

Rural Housing Service • Community Facilities Program

Partnering to Alleviate Hunger in a Rural Community

In the small community of Florence and the surrounding area on the Oregon coast, nearly 4,000 people received free food from the nonprofit Florence Food Share last year. The pantry helps ensure that seniors, people with disabilities, those who are unemployed, and low-income families have enough to eat. The nonprofit relies on donations from a wide array of organizations, but the cost of repairs and improvements to its facilities sometimes exceeds what the pantry can afford.

“USDA grants have helped our agency serve this small coastal community over the years,” said Colin Morgan, Operations Manager.

The nonprofit knew that in the event of an emergency, low-income families would have an even greater need for food assistance, and yet the nonprofit did not have the means to protect its perishable foods during a power outage.



Florence Food Share distributes approximately 50,000 pounds of food per month to help alleviate hunger in this rural community.

Florence Food Share learned of a grant program offered by USDA Rural Development to support essential community services. It applied and received a \$10,600 [Community Facilities](#) grant to install a generator, which will keep their refrigerators and freezers running, even during a storm that causes an electrical outage.

The following year, the food pantry needed to replace its roof. The nonprofit was also experiencing issues with its garden, which provides 10,000 pounds of fresh produce each year. It was losing crops to deer and wind damage. Once again, the nonprofit applied to Rural Development. It received a \$25,000 grant that made it possible to install a new roof and add a fence around the garden.

Last year, the food pantry switched to a ductless heat pump with help from a nearly \$8,000 USDA grant. The energy-efficient heating and cooling system is reducing the nonprofit’s monthly utility bill, providing savings it can use to feed more people in need.

“The bottom line,” said Morgan, “is that USDA has been a great partner.” With the repairs and improvements to its facilities, Florence Food Share will be able to do even more to alleviate hunger in its 270-square-mile rural service area.

Obligation Amount:	\$7,987 grant; \$25,268 grant; and \$10,600 grant
Date of Obligation:	March 2018, April 2016, and August 2015
Congressional District:	Representative DeFazio, District 4; Senators Wyden and Merkley
Demographics:	Western Lane County, Oregon; population 8,566
Impact:	Facility repairs and improvements are helping a nonprofit food pantry continue to provide 50,000 pounds of food per month to nearly 4,000 low-income people in a 270-square-mile area in western Lane County on the Oregon coast.
