

# Seed to Table expands produce shares program

By **Katy Yoder**  
Correspondent

Seed to Table, a Sisters agricultural and education nonprofit, is opening sign-ups January 20 for this season's produce shares. The early sign-up offers a longer availability of fresh veggies, sliding-scale payment options, and SNAP/EBT payment options.

Seed to Table's produce share is based on a model called community supported agriculture or CSA. This concept was created in the 1960s by Booker T. Whatley, a Black horticulturist, agricultural professor, and advocate for farming practices that help sustain and rebuild the land. In a produce share, individuals or families pay in advance or monthly for a season of fresh, local vegetables. Each week the bounty of veggies is laid out market-style at the Seed to Table farmstand. Produce share members browse and choose what they want to take home.

A small produce share receives six to eight items and a large share receives nine to 11 items each week.

The produce shares run May 4 through October 19. With the incorporation of a spring greens variety, this is

nearly a month longer than previous years.

Pickups happen at Seed to Table Farm in Sisters 3 to 5:45 p.m. on Wednesdays or at Sisters Farmers Market on Sundays from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. If transportation is a barrier, Seed to Table can arrange to deliver to locations within 20 miles of Sisters.

Seed to Table has been learning from fellow farmers and advocates across the country about methods to increase access to fresh produce.

"The board and staff are grateful for the opportunity to build on models from other farms to implement a new sliding-scale payment system intended to better serve the variety of needs of our community members," said Audrey Tehan, founder and executive director.

With this sliding-scale model, members choose a payment level that works best for them. The first option starts at \$20 a week, and moves to the "Market Value," and finally a "Pay It Forward" share.

Moving to a sliding-scale payment model supports a vision where all people have access to fresh produce. Sign-ups begin January 20 at [www.seedtotableoregon.org](http://www.seedtotableoregon.org).

# Seed to Table hits fundraising goals

Finishing up their final fundraising efforts for 2021, the Seed to Table Oregon (S2T) team is extending a heartfelt "thank you" for all the generous donations received by the nonprofit.

Board member Barb Schulz reflected on the future for the nonprofit as community members and partnerships help expand Seed to Table's impact in Central Oregon.

"I'm thrilled by the broad community support that helped us reach our goals. Community members can look forward to amazing produce. Our education programs will also benefit from the funding, along with the Sisters Farmers Market. There will be new produce in our greenhouses and fertile ground ready to produce more food to feed even more families. With a wonderful staff and effective board, we're going strong," said Schulz.

Audrey Tehan, founder and executive director of S2T, is feeling gratitude and optimism for the coming growing season. The board and staff ramped up fundraising goals because of increased demand for produce and a 30 percent rise in K-12 farm-based education.

"We are grateful to have so many generous contributors,

on all levels, who make these programs happen. It allows us to feed and educate more people," said Tehan.

She is celebrating and welcoming a growing network of supporters, including 20 percent more new donors.

Programming and farm yields last year were robust. Farm-based classes provided by S2T served 1,200 youth through the Sisters School District and summer programs. Students attended field trips to the farm where they learned how to grow, harvest, and prepare nutritious meals. In addition, S2T provided learning opportunities in the high school greenhouse and during the seasonal Sisters Farmers Market, which is managed by S2T.

In 2022, S2T staff and board members are continuing the theme "Digging Deeper." For Tehan and her team, it's not about getting

bigger but getting better at providing produce and educational opportunities that benefit the entire Sisters community and beyond. Tehan will be focusing in key areas like community programming, food distribution, the Sisters Farmers Market, collaborative partnerships, and farm production. The shared vision will make the nonprofit more nimble, efficient, and an even more valuable community asset.

Seed to Table is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (tax ID number 82-3795618), with a mission to increase health and wellness of the Central Oregon community through providing equitable access to locally grown, farm-fresh produce and offering opportunities in farm-based education.

For more information about Seed to Table visit [www.seedtotableoregon.org](http://www.seedtotableoregon.org).

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