

USDA is distributing food boxes to help relieve community food insecurities

By Andy Taylor

In November 2025, the Siletz Tribal Council approved an emergency declaration to help address rising food insecurity caused by the federal government shutdown. With funds allocated to the tribe, the CTSI team quickly got to work on a plan that would make a real difference for the community.

Area Offices received funding to support their regions by creating food pantries in offices, designed to fill gaps where members need extra support. This effort has also opened opportunities for offices to host community gatherings in culturally respectful ways, providing meals and connection

for the membership at a time when it's needed most.

Additional departments, including Education & Youth, ICW, and 477-SSP, were also given funding to help ensure fewer empty stomachs in the community. Together, these programs are strengthening the tribe's ability to care for its members and provide reliable food access during uncertain times.

USDA staff Nutritionist & clerk Marci Taylor, along with a volunteer warehouseman Damian Barber, worked tirelessly to organize these emergency food boxes.

Thanks to their dedication and some generous help from the Newport

Fred Meyer store, the USDA program was able to create abundant food boxes filled with shelf stable staples. Fred Meyer contributed donated goods after learning the USDA team was shopping to stock the boxes, helping stretch resources even further.

In total, the USDA program received \$10,000 in emergency funds, and the team made every dollar count. By using a mix of digital and paper coupons, they were able to stretch those funds even further, adding an impressive \$3,497 in additional value to the food box effort. Their smart shopping and resourcefulness meant more food, more variety, and more support for community members.

Each box includes a wide range of items to cook a meal with such as canned fruit, noodles, spaghetti sauce, soups, tinned fish, canned meats, cereal, coffee, cereal bars, mashed potatoes, and much more.

These boxes are free to the community and will be available until gone. Households can pick up one box per person, but everyone must be present to pick up a box, no notes will be accepted. Staff are excited to assist you however possible.

To learn more or request assistance, you can reach out to Marci Taylor at the USDA office by calling 541-444-8393, or by emailing her at marcit@ctsi.nsn.us.



Photos courtesy of Marci Taylor

Above: Some food items displayed on a cart

Right: Damian Barber, volunteer warehouseman, packing food boxes to distribute to the community



IN-PERSON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CLASSES

MARCH: BEAR GRASS BRAIDS

Siletz (Community Center)-Monday, March 2
Eugene Area Office-Wednesday, March 4
Salem Area Office-Wednesday, March 11
Portland Area Office-Wednesday, March 18

APRIL AND MAY: GATHERING TRIPS

Spring is the time to gather basketry materials. Exact dates will depend on weather and conditions and occur between late-March and April at locations near Portland, Eugene, and Siletz. Sign up to receive email updates of all trips at the contact information below

VIRTUAL CULTURE NIGHTS

Upcoming Dates:

Tuesday, March 17 at 5 pm: Sharing our Ways
Tuesday, April 21 at 5 pm: Allotment
Tuesday, May 19 at 5 pm: Run to the Rogue

Sponsored by the Education and Culture Departments
For questions or more information Contact
Nick Viles at nickv@ctsi.nsn.us or 541-270-5814 (work cell)

**In-person Culture Classes start at 6 pm
Come at 5 pm for language practice**

Tipi Drawing

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Roll: _____

For Siletz Tribal members to use during the Nesika Illahee Pow-Wow on Aug 1-9, 2026. One entry per household. Must be a Siletz Tribal member to enter.

Deadline for entries is June 5, 2026 by end of work day (4:30 p.m.) Names will be drawn soon after the deadline. Return the form to Siletz Pow-Wow at Attn: Tipi Drawing, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380. Applications are located on the CTSI website, under the Pow-Wow tab.

Note: You do not win the Tipi. The drawing is only for a stay in the Tipi over Pow-Wow weekend.

2026-2027 Siletz Royalty Applications

Applications are being accepted for 2026-2027 Miss Siletz, Junior Miss Siletz, and Little Miss Siletz. Applications must be turned in by the end of the workday (4:30 p.m.) no later than May 29, 2026. Applications may be sent to: Siletz Pow-Wow Committee at P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380.

Applications can be downloaded from the CTSI website located under the Pow-Wow tab. <https://www.ctsi.nsn.us/heritage/pow-wow/>

If you have any questions, contact A.J. Warren at 541-444-8244, or email ajw@ctsi.nsn.us