

# THAT'S MY FARMER RAISES FUNDS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

A weekly produce box from a local farm can cost a family of four \$550 — for a 20-week supply of healthy food, it's a real bargain. But it's not something every family can afford.

On April 14, First United Methodist Church hosts That's My Farmer, an annual fundraiser to support low-income families by providing access to local and organic food through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs. Donations will go towards That's My Farmer's low-income fund, which subsidizes what families cannot afford to pay for a season of food shares.

The money goes directly from the fund to the farmer, says Katharine Hunt, a volunteer coordinator for That's My Farmer. In 2015, the low-income fund assisted 277 people, or 129 families. This year's fundraising goal is \$5,000, Hunt says.

Farmers will table at the fundraiser, allowing residents to meet with local CSA programs and learn more about each program and what it has to offer, such as the variety or quantity of food, as well as pick-up sites for food boxes, Hunt says.

This year's theme for the event is "Bringing Food Home for All of the People."

"We really wanted to focus more on the low-income fund," Hunt says. "We feel like people in our area really get the idea of CSA, of having a community supported agriculture food share, but we wanted to really promote being available for all people, and no matter what how much you can afford."

Among That's My Farmer supporters and promoters is Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, says Lynne Fessenden, the coalition's executive director.

Fessenden explains that there are factors that make it difficult for low-income families to purchase healthy foods, such as having the time to prepare meals, not having access to local grocery stores and having the financial means to pay for locally sourced items.

"They're forced to always be looking for the cheapest food, and we know often that the cheapest food is unfortunately not the healthiest food," Fessenden says.

The fundraiser will also have door prizes and seasonal snacks provided by farmers.

That's My Farmer begins 6 pm Thursday, April 14, at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive Street. Organizers suggest a donation between \$5 and \$500. Find more information at [lanefood.org/thats-my-farmer.php](http://lanefood.org/thats-my-farmer.php). ■

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