

Strong partnerships create healthy communities



The Produce Pick-Up program distributes fruits and vegetables sourced by the Wholesale Recovery program to families at sites in Watts, South Los Angeles, Inglewood, and Simi Valley.

These free distributions are made possible with volunteer power and in collaboration with four partners: Watts Labor Community Action Committee, Social Justice Learning Institute, Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, and Simi at the Garden.

This model enables Food Forward to reduce barriers to food access by strategically serving communities that have limited supermarkets, food pantries, or farmers markets to provide affordable, healthy options. To meet the needs of each neighborhood being served through a Produce Pick-Up, five to eight varieties of fresh produce are given out through a market-style distribution or in pre-packed bags. In 2018, 321 volunteer shifts were filled and nearly 700,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables were distributed at Produce Pick-Up events.



PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: Social Justice Learning Institute

“One of the original tenets of our 100 Seeds of Change initiative was to grow, aggregate, and distribute enough produce to help end food insecurity in our community. We built over 100 gardens, growing tens of thousands of pounds of produce over the last eight years. We started regularly harvesting and distributing that produce through our CSA program. However, even with accepting EBT, we saw that there was still a major gap in access to food that our programs didn’t have the capacity to address. Partnering with Food Forward to create the Food for Thought Produce Pick-Up became the solution that significantly filled in that gap. In one year together, we’ve made an amazing amount of fresh produce available—over 100,000 pounds—while concurrently implementing Inglewood’s first closed-loop food system by composting the produce not given away. I believe that our model will prove to make LA County one of the largest food rescue communities eliminating food waste in the country.”

Derek Steele, Health Equity Programs Director, Social Justice Learning Institute