

April & May Newsletter

2026



CENTER FOR FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

We have a Worm Farm! Vermiculture Composting Project



Article written by Maggie Billings

This spring we started work on establishing a worm farm to explore more sustainable options for managing the huge amounts of cardboard waste generated by our food pantry operations. Thanks to the indispensable knowledge and experience of veteran worm farmer Dennis Hayes and the many hours he's spent teaching me the ins and outs of worm farming, we now have several bins of red wigglers and European nightcrawlers (all donated by Dennis and other volunteers!) breeding and eating away. Both types of these worms are prolific eaters, able to consume up to half their body weight in decaying matter daily and turn it into castings that fertilize and revive the soil microbiome.

As our farm grows, we hope to be able to turn most, if not all, of our cardboard and food waste into castings for use in our garden and distribution to other gardeners in the community. Using natural decay processes to turn cardboard trash into a component of healthy soil will help us continue to strengthen sustainable food production and waste management processes within The Commons and the community at large.

**Join Us for Our 5th
Annual Gala in the
Garden in September!**

Volunteer Spotlight

Dennis Hayes



Join us on **Saturday, September 26 from 5-9pm** for a stroll through the gardens with friends, delicious food, live music, a silent auction, and to learn about what The Commons has done and is planning for the upcoming year.

This year we are excited to host the gala *Under the Harvest Moon*, a symbol of abundance, gratitude, and community. Traditionally associated with the gathering of the harvest, this special evening reflects The Commons' mission to cultivate food security, self-sufficiency, and sustainability in Grant County. As we gather in the garden, we celebrate the shared work of nourishing our community and creating a more resilient future together.

We will post more on our website and social media with details about the ways you can get involved soon, so stay tuned!

Partner Spotlight

Frontier Food Hub



In this newsletter, we would like to honor Dennis Hayes for our volunteer spotlight! Dennis has graciously lent us his expertise in vermiculture composting and has been a tremendous help with setting up our new worm farm. Together with our Operations Manager, Maggie, the two have spent the last few months planning and setting up a compost site with the hopes to process enough cardboard each month to produce approximately 20-25lbs of castings into nutrient-dense soil amendment that can be used in gardens. Thanks for all the help, Dennis!

National Volunteer Appreciation Month



The Frontier Food Hub, a program of the National Center for Frontier Communities, works to support regional farmers by providing services such as marketing, aggregation, logistics, and consulting. These resources help ensure that local producers have what they need to successfully operate and sustain their farm businesses.

One important part of the Food Hub's work is partnering with local organizations like The Commons to distribute locally grown and sourced food throughout the community.

In one of our May deliveries, we received:

- Produce from Achin Acres and Dominguez Canyon (Gila/Cliff)
- Eggs from Hazy Foothills Permaculture (Silver City)
- Meat from Farr Ranch (Sierra County)

Partnerships like these are what strengthen our food system, helping ensure that our community has direct access to fresh, nutritious food, while uplifting local farmers and growers!



Volunteers are the heart of The Commons! We say it a lot, but only because it's true. With only a staff of five, we couldn't do this work without you. April was National Volunteer Appreciation Month and we just want to say thank you to every single person who gives their time to support our mission. Because of you, our Grant County community is fed and cared for.

From Silver City to Bayard, Cliff, Gila, and Mimbres, your kindness and dedication to food security means so much. You're the reason this community feels so special, and we're so grateful to have you as part of The Commons!

Give Grandly 2026



All of us at The Commons are in awe of the generosity shown to us during Give Grandly and Southern New Mexico Giving Day. It truly shows how



special this corner of New Mexico is. A place where neighbors really take care of one another.

We are excited to share that we met our Give Grandly goal and it is all because of you! Not only did you help us meet our matching goal but you surpassed it, totaling in over **\$40,000 going toward food security right here in Grant County.**

Your support helps us continue providing vital resources to Grant County residents, strengthening community resilience through food assistance, educational programs, and sustainable food initiatives.

Plan Ahead:

June:

CYO Pantry: Weekly Tues-Wed-Thurs

Silver City Food Pantry: 6th
Mining District Food Pantry: 16th
Cliff Gila Food Pantry: 16th
Mimbres Food Pantry: 17th
Community Dinner: 26th

July:

CYO Pantry: Weekly Tues-Wed-Thurs

Silver City Food Pantry: 4th
Mimbres Food Pantry: 15th
Mining District Food Pantry: 21st
Cliff/Gila Food Pantry: 21st
Community Dinner: 31st

August:

CYO Pantry: Weekly Tues-Wed-Thurs

Silver City Food Pantry: 1st
Mining District Food Pantry: 18th
Cliff/Gila Food Pantry: 18th
Mimbres Food Pantry: 19th
Community Dinner: 28th

Did you know that The Commons is Almost Completely Staffed by Volunteers?

Southwest New Mexico Seed Library



Did you know that the SW New Mexico Seed Library gives out over 10,000 packages of **free seeds** every year? And 80% are locally donated! There are several Seed Library Locations where you can "check out" seeds:

- The Commons
- Silver City Public Library
- Single Socks Thrift Store
- Silver City Farmers
- Valley Mimbres' Market
- Bayard Library
- Hurley Library
- Gila Library
- Lordsburg Library
- Santa Clara Farmers' Market
- Bear Creek Herbs

You can join us packaging and cleaning seeds on Tuesdays.



Here are some ways to get involved:

Food Pantry: Several times a month in groups meet to sort, pack and distribute food.

Help out at one of our pantry locations in Grant County: Silver City, Bayard/ Santa Clara, Gila/Cliff, or Mimbres!

Garden: Care for the Commons garden, plant food and harvest for distribution, help maintain the orchard.

Kitchen: Help prep, serve, and clean up at our monthly Community Dinner.

Fundraising Events: Help put together community gatherings to raise money for The Commons.

[Click here](#) to sign up for the weekly email update to stay informed about all of our volunteer opportunities

[Click here](#) to view all our volunteer opportunities on The Volunteer Center website

Contact swmseeds@gmail.com for more information.

Donate to The Commons and Support Food Security in your Community!

- Send a check to the Commons at PO Box 416, Silver City, NM 88062
- OR click the button below to go to our website and then click the **DONATE button.**

Visit our Website



REMEMBER:

- Food Pantries in Silver City are the first Saturday of the month.
- Choose Your Own (CYO) Pantry is open every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in Silver City from 11:00 AM — 3:00 PM and every first Saturday of the month from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- The Mining District (Fort Bayard) distribution and the Gila/Cliff distribution are on the third Tuesday of each month.
- The Mimbres distribution is on the third Wednesday of each month.

For more information, call the Commons at 575-388-2988 or check the website at www.thecommonsgrantcounty.org

The Commons Center for Food Security and Sustainability
www.thecommonsgrantcounty.org



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