

Your Investments in Action

Spring 2024
Impact Report



FEEDING
AMERICA



Above from left to right: Bernhard Kowatsch, founder and head of Innovation Accelerator at the United Nations World Food Programme, Claire Babineaux-Fontenot and Feeding America's Chief Development Officer Casey Marsh in Davos, Switzerland for the World Economic Forum.

A LETTER FROM THE CEO

Food insecurity in the United States had a moment in the global spotlight at the [World Economic Forum](#) in January in Davos, Switzerland. I was invited to speak at [The Swedish Lunch](#), where the international audience was stunned by the breadth and depth of hunger in the U.S.—where 1 in 5 children face food insecurity—and captivated by Feeding America's multi-faceted approach. Of particular interest was our dedication to addressing hunger by rescuing quality, nutritious food and supporting sustainable food systems. As people continue to experience food insecurity at increased rates and communities continue to experience climate-related disasters at increased rates, this work is more important than ever.

More than 92 billion pounds of food are wasted each year, resulting in 8% of all global emissions. The Feeding America network is proud to have rescued 3.96 billion pounds of food in fiscal year 2023, and we know we can do even more when we partner with you. A new Food Rescue Fund has been created to support efforts as we aim to rescue an additional, incremental 1 billion pounds of food by the end of 2025. To accomplish this, we are calling for vital contributions to this effort as we collaborate with new and existing strategic partners and engage with innovative solutions and smart technology, like our MealConnect® platform.

The Feeding America network is leaving no stone unturned in our mission to work alongside people facing food insecurity to end hunger in the U.S., and a crucial part of the solution will be passing a strong, non-partisan [farm bill](#) that supports farmers, food banks, and most importantly, people facing hunger. From my travels, I know the belief that no one in our country should go hungry is shared across party lines, across state lines, across creeds and cultures and languages. I am filled with optimism when I imagine what we can do when we all stand up together.

Your partner in the movement to end hunger,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Babineaux-Fontenot'.

Claire Babineaux-Fontenot

Chief Executive Officer, Feeding America

TOGETHER, WITH PEOPLE LIKE RAY, WE HELP MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FACING HUNGER

Across the country, Feeding America works with farmers like Ray, as well as manufacturers and retailers, to help rescue food for its highest and best use: providing it to people facing hunger. In fiscal year, 2023, the food bank network rescued 3.96 billion pounds of food.

For more than 50 years, Ray's farm in northern California has grown some of the best citrus in the U.S. His primary crop is Valencia oranges, which are sold whole or as juice in grocery stores. At times, he has a surplus—perfectly good oranges he can't use. When that occurs, Ray donates the extra produce to [Feeding San Diego](#), ensuring his neighbors facing hunger have access to high-quality fruit, while also rescuing the food from being discarded.

"I text (the food bank) and within 24 hours, they're here with a truck to pick up the produce and then it's usually distributed in the community the day after," said Ray, who has donated nearly 6,000 pounds of premium produce.

For Feeding America's nationwide network members, including Feeding San Diego, working with farmers like Ray is crucial to help shorten—and ultimately end—the food lines in communities. Your support of the movement to end hunger in America greatly impacts our efforts, nationally and at the local level. With the latest USDA statistics revealing a [distressing surge in food insecurity across the nation](#)—a 31% increase, the largest single-year increase since the Great Recession—immediate action is needed to rescue more food to achieve food security in America.

"Farming isn't an easy business. I'm optimistic about the future ... I couldn't imagine doing anything else."



HUNGER IN THE U.S. REMAINS AN URGENT CRISIS

The hunger rate among people living in America is the highest it has been since 2014. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 44 million people—including more than 13 million children—experienced food insecurity in 2022. That is an increase of 31% for all individuals and 44% for children from the previous year. This is unacceptable—and we know that by working together with you, we can do more.

We need donors, partners and partnerships to help us expand and elevate the transformative work the network is undertaking to rescue and distribute more food to more people. We've launched a Food Rescue Fund and we are rallying supporters like you to join us by making an

CONTINUED ADVOCACY FOR POLICY CHANGES TO HELP PEOPLE FACING HUNGER

In March, Feeding America advocates visited Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to meet with lawmakers to convey the urgent hunger crisis in our country—affecting 1 in 5 children—and the persistent challenges partner food banks are experiencing. The March 6 event was **the largest standalone Feeding America** fly-in event in our history. Attendees included 180 network members from over 100 organizations, representing 42 states and Puerto Rico. Fly-in advocates visited approximately 240 congressional offices. The unified message shared with lawmakers centered on passing **a strong farm bill** that makes critical investments in federal programs, like [The Emergency Food Assistance Program](#) (TEFAP) and the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP), that help individuals and families keep food on the table. The farm bill is the largest piece of federal legislation for food and farming, and it impacts access to nutritious food for the millions of people facing hunger in the U.S.

Feeding America also convened the Farmers Feed America coalition for a senior meal packing event on March 21 for Congressional staff to increase their knowledge of the critical role TEFAP foods play in supporting neighbors. The **Farmers Feed America nonpartisan coalition**, which launched in March 2023, is focused on **shared priorities for the next farm bill** to help meet the continued needs of communities facing hunger, bolster our nation's food resilience, and enhance markets for farmers and ranchers, who play a key role in the movement to end hunger. Among the priorities is that the farm bill should strengthen TEFAP to help food banks keep up with the rising need for food assistance

investment to help enhance food rescue capacity across the Feeding America network. Our goal is to rescue an incremental 1 billion pounds of food by the end of 2025. We must scale proven, successful strategies to rescue more food and get it into the hands of neighbors who need it most. For example, more than 59 million pounds of agricultural products, including protein, produce and dairy—some of the top-requested items by neighbors at food banks—are delivered to network members every week. Conversely, without the support they receive from network members, neighbors facing hunger receive the equivalent of one gallon of milk per person per year, making it difficult to get all the protein and nutrients dairy provides.

To learn how you can support the Food Rescue Fund, please contact your Feeding America Relationship Manager and they will be happy to share more information.

and food costs. The coalition is comprised of farmers, food companies, food retailers, and hunger-relief organizations, including Feeding America and the American Farm Bureau Federation, among others.

Underscoring all of our advocacy is our commitment to preserving the dignity of people facing hunger, as they know what foods best meet their needs—and they, like all of us, should have the power of choice. There were efforts to include a pilot program to restrict SNAP purchases in fiscal year 2024 appropriations legislation that Feeding America successfully advocated be excluded from the final bill. **Feeding America opposes any restrictions on the types of foods SNAP participants can purchase with SNAP benefits.** In our [2022 Elevating Voices to End Hunger Together report](#), 78% of people facing hunger surveyed wanted SNAP to have easier access to the nutritious foods they need to thrive, not restrict food choices. We will continue to advocate with Congress to preserve SNAP access and the dignity of choice for SNAP participants.

The **next farm bill is currently being drafted**—our job is to **influence it during this critical and condensed window of time.** Our goal is to keep network members—and supporters like you—engaged in pushing consideration for our farm bill priorities in support of people facing hunger.

COMING IN JUNE!

The 2024 Elevating Voices: Power Summit, an advocacy event designed with—and for—neighbors who have lived or living experience of food insecurity. Summit attendees will gather June 11-13 in Washington, D.C., to connect with other neighbors making changes in their communities, sharpen their advocacy and communication skills, and speak directly to policymakers.

HIGHEST PAYOUT RATES IN 16 YEARS: THE BENEFITS OF A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

Charitable gift annuity payout rates increased again Jan. 1, 2024, and are higher than they have been in 16 years—making this a great time to consider this type of gift. A charitable gift annuity is an excellent way to support Feeding America with a gift that can provide you with stable, regular income for life and after your lifetime—the remaining amount becomes part of your legacy at Feeding America, allowing us to advance our mission far into the future. With this gift, you’ll also enjoy a partial income tax charitable deduction for your gift when you itemize. In addition, part of each payment will be income tax-free throughout your estimated life expectancy.

HOW A GIFT ANNUITY WORKS

Charitable gift annuities can be funded through a donation of cash, marketable securities or other assets, and we, in turn, pay you a fixed amount for life. You’ll receive reliable, predictable payments for your lifetime and the lifetime of a loved one, if you choose. For example, a 72-year-old who transfers \$25,000 in exchange for a charitable gift annuity will receive annual payments of \$1,650, a rate of 6.6%.

YOUR FUNDING OPTIONS

In addition to funding the gift with cash, there may be significant benefits to making the gift with appreciated assets such as securities. If you use this method, you will receive a federal income tax charitable deduction (when you itemize) in the year the gift is made and eliminate part of the capital gains tax you would have paid if selling the securities. If you have stocks that produce low-yield dividends, you may be able to increase your income.

GIVE FROM YOUR IRA

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a one-time election for a qualified charitable distribution of up to \$53,000 (without being taxed) from your IRA to fund a gift annuity. Special rules apply, so please contact us for more details and a personalized illustration at no obligation.

REQUEST YOUR PERSONALIZED EXAMPLE

We would be happy to answer any questions you might have and to send you additional information showing you the benefits you can receive from a gift annuity. Your personalized gift calculation will illustrate how the gift works and include your potential income tax charitable deduction and our annual payments to you for life. **Contact Jessica Noe, Director of Development and Planned Giving, at 312-641-5593 or jnoe@feedingamerica.org to begin.**

GIFT ANNUITY RATE CHARTS

One Recipient

Age	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
Payout Rate	5.2%	5.7%	6.3%	7.0%	8.1%	9.1%	10.1%

Two Recipients

Age	60/65	65/70	70/75	75/80	80/85	85/90	90/95+
Payout Rate	4.8%	5.2%	5.8%	6.5%	7.3%	8.7%	9.9%

These rates are subject to change. Please contact us for a personalized illustration.

California residents: Annuities are subject to regulation by the State of California. Payments under such agreements, however, are not protected or otherwise guaranteed by any government agency or the California Life and Health Insurance Guarantee Association. Oklahoma residents: A charitable gift annuity is not regulated by the Oklahoma Insurance Department and is not protected by a guaranty association affiliated with the Oklahoma Insurance Department. South Dakota residents: Charitable gift annuities are not regulated by and are not under the jurisdiction of the South Dakota Division of Insurance.

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OFFERING MORE FOOD CHOICE WITH DIGNITY FOR NEIGHBORS FACING HUNGER

Transforming the neighbor experience—which encompasses all aspects of a person experiencing food insecurity’s interactions before, during and after accessing charitable food—so that it is centered on neighbors’ needs is one of Feeding America’s priority areas for investment in support of the nationwide network of food banks. Providing neighbors with full choice of food—allowing people to select the food they need—is key to strengthening relationships with the people served in local communities, yielding them dignity and convenience. **For the first time ever**, Feeding America published an [article](#) on the **feasibility of offering neighbor choice**, including understanding and evaluating the barriers in implementing

choice and highlighting the impacts of choice on the experiences of neighbors. Among the takeaways in the article, published in the *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, is that designing food pantries with full choice not only provides access to food but also **accommodates cultural food preferences, decreases food waste and reduces the stigma often associated with charitable food**. Of the agency partners, as part of the article’s study, that have increased their level of choice, 79% report overall improved operations, including the satisfaction of staff, volunteers and neighbors served.



FROM THE FRONT LINES

PARTNER FOOD BANK IS THE FIRST FOOD BANK IN THE WORLD TO EARN 'ZERO WASTE' CERTIFICATION

Nearly 92 billion pounds of food go to waste each year. Providing hunger relief to the tens of millions of neighbors experiencing food insecurity necessitates immediate action. Network members across the country are committed to rescuing more food, including **Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County**, which is the **first food bank in the world to be certified for its sustainability efforts**. The food bank has reduced its amount of waste going to landfill from 41% to less than 5% currently, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Previously discarded material, including edible and non-edible food, cardboard boxes, paper and plastic cutlery, is now reused, recycled or reduced.

The food bank was awarded a **TRUE certification** (TRUE stands for Total Resource Use and Efficiency) last fall from Green Business Certification, Inc. The milestone reflects the food bank's commitment to community health by ensuring as much food as possible reaches people facing hunger and reducing negative environmental impacts.

For more than two years, the food bank underwent a complex process to earn the zero-waste organization designation, enacting changes beneficial to both the local community and the environment. Small, yet intentional, modifications to its grocery rescue program proved beneficial, including directing its agency partners to pick up rescued food directly from grocers—yielding faster food distribution and less waste. The food bank implemented a sorting process to separate food that could be composted versus thrown away; invested in heavy-duty plastic agricultural bins to harvest food, replacing cardboard boxes; and the transportation team now uses iPads—rather than paper—to conduct daily inspections. The food bank also now requests that their vendors use pallet straps to secure food boxes, instead of plastic wrap.

Adjustments also were made for food bank staff. For example, employees are now provided reusable cutlery, water bottles and coffee mugs. In addition, the food bank assigned a zero-waste leadership role to its Supply Chain director; the sustainability role focuses on assessing—and ultimately minimizing—waste generated daily by various food streams. In 2023, the food bank distributed more than 36 million pounds of food—the equivalent of over 18 tons of food—to the community.

Below: Second Harvest of Orange County leaders accept the Award for Excellence in the Zero Waste & Circular Solutions category from the U.S. Green Building Council, Los Angeles Chapter. From left to right: Denise Braun, Principal, All About Waste; Chrislynn VanSkiver, Chief Operating Officer, Second Harvest; Kelly Alesi, Director of Supply Chain, Second Harvest; Emily DeCremer, TRUE Advisor, Senior Product Manager, All About Waste



AT OUR CORE

AMPLIFYING HUNGER RELIEF THROUGH A MULTI-NATIONAL EFFORT

Boundless Collaborations are joint ventures between two or more food banks that transcend historical service-area boundaries. Nestled in this work is our **Southwest Boundless Collaboration—a transformative partnership** that unites Feeding America network members and the **Mexican Food Banking Network** (BAMX; Bancos de Alimentos de México) in a **multi-state and multi-national commitment** to increase access to fresh produce for people facing hunger. The Southwest Boundless Collaboration, which launched in 2022, involves 18 project partners, 12 food banks, three state associations and two Regional Produce Collaboratives across the Southwest region, along with BAMX, which operates a network of more than 50 food banks throughout Mexico.

The Feeding America network has been sourcing produce from Mexico for more than a decade, with sourcing for U.S. food banks from Mexico formerly left to growers, importers, shippers and brokers. Now, through the collaboration, the Feeding America network is engaging BAMX directly as a partner to build the infrastructure necessary to **equitably rescue food rather than it going to waste across the Southwest region of the country, along the U.S./Mexico border**. The project builds on the success and the track record of partnership between the **Collaborative for Fresh Produce** (headquartered in Texas) and Southwest Produce Cooperative (headquartered in Arizona) in working together to source produce to excess so that more neighbors facing hunger can receive increased nutritious food.

The project aims to demonstrate that a regional model can be successful when:

- Food banks share relationships, think collectively and act collaboratively
- Processes, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
- Food banks are aligned around mutual commitments and shared accountability for outcomes

The Southwest Boundless Collaboration has unified project partners around key efforts to provide more produce to all food banks in the region. Specifically, the group has begun work with Feeding America to adopt **MealConnect**—one of Feeding America’s foundational technology platforms that is central to transforming the food-rescue landscape—as a solution to increase visibility, access to data, and move produce from donors to food banks more quickly. MealConnect is available nationwide at no cost to food businesses who connect with local food banks and feeding programs, making it easy to donate food and coordinate logistics. With MealConnect, we’re sourcing more food and sharing it in new ways, engaging more donors, reducing transportation costs and increasing access to nutritious food in communities everywhere.

Grant funding to support this work will run through 2025. Starting in 2026, grantees will be fully sustainable and operational on an ongoing basis.

Below: The Southwest Boundless Collaboration held a convening in January 2024 at the **Tarrant Area Food Bank** in Fort Worth, Texas.



NEW PARTNERSHIP TO ADVANCE FOOD AS MEDICINE WORK

Food security and health are inextricably linked—and Feeding America aims to transform the charitable food experience for people facing hunger so that more people, especially neighbors living with chronic diseases, can access nutritious food that promotes improved health and well-being. Feeding America has partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to advance the work and progress of our Food As Medicine program, which has yielded notable interventions and outcomes over the last five years. The new partnership between HHS and Feeding America was announced at the **first-ever Food Is Medicine Summit**, a bipartisan event held Jan. 31 in Washington, D.C. During the summit, HHS announced two additional public-private partnerships with **Instacart**, a Feeding America Supporting Partner, and the Rockefeller Foundation.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

- 1 Coming in May:** The 2024 release of Feeding America's **Map the Meal Gap**, our annual study on local food insecurity and food cost across the country.
- 2** To learn how you can support the new **Food Rescue Fund**, please contact your Feeding America Relationship Manager and they will be happy to share more information.
- 3 Join us May 14** for our next **What's Cooking? webinar**, hosted by **Linda Nageotte**, Feeding America's President and Chief Operating Officer.
- 4 Continue your commitment to hunger relief** with a gift to Feeding America in your estate plan. For more information, contact Jessica Noe at plannedgiving@feedingamerica.org or 312.641.5593.



161 North Clark Street, Suite 700
Chicago, IL 60601

1627 I Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20006

800.771.2303

www.feedingamerica.org

Feeding America is a nationwide network of food banks that helps provide meals to tens of millions of people through food pantries and meal programs in communities across America and leads the nation in the fight against hunger.

Support Feeding America and help solve hunger.

Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate.

