

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."



NEIGHBORS
FACING HUNGER
GAINED ACCESS
TO MORE THAN

1.4B* MEALS

SUPPORTED BY
THE FEEDING
AMERICA
NETWORK
OCTOBER THROUGH
DECEMBER 2023

FRESH
PRODUCE
200M

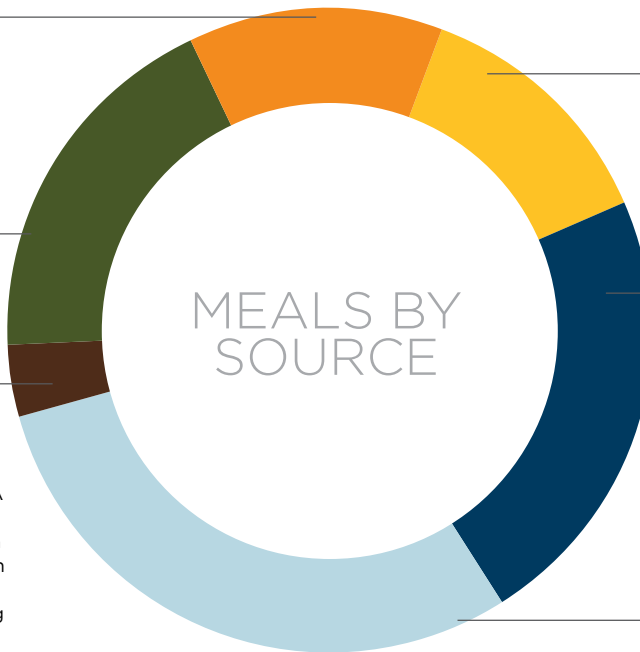
MANUFACTURING
DONATIONS
194M

PURCHASED
FOOD
286M

FEDERAL
COMMODITIES
350M

SNAP
MEALS
46M

RETAIL
DONATIONS
457M



*A meal from Feeding America is 1.2 pounds of product, based on USDA guidelines. The quarterly estimate includes SNAP meals Feeding America enabled through our SNAP application assistance programs. If you have any questions, please contact your Feeding America relationship manager or productsourcing@feedingamerica.org

MAXIMIZING RETAIL RESCUE OPPORTUNITY THROUGH AGENCY CAPACITY BUILDING

We leverage support from partners across the country to address the underlying causes of hunger so people can thrive. Over the years, the network has examined how racial disparities impact food insecurity, yielding a shift in how members approach partnerships.

In March 2024, we held a Retail Agency Capacity (RAC) convening, hosted at [North Texas Food Bank](#). The two-day event was attended by 75 people, including staff leaders representing 31 partner food banks. The purpose of the event, which featured a Walmart town hall, was for RAC grantees to learn and share best practices and to develop resources for future grantees. Retail donations are the largest stream of food for the network. In fiscal year 2023, we secured 2.1 billion pounds of food through retail donations.

During the past two fiscal years, \$37 million in RAC grants have been awarded to 44 food banks. Results to date include a 7.29% increase in donated pounds of food, compared to a 2.63% increase for non-RAC grantees. Moreover, RAC grantees are seeing accelerated growth in

produce, meat, and dairy donations due to increased pickup frequencies at the retail store, a key strategy enabled by this grant. The latest round of RAC grants, which included funding from the [Walmart Foundation](#), for example, allowed agency partners to purchase portable walk-in coolers—a solution to storing more fruits and vegetables, where space and building restrictions are common.

Overall, RAC grant funding helps agency partners pick up donations directly from hyper-local retail stores, meaning nutritious food within a community reaches neighbors facing hunger within the same community faster and allows food banks to reallocate their resources to other food rescue strategies. Additionally, the grant requires that at least 50% of funding be used to develop or strengthen agencies that serve primarily rural and/or communities of color. To date, these grants have strengthened and supported over 1,150 partner agencies serving communities of color and nearly 600 agencies in rural communities.

Special thanks to Cargill, Dollar General, The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation, and Walmart Foundation for supporting this work.

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.

PARTNERING WITH YOU TO END HUNGER

FIRST-TIME PARTNERS YIELD DISASTER SUPPORT FOR MAUI

It's been eight months since the fifth deadliest wildland fire in U.S. history—and the worst natural disaster in Hawaii's history—devastating people living on the island of Maui. The August 2023 disaster united people around the world to give back, including **Adyen**, a global payment processing company. For the first time, Adyen used its platform to partner with us, raising funds for our Maui disaster relief work. The campaign was implemented in all brick-and-mortar Uniqlo stores in the U.S., as well as Rag & Bone. The activation included campaign matches from Adyen and Uniqlo, generating three times the amount raised at register checkouts to help provide food and relief supplies to people on Maui. More than half a million pounds of food were distributed by Maui Food Bank in the first few weeks of response, alone, and partners like Adyen were part of that collective effort.

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO BEST MEET NEIGHBORS' NEEDS

The Service Insights Initiative is our network-wide approach to **glean deeper insights about the people we serve** at food banks and agency partners across the country. In February 2024, we held the largest Service Insights convening in the history of the initiative, which launched in 2018. More than 100 network staff members—representing 61 partner food banks—attended the two-day workshop in Chicago. Topics ranged from training agency partners, approaches for data collection with Native/Tribal populations, creating a positive neighbor experience, communication planning, and organization impact. In fiscal year 2024, thanks to a multi-donor Service Insights grant, we have distributed over \$5 million to support food banks as they increase their understanding about the neighbors they serve and translate that information to increase impact and access in their communities.

BANK OF AMERICA PRIORITIZING HEALTH EQUITY TO HELP ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY

We know food insecurity and health are intricately linked. We strive for equity and work toward solutions to eliminate inequalities that contribute to food insecurity, and partners like Bank of America are alongside us in the movement to end hunger.

Bank of America, a **Mission Partner**, has supported our work since 2009, donating over \$27 million to support national hunger-relief efforts. This fiscal year, Bank of America's support provided \$1 million for the second round of Health Equity Community Grants, awarded to 11 partner food banks. The grants aim to help network members strengthen health equity partnership models to increase equitable access to nutritious food.



Above: Bank of America staff members volunteering at Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.

Health equity continues to be a focus for Bank of America as they support food banks in their key markets. In 2022, the first round of Health Equity Community Grants—the first grant of its kind for our organization—was awarded to 21 food banks thanks to support from Bank of America.

THE NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT TO END HUNGER IS GROWING

Thanks to Feeding America’s nationwide network of food banks, the generosity of retailers and farmers, the determination of people facing hunger and kind hunger-relief partners like you, more neighbors in the U.S. have access to the food they need.



AT&T, a Feeding America [Mission Partner](#), is dedicated to providing nourishing meals to help people facing hunger. Through [AT&T’s Fiber Campaign](#), customers can easily give back by donating reward dollars. The campaign has raised over \$1 million, to date, for our mission, as well as other charities.

Dairy products are some of neighbors’ top-requested items at food banks. **Land O’Lakes’** First Run Program has donated more than 7 million pounds of product since 2010 to help people facing hunger. The program donates truckloads of fresh product year-round, made specifically for food banks to help alleviate hunger nationwide.



Ambit Energy, a Feeding America [Supporting Partner](#), is committed to harnessing the energy of their community to change the lives of people facing hunger. [The Ambit Cares campaign](#) has raised over \$200,000, to date, to help end hunger across the U.S.

In fiscal year 2024, **Health Care Service Corporation** (HCSC) launched the [Good Jobs Challenge](#), aimed at helping students access quality jobs and strengthening in-house workforce training programs, among other outcomes. Thirteen food banks in nine states participated, with over 200 job placements anticipated.

Our corporate partners launch engaging campaigns to motivate people to join the movement to end hunger. In March, **RITZ**, owned by **Mondelēz International**, held its Happy Pantry Project, donating 10 cents for every RITZ product purchased at Walmart stores and online—guaranteeing an investment of \$1 million.

HELPING TO MEET THE NEED TO END HUNGER

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.

Special thanks to the Morgan Stanley Foundation for supporting this work.



ACTRESS KAREN PITTMAN SHARES HER STORY OF OVERCOMING HUNGER

Karen Pittman is an actress and producer, recently starring in “The Morning Show” and the “Sex and the City” spinoff, “And Just Like That ...” As a single mother, she experienced food insecurity in 2013 and made the decision to visit a local food pantry in New York City, a partner of City Harvest, a member of the Feeding America network. She now enjoys volunteering at City Harvest when she’s able. You can **read Karen’s story** on Feeding America’s **Hunger Blog**. In the post, she writes: **“The biggest obstacle for me was overcoming the shame I felt. And once I did that, I was able to reframe my situation.** I accepted myself and the circumstances as a matter of transition and not as a permanent change. Not as something I’d done wrong, but as an opportunity to surmount a challenge.”

LEAP DAY YIELDS FOOD & AG PARTNER’S LARGEST EVER ONE-TIME FOOD DONATION

Perdue Farms, a Feeding America **Mission Partner**, used this year’s bonus 24 hours—leap day—to make its largest ever one-time food donation to support people facing hunger. The company provided **3.3 million pounds of chicken**—approximately 2.75 million servings—to partner food banks across the U.S., helping people experiencing food insecurity gain access to nutritious protein. Perdue Farms delivered more than 70 trailer loads of its No Antibiotics Ever chicken to food banks across the nationwide network, including communities where Perdue associates live and work. The donation, part of Perdue’s Delivering Hope To Our Neighbors® outreach, aims to alleviate the strain on families facing hunger, in addition to filling an urgent need at food banks—there is a 500-million-pound protein gap within the network. The movement to end hunger takes committed partnerships like this to help us ensure neighbors have the food they need to thrive.



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.

Special thanks to Elevance Health Foundation for supporting this work.

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** **Join us May 14** for our next **What's Cooking? webinar**, hosted by **Linda Nageotte**, Feeding America's President and Chief Operating Officer.
- 3** Learn how supporters are taking action in the new **Why I Partner** section of our website, featuring AAA and Ford, General Mills, Hy-Vee, JD Finish Line Foundation, Pacific Life Foundation, Tony Robbins, and Walmart, Sam's Club and the Walmart Foundation.



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.

