



Your Investments in Action

Summer 2024
Impact Report


FEEDING
AMERICA



Above: Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico Executive Director Mari Jo Laborde, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and Claire Babineaux-Fontenot participated in a roundtable to discuss food insecurity in Puerto Rico and the U.S.

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Summer is heating up, and so is the movement to end hunger. In June, I was honored to attend the 3rd annual Elevating Voices: Power Summit in Washington, D.C., where advocates with lived experience of hunger gathered to share their expertise. Each advocate has a unique story and perspective, and together, the message was clear: People are finding it increasingly difficult to afford and access the food they need to thrive—yet when we work together, there is hope.

The Feeding America network is meeting the increasing demand through innovation and advocacy, and many people and partners are taking sustainable action. Our new [Food Rescue Challenge](#) has the ambitious goal of rescuing 1 billion more pounds of food annually, with a focus on rescuing produce from farms and high carbon intensity foods, such as protein and dairy, which are both nutritionally dense and frequently requested. According to the EPA, food waste was responsible for 55 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2020, and diverting food from landfills is an effective way to reduce those emissions. I am so inspired that we can keep people facing hunger at the center of our mission while helping to reduce the amount of organic waste in U.S. landfills. With all the innovation and resources available in this country, I know we can end hunger for good.

In September, we will kick off [Hunger Action Month](#), calling everyone to join the movement to end hunger. Though I'd say—and I believe people facing hunger would agree—you needn't wait until September 1 to act. Today would be even better.

Your partner in the movement to end hunger,

Claire Babineaux-Fontenot
Chief Executive Officer
Feeding America

TOGETHER, WE HELP MILLIONS OF CHILDREN, LIKE JADEN



For 7-year-old Jaden, pasta is the immediate answer when asked to name his favorite meal prepared by his mom, Maria.

“I like eating with my family,” Jaden adds.

When she's not making Jaden smile with her pasta, Maria loves to cook food traditional to her family, including rice, beans and chicken. During the school year, Jaden also enjoys breakfast and lunch at his school through the [National School Lunch Program](#). More than 22 million children in the U.S. rely on school meals.

During the summer months, when school is out of session and school meals are no longer available, partner food banks step in with programming to help get nutritious food to children throughout the season. The Feeding America network operates various programs, including mobile meal sites, to help achieve consistent access to nourishing meals, including for children on weekends, holidays and extended school breaks.

“I have a job, but that's not enough,” says Maria, who works in housekeeping. “Everything now is expensive.”

According to the USDA, 44 million people in America—including 13 million children—experienced food insecurity in 2022. Together, with your support, we can help kids facing hunger—not just during the summer but year-round.

Join the movement to end hunger in communities across the country: FeedingAmerica.org/Summer

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

August is National Make-A-Will Month, an annual observance that emphasizes the importance of creating and/or updating your will. Many supporters like you have found it fulfilling to preserve their passion for strengthening hunger relief in America through a legacy gift to Feeding America.

When creating or updating your will and other parts of your estate plan, we hope you consider the role Feeding America has played in your life and how you can continue making a difference for years to come.

If you don't have an estate plan, don't worry—you're not alone. The good news is that now is a great time to get started to get your plans in order and know you've provided for the people and causes you care about most.

Here are the basic things your estate plan should include to give yourself and your loved ones peace of mind:

- **Will and/or trust:** Determines how your property is distributed after you're gone. A trust sets up how your assets are managed and distributed.
- **Beneficiary designations:** Names the person(s) or charities you want to receive a specific asset, such as retirement plan assets or life insurance.
- **Power of attorney for finances:** Gives a trusted individual authority over financial decisions if you are unable to make them.
- **Power of attorney for healthcare:** Names a person to ensure your healthcare wishes are followed in the event you are unable to do it yourself.
- **Advance healthcare directive (aka living will):** Documents your wishes to a doctor regarding life-sustaining care.

To make it even easier to get started on your will, Feeding America is pleased to share with you—our dedicated supporters and friends—our secure online estate planning platform, Giving Docs. This safe, free-for-life resource gives you the power to write your own will. Visit plannedgiving.feedingamerica.org/giving-docs to learn more.

Thanks again for being a dedicated partner in the movement to end hunger in America. If you have any questions about including Feeding America in your estate plans, or if you already have and want, please contact Jessica Noe, Director of Development and Planned Giving at (800) 771-2303, ext. 5593 or email at plannedgiving@feedingamerica.org.



6 REASONS TO UPDATE YOUR ESTATE PLAN: A CHECKLIST

If any of these statements apply to you, don't wait another day—contact an estate planning attorney to make changes.

- I am a new parent or grandparent.
- I've started or ended a long-term relationship with an individual named in my estate plan.
- I'd like to change who is provided for after I'm gone.
- I own a business.
- I'd like more of my estate to go to my loved ones instead of taxes.
- I want my estate to support my favorite charitable causes.

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ACCELERATING OUR WORK THROUGH RESEARCH

As a leader in hunger research, Feeding America produces critical studies to help improve our understanding of the extent and impact of food insecurity in the U.S. Research and data-driven information are fundamental in advancing our knowledge, improving decision-making, driving innovation, and achieving efficiency and effectiveness when working to address the tens of millions of people facing hunger.

MAP THE MEAL GAP - MAY 2024

The only annual study that provides local-level estimates of food insecurity and food costs for every county and congressional district in the U.S.

The amount of money that people facing hunger in America need to have to be food secure has reached its highest point in 20 years, according to Feeding America's annual [Map the Meal Gap](#) study. On average, people facing hunger said they needed an additional \$24.73 per week to have just enough money to cover their food needs in 2022, a 9.5% increase after adjusting for increased prices. Nationally, the amount needed among all 44 million people facing hunger in 2022 hit a record high of \$33.1 billion, up nearly 43%. This surge suggests that rising prices, especially food costs, likely contributed to the increase in need—which directly echoes what [we have heard](#) from people facing hunger, who stress that **food insecurity in our country should be treated as an urgent crisis**. This is the 14th consecutive year that Feeding America has produced *Map the Meal Gap*. To learn more, view the [full report](#) or browse the [interactive map](#).

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IDENTIFYING RACISM IN THE DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY - MAY 2024

A dashboard that examines how systemic racism drives disparities in five economic indicators, impacting a family's ability to access food.

The updated [Identifying Racism in the Drivers of Food Insecurity](#) is a dashboard that visualizes local data for the drivers of food insecurity used in the *Map the Meal Gap* model by race and ethnicity. The 2024 dashboard highlights data for 2022 and includes the food insecurity estimates disaggregated by race/ethnicity that come from the *Map the Meal Gap* map. The previous version of the dashboard was released in 2023 and reflected 2021 data.

CELEBRATING THE ELEVATING VOICES: POWER SUMMIT

Nearly 50 super-advocates representing 36 states gathered in June in Washington, D.C., for the second annual Elevating Voices: Power Summit, co-created with a neighbor advisory committee. Participants met with congressional members and built relationships that will help catalyze the movement to end hunger. A U.S. Department of Agriculture listening session focused on [Food is Medicine](#) (FIM)—a topic about which many neighbors were passionate. FIM interventions support the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) nutrition goals and, earlier this year, [Feeding America was named one of three HHS public-private partnerships](#) to advance this work. New this year at the summit—and widely well received—were speed lobbying sessions, with Feeding America's lobbyists role playing as lawmakers and congressional staff so the neighbors could hone their advocacy pitches.



HOUSE MINORITY LEADER AND FEEDING AMERICA DISCUSS FOOD INSECURITY, FARM BILL

Feeding America CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot and [Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico](#) Executive Director Mari Jo Laborde participated in a roundtable on May 29 with [House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries](#) to discuss food insecurity in Puerto Rico and across the U.S.

Additional roundtable participants included leaders from Puerto Rican government agencies, nonprofit organizations and people with lived experience. Hosted at the food bank, discussions covered several key anti-hunger policy priorities, including funding for [The Emergency Food Assistance Program](#) (TEFAP); the need for the passage of a strong, bipartisan [farm bill](#) that helps farmers and people facing hunger, as well as protects and strengthens nutrition programs; and helping Puerto Rico transition from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to full participation in the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP). In 1981, people living in Puerto Rico were excluded from SNAP and locked into NAP, a capped federal block grant.

That means that for over 40 years, Puerto Rico's exclusion from SNAP has exacerbated poverty and food insecurity for people on the island. When NAP was implemented in 1982, it resulted in an automatic 25% reduction in aid. In addition, the conversation focused on the disparate treatment of Puerto Rico and its exclusion from the USDA's Household Food Security report, underscoring the importance of having the data to better understand the need and inform the strategies to help end hunger.



Above: House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries helped pack food boxes at Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico.

The necessity of a strong farm bill—and its impact on the work of food banks, including Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico—cannot be overstated. In Puerto Rico, the food bank serves the entire island. The tremendous impact it achieves for people facing hunger, including programs addressing seniors, college students and military hunger, is accomplished with limited resources.. Currently, the maximum monthly benefit for people receiving NAP in Puerto Rico averages 41% less than SNAP in the 48 states and Washington, D.C. With inflation, continued food supply chain challenges and increasing poverty, the hardships families face are compounded.

We're inspired to see collaborative efforts and engaged dialogue, as demonstrated at the May roundtable, and we will continue advocating for the passage of a strong farm bill that invests in farm and nutrition programs. Food banks cannot help people facing hunger without the partnership of farmers, producers, growers and retailers—all are integral to our nation's food system.

DEVELOPING AND TESTING NEW TOOLS FOR FOOD BANKS

The work developed and executed by a newly formed cohort of 12 partner food banks will advance network members' ability to deeply engage with their service areas and communities, center neighbor voices, and build capacity to improve access to resources for communities disproportionately affected by food insecurity. Launched in June 2024, with support from an anonymous donor, the cohort gathered in Chicago for an inaugural in-person convening, with nearly 50 network staffers representing the participating food banks. The cohort participants will work with our Access Capacity Services team to co-create, test and refine resources that will support the Feeding America network in implementing the Service Requirement section of the newly adopted agreement among all partner food banks. The next cohort convenings are scheduled for October 2024 and March 2025.

DO YOU KNOW 'WHAT'S COOKING?' WITH FEEDING AMERICA?

During Feeding America's What's Cooking? town hall on May 14, attendees had the opportunity to hear from Linda Nageotte, our president and chief operating officer, along with Feeding America staff, as they shared insights and perspectives about what they are seeing and experiencing—and learning from neighbors—as we all work together to end hunger in local communities. The town hall provided a reaffirmation that by uniting as a nation, food security in America is achievable—and that, collectively, we are making meaningful strides along that path. Click [here](#) to view a recording of the town hall.

FROM THE FRONT LINES

A tip of the chef's hat is in order for the recent graduates of one partner food bank's new course designed to help participants not only learn the art of sauté, but also the tools to obtain gainful employment and achieve financial self-sufficiency.

FOOD BANK HONORS FIRST CLASS OF CULINARY GRADUATES

[FeedMore WNY](#) (Buffalo, New York) celebrated the inaugural graduates of its new [RISE Culinary and Food Manufacturing course](#), part of the food bank's Readying Individuals for Success in Employment (RISE) workforce development program, during a ceremony June 10 at Buffalo State University.

RISE Culinary is a free, 14-week course—including a two-week internship—that offers local adults hands-on experience in a commercial kitchen. Students earn certifications in ServSafe food handling, as well as their Certified Fundamentals Cook certification from the American Culinary Federation.

Cooking and Life Skills

Workforce development programs like RISE Culinary are enriched with life skills and job-readiness training, geared toward individuals with barriers to employment. That means that beyond learning how to bake, baste and sanitize, students receive training on financial literacy, resume writing and job interview preparation.

"I'm amped to go to the next level," said Monica, a Culinary RISE graduate in a [FeedMore WNY video](#). "I plan on doing a restaurant in a few years and that's just going to be exceptional because I've learned so much through this program. The knowledge that I'll need to open my restaurant I'll already have."

To further help students immerse themselves in the program, the food bank offers critical support, such as fuel gift cards or community bus passes to help offset transportation costs, daily hot lunches and bi-weekly access to the food pantry. Additionally, in partnership with a local nonprofit called the Family Help Center, the food bank offers childcare for participants with children. These efforts help remove barriers and ensure accessibility for all who are striving for a better future.

In July 2024, the food bank launched its latest RISE Culinary cohort, which runs through September 13. The RISE workforce development program also offers a free 10-week course and certifications tailored for careers in warehousing and logistics.



Above: Monica (right), a recent graduate of the RISE Culinary and Food Manufacturing course through FeedMore WNY, showcases her skills during a presentation.

Investing in the Power and Potential of People

Ending hunger in America extends beyond distributing meals to neighbors facing hunger. Given its nationwide reach and scope, the Feeding America network is a key resource that can help people forge a path to financial stability, which is intricately linked to food security. Financial stability empowers individuals to make consistent, nutritious food choices, while access to reliable and nourishing meals fosters a foundation for economic success.

By focusing on workforce development, we aim to dismantle systemic barriers hindering economic stability, while simultaneously equipping neighbors with the skills, tools, and opportunities needed for lasting change. Across the country, food banks are actively engaged in workforce development through various programs and partnerships, playing a pivotal role in addressing immediate food needs and empowering individuals with long-term solutions to break the cycle of poverty.

FeedMore WNY is one of 117 network food banks involved in workforce development activities.

AT OUR CORE

FEEDING AMERICA LAUNCHES NEW 'FOOD RESCUE CHALLENGE'

Let's Work Together to Bring More Food to Fridges, not Landfills.

Food rescue is one of the most immediate and effective opportunities to address our nation's ongoing hunger crisis.

Already, Feeding America helps rescue about 4 billion pounds of nutritious food that would otherwise have gone to waste. With your support, we can do more.

[The Food Rescue Challenge](#), launched in June 2024, is our collective call to action for individuals, companies and communities to **prevent an additional 1 billion pounds of good food from being wasted and help people facing hunger.**

Foods that are nearing their sell-by date, appear cosmetically imperfect or are overproduced can benefit the tables of the tens of millions of people in America. By rescuing that perfectly good food from going to waste, we not only help millions of people put food on the table, we reduce the amount of harmful greenhouse gases emitted from landfills.

Support the Food Rescue Fund

To catalyze the Food Rescue Challenge, Feeding America has established a new [Food Rescue Fund](#), **open to corporate partners, philanthropists, foundations and the general public.** The fund's initial goal is to **raise \$50 million** to establish new and deeper partnerships between food manufacturers, retailers, farmers, strategic partners and the Feeding America network. It's important to note, however, that food rescue has always been—and will most certainly remain—a top priority for us. That means that while \$50 million is anchoring the launch of the Food Rescue Fund, we realize that additional investments in this priority area will be needed to address future demand for food.

No one should have to question how they will access their next meal, not when there's such wasted abundance in our country. Are you up for the challenge?

GIVE TODAY TO SUPPORT THE FOOD RESCUE CHALLENGE

The Challenge aims to secure 5 billion pounds of rescued food annually. To increase and scale this growth, we seek to incrementally raise an additional year-over-year investment of \$50 million through the [Food Rescue Fund](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

In the U.S., **92 billion pounds** of food go to waste each year—the equivalent of **145 billion meals.**



WITH GRATITUDE

Special thanks to the following dedicated partners for their generosity in helping build the momentum for the [Food Rescue Fund](#):

- [General Mills](#) – Feeding America founding partner and a Visionary Partner
- [Starbucks](#) – Feeding America Leadership Partner
- Gary and Barbara Rodkin – Gary is the former Feeding America Board Chair and former CEO of [Conagra](#), a Feeding America Leadership Partner

INCREMENTALLY SECURING AN ADDITIONAL 1 BILLION POUNDS OF RESCUED FOOD ANNUALLY WILL HELP FEEDING AMERICA:



Source More Nutritious Food



Alleviate Transportation Costs



Expand Food Rescue Channels



Increase Capacity Across Network



Scale Technology Solutions



SEPTEMBER IS HUNGER ACTION MONTH!

Each September, the Feeding America network celebrates [Hunger Action Month](#) to encourage collective action to end hunger in our country. This year, we're spotlighting the power of partnerships as we aim to have **one million actions taken by passionate hunger-relief supporters like you**. Actions could include hosting a fundraiser, making a financial or product donation, volunteering at your local food bank or pantry or engaging on social platforms, among other ideas.

Key Dates:

- **Hunger Action Month:** September 1-30
- **Hunger Action Day:** September 10
- **[Elevating Voices: Insights Report](#)** for 2024: September 10; The report is our annual, nationally representative survey of the experiences, concerns and policy views of people facing hunger in the U.S.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

- ▶ **Save the Date:** The next installment in our next What's Cooking? series will be the **second annual State of Hunger address with Claire Babineaux-Fontenot**, our chief executive officer. The webinar will be held at 1 p.m. CT Thursday, September 12. We'll be in touch soon with more information on the webinar and registration information.
- ▶ Learn how supporters are taking action in the movement to end hunger in the [Why I Give](#) and [Why I Partner](#) sections of our website new section of our website.
- ▶ 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.



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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.**

