



RESCUING MORE FOOD TO BENEFIT PEOPLE, THE ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY



In the United States, **66 billion pounds of perfectly good food goes to waste each year**, while the painful reality of hunger persists for tens of millions of people. For the millions of people who already faced hunger, the pandemic created a crisis within a crisis. We know 38 million people, including nearly 12 million children and more than five million seniors, faced hunger in 2020. Thanks to federal interventions and the response from the charitable food sector, food insecurity rates as a whole did not increase dramatically in 2020, though it is clear that the impact of the pandemic has disproportionately affected certain communities, such as households with children and communities of color.

The loss of food occurs at every stage of the food production and distribution system—from farmers to packers and shippers, from manufacturers to retailers to consumers. As the largest food waste rescue organization in the U.S., Feeding America is uniquely positioned to rescue this food at each of these stages and help provide it to families facing hunger.

In fiscal year 2021, our network rescued 4.7 billion pounds of good, safe groceries that would otherwise go uneaten. Our three-year priorities include the development and execution of a comprehensive national food sourcing strategy to more efficiently secure as much food as possible and to become a key solution.

PRIORITY

Feeding America is focused on rescuing an abundance of produce. On average, more than 8 million pounds of produce are delivered to food banks weekly. According to ReFED, 17 million tons of fruits and vegetables are discarded on farms or left in fields—wasted food that could nourish families struggling with hunger. In addition to fresh produce, we have strategic sourcing priorities to rescue more lean meats and low-fat dairy, which can help the people we serve better manage nutrition-related health concerns.

IMPACT

Feeding America aims to rescue 9 billion pounds of food annually by 2025 to transform our supply chain, and we are committed to rescuing an abundance of produce. In fiscal year 2021, our network helped provide more than 2.2 billion pounds of produce to families nationwide and we believe we can recover an additional 300 million to 400 million pounds of produce per year. That quantity represents the equivalent of more than 580 million meals we could provide to people facing hunger.

HELP THE PLANET

It is incongruous that 35% of the food grown, processed and transported in this country annually goes unsold or uneaten while millions of our neighbors are food insecure. Reducing food waste is a powerful opportunity to help not only end hunger but save the planet. Each year in the U.S., \$218 billion worth of food is wasted, which:



Generates greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to **37M** passenger vehicles annually



Consumes **24%** of landfill volume*



Uses **14%** global fresh water consumption through the agricultural process**

* Natural Resources Defense Council, Wasted: How America Is Losing Up to 40 Percent of Its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill

** ReFED: <https://www.refed.com/?sort=economic-value-per-ton>

FOOD WASTE IS COMPLEX—AND SOLVABLE

Feeding America works to source millions of pounds of fruits and vegetables each year to help feed people in need.



Rescuing produce has the biggest growth potential for nutritious food recovery in the United States. In addition to our fresh produce priority, Feeding America could potentially recover 300 million to 500 million pounds of dairy and 300 million to 500 million pounds of meat from farms.



Growing retail store donations remains a key priority. Retail has historically been our largest single channel of food. In fiscal year 2021, for the first time ever, we secured more than 2 billion pounds of food through retail donations. We plan to increase overall retail donations by a continued commitment to strengthening our agency network, increase pick-ups at the store level and leverage technology for the greatest impact.



MealConnect is transforming the food-rescue landscape. Our free food donation app—available everywhere for all food businesses—facilitates easy, safe and quick donations from across the food supply chain to our network. In 2021, we evolved the MealConnect platform into an integrated cloud based system with a new produce-sourcing feature set. This innovative technology with mobile capabilities has provided Feeding America network members with a more streamlined experience. It has also decreased access barriers, promoted quicker decision making and enhanced collaborative regional product sharing.

ADVOCATE FOR FEDERAL POLICY AND LEGISLATION TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

Feeding America educates Congress and the Administration about surplus food and food donation. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have an agency agreement to increase the ability of the food industry to donate nutritious food to nonprofits like food banks. USDA is also working to implement food waste pilot programs funded by the 2018 Farm Bill that aim to reduce food waste and increase food donation. EPA's food recovery hierarchy indicates that feeding people who struggle with hunger is the highest-value use of excess food, emphasizing that all good, unsold food should be donated before being considered for any other use.



Visit [FeedingAmerica.org](https://www.FeedingAmerica.org) to learn more about joining us in food rescue to help feed more Americans facing hunger.