

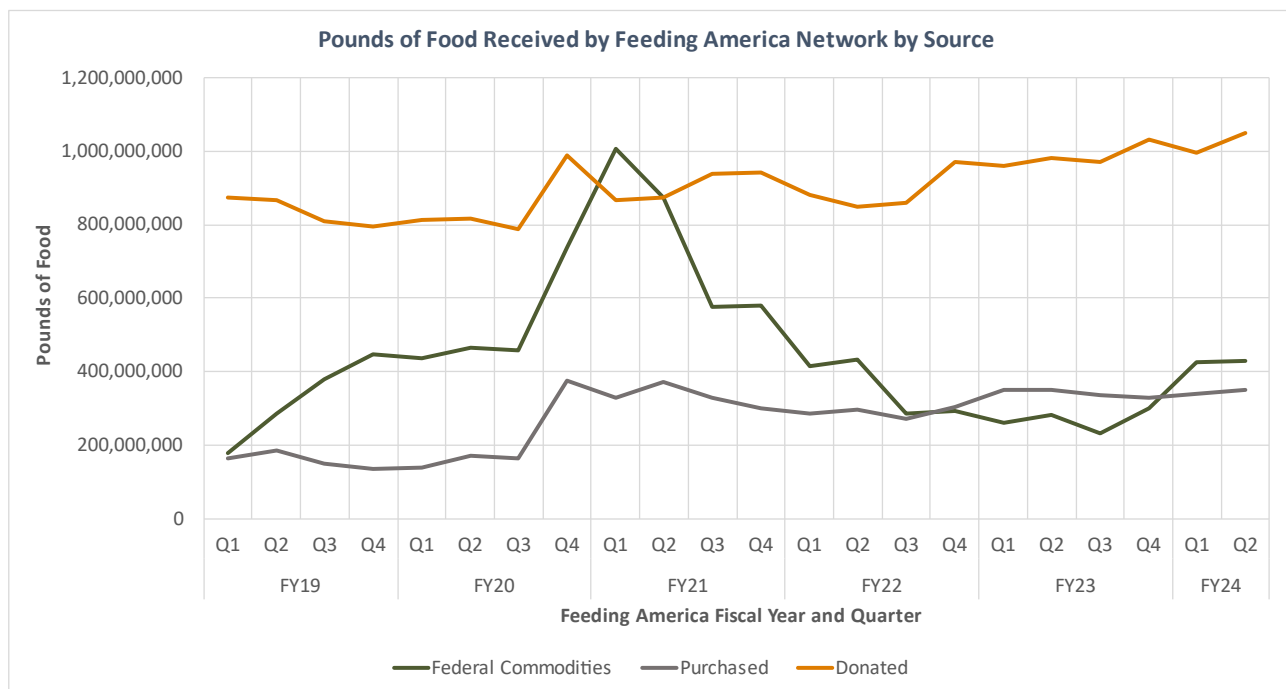
TEFAP & Food Bank Food Supply



In every community across the U.S., people are working hard to provide for themselves and their families. But higher prices for food, housing and other necessities are driving more and more individuals to seek food assistance. This has been exacerbated by the end of temporary COVID-era assistance programs. In 2022, an estimated **44 million people in the U.S. were living in food insecure households**. This is an increase of nearly 31% from the previous year, the highest rate and number since 2014, and the largest one-year increase since 2008.

Food Need Remains High

Feeding America is the largest hunger relief organization in the United States. As a network of more than 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 partner agencies, food pantries and meal programs, 25,000 of which are faith based, we helped provide 5.2 billion meals to tens of millions of people in need last year. In a recent Feeding America survey, around 90% of responding food banks reported seeing demand for food assistance increase or stay the same in February 2024 compared to February 2023. Although inflation has come down, food prices are still higher than last year.¹ In a recent survey of likely voters, more than 8 in 10 respondents said they are concerned about high food prices right now, and 7 in 10 want the government to do more to address food insecurity.²



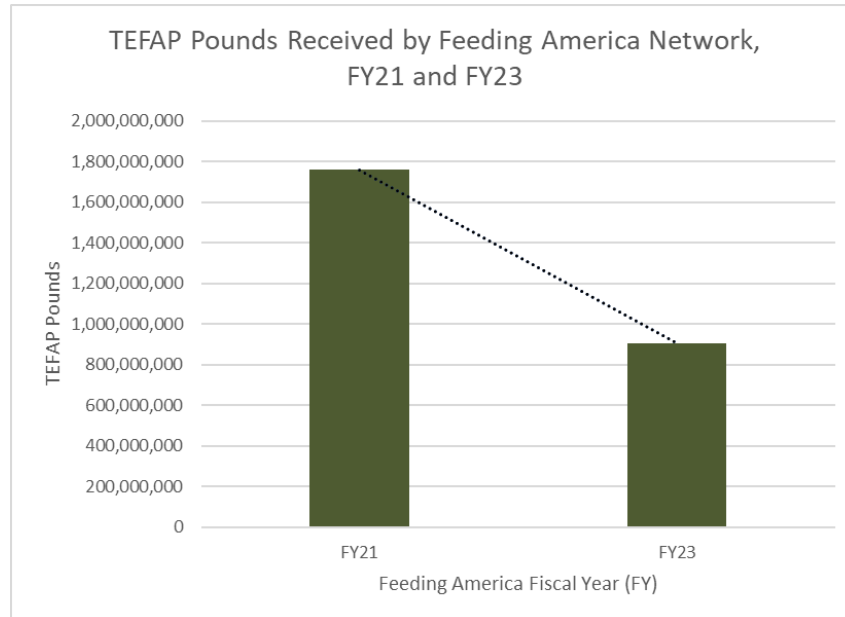
Less Food, More Need: Food banks are receiving less food from federal commodities, including temporary programs. To compensate, food banks have increasingly relied on food purchases—a backstop that is not sustainable.

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Consumer Price Index Summary](#) (January 2024).

² Perry Udem, [“Farm Bill: A National Survey of Likely 2024 Voters”](#) (2023).

Food Supply Impacted by Supply Chain Instability

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a cornerstone of the charitable food sector's food supply. The program provides on average around 25% of the food distributed through Feeding America food banks and local hunger-relief programs.



As COVID recovery TEFAP funding from Congress came to an end, food banks saw a steep decrease in food, sometimes resulting in empty shelves and coolers. Feeding America saw a **48% decline in TEFAP foods** and USDA foods distributed through TEFAP over the last two years (from fiscal year 2021 to 2023), despite actions taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support food banks.

A recent survey found that support for TEFAP is widespread. 93% of likely voters said that TEFAP is an important program, and 85% support increasing TEFAP funding in the Farm Bill.³

Let's Invest in Proven Solutions and Innovations

In the next farm bill, Feeding America calls on Congress to:

- Reauthorize and double annual mandatory funding for TEFAP food purchases, adjusted for inflation.
- Reauthorize and increase to \$200 million annual discretionary funding for TEFAP storage and distribution.
- Reauthorize \$15 million in annual discretionary funding for TEFAP infrastructure grants.

Questions?

Feeding America Government Relations
policy@feedingamerica.org



³ Perry Udem, "Farm Bill: A National Survey of Likely 2024 Voters" (2023).