



Iowa Food Bank Association
Feeding Iowa

2024 Policy Priority

IOWANS FEEDING IOWANS ACT

THE ASK: A \$5 million state appropriation with matching funds provided by the Iowa Food Bank Association (IFBA) network.

IFBA believes policy changes are critical to ending hunger in Iowa. In partnership with our six Feeding America partner food banks, we lead advocacy efforts and track state and federal policies that make us more efficient and effective in serving the more than [238,290 adults, children and seniors](#) facing hunger in Iowa.

Hunger across Iowa is not decreasing. Our food banks and network of over 1,200 pantries and meal sites are seeing record numbers of Iowans seeking food support and nutrition assistance. At the same time, we live in a state with incredible agricultural resources.

Iowa is the breadbasket of our nation, leading the country in the production of many commodities and food processing. Procuring food from within the state is the best way to serve hungry Iowans while bolstering local economies.

The **Iowans Feeding Iowans Act** is a \$5 million state appropriation with matching funds from the Iowa Food Bank network, totaling \$10 million.

The **Iowans Feeding Iowans Act** would fund food banks to purchase Iowa-grown, produced, and/or processed foods and then distribute this food through our network of over 1,200 pantries and meal sites to Iowans in need. This includes procuring a minimum of 20% of food from local farmers (locally-owned producers within Iowa). This act will also provide the opportunity to procure food from Iowa-based manufacturers, retailers, and processors, such as Barilla, Grain Millers, Fareway, Hy-Vee, Edgewood Locker, and Dan & Debbies, to name a few our food banks already work with.

The **Iowans Feeding Iowans Act** would:

- Help fill in the food supply gaps during this extremely high-need, high-inflation time period.
- Utilize the well-established Iowa Food Bank Association distribution network to serve people in all 99 Iowa counties.
- Be matched dollar-for-dollar by participating food banks, doubling the state's impact.
- Be used to purchase food from local farmers and Iowa-based companies, with no administration fee taken by the food banks.
- Allow all of the six Feeding America food banks to purchase directly from local farmers, producers, or processors, with a minimum of 20% of food procured from local farmers (locally-owned producers within Iowa).
- Help food banks purchase highly-desired local foods such as produce, dairy, eggs, and protein as well as other staple items.
- Be easy to administer with funds disbursed to the Iowa Food Bank Association for use by the six-member food banks.
- Allows farmers to better plan their crops knowing there are guaranteed customers for their products.

- Help ensure that Iowans-in-need receive the food and nutrition they need to live healthy and productive lives.

Food Insecurity Exists in Every Iowa County*

238,290 Iowans don't have enough to eat

7.5 % of adults are food insecure

11.3 % of seniors & older Iowans live with hunger

1 in 13 Iowans are food insecure

68,990 children go to bed hungry

42 million meal shortfall annually**

- The face of hunger is changing to where hardworking families with children and those living on fixed incomes struggle.
- Food insecurity contributes to increased healthcare costs of **\$121 per Iowan**.
- Nearly half of Iowa's children are enrolled in free- and reduced-cost breakfast and lunch and suffer a lack of resources at home (40.68% in 2021-2022).
- Seniors must choose between medicine and food, utilities and food, and transportation and food.

*Data from Feeding America's [Map the Meal Gap](#) 2021 study

**Avg cost of a meal in Iowa is \$3.44

The Iowa Food Bank Association is the RIGHT Partner

- The Iowa Food Bank Association is the only food assistance program covering the entire state of Iowa.
- IFBA is comprised of six trusted Feeding America partner food banks each with proven food acquisition and distribution operations focused on serving food insecure Iowans equitably, efficiently, and safely.
- Our network consists of 1,400 smaller frontline nonprofits that serve hungry Iowans in all 99 counties.
- The food banks stock the shelves of pantries in community centers, churches, and schools.
- Our network provides food for a diversity of meal sites, such as homeless shelters, halfway houses, rehab facilities, senior centers, and daycare centers.
- We observe strict food safety protocols from food procurement to handing food to a neighbor in need.

The Iowa food banks and our network have a proven track record supporting this type of partnership. As active participants in the COVID-inspired [Feeding Iowans Task Force](#), led by Lt. Governor Gregg, our network procured Iowa pork, turkey, and beef to feed hungry Iowans and distributed more than 51 million meals in 2020.

The Iowa Food Bank Association and our six Feeding America member food banks currently receive no state funding to fight hunger in Iowa. The need has never been greater with 1 in 7 working Iowans unable to cover the costs of basic needs. By supporting The **Iowans Feeding Iowans Act** our food banks can serve more of Iowa's hard-working families and support Iowa's farmers.

It's a win-win. For more information, please contact Linda Gorkow at linda@iowafba.org.



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