

CHOOSE IOWA REPORT ON FARMS TO FOOD BANKS FY2026 AND FOOD PURCHASING PILOT PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS

Overview of Program

The Food Bank funding was made permanent for FY26 and is now called the Farm to Food Bank Program. Appropriated funds were divided between the six Iowa Food Banks based upon the size of the population served as well as the TEFAP percentages. State investments are leveraged by participating food banks as they must match the state’s investment on a one-to-one (1:1) basis.

\$70,000 was allocated for the Food Purchasing Pilot Program for Schools. Each school building was eligible for \$1,000 up to \$5,000 per district. Applications from 61 schools or school districts requesting a total of \$158,249 was received and 33 schools were selected to receive funding. A mixture of schools across the state, ranging in size from A to 5A were selected, with additional considerations whether schools had purchased local food previously or this would be their first experience in doing so. The School Pilot will conclude at the end of the SFY26 with the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

Eligible Producers/Products

To be eligible for funding, foods must be purchased from a Choose Iowa member or a producer that meets eligibility for membership in Choose Iowa. A complete list of current members is available online at chooseiowa.com/find-local. Food hubs that are Choose Iowa members are also eligible for food purchases within the program. Eligible products for food banks include meat and poultry, dairy products, eggs, honey, and produce. For schools, the list of eligible foods is the same except for milk due to existing federal funding for milk in school lunches.

Reimbursement for Food Banks

The **pilot funds** for food banks appropriated in 2024 have been fully reimbursed.

CHOOSE IOWA FOOD PURCHASING PROGRAM – PILOT FOR FOOD BANKS		
FOOD BANKS	IOWA FOOD AMOUNTS PURCHASED	FUNDING ALLOCATION
HACAP	\$92,000	\$46,000
Food Bank of Siouxland	\$46,221.55	\$22,000
Food Bank of Iowa	\$152,777.92	\$50,000
Food Bank of the Heartland	\$37,169.96	\$18,000
Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$72,441	\$36,000
River Bend Food Bank	\$76,000	\$38,000
DMARC	\$20,104.56	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$496,714.99	\$220,000

The **Choose Iowa Farms to Food Banks Program** was made permanent in 2025 and SFY26 allocations have been awarded to the following six food banks. The food banks worked through food sourcing challenges during the fall during the federal government shutdown. Many local food purchases are made during the active growing season when seasonally fresh produce are available.

CHOOSE IOWA FARMS TO FOOD BANKS ALLOCATIONS AND REIMBURSEMENTS			
FOOD BANK	ALLOCATION	REIMBURSEMENTS	REMAINING
Food Bank of Iowa	\$50,000	0	\$50,000
HACAP	\$40,000	\$38,729.91	\$1,270.09
River Bend Food Bank	\$33,000	0	\$33,000
Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$34,000	\$4,387.05	\$29,612.95
Food Bank of Siouxland	\$18,000	\$3,884.16	\$14,115.84
Food Bank of the Heartland	\$15,000	0	\$15,000
Administrative allocation ¹	\$10,000	N/A	N/A
TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATED	\$200,000	\$4,387.05	\$152,998.88

Reimbursement for Schools

The funds for schools appropriated in 2024 were awarded in May 2025. Purchasing is underway at the schools. A few have already completed their purchases.

FOOD PURCHASING PILOT PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS AND REIMBURSEMENTS FOR SCHOOLS			
SCHOOL (County)	ALLOCATION	REIMBURSEMENTS	REMAINING
Belle Plaine Community School District (Benton)	\$2,000	-	\$2,000
Bondurant Farrar Community School District (Polk)	\$1,000	\$1,000	-
Boone Community School District (Boone)	\$4,000	-	\$4,000
Bosco Catholic School System (Black Hawk)	\$1,750	\$257	\$1,493
Center Point-Urbana Community School District (Linn)	\$1,000	\$1,000	-
Central Lee Community School District (Lee)	\$2,000	-	\$2,000
Clarinda Community School (Page)	\$1,000	\$285	\$714.94
Council Bluffs Community School District (Pottawattamie)	\$5,000	-	\$5,000
Decorah Community School District (Winneshiek)	\$5,000	-	\$5,000
Diagonal Community School (Ringgold)	\$1,000	\$443.17	\$556.83
Dike-New Hartford Community School District (Grundy)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Dike-New Hartford Community High School (Grundy)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Fairfield Community School District (Jefferson)	\$4,000	-	\$4,000
Griswold Community School District (Cass)	\$1,000	\$128.86	\$871.14
Hampton-Dumont Community School District (Franklin)	\$3,750	-	\$3,750
Hinton Community School District (Plymouth)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Holy Family Catholic Schools (Dubuque)	\$1,000	\$692.50	\$307.50
Lone Tree Community School District (Johnson)	\$1,000	\$164.54	\$835.46
MFL MarMac Community School District (Clayton)	\$2,000	-	\$2,000
Missouri Valley Community School District (Harrison)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Montezuma Community Schools (Poweshiek)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000

¹ Up to five percent of the \$200,000 appropriated may be allocated toward the costs of administering the pilot project. This administrative allocation is being applied equally between food banks and schools with \$5,000 to each portion of the pilot program.

Moulton Udell (Appanoose)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
OABCIG Community School District (Ida)	\$1,000	\$560	\$440
Osage Community Schools (Mitchell)	\$1,000	\$823.03	\$176.97
Pella Community School District Marion)	\$4,500	\$3,766.57	\$733.43
Pleasant Valley Community School District (Scott)	\$5,000	\$2,183.48	\$2,816.52
Riceville Community School District Howard)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Sheldon Community School District (O'Brien)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
St. Teresa of Calcutta School (Winneshiek)	\$1,000	\$296.60	\$703.40
Waukee Community School District (Dallas)	\$5,000	\$5,000	-
Webster City School District (Hamilton)	\$5,000	{withdrew}	\$5,000
West Sioux Community Schools (Sioux)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Westwood Community School District (Woodbury)	\$1,000	-	\$1,000
Xavier Catholic Schools (Linn)	\$1,000	\$284.75	\$715.25
TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATED	\$70,000	\$16,885.56	\$53,114.44