

Increase Support for Food Banks

Food banks are the heart of our local communities. WSDA estimates that the need for food banks has nearly doubled since before the pandemic: **nearly 1 in 3 Washingtonians now rely on their local food bank to put food on the table.**

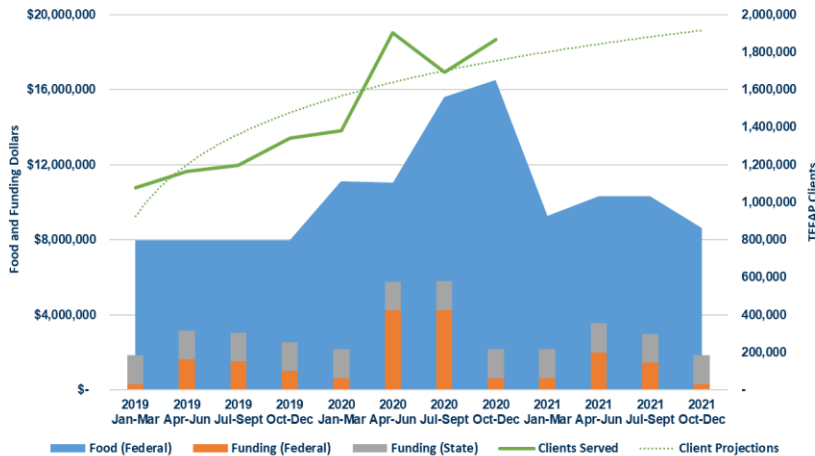


Image courtesy of WSDA Food Assistance Programs, Statewide Snapshot

Pre-pandemic client visits never decreased to pre-pandemic levels.

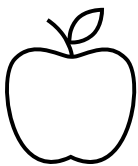
The end of federal trade mitigation and CARES Act funding has resulted in a significant drop in federal support for food, supplies, and PPE.

Food banks report a 70% decrease in food donations from retailers.

Infection rates and the draw down of support from National Guard are creating sharp declines in volunteers.

Previous recessions show that food banks need robust and flexible funds to meet these challenges – now and into the next biennium. Thanks to established partnerships with community programs and local growers, state dollars will foster innovation and efficiency in how we feed our neighbors in need.

Increased support for food banks should support:



Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP)

Expand funding for food bank coalitions to meet local needs for food, storage, and distribution.

\$8 million



Farm to Food Pantry Initiative

Supporting farms and families with grants for food banks to purchase produce directly from local growers.

\$700,000



COVID Response Grants

Flexible funds administered by WSDA so food banks can develop targeted responses to gaps and food supply chain disruptions.

\$14.4 million

For more information, contact:

Claire Lane, Director - Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition | (206) 446 - 0966 | Claire.Lane2@gmail.com

Total request: \$23.1 million in ongoing support for WSDA's Food Assistance Programs



Expand Funding for Emergency Food Assistance Program

EFAP is our state's core funding program for food banks. It provides the funding so that food banks can keep their shelves stocked with food and pay for the equipment needed to safely store and distribute food to people in need. Local food bank coalitions make spending decisions to meet local needs.



Grow WSDA's Farm to Food Pantry Initiative

This initiative provides grants to food pantries to purchase directly from local farms. The wholesale purchasing contracts prioritize highly nutritious produce that is in high demand but rarely seen in food bank donation streams. Participating farms gain experience and build networks that lead to more marketing opportunities. Grants can prioritize farmers of color and tribal food programs, promoting equity and relief for those who have seen greater economic disruptions yet little in COVID relief.



Create COVID Response Food Bank Grants

Flexible, responsive funds are needed to for food banks to effectively and efficiently respond to emerging opportunities that address ongoing hardship and create flexibilities to move food from disrupted supply chains to the emergency food system. Grants can be targeted to communities of color and tribal communities to increase equitable access to nutritious food.