

Fighting Hunger in Minnesota



Expanding Farm to Food Shelf

RISING FOOD INSECURITY

- One in nine Minnesotans, and one in six Minnesota kids, live with hunger.¹
- Across Second Harvest Heartland's service area, distributed pounds are up by 25% since COVID began, with agency partners reporting a 60% increase in the number of people accessing food assistance since March 2020, many for the first time.
- Feeding America estimates that many rural Minnesota counties are experiencing the highest rates of food insecurity due to COVID-19 in MN.¹
- Second Harvest Heartland partnered with McKinsey & Co. to model the demand for food assistance caused by COVID-19, and their projections show that the increase in need will be sustained into 2022.

THE REACH OF MINNESOTA'S FEEDING AMERICA FOOD BANKS

Minnesota's Farm to Food Shelf program enables the state's network of Feeding America food banks, food shelves and meal programs to provide millions of pounds of locally-sourced produce, dairy and protein each year. These in-demand foods are a vital source of nutrition for our neighbors experiencing hunger.

Second Harvest Heartland serves nearly 1,000 agency partner programs such as food shelves and meal program sites across 41 counties in central and southern MN and 18 counties in western WI. Second Harvest Heartland is one of the largest food banks in America by volume, distributing more than 105 million meals and providing 84% of all food sourced by partner food shelves and meal programs in the fiscal year 2020.

Second Harvest Heartland is a member of the Feeding America network of more than 200 food banks nationwide, working in close partnership with the five other Feeding America food banks in Minnesota.

1 in 9 Minnesotans is facing hunger.



In 2019, it was **1 in 11**

¹Feeding America, The Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity, October 30, 2020.

²2017 Minnesota Food Shelf Client Survey

³2017 Minnesota Food Shelf Client Survey

PROGRAM IMPACT

Produce: The Farm to Food Shelf annual appropriation allows us to source 7.6 million pounds of produce from Minnesota farmers each year.

- Since 2015, Second Harvest Heartland has sourced 37 million pounds of 25 different types of produce from more than 120 local growers, which is distributed in all 87 Minnesota counties.
- Farm to Food Shelf has boosted food banks' ability to source a variety of fresh, locally grown produce, representing nearly a third of the total produce that Second Harvest Heartland sources directly from farmers.

Milk: The Farm to Food Shelf annual appropriation allows food banks to purchase competitively priced fluid milk to distribute to food shelves and meal programs across the state, covering milk purchases for about half the year.

- Dairy is the second most requested food of food shelf clients², and the Milk Grant has supported our neighbors experiencing hunger for more than 15 years.
- Last year, Second Harvest Heartland sourced 540,000 gallons of milk, in large part through the financial support of this program.

Protein: In 2020, Second Harvest Heartland sourced 300,000 pounds of protein from local producers or processors, thanks to state aid allocated last spring and summer.

- Meat, poultry and fish are the most requested food from food shelf clients³. As one of the most difficult items for food banks to source, lean protein is often in short supply.
- Second Harvest Heartland's new Brooklyn Park facility, with a temperature-controlled room for repacking bulk protein donations and triple the cold-storage of our old facility, has vastly increased our capacity to distribute more protein.



Farm to Food Shelf Request

Fund Farm to Food Shelf at \$5.9 million for the next biennium:

- Increase annual appropriation from \$1.7 million to \$2.95 million, continuing additional \$1.25 million allocated in 2020 to support food bank's local food sourcing to meet the growing hunger crisis.
- Permanently include language allowing purchase of low-cost protein from Minnesota producers and processors.
- Cover all three commodities in the program, dedicating \$600,000 for milk purchases, to allow food banks flexibility to use funds as effectively as possible.