



Vermonters Feeding Vermonters

Supporting local farmers and fighting hunger during COVID-19

This year, Vermonters Feeding Vermonters (VFV) emerged as a critical tool for addressing the economic fallout from the pandemic. This Vermont Foodbank program purchases locally produced fresh food to distribute to people facing hunger. As rates of food insecurity skyrocketed and local farmers and producers lost their markets, VFV bridged the gap. Thanks to the legislature appropriating Coronavirus Relief Funding to the Vermont Foodbank, we were able to rapidly expand this program to address the unique challenges facing our community.



30% of Vermont households experienced food insecurity at some point since March 2020, a significant increase from 9.6% before the pandemic.*

VFV's original budget for 2020 was \$200,000. Thanks to CARES Act funding, the Vermont Foodbank will spend **\$975K** on local food this growing season.



In the past, VFV has focused solely on produce. This increased funding allowed us to expand VFV to include local meat, dairy, and eggs. Over **\$540K** will be spent on these additional products during the 2020 growing season.

We are facing a hunger crisis unlike anything we've seen in our lifetimes. VFV can remain a key tool to ensure that all Vermonters are fed and that our local farmers and producers can stay afloat. But we cannot continue at this level without additional funding.

We are asking the legislature to appropriate \$500,000 in base funding to Vermonters Feeding Vermonters, helping feed our neighbors facing hunger while supporting local farmers and producers.

* Niles, Meredith T.; Belarmino, Emily H.; and Bertmann, Farryl, "COVID-19 Impacts on Food Security and Systems: A Third Survey of Vermonters" (2020). College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Faculty Publications. 27.
<https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/calsfac/27>



Vermonters Feeding Vermonters

Sharing Vermont's bounty with all

Vermonters Feeding Vermonters is the Vermont Foodbank's local approach to creating healthier communities where everyone has access to fresh, locally produced food.



The Vermont Foodbank and partner agencies work with Vermont farmers and food producers to set a purchase quantity and price prior to the growing season; farmers provide regular deliveries throughout the year.

- **Partnerships with more than 150 Vermont farms and food producers throughout the state**
- **Estimated \$1.6 million stimulus to Vermont's economy in 2020**



Fresh, local food is provided to people facing hunger at 277 community locations throughout the state.

- **20 monthly and bi-weekly VeggieVanGo distributions**
- **215 partner food shelves and meal programs**
- **42 housing sites**
- **55 CSA shares of culturally responsive produce for New American families**



Access to fresh, local food for the 28% of people in Vermont who seek food assistance annually.

- **1 in 4 people in Vermont receive food through the Vermont Foodbank**
- **All 14 Vermont counties are served by the program**

Learn more at feedingvermonters.org

Totals projected for the 2020 growing season





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Vermonters Feeding Vermonters addresses key issues the state faces in working towards a better future for all.



IMPROVED HEALTH FOR VERMONTERS

Recent CDC data shows that **food insecurity costs Vermonters \$82M** in annual health care expenses*

80% of recipients indicated they are **more likely to eat** Vermont grown produce again

FRESH = HEALTHY



SECURITY FOR FARMERS

70% of farmers and producers selling directly to the Foodbank reported a **big or huge impact** on their business stability from being able to sell large, reliable quantities

62% of farmers selling directly to the Foodbank reported **increased jobs/employment** on their farm

FRESH = SECURE



STRONGER VERMONT ECONOMY

\$1 spent on local food contributes an additional **.60¢** to the **local economy****

\$975,000 spent on **Vermont produce, meat, dairy, and eggs** in 2020

FRESH = STRONG



REDUCED ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Vermont produced food stays in Vermont, reducing the **current average** of **1,500** miles food travels from "field to plate"

FRESH = GREEN

Learn more at feedingvermonters.org

* Berkowitz SA, Basu S, Gundersen C, Seligman HK. State-Level and County-Level Estimates of Health Care Costs Associated with Food Insecurity. Prev Chronic Dis 2019;16:180549. https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/18_0549.htm

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