A special report on initiatives to fight childhood hunger in summer 2018
Governor’s Summer Meals Programs

We first launched the Governor’s Summer Weekend Meals Program in 2012, adding the Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program and Mobile Farmers Market Program in 2013. Since then, we have partnered every summer with Governor John R. Kasich’s Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and the Ohio Department of Education to operate innovative, state-funded programs to fill the gaps left by the federal Summer Food Service Program.

Summer Weekend Meals Program

Children that attend Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites during the week don’t have access to those meals on the weekend. Through our Summer Weekend Meals Program, children attending participating SFSP sites can take home a bag of weekend meals that contains two breakfasts, two lunches, and two dinners. In summer 2018, we partnered with 30 SFSP sponsors to distribute take-home weekend meals to about 10,000 children each week, for 600,000 meals total.

Cost Breakdown:
- Food: $908,064
- Packing Materials: $35,690
- Packaging Labor: $132,592
- Delivery: $50,437
- Administrative: $101,410

Total Program Cost: $1,228,194

Cost Per Meal: $1.5134
Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program

The federal Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is designed to replace free and reduced-price school meals during the summer when school is out. But because the federal regulations require that meals be eaten at congregate feeding sites, many children face barriers to accessing those meals. Our Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program targets children in underserved, rural areas where children may not have transportation to access a site, or where SFSP sites don’t exist at all. Children receive a week’s worth of kid-friendly, shelf-stable meals, including lunches for each day of the week, as well as breakfasts, lunches, and dinners for over the weekend. In summer 2018, we partnered with 9 nonprofit organizations to deliver or distribute weekly meal boxes to about 4,400 children each week, for 484,000 meals total.

Mobile Farmers Market Program

We know when children are home for the summer, household budgets can be even more squeezed than usual, and it can be especially challenging for families to afford fresh fruits and vegetables. We operate the Mobile Farmers Market Program to provide produce items, like peaches, cantaloupe, pineapple, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, and sweet corn, to families with children at participating Weekend Meals Program and Rural Delivery Meals Program sites. In summer 2018, we distributed more than 1.1 million pounds of fruits, vegetables, and protein items at just 39 cents per pound.
“Sometimes you just get extra hands, but sometimes you get young people who remind us why we do what we do, and end up making all of us better at it.”

VISTA site supervisor, OU Kids on Campus

“This summer of service has filled me with joy. I wouldn’t have wanted to spend my summer any other way.”

VISTA member, SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen
AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates

We have partnered with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to place AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates at summer meals programs across Ohio since 2009. In our 10th year this summer partnering with CNCS on this initiative, we deployed 69 AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates at 29 summer meals programs throughout Ohio.

Our AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates spent their summers in full-time service, preparing and serving meals, developing and implementing programming, providing nutrition education, recruiting volunteers, tending community gardens, mentoring youth, and much more. They helped their host site organizations serve about 420,000 summer meals to children at risk of hunger. They also helped to serve 86,000 snacks, harvest 16,000 pounds of produce, recruit 460 volunteers and 3,500 new program participants, and institute nearly 50 new processes and procedures to help their sites serve food insecure Ohio kids more effectively.

In addition to all of those results, they also fill a mentorship role for kids in their communities. As one of our sponsors put it, “They’re a strong volunteer army that can meet the needs of the children that attend the program in a personal way. VISTAs make that happen. They are awesome!”

“It is safe to say through the efforts of our VISTA members, our volunteers grew in confidence, knowledge, and experience as much as they grew in tomatoes, cucumbers, and spinach.”

VISTA site supervisor, The University Church
Thank you to our funders and supporters:
1 in 5 Ohio kids live in food insecure households. But thanks to our local partners, we helped fill the gaps this summer for tens of thousands of Ohio kids.

AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate Host Sites
- Camp Chabad
- City of Bedford Heights
- COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley
- Community Action Commission of Belmont County
- Community Action Council of Portage County
- Community Building Institute (CBI) Middletown
- Food for Thought
- The Foodbank, Inc.
- Greater Cleveland Food Bank
- Homeless Families Foundation
- Homeport
- Lodi Family Center
- Mid-Ohio Foodbank
- Neighborhood Ministries
- Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission
- Ohio University Kids on Campus
- The Potter’s House Ministries
- SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen
- SON Ministries - Upper Arlington Lutheran Church
- The University Church
- Thea Bowman Center
- TLC Ministries
- Urban Mission Ministries
- Vineyard Community Center
- Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)
- Washington United Church of Christ
- Washington-Morgan Community Action
- Worthington Resource Food Pantry
- YMCA of Greater Dayton

Mobile Farmers Market Program Sponsors
- COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley
- Community Action Committee of Pike County
- Community Action Organization of Scioto County
- Elgin Local Schools
- The Foodbank, Inc.
- Freestore Foodbank
- Ironton Lawrence County Area Community Action
- Marion City Schools
- Salvation Army of Middletown
- SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign, & Logan
- St. Francis Evangelization Center
- TLC Ministries
- Washington-Morgan Community Action
- Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)
- YWCA of Van Wert County

Summer Weekend Meals Program Sponsors
- Adams-Brown Counties Economic Opportunities
- City of Cleveland
- COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley
- Community Action Committee of Pike County
- Community Action Organization of Scioto County
- Dayton Public Schools
- Elgin Local Schools
- Freestore Foodbank
- Fremont City Schools
- Highland County Community Action Organization
- Ironton Lawrence County Area Community Action
- Kenton City Schools
- Marion City Schools
- Neighborhood Ministries
- New Lexington City Schools
- Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission
- Reynoldsburg City School District
- Ross County Community Action Commission
- Salvation Army of Middletown
- SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign, & Logan
- Stark County Community Action Agency
- TLC Ministries
- Washington-Morgan Community Action
- The Well at Sunnyside
- Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)
- YWCA of Van Wert County

Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program Sponsors
- Adams-Brown Counties Economic Opportunities
- COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley
- Community Action Committee of Pike County
- Country Neighbor Program
- Freestore Foodbank
- Meigs Local School District
- The Potter’s House Ministries
- SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen
- St. Francis Evangelization Center