

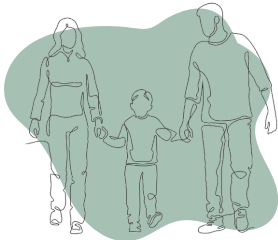
# Prioritizing Food Security for Every Ohioan in the 2026-2027 State Operating Budget



The Ohio Association of Foodbanks (OAF) proudly represents Ohio’s 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,600 member charities, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and supplemental feeding programs. **Thanks to the vital support from the Governor and the Ohio General Assembly, OAF can secure a diverse array of food sources.** While charitable donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and manufacturers provide much of the food distributed by our network, state support is crucial for procuring wholesome foods that are often absent from traditional donation streams such as fresh fruits, vegetables, and proteins. These nutritious items are critical to keeping children, parents, workers, disabled Ohioans, and older adults nourished across all 88 counties.

## WHAT WE DO

We are part of a complex local, regional, domestic, and global food supply chain that faces increasing challenges to its long-term stability. To contribute to a resilient agricultural sector in Ohio – the backbone of Ohio’s economy – we have been partners for nearly three decades in providing outlets for surplus or otherwise unmarketable fruits, vegetables, protein, and dairy items. **Our long-term, public-private partnership with the State of Ohio, Ohio’s farmers, growers, and producers, and Ohio’s foodbanks reduces food waste and supports agricultural partners navigating increasing volatility in their business of feeding the state, the nation, and the world.** The foods we procure through our partnership with the State of Ohio represent some of the most wholesome and nutritious items available through our charitable hunger relief network. We are proud to be the State of Ohio’s partner in:



Supporting Ohio families facing high costs for household expenses like housing, utilities, food, child care, transportation, and medical care.



Promoting access to nutritious foods today and workforce development for a brighter tomorrow for Ohio students, workers, and justice-involved residents.



Providing access to wholesome foods to Ohio’s growing population of older adults, helping them to age in place with dignity and manage chronic conditions.



Partnering for a resilient agricultural industry that can continue to nourish Ohio’s families and Ohio’s future economy.



## WHO WE SERVE

Since the last state operating budget was adopted:



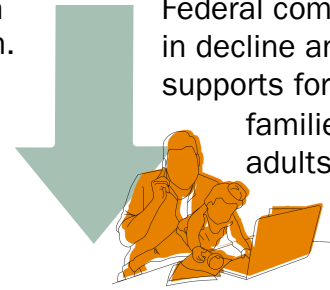
Housing costs have increased significantly.

**25% of Ohio renters spend at least half their income on housing.**



Food prices and pressure on the supply chain remain high.

**Like many other household expenses, food costs are 20% higher than they were four years ago.**



Federal commodities are in decline and other supports for working families and older adults have ended.

The number of people visiting local food pantries across Ohio has surged, reflecting a growing and urgent need for support in our communities. Fortunately, foodbanks are trusted providers that not only prevent hunger today, but contribute to economic security and improved health long-term.

### Future need for help with food



In a statewide survey of food pantry visitors, almost all (89.6%) said they would need help as often or more often in the next 12 months than in the past 12 months, including a third (33.7%) that said they would need help more often.

### The good news—we are ready to help



Food pantry visitors report that they find value in the friendly, kind, and welcoming staff and volunteers in our network.



Food pantry visitors value that foodbanks help them eat healthier foods and provide access to food that support good health.



Many report that help from foodbanks allows them to spend money on other necessities and helps decrease their level of stress.

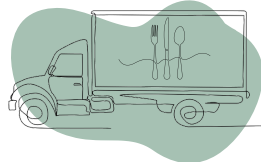
## HOW YOU CAN HELP

The stakes could not be higher for the health, wellbeing, and economic mobility and security of Ohio's families, children, workers, older adults, and people with disabilities, as well as for the farmers and farm workers that sacrifice so much to nourish the state, country, and world.

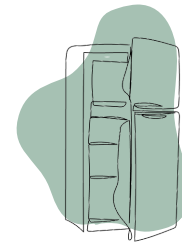
**The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is respectfully requesting \$36.98 million per year over the FY 2026-2027 biennium (\$73.96 million total) to be used for the following:**



**Procuring** fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, and other center of the plate foods.



Safely and efficiently **storing and distributing** foods throughout all of Ohio.



**Building local capacity** to handle and serve healthy and perishable products.

This funding allows us to direct state dollars where they're needed most—feeding Ohio families, supporting children's health, and protecting vulnerable populations. Together, we're leading in anti-hunger and pro-agriculture efforts. Thank you for your support and partnership in fighting hunger alongside our foodbanks and farmers.