



Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank

**Network Forum
September 13, 2023**



Welcome!

- Please enter your name, organization and town in chat
- **Enter questions in the Q&A** and we will answer at the end of each presenter's section
- To view captions for the presentation, click “show captions” in the meeting controls of your Zoom screen.
- Recording and slides will be sent out after the webinar



Today's Agenda

1. Farm Bill and Legislative Update – Jennie Hirsch
2. Listening Sessions Results – Aubrey Roscoe
3. New! Welcome Poster – Miranda Muro
4. Order Ahead Opportunity – Kristen Skulte
5. Neighbor Resources Overview – Chris O'Rourke
6. Community Impact Grants Timeline – Miranda Muro
7. Network Advisory Council— Miranda Muro
8. Thanksgiving Timeline – Chris O'Rourke
9. Grocery Purchasing Program Update – Chris O'Rourke

Community Impact Plan 2023 - 2025



PILLAR ▶ **A**
INCREASE ACCESS

We will increase access to food assistance across the state and provide our neighbors with more fresh, nutritious, and culturally preferred food.

PILLAR ▶ **B**
INVEST IN PARTNERS

We will make a historic investment in our network of community hunger-relief partners to bolster operations, improve the experience of obtaining food assistance, and increase our collective impact.

PILLAR ▶ **C**
CREATE LASTING FOOD SECURITY

To reduce food insecurity for good, we will connect our partners and neighbors with resources that build economic security while pursuing public support to address root causes of hunger.

PILLAR ▶ **D**
EMBODY EQUITY

We will apply the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion to all aspects of our work. We will keep neighbors at the heart of what we do, tapping into the expertise of their lived experience.

Photo: Feeding America



Community Impact Plan Initiatives: Year 1 Progress

- Grant opportunity for partner programs
 - \$1.5M provided to 59 partner programs
- Growing the Network Relations team
 - Complete! Smaller service areas = more support
- Network Advisory Council
 - Formed and meeting since January, 2023



Community Impact Plan Initiatives: Year 1 Progress

- **Expanded Mobile Pantry reach**
 - 113 sites, set schedule, every two weeks
 - Mobile texting service available state-wide
- **Expanded SNAP application assistance**
 - Addition of FT, bilingual position
 - Grant to increase use by seniors
- **Expanded AmeriCorp/VISTA resources**
 - Six positions approved – 1 hired so far



Community Impact Plan Initiatives: Year 1 Progress

- **Walk Against Hunger**
 - Partner programs now get 100% of funds raised
- **Expanded Trainings and Meetings**
 - Monthly calendar of webinars
 - First annual state-wide convening held in June
- **Expanded Resource Offerings**
 - Mansfield Paper Company partnership
 - Community Resources monthly newsletter



**Connecticut
Foodshare**

Our Community, Our Food Bank

Connecticut Foodshare Legislative Advocacy

Jennie Hirsch

Chief of Staff

September 13, 2023





How Are We Advocating?

- Direct engagement with elected officials
 - Press events
 - Regular quarterly outreach, issue-specific outreach
 - Site visits
- Social media & newsletter education pieces
 - Farm Bill 2023
- Elevating voices of those with lived experience
 - White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health
 - Feeding America's Elevating Voices Power Summit
 - Story collection
- Feeding America's PEAC & Feeding America Grantee Cohorts

2023 Farm Bill Activations

Round table and Town Hall style events

Social media educational campaign

Press Conferences

Legislative Outreach

Feeding America DC Fly-In





2023 Farm Bill Priorities

- Enhancing TEFAP impact
- Streamline CSFP
- Strengthen SNAP
- Empower local agriculture

What's Next?



Thank You!



Any Questions?



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Listening to Our Neighbors: Barriers to Accessing Charitable Food

“Once you’ve had a bad experience at a pantry, it makes you not want to go to any pantry. It’s like a bad apple... once you’ve had a bad bite, you don’t want to come back for more.”
– Listening session participant

“It’s the feeling you have when you need help that day and can’t get it.” – Listening session participant

Key Barriers to Accessing Charitable Food



Awareness



Stigma



Physical Access



Individual Experience

“I am a PCA and I used to get 60-70 hours a week and now it’s down to 12 hours a week. We barely make enough a week. My family says, “why aren’t you working harder.” I can’t afford daycare, so the husband takes care of the kids and can’t work. They are on a waiting list for daycare. It can get really upsetting when people are throwing it in your face.”

– Listening session participant

“I can attest to the embarrassment part. I have a neighbor and his dad is well known in town. He’s afraid that someone will see him asking for help.”

– Listening session participant

WELCOME

As a Connecticut Foodshare partner,
this is our commitment to everyone seeking food assistance.

We will:



Treat you with dignity
and respect.



Welcome people from
all backgrounds,
experiences, and
abilities.



Respect your privacy;
we do not share your
personal information.



Not turn you away
because of lack of
identification.



Provide food free of
charge on a
consistent, reliable
schedule.



Not require you to
participate in religious
or other activities for
food.



Provide a clean,
comfortable, and safe
environment.



Offer food that meets
local, state, and federal
safety standards.



Accept your right to
refuse any food
offered.

Questions or Concerns?
Talk to staff at this location. We are here to help.

Order Ahead



OrderAhead



orderahead@ctfoodshare.org

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- [More Information and Resources](#)
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Want to learn more about OrderAhead? Start Here!

An introduction to OrderAhead



More Information and Resources

View a recording of our February presentation on OrderAhead, featuring Connecticut Foodshare Partner Program Caring for Bethlehem Food Bank and **review the slides** from that presentation.

View an online video **demonstration** of the OrderAhead app.

Visit OrderAhead.org, home of the OrderAhead program.

Neighbor Resources

Available on Partner Programs page of our website at: <https://ctfoodshare.org/partner-resources/neighbor-resources/>

- SNAP assistance: (860) 856-HELP
- Mobile Pantry: text **Foodshare** to 85511
- Food Resource guide
- Budget stretching non-food resources
- And more...!



Community Impact Grants – Key Dates

- Year 2 Funding will be available
- Year 2 Application Opens: January 17, 2024
- Year 1 Final Reports Due: January 30, 2024
- Year 2 Applications Due: February 28, 2024



Openings for Network Advisory Council (NAC)

The NAC includes 15 partner program representatives that meet quarterly to offer insight to Connecticut Foodshare staff

Recent topics: online ordering improvements, annual network conference, online platform for agency networking, and more

We are recruiting new members to start in January!

- Application Released: September 14th Network Newsletter
- Application Due: October 31st
- Decisions Announced: Early December





Thanksgiving 2023

- Eligible: pantries, community meals, emergency shelters
- Provided 8+ months of program statistics
- Email sent today (September 13)
- Responses due by October 4
- Email sent week of October 23 w/final allocations and delivery or pick-up date/time
- Please respond to the survey-do not email!



Grocery Purchasing Program (GPP) Update

Most Requested Foods:

1. Frozen chicken
2. Frozen ground beef
3. Frozen fish
4. Cold breakfast cereal (low sugar)
5. Cooking oil
6. Canned fruit (low sugar)
7. Fresh eggs
8. Canned tuna
9. Shelf stable milk
10. Canned chicken
11. Mac and Cheese
12. Pasta (white)

Phasing out - slow movers:

- Canned beans-pinto, black, kidney
- Reduce variety of canned vegetables

Next GPP survey – December

- Will determine GPP offerings for 1st half of 2024

Upcoming Network Partner Webinars and Info Sessions

- Food Bank Fundamentals:
 - Online Ordering In Agency Express – first Thursday of each month
 - Creating a Welcoming Culture – fourth Thursday of each month
- Wednesday Webinars –third Wednesday of each month
- SWAP Office Hours – fourth Friday of each month

Register for upcoming sessions and view recordings of past sessions at ctfoodshare.org/webinars



Connecticut Foodshare Partner Newsletter

Network Partner Updates

Monthly updates to inform, connect, and inspire Connecticut Foodshare network and program partners.



Community Resources Newsletter

Community Resource Updates

Monthly updates to share resources beyond food and help connect people with additional resources to meet basic needs





Today's Presenters

- Jennie Hirsch – jhirsch@ctfoodshare.org, 860-856-4336
- Aubrey Roscoe – aroscoe@ctfoodshare.org, 203-741-9070
- Miranda Muro – mmuro@ctfoodshare.org, 860-856-4345
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