



USDA Invests \$1.7 Billion to Support Farmers, Deliver Nutrition Assistance, and Bolster Rural Economies

Press Release

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WASHINGTON, October 1, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced an investment of \$1.7 billion for purchase of locally and regionally produced foods and domestically produced foods for emergency food assistance. These investments, made possible by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), will help American producers by ensuring they have the certainty of access to local and regional markets as well as the financial benefits that come with selling directly to institutions. With these purchases, USDA is at the same time ensuring American children and families in need have access to healthy food at schools, child care facilities and emergency food providers.

“The investments USDA is announcing today provide immediate and long-term assistance to American farmers, families, and communities,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “By delivering food from domestic producers to schools, child care facilities and emergency feeding organizations, we’re securing local and regional markets for those farmers and ensuring our students, young children and neighbors in need are getting nutritious, reliable meals. These types of investments keep local economies strong and help build resilient food systems with lasting impact.”

Many of these initiatives build on previous investments in local and regional food systems that have helped many farmers find new markets and recover from supply chain disruptions. Local and regional commercial opportunities are especially important for small- and mid-sized farming operations in the aftermath of natural disasters. These funds respond to pre-existing needs that Hurricane Helene has exacerbated and provide an early foundation for future disaster assistance and long-term recovery efforts.

With funding made available from the CCC, USDA is providing:

- \$1.2 billion to support local food purchases with schools, child care facilities, food banks, and other institutions; and
- \$500 million to purchase domestic commodities for emergency food providers.

Local Food Support

USDA is providing \$1.2 billion for local food purchases that food banks, schools, and child care facilities will integrate into their meals for the coming year. This funding builds on previously provided local food support and creates new marketing opportunities for small- and mid-sized producers and food businesses. Past funding has provided much needed assistance to schools and food banks as they grapple with acquiring enough food to meet the needs of their recipients. Continued investment in local purchasing allows producers to expand, invest in infrastructure, and solidify new connections that support resilient regional food systems while providing healthy products to food recipients.

Of the funding, \$500 million will be made available for states, territories, and Tribal nations to purchase local foods for emergency food providers and underserved communities, while another \$500 million will allow school meal programs to make local food purchases. For the first time, USDA will also provide \$200 million in funds specifically for child care facilities, which face similar challenges purchasing food as schools.

This builds on USDA's popular [Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program](#) (LFPA) and [Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program](#) (LFS), both of which were created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthened local relationships between producers and their communities, providing new markets for producers and jobs and opportunities in local communities.

Support for Emergency Food Providers

USDA is providing \$500 million to purchase domestic commodities for emergency food providers like food banks and food pantries. This latest round of funding, in addition to the nearly \$2 billion previously provided in 2022 and 2023, will allow states to order American-grown commodities from USDA for emergency food providers. These investments and several other USDA actions to [support emergency food providers](#) will help ensure no one in America goes without the nutrition they need. Past domestic commodity support has enhanced food deliveries to emergency providers fighting food and nutrition insecurity while supporting American agriculture, and these funds continue that investment.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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