

# Your Investments in Action

Summer 2021  
Impact Report



  
**FEEDING**  
**AMERICA**

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

## PROVIDING MEALS IN TIMES OF NEED

As summer rolls on and the U.S. continues to return to life with eased and fewer restrictions, people across the country are welcoming life's simple joys, from beaches and barbecues to the comforting embrace of family and friends.

This also marks the season when millions of children in our country are worried about where their next meal is coming from. **Feeding America estimates that 13 million children in the U.S. may face food insecurity in 2021** due to the pandemic. And no child should ever go hungry.

As neighbors continue to demonstrate resilience and strength in the wake of the pandemic, the Feeding America network of food banks is committed to helping make sure families facing hunger have the nourishing meals they need. This summer, the Feeding America network expects to provide approximately **54 million meals to children and families through summer feeding programs**. That's as many as 2020—due in part to our advocacy work supported by donors and partners like you—and more than double the number from 2019. In addition, we look forward to working with lawmakers to advance policies that will help keep children nourished.

Your partnership helps us raise awareness and support to meet the urgent need among our most vulnerable population: our children. For that—and all you do in the fight against hunger year-round—we extend our gratitude.

Your partner in fighting hunger,



Claire Babineaux-Fontenot  
Chief Executive Officer  
Feeding America



Babineaux-Fontenot speaks at Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico, a Feeding America network member.

## THE FEEDING AMERICA NETWORK HELPS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, LIKE REBECCA

For more than a year, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been devastating for millions of people across the country, including neighbors like Rebecca, who suddenly was faced with making ends meet with no source of income. A challenge made even more dire as she cares for two of her grandchildren.

Before the pandemic, Rebecca worked as a waitress and bartender at a restaurant in Missouri. As COVID-19 spread and the stay-at-home order was issued, the restaurant closed and she was let go.

"I don't know when I'll be able to go back," Rebecca said.

With little-to-no money, increased grocery prices and two grandchildren who depend on her for their meals, Rebecca started visiting food pantries supported by Southeast Missouri Food Bank and its partners, all part of the Feeding America network. The food she receives lasts her family about two weeks.

"It comes in very helpful and I truly appreciate everything we get," she said.

"[The food from the pantries] comes in very helpful and I truly appreciate everything we get."



Rebecca receives nourishing meals to feed her family, including two grandchildren, thanks to donor support of the Feeding America food bank network.

DUE IN PART TO THE PANDEMIC,  
**13 MILLION CHILDREN**  
IN THE U.S. MAY NOT KNOW WHERE  
THEY WILL GET THEIR NEXT MEAL.



## PROVIDING MEALS TO OUR MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION: CHILDREN

Feeding America estimates that 13 million kids may face food insecurity in 2021 due to the pandemic. That means ending child summer hunger is more necessary than ever—and the food bank network is committed to raising awareness and support to do just that. **With your help, the Feeding America network expects to provide about 54 million meals to children and families through summer feeding programs.** That's as many summer meals as 2020 and more than double the amount from 2019.

# THE IMPACT OF YOUR GENEROSITY

Every year, the Feeding America network helps provide meals to millions of neighbors in the U.S. Along with supporters like you who are committed to helping end hunger, member food banks are able to chart a lasting path to an America where no one is hungry.

## USDA PROVIDES \$1 BILLION IN HUNGER RELIEF

The Feeding America food bank network advocated to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for additional nutrition investments to support people facing hunger. Feeding America is grateful for USDA's recent announcement to provide **\$500 million in additional The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** food purchases, \$100 million in grants to support food bank capacity, and \$400 million in local and regional purchases through state agencies. Feeding America estimates USDA's announcement will help provide at least 750 million additional meals for neighbors in need. We project that during 2021, approximately 42 million people could experience food insecurity due in part to the ongoing economic fallout from COVID-19.

## LEVERAGING HEALTH CARE PARTNERS TO ADDRESS FOOD INSECURITY

Member food banks continue to engage health care partners to collaboratively address the intersection of food insecurity and health. In May, 14 network food banks began participating in an expansion of the **Food is Medicine (FIM) program**, launched in 2019, and are **partnering with local hospital systems with the goal to screen over 100,000 patients for food insecurity and connect neighbors in need to nutrition resources.** In March 2021, Feeding America released a **FIM final project report** from the initial two-year FIM project that highlights key learnings and will serve to support network food banks in developing and expanding effective partnerships with health care organizations.

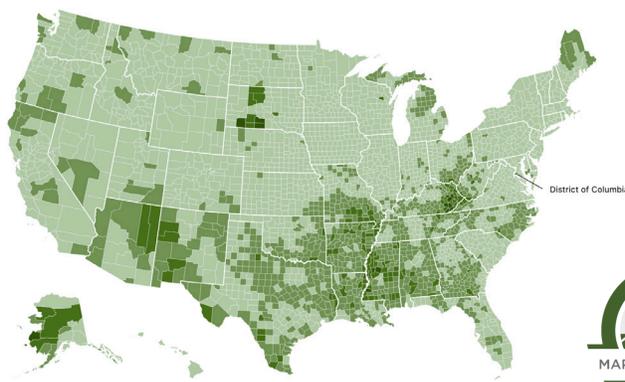
### Food Insecurity in The United States Before COVID-19

Click or touch on the map, or use the search bar to start exploring

Search  
State, County, or Food Bank

Demographic	Location	Map Type	Year
Overall	Child	National	
		County	District
			2019
			2018
			2017

The United States



## DID YOU KNOW?

Feeding America's **Map the Meal Gap**, an annual research study to improve our understanding of food insecurity and food costs at the local level throughout the United States, is among this year's **American Association for Public Opinion Research award winners.**

*Map the Meal Gap* has been produced by Feeding America for the last 11 consecutive years, and since the start of the pandemic has allowed us to rigorously project how food insecurity levels may be changing.

## STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK THROUGH STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

To help network members plan for their futures and materially impact food insecurity in their communities, Feeding America is providing **\$2.5 million in member grants to engage skilled practitioners who can provide customized services in areas in which members are facing acute needs right now.** Areas of focus include strategic planning, operations assessment, fundraising planning, and other strategic capacity-building priorities. These member grants are part of Feeding America's CHARGE 2021, a six-month initiative to support food bank leadership teams as they navigate opportunities and challenges this year.

## IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH ON FOOD AND HEALTH EQUITY

Food insecurity and mental health share a bilateral connection—mental health and well-being can be worsened by food insecurity, whereas food insecurity can also be worsened by mental health conditions. **Feeding America is collaborating with Mental Health America (MHA) to raise awareness about mental health conditions and their connection to food and health equity.** **A Closer Look: Spotlight on Mental Health**, in collaboration with MHA, takes a closer look to learn about the link between mental health, food and equity, as well as actions you can take to advance health equity.

### NEIL BOOK WHY I SUPPORT FEEDING AMERICA

Tucked away in a diverse New York neighborhood are the defining moments of Neil Book's life.

Raised by a teacher and an entrepreneur, he comes from a tight-knit family. As a child, Neil couldn't personally relate to experiencing hunger, but he could recall having friends sleep over for weeks at a time because their living situations weren't stable.

Neil grew up as the oldest of three boys, yet the youngest was his hero. At an early age, his brother, Douglas Book, was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy. Through his compassion and understanding, Doug has led a life of service. Now as a guidance counselor in New Jersey, he helps kids who are often below the poverty line.



Above: Neil Book. Below: Douglas Book and his children

After making a personal gift to the **Wheels Up/ Meals Up fundraiser** during COVID-19, Neil became familiar with Feeding America. His eagerness to engage was fueled by his childhood friends and the kids who are inspired and aided by his brother.

As the CEO of Jet Support Services, Inc. (JSSI), Neil hosted a company fundraiser that has contributed nearly 200,000 meals to our neighbors facing hunger. Family is oftentimes our foundation. In Neil's case, his family is the cornerstone for his compassion.

## FROM THE FRONT LINES

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, we launched a COVID-19 Pulse Survey to identify critical gaps in funds, food, volunteers and other resources as experienced by network food banks. Each month, food bank leadership provided information about their immediate needs and long-term trends. The survey responses helped inform Feeding America's crisis response efforts, including the allocation of COVID-19 Relief Grants, supply chain distribution and in-kind resources.

Teams across Feeding America have also used survey responses to inform media interviews, partner with President Biden's "Mask Up for 100 Days" initiative, advocate for National Guard support at member food banks, and advise the USDA on how to spend \$1 billion in TEFAP funds. We received invaluable real-time information and insights from on-the-ground food bank leadership, including the following:

"We've heard several times now how this is the first time a family has had to turn to our network for help in getting food for their family. It is so rewarding to know we can make a difference at a time when our country needs our help."

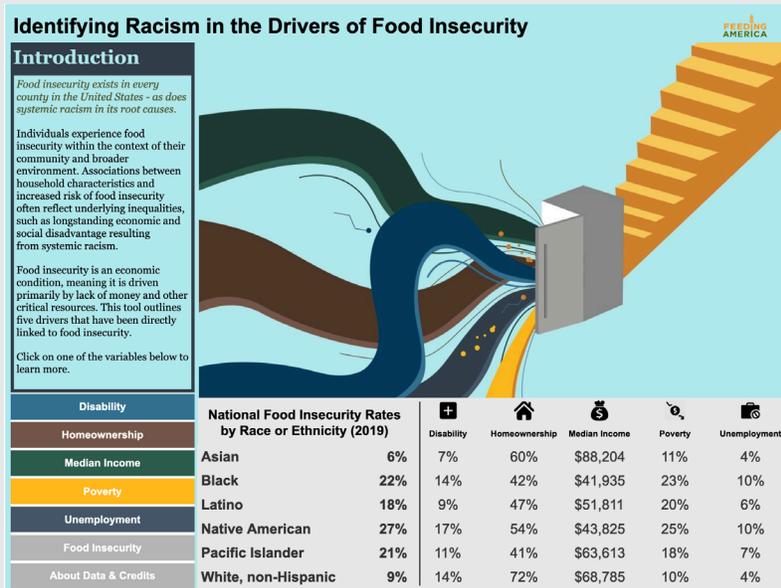
"I have become even more convinced that to truly help people in need, we need the entire community involved: government, nonprofits, corporations, food banks, food pantries, agencies, etc."



# AT OUR CORE

## Addressing Systemic Racism’s Impact on Food Insecurity

Food insecurity exists in every county in the U.S.—as does systemic racism in its root causes. To dig into how systemic racism drives disparities, **Feeding America released in May the racial disparity dashboard, Identifying Racism in the Drivers of Food Insecurity**. The dashboard is designed to support Feeding America, the food bank network and the public in understanding disparities in the following drivers of food insecurity by race or ethnicity: disability, homeownership, median income, poverty and unemployment. Each of these variables align with Feeding America’s **Map the Meal Gap** and are examined among Asian, Black, Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander and white individuals.



## IDENTIFYING RACISM IN THE DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY DASHBOARD

The dashboard allows for analysis at multiple levels—national, state, food bank service area and county—and is published on the **Tableau Foundation’s Racial Equity Data Hub**.

To learn more about the dashboard, including the development process and the importance of using disaggregated data in our work, check out the Feeding America blog post on Tableau’s website: <https://tabsoft.co/3rxqtrj>.

Feeding America Proudly Supports HungerMitao Month, a National Campaign Conducted Annually During August, Celebrating the Month of India’s Independence.

The HungerMitao initiative is a volunteer-driven grassroots movement focused on raising awareness about hunger in the USA, improving community engagement, as well as channeling resources and contributions of the Indian American community to fight hunger through the Feeding America network of food banks. The name translates to “wipe out hunger” and it is the mission of HungerMitao to do just that. Launched in North Texas in 2017, the movement has enabled more than 35 million meals for Feeding America and food banks in North Texas, Houston, New York City, Atlanta, and Seattle.

If you are interested in engaging with this initiative, please contact Melissa Westbrook at [mwestbrook@feedingamerica.org](mailto:mwestbrook@feedingamerica.org).



# WITH GRATITUDE

Feeding America estimates that 13 million kids may face food insecurity due in part to the pandemic—making ending child summer hunger more necessary than ever. With your support, the Feeding America network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs expects to provide approximately 54 million meals to children and families through summer feeding programs. Thank you for partnering with us in our mission to end hunger—not only this summer, but year-round—and providing nourishing meals to neighbors in need.

## WAYS TO ENGAGE

▼ **September is Hunger Action Month®**  
The Feeding America network's nationwide awareness campaign designed to inspire the public to take action on the issue of hunger. Whether donating, volunteering or raising awareness on social media, every action helps advance our mission to end hunger.

▼ **Check out Feeding America's "Elevating Voices, Ending Hunger" podcast series** (available on [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#)), featuring change makers and everyday leaders disrupting the status quo to end systems of inequity that drive food insecurity in the U.S.

▼ **Consider continuing your commitment to hunger relief with a gift to Feeding America in your estate plan.**  
For more information, contact Jessica Noe at [plannedgiving@feedingamerica.org](mailto:plannedgiving@feedingamerica.org) or 312.641.5593.



161 North Clark Street  
Suite 700  
Chicago, IL 60601

1627 I Street NW  
Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20006

800.771.2303  
[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)

*Feeding America is a nationwide network of food banks that feeds more than 40 million people through food pantries and meal programs in communities across America and leads the nation in the fight against hunger.*

**Support Feeding America and help solve hunger.  
Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate.**