

\$30 Million Investment in Food Pantry Network

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<http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/farm-family-dinner-s5.jpg>



Money to help connect producers and processors with those in need of food in rural communities, urban centers, Tribal Nations, and Wisconsinites in every corner of our state.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today, together with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), announced a yearlong investment of \$30 million in the state’s two largest hunger relief organizations. This announcement brings the governor’s total investment in food security to \$55 million over the course of the pandemic.



“In a state that grows some of the finest products in the world, no kid or family should go hungry,” said Gov. Evers. “As the pandemic continues to affect food security, this investment will help increase access to locally grown and processed food across our state so we can keep working together to ensure every Wisconsin family has food on the table and shelves are stocked.”

The \$30 million will be used to ensure food-insecure residents in rural communities, urban

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centers, Tribal Nations, and Wisconsinites in every corner of our state receive much-needed hunger relief. To help achieve this goal, Gov. Evers is building on the strong partnership established last year with Hunger Task Force and Feeding Wisconsin to deliver these resources across the state. Through this program, each feeding organization will be eligible for \$15 million to purchase food resources and may use up to \$5 million to invest in storage, distribution, and cover transportation costs.

“Governor Evers has continued to invest in food security in Wisconsin and has already helped connect producers and processors with those in need of food,” said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. “With this dedicated funding for the Food Security Initiative, dollars will be used to purchase Wisconsin products wherever possible. Through this program, Governor Evers is strengthening Wisconsin’s food security networks and investing in our local Wisconsin farmers and processors.”

Today’s \$30 million announcement for the Food Security Initiative builds upon \$25 million in investments by Gov. Evers to the Food Security Initiative in 2020. Funded through federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, through these investments, Gov. Evers has been directing COVID-19 relief dollars to both feed Wisconsin’s food-insecure families and help Wisconsin food producers find markets for their products during this time of economic volatility.

“We are grateful to Governor Tony Evers for allocating ARPA funds to further the work of the Food Security Initiative,” said Stephanie Jung Dorfman, Executive Director of Feeding Wisconsin. “In 2020, this initiative supported increased infrastructure capacity and the purchase of over 6.2 million pounds of food. In total, Feeding Wisconsin’s network provided 86 million pounds of food to Wisconsinites in fiscal year 2021 – an increase of 75 percent over 2019. With this announcement, we can build on these efforts supporting local Wisconsin and Tribal producers while distributing nutritious and culturally meaningful food to our friends and neighbors.”

“Through the Food Security Initiative, Hunger Task Force deployed a fleet of 13 refrigerated trucks and seven refrigerated cargo vans accompanied by fork trucks, pallet jacks and commercial grade coolers as far north as Red Cliff, and south as Kenosha,” said Sherrie Tussler, Executive Director of Hunger Task Force. “We also strategically purchased foods from family farms and small food producers in Wisconsin to assure their solvency during difficult supply chain issues. With this yearlong investment, we are proud to assist the Evers administration to support farmers and food producers while we work to end hunger in local communities.”