



USDA Announces Resources to Improve Emergency Food Assistance Programs and Infrastructure

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Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the availability of resources to strengthen the capacity of the Nation's emergency feeding network to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of people who are turning to food pantries and soup kitchens to feed their families. Up to \$6 million in grants is available for food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens to improve and expand the infrastructure.

"The Obama Administration has proposed important measures to combat hunger in America and to assist food insecure households - especially food insecure children," said Vilsack. "These grants will help to ensure that food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens have the equipment and infrastructure necessary to provide healthy, safe food to America's families in need during challenging economic times."

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) plans to award up to \$6 million to emergency feeding organizations, such as food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens, participating in the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). At least \$3 million is expected to be awarded for projects that improve the emergency feeding infrastructure in rural communities. Projects that benefit or serve Native American communities will receive priority consideration.

Among other activities, grantees can use funds to improve the tracking, collection, storage, distribution and transport of time-sensitive and perishable foods; develop or maintain computerized systems for tracking foods; improving the provision of recovered foods to food banks; and repairing and expanding facilities, equipment or appliances to support hunger relief. Funds can also be used to identify new donors and emergency food providers or to provide outreach to persons in need of food assistance.

TEFAP, administered by FNS, provides USDA-purchased food and administrative funds to States for further distribution to organizations such as food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens. These organizations provide food assistance to needy families across the country in the form of prepared meals or as a bag of groceries that families take home and prepare themselves.

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