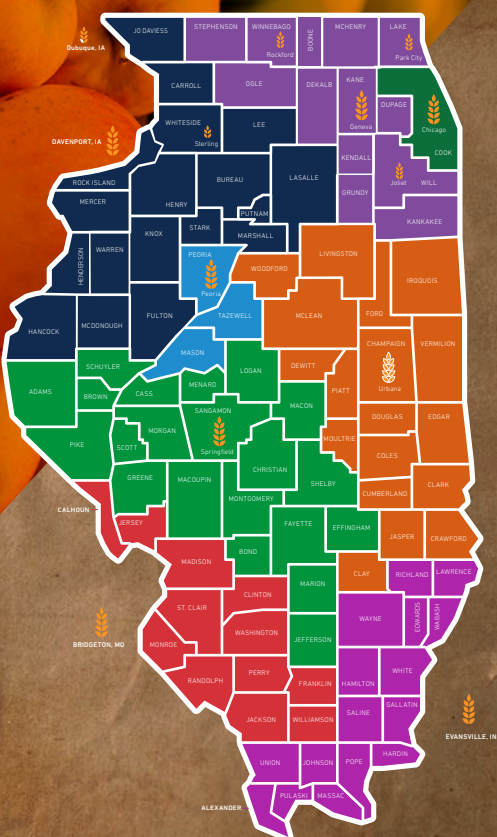


# Farmers Feeding Illinois

## Farm to Food Bank Initiative

# HOW DOES IT IMPACT YOU

[WWW.FEEDINGILLINOIS.ORG/FARMERS](http://WWW.FEEDINGILLINOIS.ORG/FARMERS)



### Food Bank Service Map

The Feeding America network is the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, working to connect people with food and end hunger. See the map for food bank locations near you.

- Food Bank Main Facilities
- Central Illinois Foodbank
- Eastern Illinois Foodbank
- Greater Chicago Food Depository
- Northern Illinois Food Bank
- Peoria Area Food Bank
- River Bend Foodbank
- St. Louis Area Foodbank
- Tri-State Food Bank
- Food Banks' Branch Locations
- Food Banks' Partner Distributions Organizations

### What is a Food Bank?

Did you know a food bank is different from a food pantry? A food bank is a non-profit that safely stores millions of pounds of food that will soon be delivered to local food programs, like a food pantry. Food banks are all different sizes and the food they store is donated from local neighbors, retailers, grocery stores, and restaurants. To get the food into the hands of the community, food banks hire drivers to make the deliveries. Every food bank serves a specific area that varies in size. No matter how long or short the drive, every food-bank is committed to ending hunger in their communities.



### Who is a Friend of the Food Banks?

A Friend of the Food Banks is any person, farm, or business selling or donating product to a local food bank or food pantry within the Feeding Illinois network.


### How to Get Involved?

Are you interested in becoming a Friend of the Food Banks? If your farm or organization would like to learn more about supporting this program, send us a message and we'll get you connected.

Contact us at  
[www.feedingillinois.org/farmers](http://www.feedingillinois.org/farmers).

Join our Farmers Feeding Illinois Program as we build a sustainable program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Feeding America, and other partners.





## Farmers Feeding Illinois

Farmers Feeding Illinois is a program connecting an array of statewide Agri-sourcing initiatives in support of Feeding Illinois Food Banks and their network of community agencies. The Program encompasses initiatives to increase the supply of specialty crops, meats, dairy, eggs, and any other edible agricultural products - fresh or processed - throughout our state's emergency food system. Through private and public partnerships, Farmers Feeding Illinois is focused on engaging farmers and the entire agricultural sector to improve the availability and accessibility to nutritious, locally sourced foods for Illinois neighbors in need.

## Partners

The Farm-to-Food Bank Initiative is a collaborative effort between Feeding Illinois, the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Specialty Growers Association, the Prairie Research Institute at the University of Illinois, Illinois Farmers Market Association and University of Illinois Extension.



## Farm to Food Bank Initiative

The Farm to Food Bank Initiative seeks to connect food banks with farms to purchase products like fruits, vegetables, cheese, milk, meat, and eggs directly from farmers. This is a unique opportunity to identify and build a long-term market and infrastructure for Illinois farmers and Illinois food banks.

However, to build a viable system, we need to know what kind of infrastructure improvements are needed, what crops are available, which farms are interested, and what costs farmers face to get products delivered? We want to hear directly from farmers because you have the most accurate perspective.

## What Are We Doing?

Through a producer survey, a series of focus groups, and implementation of pilots across the state, the program partners look to uncover and overcome the current barriers farms and food businesses face to supply fresh food produced in Illinois to Illinois residents with as little waste as possible.

Based on the recommendations and data, we hope to build a long lasting, sustainable, state-funded program that would create a network of farms working directly with food banks. Such a program would increase food access, economic dollars within the state, profitability for Illinois farmers, community revitalization, and reduce food waste.

Objectives include:

- Collection of data on surplus food in Illinois
- Evaluate logistical opportunities and challenges
- Provide farmers with additional end markets for commodities
- Increase food security
- Reduce food waste
- Keep products, food, and dollars in Illinois
- Create a roadmap for a statewide farm to food bank program

## What Are We Buying?

We are looking for fruit, vegetables, cheese, milk, meat, eggs, and more. We would like your excess product and/or seconds.


### What is a Second?

Seconds are produce items that are cosmetically imperfect in shape, size, or uniformity or are too ripe to meet the shelf life needs of your market. Seconds are also called No. 2 grade or commercial grade. Produce that is rotten, unsafe, dehydrated or near the end of its shelf life is not a second and it should not be sold.

Check out our produce standard guide or inquire about the items we are looking for at [www.feedingillinois.org/farmers](http://www.feedingillinois.org/farmers).

## Can I Donate?

Yes, we will continue to take donations. Any food product that doesn't qualify as seconds can be donated to the food pantry and will still qualify for a tax exemption. To learn more about tax exemptions, visit A Farmer's Guide to the Enhanced Federal Tax Deduction for Food Donation at [bit.ly/NRDCfooddonation](http://bit.ly/NRDCfooddonation).



[www.feedingillinois.org/farmers](http://www.feedingillinois.org/farmers)