



Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank

CRCOG Human Services Council **September 19, 2023**

About Us

Connecticut Foodshare is the only Feeding America affiliated food bank serving Connecticut.

MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA



Our Mission

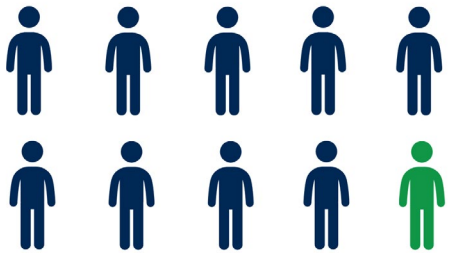
To deliver an informed and equitable response to hunger by mobilizing community partners, volunteers, and supporters.



Hunger In Connecticut

Hunger In Hartford County

1 in 10



nearly 400,000 people are food insecure



nearly **90,000 children**

Nearly 100,000 people; more than 24,000 children.



How We Work

Food Sources



Government Commodities:
(TEFAP / CT-NAP)
Food Industry Donations
Farms



Connecticut Foodshare



Volunteers sort and pack
the food at our facilities
across the state.



Partner Programs



Food is distributed to
pantries, meal programs,
and mobile food
pantries.



Our Neighbors



Food is provided to our
neighbors throughout
Connecticut.



Listening to Our Neighbors:

Barriers to Accessing Charitable Food

To better understand barriers to accessing food assistance across the state, Connecticut Foodshare hosted a series of 13 listening sessions with neighbors from fall 2021 through spring 2023. These listening sessions included over 100 participants at Connecticut Foodshare partner programs and community partners in Bridgeport, Bristol, Canaan, Hartford, Meriden, Naugatuck, New London, and Waterbury. Several sessions included Spanish-speaking translation. Each listening session had participants respond to barriers to accessing charitable food that Feeding America identified through their extensive research.

Key Barriers to Accessing Charitable Food



Awareness



Stigma



Physical Access



Individual Experience



Awareness

- **Some community members are not aware of pantries or do not know when or how they operate**
- **Participants commented on the difficulty to access and complete paperwork for public benefits**





Physical Access

- Limited/fixed pantry opening times make it difficult or impossible for clients to access help
- Participants commented on the difficulty to access and complete paperwork for public benefits
- Lack of transportation options to get to pantries
- Difficult for disabled community members to access pantries
- Language barriers for non-English speakers



Stigma

- **People feel embarrassed or ashamed to visit a food pantry**
- **Lack of anonymity**
- **Pantry intake paperwork is extensive, intrusive, and raises fears of losing other benefits**





Individual Experience

- **Poor treatment at pantries is noticed, and matters**
- **Clients are appreciative of pantries where staff and volunteers are welcoming, respectful, and helpful**
- **Lack of variety in food choice**
- **Allergies, dietary preferences, and culturally preferred foods**

Partner Programs

We support our 500 partner programs with food and help them ensure strong operations so they can focus on providing a safe, welcoming and dignified experience for our neighbors.



100+ Mobile Food Pantries



Text “Foodshare” to 85511 for locations and times near you!



24,000+ households visit our mobile food pantries each month to stretch their budgets and help keep food on their tables.

SNAP Outreach

Last year we helped 1,681 households apply for SNAP benefits, resulting in 1.4 million meals for our neighbors.

call our team

860-856-HELP



Krista told us that the first treat her children asked for when they shopped with their benefits card was the fresh raspberries she couldn't afford before.

Our Impact



for our neighbors

Statewide



**10.3 million meals
In Hartford County**



How You Can Help Neighbors

Share

Our SNAP Outreach line with people seeking help: 860-856-4357 (HELP)

Our Mobile Pantry text information service "Foodshare" to 85511

Our guide to www.ctfoodshare.org/OtherFoodResources

Refer

Town residents to local pantries, recommending they call 211 Infoline or visit 211CT.org for food assistance options near them as well as information on other resources.

