



# White House Conference on Nutrition, Hunger, & Health Listening Session

Friday, July 8th | 11am PST / 2pm EST



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Join The Farmlink Project to help tell a cohesive story about the billions of pounds of nutritious surplus produce going to waste that can feed millions of families with dignity.

Come share your stories and ideas on how federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors, can work to reduce food loss & waste, improve food access, and end hunger for all.



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## About The Farmlink Project

The Farmlink Project is a student-founded non-profit with an innovative solution to combat food waste, food insecurity, and climate change in an effort to create a more equitable future for all. Founded during the pandemic, The Farmlink Project connects farms with surplus to food banks to feed people in need, reduce carbon emissions & empower the next generation of changemakers. To date, we have rescued over 70 million pounds of produce and provided approximately 58 million meals across the country. Visit [www.farmlinkproject.org](http://www.farmlinkproject.org) to learn more.

The goal of The Farmlink Project's Listening Session was to focus on **Pillar One: Improve Food Access and Affordability**. We are proud to act as facilitators helping to tell a cohesive story of the billions of pounds of nutritious surplus produce that is going to waste and can feed millions of families with dignity. Our Listening Session was attended by **100 of our stakeholders and partners** that we work with on the ground everyday. Our attendance was limited at 100 participants by capacity restrictions, but was supplemented through our **Comment Form** that allowed for continued conversation and asynchronous suggestions to be submitted. At **375+ registrants**, we brought together a national cohort of growers, producers, suppliers, food bank representatives and recipients, alongside corporate partners and interested citizens.

## About this Report

This report is organized in the order that the questions were posed during The Farmlink Project's Listening Session. We used the questions outlined in the Toolkit for Partner-Led Convenings with slight variations informed by our attendees and our focus on Pillar One. This report compiles suggestions from our Listening Session, Comment Form, and The Farmlink Project's recommendations. **These comments are in no particular order and should be taken into consideration equally.**

For any questions or concerns regarding this report, please contact Sophia Adelle, Head of Food Policy & Advocacy via email: [sophia.adelle@farmlinkproject.org](mailto:sophia.adelle@farmlinkproject.org).

**Question I:** *How has food insecurity impacted you, your family, or your community?*

**Angel Swanson, Feeding Feasible Feasts (Edgewood, WA)**

- Angel grew up in Chicago, Illinois with few resources for affordable and nutritious food. When she later moved to Washington, she found the same circumstance to be true, despite her new place of residence being predominantly white. There was a food bank open for 3 hours randomly throughout the week. Angel had seven children, and only one car which was mainly used for her husband to commute to work, and the local bus service was not reliable. **They would stand in front of a food bank for hours waiting for someone to show up in order to receive bread and apples.** As an adult, she now works to fight food insecurity. At her current place of residence, there has been an influx of refugees. The programs Angel has worked for are 24/7 services in well-lit facilities to help those in need in her community, providing more than 30 meal choices. Her services assist farmers and have helped normalize access to nutritious meals for children. In her concluding remarks, she explained that a 17-pound box is disheartening and unhelpful when only a portion of the box can be eaten by her children. In addition to the children not being fed, Angela posed a question that reflects the struggle of many Americans, **“Should she throw it away? Should I force my kids to eat it?”**. Angela emphasized the **importance of ensuring the food and produce included in food boxes are edible and accessible to the recipient communities and families, and the arbitrary rules for access in terms of these food boxes need to be addressed.**

**Aleth Dimmano, Alameda County Community Food Bank (Oakland, CA)**

- Aleth is from the Alameda County Community Food Bank, a non-profit food organization. In the past, Aleth’s food bank was only able to **feed 1:6 in their community.** They have **expanded** operations and are **able to feed 1:4.** Aleth’s Food Bank has **transported over 36 million pounds of food.** The donations they have received over the years have been extremely helpful. **It is necessary to overcome barriers to increase donation (especially of fresh, nutritious produce).**

**Brandy Badger, International Nutritional Sustainable Partners (Redmond, WA)**

- Badger has **transported 1.6 million pounds of food** into Washington State with other organizations, nonprofits, and food banks. Badger points out that her organization is struggling. What once used to be a four-event work week is now reduced to one event a week. Despite this decrease, their lines are frequently inundated with people fifteen minutes prior to opening. **They are feeding 14,000 people within 30 minutes.** Brandy and her partners are **requesting increased access to funding to help them get the food level back to where it needs to be as well as being aware of community needs.**

**Norma Marchesani, Interested Citizen (Rockville, CT)**

- Norma Marchesani has family members who regularly go to weekly Foodshare distributions in their local area. In Norma's town, she has an organization called **Cornerstone** that established a soup kitchen serving lunch and dinner daily. In addition to the food bank, Cornerstone has a clothing bank, two shelters, and provides services that connect homeless people to housing. In collaboration with another food bank called **Hockanum Valley**, they tap into local churches and other organizations to provide food drives for the pantries throughout the year. The need is very great. **Additionally, in town, there are 3 grocery stores: Aldi and 2 Stop & Shop locations of which none are located where people really need a grocery store within walking distance.**

**Melanie Willich, The Kohala Center, (Waimea, HI)**

- The pandemic has caused a spike in unemployment in Hawai'i, worsening already dire food insecurity among communities statewide. A Hawai'i Island-based non-profit organization runs a demonstration farm in Honoka'a along the Hāmākua Coast and provides agricultural training and education. The Peace Committee of our Honoka'a Hongwanji Buddhist Temple reached out at the onset of COVID when the demand for their **"Feeding our Keiki and Kupuna " community meal program** at least tripled. Food donations from nearby farmers couldn't meet the increased demand and the reliance on additional food donations became urgent. As a non-profit, Melanie was in the fortunate position of being able to donate produce from their demonstration farm mainly deriving from specialty seed crop variety trials, including leafy greens, pulses, and sweet potatoes. Since specialty seed crop variety quantities are limited and cultivation based on other grant commitments, they are hoping for solutions to **continue contributions that are relevant to the needs of community meal programs**



**Question II:** *What specific actions should the U.S. Federal government, including the Executive Branch and Congress, take to support farmers, encourage surplus food donation, and build equitable and dignified food distribution networks? What are the opportunities and barriers to achieving these actions?*

## **Increase Federal Funding to Support Surplus Food Recovery and Equitable Distribution Networks**

### **I. Expand Funding That Utilizes The Fresh Produce Supply Chain to Address Nutrition Security**

- Inform national strategy with similar approach as in the **Fresh Produce Procurement Reform Act of 2021** (H.R. 5409, 117th Cong.) which offers grant resources and specialty crop procurement programs to increase food recovery from farms and the **Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program** which rewards up to \$400 million for emergency food assistance purchases of local food with the ARP funds.
  - Anecdotally, aggregators struggle to maintain sufficient funding to to purchase locally grown food and donate produce to nearby schools and food banks
  - Suggested by: Dionne Washington, Friends of the Farm, Arizona Food Bank Network
- Previously, **USDA's Farms to Families Food Box Program** provided limited food options and failed to fit community needs. Beyond limited food, produce would arrive in poor conditions and regional accessibility posed a serious issue. For example, the Northeast region of the US received the second lowest allocation of food boxes and only 4.4.% of total funding in the first round of allocations by the USDA. While more funds were allocated to underserved regions, it became apparent that funds were being misallocated and there was a lack of oversight by USDA.
  - Look towards the **Food Bank Access to Farm Fresh Produce Act** (S.360, 116th Cong.) to inform plans of expanding food accessibility. Additionally, look to endorse expanding **SNAP** funding, and improving food donations and food waste management practices.
  - Suggested by: Bobby Rodrigo, We DO Better Relief; has been in the food space for 30 years, stated that prior to the pandemic, food-insecure people had more dignity over their food choices as they were given more options.

- Additional Comments: Yuka Nagashima, Exec Director at Food Shift, agreed and stated that the USDA Box Program lends itself to larger providers receiving all the bids rather than smaller providers.

## II. Provide Federal Funding to Support Progress in Interagency Collaboration

- **Extend the formal interagency collaboration agreement between the USDA, FDA, and EPA to 2030.** This extension will assist in improving food insecurity across the nation alongside reducing the climate and environmental impacts associated with food loss & waste. This extension would be consistent with the national timeline to reduce food loss & waste by 50% by 2030.
  - Signed in October 2018, the USDA, EPA and FDA signed a formal agreement to commit to improving coordination and communication efforts to better educate Americans on the impacts and importance on food waste reduction. The three agencies renewed the agreement in December 2020, but we suggest it be extended further and given proper funding for the collaboration to be fully staffed (\$2 million annually).
  - Suggested by: Julia Johnson, Agricultural Legislative Assistant at OFW Law
- The USDA should partner with the Department of Commerce EDA to **provide loans and technical assistance to as many farmers within 30-50 miles from an urban settlement**. This should empower farmers to process organic food waste and yard trimmings from the city.
  - Suggested by: Daniela Ochoa, Regenerative Solutions & DC Food Recovery Working Group

## III. Build Out Federal Funding for Producers and Create Precedent for Defining and Supporting Small Farmers' Rights (specifically in the food recovery space)

- **Continue expanding both financial capacity and reach of previous loan opportunities, such as the USDA FSA Microloan Programs and SDA Funding Programs**, that incentivize growers from disadvantaged communities who face many challenges in the food system ("micro-producers"). Create flexible and accessible funding to support production costs and incentivize leadership among vulnerable populations.
  - Suggested by: Eugenia Gusev, Technical Advisor for the Food Security and Agriculture division at the International Rescue Committee.
- **Integrate Specialty Crop Farmers Into Programs:** Support the Federal Government in expanding the **USDA Specialty Crop Assistance Programs**. Focus on specialty crop farmers and factor them into programs that also include Commodity Crop Farmers in the Midwest.

- **Reassess the Food Bank Access to Farm Fresh Produce Act of 2020 (S. 3605)** that provides funding for food banks to procure, store, and distribute specialty crops.
  - Suggested by: Lisa Johnson, Food Loss Expert and Researcher
- **Support and prioritize family-owned farms** over agribusiness. Utilize Connecticut's Foodshare as a model for food distribution and community partnership. The Federal government should fund organizations like Foodshare, which purchases fruits and vegetables from local farmers and distributes them among communities in need. Local, small-scale farmers are supported financially through Foodshare. Additionally, **ease restrictions on worker visas and immigration to mitigate the farm worker shortage.**
  - USDA-ERS defines “Small Family Farms” as farms with gross sales of <\$250,000, this category requires the most financial and government support.
  - Suggested by: Norma Marchesani, Interested Citizen
- **Pay farmers for their labor, land, and growing investments.** The government should provide compensation for participating in feeding programs; subsidize school contracts. Create a donation model that benefits farmers. Stop subsidizing commodity crops. Pay farmers for their surplus.
  - Suggested by: Anna Hammond, Matriark Foods
- **Create a way for farmers to sell to consumers as a contingency plan** for when they don't sell all their produce. A program like this would be able to help farmers plan what areas they could take their produce to before it goes to waste. When a food surplus that they cannot buy is found, farmers can coordinate with other food rescue organizations.
  - John Kunin works for East West Food Rescue.
- **Prioritize the rights of micro-producers, specifically refugee communities.** Compensate local farmers to create a more stable food system. Provide long-term land access to farmers, which is a current hindrance to many farmers that the International Rescue Committee work with, as urban agricultural land is typically leased on an annual basis. Ensure food donations are appropriate for those on the receiving end – many food insecure people have dietary restrictions and cultural or religious needs that are not met by some food donations.
  - Suggested by: Eugenia Gusev, Technical Advisor for the Food Security and Agriculture division at the International Rescue Committee.
  - Additional comments: Yuka Nagashima, Executive Director at Food Shift, highlighted the need for **Indigenous people and tribal communities to have authority over their own SNAP operations.**
  - Additional Comments: Pam Larry, Director of the Butte County Local Food Network; stresses that government funding for locally-grown food and the creation of stronger local food systems should be much higher-



**\$40 billion rather than \$4 billion allocated in Build Back Better to Strengthen Food Systems.**

She believes that Victory Garden-style of locally-grown produce is key to addressing food insecurity at the community level, and should be given priority funding.

- Backed by: Julia Groenfeldt, Program Manager at the Institute for Public Health Innovation

**IV. Expand Federal Tax Incentives for Food Donation and Create an Alternative Tax Credit for Food Donation**

- **Implement a federal tax credit to encourage farms to donate their excess produce.** Implement a program that pays farmworkers to harvest post-harvest excess for donation. This combination would aid low-wage farmworkers, reward farmers for being generous, and make produce more available in the hunger-relief system, which alleviates hunger and improves public health simultaneously.
  - Suggested by: Lisa Johnson, Food Loss Expert and Researcher
  - Suggested by: Michael Binger, Society of St. Andrew
  - Additional comments: Cheryl Kollin, Program Director of Community Food Rescue (CFR) based out of Montgomery County, pointed out that Maryland has a **Food Donation Pilot Program (SB539)** out. It is a tax credit program where qualified farms can claim certain credit against the Maryland income tax for the donation of fresh farm products for human consumption, and has been extended through December 2023 for farmer food donations (Maryland Food Donation Pilot Program).
  - Backed by: Ben Collier, Co-Founder and Co-CEO of The Farmlink Project; Cheryl Kollin, Program Director of Community Food Rescue (CFR) based out of Montgomery County; Julia Groenfeldt, Program Manager at the Institute for Public Health Innovation; Kai Robertson, Senior Corporate Sustainability Advisor at KOR Consulting
- Inform national strategy by keeping in mind the **Further Incentivizing Nutritious Donations of Food (or FIND) Act of 2022 (H.R. 7317, 117th Cong. 2nd Sess., 2022)**
  - Sponsored by **Rep Shontel M. Brown (D-OH). Cosponsors are Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Rep. Fred Keller (R-PA), Rep. Troy Balderson (R-OH), and Rep. Melanie Ann Stansbury (D-NM).** The FIND Act incentivizes farmers to donate food by creating new tax deductions and credits. Specifically, the bill includes a tax deduction for transportation costs, creates a tax credit for food donations by farmers, and expands the charitable tax deduction for food donation.
  - Some areas for improvement in the FIND Food Act to consider are **stipulating that produce must be grown within the US**

**significantly limits the charitable donations that can be made.**

In the winter, at least 80% (in the Summer, approximately 20%) of produce The Farmlink Project moves and is currently donated in the US is grown internationally (but marketed by US based companies). Allowing all donations by US corporations to US food banks would unlock a great amount of supply for the charitable food space, where The Farmlink Project is well-positioned to coordinate and execute donations.

- **Replace the current tax credit cap (\$20,000) with a net income percentage.** The FIND Act's current tax credit cap at \$20,000 disincentivizes donors with especially large quantities of produce. Most wholesalers will max out the benefit within just a few truckloads (<10), while many US donors have the capacity to donate dozens (or even hundreds) of truckloads of food per year.
- Make tax benefits easier to claim by **calculating benefits using a percentage of fair market value, rather than a basis value.** This will increase accessibility to all donors, especially those who source goods from outside the US. California State has a tax credit program that provides an example for a fair market value model. See **California CAL. REV. & TAX. CODE § 17053.12 & 17053.88.5: A Case Study.**

**Question III:** *What specific actions should local, state, territory and Tribal governments; private companies; non-profits, community groups; and others take to support farmers, encourage surplus food donation, and build equitable and dignified food distribution networks? What are the opportunities and barriers to achieving these actions?*

### **Introduce State Level Tax Incentive Laws to Encourage Surplus Food Donation in all 50 States**

#### **I. California CAL. REV. & TAX. CODE § 17053.12 & 17053.88.5: A Case Study**

- **California's Tax Code Section 17053.12** is a strong incentive because taxpayers involved in transport of ag produce donations are eligible for tax credits of 50% of transportation costs of donated crops to eligible nonprofits.
- **California's Tax Code Section 17053.88.5** allows taxpayers to claim a tax credit = 15% of wholesale market price of donated goods to Californian food banks; taxpayers include farmers + those responsible for packaging or processing a qualified donation item, as long as that person is not a retailer.
- States that incentivize tax deductions for food donations are California, Iowa, Arizona, Colorado, The District of Columbia, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, South Carolina, and Virginia. **We want to see all fifty states implement state level tax incentive laws.** This will promote surplus food donation and allow farmers to feed their families while trying to help their community.
  - Suggested by: The Farmlink Project and Melanie Willich, The Kohala Center
  - Additional Comments: Aaron Tolson, Northern Virginia Food Rescue; the existing tax deduction programs for farmers are not sufficient food on their table. We must secure tax credit opportunities for food rescues so they are able to purchase from farmers. With this, farmers are ensured to make a liveable wage.

### **Develop Structures that Encourage Community Engagement and Collaboration**

- Local and state authorities, territory and tribal entities should **source information directly from their communities to define areas of food insecurity.** Community organizations may be siloed due to a lack of connection to a wider network which poses a barrier to accessing greater opportunities for these organizations.
  - **The Rhode Island Department of Health and The Health Equity Zone of Woonsocket's Food Access Working Group** has created an Implementation Roadmap highlighting a community headquarters for food access to focus on how food insecurity has impacted their community. By doing

this, they can build community-focused initiatives to eliminate “health disparities using place-based strategies to promote healthy communities.”

- Suggested by: Norma Marchesani, Interested Citizen
- Additional Comments: Running a food bank is not easy. Great leadership, commitment and participation is required in all processes from pick up to clean up. While some food banks can get by with bake sales, increased and flexible funding for organizations who provide food to those in need is necessary for success. This funding would be used for **training programs and leadership opportunities.**
  - Roman Pinal, The United Farmworkers of America
- **Lean on Food Policy Councils understanding and engagement with their community to inform local, state, and federal work.**
- **Establish and maintain open lines of communication with refugee resettlement agencies** to find innovative solutions for culturally-appropriate food donations- also known as achieving food sovereignty. As the Biden administration has permitted more refugees to enter the United States than previous administrations, it is important to ensure that refugee communities have access to adequate nutrition- especially as the demand for emergency food at refugee settlements continues to increase. Partnerships between the public and private sectors recommended.
  - Suggested by: Eugenia Gusev, Technical Advisor for the Food Security and Agriculture division at the International Rescue Committee.

**Question IV:** *What opportunities do you see for public and private-sector partners to work together to establish equitable food supply chains? What do you think is necessary for these partnerships to be successful?*

### Support Infrastructure to Promote Food Donation & Recovery

- **Improve transportation and storage through public and private sector partnerships.** Each year, \$408 billion is spent each year on processing, transporting, sorting and disposing of wasted food. Improving donation transportation and storage infrastructure has the annual potential to divert 908,000 tons of food waste, and reduce 1.316 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, all with a net financial benefit of \$3.287 billion. Private corporations can support this goal by partnering with nonprofits, food pantries, and transportation companies and providing them with either the equipment or the funding to improve this infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>
  - With the use of a forklift, pallets of food can be unloaded at double the pace. Whereas it usually takes 4 hours per load, this piece of equipment enables the time to be cut in half to about 2 hours. **A truckload can currently deliver appx. 31,667 meals in 4 hours, a forklift can deliver 63,334 meals in the same time span.** In sum, one forklift allows The Farmlink Project to deliver an additional 31,667 meals per truckload.
  - Suggested by: The Farmlink Project, Bobby Rodrigo, We DO Better Relief, Melanie Willich, Research Associate at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management
  - Additional Comments: Jennifer Breitlow, former farmer and current food shelf worker, Winona Volunteer Services; emphasized how getting produce from the field to communities takes people and transportation: no part of the process is easy.
  - Additional Comments: Eugenia Gusev, Technical Advisor for the Food Security and Agriculture division at the International Rescue Committee; providing local businesses with the means to better stock their fresh food. Four years into having increased fridge and freezer space, small business owners experienced huge growth in their revenues, consistently sold out of fresh fruits and vegetables, and were ultimately able to reinvest into their businesses.
  - Additional Comments: Bobby Rodrigo, We DO Better Relief; Non-profit work is a bandaid to issues due to a lack of funding. Nonprofits should receive support from private-public sector partnerships and federal funding to implement

<sup>1</sup> Emily M. Broad Leib, Joseph S. Beckmann et al., Harv. L. Sch. Food L. & Pol'y Clinic (FLPC), Nat. Res. Def. Council (NRDC), ReFED, & World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Opportunities to Reduce Food Waste in the 2023 Farm Bill (2022), <https://chlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2023-Farm-Bill-Food-Waste.pdf>.



systems and infrastructure that allows communities to respond to their own crises in their community.

### Community Suggestions for Fostering Public-Private Sector Partnerships

- **Governments, corporations, entities and non-profit organizations must work more closely together in order to eliminate gaps within our food system**, specifically within the food recovery space. The most direct method to cutting food waste is to obtain food from large corporations before it goes to waste. For example, Baltimore Community Food has worked with Amazon to procure food for distribution in the Baltimore area.
  - Suggested by: J.C. Faulk, the founder of Baltimore Community Food.
- **Public/private partnerships need to be leveraged to aggregate more precise data** that would subsequently enable organizations to better determine the gaps within the food system. This data would help organizations target communities and food shortages far more effectively.
  - Suggested by: Anamika Arthurs, an executive at HealthTech for Medicaid.
- **Develop a public-private partnership food waste education effort** (modeled after the Partnership for Food Safety Education). Promote public and private efforts to increase the amount of food donations across the supply chain and develop instruments for measuring increases.
  - Suggested by: Julia Johnson, Agricultural Legislative Assistant at OFW Law
- **Reference SB1383 in California to inform national strategy on promoting corporate and individual responsibility for food waste.** Working together with multiple levels of government and local agencies creates a community understanding of needs and assesses the level of collaboration that exists and can be improved upon. A single organization acting as a point of contact for all food generators, food banks, pantries or any other food donation center is an efficient and effective way to promote better practices. Government funding is provided to local feeding agencies, service providers, housing programs, and ministries while a single organization acts as the point of contact for everyone. System efficiencies help realize change and should be supported in the national strategy to end hunger.
  - Suggested by: Christina Keneti Kennedy, advocate for High Desert Second Chance

**Question V:** *What innovative, successful current activities do you see at the local, state, territory, and Tribal levels that could inform actions at the Federal level?*<sup>2</sup>

### Protections to Strengthen Food Recovery

- **Look towards recent legislation passed in Rhode Island (S2550 and H7911)** which adds food pantries to the list of organizations that are exempt from the requirement, and alleviates the huge expense of an audit for these pantries. This bill sets a good example of regulation that provides protections and exemptions that make food donations more feasible. As donations continue to come in during the pandemic, this legislation is necessary in order to empower these critical organizations to continue to serve families and communities in need across the state. These costs and logistics associated with operating non-profits should be better understood by the US government. Nonprofits are already often overburdened with food donation paperwork (i.e. a financial audit) requiring hefty time commitments and resources that detract from completion. On the farm side, professionals can take up to 80 hours to fill out a single USDA grant application while a local farmer could take up to 120 hours to complete the same application.
  - Suggested by: The Farmlink Project and Bobby Rodrigo, We DO Better, Pamm Larry, Director of the Butte County Local Food Network
- **Gleaning efforts should be funded and enhanced** so that residents and surplus food donation networks are more quickly notified and crops more efficiently harvested/recovered.
  - Melanie Marchesani, Interested Citizen
  - Melanie Willich, The Kohala Center
- **Read the “Opportunities to Reduce Food Waste in 2023 Farm Bill”**, authored by ReFED, NRDC, the Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic, and WWF. This paper provides food waste recommendations in four categories: 1) preventing food waste, 2) increasing food recovery, 3) recycling food scraps, and 4) coordinating food waste reduction efforts. These recommendations highlight the need to reduce food waste and reallocate wasted food.
  - Suggested by: Cheryl Kollin, the Program Director of Community Food Rescue (CFR), Montgomery County
  - Backed by: Yuka Nagashima, ED at Food Shift; Kai Robertson, Senior Corporate Sustainability Advisor at KOR Consulting

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<sup>2</sup> Note: The current and future conversations surrounding the 2023 Farm Bill will influence this Conference. We hope to recognize the recommendations from our stakeholders and their potential integration within the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. .

## Training & Education Programs

- **Create professional development funding to improve the reinsertion cycle of the agriculture workforce.** Direct funding programs, such as the **Beginning Farmer-Rancher Development Program ('BFRDP')**, provides opportunity and education to small businesses/farms located in food deserts and/or owned by minority community members. While effective, these training programs should be scaled for the national strategy and should not require participants to aspire to become commercial growers.
  - Suggested by: Eugenia Gusev, Technical Advisor for the Food Security and Agriculture
  - Additional Comments: Roman Pinal, United Farm Workers; increase education/offering for workers to break poverty cycles in farmers.  
**Provide a mobile clinic and food donations** to address the endemic cycle with those who harvest the food.
    - a) Roman Pinal, United Farm Workers
- **Avoid Annual Loss of 28 Million Pounds of Food in Schools with Increased Federal Food Waste Standards: Endorse national date labeling requirements** developed by FMI and Consumer Brands Association; Prioritize **food waste education in existing nutrition education programs**; Expand information about **preventing food waste in Team Nutrition educational materials for schools**; Include additional information about preventing food waste in **USDA's Foods in Schools Product Information**
  - Suggested by: Julia Johnson, Agricultural Legislative Assistant at OFW Law
- **Implement "Common Core" cooking and gardening classes for students such as the lessons from Mundo Verde.** Students are taught the importance of all colored vegetables as they learn how to read and write. The lesson plan for food and nutrition classes should also be shared to parents of ALL Pre-K and kindergarten/elementary aged students. Oftentimes, parents do not know the food miles or impact of the food they procure and eat, just as much as the students are unaware.
  - Sharing the culture of the dishes made in school, the origin of the ingredients and the places/farms where each item is produced would be great education.
    - Suggested by: Daniela Ochoa, Regenerative Solutions & DC Food Recovery Working Group.

## Decreased Carbon Emission Frameworks

- **The government should focus capital investments on projects that help reach carbon neutrality** such as strengthening food systems and focusing farming insurance subsidies on better soil regeneration practices as outlined by [Natural Resources Conservation Services](#) (NRCS).
- **Implement tax breaks for green roofs for food production** and subsequent reductions of restrictions for urban gardening and fruit orchards in city areas.
- **Freeze dry food for longer delivery to those in need; Endorse technology such as an app to manage data targeting food shortages by county.**
  - Suggested by: Mary McNamara, culture columnist and critic for the Los Angeles Times
  - Additional Comments: Brandy Badger, International Nutritional Sustainability Partners; Funding should be increased for warehouses and technology to freeze dry (flash freezing) so that food can be available then for the next 25 years. Freeze drying keeps food from going into waste and landfills and is a potential solution to disaster relief and food relief.
- **Make dumping food waste in landfills illegal and provide alternative infrastructure for food waste. This concept was** introduced in [MA](#) and soon to be in CA and MD, however, none of the areas are really equipped to compost or otherwise handle the huge influx of waste.
  - Suggested by: Daniela Ochoa, Regenerative Solutions & DC Food Recovery Working Group.