

Gov. Evers, DATCP: Announce additional \$10 million for food security initiative

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today, with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), announced two of Wisconsin's largest hunger relief organizations will receive an additional \$10 million to help serve Wisconsinites experiencing food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic. This announcement brings the total investment in Wisconsin's agricultural and food industries during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to \$75 million.

"There isn't a family, worker, or industry that hasn't experienced the effects of the ongoing pandemic," said Gov. Evers. "This funding bridges an important gap, not only helping these organizations continue to do their good work, but also helping farmers get their goods to folks across the state and Wisconsin families put food on the table."

Today's announcement is the latest in a series of efforts designed to help support Wisconsin farmers and food processors while helping people in need. Hunger Task Force and Feeding Wisconsin will each receive \$5 million in grant funding. The money will be used to purchase food for distribution, and for food storage and transportation.

"COVID-19 has brought uncertainty for many people, but no one should have to worry about how they'll feed themselves or their family. The Food Security Initiative has already helped many organizations adjust to the pandemic and provide high-quality, nutritious Wisconsin food products to people in need across our state," said Randy Romanski, DATCP Secretary-designee. "We're proud to partner with Governor Evers, Hunger Task Force, and Feeding Wisconsin to continue that work through this additional funding."

“Hunger Task Force is extremely proud to utilize these funds to purchase Wisconsin products including milk, cheese, pork, beef, potatoes, and cherries. Even more important, these products have been delivered across Wisconsin to service local communities free of charge,” said Sherrie Tussler, Executive Director of Hunger Task Force. “People of color, the rural poor and indigenous people who have been hard hit by the pandemic have received food, and with the food, a bit of hope. We applaud Governor Evers for his inclusivity and compassion for hungry Wisconsinites.”

“We thank Governor Evers for creating the Food Security Initiative, which has provided needed support at all points in the emergency food system from farmers to processors, to food pantry and food bank operations, to those Wisconsinites accessing food through our distributions,” said Feeding Wisconsin’s Executive Director, Stephanie Jung Dorfman. “Feeding Wisconsin and our statewide network of six food banks and almost 1,000 food programs, are grateful for the awarded funding. At a time when we are seeing a 70% increase in demand for our services and our food banks are purchasing more food than ever before, these funds are enabling us to source great Wisconsin products to distribute to our neighbors faced with food insecurity during this challenging time.”

About the Food Security Initiative

The initiative was announced in May 2020. The funding has been distributed in three parts: the \$5 million COVID-19 Food Security Network Support Grant, the \$10 million COVID-19 Food Security and Wisconsin Products Grant, and the additional \$10 million announced today. More information is available at <https://FoodSecurity.wi.gov>.