

## Federal Funding Opportunity to Support Hunger Relief

*The purpose of this communication is to provide information to agricultural wholesalers, distributors, school districts, Tribal Nations, non-profit and faith-based organizations who may be interested in participating as local partners in the Farmers to Families Food Box Program.*

### Overview

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is partnering with farmers, ranchers, specialty crop producers, food processors, distributors, and non-profit organizations to ensure that all Americans have access to the nutritious food options they need during the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 17, 2020, the USDA announced that the Coronavirus Farm Assistance Program (CFAP) also known as the [Farmers to Families Food Box Program](#), is exercising authority under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act to purchase and distribute up to \$3 billion of agricultural products to serve those in need. Minnesota farmers and distributors whose workforce has been significantly impacted by the closure of restaurants, hotels, and other food service entities, have an opportunity to partner with the USDA and regional distributors to sell fresh produce, dairy, and meat to support those in need.

### Farmers

Sell food previously destined for restaurants and bulk purchasers to distributors, preventing waste.

### Contracted Distributors

Partner with USDA to package family-sized boxes with fresh produce, dairy and meat products, then transport them to non-profit and faith-based organizations, schools, and Indian Tribal Organizations, across America.

### Families

Pick up food boxes from local schools, food banks, faith-based organizations and other non-profits.

### Program Details

USDA issued a request to invite proposals from partners to supply commodity boxes to non-profit organizations and awarded contracts on May 8, 2020, for the purchase of the agricultural products, the assembly of commodity boxes and delivery to identified non-profit organizations that can receive, store and distribute food items. Agricultural Marketing Service's Commodity Procurement Program will provide an estimated \$100 million per month in fresh fruits and vegetables; variety dairy products, and meat products. The distributors will then provide a pre-approved box of fresh produce, dairy, and meat products to food banks, community and faith-based organizations, and other non-profits serving Minnesotans in need.

## Opportunities to Partner – Distribution

School districts, school nutrition authorities and Indian Tribal Organizations (ITO) would qualify as government entities and would also be eligible to receive food boxes which they can then distribute to individuals and families. These entities must be able to demonstrate that they have the operational and financial capability to receive, store and distribute requested food items. Non-profit and faith-based organizations who are interested in distributing boxes to families can also partner with regional distributors to receive them. You can find more information on regional distributors [here](#). Distributors will work directly with non-profit organizations and other partners to determine details regarding delivery, including volume and delivery schedules. Additional program information is available [here](#).

## Opportunities to Partner – Wholesalers

Organizations interested in partnering to provide additional logistical support to connect distributors with hard to reach rural, tribal and urban areas may contract with distributors to determine partnership opportunities, including additional support logistics. You can find more information on regional distributors [here](#).