

Status:

- According to USDA data, over 500,000 Arkansans are experiencing hunger or food insecurity. With the recent downturn in the economy and stress placed on food supplies globally, it is becoming increasingly difficult for hunger relief organizations to acquire food.

Program:

Of the \$1M requested annually, the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance (Alliance) will utilize the program funds as follows:

- 75% to purchase and deliver food to the member food banks.
 - Distribution will be based on the level of poverty, on population of the regions and on current annual distribution of member food banks.
 - No fee will be charged by the member food banks or by local agencies.
- 25% to fund capacity-building grants to hunger relief organizations in the state.
 - Capacity-building grants will be defined as assistance with capital improvements to the facility, major repairs to allow an agency to remain open, or other needs that will allow the agency to better serve the population receiving services.
 - The Alliance will work with an advisory group to establish a Request for Proposals (RFP) process for the grants.

Impact:

- Funds will allow for food purchase and distribution of an estimated 1.6 million pounds of food.
- This translates into 1.5 million meals (based on 1.07 pounds per meal).
- 1.5 million meals would serve 4,011 people one meal per day, or nearly 29,000 people one meal per week.

How it Works:

The following stipulations will be used as guidelines for the program:

- All food purchased will be from Arkansas growers, producers or manufacturers.
- Funds may also be used to access free USDA Bonus Foods when available.
- The Alliance will ensure food is delivered to food bank members.
- Member food banks will distribute food to the 900+ member agencies that meet nationally recognized standards for proper handling of food and serve low-income families.

Administration/Oversight: The Alliance will be responsible for administration of the program. The Alliance currently monitors distribution of food throughout the state by all of their member organizations. They track food purchases and deliveries and receive monthly reports from member food banks as to the distribution of food to local pantries. The Alliance works with local transportation companies to achieve the best pricing and solicits thousands of dollars of donated transportation for its member organizations.

Funds to support these services will be appropriated by the Arkansas General Assembly to the Arkansas Department of Human Services (ADHS). The ADHS Division of County Operations will provide oversight for the program as part of their normal monitoring activities associated with the Commodities program.