



Feeding Colorado Statement on USDA Announcement of Nearly \$1.5 Billion in New Investments in Hunger Relief

Statement Attributed to Effie Rorke, Senior Director of Public Policy and Communications

Feeding Colorado applauds the recent announcement from the Biden administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that they will provide nearly \$1.5 billion in additional funding for emergency food assistance nationally. This new investment will help Colorado's five Feeding America food banks and our statewide network of more than 1,200 partners begin alleviating the severe food shortage we have been facing and help ensure people in our community do not need to make the difficult choice between putting food on the table and paying bills.

Food banks, pantries and other charitable food assistance programs have been providing a record response during the COVID-19 pandemic, assisting 60 million individuals in 2020 and 53 million in 2021. This level of aid would not have been possible without USDA food purchases. In 2020, USDA foods made up 38% of all food distributed by the Feeding America network, of which Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado, Community Food Share, Food Bank for Larimer County, Food Bank of the Rockies, and Weld Food Bank are members, translating to over 2.4 billion meals for community members in need.

USDA food purchases are a lifeline for rural communities, which often face higher rates of food insecurity than urban communities. In 2020, 96% of rural counties received USDA food items distributed by a food bank within the Feeding America network.

Today, the demand for emergency food assistance remains well above pre-pandemic levels. But in 2022, food banks have struggled with a food supply crisis. Feeding Colorado member food banks have been facing an unprecedented combination of supply chain disruptions, decreased donations of food and funds, and rapidly increasing costs for purchased food, transportation, cold storage and other operational needs.

"This investment from the Biden administration will help close the gap between the amount of food we can provide and the hunger relief Colorado needs."

Feeding Colorado member food banks stand ready to distribute this emergency food aid as soon as possible to individuals and families facing hunger in our community.

Feeding Colorado is an association of the five Feeding America food banks serving all of Colorado and Wyoming, collaborating and leveraging their combined strengths to reach people in every county, every day. Member food banks include Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado, Community Food Share, Food Bank for Larimer County, Food Bank of the Rockies, and Weld Food Bank.

