



## 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan Overview

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**Food Assistance Mission:** Food Assistance serves communities and lower-income families by improving access to safe and nutritious foods. We honor our connections with agriculture and strengthen the emergency food system by providing food, funding, logistical support, and outreach to hunger relief agencies and tribes.

**Food Assistance Vision:** We are trusted partners who anticipate and respond to the evolving needs of the food system by focusing on the intersection, viability, and success of hunger relief agencies and agricultural producers. Together, we ensure access to healthy food and sustain vibrant communities for all Washingtonians.

### Food Assistance Core Functions:

- **Contract Management:**
  - Develop, issue and provide oversight of program contracts, compliance and monitoring reviews.
  - Support non-profit food banks, community action agencies, agricultural community partners, tribes and tribal organizations through a network of contracts and subcontracts designed to fairly allocate food and funds across the state.
  - Serve as a pass-through entity for USDA and state general funds to ensure meaningful investments in emergency food system and wise stewardship of public funds.
- **Logistics Services:**
  - Manage food ordering, warehousing and shipping for USDA commodities.
  - Monitor and ensure accountability for all food losses.
- **Outreach and Education:**
  - Produce information resources to support food system and hunger relief planning, including county fact sheets, annual close-out reports, donation guides and more.
  - Leverage the website as a central hub for information, resources, and tools that assist Washington's hunger relief and agricultural stakeholders, to share best practices, and to highlight successful projects across the state to support the development and success of the food system.
  - Provide nutrition education, food safety information, certification assistance, and targeted workshops.
  - Serve as community liaison and resource, on advisory committees, and at regional meetings.
- **Partnership Development:**
  - Develop and sustain key partnerships that benefit emergency food providers, agricultural producers and the broader food system (e.g. Farm to Food Pantry initiative).
  - Collaborate with local, state and national advisory committees, commissions, councils, and coalitions.
  - Work with partners to pursue shared resources and leverage existing resources to enhance food system and food access.
- **Technical Assistance:**
  - Provide training, guidance, and 1:1 assistance for implementing applicable rules, best practices, regulations and procedures impacting the agricultural community and emergency food system.
- **Data-Driven Strategies:**
  - Conduct statewide data collection and analysis, develop data-driven strategies, and evaluate program activities for continuous food system improvement and relevance to stakeholder needs.
- **Emergency Management:**
  - Participate in emergency response planning and readiness, as well as select food recall activities.



**WSDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

A. The capability and commitment to carry out our mission effectively, efficiently and safely.

B. Consistent customer focus and satisfaction.

C. Consistent, effective and transparent regulation.

D. Effective partnerships and relationships.

**Food Assistance Strategic Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 4**  
Ensure FA staff have the resources, training and tools needed to provide exemplary core program services.

Objectives:

1. Improve training and annual performance plans.
2. Update desk manuals to reflect current workload and procedures to improve training, time management and succession planning.
3. Restructure internal electronic records to encourage collaborative communication and consistent recordkeeping.
4. Acquire a reliable database that promotes transparent, easily accessible data and streamlined reporting systems.
5. Provide support and recognition opportunities to all staff.

**Goal 3**  
Provide tools to contractors and subcontractors that are user-friendly and necessary for compliance.

Objectives:

1. Provide guidance, resources, data analysis, and technical assistance to contractors and subcontractors that are consistent, clear and streamlined.
2. Increase contractors' understanding of and participation in USDA commodity shipping & receiving processes.
3. Develop and implement an internal contractor communication and outreach plan to promote proactive communications and preparedness for compliance activities.
4. Participate in outreach and engagement activities that foster collaboration and promote emergency food system improvements.
5. Maintain engagement with tribes and tribal organizations and pursue strategies to support tribal food sovereignty.
6. Maintain and continuously improve web-based messaging and contractor tools.
7. Increase shared understanding and preparedness for food recalls and disaster response efforts within hunger relief agencies.
8. Revise EFAP application process for greater ease and clarity.

**Goal 5**  
Food Assistance fully complies with federal and state regulations.

Objectives:

1. Conduct annual TEFAP risk assessment.
2. Conduct required compliance reviews of contractors and subcontractors annually.
3. Maintain accurate and effective TEFAP and CSFP State Plans.
4. Regularly review rules and update FA program outreach materials, procedures manuals, and web content to ensure consistency between programs and compliance with state and federal requirements.
5. Ensure FA compliance with TEFAP and CSFP inventory management requirements.
6. Implement post-audit procedural updates and continuous monitoring.
7. Document and communicate the impacts of the Trade Mitigation Program (TMP) on the emergency food system.

**Goal 1**  
Ensure hunger relief agencies have capacity to provide optimal program services, effective client access, and safe, nutritious food.

Objectives:

1. Increase the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) base state funding.
2. Maximize federal pass-through rate for the TEFAP administrative budget.
3. Increase the availability of Washington-grown produce to hunger relief agencies through the Farm to Food Pantry (F2FP) initiative.
4. Collaborate with statewide and regional hunger relief agencies, as well as governmental agencies to regularly identify needs and develop strategies to improve emergency food system capacity.
5. Ensure that USDA commodity foods ordered by FA team meet nutritional targets and while striving to meet hunger relief agency preferences.
6. Maintain or increase caseload funding for Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for senior nutrition.

**Goal 2**  
Cultivate and maintain partnerships that support strategic, mutually-defined food system improvements.

Objectives:

1. Participate in partner projects that increase access to fresh produce, healthier foods, and nutrition education among lower-income people and communities.
2. Engage with Washington's agricultural producers to develop meaningful connections with hunger relief agencies.
3. Partner with state agencies to create efficiencies for hunger relief agencies and to develop a statewide plan to reduce food waste and increase the amount of good food available to lower-income people.