



2025 IMPACT REPORT

# Moving What Matters

Strengthening the systems that connect  
food to communities

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Food Connect Impact Report – 2025



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## Letter from our leadership

# Meeting the moment

Across the country, 2025 tested the strength of our food system. Federal funding cuts, changes to SNAP, and delayed benefits left families navigating uncertainty and difficult trade-offs.

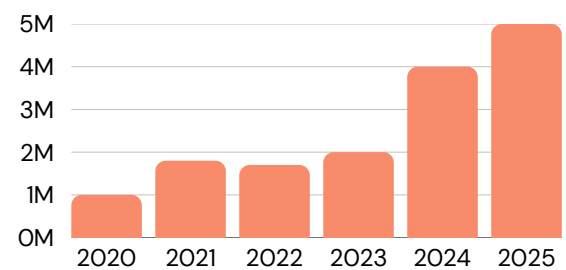
In those moments, communities did what they have always done. They showed up. Local leaders, organizations, and neighbors came together to respond quickly while also building toward long-term solutions. We were honored to stand alongside our partners and local leaders.

At Food Connect, our role is to make sure food gets where it is needed reliably, efficiently, and with dignity. Working with local organizations last year, in multiple regions across the county, reinforced what we know to be true. Strong coordination and dependable logistics enable communities to adapt, respond, and make food accessible for people, even in profoundly challenging moments.

Together with our partners, we provided the last-mile delivery of 4.8 million pounds of food, more than 20 percent growth from last year, reaching the equivalent of nearly 4 million meals.

Using a model refined over time, we expanded to two new markets, now reaching communities in the Twin Cities and Newark alongside Greater Philadelphia, the Bay Area, and Kansas City.

Pounds of last-mile food delivered in recent years



While we are proud of the support we're providing, we believe that increased demand for food access is not a marker of success. Across the country, we continue to see a disconnect between the abundance of available food and the barriers that prevent it from reaching people, with too much edible food still going to waste. This year, those gaps were widened by policy changes and economic pressure, putting additional strain on families.

Our work focuses on closing these gaps by moving food to people who need it. Food rescue, the work that led to our founding, still accounts for most of the food we move, alongside increased involvement in Food as Medicine initiatives, home delivery efforts and other food distribution needs.

In 2025, we saw what is possible when local leadership is supported by the right infrastructure. Partners moved quickly, shared resources, and worked across sectors to meet immediate needs while laying the groundwork for more resilient systems.

But there is still more work to do. With continued investment and partnership, we can strengthen the systems that move food efficiently, support community-led solutions, and reduce the gaps that leave people without access in the first place.

Thank you for being part of this collective effort. Together, we will continue building a food system that is more responsive, more equitable, and better prepared for what comes next.

With gratitude,



*Megha Kulshreshtha*

**Megha Kulshreshtha**  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer



*Richard Vezina*

**Richard Vezina**  
Board Chairperson

## State of the sector

# Food exists Access doesn't

In 2025, the U.S. continued to produce more than enough food to meet people's needs, yet too often, it did not reach the households who needed it most.

As demand reached historic highs and resources tightened, gaps in how food moves and who it reaches became more pronounced.

### **Accessing food is a complex problem**

For too long, affordable, healthy food has been out of reach for millions of people across the country due to economic conditions, rising food costs, and difficulty accessing public benefits. For 42% of people facing food insecurity, lack of reliable transportation compounds these barriers. Local organizations understand the need, but lack the capacity to reach everyone, especially those unable to travel.

### **Policy changes are reshaping demand**

Federal budget decisions in 2025, including the largest cuts to SNAP in U.S. history, alongside delays in benefit distribution, created a significant demand shock across the hunger relief system. SNAP participation alone is projected to decline by more than 3 million people per month due to new eligibility requirements, increasing reliance on local food providers.

### **Need is more complex**

People facing food insecurity are often also managing chronic illness or diet-related health conditions, where access to nutritious food is critical. Across the country, food and healthcare systems are becoming more connected, helping expand access to medically tailored meals and nutrition education. At the same time, federal budget decisions eliminated SNAP-Ed funding, ending a 30-year-old nutrition education program that historically reached 2.3 million people.

## State of the sector

### The system remains disconnected

Up to 30–40% of food that could feed people is lost or wasted, while many continue to face barriers to getting the food they need. In 2025, federal funding cuts disrupted programs supporting local farmers, aggregation, and distribution, slowing and even halting efforts to move surplus food and strengthen local economies.

### Communities are responding

Across the country, local organizations and community leaders are adapting in real time, coordinating resources, and planning for continued uncertainty. Even as resources tighten, communities continue to respond with creativity and collaboration.

The opportunity ahead is to strengthen the infrastructure that connects supply and access so that food can move more reliably, reach more people, and strengthen community-led, resilient food systems over time.



Food Connect attends the annual FRAC conference in D.C.

## How our work made a difference

# Transportation infrastructure at work

Throughout 2025, we teamed up with community partners across the country to respond to rising need and ongoing uncertainty.



### Food rescue

Surplus food didn't sit while need grew elsewhere. It moved swiftly and reliably from where it existed to where it was needed, turning missed opportunities into consistent community supply.



### Household delivery

Partners didn't have to navigate transportation gaps on their own. With coordinated logistics in place, food reached community sites and households more predictably, even in places where distance or access had long been a barrier.



### Food is medicine

And as needs became more complex, consistency mattered more than ever. We supported hospitals and clinics in reaching patients with fresh, nutrient-dense food they could count on so food wasn't just available, but dependable enough to support health.



For local community partners leading this work every day, this support is tangible: less time spent figuring out how to move food, and more time focused on serving their communities in ways that are responsive, steady, and rooted in trust.

## Our theory of change

# How we make reliable access possible

We bridge gaps in the food system by moving food where it's needed most, meeting immediate needs while building stronger, community-led food systems.

Through strong local partnerships, logistics expertise, and community-driven solutions, we:



Reduce food waste and environmental impact



Increase access to healthy, nutritious food



Strengthen the capacity of local organizations

Over time, this approach strengthens the performance of local food systems by advancing the availability, accessibility, and adequacy of food while enabling community autonomy and agency to sustain long-term food security.



*Food Connect and Temple Health staff pack bags of fresh food for home delivery.*

## Our theory of change

# How we make reliable access possible

### Mission

We move food where it's needed most

### What we do

Rescue surplus food, transport medically tailored meals & nutritious food, coordinate home-delivery, and support community partners in closing the final gap between food and people.

### What changes

#### Resource efficiency:

More food is used, less goes to landfills

#### Short-term relief:

Nourishment and support reach people who need it

#### Local food economies:

Communities create more productive food systems

### Why it matters

#### Planet:

Reduced environmental and climate impacts

#### Individuals:

Improved livelihood, reduced food insecurity

#### Communities:

Empowered and inclusive growth of communities

2025 Impact at a glance

# Meeting a critical need at a critical time

**4.8 M** last-mile pounds of food delivered

**3.97 M** last-mile meals delivered

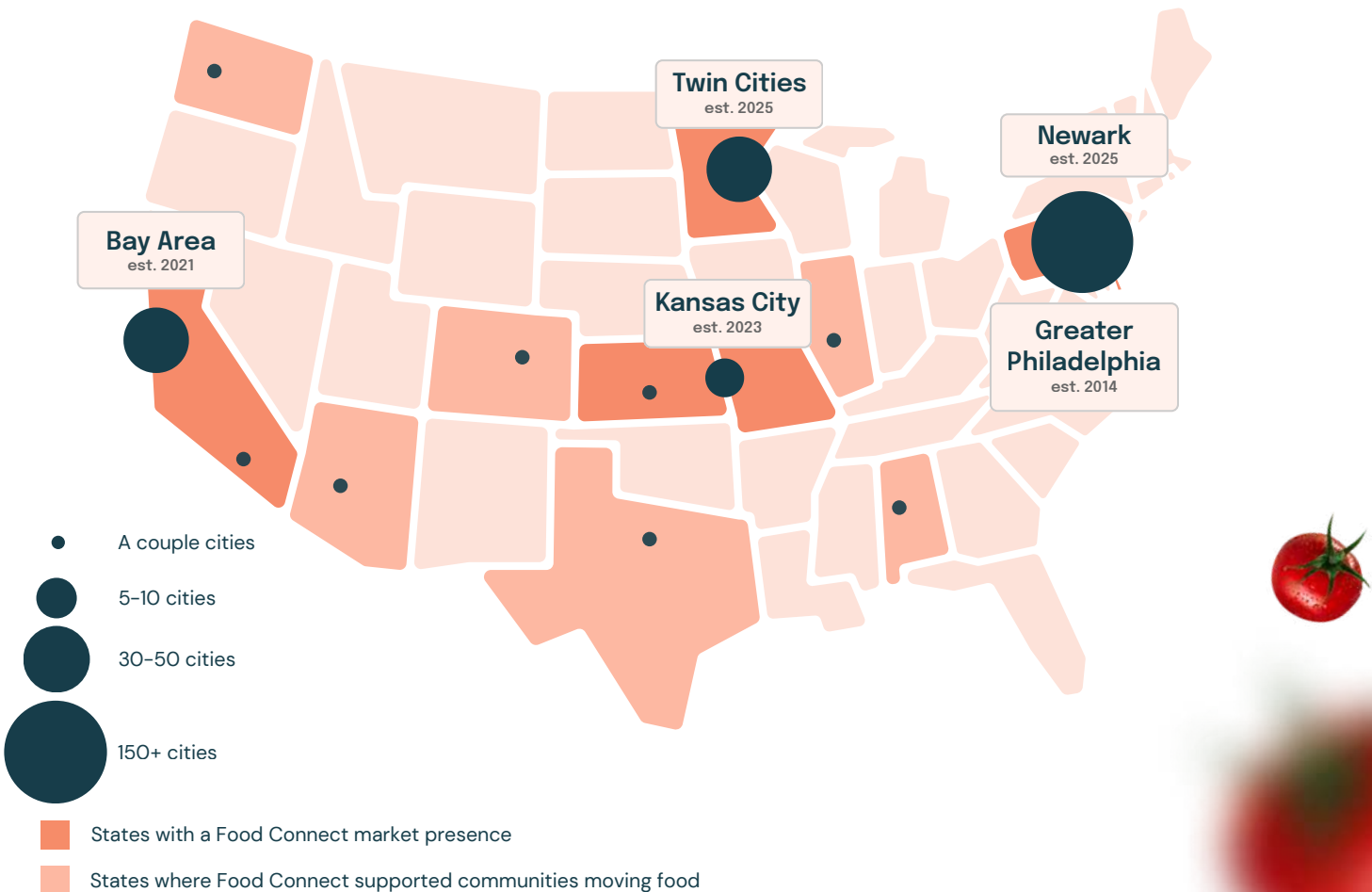
**1.99 M** beneficiaries served

**673 M** gallons of water saved

**5.04M** CO<sub>2</sub> emissions diverted

**109%** of budget fundraising goal achieved

Alongside 192 local partners, we moved food in **268 cities and towns across 12 states**



## 2025 Impact at a glance

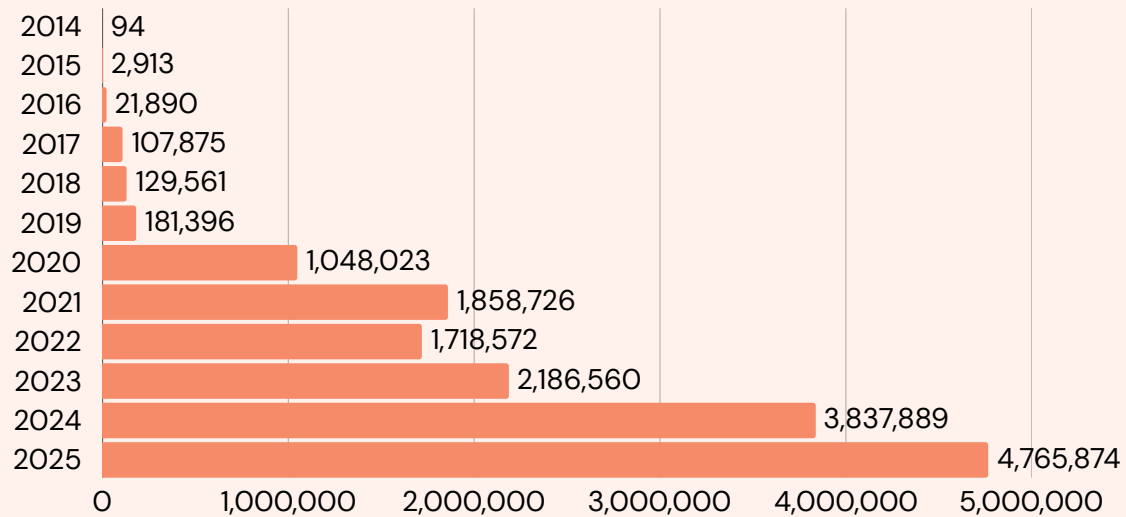
# Activating capacity for rapid response

11 years of growth

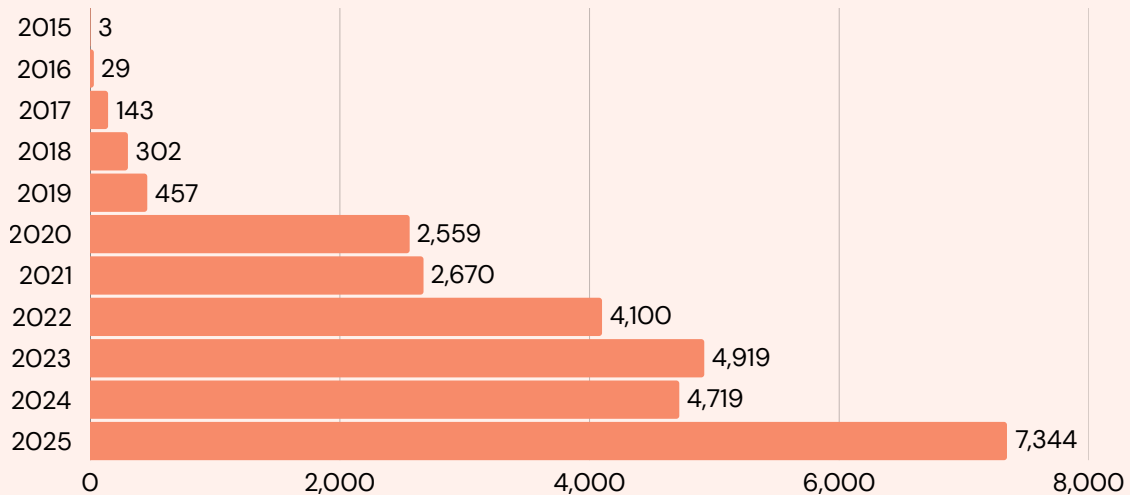
17 M total pounds of food rescued

14 M total last-mile meals delivered

### Total last-mile pounds delivered by year



### Average monthly deliveries of last-mile food





# Food Connect Greater Philadelphia

Founded in Philadelphia 11 years ago, Food Connect continues to build on its longest-standing market as an example for what sustained investment in local food access infrastructure can achieve. In 2025, Food Connect partnered with 29 community-based organizations to facilitate the last-mile delivery of surplus food, support school-based food distribution, and expand household delivery for seniors and food as medicine programs. And, in coalition with leaders in the Montgomery County Food Policy Council and the Philadelphia Food and Nutrition Security Task Force, we advocated for long-term solutions to food access to prepare for future crises.



*Teachers and students at Alain Locke Community School pack food delivered by Food Connect so it's ready for pickup by families.*

## Food Connect | Greater Philadelphia

# 2025 Impact at a glance

## 2.1 M

last-mile pounds  
delivered

## 1 M

people  
reached

## 1.8 M

last-mile meals  
delivered

### Partner Spotlight: The impact of multi-sector partnerships

When community feedback and local data from Pottstown, PA showed a growing need for nutritious food access, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) Pediatric Primary Care, Sunnybrook partnered with Food Connect to extend its Food as Medicine program to meet the need. Building on four years of impact at CHOP Norristown, families in Pottstown now participate in hands-on wellness activities like cooking, nutrition education, and gardening.

With financial support from the W. W. Smith Charitable Trust, this annual six-month program includes bi-weekly home-delivered food boxes with fresh produce, pantry staples, and recipes to use at home. Combined with wellness education, this consistently delivered box of resources is a model designed to improve health outcomes.

"What stands out most is how engaged families are in the Food as Medicine program. Seeing children take interest in nutrition and caregivers gain confidence in preparing healthy meals reflects just how meaningful this partnership is for the community."

**Tori Armstrong**  
Community Health Programs Coordinator  
of CHOP



*Families make caprese salads at CHOP's Food as Medicine program kickoff event.*



# Food Connect – Bay Area

Food Connect Bay Area reflects what is possible after 5 years of refining food rescue and last-mile delivery models while continuing to adapt to evolving challenges. This year, we responded to sudden disruptions to keep farm-to-community food distribution moving, expanded prepared meal delivery, and increased capacity during periods of heightened need. While operating dozens of programs with over 20 local partners, we also joined regional planning conversations with elected officials to share insights on how transportation infrastructure can increase access for hard-to-reach communities in both emergency response and long-term food system design.



*Community volunteers at Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco prepare food boxes with produce supplied by the SF Market and transported by Food Connect.*

Food Connect | Bay Area

## 2025 Impact at a glance

### 2.5 M

last-mile pounds  
delivered

### 1 M

people  
reached

### 2.1 M

last-mile meals  
delivered

### A critical moment: filling a void during federal funding cuts

In the spring, sudden federal cuts to the Local Food Purchasing Agreement (LFPA) program created an immediate gap for farmers and community organizations across the region. LFPA previously funded the purchase of fresh food from local farmers for use by food banks, schools and community institutions. When the cuts took effect with just one week's notice, partners like Veggielution faced a difficult reality: farmers had crops harvested and ready to distribute, but the funding to move that food into communities was suddenly gone.

Because of unplanned funding shortages across multiple partners' programs, we adapted quickly, halting planned routes for one week and reactivating them once the funding was restored. This ability to pause, pivot, and restart delivery on short notice has become a key part of how we show up during uncertainty and emergency response moments.



*The inside of a food box, ready for home delivery.*

### Celebrating community milestones

This year, we joined SF Market to celebrate surpassing the ten millionth pound of fresh produce distributed across the region over the past decade. This year alone, Food Connect Bay Area delivered approximately 825,000 pounds of that ten million to community organizations, schools, and distribution partners.



# Food Connect – Kansas City

As a growing market, Food Connect Kansas City is strengthening a regional food ecosystem shaped by community leadership and local solutions. This year, we provided reliable transportation that kept fresh food and pantry staples moving across communities, coordinated urgent food rescues, and expanded access to nutritious food for patients managing chronic disease. By working with community partners and local coalitions, these efforts are helping build a more connected, responsive system that meets both immediate needs and supports long-term community health.



*Food Connect Kansas City Driver Stephen Edwards and Regional Director Laura Smith after loading a van full of food boxes supplied by the Kansas City Food Hub.*

Food Connect | Kansas City

## 2025 Impact at a glance

**40.9 M**

 last-mile pounds  
delivered

**9.5 K**

 people  
reached

**25.9 K**

 last-mile meals  
delivered

### Partner Spotlight: Bridging the gap

Cross-Lines Community Outreach has long been a trusted anchor for families in Kansas City, offering food assistance, housing support, and essential services with dignity and care. Earlier this year, their team found themselves with nine pallets of food – roughly 18,000 pounds, the same weight of a school bus – that needed to be moved quickly so it could reach households relying on their programs. Cross Lines called on Food Connect Kansas City to help quickly transport that large volume of food.

Our team stepped in to coordinate the pickup, manage routing, and ensure the food reached the organizations and families who needed it. This immediate transportation assistance is at the core of what Food Connect Kansas City offers. When partners need logistical support, we help close the gap so more fresh food moves efficiently through the system and less goes to waste.

“Food Connect has made an incredible difference for the families we serve at Cross-Lines. Their support helps us rescue and distribute fresh, nutritious food for our community, and we are so grateful for the continued partnership.”

**Marione Rangel**  
Community Market Manager of Cross-Lines  
Community Outreach



*Marione Rangel, Cross-Lines, and  
Laura Smith, Food Connect.*

**NEW MARKET**

# Food Connect - Twin Cities

In its first year, Food Connect Twin Cities showed how delivery infrastructure can be tailored to meet specific community needs from the start. Partnerships were formed quickly with community and healthcare organizations to transport culturally grounded foods to Native American elders and physician-prescribed food boxes to individuals managing chronic conditions. We provided last-mile delivery of more than 160K pounds of food while laying the foundation for a responsive, dignified, community-centered model.



*Community partners and funders celebrate the launch of Food Connect Twin Cities.*

Food Connect | Twin Cities

## 2025 Impact at a glance

**161 K**

 last-mile pounds  
delivered

**6.6 K**

 people  
reached

**134 K**

 last-mile meals  
delivered

### The founding of Food Connect Twin Cities

Across the Twin Cities, organizations have been working for decades to strengthen nutrition access, support community wellness and reduce barriers rooted in inequity. Earlier in 2025, community leaders shared that while they have nutritious food available and community-centered programs ready to distribute it, limited transportation capacity typically means too much food is at risk of not reaching the families who need it most.

Food Connect Twin Cities was invited into these conversations and asked to help fill a clear gap. Our role was simple but essential: provide dependable, high-quality last-mile food delivery so partners can focus on providing healthcare, cultural programming, youth support and reliable access to fresh food.



*A Food Connect Driver's car, packed with food boxes ready for home delivery.*

“Since partnering with Food Connect Twin Cities, the difference has been remarkable. Our elders have shared how much more confident they feel knowing that their food will arrive on time and intact. It is more than just a delivery; it is a demonstration of respect and reliability that our community truly values.”

**Theresa Halvorson-Lee**  
Director, Department of Indian Work





NEW MARKET

# Food Connect – Newark

Since launching in October of 2025, Food Connect Newark focused on aligning with a strong network of local leaders already advancing food access solutions. In response to SNAP benefit delays, Food Connect joined a coalition of community organizations working to transport food to emergency neighborhood hubs, helping ensure timely and reliable distribution. These early efforts reflect our deliberate approach to strengthening existing systems and supporting community-led solutions through last-mile delivery infrastructure.



*Food Connect attends an emergency meeting held by Newark Mayor Baraka to solve food access challenges due to SNAP benefit delays.*

Food Connect | Newark

## 2025 Impact at a glance

### 71.7 K

last-mile pounds  
delivered

### 10.1 K

people  
reached

### 60 K

last-mile meals  
delivered

### A Coordinated Community Response to SNAP Benefit Delays

As Newark’s network of community organizations mobilized to meet rising food access needs, Mayor Ras Baraka convened more than 100 organizations to respond at five emergency community hubs. With food being prepared for distribution, ensuring it could move quickly and reliably across the city became an immediate priority.

We partnered with Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity, Inc. (MEND), a hunger relief network rooted in Essex County, to help bridge this gap. MEND facilitated food sourcing and distribution for the hubs, while we coordinated transportation to move food efficiently to each neighborhood. By managing routing, pickups, and delivery, Food Connect provided the logistics expertise to support a broader, community-led effort to quickly move food where it was needed most.



#### Joining the Food & Health Equity Coalition

While building relationships across the city, we joined the Food & Health Equity Coalition of Essex County, a collaboration of more than 90 organizations, working across sectors to address food insecurity and advance health equity. Through this coalition, we are contributing to conversations about how transportation infrastructure can support a more coordinated, reliable system.



*A pallet of food ready to be picked up and redistributed.*

## How systems shift when communities lead

# From response to resilience

In 2025, our work extended beyond moving food to helping shape how food systems function over time. With our partners, we made transportation more visible, coordinated, and investable, laying the groundwork for more dependable and equitable food access.

### Policy & advocacy

Transportation was increasingly recognized as core food infrastructure rather than a secondary service. Across regions, we worked with local elected officials, public agencies, and cross-sector partners to elevate the critical role of last-mile delivery in food access, public health, and emergency preparedness to better shape how funding flows, resources are allocated, and systems are sustained over time.

EXAMPLE

**In Philadelphia, we advocated for rapid relief funding** to reach neighborhood pantries, mutual-aid networks, and cultural organizations serving SNAP-impacted households, helping unlock \$4.2M in immediate support for grassroots partners responding to the crisis.



*Kate Colyer, Senior Regional Director of Greater Philadelphia testifies at an emergency City Council hearing regarding SNAP benefit delays*

## How systems shift when communities lead

### Strengthening local capacity

Partners didn't have to solve transportation challenges alone. We worked alongside funders, community organizations, and public partners to strengthen coordination, align delivery pathways, and expand what local systems can do, supporting more responsive, community-informed approaches in moments of both stability and disruption.

EXAMPLE

**In Kansas City, we participated in GreenLight Fund's "Share Your Voice" Community Consultants convening, learning directly from residents whose experiences shape how their food systems will function in practice. This experience informed how we coordinated with partners locally in Kansas City and continue to guide how we center community voice in our work across markets.**



*Megha Kulshreshtha, CEO and Founder attends the "Share Your Voice" convening to learn from GreenLight Fund's Community Consultants.*



## How systems shift when communities lead

### Sector leadership & learning

In partnership with local coalitions and cross-sector leaders, we contributed to a shared understanding of what effective food access systems require. Together, we translated logistics, data, and community insights into tools and recommendations that helped inform coordinated response efforts and more resilient system design.

EXAMPLE

**In the Bay Area, we worked in coalition alongside partners** in the Food and Agriculture Action Coalition Towards Sovereignty (FAACTS), to prepare for expected strain on food access organizations by sharing logistics insights and advocating for city-level policy changes and philanthropic support to fill federal funding gaps.



*Food Connect attends the annual FAACTS summit to learn, contribute and collaborate.*



## How we steward resources

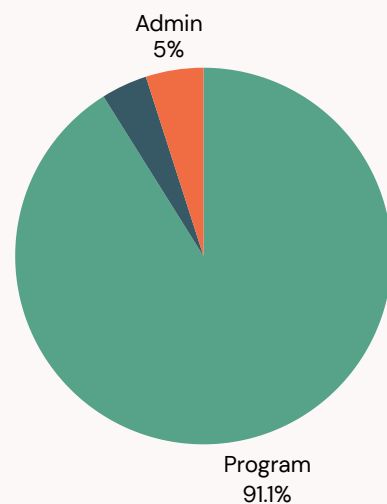
# Resourcing the response

In a year marked by growing need and uncertainty, these investments helped communities respond in real time, moving food more reliably, strengthening local partnerships, and supporting solutions grounded in dignity. The numbers below reflect how resources were directed to strengthen both immediate response and long-term system capacity.

## Total expenses: \$2.74M

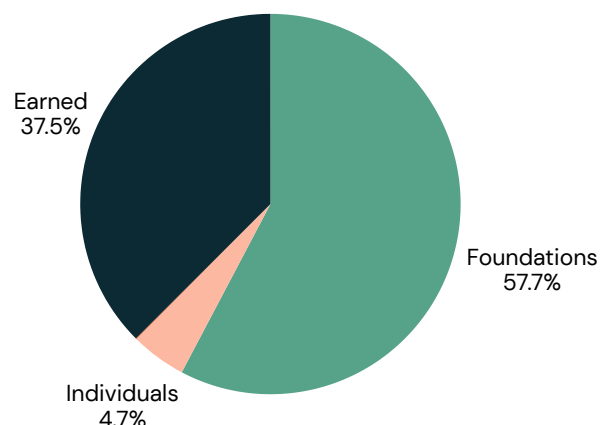
92% of spending supports direct aid and program delivery

- **\$2.5 M Program:** Food sourcing, logistics, and distribution in partnership with community organizations
- **\$125k Admin:** Core operations that ensure reliability and scale
- **\$101 k Fundraising:** Resources that sustain and grow the work



## Total income: \$2.89M

- Foundations: \$1,665,977
- Individuals: \$136,103
- Corporate: \$2,000
- Earned Revenue: \$1,082,264



## How we steward resources

# Verified and accountable

Our commitment to transparency goes beyond reporting totals. We provide detailed financial information to show how resources fuel our work supporting efficient last-mile delivery of food, local community-led efforts, and long-term system improvements.



View full audited financial statements on our website at:  
[foodconnectgroup.org/about-us/financials](https://foodconnectgroup.org/about-us/financials)



# With gratitude



We're deeply grateful to the partners, supporters, and leaders who make it possible for us to move food effectively and strengthen the local systems communities rely on.

## To our funders

Thank you for investing in infrastructure, not just outcomes, and supporting reliable delivery capacity and long-term system strength.

## To our food donors

Thank you for your dedication to your local communities. Turning food surplus into food access starts with you.

## To our community partners

Thank you to all of the community organizations, clinics, pantries, food aggregators, farmers and grassroots leaders we move with! Your leadership keeps this work grounded in what communities truly need.

### A big thank you to some of our funders and partners

- ✔ Barra Foundation
- ✔ Claneil Foundation
- ✔ Crankstart
- ✔ Green Family Foundation
- ✔ GreenLight Fund
- ✔ Healthcare Improvement Foundation (HCIF)
- ✔ Mighty Arrow Family Foundation
- ✔ San Francisco Department of the Environment
- ✔ Tigris Foundation
- ✔ W.W. Smith Charitable Trust
- ✔ Wawa Foundation
- ✔ Zoom Cares



## What comes next

Looking ahead, we remain committed to strengthening the systems that move food where it matters most. Our focus for the years ahead:

**Advancing logistics as essential infrastructure:** Continue strengthening last-mile delivery systems so food can move reliably, efficiently, and with dignity in every community.

**Deepening community-rooted impact:** Expand local partnerships and delivery models that build trust, grow capacity, and strengthen the organizations closest to the need.

**Measuring, learning, and improving together:** Deepen how community voice and data inform decisions to strengthen how food access systems operate and evolve over time.



The challenges ahead are real, but so is the opportunity to build something stronger. Lasting progress will require collaboration across funders, community organizations, and public partners working together to shape more reliable, equitable systems.

### Join us in this work:

- Invest in stronger, more reliable food systems
- Subscribe for updates and insights
- Partner with us to expand local impact
- Follow and amplify this work on social



Together, we can build the infrastructure communities need to thrive.

[www.foodconnectgroup.org](http://www.foodconnectgroup.org)

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Food  
Connect

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