



VERMONTERS FEEDING VERMONTERS

Report to House Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry on Expenditure of State Funds Fiscal Year 2026



VERMONTERS FEEDING VERMONTERS (V F V)

Vermonters Feeding Vermonters, as passed in Act 34 of 2025, provides fresh, local, nutritious food to people facing hunger, plays a vital role in the state economy by building strong relationships with and supporting Vermont farmers, and reduces our environmental footprint.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Everyone in Vermont deserves equitable access to fresh, local, nutritious and culturally meaningful food.
- Neighbors may see better health outcomes if they have access to and eat fresh, local food.
- Strong relationships between Vermont Foodbank and Vermont farmers help provide stability to farming operations, while also getting food to those who need it most.
- Our food system is strengthened, and our economy benefits when we keep our food dollars in-state, rather than purchasing food elsewhere.
- Our environmental footprint is reduced because the food is sourced and served locally.



V F V PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Large-Scale Wholesale Direct Purchasing – State funding support in FY26
2. Grants to Vermont Foodbank Partners to Purchase Locally
3. Special Projects and Grants to Foodbank Partners for Culturally Responsive Foods

VFV PROGRAM GOALS & STRATEGIES RELATED TO STATE INVESTMENT

- Purchase a diversity of fresh, nutritious, locally-produced food.
- Pay a fair price to farmers.
- Provide farmers with large-scale contracts that provide them increased security of predictable sales, volumes, and prices.





LARGE-SCALE WHOLESALE DIRECT PURCHASING WITH STATE INVESTMENT FY26

- **\$1.03 Million** in purchases
 - \$500k was State FY26 appropriation
- 21 Direct Purchase Farm Partners
- Over 40 Types of Produce
- 236+ Vermont Foodbank Network and Program Partners supported statewide distribution via Food Shelves, Meal Sites, VeggieVanGo School and Hospital sites, SASH and via other food access partners.
- **\$1.65 Million** is the estimated contribution to the Vermont economy **
 - \$800k is estimated State contribution to VT economy in FY26

** Based on large-scale wholesale food purchasing research conducted by the Center for Rural Studies at UVM, every dollar spent on locally produced food contributes an additional 60 cents into the Vermont economy.

VFV DIRECT PURCHASE BENEFITS

- FULL PALLET QUANTITY PURCHASES
- WILLINGNESS TO PURCHASE SURPLUS CROPS
- FLEXIBILITY ON VARIETIES OF PURCHASED COMMODITIES
- CONTRACTS PLANNED OVER 6 MONTHS AHEAD OF DELIVERIES



Photo credit: Vermont Foodbank

LARGE-SCALE WHOLESALE DIRECT PURCHASING: FARMER IMPACTS

- 100% of participating growers reported **increased stability** related to selling large reliable quantities and **increased gross sales**.
- 100% of participating growers reported **increased amount of food going to families with limited income** and/or who struggle with food insecurity.
- 92% of participating growers reported **increased amount of food** that their business sells/keeps **in Vermont**.

***data collected from VFV large-scale produce farmers during Winter 2025.

“It feels really good to know that, yes, our food is going to Vermonters and **staying within the state.**”

“By working with you, you are increasing the amount of our product that **goes to food insecure families.**”



Photo Credit: Intervale Center (Burlington),

LARGE-SCALE WHOLESALE DIRECT PURCHASING: FARMER IMPACTS

- “A sure sale at a **reasonable price.**”
- “The **stability** of knowing that we can sell significant amounts.”
- “The **efficiency** that comes with these large orders.”
- “I was **able to hire** another full-time person and plan for that.”
- “We’ve probably doubled in size on **acreage** since we started the program.”
- “Allowed us to invest in that **equipment** that just makes farming more **sustainable.**”
- “You’re one of the most **reliable** customers.”

★★ Quotes from VFV large-scale produce farmers





QUESTIONS:

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