



REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY
Increasing access to affordable, healthy food

Application Grant Program
Funding Guidelines 2016

REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY FUNDING PRIORITY

The HNH Foundation has long prioritized the health and well-being of all vulnerable children and their families and has identified Food Insecurity as a funding priority for 2016.

Food insecurity is a condition experienced when “access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources” (USDA 2009). Food insecurity among young children has been shown to have significant and lifelong effects on learning, development, productivity, physical and psychological health, bodyweight and family life.

Households with incomes below the poverty level, those with children, those headed by a single woman and Black and Hispanic households are at greater risk of food insecurity. According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), 76,664 households in New Hampshire experienced low or very low food security in 2013. In addition to those with lower income, research conducted by the Carsey Institute at UNH, found food insecurity in New Hampshire is greater among those who live farther from a grocery store. Based on these two risk factors, 57 of 234 New Hampshire towns and cities are at highest or high risk of food insecurity, with most located in the northern and western regions of the state.ⁱ

Federal nutrition programs and other state and local feeding programs are important sources of food for families and children at risk of food insecurity. But children in New Hampshire still go hungry and suffer the effects of food insecurity. Many federal programs are not fully utilized by those who might benefit from them, while many local programs (e.g. food pantries, community suppers) are under-resourced and/or have waiting lists. In addition, many New Hampshire residents have difficulty accessing traditional cultural foods as well as affordable, fresh and locally-produced foods.

REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY FUNDING STRATEGIES

The purpose of HNH Foundation’s Food Insecurity funding is to reduce food insecurity by increasing opportunities for children and families to access affordable, healthy food.

Applications for grant funding to address Food Insecurity must address one or more of the following strategies:

1. Support for research-informed, emerging and promising practices to increase participation in federal nutrition and food assistance programs for children and families.

Federal nutrition programs – SNAP, WIC, and child nutrition programs like school lunch and breakfast – are essential programs for families struggling to make ends meet. Yet many of these programs are underutilized. For example, according to the national Food Research and Action Center, only 39.7% of New Hampshire students eligible to participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast program did so in 2014. If New Hampshire was able to increase participation to 70%, an additional 12,469 children would receive breakfast and the State would receive nearly \$3.2M in additional federal funding.

The HNH Foundation will consider proposals that identify and implement system-change solutions to address barriers to participation in federal nutrition programs. The Foundation is particularly interested in innovative proposals for increasing participation in School Breakfast, Summer Meals, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Women, Infants and Children Program in communities and neighborhoods where high food insecurity exists.

2. Support research-informed, emerging and promising practices to increase availability of and access to affordable, culturally appropriate fresh and local foods for children and families at risk for food insecurity

New Hampshire, like much of the country, is experiencing an explosion of interest in fresh, locally-sourced foods, and building local food production, processing and distribution systems to respond to that interest. The *New England Food Vision* (2014) proposes “healthy food for all” and suggests that in order for locally produced foods to be truly accessible for everyone, we must ensure affordability. And as already noted, for a growing number of New Hampshire residents, access to traditional cultural foods is important as well.

The HNH Foundation will consider proposals that identify and address barriers and challenges to access to affordable fresh and local foods by children and families at risk of food insecurity. The Foundation is particularly interested in proposals from:

- safety net providers and federal nutrition program operators to increase use of locally produced food,
- local food producers, processors and distributors to strengthen their capacity for providing affordable and culturally appropriate products.

Examples include: Use of SNAP benefits for purchase of fresh and local foods, co-locating fresh food markets at social service agencies, expanding production and distribution capacity of local farmers, establishing farm-to-school and farm-to-institution partnerships, and distribution of fresh food by safety net providers. Approaches that build or strengthen new partnerships, demonstrate innovative program models, and lead to structural change are strongly encouraged.

3. Data collection, analysis, communication and advocacy to increase awareness of food insecurity across NH and build public support for policies and practices that increase participation in federal nutrition programs and increase access to affordable, culturally appropriate, fresh and local foods for children and families at risk for food insecurity.

In New Hampshire there are many organizations responding to food insecurity by providing food to those in need through food pantries, community kitchens and other safety net programs. What used to be considered “emergency” food sources have become relied upon by families who stretch their limited food dollars with a combination of federal nutrition programs and other community-based supports.

While these programs provide essential services, long term reduction of food insecurity requires sustained education and state-level advocacy to build awareness and capacity for advancing and institutionalizing long-term systemic solutions.

The HNH Foundation invites proposals from individual organizations and coalitions engaging in data collection, analysis, strategic communication, education and effective advocacy to:

- Increase awareness of food insecurity and food system vulnerability,
- Advance strategies that increase participation in federal nutrition programs, and
- Support the viability of New Hampshire's local food system

ⁱ Mapping Food Insecurity and Food Sources in New Hampshire Cities and Towns, Barb Wauchope and Sally Ward, Carsey Institute, UNH, Spring 2012