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New York State Provides Additional Details on $25 Million in Funding for Food Banks Through Nourish New York Initiative

Funding Will Be Distributed Regionally to Food Banks and Emergency Food Providers Based on Need

Food Banks Will Use Funding for Drive-Through Food Distribution Events, Voucher Programs at Grocery Stores, and the Direct Purchase of Products From New York Producers and Processors

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and Department of Health provided additional details on the distribution of the $25 million Nourish New York initiative, as announced yesterday by Governor Cuomo. Funding will be allocated regionally and based on need, from the State's special public health emergency fund, for food banks and emergency food providers across the state. The Nourish New York initiative, launched by the Governor on Monday, is working to quickly reroute New York's surplus agricultural products to the populations who need them most through New York's network of food banks.

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "Nourish New York will be a lifeline for our families and our farmers who have been struggling with changes brought on by COVID-19. The agricultural industry has continued to give back to New York communities during this time; however, they have seen devastating losses financially as a result of lost markets, such as schools and restaurants. I am grateful to the Governor and to the entire Nourish New York team for launching this critical program that will help people who are food insecure to access the nourishment that they need while providing much-needed relief for our farmers."

State Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker said, "During this pandemic response, we continue to come together as a statewide community, first to mobilize and expand our healthcare sector and now to help meet struggling New Yorkers' nutritional needs. Thanks to Governor Cuomo's $25 million Nourish initiative, we will leverage the state's robust agricultural sector to ensure that food is distributed throughout the state to those in need."

Through Nourish New York, the State is providing funding to New York food banks so they can purchase excess products, such as fruits and vegetables, from New York farmers and surplus dairy products from New York dairy manufacturers, to distribute directly to communities. Food banks are expected to receive funding and begin purchasing this week. Emergency food providers can spend the money allocated to them by doing any of the following:

- Setting up food-drive through events/giveaways (guidance available here (/charitable-food-drive-through-events-guidance));
- Distributing dairy vouchers that can be redeemed in grocery stores for products like cheese, yogurt, milk, sour cream, and butter, throughout the state, and/or;
- Purchasing products directly from New York dairy/food manufacturers for their feeding programs.

The majority of the funding will be used to purchase dairy products. Food banks and other emergency food providers will work with New York's dairy processing partners—Cabot Cheese, Chobani, Dairy Farmers of America, HP Hood, Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc., and others—to purchase pre-

packaged, consumer-ready products, such as milk, cheese, yogurt, sour cream, and cream cheese. The dairy cooperatives will use excess New York State milk to produce these products and are prepared to increase production to meet the rising demand. A dedicated portion of this award will be focused on the purchase of kosher items.

Funding distribution is as follows:

- **New York City Region:** $10,997,554
- **Westchester Region:** $985,605
- **Long Island Region:** $1,587,313
- **Capital/Hudson Valley Region (includes portion of North Country and Mohawk Valley):** $4,357,115
- **Central NY Region (includes portion of North Country and Mohawk Valley):** $2,202,404
- **Southern Tier Region:** $1,054,327
- **Western New York Region:** $2,129,463
- **Finger Lakes Region (includes portion of Southern Tier):** $1,686,218

A map of the food bank coverage areas is here (https://feedingnys.org/our-mission/) . The complete list of food banks and emergency food providers receiving funding is here (/nourish-ny-funding) . In addition, New York State will launch a web page dedicated to the Nourish New York initiative that help connect food banks to the surplus agricultural products across the State.

The State is also asking any philanthropies that would like to help the State's food banks to contact Fran Barrett, Director of Non-Profits at COVIDPhilanthropies@exec.ny.gov (mailto:COVIDPhilanthropies@exec.ny.gov) .

Secretary of State Rossana Rosado said, "During this unprecedented crisis, New Yorkers continue to come together to help those most in need and Nourish New York is the latest example of this. Under the leadership of Governor Cuomo, Nourish New York will help alleviate hunger for countless families and also bolster farmers throughout the state who stand ready to deliver in the ongoing response to COVID-19."

State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner Mike Hein said, “Food banks and emergency food providers have long played an important role in our efforts to ensure New Yorkers are able to feed themselves and their families and their importance has only been magnified during this unprecedented crisis. The Nourish New York Initiative will provide much-needed resources that will enable excess products from New York farmers to easily make their way to families and individuals in need. I want to thank Governor Cuomo for acting quickly to launch this effort that benefits our farmers and those struggling to afford food.”

Feeding New York Executive Director Dan Egan said, “Feeding New York State applauds Governor Cuomo's leadership in creating the Nourish New York Program. With these funds, our ten food banks will be able to significantly expand our partnerships with New York farmers and dairy producers, providing top quality food to our neighbors statewide. Communities suffering from the economic effects of this pandemic will get healthy food, and our productive farmers will have a market, through the Nourish New York program. Thanks to Governor Cuomo, we are FEEDING NEW YORK STATE.”

New York Farm Bureau President David Fisher said, “New York’s farmers are dedicated to growing and producing food for all New Yorkers. New York Farm Bureau has made it a decades long priority to get food to those in need, and we are grateful to Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Ball for launching the Nourish NY program when it is needed most. The commitment to moving more product from our farms to the food banks will provide nutritious meals across this state while also supporting farmers who are facing serious market loss in light of the pandemic.”

New York Apple Sales President and CEO Kaari Stannard said, “We applaud Governor Cuomo’s efforts to support our family farms and our workers and look forward to Nourish NY helping people put food on the table. We’re all in this together.”

Eden Valley Growers Operations Manager David Walczak said, “The announcement made on Monday regarding Nourish NY is very encouraging with the fact that our local vegetable season is beginning to

ramp up! Eden Valley Growers, Inc. promotes and markets for 35 plus growers from the Western New York area. The same area has been hit hard with the Coronavirus, second only to NYC metro area. The community also has an alarming high rate of diet-related diseases, particularly in the urban areas. Providing the food banks with dollars to support the growers and, in turn, the people in need is an awesome move by New York State."

Dairy Farmers of America Northeast Area Senior Director of Marketing, Council Affairs and Industry Relations, Jennifer Huson, said, "We are honored to partner with the State of New York to provide nutritious milk and dairy products to the people who need it most right now. Even though they are facing hardship in these uncertain times, our farm families remain dedicated in their commitment to supporting the communities in which we live and work."

Chobani President Peter McGuinness said, "It's about community, especially in these tough times. We're excited to partner with Nourish New York to do our part to help dairy farmers with their milk supply and fellow New Yorkers who are struggling to keep food on their tables."

HP Hood LLC spokesperson Lynne Bohan said, "We are pleased to be a part of Governor Cuomo's Nourish New York initiative, and to be providing more opportunities for consumers to have access to nutritious dairy products using milk sourced from New York's dairy farmers."

Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc. Chief Executive Officer Larry Webster said, "We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Nourish New York initiative to help feed our communities and ensure that the milk produced by our farmer-owners ends up being converted into delicious and nourishing dairy products. We are ready to supply milk, yogurt, and string cheese to food banks and other organizations that have the means to distribute these quickly to those in need."

Cabot Creamery Senior Vice President of Marketing Roberta MacDonald said, "It is an honor for the farm families who own Cabot to be part of the hunger solution in New York."

The Nourish New York Initiative is being led by:

- Kelly Cummings, Director of State Operations and Infrastructure

- Richard Ball, Commissioner of Agriculture
- Rossana Rosado, Secretary of State
- Karim Camara, Executive Director of the Office of Faith-Based Community Development Services
- Fran Barrett, Director of Non-Profits
- Mike Hein, Commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, New York food banks have seen a dramatic increase in demand, in some regions up to 200 percent, as many New Yorkers struggle to put food on the table. At the same time, New York's farmers and producers have been faced with their own unprecedented extreme financial difficulties. Many have lost up to 50 percent of their markets through the closure of schools and restaurants, leaving them without a place to sell their perishable products.

Nourish NY Funding
(/system/files/documents/2020/05/nourishny.pdf)

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Contact Agriculture and Markets and the Department of Health

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