

MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MEFAP)



Fiscal Year 2024 Core Food & MassGrown Summary Report

July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024



PREPARED BY



ON BEHALF OF



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“Operating a family farm can be complex, and your commitment to supporting local agriculture enables us to continue to do what we love to do—grow healthy food for others. Our long-standing relationship with GBFB provides us with additional access to market for our locally grown peaches, pears and apples and helps make it possible for us to continue to employ and support our eleven full-time orchard staff. Picked and packed to order, we take pride in the fruit we grow and are honored to provide fresh local produce to help feed our shared community.”

Jay Mofenson,
Lookout Farm, South Natick, MA

Highlights of Fiscal Year 2024

FOOD INSECURITY RATES REMAIN HIGH

Food Insecurity rates in Massachusetts remain high, growing by nearly **80%** since 2020.

The number of people seeking food assistance continues to increase, as demonstrated by the number of MA residents enrolled in SNAP benefits.

In January 2025, **more than 1.1 million** people were enrolled in SNAP—over 8,000 more than in January 2024.²

Although year-over-year national inflation rates have slightly improved in 2024, the cost of food in Massachusetts has remained high.

According to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap study, **the average cost of a meal in the Commonwealth is \$4.41**—the third highest of any state behind only Hawaii and Alaska.²

Over **900 emergency food programs** partnering with the **4 regional food banks** across the state were supported with products purchased with MEFAP funds.

In 2024, MA food banks partners collectively reported serving an estimated **882,000 people every month**.

As many as **1 in 3 adults** in MA faced food insecurity at some point in 2024.

Nearly **1 in 2 households** with children in the Commonwealth were food insecure in 2024, compared to 1 in 4 in 2019.¹

Total MEFAP funding in FY24 was **\$35.5M**, —a **\$5.5M increase** from FY23.

- ✓ A total of **34,268,750 meals** were provided through MEFAP, including over **13.3 million pounds of fresh produce**.
- ✓ In FY24, **36% more pounds of food** were distributed through MEFAP than in FY23—a total of **41,122,500 pounds**.
 - Of this total, **37,762,442 pounds** and **237 different food items** were distributed through the Core Food program between July 2023 and June 2024.
 - **3,360,058 pounds** and **162 different food items** were distributed through the Massachusetts Grown Initiative (MassGrown) between January and December 2024.
- ✓ Between July 2023 and June 2024, the FBCMA collectively distributed **111.7 million meals** or **134.1 million pounds of food across all food sources**, including MEFAP.
 - MEFAP-distributed food represented **31% of the total pounds** distributed by the four Massachusetts food banks in FY24.
- ✓ In FY24, **50.3% of all MEFAP dollars—a total of \$17.03M—was spent with Massachusetts-based suppliers to support local industry and economy**.
 - Of the 46 Core Food vendors, 30 were Massachusetts-based companies, comprising 46% of the Core Food spend.
- ✓ There were **53 total vendors** in FY24.
 - This includes 9 new vendors since FY23.
 - 30% of the core food vendors are based in Massachusetts.
 - **21 Massachusetts farms** were supported by MassGrown purchases through MEFAP.
 - Distribution of produce has tripled since 2020, and has increased by 11 million pounds.

¹ Department of Transitional Assistance facts and figures | Mass.gov

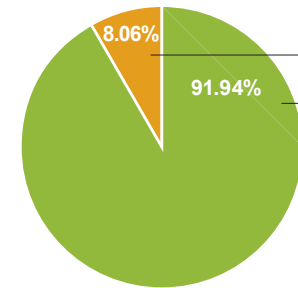
² “Opportunities to Improve Food Equity and Access in Massachusetts,” Greater Boston Food Bank.

MEFAP Fiscal Year 2024 Summary Report

About MEFAP

The Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP) provides food products to food insecure residents in the Commonwealth. The program has consistently supplied over 900 emergency food providers with quality, nutrient-dense foods and locally grown fresh produce through the statewide food bank network. Since FY21, it has also expanded to include locally sourced seafood.

MEFAP consists of two food purchasing programs:



MassGrown: (year-round)—Accounts for 8.06% of funding for food purchases

Core Food: (July to June)—Accounts for 91.94% of funding for food purchases

Both the Core Food and MassGrown programs within MEFAP are administered by The Greater Boston Food Bank on behalf of the Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts (FBCMA). This report summarizes the work of both programs for MEFAP Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24).

About The Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts

The Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts (FBCMA) includes The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts (FBWM) located in Chicopee, The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) located in Boston, Merrimack Valley Food Bank (MVFB) located in Lowell, and Worcester County Food Bank (WCFB) located in Shrewsbury. Each food bank is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation that distributes surplus, reclaimed and other donated foods, purchased food and foods provided by USDA through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). U.S. Census Bureau service area population and poverty statistics, as well as clients served, are used to determine the allocation of MEFAP funds to the four food banks. The distribution formula for FY24 MEFAP funds along with changes from FY23 percentages are detailed in Table 1 below.



We consider ourselves the 'backyard garden' to most Northeast U.S. markets, and particularly to MEFAP. Your support of our New England potato program has been instrumental to our success. Thank you once again for partnering with Irving Farms through the GBFB and MEFAP program."

Noah Winslow
Irving Farms, Caribou, Maine

TABLE 1
Allocation of FY24 MEFAP Funds within the Food Bank Coalition of MA

FOOD BANK	LOCATION	PERCENTAGE*	% CHANGE
GBFB	Boston	68.13%	↑ 0.04%
WCFB	Shrewsbury	12.11%	↓ -0.03%
FBWM	Hatfield	14.45%	→ 0.00%
MVFB	Lowell	5.31%	→ -0.01%

*Percentages based on U.S. Census and Feeding America statistics

Over 900 emergency food providers received MEFAP products in FY24.

These programs include:

- Pantries
- Meal Programs
- Shelters
- Soup kitchens
- Transitional Houses
- Health and Senior Centers



The statewide emergency food bank network reaches every community in the Commonwealth through their food distribution member partners, which serve individuals and families in need of food assistance. By reducing food costs for these partners and providing high-quality, nutritious food, MEFAP plays a vital role in reducing hunger and supporting nutrition in the Commonwealth.

While other food sources for food banks—including donations from food retailers, manufacturers and processors, as well as federal commodities received through the USDA—fluctuate significantly from year to year, MEFAP remains a stable source of healthy food products for FBCMA and the partners and clients it serves.

TABLE 2
FY24 Massachusetts Regional Food Banks Total Distribution*

FOOD BANK	TOTAL POUNDS FROM ALL SOURCES	% CHANGE	MEFAP % OF TOTAL POUNDS	% CHANGE
GBFB	104,629,969	↓ -2.5%	27.9%	↑ 37.7%
WCFB	9,316,350	↑ 19.3%	47.1%	↑ 16.1%
FBWM	16,220,412	↑ 26.1%	35.4%	↑ 14.2%
MVFB	3,921,683	↑ 10.2%	47.1%	↑ 22.0%
TOTAL	134,088,414	↑ 1.9%	30.7%	↑ 33.4%

*Table includes overall pounds distributed from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

TABLE 3
FY24 MEFAP Distribution*

FOOD BANK	MEFAP CORE FOOD	% CHANGE	MEFAP MASSGROWN	% CHANGE	MEFAP TOTAL POUNDS	MEFAP TOTAL MEALS	% CHANGE
GBFB	26,746,546	↑ 38.1%	2,394,357	↑ 3.1%	29,140,903	24,284,086	↑ 34.3%
WCFB	4,115,933	↑ 44.8%	272,920	↓ -16.7%	4,388,853	3,657,378	↑ 38.4%
FBWM	5,201,170	↑ 51.4%	543,875	↓ -1.8%	5,745,045	4,787,538	↑ 44.0%
MVFB	1,698,793	↑ 36.6%	148,906	↑ 13.0%	1,847,699	1,539,749	↑ 34.3%
TOTAL	37,762,442	↑ 40.4%	3,360,058	→ 0.7%	41,122,500	34,268,750	↑ 36.0%

*Table includes Core Food pounds distributed from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, and MassGrown pounds distributed between Jan 1, 2024 & December 31, 2024.

Fiscal Year 2024 in Review

Background

Recent statewide data reveals that as many as 1 in 3 people in Massachusetts are food insecure, and that the persistent need our partners are experiencing has more than doubled over the last five years. Based on this significant need, the FBCMA has responded with increased purchasing to distribute more food. MEFAP plays a vital role in this response, enabling Massachusetts' food bank system to provide a consistent and reliable supply of quality, nutrient-rich foods, locally grown fresh produce and staple items to food pantries and other feeding programs across the state.

Total Food Distributed by FBCMA

Between July 2023 and June 2024, the FBCMA collectively distributed 134.1 million pounds of food across all food sources, including MEFAP—a 2% increase over the prior year.

41.12 million pounds of this food was from MEFAP, accounting for 31% of the overall volume of food distributed by the four Massachusetts food banks—an increase of 8% over FY23. This increase was driven by two factors:

- 1 An overall increase in funding, which allowed for more food purchasing
- 2 Other sources of food—including USDA and donated food—decreased by 9% from FY23 to FY24. MEFAP filled the gap that this shortfall created, with MEFAP food increasing by 8% over FY23 as a share of overall food distributed.

Additional MEFAP funding, alongside private donations, has sustained elevated purchasing, allowing food banks to continue to increase and sustain food distribution levels that meet the ongoing historic need for food assistance in the Commonwealth. MEFAP remains an important and reliable buffer to the volatility of other unstable product sources and a significant and critical source in the statewide effort to combat food insecurity.

The stability of MEFAP contracts and supplier relationships underscores the unique and critical role MEFAP plays in the state's hunger relief and food systems. Vendor contracts in Core Food ensure a steady supply of food items to agencies, including eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, pasta, 100% juice and poultry. Core Food funds set aside for produce offer additional flexibility, increasing produce variety for agencies and providing a secondary support stream for Massachusetts farms when needed.



For the past five years, we have proudly participated in the Mass Grown program. The program's ability to move large volumes of produce has been especially crucial to bridging the gap between peak harvests. The food bank's reliable orders of overwinter onions, broccoli, Cabbages, spinach, carrots and other crops have provided essential supplemental income during early spring and late fall, extending our sales window into the winter months with storage crops. Finally, their fair pricing ensures healthy cash flow during traditionally slower periods."

Harrison Bardwell
Bardwell Farm, Hatfield, MA

Prioritizing Nutrition

Nutrition continues to be a foundational priority for MEFAP purchases. The FBCMA's purchasing reflects the desires of neighbors we serve, prioritizing high-quality, nutrient-dense products including produce, proteins and dairy.

In FY24, **96.7% of distributed pounds of food** met the coalition's standards for nutrition, based on saturated fat, sodium and sugar content.



Cost of Food

Cost of food remained a focal point last year. MEFAP saw overall cost per pound decrease, while the cost of local food remained high, underscoring the expense of Massachusetts-grown food.

- Overall, MEFAP's cost per pound decreased by 16.17%, from \$0.97/lb. in FY23 to \$0.82/lb. in FY24.
- The cost per pound for Core Food decreased by 19.1%, from \$1.01/lb. in FY23 to \$0.82/lb. in FY24.
- The MassGrown cost per pound increased by 20.5%, from \$.67/lb. in FY23 to \$.81/lb. in FY24.

Prioritizing Local

While the main objective of MEFAP is to provide food products for food insecure populations by balancing cost, variety and nutrition, care is taken to prioritize local purchasing and support Massachusetts industry where economically and logistically feasible.

- In FY24, 50.3% or \$17.03M, of all MEFAP dollars were spent with Massachusetts-based suppliers to support local industry and economy.
- For Core Food purchases, 46% of funding was spent with Massachusetts-based vendors.
- 100% of MassGrown purchases were from local Massachusetts farms.

Program Funding

At \$35.5M, MEFAP funding in FY24 (July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024) increased by \$5.5M from the prior year. A breakdown of the funding is contained in Table 4 below and a summary history of MEFAP funding and meals distributed is contained in Table 10. In FY24, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) managed both the food purchasing funds, including funding for the MassGrown and operation funds.

TABLE 4
FY24 MEFAP Funding

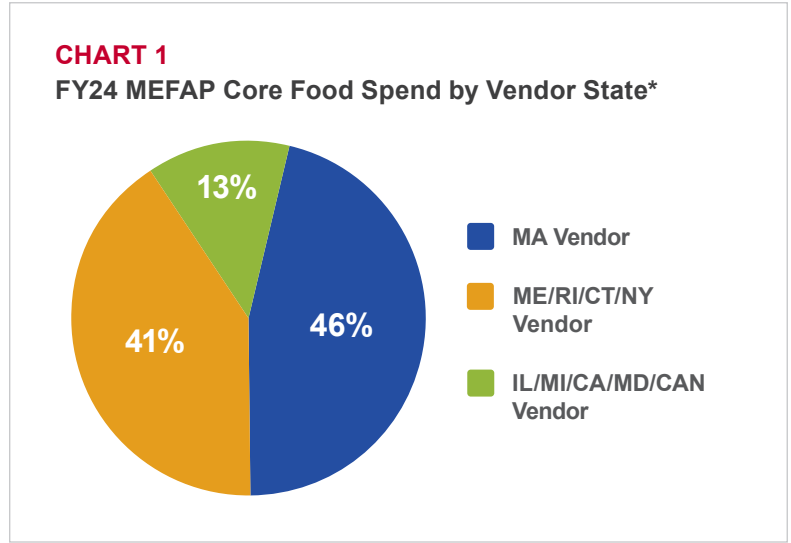
PROGRAM	FY24 FUNDING
Core Food Funding	\$31,083,390.12
MassGrown	\$2,726,609.88
Operation Funding	\$1,000,000.00
MDAR Administrative Fee	\$690,000.00
TOTAL FUNDING	\$35,500,000.00



MEFAP Food Purchases: Core Food and MassGrown Initiative

Core Food

The Core Food program supports purchases across a wide variety of product categories, allowing the FBCMA to consistently distribute a broad and sustainable assortment of key nutritious products to clients in need through distribution sites. Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, FBCMA purchased and distributed 37.76 million pounds of food through the Core Food program, accounting for 92% of total MEFAP distribution in FY24. In FY24, 46% of all Core Food funds were spent with Massachusetts-based vendors. See Chart 1 below for a breakdown of Core Food spend by vendor location.



*Vendor state indicates location of company headquarters.

“As an organization that is working at the intersection of farmer viability and food access, the MEFAP program and the percentage allocated to Massachusetts suppliers has made a significant impact on both Boston Food Hub and our farming community. Our partnership with the food banks to source locally grown, fresh produce has been tremendously beneficial to the growth of our food hub program, increasing market access for all farmers in Massachusetts and adding incremental revenue for many of our partner farms.”

Usha Thakrar
Boston Food Hub/Boston Area Gleaners, Acton, MA



Core Food FY24 Bid and Contracts

The majority of food purchased through the Core Food program is sourced from vendors selected through a competitive bid process. Annual contracts for all items (excluding produce and seafood) are awarded to vendors whose submitted bids offered the best value to the food banks and the state based on a combination of factors, including:

- Product pricing
- Logistical capabilities (service all 4 locations)
- Price time frames
- Local vendor location vs. out-of-state vendor location
- Product quality and nutritional value
- Company service record and past performance

Food safety documentation is an important Core Food Bid requirement to safeguard populations served by FBCMA and to remain aligned with the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act. Bidders must provide letters of material guarantee from all manufacturers represented and third-party food safety audit certificates for all food processing facilities. All four food banks were very satisfied with the customer service supplied by the 14 awarded Core Food vendors. Table 5 below summarizes the award by vendor.

TABLE 5
FY24 Core Food Bid Vendors

VENDOR	LOCATION	ITEMS AWARDED	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Port Royal Sales	Woodbury, NY	Canned Fruit & Vegetables, Beans, Spaghetti Sauce, Tuna, Quick Oats, Pasta	\$3,645,159.52	\$4,313,614.84	↑ 18.34%
Broccoli Associates	Utica, NY	Poultry, Cheese, Halal Drumsticks, Shelf Stable Milk	\$3,026,389.86	\$4,018,896.25	↑ 32.80%
B&B Trading Corporation	Boston, MA	Poultry & Pork	\$1,018,647.18	\$2,344,644.25	↑ 130.17%
Hillandale Farms	Bozrah, CT	Fresh Eggs	\$2,155,580.25	\$2,207,738.70	↑ 2.42%
New England Food Bkg. Inc.	Stoughton, MA	Ground Beef, Frozen Vegetables, Rice	\$798,747	\$1,982,019.58	↑ 148.14%
Feeding America	Chicago, IL	Canned Vegetables, Cereal, Mac & Cheese, Soup	\$1,743,731.91	\$1,501,523.14	↓ -13.89%
Performance Food Group	Springfield, MA	Yogurt & Oatmeal	\$2,681,889.07	\$1,440,909.58	↓ -46.27%
The Leavitt Corporation	Everett, MA	Peanut Butter	\$750,388.80	\$1,315,137.60	↑ 75.26%
CEBEV	Chicago, IL	Fruit Juice	\$836,136.40	\$980,081.86	↑ 17.22%
F&AM, Inc. dba Value Added Food Sales	Wayland, MI	Almond Milk & Canned Chicken	\$0.00	\$907,056.72	N/A
DFA Dairy Brands/ Garelick Farms	Franklin, MA	Fresh Milk	\$310,238.88	\$425,697.71	↑ 37.22%
Transnational Foods, Inc	Miami, FL	Cereal	\$0.00	\$191,732.80	N/A
Nemco Food Trading Inc.	Lakeville, MA	Canned Vegetables	\$0.00	\$166,339.90	N/A
Burnette Foods	Elk Rapids, MI	Applesauce	\$997,484.68	\$163,520.00	↓ -83.61%

Core Food Seafood

FBCMA continues to support the local seafood program established in FY21. The seafood program consists of a continued partnership with two Massachusetts-based seafood organizations. In FY24, we expanded this program by adding two additional local seafood vendors. The program supports the local seafood industry while providing an additional source of nutritious protein items to food insecure populations.

- Since the local seafood purchasing program began, the FBCMA has tripled its overall spend on local seafood and more than doubled the number of pounds distributed.
- Total local seafood support increased by 6.5% in dollar volume compared to FY23.

TABLE 6
FY24 Core Food Seafood Vendors

VENDOR	LOCATION	ITEMS PURCHASED	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Association	Chatham, MA	Clam Chowder, Haddock Chowder, Provençal Stew	\$528,710.00	\$922,740.00	↑ 74.53%
Boston Sword & Tuna	Boston, MA	Pollock, Salmon Tails	\$1,260,575.60	\$895,424.00	↓ -28.97%
<i>New Vendor</i> Eastern Fisheries	New Bedford, MA	Flounder & Cod	\$0.00	\$57,975.00	N/A
<i>New Vendor</i> North Coast Seafoods Corp.	Boston, MA	Flounder	\$0.00	\$30,000.00	N/A
Total			\$1,789,285.60	\$1,906,139.00	↑ 6.53%

TABLE 7
Additional Core Food Vendors

VENDOR	LOCATION	ITEMS PURCHASED	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Reed Farm, LLC	Sunderland, MA	Poultry	\$0.00	\$16,965.53	N/A

*Table represents funds spent outside of bid process



“When the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance wanted to connect your fishing community to people facing food insecurity across the state, The Greater Boston Food Bank became our crucial partner. Together, with MEFAP support, we built a program that to date has delivered almost 860,000 pounds of haddock chowder, clam chowder, and fish stew to every corner of the Commonwealth.”

Seth Rolbein
Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance

Core Food Produce

Core Food produce orders are placed based on weekly availability and pricing from a wide pool of in-state and out-of-state farms, produce sheds, suppliers, and brokers. In addition to the \$23.88M in Core Food awarded spending through the 14 awarded vendors and five Massachusetts seafood and poultry vendors detailed above, an additional \$7.25M of Core Food funds were spent on produce—a 61% increase compared to the prior year.

To increase the volume of fresh produce in the program and help keep overall costs per pound low, **GBFB coordinated purchases of Grade A produce items from a large pool of vendors throughout the year.**

Table 8 provides a breakdown of the spending of these Core Food produce funds. Special attention was paid to these produce purchases to not interfere with MassGrown Initiative ordering. Items sourced were either not available through MassGrown or were ordered off-season.

TABLE 8
FY24 Core Food Produce Vendors

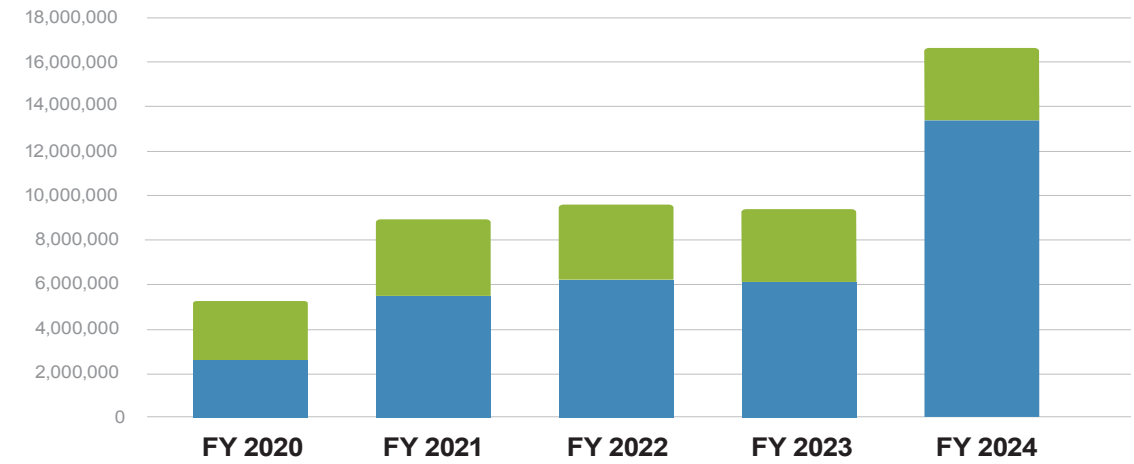
VENDOR	LOCATION	ITEMS PURCHASED	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Tourtellot & Co.	Warwick, RI	Apples, Bananas, Berries/Grapes, Cabbages, Citrus, Cooking Greens (Collards/Kale), Cooking Vegetables, Corn, Exotic Fruit, Melons, Miscellaneous Produce, Onions, Peppers, Pineapples, Potatoes, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Salad Vegetables, Squash, Stone Fruit, Tomatoes	\$1,064,362.50	\$1,387,401.66	↑ 30.35%
New England Banana	Chelsea, MA	Bananas, Exotic Fruit, Miscellaneous Produce, Pineapples	\$844,056.25	\$1,082,316.08	↑ 28.23%
DiSilva Fruit	Chelsea, MA	Apples, Citrus, Melons, Onions, Potatoes	\$812,703.44	\$697,517.30	↓ -14.17%
Northeast Produce	Plainville, CT	Peppers, Salad Vegetables, Squash, Tomatoes	\$241,909.50	\$420,163.50	↑ 73.69%
Szawlowski Potato Farm Inc	Hatfield, MA	Potatoes	\$2,250.00	\$416,062.50	↑ 18391.67%
Boston Area Gleaners, Inc.	Acton, MA	Apples, Cabbages, Cooking Greens (Collards/Kale), Cooking Vegetables, Potatoes, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Squash	\$155,305.00	\$413,601.00	↑ 166.32%
Irving Farms, Inc	Caribou, ME	Potatoes	\$8,533.00	\$373,962.75	↑ 4282.55%
Joseph P. Sullivan & Co.	Ayer, MA	Apples	\$220,657.50	\$320,994.00	↑ 45.47%
Western Harvest	Quebec, CAN	Corn, Melons, Onions, Potatoes, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips)	\$1,825.00	\$296,772.42	↑ 16161.50%
D'Arrigo Bros. Co. of Massachusetts	Chelsea, MA	Apples, Cabbages, Cooking Vegetables, Corn, Potatoes, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Salad Vegetables	\$0.00	\$290,186.00	N/A
P. Tavilla Company, Inc	Chelsea, MA	Cabbages, Cooking Vegetables, Corn, Miscellaneous Produce, Peppers, Salad Vegetables, Squash	\$81,449.00	\$284,971.00	↑ 249.88%

FY24 Core Food Produce Vendors (continued)

VENDOR	LOCATION	ITEMS PURCHASED	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Farmer Dave's	Dracut, MA	Apples & Cooking Greens (Collards/Kale)	\$150,721.00	\$257,670.00	↑ 70.96%
S. Strock & Co.	Chelsea, MA	Salad Vegetables	\$386,587.81	\$246,142.80	↓ -36.33%
McKinstry Market Garden, Inc.	Chicopee, MA	Cabbages, Cooking Vegetables, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Squash	\$97,300.00	\$198,056.00	↑ 103.55%
Pioneer Valley Growers Association	S. Deerfield, MA	Apples, Cabbages, Cooking Vegetables, Corn, Peppers, Potatoes, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Squash	\$87,979.00	\$140,128.00	↑ 59.27%
Michael Davidian dba Davidian's Farm Market LLC	Northborough, MA	Apples, Cooking Vegetables, Corn, Salad Vegetables, Squash	\$12,740.00	\$113,839.00	↑ 793.56%
Ward's Berry Farm	Sharon, MA	Cooking Vegetables, Peppers, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Squash	\$23,150.00	\$77,084.00	↑ 232.98%
Honey Pot Farm, LLC	Hatfield, MA	Cabbages, Cooking Vegetables, Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips), Squash	\$49,537.50	\$62,832.00	↑ 26.84%
Del Monte Fresh Produce	Chicago, IL	Bananas, Exotic Fruit, Melons, Pineapples	\$160,155.00	\$53,330.00	↓ -66.70%
Ryan Voiland dba Red Fire Farm	Montague, MA	Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips)	\$0.00	\$31,968.00	N/A
New England Apple Products Company	Leominster, MA	Cider	\$34,896.00	\$28,800.00	↓ -17.47%
Atlas Farm	Deerfield, MA	Root Vegetables (Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips)	\$16,780.00	\$22,400.00	↑ 33.49%
Harrison W. Bardwell	Hatfield, MA	Cabbages, Cooking Greens (Collards/Kale), Cooking Vegetables	\$0.00	\$12,310.00	N/A
Kevin Kresloff dba Family Table LLC	Gaithersburg, MD	Melons	\$0.00	\$6,031.20	N/A
Mario Cutone Mushroom Co Inc	Chelsea, MA	Pineapples & Squash	\$0.00	\$5,850.00	N/A
Hungry Harvest	Landover, MD	Cooking Vegetables	\$21,930.40	\$2,880.00	↓ -86.87%
Springworks Farm Maine Inc.	Lisbon, ME	Salad Vegetables	\$0.00	\$1,680.00	N/A

CHART 2
MEFAP Fresh Produce Pounds

■ Core Food ■ Mass Grown



Core Food Product Categories and Cost per Pound

The Core Food assortment is intentionally selected each year to provide a consistent supply of highly nutritious staple products with a focus on produce, protein, and dairy. Adjustments to the assortment are made annually based on feedback from FBCMA distribution sites, past year suppliers, and item performance. FBCMA continues to work to maximize the meals distributed through the program while also meeting the needs of those served by our member agencies.

Meat, protein, produce, canned/frozen vegetables and fruit, and dairy comprised over 80% of the total distribution volume. This is a 20% increase from the prior year, with a 15% increase in fresh produce. Dairy substitute (almond milk) was a new category introduced this year. See Chart 3 for a breakdown of MEFAP Core Food items distributed by product category. Chart 4 breaks down the 35.3% Fresh Produce distribution by product type.

CHART 3
FY24 Core Food Distribution by Category

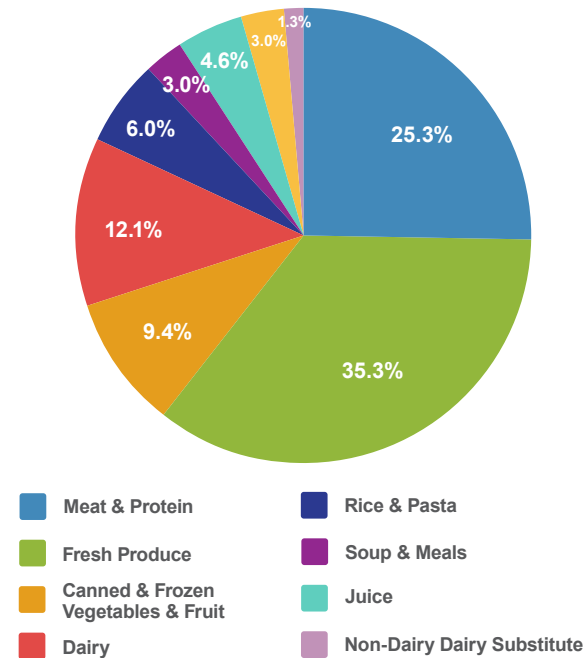
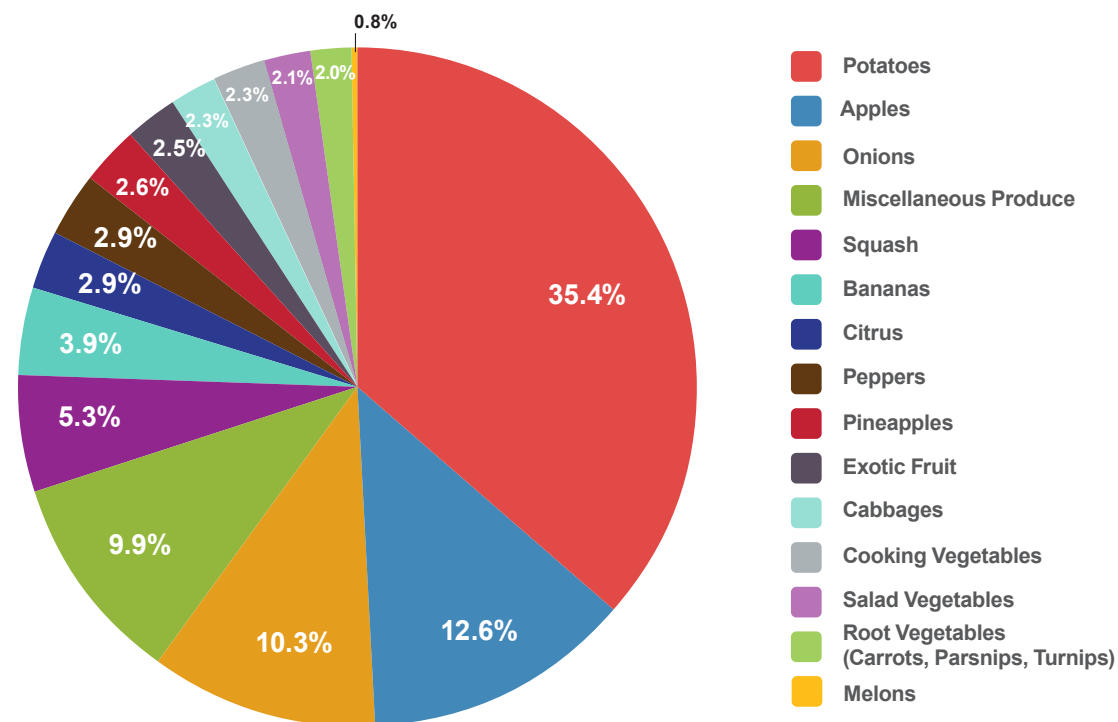


CHART 4
FY24 Core Food Produce Distribution by Product Type

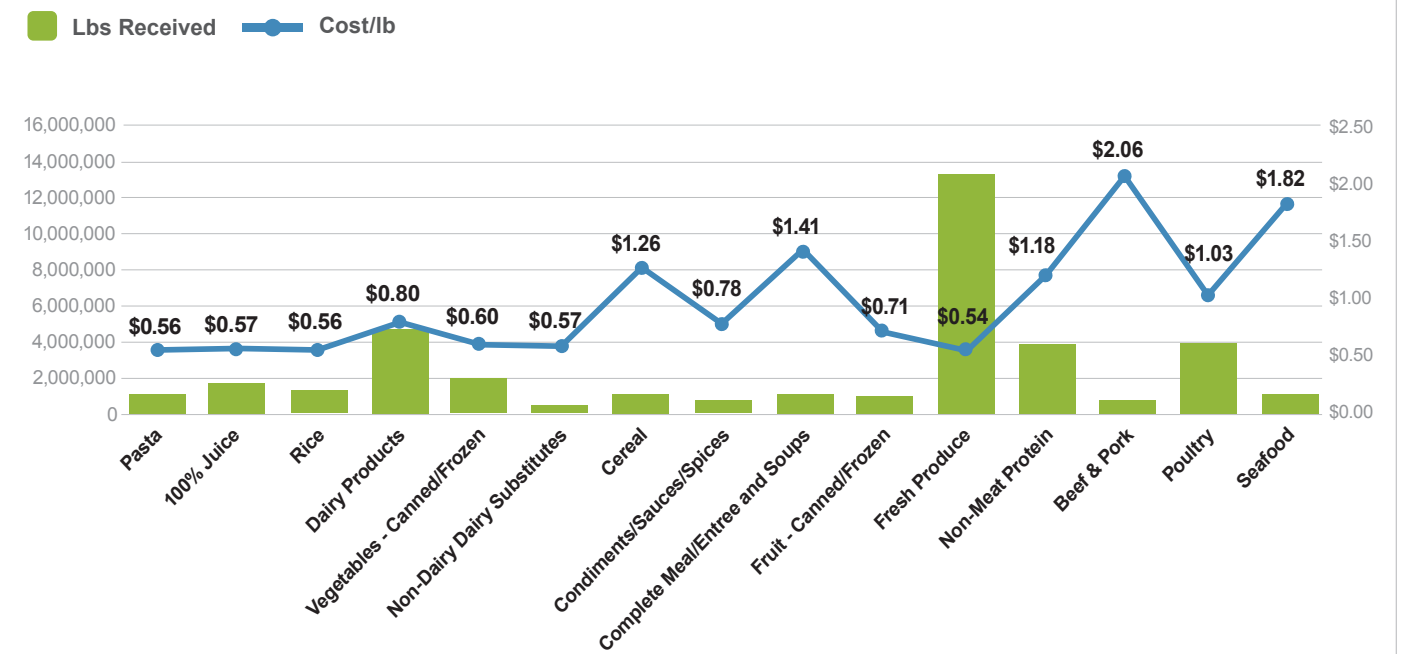


As shown in Chart 5, beef, pork, seafood, and other protein items continue to be some of the highest cost per pound categories in the program but continue to be a focus for FBCMA and the agencies we serve. Additionally, dairy, egg, and meat items can be subject to volatile pricing changes during the year. These higher costs are in part off-set by the lower cost per pound of fresh produce and non-meat protein categories that are also a priority. The overall cost per pound of Core Food items decreased by 19.1%, from \$1.01 in FY23 to \$0.82 in FY24.

In FY24, 11,268 turkeys, representing 0.8% of Core Food funding, were purchased with MEFAP Core Food funds and distributed over the Thanksgiving holiday season. While the quantity purchased slightly decreased from FY23, the cost per pound increased by 20% due to inflation. The cost of turkeys increased from \$1.56/lb. in FY23 to \$1.88/lb. in FY24.



CHART 5
FY24 MEFAP Core Food Cost per Pound by Category



Purchases of our milk by GBFB through MEFAP has been a win-win relationship the last few years, allowing us to balance our supply of milk during low-demand seasons while providing locally sourced and nutritious milk. Last year alone, we delivered over 26,000 half gallons of milk to the Western Massachusetts Food Bank. We are proud of this program and GBFB for making healthy, locally produced food accessible.”

Jessica Dizek
Mapleline Farm, Hadley, MA

Core Food Eggs

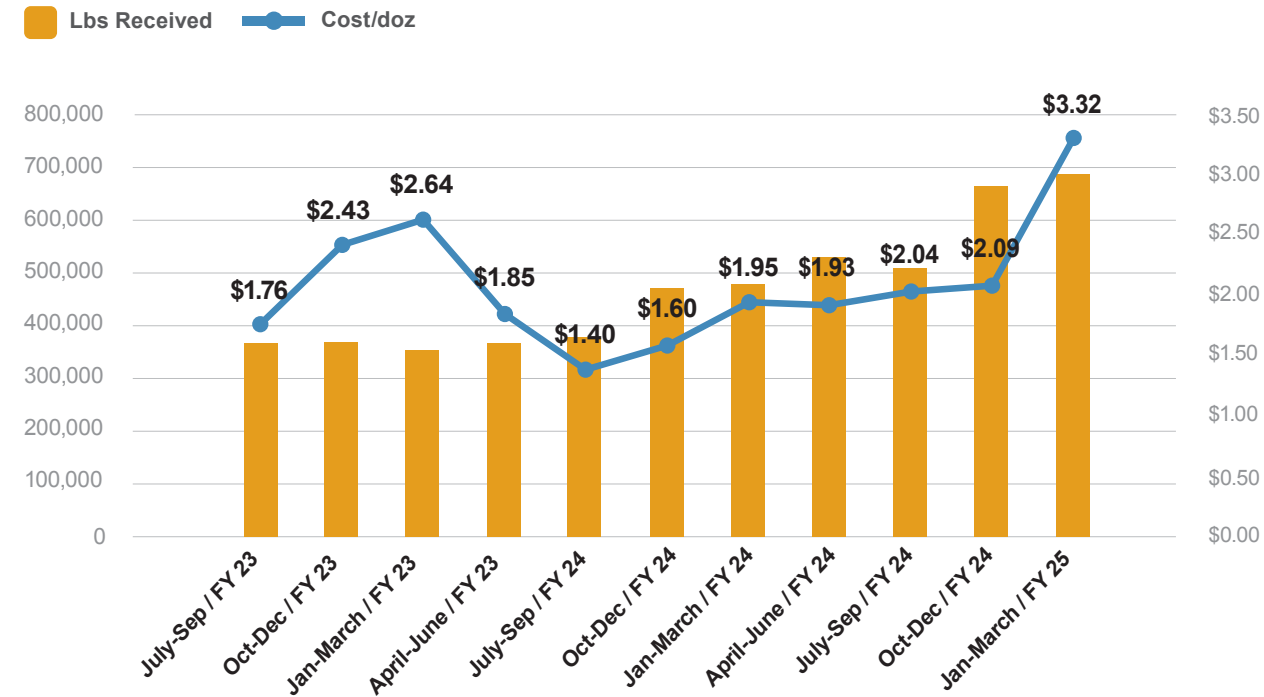
The cost of eggs grew slightly in FY24, but was lower than FY23 on average. Chart 6 provides a review of the average cost of eggs per quarter in FY24, which increased by 38% from \$1.40/dozen in Q1 to \$1.93/dozen in Q4. However, overall, there was a significant decrease in cost compared to the prior year.

We increased the quantity of eggs purchased by 27% or 400,000 pounds.



The average cost per dozen for the entire year was \$1.74, which was a 20% decrease from FY23, when the average cost per dozen was \$2.17. As demonstrated in Chart 6, egg price trends continue to fluctuate. Toward the end of 2024, they rose again due to supply chain disruptions and significant avian influenza outbreaks, which continue to impact pricing.

CHART 6
FY24 MEFAP Core Food Eggs Cost per Dozen



Massachusetts Grown Initiative (MassGrown)

The Massachusetts Grown Initiative within MEFAP is intended to give food insecure individuals access to fresh local produce, while simultaneously opening a new market for local farmers. The program has successfully re-invested MEFAP funds into Massachusetts' agricultural industry since it began—and wrapped up its 26th year in December 2024. MassGrown aids the four regional food banks in their effort to maximize the nutritional value of distributed food. As these food banks continue to focus on acquiring and distributing more fresh produce and nutrient-rich food, the MassGrown initiative provides a vital opportunity to source top quality products locally. Due to the seasonality of the Massachusetts growing season, MassGrown purchases and distribution statistics are for the period of January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

MassGrown Spend and Partner Farms

MassGrown funding was \$2.73M in FY24—an increase of \$483K over FY23. This is a 22% increase in funding to support local farms. The MassGrown allocation comprised 8.1% of the total food purchase funding, which was a slight increase over FY23. Each food bank selects their own percentage of total funding for food to apply towards MassGrown. In FY24, FBWM allocated 8.5% of their food purchase funding for MassGrown, GBFB allocated 8.5%, and WCFB and MVFB allocated 6.0%. The FBCMA will continue to prioritize allocating funding towards the MassGrown initiative as more farms join the program and as we advocate for increased MEFAP funding.

In FY24 the regional food banks distributed 3,360,058 pounds of Massachusetts-grown produce, dairy and poultry. This is a 0.7% increase from FY23.



Through this partnership, we have listened to the needs of GBFB and have started to grow a vast variety of new products, some of which are bok choy and napa cabbage. Through constant communication, we are continuing to adapt to the needs of the community.”

Michael Davidian
Davidian's Farm Market

MassGrown Diversity of Farms

Food bank hunger-relief member partners appreciated the variety and the quality of the local fresh produce offered during the most recent MassGrown season. FBCMA continued to expand its MassGrown partnerships in FY24, with additional farms signing contracts to sell their products to the FBCMA. This year, our largest partner was Davidian's Farm Market, which had a 93.5% increase in spend. Another of our largest MassGrown partners continues to be Pioneer Valley Growers Association, which sources from 40 partner farms across Western Massachusetts.

Our annual spend has continued to move away from a concentration on the top 4-5 partner farms and larger local brokers toward independent family farms such as Farmer Dave's, Honey Pot Farm and McKinstry Market Garden. We have also continued to build on our partnership with the Boston Area Gleaners, which sources from many Massachusetts farms who may not have the means to meet our capacity standards on their own. We hope to continue this trend of broadening participation in the program. Table 9 below is a listing of all partner farms who provided products to FBCMA during MassGrown FY24.

TABLE 9
FY24 MassGrown Farms

FARM	LOCATION	FY23 SPEND	FY24 SPEND	% CHANGE
Michael Davidian dba Davidian's Farm Market LLC	Northborough, MA	\$242,755.52	\$469,748.34	↑ 93.51%
Farmer Dave's LLC	Dracut, MA	\$225,448.40	\$358,798.82	↑ 59.15%
Honey Pot Farm, LLC	Hatfield, MA	\$276,759.00	\$344,204.00	↑ 24.37%
Pioneer Valley Growers Association	South Deerfield, MA	\$278,067.00	\$317,514.00	↑ 14.19%
McKinstry Market Garden, Inc.	Chicopee, MA	\$243,380.00	\$271,221.00	↑ 11.44%
Boston Area Gleaners, Inc.	Acton, MA	\$236,004.80	\$226,851.40	↓ -3.88%
Ward's Berry Farm	Sharon, MA	\$155,829.00	\$114,331.00	↓ -26.63%
Szawlowski Potato Farm Inc	Hatfield, MA	\$265,497.50	\$108,262.50	↓ -59.22%
Hugh Manheim dba Manheim Farm	South Deerfield, MA	\$49,268.00	\$89,468.00	↑ 81.59%
Mapleline Farm LLC	Hadley, MA	\$36,699.21	\$88,366.07	↑ 140.78%
Atlas Farm LLC	Deerfield, MA	\$65,987.60	\$84,835.00	↑ 28.56%
Lookout Farms, LLC	South Natick, MA	\$24,960.00	\$78,720.00	↑ 215.38%
Reed Farm, LLC	Sunderland, MA	\$24,149.22	\$57,357.00	↑ 137.51%
Mark Wendolowski dba M.A. Wendolowski Farm	Hatfield, MA	\$20,421.00	\$33,461.25	↑ 63.86%
Ryan Voiland dba Red Fire Farm	Montague, MA	\$1,570.00	\$23,362.00	↑ 1388.03%
Joseph P. Sullivan & Co., Inc	Ayer, MA	\$8,925.00	\$16,800.00	↑ 88.24%
Plainville Farm	Hadley, MA	\$23,422.50	\$12,195.00	↓ -47.93%
Harrison W. Bardwell	Hatfield, MA	\$28,647.00	\$11,360.00	↓ -60.34%
New England Apple Products	Leominster, MA	\$0.00	\$9,696.00	N/A
Joe Czajkowski Farm	Hadley, MA	\$21,416.00	\$6,782.50	↓ -68.33%
Sidehill Farm	Hawley, MA	\$12,654.72	\$3,276.00	↓ -74.11%

MassGrown Produce, Dairy, and Poultry

The amount of non-produce products sourced through MassGrown has doubled to 125k pounds since FY23. However, the food banks continue to focus on purchasing lower cost per pound produce items with MassGrown funds to maximize the impact of the funding.

Of the 3.36 million pounds of food distributed through MassGrown in FY24, **96.3% was fresh produce, while 3.7% was local milk, sour cream, beans and locally raised poultry.**



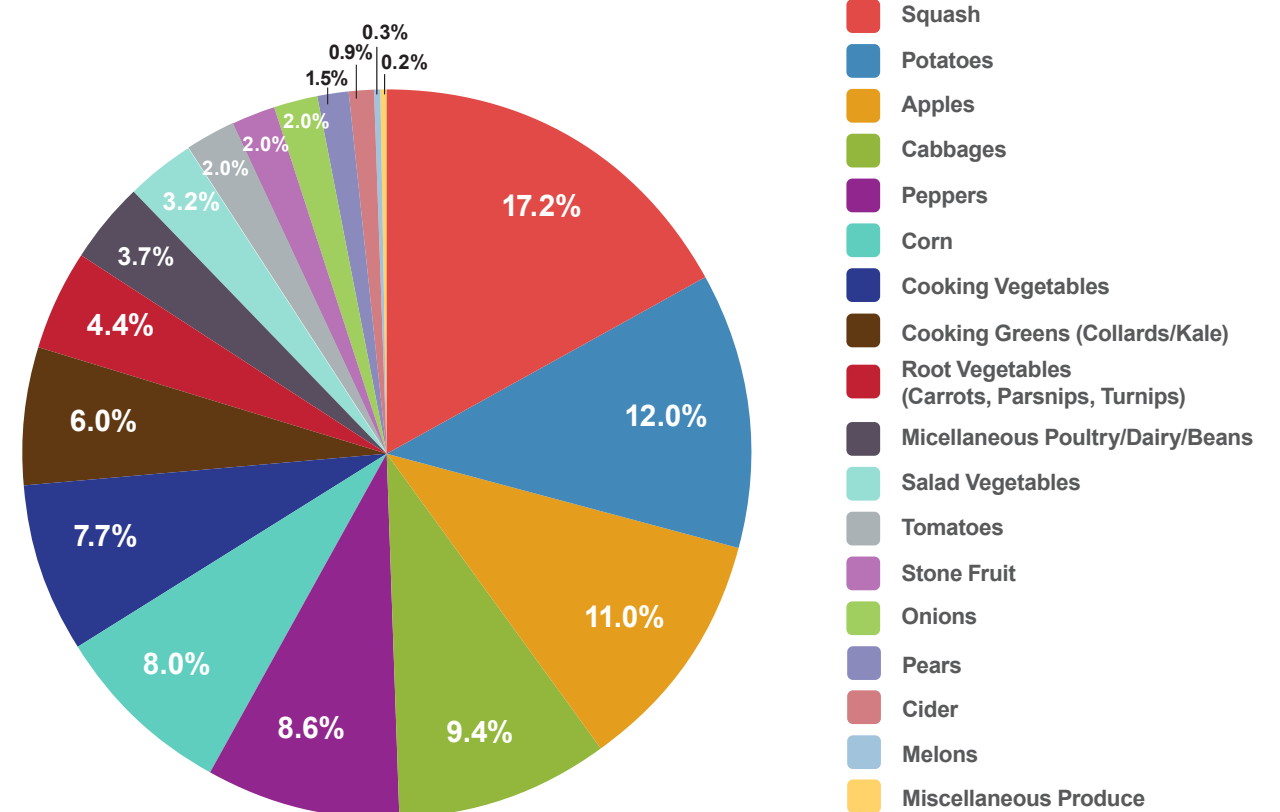
MassGrown Product Variety Mix

The variety of produce offered by Massachusetts farms has been instrumental in supplementing other food bank produce sources, offering a selection of fruits and Vegetables for food bank agencies to choose from. Still, it is crucial for food banks to have access to staple crops, such as potatoes, apples, onions, carrots and Cabbages, through MassGrown.

FBCMA works closely with participating farms, meeting prior to the growing season to collaborate with them on their growing plans. This effort ensures that desired products will be available to the food banks and that farms are not left with excess product. As food bank ordering priorities shift, it is important that these changes are shared with the farms, as MassGrown purchasing is a significant portion of some of the participating farms' annual sales.

Squash was the highest volume category in 2024, accounting for over 17% of the MassGrown distribution. Potatoes, apples, and cabbages were the second-, third- and fourth-highest categories at 12%, 11% and 9.4%, respectively. Together, these four categories make up almost half of the MassGrown produce pounds distributed. The amount of distributed pounds for these 4 categories decreased by almost 15% compared to FY23. This is due to the greater variety of locally grown items. Chart 7 below details pounds distributed by category.

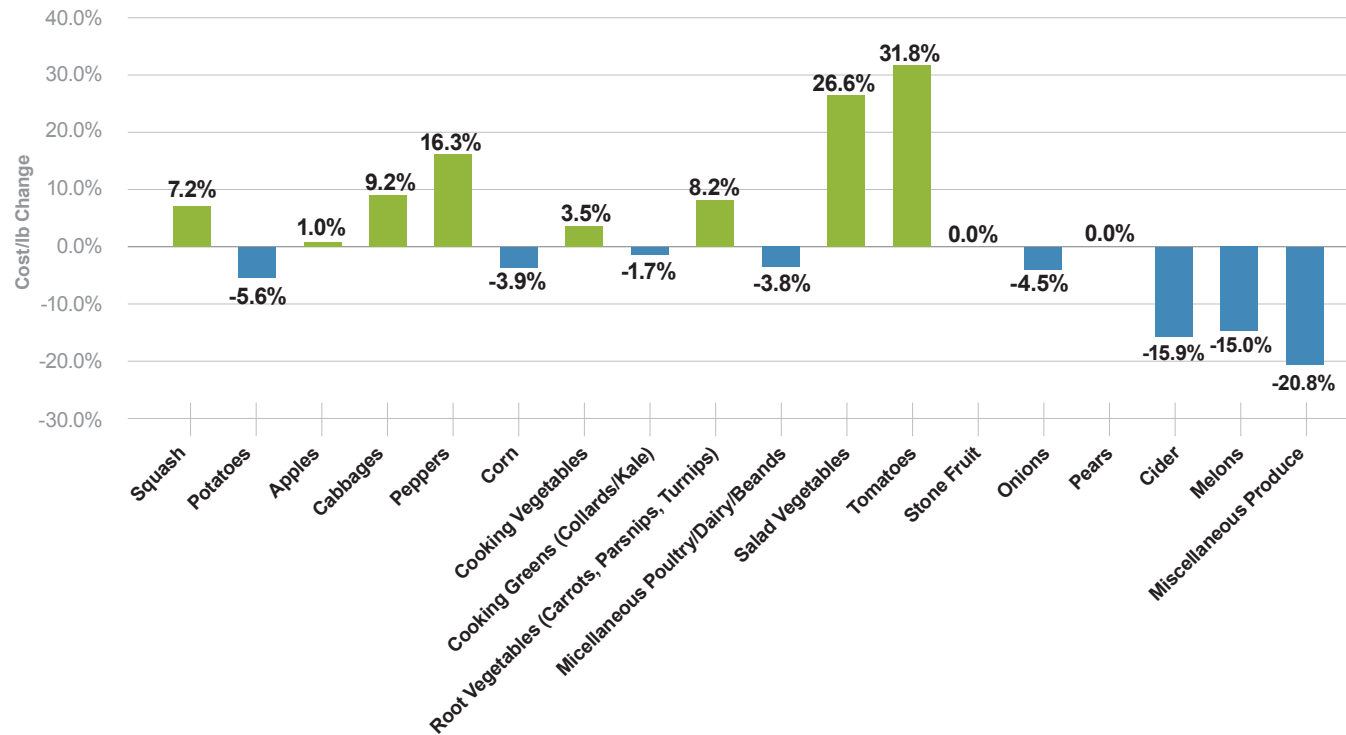
CHART 7
FY24 MEFAP MassGrown Pounds by Category



MassGrown Cost per Pound

In FY24, there was a 20.5% increase in the cost paid per pound across all categories procured through the MassGrown program. This increase was driven by the higher costs of locally grown items. Given the only 0.7% increase in MassGrown distribution, the high cost per pound increase exemplifies the need for additional funding. Chart 8 below details changes in costs by produce category compared to last year.

CHART 8
FY24 Cost per Pound Changes by MassGrown Produce Category



Operating Funding Supports Distribution

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) manages operating funds to support the distribution of food, retaining a fee of no greater than 2% to administer the program. The food banks use the percentages in Table 1 to equitably allocate operating funds according to poverty statistics for the population served by each food bank. Food bank operating funds remained level at \$1M in FY24. The operating funds are applied to the costs of labor associated with receiving, warehousing, transporting and distributing MEFAP products. FBCMA raises additional private funds to cover the full cost of distribution. Table 10 below details the funding history for the program.

TABLE 10:
MEFAP Funding History

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL FUNDING	OPERATING FUNDING*	ADMIN. FEE RETAINED BY MDAR	MASSGROWN INITIATIVE FUNDING	CORE FOOD FUNDING	MEALS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH MEFAP
		DOE 7051-0015		DFA 2511-0105	DFA 2511-0105	
1995 & 1996**	\$1,000,000.00	\$142,000.00	\$17,160	-	\$858,000.00	-
1997	\$1,000,000.00	\$142,000.00	\$17,160	-	\$858,000.00	1,176,128
1998	\$3,448,000.00	\$448,000.00	\$60,000	-	\$3,000,000.00	3,748,435
1999	\$7,430,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$128,600	\$260,000.00	\$6,020,000.00	5,176,882
2000	\$7,430,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$128,600	\$300,000.00	\$5,980,000.00	4,972,956
2001	\$7,430,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$128,600	\$300,000.00	\$5,950,000.00	6,261,695
2002	\$7,360,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$128,600	\$330,000.00	\$5,950,000.00	6,408,176
2003	\$7,185,600.00	\$830,600	\$127,100	\$330,000.00	\$5,950,000.00	6,038,672
2004	\$7,027,000.00	\$747,000	\$125,600	\$330,000.00	\$5,950,000.00	7,036,356
2005	\$7,027,000.00	\$747,000	\$125,600	\$330,000.00	\$5,950,000.00	6,927,565
2006	\$7,027,000.00	\$747,000	\$128,865	\$330,000.00	\$6,113,252.00	6,927,565
2007	\$13,250,000.00	\$1,247,000	\$240,000	\$600,000.00	\$11,400,000.00	12,770,887
2008	\$12,137,000.00	\$1,247,000	\$220,000	\$550,000.00	\$10,340,000.00	12,482,075
2009	\$13,127,000.00	\$1,309,350	\$240,000	\$600,000.00	\$11,280,000.00	11,535,297
2010	\$12,509,518.00	\$1,239,518	\$230,000	\$575,000.00	\$10,695,000.00	13,219,524
2011	\$12,500,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$230,000	\$690,000.00	\$10,580,000.00	14,122,817
2012	\$12,500,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$230,000	\$690,000.00	\$10,580,000.00	12,641,443
2013	\$13,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$240,000	\$720,000.00	\$11,040,000.00	13,838,476***
2014	\$14,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$260,000	\$780,000.00	\$11,960,000.00	16,089,423
2015	\$15,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$280,000	\$840,000.00	\$12,880,000.00	16,697,380
2016	\$17,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$320,000	\$1,088,704.00	\$14,591,296.00	18,819,628
2017	\$17,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$320,000	\$1,222,048.00	\$14,457,952.00	20,979,361
2018	\$17,413,831.00	\$1,000,000	\$328,277	\$1,229,065.04	\$14,856,489.34	22,356,343
2019	\$18,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$340,000	\$1,284,027.85	\$15,375,972.15	22,653,636
2020	\$20,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$380,000	\$1,437,519.86	\$17,182,480.14	23,404,229
2021	\$30,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$580,000	\$2,190,698.86	\$26,229,301.14	29,353,645
2022	\$30,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$580,000	\$2,201,129.00	\$26,218,871.00	29,579,198
2023	\$30,000,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$580,000	\$2,201,129.00	\$26,218,871.00	25,191,218
2024	\$35,500,000.00	\$1,000,000	\$690,000	\$2,726,609.88	\$31,083,390.12	34,268,750
2025	\$41,500,000.00	\$1,250,000	\$805,000	\$3,670,396.70	\$39,445,000.00	TBD

*Operating funding includes funds provided to FBCMA and the administration fee retained by the MDAR.

**Meals data not available for FY1995 and FY1996.

***The formula for calculating meals distributed was adjusted in FY13 from 1.3 pounds of food / a meal to 1.2 pounds.

Note: Nutrition Education Funding was provided within MEFAP at \$150,000 from 1999-2002 and at \$75,000 in 2003.



MEFAP has transformed our ability to supply high-quality, consistent produce at scale. Before MEFAP, we donated about 50,000 pounds of excess produce annually. By 2024, MEFAP funding helped us provide nearly one million pounds of produce annually to food banks. It has also allowed us to control costs. Unlike many farms, Farmer Dave's hires local workers from Lowell and Lawrence, keeping jobs and food dollars in the community."

Dave Dumaresq
Farmer Dave's, Dracut, MA



Conclusion

The Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts (FBCMA) remains steadfast in its commitment to maximizing the impact of MEFAP funding in order to provide vital resources to those facing food insecurity across the Commonwealth. By prioritizing in-state partnerships, responding strategically to challenging market conditions, and carefully stewarding funding dollars, FBCMA continues to ensure that Massachusetts residents have access to fresh, nutritious food.

In FY24, FBCMA distributed more than 41.1 million pounds of MEFAP food, equivalent to over 34 million meals statewide—representing a 36% increase from the prior year. This remarkable growth underscores MEFAP's critical role in ensuring stability in the FBCMA's food distribution despite volatile market conditions that impact the fluctuating availability of USDA food sources, donated foods or pricing of staple items such as eggs.



Economic Impact

MEFAP also plays a vital role in strengthening the local economy and supporting local industry. In FY24, 50.3% of all MEFAP dollars—\$17.03 million—was invested in Massachusetts-based suppliers, with 30 of 46 Core Food vendors located within the state. Through MassGrown, FBCMA supported 21 Massachusetts farms, including smaller family farms and organizations like the Pioneer Valley Growers Association and the Boston Food Hub/Boston Area Gleaners. This strategic investment underscores our focus on increasing the availability of fresh, locally grown produce for residents across the Commonwealth—while reinforcing the resilience of the local agricultural sector.

Food Bank Infrastructure

In addition to managing an increase in MEFAP funds in FY24, the food banks made significant investments in their building infrastructure across the state. Merrimack Valley Food Bank moved into a new facility in Lowell in February 2024, which has increased freezer capacity and more accessible loading docks, which have allowed them to serve more people with greater safety and efficiency than in the prior space. The Food Bank of Western MA built and moved into a new facility in Chicopee in December 2023, which allowed their team to provide greater access to healthy, nutritious food in Western Massachusetts. This new building has allowed them to take over one million additional pounds in MEFAP last year. In August 2024, The Greater Boston Food Bank expanded their refrigeration storage space – the single-largest investment in GBFB's Yawkey Distribution Center in Boston since it was built 15 years ago. This project doubled the refrigeration and cooling unit that stores 400 pallets of perishable food, allowing GBFB to distribute millions of additional meals each year. The FBWMA and GBFB's building investments were both funded through philanthropic and state funds allocated during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. These investments were made across the state to right-size the food bank operations in these regions to support its response to the historic need throughout Massachusetts and acquire and distribute more food to our neighbors in need.

Feeding Massachusetts

As the Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts works toward bridging the meal gap in the Commonwealth, they rely on continued MEFAP funding. MEFAP remains a critical piece of the response to food insecurity in the Commonwealth. Without MEFAP, FBCMA would not have been able to distribute an unprecedented 134.1 million pounds of food over the past year.

Thank You

FBCMA and their teams would like to acknowledge the support of MDAR, the Governor's Office, the Lieutenant Governor's Office and the Legislature for their commitment to helping end hunger in Massachusetts. For more information on the specific programs and activities of FBCMA, note the contact information on the right side of this page.

To learn more, contact:



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