



Agricultural Surplus Initiative

Overview

Situation

According to a 2011 study by Feeding America, more than 585,000 Minnesotans suffer the debilitating effects of hunger by missing 100 million meals every year.

Currently, Minnesota allows approximately 210 million pounds of potatoes, sweet corn and peas to go unharvested every year. If we are able to capture and distribute some of this surplus agricultural food, we have the opportunity to provide a new source of healthy and nutritious food for our Minnesota neighbors in need. **We cannot meet the hunger need for 585,000 Minnesotans without a strong statewide agricultural surplus program.**

Initiative Overview

The Hunger-Free Minnesota Agricultural Surplus Initiative is building solutions to direct Minnesota's surplus and unmarketable agricultural produce through the network of 7 emergency food banks in our state, ensuring needy Minnesota families have a continuous source of healthy and nutritious food.

Hunger-Free Minnesota has created a cross-sector workgroup to build long-term solutions toward capturing surplus agricultural food from Minnesota growers. To further this effort, we have received an \$880,000 donation from Cargill toward building strategic approaches for procuring agricultural surplus that are sustainable, measurable, and replicable.

Initiative Objective & 3-Year Goal

- **Objective:** Lead the U.S. in the capture of human consumable agricultural crops in a way that is sustainable, replicable, and measurable.
- **Goal:** Source 15 million pounds from surplus/unmarketable Minnesota crops, annually & sustainably, by 2014.
- **Grower Focus:**
 - Fresh food crops being grown for wholesale and retail – an estimated 30% of human consumable crops are grown for the wholesale and retail markets.
 - Crops being grown for processing – an estimated 70% of human consumable crops are grown for processing into cans or frozen goods.

Key Challenges

Hunger-Free Minnesota has identified several key challenges in implementing this initiative:

- Low awareness among growers and processors of opportunities for surplus crop donation.
- Identifying the best incentives for growers and processors to donate surplus crops for consumption by hungry Minnesotans.
- Food directly from Minnesota farms is seasonal and perishable, creating challenges in transportation logistics and absorption by the emergency food system (such as a need for refrigerators/freezers to store perishable food).