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NEW JERSEY ORGANIZATIONS PARTNER TO PROVIDE JERSEY FRESH FOR ALL
LFPFA will increase access to locally purchased food, create relationships with socially disadvantaged farmers

HILLSIDE, NJ—October 12, 2023

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey (CFBNJ) announced today that it is serving as the subrecipient agency for a \$9.7 million cooperative agreement signed by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the new Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement (LFPFA). The agreement was signed in November 2022, and work on the program is underway.

The Jersey Fresh for All program, as part of LFPFA, aims to increase access to local domestic food and improve supply chain resiliency by creating new markets for farmers, ranchers, and other producers in the state. Funds are used to purchase food from New Jersey farmers and producers, particularly socially disadvantaged farmers, for distribution in underserved communities. CFBNJ is coordinating with the state's other banks, including Fulfill, Food Bank of South Jersey, the Southern Regional Food Distribution Center, Mercer Street Friends, and Norwescap, to ensure that agricultural products purchased through LFPFA reach people in need in all 21 New Jersey counties.

Through this innovative program, CFBNJ is establishing partnerships that best support local needs, as well as farm viability, particularly through purchasing local and seasonal products sought by community members. LFPFA is authorized by the American Rescue Plan. Nationwide, the USDA awarded up to \$400 million through non-competitive cooperative agreements with state and tribal governments to support the purchase of food produced within the state or within 400 miles of the delivery destination.

"Through LFPFA, we can broaden access to wholesome, healthy, and delicious Jersey Fresh food for our neighbors in need," said Elizabeth McCarthy, President & CEO of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. "We are excited to engage in this groundbreaking work that nourishes underserved communities and lifts up socially disadvantaged producers for a fairer and more equitable Garden State."

CFBNJ is working in close coordination with the Director of the New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate and the NJDA. The Common Market and the New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative (NJFDC) are serving as key collaborators in the program's procurement, research, outreach, and relationship development activities.

"About 50% of New Jersey's farmgate value comes from roughly 100 farms," said Mark Dinglasan, Director of the New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate. "That's why LFPFA seeks to encourage diversity in farming. I'm proud to work alongside a group of committed partners to bring opportunity to local producers across the state."

“NJFDC is pleased to serve as an outreach and evaluation partner for LFPA,” said Jeanine Cava, Lead Facilitator at the New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative. “We will reach out to local farming communities to better understand their needs and conduct a landscape assessment for a complete picture of who is farming in New Jersey.”

“We are excited to support two high-need groups through our work with LFPA – socially disadvantaged farmers and food insecure individuals,” said Haile Johnston, Co-Founder and Co-CEO of The Common Market. “By helping CFBNJ access new farmers and wholesale markets, we’re providing healthy, nutritious foods for our neighbors in need while increasing farmers’ capacities to build thriving businesses.”

As of late September 2023, LFPA funding has supported the purchase of more than 1.1 million pounds of New Jersey-sourced produce and proteins, which have reached more than 300 unique organizations in over 100 communities. CFBNJ, NJFDC, and The Common Market anticipate building on this progress throughout the three-year grant period.

One noteworthy success story so far is the use of LFPA funds to make ongoing produce purchases from K&J Farm in Elmer, New Jersey. K&J Farm is a Black owned and operated 40-acre farm. Through LFPA funding, K&J’s crops were contracted for purchase by The Common Market before seeds were placed in the ground, providing the farm upfront assurance of market access and revenue. This was the first growing season that K&J had a committed market to their product, which enabled the farm to make business planning decisions that improved their capacity and ability to meet the product needs of food insecure communities across the state.

If you are a local food advocate looking to get involved with LFPA or a farmer interested in participating, please visit NJFDC’s website (<https://www.njfooddemocracy.org/jersey-fresh-for-all>) or email NJFDC@foodshedalliance.org.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOODBANK OF NEW JERSEY

[The Community FoodBank of New Jersey](#) (CFBNJ), a member of Feeding America® and the state’s largest anti-hunger organization, has been delivering food, help, and hope across the Garden State for nearly 50 years. Last year, CFBNJ provided nutritious food for over 90 million meals through its network of more than 800 community partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, child and senior nutrition programs, and more, serving 11 New Jersey counties directly and four in partnership with affiliate food banks. It also addresses the root causes of food insecurity with supportive services like nutrition education, job training, SNAP outreach, and hygiene product distribution. By delivering neighbor-centered solutions and collaborating with all sectors of society, CFBNJ believes that food insecurity is a solvable problem.

ABOUT COMMON MARKET

[The Common Market](#) is a nonprofit wholesale food distributor with a mission to build vibrant and sustainable regional food systems that strengthen the health and wealth of communities. The organization works to scale local food systems through efficient aggregation and distribution infrastructure that builds fair and transparent markets for farmers while democratizing the accessibility of good food for all people. Through its work, The Common Market connects family farmers to institutions and the communities they serve.

ABOUT THE NEW JERSEY FOOD DEMOCRACY COLLABORATIVE

[The NJ Food Democracy Collaborative](#) supports collective action and informed and empowered civic engagement toward equitable, resilient, and connected local food systems across NJ. We envision a food system where everyone has access to healthy food, in which food is produced in a way that stewards and restores natural resources and communities, and everyone has access to the systems where policy decisions are made; a food system in which everyone can and does practice connected food democracy.

ABOUT THE LOCAL FOOD PURCHASE ASSISTANCE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (LFPA)

[The Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program \(LFPA\)](#) uses non-competitive cooperative agreements to provide up to \$900 million of American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)

funding for state, tribal and territorial governments to purchase foods produced within the state or within 400 miles of the delivery destination to help support local, regional and underserved producers. The purpose of this program is to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency. The cooperative agreements allow the states, tribes and territories to procure and distribute local and regional foods and beverages that are healthy, nutritious, unique to their geographic areas and that meet the needs of the population. The food will serve feeding programs, including food banks, schools and organizations that reach underserved communities. In addition to increasing local food consumption, the funds will help build and expand economic opportunity for local and underserved producers.