

# OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SECOND HARVEST FOODBANKS

## State Funding Fact Sheet

Since 1997, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) has received state funding to support emergency food assistance programs in communities throughout Ohio. As funding levels have grown from \$1.5 million in 1997 to \$4.5 million in 2003, OASHF has guaranteed that all state dollars are used to purchase food or improve the food distribution network.

As a result, the collaboration between OASHF and the state of Ohio has been described by representatives of the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services to the state legislature as **“one of the most successful cost effective public private partnerships currently operating in the State of Ohio.”**

Specifically, OASHF has dedicated state dollars to the **Ohio Food Program (OFP)**, the **Ohio Agricultural Surplus Production Alliance Program (OASPA)** and a **capacity building grants** program. Dollars directed to OFP take advantage of the power of buying in bulk to supply local food pantries and soup kitchens with nutritional, shelf-stable foods. OASPA funds are used to buy surplus fresh vegetables and fruits from Ohio farmers. And capacity building grants are provided to local food pantries to purchase equipment such as freezers and refrigerators to improve distribution efforts, thereby strengthening the infrastructure of Ohio’s emergency food assistance network.

As a result of state support for these programs, OASHF:

- Provided more than 17 percent of all the emergency food distributed by OASHF in Ohio during 2003.
- Served over 2.7 million low-income households (duplicated counts) as a direct result of funding for the Ohio Food Program and Ohio Agricultural Surplus Production Alliance Program in 2003. About 43 percent of those served were children and 33 percent of the households contained at least one elderly or disabled adult.
- Has purchased and distributed more than 25.9 million pounds of OFP groceries to 12 foodbanks serving more than 3,000 member charities. This has provided 20.3 million meals to hungry Ohioans.
- Has reimbursed Ohio farmers, growers, and commodity producers for picking, packing, production, and transportation costs for more than 30.2 million pounds of surplus fruits, vegetables, chicken, and eggs. This has provided over 23.6 million meals to hungry Ohioans.
- Has distributed over \$1,180,000. in 4,369 capacity building grants to over 3,000 member soup kitchens, food pantries and homeless shelters.

Challenging economic times have simultaneously lead to increases in demand for emergency food assistance and decreases in funding from a range of sources. It is more important than ever to secure a permanent line item in the state budget for OASHF funding. As pantry shelves empty more quickly, hungry Ohioans will not get the help they need.

*Towards a Hunger Free Ohio*

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