

Mainers Feeding Mainers 2016 Report



Good Shepherd
FOOD BANK OF MAINE

partnering to end hunger



MAINERS
FEEDING
MAINERS

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Good Shepherd Food Bank
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2016 Program Report Mainers Feeding Mainers



“The Mainers Feeding Mainers program is creating business solutions to seemingly intractable social problems. It's creating economic prosperity for our farms by contracting with them to grow food, and it's creating a lifeline to that food for people who have no other place to get it but from the food pantry.”

— Gray Harris, Director of Sustainable Agriculture, Coastal Enterprises, Inc.



Program Introduction

Mainers Feeding Mainers is a partnership between Good Shepherd Food Bank and Maine farms, dairies, fisheries, and other local food producers to eliminate hunger in Maine. We invite you to watch the program's YouTube video.

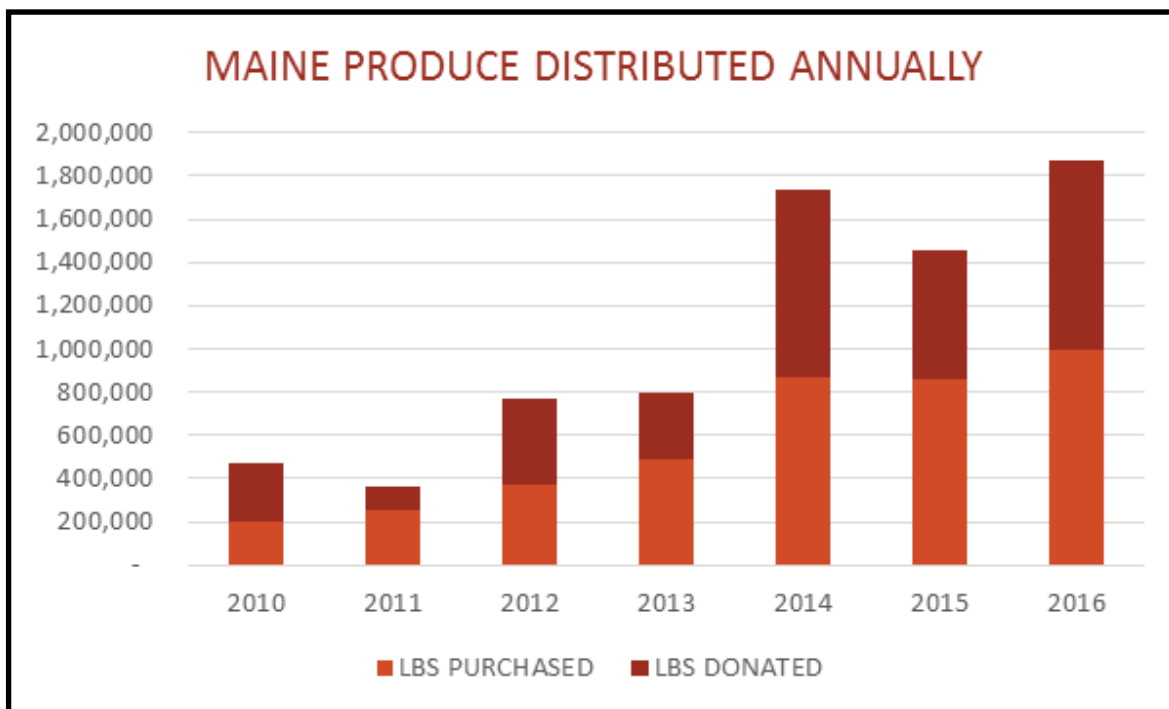
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2016 Program Report Mainers Feeding Mainers

Program Summary

Good Shepherd Food Bank is working to get fresh, local food out to the Mainers who need it most – those who struggle with food insecurity and have limited access to nutritious food. We do this by forming agreements with local farmers and creating safe and efficient distribution channels for local food.

The program was launched in 2010. In its first year, the program acquired and distributed just over **350,000 lbs.** of nutritious, locally grown food.

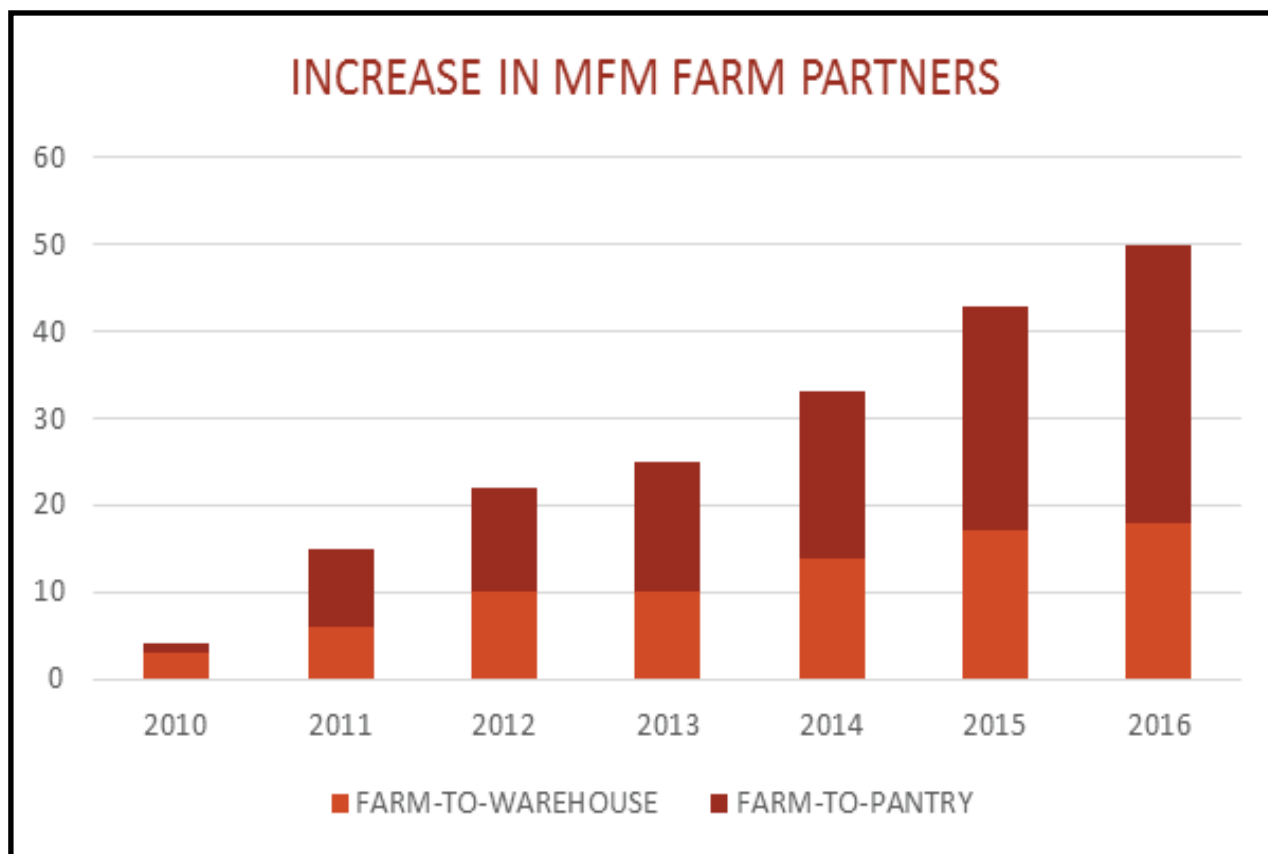


In 2016, Mainers Feeding Mainers purchased more than **1,000,000 pounds** of produce, received an additional **871,000 pounds** of donated produce from its farm partners, and invested more than **\$500,000** into the Maine agricultural economy. Through the program, nearly **1.9 millions pounds** of fresh and nutritious Maine fruits and vegetables were distributed to Maine families in need.

Since 2010, the program has acquired (through purchases and donations) nearly **9 million pounds** of nutritious fruits, vegetables, seafood and dairy products that have helped feed Mainers in need.

Building Strong Communities

In 2010, the Mainers Feeding Mainers program began with nine initial partnerships with Maine farms. **The number of partnerships has grown to 50 in 2016** and we incorporated dairies and fisheries into the program. We have several partners in each of the state's 16 counties.



In 2011, the Mainers Feeding Mainers program initiated direct deliveries of produce from farm partners to food pantries. These deliveries are crucial to our efforts to move fresh food more cost-effectively, quickly, and safely from the field or producer to the shelves of hunger relief programs. This component has grown from a single operation in 2011 to **32 farm-to-pantry partners** today, delivering fresh produce and dairy directly to more than 115 food pantries, soup kitchens, school pantries and shelters.

2016 Program Report Mainers Feeding Mainers

Since Mainers Feeding Mainers was launched, the program has brought about a fundamental change in the nutritional quality of the food we distribute. The Food Bank has steadily increased the pounds of healthy produce distributed to food insecure Mainers—from 2 million lbs. in 2010 to **8 million pounds** in 2016. We have also increased the percentage of healthy fruits and vegetables in the food we distribute to hunger relief programs:

Food Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Fruits & Vegetables	19%	25%	24%	36%	41%	43%	47%
Vegetables Only	9%	13%	16%	28%	35%	36%	37%

Also in 2016, we participated in **Milk2MyPlate**, a program that maximizes the Food Bank's ability to provide fresh milk to our network partners while increasing incremental milk sales for the processor. Through a collaboration with the Maine Dairy Promotion Board and Oakhurst Dairy, we have begun to provide half-gallons of milk to three school pantries.

Contributing to the Economy

In 2016, Mainers Feeding Mainers invested **\$511,000** in our local agricultural and farming businesses through the purchase of **1,031,000 pounds** of farm product at an average cost of \$.49 per pound.

This investment has a multiplier effect that also helps strengthen the Maine communities where the farms are located and the products are grown.



2016 Program Report Mainers Feeding Mainers



The Mainers Feeding Mainers program benefits Maine farmers and the agricultural economy in several ways:

Provides a new market for Maine farmers. Good Shepherd Food Bank provides food for over 178,000 low-income individuals, representing a potential market that is largely unable, without assistance, to access local, fresh produce due to the cost.

Offers the security of pre-season contract agreements. Pre-season purchase agreements made from December through February are beneficial to farmers. They provide the security of a known sale and the ability to take risks in opening new fields or hiring additional labor. For some farmers, just being able to add 1-2 acres of planted crops has a significant impact.

Increases annual yields to markets with late-season purchases. Mainers Feeding Mainers also makes purchases late in the season. This keeps costs down and helps farmers get more of their produce out of the fields (rather than plowing the produce under) while still covering their basic production costs. As one farmer told us: "I get to sell everything I grow now."

What's in store for 2017?

Future plans for the Mainers Feeding Mainers program include a continued focus on an annual goal of acquiring 2 million pounds of fresh Maine farm product (about 50% purchased and 50% donated) on behalf of food insecure Maine families. We are also committed to expanding our capacity to safely store and distribute nutritious farm produce through the winter and spring, as well as exploring ways to process and preserve fresh food product for year-round distribution through our Auburn facility.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Finance Authority of Maine in 2016, Mainers Feeding Mainers will expand even further in 2017 and beyond. In the next two years we plan to increase the number of farm partners from 50 to 80, which will allow us to increase the amount of local food we source. In addition, we're currently in the planning stages to construct a cutting-edge produce storage and distribution facility at our recently purchased Bangor region warehouse. Once constructed, this facility will help us increase distribution of nutritious, local food, as well as field test new techniques for improved processing and storage of local fruits and vegetables.



Program Support

Mainers Feeding Mainers is sustained through a generous major funding collaborative that includes the following donors:

Sandy River Charitable Foundation	Elmina B. Sewall Foundation
Sam L. Cohen Foundation	John Merck Fund
New Balance Foundation	Betterment Fund
Walmart Foundation	Thomas W. Haas Fund
USDA / Local Foods Promotion Program	F.A.M.E. / Fund for a Healthy ME
Next Generation Charitable Foundation	



www.feedingmaine.org/how-we-help/mainers-feeding-mainers/