

The 2018-2019 New York State Budget: Issues of Concern to the Food Bank Association of NYS



No Student Goes Hungry

The adopted Budget creates the “No Student Goes Hungry” program to provide students with access to healthy, locally-sourced meals to address child hunger. It includes an expansion of the Farm-to-School Program to utilize locally-grown, quality meals. Under the plan, schools will receive an increased reimbursement, from 6 cents to 25 cents, if they can show that their lunches included 30 percent or more New York grown or produced food. The program also bans “meal shaming,” and supports “Breakfast after the Bell” to make breakfast accessible for students after the school day has begun.

SUNY is addressing student hunger on campuses through the SUNY Food Insecurity Task Force. There is no current funding in the adopted Budget.

Taste NY Program

The adopted Budget continues funding initiatives that connect New York’s food and beverage producers with consumers, including:

- \$1.1 million for the Taste NY program
- \$27.3 million for the New York State Grown and Certified program to strengthen consumer confidence in New York State products, address food product labeling, and assist New York farmers so they can take advantage of the growing demand for local, high quality food
- \$750,000 for the Farm to School program
- \$100,000 for the Seed to Success program to promote school gardens
- \$500,000 for the Senior Farmers Market program

Empire State After-School Program

The adopted Budget increases the state’s after-school investment with \$35 million in new funding for public after-school programs in the state’s 16 Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) as well as in communities in the state with high rates of child poverty. This new funding will create an additional 22,000 spots for students in after-school programs.

Food Rescue and Recycling Act

Governor Cuomo proposed the “Food Rescue and Recycling Act” to reduce food waste by requiring large volume food waste generators to a) divert excess food to food banks and b) divert food scraps to designated facilities for anaerobic digestion and conversion to energy. An agreement on the measure could not be reached as several Senators had issues with the mandate provision and the scope of the legislation. Senator Marisol Alcantara has introduced the “Surplus Food to Charitable Organizations Act” (S7348), which narrows the scope to include only donations of excess food from supermarkets with a footprint of 10,000 sq. ft. or more, and replaces the mandate to donate with a requirement of a “good faith” effort by supermarkets to do so. This legislation could establish a foundation upon which to move forward incrementally, and is expected to be approved by the Senate shortly. It does not yet have a “Same As” bill in the Assembly.



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Utilization of Safe and Appropriate “Past-Date” Foods

A2272, which would regulate the sale of past-date foods and potentially open the door to limiting the use of past-date foods as food donations, was not included in the adopted Budget and does not have a “Same As” in the Senate. As part of S7348 (see above), the Senate included language that would categorize past-date foods that are safe and appropriate as “excess food” that is qualified for food donations by supermarkets.

Feed NYS State Income Tax Checkoff Program

A4572, which would establish a State tax checkoff program for donation to food banks, was not included in the adopted budget and does not have a “Same As” in the Senate.

Capital

The adopted budget does not include new funding for the Nonprofit Infrastructure Capital Investment Program, but re-appropriates \$120 million which was previously allocated for this program.

Other Budget Items

The adopted Budget includes:

- \$26.255 million for Woman, Infants & Children (WIC)
- \$3.024 million for Nutrition Outreach for Community Based Organizations

For More Information:

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