

P2P

peer to peer


FEEDING[®]
NEW YORK STATE
SUMMER 2026



SUMMER
bliss

A MESSAGE FROM FEEDING NEW YORK STATE



Elizabeth Cooper
Executive Director

I am excited to be writing to you in my first newsletter as Executive Director of Feeding New York State (FNYS) and I want to begin by expressing my gratitude. It is an honor to join this remarkable organization.

Over the past several years, FNYS has grown into a nationally recognized voice in the fight against hunger, thanks to the vision of those who came before me, the dedication of our staff, and the commitment of our member food banks and partners.

In my first few weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet with each member of the FNYS team and am impressed by their knowledge and passion. Additionally, I met many partners and board members. It has become abundantly clear that this organization is built on relationships. It is the strength of these relationships that makes FNYS uniquely positioned to bring diverse perspectives together for innovative solutions to the challenges of food insecurity.

My leadership philosophy is simple: the best solutions come from listening, learning, and working together.

As I start to visit our member food banks and learn from the communities we serve, I look forward to hearing your perspectives, understanding the unique challenges you face, and learning from your experiences. Together we can work to advance bold policy solutions, expand innovative programs, challenge assumptions, and pursue new approaches.

Thank you for the warm welcome you have extended to me. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the months ahead and working together to ensure that every New Yorker has reliable access to nutritious food.

With appreciation,

Elizabeth

Feel free to connect with me, ecooper@feedingnys.org or 518.949.0194



Strategic Initiatives & Grants



Kathleen Stress
Deputy Director

As members you receive pass through funds that support your work.
Below is an overview of FY27 funding support.

FNYS Administers	Period	Amount
Transportation Grant	Period 2 (8/1/26-7/31/27)	\$32,000/ food bank
Vension Donation Program	Period 4 (7/1/26-6/30/27)	\$17,636/ food bank
Food Recovery	Period 2 (5/1/26-4/30/27)	\$141,000/ food bank

Pass through funds are separate from the non-cash benefits each food bank receives from FNYS.

Food Recovery pounds and Produce Sourcing pounds are considered supplemental support to your acquisition programs.

Pass through grant notifications emailed week of 7/27/26, please ensure you received

Venison Donation, Period 4

Reimbursement:

- Funds will reimburse food banks for the cost of processing donated venison.
- If your region does not receive venison donations, please coordinate with other food banks to acquire products from other regions.

Minimum funding available is: \$17,636.60

- Grant funds cover processing fees up to \$3.50/pound for the duration of Period 4.
- Program Assessments: FNYS will conduct December and February status reviews to assess use of funds and availability for additional expenditures.

Transportation, Period 2

August 1, 2026 through July 31, 2027

Allocation per food bank: \$32,000

These funds are designated to support freight costs for eligible food commodities that meet HPNAP Nutrition Policy requirements.



Member Engagement



Steffani Williams
Director of
Engagement

Looking Back

Thank you to everyone who joined us in Rochester for the 2026 FNYS Annual Member Summit! Together, we learned, shared ideas, celebrated successes, toured Foodlink and the Community Farm, and strengthened the relationships that make our network stronger.



2026 Summit at a Glance

- Rochester, NY
- Over 140 attendees
- Educational sessions on advocacy, sourcing, food recovery, food as medicine, and technology
- Hunger Champion Awards
- Foodlink & Community Farm tours
- New connections and collaborations

See presentations, photos, award winners, and more on our Summit landing page:

<https://feedingnys.org/2026-annual-summit/>

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, presented, sponsored, volunteered, and helped make this year's Summit such a memorable event. I'm already looking forward to next year!



Looking Ahead

Over the past three years, one of the things I'm most proud of is the stronger connections across our network. More than ever, colleagues are sharing ideas, solving challenges together, and learning from one another. That's exactly the kind of collaboration I hoped to foster.

As my role evolves, so will the way we engage. You'll see a more intentional approach to quarterly meetings, food bank road shows, workshops, and other opportunities to connect. We'll focus on identifying trends, gathering meaningful insights, and ensuring Feeding New York State delivers the greatest value to our member food banks.

The relationships we've built provide a strong foundation. Now it's time to build on that momentum by turning what we learn together into meaningful action that strengthens our network.



Member Spotlight

It's exciting to see food banks investing in their people to strengthen their organizations to better serve their communities.

Say hello to Norm!



Norm Schneider, Director of Food Bank Operations at Foodlink. He joined Foodlink in March and has assumed the day-to-day responsibilities for Operations, including fulfillment and logistics for the Food Bank team. His role is part of Foodlink's recent organizational restructuring, designed to strengthen operations and position the team for continued success.

Norm is a Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) grad with a degree in Biotechnology/Biology and he spent 24 years working in agricultural research, support, and manufacturing before joining the food banking network. Outside of work, he enjoys cooking and baking (especially sourdough!) and spending time hiking with his two dogs, Willow and Karma.

Welcome, Norm! We're excited to have you connect with other food bankers across the state.

Admin & Finance



Lydia Casavant
Director of
Business
Administration

Fiscal Year Reflections

As we move through the summer, it's a good time to reflect on our progress while looking ahead. It's been a productive few months, and I'm pleased to share a few updates.

- In May, we held a productive in-person Board of Directors meeting in Syracuse, hosted by the Food Bank of Central New York, and we're looking forward to meeting this September, hosted by Feeding Westchester.
- In June, Feeding New York State proudly sponsored the New York State Food Summit, hosted by our colleagues at The Alliance for a Hunger Free New York. Jay, Alyssa, and I enjoyed connecting with partners from across the state, learning about their impact, and participating in inspiring sessions, including one led by Alyssa. The summit reinforced the value of collaboration in our shared mission to end hunger.
- This time of year also marks our fiscal year-end, bringing plenty of accounting, administrative work, and coordination with our auditors. Having previously worked as a nonprofit auditor, I have a deep appreciation for the effort that goes into a successful year-end close. Best wishes to the accountants and administrators at our member food banks as you navigate your own year-end responsibilities.



The end of this summer will also mark my two-year anniversary with Feeding New York State.

During that time, I've had the privilege of helping strengthen our operations and support our member food banks, and I look forward to continuing that work in the years ahead.

Thank you for your continued partnership, and I hope you have a wonderful summer!

New technology to help with grant tracking and member submissions



Our Salesforce implementation continues to make steady progress and remains on track for internal implementation in August 2026.

We've enjoyed working closely with Atlas DevShop throughout the project, and we're excited to provide our members with a more streamlined experience for grant administration and service utilization. Each food bank will have their own portal to track FNYS Program data & submissions

Sourcing Connections



Jim Germain
Sr. Director of Produce
& Logistics

Early days of Summer

While many of us plan PTO or sit in air-conditioned rooms, our farmers are busy working and maintaining crops to feed our families. It is important to know where your food comes from and consciously support our New York growers.

As Feeding New York State quickly reflects on our **record-breaking FY 26 year distributing more than 51M lbs. of assorted fresh produce** we are now focused on how we can continue to be a supplemental resource to our members for fresh produce.

As we speed up Mother Nature's clock to late summer/early fall, look for a wide variety of fresh produce options coming out of our mixing centers. Phone conversations are always encouraged to discuss the best available options that work for your food bank's distribution.

I hope everyone has a moment to reflect on all your successes in FY26 and look forward to the opportunities this upcoming year will bring.



LOOK FOR OUR MID-SUMMER VEGETABLE OPPORTUNITIES:

Apples, beets, cabbage, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini & yellow squash, onions, peppers, and tomatoes



**DAILY OFFERINGS ARE TIME SENSITIVE
AND GO QUICKLY SO
PLEASE BE AWARE WITH
RESPONSE TIMES.**

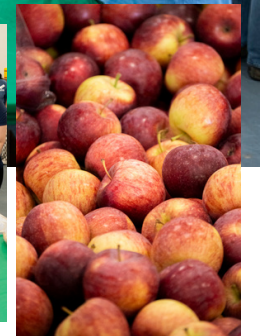
NEW DROP!



Our 25lb. **Fresh-to-Go** assorted produce box program continues to grow in popularity.

Each week we will pack the freshest and best available NY grown products for easy client distribution.

Our approach from August through October is to provide one carton of zero cost fresh eggs for every FTG box to satisfy any household. Dairy items will also be available starting September.



Food Recovery



Jay Hawkins
Director of Food Recovery

Cassidy Hammecker
Sourcing & Food Recovery Coordinator

New York’s Food Donation & Food Scraps Recycling Law Expands January 1, 2027

New York State's Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law enters its next phase, adding approximately 2,000 businesses and institutions as Designated Food Scraps Generators (DFSGs). This expands the statewide list from about 1,200 to more than 3,200 designated generators.

The expansion creates a significant opportunity to recover more wholesome food for New Yorkers facing hunger while reducing food waste. It also means thousands of new organizations will need outreach, education, and support to comply with the law.

Feeding New York State's member food banks have already built a strong foundation, partnering with 68% of the currently designated generators and recovering more than 100 million pounds of food since 2022.

In the months ahead, Feeding New York State will continue working with member food banks, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and community partners to prepare for the expansion by strengthening infrastructure, building new partnerships, and supporting newly designated generators. Together, we are expanding New York's food recovery network—recovering more food, reducing waste, and feeding more New Yorkers.

By the Numbers	
Current Designated Generators	1,200
New Generators Added in 2027	2,000
Total Designated Generators	3,200
Current Generator Partnership Rate	68%
Food Recovered Since 2022	100+ Million Pounds

Welcome new food bankers

Blossom Vance joined FeedMore WNY Retail Partnership team as a Community Nutrition Educator in June. In this role, Blossom supports the Food Donation Nutrition Pilot Program, which reduces food waste through nutrition education and community empowerment. Her focus will be on developing engaging educational materials and delivering hands-on nutrition and cooking workshops that help network partners, staff, and community members get the most from recovered foods.



- Fun Facts:
- Enjoys gardening and has several years of experience in organic agriculture.
 - Currently learning to play the cello.
 - Passionate about creative writing and storytelling.

This month, **Tara Pagano-Toub** joined the Food Recovery Team as Food Recovery Advocate after six months on the FNYS Policy and Advocacy Team. Prior to FNYS, she was the inaugural Dunn-Ramirez Food Policy Fellow at City Harvest and worked at The Farmlink Project as Student and Volunteer Coordinator.

Tara received her Bachelor’s Degree from Northwestern University with a double major in Environmental Policy & Culture and Violin Performance. She also received a Master’s Degree in Violin Performance at Manhattan School of Music.

Outside of her work at FNYS, Tara is a professional violinist and member of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra. She freelances around NYC and the tristate area, and has a small studio of violin students.

Regional Food Bank welcomed **Emily Thorne** as their new Retail Rescue Onboarding Coordinator! Emily joined the team in June and will play a key role in supporting the continued expansion of the Retail Rescue Program across their 23 counties.



The Regional Food Bank is preparing to onboard partnerships that will nearly double their current retail network. Emily's work will be instrumental in building strong partnerships and supporting successful program launches as they move forward.



Advocacy Happenings



Alyssa Harrynanann
Advocacy
Manager

Celebrating a successful FY26 Advocacy Season

We have to take pause to celebrate a win for our neighbors with the increase of HPNAP in the state budget. We did not receive all that we asked for, yet it cannot diminish the significant investment made to a critical program.

HPNAP	NNY	NY Plates
\$72.8 M	\$55M	\$10 M
increase of \$15M	Maintained	New Initiative

Throughout the summer, our Advocacy Committee has been building off progress made at our FNYS Summit meeting to develop our policy platform for the year ahead. Once this platform is finalized and approved by the Board, we are excited to continue pushing our advocacy efforts for next year!

- We’re planning earlier meetings with the Governor’s office and our legislative champions to ensure that our food bank priorities are remaining top of mind.
- Information gathering: FNYS and our food banks will be collaborating to share our annual partner agency survey on advocacy. We’ll be gathering feedback on the demand for food across our networks, the impact of H.R.1, and other relevant information that will help inform our advocacy materials.



Nourish Ny

We’ve expanded our outreach efforts around Nourish New York by partnering with farmers to share why they value the program.

Help us amplify these voices. Do you know a farmer working with your food bank through Nourish New York who would be willing to support our advocacy efforts? If so, please let me know—we’d love to connect with them.



Feeding New York State joined Regional Food Bank, Long Island Cares, and youth advocates from across the nation at the Gen Z Food and Hunger Summit! This conference allowed us to network with the next generation of leaders, while also advocating for anti-hunger priorities with our legislators. We’re grateful for the opportunity!



14 Columbia Circle, Suite 200
Albany, New York 12203
P: 518-930-7000
www.feedingnys.org

Proud member of



Partnership *highlight*



Another chance to celebrate our **Hunger Champions!**

It is all about partnerships that allow us to do the work!

- Sarah Wilfred-NYS DOH
- Kristine Ellsworth- NYS DEC
- Amanda Palme-Food Bank of the Southern Tier
- City Harvest team- Sourcing
- Jerome Nathaniel- City Harvest