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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

**GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES STATE ACTIONS IN RECOGNITION OF
HUNGER ACTION MONTH**

***Nourish New York Initiative Purchases Over 50 Million Pounds of New York Farm
Products, Bringing Nearly 50 Million Meals to Families in Need***

***State Landmarks to be Lit in Orange in Recognition of Hunger Action Day,
September 23, 2022***

***New York's Food Banks Honor the Month With Food Drives, Distributions, and
More***

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced actions taking place across New York State in recognition of Hunger Action Month, which is observed each September to raise awareness about food insecurity and to encourage people to take part in the fight against hunger. This month marks several milestones for the State's Nourish New York initiative, which was launched during the pandemic to get more food to people in need while supporting New York farmers. The program has now helped food banks purchase over 50 million pounds of New York farm products, putting nearly 50 million meals on the table for families facing food insecurity.

"Too many New Yorkers struggle to put food on the table, and the past few years have only intensified this problem for families," **Governor Hochul said.** "Our state agencies and partner organizations across the state are working hard to fight food insecurity through programs like Nourish New York, and Hunger Action Month is a perfect time to raise awareness and recognize their hard work. New Yorkers always lend a helping hand in times of need, and I encourage everyone to get involved with their local food banks this Hunger Action Month."

The Governor also announced that state landmarks will be lit in orange on Hunger Action Day, which takes place on Friday, September 23, to raise awareness of this important issue and to pledge New York's continued commitment to combat hunger in our communities. Food banks statewide are also honoring the month with a series of food distributions, food drives, and other events, giving all New Yorkers an opportunity to get involved.

Nourish New York

The [Nourish New York](#) initiative allows New York's emergency food providers to purchase surplus products from New York farmers and dairy manufacturers to deliver to New York families in need through New York's network of food banks and emergency food providers. Since its launch during the height of the pandemic in May 2020, Nourish New York has given \$96 million to help New York's network of food banks and emergency food providers purchase more than 57 million pounds of food from local farmers and deliver more than 47.7 million meals to communities across the state. Thirty-one percent of the funding has been spent on dairy products, 29 percent on produce, and 40 percent on other products including meat, eggs, and seafood.

In November 2021, Governor Hochul signed legislation S.4892-A/A.5781-A enshrining the Nourish New York program permanently in state law. A total of \$147 million has been committed to Nourish New York to date through five rounds of funding. The program provides funds directly to the state's emergency food providers to help them buy New York agricultural products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, and produce, meat, seafood, and eggs. It also funds the delivery of these goods to New Yorkers through large drive-through distributions, food box and school meal programs, food pantries, and soup kitchens.

In addition, the program supports the state's farmers and producers who lost markets for their products due to the pandemic. Through the food banks' purchases, 4,320 food and agriculture businesses have been impacted to date.

State Landmarks Lit in Orange

State landmarks will be lit orange on Friday, September 23, in recognition of Hunger Action Day and Hunger Action Month. This is the fourth consecutive year that New York State is lighting its landmarks in orange, which was the color of the first food stamps and is used to represent hunger awareness by hunger relief organizations.

The state landmarks that will be lit orange in recognition of Hunger Action Month include:

1. Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge
2. Kosciuszko Bridge
3. The H. Carl McCall SUNY Building State Education Building
4. Alfred E. Smith State Office Building
5. Empire State Plaza
6. State Fairgrounds - Main Gate & Expo Center
7. Niagara Falls
8. The "Franklin D. Roosevelt" Mid-Hudson Bridge
9. Albany International Airport Gateway
10. The Lake Placid Olympic Jumping Complex

11. The Lake Placid Olympic Center
12. MTA LIRR - East End Gateway at Penn Station
13. Fairport Lift Bridge over the Erie Canal

New York State has long been committed to the fight against hunger. The State has launched several groundbreaking programs in recent years to improve access to healthy, locally grown foods and to bring New York-grown foods and beverages to underserved communities. Most recently, as part of her State of the State commitment to better connect farms and schools across New York, Governor Hochul directed the Department of Agriculture and Markets to take the lead on administration of the [30 percent NYS Initiative](#) in order to enhance participation in the program statewide. This initiative increases the reimbursement schools receive for lunches from 5.9 cents per meal to 25 cents per meal for any district that purchases at least 30 percent ingredients for their school lunch program from New York farms. Another recent milestone is the one million pounds of food donated to hungry New Yorkers as part of the ongoing implementation of the State's Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law, which builds on the State's efforts to reduce waste and climate-altering emissions caused by landfilling, while providing quality food to New Yorkers in need.

The [Council on Hunger and Food Policy](#) convenes to provide state policymakers with expertise on how to address hunger and improve access to healthy, locally-grown food for New York State residents. The work of the Council was critical during the establishment of the Nourish New York program, thanks to its focus on strengthening ties and cooperation between programs addressing hunger and those who produce and supply food. The Council continues its work and encourages the public to watch the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health on Wednesday, September 28.

Food Distribution Events

Additionally, many of New York State's 10 regional food banks are each recognizing Hunger Action Month in their own way this month, giving New Yorkers a great opportunity to get involved on the ground in their own communities. Planned activities include a series of food distributions, food drives, and other community events to support their hunger relief missions. Some examples include:

1. **Food Bank of the Southern Tier** is hosting the "Leader of the Pack" fundraiser and virtual food drive, which brings local businesses together to raise funds for the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. Participating corporate partner teams compete to pack the most backpacks in the fastest time while also collecting the most contributions through their custom virtual store.
2. **Foodlink** cohosted a media event with Congressman Joseph Morelle to advocate for federal anti-hunger legislation, such as Universal School Meals and the Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act, earlier this month. Foodlink's annual fall fundraiser, the Festival of Food, also returned to the city's Public Market for the first time since 2019.

3. **Island Harvest** released an [interactive Hunger Action Month calendar](#) with events and ideas for how people can raise awareness and get involved locally in the fight against food insecurity, including a month-long "Build a Box" food drive activity.
4. **Long Island Cares, Inc. - The Harry Chapin Regional Food Bank** is partnering with the Hauppauge Industrial Association of Long Island to mark Hunger Action Day. Several corporations that are members of the HIALI have donated \$10.00 per employee to support Long Island Cares and will gather together on Hunger Action Day for a group photo.

Food banks are also encouraging New Yorkers to wear orange on Hunger Action Day and post to social media to raise awareness of the cause. Those interested in finding food or in volunteering with their local food bank can visit the [Feeding New York State website](#) to learn more.

Department of Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "Hunger Action Month is our annual opportunity to raise awareness of the food insecurity facing our communities, and encourage folks across the State to get involved. Here at the Department, we work hard every day to combat hunger and get more food on the tables of all New Yorkers. I'm proud that our Nourish New York program has now brought nearly 50 million meals to people in need through our network of food banks, while supporting our farmers through the purchase of their healthy, farm fresh products. That's really something to be excited about."

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner Daniel W. Tietz said, "Far too many households in our state continue to grapple with food insecurity--a sad reality that we cannot allow to become commonplace. Hunger Action Month reminds us all that there is more work to be done. Governor Hochul's unwavering support for programs like Nourish New York demonstrates her true commitment to ensuring all New Yorkers have the ability to provide healthy, nutritious food for themselves and their loved ones."

State Senator Michelle Hinchey said, "Every New Yorker deserves to have access to affordable, healthy food and to have the security of knowing where their next meal is coming from. As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, my priority has always been to connect the dots between the nutritious food grown by New York farmers and local families facing food insecurity, which is how our Nourish New York bill—a lifeline for food access—was formed. We will continue to lead the way on solutions to end the hunger crisis, and I thank Governor Hochul for her partnership in building a more equitable food system for all."

Assemblymember Donna Lupardo said, "I'd like to thank Governor Hochul for highlighting our successful Nourish New York program during Hunger Action Month. The program has allowed food banks and emergency food providers to purchase millions of dollars of surplus food from NY producers. New York's agricultural sector is proud to play a vital role in addressing food insecurity across the state."

Hunger Free America CEO Joel Berg said, "Two million New York State residents, spread out over every rural, suburban, and rural corner of the state - including working people, seniors, children, veterans, and people with disabilities -- now live in food insecure homes, unable to always afford enough food. This Hunger Action Month, lets rededicate our collective efforts to creating and implementing the policies needed to end hunger and ensure that everyone can afford nutritious food by slashing poverty, expanding economic opportunity, and ensuring adequate government safety net programs."

New York Farm Bureau President David Fisher said, "Nourish NY is a valuable program connecting farmers with regional food banks and emergency pantries across the state. The market opportunities it provides serves as a lifeline for both growers and New Yorkers in need, especially when there are supply chain disruptions. Hunger Action Month is a great reminder to the importance of maintaining a strong agricultural system in New York to address the needs of our state and of our farmers' commitment to make sure every New Yorker has access to fresh, locally produced food. We appreciate Gov. Hochul's continued support of Nourish NY and all that it provides."

Feeding New York State Executive Director Dan Egan said, "New York State government continues to provide crucial support to food banks and other anti-hunger organizations through Nourish New York, the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program, and food waste recovery projects. We must guard against any false belief that the crisis is over: although we are no longer in a COVID lockdown, the need for charitable food remains at very high levels. Inflation has impacted our neighbors and our own work. We are fortunate to have great partners in State government. Governor Hochul's leadership enables us to provide millions of pounds of high-quality New York-raised food to help our hungry neighbors. We are connecting farmers, food banks and the hungry in an efficient and productive program. We look forward to the day when all our neighbors have secure food supplies and our work will no longer be necessary. Until that day comes, continued support for food banks will be vital."

Long Island Cares, Inc. Chief Government Officer Michael Haynes said, "This Hunger Action Month, Long Island Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank is proud to stand alongside Feeding America and Feeding New York State in advocating for increased support for food banks and the diverse food insecure populations we serve. Next week we are hosting a local watch party for staff, volunteers, agencies and persons with lived experience to virtually attend the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health. We are very excited to see how this Conference will galvanize the nation's hunger advocates and look forward to doing the work required to ensure a hunger-free America by 2030."

Foodlink President and CEO Julia Tedesco said, "Nourish NY funding has been a critical source of support for Foodlink and our community partners so we can support local growers while getting healthy food on the table for millions of New Yorkers," said,

of. "We applaud state officials for recognizing the need, and turning this pandemic response program into a permanent legislation within the state budget."

Long Island-based Island Harvest Food Bank President and CEO Randi Shubin Dresner said, "Many Americans are feeling the economic pressure due to rising costs for food, fuel, and other essential commodities, causing them to make difficult decisions, such as buying food or paying to fuel up their cars, or pay a utility bill. Hunger Action Month is a time for New Yorkers to mobilize to help end hunger by donating, volunteering, or advocating. We applaud Governor Hochul for her leadership and support of programs like Nourish New York that help ensure that no New Yorker goes without a basic human right such as food."

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