

CFC FY24 IMPACT REPORT

- Overview -

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, the Community Food Connection (CFC) Program grew to meet the needs of New Yorkers, increasing the total number of providers, the number of visits, and the volume of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed. The CFC program supported 694 providers to supply 43.1 million pounds of food across 169 Neighborhood Tabulation Areas (NTAs) and closed 25% of the Supply Gap citywide. In high-need neighborhoods, identified by New York City's Taskforce on Racial Inclusion & Equity (TRIE), CFC closed 35% of the Supply Gap and increased the volume of food per food-insecure person to 42 pounds.

Supply Gap

The Supply Gap, which computes the difference between the need for emergency food and the supply of emergency food by NTA, was reduced by 25% (+5% vs FY23) citywide. In NTAs with a CFC provider, the supply gap was reduced by 30% (+5% vs FY23) and by 35% in TRIE NTAs with a CFC provider (+7% vs FY23), increasing in pounds per food insecure person in TRIE NTAs to 42 pounds (+1 from FY23). CFC successfully served 65% of NTAs (169/262), where roughly 91% of NYC's food insecure populations live. A deeper look at TRIE NTAs show that 72% of CFC providers serve these high-need areas, an increase of 4% from FY23, with 92% of active CFC providers located in TRIE NTAs. Overall, CFC supported increased food security across New York City, including high priority areas with the most prominent meal gap.

Providers

CFC onboarded 44 new providers, 75% of whom service TRIE NTAs, reaching an additional 1.1 million people. While the number of new providers onboarded decreased from 96 in FY23, the CFC program grew to serve 64% of all NYC emergency food providers. CFC providers delivered an astounding 43,093,360 pounds of food, though 2.6 million pounds less than the previous year, in part due to the rising cost of food. The average cost per pound of food supplied by CFC increased 6%, from \$1.04 in FY23 to \$1.10 in FY24. Although the cost per pound of food increased, contributing to a decrease in the total volume of food procured, the proportion of CFC-funded emergency food providers still grew to represent a larger proportion of total providers in the network.

Reach

CFC providers report reach as determined by household size and frequency of visits, representing a duplicate value as opposed to unique individual count. CFC providers reported a reach of 35.3 million in FY24, 9.1 million higher than in FY23. This included additional service to 1.8 million (+32%) seniors, 2.8 million (+36%) children, and 4.3 million (+33%) adults (duplicate). On average, CFC funding supported an average monthly reach of 300,000 more people each in FY24 (2.9 million) compared to the average monthly reach in FY23 (2.6 million). There were 7 months of the year in which the average monthly reach was exceeded, alluding toward a trend of increased visits more consistently throughout the year. However, this increase is not necessarily predictive of future reach trends and could be influenced by changes in CFC provider count and capacity.

Food Supply

CFC supports 64% of all NYC emergency food providers, supplying 18% of the total 234.6 million pounds of emergency food distributed in FY24. The decrease in representative percent of citywide emergency food supply indicates that partners outside of the CFC program scope are increasing their distribution

volumes at a faster rate than CFC. This could be attributed to the increase in food cost, leading to a decrease in the overall volume of food provided. This could also be influenced by the proportion of new providers within the CFC program; the only emergency food funding source accepting new partners. As new providers are onboarded, CFC funds are stretched to accommodate increased provider funding requests, thinning the finite budget and requiring reductions in allocations. This supports new providers in receiving CFC funding to meet existing needs while enabling larger providers to focus on scale and capacity building without the reductions in allocations due to new partners. The composition of food distributed by the CFC program shows a trend toward more fresh fruits and vegetables, with an increase in the volume of fresh produce by 5% (28% vs 33%), equating to roughly 12 million pounds. There were also distinct increases in the amount of protein (4% vs 8%) supplied, reflective of the introduction and expansion of the approved procurement lists, including additional protein options (e.g., kosher chicken).

Considerations

The continued rise in monthly average visits, cost of food, and new providers all indicate a trend toward increased demand for emergency food in FY26. To ensure New Yorkers have multiple ways to access healthy, culturally relevant foods to increase household food security, MOFP recommends strengthening communication and support across emergency food providing agencies to provide more comprehensive and adaptive responses to need in real time. Collaboration across emergency food stakeholders through Quarterly Emergency Food Strategic Convenings would support continuous engagement and adaptability to meet the needs as they arise. Leveraging FeedNYC for quarterly reports, encouraging full allocation spend, thereby decreasing the need for reallocation, will ensure high need areas are receiving the resources needed to close the meal gap.

Additional considerations should be taken into account when determining priority rankings, including adjustments to represent for high-need communities, changes in service areas based on site relocation, and expansion of the catchment service area based on insights from travel behaviors. This could be addressed through adaptations to the Supply Gap Analysis, including weighted factors to proactively account for changes in demand for emergency food and through real-time service insights during Quarterly Emergency Food Strategic Convenings. Further, CFC's continued communication promoting utilization of provider allocations through provision of monthly reports are strongly encouraged to ensure that emergency food dollars are leveraged to their maximum capacity. If providers are unable to utilize their full allocation, unused funds, as practicable, should be re-directed to high need areas.

Capacity investments, particularly for small and medium providers, that include refrigeration, storage, technology, inventory management, trucks/transportation, and staffing have been identified by providers as essential to meeting the needs of their communities. The City should ensure that it makes providers aware of grant opportunities, including CFC's annual capacity grant application, and provide them with technical assistance to ensure responsive, accurate, and timely application submissions. CFC will be launching a demonstration project that will offer a monthly voucher to eligible participants that aims to provide access to a broad range of purchasable items, including items such as infant care and personal hygiene products, to expand choice for participants beyond existing food items available at pantries. The project goals are to gain insight into family needs and preferences to alleviate food insecurity and economic stress and to inform a potential expansion of products available at pantries. Continued expansion of approved items, based on member input and availability by the contracted food vendor, on

the CFC procurement list would also support diversification of food supply, improve service, and foster a more culturally representative emergency food network.