



HUNGER & THE WISCONSIN STATE BUDGET

# COVID-19 exacerbated food insecurity

As of March 2021, Feeding America estimated

that **680,330**

Wisconsinites

(11.7% or just over 1 in 8),

including



**1 in 5**

children,

experienced

food insecurity

in 2020.

**Feeding Wisconsin is the state association of the six Feeding America food banks in Wisconsin.**

**Together, our food banks serve almost 1,000 local food programs.** In 2020, the Feeding Wisconsin network distributed 79 million pounds, an increase of 62% over 2019. We anticipate that demand will continue far beyond 2021 as the pandemic and resulting economy crisis continues to take a toll on our communities, especially those experiencing food insecurity.

Addressing food insecurity in the Wisconsin budget is fundamental to health, education and our Wisconsin values. Feeding Wisconsin supports budget policy that will increase access to fresh, nutritious food for Wisconsin families at home and at school; ensure a strong, accessible, and effective FoodShare program; and improve the health of Wisconsin families.



**SUPPORTING CHILDREN:**  
Create Healthy, Hunger-Free Schools in Wisconsin

- Fully funding and expanding eligibility for reimbursement of the school breakfast program
- Investing in students to cover the cost of reduced-price school meals
- Funding the Farm-to-School Program to provide local foods in school meals



**SUPPORTING OUR FARMERS:**  
Create opportunities for Wisconsin farmers while working to end hunger in our communities

- Investing \$20 Million to connect Wisconsin food banks and pantries with Wisconsin producers to provide food to families experiencing food insecurity
- Providing technology improvements to farmer's markets and farmers who sell directly to consumers increasing access to Wisconsin grown products to low-income Wisconsin families
- Creating the food waste reduction pilot program connecting food producers and distributors with nonprofit organizations to provide food to families experiencing food insecurity



**SUPPORTING WISCONSIN'S LARGEST ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAM:**  
Create a strong, accessible, and effective FoodShare program

- Funding the Healthy Eating Incentives pilot will provide up to 2,000 FoodShare households with discounts on fresh produce and other healthy food options
- Eliminating eligibility barriers to food benefits by repealing the work requirement for FoodShare
- Eliminating eligibility barriers to food benefits to help recipients gain employment by repealing the drug testing requirement for those participating in the FoodShare Employment & Training program



The list below indicates the locations of the public hearings.

## Make your voices heard!

The Joint Finance Committee will hold four public hearings on the proposed 2021-2023 biennial budget. Three hearings will be held in person, and one hearing will be virtual. All of the hearings will be streamed on Wisconsin Eye ([wiseye.org](http://wiseye.org)).

### If you are planning on attending one of the public hearings, here are a few important things to note:

- The primary purpose of the public hearings will be to hear from Wisconsinites. This is your opportunity to share your story.
- No one in Wisconsin should be hungry. We need your help speaking up on these important issues.
- Speakers (virtual and in-person) will be given two minutes to speak.
- The Joint Finance Committee will be following the guidelines from local public health departments for the host location regarding masking, social distancing and room capacity.

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 2021

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater  
Irvin L. Young Auditorium  
930 W. Main St.  
Whitewater, WI 53190

#### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2021

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Hodag Dome  
665 Coolidge Ave.  
Rhineland, WI 54501

#### THURSDAY, APRIL 22ND

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Great Hall of the Memorial Student Center  
302 10th Ave E  
Menomonie, WI 54751

#### VIRTUAL HEARING:

#### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Virtual

The virtual hearing will require pre-registration. Details will be released via The Joint Finance Committee website: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/virtual/>

Comments may also be submitted via email to [Budget.Comments@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Budget.Comments@legis.wisconsin.gov) and on the Joint Finance Committee Budget Comment Website <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/submit-comments/>

[www.feedingwi.org/statebudget](http://www.feedingwi.org/statebudget)