

# Wake County Food Security Plan 2024 Update

Wake County Board Of Commissioners  
HHS Committee

Cooperative Extension  
Sydney Mierop & Trevor Hyde

August 25, 2025



@wakegov    

wake.gov

# Overview

- **ARPA funding update**
- **Outcomes to date**
- **Federal policy impacts**
- **Next steps**



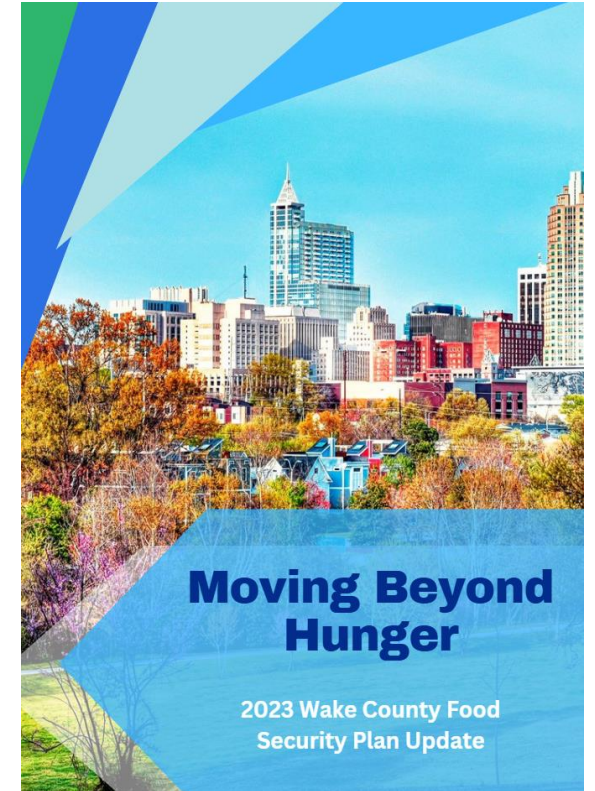
# 2023 Food Security Plan: Big Picture

## Environmental Challenges

- Growing food insecure population
- Shifting federal landscape
- Long-term health impacts of food insecurity

## Systems Approach

- Strengthen local economy
- Improve resilience of local food system to future shocks and supply chain shortages
- Improve health of food insecure populations
- Empower community organization capacity



[2023 Wake County Food Security Plan Update](#)  
[FoodHubStrategy\\_final.pdf](#) (also utilized)



# ARPA Funding Update

# Key points

- Awarded \$7.2 Million ARPA funds for implementation
- Ongoing programs scheduled to end by December 2026
- Seeing positive impact of investments despite shifting funding landscape

# Encumbered Funds by Program

Initiative	Total Dollar Amount Awarded	Expected Completion
Nourishing Wake (Produce Prescription)	\$1,773,000	Dec 2026
Food Bank Local Purchasing	\$1,745,000	Dec 2026
Local Food Aggregation	\$1,248,000	Dec 2026
Community Health Workers	\$612,933	Dec 2026
Mobile Market Expansion	\$385,251	Dec 2026
Food Pantry Innovations	\$213,166	Nearing completion
Farmers Markets EBT/SNAP & Produce 2 Pantry	\$293,076	Dec 2026
Food Justice Cohort & Food Policy Intern	\$162,432	Dec 2026
Communal Garden Infrastructure Support	\$62,050	Nearing Completion
Farm to Early Childcare	\$50,000	Aug 2026



# Outcomes to Date

# Initial Insights

- **4,539,762 pounds** of food purchased/grown for food insecure populations (add conversion to meals)
  - Approx 383,135 meals
  - 2024 data includes additional CV19 Emergency Food Strategies
- **\$6,710,690 sales generated** for local producers
  - \$2,239,852 sales generated for marginalized producers
  - \$100,989 in SNAP benefits utilized & matched at Farmers Markets
- **132.3% Increase** in Farmers Market Foot Traffic 2022 through 2024





# Initial Insights

- **23 partners with increased cold storage** or delivery capacity
  - Reduction in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) makes tracking impact year to year difficult
- **126% increase in pounds of food harvested** by Communal Gardens
- **10,986 referrals** via Community Health Workers
  - Top 3 referral needs: Chronic Health Condition Support/Education, Nutrition Education, and Food Resources



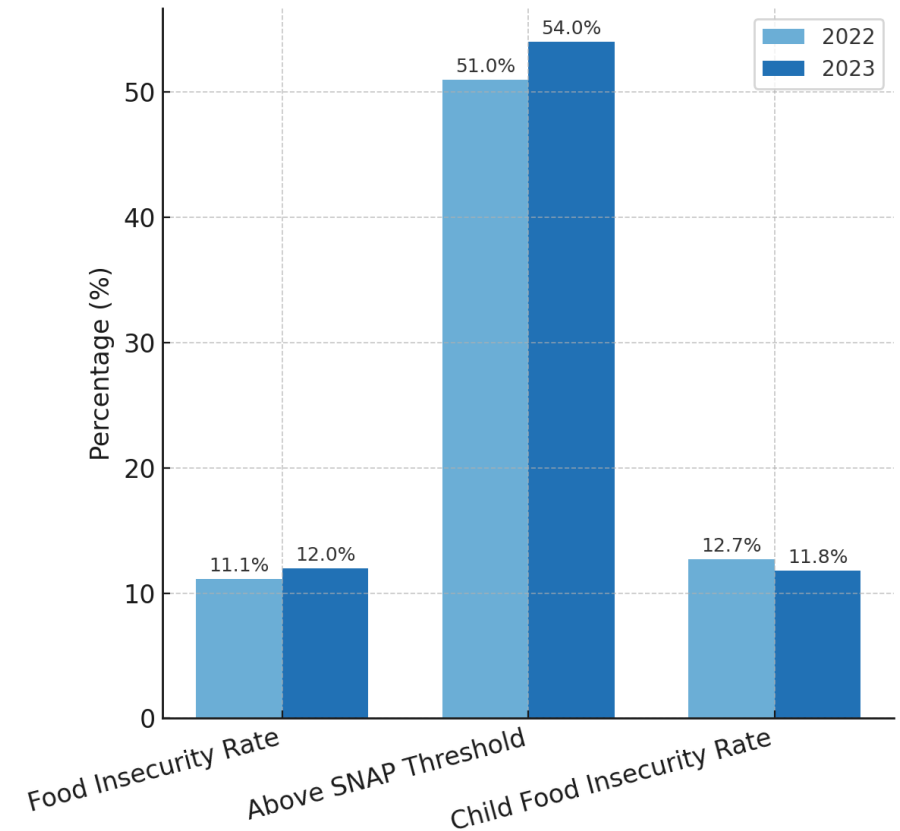


# Federal Policy Impacts

# Federal Policy Impacts – Food Security

- **2022 – 2023 Notable Shifts**
  - Overall food insecurity rate increased
  - Increased number above SNAP threshold = fewer number of **food insecure** residents eligible for SNAP
  - Child food insecurity rate decreased
  - Decrease in Food Aggregator sales
  - Reduced SNAP redemption

Wake County 2022 & 2023  
Food Insecurity Data



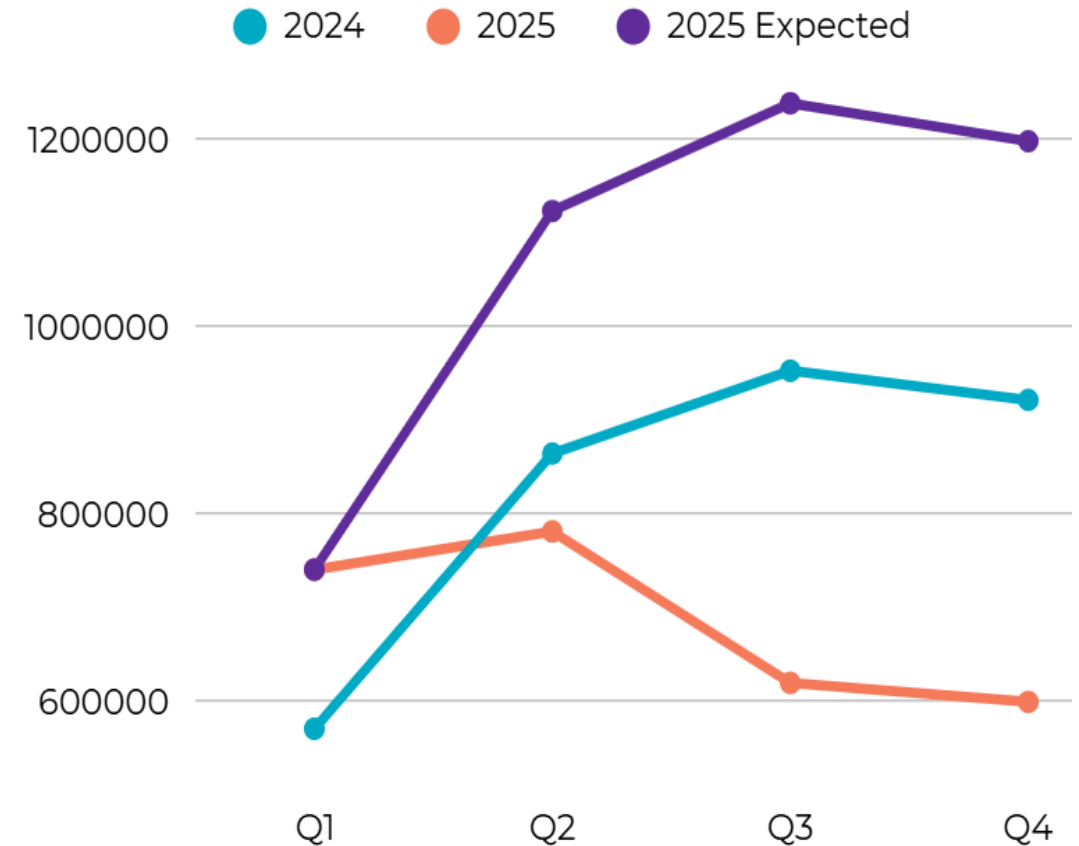
[Hunger & Poverty in the United States](#) | [Map the Meal Gap](#)

# Federal Policy Impacts – Food Security

- **Key Policy Changes**

- Shifts in SNAP funding
- Decrease in TEFAP
- Loss of USDA grants

**Food Aggregator  
Sales Data 2024-2025**



<https://www.wunc.org/education/2025-05-06/federal-funding-cuts-nc-apple-farmers-usda-school-lunch>

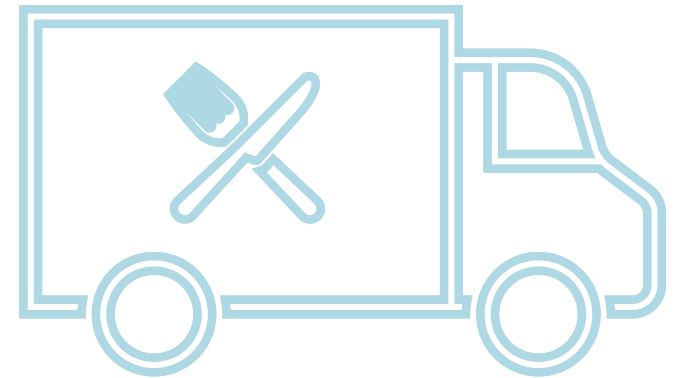


# Next Steps

# Supporting Emergency Food Partners

## Support capacity building to:

- **Increase food donations**
  - Match food pantries to local sponsors
  - Improve Food Reclamation such as Toward Zero Waste SHARE Program with schools
- **Increase food purchasing budgets**
  - 1:1 Business Connections
  - Train emergency food partners on how to obtain funding
- **Enhance outreach and communications strategies**
  - Partner with health clinics to share resources
  - Develop Food Security Team newsletter
  - Revamp Capital Area Food Network communications



# Advancing systems level efforts

## Encourage more local food procurement via local institutions

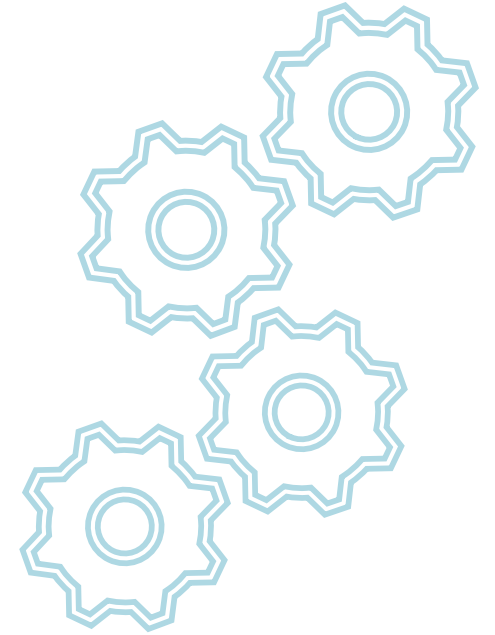
- Inventory local institutions and level of local procurement
- Secure introductions to local food-serving institutions such as hospitals, etc.

## Advancing regional food system development via multi-county approach

- Strengthen Wake fresh local food supply chain for shock-resistance
- Expand local food market opportunities

## Identify and secure funding & partnerships to support ongoing efforts

- **Nourishing Wake**
  - Federal funding options are less viable
  - American Heart Association potential partner for funding match
- **Produce 2 Pantry & SNAP Match**
  - FY27 outlook



# The Food Justice Cohort: Phase II Strategy

**Co-Led Effort by Wake County Cooperative Extension & Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

**Train-The-Trainer series to build the capacity of local organizations**

## **Program Launch Timeline**

- Steering Committee Launched Spring 2025
- Recruit Trainers – Summer 2025
- Develop Training Materials – Fall 2025
- Launch 1st cohort – January 2026 (10-15 CBOS)
- Graduate 1st cohort March/April 2026
- Anticipate 2 cohorts through Dec 2026





# Future Impacts

- Nourishing Wake:
  - Lower A1C, Blood Pressure for Nourishing Wake patients
- Emergency Food Partners:
  - Increased pounds of fresh food and food overall
- Local Partners trained:
  - Report funding successfully obtained
  - New partnerships formed
- Enhanced Knowledge of Food Resources
  - 3 of 4 residents asked will indicate low barriers to accessing food resources





**WAKE.GOV**