

General Focus Check-In Meeting – October 21, 2025

Please note that at this time AI programs are not allowed at WSDA hosted meetings and they will be denied or removed from the meeting. Questions posed in chat will be responded verbally unless the information is already public knowledge.

WSDA Focus on Food – Katie Rains

- Dialogue between the governor, state agencies and representatives.
- Reminder that WSDA does not have additional requests of the legislature for this session.
- EFAP data has been shared with the Director's office, the Governor's office, and OFM. They are aware of historic number of client visits.
 - The Governor's office and legislature are interested in the impacts of HR-1.
 - Reduced snap benefits, new work requirements, other impacts and needs in the hunger relief community.
 - Also the government shut down could impact SNAP benefits as soon as November 1.
 - Suggestions on the role of the state, keeping in mind we don't have the financial ability to cover the federal funding.
 - Please give feedback to Katie Rains to be shared with legislators and policy makers.
- Please send your feedback, concerns and suggestions about the felt impacts of HR1 in your community - or suggestions for state response in the event that SNAP benefits aren't issued in November. Communicate with your regional rep, Kim Eads, or myself so that we can share situational awareness with agency leadership, Gov's office, and policymakers. krains@agr.wa.gov, 360-688-4549
- **Contact:**
 - Katie Rains, Food Policy Advisor to the Director
 - krains@agr.wa.gov; 360-688-4549

Washington Food Coalition – Trish Twomey

- Thank you to everyone who attended and/or sponsored the conference. Please fill out the Whova feedback survey.
- FAAC meeting Thursday, October 23rd, 1:00-2:30pm.
 - Updates on the impacts of the federal shutdown.
 - Progress report on developing a statewide food security strategy.
 - Discussion of EFAP data and WSDA's Community Engagement process.
- Training on de-escalation on Oct 30th 2:00-4:00pm. Registration will be in the newsletter today. (Register here: <https://washingtonfoodcoalition.growthzoneapp.com/event-calendar/details/de-escalation-training-with-national-alliance-on-mental-illness-nami-1514248>)
- Translation and telephonic interpretation services are now available. Send documents to be translated to Trish. Contact Trish about details on the telephonic interpretation service.
- Reminder that membership renewal starts in November.
- **Contact:**
 - Trish Twomey, Executive Director
 - trish@wafoodcoalition.org

Harvest Against Hunger – David Bobanick

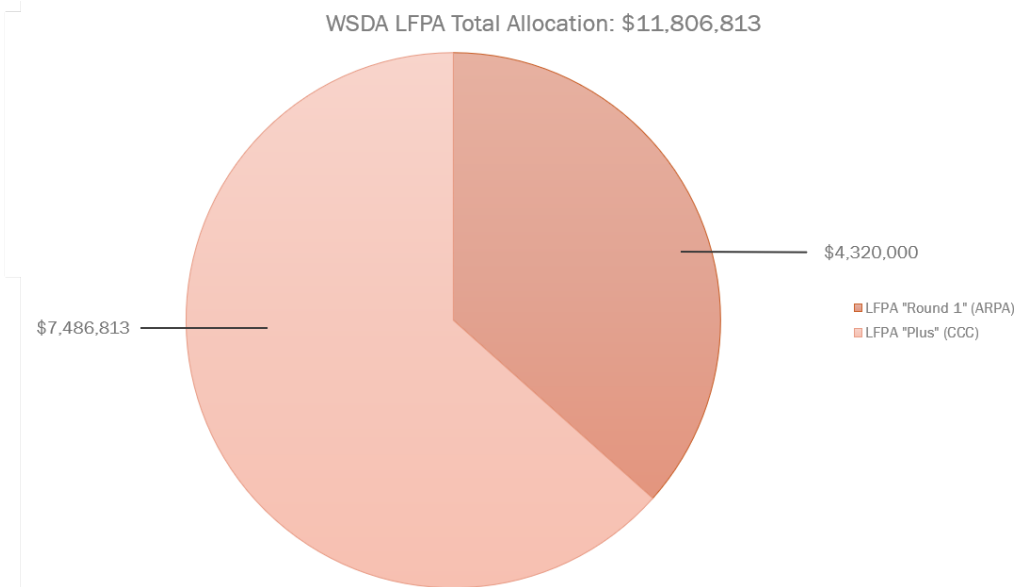
- F2FP continues. Thank you to those participating and providing feedback.
- F2FP Report will be published in November.
- Coordinating four food system get-togethers, formerly round tables. Get farmers, volunteers and hunger relief community connected to solve problems in their area. Let me or Olivia know if you want to host one in your area.
- Expecting a March date for the WA Gleaning Network Conference. Finalization coming soon.
- **Comments:**
 - Growers Round Table date/location posted on website?
 - Yes, will be posted on the website. Also work with community partner who will outreach to the local area. Will also send an invite to the local WSDA rep in the area.
- **Contact info:**
 - David Bobanick, david@harvestagainsthunger.org
 - Olivia Jackiewicz, olivia@harvestagainsthunger.org

Advocacy Updates – Claire Lane, Aaron Czyzewski

- DSHS notice: SNAP Benefits will be delayed in November if the government shutdown continues past October 31st. But once it reopens, benefits should be issued within a couple days.
 - DSHS will also have large scale temporary staff layoffs (over 600 people), complicating customer service.
 - DSHS is working on contingency plans, which is essentially hunger relief organizations. The State is aware you don't have money or food and have too many clients. They are working on finding funding to help out.
 - DSHS is aware it takes 5 days to get letters out, so they are working on large scale messaging for SNAP beneficiaries. When the messaging is published, it will be shared with hunger relief organizations, to be shared with clients.
 - We need to be thoughtful how to communicate with the homeless community. Contact Claire with ideas on how to get information out immediately as needed.
- WIC is a discretionary program, and earlier in October Washington State had 1.5 weeks of funding. USDA used tariff money to fund WIC through Thanksgiving.
- The State, elected officials, agencies, etc. are strategizing for a difficult time.
- Bright side: more coordinated and connected focus on state hunger insecurity. Rep. Reeves, chair of the House AG and Natural Resources Committee has food security one of her top priorities. House Bill 1987 to develop a coordinated response to ensure statewide food security.
- Independent hunger relief organizations can request additional funding and measures in ways state agencies can't.
- Last week the Senate Ways and Means Committee had in-depth presentations to understand the impacts of HR-1 on our state's Medicaid, SNAP, and Basic Food.
- Work session Dec 5th, House Ag Committee. Will be good to tune into that to get a sense of the conversation around food security.
- Food Lifeline is looking at legislative priorities for 2026 and is focusing on the statewide response to the federal cuts.
- Statewide workgroup recently sent best practices recommendation for food donations to the legislature. Also the food policy forum is advancing recommendations to legislature.
- Possible advocacy priority: tax code equity to fund social service needs and community investment.

- **Comments:**
 - Do we have any *guesses* on the chances of the shutdown continuing through November?
 - We need to prepare for it to last beyond Nov 1.
 - Most folks have already used the majority of their October SNAP benefits.
 - Could DSHS help provide public numbers? I can only find data that is at least a year old on how many individuals are served by SNAP right now and at what dollar level.
 - Looks like WA SNAP recipients access about \$167M per month in aggregate. That's the gap that needs to be filled.
 - Can you pls repeat how long SNAP is funded till?
 - SNAP through 10/31 and WIC through 11/30.
 - The budget deficit for this session is estimated to be \$7 BILLION.
 - Is there a possibility that money will be moved out of Food Assistance?
 - WSDA has no reason to believe that any policymakers are considering defunding Food Assistance in the current biennium ending June 2027.
- **Contact:**
 - Aaron Czyzewski, aaronc@foodlifeline.org; (813) 503-3535
 - Claire Lane, Claire.Lane2@gmail.com; (206) 446-0966

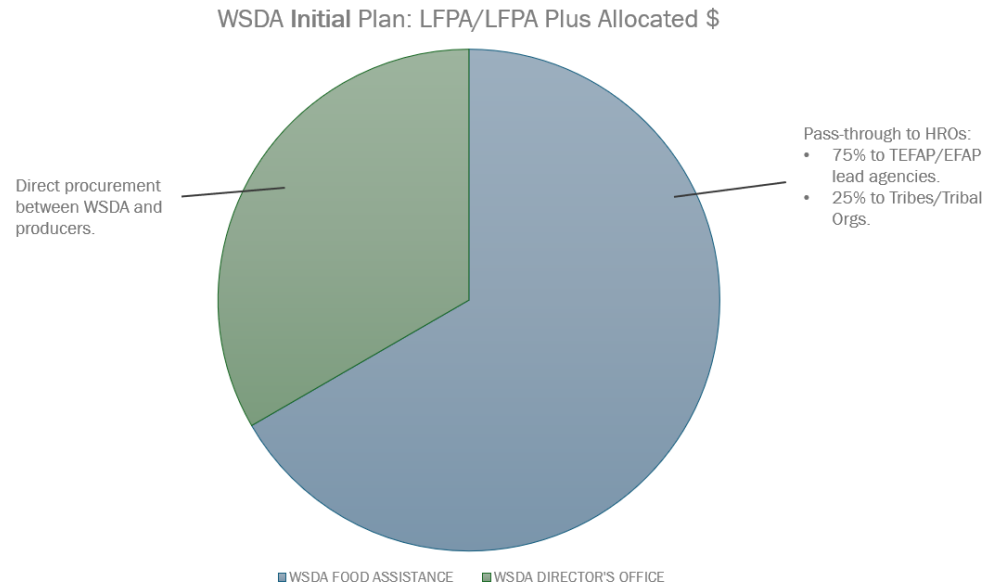
Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Program Review – Jeff Mathias, Elise Levesque, WSDA FA

- Program Overview: 2022 to today
 - Goals of LFPA:
 - Strengthen local and regional food systems.
 - Support local and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers through expanded economic opportunities.
 - Provide fresh, culturally relevant foods to underserved communities across WA.
 - 2022
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WSDA LFPA Total Allocation: \$11,806,813

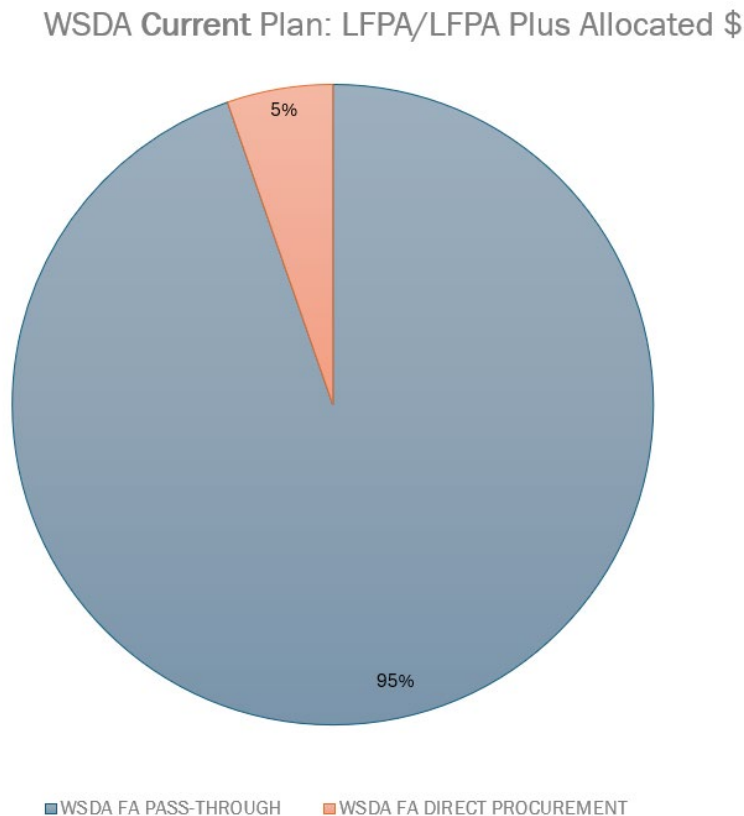
Fund Source	Amount
LFPA "Round 1" (ARPA)	\$4,320,000
LFPA "Plus" (CCC)	\$7,486,813
Total	\$11,806,813
 - Two fund sources within USDA.
 - Program officially began in 2022.
 - Does not include state LFPA-GAP or LFPA Food Purchasing funding.

○ 2022-2024 WSDA Initial Plan:



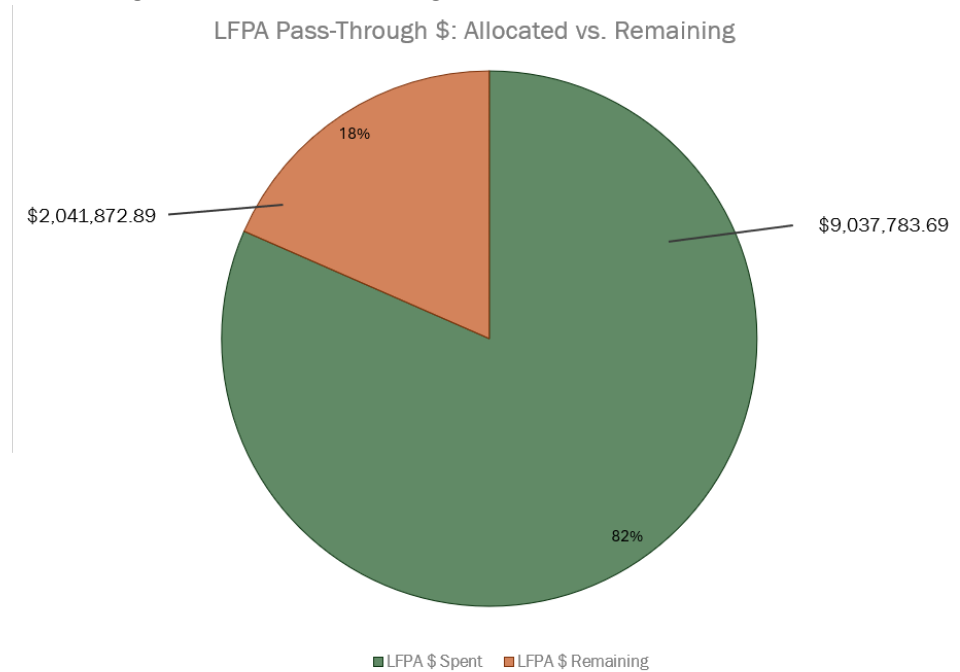
- “LFPA 25” announced by USDA October 2024.
- WA was expected to receive ~\$8M in LFPA funding.

○ 2025 WSDA Current Plan:



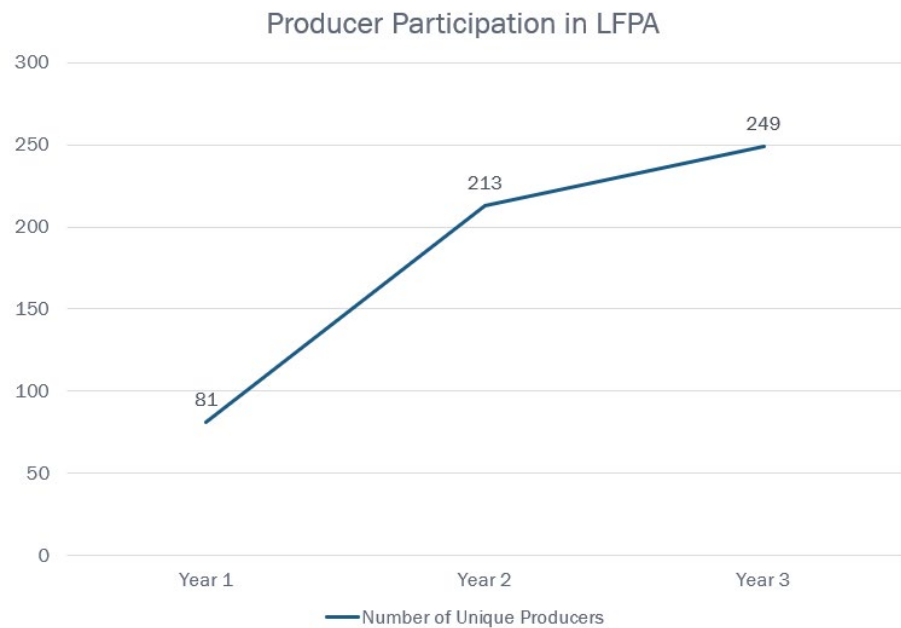
- LFPA 25 terminated by USDA January 2025.
- Director’s Office reallocated their LFPA funding to Food Assistance.
- FA allocated most of that funding to Lead Agencies.
- WSDA received a no-cost extension on existing LFPA funds. Pass-through must be spent by 12/31/25.

- Today LFPA Pass-Through Allocated vs Remaining:



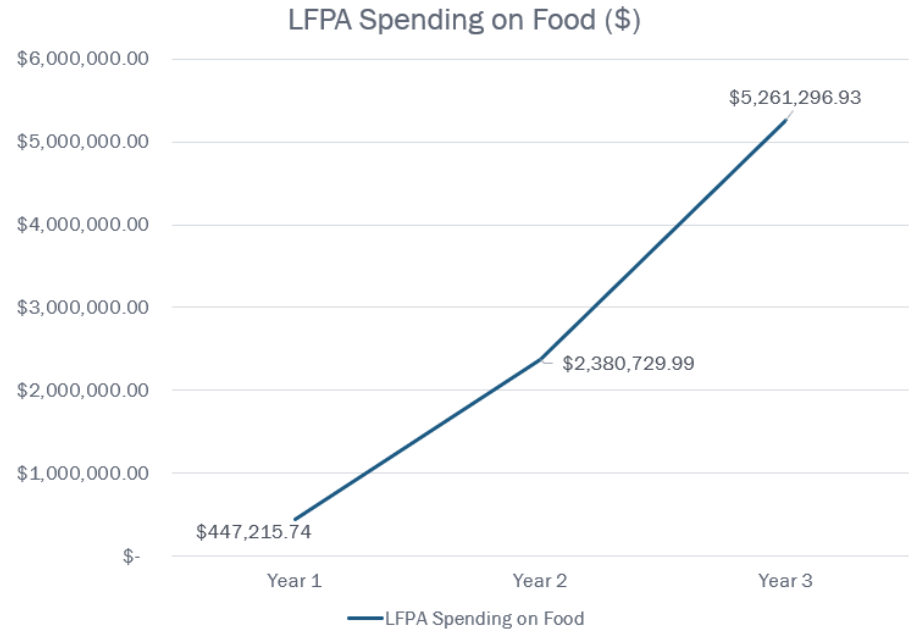
- Values as of October 20, 2025.
- Does not include LFPA Gap.

- LFPA Over the Years
 - Outcome 1: Strengthening Local Food Systems
 - 7-1-22 to 6-30-25

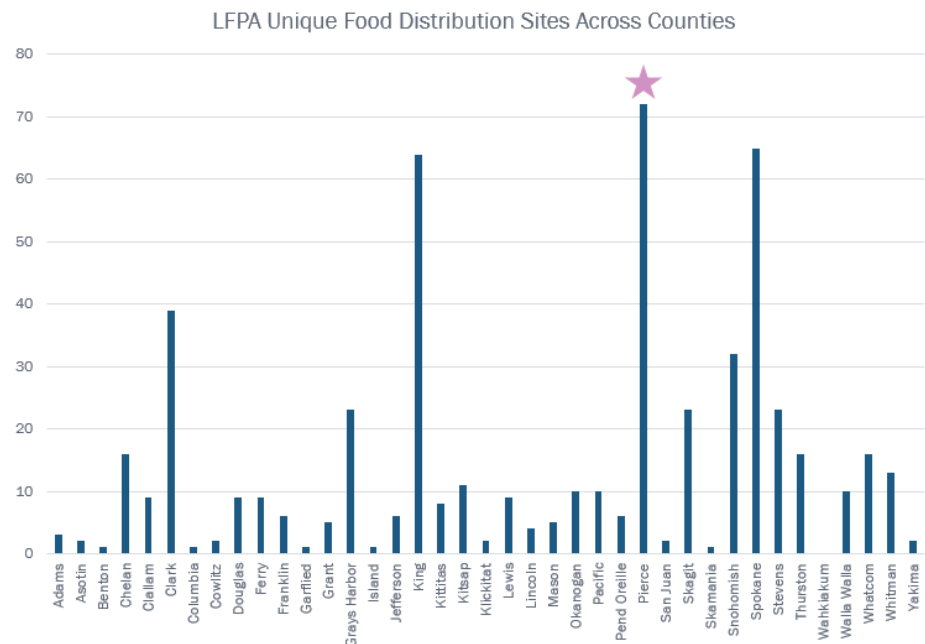


- Sourced from 382 unique producers/vendors.
 - 60% of farmers/vendors were socially disadvantaged.
- Over \$8M spent directly on food purchases.
 - 93% of pass-through funding spent on food.
 - 59% of funds spent on food grown by socially disadvantaged farmers.

- Year 3 – SFY25



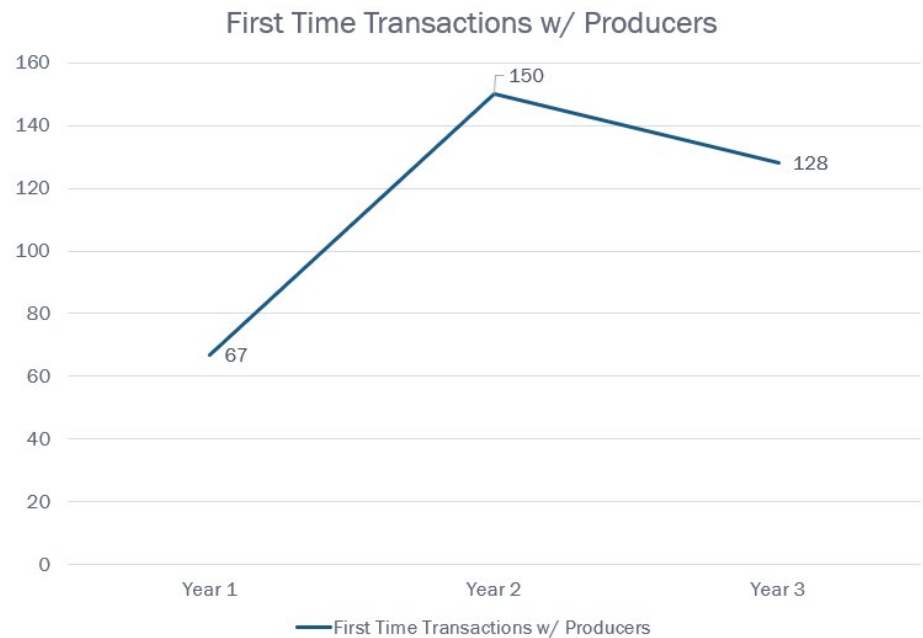
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- Sourced from 249 unique producers/vendors.
 - 59% of farmers/vendors were socially disadvantaged.
- Over \$5M spent directly on food purchases.
 - Majority of purchases for fresh produce and proteins.
- Outcome 2: Broadening Partnerships & Distribution
 - 7-1-22 to 6-30-25



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- Food distributed to 534 hunger relief sites across the state (408 in SFY25).
 - 91% of distribution sites located in underserved communities.
 - 90% of total food value was distributed to underserved sites.

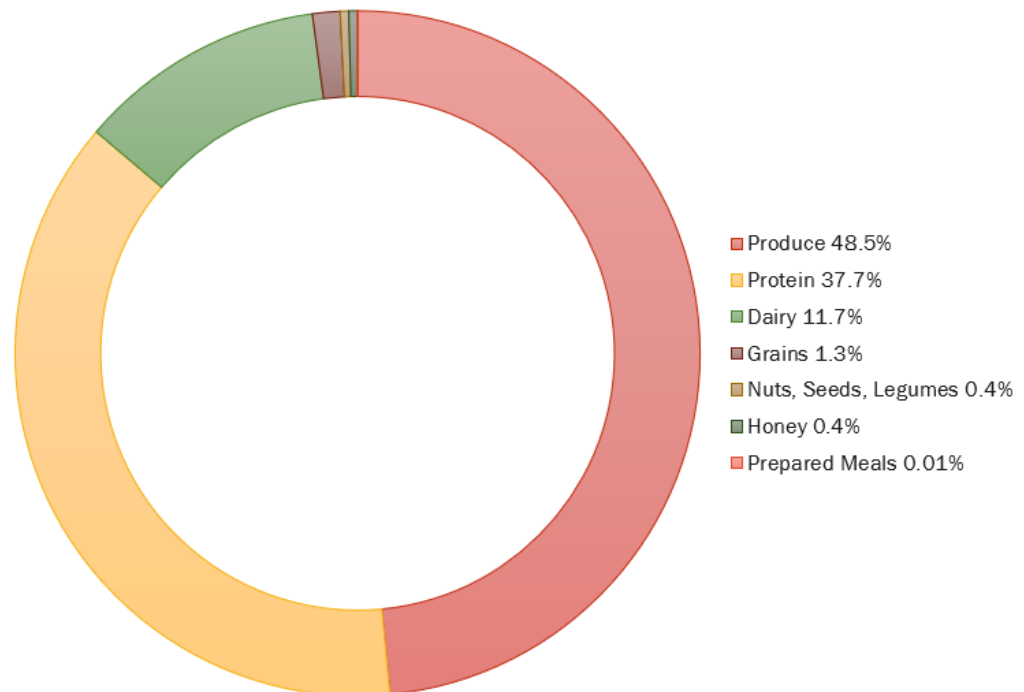
- Outcome 3: New Market Opportunities

- 7-1-22 to 6-30-25



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- 345 first time transactions with new farmers.
 - 216 identified as socially disadvantaged.
- 99% of new farmers are expected to sustain sales beyond LFPA funding.

- Outcome 4: Diversity of Food Purchased



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- “LFPA is a much-needed blessing; integral to addressing food insecurity by allowing agencies to procure locally-grown and culturally relevant food while also supporting state-wide agriculture.” -Hopelink

- LFPA Challenges and Successes
 - Challenges:
 - Finding farmers/producers.
 - Staff turnover.
 - Administrative burdens, minimal admin funding.
 - Invoicing vs reporting frequencies.
 - Federal government changes.
 - Successes:
 - Producer-HRO relationships.
 - Flexibility of purchasing.
 - Tribal Traditional Activities.
 - Local economic impact.
 - “Proof of Concept” for future local purchasing programs.
 - A Big Thank You!
- Final Office Hours
 - Thursday, November 6th 1:00pm.
 - Email to come with more info.
 - PS – Quarterly reports were due October 20th.
- **Comment:**
 - This is a \$11 M loss to WA food banks and farmers. Devastating.
 - Way to go EFN!
 - And...funding isn't available. What a bait and switch for small producers.
 - Data shared today has been updated on our webpage: [https://agr.wa.gov/services/food-access/programs-and-services/local-food-purchase-assistance-\(lfpa\)](https://agr.wa.gov/services/food-access/programs-and-services/local-food-purchase-assistance-(lfpa)).
 - I love how successful this program WAS but think we need to really focus on what we are going to meet the need NOW. This program is done by the end of the year. With the shutdown of the government and SNAP and WIC. What are we going to do to meet the need RIGHT NOW? That money is GONE. How could we fund this going forward?
- **Contact:**
 - Jeff Mathias, jeff.mathias@agr.wa.gov
 - Elise Levesque, elise.levesque@agr.wa.gov

Community Engagement - Andrea Litzow, WSDA FA

- Community Engagement at WA Food Coalition Conference
 - Overview
 - 200+ interactions with stakeholders, including Lead & Sub Agencies, Grantees, Tribes, Advocates, and more.
 - Comments/feedback/questions shared via:
 - 16 FA Staff who recorded what they heard/takeaways.
 - Direct stakeholder submissions to FA Comment Form.
 - A full house for the WSDA Session.
 - Overall Themes from Stakeholder Engagement
 - Gratitude for WSDA FA efforts.
 - Challenges and frustration over program policies.
 - Concern for services and future resources.
 - Disconnect and tension amongst system and roles.

- Innovation and enthusiasm to collaborate.
- WSDA Food Assistance Community Engagement Strategies
 - Sixth wave of Washington State Food Security Surveys (WAFOOD).
 - Tentative survey launch: Jan-Feb 2026.
 - Regional stakeholder engagement for FA program improvements.
 - Tentative timeline:
 - Active engagement: January-June 2026.
 - Evaluate feedback and share outcomes: July 2026-March 2027.
 - Implement program improvements: April to June 2027 for 2027-29 State Biennium (starts July 1, 2027).
 - Ongoing Community Engagement Efforts
 - Food Assistance Advisory Committee (FAAC) Meeting on Thursday, October 23rd 1:00-2:30pm.
- **Contact:**
 - Andrea Litzow, andrea.litzow@agr.wa.gov

General Updates – Kim Eads, Kyle Merslich, WSDA FA

- Program Updates: [Visit WSDA FA homepage](#).
- Current Strategy – Guidance Memos will be sent out via email and then incorporated into amendments during the course of the agreement period.
- We will be covering changes and updates more in-depth at the Lead Agency Open Office Hours on November 4th and the Lead Agency Check-In Meeting November 7th.
- Updates:
 - Procurement changes September 1, 2025 are pending further discussion:
 - Direct Buy
 - Level 1: up to \$40,000.
 - Level 2: up to \$50,000 for small and veteran-owned businesses.
 - Level 3: \$50,000-\$100,000 with 3 quotes from small and/or veteran-owned businesses.
 - Competitive Solicitation for over \$40,000 unless Level 2 or 3 apply.
 - Shutdown Funding Impacts (no new information):
 - Stable state funding, estimating less federal funding, and increased client need.
 - Options are being discussed but we anticipate FA program operations will continue through December 31, 2025 without any modifications.
- **Comments:**
 - Leads will be receiving a communication from Reps shortly highlighting some of the information in those What's New posts! Excited to answer your questions 😊.
 - This will also be messaged to Resiliency Grants and Farm to Community grantees!
 - Any help you all can give with providing lists of veteran owned and small business will be very helpful.
 - <https://omwbe.wa.gov/directory-certified-businesses>

Office Hours & Trainings – Kim Eads, WSDA FA

- LFPA
 - Quarterly open office hours: TBD
 - Quarterly reports due October 20th
 - Farm to Community Team
 - Contact Jeff Mathias – jeff.mathias@agr.wa.gov
- Lead Agency – Core Programs
 - 1st Tuesday of the month, 9:30-10:30am
 - Q&A, info sharing, problem solving
 - Contact Mallorie Shellmer – mallorie.shellmer@agr.wa.gov
- Resiliency Grant
 - Open Office Hours October 22nd, 9:00-10:00am
 - Updates and open space for Q&A/discussion
 - Contact Erin Kester – foodassistancegrants@agr.wa.gov
- Food Order Work Group Meeting
 - TBD
 - Contact: James Scovel – jscovel@agr.wa.gov or John Carney – john.carney@agr.wa.gov

Upcoming:

- Food Assistance Advisory Committee (FAAC) Meeting
 - Thursday, October 23rd 1:00-2:30pm
- Lead Agency Check-In Meeting (last one for 2025)
 - Friday, November 7th 9:00-10:00am
- TEFAP and CSFP Inventory Report Virtual Training
 - November TBD
- Lead Agency and General Check-In Meetings
 - Will resume January 2026