



Frankly, there are especially challenging times ahead for food banking. The need for support cannot be understated. Arizona's food banks are already serving upward of 700,000 people each month. But no matter what, **food banks will always do whatever it takes to meet the need** through collaboration, innovation, and community support. I know we can do better for our neighbors together. And yes, after 40 years of AzFBN and counting, we still believe we can end hunger in our lifetime.

**APRIL BRADHAM** AzFBN President & CEO



## FOOD BANKING

With AzFBN's goal of going **zero-produce-waste by 2030**, there are plenty of improvements being made around the AzFBN produce warehouse in Rio Rico. There is officially no dumpster used for produce waste at the warehouse; instead, about 20 local farmers utilize the produce waste for animal feed and/or compost. Donated produce gets sorted so that the best of it goes into family-friendly produce boxes, then what's not-so-good goes straight to our composting machines or to a lift truck, to finally get delivered by AzFBN staff to a farmer within a 10 mile radius.

With this shift, AzFBN has redirected more than **2 million pounds** of produce waste to farmers instead of the landfill this fiscal year! Going zero-waste also saves about \$75,000 annually in landfill dumping fees - not to mention the environmental benefit of less produce rotting in the landfill to emit harmful gases. The AzFBN Produce Program continues to be a strong business solution for the produce industry in Arizona and Mexico, while feeding hundreds of thousands of people struggling with food insecurity in Arizona (and beyond) and reducing food waste.



**461,540 produce boxes** distributed to food banks across Arizona and beyond through the AzFBN Produce Program



Overall, AzFBN facilitated the distribution of **60,050,186 pounds** of food to **56 food banks in 16 states** through the Southwest Produce Co-Op, AzFBN Produce Program, and national Feeding America network



**135 growers and producers across Arizona** supplied food banks with **\$3,811,806** worth of nutritious, local food through the AzFBN Friends of the Farm Program



How Could a Dump Truck End Hunger?

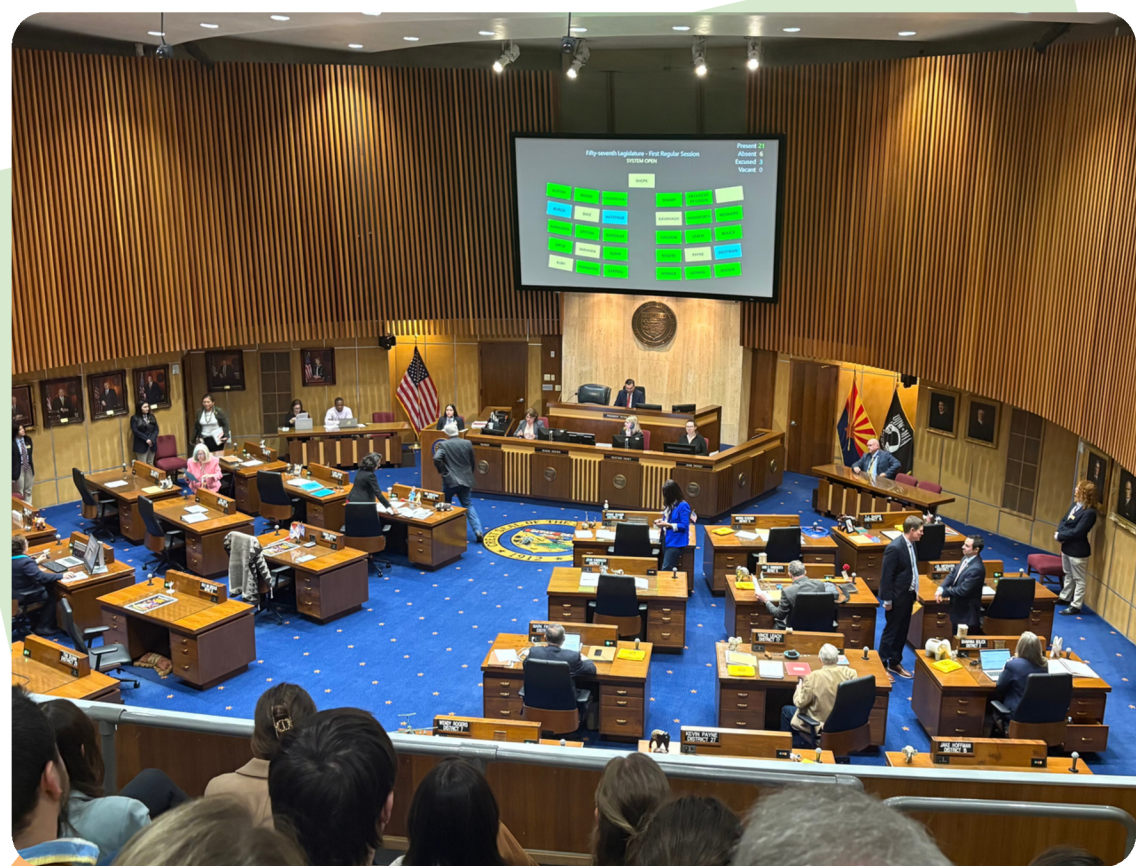


SOUTHWEST PRODUCE CO-OP





January-June 2025 - After last year's historic decision, Gov. Katie Hobbs and the Arizona State Legislature extended the first-time \$3.8 million investment in **school meals in the state budget**, thanks to years of effort from our Advocacy Team and their partners. With \$3.8 million invested, eligible families with students at public and charter schools operating the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program won't have to worry about the 70-cent copay for breakfast and lunch each day.



Hear from food bank CEOs about the **2025 federal budget bill**:



February 2025 - AzFBN organized and hosted the 2025 Anti-Hunger Day at the State Capitol! Over **100 advocates, allies, and legislators** came together to celebrate wins, establish priorities, and show what a force this community is at the Capitol's front door. Every year, this event allows us to highlight the importance of sustainable and smart policy solutions to ending hunger in our state.

June 2025 - AzFBN partnered with four local social services organizations to advocate for changes to the federal budget bill, which cut SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Medicaid funding for Arizonans. Over 50 advocates and local media were in attendance, including Arizona's Family, ABC15, Phoenix New Times, and more. AzFBN will continue supporting SNAP and food banks, which will need help to meet unprecedented need - over **700,000 people at Arizona food banks each month**, up 60% from 2024. For every meal a food bank provides, SNAP can provide nine.



In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, AzFBN reached **237 schools** to support **child nutrition programming**, including (but not limited to) providing ongoing support for a unique improvement, building connections between schools and community partners, assisting with grant applications, and more.

Additionally, AzFBN's outreach helped expand summer meal opportunities for kids in rural communities. The team reached **73 school districts** to support grab-and-go summer

meal efforts, resulting in thousands of meals every day for families whose children rely on school meals for consistent nutrition throughout the year.

In Summer 2024, over **700,000 children in Arizona received benefits** thanks to a new federal food assistance program called SUN Bucks, which is geared toward feeding children while school is out. As a key partner in the program launch, AzFBN managed direct outreach to families on behalf of the state agencies, and kept families informed so that no eligible kids went without three square meals a day.

Back in Rio Rico, AZ, the No Limits Job Training Program celebrated its second graduation! **Twenty-one participants** earned OSHA certification and 19 earned forklift certification. Graduates also worked on building adaptability, communication and English language skills, and interviewing skills. **Three participants have since secured better-paying, permanent, full-time jobs**, including some promotions internally!

