

Farmers Feeding America Act of 2023

Bill Summary – Updated Aug. 2, 2023

The Feeding America Government Relations Team is providing a summary of the Farmers Feeding America Act of 2023. The bill would increase the funding amount for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) entitlement commodities to an estimated \$960 million in fiscal year 2024 (more on this below). It would also raise the authorized amount of funding for TEFAP storage and distribution to \$200 million and extend the \$15 million authorization for TEFAP infrastructure grants. The bill also provides flexibility to help the USDA better serve specific geographically isolated states and procure fresh produce.

The bill was introduced in the Senate on July 27, 2023.

More Information

- [Bill Details: Farmers Feeding America Act of 2023](#)

Availability of Commodities for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

- The bill provides \$500 million in additional funding for TEFAP entitlement commodities for each fiscal year 2024 through 2028. This funding will continue in 2029 and beyond, adjusted by the percentage by which the Thrifty Food Plan is adjusted for inflation.
- The bill continues to provide base entitlement commodity funding for each fiscal year 2024 through 2028, adjusted by the percentage by which the Thrifty Food Plan is adjusted for inflation. In FY 2023, base funding amounted to \$445.5 million.

For Reference – Background on TEFAP Commodities Funding:

- *The 2008 Farm Bill established base funding available for TEFAP food purchases of \$250 million for FY 2009 and indexed that amount to the annual percentage by which the Thrifty Food Plan is adjusted for inflation.*
- *The 2018 Farm Bill extended that base funding and adjustments through FY 2023, and added specified amounts annually, including \$35 million in FY 2023.*
- *Based on changes in the Thrifty Food Plan and the additional funds authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, the amount available for TEFAP food purchases through the [FY 2023 Appropriations Act](#) was \$445.5 million.*
- *Between [FY 2022](#) and FY 2023, the Thrifty Food Plan adjustments resulted in around \$45 million more in funding. Therefore, we estimate that if this bill becomes law, the amount available for TEFAP food purchases in fiscal year 2024 could be about \$960 million (\$250 million in base funding + roughly \$210 in Thrifty Food Plan inflation adjustments since 2010 + \$500 million in new funding = about \$960 million).*

Emergency Food Program Storage and Distribution

- This section adjusts the current statute to allow up to \$200 million to be appropriated by Congress for TEFAP storage and distribution, an increase from \$100 million. This funding remains subject to the annual appropriations process.

Emergency Food Program Infrastructure Grants

- This section extends the authorization of \$15 million to be appropriated to carry out The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Rural Infrastructure Grant Program for each fiscal year through 2028. The current statute ends in 2023. This funding remains subject to the annual appropriations process.

Additional Provisions Related to Allotment and Delivery of Commodities

This section of the bill adds to existing statutes to:

- Establish alternative delivery options for commodities allocated to “geographically isolated states” to ensure they are able to receive commodities, and to allow them to order commodities through the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. It names Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands as geographically isolated states.
- Provide the secretary of agriculture with additional authority to transfer to a geographically isolated state the cash value of up to 20% of the commodities allocated to that state. Those funds could then be used to directly procure domestically grown food in lieu of receipt of those commodities.
- Allow the secretary to consider additional factors beyond the lowest price in determining winning bids for contracts for fresh produce packages, including product variety and transportation distance.