MealConnect® | FEEDING AMERICA®
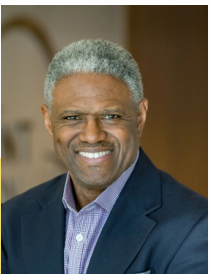

2025 Impact Report

Contents

A few words from our CIO

As a seasoned technologist, I've seen firsthand how technology and innovation are not just tools of efficiency but as catalysts for meaningful change. When we talk about reducing hunger in America, we must recognize the power of data, digital infrastructure, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in driving smarter, faster and more equitable food access.

Technology-driven solutions are transforming how we source, distribute and deliver nutritious food to communities in need. From AI-powered food sourcing that prevents food loss, to platforms that match surplus meals with food banks in real time, innovation is at the heart of closing the hunger gap.

Equally important is the digital backbone supporting food banks and their networks. Modern logistics, analytics and automation allow food banks and their partners to forecast demand, optimize delivery routes and ensure that healthy, high-quality food reaches those who need it most—quickly and reliably. As part of our digital backbone, MealConnect turns connectivity into action—moving food faster, reducing waste and giving food banks a simple, unified way to collaborate across regions.

At Feeding America, we believe collaboration is key. By integrating innovative technologies into sourcing and food recovery efforts, we're empowering our network to become more sustainable, and more importantly, part of the long-term solution to hunger in America.

Our mission is bigger than feeding people—it includes building smarter, more connected and more compassionate systems that lift up people facing hunger.

Kevin Steele,
Chief Information Officer

FEEDING AMERICA

Thank You Donors!*

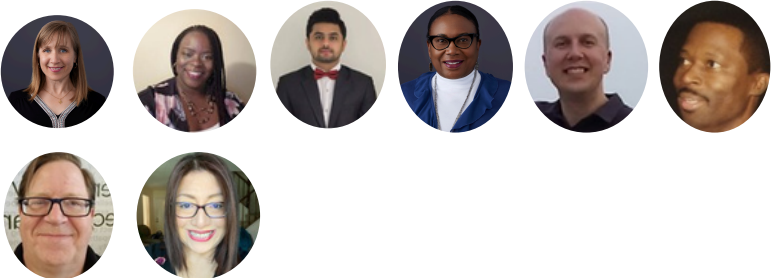# MealConnect Team

Leadership

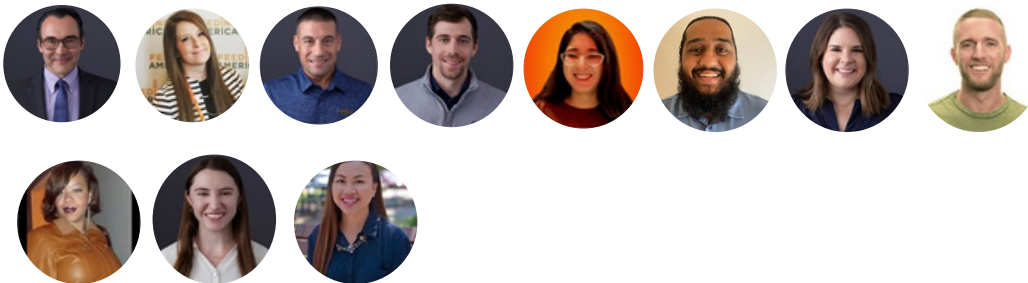## Program Staff

Developers for the Web

Developers for the Mobile App

Feeding America Software Engineer/ Project Staff

Produce & Grocery Teams

Just a few of the many MealConnect Champions in the network

FY25 IMPACT*

1,456,800,739
Pounds MealConnect Supported the
Network in Rescuing

1,219,179,915
Retail Pounds

237,620,824
Pounds of Fresh Produce Sourced

1,214,000,615 [a]
Meals

a) Based on USDA guidelines, a meal is equal to 1.2 pounds of food and grocery product.

Retail Rescue in MealConnect

2,565,644
Total Food Recovery Receipts
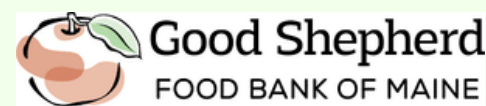
137
Active Food Banks

8,558
Active Agencies

25,215
Active Donor Locations

137 Food Banks Using MealConnect for Retail Rescue

14 new food banks and 1,905 new agencies recently started using MealConnect for retail:

NORTH COUNTRY FOOD BANK, INC.

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST — THE FOOD BANK

FEEDING NORTHEAST FLORIDA

FOOD BANK OF SOUTH JERSEY — Food | Nutrition | Sustainability — Live Local. Give Local.

GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK

SECOND HARVEST OF COASTAL GEORGIA

VIRGINIA PENINSULA Foodbank — PARTNER FOOD BANK OF FEEDING AMERICA

REGIONAL FOOD BANK OF OKLAHOMA

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA FOOD BANK — No One Should Be Hungry

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK EST. 1982 OF NORTH CENTRAL OHIO

RHODE ISLAND COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Food Bank OF DELAWARE

FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA

Good Shepherd FOOD BANK OF MAINE

*Feeding America's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 was from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

SXSW Innovation Awards

In March 2025, **Share@MealConnect**, Feeding America's AI-driven tool designed to transform food donation, won a **SXSW Innovation Award**, taking home the top honor in the **Community Empowerment** category. Each year through the Innovation Awards, SXSW recognizes individuals and organizations from around the **globe** who are leading innovative, creative and inspirational work in their fields.
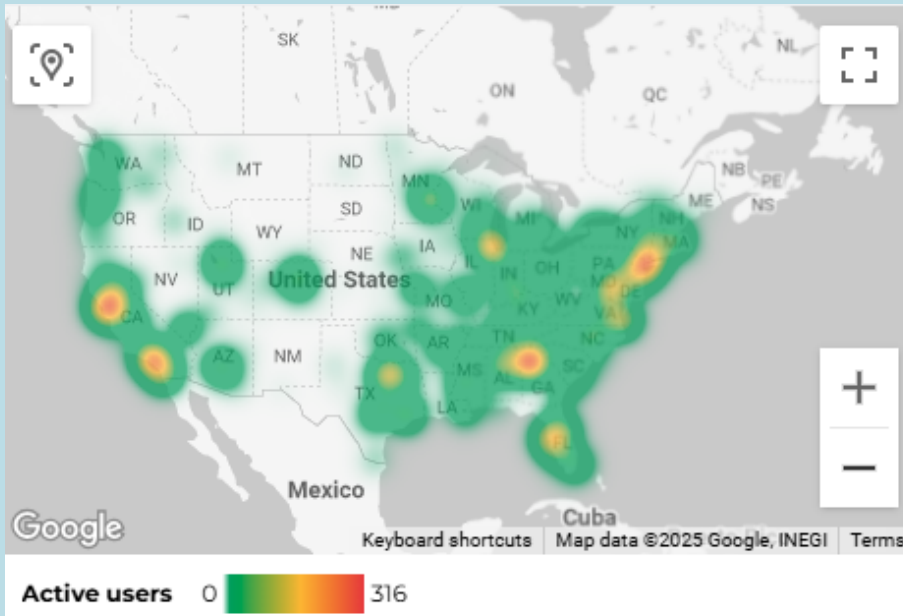
Through an AI-driven platform, food manufacturers, farmers and retailers across the country can share surplus food through text or email and be instantly connected to a nearby food bank that will accept their donation - making donating food as easy as sending a text to a friend. With Share@MealConnect, Feeding America leverages AI for good, aligning with part of the organization's strategy of utilizing technology to get more food to those in need.

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Chicago Innovation Awards

Out of 350 nominees, Feeding America's MealConnect mobile app was a winner of the **Social Innovator Award** at the 2024 **Chicago Innovation Awards**!

The MealConnect mobile app puts retail rescue in the palm of the network's hand, and empowers the local recovery of nutritious food for people experiencing hunger across the nation.

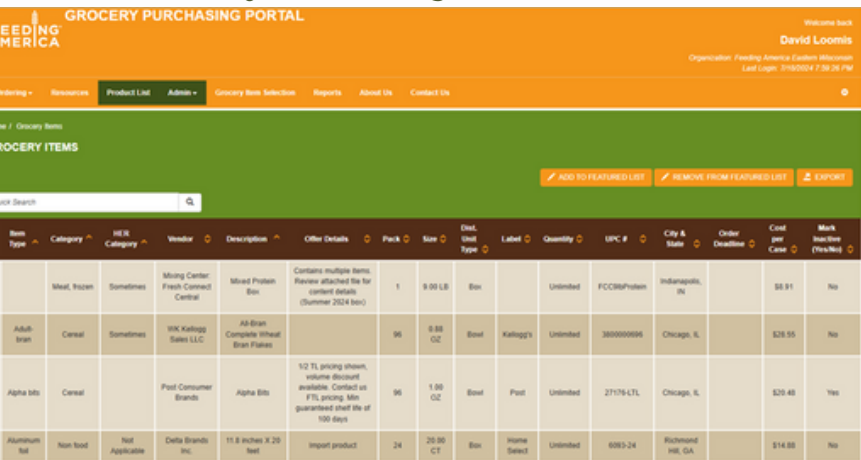*MealConnect mobile app usage across the country*

Marketplace

This year, we set the stage for a significant evolution in the MealConnect platform. On October 27, MealConnect became the hub for the Marketplace. The Marketplace combines the functionalities for both the former Produce Marketplace and the former Grocery Purchasing portal into one source. Grocery items, agri-products, and produce are all offered and ordered within MealConnect through an enhanced experience. This transformation is part of a broader vision to shift MealConnect from a local food donation platform to the central food sourcing platform for the network.
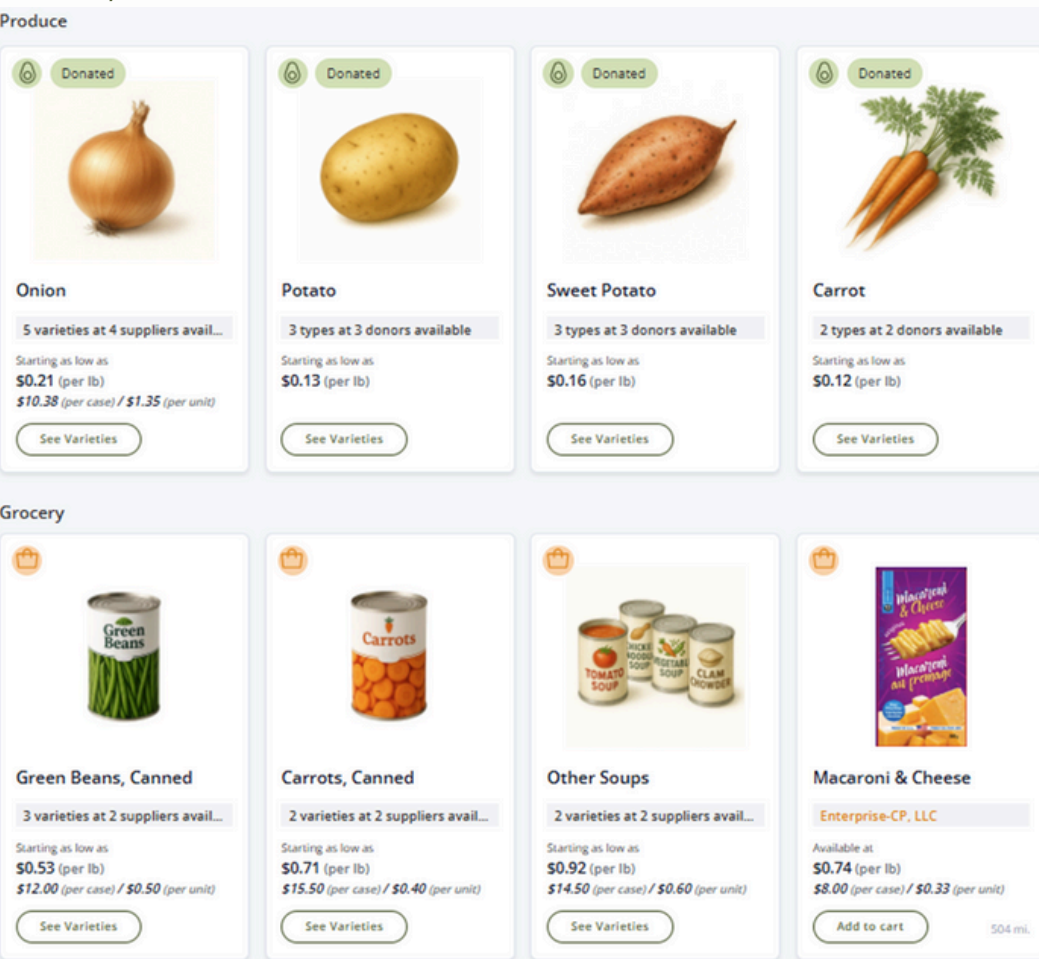
36,407
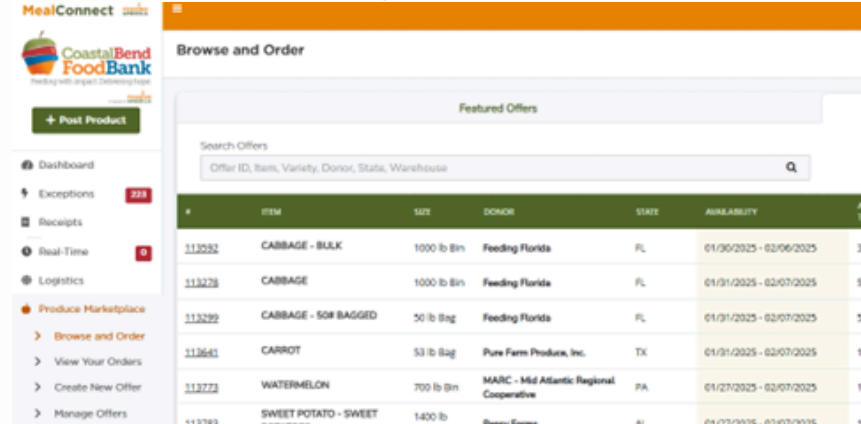
produce alert text messages sent in FY25

Former Grocery Purchasing Portal

Former Produce Marketplace

Marketplace

Affiliate Food Banks Can Now Use MealConnect for Retail Rescue!

Affiliate Food Banks, a vital part of the network, are now able to use MealConnect for retail rescue. Previously, full use of MealConnect's retail rescue capabilities was only available to Partner Food Banks. This shift is more reflective of Feeding America's diverse and dynamic network of partners.

Affiliate Food Banks are able to use MealConnect's full suite of functions for their food recovery efforts- making it easier and more efficient to get more food to local communities.

Many thanks to Oregon Food Bank & their partner Affiliate Food Banks for their collaboration in the co-creation process.

59
Affiliate Food Banks in the Feeding America Network

Photo credit: Oregon Food Bank

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New Feature: Activity Based Auto-Scheduling

Last fiscal year, we streamlined the process of connecting agencies and store locations, assigning day of the week pickups, and resolving missing ERP mappings through the revamped Connections screen.

In response to feedback from the network, we improved it further by introducing an activity-based automated location matching feature. This feature makes the time-consuming work of matching up thousands of stores with hundreds of partner agencies to pickup days a thing of the past.

"With 31 agencies currently enrolled in the Agency Enablement Program, the auto-schedule feature has been very helpful with keeping tabs on the day-to-day aspects of the program. As we expand with more agency partners, this feature will continue to be beneficial in ensuring our agency partners' needs are being met and that our retail partners are being fully supported."
-Danielle Vasquez, Feeding Westchester

Photo credit: Feeding Westchester

Pilot Programs: Using the Mobile App for Efficient Pickups

Partners offer unique insights, and leveraging their support translates into meaningful and lasting impact for communities facing hunger. This year, we had 2 pilot programs with donor partners focused on using the MealConnect mobile app to make retail pickups more efficient.

Walmart/MealConnect Direct Store Delivery (DSD) Pilot

The pilot integrates MealConnect with Walmart's DSD receiving process via the MyWalmart App to improve the experience for store associates and streamline operations.

The goal is to reduce wait times and increase efficiency by integrating food donations into daily store operations, improving consistency, communication, and reducing missed pickups.

Giant Food MealConnect Pilot

Giant Food (Ahold Delhaize) partnered with MealConnect for a pilot focused on enhancing the communication between store teams and their agency partners through the MealConnect mobile app.

Use of the mobile app allows both parties to coordinate on schedule changes, conflicts, additional donation opportunities, and other key updates in real time.

Many thanks to Walmart, Ahold Delhaize, participating food bank & agency partners, and Feeding America National Office partners.

Real-Time Optimization Project with Yale & Stanford

Since January 2024, the MealConnect team partnered with professors and a doctorate student from Stanford University and Yale University to explore optimizations to the Real-Time function. Real-Time is MealConnect's matching function that coordinates the pickup and delivery of ad-hoc donations.
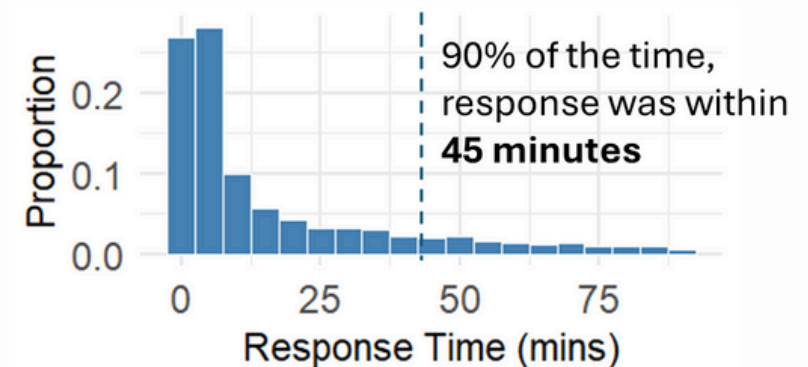
We took a quantitative and qualitative approach to our work by analyzing real-time transaction data and conducting survey interviews with a select group of real-time food bank users to identify potential areas of opportunity in the real-time function, & came up with a list of recommendations. Our primary recommendation, which we implemented & shared across the network, was to increase the amount of donation offers by adjusting the amount of time partner agencies have to respond to notifications.

Many thanks to Professor Vahideh Manshadi, Professor Daniela Saban, Soonbong Lee, and Rob Venables.

✓ **Impact:** More offers to agencies → **reducing unmatched donations by 14%**

Regular mode: 90 min window for responses

90% of the time, response was within **45 minutes**

Redesign: Reduce response window (e.g., down to 45 mins)

MealConnect &

The MealConnect platform currently utilizes AI responsibly to amplify mission impact.

AI is applied in the following ways:

Share@MealConnect allows network users to share excess food to agencies, affiliate food banks, and partner food banks through text or email. AI is used to analyze photos, spreadsheets, and emails, and converts the data into a standardized donation record.

The **Real-Time function** matches ad-hoc food donations from donors to a food bank's agencies, based on rules they have set and past donation patterns. AI is used for automatic donation summaries for eligible transactions submitted through the application programming interface (API).

Manufacturing Donation Converter uses AI to read multi-sheet spreadsheets from manufacturing donors and generates a spreadsheet in the Feeding America National Office format for upload to the Choice (sharing system). This is an interim solution which will be replaced when manufacturing donations migrate to MealConnect.

Looking Forward

As we look ahead, our focus on food sourcing will be guided by our strategic priorities and a commitment to catalytic efforts that drive long-term change. Our work will prioritize impact, innovation, and response, ensuring that the food we source reaches the communities that need it most—efficiently, sustainably, and with dignity.

By aligning our sourcing strategies with the broader Feeding America 2030 Strategy, which is informed by and aligned with the network Strategic Framework- the shared direction and priorities of the network- we will empower the network, amplify community voices, and catalyze meaningful, lasting change in the fight against hunger.

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