



# Land-grant Universities Improve Local Food Security

*Food security impacts individuals, as well as the health of entire communities. Through creation of food pantries, community gardens, food drives, farmers markets and more, land-grant universities and local community initiatives collaborate to keep food on the table for many.*

## Successful examples include:

- An effort begun during Covid-19 is still providing high-quality shrimp to food banks in **Louisiana**. With help from USDA, the local Sea Grant program was able to develop workable guidelines for the purchase and distribution of shrimp. The effort supports a vital industry in the state and provides a highly valued addition to the diets of food bank clients.
- **Alabama's** Grow More, Give More program helps gardeners grow more food and encourages them to donate garden produce to food banks and food pantries. Last year participants donated fresh produce to 6,500 families worth an estimated retail value of \$60,000.
- The Garden Hour webinar series provides education to those in **Kansas** and beyond. Of it's more than 11,700 participants last year, 62% reported improved nutrition with increased availability and access to fresh produce as a result of the series. Information provided included indoor seed starting, how to better understand fertilizer and pesticide labels and identifying plant problems.
- In **Vermont**, Latino farmworkers face challenges in obtaining food including lack of transportation and unavailability of preferred foods. The Bridges to Health program works with community health workers, food banks and other partners to assist farmworkers. Services include help in applying for aid programs,

Continued

---

## [www.landgrantimpacts.org](http://www.landgrantimpacts.org)

**ABOUT LANDGRANTIMPACTS.ORG** | The Land-grant University System is a uniquely American institution and has operated successfully for more than a century. The website documents the collective and individual impacts of the national system of joint teaching, research, and extension institutions.

Prepared by the National Impacts Database writing team, and supported by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' Board on Agriculture Assembly. Some projects funded by USDA/NIFA.



## Food Security

ensuring that food banks have culturally-appropriate foods, and coordinating volunteers to deliver food to households.

- Community gardens help provide food security and other benefits such as education and civic engagement. **Wisconsin** Extension supports community gardens in 32 counties. Milwaukee County has the largest community garden and urban agriculture program in the state with more than 2,500 garden plots on 80 acres and members from 800 households. Last year more than 130 gardeners donated food from the plots to feed others.
- In **Arkansas**, data were collected on community gardens across the state to aid in the development and sustainability of these efforts. A strategic management program with easy-to-understand strategies for proper management of community gardens was created along with a database of community garden operators.
- The community around the **Oklahoma** City Extension office is classified as a food desert with low-income families there having limited access to grocery stores. The office started the East Side Fresh Farmer's Market to provide local residents access to healthy food. Operating Tuesday evenings to better serve working families, the market had 32 vendors who collectively sold about \$26,000 worth of their products. The market attracted 35 to 150 shoppers each night from May to October.
- The Peanut Butter Challenge, an annual **Florida** Extension effort, collected 22 tons of peanut butter which was donated to food pantries and school children. Peanut butter is nutrient-dense and shelf stable, making it a popular source of protein and comes from a product grown in the state. The past 10 years, the value of tri-state varieties has increased by approximately \$190 million. These varieties are now grown on more than 143,000 acres in the Pacific Northwest, with value to growers estimated at \$600 million.