



THE FLORIDA SENATE
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President

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Farmers Feeding Florida Budget Proposal Set For Final Passage
Funding connects Florida farmers to families facing food insecurity, in need of fresh food

Tallahassee—The Senate will take up Senate Bill (SB 2500), the General Appropriations Act, a balanced budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, later tonight at the conclusion of the 72-hour constitutionally-required cooling off period. The budget includes critical funding to address food insecurity and support Florida farmers, both key priorities of Senate President Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula).

“Florida’s farmers, growers, and ranchers produce hundreds of different commodities every year. Fresh from Florida is more than just a slogan – it’s a way of life for those who feed our state and nation,” said President Albritton. “No matter how prosperous our state is, unexpected and unplanned things happen that can cause food insecurity for families. I don’t want any Floridian, especially children, to go to bed hungry every night, not knowing where their next meal will come from. That’s not something I’m willing to live with. Florida does a lot to help struggling folks back onto their feet and food is a part of that effort. We’re running to this fight to connect hungry families across our state with Florida farmers who produce fresh, wholesome food. This is a much-needed hand-up for families and farmers across our state. As I travel the state, attacking food insecurity unites Floridians like nothing else can. Food matters.”

“Food insecurity is without a doubt a real problem that some families in our state face,” said President Pro Tempore Brodeur (R-Sanford), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government who authored the proposal. “This funding will help expand food bank and pantry infrastructure to make fresh, healthy food available to families in need. I can’t think of a more conservative, more compassionate way to help these struggling families. This funding will be a win for Florida families and a win for Florida agriculture.”

“Florida’s farmers have a deep connection to our state and its people, going back in many cases for generations. Rain or shine, they are responsible for putting food on grocery shelves across the state and are our first and best line of defense against food insecurity,” said Commissioner Simpson. “Expanding our food bank infrastructure will help connect more families across Florida with fresh, healthy, seasonal crops and produce grown right here in the Sunshine State.”

Food Bank Infrastructure Expansion

The budget funds \$10 million to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to administer a program to create and expand food banks and pantries designed to serve food insecure Floridians who are currently disadvantaged by proximity to services.

The department will work with Feeding Florida to identify underserved areas, including a focus on rural areas of opportunity, for expansion. The funds may be used to equip new locations, expand distribution routes, purchase transportation equipment, or provide necessary training to onboard pantry staff.

Food Bank Operations

The budget includes \$28 million for DACS to administer a program to provide fresh food products grown or produced in Florida. The department will contract with entities that have the ability to manage a statewide commodities reimbursement and distribution program. All entities must have been in existence for a minimum of five years. Food commodities distributed by entities must be fresh food products grown or produced in Florida. The entities will purchase, transport, and distribute fresh food products for the benefit of Florida residents that are food insecure due to lack of local food resources, accessibility, and affordability.

The entities will submit monthly reports to the department that include, at a minimum, the amount of food purchased by commodity type, purchase location, purchase date, delivery date and distribution location. The entities will also submit quarterly supporting documentation to the department that includes, at a minimum, fresh food product purchase receipts, donation receipts, report of new partners, and report on the variety of fresh food products provided.

For more information, please visit www.FLSenate.gov.

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