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Wolf Administration Announces New Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant Program

Harrisburg, PA – Grant applications are now being accepted for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) new Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant Program, which will provide assistance to eligible nonprofit organizations such as shelters and food banks for proper food management.

“Access to fresh food in underserved communities is a public health and quality of life issue, but it’s also an environmental justice issue. While traveling across the state, my staff and I often hear from underserved communities that access to fresh food is a significant concern, so we wanted to do our part to address this issue in a meaningful, environmentally focused way,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “Nonprofit organizations such as food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters provide critical sustenance to those in need, so it’s critical that the food they provide is properly transported and stored.”

“Our agriculture community and charitable food network work together every day to keep Pennsylvanians from going hungry,” Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said. “These grants will supplement their generosity and help ensure that food donations get safely to those who need them.

Funded through the state’s Recycling Fund, grants of up to \$200,000 [are available](#) to eligible nonprofit organizations to purchase equipment like refrigerators, freezers, refrigerant vehicles, and more to use food before it becomes waste for disposal.

“Protecting food and preventing food waste is also an important way to reduce landfill waste and address climate change, as rotting food produces methane, a strong greenhouse gas,” McDonnell said. “This funding will help nonprofits afford the necessary equipment to transport and maintain food items so that they can not only continue their efforts to help those in need but also reduce and prevent food waste.”

Reducing food waste is a priority in DEP’s [Climate Action Plan](#). In addition to releasing greenhouse gases, food waste represents a significant portion of landfill waste. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [estimates](#) that in 2015, of the 39.7 million tons of food waste that was generated nationwide, three quarters – or 30.3 million tons – of food waste went to landfills, representing nearly a quarter of all solid waste landfilled.

Interested organizations are first required to meet with their [DEP Regional Planning and Recycling Coordinator](#) to apply. The grant application deadline is April 24, 2020.

For more information about the grant program, visit [DEP’s Recycling Financial Assistance webpage](#), download our [Food Infrastructure Grant Application Information Sheet](#), or contact Mark Vottero, grant coordinator for DEP’s Division of Waste Minimization and Planning, at 717-787-7382 or mvottero@pa.gov.