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# Health and Nutrition

The Idaho Foodbank

IMPACT REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025



Together, we  
can solve hunger.

## Health, Hunger, and Social Determinants of Health:

When someone is food insecure, they are making difficult choices on how to make ends meet, such as: getting the medical care they need, paying for rent to keep a roof over their head, putting gas in the car to get to work or school, or having the food they need. These intertwined factors that impact an individual's ability to become food secure are known as the Social Determinants of Health. These are the conditions in the environment in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes. The Idaho Foodbank is actively partnering to find ways to work together to improve these Social Determinants of Health to address root causes of food insecurity.

## Solving Hunger in Idaho

FISCAL YEAR 2025

The Idaho Foodbank hosted partner agency conferences in North Central and Eastern Idaho. People running food pantries of all sizes came together to learn and brainstorm with other food pantries to better serve their communities. The conferences featured panel and small group discussions and presentations about volunteer recruitment, community health needs, nutrition education, increasing food distribution, and food safety best practices. We love bringing our Partner Agencies together to collaborate on initiatives to address food insecurity and support thriving, food-secure communities across Idaho.

To improve community health, people need to know what resources are available. It can be overwhelming to find the various sources of assistance that might make a difference when you're struggling to make ends meet. The Foodbank provides comprehensive resource boxes to our Partner Agency Network. They have information to connect people with help, including where to apply for housing assistance or how to enroll in Medicare or Medicaid. Our Partner Agencies then share the information in these resource boxes with our neighbors at their respective food pantries.

We've provided information for a variety of needs, including mental health crisis support through 988, SNAP and WIC nutrition assistance, and job training through Equus Workforce Solutions. Our resource boxes have linked families to a range of services that make a real difference in the lives of Idahoans.

Bringing information to our neighbors in need and collaborating with our Partner Agency Network is essential for building healthy communities together.



## Nutrition Education

Consistent access to nutritious food is essential to health and well-being. Good nutrition can help prevent chronic illness, support mental and physical health, and improve quality of life. Unfortunately, many communities in Idaho struggle to consistently access nutritious food. When families experience food insecurity, they're often forced to make challenging decisions about food, such as prioritizing quantity over quality. This can lead to diets low in essential nutrients and increasing the risk of chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. That's where our Nutrition Education program makes a difference.

Through hands-on cooking classes, practical food budgeting tips, and easy, affordable recipes, we help individuals and families build the skills and confidence to make healthier choices—no matter their circumstances. Our programs are designed to meet people where they are—offering nutritional guidance that's realistic, culturally relevant, and empowering. By investing in nutrition education, we're not just teaching people how to cook—we're helping them take control of their health, stretch their food dollars, and build a foundation for a healthier, happier future.

The Foodbank often partners with local organizations to host nutrition classes in the community. One example is when our Nutrition Education Specialist in Orofino partnered with the Idaho Department of Corrections to begin cooking classes for residents nearing their release date. These classes will help the residents manage their limited resources upon being released and successfully reintegrate into the community.

## 1,501 Nutrition Education Participants

In FY25, The Idaho Foodbank offered 163 nutrition education and point of service opportunities to our neighbors in need.

These include Cooking Matters and other nutrition education classes, presentations on nutrition, and the distribution of nutrition resources.

## 84% of the food distributed in FY25 was considered nutritious

“Vegetables were gross but now they are good. I want to help cook dinner at home.”  
– Kids Cooking Matters Participant

“[One participant] shared that while he had been attempting to incorporate lower sodium foods into his diet...The tips, tricks, and recipes provided during the class were particularly helpful for him.”  
– Nutrition Education Specialist

“Absolutely love my [resource] box! I display information out front in the lobby for clients to look and choose to take.”  
– Partner Agency Coordinator



### About The Idaho Foodbank

The Idaho Foodbank is an independent, donor-supported, nonprofit organization with a mission to nourish, educate, and advocate to support thriving, food-secure communities across Idaho. It is the largest statewide distributor of free food assistance in Idaho. The Idaho Foodbank was established in 1984 and since that time has distributed millions of pounds of nutritious food through its facilities in Lewiston, Meridian, and Pocatello. In the last fiscal year, The Foodbank provided food for more than 21 million meals to Idahoans living with food insecurity. The Foodbank distributes food through a network of more than 400 Partner Agencies including schools, food pantries, senior centers, feeding sites, shelters, mobile pantries, and churches. The Idaho Foodbank focuses on providing nutritious food and collaborates with community organizations to promote nutrition education, wellness resources, and healthy living. Visit [idahofoodbank.org](http://idahofoodbank.org) for more information. You can also find us on your favorite social media platform.



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