



STATE FOOD PURCHASE PROGRAM

Pennsylvania leads all states in providing food assistance for the needy under the State Food Purchase Program (SFPP). The program provides cash grants to counties for the purchase and distribution of food to low-income individuals. It is intended to supplement the efforts of food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks, feeding programs, shelters for the homeless and similar organizations to reduce hunger.

Pennsylvania is one of a small number of states in the nation to provide state revenues for an emergency assistance food program for its low-income citizens. This is the largest program of its kind and it reflects the Commonwealth's determination to address problems related to nutrition and hunger. Grants are allocated to the County Commissioners for the purchase of food at wholesale, competitively bid prices, or better. The Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County (CFWMC) has been designated by the Mercer County Commissioners as the lead agency for this program. The CFWMC has formed a local Board to assist in administering this program. The Board consists of a cross-section of individuals from local community groups. Representation is from the following:

Dept. of Welfare	United Way of Mercer County
Shenango Valley Urban League	Salvation Army
American Red Cross	Community Action Partnership
Catholic Charities	Mercer County Agency on Aging
Primary Health Network	Mercer County Commissioners Rep.
Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County	

The percentage of purchased food and/or funds that each agency will receive will be determined by the local Board. Each eligible agency applies for funding according to their individual programs. Previous grant periods have dispersed the state funds throughout Mercer County in a fair and equitable way by the Board. Once the applications are completed by the agencies, the Board reviews each one and votes on the award amount, taking into consideration past performance, compliance and each geographic location.

The CFWMC utilizes the food bank/food pantry distribution system. Each food pantry has equal access to food products that are available each week. The Community Food Warehouse provides each agency an inventory listing of foods that are available. Agencies can order as much and as often as they deem appropriate for their individual programs.