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El Pasoans Fighting Hunger joins statewide coalition of advocates calling for reversal of cuts to state food bank funding

EL PASO, Texas, JANUARY 26, 2021— El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank joins a statewide coalition of advocates calling for the reversal of recent cuts to state food bank funding. If not stopped, these cuts will reduce food distribution to hungry Texans by nearly twenty million pounds.

The program under consideration, known as the Surplus Agricultural Products Grant, allows food banks to procure fresh produce from Texas farmers that would otherwise go to waste.

“Every day, the team at EPFH sees with our own eyes the level of need there is and health experts estimate that this situation will continue to take its toll on communities across the state and the nation for many more months to come. Any and all resources that provide healthy foods to Texas families should be strengthened and increased, not weakened and reduced,” said Susan Goodell, CEO of El Pasoans Fighting Hunger. “This is really the worst time for a cut like this to a program that has proven itself to be win-win for food banks, farmers, and the families who rely on whole, nutritious food it delivers to them.”

Since 2001, the Surplus Agricultural Products Grant has supported a cost-effective strategy to fight hunger, improve health, and reduce food waste in Texas. The program is overseen by the Texas Department of Agriculture, which cut the program earlier this year on instructions from the Governor’s office to find savings.

“With more Texans at risk of hunger than ever before, this is not the time to be cutting a critical source of healthy, fresh produce for our community,” said Celia Cole, CEO of Feeding Texas, the statewide network of food banks.

Food insecurity in Texas jumped from 13% to 29% following the arrival of COVID-19. Access to healthy food is a key social determinant of health. Research shows that food insecurity leads to diet-related illness, and is linked to many adverse health effects.

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About El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank: El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank (EPFH) is El Paso's only food bank and a member of Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger relief network. With a current 22.3% of the population living below the poverty, EPFH commits to making sure no one goes hungry. In 2019, EPFH worked diligently with more than 132 partner agencies to distribute more than 30 million pounds of food in 3 county areas: El Paso, Hudspeth and Culberson. The mission statement of EPFH is "to combat the hunger crisis in our region by strategically procuring and distributing nutritious food through community partners . . . because no one should go hungry." Visit us [at www.elpasoansfightinghunger.org](http://www.elpasoansfightinghunger.org) to learn more.

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger is a 501 (c) (3)
organization.