Secretary Naig Announces Launch of Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Pilot Program for Food Banks

DES MOINES, Iowa (July 31, 2024) – Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig today announced the launch of the Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Program – Food Bank Pilot. The pilot program, which was authorized during the 2024 legislative session and is an initiative of the state's Choose Iowa Program, aims to connect Iowa food banks with Choose Iowa members to help alleviate food insecurity within our communities. The announcement was made during the annual Iowa Hunger Summit organized by the World Food Prize Foundation and held at the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates in Des Moines.

"Food insecurity is a real and pressing issue in communities big and small, urban and rural," said Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig. "As the state's signature brand for Iowa grown, Iowa raised, and Iowa made food, beverages and ag products, Choose Iowa is all about connecting consumers to great Iowa products produced by Iowa farmers and small businesses. And now thanks to the support from the Iowa Legislature and Gov. Reynolds this past session, Choose Iowa will also help connect farmers with food banks to combat food insecurity within our communities."

Details of the Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Program – Food Bank Pilot

$225,000 is being allocated to assist Iowa food banks in providing nutritious food to those in our communities who are food insecure. State investment will be leveraged by participating food banks, who will match the state's investment on a one-to-one (1:1) basis. Eligible purchases will include dairy products, meat and poultry, eggs, honey and produce. Six Iowa food banks and Des Moines Area Religious Council will purchase products from farmers and ag businesses that are Choose Iowa members. The six food banks include: Food Bank of Iowa, HACAP, River Bend Food Bank, Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Food Bank of Siouxland, and Food Bank for the Heartland. The reimbursement deadline is June 30, 2025.

Eligible Farmers and Producers

Food must be purchased from approved Choose Iowa members. A current list of members can be found on the Choose Iowa website. If farmers wish to have food purchased from food banks, they should apply to become a Choose Iowa member as soon as possible. Members enjoy a variety of benefits beyond being eligible to participate in this pilot program.

For farmers or businesses that need help enrolling in Choose Iowa or for those that have specific questions about the pilot program, contact chooseiowa@iowaagriculture.gov.

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About the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Led by Secretary Mike Naig, the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship serves the rural and urban residents that call Iowa home. Through its 14 diverse bureaus, the Department ensures animal health, food safety and consumer protection. It also promotes conservation efforts to preserve our land and enhance water quality for the next generation. Learn more at iowaagriculture.gov.

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