

## Our Vision and Principles

Nearly 1.5 million New Yorkers don't always know where their next meal is coming from—including 1 in 4 children. Millions more New Yorkers are teetering on the edge of food insecurity. This is unacceptable.

At City Harvest, we are working to build a city where all New Yorkers have the food, they need for themselves and their families. While our operations and community of food providers and donors continue to work hard to meet the immediate food needs of New Yorkers facing food insecurity by supporting our partner food pantries, we must also work hard to decrease the demand for emergency food and end hunger and shorten food pantry lines in the long run.

To build a food-secure future for all New Yorkers, we must address food insecurity's root causes—systemic racism, income inequality, rent burden, inequitable public policies, etc. We believe that all New Yorkers deserve equitable access to nutritious, affordable food regardless of their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or immigration status.

## Our Approach

City Harvest advocates for policies that aim to end hunger, decrease the demand for emergency food and shorten food pantry lines in communities throughout New York City. We support policies that provide immediate, dignified, and empowering access to healthy and affordable food, while also promoting policies that address the structural root causes of hunger in our communities.

We do this by engaging elected officials, coalitions, frontline food pantry and soup kitchen leaders, and advocates throughout New York City, as well as at the state and federal levels.

## Platform Priorities

**TOPIC I:** Support policies that **end hunger** by addressing **root causes** and systemic inequities that disproportionately impact low- to moderate-income New Yorkers, Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant, LGBTQIA2S+, seniors, and families with children.

**TOPIC II:** Strengthen and expand eligibility for **government food benefit programs** that **alleviate hunger** by ensuring that benefits reflect the true cost of food for families and are inclusive of all New Yorkers who lack the adequate income and access to safely feed their families.

**TOPIC III:** Ensure that the charitable food pantry network has the resources to **meet the current need** of all New Yorkers to safely feed their families by having the necessary support to provide access to culturally desirable foods in a safe environment for all New Yorkers of different identities and abilities.

**TOPIC IV:** Advocate for an equitable and inclusive food system that is centered in **sustainable economic models for New Yorkers with lived-expertise**, and centered in food businesses and growers that apply an equity framework to their operations.



## **TOPIC I: End Hunger** by addressing **root causes** and systemic inequities

*Support policies that end hunger by addressing root causes and systemic inequities that disproportionately impact low- to moderate-income New Yorkers, BIPOC, immigrant, LGBTQIA2S+, seniors, and families with children.*

All New Yorkers must be able to feed their families and afford other essential living expenses, like rent, transit fare, childcare, etc.

This means that when we are advocating for anti-hunger legislation, we must uplift policies that address the intersectionality of hunger through comprehensive anti-hunger legislation that speaks to:

- Affordable housing
- Universal childcare
- Transportation
- Medical expenses
- Barriers to adequate income/fair wages

## **TOPIC II: Alleviate hunger** by strengthening buying power for New Yorkers to be able to afford food and expand eligibility for **government food benefit programs**

*Strengthen and expand eligibility for government food benefit programs that alleviate hunger by ensuring that benefits reflect the true cost of food for families and are inclusive of all New Yorkers who lack the adequate income and access to safely feed their families.*

Because programs like SNAP, WIC, Pandemic EBT, and local NYC initiative like Get the Good Stuff are able to provide greater access to food for low-income New Yorkers so that they can purchase culturally desirable food from the food businesses they prefer when they want. However, more than half of New Yorkers with inadequate income are ineligible for most federal food benefit programs because the use of the federal poverty line to measure needs is far lower than the cost of living in our city.

This means that we must advocate to:

- Expand eligibility to support all New Yorkers who lack the income to afford living in our city, including
  - Immigrant communities who may not be eligible for some programs or may feel unsafe accessing government programs;
  - Seniors on fixed income;
  - Working families with children who incur fixed costs that are not acknowledged in income-based benefit program.
- Ensure that benefits reflect the true cost of food and end the narrative of long lines at emergency food programs when benefits are quickly exhausted.





### **TOPIC III: Meet the current demand for food by ensuring food pantries have the resources to safely feed families**

*Ensure that the charitable food pantry network has the resources to meet the current need of all New Yorkers to safely feed their families by having the necessary support to provide access to culturally desirable foods in a safe environment for all New Yorkers of different identities and abilities.*

Because we need policies that put healthful and culturally desirable food within reach for all New Yorkers, while also leaning on our values to uplift models that don't exploit our food system.

This means that we must:

- Design and leverage programs like Nourish NY, HPNAP, PFRED, Get Food, school meals, TEFAP and other government food access programs to not only adequately support the demand for emergency food, but to be intentional about whom and how we source the food.
- Advocate for flexible funding for pantries to be able to stock their pantry shelves, afford rent for their pantry space, cover overhead costs for staff and waste removal, and access equipment and investments in infrastructure to safely store and distribute food.

### **TOPIC IV: Advocate for an equitable and inclusive food system**

*Advocate for an equitable and inclusive food system that is centered in sustainable economic models for New Yorkers with lived-expertise, and centered in food businesses and growers that apply an equity framework to their operations.*

Because shifting from charity to resiliency for low-income New Yorkers necessitates models that shift power structures and ownership of food access endeavors from large institutions to the expertise, passion and existing networks of community leaders and food operations that adopt values-based practices.

This means that we must:

- Advocate for policies that uplift food businesses that operate with values for their workers, land and consumers such as the Good Food Purchasing Program.
- Support legislation that provides funding for community led solutions that are led by individuals with lived expertise through Community Food Project Grants, Food Justice Grants, SEED Funding and other best practices for funding community led food access endeavors from across the nation.
- Advocate for policies that incentivize good food jobs that provide great working conditions for food service workers and support food access in their communities.

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