PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

NOVEMBER 2026 PROTECTING OUR FOOD SUPPLY CAMPAIGN

PARTNER TOOLKIT

Campaign Overview

Whether your meal is prepared in a restaurant or in the comfort of your own home, it depends on a system most Americans never see or think about. This month, we're highlighting how public servants from federal food inspectors to agricultural researchers work to protect our food and support a thriving and productive agricultural industry.

That system can only work when government is effective, responsive and accountable to the people it serves. However, since January 2025, we've lost more than half of our federal food inspectors. CDC grants have dropped more than 70%, and project grants and research contracts from food and agriculture agencies are down more than 60%. When federal capacity shrinks and government falls short of delivering meaningful outcomes for the public, families, farmers and our economy feel the impact.

This toolkit will help you show your audience how government has protected our food from farm to fork, how it supports the farmers who make up less than 2% of the population yet feed all of us and what's at stake when government falls short.

How to use this toolkit:

- **Newsletter blurb -** Use our sample language to introduce your audience to the federal workers who inspect our food, track outbreaks and support American farmers, and to the value they deliver to the public every day.
- **Email blast -** Use our email language to show your audience how federal cuts are reaching their grocery carts, their local food banks and the farms that feed them and why an effective government matters at every family's table.
- **Social media posts -** Use our social media graphics and captions to spread the word and encourage people to learn more about how the Trump administration's personnel and funding cuts are affecting experts' ability to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

Top-Line Messages

Federal employees help make sure our food is safe at every step - from farms to grocery stores to our dinner table. Cutting the workers who inspect food, set safety standards, monitor outbreaks or regulate pesticides have put everyone at risk.

Government plays a central role in feeding America by expanding access to nutritious food, supporting farmers, funding agricultural research and strengthening our food supply chain during crises.

Farmers make up less than 2% of the American population yet carry a huge responsibility to feed all of us. Government support strengthens American farms and the people who run them.

America is an agricultural powerhouse in part because of decades of publicly funded research that farmers and private companies have used to boost productivity, conserve resources and manage risks like drought and natural disasters.

Newsletter Blurb

Before food reaches your table, it moves through a system designed to keep it safe. Inspectors check what's grown and processed, scientists monitor for outbreaks and alert the public when something goes wrong and researchers help farmers protect their crops from drought and their livestock from disease.

That system runs on public servants who deliver results for the public every day, yet we're losing them. Since January 2025, we've lost more than half of our federal food inspectors. Food banks across the country have lost millions of dollars in federal funding, including places like Cuyahoga County, Ohio, where the USDA canceled delivery of more than 500,000 pounds of food meant for families in need.

An effective government keeps our food safe from farm to fork and supports the farmers and programs that ensure we are fed.

Dig deeper into the Cost of Cutting American Science to see what's at stake.

Learn more

Email Blast

Subject Line
What about the turkey? More than half of our federal food inspectors are gone.

Preview Text
Public servants protect our food and support our farmers at every step. What happens when they can't do their jobs?

Hi [Name],

As many prepare to gather around the table this Thanksgiving, no one should have to worry if the food on our plate is safe to eat.

From farms to grocery stores to our dinner tables, public servants work across our food system to inspect food, set safety standards, monitor outbreaks and regulate pesticides, so that when you're ready to start cooking, your food is safe.

It starts with supporting the farmers who grow and produce our food. Did you know farmers make up less than 2% of the U.S. population, yet they carry the responsibility of feeding all of us? In 2024, the federal government provided $9.3 billion in subsidy payments to farmers growing crops like corn, soybeans and cotton, making up 5.9% of total farm earnings that year. Decades of publicly funded research have also helped farmers boost productivity, conserve resources and manage risks like drought and natural disasters.

But between September 2024 to August 2026, the public servants, programs and funding that protect our food and support our farmers have been cut at every step:

- We've lost more than half of our federal food inspectors.
- Grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have dropped by more than 70%.
- Project grants and research contracts from food and agriculture agencies are down more than 60%.
- Environmental research grants are down 78.9%, slowing work on food allergies and new ways to protect crops from drought.

These cuts are affecting our food supply and reaching family tables. In Ohio, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank lost 500,000 pounds of food from the Department of Agriculture through canceled deliveries that would have gone to Cuyahoga County families in need. The North Texas Food Bank, which serves 12 counties, lost $2.5 million in already-awarded federal funds for 2025 and is projected to lose $9.2 million in 2026. And they are not alone. From Washington state to Maine, food banks across the country have lost millions of dollars in federal funding and food. Every family deserves a government that holds itself accountable to the needs of the people it serves, starting with the food on our tables.

As you plan this year's Thanksgiving dinner, take a moment to see how federal funding cuts are affecting your community with the Partnership for Public Service's interactive Cost to Your Community map

Social Media Content

Use our social media graphics and captions to spark online conversations about what it takes for government to protect our food and farmers, and how the public can hold it accountable for delivering meaningful results. Below are ready-to-post captions covering the campaign's core message. You can also insert a localized story from your state to make the issue feel more immediate to your audience.

Post 1

From farms to grocery stores to your dinner table, public servants work to protect our food supply at every step. They inspect what's being grown and processed, set safety standards, monitor outbreaks and regulate pesticides used on crops.

But between September 2024 and August 2026, we've seen a decrease of more than half (68.4%) of federal employees working in food inspection, and a decrease of 55.3% in project grant funding from food and agriculture agencies.

What does this mean for you? It means fewer people monitoring our food's safety and less funding for nutrition programs that serve communities like yours .

An effective government protects our food supply from the farm to your fork.

See how these haphazard cuts are harming American families and farmers by exploring The Cost of Cutting American Science.

Share this post with your networks

Post 2

Milk, eggs, and meat were all on their way to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank until the Department of Agriculture's budget cuts canceled more than 500,000 pounds of food for Cuyahoga County families.

The food bank served over 424,000 people in 2024 and nearly a quarter of those visitors sought help for the first time. For the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, nearly half of its food comes from the USDA and the state of Ohio. Without public funding, it says it can't adequately support its community.

Cleveland isn't alone in this. Food banks all across the nation, from Washington state to Maine, are facing similar losses.

Explore how federal cuts are affecting food access in your community through our interactive Cost to Your Community map.

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Post 3

The federal government plays a central role in feeding America and keeping our food supply chain secure. Inspectors make sure food meets safety standards, epidemiologists trace outbreaks to their source and federal, state and local agencies work together to warn the public.

But that system is being stretched thin. The Food and Drug Administration's investigations have linked more than 12,800 illnesses to foodborne outbreaks in 2026 so far, compared with 895 in all of 2025. Meanwhile, the number of federal employees working in food inspection decreased by 68.4% between September 2024 and August 2026.

With fewer people on the job, some inspections meant to prevent outbreaks now happen only after people get sick. And when investigations stall, families like those of Colton George, a 10-year-old Indiana boy who was left needing dialysis after eating e.coli contaminated lettuce, are left manage on their own.

Keeping our food safe takes every level of government working in alignment to mitigate harm.

Read more about Colton's case here.

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Post 4

Whether you're planning a holiday meal or a Sunday football spread, most of the preparation comes down to the menu, the guest list and who's bringing dessert. Food safety rarely comes up until something goes wrong: a dish that wasn't hot enough or a snack that sat out all afternoon.
When you're feeding a crowd, one food safety slip can affect every guest you entertain.

Here are four simple tips from the Food and Drug Administration to keep your party food safe:

💡 **Size matters:** If you're not sure how quickly food will be eaten, prepare smaller platters ahead of time. Swap in fresh ones throughout the party instead of adding new food to old.
💡 **Take temperatures:** Use a food thermometer to ensure hot foods stay at 140 degrees or higher, and use ice to keep cold foods at 40 degrees or below.
💡 **Keep it fresh:** Don't add new food to an already filled serving dish. Instead, replace nearly empty serving dishes with freshly filled ones.
💡 **Watch the clock:** Discard any perishables left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours, unless you're actively keeping it hot or cold.

Behind these tips are food scientists whose job is to keep your food safe every step of the way.

Learn more about the role government plays in food safety and agriculture at the Cost of Cutting American Science.

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Post 5

California grows almost a third of the nation's vegetables and nearly three-quarters of its fruit. Its irrigated agriculture uses more than 70% off the state's freshwater and traditional irrigation relies on weather and crop data that can be weeks or months out of date.

Kyle Knipper, a Department of Agriculture scientist, developed satellite-based models that measure how much water crops actually use, giving growers near real-time data to plan irrigation.

Working with NASA and university researchers, Kyle's GRAPEX program helped E&J Gallo Winery and other vintners in California's Central Valley use data to track soil and vine moisture to plan irrigation. Gallo has cut water use by up to 25% in some of its vineyards.

"There is nothing more rewarding than seeing research we've spent years developing become practical tools that growers embrace," shared Kyle.

When federal scientists, researchers and growers work together, American farms get stronger.

Learn more about Kyle Knipper at servicetoamericamedals.org.

Share this post with your networks

Post 6

Farmers make up less than 2% of the U.S. population, yet they carry the responsibility of the county's food security. Nearly 97% of America's farms are family-owned, and they are fighting to stay in business.

America's farmers and ranchers are heading into a fourth straight year of losses, meaning their returns are below the cost of production, according to American Farm Bureau Federation economists.

When a family farm closes, rural communities lose jobs, local economies weaken and our national food supply chain becomes weaker.

Keeping family farms strong takes a government that's responsive to their needs. It means investing in agricultural research, working to make farm costs more predictable, and modernizing the policies and programs to work for today's challenges.

When government is effective and responsive, it supports the families who grow our food and secures the food supply for every American.

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Post 7

When global supply chains froze in 2020, independent producers were cut off from commercial buyers like restaurants and schools. This resulted in highly perishable goods dumped in fields while grocery store shelves sat empty.

In late 2021, the Department of Agriculture launched programs to help schools, food banks and tribal communities buy food directly from local family farms, guaranteeing farmers a buyer before they planted a single seed.

Then, in March 2025, those agreements were canceled mid-season. In northwest Indiana alone, 28 family farms lost $1.4 million in federal funds after planting had already begun.

The ripple effects has reached school cafeterias and food pantries across the country.

Read how federal funding cuts hurt farmers and our food supply chain.

Share this post with your networks

Post 8

Known as the “Willy Wonka of healthy food,” Tara McHugh is a food scientist and senior scientific leader at the Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service. Her lab tackles two problems at once: billions of dollars in wasted food every year and the more than 10% of Americans who struggle to get nutrition dense food.

Tara’s team turned fruit waste into the world’s first 100% fruit bar, and turned left over from beer brewing grains into a protein-rich flour now used in grocery store bread.

By partnering with entrepreneurs to bring ideas like these to market, her lab has helped launch 10 companies, many in rural areas that brought communities new jobs.

As one business partner put it, government’s role is to help “give life to projects and products that would not otherwise exist.” That’s public service at its best.

Learn more about Tara McHugh at servicetoamericamedals.org.

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Post 9

Tavis Brown is an Army veteran and Department of Agriculture consumer safety inspector who has spent three decades keeping our food safe.

Tavis enlisted in the Army in 1989 as a food service specialist and later served in the Army Reserve. In 1994, he joined the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, bringing the discipline, leadership, accountability and teamwork he learned in the Army to his work as a food inspector. When he was deployed to Iraq in 2006, he used that inspection training to set up cooler monitoring procedures for troops.

Through it all, he's lived by one motto: Be fair, firm, consistent and maintain integrity.

From the Army to the USDA and to his own neighborhood barbecues, Tavis has made food safety his mission.

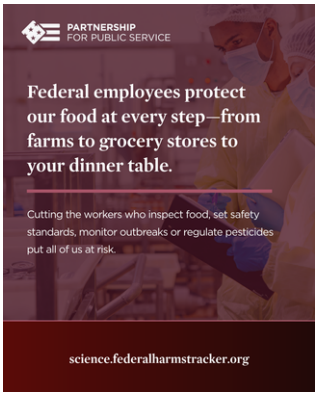
Tavis is one of the many public servants protecting the food on our plates.

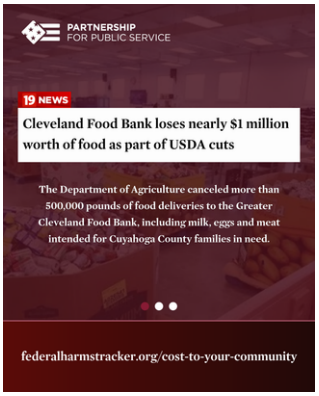
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Graphics

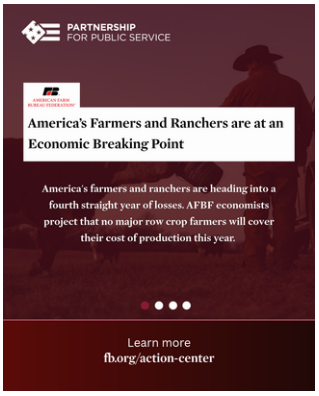
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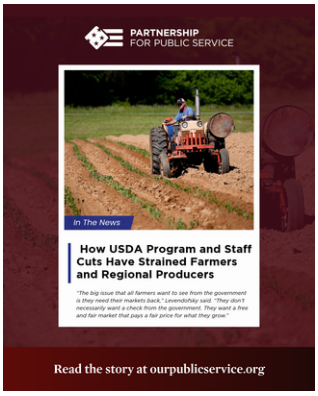




















RESOURCES

- ★ The Cost of Cutting American Science
- ★ Save Our Science - Partnership for Public Service
- ★ Honoree Archive • Service to America Medals