

Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS)

A How-To Guide for Farmers & Vendors

What is PASS?

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) provides funding to Feeding Pennsylvania's statewide network of food banks to purchase Pennsylvania food products, including fresh produce, dairy products, meats, eggs, and value-added items with PA ingredients. The goal of PASS is to provide a market for products that may have gone to waste or may not have been harvested. PASS funds are used to cover the harvesting, processing, transportation, and packaging costs, seeking to provide financial support to our local farms and vendors, while getting nutritious foods into our charitable food system.

How does PASS work?

1

Interested vendors reach out to Feeding PA or their regional food bank to get setup as a PASS vendor.

2

Vendors notify their regional food bank or local pantry of product availability and quantities.

3

Vendors and food banks or pantries negotiate a mutually agreed upon price and plan delivery or pickup.

4

Vendors submit an invoice to the food bank/pantry; payment is issued after the product is delivered.

PASS Participation Guidelines

Vendor Eligibility

- Farms, producers, and processors based in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are eligible to participate in the PASS Program.

Product Eligibility

- Food products must be from Pennsylvania.
- If food products are processed, the ingredients must be from Pennsylvania, and the processing must be done within Pennsylvania.
- Meat products must be processed at a USDA-inspected facility based in Pennsylvania.

Delivery

- If your farm or company can deliver your products to the regional food bank or a nearby food pantry, delivery costs can be compensated using PASS funds.
- If delivery is not an option, pick-up can sometimes be arranged by the food bank.

Payment

- When products are sold to the food bank, vendors submit an invoice to the food bank in a timely manner that includes:
 - Vendor Information:** company name, address, contact person/info
 - Delivery Information:** delivery date, food bank/pantry name and address, contact person/info/signature
 - Product Details:** Product information, quantity sold (pounds, cases, cartons, etc.), price rate, total price
- Payment can only be issued once product is delivered, no payments in advance.



Tips for Working with Food Banks

- **Plan ahead** with your regional food bank.
 - Whether your product is available now and/or later in the season, reach out early.
 - If you're interested in working with the food bank to plan production of a specific item, please communicate as early as possible to gauge interest and coordinate details (product, quantities, dates, etc.).
- It is helpful to **share details** of your products, including:
 - Quantities
 - Quality
 - Packaging
 - Shelf life remaining
 - Current and future product availability
- Vendors should **have a price or a price range in mind**. If interested, food banks will negotiate or advise on a normal range for a product given product quality.
 - *For example: Produce in 3lb bags will cost more than those in bins or bushels. Fresher product will cost more than product with less shelf life remaining.*
 - Food banks work together with vendors to **mutually agree upon a fair price** for their products. Vendors have businesses to operate and costs to cover, so we make every effort to work together on pricing that covers all costs, and ideally includes some profit, while allowing regional food banks and local food pantries to charitably distribute as much food as possible to neighbors in their community.
- When considering utilization of PASS funds, food banks take a variety of factors into account, including their inventory of products, availability of cold storage (if needed), shelf life remaining, price, preferences of the neighbors they serve, etc. to determine whether to make a purchase.
- **Maintain communication** with food banks, even if a sale may not be in progress. It's helpful to keep the food banks informed on your products, varieties, quantities, availability, etc.

How to Get Started

If you're a vendor interested in participating in PASS, reach out to one of the following:

Feeding Pennsylvania

Contact Tom Mainzer, Director of Agricultural Partnerships at

tmainzer@feedingpa.org

717-257-9850

Your regional food bank

Find your food bank at

FeedingPA.org/food-banks

Your local food pantry

Make sure to have your company's W-9 form available to be set-up as a vendor for payment.

