

## Fw: Advocacy Update 3.18.19



# NTFB VOICE Advocacy Update

ADVOCATING FOR A HUNGER-FREE, HEALTHY NORTH TEXAS

### At a Glance

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- Register for our Lunch & Learn
  - A new marker bill for WIC-to-6 introduced in the Senate
  - Partner agencies and advocates can still comment on the SNAP eligibility rule
  - Date labeling bill has been reintroduced
  - UN warns of increased food insecurity if climate change is not addressed
  - China has halted purchases of all US farm products
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### Lunch & Learn Series

The North Texas Food Bank will be hosting two Lunch & Learn educational events along with our partners at CitySquare, Children's Health, Child Poverty Action Lab, CHILDREN AT RISK, and The Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions. The topic for these sessions will be the Child Nutrition Re-Authorization, if you are interested in attending click the links below.

[Collin County Event](#) – Tuesday, August 27, 2019

[Dallas County Event](#) – Thursday August 29, 2019

### Wise Investment in our Children Act

[Senators Casey & Collins have introduced this act](#) to strengthen the Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) Program.

The WIC program gives low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children (up to age five) food benefits, nutrition education, counseling, and screening services.

This introduced bill would do three things.

- Allow program eligibility for children up to age six
- Make the certification period for infants to two years long
- Extend the eligibility period for breastfeeding and post-partum mothers to two years

Currently, children age out of WIC at age 5. This leaves a nutrition gap before the start of kindergarten, where they would be eligible for school meals. Extending the certification period to age six would close that gap, eliminating the uncertainty period between WIC and their first day of school.

Extending the certification period for infants and mothers eliminates extra paperwork, saves on administrative costs, and keeps families in the program longer. The WIC program contributes to healthier pregnancies and healthier mothers and children. Making WIC more accessible during critical developmental growth and recovery periods increases the health and outcomes of low-income families.

*A marker bill is a piece of legislation introduced in Congress that's not actually intended to pass as a standalone bill, but rather is intended for inclusion in a larger bill, in this case, the upcoming Child Nutrition Re-Authorization.*

### **There's still time to make a comment on Categorical Eligibility for SNAP recipients**

A letter was sent to NTFB's partner agencies about the recent proposed rule change published in the federal register. In brief, the rule change would change Broad Based Categorical Eligibility for SNAP, impacting State's flexibility in determining program eligibility. Those impacted will be applicants who have household incomes between 130% and 165% of the Federal Poverty Limits. Roughly between \$2,700 and \$3,500 a month, for a family of four. [If you'd like to read the letter, please visit here](#). And if you'd like to make a comment on the rule change, [please go here](#). Comments will be accepted until September 23, 2019.

### **Date labeling legislation is re-introduced (HR 3981)**

Date labeling is confusing right?! Best by, Use by, Sell by, Freshest by, Expires by – labels can cause confusion resulting in a lot of good food getting thrown away. [Representatives Pingree and Newhouse have reintroduced bipartisan legislation](#) to create a national standard labeling system for food products. This will result in less food waste and increased food donations to food banks.

### **UN warns of increased food insecurity if climate change is not addressed**

The United Nations has [issued a climate change report warning](#) the food industry of what is to come if rising temperatures continue and agriculture practices are not changed. The change in global temperatures will increase droughts, floods, heatwaves, soil loss, and erosion, all leading to a breakdown of our food chain systems.

The report recommends the ag industry improve land productivity, decrease food waste in the fields, and practice land sustainability such as soil management and plant more trees. Additionally, the report suggests the public consume less meat to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions and the draining of wetlands, all consequences of the ranching industry.

### **Trade wars escalate for all US Farm Products**

[The Wall Street Journal reports](#) on the devastating blow to US farmers and ranchers in this comprehensive article. This week, China has halted all food purchases from the United States. Agriculture producers are reporting record drops in quarterly earnings and profits while China has moved on purchasing food elsewhere from other international markets. The US hog and pork industries have suffered greatly as China is the world's largest pork consuming country.

Last week farmers began to sign up for the USDA program that will issue \$14.5 billion dollars to US farms to purchase commodities and help ease the strain caused by the trade wars. A portion of these purchased commodities will be sent to US Food Banks, who will be able to distribute them, but only to those who are income-eligible under the current USDA and state guidelines.

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Questions or Comments? Feelings? Tell me!

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