

Advocacy Update 8/22.2018

Federal

• **USDA Milk, Beef and Chicken** - For the first time ever, the USDA will be buying up \$50 Million dollars worth of milk to help rescue the declining Dairy Industry, and give this milk to food banks. The gesture is nice but in an industry worth \$440 Billion dollar a year, it is a drop in the bucket to rescue the decline. They will also be purchasing \$15 Million for Beef and \$60 Million for chicken.

These products will be purchased through Section 32 TEFAP bonus commodity funds and why we advocate so heavily for fully supporting Section 32.

Fun fact: In the US, 9 Million cows produce enough dairy for each person to consume almost 2 pounds a day. No other country comes close to this level of overproduction.

What it means for NTFB:

OPS – If you have not already, please verify that we will be receiving this opportunity as a TEFAP EFO through Texas Department of Agriculture & Feeding Texas before the other Texas Food Banks step in and grab it all for us.

Food & Nutrition Services Regional Offices will be reaching out to state agencies to find out what milk products TEFAP Emergency Feeding Organization's (EFO's) want

The product offered is divided equally among:

Whole milk in ½ gallon sizes

2% milk in ½ gallon sizes

1% or skim milk in ½ gallon sizes

Processors will pack the milk in crates or boxes of 9 ½ gallons per crate

USDA does have the ability to split loads for TEFAP deliveries

The delivery period starts October 17, 2018 and goes to March 2019.

Delivery windows will be three days for fluid milk.

The milk will need to be distributed within 7-10 days of receiving it, so food banks should only choose the amount they can distribute in each delivery window.

• **Farm Bill** – The first meeting for the conference committee has been set for September 5th. The majority is pushing hard to get the Farm Bill wrapped up before the November elections. As a reminder the Farm Bill expires September 30th and needs a continuing resolution (CR) to pass in order for chaos not to erupt in the commodities and subsidies area of the bill.

If it did expire without a CR, Farm subsidy prices would revert back to 1940s prices. The government would be forced to buy up milk & honey at prices that would drive milk up to \$10 a gallon. But don't worry, they know this and wouldn't let it happen. Hopefully.

SNAP and other feeding programs would still be safe as they are not appropriated within the bill and have mandatory funding.

What it means for NTFB: I will be traveling to DC on September 13th along with other food banks who have members on the Farm Bill Conference committee for a strategy session and to meet with our two members on the committee: Representatives Eddie Bernice Johnson and Representative Hensarling. Let me know if there is a personal message you would like me to convey. I will be reaching out to individuals at NTFB for more impact data for both SNAP & CSFP.

State

- **Lobby Day** - Currently at the State Level we are planning our Lobby Day at the Capitol for the 3rd week in February. Specific Date is TBD but I will be reaching out to specific team members as to their ability to join us based on our policy priorities for the State Legislative session.

- **Weed Killers** – Weed killers used to keep Texas cotton fields clear are getting into the groundwater and air, causing damaging the Texas Wine Country industry, an industry worth \$13B a year.

What it means for NTFB: Nothing. It's just a heads up to buy your Texas favorite bottles now! I highly recommend Bending Branch Winery Tannat Wine. Amazing.

Local

- **Everyone wants \$3M dollars!** - This week NTFB met with a lobbyist for the American Heart Association (AHA) about sponsoring their attempt to get at the \$3 Million dollars that the City of Dallas "found" to help revitalize South Dallas.

The AHA plan is to win the funds and implement healthy grocery store initiatives to combat food deserts in South Dallas.

AHA wants NTFB to support them in this effort. In order for that support to come, we need to see more results from their other initiatives, that are currently in place.

Traditionally, sticking a healthy grocery store in the middle of a food desert fails within a year, due to lack of demand. There are many programs already in place to address food deserts in South Dallas that \$3M would greatly benefit. For large scale initiatives (bringing a large grocery chain in or retrofitting corner stores), \$3M would not do much, and we question how it would be properly spent. I would welcome your thoughts too.

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