



FRESH & FRUGAL:

RESOURCES FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE & EATING ON A BUDGET

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STATEWIDE FOOD ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

The Emergency Food Assistance Program

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of people with low-income by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost.

Florida Association of Food Banks

13 regional food distribution centers provide food donated by farmers, manufacturers, restaurants, and stores. Dial 211 from any phone in Florida to be connected to the United Way Help Line. 211 will help you to identify emergency food pantries and other human services available nearest to your home. Many food pantries have eligibility rules, such as proof of income, hardship or residency.

Get Help Florida: Food Pantries by City

The Get Help Florida site helps families locate not only food pantries, but other important resources such as Food Stamps application, WIC locations, Meals on Wheels, and summer food programs for children.

Community Farmers Markets (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)

These are the markets that are open on certain days each week, often from October to May each year, offering local produce, crafts, food products and other items. At this link, enter the county name in the search window for a list of markets in that county.

Families enrolled in the WIC program can obtain Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons that allow certain purchases at farmers markets.



COOKING/GROCERY SHOPPING TIPS

Fresh From Florida: This tool can help you shop for produce and other fresh groceries that are currently in season. Items that are out of season locally are often more expensive because they must be imported. Shopping for peak season produce can save money while maintaining a fresh and nutritious diet!

USDA Food Shopping and Meal Planning Resources

Budget Bytes: A budget conscious recipe site that breaks down the cost per serving. It also includes step by step photos which can be a big help to beginner cooks and visual learners.

Check out:

- [Budget Grocery Shopping Tips](#)
- [SNAP Challenge Recipe Series](#)
- [Dollar Store Dinners Series](#)

Efficiency is Everything: An engineer applies mathematics to everyday life, including food! The website provides several analyses of nutrients and calories per dollar to help you spend your money efficiently.

Check out:

- [Eat For \\$1.50 Per Day](#)
- [Free cookbook and grocery list](#)

Easy Budget Recipes: Another budget minded recipe site that allows you to search by recipe cost. Includes nice visual ingredient lists.

Check out:

- [Holiday meal budgeting](#)
- [Thanksgiving Dinner Planning Guide](#)



GARDENING/HOME FOOD PRODUCTION

Growing some of your own food may also be a longer-term option. Even if you don't have a yard or a lot of space, you may be able to have a small container garden or use vertical planters to grow fresh produce and reduce your grocery bill. Plus, you can also regrow some veggies from scraps to stretch your dollars without taking as much space or effort as full-on gardening.

- [Container Gardening](#)
- [Grocery Store Starts \(Regrowing Veggies from Scraps\)](#)
- [Gardening with Limited Space](#)

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF IFAS) Extension program provides a wealth of information about which crops you can grow in our state as well as details about when and how to grow them depending on which part of the state you live in. In addition to their online information, each county also has a local office with staff and volunteer master gardeners who are available to answer questions and provide gardening advice. Florida's climate makes for unique growing seasons and gardening strategies that don't necessarily match the general advice the rest of the country follows - be sure to refer to resources specific to Florida and subtropical gardening!

- [How to Start Gardening](#)
- [Edible Plants for Florida](#)
 - [Plus, check the table at the bottom of this page for a chart with recommended varieties for Florida!](#)
- [What to Plant by Month](#)
- [Find Your Local Extension Office by Region](#)

Check your county in the list below for community gardens and seed libraries in your area!

RESOURCES BY COUNTY

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CHARLOTTE

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Charlotte County Gov List of Food Pantries and Meal Programs](#)
- [Harry Chapin Food Bank](#)
- [Edgewater United Methodist Church Food Pantry](#)
- [Hunger Prevention Program at Charlotte CARE Center](#)
- [Florida SouthWestern State College List of Local Food Pantries](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Charlotte County Community Gardens](#): Rental plots available for \$10-20/year

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Charlotte County Libraries](#): All Branches; up to 5 seed packets

COLLIER

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Harry Chapin Food Bank](#)
- [Florida SouthWestern State College List of Local Food Pantries](#)
- [Collier Harvest Partner Agencies Map](#)
- [Catholic Charities Collier County Food Pantry](#)
- [Our Daily Bread Food Pantry](#)
- [Meals of Hope Mobile Food Pantry](#)
- [Salvation Army Food Pantries](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [The Healthy Earth Free Community Gardens Program](#)
- [THRIVEability Garden](#)



DESOTO

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [All Faiths Food Bank](#)
- [Catholic Charities Arcadia Food Pantry](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Get Healthy DeSoto Community Gardens](#)
- [Arcadia, Florida Community Garden Club](#)

GLADES

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Harry Chapin Food Bank](#)
- [Florida SouthWestern State College List of Local Food Pantries](#)
- [The Glades Initiative Food Pantry](#)
- [Catholic Charities Clewiston Food Pantry](#)

HARDEE

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [Hardee Help Center Resource](#)
- [United Way Central Florida Food Drops](#)

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Hardee County Library: One pack per visit](#)



HENDRY

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Harry Chapin Food Bank](#)
- [Florida SouthWestern State College List of Local Food Pantries](#)
- [Catholic Charities Clewiston Food Pantry](#)

HIGHLANDS

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [United Way Central Florida Food Drops](#)
- [Heartland Food Bank](#)
- [Local Food Resources list compiled by Macaroni KID](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Growing in the Heartland Community Garden: Plot rental \\$25/6 months or \\$40/year](#)

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Highlands County Libraries: All branches](#)



HILLSBOROUGH

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [Hillsborough County Schools Mobile Food Pantries](#)
- [United Food Bank & Services of Plant City](#)
- [Metropolitan Ministries](#)
- [Tampa Bay restaurants offering free meals](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Coalition of Community Gardens](#): Over 60 gardens throughout the Greater Bay Area

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Hillsborough Community College Libraries](#)

LEE

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Harry Chapin Food Bank](#)
- [Florida SouthWestern State College List of Local Food Pantries](#)
- [Food Resources compiled by Lee Health](#)
- [Community Cooperative](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [The Healthy Earth Free Community Gardens Program](#)
- [Lakes Park Community Garden](#): Raised beds \$75/year
- [Lee Community Gardens](#): Volunteer based, may request to receive veggies



MANATEE

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [The Food Bank of Manatee](#)
- [St. Joseph Food Pantry](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Coalition of Community Gardens](#): Over 60 gardens throughout the Greater Bay Area
- [Fruit Tree Forest at East Bradenton Park](#)
- [Elwood Community Garden](#)

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Manatee County Libraries Palmetto Branch](#): Up to 3 packets per visit

PASCO

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [The Volunteer Way](#)
- [Metropolitan Ministries](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Coalition of Community Gardens](#): Over 60 gardens throughout the Greater Bay Area

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Pasco County Libraries](#): Up to 5 packets per month



PINELLAS

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [Hope Villages of America](#)
- [Metropolitan Ministries](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Coalition of Community Gardens](#): Over 60 gardens throughout the Greater Bay Area

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Eckerd College Seed Library](#)
- [Safety Harbor Public Library](#)
- [Tarpon Springs Public Library](#)
- [Clearwater Public Library](#)
- [Dunedin Public Library](#)
- [Largo Seed Library](#)



POLK

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [Feeding Tampa Bay](#)
- [Metropolitan Ministries](#)
- [United Way Central Florida Food Drops](#)
- [Lakeland Ledger list of food resources](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- [Coalition of Community Gardens](#): Over 60 gardens throughout the Greater Bay Area

SEED LIBRARIES

- [Mulberry Library](#)
- [Winter Park Library](#)
- [Lakeland Public Library](#): Seed library is available seasonally, check to see when it is open.
- [UF/IFAS Extension Polk County Office Seed Library](#)

SARASOTA

LOCAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

- [All Faiths Food Bank](#)
- [Harvest Food Pantry](#)
- [Sarasota Magazine list of local food resources](#)

SEED LIBRARIES

- [UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County Seed Exchange](#)