



PANDEMIC RECOVERY OFFICE

Rhode Island Community Food Bank Grant Final Report

Submitted by State of Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office

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<https://pandemicrecovery.ri.gov>

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Rhode Island Community Food Bank Grant

Project Identification Number: 10070

Pandemic Recovery Office Approval Date: September 12, 2023

Project Completion Date: August 8, 2024

Funded Amount: \$3,000,000

Expended Amount: \$3,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.1 Negative Economic Impacts: Household Assistance: Food Programs

Problem Statement: The pandemic had a lasting effect on low-income households' access to food. The 2022 RI Life Index Survey showed that food insecurity for Rhode Island households rose from 18% in 2021 to 31% in 2022.¹ The rates of food insecurity were even higher in 2022 for households with children, 41%, and people of color: 43% for Black households, 47% for Latino households, and 43% for other, non-white households. These rates compare to 26% for white households.

In February 2023, the pandemic-era, emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allotment ended, and families saw their benefits reduced by an average of \$153 per month. From March to June 2023, Rhode Island Community Food Bank (Food Bank) member agencies (e.g., food pantries and meal sites) served 80,000 people per month – a 25% increase from the same period in 2022.

On average, the per-pound cost of food was \$1.01 in State Fiscal Year 2023, up from \$0.40 to \$0.50 per pound prior to the pandemic. Examples included ground beef costing \$0.90 more per pound; eggs being \$0.80 more per pound; and rice being \$0.33 more per pound.

The increases had an impact on the Food Bank as it purchases food by the truckload at wholesale prices. The Food Bank budgeted \$7.8 million for food in State Fiscal Year 2024, which is significantly higher than before the pandemic.

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services was appropriated \$3 million by the General Assembly to provide a grant to the Food Bank. The Food Bank used the grant funding to purchase food for its 143 member agencies located in 32 of the state's 39 cities and towns. The member agencies provided food to households experiencing food insecurity.

¹ [2022 RI Life Index Survey](#)

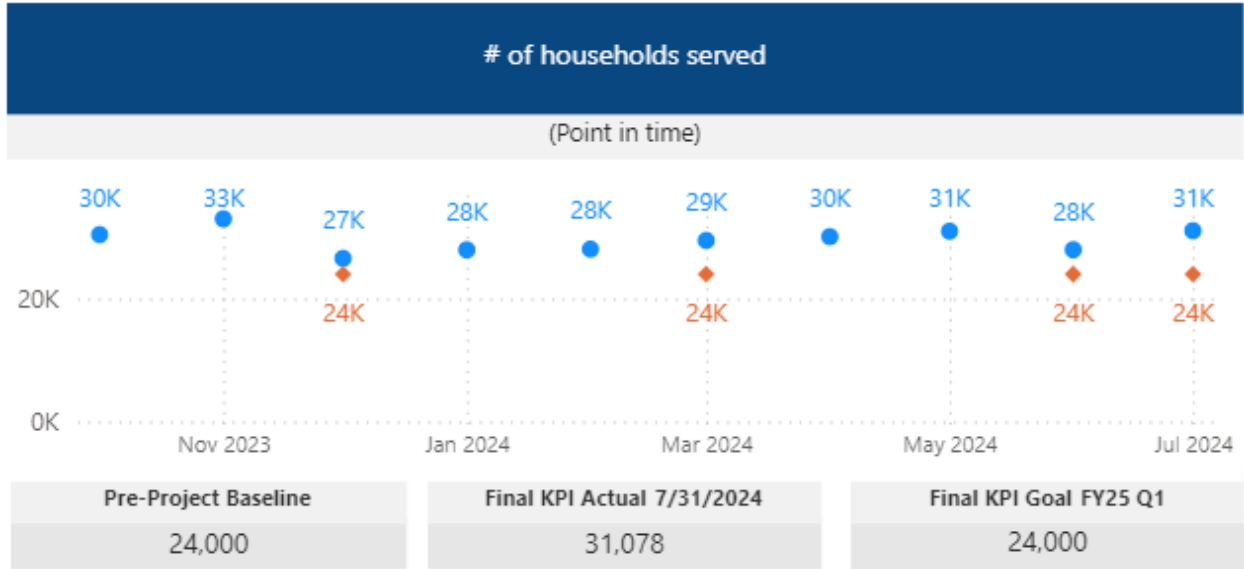
Financial Overview: All program payments can be found on the [Pandemic Recovery Office's website](#) by filtering the "Project" box for "Rhode Island Community Food Bank Grant." The table below shows planned expenditures by fiscal quarter and actual expenditures by fiscal quarter:

Fiscal Year Quarter	Planned Expenditures	Actual Expenditures
FY 2024 Q2	\$1,300,090	\$1,213,543
FY 2024 Q3	\$1,000,000	\$1,562,559
FY 2024 Q4	\$699,910	\$223,898
Total	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
<i>Note: A single audit fee applies to all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects and accounts for \$900 of the funds shown in the above table.</i>		

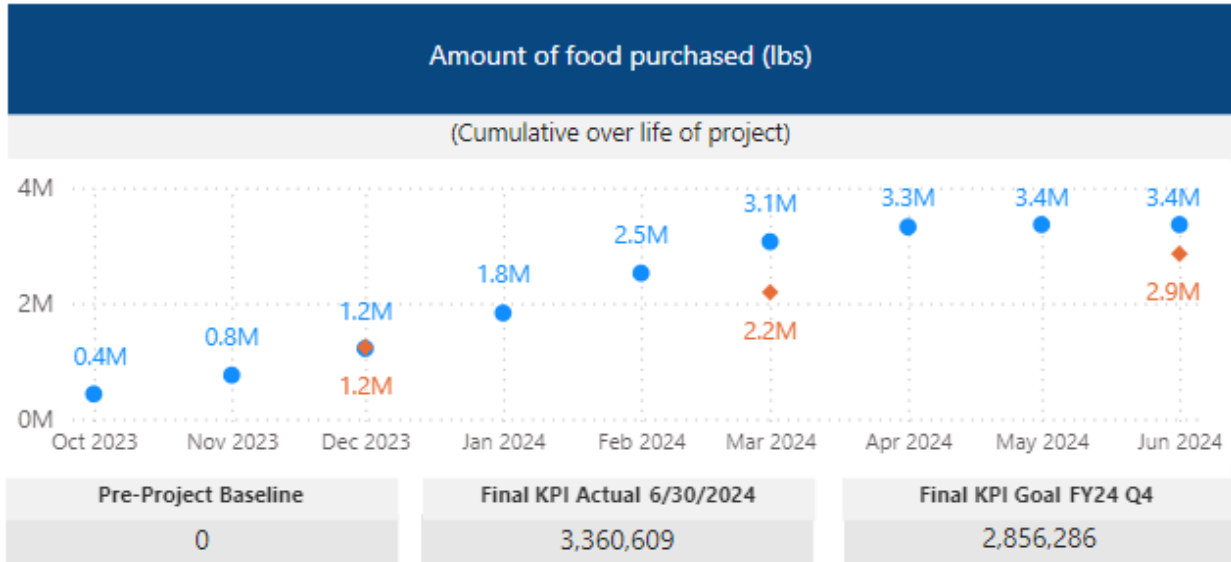
Key Performance Indicators: The following are the key performance indicators based on quarterly goals and monthly data collections.

Legend: ● Actual KPI Value Reported ◆ Quarterly Goals

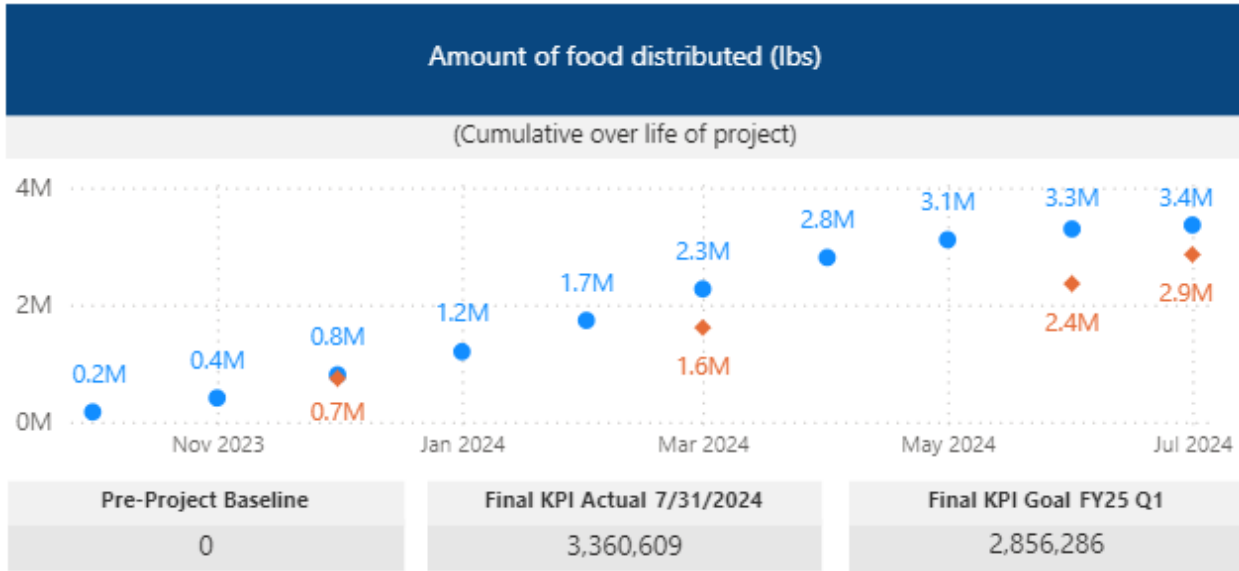
1. Number households served



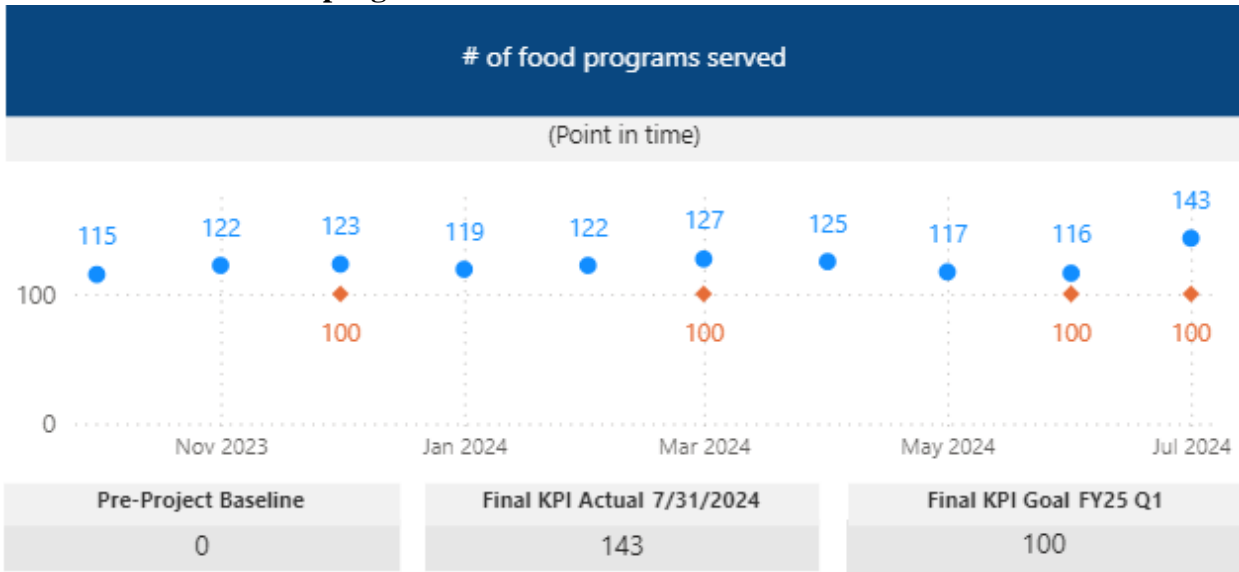
2. Amount of food purchased (pounds)



3. Amount of food distributed (pounds)

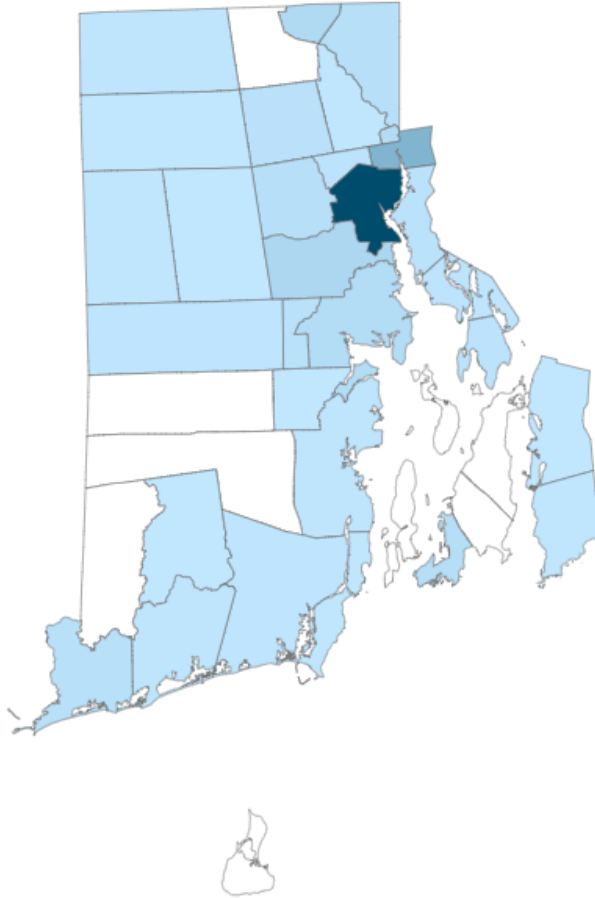


4. Number of food programs served



Demographics: The information in this section includes a map to show the distribution of the food purchased and demographics of those served by the Food Bank.

Distribution of Food (lbs) by Location



Municipality	Food Programs	Pounds of Food
Barrington	1	32,461
Bristol	1	42,167
Burrillville	3	17,748
Central Falls	2	115,175
Charlestown	1	19,771
Coventry	4	22,316
Cranston	4	158,271
Cumberland	2	83,748
East Greenwich	1	1,202
East Providence	4	46,094
Foster	2	6,241
Glocester	1	626
Johnston	2	78,628
Lincoln	1	11,398
Little Compton	1	9,075
Narragansett	1	8,035
Newport	6	90,387
North Kingstown	3	19,460
North Providence	4	38,756
Pawtucket	15	513,415
Providence	57	1,547,975
Richmond	1	3,847
Scituate	1	2,888
Smithfield	2	59,031
South Kingstown	2	23,342
Tiverton	1	3,206
Warren	1	23,472
Warwick	3	109,319
West Warwick	4	60,868
Westerly	4	74,579
Woonsocket	8	137,107
Total	143	3,360,609

In October 2023, the Food Bank released the results of the 2023 Hunger Survey, which was completed in partnership with the Survey Research Center at the Brown University School of Public Health.² A total of 459 surveys were completed at food program sites between April and June 2023. Respondents were asked to identify the race and ethnicity of their household members and were able to select more than one category. Among all households, participants identified as:

Race/Ethnicity	
White	47%
Black or African American	9%
Hispanic or Latinx	32%
Native American or Alaska Native	4%
Other Race or Origin	4%
Asian	3%

Sixty-seven percent of respondents reported receiving SNAP benefits, with 70% of that population reporting that their benefits are exhausted within two weeks. Forty-five percent of respondents reported having to choose between paying for housing or paying for food at least once in the past 12 months, and 47% reported having to choose between paying for utilities or paying for food at least once in the past 12 months.

² [2023 Rhode Island Hunger Survey](#)