



Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

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Shapiro Administration Highlights Nearly \$18 Million to Fight Food Insecurity and Reduce Food Waste, First Lady Lori Shapiro and DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley Tour The Valley Lighthouse in Dauphin County



The Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant has provided nearly \$18 million in funding to food banks and soup kitchens to reduce food waste and food insecurity.

Grant funding allows for the purchase of refrigerators, freezers, vehicles, stoves, and microwaves to assist in providing fresh, wholesome food to individuals in the community.

Lykens, PA – Yesterday, First Lady Lori Shapiro and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Jessica Shirley highlighted the Shapiro Administration’s nearly \$18 million investment in food recovery infrastructure to

help nonprofits across Pennsylvania get more fresh, wholesome food to families while reducing food waste.

During a visit to **The Valley Lighthouse**, a 2026 recipient of **\$50,000 in [Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant \(FRIG\) funding](#)**, First Lady Shapiro and Secretary Shirley saw firsthand how the investment is helping the organization expand its food distribution capacity. The grant funded a box truck, freezer, and refrigerator — allowing The Valley Lighthouse to **more than double the amount of food it can pick up and distribute** to families in need.

“Access to fresh, healthy food is a challenge for too many across Pennsylvania,” said **First Lady Lori Shapiro**. “Josh and I, along with the entire Shapiro Administration, will continue to work to increase food security across the Commonwealth, and funding sources that help nonprofit organizations do more are vitally important. We will continue our work to ensure families have access to fresh, wholesome, nutritious food.”

The **Shapiro Administration** is investing in food security and food recovery across Pennsylvania, including:

- **\$8.3 million** to 230 eligible nonprofit organizations across Pennsylvania to assist these organizations in enhancing their food recovery and distribution programs. Two rounds of FRIG funding have been provided during the Administration, the first round was provided in 2023, and then again earlier this year.
- **\$46.5 million** since taking office to provide universal free breakfast to all of Pennsylvania’s 1.7 million public school students and free lunch to all 22,000 Pennsylvania students who are eligible for reduced-price lunches through the National School Lunch Program.
- Convening and staffing the **[Pennsylvania Food Policy Council](#)** to address the complex issues contributing to food insecurity and food waste and develop strategies to improve nutrition and support healthy, equitable food systems.

The Valley Lighthouse received **\$50,000 in FRIG funding in January 2026** to purchase a box truck, freezer, and refrigerator. The new box truck has **doubled the number of pallets the organization can receive from partners**, allowing it to distribute more food to families in need.

“Food waste is the leading source of waste in our landfills, and as it breaks down it creates methane, a climate-changing gas, entering our atmosphere,” said **DEP Secretary Shirley**. “This funding provides nonprofits with necessary resources to keep food fresh until it’s delivered to folks in our communities.”

“It’s hard to express how grateful we are for the grant from FRIG, and the opportunity to guide First Lady Shapiro through our operation,” said **The Valley Lighthouse Executive Director Stephen Sands**. “The box truck purchased through FRIG has allowed us to more than double the amount of food we are able to pick up and the new freezer and the refrigeration unit allows us to have more food on hand to distribute.”

Food Recovery Infrastructure Grants are awarded to reimburse the cost of equipment like refrigerators, freezers, refrigerated and non-refrigerated vehicles, stoves, and

microwaves to store, transport, or prepare the recovered safe, fresh, wholesome foods to ensure that the food can be redistributed to the public. Grants up to \$50,000 were available per applicant. Special consideration was given to applicants with projects that serve [Environmental Justice areas](#).

In addition to releasing greenhouse gases when it decomposes, food waste represents a significant portion of landfill waste. [Food waste was estimated to be the largest single component of the PA waste stream](#) at nearly 1.6 million tons disposed. In 2018, EPA estimated that in the United States more food was sent to landfills than any other single material in our everyday trash.

Since 2020, DEP has provided three rounds of FRIG funding totaling nearly \$18 million. The first round was provided in 2020, the second in 2023, and the third this year. This funding has been awarded to 375 eligible nonprofit organizations across the Commonwealth to assist them with enhancing their food recovery and distribution programs.

For more information, visit the [DEP's website](#), or follow DEP on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

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