



**INTER-FAITH
FOOD
SHUTTLE**

Service Area Assessment

Fiscal Year 25/26

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle Service Area Assessment Fiscal Year 25/26

ABOUT US

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle (IFFS) is a nonpartisan, 501c3 non-profit organization and a member of the Feeding America National Network of Food Banks. Our programs seek to support neighbors in our community for whom access to nutritious food is a barrier. We aim to alleviate that barrier by recovering and distributing food and resources to our various agency partners. As a result, our neighbors can access food at no cost at mobile markets and food pantries throughout our seven-county service area, including **Wake, Durham, Johnston, Orange, Chatham, Nash, and Edgecombe** counties.

We also recognize that simply putting food on the table is not enough. We aim to break the systemic cycle of food insecurity and empower our neighbors to meet their own food needs. Some of the ways we achieve this include culinary job training, beginner gardening, and teaching our neighbors to cook nutritious meals on a budget.

Our Vision: a hunger free community

Our Mission: We **FEED** our neighbors, **TEACH** self-sufficiency, and **GROW** healthy foods by cultivating innovative approaches to end hunger.



FEED

Increase
The
Harvest



TEACH

Pathways
Through
Educations



GROW

Building
Self-
Sufficiency

- **FEED:** We are committed to providing nutritious food to children, families, and seniors facing food insecurity, ensuring that everyone has the nourishment they need.
- **TEACH:** We are dedicated to fostering self-sufficiency by empowering our neighbors to meet their own food needs. Through a variety of programs, we equip individuals with the skills they need to thrive.
- **GROW:** We are dedicated to fostering self-sufficiency by empowering our neighbors to meet their own food needs. Through a variety of programs, we equip individuals with the skills they need to thrive.

Our Core Values:

- We **RESPECT** each person's inherent value, and give due regard to the autonomy, boundaries, feelings, rights, and identity of ourselves and others.
- We approach everything we do with **INTEGRITY** and commit to hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards.
- We **COLLABORATE** to build strong relationships by seeking out the input and counsel of our community who share our vision for an improved quality of life for all.
- We believe **HEALTH** is the foundation of any community. We are dedicated to elevating the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being of our staff, volunteers, and the communities we serve.
- We commit ourselves to achieving **EQUITY** by going to the point of need and building trusted relationships within our communities to advance just outcomes for all.
- We **SERVE** with excellence, compassion, and responsiveness to meet the needs of those with whom we work, internally and externally.

CURRENT PROGRAM FOOTPRINT

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle deploys a multi-modal hunger-relief and capacity-building system, including:

- Mobile Markets
- Agency Partners
- Senior Feeding
- Backpack Buddies
- School Choice Pantries
- Community Gardens & Urban Agriculture
- Nutrition education
- Food recovery and redistribution

Programs demonstrate strong utilization, particularly in areas with:

- Limited grocery options
- High senior density
- Larger Hispanic/Latinx populations
- Higher household poverty percentages

Agency Partner - Our network of 54 food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens operate through an allocation method based on service records, where neighbors receive equal access to all product streams regardless of their location in the service area.

Mobile Market - A mobile program that provides fresh fruits and vegetables and other groceries. Providing 84 distributions for an average of 4,065 households and 13,650 individuals served monthly through a total of 711,115 pounds distributed.

- Chatham: 15,313 lbs.
- Durham: 214,142 lbs.
- Edgecombe: 117,076 lbs.
- Johnston: 95,386 lbs.
- Nash: 4,290 lbs.
- Wake: 264,908 lbs.

Senior Feeding Program - Dedicated to addressing food insecurity among seniors by providing nutritious grocery bags monthly that seniors can prepare and enjoy at home. 1,194 monthly caseload/136,647 pounds distributed.

Backpack Program- Inter-Faith Food Shuttle's BackPack Buddies program provides children in food-insecure homes with four balanced weekend meals and two healthy snacks during the school year. Bags are delivered weekly (37 weeks) to schools, where staff distribute them to students in a way to support confidentiality and easy access.

For the 2nd Quarter FY 25-26: Served 59 school/sites, distributed 15,488 BackPacks and 61,952 lbs.

School Choice Pantry Program - The School Choice Pantry is an Inter-Faith Food Shuttle program that helps address food insecurity among students and their families by increasing access to wholesome foods. School staff provide a welcoming, safe, and secure location where families can receive support while maintaining dignity and confidentiality.

For the 2nd Quarter FY 25-26: Served 59 school/sites; 62,327 lbs. of food to 11,268 neighbors (2,730 households), including 6,419 children.

- **Chatham County:** Two BackPack schools want a school pantry, but space is unavailable.
- **Durham County:** Need is high, but some families hesitate to seek help.
- **Edgecombe County:** High need; limited resources.
- **Johnston County:** Families are appreciative of services.
- **Nash County:** High need; limited resources.
- **Orange County:** No schools currently served; Head Start coordinator values Inter-Faith support.
- **Wake County:** Need is high, but stigma/shame keeps some families from seeking help.

Overall: Need is rising amid economic challenges, with increased McKinney-Vento enrollment. Some areas report declines in school/work attendance. Site Coordinators are doing all they can; next, we should strengthen support for unhoused populations and expand options for Site Coordinators, especially in rural counties where resources are limited.

OUTREACH & EXPANSION PROJECT

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle operates a comprehensive hunger-relief and community health portfolio across a seven-county service region. Despite robust programming, persistent and emerging disparities in food access remain, especially in areas with limited partner coverage, inadequate transportation, and high poverty concentration.

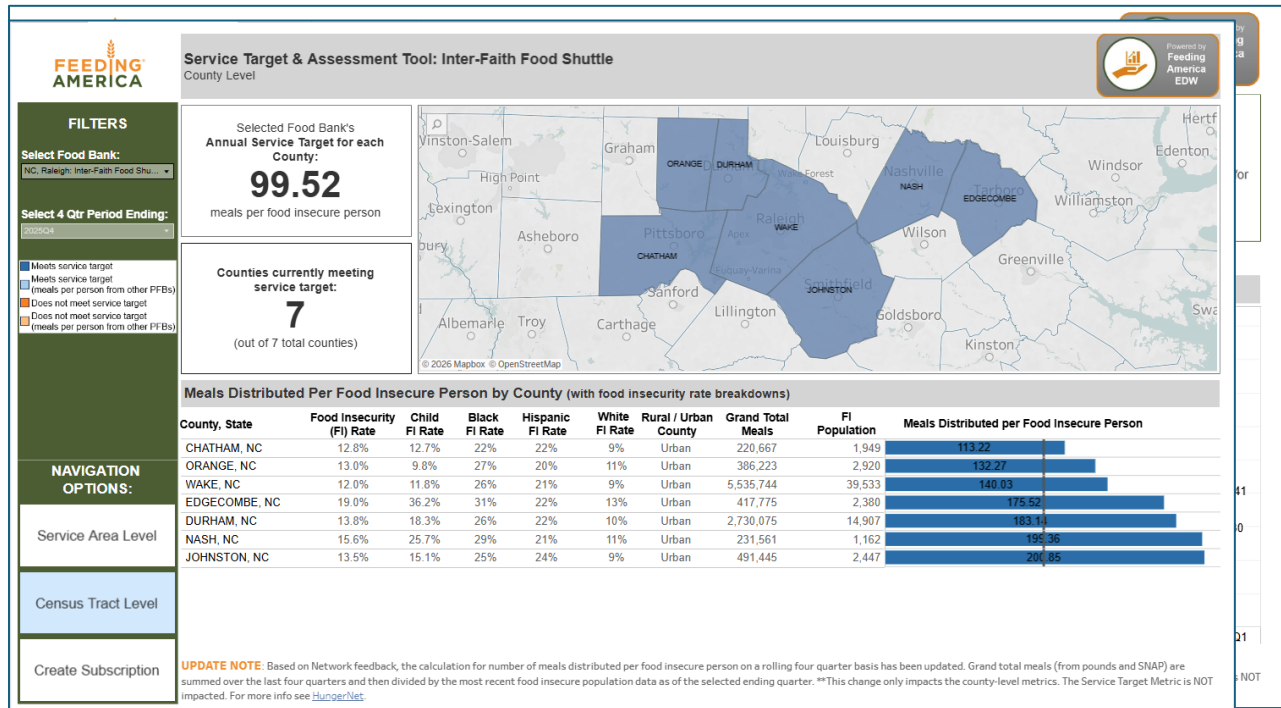
Outreach efforts are strategically designed to target priority areas within each county by identifying ZIP codes with high levels of food insecurity and highlighting organizations for partnership and recruitment. This approach enables us to expand our reach to underserved communities while maintaining the quality and consistency of service provided to our existing neighbors.

Through ongoing outreach and regular engagement with agency partners, we have identified several consistent needs across the service area, including access to culturally appropriate foods, operational equipment, staffing support, and larger or more efficient distribution sites.

Strategic Approach to Supporting Identified Needs

- Maintain a centralized log of agency requests
- Advocate for partner needs as funding becomes available
- Connect agencies with relevant grant opportunities
- Facilitate collaboration by linking agencies with one another and with broader community partners

This coordinated approach ensures a responsive and sustainable framework for strengthening delivery service across the region.



Inter-Faith Food Shuttle’s Target Service metrics – data below represents (Oct/Nov/Dec 2025)

We conducted comprehensive assessments across our entire seven-county service area in collaboration with FBCENC and our shared agency partners. The data presented reflects findings from this full regional analysis. Within each county, we focused on the two areas with the highest FI rates, identifying the corresponding ZIP codes for each Census Tract ID with elevated need.

For each county, we also highlighted the level of distribution established by existing agency partners. In these targeted areas—such as in Chatham County—we currently have two agency partners and one Mobile Market. We remain committed to strengthening service delivery through continued collaboration with FBCENC and our shared network of partners.

Across all counties, demand is outpacing resource availability, especially for fresh produce and protein.

KEY DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY – COMMUNITY NEED SUMMARY

Based on local intelligence and partner feedback, the primary determinants include:

- Rising cost of food and housing
- Underserved neighborhoods lacking transportation
- Limited grocery availability (both urban and rural food deserts)
- High concentrations of aging adults, children, and immigrant populations
- Chronic underinvestment in community-based support infrastructure

Vulnerable Populations (Across Counties)

- Senior residents lacking mobility and fixed-income constraints
- Communities of color are disproportionately affected by structural access barriers
- Immigrant and refugee families requiring translation, culturally familiar foods, and bilingual service delivery
- Rural residents are isolated from service hubs and grocery stores

BREAKOUT BY COUNTY FOR NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2025 PERIOD

Chatham County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

- Number of Pantries: 2
- Average Monthly Households Served: 1,121
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 3,961
- Total Food Distributed: 52,345 lbs.

This snapshot highlights the current scale of service delivery and community reach within Chatham County.

- Limited partner presence constrains service availability.
- Population spread across rural areas amplifies access inequities.
- Community voices emphasize need for more frequent distributions.

CHATHAM					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27344	37037020401	CHATHAM, NC	1,140	18.6%	
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Chatham Outreach Alliance - Siler City	2535 Old Highway 421 N	Siler City	Rural
Mobile Market		El Camino United Methodist Church	123 E. Chestnut St	Siler City	Rural
27312	37037020105	CHATHAM, NC	950	11.3%	
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Chatham Outreach Alliance - Pittsboro	40 Camp Drive, Pittsboro	Pittsboro	Rural

Durham County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

Pantries

- Number of Pantries: 6
- Average Monthly Households Served: 3,860
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 14,385
- Total Food Distributed: 357,088 lbs.

Shelters/Soup Kitchens

- Number of Sites: 4
- Average Monthly Households Served: 968
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 1,012
- Total Food Distributed: 202,852 lbs.

This data reflects the breadth of service delivery and the scale of community impact across Durham County.

- High food access need with notable pockets lacking partner coverage.
- Some schools express interest in a pantry program but lack space.

DURHAM					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27704	37063001709	DURHAM, NC	1,810	21.0%	
Pantry	Emanuel Food Pantry	2504 N Roxboro St	Durham		Urban
Pantry	Greater Waltown United Holy Church Inc	706 Belvin Ave	Durham		Urban
Mobile Market	Rise and Shine Ministries	4625 Denfield St	Durham		Urban
27713	37063002026	DURHAM, NC	1,540	17.1%	
No agencies to report in this zip code					

Johnston County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

Pantries

- Number of Pantries: 2
- Average Monthly Households Served: 515
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 1,486
- Total Food Distributed: 71,353 lbs.

Shelters

- Number of Sites: 1
- Average Monthly Households Served: 8
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 8
- Total Food Distributed: 388 lbs.

This overview reflects the scale of service delivery and community reach within Johnston County.

- Strong community feedback indicating high need, particularly in areas with large Hispanic/Latinx populations.
- Demand for culturally meaningful foods exceeds current supply.
- Need for more bilingual volunteers, partners, and materials.

JOHNSTON					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27527	37101041001	JOHNSTON, NC	1,570	13.0%	
No agencies to report in this zip code - NEAREST is 27526					
Pantry	Operation Nahyelle Inc	800 S Main St, Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526	Fuquay Varina		Rural
27520	37101040903	JOHNSTON, NC	1,380	14.4%	
Shelter	House of Hope of North Carolina	408 Covered Bridge Rd	Clayton		Urban
Mobile Market	Praise Temple Apostolic Faith Church Inc	131 Guy Rd, Clayton	Clayton		Urban

Nash County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

- Number of Pantries: 1
- Average Monthly Households Served: 34
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 93
- Total Food Distributed: 12,742 lbs

This snapshot highlights the scale of service delivery and community reach within Nash County.

- Rural geography increases isolation and transportation barriers.
- Persistent poverty and aging populations lead to sustained demand.
- Infrastructure insufficient in several ZIP codes despite strong community ties.

NASH					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27804	37127010400	NASH, NC	1,020	29.0%	
Mobile Market	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Word Tabernacle Church	821 Word Plaza	Rocky Mt	Urban
27856	37127011103	NASH, NC	1,020	18.1%	
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	A Touch of the Fathers Love	5193 Momeyer Way	Nashville	Rural
Mobile Market		The Village Concept Inc - Nashville	3725 Sandy Cross Rd	Nashville	Rural

Orange County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

Pantries

- Number of Pantries: 1
- Average Monthly Households Served: 333
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 686
- Total Food Distributed: 3,717 lbs.

Soup Kitchen

- Number of Sites: 1
- Average Monthly Households Served: 3,610
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 3,610
- Total Food Distributed: 89,801 lbs.

This overview reflects the scale of service delivery and community reach within Orange County.

- Strong community feedback indicating high need, particularly in areas with large Hispanic/Latinx populations.
- Demand for culturally meaningful foods exceeds current supply.
- Need for more bilingual volunteers, partners, and materials.

ORANGE					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27705	37135010902	ORANGE, NC	1,010	14.9%	
Mobile Market	Iglesia El Buen Pastor	St. Luke Episcopal Church, 1737 Hillandale Rd	Durham		Urban
Mobile Market	Iglesia La Semilla UMC - Clarendon	806 Clarendon St	Durham		Urban
27510	37135010705	ORANGE, NC	780	18.3%	
Pantry/Soup Kitchen	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Inter-Faith Council for Social Service	110 W. Main St	Carrboro	Urban
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Table	311 E. Main St.	Carrboro	Urban
Pantry		PORCH Chapel Hill - Carrboro	202 S Greensboro St., suite A	Carrboro	Urban

Wake County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

Pantries

- Number of Pantries: 21
- Average Monthly Households Served: 12,332
- Average Monthly Individuals Served: 45,774
- Total Food Distributed: 1,101,762 lbs.

Shelters/Soup Kitchens

- Number of Sites: 11
- Average Monthly Households Served: 985
- Average Daily Individuals Served: 4,764
- Service Level: Three meals plus a snack provided daily

- Total Food Distributed: 195,042 lbs.

This overview reflects the significant scale of service delivery and the extensive community reach across Wake County.

- Significant urban/suburban population growth driving ongoing need.
- Transportation barriers inhibit access, especially for residents without cars.
- Strong existing infrastructure, but still insufficient to meet demand in some ZIP codes.

WAKE					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27610	37183052101	WAKE, NC	2,160	25.4%	
Mobile Market/Pantry	Abundant Life Cathedral COGIC	4400 Old Poole Rd	Raleigh		Urban
Mobile Market	Iglesia La Semilla UMC - Kings Parkway	284 Kings Parkway (Kingsborough Estates Apts.)	Raleigh		Urban (last distribution April 2026)
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Lincoln Park Holiness Church	Pantry @ 1409 Cross St	Raleigh	Urban
27587	37183054212	WAKE, NC	1,800	23.8%	
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Richland Creek Community Church	3229 Burlington Mills Rd	Wake Forest	Rural
Pantry	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Tri-Area Ministry	149 E Holding Ave	Wake Forest	Urban

Edgecombe County Level Highlights & Observed Gaps

- Rural geography increases isolation and transportation barriers.
- Persistent poverty and aging populations lead to sustained demand.
- Infrastructure insufficient in several ZIP codes despite strong community ties.

EDGECOMBE					
Mapped ZIP	Census Tract ID (2020)	County, State	Avg. # FI Pop. (Tract)	Avg. % FI (Tract)	Rural/Urban
27803	37065020300	EDGECOMBE, NC	1,480	27.1%	
27801	37065020200	EDGECOMBE, NC	1,000	23.1%	
No agencies to report in this zip code - NEAREST IS 27804					
Mobile Market	Shared Agency with FBCENC	Word Tabernacle Church	821 Word Plaza	Rocky Mt	Urban

We can incorporate the following into all our service area.

FEED Programs

Increasing the Harvest: We aim to address these critical gaps by increasing food recovery, refining our food distribution systems, and forming strategic partnerships to ensure that no one goes hungry. This initiative focuses on improving the efficiency, reach, and impact of our services for children, seniors, and communities in need. By streamlining supply chains, enhancing collaborations with retailers, and expanding child feeding programs like Backpack Buddies and school pantries, we are committed to reducing hunger while promoting food, health, and nutrition security in the regions we serve.

Winning Strategies:



Retailer Partnerships for Food Recovery: Strengthening relationships with retailers will allow us to recover more food and reduce the need to purchase additional supplies. By forming new partnerships and optimizing existing ones, we will increase the volume of food recovered, ensuring that it reaches the people who need it most.



Decreasing the Food Distribution Gap: There is often a gap between the amount of available food and the actual pounds distributed to communities. We will close this gap by refining our distribution methods based on comprehensive community assessments, ensuring that food is efficiently distributed to underserved populations.



Streamlining Supply Chains: Improving the efficiency of our supply chain operations is critical to reaching food deserts and underserved communities. We will invest in supply chain optimization, creating sustainable distribution models that can reliably meet the chronic hunger needs in these areas.



Expanding Child and Senior Feeding Programs: Special attention will be given to expanding our child feeding programs, such as Backpack Buddies and school pantries, while also increasing support for senior feeding initiatives. By ensuring that vulnerable populations have consistent access to nutritious food, we will build stronger and healthier communities.



Expand Meal Production and Distribution: Increase the volume of nutritious meals prepared and delivered to underserved communities, schools, and partner agencies, ensuring that every meal is balanced and culturally appropriate.

TEACH Programs

Through our *Create Pathways through Education* initiative, we are empowering underserved populations with both culinary and agricultural skills, equipping them to secure higher-paying positions, improve nutrition, and combat diet-related illnesses like diabetes and hypertension. Integrating agricultural education teaches individuals how to grow and source fresh, healthy ingredients, fostering self-sufficiency, sustainable practices, and long-term nutrition security. As we expand, we aim to be the leading provider of highly skilled, diverse talent for top-tier hospitality chains in the region while building a healthier, more resilient community capable of managing and preventing chronic illnesses through better nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

Winning Strategies:



Target Underserved Populations: Focus on Hispanic and African American communities by offering tailored culinary programs, providing skills for higher-paying positions, and creating sustainable career paths out of poverty.



Scalable Nutrition and Culinary Education: Develop scalable nutrition education initiatives alongside culinary training, empowering participants to make healthier, budget-conscious food choices while addressing long-term health challenges.



Expand Access to Nutritious Meals and Career Opportunities: Combine culinary education with job placement to ensure participants gain both skills and resources, while also expanding access to nutritious meals for local communities.



Hands-On Agriculture and Sustainable Learning: Engage all age groups in hands-on learning through agriculture education, teaching sustainable farming, gardening, and food systems, integrated into existing community programs.

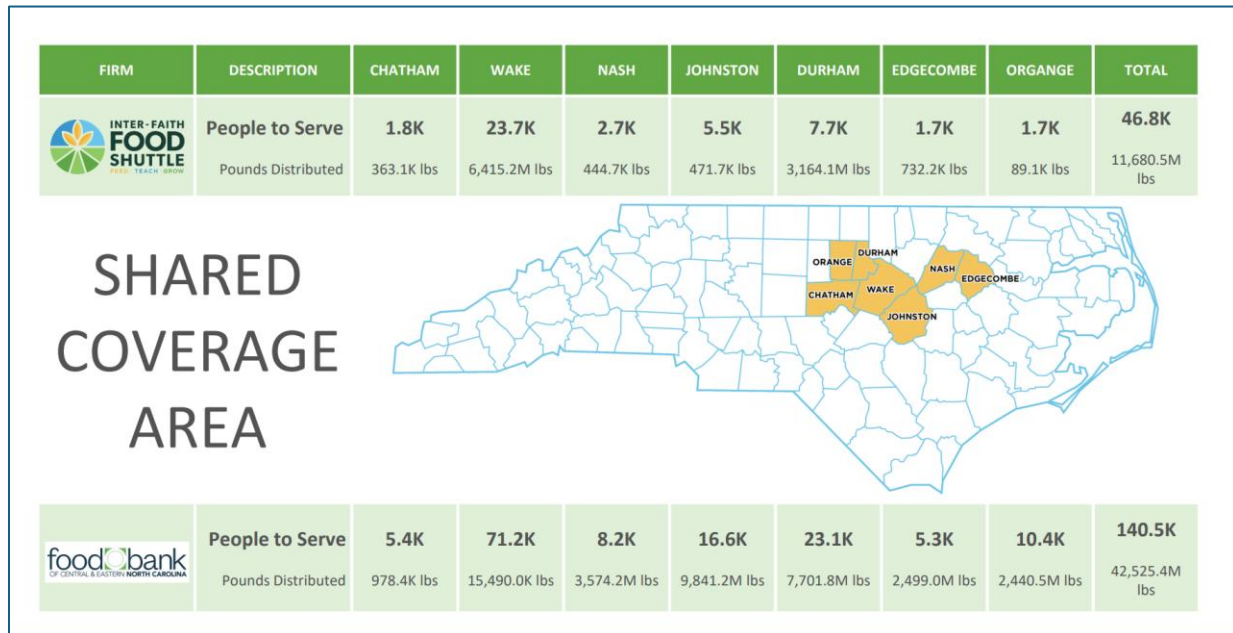


Partnerships and Career Pathways in Agriculture: Build partnerships with schools and nonprofits to promote agriculture as a viable career, offering internships, certifications, and emphasizing food justice and equity in affected communities.

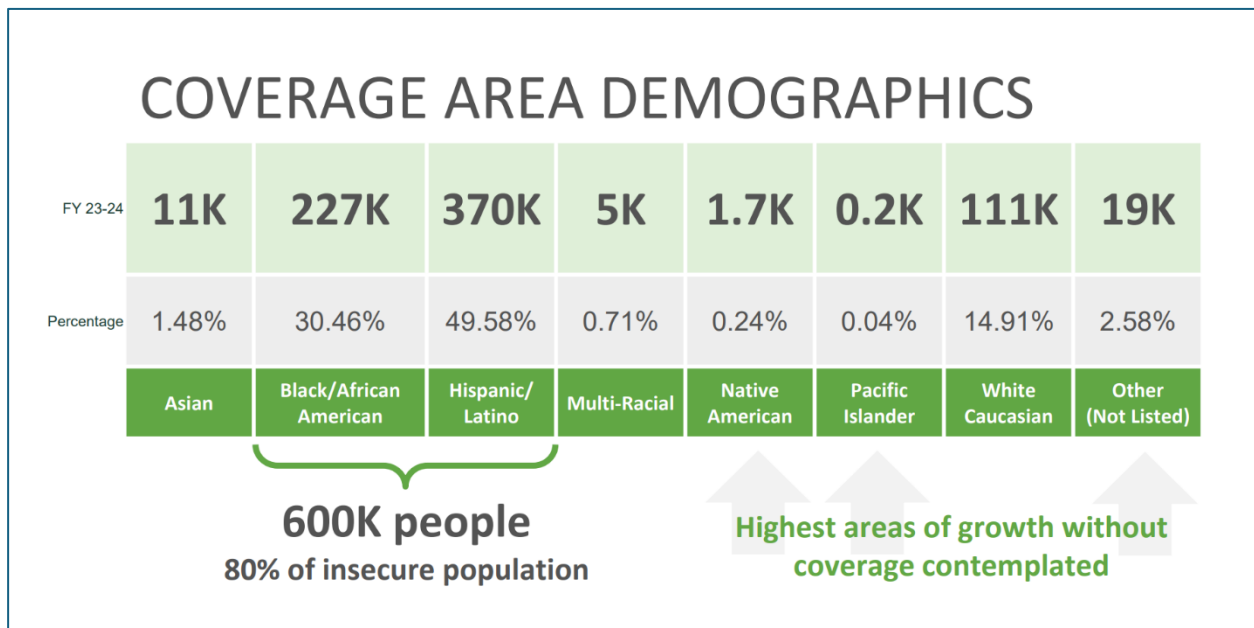
Data and Statistics

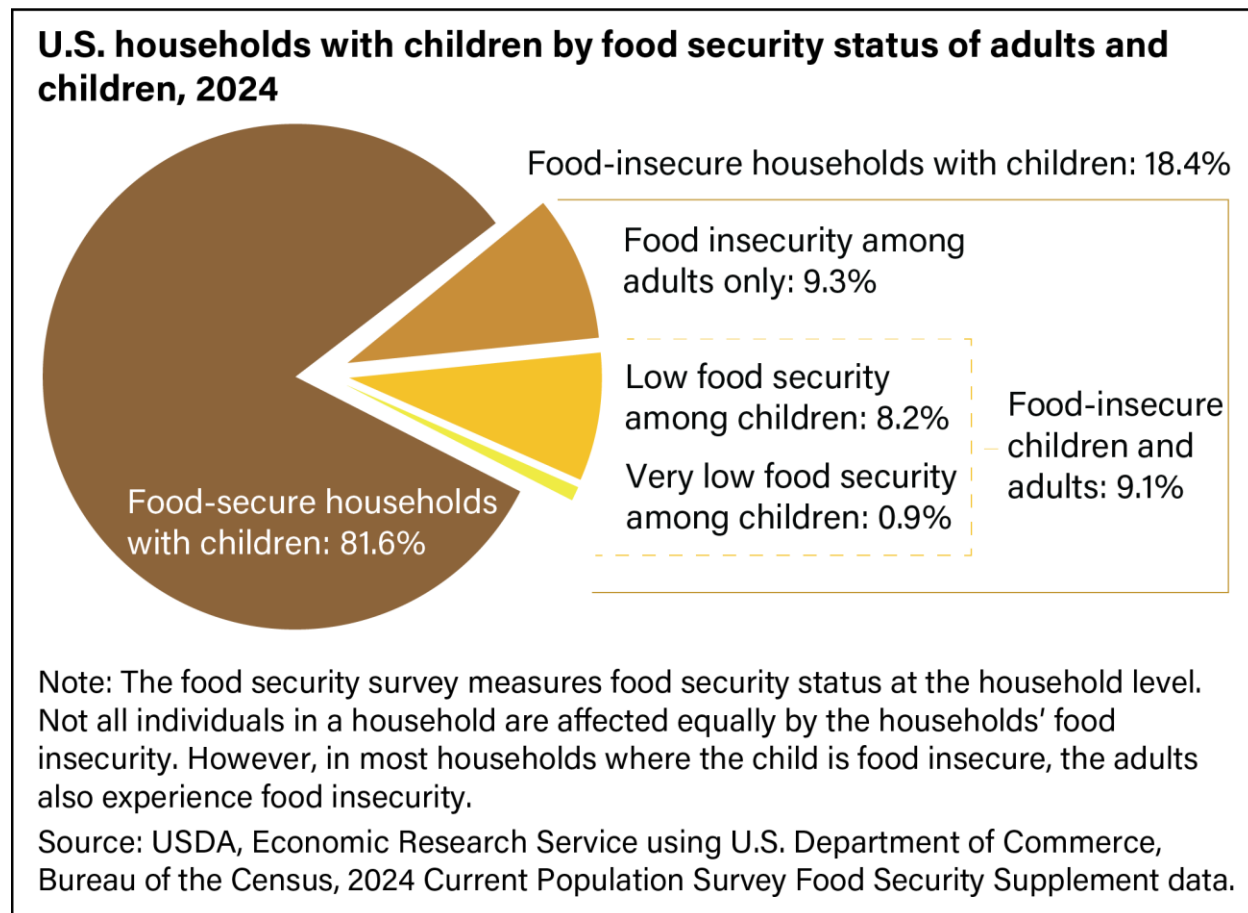
Shared Coverage Area for Inter-Faith Food Shuttle and the Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC

*data is from fiscal year 23-25



Food Shuttle Coverage Area Demographics





The Need

Within our service area, the charting indicates the highest levels of need when analyzed by ZIP code and county. These ZIP codes highlight where we should focus our strategic recruitment of agency partners. The elevated food-insecurity rates in these areas clearly show where our efforts and resources are most urgently required.

Ways We Can Be Strategic in the Recruitment Process

- **Prioritize High-Need ZIP Codes:** Target outreach efforts first in ZIP codes with the highest food-insecurity indicators.
- **Leverage Local Data and Community Input:** Use county-level data, community feedback, and partner insights to validate needs and identify service gaps.
- **Engage Existing Community Organizations:** Connect with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, schools, and grassroots groups already serving these ZIP codes to explore partnership opportunities.
- **Conduct Direct Community Outreach:** Attend local meetings, coalitions, and community events in targeted ZIP codes to build relationships and increase visibility.

- **Assess Capacity and Alignment:** Prioritize agencies that demonstrate operational capacity, mission alignment, and readiness to expand programming in high-need areas.
- **Create a Clear Onboarding Framework:** Establish a streamlined recruitment and onboarding process to support new partners entering these priority ZIP codes.
- **Collaborate with Local Government and Stakeholders:** Partner with county offices, public health departments, and social-service providers to identify potential agencies and align collective efforts.
- **Monitor Impact and Adjust:** Regularly review data and partner performance to ensure recruitment efforts are effectively addressing service gaps in targeted ZIP codes.