

Global Food Security: A Smart U.S. Investment

Feeding the World Fuels U.S. Growth

With more than 735 million people worldwide facing hunger, food insecurity is not only a humanitarian crisis but also a growing threat to global stability, fueling conflict, displacement, and economic fragility in vulnerable regions. Proven solutions—such as investments in agricultural development and research—help countries and communities build resilient food systems, reduce dependence on aid, curb migration drivers, and become stronger U.S. trading partners.

Recognizing the link between hunger and U.S. national security, Congress has repeatedly reauthorized the **Global Food Security Act**, which President Trump signed into law in 2018. Through this bipartisan commitment, USAID's agricultural development portfolio—supporting the U.S. Government's **Feed the Future** (FTF) global hunger initiative—receives roughly \$1 billion annually in Congressional appropriations and has delivered meaningful results both at home and abroad. In 2023 alone, FtF reached more than **32 million people**. From 2010 to 2019, targeted FTF areas saw an average **19% reduction in extreme poverty**. Agriculture-led development in low income countries consistently delivers high-impact investments—up to **four times more effective** at reducing poverty than investments in other sectors. Notably, **USAID-funded agricultural research** yielded a return of **\$6.80 for every \$1 invested** between 1978 and 2018.¹

U.S. investments in agriculture abroad also help other countries strengthen their food and nutrition security, fuel economic growth, and create new markets for American exports. **Eleven of America's 15 largest trading partners** today were once beneficiaries of U.S. foreign assistance. Expanding and diversifying export markets is essential for U.S. farmers and agribusinesses, with the most rapidly growing markets for U.S. agricultural exports are in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

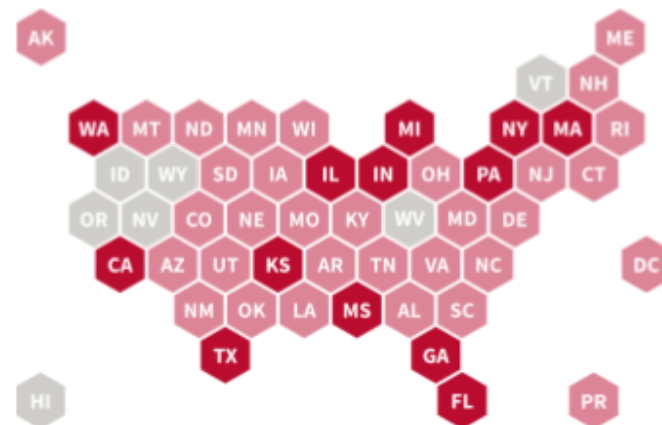
¹ Dalton, T. & K. Fuglie. (2022). [Costs, Benefits, and Welfare Implications of USAID Investment in Agricultural Research through U.S. Universities](#). *Journal of Applied and Agricultural Economics*. 54(3). 461 - 479.

US Farmers, Ranchers, and Businesses Benefit

Feed the Future helps create stable, investable markets by supporting policy reforms and mitigating corporate risk—laying the groundwork for U.S. investment abroad as well as supporting American farmers and ranchers at home. In addition to USAID purchasing 1.1 million metric tons of food from U.S. farmers and ranchers in the previous fiscal year, American farmers export \$5 billion annually to the 20+ countries Feed the Future supports. In FY2023 alone, **Feed the Future unlocked \$677 million in private investment.**

Feed the Future also strengthens U.S. agricultural resilience through research. Through the 19 [Innovation Labs](#) at U.S. universities and the CGIAR global research network, over 1,000 agricultural innovations have been developed to combat pests and diseases that threaten food security abroad and at home. For example, Feed the Future helped contain African Swine Fever near the Gulf of Mexico in partnership with USDA, protecting the U.S. pork industry from billions in potential losses. It also helped develop a green aphid-resistant sorghum variety in Ethiopia—later adapted for U.S. crops—saving American farmers hundreds of millions.

FTF pairs American innovation with global expertise through **19 Innovation Labs**, joining forces with 70+ top U.S. universities across **39 states**



Mitigating PRC's Economic Coercion

Investing in USAID and foreign assistance initiatives like Feed the Future is one of the most cost-effective ways to outcompete the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the global stage. Through Feed the Future, USAID advances the resilience of our partner countries and reduces their vulnerability to the PRC's economically coercive trade practices. Feed the Future promotes the diversification of export markets for agricultural products, which reduces country-level reliance on the PRC as a major export purchaser. In May 2024, [the PRC restricted imports of](#)



[Guatemalan coffee and macadamia nuts](#), after the Guatemalan President attended the inauguration of Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te. Through Feed the Future, USAID supported Guatemala over many years to meet international export requirements that enabled producers to expand their markets and sell coffee to U.S. companies like Starbucks – blunting the impact of the PRC's trade weaponization.

The dismantling of USAID and the termination of foreign assistance projects, however, has created a vacuum for the PRC to reshape the global order in their favor, undermining American soft power, strategic interests, and national security. Since February, the PRC has worked swiftly to deepen its ties with Honduras – a Feed the Future target country – including establishing seven new agricultural schools, and [negotiating a Free Trade Agreement](#).

What can Congress do?

Protect Funding and require implementation of existing law: Congress has regularly reauthorized and appropriated funding to implement the Global Food Security Act and agriculture-led development. While Congress directed the Administration to provide at least 50% of agriculture appropriations to FTF focus countries in the FY2024 SFOPS bill, the Administration cuts to FY2024 programming have reduced programming from 20 focus countries to just 3 - Guatemala and one small program each in Senegal and Ethiopia. Congress should reject any recessions to Feed the Future/agricultural programming and reinstate funding, as outlined in the FY 24 appropriations bill and ensure FY 25 appropriations are spent on development programming like FTF.

Protect Expertise: Food and nutrition security requires high levels of expertise. For example, ensuring research grants are investing in the most pressing diseases and threats to agriculture and livestock, or understanding the gaps in genetic research to advance better crops requires extensive expertise. Ensuring State, USAID, and/or USDA have the right number of staff with the right qualifications is essential for effective programming. Bill or report language in the SFOPS Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) account encouraging these expertise would ensure the effective implementation of programs. Additionally, overseas staff to support programs that are advancing food and nutrition security and high quality research are essential.

***For more information about specific impacts of cuts to food security funding by state, see <http://bit.ly/42VDEX9>

Information in this document reflects the status as of May 12, 2025, and will be updated as new developments occur. For questions, meeting inquiries, or resources on the benefits of USAID and foreign assistance you can reach us at congressaidletters@gmail.com.