

U.S. Title II Food Assistance Status Update

Buying life-saving food commodities from American farmers for use in foreign assistance makes America more prosperous and more secure. The USAID food bag is one of the most recognized and iconic symbols in American diplomacy: a sign of hope to those in crisis. Simultaneously, the Food for Peace Act puts money back into the hands of American farmers, ports, and our maritime industry.

Status Update:

- At least \$1 billion of food assistance for millions of vulnerable people was cut by the Trump Administration when it gutted USAID in February—despite waivers granted by Secretary of State Marco Rubio. This included US Title II emergency and development programs that source American-grown food under the Food for Peace Act. Jeremy Lewin, hired by DOGE and embedded within USAID, terminated additional food assistance programs in April.
- **While some terminated activities were turned back on, much aid – and all new purchases of U.S.-produced food assistance – is still blocked.** Typical U.S. humanitarian spending for food assistance and treatment for severe acute child malnutrition has been about \$5 billion each fiscal year. To date this fiscal year, only about 20 percent or \$1.0 billion has been allocated for food assistance and nutrition interventions. This is money Congress has already appropriated to USAID.
- **The consequence of these cuts is unnecessary human suffering.** In Sudan, innovative, locally led [emergency response rooms](#) no longer get money to provide hot meals for displaced families. In Somalia, terminated grants mean [shuttered nutrition centers](#)—resulting in higher numbers of severely malnourished children, including some who have already died as a result. WFP has been forced to [cut food rations in half](#) for more than 1 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Assistance cuts—including a one-third reduction in food rations—have resulted in a [sharp increase in violence](#) in Malawi's Dzaleka refugee camp, according to State Department officials.
- The U.S. incurs additional costs by diverting food from cancelled programs. Furthermore, according to [news reports](#), more than 60,000 tons of food valued at more than \$90 million is languishing in warehouses waiting for State Department approvals to redirect it.
- In addition, two U.S.-based suppliers of a specialized peanut paste designed for malnourished children report that the U.S. government does [“not have any upcoming demand”](#) for their product, resulting in layoffs and production line shutdowns. These U.S. companies are key to treating malnutrition worldwide, and the U.S. government is their major buyer. If they cannot keep their doors open, the most vulnerable children and pregnant women face an increased risk of starvation.
- **The terminations and refusal to spend appropriated funding is having far-reaching consequences across the globe.** Famine conditions are worsening in [Sudan](#), half of [Yemeni children](#) are malnourished, and [Afghanistan](#) is facing the most severe child malnutrition crisis in its history. In each of these contexts and many others, the U.S. funding cuts are cited as a key driver of increased vulnerability.

Administration and Hill proposals related to Title II Food Aid

- The Administration is proposing to [zero out Food for Peace Title II funding for FY2026](#), removing a vital market for American farmers and drastically reducing U.S. support for addressing global malnutrition and acute food insecurity at a time of [increased](#) needs.
- While not yet public, we expect any rescission bill for FY25 to include significant cuts to food aid. To date, only 20 percent of typical expenditures on nutrition and food assistance have been obligated. A rescission at this time could effectively terminate lifesaving programs that are still active and put more lives in danger.
- Separately, there are Congressional proposals to transfer the functions and duties of the Title II food aid program to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), at a time when USDA's international food portfolio is also being gutted.

Key Requests to Congress

- **Protect Funding and require implementation of existing law:** Congress has regularly reauthorized and appropriated funding to implement Title II food assistance. The executive branch is required to spend funding that Congress has appropriated using its Article I powers.
- **Ensure adequate expertise:** Food and nutrition security requires high levels of expertise. USAID staff working on food assistance - both in the U.S. and around the world - have a variety of specialized skills. They are experts in logistics and supply chains, price forecasting, market analysis, nutrition and food safety, monitoring, and grant and contract management. Other U.S. agencies do not have the specific expertise and global footprint required to responsibly manage this assistance.
- **Excise any cuts to food aid in the rescission proposal** and ensure the FY 2026 appropriation includes funding for Title II at normal annual levels (approximately \$1.7 billion).
- **Do NOT endorse a move of food aid to USDA at a time when its international food programs are also being dismantled:** Keeping food aid management together with other emergency response ensures efficient and effective food assistance with sufficient oversight. The first Trump administration merged USAID's Office of Food for Peace with the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to create a more efficient and effective emergency response. The proposed legislation would undo this integrated response architecture - an approach resulting from years of analysis and lessons learned that resulted in greater value for money by delivering a stronger, more coordinated response on the ground. Relying on staff who lack this coordinated expertise in integrated programming and an agency that lacks USAID's global footprint would be an inefficient use of U.S. taxpayer resources and increase the risk of fraud, waste, and diversion of U.S.-grown food aid.
- **Demand reinstatement of all third-party monitoring mechanisms:** USAID instituted these agreements in places where U.S. Government officials are unable to monitor to ensure that implementing organizations fulfill their agreements and to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

Information in this document reflects the status as of June 2, 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.