

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

HELEN KELLER



As we grow,  
our ability to help  
others grows.

2024 IMPACT REPORT

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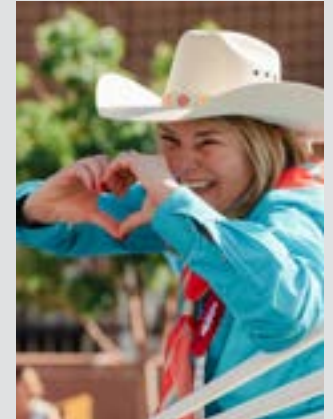
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Wyoming Hunger Initiative is the official initiative of First Lady Jennie Gordon and is governed by the Board of Directors of the Wyoming Governor's Residence Foundation, a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



## Letter from First Lady Jennie

In 2024, we celebrated Wyoming Hunger Initiative's fifth anniversary! It feels simultaneously like a lifetime away and the blink of an eye. I'm constantly amazed at what we've been able to accomplish in the last five years; we've built programs, allocated hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight hunger, built networks and relationships that enable more effective problem-solving, all while supporting the work of scores of anti-hunger organizations across the state. It wasn't so long ago that I was surprised to learn how many of our Wyoming communities experience high rates of food insecurity, but once you know the facts it's impossible to ignore the search for solutions.



Wyoming Hunger Initiative prides itself on being uniquely positioned to provide the framework and foundation for successful collaborations and solutions to hunger statewide. After a series of conversations with partners at local Wyoming Hunger Initiative Regional Summits, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation came forward with a plan this year to support and address the needs that were identified but lacked sources of funding to include utilities, rent, marketing, internships, communications, storage, and accounting assistance to name a few. The Flexible Funding dollars were intended to address one-time or extra costs or expenses facing the organizations.

After a successful pilot during the 2023 spring semester, *Beef for Backpacks* was launched statewide for the 2023-2024 school year. Thanks to the support of so many, Wyoming Hunger Initiative was able to provide over 250,000 beef sticks to weekend food bag programs statewide which directly benefited the 6,796 kids in Wyoming participating in weekend food bag program. This program was made possible thanks to 307 Meat Company, Wyoming Stock Growers Association, and the Wyoming Beef Council.

I am most proud of the partnerships we've built to develop Wyoming solutions to Wyoming challenges. Five years ago, I invited everyone in Wyoming to join me with their time, generosity, and innovative thinking to solve hunger in Wyoming. I never could have imagined the overwhelming response. It gives me hope that with each passing year, we'll grow closer to our goal of solving hunger once and for all.

Approximately 83,000 Wyoming residents struggle with food insecurity. Nearly 28,000 of those are children. Wyoming Hunger Initiative stands ready to support the grassroots efforts of every Wyoming county. **Together, we can do so much more. Take a look for yourself.**

Thank you for joining the fight.



Let's share the bounty of Wyoming with those who need it most. Hunt, Donate, Nourish.

Hunting is more than a tradition in Wyoming. It's a sustainable solution. *Food from the Field* brings hunters and participating partners together to safely and efficiently streamline donations of game to distribute to local families in need.



### PARTICIPATING PROCESSORS

Star Valley Meat Block,  
Thayne

Dan's Meat Processing,  
Evansville

Paintrock Processing,  
Hyattville

Riverton Packing, Riverton

Wapiti Valley Meats, Wapiti

K bar J Meats, Burns

Home on the Range Meat  
Processing, Cheyenne

Salt River Meat Co., Afton  
Koehlers, Gillette

Chug Springs Butchery,  
Chugwater

Tom's Wild Game Processing  
LLC, Douglas



Food from the Field partners come together once a year—including processors, Wyoming Game & Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and Wyoming Hunger Initiative Regional Directors—to ensure success of the program for years to come.

**925** animals have been donated for processing since the program was launched in 2020.

That translates to **54,570** pounds of meat providing **200,000** meals.



## FAIR TO FORK

Think a hog can't change the world? Think again.

You're never too young to join the fight against food insecurity.

Sources of high-quality protein are notoriously expensive and difficult to procure for local food pantries.

In partnership with University of Wyoming Extension 4-H, FFA, and the Hughes Charitable Foundation, *Fair to Fork* worked to purchase a non-livestock sale hog through a lottery selection, from almost every county in Wyoming. Wyoming Hunger Initiative will purchase the pig, ensure the meat is processed by a USDA or state-inspected participating facility, and then coordinate with the 4-H or FFA member to donate it to a local anti-hunger organization in the county or origin.



## 2024 FAIR TO FORK PARTICIPANTS

- Sierra Widenborg, Albany
- Makayla Workman, Big Horn
- Gemma Hagen, Campbell
- Taylor Faddis-Meyer, Carbon
- Max Dixon, Crook
- Carsen Simon, Fremont
- Rico Ramirez, Goshen
- Jay Ritchey, Hot Springs
- Tate Bassett, Johnson
- Brysen Walls, Laramie
- Leila Titensor, Lincoln
- Nathan Danford, Natrona
- Miranda Smith, Niobrara
- Blake Besslier, Park
- Kendra Bauder, Platte
- Natalie Opitz, Sheridan
- Dawson Benard, Sweetwater
- Sebastian Smits, Teton
- Mazen Morrill, Uinta
- Zane Lentsch, Washakie
- Julie Morris, Weston

**21:** Number of hogs donated by the 2024 participants, to 22 anti-hunger organizations.





## BEEF FOR BACKPACKS

Providing high-quality, locally raised protein—in a portable form to kids—is a Wyoming solution to hunger.

- This program, made possible through strong partnerships, utilizes Wyoming resources to support the work of weekend food programs, making a real impact for children.
- Wyoming Hunger Initiative provided over 250,000 snack sticks through *Beef for Backpacks* in the first year.
- After a successful pilot in Laramie County, *Beef for Backpacks* was expanded statewide to meet the needs of programs in almost every Wyoming county.



Thanks to a partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming, Wyoming Hunger Initiative was able to bring the *Beef for Backpacks* story to life this year in a video that showcases the impact of high-quality protein on school kids throughout Wyoming.

Scan the code with your phone camera to watch the video.



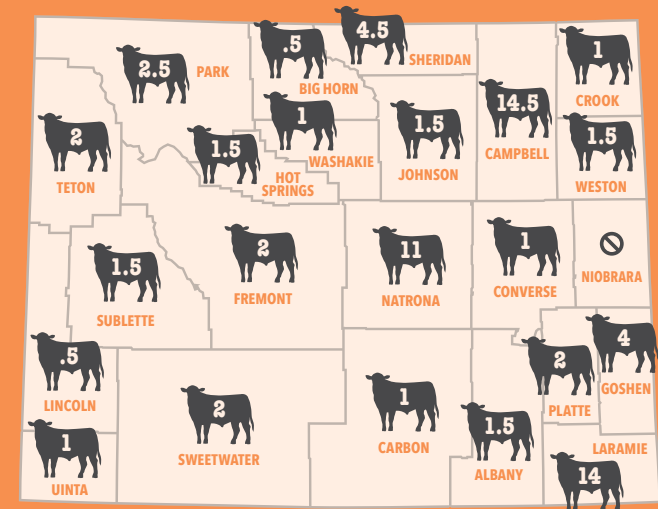
**YIELDS**  
**2,880**  
 beef snack stick packages  
**SERVING**  
**80** kids  
 for **36** weeks

## Wyoming's BEEF Needs



*Beef for Backpacks*

## Breakdown by County



⊖ = Doesn't have a weekend food bag program **10/29/24 UPDATE**

## BEEF Participating Programs

Albany	1.5	ACSD #1 Backpack Program
Big Horn	.5	Totes of Hope - Basin
Campbell	14.5	Blessings in a Backpack
Carbon	1	Boys & Girls Club of Carbon County Totes of Hope
Converse	2.5	Boys & Girls Club of Douglas TOH
Crook	1	Sundance BIB, Hulett BIB, Moorcroft BIB
Fremont	2.5	Friday BP, Shoshoni BP, Wyoming Indian Elementary School
Goshen	4	Torrington Middle School Totes of Hope
Hot Springs	1.5	People for People Backpack Program
Johnson	1.5	Johnson County Friends Feeding Friends
Laramie	14	Friday Food Bag Foundation
Lincoln	.5	Lincoln County School District #2 Education Foundation
Natrona	11	Wyoming Food for Thought Project
Park	2.5	Food 4 Kids, Backpack Blessings of Powell
Platte	2	Food 4 Weekends, Guernsey Totes of Hope
Sheridan	4.5	The Food Group, Inc.
Sublette	1.5	Community Bak-Pak Program
Sweetwater	1.5	Weekend BP, Food Bank of Sweetwater Cnty TOH
Teton	2	Hole Food Rescue
Uinta	1	Mountain View and Lyman Backpack Program
Washakie	1	Washakie County School District #1, Blessings in a Backpack
Weston	1.5	Newcastle Totes of Hope

TOH = Totes of Hope | BIB = Blessings in a Backpack | BP = Backpack Program  
 Don't see your county listed? Contact your local weekend food bag program to get started.



## LIVESTOCK DONATIONS

Quality product, local solutions. That's the Wyoming way.

*Food from the Farm + Ranch* was created to utilize Wyoming agricultural products to combat food insecurity. Fresh food and sources of high-quality protein are notoriously expensive and difficult to procure for the American food bank system. Wyoming is a state of plenty, and agricultural solutions are a key element to reducing and eliminating hunger.

- Wyoming Hunger Initiative works with Wyoming Stock Growers Association to streamline donations that are in turn processed and distributed through the Wyoming Hunger Initiative regional network.
- Wyoming Hunger Initiative's regional framework is uniquely positioned to understand the need within their regions and distributes this high-quality protein based on that knowledge or per the donors request.
- Wyoming Hunger Initiative is positioned to cover the cost of processing thanks to the generosity of a multitude of donors; alternately, a donor may choose to pay for the processing before donating to Wyoming Hunger Initiative.



**150,000:** Number of pounds of fresh and local protein distributed to anti-hunger organizations throughout Wyoming, since *Food from the Farm + Ranch* was launched in 2020.

# GROW A LITTLE EXTRA

WYOMING HUNGER INITIATIVE

They say gardening feeds the soul. It can also feed neighbors in need.

Increased access to fresh produce in Wyoming is a critical tool in the fight against food insecurity. *Grow a Little Extra* is helping to remove existing barriers one vegetable at a time.

This partnership between **University of Wyoming Extension, Cent\$ible Nutrition Program**, and the **Master Gardener** program was made possible in large part due to the generosity of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming.

You don't need special training in fighting food insecurity to make a difference. You only need to identify a need and figure out how best to help fill it. Food insecurity isn't always readily apparent, but every single Wyoming county has an army of anti-hunger heroes who are always ready to welcome new warriors to the fight. Consider this your invitation to get involved. Together, we can end hunger in Wyoming.



In 2024, **44,616** pounds of produce was donated and 29 grants were distributed, totaling **\$27,388.**



Anti-hunger warriors are making a difference, one need at a time.

Wyoming Hunger Initiative grants are intended to support infrastructure and longevity of antihunger organizations as well as long-term, sustainable solutions to food insecurity across the state.

For the fourth year, Wyoming Hunger Initiative sold “Hearts for Hunger” during the month of February for \$5 each, proving that no matter the size of the donation, every dollar makes a difference. All funds raised were put towards infrastructure grants.

Grant funding also comes from the Wyoming Hunger Initiative Hunger *Champions Circle*, which is a team of dedicated ambassadors who serve as catalysts in the ongoing mission to end food insecurity in Wyoming.



\$207,022

was distributed to 57 applicants through Infrastructure Grants in FY2024

**Albany:** Laramie Interfaith; Laramie Connections; Laramie Soup Kitchen

**Big Horn:** LIE Totes of Hope; Lovell United Methodist Church

**Campbell:** Edible Prairie Project; Gillette Salvation Army; Wright Community Assistance

**Converse:** Boys & Girls Club of Douglas

**Fremont:** First Stop Help Center; Good Samaritan Community Meal; Pushroot Community Garden; Shoshoni Senior Center; The Soldier's House

**Goshen:** Eastern Wyoming College Food Pantry

**Hot Springs:** People for People Backpack Program; People for People Community Meal

**Johnson:** Johnson County Friends Feeding Friends; St. Luke's Episcopal Church

**Laramie:** Boys & Girls Club of Cheyenne; COMEA, Inc.; Element Church Food Pantry; Friday Food Bag Foundation; Needs Inc.; True Vine Community Church

**Lincoln:** Afton Food Pantry; Alpine Food Bank; Thayne Community Food Bank

**Natrona:** Alcova Community Food Pantry; Casper First Church of the Nazarene; Casper Youth for Christ; Cent\$ible Nutrition Program; City Park Church; Feed307; Helping Hands Community Services; Kind Grounds; Wyoming Food for Thought Project

**Niobrara:** Niobrara County Senior Center

**Park:** Backpack Blessings of Powell; Cody Council on Aging; Mannahouse Food Pantry; Powell Senior Citizens

**Sheridan:** Rooted in Wyoming; Sheridan Salvation Army; Senior Citizens Council, The Hub; The Food Group, Inc.

**Sublette:** Pinedale Community Food Basket; The Community BakPak Program

**Sweetwater:** Boys & Girls Club of Sweetwater County; Food Bank of Sweetwater County

**Teton:** Good Samaritan Mission; One22 Resource Center

**Washakie:** Washakie County Conservation District; Washakie County Ministerial Association

**Wind River Reservation:** Wind River Food Sovereignty Project; Wyoming Indian Elementary

Matching funds provided by  
Pace Family Foundation





# Hunger Champions Circle

WYOMING HUNGER INITIATIVE

One heart, one mission, one goal.

Wyoming Hunger Initiative's *Hunger Champions* are a team of dedicated ambassadors who serve as catalysts in our ongoing mission to end food insecurity in Wyoming. The financial commitment required to join the *Hunger Champions Circle* provides ongoing support for our mission by funding infrastructure grants; the power of even a small amount of funding to exponentially grow a nonprofit's mission and reach is a powerful testament to the good that can be done when we come together to tackle challenges.

Wyoming Hunger Initiative hosted the annual *Hunger Champions Circle* appreciation event September 6th and 7th with dinner on Friday night at the Governor's Residence and a Cowboy Football game on Saturday. When like-minded folks get together, there is no telling what the future will hold when it comes to food insecurity in Wyoming.

## 2024 HUNGER CHAMPIONS

Bruce and Diane Asay  
Erin Asay and Austin Johnson  
Paul and Carla Bankes  
Dave Berry and Anne Hanson  
Chuck and Katie Brown  
John Brown and Nancy Bomberger  
Jay and Linda Butler  
Tom and Kathy Creager  
Brad and Jan Cundy  
Jonathan Downing  
Scott and Megan Fox

Paul and Heather Frauendienst  
Kiel and Kristin Harding  
Rob and Leslie Hendry  
Paul and Beth Howard  
Dan and Lynn Kirkbride  
Steve and Kathy Lenz  
Sherri Lovercheck  
Mike and Emily McGrady  
John and Kathleen McKinley  
Travis and Danielle McNiven  
Brian and Penny Nesvik

Dr. Larry Meuli  
Anne Pendergast  
Torey and Kristi Racines  
Dr. Barbara Rasco and Dr. Gleyln Bledsoe  
Doug and Susan Samuelson  
Scott and Nancy Scheffey  
Ryta Sondergard  
Bill and Barbara Stafford  
Fred and Susie von Ahrens



## It's time to rethink the narrative about school meal debt.

When communities come together, big things happen!

- Wyoming Hunger Initiative joined 16 businesses in Cheyenne who came together to donate a portion of their sales or made a flat contribution to put towards reducing school meal debt in Laramie County School District #1. The result? \$10,000 available for the district to apply towards outstanding school meal balances. This is a Wyoming solution to a Wyoming challenge.
- Wyoming Association of Student Councils joined forces in 2024 to work to alleviate school meal debt in their communities. They raised funds and received a match through Wyoming Hunger Initiative to stretch their dollars that much further.
- Check out the new program logo!

**\$50,169:** Amount of *other* school debt paid off in 2024.



## WYOMING GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board has been hard at work in 2024 to ensure the success of Wyoming Hunger Initiative for years to come.

Some of their 2024 accomplishments include:

- Expressed their appreciation to Annemarie McCracken Picard for leading the charge for the last four years and welcomed a new board chair, Susan Samuelson;
- Celebrated Beef for Backpacks with donors, supporters, and partners in the form of a press conference with an emphasis on sharing this Wyoming story nation-wide;
- Launched, implemented, and evaluated a "flexible funding" grant intended to address one-time or extra costs or expenses facing organizations in collaboration with the John P. Ellbogen Foundation;
- Planned and executed four regional summits in Cheyenne, Lander, Afton, and Cody to bring folks together who are working in this space.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennie Gordon  
FIRST LADY OF WYOMING  
Susan Samuelson  
BOARD CHAIR  
Laurie Box  
TREASURER  
Kathryn Boswell  
SECRETARY

Diane Asay  
Katie Brown  
Paty Gierau  
Alfrieda Gonzales  
Lynn Kirkbride  
Ashlee Lundvall

Annemarie McCracken Picard  
Danielle McNiven  
JoAnn Skeim-True  
Susie von Ahrens  
Deb Wendtland



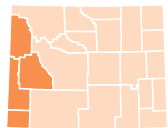
**Downtown at the Cheyenne Frontier Days parade**

*Left to right:* Deanna Trumble, Greta Spencer, Tim Sheppard, Debbie Kelly, Sierra Mitchell, and Breean Waller

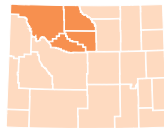
## WYOMING HUNGER INITIATIVE REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Boots on the ground.

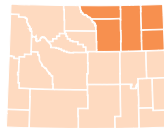
Regional Directors were identified in each of the six regions to network individuals and organizations but also to create a platform for communication where food insecurity can be solved as a state, together! Regional Directors live and work in the regions they serve, but they also travel to represent Wyoming Hunger Initiative throughout their regions and across the state. This work would not be possible without our “boots on the ground.”



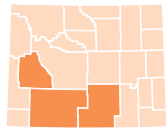
**West**  
**Sierra Mitchell**  
Lincoln, Sublette, Teton, Uinta



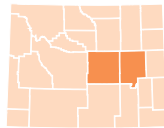
**North**  
**Debbie Kelly**  
Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, Washakie



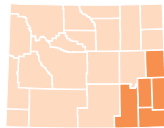
**Northeast**  
**Breean Waller**  
Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, Weston



**Central West**  
**Deanna Trumble**  
Carbon, Fremont, Sweetwater



**Central**  
**Greta Spencer**  
Converse, Natrona



**Southeast**  
**Tim Sheppard**  
Albany, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, Platte

## REGIONAL SUMMITS

Through the relationships that have been developed across the state specific to food insecurity, Wyoming Hunger Initiative has identified partners in every community. Thanks to a grant from the Hughes Charitable Foundation, Wyoming Hunger Initiative was able to host its remaining four Regional Summits in Cheyenne, Lander, Afton, and Cody this year to bring folks together who are working in this space.

The result? A whole lot of networking, sharing of resources, and collaboration that will lead these anti-hunger organizations forward together while also producing realistic action items that are already underway.

Each event includes a volunteer recognition celebration where anti-hunger organizations nominated a volunteer from their organization to be recognized.

It is safe to say that this group is “all in” when it comes to fighting food insecurity in Wyoming. We look forward to the continued collaboration and the work that will take place in the coming year thanks to the passion and commitment of these organizations.



## CAMPAIGNS: PARTNERSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS!

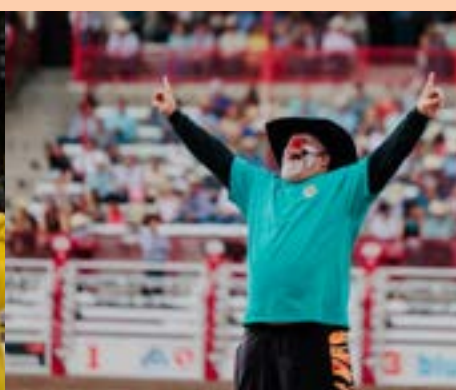
Without them, innovative approaches would simply not be possible and numerous campaigns would falter.

- Wyoming Hunger Initiative is committed to providing ways for everyone in Wyoming to join the fight against food insecurity.
- Partnerships shine a light on the too-often invisible problem of hunger.
- We know that together, we can end hunger in Wyoming.

The results of these collaborative efforts is presented **by the numbers** on pages 22 and 23.

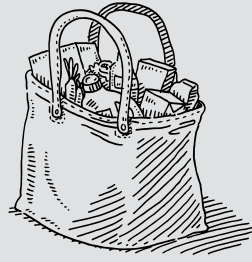
**“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”**

CORETTA SCOTT KING



**\$85,000** distributed in the form of pantry replenishment thanks to the **John P. Ellbogen Foundation**.

Pantries are experiencing higher numbers of visits than normal and are struggling to keep fresh items available for distribution.



**\$70,000** was allocated to organizations providing **Christmas meals** this year.



**11 animals** were donated to *Food from the Field* at the **2024 Wyoming Women's Antelope Hunt**.



alexis drake

**187 Alexis Drake**

**scarves** were sold with 20% of the proceeds benefiting Wyoming Hunger Initiative.



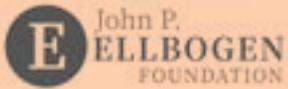
**\$12,000** was donated through **Fun Bizz Concessions** as a result of corn dogs sold on Wyoming Hunger Initiative Day at Cheyenne Frontier Days.

**\$71,975** was raised in the 24 hour period of fundraising on **WyoGives Day** in July from 85 individual donors.



**21,800 lbs of food** was donated for the **Tackle Hunger** food drive through BCBSWY Member Centers and Ridley's Family Markets, over 42,000 pounds donated since this partnership began.

**\$118,400** was distributed in the form of **flexible funding grants**, intended to address one-time or extra, costs or expenses, faced by anti-hunger organizations.



**\$70,000** was allocated for **Project Thankful Wyoming** to provide resources for organizations providing Thanksgiving meals.



**\$30,000** was distributed in the form of food cards in partnership with the **Wyoming Veterans Commission** to provide access to food to veterans and their families; **\$6,213** was distributed to the UW Veterans service program.



**3,038 hearts** sold during **#heartsforhunger** in 2024; matching donations from BCBSWY and others.

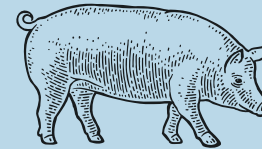


Over **\$50,000** was distributed to **Shop with a Cop** programs across the state to provide a meal basket component.

**57 Hunger Champions** served as ambassadors for Wyoming Hunger Initiative and fought food insecurity helping to log a record year for grant allocation.



**21 participants** donated hogs in the third year of the **Fair to Fork** program, to 22 anti-hunger organizations.



*Wyoming*  
**TOGETHER**



## DONORS

Every dollar makes a difference in the fight against food insecurity in Wyoming.

Our ability to make an impact is directly linked to the generosity of our partners. Wyoming Hunger Initiative understands the importance of stewarding funds donated for community-based anti-hunger efforts; these funds allow local organizations to strengthen their community's safety net in the present and create stronger communities in the future.

We are committed to working with our partners to ensure their donations achieve the largest possible impact while cultivating sustainable solutions.

Thanks for joining the fight!



Pace Family Foundation

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Cheyenne

The Salary of Governor Mark Gordon

Nourishing Neighbors

Dan and Cynthia Starks – National Museum of Military Vehicles

Wyoming Downs

Farm Credit Services of America

Northrop Grumman

Enbridge

Cigna

Camerahead Media

*A special thanks to ALL who supported Wyoming Hunger Initiative in 2024*

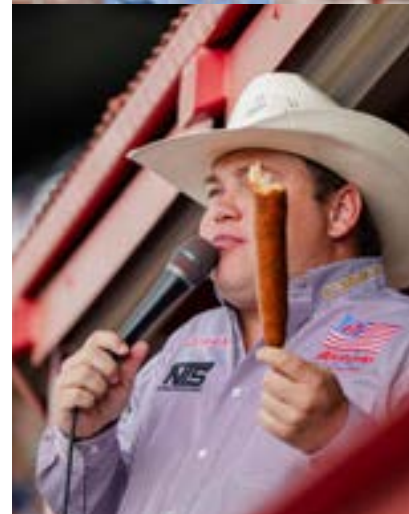
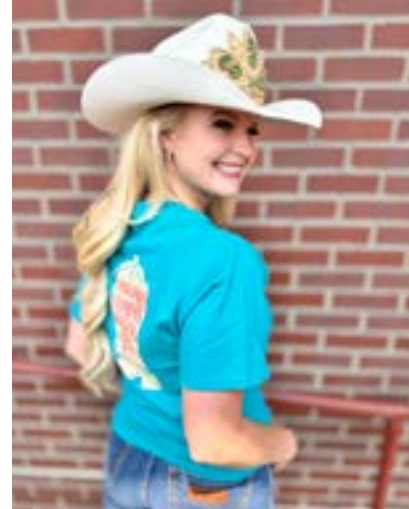
## SETTING GOALS FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

If we've learned anything in the last five years, it's that there's a real need for the work Wyoming Hunger Initiative is doing.

What's more is that we know Wyoming Hunger Initiative needs to continue to exist.

Take a look at our driving strategy and goals for 2025:

- Execute the separation of Wyoming Hunger Initiative from the Wyoming Governor's Residence Foundation to include hiring an Executive Director and building an endowment that will support this work for years to come;
- Partner with local efforts to analyze and utilize the statewide "needs assessment" to identify gaps in services and opportunities for Wyoming Hunger Initiative to develop Wyoming solutions to Wyoming challenges;
- Collaborate with local and statewide partners to identify solutions to school meal debt while also working to develop strategic approaches to ensuring summer meal sites are available for children in all 23 Wyoming counties;
- Develop a statewide day of volunteering to serve as an introduction to local anti-hunger organizations while raising awareness and bringing significant support to these grassroots organizations.





**WYOMING HUNGER INITIATIVE**

5001 Central Avenue | Cheyenne, WY 82009 | (307) 777-7398

[nohungerwyo.org](http://nohungerwyo.org)