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We save rivers.

**To:** DuPage County Board

**From:** The Conservation Foundation

### **Request for funding for Farm to Pantry Initiative**

We are requesting funds to expand the Farm to Pantry Initiative by **60 percent** to serve residents in **each of the six DuPage County Districts**, increasing the volume of farm-fresh vegetables reaching those facing food insecurity. Additionally, we are requesting funds to purchase a new refrigerated delivery van to reduce barriers to pantries for receiving fresh vegetables and expand capacity of temperature controlled growing space to extend length of time food can be provided to food pantries.

### **Funds Requested For:**

- **\$80,000/year - \$160,000 total** to provide approximately **800 units (~22,000 pounds)** of truly fresh, pantry-preferred, culturally-familiar vegetables per week during our twenty-week season (mid-June through early November) to pantries serving approximately **5,800 residents** across all six DuPage County districts.
- **\$6,000/year - \$12,000 total** for supplies needed to increase vegetable production by 60% and expand refrigerated storage capacity.
- **\$90,000 in 2026** – New refrigerated delivery van to provide delivery to food pantries across DuPage County.
- **\$60,000 in 2027** – Purchase, construct and run utilities for new greenhouse. This temperature-controlled space would provide an additional **2–4 weeks** of produce in future years.
- **Total over 2 years - \$322,000**

### **Background:**

#### **Farm to Pantry Initiative**

The support from DuPage County over the past three years through ARPA and MIP has enabled The Conservation Foundation to launch a reliable, impactful, and highly successful Farm to Pantry Initiative for our neighbors facing food insecurity. Through this partnership, we have helped address the fresh food gap across DuPage County by providing consistent access to fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables to our pantry partners.

### **To date, our DuPage County Farm to Pantry Initiative has:**

- **Provided 10,800 DuPage County residents** with access to truly fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables distributed through local food pantries over the past three growing seasons.
- **Provided over 49,000 pounds** of just-harvested vegetables to pantry partners' clients.
- **Partnered closely with each pantry** to identify the most needed and culturally familiar vegetables for their communities, allowing families to prepare nutritious, familiar meals while supporting pantries in meeting their goals of offering the healthiest food options possible.
- **Ensured rapid distribution**, with pantry clients receiving farm-fresh vegetables within 2–3 days of harvest. Fresh, appealing produce is significantly more likely to be selected, taken home, and consumed—especially by children.