



State of Nevada  
Governor's  
Council on Food  
Security

2018

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**Annual Report**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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Executive Summary .....	1
Background .....	2
Accomplishments.....	3
LEAD .....	3
FEED.....	4
DATA.....	5
Future Focus.....	5
Members: Nevada Governor’s Council on Food Security.....	6

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of adequate food.<sup>1</sup> While Nevada has been experiencing a significant decrease in food insecurity, about one (1) in eight (8) Nevada households and one (1) in six (6) children do not know from where or when they will get their next meal.<sup>2,3</sup> Food insecurity is a significant public health concern associated with adverse health outcomes and a poor quality of life, including chronic diseases and mental health issues.<sup>4,5</sup> In addition, food insecure individuals often lack access to nutrition-dense foods, limiting their ability to maintain healthy eating behaviors and manage their chronic disease(s).

To address food insecurity throughout Nevada, Governor Brian Sandoval issued Executive Order 2014-03 on February 12, 2014, establishing the Governor's Council on Food Security (GCFS). The GCFS is tasked with implementing the goals of *Food Security in Nevada: Nevada's Plan for Action* (i.e., The Food Security Plan) and effectively improving the quality of life and health of Nevadans by increasing food security throughout the State.<sup>6</sup>

Tremendous progress has been made on the Food Security Plan this year, due to the dedication of various state and local agencies committed to eliminating food insecurity in Nevada. Since its inception, the GCFS has focused efforts on promoting and supporting policies addressing food insecurity and its determinants and working to increase participation in federal nutrition programs. In 2018, the GCFS Policy Subcommittee supported the GCFS in this effort, proposing a menu of policies which will be supported in the 2019 Nevada Legislative Session, or carried out administratively throughout the upcoming year.

In addition, the GCFS continued to act as a platform for stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Per policy recommendations outlined in the *Nutrition Programs for Older Nevadans and Preliminary Recommendations*, and as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee, the GCFS is working with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Community Partnerships and Grants to increase priorities alignment regarding the food-security specific amounts of the Fund for a Healthy Nevada (FHN).

To close out the year, the Office of Food Security (OFS) coordinated a statewide Food Security Summit in November 2018 intended to increase collaboration and connectivity among cross-sectional stakeholders throughout the food security network. The Food Security Summit aimed to create a mechanism and an action plan to enhance communication and engagement and to leverage existing efforts to support GCFS priorities and the Food Security Plan.

This report outlines the background of the GCFS and 2018 accomplishments.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/84973/err-237.pdf?v=42979>

<sup>3</sup> Office of Public Health and Epidemiology. Division of Public and Behavioral Health. Food Insecurity in Nevada 2013 -2015: A Review of Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance Survey (YRBS) and Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS). Carson City, Nevada. August 2016. E 1.0.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/84467/err-235.pdf?v=42942>

<sup>5</sup> <http://jn.nutrition.org/content/145/3/622.full>

<sup>6</sup> [http://dphh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dphhnavgov/content/Programs/GCFS/dta/Publications/2018\\_Food\\_Security\\_Work\\_Plan\(1\).pdf](http://dphh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dphhnavgov/content/Programs/GCFS/dta/Publications/2018_Food_Security_Work_Plan(1).pdf)

## BACKGROUND

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In 2012, a community needs assessment was conducted by the DHHS Office of Community Partnerships and Grants (OCPG). The assessment identified food insecurity as a priority public health issue for Nevada. At the time, one (1) in six (6) Nevada households were food insecure. In 2013, an initial food security summit, "A Place at the Table," was held which engaged statewide stakeholders in a conversation about hunger issues in Nevada. This event resulted in significant input from 165 participants and representatives on food systems, food security, and healthy communities. In 2013 the OCPG also implemented a strategic planning process to address food insecurity in Nevada. Four (4) workgroups were created to address specific components of food insecurity: LEAD, FEED, GROW, and REACH. Goals and activities were developed under each component, comprising the original Food Security Plan.

Following the completion of the Food Security Plan, Governor Brian Sandoval issued Executive Order 2014-03 on February 12, 2014, establishing the GCFS to implement the goals of the Food Security Plan and effectively improve the quality of life and health of Nevadans by increasing food security throughout the State. The GCFS consists of 21 members including leaders from government agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. Kathleen Sandoval was appointed as the first Chair and provided the GCFS leadership and vision the first four (4) years. In September 2017, Steve Fisher, Administrator of the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS), was appointed Chair.

In 2017, the GCFS worked to update and revise the [Food Security Plan](#) to ensure objectives and activities were measurable and actionable. These revisions were approved at the November 2017 GCFS meeting. Further, in November 2018, the GCFS approved the inclusion of an additional activity focusing on efforts relating to older Nevadans under FEED, Goal 2. The revised themes and objectives are:

### LEAD

- Goal 1: Align and enhance collaboration efforts of state and non-state agencies to strengthen statewide food security strategies.
- Goal 2: Identify and support state and local policies that increase food security in Nevada.

### FEED

- Goal 1: Support strategies that increase participation in state/federal nutrition programs.
- Goal 2: Support client-centered strategies that increase access to nutrition programs and resources that address determinants of hunger.

### GROW

- Goal 1: Support initiatives to strengthen Nevada's food system and increase access to local foods.

### DATA

- Goal 1: Establish evaluation and reporting processes to enhance data collection to drive future strategies and track progress in improving food security in Nevada.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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Throughout 2018, the GCFS focused on LEAD and FEED goals by developing Subcommittees to address specific food security issues; recommending policy development and changes at the State and administrative levels; and enhancing collaboration with the Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) and the Nevada Commission on Aging (CoA).

### LEAD

**2018 Food Security Summit:** Five (5) years after the first Food Security Summit, *A Place at the Table*, the OFS hosted a second Statewide Food Security Summit on November 8, 2018 in Las Vegas. The 2018 Food Security Summit, *Improving Connections and Collaborations*, brought together approximately 50 food security stakeholders to develop an action plan to enhance collaboration and connectivity throughout Nevada's food security network. Steve Fisher, Administrator for the Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services and GCFS Chair welcomed participants and introduced keynotes from Aurora Buffington (University of Nevada Cooperative Extension) and Dorian Stonebarger (Three Square Food Bank).

Lunch was provided, sponsored by Urban Seed Foundation and Carson Kitchen in Las Vegas, and was accompanied by a panel on innovative strategies to address food insecurity. Panelists included representation from statewide partners including the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, James Seastrand Helping Hands of North Vegas, Urban Seed Foundation, and Three Square Food Bank.

Throughout the afternoon attendees participated in a facilitated action planning session with five (5) focus areas: 1) statewide engagement/coordination; 2) service focus; 3) data systems/sharing; 4) funding; and 5) innovation. Following the Summit, the OFS will use post-surveys to develop a final report summarizing the Summit and a Collaboration Recommendations Report which will include the recommendations and action items identified by stakeholders. The Collaboration Recommendations Report will be finalized in Spring 2019 and will be used by the GCFS and OFS to enhance collaboration among food security partners and projects statewide to better meet to shared goals of the Food Security Plan.

**Policy Subcommittee:** During the November 2017 GCFS meeting, in preparation for the 80th Nevada Legislative Session beginning February 2019, members motioned to create a Policy Subcommittee. The GCFS Policy Subcommittee was tasked with developing a menu of policy recommendations to address food insecurity and associated social determinants of health for Nevadans. The Policy Subcommittee met eight (8) times between January and September 2018. During this time, the Subcommittee engaged various community and State representatives to acquire information relating to food security needs in Nevada communities. In addition, the Subcommittee reviewed the recommendations of the National Commission on Hunger Report, *Freedom from Hunger: An Achievable Goal for the United States*, to assess Nevada's status in addressing these goals at the state level, and considered policy recommendations outlined in the 2017 report, *Nutrition Programs for Older Nevadans and Preliminary Recommendations*.

The [Policy Subcommittee Policy Recommendations](#) were presented for member consideration and finalized at the November 2018 GCFS meeting. Of the nine (9) policies proposed, three (3) would require action by the Nevada Legislature:

1. Establish the GCFS as a permanent advisory committee, board, or commission in Nevada;
2. Increase meal reimbursement rates to create parity between child and senior meal programs (including both congregate and home delivered meals); and
3. Establish a Food Rescue State Goal Bill.

The GCFS voted in support of these policies as effective strategies for addressing food insecurity in Nevada. To support these policies, a [2018 State Policy Recommendations Executive Summary](#) was developed. The Executive Summary provides an overview of the data and influencing factors considered while developing these policy recommendations and will be shared with stakeholders who participated in the Subcommittee and as appropriate.

**Technology Subcommittee:** At the September 2018 meeting, the Policy Subcommittee motioned to recommend Chair Fisher create a Technology Subcommittee to address FEED Goal 2.2: "Support the use of a shared client database among community partners." The Technology Subcommittee is therefore tasked with the following objectives:

- 1) Learn about client database systems and national best practices, as well as the perspective of statewide agencies on technology use.
- 2) Identify a conduit and develop a reporting process for the frequency of statewide partner/program data collection.
- 3) Create a database systems/add-ons table or decision tree.

The Technology Subcommittee held an initial meeting in November 2018 and will meet a minimum of three (3) additional times throughout 2019.

## **FEED**

**Technology Subcommittee:** See summary above.

**OCPG Collaboration:** Throughout 2018, the GCFS, OFS, and OCPG worked to enhance collaboration between GCFS and GMAC, including alignment of the Funds for a Healthy Nevada (FHN) food security awards with GCFS priorities. At the September 2018 GMAC meeting, GCFS member Sarah Adler presented the Food Security Plan and GCFS priorities as identified by the GCFS Policy Subcommittee.

The current GCFS priorities are focused on two (2) Food Security Plan activities, specifically LEAD Goal 2: "Identify and support state and local policies that increase food security in Nevada;" and FEED Goal 1: "Support strategies that increase participation in state/federal nutrition programs." In addition, the GCFS recommended dual representation between the GMAC and GCFS; GMAC members agreed.

**DATA**

At the November 2018 meeting, the GCFS motioned the creation of a Research and Analysis Subcommittee. The Research and Analysis Subcommittee will convene once the Technology Subcommittee has achieved their goals.

**FUTURE FOCUS**

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Throughout 2019, the GCFS will meet at least six (6) times to discuss issues regarding food insecurity and associated social determinants. The GCFS and OFS will continue implementing strategies related to the revised Food Security Plan, as well as support food security-related policies throughout the 2019 Legislative Session.

In addition, the GCFS and OFS will continue work to enhance collaboration and leverage existing initiatives throughout Nevada's food security network. This includes an on-going effort to align nutrition and food security-related priorities among the GCFS, GMAC, and the Nevada CoA. Collaboration between State agencies, public bodies, and local agencies/stakeholders is a focus of the Food Security Plan. Collaboration efforts have been prioritized to strengthen initiatives and ensure a unified approach to achieving common goals in addressing food insecurity among Nevada families and older people.

## MEMBERS: NEVADA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON FOOD SECURITY

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**Steve Fisher, Chair**

Administrator  
Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

**Christy McGill, Vice Chair**

Director of Safe and Respective Learning  
Nevada Department of Education

**Amy Hill**

Senior Director, Public Affairs  
Walmart Government Relations

**Amber Bosket**

Executive Director  
State Renewable Energy

**Anmarie Feiler**

Executive Director  
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**Aurora Buffington, PhD, RDN, LD**

Public Health Nutrition Specialist  
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

**Gillian Barclay, DDS, MPH, DrPH**

Healthcare Industry Specialist  
Nevada Governor's Office of Economic  
Development

**Homa Anoooshehpoor, PhD**

Administrator  
Food and Nutrition Division  
Nevada Department of Agriculture

**Cherie Jamason**

Director of Ending Hunger Initiatives  
Food Bank of Northern Nevada

**Chuck Duarte**

Chief Executive Officer  
Community Health Alliance

**Deacon Tom Roberts**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada

**Jerri Williams-Conrad**

Interim Director  
Nevada Department of Agriculture

**Jodi Tyson, MPH**

Vice President of Strategic Initiatives  
Three Square Food Bank

**Julie Kotchevar, PhD**

Administrator  
Division of Public and Behavioral Health

**Kenneth Osgood, MD, MPH**

Public Health Advisory Board  
Southern Nevada Health District

**Robert Thompson**

Deputy Administrator  
Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

**Sarah Adler**

Healthy Communities Coalition of Lyon and  
Storey Counties

**Marcia Blake**

Executive Director  
James Seastrand Helping Hands of North Las  
Vegas

**Robert Medeiros**

Chief Executive Officer  
Boomtown Casino Hotel and Reserve Casino  
Hotel

**Vacant**

Western Regional Director of the United States  
Department of Agriculture or designee

**Vacant**

Member representing food processing or  
distribution