



# Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank



**Gathering Neighbor Feedback**

September 2026

# Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of gathering feedback from the neighbors you serve
- Learn different ways to gather neighbor feedback
- Learn how to use findings to inform your operations and close feedback loops with neighbors



**“At the heart of everything we do are our neighbors, who remind us why this work matters. Their resilience drives our mission forward, and their voices shape how we show up every day.”**  
**- Feeding America**

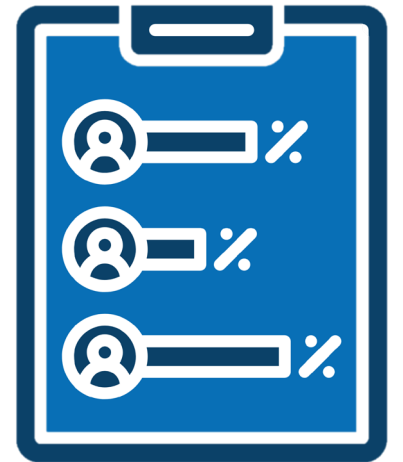


# Surveys

**Goal:** To collect data that you can quantify to understand trends, beliefs, or experiences within a given population

## Tips:

- Have specific goals for the survey
- Create questions that will answer your goal
- Only ask questions that you're willing & capable to act on
- Write questions that are easy to understand & are in logical order
- Keep it short
- Share the purpose & how results will be used

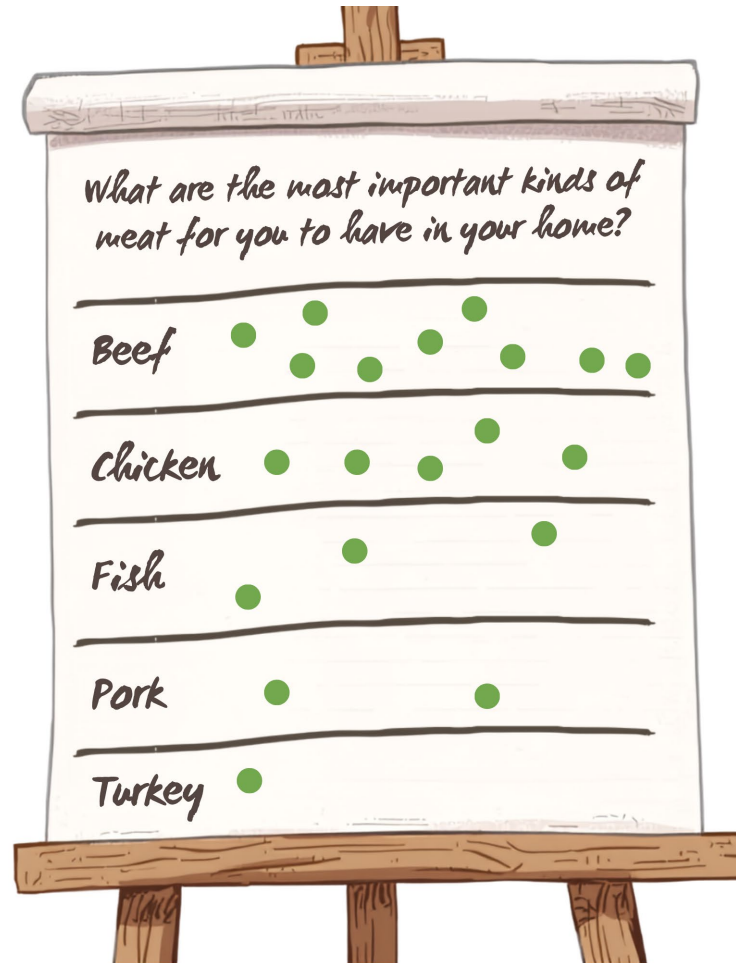


# Examples of Gathering Feedback

What are the most important kinds of grains for you to have in your home?

Please check all that apply.

- a. Barley
- b. Brown rice
- c. Bulgur
- d. Couscous
- e. Jasmine rice
- f. Millet
- g. Oats
- h. Pasta
- i. Red rice
- j. White rice
- k. Whole grain pasta
- l. Other: \_\_\_\_\_



This pantry has food that my household likes to eat.

| Strongly disagree     | Disagree              | Agree                 | Strongly agree        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

# Community Listening Sessions

**Goal:** To better understand a topic by hearing directly from a given population about their feedback & experiences in an open discussion

## Tips:

- 8-10 people per group
- Create 5-10 discussion questions that will answer your goal
- Ask open-ended questions
- Create a facilitator guide to use during sessions
- Consider logistics to support neighbors attendance
- Ideal session length is 60 minutes
- Conduct multiple sessions so you hear a variety of perspectives



# What's Next

- Review data from surveys, notes from community listening sessions, etc. to see what you heard
- Use these findings to inform your work & make plans to act on what you heard



# We Heard You,

## Here's what we're doing about it

At Connecticut Foodshare, the lived expertise of neighbors helps guide our work. To better understand the local context of communities across the state, we conducted community feedback forums, in English and Spanish, with nearly 60 neighbors in nine communities between March and April 2026, including: Bridgeport, Bristol, Groton, Hartford, Killingly, New Haven, Norwalk, Waterbury, and Winchester.

Here's a glimpse of what we heard and what we're doing about it:

### What we heard:

**Welcoming culture at food assistance programs matters. One negative experience at a program can make it difficult to want to return to that program or visit others.**



### What we're doing about it:

Connecticut Foodshare will continue to provide one-on-one consulting and support to programs, host peer learning sessions for partners to hear from each other (such as webinars, conferences) and use a section of our website to focus on neighbor-centered practices. Some examples of topics: offering choice, welcoming culture, neighbor engagement and feedback, de-escalation, fairness with volunteers, and much more.

### What we heard:

**People prefer programs where they can shop so that they can choose foods that meet their needs and preferences and so that nothing goes to waste.**

### What we're doing about it:

Connecticut Foodshare is working with food pantries to build capacity to expand choice and shopping in their operations and will continue to provide this support. Of the 372 food pantries in the Connecticut Foodshare partner network, most offer full choice (66%).



### What we heard:

**Neighbors offered a variety of ideas on how Connecticut Foodshare could improve awareness of existing food resources to help reach more neighbors.**



### What we're doing about it:

We are exploring strategies to increase awareness of existing food resources across the state and across populations to ensure that neighbors know where they can look to find the information needed to access food assistance.

### What we heard:

**Home delivery would be a useful tool for seniors, neighbors with disabilities or other health considerations, and anyone facing mobility or transportation barriers.**

### What we're doing about it:

Connecticut Foodshare is exploring opportunities to encourage and support food pantries that are interested in piloting and scaling home delivery programs. We have taken steps to better understand the home delivery landscape among food pantries and plan to create tools to support the launch and expansion of such programs.



Thank you to everyone who shared their perspectives and feedback with us during these sessions. The learnings from these sessions will help inform Connecticut Foodshare's programs and operations across Connecticut.

# Gathering Neighbor Feedback

## Agency Partner Panel



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# Activity

- What do you want to learn from the neighbors you serve?
  - Draft at least one question to help answer your goal
- How might you want to collect that information?

Individual  
reflection

Discussion  
in small  
groups

Volunteers  
share with  
full group



# Thank you for joining today!

**Olivia Giusto, MPH**

Strategy & Community Engagement Manager

## Questions?

**Contact our team at:**

**[strategy@ctfoodshare.org](mailto:strategy@ctfoodshare.org)**

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**on social media**  
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