

Myths&Facts



USAID Title II Food for Peace Assistance

MYTH: USAID is trying to take the food out of food aid.

FACT: U.S. commodities have been, and will remain, a core component of Title II Food for Peace programming. In fact, **one of USAID's highest priority Food for Peace Act requests this year is to use more commodities in emergency programming**, where they play a critical role in saving lives. For example, from 2015 to 2022, USAID increased the dollar value of U.S. in-kind commodities purchased through Title II by nearly 150 percent.

MYTH: USAID does not engage with U.S. farmers and producers.

FACT: USAID regularly consults with U.S. farmers, producers, and shipping groups through the Food Aid Consultative Group (FACG). USAID and USDA convene this group, which is codified in the Food for Peace Act, at least twice per year and are required to keep stakeholders apprised of policy changes and relevant developments. Independently of legal requirements, USAID also regularly meets with commodity group representatives to understand their annual yields and supply chains.

MYTH: More commodities will lead to more lives saved.

FACT: Transportation, warehousing, programming, and oversight costs are also vital to saving lives. Establishing a floor for commodity and ocean freight costs that is too high would prevent USAID from getting commodities from U.S. farms to people in need in remote and complex environments like Darfur, Sudan, and ensuring that the right people get aid. One proposal under consideration in Congress designed to increase the amount of commodities shipped overseas would actually result in USAID reaching 2.3 million fewer people at a time when global hunger is rising.

MYTH: Cash assistance comes at the expense of U.S. commodities.

FACT: While USAID does have limited flexibility under the Food for Peace Act, USAID prioritizes Food for Peace funding for U.S. in-kind assistance. Most of USAID's market-based food assistance activities are authorized and appropriated separately from the Food for Peace Act and the Farm Bill. Because these funding streams are authorized and appropriated separately from each other, they do not have a direct relationship to each other. **Using food vouchers or electronic transfers from other funding does not come at the expense of U.S. in-kind commodity programs under Food for Peace.** Both types of assistance are critical to meeting food needs around the world.

MYTH: Requiring USDA consultation for food aid programs would streamline assistance.

FACT: USAID is the designated federal lead for international disaster response because of the agency's six decades of hard-earned experience in humanitarian emergencies, global presence, and critical partnerships. USAID works collaboratively and effectively with USDA to ensure the right commodities are bought from American farmers and delivered to vulnerable communities who need them the most. Upending this successful partnership would impact program quality and efficiency and delay commodities from reaching people in the greatest need.

MYTH: USAID uses Title II assistance to purchase adversaries' commodities.

FACT: In FY23, USAID purchased approximately 99.9% of Title II commodities from the U.S. In the rare cases where a partner needs to use local procurement—such as shipping or other supply chain delays—USAID requires partners to buy from a list of lower or lower-middle income countries, with a preference for the countries located near the crisis. This ensures we are not purchasing food from U.S. competitors like Russia and China.

MYTH: USAID purchases and ships less than 100,000 metric tons of food from the United States annually.

FACT: In FY23, USAID purchased and shipped more than 1.1 million metric tons of food from the United States reaching 45 million people in 35 different countries. USAID values the role of U.S. farmers and continues to keep U.S. commodities at the center of Food for Peace Title II programs. Over the lifetime of the Food for Peace program, U.S.-produced food aid has reached more than 3 billion people – a testament to American values and generosity.