

# Implementing Tools

## 2024 continuous improvement report



For the People, Animals  
& Climate of Tomorrow



Nourishing Today  
Sustaining Tomorrow





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# Note from the President and CEO

It is my great pleasure to introduce the Meat Institute’s third annual continuous improvement report. The theme of this year’s report is “Implementing Tools,” which highlights the crucial stage at which our industry stands.

We started with “Framing our ambitious vision” in 2022 and have worked through “Building from transparent baselines” in 2023. Now, we are taking concrete steps to ensure we achieve our ambitious targets and meet society’s demands for sustainability, transparency, and responsibility in our operations.

At the heart of the Meat Institute’s mission is our commitment to continuous improvement. As our members make the food that people in the United States and around the world rely on, they nourish today. And as stewards of our communities, our natural resources, and our planet, we all must sustain tomorrow. That’s why the Meat Institute has invested considerable resources in benchmarking performance and demonstrating progress. As we assess the strides we’ve made, we have also identified critical gaps and taken concrete steps to create tools, resources, and research to fill these gaps.

Building on the 2023 release of our greenhouse gas emissions inventory tool, published in collaboration with the UN Global Compact Network USA, this year we partnered with Suppliers Leading on Climate Transition (Supplier LOCT) to enroll Meat Institute members in emissions measurement, disclosure, and abatement training. Supplier LOCT’s experts lead hands-on workshops covering emissions accounting (scopes 1-3), science-based target setting, abatement, and disclosure. Participants can also receive training in forest, land, and agriculture (FLAG) accounting methodologies, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.

This training will allow Meat Institute members to credibly assess and track their emissions, helping them implement



targeted actions that reduce their carbon footprint. It will also enable the supply chain collaboration that is essential to aligning sourcing and production practices with consumers’ values and expectations.

As I’ve said before, the Protein PACT is at least a ten-year commitment, driven by the Meat Institute’s members and their vision for sustaining the future. We have also reimagined the Meat Foundation to expand its research focus to include all five Protein PACT focus areas, and earlier this year we refreshed the Meat Institute’s name and visual identity to better reflect our dynamic, inclusive approach as part of modern food systems.

There is so much more to be done, but we are proud to see our efforts advancing. We know that every step adds up to achieving not only our own but also global goals.

*Julie Anne Potts*

# What we will achieve

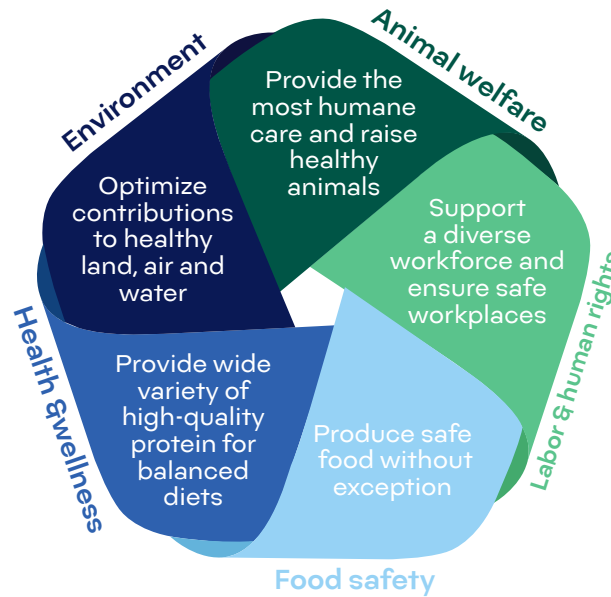
To verify progress along the way to our vision for 2030, the Meat Institute aims that:

## By 2025:

- 100% of Meat Institute members who handle animals will pass third-party animal transport and handling audits, and all members will require all suppliers to implement mandatory employee training and follow species-specific standards for animal care.
- Working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Feeding America, we will measure and help fill the protein gap to ensure families in need have enough high-quality protein.

## By 2030:

- 100% of Meat Institute members will have delivered an approved Science Based Target to reduce emissions in line with Paris Climate Agreement goals.
- We will further reduce workplace injuries by 50% (2019 baseline), on top of the 75% reduction achieved from 1999 to 2019.
- 100% of Meat institute members will be reporting on all metrics.



## Protein PACT bold goals



Bold goals reflect the industry's values and inspire members to continuously improve and increase consumer trust.

The bold goals are aspirational, forward-looking, and intended to encompass the entire supply chain.





# Data-based benchmarking to catalyze best practice implementation sector-wide



Our data collection and reporting is unusual in that we embarked on this process knowing our reported figures on key metrics would decline in the first several years as more companies, particularly smaller companies, participate.

We believe every company has a role to play, and we are committed to helping every member start and measure its continuous improvement journey.

Newer participants are more likely to be at earlier stages of implementing practices to achieve Protein PACT targets. In some cases, we have also updated metrics to more accurately capture practices and/or to segment by species.

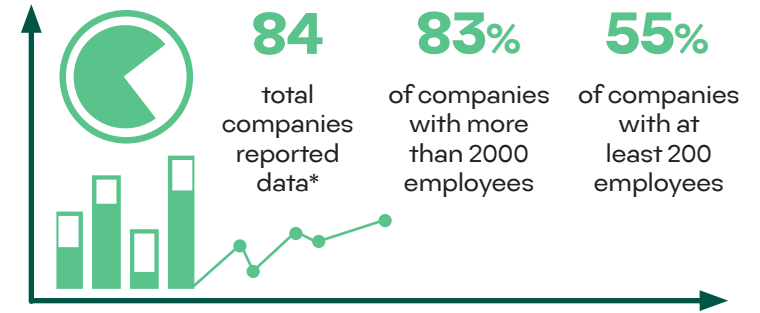
For this reason, each year's report provides achievement snapshots on the basis of that year's data only, rather than as a comparison with previous years.

## Target

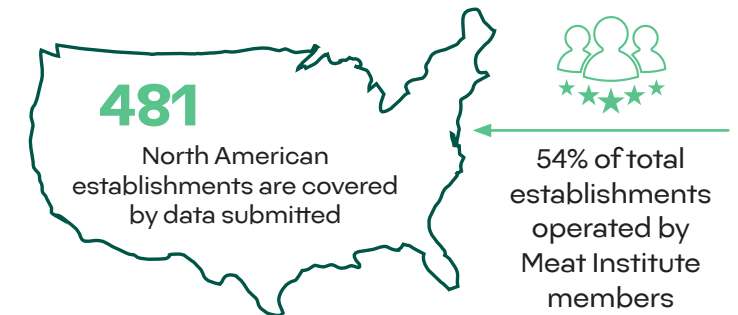
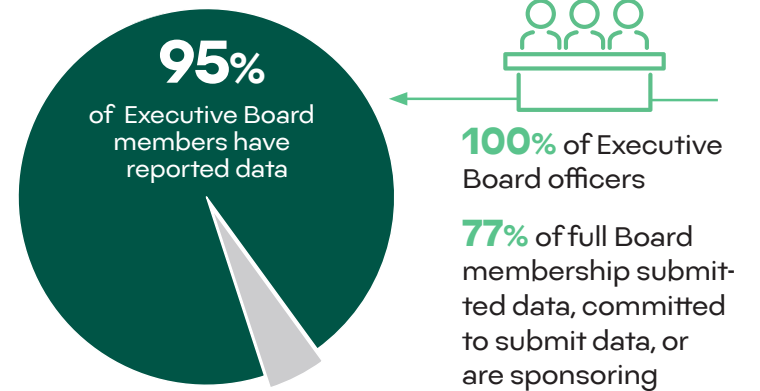
By 2030, 100% of Meat Institute members will be reporting on all metrics.



## Achievement snapshot:



\*Note that reporting companies were not required to submit data for all metrics, and some metrics only apply to certain companies (e.g., those that handle live animals). The figures reported below specify the data pool for each metric or indicator.



Number of employees in covered establishments was not recorded. However, given the participation of large member companies, data include establishments employing a large majority of the total North American workforce packing or processing meat.





# Optimizing contributions to healthy land, air & water

Many Meat Institute members, as well as their suppliers and customers, are setting targets to reduce emissions, prevent waste, protect natural resources, and more.

Participants submitting data for the first time in 2023 (compared to those who submitted data in 2022) are less likely to have set and be tracking progress in our environment metrics.

Practical tools aim to help drive emissions measurement, disclosure, and abatement in the coming years.

## Target

By 2030, companies representing 100% of Meat Institute members will have delivered an approved Science Based Target to reduce emissions in line with Paris Climate Agreement goals.

## Achievement snapshot:

26 Meat Institute members have publicly committed to and/or set targets through the **Science Based Targets Initiative**



**64%** of reporting establishments are covered by a company commitment to set scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction targets (51% have targets verified by a 3rd party)

**59%** of reporting facilities are covered by a company commitment to set scope 3 emissions reduction targets (48% have targets verified by a 3rd party)



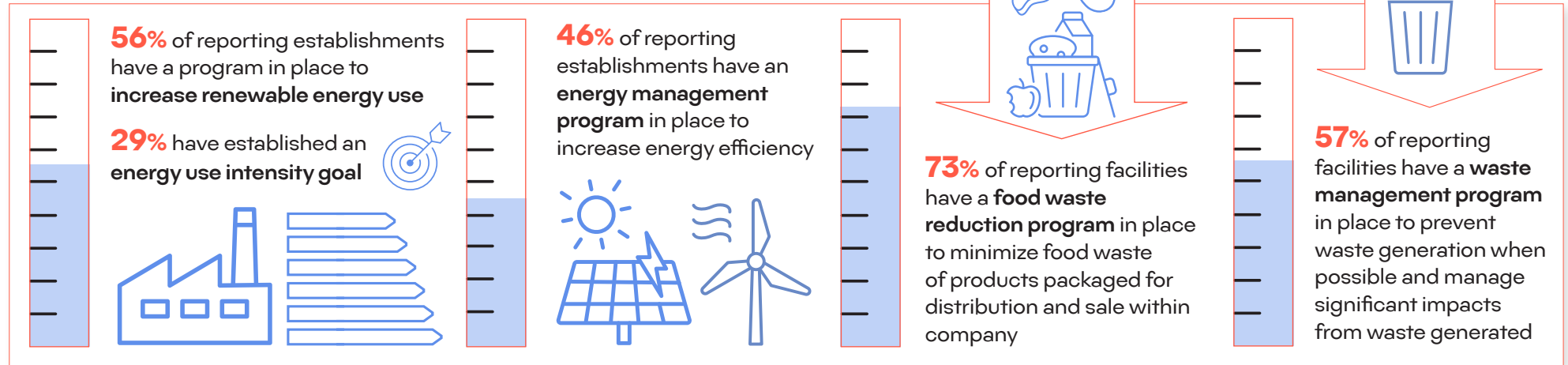
40 members have completed or are enrolled in emissions measurement, disclosure, and abatement training through **Suppliers Leading on Climate Transition**.

- Amcor Flexibles North America
- American Foods Group
- Boar's Head Provisions
- Cargill
- Central Valley Meats
- Clw Foods
- Clemens Food Group
- Coast Packing Company
- Fair Oaks Foods
- FPL Food
- Fratelli Beretta U.S.A.
- Golden State Foods
- Greater Omaha Packing
- Griffith Foods
- Harris Ranch
- Holtens Meat/Branding Iron Holdings
- Independent Meat Company
- Jones Dairy Farm
- Kalapooia Valley Grass Fed Processing
- Km Food Service
- Land O' Frost
- Lombardi Brothers Meats
- Mary Anns Foods
- National Beef Packing
- Ortegas Meat Distribution
- OSI Group
- Quentin Meats
- Rudolph Foods Company
- SCS Engineers
- Seaboard Foods
- Sigma Bar S
- Silva Sausage
- Smithfield
- Sonoma County Meat Co.
- Swaggerty Sausage
- The Miniart Companies
- Upper Iowa Beef
- Washington Beef
- West Coast Prime Meats
- Wholstone Farms



# Optimizing contributions to healthy land, air & water

## Additional indicators:



## Land and water use:







# Providing the best animal care and raising healthy animals

The high-quality, nutrient-dense meat we rely on for healthy diets and sustainable food systems can only come from healthy, well-cared for animals.

## Target

By 2025, 100% of Meat Institute members who handle animals will pass third-party animal transport and handling audits, and 100% of members will require all suppliers to implement mandatory employee training and follow species-specific standards for animal care.



## Achievement snapshot:

**79%** of reporting establishments that handle live animals have a comprehensive animal welfare program based on the Meat Institute's Animal Handling Guidelines



**77%** of reporting establishments that handle live animals pass **third-party animal handling audits**, at minimum annually



**75%** of reporting establishments that handle live animals require suppliers to implement an **animal welfare program**



**78%** of reporting establishments that handle live animals have/require **animal welfare transport regulations/programs**



**53%** of reporting establishments (live animal and further processing) participate in **species-specific stakeholder initiatives** to improve animal well-being





# Supporting a diverse workforce & ensuring safe workspaces

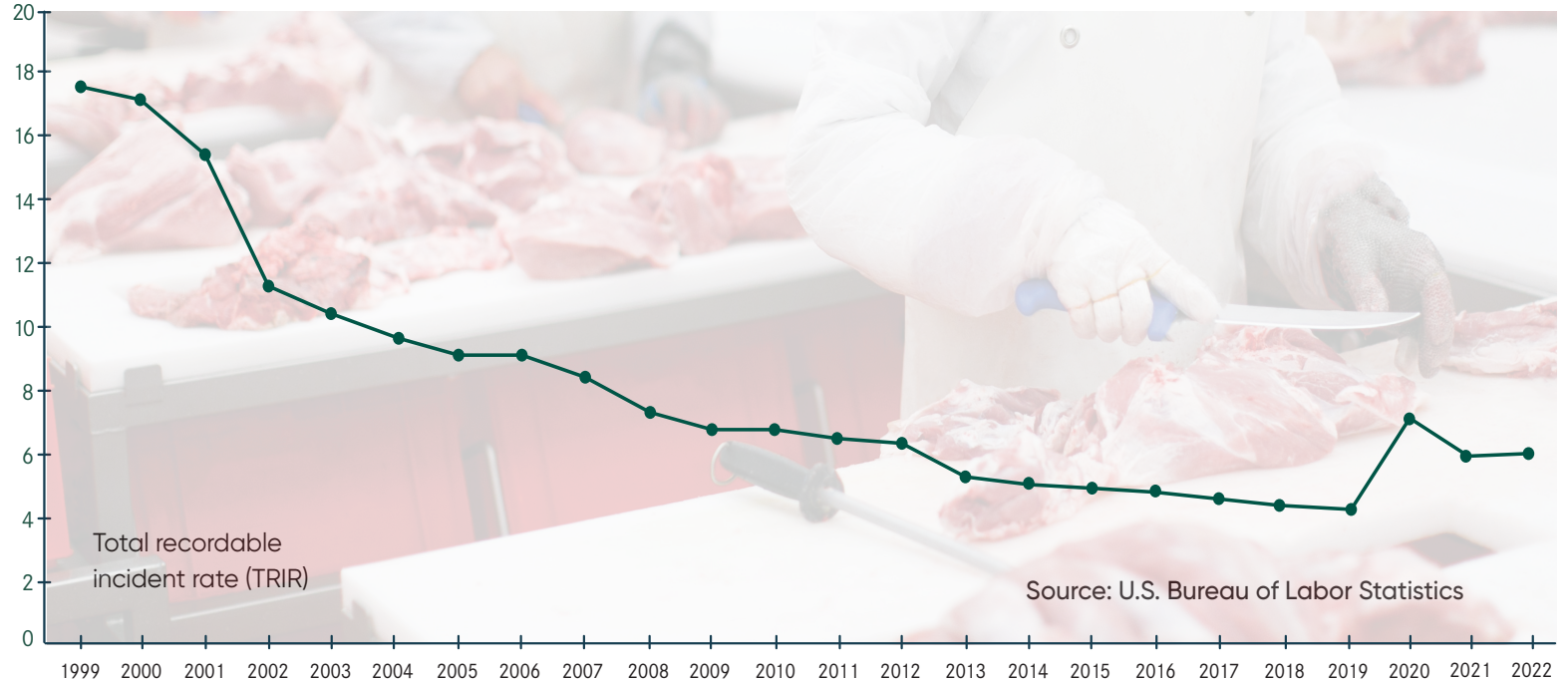
The 500,000+ dedicated people who work in America's meat companies keep nutrient-dense food on our tables and our farm economy running. They are our sector's greatest asset.

Official U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data for the 2023 Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) is not available at the time of publication of this report (October 2023). Updates to digital versions will be made where possible.

## Target

We will further reduce workplace injuries by 50% (2019 baseline), on top of the 75% reduction achieved from 1999 to 2019.

## Achievement snapshot:



## COVID-19 impact on TRIR data

According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the number of employer-reported respiratory illness cases in all industries increased nearly 4,000% in 2020, rising from 10,800 in 2019 to 428,700. The Meat Institute assesses that the 2020 change in TRIR is attributable to reported COVID cases, not to an increase in injuries.







# Supporting a diverse workforce & ensuring safe workspaces

## Additional indicators

**92%** of reporting establishments have a **written worker safety program** in place

**91%** of reporting establishments have **safety on-boarding** and continuing **safety training**

**91%** say employees recognize hazards and **improve safety as a group**

**90%** of reporting establishments have a **safety committee** or team that meets regularly

**91%** of reporting establishments **inspect** all departments, lines, and areas **for potential hazards** at least monthly

**89%** of reporting establishments report **near-miss incidents** within 24 hours

**91%** of reporting establishments **analyze injury data** at least annually and use data to set company goals and objectives

**71%** of reporting establishments **conduct safety perception surveys** of employees regularly



## Workplace diversity

**44%** of reporting establishments have committed to company policies and practices that align with **UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights**



**86%** of facilities are covered by company commitment to engage in activities that **eliminate bias in hiring**



**69%** of reporting establishments conduct **social compliance audits** annually



**81%** of reporting establishments benchmark **demographic metrics for hourly staff** and review regularly



**80%** of reporting establishments benchmark **demographic metrics for salaried staff** and review regularly





# Producing safe food without exception

Food safety is our number one priority, and meat processing and packing are among the most regulated industries in the United States. U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors are continuously present in meat packing plants and oversee compliance with a wide array of regulatory requirements.

While preventing foodborne illness requires appropriate safety measures at all steps in food's journey from the farm to the family dinner table, we implement the highest standards for food safety measures.

**Food safety is not a target - it is our culture.**

## Achievement snapshot:



**89%** of reporting establishments have a multidisciplinary team that periodically **reviews food safety programs** and takes improvement action in response to available



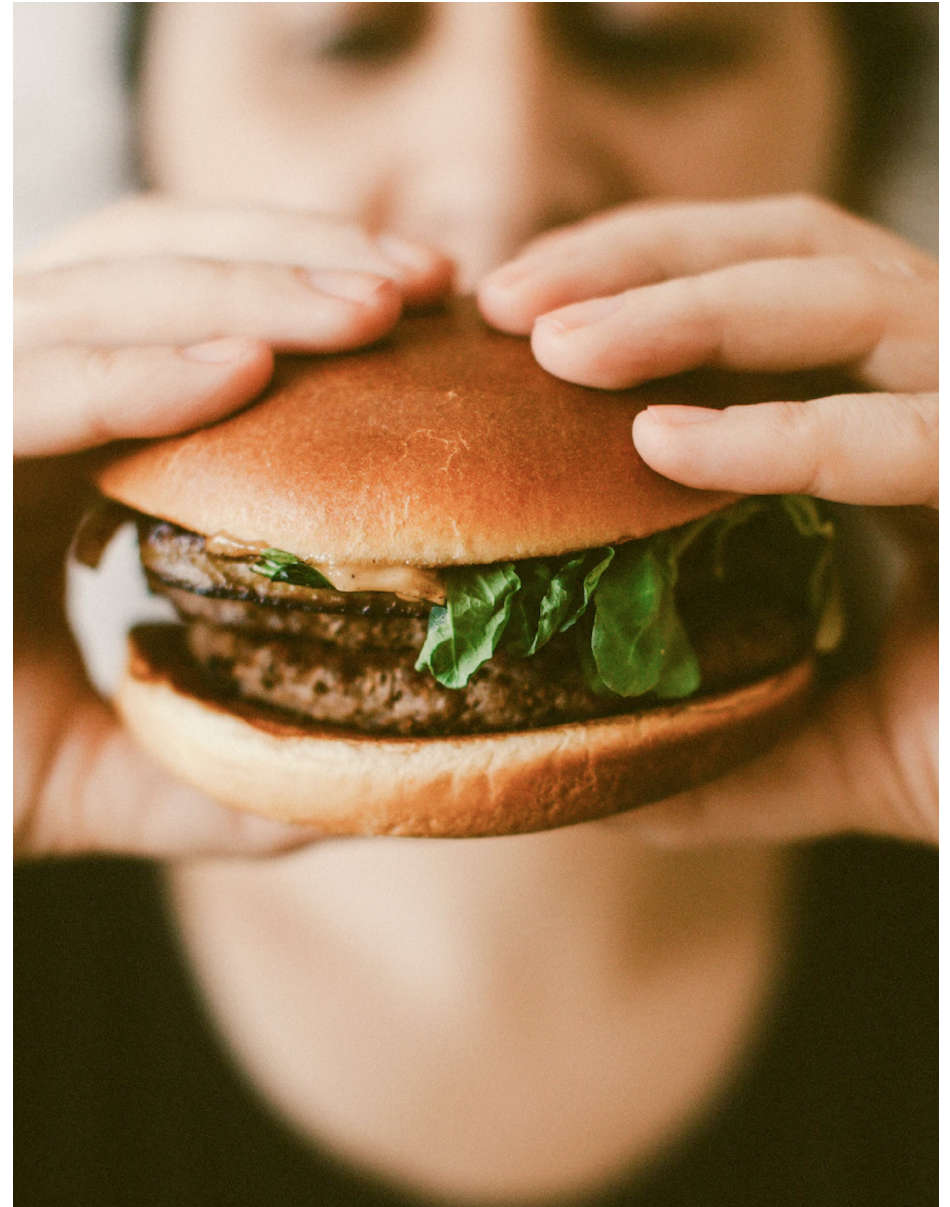
**89%** of reporting establishments have embedded **food safety** into the company culture through **communications and initiatives**



**88%** of reporting establishments conduct an accredited **third-party food safety audit** annually, at minimum



**71%** of reporting establishments are covered by a company commitment to establish a **continuous improvement goal** on top of passing a third-party food safety audit







# Providing a variety of high-quality protein for balanced diets

We are committed to providing a wide range of choices to fulfill all consumers' individual and family needs.

In addition, too many Americans are facing hunger, and meat represents just 1% of food distributed by food charities, in part due to limited capacity to limited infrastructure for cold storage, packing, and distribution.

## Target

Working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Feeding America, we will measure and help fill the protein gap by 2025 to ensure families in need have enough high-quality protein.



The Meat Institute and its members have committed to act on a non-competitive basis to help end hunger in the United States by openly sharing information and advancing industry-wide implementation of best practices, like investing in protein pack rooms and refrigerated transportation.

These efforts contribute to filling the "protein gap" that results when people facing hunger don't have access to nutrient-dense meat. The "protein gap" worsens hunger and particularly impacts women, children, and older adults who have greater needs for the nutrients, vitamins, and minerals best and sometimes only found naturally in animal-source foods.

## Achievement snapshot:

**76%** of reporting companies make donations to food banks and/or other charities



Meat Institute members donate tens of millions of dollars and meals to food banks and charities across the country every year. Some of the examples include:

### Cargill

Among other donations, the Cargill Foundation donated \$1 million to a Minneapolis food bank damaged by a car crash and has given cash grants to establish food pantries in school districts.



Jennie-O turkey shattered the previous world record for largest donation of turkey in 24 hours, donating 15,000 whole turkeys on World Kindness Day 2023. Jennie-O separately donated 5,000 turkeys to food charities during the 2023 Thanksgiving season.



In a 2022 campaign to support Feeding America, Omaha Steaks donated more than 100,000 servings of premium proteins to families in need and also partnered with FedEx to automatically reroute undeliverable packages to the nearest food bank.

### Smithfield

One of Smithfield's contributions is a \$100,000 donation to fund a mobile food retail market that will provide fresh food in food deserts throughout south-eastern North Carolina. The company is on track to donate 200 million servings of protein through its Helping Hungry Homes® initiative globally by 2025.



In 2023, Tyson more than doubled its 2022 donations volume of 19.5 million pounds and is investing nearly \$80 million in free products to fill the protein gap for underserved and vulnerable populations.

## Appendix A: Meat Institute packer/processor members reporting data by September 2024

- American Beef Packers, Inc.
- American Foods Group
- Angus Meats, Inc.
- Birchwood Foods
- Bob Evans Farms, Inc.
- Branding Iron Holdings
- Carl Buddig and Company
- Cargill
- Carlton Farms
- Catelli Brothers
- Caviness Beef Packers
- Certified Meat Products, Inc.
- Clemens Food Group
- CLW Foods
- Coast Packing Company
- CS Beef Packers
- Dietz & Watson
- Empirical Foods
- Fair Oaks Foods
- Florida Beef, Inc.
- FPL Food, LLC
- Fresh Mark, Inc.
- Golden State Foods
- Gourmet Ranch, LLC
- Greater Omaha Packing Co.
- Hill Meat Company
- Hormel Foods
- HRR Enterprises, Inc.
- Indiana Packers Corporation
- Jack Link's Protein Snacks
- Jack Stack BBQ
- Johnsonville
- Jones Dairy Farm
- Land O'Frost
- K&M Food Service
- Kayem Foods, Incorporated
- Kent Quality Foods
- Lopez-Dorada Foods
- Leidy's, LLC
- Levitt Foods
- Meyer Natural Foods
- Maple Leaf
- Marcho Farms, Inc.
- Nueske's Applewood Smoked Meats
- Michael's Finer Meats & Seafoods, LLC
- National Beef Packing
- Omaha Steaks International, LLC
- Old Trapper
- Old World Provisions
- PFS/Middendorf Meat Company
- OSI Group
- Perdue Premium Meat Co.
- Salm Partners, LLC
- Pineland Farms Natural
- Meats Pitman Farms
- Sigma
- Seaboard Foods, LLC
- Sierra Meat & Seafood Company
- Sonoma County Meat Co.
- Silva Sausage
- Smithfield
- SugarCreek
- Sterling Pacific Meat Co.
- Strassburger Steaks
- Surlean Foods
- SuKarne
- Superior Farms
- Thomas Foods International USA
- Swaggerty Sausage Company Inc.
- The Miniati Companies, Inc.
- Upper Iowa Beef
- Triumph Foods
- Tyson Foods
- Washington Beef
- Walt's Wholesale Meats
- Wasatch Meats, Inc.
- Yosemite Foods
- West Liberty Foods
- WholeStone Farms Cooperative

## Appendix B: Meat Institute supplier members sponsoring

- Amcor
- Bayer
- Bunzl
- Corbion
- Cryovac Brand Food Packaging
- Environ Energy, formerly APPI
- Eurofins
- FlexXray
- Food Production Solutions Association
- Food Safety Net Services, a Certified Group Company
- Hawkins
- Infor
- Intralox
- Jarvis
- Lucid Corp.
- Multivac
- Neogen
- Pinion
- Pratt Industries
- Reiser
- TradeCafe
- Wells Fargo
- WOW Logistics



## Appendix C: Partner organizations

- Animal Agriculture Alliance
- Beef Alliance
- Dairy Management, Inc.
- Elanco
- Genus PIC
- Institute for Feed Education and Research
- Leather and Hide Council of America
- Meat Institute
- National Corn Growers Association
- National Pork Board
- National Pork Producers Council
- U.S. Meat Export Federation
- U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef
- U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Poultry and Eggs
- United Soybean Board

## Appendix D: Endorsers

- AFCO
- American Frozen Food Institute
- American Meat Science Association
- American Veal Association
- Animal Health Institute
- Canadian Meat Council
- Carni Sostenibili
- ComeCarne
- Consumer Brands Association
- Corn Refiners Association
- Decade of Ag
- Eocene Environmental Group
- European Livestock Voice
- Farm Journal: Trust in Food
- Feeding America
- FMI - The Food Industry Association
- Food Safety Net Services
- Food Processing Suppliers Association
- Fulton Market Group
- Global Cold Chain Alliance
- Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef
- Grundfos
- Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
- Kerry
- Marcus Technologies
- Meat Foundation
- Mexican Beef
- Multivac, Inc.
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
- National Institute for Animal Agriculture
- National Milk Producers Federation
- National Council of Chain Restaurants
- North American Renderers Association
- National Retail Federation (NRF)
- Phibro Animal Health Cooperation
- Shelf-Stable Food Processors Association
- Sustainable Environmental Consultants
- U.S. Dairy Export Council
- Women's Meat Industry Network