

1932: Federal government began giving commodities to private food assistance agencies that then distributed the food to those in need

1939: Federal government developed food stamp program to expand the market for surplus commodities and offer the needy sufficient assistance to maintain a nutritious diet

1946: National School Lunch Act passed

1963-64: Federal poverty line calculated based on data from 1955 showing 1/3 income spent on food; The food stamp program became permanent in 1964

1970: Food Stamp Reform Bill was passed & participation significantly increased due to expanded eligibility and the adjustment of benefits to inflation rates

1977: Purchase requirement for food stamps eliminated

1979: Formation of America's Second Harvest (Feeding America)

1981-82: Legislation passed in 1981 and 1982 reduced federal food stamp benefits and made eligibility requirements stricter

1983: Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) introduced

1990: TEFAP program changes name to The Emergency Food Assistance Program

1995: Food Security Supplement was first offered with the CPS



1930s: Food pantries & soup kitchens were thought of as divisive, inadequate, inefficient and demeaning to the poor

1980s: Cuts to the food stamp program mobilized the anti-hunger movement to provide private assistance; the emergency food system resurfaced and was embraced as a demonstration of charity

1970s-80s: Increases in shelter costs resulted in rent and utility charges that were out of reach for the poor