



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Grant Makes More Dairy Products Available to Western North Carolina Families**

*The Milk2MyPlate initiative brings nutrient dense dairy to the food insecure*

**ASHVILLE, NC (July 23, 2019)** — Thousands of North Carolinians who struggle to buy nutritious foods for their families now have greater access to fresh North Carolina-produced milk thanks to a \$45,000 grant from The Dairy Alliance to the MANNA FoodBank in Asheville, NC, which serves the 16 western-most counties of North Carolina.

MANNA FoodBank used the grant to purchase a refrigerated dairy express van to help deliver milk to the food insecure. The grant was awarded by The Dairy Alliance and the *Milk2MyPlate* initiative.

“The van funded by this grant will enable MANNA FoodBank to deliver fresh milk to our food pantry clients,” Hannah Randall, Chief Executive Officer said. “This allows families across Western North Carolina to have access to nutrient rich milk on a regular basis.”

Hungry families, particularly those with young children, often lack calcium-rich milk in their diet. This pilot project will help us establish a consistent, sustainable flow of milk to those in need,” Randall said. “Since cold milk has been more available, we’ve witnessed so much joy and excitement through a cold glass of milk. Hats off to The Dairy Alliance, Milkco and our amazing North Carolina dairy farmers for helping us begin to imagine what’s possible through a growing *Milk2MyPlate* Program.”

“On behalf of the dairy farm families of North Carolina and the Southeast, The Dairy Alliance is proud to partner with Feeding America to help nourish families across Western North Carolina,” said Molly Szymanski, COO of The Dairy Alliance. “As a bonus, our hard-working dairy farm families will get a new market for their products. This is one small step that hopefully will lead to more initiatives to help North Carolina’s dairy farmers.”

The *Milk2MyPlate* Program was created by Northern Illinois Food Bank and Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. in 2012. This model has created opportunities for food banks, processors and dairy farmers across the country to replicate and better serve their communities.

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**About The Dairy Alliance**

On behalf of dairy farm families, The Dairy Alliance, a non-profit, works with schools, health professionals, retailers, dairy processors and the public to promote dairy foods. For more information, visit [thedairyalliance.com](http://thedairyalliance.com).

**About MANNA FoodBank**

MANNA FoodBank is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving Western North Carolina since 1983. As an accredited member of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger relief organization, the mission of MANNA FoodBank is to involve, educate, and unite people in the work of ending hunger in Western North Carolina. MANNA serves over 200 community-based non-profit food assistance partner agencies in 16 Western North Carolina counties and distributed 18.2 million pounds of food in 2017/2018. MANNA FoodBank is a nonpartisan organization committed to sharing facts and information about issues related to hunger in Western North Carolina and how they affect those we serve. For more information, visit [MANNAFoodbank.org](http://MANNAFoodbank.org), or call 828-299-FOOD.