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International Food Aid: U.S. and Other Donor Contributions

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Summary

The United States is the world's major provider of international food aid to low-income developing countries. This report provides data on the U.S. contribution to global food aid as reported by signatories of the International Food Aid Convention (FAC) and compiled by the International Grains Council (IGC), as well as data on U.S. and other donor contributions to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).

The Food Aid Convention (FAC) is an agreement among donor countries to provide a minimum amount of food aid to low-income developing countries. The food aid commitment agreed to by all FAC signatories in 1999 was approximately 4.9 million metric tons (mmt) annually. The United States pledged to provide 2.5 mmt annually, or 51% of the total annual commitment. A new FAC, renamed the Food Assistance Convention, was negotiated in 2012. The United States ratified the new FAC on September 26, 2012. Commitments under the new convention are pending.

Data from the IGC show that U.S. food aid accounted for 56% of food aid shipments by FAC signatories over the period 1995/1996-2011/2012.

A substantial portion of U.S. food aid is channeled through the WFP. Over the period from 1996 to October 20, 2013, around 43% of donor contributions to the WFP came from the United States.

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Commitments Under the Food Aid Convention

The Food Aid Convention (FAC), first agreed to in 1967 during the Kennedy Round of multilateral trade negotiations held under the auspices of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), was an international agreement that constituted a framework of cooperation on food aid among major donors. The food aid commitment under the FAC was a minimum commitment and was intended to be a guarantee of food security for low-income developing countries. The signatories of the FAC were Argentina, Australia, Canada, the European Union and its member countries, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States. Signatories could provide more than their minimum commitment.

Under the FAC, the donors could express their annual food aid commitments either in tonnage or in value. Some donors—the EU, Canada, and Japan—use a mix of commodities and cash. The total commitment under the FAC (negotiated in 1999) was 4.9 million metric tons, or mmt (**Table 1** and **Appendix B**). The United States made the largest annual commitment, 2.5 mmt or 51% of the total. The combined EU commitment (European Commission and EU member countries) was around 27%. Commitments by Canada, Japan, and Australia were, respectively, 8.6%, 6.1%, and 5.1%.

Table 1. Annual FAC Food Aid Commitments and Annual Average Shipments
(metric tons wheat equivalent)

| | Annual Commitments | Percent | Average Food Aid Shipments 1999-2012 | Percent |
|-------------|--------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Argentina | 35,000 | 0.72% | 1,753 | 0.02% |
| Australia | 250,000 | 5.11% | 222,757 | 2.83% |
| Canada | 420,000 | 8.58% | 478,940 | 6.08% |
| EU | 1,320,000 | 26.97% | 2,062,203 | 26.18% |
| Japan | 300,000 | 6.13% | 529,886 | 6.73% |
| Norway | 30,000 | 0.61% | 94,310 | 1.20% |
| Switzerland | 40,000 | 0.82% | 63,091 | 0.80% |
| USA | 2,500,000 | 51.07% | 4,422,696 | 56.16% |
| Total | 4,895,000 | 100.00% | 7,875,637 | 100.00% |

Source: International Grains Council Food Aid Committee, The Food Aid Convention.

Although the FAC expired in 2003, a working committee of the IGC was established to prepare for its renegotiation. The Food Aid Committee of the IGC meets periodically to review donor food aid contributions in relation to commitments under the 1999 FAC and to global food needs. At their biennial meeting in December 2010, the members of the Food Aid Committee agreed to begin the formal process of renegotiating the Food Aid Convention.¹ Negotiations for a new FAC were completed in 2012. The Food Aid Convention was renamed the Food Assistance Convention

¹ Food Aid Committee, Press Release, December 20, 2010, “Meeting of the Food Aid Committee, London 14 December 2010,” viewed at http://www.foodaidconvention.org/Pdf/p_r/prfacdec10.pdf.

to reflect the fact that food aid included not only commodities but also cash-based forms of assistance to provide food security.² Commitments under the new convention are pending.

Food Aid Shipments under the FAC

The United States is the major contributor to international food aid, supplying on average, since 1995, around 56% of the annual total food aid donated by members of the Food Aid Committee of the International Grains Council (IGC) and signatories of the 1999 Food Aid Convention (**Figure 1**).³ U.S. contributions have averaged 4.4 mmt annually, but U.S. food aid shipments have varied from year to year (**Appendix A**).⁴ The lowest amount shipped was 2.2 mmt in 2010/2011; the largest shipments, 7.1 mmt, were in 2001/2002. U.S. shipments of commodity food aid were 2.8 mmt in 2011/2012,.

Food aid from the European Union (including food aid provided both by the European Commission and by individual EU member countries) has been more stable and averaged around 2.1 mmt or 26% of average annual food aid shipments. Japan and Canada provided 7% and 6%, respectively, of the total from major donors. Historically, the United States, the EU, Canada, Japan, and Australia have accounted for about 98% of total food aid shipments. The United States and the EU together contributed 82% of shipments under the FAC. The United States contributes U.S. commodities, while the European Union and its member countries and Canada provide a mix of cash and commodities. Japan's contributions are provided primarily as cash rather than commodities.

Because the IGC's food aid data are reported on a July/June marketing year basis, its data for U.S. food aid shipments do not correspond, for example, to fiscal year food aid data reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in annual budget documents or by the U.S. Agency for International Development in its budget documents or annual food aid reports. The source of the data in **Figure 1** and **Appendix A** is the annual report *Food Aid Shipments*, prepared by the Food Aid Committee of the International Grains Council, which has been renamed *Food Aid Operations*.⁵

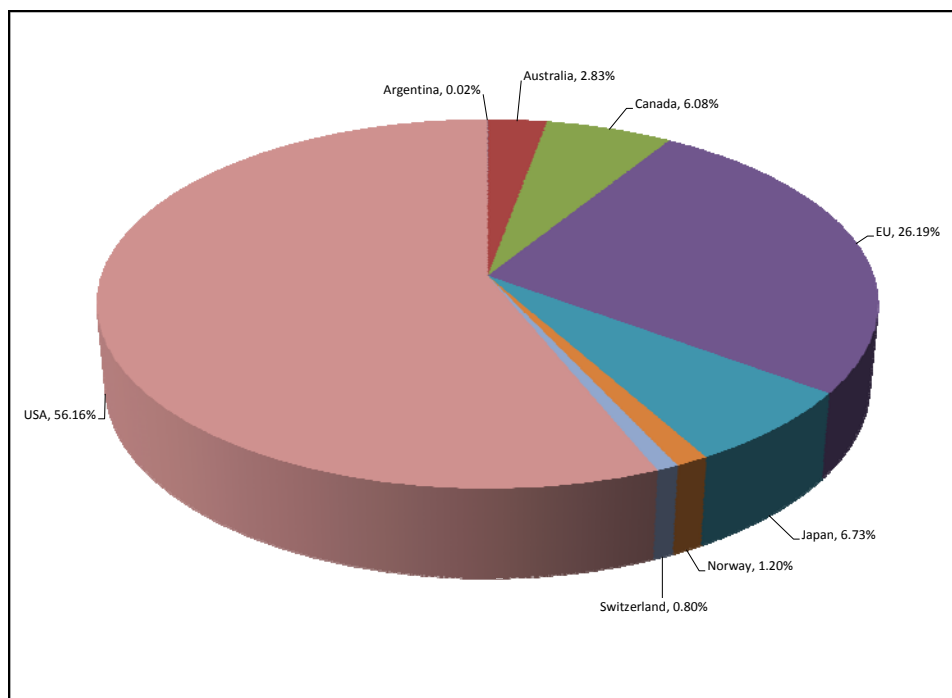
² The text of the Food Assistance Convention may be accessed at <http://www.foodaidconvention.org/Pdf/FoodAssistance/FoodAssistance.pdf>.

³ Information on the International Grains Council, the Food Aid Convention, and the Food Aid Committee is available at <http://www.igc.int/en/Default.aspx> and at <http://www.foodaidconvention.org/en/Default.aspx>.

⁴ Data on food aid shipments provided by the International Grains Council are reported on a wheat marketing year basis (July-June).

⁵ International Grains Council, Food Aid Committee, *Food Aid Operations 2011/2012: Report on Operations by Members of the Food Aid Convention*, September 2013, viewed at http://foodaidconvention.org/Pdf/annual_reports/faoperations_1112.pdf.

Figure 1. Average Annual Food Aid Shipments (%) in Wheat Equivalent by Major FAC Donors, 1995/1996-2011/2012



Source: Food Aid Operations 2011/12, International Grains Council Food Aid Committee.

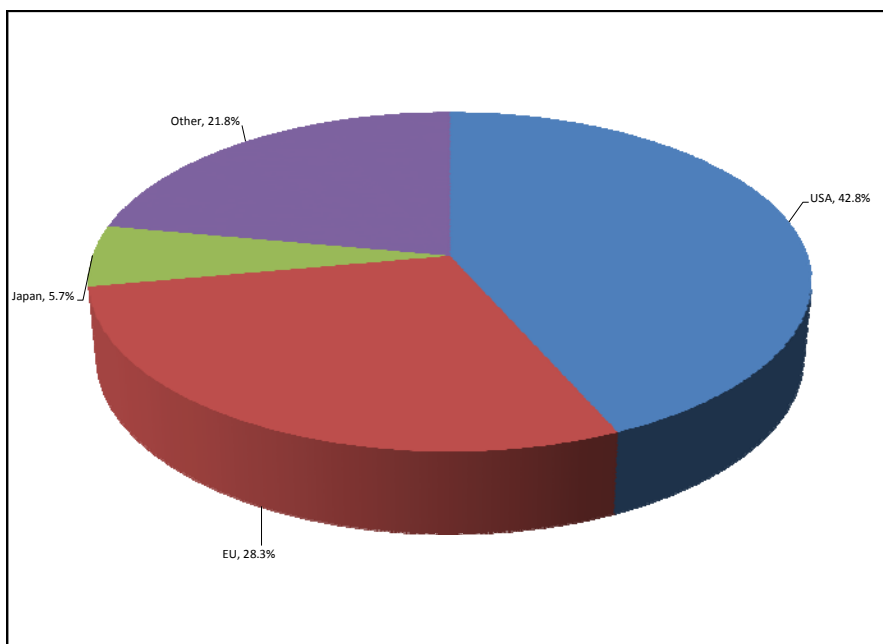
Food Aid Contributions to the World Food Program

A substantial portion of U.S. food aid is channeled through the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), the intergovernmental agency that provides food aid for development projects and humanitarian relief in low income countries. U.S. and other donor contributions to the WFP are not in addition to, but are included in, the data reported in **Figure 1** and **Appendix A**.

More than 56 donors, mainly countries, but also some non-governmental organizations and private corporations, contribute to the WFP. The United States is the major donor, providing over the last 18 years around 43% of total WFP contributions

Figure 2 and **Appendix B**). Over that same 18-year period, the EU (European Commission plus EU member countries' contributions) accounted for 28% of total WFP contributions. Japan, whose contributions are in cash, provided around 6%. The remaining donors combined provided 22% to WFP food aid resources.

Figure 2. Food Aid Contributions by Donors to the World Food Program, 1996-2013



Source: World Food Programme.

Note: Data as of October 20, 2013.

Appendix A. Annual Food Aid Shipments by FAC Donors, 1995/96-2011/12

| | 1995/96 | 1996/97 | 1997/98 | 1998/99 | 1999/00 | 2000/01 | 2001/02 |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| | (metric tons wheat equivalent) | | | | | | |
| Argentina | 13,400 | 0 | 0 | 10,135 | 2,740 | 0 | 26 |
| Australia | 298,146 | 305,127 | 293,221 | 273,064 | 296,713 | 251,865 | 245,828 |
| Canada | 448,764 | 468,431 | 417,917 | 487,095 | 470,640 | 293,477 | 412,082 |
| EU | 2,413,991 | 2,049,691 | 2,201,162 | 1,969,892 | 1,970,768 | 2,357,778 | 1,836,717 |
| Japan | 474,870 | 326,835 | 302,626 | 561,643 | 337,357 | 637,749 | 531,755 |
| Norway | 6,233 | 32,816 | 19,306 | 61,293 | 75,960 | 85,876 | 74,318 |
| Switzerland | 75,479 | 38,636 | 57,915 | 38,939 | 61,295 | 54,169 | 58,042 |
| USA | 2,849,384 | 2,553,283 | 2,818,500 | 4,734,121 | 5,692,116 | 6,798,280 | 7,124,407 |
| Total | 6,580,267 | 5,774,819 | 6,110,647 | 8,136,182 | 8,907,589 | 10,479,194 | 10,283,175 |
| | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 |
| | (metric tons wheat equivalent) | | | | | | |
| Argentina | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Australia | 203,820 | 177,984 | 168,083 | 180,667 | 114,530 | 216,726 | 163,857 |
| Canada | 499,382 | 351,168 | 437,341 | 448,534 | 474,438 | 520,903 | 551,475 |
| EU | 1,980,781 | 2,218,065 | 2,151,958 | 2,853,063 | 2,488,053 | 2,178,310 | 2,263,456 |
| Japan | 666,910 | 580,953 | 578,261 | 354,289 | 318,964 | 428,301 | 556,078 |
| Norway | 144,927 | 165,510 | 145,586 | 196,034 | 179,408 | 102,955 | 89,382 |
| Switzerland | 67,892 | 69,689 | 71,854 | 61,608 | 71,051 | 69,872 | 59,368 |
| USA | 6,054,197 | 5,801,724 | 5,363,186 | 4,830,710 | 3,869,162 | 3,630,343 | 4,256,834 |
| Total | 9,617,909 | 9,365,093 | 8,916,269 | 8,924,905 | 7,515,606 | 7,147,410 | 7,940,450 |
| | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | Total | Annual | Average | |
| | (metric tons wheat equivalent) | | | | (percent) | (metric tons) | |
| Argentina | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26,301 | 0.02% | 1,753 | |
| Australia | 165,081 | 185,067 | 247,094 | 3,786,873 | 2.83% | 222,757 | |
| Canada | 524,148 | 603,760 | 732,428 | 8,141,983 | 6.08% | 478,940 | |
| EU | 1,691,765 | 1,463,241 | 968,764 | 35,057,455 | 26.19% | 2,062,203 | |
| Japan | 691,326 | 915,223 | 744,918 | 9,008,058 | 6.73% | 529,886 | |
| Norway | 62,774 | 109,885 | 51,012 | 1,603,275 | 1.20% | 94,310 | |
| Switzerland | 47,861 | 97,738 | 71,139 | 1,072,547 | 0.80% | 63,091 | |
| USA | 3,745,514 | 2,209,249 | 2,854,828 | 75,185,838 | 56.16% | 4,422,696 | |
| Total | 6,928,469 | 5,584,163 | 5,670,183 | 133,882,330 | 100.00% | 7,875,431 | |

Source: International Grains Council Food Aid Committee, *Food Aid Shipments renamed to Food Aid Operations*, various issues.

Appendix B. Annual Food Aid Contributions by Donors to the World Food Program, 1996-2013

(thousand dollars)

| Government Donors | 1996* | 1997* | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| United States of America | 494,980 | 408,380 | 873,051 | 721,157 | 795,676 | 1,201,223 | 938,185 | 1,458,638 |
| European Union | 603,981 | 550,522 | 522,921 | 465,575 | 442,999 | 449,787 | 563,170 | 623,956 |
| EU Commission | 196,873 | 237,254 | 184,645 | 167,576 | 117,794 | 126,833 | 177,326 | 200,874 |
| EU Countries | 407,108 | 313,269 | 338,276 | 298,000 | 325,205 | 322,953 | 385,844 | 423,081 |
| Austria | 4,774 | 4,910 | 3,853 | 3,710 | 2,832 | 1,117 | 3,302 | 2,199 |
| Belgium | 19,472 | 17,416 | 16,908 | 10,782 | 6,284 | 5,342 | 5,831 | 8,405 |
| Bulgaria | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cyprus | | | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 99 |
| Czech Republic | | | 20 | 590 | 37 | 100 | 0 | 175 |
| Denmark | 53,064 | 44,248 | 43,384 | 46,900 | 41,922 | 39,786 | 40,158 | 39,268 |
| Estonia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Finland | 16,045 | 13,768 | 13,801 | 15,345 | 15,219 | 14,352 | 17,444 | 17,793 |
| France | 19,203 | 21,884 | 24,742 | 27,693 | 26,170 | 35,957 | 14,457 | 14,940 |
| Germany | 96,036 | 68,487 | 61,779 | 53,089 | 46,750 | 58,228 | 60,920 | 46,503 |
| Greece | 150 | 170 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hungary | 0 | 0 | 65 | 74 | 65 | 65 | 65 | 65 |
| Ireland | 3,149 | 4,284 | 4,378 | 5,021 | 7,644 | 7,338 | 10,349 | 11,815 |
| Italy | 34,876 | 9,112 | 10,632 | 20,824 | 19,936 | 39,748 | 41,787 | 41,074 |
| Latvia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Luxembourg | 218 | 0 | 270 | 130 | 1,205 | 1,748 | 2,919 | 4,132 |
| Malta | 0 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| Government Donors | 1996* | 1997* | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Netherlands | 78,804 | 45,972 | 45,532 | 55,003 | 62,801 | 59,173 | 58,795 | 50,422 |
| Poland | 0 | 0 | 0 | 684 | 225 | 200 | 215 | 215 |
| Portugal | 0 | 0 | 185 | 2,285 | 0 | 358 | 0 | 447 |
| Romania | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Slovakia | 0 | 0 | 25 | 518 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 697 |
| Slovenia | 0 | 0 | 227 | 141 | 0 | 57 | 36 | 0 |
| Spain | 13,720 | 12,245 | 2,725 | 2,511 | 3,256 | 3,952 | 2,607 | 6,754 |
| Sweden | 33,164 | 35,985 | 29,511 | 28,415 | 30,778 | 27,721 | 31,224 | 42,341 |
| UK | 34,434 | 34,789 | 80,212 | 24,284 | 60,056 | 27,694 | 95,718 | 135,734 |
| Japan | 124,032 | 98,991 | 123,757 | 106,438 | 260,099 | 90,592 | 92,896 | 130,136 |
| All Others | 222,166 | 253,647 | 125,027 | 195,058 | 135,011 | 151,707 | 852,568 | 760,570 |
| Total Government Donors | 0 | 0 | 1,720,488 | 1,509,679 | 1,682,692 | 1,916,877 | 1,833,487 | 2,541,244 |
| Total Financial Institutions, Pooled Funding, and Private Sector Donors | 0 | 0 | 4,479 | 2,833 | 11,149 | 4,125 | 709,050 | 567,789 |
| Total | 1,445,159 | 1,311,540 | 1,724,966 | 1,512,512 | 1,693,841 | 1,921,002 | 2,542,536 | 3,109,034 |

| Government Donors | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| United States of America | 1,065,020 | 1,173,720 | 1,123,291 | 1,184,181 | 2,070,435 | 1,767,852 | 1,552,743 | 1,239,077 |
| European Union | 695,550 | 868,169 | 743,215 | 758,105 | 1,254,938 | 1,167,955 | 975,747 | 1,054,743 |
| EU Commission | 200,501 | 263,940 | 265,762 | 250,437 | 355,435 | 343,063 | 289,928 | 258,587 |
| EU Countries | 495,049 | 604,229 | 477,453 | 507,668 | 899,503 | 824,892 | 685,818 | 796,156 |
| Austria | 2,189 | 4,093 | 1,839 | 3,794 | 3,935 | 1,722 | 1,329 | 733 |
| Belgium | 11,705 | 13,941 | 11,132 | 17,642 | 24,784 | 39,111 | 37,691 | 36,957 |
| Bulgaria | 5 | 0 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cyprus | 5 | 0 | 400 | 656 | 200 | 814 | 690 | 0 |
| Czech Republic | 98 | 1,236 | 308 | 574 | 817 | 309 | 159 | 237 |
| Denmark | 43,436 | 53,202 | 43,817 | 44,731 | 56,608 | 41,890 | 41,112 | 45,751 |

| Government Donors | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Estonia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 42 | 242 | 0 | 240 | 71 |
| Finland | 18,000 | 23,794 | 18,319 | 25,567 | 28,257 | 28,799 | 26,643 | 29,902 |
| France | 30,424 | 37,809 | 25,325 | 32,121 | 40,369 | 21,701 | 20,127 | 38,269 |
| Germany | 65,331 | 69,533 | 59,680 | 65,836 | 100,752 | 132,118 | 95,824 | 194,777 |
| Greece | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hungary | 65 | 120 | 65 | 65 | 65 | 65 | 65 | 15 |
| Ireland | 13,684 | 19,820 | 31,005 | 34,443 | 39,821 | 22,549 | 19,318 | 27,010 |
| Italy | 47,929 | 45,790 | 12,392 | 31,601 | 101,920 | 30,058 | 24,052 | 27,392 |
| Latvia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 0 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 0 | 112 | 306 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Luxembourg | 5,413 | 10,933 | 15,387 | 12,207 | 14,276 | 12,987 | 12,789 | 11,575 |
| Malta | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Netherlands | 77,740 | 115,352 | 80,023 | 75,663 | 117,505 | 77,594 | 74,424 | 73,059 |
| Poland | 356 | 200 | 1,200 | 755 | 1,164 | 535 | 691 | 465 |
| Portugal | 723 | 874 | 488 | 111 | 111 | 112 | 0 | 0 |
| Romania | 0 | 0 | 0 | 147 | 301 | 75 | 72 | 0 |
| Slovakia | 25 | 30 | 48 | 44 | 72 | 30 | 15 | 15 |
| Slovenia | 34 | 97 | 0 | 107 | 135 | 108 | 119 | 196 |
| Spain | 17,466 | 11,552 | 16,993 | 29,641 | 117,460 | 214,204 | 82,635 | 68,024 |
| Sweden | 44,540 | 84,259 | 58,520 | 64,754 | 81,708 | 72,487 | 90,660 | 97,832 |
| UK | 115,884 | 111,595 | 100,390 | 66,851 | 168,961 | 127,624 | 157,127 | 143,877 |
| Japan | 135,730 | 160,472 | 71,381 | 118,870 | 178,323 | 202,905 | 214,762 | 282,026 |
| All Others | 774,050 | 637,996 | 609,321 | 638,702 | 1,835,667 | 754,309 | 916,726 | 1,123,170 |
| Total Government Donors | 2,226,391 | 2,671,577 | 2,406,395 | 2,510,582 | 4,661,191 | 3,697,813 | 3,459,400 | 3,398,247 |
| Total Financial Institutions, Pooled Funding, and Private Sector Donors | 559,843 | 280,374 | 241,202 | 256,128 | 847,132 | 322,832 | 357,704 | 444,646 |
| Total | 2,786,234 | 2,951,951 | 2,647,598 | 2,766,710 | 5,508,324 | 4,020,645 | 3,817,104 | 3,842,893 |

| Government Donors | 2012 | as of October 20, 2013 | Total |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------|
| United States of America | 1,462,478 | 1,368,718 | 20,887,505 |
| European Union | 1,083,167 | 1,036,706 | 13,834,778 |
| EU Commission | 386,136 | 223,930 | 4,247,909 |
| EU Countries | 697,031 | 812,777 | 9,586,868 |
| Austria | 1,082 | 1,185 | 48,598 |
| Belgium | 14,448 | 36,307 | 333,817 |
| Bulgaria | 0 | 208 | 248 |
| Cyprus | 5 | 3 | 2,767 |
| Czech Republic | 399 | 200 | 4,326 |
| Denmark | 43,510 | 52,638 | 814,401 |
| Estonia | 180 | 158 | 787 |
| Finland | 25,999 | 20,397 | 369,055 |
| France | 30,747 | 22,600 | 485,045 |
| Germany | 150,055 | 139,831 | 1,565,019 |
| Greece | 0 | 0 | 27,958 |
| Hungary | 85 | 10 | 954 |
| Ireland | 20,002 | 15,964 | 297,596 |
| Italy | 14,592 | 21,540 | 532,786 |
| Latvia | 0 | 0 | 37 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 0 | 446 |
| Luxembourg | 9,920 | 11,948 | 127,914 |
| Malta | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Netherlands | 75,255 | 57,967 | 1,280,937 |
| Poland | 744 | 0 | 7,647 |
| Portugal | 99 | 0 | 5,792 |
| Romania | 40 | 0 | 635 |
| Slovakia | 18 | 0 | 1,581 |

| | Government Donors | 2012 | as of October 20, 2013 | Total |
|--|---|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| | Slovenia | 0 | 39 | 1,297 |
| | Spain | 12,524 | 811 | 616,474 |
| | Sweden | 95,181 | 86,173 | 1,029,363 |
| | UK | 202,145 | 344,799 | 2,030,328 |
| | Japan | 190,749 | 215,367 | 2,796,842 |
| | All Others | 1,139,317 | 785,664 | 10,630,857 |
| | Total Government Donors | 3,663,113 | 1,936,302 | 41,805,981 |
| | Total Financial Institutions, Pooled Funding, and Private Sector Donors | 414,743 | 270,361 | 2,738,009 |
| | Total | 4,077,856 | 3,751,255 | 48,845,280 |

Source: World Food Program. See <http://www.wfp.org/about/donors/wfp-donors>.

* 1996 and 1997 includes both the totals for government donors and financial institutions, pooled funding, and private donors.

If a country contributed to the WFP program before joining the EU then the amounts contributed are shown in this table; however, their contributions were not added to the total for the EU countries or EU total. Instead it was added to all others.

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