

## POLICY PRINCIPLES

### **Access to nutritious food is a human right.**

Every member of our community should have the food they need to thrive.

### **Policies should be focused on access for all.**

We are committed to examining systems, policies and practices to ensure they support diversity, equity and inclusion for all.

### **Addressing the root causes of hunger.**

We will explore how we can support root-cause solutions in areas tied to ending hunger and where our voice can make a difference.

### **Community voice matters.**

We will support nonpartisan efforts at the local, state and federal levels to increase access to voting and encourage voter registration.



## POLICY PRIORITIES

### **Farm Bill** – *The most important federal legislation for CalFresh and food banks*

We will advocate for a robust Farm Bill that protects access to vital food assistance programs for low-income people.

**The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called CalFresh in California, is the first line of defense against hunger. For every meal provided by food banks, nine are provided through CalFresh.**

### **Key CalFresh Priorities:**

#### **Increase Benefits, Expand Eligibility, Improve Access, Protect Choice:**

We will advocate for a CalFresh program which takes a more accessible approach to addressing food insecurity. We will oppose any effort to restrict eligibility or reduce benefits.

This includes ensuring:

- Benefit amounts are adequate for a household to meet its nutritional needs.
- Access for all underserved populations, such as low-income college students and those reentering their community after incarceration.
- Receiving food assistance is not tied to harmful work requirements.
- Applications can be processed online and by phone.
- Recipients maintain the ability to purchase the food that best meets their household's needs

**The Emergency Food Assistance Program:** We will advocate for strong TEFAP support in Congressional Farm Bill negotiations—a win for U.S. farmers, food banks and our neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

### **Food4All**

The California Food Assistance Program is a state-funded program that mirrors CalFresh and supports people who are not eligible for CalFresh under federal rules. We support the Food4All campaign to expand this program to all low-income immigrants.

### **CalFood**

California's support of food banks and farmers through CalFood is vital to a strong safety net. Given the continuing high level of food insecurity, we will advocate for \$60M in ongoing annual statewide funding for this program.

## School Meals and Summer Nutrition

We will work to expand access to free school meals and ensure students have access to nutrition in the summer months.

**Federal Universal School Meals:** We will advocate for a Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill which includes free school meals for all students nationwide.

**California's Universal School Meals Program:** We will advocate for additional funding, stronger federal support through direct certification, and more time in school schedules to allow students time to eat.

**Summer Nutrition:** SUN Bucks (Summer EBT), established in 2024, is a new federal nutrition benefit for low-income students. We will continue to monitor its implementation and advocate for program improvements.

## Food Recovery

We are the hub for edible food recovery in our region, redirecting more than 93M pounds of food from landfills and composting. We will continue to advocate for adequate funding for the food recovery system to ensure the implementation of SBI383 is successful.

## Addressing the Root Causes of Hunger

Systemic racism and other inequities are the root causes of hunger. As part of our mission to end hunger in our community, we will explore how we can support root-cause solutions in areas like income and safety net programs, affordable housing, environmental justice and support of basic needs for immigrants. We will work in coalition with our community and focus on solutions where our voice will have the greatest impact.

### Environmental Justice and Sustainability - Clean air, water and soil

Under-resourced and marginalized communities are inequitably impacted by climate change and aging infrastructure. We will learn more about efforts to improve air, water and soil quality, whether they impact the fields where our food is grown or our local neighborhoods.

### Housing - Safe, clean, affordable housing for our communities, including farmworkers

We will partner with experts in housing policy to support expanding affordable housing in our region and to ensure that farmworkers have safe, clean and accessible housing options.

### Income and Safety Net Programs - Adequate wages and tax credits

We will support efforts to increase minimum wages and provide tax credits to low-income people in our communities, including the expanded Child Tax Credit. Ensuring our community has the financial resources to afford nutritious food is a clear root cause solution to reducing food insecurity.

### Support of Basic Needs Regardless of Immigration Status

- Second Harvest provides food to everyone who needs it and never asks for immigration status. We will continue to make our distribution sites safe and welcoming locations for anyone who needs food.
- We will support governmental and community efforts that ensure that all people, regardless of immigration status, have access to food, education and other basic needs.
- We will support policies that protect farmworkers, who are integral to our food system.
- We will assist mixed-status families in accessing the benefits to which their citizen members are entitled.



SECOND HARVEST  
of SILICON VALLEY

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