



**SECOND HARVEST**  
*of* SILICON VALLEY

# Legislative Gathering

2026

# Welcome

Rachel Monaco

Senior Manager, Policy & Advocacy



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# State of the Food Bank

Leslie Bacho

Chief Executive Officer



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# **Our Mission: End hunger in our community**

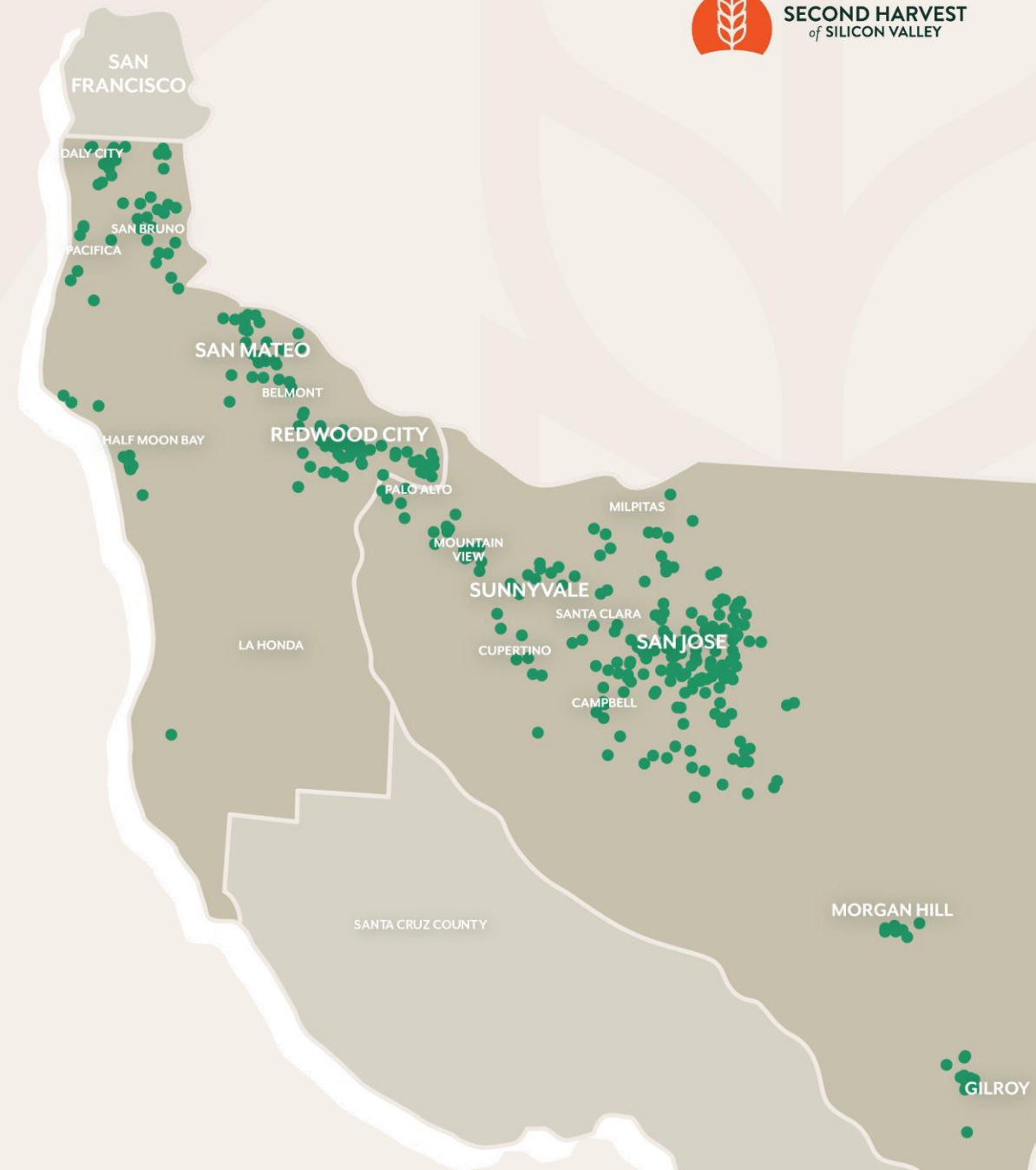
## **Strategic vision**

We will deepen our relationships with local communities to evolve a system of support that equitably meets the immediate need for food assistance while identifying opportunities to address the root causes of hunger.

# Our work at a glance

Second Harvest distributes free groceries through **nearly 400 partners and 900+ sites** across Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

We collaborate with local, state and federal partners to strengthen programs and policies that advance a hunger-free community.



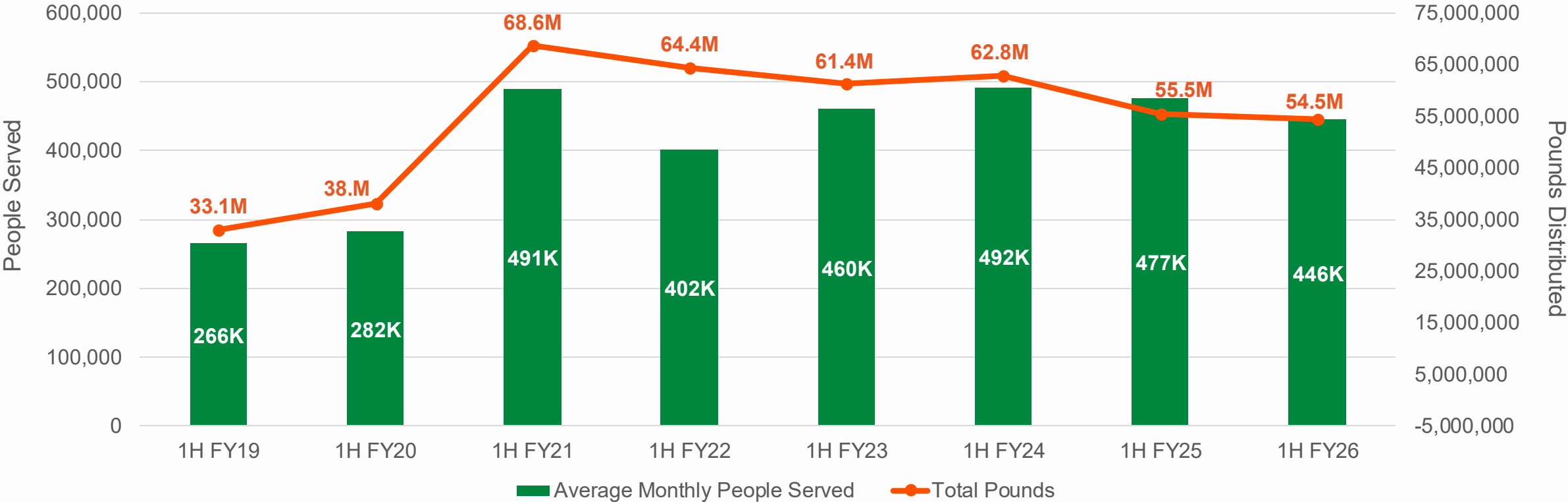
# Hub of the charitable food system

- Most nonprofits providing food assistance in our region is sourcing much of that food from us, **at no cost to them.**
- In FY25, we provided **\$189M+** worth of food to our two counties.
- Less than 10% of our funding is from government sources.

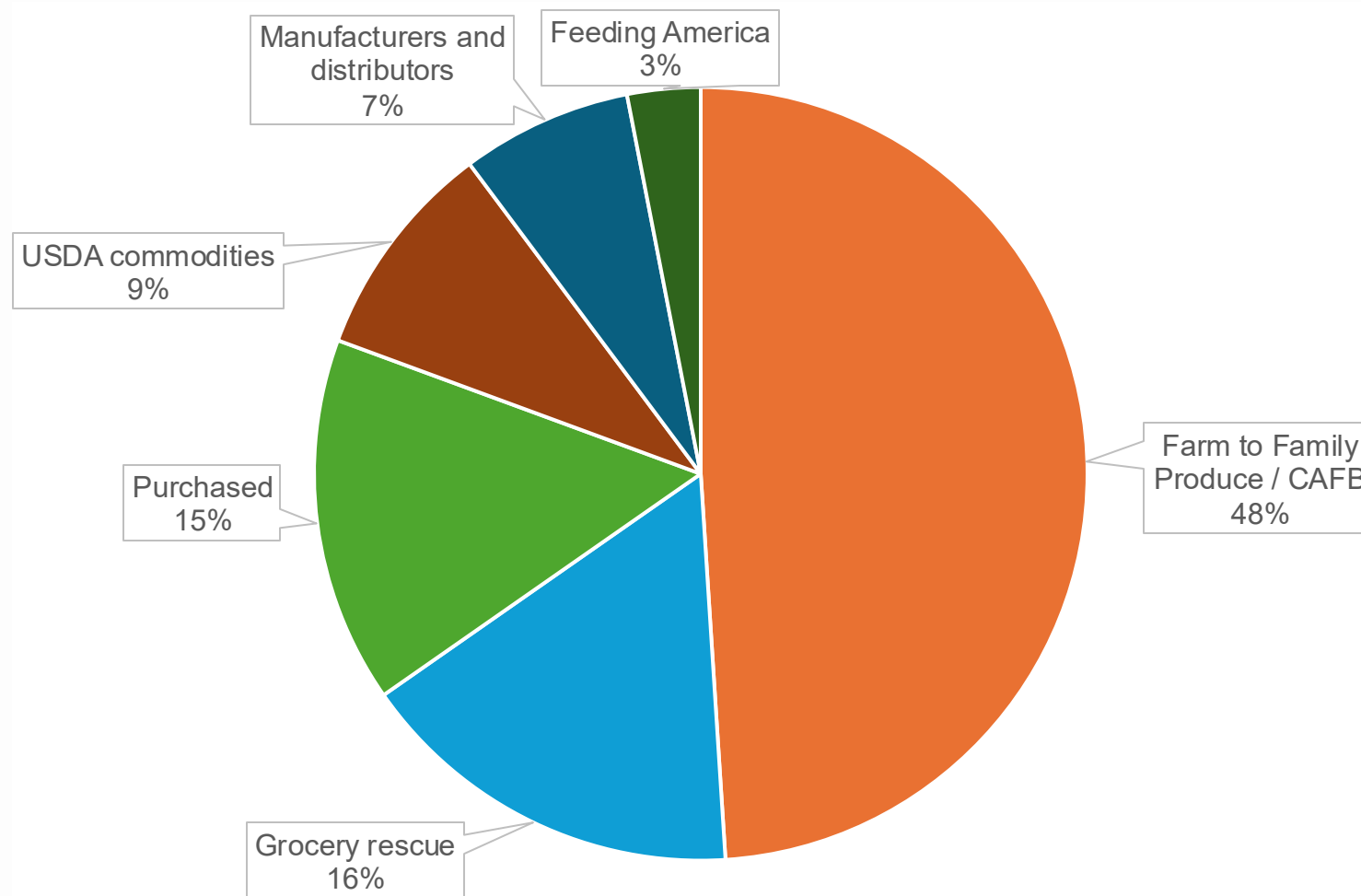


# Elevated need long after pandemic

Pounds and People Served



# 85% of our food is donated



**Total pounds collected fiscal year to date**



# Building our future

*Spring 2027*



# Federal Changes Eroding Safety Net

Robert Sacasa

Assistant Director, Department of Employment and Benefits  
Services

Social Services Agency, Santa Clara County



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# H.R. 1 Budget Cuts

## Impact on CalFresh Recipients

Presenter  
Robert Sacasa, DEBS Assistant Director

March 13, 2026



# H.R. 1 Impacts our Community and Clients

- Primarily targets low-income families and individuals, immigrants, refugees, and communities of color.
- Multi-pronged attack focusing on strict work and reporting requirements which will result in people losing benefits, even when people are meeting the work requirements.
- Imposes unprecedented cost-sharing requirements on the State and/or counties.



# H.R. 1 Impacts Funding for Social Services

- **53%** of the Social Services Agency's annual budget for FY25-26 comes from federal funding.
- Federal funding is passed through from the State to county governments for social services program implementation.
- The County currently receives federal funding based on administrative cost-share and benefits enrollment.



# CalFresh Population in Santa Clara County

**125,000** people in the county rely on CalFresh benefits to cover their food expenses.

- 26% are **children under 18**
- 31% are older adults **65 and older**
- 43% are adults aged **18-64**



# H.R. 1 Impacts to CalFresh

## 1. Expands Work Requirements for "Able-Bodied" Adults

Expands the upper age requirement to 64 years old (formerly 54).

Removes exceptions for homeless individuals, veterans, and those 24 and younger who aged out of foster care.

Limits the exception based on responsibility to care for a dependent child to those with a child under 14 years of age (formerly 18).

Waivers are very unlikely to be granted in future.

## County Impact: 55,000 Individuals

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# H.R. 1 Impacts to CalFresh

## Expanded Work Requirements Target the Most Vulnerable

Impacts will be felt by those who need food benefits the most and those who are most at risk of not meeting the requirements.

- **Former foster youth** who aged out of care and can't get a job, or who don't have a mentor to remind them to keep records and turn in their paperwork.
- **Elderly individuals** who are too worn out to re-enter today's demanding workforce and will face challenges with obtaining and uploading work verification documents.
- **Homeless individuals** who are just trying to survive.
- **College students** who get too busy with their classes and jobs.
- **Veterans** who are reintegrating back into civilian life.
- *Many CalFresh recipients are working but are still at risk of losing benefits due to red tape.*



# H.R. 1 Impacts to CalFresh

## 2. Immigrant Ineligibility

Limits eligibility to U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents (green-card holders)

Removes eligibility for certain longstanding or humanitarian statuses, apart from certain Cuban and Haitian nationals, and COFA Nationals

**County Impact: 2,000 Individuals\***



# H.R. 1 Impacts to CalFresh

## 3. Cost Shifting to States and Counties

Administrative Cost Shifting: Reduces federal contribution from 50% to 25%, making states and counties liable for 75% (effective 10/1/26)

Benefit Cost Shifting: Requires States to contribute to the cost of food benefits for the first time in history (effective 10/1/27)

These costs will likely be passed along to counties, given the State of California's own fiscal challenges.

**Estimated County Impact: \$7M in FY26-27, rising to \$70M in FY28-29.**



# Possible Community Member Concerns

- Immigration Concerns
- Fear that PII will be shared with ICE
- Belief that their benefit amount will be too low to make it worth the time it takes to apply and to renew eligibility



# DEBS Actions in Response to H.R. 1

## **Establish a New Dedicated Client Engagement, Assessment, and Tracking Unit**

- Recruiting Additional Workfare Sites
- Expanding the CalFresh Employment & Training (CFET) Program
- Facilitating Volunteer Opportunities

**Outreach to the  
Community/  
Collaboration  
with Partners**

**Data  
Monitoring**

**Active  
Participation in  
State Meetings  
and Workgroups**



# Communications & Outreach

In collaboration with partners, SSA engaged in a major communications and outreach blitz via:

- Messaging directly to clients and vendors
- Messaging at all district offices
- Messaging through internal and external partners
- Social Media messaging
- Press Releases/Media Inquiry Responses



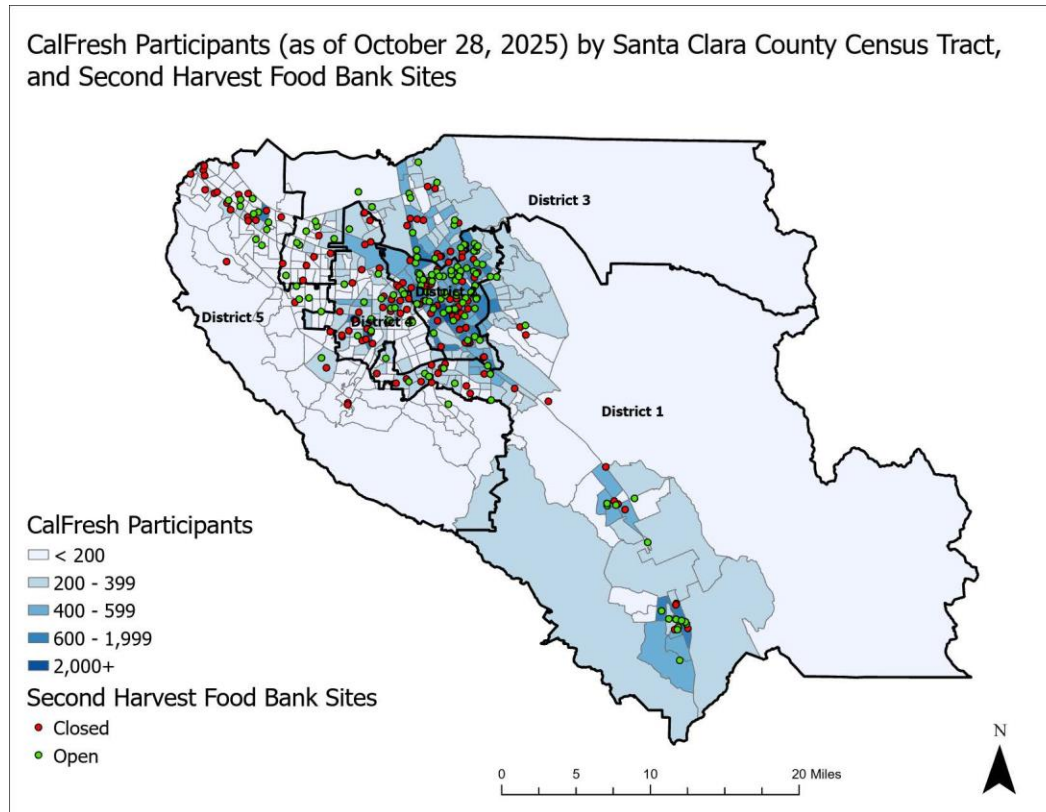
# Importance of Partnerships

- Partnerships and Collaboration with CBOs and other County Departments are extremely important to our strategy. Leveraging partnerships allows us to:
  - Access a wider population base
  - Share resources
  - Impact more CalFresh recipients



# Partnership with Second Harvest

## *Census Tract Data: Food Bank Sites*

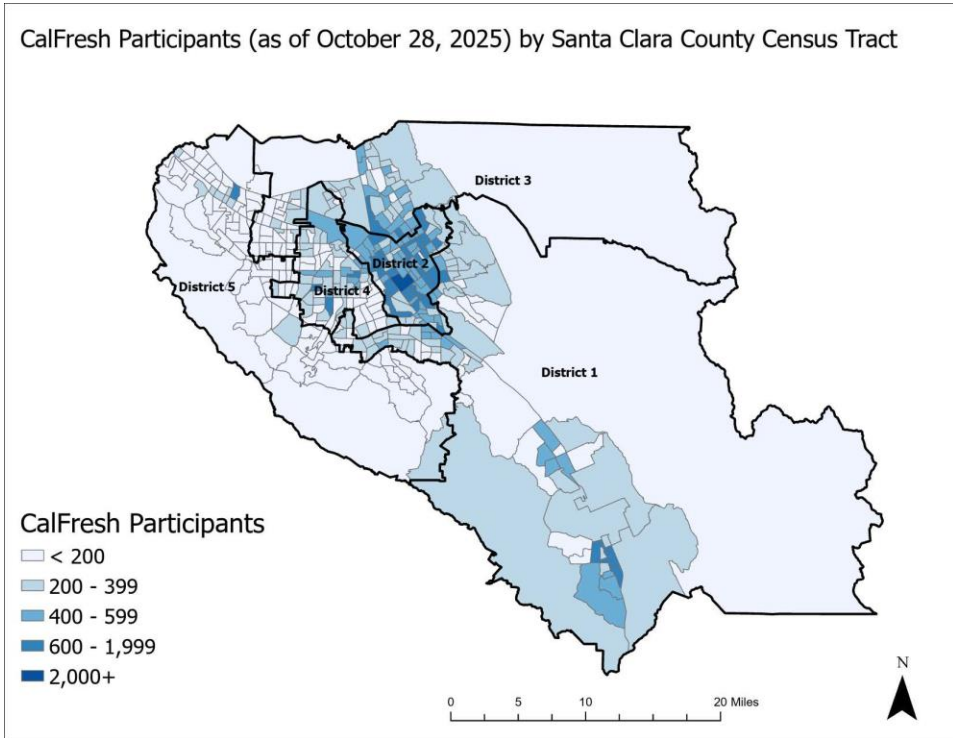


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# Partnership with County Departments

## *Census Tract Data: Grocery Store Flyers*



### Impacts of Federal Government Shutdown on CalFresh Food



CalFresh food benefits will be delayed starting November 1, 2025, affecting about 130,000 Santa Clara County residents.

#### What is happening?

The federal government shutdown began on October 1, 2025. As a result, CalFresh Food benefits will be delayed in November. CalFresh Food benefits, also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), are used to buy groceries at participating vendors, which include most grocery and convenience stores, many farmers markets, and select online retailers.

#### Who is affected?

About 130,000 Santa Clara County residents use CalFresh Food benefits to help pay for groceries.

**25%**  
are children and youth

**45%**  
are ages 18-64

**30%**  
are older adults age 65+



#### What can I do?

Keep updated on the latest news by visiting: [cdss.ca.gov](http://cdss.ca.gov) or [ssa.santaclaracounty.gov](http://ssa.santaclaracounty.gov)

#### If you need emergency groceries:

**Second Harvest Food Bank**  
1-800-984-3663



Scan or visit: [www.shfb.org](http://www.shfb.org)

**2-1-1 of Santa Clara County**  
By phone dial 2-1-1

**Santa Clara County Community Resource Guide**

[SSA.SantaClaraCounty.gov/CRG](http://SSA.SantaClaraCounty.gov/CRG)

#### What can I do to help?

Donate to Second Harvest Food Bank.  
\$1 pays for 2 meals.  
[www.shfb.org/donate](http://www.shfb.org/donate)

Scan to donate





# Partner with Us - Host an ABAWD Workfare Site!

- Workfare increases your operational capacity without additional payroll costs.
- Helps participants build skills, confidence and meet work requirements.
- Strengthen ties with Social Services Agency and demonstrate commitment to community well-being.
- Create additional community service opportunities that allow participants to volunteer with ease.
- **Contact: Stacy Serrano**  
**[stacy.serrano@ssa.sccgov.org](mailto:stacy.serrano@ssa.sccgov.org)**



# Summary

- The impacts of HR1 are devastating to many members of our community.
- Collaboration with County and community-based partners is the only way to ensure that households withstand future uncertainty and reduction of their benefits.

# Client Story

Patricia Cervantes

Food Connection Outreach Coordinator



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# Food Connection Hotline

Connect clients to free groceries and help them apply for CalFresh

- 16 bilingual staff
- Most calls are answered 'live'

Clients can contact us

- Phone: 1-800-984-3663
- Monday – Friday, 8am - 5pm



# Our Response to Federal Changes

Leslie Bacho

Chief Executive Officer



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# CalFresh: a vital lifeline for our community

- In Nov. '25, CalFresh benefits were disbursed late as a result of the government shutdown.
- **Calls to our Food Connection hotline doubled; visits to our online Food Locator nearly tripled.**
- As the rollout of H.R. 1 provisions continues, we're preparing not only for more people at our sites but also for people needing more food than normal.



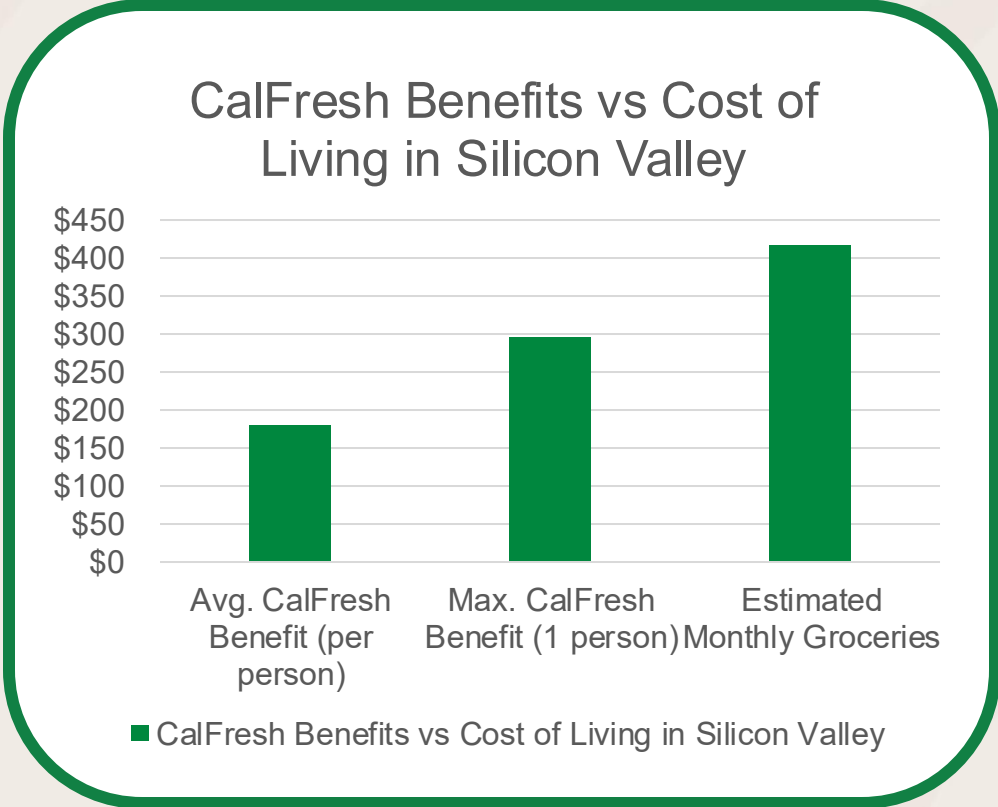
# Reductions in CalFresh cause our lines to grow longer

CalFresh (SNAP) provides 9 meals for every 1 from food banks.

## Benefit reductions increase food bank demand.

High cost of living leaves less room for food in family budgets.

Many households earn too much to qualify but still struggle, including immigrants and middle-income families.



Data from sccgov.org and Silicon Valley Index



# How are we preparing?

## **Increased Food Sourcing and Purchasing**

Proactively increased our food budget for the remainder of our fiscal year.

## **Supporting CalFresh Recipients Subject to Work Requirements**

Partnering with SSA/HSA to promote volunteerism as a pathway to meet work requirements.

## **In Development: Communications for CalFresh Recipients on Changes**

Working with SSA/HSA to develop materials to explain the changes to CalFresh and how recipients can maintain eligibility.



# Policy Priorities

Rachel Monaco

Senior Manager, Policy and Advocacy



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# CalFood: most important state funding for food banks

- CalFood is currently facing a ~\$72M-statewide drop in funding at the end of June 2026.
- **Ask: \$60M ongoing; \$50M one-time to respond to H.R. 1.**
- Critical to food banks to meet increased need by purchasing CA produced food such as produce, dairy and meat; a win for farmers, food banks, and our community.

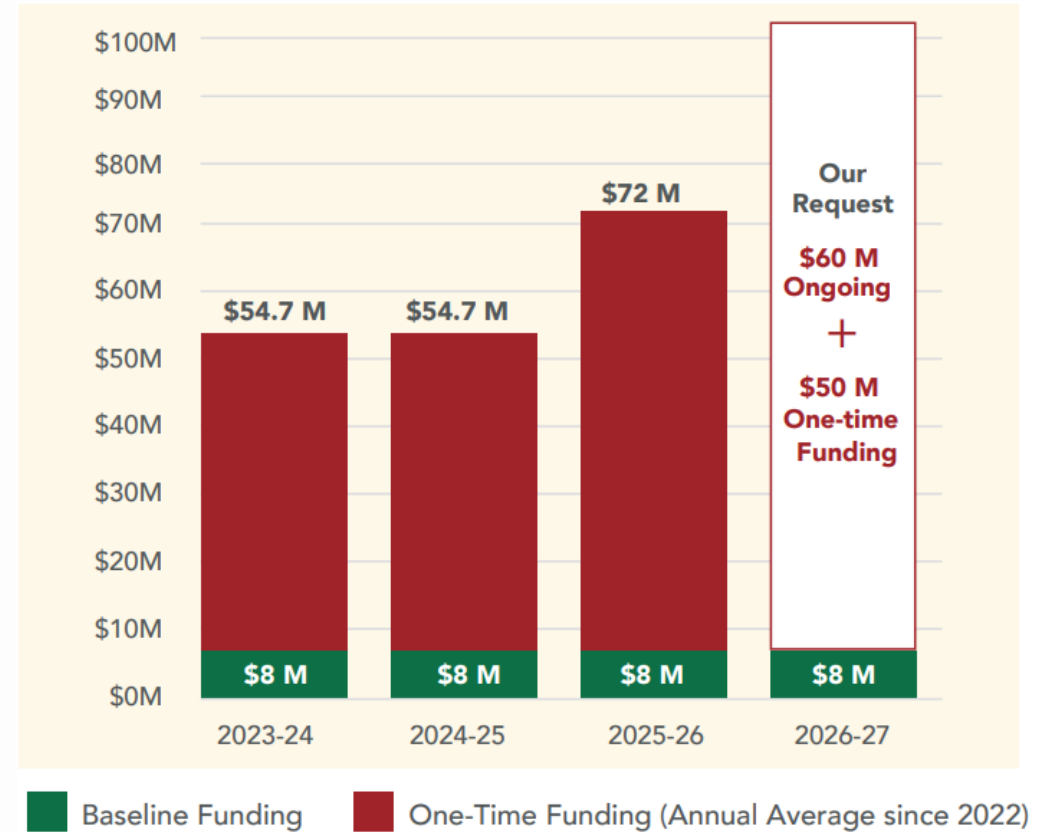


Image from California Association of Food Banks



# Key CalFresh priorities

**Increase benefits:** Ensure households receive enough support to meet their nutritional needs.

**Expand eligibility:** Include underserved populations.

**Improve access:** Cut red tape and increase access to vulnerable populations.

**Protect autonomy:** Safeguard recipients' ability to purchase the food that best meets their household's needs.



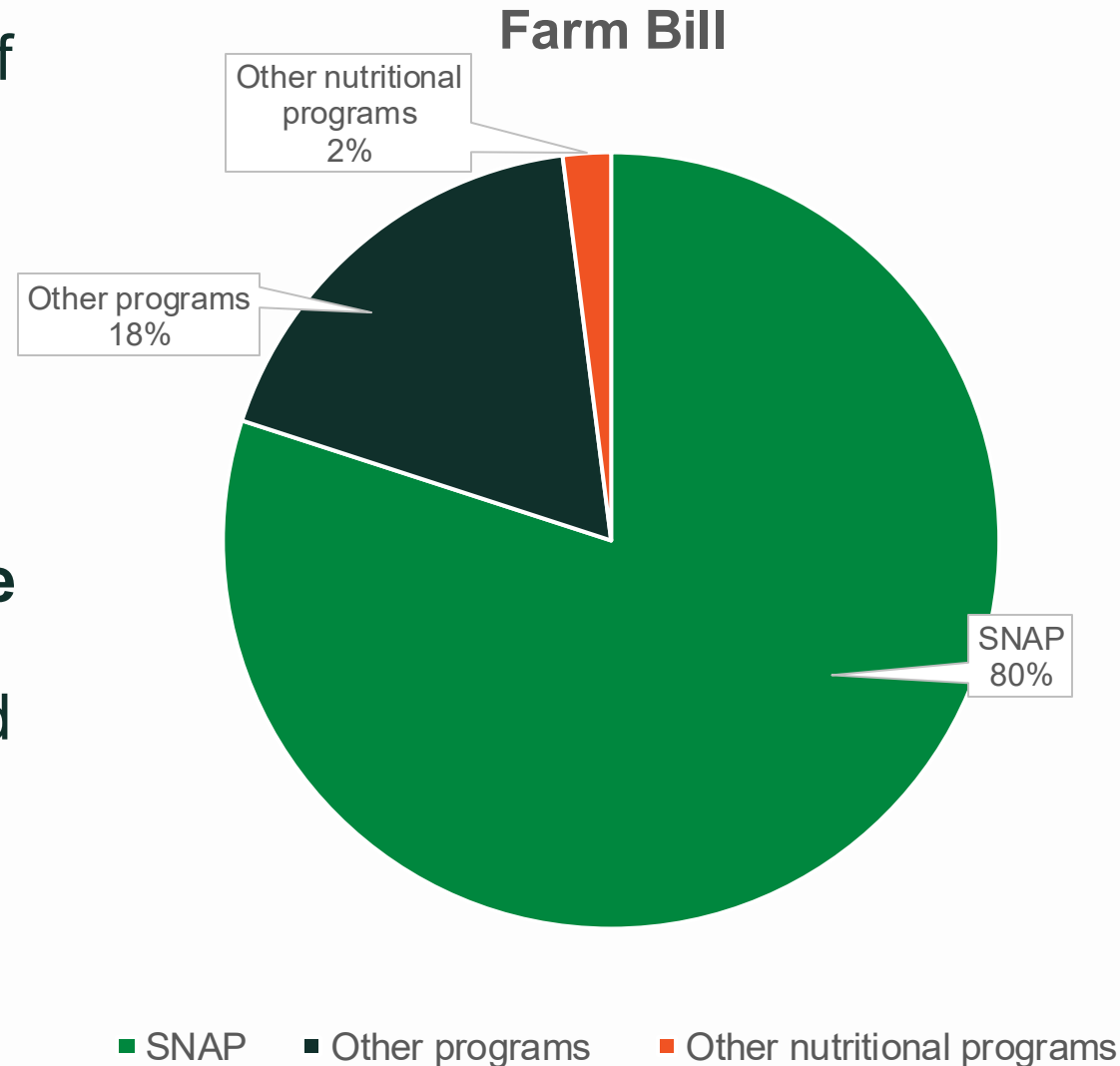
# Priority state CalFresh bills, budget asks

- **CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot:** \$100M to provide a double-up benefit at participating grocery stores.
- **AB 2299: California Anti-Hunger Response and Employment Training:** Provides state-funded benefits for those cut off from CalFresh due to time limits as a result of H.R. 1.
- **Oppose: AB 2171/SB 1134:** Restricts what people can purchase with CalFresh.



# Farm Bill: what's at stake?

- Crucial for CalFresh and support of food banks.
- ~82% of the Farm Bill funds key nutrition programs like SNAP.
- **Currently being marked up at the federal level;** opportunity to delay implementation of cost-sharing and other H.R.1 provisions; increase funding for TEFAP.



# Student nutrition

**Maintain commitment to fully fund CA's Universal School Meals Program** included in January Governor's Proposed Budget.

**H.R. 1 will impact student nutrition programs.**

Fewer families receiving CalFresh =

- Fewer federal dollars funding school meals.
- Fewer students automatically eligible for SUN Bucks.

Time to eat remains a barrier to access.



**MEAL TIME!**  
State of School Meals:  
San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties

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UC  
CE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources



# Grocery rescue



- We lead regional edible food recovery and advocate for funding to support SB 1383 implementation and food recovery infrastructure.
- In FY25, **we recovered more than 17M pounds of food through grocery rescue.**
- Food recovery advocates are requesting \$29M in annual CalRecycle funding to sustain edible food recovery infrastructure statewide.



# Working Deeply in Community

Alex Navarro

Director of Community Health  
and Nutrition



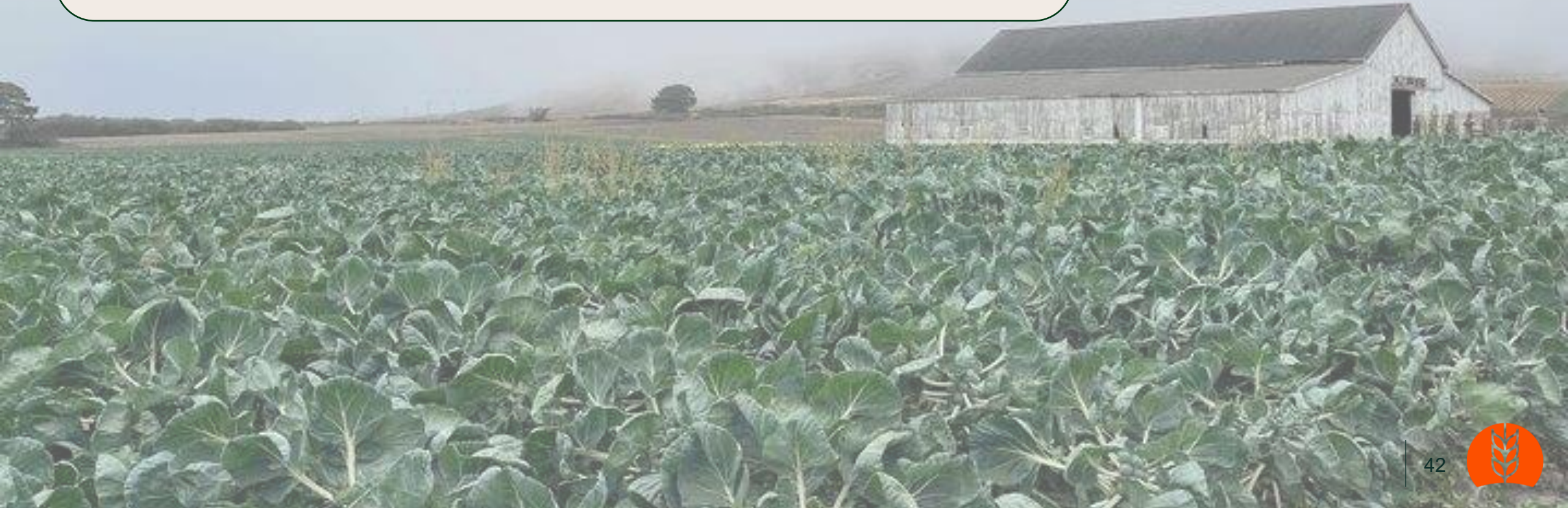
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# Deepening Impact In Community

Farmworkers on the coast often face:

- Health inequities and limited access to nutrition care
- Limited transportation and resource barriers
- Isolation where they live and work

**Together we created a space to learn, build community and empower**



# A Community-Centered Approach



## What we did together

- Brought classes directly to the farm, where they live and work
- Created nutrition and culinary education classes, focusing on their specific needs
- Honored their labor, culture, traditional foodways and stories

**By centering community voice, we strengthened health, dignity and connections**



# Takeaways: What Can You Do?

Rachel Monaco

Senior Manager, Policy and Advocacy



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# Support food access

- **Cities:** Assess community food needs and partner with food banks on referrals and volunteer engagement.
- **Counties:** Collaborate with food banks and invest in food access and root-cause solutions like housing and income supports.
- **State:** Provide \$60M ongoing + \$50M one-time CalFood funding (2026–27) for food assistance.
- **Federal:** Protect and invest in nutrition and anti-poverty programs (Farm Bill, TEFAP, EITC, CTC, WIC, SNP).



# Q & A

Rachel Monaco

Senior Manager, Policy and Advocacy



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**Thank you**