



# State Emergency Food Assistance: Get with the Program

**Help Fight Hunger Throughout California—Fund SEFAP at \$5 million!**

## Need in California

Millions of Californians face food insecurity every day, and food banks provide critical assistance to this population. Several of California’s peer states already make significant investments in their food banks, and California can better serve people in need of food by increasing support in our emergency food network. After years without a state funding mechanism for food banks in California, the State Emergency Food Assistance Program (SEFAP) was established in 2011. SEFAP has been temporarily funded at \$1 million since 2013-2014, but food banks need permanent support to keep up with needs for food assistance among low-income families. Food banks throughout the state are experiencing particularly high demand, complicated by the impacts from the state’s most severe drought emergency in decades.

**Increasing SEFAP funding to \$5 million in 2015-2016 is vital to help reduce hunger.**

## Reducing Hunger Efficiently and Effectively

Every \$1 million appropriated by California to SEFAP would enable food banks to provide approximately 5 million meals. Increasing SEFAP funding to **\$5 million** would allow California food banks to provide about **25 million meals** for those who need it most. The program uses an existing infrastructure managed by the California Department of Social Services to efficiently distribute federal TEFAP food, disaster food, and private tax check-off contributions donated through the Emergency Food for Families Fund to all 58 counties.

| Peer State Investments in Emergency Food Assistance |  |                                    |                               |                                      |
|---|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| State   | Annual State Emergency Food Funding <sup>1</sup> | Food Insecure Persons <sup>2</sup> | Annual Expenditure Per Person | SNAP Participation Rate <sup>3</sup> |
| Massachusetts                                       | \$13 million                                     | 809,920                            | \$16.05                       | 93%                                  |
| New York  | \$30 million                                     | 2,853,190                          | \$10.51                       | 80%                                  |
| Pennsylvania  | \$17.8 million                                   | 1,894,550                          | \$9.07                        | 90%                                  |
| Ohio  | \$13 million                                     | 2,054,290                          | \$6.33                        | 88%                                  |
| New Jersey  | \$6.8 million                                    | 1,230,690                          | \$5.52                        | 77%                                  |
| Washington  | \$5.1 million                                    | 1,101,490                          | \$4.63                        | 98%                                  |
| <b>California</b>                                   | <b>\$1.0 million</b>                             | <b>6,179,590</b>                   | <b>\$0.15</b>                 | <b>63%</b>                           |

## Supporting Local Economies and California Agriculture

In addition to providing healthy food to struggling Californians who need it most, increasing **SEFAP funding also helps stimulate local economies and California agriculture**. SEFAP funding helps provide food for families in need, and these families are better able to spend precious dollars on non-food items as a result, thus increasing economic activity to communities. Moreover, funds appropriated to SEFAP are required to be spent on purchasing and distributing food grown or produced in California, to the benefit of our agricultural and food sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> Compiled from each state’s EFAP funding data.

<sup>2</sup> Feeding America. Map the Meal Gap. <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> USDA. State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2012.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/Reaching2012.pdf>