

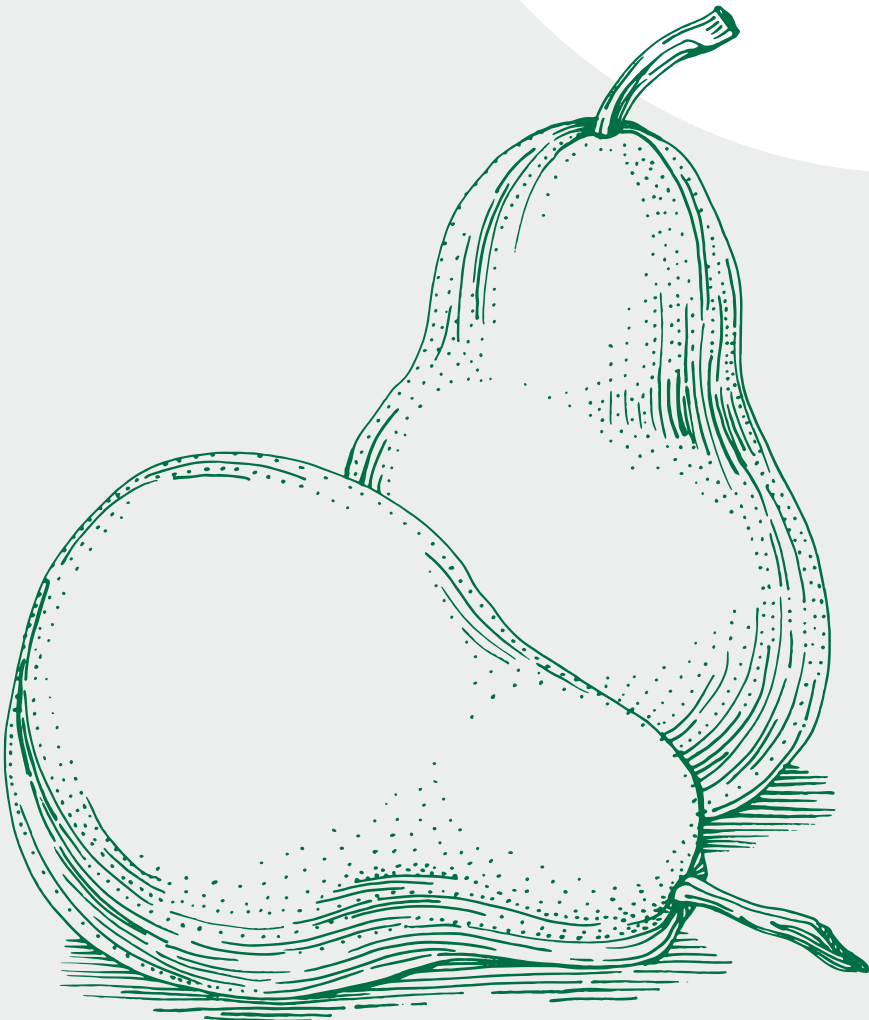
2022

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# IMPACT REPORT

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF  
FOOD BANKS



CALIFORNIA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
FOOD BANKS

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# LETTER FROM THE CEO

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Dear Friends,

California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) continues working towards its vision of a well-nourished and hunger-free California, where everyone has enough food to lead a healthy life. In this work, we depend on the strength and resiliency of our food bank members, anti-hunger coalitions, and partners like you in our mission to end hunger in California.

As public life reemerged last year, food banks continued to serve an elevated need for food. They also started implementing SB 1383, California's edible food recovery law, while at the same time facing inconsistent availability of the federal commodities they usually rely on. Then came the skyrocketing cost of fuel and groceries, which sustained the high demand for food bank services, and strained the financial resources of our member food banks as well. **While the evening news may no longer cover the stories of the one in five hungry Californians or show images of the millions who line up for food distributions each month, those lines persist.**

**In response, last year alone, CAFB delivered a record 240 million pounds of food to food banks, secured \$180 million for food bank purchases, and held our first statewide conference since the pandemic began, Food ACCESS 2022.** The two-day event was abuzz with energy, ideas, and hope for a hunger-free future. We honored three of our founders, two of whom retired this past year. All in all, the year ushered in a host of new leaders and new faces to the food banking network and anti-hunger movement — and we're grateful to have more champions of our cause.

As we look ahead to 2023, with the end of CalFresh Emergency Allotments and Pandemic EBT, which has represented one-third of the meals in California's food safety net, will disappear. As allies, it is critical that we come together and elevate the need of those who cannot speak for themselves — bring visibility to the lines that our food banks still see every day. Our 2023 legislative and administrative advocacy work is focused on providing food banks with the resources they need to serve their communities and introducing policies that will systemically decrease food insecurity. If we ensure that California's fruits and vegetables are not wasted but rather are equitably distributed across our state, enable access to nutritious food for those who need it right now, and change the systems and policies that create hunger in the first place, then we can — and we will — end hunger in California.

Thank you for joining us in this life-changing work.



Stacia Hill Levenfeld, CEO

***"If we ensure that California's fruits and vegetables are not wasted but rather are equitably distributed across our state, enable access to nutritious food for those who need it right now, and change the systems and policies that create hunger in the first place, then we can — and we will — end hunger in California."***

—Stacia Hill Levenfeld



# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE:



*Building a diverse & sustainable charitable food system*



*Creating robust & equitable pathways that connect food-insecure neighbors to food*



*Preventing hunger from happening in the first place*



**Ending hunger in California**

# Building a diverse & sustainable charitable food system

**229 MILLION**

*Pounds of Produce  
Delivered*

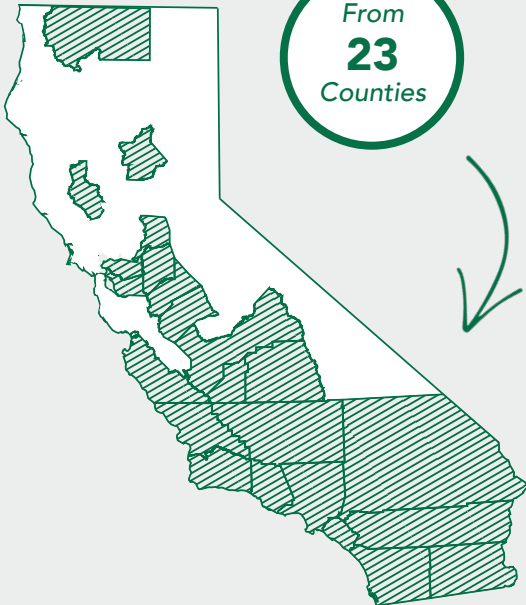
**11 MILLION**

*Pounds of Protein  
& Pantry Essentials  
Delivered*

**74**

*Agricultural  
Partners*

*From  
**23**  
Counties*



## FROM FARMS TO FAMILIES

Since 2005, our Farm to Family program has built collaborative relationships with farmers, packers, distributors, and freight carriers throughout California to distribute donated food to food banks. Last year was a record-breaking year. We distributed more than 53 types of farm-fresh produce, more than 20 types of protein and pantry essentials, and mixed food boxes, including meal kits tailored to the diets of specific cultures and communities.

The availability of fresh produce through CAFB's Farm to Family program has made fruits and vegetables a staple of food banks' distributions — **many food banks report that fresh produce constitutes half or more of the food they distribute.**



**WE DELIVERED OVER 465,345 GALLONS OF FRESH FLUID MILK DONATED BY DARIGOLD AS PART OF THE USDA DAIRY DONATION PROGRAM**



**WE DELIVERED 750,000 POUNDS OF SHREDDED CHEESE FROM MAPLE RIDGE FARMS THROUGH A GRANT FROM FEEDING AMERICA & THE CALIFORNIA MILK ADVISORY BOARD**



**WE DELIVERED 12 MILLION POUNDS OF STRAWBERRIES DONATED BY DRISCOLL FARMS**

In addition to the trucking companies that Farm to Family partners with, these truck drivers have committed their time to drive exclusively for CAFB and are a critical part of our transportation network. We're grateful for their dedication to our shared cause:

(They're brothers!)



**SERGIO ROMO**  
**9 Years Driving for CAFB**  
*"I love it. It's all types of produce — you name it, we pick it up."*

**EDGAR PACHECO**  
**8 Years Driving for CAFB**  
*"The produce we deliver — I'm happy that it goes to people in need. That's my number one favorite thing. I'm very proud of working with CAFB."*

**IGNACIO PACHECO**  
**7 Years Driving for CAFB**  
*"We used to drive loads of canned foods, but we don't do that much anymore. We do oranges, carrots, onions, melons, broccoli, and so much more."*



SERGIO, EDGAR, & IGNACIO DELIVERED **954** OF THE **5,725** TRUCKLOADS OF FOOD OUR FARM TO FAMILY PROGRAM DELIVERED TO FOOD BANKS IN 2022

## WHERE WE'RE HEADED: INCREASING ACCESS TO FRESH PRODUCE

Not all California food banks have the infrastructure available to distribute fresh produce consistently. In the coming year, we're focused on removing the barriers our smaller and rural food banks face, such as cold storage capacity, costly freight, and timely distribution. We're working to understand each food bank's unique challenges and help to overcome them.

We're also kicking off a new project, Farms Together. In partnership with Community Alliance with Family Farmers and Fresh Approach, we are working with small and minority-owned farms to procure more fresh produce and expand on the culturally-relevant types of produce provided to people within our communities.



# Creating robust & equitable pathways that connect food-insecure neighbors to food

## SUPPORTING OUR FOOD BANK NETWORK

CAFB is working to ensure our food banks have the tools and resources they need to do what they do best: feed our communities. Our member engagement program provided more than 20 opportunities for food bank staff to stay abreast of the latest information and resources, connect, and learn — from educational webinars to engaging discussion groups to days of action. We convened State partners from CalRecycle, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and California Department of Social Services to provide food bank staff insight into processes, policy changes, and administrative updates.

Our community coalesced at our October conference, Food ACCESS 2022. The conference brought together a wide variety of anti-hunger and anti-poverty advocates from across the state and country to strategize, connect, and push forward a vision of a hunger-free California.

### OUR MEMBER FOOD BANKS:

Partnered with  
**6,000+**

Pantries, Soup Kitchens,  
& Community  
Distribution Partners

Distributed More Than  
**1 BILLION**  
Pounds of Food —

The Equivalent of  
**850 MILLION**  
Meals

Provided Food to  
**4.5 MILLION**  
People Per Month,  
on Average

\*data from 2021

### OUR 41 MEMBER FOOD BANKS:



# 2022 FOOD ACCESS CONFERENCE

It was Tuesday morning when Genevieve Riutort took the stage at **Food ACCESS 2022** to introduce fellow food bankers Dalia Hernandez-Fernandez from Second Harvest of the Greater Valley, Geo Dinoso of Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano, Joel Campos from Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County, and Tristan Langstaff of Central California Food Bank. Besides dedicating themselves in service of their food-insecure community members, they share a common history — that of being food-insecure themselves.

***“What I’d like people to understand about food insecurity is how it’s an overwhelming filter on every decision you make — whether it’s buying clothes or choosing to go out, you have to think, ‘do I have enough money to buy food later?’”***

—Geo Dinoso

The panelists gave emotional and honest testimony about their experiences as food-insecure kids, college students, and parents.

***“Hunger is invisible. You can’t see it because people will do whatever it takes to shield themselves from the public, because they don’t want to be shamed, they don’t want to be less.”***

—Joel Campos

Their words not only inspired attendees but offered an unveiled look at hunger as an issue entangled with many other challenges our communities face.

***“Hunger is a symptom of poverty. We’re not going to solve hunger without solving poverty.”***

—Dalia Hernandez-Fernandez

Food ACCESS 2022 was presented by PG&E.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:



Left to Right: Joel Campos, Geo Dinoso, Genevieve Riutort, Dalia Hernandez-Fernandez, Tristan Langstaff



**Mikki Kendall**  
Author & Diversity Consultant



**Jennifer Siebel Newsom**  
First Partner of California



Left to Right: Farmer & Former CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura, CDFA Secretary Karen Ross, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County CEO Claudia Keller

**120**

Organizations

**450**

Attendees

**OUR 55 CALFRESH  
OUTREACH PARTNERS  
INCREASED ACCESS:**

**97,000**  
Households  
Pre-Screened for  
CalFresh Eligibility

**28,000**  
Households  
Assisted in Applying  
for CalFresh

**7,000**  
Households  
Assisted in Keeping  
Their CalFresh

## SUPPORTING OUR OUTREACH NETWORK

CAFB increased community access to public nutrition programs by supporting our network of 55 CalFresh outreach partners and our 16 Pandemic-EBT outreach partners throughout the year. These conversations identified and elevated issues with the programs, provided feedback on materials, and created opportunities to troubleshoot cases. We offered educational training for outreach workers and convened CalFresh partners for our annual Peer-to-Peer statewide meeting.

At the same time, we worked with our partners at the State, advocating for increased access through program implementation while pushing for permanent improvements — like simplified applications, telephonic signatures, and virtual interviews.

## A HISTORIC WIN

*The expansion of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, known as CalFresh in California) benefits to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients in 2019 was the biggest increase in program eligibility in decades, ending an inequitable policy of exclusion that had been in place for more than 40 years. The change impacted nearly 1.2 million SSI recipients.*

These are the first two sentences of a report we published last year that took an in-depth look at this historic expansion that CAFB was instrumental in achieving. This original research, paired with an interactive data dashboard detailing county level population data and support gaps, armed CalFresh outreach workers around the state with the knowledge needed to target communities that had been overlooked or that struggled with accessing benefits.

Read the full report:  
[cafoodbanks.org/calfresh-expansion-report](https://cafoodbanks.org/calfresh-expansion-report)





THROUGHOUT THE  
STATE, WE WORK  
WITH:

**55**

*CalFresh Outreach  
Partners*

**16**

*P-EBT Outreach  
Partners*



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**WHERE WE'RE HEADED:**

**DECREASING HUNGER BY INCREASING ENROLLMENT**

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We continue to look for strategies that ensure food-insecure Californians have access to foods that meet their dietary, cultural, and nutritional needs. As we explore new ways to support our member food banks, which have been stretched thin since the onset of the pandemic, we continue building a robust calendar of engagement and learning opportunities so that food banks are equipped with the resources and support they need.

We remain steadfast in our work to enroll, and keep enrolled, all Californians eligible for CalFresh, focusing on connecting with and supporting those with the greatest barriers to accessing benefits — people like our formerly incarcerated community members. We eagerly await government waivers allowing incarcerated individuals to apply for CalFresh benefits before release. Once the waivers are in place, we are poised to aid state prisons to better enable the application process. Equipping people on parole with basic resources gives them a better chance at successfully reentering our communities, reestablishing their lives, and avoiding recidivism.

# Preventing hunger from happening in the first place

**\$2 BILLION**

Secured to Implement  
School Meals for All

**191**

Co-Sponsors  
Secured on 7  
Federal Bills

**\$120 MILLION**

Secured for Food  
Banks to Purchase  
Food

## ADVANCING POLICY

In addition to securing critical resources for food bank operations through advocacy at the state and federal levels, CAFB removed barriers to food assistance for Californians while creating policy changes that will permanently mitigate hunger — solutions like SB 641 (Skinner), which improves access to CalFresh for college students.

In 2022, The White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health was held for the first time in 50 years. To ensure CAFB and our food banks' perspective was heard loud and clear, we held five listening sessions, including with Rep. Lee, Speaker Pelosi, and Rep. DeSaulnier, and helped send Jacqueline Benitez, a college student who works as a preschool teacher and has personal experience with hunger, to attend the conference in Washington, DC.

At year's end, there was an uptick in EBT "skimming" or, simply put, theft. We worked tirelessly on behalf of CalFresh recipients who had their benefits stolen to secure funding in the Federal omnibus bill to ensure that benefits are replaced.

## SECURING ACCESS FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine took hold and Ukrainian people were forced to flee their homeland, many sought refuge in the United States. As they began to arrive in late February, some were faced with the stark reality that they were ineligible for critical benefits, including SNAP (known as CalFresh in California and formerly as food stamps). Being victims of war, the refugees arrived with very little, and needed support to feed themselves and their families.

We immediately got to work. In coalition with anti-hunger advocates, we identified the technicalities that prevented our newest neighbors from accessing groceries and advocated for a swift resolution. Thanks to our powerful coalition and the leadership of Speaker Pelosi, the United for Ukrainians emergency package, which includes language authorizing federal benefits (like SNAP) for Ukrainians granted Humanitarian Parole, was signed into law on May 21.

Access to food is a basic human right no matter which country you come from.

## COALITIONS & PARTNERS:



School Meals for All



Feeding America



Californians for SSI



CalEITC Coalition



California Hunger Action Coalition



California Food and Farming Network



Protecting Immigrant Families



End Child Poverty California



*The California Assn. of Food Banks is calling for nearly twice as much money from the state than Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed in his January budget for the regional organizations, warning that relief from the government that had buoyed low-income families during the pandemic is expiring and will further contribute to financial woes."*

*—Los Angeles Times, April 20, 2022*

### WHERE WE'RE HEADED:

## PANDEMIC PROGRAMS ARE ENDING, ACTION IS CRITICAL

With the end of pandemic programs like CalFresh Emergency Allotments (which added extra benefits to all) and Pandemic EBT (which provided funds for groceries for low income kids) we're growing increasingly concerned about what lies ahead for hungry Californians. These programs, coupled with the incredible work of food banks, held the line on hunger these past three years. Food insecurity rates are not decreasing, so we must continue to advocate for an adequate food safety net or it could take up to a decade for hunger rates to retract to what they were before the pandemic.

We will actively advocate in our statehouse and country's Capitol for food bank support and to enact anti-hunger policies that will systematically and permanently reduce food insecurity.

Read our 2023 state policy agenda: [cafoodbanks.org/2023-state-policy-agenda](https://cafoodbanks.org/2023-state-policy-agenda)

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# OUR TEAM

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## OUR BOARD:

Leslie Bacho, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley  
Natalie Caples, Co-Chief Executive Officer, Central California Food Bank  
Nicole Celaya, Co-Executive Director, FoodLink for Tulare County  
Michael Flood, President & Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank  
Amanda Friscia, Executive Director, Fort Bragg Food Bank  
Claudia Keller, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County  
Keenon Krick, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest of the Greater Valley  
Shurla Lovejoy, Manager of Operations – Food Bank, Dignity Health Connected Living  
Dave Martinez, Executive Director, Placer Food Bank  
Juan Martinez, Nutrition Education & Hunger Prevention Director, Kings County Community Action Organization  
Willy Elliott-McCrea, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County  
Beth Stanton, Executive Director, Interfaith Food Bank of Amador County  
Monica White, President & Chief Executive Officer, Food Share of Ventura County  
Blake Young, President & Chief Executive Officer, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services

## OUR STAFF:

Fizza Ali	Firdaus Jahan	Amanda Moyrong
Stephane-Marie Angel	Rachael Lacey	Stephanie Nishio
Victoria Boykin	Lauren Lathan Reid	Ivania Reyes-Gonzalez
Jay Camegla	Alice Lee-Osborne	Stacy Robson
Jillian Carbone	Stacia Hill Levenfeld	Courtney Scullin-Taylor
Amanda Carson	Wilken Louie	Becky Silva
Gabby Davidson	Paul Maas	May Lynn Tan
Loisa Domingo	Edith Martinez	Eva Tangen
Itzúl Gutierrez	Melanie Miksis	Sabrina Thakkar
Josh Hoobler	Madeleine Moore	Maria Vaca
Maria Houlne	Madeline Morataya-Rodriguez	

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