Central Coast food banks sees increase in demand as gas and food prices rise

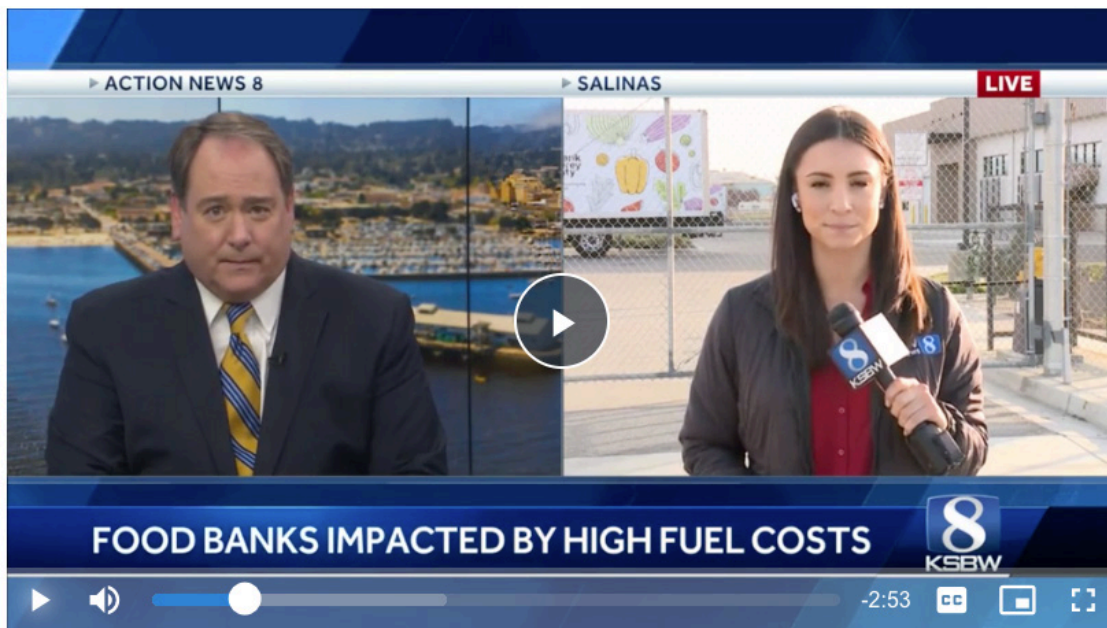Share **f** **🐦** 🔗   **KSBW** 8 | Updated: 7:14 PM PDT Mar 25, 2022
                                ACTION NEWS

Ariana Jaso
Anchor/Reporter

SALINAS, Calif. — High gas prices are crushing food banks, all three counties on the Central Coast are feeling pain at the pump and experiencing similar challenges. Especially when it comes to shipping and fueling up their trucks.

Dawn Barreres, with Second Harvest food bank in Santa Cruz County, said, "We're seeing increases in inbound product that we're bringing in. So it costs us more to get it into the warehouse. We're seeing increases in outbound delivery."

San Benito County food bank has three semi-trucks that are on the road six days a week. While Monterey County food bank uses 15 semi-trucks, covering hundreds of miles.

"That's a lot of territory to cover a lot of miles and obviously a lot of money spent on gas," said Melissa Kendrick, CEO of Food Bank for Monterey County.

Sarah Nordwick, CEO of San Benito County food bank shared, "Given the cost of gas and our 46% increase in that gas line budget, we have seen it hit the bottom line."

With an increase in gas and shipping comes higher food prices. For example, Nordwick explained San Benito County food bank used to buy a dozen eggs for $1.29 compared to now they're paying $3.19 per dozen eggs. They also say they're seeing fewer donors and volunteers.

Berreres said, "We had almost two years of help from the National Guard, and yesterday was their last day. So we're actively recruiting volunteers all sorts."

Despite the higher costs, all three food banks said they don't anticipate cutting back on the amount of food they hand out.

"We are definitely feeling the stress to go from a pandemic that was unprecedented to now an inflation that seems unprecedented, we never really had a chance to take a deep breath and have a steady state. So we're just going from one chaos to another," Nordwick said.

To donate or volunteer—

Food Bank in Monterey County: **https://foodbankformontereycounty.org/**

Food Bank in Santa Cruz County: **https://www.thefoodbank.org/**

Food Bank in San Benito County: **https://www.communityfoodbankofsbc.org/**