



## For Immediate Release

**Date:** Tuesday, January 17, 2024

**Contact:** Dawn Barreras, Chief Marketing Officer

**Telephone Number:** (831) 232-6369

**Email Address:** [dawn@thefoodbank.org](mailto:dawn@thefoodbank.org)

**Web address:** [thefoodbank.org](http://thefoodbank.org)

**Event Dates:** January 24, 2024 5-6 p.m..

January 25, 2024 4-5 p.m.

**Event Location:** See schedule below

### **Cultivating Change: Food Bank Launches Land & Sea Sustainability Efforts**

**Program nourishes community and economy, features produce from BIPOC farmers, and local fisheries.**

**WATSONVILLE, CA January 17, 2024** - Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County launches its innovative “Land & Sea” initiative prioritizing locally sourced, sustainable, produce and meat proteins. The Land aspect of this effort, the Farmer Equity Program (FEP), supports BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)-owned farms across Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey Counties, while the Sea aspect supports the local fishing economy by sourcing nutritious seafood from Monterey Bay. This groundbreaking program aims to alleviate immediate food insecurity issues, lower food-miles, and circulate money in the local economy. These initiatives also seek to strengthen community ties, endorse organic sustainability practices, and enhance the overall well-being of the local region and its residents.

A significant forward stride in the realm of food sourcing, these initiatives showcase The Food Bank’s commitment to supporting local and BIPOC organic farmers and local fisheries, while addressing broader community needs.

*“This initiative is not just about providing food; it’s a commitment to nurturing our community, cultivating equity, and sowing the seeds of positive change. By working hand-in-hand with local farmers and fisheries, we’re filling stomachs and fostering a resilient and sustainable future for all. Together, we’re distributing food and cultivating change.”*

— Erica Padilla-Chavez, CEO, Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County

growers and owners in the tri-county area. The intention is to prioritize underrepresented growers and embrace a grassroots approach that supports local farmers and strengthens community bonds.

*“The Farmer Equity Program allows Luna’s Farm to purchase items for 2024, like seeds, plants, and cover crop. We are very thankful to Second Harvest for buying produce from Luna’s Farm which helps Luna’s Farm continue our mission of growing fresh, local, and organic produce.”* — Antonio Luna, owner, Luna’s Farm

Second Harvest is also partnering with Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust (MBFT) to increase access to local, sustainable seafood. Local fish provide nutrient-rich meat protein that The Food Bank strives to offer its food-insecure recipients.

*“As a new partner in our Community Seafood Program, Second Harvest Food Bank will be able to help us put more local fish on local plates around Santa Cruz County and be able to amplify the impact our program has for both the fishermen and those receiving food distributions.”*

— Melissa Mahoney, Executive Director, Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust

Both produce from the Farmer Equity Program and fish from the Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust will be distributed together for the first time on the following dates and locations:

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024 (5-6 p.m.)**

Freedom Elementary School  
25 Holly Dr., Freedom, CA 95019

**Thursday, January 25, 2024 (4-5 p.m.)**

Live Oak Elementary School  
1916 Capitola Rd., Santa Cruz, CA 95062

---

**About Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County**

Founded in 1972, Second Harvest Food Bank was the first food bank in California and the second in the nation. Its mission is to inspire and support Santa Cruz County to provide nourishment for all community members. Its network of nearly 130 local agencies and programs feeds on average 65,000 people in Santa Cruz County every month. In our community’s efforts to ease food-insecurity, we recognize our donors, we celebrate our volunteers, we’re thankful for our partners and staff, and we truly see all our neighbors. We are the Food Bank.

[TheFoodBank.org](http://TheFoodBank.org)

##

---





## Farmer Equity Program

Luna Family of Luna's Farm with harvested winter squash



## MBFT Partnership

Grenadier fillets donated to Second Harvest Food Bank by Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust



## MBFT Partnership

Second Harvest Food Bank and Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust leadership working on local sustainability efforts.



## Farmer Equity Program

Juve, Rigo from Rancho Las Palmas,  
With Second Harvest Food Bank's  
Supply Chain Director Emily Freed



*Copyright (C) 2022 Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County. All rights reserved.*

Thank you for receiving media alerts from Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County

Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County 800 Ohlone Pkwy, Watsonville, CA 95076-7005

[Add us to your address book](#)

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County · 800 Ohlone Pkwy · Watsonville, CA 95076-7005 · USA