



WE ARE THE FOOD BANK

Partner Agency Newsletter

May 2024



From the CEO

Dear Agency Partners,

I recently returned from an enlightening Feeding America conference, where food banks from across California united with over 200 counterparts nationwide. Our gathering was dedicated to delving into the pressing challenges facing food banks and exploring innovative solutions to address the escalating levels of hunger in our state and country. We engaged in discussions on the transformative impact of artificial intelligence and technology on our food systems, while also shedding light on persistent issues such as food deserts and the ongoing inaccessibility of food in certain communities. We were encouraged to return home and reflect on how our local network can better assess food needs and distribution to serve our community in a more equitable manner.

Our conversations underscored that the structures of many food banks and partner agencies were established organically nearly fifty years ago, at the inception of the food banking movement. As with any longstanding program, it's essential to pause and evaluate our systems to ensure they operate with optimal efficiency and effectiveness.

To this end, starting in July, I will be initiating conversations with partner agencies to collectively examine our robust network. Together, we will analyze data, celebrate our shared achievements, and pinpoint opportunities to enhance our collective efforts, all with the overarching goal of ensuring that every neighbor in Santa Cruz County has access to nourishing food. I eagerly anticipate our collaboration and am immensely grateful for your unwavering dedication to nourishing our community.

In partnership,

Erica Padilla-Chavez
Chief Executive Officer

Agency Network Update

June Inventory Closure

The last day for order delivery or pick up is Wednesday, June 26 prior to our annual inventory closure. Normal operations will resume Friday, July 5. The Agency Network Team will be reaching out with more information, particularly concerning order availability, as we get closer to closure. We appreciate our partners' understanding while we make sure our warehouse is in order.

Protein Survey & Push Item Follow Up

A big thanks to the agencies that provided their protein preferences last month. This feedback will be used for budgeting in the upcoming fiscal year. As a reminder, the Agency Network Team will continue to put produce with a short shelf-life on orders to expedite the distribution process. The limit will be two produce items per order, so partner agencies aren't overwhelmed.

5-Day Ordering Window Reminder

As noted at the April Partner Agency Meeting, the **ordering window on Agency Express 3 will be shortened from seven days to five days** starting this month. For example, if an agency usually orders on a Wednesday for delivery or pickup the following Wednesday, the earliest they can now order will be the preceding Friday. Please reach out to our Team if you have any questions. This change will result in fresher produce as well as more accurate and consistent fulfillment of produce items.

Office Hours

For any questions or concerns from network agency representatives, our next office hours will be Tuesday, May 21 from 12 -2 p.m. This will be over Microsoft Teams and the link and information is below.

[Join the meeting now](#) | Meeting ID: 261 001 504 633 | Passcode: dyXFmJ

Agency Participation Numbers

March 2024			
Estimated Unduplicated Households and Individuals			
County Zone	All Households	All Individuals	% Change from Feb. '24
North County	13,054	24,972	-7.46%
South County	4,949	20,841	2.62%
San Lorenzo Valley	3,745	8,008	3.02%
Out of County	911	1,737	-15.02%
Total	22,659	55,558	-2.72%

*42 of 49 (86%) partner agencies reporting – Thank you!

Community Spotlight Partner Agency Meeting

This month's quarterly Partner Agency Meeting at St. Philips Episcopal Church was a great success. Thank you to everyone who attended in person and online. We covered a lot of information and had an amazing lunch provided by Martha's Kitchen. Thanks Trish! The meeting recording and slide deck have been emailed to all agency network contacts. Please check with the Agency Network Managers if you did not receive it.



[Link: April 15th Partner Agency Meeting Zoom Recording](#)
Passcode: [g@xmj4*f](#)

We're excited to announce that Fernando Cardenas has joined the Second Harvest Programs team as the Agency Partnerships Director. Fernando oversees our two agency network managers and will focus on the advancement of grocery rescue (SB 1383) in our community.



He brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm to this new position so please welcome, [Fernando](#) to the team!

Save the Date

Please add the events below to your calendars. We kindly request that agencies update us regarding changes to, or cancellations of, their distributions.

Friday, May 3

CalFresh Forum

10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

(lunch included)

Twin Lakes Church – Monschke Hall
2701 Cabrillo College Dr., Aptos

Tuesday, May 21

Agency Network Team Office Hours

12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Join the Meeting

Meeting ID: 261 001 504 633

Passcode: dyXFmJ

Thursday, June 27 - July 4

June Inventory Closure

June 26 – Last day for

deliveries/pick-up orders

July 4 – Offices Closed

July 5 – Normal operations resume

Thursday, September 16

Partner Agency Meeting

Time and Location TBA

Network Action Spotlight

In order to comply with Feeding America, our Agency Network Team will continue to reach out to partners that require updated documentation, as well as to schedule a visit. As a reminder, the elements below are contractual requirements for all partner agencies. Please contact the Agency Network Team with any questions or concerns.

- **Agency Monitoring:** A site visit which may take approximately 1 hour, depending on facility size, will be required annually. It is preferable that this occurs during an agency's distribution, if applicable.
- **Certificate of Liability Insurance:** A current Certificate of Liability Insurance must always be kept on file for each partner agency. It is NOT required that the food bank be "additionally insured" under an agency's plan, but if the food bank is listed as a Certificate Holder, then an insurance certificate will be automatically mailed when the insurance plan is renewed.
- **Food Safety Certification:**
 - **Meal Prep** – the new requirement for agencies that prepare hot/cold meals for the community is a [ServSafe Food Manager](#) certification or equivalent: [ServSafe® Manager](#) or a more cost effective equivalent, [Food Protection Manager Certification | Always Food Safe](#)
 - **Pantry/Direct Distribution** – the new requirement for agencies that have a pantry or distribute produce/dry goods directly to community members is a [ServSafe Food Handler](#) certification: [ServSafe® Food Handler](#)

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