

FOOD InSECURITY SYMPOSIUM

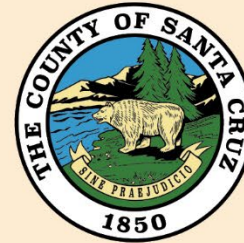
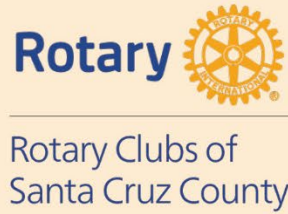
Friday, May 15, 2026

Samper Recital Hall, Cabrillo College

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION!



Thank You to our Sponsors



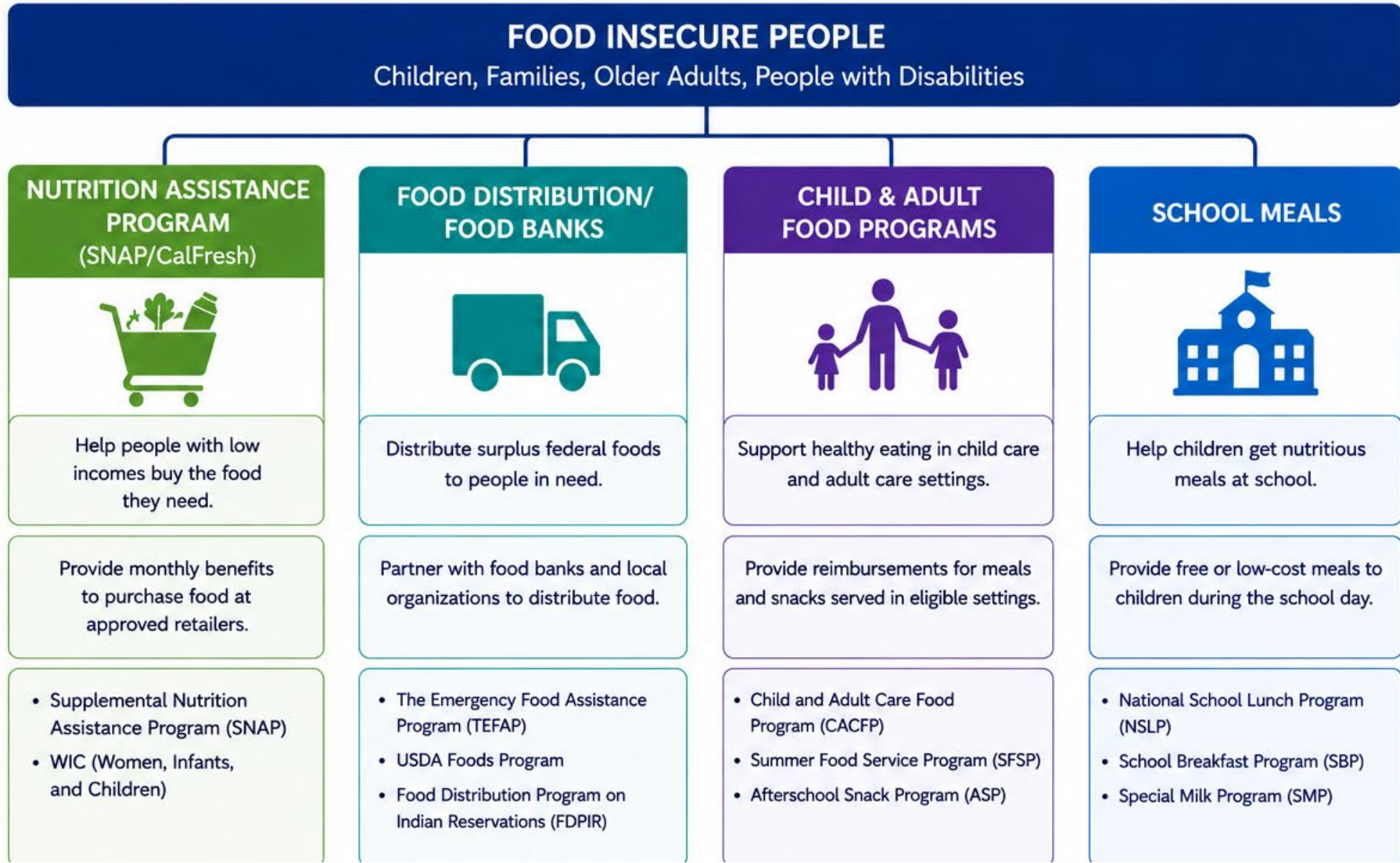
Framing the Day

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

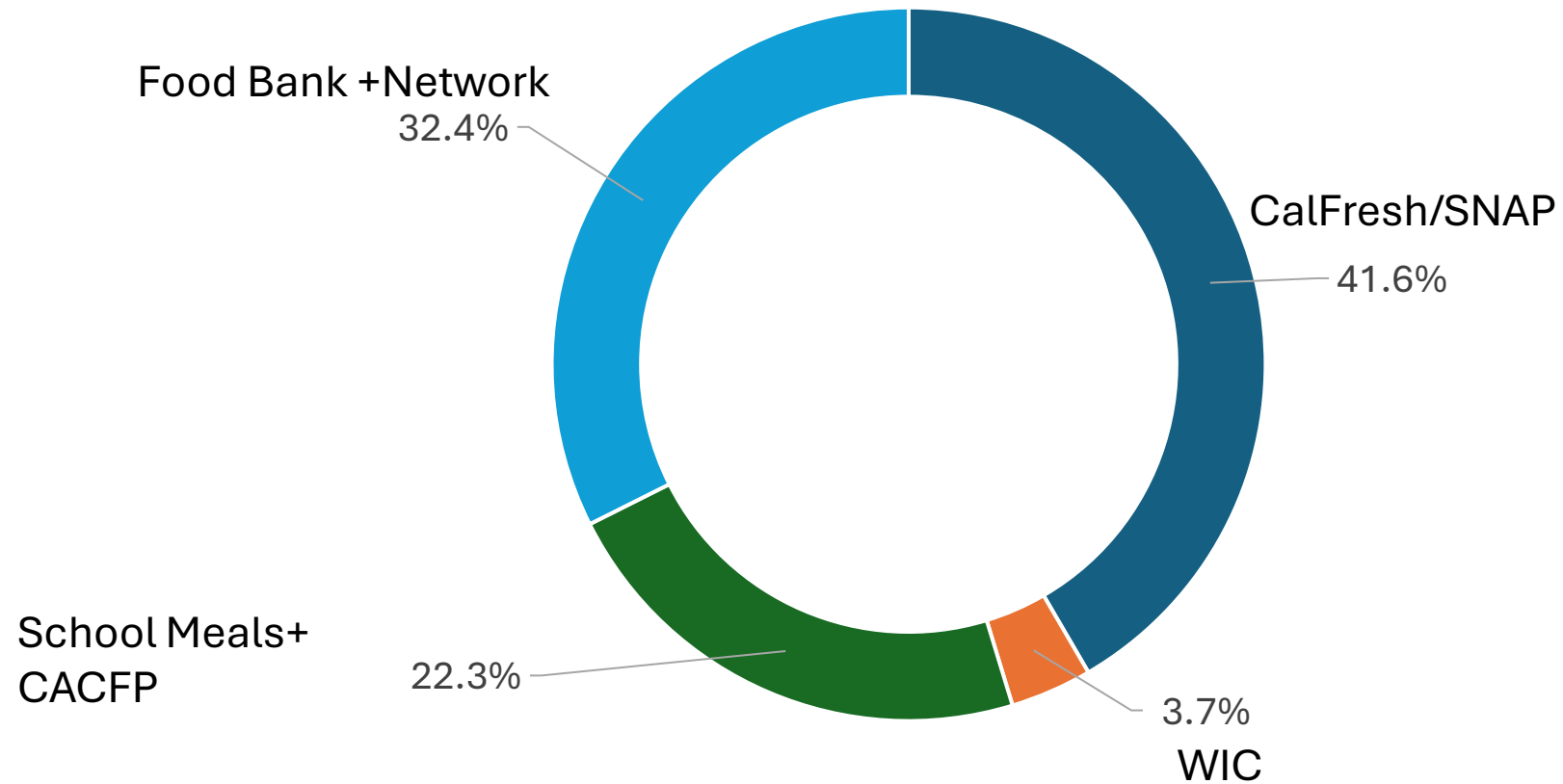


The Nation's Food Safety Net System

The federal food safety net includes a range of programs that help keep people from going hungry and support health and well-being. These programs are designed to work together.



Food Assistance by Source in Santa Cruz County



What we know to date

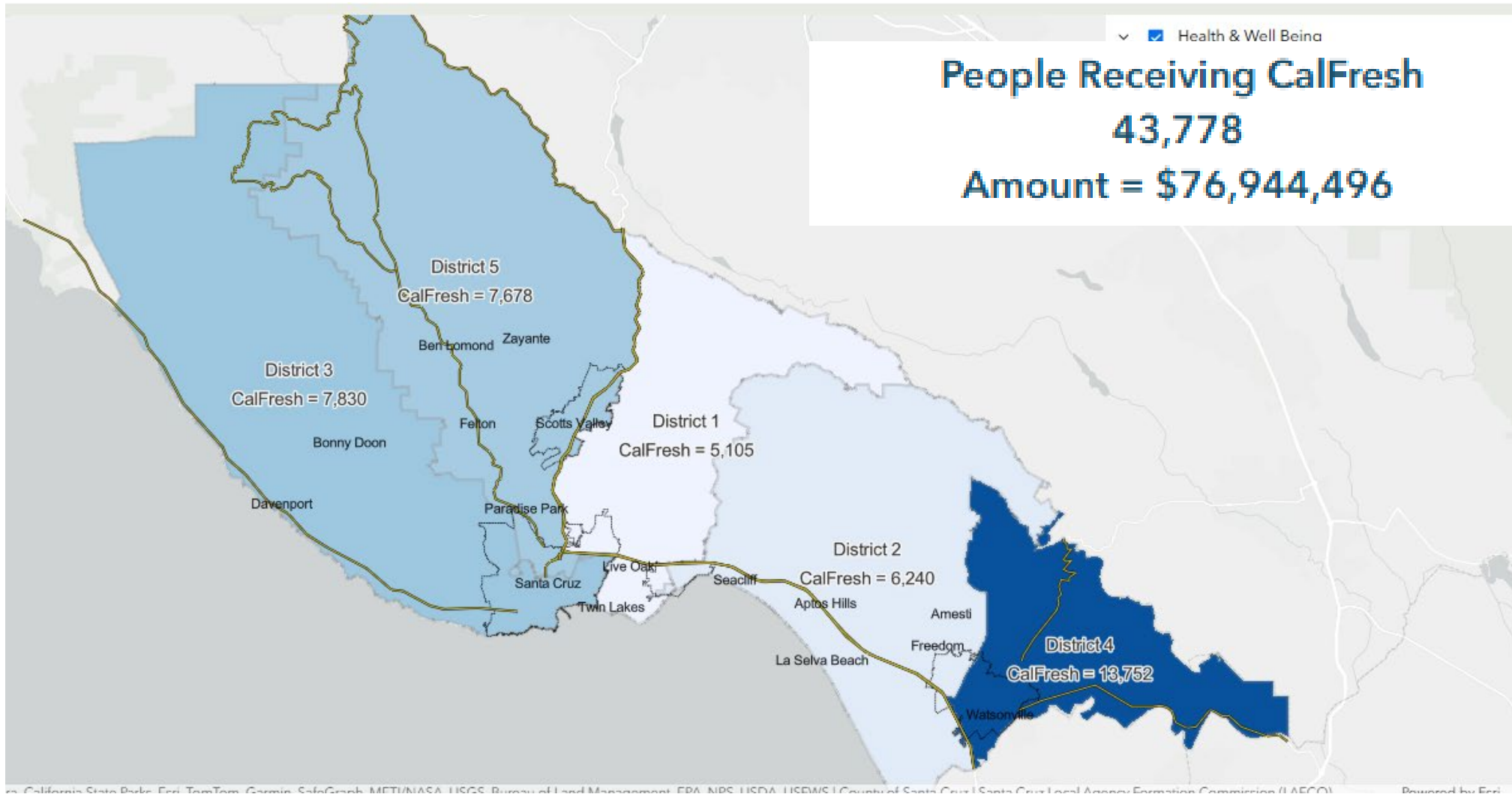
- H.R. 1 imposed the most severe cuts to SNAP in its history
- 2.5 million people have lost access to SNAP
- Feds reduce federal share and increase states responsibility

The solution?

✓ **We need a better Farm Bill!**

- ✓ In the interim: states, local governments + community must collaborate

What's at stake?





YOU are a part of the solution!

- **Volunteer** at the food bank or network partner agency
- Let's help eligible people enroll in CalFresh and keep benefits
- **Donate**
- Become an **Advocate** of our Food Justice League!
- Give us your ideas!!!



Answering the Call:
Our Community Can Make a Difference



Q&A





Break



LEARN MORE



DONATE



VOLUNTEER



Food Insecurity in Santa Cruz County

Heather Bullock



Center for Economic Justice and Action
UC SANTA CRUZ



U.S. Food Insecurity

For Many Cash-Strapped Americans, 'Basic Living Has Become a Burden'

President Trump says that he has brought down inflation, but families are still struggling to pay bills and plan for the future.

Food Banks Brace for Overwhelming Demand as SNAP Cutoff Looms

Growing need and decreased resources are squeezing the charitable food system beyond its capacity, leaders say.

To Help SNAP Recipients, Bookstores Set Up as Food Banks

During the government shutdown, booksellers are collecting food for Americans who receive federal aid to buy groceries.

SNAP Food Program Linked to Slower Cognitive Decline in Older Adults

A new study suggests the benefit, which is facing federal funding cuts, may be good for brain health.

The Trump Administration Has Changed Almost Every Aspect of Food Stamps

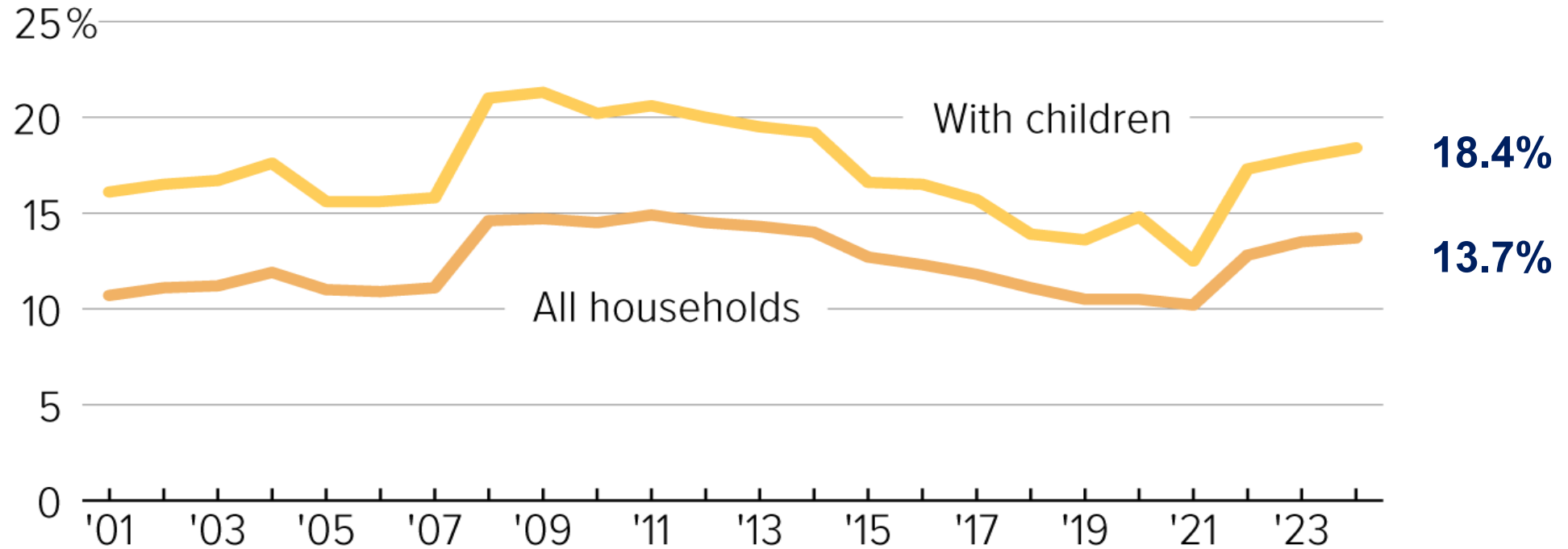
Legislation and regulatory tweaks enacted over the past year have altered who is eligible, what recipients can buy and how much some receive in benefits, among other changes.

States Grapple With Fundamental Change in Food Stamps

Whether states can find the money in their budgets — billions of dollars in some cases — will have wide-ranging, and likely uneven, consequences for some 42 million recipients.

Household Food Insecurity Remained Steady in 2024

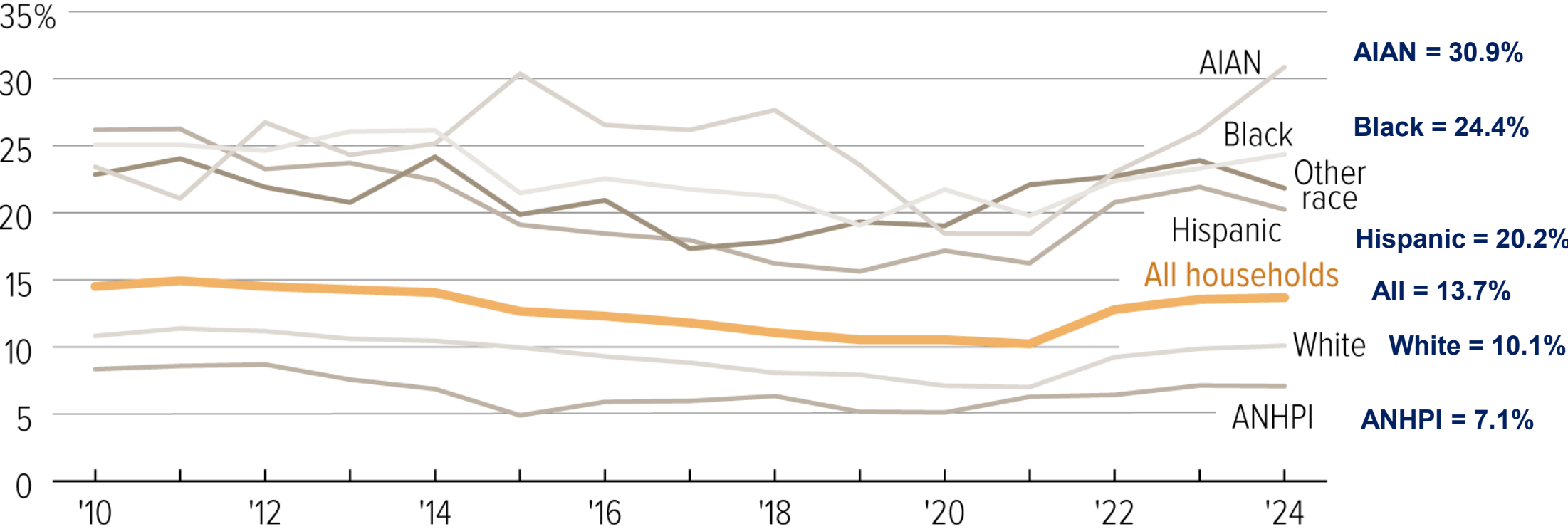
Share of households that lacked access to adequate food at some point in the year



Source: Economic Research Service, “Household Food Security in the United States in 2024,” U.S. Department of Agriculture, December 2025

Household Food Insecurity by Race and Ethnicity Reveals Stark Inequities

Share of households that lacked access to adequate food at some point in the year



Note: Other race = people who are more than one race. AIAN = people who are American Indian or Alaska Native. ANHPI = people who are Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. Hispanic households may be of any race. Race and ethnicity for the household are based on that of the household reference person (in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented).

Source: CBPP analysis of Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement 2010-2024



Statistical Supplement to Household Food Security in the United States in 2024

Matthew P. Rabbitt
Madeline Reed-Jones
Laura J. Hales
Shellye Suttles
Michael P. Burke

Trump Administration to Stop Measuring Food Insecurity

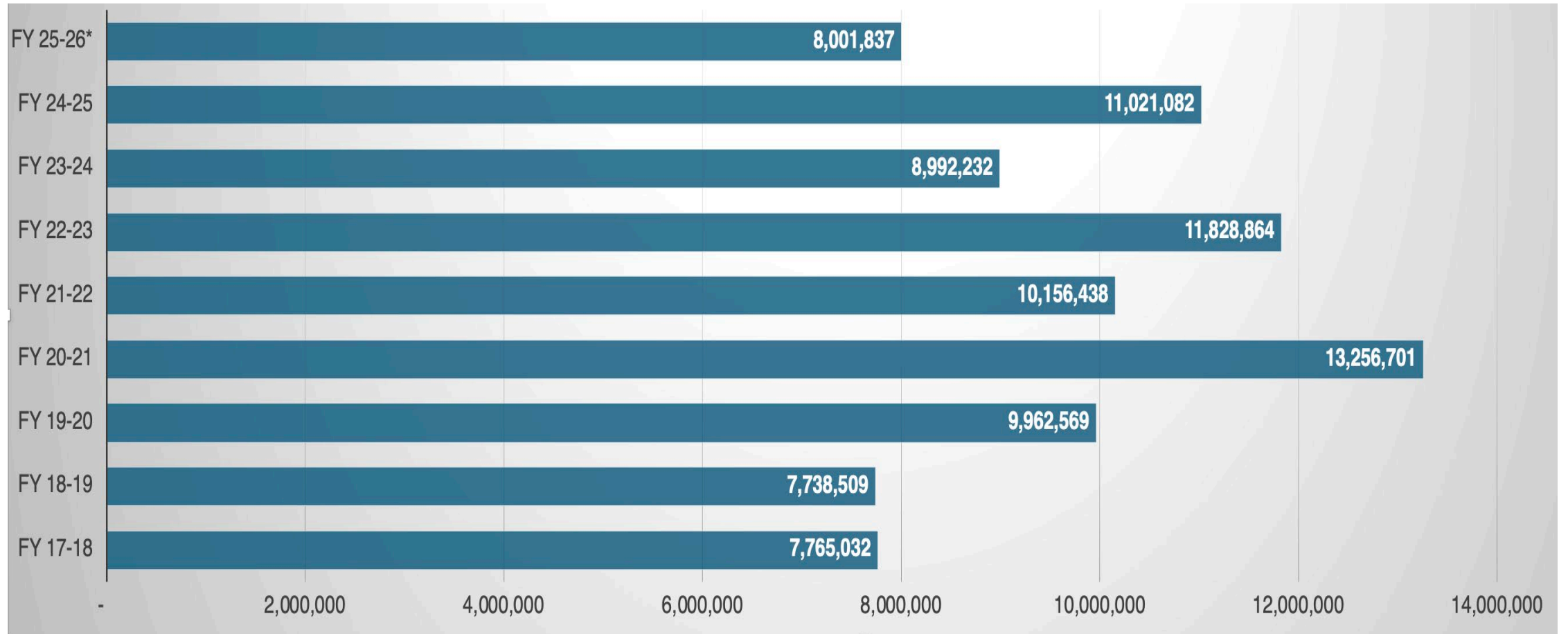
The move strips the government of its main gauge of hunger in America, and will impede efforts to track the impact of aid cuts.

“If you don’t measure it, it’s not there.”



California and Santa Cruz County

Second Harvest Pounds of Food Distributed



*FY 25-26, Year to date as of March 31, 2026

Average Monthly Participation



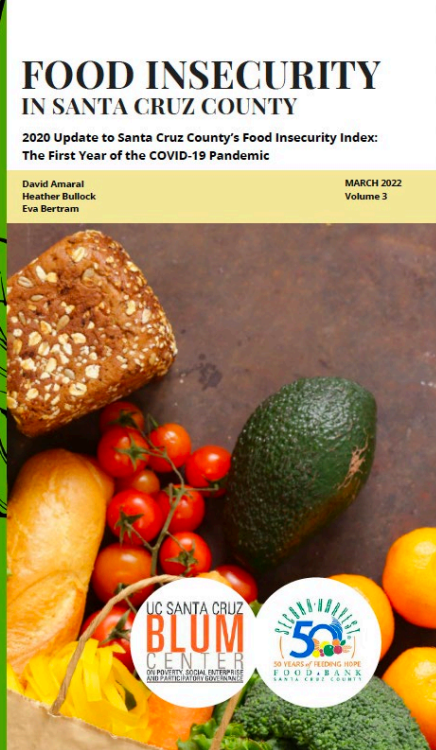
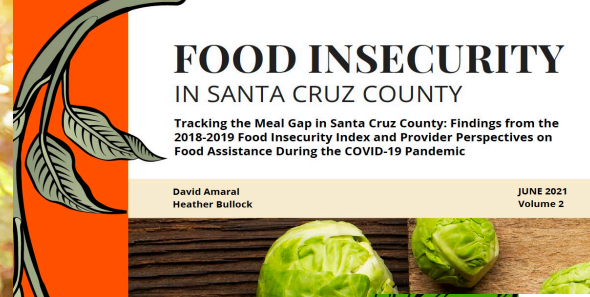
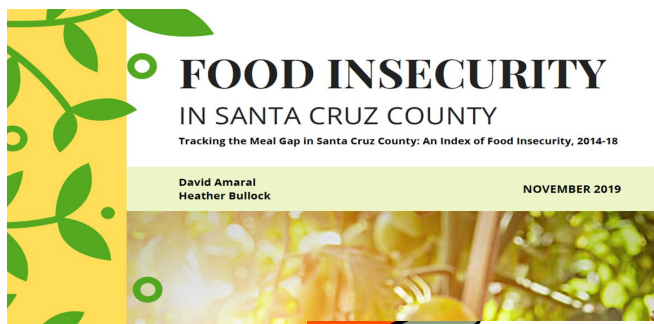
*FY 25-26, Year to date as of March 31, 2026

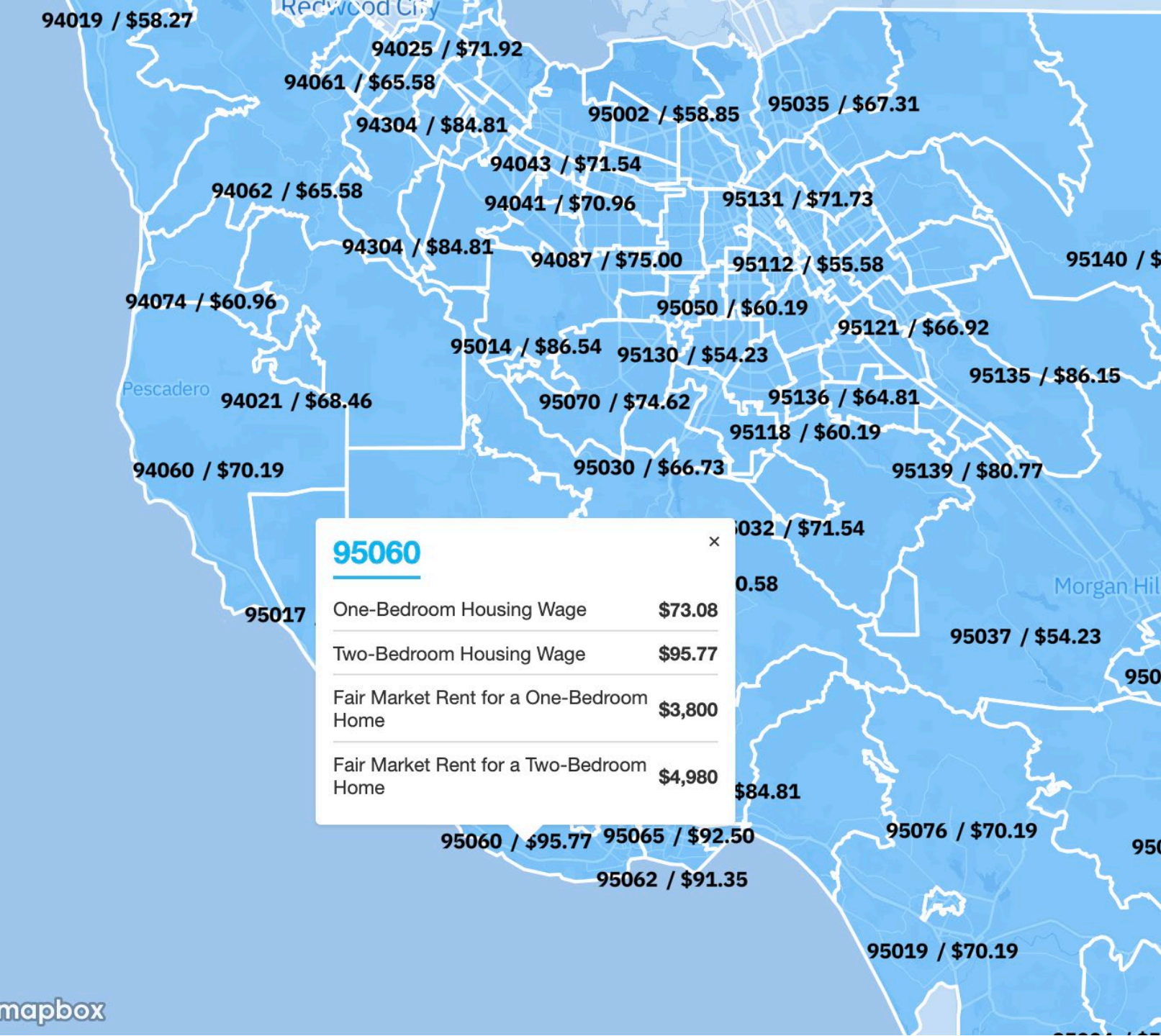
• Food Insecurity Index

- Provides an estimate of needed food assistance that goes unmet

$$\text{Food Insecurity Index} = \frac{\text{Missing Meals}}{\text{Total Meals Required} - \text{Meals Purchased}}$$

- Shows the impact of food assistance programs (e.g., food banks, CalFresh) on unmet need
- In FY 2018-19, one-third of households in Santa Cruz County were *at risk* of experiencing food insecurity
 - 24 million “missing meals” that if equally distributed across the population would mean 5 missed meals per week





HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT

Santa Cruz County named the nation's least affordable rental market for third straight year — and the gap has widened

July 17, 2025

National Low Income Housing Coalition (2025). <https://nlihc.org/or>

MIT Living Wage Estimate for Santa Cruz County

1 Adult

0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
\$42.98	\$74.61	\$92.91	\$113.84

2 Adults
(1 Working
Outside the Home)

0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
\$50.56	\$64.34	\$68.07	\$83.38

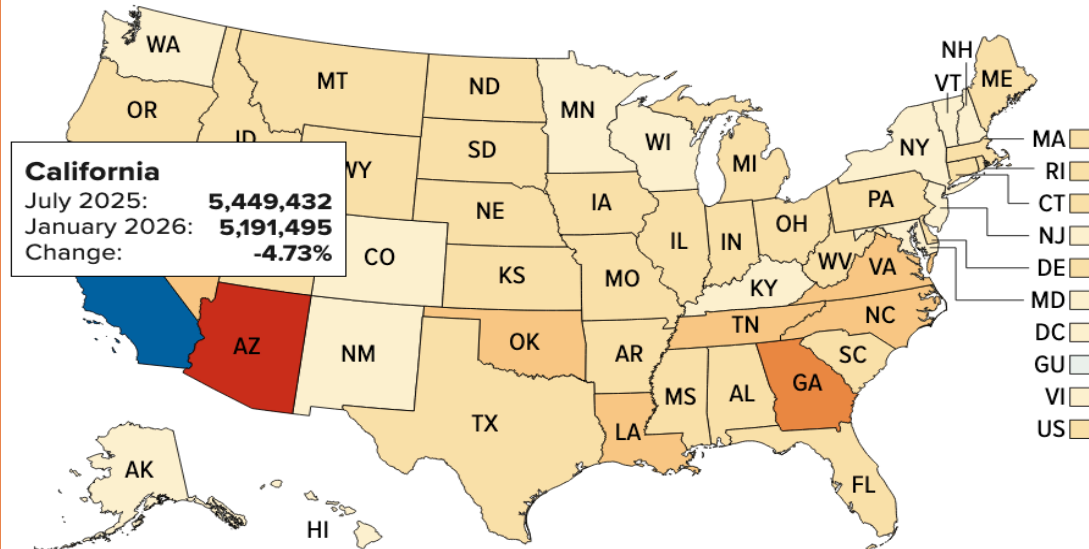
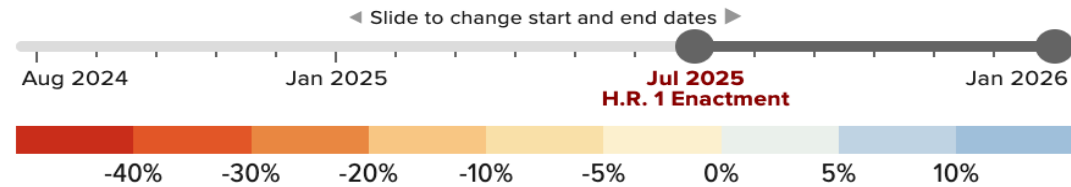
2 Adults
(Both Working
Outside the Home)

0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
\$25.28	\$39.42	\$47.51	\$57.91

SNAP Participation Dropping Following Enactment of Harmful Republican Megabill

Percentage change in SNAP participants between July 2025 and January 2026

Data source: **USDA** State Agencies



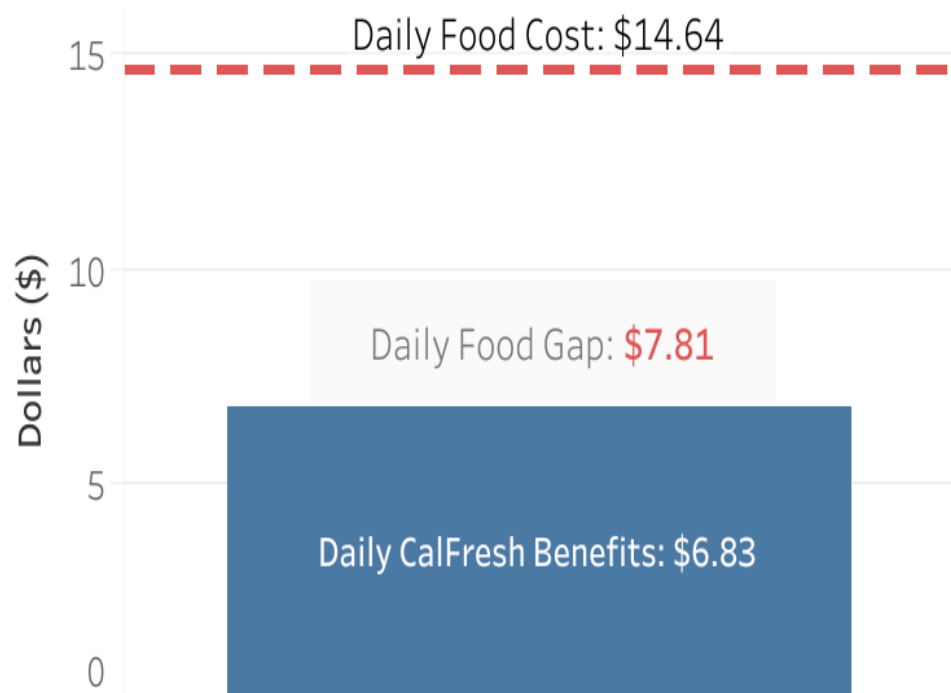
Note: Some states appear to have anomalous data. See ["Chart Notes"](#) below.

Source: CBPP calculations from USDA and state program data

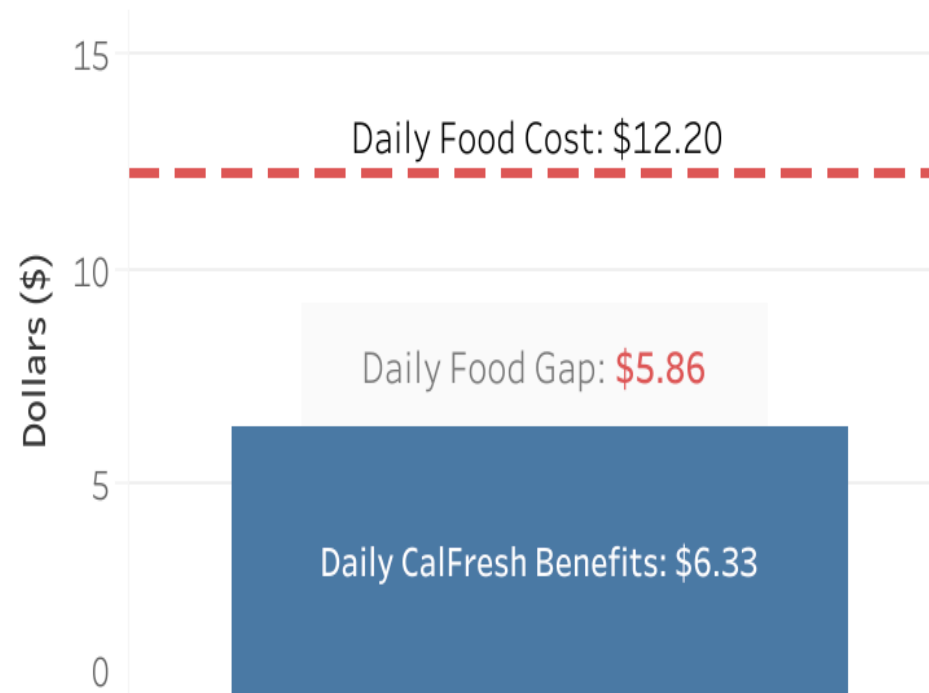
CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

CalFresh Benefit Sufficiency

County: Santa Cruz County



Statewide Average





Economic Impacts of SNAP Reductions on Communities

Families: Estimated 3.8% reduction in income for poorest 20% of people in the U.S. (Hacker & Sullivan, 2025).

Food Retailers: As participants lose SNAP, small grocers could see sales decline by as much as 6.7% (FRAC, n.d.)

Farmers: Could lose \$24 billion over the next decade as household food purchases decline (FRAC, n.d).

Societal: Every \$1 in SNAP children and families lose per year could cost society from \$14 to \$20 nationally (Koutavas et al., 2025).

- Economic losses driven by SNAP cuts reduce long-term health, earnings, and future tax contributions of child SNAP participants and increase costs (e.g., healthcare). Losses also undermine parental health and contribute to greater health care costs.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

– Margaret Mead

Breakout Sessions

Room 5146 Healthcare & Food Insecurity

Room 1001 Housing & Food Insecurity

Room 5137 Seniors & Food Insecurity

Room 5148 Students / Youth & Food Insecurity

Room 5156 Federal Policy Changes & Food Insecurity





Break



LEARN MORE



DONATE



VOLUNTEER

Report Back: Healthcare & Food Insecurity

- **31%** of residents (83,000+ people) in Santa Cruz County currently receive Medi-Cal benefits.
- H.R. 1 reduces subsidies to buy private insurance through Covered California and rolls back previous Medicaid benefit expansions.
- **19,000 Santa Cruz County residents** are projected to lose benefits as a result of H.R. 1

Source: [UC Berkeley Labor Center: Medi-Cal Enrollment by County](#), [UC Berkeley Labor Center: Projected Reductions due to H.R. 1](#)





Report Back: Housing & Food Insecurity

- **52% of renters** in Santa Cruz County are spending *more than 30%* of their household income on rent.
- **38% of mortgaged home-owners** in Santa Cruz County are spending *more than 30%* of their household income on housing costs.
- **20%** of households in Santa Cruz County are spending *more than 50%* of their household income on housing.

Source: [DataShare Santa Cruz County](#)





Report Back: Seniors & Food Insecurity

- Seniors are the **fastest growing age group** in California.
- There are **twice as many** homeless people over the age of 55, as there are under the age of 25, in Santa Cruz County.
- **28%** of seniors in Santa Cruz County are below the Elder Economic Security Standard Index.

Sources: [*Public Policy Institute of California, 2025 Point In Time Count*](#), [*DataShare Santa Cruz County*](#)





Report Back: Youth / Students & Food Insecurity

- **48%** of UCSC students report being food insecure.
- Over **46%** of California Community College students face food insecurity annually.
- **80%** of PVUSD students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Sources: [UCUES 2022](#), [2025 Real College California Basic Needs Survey](#), [Education Data Partnership](#)





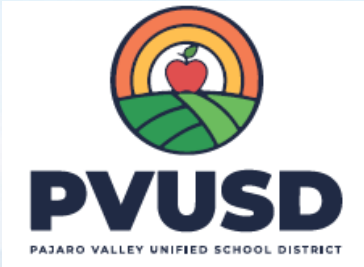
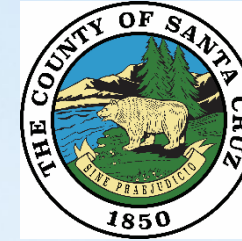
Report Back: Federal Policy Changes & Food Insecurity

- Approximately **43,800** neighbors in Santa Cruz County residents receive food stamp benefits.
- Those benefits (aprox. **\$76M annually**) are spent in local grocery stores, farmers markets, etc.
- An estimated **20%** of current recipients will see their current benefits reduced or eliminated due to H.R. 1

Sources: [CalFresh Data Dashboard](#), [Lookout Local](#)



Thank You to our Presenters!





**Scan the QR Code to take a short survey
and join our *Food Justice League!***





Thank you!

LEARN MORE



DONATE



VOLUNTEER

