

We Are The Food Bank

Partner Agency Newsletter
August 2026



Dear Partners,

Thank you to everyone who took the time to join us for our July in-person Partner Agency Meeting. I am glad you had the opportunity to connect with one another, exchange ideas, and continue building relationships across our Partner Agency network.

As you heard during the meeting, we have some exciting changes underway. These changes are intended to improve our processes, strengthen our partnership, and help us work more effectively together as we continue our shared efforts to nourish our neighbors.

We recognize that change can sometimes feel overwhelming or challenging. Please know that **our team is committed to supporting you every step of the way.** We appreciate your patience, flexibility, and partnership as we implement these improvements.

Over the next couple of weeks, we will begin piloting the **Oasis participation tracking database** with Partner Agencies in cohorts. Additional information, including timelines, expectations, training, and next steps, will be shared via email soon. Please carefully review these communications, as they include important information about the upcoming changes and what will be required of your agency.

I also want to share an **important reminder regarding agency orders.** Please make sure your orders are submitted by the established deadline. Historically, our team has provided individual reminders to agencies that have not submitted their orders. Unfortunately, due to current staff capacity, we are no longer able to provide these individual reminders.

If an order is not submitted by the deadline, an order will not be created on your agency's behalf. This may result in a missed distribution and impact your ability to provide services to your neighbors. We encourage you to establish an internal reminder or process to ensure orders are submitted on time.

Thank you for your continued partnership, flexibility, and commitment to serving our community. We are excited about the improvements ahead and look forward to continuing this work together.

In Community,

Adriana Mata

Chief Community Impact Officer

Agency Network Updates

Partner Agency Meeting

On Tuesday, July 7, our Partner Agency team and Network gathered at Anna Jean Cummings Park for the final quarterly Partner Agency Meeting. Going forward, meetings will be held monthly, alternating between virtual sessions and in-person gatherings throughout Santa Cruz County.

At the meeting, partner agencies learned about the upcoming transition to Oasis, a new intake system designed to streamline and standardize participation data collection. More consistent data will support grant reporting and audits while giving us a clearer picture of our impact across Santa Cruz County. Our team will approach data collection and implementation with the utmost care and consideration. Please stay tuned for more information.



We also extend special thanks to Robin Spurlock of the People's Pantry and Alejandra Espiritu of Pajaro and E.A. Hall Middle Schools for presenting their food assistance programs. If you or someone from your agency would like to be featured at the next Partner Agency Meeting, please contact our team.

These meetings reflect the many ways we support one another and our community's commitment to collaboration and change. That collective effort helped our partner agencies and the food bank distribute **11 million pounds** of food during the past fiscal year. As we celebrate this achievement, we also recognize what the growing need represents for our community. Thank you for all that you do.

Diaper Bank Update

We are very excited to announce the continuation of our Diaper Bank Program!

Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County serves as a **National Diaper Bank Program** in California, providing a necessary service for those who find themselves having to make sacrifices for a basic need.

The continuation of this program is a testament not only to the need that is prevalent within our county, but to the impact our voices have when we come together as one.

If your agency is interested in participating in the Diaper Program, please fill out the application below:

Diaper Distribution Program Application

Network Action Spotlight

Food Safety: Transportation and Temperature

Starting August 1, 2026, our warehouse will begin verifying that agencies that are picking up food from the Food Bank have a method of controlling temperature while transporting the product back to your agency.

The Food Bank has been giving away thermal blankets to help keep the temperature of food at a safe level. If your agency regularly picks up from our facilities and you have not already picked up a thermal blanket, please reach out to an agency network team member at your earliest convenience.

Staff Spotlight

Kelli Catey, Grants, Contracts & Government Relations Analyst

Please help us welcome one of our newest members of the Food Bank, Kelli!

Kelli interacts frequently with all our departments to ensure everyone is supported in the ways that they need. Some of you all were able to meet Kelli during our Partner Agency Meeting, but for those who have not, or for those who would like to know more, please see below:



Where did you grow up and where do you live now?

- **Response:** I grew up on my family's farm in Greenup, IL. I've bounced around a lot since I turned 18, but I moved to Monterey in 2020 and have been here ever since.

How long have you been at the food bank and how did you start there?

- **Response:** I joined the Food Bank on Star Wars Day (May the Fourth) of this year. I was looking for the next step in my career, and this position seemed like the perfect fit.

What does the food bank mean to you?

- **Response:** I haven't been here long, but from what I've seen, this is an organization that is so dedicated to and focused on helping the community, and the community is equally supportive of this Food Bank. I love seeing that kind of relationship between an organization and the community it serves.

Fun Facts!

What is your favorite fruit and/or vegetable?

- **Response:** Apples are my favorite fruit, and cauliflower is my absolute favorite vegetable in the world. It's so versatile it can be anything, and it's so easy to cook.

What are some of your favorite foods?

- **Response:** I am a fan of most Korean and Thai dishes, but my favorite food by far is any breakfast food.

What is your favorite animal?

- **Response:** My cat, Louise, is my favorite animal I personally know, but the entire genre of turtles is endlessly fascinating to me. One of my projects in the Peace Corps was to help the night patrol volunteers at Tortuguero, and it was amazing.

What is on your bucket list, and what have you already accomplished on it?

- **Response:** I don't really have a bucket list, as I try to be as present in the moment as possible and not dwell on the past or future. That being said, there are a few famous hikes I want to do (like Machu Picchu). I've done most of the ones in California and finished El Camino, so I'm slowly making my way through them.

Save the Dates

Please add the following events to your calendar!

We ask that agencies notify us of any changes or cancellations to their distributions.

Partner Agency Network Check-In Meeting

Please join us virtually for our first Partner Agency Meeting of the fiscal year!

As mentioned before, this is the start of our new meeting framework. We are so excited to meet with you all virtually! Please see all meeting information below:

- Thursday, August 20, 2026
- 9:30 a.m. — 11:00 a.m.
- Location: Virtual via Zoom
- [Meeting Link](#)
- Meeting ID: 870 7386 1725
- Passcode: 252495

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