



# 2020-21 State Budget Priorities Fighting Hunger in California

The California Association of Food Banks represents 41 food banks that partner with more than 6,000 local agencies serving the entire state. Together, we work to create a healthy and hunger-free California. Our 2020-21 Budget priorities relate solely to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the continuing threat of disasters.

## COVID-19: \$96M one-time for emergency food *previously \$116M, currently \$20M secured for food boxes*

From day one of COVID-19, food banks have been at the forefront responding to the growing need of our communities. This crisis has created a surge in demand for emergency food, with signs that economic damage will outpace the 2008 Great Recession. Our network estimates that food banks will need \$116 million in additional food to keep Californians healthy, well-fed, and out of hospitals during this time of potential system overwhelm.

For context, Feeding America has estimated that nationally over the next six months, food banks will need \$1.4 billion in addition to federal assistance, roughly a \$140 million need in California.

We are grateful that the State has funded \$20 million to date – it is making a difference to the food banks and families we serve. The USDA has indicated that federal food will not arrive until July. State funding is needed not only because of this lag in federal support, but because it is providing a resource ideal for this moment. These State supplied boxes of prepackaged, shelf-stable foods increase food supply while minimizing internal logistics, alleviating workforce burden, and supporting social distance at distributions.

Our updated request is for \$96 million one-time in emergency food for COVID-19.

## Disaster Resilience: \$32M one-time for food & supplies

The current COVID-19 pandemic is far from the only disaster facing Californians, disproportionately impacting our low-income community-members. We know that soon fires, public safety power shutoff, and other events will continue to deepen food insecurity for those in need, and cause long-term hunger up the income scale as families lose jobs and homes. COVID-19 has already affected wildfire preparation, and a fire during the pandemic stands to create a multi-layered crisis.

Immigrants, farm workers, and other disenfranchised low-income Californians experience disproportionate consequences from disasters. They are frequently barred from federal disaster aid and, even if eligible, the chilling effect from public charge and other attacks, has driven families to food banks instead of seeking public benefits.

### **\$32 million one-time will build the long-term disaster resilience of the emergency food network:**

- » \$8 million for permanent, on-site investments to sustain emergency food operations during disasters, such as back-up generators, solar power battery storage, diesel fuel tanks, and other one-time investments that build long-term disaster resilience.
- » \$24 million for hunger needs that increase during disasters. The California Department of Social Services would hold funds and, if a disaster is declared by our Governor, food banks would be able to purchase healthy, rarely donated items appropriate for the situation and population.

For more information: [cafoodbanks.org/advocacy](https://cafoodbanks.org/advocacy)

