



# CALIFORNIA & THE FARM BILL

## WHY THE FARM BILL MATTERS

The farm bill is the major agriculture and food legislation that gets revisited or reauthorized by Congress every 5 years. This legislation affects every person, in every county in the country. It provides the heart of the federal commitment that no one in California or in any state across this great nation should go hungry.

## THE NEED IN CALIFORNIA

In California, 12.5% of people are food insecure, including 20.7% of children and 9% of seniors. Farm bill programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) provide aid to those in need of food assistance in California. Feeding America supports a network of 200 member food banks across the country, including 18 that serve California, that work in partnership with these programs to assist food insecure individuals and families.

## SERVING THE NEED IN CALIFORNIA

TEFAP is a commodity program that purchases and distributes American-grown food to low-income Americans. The program supplies 723 million pounds – nearly 20 percent – of the food distributed by Feeding America food banks in FY2016, accounting for about 600 million meals. Food banks in California received 48,803,789 pounds of TEFAP food that year. CSFP also provides healthy American commodities to individuals at least 60 years old and operates in 48 states and two Indian tribes. California received \$22,912,193 in FY2016 to help around 78,600 seniors.

## DIRECTLY HELPING CALIFORNIA

In FY2016, SNAP provided food assistance directly to around 4,340,000 individuals in California, roughly 58% of whom are children, seniors, or disabled. The program infused \$7,237,700,086 in food benefits to California, generating around \$12,304,090,000 in economic activity. SNAP supports nutrition education efforts in California as well as employment and training programs to help beneficiaries gain skills or work experience to increase their ability to move toward self-sufficiency. California received around \$59,250,584 for employment and training programs in FY2016. SNAP is a critical partner with TEFAP, CSFP, and food banks in providing nutritious food to those who need it most.

## SUPPORTING OUR FOOD PRODUCERS

The farm bill provides policies and programs that help support the country's agriculture economy and supports rural communities. About 40% of food produced in the United States does not make it to our plates – a loss for farmers and those facing food insecurity. We have an opportunity in the farm bill to help capture this food for those who might otherwise go without, supporting food banks, communities in need, and our growers and producers.



**CALIFORNIA NEEDS OUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO PUSH FOR A STRONG FARM BILL**

The farm bill must protect and strengthen the national commitment to reducing hunger. Feeding America urges Congress to invest in and protect programs such as TEFAP, SNAP, and funding to strengthen food donation programs to reduce Food Waste.