

SB 900 (Wiener & Arambula): Double the 'Fresh' in CalFresh



Opportunity

CalFresh helps over 4 million people put food on the table. Despite the reach of CalFresh, the federal benefit levels limit the ability to purchase healthy foods.

Supplemental nutrition incentive programs provide matching dollars tied to the purchase of California-grown vegetables and fruit. These matching programs operate locally across the state to make purchasing California-grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for low-income Californians.



For these efforts to reach their full potential for people, farms, and the economy, we must integrate California fruit and vegetable benefits into the CalFresh EBT card, which is widely accepted by food retailers statewide. **We can advance our existing state systems to fight hunger and poverty, improve health, and support California's agricultural economy.**

Legislative Action

- ➔ SB 900 would enable the CalFresh EBT system to allow CalFresh shoppers to receive a dollar-for-dollar bonus match for eligible purchases of California-grown fruits and vegetables.
- ➔ SB 900 would pilot community-based projects to test this upgraded EBT system feature with supplemental nutrition benefit initiatives at grocery stores and farmers' markets.

Why This Matters



Numerous studies show that the federal **CalFresh benefit amount is inadequate to support the purchase of nutritious foods** that are needed for a healthy diet, particularly fruits and vegetables. Over the past decade, initiatives to provide supplemental benefits to CalFresh (SNAP) recipients in California and other states have shown that **when low-income families have more money for fruits and vegetables, they buy and eat more fruits and vegetables.** For these programs to be more effective and widely available, California needs a system that is **simple to use, efficient to administer through CalFresh, and easily incorporated into existing retail operations.**

Fight Hunger & Support California Agriculture: Make Healthy Food More Affordable