

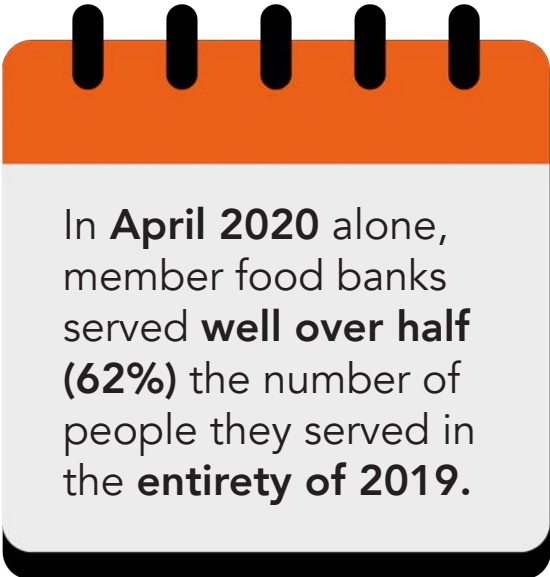
CALIFORNIA FOOD BANKS

& THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

THE IMPACT, THE CHALLENGES, AND THE COLLECTIVE RESPONSE

The California Association of Food Banks' 41 member food banks responded to an **unprecedented demand** for food by rapidly redesigning their program **delivery models** in order to safely increase food distribution and adjust to **necessary safety measures**. Still, food donations and staffing resources were **vastly outpaced by increased demand**.

Food distribution skyrocketed — especially via direct distribution.



In **April 2020** alone, member food banks served **well over half (62%)** the number of people they served in the **entirety of 2019**.

In order to reach the 1.1 billion pounds of food, or about **917 million meals** delivered by CAFB member food banks, **operating costs rose** in 2020. Areas with the largest cost increase were **1) Food Purchasing, 2) Packaging Materials, and 3) Cleaning/Sanitation Supplies**.

MORE THAN 
1 BILLION
POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

The **total food** distributed by CAFB member food banks increased by **74%** between 2019 and 2020.

Direct distribution doubled (101%) between 2019 and 2020. **All** member food banks provided direct distribution in 2020, including food banks that were not previously providing direct distribution.

In one month, CAFB member food banks served **1.5 million households** — approximately **4.54 million people**.

Food and staffing resources struggled to keep up with demand — while costs rose.

Food donations **decreased** in 2020. Community **food drives** and **retail donations** decreased for **more than half** of food banks while nearly all **significantly increased** food purchases.

Even while **paid staff increased by 13%**, and **volunteer hours increased by 63%**, including state assets such as the National Guard, increases in the number of paid staff and volunteers were **still outpaced by increases in food distribution**.

POPULATIONS MOST COMMONLY GIVEN TARGETED SUPPORT:



Program models shifted as food banks found innovative ways to meet the moment.



ADDED OR INCREASED
DRIVE-THRU DISTRIBUTIONS



Drive-thru and home delivery distributions became commonplace — often meaning decreased opportunity for **client choice**. In order to meet the moment, food banks had to find ways to distribute food while also **ensuring the safety of staff, volunteers, and clients**. No longer an option due to COVID-19 safety precautions, farmers market-style “shopping” gave way to **pre-packaged boxes** of food, and custom online food orders shifted towards a **fixed list of items**.

Food banks expect to serve elevated levels of demand for years — and to be forever changed by the pandemic.

Food banks anticipate the effects of COVID-19 on food insecurity to **outlast the pandemic**, keeping demand dramatically elevated for a **long time to come**.

71% of food banks expect that their programming and operations will **remain changed** in some way **beyond the COVID-19 crisis**.

After the Great Recession, it took nearly **10 years** (until 2018) for food insecurity to **return to pre-recession** levels.

This data was collected directly from CAFB member food banks. The total number of respondents may vary for each data point. Percentages are relative to the total respondents for individual points.

VOLUNTEERS & STATE ASSETS PROVIDED THE EQUIVALENT OF

1,105

FULL-TIME
EMPLOYEES



40%

OF THE TOTAL
WORKFORCE