



2022-23 CAFB State Budget Priorities: **State Disaster Food Assistance Program (SDFAP)**

Permanently Authorize SDFAP in Statute to Meet the Needs of Disasters & Maximize Responsiveness

The fundamental feature of the State Disaster Food Assistance Program (SDFAP) is to ensure that there is an adequate resource to respond to California's disasters that often force families to make life-saving decisions overnight with explosive fires and the threat of earthquakes. The federal response – if at all – is often designed to be a lagging support, such as Disaster CalFresh that is not always triggered and requires the restoration of commercial channels. The SDFAP fills these critical gaps in the food safety net.

As we saw with the Caldor Fire, even when there is significant impact on communities as widespread as Pollock Pines to South Lake Tahoe, Presidential Disaster Declarations with Individual Assistance may not come. We know that droughts and freezes have never received federal declarations to unlock emergency food aid no matter how severe.

Thanks to the great work by California Department of Social Services and this Administration, the SDFAP has the program structure to replenish the \$1 million in emergency food aid. But to make sure resources are able to get to where they are needed on time we need to clarify CDSS's statutory authority.

Permanently authorize SDFAP in statute

To help ensure the smooth operation, avoid the delays seen this year, and streamline administration of the program we are asking to place SDFAP in the Welfare & Institutions Code where the state's other emergency food programs reside. Just this year the program letter was not released until December, meaning this vital resource was not available during record-breaking fires and deepening drought. We have provided language to place the program into statute and ensure permanent authority and program consistency so communities have access to emergency food when they need it most.



For more information, please contact becky@cafoodbanks.org