



CDFA OFFICE OF FARM TO FORK

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY

This was an exciting year for the Office of Farm to Fork, with the California Nutrition Incentive Program now up and running at Certified Farmers' Markets throughout the state. From Los Angeles to San Francisco and Visalia to Arcata, shoppers using CalFresh benefits were able to buy more fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts directly from California farmers.

The California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) is a triple win for our state – it supports low-income shoppers, our farmers, and our local economies. Our California farmers grow the highest quality fruits and vegetables in the nation, and we want to make sure that their produce is accessible to all Californians. CNIP does just that by increasing the purchasing power of low-income shoppers buying directly from farmers at the market, ensuring that high quality, fresh produce is within everyone's reach.

The Office of Farm to Fork has also continued to lead the way in building connections between farmers and schools through the California Farm to School Network. By making sure that fresh, healthy foods are nourishing the students in our schools, we are helping the next generation of Californians grow to their full potential.

As we reflect upon the previous year, I am proud of what the Office of Farm to Fork has accomplished and am looking forward to exciting possibilities and new initiatives moving forward.

Yours truly,



Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture

MISSION & GOALS

The mission of the Office of Farm to Fork is to promote and protect California agriculture, lessen the impact of food insecurity, foster healthy environments, and improve market access – through coordination, education, and outreach



Reduce Food Insecurity

Lessen the impact of food insecurity through increasing access points and expanding the availability of resources



Advance Farm to School

Foster healthy school environments and increase market access for institutional buyers and sellers



Coordination and Communication

Inform communities of the benefits and opportunities within a dynamic food system

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Reducing Food Insecurity

California Nutrition Incentive Program

The California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) encourages the purchase and consumption of healthy, California grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts by nutrition benefit clients. Established by Assembly Bill 1321 (Chapter 442, Statutes of 2015) and first funded by the 2016 Budget Act, CNIP provides grant funds to community-based organizations, small businesses, and farmers' markets that provide nutrition incentives to low-income shoppers. In the first phase of the program, grants were awarded to four partner organizations to distribute nutrition incentives to CalFresh shoppers at Certified Farmers' Markets. Any CalFresh shopper can benefit from the program simply by spending their benefits at participating Certified Farmers Markets. In addition to incentives, CNIP also funds grantees to provide nutrition education, support for farmers' market outreach, program administration, and many other vital services.

Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant

In addition to state funding, CNIP is supported by a \$3.9 million Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Awarded to the Office in

August of 2017, these federal grant funds help to support the program and its evaluation.

State Nutrition Action Committee

As part of the State Nutrition Action Committee, the Office collaborates with partner state agencies, including the Department of Social Services and the Department of Public Health, to promote Certified Farmers' Markets to low-income shoppers. The initiative provided additional marketing support to markets in four counties (Fresno, Riverside, Tulare and San Bernardino) where shoppers can use their CalFresh, WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and CNIP benefits.

California State Employees Food Drive

The Office partnered with the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services to lead the California State Employees Food Drive. Over 100 state agencies and departments participated to raise a total of 792,301 pounds of food, including fresh produce. Donations were distributed by Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services to over 220 local partner agencies to help support Californians facing food insecurity.



Advancing Farm to School

California Farm to School Network

The California Farm to School Network (CFSN) completed the transition from Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) to the Office in July 2017. As the CFSN lead coordinator, the Office continues to support the mission of the CFSN to align farm to school activities statewide by sharing resources and bringing farmers, schools, distributors, and practitioners together. The Office continues to rely on CFSN regional leads to provide local expertise, while collaborating with organizations at the statewide and national level.

CFSN Needs Assessment

Upon assuming leadership of the CFSN, the Office initiated a statewide needs assessment to better inform and direct future farm to school efforts. The needs assessment was developed by conducting extensive research into the resources and systems of the CFSN, as well as analyzing the results of 384 stakeholder surveys and 25 one-on-one interviews. Published in August 2017 and available on the Office's website, the needs assessment identifies challenges and opportunities facing the CFSN under the new leadership of the Office and makes recommendations for moving forward.

National Farm to School Network

The Office continued to serve as California's core partner for the National Farm to School Network. This designation has helped reinforce the Office's role as lead organization for the CFSN and has enabled the Office to further connect the CFSN to farm to school efforts nationwide. As a core partner, staff from the Office attended the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference in April 2018.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Coordination and Communication

Resources

The Office continues to provide information on a variety of topics ranging from farm to school to food access. Both CAFarmToFork.com and CAFarmToSchool.org were relaunched in the previous year. The redesigned websites maximize mobile accessibility and feature a wealth of reports, program profiles, and best practices. The Office also continues to engage stakeholders and the public through the Office newsletter and blog, Tales from the Field, as well as through social media accounts.

Strategic Plan

After a series of planning sessions, the Office released a strategic plan capturing the mission, values, goals, and associated performance measures for the Office's programs through 2020. The strategic plan describes the Office's three primary goals: reducing food insecurity, advancing farm to school, and communication and coordination. These goals and associated objectives provide a framework to guide activities and advance the Office's work through 2020.

Conferences and Stakeholder Meetings

The Office continues to attend stakeholder conferences and community meetings to promote internal and external food access programs nationally and statewide. Attending these gatherings allows the Office to connect directly with stakeholders and the public to learn about current issues and share findings statewide. During the past year, the Office presented at the Market Match Consortium Meeting, the California SNAP-Ed Forum, the California School Nutrition Association's Annual Conference, and various webinars. The Office also participated in the USDA Farm to School Grantee Conference, the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, California Small Farm Conference, Latino Farmer Conference, WIC Conference, and EcoFarm.

Food Waste

The Office is committed to reducing food waste in California. In the past year, staff continued to participate in initiatives aimed at preventing food waste and increasing food recovery, including the California Food Waste Roundtable and the first ever California Food Waste Prevention Week from March 5-9, 2018.

SUPPORT & REACH

The Office is funded through a combination of contracts, grants, and a general fund appropriation, with each source of funding tied to specific programs and deliverables. Activities over the past year were funded by a combination of sources, including:

- ▶ California Department of Public Health / SNAP-Ed
- ▶ National Farm to School Network
- ▶ State of California General Fund
- ▶ USDA Farm to School Grant
- ▶ USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant
- ▶ USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

4 CNIP grants

were made to community-based organizations and farmers' markets, including

The Ecology Center

Wellington Square Certified Farmers' Market

North Figueroa Association/ Lincoln Heights Benefit Corporation

Downtown Napa Certified Farmers' Market

for a total of

\$2,082,770 in CNIP funds

granted for incentives, nutrition education, outreach, program support, and other vital services.

187,446 CalFresh transactions

were matched with CNIP incentives at participating markets.

25,730 CalFresh shoppers

used CNIP incentives for the first time.

\$1,279,236 in CNIP incentives

were distributed to purchase California grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

100 state agencies

participated in the California State Employees Food Drive, donating a combined total of

792,301 pounds of food,

which was distributed by the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services and

220 local partners.

384 surveys and 25 interviews

were used to develop the California Farm to School Network Needs Assessment.



PROGRAM HISTORY

The Office of Farm to Fork was initially an objective of the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force's Farm to Fork Implementation Plan, endorsed by the Strategic Growth Council in January of 2012. With HiAP's help, the Department of Education, Department of Food and Agriculture, and Department of Public Health collaborated to form the Office of Farm to Fork within the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

On September 26th, 2014 the Office of Farm to Fork was formally and permanently established within the department when Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 2413. AB 2413, authored by Assembly Speaker John Pérez, officially created the Office of Farm to Fork within the Department of Food and Agriculture and charged the Office with increasing access to healthy foods for underserved communities and schools in the state of California.



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