



ANNUAL  
REPORT



2018-2019

CDFA OFFICE OF  
FARM TO FORK



# LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY

The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) continued to grow its reach this year, making California-grown produce more accessible to all, supporting our state's economy, and facilitating connections between farmers and schools to help every child access fresh, healthy foods.

We were particularly excited to expand the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) from helping low-income shoppers buy fresh produce at farmers' markets to include select retail outlets. Participating locations also matched the nutrition benefits of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

We renewed Farm to School efforts, undertaking a broad listening tour to uncover needs and shore up crucial relationships.

We designed a new Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program and solicited the first proposals for energy-efficient refrigeration units in corner stores located in low-income and low-access neighborhoods.

Through these programs and lending expertise on food security to diverse state collaborations and processes, CDFA-F2F is making a valuable impact for food access and California agriculture.

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 and vegetables 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. Shoppers can simply use their CalFresh benefits at participating retail outlets to purchase food, and they'll receive matching benefits to purchase additional California-grown produce. In addition to incentives for shoppers, CNIP also funds nutrition education, outreach, program administration, and other services. In fiscal year 2018-19, over \$1.8 million in incentives were distributed.

### ***CNIP Funding***

CNIP was allocated \$10 million in the 2018-19 State Budget, allowing CDFA-F2F to apply for matching state funds under the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), formerly known as the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program (FINI). CDFA-F2F released a statewide Request for Proposals to find partner organizations to distribute incentives as part of the project and selected seven entities to join its federal application.

### ***California Nutrition Incentive Program Expansion***

CDFA-F2F solicited proposals to expand CNIP into retail stores, as well as to match WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program benefits. Four grants, totaling \$825,543, were selected and grantees began distributing incentives in the summer of 2018.



## Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program

The Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program (HSRGP) was established in California Food and Agricultural Code section 49015 and \$5 million in funding was made available in the Budget Act of 2018. Through HSRGP, CDFA funds energy-efficient refrigeration units in corner stores and small businesses in low-income or low-access areas, often called food deserts, throughout the state to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts, and minimally processed foods. HSRGP improves access to healthy food choices in the small retail environment for underserved communities, while promoting California-grown agriculture.

During the first program year, CDFA-F2F conducted intensive research and outreach in order to design the program to best meet community needs and reach target audiences, including small business owners in marginalized communities who can face barriers to accessing government funding. Input from community members and stakeholders across public, private, and nonprofit sectors helped shape program development. Feedback from government and industry experts and a robust partnership with the CA Air Resources Board informed criteria for refrigeration units that are energy-efficient and have low global warming potential.

A first round Request for Proposal was released, the technical review process to select awardees began, and the Nutrition Policy Institute was contracted to evaluate the pilot program's results.

HSRGP builds on the success of CNIP and helps pave the way for the small retail sector to also participate in CNIP, creating even more value and access for shoppers with low incomes.

## California State Employees Food Drive

CDFA-F2F partnered with the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services to lead the California State Employees Food Drive.

- 98 state agencies and departments participated,
- raising a total of 717,815 pounds of food, including fresh produce.

Donations were distributed to over 200 local partner agencies to help support Californians facing food insecurity.





# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Advancing Farm to School

### ***California Farm to School Network: Listening Tour***

The CDFA-F2F Farm to School Program conducted a statewide listening tour, meeting with more than 100 farm to school practitioners from across California. The listening tour helped identify key obstacles facing the farm to school community and will help CDFA-F2F support its California Farm to School Network more effectively moving forward.

### ***National Farm to School Network***

CDFA-F2F continued its role as core partner for the National Farm to School Network. CDFA-F2F coordinated communications with local partners, shared best practices nationally, and utilized distance learning opportunities to network with other state agencies focused on farm to school.

### ***Farm to School Field Trips***

In addition to the listening tour, CDFA-F2F used a series of grants to fund field trips for students throughout California to visit local farms. After the field trips, students reported an increased interest in food production, and shared that they would be more likely to eat fresh foods at school after seeing them in the fields.



## Coordination and Communication

### ***Resources and Presentations***

CDFA-F2F continued to provide resources, collaborate with partners throughout the state, and share and present on CDFA-F2F programs through various forums, meetings, and conferences.

### ***Collaboration: State Nutrition Action Committee***

As part of the State Nutrition Action Committee (SNAC), CDFA-F2F collaborates with partner state agencies, including the departments of social services, public health, and education, to coordinate nutrition messaging. For the second summer in a row, SNAC operated a Farmers' Market Initiative promoting Certified Farmers' Markets to low-income shoppers. The initiative provided additional marketing support to markets in four counties (Fresno, Riverside, Tulare, & San Bernardino) where shoppers can use their CalFresh, WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and CNIP benefits.



# SUPPORT & REACH

## **\$1.8 million in CNIP incentives**

were distributed to purchase California-grown fresh fruits and vegetables

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## **4 new CNIP grants**

were made to community-based organizations and farmers' markets:

The Ecology Center

Mandela Partners

Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative

Visalia Certified Farmers' Market Association

## **279 farmers' markets and mobile markets**

offered CNIP incentives

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## **200,000 CalFresh transactions**

were matched with CNIP incentives at participating markets

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## **Over 21,000 CalFresh shoppers**

used CNIP incentives for the first time

## **98 state agencies**

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

## **717,815 pounds of food,**

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

## **200 local partners**

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## **100+ farm to school practitioners**

participated in the CA Farm to School Network Listening Tour

CDFA-F2F is funded through a combination of contracts, grants, and a general fund appropriation. Activities over the past year were funded by sources including:

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



## 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, CDFA collaborated with the California Department of Education and California Department of Public Health to form the Office of Farm to Fork.

The Office of Farm to Fork was permanently established within CDFA in 2014 when Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 2413, authored by Assembly Speaker John Pérez. As part of CDFA's Inspection Services Division, CDFA-F2F is charged with increasing access to healthy foods for underserved communities and schools in the state of California.



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