



CDFA OFFICE OF FARM TO FORK

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY

This was an unparalleled year as the COVID-19 pandemic shocked supply chains and the food system. The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) pivoted to adapt to changing needs while growing core programs. We helped facilitate donations to food banks as we supported agriculture through farmers' markets and more. Making California-grown produce accessible to all became ever more critical.

We were pleased to be awarded a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant of over \$7 million and expand the reach of our California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP). We saw skyrocketing demand for incentives as shoppers stretched food dollars and we reallocated resources towards COVID safety and alternate program delivery.

We collaborated with the California Department of Education on local procurement and preparation for meal services during school closures. We were very excited that our Farm to School budget was added to the Governor's 2020-2021 state budget proposal.

Our Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program awarded \$4.45 million to 57 grantees, funding energy-efficient refrigeration units in corner stores in low-income and low-access neighborhoods – supporting this essential sector through the crisis.

I will always be proud of how CDFA-F2F rose to the occasion, helping sustain safe and resilient marketplaces for CA-grown agriculture, and innovating to support better food access for low-income shoppers weathering this year's challenges.

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



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

CNIP funds community-based organizations, small businesses, and farmers' markets that provide nutrition incentives to low-income shoppers using federal nutrition benefits. For every CalFresh dollar they spend, shoppers receive an additional dollar to spend on fruits and vegetables. CNIP also funds nutrition education, outreach, program administration, and more. This year:

CDFA-F2F was awarded a three-year, \$7,166,877 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expand CNIP, including to new brick and mortar retailer sites.

- Drawing on federal and state funds, CDFA-F2F awarded seven new, multi-year CNIP grants to community-based organizations and farmers' markets, totaling over \$13.1 million in funding.
- Nearly \$2.7 million in nutrition incentives were distributed
- Over 345,498 CalFresh transactions were matched at participating markets
- 296 farmers' markets and mobile markets offered CNIP incentives
- CDFA-F2F solicited proposals to once again match benefits of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition program.

Effects of COVID-19

Demand for nutrition incentives skyrocketed as CalFresh shoppers stretched their food dollars and more shoppers became eligible for CalFresh. Farmers' markets offered shoppers an outdoor, low-contact way to purchase

California-grown produce. CDFA-F2F supported partners in pivoting to offer market boxes for safe pickup or delivery.

Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program

CDFA-F2F awarded \$4,454,260 to 57 grantees in two rounds through the Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program, funding energy-efficient & low global warming-potential refrigeration units in corner stores and small businesses in low-income or low-access, underserved neighborhoods in ~40 counties.

Grantees include corner stores and small businesses, as well as nonprofits, counties, and a city providing technical assistance to corner stores. New units are to stock California-grown produce, nuts, and minimally processed foods – supporting California farmers while increasing healthy food access. Refrigerated trucks facilitated produce procurement and new mobile markets, meeting low-income shoppers where they are.



Benefitting 215 Corner Stores

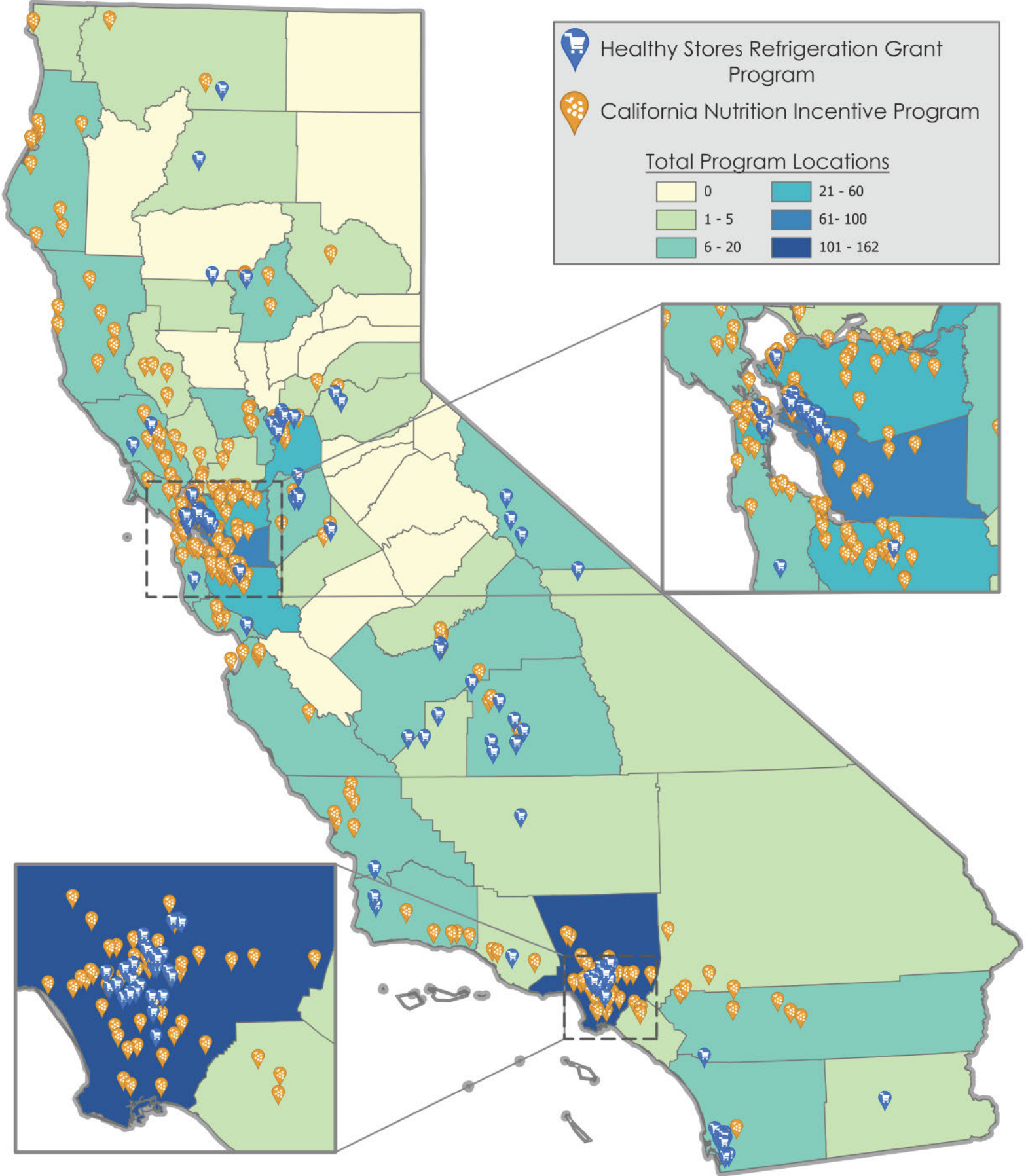


Supplying 367 Refrigerators



Funding 14 Refrigerated Trucks

PROGRAM REACH





Advancing Farm to School

California Farm to School Network

In the 2019-20 fiscal year, CDFA-F2F's Farm to School program was added to Governor Gavin Newsom's 2020-2021 state budget proposal, which included \$8.5 million to establish a Farm to School Incubator Grant Program, and \$1.5 million ongoing to support CDFA's Farm to School efforts.

With funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Program, CDFA-F2F continued planning the bi-annual California Farm to School Conference to be held in March 2020. Due to COVID-19, the conference was postponed to March 2021 and CDFA-F2F shifted its work to best support schools as they were impacted by the pandemic.

This included sharing relevant state resources from USDA for meal services during school closures, and working with the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide methods for finding local foods, purchasing them, and preparing them.



CALIFORNIA
FARM TO SCHOOL
NETWORK



Coordination and Communication

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

Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project

CDFA-F2F staff collaborated with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), advising on aspects of the California Fruit and Vegetable EBT (electronic benefit transfer) Pilot Project to develop technology for incorporating supplemental nutrition benefits directly into shoppers' EBT cards. CDSS worked with stakeholders and partners on program and RFP development.

California State Employees Food Drive

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

- 95 state agencies participated.
- A combined total of 681,393 pounds of food were donated.
- 8,466 pounds of that total were donated by CDFA employees.

SNAC Summer Farmers' Market Initiative



CDFA-F2F worked with the State Nutrition Action Committee (SNAC) to distribute promotional materials about nutrition benefits to 22 farmers' markets in six counties, with an emphasis on the Central Valley. A Food Navigator component was piloted in two counties. Supporting the farmers' market initiative (FMI) through the pandemic meant creating COVID safety guidelines, utilizing digital mail, social media, and moving educational activities virtual.

- 76,846 promotional materials were distributed, including 34 posters; 66,789 flyers; 6,022 postcards, and 35 COVID-19 guidelines.
- Five markets began offering CNIP in 2020 and participating in the FMI, supporting a 22.75% increase in markets accepting incentives.
- 12 local partners collaborated with 19 SNAC state-level partners on the program.
- Reach of the program based on census data for participating areas extended to 195,275 individuals below 185% of the federal poverty level.

PROGRAM HISTORY & SUPPORT

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.

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

- ▶ State of California General Fund
- ▶ USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant
- ▶ USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant
- ▶ USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Grant



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
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