



WE ARE THE FOOD BANK Partner Agency Newsletter

July 2024



From the CPO

Greetings Partner Agencies,

At the Food Bank, our fiscal year starts in July, so Happy New Year! It's incredible to reflect on everything we've achieved this past year and to look forward to what's ahead. Thank you to everyone who joined us in person for our end-of-year celebration, and a special thanks to Grey Bears for hosting us and providing a delicious lunch.



The Programs department has developed three new focus areas for the 24/25 fiscal year: People-Centered, Innovative Solutions, and Compliance. We look forward to interacting with you all and bringing these focus areas to life.

This year, we have several exciting initiatives planned. The new ShopSmart program will offer the most requested items based on your survey feedback. Additionally, we'll be onboarding agencies to join us in becoming USDA-compliant, launching a new cohort group for existing grocery rescue sites, and advancing our research into barcoding for participation registration. Lastly, we're forming a Participant Advisory Council and will be recruiting eight community members from different parts of the county to help guide our programming and advocacy efforts.

Stay tuned for more updates and share your thoughts by joining us for our [monthly office hours](#) and quarterly agency meetings.

Thank you for all the great work you do!

Josué Barajas
Chief Programs Officer

Agency Network Update

Shop Smart Percentage

Starting July 1, ShopSmart increased to an 80/20 pay scale, agencies pay 80% of the item's cost and The Food Bank pays 20%. Thank you to everyone who filled out the survey. From the feedback, we'll prioritize purchasing the most requested items: milk, eggs, tortillas, and meat. Please note, we will continue to provide six shelf-stable items free of cost; tomato sauce no salt added, pinto beans, peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, and long-grain white rice. A reminder, all USDA product are always free of charge.

Office Hours

Our next office hours are Wednesday, July 17, 10—11 a.m. via Microsoft Teams.

[Use this link to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 231 972 592 198 | Passcode: SqEy65

Agency Participation Numbers

May 2024			
County Zone	Estimated Unduplicated Households	Estimated Unduplicated Individuals	% Change from May. '24
North County	12,858	23,647	-7.04%
South County	9,489	32,962	-11.46%
San Lorenzo Valley	4,303	9,066	1.50%
Out of County	912	2,214	17.64%
Total	27,562	67,889	-7.61%

*44 of 52 (85%) partner agencies reporting as of 7/2/24
Thank you!

Community Spotlight: Partner Agency Gathering

Thanks to everyone, the end of the fiscal year Partner Agency Gathering was a great success. It was an opportunity for agency representatives to connect with each other as well as hear from our CEO, Erica Padilla-Chavez, about our collective positive impact on the community and the realities of our challenges ahead. We want to thank Grey Bears for hosting the event and providing a very tasty lunch. We also want to give a shout out to Polar Bear Ice Cream for providing us with a delicious dessert. Thank you to all who attended!

So many of the partner agencies in our network have diverse reasons for serving our neighbors, nourishing our community and addressing food insecurity in Santa Cruz County. Here are a few quotes from partner agency representatives when asked, "Why do you do what you do?"

"We're called to feed the hungry - as a believer, if we can fill the need...if we can provide food that fills the need, it frees up the (family) budget for bills."

– Robin Spurlock, Peoples' Pantry/ Twin Lakes Church

"It's nice to help the community. It's a blessing to have The Food Bank provide food for families. I like helping my sister Josephine."

– Angela Vega, Cornerstone Church

"Social economic gaps cause the inability to feed and nourish local kids...healthy kids are essential for a healthy community, and I enjoy helping provide access."

– Monica Hanly, Giving Grace Thru Joy, Inc.



Save the Dates

Please add the events below to your calendars. We kindly request that agencies update us regarding changes to, or cancellations of, their distributions.

Wednesday, July 17

Agency Network Team Office Hours
10 – 11 a.m.

[Join the Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 286 663 127 35

Passcode: SqEy65

Saturday, August 3

Second Harvest Food Bank Fundraiser:
Party in the Parking Lot at Second Harvest!
4 – 7 p.m.

800 Ohlone Parkway, Watsonville
Live Music featuring The Joint Chiefs,
Food Trucks, and Games!

Tickets available at:

thefoodbank.org/partyintheparkinglot/



Monday, September 16

Partner Agency Meeting
Time and Location TBA

Network Action Spotlight: Participation Information Highlight

Our new fiscal year began July 1, and we thank all our partners for their quality of participation data this past year. We are a data-driven organization and rely on all our partner agencies to submit accurate data in a timely fashion so we can make decisions based on what our community needs.

It's extremely important to receive accurate data during each reporting period. **Participation reports are due on the 7th of the month.** The sooner we receive the data, the sooner we can put our findings into action!

Thanks again to those who did get all their data in by the 7th of each month of the 23/24 fiscal year. We look forward to another year of timely and accurate data collection and reporting by our partners. Remember, the Agency Network Team is here to support you - our partner agencies. Let us know how we can help with data reporting.

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