



PARTNER AGENCY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025



Dear Partner Agency,

These are undeniably challenging times, yet it is truly inspiring to see your unwavering dedication to nourishing our neighbors despite the organizational pressures brought on by federal policy changes. Your compassion, empathy, and commitment to ensuring our community's access to basic nutrition do not go unnoticed - thank you. At Second Harvest, we are closely monitoring policy and budget proposals that could impact our food security system. As you may have seen in the news, the SNAP program - known as CalFresh here in California - is a central focus of budget discussions in Washington, D.C.

The House of Representatives' proposed budget framework includes over \$200 billion in cuts to SNAP, which could directly affect approximately 40,000 local neighbors, many of them children, who rely on this essential program. Our Government Relations Director, Angela Chestnut, will be reaching out soon to share ways your agency can engage in advocacy efforts to help prevent these critical cuts. Together, we can protect the programs that sustain our community.

As a side note, we want to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in our strategic planning roundtable discussions. We recently wrapped up these conversations and surveys with participants, and we look forward to sharing key insights and highlights with you at our next partner agency meeting.

Thank you for all you do!

Erica Padilla-Chavez
CEO

AGENCY NETWORK UPDATE

NEW EFA-7 USDA INTAKE FORMS

USDA partner agencies must now use the updated form received via email for client intake when distributing USDA products. Follow the simplified intake process: include only the participant's zip code in the address section and use initials in the name section. Contact our Agency Network Team for questions or concerns.

SHOP SMART EGG UPDATE

Due to rising egg prices, we are pausing cost-sharing egg purchases through Shop Smart. Our Sourcing Team is exploring alternative proteins based on partner feedback and vendor availability. Egg purchases will resume when pricing aligns with our budget.

DATA MINIMIZATION

We ask partner agencies to review the client data they retain. To create a safe, stigma-free space, we are reducing data collection to only what is required by Feeding America or grant funding.

PARTICIPATION DATABASE READY FOR USE

We're grateful to our volunteer web developer for fixing issues with the Participation Database. Partners can now submit data electronically, though some errors may persist. Thank you for your patience - please report any new issues.

OFFICE HOURS

Friday, March 28
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
[Use this link to join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 839 5909 1866



IMMIGRATION POLICY MEETING AND COUNTY RESOURCES

Thank you to our partner agencies for attending the Immigration Policy Meeting. We appreciate your commitment to a safe, welcoming space. The information shared below outlines our efforts, but agencies should consult legal counsel before taking any action.

Trigger Points:

Partners contact RJ Hinojosa, rj@thefoodbank.org, 831-256-7201

- If they notice an attendance dip of 30% or greater
- If they witness ICE activity at their agency

Santa Cruz County's Resource Page

www.santacruzcountyca.gov/Sanctuary.aspx

> Immigration Resources

- Tookits
- Red cards
- Know Your Rights flyers and videos
- Example of administrative versus judicial warrants

We ask that agencies notify us of any changes or cancellations to their distributions.

Friday, March 28

Agency Network Team Office Hours

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

[Join the Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 839 5909 1866

Monday, April 21

Partner Agency Meeting

Time TBA

Location TBA

Friday, May 2

CalFresh Forum

Cabrillo Crocker Theater

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

6500 Soquel Dr, Aptos

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

UNITED VETERANS COUNCIL – WATSONVILLE MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

The United Veterans Council (UVC) of Santa Cruz County's mission is to serve veterans. There are an estimated 2,000 veterans in South Santa Cruz County who are unable to go to the UVC pantry located in the City of Santa Cruz.

Recently, the UVC gained access to the Veterans Memorial Building in Watsonville. Along with the county government, the UVC has made repairs to part of the building, making it possible to open a **'PANTRY FOR VETERANS'** (and their families). This pantry is in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County and is open every Tuesday, from 9:00 a.m. through noon.

We offer food and a limited amount of clothing to veterans and their families at no cost. Every second Tuesday of the month there is a full veteran's service day which includes VA Doctor, HUD-VASH, Veteran Service Officer, and CalFresh, all of whom are present to help veterans.

We respect veterans and their families; we are here to serve.

Written by James Dailey

