



2021 Impact Report



Message from the CEO

As our community faces the long-term effects of the pandemic, we continue to scale every aspect of the Food Bank to better serve our neighbors in need. This past year you **helped feed 1 in 6 residents** in the community each month. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve neighbors facing rising costs in many aspects of our lives, especially at our grocery stores (see Alehiem's story on page 6).

Serving people is the heart of our mission. This year we look forward to providing not just more food, but even more **nutritious** food. The cost of overall food prices has risen by 5.2%, with the cost of meat and healthy proteins increasing by nearly **10%***. This is why we've seen an incredible response to our protein-filled boxes of food, and look forward to **scaling the distribution of produce, dairy and perishable protein** products in 2022.

In this report, you will read about the many ways you have helped make a positive and lasting impact. I could not be more proud of our team, donors, volunteers, partner agencies and elected officials—thank you for your partnership. This endeavor would not be possible without YOUR continued support. Together, we serve as stewards in the mission to end hunger.

In partnership,



JOEL SJOSTROM
President & CEO

**https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_sanfrancisco.htm

**42,000,000
POUNDS**

OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

That's 3.5 million pounds
per month!

97 CENTS

OF EVERY DOLLAR DONATED

goes towards feeding our
community

50%

of the food we distribute is
FRESH PRODUCE.

6,000 VOLUNTEERS

stepped up to help us serve the
community as an essential business.

250,000

PEOPLE SERVED
EVERY MONTH

We're seeing a
record number of people
turning to us for help.

8,600 sq ft

OF NEW COLD STORAGE
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

so we can serve even more
nutritious fresh food!



**"When I was younger, my
parents had a soup kitchen at
our church. We would cook and
give out hot meals. So I've been
doing this all my life."**

**Rene,
Richmond volunteer**

Hunger fighting goes beyond distributing food

We experienced a historic year for food security during the 2021 legislative cycle at the regional, state and federal levels.

The pandemic brought a renewed focus on food security, making advocacy work more crucial than ever. Public policy is an effective tool to create systems change that can prevent individuals from arriving at hunger in the first place. By advocating for legislation and funding that promotes equitable access to healthy foods and assistance programs,

we are supporting the Food Bank's long-term goal to end hunger in our community.

Advocacy work is a collective effort, and without the determination and strength of our community advocates and larger hunger-fighting network, we likely would not have as many "wins" to celebrate. Learn how you can get involved with our advocacy work by visiting foodbankccs.org/advocate or reach out to Cassidie Bates, Government & Public Affairs Manager at cbates@foodbankccs.org.



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I never thought I'd be sitting across the table from legislators advocating. What I've learned during this process is that my voice is the voice of many.

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Keva, community advocate



Advocacy wins in 2021

- The passage of **School meals for all** allows ALL California students in K-12 public schools to receive breakfast and lunch at no cost to the family, regardless of income or immigration status.
- The \$110 million CA budget investment for **emergency food purchasing** was passed and signed into law.
- The \$182 million investment in **CA food bank resilience and climate capacity** to ensure California food banks remain operational during disasters.
- **85%** of the bills we focused on in the 2021 Food Bank Policy Agenda were **signed into law**.





"I come and collect food because I am not working and I'm disabled. It helps me a lot. I need it. Sometimes I don't have anything."

Alehiem,
Richmond client

The gift of groceries

"I cry to myself because, like today, **I didn't even eat breakfast.**"

This is what Alehiem, a senior and Richmond resident, told us when we first met her at a **Community Produce Program Plus** food distribution. She had recently learned about the Food Bank thanks to a concerned neighbor who knew she was experiencing hunger.

The USDA's Consumer Price Index for Food confirms what we are all experiencing—it's **getting more expensive to eat**. Data shows high-protein food prices are nearly 10% higher* than just a year ago, impacting our neighbors living on low and fixed incomes the hardest.

Alehiem added, "I buy spinach, tomatoes, green peppers....\$80 just for a little bit of food! I can't buy meat; I can't buy chicken. **It's too expensive.**"

Alehiem left the distribution with a shopping cart full of **fresh produce, frozen meat** and a bright smile on her face. She is grateful to the Food Bank and its supporters because she no longer worries if she'll have to skip yet another meal this week.

*https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_sanfrancisco.htm

The link between food and opportunity

The Le Family story

I had a personal connection with the Food Bank's mission long before I joined the Board. If food resources hadn't been available, my life could have easily turned out differently.

My parents were refugees from Vietnam. During the war, they fled with just the clothes on their backs with my then 2-year-old older brother. They relied on organizations like the Food Bank to feed us all, which helped us get on our feet after arriving in America. Without having to worry about food, my parents were able to persevere and save enough money to put my dad through college. As a result, he became a successful businessman owning multiple businesses in Texas and was able to send me to college. Because we had that foundation, I was able to lead a career I am proud of, too. Now, as a dad of two, I am proud to say I am able to set my own children up for success.

Thanks to organizations like the Food Bank, we get to live our "American Dream". My family's story is just one example of how having food gives us what we need to thrive. There are many more families out there who just need a little help getting back on their feet. Thank you for supporting The Food Bank.



Finding a way to come together

We knew it would take some out-of-the-box thinking to pull off our 2021 Nourish Gala. The challenge: how could we still serve hot gourmet meals, give away keepsake gifts and enjoy a live, in-person event **all while keeping everyone safe** during a pandemic? The answer: hold it at a drive-in movie theater!

After being apart for two years, our community showed up and inspired us like never before at the **Nourish Gala Drive-in to Fight Hunger**—a unique take on the Food Bank's annual fundraiser.

Under the night's sky at Concord's West Wind Solano Drive-in, 250 people came together and **raised enough funds to provide a record-breaking 500,000 meals**.

To keep everyone safe, we served our guests without them having to leave their car—similar to how the Food Bank has adapted to getting food out to our neighbors. Though all guests stayed two car lengths apart, we felt closer to our community than ever before.

Please **save the date** for the 2nd Nourish Gala Drive-in to Fight Hunger taking place on **Thursday, May 19, 2022**. For tickets visit, foodbankccs.org/nourishgala.

