



# 2023 Legislative Agenda

Food banks play a critical role in ending hunger, but we can't do it alone.

The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano strategically engages in advocacy work to raise awareness and mobilize support to end hunger, improve economic security and promote health and well-being for our community. This includes educating the public and policymakers about food insecurity and encouraging partnerships to improve access to healthy food.

## Our Mission

Leading the fight to end hunger, in partnership with our community and in service of our neighbors in need.

## Our Advocacy Goal

To identify the root causes of hunger, specific to our region while integrating the experiences and voices of our community members to most effectively advocate for sustainable change in our food systems to eliminate food insecurity.



## Social Safety Net Programs

The social safety net is a crucial component in the daily lives and long-term outcomes of our community members. Advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels is needed to ensure these programs are robust, funded, promoted and reliably accessible for those in need of support. The Social Safety Net includes food assistance programs like CalFresh/SNAP, WIC, TEFAP, P-EBT, CFAP, just to name a few, and also encompasses other programs that contribute to the ability of individuals experiencing poverty to meet their needs.

- [SB 348 – Senator Skinner – Nutritious School Meals for Every California Student](#)
- [SB 600 – Senator Menjivar – California CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023](#)
- [AB 1178 – Assemblymember Rivas – School Nutrition: Guardian Meal Reimbursement](#)
- [AB 712 – Assemblymember Carrillo – CalFresh: Hot and Prepared Foods](#)
- [SB 245 – Senators Hurtado and Rubio – California Food Assistance Program: Eligibility and Benefits](#) / [AB 311 – Assemblymember Santiago – California Food Assistance Program: Eligibility and Benefits](#)
- [AB 679 – Assemblymember Wicks – Family childcare homes: meals: reimbursement rates](#)
- [AB 605 – Assemblymember Arambula – CalWORKs: CalFresh: Eligibility: Income Exclusions](#)

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- [AB 242 – Senator Skinner – California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment \(HOPE\) for Children Trust Account Program](#)
- [AB 274 – Assemblymember Bryan – CalWORKs: CalFresh: Eligibility: Income Exclusions](#)
- [HR 1510 – Representative Barbara Lee – Improving Access to Nutrition Act of 2023](#)
- [HR 3037 – Representative Alma S. Adams – Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2023](#)
- [HR 3183 – Representative Gomez – EATS Act of 2023](#)
- [AB 1644 – Assemblymember Bonta – Medi-Cal: Medically Supportive Food and Nutrition Services](#)
- [Expand Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer \(EBT\): \\$100 Million One-Time](#)
- [Commodity Supplemental Food Program: \\$390 Million or USDA Deems Necessary One-Time](#)
- [WIC Funding for Anticipated Caseload and Cost of Nutrition: \\$6.35 Billion](#)
- [Child and Adult Care Food Programs \(CACFP\): \\$10 Million One-Time](#)

## Strengthening Food Systems and Food Banks



Food Banks are a vital part of our interconnected food system. The uncertainty of the past few years has displayed the importance of ensuring our food bank is well-poised to respond to a myriad of needs in the community.

Unfortunately, California has a wildfire season, and these annual events place a high responsibility on food banks to act as emergency food responders. Agriculture is another key aspect of our food system. We continually strive for even furthered partnerships with our local food producers and legislative efforts to ensure the system as a whole has the funding and resources needed to meet the growing food insecurity in California.

- [AB 870 – Assemblymember Arambula – Public Social Services: Benefits for Students](#)
- [CalFood: \\$60 Million Ongoing](#)
- [Food Bank Capacity & Climate Resilience: \\$180 Million One-Time](#)
- [State Disaster Food Assistance Program \(SDFAP\)](#)
- [AB 619 – Assemblymember Fong – State Government: Emergency Services: Nonprofit Service Providers](#)
- [AB 590 – Assemblymember Hart – State-funded Assistance Grants and Contracts: Advance Payments](#)
- [SB 336 – Senator Umberg – State Grant Programs: Negotiated Cost Rate Agreements](#)



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- [School Meals Direct Certification Grants to Reduce Paperwork for Schools: \\$10 Million One-Time](#)
- [Expand Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer \(EBT\): \\$100 Million One-Time](#)
- [TEFAP Food Purchases for Food Banks: \\$900 Million One-Time \(FED\)](#)
- [Farm Bill for TEFAP Storage and Distribution for Food Banks: \\$200 Million One-Time \(FED\)](#)

## Policy Partnerships for Hunger Solutions

Effective policy solutions stem from strong partnerships. The focal point of our advocacy model is to center the lived experiences of our community advocates into each aspect of the legislative process. As a community organization focused on ending hunger in partnerships with our community, we strive to work closely alongside our elected officials, CBOs, coalitions and community members to identify the root causes of food insecurity in our region and implement strategic solutions.



To get involved or for questions, please contact Government and Public Affairs Manager Cassidie Carmen Bates at [cbates@foodbankccs.org](mailto:cbates@foodbankccs.org).

Since 1975, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano has led the fight to end hunger in our community. Through our advocacy, we aim for long-term and systems-change to mitigate the root causes of food insecurity in our region. In efforts to achieve this we partner with community advocates with lived-experience with hunger and those passionate about food security as we engage with elected officials to advocate for policies that strengthen our social safety net, promote food access that is equitable, affordable, dignified, and nutritious, and identify regional solutions to hunger. We engage in advocacy on the regional, state and national levels. Our policy scope is generally defined by the below categories and is not listed in order or priority.

## Food Bank and Food Systems Resilience

Food banks are designated community emergency providers; it's crucial that they remain prepared, sustainable and equipped to serve the hunger-related need. Since 2020, food insecurity has deepened in our service area and we will advocate to ensure that California food banks have the physical space, capacity, funding, and resources to continue purchasing, safely storing, and distributing product, especially during times of disaster, supply chain and food systems disruptions, etc.

- ◆ **\$180 Million Food Bank Capacity and Climate Resilience (CA)**
- ◆ **\$120 Million CalFood Budget Request (CA)**
- ◆ **\$10 Million State Disaster Food Assistance Program Budget Request (SDFAP) (CA)**

## Bolstering Food Assistance Resources

Governmental food assistance programs are documented as an effective first-line defense to food insecurity as many of these social safety net programs provide direct allowance to eligible individuals to purchase food. We advocate for: the federally funded program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) and the state tailored version, **CalFresh**, **Women Infants and Children (WIC)**, **TEFAP**, **Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT)**, **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**, the **School and Summer Meals programs**. Our advocacy centers on protecting these programs from cuts, ensuring the programs are accessible, the application process, distribution of benefits, and the qualification guidelines match the needs of the food insecure and vulnerable demographics in our service area. Additionally, we actively engage in continued efforts related to **Child Nutrition Reauthorization** and **Farm Bill**.

- ◆ **AB 1965: California Antihunger Response and Employment Training Act (CARET) of 2022 (CA)**
- ◆ **AB 2153: California Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project (CA)**
- ◆ **SB 364: Pupils Meals (CA)**
- ◆ **SB 464: California Food Assistance Program: eligibility and benefits (CA)**
- ◆ **SB 641: CalFresh for College Students Act (CA)**
- ◆ **SB 1481: Preschools, Child Daycare Facilities, and Trustline Providers: Meals (CA)**
- ◆ **H.R. 1753: Improving Access to Nutrition Act of 2021 (FED)**
- ◆ **H.R. 1919: EATS Act (FED)**
- ◆ **H.R. 4077: Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2021 (FED)**
- ◆ **H.R. 5227: Lift the Bar Act (FED)**
- ◆ **H.R. 6613: Keeping School Meals Flexible Act (FED)**
- ◆ **\$900 Million Budget Request for TEFAP (FED)**

## Nutrition and Healthy Food Access

The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano is committed to improving access to nutritious and healthy food throughout our service area. We are supportive of legislative efforts, such as food-as-medicine, and ones that address the connection between food insecurity and diet-related illness.

- ◆ **AB 2153: California Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project (CA)** \*also listed under *Bolstering Food Assistance Resources*

# 2021 Legislative Agenda

Since 1975, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano has led the fight to end hunger in our community. Through our advocacy, we educate and partner with the community, collaborate with elected officials, and conduct research to best engage with policies that strengthen emergency food assistance, promote food access that is equitable, affordable, dignified, and nutritious, and identifies regional solutions to hunger. Below are our main areas of policy & budget priorities for the 2021 local, state, and federal legislative cycles. Not in an order of prioritization.

## Food Bank Resilience

- A. **Storage & Capacity for California Food Banks** - Ensure Food Banks have the physical space and capacity to safely store all of the necessary product and equipment; including but not limited to refrigeration, back-up generators, adequate warehouse space, etc.
  - A. *SB 240: Eggman: Income Tax: Credits: Food Banks*
  - B. *AB 125: Rivas: Equitable Economic Recovery, Healthy Food Access, Climate Resilient Farms, and Worker Protection Bond Act of 2022*
- B. **Emergency & Disaster Preparedness** - Ensure that Food Banks have the monetary and physical resources to continue being emergency responders, especially during times of natural and public health disasters; including but not limited to fires, earthquakes, epidemics, etc.
  - A. *AB 221: Santiago: Emergency Food Assistance*

## Bolstering Food Assistance Resources

- A. **CalFresh/SNAP** - Ensure that the federally funded program, SNAP, is protected from cuts and that the state tailored version, CalFresh, is accessible to all those who qualify throughout the application process, distribution of benefits, and that CalFresh qualification guidelines match the needs of the food insecure, and vulnerable demographics, in our service area.
  - A. *SB 20: Dodd: Student nutrition: eligibility for CalFresh benefits*
  - B. *SB 107: Weiner: CalFresh*
  - C. *AB 396: Gabriel: CalFresh: educational programs*
  - D. *H.R. 1919 (EATS Act): Gomez: Enhanced Access to SNAP Act*
  - E. *SB 108: Hurtado: State Healthy Food Access Policy*
  - F. *SB 464: Hurtado: California Food Assistance Program: eligibility*
- B. **WIC** - Ensure that the Women, Infants and Children program is protected from cuts and is accessible to all those who qualify throughout the application process, distribution of benefits, and that WIC qualification guidelines match the needs of the food insecure, and vulnerable demographics, in our service area.
- C. **TEFAP** - Ensure the Federally funded program, TEFAP, is protected from cuts and that the state tailored version, CalWORKs, is accessible to all of those that qualify throughout the application process, distribution of benefits, and that CalWORKS qualification guidelines match the needs of poverty in our service area.
- D. **Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT)**-Ensure that the federally funded and state directed program is operated throughout the guaranteed date and that it's accessible to those who qualify throughout the

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application process, distribution of benefits, and that P-EBT qualification guidelines match the needs of the food insecure, and vulnerable demographics, in our service area

E. **School & Summer Meals** - Increase awareness, accessibility, and participation by school-aged children in breakfast, lunch, and summer meal programs; in addition to creative solutions that address the low school meal participation due to COVID.

A. ***SB 364: Skinner: Free School Meals for All Act of 2021***

F. **Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act** - Every five years, Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) provides Congress with an opportunity to improve and strengthen the child nutrition and school meal programs. Although the current law, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296), expired on September 30, 2015, the programs continue to operate.

G. **Farm Bill** - Ensure the continued successful implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill.

## COVID-19 Economic & Food Security Build-Back

A. **COVID Relief and Regional Hunger Solutions** - Given the unprecedented circumstances that have been present and amplified, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will engage in advocacy that mitigates the rates of food insecurity in our service area and increases specific initiatives, such as, 'food as medicine'. Although some subjects of our engagement may be outside of our typical policy scope of hunger relief, we intend to advocate for subjects that are directly impacting food security in our region, as we understand the multitude of factors that directly correlate to how many individuals are utilizing Food Bank services.

A. ***H.R. 1319 (American Rescue Plan): 117th Congress***

B. ***AB 368: Bonta: Food Prescriptions***

C. ***Master Plan on Aging (MPA): Goal 5: Affordable Aging, Strategy C: Protection from Poverty and Hunger***