



TOGETHER WE WIN

2025 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NOURISH CALIFORNIA



nourishcalifornia.org



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you to our passionate partners, community members, supporters, funders and donors, department administrators, California legislative leaders, and the Administration who supported us and championed our policy priorities this year.

This was an especially difficult year.

A hostile federal Administration, ICE kidnappings and mass deportations, fires that destroyed Altadena and the Palisades, attacks on DEI and non-profits, the passage of HR 1 - which made punitive changes to eligibility for critical safety net programs - and a federal shutdown that delayed November CalFresh food benefits, created significant challenges to our communities and our advocacy work. Through these moments, your collaboration, leadership, and commitment helped ensure families could continue to access food and counter harmful policies and narratives.

Lastly, we want to express our deepest gratitude to our incredible staff. Their dedication, passion, and resilience made all of this work possible during such a challenging year.

Join us in reading about the positive impact we've all made together in 2025.



Community-submitted proposals

were collected for the first time ever at Nourish California. These proposals were carefully reviewed by our Advisory Committee and selected to lead breakout sessions at the Forum.

These sessions covered a variety of expertise and topics, including promotoras in food justice and the challenges to access food when you are unhoused.

Compton College

created a beautiful backdrop for the CalFresh Forum to be painted onto. We proudly partnered with local organizations, businesses, and vendors to achieve our vision of a community-centered CalFresh Forum.

“Loved the translation services!!! Very inclusive practices.”

CalFresh Forum participant



Reimagined Freshy Awards

allowed us to honor the range of individuals and groups fighting to increase food access in our state. Innovative new categories recognized the intersectional and creative leaders in this work.





BOOSTING BENEFITS

CalFresh Fruit & Vegetable EBT Program

\$36 million

in funding secured for the CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Program.

This is **3.5 times more funding** than this program has ever received in a single year.

We are grateful for the strong community action, our cosponsors Fullwell, and our legislative champions, Assemblymember Lee and Senator Richardson, for making this historic funding level possible.

over 4,500 petition signatures
from community members

more than 1,000 individual letters
sent to legislators

THRIVING TRANSITIONS

Approval for an expansion of pre-release CalFresh applications across the state granted by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

This approval is a major step in ensuring that people leaving incarceration are connected to critical food resources before they return home. It both helps **reduce hunger** and **increase stability** during reentry.

Support to individuals in transition also strengthens entire communities by **reducing economic strain** on families and support networks.





Introduced AB 1049

to eliminate barriers from the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) and improve food access for low-income immigrant Californians. It was supported by testimonies by community members and 17 letters of support from partners.

The bill was held as a two-year bill and will continue to move in 2026.

“If [cannot get access to food assistance], it would be very difficult for families, like mine, because many of those like me, we would have to buy the food and we could not pay other things like paying rent, paying the bills or medicines it would be even more difficult for everyone.”

Esmeralda, community member in San Jose

Pushed back on a new threat to the CFAP expansion to undocumented Californians aged 55+ by October 2027.

This victory was achieved by:

- **37 public comments** sent by partner organizations
- **over 53 calls** made to legislative leaders
- **3 testimonies** shared with the Governor's office



Seed Campaigns

Every Kid, Every Day

\$43.8 million

in state investments included in the budget for the implementation of SUN Bucks (Summer EBT). Allows California to deliver critical food assistance to over 4 million children during the summer.

Inclusive, accessible outreach and enrollment

of SUN Bucks, particularly for immigrant, mixed-status, and limited-English-proficient families. Advanced by working closely with the California Departments of Social Services and of Education, alongside partners such as the California Association of Food Banks, GRACE, San Diego Hunger Coalition, and others.

\$90.7 million

secured by joining partners in advocating against proposed funding cuts, and supporting full funding for School Meals for All. Ensures that every child in California can access two free meals during the school day.

Co-created solutions with community

by hosting listening sessions and having real-time experiences with school meals and SUN Bucks inform our recommendations to CDSS and our policy planning. This includes a Los Angeles session with high school students, co-led by The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health, and a Bay Area session with students and parents, co-led by Innovate Public Schools.





Ensuring Food and Water Access for Californians Impacted by Climate Change

Continued to advocate for the CalFresh Safe Drinking Water Pilot while seeking alignment with climate justice and environmental justice partners for long-term solutions.

The Water Pilot has funding to last until late 2026.



Listening for Solutions: LGBTQ+ Californians and Food Security

Developing new partnerships across the state and country.

Breaking Barriers to Food Access for Communities with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Consistently meeting with the California Department of Social Services to ensure accountability in language access and that state language access policies meet the needs of LEP communities.

Seed Campaigns



Food Justice for Black Californians: Confronting Racism, Bias, and Barriers in the Safety Net

Alongside other advocates,
halted the passage of SB 18,
which ignored community input to address food insecurity and
aimed for a quick fix using our tax dollars.

If passed, it would have harmed families experiencing food
insecurity and excluded community food retailers from
support.





CLOSING

Strong community members like you are crucial to the wins we saw this year. We appreciate your voice, time, and financial support as we create a more equitable California. This journey continues and we are excited to keep partnering with you all.

Please support our work by donating today at <https://act.nourishca.org/action/donate>

From,

George Manalo-LeClair
Executive Director

Betzabel Estudillo
Chief Engagement Officer

