



Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Newsletter

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News and Updates

Understanding Food Insecurity and Hunger in California

Food insecurity in California continues to persist despite the efforts of state and federal benefit programs. Middle and low-income Californians continue to worry about and experience running out of money to buy food. In October 2023, [Nourish California](#) partnered with FM3 Research to identify the barriers affecting the well-being of Californians. Some of the key takeaways include:



- ❖ **Middle and low-income Californians continue to worry about running out of money to buy food.** Fewer than one in five survey respondents are able to “always” get the food they need.
- ❖ **More than four in five of those who have been incarcerated, or have a household member who has been, say they often or sometimes worried about running out of food in the past year.** 84% worry about running out of food and 78% have actually run out of food.
- ❖ **Extreme weather harms Californian food security.** Two in five survey respondents say that extreme weather made it harder for them to get food, with the increase in cost surrounding the event being the primary challenge.
- ❖ **Experiences with unfair treatment and language barriers continue to be a deterrent to using public benefits.** More than one in ten experienced a language barrier with CalFresh.

Access the full focus group and survey findings [here](#).

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Black History Month



Black History Month is observed every February to celebrate the accomplishments, culture, courage, and leadership of Black and African Americans.

The national theme, provided by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALAH), is "[African Americans and the Arts.](#)" This theme highlights the many impacts Black Americans have had on visual arts, music, cultural movements, and more.

Check out the following websites to find resources, downloadable materials, recipes, Black History Month events and more!

- ❖ [LA County Parks](#)
- ❖ [LA County Library](#)
- ❖ [Black Cultural Events](#)
- ❖ [Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs](#)
- ❖ [Office of Minority Health](#)
- ❖ [SNAP-Ed Connection](#)
- ❖ [Library of Congress](#)

Nutrition for the Clinician

To educate physicians and other health professionals on the fundamentals of nutrition, [The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition](#) (AJCN) launched a new article series titled **Nutrition for the Clinician**. The effort supports the White House National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health and its directives to expand nutrition knowledge of health care providers. Through case-based learning, Nutrition for the Clinician provides continuing education that enhances clinical reasoning and use of the best nutrition evidence in practice. Each clinical case will feature a clearly identified nutrition problem and defined learning objectives and be published in the journal's regular issues periodically throughout the year.



Based on the recent developments in nutrition education for clinicians and enthusiasm of federal policymakers for greater integration of nutrition into health care, the AJCN anticipates growing demand from physicians and other clinicians for continuing education in nutrition. Meeting that demand should raise awareness of the importance of nutrition care and the minimum nutrition knowledge within the medical community while also increasing the clinical expertise of nutrition specialists. Access the first issue [here](#).

New Data on RACE COUNTS

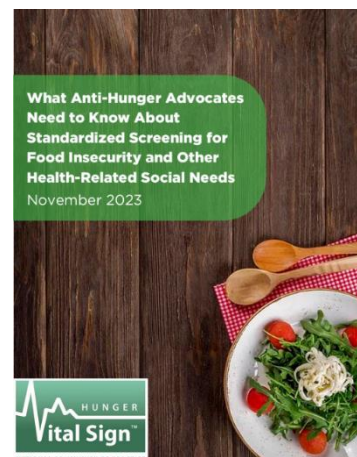
[Catalyst California's](#) RACE COUNTS initiative released pivotal new data on racial disparities for nearly 500 cities across California that highlights how inequities have a devastating impact on communities of color not only in larger, more diverse cities but also in smaller, less diverse cities with better outcomes.

RACE COUNTS has long been a valuable tool to the racial justice field as one of the only resources that provides racial disparity data and analysis across multiple issue areas and indicators including food access, lack of greenspace, living wage, life expectancy, and housing quality. With the addition of data at the city level, RACE COUNTS can provide more value to community-based organizations, advocates, elected officials, and journalists by showing not only where their county ranks, but where their local communities stand. Explore the new data [here](#).

More than half of Black, Latinx and Native American renters are rent-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of income on housing costs.

What Anti-Hunger Advocates Need to Know About Standardized Screening for Food Insecurity and Other Health-Related Social Needs

The [Hunger Vital Sign™ National Community of Practice](#) released a brief that examines how screening for food insecurity and other health-related social needs is a key strategy for addressing patients' social risks. It provides an overview of what recent standards-setting initiatives mean for efforts to screen patients for food insecurity, and recommendations for anti-hunger advocates to leverage screening efforts to improve the nutrition, health, and well-being of people struggling to put food on the table. Read the brief [here](#).



Southern Region Student Wellness Conference



The Southern Region Student Wellness Conference (SRSWC) is an engaging multi-day event designed to empower educational partners such as mental health professionals, administrators, educators, school counselors, school safety staff, healthcare providers, and the community to address the needs of the whole child.

The SRSWC features nationally recognized speakers and premier breakout sessions supporting historic California investments in community schools, behavioral health, and workforce capacity. Grounded in the elements of the Center for Disease Control's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model, the conference focuses on the interconnectivity between students, families, communities, and schools in the pursuit of health and wellness. [Learn more and register here](#).

Leveraging CACFP for Farm to Early Care and Education



A new report released by the [Food Research & Action Center](#) (FRAC) outlines a pivotal cross-sector approach to improving children's equitable access to fresh, nutritious foods to reduce hunger. The report provides recommendations and policy changes that support child care providers to access the federal Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) and utilize it for eligible Farm to Early Care and Education (Farm to ECE) activities.

To reach more eligible children with nutritious meals and snacks in child care settings, FRAC recommends policy and regulation decision-makers, state agencies, CACFP sponsors, child care providers, local farmers and ranchers, regional food hubs, and other food system sector partners, adopt the following strategies:

- ❖ Promote awareness of CACFP and Farm to ECE through tailored outreach communications.
- ❖ Leverage CACFP State Administrative Expense Funds to provide training and technical assistance on Farm to ECE, such as producing state-level Farm to ECE guidance materials and employing a Farm to ECE coordinator.
- ❖ Advocate for and support local- and state-level local food procurement incentives for CACFP providers, including additional reimbursement for meals served that include local foods.
- ❖ Invest in local food procurement infrastructure and shared-service procurement models, such as central kitchens accessed by multiple CACFP providers.

The report also features templates that CACFP sponsors and providers can utilize to help streamline the processes necessary to leverage CACFP for Farm to ECE activities. [Read the full report.](#)

Grow LA Garden Classes

Come learn the basics of growing your own vegetables through the [Grow LA Gardens Initiative](#), a series of four-week classes offered around Los Angeles County. This spring, these low-cost classes will be offered at 13 sites from Altadena to Long Beach, Van Nuys to Pomona. Experienced *UC Master Gardener volunteers* lead the small classes where participants learn the ins-and-outs of soil preparation, irrigation, planting, pest management, and harvesting. In addition to learning the basics of successful gardening, participants meet other gardeners in their community and build a new network of gardening friends.

[See the schedule](#) for locations, dates, and times.





Recipe of the Month

Chocolate Tofu Pudding

Serves: 3 **Serving Size:** ½ cup

Ingredients:

- ❖ 1 cup or one 8-ounce package of silken tofu
- ❖ ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ❖ 2 tablespoons water
- ❖ 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ❖ ½ teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
- ❖ Salt, to taste

Instructions:

1. Wash hands with soap and warm water.
2. In a blender or food processor, blend tofu a few seconds at a time to start to break it up.
3. In a small microwave safe bowl, combine chocolate chips and water. Microwave for 30 seconds or until the chocolate chips start to melt. Stir the mixture until combined.
4. Add half of the chocolate mixture to the blender or food processor and blend together until combine, about 10-15 seconds.
5. Scrape down the sides of the blender or food processor and add all remaining ingredients. Blend to combined.
6. Pour pudding into a bowl or individual serving dishes and refrigerate for at least four hours.
7. Serve chilled. Add your favorite fruit, nuts, or other toppings.



Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 180 calories, 55 mg of sodium, 19 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 4 g protein, 10 g total fat.

Find [this recipe](#) and other healthy recipes at [AZ Health Zone](#).



Webinars

Linking Patients to WIC and Other Food Safety Net Programs: Perspectives from Health Care

February 26/11:00 am

Join PHI's Dialogue4Health and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation for a conversation with representatives from healthcare systems that are increasing food security through collaborative coordination of healthcare, referrals, and food safety net programs. Register [here](#).

Promoting Health Equity Through Economic Opportunity

February 27/11:00 am

Join Trust for America's Health and the Bipartisan Policy Center for a national webinar that will discuss the reciprocal connections between health and income. Register [here](#).

Funding for Active Transportation: What You Need to Know

February 27/11:00 am

America Walks is hosting an informative webinar featuring experts from Safe Routes Partnership, Smart Growth America, and the League of American Bicyclists. Join to learn about deferral and state funding opportunities for communities across the spectrum of capacity and learn about the resources available to assist in navigating funding options. Register [here](#).

Transform Your Practice: Community Engagement Strategies for Trust, Impact & Civic Pride

March 6/10:00 am

Join Reimagining the Civic Commons to learn about promising new practices in community engagement – and how you can bring these powerful strategies into your work. Public participation experts from across the country will share insights on building relationships with a diverse range of community members, navigating complex dynamics and developing inspired, beloved solutions. Register [here](#).

Recognizing Women's Impact on the Food Justice Movement

March 12/11:00 am

Join Swipe Out Hunger for a discussion on how so many women impact food justice efforts around the country. Register [here](#).



Funding Opportunities

GUSNIP Produce Prescription Program

Close Date: February 28, 2024

The primary goal and objective of the GusNIP Produce Prescription Program is to demonstrate and evaluate the impact of projects on (1) the improvement of dietary health through increased consumption of fruits and vegetables; (2) the reduction of individual and household food insecurity; and (3) the reduction in healthcare use and associated costs. Estimated total funding for FY24 is \$5,280,800 for grants up to \$500,000. Learn more [here](#).

Garden Grant

Close Date: March 1, 2024

The Garden Grant program provides a \$3,000 monetary grant to support a new or existing edible educational garden located at either a K–12 School or Non-profit organization that serves children in the K-12 grade range. Learn more [here](#).

No Kid Hungry Summer Meals Grant

Close Date: March 1, 2024

No Kid Hungry is offering grants to schools and community organizations that are serving rural communities by providing non-congregate feeding models as part of the Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Option. The average grant award will range between \$10,000 - \$15,000. Learn more [here](#).



What We're Reading

A Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Excise Tax in California: Projected Benefits for Population Obesity and Health Equity

CHOICES Project

This study evaluates the cost-effectiveness of a hypothetical 2-cent-per-ounce excise tax in California and implications for population health and health equity. [Read here](#).

Severe Obesity Increasing Among Young Children

Pediatrics

Following a period of decline, severe obesity rates among young children are now on the rise. A new study highlights this growing risk and recommended policy solutions to address its root causes. [Read here](#).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participants Appreciate Behavioral Science Informed Nutrition Text Messages

Nutrition Policy Institute

New Nutrition Policy Institute (NPI) research demonstrates that sending encouraging text messages to SNAP participants helps promote nutrition resources and stimulate positive feelings about the program. [Read here](#).

Food Insecurity Tied to Shorter Life, Early Death

U.S. News

A new study finds people who experience food insecurity are at greater risk of dying prematurely and living a shorter life after age 50. [Read here](#).

How This Farmer is Advancing Food is Medicine

Food Bank News

The Project Food Box program of SunTerra Produce in California is showing that there is a role for farmers to play in the Food is Medicine movement. [Read here.](#)



CalFresh Healthy Living Trainings

Training	Date/Time	Format	Registration
Food Smarts: Waste Reduction Training	Feb 27/10:00 am	Virtual	Register here
CFHL Creating Nutrition Messages with a Trauma Informed Approach	Feb 29; Mar 14/10:00 am	Virtual	Register here
Social Identities, Implicit Bias and their Impact on Health and Wellbeing	Mar 11/10:00 am	Virtual	Register here
Smarter Mealtimes Movement: An Early Start to Healthy Eating	Mar 20/9:30 am	Virtual	Register here
Emotional First Aid for CFHL	Apr 05; Apr 19/ 10:00 am	Virtual	Register here

Visit the [CalFresh Healthy Living Training page](#) (hosted by Leah's Pantry) for the latest training-related information and calendar of all scheduled trainings and events. Please seek approval from your Project Manager and Contract Manager prior to travel.

If you would like to submit content or have any questions or comments about the Nutrition and Physical Activity Program newsletter, please contact Tania Marquez at tmarquez@ph.lacounty.gov.