



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 5/12/2026

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services; Health Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Angela Struckmann, 707-565-5800; Nolan Sullivan 707-565-7901

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution declaring May 2026 as CalFresh Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

In 2011, the California Department of Social Services designated May as CalFresh Awareness Month to increase public awareness of the CalFresh program, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. CalFresh is a vital food security program that helps improve the health and well-being of participating Sonoma County residents through a monthly food benefit. The adoption of this Gold Resolution declares May 2026 as CalFresh Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

Discussion:

Sonoma County currently has approximately 42,249 people receiving CalFresh food benefits each month, which supports low-income individuals and families to buy food. CalFresh benefits are issued monthly on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, like a standard debit card, to purchase food at online retailers, grocery stores, convenience stores, farmers markets and any store that accepts EBT. CalFresh spending strengthens Sonoma's local economy, with every \$1.00 spent in CalFresh benefits generating \$1.79 of economic activity in our community. As a result, CalFresh purchasing power supports local businesses, helps boost community supported agriculture, and sustains local jobs.

While the CalFresh monthly food benefit directly contributes to reduced food insecurity and supports the local economy, CalFresh also uplifts participants through additional programming. The CalFresh Employment & Training Program provides resources and job readiness training for eligible CalFresh participants interested in increasing their employability. CalFresh Disaster Response provides several important food supports, including replacing lost food and benefits, and providing expanded eligibility during certain disasters.

For over 20 years, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) (known in California as CalFresh Healthy Living) has funded nutrition education and physical activity promotion in the community. Just a few of the many program successes include reaching over 30,000 individuals with nutrition classes, installation of 6 community water fountains, revitalization of community gardens, and improved health policies and practices at dozens of schools and childcare sites throughout the county. Unfortunately with the passing of recent federal legislation, SNAP-Ed funding was eliminated.

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Partnerships with the Department of Health Services and other county departments, community partners, and non-profit organizations fosters collaboration to increase access and enrollment in CalFresh.

CalFresh Awareness activities will kick off across the county in May. Throughout the month there will be a series of coordinated outreach efforts in partnership with community partners and other agencies to share information about the CalFresh program, including increasing awareness and access, assisting with applications, promoting the farmers market match program, and other resources connected to the CalFresh program.

Prior Board Actions:

The board has adopted resolutions proclaiming May as CalFresh Awareness Month annually, 2017-2021 and 2024-2025.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Not applicable

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Not applicable

Attachments:

Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None