The past year has been productive for our great state when it comes to food security. Despite a number of hurdles, California has risen to the challenge, prioritizing food-insecure populations and strengthening support for a healthy, safe, and affordable food system.

At the center of these efforts is the California Department of Food and Agriculture and its Office of Farm to Fork, which has addressed long-standing barriers to food access, expanding farm-to-school programs, and promoting and supporting careers in agriculture.

The 2016 state budget signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. allocated funding for the California Nutrition Incentive Program - a win-win for farmers and low-income Californians. In 2017 the Office of Farm to Fork also assumed leadership of the California Farm to School Network, an organization dedicated to increasing student access to food grown within our state and educating them about the production of that food.

I am proud of the work the Office of Farm to Fork accomplished this past year and am excited to see the pathways ahead, as we work to support farmers and ranchers and increase food access for all Californians.

Yours truly,

Karen Ross
Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture
mission and goals

To promote and protect California agriculture, lessen the impact of food insecurity, foster healthy environments, and improve market access – through coordination, education, and outreach

increase food access
Lessen the impact of food insecurity through increasing access points and expanding the availability of resources

advance farm to school
Foster healthy school environments and increase market access for California institutional buyers and sellers

coordination and communication
Inform and guide communities on the benefits and opportunities within a dynamic food system
Program highlights

Reducing food insecurity

California Nutrition Incentive Program
Over the past year, the Office of Farm to Fork (Office) laid the groundwork for the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP), which was established by Assembly Bill 1321 (Chapter 442, Statutes of 2015) to encourage the purchase and consumption of healthy, California-grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts by nutrition benefit clients. Phase I of CNIP will provide CalFresh shoppers with nutrition incentives for fruits and vegetables at Certified Farmers’ Markets. The program began on July 1, 2017 with implementing partners at the Ecology Center, Wellington Square Farmers’ Market, North Figueroa Association, and the Downtown Napa Farmers’ Market. The program is funded through a combination of state general fund dollars, a federal Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant, SNAP-Ed funding, and match funding.

California State Employees Food Drive
The Office continued to lead the California State Employees Food Drive, partnering with the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services to raise food donations and funds to support food insecure Californians. Over 100 state agencies and departments participated, resulting in the donation of over 750,000 pounds of food, including fresh produce.

Food Waste
The Office is committed to reducing food waste in California. In the past year staff continued to participate in initiatives aimed at preventing food waste and increasing food recovery, including the California Food Waste Roundtable.

Advancing farm to school

California Farm to School Network
The Office began the transition of the already robust California Farm to School Network (CFSN) to the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) in the spring of 2017. The CFSN is a “one-stop shop” for everything related
to farm-to-school in the state of California. As a communications hub and a convener across many organizations and regions in the state, the CFSN will align statewide farm-to-school efforts by sharing resources and bringing farmers, schools, distributors, and practitioners together. The Office received a USDA Farm to School Grant and was named as a core partner by the National Farm to School Network to facilitate future efforts.

California Farmer Marketplace
The California Farmer Marketplace continued to connect farmers and ranchers to California school food service directors. The Marketplace, a free and public website developed by CDFA, allows farmers to list products and connect directly with school food service directors to increase the amount of healthy California-grown foods on school lunch trays.

Child Nutrition Director Trainings
Leveraging the power of peer learning, the Office coordinated three child nutrition director trainings in Fort Bragg, Turlock, and Encinitas, California. The trainings showcased successful farm-to-school programs and introduced directors to effective strategies for advancing their own programs.

Farm to Fork Ambassadors
Continuing the success from the first round of Farm to Fork Ambassadors, the Office provided scholarships to four veterans enrolled at Archi’s Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, a program that teaches beginning farmers hydroponic growing techniques. Students shared their journey during the intensive training program through the Tales from the Field Blog and best practices guides developed from their future business plans.

Contra Costa County School Districts JPA
With coordination from the Office of Farm to Fork, nine school districts in Contra Costa County were able to form a Joint Powers of Agreement (JPA), pool their dairy bids, and select one distributor. This allowed for significant savings for smaller districts, created a system for future group bids, and represented $1.4 million in sales for California dairy farmers.
program highlights

Communication and coordination

The Office continued to provide stakeholders and the public with reports, program profiles, and best practices on topics ranging from farm-to-school to food access. Materials are available on CAFarmtoFork.com; through the Office newsletter and blog, Tales from the Field; and through Office social media accounts. Staff also continues to attend stakeholder conferences and community meetings to promote internal and external food access programs statewide.

Asset Map

In the winter of 2016, the Office released an Asset Map of farm-to-fork activities in California after collaborating with USDA’s Food and Nutrition Services Western Region Office and other partners. The report, generated from stakeholder input, aims to strengthen statewide collaboration across farm-to-fork focus areas and outlines existing assets and gaps in California. The report is available on CAFarmtoFork.com.

Central Valley Food Access Working Group Report

The Central Valley Food Access Working Group was convened by the Office to recommend actions to support improved food access in the Central Valley. A diverse group of stakeholders generated the content for the report, including barriers and recommendations. The report is available on CAFarmtoFork.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OFFICE REACH</strong> 2016-17</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>350,000</strong> students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of CA students impacted by their food service director who attended a farm-to-school child nutrition director training</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>764,000 pounds</strong></td>
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<td>Amount of food donated through the CA State Employees Food Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6,500 individuals</strong></td>
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<td>Number of people reached through Office of Farm to Fork outreach and presentations at statewide conferences and events</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>47 blogs posts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of blogs posted to Tales from the Field promoting food access efforts and resources in CA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$1.4 Million</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of sales to CA dairy farmers through the Contra Costa Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$11.6 Million</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of funds secured for Phase I of the CA Nutrition Incentive Program</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4,300 members</strong></td>
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<td>Number of CA Farm to School Network stakeholders</td>
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History

The Office of Farm to Fork was initially an objective of the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force’s Farm to Fork Implementation Plan, endorsed by the Strategic Growth Council in January of 2012. With HiAP’s help, the Department of Education, Department of Food and Agriculture, and Department of Public Health collaborated to form the Office of Farm to Fork within the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

On September 26th, 2014 the Office of Farm to Fork was formally and permanently established within the department when Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 2413. AB 2413, authored by Assembly Speaker John Pérez, officially created the Office of Farm to Fork within the Department of Food and Agriculture and charged the Office with increasing access to healthy foods for underserved communities and schools in the state of California.

Office of Farm to Fork Team
Elysia Fong • Addison Ford • Sarah Hanson • Tomi Jimenez • Nicole Sturzenberger