

THE CONNECT

January

2023



CDPH Project Directors' Meeting

Hilton Arden West
February 15–17

2023



A note from the CDPH NEOPB Chief

Hello CFHL LHDs,

It's almost here, the first CDPH CFHL Project Director's Meeting (PDM) in more than three years. We are excited to host this important event and grateful for the time to connect with all of you. This meeting will be held in-person, February 15 to February 17, 2023, at the Hilton Arden West Hotel in Sacramento. The PDM is for LHD Project Directors and other key LHD staff. If you have questions about who should attend, please contact your Project Officer. If you have not yet registered, please do so at this link: <https://cvent.me/kKvGe7>

The purpose of the 2023 PDM is to provide information and networking opportunities that will strengthen the abilities of LHD Project Directors and other participating staff. Participants will engage in sessions that support the planning and execution of FFY 24-26 CFHL work plans that meet both the community's needs and LHD CFHL program requirements. The 2023 PDM also serves as an opportunity for LHD Project Directors to connect with CDPH staff and focus on strengthening our relationship as the CFHL state and local public health implementing agencies.

Those who attend will leave:

- Understanding the intention behind the FFY 24-26 CFHL funding application package (FAP) and its requirements
- Feeling confident in addressing the FAP requirements in the IWPs
- Having brainstormed programmatic opportunities, and determined gaps and additional needs for state CFHL support
- Recognizing the value and importance of our work from an individual to the national level



I look forward to seeing all of you in-person and taking advantage of these few days to connect with each other more deeply. I am looking forward to listening to LHD ideas and input, and to discussing the great work being done on behalf of CalFresh-eligible Californians.

In solidarity,

Erica Eilenberg 



PSE Success Story: Merced Original Farmers Market Expands EBT Acceptance Market-Wide

Timeframe: FFY 22



Intervention Summary: Merced County is located in the heart of the State's farm belt, and its farms cultivate a variety of agricultural products that are distributed state- and nationwide. To sell their produce locally, farmers are given a platform at the Original Merced Certified Farmers Market (farmers market) where local customers can purchase farm-fresh produce. A variety of fresh produce is sold weekly, spanning from stone fruit to fresh greens to aromatic herbs.

To increase the accessibility of fresh, local produce to CalFresh recipients, the Merced County Department of Public Health's CalFresh Healthy Living Program subcontracted with Kind Neighbor, a local organization, to expand Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) acceptance across the entire farmers market. Doing so helps low-income residents of Merced County increase their purchasing power and allows more families to enjoy more locally-grown produce, while generating sales for farmers.

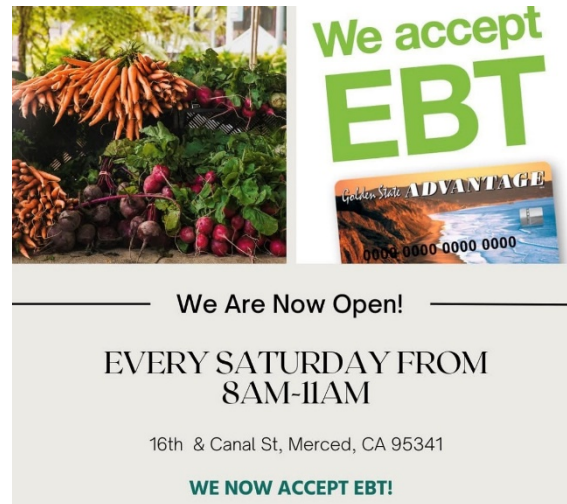
Successes

Prior to the expansion of EBT across the farmers market, only two of the eleven farmers were authorized to accept EBT at their individual stands. While the board members of the farmers market had intended to expand the acceptance of EBT market-wide, the plan never materialized until Kind Neighbor offered the technical support needed for the market to apply for Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approval. The CalFresh Healthy Living Program provided Kind Neighbor with resources and guidance on the application process. In July 2022, Kind Neighbor worked with the farmers participating in the farmers market to collectively apply for EBT. Finally, as of August 27th, 2022, the farmers market became an approved EBT retailer and has since accepted EBT utilizing a centralized point of sales system. EBT recipients can swipe their card in exchange for scrip, or tokens, that are later redeemed for cash by the farmers. In less than one month, 11 customers had utilized their EBT benefits.

In addition, Kind Neighbor's team hosted two food demonstrations utilizing produce available at the farmers market. Attendees also received recipe cards and information on finding healthy recipes that incorporate items that can be found at the farmers market. Doing so helps CalFresh beneficiaries learn how to use the fruits and vegetables that they can purchase at the farmers market with their EBT card.

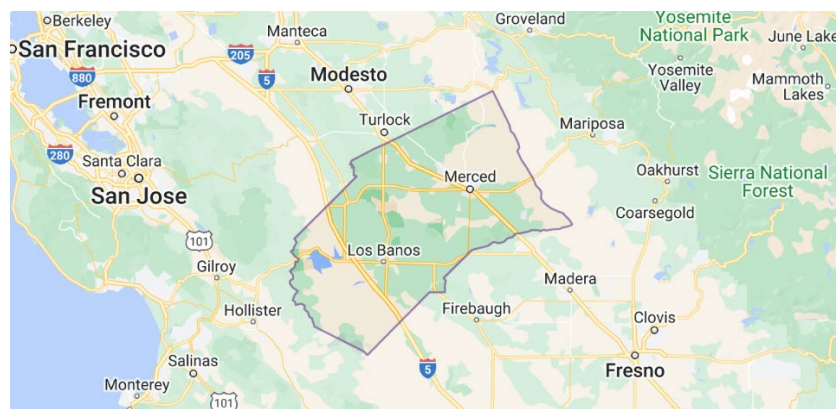
Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solution

One of the key challenges of this activity was, and continues to be, promoting the use of EBT at the farmers market. For the first two weeks following the FNS approval, there were no EBT recipients shopping at the farmers market. However, with the boosting of messaging through social media campaigns, radio PSAs, canvassing, and distributing mailers in areas that reach EBT recipients, Kind Neighbor and the farmers market have increased awareness in the community about its ability to accept EBT.



In addition, the farmers market sought an application for the state's Market Match program in August 2022. However, it was learned through the Ecology Center that the Market Match program did not have sufficient funds to add any more farmers markets this year. The farmers market plans to apply in March of 2023, when the applications open once again.

Lastly, the farmers market competes with a local flea market that runs concurrently. While the flea market does not accept EBT, its proximity to low-income neighborhoods and the variety of culturally-appropriate products sold attracts many CalFresh-eligible customers. To address this, Kind Neighbor has invited a variety of new vendors catering to EBT recipients and provided nutrition education with reinforcement items, such as recipe books, to attract new customers. Moreover, Kind Neighbor, with the assistance of the CalFresh Healthy Living Program, created a robust promotional campaign that highlights the use of EBT at farmers' markets.



Future Directions/Sustainable Success

To sustain the efforts that permitted the farmers market to see an increase in customers, the board members of the farmers market are considering hiring a permanent position that can continue the work accomplished in this fiscal year. This includes the continuation of promotional efforts, inviting more local and diverse farmers and vendors to the farmers' market, and providing food demonstrations. The Merced County Department of Public Health's CalFresh Healthy Living Program will continue to partner with the farmers' market to provide technical assistance, such as developing satisfaction surveys.

Furthermore, the Merced County Department of Public Health is looking at opportunities for expanding farmers markets in areas that have high concentrations of low-income populations, especially those that have been identified as food deserts. A short survey was developed to assess the interest of community members in seeing a farmers market in their community. The survey also asks participants to identify best dates, times, and locations, as well as the types of products they would like to see at the farmers market. This information will be shared with the farmers market board members to determine the feasibility of establishing a new farmers market in the areas that indicate an interest in farmers market. 🧩

FREE SMOOTHIE DEMO WITH ROCIO

Learn how to make a healthy quick & easy green mango smoothie!

8/27

9AM-10AM

**16th & Canal St,
Merced, CA 95341**

Two time slots available: 9-9:30am & 9:30-10am

Join us and get a tote bag full of health goodies.

Free samples will be provided.

MERCED COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

CalFresh HEALTHY LIVING

KIND NEIGHBOR



Harvest of the Month Curricula

Are you looking for curricula to support your agency's nutrition education work in the elementary school setting? Then visit the CDPH Communication Resource Library, which houses Harvest of the Month (HOTM) curricula to support nutrition education for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders.

These resources, and teachers' guides, are available in the [Curricula section](#) of the [Communication Resource Library](#).

California Department of Public Health Connection Project Sites EDIT LINKS

California Department of Public Health Sharing Space

CalFresh Healthy Living,
California Department of Public Health Sharing
Training and Events

On behalf of the California Department of Public Health, Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch, we are pleased to provide CalFresh Healthy Living trainings available to appropriate staff from CalFresh Healthy Living local health department agencies in California.

For information regarding CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training events and resources, email CFHLStatewideTraining@leahspantry.org.

[Communication Resource Library](#)

The Communication Resource Library provides resources such as logos, news bulletins, funder statements, graphics and templates. Microsoft SharePoint navigation can be learned by "trial and error" or through online tutorials by searching YouTube for Microsoft SharePoint trainings.

California Department of Public Health Connection Project Sites

Curricula

New Upload Sync Share More

Home All Pictures Slides Thumbnails Find a file

	Name	Picture Size	File Size	Modified
Logos				
Curricula				
Funder Statements	HOTM FarmToPreschool	...		January 29, 2021
News Bulletins	HOTM Student Workbooks	...		January 29, 2021
Templates	HOTM Teacher Guides	...		January 29, 2021

Available HOTM curricula:

- HOTM 4th, 5th, and 6th grade Student Workbooks
- HOTM 4th, 5th, and 6th grade Teacher Guides

HOTM Website Update

Please note that the Harvest of the Month website will sunset starting January 31, and resources on that site will no longer be available. 🧩



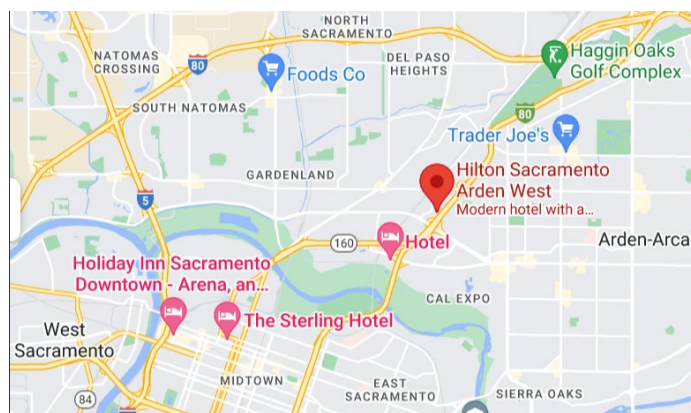
CalFresh Healthy Living Training Resources

Check out the [Training & Events webpage](#) for the latest training information and calendar of scheduled events.


CDPH Pre-Project Directors Meeting Webinar February 1, 2023



CDPH Project Directors Meeting
February 15-17, 2023 (will be held *in person* at the [Hilton Arden West Hotel](#) in Sacramento).



For information regarding CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training events and resources, email CFHLStatewideTraining@leahspantry.org.

[CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training Resources](#)
[CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training Learning Platform](#) 




USDA Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) established the Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative to improve the nutritional quality of school meals by transforming school food systems, providing technical assistance, sharing ideas, and offering a recognition and grant program.

Key activities of the Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative include School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants, Healthy Meals Summits, Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards for School Food Authorities, and Healthy Meals Incentives Grants for Small and/or Rural School Food Authorities.

School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants

As shared on the USDA's FNS Healthy Meals Incentives webpage, "Starting in spring 2023, FNS will support the development and innovative solutions for K-12 food service transformation. Through partnerships between various entities, the goal is to create a resilient, equitable, and nutritious school food system. As part of these grants, grantees will work with industry partners (agricultural producers, growers, processors, etc.) to develop creative solutions to provide nutritious foods for school meals."

FNS is now accepting applications for the School Food System Transformation Challenge grants. Applications are due on February 1, 2023. For more information on this grant opportunity or other aspects of the Healthy Meals initiatives, visit the [USDA Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative webpage](#). 



This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health with funding from USDA SNAP and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers.