Fast Facts from the Fresh Ideas For Calfresh Report

**FOOD QUALITY, AVAILABILITY, & ACCESSIBILITY**

For CalFresh populations, not only do they face challenges enrolling into and maintaining benefits, they also may not have access to a grocery store. Food quality and availability are neither guaranteed nor consistent in low-income communities. In a nationwide study, CalFresh participants who lived far from a grocery store consumed significantly less fruit than those who lived within a mile of one.*

“The food is too expensive and only people with high incomes can afford to buy good quality food. Even with food stamps... it’s not enough to get good food.”

— REGION 3, SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

**TOP COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

**QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY.**
Community members have noticed lower quality foods in their local stores, while more affluent communities have better produce selection. Some expressed wanting a farmers’ market in the neighborhood.

**INCONSISTENCY AMONG CALFRESH VENDORS.**
Community members expressed seeing different requirements at stores accepting CalFresh, which influenced what they can and cannot purchase.

**ACCESSIBILITY.**
Some community members face challenges when trying to find CalFresh vendors to purchase food from. Given the diversity of the region, community members faced different and unique barriers depending on where they live.

**USING CALFRESH FOR GARDENING.**
Community members expressed not knowing other types of benefits including using CalFresh benefits to purchase seeds for home and community gardens.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

• Invest in technical assistance for CalFresh Vendors
• Support CalFresh participants with quality food options
• Engage with local growers and producers to strengthen the supply chain with higher food quality options

**MYTH:**
When someone is enrolled in public food assistance, they have everything they need.

**FACT:**
While public food assistance is one of the first defense against food insecurity, enrollment doesn’t ensure access to quality food. Communities also need the ability to use their public food benefits in their own neighborhoods. They should also have access to fresh and healthy food options.

Source: *Public Health Nutrition

CHECK OUT THE PROJECT AT GOODFOODLA.ORG/CALFRESH