



County of Monterey

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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May 28, 2024

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review
1021 O Street, Room 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget Sub #3
1021 O Street, Room 6720
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget
1021 O Street, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Corey Jackson
Chair, Assembly Budget Sub #2
1021 O Street, Room 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Market Match Program Funding

Dear Senator Weiner, Senator Menjivar, Assembly Member Gabriel and Assembly Member Jackson:

On behalf of the County of Monterey, I am writing to share our concerns with the budget proposal, to cut \$33.2 million from the three-year \$35 million California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) budget under the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Market Match is a 15-year-old program funded through CNIP and the USDA's Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) that incentivizes CalFresh (known nationally as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)) recipients to spend their benefits for farm-direct fresh fruits and vegetables by providing a dollar-for-dollar match on CalFresh purchases, up to a daily maximum, at 291 farm-direct outlets across the state in 52 California counties.

Market Match is California's largest nutrition incentive program that increases access to fresh, healthy produce and food for people with low incomes, while reinvesting state and federal dollars into California's small and mid-sized farms and rural communities. Small Central Coast and Central Valley farms have earned \$518,000 more in sales of fresh produce to CalFresh families in Monterey County through Market Match funds.

In Monterey County over 40% of households are food insecure. The County has 58,507 residents in 29,546 households receiving CalFresh, and 15,944 residents receiving Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). In 2023, there were 62,593 customer visits to markets offering Market Match in Monterey County, including 3,844 CalFresh customers using Market Match.

There are currently seven farmers' markets administering Market Match in Monterey County through CNIP funding: Alisal Certified Farmers' Market, Marina Certified Farmers' Market, Natividad CFM, Pacific Grove CFM, Salinas Valley Health CFM and Seaside CFM administered by Everyone's Harvest, and North County CFM administered by North County Recreation and Park District. In 2023, there were a total of 214 market days offering Market Match in Monterey County, at the seven locations listed above.

GusNIP brings grant dollars into the state, and the Market Match program leverages federal funds by matching nutrition assistance benefits with funds that can be spent by low-income Californians to buy healthy, fresh food grown by California farmers. Absent state funding, Market Match will not be able to meet the non-federal match and bring significant federal funds into the state.



More than 160 safety net, economic development, sustainable agriculture, school districts, and local food systems organizations have joined the Save Market Match Coalition, including Monterey County-based organizations ALBA, Blue Zones Project, Everyone's Harvest, Monterey Bay Certified Farmers' Markets, Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust, Monterey County Food System Coalition, as well as the American Heart Association, California WIC Association, Center for Food Safety, Nourish California, and The Food Trust to advocate to retain state funding to continue the Market Match program.

For these reasons, the County of Monterey urges you to oppose these cuts and retain full funding for the Market Match program through the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) budget under the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Should you have any questions regarding the County of Monterey's positions, please feel free to contact the County's Public Policy Advisor, Ashley Walker of Nossaman LLP at 916-442-8888.

Sincerely,



Sonia M. De La Rosa
County Administrative Officer

cc: Members of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Members of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Elizabeth Schmitt, Budget Consultant, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Nicole Vazquez, Budget Consultant, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
The Honorable Anna Caballero, 14th Senate District
The Honorable John Laird, 17th Senate District
The Honorable Robert Rivas, 29th Assembly District
The Honorable Dawn Addis, 30th Assembly District
Jenny Nguyen, County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)