

# **CALFRESH UPDATE FOR Senate Budget No. 3 on Health and Human Services**



**April 30, 2015**

# CalFresh In A Nutshell



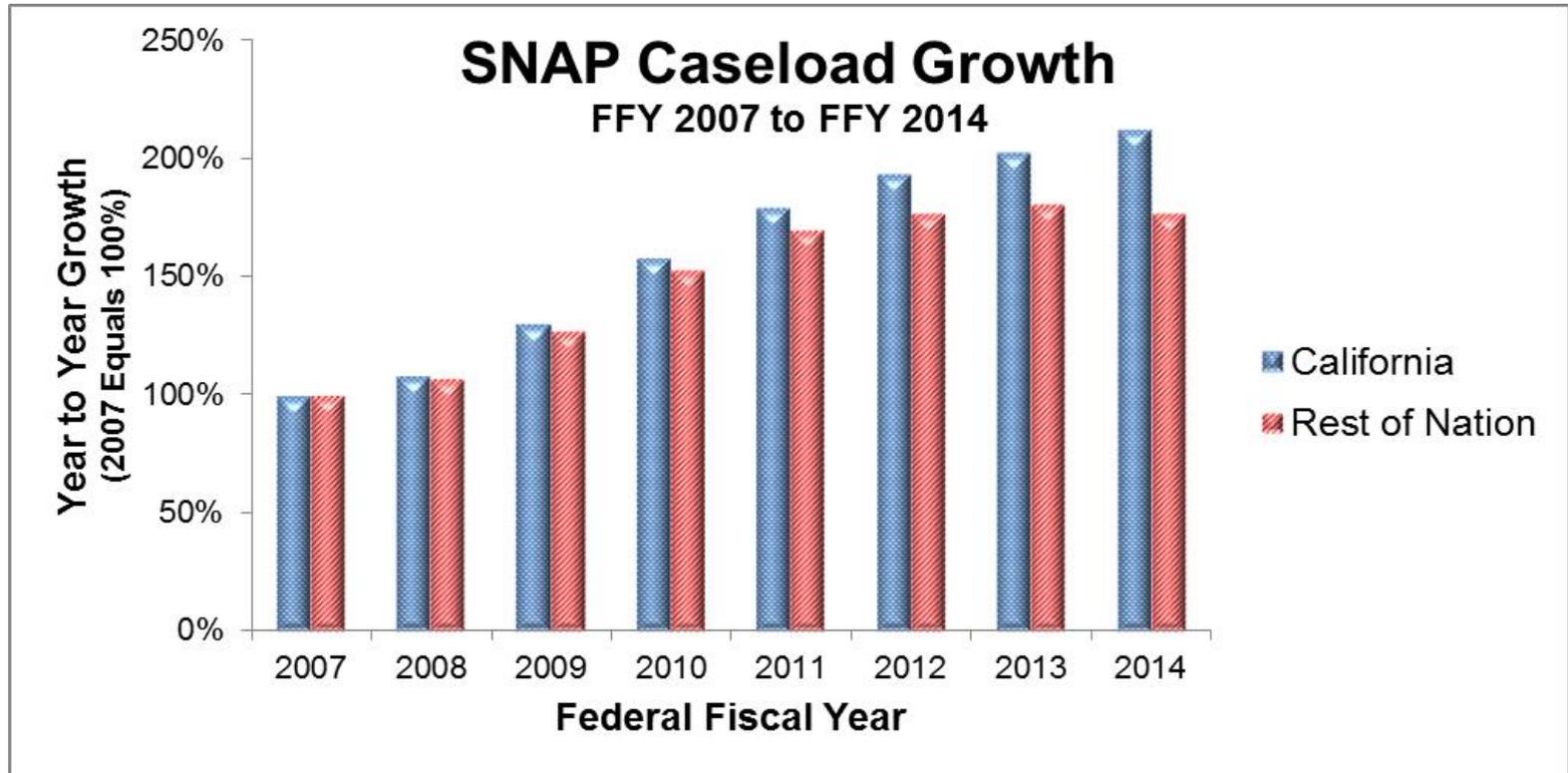
- CalFresh (formerly known as Food Stamps) is an entitlement program that provides monthly benefits to assist low-income households in purchasing the food they need to maintain adequate nutritional levels.
- In general, these benefits are for any food or food product intended for human consumption.
- Benefits may not be used for items such as alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, or paper products.
- National eligibility standards and benefit levels are set by Congress and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture.
- The program is called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the federal level.
- CalFresh benefits are issued through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. By using the EBT card, cardholders can access food benefits at point-of-sale (POS) terminals of retailers authorized by USDA to accept CalFresh benefits.

# CalFresh Participation



- In the past few years CalFresh has seen significant increases in the number of people receiving benefits.
- Today, CalFresh serves over 2 million households representing over 4.4 million persons with an annual benefit amount of over \$7.4 billion dollars.
- Based on Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2012 federal data (the latest available), California's participation rate was 63 percent.
- California's participation rate grew 8 percentage points from 2011. The national average increased to 83 percent, an increase of 5 percentage points from the prior year.
- California's caseload is rising faster than the nation as a whole. Since 2012, California's SNAP caseload has increased by 9.7 percent while the national caseload has *decreased* by 0.2 percent.

# CalFresh Participation



# CalFresh Outreach



- California's CalFresh Outreach Plan is recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the largest and one of the most innovative plans in the nation.
- The FFY 2015 – 2016 Outreach State Plan includes eight primary contractors and 100 subcontractors.
- Outreach activities in the past year were responsible for enrolling an estimated 118,330 individuals into CalFresh, representing 55,037 new households, which was a 3.6 percent increase over prior year outreach results.

# CalFresh Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed) & BCP



- CDSS oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) Program, which educates low-income individuals and families in the state about the benefits of nutrition and physical activity.
- CDSS works with the California Department of Public Health, the California Department of Aging, Catholic Charities of California, the University of California at Davis CalFresh Program, CWDs and a number of other subcontracting partners to carry out SNAP-Ed programming statewide.
- SNAP-Ed requests six positions:
  - To conduct fiscal and programmatic reviews,
  - Improve contract oversight, and
  - Provide overall technical assistance to all SNAP-Ed State and Local Implementing Agencies.
- USDA-FNS has approved the 100% federal funding for these six positions.
- Expected outcomes include:
  - CDSS to conduct annual Management Evaluations as required by USDA-FNS.
  - Identify and share best practices with all SNAP-Ed providers,
  - Deliver timely technical assistance, and
  - Better support for overall program implementation.



# Drought Food Assistance Program (DFAP)

- DFAP is the temporary program developed in response to Governor Brown's Drought Emergency Declaration in January 2014.
- DFAP was designed to provide food assistance in 24 drought counties that suffered high levels of unemployment resulting from the drought.
- CDSS partnered with Foodlink to procure, pre-package and ship DFAP food boxes to the drought designated counties.
- Each DFAP box weighs about 25 pounds and serves households of four for 4-5 days. The box includes canned fruits, vegetables, soup, peanut butter, rice and beans.

# DFAP (continued)

- To qualify for DFAP, individuals must self-certify that they live in the drought-impacted county, that their employment has been impacted by the drought and that the food is for personal use only.
- DFAP food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. DFAP began distributing food boxes in May of 2014. As of April 2015, DFAP counties have distributed over 560,000 food boxes to nearly 300,000 households.
- Chapter 1, Statutes of 2015 (AB 91) added five additional counties (Imperial, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura and Riverside) to the initial 24 and added \$17 million to fund DFAP through June of 2016.