



Food Forward Meeting the SNAP Crisis

October 31, 2025

Dear Food Forward Community,

More than 40 million people across the country now face deep uncertainty as the future of the nation's most essential nutrition assistance program hangs in the balance. A historic federal move to halt funding for SNAP has left millions unsure whether they will continue to receive the support that helps them put food on the table.

The intentional suspension of programs like SNAP (known as CalFresh in California) and WIC means that 1.5 million LA-area families, seniors, students who depend on free school meals, and federal workers who are now without pay, will *all lose* access to the food assistance they rely on to survive.

For more than 12 percent of the U.S. population, this change will undoubtedly deepen food insecurity and further strain communities already under great stress.

Food Forward is answering this urgent call as a community.

As the [fourth largest independent food distribution organization in the nation](#), our challenge has never been clearer: ***to widen the produce pipeline and as quickly as we can, to make sure that healthy, free food reaches those that need it most.*** Every orange, tomato, and head of lettuce we recover represents more than nourishment. They represent urgency, dignity and survival.

Starting Monday, Food Forward, in partnership with the [YMCA of Greater LA](#) and with support from [L.A. Care](#), is rapidly scaling up to meet the anticipated surge in need. As long-standing partners, we are increasing our distribution of produce to YMCA's network from 13 to 29 locations across Los Angeles County. Together, we will be mobilizing resources and teams to ensure fresh food reaches the communities most impacted. This new scale is in addition to our ongoing distributions of well over five and a half million servings of fresh fruits and vegetables each week.

Our work has always been about people. We know this is only the beginning of what will be needed, but we're reminded that our collective efforts and interconnectedness, whether through gleaning or giving, have immense power. Power to feed, to connect, and to bring hope at a time when it is most needed.

Thank you for being part of the Food Forward community. Together, we are not just responding to this crisis. We are continuing to lay the foundation for a stronger, more equitable food system that nurtures

every generation and where food is seen as a human right.

With gratitude,
The Food Forward Team

[Donate](#)

Food Forward's Emergency Relief Update

June 13, 2025

We recognize that recent events in Los Angeles and across the U.S. create uncertainty for many. While these challenges extend beyond food access, we know that fresh, nutritious food access is deeply connected to safety, stability, and community care.

Our work sits at the intersection of environmental and social justice—diverting food waste from landfills while nourishing the clients of over 250 hunger relief agencies serving communities in need. In a county where more than 1 in 4 residents experience food insecurity, our impact is both immediate and essential.

Over the past six months, Food Forward has mobilized quickly—facilitating emergency distributions with our hunger relief partners to support families who had lost homes, income, and access to basic needs and essential benefits.

The ripple effects have impacted several thousand of workers, especially those who worked at homes and businesses in the affected areas and who lost jobs and stability overnight.

In the first quarter of 2025, we were able to increase our distribution of fresh, nutritious produce by approximately 30%, with two-thirds of that produce being donated across LA County in response to this crisis. Most recently, we've had an increase in requests for produce donations due to the recent LA events. As a food justice organization we remain committed to the long-term recovery and assistance of Los Angeles.

March 26, 2025

Zest Fest – Community Strong
Countdown to 500 Million Pounds

Saturday, June 7, 2025
California State University, Northridge

Join hundreds of volunteers for a powerful day of action, unity, and impact!

This special community harvest and distribution event brings together friends, families, and local leaders under the trees of one of LA's oldest historic citrus orchards to harvest surplus produce, provide to those in need, and support LA wildfire victims.

Be part of Food Forward's biggest public event of 2025 that will begin our push to reach 500 million pounds of rescued food since our founding in 2009.

More details coming soon!

Emergency Response Continues

Food Forward quickly pivoted to provide relief services to the people affected by the area wildfires in January. We remain committed to the long-term recovery and have continued consistent distributions of healthy produce. Highlights include:

We are assisting CIELO, an Indigenous women-led org in South LA, with emergency distributions focused on service workers impacted by the fires.

In addition to our ongoing disaster recovery efforts in Pasadena; Bienestar is Well Being, our second-largest hunger relief partner, has added a drive-thru distribution in Pasadena serving 200 families daily, for which Food Forward will provide 100% of produce donations throughout the summer months.

Thank you for everyone's support in sustaining our mission.

Share Your Story

Your feedback matters! If your experience with Food Forward has touched your heart and community we'd be grateful to hear from you. Take a moment to [leave us a review](#) on the Great Nonprofits website! Your review helps us reach more people, grow our impact, and continue fighting hunger and reducing food waste in our communities. Thank you for being a part of our journey.

[Write a Review Today](#)

February 26, 2025

Dear Food Forward Community,

Over the past two months, our mission to support those in need continues to be our number one priority, and we've let no obstacles be in our way.

We have mobilized and supplied over 35 distributions across Los Angeles County to meet the needs of those impacted by the Los Angeles wildfires, while continuing to support our 250+ hunger relief partners in our mission to increase access to fresh produce in food insecure communities. Our mobilization has allowed several of our partners to increase the number of their distribution events by 2Xs or even more as we all respond to the immediate escalating need for nutrient-dense food.



With your help, Food Forward is expanding its recovery and logistics to supply more produce to our trusted partners, including our ongoing emergency distributions with National Day Laborers and Bienestar Well Being in Pasadena. As well as supporting one of our newest partners Support + Feed in Bell Garden just last week.

Being a part of the equation to help food-insecure communities gain access to healthy food, we also joined our hunger relief partners to request the LA County Board of Supervisors fund Grocery Card Assistance for all residents impacted by the greater Los Angeles wildfire disaster. This is one of many steps that Food Forward will take in our long-term commitment to help rebuild our community.

We are deeply grateful for your unwavering support and commitment to our cause. As we continue to move food forward, we have added new and experienced leaders to the Food Forward family who will help shape our vision of Building Generational Health now and for the future.

Welcome the New Fruitland Team



David Lake
Board Member

David brings over 30 years of experience in the fresh produce industry as the President and CEO of 4Earth Farms. Under his leadership, 4Earth Farms has become a beacon of sustainability and innovation in organic and conventional produce. His expertise in bridging market demands with environmentally conscious practices is invaluable as we scale our impact.



Stevie Shandler
Advisor

As a fifth-generation leader in LA's produce industry, Stevie serves as Director of Growth and Sustainability at SGS Produce. She's dedicated to reducing food loss and landfill waste through strategic advocacy and cross-industry collaboration. Her work on the IFPA Food Waste and Food Loss Working Group and advisory roles with food recovery organizations align perfectly with Food Forward's vision of building a healthier food system for all.

Together, we're turning fresh produce into lifelong impact for countless families, while helping the environment for years to come. We also want to deeply thank former board member Mark Rhein for his leadership, dedication and his years of service.

Thank you all for remaining an essential part of this journey.

Let's keep growing together.

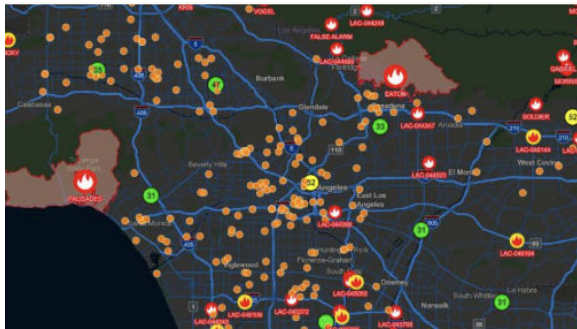
Warmly,
Jeff Harris
Chair, Food Forward Board of Directors

February 6, 2025

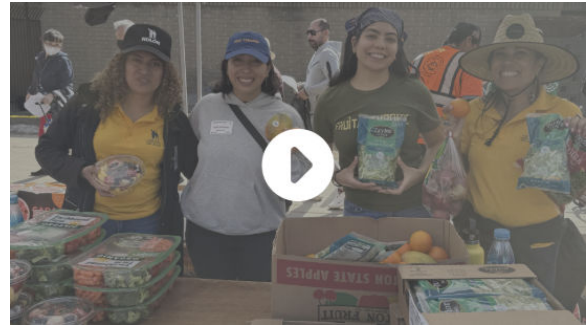
This January, Los Angeles experienced a crisis like no other in our lifetime. Our team members, families, colleagues, and communities have endured profound loss and upheaval. The unprecedented fires, which raged for weeks, are now out. Still, our city is now grappling with the aftermath of this tragedy.

Food Forward, with your invaluable support, continues to meet the needs of our communities, especially those affected by the wildfires. Your generosity, along with that of other supporters and produce donors, enabled us to distribute over 9,000,000 pounds of fresh produce in the past 31 days, *a 40% increase over January 2024.*

A special thanks to produce donors like Taylor Farms and Generous Brands, whose generosity bolstered our ability to respond swiftly. Their donations of fresh produce and financial support helped ensure that people in disaster areas received the nourishment they needed during this critical time.



Our ability to thoughtfully respond in real time was made possible in part by our innovative mapping developed with support from Novo Nordisk Inc. This tool enabled us to quickly identify fire-affected agencies so we could reach out with increased food supply.



Our partnership with the National Day Laborers Organizing Network was a standout example of our expanded reach. With increased donations, we provided fresh fruits and vegetables as well as hygiene kits donated by Kaiser Permanente to individuals in fire-adjacent areas.

Food Forward is dedicated to long-term recovery and ensuring surplus fresh food reaches those who most need it and reaches them with dignity. We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support of our donors, volunteers, and partners, who make our work possible. We invite you to check out our [volunteer calendar](#) or [donate](#) and join us in continuing to show up and make a difference!

In community,
The Food Forward Team

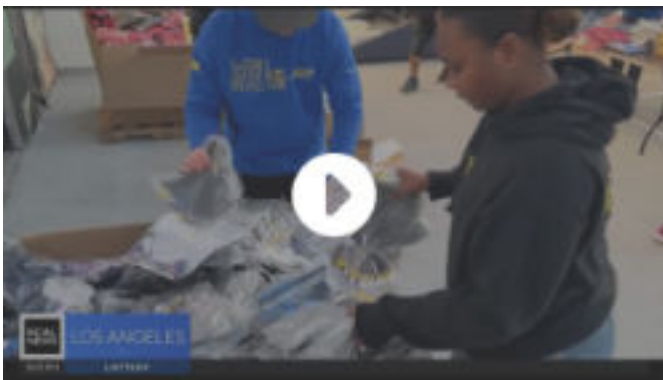
P.S. We have heard from several in our community with concerns about whether the ash and residue from the fires harming their fruits and vegetables? [Our friends at KCRW have answers.](#)

Donate

January 22, 2025

In hopes of keeping our Food Forward community updated on our wildfire short-term assistance, as well as the transition into longer term recovery efforts, you will notice we are reaching out more frequently. We heard from many that this sort of brief update was helpful, and hopeful, during a time when we all remain on edge and want to stay connected.

We knew two weeks ago that Food Forward would be needed as part of relief efforts for the LA wildfires, but how much we'd be needed was unclear. That was crystalized when last week, on top of our normally scheduled partner distributions, Food Forward staff, volunteers, and our produce and facilities were mobilized across the region. In just one 48-hour period we:



Distributed fruits and vegetables as a lead partner in the [Los Angeles Rams "LA Strong"](#) mega-distribution for thousands of fire evacuees.



Supplied 100% of the produce for a UCLA community emergency distribution feeding hundreds of displaced students.



Coordinated building hundreds of produce care packages for first responders, which were delivered to command posts by The Produce Ambassador and produce partner, Westfalia



Supplied needed hand fruit for a child and family event organized by LA county at the LA Arboretum for over a thousand attendees affected by the Eaton Fire.

To supply these tens of thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables for relief efforts, we redeployed staff and pivoted some operations. We have been using new internal mapping technology to pinpoint our agencies within the fire zones that needed and could handle additional produce beyond their normal allotments. And we did this while maintaining our ongoing distributions to partners throughout the region.

We continue to work with city, county, nonprofit, and corporate partners to keep a pulse on how best to calibrate amounts and varieties of food for those impacted by the fires. We're also in continual touch with distribution partners to ensure they have fresh produce for their increased needs during the recovery.

We deeply appreciate the outpouring of notes from our supporters, and we remain committed to the multiple stages and sectors of the LA city and county community which are, and will be, impacted by this unprecedented disaster for months to come.

In solidarity,
The Food Forward Team

P.S. If you're interested in getting out in the field with us, volunteer events are available. Please see our [volunteer calendar](#).

January 14, 2025

Dear Food Forward Community:

We hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe during these devastating fires. Our hearts go out to everyone affected by this unimaginable crisis, though as Angelinos we know we ALL are affected by this emergency and will be for weeks, months, and years to come.

Now over a week in, this surreal situation keeps shifting. I wanted to take a minute to get the word out about how Food Forward is responding to this unprecedented crisis. In short, we are open and operating, distributing hundreds of thousands of pounds of produce daily, and making pivots in service where closures and canceled distributions affect our community.

- Our staff have been in communication with partner agencies to learn of their specific needs and, as a result, have scheduled increased distributions, including with larger multi-location partners in key areas through our partner the YMCA. We're in discussions with many others (including Red Cross and World Central Kitchen), as well as the city and county of Los Angeles, to help coordinate distributions as soon as they are needed.
- Due to farmers market cancellations and unhealthy air quality, many of our volunteer-powered events have been paused or modified in the affected areas, but we are closely monitoring and working to get gleaning events back up and running. Meanwhile, we are working to get food to agencies that would have ordinarily received produce from those events. We love our volunteers and know many want to get out in the community and do something, so keep an eye on our [Volunteer Calendar](#) for opportunities at our Farmers Market Recovery and Backyard Harvesting events.
- Hand fruit, such as oranges or tangerines, has been a top-of-list request by our partner organizations. If you have some in your yard that's ripe and that you're able to harvest, [you can connect with us](#) to make those donations. Reminder: PLEASE hold off on harvesting until after you have coordinated with us.
- While produce recovery and distribution continue to pivot, we anticipate incurring significant additional costs (overtime, staff redeployment, transportation, fuel, etc.) to meet this moment, should you care to [financially support](#) our work to ensure fresh produce continues to flow to all you can [donate here](#).

We expect there to be significant long-term effects as a result of these tragedies, including the economic repercussions for communities of low-income service workers, caretakers, etc. These

are our neighbors who may not have lost their homes, but will have lost their means of income having worked in the homes, businesses, and restaurants which are now destroyed.

We are so grateful for the 250+ partners—large and small—that allow us to continue to do this urgent work, such as the one we heard from this Sunday:

“This was a tough week here in the Conejo Valley for many...90% of Thousand Oaks was without power for 30 hours. Some are still without. Food spoiled. Many lost wages as workplaces closed. Families picked up expensive take-out food so our Pantry was extra busy with 110 households served when we typically have about 60 at the smaller Shadows 2nd Friday event.

We picked up from your Oxnard [Community Action of Ventura] hub on Tuesday...[Your staff] dropped off fabulous tangerines and one of our volunteers picked up at the Thousand Oaks Farmers Market on Thursday just as the Kenneth fire broke out.

Food Forward is always there for us.

We are thrilled to partner with you and so grateful to be able to offer families healthy fresh fruits and vegetables. Being able to communicate directly...makes working with you a delight.”

- Adelante Comunidad Conejo, hunger relief partner

At this writing, all Food Forward staff are thankfully safe. We're grateful for all of the generous and kind supporters who've reached out to ask how they can help those affected by this devastation. We will keep you posted as things develop on our end, as we do all we can to provide long-term assistance to rebuild our community.

- Rick Nahmias and The Food Forward Family

Donate