









# Food & Farm Scorecard 2023

The California Food and Farming Network (CFFN) envisions an inclusive, equitable, and ecologically regenerative food and farming system that has recognized and repaired injustices to Black, Indigenous and people of color workers, producers and communities, and which generates healthy, affordable, accessible, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and other agricultural products.

CFFN is a network of more than <u>50 members</u> across the state, building a movement centered on racial equity to transform the food and farming system through state policies.





# 2023 Analysis

The good news first: in the face of a state budget deficit, food and farming advocates fought for, and were able to establish, new programs and laws this year across multiple food and farming sectors. Some CalFresh recipients will see their minimum benefits increase from \$23 to \$50 a month in a new pilot program slated to start in FY 24-25. A new Environmental Justice Advisory Committee will be established at the Department of Pesticide Regulation, giving voice to many excluded communities directly impacted by the harms of agricultural pesticide usage, including farmworkers, environmental justice communities, indigenous people and BIPOC farmers. A new regulation now requires grocery companies to notify the California Attorney General in advance of finalizing a proposed merger or acquisition, creating an upstream tool to help combat corporate consolidation in our food and farming system.

Continuing on with the positives from the year, some programs were updated to improve and include prescribed grazing as a naturebased wildfire solution, with a few more pieces left to finalize for next year. And, California's first-in-the-nation School Meals for All legislation was strengthened by ensuring every school-aged child has access to two healthy meals every day, along with steps toward lower-added sugar and sodium meal options and recommendations to provide students with adequate time to eat at school.

On the other hand, our priority safety net programs remained status quo, meaning that many Californians, including millions of food system workers, are still left out of crucial benefits. A longtime priority of the Network to fully extend CalFresh benefits to those eligible regardless of immigration status maintained the funding allocated last year for those age 55 and up only. A secondyear attempt to extend unemployment insurance to excluded workers, regardless of immigration status, did not receive funding this year. And, legislation to extend medically supportive food and nutrition interventions to more Medi-Cal recipients stalled out early in the legislative cycle.

Unfortunately, investments in regional food ecosystems were not a priority for the Administration in 2023. Yet, thankfully the legislature, alongside advocates, fought hard to maintain funding at threat of being cut for existing programs that support regional food ecosystems (including past CFFN priorities around community food hubs, urban agriculture and beginner farmer and farmworker training programs), along with putting a bill in front of the Governor to establish a new small farmer equipment sharing program that the Governor ultimately vetoed.

Finally, a bill (first introduced in 2021) to put a multi-billion dollar bond in front of voters to meaningfully invest in dozens of programs that support regional food ecosystems, farmworkers, healthy food access, and climate-resilient agriculture will have to wait until next year to learn its fate.

Overall three out of our 10 priorities succeeded this year with five more still active for next year's session. 2024 will be another year of advocating for appropriate and full implementation of existing programs, while continuing to push for more meaningful structural change across our food system.



#### **CFFN'S Commitment to Racial Equity:**

CFFN believes that a food and farming system that is not just, equitable, and inclusive is not sustainable, and in order to create the food and farming system that the world needs, it is imperative that we dismantle oppression and work towards racial equity. We believe that public policy has played a central role in institutionalizing racism, and must be used to dismantle it. Advancing policies that center racial equity and are rooted in the lived experiences of impacted communities is an essential strategy for transforming systems and creating lasting change. Read our full Racial Equity Statement <u>here</u>.

Acknowledgment: Thanks to Roots of Change and the California Food Policy Council for starting this legislative tracker eleven years ago with an eye toward holding our legislators accountable to ensuring a healthy and fair food and farming system. View past issues <u>here</u>.



# Priority Bills for the 2023 Legislative Session

Key= Wins; Losses; In 2-Year Process or Partial Win

Bill No. & Author	Position	Bill Name	Status
Regional Food System F	Resilience		
AB 408 (Wilson)	Support	Climate-Resilient Farms, Sustainable Healthy Food Access, and Farmworker Protection Bond Act of 2024	Held in Senate Appropriations Committee; In 2-Year Process
AB 552 (Bennett)	Support	Farmer Equipment-Sharing Program	Vetoed by the Governor
Farmworker and Food C	hain Worker Ac	dvancement	
AB 853 (Maienschein)	Support	Californians Right to Access Essential Goods and Services	Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor
SB 227 (Durazo)	Support	SafetyNet for All	Held by author in Assembly Appropriations Committee; In 2-Year Process
Improved Access to Hea	llthy Food		
AB 1644 (Bonta)	Support	Medically Supportive Food and Nutri- tion	Died in Assembly Appropriations Committee
SB 245 (Hurtado) / AB 311 (Santiago)	Support	Food4All	Partial program funding maintained, but program is not yet fully funded to cover all eligible individuals
SB 348 (Skinner)	Support	Healthy Meals for Kids	Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor
SB 600 (Menjivar)	Support	CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023	Held by author in Assembly Human Services, pilot implementation achieved in the Budget
Agroecological Farming	I		
AB 652 (Lee)	Support	Department of Pesticide Regulation Environmental Justice Advisory Council	Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor
SB 675 (Limón)	Support	Prescribed Grazing for Wildfire Mitigation	Inactive on Assembly Floor; In 2-year Process



# **Regional Food System Resilience**

#### In 2-year Process

#### AB 408 (Wilson) – Climate-Resilient Farms, Sustainable Healthy Food Access, and Farmworker Protection Bond Act of 2024 - Support

Would put a \$3.3 billion bond measure in front of California voters to invest in programs and infrastructure to strengthen our food and farming system across agriculture, farmworkers, hunger, and regional food economies.

Held in Senate Appropriations Committee

#### Losses

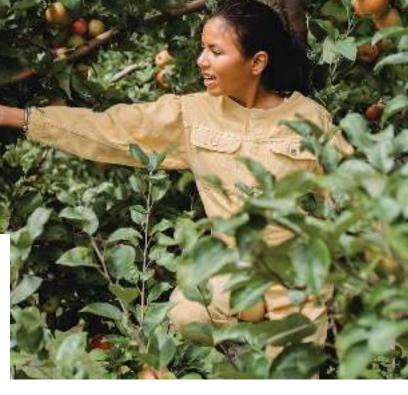
#### AB 552 (Bennett) – Farmer Equipment-Sharing Programs -Support

Would have established a program at the Department of Food and Agriculture that funds resource conservation districts, County agricultural commissioners, University of California Cooperative Extensions, tribal entities, and nonprofits serving small, socially-disadvantaged and/or limited resource farmers to run equipment sharing programs to make it easier for farmers to access the equipment needed to implement agroecological practices.

Vetoed by the Governor

**Food sovereignty:** All people have the right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound methods, and to define and prosper in their own food and agriculture systems.

Shared Economic Prosperity: All people have equitable opportunity to fully participate and build wealth in the food and farming system, contributing their food and ag cultures, knowledge and skills to strengthen and diversify opportunities and build resilience for all.



### Farmworker and Food Chain Worker Advancement

#### Wins

#### AB 853 (Maienschein) – Californians Right to Access Essential Goods and Services - Support

Requires grocery or drug-retail companies to notify the California Attorney General's 180-days in advance of finalizing a proposed merger or acquisition and submit an economic analysis report on the impact of the merger or acquisition on communities, such as food deserts, food prices, and access to food, supply of experienced grocery workers, unemployment, wages and benefits and more.

Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor

#### **In 2-year Process**

#### SB 227 (Durazo) – SafetyNet for All - Support

Would expand unemployment insurance to excluded workers, regardless of immigration status.

Held by author in Assembly Appropriations Committee

**Empowered Workers**: Workers are respected and valued as essential to the survival and health of our communities, share in the wealth of their labor, have the power to shape their working conditions and lives, and the opportunity to become owners or prosper within the food system.



Key= Wins; Losses; Partial Win

# Improved Access to Healthy Food

#### Wins

#### SB 348 (Skinner) – Healthy Meals for Kids - Support

Strengthens California's first-in-the-nation School Meals for All legislation by ensuring every school-aged child has access to two healthy meals every day, regardless of where they live or their family's income; increases student access to loweradded sugar and sodium meal options; and provides students with adequate time to eat at school.

Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor

#### **In 2-Year Process**

#### SB 245 (Hurtado) / AB 311 (Santiago) – Food4All - Support

These (identical) bills would extend food assistance benefits to households who are currently ineligible solely due to their immigration status to all ages. This builds on policy passed in 2021 that modernizes the California Food Assistance Program to provide food assistance benefits to households who are currently ineligible solely due to their immigration status and that received funding in FY 2022-23 budget for ages 55 and up.

Held by author in second-house Human Services Committees, partial program funding maintained, implementation moved forward to October 2025

#### SB 600 (Menjivar) – CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023 - Support

Requires the California Department of Social Services to provide additional nutrition assistance to CalFresh participants, ensuring a minimum monthly benefit increase from \$23 to \$50. Received \$15 million one-time General Fund in 2024-25 to implement the CalFresh Minimum Nutrition Benefit Pilot.

Held by author in Assembly Human Services, pilot implementation achieved in the Budget

#### Losses

#### AB 1644 (Bonta) – Medically Supportive Food and Nutrition - Support

Would have transitioned medically supportive food and nutrition interventions from pilot services in CalAIM to covered Medi-Cal benefits.

#### Died in Assembly Appropriations

**Food is a Human Right**: All communities have access to the nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and traditional food they need to thrive.

# Agroecological Farming



#### Wins

#### AB 652 (Lee) – Department of Pesticide Regulation Environmental Justice Advisory Council - Support

Establishes an environmental justice advisory committee at the Department of Pesticide Regulation, made up of impacted voices such as farmworkers, environmental justice community members, Indigenous people, and BIPOC farmers, that will provide policy recommendations to the Department in order to reduce health disparities from pesticide exposure.

#### Passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor

#### **In 2-Year Process**

#### SB 675 (Limón) – Prescribed Grazing for Wildfire Mitigation - Support

Would increase support for prescribed grazing as a naturebased wildfire solution by integrating prescribed grazing outreach, infrastructure, and best practices within two existing wildfire prevention grant programs. Would also direct the state's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force to develop a plan to expand the use of prescribed grazing to protect fire-threatened communities.

Inactive on the Assembly Floor. Pieces of SB 675 were achieved via another bill AB 297 (Fong)

**Ecological Health**: Our food and farming system is rooted in agroecological systems determined by impacted communities, shifting power away from corporate agribusiness. This means honoring Indigenous and cultural practices, and farming in harmony with nature so that people and the land are nourished and healed.

# The California Food and Farm Policy Champions

In a Legislature with 120 elected officials, many champions for change to California's agriculture and food system are needed. This year we recognize Assemblymember Lori Wilson and Senator Caroline Menjivar, joining our growing list of honored legislators.

#### 2023 Food & Farm Policy Champions

#### Assemblymember Lori Wilson

Lori Wilson was elected to the Assembly in the spring of 2022 representing communities from Solano County and parts of Contra Costa and Sacramento Counties. Early in her state legislative career Wilson authored a large bill, AB 408, that would put a \$3.3 billion bond



measure in front of California voters to invest in programs and infrastructure to strengthen our food and farming system across agriculture, farmworkers, hunger, and regional food economies. She boldly and quickly stepped in as a food system leader, building momentum for this bond legislation that has the potential to deeply invest in cross-sector food system issues. Wilson has committed to continuing this work into 2024 bond negotiations. In 2023 she also worked with sustainable agriculture organizations to ensure small farmers were acknowledged, for the first time, in groundwater adjudication processes (AB 779), willing to push back against opposition in defense of small farmers. Wilson is an approachable leader and willing to work with food and farming communities. Assemblymember Wilson has voted in alignment with the food movement's priorities 100% of the time since her time in the legislature.

#### Senator Caroline Menjivar

Caroline Menjivar was elected to the California State Senate in November 2022 to represent Burbank and communities throughout the San Fernando Valley. She kicked off her legislative career by authoring landmark legislation to raise the minimum monthly CalFresh benefit from \$23 to \$50, achieving



a \$15 million state budget inclusion to implement the CalFresh Minimum Nutrition Benefit Pilot Program. She is committed to continuing to advocate for statewide implementation. She sits on the Senate Human Services Committee and has supported key policies to strengthen California's anti-hunger programs, such as Food4All and expanding CalFresh to allow the purchase of hot and prepared foods, being vocal about the importance of strengthening CalFresh at every opportunity. As Chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services in 2023, Menjivar has advocated for critical funding for food security, such as CalFood funding to support food banks and an attempt to protect CalFresh recipients from the cruel and failed federal Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time-limit rules. She also secured \$3 million to continue the CalFresh Safe Drinking Water Pilot Program that will provide time-limited additional CalFresh nutrition benefits to residents of prioritized disadvantaged communities. Senator Menjivar has voted in alignment with the food movement's priorities 100% of the time since her time in the legislature.



#### Alumni Food & Farm Champions as House Leaders

We are excited that two of our Alumni Food and Farm Champions are taking the reigns as house leaders:



Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas



Senate Pro Tem Designee Mike McGuire

#### Alumni Food and Farm Policy Champions:

#### 2016:

Assemblymember Eggman Assemblymember Ting Senator Leno Senator Wolk

**2017:** Assemblymember Chiu Senator McGuire

**2018:** Senator Lara Senator Monning

**2019:** Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry Assemblymember Limón

**2021:** Assemblymember R. Rivas Senator Skinner Assemblymember Bloom

**2022:** Assemblymember Bennett Assemblymember Wicks



# **Scoring Methodology**

This year, we scored 10 bills. Our scorecard considers policy committees and floor votes, equally weighted. We used the original floor votes, unless otherwise noted. Votes in alignment with a CFFN position counted towards a legislator's score, while votes contradicting a CFFN position counted against a legislator's score. Abstained votes (indicated as 'NVR') are considered a no vote and scored in alignment with a CFFN position. A bonus point (equally weighted) is given for lead authors of a supported bill and/or budget item and subtracted for an opposed bill. The Governor was scored on 6 pieces of legislation this year, four bills that reached his desk and two budget items that were scored on whether or not they were included in any of his proposed or final budgets this year.





## Record of votes—Senate

	Score	AB 408 AB 552		AB 652 AB 853			SB 227			SB 245		SB 348			SB 600		SB 675					
Committee votes		Ag	G&F	Ag	Nat Res	Flr	EQ	Flr	Judic	Flr	LPE&R	G&F	Flr	HS	Flr	Edu	HS	Flr	HS	Flr	Nat Res	Flr
Allen, Ben (D-24)	100%																					
Alvarado-Gil, Marie (D-04)	67%												NVR									
Archuleta, Bob (D-30)	100%																					
Ashby, Angelique (D-08)	100%																					
Atkins, Toni (D-39)	100%																					
Becker, Josh (D-13)	100%																					
Blakespear, Catherine (D-38)	75%											NVR	NVR									
Bradford, Steven (D-35)	100%																					
Caballero, Anna (D-14)	78%					NVR		NVR												EA		
Cortese, Dave (D-15)	100%																					
Dahle, Brian (R-01)	36%				NVR																	
Dodd, Bill (D-03)	100%																					
Durazo, Maria Elena (D-26)	100%																					
Eggman, Susan Talamantes (D-05)	100%																					
Glazer, Steven (D-07)	100%																					
Gonzalez, Lena (D-33)	100%																					
Grove, Shannon (R-12)	33%	NVR		NVR	NVR	NVR																
Hurtado, Melissa (D-16)	82%				EA												EA					
Jones, Brian W. (R-40)	29%																			NVR		
Laird, John (D-17)	100%																					
Limón, Monique (D-19)	100%																					
McGuire, Mike (D-02)	100%																					
Menjivar, Caroline (D-20)	100%																					
Min, Dave (D-37)	100%																					
Newman, Josh (D-29)	100%																					
Nguyen, Janet (R-36)	38%																					
Niello, Roger (R-6)	22%					NVR														NVR		
Ochoa Bogh, Rosilicie (R-23)	50%												NVR	NVR	NVR							
Padilla, Steve (D-18)	100%																					
Portantino, Anthony (D-25)	100%																					
Roth, Richard D. (D-31)	100%																					
Rubio, Susan (D-22)	100%																			EA		
Seyarto, Kelly (R-32)	30%				NVR															NVR		
Skinner, Nancy (D-09)	100%																					
Smallwood-Cuevas (D-28)	100%																					
Stern, Henry (D-27)	100%																			EA		
Umberg, Thomas (D-34)	100%																					
Wahab, Aisha (D-10)	100%																					
Wiener, Scott (D-11)	100%																					
Wilk, Scott (R-21)	60%										NVR											
	<b>-</b>	AB	408	AB 552		AB 652		AB 853		SB 227			AB 311/ SB 245		SB 348			SB 600		SB	675	
Governor Newsom	67%	No	desk		•							•			Partial dget						No	desk

• Vote in alignment with CFFN position • Vote contradicted CFFN position NVR = No Vote Recorded EA = Excused Absence

# Record of votes—Assembly

	Score	AB 311			AB 408		AB 552		AB 652		AB 853		AB 1644	SB 227	27 SB 348			SB 675
Committee votes		HS	Flr	Ag	Nat Res	Flr	Ag	Flr	ESTM	Flr	Judic	Flr	Health	Insur	Edu	HS	Floor	Nat Res
Addis, Dawn (D-30)	100%																	
Aguiar-Curry, Cecilia M. (D-04)	100%																	
Alanis, Juan (R-22)	40%	NVR																
Alvarez, David (D-80)	100%																	
Arambula, Dr. Joaquin (D-31)	100%																	
Bains, Jasmeet (D-35)	50%					NVR				NVR								
Bauer-Kahan, Rebecca (D-16)	100%																	
Bennett, Steve (D-38)	100%																	
Berman, Marc (D-23)	100%																	
Boerner Horvath, Tasha (D-76)	100%																	
Bonta, Mia (D-18)	100%	NVR																
Bryan, Isaac (D-55)	100%																	
Calderon, Lisa (D-56)	100%																	
Carrillo, Juan (D-39)	100%																	
Carrillo, Wendy (D-52)	100%																	
Cervantes, Sabrina (D-58)	100%																	
Chen, Phillip (R-59)	25%											NVR						
Connolly, Damon (D-12)	100%																	
Dahle, Megan (R-01)	50%																	
Davies, Laurie (R-74)	33%																	
Dixon, Diane (R-72)	25%																	
Essayli, Bill (R-63)	20%										NVR							
Flora, Heath (R-09)	40%						EA						NVR					
Fong, Mike (D-49)	75%												NVR					
Fong, Vince (R-32)	25%																	
Friedman, Laura (D-44)	100%																	
Gabriel, Jesse (D-46)	100%																	
Gallagher, James (R-03)	33%																	
Garcia, Eduardo (D-36)	100%																	
Gipson, Mike (D-65)	100%																	
Grayson, Timothy (D-15)	100%																NVR	
Haney, Matt (D-17)	100%																	
Hart, Gregg (D-37)	100%																	
Holden, Chris (D-41)	100%																	
Hoover, Josh, (R-07)	43%		NVR															

#### Committee Name Key:

10

Ag= Agriculture ED= Education EQ = Environmental Quality ESTM= Environmental Safety and Toxic Material FIr=Floor G&F= Gov & Finance

🔨 C F F N

HS= Human Services Insur= Insurance Committee Judic= Judiciary LPE&R= Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Nat Res= Natural Resources • Vote in alignment with CFFN position

• Vote contradicted CFFN position

NVR = No Vote Recorded

EA = Excused Absence

	Score	AB 311			AB 408		AB 552		AB 652		AB 853		AB 1644	SB 227		SB 348		SB 675
Committee votes		HS	Flr	Ag	Nat Res	Flr	Ag	Flr	ESTM	Flr	Judic	Flr	Health	Insur	Edu	HS	Flr	Nat Res
Irwin, Jacqui (D-42)	100%																	
Jackson, Corey (D-60)	100%																	
Jones-Sawyer, Reginal Byron Sr. (D-57)	100%						EA											
Kalra, Ash (D-25)	100%										EA							
Lackey, Tom (R-34)	25%					NVR						NVR						
Lee, Alex (D-24)	100%																	
Low, Evan (D-26)	100%																	
Lowenthal, Josh (D-69)	100%																	
Maienschein, Brian (D-76)	100%																	
Mathis, Devon (R-33)	40%			NVR						NVR								
McCarty, Kevin (D-06)	100%																	
McKinnor, Tina (D-61)	100%																	
Muratsuchi, Al (D-66)	100%																	
Nguyen, Stephanie (D-10)	67%									NVR			1					
Oretega, Liz (D-20)	100%												1					
Pacheco, Blanca (D-64)	100%												1					
Papan, Diane (D-21)	100%												1					
Patterson, Jim (R-08)	20%					NVR							NVR					
Patterson, Joe (R-05)	33%																	
Pellerin, Gail (D-28)	100%																	
Petrie-Norris, Cottie (D-73)	100%																	
Quirk-Silva, Sharon (D-67)	75%									NVR								
Ramos, James C. (D-45)	100%																	
Rendon, Anthony (D-62)	100%																	
Reyes, Eloise Gomez (D-50)	100%																	
Rivas, Luz (D-43)	100%																	
Rivas, Robert (D-29)	100%						EA											
Rodriguez, Freddie (D-53)	80%													NVR				
Rubio, Blanca (D-48)	100%																	
Sanchez, Kate (R-71)	40%																	
Santiago, Miguel (D-54)	100%																	
Schiavo, Pilar (D-40)	100%																	
Soria, Esmeralda (D-27)	75%									NVR								
Ta, Tri (R-70)	20%					NVR							1					
Ting, Philip (D-19)	100%								-									
Valencia, Avelino (D-68)	100%																	
Villapudua, Carlos (D-13)	75%									NVR								
Waldron, Marie (R-75)	50%																	
Wallis, Greg (D-47)	33%												-					
Ward, Chris (D-78)	100%																	
Weber, Akilah (D-79)	100%																	
Wicks, Buffy (D-14)	100%																	
Wilson, Lori D. (D-11)	100%																	
Wison, Lon D. (D-11) Wood, Jim (D-02)	100%							-		•		•						
												-						
Zbur, Rick Chavez (D-51)	100%												1					

• Vote in alignment with CFFN position • Vote contradicted CFFN position

NVR = No Vote Recorded EA = Excused Absence

11

