



SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

FINAL REPORT
JANUARY 31, 2023

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



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Purpose of Food Security System Assessment

Pre-Pandemic

- Base level safety net
- Local programs = primarily pantries/ groceries

Pandemic

- Exploding Needs
- Temporary increases in safety net benefits
- Expanded Local Services
- Increased Philanthropy

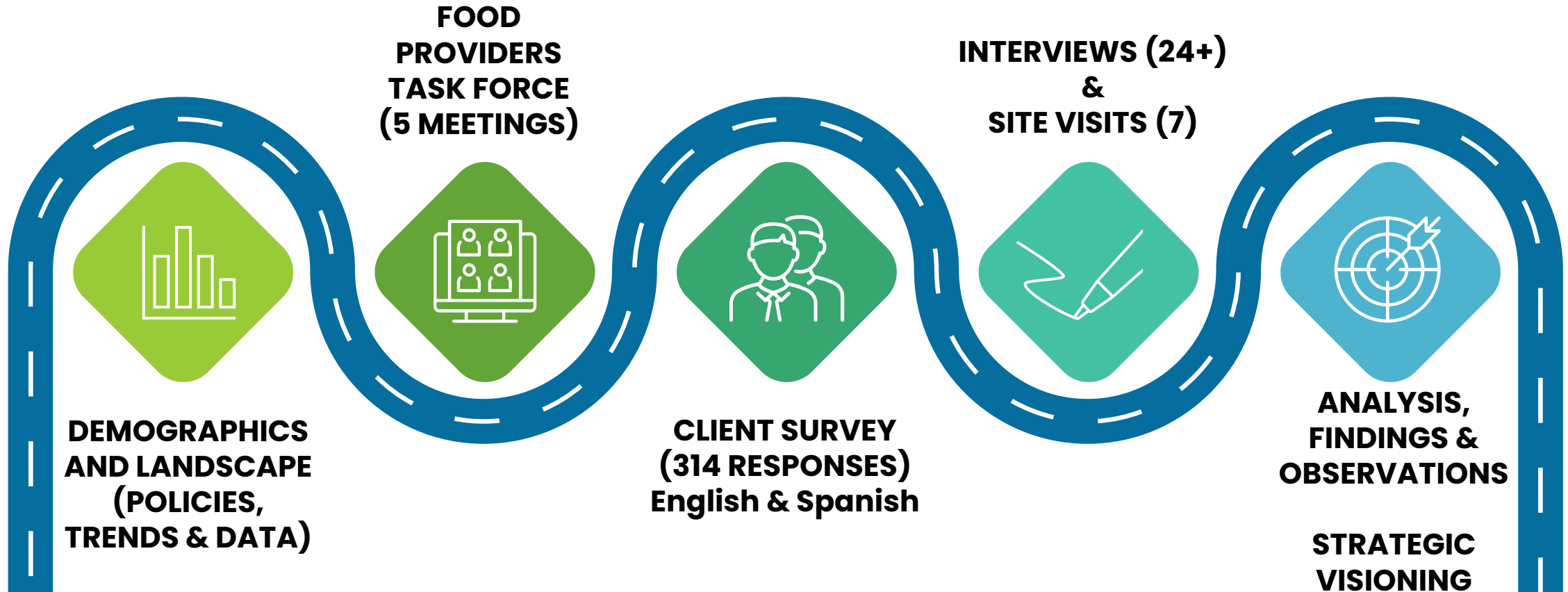
Post-Pandemic?

- Strengths and Assets
- Needs and Resources
- Opportunities and Challenges

Post Pandemic ... How can ongoing and changing food needs of the community be met in a way that is effective and sustainable over time?

Assessment Roadmap – Approach & Process

Assessment resulting in 23 Opportunities & Recommendations for the Sonoma Valley Food Security System



What does “Food Insecurity” mean?

The USDA defines food insecurity as a **lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life.**

This can be a temporary situation for a family or can last a long time.



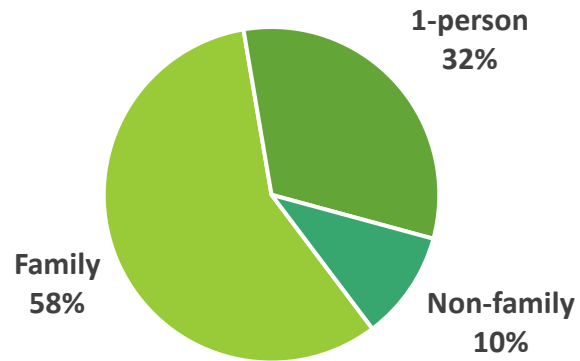
FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS:

Demographics and Drivers of Food Insecurity

SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

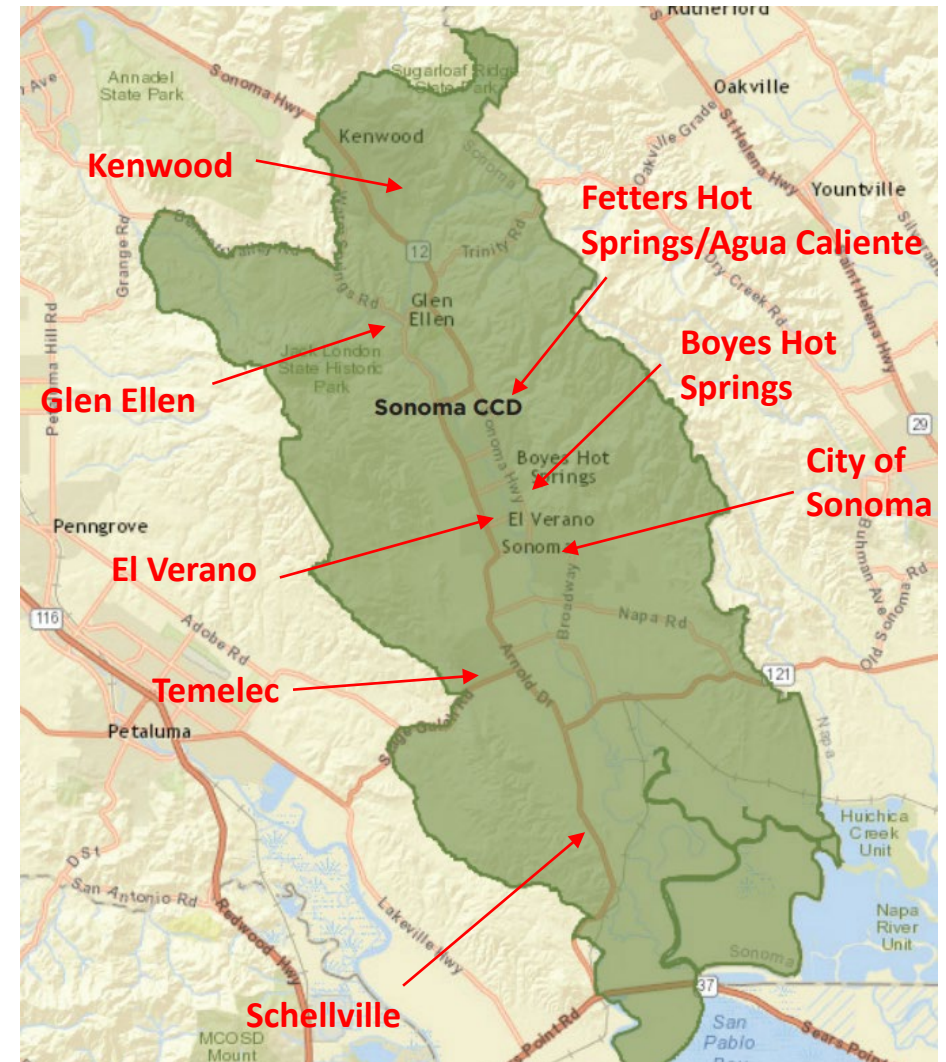
Sonoma Valley Demographics

40,156 Residents in
16,397 Households



- 25 - 30% Latino
- Senior (65+) Population: 27% and growing
- Youth Population (<20): 20% and shrinking

Experiencing Homelessness: 122
(point in time; est. 200+ at some point during year)



City of Sonoma population: 11,000
Sonoma Valley population: 40,000

CCD = census county division

Sonoma Valley Demographics

Large variation in age and income among neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Population	Age <18	Age 65+	Median HH Income
Glen Ellen	1,214	4%	16%	\$250,001
El Verano	3,256	14%	17%	\$101,813
City of Sonoma	11,082	14%	33%	\$85,509
Fetters/Agua	3,554	15%	14%	\$82,260
Boyes Hot Springs	8,006	28%	14%	\$62,261
Temelec	1,915	0%	85%	\$56,691

Neighborhoods are based on census designated places and do not reflect entire population in all areas.

Data is for general comparison purposes only (some data has Margin of Error >10%)

Source: censusreporter.org

Poverty in Sonoma Valley

Household Size	100% FPL	200% FPL	300% FPL
1	\$13,950	\$27,180	\$40,770
2	\$18,310	\$36,620	\$54,930
3	\$23,030	\$46,060	\$69,090
4	\$27,750	\$55,500	\$83,250
5	\$32,470	\$64,940	\$97,410
6	\$41,910	\$74,380	\$111,570

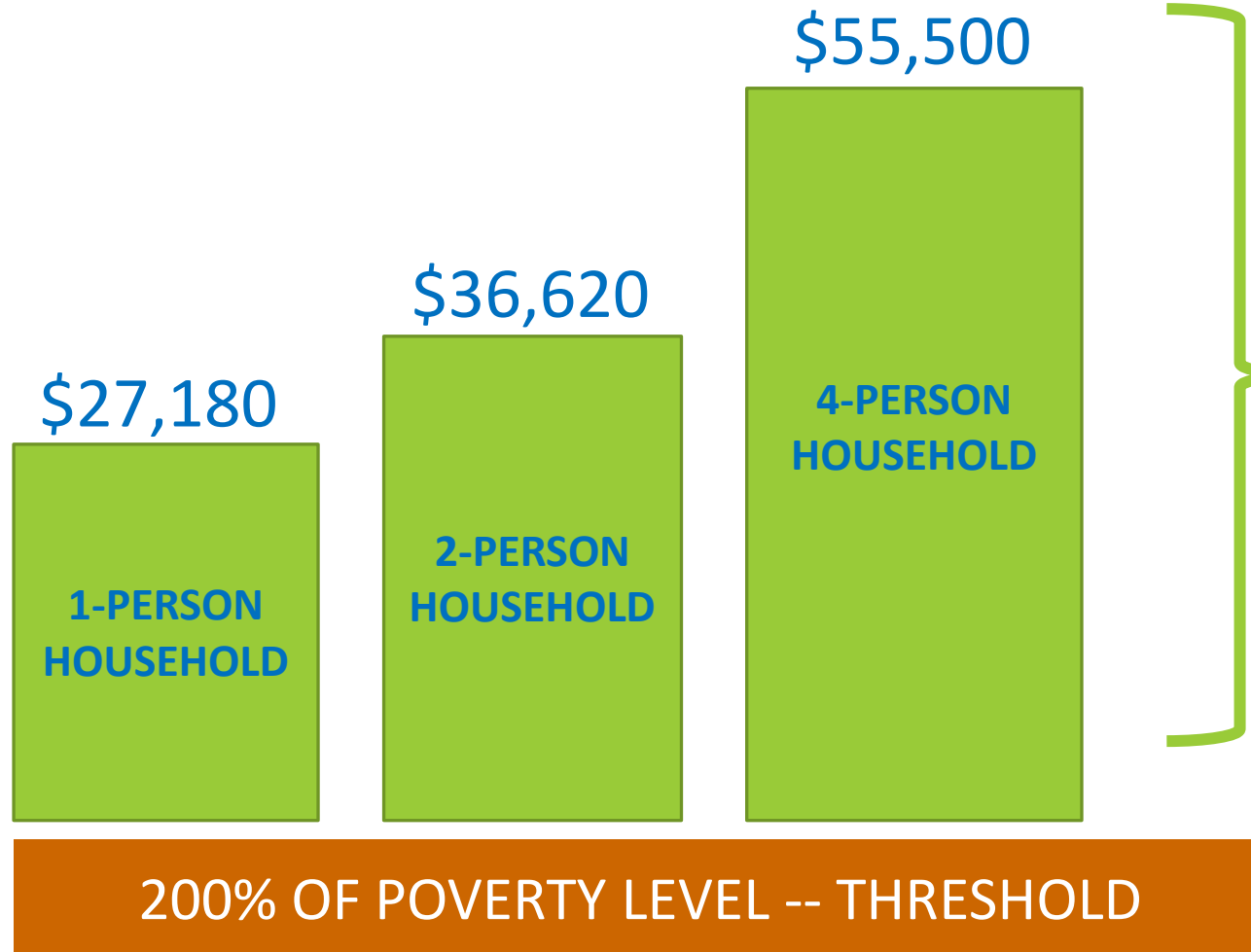
- **Almost 8%** of Sonoma Valley residents live below the federal poverty level (FPL).
- **Almost 20%** of Valley residents live below 200% of FPL.
- **About 40%** of Valley residents live below 300% of FPL.

Disproportionately living in poverty:

- **Children (<18)**
- **Young adults (<35)**
- **Latino residents**
- **Female residents**

Federal poverty levels are based on pre-tax income from all sources, and exclude non-cash benefits (e.g. SNAP/CalFresh, housing subsidies) and tax credits, as well as capital gains/losses. The same poverty thresholds are used throughout the U.S.

One in five are living below 200% of poverty level



Almost 20% of Valley Residents

"Given the high cost of living in Sonoma County, it is generally accepted that an annual income under 200% of FPL ... is inadequate to meet basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, health care and other necessities."
- Sonoma County DHS website

Additional demographic data is provided in Appendix D.

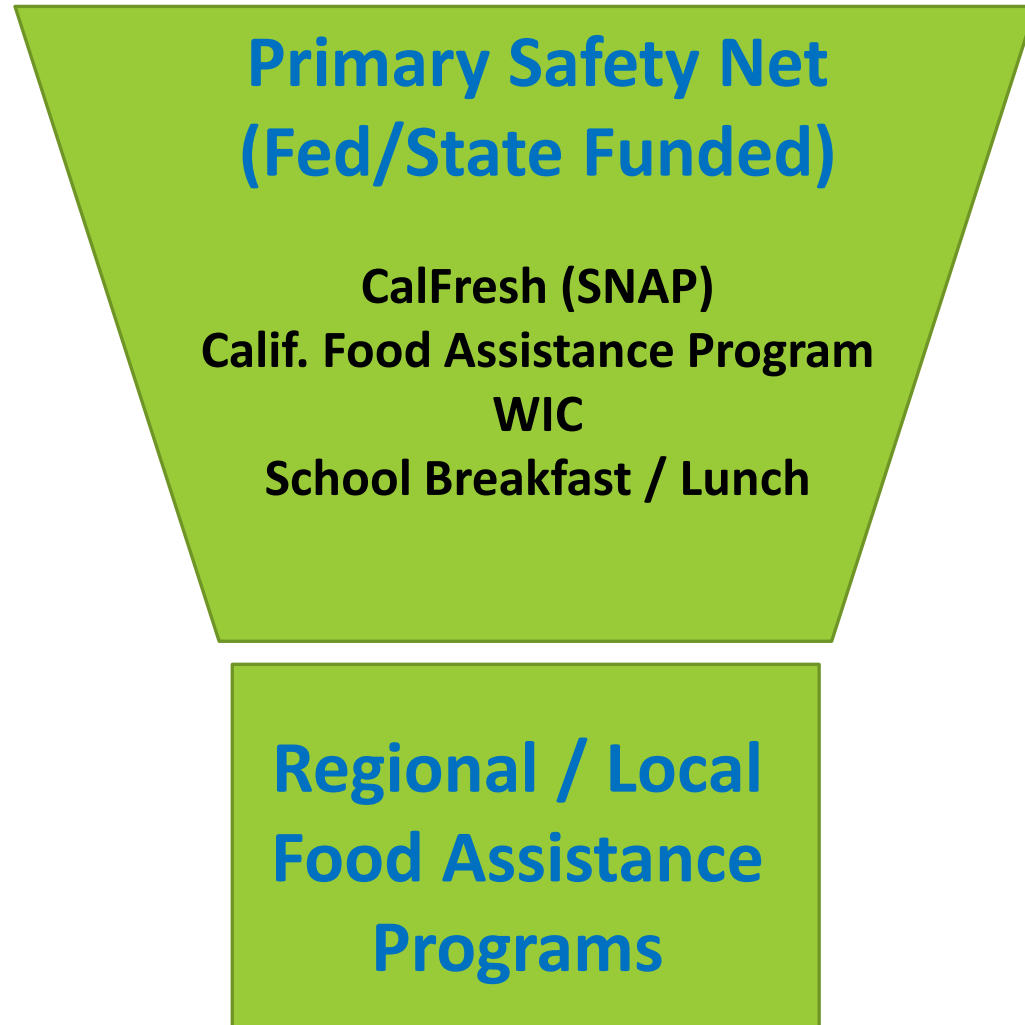
Sonoma Valley: Drivers of Food Insecurity



- ▷ Cost of Living significantly (~50%) above national average*
- ▷ Government safety net programs not adjusted for regional cost of living
- ▷ Government safety net programs exclude some residents
- ▷ Pandemic Impacts: Work, School, Home
- ▷ Inflation: Food prices up 10% in past year **

**Sonoma County 51.8% above national average (Sperling's Best Places index); SF Urban Area 78.6% above national average; Oakland Urban Area 45.9% above national average (C2ER 2022); **Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Expanded Primary Safety Net - But Big “Holes” Remain



Expansions in the Safety Net

- Temporary increases in benefit levels during pandemic
- Permanent 25% increase to CalFresh benefits (Oct 2021)
- California: CFAP benefits being added for all age 55+, regardless of immigration status
- Universal School Meals made permanent in California
- Ongoing national Summer EBT for schoolchildren added
- Medi-Cal to cover medically supportive foods

Holes in the Safety Net

- Income thresholds not adjusted for regional cost of living
- Ineligibility based on immigration status
- Under-enrollment by eligible residents due to lack of information and outreach, issues of trust/fear among immigrant population, general issues of pride/stigma, and real and perceived logistical hurdles

Changes in Food Security Safety Net: Federal, State, & County Programs

Program	Pre-Pandemic	Pandemic Relief	Post-Pandemic /Ongoing
CalFresh (SNAP, EBT)	Monthly benefits (citizens or qualified status, e.g. green card)	Emergency 15% increase in benefit levels (temporary, will expire March 2023)	Permanent increase (approx. 25%) to benefits was effective Oct 2021
California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)	State-funded CalFresh benefits for some qualified immigrants who do not meet CalFresh status requirements (limited)	Increased benefit levels (temporary)	CFAP in process of expanding CalFresh benefits to all income eligible age 55+ regardless of immigration status
Women, Infant, Child Nutrition (WIC)	Infant formula & food benefits for income-qualified women & children < 5 (no citizenship req.)	Increased benefit levels for fruit/vegetables (temporary, will expire September 2023)	
School Meals (National School Lunch Program)	Free or reduced-price breakfast & lunch based on income	Universal School Meals (temporary); Pandemic EBT (temporary during school closures and summer)	California: Universal School Meals – free for all (permanent). Federal: Summer EBT Program for all eligible schoolchildren.
Other		Expanded Child Tax Credit (expired end of 2021) not renewed to date; County ARPA Funded Programs	Pilot programs in areas of Food As Medicine (MediCal) and Guaranteed Income (Sonoma County)

Estimating Food Insecure Population in Sonoma Valley

**Estimated
8,000+**
Food insecure
Sonoma Valley
residents

- Currently **no single metric or definitive estimate exists** of the size of Valley's food insecure population.
- Food insecurity is a **continuum** – there is no “bright line”
- Food insecurity can be **chronic, intermittent, or seasonal**. Pandemic impacts have lessened; but pandemic benefits are expired or expiring this year. **Ongoing needs remain high** and are impacted by food inflation and the high cost of living in Sonoma Valley.
- Based on available information, the number of residents living under **200% of Federal Poverty Level can serve as a reasonable “proxy”** for the food insecure population in the Valley. This would mean that **at least 20% of Valley households or 8,000 residents experience some level of “food insecurity”**.
 - Although there may be some households with income < 200% of FPL that are not food insecure, it is clear from discussions with food providers that there are also **households above this 200% threshold that still need supplemental food resources**.

Additional information on measuring food insecurity can be found in Appendix E.

**Estimated
8,000+**
Food insecure
Sonoma Valley residents



1,778
Sonoma Valley residents enrolled



366
Sonoma Valley residents enrolled
(average month)



1,200+
Low-income students served School Meals daily
(2,800 meals total, all free under Universal School Meals)

Clients of these
programs use 2 – 3
programs on
average



5,588
Sonoma Valley residents enrolled
(1,455 households served each month on average)

Total unique clients served are currently not being tracked at a system-wide level, but based on available data, we estimate that:

1,700 Valley residents (unique) are served each month by other programs and up to 4,000 unique residents annually.

Opportunity to Increase Safety Net Use in Valley

CalFresh

Max benefit 2023 = \$281/month for 1 person,
\$939 for family of 4

WIC

\$62 per month average redeemed benefits
in Sonoma County

UTILIZATION (Sonoma Valley)

CURRENT

1,778 individuals in
1,122 households
enrolled

POTENTIAL?

4.4% of Valley
population enrolled, vs.
6.4% of County
(similar poverty rates)

CalFresh enrollment increased countywide since start of pandemic.

UTILIZATION (Sonoma Valley)

CURRENT

366 individuals
(children and adults)
participating in
average month

POTENTIAL?

Statewide, WIC serves
only 61.1% of eligible
residents and 81.6% of
eligible infants

Barriers to enrollment include lack of information, issues of trust/fear among immigrant population, general issues of pride/stigma, and real and perceived logistical hurdles.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS:
**Food Insecure Residents
of Sonoma Valley**

SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

Client Segments: Differing Needs, Challenges



**Families with
Children**



**Working Age
Adults**



Seniors

Additionally, 3 segment-crossing groups ...

- Those experiencing homelessness**
- Those with transportation or mobility limitations**
- Those with medically-related food needs**

314 Households Surveyed:

Key Differences

	Took survey in English	Took survey in Spanish
<i>Household Characteristics</i>	Smaller (average: 1.9 people)	Larger (average: 4.2 people)
	Older (76% have someone age 65+)	Younger (87% have someone < age 18)
<i>Most Difficult Times</i>	Beginning/end of month	Late fall and winter months
<i>Biggest Barrier to Food Assistance</i>	Food items provided are often ones I don't like, or typically use (31%)	Days/times food help is available (22%)
<i>Programs Used in Past Year</i>	REFB (45%), FISH (26%), MoW/Sonoma Home Meals (20%)	Comida Para Todos (45%), St. Leo's/St. Francis (35%), REFB (33%)
<i>Preferred Way to Communicate</i>	Text (33%), Phone (31%), Email (30%)	Text (77%), Facebook (26%)

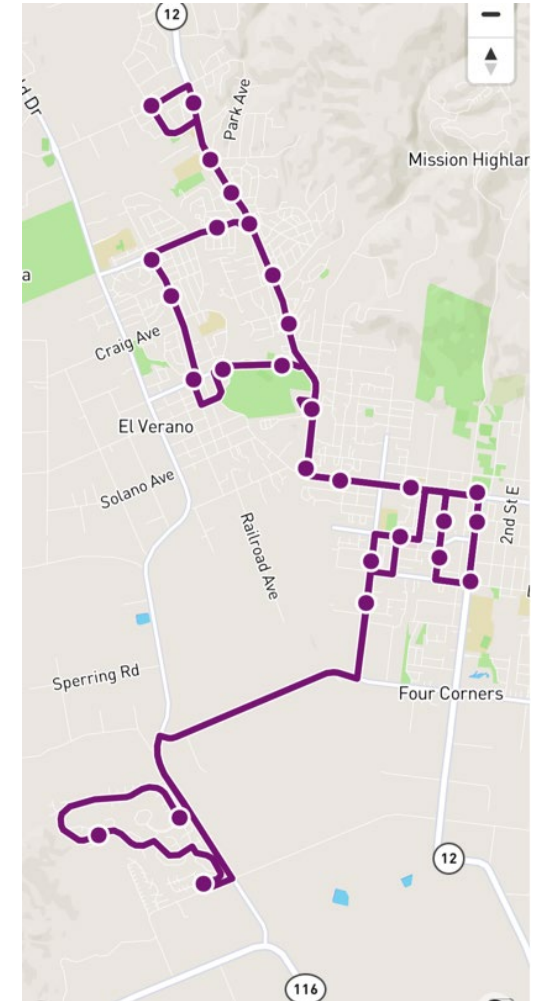
314 Households Surveyed:

Transportation & Mobility Barriers to Food Assistance

Transportation and Mobility (26% overall)
“Transportation problems make it hard to get to the places where food assistance is available, or limit how much I can carry”



- Nationally, half of those age 75+ have a disability. Mobility disabilities are the most common.
- Locally, driving and mobility limitations are likely to become more common as local population ages – but these barriers is not limited to seniors.
- Current options include:
 - Free “Sonoma Shuttle”
 - Paratransit (for those unable to use lift-equipped fixed route transit)
 - Vintage House’s “myRide” and “Vintage House Delivers” services
 - Delivery services from local food assistance providers (groceries, meals)
 - Instacart option for CalFresh (new)



Sonoma Shuttle Route Map

314 Households Surveyed:

Other common Barriers to Food Assistance

Hesitancy in Accepting Help (21% English, 18% Spanish)

“I don’t want to take food if there are others that might need it more.”

Lack Information on Available Resources

“I am not sure what kind of help is available to me, and how or where to get it.” (21% English, 18% Spanish)

“Do you feel like you have the information you need about food assistance that is available to you?” (English: 69% yes, 31% no or not sure. Spanish 67% yes, 33% no or not sure)

No barriers (29% English, 15% Spanish)

“It is not hard to get food assistance”

“I don’t know that we are eligible. We are not low income but we’re having an awfully hard time making ends meet.”

- Comment by survey respondent

314 Households Surveyed:

Most Requested Changes



According to the CDC, diet is a leading risk factor for mortality, with more than 1.5 million deaths linked to poor diet annually. (CDC 2015).

- **More vegetables** (*#1 request by far!*) & fruit
- **More choice / more variety**
- **More “healthy” food / less processed and canned food**
- **Accommodation for special needs**
E.g. less salt/sodium, less sugar, less spicy/acidic, softer foods
- **More prepared foods** (*English survey respondents*)

Summary of Key Findings:

Food Insecure Residents

- Regular, Intermittent, and Seasonal Needs
- Estimated food insecure population larger than total currently served
- Combining Resources to Meet Needs
- Client Segments with Different Needs/Wants
- Weekday Focus and Transportation/Mobility Issues Limit Access
- Comprehensive, Current Info on Resources Hard to Find
- Hesitancy of Use Among One in Five
- Barriers of Language, Culture & Generations
- Text has Become Preferred Communication Tool
- Clients Seek More Choice / More Produce

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS:
Local Food Security System

SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

Sonoma Valley's Local Food Assistance Providers

- 15+ active food assistance providers
- 500+ community volunteers
- Extensive community connections
- Massive effort in response to pandemic
- Many effective partnerships
- High level of trust and value from clients

You guys do an amazing job!!!!
Seriously, you help me raise my kids.

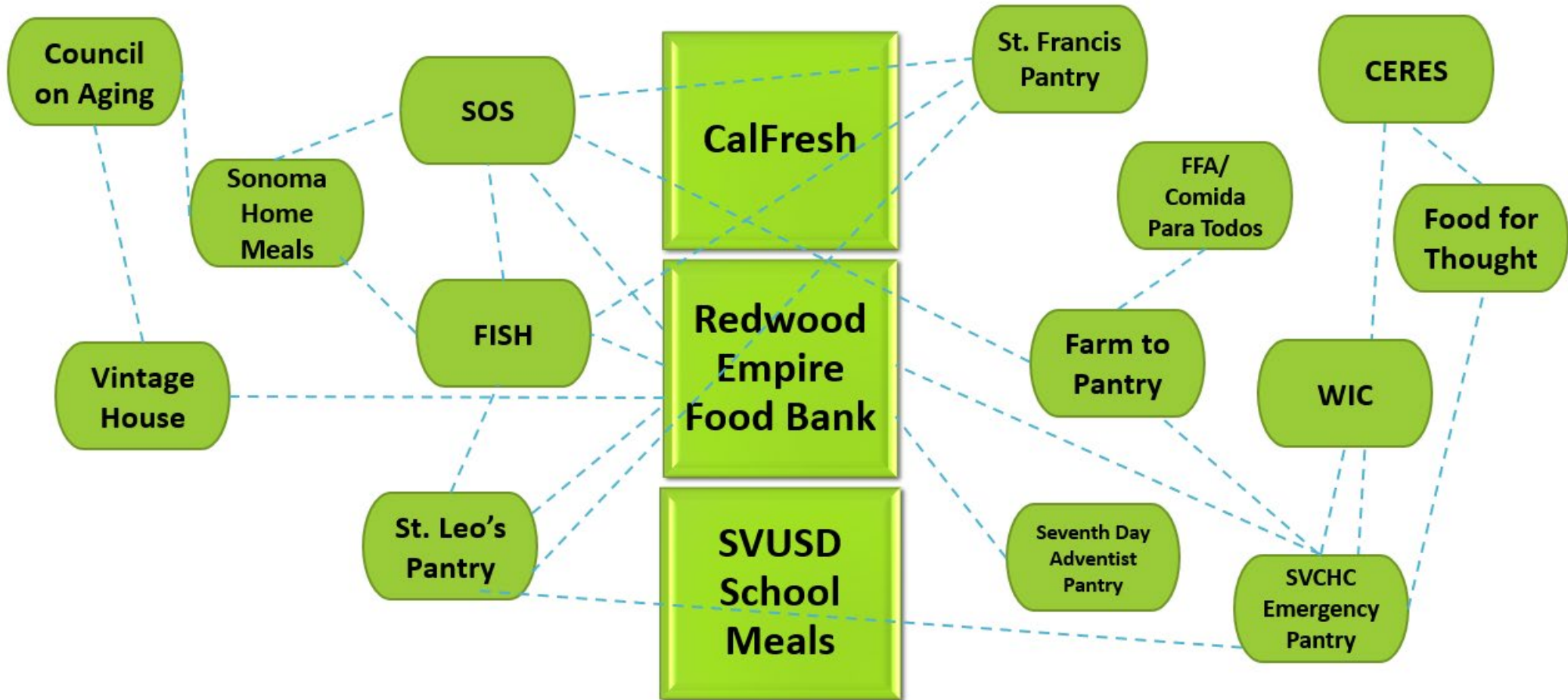
Sample comments from survey

Would like for all the volunteers and staff to hear and know how they are appreciated every day.



A LOOSE NETWORK OF STRONG AND COMMITTED PROVIDERS

Decentralized and Relationship-Based



Food Security "Backbone"

Food Assistance Available in Sonoma Valley

CalFresh provides monthly grocery benefits on EBT card to citizens and qualified immigrant status with income < 200% of federal poverty level (FPL).

WIC -- Women, Infants & Children Supplemental Nutrition Program, no citizenship or green card required, income < 185% of FPL (or in CalFresh or MediCal).

Redwood Empire Food Bank – Mobile food distributions; youth meal programs; provider of fresh and shelf-stable foods to local providers; CalFresh help.

SVUSD School Meals – School breakfast and lunch program (pre-K to 12th grade, 10 locations), all free under California Universal School Meals.

Council on Aging -- Small Meals on Wheels presence in Valley; weekly sit-down meals at two locations as well as “Drive Up Pick Up” weekly meal packs.

Farm to Pantry – Gleaning to provide produce to low-income apartments and food providers; CSA boxes purchased and provided to local providers.

Food For Thought – “Specialty food bank” serving County residents with medical conditions (e.g. HIV, COVID, congestive heart failure, recently hospitalized).

CERES Project – Provide medically tailored meals to County residents with serious illness (e.g. cancer, diabetes, congestive heart failure).

FISH – Valley’s largest food pantry, open 4x/week by appointment; delivers groceries to homebound/seniors weekly; holiday food baskets.

Church Pantries at St. Leo’s, St. Francis, & Seventh Day Adventist are open to all community members on a call or walk-in basis, 1-4 days/week. St. Leo’s also provides gift cards at Thanksgiving.

Sonoma Valley Community Health Center – Offers an emergency food pantry, serves as an REFB food distribution site, and has a regional WIC office.

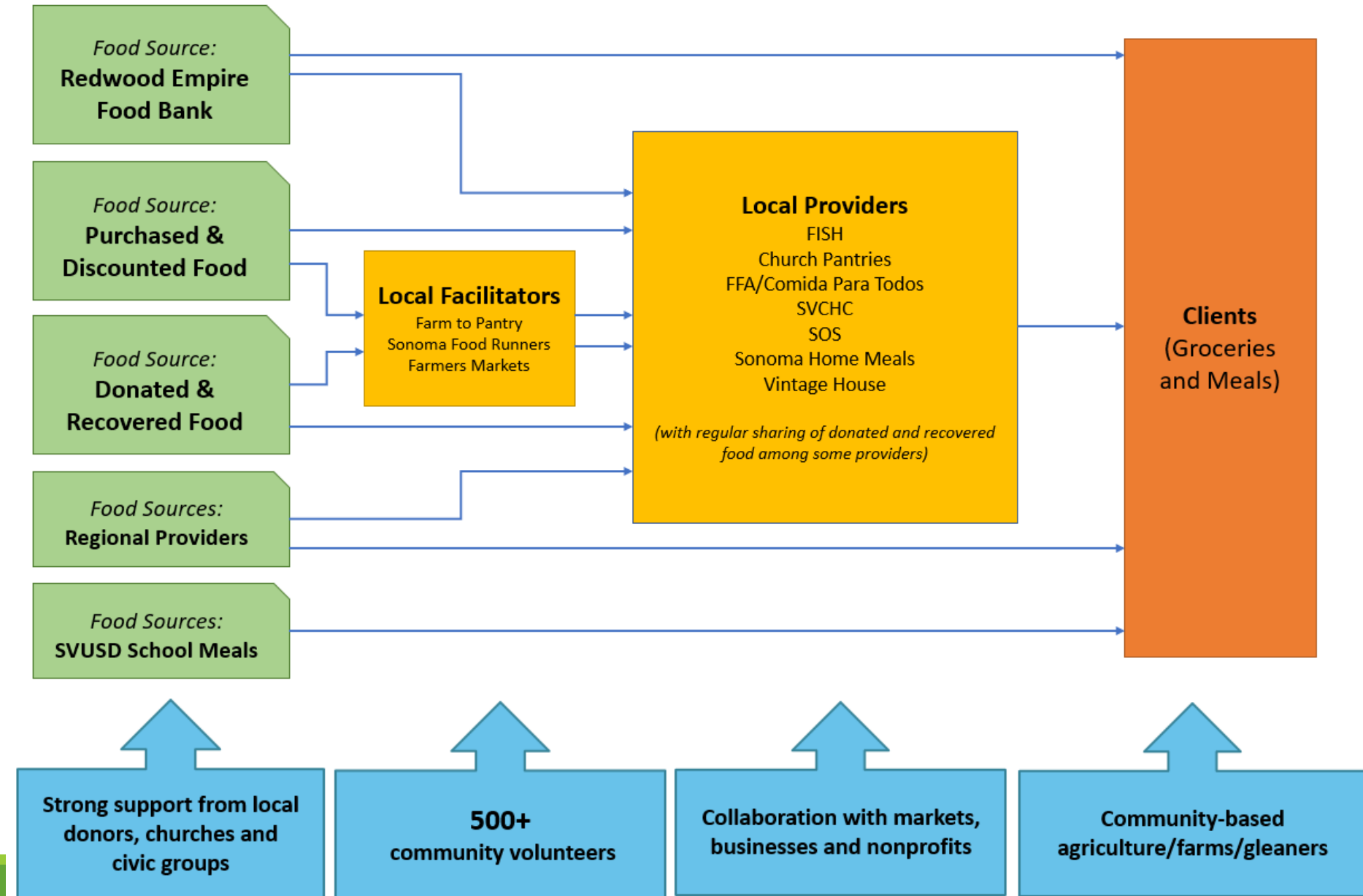
Food for All / Comida Para Todos delivers groceries (including CSA boxes from FTP) and other essential household items to Latinx families 2x/month.

Sonoma Home Meals prepares and delivers lunches and dinners every weekday to homebound seniors in the Valley (not an official Meals on Wheels).

SOS prepares and serves breakfast and lunch for pickup each weekday at Springs Community Hall; delivers meals to homebound twice a week.

Vintage House provides onsite meals (Soup’s On, Supper’s On) weekly as well as rides to grocery store (also a site for CoA meal pick up and REFB).

Getting Food to Those Who Need It: the Local Food Security System



Growth in delivery and prepared meals; capacity in pantry programs

Groceries

Prepared Meals

Pick Up /
Eat On Site

- REFB Mobile Pantries @ community locations
- FISH Pantry
- St. Leo's Church SVdP Pantry
- St. Francis Church SVdP Pantry*
- Seventh Day Adventist Pantry
- Community Health Center Emergency Pantry

- SOS Meal Program at Springs Hall
- County Office on Aging (CoA) "DUPU" Meals
- CoA congregate dining meals (new sites)
- Vintage House Soup's On and Supper's On
- SVUSD Universal School Meals
- REFB After-School Café & Summer Lunch

Delivered

- Food For All/Comida Para Todos
- FISH Weekly Deliveries
- REFB Mobile Pantries @ Senior Apartments
- Farm to Pantry CSA box deliveries
- Food for Thought**

- Sonoma Home Meals / MoW
- CoA Meals on Wheels
- SOS Meal Deliveries
- Ceres Community Project

* St. Francis also provides snack bags for homeless ** Food For Thought provides primarily groceries, some frozen meals

Groceries & Meals

Groceries for All, Meals for Those with Specialized Needs

Open to All



REFB Mobile Pantries @
community locations



FISH Pantry



St. Leo's Pantry



St. Francis Pantry



Seventh Day Adventist Pantry



SVCHC Emergency Pantry



Food For All/Comida Para Todos



SOS Meals @ Springs Hall

Youth



SVUSD School Meals



REFB After-School Café &
Summer Lunch

Medical Needs



Food For Thought



CERES Project



groceries



meals

Seniors and/or Homebound



Sonoma Home Meals



SOS Meal Delivery



Vintage House Meals



CoA Meals on Wheels and Meal
Pick Up



CoA Congregate Dining



REFB @ Senior Apts

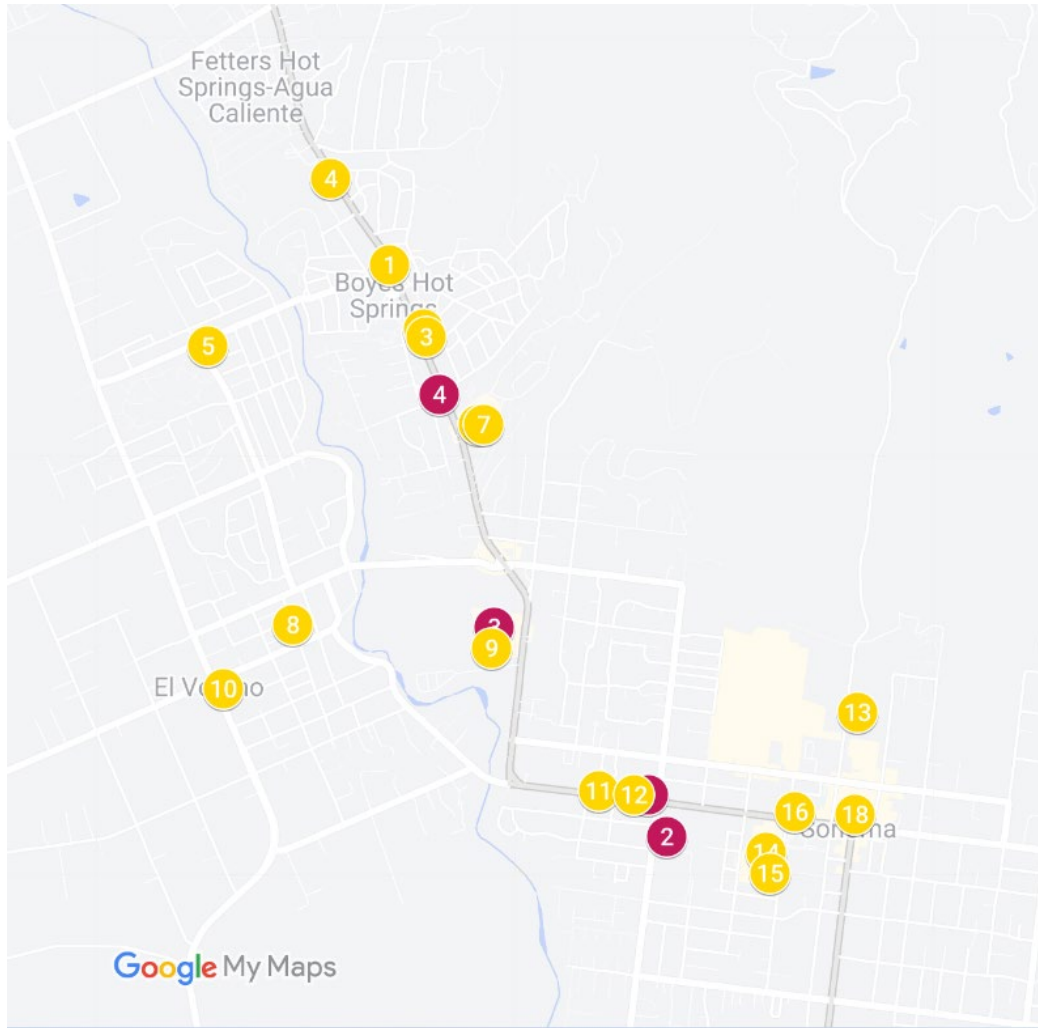


FISH Grocery Delivery

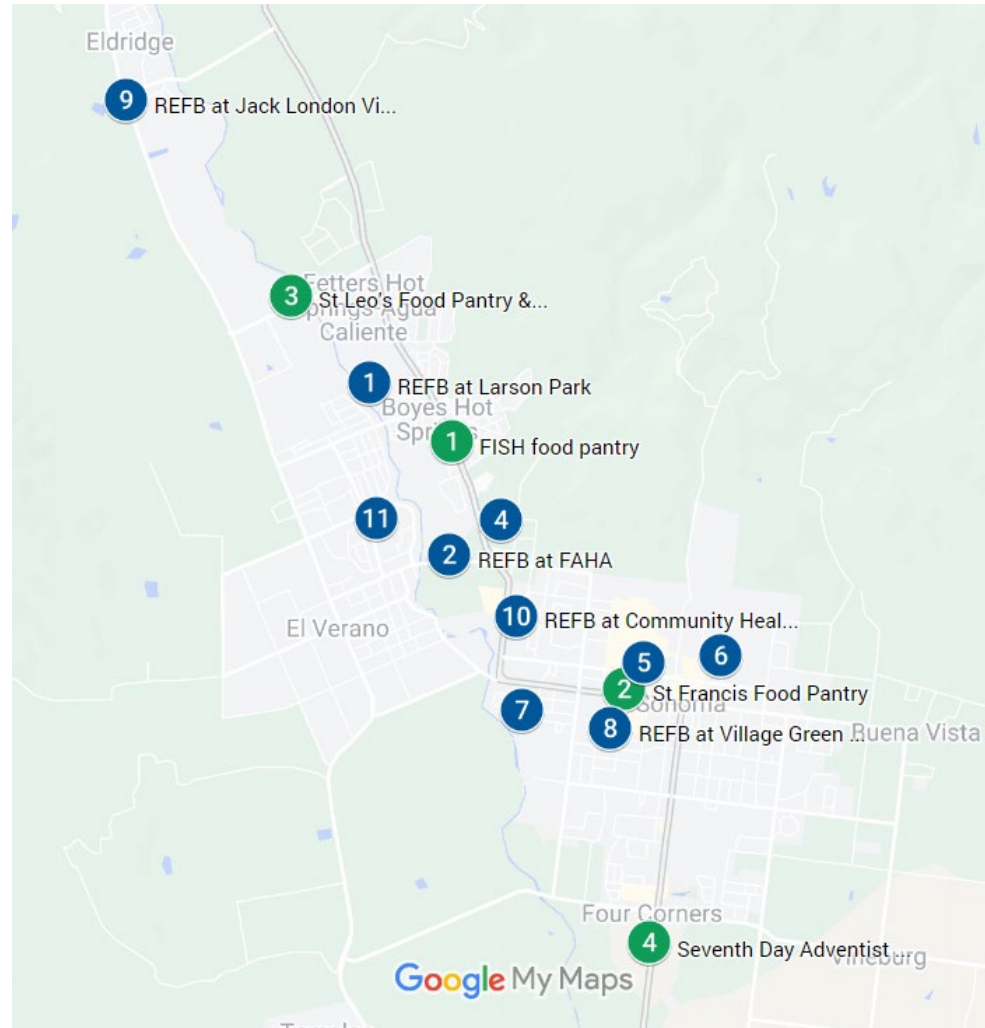
NOTES: Some programs are open to all but have target populations, e.g. Latino families, homeless persons.

Food For Thought primarily provides groceries, but in some cases frozen meals. St. Francis provides primarily groceries, but also snack bags for the homeless.

Access: Services generally well-distributed



CalFresh (yellow) and CalFresh/WIC (red) participating stores



Food Pantries and REFB Grocery Distribution sites

The Critical Role of Community Support



Strong support from local donors, churches and civic groups

500+ community volunteers

Collaboration with markets, businesses and nonprofits

Community-based agriculture/farms/gleaners

Photo: REFB food distribution at St. Leo's

Summary of Key Findings:

Local Food Security System

- Supportive Community is Foundational, and Proven in Crisis
- Many High-Trust, High Value Programs With Strong Client Relationships
- No System-Level Data On Clients, Usage, or Capacity
- Service Locations Generally Well-Distributed
- Pantries: Limited/no Client Choice, Underutilized Capacity
- No “One Stop Shop” for Accessing the System
- Most Programs Difficult to Scale
- Missed Opportunities, Potential for Partnerships

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS: **Food System Resources**

SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

Local Food Providers: Sources of Food

Food Source #1

Redwood Empire Food Bank

- “Sonoma Valley’s Food Bank”
- Food supplies to local partners: produce, bread, dairy, eggs, shelf-stable items (free or pennies on the dollar)
- 400 lb minimum delivery, or local providers can “shop” the REFB warehouse.

Food Source #2

Donated & Recovered Food

- Supported by new state law (SB 1383)
- Local supermarkets, restaurants, caterers, and farms
- Gleaned produce
- Food donation drives & collections
- Faith-based charitable organizations
- Schools – untapped potential?

Food Source #3

Directly Purchased Food

- All local food assistance providers purchase some of their food, typically at a discount
- Local supermarkets
- Other retailers
- Local restaurants
- FEED Sonoma - North Bay farmer cooperative (via Farm to Pantry)

Not shown: Food sources for regional providers (e.g. CoA, CERES) and SVUSD school meals.

Food Source #1

**Redwood Empire
Food Bank**



\$2.5M – Value of food provided
\$750K – Cost of programs
\$351K – Money raised in Valley

Low Profile, Big Impact

- **2,320 REFB cardholder households** in Sonoma Valley, with 5,588 residents
 - 13 direct distribution sites in Sonoma Valley
 - 1,455 Valley households receive distributions each month (average)
- **10 meal programs** (After School Café and Summer Lunch – youth)
- **Food supplier to local community partners**
 - Including FISH, SOS, St. Leo’s Pantry, Seventh Day Adventist Pantry, Sonoma Home Meals, SVCHC Emergency Pantry
- **CalFresh Application Assistance** (18 people in Valley in past year, estimated benefits of \$27,556).
- **Total of \$2.5M** in food to Sonoma Valley annually
- **Opportunities to expand usage** of REFB foods by local food assistance providers

Food Source #2

**Donated &
Recovered Food**

**For some local providers, up to 50% of
total food is donated and/or recovered**

- Sonoma Home Meals, SOS, Food For All, and most food pantries **rely on this source of food.**
- Under a recent state law (SB 1383), **supermarkets are required** to work with food recovery organizations to collect edible food that would otherwise be disposed of.
- Fresh food recovery is **high value, but time and labor intensive.**
 - Volunteers go to local supermarkets daily to collect food.
 - Sharing of recovered food among providers is common, requiring coordination and distribution to match available foods with needs
 - The ability of providers to store or freeze fresh foods is limited
- **Direct donations** from local farms, gleaners, and caterers are also a source of fresh food.
- **Canned food drives** have a popular tradition and can increase provider visibility, but not effective source of shelf-stable items
- **Opportunities may exist with food recovery** from SVUSD (milk, fruit); shared space for donation sorting and distribution; and increased efficiency with use of food recovery specialists.

Food Source #3

Directly Purchased Food

Programs that provide more produce and support local farms are win-win (but must be accessible)

- **Programs that support local farmers** (e.g. CSA boxes) are generally more efficient than community gardens at providing produce for food insecure residents.
- **Farmers Market Nutrition Programs** (tokens or “bucks” for local farmers markets and farm stands, often with local matches) can be expanded, but easy access by participating residents is critical.



CalFresh Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

- **Both the seasonal Tuesday Night and Friday morning farmers markets participate.**
- “Double bucks” tokens per person per market, using EBT card
- Tuesday market has a 100% match from a local sponsor (no cap per buyer – very uncommon)
- Used by 88 total customers in 2022, with season total of almost \$2,000 in matching funds.

Senior FMNP and WIC FMNP

- **10 participating farmers markets in Sonoma County; none in Sonoma Valley currently** (2 participating farmers - The Patch and Paul’s Produce)
- Seniors: \$75 in “bucks” per person each market season (\$50 + \$25 local match from Catholic Charities). Seniors self-certify to area Agency on Aging (age 60+ with income < 185% of poverty level) to receive checks
- WIC: \$35 per WIC family member each market season

Role of “Food As Medicine” – Resources Growing

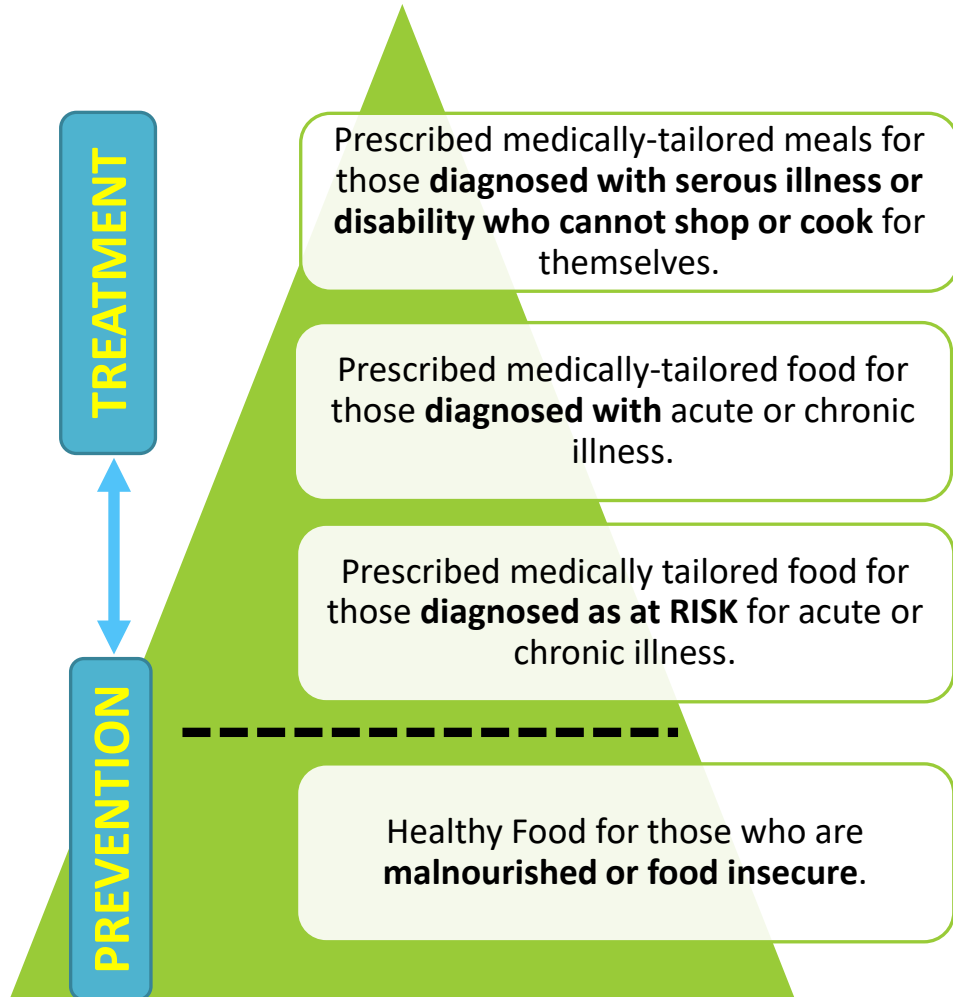


Image: Center for Health Law and Policy Intervention

- Spectrum of services and health interventions that recognize and respond to critical **link between nutrition and chronic illness**.
- **Medically-tailored Food:** designated by a Registered Dietitian as an appropriate part of a treatment plan for an individual with defined health condition(s)
- One of **5 pillars** of the White House Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health
- 2022: Sonoma County ARPA funds of **\$2.25 million to Food For Thought and CERES** (providers of medically tailored food)
- CA Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) **pilot program** – medically tailored meals.

Summary of Key Findings:

Local Food Security Resources

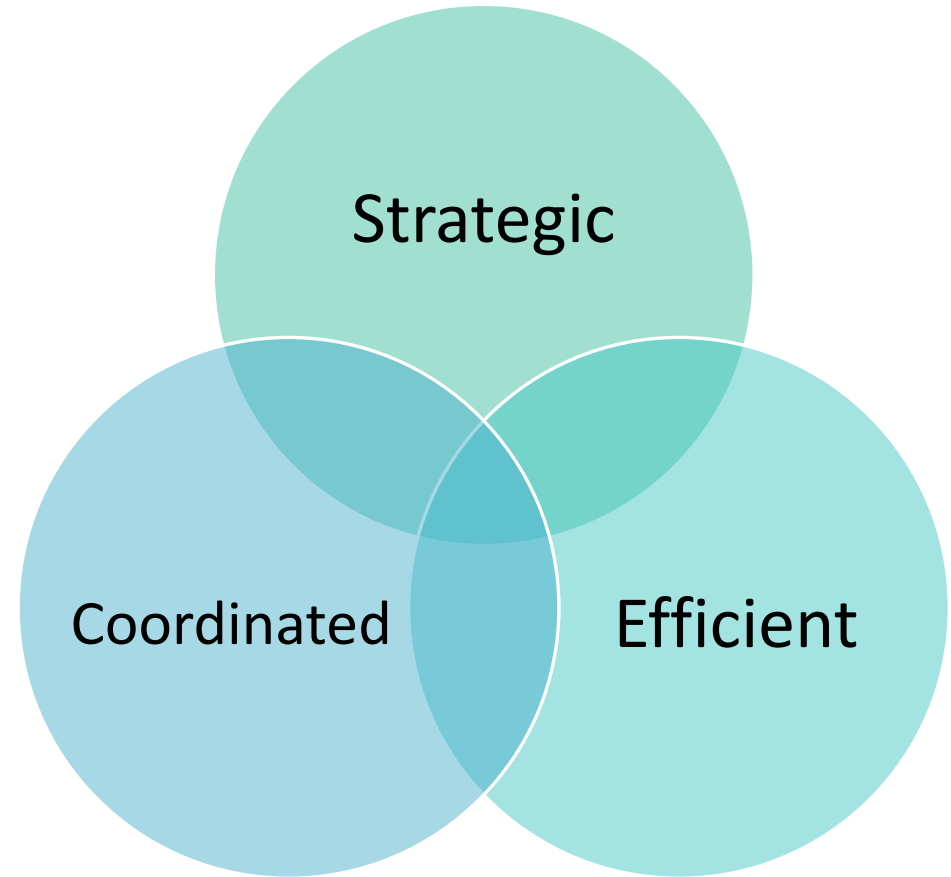
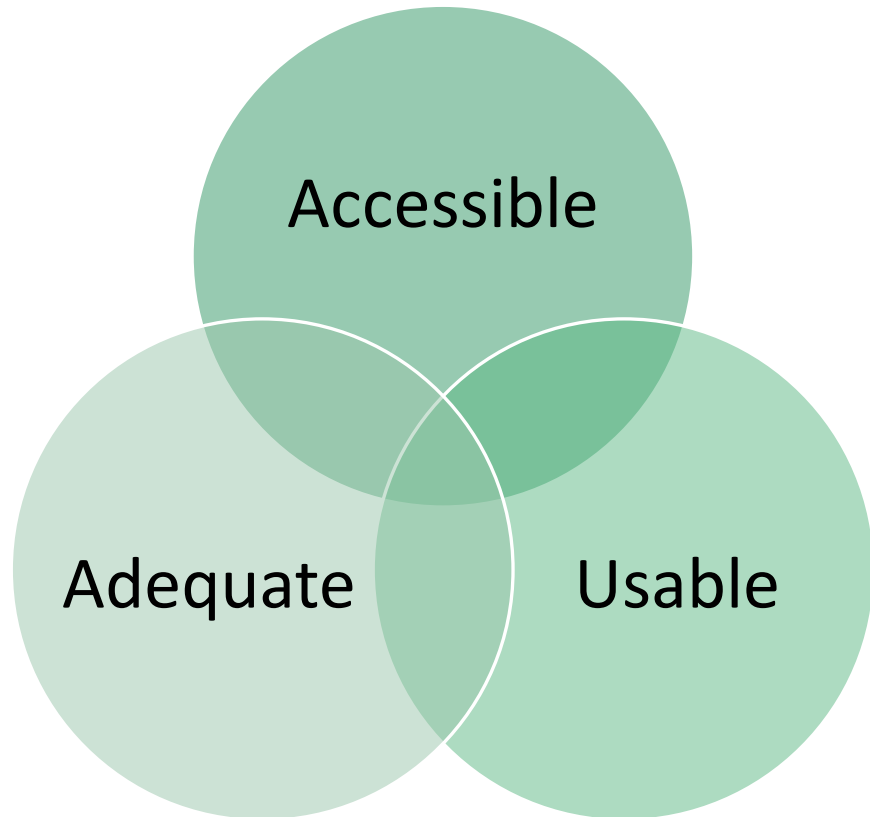
- Lean Organizations – Funding, Leadership
- Food recovery is critical – but requires high level of coordination
- Powerful food bank able to partner
- Collaboration on food procurement can increase options, savings
- Opportunities to further tap into programs providing healthy food, if groundwork can be laid
 - Food as medicine
 - Local produce
- Reliance on workforce of 500+ volunteers
- Limited space hinders storage, sorting & distribution, pantry choice
- No dedicated commercial kitchen (long term)

Opportunities and Recommendations

SONOMA VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

Opportunities for:

Meeting local needs for **food security**... in a way that can be **sustained** over time



Strengthening Local Food Security

To be food secure, households need **access** to **adequate** food that is **usable**.

Access

- Economic access
- Physical access
- Access to information
- Consistency of access

Adequacy

- Food Quantity
- Food Safety
- Nutritional value

Usability

- Food Variety and Choice
- Practicality and Ease of Use
- Cultural relevance
- Suitability to health needs

Strengthening Local Food Security

*To meet local needs in a way that is sustainable,
the local food security system needs to be **strategic**, **coordinated**, and **cost effective**.*

Strategic

- Goals, indicators of success, measurement
- Innovation & adaptation
- Advocacy
- Community support
- Funding opportunities

Coordinated

- Information and resource sharing
- Coordinated community outreach and access
- Client management
- Gaps identified and filled
- Regional connections

Cost Effective

- Food Sourcing
- Food Storage, distribution & delivery
- Effective use of volunteer & staff time
- Facilities & equipment
- Cost per meal; staff/volunteer time per meal



1

Access to Available Food Resources

1.1 SAFETY NET PROGRAMS -- Facilitate increased enrollment by eligible residents in primary safety net programs (CalFresh/CFAP, WIC, Summer Youth EBT).

1.2 RESOURCE GUIDE & REFB WEB SITE -- Improve access to information by developing a Sonoma Valley-specific food resource guide (bilingual, regularly updated, in print/PDF format); outreach to all community partners for distribution and online posting; keep REFB regional online “food finder” resources updated.

1.3 INCREASE VISIBILITY THROUGH COORDINATED COMMUNITY OUTREACH – Target and tailor outreach by client segment, focusing on promoting local programs as well as regional programs for specialized needs. Address key information gaps and barriers, including hesitancy in using food assistance and perception that “others need the food more”.

1.4 BILINGUAL SERVICES & BICULTURAL TRAINING – Support expanded capacity in staff, volunteers, or through partnerships, so that all resources are accessible to all residents. Provide bicultural training to volunteers and staff.

1.5 FOOD AS MEDICINE “PRESCRIPTIONS”-- Work with the medical community to inform practitioners about medically tailored food programs and process for “prescribing” through Ceres, Food for Thought, and other resources.

1.6 PILOT EXPANSIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESS -- Initiate a coordinated and well-promoted pilot program to expand or reallocate services to better meet the needs of potentially underserved segments and times of peak need. Possible examples: Saturday pantry hours for working adults; food distribution in Temelec; increased services during winter months.

2

Client Experience

2.1 EXPAND CHOICE IN FOOD PANTRY PROGRAMS – Foster efforts by food pantries to continue to expand client choice, food variety, and culturally relevant food options, in order to support client dignity, better meet needs of the marginally food insecure, provide feedback on food items needed, and reduce waste.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION TOOLS -- Implement client request options more suited to user preferences and schedules, including texting-based tools.

2.3 ENABLE USERS TO ADJUST QUANTITY – Explore options that allow more clients to scale the amount of food received, where possible.

2.4 MORE FRESH PRODUCE -- Continue to increase availability of fresh produce. Support gleaning programs and produce recovery/distribution; work with local farms and farmers markets to add the Senior and WIC options to the Farmers Market Nutrition Programs offered.

2.5 FOOD SAFETY, NUTRITION, & USAGE – Provide pantry clients with information on food usage/expiration dating (REFB and ExtraFood have materials), as well as nutritional information and recipes that use available ingredients.

3

Coordination, Connectivity, and Strategic Initiatives

3.1 FOOD ROUNDTABLE -- Re-establish the Sonoma Valley Food Roundtable, with regular coordinating meetings and task force teams to work on key issues.

3.2 PART-TIME FOOD COORDINATOR – Staff a bilingual Sonoma Valley Food Coordinator position to support the Roundtable, help implement key system-wide priorities, identify grant opportunities, and provide local and regional coordination and representation.

3.3 INCLUDE REGIONAL PROVIDERS – Invite regional food providers to Roundtable and provide Sonoma Valley updates/connections for increased collaboration; coordinate with regional providers to provide “last mile” delivery services as needed to increase their program reach in the Valley.

3.4 CLIENT DATA SYSTEM -- Support providers in moving toward a common client management system to allow for better analysis of needs and services, as well as streamlining client intake and delivery of assistance and enabling a more customizable level of client service (REFB system available for demonstration/sharing).

3.5 EXPAND VOLUNTEER PIPELINE -- Coordinate volunteer recruitment efforts, including strategies to recruit, train and integrate more bilingual volunteers and provide more volunteer opportunities for students and working residents.

3.6 “NEXT STEP” TASK FORCE(S) – Form task forces with Roundtable members and other key stakeholders to focus on key opportunities, such as (1) food recovery, including SVUSD food, (2) food purchasing, and (3) pantry food choice.

4

Food System Resources, Cost- effectiveness, & Sustainability

4.1 MAXIMIZE FOOD SOURCING FROM REFB -- Increase coordination among providers in food purchasing and sourcing. Cost savings for some providers can be reduced through use of food from REFB; smaller providers may be able to access REFB food through coordination.

4.2 MAXIMIZE LOCAL FOOD RECOVERY AND USAGE OF RECOVERED FOODS – Explore further coordination on recovery and distribution, along with further provider, client, and community education on best-by and sell-by dates.

4.3 EXPLORE FOOD HUB FACILITY -- Explore the possibility of a Valley food hub facility for storage and distribution of purchased and donated food. Other potential uses, depending on the facility and location, could include a client services site, an expanded food “choice” pantry, and/or a “last mile” distribution point for regional food delivery programs.

4.4 PERMANENT COMMERCIAL KITCHEN – Kitchen needs are currently being met through community collaboration, but there is a long term need to secure more permanent shared commercial kitchen space for meal preparation and potentially for meal service.

4.5 INVEST IN SUSTAINABLE SOURCES OF LOCAL PRODUCE – Explore ongoing ways to support local farming, such as CSA (community supported agriculture) programs, farm stands, and/or a partnership to utilize vacant land designated for “orchard” at SVHS.

4.6 SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO INCREASE PROGRAM REACH AND SUSTAINABILITY - Support cost-saving and/or fund-raising initiatives to reduce ongoing financial pressures faced by providers. Also utilize funding to support “move the needle” collaborative initiatives to expand reach and increase cost-effectiveness of food system.



Appendixes

Appendix A: Interviews and Site Visits

Appendix B: Food Provider Task Force Membership

Appendix C: Selected Sources (Research)

Appendix D: Additional Demographic Detail

Appendix E: Measuring Food Insecurity: Existing Tools & Data

Appendix F: Survey Response Detail and Representative Comments

Appendix G: Current Print and Online Resources: Sonoma Valley Food Assistance

Appendix H: Inventory of Food Assistance Organizations and Resources

- Service Hours by Organization
- Facilities by Organization
- Food Sources by Organization
- Volunteers by Organization

Appendix I: Efforts in Sonoma County Related to Food Insecurity

Appendix A: Interviews and Site Visits

Interviews included:

- SOS (Kathy King and Dan Kahn)
- FISH (Sandy Piotter)
- St. Leo's (Patti England)
- St. Francis (Dave Owens)
- Food For All/Comida Para Todos (Maite Iturri)
- Sonoma Valley Community Health Center (Maricarmen Reyes)
- Vintage House (Jade Filippi)
- Redwood Empire Food Bank (Allison Goodwin)
- Springs Community Hall / Agriculture (Seth Dolinsky)
- Sonoma Home Meals (Anea Kamahale)
- Farm to Pantry (Duskie Estes)
- Council on Aging (Denise Johnson)
- Seventh Day Adventist Church Pantry (Carol Boyce)
- City of Sonoma – Events/Emergencies (Lisa Janson)
- City of Sonoma – Sustainability/AB 1383 (Travis Wagner)
- SVUSD (Bruce Abbott and Adam Klapow)
- Extra Food (Monica Ravizza)
- La Luz Center (Leonardo Lobato and Sandy Sanchez)
- Sonoma County Human Services (Angela Struckmann and Oscar Chavez)
- County Supervisor Susan Gorin
- Food For Thought (Nina Redman)
- Sonoma Family Meal (Whitney Reuling)
- CERES Community Project (Cathryn Couch)
- County COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) Food Committee (Mimi Enright)

Site visits: FISH food pantry, St. Leo's food pantry, St. Francis food pantry, SOS at Springs Hall, Sonoma Home Meals, Comida Para Todos grocery distribution, and REFB grocery distribution at St. Leo's Church.

Appendix B: Food Providers Task Force Members

- Bruce Abbott* and Adam Klapow, Sonoma Valley Unified School District
- Patti England, St. Leo's Food Pantry (St. Vincent de Paul)
- Duskie Estes, Farm to Pantry
- Jade Filippi* / Mary Wilcox, Vintage House
- Allison Goodwin, Redwood Empire Food Bank
- Maite Iturri, Food for All /Comida Para Todos **
- Anea Kamehele*, Sonoma Home Meals (Meals on Wheels of Sonoma)
- Kathy King and Dan Kahn, SOS
- Dave Owens, St. Francis Food Pantry (St. Vincent de Paul)
- Sandy Piotter, Friends In Sonoma Helping (FISH)
- Maricarmen Reyes, Sonoma Valley Community Health Center

* *No longer with the organization listed (as of January 2023)*

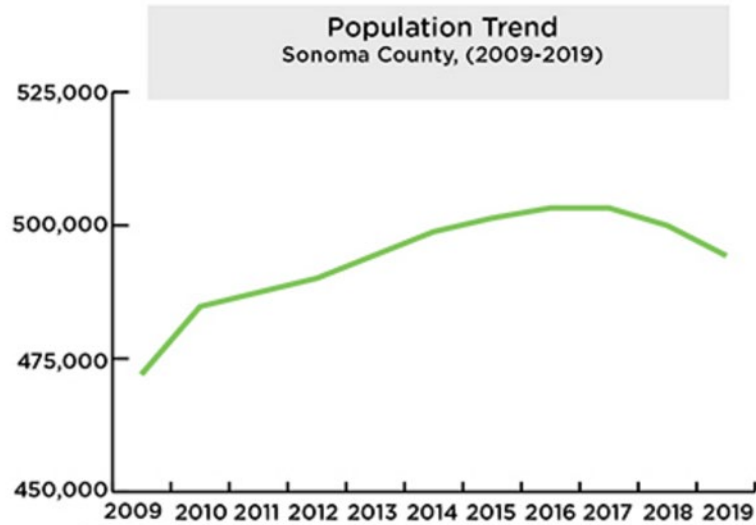
** *Was not able to attend task force meetings but was briefed regularly*

Appendix C: Selected Sources (Research)

- ESRI Demographic and Income Profile / Census 2016-2022 ACS estimates by zip code
- SVUSD Student Population Forecast
- U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey
- Federal poverty guidelines 2022
- Censusreporter.org
- USDA Economic Research Service
- “Hidden in Plain Sight” Report by the Sonoma Valley Fund
- FeedingAmerica.org
- Getcalfresh.org
- County of Sonoma 2022 Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons Results
- County of Sonoma Department of Human Services – Geography, Demographics, and Socio-economic Data; Sonoma County Hunger Index 2018; Calfresh enrollment data
- County of Sonoma Dept of Health Services – WIC participation data
- County of Sonoma – ARPA Funding Recommendations
- Sonoma County Economic Development Board
- CDFA Office of Farm to Fork
- California Dept of Public Health, California Health and Human Services Agency, California Dept of Food & Agriculture
- Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health (Sept 2022)

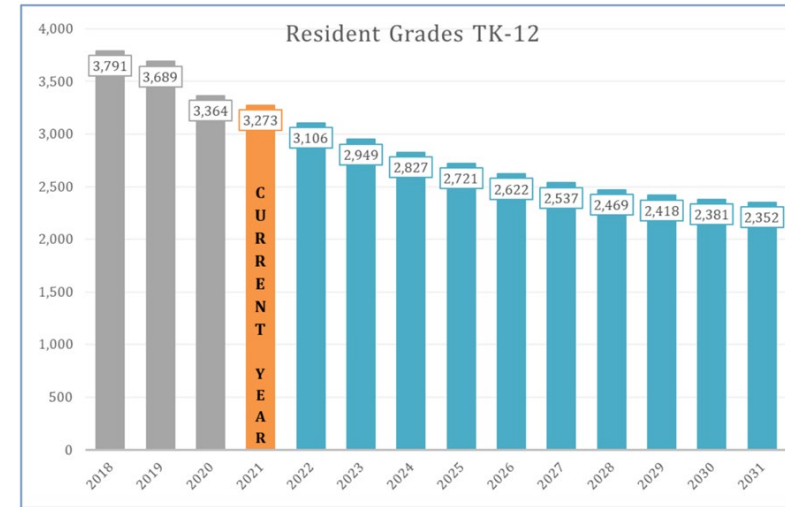
Appendix D: Additional Demographic Detail

Sonoma Valley population trends: Very slow growth, fewer children, more seniors



Source: US Census Bureau (www.Census.gov)

- Sonoma County’s population peaked in 2016 and then began to slowly decline. Most recently, Sonoma County population decreased from 484.7K in January 2021 to 482.4K in January 2022.

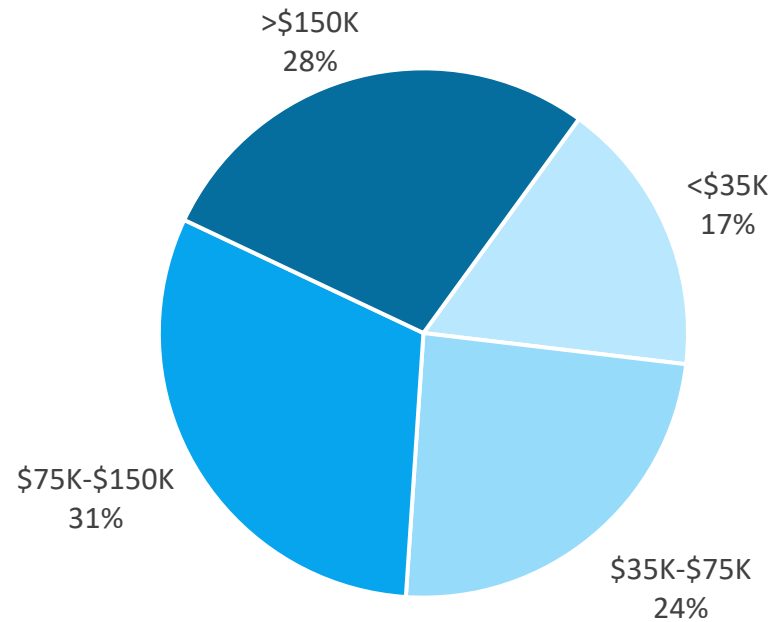


- Sonoma Valley’s population is projected to grow very slowly, increasing in total by less than half of one percent over the next five years. (Greatest unknown = Sonoma Development Center)
- SVUSD projects that the school age resident population will decrease by almost 20% by 2026, from 3,273 to 2,622.
- The percentage of the population age 65 and over is projected to increase by more than 9% from 2021 to 2026 (from 26.7% to 29.2%).

Sources: CA Dept of Finance, Sonoma EDB, Census/ACS, SVUSD

Sonoma Valley Household Income

- 17% have household income under \$35K (very low or extremely low income by Sonoma CDC housing thresholds)
- An estimated 25% of households that rent spend 50%+ of their household income on rent



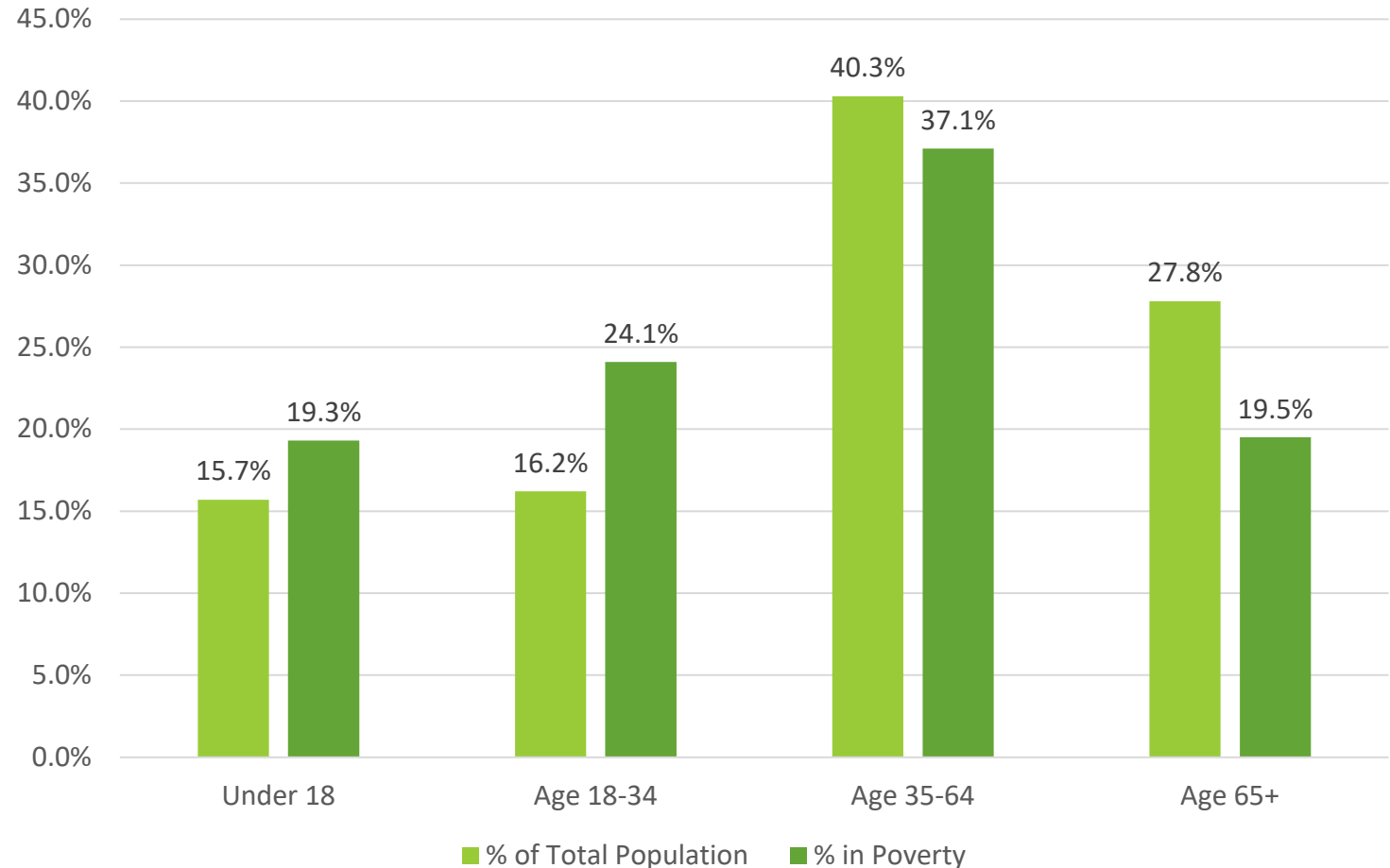
Sources: ESRI, Census ACS, Sonoma County website

Income limits for Sonoma County Community Development Commission assisted units.

Persons in Household	Acutely Low Income (15% Area Median Income)	Extremely Low Income	Very Low Income (50% Area Median Income)	60% Area Median Income	Low Income (80% Area Median Income)	Median Income (100% Area Median Income)
	Income)					
1	11,850	25,000	41,600	49,920	66,550	78,950
2	13,500	28,550	47,550	57,060	76,050	90,250
3	15,200	32,100	53,500	64,200	85,550	101,500
4	16,900	35,650	59,400	71,280	95,050	112,800

Sonoma Valley Residents Living Below the Poverty Level

Younger residents of Sonoma Valley are disproportionately living in poverty.



Source: American Community Survey 2020 ACS 5-year Estimates for 95476. Some data have high MOE (margin of error) and should be used only as general indicator.

Appendix E:

Measuring Food Insecurity: Other Tools & Data

1. **Local Survey** (fall of 2022) – In the survey conducted as part of this assessment, 18% of respondents indicated that their household “sometimes” or “often” did not have enough to eat in the past month. When asked if (with the food assistance received) they are getting enough food to stay healthy, a total of 18% answered “no”, “usually not” or “not sure”. However, this survey was targeted to those who are most likely to experience food insecurity (e.g., existing clients of food assistance and other social service programs, residents of low-income apartment complexes) rather than the general population.
2. **Census Weekly Household Pulse Survey** (2022, state level) – latest weekly data (December) show approx. 10% high food insecurity (“sometimes/often not enough to eat”) and 28% marginal food insecurity (“enough food, but not always the kind wanted”) for California statewide.
3. **Feeding America** (2020) – estimated a food insecurity rate (lack of access to enough food for a healthy, active life) of 9.3% for Sonoma County and 11.4% for the region served by Redwood Empire Food Bank.
4. **Sonoma County Hunger Index** (2018) – uses formula based on households with incomes under \$50K to identify a meal gap and estimate of number of food insecure.
5. **California Health Interview Survey data** (2009) – estimates 50.5% of household population with incomes of <200% of the federal poverty level as food insecure.

Appendix F: Survey Information

Food Insecurity Survey



10-question survey targeting Valley residents who are likely to be facing food insecurity

Partnered with local food assistance providers to survey current clients, with Burbank Housing to survey residents of affordable housing apartments

Conducted August/September 2022 using online and print versions in English and Spanish

314 total surveys completed: 64% in English, 36% in Spanish

The largest % of respondents reside in Agua Caliente/Fetters Hot Springs, followed by the City, Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano, and other neighborhoods *



Based on average reported household size, these 314 households include approx. 859 individuals

8% of respondents said that a member of their household was homeless sometime in the past year.

** Because this question was added after survey was launched, data represents only 40% of total respondents.*

Print version of survey: English

Sonoma Valley Food Assistance Survey

Food assistance providers are gathering information to help us better serve our Sonoma Valley community. This survey takes about 5 minutes to complete. We do not ask for your name or address. **Please take this survey only one time.** Your input will help us meet the needs of our community. Thank you.

1. Which best describes the food eaten by you (or in your household) in the past month?

- There was enough of the kinds of food that I (we) wanted to eat
- There was enough food, but not always the kinds of food that I (we) wanted to eat
- Sometimes did not have enough to eat
- Often did not have enough to eat
- Are there times of the month or the year that are the most difficult? _____

2. Which of these food assistance programs have you (or someone in your home) used in the past year?

- Groceries from Redwood Empire Food Bank (distributed at various locations)
- FISH food pantry
- Food pantry at St. Leo's or St. Francis Church
- Community Health Center's emergency food pantry
- Food for All / Comida Para Todos
- FISH grocery deliveries
- Meals from SOS at the Grange (Springs Community Hall)
- Meal deliveries from SOS
- Food Box deliveries from FEED Sonoma (Farm to Pantry)
- "Meals on Wheels" weekday deliveries
- Frozen meal packs from Council on Aging (pick up at Vintage House)
- "Soup's On" or "Supper's On" meals at Vintage House
- Rides to the grocery store from Vintage House
- CalFresh (also called SNAP)
- WIC (Women, Infant & Children nutrition program)
- School Breakfast and Lunch program
- Pandemic EBT

Which of these programs (or other kinds of help) do you rely on the most?

3. What kinds of things make it hard to get the food assistance you need? (Check all that apply).

- The days (or times of day) that food assistance is available don't work well for me
- Transportation problems make it hard to get to the places where food assistance is available, or limit how much I can carry
- I don't have a kitchen or a way to store or cook groceries
- Food items provided are often ones I don't like, or don't typically use
- I am embarrassed or uncomfortable using food assistance
- I am not sure what kind of help is available to me, and how or where to get it
- The application process for some programs is too difficult
- Food assistance providers often don't speak my language or understand my culture
- I am concerned about my privacy if a program asks for information about me
- I applied for a program but was turned down
- I don't want to take food if there are others that might need it more
- Nothing, it is not hard to get food assistance

(Please turn to next page to finish the survey)

Please tell us more about anything that makes it hard to get the food assistance you need.

4. What kinds of changes would you like to see to food assistance programs in Sonoma Valley? Please check all that apply, and use the comment box to give us details.

- Different foods
- More of one kind of food (such as vegetables, meat, oil)
- More choice in what foods I receive
- More prepared foods or meals
- Changes in how much food is provided
- Changes in which days or times of day that I can get food
- Changes in the places where I can get food assistance
- Make it easier to find out about what food assistance is available
- Help in applying for CalFresh, WIC, or other programs

What specific changes you would like to see?

5. With the food assistance you receive, do you feel that you are getting enough food to stay healthy?

Yes ___ Usually ___ Usually not ___ No ___ I don't know ___

6. Do you feel like you have the information you need about food assistance that is available to you?

Yes ___ I'm not sure ___ No, I would like more or better information ___

7. How do you prefer to get information about food assistance that is available? (check all that apply)

- Emailed messages or newsletters
- Text messages
- Website
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Phone number I can call
- Mailed information
- Talking with people at community organizations (for example, La Luz, Vintage House, my church)
- Flyers or posters at community locations
- Word of mouth from people I know
- Outreach from my child's school
- Local newspapers
- Other: _____

8. In what language(s) are you comfortable getting information about food assistance programs? (check all that apply)

- Talking in English
- Talking in Spanish
- Comfortable talking in English or Spanish
- Reading in English
- Reading in Spanish
- Prefer talking or reading in a language other than English or Spanish (which language? _____)

9. How many people live in your household?

Total number in household ___ Number of people under age 18 ___ Number of people age 65 or older ___

Please check here if you were homeless at any time in the past year ___

10. Is there anything else that would be helpful for food assistance providers to know, or suggestions that you have?

Thank you!

Print version of survey: Spanish

Encuesta de Asistencia Alimentaria del Valle de Sonoma

Los proveedores de asistencia alimentaria están recopilando información para ayudarnos a servir mejor a nuestra comunidad del Valle de Sonoma. Esta encuesta tarda unos 5 minutos en completarse. No le pedimos su nombre o dirección. **Por favor, responda esta encuesta solo una vez.** Su opinión nos ayudará a satisfacer las necesidades de nuestra comunidad. Gracias.

1. ¿Cuál describe mejor los alimentos consumidos en su hogar en el último mes?

- Había suficiente de los tipos de comida que yo (nosotros) queríamos comer
 - Había suficiente comida, pero no siempre el tipo de comida que yo (nosotros) queríamos comer
 - A veces no tenía suficiente para comer
 - A menudo no tenía suficiente para comer
- ¿Hay momentos del mes o del año que son los más difíciles? _____

2. ¿Cuál de estos programas de asistencia alimentaria usó usted (o alguien en su hogar) en el último año?

- Abarrotes del Banco de Comida Redwood Empire (distribuciones en varias localidades)
- Despensa de Comida FISH
- Despensa de la Iglesia San Leos o San Francis
- Despensa de Emergencia Clínica de Salud Comunitaria
- Comida Para Todos
- Entregas de Comida de FISH
- Comida en SOS en Springs Community Hall
- Entregas de Comida de SOS
- Cajas de comida de Farm to Pantry
- Entrega de Comida del Programa "Meals on Wheels"
- Paquetes de comida de County Council on Aging
- Almuerzos "Soup On"/Cenas "Supper's On" Vintage House
- Transporte a la tienda de Vintage
- CalFresh (also called SNAP)
- WIC (Women, Infant & Children nutrition program)
- School Breakfast and Lunch program
- Pandemic EBT

¿En cuál de estos programas (u otros tipos de ayuda) utiliza más?

3. ¿Qué tipo de cosas le dificultan obtener la asistencia alimentaria que necesita? (Por favor marque todos los que apliquen).

- Los días (u horario del día) en que la asistencia alimentaria está disponible no me funcionan bien
- Los problemas de transporte se me dificultan llegar a los lugares donde hay asistencia alimentaria disponible o limitan la cantidad que puedo llevar
- No tengo una cocina o una forma de almacenar o cocinar comestibles
- Los alimentos proporcionados son a menudo los que no me gustan o que normalmente no uso
- Estoy avergonzado o incómodo usando asistencia alimentaria
- No estoy seguro de qué tipo de ayuda hay disponible para mí, y cómo o dónde obtenerla
- El proceso de solicitud para algunos programas es demasiado difícil.
- Los proveedores de asistencia alimentaria a menudo no hablan mi idioma ni entienden mi cultura.
- Me preocupa mi privacidad si un programa solicita información sobre mí
- Solicité un programa pero fui rechazado
- No quiero llevar comida si hay otros que puedan necesitarla más
- Nada, no es difícil conseguir asistencia alimentaria

(Pase a la página siguiente para finalizar la encuesta)

Cuéntenos más sobre cualquier cosa que le dificulte obtener la asistencia alimentaria que necesita.

4. ¿Qué tipo de cambios le gustaría ver en los programas de asistencia alimentaria en el Valle de Sonoma? Utilice el cuadro de comentarios para darnos detalles.

- Comidas diferentes
- Más de un tipo de alimento (por ejemplo, verduras, carne, aceite)
- Más opciones en los alimentos que recibo
- Alimentos o comidas más preparados
- Cambios en la cantidad de comida que se proporciona
- Cambios en qué días u horarios del día que puedo obtener comida
- Cambios en los lugares donde puedo obtener asistencia alimentaria
- Facilitar la búsqueda de que asistencia alimentaria esta disponible para mí
- Ayuda para solicitar CalFresh, WIC u otros programas
- Otros cambios

Díganos qué cambios específicos le gustaría ver.

5. Con la asistencia alimentaria que recibe, ¿siente que está recibiendo suficiente comida para mantenerse saludable?

Sí ___ Generalmente ___ Usualmente no ___ No ___ No sé ___

6. ¿Siente que tiene la información que necesita sobre la asistencia alimentaria que está disponible para usted?

Sí ___ No estoy seguro ___ No, me gustaría más o mejor información ___

7. ¿Cómo preferiría obtener información sobre la asistencia alimentaria que está disponible? (Por favor marque todos los que apliquen)

- Mensajes enviados por correo electrónico o boletines
- Texto
- Sitio web
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Número de teléfono al que puedo llamar
- Información enviada por correo
- Hablando con personas en organizaciones comunitarias (por ejemplo, La Luz, Vintage House, mi iglesia)
- Volantes o carteles en lugares de la comunidad
- El boca a boca de gente que conozco
- Alcance de la escuela de mi hijo
- Periódicos locales
- Otros comentarios o sugerencias: _____

8. ¿En qué idioma(s) se siente cómodo recibiendo información sobre los programas de asistencia alimentaria? (Por favor marque todos los que apliquen)

- Hablando en inglés
- Hablando en español
- Cómo hablando en inglés o español
- Leer en inglés
- Leer en español
- Prefiere hablar o leer en un idioma que no sea inglés o español (¿cual idioma? _____)

9. ¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar? Número total en el hogar _____

Número de personas menores de 18 años _____ Número de personas de 65 años o más _____

Marque aquí si estuvo sin hogar en algún momento del año pasado _____

10. ¿Hay algo más que sería útil que los proveedores de asistencia alimentaria supieran, o sugerencias que pueda tener?

¡Gracias!

Surveys Completed				
	English	Spanish	Total	
WEB	61	97	158	
PRINT				
FISH	28	9	37	
SOS	30	8	38	
Sonoma Home Meals	34	0	34	
Burbank Housing (print)	41	0	41	
Other	6	0	6	
ALL SOURCES	200	114	314	

Notes: Burbank Housing used web link for family properties and print surveys for senior properties.

Web link distributed by Comida Para Todos, La Luz, Vintage House, SVCHC, and others.

For print, "Other" includes Vintage House, St. Francis pantry, and SVCHC.

SURVEY SUMMARY		ENGLISH	SPANISH	TOTAL
Q1: Which best describes the food eaten in your household in the past month?				
	There was enough of the kinds of food that I (we) wanted to eat	47%	32%	42%
	There was enough food, but not always the kinds of food that I (we) wanted to eat	36%	47%	40%
	Sometimes did not have enough to eat	14%	19%	15%
	Often did not have enough to eat	4%	3%	3%
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	191	107	298
Q2: Which of these food assistance programs have you (or someone in your home) used in the past year?				
	Groceries from Redwood Empire Food Bank (distributed at various locations)	45%	33%	41%
	FISH food pantry	26%	14%	21%
	Food pantry at St. Leo's or St. Francis Church	14%	35%	22%
	Community Health Center's emergency food pantry	7%	9%	7%
	Food for All / Comida Para Todos	7%	45%	21%
	FISH grocery deliveries	10%	5%	8%
	Meals from SOS at the Grange (Springs Community Hall)	16%	4%	12%
	Meal deliveries from SOS	9%	2%	7%
	Food Box deliveries from FEED Sonoma (Farm to Pantry)	9%	3%	7%
	"Meals on Wheels" weekday deliveries	20%	2%	13%
	Frozen meal packs from Council on Aging (pick up at Vintage House)	6%	1%	4%
	"Soup's On" or "Supper's On" meals from Vintage House	10%	4%	7%
	Rides to the grocery store from Vintage House	5%	0%	3%
	CalFresh (also called SNAP)	18%	21%	19%
	Pandemic EBT	11%	21%	14%
	WIC (Women, Infant & Children nutrition program)	3%	20%	9%
	School Breakfast and Lunch program	8%	16%	11%
	None of these	4%	6%	5%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	196	111	307
	AVERAGE # PROGRAMS USED PER RESPONDENT (excl. "none of these")	2.3	2.4	2.3

SURVEY SUMMARY		ENGLISH	SPANISH	TOTAL
Q3: What kinds of things make it hard to get the food assistance you need? (check all that apply)				
	Nothing, it is not hard to get food assistance.	29%	15%	24%
	The days (or times of day) that food assistance is available don't work well for me	13%	22%	17%
	Transportation problems make it hard to get to the places where food assistance is available, or limit how much I can carry	29%	21%	26%
	I don't have a kitchen or a way to store or cook groceries	11%	4%	8%
	Food items provided are often ones I don't like, or don't typically use	31%	13%	24%
	I am embarrassed or uncomfortable using food assistance	14%	4%	11%
	I am not sure what kind of help is available to me, and how or where to get it	18%	21%	19%
	The application process for some programs is too difficult	9%	12%	10%
	Food assistance providers often don't speak my language or understand my culture	3%	4%	3%
	I am concerned about my privacy if a program asks for information about me	12%	8%	10%
	I applied for a program but was turned down	4%	4%	4%
	I don't want to take food if there are others that might need it more	20%	17%	19%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	180	104	284
Q4: What kinds of changes would you like to see to food assistance programs in Sonoma Valley? (check all that apply)				
	Different foods	36%	31%	34%
	More of one kind of food (such as vegetables, meat, oil)	34%	59%	44%
	More choice in what foods I receive	41%	23%	33%
	More prepared foods or meals	23%	10%	18%
	Changes in how much food is provided	12%	7%	10%
	Changes in which days or times of day that I can get food	20%	15%	18%
	Changes in the places where I can get food assistance	10%	11%	10%
	Make it easier to find out about what food assistance is available to me	23%	14%	19%
	Help in applying for Calfresh, WIC, or other programs	15%	14%	14%
	Other changes	1%	3%	2%
	No changes	9%	7%	8%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	155	111	266

SURVEY SUMMARY		ENGLISH	SPANISH	TOTAL
Q5: With the food assistance you receive, do you feel that you are getting enough food to stay healthy?				
	Yes	55%	46%	52%
	Usually	28%	34%	30%
	Usually Not	9%	7%	8%
	No	5%	5%	5%
	I don't know	3%	8%	5%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	100%	100%	100%
Q6: Do you feel like you have the information you need about food assistance that is available to you?				
	Yes	69%	67%	68%
	I'm not sure	19%	26%	22%
	No, I would like more or better information	12%	7%	10%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	100%	100%	100%
Q7: How would you prefer to get information about food assistance that is available? (check all that apply)				
	Emailed messages or newsletters	30%	23%	27%
	Text	33%	77%	50%
	Website	16%	10%	14%
	Facebook	12%	26%	17%
	Instagram	3%	3%	3%
	Phone number I can call	31%	21%	27%
	Mailed information	26%	13%	21%
	Flyers or posters at community locations	26%	23%	25%
	Word of mouth from people I know	23%	14%	19%
	Outreach from my child's school	6%	13%	8%
	Local newspapers	10%	4%	8%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	181	111	292

SURVEY SUMMARY		ENGLISH	SPANISH	TOTAL
Q8: In what language(s) are you comfortable getting information about food assistance programs? (Please check all that apply)				
	Talking in English	91%	9%	61%
	Talking in Spanish	9%	86%	37%
	Comfortable talking in English or Spanish	6%	14%	9%
	Reading in English	38%	4%	26%
	Reading in Spanish	5%	31%	15%
	Prefer talking or reading in a language other than English or Spanish	1%	0%	1%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	191	112	303
Q9: Please check any that apply:				
	My household includes someone under age 18	30%	87%	53%
	My household includes someone age 65 or older	76%	17%	52%
	My household has someone who was homeless sometime in the past year	9%	6%	8%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	122	83	205
	Average household size of respondents:	1.9	4.2	2.6
	<i># who answered this question</i>	155	68	223
Q10: Which neighborhood do you live in? (note: added to online survey after launch; not asked of all respondents)				
	Glen Ellen	4%	5%	5%
	Agua Caliente/Fetters Hot Springs	13%	35%	27%
	Boyes Hot Springs	19%	18%	18%
	El Verano	19%	9%	13%
	City of Sonoma	36%	28%	31%
	Vineburg/Schellville	4%	1%	2%
	Temelec	0%	0%	0%
	Other (please specify neighborhood)	4%	4%	4%
	<i># who answered this question</i>	47	79	126

Additional Feedback on Challenges: Representative Comments

Schedule/Hours

- *Often am working out of the area on applicable days.*
- *The times they are distributing it, I'm working.*
- *Sonoma needs accessible food for everyone on Saturday since many of us work and can't go during the week*
- *Extend hours*

Transportation/Mobility

- *I don't drive and I can't go for food where they give it*
- *Distance to home / transportation costs*
- *Not having reliable vehicle/no car*
- *My surgeries prevent driving and no one can pick up for me.*
- *Am using a walker, therefore, limitations are upon me.*
- *Limit on how much I can carry.*
- *Transportation is an issue for many...Having said that, extended hours would be helpful in accessing all resources available.*

Most Difficult Times of Month or Year

- *Winter, I'm in the trades and the holidays*
- *End of month tends to have less funds*
- *The end of the month since I get my social security on the 3rd every month*
- *In December when the electricity bill goes up more because we use the gas heater to keep our home warm.*
- *Yes, at the end of the month, because we must sacrifice expenses to be able to pay the rent*
- *December and January when work goes down a lot*
- *Usually in winter, my husband's work goes down, but now everything is very expensive.*
- *If, from November to March, work is lowered a lot.*

Additional Feedback on Challenges: Representative Comments

Medical/Special Needs

- *I am diabetic and there are not many things that I can eat in the food basket.*
- *I had to stop Meals on Wheels [SHM] because my BP was high. I need a no or low salt alternative.*
- *Have a day to distribute food for people with diabetes or other diseases*
- *I am just one person and not able to eat so much of one item. Also often foods have a high sugar content.*
- *Have dentures/bad teeth/need soft foods*
- *I have stage 3 kidney disease and have to limit salt.*
- *Age 92 – arthritis – can't open cans.*

Other Barriers/Suggestions

- *I don't know that we are eligible. We are not low income but we're having an awfully hard time making ends meet.*
- *I have a very small fridge, can't store too much.*
- *I don't know much about technology.*
- *If ask for info about me, keep it brief*
- *Sometimes I couldn't connect to the Internet to fill out the food application for everyone, I have to walk for food and sometimes people treat us badly, I know they are volunteers, but some are not so kind*
- *Create more awareness among the volunteers who distribute food, because if we are going to ask for food it is because we need it and they should not make us feel bad about it.*

Appendix G: Current print & online resources for Sonoma Valley Food Assistance

Source	Contact info	About/Info Sources/Status
Food Finder and Food Connections Resource Center at Redwood Empire Food Bank	getfood.refb.org 707-523-7903	REFB also produces flyer for Sonoma Valley (East County) listing REFB food distributions by day and location. Food Finder has partial info for SV.
2-1-1 Sonoma County program of United Way of the Wine Country	211sonoma.org Dial 211 Text your zip code to 898211	Has partial info for Sonoma Valley.
“Text FOOD” - Justicewise (project of Inquiring Systems nonprofit)	Text FOOD or COMIDA to 707-353-3882 Program info at justicewise.org	Automated systems texts listings for Meals or Groceries in English and Spanish. Partial info for SV.
Food Resources page at YWCA Sonoma County website	ywcasc.org/community-resources/food-resources/	Limited info for Sonoma Valley
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa website	srcharities.org/food	Offices in Santa Rosa. Website has a food assistance search tool with a limited database; no current info for SV
Resources pages at FISH, SVCHC, and La Luz	friendsinsonomahelping.org (“More Resources”) svchc.org/community-resources/	La Luz does not have listings or links but staff provides resource referrals & Calfresh assistance.
County of Sonoma City of Sonoma	sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/human-services ; sonomaseniorresourceguide.org	County website and County Area Agency on Aging have limited info for SV. City of Sonoma website had a Food Assistance Calendar at COVID peak; now inactive.
Print guide to “Sonoma County Food Resources” prepared by Partnership Health Plan	partnershiphp.org/Community/Documents/Sonoma/Sonoma_Food.pdf	Nonprofit community health care org that contracts with State to administer MediCal benefits through local care providers. Limited info for SV.

Appendix H: Inventory of Food Assistance Organizations and Resources

- Program Availability by Day and Time
- Facilities by Organization
- Food Sources by Organization
- Volunteers by Organization

Program Availability by Day and Time (Pick-Up and On-Site Programs only)

	Morning (8:30 - 11 am)	Midday (11 am – 3 pm)	Afternoon/Eve (after 3 pm)
MON	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) CoA 5-meal pack pickup at Vintage	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) FISH Food Pantry (1:30 -3pm) REFB @ Larson Park (2-3 pm, 2x/mo) Vintage House Sandwich Monday	
TUE	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) REFB @ St. Leo's (8:30 – 9:30 am, weekly) REFB @ Vintage House (8:30-9:30 am. 1x/mo)	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) FISH Food Pantry (1:30 -3pm) St. Francis Food Pantry (1-2:30pm) CoA Community Table meal at Oak Ridge Sr. Apts REFB @ Village Green II Apts, Sonoma Creek Sr Housing, Oak Ridge Sr Apts, and FAHA Manor Apts (1:30-2:30 pm, 1x/mo at each senior housing site)	REFB @ 1 st Congregational (5-6pm, 2x/mo) REFB @ St. Patrick's Kenwood (5-6 pm, 2x/mo)
WED	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm)	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) St. Francis Food Pantry (1-2:30pm) St. Leo's Food Pantry (11:30-12:30pm)	Vintage House – Supper's On
THU	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm)	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) FISH Food Pantry (1:30 -3pm) St. Francis Food Pantry (1-2:30pm) St. Leo's Food Pantry (11:30-12:30pm) Seventh Day Adventist Church Pantry (12-1pm)	
FRI	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) REFB @ Craig Ave Baptist(8:30-9:30am, 2x/mo) REFB @ SVCHC (9 – 10am, 2x/mo) REFB @ Jack London Village (9:30-10:30 am, 2x/mo)	SOS Hot Meals (9am-1pm) FISH Food Pantry (1:30 -3pm) St. Francis Food Pantry (1-2:30pm) St. Leo's Food Pantry (11:30-12:30pm) Vintage House Soup's On	
M-F	SVUSD School Breakfast and Lunch (Daily), SVCHC Emergency Pantry (as needed)		

Not shown: Delivery programs including FFA/Comida Para Todos, SHM/Meals on Wheels, FISH delivery, SOS delivery; HAS Sunday dinners.

Facilities by Organization

Organization	Current Facilities	Assets/Challenges
FISH	Largest pantry in Valley with approx. 500- 600 total sq ft. Good cold storage. Very small office space.	Centrally located. Limited parking. Although largest pantry in Valley, space limited for “shopping” model.
St. Leo’s	Medium-sized pantry with limited cold storage.	Provide use of church parking lot for large-scale REFB sorting & distribution 1x/week.
St. Francis	Small pantry with good refrigeration/freezer space but very limited storage/total space	No access for larger REFB truck (parking lot is used by school). Street parking only.
SOS	Leased facilities at Springs Community Hall (weekdays) with large commercial kitchen and meal distribution space	M-F use only. No long-term lease. Limited parking
Sonoma Home Meals	Leased space at Trinity Episcopal Church (mornings) is under major remodel; sharing space with SOS kitchen currently.	No office space.
Comida Para Todos	Small (approx. 10x10’) storage area at United Methodist Church + one storage unit + storage by FRUTA.	Pack boxes in church parking lot for delivery. Overnight storage for perishable items provided by Paul’s Produce.
Vintage House	Commercial kitchen, large on-site dining facilities. Also serves as meal pickup and congregate dining site for Council on Aging.	Multi-use facility.
SVUSD	Central warehouse with shelving & cold storage; near capacity.	No central kitchen; limits ability for options other than pre-made foods (must train 10 school sites on each recipe).
REFB	Central warehouse in Santa Rosa where providers can shop, or will deliver with 400 lb minimum.	No local storage or distribution hub. Partners with local organizations as distribution hubs.

Other commercial kitchens (nonprofit) in Sonoma Valley: Sonoma Community Center, Veterans Hall (County), Teen Services.



FISH Pantry



**St. Francis
Pantry**



St. Leo's Pantry

Springs Community Hall Kitchen (SOS; currently sharing with Sonoma Home Meals)



Food Sources by Organization

Organization	Purchased Food	Donated & Recovered Food
FISH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REFB* Dollar Store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeway, Whole Foods Paul's Produce, Benziger Farm, Petaluma Farm Community Food Drives (e.g. Scouts)
St. Leo's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REFB* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-10% of pantry food is donated by parishioners
St. Francis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grocery Outlet – Napa (at discount) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole Foods (primarily), Safeway
SOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costco Bishops Storehouse (LDS Church – discounted or free) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm to Pantry / Local farms (Haystack, Little Paradise, Benziger) Local caterers (Delicious Dish, Elaine Bell, etc.) Sonoma Market (via Sonoma Home Meals)
Comida Para Todos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FRUTA (ice cream shop owner in Petaluma) coordinates purchasing/shipping/storage La Favorita (COVID emergency boxes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm to Pantry/FEED Sonoma Help a Mother Out (diapers) Local farms
Sonoma Home Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sonoma Market (at discount) REFB* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sonoma Market (50% of total; redistributes to SOS and other organizations)
Vintage House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase ingredients; chefs are volunteers Sometimes will purchase soup from local restaurants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional donations from Sweetwater (lettuce), Sonoma Food Runners (Benziger Farm)
SVCHC Emergency Pantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REFB* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Leo's Pantry shares with SVCHC
Farm to Pantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEED Cooperative of 80 farmers (under ARPA grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gleaned from local farms & properties (Haystack & others)

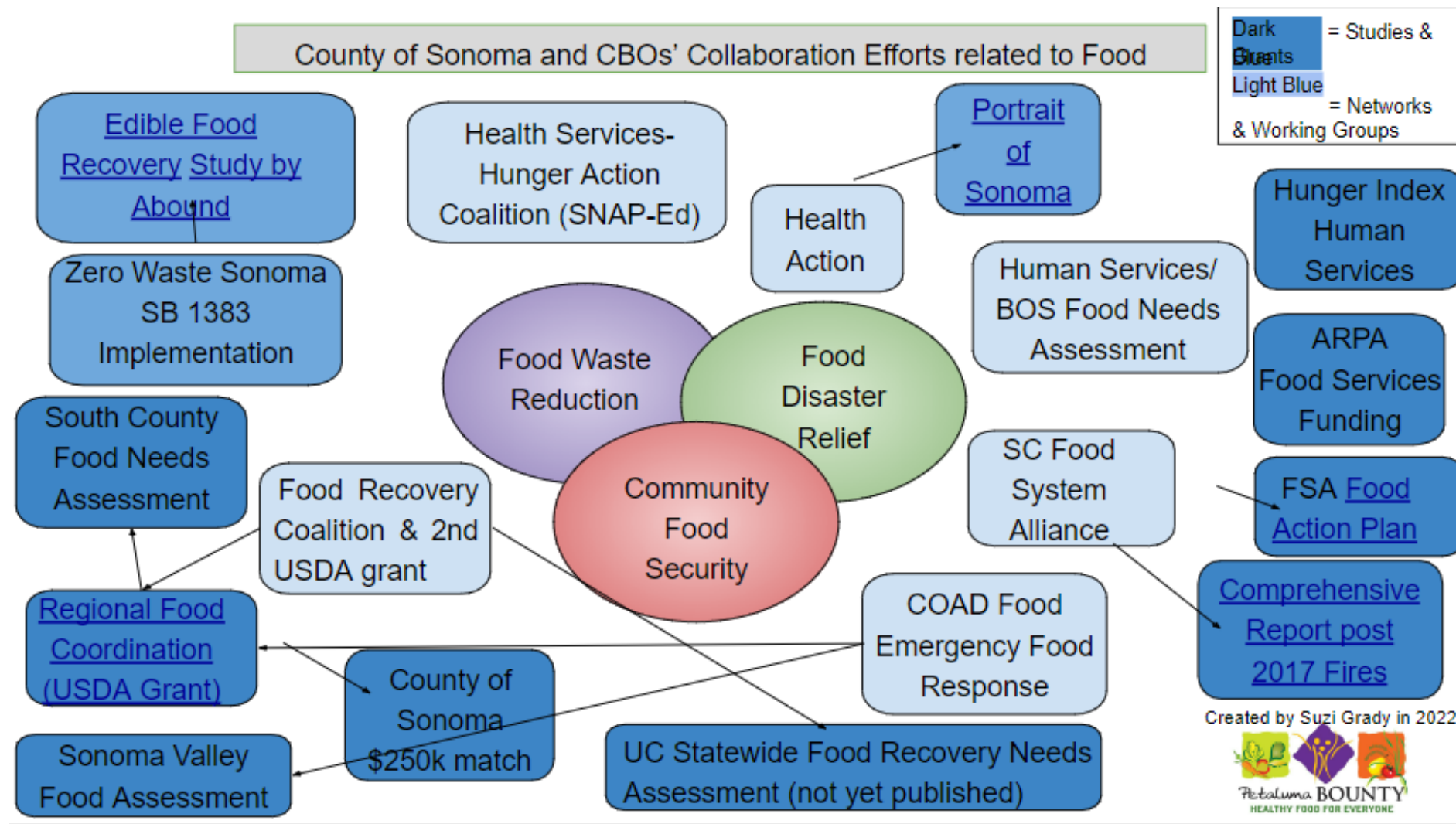
*Some REFB foods are provided at no charge; for other items providers are charged a few cents per pound - but can be waived.

Volunteers by Organization

Organization	Number of Food Program Volunteers
REFB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 140 total volunteers in Sonoma Valley
FISH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 total volunteers in food program, includes 8 rotating drivers doing food pickups. Additional volunteers for annual holiday food basket program.
Comida Para Todos/Food For All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50-60 total volunteers including 12 on leadership team and 25 drivers. Almost all speak Spanish; some have limited English.
SOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35 active kitchen volunteers (4-5 per day), <u>plus</u> 30-35 for twice weekly deliveries. Some are bilingual.
Sonoma Home Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 total volunteers including up to 50 for cooking, gleaning, pickup; plus 30 driving volunteers (different team each day).
Vintage House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx 40 (shopping assistance, rides, servers at Soup's On and Supper's On)
St. Leo's Pantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30-45 regular volunteers. Many are bilingual.
St. Francis Pantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-21 regular volunteers
Farm to Pantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 volunteers in Sonoma Valley (500 countywide)

Total Volunteers: 500+

Appendix I: Efforts in Sonoma County Related to Food Security



Source: Petaluma Bounty

