



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

DARCIE ANTLE
CLERK OF THE BOARD

501 Low Gap Rd. Room 1010
Ukiah, CA 95482

Email: bos@mendocinocounty.gov
Website: www.mendocinocounty.gov

Office: (707) 463-4221
Fax: (707) 463-5649

May 29, 2024

Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Chair
Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Sub. No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 6720
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Budget Sub. No. 2
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Save Market Match: Keep California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) in the FY 2024/25 Budget

Dear Budget Chairs,

On behalf of Mendocino County, we write to express our respectful opposition to the Governor's proposed \$33.2 million reduction in the CDFA's California Nutrition Incentives Program (CNIP) three-year \$35 million budget in his 2024 California budget proposal. The County of Mendocino joins the over 160-strong Save Market Match Coalition to advocate to retain state funding to continue the Market Match program, which provides access to fresh fruit and vegetable to low-income Californians.

With California's current budget crisis, we understand that tough decisions must be made. However, with California's high cost of living, safety net programs must be prioritized, including CNIP, which funds Market Match. Market Match is a 15-year-old program that matches CalFresh's spending dollar-for-dollar (up to a daily max) for fresh food at the local level and drives health equity and economic development in rural areas. Further, CNIP funds are matched by federal grant dollars. Since 2017, CNIP funding has brought more than \$30 million in federal match funds into California from the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).

The Market Match Program is currently the most extensive CNIP program, matching federal nutrition assistance benefits, like CalFresh and WIC, at farmers' markets and other California farm-direct sites. Market Match is available at 293 sites, spanning 52 counties, 37 Senate districts, and 66 Assembly

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

GLENN MCGOURTY
First District

MAUREEN MULHEREN
Second District

JOHN HASCHAK
Third District

DAN GJERDE
Fourth District

TED WILLIAMS
Fifth District

districts. These 293 active Market Match sites are run by 57 community-based organizations and farmers' market operators.

In 2024, CNIP is expected to draw approximately \$13 million in matching federal dollars to California through Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) to support Market Match and other nutrition incentive programs. The program is a win-win-win: increasing the spending power of low-income Californians, enhancing access to fresh, healthy produce and food, and reinvesting state and federal dollars into California's small and mid-sized farms and rural communities.

In 2022, the Market Match and CalFresh programs combined saw low-income shoppers spending a total of \$19.5 million, resulting in 630,000 Market Match transactions, a 390% increase from 2019. This remarkable surge in spending underscores the need for such programs. In Mendocino County alone, farmer's markets recorded \$107,784 in market match spending in 2023. A survey revealed that 73% of customers could increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables they bought each week. 85% reported purchasing different kinds of fruits and vegetables, and 71% said that their family's health improved due to Market Match.

Market Match not only supports participants in accessing fresh, healthy foods but also injects money into the pockets of California's small- and mid-sized farmers. According to the USDA, every \$1 of SNAP spending generates up to \$1.79 of additional economic activity. 84% of farmers participating in the program report selling more fruits and vegetables, and 37% report expanding their operations with new hires, equipment, acreage, and crops.

Market Match has invested over a decade in building a robust public-private partnership that effectively operates at the local level across the state. This long-term commitment has not only provided immediate benefits to low-income Californians and small and mid-sized farmers but has also laid the groundwork for a healthier, more sustainable future. A one-year gap in funding would not only disrupt critical infrastructure but also lead to the layoff of many long-term program operators in grassroots organizations, jeopardize the long-term benefits, and leave federal match dollars on the table for other states.

For the above reasons, the County of Mendocino respectfully requests the protection of the \$33.2 million previously approved for the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP).

Sincerely,



Maureen Mulheren, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Jim Wood, 2nd District
The Honorable Mike McGuire, 2nd District