

Ultra-Processed Foods and Dairy: Policies, Trends, and Opportunities



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DairyCouncilofCA.org



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About Us

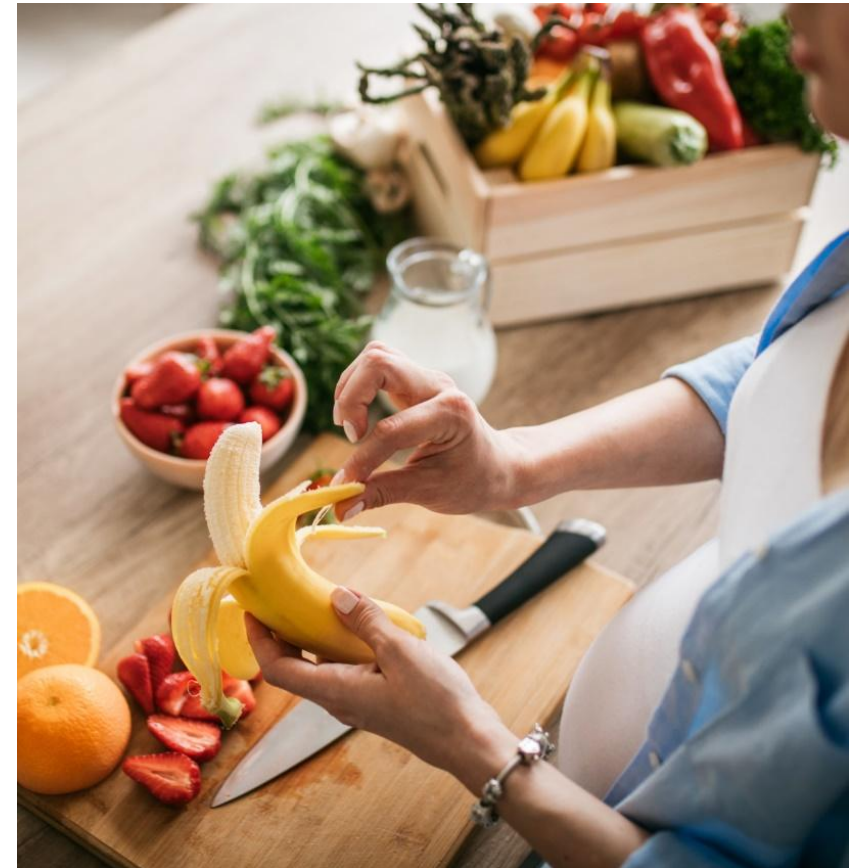


Our Vision

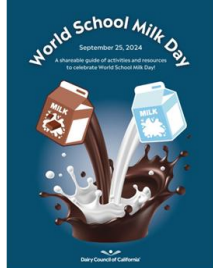
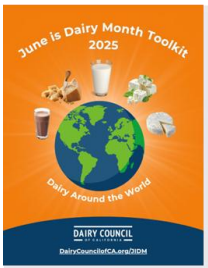
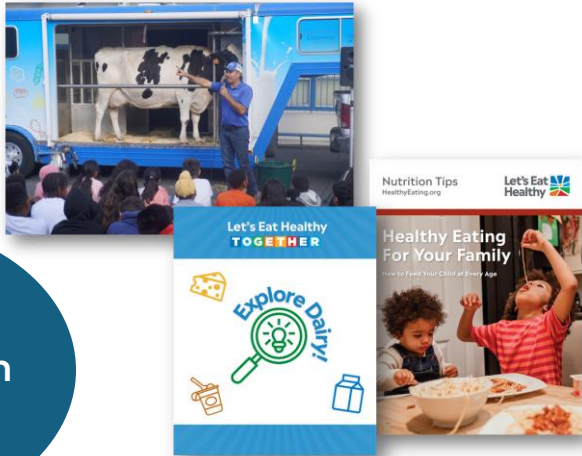
Milk and dairy are globally accepted as an essential solution to achieve nutrition security and sustainable food systems.

Our Cause

Elevating the health of children and communities in California by promoting lifelong healthy eating patterns that include milk and dairy foods.



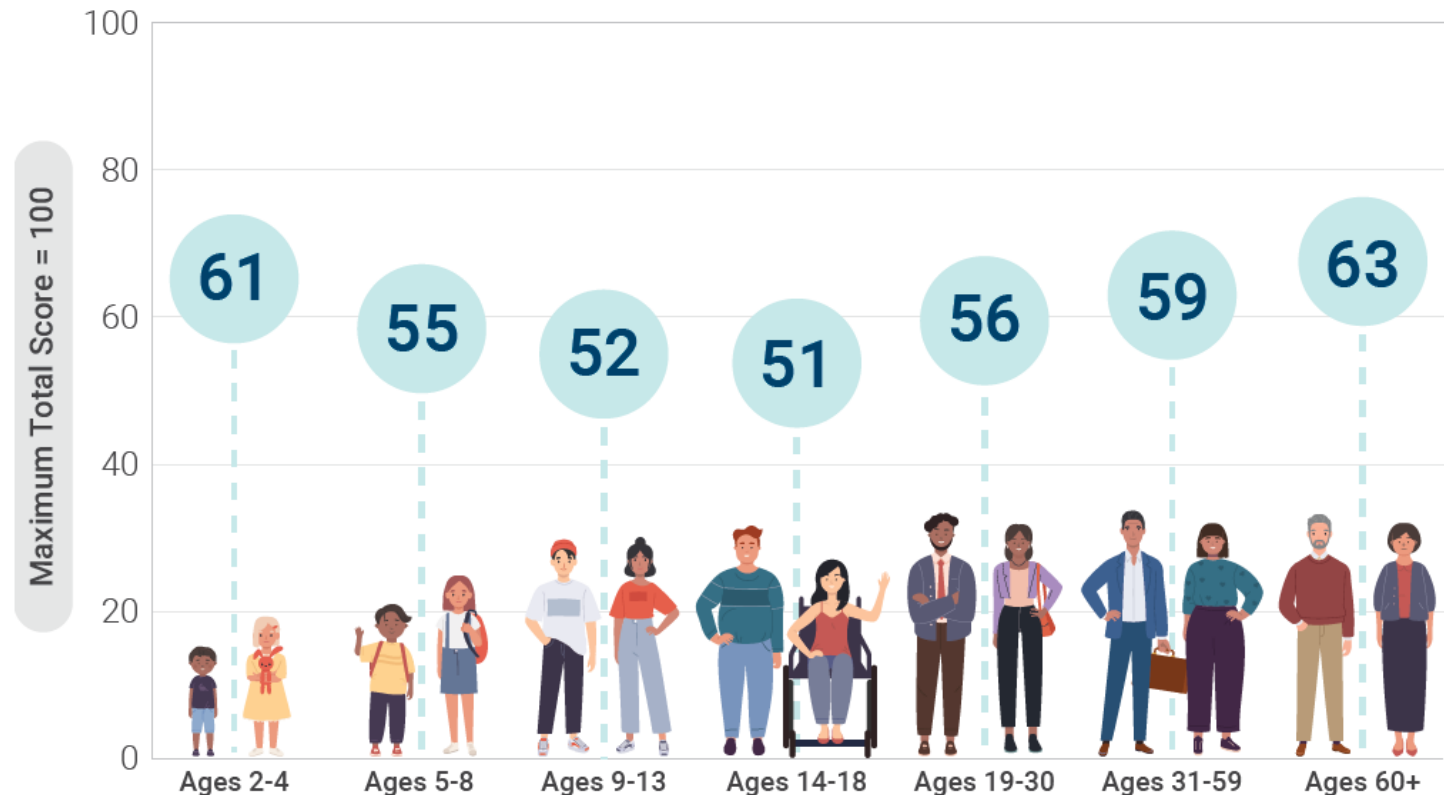
Core Strategies



Most Americans Do Not Meet Dietary Recommendations



Adherence of the U.S. Population to the *Dietary Guidelines* Across Life Stages, as Measured by Average Total Healthy Eating Index-2015 Scores

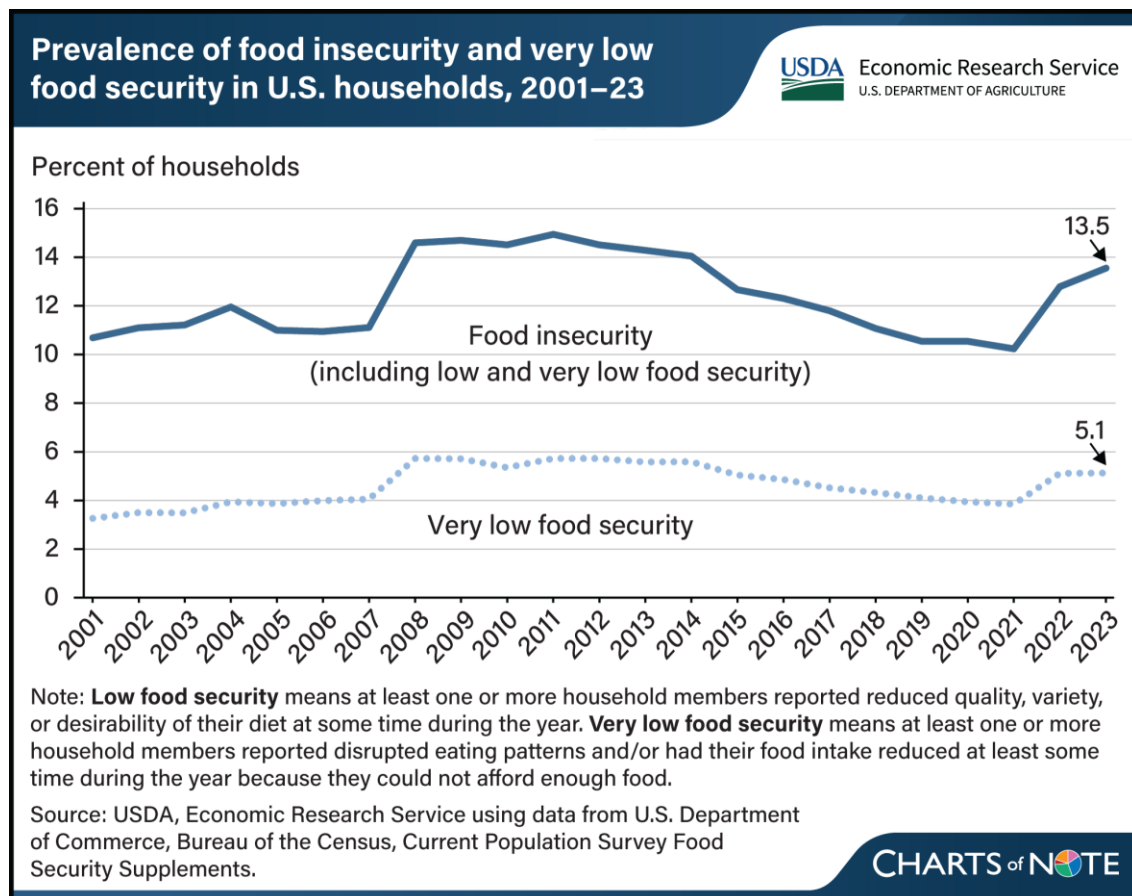


NOTE: HEI-2015 total scores are out of 100 possible points. A score of 100 indicates that recommendations on average were met or exceeded. A higher total score indicates a higher quality diet.

Data Source: Analysis of What We Eat in America, NHANES 2015-2016, ages 2 and older, day 1 dietary intake data, weighted.



Food Insecurity on the Rise



In California, 4,915,450 people are facing hunger - and of them 1,437,250 are children.

1 in 8 people



face hunger.

1 in 6

children

face hunger.

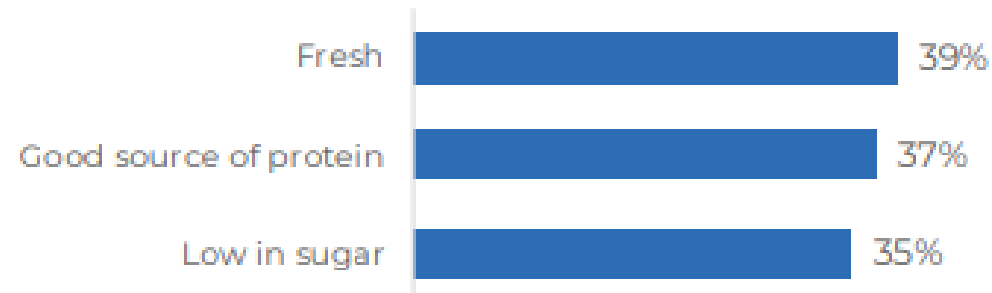
In 2023, CA Food Banks delivered almost

**900 million
pounds of food**

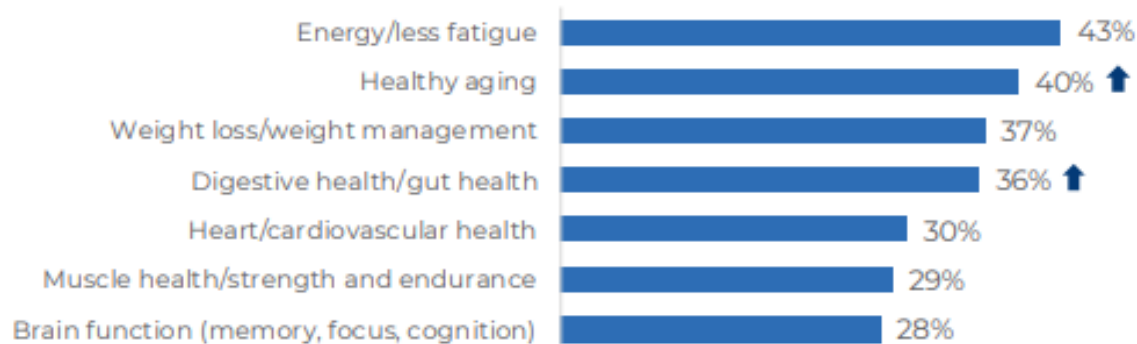
49.2%
of households receiving
SNAP benefits have
children

Health Behaviors & Food Choices

Definition of Healthy Food (Top Choices)



Health Benefits Sought from Food/Beverages/Nutrients

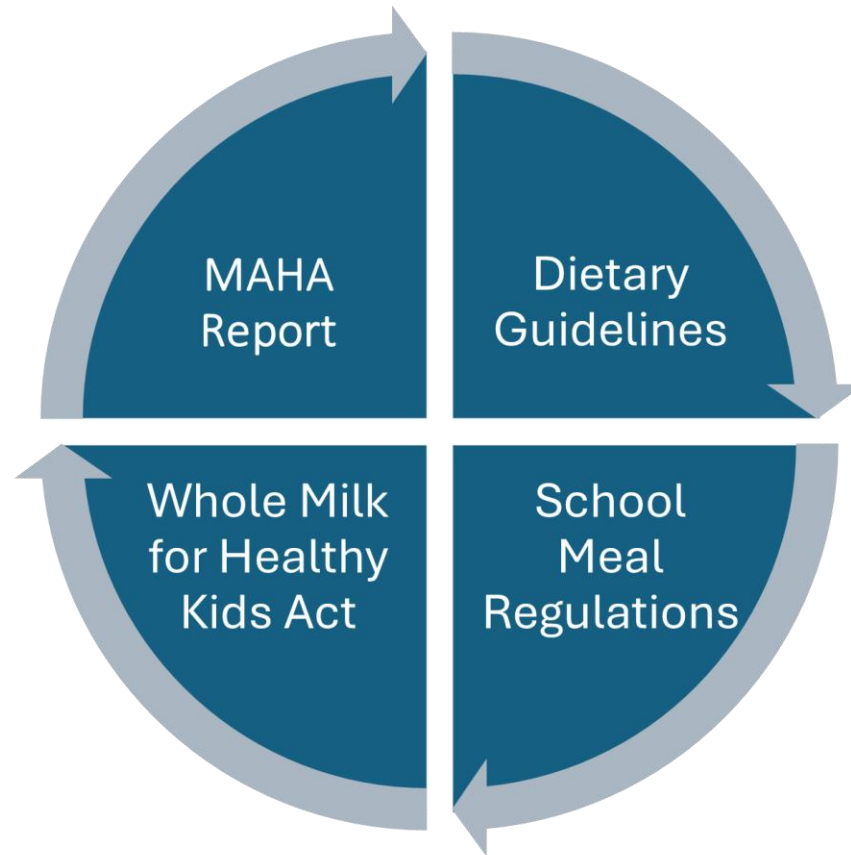
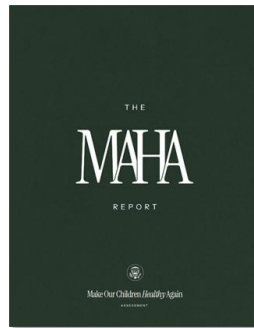


- Top three criteria for healthy food:
 - Fresh
 - Good source of protein
 - Low in sugar
- 71% of people prefer to get protein from food sources.
- Benefits sought from food:
 - Energy
 - Healthy aging
 - Weight management
 - Digestive health

Evolving Nutrition Policy Landscape



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Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- Release expected this summer
 - May differ significantly from scientific report released in January
 - May address Ultra processed foods
- **Opportunity for whole milk and dairy foods**
- Will revamp future nutrition education + messaging
- Shapes food and nutrition assistance programs like WIC, School Meals, SNAP-Ed, etc.



Whole Milk Act

- Strong bipartisan support
- Passed in the House
- Passed out of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry in Senate
- Bill allows for more choices in milk type at school
 - CA may not change their offerings
- Differing expert opinions but garnering support



Dariush Mozaffarian, MD, PhD
Tufts University

“There’s really no strong evidence to report that low-fat dairy is healthier than whole-fat dairy.”



Darlena Birch, RD
National WIC Association

Future committees should continue examining the impact of higher-fat dairy on health outcomes



Kelly Horton, MS, RDN
Senior Vice President, Public Policy and Government Relations

“Most children already consume too much saturated fat, and this change their daily nutrition,”



Schools Foods are the Richest Source of Dairy in Children's Diets

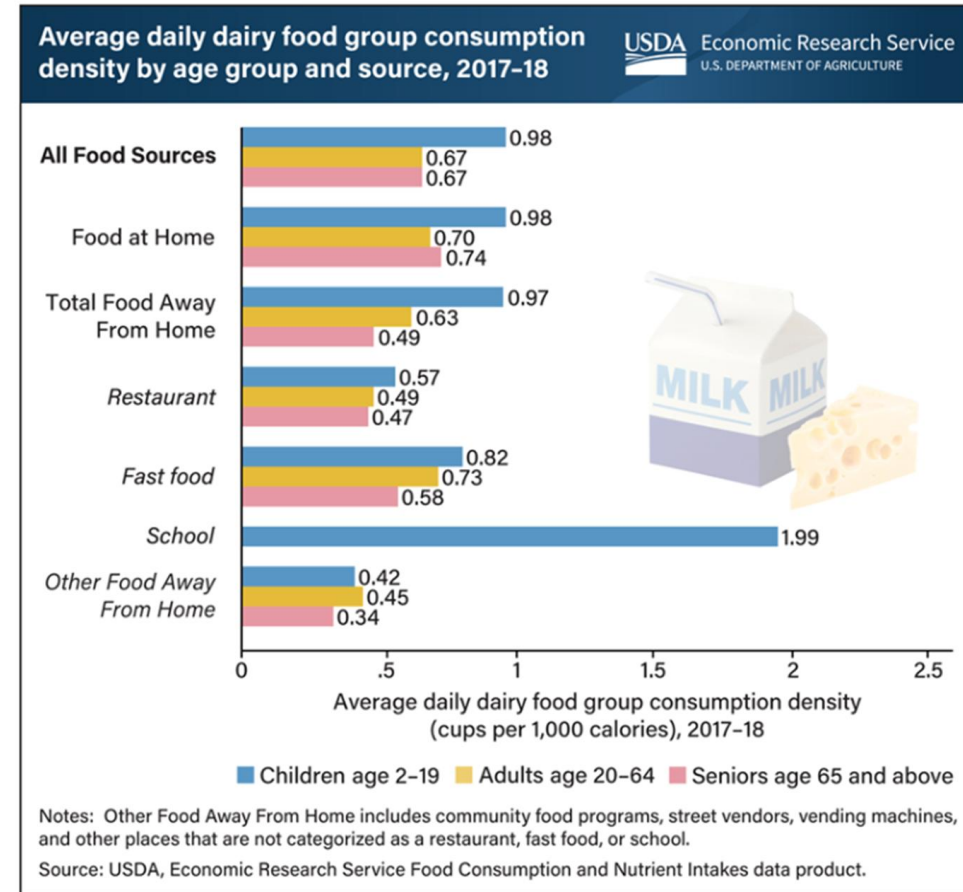


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School meals provide:

- 77% of total milk consumption and
- 70% of total dairy consumption for children ages 5-18* from low-income families.



*Cullen KW, Chen TA. [The contribution of the USDA school breakfast and lunch program meals to student daily dietary intake](#). *Prev Med Rep*. 2016;5:82-85.

Ultra Processed Foods

- Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Movement
- Approximately 100 bills nationwide currently targeting ultra processed food restrictions
 - Bipartisan support
 - School Meals are a primary target for change
- CA a leader in school food transformation and stricter food guidelines



MAHA Report Highlights

- Nutrition, sedentary lifestyle, mental health issues related to technology use, exposure to environmental chemicals and overmedication framed as a central drivers of childhood chronic diseases.
- Dairy, including whole fat options, is positively represented as a whole food.
- Promotes increased consumption of whole foods.
- Identifies excessive consumption of UPF and food additives as detrimental to childhood health.
- The food and beverage industry is heavily critiqued for reportedly influencing nutrition research and UPFs in the U.S. food supply.



Jan 3, 2025



Governor Newsom issues executive order to crack down on ultra-processed foods and further investigate food dyes

What you need to know: Governor Newsom issued an executive order today directing state agencies to recommend potential actions to limit the harms associated with "ultra-processed foods" and food ingredients that pose a health risk to individuals.

California Advances First-in-the-Nation Legislation To Phase Out Harmful Ultra-Processed Foods from School Meals

Bipartisan Legislation Would Establish First-Ever Statutory Definition of Ultra-Processed Foods, Ok Phasing Out "Particularly Harmful" Products

California governor signs landmark legislation prohibiting six artificial dyes from the food served at public schools

The first-in-the-nation law will ban Red 40 and five other synthetic colors that have been linked to behavioral issues.



8

9

10

11

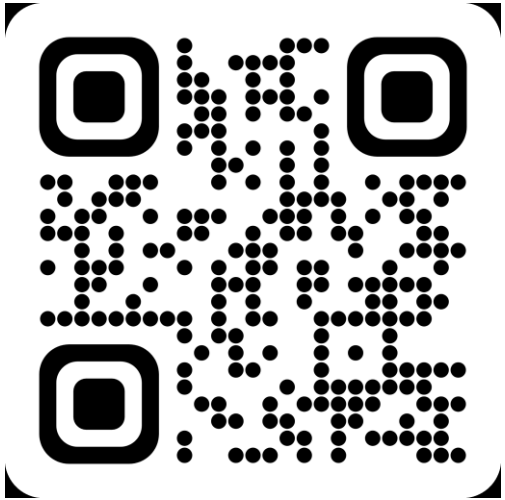
CA AB 1264: Harmful Ultra processed foods would be removed from school lunches



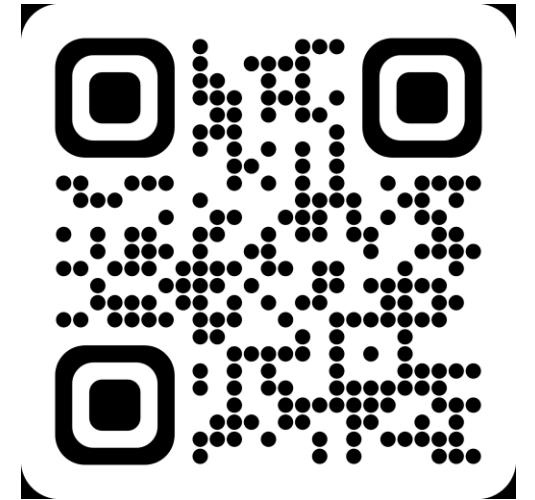
- Passed in House
- Next step to pass in Senate and be signed by governor
- The legislation requires that the first step, defining which ultra processed foods are most detrimental to human health, be completed by July 1, 2026.

Where Do We Go From Here?

- Educate on the benefits of food processing
- Consensus definition of UPF that is science-based
- Recommend further research on UPF and food additives
- Evaluate the impacts of UPF policy on dairy foods and federal assistance programs



**Ultra-Processed
Foods: Evaluating
Nutrition Science
and Diet Quality**



**IDF Fact Sheet: The
Benefits of
Processing Dairy**

Other Federal Nutrition Legislation



SNAP restrictions at state level approved for the first time

- Six states approved primarily focused on soda/candy/energy drinks
- Iowa's is most extensive (all taxable items defined by the Iowa IRS)
- Go into effect Jan 1, 2026

Tax Bill (Big Beautiful Bill) impacts several nutrition and health programs

- SNAP benefit eligibility shifts
- Thrifty Food Plan freezes
- SNAP-Ed elimination (known as CalFresh Healthy Living in CA)
- Increased costs to states to administer the programs
- Latinos would be most impacted by SNAP reductions in CA

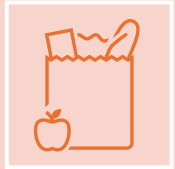
Potential Challenges



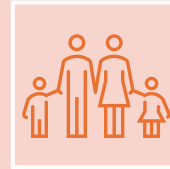
Ultra process definition could impact added sugar, sodium and additives in dairy foods (flavored milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream)



Potentially stricter school meal rules changing allowable products



Less buying power for SNAP and low-income customers



Families experience food insecurity and hunger

Opportunities for Dairy

Dairy foods are considered whole foods

Consumers are looking for fresh, high protein and low sugar products—which dairy delivers

More flexibility for whole-fat milk and dairy in schools and federal guidelines

Expand Food as Medicine programs to include dairy

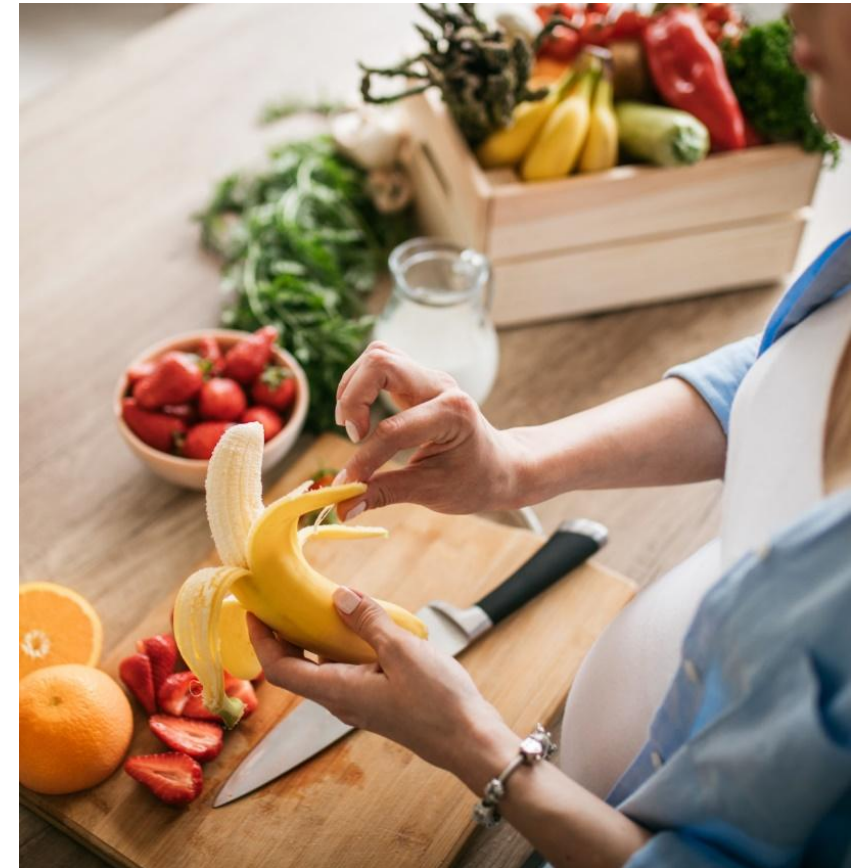
Educate on the benefits of dairy processing techniques

Advocate for evidence-based decisions related to the definition of ultra processed foods

Reformulate to meet consumers and policymakers needs

Promote the affordability and versatility of dairy to shoppers to help stretch limited food dollars

Expand SNAP incentive programs like +Add Milk





Questions?

Presenting



LOOK FOR THE SEAL.
RealCaliforniaMilk.com



GE VERNOVA

Platinum



Hospitality



Gold



Silver



Bronze

