



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

Date: October 14, 2020

Contact: Jennifer Kaley

Jennifer.Kaley@santacruzcounty.us

FOOD BENEFITS AVAILABLE FOR WILDFIRE VICTIMS

Starting October 14 through October 22, Disaster CalFresh food benefits may be available to residents impacted by the CZU Lightning Complex wildfires. Santa Cruz County is one out of 6 wildfire impacted counties (Monterey, San Mateo, Solano, Lake and Yolo counties) operating a Disaster CalFresh program during this temporary period.

A family of four with a monthly income up to \$2,893 per month, after taking disaster-related expenses into consideration, may be eligible to receive up to \$646 in food benefits through this program. Individuals who might not otherwise qualify for CalFresh benefits may qualify for Disaster CalFresh. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the Disaster CalFresh program will be operated primarily by phone.

Individuals and families who lived or worked in Santa Cruz County on Aug. 14 may be eligible for Disaster CalFresh benefits if the household experienced at least one of the following between August 14th and September 12th as a direct result of the wildfires:

- At least one person in the household was not getting regular CalFresh food benefits
- Money was spent because of the wildfire or related power outage
- Money was lost from work because of the wildfire; or
- Money was spent because of damage to a home or business.

Households already receiving regular CalFresh food benefits are not eligible to receive Disaster CalFresh food benefits.

Santa Cruz County residents can apply online at mybenefitscalwin.org throughout the application period or call 1-888-421-8080 between 7:30am – 5pm Monday – Friday. Paper applications can also be dropped off at 18W. Beach, Watsonville, or 1020 Emeline Ave. Santa Cruz between 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

After completing an interview and the application process, eligible applicants will be informed of where they can pick up their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card for Disaster CalFresh food benefits. An EBT card is like a debit card that can be used to purchase food items at grocery stores and other authorized retailers.

Additional information is available at <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/disastercalfresh1>.