

SNAP food replacement in wildfire-hit California counties

September 21, 2023



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced on September 8 that households impacted by power outages due to heatwaves and wildfires in California could be eligible for replacement of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/CalFresh benefits. This is one of many recent steps USDA has taken to ensure California residents in need have food to eat.

Rather than require SNAP households to report food losses individually, USDA allowed the State of California to approve automatic mass replacements for residents of certain counties and zip codes who lost food as a result of the heatwaves and wildfires.

The waiver applies to 22 zip codes in the 14 counties of Calaveras, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Humboldt, Kings, Lake, Mariposa, Nevada, Placer, Santa Cruz, Siskiyou, Trinity, Tulare, and Tuolumne.

More details will be made available through the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

SNAP participants in areas hardest hit by the disaster may have a portion of their August benefits replaced.

SNAP recipients residing in other affected areas may request replacement benefits by filing an affidavit with the local office attesting to disaster-related loss.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is ready to consider additional waivers that may be needed to help program participants who have lost food due to power outages caused by heatwaves and wildfires and to simplify the application process for affected households, upon request from the CDSS. Individuals seeking more information about this and other available aid should dial 2-1-1.

For more information about California SNAP, visit <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/food-nutrition/calfresh>.