

CalFresh: Counties' Efforts to Improve Access to Healthy Food



Legislative Analyst's Office

**Presented to: County Welfare Directors
Association 2012 Conference**

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Agenda

- **CalFresh Overview**
- **Program Updates and Policy Changes**
- **Innovative County Practices**
- **Conclusions**

Program Overview

■ What Is CalFresh?

- California's version of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).



■ Program Goals

- Raise levels of nutrition among low-income households.
- Increase food purchasing power of low-income households.



Program Overview (Continued)

- **Income Eligibility Requirements**
 - **Gross income:**
 - < 130 percent federal poverty level (FPL).
 - \$2,008/month for a household of three.*
 - **Net income:**
 - < 100 percent of FPL.
 - \$1,545/month for a household of three.*
- **Categorical Eligibility = no asset requirements**

*Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2012 rules.



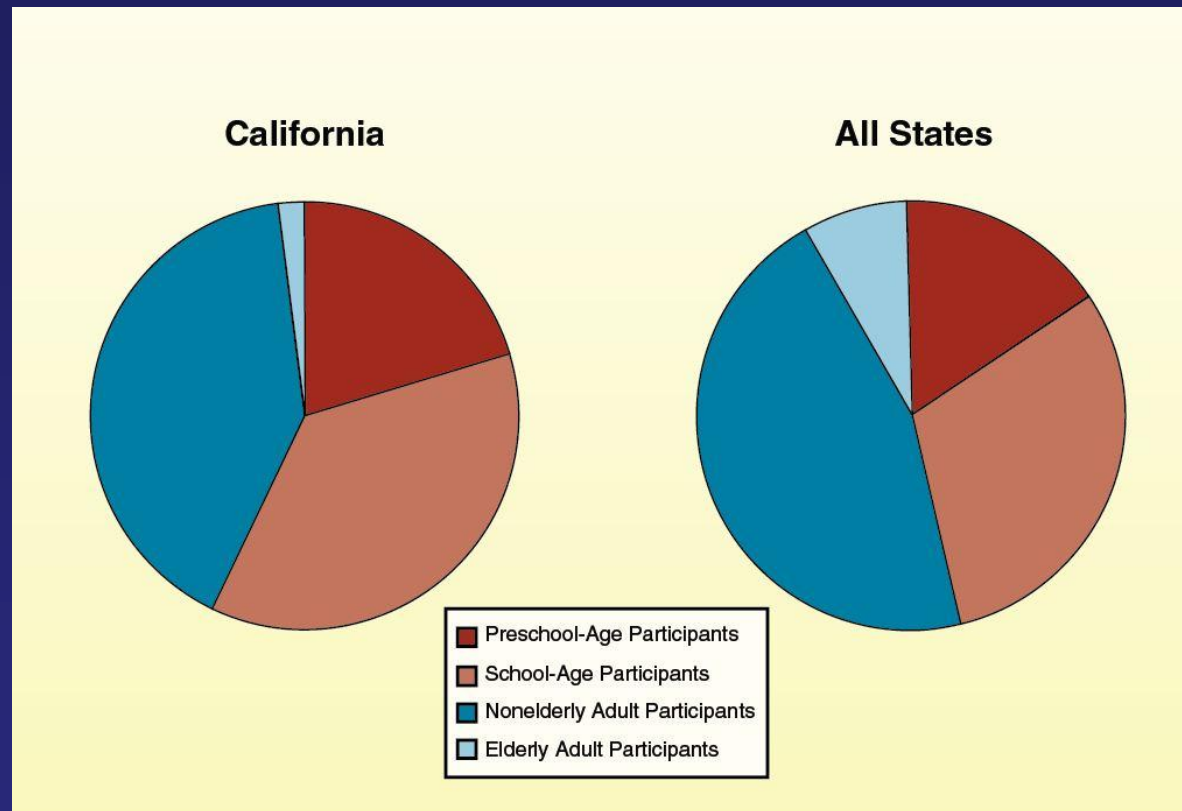
Program Overview (Continued)

People in Household	Maximum Monthly Allotment*
1	\$ 200
2	367
3	526
4	668
5	793
6	952
7	1,052
8	1,202
Each additional person	+ 150

*FFY 2012 rules.

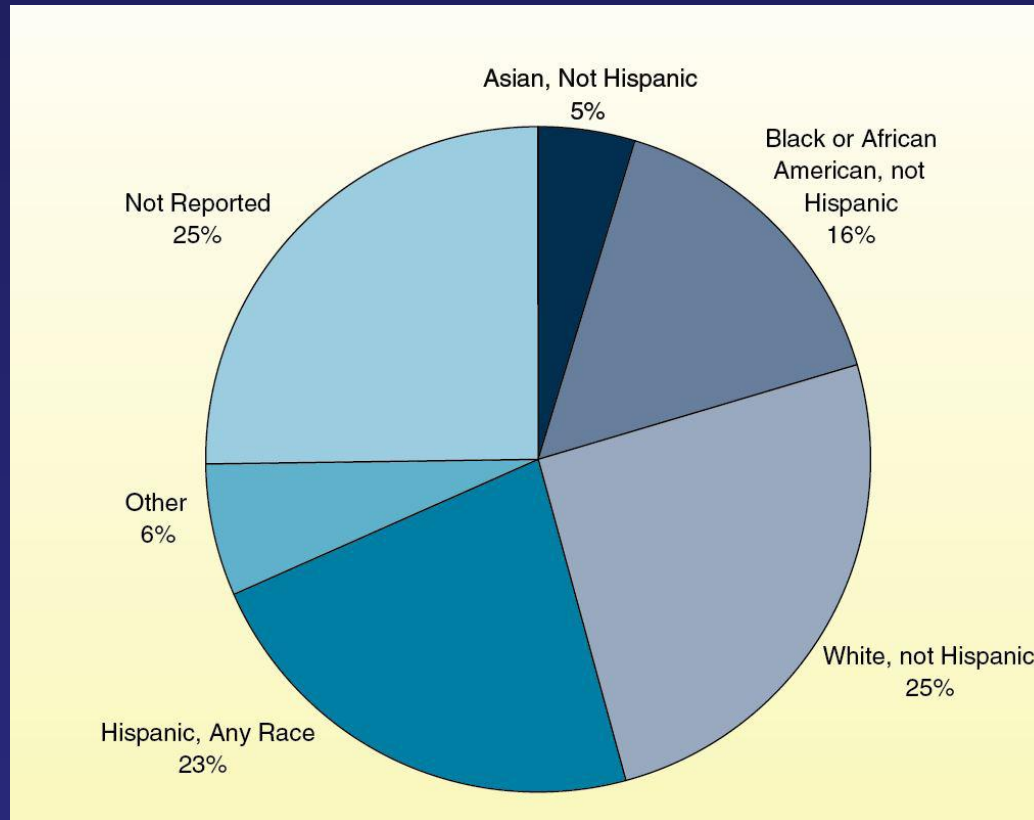


Household Characteristics— Age



Source: FFY 2010 SNAP Quality Control Dataset.

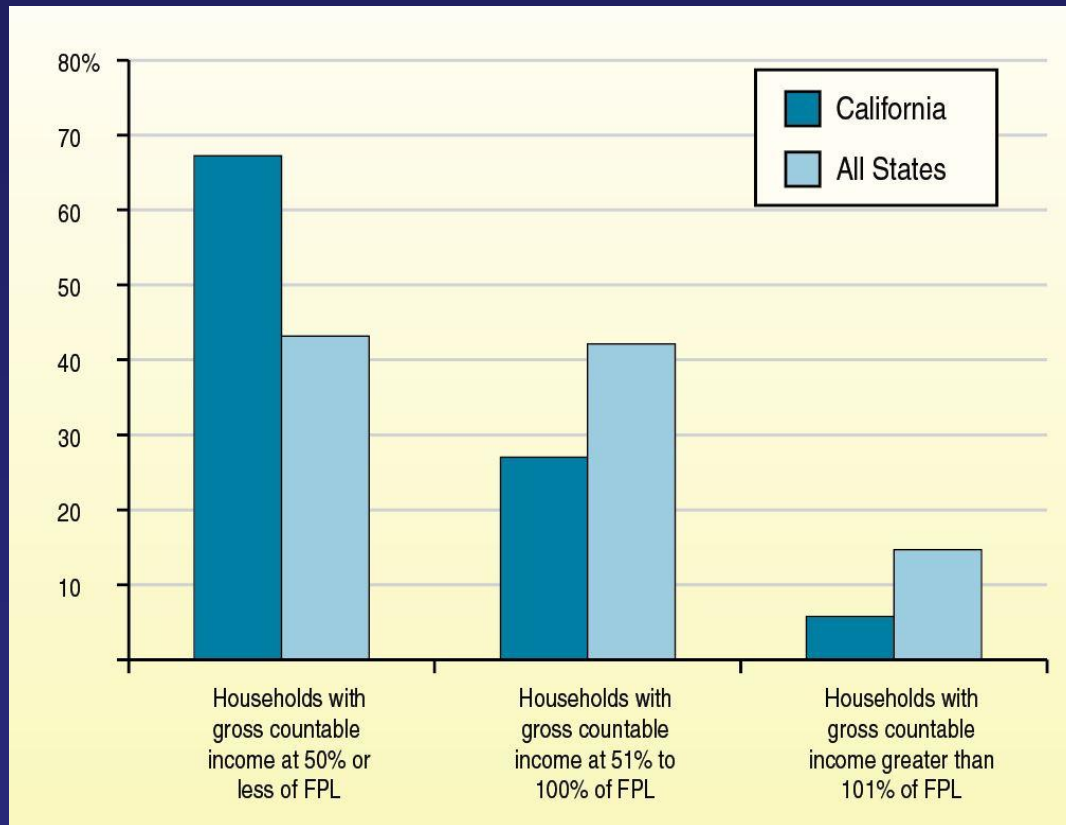
Household Characteristics— Race



Source: California Department of Social Services Administrative Data.

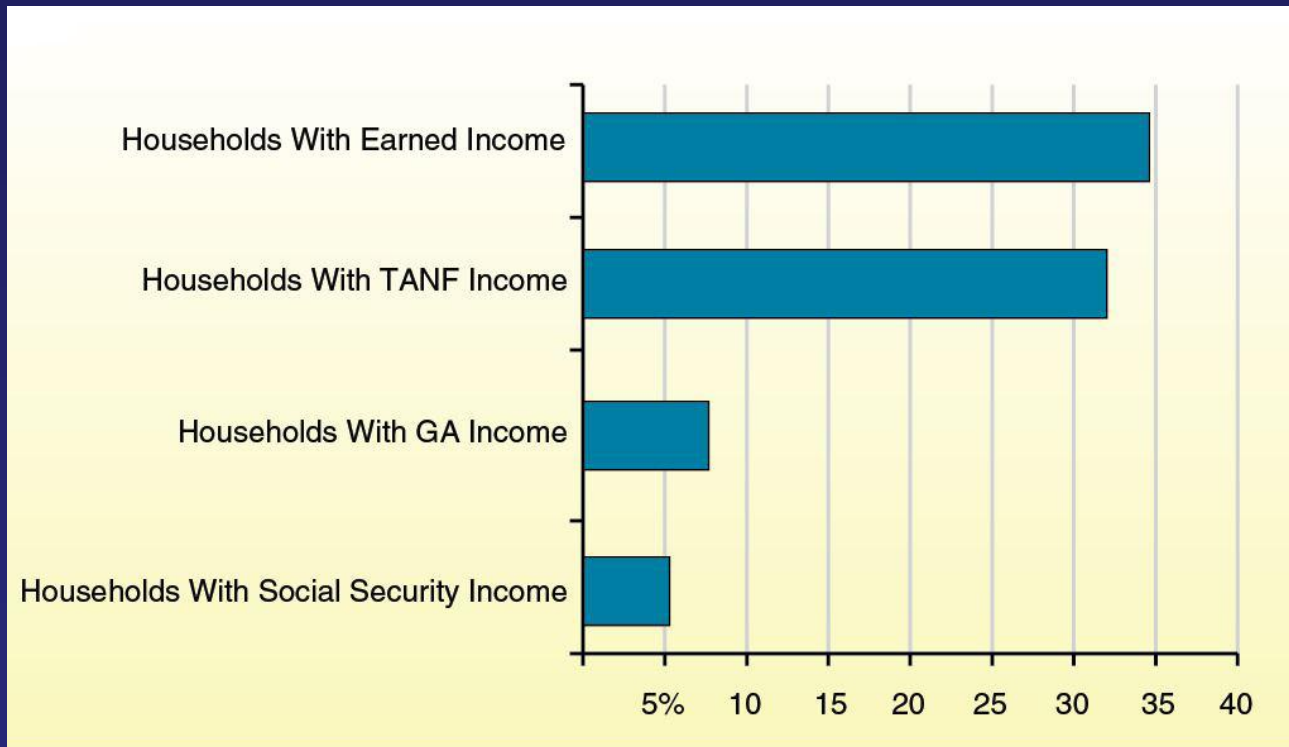


Household Characteristics— Income



Source: FFY 2010 SNAP Quality Control Dataset.

Household Characteristics— Income



TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families;
GA: General Assistance.

Source: FFY 2010 SNAP Quality Control Dataset.



Program Snapshot

- **June 2012**
 - 1,810,000 households.
 - 4,000,000 recipients (1 in 10 Californians).
 - \$600 million in benefits issued.
 - Average monthly household allotment: \$330.

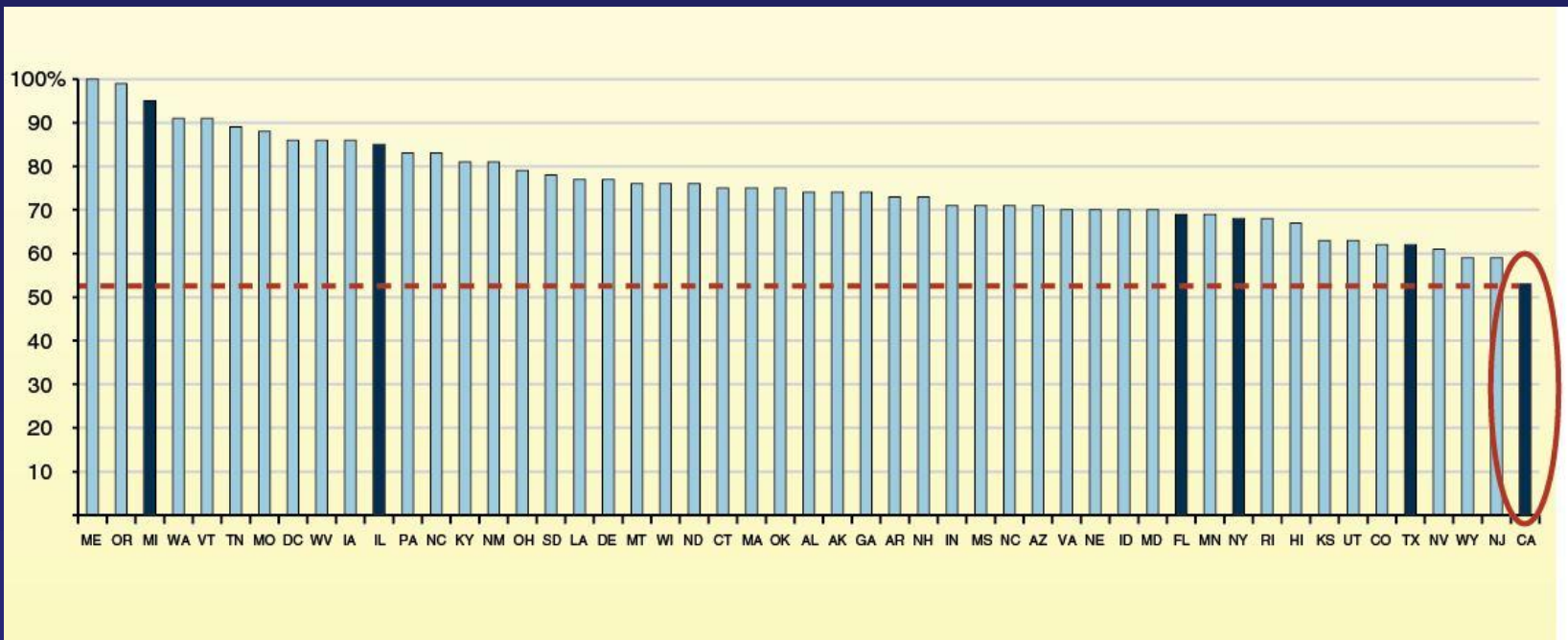
Source: California Department of Social Services Administrative Data.



Participation Rate (2009)

- **California = 53 Percent in 2009**
- **National Average = 72 Percent in 2009**

SNAP Participation Rates (2009)



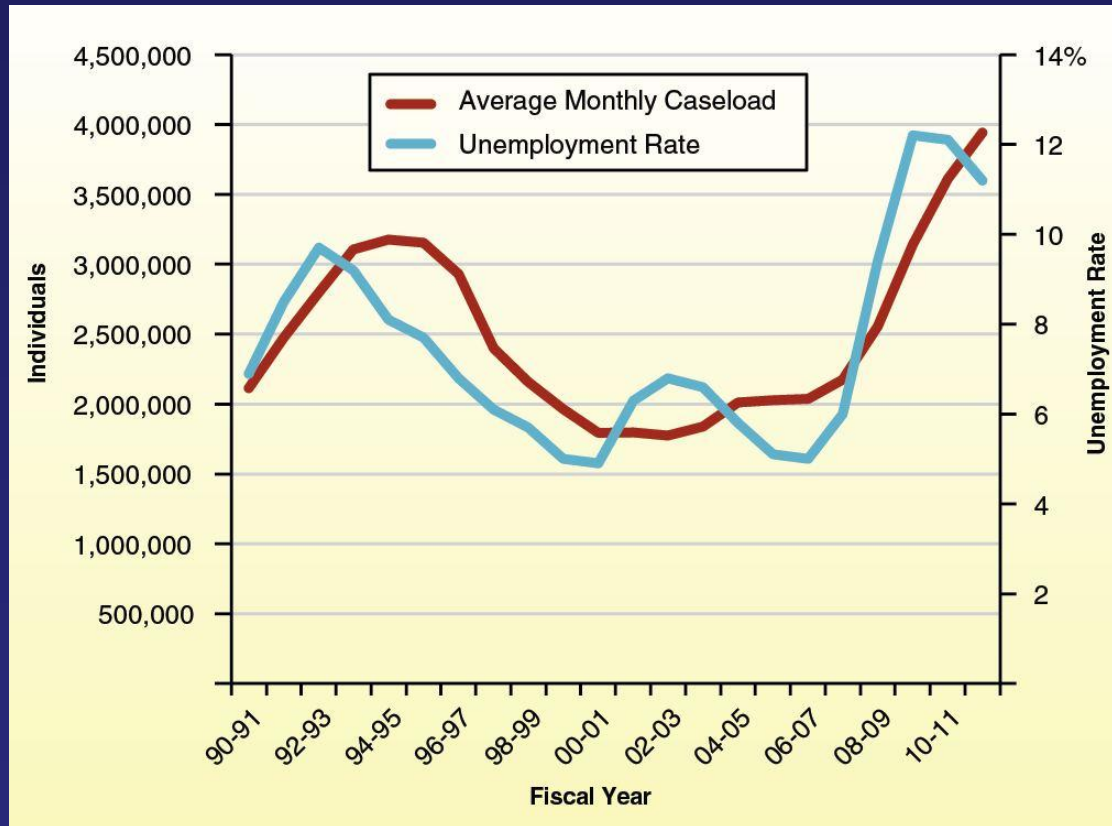
Potential Causes of Low Rate

- **Large Immigrant Population**
 - Concern for impact on green card application.
 - Ineligible parents do not apply for eligible children.
- **Unique California Program Requirements**
 - Fingerprinting depresses participation.
 - Quarterly reporting causes churn.

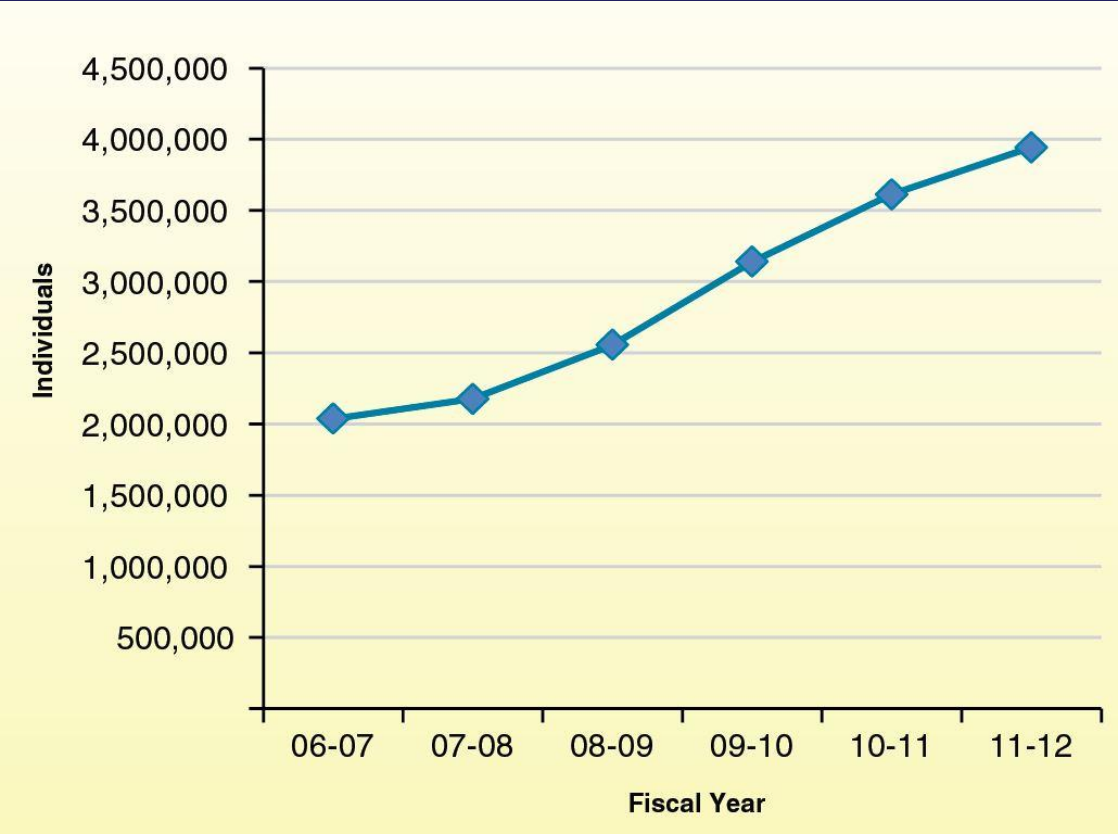
Potential Causes of Low Rate (Continued)

- **Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP) Recipients Are Ineligible**
 - Discussion of whether SSI/SSP recipients should be included in the participation rate.
 - Confusion over eligibility depresses participation.

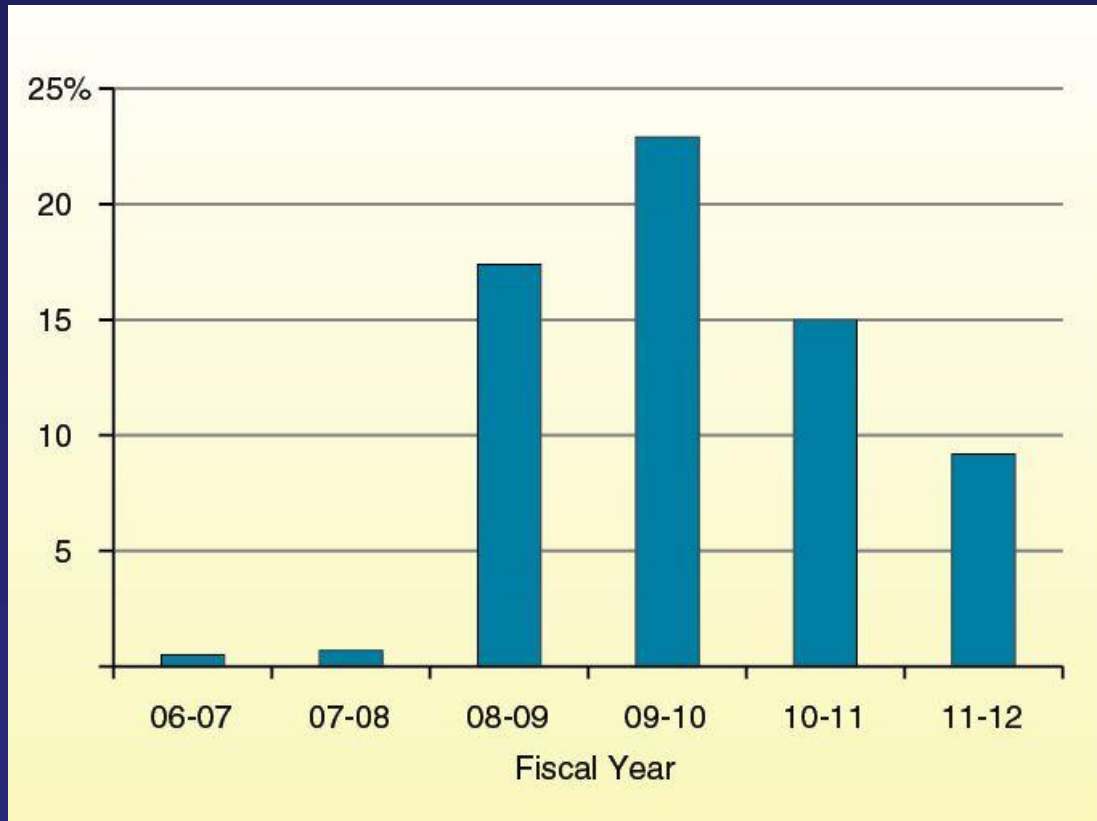
CalFresh Caseload Trends and Unemployment Rate



Average Monthly Caseload



Caseload Growth Rate



Program Updates

- **CalFresh Refresh**
- **Legislative Actions**

CalFresh Refresh

- **California Department of Social Services' Initiative to Modernize CalFresh**
 - **Remove barriers to access:**
 - Waiving face-to-face interviews.
 - Postpone interviews for expedited service.
 - Eliminate finger-imaging.
 - Telephonic signatures.

CalFresh Refresh

(Continued)

- **Modernizing CalFresh**

- **Reduce administrative burden and cost:**
 - Waiving recertification interviews for certain populations.
 - Semiannual reporting.
 - Online case access for recipients.

Legislation Impacting CalFresh

- **AB 6 (Fuentes), 2011**

- Repeals finger-imaging requirement.
- Moves to semiannual reporting system.
- Implements Heat and Eat program.

- **AB 69 (Beall), 2011**

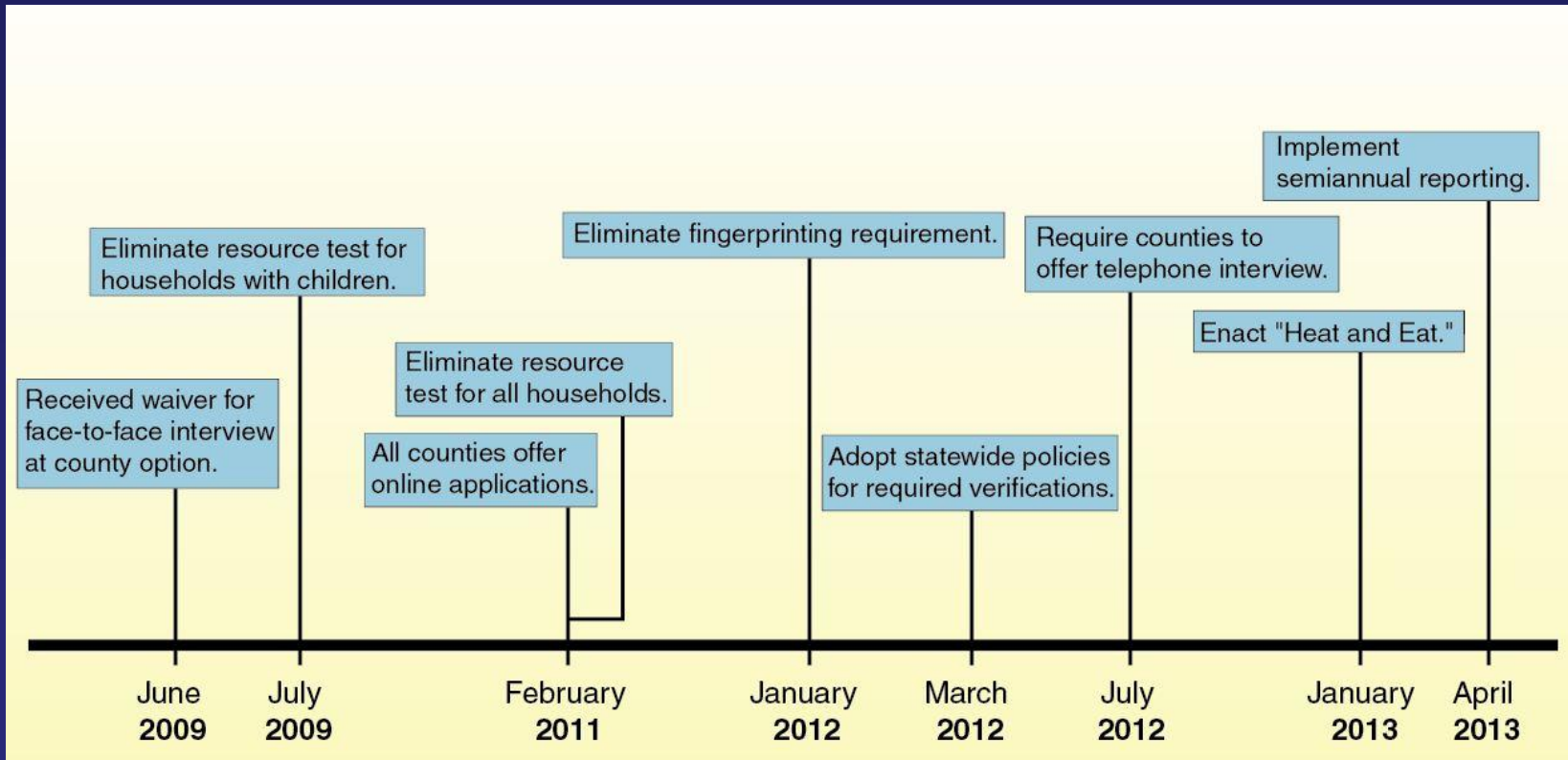
- Allows sharing with federal social security information system.
- Simplifies application and enrollment process for eligible older population.



Legislation Impacting CalFresh (Continued)

- **AB 1359 (Skinner), 2012**
 - Screens *all* applicants for expedited services.
- **SB 970 (de Leon), vetoed**
 - Allows applicants applying for health coverage to utilize that data to start a CalFresh application.

Program Update: Timeline of Recent Changes



Innovative Practices

- **Overview:**
 - Outreach.
 - Enhancements in efficiency.
 - Technological changes.
 - Business process changes.
 - Pilots and programs to increase access.
 - Improvements in accountability.

Outreach

- **Collaboration With Community Based Organizations (CBOs)**
 - Entire application process available off site.
 - Mobile units.
 - Application assisters located in community.
 - Dedicated county staff to assist CBOs.

Outreach

- **Counties Branching Out to Hard-to-Reach Regions and Populations**

Outreach

- **Network for a Healthy California**



Enhancements in Efficiencies

- **Technological Changes**
 - **Online Capabilities**
 - Online Application Submittal.
 - Online Reporting.
 - Online Case Access.
 - E-mail Notifications/Alerts.
 - Mobile Apps.

Enhancements in Efficiencies (Continued)

- **Technological Changes**
 - Document Imaging.
 - Service Centers/Call Centers.

Enhancements in Efficiencies (Continued)

- **Business Process Improvements**
 - Moving From Case-Based to Task-Based Models.
 - Service Center Traffic/Lobby Queue Management.

Pilots and Programs to Increase Access and Efficiency

- **Innovative Programs to Provide Access to Food**
 - Restaurant Meals Program.
 - Farmer's market pilots.
 - Golden Advantage Nutrition Program.

Pilots and Programs to Increase Access and Efficiency (Continued)

■ Innovative Programs to Increase Efficiency

- Same day application processing using online application.
- Telephone interview call-back option.
- Telephonic signature.
- Telecommuting.

Improving Accountability and Decision Making

- **Los Angeles County's Department of Public Social Services
Total Accountability, Total Success
(DPSSTATS)**
 - Management tool to promote data-driven, collaborative decision making and enhance accountability for outcomes.



The Four Tenets of STATS

1. Accurate and Timely Intelligence

- Know What Is Happening

2. Effective Tactics

- Have a Plan

3. Rapid Deployment

- Do It Quickly

4. Relentless Follow-Up

- If It Works, Do It More... If Not, Do Something Else

DPSSTATS— Program Components

1. Data

- Drawn from a variety of sources.

2. Performance Metrics

- Derived from state/federal standards and current department priorities.

3. Meetings

- Executive management team, division chiefs, and key managers discuss key issues, analyze performance on key metrics and make decisions to avoid delays in obtaining approval.



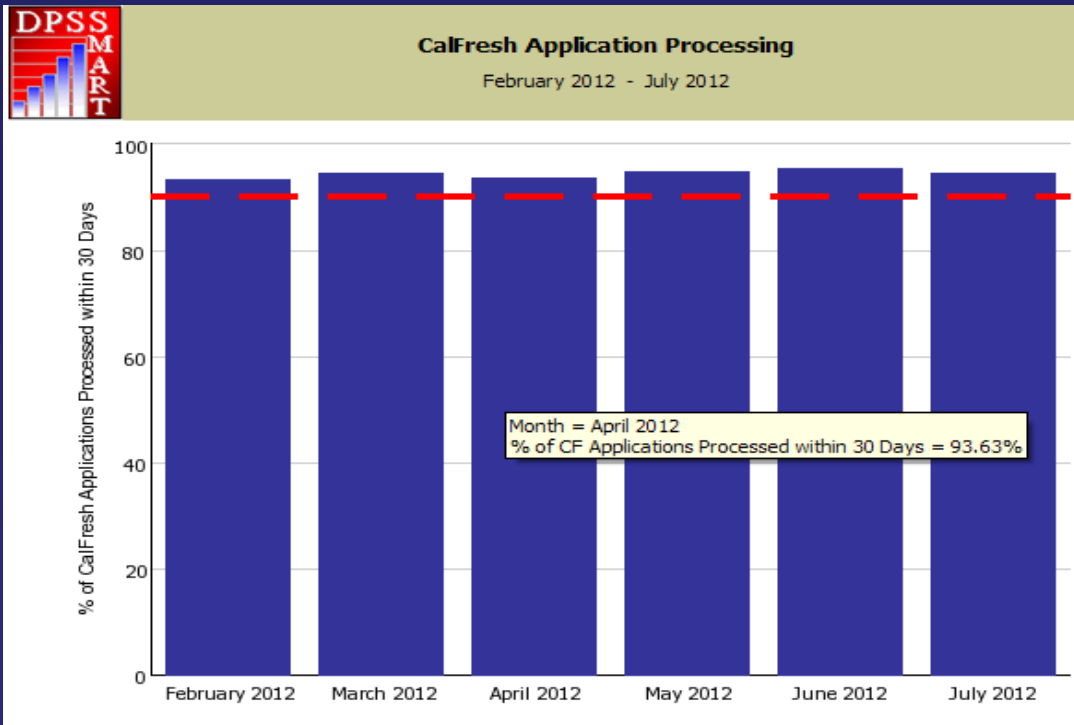
DPSSTATS— Data

- **Drawn from a variety of sources, including:**
 - LEADER (eligibility data),
 - GEARS (CalWORKs welfare-to-work data),
 - MAPPER (CalFresh/General Relief employment and training data),
 - CMIPS (In-Home Supportive Services payment data),
 - A specially constructed data warehouse called DPSSMART (Systematic Measurement, Accountability and Report Tool) that supplies performance metrics and reports for DPSSTAT, and
 - Additional information collected manually as needed.



DPSSTATS— Sample Performance Measures

- Percentage of CalFresh applications processed timely
- Customer service center call abandonment rate
- Percentage of CalFresh applications received online



DPSSTATS Meetings

- Held on a regular basis (monthly).
- Leadership present from multiple levels .
- Divisions report on performance and steps needed to achieve improvement are discussed.
- Needed decisions are made on the spot.
- Prospective issues are raised for future research and resolution and are tracked for follow-up as “commitments.”



DPSSTATS Results

- **DPSSTATS Results:**
 - Increased accountability.
 - Greater collaboration.
 - Focus on priorities.
 - Improved customer service.
 - Decreased wait times.

Conclusions

- **Counties Are Facing Unprecedented Changes to CalFresh**
- **Counties Have Made Substantial Efforts to Increase Outreach to and Participation of Eligible Individuals**
- **Counties Are Taking Up Approaches Right for Them**
- **Sharing Good Practices is Key**



Any Questions?

