

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Healthy Food Takes “Blues” Out of Monday

Alameda County Social Services Opens Third Front in War on Food Deserts

WHAT: Oakland, CA.— Starting February 24, the “Monday blues” will be banished from the Alameda County Social Services Agency’s East Oakland office. With the Grand Opening of the Farm Stand at the Eastmont Self-Sufficiency Center, clients, staff and neighbors of the facility will start their week with the colorful fresh fruits and vegetables that their counterparts at the Agency’s Hayward and North Oakland offices already enjoy.

All three sites were carefully chosen to provide SSA clients the opportunity to purchase wholesome, pesticide-free fruits and vegetables at the same locations where they sign up for and receive CalFresh benefits.

Behind the slogan of “Fresh Produce at ‘Dirt’ Cheap Prices” is the goal of making nutritious food available to low-income residents for whom fresh fruits and vegetables are either too far away or priced out of reach, explained Lori A. Cox, the Agency’s director.

A [study by the Oakland Food Policy Council](#) (OFPC) found that compared to the hills, the flatlands of Oakland have limited access to grocery stores selling healthy, affordable food.

According to that report, “(I)f you are a child (in Oakland), you have a one in three chance of developing diabetes in your lifetime, ... Your family has a one in five chance of living below the federal poverty level, and your neighborhood may well be a “food desert,” where grocery stores are non-existent, and access to fresh and nutritious food is limited.”

Farmer’s markets can help address these disparities, particularly when they “accept payment from federal, state, and local nutrition assistance programs to increase access and affordability for all customers,” the OFPC report noted.

Novice cooks are especially encouraged to attend the grand opening, according to SSA spokesperson Sylvia Soublet. “There will be a healthy cooking demonstration, as well as healthy recipes customers can take home and duplicate.”

WHEN AND WHERE (Weather permitting):

GRAND OPENING – February 24, 2014 /Every Monday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Alameda County Social Services Agency, Eastmont Self-Sufficiency Center
6955 Foothill Blvd – Suite 100, Oakland

(access ground floor parking lot on Church St./Farm Stand located by office entrance.)

Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Eden Area Multi-Service Center
24100 Amador St, Hayward 94544

(Stand is located on Amador St side of the building)

Fridays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Thomas L. Berkley Self-Sufficiency Center
2000 San Pablo Ave, Oakland 94612

(Stand is located near front entrance)

WHO: Alameda County Social Services Agency and Dig Deep Farms and Produce (a project of the Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League)

Find out more at our [website](#) or  .