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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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La Manzanita Community Resources Summer Lunch 2011

**Six sites throughout Santa Cruz County will begin serving FREE LUNCH to low-income kids through age 18 starting June 13, 2011 to August 05, 2011.**

For immediate release: June 2, 2011

Watsonville, CA –This summer, hundreds of children will have access to meals served at six sites in the county free of charge. La Manzanita Community Resources, a program of Community Bridges, is sponsoring the Summer Food Service Program, a nationwide program with national and state funding as well as local funds from Driscoll's Charitable Fund at the Community Foundation. During the summer months, when school-based programs are closed, many children miss out on a healthy midday meal. That's where the Summer Lunch program can fill in, making sure that young people get the nutrition and exercise they need to develop in the healthiest possible ways. And, with more than 70% of students in the Pájaro Valley Unified School District qualifying for free or reduced meal service, that healthy summer meal can mean a lot.

All children under the age of 18 participating in the program are provided access to a healthy meal each day, have an opportunity to engage in physical activity/play, and are able to taste new types of foods. Through a partnership with the City of Watsonville, onsite activities will include organized games and sports, arts & crafts, computer time/classes, homework time and opportunities for peer relationship building.

**South County:**

- **Callahan Park** 225 Sudden St, Watsonville, CA 95076. Tuesday- Friday 12:15-1:15 PM
- **La Manzanita Community Resources**, 521 Main Street, Watsonville, CA 95076. Monday – Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 PM
- **Marinovitch Park**, 118 W. 2nd Street, Watsonville, CA 95076. Monday –Friday 12:45 -1:45 PM
- **Neighborhood Services**, 37 Davis Avenue, Freedom, CA 95019. Monday – Thursday 12:00-1:00 PM
- **Ramsay Park** , 1301 Main Street, Watsonville, CA 95076. Monday – Friday 12:30-1:30 PM
- **YWCA**, 340 E. Beach Street, Watsonville, CA 95076. Monday – Friday 12:30-1:30 PM

This year, Community Bridges has also partnered with the County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department to provide CalFresh outreach and screening services to families with children participating in the 2011 Summer Lunch Program. The outreach and screening services will help eligible families access CalFresh benefits to make their food purchasing costs more affordable.

CalFresh, formerly known as Food Stamps, is a program run by the USDA and is designed to help people with little or no income supplement their nutritional intake, as well as to benefit farmers and retailers. The program provides a monthly benefit for families to buy food. Families living 100% below the Federal Poverty Level – a family of 4 with a net income of \$1,838 a month or less – may be eligible to receive CalFresh benefits. CalFresh benefits also help bring revenue to the local economy. According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), every \$5 in new benefits creates approximately \$9.00 in community spending.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally funded program that works with agencies to provide nutritious meals to children 18 years or age and younger when school is not in session. Community Bridges' La Manzanita Community Resources, a comprehensive family resource center in Watsonville, has provided Summer Lunch through SFSP for children in Santa Cruz County for more than 5 years. Funding for the program comes from the California Department of Education, the United States Department of Agriculture, the County of Santa Cruz, and La Manzanita Community Resources, a program of Community Bridges.

Families interested in being screened for CalFresh or in learning more about the Summer Lunch Program may contact Patrick Fodell, Summer Lunch Coordinator, La Manzanita Community Resources at (831) 724-2997 or visit [www.communitybridges.org](http://www.communitybridges.org).

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*Community Bridges is a nonprofit human services provider serving over 30,000 Santa Cruz County residents each year. Its family of programs include Beach Flats Community Center, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Child Development Division, La Manzanita Community Resources, Lift Line, Live Oak Family Resource Center, Meals on Wheels, Mountain Community Resources, and WIC Nutrition Program.*

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