

Nicholas Escobedo  
Scarborough  
LD 2093

We all know the value of food. Whether or not we appreciate it, we must keep ourselves from perishing every single day by consuming foods of all varieties. Food is one of the most fundamental examples of a necessity, and must be guaranteed for the inhabitants of this state.

However, high-quality food is often seen as a luxury. Fresh fruits and vegetables are limited to the few that can afford them, because they are exponentially more nutritious and impactful to your health than food that is made cheaper by being excessively processed, preservative-packed, and/or chemically "enhanced."

High-quality food is not a luxury. Fruits and vegetables protect from cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and a plethora of other illnesses. More importantly, even the lack of the vitamins they impart can create illness. Just as insufficient caloric intake inhibits your health - creating hunger - insufficient vitamin and mineral intake also limits your ability, creating deficiencies that cause muscle weakness, dizziness, numbness, irregular heart rhythm, etc.

Furthermore, placing our subsidies in a program that supports locally-grown agriculture is surely not an investment only in our social assistance programs - it is an investment in our own economy. By subsidizing these programs, of which there is great need in this state, we are increasing the capacity of our agricultural industry to flourish. We are in the position to multiply the reward of our endeavors by assisting the impoverished and the overall economy, so why would we not seize it?

Fruits and vegetables are essential to our survival, not just the survival of the wealthy or privileged. The opportunity to subsidize these necessities and increase equity through SNAP and WIC in a way that will benefit our local agriculture economy is not a chance we should squander.