

Santa Cruz County Food Stamps OK'd

SANTA CRUZ — The County of Santa Cruz has been given federal authorization to implement a food stamp program for the poor.

County officials have been notified that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved the county's year-old request for the program, which enables welfare recipients and other poor persons to buy food at reduced rates.

The program, if adopted, would replace the county's current food surplus program. Under this program, certain kinds of food, mostly, staples, are given out free to the poor at specific days of the month.

Local officials previously indicated they favored the food stamp program because it gives poor persons a wider choice of food. With food stamps, persons can buy food in regular stores.

County Supervisor Henry Mello said the county may not begin the new program im-

mediately. He indicated that some officials wanted more time to compare the two programs.

Under a federal law, only one type program can be operated at the same time.

Raymond Ansell, county welfare director, said the food stamp program operates under a sliding scale. The poorest persons pay less for stamps than those who are getting a higher amount.

Ansell said that the average family receiving welfare payments pays about \$66 a month for stamps that can buy up to \$106 worth of groceries.

Mello said one of the arguments favoring the food surplus program is that recipients pay nothing for the food.

Garbage Fee Going Up At Gilroy