

# Building a Healthy Food System for Los Angeles:

## Strategic Priorities 2012 - 2013

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City of Los Angeles





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# Strategic Priorities 2012

## City of Los Angeles Good Food Office

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# [1] Executive Summary

**Cities are faced with the local impacts of a global and industrialized food system:** hunger, obesity and nutrition-related diseases (and associated health care costs), and environmental degradation. Many municipalities have started to connect the dots between the health of their residents and regional, state, federal and even international food and agricultural policies.

The way we eat and the way our food is produced has changed tremendously in less than a century, and Los Angeles feels those changes acutely. Public health professionals observe that, in the 1950's, low-income populations had the healthiest diets; by 2010 they had the least healthy.<sup>1</sup> In the 1950's, Los Angeles was the top agricultural producing county in the nation. In 2010, it was one of the lowest. The shift toward industrialized agriculture from the 1950's to today has led to the loss of farmland to development, with the resulting loss of small to mid-size farms. It has also created food swamps (neighborhoods awash in junk food, with little access to healthy food) in our urban centers.

Given the systemic nature of how food is produced, distributed and consumed, cities are looking for systems-based solutions to localized problems. Through integrated strategies, cities and counties can address some of their key policy priorities of education, health care, sustainability, job creation and public safety by addressing the food system.<sup>2</sup> The Good Food Office catalyzes, coordinates and connects stakeholders from across the food system to create holistic, systems-level transformation.

The Good Food Office of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa consists of his food policy team and the incubation of the Los Angeles Food Policy Council, a nonprofit entity. The Mayor's Senior Advisor on Food Policy is the founding chair of the Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC), and works closely with LAFPC to develop and implement policy goals that are strengthened by the stakeholder coalition it represents.

**The goals of the Good Food Office reflect a vision to shift our regional food system** to promote local growers, sustainable agriculture and fair working conditions for all food workers, and to ensure access to healthy, affordable food in underserved neighborhoods.

The Good Food Office catalyzes, coordinates and connects stakeholders from across the food system to create holistic, systems-level transformation.



<sup>1</sup> Popkin, B. professor of Public Health at the University of North Carolina.

<sup>2</sup> Leschin-Hoar, C. (2012, May 9). Cities take the lead on food issues, as D.C. dithers.. Retrieved from <http://www.takepart.com/article/2012/05/08/cities-take-lead-food-issues-dc-dithers>

## How Can We Build a Good Food System?

Good Food is defined as healthy, affordable, sustainable and fair. Good Food is a new paradigm for our food system — encouraging the production, distribution, accessibility and consumption of high quality food within the Southern California region. Prioritized fulcrums for change include:

- Building market demand for healthy food that is produced fairly and sustainably in order to increase its affordability and availability,
- Creating infrastructure that delivers this type of good food to underserved communities, and
- Providing assistance to those communities through coordinated microenterprise development and support.

These priorities reinforce and support each other and bring together stakeholders from across the entire food system around shared goals.

## 2012-2013 Strategic Goals & Objectives

The Good Food Office has identified the following **top three priorities** for immediate implementation in 2012:

1. Develop a coordinated **healthy food neighborhoods strategy**, with a focus on neighborhood market conversions.
2. Implement a **Good Food Procurement Policy** that leverages demand from large institutional purchasers.
3. Develop a **Food Hub enterprise** that can support local growers, connect retailers in low-income areas to locally produced food and provide business incubation for value added and prepared foods.

### Vision for a HEALTHY FOOD SYSTEM

- Prioritizes the health and well being of people and environment.
- Protects and strengthens our biodiversity and natural resources throughout the region.
- Ensures that healthy, high-quality food is affordable and accessible to all.
- Contributes to a thriving economy where all participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation and fair treatment.

### GOOD FOOD IS:

#### HEALTHY

- Meets the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Is delicious, safe, and aesthetically pleasing.

#### AFFORDABLE

- People of all income levels are able to purchase.

#### FAIR

- All participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation and fair treatment, free from exploitation.
- High quality food is equitably, physically, and culturally accessible to all.

#### SUSTAINABLE

- Produced, processed, distributed and recycled locally using the principles of environmental stewardship (including best practices in water, soil, and pesticide management).

Overall goals and objectives for 2012-2013 are listed in the charts below. These goals reflect the leadership and momentum of the Los Angeles Food Policy Council with its Working Groups and staff in partnership with the Mayor's Good Food Office.

2012 STRATEGIC GOALS	OBJECTIVES
<b>1. Build market demand for Good Food</b>	a. Adoption of model local, healthy, and sustainable food procurement policies by public agencies, schools, hospitals, restaurants and other institutions <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Adopt the Good Food Pledge by individuals
	c. Raise public awareness through two high profile city wide events per year
<b>2. Increase equitable access to healthy food in underserved communities.</b>	a. Create healthy food neighborhoods through a coordinated place-based strategy that connects multiple projects and food assets together to transform food environments in underserved communities <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Convert neighborhood markets and corner stores into healthy food stores through a coordinated effort with key stakeholders <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	c. Implement a Healthy Food Cart program: increase the availability of healthy street food, including permitting the sale of food on city sidewalks and incentives to encourage more mobile vendors to sell healthy items
	d. Expand farmers' market access by increasing the acceptance of Federal nutrition benefits at farmers' market
	e. Promote opportunities and policies that expand access to community gardens in low-income neighborhoods.
	f. Support the California Freshworks Fund initiative to locate independent grocers and opportunity sites in underserved communities
<b>3. Build the infrastructure for a Good Food System</b>	a. Develop a Regional Food Hub enterprise to connect small and mid-sized local growers to underserved urban communities <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Operationalize cooperative purchasing mechanism for neighborhood market that connects them to low-cost, locally produced food.
<b>4. Advance and help implement healthy school food initiatives and programs</b>	a. Continue to work closely with LAUSD on supporting its healthy food initiatives, and provide technical assistance for Good Food Procurement policies

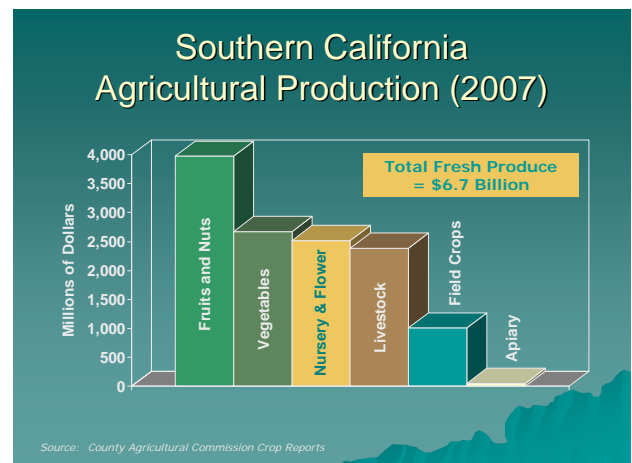
2013 STRATEGIC GOALS	OBJECTIVES
<b>1. Advance prioritized urban agriculture policy recommendations</b>	a. Create guidelines for edible landscapes in parkways
	b. Support the development of edible landscapes in affordable housing units
	c. Map city-owned land available for community gardens
	d. Increase the composting of food waste
<b>2. Urban aquaculture</b>	Develop the capacity for large scale commercial production of fish as part of a food hub
<b>3. Create a Healthy Food Cart program</b>	Continue work to legalize street vending of healthy foods

## [2] The Current State of the Food System

The Los Angeles food system works remarkably well for many—with some of the finest restaurants and farmers' markets in the world—but at the same time, our industrial food system creates imbalances in environmental, economic, community and human health.

California is the most productive agricultural state in the nation, with a \$37.5 billion farm economy, generating 12 percent of total US agricultural revenue and producing about 50 percent of the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables<sup>3</sup>. The top producing counties are Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Merced and Monterey. California exports 23 percent of the products grown and harvested in the state, making it a trading powerhouse. Our state has more than 400 crops on 81,700 farms employing 800,000 people in all aspects of the farming and ranching economy.

- Our regional food system (or foodshed) spans 200 miles, 10 counties and touches over 22 million people, or about seven percent of the U.S. population. The 10 counties included in this foodshed are Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura.
- Our region still has an extensive regional farming base that produces about \$12 billion in fruits, nuts and vegetables a year and a large food processing and manufacturing sector.
- Consumers spend close to \$60 billion on food in our 10 county foodshed and \$25 billion on food in LA County.
- Los Angeles County has the highest rate of fresh fruit and vegetable sales among California counties, representing \$4 billion dollars in fresh fruit and vegetable sales annually<sup>4</sup>.



<sup>3</sup> California Department of Food and Agriculture. (2009). California Agricultural Resource Directory, 2008-2009. Retrieved from [http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Statistics/PDFs/ResourceDirectory\\_2008-2009.pdf](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Statistics/PDFs/ResourceDirectory_2008-2009.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Cech, S, Fox, C., & Landsman, C., (2009). Fresh fruits and vegetable distribution: A look at produce wholesalers through the lens of sustainability.



## A. Public Health

**Obesity:** In LA County 55 percent of adults, 40 percent of kids, and 34 percent of toddlers are obese or overweight<sup>5</sup>. The County loses \$12 billion annually due to obesity related costs<sup>6</sup>. Obesity and obesity-related diseases have inequitable impacts for Los Angeles communities. In South Los Angeles, the rate of obesity is more than three times greater than in West Los Angeles.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, studies have shown that while about one-third of children will develop Type II diabetes, the rate is much higher for African American and Hispanic children, at about 50%.<sup>8</sup>

**Antibiotic Resistance:** According to The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production (IFAP), IFAP – sometimes known as factory farming -- has led to a serious public health threat. The routine use of antibiotics to treat livestock on factory farms contributes to growing antibiotic resistant bacteria that cause human infection.<sup>9</sup> Over 70 percent of all antibiotic use in the United States is for livestock. The Centers for Disease Control estimate that antibiotic resistance costs \$5 billion annually.<sup>10</sup>

**Air Pollution:** According to a rating system by Food and Water Watch (a nationally respected environmental organization), Los Angeles County has a “severe” density of factory farms.<sup>11</sup> The density is “extreme” for Kern, San Bernadino, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial counties. Pesticide drift, field waste, waste burning and toxic gases released from manure are all food production factors that contribute to the high rates of air pollution and consequently high rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses in rural California counties. The American Lung Association ranked Fresno County California, the top dairy producer in the nation, the fourth most polluted county in the country for fine particulate matter and sixth for ozone pollution.<sup>12</sup>

**Pesticide Exposure:** Widespread pesticide use in industrial scale agriculture exposes farm workers, farmers, their families, and surrounding neighbors to dangerous levels of chemicals, often exceeding



<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. (2009). Key indicators of health by service planning area - 2009. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

<sup>6</sup> California Center for Public Health Advocacy. (2009). *Economic Costs of Physical Inactivity, Obesity, and Overweight in California Adults - 2006*. New Bern, NC: Chenoweth & Associates.

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Urrutia-Rojas X, Menchaca J. (2006). [Prevalence of risk for type 2 diabetes in school children](#). *Journal of School Health*. 76(5):189-94.

<sup>9</sup> Pew Charitable Trusts & Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. (2008). Putting meat on the table: Industrial farm production in America. Retrieved from [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Industrial\\_Agriculture/PCIFAP\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Industrial_Agriculture/PCIFAP_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Food & Water Watch, Factory Farm Map: <http://www.factoryfarmmap.org/>

<sup>12</sup> American Lung Association. (2007). State of the air: 2007 best and worst cities. Retrieved from [http://lungaction.org/reports/sota07\\_cities.html](http://lungaction.org/reports/sota07_cities.html)

established safety levels. Chronic, low-level pesticide exposure has been linked to a variety of health problems including cancer, birth defects, neurological disorders, reproductive and behavioral health effects, and impaired immune system functions. Farm worker cancer rates are twice the national average, likely due to chronic exposure to pesticides.<sup>13</sup>

## B. Paradox of Food Insecurity and Obesity

Because of persistent poverty and growing unemployment in Los Angeles, hunger has remained a chronic problem in the region. While Southern California is the most productive agricultural region in the country, ironically, more than one in 10 families (or over one million people) go hungry or face food insecurity in LA County.<sup>14</sup> Twenty-five percent of children and 50 percent of seniors are food insecure in LA County.<sup>15</sup> However, less than 55 percent of LA County residents eligible for Food Stamps are currently enrolled in the program. Due to this low enrollment rate, the County loses over one billion dollars a year in unclaimed nutrition benefits<sup>16</sup>. Paradoxically, many of LA's food insecure families may also struggle with obesity.

More than one in 10 families (over 1 million people) go hungry or face food insecurity in LA County.



## C. Healthy Food Access Disparities

The greatest impacts of our food system's shortcomings fall on low-income residents and communities of color, whose neighborhoods often are overwhelmed with fast food venues, liquor stores, convenience stores and simultaneously lack healthy food options, such as full-service grocery and farmers' markets. In Los Angeles, as with many cities around the country, inequitable development, redlining by banks has resulted in insufficient and often poor quality food retail services in many low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.<sup>17</sup> Predominantly white neighborhoods in Los Angeles have three times as many supermarkets as black neighborhoods and nearly twice as many markets as Latino neighborhoods.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Reeves, M., Katten, A., & Guzman, M. (2002). *Fields of Poison*. Darby, PA: Diane Publishing Company.

<sup>14</sup> Los Angeles Regional Foodbank. (2010). Hunger in Los Angeles County 2010. Retrieved from [http://www.lafoodbank.org/source/Editorfile/HILAC2010\(2\).pdf](http://www.lafoodbank.org/source/Editorfile/HILAC2010(2).pdf)

<sup>15</sup> The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and Mazon: A Jewish Response to End Hunger. (2009). Hungry no more: A blueprint to end hunger in Los Angeles. Retrieved from <http://cfpa.net/LosAngeles/ExternalPublications/Mazon-BlueprintToEndHungerInLosAngeles-2009.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Shimada, T. (2009). Lost dollars, empty plates: The impact of CalFresh participation on state and local economies. Oakland: California Food Policy Advocates. Retrieved from <http://cfpa.net/CalFresh/CFPAPublications/LDEP-FullReport-2012.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Bassford, N. Galloway-Gilliam, L. Flynn, G. (2010). Food desert to food oasis: Promoting grocery store development in South Los Angeles. Los Angeles: Community Health Councils. Retrieved from <http://www.chc-inc.org/downloads/Food%20Desert%20to%20Food%20Oasis%20July%202010.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Shaffer, A. (2002). The persistence of L.A.'s grocery gap: The need for a new food policy and approach to market development. Los Angeles: The Center for Food and Justice, The Urban and Environmental Policy Institute: Occidental College. Retrieved from <http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfj/publications/Supermarket%20Report%20November%202002.pdf>

Unhealthy food environments are often described as “food deserts” (a scarcity of healthy food options) or “food swamps” (retail outlets dominated by unhealthy food), and the environment shapes residents’ choices about food purchase and consumption. More South Los Angeles resident report available produce as “not good quality” compared to residents in other parts of the county.<sup>19</sup> It is not surprising then that South Los Angeles residents also report the lowest percentage of daily fruit and vegetable consumption and the highest weekly fast food consumption in the county.<sup>20</sup>



Credit: Gary Leonard

Studies link an imbalanced food retail environment to disproportionate rates of obesity, diabetes and other nutrition-related diseases in low-income communities of color across the country.<sup>21</sup> Here at home, poverty, obesity and diabetes rates are three times greater in South Los Angeles than West Los Angeles. In effect, children and families living in underserved neighborhoods are condemned to a higher likelihood of preventable, nutrition-related health problems which impact quality of life and life expectancy.

Yet, residents in neighborhoods such as South and East Los Angeles demonstrate high willingness to spend their income on food retail. A 2008 market analysis by Social Compact found food retail sales leakage of \$113 million dollars across nine neighborhoods in South and East Los Angeles, indicating a largely unmet demand for food services in those areas.<sup>22</sup>

## D. Environmental Impacts

Industrial farms and the extensive transportation of their output debilitate the natural environment through water use, chemical impacts, and air quality. The production and application of fossil fuel based, toxic pesticides and fertilizers used to produce our food, methane emissions from industrial feedlots and landfills, the far distances our food travels, and water pollution from agricultural runoff are among the reasons that our food system is a leading contributor to environmental degradation, ecosystem decline, and climate change.

**80% of the water  
in California is used  
for agriculture**

- Agriculture is responsible for 80 percent of all water use in California. Although water conservation efforts heavily target urban and industrial water users, those sectors use only 20 percent of the water in the state. A shift in the types of crops grown, how they are grown and the irrigation

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Op. cit. 26

<sup>21</sup> Treuhaft, S. & Karpyn, A. (2011) *The grocery gap: Who has access to healthy food and why it matters*. Los Angeles: PolicyLink. Retrieved from [http://www.policylink.org/site/c.kiXLbMNJrE/b.5860321/k.A5BD/The\\_Grocery\\_Gap.htm](http://www.policylink.org/site/c.kiXLbMNJrE/b.5860321/k.A5BD/The_Grocery_Gap.htm)

<sup>22</sup> Social Compact. (2008). *Los Angeles Neighborhood Market DrillDown: Catalyzing Business Investment in Inner-City Neighborhoods*

methods would provide significant water savings gains, while keeping the land in agricultural production.<sup>23</sup>

- Across the country, historic agricultural policies have led to the dominant production of small grain field crops that are not consumed as fresh food, such as the alfalfa, hay and pastureland that support the cattle and dairy industry. Field crops are water intensive, and account for more than half of applied irrigation in California.<sup>24</sup>
- Vegetables, orchards and vineyards produce more revenue per unit of land or water. Vegetables, for example, account for only 16 percent of irrigated acreage and use only 10 percent of the applied water, yet they generate 39 percent of California's crop revenue.<sup>25</sup>
- Pollution from agricultural fertilizers and animal waste is the biggest source of groundwater contamination, leaving small communities in agricultural counties without a safe drinking water supply<sup>26</sup>
- The production of fruits, vegetables and nuts is lower in terms of greenhouse gas emissions than livestock production, which produces 18 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions – a higher share than all transportation sectors combined.<sup>27</sup> More recent reports suggest that the livestock industry may actually account for closer to 50 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>28</sup>



## E. Jobs and the Food System

US consumers spend on food an estimated \$1 trillion annually, or nearly 10 percent of the gross domestic product. Approximately 20 million people are employed in the food industry, considering all sectors of food growing, distribution, processing, retail service and waste management.<sup>29</sup> Nationally, the single largest percentage of manufacturing jobs are in the food sector, including



<sup>23</sup> Pacific Institute. (2009). Sustaining California agriculture in an uncertain future. Retrieved from [http://www.pacinst.org/reports/california\\_agriculture/final.pdf](http://www.pacinst.org/reports/california_agriculture/final.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Center for Watershed Sciences at University of California, Davis. (2012). Assessing nitrate in California's drinking water: Report for the State Water Resources Control Board report to the legislature. Retrieved from <http://groundwaternitrate.ucdavis.edu/files/138956.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> United Nations. (2006). Livestock's long shadow: Environmental issues and options. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization.

<sup>28</sup> Goodland, R., & Anhang, J. (2009). Livestock and Climate Change. In *State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldwatch.org/sow11>

<sup>29</sup> Food Chain Workers Alliance. (2012). *The Hands That Feed Us*. Retrieved from <http://foodchainworkers.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Hands-That-Feed-Us-Report.pdf>

butchering, processing and packaging food.<sup>30</sup> For every four workers employed directly by the food system, another job is created indirectly due to economic activity created by food system industries.<sup>31</sup>

Los Angeles is home to a robust food economy as well.

- The food system accounts for more than 1 in 7 jobs in Los Angeles County.<sup>32</sup>
- A recent study by the Centers of Excellence office of the California Community Colleges found that the agriculture value chain has a significant impact on the California economy, with most of the jobs (59 percent) in the agricultural support sector.<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately, the health and well being of farm and food workers are often sacrificed to reduce labor costs and meet demands for cheaper food. Seven of the 10 worst paying jobs in the US are in the food system<sup>34</sup>. More than 86 percent of workers surveyed in a national study of food system workers reported earning low or poverty wages.<sup>35</sup> Only 13.5 percent earned a living wage (defined as 150 percent of the regional poverty level). Farm workers are still among the most exploited workers in the US and many can't afford to buy the food they harvest. Meatpacking is the one of the most dangerous jobs in America – more than 1 in 10 workers in meatpacking plants suffer illness and injuries, double the rate for all U.S. manufacturing<sup>36</sup>. Hospitality workers in LA are the lowest paid workers in the County—often recent immigrants and too poor to eat the food they serve. On average, restaurant workers annually earn \$12,868, compared to \$45,371 for the total private sector<sup>37</sup>.

**In L.A. County, the food system accounts for more than 1 in 7 jobs.**

**Approximately 20 million people are employed by the food industry nationally.**

## F. Farm Impacts

US food production today is a highly industrialized, centralized, and technologically sophisticated process. Over the last 60 years, the number of farms has decreased and individual farm size has more than doubled, leading to loss of local revenue and threatening small scale family farms. Today, most of our food comes from a small number of very large farms. While 90 percent of farms are classified as small-scale family farms that take in less than \$250,000 a year, these farms account for less than 25 percent of

<sup>30</sup> Helper, S., Krueger, T., & Wial, H (2012). *Locating American manufacturing: Trends in the geography of production*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

<sup>31</sup>Schilling, B.J. and Sullivan, K.P. (2006). *The economic importance of New Jersey's food system in 2002*. Food Policy Institute, Rutgers University. Retrieved from <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=E332>

<sup>32</sup> California Employment Development Department. (2009). *Labor Market Info: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*. Retrieved from <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1016>

<sup>33</sup> Centers of Excellence. (2011). *Agricultural Value Chain for California*. Retrieved from [http://www.coecc.net/Environmental\\_Scans/ag\\_scan\\_cv\\_11.pdf](http://www.coecc.net/Environmental_Scans/ag_scan_cv_11.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011). *Occupational Employment and Wages*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.htm>

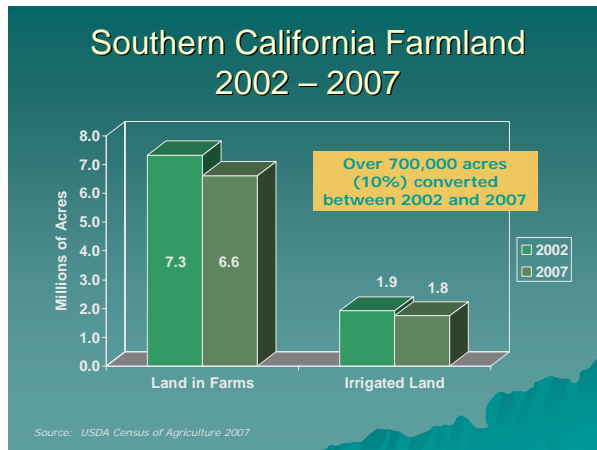
<sup>35</sup> Op. cit. 5

<sup>36</sup> US Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012). *Injuries, Illnesses and Fatalities*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/iif/#tables>

<sup>37</sup> Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy. (2008). *Poverty, jobs, and the Los Angeles economy: An annual analysis of US Census data and the challenges facing our region*. Los Angeles, CA: LAANE.

total agricultural production value<sup>38</sup>—which means that 10 percent of farms account for 75 percent of our food supply.<sup>39</sup>

Small and mid-size producers who don't have the capacity to supply large retail buyers like supermarkets are left with few options. Many sell off their farms or work for contract. These trends reflect in Southern California as well. The region lost 10 percent of its farm land from 2002-2007<sup>40</sup>. Nationally in the last five years, the number of smaller farms (earning between \$50,000 and \$500,000) declined by 22 percent.



Los Angeles has lost 3 percent of our designated agriculture lands, while our farm sizes are decreasing by 13 percent, over the past five years.<sup>41</sup> The total gross value of agricultural crops and commodities produced in Los Angeles County during 2006 was more than \$270 million, which reflects a continuing decline from prior years.<sup>42</sup> Harvested acreage for vegetable crops dropped by 30 percent, while fruit and nut crops increased by 14.6 percent.<sup>43</sup>

Number of Farms and Sales 2007 Percent of Total

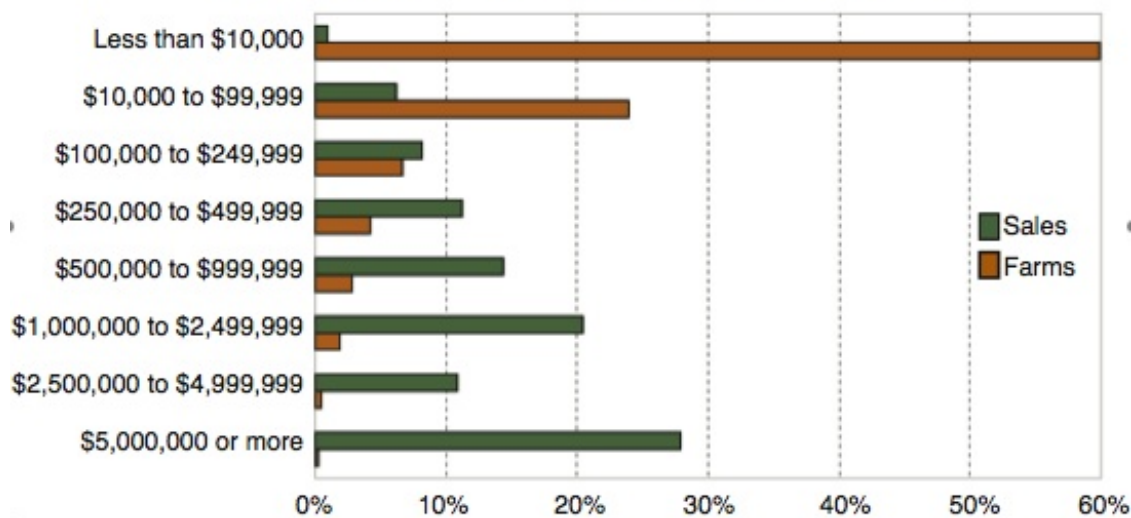


Chart Source: USDA 2007 Agricultural Census

<sup>38</sup> National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. (2009). *USDA Census of Agriculture, 2007*. USDA. Retrieved from <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Los Angeles County Farm Bureau. (2006). *Los Angeles County Crop Report*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Farm Bureau.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

# [3] Improving the Food System

## What is a Good Food System?

Good Food is the new paradigm within our food system — encouraging the production, distribution, accessibility and consumption of high quality food within Southern California. A Good Food system:

- Prioritizes the health and well being of people and the environment,
- Protects and strengthens our biodiversity and natural resources throughout the region,
- Ensures that healthy, high-quality food is affordable and accessible to all,
- Contributes to a thriving economy where all participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation and fair treatment.

Los Angeles County spends over \$25 billion on food and approximately \$4 billion on produce each year. Imagine if we could redirect just one tenth, or \$2.5 billion, of that money towards developing a Good Food system: a system that provides opportunities for small farmers to thrive, for workers to receive just compensation and fair treatment, for local economies to rebuild, and to reduce our environmental footprint, all while increasing access to and consumption of fresh, high-quality, culturally relevant and nutritious food, particularly in communities most impacted by food system inequities.

Our work encourages shifts in our regional food system to support local growers, sustainable agriculture, fair working conditions and to address the problem of healthy food access in many neighborhoods. This shift can be achieved by:

- 1) Building market demand for healthy food that is produced fairly and sustainably in order to increase its affordability and availability

### GOOD FOOD IS:

#### HEALTHY

- Meets the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Is delicious, safe, and aesthetically pleasing.

#### AFFORDABLE

- People of all income levels are able to purchase.

#### FAIR

- All participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation and fair treatment, free from exploitation.
- High quality food is equitably, physically, and culturally accessible to all.

#### SUSTAINABLE

- Produced, processed, distributed and recycled locally using the principles of environmental stewardship (including best practices in water, soil, and pesticide management).



2) Creating infrastructure that delivers good food to underserved communities

3) And increasing equitable access to healthy food in underserved communities through coordinated microenterprise support and development.



## Summary of Strategic Goals and Objectives for 2012 - 2013

The Good Food Office has identified the following objectives as priorities for immediate implementation in 2012:

1. Develop a coordinated **healthy food neighborhoods strategy**, with a focus on neighborhood market conversions.
2. Implement a **Good Food Procurement Policy** that leverages demand from large institutional purchasers.
3. Develop a **Food Hub enterprise** that can support local growers, connect retailers in low-income areas to locally produced food and provide business incubation for value added and prepared foods.

Overall goals and objectives for 2012-2013 are listed below, and the high priority objectives are described in detail on the pages that follow.

### *2012 Strategic Goals*

#### **1. Build the market for Good Food**

- a. Adoption of model local, healthy, and sustainable food procurement policies by public agencies, schools, hospitals, restaurants and other institutions **(HIGH PRIORITY)**
- b. Adopt the Good Food Pledge by individuals
- c. Raise public awareness through two high profile city wide events per year.

#### **2. Increase equitable access to healthy food in underserved communities**

- a. Create healthy food neighborhoods through a coordinated place-based strategy that connects multiple projects and food assets together to transform food environments in underserved communities **(HIGH PRIORITY)**
- b. Convert neighborhood markets and corner stores into healthy food stores through a coordinated effort with key stakeholders **(HIGH PRIORITY)**



- c. Implement a Healthy Food Cart program: increase the availability of healthy street food, including permitting the sale of food on city sidewalks and incentives to encourage more mobile vendors to sell healthy items
- d. Expand farmers' market access by increasing the acceptance of Federal nutrition benefits at farmers' market
- e. Promote opportunities and policies that expand access to community gardens in low-income neighborhoods
- f. Support the California Freshworks Fund initiative to locate independent grocers and opportunity sites in underserved communities.



### **3. Build the infrastructure for a Good Food System**

- a. Develop a Regional Food Hub enterprise to connect small and mid-sized local growers to underserved urban communities **(HIGH PRIORITY)**
- b. Operationalize cooperative purchasing mechanism for neighborhood market that connects them to low-cost, locally produced food.

### **4. Advance and help implement healthy school food initiatives and programs**

- a. Continue to work closely with LAUSD on supporting its healthy food initiatives, and provide technical assistance for Good Food Procurement policies.

## ***2013 Strategic Goals***

### **1. Advance prioritized urban agriculture policy recommendations**

- a. Create guidelines for edible landscapes in parkways
- b. Support the development of edible landscapes in affordable housing units
- c. Map city-owned land available for community gardens
- d. Increase the composting of food waste.

### **2. Urban aquaculture**

- a. Develop the capacity for large scale commercial production of fish as part of a food hub.

### **3. Create a Healthy Food Cart program**

- a. Continue work to legalize street vending of healthy foods.

# GOAL: Increase Equitable Access to Healthy Food in Underserved Communities

## PRIORITY: Creating Healthy Food Neighborhoods

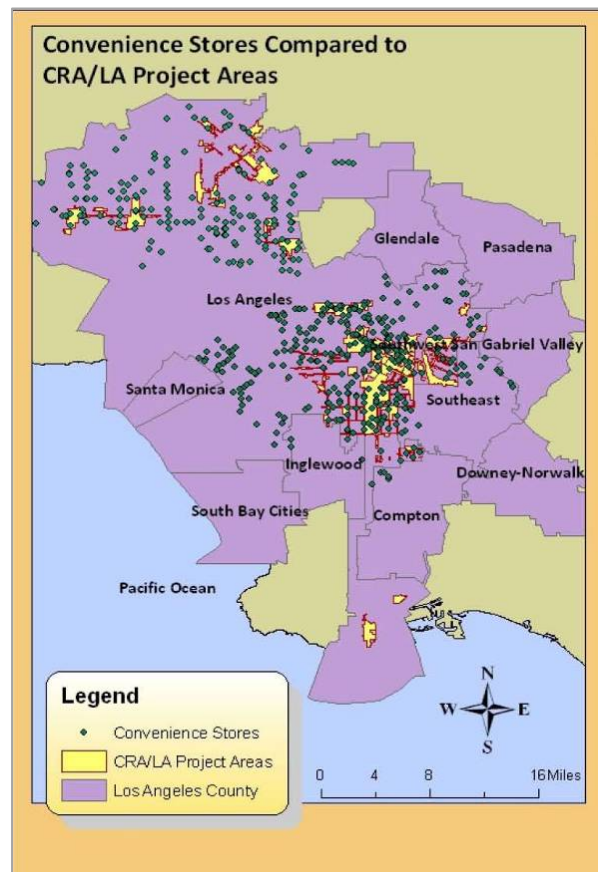
### *The Importance of Creating Healthy Food Neighborhoods*

Recent studies indicate that grocery store concentration alone is a limited solution for addressing the problems of healthy food access in underserved communities. According to invited commentary in the Archives of Internal Medicine by Dr. Jonathan Fielding (Health Officer for Los Angeles County and Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health) and Los Angeles Food Policy Council member Dr. Paul Simon (Director, Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health), the effort to attract supermarkets to so-called 'food deserts' is important, but it is not sufficient.<sup>44</sup> In supermarkets, healthy foods need to be prominently placed, priced competitively and look attractive to trend consumer behavior toward healthier eating.

For an effective strategy, the entire neighborhood food environment must be taken into account. The statewide Network for a Healthy California has pioneered a robust formula for evaluating neighborhood food environments that goes beyond the presence of supermarkets alone and considers fast food outlets, corner stores, farmers' markets, produce vendors, the quality of products and advertisements at all these retail sites as well as government, school and community infrastructure that shape access and quality of food.<sup>45</sup> Though the index has not been applied to Los Angeles County to date, a multidimensional analysis of food environments shapes our strategy to improve neighborhood food environments in greatest need.

### *Five Point Strategy for Healthy Food Neighborhoods*

In collaboration with LAFPC member organizations, we are developing a comprehensive strategy for healthy food access that will have five elements:



<sup>44</sup> Fielding, J.E. & Simon, P.A. (2011). Food deserts or food swamps?: Commentary on "Fast food restaurants and stores". *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 171(13):1171-1172.

<sup>45</sup> California Department of Public Health. (2012). Communities of Excellence (CX3). Retrieved from [http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Pages/CX3\\_Main\\_Navigation.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Pages/CX3_Main_Navigation.aspx)

1. **Community Market Conversions.** Coordinate collaborative initiative to transform neighborhood market and convenience stores in South and East Los Angeles into healthy food retailers.
2. **Healthy Street Cart Vending.** Authorize street food vending in the City of Los Angeles and provide incentives for vendors to offer healthy fare.
3. **Community Gardens.** Promote opportunities and policies that expand access to community gardens in low-income neighborhoods. Connect community gardeners to food security efforts and community market conversions.
4. **Farmers' Markets.** Ensure all farmers' markets accept Federal nutrition benefits, including Cal-Fresh (nationally referred to as SNAP- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as the Food Stamps Program) and Women, Infant, Children (WIC), expand coverage of incentive programs which double the purchasing power of low-income residents, and work with partners to promote farmers' markets in low-income areas.
5. **Supermarket Attraction.** Identify incentives and opportunities to attract and develop full service grocery stores in underserved parts of the city in partnership with the California Freshworks Fund.

### **Proposed Implementation Steps for Community Market Conversion Collaborative**

To anchor the healthy food neighborhood strategy, we are prioritizing the incubation of a Community Market Conversion collaborative focused on South Los Angeles. The collaborative consists of organizations with the capacity and track record to carry out the critical functions necessary for the transformation of neighborhood markets and convenience stores into healthy community grocers. The goal is to transform up to 15 neighborhood markets in South Los Angeles by June 2013. By combining expertise in economic development, business development, community organizing and health promotion, the collaborative initiative will be able to provide the following resources and services:

1. **Economic Development.** Resources and incentives through public and private sectors for physical store improvements and new equipment.
2. **Business Development.** Technical and marketing training to develop the operational capacity of stores to successfully market and promote healthy grocery inventory.
3. **Community Organizing & Demand Generation.** Promote healthy eating, generate demand for

### **Healthy Corner Store Programs**

*"[Chicago Mayor Rahm] Emanuel promised to halve the city's food deserts — neighborhoods without healthy food outlets — by the end of his first term. Yet in the eight months since he gathered chief executives from major grocery chains and pushed them to put stores in underserved communities, few have opened. Meanwhile, Mr. Emanuel took another approach: persuading corner stores, seen by some as a part of the food-desert problem, to sell fresh fruits and vegetables."*

New York Times, "How About a Nice Fresh Orange to Go With Your Cheetos?" February 11, 2012

### **Other Cities with Healthy Corner Store Programs:**

Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Hartford, Louisville, Minneapolis, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C.

new healthy products, connect residents and neighborhood institutions to the stores, and ensure sustainable support for market conversion.

4. **Local Sourcing Mechanism** to help stores connect to regional growers and keep distribution costs low.

Through its “backbone” role in the food policy collective impact initiative, the LAFPC will coordinate the various components of the Community Market Conversion initiative in South Los Angeles to generate a streamlined, collaborative program. The LAFPC will leverage the expertise of its network for specialized technical assistance related to sourcing, handling and merchandising fresh, healthy food products.

Additionally, LAFPC will supply strategic research on best practices and innovations in the field of corner store/neighborhood market conversions. One key research project is to determine the feasibility of a cooperative purchasing mechanism among store owners that enables small markets to cost effectively source locally produced food, perhaps to the Food Hub enterprise.



*Basic produce installation from CRA/LA's Community Market Conversion Program Pilot.  
Estimated impact of store conversion: 13,500 households with expanded food access.*

### ***The Benefits of Neighborhood Market Conversions***

Corner store or neighborhood market conversion is a national strategy to address disparities in food access. Convenience stores are a critical link in the food chain in many low-income neighborhoods. A RAND study identified corner stores, typically stocked with high-caloric, low-nutrient processed foods, as a more pervasive problem for the health of South Los Angeles residents than fast food restaurants.<sup>46</sup> One study in *Pediatrics* identified that 53 percent of youth in Philadelphia stop at a corner store at least once a day.<sup>47</sup> Transforming convenience stores into healthy markets focused on fresh produce creates more fresh food options for communities that need it, thereby improving chances to reduce health disparities.

<sup>46</sup> Sturm, R. & Cohen, D.A. (2009). Zoning for health?: The year-old ban on new fast-food restaurants in South LA. *Health Affairs*, 28(6): 1088-1097.

<sup>47</sup> Borradaile, K.E., Sherman, S., Vander Veur, S.S., McCoy, T., Sandoval, B., Nachmani, J., Karpyn, A. & Foster, G.D. (2009). Snacking in children: The role of urban corner stores. *Pediatrics*, 124, 1293-1298. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2009-0964

Across the country, low-income areas tend to have 30 percent more convenience stores than upper-income areas.<sup>48</sup> South Los Angeles has twice as many small stores than the County average and three times as many convenience stores as West Los Angeles.<sup>49</sup> Targeting change in the existing food retail environment, as a parallel strategy to supermarket development, generally requires less time and financial resources.

**Overall benefits of neighborhood market conversion:**

1. **Economic:** Neighborhood market conversions have the potential to catalyze neighborhood level development in areas needing revitalization, build localized wealth and save or create jobs.
2. **Social:** Neighborhood markets serve as a community or cultural hub, where market owners can respond to local resident needs and provide culturally-meaningful food and health information.
3. **Environmental:** Neighborhood markets are easily able to source locally grown food, including that from urban farms and gardens, which means less travel distance for food as well as increased viability for local and regional growing.



## **GOAL: Build Market Demand for Good Food to Increase Affordability and Availability**

### **PRIORITY: Good Food Procurement Policies Adopted by Major Institutions**

#### ***The Importance of Good Food Procurement***

Los Angeles County spends over \$25 billion on food and accounts for the largest produce market in the country with approximately \$4 billion spent on produce each year. Due to the size of the Los Angeles market, a key priority of our work is to leverage the purchasing power of large-scale institutions like government agencies, hospitals and universities to promote local, sustainable food systems. **Our goal in Los Angeles is for at least five major institutions to adopt Good Food procurement policies by June of 2013.**

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<sup>48</sup> Ob. cit. 43.

<sup>49</sup> SOb. cit. 47.

## ***LAFPC Good Food Procurement Strategy***

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC), in consultation with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, has developed a Good Food Procurement Policy: model guidelines for food service establishments in assessing and purchasing Good Food (food that is healthy, affordable, fairly produced and distributed, and sustainably grown) in the Los Angeles region. The guidelines include suggested measures and practical steps to implementing those measures.

The Good Food procurement policy priorities, scaled similarly to LEED green building certification, emphasize the following values:

1. **Local Economies** – Family-scale agriculture and food processing within the local area or region.
2. **Health** – Promote health and well-being by offering generous portions of vegetables, fruit and whole grains and reducing salt, added sugars, fats and oils, and eliminating artificial additives.
3. **Environmental Sustainability** – Producers employ sustainable production systems that reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers; avoid the use of hormones, antibiotics, and genetic engineering; conserve soil and water; protect and enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity; and reduce on-farm energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
4. **Valued Workforce** – Provide safe and fair working conditions for the providers of the products consumed.
5. **Animal Welfare** – Provide healthy and humane care for livestock.

Institutions will be asked to sign the Good Food pledge, which is a commitment to working with the LAFPC Good Food Procurement Working Group to implement suggested Good Food guidelines. The long term goal of this program will be to quantify sourcing metrics and then certify Good Food institutions by participating in a third party program such as *Green Restaurant Certification* or *Green Seal™*.

### ***Proposed Implementation Steps for City of Los Angeles***

By implementing good food procurement standards within City departments, the City of Los Angeles can demonstrate national leadership through our commitment to providing healthy, locally produced food that lessens the environmental impact of our food procurement practices and encourages significant investment in our regional food system.

**The model Good Food guidelines developed by the LA Food Policy Council align closely with several existing purchasing policies in**



the City of Los Angeles, which can be applied to food and strengthened, including:

- **City of Los Angeles’ Local Preference Ordinance**, which awards local businesses seeking government contracts by assigning them eight percent greater value on their bids and proposals in an effort to retain and attract local businesses, create jobs and generate more revenues for the City.
- **City of Los Angeles’ Business Inclusion Program**, which encourages an increased number of contracts awarded to small businesses and businesses owned by minorities, women and disabled veterans.
- **City of Los Angeles’ Child Nutrition Policy**, which directs City departments to provide healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruits and vegetables, at City-funded programs for children.
- **City of Los Angeles’ Sweat Free Purchasing Policy**, which requires all vendors who fulfill contracts for goods and materials to comply with the Department of General Services Code of Conduct defining acceptable labor standards.
- **City of Los Angeles’ Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy**, which promotes the purchase of recycled and other environmentally preferable products whenever they meet price and performance requirements.
- **Mayor Villaraigosa’s Executive Directive 14**, which provides goals for City departments to increase the number of small, women, minority, and disabled veteran-owned businesses that participate in City contracting.
- **A City resolution declaring Sundays “Eat Local, Buy California Grown Day”** in Los Angeles. The resolution, by Councilmembers Alarcon and LaBonge, was based on an Assembly Concurrent Resolution (Ma), which was passed in both the Assembly and Senate.<sup>50</sup>

In addition, there are several recent City Council motions regarding food procurement which show the growing interest and policy direction of the city regarding good food.<sup>51</sup>



<sup>50</sup> Los Angeles City Council. (Adopted 2011, July 1). *Eat Local, Buy California Grown Days*. Council File No. 11-1106.

<sup>51</sup> Examples include: (1) A Koretz/Huizar/Garcetti motion requests that all City departments adopt local food procurement goals. This motion was developed with the LA Food Policy Council. Introduced October 4, 2011. *Local Food Procurement Goals*. Council File No. 11-1678 (2) An Englander/Perry motion, which directs the Library Department and the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a plan for phasing out the sales of soda in facility vending machines. This motion is supported by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Introduced November 1, 2011. *Eliminating Sale of Sodas*. Council File No. 11-1867

In the City of Los Angeles, our proposed implementation steps include:

- **Assess current food purchasing practices** of each food purchasing department through a survey that LAFPC staff adapted from the L.A. County Department of Public Health.
- **Report progress at committee hearing on Good Food Procurement motion** – City Council members will ask City departments and LAFPC to report on survey results to date, and will direct departments to work with LAFPC on establishing Good Food purchasing criteria.
- **Convene standing food systems stakeholder advisory committee through LAFPC Good Food Procurement Working Group** – including issue experts, procurement officers, and food distributors – to assist with gaining institutional commitments and implementation efforts, including connecting purchasers to distributors able to fulfill Good Food standards and providing model language for incorporating Good Food guidelines into contracts and RFPs.
- **Establish Good Food purchasing criteria** for each City department by working in partnership with the departments’ staff members.
- **Determine potential cost impact** - Kaiser Permanente and LA County Department of Public Health have identified cost effective strategies to offset any cost increases that may occur with requesting new menu items. LAUSD has maintained cost neutrality so far due to their economies of scale.
- **Explore strategies to achieve cost neutrality** – minimize cost and operational impact.
- **Pass City Council motion and announce Good Food Pledge** by five major institutions by October 2012.

## Economic Benefits of Buying Locally

A couple examples illustrate some of the economic benefits of buying local food:

### Higher Revenue for Producers

A national study of 15 food supply chains found that producers received more than seven times the price in local food supply chains than in mainstream (e.g. conventional wholesale) chains.

### Local Jobs Created

An input-output analysis for Michigan estimates that almost 2,000 jobs would be created if residents meet USDA fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines by eating more seasonally available Michigan-grown fresh produce.

#### Sources:

1. King, Robert P., Michael S. Hand, Gigi DiGiacomo, Kate Clancy, Miguel I. Gómez, Shermain D. Hardesty, Larry Lev, and Edward W. McLaughlin. 2010. Comparing the Structure, Size, and Performance of Local and Mainstream Food Supply Chains. Economic Research Service Economic Research Report (ERR-99), 81 pp.
2. Connor, David S., William A. Knudson, Michael W. Hamm, and Christopher Peterson. 2008. "The Food System as an Economic Driver: Strategies and Applications for Michigan." *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition* 3(4): 371-383.

## Benefits of Good Food Procurement

Within Los Angeles, hospitals, universities, and restaurants have spearheaded the adoption of local and sustainable food procurement policies to create opportunities for small farmers to thrive, for workers to



receive just compensation and fair treatment, for local economies to rebuild, and to reduce our environmental footprint, all while increasing access to and consumption of fresh and nutritious food, particularly in underserved communities. As more institutions and restaurants join the Good Food movement and build the market for Good Food, infrastructure to distribute Good Food will improve, making it easier for more institutions to participate. Strong and steady demand for good food will increase the affordability and accessibility of good food in all communities.



**Public institutions in particular play a critical role in driving the demand for good food.** Through their reach to some of the most vulnerable populations, including seniors and children, public programs can help ensure that all Angelenos have access to the healthiest foods.

Good Food sourcing benefits include:

1. **Environmental** – Reduces food miles, greenhouse gases, carbon footprints, land degradation. Local food purchases reduce vehicle trip miles (food miles) from an average of 1,500 miles to 56 miles.<sup>52</sup> The production of fruits, vegetables and nuts is lower in terms of greenhouse gas emissions than livestock production, which produces 18 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions – a higher share than transport.<sup>53</sup>
2. **Nutritional** – Encourages increased purchasing of whole foods and local produce. Fresher food has a higher nutritional content and tastes better. The nutritional quality of fruits and vegetables is highest right after harvest and then declines with time. Locally produced fruits and vegetables are higher in nutritional content to the degree to which local sourcing shortens the time between harvest and sale.<sup>54</sup>
3. **Social** – Transforms the supply chain rewarding farmers and food businesses for environmental and socially sustainable business practices;

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<sup>52</sup> Pirog, R. (2003). Checking the food odometer: Comparing food miles for local versus conventional produce sales for Iowa institutions. Ames, IA: Leopold Center for Sustainability.

<sup>53</sup> Ob. cit. 24.

<sup>54</sup> Edwards-Jones, G. (2010). Does eating local food reduce the environmental impact of food production and enhance consumer health? *The Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 69: 582-591.

4. **Economic** – Supports local and regional farmers and food businesses. Local food purchases return three times the purchase price to the local economy, of a food product purchased from an out of state company.<sup>55 56</sup>

**Other Good Food Procurement Policies:**

Cities, states, and other large-scale institutions around the country are adopting good food procurement policies.

Jurisdiction	Good Food Procurement Policy
New York City	Requires that all city agencies request sourcing information from contractors, which is being compiled and will be used to assist agencies in procuring food grown in New York State.
San Francisco	An executive directive mandates that all departments will purchase local and sustainable foods for meetings to the maximum extent possible and that city lease agreements with food vendors shall give preference to, or require the sale of healthy and sustainable food.
Philadelphia	Modified vending requirements for city departments to include nutritional and energy efficiency standards.
Los Angeles County	Developing standards which promote healthy, nutritious food procurement for county facilities.
Louisville School District	Set and exceeded a goal of 12 percent local food procurement by 2012. School districts in Boston, Philadelphia and Portland also have local food procurement policies.
Illinois	Set a goal of sourcing 20 percent of food purchased by state agencies and state-owned facilities locally by 2020.
Kaiser Permanente	Set a goal of sourcing 15 percent sustainable food by 2012, and maintains minimum annual levels of sustainable food procurement, to increase at two percent per year.
University of California	Aims to achieve a goal of 20 percent sustainable food sourcing by 2020.

<sup>55</sup> King, R.P., Hand, M.S., DiGiacomo, G., Clancy, K., Gómez, M. I., Hardesty, S.D., Lev, L. & McLaughlin, E.W. (2010). Comparing the structure, size, and performance of local and mainstream food supply chains. Washington, DC: United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

<sup>56</sup> Connor, D. S., Knudson, W. A., Hamm, M.W., & Peterson, C. (2008). The food system as an economic driver: Strategies and applications for Michigan. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, 3(4): 371-383.

## GOAL: Build the Infrastructure for Good Food

### PRIORITY: Develop a Regional Food Hub

In collaboration with public, private and non-profit partners, we are developing plans for a regional food hub to provide infrastructure support for healthy food access.

#### *The Importance of Regional Food Hubs*

Regional Food Hubs are an emerging business model that offers aggregation and distribution services for small and midsize producers and are critical infrastructure for expanding local and regional food systems as an economic development, job creation, public health, and environmental strategy. It creates a dedicated supply chain that connects local produce growers to the urban food distribution system, developing greater growing capacity and improving product affordability. The USDA supports the development of regional food hubs because they are key leverage points for building robust regional food systems.

Ownership structures, management practices and community benefits differentiate Hubs from traditional farmers' markets, public markets or terminal markets. Regional Food Hubs include the following defining characteristics:

- **Increased access to Good Food**— for underserved communities and expanded direct-to consumer sales for farmers in food desert neighborhoods;
- **Supply chain infrastructure development** that enables local institutions such as schools, municipal agencies, hospitals, restaurants, corner stores, and other retail outlets to increase their local food procurement;
- **Expanded markets for small and midsize local growers;**
- **Good job creation throughout the food chain**, including incubation of community kitchens developing value added food products;



#### **Regional Food Hubs Add Value to the System**

**Regional food hubs complement and add considerable value to the current food distribution system:**

For institutional and retail buyers that would like to “buy local,” food hubs can reduce transaction costs by providing a single point of purchase for consistent and reliable supplies of source-identified products from local and regional producers.

Furthermore, by fulfilling small farm aggregation functions, regional food hubs can add significant value to the more traditional distribution channels by partnering with regional food distributors—along with their national food distribution clients and partners—enabling them to offer a broader and more diverse selection of local or regional products than they would be able to source otherwise.

*(USDA, Regional Food Hub Resource Guide, Barham et. al., April 2012)*

- **Streamlined local purchasing** for customers to purchase source-verified local foods, which are grown and distributed with decreased environmental impact;
- **Increased education of residents** about available nutrition assistance programs and emerging market outlets; and
- **Permanent market and distribution facilities** which contribute to the local economy through job creation and the economic multipliers of local purchasing.

### ***The Benefits of Regional Food Systems and Food Hubs***

Local and regional food systems can offer many benefits including 1) improved health and well-being of communities, 2) increased access to healthy, high quality affordable food, 3) contribute to a thriving local economy including job creation, and 4) protecting and strengthening biodiversity and natural resources.

As stated by the President’s Council of Economic Advisors, which identifies the support of local food systems as a top priority of the Administration:<sup>57</sup>

“Local food systems promote healthful living through increased availability of fresh food to underserved areas and the provision of better information on where food was grown. Locally grown food also may have greater nutrition value, since it does not have to be picked as early or treated to maintain freshness for transport to distant places. Finally, local food systems may reduce income variability and increase the share of the final product price that goes to farmers.”

Food hubs provide the necessary infrastructure to scale up supply of good food and connect urban consumers to foodshed producers, offering the following benefits:

1. **Economic** – Food hubs provide opportunities for more local food procurement at a larger scale, which can support small businesses, create jobs, generate business taxes, and increase earnings

### **The Multiple Benefits of Food Hubs**

Regional food hubs are having significant economic, social, and environmental impacts within their communities. Even though many food hubs are relatively new, they demonstrate innovative business models that can be financially viable and also make a difference in their respective communities.

**Economically**, they are showing impressive sales performance and helping to retain and create new jobs in the food and agricultural sectors.

**Socially**, food hubs are providing significant production-related marketing, and enterprise development support to new and existing producers in an effort to build the next generation of farmers and ranchers. In addition, many food hubs make a concerted effort to expand their market reach into underserved areas where there is lack of healthy, fresh food.

**Environmentally**, food hubs are helping to build producers’ capacity to develop more reliable supplies of sustainably grown local and regional products and are reducing energy use and waste in the distribution process.

*(USDA, Regional Food Hub Resource Guide, Barham et. al., April 2012)*

<sup>57</sup> Council of Economic Advisers. (2010). *Strengthening the rural economy*. Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President.

throughout the region as production increases locally.<sup>58</sup>

A recent study by the Centers of Excellence office of the California Community Colleges found that the agriculture value chain has a significant impact on the California economy, with most of the jobs (59 percent) in the agricultural support sector. The study projected that the **Los Angeles and Orange County region would experience 53,476 new jobs** in that sector over the next five years -- the largest number of new jobs, in that sector, in the state. However, the study also projected a loss of agriculture production jobs throughout the state.



Since agricultural support jobs depend on agricultural production, support for local agriculture is important from a jobs perspective in addition to the well known health and environmental benefits.

2. **Environmental** – As the key infrastructure to scaling up supply of local food, food hubs offer important environmental benefits in terms of shortening the supply chain and reducing trip miles from farmer to consumer, as well as promoting the adoption or use of sustainable or environmentally sound agricultural production practices from smaller scale farmers that generally use less intensive farming practices.<sup>59</sup>

3. **Nutrition and Food Access** – Food hubs make it easier for municipal agencies, hospitals, schools and neighborhood markets to purchase high-quality, healthy and local food more affordably. By providing services such as insurance, food safety quality control, distribution, processing, marketing and establishing relationships among buyers, food hubs help eliminate the barriers along the supply chain that make it difficult for producers to meet the requirements of these wholesale buyers that operate in food desert neighborhoods. In addition, by shortening the supply chain and the time between harvest and consumption, consumers have access to fresher food, which has a higher nutritional content.<sup>60</sup> Fresh produce also tastes better, encouraging greater consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.

#### Local Sourcing on a National Scale

“The U.S. Conference of Mayors Food Policy Task Force will explore local food sourcing as a means to increase access to healthy food, while supporting the local economy.”

– Mayor Thomas Menino  
Boston, MA

<sup>58</sup> Barham, J., Tropp, D., Enterline, K., Farbman, J., Fisk, J., & Kiraly, S. (2012). Regional food hub resource guide. Washington, DC: United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Op. cit. 56.

# [5] About The Los Angeles Food Policy Council

## About the Food Policy Council

The Food Policy Council model is a policy and governance innovation that brings together diverse stakeholders to study a local food system and offer recommendations for policy change. FPC members represent the full spectrum of food system activities: they are typically farmers, gardeners, chefs and restaurateurs, food processors and wholesalers, grocers, consumers, anti-hunger and food security advocates and government representatives.

**The purpose of the food policy council is to bring together leaders from across sectors, geographies, and socio-economic communities to build new relationships and to strengthen, facilitate, and coordinate systemic change.**

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC) is a collective impact initiative, working to make Southern California a Good Food region for everyone- where food is healthy, affordable, fair and sustainable.

Through policy creation, new cooperative relationships, and systemic change, its goals are improve the health and well-being of our residents particularly in low-income communities and communities of color; develop a thriving good food economy for everyone; and strengthen agricultural and environmental stewardship throughout the region. In particular, the LAFPC aims to connect environmental sustainability and local agriculture with efforts to expand access to healthy food in underserved communities.

## 2011 Achievements

While there are a number of community-based social and environmental organizations operating in L.A. County, the LAFPC is the only organization that works specifically on implementing a “Good Food for All Agenda” for the region. In its first year, the LAFPC has achieved the following:

### Collective Impact & Social Change

“Large scale social change comes from better cross sector coordination rather than from the isolated intervention of an individual organization...substantially greater progress could be made in alleviating many of our most serious and complex social problems if non-profits, governments, businesses and the public were brought together around a common agenda to create collective impact.”

*Excerpt from: John Kania and Mark Kramer. January 2011. “Collective Impact,” Stanford Social Innovation Review.*

### LAFPC at a Glance

#### **Organization:**

CEO-level Council (maximum of 40 members), plus an extended network of hundreds of stakeholder organizations which participate in Working Groups.

#### **Reach:**

A well developed network of over 300 diverse food system stakeholders representing over 180 organizations and businesses.

#### **Reputation:**

The largest and most advanced food policy council in the state, with the broadest reach of any such council in the country.

**1. Organized a network of over 300 stakeholders into a thriving and cohesive collaborative**

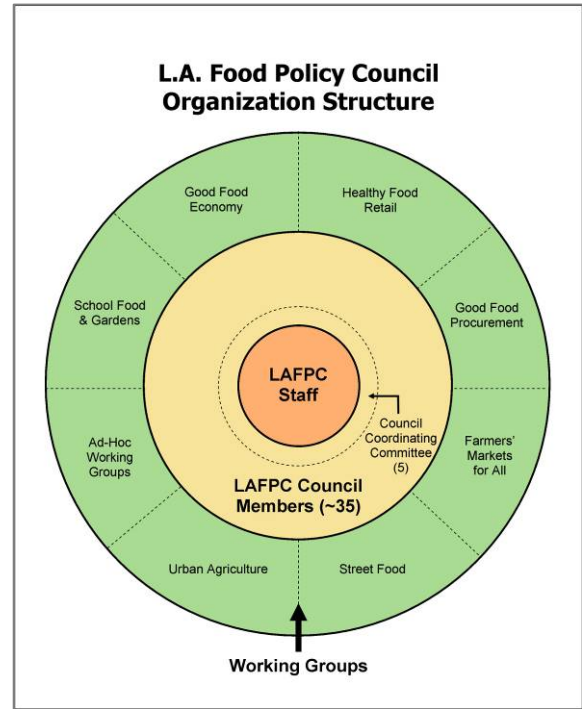
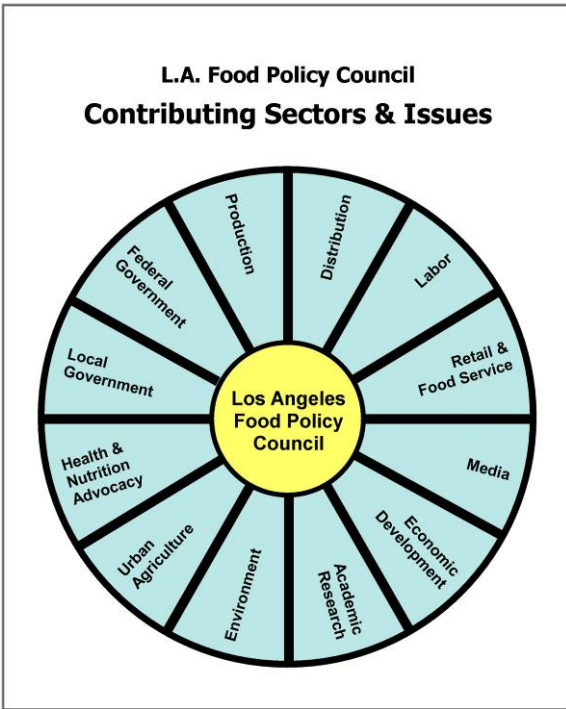
- The LAFPC has developed a highly facilitated stakeholder coalition process in a unique Working Group structure, which has led to:
  - Refinement of priorities from Good Food For All Agenda
  - Implementation strategies and tools
- More than 100 people attend and actively participate in policy and program development in working group meetings, organized in the following categories: Good Food Economy, Street Food, Good Food Procurement, Farmers' Markets for All, Healthy Food Retail, Urban Agriculture, and School Food and Gardens. Each working group has identified its leadership and adheres to the LAFPC working process and protocols.



**2. Advanced the Good Food for All Agenda**

- In coordination with the Mayor's office, LAFPC developed a US Conference of Mayors resolution on Regional Food Hubs, which was adopted in 2011.
- The Street Food Working Group developed a proposal to legalize street food vending, with incentives for street vendors to comply with nutritional guidelines developed by the working group.
- The Good Food Procurement Working Group created a Good Food purchasing template and resource guide for foodservice bids and contracts.
- Developed a Los Angeles City Council motion to adopt Good Food procurement policies for the city.
- Convened meetings and discussions with LAUSD which catalyzed three LAUSD school food policies and practices including a ban on serving flavored milk, local food procurement





policies (achieving 57.4 percent local sourcing), and implementation of breakfast in the classroom program.

- The Healthy Food Retail Working Group developed a plan for workshops designed to facilitate the conversion of corner stores in underserved communities to sell healthy produce and developed plans for Crop to Communities: a Good Food for All Microenterprise Initiative.
- Convened two farmers' market manager meetings to discuss EBT use and formed a partnership with DPH/RENEW on universal access to farmers' markets (including EBT use).
- Coordinated six workshops for Family Farmed Good Food Festival's Food Policy and Public Health Summit.
- Advanced federal policy on the Farm Bill:
  - o Coordinated a Farm Bill Town Hall Listening Session with the California Department of Food and Agriculture
  - o Assisted with the development of a L.A. City Council Farm Bill resolution.

**3. Promoted Public Awareness of the Good Food for All Agenda**

- Developed LAFPC social media infrastructure and a website, consisting of a 60-page food systems resource and information hub, which also includes a member forum.
- Co-hosted 700 person event honoring Eric Schlosser and the 10th anniversary of *Fast Food Nation* at Occidental College.
- Led the organizing of more than 40 events by over 60 organizations across the county for na-



tional Food Day on October 24, 2011, in partnership with LA County Department of Public Health.

- In partnership with the Mayor’s office, conducted a citywide awareness and volunteer service event on March 31, 2012 called Good Food Day LA – A Day of Service, with an estimated attendance of 3,000 Angelenos.



## The LAFPC Working Groups

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council is the backbone organization for seven Working Groups, each dedicated to a categorical goal of the Good Food For All Agenda. The Working Groups meet at least every other month to develop new projects, events and policy recommendations. Each Working Group elects a chair to facilitate the process, and Food Policy Council members participate in the Working groups.

### Good Food Economy Working Group

The Good Food Economy Working Group provides recommendations on the infrastructure, legal structures and public awareness necessary to create a fair, vibrant local food economy for everyone’s benefit. Activities of the Working Group include mentorship on the Food Hub enterprise initiative, review of various municipal codes that infringe on Good Food activities in the city, and connecting organized labor and food advocates around a common cause.

### Backbone Organizations

“...backbone organizations serve six essential functions: providing overall strategic direction, facilitating dialogue between partners, managing data collection and analysis, handling communications, coordinating community outreach, and mobilizing funding.”

*Excerpt from: Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work (Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2012; Hanleybrown, Kania, Kramer)*

### **Street Food Working Group**

The Street Food Working Group is focused on cultivating Good Food on the city's vibrant sidewalks and streets as an opportunity to expand access to nutritious foods in low-income communities as well as promote food entrepreneurs. The Working Group is developing policy recommendations to increase the availability of healthy street food, including permitting the sale of food on city sidewalks and incentives to encourage more mobile vendors to sell healthy items.

### **Good Food Procurement Working Group**

The Good Food Procurement Working Group's purpose is to leverage purchasing power of large institutions and restaurants to increase demand for Good Food in the Los Angeles area. The Working Group seeks to shift our current food system from conventional products to a greater emphasis on local, sustainable food by encouraging institutions like schools, restaurants, hospitals, universities and local government to develop robust food procurement policies.



### **Farmers' Markets For All Working Group**

The Farmers' Markets for All Working Group focuses on improving the accessibility and affordability of fresh food for residents of all income levels through farmers' markets. The priority tactics are to increase CalFresh and WIC outreach and acceptance at LA County farmers' markets through policy change and peer to peer mentoring and to help establish a countywide Market Match Fund to offer financial incentives for CalFresh purchases at farmers' markets.

### **Healthy Food Retail Working Group**

The Healthy Food Retail Working Group focuses on creating equitable access to healthy food in low-income and communities of color by improving the vitality of the food retail environment through economic development, policy change and community organizing. The Working Group is currently developing trainings and resources for small neighborhood markets in low-income areas that would like to be-

come healthy food retailers. The group is also hosting a research project about racial justice and equity in food advocacy work.

### **Urban Agriculture Working Group**

The Urban Agriculture Working Group fosters the development of a sustainable, local, food-growing system in Los Angeles by facilitating collaboration, research and policy changes. The group is engaged in drafting policy that prioritizes the growing, sharing, selling, and distributing of locally grown food whenever and wherever possible.

### **School Food and Gardens Working Group**

The School Food and Gardens Working Group seeks to strengthen nutrition and food awareness for all students by connecting school gardens, cooking and nutrition programs in the Los Angeles Unified School District and beyond. To achieve this, the group is researching existing regulation locally and nationally on school gardens and nutrition programs as well as creating a video to highlight the best practices and opportunities in Los Angeles.





## THE LOS ANGELES FOOD POLICY COUNCIL GOOD FOOD PLEDGE

**I PLEDGE** to complete the following action items to support the Good Food movement in Los Angeles:

### ACTION ITEMS:

**ENGAGE** with your food! Learn where it came from, how it was grown, and the people who brought it to your plate.

**EAT** at least one seasonal, local fruit or vegetable each day, from your own yard, or from within a 200-mile radius of Los Angeles.

**ENJOY** a family dinner. This is a great opportunity to try a new recipe, get the whole family involved in meal preparation, and to savor the results together.

**CONNECT** and get involved with LAFPC and other Good Food organizations to keep up with Good Food issues and events in Los Angeles. Check out the Connect section of this website for local organizations working on Good Food issues and try out our Day to Day steps.

**IN PLEDGING MY SUPPORT FOR GOOD FOOD,** I will encourage the production and consumption of food that is healthy, affordable, fair and sustainable. I recognize that food choices and actions have the power to reform the food system, sustain local family farmers, food workers, support sustainable farming practices, reward good environmental stewardship and increase access to fresh and healthy foods. I pledge to buy and request Good Food as much as possible.

With this pledge, I declare my commitment to the Good Food movement and join with other concerned eaters to provide lasting support for Good Food within our 200-mile foodshed.

2012 STRATEGIC GOALS	OBJECTIVES
<b>1. Build the market for Good Food</b>	a. Adoption of model local, healthy, and sustainable food procurement policies by public agencies, schools, hospitals, restaurants and other institutions <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Adopt the Good Food Pledge by individuals
	c. Raise public awareness through two high profile city wide events per year
<b>2. Increase equitable access to healthy food in underserved communities.</b>	a. Create healthy food neighborhoods through a coordinated place-based strategy that connects multiple projects and food assets together to transform food environments in underserved communities <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Convert neighborhood markets and corner stores into healthy food stores through a coordinated effort with key stakeholders <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	c. Implement a Healthy Food Cart program: increase the availability of healthy street food, including permitting the sale of food on city sidewalks and incentives to encourage more mobile vendors to sell healthy items
	d. Expand farmers' market access by increasing the acceptance of Federal nutrition benefits at farmers' market
	e. Promote opportunities and policies that expand access to community gardens in low-income neighborhoods.
	f. Support the California Freshworks Fund initiative to locate independent grocers and opportunity sites in underserved communities
<b>3. Build the infrastructure for a Good Food System</b>	a. Develop a Regional Food Hub enterprise to connect small and mid-sized local growers to underserved urban communities <b>(HIGH PRIORITY)</b>
	b. Operationalize cooperative purchasing mechanism for neighborhood market that connects them to low-cost, locally produced food.
<b>4. Advance and help implement healthy school food initiatives and programs</b>	a. Continue to work closely with LAUSD on supporting its healthy food initiatives, and provide technical assistance for Good Food Procurement policies

2013 STRATEGIC GOALS	OBJECTIVES
<b>1. Advance prioritized urban agriculture policy recommendations</b>	a. Create guidelines for edible landscapes in parkways
	b. Support the development of edible landscapes in affordable housing units
	c. Map city-owned land available for community gardens
	d. Increase the composting of food waste
<b>2. Urban aquaculture</b>	Develop the capacity for large scale commercial production of fish as part of a food hub
<b>3. Create a Healthy Food Cart program</b>	Continue work to legalize street vending of healthy foods

