

Realizing a Sustainable Food System for All

An Action Plan for San Diego

Systemic Recommendations

By 2015

- Institute a Food System Council to act as the countywide, coordinating body for fostering collaboration, recommendations, and actions that contribute to a healthy, sustainable, and gainful local food system.
- Develop and finance infrastructure through public and private means that supports the aggregation, processing, distribution, and wholesale of local produce and protein sources.

By 2020

- Create a Food Commissioner position that works in coordination with the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency and Land Use and Environment Group to assure that healthy, local foods are available to all.

Goal 1.1: San Diego Residents Know Where Their Food Comes From, How It's Grown and Who Grows It

1.1 Stakeholder Recommendations

By 2015

- Increase public knowledge about food and food systems (i.e. from production to disposal):
 - Schools adopt a food and agriculture curriculum that includes experiential learning opportunities (e.g., garden-based education, farm tours, etc.).
 - Media outlets cover food from a systems approach recognizing its economic, health, and environmental impacts.
 - Nutrition education campaigns recognize the role of sustainable, regional food systems in healthy eating.
- Increase meaningful engagement of low-income communities in food systems planning dialogue.
 - Increase the number of community groups within food systems planning, implementation and decision-making processes.
 - Provide appropriate language translation and interpretation of reports, meeting materials and format.
 - Use culturally-appropriate language and terminology in discussion of food system issues that reflects the diverse communities of San Diego County.

By 2020

- Support the development and operation of publically and privately-run backyard, community, and school garden training programs.
- Develop promotional campaigns supporting the purchase of San Diego County-grown products:
 - Labels are used recognizing San Diego County grown and raised foods.
 - Awareness campaign promotes participation in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and sales at local farmers' markets.

Goal 1.2: San Diego County Residents, From Infants to Seniors, Consume More Healthful Foods

1.2 Stakeholder Recommendations

By 2015

- Adopt policies that improve the nutritional value of meals and snacks served at childcare, school, senior, healthcare, military and other highly-utilized facilities:
 - Menu offerings and nutritional requirements are consistent with current scientific evidence showing that plant foods promote good health and help individuals maintain a healthy weight.
 - Commodities programs provide foods that support optimal health and nutrition, including plant-based alternative protein products, nondairy milk substitutes, and hormone-free meats.
 - USDA provides training materials regarding nutritional benefits and preparation of new foods introduced to promote optimal health.
 - Government-sponsored nutrition programs incentivize the promotion of plant-based entrees to students.
 - Resources are provided for programs that teach food service workers, parents, and children about healthy eating and promote good dietary habits, including healthy cooking classes.
 - Resources are provided that encourage institutions to serve meals made from scratch.
- Increase access to free, clean drinking water in schools and public facilities.

By 2020

- Give preference to local foods at a price point that is affordable for institutions and profitable for local farmers.
- Encourage Congress to increase funding earmarked for the purchase of fresh, *local* fruits and vegetables.
- Decrease the availability of unhealthy foods and beverages through regulatory and agency policies:
 - Sugar- sweetened beverages and sports drinks are restricted in schools, public facilities, and healthcare institutions serving children.
 - Fast-food establishments are limited (or banned) around public schools and youth attractors (e.g. parks, malls, arcades).

Goal 1.3: All San Diego County Residents Have Access to Affordable, Healthful, Culturally Desirable Foods at all Times

1.3 Stakeholder Recommendations

By 2015

- Encourage a simplified food stamp application process.
- Increase purchasing power of families to attain healthful foods:
 - Partner with the County of San Diego to implement and strengthen activities related to the Nutrition Security Plan (e.g., SNAP outreach and enrollment).
 - Partner with WIC offices to increase redemption of WIC vouchers at farmers' markets.
 - Partner with the County of San Diego and other public and private partners to increase the number of farmers' markets offering dollar match programs, like Fresh Fund, targeted towards SNAP, WIC, and Social Security Income (SSI) recipients.
 - Encourage food banks/pantries to offer food distribution hours more conducive to the schedules of the working poor.

By 2020

- Partner with transportation and planning authorities to ensure safe routes to healthy food outlets, particularly among those living in rural communities and food deserts.
- Encourage all eligible institutions and public schools to participate in federally-funded meal and snack programs, including the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs.
- Increase mobile food access points and supplemental food assistance for North County residents.

By 2030

- Ensure a fair proportion of fresh and healthy food access points (proportional to population) in all communities through:
 - Regulatory policies and development incentives that encourage the establishment of fresh food outlets and grocery stores.
 - Farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs located in underserved communities.
 - Increased acceptance of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) at farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs.
- Improve accessibility, nutrition and amount of culturally appropriate food given by food banks.
 - Ensure nutritious, high-quality foods are donated to food banks.
 - Ensure food is culturally-appropriate for the community receiving donated food.

- Ensure that food bank regulations allow all residents who need supplemental food assistance to receive foods, even if they receive other government assistance.

Goal 1.4: Initiation and Duration of Breastfeeding, the Healthiest First Food, Increases in San Diego County

1.4 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Increase public awareness on the benefits of breastfeeding:
 - Food system discussions include breast feeding, the “first food.”
 - Medical providers and offices deliver consistent breastfeeding messages in prenatal and postpartum follow-up visits.

By 2020

- Create environments that support breastfeeding during the critical first six months of life:
 - Encourage worksites to adopt lactation policies that accommodate breastfeeding employees.
 - Encourage hospitals to adopt baby-friendly policies and practices.

Goal 1.5: San Diego Has Local, Accessible, Adequate Food Supplies for Emergency Preparedness

1.5 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Adopt a multi-agency feeding plan coordinated and supported by the county that limits duplication of efforts and maximizes available resources for a timely and efficient feeding response.
- Ensure transportation plans are in place to account for different emergency contingencies (earthquake, fire, etc.)

By 2020

- Establish mini-warehouse hubs throughout the county that have a regular stock of non-perishables.
- Ensure local community-based organizations currently involved in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) outreach are trained and positioned to implement the Disaster SNAP.

By 2030

- Allocate space in all neighborhoods for food production.

Goal 2.1: San Diego County Increases its Working Lands for Urban and Rural Food Production

2.1 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Determine the economic and production capacity of the regional foodshed, including a survey of urban and agricultural lands and processing, retail, distribution, storage and waste infrastructure
- Allow agriculture by right in all appropriate zoning classifications

By 2020

- Protect the food producing capacity in San Diego County by creating policies and incentives that promote:
 - No net loss in productive agricultural land.
 - Food producing capacity proportional to population growth.
 - Community stewardship through strategies like local water price differentials, protection from invasive species, and property tax strategies.

By 2030

- Cities and unincorporated communities should establish policies and practices that promote diverse food production:
 - Establish policies that encourage the development of new community gardens, particularly in low-income communities.
 - Identify and facilitate the use of available land for community gardens.
 - Plant edible landscaping in public green spaces.
 - Allow residents to operate small-scale food production in homes and neighborhoods.
 - Allow for urban farming— chicken coops, fish farms, beekeeping, small animal husbandry.

Goal 2.2: San Diego Improves its Waterways as Healthful, Sustainable Food Sources for San Diego County Residents

2.2 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Analyze fisheries and aquaculture in San Diego County to assess environmental, economic, and social impacts

By 2020

- Protect water sources from pollution

Goal 2.3 San Diego County Food Producers and Processors Employ Practices that Support Animal Welfare

2.3 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Support successful transition of producers into Proposition 2 compliance without closures or early retirements.

By 2020

- Support a small producer exemption for the on-farm slaughter and wholesale of cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and other animals similar to the existing exemption for chicken and rabbits.
- Support farmers who seek certification programs to inform the public about animal production practices in San Diego County, such as “Animal Welfare Approved,” etc.

Goal 2.4: San Diego County Prioritizes Food Production in Allocation of Available Water Resources

2.4 Stakeholder Recommendations

By 2015

- Support local water agencies and San Diego County Water Authority goals for water use and supply.
- Promote residential water conservation.

By 2020

- Develop water pricing strategies that incentivize home, community garden and commercial food production.
- Create a community supported water program that allows residents to subsidize water usage in local agriculture for food production
- Explore and develop new local water supplies (e.g. recycled water, brine water recovery, desalination, grey water).

Goal 2.5: San Diego County Recycles its Organic Wastes Locally and Makes Compost Available for Local Food Production

2.5 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Increase the collection of food waste from food banks, food pantries, restaurants, schools, and supermarkets and distribution to urban and rural farms for composting and the improvement of soil quality.

By 2020

- Adopt regulations at city, county, and state levels that prohibit the use of compostable green waste (i.e. alternative daily cover) in landfills.

By 2030

- Establish a county green waste recycling and/or BioChar program and facility that designates compost specifically for local food production.

Goal 2.6: San Diego County Reduces Food System-related Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through its Food System

2.6 Stakeholder Recommendations

By 2015

- Support existing strategies that sequester carbon on-farm.

By 2020

- Monitor and identify the local food systems ability to reduce GHG emissions:
 - Assess the capacity of San Diego County farm / ranch land to sequester carbon.
 - Encourage the Air Pollution Control District and Department of Agriculture to develop a metric for the quantification of GHG emissions produced through the local

By 2030

- Support food production and retail facilities in adopting renewable-energy sources and reducing petroleum dependence:
 - Create a local fund to provide no- interest loans or tax credits to food producers and retailers for the purchase of energy saving/producing technologies.
 - Establish an integrated distribution network (i.e. backhauling product) that reduces food miles.
 - Limit (or ban) the use of Styrofoam, plastic bags, and plastic water bottles in public- and private- facilities.
 - food system and assess the carbon footprint of local farms and ranches using standard tools (cool farm or disaggregated greenhouse gas emission).

Goal 3.1: Local and Regional Procurement/Sale of Food Grown in San Diego County Increases

3.1 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Promote and support regional agriculture by connecting rural farms to urban consumers:
 - Network existing and develop new infrastructure to support the accessibility of local foods, including aggregation, processing, and distribution facilities for local produce and meat.
 - Encourage and provide resources for the sourcing of local foods in institutions, healthcare systems, military facilities, restaurants, and fresh food outlets.
 - Ensure that the local, state and federal food purchasing process allows local foods to be sourced as easily and accessibly as nonlocal foods.
 - Adopt local food procurement goals and policies for all county and city agencies.
 - Build a network of growers and local businesses able and willing to source local products.
 - Encourage farmers' markets to provide preferential treatment to San Diego County growers through tiered-stall fees.
 - Create incentives and financing strategies that balance fair prices for local growers and competitive price points desired by local businesses.
- Encourage schools to harvest and procure foods from on-site gardens.
- Promote local, state, and federal food policy development that allows food services and establishments to (purchase, identify, and) source local foods as easily as nonlocal foods
- Adopt policies and practices that ensure low-income communities can fully participate and sustain involvement in local, healthy food activities and business.

By 2020

- Partner with the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation to create an economic development plan for local food production and sale.
- Partner with researchers to study food system policies and their community impact.
- Increase economic incentives for local food businesses:
 - Reduce the cost of liability insurance for small- and mid-sized farmers sourcing to local institutions and retail outlets.
 - Promote public and private investment in affordable and accessible processing and distribution facilities and commercial kitchens
 - Leverage existing funding sources (e.g., Empowerment Zones, Healthy Food Financing Initiative) and tax incentives to support local food production, sourcing, and job development.
 - Provide fast-tracked permitting for businesses sourcing local foods, including sidewalk vendors and grocery stores.
 - Provide umbrella liability coverage for farmers' market vendors in low-income areas.
- Increase amount of local foods used as ingredients in packaged and processed foods.

- Track and quantify the potential and current economic benefit of the local food system.
- Redirect commodity subsidies to local food production and procurement.
- Increase economic incentives for small-scale urban farmers and gardeners.
 - Perform feasibility analysis and educational outreach for backyard gardeners and urban growers to illustrate the benefits of urban gardening and farming.

Goal 3.2: Fishing, Farming, and Ranching Increases for Diverse Groups in San Diego

3.2 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Create affordable pathways for urban farmers in low-income communities to sell locally-grown food within their communities, e.g. reduce cost of Certified Producer certificate for low-income farmers.
- Increase production and processing of culturally-desirable crops and livestock.
- Engage youth as future farmers.

By 2020

- Transfer development rights and purchase of development rights programs established to steward farmland.
- Create facilities to support the processing of wholesale local meats.
- Partner with the Port of San Diego to support new opportunities and markets for locally caught fish
- Assess the economic impact of pests and opportunities for shifting crops to those not impacted.

By 2030

- Provide incentives for new farmers and ranchers committed to working in the San Diego agriculture and livestock industry.
- Assess barriers to entry for and offer technical assistance to new farmers and ranchers from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Dedicate resources to strengthen farmer / ranching training programs in San Diego County, particularly in creating courses and curricula targeting aspiring, new, minority, immigrant, and refugee farmers.

Goal 3.3: The San Diego Food System (Production, Distribution, Processing, Disposal)
Provides Safe, Fair, Meaningful Work

3.3 Stakeholder Recommendations:

By 2015

- Establish incentives and financing strategies that balance fair prices for local growers with competitive price points for local food retail and outlets

By 2020

- Adopt standards that require food production, sourcing, and retail businesses receiving government subsidies to establish and abide by fair wage and job standards for all employees
- Create models for collective bargaining structures that ensure fair wages and job standards in all sectors of the food system