Sacramento Food System Assessment and Partnership Project

October 2020 - September 2022

Why Assess the Sacramento County Food System?

The abundance and prosperity of Sacramento’s food system is not fairly distributed across neighborhoods, working people, farmers, or business owners. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased food insecurity and put food chain workers at risk.

Sacramento deserves equitable food systems, where a person’s race, age, or income does not determine their ability to access food, health, and opportunity.

The Sacramento Food System Assessment will lay the foundation for a fair, resilient, post-COVID-19 food system and action plan in Sacramento County.

In Sacramento County:

- 43% of low-income adults are not able to afford enough food (CHIS)
- 14% of the population is enrolled in CalFresh food assistance (CDSS)
- 59.5% of children are enrolled in free and reduced lunch (CDE)
- 3.4 million tons of food is produced in the Sac region, while only 2% of this is consumed locally (SACOG)
- In the Sacramento Region, areas lacking sufficient supermarket access tend to be located in communities of color. Asian or Pacific Islander communities are more likely to lack sufficient supermarket access. (Healthy Sac Coalition)

Food insecurity is the tip of the iceberg in a food system where workers are often the lowest paid in the economy. Meanwhile, farmers and business owners of color face system-wide barriers to opportunity.

This project begins implementation of healthy food access policies, adopted in Dec. 2019 as part of the Sacramento County Environmental Justice Element (page 35, EJ-12).

Funding for The Sacramento Food System Assessment and Partnership Project was made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant AM190100XXXG176. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

*Published November 2020

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The Sacramento County Food System Assessment will engage partners & neighborhoods in a collaborative goal-setting and research process. The assessment will deepen understanding of opportunities and barriers for racial equity, climate resilience and other themes identified by stakeholders in each sector of the food system.

**Food System Sectors:**
- Small to Mid-scale Farmers & Resilient Agriculture
- Community Retail & Urban Agriculture
- Emergency Food Access
- Food Chain Workers & Workforce Development
- School & Institutional Purchasing
- Finance, Marketing, & Food Business Development
- Local Food Processing, Distribution, and Marketing
- Government Agency Engagement & Local Food and Farm Policy

**Project Activities**
- Evaluate Market & Land Access for Small to Mid-Scale Farmers
- Assess Needs for Investment in Local Processing, Distribution & Institutional Purchasing
- Evaluate Equitable Financing Opportunities for Small Businesses & Farms
- Understand Opportunities for Health and Environmental Justice in our Neighborhoods
- Project Approach: People Centered Food System Assessment
- Survey Need for Healthful & Culturally Relevant Food Access

**Project Timeline:**

**Oct 2020 - Jan 2021:**
Initial Project Planning, Coordination and Visioning.

**Feb 2021 - Jan 2022:**
Community & Stakeholder Engagement, Food System Goal-Setting, Data Collection, Partner Capacity Building

**Feb 2022 - Sep 2022:**
Data Analysis & Report Writing, Share Project Results Widely

**Community and Stakeholder Engagement:**
The Food System Assessment will be informed by hundreds of hours of input and partnership with community and food system stakeholders. Engagement will focus on uplifting people and prioritizing equity within our food system.

**Stakeholder Engagement Activities will include:**
- 6 Public Town Halls
- 10 Community and Stakeholder Listening Sessions & Surveys
- 10 Food Sector Specific Roundtables
- Countywide Food System Working Group

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