





We Are Farm 2 Fork

White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

Summary of Recommendations from the Sacramento Region

ABOUT THE GREATER SACRAMENTO REGION

The Greater Sacramento region is at the heart of one of the world's largest agricultural economies, producing products for people at home and around the globe. With its renowned food and agricultural assets, the region produces a large diversity of high-quality crops and products, valuing its agricultural heritage while looking to the future as a global innovator and leader in sustainable agriculture, food, and health. While we are known as and pride ourselves on being America's Farm-to-Fork Capital, our reality is more complex.

In spite of our great abundance, the region experiences persistent levels of food insecurity – higher than the national average even before the pandemic; lack of access to healthy affordable foods; and lack of equitable access to economic opportunities, among other conditions. These conditions most deeply impact Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) residents, older adults, farmworkers and other frontline workers who ensure our food supply, people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and residents in rural communities and transit deserts.

These circumstances led us to prepare the <u>2021 Sacramento Region Food System Action Plan</u>, which is our road map for a resilient, sustainable, health-promoting, and equitable food system. This Plan captures the region's assets, strategies, projects, and programs that helped us weather the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change impacts such as drought, fire, and extreme weather events. As the Farm-to Fork-Capital, the Greater Sacramento Region is a model for prototyping and scaling innovative, partnership-driven solutions that will increase access to healthy food for all and address systemic issues of hunger and nutrition security.

GREATER SACRAMENTO REGION CONVENING

This document summarizes key issues and recommendations from more than 75 community partners in the Greater Sacramento region who gathered at an input session for the September 15th, 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health. The session was convened by Valley Vision, a regional civic leadership organization working on strategies to strengthen the regional food system, in partnership with the Sacramento Region Community Foundation and Mulvaney's B&L. Organized under the banner of our community food system network "We are Farm to Fork," participants included a vibrant cross-section of over 75 leaders representing food banks, restaurants, school districts, nonprofits, local, state, and federal agencies, tribal and many more. (See Appendix A for list of participants.)

Using the toolkit provided by the White House Conference planners as a guide for regional input sessions nationally, our discussion focused on the first three of five guiding pillars of the Conference:

- 1. Improve food access and affordability
- 2. Integrate nutrition and health
- 3. Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices

For these three issue areas we then focused on two of five possible questions that could be posed:

Question 2: What specific actions should the U.S. Federal government, including the Executive Branch and Congress, take to achieve each pillar? What are the opportunities and barriers to achieving the actions? Actions should include specific policy and/or programmatic ideas and changes as well as funding needs.

Question 5: What are innovative public- and private-sector activities already happening at the local, state, territory, and Tribal levels that could inform actions at the Federal Level?

Participants were provided with a form (both online and at the convening) to fill out that covered the above issues and questions. Twenty-nine responses were received which are included in the next section of the document. A lightning round highlighting barriers, opportunities, and proven models and recommendations from a cross-section of organizations also demonstrated the breadth and diversity of partnerships, the creativity and responsiveness of solutions, and some compelling outcomes to date. They are the foundation of our recommendations to the federal government, which range from streamlining specific regulations and providing increased flexibility to invest in impact models both within the region and that could scale and be replicated across the nation.

The rapid mobilization of our community at the start of the pandemic to reach hungry residents and support farmers, food distributors, restaurants and other frontline workers demonstrates the solidarity, dedication, and skill that are hallmarks of our regional food system. The model projects and programs we recommend, as well as the ideas for barrier removal and accelerating innovation, are grounded in deeply experienced reality and they exemplify how we work together for a better and more equitable future. We hope they will be a blueprint for change and action nationally and will lead to the support needed for America's Farm to Fork Capital and a food system that works for all.

Because many of the projects and programs we feature are cross-cutting across the three selected pillars, we have created a legend to identify the pillars addressed in each:







The next section provides a summary of recommendations.

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Several clear themes and recommendations were identified in the convening, that if adopted, would greatly facilitate systemic solutions to systemic challenges within our region and across the country. The pandemic showed us what is possible when innovation and flexibility are permitted and encouraged, including through the adoption of waivers, streamlining requirements, and new funding and program resources that were dedicated to quick responses to dramatic disruptions.

These new resources were used by local governments to invest in impactful food system projects, often for the first time. New partner-driven solutions were effective in trying to address the rapid increase in food insecurity levels, lack of access to healthy foods, major supply chain gaps, and accelerated job and income loss. Several strong models emerged that are tangible, tested, and outcome-driven and are reflected in the recommendations and in the supporting materials.

The pandemic showed the face of what food system partners have been dealing with for years before this visibility was manifested by a major global health and economic crisis. The emergency food system, in particular, bears the brunt of food and nutrition security, yet it is neither a temporary (i.e., emergency) system, nor one that receives much public investment compared to the scale of the problem. The nonprofit sector carries an outsized responsibility to remediate major societal challenges such as hunger, without adequate and steady resources and capacity. Public agencies are similarly under-resourced; their missions were greatly compromised during the pandemic due to the many challenges in reaching and getting eligible residents signed up for and access to important safety net programs.

Models that were created in response to the pandemic such as the Family Meal Program - started by restaurants to help keep workers employed, farmers viable, and to get food to homebound seniors - have proven to be scalable and replicable. But like many projects, they have been challenged by inconsistent funding levels, having to pause the delivery of food every few months as they seek new and stable funding sources and overcome regulatory barriers. And schools, health systems, and other institutions have struggled to source from local growers, food producers, and distributors, and foster

health-driven programs amid supply chain disruptions, staffing challenges, and burdensome regulations. These are just some of the challenges and opportunities highlighted in our materials.

The region and the country will benefit from the Federal Government building on the knowledge and expertise gained during the past two and a half years. Such efforts will help build the long-term resiliency and equity of our regional food systems to the benefit of all. The recommendations summarized below are contained in more detail in the attached case study examples. Key themes revolve around funding, regulatory changes, and other opportunities.

Funding: Increased stable, predictable, dedicated, and at scales large enough to meet the need

Food Banks	Create stable, dedicated, and significant long-term funding streams for local food banks to purchase fresh produce and staples locally, along with the infrastructure to store, transport and deliver the items.
Local Meal Delivery Programs	Create a USDA-funded Family Meal (Great Plates Delivered) program that provides for consistent federal funding to support the local creation of meal delivery programs from local restaurants for homebound seniors, unhoused residents, and disabled residents among others. The model exists, is successful and ready to scale across the region, and is replicable nationally.
Food Hubs, Central Kitchens, Food Incubators, Public Markets	Food hubs, school central kitchens, incubators for local food entrepreneurs, and public markets are the critical missing food system infrastructure to connect local producers to expanded local markets - especially institutions such as schools and hospitals and underserved communities – to increase healthy food access, to strengthen the resilience of local supply chains, and increase economic benefit to the local food and ag economy. This will provide an important opportunity to BIPOC, small and economically disadvantaged farmers, and food producers. Federal programs for such facilities are mostly underfunded overall to meet the strong national demand, and also underfunded at the scale actually required, forcing community partners to seek multiple funding sources. Provide federal agency assistance to support local capacity building in terms of organizing materials, templates, case studies, etc. The Yolo Food Hub Network and Alchemist Public Market are two important examples.
Farmers Markets, Market Match, Community Gardens, and other healthy food access programs	Establish consistent, non-competitive grant funding nationwide to every certified farmers' market in order to ensure that high-quality SNAP/EBT access is available. Create enhanced stable, creative, dedicated, and direct funding for FINI/GusNIP and local market match and double-up programs for farmers markets, grocery stores, etc. This includes funding for CBOs to implement screening and referral. These investments will ensure increased access to fresh locally grown produce to improve health and economic outcomes.

Nutrition Education and Food and Ag Literacy	Increase support and funding for a comprehensive approach to nutrition education and food and ag literacy. Prioritize nutrition education where nutritious food access exists through USDA Food and Nutrition Service Programs to address challenges to achieving nutrition security. Provide more long-term, sustainable funding for programs that promote health over time, including programs to combine nutrition/food access with physical activity. Provide dedicated funding for urban agriculture, including gardens and school farms, to increase healthy food access and knowledge, and revitalize communities through an Edible City initiative. Incorporate a train the trainer component to manage sites.
Food as Medicine	Increase support for Fruit and Vegetable Rx@health systems (food prescription programs). Direct HRSA (Medicaid, Medicare, FQHCs, Migrant centers, etc.) to invest in food produce prescriptions for all qualifying participants.
Nonprofits	Provide more consistent, flexible funding for small nonprofits, with more local control over the use of funds. Small nonprofits often lack the capacity or the time to access funding and comply with complex reporting and regulatory requirements yet they fill an important need in the local food system, ranging from food literacy, urban agriculture, healthy eating and lifestyles, food access, youth education, and so forth. Flexible funding should support the capacity and growth of organizations of all sizes
Innovation funding	There is limited federal funding for local innovative projects. These are often the test bed for successful prototyping and scale-up. Provide funding for collaborative initiatives and local partners funding that is flexible.

Regulatory Changes: Regulations streamlined and adjusted for meeting modern food security needs

Institutional Procurement/Farm to School: Cash in Lieu of Commodities	The USDA should provide flexibility to school districts to have the option to select Cash in Lieu of Commodities for use in the National School Lunch Program, just as this option is available in other federal child nutrition programs. This would enable districts to increase their purchasing from local growers and through direct bidding, instead of purchasing commodities from out-of-state vendors using USDA entitlement dollars.
Eligibility for Assistance Programs	For SNAP, WIC, and Free and Reduced School Meals, remove bureaucratic barriers to coordinating between the three; create mandatory co-enrollment, automatic enrollment, or categorical eligibility for families across all three programs. Adopt streamlined and universal application and recertification requirements for all three programs. Create one-stop shops. Simplify the application requirements for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program for those over 60 years of age, allowing it to be completed over the phone or virtually. The Federal Government could expand income eligibility for the program. Food is not getting to people in need. CalFresh enrollment levels mostly vary between 40 and 50% of enrolled vs. eligible residents.

SNAP-Ed for College Students	Higher education students are some of the hardest hit groups relative to food insecure insecurity, estimated at up to 40% in some of our educational institutions. The SNAP College Student Exemption should be removed in totality and normal application regulations should apply to students, to enhance access for hungry students.
SNAP for Hot Meals	Make major adjustments to SNAP program policies and regulations related to the "Hot Meals Program" to include local restaurants, grocery delis, and other local providers to feed seniors, disabled and unhoused residents and expand eligible recipients. Enable all food assistance recipients to access ready-made hot meals; make it easier to assign funds to a community meal plan program.
Program funding and Administration	Complicated and bureaucratic funding application processes are very cumbersome and laborious to complete for local governments, small farmers and producers, nonprofits, and other diverse stakeholders. There is limited access to assistance to troubleshoot very complicated and rigid processes. Also, streamline reporting and funding for food banks and food pantries.

Other Topics: Covering a range of needs

Food Insecurity Measurements	Create a national, means-tested Food Insecurity Measurement tool to measure food insecurity; can be similar to HUD's COC system.
New Food Delivery Models	Provide significant enhancements to policy, technology, and funding for online ordering, CSA box delivery, and the use of benefits for modern food and delivery services.
Nutrition Training	Expand medical school requirements for nutrition training of future medical doctors.
Transportation Access	Provide transportation options for folks without care or who live in areas without good public transportation, to improve access to healthy foods.
Food Sourcing	Source federal commodities that will meet clients' dietary/health food needs and religious/cultural food needs.

For further information please contact Grace Kaufman, Project Manager, Food and Agriculture, and Trish Kelly, Managing Director, Valley Vision – grace.kaufman@valleyvision.org





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Examples of Sacramento Region Innovative Projects

Examples of Sacramento Region Innovative Projects

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Family Meal

Contact: Clay Nutting, clayton530@gmail.com

Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Family Meal

1. Improve food access & affordability





Description:

Family Meal is an innovative community feeding program that was launched during the pandemic by Sacramento area restaurants. The program's mission is to reduce food insecurity by hiring restaurants to provide nutritious meals to low-income families and seniors. Since the program's inception in March 2020, Family Meal has provided over 500,000 meals to people in need while preserving nearly 100 full-time jobs across twenty Sacramento area restaurants. Family Meal also inspired a statewide initiative called Great Plates Delivered which provided 37 million meals across California. At its peak, Great Plates was successfully carrying out program operations in a total of 41 local governments (10 Area Agencies on Aging, 10 counties, and 21 cities) across California. These local governments collaborated with more than 800 local food businesses, supported over 9,500 food industry jobs, and served over 55,000 seniors amid the pandemic. Capacity support has also been provided across the country on the model.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

- 1. <u>Supporting Local Farmers and Vendors</u>: Family Meal's restaurant partners make a commitment to source product from local farmers and vendors furthering the program's economic impact.
- 2. Financial Insecurity: By providing low-income families with supplemental meals, families are able to spend money on other necessities.
- 3. <u>Healthy & Nutritious Food</u>: Family Meal provides nutritious, restaurant-prepared meals to residents that live in underserved areas in the community. Many of these residents live in food deserts, and often lack access to nutritious foods.
- 4. <u>Equitable Systems:</u> Family Meal works with minority owned businesses to provide ethnically relevant meals to the community.

Barriers:

The pandemic hit the restaurant industry particularly hard, and despite the recent return to normalcy, the road to recovery for restaurants will be long and precarious. Several funding sources have contributed including federal agencies, but funding is very episodic, leading to gaps and challenges in scaling, and requiring a tremendous amount of time to secure operational resources.

Action Needed:

Funding. Family Meal is scalable with more resources. While our goal, locally, is to grow our program by bringing on more restaurant partners to help address our community's chronic food insecurity challenge — Family meal can also serve as a model for all communities across the country.

Alchemist CDC - Alchemist Public Market

Organization: Alchemist CDC

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Samuel Greenlee, sam@alchemistcdc.org

Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Alchemist Public Market

Description:

Our organization works in equitable food access at farmers' markets, green placemaking, and inclusive economic development through the training and incubation of under-resourced food entrepreneurs. Alchemist Public Market is a project in development that combines all three programs. It will:

- Center on a large shared-use all-electric commissary kitchen, rented out at affordable rates, and capable of incubating 35-40 small food businesses
- Include a shaded outdoor food court surrounded by 8 "food pods" which are similar to food trucks but permanent structures, each equipped with a small commercial kitchen and vending window. These will incubate eight food businesses at a time, and 2-3 spaces will rotate out each year. This will provide a constant supply of affordable space in which new businesses can launch and scale up before moving into their own more permanent location
- Feature a social enterprise cafe that provides paid workforce development for individuals with high barriers to employment (e.g. recent work authorization, recent incarceration, etc.) in order to place them in positions in the local food industry
- Provide a small retail store in which small local maker businesses (packaged food and other non-food products) can have their first retail presence as they scale up
- Host a certified farmers' market with SNAP/EBT access and nutrition incentive program in order to provide healthy food access to the community

This project will be located in a high-need food desert community and its design will encourage access via active and public transit. The space will be able to function as a local resiliency center in the event of disasters and emergencies, with food distribution, shade, etc. By combining food-focused inclusive economic development, healthy food access, and community-building placemaking, this project will have a major impact locally.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Provide targeted funding for such programs, perhaps through a dedicated grant program.

Barriers:

The State provided funding for site acquisition. Funding such a unique project is difficult; funding sources are fragmented and not at the level needed for full project development funding, forcing community developers, local governments and others to constantly be seeking adequate funds. Finding



funding for the construction of this project with all its components is the biggest obstacle to seeing it implemented.

Action Needed:

Provide targeted funding for such facilities and programs as food business incubators with additional components, especially for BIPOC and low-income entrepreneurs, perhaps through a dedicated grant program.

Alchemist CDC – EBT at Farmers' Markets

Organization: Alchemist CDC

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Samuel Greenlee, sam@alchemistcdc.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Fund SNAP/EBT Access at Every Farmers' Market

Description:

Increase access to healthy foods by establishing a noncompetitive grant program that would fund dedicated EBT processing staff and EBT administrative support at every certified farmers' market. The funding would be used to scale and improve EBT processes at existing farmers' markets, establish EBT access at new certified markets in under-served low-income communities, and develop education and outreach efforts to local communities. An inexpensive but catalytic investment, increased EBT access at farmers' markets:

- Drives increased consumption of fresh produce and better health outcomes for low-income households;
- Leverages state and federal nutrition dollars that directly benefit small and midsize American producers;
- Decreases nutritional disparities;
- Stimulates local economies (a UC Davis study found every dollar spent at a farmers' market generates \$1.86 in local economic activity);
- Provides counter-cyclical support, helping more low-income households and more small farmers during economic downturns;
- Strengthens local food systems and protects against global supply chain interruptions;
- incentivizes the creation of new farmers' markets in low-income food deserts, efficiently addressing issues of lacking food access.

Alchemist CDC is a co-sponsor of SB907 (Pan) in California which would do this work statewide, but we designed the program with the hope that it could function as a template for federal policy.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Establish federal funding.

Barriers:

Currently, farmers' markets have difficulty finding sufficient funding to offer high-quality EBT access, depending on an assortment of different grants each year, leaving the service's continued existence tenuous. Many markets do not have the capacity to pursue competitive grants on their own and so simply do not offer high-quality EBT access or any EBT access.

Action Needed:

Establish consistent, non-competitive grant funding nationwide to every certified farmers' market in order to ensure that high-quality SNAP/EBT access is available.

American Heart Association – Feed the Need

Organization: American Heart Association

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Monica Alleje, Monica. Alleje@heart.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Feed the Need

Description:

We work with health systems in a nutrition screening and food access referral whether to a local CBO, food bank, or FRC or other to receive immediate food access and sustainable food access like SNAP/CalFresh. We also train CBOs on how to screen for insecurity & enroll in SNAP so referrals/connnections work both ways. We also provide nutrition education in multiple languages. Basic info like sodium/sugar intake, serving sizes, etc. We train health teams on how to sensitively educate/address nutrition.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Funding for technical assistance, education & translations & support staff.

Barriers:

Capacity, bandwidth, funding.

Action Needed:

Funding for CBOs to implement screening and referral

American Heart Association - Food & Veggie Rx

Organization: American Heart Association

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Monica Alleje, Monica. Alleje@heart.org

Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Food & Veggie RX







Description:

Working with Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and health systems to develop a food and vegetable (F&V) Rx/prescription where people identified w/ hypertension, diabetes, etc. can receive an Rx to purchase X servings of F&V at farmers markets or stores.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Rx/vouchers, outreach support.

Barriers:

Barriers within the community are translations/translators & unwilling/unfamiliar with healthy ingredients/produce

Action Needed:

Health systems to implement Fruit and Veggie Rx program

CA Assoc of Resource Conservation Districts – Yolo Food Hub

Organization: CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Jennifer Wood, jennifer-wood@carcd.org

1. Improve food access & affordability





Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Yolo Food Hub

Action Needed:

Funding for food hubs across the country and agency staff to support local capacity building in the form of organizing materials, templates, case studies, technical support, etc.

CommuniCare - Food is Medicine

Organization: CommuniCare Health Centers

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Edye Kuyper, edyei@communicarehc.org

1. Improve food access & affordability





Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Food is Medicine Clinic Initiatives

Description:

CommuniCare Health Centers, a network of FQHCs in Yolo County, is integrating food into promary care and behavioral health systems. A clinic-based garden offers therapy opportunities, food education, and equips patients with skills; produce prescriptions improve food access.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Currently, USDA investment via NIFA PPR—produce prescriptions; funding pilot projects, not at scale. Other support includes community benefit funding, private foundations & individual donors. Partnerships with other agencies working toward increasing food access in different sectors: healthcare, schools, and food pantries.

Barriers:

Reliable, ongoing investment dependent on performance instead of competitive awards. Diet-related disease threatens American prosperity and is inequitably distributed w/ low-resourced people experiencing a greater burden.

Action Needed:

Direct HRSA (Medicaid, Medicare, FQHCs, Migrant, etc.) to invest in food (produce prescriptions) for all qualifying participants. Expand medical school requirements for nutrition in the training of future medical doctors.

Dairy Council of California – Summer STARS

Organization: Dairy Council of California

Type: Private Organization

Contact: Megan Holdaway, mholdaway@dairycouncilofca.org

1. Improve food access & affordability



Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Summer STARS

Description:

A program to ensure children and families have access to healthful foods and educational activities, including nutrition education to build knowledge around healthy eating. The on-going partnership between the Community Housing Opportunities Corporation, a non-profit affordable housing developer, Dairy Council of California, and United Way California Capital Region, delivers effective culturally-relevant nutrition and ag literacy resources, and empowers healthier families and communities.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Connecting nutrition education with access to nutritious foods is critical to help address nutrition security. Increasing funding for summer meal programs to incorporate nutrition education with food access, as well as building awareness of opportunities to partner with programs such as Summer STARS.

Barriers:

Lack of awareness of opportunities to collaborate. Collaboration across sectors is needed to bridge the gap between nutrition education and access to nutritious foods.

Action Needed:

Increase support and funding for a comprehensive approach to nutrition education and ag literacy. Prioritizing nutrition education where nutritious food access exists through USDA Food and Nutrition Service programs can effectively address the challenges to achieving nutrition security in our communities.

Food Literacy Center - Cooking School

Organization: Food Literacy Center

Type: 501c nonprofit

Contact: Amber Stott, amber@foodliteracycenter.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Cooking School

Description:

Food Literacy Center's new cooking school and 1-acre student garden on the Leataata Floyd school campus in a highly impacted community. This is a partnership between the City of Sacramento, Sacramento City Unified School District, and our nonprofit. It is a start of the art green facility that will include a cooking school for students, a prep kitchen for staff and volunteers to prep food and cooking supplies for after school programs focused on Title 1 schools, and community programs. The Center's programs operate in 16 schools, teaching children to eat healthy vegetables.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Creative approaches to funding that allows flexibility and encourages partnerships that don't have models. Instead of looking for reasons something can't be done, look for reasons it can be done.

Barriers:

Funding and staffing. As a nonprofit, we do not have ongoing tax revenue to count on, so we must always fundraise. Longer-term and renewable grants would enable us to hire better qualified staff looking for stability.

Action Needed:

Improve food access and affordability, Integrate nutrition and health, Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices

Health Education Council - Walk With Friends

Organization: Health Education Council

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Sal Sanneh, ssanneh@healthedcouncil.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Walk With Friends

Description:

Walk With Friends (WWF) is a community-centered network of walking groups across the Sacramento region designed to increase healthy living, active living, food access, and social connection among residents by utilizing their local parks and walking trails.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

As we eased out of the pandemic, HEC not only revived WWF at 2 sites but invited guest speakers to come present and host workshops for the participants. This helps by providing health-related workshops for those in underserved communities. Moreover, it helps provide community mentors with resources.

Barriers:

Funding. WWF originally was funded through Arthritis Foundation but switched to Kaiser once that grant ended. The Kaiser grant ended right before the pandemic and all 5 walking sites ceased. As we moved to the endemic phase, HEC revived 2 walking sites leveraging FEMA funds and other grants.

Action Needed:

More long-term, sustainable funding for programs that promote health over time. Programs to combine nutrition//food access with physical activity. More federal funds for food banks, and collaboration with local farmers.

Impact Foundry – Fresher Food Credit Union

Organization: Impact Foundry

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Rabbi David Azen, rabbidave@impactfoundry.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Fresher Food Credit Union

Description:

Pooling assets, providing a platform for all consumers to have food credits and the dignity of choice for dine in, take out, and delivered meals, kits, and ingredients taxes.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Pilot at Marisol Village, with training for residents to create a community meal plan that lowers prices, creates training and employment opportunities and makes healthy food accessible

Barriers:

Start up funding

Action Needed:

Snap+ - enable all food assistnce recipients to access ready-made hot meals. Consumuer collectives - make it easy to assign funds to a community meal plan - increase efficiencies, reduce waste.

Kitchen Table Advisors – Yolo Food Hub Network

Organization: Kitchen Table Advisors

Type: Private Organization

Contact: Thomas Nelson, thomas@kitchentableadvisors.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Yolo Food Hub Network

Description:

Expand infrastructure for food hub activities in Esparto that will serve farmers and households across the Greater Sacramento region, including aggregation, packaging, distribution and value-added processing of healthy, local grown foods from a network of food hub partners. The goal is to expand institutional procurement across the region, providing new markets for farmers, especially small and BIPOC/disadvantaged, and increase healthy food access.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Fundraising. Community outreach and partnerships.

Barriers:

Funding. New Seasons Development, a CDC dedicated to community revitalization, received a grant from Yolo County for site acquisition of a 5 acre site in Esparto. There is am \$8 million funding gap to complete the renovation of the existing facilities and build a food processing component..

Action Needed:

Funding.

Lisa A. Baker Consulting

Organization: Lisa A. Baker Consulting

Type: Private Organization

Contact: Lisa Baker, housing.LisaB@gmail.com







Description:

Idea #1: Create ways to improve local food and nutrition. Incentivize nonprofits to share grant management, infrastructure, monitoring, and reporting so that small organizations can focus on delivery and larger organizations can help provide structure.

Idea #2: Create an app-based/audit/credit card "wallet" for all benefits a family can be eligible for. More from program focus to full person focus

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Many, especially at the state and federal level.

Barriers:

Barriers are old school thinking

Action Needed:

Change benefit programs to focus on client success, not expecting them to cobble together their own path forward - use access and management lessons learned from the Housing First Model to focus on the family/client needs and help them access the programs and opportunities to address those needs - use a "no wrong door" approach so that families can access what they need across agencies and across silos.

Meals on Wheels by ACC – EBT at Farmers Markets

Organization: Meals on Wheels by ACC

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Linda Revilla, Lrevilla@mowsac.org

Innovative project / Activity / Program:

EBT at Farmers Markets

Description:

Allowing folks to use EBT cards at farmers markets.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Partnering with others for outreach to let folks know this is an option

Barriers:

Transportation to farmers markets is a barrier. Lack of staffing at farmers markets is another barrier.

Action Needed:

Better transportation options for folks without cars or who live in an area without good public transportation

Paratransit, Inc. – Healthy Food for Seniors

Organization: Paratransit, Inc.

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Lisa Cappellari, lisac@paratransit.org

1. Improve food access & affordability



1. Improve food

access &

affordability

3. Empower all

consumers to

make & have access to healthy

choices



Description:

Paratransit is a nonprofit transportation & mobility agency. We have a pilot program to transport shelf-stable food boxes to individuals with disabilities twice per month.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

There are a lot of programs to help seniors but not as many for persons with disabilities. This allows healthy food to be delivered to this community without them having to pay for transportation to get it.

Barriers:

Paratransit has the vehicles, fueling capability, and maintenance department for this program. We have identified recipients with the help of the Sac Food Bank & Alta Regional Center. The funding is the only missing component.

Action Needed:

Funding.

Paratransit, Inc. – Farmers Market & Local Food Promotion Program & Family

Meal

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Tiffani Fink, tiffanif@paratransit.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Farmers Market & Local Food Promotion Program & Family Meal

Description:

FMLFPP provides transportation from under-resourced communities to farmers markets. Family Meal provides food (quality) to seniors & those in need. ParaTransit partners with the Family Meal program.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Increased funding for transportation options to both move food to people as well as food to people.

Barriers:

Reliable funding.

Action Needed:

Funding (see Family Meal program description).

River City Food Bank – Food Distribution + CalFresh Outreach

Organization: River City Food Bank

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Amanda McCarthy, amccarthy@rivercityfoodbank.org



Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Food Distribution + CalFresh Outreach

Description:

RCFB offers consistent, dependable access to healthy, culturally-meaningful food 5 days per week, including Saturdays. We welcome all neighbors without barriers to access food or CalFresh outreach in a variety of languages.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Funding that allows smaller organizations to grow capacity and support revenue-generating activities that improve access and sustainability.

Barriers:

Food donations have gone down as need has sharply risen—RCFB has seen 30% increase in need year after year for three years. The food budget is up 156%. RCFB serves more than 20,000 per month—families and refugees.

Action Needed:

Flexible funding that supports capacity and growth for organizations of all sizes/Opportunities to enhance collaboration with local services (e.g., housing) and food producers. Streamlined reporting/funding for food banks and food pantries.

River City Food Bank - Collaboration with Schools and Nonprofits

Organization: River City Food Bank

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Jena Edoho, jedoho@rivercityfoodbank.org



Collaboration with schools and nonprofits

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

District dollars can create spaces to bring in nonprofits for programs/outreach. Funding (federal \$\$\$)

Barriers:

Getting key stakeholders in the same room/conversation in order to collaborate.

Action Needed:

Fund collaborative initiatives; local partners/funding that is flexible. Funding for food bank/pantries. Streamline benefits applications across programs (SNAP, WIC, etc.).

Sacramento City Unified School District – Cash in Lieu of Commodities

Organization: Sacramento City Unified School District

Type: School District

Contact: Kelsey Nederveld, kelseynederveld@scusd.edu





1. Improve food

access & affordability



Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Cash in Lieu of Commodities

Description:

Institutions such as schools and hospitals have purchasing power that has been greatly underestimated and are working to increase their purchasing power of locally grown foods. Each dollar spent on locally-purchased food by large institutions can generate up to an additional \$2.16 in local economic activity.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Cash in lieu of commodities. Allowing the flexibility to have the option for cash in lieu of commodities would enable school districts to increase their purchasing from local growers and through direct bidding instead of purchasing commodities from out of state using USDA entitlement dollars. With great dedication, several institutions in the region are paving the way, providing economic benefit to both their operations and local growers while improving the quality and healthiness of food served, including to many of our most vulnerable students.

Barriers:

Purchasing policies, regulatory constraints, limited budgets, lack of capacity, lack of adequate infrastructure such as food hubs to aggregate and deliver crops from farm to institution, and on-site facilities for storing and preparing fresh produce, are some of the long-standing barriers to local procurement. COVID-19 and the resulting disruptions in the supply chain and labor shortages have crippled school meal procurement efforts, where school food directors are unable to receive commodity (USDA Foods) allocations from processors due to shortages in labor and freight services. Unfortunately, many school manufacturers are focused on using their resources to produce commercial items due to higher margins and profitability. School food purchases orders have been shorted, delayed, or canceled.

Action Needed:

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) should extend to school districts the option of selecting Cash in Lieu of Commodities for use in the National School Lunch Program, just as this option is available in other federal child nutrition programs. This would expand local purchasing, open new markets for farmers and food producers, and support a resilient regional food system.
- Support development of food system infrastructures such as food hubs, central kitchens, and
 other facilities and equipment to increase opportunities for farm to institution procurement and
 increase economic benefit to local growers and the food and ag economy. This is especially an
 opportunity for Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), small and economically
 disadvantaged farmers, and food producers. The Yolo Food Hub and the Alchemist Public
 Market are two shovel-ready projects that are supported by local funding and broad community
 partnerships.

Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services – Upscaling Operations for Seniors

Organization: Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Karen Strach, kstrach@sacramentofoodbank.org

1. Improve food access & affordability

Description:

Since 2020, Paratransit and Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services (SFBFS) have partnered to provide a monthly home-delivered box of groceries to over 1,000 seniors and individuals with mobility limitations in Sacramento County. Eligible Seniors receive a grocery box based on USDA's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). Individuals with mobility limitations, who are not eligible for CSFP, receive a box filled with donated foods.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

- Additional funding/food resources geared for individuals with mobility limitations (such as healthy foods with easy-to-open packaging)
- Additional delivery partners

Barriers:

- Delivery capacity
- Federal regulations for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (once current pandemic waivers expire)

Action Needed:

- Federal Government could expand income eligibility for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (currently at 130% of FPL) compared to USDA's Emergency Food Assistance Program, which in California is set at (235% of FPL).
- Simplify the application for the application requirements for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program to allow for it to be completed over the phone or virtually (e.g., remove signature requirement and proof of age).
- Source federal commodities that will meet the client's dietary food needs (such as low/no sodium and low/no sugar) and religious/cultural food needs (such as Halal foods and fresh foods such as produce, eggs, and milk).

Soil Born Farms – Edible City Initiative

Organization: Soil Born Farms

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Shawn Harrison, sharrison@soilborn.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Edible City Initiative

Description:

The goal of the urban environment is to figure out a more profound role for urban spaces to feed folks. We need to find a better way to educate folks where their food is from and what food is good for them. This builds on the successful work of Soil Born Farms, a 55 acre publicly supported urban farm that has educated thousands of students and residents on where their food comes from and healthy eating, trained next generation farmers, and provides capacity support to community partners.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Small gardens in the community and schools where people can interact with them. A central part of the initiative is the Train to Trainer Initiative. A lot of funding has come lately, we want to find small and large agencies to act as trainers for trainees from colleges (teachers, nutritionists, doctors, farmers). These entering trainees need more specialized training via paid internships (year-long) and to get placed at partner organizations. We need to teach children how to grow food, what food is good for them, how to cook it.

Barriers:

Teachers don't have the capacity to cultivate school gardens on their own.

Action Needed:

Funding.

Three Sisters Gardens - Technical Assistance and Flexible Government Spending

Organization: Three Sisters Gardens

Type: 501c3 Nonprofit

Contact: Alfred Melbourne, Alfred@3sistersgardens.com







Description:

Three Sisters Gardens' mission is to inspire and empower at potential high promise youth through farming. Three Sisters Gardens' main goal is to give back to the community by inspiring and empowering youth through gardening. Like the Three Sisters legend of companionship planting, Three Sisters Gardens believes that our communities can begin to heal and thrive when all components, the youth, adults and elders are working together as one.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

- Technical assistance, specifically for grant awareness and writing
- Equitable funding allocation. A lot of funding goes to long-established organizations.

Barriers:

Funding

Action Needed:

- More flexible government spending
- Additional funding for technical assistance for small organizations

University of California, Davis – Cultural Bite

Organization: University of California, Davis

Type: Public University

Contact: Emmanuel Momoh, eomomoh@ucdavis.edu



Cultural Bite



Description:

The FAO integrated food choices into the food security framework in 1994, yet many immigrant households remain food insecure due to inaccessibility of culturally-preferred food. The Cultural Bite program is supposed to improve the cultural diversity of our food-producing system. The US is home to diverse immigrant households who are accustomed to different kinds of food that give them a sense of identity and food security.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Research funding. This will help in identifying the cultural composition of communities and possible opportunities for growing cultural foods.

Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency – Modernizing USDA Benefits to **Feed America**

access &

affordability

Organization: Yolo County Health & Human Services Ager

CalFresh Healthy Living Program

Type: Public Agency

Contact: Nolan Sullivan, nolan.sullivan@yolocounty.org





Innovative project / Activity / Program:

Modernizing USDA Benefits to Feed America

Description:

- 1. Streamline and combine application processes for SNAP WIC and Free and Reduced Lunch.
- 2. Streamline and adjust College Student Eligibility requirements to SNAP to enhance access for hungry students.
- 3. Create stable and significant long term funding streams for local food banks to purchase fresh produce, vegetables and staples locally.
- 4. Make major adjustments to SNAP regulations surrounding the "Hot Meals Program" to include local restaurants, grocery delis and other local providers to feed seniors, disabled and homeless residents.
- 5. Enhanced and stable funding to FINI/GusNIP and Market Match Programs.
- 6. Create a national, means tested Food Insecurity Measurement tool to measure food insecurity nationwide. This can be very similar to HUD's COC system.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

- 1. Significant regulation changes to adjust for modern food security needs.
- Adjustment of regulations and removal of bureaucratic barriers to coordination between WIC, SNAP and Free and Reduced Meals.
- 3. Dedicated funding for local food banks.
- 4. Get dollars to local governments with limited restrictions, requirements and goals with the end goal of working with local farmer, non-profits and food producers to feed hungry residents and support local farms / producers. Follow the ARP process and allow more local control.
- 5. Creation of new, stable and creative funding streams to support local market match and community garden / gleaning programs.

Barriers:

Federal Regulation. Very limited Federal Funding for local innovative projects. Complicated and bureaucratic application process that are very cumbersome and laborious to complete for local governments, small producers, diverse stakeholders and local municipalities to apply for, track and issue. Limited access or voice from local governments, farmers and businesses to troubleshoot very complicated and rigid process.

Action Needed:

- 1. SNAP College Student Exemption should be removed in totality and normal application regulations should apply to students.
- 2. Policy goal for SNAP, WIC and Free and Reduced Meals to create mandatory co-enrollment, automatic enrollment or categorical eligibility for families across all three programs. Streamlined application and recertification requirements. Universal application and recertification for all three programs.
- 3. Dedicated and direct funding for local food banks.
- 4. Dedicated and direct funding for local market match and double up programs.
- 5. Revisions to SNAP "Hot Meals" program policy and regulation allowing expansion to local restaurants, deli counters and an expansion of eligible recipients.

- 6. Creation of a USDA "Great Plates Delivered" program that allows for federal funding and local creation of meal delivery programs from local restaurants for local homebound seniors, homeless residents and disabled residents.
- 7. Significant enhancements to policy, technology and funding for online ordering, CSA box delivery and use of benefits with modern food and meal delivery services.

Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency — CalFresh Healthy Living Program

1. Improve food

access &

affordability

2. Integrate

health

nutrition and

3. Empower all

consumers to

make & have access to healthy choices

1

Organization: Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency,

CalFresh Healthy Living Program

Type: Public Agency

Contact: Anel Moreno, anel.moreno@yolocounty.org



CalFresh Healthy Living

Description:

Urban farm stand mobile market.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Provide funding & resources to expand locations.

Barriers:

Lack of funding

Action Needed:

One stop shop; streamline access when you apply for one service; should be applied to another program.

Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency – CalFresh Healthy Living Program

2

Organization: Yolo County
Type: 501c3 Nonprofit
Contact: David Linebarger

david.linebarger@yolocounty.org







Innovative project / Activity / Program:

CalFresh Healthy Living

Description:

California SNAP-Ed program. Provide nutrition education to underserved communities, increase their nutrition/health literacy and food security through expanding healthy food access.

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Partnerships with other agencies working toward increasing food access in different sectors: healthcare, schools, and food pantries.

Barriers:

Program limitations by USDA. (Ex: Working outside of designated census tracts and buying equipment for cafeterias + food pantries/convenience stores.)

Action Needed:

Bring back incentive items (SWAG) to increase branding & expand services through networking at community events.

Farm to School

1. Improve food access & raffordability



3. Empower all consumers to make & have access to healthy choices

Description:

Linkages between Farmers Markets with Farm to School Programs in communities

Opportunities for Federal Government Support:

Provide funding to showcase pilot programs, information sharing to encourage linkages

Barriers:

Lack of flexibility for school distracts to partner with local farmers markets; Davis FM does partner with its Davis Farm to School program. I believe we are the only who operates our own farm to school program.

Action Needed:

Create policies that allow school district to have flexibility to utilize the local food system and to integrate working with local farmers and school districts, and farmers markets.

Appendix A

First Name	Last Name	Job title	Organization
Teja	Payne	Nutrition Services Manager	Agency on Aging\Area 4
Sam	Greenlee	Executive Director	Alchemist CDC
Monica	Alleje	Community Impact Director	American Heart Association
Lori	Rianda	SVP, Local Market Executive	Bank of America
Jennifer	Wood	Soil Health Specialist	California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
Nick	Anicich	Farm to School Program Manager	California Department of Food and Agriculture
Ryan	Choi	ASI Food Pantry Coordinator	California State University, Sacramento
Clay	Nutting	Owner & Operator	Canon East Sacramento
Clay	Nutting	Owner / Operator	Canon East Sacramento
Sara	Bernal	Program Manager	Center for Land-Based Learning
Mikel	Davila	Project Manager	City of Sacramento
Joany	Titherington	City Council, District 5 Assistant	City of Sacramento
Councilmemb er Mai	Vang	District 8 Councilmember	City of Sacramento
Gregg	Fishman	Media and Communications Specialist/Board Member	City of Sacramento/SMUD
Marina	Contreras	Food & Wellness Education Coordinator	CommuniCare Health Centers
Edye	Kuyper	Food & Wellness Manager	CommuniCare Health Centers
Shanley	Schoenhofer	Registered Dietitian Nutritionist	CommuniCare Health Centers
Paul	Towers	Executive Director	Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Stephen	Julian	Watershed Coordinator	Cosumnes Groundwater Authority
Megan	Holdaway	Nutrition Science Program Manager	Dairy Council of California
Meghan	Russell	Executive Director	Davis Farm to School
Randii	Macnear	Executive Director	Davis Farmers Market Alliance/Davis Farm to School
Nico	Chapman	Attorney	Downey Brand

First Name	Last Name	Job title	Organization
Jim	Durst	Farmer	Durst Organic Growers
Ricky	Samayoa	Business and Grant Development Director	E Center
Amber	Stott	Chief Executive Officer	Food Literacy Center
Julia	Burrows	Consultant	Funkhouser & Associates
Shannin	Stein	Chief Operating Officer	Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento
Sal	Sanneh	Program Coordinator	Health Education Council
Sahej	Claire	Independent Contractor	Honey
Maggie	Giordanengo	Strategy Director	Honey
Meghan	Phillips	Chief Executive Officer	Honey
Britt	Wesely	Resources Manager	Honey
Miguel	Barraza	Caregiver	IHSS
Rabbi David	Azen	Director Fresher Collective	Impact Foundry
Thomas	Nelson	Director	Kitchen Table Advisors
Lisa	Baker	Consultant	Lisa A Baker Consulting
Linda	Revilla	Director of Strategic Initiatives	Meals on Wheels by ACC
Alex	Llocclla	Program Specialist	Meals on Wheels Yolo County
Alexa	Torres	Program Manager	Meals on Wheels Yolo County
Bishop Chris	Baker	Advocate	Ministry of Advocacy
Patrick	Mulvaney	Proprietor and Chef	Mulvaney's B&L
Shandenia	Piper	Director of Equitable Community Development	NeighborWorks Sacramento
Emily	Schmidt	Community Development Manager	NeighborWorks Sacramento
Michael	Bosworth	Chief Executive Officer	Next Generation Foods
María	Elena	Advocate	Padres Organized Community
Lisa	Cappellari	Chief Financial Officer	Paratransit, Inc
Tiffani	Fink	Chief Executive Officer	Paratransit, Inc
Chelsea	Minor	Corporate Director, Public Affairs	Raley's
Muriel	Strand		Retired
Jena	Edoho	Operations Director	River City Food Bank
Amanda	McCarthy	Executive Director	River City Food Bank

First Name	Last Name	Job title	Organization
Diana	Flores	Executive Director	Sacramento City USD, Central Kitchen
Kelsey	Nederveld	Assistant Director	Sacramento City USD, Central Kitchen
Rebecca	Sloan	Chief of Staff to Supervisor Don Nottoli	Sacramento County
Karen	Strach	Director of Programs	Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services
Dominic	Allamano	Urban Agroforester	Sacramento Food Forestry Project
Veronne	Clark	Manager of Social Responsibility	Sacramento Kings
Katie	Nicholson	Director, Social Responsibility	Sacramento Kings
Linda	Cutler	Chief Executive Officer	Sacramento Region Community Foundation
Juan	Barajas	Owner	Savory Cafe
Emily	McNamara	Farmer	Sierra Orchards
Austin	Miller	District Manager	Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District
Shawn	Harrison	Chief Executive Officer	Soil Born Farms
Patrick	Curzon	Senior Associate	Spafford & Lincoln
jacob	Weiss	General Manager	Spork Food Hub
Dagny	Starn	Consultant	Strait Advocacy
Crystal	Strait	Consultant	Strait Advocacy
Tammi	Riedl	Chief Executive Officer	The Farmers Marketplace
Lon	Hatamiya	President and CEO	The Hatamiya Group
Alfred	Melbourne	Owner & Operator	Three Sisters Gardens
Matthew	Ceccato	District Director, Office of Rep. Bera	U.S. House of Representatives
Glenda	Corcoran	District Director, Office of Rep. Matsui	U.S. House of Representatives
Nia	Jones	Healthcare Field Representative, Office of Rep. Matsui	U.S. House of Representatives
Liz	Vasile	Director, Health Equity Resources and Outreach	UC Davis Health/CTSC
Gabriel	Youtsey	Chief Innovation Officer	University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

First Name	Last Name	Job title	Organization
Adriana	Galarza	Graduate Student Researcher - Environment, Land and Food Systems Lab	University of California, Davis
Emmanuel	Momoh	Student	University of California, Davis
Lisa	Butler	Community Facilities Programs Director	USDA Rural Development
Maria	Gallegos Herrera	State Director	USDA Rural Development
Grace	Kaufman	Project Manager	Valley Vision
Trish	Kelly	Managing Director	Valley Vision
Priya	Kumar	Communications Manager	Valley Vision
Kathy	Sacheau	Project Associate	Valley Vision
Evan	Schmidt	Chief Executive Officer	Valley Vision
Danielle	Susa	Project Associate	Valley Vision
Dana	Cash	Hospitality Manager	Wellspring Women's Center
Linda	Henigan	Executive Director	Woodland's Dinner on Main
Bridget	Levich	Secretary	Woodland's Dinner on Main
Mark	Fink	Library Director	Yolo County
David	Linebarger	Program Coordinator, CalFresh Healthy Living, Health and Human Services Agency	Yolo County
Anel	Moreno	Outreach Specialist, Health and Human Services Agency	Yolo County
Nolan	Sullivan	Health and Human Services Agency Director	Yolo County
Kristen	Wraithwall	Sustainability Manager	Yolo County
Andrew	Truman Kim	County Commissioner	Yolo County Climate Action Commission
NJ	Mvondo	Chair	Yolo County Climate Action Commission / Davis Human Relations Commission
Anya	Perron- Burdick	Executive Director	Yolo Farm to Fork
Steven	Loya	Director of Development	Yolo Food Bank
Genevieve	Pyeatt	Director of Programs	Yolo Food Bank

First Name	Last Name	Job title	Organization
Maria	Segoviano	Director of Marketing and Communications	Yolo Food Bank
Suzanne	Reed	CO-Founder	Yolo Food Security Coalition
Nancy	Gifford	Case Manager	Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance
Rachel	Downs	Project manager	Yuba County