



# What food issues are important to El Cajon residents?



In the summer of 2020, as part of [San Diego County Food Vision 2030](#), San Diego County residents answered a few survey questions to express their unique needs and aspirations related to food in their communities. We're excited to share what we heard from residents of El Cajon.

## OVERVIEW

What food issues are most important to you?

### TOP ISSUES

Finding healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food  
Getting healthy food into schools  
Reducing hunger & food insecurity  
Supporting a local food economy  
Reducing food waste

I would like to see more \_\_\_\_\_ in my community

### TOP SELECTIONS

Farmers' markets  
Co-ops (community-owned businesses)  
Community gardens  
School gardens  
Food banks and pantries

## ASPIRATIONS FOR FOOD IN EL CAJON

Within the next 10 years, what is one hope that you have for food in your community?

### LOCALLY GROWN, CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD

- "We have NO farmers markets in the biggest population area of East County (El Cajon). To get local produce requires a drive on the freeways—really a 20+ mile drive to get to a decent sized market—which is problematic for a number of reasons. My dream is a thriving market like Little Italy's, but here in East County."
- "Truly organic fruits and vegetables. Grass-fed meats."
- "Locally sourced/grown foods; healthy, cultural foods; plant-based options."
- "Affordable organic produce, ability to purchase fruits and vegetables from a local urban grower at affordable prices, affordable culturally acceptable prepared meals for seniors."
- "Fresh, organic, and more available for low-income families."
- "Locally sourced, quality organic produce that's not trucked in from outside San Diego County."
- "Asian groceries. There is a severe lack of Asian groceries in East County."
- "There is a wonderful diversity about the cuisines of El Cajon and I wish that more of the San Diego population had an awareness of it."

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES, CONSUMER EDUCATION

- "The lost preschool-grandparent gardening program at Cuyamaca CDC is a big loss to our community and could easily be revived with a tiny grant."
- "I think there needs to be a big consumer education initiative about food systems."

### HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

- "I'd like to see free lunch for all students. My hometown does this. Even for a middle class family, paying for lunch for my kids is a struggle."
- "COVID-19 has caused our food spending to soar. Since we're senior and at-risk, we need food delivered more than ever. We need rent control to help offset new food and living expenses."
- "We have poor options in El Cajon and Rancho San Diego. A lot of fast food."