

What is Our Community Saying?

CAPTURING THE HOPES & DREAMS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

In the summer of 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the San Diego Food System Alliance canceled 13 in-person events and shifted to an all-digital community engagement process to safely capture the needs and aspirations of San Diego County residents and food system stakeholders. Food Vision 2030 is rooted in the hopes and dreams of our community, and the plan will largely be designed around this community input.

Engagement took place on a multilingual online platform (engage.sdfsa.org). Participation was widely promoted through digital and traditional channels, as well as through direct outreach and surveying by community-based partners.

WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, WE RECEIVED OVER

6,000

Unique visitors to the platform

2,000

Contributions to the platform
(includes survey responses, virtual
discussion board post-it notes)

55%

Percentage of contributions that came
from marginalized neighborhoods and
food system workers

This report provides a snapshot of high-level themes that have emerged from this Community Engagement process. Thorough findings will be shared in Food Vision 2030.



GENERAL COMMUNITY SURVEY

900 Contributions to general community pages
(includes survey responses and virtual discussion board post-it notes)

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Reducing hunger & food insecurity | 65% |
| Minimizing food waste | 54% |
| Reducing racial/ethnic disparities | 48% |

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Community gardens | 47% |
| Composting programs | 45% |
| Co-ops | |
| Urban Farms | 37% |

WITHIN THE NEXT 10 YEARS, WHAT IS ONE HOPE THAT YOU HAVE FOR FOOD IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| "I want food to be more visible, accessible and present for underserved communities across our county." | "One hope is that people will see more food growing and be able to access fresh, affordable products." | "I hope that San Diegans start seeing the entire food system, start to finish, in their own community. This includes where their food is being grown, how it is produced, what happens to their food waste, and who is doing all of this work." |
|---|--|---|

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| "Taking my parents to a restaurant that has the food they remember from their childhood and home countries." | "That local fishermen and local seafood system are supported and supplying healthy protein to the entire community." | "Food and the people who prepare it are valued as much any other professional in the economy." |
|--|--|--|

COMMUNITY PARTNER SURVEYS

To uplift the voices of those most affected by current inequities in the food system, we partnered with community-based organizations directly serving the following communities in San Diego County.

800 Contributions to community-specific pages
(includes survey responses and virtual discussion board post-it notes)

Chula Vista

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Community engagement still in progress

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community engagement still in progress

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

Community engagement still in progress

City Heights

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Finding healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food (65%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community Gardens (74%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"My hope is that there will be more opportunities for community gardening and access to growing and finding cultural goods."

El Cajon

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Community engagement still in progress

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community engagement still in progress

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

Community engagement still in progress

Escondido

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Supporting locally owned grocery stores and restaurants (61%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

School Gardens (45%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"My hope/dream is to have better education for our families and students. Have community kitchens with pantries with actual fruits and veggies, not canned food."

Imperial Beach

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Finding healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food (68%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Farmers' Markets (49%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"Food brings people together. Let's get a great grocery store in Imperial Beach so our community knows we care."

Logan Heights

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Finding healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food / Getting healthy food into schools / Reducing hunger & food insecurity (all tied at 53%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community Gardens (51%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"I have dream that I can walk a block and pick some apples or oranges. Swing by a community garden on my way home and get produce for our salad that night."

National City

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Finding healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food (70%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Farmers' Markets (63%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"Food grown in our neighborhoods, going to homes in our neighborhoods. Community gardens and urban farms being free learning spaces to empower neighbors to grow and trade food with each other."

Oceanside

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Getting healthy food into schools (60%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community Gardens (55%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"I hope all healthy food in my community is truly healthy. Grown and planted locally, with care for the well-being of the land, worker, and animals."

San Ysidro

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Community engagement still in progress

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community engagement still in progress

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

Community engagement still in progress

Southeastern San Diego

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Reducing hunger & food insecurity (80%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community Gardens (60%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"That the community is able to grow and store food to feed all families who are food insecure. All without reliance on grant funding."

Tribal Community

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

*Community engagement
still in progress*

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

*Community engagement
still in progress*

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

*Community engagement
still in progress*

Unincorporated San Diego County

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

*Community engagement
still in progress*

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

*Community engagement
still in progress*

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

*Community engagement
still in progress*

Vista

WHAT FOOD ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Supporting local farms &
fisheries (65%)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE _____ IN MY COMMUNITY.

Community Gardens (59%)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR FOOD VISION?

"Me gustaria mas farmer's
market con verduras y frutas
a precios razonables." (I would
like more farmer's market
with vegetables and fruits at
reasonable prices)

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

To ensure we heard from our most essential workers who feed and nourish our community, the Alliance also developed unique survey questions and outreach processes for food system practitioners and stakeholders.

300 Contributions to stakeholder-specific pages
(includes survey responses and virtual discussion board post-it notes)

Farmers

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES FOR YOUR FARM?

Business & Financial –
Achieving profitability and/or making a living (60%)

Regulatory & Legal –
Navigating permitting/ regulatory issues (63%)

Production Challenges –
Managing pests (60%)

WHICH OF THESE RESOURCES WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY USE?

Matchmaking program that connects farm with markets (42%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OPERATING A FARM?

"Heat, cold, rain, drought. Farmers directly affect and are affected by nature. It's an intimate and beautiful relationship. Full of hard work, tears, joy and wonder. I wish more folks would commit to this relationship, we need more farmers."

Farmworkers

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP WORKPLACE CHALLENGES?

Low wages (59%)

WHICH OF THESE RESOURCES WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY USE?

Livable wage campaign (63%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES GROWING, PRODUCING, HARVESTING, AND DELIVERING FOOD TO MARKETS?

"We work hard. Everyone, including engineers, lawyers and even the President depends on our labor. The world depends on agriculture and its workers, we feed the world."

"Mi trabajo es esencial pero a nosotros los trabajadores agricolas no se nos paga ni trata como esenciales." (My work is essential but we agricultural workers are not paid or treated as essential)

Fishermen

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Ability to make a living (profitability) and maintain a good quality of life (having time to do all that needs doing plus time for family and self) (69%)

Permitting and regulatory challenges associated with fishing and/or marketing (69%)

WHICH OF THESE RESOURCES WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY USE?

Regulatory and legal advice or assistance (81%)

Apprenticeship program for new/young crewmember training (69%)

Access to alternative marketing arrangements, such as Community Supported Fishery programs (CSF), Fish Auctions, etc. (69%)

Shared storage and processing infrastructure and equipment (69%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OPERATING A FISHING OPERATION?

"The cost of providing fresh high quality seafood to the customer is affected greatly by local and Federal rules and regulations, both in shore-based infrastructure support and on-the-water regulations."

"I would like to see all domestic markets grow, from high-dollar fish to bread-and-butter fish. Simply put, I want to feed more people fish."

Food Workers

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP WORKPLACE CHALLENGES?

Low wages (39%)

WHAT RESOURCES AND TOOLS WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU/YOUR CAREER?

Continuing education programs (52%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WORKING IN FOOD RETAIL, PROCESSING, MANUFACTURING, OR DISTRIBUTION?

"My vision is for food workers to be able to afford to live in the regions they serve, shop at the businesses they help keep in business, and be treated as essential, important parts of the local economy."

"It's hard work and we are overlooked in terms of having the proper resources to do our job. We're scraping the bottom of the barrel."

Retailers

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP WORKPLACE CHALLENGES?

Achieving profitability/
making a living (69%)

WHICH OF THESE RESOURCES WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY USE?

Website and event guide
helping tourists find
authentic food and farm
experiences in San Diego
County (52%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OPERATING A SMALL COMMUNITY MARKET?

"It is challenging to continue to be profitable in a building raising rent." "We are hoping to finish this year with some profit."

Restaurants

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Finding affordable and skilled
labor (62%)

Achieving profitability/
making a living (61%)

WHICH OF THESE RESOURCES WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY USE?

Network for restaurant
owners/managers (62%)

WHAT DO YOU WANT SAN DIEGANS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OPERATING A RESTAURANT?

"The cost of operation is HIGH. Even when you're busy, you're not raking in cash."

"Labor is expensive. Don't be surprised when food prices go up."

"In order to be profitable, we would need to reduce labor by more than 50%."

San Diego County Food Vision 2030 is still being developed. We will be engaging the community again for further feedback on draft goals, objectives, and strategies later this fall.



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