

Working Together to Build a Thriving Food System in San Diego County

WHAT IS A FOOD SYSTEM?

“Food system” is a term often used to describe the elements involved in feeding a population, including but not limited to:

- Growing
- Harvesting
- Processing
- Packaging
- Transporting
- Marketing
- Consumption
- Disposal

- ◇ Everyone is impacted by the food system, because **everyone eats**.
- ◇ Food systems create an environment that can promote or hinder access to healthful, nutritious foods. Although access to nutritious food is associated with decreased risk for chronic disease, many children, families and individuals lack access to healthy foods.
- ◇ A healthy food system addresses the sustainability of agriculture, as well as, the health and well-being of community residents. It also contributes to **thriving communities** through **sustainable economic growth** and addresses **environmental stewardship** by protecting resources and practicing agricultural biodiversity.

THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

- ◇ A **local food system** refers to all the **processes and infrastructure** involved in feeding a population within a given geographic area.
- ◇ **What activities of your department touch the local food system?**

VISION: A region that is Building Better Health, Living Safely and Thriving



Live Well San Diego

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS:

San Diego is a vibrant region with planning, development, infrastructure and services that strengthen the local economy

- Provide and promote services that increase consumer and business confidence

The region is a leader in protecting and promoting our natural and agricultural resources, diverse habitats and sensitive species

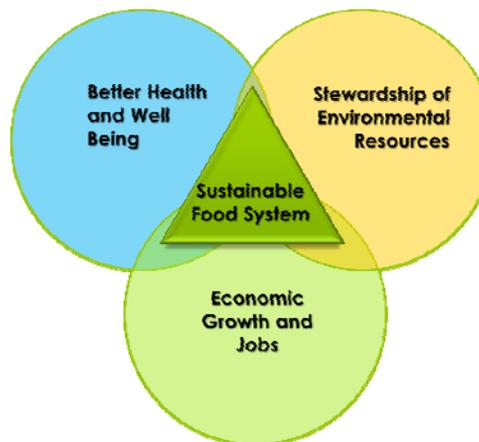
- Enhance the quality of the environment by focusing on sustainability, pollution prevention and strategic planning

HEALTHY FAMILIES:

Every resident has the opportunity to make positive healthy choices that reduce preventable deaths

- Strengthen the local food system and support the availability of healthy foods, nutrition education, and nutrition assistance for those who need it

Sustainable Food System



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

- ◇ Under the County’s Strategic Initiatives of Sustainable Environments and Healthy Families, there are audacious visions and enterprise-wide goals to focus efforts on strengthening the local economy by increasing consumer and business confidence, protecting and promoting our natural and agricultural resources by focusing on sustainability, and providing opportunities for residents to make positive healthy choices by strengthening the local food system.
- ◇ How is the County working to achieve this goals? One way is the formation of an interdepartmental **Live Well San Diego Food System Working Group** that is working collaboratively to advance a safe, healthy, and robust food system that sustains thriving residents, communities, the economy and environment in San Diego County.
- ◇ **How can your department join with other departments in realizing this County goal?**



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

Currently participating in the *Live Well San Diego Food System Working Group* : Agriculture, Weights & Measures (AWM) • Environmental Health (DEH) • Farm and Home Advisor (FHA) • Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) • Parks & Recreation (DPR) • Planning & Development Services (PDS) • Public Works (DPW)

OUR MISSION: *To be a responsive, agile team working collaboratively to advance a safe, healthy, and robust food system that sustains thriving residents, communities, the economy and environment in San Diego County.*

LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO FOOD SYSTEM WORKING GROUP

Challenges

- ◇ 1 in 6 San Diegans experience food insecurity on a daily basis.
- ◇ Connecting growers, gleaners, and food banks to communities that lack healthy food options.
- ◇ 40% of food produced is wasted throughout the food system.
- ◇ Identifying “food deserts” throughout the Region.
- ◇ Ensuring the safety of donated foods and gleaned produce.
- ◇ Finding economical farming opportunities in urban communities.
- ◇ Availability of affordable irrigation water.
- ◇ Making healthy food choices appealing, affordable, and accessible for County employees.
- ◇ **What challenges to a sustainable healthy food system can you identify?**

Opportunities

- ◆ Collaborate with food banks and other partners to target “food deserts.”
- ◆ Work with restaurant and retail industries to increase food donations.
- ◆ Assist San Diego Grown 365 in linking growers, gleaners & food banks with buyers of local fresh products.
- ◆ Identify County-owned properties where farming could occur.
- ◆ Promote edible landscapes in public and private developments.
- ◆ Increase water available for agriculture by promoting water conservation efforts.
- ◆ Continue to expand access to healthy food choices for County employees.
- ◆ **What opportunities do you see for your department to meet the challenges and remove obstacles to improve our food system?**

Working Group Goals

Short-term 0-1 year

- Establish a comprehensive Healthy Small Food Retail Designation Program that will partner with retail business owners to increase healthy food access options.
- Roll out a new & improved San Diego Grown Exchange to promote local food and San Diego Grown 365 .

Mid-term 1-5 years

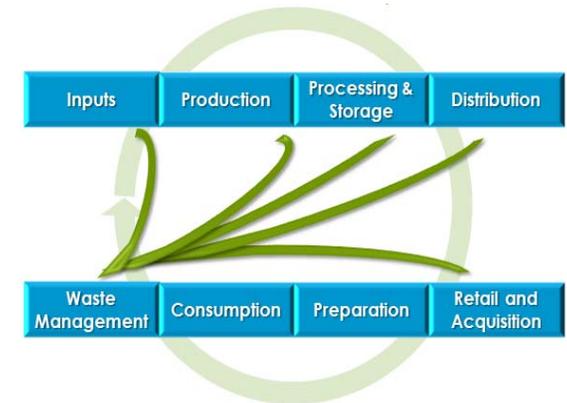
- Develop comprehensive County of San Diego Food and Nutrition Standards that will address incarcerated populations and County hosted meetings, events and cafeterias.
- Provide new opportunities and promote local growers thru a new Agriculture Promotion Program.

Long-term/ongoing 5+ years

- Revise regulations to streamline recycling and maximize the diversion of organic materials from landfills.
- Collaborate with Live Well partners to develop comprehensive, regional Food System policies.

LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO FOOD SYSTEM WORKING GROUP

- In May 2014, the interdepartmental **Live Well San Diego Food System Working Group** emerged as a streamlined way to work with various stakeholders involved in the processes and infrastructure to achieve a sustainable local food system.



BEEFITS OF THE WORKING GROUP

- Mechanism for **SYNERGY** and **COLLECTIVE IMPACT**
- Recognize the **INTERCONNECTEDNESS** of our departments and opportunities for **FUNCTIONAL THREADING**
- **EFFICIENCY** and **EFFECTIVENESS** through unity to improve our food system, and help the residents, communities, economy, and the environment in San Diego County to **THRIVE!**

