

# Receive Recognition

for your Sustainable Food Policies

Many cities and towns throughout California and the United States are adopting policies that support sustainable food systems. The following recognition programs help cities and organizations support and learn from one another:

- Michelle Obama's *Let's Move! Cities and Towns Campaign* encourages officials to take action to reduce childhood obesity. Learn more at [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov).
- *The Healthy Eating Active Living Cities Campaign* by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy offers assistance, training, and publicity to California cities working on policies that improve their food and physical activity environments. Visit [www.healcitiescampaign.org](http://www.healcitiescampaign.org).



*The San Mateo County Food System Alliance would like to thank the San Mateo County Health System, Ag Innovations Network, and all members and allies of the Alliance who contributed their time and expertise to develop this brief.*

The San Mateo County Food System Alliance (FSA) is a collaborative of farmers, fishermen, farmers' market managers, environmental advocates, public health professionals, and residents seeking to support and promote a healthier and more vibrant local food economy. For more information, please visit <http://aginnovations.org/alliances/sanmateo>.

<sup>1</sup> The San Mateo County Food System Alliance (FSA) defines local as value-added products, produce, and seafood that are grown or harvested in the county.

<sup>2</sup> UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. 2008. University of California. 27 May 2011. [www.sarep.ucdavis.edu](http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu)

<sup>3</sup> A food system is defined as the chain of activities connecting food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management, as well as all the associated regulatory institutions and activities.

<sup>4</sup> Value-added products are defined as those products whose value is enhanced due to special manufacturing, marketing, or processing. [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)

<sup>5</sup> County of San Mateo, CA. Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures. *San Mateo County 2009 Agricultural Crop Report*.

<sup>6</sup> According to the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, the "local multiplier effect suggests that even small shifts in consumer spending offer positive results for local economies." <http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/foodandfarm/ilffp.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Kisner, Corinne. National League of Cities. *Developing a Sustainable Food System*. 2011.

<sup>8</sup> National Policy and Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity. *Establishing Land Use Protections for Community Gardens*. 2011.

<sup>9</sup> City and County of San Francisco, CA. San Francisco Department of Public Health. Executive Directive on Healthy and Sustainable Food 09-03, Summary Report. 2010.

<sup>10</sup> *Port Fest 2010*. 2010. Port of Redwood City. 27 May 2011. [www.redwoodcityport.com](http://www.redwoodcityport.com)

<sup>11</sup> *The District*. 2006. Sonoma County Ag Preservation and Open Space District. 27 May 2011. [www.sonomaopenspace.org](http://www.sonomaopenspace.org)

<sup>12</sup> *As Fresh As It Gets* is sponsored by the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau in cooperation with the San Mateo County Farm Bureau and the San Mateo County Harbor District.

<sup>13</sup> City of Albany, CA. Albany City Council. *Environmentally Preferable Food Policy*. 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Half Moon Bay Fishermen's Association. 2011. [sites.google.com/site/hmbfishing/home](http://sites.google.com/site/hmbfishing/home)

<sup>15</sup> City of Richmond, CA. Human Resources Management. *Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy*. 2001.

<sup>16</sup> City of Kansas City, MO. Parks and Recreation Department. *Kansas City Parks and Recreation Vending Policies* 4.7.08. 2006.



# Producing, Distributing & Consuming Healthy Local Food

*Ingredients for a Sustainable Food System*

A sustainable food system ensures equal access to healthy, local<sup>1</sup> food and is economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially just.<sup>2</sup> In this type of food system<sup>3</sup>, farmers, fishermen and chefs profit from the sale of their produce, fish, and value-added products;<sup>4</sup> all residents can access and afford to buy local, healthy food, and our land is not just maintained, but preserved for future generations.

## Why Does a Sustainable Food System Matter?

In 2009, San Mateo County's agricultural production and local seafood harvest was worth \$153 million. The actual impact of food production on the local economy is estimated to be much higher, at \$535 million, due to a multiplier effect.<sup>5,6</sup> Most of this food is not available to our residents. It is processed and sold outside of San Mateo County, which reduces local access to fresh and healthy foods, increases our carbon footprint and takes valuable dollars out of our community.

### A sustainable food system:

- Promotes the health of our residents by increasing access to healthy foods
- Benefits the environment by preserving agricultural land and working waterfronts
- Reduces our carbon footprint
- Enhances the economic vitality of our community by creating jobs
- Keeps money circulating within the community by boosting our local restaurant and tourism industries<sup>7</sup>



California Senate Bill 375 and Assembly Bill 32, which mandate planning and land use to reduce carbon emissions, contribute to a sustainable food system.



# Actions to Support a Sustainable Food System in Your Community



The San Mateo County Food System Alliance can help you build a sustainable food system. You can find resources at <http://aginnovations.org/alliances/sanmateo>, or contact the San Mateo County Health System's Health Policy & Planning division at (650) 573-2398 or [hpp@co.sanmateo.ca.us](mailto:hpp@co.sanmateo.ca.us).

There are many ways your city or jurisdiction can join the movement:

## Update Land Use & Other Local Policies

### San Francisco

San Francisco City & County revised its urban agriculture zoning policies to identify lots which could be used for community gardens.<sup>9</sup>

### Redwood City

Redwood City recently began to celebrate an annual "Port Fest" to help residents learn more about the city's working waterfront.<sup>10</sup>

### Sonoma

Sonoma County has preserved more than 70,000 acres of agricultural land and open space by creating an Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District that is funded by a quarter-cent sales tax.<sup>11</sup>

## 1 Support Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

- Establish urban agriculture as an approved land use in residential, multi-family, open space and other zones.
- Encourage residents to donate surplus backyard produce to the food bank and other non-profit organizations.<sup>8</sup>
- Promote school gardens and garden-based education in our schools.

Neighborhoods often have parcels of land that are ideal for community gardens but are unused or unavailable due to zoning restrictions. Changing zoning rules can increase access to fresh produce and bring communities together.

## 2 Protect Agricultural Land and Working Waterfronts

- Encourage strategies that protect working landscapes and waterfronts, such as easements, reduced tax burdens, and increased access to land and infrastructure.

Fishermen often struggle to access the space they need to operate their businesses due to tourism and residential and industrial uses that can overtake waterfronts. New farmers also struggle to establish their businesses. Investing in infrastructure for farmland and fisheries can contribute to the future food security of your community.

## Purchase and Promote Locally Grown, Harvested & Produced Food

### 3 Bring the *As Fresh As It Gets* Campaign to Your Community

- Encourage local businesses, including restaurants, grocery stores, catering businesses, and corner stores to use locally grown or harvested produce and seafood. For information on restaurants that sell local produce, visit [www.freshasitgets.com](http://www.freshasitgets.com).

### San Mateo County

The *As Fresh as it Gets* campaign was created in San Mateo County to increase the purchase of locally grown or harvested produce and seafood.<sup>12</sup>

### 4 Adopt Local Food Purchasing Policies

- Require a percentage of food purchased to be grown locally.
- Create incentives for contractors who prepare food made with local ingredients.

Local food purchasing policies create demand for local food. Guidelines can be added to current policies that address purchasing and describe nutritional guidelines for meals and snacks provided by an organization.

### Albany County, New York

Albany County requires at least 10% of the county's food purchasing costs for Residential Healthcare and Correctional Facilities to be spent on locally produced food.<sup>13</sup>

### 5 Participate in Community-Supported Agriculture and Fishing Programs

- Connect local producers with residents by increasing participation in Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) or Community-Supported Fishery (CSF) programs.

CSA and CSF members pay a monthly fee for a regular box of produce or fish. This provides a reliable source of income for farmers or fishermen, keeps money in the community and decreases carbon emissions from transporting food long distances.

### Half Moon Bay

The Half Moon Bay Fishermen's Association Community-Supported Fishery is the first CSF in Northern California.<sup>14</sup>

### 6 Support Healthy Mobile Food Vending

- Offer incentives to run a healthy mobile food business such as discounts on permit fees, reserved spots at preferred locations, or low-interest loans to purchase equipment for healthy mobile food businesses.<sup>15</sup>

In many communities, mobile food vending is an important part of the local economy and a convenient way for residents to purchase food. Healthy mobile food vending policies support small businesses and increase the amount of healthy food available in neighborhoods.

### Kansas City, Missouri

Food vendors with a 50% healthy inventory got a 50% discount on their vending permits, and vendors with a 75% healthy inventory received special roaming permits that enabled them to sell at special roaming locations.<sup>16</sup>