

## Chapter 6. Toward a Sustainable Food Plan for Oakland: Recommendations

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The food system in Oakland involves a variety of actors with various interests and stakes in how food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed, and wasted. These actors span across sectors, across city, regional, and even international boundaries, and have deeply interconnected implicit and explicit relationships with one another. These dynamic relationships are represented in public policy decisions, private and other non-governmental activities, and in the end consumer who makes daily decisions on food choices. These relationships effect economic, cultural, and environmental spheres of life and produce differentiated outcomes depending on the ways in which the relationships are constructed and the “tools” in place to implement activities around food.

This report has attempted to highlight some of these actors and trends through an assessment of food activities. There is great concern among segments of the Oakland community about the outcomes produced by the current food system, and this is reflected in the numerous initiatives discussed in this report that are at work in the City to address issues of access to and quality of food, nutrition education, the local economy as it relates to food, and food waste.

While the intentions of the actors are noteworthy, we believe that there is a need to make some of these relationships more explicit in order to better align shared values and interests and to analyze the “tools” that facilitate both desired and undesired outcomes of the food system in Oakland.

Convening some of these actors, such as health professionals, school officials, waste management companies, large and small food retailers and processors, regional farmers, community- and faith-based organizations, and various City and County staff in the form of a food policy council could be the first step toward a comprehensive, sustainable food policy and plan for Oakland. A food policy council could broaden the discussion of food, provide an ongoing comprehensive examination of the City’s food system, and increase communication and understanding between citizens and the City government.

Each of the following recommendations could be taken up as an action item for the food policy council in coordination with the appropriate agency or organization.

### Recommendations on First Steps Toward a Sustainable Food Plan:

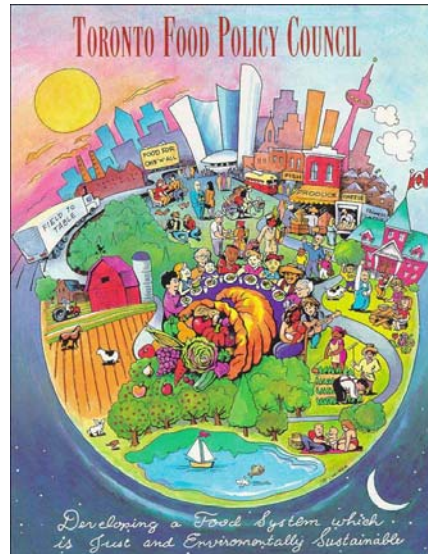
1. Develop a Food Policy Council or Commission comprised of stakeholders from various segments of Oakland’s food system. This might be done through several professionally facilitated meetings of key stakeholders. **The Council’s first task should be the development of a City-wide food systems plan that seeks to achieve the proposed five food systems sustainability goals.**

See Appendix 2 for example legislation on the development of a city food policy council (FPC) and Appendix 3 for a list of state and local FPC’s and where to go for further information on developing FPC’s.

2. Develop a Department of Food supported by Oakland's Office of Sustainability, Department of Human Services, the Community and Economic Development Agency, other appropriate City departments, and OUSD, to advocate for local food and business development incentives for food-related economic activities, with a priority agenda to increase food access in underserved areas. The Department of Food would work with the Food Policy Council to review and reform existing general plan policies and regulations to support the proposed five food systems sustainability goals.
3. This collaboration should develop indicators representing each of the proposed five food systems sustainability goals, which could be annually monitored by a "Food and Health Report Card".
4. The Food Policy Council in collaboration with the Department of Food would take responsibility for implementing the following list of recommendations in this report or direct responsibility to the appropriate City agency or department.
5. Initiate a City-sponsored annual music concert to benefit community food programs.

## Case Study - Toronto Food Policy Council<sup>165</sup>

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) is one of 31 state, county, and local food policy councils in North America (see Appendix X for a full list of councils). Founded in 1991, due to the lack of federal and provincial leadership on food security, TFPC is a 24-member council that holds meetings open to the public every two months. Members include representatives of city council, conventional and organic farms, co-ops, large food corporations, multicultural groups, anti-hunger advocacy groups, the faith community, and community development groups. The council prides itself on working through diverse coalitions to create innovative solutions, obtaining and sharing hard-to-find information, advocating for effective public policies, and increasing public awareness of food security issues.



The Toronto Food Policy Council mission encompasses two goals:

1. "to end hunger and the need for a food distribution system based on charity" and
2. "to promote food production and distribution systems which are equitable, nutritionally excellent, and environmentally sound."

The Toronto Food Policy Council has existed for over a decade and thus has a substantial list of accomplishments. Highlights over a variety of topics include:

### **Food and Hunger Action**

- Writing the City of Toronto Declaration on Food and Nutrition and later helping draft the Toronto Food Charter.
- Working with the organization FoodShare to launch a Good Food Box, now distributed to over 4000 mostly low-income families a month.
- Helping launch city-wide food and hunger action committee to link citizen groups and all city departments dealing with food issues.

### **Health**

- Advocating against federal approval of genetically engineered Bovine Growth Hormone use.
- Increasing the number of school food programs from 53 to 350 in partnership with the Student Nutrition Coalition.

### **Planning and Economic Development**

- Helping draft crucial passages on food security in Toronto's 2003 official plan.
- Contributing to the creation of a commercial kitchen incubator in Toronto, working with the City of Toronto Economic Development Division and FoodShare.

### **Urban Agriculture and Food Waste Recovery**

- Helping lead community garden expansion project in Toronto--the number of community gardens increased from 50 to 122 over 10 years.
- Founding Rooftop Garden Resource Group to help develop gardens, in coordination with roofers association.
- Managing two e-mail services, one specializing in local food systems and another in global food policy issues.

<sup>165</sup> Case study source: "Food Policy Council Profiles." *World Hunger Year*. 17 February 2006.  
<[http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/faqs/ria\\_093.asp?section=8&click=3#4](http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/faqs/ria_093.asp?section=8&click=3#4)>.

## **Goal 1: Food Security**

*Ensure that no Oakland resident experiences hunger. Ensure that access to safe and nutritious food is not limited by economic status, location, or other factors beyond residents' control.*

### **Recommendations for Food Security<sup>166</sup>**

1. Increase access to fresh and local foods for residents who participate in federal and emergency food programs. This might include:
  - Developing a farm-to-school/institution program with administrators of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, Summer Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Head Start, and senior centers to guarantee the provision fresh, organic, and local foods.
  - Develop an outreach program to increase WIC and Food Stamps usage at farmers' markets.
2. Develop an outreach program to increase and stabilize participation rates for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and Child and Adult Care Food Program. The outreach effort could be shared in partnership among Oakland's community-based organizations and OUSD, and carried out through the schools. The outreach would not only inform youth and their parents about food programs at school and day care, but would also provide parents with information about other nutrition programs such as WIC, food stamps and emergency food resources.<sup>167</sup>
3. Work with OUSD to develop a universal classroom breakfast that provides all children with a nutritious breakfast, at no charge, at their desks at the start of the school day.<sup>168</sup>
4. Support corner store conversions by assisting store owners to transition their stock from fortified alcohol and junk food to both healthful and profitable retail that also meets community needs. This can be achieved by:
  - a. Providing incentives, including grants, tenant improvement funds, tax breaks (e.g. reduction in business taxes at comparable rate to increased stock of local, fresh foods), and the guarantee or facilitation of low-interest loans.
  - b. Providing leadership and guidance for new mixed-use development projects to include sites for food retailers that offer healthy foods.
  - c. Streamlining any applicable license and permit processes. Acquire or convert underutilized or vacant land for food retail development.

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<sup>166</sup> Several of these recommendations were informed by the paper *Neighborhood Groceries: New Access to Healthy Food in Low-Income Communities*, prepared by Ed Bolen and Kenneth Hecht for California Food Policy Advocates. January 2003.

<sup>167</sup> Recommendation informed by: Chanse, Ursula, Alameda County Community Food Bank. "Finding the Gaps in Child Nutrition: A Report on the Summer Food Service Program in Alameda County." June 2003

<sup>168</sup> California school district in Cutler-Orosi, Folsom-Cordova, Modesto, Santa Rosa, and West Contra Costa have adopted universal breakfast programs. For more information see California Food Policy Advocates' publication, [http://www.cfpa.net/UCB\\_SBPInClassroom\\_SimpleSolution.PDF](http://www.cfpa.net/UCB_SBPInClassroom_SimpleSolution.PDF).

- d. Encouraging the conversion of small food retail establishments as a vital component of redevelopment projects.
  - e. Providing technical assistance to entrepreneurs and storeowners who are interested in stocking nutritious food. This might include assistance with marketing, and feasibility and business plans.
  - f. Ensuring that police services to support market operators and discourage undesirable loitering that may detour business.
  - g. Conducting nutrition education classes and activities, including shopping and food budgeting guidance, in conjunction with small food retail stores, residents, and community-based organizations.
5. Develop food enterprise zones in neighborhoods underserved by quality food retail whereby food retailers that provide nutritious foods in these neighborhoods are exempt from Oakland business taxes.<sup>169</sup>
  6. The planning department should include food access needs in the planning, zoning and development process.
  7. Improve transportation services to food markets. Public transit routes can be designed to connect neighborhoods that lack healthy food outlets with areas that have such stores.
  8. Restrict the location and amount of fast food restaurants through land use and other controls. This can be done by:
    - Banning fast food outlets and/or drive-through services
    - Applying fast food bans to certain areas of the City
    - Regulating the number of fast food outlets
    - Regulating the density of fast food outlets
    - Regulating the distance of fast food outlets from other uses, e.g. schools.
  9. Mandate that all parks and recreation facilities remove candy and other high-calorie junk foods from vending machines in favor of healthy alternatives.
  10. Survey and monitor grocery store prices and locations, and survey and monitor transportation and access to food stores.
  11. Lobby and advocate before state and federal legislatures for programs and actions which will improve residents' opportunities to obtain healthily diets.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> San Francisco Food Systems Council and San Francisco Department of Public Health have proposed establishing Food Enterprise Zones in the city's eastern neighborhoods.

<sup>170</sup> Recommendations informed by: Mair, Julie Samia, Matthew W. Pierce and Stephen P. Teret. *The City Planner's Guide to the Obesity Epidemic: Zoning and Fast Food*. Published for The Center for Law and the Public's Health at Johns Hopkins & Georgetown Universities. October 2005.

12. Award and incentivize restaurants and food retail establishments that stock or provide a choice of nutritious foods on their menus. See recommendation number 6 under “Food Literacy.”
13. Ensure that the appropriate program administrators within the City of Oakland are aware of and apply to Food Stamp Outreach grants.
14. Increase availability of land and opportunities for urban food production. (see “Goal 2: Urban Agriculture and Waste Reduction.”)

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<sup>171</sup> For examples of advocacy campaigns, see California Food Policy Advocates < <http://www.cfpa.net/> > and Community Food Security Coalition , <http://www.foodsecurity.org/policy.html>>.

## *Case Study - Corner Store Conversion for Increased Access to Fresh, Nutritious Food<sup>172</sup>*

### *School Market - California Food Policy Advocates Fruitvale, Oakland*

School Market, a 1,300 sq. ft. market in the Fruitvale neighborhood of Oakland was the sole commercial establishment in a 12-block radius, serving a multicultural population. The median household income for the neighborhood is \$25,866. School Market was typical of many urban “corner stores.” The store depended on sales of alcohol, convenience (“junk”) foods, and cigarettes. After a Bay Area Community Services (BACS) and California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) study found that **an important strategy for improving food access of seniors was, “Starting a fresh produce market, or enhancing an existing market by helping it to sell produce and other fresh foods,”** CFPA approached the owner of School Market in 2000 and inquired about whether the store might be interested in expanding its selection of produce and dairy.

The process for “converting” School Market included connecting the owner, Tom Ahmed, with a knowledgeable “produce mentor,” Nathan Cheng, who had been operating a successful free-standing produce market in a low-to-middle income area of Berkeley. Mr. Cheng worked with Mr. Ahmed to reorganize the store layout, maximizing efficiency and creating room for a produce display, as well as marketing strategy for item placement. Mr. Cheng trained Mr. Ahmed in buying, pricing and selling produce. The outside of the market was redesigned and repainted, and flyers in English and Spanish were distributed door-to-door within a 15-block radius of the store. School Market held an open house and distributed free bags of fruit to over 300 individuals. Additionally, they held raffles for produce-related prizes and distributed information on nutrition and health in order to better market the new food.

CFPA arranged an important community outreach component of the conversion with the Alameda County Public Health Department to design a “**fresh produce buying and preparation after-school activity**” with the nearby Fruitvale Elementary School. This relationship also resulted in the fresh produce mural painted by students on the front of the store, and helped connect School Market with the surrounding neighborhood. The result of these efforts was an increase in gross produce sales from \$50 per week to an average of \$600/\$700 per week. Total cost for the project was \$22,520.

Key factors to the success of this conversion included the desire of Mr. Ahmed and his staff to increase produce sales, the expertise and technical assistance provided by Mr. Cheng, the ability of the store to manage their floor space more effectively, as well as base of customers provided by the surrounding neighborhood.

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<sup>172</sup> “Neighborhood Groceries: New Access to Healthy Food in Low-Income Communities.” *California Food Policy Advocates*. 24 February 2006. < <http://www.cfpa.net/Grocery.PDF>>.

## *Case Study - Corner Store Conversion for Increased Access to Fresh, Nutritious Food<sup>173</sup>*

### ***SuperSave Grocery - Literacy for Environmental Justice***

*Bayview Hunters Point, San Francisco*

Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) received funding for its Good Neighbor Project from the San Francisco Department of Public Health's Tobacco Free Project. Funding was provided to implement the Community Capacity Building Process to replace tobacco food subsidiary products in corner stores in the Bayview Hunters Point community with healthier food alternatives and reduce tobacco and alcohol advertising at corner stores.

SuperSave Grocery is the largest food retailer on Third Street in Bayview. However, many folks in the community remember when (not long ago) it was a dark unkempt store, riddled with alcohol and tobacco advertising, that carried little, if any, produce items. Based at a major neighborhood intersection, the business is also obstructed by loitering and a generally menacing atmosphere.

When The Good Neighbor program approached store manager, Sam Aloudi, in late 2003 to become the program's first pilot store, he was skeptical. However, Sam, a savvy businessman recognized that change was on its way. "Well, I haven't sold health foods much because I don't think people will buy them. But- the neighborhood is changing- so why not try it?" he said.

Now, almost 2 years later, SuperSave has continued the program and produce is now 30% of their sales. The dark advertising has been virtually removed and the store is much brighter. After Good Neighbor provided energy-efficient refrigeration units, Sam began carrying fresh dairy products including organic milk and eggs, along with a selection of cheeses. Today, in an aisle stocked with everything from red onions to fresh kiwis, Sam and the Good Neighbor program have demonstrated that it's never too late to change your ways.

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<sup>173</sup> "Good Neighbor Store Case Studies." *Literacy for Environmental Justice*. 24 February 2006.  
<[http://www.lejyouth.org/docs/Good\\_Neighbor\\_Store\\_case\\_study.doc](http://www.lejyouth.org/docs/Good_Neighbor_Store_case_study.doc)>.



## **Goal 2: Urban Agriculture and Waste Reduction**

*Maximize Oakland's self reliance and capacity to grow and provide healthy local food for its citizens through community and rooftop gardens, farmer's markets, community supported agriculture, and other urban agricultural activities; and simultaneously promote a "closed-loop" system that makes use of food waste recovery while reducing energy use.*

### **Recommendations for Local Food Production**

1. Initiate an inventory of land that is potentially suitable for urban agricultural production. This could include both suitable public (right-of-ways, easements, parks, etc.) and private (rooftops, back-yard gardens, etc.) land.
2. Conduct a comprehensive review of current policy and zoning obstacles to urban food production.
3. Develop urban agriculture zoning designations along with related policies for the City's zoning map and general plan.
4. Adopt a formal policy on expanding urban agriculture in Oakland with a targeted 30 percent increase and a corresponding timeline.

See Appendix 4 for Sample Legislation Supporting the Expansion of Urban Gardening.

5. Adopt a plan, goals, and timeline for how Oakland will produce a determined percent of its food consumption.
6. Encourage edible landscaping, community gardens, and rooftop gardens for new large-scale residential and mixed-use development projects.
7. Increase food waste diversion by supporting and following the City's "Zero Waste" resolution recommendations and the polystyrene ban to improve the recyclability of food waste.
8. Increase food waste diversion by supporting community-based organizations that use urban food waste as compost for urban food production. These organizations may be better able to access "hard-to-reach" members of the community (multi-unit residential buildings, or "reluctant recyclers") by creating a direct connection between recycling, environmental sustainability, and community food.
9. Work with Oakland Unified School District, Alameda County Cooperative Extension, and other local organizations to support resources for school gardening.
10. Where schools have shared space with the City (city parks), there should be support in the development of shared school/community gardens. There should also be more coordination between community garden staff from the City Parks and Recreation, the school district, and organizations

providing community-based garden program with regards to the use and expansion of gardens at educational facilities.

11. Pursue a backyard gardening incentive program that promotes and assists homeowners and renters to maintain household gardens.

## *Notable Benefits of Urban Agriculture<sup>1</sup>*

### **Food Security**

- Urban agriculture, but especially community and neighborhood gardens can supply of fresh, quality, and nutritious food to areas underserved by food retail.
- Gardeners can grow cultural favorites that are difficult to find in the market.

### **Education**

- Dietary knowledge and practice is influenced by practical experience—cultivation, harvesting, and cooking contribute to people’s understanding of how food affects their bodies and overall health.

### **Public Safety and Sense of Place**

- Community groups that engage collaboratively to “green” a neighborhood feel a sense of responsibility and pride for physical spaces in the community.
- Community and neighborhood gardens can assure public safety as people of all ages usually engage in gardening during most times of the day.
- Community and neighborhood gardens decrease air pollution, reduce crime, enhance civic life, and create a strong sense of place.
- Urban agriculture of all types can beautify public and private spaces.

### **Mental Health**

- Working with plants can be therapeutic and can help people of all ages with mental illness, improve social skills and self esteem, and can reduce stress.

### **Exercise**

- Gardening and food production provides good exercise which can reduce risks of obesity, coronary heart disease, diabetes, and occupational injuries.

### **Urban Environmental Quality**

- Urban gardens serve as a perfect outlet for compost. (A local drop-off compost site can save a city hundreds of thousands of dollars in waste collection hauling fees.)
- Urban gardens improve storm water absorption—compost-rich gardens can absorb about 15% more than lawns.
- Urban gardens “green” the city and improve air quality. Plants take in carbon dioxide, store carbon in their roots and pump out fresh oxygen.
- Plants can also reduce the “heat island effect” by cooling an area with their evaporation.
- Energy savings and pollution reduction by reducing transportation of food.

### **Economic Development**

- Urban agriculture can be the source of micro-enterprise development, creating business in areas such as food processing and preparation, agricultural supplies and garden consulting.
- Urban agricultural production activities can provide long-lasting job skills.
- Land that is otherwise fallow can produce high-value specialty crops, which in turn earn income that contributes to the overall local economy.
- Urban gardening and landscaping can beautify the city, which can attract businesses and residents. Community gardening can be seen as a factor contributing to quality of life, thereby attracting businesses and residents.

<sup>1</sup> Sources include: Bellows, Anne C. “Health Benefits of Urban Agriculture, An Overview,” *Community Food Security News*. Winter 2006; and Roberts, Wayne. “The Way to a City’s Heart is Through its Stomach,” published by the Toronto Food Policy Council. 2001.

***SCENARIO - 30% Local Area Food Production: What Does Local and Regional Food Production look like for Oakland?***

According to BIOINTENSIVE® sustainable mini-farming methods, a skilled farmer can produce 2 to 6 times the yield compared to commercial agriculture, while using 67%-88% less water, 99% less energy and 50%-100% less purchased organic fertilizer per unit of yield compared with commercial agriculture. It is a method that allows gardeners and farmers to transform scarcity into abundance. If a farmer employs BIOINTENSIVE® farming methods, one person needs between 3,400 and 7,200 square feet for ALL their food needs to be satisfied. The upper end is for meat eaters and perhaps not as "intensive" techniques. The lower end is for veggie diet and very intensive. On one acre (43,560 square feet), a skilled farmer could provide ALL food needs for between 12 and 6 people. What would it look like in Oakland were to expand its urban food production capacity and increase sourcing of food from the regional foodshed? Here's a scenario:

<b><u>Oakland Population</u></b>	<b><u>Oakland 30%</u></b>
400,000	120,000

**Range of acres needed to support 30 % of population's diet:**

9,366	Low end, vegetable-based, intensive farming
19,835	High end, meat- and vegetable-based diet, less intensive farming

**Average acres needed to support 30 % of the population's diet:**

14,601

**SCENARIO**

	Quantity/size	Acres	
Backyard Gardens	20,000 @ 1000 sqft	404	
Community/Neighborhood Gardens	400 @ 5000 sqft	46	
Commercial Production Farms	2 @ 3 acres	6	
Rooftop Gardens	30 @ 600 sqft	0.41	
Schools	100 @ 1000 sqft	2	
Parks	10 @ 1000 sqft	0.23	
Churches	20 @ 1000 sqft	0.46	
Edible Landscaping	10 acres	10	
Greenhouses	10 @ 1000 sqft	0.23	
Converted Brownfields	5 @ 5000 sqft	0.57	
Public Rights-of-Way/Easements	100 acres	100	
<b>Total acreage in Oakland</b>		<b>570</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Total acreage in Regional Foodshed</b>		<b>14,030</b>	<b>28.8%</b>
		14,601	

\*In Chapter 2, "Production" and Chapter 3 "Consumption," we look at the region's capacity to supply food in terms of the value of agricultural production as compared to consumer food expenditures. While this scenario looks at acreage in order to assess the amount and types of land potentially available for expanding food production in Oakland, we believe that a more accurate method to assess the ability of regional agricultural production to supply Oakland consumer is to look at the value of agricultural production, not acreage of farmland.

### ***Goal 3: Economic Development***

*Promote and revitalize economic development opportunities in the food sector that create jobs and recirculate financial capital within the community. Encourage marketing and processing practices that create more direct links between local producers and consumers.*

### **Recommendations for Economic Development**

Pursue economic development policy that supports the five goals of the food system:

1. Promote food systems policy goals within CEDA activities by helping with location and expansion, and streamlining fees and permitting processes for urban food production and processing, “corner store conversions,” and alternative distribution facilities (farmer’s markets, local wholesalers, etc).
2. Utilizing redevelopment, development agreements, and other mechanisms to create economic development opportunities Oakland’s food sector, including:
  - The establishment and development of a wholesale (farmers’) Produce Market. Conduct a feasibility study on developing a market and market survey, research development feasibility, potential sites and programmatic possibilities. (See following case study on the New York Wholesale Farmers Market Feasibility Study.)
3. Utilize available incentives and economic development assistance, such as assistance with site location and other expenses, to develop a wholesale market component in partnership with a non-retail marketer, such as the Grower’s Collaborative, that specifically caters to schools, institutions, “corner store conversions,” and other low-income consumers. (See case study on the Grower’s Collaborative, p. X)
4. Incorporate food processing activities into wholesale market development, specifically providing job training and entrepreneurial skills that benefit low-skill or low-income workers.
5. Pursue an industrial retention policy that both preserves land for food processing uses and that plans for infrastructure upgrades so that food processing companies can maintain high levels of productivity and innovation.
6. Expand efforts to incubate new food-related businesses throughout the City. This might include:
  - Developing an incubator program to connect job training and food, such as tying urban food production and processing together into an entrepreneurial urban agricultural and kitchen incubator.
  - Highlighting restaurants and farmers’ markets as key elements of the City’s appeal as tourist attractions.

- Providing incentives that reduce barriers to entry for new food retail entrepreneurs, especially those located in underserved neighborhoods, and those that carry local foods.
7. Build the food sector around the City's diverse population to create specialty and ethnic food products by fostering closer working relationships among restaurants and food / beverage processing entrepreneurs.

### *Case Study - New York City Whole Farmers' Market Feasibility Study<sup>174</sup>*

Recognizing that agriculture is an important industry in New York State and an essential way of life in many communities, and witnessing an increasing demand for local produce from city buyers, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets commissioned a study to learn how to strengthen the market for regional farmers while improving the economy of both the state and New York City.

The New York Wholesale Farmers' Market Study specifically explored the need and potential for re-establishing one or more wholesale farmers' markets in New York City. The study took place over the course of one and half years, starting in 2003 and finishing in 2005. The consultant team was led by Market Ventures, Inc. and Karp Resources, selected by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets through a competitive bid process. Working with the study team was an advisory committee of nearly 30 members who included farmers; chefs; food business associations; economic development organizations from New York City, the Hudson Valley, Long Island and other areas in New York State; and not-for-profit food- and farm-related organizations. The premise of re-establishing one or more wholesale farmers' markets in New York City would be to:

- expand marketing opportunities in New York City for small- and medium-sized agricultural producers from New York and adjacent states, and
- to meet the growing demand for locally-produced food products among the City's wholesale buyers such as restaurants, caterers, retail stores, food manufacturers, institutions and horticultural retailers.

The study tested the premise that small and mid-size farmers from New York and adjacent states would benefit from the opportunity to market their locally grown fresh and processed products directly to wholesale buyers in New York City at a specialized market facility – a wholesale farmers' market – where they could earn a higher share of the consumer dollar than through conventional wholesale marketing channels. The study included buyer and producer interviews and surveys, an economic benefit analysis, and a location analysis.

In addition, the consultant team investigated other cities' wholesale farmers' markets. They found that in Columbia, South Carolina, a substantial portion of the state's agricultural production flows through the Columbia State Farmers' Market. At the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto, 450 farmers sell to 6,000 registered buyers. In Paris, 99 stalls in three sheds at the famous Rungis market are devoted to the products grown within the agricultural zone designated by Ile de France as a 150-mile radius around Paris. These products are branded and graded distinctively and are highly desired by wholesale buyers.

The results of the study showed that both buyer and producers have a strong interest and enthusiasm for the re-establishment of New York City wholesale farmers' markets. The project team is encouraging New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to conduct a feasibility study and concept development plan as the next logical step toward establishing a wholesale farmers' market in New York City. Such a follow-up study would identify an optimum location (or locations) for siting a permanent wholesale farmers' market, develop facility design, specifications, and cost estimates, examine financing and market management options, identify promotional strategies, including public health campaigns, that could be linked with the market's development, and explore economic synergies with existing wholesale produce markets.

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<sup>174</sup> Market Ventures, Inc., Karp Resources, Urbanomics of New York & New Jersey, Hugh A. Boyd Architects, Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc. *A Study on Development of New York City Wholesale Farmers' Markets*. January 2005. Prepared for: New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Albany, NY and USDA and

### **Goal 4: Agricultural Preservation**

*Support the preservation of the region's foodshed by encouraging consumption of regionally grown food that uses less chemical and energy-intensive production practices and emphasizes local inputs. Support Smart Growth policies that direct growth away from prime agricultural land.*

### **Recommendations for Regional Agricultural Preservation**

1. Expand current "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" or "Local First" campaign in conjunction with the Shop Oakland campaign that promotes wholesale and retail distribution of regionally and sustainably produced foods.
2. Establish a relationship with the Growers Collaborative (see case study below) to support a regional food distribution hub in the Bay Area and for the potential sourcing of local food for City administered food procurement.
3. Adopt a local food ordinance that requires the City government to purchase, by or through its food service contractor, locally-produced and organic food when a department of the City serves food in the usual course of business.

See Appendix 6 for sample local food resolution, passed in winter 2005 in Woodbury County, Iowa.

4. Encourage wholesale produce companies in Oakland to procure goods from regional and organic farms.
5. Lobby and advocate before state and federal legislatures for programs and actions that maintain regional agricultural infrastructure.
6. Develop collaborative relationship with Roots of Change<sup>175</sup> projects to ensure that Oakland's Sustainable Food System Plan is synergistic with complimentary efforts toward a California-wide sustainable food system.

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Agricultural Marketing Service, Washington, DC. 24 February 2006.

<http://www.wholesalefarmersmarketnyc.com>.

<sup>175</sup> The Roots of Change (ROC) Fund is a foundation collaborative supporting work to catalyze the transition to a healthier food system and a healthier environment in California. The ROC Fund aims to increase the human and financial resources devoted to this issue, strengthen this emerging field, and support work toward systemic progress. Description from 29 March 2006 <<http://www.rocfund.org>>.



### *Case Study - The Growers Collaborative<sup>176</sup>*

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is a 501(c)3 organization with 30 years of experience in developing and supporting sustainable agriculture systems in California. For the past three years, CAFF has been running a pilot produce distribution project in Ventura California – the Growers Collaborative – to source fresh, local produce to over 40 low-income schools in the area. The development of the Growers Collaborative was funded by a three-year USDA Value Added grant totaling \$210,000. The pilot has proved a success, with revenue of \$180,000 (profit \$12,000) last year and projected revenue of \$250,000 (profit \$35,000) in 2005. CAFF is developing this pilot into an independent LLC next year, which will expand into Los Angeles schools, and set up distribution hubs in four other regions: Bay Area, Central Coast, San Joaquin Valley, and Sacramento Valley in the next three years.

The capacity of the Growers Collaborative will expand as it works both with small family farmers and mid-sized ‘Ag in the Middle Farmers’. Key support from the Latino farmers’ association ALBA, the Hmong American Farmers’ Association, and the California African American Farmers’ Association will build the Growers Collaborative into an important distribution arm for California’s ethnic farming communities. \$220,000 of financial support for the next three years has already been secured for the Central Coast hub of the Growers Collaborative, and CAFF is currently seeking investments and grants to fund activities in the San Joaquin Valley, Bay Area, and Sacramento Valley (in order of priority).

The Growers Collaborative will serve schools and other large public-sector institutions such as hospitals and universities, yet an important aspect of the viability of the pilot has been the development of corporate clients for produce as well, such as Bon Appetit, the Getty Museum, and the DreamWorks studio. These corporations have chosen to support the social venture with their food dollar, and the higher profit margin on the product distributed to these corporate clients contributes to the long-term sustainability of the business.

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<sup>176</sup> Community Alliance with Family Farmers. White Paper provided by Anya Fernald. 26 January 2006.

### **Goal 5: Public Education and Capacity Building**

*Increase public “food literacy” and build capacity within communities to make food-related choices that positively influence public health and long-term sustainability.*

#### **Recommendations for “Food Literacy”**

1. Engage food policy council and community based organizations to develop and implement a “Healthy Oakland” public relations and educational campaign on healthy living and urban gardening.
2. Support and encourage more nutrition education in youth, adult and senior programs that are currently administered or funded by the City.
3. Support school-based programs that integrate nutrition and gardening and that raise awareness about the connection between healthy food choices and locally-grown fresh produce.
4. Engage with Oakland Unified School district in the ongoing development of their Wellness Policy.
5. Sponsor community events and public health campaigns that promote healthy foods and urban agriculture. Examples could be community health fairs, open garden day, harvest festival, and a City-wide “Eat Well” week.
6. Collaborate with the existing Bay Area Green Business Program to add food criteria in addition to water, energy solid waste, and pollution protection criteria for green business compliance and certification.