



King County

Local Food Initiative



A roadmap
to strengthening
King County's local food
system and increasing access
to healthy, affordable food.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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King County
Northwest Agriculture Business Center
PCC Natural Markets
Zachary D. Lyons



photo: King County

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Executive Constantine 1

Message from Co-Chairs 2

Erick Haakensen, Jubilee Farms

Scott Owen, PCC Natural Markets

Leslie Mackie, Macrina Bakery and Cafe

Snapshot of King County’s Local Food System 4

Executive Summary 7

Introduction 8

Kitchen Cabinet Process 9

Summary of Recommendations 12

King County’s Food Economy

King County’s Access to Healthy, Affordable Food

Next Steps 30

Executive’s Findings

Appendices 37

Appendix A: Food Economy Targets, Strategies, and Action Items

Appendix B: Healthy, Affordable Food Access Targets, Strategies, and Action Items

Appendix C: List of Kitchen Cabinet Members Appointed by King County Executive Dow Constantine

Appendix D: Resources – Referenced Works and Resources, and Acronyms

**BY 2025,
KING COUNTY WILL HAVE...**



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

Few places do food better than King County. Our culinary scene is world-renowned. We have vibrant urban areas within a tractor ride of farms growing delicious, healthy produce. Our residents can browse at more than 40 bustling farmers markets across the county. Nowhere is healthful living more valued.

King County has the largest food market of any county in the Pacific Northwest, with close to \$6 billion annually spent on food and beverage.

But that's where our food story begins to... wilt a bit. Only about two percent of that \$6 billion is going back to King County's farms, whose survival is increasingly at risk due to development pressure, regulatory challenges, and fewer growers getting into farming. Our local food system was not built to withstand global threats such as climate change. What's more, many low-income communities in King County - where residents experience higher rates of obesity and diabetes - suffer from limited access to nutritious foods.



Last year I launched the Local Food Initiative to better connect local farms to consumers, increase access to healthy, affordable foods in underserved areas, support our farmers, and create a farm-to-plate pipeline that is more resilient to the effects of climate change.

I asked more than 30 high-level stakeholders in our local food system - our "Kitchen Cabinet" - to take a hard look at these issues. With this report, they have recommended meaningful targets, strategies, and actions for the County and our partners to pursue.

In this report you will find my Top 20 priority actions for 2015-17. You will also learn about the Cabinet's process, the current state of our county's food system, and see additional Cabinet recommendations for how it can be enhanced over the long term.

I believe that, working together, we can achieve our vision for a stronger food system within a decade.

Everyone can help in this process by working to become better "food citizens." Be aware of what you're consuming, where it is grown or produced, and whether others also have the opportunity to eat healthy, local food. Through wise food purchasing and consumption we can keep our farms productive, our food businesses thriving, and ensure that everyone has access to affordable, healthy food.

Thank you.

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

MESSAGE FROM CO-CHAIRS

Erick Haakensen, Founder and Owner, Jubilee Farms

It has been an honor to serve as a co-Chair of the Kitchen Cabinet. I believe we have arrived at a number of significant proposals whose implementation would indeed fulfill the charter given to this group; namely, to identify achievable means to facilitate the “expansion of our local food economy, and to ensure job growth and economic viability for the food and agricultural industries.” In doing this we have accessed and integrated the discussions and findings of the Regional Food Policy Council; the “Local Food and Farm Roundtable”; and the Fish, Farm and Flood Taskforce, along with seeking out other stakeholders and community leaders for additional input.



photo: Ken Kailing, GoodFood World

There is still much work to do. I am pleased that many of those on the “production team” have expressed a commitment to continue the work in light of the affirmation and direction provided by Executive Constantine. I, too, wish to continue my involvement in seeing these proposals being instantiated in actions that will achieve their intended outcomes.



photo: PCC Natural Markets

Scott Owen, Grocery Merchandiser, PCC Natural Markets

Being a part of the King County Kitchen Cabinet was a wonderful learning experience overall. Having come from retail, the interaction with non-governmental institutions in addition to local governmental agencies was a new experience for me. Bringing together such a broad base of talented and insightful folks made this a true pleasure, and I believe provided the King County Executive a broad and comprehensive package of options well suited to the goals. I do hope the program can achieve its goals, as I truly believe a robust local food system is a benefit to all residence. Today’s global economy provides numerous benefits in cost and selection, but what are its true costs? A strong local food chain is transparent, cost effective, and is nutritious to one’s body and soul. It provides a strong base to grow our local economy, and who does not want to know where their food comes from? These initiatives will provide benefits to us all for decades to come.

**Leslie Mackie, Founder and Owner,
Macrina Bakery and Cafe**

We have spent months working out the details to best define the Local Food Initiative targets and supporting strategies. These targets are well-planned to create long-term benefits for our community and align with Executive Dow Constantine’s objectives for King County. Partnering with other Kitchen Cabinet members has been an eye-opening experience. Each organization has brought a wealth of knowledge to the table and the work that everyone does is inspiring.



photo: Macrina Bakery

Macrina Bakery is taking the Local Food Initiative to heart by making it part of our business decisions. We have redesigned our weekend brunch menus to showcase weekly market-fresh offerings. We are creating a kids menu to offer healthy, whole-grain choices. We have forged a wholesale relationship with PCC Natural Markets, Full Circle Farms, Bon Appetit, and other local purveyors, offering them our Whole Wheat Cider bread made from organic wheat grown in Walla Walla on a PCC Land Trust parcel. And finally, we have a more deliberate goal for our unsold breads and pastries to ensure that these products are donated to food banks and community kitchens that directly help the livelihood of our community.

We all need to make the Local Food Initiative part of our business and personal choices. Step out of the “convenience of things” and buy local first. Ask your supplier or produce department to feature locally grown produce. Take the lead in understanding the importance of exposing our children to the benefits of healthy eating. When we invest in King County’s overall economic growth, we build a healthy, thriving community for decades to come.

It is an honor to be a co-chair for the Local Food Initiative and I ask our community at large to participate. We will all benefit from the results!

King County is a GREAT PLACE FOR...

GROWING FOOD!

King County has **14,200 acres** of preserved farmland



Of the 39 counties in Washington,

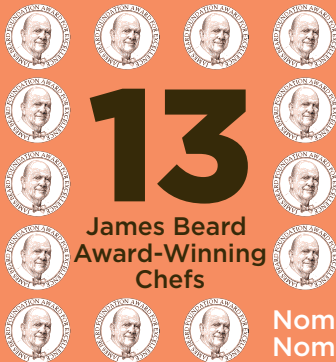


King County has the **3rd** highest number of farms

- Apples
- Artichokes
- Asian Pears
- Asparagus
- Bamboo
- Shoats
- Basil
- Beef
- Beets
- Blackberries
- Blue Potatoes
- Blueberries
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels
- Sprouts
- Butter Lettuce
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cherries
- Chervil
- Chicken
- Chicken Eggs
- Chinese Vegetables
- Chives
- Cilantro
- Corn, Sweet
- Cow Dairy Products
- Currants
- Daikon
- Dill
- Duck Eggs
- Ducks
- Edible Flowers
- Eggplant
- Elephant Garlic
- Emu Eggs
- Epizote
- Fava Beans
- Fennel
- Filberts
- Fingerling Potatoes
- Garlic
- Goat Dairy Products
- Goats
- Gooseberries
- Grapes
- Green Beans
- Green Leaf Lettuce
- Green Onions
- Greens
- Head Lettuce
- Hot Peppers
- Japanese Cucumbers
- Jerusalem Artichoke
- Kiwi
- Kohlrabi
- Lamb
- Lavender
- Leeks
- Lemon
- Thyme
- Marion
- Berries
- Marjoram
- Melons
- Mint
- Mushrooms
- Oregano
- Parsley
- Parsnips
- Pea Vines
- Pears
- Pickling Cucumbers
- Pigs
- Pork
- Pumpkins
- Quince
- Radishes
- Raspberries
- Red Leaf Lettuce
- Red Onions
- Red Potatoes
- Rhubarb
- Romaine Lettuce
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Salad greens
- Savory
- Shallots
- Sheep Dairy Products
- Shell Beans
- Shell Peas
- Slicing Cucumbers
- Snow Peas
- Sorrel
- Sprouts
- Strawberries
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Summer Squash
- Sweet Bay
- Sweet Peppers
- Tarragon
- Thyme
- Tomatillos
- Tomatoes
- Turkey
- Turnips
- Walnuts
- White Onions
- potatoes
- Winter Squash
- Yellow Peas
- Yellow Wax Beans
- Zucchini



INNOVATIVE FOOD!



13

James Beard Award-Winning Chefs

Nom Nom

Seattle was recently ranked the

8th best city in the U.S. for food

by Conde Nast (it's 21st in population)

King County is home to many innovative food brands

- Allrecipes
- Amazon Fresh
- Beecher's
- Caffe Vita/ Via Tribunali
- Darigold
- Dry Soda
- Fran's Chocolates
- Oberto
- PCC Natural Markets
- Pike Place Market
- Starbucks
- Theo Chocolates
- Tim's Cascade Chips
- Top Pot Doughnuts
- Trident Seafoods
- Trophy Cupcakes
- Urbanspoon
- Uwajimaya

Seattle-Tacoma metro area has

20 restaurants per 10,000 people

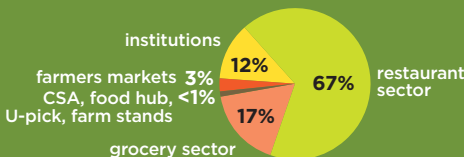


Only the SF Bay Area has a higher concentration

BEING IN THE FOOD BUSINESS!

King County is the largest food processing county in WA - worth \$6.4B and employing over 12k.

King County residents spend an estimated **\$6 Billion** on food yearly



4.5% King County has the lowest unemployment rate in WA.

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES!

King County Parks has over...

175 miles of regional trails
180 miles of hiking trails
200 parks totaling **28,000 acres**



20 FARMERS MARKETS & FOOD STANDS

offer the **FRESH BUCKS** program to provide nutrition incentives for low income consumers.

KING COUNTY'S FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM delivered



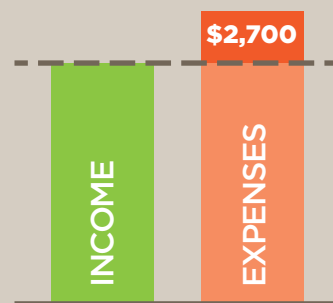
65,000 pounds in 2014 of fresh & healthy local foods to 33,200 students

Youth obesity in South Seattle and South King County dropped from **9.5%** to **7.9%** after work with communities and schools.

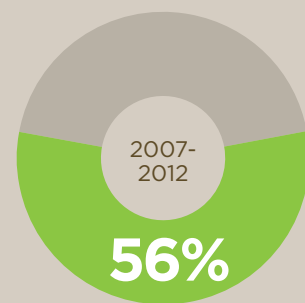
17% reduction 2004-12

BUT LOOKING CLOSER YOU'LL SEE...

MANY FARMERS ARE STRUGGLING



King County's farmers are spending **\$2,700 more per year** to produce food than they are earning back



56% of King County farmers relied on **additional income sources** aside from farming to support their operations & family

THE INDUSTRY COULD BE MORE ROBUST

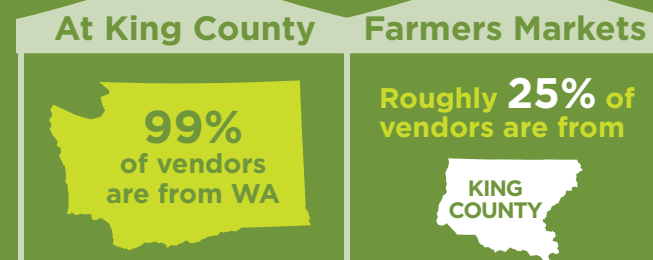


The economic value of King County's agriculture industry 2007 - 2012



HOW YOU CAN HELP

KNOW WHERE YOUR FOOD COMES FROM

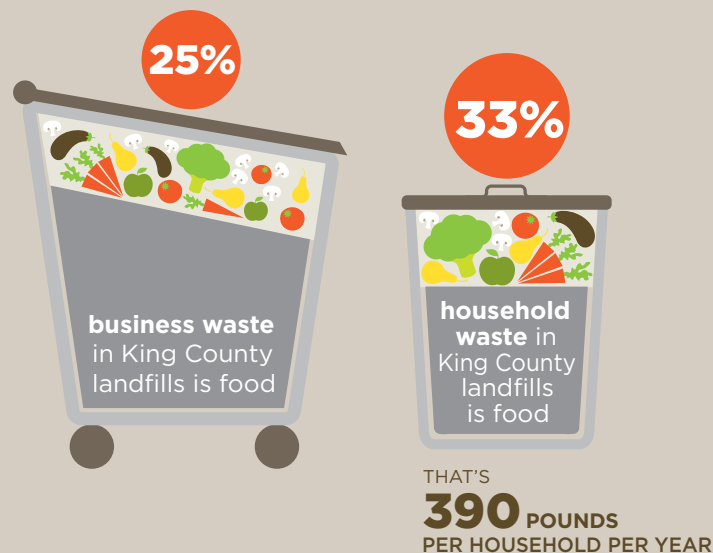


SHOP & EAT LOCALLY!

FOR EVERY **\$100** THAT'S SPENT AT A LOCALLY-OWNED...

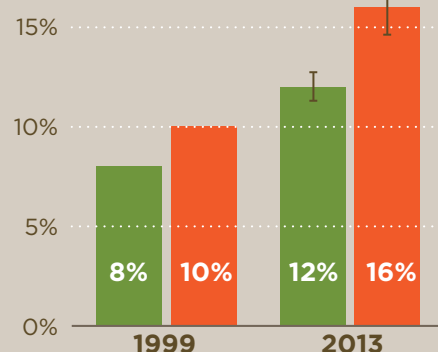


LOTS OF FOOD IS THROWN AWAY



NOT EVERYONE CAN AFFORD TO EAT HEALTHY FOOD

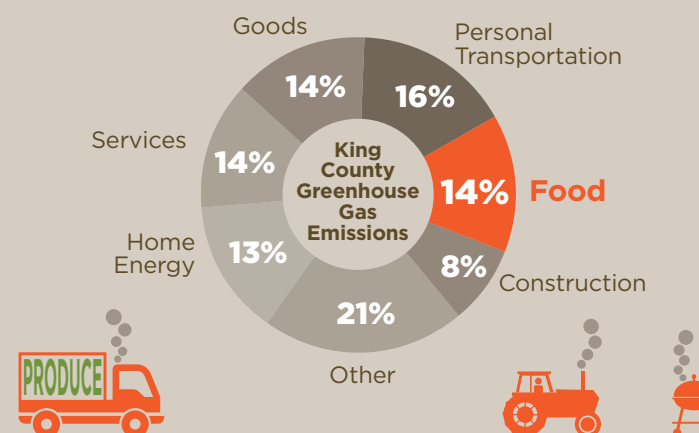
Poverty rates for **ALL AGES** and for **CHILDREN 0-17** in King County have risen.



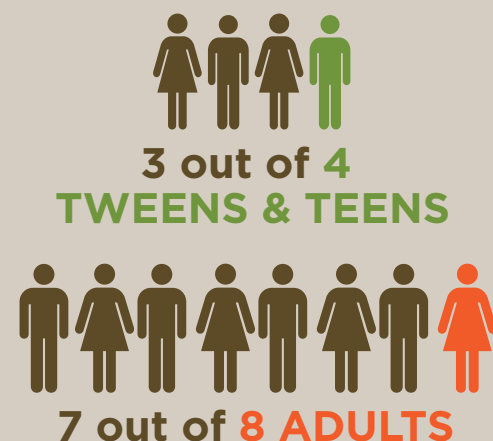
Confidence interval shows range that includes true value 95% of the time (not available for 1999).

FOOD IMPACTS CLIMATE CHANGE

The carbon emissions from producing, transporting, and consuming food are second only to the emissions from transportation.



WHO'S NOT EATING THEIR VEGGIES?



DO NOT consume enough fruits and vegetables to provide adequate nutrition

SOME RESIDENTS DON'T GET ENOUGH FOOD



VEGGIES LOSE 15-77% of their **vitamin C** within 7 days of harvest

BUYING LOCAL MEANS FRESHER & HEALTHIER FRUITS & VEGETABLES!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report captures the targets, strategies, and action items recommended by the Kitchen Cabinet for achieving the goals of King County's Local Food Initiative (Initiative). The Kitchen Cabinet (Cabinet) is an advisory panel comprised of high-level representatives from food economy and access stakeholders in King County. The Cabinet members were tasked with producing targets, strategies, and action items for meeting the goals of the Initiative. These goals are:

- 1. Expand our local food economy to ensure job growth and economic viability for King County food businesses and farms.**
- 2. Improve access to healthy, affordable food in low-income communities.**

The Initiative was borne out of the need to develop a resilient and sustainable local food system that was both economically viable and capable of providing healthy food to county residents in the midst of economic and climate change pressures. Its scope is currently limited to King County farms, food businesses, institutions, and local government and as the Initiative progresses, it is foreseeable that the scope could grow beyond the county.

The Kitchen Cabinet process is the first phase of the Initiative and will continue to serve as a monitoring body to oversee the progress of work completed under it. King County Executive Dow Constantine appointed the 36 members of the Kitchen Cabinet on June 23, 2014 and tasked them to identify targets, strategies, and action items that King County can implement as a region to meet the goals within 10 years. Cabinet members were drawn from private, public, non-profit, and academic organizations that are all currently working in the food system or are champions of access to healthy, affordable food.

After a five-month period, the Cabinet identified five targets, 35 strategies, and over 140 action items. Areas of focus amongst the five targets include increasing food production, doubling demand of local food, reducing food waste, increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables, and increasing food security. Within each target are metrics to measure progress and performance.

The second phase of the Initiative is implementation of the action items and strategies. After reviewing all the targets, strategies, and action items, the County Executive identified 20 priority actions and strategies that are critical to the success of the Initiative. These priority items will start or receive additional support beginning in 2015-17. As the Initiative progresses, the remaining action items and strategies will be integrated where appropriate and as capacity and resources become available.



photo: King County

INTRODUCTION

Report Organization

This report is organized into four main sections:

Kitchen Cabinet Process: This section provides an overview of the Kitchen Cabinet along with the exact charge it received from the Executive. It also provides additional details about the process undertaken by the Kitchen Cabinet to achieve the targets, strategies, and action items

Summary of the Recommendations: The Kitchen Cabinet’s deliverables are the results of an intensive process that involved analyzing data points, previous recommendations from other regional food policy fora, studies, and first-hand knowledge. In this report, a synopsis of each target is found under the Current Situation subsection. It is then followed by a summary of the strategies and action items

Next Steps: Information on the implementation phase of the Initiative can be found in this section, which includes: the Executive’s Key Findings, Next Steps for the Kitchen Cabinet, and resources.

Appendix: The appendix includes additional details about the targets, strategies, action items and a bibliography containing the works, studies, and resources used by the Kitchen Cabinet. All resources contained in the bibliography are accessible via the Initiative’s site: www.kingcounty.gov/exec/local-food.



photo: King County

KITCHEN CABINET PROCESS

A. What is the Kitchen Cabinet?

The Kitchen Cabinet consisted of 36 members from both private and public sectors of the food system; each bringing unique expertise in food production, distribution, processing, research, retail, and/or food access to the discussion. All members were appointed by the County Executive and led by three co-Chairs who consulted on the process with King County. The co-Chairs are:

Erick Haakensen, Jubilee Farms

Leslie Mackie, Macrina Bakery and Cafe

Scott Owen, PCC Natural Markets

A full list of Cabinet members can be found in the Appendix and on the Initiative's website: www.kingcounty.gov/exec/local-food

B. Executive's Direction

The Kitchen Cabinet was directed by Executive Constantine to use its expertise in the food system to produce three deliverables that would advise the Executive on an action plan needed to expand the local food economy and increase access to healthy, affordable food. The deliverables were not limited to actions that only the County government can do, but focus on what King County, as a region, can do. Those deliverables are:

1. **Targets** under each goal that are measurable.
2. **Strategies** to meet the targets.
3. **Action items** that could be incorporated into a countywide action plan for implementation.

In developing these deliverables, the Kitchen Cabinet also took into consideration recommendations and studies from past and ongoing local food system efforts in King County.



photo: King County

C. Meetings and Dissection of the Targets, Strategies, and Action Items (Deliverables)

The Kitchen Cabinet met 15 times during the course of five months to work on the deliverables.

The first few meetings were devoted to reviewing baseline assessments of the current states of King County’s food economy and healthy, affordable food access.

Following the presentation of the baseline assessments, the Kitchen Cabinet first considered the deliverables under the food economy goal, then the healthy, affordable food access goal. For both goals, the Kitchen Cabinet members were divided into small groups based on their expertise in the food system. Under the food economy goal, there were three sub-groups: Production, Demand, and Food Waste Reduction. For the healthy, affordable food access goal, the sub-groups were divided according to food access pathways: Institutions, Retail, Emergency Food, and Alternative such as direct markets.



Within these small groups, the members brainstormed potential targets, strategies, and action items by drawing from existing data, literature, promising practices, and personal experience. Each small group further scrutinized the deliverables for criticality, probability of implementation, key partners, and resource needs before making a recommendation to the larger Kitchen Cabinet for approval.

There was a stakeholders’ outreach period where the deliverables for both goals were made available for public feedback. The Kitchen Cabinet reviewed all feedback and integrated as applicable.

During this process, King County facilitated meetings and provided administrative support, research, and analysis to the Kitchen Cabinet. King County also conducted outreach to targeted groups who were not members of the Kitchen Cabinet and integrated feedback into the final document.

This report is a result of this process and will serve as the action plan for implementation.

Info Bite

Macrina Bakery and Café

SOURCE



BAKE

3 SEATTLE LOCATIONS

BELLTOWN
McGRAW
SODO

DONATE



Macrina Bakery and Café is an institution in King County known for its quality breads, baked goods, and cafes. What was not known about Macrina until recently is the strong local food ecosystem the company has been able to build. Everything is local and touches on King County-whether it's the wheat it sourced from a Walla Walla farm owned by Seattle-based PCC Farmland Trust, or food donations to the Vashon Food Bank. Macrina also practices sustainability in donating its organic byproducts to Feliz Farms, an organic pig farm in Auburn.

Les Dames D'Escoffier: On a personal note, Leslie Mackie devotes a significant amount of her time supporting the organization's Green Tables program, which provides grants to non-profits that promote and provide education on the seed-to-fork cycle.



CONNECTIONS MADE THROUGH THE LOCAL FOOD INITIATIVE

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kitchen Cabinet made quick progress and achieved a great deal of consensus on the deliverables. At the end of the process, there were over 140 action items recommended for implementation; 127 were identified as “high priority”. A complete list of those action items can be found in Appendices A and B.

Three overarching action items were identified as essential to measuring progress under the Initiative. These items are:

Develop a local food system data collection system.

During this phase, King County pulled as much data as possible from available resources at the local, state, and national level. It was apparent that there was insufficient data focused on King County’s local food system. Therefore, data collection of the local food system will be a priority under the Initiative.

Develop a legislative strategy (local, state and federal) in which to house local food system and access to healthy, affordable food needs. The Kitchen Cabinet identified action items that called for major policy changes critical to reaching the targets. King County will determine how best to capture these action items and present it to decision makers.

Put in place a funding strategy to fund Local Food Initiative work. Some of these action items will require a funding stream to implement. Throughout the process, the Kitchen Cabinet treated resources as a critical piece of implementation but it was not a limiting factor in identifying strategies and action items that were most critical to success. There are existing funding sources, both public and private, that fund local food systems work, which either King County or Cabinet members have experience using and will continue to use. A major “next step” will be to identify additional temporary and permanent funding to supplement current resources.

A. King County’s Food Economy

King County is the largest food market in Washington, thanks to a growing population tied to a growing economy. According to Washington’s Office of Financial Management, King County’s population is expected to grow to 2.3 million by 2025. As the population continues to grow, the demand for food will increase as well. Currently, restaurants and grocery retailers account for 88 percent of the estimated \$6 billion food market in King County; however, there is a rising trend of direct markets such as farmers’ markets. In 2012, there were over 40 farmers markets in King County accounting for an estimated \$20 million in sales. Given that 97 percent of King County farmers are small- to mid-size farmers, farmers markets along with, or Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and other direct market retail outlets have become primary sources of revenue generation for King County farmers. Therefore, not only must King County continue to support existing market channels for local food but it must also begin exploring new markets to support it.



Understanding that a sustainable and resilient local food economy needs a reliable flow of supply as well as stable market capacity to absorb it, the Kitchen Cabinet identified three target areas that it felt were critical to achieving the goal. These three target areas are: **Production, Demand, and Food Waste Reduction.**

Target 1: Production

***Target 1A:** Add 400 net new acres in food production per year in King County (2 percent per year) for the next 10 years.*

***Target 1B:** Increase the number of new and beginning farmers in food production in King County by 25 new farmers per year.*

Current Situation:

King County has a long history of preserving farmland and supporting farmers and farmers markets in the county. The Farmland Preservation Program is 30 years old, and has saved roughly 14,000 acres of the county’s most-productive agricultural lands. Furthermore, King County launched “Puget Sound Fresh” in 1998 to support farmers markets and to promote farm products grown, raised, or harvested regionally. More recently, the County partnered with the City of Seattle in a program to use revenue generated from selling rural development rights to preserve more farmland – especially active farms that supply Seattle’s farmers markets and restaurants.

Despite these successes, the landscape of farming is changing in King County. Similar to the rest of the country, King County agriculture is confronted with challenges such as aging farmers and rising cost of land. Furthermore, the 2012 USDA Agriculture Census indicated that King County farmers are actually spending more money to produce food than they are making in revenue. Despite King County residents spending nearly \$6 billion per year on food and drink, less than 2 percent of that amount is realized by King County farmers for food grown in the county. In addition:



photo: Zachary D. Lyons

- King County farms experienced a 4.7 percent decrease in the value of production since the 2007 USDA Agriculture Census (\$127 million in 2007 vs. \$121 million in 2012).
- Production costs outweighed revenue by an average of \$2,700 per farm.
- There was a 6 percent decline in the number of beginning farmers while the average age of King County farmers is 57.
- The number of acres farmed in the county decreased by 5.2 percent.

Not all the data was negative. There were some very positive trends such as:

- A 43 percent increase in Hispanic farmers and a 23 percent increase in Asian American farmers.
- Despite farm acreages decreasing, the number of farms in King County increased by 2.6 percent.

Fortunately, in recent years, there has been a growing focus on local food and the local food system. In the mainstream media, the encouragement to support local farms and know where food comes from has created a national local food movement.

Although agriculture in King County has some challenges, those challenges can be overcome by building a more sustainable and resilient local food system that allows for increased awareness of local farms and food. If the action plan is successful in meeting the stated targets, King County will have built a positive business environment with a level playing field for county farmers and the local food industry.



photo: King County

On the next pages are summaries of the Targets, Strategies, and Action Items under the Production target. Please refer to Appendix A for more details.

Strategies and Action Items:

Strategy 1.1: *Decrease start-up and expansion costs and remove barriers in food production (land, equipment, related infrastructure, taxes, insurance, capital investment).*

Strategy 1.1 addresses the range of barriers, especially financial, to accessing land and equipment necessary for food production in King County. Under this strategy, the action items focus on streamlining technical assistance and services for farmers as well as exploring regulatory changes and potential incentives to make acquiring land for food production more feasible. In addition, there is a strong focus on exploring additional strategies to devise new and innovative ways of financing food production in King County. There was a clear consensus from the Production segment of the Kitchen Cabinet that whereas many important items were discussed, this point was essential to bringing about new and significant agricultural production in King County.

Strategy 1.2: *Improve farmland productivity.*

Farming in King County is expensive. In the 2012 USDA Agriculture Census, the top five expenses for King County farmers included land, labor, supplies/maintenance, property taxes, and fuel. Kitchen Cabinet members who consistently follow developments in the industry also pointed out that new federal food safety regulation such as the Food Safety Modernization Act could bring additional costs to farmers. Therefore, ensuring that farmers producing food not only have access to land and water but also have a chance at being economically viable was a priority for the Kitchen Cabinet. Under this strategy, the recommended action items sought to increase technical assistance and resources that would help farmers extend seasonality and productivity as well as business skills.

Strategy 1.3: *Enhance recruiting, training, and technical assistance programs for new farmers, with consideration of diverse cultural and language needs.*

To establish an achievable goal of increasing the number of new farmers in King County, the Kitchen Cabinet recommended that Production Target 1B specifically focus on recruiting at least 25 new farmers per year for the next 10 years. In order to meet that target, the Kitchen Cabinet recommended increasing technical assistance and services such as the Farmlink Program and Cultivating Success classes. It also acknowledged the rise in immigrant and minority farmers and the need to provide technical assistance and services specific to those groups. This equates to increased support for farm incubator programs, financing education, and forming farming associations for King County minority/immigrant farmers.



photo: King County

Strategy 1.4: *Preserve farmland for food production, building on the recommendations of the King County Farms and Food Roundtable.*

King County has made great strides with farmland preservation, having preserved 14,000 acres for farms. This Initiative hopes to build on this success by honing in on land specifically preserved for food production. In 2013, the City of Seattle, King County, and Pike Place Market assembled the King County Farms and Food Roundtable to identify recommendations for preserving King County lands for food production as well as address the marketing of local food products. Out of that effort came a list of recommendations that were further explored under this Initiative for implementation. With the goal of increasing access to land specifically for food production, the action items under this strategy focused on innovative measures such as developing an easement requiring that food be produced on the land and maintaining the current practice of purchasing easements to reduce cost of land. Recognizing that there are potentially other mechanisms to preserve land for food production, an action item to convene a group to develop a long-term strategy for more farmland preservation for food production was highly recommended.

Strategy 1.5: *Improve drainage to bring more land into production.*

King County farmers consistently cite drainage as an impediment to food production. While there are mechanisms and partnerships with the local government to address these issues, the Kitchen Cabinet found that more could be done to streamline drainage solutions that would allow for increased food production on King County agricultural lands. The action items under this strategy could best be summarized as maintaining and improving current drainage efforts such as the Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP) while actively seeking new ways to make drainage projects less expensive, easier to implement, and improve drainage systems across property lines.

Strategy 1.6: *Improve availability and efficiency of irrigation water: save what we have, share what we have, and if possible, find more.*

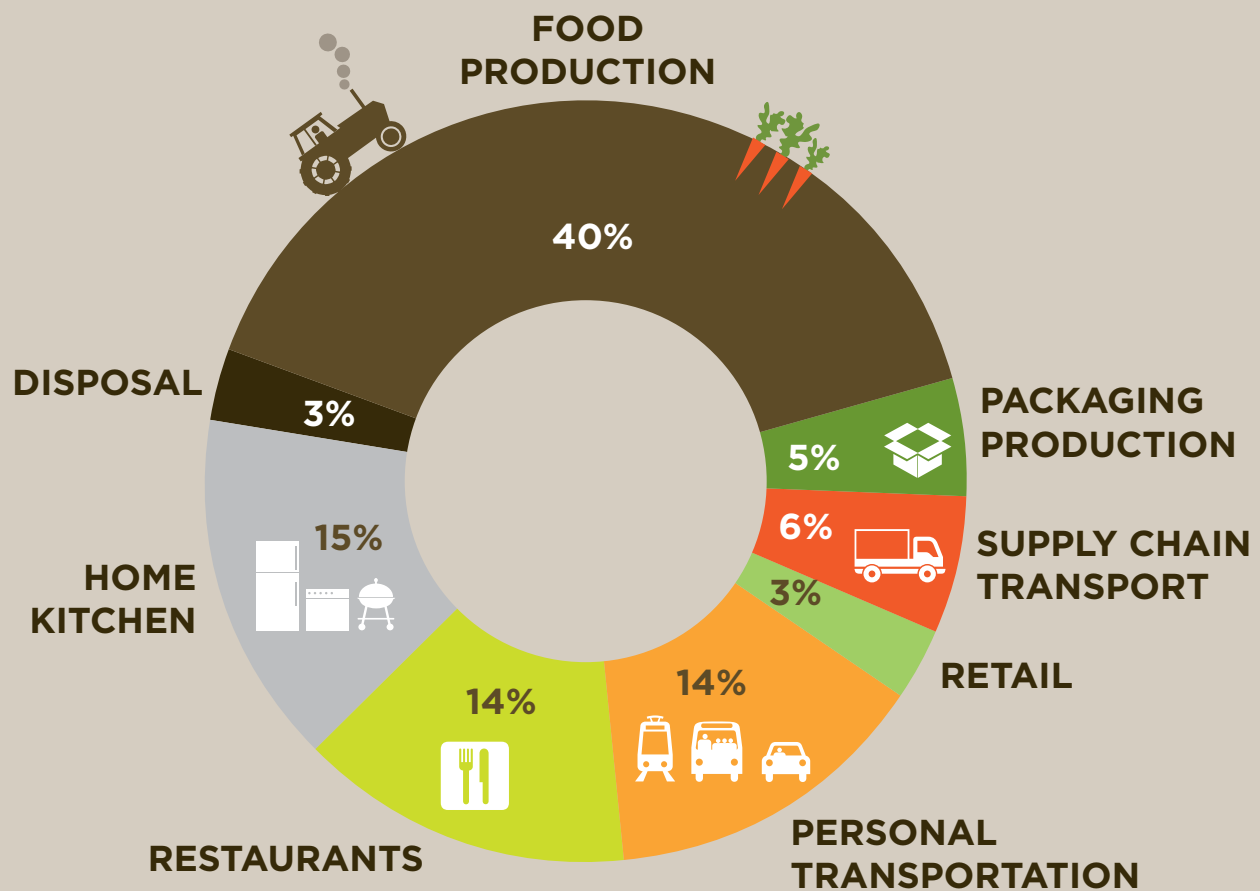
Aside from removing water from land, King County farmers also face the challenge of not having enough water. Most of the time, this is due to the lack of water rights on agricultural property. In deliberating this issue, the Kitchen Cabinet recognized that the solution may be in identifying creative and innovative solutions to bring more water to farmers who wish to grow food crops. Therefore, some of the top action items recommended included exploring the use of reclaimed water by farmers for irrigation and creation of Watershed Improvement Districts to better manage existing water rights.



photo: King County

Info Bite

Food System and Greenhouse Gas Emissions



What can you do to reduce your impact?

- Minimize car trips to restaurants and stores.
- Cook with efficient appliances and techniques.
- Compost, recycle and relish leftovers.
- Cut down on unnecessary food waste by learning which fruits and vegetables stay fresh longer inside or outside of the fridge (see: <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/wasteprevention/documents/too-good-food-storage-guide.pdf>)

Source data for this infographic is online: www.kingcounty.gov/exec/local-food

Target 2: Demand

Double demand for locally produced, healthy food from \$93 million to \$186 million in 10 years.

Current Situation:

King County farmers are located in the largest food market in Washington, yet in 2012, King County farmers received only \$121 million of the estimated \$6 billion spent on food here. The bulk of the King County food market is in the restaurant industry, which was a \$4.3 billion industry in 2012 followed by the grocery retail industry at \$1.1 billion.

These revenue trends align with national spending patterns. The 2012 Consumer Expenditures Report generated by the U.S. Department of Commerce and a corresponding study by USDA's Economic Research Service showed that more Americans were spending their food dollars eating away from home as opposed to eating at home. In addition, more Americans were eating prepared and processed food than home-cooked meals.

Many of King County's farmers have found sales to restaurants to be a good market. Some farmers have cultivated relationships with local chefs and supply directly to the restaurants while others have chosen to supply local food distributors serving local restaurants. Despite this, the large size of the restaurant industry in King County suggests that a majority of the food is being imported from outside the county. Initial research indicates there are opportunities for more locally-produced products to be sold to King County restaurants.

Another promising market for local farmers is the institutional sector. This includes public and private institutions such as schools, hospitals and daycares. In a recent report completed by Cascade Harvest Coalition and Slow Money Northwest, the institutional market (specifically schools, hospitals, and daycares) in King County was valued at approximately \$74 million annually. There is also a growing awareness and appreciation for locally-produced food among institutions; however, this market sector is limited by its procurement policies, practices and budgets. Furthermore, due to the large quantities of food these organizations require, small-to mid-sized farmers hoping to sell to institutions are often faced with quantity and processing challenges.



photo: Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)

King County is currently the largest food processing county in Washington with an estimated industry worth \$6.4 billion. In breaking down the food processing business in King County, the majority of the food processors are in the baking, beverage, and coffee sectors. This trend is best attributed to the gradual relocation of many Puget Sound fruit and vegetable processors to Eastern Washington beginning 20 years ago. The driving factor for this relocation was

the need of the processors to be closer to the commodities they process. Darigold still has many of its dairy operations in western Washington, but the livestock industry in King County continues to struggle with a lack of meat processing facilities in the county. The closest slaughtering operations are located in Pierce and Snohomish counties. According to the 2012 USDA Agriculture Census, livestock and poultry was King County's number one industry valued at \$76.7 million.



photo: Clean Greens Farm & Market

As mentioned earlier, many King County farmers have come to rely on direct markets for revenue. Farmers' markets, CSAs, roadside stands, and U-picks are prevalent in King County. The attractiveness of a direct market to a farmer is the ability to get the asking price for the products. Through storytelling and relationship building, King County farmers are able to place a value around their products that is oftentimes lost in the larger food system. Because of the high cost of production in King County, mainly attributed to expensive land, lack of supplies and maintenance, and property taxes, farmers have sought to add value to their products by adopting sustainable farming practices and adding value where they can. Despite such efforts, farming in King County is still expensive, which makes direct markets the market-of-choice for many farmers.

Under the Demand target, the strategies and action items identified are those that would increase awareness of locally-produced food, train and assist both the farmers and the buyers about local food, and expand the local food market share whether it be through sustaining and enhancing current markets or creating and supporting emerging markets. The need to have better insight into the food processing and distribution infrastructure was deemed a priority along with increasing support for food aggregation models such as food hubs and cooperatives, which are necessary to meet the quantity and quality demanded by the market.

Strategies and Action Items:

***Strategy 2.1:** Create awareness of King County-produced food via marketing and education to consumers.*

King County is often considered urban; however, there are over 1800 farms within the county. This strategy is intended to increase awareness amongst King County residents of its farms and the food products produced here. Under this strategy, the recommended actions designed to promote King County food include enhancing the "Buy Local" message along with educating consumers about what is available season-to-season. In addition, there are action items that specifically focus on facilitating farms-to-consumers connections to increase awareness and provide opportunities for local food purchases.

Strategy 2.2: *Increase technical assistance for sourcing locally: for farmers/ producers- retail-readiness and marketing assistance; for restaurants, institutions, and grocery retailers – how to source locally and implement sustainable practices.*

King County farmers can benefit from additional marketing technical assistance. As the Kitchen Cabinet process progressed, it became apparent that it is not enough to create an environment that facilitates only production; a robust local food system also requires all entities in the food system to have the knowledge and skills necessary to bring the products to market. In addition, there is a need to provide market intelligence surrounding local food and the local food system to all entities. Therefore, the action items under this strategy could be broken down into those that focus specifically on increasing technical assistance and those on increasing market intelligence.

Strategy 2.3: *Improve the local food processing, distribution, and marketing infrastructure in King County to accommodate and increase aggregated food distribution.*

King County is the number-one food processing county in Washington; however, there is little information on the food processing industry and distribution infrastructure servicing fruits, vegetables, and meats. The local food system infrastructure is especially crucial in bringing more local food to King County consumers as retailers consistently identify basic food processing such as wash-and-pack and bulk quantities as their top needs when sourcing locally. Therefore, the action items under this strategy focus on developing a better understanding of the food system infrastructure; supporting Food Innovation Districts and aggregated food models; and supporting infrastructure development, including meat processing units.



photo: Food Lifeline

Strategy 2.4: Support emerging markets for selling locally-produced food.

This strategy was developed to create and support new markets for local food. Under this strategy the recommended action items include exploring the use of Park and Rides as food distribution sites and exploring the incentives models under corporate wellness programs to motivate increased consumption of healthy local food.

Target 3: Food Waste Reduction

In 10 years, decrease by 25 percent the amount of wholesome food loss.

Current Situation:

According to the USDA’s Economic Research Service, Americans every year throw away around 133 billion pounds of food that is still consumable. This is equivalent to every American household tossing 100 quarter-pound hamburgers every month. It is estimated that an average American household of four tosses out more than \$1,600 per year in food.

Aside from economic impacts, throwing away wholesome food also has impacts on the climate. In addition to all the natural resource inputs that it takes to produce food, the decomposition of discarded food releases methane, which is a greenhouse gas that is 21 times more damaging than carbon dioxide. In King County, the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from food production and consumption are second only to the emissions from personal transportation. An additional reason to minimize wasted food is to reduce the amount of food waste going to landfills or compost facilities.

Under the Reduce Food Waste target, the Kitchen Cabinet’s strategies are designed to redirect healthy food away from disposal and to consumption. The idea is to maximize the use of food so that all the resources it took to produce, transport, and consume food are not wasted. In order to achieve this, the strategies can best be summarized as focusing on the following areas – waste prevention education, extending the life of healthy food, and increasing awareness of sustainable practices for food retailers.



photo: King County

Strategies and Action Items:

Strategy 3.1: *Promote residential/household practice improvements to better utilize healthy food such as portion sizes, extending shelf-life of food, better shopping.*

This strategy encourages continued support of the County's current neighborhood/household food waste prevention campaign, Food: Too Good to Waste program. The program seeks to prevent food that is still consumable from going to waste. King County was one of the first counties in the United States to pilot the program.

Strategy 3.2: *Increase the amount of surplus food that is donated via meal programs and related channels.*

The action item recommended by the Kitchen Cabinet is to increase and support prepared food rescue programs.



photo: King County

Strategy 3.3: *Increase the efficiency of institutional, catering, and restaurant kitchens.*

This strategy builds on the “Lean Kitchen” concept. Information on how to implement “Lean Kitchen” and sustainability practices will be pulled together into a Sustainable Restaurant/Food Retailer Toolkit that will be available for businesses interested in the practices. These resources currently exist but not in one location.

Strategy 3.4: *Expand the utilization of edible food produced in King County.*

King County will explore piloting an imperfect food campaign to create consumer demand for imperfectly-shaped fruits and vegetables. Additionally, in response to the demand for fresh fruits and vegetables by food banks and similar entities, there will be increased efforts in connecting local farms with the donated food distribution networks.

Strategy 3.5: *Increase grocery store food management efficiency.*

This strategy also builds on increasing awareness and implementation of the “Lean Kitchen” practices, specifically for small grocers. Furthermore, there is an action item to engage small store owners in donating edible, prepared food as opposed to composting or throwing it away.

Strategy 3.6: *Build food utilization tracking into food knowledge management system.*

As previously stated, developing a data tracking mechanism to provide more insight into the local food system and measure progress under the Initiative is an overarching action item. This strategy is a perfect example of the various data needs specific to reducing food waste.

B. Access to Healthy, Affordable Food in King County

Food insecurity, hunger, obesity, and inequitable access to healthy, affordable food are complex problems. King County's Equity and Social Justice Annual Report released in November 2014 identified access to healthy, affordable local food as a major equity determinant – an essential need for each person. In developing the deliverables under the



Healthy, Affordable Food Access goal, the Cabinet recognized that strategies for an improved local food system and improved food access in low-income communities are inextricably linked to a range of major social and political issues such as poverty, transportation, social justice and commodity-subsidized agriculture. The ultimate goal from the Cabinet is to pursue near and long-term remedies and solutions to achieve equitable access to healthy, affordable food. The work ahead will necessitate multi-pronged approaches by government, business, nonprofits and communities to make measureable impacts.

There are many existing efforts to improve access to healthy, affordable food and additional resources are needed to bring these programs to scale. Thus the Kitchen Cabinet emphasizes that the following set of strategies require a commitment to fund them in a sustainable, long-term manner. The recommendations under this goal reflects actions that can occur locally, support existing and new county-wide efforts to increase access to healthy food, and find innovative solutions to address disparity and food security challenges.

Target 1: Increase Consumption of Healthy Fruits and Vegetables

Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables by 2025. Middle and high school youth - from 24 percent to 30 percent. Adults - overall consumption from 12 percent to 20 percent with a focus on disparately affected populations.

Current Situation:

A “healthy food” is a plant or animal product that provides essential nutrients and energy to sustain growth, health, and life while satiating hunger. Only 12 percent of all King County adults and 26 percent of King County middle and high school age youth consume recommended levels of fruits and vegetables, and there are significant disparities (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2011 and 2013, Healthy Youth Survey). In King County, consumption of fruits and vegetables is linked to race and income. There are communities with less healthy food access, less healthy eating, and coincident diseases. Eating fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of developing many chronic diseases, provides important nutrients for the human body, and can also help with weight management. Creating greater access to quality and affordable fruits and vegetables is an important step to increasing consumption.

Target 2: Food Security

While King County strives for elimination of food insecurity, the target by 2025 is to reduce food insecurity from 14 percent to 10 percent.

Current Situation:

Food security is defined as “the access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.” Food insecurity refers to “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways.” (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture). In King County, 271,380 (14.0 percent) residents lacked access to enough food for an active, healthy life in 2012 and 79,320 (19.2 percent) King County children lived in food-insecure households (Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap). According to recent surveys, there are significant disparities in access to food and food security. Food insecurity is more likely among low income households, adults with low educational attainment, and those out of work. African Americans/Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos are more likely to run out of food than whites or Asians and multiple race individuals are less likely to run out of food than Hispanics. In South King County, more people run out of food when compared to other parts of the County. The strategies defined in this report are focused on communities of highest need.

Strategies and Action Items:

Strategy 1: *Increase the number of healthy food procurement policies in King County institutions (schools, child care, hospitals), with an emphasis on institutions serving priority populations.*

Action items under this strategy include providing resources and technical assistance to institutions regarding healthy eating, policy development/implementation support, and identifying and securing funding sources to implement and facilitate these policies.

Strategy 2: *Improve school nutrition environments, with emphasis on schools with high eligibility rates for school meal programs.*

King County will partner with schools and school districts to implement strategies such as breakfast after the bell and farm-to-school.

Strategy 3: *Increase the number of King County farmers markets with nutrition incentive programs for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, with emphasis in South King County.*

Under this strategy, the focus is to make Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), SNAP and other nutrition incentive programs available to consumers in King County farmers markets, with an emphasis in South King County.



photo: Food Lifeline

Info Bite

Meet Seattle Tilth Farm Works Farmers: Elizabeth Ndishu and Francis Kamau

Elizabeth Ndishu and Francis Kamau come from agricultural roots. Both have fond memories of growing up within farm communities in Kenya. “My farm experience began when I was young, cultivating with my mother in the fields,” said Elizabeth. But other life opportunities led each away from their respective family farms, eventually away from Kenya.



photo: Seattle Tilth

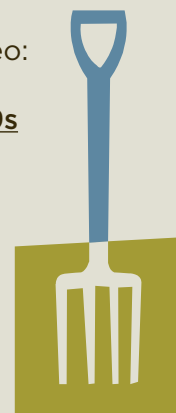
Fast forward to 2013: married to one another, living in Renton, and employed in the health care sector. “We had been gardening in our back yards, but wanted more space and needed to gain knowledge on regional crops and organic practices,” said Elizabeth. Through a friend’s recommendation, Francis and Elizabeth enrolled in the Seattle Tilth Farm Works (STFW) incubator program to pursue their sprouting dream of owning/operating a diverse mixed vegetable operation. “I was particularly interested in learning about drip irrigation and mechanized systems,” said Francis.

Now entering their third season, Faith Beyond Farm is excited about farming 1-2 acres of vegetables and expanding a small laying hen flock started this past season. Through technical assistance offered by STFW, Faith Beyond Farm has begun using the drip irrigation system Francis set out to learn, as well as caterpillar tunnels for season extension and hot crops. The duo sells produce through the Seattle Tilth multi-producer CSA, which is a marketing outlet for incubator farmers, as well as through independent community channels. “In 5 years’ time, I see myself equipped with all the modern techniques, skills, and knowledge on cultivating crops in the Pacific Northwest so I can own and manage a farm with my wife,” said Francis of his future plans. Look for Faith Beyond Farm produce through one of the **Seattle Tilth Produce** outlets.



You can see them in action on Seattle Tilth’s video: <http://youtu.be/yIcIlVAeaSQ?t=49s>

photo: Seattle Tilth



LEARN. GROW. EAT.
**seattle
tilth**

Strategy 4: *Increase policies, practices, and incentives in local jurisdictions that promote access to healthy eating among priority populations.*

Through this strategy, King County will collaborate with local jurisdictions to implement policy and environment changes to improve access to healthy, affordable foods. Strategies may include community engagement, comprehensive plan updates, urban agriculture policies, and joint use agreements.

Strategy 5: *Increase the amount of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy food options available in food banks and emergency meal programs.*

The action items address barriers such as infrastructure for distributing and storing fresh food and identifying funding and policy solutions to increasing the procurement and availability of healthy food in the county's emergency food system.

Strategy 6: *Increase summer meal participation rate.*

The action items under this strategy focus on increasing the number of sites in neighborhoods that qualify and provide more than 40 days of summer meals.

Strategy 7: *Identify and implement strategies with the restaurant sector to promote and increase fruit and vegetable consumption and other under-consumed nutrients.*

This strategy's action items seek to establish partnerships with restaurants to increase consumption of healthy food. This will require a range of activities such as identifying which restaurants are frequented by low-income families to identifying policy solutions to ensure that the majority of food available via restaurants is healthy, local, and affordable.

Strategy 8: *Implement policies to ensure an improved safety net for low-income families to access healthy, affordable food.*

Under this strategy, innovative solutions to increase funding and participation in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and SNAP will be explored and efforts to engage the community in the process will be supported.



photo: King County



photo: NABC

Strategy 9: *Identify and implement strategies with the retail sector to promote and incent fruit and vegetable purchases by priority populations.*

The intent of this strategy is to collaborate with King County food retailers to improve access to healthy, affordable food. Actions may include promotion, product placement, and pricing strategies.

Strategy 10: *Coordinate with the health care sector to implement innovative programs, practices, and policies to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among priority populations.*

These action items include working with hospitals and health systems to provide healthy food prescriptions, good food bags, and CSA drop off sites.

Strategy 11: *Increase the number of healthy food procurement policies in large gathering places (community centers, worksites, recreational/cultural settings), with an emphasis places in high need communities.*

Action items include approaching large gathering places about establishing healthy food procurement policies and providing technical assistance in implementation.

Strategy 12: *Engage and build capacity in communities to continue to learn and address barriers to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and food security.*

This strategy aims to continue conversations with community members to ensure that barriers and potential solutions for access to healthy, affordable food are understood. It also includes actions to build community capacity to drive change.

Strategy 13: *Increase access to direct market outlets in priority communities including local CSA programs farmers markets, farm stands and mobile markets.*

In addition to working with King County farmers markets, the Kitchen Cabinet acknowledged other direct market venues as opportunities for improved access to healthy, affordable food among low income communities. King County and the Kitchen Cabinet will collaborate with partners to explore and implement new and innovative solutions.

Strategy 14: *Implement a universal school meal program with at least one King County school district with high free/reduced lunch participation.*

The action items under this strategy will lead to a pilot program with at least one King County school district to implement a universal meal program to decrease barriers to school meal participation and increase access to healthy food among King County youth.

Strategy 15: *Convene partners to address poverty, transportation, social justice, and other upstream forces that lead to inequitable access to healthy, affordable food.*

Implement educational activities and outreach in high need communities to empower communities to eat more fruits and vegetables.



photo: Food Lifeline



photo: WSDA

Strategy 16: *Create a feebate program to correct market distortions and externalities.*

Action items include convening a cross-sector collaboration to design a regionally-scaled feebate program that promotes healthy food choices through price signals and establish a criterion for healthy/unhealthy food types, create fee and rebate pricing standards.

Strategy 17: *Implement educational activities and campaigns to empower communities and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables, with a focus on priority populations and communities.*

Notable action items under this strategy include implementing youth engagement/empowerment programs in King County schools, and working with communities to develop and implement educational activities to increase understanding of healthy eating.

Strategy 18: *Engage diverse stakeholders to learn about barriers to and opportunities for hunting, foraging, and fishing as strategies to increase healthy food security.*

Aside from convening stakeholders to better understand the barriers, opportunities, and solutions, there will also be an effort to review current processes, policies, and procedures for hunting, fishing, and foraging.

Strategy 19: *Increase the number of community and school gardens and other garden opportunities available in priority communities.*

The focus will be on creating or expanding gardens in places such as housing authorities, low-income housing communities, and schools. In addition, there will be efforts made to work with community organizations to implement community gardens and other urban agriculture.

NEXT STEPS

A. The Executive's Findings - *Top 20 Priority Action Items and Strategies for 2015-17*

The Executive reviewed and agreed with the targets and strategies recommended by the Kitchen Cabinet. He also agreed with the importance of each action item; however, given their large number, the Executive identified 20 that will begin implementation in 2015-17. These items are:

Food Economy Goal:

1. Address barriers to food production

Starting in 2015-17, King County will begin to address barriers to food production, mainly in the areas of access to farmland, regulations, access to water, and access to finance and business planning. These are the four major areas that are essential to food production and must be addressed immediately. Under this action item, there will be an emphasis on enhancing already existing County-led efforts as well as developing new mechanisms to transfer knowledge and improve access.

2. Increase support of farm incubator programs for new and beginning farmers and build an infrastructure to facilitate the transition out of incubator status.

As the Initiative seeks to add 4,000 net new acres of farmland to food production, it will require skilled and resilient farmers to grow food on these lands. Supporting farmer recruitment and training programs such as Seattle Tilth's innovative incubator program, Clean Green's volunteer-based farm in Duvall, and other similar efforts will be crucial to success. Equally as crucial will be the transition assistance from a training program into an independent farming business.

3. One-stop shop of agricultural and marketing technical assistance for current and new farmers.

Growing enough food to feed multiple individuals is more than a full-time job. That is why the Initiative will seek to streamline technical and regulatory assistance for farmers. In particular, this "one-stop shop" for agriculture will focus on assistance with production, marketing, and business planning. King County will make it easier for farmers to spend more time growing food rather than navigating the complex regulatory environment.



photo: King County

4. Overall increase in local food marketing and economic development efforts in the food and agriculture industry by increasing market intelligence to farmers and food businesses and actively seeking out new food and agribusinesses for King County.

The Initiative will make King County’s estimated \$6 billion food industry and \$121 million agriculture industry an economic development priority. The county’s farmers will have more market intelligence available to them so they can make informed business decisions about their farms while food businesses will have insight into what resources are readily available in the county to support them. Under this action item, the County and its partners will play a proactive role in building the farm-to-fork pipeline by facilitating connections and working to ensure that food businesses and producers alike remain economically viable.

5. Pilot two new projects using King County’s Healthy Incentives program and Park and Rides to increase support for direct market options for farmers markets and CSAs.

As the healthcare industry undergoes one of its largest transformations in decades, King County stands ready to implement innovative approaches to ensure that its residents receive the maximum benefit. In 2015-17, King County will test out two new pilot projects – one involving King County’s wellness program for its 13,000 employees, and another that will transform the commuting experience by bringing fresh and healthy foods to King County Park and Ride sites. Both are designed to increase healthy food consumption and support of local farms and food businesses.

6. Host an event at Marymoor Park to showcase local food.

King County is developing a new event at Marymoor Park, CHOMPI, with an emphasis on King County grown and processed food.

7. Develop food innovation districts to cultivate new food entrepreneurs and provide community benefits. Explore the establishment of a food terminal in King County to make it easier for food businesses and general consumers to find and purchase local food.

As a food system-wide Initiative, innovative projects that bring food and community or food and jobs together will be a priority. Much effort will be focused toward the food innovation district projects in the City of SeaTac and in the Rainier Valley to ensure that they move onto the next steps required to secure success. King County will also start exploring the possibility of establishing a food terminal in the county to allow for local farmers to sell their products year-round and accommodate food businesses.



photo: NABC

8. Continue to grow institutional demand for local food by increasing awareness and knowledge of local sourcing and supporting efforts to change institutional procurement policies to increase local sourcing.

In order to capitalize on the estimated \$74 million institutions food market in King County, there must be continued support for efforts connecting farmers to institutions, aggregating food, and increasing access to infrastructure such as cold storage and commercial kitchens. In addition, promotion of King County products and increased technical assistance for farmers will be enhanced to make farmers “retail-ready” and market access issues such as procurement policies will be examined.

9. Formally extend the Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC) to King County so it can continue to provide King County farmers with marketing technical assistance.

The NABC has been helping Puget Sound farmers connect to markets since 2006. Despite not being formally in King County, NABC has continued to provide services to King County farmers. Under this action item, NABC’s presence in King County will be formalized so that King County farmers can rely on NABC’s services to support their farms.

10. Develop a sustainable and local sourcing toolkit for restaurants and grocery stores so that all resources for how to source locally, reduce food waste, and promote local food is centrally located.

Implementing sustainable practices in commercial kitchens, regardless of whether it is a restaurant or grocery store, has both economic and environmental benefits. Sourcing local food also has a positive economic impact on the immediate community. This action item will seek to pull together all these resources into one place so that food entrepreneurs interested in implementing these practices can easily locate and implement them.

11. Pilot an “Imperfect Food” campaign that will pull public and private sector partners together to develop a new market for imperfect but still healthy food.

Similar to the Intermarche effort in Europe, King County is ready to be one of the first counties in the United States to pilot a similar project in an effort to reduce the amount of good wholesome food that is wasted.



photo: King County

Healthy, Affordable Food Access:

King County has had success in recent years in collaborating to address healthy eating and associated risk factors such as obesity and diabetes. Through initiatives such as Communities Putting Prevention to Work and the Community Transformation Grant, communities have come together to implement innovative solutions to improve eating environments and access to healthy, affordable food. It is within this same spirit of collaboration, that this Initiative will pursue the strategies under the Healthy, Affordable Food Access goal.

1. Improve school nutrition environments, with emphasis on schools with high eligibility rates for school meal programs.

Schools are a known and traditional environment for supporting the health and well-being of students. Children and teens spend up to half of their waking hours in school and may consume half of their daily calories there. Schools are in a unique position to support healthy behaviors for eating and physical activity. Furthermore, healthy, active students learn more and do better in school. Seventy-four percent of students in King County do not eat the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables daily. School is a major source of nutrition with 52 percent of south Seattle and south King County students qualifying for free or reduced price meals. King County will work with school districts to identify and implement strategies to increase school meal participation, and to improve school nutrition environments.

2. Increase policies, practices, and incentives in local jurisdictions that promote access to healthy eating among priority populations.

Many King County communities have limited access to environments that offer healthy, affordable food choices. Excessive and inequitable exposure to unhealthy foods is ubiquitous in many King County communities. Healthy food system elements in city planning can increase access to healthy foods for all city residents. These elements include urban agriculture design and plans, local procurement systems, mobile and farmers markets and zoning in support of these, mobile processing units, farm-to-institutions food distribution, attracting grocery stores or improving grocery stores in lower-income neighborhoods, drinking water access, and policies and standards for food and beverages provided in city buildings and facilities.

3. Identify and implement strategies with the restaurant sector to promote and increase fruit and vegetable consumption and other under-consumed nutrients.

In today's society, restaurants are becoming a larger source of daily caloric intake as more individuals eat out for their meals. Children are consuming, on average, 25 percent of their daily calories at fast food and other restaurants. In some restaurants, portion sizes are increasing and the food served is not always nutritious. According to national statistics in 2012, only three percent of children's restaurant meals at the top 50 restaurants met nutrition standards. Especially in low-income areas with high densities of fast food, many communities



are seeking partnerships and policies with the restaurant sector to increase and promote healthy, affordable food and beverage choices.

4. Engage and build capacity in communities to continue to learn and address barriers to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and food security.

In recent community reports, affordability is commonly cited as a significant barrier to healthy eating. King County and the Kitchen Cabinet intend to build on these conversations and work with community members to implement local change.

5. Identify and implement strategies with the retail sector to promote and incent fruit and vegetable purchases by priority populations.

There are many ways to increase access to healthy foods in a community. Most of us purchase our food from retail stores including supermarkets, grocery stores, co-ops, corner stores, and convenience stores. Through partnerships and policies with the retail sector, we can improve how healthy food is promoted, priced, and placed for improved consumer access. This strategy also explores opportunities for providing incentives to SNAP participants to purchase fruits and vegetables.

6. Convene partners to address poverty, transportation, social justice, and other upstream forces that lead to inequitable access to healthy, affordable food.

Food insecurity, hunger, obesity, and inequitable access to healthy, affordable food are complex problems. There is the recognition that poverty and structural inequities are major factors and that rising income inequality, high costs of housing, transportation, and medical care, and a regressive tax structure are all leading drivers of poverty. This strategy aims to better understand these connections to healthy eating and implement innovative solutions.

7. Increase the number of King County farmers markets with nutrition incentive programs for SNAP recipients, with emphasis in South King County.

For low income populations, cost is a key barrier to eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. Programs to increase access to farmers markets among low-income communities are recommended in multiple reports and resources. Nutrition incentive programs make fruits and vegetables more affordable by providing bonus dollars (the incentive) when SNAP benefits are used to buy fruits and vegetables. The City of Seattle Fresh Bucks program provides incentives worth up to \$10 per market visit to people using SNAP benefits at Seattle farmers markets. There are currently zero farmers market incentive programs south of Seattle in south King County. Four existing markets in the area already accept EBT cards, a first step in setting up an incentive program for low-income populations, with six markets without this capacity.



photo: King County

8. Increase access to direct market outlets among priority communities including local CSA programs farmers markets, farm stands, and mobile markets.

Direct market outlets are good for the local food economy and for the people they reach. This strategy aims to better understand the distribution of direct market outlets such as farmers markets, CSAs, and farm stands and to work with farmers and organizations to pilot programs to provide increased access in low income communities.

9. Increase the amount of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy food options available in food banks and emergency meal programs.

Visits to food banks and pantries are increasing in King County. This strategy aims to increase the healthy options available through these outlets for our most valuable community members. Through policies and partnerships, King County and its partners can simultaneously address hunger and health for those who are most likely to become disease burdened.

As the Initiative progresses, it is expected that the remaining action items will be implemented as needed or as resources become available.



photo: King County



photo: King County

B. The Kitchen Cabinet

The Kitchen Cabinet members were appointed to participate in this effort because of their technical expertise and vast experience in the food system. Their unwavering commitment to this first phase of the Initiative was unprecedented and in the process, it became apparent that their continued engagement is necessary. As the Initiative enters the implementation phase, it will be important that the Kitchen Cabinet be a monitoring body to ensure the action items are making progress toward meeting the targets and goals.

Moving forward, the Kitchen Cabinet will meet at least once per year to receive a status update on implementation and reassess whether the targets, strategies, and action items are still current. A written status report will be provided in January in each consecutive year during the life of the Initiative; the reports will outline the previous year's achievements, progress, and challenges. In the meantime, members of the Kitchen Cabinet who are implementing the action items will serve on an Implementation Committee that will meet more regularly throughout the year to report on progress.

Given the large scope of the Initiative, the Kitchen Cabinet members, regardless of whether they are on the Implementation Committee, will continue to serve as consultants and advisors on action items specifically pertaining to their expertise in the local food system.

C. Resources

The question of resources, both human capital and funding, will continue to be revisited. At the time of this report, some key partners and resource needs were identified for the action items; however, the information is not complete and efforts to identify and refine the information will continue. Again, the intent behind this Initiative is to make a holistic impact on both the local food system and expanding access to healthy, affordable food for low-income families in King County; therefore, this Initiative will always welcome partners throughout the county and will continue to cultivate those partnerships.



photo: King County

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Food Economy Targets, Strategies, and Action Items

APPENDIX B: Healthy, Affordable Food Access Targets, Strategies, and Action Items

APPENDIX C: List of Kitchen Cabinet Members Appointed by King County Executive Dow Constantine

APPENDIX D: Resources – Referenced Works and Resources, Acronyms

APPENDIX A: Food Economy Targets, Strategies, and Action Items

Target 1A: Add 400 net new acres in food production per year in King County (2 percent per year) for the next 10 years

Target 1B: Increase the number of new and beginning farmers in food production in King County by 25 new farmers per year.

Strategy 1.1: Decrease start-up and expansion costs and remove barriers for farmers in food production (land, equipment, related infrastructure, taxes, insurance, capital investment).

Rationale/Potential Impact: It is expensive to start or expand a farm in King County. Land prices are high, equipment can be expensive, and much of the unfarmed land is in need of capital investment for new or rehabbed farm infrastructure. Yet many farmers lack the resources, or lack the equity to borrow resources, necessary to start up or expand their farm business. This may be especially true for low income, minority or limited-English farmer. High cost and lack of resources are significant barriers to getting new land into production and new farmers working in King County. The following suite of actions would tangibly reduce land costs for food farming, create easier access to capital to food farmers, and expand and create new financial incentives to food farming.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Increase economic development capacity for the agriculture sector. Develop a regional economic development strategy.
Analyze different farming sectors to assess growth opportunities. This strategy will encompass 1.1 B, 1.1 C, and many of the demand strategies
- B. Create “one-stop” economic development office for farmers in food production and/or processing, including: information clearinghouse, loan and credit programs, business planning. Ensure that assistance is available in multiple languages and is culturally inclusive.
- C. Create a finance strategy planning group to improve access to credit and financing for farmers beginning or expanding food production and to develop new financing models such as: low interest revolving loan program, loan guarantees, loans that don't require equity.
- D. Make more land available to lease for food production, building on recommendations of the Farm and Food Roundtable. Recruit low-income and minority farmers.
- E. Develop a strategy for leasing land in ways that encourage farmer investment in the land: long term leases, lease-to-buy, incentives for production, etc.
- F. Analyze costs for long-term staffing, property improvements, land purchase costs

G. Encourage private landowners to lease or sell land to farmers in food production.

- Survey landowners who have unfarmed farmable land to determine what would encourage them to lease/sell to a farmers
- Provide assistance in negotiating leases
- Develop other incentives if needed (e.g., tax incentives)

H. Change regulations to make it easier to develop farming infrastructure; develop an agriculture building permit track.

I. Evaluate opportunities to reduce tax burden, such as CUT for ag buildings, SWM fee, business property tax

J. Develop a tax rebate program that would rebate property taxes to farmers who reach a certain threshold for high food production. As an example, a farmer who produces \$10,000/ac of food might get a refund of the property taxes paid on the land.

K. Support pilot project to develop innovative approach to cooperative farming model, offering access to technical assistance, shared equipment and access to markets, particularly for minority and low-income farmers.

L. Encourage urban agriculture through land use policies and use of public land where appropriate

Lead Organizations: King County, NABC, Cascade Harvest Coalition, King Conservation District, Seattle Tilth

Potential Key Partners: WSDA, American Farmland Trust, Slow Money NW, Seattle Dept. of Economic Development, WSU Extension, Natural Resource and Conservation Service, NW Farm Credit Services, Craft 3, Small Business Administration, Viva Farms, PCC Farmland Trust, Pike Place Market, WA State Housing Finance Commission, WA State Ecology, USACE, Clean Air Agency

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: Farmers, agriculture non-profits, agribusiness

Measurement:

1. Number of farmers-to-land connection.
2. +/- number of acreage in food production.
3. Number of farmers attending training courses and accessing services; there will be follow-up to determine whether the courses or services where successful.

Type: Current and Scalable - there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.

Strategy 1.2: Improve drainage to bring more land into production.

Rationale/Potential Impact: There is good, farmable acreage throughout King County that is prevented for being farmed due to drainage problems. There is also farmed acreage that could be more productive for more months if drainage was improved. Addressing drainage issues on farmland is a tangible way to help open up more acreage for production. The following suite of actions would implement short and long term fixes that lead to drainage issues being resolved.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Continue short term improvements to ADAP
 - Increase staff support
 - Increase budget
 - Provide farmers with pumps at low/no cost
 - Pay for riparian plantings/establishing plantings
- B. Evaluate with other counties state regulatory changes to make projects less expensive and easier to implement; develop a strategy to address the more complex drainage issues.
- C. Develop ways to maintain and improve drainage systems across property lines, e.g., multiple property projects, exploration of drainage districts or alternative landowner cooperative.

Lead Organizations: King County, King Conservation District

Potential Key Partners: Ecology, Tribes, Farmers, WDF, ACOE

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: Farmers, rural landowners

Measurement: TBD. Pending a needs assessment and outreach effort King County and KCD will be conducting in 2015.

Type: Current and Scalable - there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.

Strategy 1.3: Improve availability and efficiency of irrigation water: save what we have, share what we have, and if possible, find more.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Access to irrigation water significantly expands how a property can be farmed, potentially enabling higher revenue generating crops and uses. Currently much of the farmland in King County is either without access to irrigation water entirely, or does not have enough to meet its full needs. Expanding how much irrigation water is available to farms would have a significant impact on growing local food production overall, as well as enabling more higher revenue producing crops. The following suite of actions would increase the amount of irrigation water available to food farms in King County.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Increase the number of farmers using reclaimed water for irrigation in the Sammamish valley by expanding current access to the eastside of the river and evaluating whether reclaimed water could be added to a water body, such as Sammamish River, and make the river a conveyance to source water for farming. Evaluation needs to include feasibility (what crops can it be used on) and affordability.
- B. Create a water management association, such as a Watershed Improvement District (WID) in Snoqualmie Valley.
- C. Evaluate whether there are opportunities in APDs other than Sammamish for making reclaimed water available to farmers, either directly or by adding it to a water body that could then be a source of water to farmers.
- D. Assess needs and opportunities for more water or better water management in other APDs, including assessing feasibility of WIDs
- E. Develop policy with the goal of retaining or increasing and better managing agriculture water rights; partner with other counties to address this issue.

Lead Organizations: King County, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance

Potential Key Partners: Ecology, City of Woodinville, City of Redmond, WSDA Organic Program, Tribes, WA Water Trust

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: Farmers/Landowners

Measurement:

- 1. More farms able to legally irrigate crops

Type: Current and Scalable - there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.

Strategy 1.4: Preserve farmland for food production, building on the recommendations of the King County Farms and Food Roundtable.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Farmland is being converted at an alarming rate, both nationally and locally. It is critical that this region preserve its best farmlands before they are lost forever. Additional investment in farmland preservation now will pay dividends in the future as the other strategies that increase production and demand take hold over the coming years. Without a farmland preservation strategy, there may not be enough farmland left in future generations to ever have a significant amount of food grown locally. The following actions will help preserve additional farmland in King County.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Continue to purchase easements to reduce cost of land.
- B. Convene a group to develop a long-term strategy for more farmland preservation for food production:
 - B(1)
 - analyze opportunities for bringing more farmland into food production;
 - prioritize critical farmland (whether in APD, rural area, cities) to protect for food production;
 - include land for lease (1.1B) in analysis.
 - B(2)
 - determine funding amount needed, including adequate staffing for transactions, monitoring, land management
 - determine mechanisms, timing, messaging, coordination with other funding needs.
 - Identify farmers
- C. Develop easement that would require food production. Also consider other mechanisms that make it more likely the land will be farmed for food long term, such as buy-back program, or annual revenue stream to farmers rather than lump sum payment.

Lead Organization: King County

Potential Key Partners: King Conservation District, Cities, PCC Farmland Trust, AFT, Seattle Tilth, Pike Place Market, Sno-valley Tilth, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance, Cascade Harvest Coalition, Forterra, Trust for Public Lands, TNC, SMNW

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience:

Measurement:

1. Number of acreage in food production
2. Number of food production easements (increase or decrease)

Type: Current and Scalable – there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.

Strategy 1.5: Improve farmland productivity.

Rationale/Potential Impact: It is difficult to farm profitably. The average revenue yield on King County farms is approximately \$1,200/acre. Increasing productivity will help farmers generate additional revenue to sustain and grow their farm businesses with an end goal of net profitability. The following suite of actions will increase the amount of technical assistance available to farmers that expand their knowledge base and tool kit for increasing productivity.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Increase research and assistance to expand and improve agricultural productivity in King County; for example, construction of hoop houses, as well as drainage and irrigation, can extend growing season.
- B. Expand NABC’s scope to include King County. NABC would provide the following services for King County farmers:
 - Business Planning
 - Value Added Product Development (including mobile slaughter)
 - Rural Cooperative and Organizational Development
 - Infrastructure Development
 - Access to Capital
 - Access to markets
- C. Return relevant WSU extension services to King County. Start with partnership with Snohomish County Extension to offer “Cultivating Success” classes, with the intention to move toward full-time extension agent. Services to include research and education on:
 - farming techniques to improve production, efficiency, soil fertility, season length, sustainability etc.
 - business planning and marketing
 - food safety regs
 - special focus on new farmers and minority farmers.
- D. Develop farmworker housing in Duvall to serve Snoqualmie valley farmers, starting with feasibility and market analysis. Development would include services for farmworkers and families. Build on this effort to address farmworker housing needs in other parts of the County.

Lead Organizations: King County, NRCS, WSU Extension, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing, Washington Growers League, NABC

Potential Key Partners: King County, KCD, Slow Money, City of Duvall, Catholic Community Services of Western WA

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: Farmers

<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More locally produced value added products being sold 2. Increased gross income to farmers 3. More people working on farms 	<p>Type: Current and Scalable – there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.</p>
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Strategy 1.6: Enhance recruiting, training, and technical assistance programs for new farmers, with consideration of diverse cultural and language needs.

Rationale/Potential Impact: The key to success of the ambitious production targets is more farmers farming successfully. Beginning farmers need training in order to be successful. Diversifying the face of farming in King County will take new approaches and tools to reach low-income and minority farmers, especially those with limited-English, but there is great interest and potential among these groups.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Enhance the FarmLink Program to match available farmland (e.g, retiring farmers) with new farmers going into food production. Services go well-beyond match-making.
- B. Increase farmer training programs, including follow up assistance after Cultivating Success classes, incubator and mentoring programs Evaluate with other counties state regulatory changes to make projects less expensive and easier to implement; develop a strategy to address the more complex drainage issues. Ensure that classes and services are accessible to non-English speakers.
- C. Pull together a finance educational panel for farmers interested in starting or expanding food production in King County, consisting of presentations from various financing sources interested in funding agricultural land purchases
- D. Offer succession planning programs (Ties to the Land) to help existing farmers create retirement accounts and transition land and resources. Include training and mentorship in production, business planning, marketing.
- E. Establish farming associations for King County minority/immigrant farmers that can be partners with King County on agriculture issues. Each group can have their own association or there can be one cohesive King County minority/immigrant farming association.

Lead Organizations: King County, Cascade Harvest Coalition, WSU, Seattle Tilth

Potential Key Partners: PCC Farmland Trust, Sno-Valley Tilth, Green River Community College, SAGE, 21 Acres, PCC Farmland Trust, Slow Money, Farm Service Agency, Farm Credit Services, Beneficial Bank, Craft 3, Pike Place Market, Viva Farms

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: Farmers

Measurement:

1. Number of new farmers

Type: Current and Scalable – there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.

Target 2: Demand – Double demand for locally-produced healthy foods from \$93 million to \$186 million in 10 years.

Strategy 2.1: Create awareness of King County locally-produced foods via marketing and education to consumers.

Rationale/Potential Impact: King County farmers currently receive less than 2 percent of the estimated \$6 billion spent on food in the County. Although local farmers markets, CSAs, food hubs, and individual farmers (when possible) engage in active promotion of their products, many King County farmers continue to identify marketing as one of their greatest challenges. **A robust and focused promotion effort capitalizing on the work already underway by local non-profits and private sector to increase awareness of the farm-to-table food movement would increase consumer knowledge of King County farms and food products. The awareness, in turn, could increase demand for locally produced fruits, vegetables, and meats.** This would not be the first time that King County has launched a local foods promotion effort. In 1998, King County launched the Puget Sound Fresh brand to create awareness of locally-produced foods in the 12 Puget Sound counties.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. **General Consumers:** Enhance the “Buy Local” message and Puget Sound Fresh promotion program to make it easier for consumers to identify and purchase King County-produced products. Enhancements could include: (1) increasing awareness of direct market outlets, (2) creating marketing materials that are both media and culturally appropriate, (3) developing and compiling farm specific stories that are compelling enough to justify asking price, (4) educating the general public on the benefits of buying local, and (5) creating a King County brand and accompanying marketing materials that can be used by retailers and farmers to promote the products.
- B. **Food Businesses:** Highlight seasonal specialties from King County through a local food promotion program across targeted food sectors – restaurants, farmers markets, schools, hospitals, retailers, etc. - to educate and thereby, influence purchasing decisions by these sectors.
- C. **Food Businesses and General Consumers:** Develop high-profile events to connect producers with buyers (businesses and general consumers) such as an annual King County culinary event hosted by the King County Executive that showcases local foods prepared by local chefs for grocery and food retailers and a King County Food Fair to connect local farmers with urban residents.
- D. **Food Businesses and General Consumers:** Increase awareness of local products and ease of sourcing in low income communities by supporting innovative programs that encourage consumption of locally-grown foods. Activities include: community dinners, training for school and daycare cooks, in-school and after school cooking clubs.

<p>Lead Organization: King County</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: Cascade Harvest Coalition, Seattle Tilth, NABC, Seattle Chefs' Collaborative, Seattle Restaurant Alliance, Health Care Without Harm, Washington State Farmers Market Alliance, WSDA, King County Grocery Retailers, King County Farmers Markets</p>
<p>Related Action Items: None</p>	<p>Target Audience: General public, food businesses (restaurants, grocery retailers, institutions)</p>
<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in purchase of locally-produced foods at farmers markets: information could be acquired via data from farmers market managers or vendor query. 2. Number of King County farmers selling to retailers, restaurants, and institutions: information would be acquired via buyer or vendor query/survey, USDA Agricultural Census. 	<p>Type: Current and Scalable – there are existing projects and activities similar to the Key Action Items that can be enhanced to meet the target.</p>

Strategy 2.2: Increase technical assistance for selling and sourcing locally.

Farmers/Producers: retail-readiness and market assistance

Restaurants, Institutions, and Grocery Retailers: how to source locally and implement sustainable practices

Rationale/Potential Impact: King County farmers have identified for years that one of their greatest challenges is marketing. In King County's "2009 FARMS Report", the King County Agriculture Commission indicated marketing and economic development as a major focus area and further elaborated that, "On their own, small farms do not have the resources or knowledge necessary for effective marketing and promotion." According to the 2012 USDA Agriculture Census, 97 percent of King County farms are 50 acres and below.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. **For Producers:** Provide technical assistance, training, workshops, and courses to producers and small businesses on: determining which products to grow such as culturally appropriate foods or foods most in demand; food processing/value-added; Good Agricultural Practice/HACCP/food safety training and drafting plans; general marketing/advertisement; retail/institution readiness; and business/accounting. These are necessary technical assistance that would help producers make educated business decisions about the type of business model they would like to implement for their farm to be economically viable.

- B. For Producers, Restaurants, Grocery Retailers, and Institutions:** Convene sector-specific groups to provide technical assistance to both producers and buyers to increase local sourcing and make sales. For Producers, it would be marketing assistance in terms of market intelligence and retail-readiness; for Buyers (restaurants, grocery retailers, institutions, and direct markets), it would be technical assistance in terms of sourcing locally (e.g, education about what is available locally, insight into quantity availability, etc.) and creating an environment to facilitate sales.
- C. For Farmers Markets:** Increase municipal and County support for farmers markets in the form of: securing permanent staging areas/shelter/cover; utilities (water, electricity); and reduction (or absence) of permitting fees. As a cornerstone of the local food economy, achieving the aforementioned items would increase the efficiency, cost effectiveness, and seasonality for farmers markets. This, in turn, would make farmers markets a more reliable source of food for consumers and a more reliable source of income for small farm farmers. King County currently has over 40 farmers markets that accounted for approximately \$20 million in revenue in 2012.
- D. For Farmers Markets:** Provide technical assistance and training to farmers market managers and organizations to increase efficiency, cost effectiveness for vendors, and ability to meet consumer demands (i.e., diversity of vendors, promotions, etc.). Areas of focus could include: sustainability according to market types (urban/rural, small/large), development of new markets, staffing needs, and regulations.
- E. For Restaurants, Grocery Retailers, and Institutions:** Develop a local and sustainable practices toolkit that would decrease food waste; increase awareness of local sourcing; increase cost effectiveness of operating a restaurant/grocery store/institutional kitchen (which could free up resources to source locally). Toolkit would include: prepared food rescue and recovery programs that would connect surplus prepared foods from restaurants/institutions/caterers to meal programs; 'Lean Kitchen' information; map of local King County farms; and others.
- F. For Producers:** Hire a marketing specialist to facilitate sales between King County farmers and institutions/retail buyers so as to increase the sale of locally-produced foods into those markets.
- G. For Producers:** Evaluate existing direct market channels serving socially disadvantaged groups such as Fresh Bucks and Good Food Bags and support those that are proven to be effective. Accomplishing this will allow for locally-produced foods to reach a different consumer sector while also increasing the health of those consumers.
- H. For Producers and Institutions:** Assess the gap between the price institutions will pay for locally grown food and the cost of producing, particularly for small to mid-sized farmers. The assessment would be followed by the development and implementation of a plan to decrease the gap. Achieving both of these pieces could potentially (1) open the door to the institutions market for small to mid-size farmers and (2) allow an opportunity for institutions to provide technical assistance to small and mid-size farmers on how to supply institutions such that they can become a reliable income source for farmers.
- I. For Producers and Restaurants:** Incentivize restaurants to participate in coordinated crop planning with local producers to ensure that restaurants can always source locally.

<p>Lead Organizations: WSU, Cascade Harvest Coalition, NABC, Seattle Tilth</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: Cascade Harvest Coalition, Seattle Tilth, NABC, Seattle Chefs' Collaborative, Seattle Restaurant Alliance, Health Care Without Harm, Washington State Farmers Market Alliance, WSDA, King County Grocery Retailers, King County Farmers Markets</p>
<p>Related Action Items: 1.1(A,B), 1.5(B)(C), 1.6 (B,E), 2.4(E), 3.2(A), 3.3(A), 3.4(C)</p>	<p>Target Audience: Farmers/Producers, Restaurants, Grocery Retailers, Institutions, Farmers Markets</p>
<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of King County farmers selling to retailers, restaurants, and institutions -or- number of retailers, restaurants, and institutions who source locally.: information 2. Attendance at technical assistance events/workshops: gathered by hosting organization. 3. Consistency of farmers market locations from year-to-year: monitoring via King County Farmers Market Managers Meetings. 4. Operational cost-savings from Farmers Markets: King County Farmers Market Managers Meetings. 	<p>Type: The action items under this strategy are in various stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action A: Current but scalable Action B: New Action C: Current but scalable Action D: New Action E: Current but scalable Action F: New Action G: New Action H: New Action I: Current but scalable

Strategy 2.3: Improve the local food processing, distribution, and marketing infrastructure in King County to accommodate and increase aggregated food distribution.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Currently, majority of King County farmers turn to direct markets as a major revenue source due to their small size; however, of the ~\$6 billion food market in King County, direct markets only account for ~\$22 million of the food market. In 2012, the majority of King County’s food market was attributed to restaurants (~\$4.3B) and grocery retailers (~\$1.1B). According to the “Farm-to-Institution Strategies” report, the institutions market (hospitals, schools, and child care) show a potential ~\$75 million market for King County farmers. Each of these major food sectors require consistent quantity and quality; the former being the greatest challenge for King County farmers, which makes food aggregation an attractive solution. In addition to quantity, certain sectors like restaurants and institutions provide potential markets for farmers who are able to deliver processed products (i.e., bagged salad, wash and cut, etc.). **Gaining a better understanding of the currently available processing/distribution resources in King County will help determine which important pieces are missing. Being able to strategically fill in those gaps will give King County farmers the resources they need to open doors to other markets in the County.**

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Develop an asset map of available food processing and distribution infrastructure to provide insight on what resources are currently available to King County farmers. This information will be important in helping farmers estimate the operational costs associated with adopting business models that call for aggregation, processing, or distribution.
- B. Conduct a prioritized needs assessment to identify food processing and distribution infrastructural needs and an accompanying cost analysis for the development of processing infrastructure. Achieving both would provide insight to farmers, government, and food entrepreneurs about investing in food processing and distribution infrastructures.
- C. Create incentives for building food hubs and other processing/distribution facilities to accommodate food aggregation and processing, which will allow for entrance into market sectors that require higher volumes of food products and/or processing. Incentives could take the form of: seeking out partners who could benefit from building green, food-related infrastructures; regulatory changes in terms of land use or building codes; redirecting incentives for economic development to businesses involving local food, to businesses buying local foods, expedited permits for food businesses sourcing locally, etc.

- D. Develop Food Innovation Districts (FID) or special economic zones to make it easier to source, aggregate, process, and/or distribute local foods back into the local economy. FIDs allow for the creation of a central location for sourcing all local food needs regardless of whether the buyer is commercial or a private consumer, acquiring food education/technical assistance, create jobs in the local food system, and depending on the model, could provide some community benefits such as meeting space. Standing up a FID would require the following initially: developing a strategy for coordination of funding and political and economic support; identify a coordinating body to manage the development process; and recruit tenants, especially the anchor businesses.
- E. Develop a meat processing infrastructure in King County to expand the \$76.7 million livestock industry. Essential meat processing infrastructures include: mobile/fixed meat and poultry processing facilities and a USDA certified “cut and wrap” facility. Having these facilities in the County will allow its livestock farmers to expand beyond direct markets to food retailers; for those livestock producers already selling to food retailers, it would cut down on operation costs acquired in the form of transportation to and from meat processing facilities in other counties.
- F. Identify and locate additional warehouse space for aggregation and cold storage that can be used by food hubs, farming cooperatives, or individual farmers. These facilities are essential to the economic viability of farmers in that it will not only expand storage capabilities but it could also prolong the life of the products to allow for more marketing opportunities.

<p>Lead Organizations: KCD, King County, Municipalities</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: NABC, Slow Money Northwest, Cascade Harvest Coalition, Global to Local, Urban Food Link, University of Washington, Swedish Hospitals, Restaurants, Chambers of Commerce, Community and Technical Colleges, Puget Sound Meat Producers Cooperative, WA Cattlemen’s Association, WSDA</p>
<p>Related Action Items: 2.3 (A)(B), 1.5(B)</p>	<p>Target Audience: Farmers/Producers, Food Hubs, Farmers Cooperatives, Food Entrepreneurs/Businesses</p>
<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in the number of food processing, distribution, and storage facilities in King County: collected via County Assessor’s office, permitting offices, or survey. 2. Number of farmers, food hubs, or cooperatives using facilities: via surveys or permitting offices. 3. Increase in amount of King County-produced foods that are being processed and entering into market channels aside from direct markets 	<p>Type: New</p>

Strategy 2.4: Support emerging markets for selling locally-produced foods.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Expanding the local food economy involves increasing the demand for and access to locally-produced foods. The actions below addresses both increasing demand and access. **This strategy aims to find creative and innovative ways to drive consumer preferences toward local foods and make it convenient to eat locally.**

Recommended Action Items:

- A. **Park and Rides:** Work with Metro/Department of Transportation to pilot a program to use County-owned Park and Ride lots to facilitate sales of locally-produced foods. A successful pilot program will result in creating a new means by which to get locally-produced products to consumers in a convenient manner, which will allow for increased sales for local farmers. In addition, it will increase the efficient use of public lands by maximizing the use of the property for the benefit of the public.
- B. **Healthcare: Wellness Programs:** Encourage employers to provide incentives to employees to purchase local fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and other direct sales outlets through: a pilot project with King County’s Healthy Incentives Program to provide credit to King County employees based on purchase and consumption of healthy foods, healthy foods vouchers, and/or workplace CSAs. Healthcare is potentially a new market for healthy eating. By companies providing incentives for consumers to purchase and consume fresh fruits and vegetables, it creates an untapped market for local farmers. Given the number of farmers markets and CSAs servicing King County with locally-produced products, initially supporting these food access pathways will allow for easier access for employees.
- C. **Underserved Neighborhoods:** Develop models/pilot projects (e.g, mobile markets, reduced price CSAs, farmers markets, etc.) to reach underserved neighborhoods, which could expand the pool of consumers eating locally-produced foods.

Lead Organization: King County

Potential Key Partners: Municipalities, CHC, WSU, NABC, WFSMA, King County Farmers Markets, Private Sector (food and technology businesses)

Related Action Items: None

Target Audience: General consumer

Measurement: Measurements would be specific to action items.

Type: New

Target 3: Reduce Food Waste – In 10 years, decrease by 25 percent the amount of wholesome food loss

Strategy 3.1: Promote residential/household practice improvements to better utilize healthy food (i.e., portion sizes, extending shelf-life of food, better shopping, etc.).

Rationale/Potential Impact: Food waste makes up the largest percentage (33 percent) of single-family household garbage disposed in King County’s Cedar Hills Regional Landfill and greenhouse gas emissions in King County that result from food consumption (from farm to plate) are second only to emissions from personal transportation. Wasted food wastes all the resources - water, oil, chemicals, land - that went into growing, processing and transporting it, before it gets to consumers. In addition, uneaten food accounts for 23 percent of all methane emissions in the U.S. - a potent climate change contributor. King County is one of the first communities in the country to tackle the issue of consumer food waste - a worldwide problem with significant financial, environmental and social impacts.

Research shows most people waste much more food than they think they do. Once consumers become more conscious of what they are throwing away, they can make small shifts in how to shop, prepare, store and cook food so that they waste less. King County’s existing Food: Too Good To Waste campaign provides tips, tools and strategies to encourage consumers to reduce their food waste and makes the link between food waste and wasting natural resources used to get food from farm to plate. In 2015, the campaign will build on successful community outreach at local farmers markets, engage community based social media tactics to spread outreach to a wider network, initiate an imperfect produce pilot, and continue to encourage residents to take the Food: Too Good To Waste Challenge.

This Action Item directly addresses Target 3’s goal of decreasing the amount of wholesome food loss by 25 percent in 10 years. The potential for success with this action would benefit from the growing national momentum to address food waste and builds on the King County Solid Waste Division’s existing Food: Too Good To Waste program.

Recommended Action Items:

The Solid Waste Division will conduct planning and implementation of a residential outreach program to increase awareness of the impacts of wasted food and to increase adoption of food waste prevention practices. This program will include

- supporting community outreach events such as educational booths at farmers markets
- working with and empowering residents who are champions of food waste prevention to spread their knowledge and King County tools to a wider network
- developing a retail initiative to encourage grocers and suppliers to sell their “imperfect” produce to consumers at a discount and to educate residents about the value of imperfect produce (Action Item 3.4 (A)).
- encouraging residents to take the Food: Too Good To Waste Challenge to track the food they toss at home and to try simple strategies to prevent food from going to waste.

Work Products may include but are not limited to:

- Marketing plan
- Retail partnership
- Advertising
- Media relations
- Outreach materials
- Implementation of program

Lead Organizations: King County Solid Waste Division, City of Seattle

Potential Key Partners: Media outlets, King County, Seattle Public Utilities, community based organizations, local grocery stores, farmers markets, household volunteers.

Related Action Items: May relate to Food Access strategies and actions.

Target Audience: General consumer

Measurement:

1. Number of residents contacted through outreach efforts.
2. Media reach for outreach campaign – web hits, media coverage, etc.
3. Sales data from King County farmers, grocery retailers, suppliers selling imperfect produce. Average amount of food waste reduction through residential Challenge efforts.
4. Average amount of food waste reduction through residential Challenge efforts.

Type: Current and scalable. Builds on existing food waste prevention efforts by King County Solid Waste Division.

Strategy 3.2: Increase the amount of surplus food that is donated via meal programs and related channels.

Rationale/Potential Impact: During an economic time that leaves more individuals at risk of hunger, people are making difficult choices. Much of the food thrown away by local restaurants, hospitals, grocers, and other businesses is edible and can be used to help feed people in local communities. Donations of surplus food are needed now more than ever. Food producing businesses such as restaurants, institutions and caterers can reduce garbage costs associated with throwing away edible food, reduce their business’s environmental impact by keeping food out of landfills, show customers that they care about their communities and increase employee pride.

This action has the dual effect of reducing wasted prepared food and will provide ready-to-eat food for those in need.

Recommended Action Items:

- Identify restaurants, institutions and caterers that already donate surplus prepared food to meal programs through a ‘Seattle’s Table’ type program.
- Encourage donations by restaurants, institutions and caterers not already donating by informing them about
 - the types of food that can be donated.
 - the potential for tax deductions.
 - state and federal Good Samaritan laws that protect them from liability when donating food believed to be safe and edible.
 - how to get started (who to contact).

Lead Organization: Food Lifeline**Potential Key Partners:** Institutions, restaurants, caterers, Food Lifeline, meal programs**Related Action Items:** Relates to Food Access goal area and 2.2E (Sustainable Restaurant Toolkit)**Target Audience:** Prepared food producers (e.g. restaurants, institutions, caterers)**Measurement:**

1. Number of restaurants, institutions and caterers that donate prepared food to meal programs (existing and new businesses that result from initiation of this action item).
2. Number of pounds of prepared food that restaurants, institutions and caterers donate to meal programs.

Type: Current and scalable.**Strategy 3.3: Increase the efficiency of institutional, catering, and restaurant kitchens.****Rationale/Potential Impact:** Food waste is the single largest component of institutional, catering and restaurant garbage. Lean techniques save money and reduce waste.

- Seattle metro area resident eat at restaurants more frequently than those in most metropolitan areas.
- Institutions, catering businesses and restaurants are significant ‘food access pathways’ that substantially contributes to both ‘pre-plate/kitchen’ and ‘post-consumer/dining area’ food loss.
- With modest, feasible, and cost-effective practice improvements, these sectors can significantly reduce food loss and improve profitability.

- The 'lean' elements of the Restaurant Sustainability Toolkit will be an attractive aspect of the toolkit if it emphasizes cost savings benefits.
- A lead organization for this element has not been identified. It may be within scope for the City of Seattle and King County Solid Waste Utilities to play a lead role in building out the lean element of the sustainable toolkit.
- The 'lean' and food waste reduction tools are intended to compliment and support the other elements of the sustainable restaurant toolkit.
- The proposed action item would contribute toward meeting the target of decreasing 25 percent of the amount of wholesome food loss.

The potential for success with this action would benefit from the growing national momentum to address food waste and add to existing DNRP food waste prevention efforts such as the Solid Waste Division's Food: Too Good To Waste program.

Recommended Action Items:

- The timeline for this element will align with the overall Sustainable Toolkit schedule.
- First step is to identify 'emerging best practices' in restaurant food waste minimization practices and inventorying the array of sustainable toolkits that have been developed elsewhere nationally and internationally for institutions, restaurants or caterers.
- Second step is to engage with local/regional institutions, caterers and restaurateurs to identify the required level of specificity and the degree that guidance and tools needed (e.g. for the various types of restaurants - fast food, delis, sit down casual, formal).

Lead Organization (potential):
Urban Foodlink, Chef's Collaborative,
Chef Action Network

Potential Key Partners: Institutions,
restaurants, caterers, Restaurant Association

Related Action Items: 2.2 E Sustainable
Restaurant Toolkit

Target Audience: Institutions, restaurants,
caterers, Restaurant Association

Measurement:

1. Number of institutions, caterers and restaurants implementing "Lean Kitchen" strategies.
2. Metrics indicating amount of waste produced before and after implementing "Lean Kitchen" strategies.

Type: New

Strategy 3.4: Expand the utilization of edible foods produced in King County.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Over 40 percent of the edible food in the United States goes to waste each year, both pre- and post-consumer; a large portion of that waste happens before the food even reaches our plates. Anecdotal evidence indicates that a significant amount of produce is never eaten due to aesthetic requirements imposed by the market for cosmetically less than perfect produce (“imperfect produce”). Wasted food, wastes all the resources - water, oil, chemicals, land - that went into growing, processing and transporting it, before it gets to consumers. In addition, uneaten food accounts for 23 percent of all methane emissions in the U.S. – a potent climate change contributor. **A focused effort to encourage grocers and suppliers to sell their “imperfect” produce to consumers at a discount and promotion to increase public awareness of the value of imperfect produce, could 1) increase demand for these products and 2) reduce waste.** This action has the dual effect of reducing wasted food on farms and stimulating markets to sell affordable nutritious, though cosmetically compromised, fruits and vegetables. 2015 is being dubbed the “Year Against Food Waste” by the National Ad Council. The potential for success with this action would benefit from the growing national momentum to address food waste and dovetail with the KC Solid Waste Division’s Food: Too Good To Waste program.

Recommended Action Items:

- **Grocery Retailers and Suppliers:** Develop a pilot to encourage grocery retailers and suppliers to sell imperfect produce to consumers at a discount. Efforts include:
 - identifying barriers and motivations to selling imperfect produce. May include KC financial support to minimize risk.
 - identifying grocery retailers, suppliers or other partners interested in participating in a pilot.
 - evaluating pilot results to determine viability of wider efforts.
 - developing marketing materials to encourage sale and consumption of imperfect produce.
- **Farmers:** Research how much of the problem happens at the farm level (compared to retailers) and investigate opportunities to mitigate crop loss due to food imperfections.
- **Consumers:** Educate the public about the value of imperfect produce (nutritious and less expensive). Promote it as valuable nutritious food to expand the utilization of edible food and reduce waste. Efforts could include:
 - developing culturally appropriate marketing materials (messaging and signage) to incentivize and make it easy for consumers to identify and purchase consumption of imperfect produce.
 - creating a King County brand and accompanying marketing materials that can be used by retailers and farmers to promote imperfect produce and influence consumer purchasing decisions.
 - developing high-profile event(s) to connect farmers, grocery retailers and suppliers with consumers that showcases the value of imperfect produce. For example, demonstrations by chefs at farmers markets or grocers, community dinners, etc.

<p>Lead Organization: King County Solid Waste Division</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: Farmers, PCC and other food retailers</p>
<p>Related Action Items: None</p>	<p>Target Audience: Consumers, grocery retailers, farmers</p>
<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of King County farmers and grocery retailers and suppliers selling imperfect produce. 2. Media reach for outreach campaign – web hits, media coverage, etc. 3. Increase in purchase of imperfect produce at grocery retailers and farmers markets. Information could be acquired via data from farmers market managers, vendor query, and grocery retailers and suppliers. 	<p>Type: New action item. Dovetails with existing food waste prevention efforts by King County Solid Waste Division.</p>

Strategy 3.5: Increase grocery store food management efficiency.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Food waste is the single largest component of grocery store garbage. Lean techniques save money and reduce waste.

- With modest, feasible, and cost-effective practice improvements, grocers can significantly reduce food loss and improve profitability.
- The ‘lean’ elements of the Sustainability Toolkit (Target 2.2 E) will be an attractive aspect of the toolkit if it emphasizes cost savings benefits.
- A lead organization for this element has not been identified. It may be within scope for the City of Seattle and King County Solid Waste Utilities to play a lead role in building out the lean element of the sustainable toolkit.
- The ‘lean’ and food waste reduction tools are intended to compliment and support the other elements of the sustainable toolkit.
- The proposed action item would contribute toward meeting the target of decreasing 25 percent of the amount of wholesome food loss.

The potential for success with this action would benefit from the growing national momentum to address food waste and add to existing DNRP food waste prevention efforts such as the Solid Waste Division’s Food: Too Good To Waste program.

Recommended Action Items:

- The timeline for this element will align with the overall Sustainable Toolkit schedule.
- First step is to identify ‘emerging best practices’ in grocery food waste minimization practices and inventorying the array of sustainable toolkits that have been developed elsewhere nationally and internationally for grocers.
- Second step is to engage with local/regional grocers to identify the required level of specificity and the degree that guidance and tools needed.

<p>Lead Organization: King County, Grocers Association</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: Kroger, PCC, Seattle Public Utilities, WISERg</p>
<p>Related Action Items: 2.2 E Sustainable Restaurant Toolkit</p>	<p>Target Audience: Grocers, Grocers Association</p>
<p>Measurement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of grocers implementing “Lean Kitchen” strategies. 2. Metrics indicating amount of waste produced before and after implementing “Lean Kitchen” strategies. 	<p>Type: New</p>

APPENDIX B: Healthy Food Access Action Items

Target 1: Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables by 2025. Middle and high school youth - from 24 percent to 30 percent. Adults - overall consumption from 12 percent to 20 percent with a focus on disparately affected populations.

Target 2: : While King County strives for elimination of food insecurity, the target by 2025 is to cut food insecurity from 14 percent to 10 percent.

Strategy 1: Increase the number of healthy food procurement policies in King County institutions (schools, child care, hospitals), with emphasis on institutions serving priority populations, in order to increase fruit and vegetable consumption at these institutions.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Schools, child care, and hospital settings provide opportunity for sustainable policies to increase healthy eating. These settings can also be prioritized to reach priority and vulnerable populations. As recommended by the Institute of Medicine, King County will coordinate with partners to ensure that a variety of foods and beverages, including those recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, are sold or served at all times through the adoption of policies and best practices.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Provide training, technical assistance, resources, and support to institutional settings regarding healthy eating best practices and policy development/implementation.
- B. Evaluate the feasibility of requiring policies in institutions via municipal, county or state laws.
- C. Identify and secure funding sources to increase the reach and scale of this work via grant funds and other funding mechanisms.
- D. Identify and secure funding for staff training, kitchen equipment for institutions.

Lead Organization: Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC)

Potential Key Partners: Schools, hospitals, child care providers, WSDA, Health Care Without Harm, UW, Seattle Tilth

Related Strategies: Food Access (FA) 2, 6, 11, 14

Target Audience: School-age children, early childhood, hospital workers, hospital visitors, hospital patients.

Measurement: Number of policies, BRFSS data (fruit and vegetable consumption), HYS data (fruit and vegetable consumption), child care survey data, institution specific data

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 2: Improve school nutrition environments, with emphasis on schools with high eligibility rates for school meal programs.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Schools are a known and traditional environment for supporting the health and well-being of students. Children and teens spend up to half of their waking hours in school and may consume half of their daily calories there. Schools are in a unique position to support healthy behaviors for eating and physical activity. We also know that healthy, active students learn more and do better in school. 74 percent of students in King County do not eat the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables daily. School is a major source of nutrition with 52 percent of South Seattle and South King County students qualifying for free/reduced price meals.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Identify interested schools and school districts and provide funding and resources as available.
- B. Provide tailored training, support, and technical assistance.
- C. Monitor and evaluate progress.

Lead Organization: PHSKC (with others)

Potential Key Partners: School districts, community organizations, NorthWest Harvest, Children’s Alliance, United Way, PTAs, students, school nutrition directors, UW -CPHN, OSPI, Seattle Tilth

Related Strategies: FA 1, 14, 6

Target Audience: Students, with emphasis on those eligible to participate in free and reduced school meal programs.

Measurement: HYS data, student participation in school breakfast and school lunch programs, number of eligible schools electing for Community Eligibility, percentage of students utilizing both breakfast and lunch programs

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 3: Increase the number of King County farmers markets with nutrition incentive programs for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, with emphasis in South King County.

Rationale/Potential Impact: For low-income populations, cost is a key barrier to eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. Programs to increase access to farmers market for low-income people are recommended in multiple reports and resources. Nutrition incentive programs make fruits and vegetables more affordable by providing bonus dollars (the incentive) when SNAP benefits are used to buy fruits and vegetables. The City of Seattle Fresh Bucks program provides incentives worth up to \$10 per market visit to people using SNAP benefits at farmers markets. This means that when someone uses their SNAP benefits at a participating farmers market, they get extra dollars to spend on fruits and vegetables, making their benefits go further. There are currently zero farmers market incentive programs south of Seattle in South King County. Four existing markets in the area already accept EBT cards, a first step in setting up an incentive program for low income populations, with six markets without this capacity. There is also a need to promote these programs among SNAP recipients to increase use of the program and opportunities for increased fruit and vegetable consumption.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Coordinate with farmers markets to identify interest, barriers, and resources/support needed to accept EBT and implement incentive programs.
- B. Provide training, technical assistance and support to markets and SNAP recipients to ensure use and successful implementation.
- C. Identify a source of funding to support incentives (outreach, incentives, promotion, market costs)

Lead Organization: City of Seattle

Potential Key Partners: WSFMA, PHSKC, farmers markets, Department of Health, funding organizations, community partners, SNAP-Ed programs, SNAP recipients, UW CPHN.

Related Strategies: FA 8, 13

Target Audience: SNAP recipients, farmers markets

Measurement: Number of markets that accept EBT, Number of markets that offer incentive programs, Number of SNAP recipients who utilize programs.

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 4: Increase policies, practices, and incentives in local jurisdictions that promote access to healthy eating among priority populations.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Many King County communities have limited access to environments offering healthy, affordable food choices. Excessive and inequitable exposure to unhealthy food is ubiquitous. Healthy food system elements in city planning can increase access to healthy foods for all city residents. These elements include urban agriculture design and plans, local procurement systems, mobile and farmers markets and zoning in support of these, mobile processing units, farm-to-institutions food distribution, attracting grocery stores or improving grocery stores in lower-income neighborhoods, drinking water access, and policies and standards for food and beverages provided in city buildings and facilities.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Implement community planning and other policy processes with cities to increase access to healthy food.
- B. Coordinate with jurisdictions to revise codes, implement urban agriculture and joint use policies in collaboration with community members.
- C. Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions in taking a Health in All Planning Approach to planning and policymaking
- D. Include access to healthy, affordable foods in health impact assessments.
- E. Encourage jurisdictions to adopt “Right to Food for All People” policies.

Lead Organization: Environmental Health Division of PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: Cities, city planners, PSRC, King County, community based organizations

Related Strategies: FA 5, 11

Target Audience: City residents

Measurement: Population level BRFSS data, number of supportive policies, feedback from community members.

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 5: Increase the amount of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy food options available in food banks and meal programs.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Visits to food banks and pantries are increasing in King County. In 2012, these programs provided 20 percent of the meals in the food safety net (Missing Meals, 2013). This strategy aims to increase the healthy options available through these outlets for our most vulnerable community members. Through policies and partnerships, hunger and health can be addressed simultaneously for those who are most likely to become disease burdened.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Increase cold storage and transportation options for food pantries and meal programs.
- B. Provide funding to food banks and pantries and meal programs to procure locally grown fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods.

<p>C. Support food banks and meal programs in promoting client selection of healthy foods.</p> <p>D. Pursue and identify policy solutions to ensure that the majority of food available through food banks and pantries and meal programs is healthy, local, and affordable.</p>	
<p>Lead Organization: PHSKC (convener)</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: Food Lifeline, Northwest Harvest, food pantries, WSDA, PHSKC, Seattle Tilth, funding organizations, farmers, King County, Seattle Food Committee, South King County Food Coalition, Hopelink, Meals Partnership Coalition, Forterra, Futurewise, Clean Greens</p>
<p>Related Strategy: FA 13</p>	<p>Target Audience: Food bank participants</p>
<p>Measurement: Amount of healthy foods procured by and available in food banks and food pantries. Data from WSDA Governor’s Goal 4 reporting.</p>	<p>Type: Current and Scalable</p>

Strategy 6: Increase summer meal participation rate.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Good nutrition is essential for effective learning every day, all year long. Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does the need for good nutrition. Healthy children learn better, act better, and feel better. Summer meal programs help children get the nutrition they need to learn, play, and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school. Additionally, this program is currently underutilized; in 2012, Washington ranked 38th in summer nutrition participation (FRAC).

- Recommended Action Items:**
- A. Increase the number of sites in neighborhoods that qualify (i.e. by Census data or by catchment area of schools with 50+% free/reduced price enrollment).
 - B. Increase the number of sites that serve meals 40 days or more.
 - C. Improve the variety and nutritional quality and cultural appropriateness of meals served so kids return throughout summer.
 - D. Expand outreach and media efforts so families and providers know where to find sites.

<p>Lead Organization: United Way</p>	<p>Potential Key Partners: School districts, United Way King County, PHSKC, YMCA, food banks/pantries, WSDA Farm to School, WithinReach</p>
<p>Related Strategies: FA 1, 2, 14</p>	<p>Target Audience: School-age children</p>
<p>Measurement: HYS data, data from school districts and individual programs, number of sites, number of meals, days open.</p>	<p>Type: Current and Scalable</p>

Strategy 7: Identify and implement strategies with the restaurant sector to promote and increase fruit and vegetable consumption and other under-consumed nutrients.

Rationale/Potential Impact: In today’s society, restaurants are becoming a larger source of daily caloric intake as the more individuals eat out for their meals. Children are consuming, on average, 25 percent of their daily calories at fast-food and other restaurants. In some restaurants, portion sizes are increasing and the food served is not always nutritious. According to national statistics, in 2012, only three percent of children’s restaurant meals at the top 50 restaurants met nutrition standards. Especially in low-income areas with high densities of fast food, many communities are seeking partnerships and policies with the restaurant sector to increase and promote healthy food and beverage choices.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Identify restaurants frequented in low income communities.
- B. Coordinate with restaurant partners (with emphasis on those serving low income consumers) to identify strategies to promote and serve more fruits and vegetables in restaurant meals.
- C. Provide technical assistance and support to restaurants to implement strategies (nutrient analysis, training).
- D. Pursue and identify policy solutions to ensure that the majority of food available through restaurant meals is healthy, local, and affordable.
- E. Promote/recognize restaurants that offer healthy, affordable options.

Lead Organization: PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: UW, restaurants, restaurant organizations, consumers

Related Strategies: FA 3, 9

Target Audience: Restaurants and consumers with emphasis on low income communities.

Measurement: Population level BRFSS data, HYS data, number of new policies, increase in healthy options offered.

Type: New

Strategy 8: Implement policies to ensure an improved safety net for low income families to access healthy, affordable food.

Rationale/Potential Impact: WIC and SNAP are important safety nets for low income families. However, there are families with income slightly above eligibility levels for federal programs that find it difficult to access healthy, affordable foods. This strategy aims to ensure that eligible families are enrolled in WIC and SNAP, and that new policies are pursued to improve access for those above current eligibility levels.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Assess the current needs of the population.
- B. Conduct outreach and education to enroll families and priority populations to increase participation in WIC and SNAP.

C. Increase access to information and enrollment in benefits at places where low income people seek services.	
D. Seek opportunities to adequately fund existing systems.	
E. Implement innovative strategies to increase participation and funding (check box for funding).	
F. Convene partners to discuss solutions for improved access.	
Lead Organization: PHSKC	Potential Key Partners: DOH, family services agencies, WithinReach, health care providers, child care programs, food assistance programs, community based organizations
Related Strategy: FA 3	Target Audience: Low income, eligible community members.
Measurement: Number of new enrollees, reduced food insecurity, fewer community members reporting barriers such as cost to healthy eating, improved policies.	Type: Current

Strategy 9: Identify and implement strategies with the retail sector to promote and incent fruit and vegetable purchases by priority populations.

Rationale/Potential Impact: There are many ways to increase access to healthy foods in a community. Most consumers purchase their food from retail stores such as supermarkets, grocery stores, co-ops, corner stores, and convenience stores. Therefore, partnerships with the retail sector to implement healthy food policies would improve how healthy food is promoted, priced, and placed for improved consumer access. This strategy also explores opportunities for providing incentives to SNAP participants to purchase fruits and vegetables.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Coordinate with retailers (grocery, co-ops, corner stores) to ensure availability of fruits and vegetables, develop incentive and promotion strategies for low income (SNAP, WIC) consumers to purchase fruits and vegetables (with emphasis on local).
- B. Develop incentive and promotion strategies with retailers.
- C. Provide technical assistance and support to retailers to implement strategies (coupons, fruit and vegetable bundles, incentives).
- D. Pursue and identify policy solutions to ensure that the majority of food available through retail outlets is healthy, local, and affordable.

Lead Organizations: PHSKC, City of Seattle	Potential Key Partners: Retailers, distributors, WIC and SNAP recipients, DOH, community based organizations, WithinReach
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Related Strategies: FA 3, 7	Target Audience: SNAP, WIC recipients. low income community members.
Measurement: Population level health outcomes, program specific evaluation, implementation of incentive programs and redemption rates.	Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 10: Coordinate with the health care sector to implement innovative programs, practices, and policies to increase fruit and vegetable consumption by priority populations.

Rationale/Potential Impact: The health care sector is uniquely qualified to promote access to healthy, affordable foods. Many King County hospitals are identifying strategies to increase healthy options for patients, visitors, and staff and this strategy aims to explore other opportunities including healthy food prescription models and health plan incentives. Medical providers carry a certain weight in many communities and their recommendation along with a direct suggested action can have an important impact on changing behavior.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Engage hospitals in supporting increased fruit and vegetable consumption through community benefit programs.
- B. Coordinate with hospitals, providers, and health plans to provide “prescriptions” and redemptions and other access points for fruits and vegetables for low income priority populations.
- C. Implement food banks, good food bags, or CSA drop sites at hospitals or other health care hubs.
- D. Implement systems to screen and refer for food security.

Lead Organization: PHSKC	Potential Key Partners: Hospitals, community based organizations, community members, farmers, food banks, community health clinics/FQHCs, Clean Greens
Related Strategies: FA 1, 3, 13	Target Audience: Hospital patients and staff, health plan members, the community at large.
Measurement: Overall population measures, Community Health Needs Assessment, program specific evaluation.	Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 11: Increase the number of healthy food procurement policies in large gathering places (community centers, worksites, recreation/cultural settings), with an emphasis on places in low income communities.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Food consumption across the United States and in King County has increased over time and obesity rates are on the rise. In many places where people shop, play, and worship, it is difficult to find healthy, affordable food options. Procurement policies can support improvement in the healthfulness of the food supply and decrease intake of nutrients of concern.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Approach large gathering places to determine interest in offering healthier food options, share best practices from other communities, and identify strategies for implementation.
- B. Provide technical assistance, training and support to sites as they implement policies.
- C. Recognize and promote successful policies and other success stories.

Lead Organization: PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: Recreational/cultural sites, community based organizations, COPC

Related Strategies: FA 1, 4, 7

Target Audience: Consumers and staff in these settings.

Measurement: Number of new policies, population level data, feedback from consumers.

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 12: : Engage and build capacity in communities to continue to learn and address barriers to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and food security.

Rationale/Potential Impact: In recent community reports, affordability is commonly cited as a significant barrier to healthy eating. King County and the Kitchen Cabinet intend to build on these conversations and work with community members to implement local change.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Conduct “listening sessions”, attend coalition meetings, and identify other opportunities to listen to and learn from community members
- B. Provide support and capacity building opportunities to communities on community change processes and leadership.

Lead Organization: PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: Community members, community organizations, local coalitions, retailers, human services coalitions

Related Strategies: All FA Strategies

Target Audience: Community members

Measurement: Number of community members participating, documentation of feedback, input, and solutions.

Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 13: Increase access to direct market outlets among priority communities including local Community Supported Agriculture programs (CSA), farmers markets, farm stands, mobile markets.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Direct market outlets are good for the local food economy and for the people they reach. This strategy aims to better understand the distribution of direct market outlets (farmers markets, CSAs, farm stands) and to work with farmers and organizations to pilot programs to provide increased access for low income community members.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Identify (create a map of) food access points where priority populations purchase food and work with those locations to accept EBT/SNAP (CSA's, good food bags).
- B. Through Action A, identify gaps and places where direct access points do not currently exist.
- C. Coordinate with farmers and others to pilot new access points and payment options that meet the needs of community members including subsidized or sliding scale pricing options.
- D. Fund and support innovative models.

Lead Organization: PHSKC (convener)

Potential Key Partners: WSFMA, farmers, Seattle Tilth, City of Seattle, NABC, Schools, Child care settings, Clean Greens, human services coalitions, municipal community programs

Related Strategies: FA 3, 4, 8, 10

Target Audience: High need communities, priority populations

Measurement: Number of direct market access points in low income or high need communities, use of markets by community members.

Type: New

Strategy 14: Implement a universal school meal program with at least one King County school district with high free/reduced lunch participation.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Federally funded school meals greatly lessens the financial burden on low income families and significantly increases their children's intake of nutritious food – but only if schools participate. A universal meal program has the potential to eliminate paperwork for schools, provide better nutrition for students, eliminate stigma associated with free/reduced lunch systems, and could also be an economic stimulus. This strategy aims to subsidize school meals through local policy.

Key Action Item:

- A. Coordinate with school partners and other organizations to determine a plan of action.

Lead Organization: PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: School-age children

Related Strategies: FA 1, 2, 6	Target Audience: High need communities, priority populations
Measurement: HYS data, evaluation from pilot school/district.	Type: New

Strategy 15: : Convene partners to address poverty, transportation, social justice, and other upstream forces that lead to inequitable access to healthy, affordable food.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Food insecurity, hunger, obesity, and inequitable access to healthy, affordable food are complex problems. There is a recognition that poverty and structural inequities are leading drivers and that rising income inequality, high costs of housing, transportation and medical care, and a regressive tax structure are all leading drivers of poverty. This strategy aims to better understand these connections to healthy eating and implement innovative solutions.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Convene partners to discuss and identify barriers and solutions.
- B. Coordinate with the Cities of SeaTac and Seattle to evaluate the health impacts of minimum wage policies, including impact on healthy eating and food security.
- C. Implement innovative solutions.

Lead Organization: UW/PHSKC

Potential Key Partners: City of Seattle, City of SeaTac, businesses, PHSKC, community organizations

Related Strategies: FA 4, 18

Target Audience: Community members and employees

Measurement: Evaluation of policies, impact on healthy eating

Type: New

Strategy 16: Create a feebate program to correct for market distortions and externalities.

Rationale/Potential Impact: A feebate program is a self-financed system of fees and rebates (historically used in the transportation and energy sectors) that influence purchase decisions by increasing cost of undesirable/unhealthy products while lowering costs of desirable/healthy products. This mechanism could be applied to food products at varying scales and via several food access pathways, including grocery delivery, in-store grocery purchase, and/or via prepared food channels, especially institutions. Preliminary and developmental steps include convening collaborators, establishing scope and criteria for fees and rebates, creating mechanisms for price adjustments, and system evaluation and adaptive management processes. Feebate programs can correct for market distortions and externalities that today send food price signals to consumers with negative health, environmental and economic consequences. The extent of the corrective effect of this program will hinge on the reach, extent and intensity of the program. A more impactful program would include more retailers/institutions, have more pronounced fees/rebates, and cover a broader array of foods.

Recommended Action Items:	
A. Convene a cross-sector (public, private, civic, academic) collaboration to design a regionally-scaled feebate program that promotes healthy food choices through price signals.	
B. Engage collaborators to establish criteria for healthy/unhealthy food types, create fee and rebate pricing standards.	
C. Pilot and evaluate.	
Lead Organization: TBD	Potential Key Partners: TBD
Related Strategies: TBD	Target Audience: TBD
Measurement: TBD	Type: New

Strategy 17: : Implement educational activities and outreach in high need communities to empower communities to eat more fruits and vegetables.	
Rationale/Potential Impact: Health and nutrition education are important components to increasing healthy, affordable food access. Community members must know what the resources and programs are in order to access them, and it is also important to address other individual barriers to healthy eating including cooking classes, shopping tips, and eating well on a budget. There is a significant amount of work happening in King County to increase nutrition education, and much to do to coordinate and enhance existing activities.	
Recommended Action Items:	
A. Work with communities to develop educational activities	
B. Promote existing programs, initiatives and resources among community members to facilitate healthy, affordable food access.	
C. Provide nutrition education, skill building, and other educational opportunities for priority populations, youth, children in schools, and the community.	
D. Implement the FEEST program, or similar models, in all schools in King County	
E. Increase training for emergency food providers	
F. Identify opportunities around backpack programs	
Lead Organization: PHSKC	Potential Key Partners: SNAP-Ed providers, nutrition education groups, Seattle Tilth, Solid Ground, WSU Extension, FEEST, Northwest Harvest
Related Strategies: All FA Strategies	Target Audience: NAP, WIC recipients. Other low income community members.
Measurement: Population level health data, evaluation of individual programs.	Type: Current and Scalable

Strategy 18: Engage diverse stakeholders to learn about barriers to and opportunities for hunting, foraging, and fishing as strategies to increase healthy food security.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Hunting, fishing, and foraging are opportunities for all community members to access healthy, local food sources. At this time, there is little known locally about the barriers or use of these mechanisms, especially among low income community members. This strategy will help us to better understand the community needs and any solutions to improve access.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Convene stakeholders, partners, and government agencies to understand barriers, opportunities, solutions.
- B. Review current processes, policies, and procedures for hunting, fishing, and foraging.

Lead Organization: King County

Potential Key Partners: Department of Fish and Wildlife, Cities, community members, community organizations, other relevant government agencies

Related Strategies: FA 4, 18

Target Audience: Community members interested in using these food access pathways to eat healthy.

Measurement: Improved access and use of hunting, fishing, and foraging. Improved system.

Type: New

Strategy 19: Increase the number of community and school gardens and other garden opportunities available in priority communities.

Rationale/Potential Impact: Community, school, and other gardens have potential for educating community members about where food comes from, fostering community ownership and stewardship among community members, bringing people together, and building community leaders. They also build resiliency and provide opportunities for new immigrants to produce traditional crops that are otherwise unavailable locally, provide exposure to cultural traditions, and serve as access points for meeting new people.

Recommended Action Items:

- A. Create/expand gardens in places such as housing authorities, low income housing communities, schools.
- B. Coordinate with community organizations to implement community gardens and other urban agriculture, work to secure resources as needed.

Lead Organization: TBD

Potential Key Partners: Cities, city planners, PSRC, community members, community organizations, housing organizations

Related Strategies: FA 2, 4, 19

Target Audience: Community members

Measurement: Number of gardens, map of community and school gardens.

Type:

APPENDIX C: List of Kitchen Cabinet Members Appointed by King County Executive Dow Constantine

Ricky Adams - Northwest Farm Credit Services
David Bauermeister - Northwest Agricultural Business Center (NABC)
Wade Bennett - Rockridge Orchards
Branden Born - University of Washington
Michael Brown - Seattle Foundation
Dennis Canty - American Farmland Trust (AFT)
Gaosheng Cha - Farmer
Phong Cha - Farmer
Tim Crosby - Slow Money Northwest
Diane Dempster - Charlie's Produce
Andrea Dwyer - Seattle Tilth
Eric Eisenberg - Swedish Medical Center
Mary Embleton - Cascade Harvest Coalition (CHC)
Karla Farias - Feliz Farms
Hilary Franz - Futurewise
Ben Franz-Knight - Pike Place Market
Tricia Kovacs - WSDA
Beverly Gruber - Les Dames D'Escoffier
Buzz Hofford - Bon Appetit Management
Kristin Hyde - Beecher's Flagship Foundation
George Irwin - Lewis Irwin Farms
Reverend Robert L. Jeffrey - Clean Greens
Devon Love - Center for Multi-Cultural Health
Zachary Lyons - Seattle Chefs Collaborative
Markham McIntyre - Seattle Chamber of Commerce
Vicki McCracken - Washington State University
Joanne MacNab - Auburn Farmers Market
Josh Monaghan - King Conservation District
Tammy Morales - Urban FoodLink
Linda Nageotte - Food Lifeline
Jennifer Otten - University of Washington
De'Sean Quinn - Tukwila City Council
Kathy Pryor - Health Care Without Harm (HCWH)
Andrew Stout - Full Circle Farms

APPENDIX D: Resources

Referenced Works and Resources: also online: www.kingcounty.gov/exec/local-food.aspx

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Acronyms

ACOE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	PCC	PCC Natural Markets
ADAP	Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program	PCCFT	PCC Farmland Trust
AFT	American Farmland Trust	PHSKC	Public Health – Seattle and King County
BRFSS	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	PPM	King County Program Manager
CHC	Cascade Harvest Coalition	PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
CFT	Conservation Futures Tax	SMNW	Slow Money Northwest
COPC	Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition	SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
CSA(s)	Community Supported Agriculture	SVPA	Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance
DOH	Washington State Department of Health	SWS	King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks – Stormwater Service Division
DPER	King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review	TBD	To be determined
EQUIP	NRCS, Environmental Quality Incentives Program	TDR	Transfer of Development Rights program
FID	Food Innovation District	TN	The Nature Conservancy
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Centers	USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
FRAC	Food Research and Action Center	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
FTE	Full-Time Employee	UW	University of Washington
HYS	Healthy Youth Survey	UW-CPHN	University of Washington, College of Public Health and Nutrition
KC	King County	WDF	Wildlife Fund
KCD	King Conservation District	WIC	Women, Infants, and Children
NABC	Northwest Agriculture Business Center	WSDA	Washington State Department of Agriculture
NWFCS	Northwest Farm Credit Services	WSFMA	Washington State Farmers Market Association
NRCS	Natural Resources and Conservation Service	WSU	Washington State University
OSPI	Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	WTD	King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks – Wastewater Treatment Division