

Community Food Systems Tactic Checklist

Food systems are complex, dynamic and involve numerous interactive sectors across the food supply as well as interactions across and within community assets.

The food system is comprised of five different sectors ranging from production to resource management, typically viewed as a cycle or process. Similarly, food systems are embedded in our communities and both impact, and are impacted by, community assets such as our economies, natural and built environment, and equitable resource and decision making abilities. Overall, these complex systems influence the potential benefits and challenges for food access, sovereignty, business viability and general food supply and consumption.

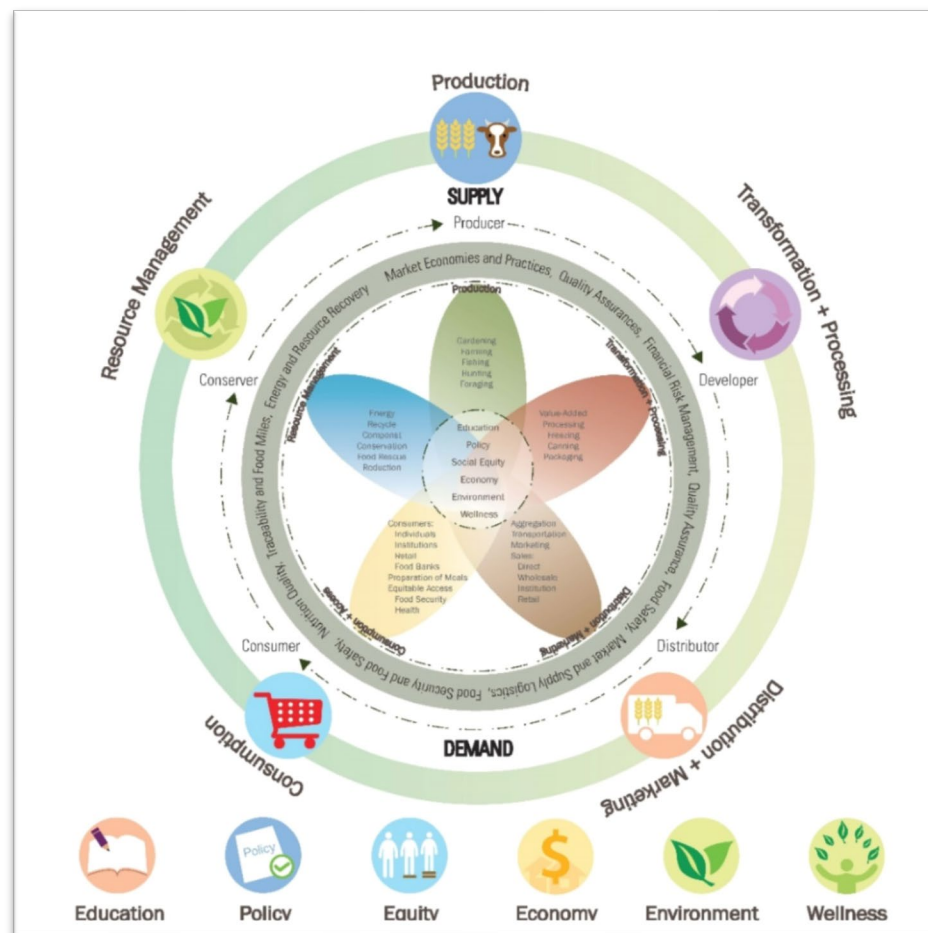
This resource describes, in brief food system sectors and community asset areas and then details tactics of food systems within sector areas. Each tactic has a primary sector that it resides in, however, it may influence or be influenced by other sectors within the food system. The matrix on following pages provides a review of the primary sector as “X” and secondary sectors as “X”. This resource is also developed to be a tool for identifying which tactics exist within your community food system. There are checkboxes within the left hand column for tracking the tactics and a notes section that can be used to describe aspects such as the number of tactic in your community; perhaps the challenges or opportunities that exist; and a general space for brainstorming ideas. This tool is meant to be a starting point to considering tactics or strategies that can be implemented to reach place-based goals of community food systems development.

Please note that this tool does not incorporate the various asset areas into the matrix. Based on the food systems teams research, there is agreement that all community assets are involved in each sector and tactic. Therefore, this tool is not used to describe the different asset area influences and impact. However, the Community Food Systems booklet does identify and research community assets implications on food systems tactics.

Additionally, the goal of this resource is to continue to highlight the breadth and diversity between the strategies and tactics of food systems. As research and community engagement continues, the list of tactics grows and depicts the numerous possibilities for food systems development that responds to place-based community values and needs. As this resource is used in community, if there are tactics that appear to be missing, reach out to our food systems team. We respect your suggestions and additions and are interested in working with you to create new tactic descriptions. Additionally, this tactic list is published into a community food systems booklet every two years to show the growth of work across local and regional food systems. This work grows through collaboration and we are looking forward to partnership.

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Community Food Systems Sectors, Assets + Tactics

Food System Sectors

- **Production:** the science, art, or occupation of cultivating land, raising livestock, hunting, fishing, foraging or farming.
- **Transformation + Processing:** transformation of raw ingredients, physically or chemically, into a value-added product which may include fresh cut or lite-processing, butchering, freezing or canning.
- **Distribution + Marketing:** moving product from farm or processing site to market or consumer, and may include wholesaling, warehousing, transportation, grocery stores, food hubs, farmers markets, and community supported agriculture.
- **Consumption + Access:** opportunities for an individual to gain access to food in a physically safe, financially viable, and culturally competent way, and may include restaurants, food pantries, meal assistance programs and awareness campaigns.
- **Resource Management:** efficient and effective deployment and allocation of community and business resources as it relates to land, water, soil, plants, foods and created materials; it may include recycling, conservation, food waste and recovery, and general environmental stewardship.

Community Assets:

- **Environment (built and natural):** Surrounding conditions that include both natural environment and built space in which a person or animal lives
- **Economy:** wealth and resources of a community or region that relate to the development and consumption of goods and services
- **Equity:** offering same status and equal access to social goods, services, property, freedom of speech; including equal opportunity for access to a healthy and good quality of life
- **Education:** promoting experiences and programming related to food systems and health for a deeper understanding and increased opportunities to build skills
- **Wellness:** health status of a community, and individuals that live in it, as it relates to access to affordable and effective options for quality of life
- **Policy:** principles or actions that have been adopted by governments, businesses and individuals to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes

Menu of Tactics

Internally, the Community Food Systems Program includes 48 that contribute to food systems. We propose that tactics have primary sectors in which they exist, however, due to the nature of food systems being cross-cutting between and within sectors, we acknowledge additional secondary sectors that are involved in each tactic. The table below provides brief descriptions of each tactic and depicts primary (X) and secondary (X) sectors.

Additionally, as new communities and partnerships are formed, this research continues to expand.

| Tactic | Description | Production | Processing | Distribution | Consumption | Resource Management | Notes: |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|--------|
| <i>Primary Sector Production</i> | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Residential Gardens + Homesteading | Private residence integrating food plants and animals with ornamental plants for an aesthetic setting. By incorporating both types of plants, a garden becomes productive as well as beautiful; leading to added health benefits, stress reduction, and personal financial stability. | X | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wild Foraging | Individual harvesting of food within nature including gathering of plants, fishing and hunting. | X | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Faith Gardens | Faith-based organizations utilizing gardens as a means for connection with the broader community or to congregation. Many offer produce to their volunteers or congregation members in need, and several also donate produce to food pantries in the community. | X | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Corporate Gardens | Business or corporation-based garden used to promote and establish healthy habits for employees and administration within a company and promote sustainable wellness for the community. | X | | X | X | |

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| | | Production | Processing | Distribution | Consumption | Resource Management | Notes: | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Community Gardens | City or community-based land utilized to create garden space for neighborhood use. Typically, a public space that can be a cross section between public and private entities open to all, or for identified users. These spaces offer opportunities for families to grow their own food leading to financial stability and healthy, fresh food options. | X | | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Farm to School: School Gardens | Public or private school offering garden space for unique learning opportunities for both students and teachers. Gardening can connect multiple disciplines: Math, Science, English, and Nutrition. It can be used to teach children how to sustain themselves, as well as care and respect the earth. School gardens foster growth and knowledge about where food comes from and nourishes healthy living habits. | X | | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Edible Landscapes | Community based landscaping efforts that incorporate various forms of food (fruit trees, berries, herbs, and vegetables) with ornamentals to build up the environment, increase diversity, and improve food security through a connection to nature. | X | | | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Forests | Similar to public edible orchards, a community-based and public use of land to incorporate various forms of fruit trees and shrubs. | X | | | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Incubator and Beginning Farm Programs | Community organization or private business that assists beginning farmer entrepreneurs in efforts to establish their own successful businesses. The farms typically train on successful business tactics and provide resources and services that are expensive or difficult for start-up entrepreneurs to access. | X | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Agriculture | Food business or organization that utilizes urban land or buildings to maximize local food outputs and assists in meeting needs for local food production and community food security. Urban agriculture contributes to the safety, health, and diversity of environments. It also enhances community by providing a sustainable food source within city limits develops community capacity. | X | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Farms | Private or corporate farm business that cultivates land for various food and commodity crops. Local and regional farming have many practices that are typically environmentally conscious practices, socially equitable, and humane to animals. Rural farms often operate at a larger scale than urban farms. | X | | | | X | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Recreational and Commercial Fisheries | Personal, corporate or industrial business that includes harvesting of fish and other aquatic species for human consumption or for fish products. Fish are harvested for either commercial or recreational use or self-consumption | X | | | | X |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agrihoods | Neighborhood development centered on agriculture, and provides direct connections between community members and food production. Many agrihoods also take into consideration conservation programs, gardens, business and retail and social spaces. | X | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agritourism | Community tourism opportunity for individuals and families to explore agricultural amenities within communities and regions. Typically includes events, meals or shopping and offers additional revenue streams to farmers and food businesses as well as ways to educate public on local and regional foods. | X | | | X | |
| <i>Primary Sector Processing</i> | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Processing Facilities | Food business that processes raw food products (such as produce, dairy, or meat) through physically or chemically altering products into value-added forms. | | X | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobile Processing Units | Food business or institution that operates a mobile processing facility that provides on-farm or on-site processing equipment. Many include animal or specialty crop processing directly on farms to offer locally-produced, locally-raised products. | | X | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shared-Use Kitchens | Non-profit organization or private food business that offers entrepreneurs a food-safe location for processing and creating meals or other product. Typically organized by a non-profit organization and rented out to food entrepreneurs. | | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Enterprise Centers | Non-profit or privately managed organization that supports businesses through entrepreneurial investments in local food, creating a self-financed, sustainably profitable model. Many times may involve various different business models and shared-space for production of products. | | X | X | X | |
| <i>Primary Sector Distribution</i> | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Community Supported Agriculture | Food business that promote agriculture sales through membership and direct distribution of products. This allows the business to have shared risk with consumers on the years production. Members, in return, receive shares (typically weekly) of products. | X | | X | X | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Boxes | Food business that aggregates products from multiple farmers (meat, vegetables, fruit, etc.) into a box that allows customers to have easy access to local and regional food. Boxes are typically offered on a weekly basis and include delivery to work-sites, door-to-door or other accessible locations. | | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Farmers Markets | Location with a community for selling food products; innovating city space as a market for food businesses and customers to socialize and purchase fresh products. Markets range in management styles and many also offer various food assistance programs to support food access for customers. | X | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Auctions | Food organization that allows consumers to purchase from local producers. The auction method offers a true supply-and-demand environment. | X | | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cooperatives | Business model where, cooperatively, many individuals own a business and share responsibility for business decisions. Cooperatives can exist in models like grocery stores or retail as well as food hubs and various business channels. Many cooperatives offer education opportunities to members, high quality products, member authority, and support for local communities. | X | X | X | X | X |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Small Market Retail | Often referred to as corner stores, bodegas or general stores which are typically independently owned and operated and support access to food as a small retailer/ grocer | | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Grocery Stores | Food business that promotes food purchases through convenience stores, delicatessens, greengrocers, and health food stores. Within the local realm, a common goal of these stores is to enhance community economic development. May also include online grocery options with pick-up or delivery options. | | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Markets | Non-profit or private business that offers space for multiple food businesses like grocers and retailers, restaurateurs, etc. to have rental or permanent space for their business. This supports entrepreneurs in understanding demand, provides customers with local products and builds the infrastructure for an effective local food system. | | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Farm to School: Procurement | Schools procuring local and regional foods to support farmers and teach staff and students about their agriculture, food, health and nutrition. | X | X | X | X | X |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Hubs | Food business or non-profit that connect consumers, buyers, producers, and food businesses by managing aggregation, distribution, and marketing of products from local producers. Typically food hubs offer the next scale of distribution to CSA and Food Box programs and sell to restaurants, grocers, and other wholesale retail locations. | X | X | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Banks | Non-profit organizations that supports food security by providing dry, cooled, and frozen storage space for food that will be distributed to pantries and partner agencies such as food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. | | X | X | X | |
| | Awareness Campaigns | Marketing campaign managed and deployed by all types of businesses and organizations to support community identity and assist in bringing visibility and attention to a specific cause or call to action. | X | X | X | X | |

Primary Sector Consumption

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Pantries and Meal Programs | Non-profit organizations that serve individuals who need support in accessing food and prepared meals. A food pantry is a charitable distribution agency that provides clients with food and grocery products for home preparation and consumption. Meal programs often include a client-choice pantry and targeted referrals to community services, helping to eliminate poverty among clients. | | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nutrition Assistance Programs | Government programs established to combat hunger through aiding low-income households in purchasing healthy foods, as well as providing education on food budgeting. Various programs target different groups of people, varying from adults and seniors to women and children. | | X | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Farm to School: Nutrition Education | Schools that provide education for students related to agriculture, food, health and nutrition. Lessons typically provide options for students to learn through hands-on experience. | X | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | School Wellness Policies | Schools required to create a policy related to student and staff wellness, prevention and combatting childhood obesity, and encouraging school nutrition guidelines are meeting minimum federal school meal standards. | X | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Trucks | Food business like a restaurant on wheels with relatively low start-up costs. Typically equipped with a full kitchen, however, may depend on a certified kitchen to first develop products for sale. Allow for mobility to various locations throughout a community or region. | | X | X | X | |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Restaurants | Food business that procure foods and offer meals to patrons. Restaurants can support local through procurement and providing unique options to consumers seeking connection with community. | X | X | | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Teaching Kitchens | Kitchen sites through organizations or food businesses that offer demonstrations and educational space to teach various culinary practices; typically include hands-on programming for participants to learn about nutrition, cooking fundamentals and cultural identity of food. | | X | | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Education Centers | Institutions, non-profits and other businesses that educate young and old alike about agricultural systems through hands-on experiences. Many offer learning labs and workshops to teach about food production and how to integrate practices into life at home. | X | X | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food System Policy Councils and Coalitions | Collaborative group of individuals brought together to support food systems change in community. This may represent food activists, community members, urban and rural planners, and local, municipal, and state governments. | X | X | X | X | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Local Food Coordinators | Individuals who support and connect food systems stakeholders and develop leadership within the community to orchestrate food system evolution. | X | X | X | X | X | |
| <i>Primary Sector Resource Management</i> | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Water Conservation | Organizations, government departments and individual activities that support water conservation practices from individual use, food business or farm or community planning strategies. This practice encourages utilizing water effectively and efficiently to conserve this limited resource and can include various forms of implementation from monitoring use, to implementation of site designs for water mitigation. | X | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Natural Resources and Renewable Energy | Organizations, government departments and individual work that seeks to protect natural resources for future generations. This includes practices that utilize alternative energy sources such as solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, etc. to substitute fossil fuels. | | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Land Trusts and Conservation Programs | Organizations managing land through programs that promote environmentally sustainable options for sensitive or damaged areas: sustainable farming, conservation land, wetlands, prairie or grassland, water protection and storm water management, etc. | X | | | | X | |

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|--------------------------|--|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fisheries, Reef and Coastal Management | Government and organizational preservation and maintenance of oceanic ecosystems' health; including coral reefs, native species, resources, shorelines, tourism, cultural values, marine life, etc. | X | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food Donation and Gleaning | Organizations or individuals working to glean food products that will go to waste at farms and food retail locations. This bridges the gap between food waste and fighting hunger by offering opportunities for individuals, organizations, and farmers to donate food that is not used, rather than throwing it away. | X | | | X | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Waste Prevention | Organizations, government departments and individuals dedicated to preventing waste through recycling, prevention of waste, and audits for understanding waste. | | | | | X | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Compost Programs | Organizations and individuals utilizing composting as a way to reuse organic material such as food scraps, yard waste, manure etc. and turn into a soil amendment. This process is an alternative for throwing food away that will end up in a landfill. | X | X | | X | | |

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