

United States Department of Agriculture
Urban Agriculture & Innovative Production Grant

City of Flagstaff
Sustainability Office



Assessing & Growing a Sustainable Community Food System



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Purpose of the USDA Grant Project:

Assessing and Growing a Sustainable Community Food System



Provides primary and secondary food systems research for 5 counties across northern Arizona



Supports community engagement in Flagstaff's climate goals related to sustainable and localized food access and distribution



Assists the City in developing food system commitments to inform and engage decision-makers, key stakeholders, and the community

Project Timeline



GOAL #1

Assess the local food system and collect data through a comprehensive food systems assessment (CFSA).



GOAL #3

Assess the feasibility of one strategic business opportunity in Flagstaff: food hub, commercial community kitchen, etc.



GOAL #2

Present CFSA findings to stakeholders and community members to increase awareness and understanding of the current state of our food system.



GOAL #4

Develop a Food Action Plan to guide City policy, programming, and investment in the local food system and urban agriculture opportunities.

City of Flagstaff Community Food System Assessment Community Engagement



A Summary and Analysis of Community Conversation and Stakeholder Findings in Response to the Community Food System Assessment



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Project Support

- Provide a unique perspective during the process design and implementation
- Coordinate grant Steering Committee
- Work with regional partners to host/promote events
- Facilitate Grower Coalition meetings
- Support stakeholder and public meetings related to this grant

Community Conversations

- East Flagstaff Library (*Audience: General/Sunnyside Neighborhood*)
- Flagstaff Aquaplex (*Audience: Youth 18-23*)
- Murdoch Community Center (*Audience: General/Southside Neighborhood*)
- Joe C. Montoya Community and Senior Center (*Audience: Seniors*)
- **STAR School** (*Audience: Indigenous families*)
- **Willow Bend** (*Audience: Educators & FUSD partners*)

Stakeholder Gatherings

- Two events at the Coconino Center for the Arts (*Audience: professionals, partners, and advocates*)

Engagement Methodology

2 Centered Groups:

- Community Members
- Community Stakeholders

Purpose:

- Understand how community members are making meaning of the data from the assessment;
- Understand perspectives on needs, gaps, and barriers;
- Identify priorities for developing the food action plan;
- Identify potential future food business opportunities.

Overview

- Engaged a total of 141 individuals
 - 94 community members
 - 47 stakeholders
- 85% of participants reside in Flagstaff with the greatest participation from the 86004 zip code
- Reached individuals ages 18-75+ with an equal split of participation across all age groups
- Participation by race/ethnicity aligned with census with slightly higher participation among Native Americans

Community Reflections

Agriculture landscape, food production, and infrastructure

- Points of interest:
 - # of farms and ranches
 - % of Indigenous farmers
 - Loss of farmland
 - Distribution gaps

Food retail environment and food access

- Points of interest:
 - High # of restaurants
 - Low # of grocery/markets that accept nutrition assistance
 - Food cost

Community Reflections, continued

Food consumption and health

- Points of interest:
 - Food cost as connected to options and health
 - Desire to focus on children and opportunities through schools

Food waste and recovery

- Points of interest:
 - Amount of waste
 - Composting

Community Reflections, continued

Making meaning of the data:

- Points of confusion:
 - Trying to determine if a data point is “good” or “bad”
 - What actions to take in response to the data

Barriers and challenges:

- Food costs
- A need to better support area farmers and food producers
- Perceptions of tensions between investing in the food system and challenges with tourism

Opportunities Informed by Community in Response to the Assessment

Increase	Improve	Incentivize	Make Accessible
Priority opportunity theme 1: Increase food hubs across northern Arizona.	Priority opportunity theme 2: Improve partnerships that are focused on food distribution challenges.	Priority opportunity theme 3: Incentivize healthy food options to address food cost and affordability.	Priority opportunity theme 4: Make it more possible/ accessible for northern Arizona to grow their own food.

Stakeholder Reflections

Agriculture landscape, food production, and infrastructure

- Points of interest:
 - # of farms and ranches
 - % of Indigenous farmers
 - Direct to consumer sales opportunities
 - Zoning regulations
 - Commercial kitchen infrastructure and access

Food retail environment and food access

- Points of interest:
 - # of eateries
 - # of grocery outlets
 - Cost of food

Stakeholder Reflections, continued

Food consumption, health, and food access

- Points of interest:
 - % of income spent on food
 - Affordability
 - School-based opportunities for children/youth/students
 - % of people interested in growing food
 - % of people interested in increasing access to farmers markets

Food waste and recovery

- Points of interest:
 - Amount of waste
 - Liabilities around food recovery

Stakeholder Food System Priorities

Food access

Agriculture
landscape and
food production

Tie – Food retail
environment and
food system
infrastructure

Stakeholder Informed Potential Food Business Opportunities



Support food recovery
businesses



Support growing-zone
smart production among
farm businesses



Support local food
distribution businesses



Support growing-zone
smart production on city-
owned spaces

Questions

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