

# County of Santa Clara

Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency  
Administration Division

**San Jose Office**  
1553 Berger Drive  
Building 1  
San Jose, CA 95112  
(408) 918-4600  
Fax (408) 286-2460

**South County Office**  
80 W. Highland Avenue  
Building K  
San Martin, CA 95046  
(408) 201-0640  
Fax (408) 683-4247



<http://www.cepascc.org>

DATE: March 1, 2021

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Joe Deviney, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures  
Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA)

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**SUBJECT: Update on Food, Restaurant, Agriculture, Health Initiative Food System Workplan**

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This report is an update to the Board of Supervisors on the Food, Restaurant, Agriculture, Health Access workplan initiative approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 1, 2020 (Item No. 10) and conducted by the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). The Board initially approved a referral from Supervisors Chavez and Simitian for this effort on June 2, 2020 (Item No. 22), which directed the Administration to report back to the Board with a workplan and timeline to create a comprehensive system-wide Food, Agriculture, and Health Access Initiative, including convening with public, private, and cross-systems partners and inclusive of the Santa Clara County restaurant industry.

## *Current Workplan Status*

As outlined in the original referral, the “food system” is broad and multifaceted, spanning from the preservation of agricultural working lands, growing and distribution of food, delivery of healthy food to vulnerable populations in need, daily meals provided by the County, and to the “rescue” and redirection food destined for a landfill. Food system components involve numerous community-based organizations, County departments, private sector partners, and other government agencies; each part has many active and ongoing programs and projects to provide the workplan with a current baseline of work being done and to enhance and improve this baseline. The workplan will include recommendations and fortify the food system, including resiliency during the pandemic and future disasters/emergencies. The UCCE has completed the following activities to date:

### Report Review, Data Collection, and Organization

- Reviewed 29 reports and other documents about Santa Clara County's food system;

- Drafted guide for the systematic review of existing County food system-related reports;
- Collected data for a community food network map;
- Compiled potential food system metrics;
- Drafted interview questions for discussions with food system leaders and experts; and
- Compiled food system plans and initiatives from other counties and metropolitan regions.

#### Engagement with Existing Organizations

- Presented on workplan to the 1) Food Insecurity Response Subcommittee Team (F.I.R.S.T) of the South County Youth Taskforce, 2) CommUniverCity, 3) Santa Clara County Food System Alliance, 4) Social Services Agency (SSA) convening of emergency food providers, 5) South Bay Food Justice Collaborative, and 6) Santa Clara County Farm Bureau;
- Planned and conducted focus groups for input on goals of a more equitable and coordinated food system with 1) SSA convening of emergency food providers, 2) Santa Clara County Food System Alliance and guests, and 3) South Bay Food Justice Collaborative;
- Held follow-up meetings with CommUniverCity and San Jose State University faculty and staff;
- Conducted a total of 43 interviews with key food system stakeholders;
- Interviewed seven food manufacturers and processors and five grocery stores; and
- Collected survey data from 15 farmers.

#### County Departmental Engagement

- Organized and held two "Kitchen Cabinet" meetings with representatives from different County agencies and programs that interact with the food system.

#### Coordination and Updates

- Held weekly UCCE workplan team meetings;
- Attended monthly SSA convenings;
- Participated in monthly CEPA/SSA/UCCE meetings; and
- Met with Department of Environmental Health staff to learn about their programs and data.

From these activities, community stakeholder input, and research, the UCCE has created a list of draft goals, recommendations, and strategies and has sought input from the stakeholders in this process on these drafts before inclusion in the final workplan. UCCE created a survey for stakeholders to provide input on draft recommendations and received approximately 60 responses.

The workplan is scheduled to be completed by the end of March and presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 20, 2021. Goals and objectives for the workplan are being developed by UCCE, and the accompanying legislative file will include final recommended actions for Board consideration.

cc: Chief Board Aides  
Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer  
Greg Iturria, Budget Director  
James R. Williams, County Counsel  
Stephanie Safdi, Deputy County Counsel  
Sylvia Gallegos, Deputy County Executive  
Jason McCluskey, Budget & Public Policy Analyst  
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors