Sustainable Food System Update

Austin’s Sustainable Food System is a Local One
Agenda

Role a Food Policy Manager

Progress Update
- Metrics Development
- Gap Analysis
- Food Portal Launch

State of the Food System Report

What’s Next
Role a Food Policy Manager

- Cities impact and influence on a food system
- Coordinating interdepartmental activity
- Leadership to achieve goals stated in 30 year comprehensive plan
Progress Update

Metrics Development:

• More than 150 meetings with stakeholders

• Conducted a survey to identify metrics:
  • Growing food
  • Selling food
  • Eating food
  • Food recovery

• Collected data for selected metrics
Progress Update

Gap Analysis:
- Access
- Competition
- Demand
- Regulations
- Policies
- Costs
Food Portal Launch:

- Educational materials
  - How to donate food
  - How to compost
  - Ways to eat healthy

- Codes and regulations
  - Starting a business
  - Starting a community garden

- Organizations
  - Helping with hunger
  - Ways to donate food
  - Where to buy local food
Input and Discussion

State of the Food System Report

Austin's Sustainable Food System is a Local One
State of the Food System Report

Purpose:

- **Educate**
  - Snapshot of current food system
  - Identifies trends
  - Easily understood – highly graphic

- **Links to existing goals**
  - Imagine Austin/ CHIP
  - COA programs and initiatives

- **Organize priorities and action**
  - Creates a common framework
  - Engages community partners
  - Identifies a path to change
Limits to Food System Report

- This is a only starting point
- Challenges:
  - Metrics cover different geographical areas
  - Trends are difficult to track
  - COA has a limited direct impact
  - Complexity of global food system / City boundaries
Growing Food

Metrics:

- 11 year farmland loss = 25%
  - 9.3 acres/ day

- Total community gardens = 52
  - Available plots = 0 (wait lists)

- AISD Schools with gardens = 77%

- Supply of food at any time = 3 days

- Average age of farmers = 62

- Average farm worker income = $11K

Vacant Land in Austin
Growing Food

Takeaways:

• Preserving farmland requires innovative approach

• Products grown in Central Texas are a small percentage of what we eat

• School, community, and urban gardens are in high demand

• Farmer demographics must be addressed
Growing Food

**COA Profile**
- Parks and Recreation
  - Community Garden guidelines
- Austin Water
  - Rainwater Rebate
  - Community Garden water-taps
- Planning and Development
  - Urban Farm Ordinance - Certificate of Compliance

**Private Sector Profiles**
- Multi-cultural Refugee Center’s Community Garden
- Agua Dulce
  - Impact of UFO COC

**Office of Sustainability**
City of Austin
Selling Food

Metrics:

- Selling local food is a significant part of Austin’s economy:
  - Total economic impact = $4.1B (.45% of GDP in Austin MSA)
  - Food manufacturing = $737M
  - Food distribution = $331M
  - Grocery sales = $449M
  - Farm direct sales = $1.3M
  - COA sales tax revenue = $63M (43% of total COA income)
Selling Food

Takeaways:

• Buying local food benefits:
  • Producers
  • Consumers
  • Local economy
  • Environment

• More local processing & manufacturing is needed

• Local selling mechanisms need evaluation & improvement:
  • # of farmers markets & fee structure
  • Demand exceeds supply for institutional buyers
  • Geographical distribution of grocery stores
Selling Food

**COA Profile**
- Health and Human Services
  - Farmers Market Regulations
- Human Resource
  - Farm to Work program
- Economic Development
  - Economic Impact study

**Private Sector Profiles**
- Sustainable Food Center
  - Farmers Market Double Dollar programs
- Odd Duck – Bryce Gilmore
  - Transformation from a food truck to a brick and mortar restaurant
Metrics:

- Food insecure = 17.6%
  - Only 57% of eligible residents receive SNAP
  - Food insecurity costs Texas $9B per year
- Eligible School Lunch program:
  - Free and Reduced = 63%
- Obesity rate = 25.5%
- Diabetes rate = 7.4%
- Food retail = over 6,000 restaurants and 85 full service grocery stores
Eating Food

Takeaways:

• Food insecurity disproportionately impacts:
  • Children
  • Minorities
  • Elderly

• Many Austinites do not have healthy eating habits

• Priorities for improvement:
  • Increased access to healthy food
  • Improve planning for healthy food
  • Addressing affordability
  • Education and outreach
Eating Food

COA Profile
- Transportation
  - Access to healthy food
- Health and Human Services
  - WIC Programs

Private Sector Profiles
- CAP Metro
  - Grocery Store routes
- Capital Area Food Bank
  - SNAP outreach
Food Recovery

Metrics:

• Food waste = 421,500,000 lbs. per year / $208M

• Households with access to curbside composting = 14,322

• Organic material diverted = 1,837 tons

• Keep Austin Fed recovers 360,000 pounds/year

• ARR composting classes = 50
Takeaways:

• Benefits of food recovery:
  • Reduces food insecurity
  • Achieves Zero Waste goal
  • Saves money
  • Conserves resources
  • Reduces climate change impacts

• 25% food waste = 25% food insecurity

• Specific strategies should be developed for:
  • Residents, businesses, schools & institutions
  • Neighborhood-scale solutions
  • Providing compost to local farms
Food Recovery

COA Profile

- Austin Resource Recovery
  - Residential and business pilots

Private Sector Profiles

- Eastside Compost Peddlers
- Keep Austin Fed
  - Food Recovery
- UT Arlington/ Eco-Network
  - Food Waste Charter
What’s Next?

Austin State of the Food System Report

- Gather data on 4 sectors of the food system
- Select food system metrics with ties to Imagine Austin
- Develop City of Austin internal Food System Roundtable
- Develop external food system stakeholder groups

Neighborhood Food Planning

- Establish best-practices
- Develop Pilot Projects (Dove Springs/Rundberg/ Seaholm Eco District)
- Identify food system metrics for neighborhoods
- Work with neighborhood stakeholders to identify priorities
- Develop neighborhood food system plans
- Develop tool-kit to assist in achieving desired changes

Austin Food System Strategic Plan

- Aggregate data from Neighborhood Food Plans
- Integrate Food Plan with Imagine Austin and CHIP
- Evaluate impact and opportunities for future collaboration

2015

2015/2016

2017/2018

Austin's Local, Healthy and Sustainable Food System

2015/2016

What's Next?