



**THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS
of the
SAN FRANCISCO
URBAN-RURAL ROUNDTABLE**

Presented to the
Honorable Gavin Newsom
Mayor of San Francisco

by
Roots of Change
May 15, 2009

Roots of Change

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Coordinating Team

Roots of Change

May 15, 2009

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Mayor of San Francisco
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mayor Newsom:

It is with great pleasure, on behalf of the members of the San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable that I convey to you the final recommendations pertaining to programs, incentives, strategies and practical actions that San Francisco could implement to support the regional agricultural economy and to increase the amount of high quality, sustainably produced, and regionally sourced food available to all of San Francisco's residents regardless of income level.

We all appreciated your willingness to sanction and engage with genuine interest this first step toward formation of working Bay Area foodshed that will serve San Francisco and the region. Although many big cities share your interest in healthy, affordable, and sustainable food production, no Mayor has ventured as far into the countryside to engage the producers of food and to hear their perspectives on how city and country can best work together for mutual benefit. Furthermore, we are encouraged by your March 30th statement of commitment to seek implementation of these recommendations in the remaining time of your Administration.

We know that some of the recommendations will be challenging, particularly given the economic climate, but be assured that you and the City's departments have the support of those who contributed to the formation of these recommendations. The pages that follow carefully document your allies. Do not hesitate to call upon us as you work to implement these recommendations.

Finally, I want to thank you for providing the support of City Staff who were members of the project's Coordinating Team. Wade Crowfoot from your office and Paula Jones from the Department of Public Health were especially helpful in our work. They are exemplary public servants. Please also know that Sibella Kraus from SAGE, Edward Thompson Jr. from American Farmland Trust, Larry Bain from Let's Be Frank, and Joseph McIntyre from Ag Innovations Network contributed with professionalism and great expertise to ensure success. And of course, all the aforementioned team members are grateful to the 50 participants in the San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable process who are listed below.

Sincerely,



Michael Dimock
President

Participants in the San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable

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Jessica Prentice, Three Stone Hearth, Chef and Author
Richard Rominger, Farmer, Rominger Farms, Yolo County, and former Deputy Secretary, USDA
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David Shabazian, Sacramento County Council of Governments
Carla Schultheis, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Dan Schuman, Project Open Hand, Tenderloin Food Purchasing Coop
Steve Schwartz, California Farmlink
Deborah Sellers, Sellers Markets, Inc.
Diana Sokolove, San Francisco Planning Department
Catherine Sneed, The Garden Project
Dave Stockdale, CUESA and Ferry Plaza Farmers Market
Egon Terplan, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research
Tom Tomich, Ph.D., UC Davis Agriculture Sustainability Institute, UC SAREP
Robert Tse, Deputy Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Nancy Waymack, San Francisco Unified School District
Kevin Westlye, Golden Gate Restaurant Association
Ed Wilkins, San Francisco Unified School District
Bill Wilkinson, Green Leaf Produce

Background

In September of 2008, Gavin Newsom, Mayor of the City of San Francisco, invited 50 leaders from city and country, including California's Secretary of Food and Agriculture, AG Kawamura, to convene three times over five months in order to prototype urban and rural collaboration in the development of a "foodshed" for the City.

The Mayor charged Roundtable participants to develop an "integrated set of recommendations for programs, incentives, strategies and practical actions" that San Francisco could implement "to support the regional agricultural economy and increase the amount of high quality, California grown food for all of our residents." Four committees were formed: Place-based Agriculture, Aquaculture and Cultural Values; Resources and Environment; Healthy Food Access; and Agricultural Economic Viability. The Urban-Rural Roundtable provided a tangible focal point for stakeholders from across the food system spectrum to work together to link city and country in the challenge of creating a sustainable food system that is place-based.

Roots of Change, which provided funding for the project, formed a coordinating team of food system and policy experts to support the Roundtable in the formation of its recommendations.

The Roundtable's first meeting was held on October 22, 2008 on the campus of the University of California, Davis. Mayor Newsom and Secretary Kawamura were both in attendance. Mayor Newsom provided a clear statement on the challenges and needs that were to be addressed by the Roundtable. Secretary Kawamura added his perspectives as both Secretary and a vegetable grower from Orange County, a historical farming region severely impacted by urbanization.

The Roundtable participants divided into four committees and brainstormed potential recommendations designed to meet the following four goals:

- 1) Enhance and maintain place-based and cultural values of agriculture in the foodshed including multifunctional land and water use, distinctive landscapes, and diverse cultural traditions
- 2) Ensure economically feasible stewardship of resources including agricultural land and other natural resources in the San Francisco foodshed.
- 3) Increase access to and availability of affordable, healthy, locally and sustainably produced food by increasing public funding and other means.
- 4) Create new markets for good locally grown food, agritourism and other sustainable enterprises that local food producers can use to earn greater economic returns.

Following the initial meeting, the Coordinating Team developed a set of preliminary recommended strategies with supporting analysis and additional resources. These strategies, based on results from the initial session and dialogue among the team, were compiled into a briefing book and sent to the Roundtable participants in early December.

A second set of Roundtable meetings - four committee meetings - were held January 7 and 8, 2009 in Davis and San Francisco. Forty-eight participants honed and prioritized a set of goals and strategies in three-hour, facilitated dialogues. The dialogues were sophisticated and dynamic.

They provided the Coordinating Team with more input used to craft a set of six draft recommendations, which were made available to the participants in early March by email. Fifteen participants provided written comments on the draft recommendations. The Coordinating Team integrated and honed these comments to create a set of five Final Draft Recommendations.

The final meeting of the Roundtable was held on March 30, in San Francisco. Mayor Newsom, Secretary Kawamura and Deputy Secretary Robert Tse from the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and 34 of 48 roundtable participants attended the meeting. Five panels composed of roundtable participants presented the final draft recommendations to the Mayor. The Mayor responded to the draft document with enthusiasm and commitment to pursue implementation of the recommendations. A Roundtable dialog rendered both refinements to the recommendations and commitments to support the Mayor and City in its efforts to implement the recommendations over the next 18 months. Following are the final recommendations from the San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable to Mayor Newsom and the City of San Francisco.

Recommendation 1

Institutionalize Food System Policy and Planning

The San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable recommends that Mayor Newsom develop a citywide Food System Policy that is integrated into the City and County Charter, General Plan, other relevant planning documents, and municipal code.

San Francisco's Food System Policy will provide the framework for improving food security, public health, the economy and the environment by creating accessible and sustainable food systems for all residents. The San Francisco Food System Policy would be incorporated into specific elements of City and County General Plan including the Commerce and Industry, Environmental Protection, Recreation and Open Space, Urban Design, Transportation, and Community Safety elements. The General Plan is critical to food policy implementation because subordinate plans, projects, and planning policies must conform to the General Plan. The Food System policy would then need to be considered by all officers, boards, commissions, and departments when conducting City and County affairs.

The following goals provide the framework for the City and County's Food System Policy. The bullets under each goal provide possible actions.

1) Hunger and Food Security

Goal: Eliminate hunger and ensure access to healthy and nutritious food for all residents, regardless of economic means through prioritizing and coordinating policies, funding, and programs that reduce food insecurity.

- Ensure all City agencies prioritize nutrition through adequate funding and staffing.
- Improve access to food stamps and all federal nutrition programs through web-based and community-based outreach and enrollment.
- Support creation of a home-delivered grocery program for seniors with limited mobility.
- Request the State to support a pilot in San Francisco that would allow eligible SSI recipients to receive food stamps.
- Create City Staff position that would provide integration and coordination of all food system activity by city departments and agencies and community-based organizations
- Create grants, low interest loans, tax and zoning incentives, and rules for redevelopment funds that will ensure healthy, regional and sustainable food retail options are available in neighborhoods that lack access to healthy food.
- Promote use of EBT and WIC coupons at farmers markets and retail that offer healthy, regional and sustainable food.
- Restrict fast food outlets in City zones targeted for nutrition improvement.
- Improve public transportation that increases access to food shopping, especially in low-income communities.
- Seek USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program money to do outreach to low-income communities to increase utilization of EBT and WIC coupons at the markets
- Promote creation and use of a universal electronic card that will include funds from Food Stamp, WIC, SSI for use in food retails including farmers markets

- Form Youth Food Corps

2) **Environment**

Goal: Reduce the environmental impacts associated with food production, distribution, consumption, and disposal by increasing our reliance on regional and sustainable food resources.

- Support farmers markets on City-owned land by establishing consistent City rules related to permitting, fees, and oversight; and ensure adequate and affordable parking for farmers.
- Establish criteria that defines what is meant by “healthy, regional and sustainable food”
- Create incentives for public institutions and vendors on public land to serve healthy, regional and sustainable food.
- Coordinate with other cities, counties, State and federal government and other sectors on nutrition and food system issues.
- Assist in assessing solid waste streams at different points of the community’s food system (production, wholesale, retail, consumer, etc.) and consider ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle wastes.
- Support strategies to increase the adoption of water and soil conservation practices in agriculture.

3) **Urban Agriculture**

Goal: Support urban agriculture through zoning controls; the creation and maintenance of community, rooftop, schoolyard, and kitchen gardens; and horticulture education.

- Set goals and objectives for urban design that maximizes urban food production including animal husbandry.
- Maintain inventory of available in-city and external lands owned by the City and County that can be used for food production, including model roof-top garden projects.
- Create materials depot where residents can access compost, seeds, and tools.
- Expand use of EPA funds for brown field clean up to create community gardens and food processing sites.
- Develop an urban agriculture right to farm ordinance
- Review urban agriculture water pricing
- Create incentives for including rooftop gardens, rabbit and poultry production as part of green building construction.

4) **Economic Development**

Goal: Promote locally owned food businesses and encourage all food system stakeholders to engage in fair labor and environmentally sound practices.

- Promote neighborhood-based food production, processing, warehousing, distribution, and marketing.
- Prioritize development and support of innovative and robust distribution channels, including renovation and/or expansion of the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market.
- Support training and employment of low-income residents to work in food production.

5) **Education**

Goal: Educate food system stakeholders and the general public on proper nutrition and

regional, sustainable food system.

- Organize City Youth summit to engage young people in food system advocacy and action, including campaign to increase funding to the Child Nutrition Act for school food
- Create a public-private partnership to promote San Francisco's restaurants as source of high quality regional food and sustainable practices.
- Promote healthy, regional, and sustainable food, farmers markets, and urban gardens in City and County materials, websites, and media buys.
- Maintain and make available through the City's website, a database of businesses, community groups, and foundations, committed to promotion of healthy, regional and sustainable food.
- Engage Kaiser and other healthcare foundations to increase funding for media messages in the City that increase food literacy

Rationale

Obesity and other diet related diseases, the deepening economic crisis, exacerbated by drought, will make hunger, food insecurity, and unequal access to healthy food significant drivers of public policy. Data indicates that the level of food insecurity is increasing rapidly in San Francisco. More than 150,000 people in San Francisco live at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level and are in need of food. There is a rising demand for food pantries with almost 70,000 households served by the Food Bank each month. Ensuring that no resident goes hungry is essential to creating an equitable and sustainable food system in San Francisco.

Combating food insecurity and food related illness is inextricably linked to maintenance of the City and the region's capacity to produce healthy food. Loss of arable land and soil, contamination of water and air, and the rise of invasive species are degrading the region's food production capacity. Therefore, it is in the City's best interest over the long-term to insure that the resource base (sufficient land, healthy soil, clean water and air) are maintained, and where possible, enhanced.

San Francisco has long sought to improve the urban and regional food system. Since 1996, over a dozen food policies and food related task forces have been created, but implementation of these recommendations has been lacking due to a lack of prioritization and coordination, and because policies have not been integrated into the City Charter, General Plan, and municipal code.

Meaningful change results from long term and institutionalized commitment from government, and coordination across public and private organizations. Currently the City's Food Security Task Force is developing recommendations for a framework to sustain increased collaboration between the City and the larger community around food insecurity, hunger and other food system issues. If the Mayor imbeds the aforementioned goals in the City's guiding documents and advocates for the actions listed, the Food Security Task Force will be well positioned to ensure that there is ongoing coordination, research, advocacy and accountability for the City's Food System Policy.

City's Role

The Mayor will form a work group to finalize a Food System Policy. The workgroup will be comprised of experts in hunger/food insecurity, nutrition, planning, distribution, regional and

urban agriculture and recycling. The Mayor's Office will coordinate the legislative work necessary to introduce the Food System Policy into the General Plan and other appropriate policy and planning documents.

Next Steps

Within 60 Days

- Brief City department heads on prioritization of food policy development
- PUC will inventory city lands to identify where food production is possible
- Review of City and County redevelopment and economic development and job creation investments to assess whether food production and distribution are being emphasized
- Review of food related regulations in health, police, fire, planning to see where regulations impede rapid development of food business start-up in preparation of drafting a BAIN Amendment to City Code
- The Mayor's Office will roll out the food system policy to implementing departments.
- The Mayor will send a copy of the Roundtable recommendations and a letter to all Bay Area Mayors and County Board of Supervisors.
- The Mayor will introduce local food purchasing ordinance

Within Year

- The Mayor's Office and city departments will write the legislation to integrate food system goals into City Code and General Plan.

Ongoing

- The City will support the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force around ongoing coordination for Food System Policy.

Workgroup of government agencies and NGO's that will implement actions

Wade Crowfoot, Office of the Mayor (Co-Lead)

Paula Jones, Department of Public Health, City of San Francisco (Co-Lead)

Leo O'Farrell, Human Service Agency, City of San Francisco

Michael Janis, San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market

Bu Nygrens, Veritable Vegetable

Bettina Ring, Bay Area Open Space Council

Carla Schultheis, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Deborah Sellers, Sellers Market

Dan Shuman, Project Open Hand, Tenderloin Food Purchasing Coop

Diana Sokolov, Planning Department, City of San Francisco

Natasha Tuck, Presidio School of Management

Recommendation 2

Reinvest in San Francisco's School Meals Program

The San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable recommends that Mayor Newsom partner with the Superintendent of San Francisco Unified School District to launch an initiative to continue to increase the quality of school meals in SFUSD.

The Mayor and Superintendent would call on administrators, local businesses, philanthropies and community residents to devise a prioritized action plan that will enable SFUSD to align their food service operation with the District's stated principles around public health, nutrition, and environmental sustainability. Following these principles, a revitalized school meal and nutrition program will be popular among students, and will be a model sustainable food service operation including local green jobs, local and sustainable food procurement, seasonal menus, composting and recycling, energy efficient kitchen and storage facilities, as well as energy efficient transportation and logistics. The model would connect school lunch to the educational environment, including garden-based learning, post consumer waste recycling and field trips to local farms.

The plan must include 1) advocacy for increases in federal and state reimbursement rates and federal funding (including possibly stimulus money) for kitchen equipment and other capital investments; 2) determination of additional costs of programs that will provide locally sourced and prepared food, i.e. a central kitchen or regional vendors with capacity to supply the district; and 3) determine the means to acquire permanent supplemental funds to maintain high quality school food for both capital improvements and on-going operations through local, state and federal policy changes.

Rationale

San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) Student Nutrition Services (SNS) Department operates the largest public food service program in San Francisco, serving students from all schools and neighborhoods. Each day, SNS provides over 31,000 meals to students in San Francisco through federal meal programs - School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program and the After-School Snack Program. While these facts combine to make SNS one of the most important public food service programs in San Francisco, investment in the operations of SNS has been minimal over the past three decades. With insufficient and/or aging kitchen equipment, rising food, transportation and labor costs, improving the school lunch program requires visionary leadership and a long-term commitment to reinvestment into the cooking infrastructure, and ongoing operations for this critical program.

San Francisco Unified School District no longer has the infrastructure or ability to efficiently prepare food for school meals locally. The district currently purchases pre-made frozen food from a national vendor prepared using labor across the United States (Chicago and Irvine) and food from diverse national and international sources. In spite of the challenges, in 2007-2008, with the financial support from the Mayor's Office and the Department of Children, Youth and their Families, SFUSD has added salad bars to all middle and high schools and some elementary

schools. The salad bars feature fresh produce, much of which is procured from California. This partnership between SFUSD and the Mayor's Office has had a tremendous positive impact on the school meals program, and on the health of SFUSD students.

Although, there have been significant improvements to school meals that have been well received by students, integrating additional changes is challenging, if not impossible due to constrained resources. Additionally relative to locally produced meals, the imported food requires unnecessary packaging and environmentally costly transportation. Conservatively assuming that food sourced to production facilities required equivalent transportation, SFUSD's current meal program costs 5,213,699,362 excess meal-miles than a program based on local production.¹ Preparing these meals in San Francisco would likely reduce transportation costs for food sources and virtually eliminate the environmental effects of the food miles.

City's Role

The Mayor's Office will work with the Superintendent of SFUSD to create a Steering Committee to develop a 10-year vision for the program, guide a planning process, secure funding, and implement the vision for the initiative.

Next Steps

Within 60 Days

- The Mayor and Superintendent will recruit Steering Committee members.
- Investigate and identify funding options for increase in spending

Within Year

- Launch in a planning process to design a system for school meals that is aligned with stated principles and that also meets the fiscal, nutritional, regulatory, and environmental criteria and considers costs, operational needs, local procurement potential, student appeal, and environmental impacts.
- Develop a diversified funding strategy to implement the local production system and fund ongoing operations.

Workgroup of government agencies and NGO's that will implement actions

Rajiv Bhatia, San Francisco Department of Public Health (Co-Lead)

Paula Jones, San Francisco Department of Public Health (Co-Lead)

Paul Ash, San Francisco Food Bank

Melanie Cheng, FarmsReach

By Nygrens, Veritable Vegetable

Leo O'Farrell, Human Services Agency, City of San Francisco

Michael Schuman, Project Open Hand, Tenderloin Food Purchasing Coop

Tom Tomich, UC Davis, Ag Sustainability Institute

Nancy Waymack, San Francisco Unified School District

¹ Assuming half of the 4,083,575 meals served in 2006-2007 were prepared in Chicago, IL and the other half in Irvine, CA.

Recommendation 3

Bay Area Food and Agriculture Policy Alliance

The San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable recommends that the Mayor publically call for a formal alliance among regional leaders from the public and private sector to promote state and federal policies that will aid development of a resilient food and agriculture system.

In response to the Mayor's call to action, a leadership alliance of Bay Area NGOs, cities and counties would join forces around a specific set of policy goals. The goals will address the need for better nutrition, enhanced stewardship and more jobs to be supported by specific objectives as follow:

Better Nutrition

- Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act with enhanced funding for school food and the WIC program.
- Increase in funds for EBT, WIC, Senior Nutrition funds for purchase of fresh produce at farmers markets and other community-based retail.
- New federal, state, and local programs to encourage development of intensive urban agriculture.

Enhanced Stewardship

- Creation of federal funding for stewardship services such as carbon sequestration, ground water recharge, productive use of flood plains, habitat conservation, and fire break management.
- State bond initiative to fund a California Ag Land Stewardship Program that would provide incentives to assist agriculture in efforts to protect and enhance soil, prevent nitrogen pollution of air and water, generate renewable energy, maximize carbon sequestration, and protect species diversity.
- Enhanced funding for the Department of Conservation's Farmland Preservation Program.
- Enhanced funding for exotic pest exclusion.

More Jobs

- State and county incentives (tax, development zones, and economic development grants) for regional food processing, i.e. mobile and/or small scale abattoirs, community kitchens for community canning and food preparation.
- Elimination of regulatory conflicts in California codes that impede small food processing facilities and mobile abattoirs.
- Improvements to the Buy California Campaign that will allow for to identification of California-grown foods by county, appellation and/or farm or ranch provenance.
- Improved farm stand and agri-tourism regulations to provide more consumer access to on-farm purchasing and more producer flexibility in development of on-farm retail sites.
- State funded agri-tourism promotion campaign.

- Use of Federal Farm Bill or stimulus funds to develop permanent, covered sites for farmers markets.

As means to build momentum, the alliance would organize a Bay Area Foodshed Summit to be hosted by the City in early 2010. A Bay Area wide call to action for foodshed development would be declared.

Rationale

Creating a more regionally oriented, sustainable food system will require the active support, of not only local institutions, but also the federal and state governments through creative policies and investments. Opportunity abounds to spawn policy change. At the federal level, the President, First Lady, and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack have announced a need to update agriculture and food policy to support enhanced nutrition, sustainability and food access. At the State level, change is also imminent. The Secretary of the Department of Food and Agriculture, AG Kawamura, has initiated the Ag Vision process to ensure State policy will allow California agriculture to thrive in the 21st Century. Two recent State laws, SB 732 and SB 375, could provide state support for sustainable regional planning, including foodshed identification and create a pathway to eventual State funding for farm and ranch stewardship work. The Senate Committee on Food and Agriculture has declared its intention to update State policies related to food safety, sustainable farming systems, food access, and animal welfare. However, given the economic downturn and complexity of competing issues, maximum public support will be needed to continue raising the food system as a public priority.

Formation of an active and effective alliance will clarify how an improved food system contributes to solutions around the national healthcare crisis, energy, and global climate change. Such an alliance will be beneficial to the City, the rural regions surrounding it, and the state as a whole by improving policies and attracting federal funds, private investment and entrepreneurial energy.

City's Role

Mayor publishes letter or makes public statement calling for a Bay Area alliance and committing his use of the bully pulpit to support the alliance. Mayor will designate a high-level deputy to act as liaison to the Alliance on a continuing basis. Where possible the Mayor will offer support for policies and collaborate on projects that logically involve the City, including hosting the proposed summit.

Next Steps

Within 60 Days

- Mayor advocates to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack for increase of Seniors Farmers Market Coupons to \$5 million
- Mayor defines his policy on Child Nutrition Act reauthorization
- Mayor writes to Speaker Pelosi, US Senators and Bay Area Mayor and County Supervisors requesting support for City's position on Child Nutrition Act reauthorization
- Mayor agrees to participate in a panel on either July 8, 9 or 10 at the Foodshed Summit to be held in Oakland, Panel to include Secretary Vilsack and Secretary Kawamura.

Within Year

- Roots of Change organizes core of alliance members willing to collaboratively develop policy platform and coordinate advocacy work.
- Alliance members draft platform on wide range of issues.
- Alliance provides platform to Mayor to enlist his public support.
- Mayor invites other county and city leaders to participate in joint statement of support for the platform at a late 2009 or early 2010 regional summit.

Workgroup of government agencies and NGO's that will implement actions

Wade Crowfoot, Office of the Mayor (Co-Lead)

Michael Dimock, Roots of Change (Co-Lead)

Larry Bain, Let's be Frank and Food from the Park

Helge Helberg, Marin Organic

Carey Knecht, Greenbelt Alliance

Sibella Kraus, SAGE & Agriculture at the Metropolitan Edge, UC Berkeley

Brian Leahy, CA Department of Conservation

Bettina Ring, Bay Area Open Space Council

Steve Schwartz, CA Farmlink

Deborah Sellers, Sellers Market

Egon Terplan, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research

Edward Thompson, Jr., American Farmland Trust

Recommendation 4

Bay Area Agricultural Resources Sustainability Strategy

The San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable recommends that Mayor Newsom promote and support the design of a comprehensive strategy for conserving and developing the full sustainable food production potential of agricultural lands in the region.

Nonprofit organizations, working with local planning agencies, the agriculture community and other stakeholders, will design and implement a plan to realize the full potential of remaining farmlands in the 16-county greater Bay Area² to grow sustainably-produced food specifically for local markets. This will include inventorying local farmland, identifying the most promising opportunities for existing and new farmers to convert it to value-added local food production, and finding the financial and other resources necessary to drive such a transformation.

The plan will be designed within two years with the goal of full implementation within a decade. Its anticipated outcomes include:

² Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Sacramento, San Benito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, and Yolo

- Increased economic opportunity and viability for local farmers and ranchers, including new entry farmers and ranchers.
- Greater access to fresh, healthy local food for residents of San Francisco and the Bay Area.
- Preservation of the region’s remaining farmlands.
- Improved environmental quality from more sustainable farming practices and a reduction in long-distance food transport.
- A closer, tangible connection between urban residents of San Francisco and the Bay Area and their rural “foodshed.”

Rationale

As the demand for locally-grown, sustainably-produced food expands – in part because of the other efforts recommended here – it will become increasingly important to conserve agricultural lands in the Bay Area and surrounding communities, and to fully develop their long-term potential to supply the region with the food it needs. Agricultural land within the San Francisco “foodshed” is being rapidly developed for urban uses.* The encroachment of development affects the land that still remains in food production by setting the stage for land use conflicts that increase the risk and cost of farming and ranching. This, in turn, causes disinvestment in agriculture that could eventually lead to the demise of the industry. This trend can be reversed if local plans, policies and program investments discourage urban sprawl and promote farmland preservation. At the same time, agriculture in the region will better be able to withstand urban development pressure if it can take full advantage of the huge buying power of the Bay Area, particularly by selling food products more directly and adding value to what it sells by making the “story behind the food” part of what it offers consumers.

City’s Role

The Mayor will support the efforts of stakeholders to raise private funds to conduct the agricultural resources sustainability strategy process. The Mayor will assign staff to participate in the design of the strategy.

Next Steps

Within 60 Days

- Greenbelt Alliance, American Farmland Trust and Sustainable Agriculture Education (as “lead nonprofits”) will raise the funds to support the agricultural resources sustainability strategy from local, regional and national foundations and agencies.

Within Year

- The lead nonprofits will work with planning agencies and others to conduct an inventory and analysis of agricultural land resources in the Bay Area and surrounding communities (including lands owned by the City and other public agencies), their potential to produce a wide variety of food commodities for local consumers, and opportunities for and obstacles to realizing this potential.

* See, *Think Globally, Eat Locally: San Francisco Foodshed Assessment*, American Farmland Trust, Sustainable Agriculture Education and Agriculture in Metropolitan Regions, August 2008, <http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/ca/Feature%20Stories/San-Francisco-Foodshed-Report.asp>

- The lead nonprofits will engage the regional agriculture community, agricultural agencies and individual farmers and ranchers in a dialogue about what will be needed to transform the region’s farmlands into sources of sustainably-produced locally-marketed food.
- The lead nonprofits will analyze local, state and federal policies, programs and investments to determine the extent to which they do or could support the implementation of an agricultural resource sustainability strategy, and recommend approaches that could be taken to harness this support.
- The lead nonprofits will convene one or more regional workshops or conferences at which to present the information they have collected and analyzed to a wide range of stakeholders. The stakeholders will propose and debate specific strategies that can be assembled into a regional agricultural conservation and development plan designed to achieve the project’s objectives.

Workgroup of government agencies and NGO’s that will implement actions

Edward Thompson, Jr., American Farmland Trust (Co-Lead)
 Carey Knecht, Greenbelt Alliance (Co-Lead)
 Sibella Kraus, SAGE & Agriculture at the Metropolitan Edge, UC Berkeley (Co-Lead)
 Helge Helberg, Marin Organic
 Jeanna Hultquist, US Ag Bank
 Brian Leahy, CA Department of Conservation
 Andrea Mackenzie, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
 Bettina Ring, Bay Area Open Space Council
 David Shabazian, Sacramento County Council of Governments
 Egon Terplan, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research

Recommendation 5

California Agricultural Buyers Rural Trade Mission

The San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable recommends that the Mayor partner with the California Secretary of Food and Agriculture to arrange a rural trade mission for city-based purchasers of California agriculture products to visit food producers within the City of San Francisco’s identified foodshed.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) regularly facilitates formal trade missions to foreign markets to promote exports of California grown products. These trade missions enable growers to promote the advantages of their product and to expand their markets. In this case a reverse trade mission, composed of key City food buyers, will travel to destinations within the City of San Francisco’s natural foodshed – connecting buyers with suppliers of California grown food products.

Since a significant percentage of the food consumed in California is imported from abroad, there would appear to be a significant untapped market for locally-grown agricultural products within

California’s urban areas, including San Francisco. A California Agricultural Buyers Rural Trade Mission to local foodshed production regions will provide a novel, high-profile opportunity to increase “trade” between California’s food producers and San Francisco’s retailers, hotels, restaurants and city institutions.

City’s Role

- The Mayor commits City staff to work with CDFA, Agricultural Commissioners, and local buyers to plan and conduct the trade mission.
- The Mayor officially promotes, hosts and participates in the trade mission.

Next Steps

Within 60 Days

- The City and partners apply for a Specialty Crop Block Grant to promote and finance the trade mission.

Within Year

- The Mayor asks the Secretary of Food and Agriculture to enter into an agreement to conduct a California Agricultural Buyers Rural Trade Mission to regions of City of San Francisco’s natural foodshed.
- The City and CDFA engage a variety of local and regional agricultural associations to determine site visit locations.
- The City works with the chambers of commerce, hotel and restaurant associations and retail groups to recruit City of San Francisco buyers to participate in the trade mission to regional foodshed destinations.
- The Mayor and Secretary officially host the trade mission.

Workgroup of government agencies and NGO’s that will implement actions

Holly King, Great Valley Center (Co-Lead)

Bu Nygrens, Veritable Vegetable (Co-Lead)

Robert Tse, CA Department of Food and Agriculture (Co-Lead)

Melanie Cheng, FarmReach

Helge Helberg, Marin Organic

Jeanna Hultquist, US Ag Bank

Michael Janis, San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market

Kathryn Lyddan, Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust

Miguel Monroy, Agricultural Commissioner, County of San Francisco

Dave Stockdale, CUESA

Edward Thompson, Jr., American Farmland Trust

Addendum

Citywide Mega CSA Project

Although the participants did not agree that the concept was ready for action on the part of the City or the Mayor, the idea of creating a **citywide, mega CSA (Community supported Agriculture)** project was widely discussed.

Several regional farms and city-based food purveyors of cheese, meats, baked goods would supply the food. The CSA's startup costs would be funded with "patient capital" loans from local financial institutions. The CSA would seek to provide subsidized boxes to low-income residents, particularly low-income seniors. Low-income subscribers (individuals or community groups) could pay for the boxes with cash, EBT cards or WIC Coupons.

An action team comprised of 2008 Roots of Change Fellows is slated to undertake a feasibility study to determine the viability of a city-based CSA targeting residents of all incomes. Results will be made available to the Department of Public Health and the Office of the Mayor.

The study will, among other issues, determine:

- Current CSA demand/ supply in San Francisco
- Average market price of a weekly CSA box
- Target price for low income and estimated amount needed for cross subsidy
- Willingness of consumers to pay cross subsidy
- Funder interest
- Reductions in energy and transportation
- Improvements in health and nutrition

Rationale

The CSA concept, in which a purchaser enters into direct economic relationship to a farmer through a subscription, is one of the best manifestations of urban-rural interdependence. The farmer maximizes financial return and builds customer loyalty that can last for years through good and bad business and weather cycles. The subscriber or consumer knows the source of their food, trusts in its quality, increases their consumption of fresh produce, and learns through weekly in-box communication about cooking, nutrition, and the realities of farming.

Several CSA farms are over subscribed by 50% to 100% in the Bay Area. Demand outstrips supply and farmers are seeking a way to increase capacity to deliver through partnerships with private and public entities. The largest CSA operation in the world is 50,000 boxes and the largest in Northern California is 1,000 boxes.

A recent Community Needs Assessment and Report from the Department of Aging and Adult Services, City of San Francisco, states that the California Health Interview Survey found that 23,300 seniors are food insecure in the City. Federal and state programs to service the aging poor need augmentation. Seniors are more likely to cook than younger low-income people and CSA boxes can easily fit their needs.

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Healthy Food Access Committee

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Roots of Change Stewardship Council

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George Work, Rancher, Work Ranch LLC, San Miguel

Lawrence Yee, Emeritus, UC Cooperative Extension and Co-founder, Association of Family Farms, Ojai

For Information about this project or any of the partner organizations that participated in the San Francisco Urban-Rural Roundtable, please visit

www.rootsofchange.org

www.rocfund.org/projects/

www.aginnovations.org

www.dph.sf.ca.us/

www.farmland.org

www.letsbefrankdogs.com

www.phlaw.org

www.sagecenter.org

