

# LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM PLAN 2023 - 2027

CITY OF  
**LINCOLN**  
NEBRASKA



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# Executive Summary

In recent years, Lincoln has undertaken several bold steps to secure its future as a thriving and resilient community. The creation of the West Haymarket area and Pinnacle Bank Arena, the addition of thousands of new housing units, the development of a strategic plan to resettle immigrants and refugees, the completion of the N Street bike trail, and efforts to protect tallgrass prairies and unique salt marshes are just a few examples. In a few years, Lincoln residents will also enjoy a downtown music district and a new destination park in the South Haymarket. Another feature that can be added to the tapestry of a growing and vibrant Lincoln is an expanded local food system.

A thriving local food system will benefit Lincoln in a number of ways. Many studies show that the local production and consumption of fruits and vegetables creates more economic activity in an area than food shipped in from a non-local source. Local food production and distribution plays an important role in sparking an entrepreneurial culture. Small family farms can benefit from access to expanded markets, creating more jobs, more opportunities for young people, and more economic activity. Many cities enjoy a sense of pride at the food that is produced by and for their local communities.

A thriving local food system can also improve Lincoln's food security. Growing food locally will help insulate Lincoln residents from shocks to the global food supply chain that may occur from extreme weather events. Expanded local food availability can also improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations who may not currently have access to fresh produce in their neighborhood markets. And finally, a local food system can help to protect the environment. By reducing the need for long-distance transportation, local food can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

Enhancing our local food system does not mean we should aim to rely solely on food grown in Lincoln or Lancaster County. We will continue to rely on the global food system for many needs, but enhancing our local food production will make us less dependent on it, more self-reliant, and more resilient. The goal of developing a local food system plan is to strengthen the local food system and continue to support the farmers and producers who sell to the Lincoln market already and/or foster those who will do so in the future - thus helping the local economy by creating new jobs and keeping our "food dollars" circulating in our community. It's all about striking a good balance.

## Priority Goals and Actions

### Goal 1: Increase and Ensure Access to Healthy Food for All

- **1.1.8.** Explore economic development incentives to attract grocery stores to neighborhoods lacking access to fresh food.
- **1.1.10.** Encourage local institutions that serve meals to source local food.
- **1.3.2.** Create more community gardens, ensuring they are distributed equitably throughout Lincoln and in areas of highest need, and ensure they are easily accessible by public transportation, bike, and/or foot.
- **1.3.4.** Promote home gardening, including container gardening.
- **1.3.10.** Encourage community gardeners, home gardeners, and farmers' market vendors to partner with the Food Bank of Lincoln, food pantries, and meal distribution programs to donate fresh produce.
- **1.4.1.** Support farm-to-school efforts in K-12 schools such as agriculture and nutrition education in classrooms, school gardens, and outdoor classrooms.
- **1.4.6** Establish a directory of locations where fresh fruits and vegetables can be donated.

### Goal 2: Invest in a Thriving Local Food and Farm Community to Increase Local Food Production and Food Security

- **2.1.1.** Assist institutional purchasers (UNL, schools, hospitals, etc.) to adopt local food purchasing percentage targets and create a model policy for the preferential purchasing of local food by public and private institutions.
- **2.1.3.** Continue to promote public-private partnerships that build stronger food networks and advance urban agriculture.
- **2.1.4.** Consider economic development programs to support small food and farm businesses, including a low-interest revolving loan fund. Ensure that these programs are accessible to ethnic/minority food businesses and farms.
- **2.1.5.** Seek out grant opportunities from state, federal and philanthropic organizations to assist with and support feasibility studies, and capital and operating expenses, as appropriate, for a food hub/commercial kitchen.
- **2.1.6.** Consider incentives for grocers/restaurants/institutions to buy locally sourced food.
- **2.2.3.** Explore expanding leasing access to suitable city-owned properties for commercial growing purposes after proper environmental assessment.
- **2.2.4.** Approach other governmental subdivisions (Lincoln Airport Authority, Lancaster County Board, Lincoln Public Schools, Lower Platte South NRD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln) about designating undeveloped properties with good quality soils for commercial food production.

## **Goal 2 (continued):**

- **2.2.8.** Encourage extension of growing season through the use of hoop houses/high tunnels, green houses, etc.
- **2.2.11.** Encourage more farmers' markets to be open year-round by investing in infrastructure improvements (such as investments in storage for vendors' supplies or a covered structure to protect vendors' goods from inclement weather). These improvements should also be considered for the year-round farmers' markets.
- **2.3.1.** Collaborate with local and regional producers in Lancaster County as well as neighboring counties to assess their local food aggregation, processing, and distribution needs.
- **2.3.3.** Conduct a market analysis for food hubs that could aggregate, process, and efficiently distribute locally grown food across the region, helping producers access larger markets.
- **2.4.1.** Revisit the 2019 feasibility report "Developing a Kitchen Incubator for Lincoln, Nebraska" to determine sufficient interest in commercial kitchens that would serve as business incubation space for food system entrepreneurs and community organizations. Partner with Lincoln Public Schools, Southeast Community College and other institutions to develop an action plan.
- **2.5.2.** Conduct a coordinated promotional campaign to encourage Lincoln residents to start growing some of their own food, whether in their own yards or in containers on patios, balconies, or windowsills.
- **2.6.4.** Conduct periodic farm and food business tours with residents, local officials, and economic development leaders.
- **2.6.9.** Educate community members about the benefits of locally sourced food.

## **Goal 3: Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air**

- **3.1.1.** Continue to administer City of Lincoln farm management contracts to require sustainable, regenerative agriculture practices to increase crop yield, lower production costs, and sequester carbon.
- **3.2.1.** Partner with local organizations to encourage the development of workshops and career academies that provide training and assistance to home/market gardeners, beginning farmers, and experienced growers.
- **3.3.1.** Encourage the use of native plantings, cover crops, mulch, and ground cover for erosion and runoff prevention.
- **3.4.4.** Promote conservation tillage or no-till gardening alongside any other management practices that aid in carbon sequestration, increasing water infiltration, holding capacity, and stormwater mitigation.

## Goal 4: Reduce Food Waste

- **4.1.3.** Compile information on existing food recovery, gleaning, and composting programs in Lincoln and Lancaster County and encourage all agencies with points of contact in the food system to cross-promote food recovery efforts.
- **4.1.5.** Support the coordination of pantries and emergency food providers to improve recovery of safe, healthy food from area retail food outlets.
- **4.2.1.** Evaluate opportunities for food waste diversion into composting or other beneficial uses.

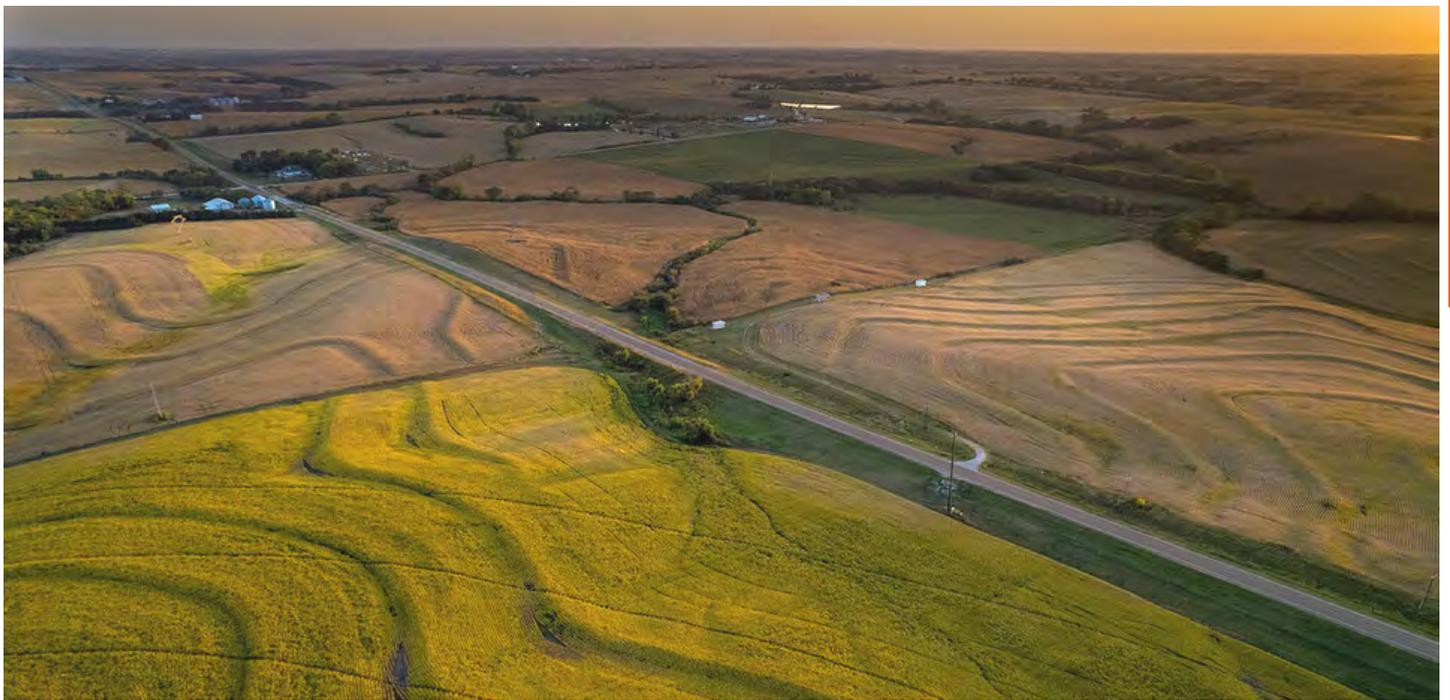
## Key Metrics

The following key metrics have been established to help guide progress in achieving the plan's goals.

1. Double the number of acres in Lancaster County that are growing edible food by 2035. (From a 2017 baseline of 341.)
2. Triple the number of institutions who are sourcing local food by 2035. (From a 2023 baseline of 6.)
3. Triple the number of community gardens in Lancaster County by 2035. (From a 2023 baseline of 13.)
4. Reduce by half the number of census tracts that have low or very low healthy food access by 2035. (From a 2023 baseline of 20.)

# Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that a food system starts with the land, and that sustainable stewardship of that land is the basis for food production and the well-being of those who live on it. We acknowledge that the City of Lincoln is located on lands that are the past, present, and future homelands of the Ponca, Omaha, Dakota and Otoe Peoples. Our goal is to be respectful custodians of these traditional lands, learn from the past, be mindful of what we do in the present, and work toward a sustainable future for those who come after us.



# Steering Committee Members of the Community Committee on Local Food

**Grant Daily** - Vice President, Friends of Community Crops and Hawley Hamlet Gardener

**Nash Leef** - City of Lincoln; Salt Slope Farmers' Cooperative

**Chef Nazim Khan** - Bryan Health

**Megan McGuffey** (Co-Chair) - Community Crops Program, Family Service Lincoln

**Kim Morrow** - City of Lincoln

**Andrew Thierolf** - City of Lincoln Planning Department

**Tim Rinne** (Co-Chair) - Hawley Hamlet Neighborhood Garden

**Frank Uhlarik** - City of Lincoln

**Hope Voss** - Community Member

**Tammy Ward** - City of Lincoln Councilwoman

## Consultants

Sabine Martin, Ph.D. - CTOR Solutions, LLC

Megan McGuffey, Ph.D. - Community Crops Program, Family Service Lincoln

Harris Byers, Ph.D. - Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

## Brownfields Redevelopment

A brownfield is a property that contains or could contain a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant, which cannot be properly redeveloped until such contaminants are removed. Funding for the development of this Food System Plan was provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through a Multipurpose Brownfields Grant to the City of Lincoln (cooperative agreement # BF - 97786901). The content of this document does not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the EPA.

The inspiration and opportunities afforded by EPA's Brownfields Program have formed the foundation for many goals and initiatives laid out in this plan. Promotion of infill, bringing underutilized vacant properties into productive use, and the pursuit of positive health outcomes align well with EPA's Brownfields program and the core tenets of this plan. As part of the grant, several brownfield sites in Lincoln are being evaluated for remediation and opportunities for potential food-related reuse.

# Process

In early 2022, Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird authorized the formation of a “Community Committee on Local Food” (CCOLF) to oversee development of a local food plan. The CCOLF was launched by City Council Chairwoman Tammy Ward at the Bethany Park Shelter on June 18, 2022. At this meeting, City staff announced the availability of an EPA Brownfields grant to support development of the plan, and participants from diverse links in the food chain contributed their thoughts to the scope and content of a local food plan.

Beginning in October 2022, several meetings with Lincoln residents were held and surveys were conducted. An initial public meeting was held at Lincoln High School on October 22nd, followed by focus group discussions with local producers and food-insecure residents. Electronic and paper surveys in English and Spanish were used to gather input from Lincoln residents in general, and specifically from food-insecure populations, grocers, and producers. Interviews with University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL), Nebraska Wesleyan University/Sodexo, and Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) representatives were conducted as each of these institutions are a big part of the food landscape in Lincoln.



All in all, 778 people shared their opinion on what food-related goals Lincoln should pursue, what food-related issues exist in Lincoln and how they could be addressed, and what their individual habits are as consumers of food.

Based on input received during community meetings and peer community food system plans, six potential food-related community goals were presented in the food system assessment survey:

1. Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security
2. Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all
3. Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air
4. Increase opportunities for food and agricultural education (cooking, gardening, composting, food safety)
5. Reduce food waste
6. Recognize and celebrate our community's diverse food cultures

Of these goals, four emerged as priorities among community members participating in surveys and focus group discussions:

1. Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security
2. Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all
3. Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air
4. Reduce food waste

Through discussions with stakeholders and further research, suggested action steps were identified to accomplish these goals.



# 1. Introduction

There are many benefits to having a thriving local food system. For consumers, local food is often fresher, tastier, and more nutritious than food that has been shipped long distances. Residents who grow their own food will have increased food security when shocks to the global food supply chain occur due to extreme weather events and other socio-political challenges. Residents also enjoy recreational and social benefits of engaging in a local food system.

For farmers, a robust local food system offers a more stable market for their products and growth opportunities for their businesses. The success of their efforts contributes to expanded economic development for the entire region. Local food systems can also help to preserve agricultural diversity, as farmers are able to specialize in crops and livestock that are well-suited to their local climate and soil conditions.

For the environment, a thriving local food system reduces the need for long-distance food transportation. This helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to protect air and water quality. Local food systems also promote sustainable agricultural practices, such as crop rotation and cover cropping, which help to improve soil health and reduce soil erosion.

For public health, a thriving local food system provides residents with access to fresh, healthy food. This can help to reduce obesity, heart disease, and other chronic diseases. Local food systems can also help to educate consumers about the importance of eating a healthy diet.

Enhancing our local food system does not mean we should aim to rely solely on food grown in Lincoln or Lancaster County. We will continue to rely on the global food system for many needs, but enhancing our local food production will make us less dependent on it, more self-reliant, and more resilient. The goal of developing a local food system plan is to strengthen the local food system and continue to support the farmers and producers who sell to the Lincoln market already and/or foster those who will do so in the future - thus helping the local economy by creating new jobs and keeping our “food dollars” at work in our community. It’s all about striking a good balance.

## 2. Nexus with other Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Documents

Lincoln's 2021-2027 Climate Action Plan, adopted in 2021, identifies "Building a Resilient Local Food System" as one of eight action areas to make Lincoln more resilient in the face of climate change.

The Lincoln-Lancaster 2050 County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2021, is a roadmap to envision "a community that is livable, equitable, thriving, resilient, and innovative". The importance of local food production, the preservation of land for local food production, in the urban core as well as the surrounding county, and the promotion of urban gardens throughout the community "with focus on neighborhoods that lack convenient access to fresh foods" are mentioned explicitly in the plan. The plan also states that "Equity is a desired focus for guiding transportation planning and decisions; access to a transit system and safe streets that accommodate all modes is important for underserved and overburdened communities."

The goal of Lincoln's Long Range Transportation Plan, adopted in 2021, "is to provide transportation and mobility benefits to all community members, especially the underserved and overburdened communities; therefore, the LRTP goes beyond the minimum environmental justice (EJ) requirements to identify and address disparities in the transportation system."

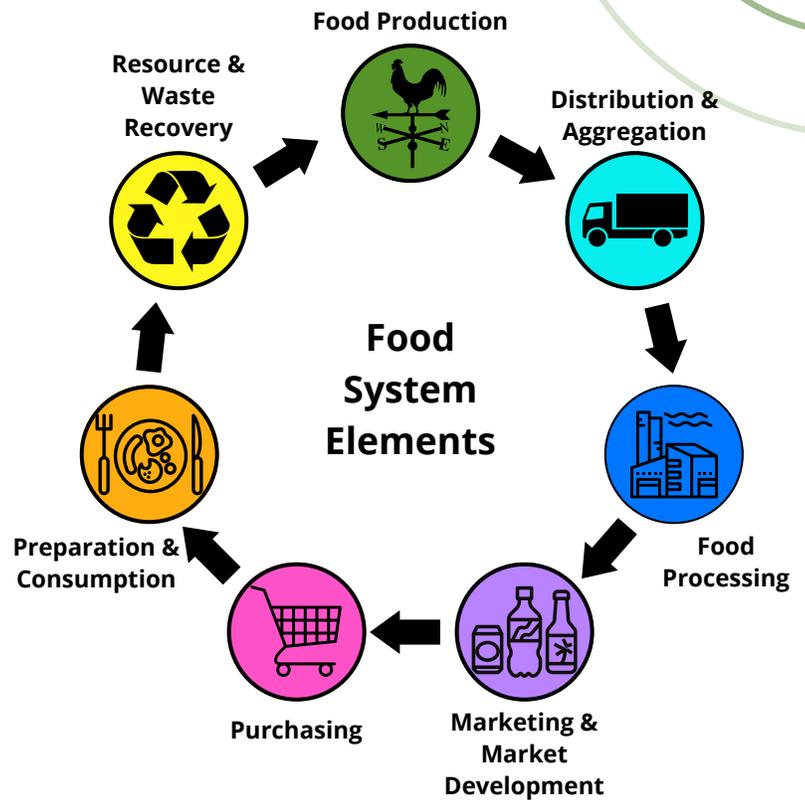
The 2022 Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Community Health Improvement Plan includes the increase of availability and consumption of healthy foods as a working goal to reduce chronic disease in the community.

Lincoln's Greenprint Challenge, Prairie Corridor Master Plan, Nine Mile Prairie Environs Master Plan, and other subarea plans envision careful land use planning to protect natural resources while identifying areas compatible with an expanding need for local food production.



# 3. What is the Food System?

The food system is a complex system of actions revolving around the production, processing, transport, and consumption of food – basically following the path of food from production to your table. It includes farmers, processors, distributors, retailers, and all of us as consumers. Governance and economics of food production, food waste, and the sustainability of the food system reflect the environment – including factors such as climate, soil fertility, and water and land access – and play a big role.



*Adapted from Christy Shi, from Cornell University, Discovering the Food System; A Primer on Community Food Systems: Linking Food, Nutrition and Agriculture.*

**“A sustainable food system is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that:**

- **It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability);**
- **It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and**
- **It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability).”**

(Food and Agriculture Administration of the United Nations, FAO)

Availability of affordable and healthy food combats hunger and chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, and contributes to community health. Evaluating farming practices to protect the environment, addressing food waste, and looking at how we process and transport food are important factors in creating a resilient food system that is “food secure.”

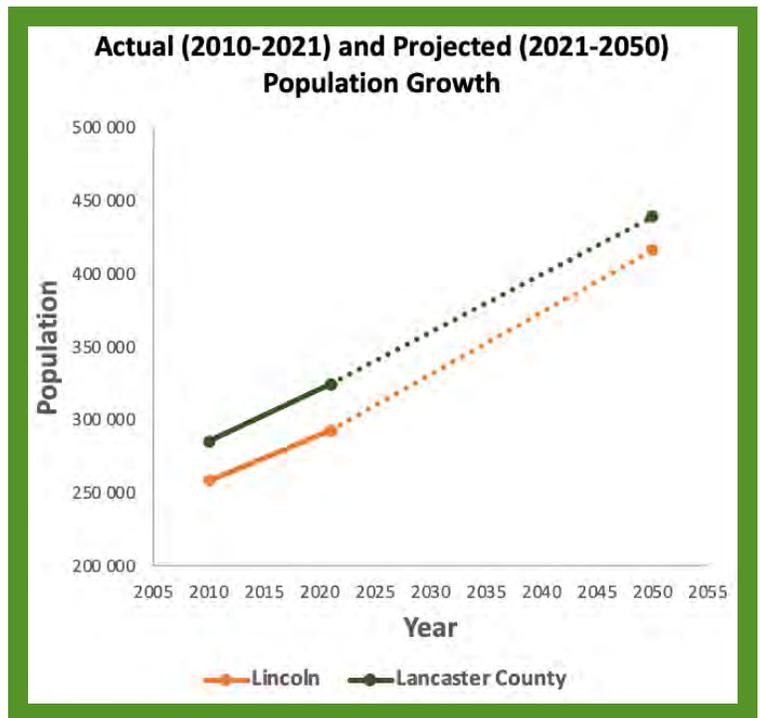
# 4. What is “Food Insecurity”?

It can be helpful to think about food security on two levels:

individual/household food security and community food security.

The first and most common understanding of the term refers to an individual household’s access to sufficient food to provide for its members’ daily nutritional needs. If an individual or family is food insecure, they might not know where their next meal is coming from, may have to make difficult tradeoffs in the amount and quality of the foods they eat due to limited access or financial resources, or may otherwise struggle to have an adequate supply of nutritious food to live a healthy and productive life. Addressing household/individual food security is an important part of eradicating hunger and ensuring everyone has the nutritious, culturally appropriate foods they need to thrive.

**The Lancaster County Populations Projections report<sup>1</sup> projects a 55.1% population increase from 2010 to 2050, based on available Census data (Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept. 2020).**



The second meaning of food security, however, speaks to the more general issue of our food supply. Community food security asks whether at any given moment we have sufficient food to meet the dietary demands of our growing urban population for the indefinite future.

Since the end of World War II, Lincoln and Lancaster County have become progressively integrated into a global economy and a global food system. In stark contrast to people living before 1950, 90%<sup>2</sup> of the food Lincolniters now eat is imported from outside the state. With the average American eating an average of 1,996 pounds of food/year or 5.5 pounds of food/day<sup>3</sup>, our capital city's nearly 300,000 inhabitants consume 1.6 million pounds of food each day, 365 days a year – almost all of which must be shipped in. In addition, under the transportation industry's nationwide “just in time delivery” distribution policy, local grocery stores and restaurants stock just three-days-worth of inventory.

Agricultural powerhouse that it is, for generations Nebraska has billed itself as a “breadbasket” of the world. Today, though, our state produces very little in the way of edible food for its citizens. The vast majority of our agri-business crop sector is dedicated to the production of livestock feed and fuel for motor vehicles – not food. Like Americans everywhere, Nebraskans are reliant on the global food system to keep themselves fed.

As the distribution bottlenecks and supply shortages of the COVID pandemic so graphically demonstrated, however, our dependence on food grown out-of-state and outside the U.S. to supply our daily dietary needs – where the average bite of food we eat travels 1,346 miles to get to our plate<sup>4</sup> – is risky. And the risk is growing. Between the hotter and drier conditions and more extreme weather associated with climate change, and geo-political conflicts like the war in the major food-producing nation of Ukraine, our ability to grow food and the stability of the global food supply is becoming ever more uncertain.



By re-localizing a portion of our food supply, our community can become more resilient. If our outside food supply is disrupted, growing more of our own food locally means we will be better able to respond to supply chain disruptions and keep a steady supply of the healthy, nutritious food our community needs to thrive. Other benefits include growing our local economies by recapturing some of the food dollars we are currently sending out of state.

# 5. What is a Food System Plan?

The goal of food systems planning is to improve a community's food system. A food system plan outlines a set of interconnected, forward-thinking activities that strengthen a community's food system through the creation and implementation of plans and policies.

Food system planning overlaps with other planning efforts communities perform on a regular basis: land use, infrastructure, water demand, and transportation. As such, food system planning can be integrated in already existing planning structures by applying a "food lens."

The goal of a food system plan is to strengthen the security of an existing food system by proposing community actions and policies.

## How "Local" is Local?

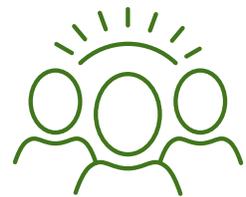
Both the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and the University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) define local as food grown within a 250-mile radius of Lincoln, which includes parts of Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa. In addition, UNL includes the entire State of Nebraska in that definition, as otherwise, the Panhandle could not be considered as local.



# 6. Why develop a Food System Plan?

There are many benefits to developing and executing a food system plan. Some examples are listed below:

- Expand local entrepreneurial opportunities and grow local businesses
- Support local farmers
- Foster a sense of pride in Lincoln's environment and community
- Improve food security
- Improve resilience to extreme weather and other events that may disrupt supply chains
- Improve access to nutritious food
- Reduce food waste
- Expand knowledge of gardening, cooking, and nutrition
- Protect the environment



# 7. Food-Related Community Goals

Based on input received during community meetings and peer community food system plans, six food-related community goals were presented in the food system assessment survey.

1. Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security
2. Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all
3. Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air
4. Increase opportunities for food and agricultural education (cooking, gardening, composting, food safety)
5. Reduce food waste
6. Recognize and celebrate our community's diverse food cultures

**Survey participants were asked to identify their three top priority goals for the community. Three major goals emerged from the survey, receiving over 50% of survey votes:**

## **Goal #1: Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all**

This goal rose to the top in the general community survey; **76.7%** of respondents or 465 respondents identified this goal as the most important one of the six goals presented in the survey. According to survey respondents, equitable access to healthy food is the top goal this food systems plan should address.

## **Goal #2: Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security**

**71.1%** or 431 respondents prioritized this goal, documenting the need for strategic investment to increase the amount of local food available to the community.

### **Goal #3: Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air**

Protection of the environment while growing and producing food is important to survey respondents. **57.3%** or 347 of survey respondents identified this goal as so important that it ranked as #3 among the prioritized goals.

The three remaining goals (listed below) received the following vote percentages:

### **Goal #4: Reduce food waste**

Reducing food waste was prioritized for inclusion into the food systems plan. **42.6%** or 258 of survey respondents felt it was important to do so.

### **Goal #5: Increase opportunities for food and agricultural education (cooking, gardening, composting, food safety)**

**33.8%** or 205 of survey respondents would like to have access to increased opportunities to learn about food-related subjects, such as cooking, gardening, composting and food safety.

### **Goal #6: Recognize and celebrate our community's diverse food cultures**

**29.4%** or 178 survey respondents chose this option as one of their 3 priority topics.



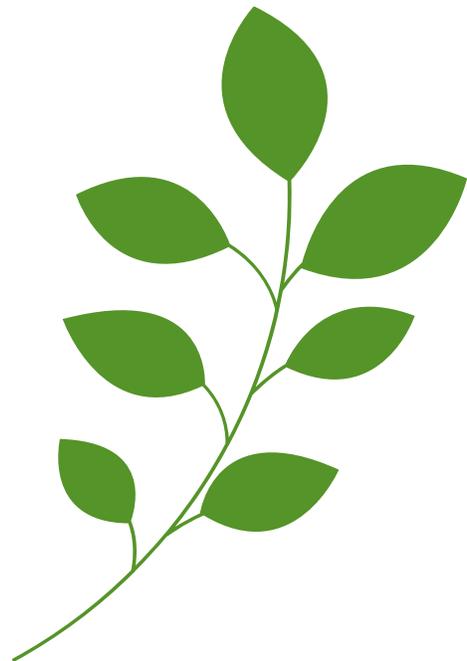
# 8. Organization of the Local Food System Plan

In the following pages of this document, Goals 1 through 4\* are discussed in detail: background information is provided, goal-related challenges brought up in community discussions and surveys are listed, action steps to address those issues are suggested, and potential partners/resources to accomplish the individual goals are identified.

Proposed action steps are the specific policies, programs, and/or initiatives prioritized to meet the respective goals. Action steps are organized by topic, such as policy/city leadership, education, transportation, and gardening, and are prioritized based on ease of achievability within a five-year timeline.

The City of Lincoln is the policy-making entity leading the implementation of the various action steps. It will take cooperation and partnerships between local government entities, community organizations, and residents to improve Lincoln's food system.

*\* Goal 5-related issues and solutions were incorporated into Goals 1 through 4, as education plays a role for all those goals. Goal 6 is not discussed, as it received the least votes in the survey.*



# 9. Community Goals

This section outlines the four prioritized food-related community goals and their associated action steps. Action steps for all goals are organized by category, such as Policy/City Leadership, Education, Transportation.



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# Goal #1:

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## Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all

According to survey respondents, equitable access to healthy food is the top goal this local food systems plan should address: 76.7% or 465 respondents identified this goal as the most important one of the six goals presented in the food system assessment survey.

### Background/Need

- 13% of Lincoln residents<sup>5</sup> and 12% of Lancaster County residents<sup>6</sup> live in poverty, which is higher than the overall percentage of 10.8% in the State of Nebraska.<sup>7</sup> 15% of children under the age of 18 and 6% of seniors aged 65 and over live in poverty in Lincoln; in Lancaster County 14% of children under the age of 18 and 6% of seniors aged 65 and over live in poverty.<sup>8</sup>
- 8.2% of households in Lincoln receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits (7.6% in Lancaster County), and 56.6% of those households include kids under the age of 18 (55.6% in Lancaster County).<sup>9</sup>
- Food insecurity rates for Lincoln and Lancaster County are 10.7%<sup>10</sup> and 10.6%<sup>11</sup>, respectively. This is near the national average of 10.4%.<sup>12</sup>
- According to the 2019 Lancaster County Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 33% of respondents self-identified as overweight and 32% as obese.<sup>13</sup>
- Based on the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment<sup>13</sup>, 27.3% of the 1,752 survey participants in Lincoln/Lancaster County identified challenges getting healthy and affordable food as a health concern.
- During the 2022/2023 school year (as of October 2022), 19,069 students or 47.7% of the student body within the Lincoln Public School (LPS) system, qualified for the free or reduced-price lunch program.<sup>14</sup>
- Average enrollment for WIC (Women, Infants, and Children program) benefits for Lancaster County for FY 2022 (October 2021-September 2022) was 6,652.<sup>15</sup> The WIC program is a special supplemental nutrition program designed to safeguard the health of low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk.
- In FY 2022, the Food Bank of Lincoln distributed 3,463,662 pounds of fresh produce and served 9,132,067 meals.<sup>16</sup>
- In the 2022 fall semester, UNL handed out 5,300 free meal passes to food-insecure students.<sup>17</sup>
- As of March 1, 2023 the Pandemic-related increase to SNAP benefits was officially discontinued, meaning less money for food for already food-insecure populations.

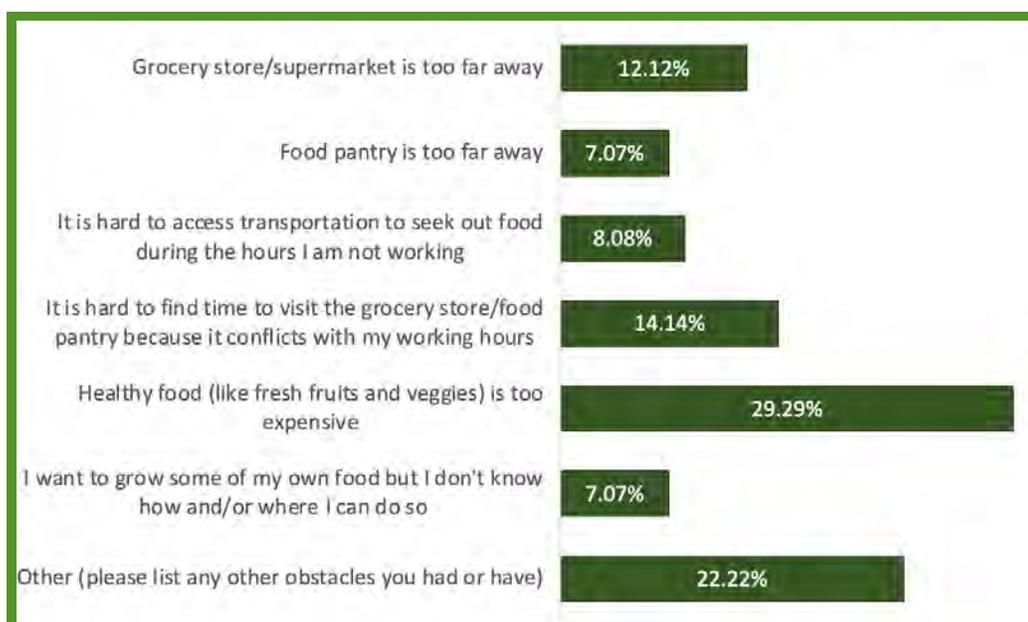
## Survey and Focus Group Results

Not surprisingly, 29.3% of the food-insecure-focused survey respondents thought healthy food is too expensive. Not having enough money to buy enough food in general was a recurring theme.

Lack of transportation, store/pantry hours colliding with work schedules, and no affordable food options in the neighborhood were mentioned as well. These issues were also mentioned in a focus group discussion with individuals experiencing food insecurity/poverty. 41% of survey respondents were interested in learning how to cook/cook on a budget and growing food in community gardens or other locations.



Response to survey question: **“What prevents/or has prevented you from having enough food for yourself and your family? (you may select more than 1 answer)”**



Some of the responses received under the “Other” category for the above survey question, are listed below.

Hard to carry a lot of stuff

Just hard to have enough money to buy good food.

Need more affordable options in this neighborhood. Aldi would be good.

I want to have my own private garden space. I would eat vegetables and fruits more often if free.

No transportation - have to walk, hard to carry

I am disabled so gardening is very difficult

As the cost of living increases, so does the price of food. With one paycheck going towards rent and the other paycheck going towards all the other bills, food has become expensive; healthy or not healthy.

Food pantry doesn't always have food my allergy kid can have and my local grocery store doesn't carry specialty food

Budgeting

Food is SO expensive! My daughters have special dietary needs which make food even more expensive. Then I have to pay a bunch of money for my own meds, so I am out of money before the 15th of the month. I'm supporting my 2 daughters and myself. Food, hygiene products, cleaning products, everything, gas for the car. How am I supposed to afford everything!? We go to food pantries, but they don't have specialized food my daughters need.

Rising costs and time to shop with a busy family.

Food pantries are not easily accessible for people like myself. I don't understand why it needs to be so difficult to get food.

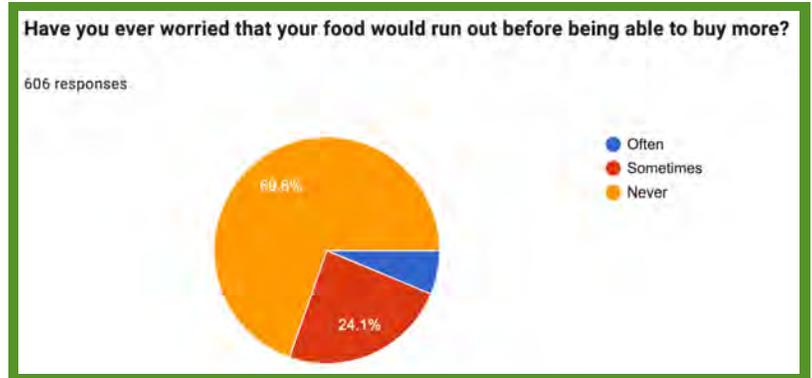
Being a single mom and working a typical 8-5 and making too much money isn't really accurate because I struggle every month to provide for myself and 3 children and that's with a college degree and I own my home.



Response to survey question **“What issues do you think need to be addressed in Lincoln so everyone has access to and can afford healthy food? (you may select more than 1 answer)”**

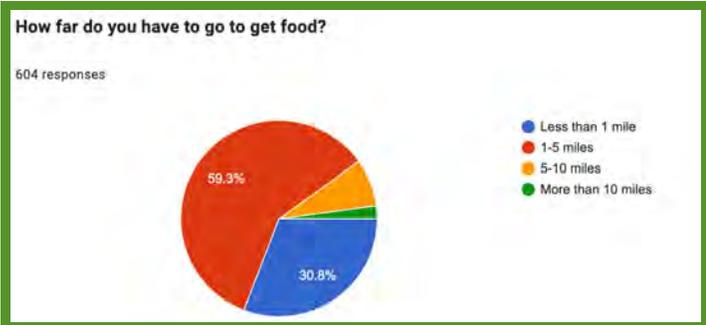


These results were somewhat mirrored by the [food system assessment survey](#). Of the 30.4% of respondents indicating they were worried about running out of food before being able to buy more, 21.7% said that money is an issue and 21.4% stated that healthy food is too expensive.



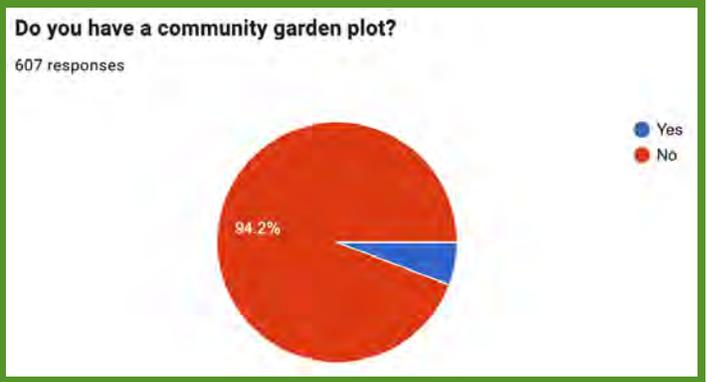
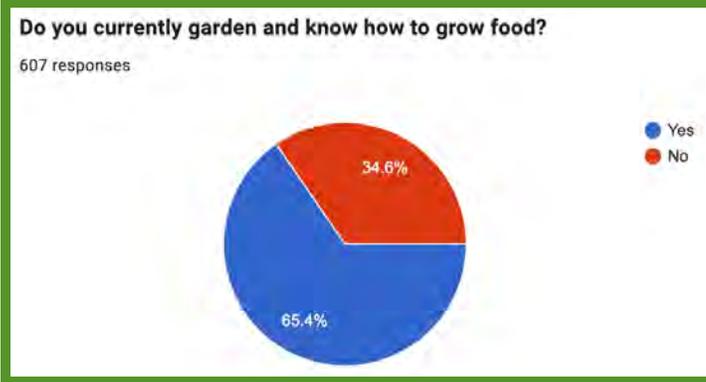
Most survey respondents (59.3%) must cover a distance between 1 mile and 5 miles to get food with the primary mode of transportation being a personal vehicle.

Of those respondents encountering transportation challenges, 53.8% said the distances from their home to the store/pantry are too far to walk. The lack of bike paths from their home to the store/pantry and the frequency of bus service were identified as major obstacles.

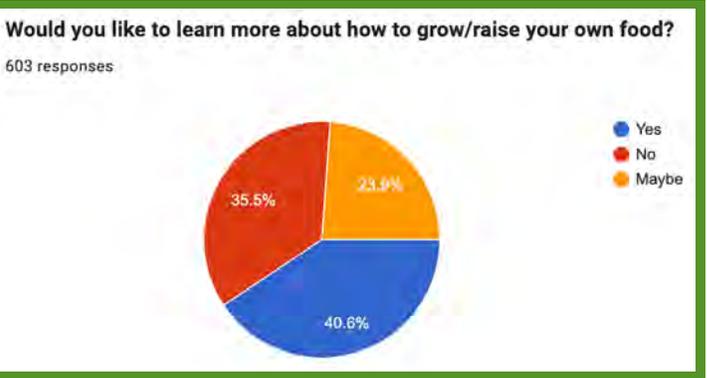


Community gardens are not utilized by the majority of people that took the survey - 65.4% or 397 respondents stated that they currently garden and know how to grow food, but 94.2% of them do not garden in a community garden.

Using public lands for community gardens was favored by 85.3%.

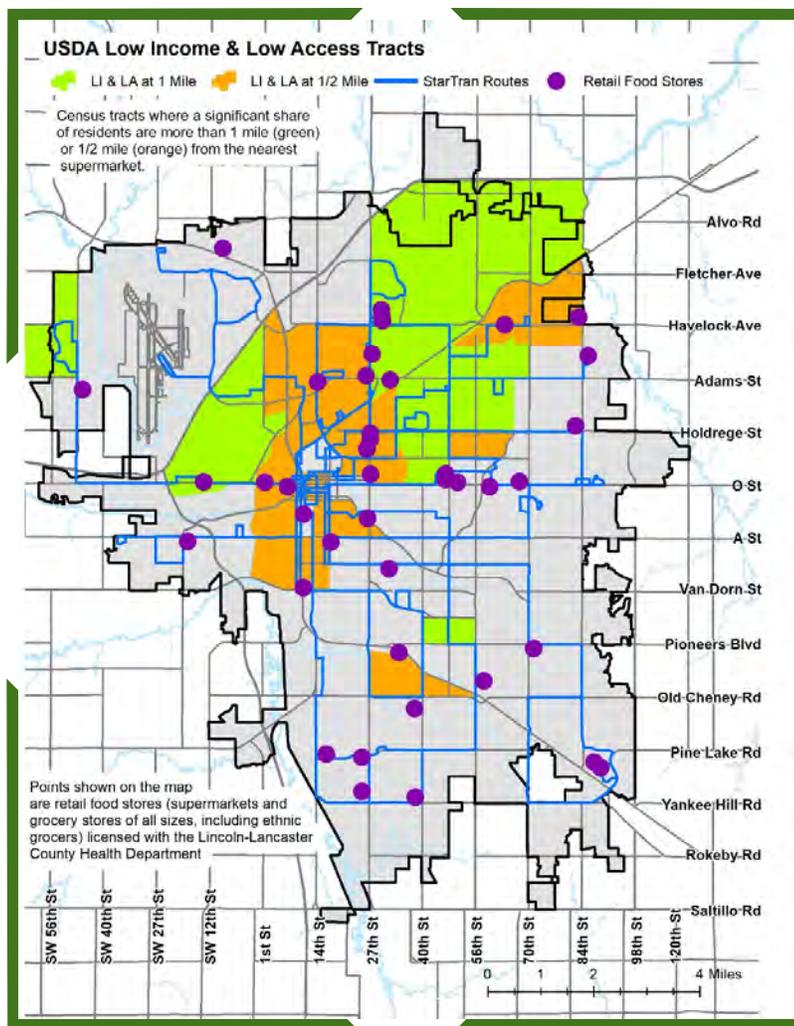


Responses to the question “Would you like to learn more about how to grow/raise your own food” were ambivalent: 40.6% would like to learn more, 35.5% were not quite sure, and 23.9% were not interested in learning more.



## Food Access Challenges (from surveys and focus groups)

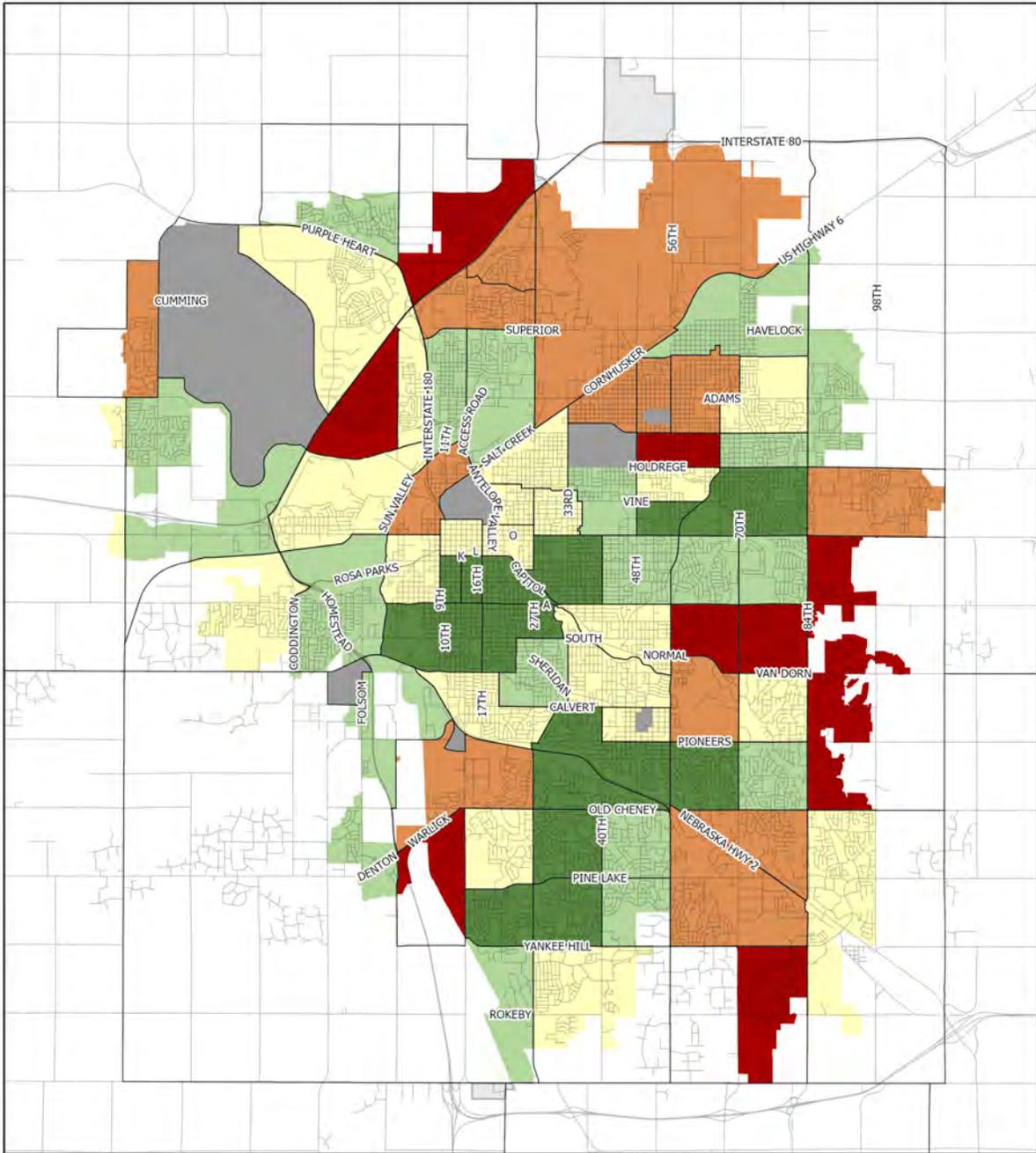
- Poor accessibility of stores/food pantries on foot, by bike, or via public transportation
- Lack of community gardens in underserved census tracts
- Low- and moderate-income census tracts lack good access to grocery stores.
- Healthy food is too expensive
- Farmers' markets are too expensive
- Difficulty finding familiar and/or allergy-friendly food items
- Insufficient healthy food choices in pantries
- Insufficient access for disabled people at food pantries and food distribution locations
- Lack of help for disabled people wanting to grow their own food
- More convenience stores than grocery stores
- Lack of neighborhood markets/full-service neighborhood grocery stores
- Quality of food from Food Bank, Food Net, Center for People in Need
- Lack of mobile fresh produce serving underserved neighborhoods
- No opportunity to have garden space when living in apartment buildings
- No awareness of food allergies. Food pantries do not offer food allergy-friendly foods.
- Farmers' markets in all areas of Lincoln, not just in the downtown area.
- Lack of indoor winter farmers' market



“ To save money, I do not buy the best healthy foods.

This makes me sad.

”



## Healthy Food Access

Eight census tracts are considered 'very low' with a score of less than 18 on a 0-100 scale.

Very Low
  Low
  Average
  High
  Very High

Data from Nebraska Extension (University of Nebraska), Nebraska Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NebNEMS), 2023.  
 Data processing from The City of Lincoln Urban Development Department



# Action Steps



## Policy/City Leadership

<b>1.1.1</b>	Explore ordinance changes that would expand opportunities for urban agriculture in city limits.
<b>1.1.2</b>	Promote use of public spaces for planting edible plants/bushes (not more than 30" tall) to be harvested by anyone.
<b>1.1.3</b>	Work with the Lincoln Housing Authority and other partners to provide opportunities for community gardens that would allow home gardens for those in LHA dwellings.
<b>1.1.4</b>	Encourage all farmers' markets to participate in SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).
<b>1.1.5</b>	Encourage/incentivize new food-related retailers (smaller stores) to locate in low-income/low-access neighborhoods.
<b>1.1.6</b>	Consider including healthy food access as one of the criteria when evaluating development projects using city incentives.
<b>1.1.7</b>	Explore amending the conservation design principles to include arable land/food growing capacity.
<b>1.1.8</b>	Explore economic development incentives to attract grocery stores to neighborhoods lacking access to fresh food.
<b>1.1.9</b>	Adopt a "Health in All Policies" framework to ensure all decisions incorporate access to healthy, local food.
<b>1.1.10</b>	Encourage local institutions that serve meals to source local food.
<b>1.1.11</b>	Support free/low-cost participation of gardening, cooking, and food preservation classes for food-insecure populations.
<b>1.1.12</b>	Support/create a donation center for free, gently used kitchen utensils.





## Transportation

<b>1.2.1</b>	Collaborate with StarTran on route optimization and scheduling to ensure access to healthy food sources for public transit users.
<b>1.2.2</b>	Provide free bus passes to be handed out at social service agencies serving food-insecure residents.
<b>1.2.3</b>	Explore the possibility of adding more points of sale for low-income bus passes.
<b>1.2.4</b>	Review the bus system operational frequency to ensure that bus service is available when residents need access to food resources.
<b>1.2.5</b>	Consider increased funding, as necessary, for public transportation to enable these potential transit improvements.



## Gardening

<b>1.3.1</b>	Identify city-owned vacant lots that could be leased, donated, or used by community partners.
<b>1.3.2</b>	Create more community gardens, ensuring they are distributed equitably throughout Lincoln and in areas of highest need, and ensure they are easily accessible by public transportation, bike, and/or foot.
<b>1.3.3</b>	Encourage/support public, nonprofit, and private landholders in making vacant land available for food production.
<b>1.3.4</b>	Promote home gardening, including container gardening.
<b>1.3.5</b>	Encourage creation of more city-block based neighborhood gardens (example: the “Hawley Hamlet” in Lincoln’s “Hawley Historic District”).
<b>1.3.6</b>	Improve accessibility of community gardens by providing more information on locations, available plots, cost, etc.
<b>1.3.7</b>	Encourage community gardens to include ADA accessible garden spaces.
<b>1.3.8</b>	Broaden access to resources to assist community gardening efforts, especially in low-income areas (i.e., free or subsidized plot rental fees, work-share programs that allow gardeners to trade time for free plot usage, free use of gardening tools, etc.).
<b>1.3.9</b>	Expand seed and plant exchanges and explore the creation of a seed library.
<b>1.3.10</b>	Encourage community gardeners, home gardeners, and farmers' market vendors to partner with the Food Bank of Lincoln, food pantries, and meal distribution programs to donate fresh produce.



## Education

<b>1.4.1</b>	Support farm-to-school efforts in K-12 schools such as agriculture and nutrition education in classrooms, school gardens, and outdoor classrooms.
<b>1.4.2</b>	Support and enhance access to public food assistance programs like SNAP and WIC through marketing and promotion.
<b>1.4.3</b>	Promote the use of SNAP, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and Double Up Food Bucks at area farmers' markets.
<b>1.4.4</b>	Expand and utilize local education programs, specifically nutrition, cooking (especially for singles and seniors on budgets), and gardening education programs.
<b>1.4.5</b>	Promote the availability of MyLink (an app that links users to Lincoln-specific resources) and United Way 2-1-1 and ensure content is current.
<b>1.4.6</b>	Establish a directory of locations where fresh fruits and vegetables can be donated.
<b>1.4.7</b>	Educate food retailers/vendors on food allergy-friendly foods.



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## Goal # 2:

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### **Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security**

This goal was prioritized by 71.1% or 431 respondents of the food system assessment survey, documenting the need for strategic investment to increase the amount of local food available to the community.

### **Background/Need**

Lancaster County (all statistics from 2017 Census of Agriculture, Lancaster County, Nebraska<sup>18</sup> – latest data available – unless otherwise noted):

- 422,996 acres of land are being farmed in Lancaster County (-14% change since 2012)
- 1,786 farms (-3% change since 2012)
- Average farm size is 237 acres (-11% since 2012), with the largest percentage (42%) of total farms between 10 and 49 acres in size
- 82% of annual sales are generated by crops
- Crops generated \$155,323,000 of sales; \$1,248,000 of this were sales of vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes; and \$341,000 were of fruits, tree nuts, berries
- Total market value of agricultural products sold amounts to \$188,834,000
- Exports of agricultural products from Lancaster County equal \$73,575,436 annually<sup>19</sup>
- 39 produce growers in Lancaster County sell directly to consumers, 20 of these sell at Farmers' Markets<sup>20</sup>
- There were 723 new and beginning farmers

Lincoln:

- 7 farmers' markets in Lincoln<sup>20</sup>
- 14 and more community gardens<sup>21</sup> (exact # unknown; no centralized directory available)
- 23 produce-producing school gardens within LPS (LPS encompasses 73 schools)<sup>22</sup>
- 8 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operations in Lincoln/Lancaster County<sup>23</sup>
- 5 meat/poultry processors in Lancaster County<sup>24</sup>

## Survey and Focus Group Results

All 18 producers who participated in the survey or focus group meeting agreed that production of local food could be increased if the demand for it increased, and the majority agreed that they would like to be able to grow and offer more locally produced food. Using the above referenced statistics, even if all the produced fruits, berries, tree nuts, vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes would be sold within Lancaster County, it would cover only 1.37% of the total market value of agricultural products sold.

Under current circumstances, producers cannot compete with food sourced out-of-state and/or out-of-country sold in large quantities to grocers and institutional buyers at wholesale prices.

All 14 ethnic grocers surveyed would like to offer locally grown food or more of it. The main barriers cited were the need for a consistent supply, high prices, lack of connection to local producers, lack of culturally appropriate food, and lack of knowledge of local regulations (i.e. fear of selling uninspected produce from a local farmer).

The need for a year-round, consistent supply and the relatively higher cost of locally grown food were also concerns for non-ethnic grocers, restaurants, and institutions like UNL and LPS.

Using public lands for food production by not-for-profit organizations was favored by 87.6% of 605 participants of the local food system assessment survey.



# Local Food Economy Challenges

- Insufficient demand for locally grown food
  - all producers agreed: sufficient production is not an issue, *demand* is
- Insufficient marketing of locally produced food – farmers need help with local food promotion
- Idled produce production because of current lack of demand
- Scalability: many small local producers cannot meet the large volumes needed by institutions and grocery stores
- Need for greater food aggregation opportunities for smaller-scale producers
- Lack of incentives for restaurants and grocery stores to procure directly from a local grower rather than just ordering from their existing suppliers (extra time/work)
- Lack of leadership (city/county) regarding local food purchasing
- Lack of sufficient and affordable commercial kitchen space available for rent by food-business entrepreneurs (value-added food production)
- Lack of food infrastructure (storage, cooling, processing) to create and store shelf-stable food items. Schools could be a big market for producers, but schools currently do not have the staff/time (and oftentimes the facilities) to prepare fresh produce (example: cutting broccoli).
- Navigating purchasing rules and regulations (USDA, grocery chains)
- Restrictions on food vendors (permits and operations) – especially mobile units were mentioned
- Lack of communication between producers and food retailers, especially ethnic grocers
- Locally grown food tends to be more expensive compared to food from national suppliers
- Lack of food diversity (example: lack of culturally appropriate food for Lincoln's ethnic population; lack of variety of locally grown food during cold season)
- Lack of local greenhouses for year-round production
- Lack of land access, especially for new/beginning farmers

**Cost is a big factor: several producers commented during the focus group that they cannot afford their own products at the prices they need to charge.**

# Action Steps



## Policy/City Leadership

<b>2.1.1</b>	Assist institutional purchasers (UNL, schools, hospitals, etc.) to adopt local food purchasing percentage targets and create a model policy for the preferential purchasing of local food by public and private institutions.
<b>2.1.2</b>	Explore potential state tax incentives for agricultural use of vacant properties.
<b>2.1.3</b>	Continue to promote public-private partnerships that build stronger food networks and advance urban agriculture.
<b>2.1.4</b>	Consider economic development programs to support small food and farm businesses, including a low-interest revolving loan fund. Ensure that these programs are accessible to ethnic/minority food businesses and farms.
<b>2.1.5</b>	Seek out grant opportunities from state, federal and philanthropic organizations to assist with and support feasibility studies, and capital and operating expenses, as appropriate, for a food hub/commercial kitchen.
<b>2.1.6</b>	Consider incentives for grocers/restaurants/institutions to buy locally sourced food.





## Infrastructure

<b>2.2.1</b>	Consider investing in the promotion of local food.
<b>2.2.2</b>	Help improve market access for local producers: encourage institutional food buyers to source from local producers.
<b>2.2.3</b>	Explore expanding leasing access to suitable city-owned properties for commercial growing purposes after proper environmental assessment.
<b>2.2.4</b>	Approach other governmental subdivisions (Lincoln Airport Authority, Lancaster County Board, Lincoln Public Schools, Lower Platte South NRD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln) about designating undeveloped properties with good quality soils for commercial food production.
<b>2.2.5</b>	Approach city councils and village boards in Lancaster County about the potential for collaboration to re-localize our food supply.
<b>2.2.6</b>	Work with the Lincoln Housing Authority and other partners to provide opportunities for home/community gardens for those in LHA dwellings.
<b>2.2.7</b>	Encourage and support more cooperative systems (land access, equipment, sales, distribution, bidding on large institutional food contracts, etc.).
<b>2.2.8</b>	Encourage extension of growing season through use of hoop houses/high tunnels, green houses, etc.
<b>2.2.9</b>	Increase support to maintain the Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska directory of local food producers to strengthen producers' connections to wholesale/retail buyers and the public.
<b>2.2.10</b>	Collaborate with federal entities such as the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service on securing financial assistance for the installation of water infrastructure to public lands designated for commercial food production.
<b>2.2.11</b>	Encourage more farmers' markets to be open year-round by investing in infrastructure improvements (such as investments in storage for vendors' supplies or a covered structure to protect vendors' goods from inclement weather). These improvements should also be considered for the year-round farmers' markets.
<b>2.2.12</b>	Consider investing in signage, sidewalk infrastructure, and transit service to help community members access the farmer markets.





## Food Hubs/Aggregators

<b>2.3.1</b>	Collaborate with local and regional producers in Lancaster County as well as neighboring counties to assess their local food aggregation, processing, and distribution needs.
<b>2.3.2</b>	Connect with existing aggregators/processors (in-and out-of-state) to learn from their experiences.
<b>2.3.3</b>	Conduct a market analysis for food hubs that could aggregate, process, and efficiently distribute locally grown food across the region, helping producers access larger markets.
<b>2.3.4</b>	Identify and pursue funding sources for food hubs, if producer interest and feasibility study are positive.
<b>2.3.5</b>	Explore locating a food hub(s) on a brownfield site.



## Commercial Kitchen(s)

<b>2.4.1</b>	Revisit the 2019 feasibility report “Developing a Kitchen Incubator for Lincoln, Nebraska” to determine sufficient interest in commercial kitchens that would serve as business incubation space for food system entrepreneurs and community organizations. Partner with Lincoln Public Schools, Southeast Community College and other institutions to develop an action plan.
<b>2.4.2</b>	Identify funding/incentives for creation of commercial kitchens that are affordable/accessible to producers and the general public.
<b>2.4.3</b>	Consider subsidizing the cost of commercial kitchen space rental as well as needed kitchen equipment to allow food business entrepreneurs get their business off the ground in an affordable way.
<b>2.4.4</b>	Explore locating commercial kitchen(s) on brownfield sites.
<b>2.4.5</b>	Explore the feasibility of a community cannery and locating it on a brownfield site.



## Marketing

<b>2.5.1</b>	Establish a collaborative approach to marketing and educating regarding local food.
<b>2.5.2</b>	Conduct a coordinated promotional campaign to encourage Lincoln residents to start growing some of their own food, whether in their own yards or in containers on patios, balconies, or windowsills.



## Education

<b>2.6.1</b>	Collaborate with educational entities, not-for-profit organizations, and area schools to identify gaps and enhance skills and technical training opportunities for jobs and careers in food, culinary, and agricultural sectors.
<b>2.6.2</b>	Support a sustainable “Buy Local” food campaign with community partners and consider declaring a “Buy Local” month during the summer to highlight locally grown produce.
<b>2.6.3</b>	Connect food businesses to opportunities to fund food system startups and/or expand existing businesses.
<b>2.6.4</b>	Conduct periodic farm and food business tours with residents, local officials, and economic development leaders.
<b>2.6.5</b>	Provide assistance and resources to new food enterprises and entrepreneurs, including food-focused training and consulting, business plan development, etc.
<b>2.6.6</b>	Facilitate mentoring program and apprenticeships with experienced farmers to assist new and inexperienced farmers.
<b>2.6.7</b>	Establish/maintain an up-to-date local food directory that connects producers with retail outlets/institutions.
<b>2.6.8</b>	Educate community members about allowed urban agriculture practices and any related updates to allowed urban agriculture uses.
<b>2.6.9</b>	Educate community members about the benefits of locally sourced food.
<b>2.6.10</b>	Encourage and identify funding for training, mentorships, and other forms of farmer-to-farmer/business-to-business education.
<b>2.6.11</b>	Utilize the Lancaster County Super Fair to showcase locally produced food and food system entrepreneurs.
<b>2.6.12</b>	Expand the Buy Fresh Buy Local Food Guide to include restaurants offering locally grown food.



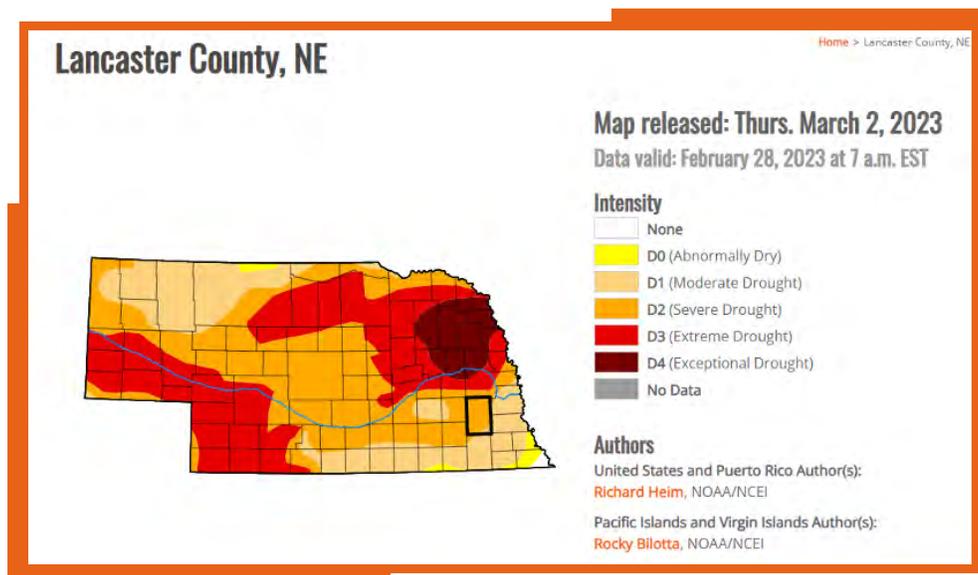
## Goal #3:

### Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air

Protection of the environment while growing and producing food is important to 57.3% or 347 food system assessment survey respondents. Good management practices are essential in commercial farming and CSA operations, as well as home, school, and community gardens, to protect the environment and ensure good produce yields.

## Background/Need

- There are over 400,000 acres of farmland in Lancaster County<sup>25</sup>
- Lancaster County leads the state of Nebraska in the total number of farms with nearly 1,500 farms<sup>25</sup>
- Agriculture's economic impact to Lancaster County is \$167,901,864 annually<sup>19</sup>
- Exports of the agricultural products from Lancaster County amount to \$73,575,436 annually<sup>19</sup>
- There are over 14 community gardens in Lincoln<sup>21</sup>
- Lincoln Public Schools (LPS encompasses 73 schools) has 23 produce-producing school gardens within its system<sup>22</sup>
- There are 8 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operations in Lincoln/Lancaster County<sup>26</sup>
- The majority of Lancaster County is currently classified as being under a severe drought<sup>27</sup>



(Source: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?NE>, accessed 3-7-2023)

# Action Steps



## Policy/City Leadership

<b>3.1.1</b>	Continue to administer City of Lincoln farm management contracts to require sustainable, regenerative agriculture practices to increase crop yield, lower production costs, and sequester carbon.
<b>3.1.2</b>	Consider establishing guidelines and educational programs for gardeners on soil and water conservation, fertilization, and pesticide application (where warranted).
<b>3.1.3</b>	Support the use of rain barrels by homeowners.
<b>3.1.4</b>	Encourage farmers, and market gardeners, local governments, non-profit organizations, and eligible private entities to access Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, including the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).
<b>3.1.5</b>	Encourage farmers to access the Soil and Water Conservation Fund administered by the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission with funds allocated by the Natural Resources Districts.
<b>3.1.6</b>	Enhance and promote Lincoln Watershed Management Division programs (“rainscaping” projects, etc.).
<b>3.1.7</b>	Explore City of Lincoln’s use of synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides and possible reductions/alternatives.



## Education

<b>3.2.1</b>	Partner with local organizations to encourage the development of workshops and career academies that provide training and assistance to home/market gardeners, beginning farmers, and experienced growers.
<b>3.2.2</b>	Provide education to home gardeners/community garden plot renters/growers on proper timing and application rates for fertilizer and agricultural chemicals.
<b>3.2.3</b>	Encourage overall best management practices for home and community gardens, and farms (water conservation, reduction of pesticide application, soil replenishment/improvement, etc.).
<b>3.2.4</b>	Support programming to help agricultural producers and landowners adopt practices and technologies to preserve/enhance soil health and water and air quality.
<b>3.2.5</b>	Educate neighborhood associations/homeowners associations on removing/avoiding restrictive covenants to landscapes that are not conducive to supporting local food.



## Soil Conservation/Protection

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>3.3.1</b> | Encourage the use of native plantings, cover crops, mulch, and ground cover for erosion and runoff prevention.   |
| <b>3.3.2</b> | Encourage crop rotation & diverse plantings at both the urban residential and rural acreage scale.   |
| <b>3.3.3</b> | Encourage application of compost and biochar to residences and acreages.   |
| <b>3.3.4</b> | Encourage home and community gardeners to have their soils tested for agronomic parameters (nutrients, pH, organic matter, etc.) to assist in good soil health practices and avoid over-fertilization. |
| <b>3.3.5</b> | Encourage conservation tillage or no-till cultivation alongside any other management practices that aid in carbon sequestration.   |



## Water Conservation/Protection

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>3.4.1</b> | Study water use patterns to identify potential areas for policy change to promote water conservation.  |
| <b>3.4.2</b> | Protect surface waters from residential chemical runoff by advising proper application technique, timing, and rate.  |
| <b>3.4.3</b> | Encourage the use of cover crops, mulch, compost, & biochar for increased water infiltration, holding capacity, and stormwater mitigation.   |
| <b>3.4.4</b> | Promote conservation tillage or no-till gardening alongside any other management practices that aid in carbon sequestration, increasing water infiltration, holding capacity, and stormwater mitigation. |
| <b>3.4.5</b> | Encourage replacing existing plantings of turf and ornamentals with native species.  |
| <b>3.4.6</b> | Provide education and technical resources on irrigation practices that conserve water such as drip irrigation and appropriate watering schedules/rates for home gardeners and farmers.                   |
| <b>3.4.7</b> | Promote growing practices that reduce the use of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers on lawns, gardens, and farms.  |
| <b>3.4.8</b> | Encourage residents to capture and store rainwater at a residential scale.   |



## Air Quality Protection

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>3.5.1</b> | Encourage replacement of lawns in home landscapes with native, water-wise, or edible plantings requiring less pest/disease management/fertilization. |
| <b>3.5.2</b> | Investigate ways to minimize drift when applying agricultural chemicals in commercial farms as well as community/private gardens.                    |
| <b>3.5.3</b> | Encourage use of electric mowers, string trimmers, and leaf blowers for lawns.   |

# Goal #4:

## Reduce food waste

42.5% of the 612 respondents participating in the general public survey felt it was important to address food waste.

### Background/Need

- Over 1/3 of the food produced in the U.S. is never eaten<sup>28</sup>
- Food waste is the single most common material landfilled and incinerated in the U.S., comprising 24% and 22% of landfilled and combusted municipal solid waste, respectively<sup>28</sup>
- Decreasing food waste can reduce the need to produce more/new food
- “Estimates that include food lost or wasted during all stages of the food supply chain (from primary production to consumption) range from 73 to 152 million metric tons (161 to 335 billion pounds) per year, or 223 to 468 kg (492 to 1,032 pounds) per person per year, equal to approximately 35 percent of the U.S. food supply. Roughly half of this food is wasted during the consumption stage (households and food service), and fruits and vegetables and dairy and eggs are the most frequently wasted foods.”<sup>29</sup>
- Preventing food waste and reducing packaging saves money, energy, and greenhouse gas emissions
- Based on data released in 2018, households in the U.S. wasted 338 pounds/household/year, and only 3% of that food waste was composted<sup>30</sup>
- The average American family of four loses \$1,500 every year because of food waste<sup>31</sup>
- In 2022, Uribe Refuse collected just under 1,500 tons of organic/food waste in Lincoln<sup>32</sup>
- Currently, Uribe Refuse has 130 residents opting in to their residential compost pickup. They serve 58 commercial institutions (not including LPS) and saw a 31% increase in organics tonnage hauled from 2021 to 2022.<sup>32</sup>
- In FY 2022, 57% of food distributed by the Food Bank of Lincoln was recovered from retail, wholesale, and manufacturing sources<sup>16</sup>

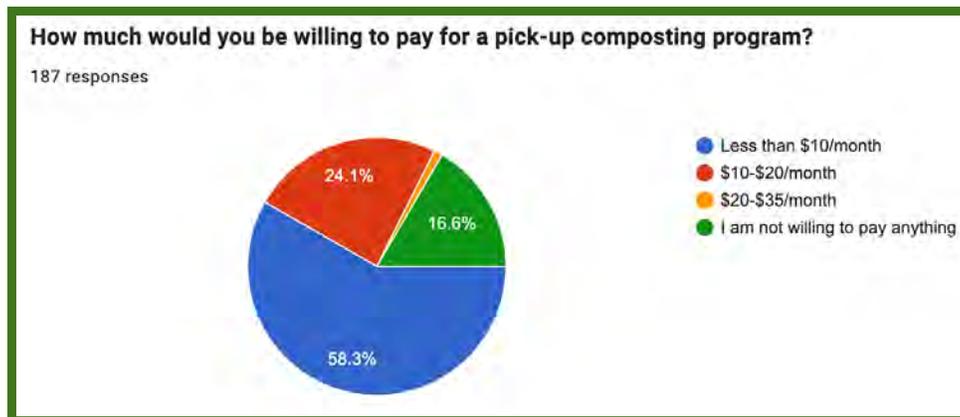


## Survey Results

The majority of survey respondents throw away food they do not or cannot eat. In response to the survey question “Why do you throw away food?” 56.1% of the respondents stated that they bought too much food and it went bad before they got around to using it; 36.8% discarded food because it was past the “best if used by” date; and 22.2% did not cook the meals they had planned to. 603 people responded to this question.



Composting at home or using a pick-up composting service is practiced by 54% (of 606) survey respondents. Of those not composting already or using a service, 54.4% would like to use a pick-up composting service and the majority (58.3%) would be willing to pay less than \$10/month for such service, 24.1% would be willing to pay between \$10-\$20 per month, 1.1% would be willing to pay between \$20 and \$35 per month, and 16.6% want this service to be free.



32.9% of survey respondents not composting already or using a service would like to learn how to compost at home.

## Food Waste Reduction Challenges

- Insufficient food waste composting capacity
- Lack of education around food waste and composting
- Challenges getting restaurants and other retailers involved in food waste-reduction initiatives

# Action Steps



## Policy/City Leadership

4.1.1	Explore code changes necessary to facilitate the diversion of food waste from the landfill.
4.1.2	Explore incentivizing food waste composting and collection.
4.1.3	Compile information on existing food recovery, gleaning, and composting programs in Lincoln and Lancaster County and encourage all agencies with points of contact in the food system to cross-promote food recovery efforts.
4.1.4	Consider community partner funding to support food recovery programs to ensure that food first goes to feed hungry people in the community.
4.1.5	Support the coordination of pantries and emergency food providers to improve recovery of safe, healthy food from area retail food outlets.
4.1.6	Encourage all food retailers, restaurants, institutional kitchens, etc. to participate in food waste reduction and donate leftover food items to local pantries or the Food Bank.
4.1.7	Apply for feasible grants related to food waste reduction.
4.1.8	Commit to hosting “zero food waste” events for all city-sponsored events.
4.1.9	Consider making available and subsidizing residential compost bins for backyard composting.



## Infrastructure

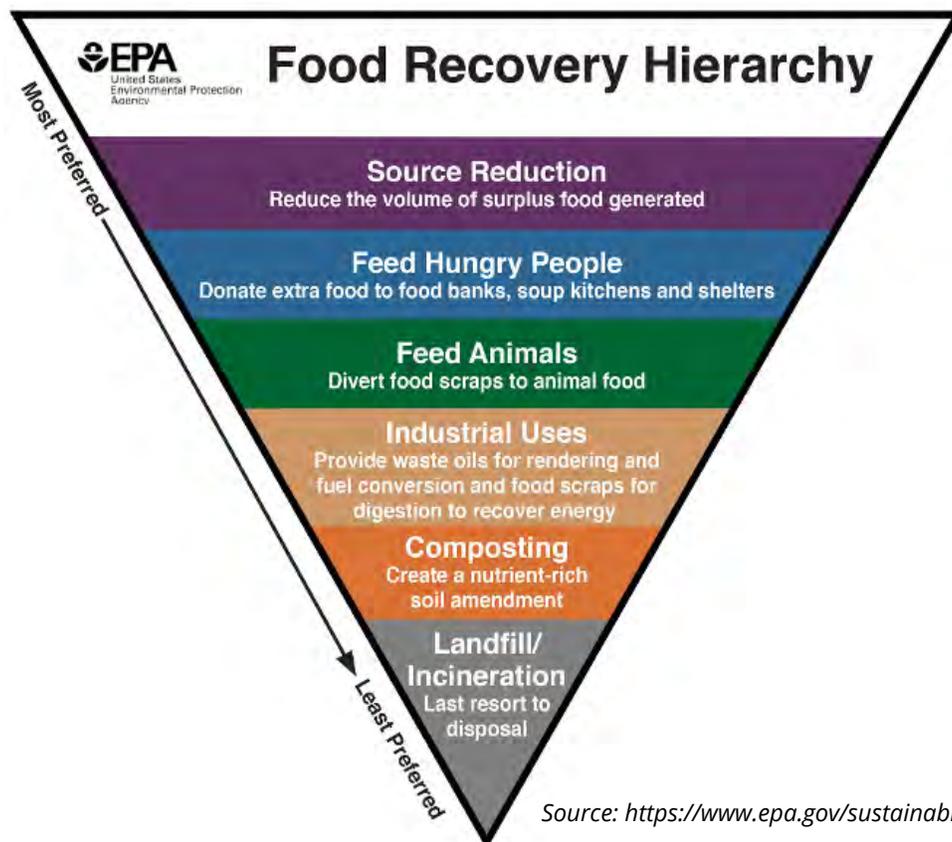
4.2.1	Evaluate opportunities for food waste diversion into composting or other beneficial uses.
4.2.2	Explore greater coordination of food-rescue efforts across the nonprofit and private sectors to grow donations.





## Education

4.3.1	Educate organizations, institutions, and businesses on how to conduct food waste audits and implement best practices.
4.3.2	Create opportunities for managers of grocery stores, restaurants, hospitals, large businesses, schools, universities, and hospitality providers to learn from each other and innovators in the industry and to share best practices and barriers to reduce food waste.
4.3.3	Create awareness of existing possibilities to donate food from home and community gardens to emergency food providers.
4.3.4	Provide education on laws protecting those who donate food from liability.
4.3.5	Partner with local organizations/institutions to provide public outreach and trainings; expand existing educational programs to prevent/reduce food waste (i.e., proper food handling and storage, how to navigate "best by" date labels, etc.); and support backyard composting programs.
4.3.6	Discuss on-farm gleaning programs with local producers and, if viewed favorably, organize volunteer "food gleaners". "Gleaning" is the act of collecting excess fresh foods from farms, gardens, farmers markets, grocers, restaurants, or any other sources in order to provide it to those in need.
4.3.7	Connect restaurants with farmers that can use kitchen scraps (not usable for charitable donation) as animal feed.
4.3.8	Provide outreach/education about companies accepting organic food waste in Lincoln; encourage these service providers to conduct public tours.



Source: <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food>

# 10. Next Steps

This Local Food System Master Plan will serve as guidance on how to improve Lincoln's food system over the next five years. It is not intended to be a static document but should be adapted according to changing circumstances. Implementation will require collaboration and partnerships between multiple entities. While the City of Lincoln will take the lead, other entities, such as institutions, businesses, not-for-profit and other community organizations, and residents will play a crucial role.

**The Steering Committee prioritized several action steps from the ones presented in this document to be addressed first:**

<b>1.1.8</b>	Explore economic development incentives to attract grocery stores to neighborhoods lacking access to fresh food.
<b>1.1.10</b>	Encourage local institutions that serve meals to source local food.
<b>1.3.2</b>	Create more community gardens, ensuring they are distributed equitably throughout Lincoln and in areas of highest need, and ensure they are easily accessible by public transportation, bike, and/or foot.
<b>1.3.4</b>	Promote home gardening, including container gardening.
<b>1.3.10</b>	Encourage community gardeners, home gardeners, and farmers' market vendors to partner with the Food Bank of Lincoln, food pantries, and meal distribution programs to donate fresh produce.
<b>1.4.1</b>	Support farm-to-school efforts in K-12 schools such as agriculture and nutrition education in classrooms, school gardens, and outdoor classrooms.
<b>1.4.6</b>	Establish a directory of locations where fresh fruits and vegetables can be donated.
<b>2.1.1</b>	Assist institutional purchasers (UNL, schools, hospitals, etc.) to adopt local food purchasing percentage targets and create a model policy for the preferential purchasing of local food by public and private institutions.
<b>2.1.3</b>	Continue to promote public-private partnerships that build stronger food networks and advance urban agriculture.
<b>2.1.4</b>	Consider economic development programs to support small food and farm businesses, including a low-interest revolving loan fund. Ensure that these programs are accessible to ethnic/minority food businesses and farms.
<b>2.1.5</b>	Seek out grant opportunities from state, federal and philanthropic organizations to assist with and support feasibility studies, and capital and operating expenses, as appropriate, for a food hub/commercial kitchen.
<b>2.1.6</b>	Consider incentives for grocers/restaurants/institutions to buy locally sourced food.

<b>2.2.3</b>	Explore expanding leasing access to suitable city-owned properties for commercial growing purposes after proper environmental assessment.
<b>2.2.4</b>	Approach other governmental subdivisions (Lincoln Airport Authority, Lancaster County Board, Lincoln Public Schools, Lower Platte South NRD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln) about designating undeveloped properties with good quality soils for commercial food production.
<b>2.2.8</b>	Encourage extension of growing season through the use of hoop houses/high tunnels, green houses, etc.
<b>2.2.11</b>	Encourage more farmers' markets to be open year-round by investing in infrastructure improvements (such as investments in storage for vendors' supplies or a covered structure to protect vendors' goods from inclement weather). These improvements should also be considered for the year-round farmers' markets.
<b>2.3.1</b>	Collaborate with local and regional producers in Lancaster County as well as neighboring counties to assess their local food aggregation, processing, and distribution needs.
<b>2.3.3</b>	Conduct a market analysis for food hubs that could aggregate, process, and efficiently distribute locally grown food across the region, helping producers access larger markets.
<b>2.4.1</b>	Revisit the 2019 feasibility report "Developing a Kitchen Incubator for Lincoln, Nebraska" to determine sufficient interest in commercial kitchens that would serve as business incubation space for food system entrepreneurs and community organizations. Partner with Lincoln Public Schools, Southeast Community College and other institutions to develop an action plan.
<b>2.5.2</b>	Conduct a coordinated promotional campaign to encourage Lincoln residents to start growing some of their own food, whether in their own yards or in containers on patios, balconies, or windowsills.
<b>2.6.4</b>	Conduct periodic farm and food business tours with residents, local officials, and economic development leaders.
<b>2.6.9</b>	Educate community members about the benefits of locally sourced food.
<b>3.1.1</b>	Continue to administer City of Lincoln farm management contracts to require sustainable, regenerative agriculture practices to increase crop yield, lower production costs, and sequester carbon.
<b>3.2.1</b>	Partner with local organizations to encourage the development of workshops and career academies that provide training and assistance to home/market gardeners, beginning farmers, and experienced growers.
<b>3.3.1</b>	Encourage the use of native plantings, cover crops, mulch, and ground cover for erosion and runoff prevention.
<b>3.4.4</b>	Promote conservation tillage or no-till gardening alongside any other management practices that aid in carbon sequestration, increasing water infiltration, holding capacity, and stormwater mitigation.

<b>4.1.3</b>	Compile information on existing food recovery, gleaning, and composting programs in Lincoln and Lancaster County and encourage all agencies with points of contact in the food system to cross-promote food recovery efforts.
<b>4.1.5</b>	Support the coordination of pantries and emergency food providers to improve recovery of safe, healthy food from area retail food outlets.
<b>4.2.1</b>	Evaluate opportunities for food waste diversion into composting or other beneficial uses.

**Once the plan is adopted by the City of Lincoln, the Community Committee on Local Food Steering Committee will:**

- Work with local government and community partners to implement the prioritized action items
- Create timelines, and identify and pursue any necessary funding to implement action steps
- Monitor progress of the plan over time and adjust as necessary
- Engage the community and communicate progress

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# 12. Partners/Resources

All community garden managers/CSA operators

All food related Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Not-for-Profit Organizations (NPOs)

All organizations serving the food insecure population (Lincoln Food Bank, food pantries, Community Action, etc.)

Commercial composting facilities

Community Crops

Food Bank of Lincoln and all pantries, meal programs, institutional food service operations, and food retail outlets

Grants (USDA Community Food Project grants, Action for Healthy Kids, philanthropic organizations (PEW Trusts), etc.)

Grocers

Hawley Hamlet Neighborhood Garden

Institutions (schools, hospitals, corporations, etc.)

Lancaster County

Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

Lincoln neighborhood associations

Lincoln Public Schools

Lincoln residents

Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (includes Lancaster County)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE)

Nemaha Natural Resources District (includes Lancaster County)

Parochial and other private schools

Private waste haulers

Producers

Restaurants

Southern Heights Food Forest

StarTran

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

UNL

UNL Extension

UNL Extension Master Gardeners

# 13. Attachment

**Attachment I:** Surveys conducted for the development of the Local Food System Plan



# Lincoln Food System Survey

As part of a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Lincoln will be preparing a Master Food System Plan. This plan will help Lincoln set priorities for supporting and strengthening our local food system and can include anything and everything from how food is grown to how it is transported, processed, purchased, accessed, and consumed.

To build a strong local food system, Lincoln needs a roadmap to guide the process. We need to know where and how to invest time, resources, and partnerships to best support a vibrant local food economy.

**Your answers to this survey are important and will make sure the Food System Plan addresses community needs and priorities.**

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Uhlarik, Sustainability and Compliance Administrator; City of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities: 402-441-7588 or [fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov)

Thank you for your time!

## 1. Where do you get your food? Please select the top 3 places you go to get food.

- Grocery Stores (Open Harvest Co-op Grocery, Hy-Vee, Leon's, A Street Market, Super Saver, Whole Foods, Aldi, etc.)
- Super Centers (Walmart, Target)
- Restaurants (sit down, carry out, delivery)
- Fast Food Restaurants (McDonalds, Runza, Taco Johns, etc.)
- Farmers' Market, Farm Stand, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program
- Cafeteria or dining service (school, workplace, hospital cafeterias, senior center, health care center, residential care facility)
- Grow your own, hunt, fish, forage
- Dollar store (Dollar General, Dollar Tree, Dollar General, etc.)
- Food pantry or food bank (Foodnet, Food Bank of Lincoln, Center for People in Need, Neighborhood Food, Good Neighbor Community Center, etc.)
- Specialty food stores (ethnic markets, etc.)
- Warehouse club (Sam's Club, Costco, etc.)
- Gas station or convenience store (U-Stop, Kwik Shop, Stop 'N Shop, etc.)
- Meal or grocery home delivery (Meals on Wheels, Mom's Meals, Amazon, etc.)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Have you ever worried that your food would run out before being able to buy more?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

**3. Did you ever run out of food before being able to buy more?**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

**4. Do you use any of the free/reduced cost food resources listed below?**

- Food Pantries/Food Banks
- School-based food pantries (Husker, SCC, LPS food markets/pantries, etc.)
- Little Free Pantries
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Women, Infant, Children Program (WIC)
- School lunch/breakfast or feeding programs
- Lincoln Fresh or other mobile food distributions
- Food Pantries/Food Banks outside of Lincoln
- Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What prevents/or prevented you from having the food you want (you may check more than 1 answer)**

- Not applicable
- Not enough money for food
- Grocery store/super market is too far away
- Food pantry is too far away
- Too difficult to get to the store
- Not enough time for shopping
- Healthy food (like fresh fruits and veggies) is too expensive
- On a special diet
- The kind of food I want is not available in stores or pantries
- I want to grow some of my own food but I don't know how and/or where I can do so
- No kitchen equipment available to cook (stove, pots, knives)
- Don't know how to cook
- Other (please list any other obstacles you had or have) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Transportation**

### **6. How far do you have to go to get food?**

- Less than 1 mile
- 1-5 miles
- 5-10 miles
- More than 10 miles

### **7. What is your primary transportation to get food?**

- Car (personal vehicle)
- Ride with friend or relative
- Ride share service (Uber, Lyft)
- Bus
- Bike
- Walk

**Depending on your selection for Question 7, please answer questions 8, 9, 10, or 11**

### **8. What makes it difficult for you to drive/share a ride to get food?**

- Not applicable
- I don't have enough money to pay for gas or ride fare
- Sharing a ride with others limits where and how far I can go
- I am not comfortable driving long distances to store/pantry
- It is costly to keep my car fixed up or to pay for needed repairs
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **9. What makes it difficult for you to walk to get food?**

- Not applicable
- Distance to store/pantry is too great
- Condition of or lack of sidewalks
- I can only carry limited amounts of food, so I must go shopping more frequently
- I don't feel safe walking in my neighborhood
- Health conditions (age, disability, etc.)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**10. What makes it difficult for you to take the bus to get food?**

- Not applicable
- Bus trip to store/pantry is too long
- Bus stop is located too far away from where I need to go
- Bus doesn't run frequently enough
- I can only transport limited amounts of bags by bus, so I must go shopping more frequently
- I don't feel safe riding the bus
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. What makes it difficult for you to bike to get food?**

- Not applicable
- The store/pantry is too far away
- There are no bike paths from my home to the store/pantry
- I can only transport a limited amount of food by bike
- I don't feel safe biking in my neighborhood
- Health conditions (age, disability)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Cooking questions**

- Do you know how to cook the foods you/your family want to eat?
- Do you have the tools you need to cook your meals?
- Do you have enough space to cook?
- Do you usually have enough time to cook?
- Do you have a safe place to cook?
- Do you have enough money to buy the food you need to cook?
- Would you like to learn more about how to prepare simple, nutritious, and budget friendly meals?
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Healthy Food questions (healthy foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grain, lean meat, beans or legumes, dairy, water)**

- In general, do you/your family eat healthy food?
- Do you have access to fresh fruits and vegetables?
- Are there sufficient healthy food options available to you?
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Growing Food questions**

- Do you currently garden and know how to grow food?
- Do you have a community garden plot?
- Do you know where some of the community gardens are in Lincoln?
- Do you raise chickens in your yard?
- Would you like to learn more about how to grow/raise my own food
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Do you throw away food you don't or can't eat?**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

**16. Why do you throw away food? (select all that apply)**

- Not applicable
- Bought too much and it went bad before I got around to using it
- Didn't know how to cook/use some of the food I bought
- It was past the "best if used by" date
- The fruit was bruised
- I didn't cook the meals I planned
- I didn't have the equipment or space to safely store it
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**17. Do you compost at home or by using a pick-up composting service?**

- Yes
- No

**If no:**

**18. Would you like to participate in a pick-up composting program?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes,** how much would you be willing to pay for a composting program?

- Less than \$10/month
- \$10-\$20/month
- \$20-\$35/month
- I am not willing to pay anything

**If no:**

**Would you like to learn how to compost at home?**

- Yes
- No

**19. Would you support use of public lands for food production? (select all that apply)**

- Yes, if used by a not-for-profit organization
- Yes, if used by a private business for sale to the Lincoln market
- Yes, if used for community gardens
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**20. What food related goals should Lincoln strive toward? (pick your top 3)**

- Invest in a thriving local food and farm community to increase local food production and food security
- Increase and ensure access to healthy food for all (making it easier for community members to find and afford healthy food they want to eat)
- Promote food production practices that protect soil, water, and air

- Increase opportunities for food and agricultural education (cooking, gardening, composting, food safety)
- Reduce food waste (composting, food recovery)
- Recognize and celebrate our community's diverse food cultures
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Demographic Questions**

#### **21. What is your age?**

- 19 and under
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80 and over
- Prefer not to answer

#### **22. What ethnic/racial background do you identify with?**

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Middle Eastern
- North African
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Two or more races
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

# Encuesta sobre el sistema alimentario de Lincoln

Como parte de una subvención de la Agencia de Protección Medioambiental (EPA), la ciudad de Lincoln estará preparando un Plan Maestro del Sistema Alimentario. Este plan ayudará a Lincoln establecer prioridades para apoyar y fortalecer nuestro sistema alimentario local y puede incluir todo, cualquier cosa desde cómo se cultivan los alimentos hasta cómo se transportan, procesan, compran, acceden y se consumen.

Para construir un sistema alimentario local fuerte, Lincoln necesita un plan que guíe el proceso. Necesitamos saber dónde y cómo invertir el tiempo, los recursos y las asociaciones para mejor apoyar una vibrante economía alimentaria local.

## **Sus respuestas a esta encuesta son importantes y asegura que el Plan del Sistema Alimentario atienda las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad.**

Si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese con Frank Uhlarik, Administrador de Sostenibilidad y Cumplimiento: 402-441-7588 o [fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov)

¡Gracias por su tiempo!

## **Recursos alimentarios**

### **1. ¿De dónde compra sus alimentos? Por favor, seleccione los 3 lugares principales donde compra comida.**

- Tiendas de comestibles (Open Harvest Co-op Grocery, Hy-Vee, Leon's, A Street Market, Super Saver, Whole Foods, Aldi, etc.)
  - Supercentros (Walmart, Target)
  - Restaurantes (para sentarse, para llevar, a domicilio)
  - Restaurantes de comida rápida (McDonalds, Runza, Taco Johns, etc.)
  - Mercado de agricultores, puesto de agricultor, programa de Agricultura Apoyada por la Comunidad (CSA)
  - Servicio de cafetería o comedor (escuela, trabajo, cafeterías de hospital, centro de personas mayores, centro de salud, centro de atención residencial).
  - Cultivar, cazar, pescar, procurar alimentos
  - Tienda del dólar (Dollar General, Dollar Tree, Dollar General, etc.)
  - Despensa o banco de alimentos gratuitos (Foodnet, Food Bank of Lincoln, Center for People in Need, Neighborhood Food, Good Neighbor Community Center, etc.)
  - Tiendas de alimentación especializadas (mercados étnicos, etc.)
  - Club de almacenes (Sam's Club, Costco, etc.)
  - Gasolinera o tienda de conveniencia (U-Stop, Kwik Shop, Stop 'N Shop, etc.)
  - Envío/reparto de alimentos o mercados casa (Meals on Wheels, Mom's Meals, Amazon, etc.)
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
-

**2. ¿Alguna vez te has preocupado que se te acabaran los alimentos antes de poder comprar más?**

- Frecuentemente
- A veces
- Nunca

**3. ¿Alguna vez se te ha acabado la comida antes de poder comprar más?**

- Frecuentemente
- A veces
- Nunca

**4. ¿Utiliza alguno de los recursos alimentarios gratuitos o a precio reducido que se indican a continuación? (puede marcar más de una respuesta)**

- No aplicable
  - Despensas/Bancos de alimentos
  - Despensas escolares (Husker, SCC, LPS, etc.)
  - Pequeñas despensas gratuitas
  - Programa Suplementario de Asistencia Nutricional (SNAP)
  - Programa para mujeres, bebés y niños (WIC)
  - Comidas/desayunos escolares o programas de alimentación
  - Lincoln Fresh o otras distribuciones móviles de alimentos
  - Despensas/Bancos de alimentos fuera de Lincoln
  - Otros (por favor indíquelos)
- 

**5. ¿Qué le impide/o impidió tener la comida que desea? (puede marcar más de una respuesta)**

- No aplicable
- No hay suficiente dinero para la comida
- La tienda de comestibles/supermercado está demasiado lejos
- La despensa de alimentos gratuitos está demasiado lejos
- Es demasiado difícil llegar a la tienda
- No hay suficiente tiempo para ir de compras
- La comida sana (como frutas y verduras frescas) es demasiado cara
- En una dieta especial
- El tipo de comida que quiero no está disponible en tiendas o despensas

- Quiero cultivar algunos de mis alimentos, pero no sé cómo ni/o dónde hacerlo
  - No hay material de cocina disponible para cocinar (estufa, ollas, cuchillos)
  - No se cocinar
  - Otros (por favor indique cualquier otro obstáculo que haya tenido o tenga)
- 
- 

### **Transporte**

#### **6.¿Hasta dónde tienes que ir para conseguir comida?**

- Menos de 1 milla
- 1-5 millas
- 5-10 millas
- Más de 10 millas

#### **7.¿Cuál es su medio de transporte principal para conseguir comida?**

- Coche (vehículo personal)
- Compartir viajar con un amigo o familiar
- Servicio de transporte compartido (Uber, Lyft)
- Autobús
- Bicicleta
- Caminar

### **Dependiendo de su selección en la Pregunta 7, por favor responda las preguntas 8, 9, 10, o 11**

#### **8.¿Qué le dificulta conducir/compartir un trayecto para ir por comida?**

- No aplicable
  - No tengo suficiente dinero para pagar la gasolina o la tarifa del viaje
  - Compartiendo el viaje con otros limita dónde y hasta dónde puedo ir
  - No me siento cómodo/a conduciendo largas distancias hasta la tienda/despensa
  - Es costoso mantener mi coche arreglado o pagar las reparaciones necesarias
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
- 

### **Retos del transporte - a pie**

## 9. ¿Qué le dificulta caminar para conseguir comida?

- No aplicable
  - La distancia a la tienda/despensa es demasiado lejos
  - Estado o falta de aceras
  - Sólo puedo cargar cantidades limitadas de comida, así que debo ir de compras con más frecuencia
  - No me siento seguro/a caminando por mi vecindario/barrio
  - Condiciones de salud (edad, discapacidad, etc.)
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
- 

## Retos del transporte -Transporte público (autobús)

### 10.¿Qué le dificulta tomar el autobús para ir por comida?

- No aplicable
  - El viaje en autobús a la tienda/despensa es demasiado largo
  - La parada de autobús está demasiado lejos de donde tengo que ir
  - El autobús no circula con suficiente frecuencia
  - Sólo puedo transportar cantidades limitadas de bolsas en el autobús, así que debo ir de compras con más frecuencia
  - No me siento seguro/a en el autobús
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
- 

## Retos del transporte - Bicicleta

### 11.¿Qué te dificulta ir en bicicleta para conseguir comida?

- No aplicable
  - La tienda/despensa está demasiado lejos
  - No hay carril de bicicleta desde mi casa hasta la tienda/despensa
  - Sólo puedo transportar una cantidad limitada de alimentos en bicicleta
  - No me siento seguro andando en bicicleta en mi vecindario/barrio
  - Condiciones de salud (edad, discapacidad)
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
-

## **12.Preguntas de cocinar**

- ¿Sabe como cocinar los alimentos que tú o tu familia quieren comer? Sí /No
- ¿Tiene disponible los utensilios que necesita para cocinar sus comidas? Sí/No
- ¿Tiene suficiente espacio para cocinar? Sí/No
- ¿Suele tener tiempo suficiente para cocinar? Sí/No
- ¿Tiene un lugar seguro para cocinar? Sí/No
- ¿Tiene suficiente dinero para comprar los alimentos que necesita para cocinar? Sí/No
- ¿Le gustaría aprender más sobre cómo preparar comidas sencillas, nutritivas y económicas? Sí/No/Tal vez
- Otros (por favor especifique)

## **13.Preguntas de Alimentación sana (los alimentos sanos incluyen frutas, verduras, cereales integrales/ granos enteros, carne magra, frijoles o legumbres, lácteos, agua).**

- En general, ¿usted o su familia comen alimentos sanos? Sí/No
- ¿Tiene acceso a frutas y verduras frescas? Sí/No
- ¿Hay suficientes opciones de comida sana a su disposición? Sí/No
- Otros (por favor especifique)

## **14.Preguntas de cultivando comida**

- ¿Actualmente cultiva un huerto y sabe cómo cultivar alimentos? Sí/No
- ¿Tiene un huerto comunitario? Sí/No
- ¿Sabe dónde se encuentran algunos de los huertos comunitarios de Lincoln? Sí/No
- ¿Cría gallinas en su jardín? Sí/No
- ¿Le gustaría aprender más sobre cómo cultivar o criar sus propios alimentos?
- Otros (por favor especifique)

## **Residuos de alimentos y compostaje**

### **15.¿Tiras la comida que no comes o no puedes comer?**

- Frecuentemente
- A veces
- Nunca

### **16.¿Por qué tiras la comida? (seleccione todo lo que corresponde)**

- No aplicable
- Compré demasiado y se pudrió/echo a perder antes de que pudiera usarlo
- No sabía cómo cocinar/utilizar algunos de los alimentos que compre
- Ya había pasado la fecha de caducidad/vencimiento
- La fruta estaba magullada/lastimada
- No cociné las comidas que había planeado
- No tenía el equipo ni el espacio para guardarlo de forma segura.
- Otros (por favor especifique)\_\_\_\_\_

**17.¿Hace compost/abono en casa o utiliza un servicio de recogida de compost/abono?**

- Sí
- No

**Programa de recogida de compost**

**En caso que no:**

**18. ¿Le gustaría participar en un programa de recogida de compost/abono?**

- Sí
- No

**En caso que sí,**

¿Cuánto estaría dispuesto/a a pagar por un programa de compostaje?

- Menos de 10 \$/mes
- 10-20 \$/mes
- 20-35 \$/mes
- No estoy dispuesto/a a pagar nada

**En caso que no:**

**Compostaje doméstico**

**¿Le gustaría aprender como hacer compost en casa?**

- Sí
- No

**Uso público del suelo**

**19.¿Apoyaría el uso de terrenos públicos para la producción de alimentos? (seleccione todo lo que corresponda)**

- Sí, si lo utiliza una organización sin fines de lucro
  - Sí, si lo utiliza una empresa privada para la venta al mercado Lincoln
  - Sí, si se utiliza para huertos comunitarios
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
- 
- No

**Objetivos comunitarios**

**20.¿Qué metas relacionadas con la alimentación debe perseguir Lincoln? (por favor elije sus 3 respuestas principales)**

- Invertir en una próspera comunidad agrícola y alimentaria local para aumentar la producción local de alimentos y la seguridad alimentaria.
  - Aumentar y asegurar el acceso a alimentos sanos para todos (haciendo que sea mas fácil para que los miembros de la comunidad encuentren y puedan permitirse pagar por alimentos sanos que deseen consumir).
  - Promover prácticas de producción de alimentos que protejan la tierra, el agua y el aire
  - Aumentar las oportunidades de educación alimentaria y agrícola (cocinar, jardinería, compostaje, seguridad alimentaria)
  - Reducir el desperdicio de alimentos (compostaje, recuperación de alimentos)
  - Reconocer y celebrar las diversas culturas alimentarias de nuestra comunidad
  - Otros (por favor especifique)
- 

**Demografía**

**21. ¿Cuál es su edad?**

- 19 y menor
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49

- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80 y mayor
- Prefiero no contestar

**22. ¿Con cual origen étnico/racial se identifica?**

- Blanco
- Negro o afroamericano
- Hispano o latino
- Oriente Medio
- Norteafricano
- Asiático
- Indio americano o nativo de Alaska
- Nativo de Hawai u otras islas del Pacífico
- Dos o más razas
- Otros
- Prefiero no contestar

**23. ¿Hay algo que le gustaría añadir/comentar?**

## Final Survey Questions

(Producers)

As part of a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Lincoln will be preparing a Master Food System Plan for Lincoln to guide the development of a resilient and equitable food system. A Food System Plan is a long-term strategy document that describes the current characteristics of food in our community (including everything from how food is grown to how it is transported, processed, purchased/donated, and consumed) and sets out a vision for what we want our food system to look like in the future.

Your answers to this brief survey are critical and will assist in establishing content for the Food System Plan.

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Uhlarik, Sustainability and Compliance Administrator; City of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities: 402-441-7588 or [fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov)

This brief survey is anonymous and will take no more than 5 minutes.

Thank you for your time!

1. What issues do you think need to be addressed for Lincoln to create an equitable and resilient food system?

2. Do you currently sell food products in Lincoln? Yes/No

- **If yes**, what percentage of your total production is currently sold in Lincoln?
- How much product would you like to be able to offer in the future?

Same or more?

**If more**, are there any barriers for you to be able to have more produce for sale?

- **If no**, would you be interested in selling your product in Lincoln in the future? Yes/No  
If yes, are there any barriers for you to do so? List

3. Are you interested in participating in more in-depth discussions (focus groups) regarding content for Lincoln's food system plan?

- Yes
- No

4. Please share your contact information, if you are comfortable doing so:

Name:

Business Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

# Have You Ever Experienced Food Insecurity?

As part of a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Lincoln will be preparing a Master Food System Plan. This plan will help Lincoln set priorities for supporting and strengthening our food system and can include anything and everything from how food is grown to how it is transported, processed, purchased/donated, accessed, and consumed.

**Your answers to this brief survey (5 min.) are important and will make sure the Food System Plan addresses community needs.**

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Uhlarik, Sustainability and Compliance Administrator; City of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities: 402-441-7588 or [fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov)

Thank you for your time!

**1. What prevents/or has prevented you from having enough food for yourself and your family?** (Please mark/circle your answer; you can mark more than 1 answer)

- Grocery store/super market is too far away
  - Food pantry is too far away
  - It is hard to access transportation to seek out food during the hours I am not working
  - It is hard to find time to visit the grocery store/food pantry because it conflicts with my working hours
  - Healthy food (like fresh fruits and veggies) is too expensive
  - I want to grow to grow some of my own food but I don't know how and/or where I can do so
  - Other (please list any other obstacles you had or have) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

**2. What issues do you think need to be addressed in Lincoln so everyone has access to and can afford healthy food?** (Please mark/circle your answer; you can mark more than 1 answer)

- There need to be grocery stores/food pantries I can reach on foot or by public transportation
  - I need to be able to access places where I can get familiar food items
  - Good and healthy food items need to be affordable/in my price range
  - There need to be more community gardens I can access and grow fresh food for myself/my family
  - I want to learn more about how to grow food
  - I want to learn more about how to cook
  - Other (Please write any other issues you can think of below)
- 
-

**3. Please share any additional thoughts you have below.**

**4. We want to hear from you! Would you join us and your neighbors for a community conversation to talk about how we can strengthen Lincoln's food system? (Please circle your answer)**

- Yes
- No

**If you circled "yes" for #4:**

**5. Please share your contact information:**

Name:

Email:

Phone:

## FINAL Survey Questions

(Institutions, such as restaurants, grocers, schools, daycares, hospitals, etc.)

As part of a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Lincoln will be preparing a Master Food System Plan for Lincoln to guide the development of a resilient and equitable food system. A Food System Plan is a long-term strategy document that describes the current characteristics of food in our community (including everything from how food is grown to how it is transported, processed, purchased/donated, and consumed) and sets out a vision for what we want our food system to look like in the future.

Your answers to this brief survey are critical and will assist in establishing content for the Food System Plan.

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Uhlarik, Sustainability and Compliance Administrator; City of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities: 402-441-7588 or [fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:fuhlarik@lincoln.ne.gov)

This brief survey is anonymous and will take no more than 5 minutes.

Thank you for your time!

1. What issues do you think need to be addressed for Lincoln to create an equitable and resilient food system?

2. Do you currently offer locally produced food? Yes/No

- **If yes**, what percentage of your total food offering is currently produced locally?
- How much locally produced food would you like to be able to offer in the future?

Same or more?

- **If no**, would you be interested in offering locally produced food in the future? Yes/No

If yes, are there any barriers for you to do so? List

3. Are you interested in participating in more in-depth discussions (focus groups) regarding content for Lincoln's food system plan?

- Yes
- No

4. Please share your contact information, if you are comfortable doing so:

Name:

Business/Institution Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone: