

August 31, 2020

Board of Supervisors
Santa Clara County
70 West Hedding Street
East Wing, 10th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Supervisors:

We, the undersigned, are writing to respectfully request you take an additional step beyond those recommended in the staff report relating to the Food, Restaurants, Agriculture, and Health Access Initiative (item no 10. in the September 2nd agenda, ID# 102246). The report recommendations call on the Board of Supervisors to approve an agreement with the University of California Cooperative Extension to develop a countywide food system work plan and receive a report in early 2021 based on this process. In addition to this workplan, we believe that taking steps towards adopting the Good Food Purchasing Policy prior to early 2021 would allow the County to move toward a more sustainable, healthy, local and just food system in one area -- food procurement – while beginning the planning process for other areas.

The immediate next step we recommend is for the County Executive, or their designee, to work with Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and Office of the Sheriff– with assistance from the Office of Procurement and the Center for Good Food Purchasing – to perform an analysis on how best to implement the Good Food Purchasing Policy (GFPP) in the county administered hospitals and jails.

Specifically, we would like the County hospitals and jails to report back by October 6th on the following:

- Each department’s annual food purchasing budget
- A timeline for completing the baseline assessment of purchases using the Good Food Purchasing framework
- A timeline for setting goals based on the baseline assessment using the Good Food Purchasing framework
- The agencies’ assessment of additional resources needed, if any, to:
 - 1) complete the baseline assessment and
 - 2) six months following the completion of the baseline assessment, set goals for new target scores within the Good Food Purchasing framework and timelines to reach those targets

The Good Food Purchasing Program is a commitment by major public institutions to use their purchasing power to source healthy, high-quality food that supports a strong local economy, fair treatment for food system workers, humane treatment of animals, and environmental sustainability. GFPP has found widespread support among municipal governments and school districts across the country, including San Francisco hospitals and jails, Oakland Unified School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, as well as the cities of Chicago and Boston.

By joining pioneering school districts, cities and counties across the country, the County has an opportunity to deepen its commitment to a more just and equitable food system. Santa Clara County would be among the first counties in the nation to leverage its purchasing power to build a regional food economy – one in which small and mid-sized farmers have sufficient demand for their products and our public institutions help improve access to healthy, high-quality food that is sustainably, fairly, and humanely produced. This amendment will help the city reach this higher bar.

We respectfully request you amend the recommendations to include the Good Food Purchasing Policy so that Santa Clara County can begin the steps toward improving its food procurement using this comprehensive framework.

Sincerely,

Christopher M. Bacon, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Sciences and Member of the Environmental Justice and Common Good Initiative, Santa Clara University*

Ann Duwe, Secretary, Slow Food South Bay

Katie Ettman, Food and Agriculture Senior Policy Associate, SPUR

Poncho Guevara, Executive Director, Sacred Heart Community Service

Kari Hamerschlag, Deputy Director Food and Agriculture, Friends of the Earth

Cayce Hill, Executive Director, Veggielution

Julie Hutcheson, Administrative Committee Chair, Santa Clara County Food System Alliance

Julie Hutcheson, Director of Impact, Green Foothills

Sibella Kraus, Founder & President, SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture Education)

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Margaret Reeves, Senior Scientist (Environmental Health and Workers' Rights), Pesticide Action Network

Kara Shannon, Senior Manager Farm Animal Welfare, ASPCA

Ben Thomas, Program Director Farm to Market, California Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF)

Tracy Weatherby, VP Strategy & Advocacy, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley

* Organizational affiliation for identification purposes only