



**ROADMAP FROM FARM TO SCHOOL:
A NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE CALIFORNIA
FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK**

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This word cloud is a result of responses to the California Farm to School Network Stakeholder Survey question: What does farm to school mean to you?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Farm to School Network (CFSN) is an initiative that provides **coordination and leadership** for the farm to school movement, acting as a **communications hub and convener** across many organizations and regions throughout the state.

In July 2017, management of CFSN was transitioned from the Community Alliance with Family Farmers to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's **Office of Farm to Fork** (Office). It continues to be supported by partners and regional leads that represent a number of different organizations.

A **needs assessment was conducted to guide** the Office's transition, facilitation, and management of CFSN, informed by **extensive research** into the resources and systems of CFSN as well as **30 interviews** and **384 survey responses**. Three major Challenges and Opportunities were identified and Recommendations to address them.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

1) Institutionalizing the Farm to School Movement: Transitioning CFSN to the Office enables the movement to benefit from the expertise of the office and access to state resources, while also requiring some changes to CFSN's handling of farm to school policy.

2) CFSN's Regional Network Model: This regional model allows CFSN to represent the diversity of California, while requiring participation from busy regional leads with full time jobs that overlap to varying degrees with their CFSN duties.

3) Representation: CFSN has the power to influence farm to school activities throughout the state and the members determine the direction of this work. Three opportunities for expanding representation are 1) inclusion of food service directors, 2) filling regional gaps, 3) increasing racial equity and inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Address the Need to Institutionalize Farm to School

- a. **Focus on the Office's ability to add value to CFSN** through its farm to school expertise and collaboration with sister agencies.
- b. **Seek permanent funding for farm to school work** in order to build capacity, expand existing programs, and share best practices.

- c. **Clarify CFSN's new role in farm to school policy** so that partners can take advantage of CFSN knowledge, while respecting necessary limitations on Office staff's participation.
- d. **Consolidate and organize farm to school resources on CFSN's website** during this transition, incorporating Office resources, to hone and improve resources.

2) Address CFSN's Regional Lead Model

- a. **Fund regional leads' work** to support their contributions to CFSN's statewide coverage.
- b. **Clarify regional leads roles** by articulating working group participation and annual CFSN blogs in their responsibilities.

3) Address the Need for Diverse Representation

- a. **Fill regional gaps** by recruiting new regional leads to cover under or unrepresented regions of the state.
- b. **Involve food service directors in CFSN leadership** by either recruiting food service directors in each region as co-leads, or creating a State Farm to School Advisory Panel.
- c. **Prioritize equity and inclusion** by seeking resources and partnership outside the Office to frame these priorities within all of CFSN's work.

INTRODUCTION

What is the California Farm to School Network?

Farm to school programs enrich the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food, and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early childhood education providers.

The California Farm to School Network (CFSN) is a statewide initiative that is supported by staff from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Office of Farm to Fork (Office), the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), Life Lab, the Urban and Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI), as well as regional leads, which represent a number of different organizations throughout the state. CFSN is a "one-stop shop" for everything related to Farm to school in the state of California and acts as a communications hub and a convener across many organizations and regions in the state. CFSN aligns farm to school efforts, shares resources, and brings farmers, schools, distributors, and practitioners together, furthering California's leadership in linking California farms to K-12 schools, early childhood education providers, and post-secondary institutions.

History

Established in 2004, the California Farm to School Taskforce was formed to provide coordination and leadership around farm to school programming around the state. In 2013, the Taskforce made the leap to broaden its work, and transition to a network that is open to everyone in the state of California who is working on farm to school programs and projects. Until 2017, CAFF hosted the Network, with staff overseeing essential communications functions, seeking funding for the Network and regional leads, and hosting two statewide conferences in 2015 and 2017. In July 2017, the Network transitioned to the Office of Farm to Fork within in the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Structure

CFSN is led by one core partner, the Office of Farm to Fork at CDFA, and three supporting partners: CAFF, which specializes in procurement efforts; Life Lab, which specializes in school garden work; and the UEPI, which specializes in farm to early childhood education activities. The Office represents the state of California as a core partner at the National Farm to School Network.

As a communications hub and convener across many organizations and

regions in a large state with diverse populations and landscapes, CFSN was designed as a network made up of 11 regions. Each region—with the exception of the South-Central Valley region, which has not had a consistent regional lead since it was formed—is represented by at least one regional lead. These regional leads are all employed by public or non-profit organizations doing farm to school work in the regions they represent and have additional responsibilities in their roles within CFSN. These include:

- Respond to inquiries about farm to school work in their region
- Host events and facilitate conversations regionally that will help align efforts and share resources amongst farm to school leaders
- Attend one in-person meeting and three phone meetings during the year with other Network leads and staff

CFSN historically has had a Steering Committee, which came together twice since the Network's founding. The committee had one in-person meeting in July 2014. A second meeting was held via conference call in November of 2016 to discuss and approve the transition of CFSN from CAFF to the Office. The steering committee roster has 20 members, although many have left their positions since 2014. Documentation on the committee lists their duties as:

- Determining CFSN goals and objectives
- Reviewing CFSN positions on policy as needed
- Attending quarterly conference calls
- Actively participating in key decision making processes for moving forward on CFSN objectives
- Participating in at least one working group for which you can fulfill the responsibilities and time commitment, such as Farm to Preschool, School Gardens, Policy, or CA Farm to School Conference Planning
- Acting as an ambassador for the CFSN externally
- Facilitating connections between projects and programs you work with to the CFSN, when appropriate
- Providing direction and feedback to staff on CFSN activities

Who are the California Farm to School Network's stakeholders?

Farm to school implementation differs by location but always includes one or more of the following:

- 1) Procurement: Local foods are purchased, promoted and served in the cafeteria or as a snack or taste-test;

- 2) Education: Students participate in education activities related to agriculture, food, health or nutrition; and
- 3) School gardens: Students engage in hands-on learning through gardening/farming.

Based on this range of programs, CFSN's stakeholders include: students, parents of school age children, food service directors and staff, school administrators, farmers, distributors, garden educators, classroom teachers, nutrition educators, and non-profit and government staff. These stakeholders provide direct farm to school services and bring knowledge and experience that helps support the development of such programs.

The California Farm to School Network Needs Assessment and Transition Plan

This report will guide the direction of work the Office will undertake to facilitate and manage CFSN in the coming years. The report is based on qualitative research conducted in June and July 2017 through research, interviews, and survey results. More than 25 one-on-one interviews were conducted with CFSN regional leads, Office staff, supporting partners, national farm to school advocates, and CSFN stakeholders, including food service directors and non-profit staff (see Appendix A for a complete list of interview subjects). The following sections represent a synthesis of the main challenges and opportunities facing CFSN under the new leadership of the Office and recommendations to address them.

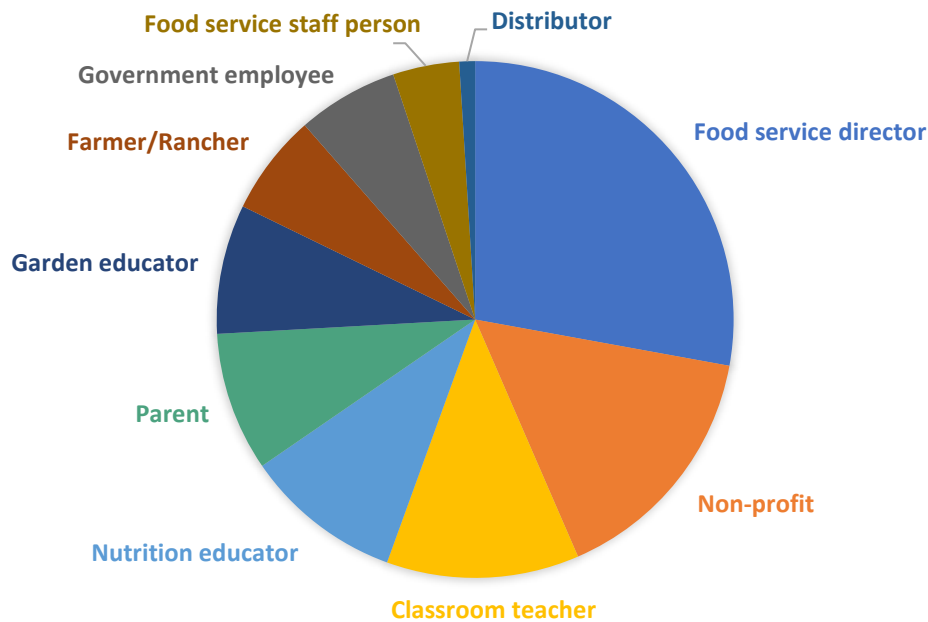
The California Farm to School Network Stakeholder Survey

The 23-question CFSN Stakeholder Survey was promoted throughout the state via regional lead's individual networks, the CFSN and the Office's newsletter lists and social media networks, the CFSN listserv, and CSFN partners and supporters, including the California Department of Education's Nutrition Service Division, which sent an email to 1,300 school nutrition program operators. (see Appendix B for survey questions)

We received 384 individual responses to the survey from farm to school stakeholders. The survey responses allowed us to determine what city and county a respondent was located in and their professional or personal role in farm to school activities is, which we call their 'sector.' Responses came from people throughout the state, although we did not get responses from a number of mostly-rural counties (See Appendix B to see the distribution of responses).

Figure 1 below shows the distribution of respondents between different sectors.

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents' Sectors



Survey Results

Questions covered the following topics: greatest barriers to farm to school work, use of CFSN resources, CFSN conference, and the California Farmer Marketplace (CFM), as well as several open-ended questions that allowed respondents to write narrative responses to express their thoughts on farm to school work and CFSN. Some of the most informative results include:

- a) The top three barriers to expansion of and participation in farm to school work overall:
 1. Lack of staff or time to maintain programs
 2. Lack of funding
 3. Higher cost of local produce

This was the case for every sector except Distributors, for which we only received five responses. All other sectors listed the same obstacles in their top three, in somewhat different order. For a list of all options provided and a breakdown of how each sector ranked their greatest barriers, see Appendix C.

- b) Two-thirds of respondents had not interacted with their CFSN regional lead.
- c) About half of respondents read CFSN's blog and newsletter 'Often' or 'Occasionally,' but only 8 percent of respondents had used the website

calendar in any capacity.

- d) Regarding CFSN online resources, 36 percent of respondents have used a few of the resources on the CFSN website; 64 percent haven't used any.
- e) Finding funding resources consistently ranked in the top three on questions about useful resources, topics of discussion, and challenges.
- f) Following funding, webinars were the second-highest ranked resource that respondents found useful, but the other options provided were close behind (curriculum, case studies of successful farm to school programs, and marketing materials).
- g) Respondents' top-three suggested programming topics for the 2019 conference were: 1) Lessons from integrated farm to school programming across the garden, cafeteria and classroom; 2) Advice on procurement of local farm fresh foods; and 3) Opportunities to network with people in the same field of work or region.
- h) Those respondents who had used the California Farmer Marketplace had good things to say about it; those that had not used it wanted more information.
- i) Other requests and ideas from the CFSN Stakeholder Survey can be found in Appendix G.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Over the last decade, California's farm to school efforts have quickly grown from being largely new and unfamiliar, into a thriving and impactful movement in many parts of the state.

In spite of its development, the movement faces new challenges, making the role of CFSN as important as ever. This report identifies three major challenges and opportunities for CFSN: CFSN's move to the public sector, the regional lead model, and representation in CFSN.

Institutionalizing the Farm to School Movement

Because the farm to school movement is no longer unknown amongst educators, food service, and agriculturalists, efforts should be turned to codifying the programs that have been successful, and sharing their lessons. CFSN's transition from a non-profit organization to a state agency offers many opportunities to address this.

The move to CDFA will help to facilitate an important developmental step in this work by institutionalizing farm to school efforts at the state level. The move also has the potential to improve CFSN's sustainability. While the Office currently does not have direct General Fund financing an opportunity exists for more consistent funding in the future with support from state legislators and agencies.

The importance of institutionalizing CFSN within state government is reinforced by the qualitative research conducted for this report, which confirmed that lack of consistent and sustainable funding and resources for farm to school activities remains the biggest barrier for stakeholders to expanding farm to school programs. Two decades of experience with school gardens, for instance, has shown that without committed staff with sufficient capacity on school grounds, established gardens and the programs that accompany them will fall into disrepair. Similarly, food service directors committed to incorporating farm to school principles into their school nutrition programs need support from school leadership and policies to enable these systems to flourish.

The transition to CDFA also allows CFSN to benefit from the work of Office staff who have extensive experience working with farm to school stakeholders and understand the particular challenges they face in implementing and furthering farm to school programming. The Office offers a new level of access and knowledge of public agencies and resources for farm to school stakeholders outside the public sector. Since the Office was founded in 2014, much of the

farm to school work that they have accomplished has entailed collaboration with other state agencies. They have, for instance, been working with the California Departments of Public Health and Education to develop resources and better coordinate and communicate farm to school efforts taking place throughout California.

Farm to School Policy

The transition to state government also requires some changes in CFSN's roles and functions, primarily with respect to farm to school policy. A key function of CFSN under the leadership of CAFF was to partake in discussions developing state, regional, and school-level farm to school policies and advocate for policies supported by CFSN members that advanced farm to school activities. Now that CFSN is a project within a state agency, CFSN will face different parameters with respect to state-level policy in particular.

As a state agency, CDFA takes its policy priorities from the executive branch of California state government and does not publicly support or oppose proposed legislation without approval from the Governor. Furthermore, agency staff are not allowed to lobby, or communicate directly with any state, legislative or agency official to influence legislative or administrative action.

Therefore, CFSN staff—as employees of CDFA—may facilitate conversations amongst CFSN members about state policy issues and serve in a technical or advisory capacity in farm to school policy conversations rather than play an advocacy role. They may ask questions and share experiences and knowledge about policy implications, but they cannot speak to CFSN, the Office, or CDFA's support or opposition to a proposed bill. Non-state employees involved in CFSN leadership may also contribute to policy work, but it is important that the participation of anyone affiliated with CFSN is not interpreted to signify that CFSN has taken a position on a piece of proposed legislation.

If advocates wish to have CDFA or CFSN support for legislation, they may speak directly to CDFA's Legislative Office. As far as outward-facing CFSN communications channels such as the listserv, e-newsletter, blog, and social media accounts, CFSN may only share educational information about state-level legislation, but may not advocate. The Office may use its communications channels to educate and promote policy with a 'small p,' as local and institutional policies are often referred.

Other states that have public entities acting as core or supporting partners in the National Farm to School Network also have to navigate these nuanced distinctions. In Washington, where the Department of Agriculture hosts a Farm to School office that has an active listserv, staff do not allow advocacy emails on the listserv, but do allow informative messages about policy.

Stephanie Heim, who works for Minnesota Extension, and Helen Dombalis, Program Director for the National Farm to School Network, both insist that public sector staff in the position of the Office that host farm to school networks have an important role to play in policy conversations. Stephanie facilitates policy discussions within the Minnesota Farm to School Leadership Team, ensuring that decisions are evidence-based and informed by best practices in other states. When policy discussions progress from policy development to advocacy, she makes sure that other partners step forward to take over her facilitation role.

The California Farm to School Network's Regional Lead Model

CFSN is made up of 11 regions of two or more California counties. Each region, with the exception of the South Central Valley, is represented by at least one regional lead. Each region has areas or counties that are better-covered than others based on regional leads' spheres of influence. CFSN's regional network model allows farm to school leaders from throughout the state to learn and benefit from one another while strengthening local connections and resources.



This structure places regional leads in the position of sometimes performing CFSN-related duties that do not perfectly overlap with their full-time work. In the past there has been a small stipend used to pay for an annual regional gathering of the lead's design. Unfortunately, CFSN's expected funding for regional leads was stripped from the farm to school grant that the Office received in June 2017. Without this funding, CFSN loses its ability to compensate or incentivize regional leads for the communications, networking, and outreach responsibilities they have traditionally performed and any tasks that the Office hopes to articulate for the first time in their memorandums of understanding (MOU) or scope of work (SOW).

In practice, there is some variation in the degree to which each regional lead is knowledgeable of and connected to the farm to school activities in the different counties of their region. In particular, the North Bay counties of Napa, Sonoma and Marin are not currently covered by the regional leads that cover the North Coast; and the very-Northern part of the state (Lassen, Shasta, Modoc, Siskiyou, Trinity) is not well-covered as part of the North Valley region, which is very large. The South Central Valley region has not had a consistent lead since the larger Central Valley region was divided into two smaller regions.

There is also variation in the degree to which different regional leads perform CFSN-related tasks that exceed what their full-time work requires of them. Some leads, for instance, have robust regional communications and region-wide farm to school events, while others have none. There are also several tasks that regional leads have committed to in the past without their inclusion in their annual MOUs. Ultimately, these activities have not happened with any consistency.

Representation in the California Farm to School Network

Representation in CFSN refers to the farm to school stakeholders who participate actively in CFSN through regional lead or partner roles primarily, but also include non-leadership participation. Since CFSN plays a significant role in influencing the direction of farm to school activities in the state through its role convening conversations and communicating best practices, representation is important. Those stakeholders at the table will influence resource allocation and priorities of the farm to school movement within the state, so striving for diverse representation is important.

Food Service Directors

Currently, CFSN's regional leads come from different parts of the state and work on different aspects of farm to school work (gardens, nutrition education and procurement). However, the staff and regional leads for the CFSN overwhelmingly represent non-profit organizations. While some regional leads work for school districts, food service directors in particular are not represented in the leadership of CFSN. Procurement is an important aspect of farm to school activities and can't take place without the buy-in of food service directors. Since their challenges are particularly complex and food service directors are most responsive to messages from their peers, their participation could have significant impact on farm to cafeteria work in the state.

Regions

Furthermore, some CFSN regions as they currently are drawn leave specific counties under or unrepresented. This is a result of the challenge in recruiting regional leads that have the capacity and expertise to fulfill the expectations of a regional lead in addition to their full-time work, and because regional leads will naturally have deeper ties to the parts of their region that overlap with their full-time works' sphere of influence.

Racial Diversity

Another important part of representation within CFSN and the farm to school movement as a whole is diversity and equity. Diversity includes many different aspects – including gender, racial, ethnic, and religious diversity. Racial diversity in particular is an area for improvement within the farm to school movement. For instance, while California's youth population is only 26.9% White according to KidsData.org, leadership within the farm to school movement-and CFSN-is overwhelmingly White. This disparity is unsettling for some stakeholders who feel that the farm to school movement is made stronger, more effective, and most relevant to students when leaders represent diverse perspectives and experiences and welcome the opportunity to have open dialogue about equity and inclusion in farm to school work. CFSN has not had a role in robust conversations about equity and inclusion in farm to school work until now, and often when these concepts do arise, they go undefined and lack clear calls to action.

The National Farm to School Network has observed these same trends and included a commitment to making racial and social equity central tenets of farm to school in their strategic plan for the coming years. Furthermore, California farm to school leaders have expressed concern about the lack of racial diversity amongst CFSN members and the way these topics have been glossed over in CFSN-facilitated conversations. Both of these issues arose at the conference hosted by CFSN in 2017, but are evident elsewhere. As a result, there is a growing interest in California and nationally to develop definitions for imprecise terms and a commitment to actions related to social justice themes that are often glossed over in farm to school contexts. In this spirit, both are attempted within this report in the Recommendations section and Appendix F.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations listed below are solutions to the main opportunities and challenges identified above.

Addressing the Need to Institutionalize the Farm to School Movement

1) Focus on the Office's ability to add value to CFSN

Collaborate with sister state agencies and USDA to provide CFSN stakeholders with information about the services and programs available, develop new resources, and convene conversations between agencies' staff and farm to school practitioners. One opportunity is to respond to school food service anxieties about new procurement audits by facilitating discussions between food service and California Department of Education staff.

2) Seek permanent funding for farm to school work

To continue to build capacity, expand existing programs, and share best practices with new practitioners, the farm to school movement must have sustainable funding. This includes funds for CFSN functions and regional leads, the Office, and farm to school programs on the ground.

3) Clarify CFSN's new role in farm to school policy

Articulate CFSN's new role in farm to school policy conversations so that partners can take advantage of CFSN's considerable knowledge, while respecting necessary limitations on the Office's participation. The Office staff expertise and facilitation of policy work can help ensure that other long-range and overarching recommendations and goals are met.

4) Consolidate and organize farm to school resources on CFSN's website

As the "one-stop-shop" for farm to school in California, CFSN should continue to hone and improve the resources it provides. Take advantage of the transition of CFSN to the Office in order to review CFSN's website and resources and make changes for ease and efficacy and incorporating the Office's farm to school resources.

Addressing the California Farm to School Network's Regional Lead Model

1) Fund regional leads' work

The Office should seek funding as soon as possible in order to reimburse regional leads for the outreach responsibilities CFSN expects of them.

2) Clarify regional leads' roles

In addition to available funds for regional lead stipends, it would be helpful to make expectations clearer about what the role of regional lead entails by including responsibilities in their MOUs or SOWs that have been requested in the past but have not been articulated. Two such tasks are: serving on working groups and annual blog contributions.

The following working groups were proposed at the regional leads' annual meeting in June:

- a) Communications - This group would be tasked with updating CFSN's communications plan, expanding subscriptions to the CFSN newsletter and listserv, and expanding utilization of CFSN resources.
- b) Policy- This group would be responsible for convening policy conversations with CFSN leadership and disseminating information to other regional leads for sharing within their own communications channels.
- c) Conference Planning - This group would most likely be joined by other farm to school stakeholders to help envision and execute the bi-annual California Farm to School and Garden Conference.
- d) Funding - This group would be responsible for identifying and communicating opportunities to fundraise for farm to school programs generally and for CFSN/the Office in particular.

Other possible working groups include:

- e) California Farmer Marketplace (CFM) - This group would use regional leads' procurement expertise and experience to strategize changes to the CFM that will continue to make it more effective at connecting school districts and California farmers.
- f) Equity and Inclusion in Farm to School - This group would strategize ways to frame equity and inclusion in CFSN's work through communications, recruitment of leadership, trainings, workshops and conference planning, etc.
- g) Measurement and Evaluation - Tim Galarneau, regional lead from the Central Coast region, has suggested that CFSN can and should be used as a way to set statewide standards for farm to school programs

to evaluate effectiveness and aid in reporting. The Golden Seeds Award, which the Office plans to facilitate again in 2019, is one tool to implement this work.

Addressing the Need for Diverse Representation

1) Fill in regional gaps

The most pressing gaps in regional coverage can be addressed by recruitment of a South Central Valley regional lead, and the creation of North Bay and Northern Border regions. Additionally, regional leads' MOUs or SOWs could include language about expansion of outreach for annual regional events to new counties.

2) Involve food service directors in CFSN leadership

Two options for including food service directors in CFSN leadership are:

- a) Recruitment of a food service director to co-lead each of the regions that currently exist. If funding was available for stipends for regional leads, this might be the motivation that some food service directors would need to become involved, but it might not be sufficient for many. Sandy Curwood, former Child Nutrition Director at Conejo Valley Unified School District and Southern Central Coast regional lead, suggested that receiving a FoodCorps worker placement helped her complete her responsibilities as a regional lead as well as contributing to her regular duties at the school district.
- b) Creation of a State Farm to School Advisory Panel, which would entail fewer responsibilities than regional leads perform, but would offer access and influence for leaders within the farm to school movement. The panel could reserve a certain number of seats for food service directors and would perhaps incorporate some of the duties that the steering committee is not performing. This option has been better received by food service directors and is more likely to attract a significant number of leaders in the movement who do not work for non-profit organizations.

3) Prioritize Equity and Inclusion

Seek outside resources and partners to support CFSN's efforts to frame equity and inclusion as central tenets of California's farm to school movement. Some potential actions include:

- a) Bring on a new CFSN partner for equity and inclusion work
- b) Incorporate racial and social justice in CFSN's mission statement and strategic goals
- c) Make an effort to recruit and retain regional leads and staff of color
- d) Create a working group on equity and inclusion
- e) Facilitate conversations, trainings, webinars and workshops on topics that frame equity and inclusion as a central tenet of farm to school.
- f) Incorporate equity and inclusion component into quarterly regional lead meetings
- g) Make equity and inclusion central themes for the California Farm to School and Garden Conference.

More discussion of these concepts, and further proposals to prioritize equity and inclusion in CFSN's work are in Appendix E.

CONCLUSION

California's farm to school movement has seen remarkable growth and development in the years since the California Farm to School Task Force was created over a decade ago. This is a testament to the dedication of farm to school leaders who have committed their time and creativity to establishing programs when farm to school was still an idealistic vision. While these leaders have proven that connecting farms to school communities is much more than idealistic fantasy, the movement continues to face challenges that require commitment and creativity. The role of CFSN to share best practices, convene and facilitate conversations, and consolidate resources and information is important for the continued health of well-established programs and the expansion of a movement that many youth in California still do not benefit from.

Institutionalizing the farm to school movement through CFSN's transition from CAFF to CDFA is another step towards solidifying its work and gaining wider acknowledgement that all students in the state should benefit from farm to school procurement, school garden, and education efforts. To ensure that CFSN is responsive to the needs of different farm to school practitioners and the ever-increasing diversity of our student population, CFSN leadership must focus on representation within CFSN, and approach farm to school work through a frame of equity and inclusion. While the CFSN regional lead model has an important role in ensuring regional diversity within the network, like many networks, it requires pointed efforts to provide regional leads with the motivation and resources needed to remain engaged and involved in the work.

This needs assessment and transition plan, of course, leaves some issues unexplored and we were not able to speak with all CFSN stakeholders. One shortcoming is that there are not more farmers' and distributors' voices included. While we received some input from both groups through the CFSN Stakeholder Survey, their numbers were limited and it was not a representative sampling. Other voices and issues were not explored extensively because of the limited time and scope of the project. We hope that CFSN, under the new leadership of the Office, will continue to invite its stakeholders to the table—asking critically who those stakeholders are—to guide the progress of the farm to school movement in California.

APPENDIX A

CFSN Stakeholder Survey Questions

*required answers

Personal Info: (if you would like to be entered to win raffle, enter your complete contact info)

1. Name: _____
2. Best phone contact: _____
3. Best email contact: _____
4. City, County: _____ *
5. Are you a: * (select all that apply)
 - a. Food service director
 - b. Food service staff person
 - c. Farmer/Rancher
 - d. Distributor
 - e. Parent
 - f. Classroom Teacher
 - g. Garden Educator
 - h. Nutrition Educator
 - i. Non-profit
 - j. Other: _____
6. Employer: _____

Farm to school:

7. What are your greatest barriers to participation in farm to school activities? * (rank top 5)
 - a. Lack of support, interest or understanding from school admin or board
 - b. Lack of support, interest or understanding from school staff
 - c. Lack of support, interest or understanding from parents/community
 - d. Lack of kitchen infrastructure
 - e. Lack of food service staff training
 - f. Lack of staff or time to maintain programs
 - g. Restrictions on meal service time
 - h. Lack of funding
 - i. Limited availability of local foods
 - j. Higher cost of local produce
 - k. Low school meal participation rates
 - l. Lack of collaboration and integration of school garden, cafeteria and education efforts
 - m. Remote location distribution
 - n. Need site-to-site delivery, no centralized drop
 - o. Other: _____
8. What does farm to school mean to you? _____

9. Have you interacted with your regional lead from the California Farm to School Network (CFSN) or participated in regional events/gatherings? *
- a. Yes
 - b. No
10. [If yes] How have you interacted and how often? _____

Network Resources:

11. How often do you read CFSN's monthly newsletter? *
- a. Often
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. Never
 - d. I have not subscribed to the newsletter
12. How often do you read CFSN's website blog? *
- a. Often
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. Never
13. What blog and newsletter content do you find useful? (select all that apply)
- a. Stories about innovative school garden programs
 - b. Stories about innovative food service programs
 - c. Stories about innovative nutrition education programs
 - d. News stories about the farm to school movement
 - e. Highlights of resources from CFSN or partnering organizations
 - f. Farm to school event listings
 - g. Funding opportunities
 - h. Other: _____
14. Have you used the free online resources available on CFSN's website? *
- a. Many
 - b. A few
 - c. None
15. Were the resources easy to find and access?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
16. What farm to school resources have been most useful? (select all that apply)
- a. Webinars
 - b. Marketing materials
 - c. Curriculum
 - d. Case Studies of successful farm to school programs
 - e. Other: _____
17. Have you used the CFSN website calendar? * (select all that apply)
- a. I have submitted events for the calendar
 - b. I have attended events that I found on the calendar
 - c. I have looked for events on the calendar but did not attend any
 - d. I have not used the calendar

California Farm to School and Garden Conference:

18. Have you attended the California Farm to School and Garden Conference? * (select all that apply)
- a. 2015
 - b. 2017
 - c. no
19. What sort of programming would make you come to the 2019 conference? * (select your top 3 choices)
- a. Opportunities to network with people in my field of work or region
 - b. Lessons from integrated farm to school programming across the garden, cafeteria and classroom
 - c. School policies that facilitate farm to school programming
 - d. Local policy advocacy
 - e. State and national policy advocacy
 - f. School garden-specific programming
 - g. Advice on menu planning
 - h. Advice on procurement of local farm fresh foods
 - i. Examples of promotion and marketing of fresh, healthy school meals
 - j. Conversations about equity in the farm to school movement
 - k. n/a, I won't attend
 - l. Other: _____

California Farmer Marketplace:

20. Have you used the California Farmer Marketplace? *
- The [California Farmer Marketplace](#) is a free statewide website featuring California produce, grains, meats, and other products for sale that offers farmers the opportunity to post products and connect directly with school food service. Primarily established to reduce communication barriers between buyers and sellers, the website is free and open to the general public, including ranchers, producers, distributors, institutional buyers, community groups, and individual consumers.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
21. What was your experience? Was the Marketplace helpful? What would you change?

22. [If no] What would make you want to use it? _____

Wrap-Up

23. What else would you like us to know in order to support farm to school efforts in your region? _____

APPENDIX B

CFSN Stakeholder Survey Response Distribution by California County

County Name	Number of Respondents	County Name	Number of Respondents
Alameda	19	Orange	22
Alpine	0	Placer	3
Amador	1	Plumas	0
Butte	11	Riverside	12
Calaveras	1	Sacramento	9
Colusa	3	San Benito	3
Contra Costa	5	San Bernardino	5
Del Norte	1	San Diego	52
El Dorado	2	San Francisco	3
Fresno	10	San Joaquin	6
Glenn	4	San Luis Obispo	7
Humboldt	3	San Mateo	4
Imperial	2	Santa Barbara	3
Inyo	0	Santa Clara	6
Kern	4	Santa Cruz	7
Kings	4	Shasta	4
Lake	2	Sierra	0
Lassen	0	Siskiyou	6
Los Angeles	33	Solano	0
Madera	1	Sonoma	4
Marin	1	Stanislaus	9
Mariposa	1	Sutter	1
Mendocino	1	Tehama	4
Merced	4	Trinity	1
Modoc	0	Tulare	4
Mono	0	Tuolumne	1
Monterey	9	Ventura	5
Napa	5	Yolo	8
Nevada	2	Yuba	1

note: 370 of 384 respondents listed their county

APPENDIX C

CFSN Stakeholder Survey Responses to Question #9 by Sector

Answer Choices	FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS		FOOD SERVICE STAFF		FARMERS		GARDEN EDUCATORS		NON-PROFITS	
	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count
Higher cost of local produce	40.46%	53	18.75%	3	46.43%	13	37.50%	12	32.31%	21
Lack of collaboration and integration of school garden, cafeteria and education	25.95%	34	31.25%	5	35.71%	10	34.38%	11	36.92%	24
Lack of food service staff training	13.74%	18	25.00%	4	21.43%	6	12.50%	4	18.46%	12
Lack of funding	33.59%	44	56.25%	9	32.14%	9	43.75%	14	56.92%	37
Lack of kitchen infrastructure	26.72%	35	43.75%	7	32.14%	9	37.50%	12	27.69%	18
Lack of staff or time to maintain programs	49.62%	65	37.50%	6	35.71%	10	46.88%	15	58.46%	38
Lack of support, interest or understanding of parents/community	10.69%	14	0.00%	0	25.00%	7	15.62%	5	15.38%	10
Lack of support, interest or understanding of school administration or board	9.92%	13	6.25%	1	32.14%	9	31.25%	10	24.62%	16
Lack of support, interest or understanding of school staff	19.85%	26	12.50%	2	10.71%	3	9.38%	3	29.23%	19
Limited availability of local foods	26.72%	35	25.00%	4	10.71%	3	12.50%	4	9.23%	6
Low school meal participation rates	10.69%	14	6.25%	1	10.71%	3	12.50%	4	13.85%	9
No centralized drop location/need for site-to-site delivery	12.98%	17	0.00%	0	17.86%	5	9.38%	3	9.23%	6
Other (please specify)	20.61%	27	25.00%	4	21.43%	6	18.75%	6	20.00%	13
Remote location distribution	11.45%	15	0.00%	0	3.57%	1	6.25%	2	7.69%	5
Restrictions on meal service time	19.85%	26	12.50%	2	3.57%	1	12.50%	4	12.31%	8
	Answered	131	Answered	16	Answered	28	Answered	32	Answered	65
	Skipped	10	Skipped	5	Skipped	4	Skipped	9	Skipped	14

note: The red cells represent the three highest ranking answers for each sector.

Continued on next page

Answer Choices	DISTRIBUTORS		CLASSROOM TEACHER		GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE		TOTAL	
Higher cost of local produce	20.00%	1	20.00%	11	33.33%	9	33.02%	107
Lack of collaboration and integration of school garden, cafeteria and education	0.00%	0	23.64%	13	40.74%	11	30.86%	100
Lack of food service staff training	0.00%	0	9.09%	5	11.11%	3	15.12%	49
Lack of funding	60.00%	3	45.45%	25	51.85%	14	44.75%	145
Lack of kitchen infrastructure	20.00%	1	16.36%	9	25.93%	7	27.47%	89
Lack of staff or time to maintain programs	0.00%	0	38.18%	21	59.26%	16	50.62%	164
Lack of support, interest or understanding of parents/community	0.00%	0	10.91%	6	14.81%	4	12.35%	40
Lack of support, interest or understanding of school administration or board	20.00%	1	12.73%	7	33.33%	9	18.83%	61
Lack of support, interest or understanding of school staff	20.00%	1	20.00%	11	22.22%	6	22.22%	72
Limited availability of local foods	20.00%	1	10.91%	6	25.93%	7	17.59%	57
Low school meal participation rates	40.00%	2	3.64%	2	3.70%	1	9.88%	32
No centralized drop location/need for site-to-site delivery	20.00%	1	5.45%	3	11.11%	3	9.88%	32
Other (please specify)	60.00%	3	21.82%	12	14.81%	4	20.68%	67
Remote location distribution	0.00%	0	7.27%	4	14.81%	4	8.64%	28
Restrictions on meal service time	0.00%	0	10.91%	6	11.11%	3	13.27%	43
	Answered	5	Answered	55	Answered	27	Answered	324
	Skipped	0	Skipped	6	Skipped	4	Skipped	61

note: Parent was another option for respondents to self-identity, but since all respondents who chose that sector also chose Classroom Teacher, it has been omitted.

APPENDIX D

Interview Subjects

Elysia Fong, Office of Farm to Fork, CDFA
Nicole Sturzenberger, Office of Farm to Fork, CDFA
Addison Ford, Office of Farm to Fork, CDFA
Sarah Hanson, Office of Farm to Fork, CDFA
Ben Thomas, Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Allie Hoffman, Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Alise Echele, Ventura USD
Erin Derden-Little, Humboldt Unified School District
John Fisher, Life Lab
Kevin Hesser, Calaveras USD
Prem Durairaj, Community Health Improvement Partners
Robyn Krock, Valley Vision
Sharon Cech, Urban and Environmental Policy Institute
Sheila McQuaid, Center for Healthy Communities
Terri Spezzano, UC Cooperative Extension, Stanislaus and Merced Counties
Tim Galarneau, Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Farming Systems,
Terre Logsdon, formerly of North Coast Opportunities
Chris Iberle, Washington Farm to School
Sapna Thottathil, formerly of School Food Focus
Vanessa Zajfen, School Food Focus
Melissa Cannon, California Food Policy Advocates
Stephanie Heim, University of Minnesota Extension
Helen Dombalis, National Farm to School Network
Hana Lee, Edible Schoolyard
April Cunningham, North Coast Opportunities
Jennifer LaBarre, Oakland USD
Alexandra Emmot, Oakland USD
Matthew Belasco, Pittsburg USD
Sandy Curwood, Virginia Department of Education
Scott Soiseth, Turlock USD

APPENDIX E

Framing Equity and Inclusion in Farm to School

CFSN may choose to discuss and define these terms for itself, however, some brief definitions have been included here in order to help clarify the observations and recommendations offered in this report.

According to PolicyLink's 2013 report, *Promoting Equity Through the Practice of Health Impact Assessment*:

Equity is distinct from equality. Equality provides each person or community with the same amount and type of resources, whereas equity recognizes that each person or community does not start at the same place and may need different types and amounts of resources to achieve similar outcomes. Some communities need more resources to experience the same outcomes as communities that have historically had access to more resources and opportunities. Equity requires that all people and communities have the conditions they need to achieve their full potential. (p. 7)

In the farm to school context, one relevant form of equity is racial equity, which applies this concept to a specific scope. For instance, racial equity implies that people of color—who experience racialized outcomes—need more resources to experience the same outcomes as other people that have different racialized experiences.

Equity requires inclusion, which may be thought of as a state of being valued, respected and supported. Accepting the previous definition of equity therefore implies that action must be taken to ensure that communities historically excluded from the resources and opportunities enjoyed by others are in fact valued, respected and supported. Inclusive programs focus on the needs of individuals and ensure the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential. This most likely requires action above and beyond traditional functions that might favor dominant groups and devalue or ignore minority experiences.

This concept is especially relevant with respect to inclusion of students with disabilities in school gardens. Many gardens have small footpaths and structures that are difficult to navigate for students with physical disabilities, making it unlikely they will experience the known benefits of school garden lessons. In

many cases, making gardens and lessons inclusive of special needs students will require more planning, adaptations, and potentially, more money.

Examples of actions and resources that advance equity and inclusion in the farm to school programs include:

- Culturally inclusive menu planning
- Adaptive school gardens and lesson plans for students with disabilities
- Bilingual curriculum and materials
- Incorporating plants and foods that are common amongst non-White student populations into school gardens and cafeterias
- Hiring more people of color for farm to school jobs

Examples of actions and resources that CFSN can take to frame equity and inclusion as a central tenant of farm to school:

1. Bring on a new CFSN partner for equity and inclusion work
2. Incorporate racial and social justice in CFSN's mission statement and strategic goals
3. Make an effort to recruit and retain regional leads and staff of color
4. Create a working group on Equity and Inclusion
5. Facilitate conversations, trainings, webinars and workshops on topics that frame equity and inclusion as a central tenant of farm to school. Topics could include:
 - Cultural relevance in lesson and menu planning
 - Equity within CFSN and within the farm to school movement
 - Making school gardens inclusive of diverse cultures and abilities
 - How farm to school leaders' personal identities and cultures impact their work with youth and local community
6. Incorporate equity and inclusion component into quarterly regional lead meetings
7. Regarding the California Farm to School and Garden Conference:
 - a. Provide scholarships for farm to school leaders of color
 - b. Seek workshop proposals on topics that incorporate equity, justice, and cultural inclusion in farm to school work
 - c. Partner with an organization with expertise in the field to lead a track on equity and diversity
 - d. Seek speakers for plenaries and sessions that represent diverse experiences and identities
8. New projects/resources:
 - a. Bilingual materials

- b. Menu planning for cultural inclusion
- c. Blogs on increasing lunch participation with culturally appropriate meal planning
- d. Provide equity resources on CFSN website

Resources on Equity and Inclusion

The National Farm to School Network is collecting resources, planning webinars, and strategizing about how they can frame racial and social equity as central tenants of farm to school and could provide support to CFSN in the same process. Although their process is still taking shape, they have already provided core partners with a list of equity resources developed by their staff and asked for more from other states.

The Edible Schoolyard (ESY) has focused much of their professional development work in recent years on exploring how race, class, power, and privilege inform their work and practice. They undertake this work with co-workers, volunteers, students, and other professionals who attend ESY trainings. They have a number of resources publicly available on their website's Anti-Oppression Resource List (<https://edibleschoolyard.org/resource/edible-schoolyard-anti-oppression-resource-list-2016>), and would be a good potential partner or ally in this work.

Within the state, a likely partner may be the California Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force, which strategizes to, "Embed Health and Equity into government programs and practices across agencies and departments." The Office already has a relationship with HiAP and this would be an opportunity to apply HiAP's work to a project within CDFFA.

APPENDIX F

Additional Ideas from CFSN Stakeholders

- Best practices for parent involvement
- Support on forward purchasing agreements
- Support on bid writing to encourage local purchases and an example of an approved bid
- Help navigating regulations
- Bilingual resources
- Resources relating to native foods for Native communities
- Help navigating procurement and food safety rules
- Resources, funding opportunities, and curriculum specifically for early childhood education providers
- Research on benefits of farm to school programming
- Trainings on kitchen safety and knife handling
- Regional networks for garden teachers
- Focus on advancing racial equity through action
- Establish a statewide version of USDA's Team Up for School Nutrition Success program in which food service directors experienced in farm to cafeteria mentor interested and less experienced food service directors
- Add research on benefits of farm to school programming to resources section of website
- Resources and best practices on persuading school boards to support farm to school work
- Advocate for policy that helps incorporate farm to school principles in educational standards
- Incorporate more food service directors into the conference
- Highlight farms available for school tours, especially dairies
- Roster or directory of farm to school programs across the state

APPENDIX G

Next Steps and Action Items

- 1st tier changes to CFSN website – contact information and logos
- Seek funding for regional leads
- Put out a clear policy on CFSN policy participation
- Plans for Legislators in the Cafeteria event in October (have policy group work on this/CAFF lead?)
- Create media plan (frequency of different publications, sources/topics for content, process for approval)
- 2nd tier changes to CFSN website – higher-priority structural changes and content updates
- Connect to Western Growers and clarify their role with School Garden Network website
- Schedule blogs for regional leads
- Form working groups
- Promotion of needs assessment executive summary
- Form new regions and recruit new regional leads
- Plan for equity and inclusion in CFSN
- Complete regional leads MOUs/SOWs
- 3rd tier changes to CFSN website – lower-priority structural changes and content updates
- Form a conference committee using results from the Stakeholder Survey's question about serving on such a committee