

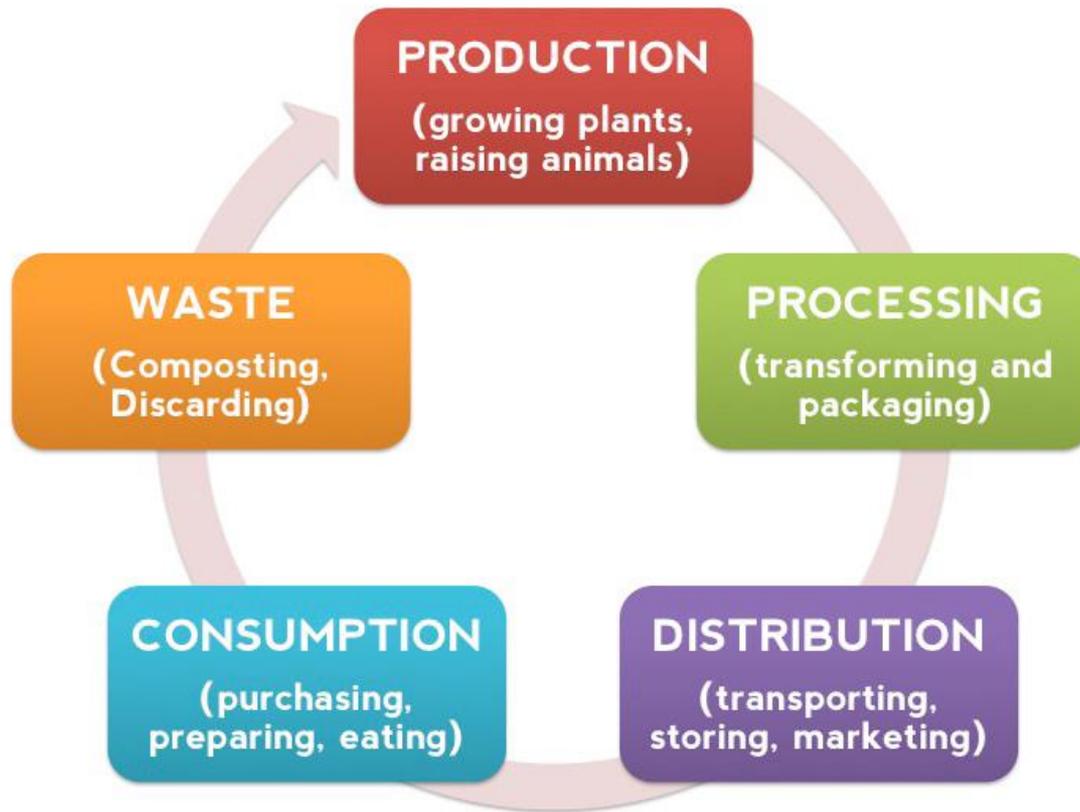
Food Policy for Food Pantries

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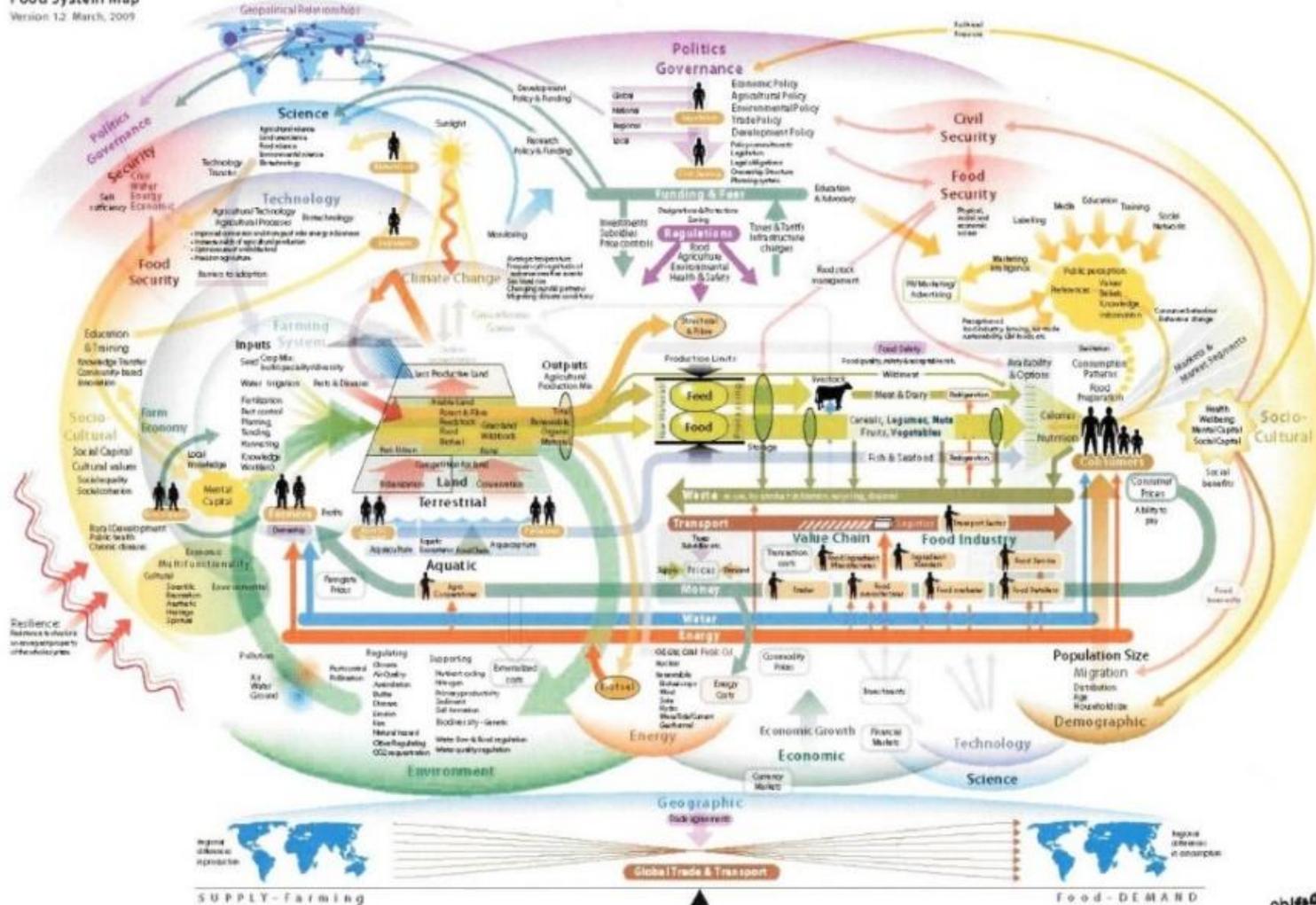
JUNE 26TH, 2017

So What is a Food System?



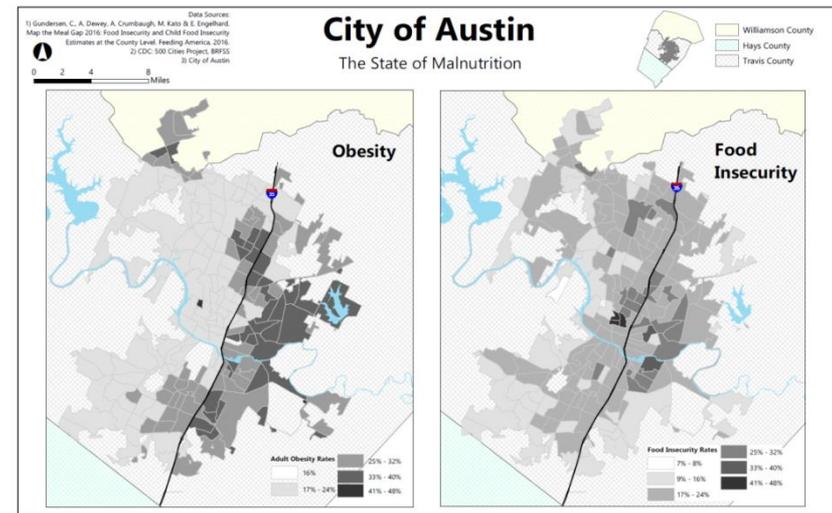
The Global Food System

Food System Map
Version 1.2, March, 2009



Food Insecurity, Public Health, and Poverty

- Food insecurity in Travis County = **17%**
- Obesity rate in Travis County = **24%**
- Obesity rates are **10% higher** in low-income population of Travis County
- Population utilizing food pantries is at much higher risk for chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes
- **Less than 30%** of Travis County consumes the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables



Increasing Access to Healthy Food

- Central Texas Food Bank is committed to increasing the distribution of fresh produce (50% of food bank inventory by 2020)
- The City of Austin is committed to improving access and affordability of healthy food
- Food pantries can help improve health outcomes while also addressing food insecurity



Central Texas Food Bank Health Initiatives

- Healthy Pantry Initiative: developing and sharing best practices to encourage healthy food distribution through “nudges” and interventions
- Food Insecurity Screening Initiative: two-question screening tool used in healthcare settings to refer identified clients to food bank and community resources
- Diabetes Box Program: partner program with Baylor, Scott and White that includes on site testing for diabetes, distribution of healthy food boxes with recipes, and diabetes management group classes

Food Policy

The rules and laws that govern our food system

- Can be Federal, State, County, and Local
- Elected officials pass laws and ordinances
- Governmental entities develop rules and regulations around the laws
- Each community is unique and will have different sets of rules and regulations
- Communities and stakeholders can influence both of these, either by working directly with law makers or by collaborating with government agencies
- Lawmakers (and sometimes government employees) may not have the expertise around food policy issues, so it is important for stakeholders to provide input

What is a Food Policy Council?

A food policy council is a diverse group of citizens from across the food system

They seek to *educate citizens* about the food system, *collaborate to identify and address issues* in the food system, and *advocate for policy changes* that would improve the food system.

Food Policy Council Structure

Food policy councils can focus on different areas of the food system and they can exist at multiple levels, but all are interested in improving their local food system in a way that is beneficial to their stakeholders.

Can be public, private, and/or collaborative

Possible members of a food policy council:

- Farmer or member of agricultural community
- Anti-hunger advocate/food pantry
- Public health expert
- Restaurant owner
- Retailer
- School food service director

Food Policy Councils Focus

- ⦿ Addressing the underlying causes of hunger
- ⦿ Decreasing obesity by increasing access to fresh healthy food
- ⦿ Improving food service and standards within public and private schools
- ⦿ Stimulating economic development and job creation
- ⦿ Supporting community gardens and local agriculture
- ⦿ Looking at the entire community food system to address inefficiencies such as food waste

What do Food Policy Councils do?

Food Policy Councils do *not* make policy

They do make RECOMMENDATIONS for policy makers based on their intimate knowledge of the food system.

Examples of 'Food Policy'

- Taxation on groceries
- Zoning for farm land
- Health inspections at restaurants

The Austin Travis County Food Policy Board

Formed in 2008

Joint City and County Board

City Council appoints 7 member and County Commissioners/ Judge appoint 6 members

Abides by open meetings act as well as ethics laws

Works to represent all aspects of the food system via membership from various sectors

ATCFPB Working Groups

Farmland Preservation and Access,

Develops policies and procedures to preserve existing farmland and increase access to new farmland for farmers from diverse backgrounds, communities, and skillsets.

Codes and Ordinances,

Works to ensure a comprehensive yet accessible set of codes, ordinances, policies, rules, and billing throughout Austin and Travis County to stimulate a thriving community-based food system.

Healthy Food Security and Access,

Uses advocacy and researched-based policy to encourage greater access to healthy food, as well as educational opportunities, to support a secure food future for all.

Budget and Policy,

Collaborates with Austin City Council, the Travis County Commissioners Court, and City and County staff to monitor and advance budgetary and policy items related to the goals of the Austin/Travis County Food Policy Board.

Institutional Purchasing,

Develops policies and procedures to improve institutional food purchasing.

Food Recovery,

Identifies, supports, and promotes solutions for using previously wasted food to feed Austin's people, animals, and soil.

Food and Climate,

Works to quantify the carbon footprint of food and agriculture activities in Austin/Travis County to provide solutions to mitigate associated greenhouse gas emissions, sequester atmospheric carbon, and build a resilient food system for all Austin residents.

ATCFPB Successes

- Ordinance for temporary food permits at farmers markets
- Defined urban farms and community gardens
- Economic impact analysis of urban agriculture and local food system
- Increased funding for SNAP outreach and enrollment
- Included food systems in city's strategic plan, Imagine Austin
- Funding for healthy corner store initiatives, school farmstands, and mobile markets

Roundtable Discussion

Q1: How might I improve food access?

Q2: How can I better coordinate food systems in my community?