

Green Umbrella Local Food Action Team Strategic Plan for 2017-2018

GU Food Action Team Mission

To develop a thriving local food system by serving as a catalyst, advocate and communication hub for local food initiatives.

The Local Food team brings together local farmers, distributors, processors, farmers markets, cooperatives, community gardeners, community supported agriculture organizations, health professionals, restaurants, extension services, educational organizations and government entities in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area to work collaboratively.

Guiding Principles of the GU Food Action Team

- 1) All Greater Cincinnati residents should have access to affordable, local, healthy, sustainable, food.
- 2) Our work focuses on food grown in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, with a priority for foods grown in our region.
- 3) Intentional coordinated efforts in advocacy, public education, and awareness are needed to build a stronger local food system.
- 4) It should be easy to grow food in our region, for personal use or for business purposes.
- 5) Businesses that produce, process, distribute, and sell local and healthy food should grow and thrive in Greater Cincinnati.
- 6) Food growing, production, and distribution practices should be humane and ethical.
- 7) Food production and distribution should adhere to sustainable growing practices that result in improvement of the quality of the local environment.
- 8) A thriving local food system requires strong collaboration among all stakeholders in the food system.
- 9) Progress toward goals should be measured.
- 10) Food related waste should be prevented, reused, or recycled.

GU Food Action Team Vision

Thanks to GU's efforts to promote collaboration and local food initiatives, by 2020, the Greater Cincinnati region will have a thriving local food system that addresses the needs of consumers, producers, distributors, and other food system stakeholders.

More specifically,
GU Food System Strategic Plan

- A cultural shift will have occurred in our region that focuses on healthy living and eating.
- The benefits of buying local foods will be widely understood.
- Local foods will be widely available, accessible to all of our region’s residents.
- Local governmental and private sectors will support and promote a strong local food system.
- There will be numerous garden plots at churches, businesses, government properties, and other community properties where space allows.
- Our citizens will have an increased level of self-sufficiency as a result of access to local foods.
- Our region will be less susceptible to food security threats through re-establishing closer consumer-producer connections.
- There will be career opportunities that pay living wage employment in all aspects of the food system.
- Local universities will offer opportunities for education and certification in local food related fields.
- Our local food system will be recognized regionally and nationally, and looked to as a model for replication.
- At least 10% of food dollars of individuals, corporations, and institutions in our region will be used to support local food producers and related businesses

Unique Niche

Green Umbrella is the “backbone organization” that helps all member organizations work better together to promote a more environmentally sustainable region.

Green Umbrella partners with our area’s leading planning initiatives, Vision 2015 in Northern Kentucky and Agenda 360 in Southwestern Ohio, to facilitate collaboration among over 200 area non-profits, businesses, educational institutions and governmental entities focused on the environmental aspects of sustainability. We have united around the Collective Impact Model, which has produced remarkable results for the STRIVE Partnership, the collaborative that promotes innovation in our local education system. The model teaches that success requires having a common agenda, using a shared measurement system, supporting mutually reinforcing activities and maintaining continuous communication.

The infrastructure of GU provides easy access to “early adopters,” both organizations and individuals, who are interested in promoting consumption of locally produced fruit and vegetables.

Assumptions for 2016- 2018

1. Local food tends to cost more than mainstream food because
 - a. demand for local foods exceeds current supply, and

- b. a lack of distribution and aggregation infrastructure reduces efficiencies and cost savings.
2. For the local food movement to reach its full potential, the price gap between local and mainstream food will have to shrink and distribution will need to increase.
3. People tend to value locally produced foods over globally produced food.
4. Local food distribution offers opportunities for reducing the cost of every component of distribution including transportation, refrigeration, packaging, advertising, insurance and middle people.
5. Food distributors will respond to increased demand in local foods.
6. Technical assistance for competition strategies will help local food businesses better compete with global food distributors, for example, use of social media and mobile technologies, etc.
7. “Network communities of practice” (joint procurement cooperatives for ex.) help locally owned businesses compete with large food distributors.
8. Shorter food supply lines and community self-reliance that come with local food can reduce food security risks.
9. Private/public partnerships are needed to address food insecurity in low-income communities.
10. Collaboration will affect changes in public policy, thus driving systemic change in the local food system
11. The timing is right for local food initiatives since public awareness of the need for healthy food choices and sustainable environment initiatives is increasing dramatically.
12. Economic benefits for the local community must be emphasized in the case for local foods.

Strategic Intent:

Green Umbrella will lead a collaborative effort working with local stakeholders to serve as a catalyst and coordinator for a thriving local food system.

BHAG (Big, hairy audacious Goal):

To double the percentage of consumption and production of locally sourced fruit and vegetables by 2020.

Key Result Areas:

Green Umbrella's (GU) local food advocacy efforts will target results in Infrastructure Development, Education, Access, and Policy.

Infrastructure Development for Local Food Initiatives:

GU will be the backbone organization and recognized leader for collaborative initiatives to promote local food, production, distribution, recovery policy and consumption. GU will facilitate communication, collaboration and data collection among individuals, communities, producers, distributors and policy makers to support a sustainable food system. GU will provide a forum and infrastructure for sharing best practices and information, helping to reduce barriers, and brokering partnerships. GU will be actively involved in developing and implementing a Strategic Plan for the local food system along with other local food stakeholders. A full time "Local Food System Advocate" will coordinate GU's initiatives, working closely with the GU Food Action Team. The Food Action leadership team will serve as the advisory team. GU will work with local food advocacy groups in neighboring regions in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. .

Education About Local Foods:

People in Greater Cincinnati will have food literacy skills. They will have a good sense of where their food comes from, where to buy local foods, how to plan meals, and how to prepare and properly store fresh fruit and vegetables. They will know where to go for information about preserving food and other topics related to local foods. Consumer demand for local produce will increase due to education efforts from Green Umbrella and other stakeholders in the local food system. Farmers and local food related businesses will better understand opportunities for growth in producing and distributing local foods including tax incentives for donations.

Access to Locally Produced Foods:

All people in the Greater Cincinnati region will have convenient access to healthful, affordable, local and sustainably grown food. Local foods will be readily available to individual consumers, in their homes, their workplaces, in schools, and other community places. In addition to farmers markets and stands, mainstream retailers will offer locally grown food. The number of certified food producers will have increased. Funding and policy mechanisms that support increased local food production will be in place.

Policies that Support the Local Food System:

A regional Food Policy Council will have been established with a sustainable infrastructure. The Council will be actively executing a prioritized action plan. Agenda 360, Vision 2015, and other regional plans will incorporate local food initiatives. Local Institutions such as schools, city departments, and community and civic organizations will incorporate policies for healthy local food. Decision makers in government, business, and community

organizations will support efforts to build more complete and sustainable local food production, distribution, recovery, and recycling systems. There will be public and private land designated for community or institutional gardens.

Bold Initiatives

- 1. Develop a robust Local Food System Infrastructure**
- 2. Promote Healthy Food Consumption and Access**
- 3. Develop and implement financial support strategies to sustain local food initiatives.**
- 4. Strengthen Local Food Distribution, Recovery, and Recycling Infrastructures**
- 5. Provide Technical Assistance and Expertise for Local Food Producers**

Bold Initiative 1: Develop a Robust Local Food System Infrastructure.

			Standards of Performance			
#	Goals	Champion (Who Else?)	Activities	Measures	Target 2017	Target 2018
1a	Engage more partners for the LFAT, facilitate more networking opportunities, and expand the collaborative.	Kristin Weiss LFAT members LFAT leadership team LFAT Leadership Other Action Team Leaders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Green Drinks to engage new people and organizations to LFAT and then add them to the mailing list Identify stakeholders and reach out to new people. Ask LFAT members for 10 organizations/people they interact with Reach out to non-food groups that represent demographics LFAT is trying to engage -- understand how to better reach people Education topics may encourage people to “bring a friend” Incorporate/Invite Local Food Vendors to come to the LFAT meetings and promote their venues for local food. Ask Food related GU members or members of other action teams to come to LFAT meetings 	<p>attendance and sign-in sheets</p> <p>sign-in sheets</p> <p>lists generated from request</p> <p>sign-in sheets</p> <p>attendance #</p> <p># Vendors at meetings</p> <p># of guests who attend</p>	<p>15 new</p> <p>50 unique orgs/people</p> <p>10 new</p> <p>10% bring a friend</p> <p>1 Vendor</p> <p>5 guests attend</p>	<p>20 new</p> <p>50 unique orgs/people</p> <p>10 new</p> <p>15% bring a friend</p> <p>2 Vendors</p> <p>10 guests attend</p>

1b	Collect metrics on local food production (i.e. farmers markets, food hubs, aggregation) and identify sub-metrics to track progress on goals (i.e. local production, local sales)	<p>Green Umbrella</p> <p>Kristin Weiss</p> <p>Produce Perks/Tevis</p> <p>Edible Ohio Valley/Amy</p> <p>Food Policy Council</p> <p>Michaela Oldfield</p> <p>LFAT leadership team</p> <p>Farmers Market Mangers Group</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share progress for regional/national recognition in press 2. Identify metrics already collected by various group 3. Identify new metrics to collect, at market setting 4. Form a Metrics Committee to support metrics work 5. Publish report on metrics at the annual meeting to share work and needs with members, prospective funders, press 6. Edible Ohio Valley can track distribution #s, can track # farmers that can advertise 7. Involve universities, develop database, develop or research tracking tools for producers to use, creating forecasting and planning tools 8. Get data/metrics collected by FPC 	<p># of “wins” shared</p> <p>List of metrics & who collects them</p> <p>List of metrics to collect at markets</p> <p>Committee formed</p> <p>Report published</p> <p>Metrics from EOV gathered</p> <p>List of universities to contact.</p> <p>List of metrics from FPC</p>	<p>5 wins shared</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>4 meetings held</p> <p>1 Report Published</p> <p>1 set of metrics gathered</p> <p>2 contacts made</p> <p>List received</p>	<p>5 wins shared</p> <p>List updated</p> <p>List updated</p> <p>8 meetings held</p> <p>1 Report Published</p> <p>1 set of metrics gathered</p> <p>All contacts made</p> <p>List updated</p>
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Bold Initiative 2: Promote Healthy Food Consumption and Access

			Standards of Performance			
#	Goals	Champion (Who Else?)	Activities	Measures	Target 2017	Target 2018
2a	Continue to promote the 10% Shift Campaign to local residents	LFAT Members LFAT Leadership Green Umbrella	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask all LFAT Members to promote the 10% shift pledge and to sign up more local residents for the 10% shift pledge. 2. Promote the 10% shift campaign at local Farmer’s Markets and other local food venues 3. Organize a Bring Your Own Bag campaign with 10% shift bags 4. Ask LFAT members to contribute content for the 10% shift campaign newsletter and continue to send the newsletter each month. 5. Publicize the 10% shift toolkits and give all LFAT members access to utilize those resources. 6. Promote the 10% shift campaign at local events related to food or local foods 	<p># of events/locations where information provided</p> <p>List of events where materials were provided</p> <p># Newsletters sent out</p> <p># Toolkit requests made</p> <p># new 10% shift pledges made in 2017</p> <p># of events promoting local foods</p>	<p>10 Events</p> <p>15 events identified</p> <p>6 Newsletters</p> <p>5 Requests</p> <p>100 New Pledges</p> <p>2 events</p>	<p>10 New Events</p> <p>20 events identified</p> <p>10 Newsletters</p> <p>5 Requests</p> <p>100 New Pledges</p> <p>5 events</p>

2b	Conduct other Outreach Campaigns to Increase Consumption of Local Food	LFAT Members	1. Set up booths at local events to compare the cost of local foods & goods to the cost of similar foods at the grocery store & provide consumers with toolkits to measure wasted food and its dollar value.(GCFWAP 1.2a)	# events attended	3 Events	5 Events
		Denise Honey		# toolkits provided	1 per event	5 per event
		Green Umbrella	2. Have LFAT members set up a table at the Flying Pig Expo to bring attention to local foods and their importance.	# CORV guides distributed	increase by 5%	increase by 5%
		CORV Guide				
		Edible Ohio Valley				
		Civic Garden Center	3. Continue to support the CORV guide and help to expand their distribution	# Edible Ohio Valley subscriptions	increase by 5%	increase by 5%
		Gabriel's Place				
Community Gardens	4. Support Edible Ohio Valley to help increase their distribution, increase ad space devoted to local foods, and expand their reach	# gardens supported	2 gardens	5 gardens		
Hamilton County Recycling & Solid Waste						
	5. Work with local community gardens to help recruit gardeners, volunteers, and mentors to increase the number of people growing their own foods	List of ways to publicize Ohio Local Foods Week	List generated	List updated		
	6. Publicize Ohio Local Foods Week (through OSU) to get people to buy/consume more local foods.	# of events promoting	2 events	5 events		
	7. Explore ways to promote local					

			<p>foods at large events like Taste of Cincy, Oktoberfest, other large events.</p> <p>8. Promote seasonal, local produce and local farmers' market shopping to area residents as a way to reduce food waste and help the local economy. (GCFWAP 1.3a)</p> <p>Local Food = Fresher Food</p> <p>9. Educate residents on the proper way to store produce in order to reduce food waste and save money.(GCFWAP 4.2d)</p>	<p>local foods</p> <p>Farmers' Market patron counts</p> <p># of educational strategies used</p>	<p>5% increase</p> <p>2 strategies used</p>	<p>5% increase</p> <p>5 strategies used</p>
2c	<p>Address food insecurity and food deserts via local foods and other assets already in place and promote local foods to groups that may not currently have access or awareness to local foods</p>	<p>LFAT Members</p> <p>Green Umbrella</p> <p>Tevis Foreman/Produce Perks</p> <p>Farmers Markets</p> <p>Gary Dangel</p> <p>Findlay Market/Toni Sauerhage</p>	<p>1. Support the work of Produce Perks and promote the Produce Perks program as much as possible.</p> <p>2. Work to increase public transportation options to Farmers Markets and other local food venues.</p> <p>3. Utilize Findlay Market Farm Stands to help grow awareness of local foods and bring local foods to underserved areas</p> <p>4. Support the work of Gorman Heritage Farm to address food</p>	<p># Produce Perks markets</p> <p># people who attend Farmer's Markets</p> <p># Findlay Market Farm Stands</p> <p># attendees at Gorman Heritage Farm programs</p>	<p>1 new market</p> <p>5% increase</p> <p>1 new farm stand</p> <p>5% increase</p>	<p>2 new markets</p> <p>5% increase</p> <p>1 new farm stand</p> <p>5% increase</p>

		Gorman Heritage Farm	insecurity and promote their programs.			
		Kim Chelf/WeTHRIVE!	5. Work with the WeTHRIVE! Initiative in Hamilton County to increase access to healthy, local foods in underserved areas.	# WT communities addressing food access issues	5 communities	3 communities
		University students & interns	6. Work with Walnut Hills to fill the void left by Kroger leaving with more local food options	# Food retailer in Walnut Hills		
		Hamilton County Recycling & Solid Waste	7. Determine the top barriers to local food access and work to address them by holding focus groups and surveying people on why they do or do not buy local.	List of barriers to local food access	5 barriers identified	10 barriers identified
			8. Support the work Our Harvest & Freestore Foodbank do to bring local foods to underserved areas including the Healthy Harvest Mobile Market and Harvest Days programs.	# focus groups held List of barriers generated	2 focus groups held List generated	2 focus groups held List updated
			9. Work with community gardens and food pantries to help utilize garden bounties to feed those in need (GCFWAP 2.2d)	List of ways to support work	List generated	2 strategies implemented
			10. Educate consumers on accepting imperfect produce and teach them how to utilize that produce	List of potential partners	List generated	List updated
				# Pounds of Produce donated	Some produce donated	5% increase
				# educational opportunities utilized	2 opportunities	5 opportunities

			in cost effective ways. (GCFWAP 4.2d)			
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Bold Initiative 3: Develop and implement financial support strategies to enhance and sustain local food initiatives.

Pending approval of GU Director

Bold Initiative 4: Strengthen Local Food Distribution Infrastructure

			Standards of Performance			
#	Goals	Champion (Who Else?)	Activities	Measures	Target 2017	Target 2018
4a	Support & Promote more organizations that distribute local foods	Hamilton County Recycling & Solid Waste	1. Determine target groups to receive information about local food organizations	List of groups to target	5 groups identified	10 groups identified
		Green Umbrella	2. Market development grants via Ohio EPA & region 5 EPA regarding preventing wasted food	List of grants sent to interested organizations	2 emails sent	2 emails sent
		LFAT Members	3. Sponsor & support CORV Guide			
		Our Harvest	4. Support growth of food hubs & sales to local farmers by promoting CSAs & institutional purchasing of local food in greater quantities	List of CSA in area List of organizations that purchase local foods # of organization that purchase local foods	List generated List generated 2 organizations	List updated List updated 5 organizations
			5. Retain and build on the local food map	# of locations on map	5 locations added	5 locations added
			6. Encourage Pop-Up markets at well-attended events to promote regular markets,	# pop-up markets held # of events/locations	1 held 10 events	3 held 10 events

			stores, etc.	where information provided		
			7. Push 10% shift information out to more people to increase demand	# new 10% shift pledges made in 2017	100 new pledges	100 new pledges
			8. Work with the local farm community, churches, and volunteer groups to develop gleaning programs and advertise benefits for farmers(GCFWAP 2.2d)	List of partners	List developed	List updated
				Plan generated	Plan developed	Plan updated

Bold Initiative 5: Provide Technical Assistance and Expertise for Local Food Producers

#	Goals	Champion (Who Else?)	Standards of Performance			
			Activities	Measures	Target 2017	Target 2018
5a	Encourage growers and local producers	<p>Chuck Lohre</p> <p>Meghan Franduti/Tower to Table</p> <p>Michaela Oldfield</p> <p>OSU Cooperative Extension</p> <p>Cincinnati City (OES)</p> <p>Higher Ed. Training Programs (XU, CSt, Miami)</p> <p>Vocational Schools</p> <p>Civic Garden Center</p> <p>Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste</p>	<p>1. Promote home and garden tours to encourage more people to garden</p> <p>2. Use existing promotional avenues to encourage & promote growing by local residents</p> <p>3. Promote Tower to Table workshops through UC to encourage growers</p> <p>4. Explore ways to increase technical assistance capacity to assist meeting goals of growers</p> <p>5. Explore ways to help growers find outlets to sell their goods in order to make it profitable for them to continue their work</p> <p>6. Find volunteers for school gardens and to help with garden education</p> <p>7. Promote existing resource for</p>	<p>List of ways to promote tours</p> <p>List of existing avenues</p> <p>List of ways to promote</p> <p>List of possibilities</p> <p>List of possibilities</p> <p># volunteers connected to school gardens</p> <p>List of current</p>	<p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>10 volunteers</p> <p>List generated</p>	<p>1 strategy used</p> <p>2 strategies used</p> <p>2 strategies used</p> <p>List updated</p> <p>List updated</p> <p>20 volunteers</p> <p>List updated</p>

			<p>aeroponic gardens and school gardens</p> <p>8. Work with other groups in the area to establish and promote incubator/accelerators to help growers get started</p> <p>9. Work with Schools/programs to develop the next generation of farmers via vocational or farm training programs on production, distribution, recovery and composting.</p> <p>10. Coordinate with Green Space Action Team & Food Policy Council to find ways to develop/preserve land for farming/growing</p> <p>11. Educate local growers on the benefits of composting for home and community gardens and as a way to reduce food wasted. (GCFWAP 3, 4)</p>	<p>resources</p> <p>List of potential partners</p> <p>List of current programs</p> <p>List of current activities</p> <p>Joint meetings held</p> <p># educational opportunities used</p> <p># attendees at classes held by HC R&SW & Civic Garden Center</p>	<p>2 connections made</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>List generated</p> <p>2 meetings held</p> <p>5 opportunities used</p> <p>5% increase</p>	<p>1 proposal generated</p> <p>50% of programs contacted</p> <p>List updated</p> <p>5 meetings held</p> <p>8 opportunities used</p> <p>5% increase</p>
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