

small talks for big change:

conversations around getting and growing good food

Community Food Security Center of the Community Food Bank

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
Themes of Issues and Ideas: problems with getting good food	
unemployment and underemployment	6
education	7
housing	8
health	8
accessibility and transportation	9
age-related concerns	9
inappropriateness of current food assistance	10
immigration and international issues	11
waste, efficiency and distribution	11
decision-making, policy-making, budgeting, resource-management	12
Themes of Issues and Ideas: growing good food locally	
possibilities and “positivities”	13
working together, community exchanges	14
environmental resource concerns	15
inaccessible vocabulary?	15
attitude, perception and time	16
race, culture and food: “white-people lettuce”	17
Projects and Partnerships	18
Recommendations for Future Research and Action	21
Appendix A: The Community Food Security Center	23
Appendix B: The Emerson National Hunger Fellowship	25
Appendix C: Give us YOUR ideas	26

Executive Summary

It is increasingly apparent in community-based work that the *process* by which changes are made is just as important as the end result. Emphasis on process - and specifically on community participation in the social change process- has led to the report now in your hands. It is the result of conversations around getting and growing food locally with approximately 30 community members including recent immigrants, service providers, youth, teachers, city council staff, graduate students and representatives from neighborhood associations. Community members discussed the problems with getting good food, as well as their thoughts and ideas for growing good food locally.

I. Getting good food

Based on conversations, two significant problems with getting good food emerged. First, the lack of good-paying employment and second, the lack of education about efficiently growing, preparing and preserving food. Other factors and issues include high housing and healthcare costs, transportation and accessibility, age-related concerns, inappropriateness of emergency food assistance, waste and efficiency, decision-making and resource management, and immigration and international issues.

II. Growing good food locally

Interest in growing food locally was discussed. Ideas and thoughts included people working together, exchanging resources and establishing community ownership. There were also questions about the environment of the desert, the ways food can be grown and how people can become more involved. More explicit discussion is needed about how to talk about food and “food systems” and how other factors like race, age, geography, culture and gender affect people’s thoughts about, and ability to, get and grow good food.

III. Specific Projects and Proposals

Local food projects that address the issues of employment and education are the most supported.

The lack of good-paying jobs which affect peoples’ ability to afford good food is a serious problem. Specific employment projects suggested during conversations include:

- Commercial kitchens for job-creation (the most supported)
- Intergenerational gardening and food-marketing
- Compost-production and selling

Lack of awareness of why local food is important and how the larger structure of the food system relate to the community and/or the individual is a problem. There is also a perceived need for more education on nutrition, gardening and cooking and combining education and knowledge with resources for action. Specific education projects suggested in conversations include:

- Creating school curricula that incorporates all aspects of food (growing, preparing, selling, etc) into learning
- Public outreach and education campaigns on all issues
- Working with the media and the arts to educate, inform and spark more conversation.

IV. Recommendations for future research and action

The author makes the following recommendations based on the themes, issues, ideas and projects that emerged. These include:

- Continue conversations with more people in more places and build on the connections made during conversations
- Gather specific quantitative and qualitative data on hunger and food insecurity in Pima County
- Explore the different ways to talk about food issues so that they are understandable and accessible
- Investigate and invest in the policies and actions needed to increase success of food projects and ideas

Introduction

It is increasingly apparent in community-based work that the *process* by which changes are made is just as important as the end result. Emphasis on process - and specifically on community participation in the social change process- has led to the report now in your hands. It is a series of conversations with community members around food-both getting and growing good food locally.

Community food security is achieved when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient food for a healthy lifestyle (paraphrased USDA). Working for community food security, the Community Food Security Center (CFSC) of the Community Food Bank is planning a long-term project that would restore, support and strengthen local food production and direct markets in Pima County. The plan is to produce quality food locally, by local people, to stimulate the local economy, create livable wage employment and to make healthy food more available and accessible to more people, particularly people with low incomes

Restoring a local food system has not been done in many places on a large scale so the CFSC decided to start by talking with the people who are intended to benefit. In November and December of 2005, eighteen conversations were held between and with approximately 30 individuals. These included recent immigrants, service providers, youth, teachers, city council staff, representatives from neighborhood associations, and graduate students. Many are members of our community who are ignored, forgotten or dismissed when talking about possibilities and change.

The conversations included the following questions:

- What are the problems we face in getting good and healthy food?
- What sorts of things should we be creating or doing, as a community, to address these problems?
- Who else should be thinking, planning and talking with us as we proceed?
- Would you like to be involved in this project as we proceed?

Thoughts and ideas from forgotten citizens of our community are the best starting point for the journey to food security. This report serves as the beginning exploration of the resources we have, people's interest in expanding the resources, and the other ideas that arise when talking in the community about food. The common themes in the following sections may be expanded in the future in additional conversations for more insight.

Also, it is important to note that this is a working document. One that will spark more dialogue in the community on all the issues involved in getting and growing good food locally.

Themes of Ideas and Issues:

problems with getting good food

The following are themes regarding the problems or obstacles we face as a community getting good food. Many of these themes are interconnected.

unemployment and underemployment

Jobs and the lack of sufficient income are the first factors mentioned that prevent people from getting good and healthy food. Reading from the following quotes, it is not just an individual problem. It is also about the large picture and the lack of steady jobs that pay decent and sufficient wages to provide for a family or individual.

“Put us to work, please. Give me a job. Most people are working part-time without benefits. It’s ridiculous. I have lived in poverty since I’ve been in this state.”

“People get really stuck in our community.”

“You get tired of the door being slammed in your face and shit happens and it happens every day.”

“People are really starving in this neighborhood. A lot of people work two jobs and you can’t believe the salaries.”

“I lay awake at night thinking of things to create jobs here.”

“We can end hunger by enlarging people’s paychecks.”

“There is no industry left in America, especially in Arizona. We don’t make anything anymore and we need to create [again].”

“Most of us are a paycheck away from starving.”

“The job market in Tucson is horrible, low-paying and thankless.”

“\$6/hr is too much to make food stamps but it’s also not a living wage.”

“If people aren’t paid well, then they can’t afford to eat.”

“We have to do something because the poorer people are getting poorer and I see there’s no jobs. All minimum wage jobs...”

education

Another issue frequently mentioned is the lack of education and knowledge regarding many different aspects of food. Many people express an interest in getting fresh, good-tasting food, especially produce. Four themes emerged from conversations. Some people felt that they understood these themes and issues and thought they needed to be educated to the public. Others expressed that they would like more information about:

- what nutritious foods are and how they can be prepared,
- why local and organic foods are important and how they impact communities,
- how food can be grown in the desert,
- how the larger structure of the food system is related to the individual every day.

In one example, a person explained that she knew a man who grew up in Tucson and did not know until he was middle-aged that Mesquite bean pods were not poisonous! The person relaying the story explained that providing knowledge about food should be the number one goal and must be joined with the resources needed to use knowledge. For example, information on mesquite pods can be combined with the community mesquite mill and information on cooking with mesquite flour.

“We have to teach people the reasons to embrace the alternatives [to the current food system].”

“The challenge is in understanding fundamentally where food comes from.”

“It’s amazing how many people I know who don’t know how to cook.”

“With education, local foods are definitely sellable.”

“We need to educate on all that’s entailed in that squash.”

“He always thought Mesquite was poisonous.”

“People need to learn not only what to grow, but why.”

“If we have a year round growing season here in Tucson, why don’t people know about it and why don’t they plant?”

translated from Spanish

“[Local food production] is a tremendous public education effort because we are fighting big corporations.”

“There is such a disconnect with farming [and where food comes from].
“People love to look at animals [or go to farms] but then go to Trader Joe’s and don’t make the connection.”

“Take a look at obesity, which is the number health problem among children. People think that because there are a lot of overweight and obese children, they must be getting too much to eat instead of not enough.”

housing

Another obstacle to getting food many people mentioned is the high housing costs that have to be paid before food is purchased. One woman explained that, on paper, her income is too high to qualify for government assistance programs. However, her housing costs are over \$1,000 per month- taking a significant percentage of the monthly budget.

The lack of affordable housing also affects the homeless population who rely on processed and prepared food because they lack the resources to cook it.

“Every year you get your raise in social security and then the trailer park raises the cost of rent and everything goes up and it’s super, super hard for me.”

“What I want is for them [the residents] to be happy...because we’re oppressed in that [trailer] park.”

“When people get behind on the rent, there’s rent plus late fees and all that and then you can’t even feed the kids.”

health

People mentioned that food and health are also interrelated. The rising cost of healthcare takes a larger percentage of the budget than in the past, with two recent immigrants explaining that medical costs for their children with health problems are one of their biggest financial obstacles. This leaves less money available each month to pay for food.

Also, people aware of the relationship between health and diet know that inexpensive and poor quality food is more accessible than nutritious food and is detrimental for the health of the community. One example is the current rise in diabetes among Native American People.

“Every penny I make goes towards medical bills [for my daughter]...it breaks my heart because sometimes my daughter will ask for a box of cornflakes and I can’t afford them.”

translated from Spanish

accessibility and transportation

Limited accessibility to stores selling healthy food is also a problem. Food is inaccessible because of both location and price. People mentioned that convenience stores nearby do not sell good food, particularly fresh produce, or food is sold at high prices.

Transportation is an issue if stores that do sell affordable healthy food are a long distance from home. Public transportation is a time commitment and limits the amount the person can purchase because they may have to carry it.

Transportation is also complicated by age and geography. One woman gave the example of elders in her community who have difficulty using the bus to buy food because of physical mobility problems, time (it may add hours of travel time) and possibly having to care for grandchildren. Transportation is also a significant factor for those located in rural areas. It affects not only the ability to access food, but also the ability to find a good paying job. For example, if someone living in Catalina can not find a good job nearby, a minimum wage job in Tucson may not pay enough to travel there and back. Also, from Catalina, the nearest bus stop is twelve miles south of town and only stops twice a day.

“The things in our neighborhood that prosper are stores that sell beer.”

“There are big pockets of low-income areas that do not have access to good food. All the places accessible to them sell stale meat, toiler paper by the roll and loose cigarettes.”

“I know a lot of people who literally live off of the food boxes.”

“There isn’t a produce store or affordable retail store in Catalina. There used to be and they’re putting in a Basha’s but who can afford Basha’s? People are living off of McDonald’s dollar menu.”

“For some reason, a bus is belittling. They don’t want to be seen on a bus.”

age-related concerns

Many people think that senior citizens and young children are the most vulnerable for getting good food. Seniors in particular have many issues to deal with including: health, mobility, limited income, and transportation.

“The new poverty population are people that are 65-plus.”

“Senior citizens are at the greatest risk of falling through the cracks.”

“Seniors simply cannot afford food on the little measly checks they get.”

inappropriateness of current food assistance

Though the point of these conversations is to envision long-term food security initiatives, the topic of emergency food assistance inevitably comes up when talking about food. Conversations included recipients of food assistance and service providers. Both explained that they were grateful for the existence of the food boxes and believed boxes are necessary and important to temporarily addressing hunger and food insecurity. However, they mentioned that there are some ways in which they do not adequately address the needs of people who receive boxes.

It is important to note that some of the inadequacies of emergency food assistance are the same focal points of food security. Namely, these issues are:

- inconsistency of content- contents depends on donations and overstock, etc
- quality of food provided- need for more and fresher produce and protein
- inaccessibility of services in terms of location and hours
- lack of awareness of service location
- inability of emergency food to address variances in recipients' eating styles, cultural and personal preferences, health concerns
- Lack of knowledge of how to prepare the food in the box, leading to inefficiency

“You have to be creative to cook with a food box.”

“I knew someone who got a food box and brought it back because they didn't know how to use it.”

“It's really hard to make a meal out of that [food box].”

“Nobody comes here for food if they don't need it. There's no choice in the food they get in the bags...you can get three cans of corn three days in a row.”

“The closest food box place is 8 miles away and that's kind of inconvenient when you have to carry it back and forth on the bus and wait for it too. Also, if you work two jobs or one during the day, it's closed when you finally get off work.”

immigration and international issues

Immigration and international issues also arose in conversations. For example, a person working with an after-school program explained the disadvantages of the children of undocumented parents. The families are often living at the poverty level because they could not get good paying jobs, so have trouble providing enough food. However, the parents are afraid of being discovered, so do not access food programs or assistance.

Besides consumption, immigration also affects food production. Some people thought that cheap immigrant labor was an opportunity for farmers. Others thought that it could be a controversial issue. It was explained that though NAFTA and trade agreements with Mexico have increased the amount of food coming into the country, but the resources needed to get the food here and its effect on communities on both sides of the border need to be considered when talking about food issues.

Immigration needs to be explored more in depth because of our closeness to the border and the issues that also arise in the “race, culture and food” section.

waste, efficiency, and distribution

Another common theme in conversations is that food is being wasted and not used efficiently on a household, community-wide, and systematic level. Some thought that people do not know how to cook food or preserve it. Food is wasted that could be distributed to hungry people. Also, distribution of food at a city and national level was thought to create unnecessary waste and unfair distribution.

“I don’t understand how people can be so wasteful when there is not enough [for everyone] to eat.”

“Where is the food that we are piling up somewhere?”

“In a country like this, it is unconscionable to have a line where people go to get food.”

“In a country so rich, it’s ridiculous that people should go hungry.”

“We have things rotting at the border and if you could get it here it would make [more] sense.”

decision-making, policy-making, budgeting, resource management

The question of where we place our resources, as governments or individuals, was stated in conversations. Some people thought that the “blame,” or responsibility for ending hunger is at the household or individual level. Others thought that the existence of hunger and food insecurity was a reflection of poor prioritizing and resource allocation by the government or larger society. An example given of the latter is the lack of investment by the government in programs like Food Stamps or income assistance. People also think that too few city or local resources are directed into food initiatives.

The issue of the system vs. the individual responsibility needs to be addressed and explored more fully. It would also be worthwhile to examine whether an increased awareness and understanding of the terms “community food security” and “food system” would affect perspectives on an individual’s ability to have food choices.

“I only get \$9/month for food stamps and it’s not worth the time and hassle to get them...I don’t even need them all the time, just to get by sometimes in the tight months.”

“The city [government] has the responsibility to connect, expand and make visible the opportunities for food.”

“It’s unacceptable to still discuss whether to have breakfast in schools. It shouldn’t be a decision between giving food to people who need it, or not.”

“What is a livable wage? And what are our standards of living?”

Themes of Issues and Ideas:

growing good food locally

The following are some of the themes concerning local food production. This section includes possibilities, positive aspects, perceived challenges and perceived obstacles.

possibilities and “positivities”

“Let’s put people to work making food.”

“The great part of food is the social connection, the vitality of cooks and food....and the cultural necessity and beauty and power of food.”

“It is easier to get people to relate to food than, say, housing or public safety because there is a lot of fear involved with those that’s not there with food...Our food practices usually stem from culture and habit but not fear.”

“[There is] a green organic stripe in this community.”

“People are fruitful and would love to turn it [sic] into something productive-even I would love to do something like that. I’m originally from Wilcox, which is a farming and ranching community, and I would love to do that but it would depend on the location.”

“There is a whole culture of people who would take this [local food] project and thrive on it.”

“The key to making this actually happen is a group of community activists with a green thumb.”

“We need to start with young people to create change.”

“[Young people with low-incomes who lived on the street] have problems accessing food but already have so many skills because they are survivors.”

“[Community gardens could be] symbolic of the food production in the past.”

“You can see the difference when you grow them [produce] at home.”

“Fresh, no matter where it comes from, is a start.”

“Food would probably be less expensive if it was local because there would be no or less transportation...I am also concerned about the chemicals they put in food bought from further away.”

translated from Spanish

“We have to find a way to get people to buy into the system so that person feels responsible...with ownership comes pride.”

“The growing process has a very therapeutic value.”

“Consumer knowledge and demand can change things.”

“I love to plant.”

translated from Spanish

working together, community exchanges

People working together and helping each other came up several times. One idea was a work exchange or barter system so those who can not afford to buy food may be able to barter something like time or skill. Exchange also came up in gardening project ideas- small groups of people teach skills, help organize and generate ideas on growing food.

“We want to not just receive, but give something back.”

translated from Spanish

Everyone has the capacity to share and contribute. In fact, most people who use food assistance have also given their resources at one time or another.

[paraphrased]

“When people pull together, you create an abundance.”

“I just believe in the power of people; what they can do when they work together and rally together.”

“I always think of a project like this in terms of bringing the community together and bringing people together to do it.”

“The good thing about the project would be making food accessible but also involving the community in deciding how needs should be met.”

“People already share food and that’s beautiful...but we have to provide meaningful incentives and opportunities to make it happen on a larger scale, efficiently and continuously, not just in times of crisis.”

environmental resource concerns

Many people thought a major obstacle to restoring local food production is the perceived lack of land and water. The fact that we are in a desert with dropping water levels and rising land prices due to development are further causes for concern. Many people who had tried to start a garden or growing food project explained that the biggest obstacle was finding affordable land and water rates. Other environmental concerns include soil contamination and the perception that lower-income areas are more highly contaminated than others.

“They don’t want to eat things if they think that gasoline was dumped back there [in the ground].”

“I would not want to plant outside where there are dogs.”
translated from Spanish

“I don’t see the land [available] so I can’t imagine local food being grown.”
translated from Spanish

“I wouldn’t want to eat food grown in my soil.”

inaccessible vocabulary?

Related to the idea of perception and the lack of knowledge are the possible problems with the words we use to talk about food, local food, food security and the food system. The community food security movement across the country is in the process of re-evaluating the way it talks about food concepts. Food system research is demonstrating that many people do not think of the larger system when talking about food.

The fact that “community food security” needed to be explained at the beginning of all my conversations demonstrates the lack of awareness in our own community. CFSC must make the public more aware and knowledgeable of the activities and mission of the CFSC. The CFSC must also stay involved in the current discussion within the food security movement about how to talk about food concepts. Additionally, CFSC must invite more of the local community to play an active part in the future re-thinking and planning of the focus and vocabulary of food.

“I think we should be striving for ‘food independence’ because dependence or independence is a word people can connect with easily.”

“Since what you eat is not just about health but also political, we need to create an ‘ethic of food.’”

attitude, perception and time

The interesting thing about this type of information-gathering is not only looking at what the defined problems are, but what people perceive as the problems. This section examines how people think about nutritious food, local food and local food production. It also examines what they think *other people* think about these things. Perhaps this section is best considered in combination with the education section.

The following quotes demonstrate the variety of problems people perceived others might have with local-food production. One of the biggest problems is the question of how much food could actually be grown and if it would be enough to feed a family or provide an adequate additional source of income. In addition, several people said they think people are more concerned about quality and price than whether or not food was grown locally. People think that more education on the benefits of local and organic food is necessary to change the perceptions expressed below.

“It’s about the image and the perception. Oatmeal in a box versus oatmeal on a chafe....most of us would choose the box.”

“People are used to getting things handed to them...it’s easy to go to Safeway and get things handed to them.”

“[Regarding gardening and working towards food security] most people are so busy, they need something they can do in 45 minutes.”

“Most people don’t want to grow their own food, they want to buy it.”

“[For people with low-incomes] the only question about food is having it, not is it the most economical, healthy, etc.”

“[Children don’t think] ‘yea, I want to work on a farm and keep it going and make it sustainable.’ No, they’re all in to drugs and smoking weed and meth [sic].”

“As bodies, we really crave sugar and grease.”

“If you have a 2yr old, when dinner needs to be ready, dinner needs to be ready.”

“It is a luxury to decide you want to have less processed food.”

race, culture and food: “white-people lettuce”

The intersection of food with race, culture and identity was addressed circuitously in some conversations and more directly in others. The connection was presented positively since different cultures have a variety of ways of relating to and preparing food. Some people think that different cultures, races and ethnicities are finding it increasingly difficult to know about and have available culturally significant and healthy foods.

For example, one woman attending a farmers’ market with a younger Native American male was trying to convince him to purchase some traditional and nutritious variety of greens. She explained that the boy did not want to buy the more nutritious varieties because it was less familiar, more expensive and he saw it as “white-people lettuce.” She said that he connected more with iceberg lettuce-not a native variety and one with almost no nutritional value- because it was more familiar and affordable, making it more accessible.

Besides the food itself, the act of and connection to growing food is also thought to have cultural, ethnic and racial connections. In some cases, the connection is inclusive and in others, people feel excluded by their perception of the growing food. Some people spoke of the Hispanic and Native American cultures as having a “culture of farming” and a connection with the land. However, a younger Native American male explained, somewhat hesitantly, that “nobody wants to be called a farmer...it makes me think of an old white guy.” Vocabulary possibly plays a part because he and his family grow some of their own food, but he does not connect with the term “farmer.”

Too few conversations were held to adequately discuss race, culture and food. Because the goal of community food security is to create equal access, space and power for all people, it is important to continue to investigate how people’s characteristics-race, culture, age, gender, nationality/citizenship, identity, etc- affect not only their ability to access affordable and nutritious food, but also the way they relate to food and perceive getting and growing food. These issues are also related to those raised in the “immigration and international issues” section.

Projects and Partnerships

Although similar projects or ideas may exist in our community, the following ideas for growing local food emerged from conversations. Some are very specific, while others are more basic themes, focuses, and approaches. Again, there is some overlap among categories.

The two most common projects and ideas were entrepreneurial and educational. This is consistent with the fact that unemployment, underemployment and the lack of knowledge were mentioned as the most significant problems with getting good-food. Age-based and intergenerational community projects (some with entrepreneurial aspects) were also quite commonly mentioned, as were community exchanges (see “working together, community exchanges” section).

entrepreneurial projects:

“Let’s put people to work making food.”

- Commercial kitchens to create jobs and sources of income. (one of the most supported ideas)
- Recycling factory to make building material for low-income housing with recycled parts (addresses food insecurity with employment and housing)
- Homeless employment project to make and sell compost to gardeners and farms
- See age-based and inter-generational section

educational projects:

“We need to educate on all that’s entailed in that squash.”

- Educate about food choices: where it comes from, what it means socially as well as physically (health) and how to prepare it to reduce waste (called an “ethic of food”)
- Prepare and serve more local food in schools
- Increase and expand high school agricultural department programs
- Create and teach school curricula that includes food issues, nutrition education and growing food
- Create a charter school which integrates food and agricultural issues into all lessons
- Hold more events like the mesquite milling and pancake dinner so that “not just selling product but selling ideas”
- Conduct an oral history project that asks people to trace back connections with the land

- Connect vocational high schools (and other high schools) with local food growers/farms
- Conduct budget and resource management courses for families
- Invest in media and arts projects:
 - Local program (similar to NPR kitchen stories) for people to tell their stories about connection to food and how it has affected all aspects of their life
 - Partner with Kino Weed and Seed Coalition's newsletters and meetings to get information on services and projects out to the community

age-based and intergenerational projects:

“We need to start with young people to create change.”

- Create a homeopathic garden managed by teens
- Collaborate with Arizona Youth Partnership on nutrition education and food production
- Establish a project where teens bag and sell donated fruit
- Examine the success of a neighborhood applying for a juicer so that the teens can juice and sell donated fruit
- Create an environment where retirees or other elders in the neighborhood could “pass on the knowledge” to teens and children about gardening
- Work with safe havens in the communities involved with Kino Weed and Seed to provide a site to grow food and teach children
- Have neighborhood centers with after-school and senior programs work together in gardens

production ideas:

“We don't make anything anymore and we need to create [again].”

- Urban Farms- people are supportive of the urban farms if the land and water issues are addressed. Some were also interested in an incubator farm to teach farming, then provide resources to start small-scale farms.
- Community garden- gardens were mentioned many different times and with different approaches-individual plots, entire plot shared, owned by schools, churches, etc
- Master Gardener Program: Expand and focus in more lower-income neighborhoods. People become “experts” in gardening and teach their neighbors, who would then teach their neighbors- “Train the Trainer” approach

- Barrio garden or “hacienda model”: self-sustaining garden on big plots of land that supplies food for surrounding households.
- Butterfly Garden (such as the one in the Doolen Fruitvale Neighborhood)
- Partnership with those in the Pima County Adult Community Service Program to provide labor for construction of neighborhood greenhouses
- Partnership with Arizona Biological Control Corporation- ArBiCo, located in Catalina and owned locally. Corporation raises ‘beneficial insects’ and makes compost

government policies and partnerships:

“The city [government] has the responsibility to connect, expand and make visible the opportunities for food [security].”

- Raise the level of benefits for food stamps
- Recognize more directly in policy that everyone has the capacity to share as well as receive
- Provide tax incentives to grocery stores to sell a certain amount of local food
- Local food prepared and served in schools
- See the CFSC report “Food Self-Sufficiency for All” for more information on policy ideas related to food security

accessibility:

“There are big pockets of low-income areas that do not have access to good food. All the places accessible to them sell stale meat, toiler paper by the roll and loose cigarettes.”

- Distribute food boxes in more accessible locations
- Expand Farmers’ markets’ hours or have hours be reflective of and convenient for working people
- Place grocery stores or 24-hour supermarkets in more areas with better food available
- Create home delivery program of organic food
- Establish community kitchens
- Create farmers market truck
- Start community food-buying clubs or co-ops to benefit from wholesale/bulk prices

Recommendations for Future Research and Action

The author makes the following recommendations based on the themes, issues, ideas and projects that emerged from conversations. Some are specific actions for CFSC while others can be undertaken by the community as a whole.

- Translate this document into Spanish so that the information is accessible to a wider audience.
- Build on the connections established during conversation. Several people expressed an interest in being a continuous point of contact and gathering information and ideas from their friends and neighbors.
- Continue conversations with more people in more places. People and perspectives to include:
 - People who primarily or more comfortably speak a language other than English
 - People involved with Food Not Bombs
 - Students involved at the Pima County Vocational High School
 - Students in Family Literacy Classes
 - Recipients of emergency food boxes at pantries and agencies
 - Refugees
 - The nanas at C.E. Rose Family Resource Center
 - Representative from the arts
 - Youth- It was very successful to use the Community Food Security 101 interactive tool with a follow-up discussion in the classroom
 - Rural communities
- Work with the *promotoras* to insert the issue of food and food security into their work and interaction with the community.
- Gather specific quantitative data on current food resources and gaps in Pima County. Create an action plan with a diverse group of people to utilize resources and close gaps.

- Remain in the national conversation around communicating ideas of food and community food security. Conduct a local study on how to talk about and express food concepts.
- Establish an easily digestible definition of “local” and convey that definition to the larger community.
- On an ongoing basis, conduct an educational/outreach campaign to communicate with the larger community about community food security as well as the specific and varied activities of the CFSC
- Continue the process of establishing a Food Policy Council. This entity would bring a diverse group of people together to advocate for policies that make the projects suggested more feasible and viable. Also, work with other groups on policy involving inter-related issues such as housing, employment, transportation, etc.
- Investigate the possibility of inserting the issue of food security into plans and initiatives in Tucson including the Local School Wellness policies and the City and County Municipal Comprehensive plans
- Explore the points of tension that arose during conversations: the connections among race, culture and food; the individual vs. systemic focus; and immigration and international implications for the local community.
- Partner with environmental and conservation groups to gain specific information on the current state of resources in the Pima County area and the best way to restore and conserve water and land.
- Investigate food-based, community-building initiatives in other areas including:
 - The programs of FoodShare in Toronto, Canada including the Good Food Box program
 - The Food Project working with youth in Boston, Massachusetts
 - The Community Farm Alliance in Louisville, Kentucky
 - Hank Herrera’s work on “Building Local Food Value-Networks”

Appendix A

The Community Food Security Center of the Community Food Bank

Mission of the Community Food Bank

Through education and advocacy and the acquisition, storage, and distribution of food, we will anticipate and meet the needs of the hungry in Pima County

Mission of the Community Food Security Center

Improve community food security for the people of Pima County by promoting, demonstrating, advocating for, and collaboratively building an equitable and regional food system, which supports food production and strengthens communities.

Programs of the Community Food Security Center

- **Arizona and Pima County food policy councils:** Councils educate residents and advocate for policy changes to improve community food security. Council development includes representation from business, local food producers, non-profits, academic institutions, community members, and elected and government officials.
- **Community partnerships:** Building and maintaining partnerships and relationships to improve community food security.
- **Faith Community Education and Advocacy:** Education and partnership building and maintenance for giving, volunteering, food security projects, economic and food justice, and lifestyle integrity.
- **Family Advocacy:** Education and advocacy with families, agencies, faith institutions, and community groups on federal and state food programs and other community services to increase peoples well-being.
- **Farmers' Markets:** Community Food Bank Farmers' Market provides naturally grown, local produce Tuesday mornings for Food Bank customers and clients. Santa Cruz River Farmers' Market provides naturally grown, local produce Thursday evenings for west side Tucson residents. The Markets accept Food Stamps, AZFMNP vouchers, and cash.
- **Food Bank Market and Demonstration Garden:** A 7,000 square foot garden on the north-west corner of the Food Bank grounds. The garden is managed organically with two 10'x10' compost bins, a 15'x15' greenhouse, and a spacious hen house. The garden demonstrates and promotes desert food production methods and provides a peaceful place

- **Home Gardening:** Assistance is provided to people to grow some of their own food and meet peoples' existing motivation with the knowledge and materials to be a successful gardener in the Sonora Desert. Compost, seeds, and starter plants are provided as available.
- **Measurement Management:** Data collection and management of Food Bank food distribution and Community Food Security Center community food security actions.
- **Research and Evaluation:** Research and evaluation, which informs food policy development and food security programming.
- **Snak Paks:** Partnerships between a faith community and school to provide children with weekend backpacks full of nutritious snacks and nutrition information.
- **Value Foods Store Mobile Market:** A mobile Value Foods Store (a public low cost, high quality grocery store in the Food Bank) that travels to rural communities which have limited access to low cost meats, dairy, dry goods, and fresh produce. Currently, the Market visits Picture Rocks and Amado twice monthly.

Contact Information

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Appendix B

Emerson National Hunger Fellowship of the Congressional Hunger Center

Mission of the Congressional Hunger Center

“Fighting hunger by developing leaders”

Three-prong strategy to fulfill this mission:

- To train leaders at the community, national, and international levels about the causes of and solutions to hunger, poverty, and humanitarian needs.
- To facilitate collaborative efforts between those organizations involved with designing policy and those developing and implementing programs aimed at ending hunger in the United States and abroad.
- To increase awareness and develop strategies in the public at large as well as among those engaged in anti-hunger activities by providing specific skills and issue training to bridge the gap between service and public policy.

Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship

Each year 24 participants are selected for this twelve-month program. Fellows are placed for **six months with urban and rural community-based organizations** all over the country involved in fighting hunger at the local level, such as food banks, economic development agencies, local advocacy groups and faith-based organizations. They then move to Washington, DC to complete the year with **six months of work at national organizations** involved in the anti-hunger and poverty movement, including national advocacy organizations, think tanks, and federal agencies. Through this unique program, the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows Program develops **effective leaders** with a deep understanding of hunger and poverty at both the local and national level that enables them to find **innovative solutions** and create the **political will to end hunger**

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Appendix C

Give us YOUR ideas...

Contact us at the Food Bank if you would like to

- Learn more about community food security and the work we're doing
- Give us your thoughts and ideas on getting and growing good food
- Organize conversations with your neighbors and others in our community

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