South Corvallis Food Hub: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Report

May 2024

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This study is for those who live, eat, and play in South Corvallis. We hope this serves you.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2021, Benton County, on behalf of the Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office, received funding from the Oregon legislature to begin work on creating a food hub in South Corvallis.[1] The City of Corvallis contracted with A Tuttle Consults, a local research consulting firm, to examine the feasibility of establishing a South Corvallis food hub.

This feasibility study focuses on financial viability. It provides three scenarios that may utilize funds from APRA to catalyze economic activity in South Corvallis.

South Corvallis is the southern-most neighborhood in Corvallis with just over 23,000 residents, is bisected by a 5-lane highway, and reports a slightly higher median household income ($63,119) compared to Corvallis as a whole ($61,610). The western area of the neighborhood reports a household income of $60,409 compared to the eastern area, reported at $102,454.

Over the past twenty years, various community groups have studied food access in South Corvallis through a variety of lenses, including studies centering the needs and impacts on farmers and South Corvallis residents, particularly those in low-income groups, and studies examining the feasibility of a neighborhood food center. However, none of these studies have resulted in a food hub of any form.

This study tested the feasibility of and community support for three food hub scenarios: a virtual, small-scale, and industrial-scale food hub. This was accomplished through a community survey, individual interviews, literature review, and regional site visits to existing food hubs. Of those three scenarios, the community demonstrated strong support and need for components of the small-scale scenario: a small-scale warehouse, a commercial kitchen, and a food cart pod. Through market analysis and fiscal modeling, the study found that these three small-scale food hub models were financially viable.

Equity, food access, affordability, and collaboration arose as overarching themes for this project from data collected from the community.

[1] RFP CD-2023-02 Pg. 3

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to serve as a resource for potential operators of a South Corvallis Food Hub. The authors aim to provide information gathered from the community to inform business plans, scenarios, and operating projections.

Available Funding

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, the Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office (EDO) was awarded funds to support the development a Food Hub in South Corvallis. At the dissemination of this report (May 6, 2024) the EDO has $495,000 available to be granted to support the development of a food hub. These funds will be granted to operators through a request for proposals process determined by the EDO.

Timeline

At this time, operators must obligate funds awarded by December 31, 2024 and spend them by December 31, 2025. All questions about this timeline are to be directed to the EDO.

Fiscal Viability

The South Corvallis Food Hub could take many forms. The goal of this feasibility study is to provide potential operators with evidence of independent fiscal viability by the end of 2025 for three distinct food hub models.

Research Design

The information presented in this report is derived from data collected through a community web survey (781 respondents), an inventory of equipment available and needed, and interviews with over fifty individuals from the local food system, including small business owners, aspiring business owners, non-profit leaders and volunteers, and South Corvallis residents.

Limitations

This feasibility study was limited in scope and depth due to the timeline and budget of the project. The abbreviated timeline for this study (January 2024 to March 2024) did not provide sufficient time to co-design a study method with all affected groups. This may have created questions and/or response options on the community survey and interview that did not affirm all cultures and experiences. Any omissions or harm caused due to this timeline are deeply regrettable. The consultant team is engaged in ongoing repair efforts through intentional community outreach, collaboration, and long-term relationship building.

The format of an electronic survey is known to be a limited access method. Those without access to electronic devices and those who have previously experienced input fatigue may not self-select to participate. However, this survey is not intended to be generalizable to any population; it was designed as the first step in a series to test the feasibility of specific food hub scenarios related to a food hub in South Corvallis.

Despite these limitations, the authors believe the findings of this feasibility study are valuable in informing any potential operators of fiscal viability of a food hub in South Corvallis.

Moving Towards a More Equitable Future

We recommend that any future grants and funds that may be allocated in communities disproportionally affected by systemic racism be spent following studies and guidance from those communities most affected by such public investments. This includes ensuring that there are appropriate timelines and sufficient communication between the funding entities and recipients, and research uses best research practices in restorative justice-based methods.

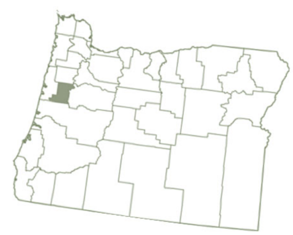
SOUTH CORVALLIS CONTEXT

Corvallis, the County Seat of Benton County, is located within the traditional homelands of the Ampinefu Band of Kalapuya. Following the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855, the Kalapuya people were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon, and today the living decedents are part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.[2]

According to the most recent American Community Survey (ACS 2022, 5-year survey), there are 97,630 residents in Benton County and 60,050 residents of Corvallis. Oregon State University's main campus is in Corvallis and students are counted in the population of the City of Corvallis. OSU recorded 24,188 students at their Corvallis campus in the fall of 2023. Enrollment is expected to continue to increase.

IDENTIFYING SOUTH CORVALLIS

South Corvallis is the southern-most neighborhood group of Corvallis and encompasses about a third of the 97333-zip code, distinct from other parts of Corvallis that use the 97330, 97331, and 97339 zip codes. It is politically represented in Ward 3 and parts of Ward 2 of the Corvallis City Council. South Corvallis is a group of neighborhoods including Tunison, Crystal Lake, Lincoln School, and most recently most southern, Willamette Landing. South Corvallis is also known colloquially as "Southtown," and may be referred to in documents[3] as Southtown or South Corvallis. The neighborhood is bordered to the west and north by the meandering Marys River, to the east by the Willamette River and Crystal Lake Park, to the south by Kiger Island Drive and the city limits.



Benton County

Corvallis

South Corvallis is bisected by Highway 99 (99W), a heavily used 5-lane highway managed by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). ODOT and the City of Corvallis are actively collaborating to change the road to better "meet the demands of all current users."[4] This highway has loud road noise from trucks, limited crosswalks, and is perceived by residents as dangerous[5], most recently killing a 10-year-old child in a marked

[2] This history is based on Oregon State University's Land Acknowledgement found at: https://diversity.oregonstate.edu/feature-story/land-acknowledgement

[3] Living Southtown is a neighborhood group mobilized as part of the Urban Renewal for Southtown Corvallis, for example: https://www.devnw.org/thriving-communities/community-building-and-neighborhood-revitalization/southtown-corvallis/

[4] https://www.oregon.gov/odot/projects/pages/project-details.aspx?project=OR99W-South-Corvallis-Improvements

[5] https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Projects/Project%20Documents/Public-Involvement-Stakeholder-Interview-Highlights.pdf

crosswalk.[6] Because of this, 99W is perceived as a barrier that separates the west side of the neighborhood from the east side, and is an important aspect of the neighborhood context.

There is one neighborhood association in South Corvallis (Tunison)[7], which is on the west side of 99W.

RESIDENTS OF SOUTH CORVALLIS

South Corvallis, as delineated by (generally) the 97333 zip code, has a slightly higher percentage (79%) of White residents than Corvallis (74%) and Benton County (77%); a slightly lower proportion of Latine (Hispanic) (8%), compared to Corvallis (9%) and Benton County (9%); and a slightly lower proportion of Asian residents (6%) and multi-race/ethnic residents (4%) compared to Corvallis (10% and 5% respectively) and Benton County (7% and 6% respectively).

	Benton County / Corvallis Metro Area	Corvallis City	97333 Zip Code (South Corvallis)
Population	**97,630**	**60,050**	**23,028**
Race / Ethnicity			
White	77%	74%	79%
Hispanic	9%	9%	8%
Asian	7%	10%	6%
2+ Categories	6%	5%	4%
All other	1%	2%	2%

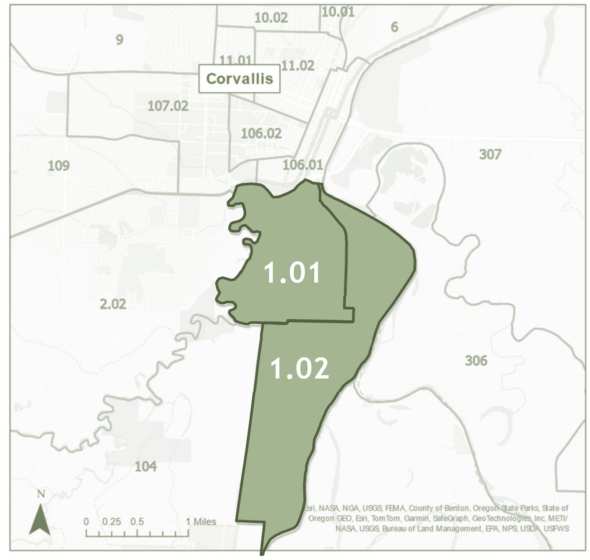
The 97333 zip code also reports a slightly higher median household income ($63,119) compared to Corvallis ($61,610), but lower than Benton County as a whole ($68,524). Similarly, 97333 reports a slightly lower poverty rate (24.6%) compared to Corvallis (26.4%), but higher than Benton County (21.7%).

	Benton County / Corvallis Metro Area	Corvallis City	97333 Zip Code (South Corvallis)
Median Household Income	**$ 68,524**	**$ 61,610**	**$ 63,119**
% of hh that make <$50k	37%	41%	42%
% of hh that make $50k - $100k	29%	28%	27%
% of households that make $100k - $200k	25%	23%	22%
$ of hh that make > $200k	9%	8%	9%
Poverty Rate (% below poverty line)	**20.7%**	**26.4%**	**24.6%**

[6] https://www.oregonlive.com/commuting/2020/01/girl-11-struck-and-killed-by-driver-in-corvallis.html

[7] https://www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd/page/neighborhood-associations

South Corvallis is more accurately delineated by census tracts 1.01 and 1.02. At this level of analysis, a significant amount of heterogeneity and disparity in economic status within South Corvallis becomes clear. Specifically, we find that census tract 1.01, which extends east-west from Crystal Lake Dr. to the Marys River and south to Goodnight Ave, has a poverty rate of 30.9% and a median income of $60,409. This is in stark contrast to the neighboring 1.02 census tract which encompasses the "Benton County Crystal Lake Drive" and Willamette Landing neighborhoods, which have a poverty rate of only 10.1% and a median income of $102,454. While this study only disaggregates these data as far as the census tract level, these economic differences become even more stark at the block and block-group levels.



South Corvallis (Census Tracts)

	97333	1.01 (SE Corvallis to Marys River to Goodnight Ave)	1.02 (SE Corvallis / Benton County - Willamette Park and South of Goodnight Ave)*
Population	**23,028**	**3,997**	**3,341**
Race / Ethnicity			
White	79%	86%	73%
Hispanic	8%	8%	14%
Asian	6%	1%	9%
2+ Categories	4%	3%	4%
All other	2%	1%	0%
Median Household Income	**$ 63,119**	**$ 60,409**	**$ 102,454**
% of hh that make <$50k	42%	42%	21%
% of hh that make $50k - $100k	27%	38%	27%
% of households that make $100k - $200k	22%	17%	38%
$ of hh that make > $200k	9%	3%	14%
Poverty Rate (% below poverty line)	**24.6%**	**30.9%**	**10.1%**

**the margin of error for these data is high.*

PREVIOUS SOUTH CORVALLIS FOOD SYSTEM REPORTS AND STUDIES

In 2005-2006 the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon in collaboration with Oregon State University and the Rural Studies Initiative conducted a community food assessment called From Our Own Soil. The study focused on **farmers** and **low-income residents** in Benton County, and added a section questioning how communities of faith contribute to food security. The effort found **potential in local food processing**, a desire among farmers to **increase local food marketing opportunities**, and the need for the community to **build demand for local food**.

The 2012 South Corvallis Food Center Feasibility Report, funded by a USDA Community Food Projects grant, aimed to assess the viability of a **community food center** in South Corvallis. Food centers, according to that report, "move from straight food banking to providing a programmatic response to help low-income communities." Community Food Centers are also "places where people can access food and learn healthful and sustainable practices to increase their quality of life." That study concluded that **without an affordable site, a capital campaign, and organizational ownership for the project, the Community Food Center is not feasible at this time (2012)**. That project concluded with developing a virtual network of food resource organizations to plan for a future community food center.

Additional studies, including a Benton County Community Food Assessment (2014) and a report completed for South Corvallis residents by the OSU Policy Analysis Lab, corroborated previous findings and added commentary.

This needs assessment aims to understand if any of the above conditions have changed and, if so, if a Food Hub is now feasible.

Selected Reports on Food System Needs in Benton County, Corvallis, and South Corvallis

2006 From Our Own Soil: A Community Food Assessment: Benton County, Oregon, and Its Foodshed (Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon)

2012 South Corvallis Community Food Center Feasibility Report (USDA Community Food Project Competitive Grant Program)

2012 Food Incubator Study

2014 Benton County Community Food Assessment

2020 OPAL: South Corvallis Residents' Assessment: A Pilot Project

WHAT IS A FOOD HUB?

In the Wallace Center and Michigan State University for Regional Food Systems' first bi-annual Food Hub Survey Report in 2013, the authors defined a regional food hub as "a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand." This definition is from the USDA. The Regional Food Hub Survey included many other types of businesses until 2019, however, with the understanding that food hubs exhibit a great deal of variety in their individual business models and core values.

The 2019 National Food Hub Survey included only food hubs that fit the USDA definition of food hubs, but the 2021 National Food Hub Survey again expanded the inclusion criteria. This expansion was in response to the 2020 Delivering More than Food: Understanding and Operationalizing Racial Equity in Food Hubs Report and Racial Equity Implementation Guide for Food Hubs: A Framework for Translating Value into Organizational Action.[8]

"a food hub… actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand"

For the purpose of this report, the South Corvallis Food Hub may align with the USDA definition of a food hub, but the actual form, name, and terminology used to describe the outcome of the service, building, or network created by selected food hub operators are not limited to this definition. Food Hubs may have the potential to create a more equitable food system, if operators create a business and governance structure that centers equity. A framework of guiding principles and key questions are provided in the footnotes.[9] Operators are encouraged to take the recommendations of the community and best equity practices into account.

[8] Jones, T., Cooper, D., Noor, S., & Parks, A. (2018). *A Racial Equity Implementation Guide for food hubs: A framework for translating value into organizational action* [White paper]. Race Forward. https://www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/racial-equity-implementation-guide-food-hubs

[9] https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/RecoveryGuide-LJ-2021_050621c.pdf

FOOD HUBS IN OREGON

According to the Oregon State University Extension Service (OSU Extension) there are twelve food hubs in Oregon.[10] They range from hosting an online farmers market with home delivery (such as Lane County Bounty in Springfield), a commercial kitchen with a small business incubator program (such as North Coast Food Web) to an event space, individual food business retail space, and a BIPOC farmers market (such as EcoTrust's Redd on Salmon Street in Portland). The main theme that ties these food hubs together are that they focus on and strengthen the local food economy in some way, although they tend to prioritize social impact over high profits, trading some profit for goals such as paying better prices to farmers and reducing barriers to healthy food.[11]

Six of these local food hubs published feasibility studies prior to their creation. Some common themes arose, although the studies varied widely in their methods, scope, and purpose.

The food hubs studied all centered around a small-scale warehouse with some additional services. The main function of the warehouse is a single location for farmers and food producers to drop off goods that are then redistributed to buyers, sometimes through last-mile delivery. Some food hubs have an attached commercial kitchen space (North Coast) and others do not. The Klamath County food hub study recommended a focus on business sustainability, efficiency, and the market realities of producers. The Central Oregon Food Hub also conceptualized services provided as a disaster resilience strategy.

Two studies (Southwest Oregon and Mid-Willamette Valley) reported farmer interest in participating in a food hub that offers wholesale while two studies reported farmers needing near-retail prices for products and the inability to sell at wholesale. Two food hub feasibility studies identified a need for meat processing facilities (Mid-Willamette Valley and North Coast).

Common challenges for food hubs identified included funding for staff (Central Oregon, Southwest Oregon), cost and upkeep of facilities (Central Oregon, Southwest Oregon), and connecting to smaller hubs (Southwest Oregon, Klamath County).

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[10] https://extension.oregonstate.edu/food/food-systems/food-hubs-oregon

[11] Wallace Food Hub benchmark report 2018: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR FOOD HUB SUCCESS ONE KPI AT A TIME
Wallowa County: Athens, K. (2017). *"Local" as a Resiliency Strategy Wallowa County Food Hub Feasibility Study*. Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD).
Central Oregon Food Hub: Van Dis, K. (2012). *Central Oregon Food Hub Feasibility Study*. Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council.
Mid-Willamette Valley: Smith, E., & Fernandez-Salvador, J. (2018). Food Hub Feasibility Study in Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley: Interviews with Conventional and Organic Small and Mid-Sized Farmers. EOrganic. https://eorganic.org/node/25213
Klamath County: Economic Development District, S. C. O. (2019). South Central Oregon Economic Development District Food Hub Feasibility Study. Competinomics, LLC.
North Coast: https://www.readkong.com/page/north-coast-food-hub-feasibility-report-9989830
Southwest Oregon: Umpqua, N., & Project, B. Z. (2020). Southwest Oregon Food Hub Feasibility Assessment: Results and Next Steps. https://ocfsn.org/food-hub

North Coast and Central Oregon shared common producer needs met by the future food hub. These needs were cold storage, a more cohesive distribution chain, and a commercial kitchen with light processing capabilities.

North Coast's and the Mid-Willamette Valley's feasibility studies noted that each part of the food system chain must be in place before producers will start to use it to scale their business. Klamath County's feasibility study recommended grounding all future action in farmer needs and interests through farmer surveys or other feedback mechanisms and to building relationships.

OSU Extension supports regional food hubs by partnering with the Oregon Community Food Systems Network, a collaboration of over fifty organizations statewide, and through their Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems, Farm to School, and OSU Small Farms programs.

Regional Food Hub Spotlight: The Redd on Salmon Street

The Redd on Salmon Street is a two-block "campus" for food businesses in Southeast Portland. It opened in 2018 as a project of EcoTrust.

The Redd hosts event spaces, a commissary kitchen, business incubator spaces, a last-mile bicycle delivery service, a farmers' market for Black and Indigenous producers and eaters, and many other food services.

EcoTrust is a Portland based non-profit with over fifty current projects across the region at the intersection of equity, economy, and the environment.

SOUTH CORVALLIS FOOD HUB SCENARIOS

As stated, Food Hubs can be many things and take many forms. This South Corvallis Food Hub feasibility study tested scenarios of Food Hubs for viability: an all-virtual model, an industrial scale model, and a small-scale model.

Each scenario's description, primary user, potential operational activities, operator structure, needed community partnerships, viability needs, and site requirements are provided below.

Virtual	
Description	**An organization or initiative with the express goal of connecting food producers, distributors, and buyers.**
Primary Users	Connecting people virtually around food and orchestrating the movement of food
Potential Primary Operational Activities	• Commercial Kitchen Space Management • Food value chain facilitator • Marketing & business development • Networking/event planning • Virtual infrastructure (e.g. Local Food Marketplace Online Sales Platform) through which transactions can be coordinated, but all actual aggregation and distribution remains the responsibility of producers/buyers
Operator Structure	Program of existing non-profit
Potential Community Partnerships	All local food programs, sites, and facilities
Viability Needs	Community engagement
Site Requirements	None/office space; could utilize Benton County Fairgrounds Commercial Kitchen

This scenario was not expected to be viable because the consultants were not able to model a viable method to spend down the available ARPA funding.[12]

[12] The consultant team completed all scenario and fiscal modeling based on the timeline in the RFP CD-2023-02 that states: Ensure that all [work be] complete for the purposes identified no later than December 1, 2024 (Task 2.1.2.1.c). The consultant was notified on April 17, 2024 that this timeline for work to be completed was extended to December 31, 2025. The consultant acknowledges this timeline shift may influence the viability of scenarios.

Industrial	
Description	**A commercial enterprise to support large scale regional food producers and buyers.**
Primary Users	Local food producers and buyers (Industrial and large scale)
Potential Primary Operational Activities	• Space Rental to large scale food producers • Property management
Operator Structure	Sole owner, new non-profit, LLC
Potential Community Partnerships	Oregon State University, Ten Rivers Food Web
Viability Needs	Tenant businesses, building ownership
Site Requirements	50,000 sqft warehouse space, loading dock, 480V, cold, frozen, and dry storage space, office space, industrial food processing space and equipment

This scenario is not expected to be viable because the consultants were not able to identify a suitable site in South Corvallis nor model a viable fiscal scenario (too few potential tenants to make this scenario viable were identified). The ARPA funding available ($495,000) was not enough to secure a building and the timeline did not allow for a capital campaign. No potential operator was identified.

Small-scale	
Description	**A food hub that utilizes an online marketplace to connect buyers with consumers**
Primary Users	Local food consumers and producers (individuals and households)
Potential Primary Operational Activities	• BIPOC centered market or other amenities • Commercial kitchen • Farm stand • Food cart pod • Food pantry • Refrigerated box truck delivery route • Delivery van route • Marketing & business development • Meeting space • Networking/event planning • Online and/or in-person farmers' market • Permanent or seasonal farmers' market
Operator Structure	Sole proprietorship, member-owned co-op, program of existing non-profit, others
Potential Community Partnerships	South Corvallis Food Bank, Corvallis-Albany Farmers Markets, Flicker and Fir, Casa Latinos Unidos, DevNW, Ten Rivers Food Web, Linn-Benton-Lincoln Health Equity Alliance, Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, Corvallis Environmental Center, others
Viability Needs	Community engagement, fiscal support
Site Requirements	5,000 square feet, cold, frozen, and dry storage space, a loading dock or other suitable space, parking lot, space for farmers market, food cart pod, or other use

This scenario is expected to be viable because potential sites were identified in South Corvallis that may be both suitable and available, community and small business support was documented, and a few potential operators were identified.

Individual aspects of the small-scale warehouse scenario are expanded below to further support potential operators. These aspects are (1) a small-scale warehouse, (2) a commercial kitchen, and (3) a food cart pod.

SMALL-SCALE WAREHOUSE

The following feasibility assessment is informed by data collected from the inventory of equipment, community survey, interviews, site visits, and available facility tours.

Description

A business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand

Primary Users

Wholesale accounts including restaurants, institutional purchasers (OSU Dining, 509J, etc) value-added food producers, neighborhood buying clubs, emergency food providers, local farmers[13], and others

Potential Primary Operational Activities

- Aggregation of local food products (regional farmers drop off their produce at a single site)
- Local & regional distribution of local food products (operator distributes food products from many regional producers)
- Streamlined online point of sale for wholesale accounts to access a plethora of local products
- Collaborative local food marketing opportunities
- Space rental in dry, cold, and frozen facilities rented by the pallet/shelf/sq ft by the month
- Light processing space

Potential producer snapshot

Data from Benton County 2022 NASS

- 1,892-1,952 producers
- Average age of producers is 58;
  - 124 are <35 years old
  - 514 are 65 to 74 years old
  - 139 are non-white or multiracial

Market Value:

- $7.7M in Vegetables, melons & sweet potatoes
- 26.4M in Fruits, tree nuts, & berries
- 18.6M in Livestock, poultry & eggs

Farms:

- 41% are 1 to 9 acres
- 37% are 10 to 49 acres
- 3 organic farms

[13] https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Oregon/cp41003.pdf

Community support from feasibility study:

Aggregation and distribution services and access to a **delivery truck** was the most commonly identified infrastructure need of local food business owners and food producers. This service would enable them increase local food at their businesses, and the lack of this service limited expansion.

Cold storage & **local food marketing supports** would benefit local food businesses

About 60% of community survey respondents were **interested in increasing local food at existing businesses**.

About 90% of community survey respondents were **very interested in purchasing locally grown fruits and produce.**

Nearly 90% of business respondents to the community survey endorsed already purchasing local food. Fresh fruits & vegetables were the most commonly purchased items, and contributing to the local economy and higher quality/better flavor were the most common reasons why they purchased local food.

Operator Structure:

Sole-proprietorship, program of an existing non-profit, new non-profit, collaboration of private ownership and non-profits, member-owned cooperative, others

Potential Community Partnerships:

Corvallis-Albany Farmers Markets, Flicker and Fir, Ten Rivers Food Web, Linn-Benton-Lincoln Health Equity Alliance, Corvallis Environmental Center, others

Fiscal Viability Modeling:

Start-up costs, including facility rental, installing a walk-in freezer, a walk-in refrigerator, light remodeling, and purchasing materials & supplied needed, are estimated to be just over $300,000. Additional fiscal modeling details are in Appendix 1. These costs could be covered using the ARPA grant funds or other grant funds. ARPA funding can be used to pay for rent into operating years 1 and 2. A fiscally viable model may be possible.

	Start up & build out	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Sales Goal		$250,000.00	$500,000.00	$750,000.00
Margin		30%	30%	30%
Expenses				
Total Expenses	$303,400.00	$140,800.00	$180,300.00	$225,300.00
Revenue				
Sales		$75,000.00	$150,000.00	$225,000.00
cooler/freezer space lease		$12,000.00	$18,000.00	$24,000.00
Total Revenue	$0.00	$87,000.00	$168,000.00	$249,000.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding	-$303,400.00	-$53,800.00	-$12,300.00	$23,700.00
Expenses covered by ARPA funding	$303,400.00	$64,800.00	$64,800.00	$0.00
Profit/Loss including ARPA funding	$0.00	$11,000.00	$52,500.00	$23,700.00

Utilizing this model, the cumulative profit at the end of Year 3, with the support of ARPA funding, is projected to be $87,267. The cumulative loss at the end of Year 3 without ARPA funding is projected to be -$345,800. This scenario may utilize $433,000 of ARPA funds.

	Start up	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cumulative Profit/Loss without ARPA	-$303,400.00	-$357,200.00	-$369,500.00	-$345,800.00
Cumulative Profit/Loss with ARPA	$0.00	$11,000.00	$63,500.00	$87,200.00

Site:

A review of all properties for sale and lease in South Corvallis was conducted with the support of a commercial real estate agent. At this time, **two commercial properties were identified** as potentially suitable sites for a food hub in South Corvallis.

Commercial properties identified:

1. 1490 SW 3rd St., Corvallis, OR 97333 “Fastenal Building”
2. 1750-1780 SW 3rd St., Corvallis, OR 97333 “Mill Race Center”

Regional Food Hub Spotlight: Central Coast Food Web

Central Coast Food Web opened in 2023 in Newport in an effort to **re-localize seafood** in Lincoln County and Oregon.

The facility provides shared space for producers who grow and land seafood on the central coast. The Food Hub supports producers by managing a Farm and Fish Market (currently an online sales platform) and collectively marketing local seafood and farmed products to the community.

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

The following feasibility assessment is informed by data collected from the inventory of equipment, community survey, interviews, site visits, information from current commercial kitchen operators, and available facility tours.

Description

A licensed commercial kitchen that is available by the hour, day, or month to small to medium-sized food businesses or organizations to rent for a fee to use for commercial scale food preparation, light food processing, or other uses permitted in the space

Primary Users

Small to medium-sized food businesses, nonprofit organizations, gleaning groups, small to medium-sized farmers, emergency food providers, and others

Potential Primary Operational Activities

- Provide hourly, daily, or monthly rental of ODA licensed kitchen facility to support commercial scale food preparation
- Classroom facilities to teach cooking, preserving, and other skills
- Small business development support to assist business owners to meet their goals
- Co-packing facility
- Light processing space

Community support in the feasibility study:

Access to a commercial scale kitchen was one of the most common needs identified by existing and aspirational food business owners.

Three non-profit groups indicated they may utilize the space for food preparation, food preserving, and cleaning.

The lack of this facility was identified as a current barrier for aspiring small business owners, especially food truck owners.

Operator Structure:

Sole-proprietorship, program of an existing non-profit, new non-profit, collaboration of private ownership and non-profits, member-owned cooperative, others

Potential Community Partnerships:

Benton County Fairgrounds (Benton County Parks and Recreation Department), Corvallis Environmental Center, Gleaning groups, others

Fiscal Viability Modeling:

This scenario was modeled on the assumption of building out an underutilized existing commercial kitchen space at the Benton County Fairgrounds. The consultant team met with the Fairgrounds staff and toured the kitchen twice to create this model.

The existing space is currently equipped with many aspects of a kitchen including a commercial gas range, reach-in refrigeration and frozen storage space, prep space, and other basics. However, the space is not yet equipped with some essential items including a stand mixer (30qt), blenders, heat sealers, food processor, and smallware. Start-up costs are estimated to be $40,000.

The Benton County Fairgrounds kitchen is an actively used space and is unavailable during specific times, including the County Fair, specific OSU game days, and weekends among other times. The fiscal model was created on the assumption the kitchen was available 47 weeks of the year, 184 days, and 12 hours per rental day. The model assumes the operators pay $50 per day to the Fairgrounds, only pay on the days the kitchen is actually used, and the individual tenants pay a rate of $25 per hour to the operators. A key current limitation of the kitchen is the lack of staff time available to manage the operations of running a rental kitchen. This model assumes a 0.1 FTE staff level in Year 1, 0.15 FTE in Year 2 (with a 5% COLA year over year), 0.2 FTE in Year 3, and a 0.25 FTE in Year 4.

Additional fiscal modeling details are in Appendix 2. These costs could be covered using the ARPA grant funds and funds could also be used to pay for rent into operating years 1 and 2. A fiscally viable model may be possible.

	Rate	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Capacity Goal			40%	50%	60%
Expenses					
Staff Time					
Kitchen Rental to Benton County Parks & Rec	$50/day				
Supplies & Equipment		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,500.00
Total Expenses		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,500.00
Revenue					
Rental $15/hr			$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 19,872.00
Total Revenue			$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 19,872.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding		$(40,000.00)	$ 12,248.00	$ 15,360.00	$ 18,372.00
Expenses covered by APRA funding		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	
Profit/Loss with ARPA funding		$ -	$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 18,372.00

Utilizing this model, the cumulative profit at the end of Year 3, with the support of ARPA funding, is projected to be $48,180. The cumulative loss at the end of Year 3 without ARPA funding is projected to be $5,980. This scenario may utilize a total of $80,265 of ARPA funds.

	Rate	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cumulative Profit/Loss without ARPA		$(40,000.00)	$(27,752.00)	$(12,392.00)	$ 5,980.00
Cumulative Profit/Loss with ARPA		$ -	$ 13,248.00	$ 29,808.00	$ 48,180.00

Site:

A review of all known existing and possible commercial kitchens in South Corvallis and the surrounding areas was conducted.

Many commercial kitchens exist in Corvallis but none were identified in South Corvallis that were available to rent or share. Commercial kitchen space is known but occupied at the Corvallis Community Center, at various faith-based buildings, and at local restaurants. The kitchen in the South Corvallis cohousing community (CoHo) is a large home kitchen, not a licensed commercial kitchen and is not available to rent. Agreements could be made with select few individual restaurant owners in a “ghost kitchen” arrangement, but the consultants determined these were not available often enough or with enough regularity to fiscally model.[14] An **underutilized commercial kitchen space** at the Benton County Fairgrounds was identified.

[14] One currently active and licensed commercial kitchen is available in Linn County within ten minutes of downtown Corvallis.

Commercial Kitchen Model: Indy Kitchen

Indy Kitchen is a shared culinary space in downtown Independence, Oregon. Food entrepreneurs, chefs, and businesses can rent a fully-equipped and licensed facility by the hour to prepare, cook, and package their product.

Image: https://www.thekitchendoor.com/kitchen-rental/indy-commons

The kitchen operates on a membership model with a one-time membership fee ($25) and variable hourly rates ranging from $15 – $35. The kitchen also offers storage bin rentals by the month at $15.

Indy Kitchen is part of Indy Commons, a storefront co-working space that also offers shared office space, an event space, a podcasting recording studio, and an artisan food and craft market operating Thursday – Saturday, 12pm – 5pm.

FOOD CART POD

The following feasibility assessment is informed by data collected from the inventory of equipment, community survey, interviews, and information from current food cart pod owners.

Description

A collection of food carts that may be independently owned and pay a monthly "pad rental" fee to an operator who manages shared utilities, space, and marketing

Primary Users

Food cart owners

Potential Primary Operational Activities

- Provide weekly, monthly, or annual rental licensed food cart pad
- Small business development support to assist business owners to meet their goals
- Shared indoor or outdoor gathering or dining space
- Low-barrier entry to small business ownership

Support in the feasibility study:

93% of community survey respondents were **at least somewhat interested in dining out at a fast casual food cart pod**, and 37% ranked a food cart pod as their top choice for a service a food hub could provide.

Respondents who eat at a food cart or restaurant ranked flavor as their most important priority, above affordability, locally sourced ingredients, convenience, and all other choices.

21% of food business respondents to the community survey indicated they would **benefit from a food cart pod**.

Aspiring and existing food business owners, especially BIPOC individuals, expressed support for **food carts as a low-barrier access to business ownership**.

Operator Structure:

Sole-proprietorship, program of an existing non-profit, new non-profit, collaboration of private ownership and non-profits, member-owned cooperative, others

Potential Community Partnerships:

Southtown Urban Renewal Development Zone, Casa Latinos Unidos, DevNW, others

Fiscal Viability Modeling:

This scenario was modeled on assumptions including that Corvallis municipal code will be changed to allow food carts and food cart pods in South Corvallis, a food cart needs about 100 square feet, pad lease terms are one year, operator business insurance is $200 a month, and food cart owners pay a pad rental fee of $800 a month to the operators. The scenario assumes two food cart tenants in Year 1, three in Year 2, and four in Year 3. A food truck pod would most likely benefit from a nearby parking lot and/or walkable access, and an easily accessible home delivery service facility (e.g., a shared DoorDash counter for all carts).

Additional fiscal modeling details are in Appendix 3. Startup costs are estimated at $15,000, and may include landscaping, plumbing, concrete pad pouring, and other one-time costs. These costs could be covered using the ARPA grant funds and funds could also be used to pay for site rental into operating years 1 and 2. A fiscally viable model may be possible.

	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Expenses				
Total Expenses	$15,000.00	$31,700.00	$31,550.00	$32,232.50
Revenue				
Food Truck Rent		$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$38,400.00
Total Revenue		$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$38,400.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding	-$15,000.00	-$12,500.00	-$2,750.00	$6,167.50
Expenses covered by ARPA funding	$ 15,000.00	$ 31,700.00	$ 31,550.00	
Profit/Loss with ARPA funding	$0.00	$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$6,167.50

Utilizing this model, the cumulative profit at the end of Year 3, with the support of ARPA funding, is projected to be $54,167. The cumulative loss at the end of Year 3 without ARPA funding is projected to be $24,082. This scenario may utilize a total of $79,850 of ARPA funds.

	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cumulative Profit/Loss without ARPA	-$15,000.00	-$27,500.00	-$30,250.00	-$24,082.50
Cumulative Profit/Loss with ARPA	$0.00	$19,200.00	$48,000.00	$54,167.50

Site:

The consultant team did not identify sites in South Corvallis suitable for a food cart pod.

Food Cart Pod Model: Portland Mercado

The Portland Mercado provides affordable retail space for Latine businesses to launch and grow in their outdoor food cart rental space and indoor public market space. It is a Latino culture hub in Portland and a project of Hacienda Community Development Corporation, a non-profit organization.

Image: https://place.la/portfolio/portland-mercado/

SCENARIO VIABILITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA MATRIX

	Small scale warehouse	Food Cart Pod	Commercial Kitchen
Improve commercial opportunities for food businesses	Central distribution and aggregation, improve consistency in volume and supply. >25 small farms plan to expand in the next 5 years	Low-barrier to entry to small business ownership, particularly accessible to BIPOC aspiring owners	Essential and missing component in small scale business development continuum
Improve food access in South Corvallis	Neighborhood groups encouraged to form buying clubs to access wholesale prices for locally produced food. Delivery feasible Price supports feasible (SNAP, DUFB, community supports, etc)	May improve geographic food access Affordability to be addressed Delivery feasible; Price supports feasible	May not directly affect
Address community needs	90% of local food businesses already purchase local food, desire to increase. Access to affordable food identified as barrier from social service orgs 90% of consumers interested in purchasing locally sourced/produced groceries and 60% of consumers interested in increasing local food at existing businesses	Top interest among community survey respondents Top interest among aspiring food cart owners	Top need identified in equipment inventory
Attain fiscal viability	Wholesale value margin + lease of food storage space will cover operating expenses if engagement targets are met	Income from pad rental fees may cover operating expenses, although start-up expenses are unclear and site-dependent	Income from vendor fees and kitchen rental coordination may be insufficient to cover operating expenses, particularly if the overarching goal is to reduce consumer costs
Available 3+ years	Likely, may achieve profitability within three years	Unknown	Likely
Address equipment inventory and needs	Aggregation & distribution top need identified by local businesses. Cold, dry, and frozen storage identified as need. Access to delivery truck feasible	Cold storage identified as need, but not shared office space, which would likely be a strong source of revenue for this scenario	Commercial kitchen top need identified by local businesses
Operator Identified	Potentially	Potentially	Potentially

NEXT STEPS & RECCOMENDATIONS

NEXT STEPS:

- This report is publicly available on May 6, 2024.
- The consultant team is scheduled to present to the City of Corvallis and Benton County elected officials during the month of May, 2024.
- Following the public release of this report, the Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office will release a public Request for Proposals for Operators. Potential operators are invited to watch the recording of public meetings presenting the findings from this study, available on the City of Corvallis website, and direct any questions to the EDO.
- Operators will be selected to carry out aspects of this project.

GLEANED WISDOM FROM CLOSED FOOD HUBS

In 2017, the USDA released a study of closed food hubs to understand the causes and themes of their closures.[15] Their findings advised food hub operators of the following:

- Create and stick to a solid business plan
- Secure a strong financial foundation (mix of income streams/grants)
- Start with expert staff and continually train
- Focus on operating strengths & find partners for the rest
- Know your customers & markets
- Work with multiple stakeholders while letting farmers lead to affect long-term systems change
- Understand the food production process
- Don’t expand too fast
- Make success of the enterprise/organization part of the mission

Additional information to support potential operators follow in appendices, including fiscal details of each scenario, the Community Survey Report, and the Inventory of Equipment.

[15] Feldstein, S., & Barham, J. (2017). *Running a Food Hub: Learning from Food Hub Closures*. United States Department of Agriculture. https://www.rd.usda.gov/publicationforcooperatives/sr-77-running-food-hub-volume-4-learning-food-hub-closures

APPENDIX 1: SMALL-SCALE WAREHOUSE FISCAL MODELING

Expenditures			Assumptions
Operator labor	$25,000.00		
Building lease	$32,400		$1.20/sf/mo, 4500 sf, 6-month lease July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024
Walk-in cooler, freezer, install	$95,000.00		1000 sq. ft. walk in cooler at $75/sq. ft., smaller commercial freezer(s) for $20,000
Other building retrofits/renovations	$50,000.00		Additional plumbing, electrical as needed
Forklift	$24,000.00		
Powered pallet jack	$3,400.00		
Refrigerated box truck	$50,000.00		
Utilities	$2,000.00		
Warehouse expenses and equipment (see below table)	$14,200.00		See below table itemized breakdown
Office expenses and equipment	$3,400.00		See below table itemized breakdown
Overhead (insurance etc.)	$3,000.00		
Online marketplace - setup	$1,000.00		
Total project setup expenditures	**$303,400.00**		Note: Setup expenditures may extend into 2025

Itemized Warehouse Expenses and Equipment		Cost per	count	Total
Pallet Rack Shelving Unit	Pallet Rack Starter, 108"W x 42"D x 144"H Includes 2 shelves	$800.00	4	$3,200.00
	Pallet Rack Wire Decking, 58"W x 42"D (2750 lbs cap) Gray	$56.00	8	$448.00
Pallets	(new)	$40.00	25	$1,000.00
Smaller Storage Shelving warehouse	Muscle Rack 77 W x 24 D x 72 H 3-Tier Steel Welded Storage Rack	$212.00	7	$1,484.00
Smaller Storage Shelving Fridge and Freezer	Muscle Rack 77 W x 24 D x 72 H 3-Tier Steel Welded Storage Rack	$212.00	12	$2,544.00
Sorting Tables (Food Grade)	Regency 30" x 72" 18-Gauge 304 Stainless Steel Commercial Work Table with Galvanized Legs and Undershelf	$205.00	4	$820.00
Recycling Center	Commercial Zone Polytec 73246399 126 Gallon 3-Stream Polyethylene Square Landfill / Recycling / Compost Receptacles with Open Top Lids	$340.00	1	$340.00
Trash Cans	Lavex 23 Gallon Black Square Trash Can	$25.00	4	$100.00

Floor Care	Regency 18-Gauge 304 Stainless Steel Standing Mop Sink	$300.00	1	$300.00
	Mop Sink accessories and faucet	$300.00	1	$300.00
	Lavex 35 Qt. Black Mop Bucket & Side Press Wringer Combo	$50.00	1	$50.00
	Lavex 16" Mop and Broom Rack with 6 Hanging Hooks and 5 Tool Clips	$15.00	1	$15.00
	Lavex 12" Open-Lid Lobby Dust Pan with Broom	$15.00	2	$30.00
	wet mop	$13.00	2	$26.00
Carts	Lavex Large 2-Shelf Utility Cart with Flat Top and Built-In Tool Compartment - 44" x 25 1/4" x 32 1/4"	$90.00	3	$270.00
	Lavex 30" x 48" Blue Steel Platform Truck 2000 lb. Capacity	$190.00	1	$190.00
Storage bins	Open bins/ Bus tubs	$6.00	20	$120.00
	Vigor 18" x 12" x 9" Clear Polycarbonate Food Storage Box with Lid - 6/Pack	$140.00	2	$280.00
Cleaning Supplies and rags		$100.00	1	$100.00
Packing Supplies	tape/ sharpies/ rubber bands/ plastic shipping tape	$75.00	1	$75.00
	Boxes for re-packing	$0.75	50	$37.50
Hand washing sink		$400.00	1	$400.00
Food washing sink		$1,000.00	1	$1,000.00
Shipping costs for equipment		$1,000.00	1	$1,000.00
Desks	used	$60.00	2	$120.00
Chairs	used	$60.00	2	$120.00
computer		$1,500.00	1	$1,500.00
Printer		$300.00	1	$300.00
Printer Ink		$100.00	4	$400.00
Shelving		$200.00	2	$400.00
Office supplies	pens/ tape/ boom box	$200.00	1	$200.00
Heater	Space Heater	$100.00	1	$100.00
Coffee maker/ Tea kettle		$50.00	1	$50.00
Other misc. supplies				$200.00
Office supplies total		**Total**		**$3,390.00**
Warehouse Expenses and Equipment Total				**$14,129.50**

SMALL SCALE WAREHOUSE FISCAL MODELING IN DETAIL

	Start up & build out	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Sales Goal		$250,000.00	$500,000.00	$750,000.00
Margin		30%	30%	30%
Expenses				
Capital investment - infrastructure	$145,000.00			
Capital investment - equipment	$95,000.00			
Staff Time	$25,000.00	$50,000.00	$80,000.00	$120,000.00
Utilities	$2,000.00	$7,000.00	$9,500.00	$9,500.00
Maintenance/Fuel (delivery van)		$8,000.00	$15,000.00	$20,000.00
Online marketplace software	$1,000.00	$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
Overhead (insurance etc.)	$3,000.00	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	$5,000.00
Marketing/outreach		$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
Lease	*$32,400.00*	*$64,800.00*	*$64,800.00*	*$64,800.00*
Total Expenses	$303,400.00	$140,800.00	$180,300.00	$225,300.00
Revenue				
Sales		$75,000.00	$150,000.00	$225,000.00
cooler/freezer space lease		$12,000.00	$18,000.00	$24,000.00
Total Revenue	$0.00	$87,000.00	$168,000.00	$249,000.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding	-$303,400.00	-$53,800.00	-$12,300.00	$23,700.00
Expenses covered by ARPA funding	$303,400.00	$64,800.00	$64,800.00	$0.00
Profit/Loss including ARPA funding	$0.00	$11,000.00	$52,500.00	$23,700.00

APPENDIX 2: COMMERCIAL KITCHEN FISCAL MODELING

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN ITEMIZED START-UP COSTS

	Rate	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Capacity Goal			40%	50%	60%
Expenses					
Staff Time					
Kitchen Rental to Benton County Parks & Rec	$50/day				
Supplies & Equipment		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,500.00
Total Expenses		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,500.00
Revenue					
Rental $15/hr			$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 19,872.00
Total Revenue			$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 19,872.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding		$(40,000.00)	$ 12,248.00	$ 15,360.00	$ 18,372.00
Expenses covered by APRA funding		$ 40,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,200.00	
Profit/Loss with ARPA funding		$ -	$ 13,248.00	$ 16,560.00	$ 18,372.00

Commercial Kitchen Fiscal Modeling in Detail

Item	price/item	count	total price
2 qt square - 6 pack	$32.99	2	$65.98
4 qt square - 6 pack	$43.99	1	$43.99
6 qt square - 4 pack	$41.99	1	$41.99
8 qt square - 4 pack	$46.99	2	$93.98
12 qt square - 4 pack	$61.32	1	$61.32
22 qt square - 4 pack	$108.78	1	$108.78
Containers total			**416.04**
sheet tray - full size - 12 pack	$59.99	1	$59.99
sheet tray - half size - 12 pack	$51.48	1	$51.48
sheet tray rack (speed rack) full	$99.99	1	$99.99
hotel pan - 6" full	$16.99	6	$101.94
hotel pan - 4" full	$12.49	12	$149.88
hotel pan - 2" full	$9.49	6	$56.94
mixing bowl set (10 piece)	$47.99	1	$47.99
mixing bowl set (5 piece)	$9.99	2	$19.98
mixing bowl 1.5 qt	$0.99	5	$4.95
mixing bowl 3 qt	$1.69	5	$8.45
colander - 16 qt	$24.99	1	$24.99
chinoise - 10"	$32.99	1	$32.99
"china cap" strainer - 12"	$19.49	1	$19.49
sieve - 8"	$4.49	1	$4.49
sieve - 4 3/4"	$2.59	1	$2.59
Food Prep Total			**686.14**

frying pan - aluminum 10" 6 pack	$45.99	2	$91.98
frying pan - aluminum 7"	$4.00	6	$24.00
frying pan - stainless steel 16"	$52.99	1	$52.99
sauce pan - stainless steel - 2 qt	$15.99	2	$31.98
sauce pan - stainless steel - 4 qt	$22.99	2	$45.98
sauce pan - stainless steel - 6 qt	$26.99	2	$53.98
stock pot - stainless steel - 12 qt	$38.99	1	$38.99
stock pot - stainless steel - 16 qt	$44.49	1	$44.49
stock pot - stainless steel - 20 qt	$55.99	1	$55.99
brazier pot - stainless steel - 20 qt	$82.99	1	$82.99
Cookware total			**$523.37**
scale, 20 lb	$29.99	1	$29.99
Small appliance total			**29.99**
grater - micro plane	$5.29	1	$5.29
grater - coarse	$4.79	1	$4.79
mandolin	$32.99	1	$32.99
funnel set	$7.79	1	$7.79
cooling rack - full	$8.39	2	$16.78
bench scraper	$1.69	2	$3.38
bowl scraper	$0.36	2	$0.72
rolling pin - wood - 15"	$8.99	1	$8.99
measuring cup - liquid - set of 5	$24.99	1	$24.99
measuring cup - dry - set of 4	$2.99	1	$2.99
measuring spoon - set of 4	$1.59	1	$1.59
whisk - 12"	$2.59	1	$2.59
whisk - 24"	$4.79	1	$4.79
spatula - offset - 4"	$1.19	2	$2.38
spatula - offset - 6"	$6.39	1	$6.39
spatula - offset - 10"	$8.69	2	$17.38
spatula - high heat - 10"	$8.01	2	$16.02
spatula - high heat - 16 1/2"	$13.64	2	$27.28
spoonula - high heat - 10"	$9.59	2	$19.18
spoonula - high heat - 13 1/2"	$12.49	2	$24.98
spoonula - high heat - 16 3/8"	$15.99	2	$31.98
spatula - turner - 8 x 3"	$2.99	2	$5.98
spatula - fish/egg - 6 x 3"	$2.99	2	$5.98
spoon - metal - 13"	$1.39	2	$2.78
spoon - metal - slotted - 13"	$0.98	2	$1.96
ladle - 4oz	$1.49	1	$1.49
ladle - 8oz	$1.99	2	$3.98
scoop/disher - set of 9	$39.99	1	$39.99

tongs - coated handle - 12"	$2.49	2	$4.98
tongs - coated handle - 16"	$2.99	3	$8.97
tongs - coated handle - 9 1/2"	$2.19	2	$4.38
can opener - easy crank handle	$10.99	1	$10.99
peeler - "Y"	$2.99	2	$5.98
Utensils Total			**$360.73**
wire shelving - 24" x 30"	$148.49	2	$296.98
wall mounted shelving - 12" x 48"	$62.99	5	$314.95
Storage total			**$611.93**
grill bricks	$20.00	/month	$240.00
paper towel	$20.00	/month	$240.00
dishsoap, bleach, degreaser	$20.00	/month	$240.00
sponges, scrubbies, brushes, etc	$30.00	/month	$360.00
scrub brush w/handle for floors	$14.49	1	$14.49
floor squeegee	$5.99	1	$5.99
Janitorial Total			**$1,100.48**
Kitchen aide professional mixer	$599.95		
Hobart 30 qt mixer	$16,484.16		
vacuum packer - chamber	$749.00		
Impulse heat sealer	$20.99		
Vitamix blender	$399.98		
Robot Coupe - food processor	$1,064.18		
spice grinder (just a coffee grinder)	$15.29		
citrus juicer	$35.49		
steam kettle 60 gallon	$16,049.00		
Large Kitchen Equipment Total			**$35,418.04**
TOTAL EQUIPMENT START UP COST			**$39,146.72**

APPENDIX 3: FOOD CART POD FISCAL MODELING

FOOD CART POD FISCAL MODELING IN DETAIL

	Start-up Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Expenses				
Licensing		$1,500.00	$700.00	$700.00
Labor/Taxes (.25FTE)		$13,000.00	$13,650.00	$14,332.50
Utilities		$5,000.00	$5,000.00	$5,000.00
Marketing		$1,200.00	$1,200.00	$1,200.00
POS/equipment and rental		$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
Liability Insurance		$2,000.00	$2,000.00	$2,000.00
SAIF		$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
Janitorial		$2,400.00	$2,400.00	$2,400.00
Office supplies		$400.00	$400.00	$400.00
Mortgage/Rent (portion of food hub location?)		$2,000.00	$2,000.00	$2,000.00
Miscellaneous		$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
Total Expenses	$15,000.00	$32,500.00	$32,350.00	$33,032.50
Revenue				
Food Truck Rent		$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$38,400.00
Total Revenue		$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$38,400.00
Profit/Loss without ARPA funding	-$15,000.00	-$13,300.00	-$3,550.00	$5,367.50
Expenses covered by ARPA funding	$ 15,000.00	$ 32,500.00	$ 32,350.00	
Profit/Loss with ARPA funding	$0.00	$19,200.00	$28,800.00	$5,367.50

END OF
COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

South Corvallis Food Hub Community Survey Report

March 2024

Introduction

This survey is a component of a food system assessment to determine the feasibility of a possible food hub in South Corvallis. The food system assessment was conducted during Winter of 2024.

Respondents were shown different questions if they endorsed interacting with the food system as an eater, a food business (owner, worker, or decision-maker), an institutional purchaser, or a social service organization worker or volunteer. All response categories received over 75 responses, and the 97333 zip code, a proxy for South Corvallis,[1] received a higher percentage of respondents.

This survey is not designed to be representative of any population or group or used to describe needs of any group. A total of 781 survey responses were included.

Cover image: Red Russian Kale from Adaptive Seeds: https://awaytogarden.com/grow-kale-sarah-kleeger-adaptive-seeds/

[1] South Corvallis comprises about a third of the land area covered in the 97333 zip code. The neighborhood is more accurately delineated by census tracts, but for the purposes of this survey the 97333 zip code was used because it is easily identifiable by survey respondents and most people in the 97333 zip code live in South Corvallis.

Purpose of the Report and Survey

The purpose of this report is to describe the findings of the community survey, one of the four data collection methods of the feasibility study of a future South Corvallis Food Hub. This survey was conducted as a required part of the System Assessment contracted by the City of Corvallis Economic Development Office.

The survey questions were created to fulfill specific requirements of the System Assessment for the South Corvallis Food Hub, including gauging (1) community (eater), (2) producers', (3) institutional purchasers', and (4) existing business owners' desires; (5) creating an inventory of existing and needed equipment, and (6) assessing economic support for various scenarios of a food hub. The questions were reviewed by representatives from each of these groups before the survey was published. Their input expanded the questions and response options in a few ways, most notably to include those who want to start a food-based business and social service organizations.

Distribution and Methods

The survey was distributed through existing community email lists including the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, the Corvallis-Albany Farmers' Market producer list, the First Alternative Co-op member list, Ten Rivers Food Web, and other local food- and community-focused email lists. The web survey was open for responses for three weeks (from January 16, 2024 through February 7, 2024). Over eight hundred responses were received. A total of 781 responses met the inclusion criteria, which was a response to the first two questions: (1) "Do you live, work, or play in Benton County, Oregon" and (2) How do you currently interact with the food system", and then a response to any one additional question.

Responses to the second question, "how do you currently interact with the food system", informed which questions survey respondents were shown in the remainder of the survey using branching logic. For example, a survey respondent could choose to only select "I eat food" as a response option and would only be shown questions related to their desires for a future food hub and some demographic questions. A survey respondent could also select "I eat food", "I work or volunteer for a social service organization, nonprofit, or government agency", and "I own, hold decision-making power, or want to start a food-based business", and therefore would be shown all questions related to each of these three topics.

The data collected was de-identified and used to understand the needs, barriers, and opportunities in the community. Researchers trained in quantitative data analysis methods used IBM SPSS software to analyze the questions that collected quantitative data and researchers trained in qualitative data analysis methods used Atlas.ti software to analyze open-ended responses. Each question was reviewed by two researchers for reliability.

Limitations

No research is perfect and this research study is no exception. This community survey was limited in scope and depth due to the timeline and budget of the project. The abbreviated timeline for this study (January 2024 to March 2024) did not provide enough time to adequately co-design a study method nor review survey questions with all affected groups which may have created questions and response options that did not affirm all cultures and experiences. Any omissions due to this timeline are deeply regrettable and repair has been attempted through intentional community outreach, collaboration, and long-term relationship building efforts.

The format of an electronic survey is known to be a limited access method. Those without access to electronic devices and those who have previously experienced input fatigue may not self-select to participate. However, this survey is not intended to be generalizable to any population; it was designed as the first step in a series of testing for feasibility of specific scenarios related to a Food Hub in South Corvallis.

In the future, we suggest any feasibility study that could result in funding allocated in communities that have been disproportionally affected by systemic racism to be led by the communities most affected and conducted on an appropriate timeline using best practices in restorative justice-based research methods, including Participatory Action Research (PAR) and collaborative storytelling. These methods are known to result in rigorous results and build community capacity, although they take significantly more time than was allocated to this project.

Despite these limitations, the authors believe the findings of this feasibility study are valuable in informing the future direction of a Food Hub in South Corvallis.

Executive Summary

Support for a food hub in South Corvallis is overwhelming and even stronger from South Corvallis residents.

Nearly all (95%) of survey respondents and an even higher percentage (98%) of respondents in the 97333 zip code endorse a food hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them at least a little.

73% of 97333 zip code respondents endorsed a food hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them at least a moderate amount, and 51% endorsed it would potentially benefit them a lot or a great deal.

Locally sourced or produced groceries, a food cart pod, a farmers' market, and increasing local food at existing businesses are all supported by a majority of eater respondents. Eaters spend more money per month on groceries than on restaurants and food carts.

Locally sourced/produced groceries were the most common top priority endorsed by eaters when purchasing groceries.

Almost three-quarters of respondents report spending between $100 and $800 a month on groceries.

Flavor was the most common top priority for respondents who eat at restaurants or food carts.

Over 80% of respondents spend less than $300 a month at restaurants or food carts.

A food cart pod was the most common top interest of services a food hub could provide, followed by a farmers' market and increasing local food at existing businesses.

About 90% of eaters endorsed being very interested in purchasing local fruits and produce, over 60% of eaters endorse interest in a farmers' market, and the same percentage expressed interest in increasing local food at existing businesses.

Purchasing local food is already common among food businesses and the desire to purchase more, especially more produce and shelf-stable items, appears to be strong. A directory[2] and a local food aggregator would support more local food purchasing. Many small farms (over 25) plan to expand in the next few years.

Nearly 90% of local food business owner respondents endorse already purchasing local food, including local fresh vegetables, fruits, and milk and dairy, but irregular supply stymied additional procurement. They also expressed a desire to purchase more produce and shelf-stable items, but did not have enough availability to do so.

A directory of local producers and a local food aggregator was the most commonly endorsed support that would enable businesses to buy more local food.

Culturally familiar foods were grown by about half of farmer respondents including produce such as potatoes, corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, specialty herbs, chili peppers, and Wapato.

Lack of sufficient volume for needs was the most commonly identified barrier to selling products locally.

Marketing supports and a central distribution center that includes cold storage could enable local food producers to sell more local food.

Nearly half of all business respondents and the same percent of farmer respondents are willing to participate in a local food marketing campaign.

Farmers want to sell more produce, dried foods and grains, and *all* products locally, but they experience barriers such as a lack of resources (equipment and land), no central distribution center, and other barriers.

A lack of affordable food was the biggest barrier to accessing locally produced food for those served by social service organizations

[2] Ten Rivers Food Web, a local non-profit, aims to launch a directory of local food producers in Spring 2024, according to their website: https://www.tenriversfoodweb.org/directory

Demographics and Response Rates

All response categories (eaters, social service workers or volunteers, food-based businesses, and institutional buyers) received over 75 responses

Almost all survey respondents endorsed interacting with the food system as an eater (97%), about a third endorsed interacting with the food system as part of their work, paid or unpaid, for a social service organization, nonprofit, or government agency (32%), one-fifth (20%) endorsed owning, holding decision-making power, or wanting to start a food-based business, and just over one in ten endorsed owning or working for an institution that purchases food (11%). These four groups will be referred to as "eaters", "social service workers or volunteers", "food-based businesses", and "institutional buyers" throughout this survey.

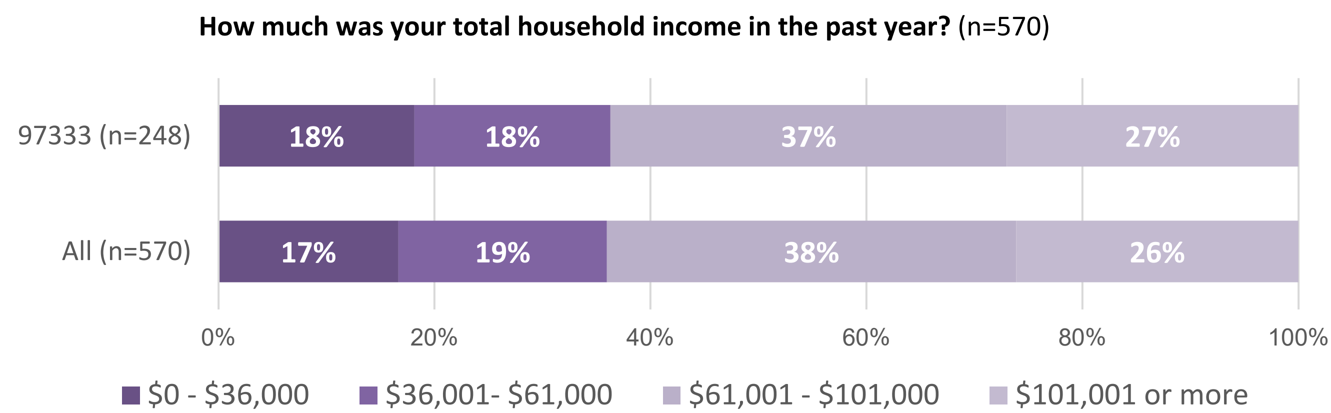
How do you currently interact with the food system? *(select all that apply)*	N=781	%
I eat food (Eaters)	755	97%
I work or volunteer for a social service organization, nonprofit, or government agency (Social service workers or volunteers)	251	32%
I own, hold decision-making power, or want to start a food-based business *(restaurant, farm, value-added product, industrial production facility)* (Food-based business)	158	20%
I own or work for an institution that purchases food *(school, hospital, cafeteria, etc)* (Institutional buyers)	92	11%

	Eaters	Social Service workers or volunteers	food-based business	Institutional buyers
Eaters	378	247	140	88
Social service workers or volunteers	247	3	45	42
Food-based business	140	45	17	24
Institutional buyers	88	42	24	4

Survey respondent demographics (income and race) generally reflect the 97333 zip code with a slight oversampling of White respondents

The 97333 zip code reports a slightly higher median household income ($63,119) [3] compared to Corvallis ($61,610) and a slightly lower poverty rate (24.6%) compared to Corvallis as a whole (26.4%).

Fewer than half (36%) of survey respondents endorsed a total household income of the Corvallis median household income ($61,610 in 2023)[4] or lower, meaning this survey may have slightly oversampled higher earners; and may more accurately represent the income distribution of the 97333 zip code than of Corvallis. The same percent (36%) of survey respondents endorsing a 97333-zip code endorsed a total household income of the Corvallis City median household income or below.



Responses to questions asking about race and ethnicity show an oversampling of White respondents (91% of respondents compared to 79% in the 97333 zip code), but the remaining groups are within the margin of error.*

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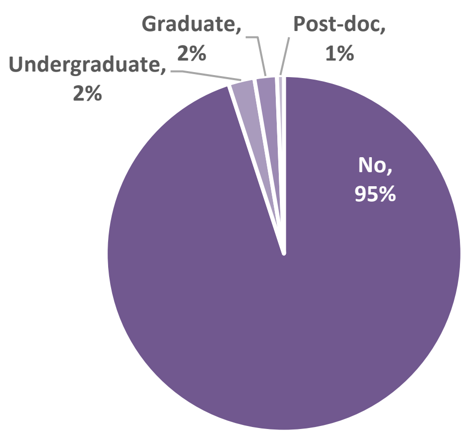
[3] https://www.incomebyzipcode.com/oregon/97333 (using ACS 2022 5-year estimate)
**the margin of error for these data are high.* The margin of error for South Corvallis (population 23,000) in a survey with about 250 responses is 6%.
[4] https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/corvalliscityoregon/PST045223

Are you a member of any of the following groups?	n=598	% of survey respondents	97333 zip code (South Corvallis)*	Over/under sample rate compared to South Corvallis
White	545	91%	79%	+12%
Hispanic	33	6%	8%	-2%
Asian	22	4%	6%	-2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	11	2%	<1%	+1%
Black or African American	7	1%	1%	-
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2	.3%	<1%	-
A different group: (please describe)	22	2%	-	-
Jewish	6	1%	-	-
Middle Eastern/Arabic/SWANA	5	1%	-	-

The vast majority (95%) of survey respondents were <u>not students</u> at Oregon State University although 40% of the Corvallis population are students at OSU.[5]

Are you a current OSU student? (n=636)

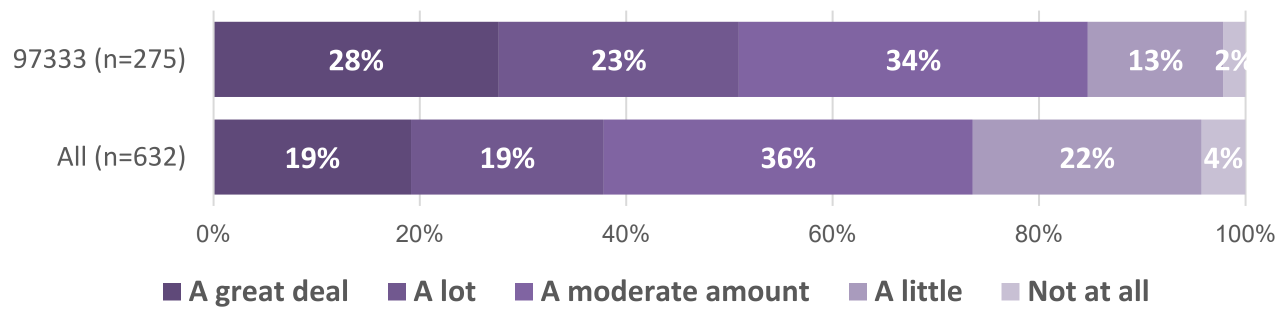


[5] https://www.corvallisoregon.gov/cd/page/population

Nearly all survey respondents endorse a food hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them at least a little

Nearly all survey respondents (96% of 632) endorsed a Food Hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them at least a little, and an even greater percent (98%) of survey respondents living in the 97333 zip code (South Corvallis, n=275) endorsed a Food Hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them at least a little. Over half (51%) of survey respondents (n=275) in the 97333 zip code endorsed a Food Hub in South Corvallis would potentially benefit them a lot or a great deal.

To what extent would you potentially benefit from a Food Hub in South Corvallis? (n=632)

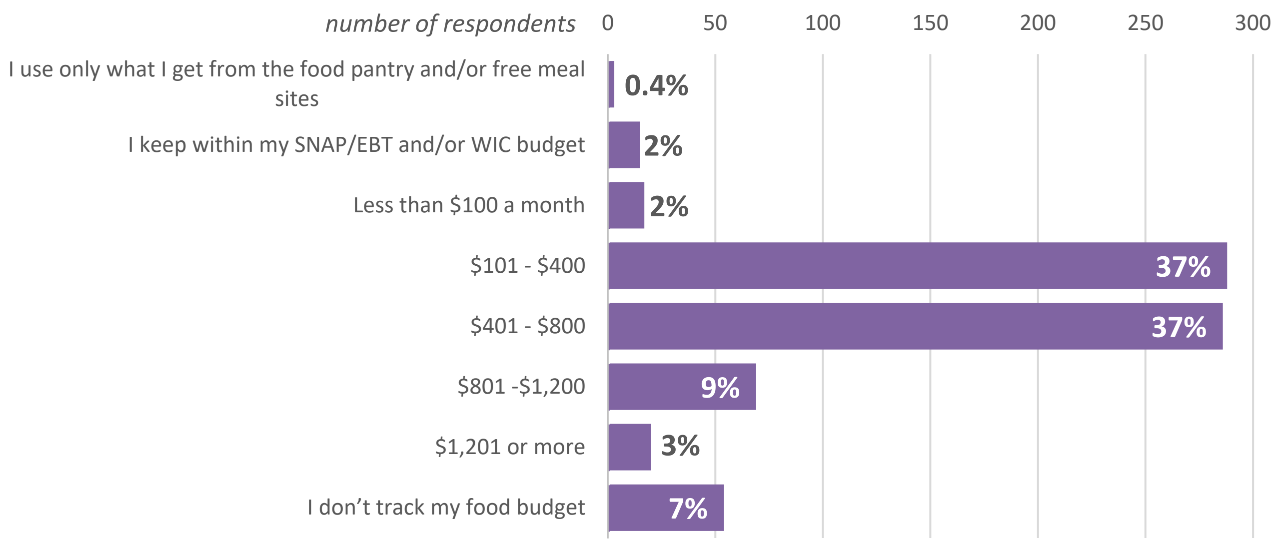


Community Survey Questions for Eaters

Almost three-quarters of respondents endorse spending between $100 and $800 a month on groceries

The majority (74%) of survey respondents endorsed spending between $100 and $800 a month on groceries, with exactly half of those spending between $100 and $400 (37%) and $401 to $800 (37%). About five percent endorse spending less than $100 or only used SNAP/EBT, WIC budget, or utilized the food pantry and/or free meal sites and thirteen percent spent $800 or more on groceries.

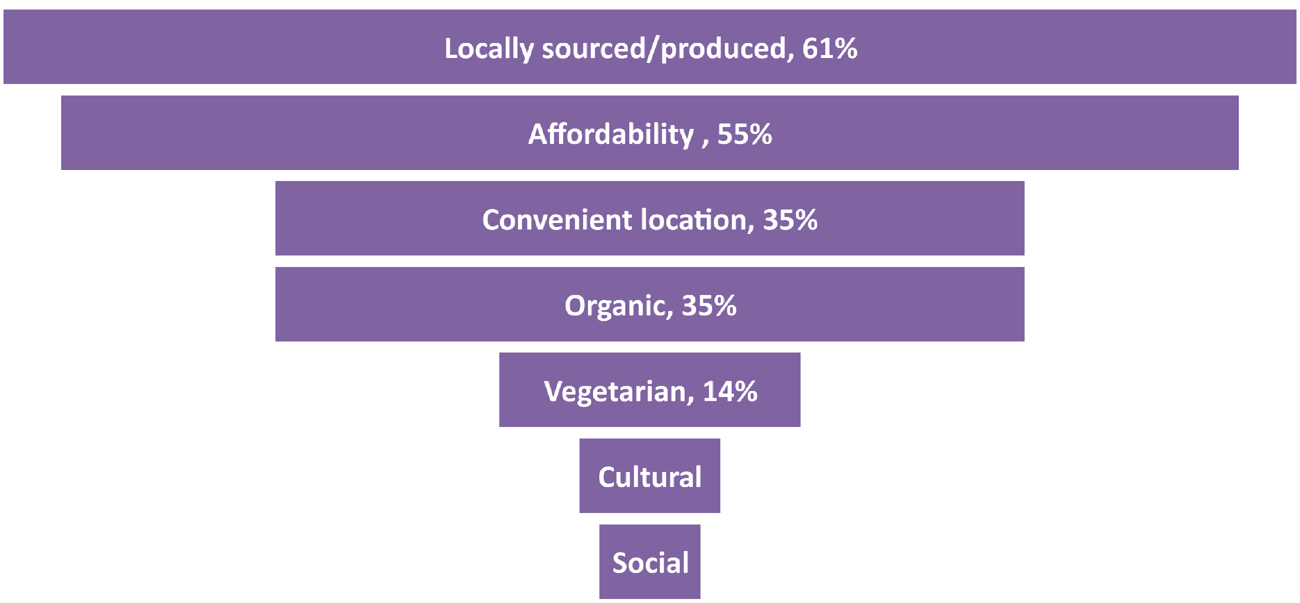
About how much does your household spend on groceries each month? (n=755)



Locally sourced/produced groceries most common top priority when eaters purchasing groceries

Locally sourced/produced was the most common (61%) priority endorsed by respondents when they purchase groceries, followed by affordability, endorsed by 55% of respondents, convenient location (35%), and organic (35%). Vegetarian or plant-based options (14%), culturally significant/relevant (6%), and social interactions (people I may run into when I'm shopping) (5%) were priorities for fewer respondents. Other responses (10%, n=75) included quality (n=17), environmentally sustainable/social priorities in production (n=13) (fair wages, regenerative, etc.), special diets (n=8) including gluten-free and allergen friendly, variety (n=7), and healthy (n=7). Six or fewer respondents each endorsed their top two priorities were cooperative/independent ownership, cultural appropriateness, food access related to transportation/location, no or minimal packaging, pleasant shopping environment, and prepared food.

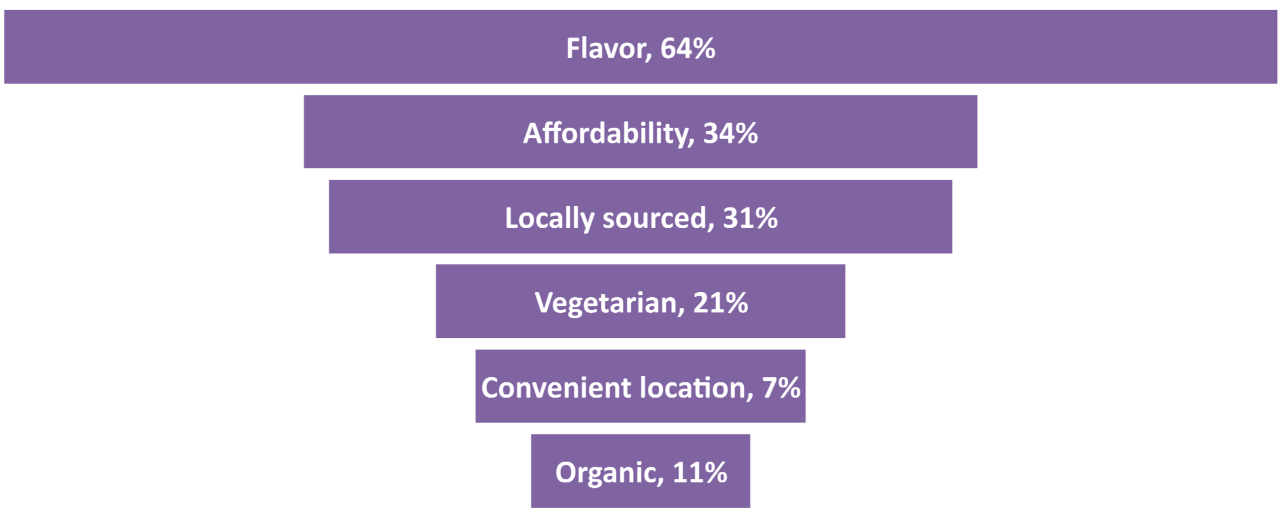
What are your top two priorities when you purchase groceries? *(n=755)*



Flavor most common top priority for respondents who eat a restaurant or food cart over affordability, locally sourced ingredients, and all other choices

Flavor was the most common (64%) priority endorsed by respondents when they eat at restaurant or food cart, followed by affordability (34%), locally sourced (31%), and vegetarian (21%). Convenient location (7%) and organic (11%) were priorities for fewer respondents. Other responses, provided by 111 respondents, could be grouped into a few themes of priorities, including quality or “deliciousness” of food and pleasant atmosphere (each 26 respondents), health and nutrition (n=15), adventurous eating (n=13), and locally owned (n=10). Less common themes (each with fewer than ten respondents), included cleanliness, kid friendly, outdoor seating, special diets, and variety of food.

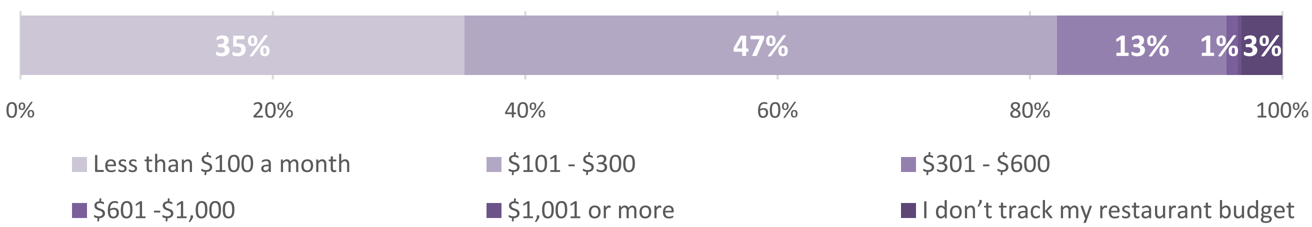
What are your top two priorities when you eat at a restaurant or food cart? (n=755)



Over 80% of respondents spend less than $300 a month at restaurants

The majority (82%) of survey respondents endorsed spending less than $300 a month at restaurants, few (13%) endorsed spending between $300 and $600, and fewer than one percent endorsed spending more than $600 per month at restaurants. Very few (3%) eater survey respondents endorsed not tracking their restaurant budget and no respondents endorsed spending $1,001 or more per month.

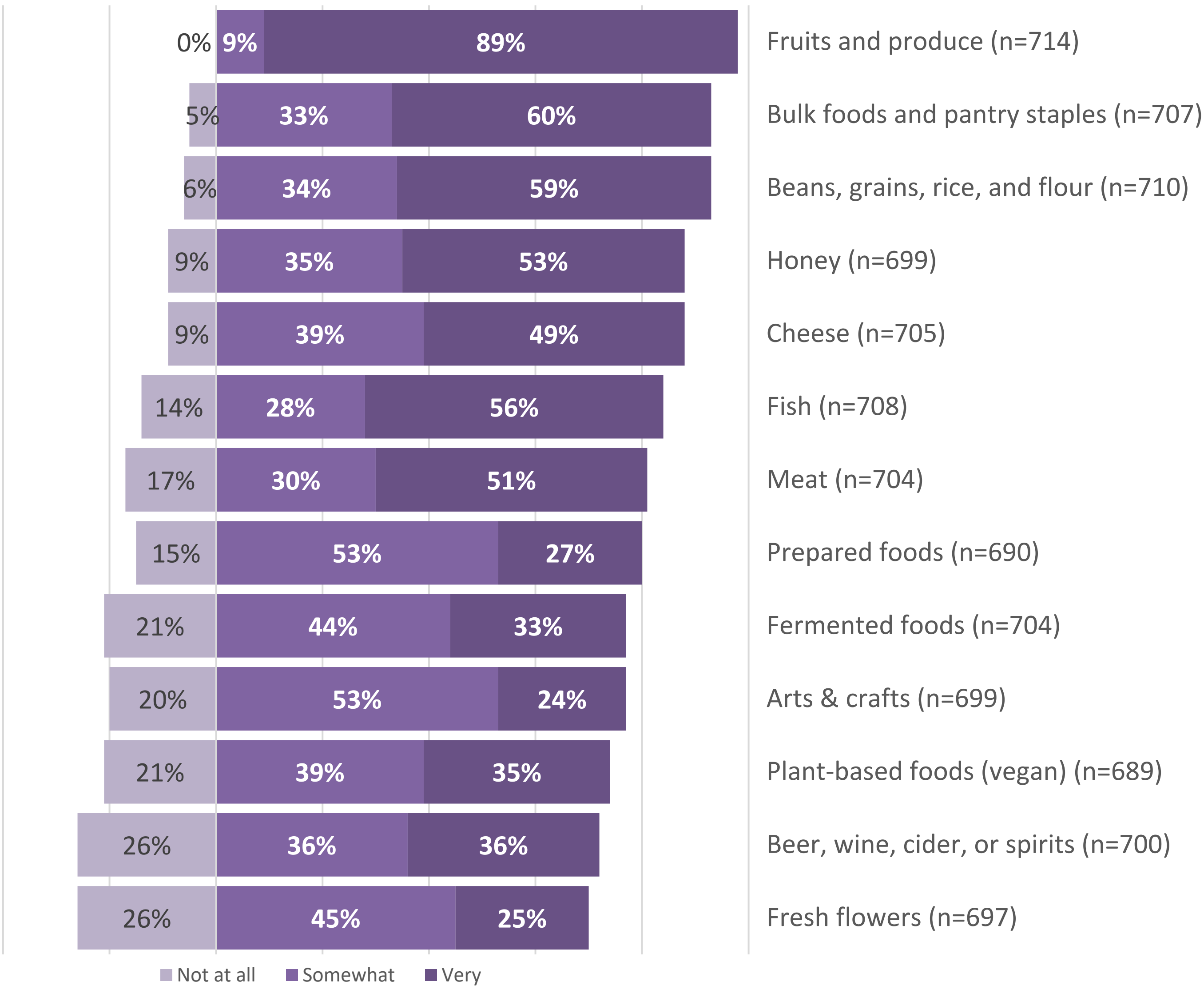
How much does your household usually spend at restaurants each month? (n=755)



About 90% of respondents endorsed being very interested in purchasing local fruits and produce

At least 70% of respondents endorsed being at least somewhat interested in purchasing every local product listed. **All respondents** (n=714) endorsed being at least somewhat (9%) if not very (89%) interested in **purchasing local fruits and produce** *(2% did not respond to this question)*. The majority (93%) also endorsed being at least somewhat (33%) if not very (60%) interested in purchasing **bulk foods and pantry staples**, the same percent also endorsed being at least somewhat interested in purchasing **beans, grains rice, and flour** (93%), and 88% of respondents endorsed being at least somewhat interested in purchasing honey and cheese. Other responses, provided by 83 respondents, could be grouped into a few themes of products, including bread and baked goods (n=11), ethnic foods and culturally appropriate foods (n=10), tea (n=7), dairy (n=6) and gluten-free products (n=6). Fewer than five respondents endorsed being interested in allergen-friendly local products, animal feed, broth/stock ingredients, butcher/fishmonger service, cooking fats, delivery, desserts/sweets, eggs, fish, herbs, meat, ready to eat meals, reusable containers, seasonal, seeds or starts for the garden, spices, value-added products, and vegan.

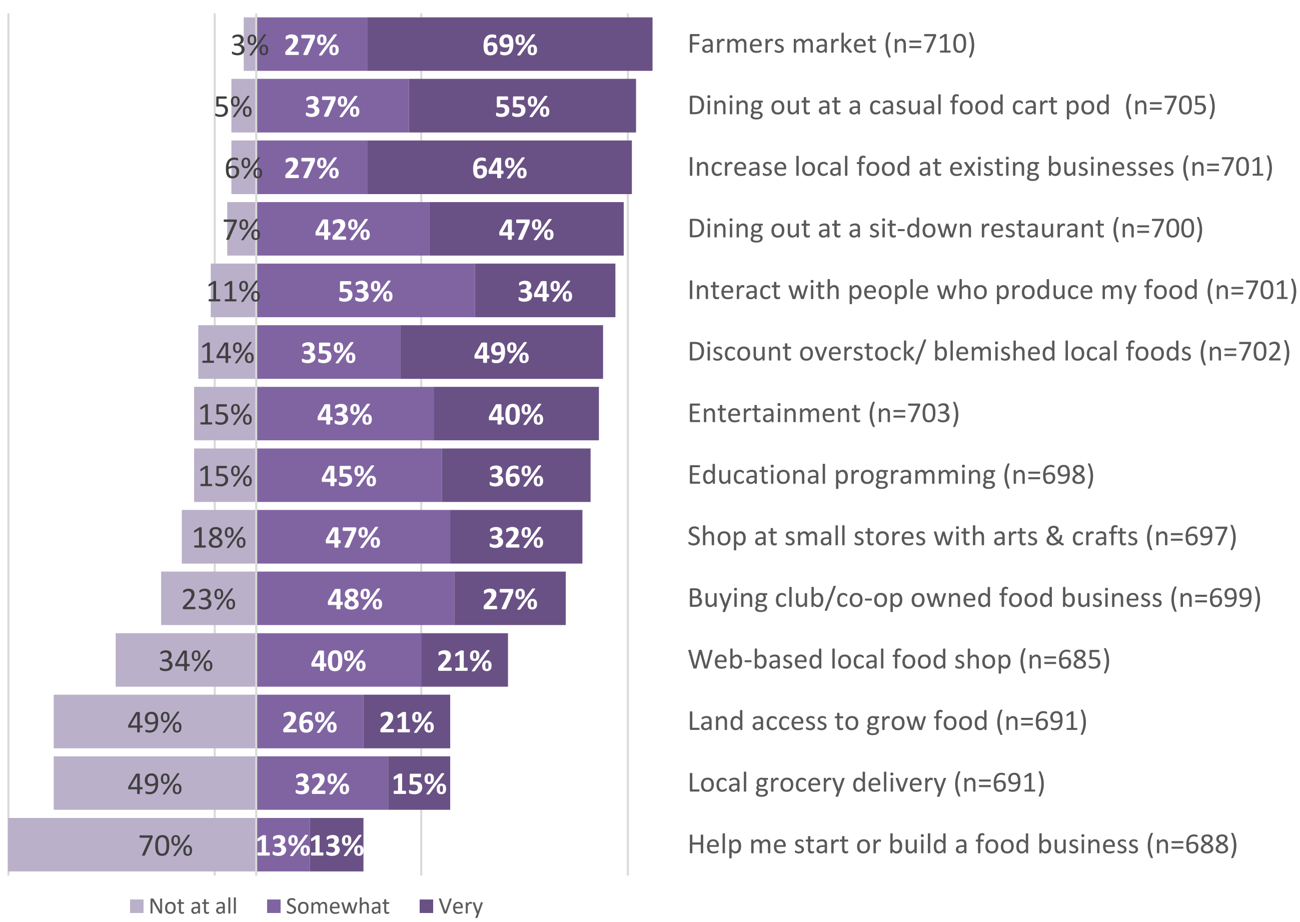
How interested are you in purchasing the following local products?



Over 60% of eaters endorse interest in farmer's market & increasing local food at existing businesses

A farmer's market was endorsed by almost all (96%) respondents (n=710) as a service the food hub could provide that they would at least be somewhat if not very interested in, closely followed by dining out at a casual food cart pod (93%), increasing local food at existing businesses (91%), and dining out at a sit-down restaurant (91%). Other responses, provided by 49 respondents, could be grouped into a few themes of services, including coordination between producers & non-retail buyers (n=6), and ability to buy affordable food (n=6). Fewer than five but more than one respondent endorsed ability to buy ethnic foods, ability to buy local foods, access to land, business support services, classes or classroom space, commercial kitchen, cultural support (including one respondent each being interested in a culturally specific farmers market and diverse representation "*representacion diversa*"), prepared meals to go, a space for children to play, and storage space.

How interested are you in the following services a Food Hub could provide?



Food cart pod most common top interest, then farmers market & increase local food at existing businesses

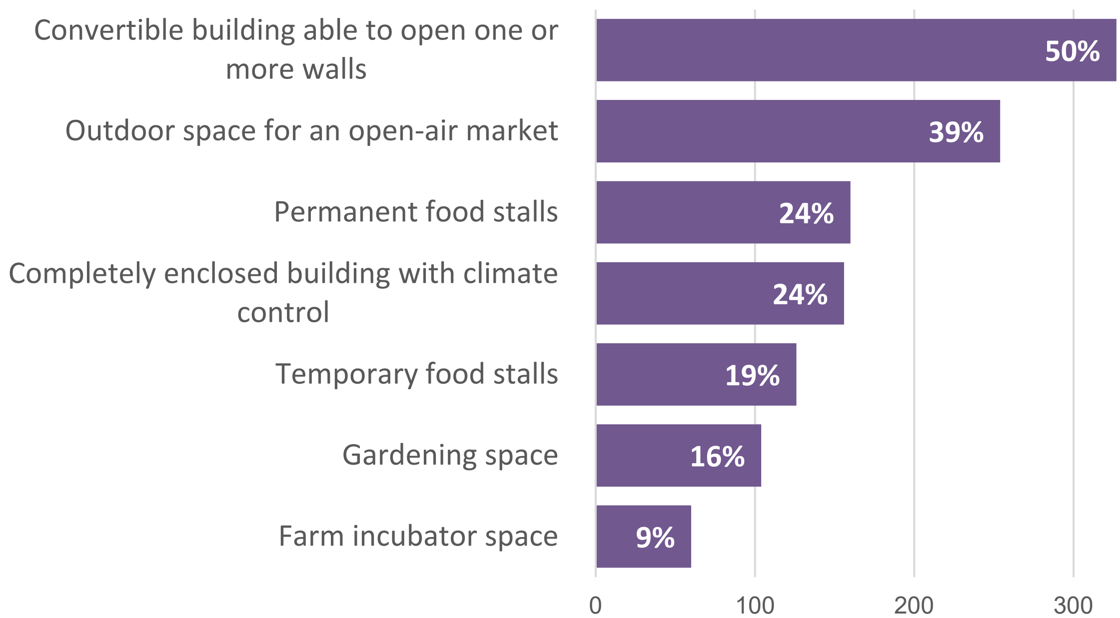
Dining out at a casual food cart pod was most commonly (37%) endorsed by respondents when asked to choose their top two services a food hub could potentially provide, followed by farmer's market (31%), and closely followed by increasing local food at existing businesses. Other responses included food access (n=8), business support (n=6), distribution/aggregation (n=4), and child-friendly play areas (n=2).

Of the services you indicated interest in above, please select your top two: (n=673)

Convertible building able to open one or more walls supported by half of all respondents

All community survey respondents were asked what type of building style would suit their needs if the food hub is in a building. A convertible building able to open one or more walls was supported by half of all respondents (50% of n=654), followed by an outdoor space for an open-air market (39%), permanent food stalls (24%), completely enclosed building with climate control (24%), temporary food stalls (19%), gardening space (16%), and farm incubator space (9% of all respondents).

If the future food hub is a building, what type of building style would best suit your needs and desires? (n=654)

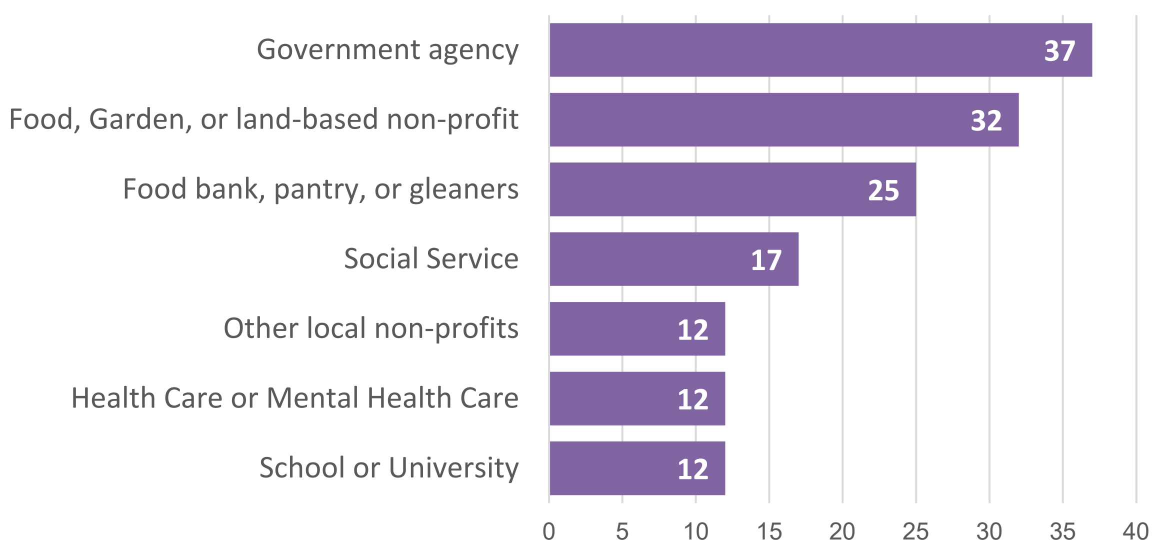


Community Survey Questions for Respondents who Work or Volunteer for Social Service Orgs

Working for or volunteering with a government agency most common type of organization endorsed by survey respondents

A government agency was the most common type of non-profit endorsed by this group of respondents (18% of respondents). Food, garden, or land-based non-profits was the next most common response, although it was not an original response option and is a category data analysts created from the "something else, please describe" response option. Food bank, pantry, or gleaners was the third most common response (12%), followed by social service organizations (8%), other local non-profits (6%), health care or mental health care (6%), and school or university (6%). The remainder of response categories each had fewer than ten respondents (fewer than 5%), and were, in order or percentage of responses: environmental non-profits, faith-based programs, housing providers, arts & creative non-profits, foundations and grant making organizations, culturally-specific non-profits, and labor unions or trade organizations. Of the food, garden, or land-based non-profits, the most common organization named was Stone Soup (n=6) followed by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition (n=5).

What type of organization do you work or volunteer for? (n=206)



What does the group you work with bring to the local food system? (n=183)	n	%
Distribute food to low-income individuals	61	33%
Education (food system, gardening, cooking, farming)	25	14%
Strengthen local food system (hosting events, connecting)	15	8%
Eaters/buy food for events	14	8%
Connection to resources (housing, energy, food aid)	10	5%
Farmer/producer supports (connect to resources)	10	5%
Food producer (e.g., produces food for Linn-Benton food share)	10	5%
Prioritizes cultural foods	8	4%
Institutional purchaser (School district, OSU, hospital, etc)	8	4%
Organizational/non-profit supports	8	4%
Awards grants	7	4%
Business support	4	2%
Political action	4	2%
Environmental	3	2%

Others included a food aid user and an organization that focuses on food justice.

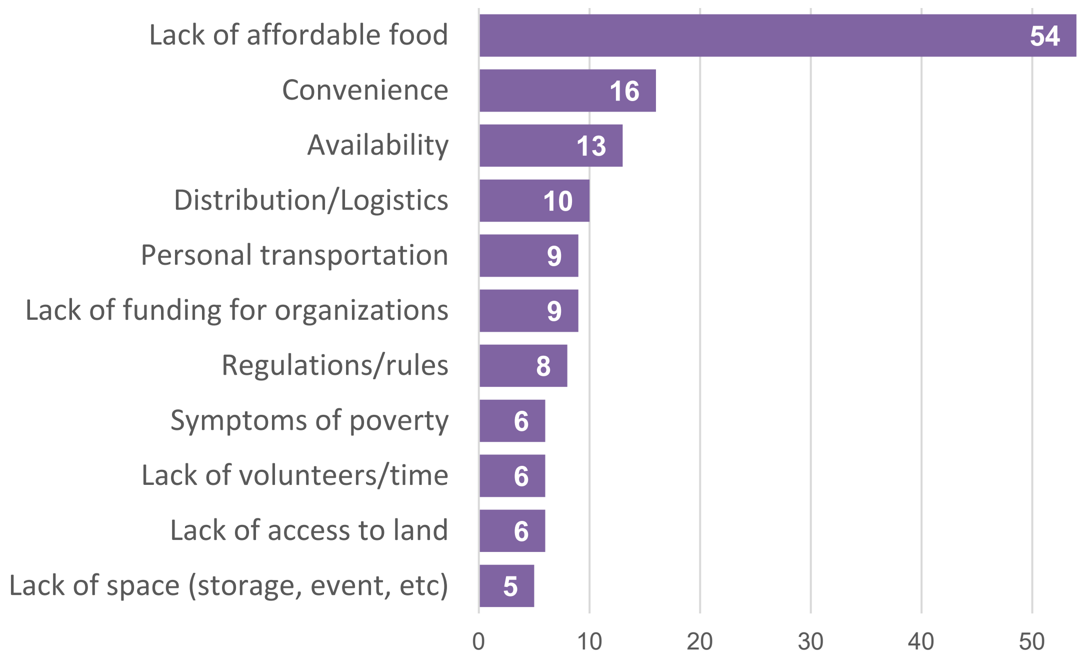
Lack of affordable food biggest barrier to accessing locally produced food

We asked survey respondents to describe the biggest barrier for those they work with to access locally produced foods, and used qualitative data analysis to create themes from the over 160 open-ended responses. **A lack of affordable food** was the most common response (33%), using words such as "Cost" and "affordability" to create this response category. **Convenience** was endorsed as the biggest barrier by 10% of respondents to this question, including limited hours of food pantries, inconvenient location of free food sites, and lack of places to purchase food in south Corvallis. **Lack of availability of local food** was endorsed as the biggest barrier by 8% of respondents to this question, followed by a **lack of coordinated distribution and logistics** or increased staff time to coordinate multiple deliveries (6%).

The biggest barrier for the people I work with is…
"Cost and the all-too-common feeling that low-income folk are out of place in the local food movement"
- Food security & small farm support non-profit

Additional barriers identified included a lack of personal transportation (5%), lack of funding for organizations (5%), prohibitive regulations and rules (5%), symptoms of poverty (including time poverty, lack of stable housing, and lack of personal cooking items) (4%), lack of volunteers and volunteer time (4%), and a lack of access to land (4%). Barriers endorsed by 3% (n=5) or fewer of respondents include, in order of popularity: lack of storage or event space, difficulties new businesses experience entering the market, lack of knowledge around cooking, lack of collaboration across social service agencies/producers, lack of culturally appropriate foods and markets, language barrier, lack of public desire for local foods, lack of diverse people in leadership positions, lack of BIPOC-centered spaces and a lack of a processing facility for value-added products.

What is the biggest barrier for the group you work with to access locally produced food? (n=167)

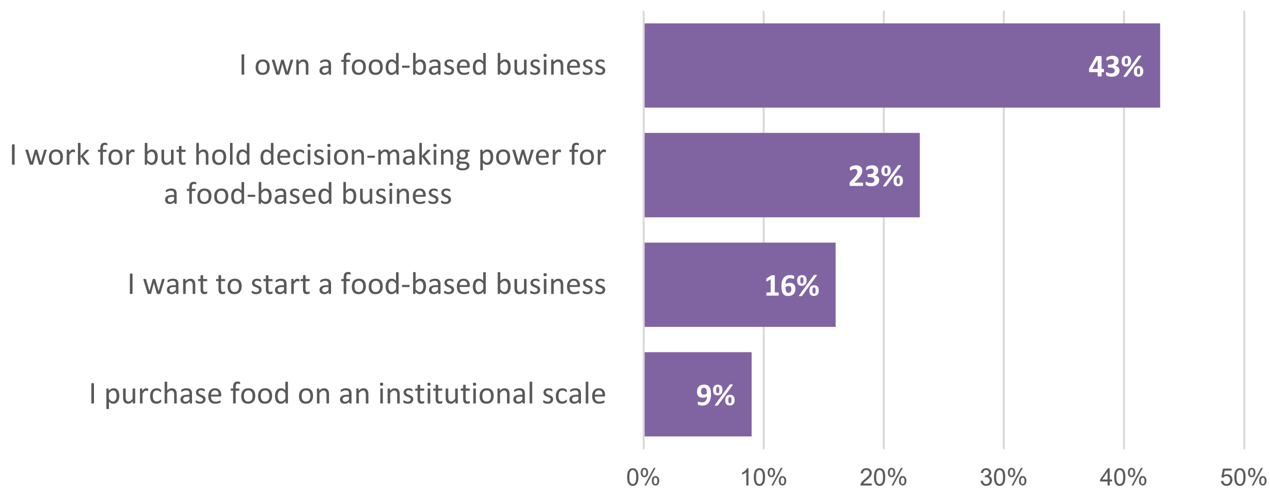


Community Survey Questions for Food-Based Businesses

Business owners almost half of food-based business respondents

Owning food-based businesses was the most common way survey respondents endorsed being part of the food-based business ecosystem (43% of respondents to this section), followed by working for and holding decision-making power for food-based businesses (23%) and wanting to start a food-based business (16%). Purchasing food on an institutional scale was endorsed by fewer than 10% of respondents to this question.

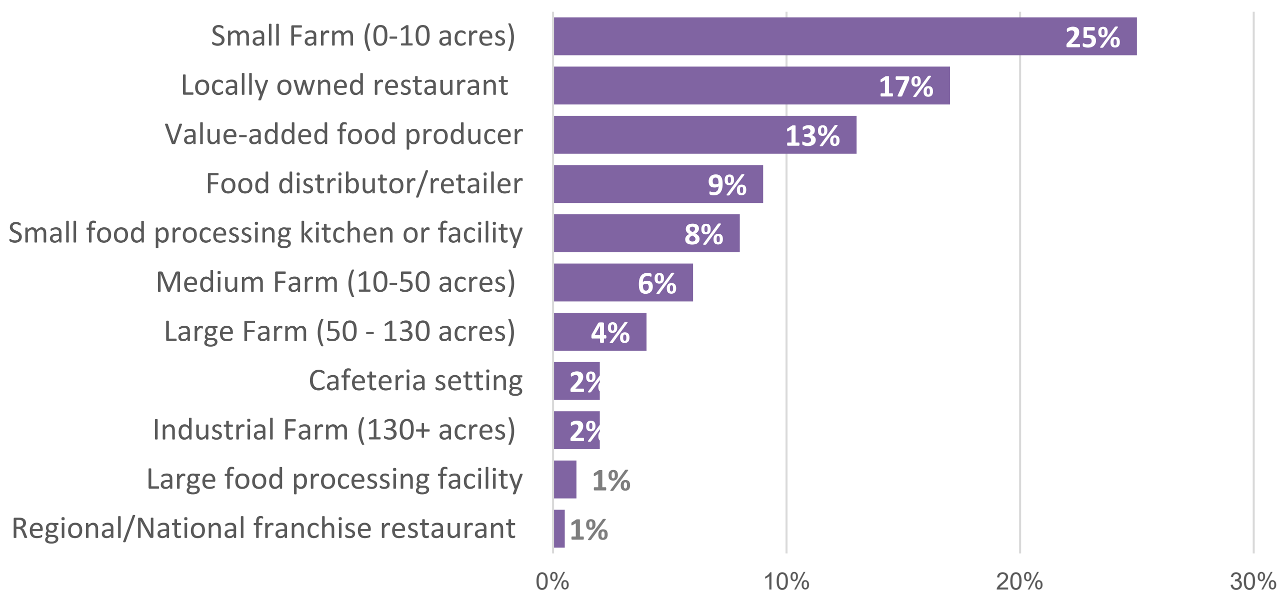
What is true for you? *(select all that apply)* (n=205)



Small farms most common type of food-based business among respondents

Small farms, fewer than ten acres, was endorsed as the type of food-based businesses owned, made purchasing decisions for, or wanting to start by a quarter (25%) of respondents, followed by locally owned restaurants (17%) and valued-added food producer (13%). Fewer than ten percent of respondents endorsed owning, making purchasing decision for, or wanting to start a food distributor/retailer, small food processing kitchen or facility, or medium farm (10-50 acres). Fewer than five percent endorsed a large farm (50-130 acres), cafeteria setting, industrial farm (130+ acres), large food processing facility, or a regional/national franchise restaurant. Alcoholic beverage manufacturing and distributing (n=5) was the most common "other" response provided (n=31 other responses) which included craft cider and wine. Additional other responses included food carts (n=4), including mobile pizza and coffee carts, food-based non-profits (n=4), including food pantries and resource centers, and individuals or groups with community gardens or space for collective gardening (n=3).

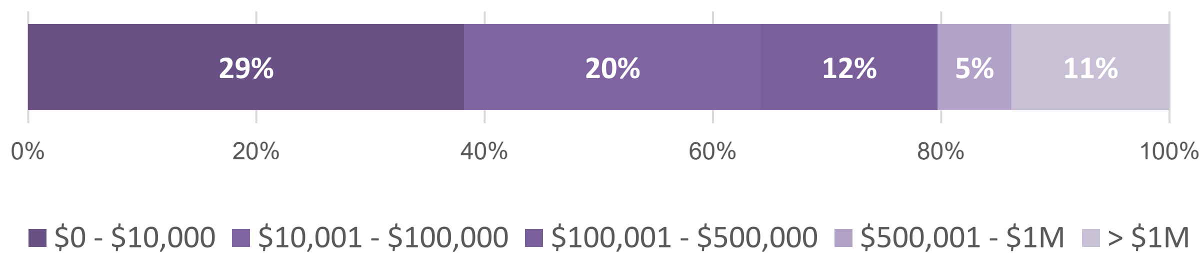
What best describes the food-based business you own, make purchasing decisions for, or want to start? (n=205)



Gross annual sales $1M or less for over 80% of food-based business respondents

Eighty-one percent of respondents to this question endorsed their gross annual sales were less than one million dollars. Thirty percent of respondents endorsed their gross annual sales were $10,000 or less, the next fifth of all respondents endorsed their gross annual sales were between $10,000 and $100,000, and the next fifteen percent endorsed sales between $100,000 and one million dollars. Just over ten percent (11%) of respondents endorsed their sales were over a million dollars and 24% declined to answer.

About how much are your gross annual sales? (n=161)

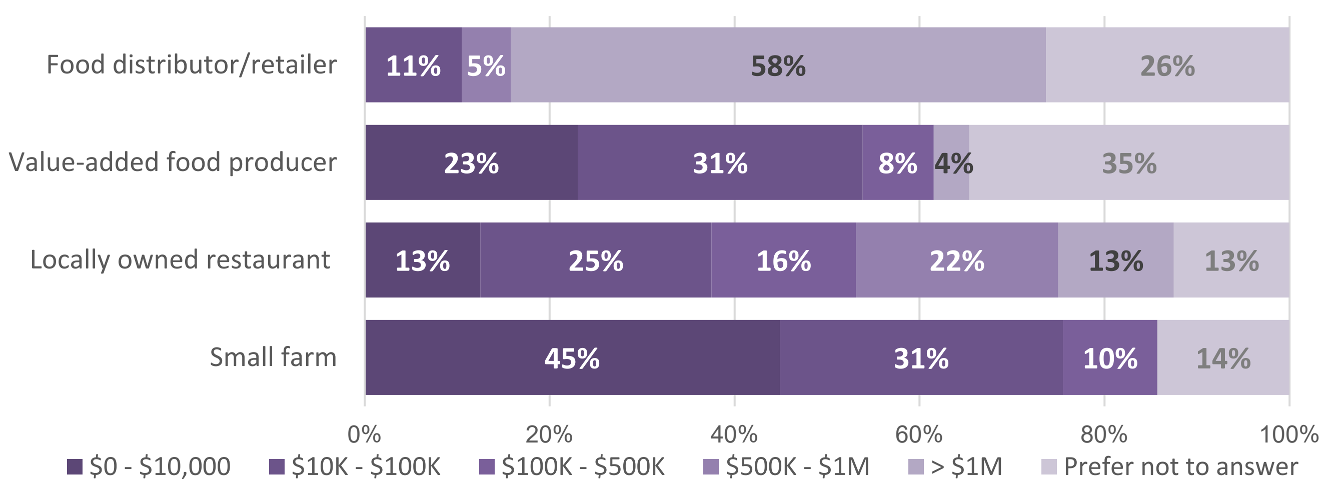


**24% of respondents to this question selected "prefer not to answer"*

Almost half of small farm respondents endorse gross annual sales of $10,000 or less

When disaggregated by type of business, the majority (58%, n=11) of **food distributors/retailers** endorsed their gross annual sales were over a million dollars, fifteen percent (n=2) endorsed their sales were less than $100,000, and the remaining quarter (26%) declined to respond. Just under a quarter of **value-added food producer** respondents endorsed their sales were less than $10,000 (n=6), a third (31%) endorsed their sales were more than $10,000 but less than $100,000, eight percent endorsed their sales were more than $100,000 but less than $500,000, and four percent (n=1) endorsed their sales were one million or more (a third declined to respond). Few (13%; n=4) of **locally-owned restaurant** respondents endorsed their sales were less than $10,000, a quarter (25%) endorsed their sales were between $10,000 and $100,000, a slightly higher percentage (38%) endorsed their sales were more than $100,000 but less than one million dollars, and 13% (n=4) endorsed their sales were over a million dollars (the same number declined to respond). About half (45%; n=22) of **small farmers** endorsed their gross annual sales were $10,000 or less and the remainder endorsed their gross sales were less than $500,000.

About how much are your gross annual sales? (n=205)



Community Survey Questions for Locally Owned Restaurants, Regional/national Franchises, and Value-Added Food Producers

Prepared meals most common type of food produced/distributed by locally owned restaurants, regional/national franchises, and value-added food producer respondents

The most common type of food produced or distributed by respondents to this survey was prepared meals (restaurants, food carts, and prepared meal providers; n=38), closely followed by breads, baked goods, or tortillas (n=36), and fresh vegetables (n=36).

What types of foods do you or your business produce or distribute?	n=100
Prepared meals	38
Breads, baked goods, or tortillas	36
Fresh vegetables	32
Something else	31
Fresh fruits	29
Grocery items (shelf-stable items)	26
Meat	26
Sauces or salsas	26
Dry beans & grains	23
Canned foods	22
Milk & dairy (bulk liquids)	20

Other responses (n=30) included: a variety foods and beverages or services (n=16) including catering services and food banks, specialty items like popsicles, chocolate, and frozen foods. Alcoholic beverages were listed by five respondents, including wine (n=3), craft cider (n=2) and one respondent listed each garden starts, herbs, mercantile items and household products, and pet foods, paper goods, and 21+ goods.

Direct from local farms or producers most common place business respondents endorse purchasing food

Direct from local farms or producers was the most common (n=63) way locally owned restaurant, regional/national franchises, and value-added food producer respondents endorsed purchasing food or raw ingredients, followed distantly by Organically Grown Company (n=20), Chef's Warehouse (formerly Provvista) (n=19), Hummingbird Wholesale (n=19), Van Vleet Meat (n=18), US Chef's Food Store (n=17), GloryBee (n=16), and UNFI (n=15).

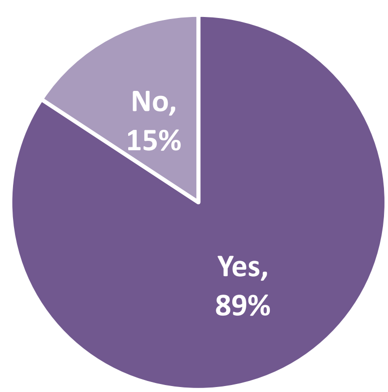
Where do you currently purchase your food or raw ingredients from? *(select all that apply)*	n=100	Exclusive contract
Direct from local farms or producers	63	8
Organically Grown Company	20	2
Chef's Warehouse (Provvista)	19	
Hummingbird Wholesale	19	1
Van Vleet Meat	18	
US Chef's Food Store	17	1
GloryBee	16	1
UNFI	15	6
Sysco	4	1
Azure Standard	4	
FSA	3	

Nearly 90% of local food business owner respondents endorse already purchasing local food

For the purposes of this survey, we prompted locally owned restaurants, regional/national franchises, and value-added food producer respondents to define local foods as those that are grown, produced, or processed within the "local 6" county area, that is, Benton, Linn, Lincoln, Lane, Marion, and Polk counties.

The vast majority (89%) of locally owned restaurants, regional/national franchises, and value-added food producer respondents endorsed already purchasing local food.

Do you currently procure local products at least some of the time? (n=89)

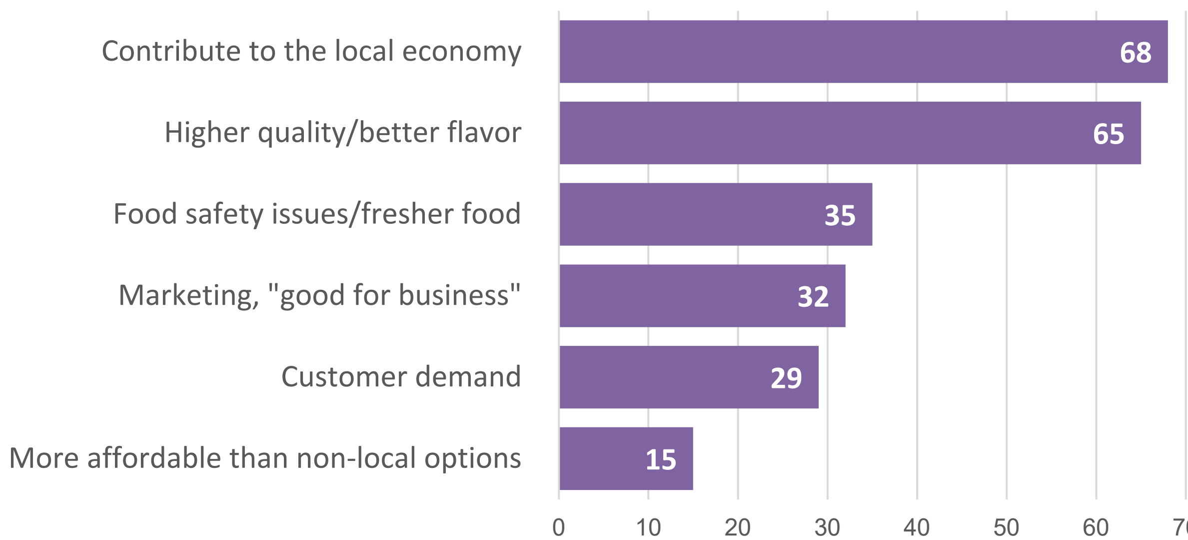


Local fresh vegetables, fruits, and milk and dairy purchased at least some of the time by most business respondents

What products do you currently procure locally, at least some of the time? *(select all that apply)*	n=75
Fresh vegetables	62
Fresh fruits	59
Milk & dairy	40
Meat	39
Breads, tortillas, sauces, or salsa	36
Dry beans & grains	29
Other merchandise including crafts or flowers	26
Prepared meals	23
Canned foods	18

Other responses (n=7) included additional types of produce (n=3), seafood (n=3), and two respondents endorsed procuring baked goods and their ingredients locally.

Why do you choose to procure local food? *(select all that apply)* (n=75)

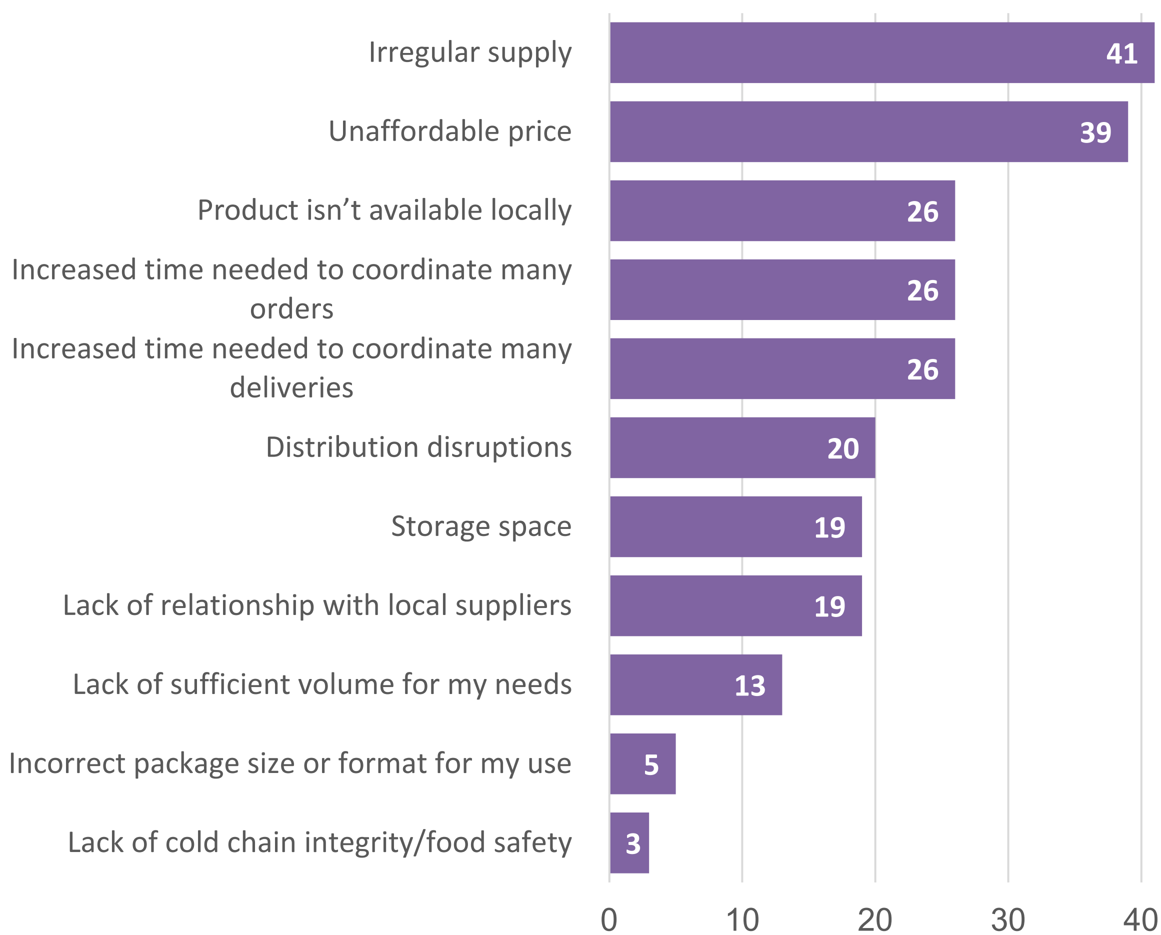


Other responses included their relationships and partnerships with other community members (n=5), the sustainability and the environmental impact of procuring local food (n=3), and benefits of supporting their regional economy (n=2).

Irregular supply most commonly endorsed barrier to procuring local food experienced by business respondents

Irregular supply was the most commonly endorsed barrier to procuring local food experienced by business respondents, endorsed by forty-one respondents (of a total 92), followed by unaffordable price, endorsed by thirty-nine respondents. About 30% of business respondents endorsed they experience additional barriers, including product isn't available locally, increased time needed to coordinate many orders, increased time to coordinate many deliveries (all endorsed by 26 respondents). Other barriers experienced included distribution disruptions (n=20), storage space (n=19), and lack of relationship with local suppliers (n=19). Less commonly endorsed barriers were lack of sufficient volume for needs, incorrect package size or format for use, lack of cold chain safety, and other logistics complications.

Which of the following barriers to procuring local food do you experience? *(select all that apply)* (n=92)

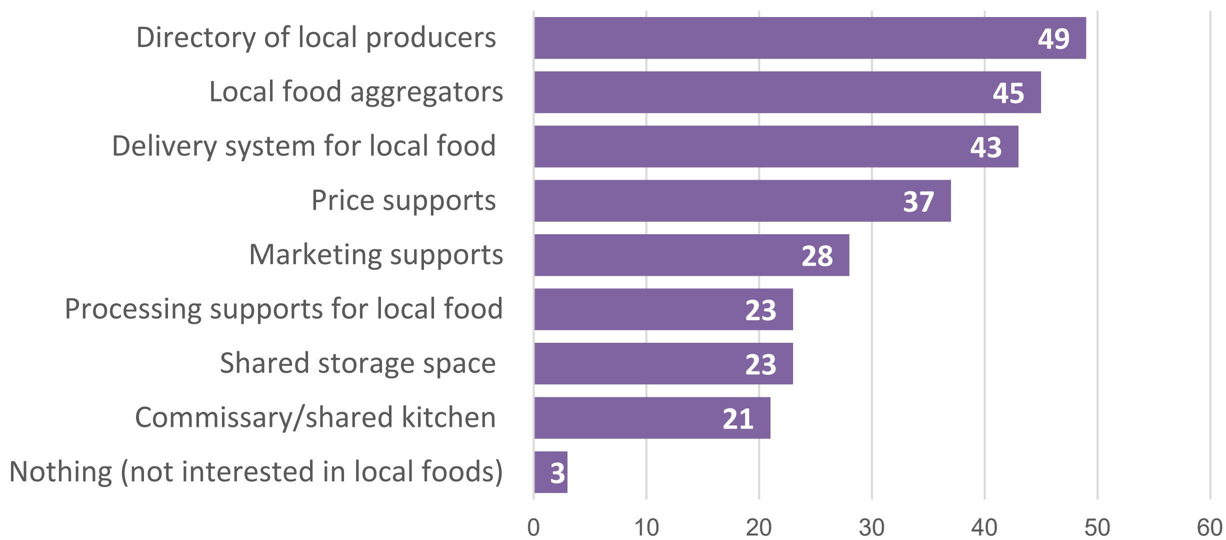


Other responses (n=8) included logistics complications more generally, meeting distributor minimums, needing to pick and process solo, state laws that limit dairy retail, and "all of the above – but it's what we do". More detailed responses can be found in the accompanying inventory of equipment.

Directory of local producers and local food aggregator most commonly endorsed support that would enable businesses to buy more local food

Directory of local producers was the most commonly endorsed support that would enable businesses to buy more local food, endorsed by 49 of 92 (53%) of respondents, closely followed by local food aggregator (endorsed by 45 of 92; 49%) and a delivery system for local food (43 of 92; 47%). Price supports (n=37), marketing supports (n=28), processing supports for local food and a shared storage space (both n=23) were also endorsed as supports that would enable businesses to buy more local food, followed by a commissary/shared kitchen (n=21). Other supports suggested by one producer each included a local certified butcher, cultural supports, and a method to provide large box stores with local foods.

What are some supports that would enable you to buy more local food? *(select all that apply)* (n=92)



Other responses (n=7) included a certified butchery of local product, "cultural", farmers being able to process their own produce and being more competitive with grocery stores like Winco and Grocery Outlet, etc, lower cost, and seeing local food at places like Grocery Depot or Winco

Response: Shared storage space

Of the twenty-three food business respondents who endorsed a "shared storage space" would enable them to buy more local food, 70% endorsed cold storage, 22% endorsed frozen storage, and 9% endorsed dry goods storage would fit their needs. Of those, about half endorsed needing year-round access [(cold storage (n=7), frozen storage (n=3), and dry goods storage (n=2)], just under half endorsed needing keyed access to a 24/hour space [(cold storage (n=6), frozen storage (n=4)], and a similar number endorsed needing the ability to coordinate with the facility or site manager for access [(cold storage (n=7), frozen storage and dry goods storage (n=1)]. Of the twenty-three food businesses endorsing a shared storage space would enable them to buy more food, only five (22%) endorsed having seasonal access only and two (9%) endorsed access during regular business hours only would meeting their needs.

	Cold storage	Frozen Storage	Dry Goods Storage	Total
What type of shared storage space would help you buy more local food? *(select all that apply)*	16	5	2	**23**
What type of access do you need to this storage space? ***(select all that apply)***				
year-round access	7	3	2	**12**
keyed access to a 24-hour space	6	4	-	**10**
ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access	7	1	1	**9**
seasonal access only	3	2	-	**5**
during regular business hours only	1	2	-	**2**

Response: Commissary/shared kitchen

Of the twenty-one food business respondents who endorsed a "a commissary/shared kitchen" would enable them to buy more local food, the majority (71%) endorsed needing year-round access to that kitchen (n=15), just over half (57%) endorsed needing keyed access to a 24-hour space (n=12), and a third (33%) endorsed the ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access (n=7). A few (n=4) need the space only on a seasonal basis and only one respondent endorsed needing the space during regular business hours only.

What type of access do you need to this commissary kitchen space? *(select all that apply)*	Total n=21
year-round access	15
keyed access to a 24-hour space	12
ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access	7
seasonal access only	4
during regular business hours only	1

Produce and shelf-stable items most commonly desired foods to procure locally

What foods do you wish you could procure locally? (n=45)

Food based business survey respondents most commonly endorsed wanting to procure **produce** (40%) locally. **Shelf-stable items** such as dried goods, grains, beans, spices, and baking ingredients were mentioned by over a quarter (28%) of these respondents and others endorsed a desire to procure **dairy** (15%), **meat and poultry** (15%), and **seafood** (11%) locally. Another five respondents reported that they **would like to procure all of their foods locally**.

Lack of availability most commonly identified barrier to procuring desired local foods

What are your barriers to procuring these foods? (n=49)
A lack of product availability was endorsed by almost half of food-based business survey respondents as the primary barrier to procuring local foods and 43% endorsed cost as a barrier. Some (10%) endorsed climate (the growing season) as the barrier including how the climate impacts the variety of available produce. Other respondents endorsed concerns about quantity and a lack of demand (8%), while a few (4%) endorsed barriers around the availability of organic foods. Some responses included more than one barrier.

Nearly half of business respondents endorsed being willing to participate in a local food marketing campaign to support the local food economy

What are some ways you or your business could support the local food economy? (n=65)

Other responses included utilizing advocacy efforts and increasing awareness about locally produced foods (n=6) and others (n=4) explained they could improve local community ties to help support the food economy in the area.

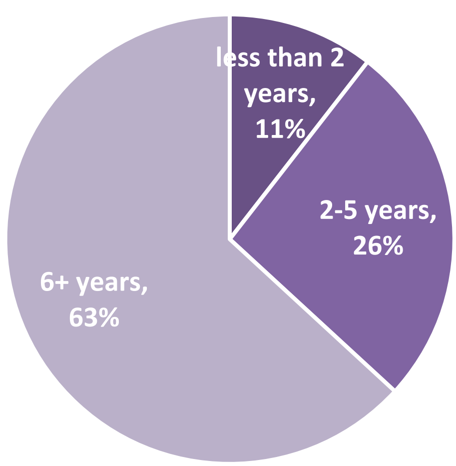
Community Survey Questions for Farmers

Over 50 small farms responded to the community survey and over twenty percent plan to expand in the next two years

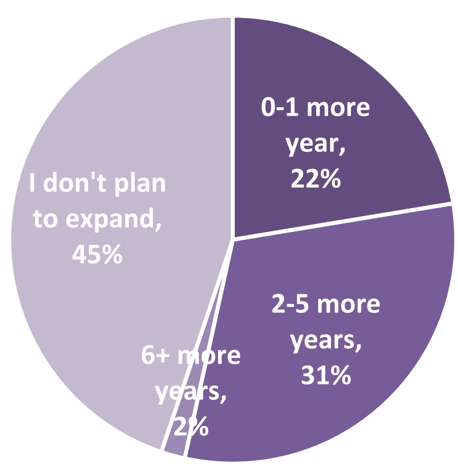
Of the 205 respondents who endorsed the response option: “I own, hold decision-making power, or want to start a food-based business”, seventy then described that food-based business as a farm. A majority of survey respondents to this question described their farm as a small farm (0-10 acres) (n=51), and far fewer described it as a medium farm (10-50 acres) (n=12), a large farm (50 – 130 acres) (n=8), or an industrial farm (130+ acres) (n=4). These respondents were asked a few additional questions directly related to farming and food producing, although not all survey respondents continued to this part of the survey.

The majority of the farmers who responded to this survey endorsed their farm was six years old or more (63%), about a quarter (26%) endorsed their farm was 2-5 years old, and 11% were beginning farmers, that is, their farm was less than 2 years old. Forty-five percent of respondents endorsed no plans to expand their farm, thirty-one percent endorsed plans to expand in 2-5 years, and twenty-two percent endorsed immediate plans to expand (0-1 year). Two percent endorsed plans to expand in six years or more.

How long has your farm been in business? (n=57)



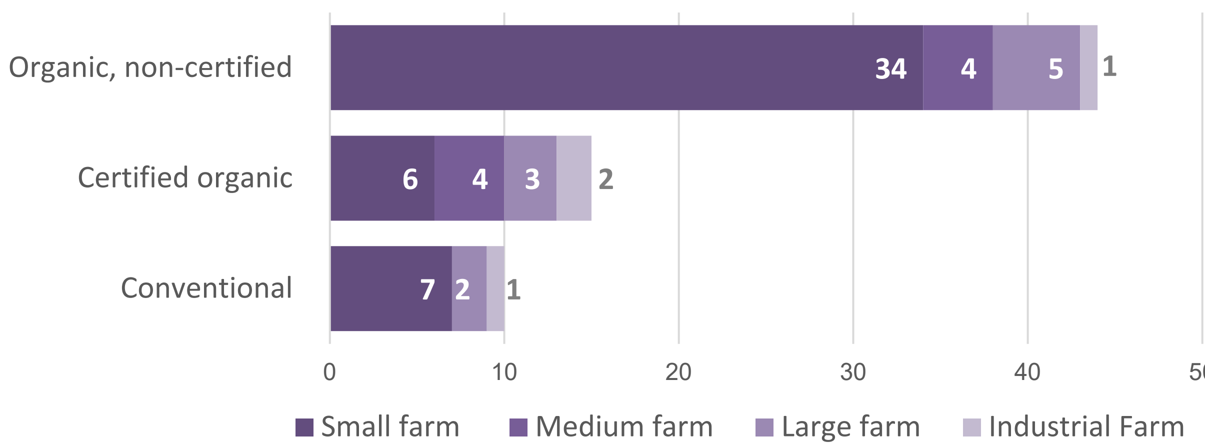
Do you plan to expand your farm in the next… (n=58)



Non-certified organic most common farming practice endorsed by farm respondents

Non-certified organic was the most common farming practice from all farm respondents (n=44) and from small farmers in particular (72% of small farm respondents). Certificated organic was the next most-common response with fifteen farm respondents endorsing this farming practice, six of whom were small farms, four were medium farms, three were large farms and two were industrial farms. The least common farming practice endorsed by farm respondents was conventional, with seven small farms endorsing this practice, two large farms, and one industrial farm.

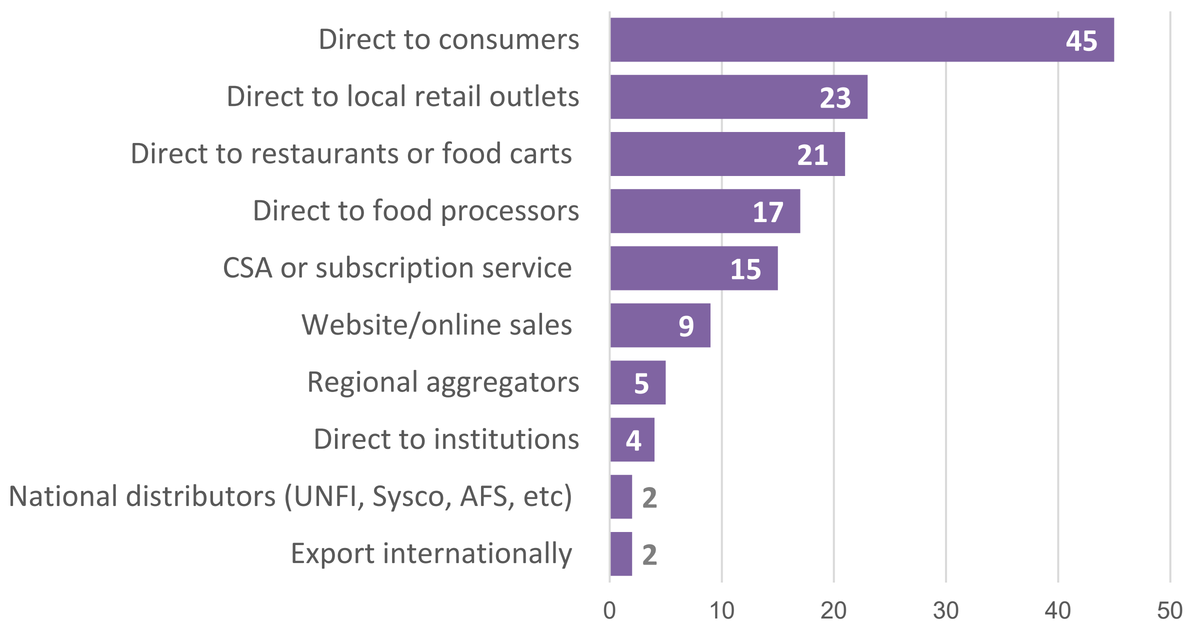
What are your farming practices? *(select all that apply)* (n=70)



Over half of farm respondents sell products direct to consumer or local retail

Over half of farm respondents endorsed selling products direct to consumer (45 of 70 respondents) and over twenty farm respondents endorsed selling direct to retail outlets (n=23) and direct to restaurants or food carts (n=21). Fewer than twenty farm respondents endorsed any of the other provided sales channels which included direct to food processors (n=17), CSA or subscription services (n=15), website or online sales (n=9), regional aggregators (n=5), direct to institutions (n=4), to national distributors (n=2), and exporting internationally (n=2). Three farmer respondents endorsed selling their products to regional, statewide, or national seed businesses.

How do you sell your products? (n=70)

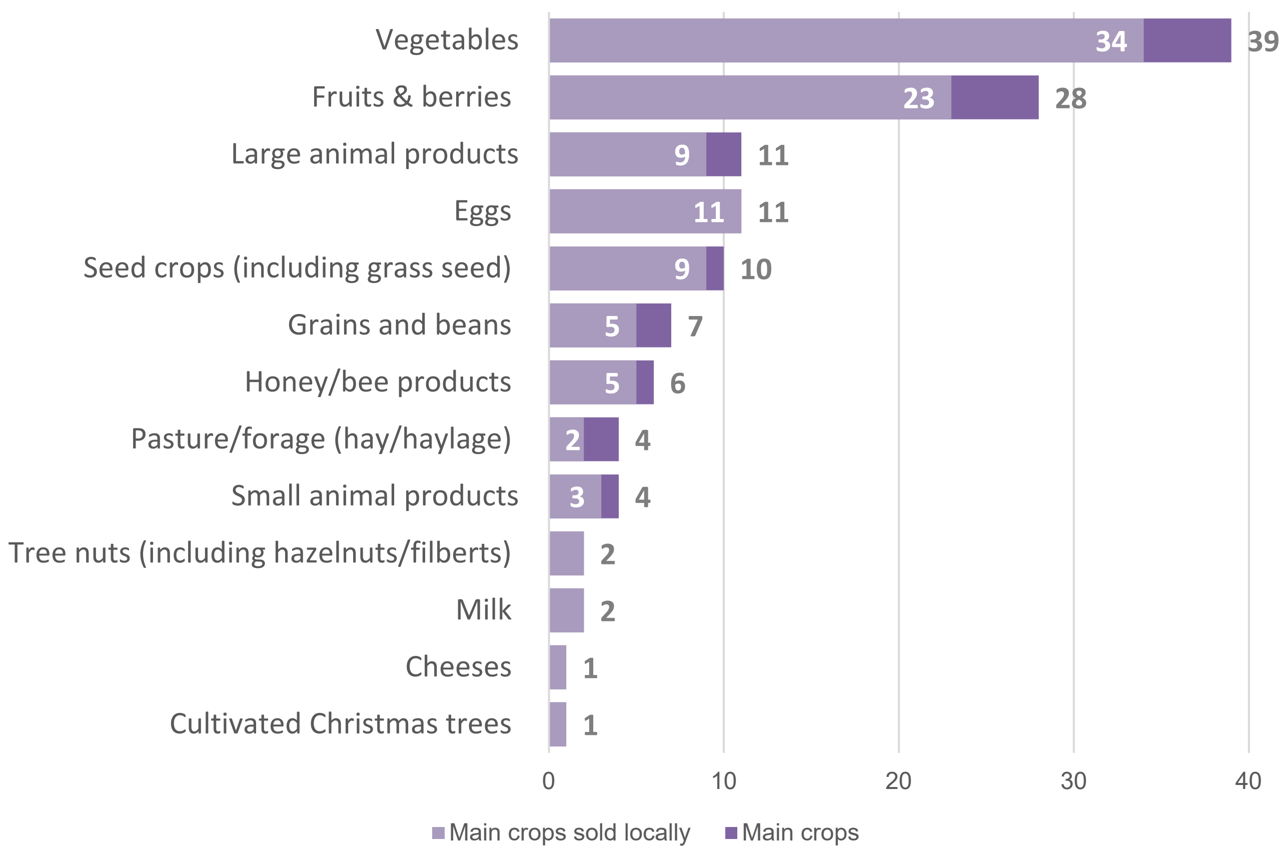


Other ways farmer respondents endorsed selling their products included regional, statewide, or national seed businesses (n=3)

Vegetables, fruits, and berries most common main crops sold locally and overall

Vegetables were the most commonly endorsed main crop by all sizes of farms, and thirty-four of thirty-nine farmers who endorsed selling vegetables as their main crops endorsed selling those crops to the local market. Fruits and berries were the second most commonly endorsed main crop, and again most farmers who endorsed selling fruits and berries as their main crop also endorsed selling these to the local market (23 out of 28). Large animal products and eggs were endorsed as main crops by eleven farmer respondents, and nine of those endorsed selling large animal products to the local market. All eleven egg farmer respondents endorsed selling their eggs to the local market. Seed crops (including grass seed) were all endorsed by ten farmer respondents as a main crop, and all but one of those endorsed selling that crop on the local market. Fewer than ten farmer respondents endorsed selling any of the other response options as their main crop; those options include: grains and beans (5 of 7 endorsed selling locally), honey or bee products (5 of 6 endorsed selling locally), pasture/forage including hay/haylage (2 of 4 endorsed selling locally), small animal products (3 of 4 endorsed selling locally), tree nuts (both farmers who endorsed this as their main crop also endorsed selling locally), and all farmers who endorsed selling milk (n=2), cheeses (n=1), and cultivated Christmas trees (n=1) endorsed selling those products locally.

What are your main crops, and which of those main crops do you sell locally? *(select all that apply) (n=70)*

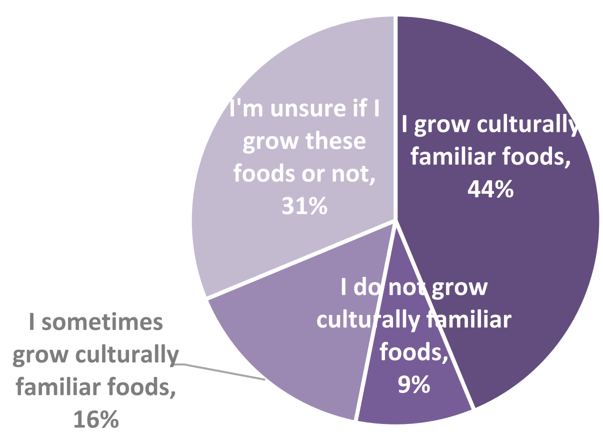


Other crops produced by farmer respondents included other sources of income aside from crops, such as value-added items and coffee (n=4), seeds or plant/vegetable starts (n=3), and flowers, herbs, and mushrooms as main crops were each endorsed two respondents. Other crops include rhubarb and tree fruits. Additionally, two farmer respondents endorsed selling all of their products locally, another two farmer respondents endorsed selling plant/vegetable starts and seeds locally, and one farmer respondent each endorsed selling flowers, herbs, mushrooms, seaweed, and coffee locally.

About half of farmer respondents endorsed growing culturally familiar foods, including produce such as potatoes, corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, specialty herbs, chili peppers, and Wapato

About half (44%) of farmer respondents endorsed growing culturally familiar foods, followed by 31% of farmers who were unsure if they grow those foods or not, 16% endorsed sometimes growing these foods, and only nine percent who did not grow culturally familiar foods. Farmer respondents provided examples of the culturally familiar foods they grew which were grouped into categories. The most common foods grown were types of produce including potatoes, corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, specialty herbs, chili peppers, and Wapato. Four farmer respondents endorsed selling culturally familiar meat and poultry, and one each endorsed selling grains and dairy. Other responses include honey, wine, grape leaves, and rose petals.

Do you grow or produce culturally familiar foods and if so, what are they? (n=64)

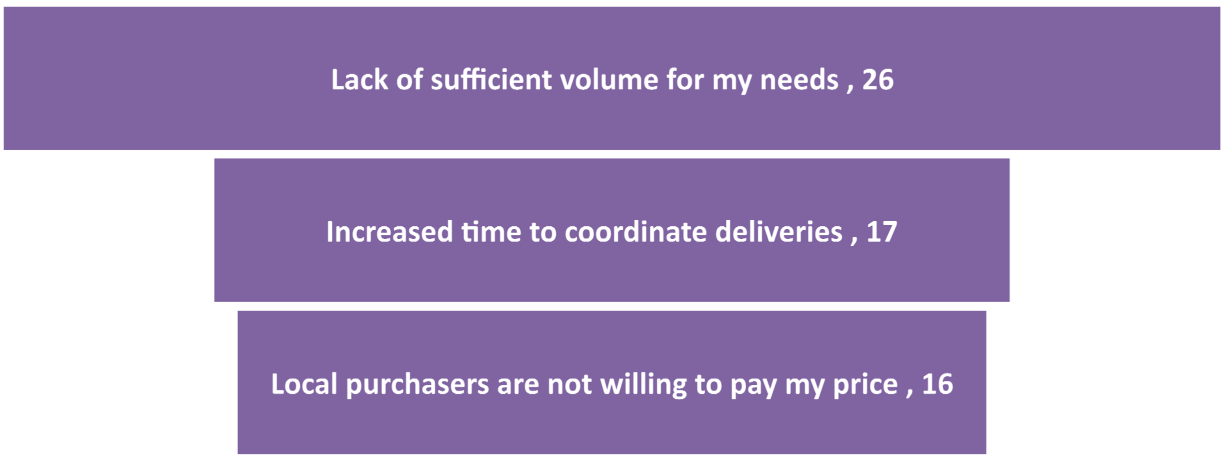


Various types of produce were the most common culturally familiar foods farmer respondents endorsed growing or producing (n=27), including produce such as potatoes, corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, specialty herbs, chili peppers, and Wapato. Meat and poultry (n=4), grains (n=1), and dairy (n=1) were also listed by respondents as were honey, wine, grape leaves, and rose petals (each n=1).

Lack of sufficient volume for needs most common barrier to selling products locally

Lack of sufficient volume for needs was the most common barrier to selling products locally identified by farmer respondents (n=26), followed by increased time to coordinate deliveries (n=17), and that local purchasers are not willing to pay their price (n=16). Less commonly identified barriers to selling products locally included a lack of connections/marketing (n=5), delivery disruptions (n=4), and inconsistent sales at the market (n=2). Other barriers were identified by one farmer respondent each.

What barriers do you experience in selling your products locally? *(select all that apply)* (n=65)



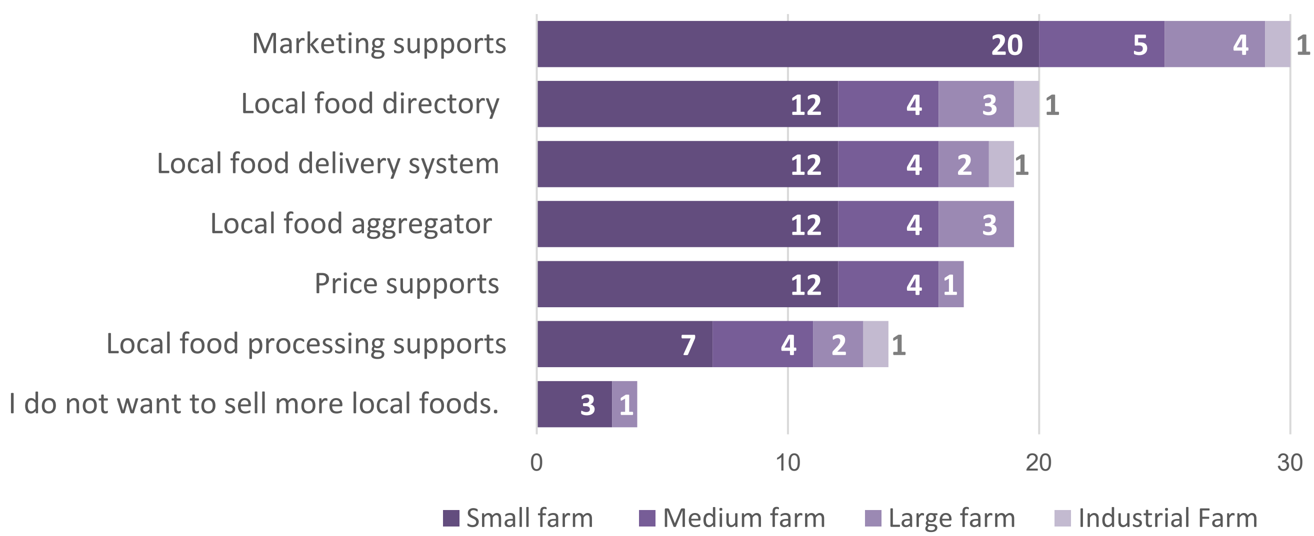
Delivery disruptions were endorsed by four farmer respondents, and fifteen farmer respondents provided and endorsed other barriers that could be grouped into themes, including lack of connections/marketing (n=5) and inconsistent sales at the market (n=2). One farmer respondent each endorsed each a lack of consistent irrigation, lack of land, lack of local support, limited time, many delivery sites, and lack of organic processing facilities.

"Selling to stores is difficult. We sell to the co-op, but it can be hit or miss"
– small farmer

Marketing support most commonly endorsed need to shift to more local selling

Marketing supports were the most commonly endorsed need to shift to more local selling by all farmer respondents and by the most small farms in particular (30 farm respondents endorsed marketing supports, twenty of those were small farms). The next most-commonly endorsed support was a local food directory, endorsed by twenty farmer respondents of which twelve were small farms, followed by a local food delivery system and a local food aggregator, each endorsed by nineteen farms in total of which twelve were small farms. Price supports were the next most commonly endorsed support needed to shift to more local selling, endorsed by seventeen farms including twelve small farms, and local food processing supports were endorsed by fourteen farms including seven small farms. Only four of sixty-five (16%) endorsed not wanting to sell more local foods.

What are some supports that you would use to shift to more local selling? *(select all that apply)* (n=65)



Three small farmer respondents provided other supports that they could use to shift to more local selling, including loans or grants to expand and improve the farm, and kitchen space, and one small farmer qualified their "delivery" response with, " I don't think it's feasible unless it is tied to SNAP and Double-Up Food Bucks (DUFB)."

Farmers want to sell more produce, dried foods and grains, and all products locally but experience barriers including lack of resources (equipment and land) and a lack of a central distribution center among others

What foods do you wish you could sell locally? (n=20)

Seven farmer respondents endorsed wishing to sell produce locally, four endorsed wishing to sell any and all foods at a local level, and another four endorsed wanting to sell dried foods and grains. One farmer respondent each endorsed wishing to sell meat, poultry, and dairy.

What are your barriers to selling these foods? (n=20)

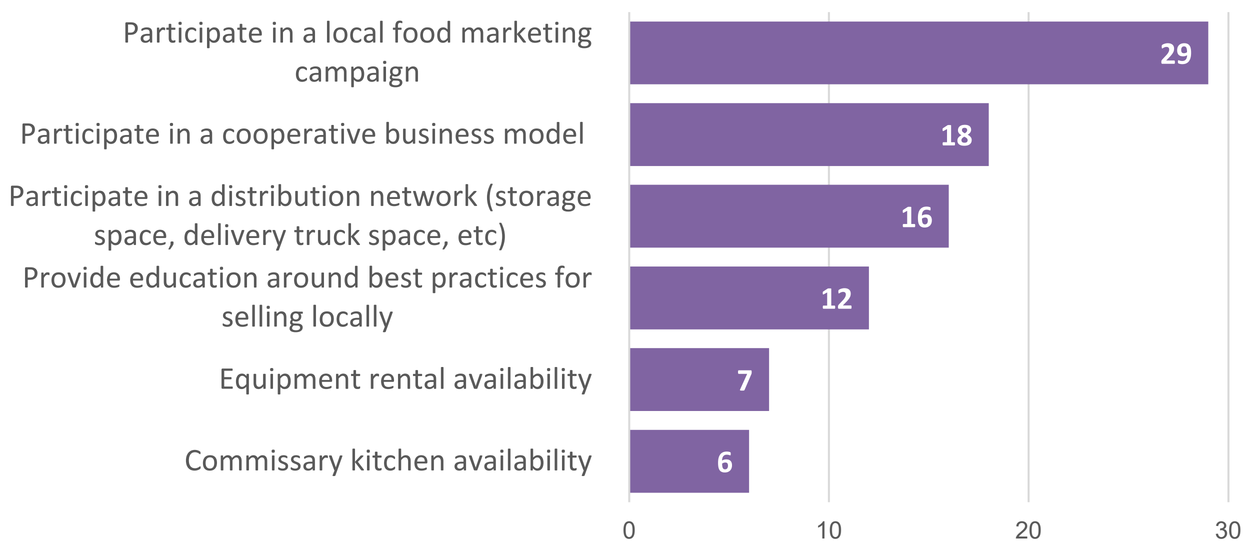
Ten farmer respondents endorsed a lack of resources as a barrier to selling these foods locally, including equipment and materials, land to produce more products, and having a central distribution center. Four farmer respondents endorsed a lack of local awareness and demand, three endorsed budgetary concerns and another three endorsed time constraints. One farmer respondent each endorsed community perception of the cost of purchasing locally and access to more vendors as barriers.

"The main barrier is my time and cost to distribute."
– large farmer

Nearly half of farmer respondents endorsed being willing to participate in a local food marketing campaign

Nearly half of farmer respondents (29 of 65; 45%) endorsed being willing to participate in a local food marketing campaign to participate in the local food economy. Eighteen farmer respondents endorsed participating in the local food economy through a cooperative business model (27% of respondents), followed by participating in a distribution network (n=16), and providing education around best practices for selling locally. Seven farmer respondents endorsed being willing to participate in the local food economy by providing equipment rental or commissary kitchen availability.

What are some ways you/your business may participate in the local food economy? *(select all that apply)* (n=65)



Other ways **farmer respondents endorsed they or their food business may participate in the local food economy** included land they could share (n=2), interest in a central pick-up location, and one commented on their ability to deliver to a food hub.

Community Survey Questions for all Businesses

Money concerns such as operating costs and consumers' unwillingness to spend more on locally sourced products most commonly endorsed challenge or frustration for all business respondents in achieving their goals for their business

What is your biggest challenge or frustration in achieving your goals for your food business? (n=86)

> ***"People are used to paying low prices for veggies which make it very difficult for smaller local farms to compete without specializing. It turns food into a commodity and a race to the bottom. The difficulty is that I truly want good local food to be accessible by all however this makes it almost impossible for small local producers to participate let alone compete."***
> **– local farmer**

Almost half (42%) of the eighty-six food-based business respondents endorsed **money concerns** as their biggest challenge or frustration in achieving their goals for their business, especially related to **operating costs** and **consumers' unwillingness to spend more on locally sourced products**. Accessing places to sell to and reaching out to the community to build interest and demand was endorsed by 16% of these respondents. Additional barriers endorsed included **knowledge about farming practices and marketing** (14%), **access to specific resources like a commercial kitchen and storage** (14%), difficulty around **laws and regulations** (9%), and **concerns around land usage** (8%).

> ***My biggest challenge or frustration in achieving the goals for my business is… "not knowing laws and regulations"***
> **– aspiring food-based business owner**

Access to general resources most commonly endorsed solution to achieve business-related goals

What are some specific solutions you can think of right now that would help you achieve your business-related goals? *For example, a development grant, business advising, technical assistance, access to a rental kitchen, etc.* (n=75)

Over one-third (36%) of the seventy-five food-based business respondents endorsed **access to general resources**, such as materials and equipment, as potential solutions to achieve their goals. About a quarter (26%) endorsed access to **funding and grants**, **consultation and guidance** (19%), a **centralized hub/cooperative for people to pick up orders** (16%), **networking** with the community and other businesses (11%), marketing (5%), and finding better ways to **sell directly to the consumers** (4%) as solutions. An aspiring value-added food producer endorsed, "Access to consultants regarding underrepresented community's needs, to help inform policies and procedures with community gardens."

"A grant to fund startup costs, business/marketing advice"
– small farmer

"Access to a more reliable space, with longer term terms and more sense of investment"
– food cart owner

Some specific solutions I can think of right now that would help me achieve my business-related goals are… "Producer/seller cooperatives. It can help find new markets that otherwise would be inaccessible to smaller producers because of limited quantities with collaboration to bulk orders. With this also includes potential shared fridge space for harvested goods (fruits/meat/veg/etc.)"

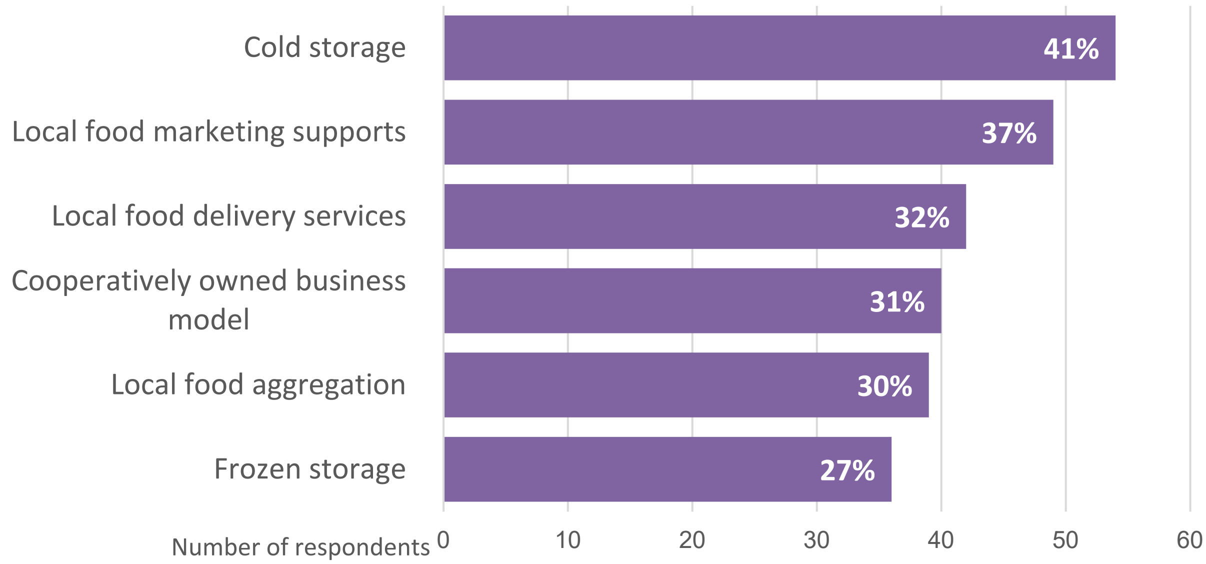
Cold storage most commonly endorsed service that would benefit all food business respondents followed by local food marketing supports

Cold storage was the most commonly endorsed service that would benefit all food business respondents (41%), followed by **local food marketing supports** (37%), **local food delivery** (32%), **cooperatively owned business model** (31%), **local food aggregation service** (30%), and **frozen storage** (27%). All other response options were endorsed by fewer than 25% of respondents. In order of most common to least they are: incubator kitchen (24%), retail outlet space (24%), fruit/veg food processing space (24%), food cart pod (21%), specialized food processing equipment rentals (20%), food business technical assistance (20%), technical assistance (food safety, USDA, ODA regulations) (18%), dry goods storage (18%), co-packing (16%), office space/co-working space (11%), meat processing space 10%), and food lab (e.g., genetic testing for yeast strains) (4%).

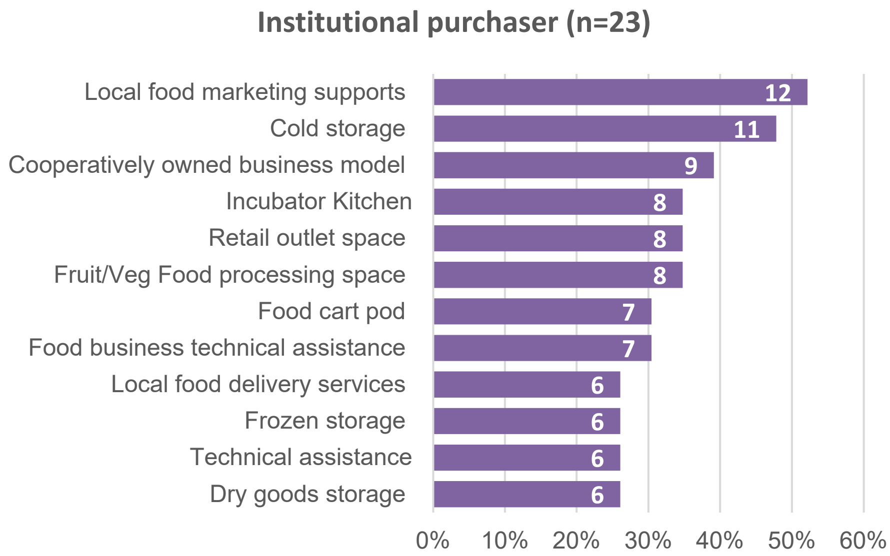
Eight of the fourteen respondents (11% of total respondents) that provided other beneficial resources endorsed **networking connections**, **space**, and **production materials.** Funding for their local businesses (n=3%) was the next most common theme of respondents, and one respondent commented on the need for a "BIPOC-managed, BIPOC-centered space with emphasis on culturally significant foods and businesses."

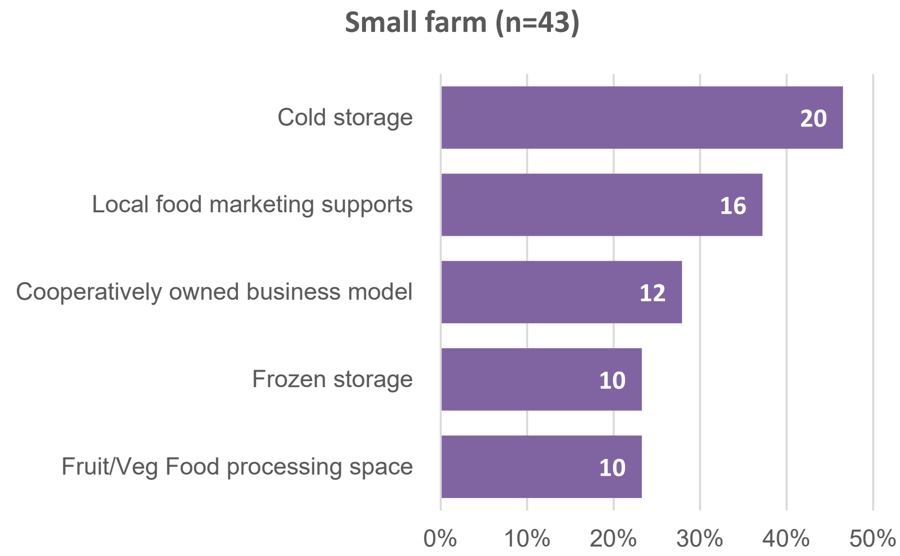
When disaggregated by type of business, **local food marketing supports** is the most commonly endorsed service that would benefit institutional purchasers and cold storage is the most commonly endorsed by all other types of businesses. More detailed results follow.

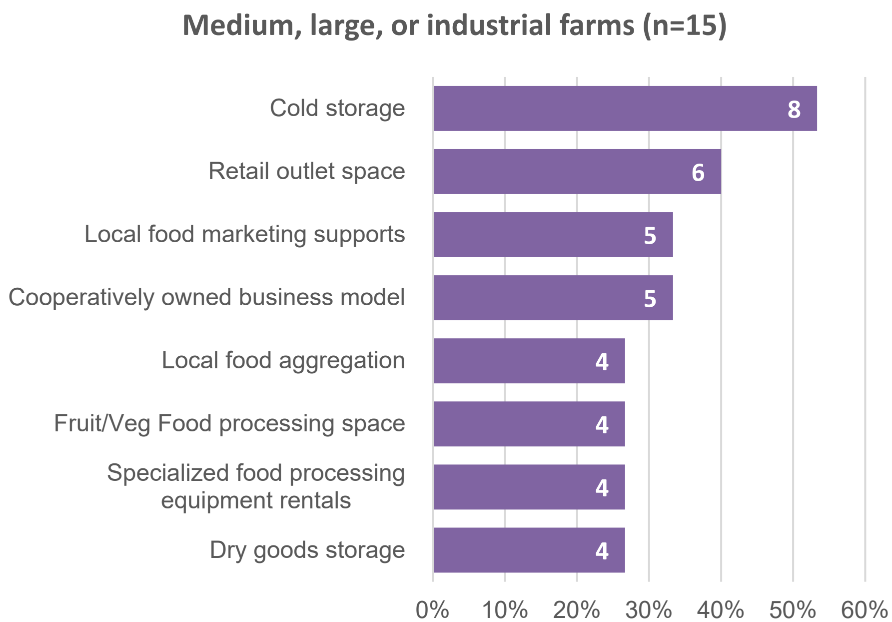
The South Corvallis Food Hub could provide a wide array of services. Please select the services that would directly benefit your business. (n=131)

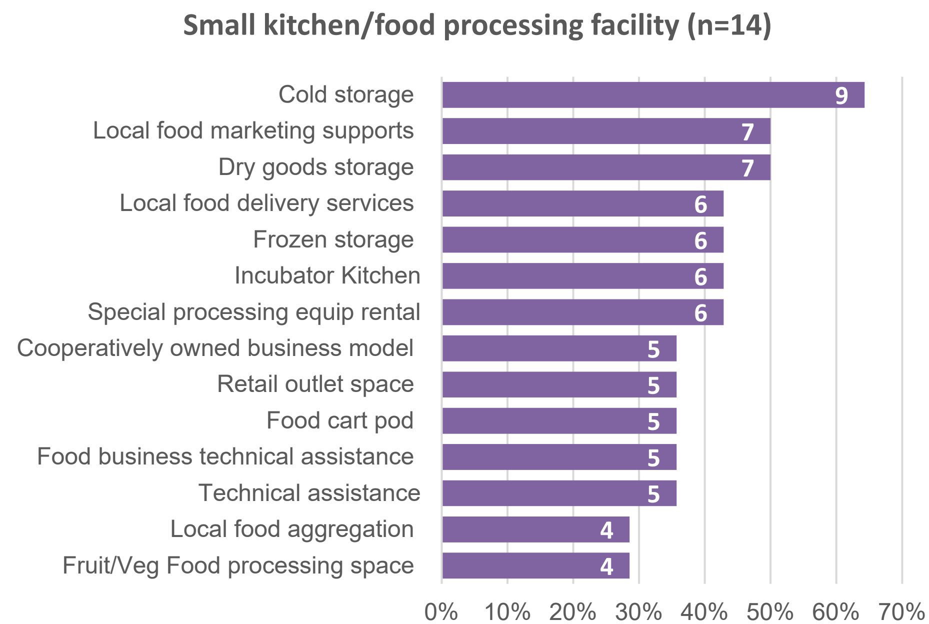


The South Corvallis Food Hub could provide a wide array of services. Please select the services that would directly benefit your business. (n=131)



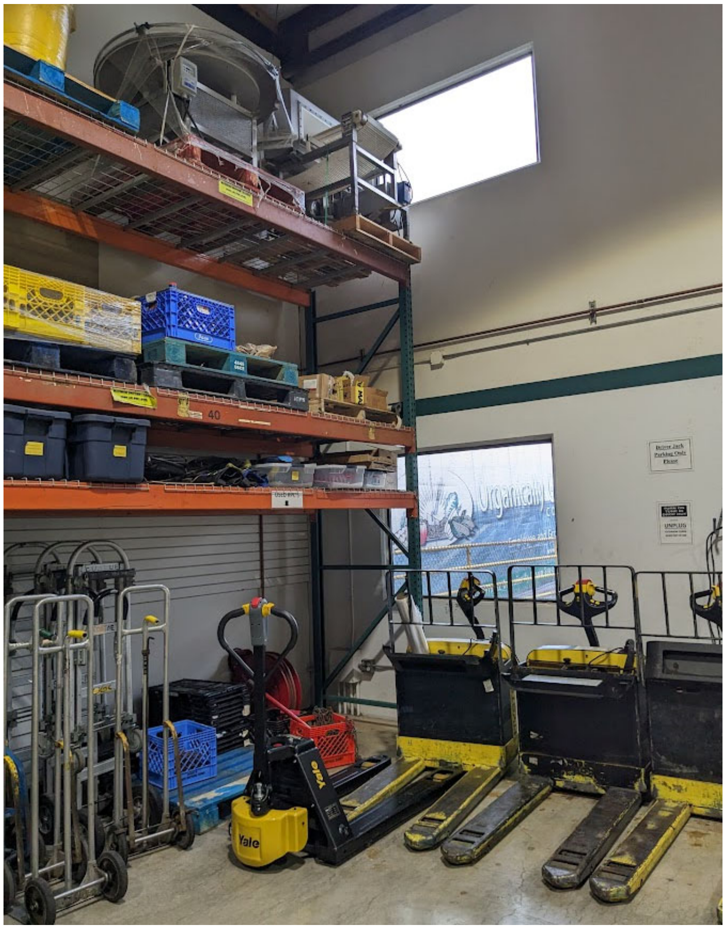






End of Community Survey Report

For questions about this community survey or community survey report please contact Aliza Tuttle, principal of A Tuttle Consults, at aliza@atuttleconsults.com. For questions about the South Corvallis Food Hub and Food System Assessment, please contact the Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office.



INVENTORY OF EQUIPMENT

Available and needed to support local food businesses and potential food hub operators

Submitted to the Corvallis / Benton County Economic Development Office
March 26, 2024

Part of the Food Systems Assessment for the South Corvallis Food Hub

Suggested citation: Tuttle, A. & Luterra, M.. (2024). Inventory of Equipment available and needed to support local food businesses and potential food hub operators in South Corvallis. Corvallis, OR

Purpose

The purpose of this inventory is to inform the feasibility study of the South Corvallis Food Hub conducted in Winter of 2024. The design of the inventory was informed by The City of Corvallis Request for Proposals for a Systems Assessment for a South Corvallis Food Hub, Task 2.1. This inventory consists of five parts:

Task 2.1 (a) Equipment available and needed to support local food businesses and potential Food Hub providers.

Task 2.1 (b) Existing and underutilized infrastructure available and needed to support multiple Food Hub scenarios including but not limited to commercial kitchen space rental, pop-up restaurants, prepared and packaged food products for retail settings, and congregate meal preparation

Task 2.1 (c) Barriers currently experienced by local food businesses

Task 2.1 (d) Community partnerships available and needed to operate a Food Hub

Task 2.1 (e) Funding available and projected to support long-term fiscal sustainability for a Food Hub

Executive Summary

A commercial kitchen and aggregation and distribution services are the most commonly endorsed need by all respondents, followed by cold storage space.

- **Specialized commercial kitchen equipment** and **commercial kitchen implements** were the most commonly endorsed item owned and willing to lend, rent, give, or sell to the Food Hub by community survey respondents and interviewees
- **A commercial kitchen** was the most common needed equipment endorsed by interviewees, followed by cold storage
- **Aggregation and distribution services** most common infrastructure need of interviewees
- **Access to a delivery truck** most common infrastructure need of survey respondents
- **Directory of local producers** and **local food aggregator service** most commonly endorsed support to buy more local food by local food business owners
- Lack of aggregation and distribution services most commonly endorsed barrier to expanding business or serving more individuals by interviewees
- **Access to land or a community garden** was identified by BIPOC individuals and those serving minority communities

"A Southtown food hub could create a place for community connection that extends beyond food."
– local non-profit organization employee

Data Sources and Methods

This inventory was created through interviews with city and county staff (n=4), five questions on the community survey (n=718), six questions in the interviews (n=50), and a literature review of existing food hub feasibility studies and previous local data collection efforts.

The community survey was distributed through existing community email lists. It was open for responses for three weeks (from January 16, 2024 through February 7, 2024). Of the over eight hundred responses received and a total of 781 responses met the inclusion criteria. Responses were de-identified and analyzed using statistical software SPSS and qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti to understand the needs, barriers, and opportunities in the community.

A team conducted 50 interviews with specific community members to compliment the community survey. Interviewees were asked to participate if they (a) were identified by the team of interviewers as potentially benefiting from or participating in the food hub (b) expressed interest in the community survey (answered the question, "please contact me to tell us additional information about your ideas or involvement with the Food Hub"), or (c) were referred by another interviewee as someone to speak with. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and were designed to oversample for (a) BIPOC food business owners and farmers (b) Spanish-speaking business owners and farmers and (c) business owners and farmers in South Corvallis. Interviews were collected from January 24, 2024 through March 6, 2024. Of the 50 interviewees, 10 (20%) self-identified as BIPOC or participated in the interview in Spanish. Interviewees represented a wide breadth of the food system including small farmers (n=10), non-profits (n=9), of which two are specifically BIPOC serving non-profits), food system workers (n=6), restaurant owners (n=5), chefs (n=3), food cart owners and aspiring owners (n=3), and others including community members, OSU instructors, produce buyers, small value-added food business owners, and the manager and a board member of the Corvallis farmers market.

Limitations

This inventory was limited in scope and depth due to the timeline and budget of the project. The consultant team was awarded the contract in January of 2024 and was expected to complete a feasibility study by March 30, 2024. This abbreviated timeline did not provide enough time to adequately review survey or interview questions with all affected groups, which may have created questions and response options that did not affirm all cultures and experiences. Any omissions due to this timeline are deeply regrettable and repair has been attempted through intentional community outreach, collaboration, and long-term relationship building efforts.

Review of literature

A review of food hub literature to understand existing knowledge around equipment needed to support local food businesses and potential food hub providers resulted in few local recommendations. Existing literature tended to address space needs rather than specific equipment (typically the feasibility studies reviewed didn't list equipment at this level of detail). North Coast Food Hub recommended cold storage space and staff FTE to manage the space. A review of the Ripple Effect[1] from the BIPOC FEAST in 2023, specifically the Opportunities ripple, affirmed survey and interview responses expressing a desire for access to land, low barrier funding, and cooking classes by and for BIPOC community members.

2.1 (a) Available Equipment

Specialized commercial kitchen equipment was the most common type of item interviewees endorsed owning

Interview question: **We are compiling an inventory of equipment and creating a list of equipment that is needed for the community. What equipment do you have that you could share, rent, or provide to the community?** (n=17)

Specialized commercial kitchen equipment was the most common (n=9) type of item interviewees endorsed owning and being willing to share, rent, or provide to the community and none of the equipment mentioned was duplicated. Other items included **knowledge** (n=4) (managing farmer's markets, navigating the system with limited English, aggregation and needs of restaurants, cooking demonstration), **space for growing** (n=2) (one space to grow culturally relevant foods and other more generally open), and a **food truck** (to sell or rent). A list of the commercial kitchen equipment is below:

Commercial Kitchen	Mobile	Immobile	Space
Cooking	• Small refrigeration • Stand mixer		• Commissary kitchen (to be built) • Industrial kitchen (needs remodeling)
Baking	• Gas powered pizza ovens	• Commercial baking equipment	• Bakery space • Café Space
Small wares	• Heat sealer, blenders, crockpots, etc • Demo equipment • Water bath canner		
Processing/ Transportation	• Green bean harvester • Root harvester	• Large beverage canning line • Tunnel pasteurizer • Large fermentation vessels (~100k gallons)	• Delivery truck space on Portland route • Delivery van (sometimes) • Personal truck (gleaning)

[1] https://ofbportals.oregonfoodbank.org/home/partner_support/partner_support/partner_resources_space_file_repo/feast/corvallis_feast_ripple_effect_mappdf~1

Commercial kitchen implements were the most common (n=21) item that community survey respondents endorsed owning and would be willing to lend, rent, give, or sell to the food hub

Community survey question: **What equipment do you own that you would be willing to lend, rent, give, or sell in partnership with the Food Hub?** (n=58 community survey respondents)

Commercial kitchen implements were the most common (n=21) item that community survey respondents owned and would be willing to lend, rent, give, or sell to the Food Hub, followed by gardening tools (n=9), tractor and/or tractor implements (n=7), food processing equipment (n=4), delivery van or truck (n=3), and space to host events or aggregate food (n=2). Ten respondents listed other equipment including larger land management tools, marketing support, mobile DJ equipment, and an available contract for additional alcohol production.

What equipment do you own that you would be willing to lend, rent, give, or sell in partnership with the Food Hub?	*n=58*
Commercial Kitchen Implements	21
Gardening Tools	9
Tractor/Tractor Implements	7
Food Processing Equipment	4
Delivery Van/Truck	3
Space: (host events, food aggregation/distribution)	2
Other	10

2.1 (a) Awareness of Equipment

Household scale food processing equipment was the most commonly endorsed by community survey respondents as items they were aware of that could be shared in a rental or cooperative ownership model.

Community survey question: **What equipment are you aware of that could be shared in a rental or cooperative ownership model that could support the food system?** (n=64 community survey respondents)

Household scale food processing equipment was the most common (n=11) item that community survey respondents were aware of that could be shared in a rental or cooperative ownership model that could support the food system, followed by tool share (n=9) and commercial kitchen implements (n=9), and commercial kitchen space (n=8). Three respondents each listed cold or frozen storage space and gardening implements and two respondents each mentioned a delivery truck, seed cleaning equipment, and tractor and/or tractor implements. Many additional responses mentioned by one respondent are listed below the table.

What equipment are you aware of that could be shared in a rental or cooperative ownership model that could support the food system?	n=64
Household-scale food processing	11
Tool Share	9
Commercial Kitchen Implements	9
Commercial Kitchen Space	8
Various	7
Storage Space (cold or frozen)	3
Gardening Implements	3
Delivery Truck	2
Seed Cleaning Equipment	2
Tractor/Tractor Implements	2

Other responses include: Food Packing Equipment, Food Hub Supports from Central Coast Food Web, Mobile Canning/Bottling Equipment, Mobile Processing System, knowledge, a stationary pizza oven, reusable event tableware, permanent market space, and various space.

2.1 (a) Needed Equipment

Interview questions:

1. **Please tell me a bit about some barriers currently limiting your business.**
2. **Are there solutions to these barriers you've thought of that a food hub could potentially address?**
3. **What are your business goals and what would help you achieve your business dreams the most?**

Access to a delivery truck was the most commonly endorsed barrier currently limiting local food business

Meat processing equipment (and space, permits, and a butcher) (n=2) was the only equipment endorsed by more than one interviewee. All interviewees endorsed needing some type of infrastructure rather than equipment.

Community survey question: **What equipment do you need to help you reach or expand your business goals or help you serve additional individuals?** (n=63 food business owners, workers, institutional purchasers, and social service organization workers or volunteers)

A delivery truck (n=7; including 2 respondents who specifically listed a truck with frozen/cold transport space), **commercial kitchen implements** (n=6), and **tractor/tractor implements** (n=4). Additional equipment needed by one or two respondents are listed below the table.

What equipment do you need to help you reach or expand your business goals or help you serve additional individuals?	n=63
Delivery truck (with cold/frozen space, n=2)	7
Commercial Kitchen Implements (oven, utensils, dehydrator, etc)	6
Tractor/Tractor Implements	4
Various/other*	7
Wash/pack station	2
Irrigation assistance	2

**Other responses include 100-200 HP tractor for large, occasional jobs, Ability to put up signs to promote businesses, bean & grain cleaning equipment, Business Coaching, Retail butcher equipment, Commercial Kitchen/dining area, Community gardens, Storage: Dry Goods, Market location, Everything that would be needed for a food distribution and resource center, Food Prep Area, Food Production Supplies, Garden Implements, Tractor/Tractor Implements, Land to build homes with community growing space, Locally-grown organic food, Marketing assistance, Mobile ice bath, Mobile market vehicle w/ability to accept SNAP/DUFB and Packing equipment.*

2.1 (b) Infrastructure available

A review of all properties for sale and lease in South Corvallis was conducted with the support of a commercial real estate agent. Two commercial properties were identified as potentially suitable suites for a food hub in South Corvallis and an existing commercial kitchen facility was reviewed for ability to support commercial kitchen operations.

Commercial properties:

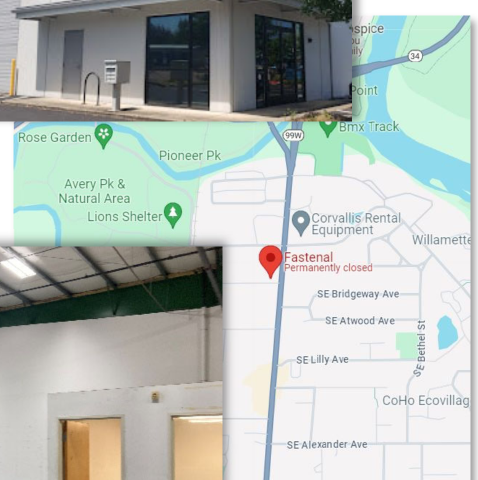
1. 1490 SW 3rd St., Corvallis, OR 97333 “Fastenal Building”
2. 1750-1780 SW 3rd St., Corvallis, OR 97333 “Mill Race Center”

Commercial kitchens:

1. Benton County Fairgrounds

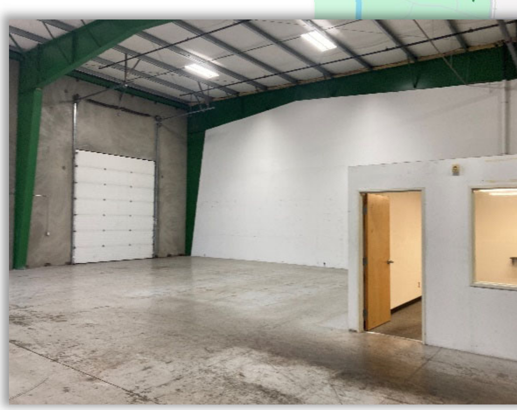
The consultant team met with a private commercial real estate agent to tour both commercial properties and toured the Benton County Fairgrounds and commercial kitchen with Benton County Fairgrounds staff. The Mill Race Center property was deprioritized from further feasibility exploration due to limited suitability and potentially high remodel costs, although it could be reconsidered if it were the only available option. The Fastenal Building was determined to be a potentially feasible space for a food hub that offers distribution and aggregation services, and the Benton County Fairgrounds was determined to need further investigation due to staff capacity limitations at the Fairgrounds and potential barriers around a lack of storage space available with use of the commercial kitchen.

The consultants also interviewed other organizations with potential commercial kitchen spaces, including the Corvallis Community Center (C3), Stone Soup, and Meals on Wheels, but none of these organizations were determined to be suitable due to capacity issues or lack of amenities needed for food businesses.



Fastenal Building

Size: 4,500 square feet
Zoned: Commercial
Price: Starting at $1.20 *sqft/month*
Restroom: Yes



2.1 (b) Infrastructure needed

Interview question:

1. **Are there solutions to these barriers you've thought of that a Food Hub could potentially address?**

Aggregation and distribution services were the most commonly endorsed infrastructure needs of interviewees

Aggregation and distribution services was the most commonly endorsed infrastructure needs from interviewees of all types, including small farmers, non-profits, and food producers. **A commercial kitchen** and **cold storage** were tied for the second-most commonly (n=9) endorsed, followed by a **place for food trucks** (n=8), **networking** (n=6) (to share farm labor staff, to connect producers and consumers, and to build a more resilient food system), and **marketing supports** (n=5). Four interviewees each endorsed needing **business technical assistance**, supports to increase and support **cultural diversity in the food system**, and **education** around local foods. Other built infrastructure needs endorsed by interviewees include **frozen goods storage space** (n=3), **dry goods storage space** (n=2), and a **place to grow foods** (n=2). One interviewee each endorsed needing grant writing and evaluation support, increasing economic access to local foods, forward contracts, a public market/retail space, a repack space, a liaison to the city permitting process, and translation services.

Commercial kitchen was the most common infrastructure need of survey respondents

Community survey question: **What equipment do you <u>need</u> to help you reach or expand your business goals or help you serve additional individuals?** (n=63 food business owners, workers, institutional purchasers, and social service organization workers or volunteers)

A Commercial Kitchen was the most common (n=11) infrastructure that community survey respondents endorsed as <u>needing</u> to help them reach or expand business goals or help serve additional individuals, followed by **cold storage** (n=9), frozen storage (n=5), other storage space (n=4), and soft infrastructure supports (n=3), such as help navigating permits for farm stands and farmworker housing, city permit process help, and information to minority families and communities.

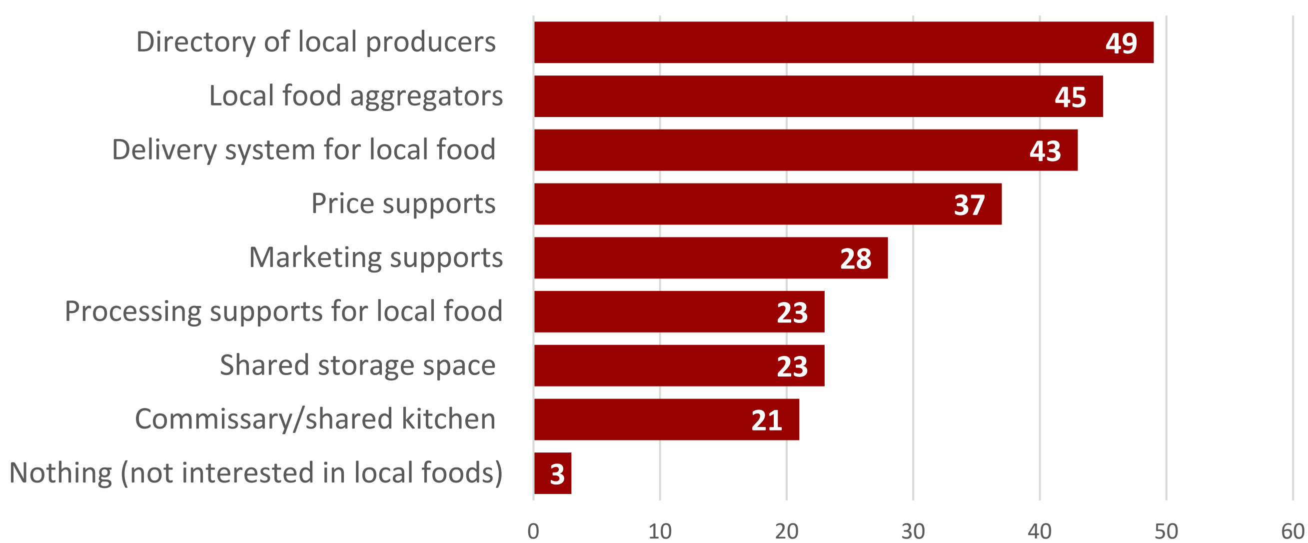
> *"If we had access to a prep kitchen we could cook more culturally appropriate food and beans and grains"*
>
> – Food education non-profit

Benton County Fairgrounds Commercial Kitchen

What equipment do you need to help you reach or expand your business goals or help you serve additional individuals?	n=63
Commercial Kitchen	11
Storage: Cold (e.g., walk-in, upright refrigerator)	9
Storage: Frozen (e.g., walk-in freezer)	5
Storage: Misc Space	4
Information: (permits for farmstand, housing, info for minority families/communities)	3

Directory of local producers and local food aggregator service were the most commonly endorsed supports to buy more local food by local food business owner survey respondents

Community survey question: **What are some supports that would enable you to buy more local food? *(select all that apply)*** (n=92 locally owned food businesses)



Other responses (n=7) included a certified butcher, "cultural", farmers being able to process their own produce and being more competitive with grocery stores like Winco and Grocery Outlet, etc, lower cost, and seeing local food at places like Grocery Depot or Winco

Supports that would enable you to buy more local food: shared storage space

Of the twenty-three food business respondents who endorsed a "shared storage space" would enable them to buy more local food, 70% endorsed cold storage, 22% endorsed frozen storage, and 9% endorsed dry goods storage would fit their needs. Of those, about half endorsed needing year-round access (cold storage (n=7), frozen storage (n=3), and dry goods storage (n=2)), just under half endorsed needing keyed access to a 24/hour space (cold storage (n=6), frozen storage (n=4)), and a similar number endorsed needing the ability to coordinate with the facility or site manager for access (cold storage (n=7), frozen storage and dry goods storage (n=1)). Of the twenty-three food businesses endorsing a shared storage space would enable them to buy more food, only five (22%) endorsed needing seasonal access only and two (9%) endorsed needing access during regular business hours only.

	Cold storage	Frozen Storage	Dry Goods Storage	Total
What type of shared storage space would help you buy more local food? *(select all that apply)*	16	5	2	**23**
What type of access do you need to this storage space? *(select all that apply)*				
year-round access	7	3	2	**12**
keyed access to a 24-hour space	6	4	-	**10**
ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access	7	1	1	**9**
seasonal access only	3	2	-	**5**
during regular business hours only	1	2	-	**2**

Supports that would enable you to buy more local food: Commissary/shared kitchen

Of the twenty-one food business respondents who endorsed a "a commissary/shared kitchen" would enable them to buy more local food, the majority (71%) endorsed needing year-round access to that kitchen (n=15), just over half (57%) endorsed needing keyed access to a 24-hour space (n=12), and a third (33%) endorsed the ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access (n=7). A few (n=4) need the space only on a seasonal basis and only one respondent endorsed needing the space during regular business hours only.

What type of access do you need to this commissary kitchen space? ***(select all that apply)***	**Total n=21**
year-round access	15
keyed access to a 24-hour space	12
ability to coordinate with facility or site manager for access	7
seasonal access only	4
during regular business hours only	1

2.1 (c) Barriers currently experienced by local food businesses

Interview questions:

1. **Please tell me a bit about some barriers currently limiting your business.**

Lack of aggregation and distribution services was the most common barrier endorsed by interviewees closely followed by lack of cold storage

Lack of aggregation and distribution services was the most commonly (n=14) endorsed barrier by interviewees of all types, including small farmers, non-profits, and food producers. Lack of **cold storage** was the second-most commonly (n=13) endorsed barrier, followed by lack of access to a **commercial kitchen space** (n=12), **business technical assistance** (n=10), and the **city's permitting process and limitations** (n=9).

Lack of **access to markets or marketing supports**, the high cost of **labor** and availability of skilled labor (both farm labor and artisan food production, for example, bakers), and lack of **culturally-specific supports** (translation services, culturally-specific food education, and lack of spaces to grow culturally-specific foods) were all endorsed as barriers by six interviewees. **Unstable pricing and/or demand** was endorsed as barriers by five interviewees.

Other barriers endorsed by interviewees included **creating connections** for producers, purchasers, and consumers, **credit lines, loans, and grants**, and lack of a **food cart pod** in south Corvallis (each endorsed by four interviewees). A future food truck owner explained a lack of place to park a food truck when not at an event was a barrier, two small farmers endorsed lack of supports around accepting SNAP and Double-Up Food Bucks limited their ability to accept those services, an environmental education non-profit is limited by a lack of supports for grant writing and evaluation, two restaurant owners want to purchase more local meat but it's not available in the quantities they need, a dietician and a farmer's market manager expressed a lack of public transportation-accessible options for local food (especially in the winter), and a fish monger, a small farmer, and a restaurant all expressed travel time and travel costs were barriers.

> *"The general sentiment is, 'if I can start a food truck I can feed the community and feed my family'."*
>
> – Culturally specific non-profit

Community survey question: **Which of the following barriers to procuring local food do you experience?** *(select all that apply)* (n=92 locally owned food businesses)

Other responses (n=8) included logistics complications more generally, meeting distributor minimums, needing to pick and process solo, state laws that limit dairy retail, and "all of the above – but it's what we do".

Additionally, the specific product from respondents who endorsed "product isn't available locally" are listed below:

Bread (n=3), including "specific bread in the amounts that I need"; Fruits (n=3), including fresh blueberries, figs, melons, and applesauce; Flour (n=3), including organic white flour; Asian products (n=2), including rice, pastas, coconut cream, diff types if chilies, fish sauces; Baking ingredients (n=2), including dry goods, spices, leaveners, oil and sugar; Chocolate (n=2), including chocolate hazelnut butter; Spices (n=2), including spice mixes; Tropical fruits (n=2), including small bananas, coconut, fresh and dried tropical fruits; Vegetables (n=2) including specific produce including: asparagus, fresh beans/peas, broccoli, cauliflower, quality garlic with *Large* cloves, potatoes sometimes, sweet potatoes, fresh produce during winter months; Canned goods; Condiments; Dried beans and grains; Low FODMAP foods; microgreens seeds; Plant based dairy alternatives (yogurt, cheese, etc); Tofu
"Sometimes the quality of a local produce item is sadly not as good as a non-local item and that's a hard choice to make."

2.1 (d) Community partnerships available and needed to operate a Food Hub

The consultant team identified community partnerships available and needed to operate a Food Hub. The selected operators are encouraged to collaborate with the consultant team which will provide warm handoffs to these community partners, all of whom expect those noted by asterisks have confirmed their interest in partnering and collaborating:

Service provided	Community partner
Fiscal Sponsorship	• Benton Community Foundation
Technical Assistance	• Central Coast Food Web • Hummingbird Wholesale • North Coast Food Web • Oregon Community Food Systems Network • Oregon State University Small Farms Program • Organically Grown Company
Potential Users	• Corvallis Albany Farmers Market • Corvallis Indoor Winter Market • Corvallis Southside Market • First Alternative Co-op • Flicker & Fir (South Corvallis Farmstead & Market) • Many individual farmers and food producers • Many individual local restaurant owners • Oregon State University Basic Needs Center • Oregon State University Dining Services
Non-profit partners	• Casa Latinos Unidos • Corvallis Environmental Center Farm to School • Corvallis Sustainability Coalition • Fresh & Local First • Gleaning program of Linn Benton Food Share • Growing Ancestral Roots (Cascade Pacific RC&D)* • Linn-Benton-Lincoln Health Equity Alliance* • Meals on Wheels (OCWCOG) • NAACP (Linn-Benton Chapter) • RAIN • SAGE Garden • Slow Food • South Corvallis Food Pantry • Stone Soup • Ten Rivers Food Web • Willamette Farm & Food Coalition

2.1 (e) Funding available and projected to support long-term fiscal sustainability

This food system assessment was funded through the American Rescue Plan Act and matching funds from the Economic Development Office (EDO), a shared office of the City of Corvallis and Benton County. A fiscally viable Food Hub will generate revenue through activities, but may also benefit from additional sources of funding. A snapshot of available and projected funding sources is below, although these this project may not be eligible for each source listed.

Eligibility	Community partner
501(c)(3) or government entities	• Oregon Community Foundation (link) • Ford Foundation (link) • Roundhouse Foundation (link) • USDA: Regional Food Systems Partnerships (link) • USDA: Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program in Oregon (link) • USDA NIFA: Community Food Projects (link) • Oregon Food Bank Network Support Funds (link)
501(c)(3) only	• Simply Organic (income less than $7M) (link) • Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund (link) • Spirit Mountain Community Fun (link) • The Schlesinger Family Foundation (link) • Benton Community Foundation *(various grant programs)* • Meyer Memorial Trust *(various grant programs)*
By invitation only	• Lazar Foundation (501(c)(3) only) (link) • Wild Rivers Alliance (link)
Regional, state, or local public-private partnerships	• USDA Healthy Food Financing Initiative (link)
No limitations	• US Congress Fiscal Year Appropriations • Bank of America (link)
Government entities only	• USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program (link)

End of Inventory of Equipment

Appendix A: Interview Respondents

The name of the business or organization interviewees identified are listed in alphabetical order. Some informal conversations with additional food system subject matter experts were also conducted but not listed, including with OSU Small Farms program, Oregon Community Food System Network, Benton Community Foundation, and many others.

Small businesses, aspiring small businesses, and small business support:

- Beer Place
- Castor
- Corazon
- Crust worthy (pop-up Pizza band)
- Current food system worker and aspiring owner
- Downward Dog
- Forks & Corks
- Kell's Koffee
- Lucca
- Murphy's
- Naked Crepe
- Oregon's Choice Gourmet/The Tinned Fish Shop
- RAIN Entrepreneurial network
- Two Towns Cider
- Violette Food Truck
- Whole Flower Farms
- Wild Yeast Bakery

Food system subject experts:

- Ag Biodiversity Consulting
- Instructors at OSU in Horticulture and Sustainability Departments
- Local Dietician
- Producer buyers at the First Alternative Co-op
- South Corvallis community member
- South Corvallis Urban Renewal District campaign worker
- Urban planner
- Vegucation Station

Local small and medium farms:

- Burnt Woods Garlic Farm
- Camron Ridge/Small Farm
- Cross Eyed Cricket Farm
- Eloisa Farms
- Gathering Together Farms
- Grassward Dairy
- Hiatt Farm
- Little Garden Organics
- Moku Chocolate
- Rainshine Farm
- Riverland Farms
- SolCycle Farm and Confluence Farm
- Trempler Family Farms

Non-profits:

- Casa Latinos Unidos
- Corvallis Albany Farmers Markets (manager and board member)
- Corvallis Farm to School
- Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Food Action Team member and co-facilitator
- Fresh and Local First
- Jammin for the Hungry
- Linn Benton Food Share Gleaner
- NAACP: Health and Wellness
- SAGE garden
- Slow Food
- South Corvallis Food Bank
- Stone Soup
- Vina Moses