

Co-producing a Place-Based Food Justice Curriculum in the South Bay

Project Update and Feedback Decision to SBFJ Collaborative Jan. 13, 2026

A project involving Santa Clara University, Environmental Justice Initiative, UC Cooperative Extension, Veggielution and the South Bay Food Justice Collaborative

Project end date: June 30, 2026



Agenda

- 10 min project summary and progress report
- 20 min break out - Feedback on modules proposed
 - Key content for our top 3 modules
 - Suggestions and contacts for who to interview first
- 10 min group dialogue on collaborations and next steps

SB Food Justice Hybrid Curriculum in a Nutshell

Goal: To create a comprehensive curriculum guide for the South Bay Food Justice Collaborative (SBFJC) to offer as regular training. The goal is to develop "food systems change agents" equipped to drive equity in the local system.

Source Material: 2025 Urban Agroecology and Cooperative Food Systems Change Conference, SBFJC 2023 Food Equity Series, our on workshops and best practices elsewhere.

Core Competencies for Participants:

- **Explain** complex food systems.
- **Identify** community strengths.
- **Diagnose** systemic problems.
- **Generate** actionable steps to build food equity, resilience and sustainability .

Output: curriculum guide containing online modules and community-based activities that allows the SBFJC to train new change agents.

Format & Methods:

- **Hybrid Structure:** Combines online learning with in-person engagement.
- **Content:** Videos, case studies, readings, and quizzes.
- **Application:** Hands-on volunteer activities at farms or community sites.

FOOD SYSTEMS CHANGE CURRICULUM PROJECT

1. BRAINSTORM & DEFINE (Goals & CTAs)



2. RECORD VIDEO CONTENT



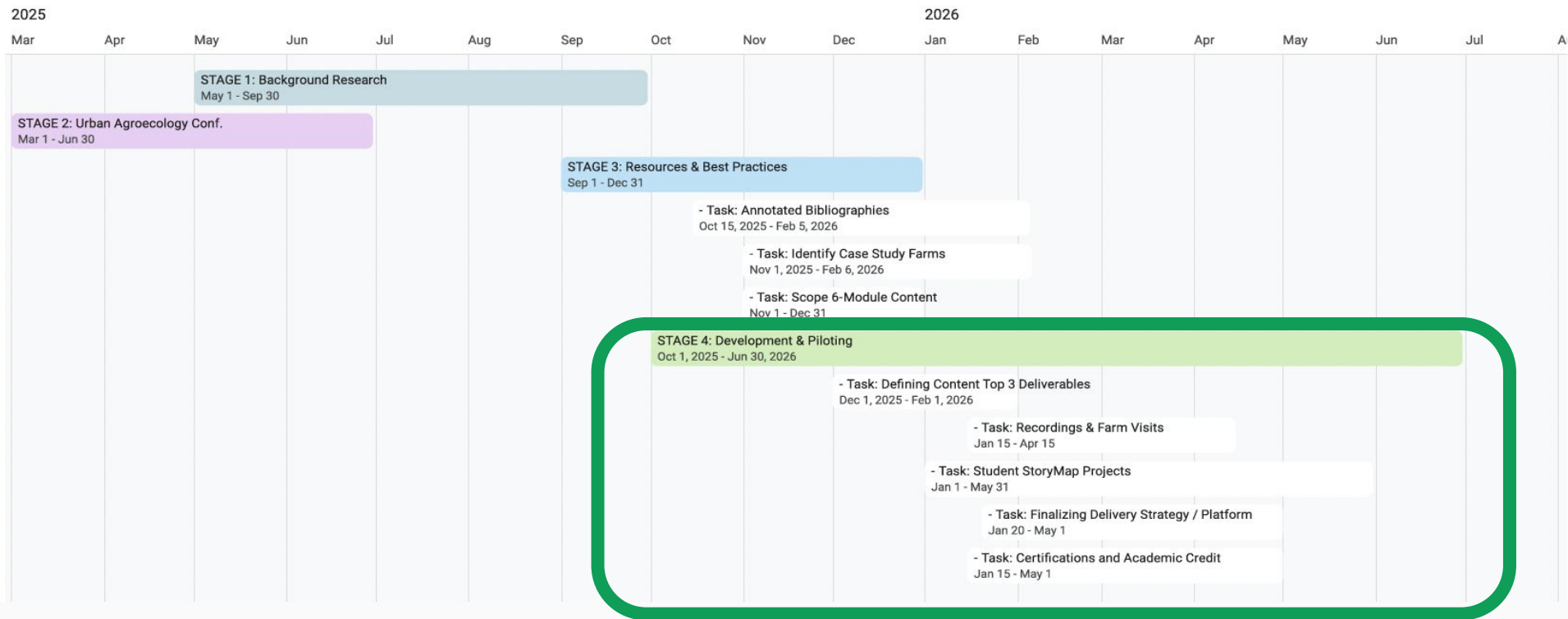
3. PRODUCE MODULES (Edit & Assemble)



4. LAUNCH & EMPOWER (Food Systems Change)



Project timeline



Starting places and existing platforms

Building Equity in the Silicon Valley Food System

Professional Development Webinar Series
Hosted by the South Bay Food Justice Collaborative

Join us for a professional development webinar series that examines issues of equity in Silicon Valley's food system.

We will learn about the historical origin of disparities in farming and food security in our region, and leave with strategies for promoting food justice in our work.

Speakers will include community members, practitioners, and other food system leaders.

Register:

<https://ucanr.edu/SVfoodequity>



1 FOOD SYSTEMS AND EQUITY: AN INTRODUCTION

January 25 | 3-4:30pm
Zoom

2 ROOTS OF INEQUITY: FARMS AND HOUSING

February 15 | 3-5 pm
Zoom

3 FOOD: CULTURE & POWER

March 15 | 3-4:30pm
Zoom

4 COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO FOOD WORK

April 19 | 3-4:30pm
Zoom

5 COMMUNITY GATHERING

May 16 | 10 am-2pm
In-person at Stanford Educational Farm

SB food Justice Website

Data for Food Justice

About Goals News Entrepreneurs Growers Advocates

Food Entrepreneurs

Build a strong regional food economy where communities and individuals prosper.

From home-based cooks to food truck owners and co-op leaders, food entrepreneurs play a vital role in shaping a more just and resilient food system in Santa Clara County. Supporting these small businesses means this work includes removing barriers, building shared infrastructure, and fostering networks that help local food businesses grow and thrive.

Types of Food Entrepreneurship



Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations

MEHKOs allow individuals to run small-scale restaurants from their private residences. This makes it easier for home cooks and first-time entrepreneurs to enter the food economy by reducing start-up costs and offering a path into the formal business sector while providing a diverse array of food for community members.

Start your home-based food business by applying for a MEHKO permit.



Cottage Food Operations

CFOs are permitted to prepare and sell non-perishable, low-risk foods such as baked goods, jams, and snacks from home. They differ from MEHKOs in that they cannot sell perishable or time-sensitive items, and individuals can only operate one type (MEHKO or CFO), not both.

Launch your small-scale food business by applying for a CFO permit.



Mobile Food Facilities

MFNFs allow entrepreneurs to cook and sell food from trucks, carts, or trailers. This flexible business model enables them to serve food at events, on the street, or at private functions, allowing entrepreneurs to reach new diverse customer bases without the high overhead of a brick-and-mortar restaurant.

Start your mobile food business by applying for an MFNF permit.



Food Cooperatives

Food co-ops are member-owned businesses that prioritize affordability, sustainability, and community collaboration. Members share equally in ownership, profits, and decision-making. Cooperatives promote locally sourced food and foster strong neighborhood ties.

Agroecology & Cooperative Food Systems Change Short Course

Summary and Evaluation April 10-12, 2025

Organizing Committee and Partners



The program organizing committee includes

- South Bay Food Justice Collaborative
- Christopher Bacon, Santa Clara University
- Lucy O'Donohue, UC Cooperative Extension
- Maria Eugenia Flores Gomez, Santa Clara University
- Samiha Hamdi, Fresh Approach
- Acaia Lynch, Fresh Approach
- Susan Chen, San Jose State University
- Fernando Fernandez, VeggieNation
- Claudia Damiani, VeggieNation
- Garry Sotnik, Valley Verde
- Mary Anna Cazarez, Independent
- Derek Bryant, City of Santa Clara

- Funding and other contributions
- (1) County of Santa Clara Food Systems Resiliency Grants
 - (2) VeggieNation
 - (3) UC Extension
 - (4) Valley Verde
 - (5) San Jose State University
 - (6) Fresh Approach
 - (7) City of Santa Clara
 - (8) Western SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education) projects funded by USDA/NIFA, Interpretation provided by North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (NSCRCD)
 - (10) Your time, ideas, and aspirations



Summary of events organized to date

- **April 10, 2025 - Bay Area Food Systems Resilience Learning Exchange workshop - 40 participants**
- **April 11, 2025 - Veggilution farm day- 45 participants**
- **April 12, 2025 - Agroecology and Cooperative Food Systems Change Conference - 75 participants**
- **Sept. 15, 2025 - Curriculum Design Workshop- Nine organizations, 14 participants**
- **November 13, 2025 - Online training to south bay food justice collaborative with Molly Anderson: Transforming Food Systems: Narratives of Power, ~21 participants.**
- **December 15, 2025 - Curriculum Design Workshop # 2- Nine organizations, 17 participants**
- **January 13, 2026 - South Bay Food Justice online workshop on curriculum design and suggested modules, ~ 16 participants.**

Meaningful food justice education experiences

Identified in previous meeting of collaborative members:

- **Direct & Intergenerational Knowledge:** Emphasizing talking to people, hearing their stories, and valuing wisdom that exists outside of formal institutions.
- **Hands-on and Systems Thinking:** Valuing service-learning, recognizing the **interconnections** within the food system, and understanding **why things work the way they do** (e.g., seeing contradictions like farmers who can't afford their own crops).
- **Trust and Leadership:** Creating spaces where we can come together, trust each other, and help individuals see their potential role as a leader or change agent.

Expected participants in trainings / audience:

Food system change agents in the South Bay Area, such as:

- Local government employees (including county, local electeds and their staff)
- Promotores / community leaders
- Longer-term volunteers, and potentially new or non-food-focused non-profit staff



[County Services](#) [Departments](#) [About the County](#)

Explore the training catalog



Learning and Employee Development (LED) collaborates with County departments/agencies to meet your training and event needs. If you are

Videos for the Training: A Good Example

[Sample video for inspiration -](#)

Cultivating Community: Why Values-Based Food Purchasing Matters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lf-yLZOEvpU>

Documentary film level
inspiration ex - [Soul Fire Farm](#)



and it costs so much to share
what they are loving and producing.

Cultivating Community: Why Values-Based Food Purchasing Matters



Community Food Advocates
4 subscribers

Subscribe

👍 12



🔗 Share

🌟 Ask

📄 Download



Student teams that will help with videos

SCU capstone teams Product by
March 15, 2026



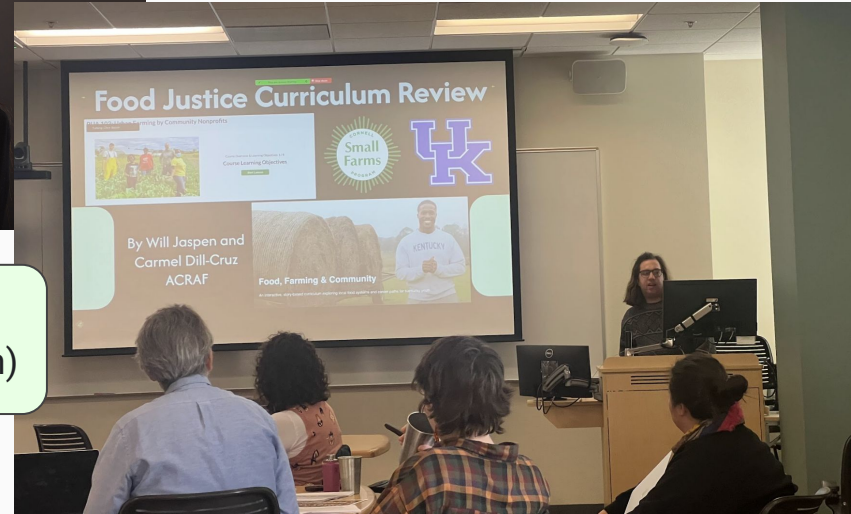
Veggielution as mentor:
Claudia Damiani

SCU Student RAs



Kate Parent
(will start soon)

UCB Grad Student - **Xihan Zhang**

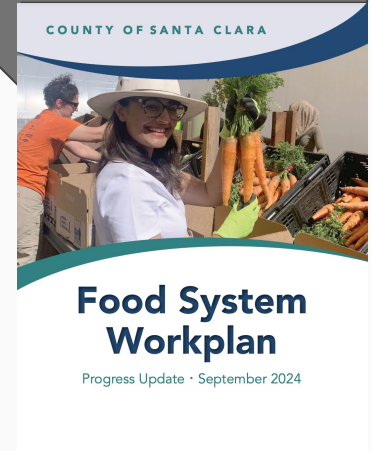


Proposal: Organize Modules using SCC Work Plan Goals + A Call to Action

Guiding questions/criteria for deciding on the: Why is this important for your participation in food system change?

1. Enhance **food system coordination and leadership**
2. Increase **community engagement toward greater food sovereignty**
3. Maintain **farmland**, increase agricultural opportunities, and enhance **farm viability**
4. Build a strong regional food economy where communities & individuals prosper
5. Improve **food security** and public health through access to **nutritious, culturally relevant, and affordable food.**
6. Expand **food recovery and composting**
7. Build a constituency for a strong regional food system by increasing **food and agricultural education**

Add an intro video to the Food Systems FS and the SCC FS Work Plan



Extra slides: Values to consider

1. County of Santa Clara Food Work Plan Values

1) Equity & Justice, 2) Resilience, 3) Food sovereignty, 4) Ecological sustainability and climate mitigation

2. Whole Measures for Community Food Systems

1) Sustainable ecosystems, 2) Healthy people, 3) Thriving local economies, 4) Justice and fairness, 5) Vibrant farms, 6) Strong communities

3. South Bay Food Justice Collaborative



Extra slides: Food System Model

University of Wisconsin Extension, Community Food Systems Toolkit

