



## NORTH COAST FOOD WEB

# Strategic Plan 2019

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**Mission** Cultivate healthy communities and a vibrant economy through food and agriculture.

**Vision** Our vision of a North Coast “food web” is a community that is home to a diverse and thriving group of farmers, fishermen, and foragers. These food producers have strong relationships with families, local businesses and organizations and are a pillar of our coastal economy. Healthy food is easier to access for all of us, regardless of who we are and our financial means. The connections made through the “web” contribute to the increased health and wellbeing we see in our community.

**Strategic Focus Area** We recognize that our vision is big and we cannot achieve it on our own. Through our strategic planning process, we have defined our unique role with the following communities and strategies:

- Support, listen to, respond to, connect, and provide resources to local farmers and food producers. We believe that local, healthy, accessible food starts with supported and successful farmers.
- Provide space for learning, playing, and building healthy habits for under-served youth. We believe youth are vital in influencing their families and can lead our community towards healthier outcomes.
- Partner with other community organizations who support aspects of our vision. We believe we cannot achieve our vision alone and that we must build deep relationships and support other organizations working towards our vision.



The North Coast Food Web has embarked on its first strategic planning process.

After ten years of existence, the organization is addressing key questions about its development and direction. The original vision of a “Food Web” has evolved, as has our community. As demographics change, social issues intensify, and the needs of our diverse community change and evolve, it is important we respond as a unified and values-driven organization.

The organization chose to work with a consultant to facilitate the process, and the board and staff were heavily involved in shaping both the process, information gathering, and creation of the plan. Stakeholder feedback was a crucial part of the process to help inform the board about community perceptions and needs. Two focus groups composed of 15 community partners were conducted, as well as a survey sent to over 50 local food producers, leaders, and business owners, 21 of which generously responded. Personal interviews were conducted with 14 people with deeper knowledge and connections to NCFW.

Some of the key questions that the board grappled with after digesting the stakeholder feedback were:

- How do we tell our story so people know what we do and know how to engage with us?
- How do we do a better job of targeting the most at-risk in our community?
- How do we do a better job of cultivating partnerships and strong relationships?
- Are we a web? Or project-driven? Is everyone in the “web” who needs to be?
- How do we limit our focus? What part of the work should be prioritized or are we uniquely positioned to do?

The board narrowed the plan’s focus on the following key challenges and opportunities facing the organization. These were prioritized as being the most crucial to mission impact and organizational success.

- Lack of funding and human capital to do the work that needs to be done.
- Need for more inclusive services and programs for underserved populations.
- People don’t know our mission or what we do.
- We are unclear on farmer’s needs and lack continuous input, leadership, and responsiveness to them.

These key issues and opportunities are addressed in the following goals and strategies.

# Goals & Strategies

## Goal #1 Deeply understand and respond to the needs of local food producers.

- Strategies:**
- Increase food producer leadership in the organization through board participation and advisory roles.
  - Coordinate seasonal gatherings of farmers. Create meaningful ways for food producers to engage with one another, share experiences, and best practices, and give feedback to the organization.
  - Streamline and formalize the process of sharing information with, and between, farmers using existing and new methods.

### Vision of Success:

Staff time will be allocated to supporting farmers and food producers. Farmers and food producers will be actively involved with the organization in informing/advising roles. Farmers feel increased support from NCFW and community at-large. Farmers express an increase in their effectiveness / skills related to their farming.

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## Goal #2 Ensure programs and services are accessible, relevant, and inclusive.

- Strategies:**
- Analyze and assess current programming and create 1-year strategies for each program to be more inclusive.
  - Intentionally build board, volunteer, and staff capacity around DEI.
  - Develop a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) statement, lens, goals.
  - Implement an annual review process to assess programs and services against DEI statement, lens, and goals.
  - Intentionally diversify volunteer base to better represent the community we work with.
  - Collaborate with other North Coast organizations who are working towards common goals around DEI.

### Vision of Success:

We are known as an organization that is serious about doing what we say when it comes to inclusive programming. Our board and staff all have an advanced understanding of its own bias and privilege. Board, staff and volunteers and participants are made up of a socioeconomically diverse group of community members. There's an increased utilization of programs and services by people in the community who may not have access to or utilize local healthy food systems before. We regularly meet with our community partners to talk about how we can advance DEI work within our organizations and community.

## Goal #3

Increase awareness and understanding of the local food system through our mission & programs.

- Strategies:**
- Maintain an up-to-date and user-friendly website with resources, events, and information.
  - Utilize social media platforms to increase and maintain visibility.
  - Deepen our relationships with community partners.
  - Take opportunities to speak at local events and gatherings to share our resources and mission.
  - Build a robust database to support communication efforts.

### Vision of Success:

Our staff, board, volunteers and community partners can all clearly articulate what we do & why. When you talk to folks at the Co-op and folks at the Food Bank, they all know our name and what we do. We see a steady increase in our program participation, volunteer engagement and online donations because folks can easily find information about what we're up to.

## Goal #4

Develop a sustainable fund development plan that funds the organization 1-year out and supports two full-time FTE.

- Strategies:**
- Board and Executive Director will develop a work plan.
  - Obtain a grant to support capacity and fundraising expertise to develop the plan.
  - Utilize our facility and programming strengths for revenue production.
  - Ensure the mission is central to fund development strategies.

### Vision of Success:

NCFW will have a team of qualified staff that's delighted in their work with the organization. Funding is secure a year out. Individual / business support has grown substantially and includes a core of regular donors. ED & board feel confident in skills related to fundraising. We have a development director in place or on the horizon. We have a mutual understanding of our business model and choices.

## Thank You

to everyone who contributed to the creation of this strategic plan. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and desire to improve our community food system. Though this is a 'final' draft, we view it as a living document and appreciate thoughts or comments on ways to keep building on our work.

