

**Strategic Plan for Community Food & Agriculture Coalition
Goals, Strategies, Outcomes, Objectives Adopted 5/24/21**

Vision

A well-nourished community supporting and relying on sustainable local agriculture.

Mission Statement

At the Community Food & Agriculture Coalition our mission is to grow a healthy local food community by conserving farmland, supporting farmers, and making food accessible for all.

Farmland + Farmers = Food for All

Organizational Value Statements:

- CFAC prioritizes engagement with community members from all backgrounds to identify pressing local issues and respond with leadership and passion.
 - CFAC values a solution-oriented teamwork approach in all we do that prioritizes connectivity and collaboration.
 - CFAC works to integrate equity and inclusiveness in all that we do. We are committed to working with a wide range of individuals and partners to ensure we are supporting and empowering all Montanans as we work together toward a more just and equitable food system.
 - CFAC emanates optimism, approaches opportunities with tenacity, and reflects on challenges with resilience.
 - CFAC takes an innovative and creative approach as we work toward positive change and increased sustainability in Montana's local food system.
 - CFAC shows respect, integrity, and trust for all people and natural resources.
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GOAL 1 - FARMS/RANCHES: Protect agricultural land to assure there is a foundation for the work we do.

Strategy 1: Expand existing staff and identify strategies for greater success in preserving existing farmland

Outcome: Farmland is protected through a multi-pronged suite of conservation strategies

Obj. 1: Grow internal structure

- Add dedicated staff person
- Expand and engage LUV committee
- Build a long-term stewardship fund for conserved land

Obj. 2: Educate legislators – local and state, and propose legislation alone or in collaboration with others

- Continue position on Missoula City/County Food Advisory Board
- Explore subdivision incentives/requirements for positive review criteria

Obj. 3: Explore new conservation tools for landowners – new approach in direct communication with landowners, new incentives, voluntary conservation tools

- Reduce barriers for new farmers
- Explore options for conservation development in new subdivision proposals
- Create new partnerships with developers who are conservation minded
- Explore buy, protect, sell model - Farmland Company
- Maintain internal database of all land use program successes, failures and compromises, and use to evaluate new subdivisions to comment on

Obj. 4: Build support and resources for landowners looking to sell/lease/give their land to beginning farmers and ranchers through Farm Link Montana

- Help landowners/farmers with succession?
 - Succession planning
 - Planned giving campaign
 - Develop marketing and outreach plan for retiring farmers

Strategy 2: Engage in reducing impacts of climate change on farmers

Outcome: Working conditions are improved for farmers in Western Montana despite climate change impact

Obj. 1: Partner to promote climate resilience strategies

- Through Agriculture Committee of the Climate Plan in Missoula, support policies that work to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on farms and farmers in Western MT
- Educate and promote mitigation strategies to farmers and the community regarding specific impacts from climate change - i.e. farmers: early freezes and smoke as well as how to lower emissions and sequester CO₂, and to consumers: changes in availability/delivery issues due to climate change
- Consider adding climate mitigation criteria for Field-Tested program

Strategy 3: Support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) leaders' land access initiatives and explore CFAC's role in equitable land access

Outcome: BIPOC communities have more access to affordable land and are partners in the farming community

Obj. 1. Develop new tools for more equitable land access

- Continue and support initiatives of All Nations Health Center (ANHC) and Soft Landing and other groups supporting BIPOC community members
 - Support and learn from BIPOC leaders already engaged in land access
 - Explore potential for cooperative land purchases
 - Explore financial support from banks like Clearwater Credit Union that have equity goals
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GOAL 2: FARMERS/RANCHERS: Increase the level of success and sustainability of farmers in Montana

Strategy 1: Provide resources to assure success of farmers and ranchers

Outcome: Farmers feel supported and have access to resources for success and sustainability

Obj. 1: Expand current farmer training programs to support both new and established farmers

- Identify how best to support experienced farmers and create a program to do so
- Continue and grow BFR training program for new farmers – (create baseline set of programs plus new/rotating topics)
- Develop a mentorship program
- Develop a certification program for new farmers

Obj. 2: Continue to provide and grow new sources of grants and other cost sharing resources for farmers

- Seek sustainable sources of field-tested program funding
- Seek field-tested climate mitigation grants
- Explore co-op type options for unemployment or health insurance for farmers and farmhands

Obj. 3: Maintain and/or build on partnerships for the farm network across the state

Obj. 4: Grow and build relationships with organizations serving BIPOC farmers, and explore ways we can support them

- Help BIPOC community and immigrant gardeners with All Nations Health Center and Soft Landing transition to farming at a larger scale
- Explore potential partnership with Salish-Kootenai College and farmers on reservations

Strategy 2: Expand and grow markets for farmers, create a model for other communities

Outcome: Farmers are successfully connected to buyers, and community members have access to locally grown food

Obj. 1: Grow the Passport program & Abundant MT - farmers and food business participants

Obj. 2: Support new markets (farmers markets/grocery stores/restaurants/food businesses offering local food) throughout Montana

Strategy 3: Explore opportunities and develop plan for potential Farm Incubator and/or Ag Resource Site

Outcome: Land access is more equitable and affordable for small-scale farmers and CFAC has a space for training and projects

Obj. 1: Further explore potential for an Incubator Farm, and if feasible and approved, begin implementation

- Develop a current business plan and proposal for board consideration
 - Identify funding sources and budget
 - Identify and confirm partnerships, allocate responsibilities
 - Create guidelines for participant selection, plot size, resources required

GOAL 3 – FOOD: Ensure access to local food for all

Strategy 1: Equitably expand Double SNAP Dollars Network and number of locations offering DSD through diversification of program models

Outcome: DSD is offered at 35 locations by 2024 that serve diverse communities through equitable program models

Obj. 1: Diversify representation on DSD Network Steering Committee to include BIPOC, rural, and eastern Montana voices

- Collaborate with partner organizations serving underrepresented geographies and people, then invite them to join the DSD Steering Committee
- Identify and recruit a Tribal spoke operator

Obj. 2: Grow the Hub & Spoke model to include additional spoke organizations for eastern MT and Tribal communities

- Recruit a Tribal Spoke Organization
- Refine processes for efficient collaboration and financial management

Obj. 3: Sustain and grow network of farmers markets

- Support markets in SNAP authorization through technical assistance
- Move SNAP authorized markets into DSD pipeline
- Identify collaborative funding opportunities

- Obj. 4: Develop strong retail program locally to replicate across Montana
- Establish retail DSD work group with industry representatives
 - Develop Internal and External Retail DSD procedures and processes

- Obj. 5: Develop farm-direct and other alternative DSD models to increase access
- Support farms in SNAP authorization through technical assistance
 - Generate marketing campaign for farm-direct SNAP and DSD participation
 - Identify funding to support EBT processing technology for farmers
 - Pilot and refine a farm-based SNAP-eligible food box program

Strategy 2: Grow food access program to include Produce Prescription projects state-wide

Outcome: Montana has a cohesive network of Produce Rx practitioners that are well-resourced, connected, and collaborative

- Obj. 1: Research current landscape of Produce Rx programs across MT and beyond
- Reach out to current MT-based programs to identify models, successes, and challenges
 - Consult with Wholesome Wave to compare and contrast models with national standards

- Obj. 2: Widen DSDN scope to include Produce Rx programs
- Recruit members for a Produce Rx work group
 - Connect existing MT-based programs with prospective programs
 - Identify and obtain funding for programs within our network

Strategy 3: Retain and grow leadership in food access policy advocacy

Outcome: State and local policy reflects equitable food access for all Montanans as a result of CFAC's strong leadership with organizational partners

Obj. 1: Establish and support food champions in Montana state legislature, to advocate for DSD and other food access programs.

Obj. 2: Through Missoula county community action fund, work with other communities on local ways to find support from city and county governments

Obj. 3: Examine funding potential for administrative or consulting fees

Strategy 4: Reinvigorate local food programs in Western Montana

Outcome: CFAC maintains role as food system innovator in Missoula and Western Montana and retains local knowledge of need and opportunity

Obj. 1: Rebuild the Missoula Food Access Committee

- Identify staffing, budget, and mission of this committee
- Recruit committee members

Obj. 2: Increase collaboration with WIC and senior farmers market as well as other area food access programs

Obj. 3: Prioritize which type of food access program to support, based on metrics of how each type of food access program supports farmers.

- Consider pay-it-forward program (buy 2 from farmer, who gives 1 away)

Obj. 4: Engage local community through grassroots, community-based projects

- Identify funding and resources for Street Team (ST) Project
- Identify staffing to manage ST members

GOAL 4: ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS: Grow our capacity to ensure and sustain success

Strategy 1: Develop and strengthen staffing and staff support

Outcome: CFAC has a diverse, dedicated, supported staff who recognize their own leadership and partner together for the success of the organization

Obj. 1: Examine staffing levels and capacity for new projects. Increase staffing as needed

Obj. 2: Develop a recruitment and retention program to increase Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within our organization and staff

Obj. 3: Identify training and staff development needs and develop protocol to meet those needs

Obj. 4: Implement a standard annual staff work planning process tied to job descriptions and strategic goals, with evaluation tied to the work plan

Strategy 2: Obtain a more permanent space for the staff as a good place to grow and continue to serve the community into the future

Outcome: CFAC has a permanent office and resource space that provides long term stability and greater presence within the public sphere

Strategy 3: Establish more avenues of unrestricted revenues

Outcome: CFAC secures a 6mo - 1yr reserve fund and realizes greater flexibility in unrestricted funding, for security and program flexibility

Obj. 1: Grow current diversified fundraising channels by 10-20% annual growth each year for 3 years

- Expand annual Local Food & Farm Passport Program to 1-2 new regions over the next 3 years
 - Work with consultant to launch Passport in Bozeman area in 2022
 - Consider fee structure for consulting, % of passport fees
- Continue to grow in-person event revenue through current CFAC events and creating a new annual signature event
- Secure 1-2 additional consistent general operating grants within the next 3 years
- Continue to grow year-end and Spring annual giving campaigns (Missoula Gives included) by generating new donor prospect lists and increasing current donor giving levels
- Grow business sponsorship opportunities through annual Spring sponsor ask and benefit package

Obj 2: Create a long-term Development plan

- Create major donor program over the next three years
- Create annual planned giving campaign to launch in 2023

Obj 3: Build strong fundraising skills and development committee at the Board level

- Recruit and retain Board members with strong development experience or willingness to actively participate in fundraising
- Secure 3-4 Board members who commit to joining and strengthening the Board development committee long-term

Strategy 4: Strengthen board governance and leadership

Outcome: CFAC has a diverse, dedicated, and generative Board of Directors who recognize their role in governance and partner with staff for the success of the organization

Obj. 1: Develop and maintain effective board orientation and support materials

- Write talking points and provide materials about current programs and activities

Obj. 2: Develop and maintain a new board member orientation and onboarding process

- Develop a board mentorship program, including opportunities to learn from former board members

Obj. 4: Establish an evaluation plan annually

- Board member self-evaluation questionnaire
- Develop a board evaluation rubric

Obj. 5: Move to bi-monthly board meetings - 6 meetings per year + annual planning retreat

Obj. 6: Assure that each committee has clear goals and a workplan

Obj. 7: Create a board nominating committee

- Craft a set of needed skills and experience to help guide recruitment

Obj. 8: Institute new efficient communications tools

- Explore potential for board use of Slack and group texts (for meeting reminders)

Strategy 5: Regularly evaluate programs and performance, and use results to inform planning and improve results

Outcome: Programs and performance are measured annually and evaluation is utilized to improve in the coming year

Obj. 1: Develop a consistent evaluation and metrics

Obj. 2: Review evaluations and create a report for improvement prior to planning retreat each year

GOAL 5: COMMUNICATION: Expand community outreach, connection and engagement

Strategy 1: Create a strong and comprehensive long-term communication and branding plan for CFAC

Outcome: CFAC is recognized as a robust, meaningful nonprofit, engaged with and supported by the community at large

Obj. 1: Continue to develop robust annual communication plan and branding guidelines

- Create an annual comprehensive communications and development calendar that includes social media, e-mail, print and other media channels that includes consistent diversified and equitable communication across the communities CFAC works in

Obj. 2: Expand Passport Program in Western Montana as a means to create organization awareness and engagement

- Work to engage more farmers, sponsors, and other related Passport events to build deeper connection to Passport holders and participants
- Expand Passport to 1-2 more regions over the next 3 years

Obj. 3: Grow in-person suite of engagement events that appeal to a broad range of community members, but are easy to execute with limited staff capacity

- Expand Bike to Barns to other regions in MT
- Create and execute Farm Fresh 5K event
- Create and execute 1-2 new events that allow people to share and discuss local food together. (ex. Book club, equity in food system group, etc.)
- Expand Pop-up Pitchfests and its potential for smaller community events (e.g. Pitchfest Pint Nights)

Obj. 4: Develop volunteer programs that aim to help CFAC become more visible in the community

- Explore volunteer program purpose, planning, recruitment and supervision strategies with full staff and Board involvement - using DEI principles and priorities.
- Develop a volunteer ambassador program that helps us table year-round at farmers markets, staff community events, etc.
- Explore past board member Ambassador/Advisor Program

Obj. 5: Examine the CFAC name to insure it describes what the organization is now

- If changed, create communications and outreach plan to roll it out (and potentially fundraise around it)
- Potential new “working” name: **Community Food & Ag Center**