



LA Food Equity Fund

2024 SIX
MONTH
INTERIM
REPORT



SIX MONTH HIGHLIGHTS



The LA Food Equity Fund has awarded over \$20 million to 78 organizations (45 in the first cohort and 33 in the second cohort) to address food and nutrition insecurity across Los Angeles County. The funding supports initiatives in strengthening food systems, nutrition promotion, public benefits enrollment, and food distribution, prioritizing high need communities and strategic alignment. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, this six-month evaluation highlights the following learnings from the first cohort of grantees (N=35 capacity-building grantees and 10 food distribution grantees):



ALIGNMENT WITH LA FOOD EQUITY ROUNDTABLE ACTION PLAN

Capacity building grantee activities address multiple LA Food Equity Roundtable goals, as illustrated below:

Goal 1

19%



Improved affordability of healthy foods

Goal 2

59%



Increase equitable access to healthy foods

Goal 3

41%



Build market demand and consumption of healthy foods

Goal 4

43%



Support sustainability and resilience in food systems & supply chain

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Food distribution grantees hosted events across the five Supervisorial Districts in LA County to distribute food and essential household items:

About **9,000** food and essential household items were distributed to residents in need.

Over **66,000** community residents were reached by food distribution efforts, gaining access to much needed food and other resources (personal hygiene products, diapers, etc.).

INCREASED CAPACITY

Capacity building grantees strengthened their capacity to provide food-related and systems-change activities:

89% Invested in hiring new staff and workforce development

80% Hosted community health fairs, nutrition education workshops, urban farming initiatives, and outreach efforts to improve food security and access

40% Strengthened outreach efforts

29% Invested in technology and digital tools

23% Enhanced their food transportation methods

20% Invested in their facilities and infrastructure improvements

GRANTEE SATISFACTION



Simple Grant Administration Process



Timely Fund Disbursement



Responsive Support From Community Partners Team

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND

INTRODUCTION



The LA Food Equity Fund, a partnership between the LA County Chief Sustainability Office and Community Partners, has awarded over \$20 million in grants to 78 organizations to combat food and nutrition insecurity across Los Angeles County. With American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, this initiative builds on the Los Angeles Food Equity Roundtable's Action Plan to create a more sustainable food system. Administered by Community Partners—a nonprofit intermediary with 30+ years of experience supporting community-based organizations—the fund prioritizes high-need communities through 68 capacity building grants for strengthening food systems, nutrition promotion, and public benefits enrollment, and 10 distribution grants for food and essential household items.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The interim evaluation of the LA Food Equity Fund uses a mixed-methods approach to assess the program's design and effectiveness among 45 grantees, including 35 capacity-building and 10 food distribution grantees. The evaluation focuses on two areas: Implementation, assessing alignment with the 2022 LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan; and Impact, measuring increased food-related capacity and distribution. Data collection methods include a crosswalk (N=35) to align grantee activities with the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan, grantee Interviews (N=25) conducted via Zoom to understand challenges and successes, progress report reviews (N=35 capacity building grantees; N=10 distribution grantees) to analyze progress and spending, and Mural document reviews to capture collaborative planning insights.



IMPLEMENTATION

ROUNDTABLE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Capacity building grantee efforts have demonstrated strong alignment with the goals and actions of the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan. Grantees addressed multiple goals, including increasing equitable access to healthy foods (59%), improving the affordability of healthy foods (41%), building market demand and consumption (43%), and supporting sustainability and resilience in food systems and supply chains (19%). Table 1 highlights the alignment across Roundtable actions. The most frequently implemented action by grantees is supporting the expansion of community-led or participatory nutrition education programming, with 17 grantees engaging in this effort, which aligns with funding disbursement. Table 2 highlights actions in the Roundtable report not addressed by grantee activities.

Grantee Voices

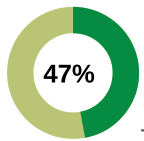
"I, myself and another colleague gave our feedback in that roundtable, and so some of our inputs were included when this action plan came about. So this was already something that was on my radar for a while. And so then, when we started working with our network and really strategized what objectives and what goals are we going to accomplish as being this network of food providers in our community trying to increase access to healthy options for our community members."

-Capacity building grantee (anonymous interview)

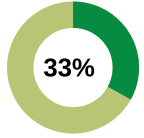


LA FOOD EQUITY FUND

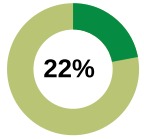
Table 1: LA Food Equity Roundtable Actions Implemented by Grantees



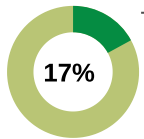
Support the expansion of community led or participatory nutrition education programming.



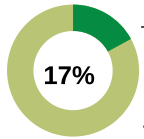
Create opportunities for families and individuals to attend public teaching kitchens, cooking, workshops, and grocery store-based nutrition education programs in hard-to-reach communities with nutrition information and recipes that match.



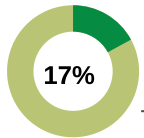
Support initiatives that aggregate food from small to mid-size and disadvantaged farmers for redistribution to local consumers, such as through neighborhood markets and innovative food retail models, including public or cooperatively owned.



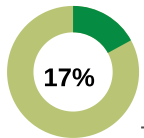
Leveraging communications channels that engage local community leaders & trusted messengers, faith-based organizations, cultural centers, ethnic media, digital/video campaigns for youth, and grassroots community-based organizations.



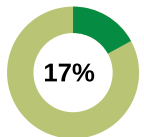
Expand nutrition incentives that encourage people to consume fresh vegetables and fruits.



Partner with programs that serve our priority population to ensure that they are delivered information in an appropriate and accessible way (i.e., digital applications).



Invest in infrastructure to build the capacity of hyperlocal community-based food assistance nonprofits, such as refrigerated trucks, cold storage, and community convening spaces for food distribution and consumption.



Improve food waste management by testing the viability of food hubs (similar to retail distribution centers) and establish a hub and spoke logistics model to address gaps/limitations in transportation and storage space for recovery/surplus.

Table 2: Roundtable Actions Not Addressed



Food Policies: Adopt the Good Food Purchasing Policy and promote plant-based menu options.



LGBTQ+ & Student Support: Expand ID change clinics for transgender individuals.



Food Assistance for Students: Partner with colleges to improve access to food resources.



After-School Programs: Extend program hours, expand to more schools, and improve meal quality for children with dietary needs.



Colleges: Partner with colleges to increase the visibility and utility of centralized platforms for students in need of food assistance.



New Farmers Markets: Streamline the process of opening new farmers markets.

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IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTEES

After six months of grant implementation, the 35 capacity-building grantees were at various stages of progress, categorized into three phases: launch and setup, implementation and engagement, and expansion or scaling. Nine grantees were in the early stage, focusing on foundational efforts such as hiring staff, establishing partnerships, securing resources, and conducting community outreach. The majority, 24 grantees, were in the mid-stage, actively delivering services through community engagement, hosting events, and implementing educational programs. Two grantees reached the late stage, having met or exceeded their initial objectives and were expanding their program scope, adding new activities, and strengthening collaborations to address emerging needs. This distribution highlighted the overall progress of the grantees and informed ongoing support efforts to ensure successful long-term outcomes. Grantee voices describing their implementation progress are showcased below.

““ Grantee Voices ””

Early Launch and Setup

"This project is still in its early stages. We have recently completed the evaluation process for our hub pilot program, assessing what worked and what didn't, and how we want to continue to support the regional food recovery hubs going forward. Part of that next step planning is identifying where the LA Food Equity funds can be best utilized in support of regional food recovery initiatives."

-San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments



Mid-Program Implementation and Engagement

"We have successfully provided scholarships for Health Educator Trainings, collaborated with key networks to expand our reach, and enhanced our website to improve user experience and engagement. Additionally, we are piloting new software to streamline care coordination and implementing technology solutions to enhance efficiency within our team. These initiatives have strengthened our organization's infrastructure and positioned us for long-term sustainability and growth."

- FEAST, Inc.



Late-Expanded or Scaling

"With the LA Food Equity support, we are taking stock of what is working well and refining our approach to ensure sustainable expansion."

- ALMA Backyard Farms



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CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTEES CONTINUED

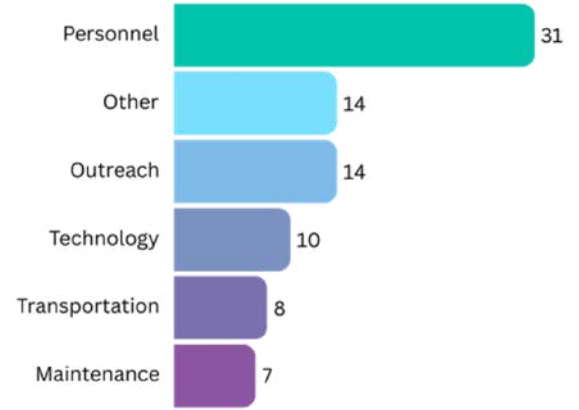
Capacity-building grantees utilized grant funds in the first 6 months, primarily for capacity-building investments such as staffing, outreach materials, transportation, technology, food distribution, and facility maintenance. These funds supported activities like hiring community health workers, purchasing equipment, conducting community outreach, and improving operational capacity. As a result, grantees were able to expand their programs, enhance community engagement efforts, and strengthen their ability to address food insecurity and related challenges.

Grantee Voices

"With the funds, we were able to afford one staff member dedicated to outreach and program coordination, increasing our ability to serve the community."

-Granada on Broadway Outreach Program

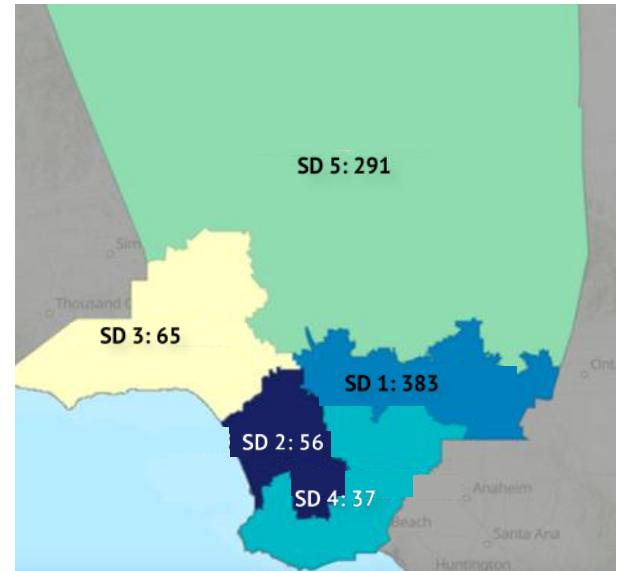
CAPACITY BUILDING INVESTMENT AREAS



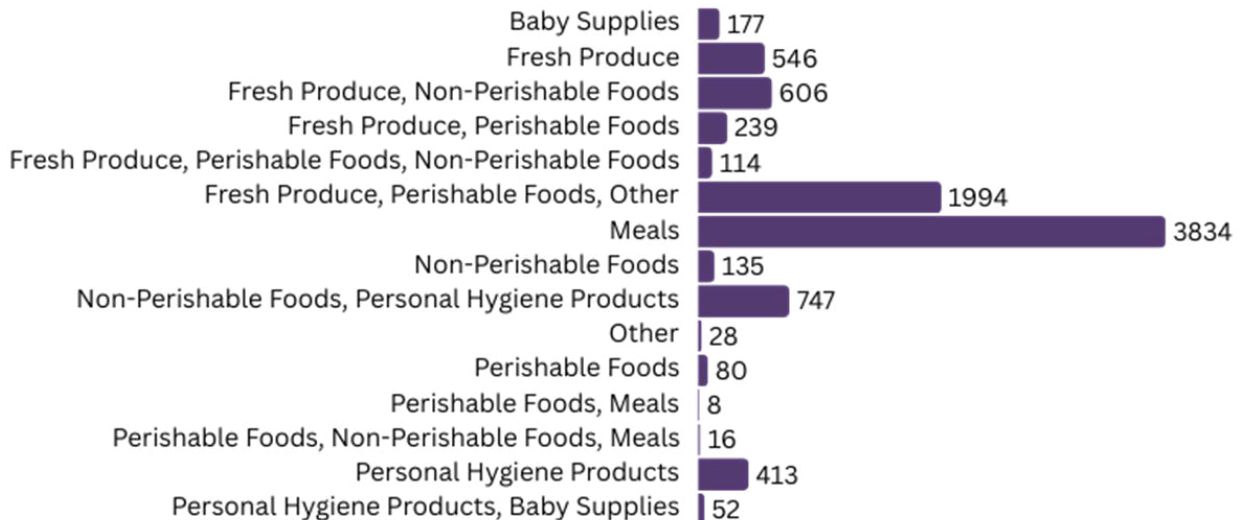
FOOD DISTRIBUTION GRANTEES

The 10 food distribution grantees held a total of 832 food distribution events, reaching 330 different zip codes throughout Los Angeles County. This extensive coverage ensured that communities across of the county, from the South Bay to the San Gabriel Valley, benefited from distribution efforts. Food distribution events targeted the First Supervisorial District with 383 events, followed by the Fifth District with 291 events, the Third District with 65 events, the Second District with 56 events, and the Fourth District with 37 events, demonstrating a strong focus on areas such as South Los Angeles, Compton, and parts of Central and East Los Angeles. During these events grantee organizations distributed a variety of items, including eggs, dairy, chicken, broccoli, cabbage, potatoes, fresh vegetables and fruits, rice, beans, frozen cheese enchiladas, canned goods, shelf-stable pantry items, diapers, baby formula, wipes, hygiene kits, and household goods. In total, 66,318 residents in need received food and supplies.

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION EVENTS BY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT



DISTRIBUTION GRANTEE TOTAL NUMBER OF DISTRIBUTED ITEMS



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SUCCESS STORIES



CHINESE CHRISTIAN HERALD CRUSADES

Successfully implemented all four programs under the "Wellness 4 Everyone" initiative. They launched a nutrition column in Herald Monthly, reaching 15,000 readers with healthy eating tips and recipes. In July, they conducted their first Education Workshop for 25 high school students, receiving positive feedback. Additionally, they trained and certified 22 individuals in Safe Food Handling and launched the Fresh Food Package program in August, serving 35 families and receiving strong support from the Chinese community. Grant funds were used to support staff, consultants, and workshop speakers, ensuring effective program delivery.



IMPACT JUSTICE

Impact Justice addresses food equity and reentry through its "Spread Wellness" program, partnering with five organizations to deliver trauma-informed nutrition education. Facilitators with lived reentry experiences were trained and equipped to deliver workshops, fostering peer-led engagement. They also integrated food distribution sourced from local farms and strengthened partnerships to build capacity and promote healing through food.



PARTNERSHIP FOR GROWTH LA

Partnership for Growth LA expanded the Freedom Farms' impact through education, food sharing, and partnerships. Their Young Growers Program taught students gardening and soil science, culminating in a shared harvest for Hollywood Community Housing residents. They strengthened collaborations with Against All Odds Compton and other grantees while hiring a Freedom Farms Manager to support business growth and sustainability. Securing vital resources like water, seeds, and equipment, they also partnered with the Social Justice Learning Institute to develop infrastructure, including tower gardens and solar power.



PROSPERITY MARKET

Prosperity Market supports Black farmers, chefs, and entrepreneurs. Namely by securing a commercial kitchen to launch a mobile farmers market, scale their online marketplace, and pursue SNAP/EBT certification. They expanded online shopping hours, added weekly delivery with an extended radius, and launched nationwide shipping. At industry conferences, they onboarded four new vendors and organized a professional photoshoot to support vendor promotion. In August, their Black Business Scavenger Hunt featured 113 Black-owned businesses, boosting foot traffic by 30+ weekly shoppers at Kathy's Kitchen, a participant and prize winner.



SÜPRMARKT

SÜPRMARKT has made a significant impact in South Central Los Angeles by distributing over 35,000 pounds of organic produce to the community. In July 2024, they opened the area's first vegan grocery store, providing fresh, organic foods and vegan options. Additionally, they organized SÜPRFEST, South Central's first vegan festival, which drew nearly 1,000 attendees and highlighted the benefits of healthy, plant-based living.