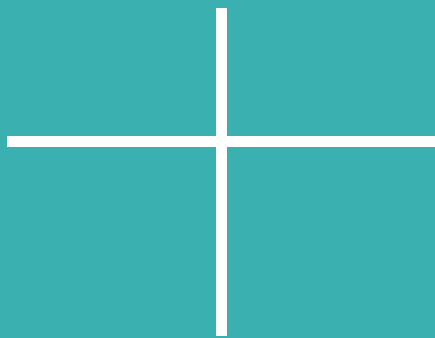




LA Food Equity Fund

2026
FINAL REPORT



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LA Food Equity Fund — 2026 Final Report

1. Executive Summary	3
2. LA Food Equity Fund Full Report	6
Background and Context	6
Q1: Program Design & Implementation	7
Q2: Measurable Impact on Food Systems & Communities	12
Q3: Feedback & Recommendations	15
Conclusions	18
3. Appendix A: Phase 2 Evaluation Tool Findings	20
CHIS Findings: Nutrition Behaviors & Food Security	20
TFAS Findings: Transportation & Food Access	22
NEMS-S Findings: Healthy Food in Neighborhood Stores	24
Supply Chain & Food Recovery Findings	25
Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) Findings: Food Affordability	27

Click any entry above to jump to that page.

THE LA FOOD EQUITY FUND

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Empowering
Communities,
Building a Resilient,
Equitable Food System*

The LA Food Equity Fund (LAFEF) awarded nearly \$20 million to 78 community-based organizations (68 capacity-building grantees and 10 food distribution grantees) to combat food and nutrition insecurity across Los Angeles County. Administered by Community Partners in partnership with the LA County Chief Sustainability Office, the Fund operationalizes the recommendations of the 2022 LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan, which called for increased affordability of and equitable access to healthy foods, greater market demand and consumption of healthy foods, and a more sustainable and resilient regional food system.

DISTRIBUTION GRANTEES' IMPACT



186,726

INDIVIDUALS SERVED
THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION



1,804

FOOD DISTRIBUTION EVENTS
OVER 2+ YEARS

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTEES' IMPACT



2,552

COMMUNITY EVENTS
& WORKSHOPS



111,688

RESIDENTS REACHED
THROUGH EVENTS



86

NEW JOBS CREATED



956

NEW PARTNERSHIPS
FORMED



1.71M

INDIVIDUALS SERVED
THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION



2,763

FOOD DISTRIBUTION EVENTS
OVER 2+ YEARS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALIGNING IMPACT WITH THE LA COUNTY FOOD EQUITY ROUNDTABLE GOALS

The LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan outlines community-driven strategies for building a more equitable food system in LA County, organized around four goals: making healthy food more affordable, expanding equitable access to it, building demand and consumption through education and engagement, and strengthening the sustainability and resilience of the region's food systems. The LA Food Equity Fund grant has made progress towards these goals.



GOAL 1 – AFFORDABILITY

2,747 residents and households received public benefits enrollment assistance, helping to lower the real cost of healthy food.

2,747
HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED



1.89M
INDIVIDUALS REACHED

GOAL 2 – ACCESS

1.89 million individuals received food and household items across 4,567 distribution events in Los Angeles County. The combined reach of the Fund's 10 food distribution grantees and 11 capacity building grantees whose funded work included food distribution.



GOAL 3 – DEMAND AND CONSUMPTION

2,552 community events and workshops (nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, farmers markets) reached 111,688 residents, building the knowledge and habits that can lead to healthy eating.

111,688
RESIDENTS REACHED



86 / 95
JOBS / POLICY EFFORTS

GOAL 4 – SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Grantees strengthened the systems behind all of this work, creating 86 new jobs and carrying out 95 advocacy or policy efforts (e.g., policy education, research, and coalition/community collaboration work).

Note: Individuals are counted once per distribution event attended. Totals reflect visits, not unique people. Approximately 86% of the combined total flows through FoodCycle's partner-agency deliveries.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



“The food provides a balanced nutritional meal each day. It also helps my mother manage her blood sugar and cholesterol.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



“I applied for CalFresh on March 18, 2025... I have a family of 5 and I am very grateful that CHIRLA was able to assist me with this application. I am no longer struggling to buy groceries thanks to my CalFresh benefits.

CALFRESH APPLICANT



Facilitators and Barriers

Grantees cited the political/immigration climate (43.2%), funding constraints (42.7%), and staffing challenges (36.9%) as the top barriers they experienced. Notably, grantees pointed to partnerships and dedicated staff more often than funding as what drove their success.

CONTINUITY OF PURPOSE

As the LA Food Equity Fund sunsets its grantmaking, we have invested in partnerships to continue advancing food equity and system transformation. These include the Los Angeles Food Policy Council and Los Angeles County Office of Food Systems, which lead research, data collection, and collaboration among community-based organizations across LA County.



2022 Roundtable Action Plan

Community and cross-sector stakeholders define shared goals and strategies for a more equitable food system.



2022-25 LA Food Equity Fund

Community Partners and the LA County Chief Sustainability Office administer nearly \$20M to 78 grantees.



Ongoing Office of Food Systems

LA County sustains grantee engagement and expands partnerships beyond the initial Fund.



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

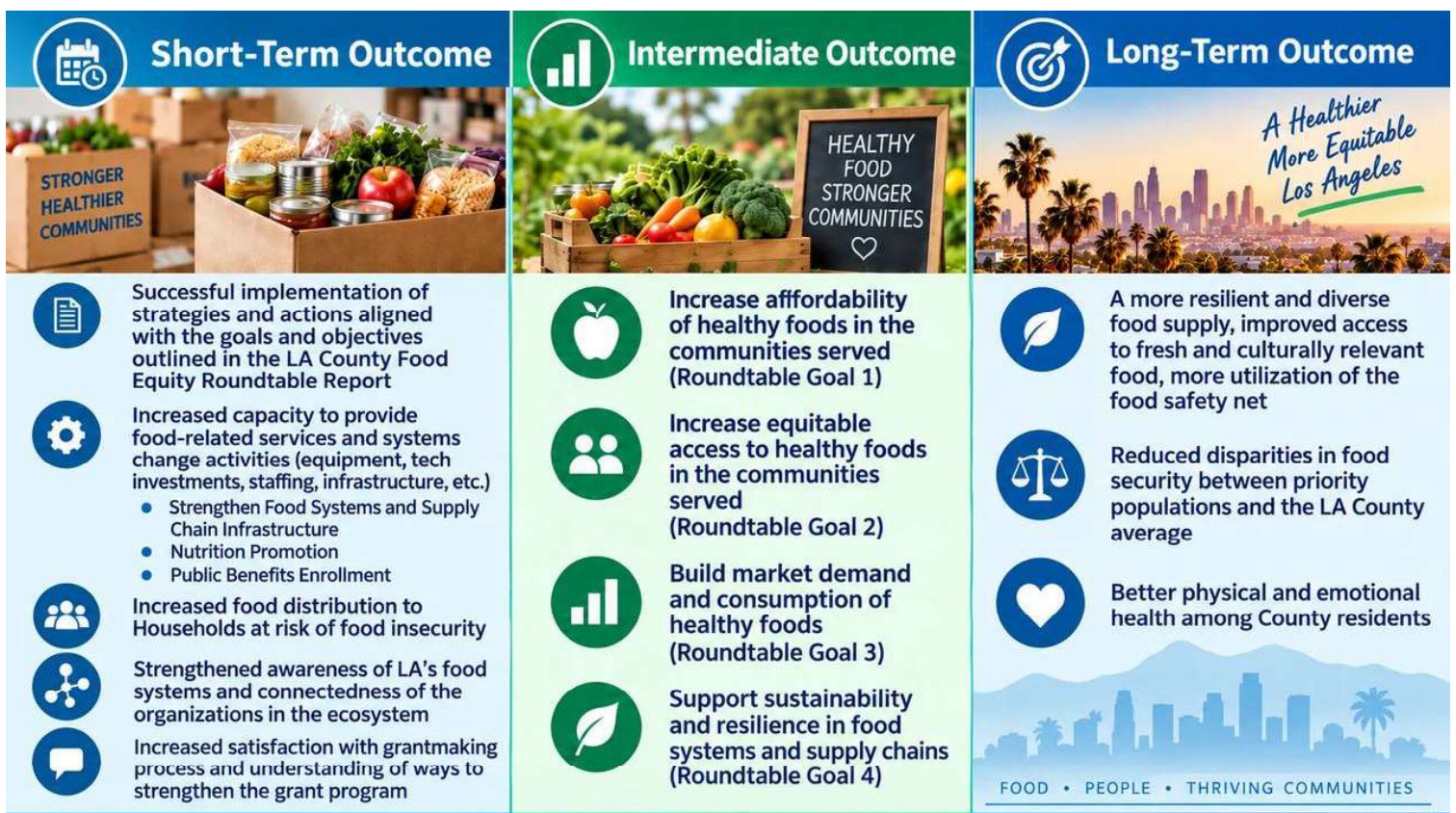


The Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office received \$20 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding and partnered with Community Partners to administer the LA Food Equity Fund. The Fund awarded grants to 78 organizations, including 68 capacity-building grantees and 10 food distribution grantees, to address food and nutrition insecurity throughout Los Angeles County. Grounded in the community-centered equity approach developed through the Los Angeles Food Equity Roundtable and its [Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan](#), the Fund supports grantees as they strengthen local food systems, promote nutrition, expand enrollment in public benefits, and improve food distribution in high-need communities. This final evaluation report highlights how effectively the grant design has supported implementation of grant funded programs, examines the measurable impact of grantee activities on local food systems, and highlights alignment with the Los Angeles County Food Equity Roundtable efforts.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

This evaluation looks at the LA Food Equity Fund from a few different angles, using a mix of data collection approaches to build a full picture of the grant's impact. The evaluation is organized around a logic model, a simple framework that maps out how the Fund's activities are expected to lead to short-term, medium-term, and long-term results. From this a set of three evaluation questions were developed: 1) How well the program was designed and carried out? 2) How satisfied grantees are and what feedback they have?, and 3) What real impact the funding has had on food security in the community?

LOGIC MODEL



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

To answer these questions, the evaluation team interviewed grantees, compared their workplans against the goals laid out in the LA Food Equity Roundtable Report, and reviewed grantee progress reports. In a later phase, grantees were also given a common set of tools to track things like food prices, access to healthy food, transportation barriers, food consumption, and supply chain issues. This not only helped grantees measure their own progress more easily but also showed the benefits of having everyone collect data in a similar way so results could be compared across the Fund.

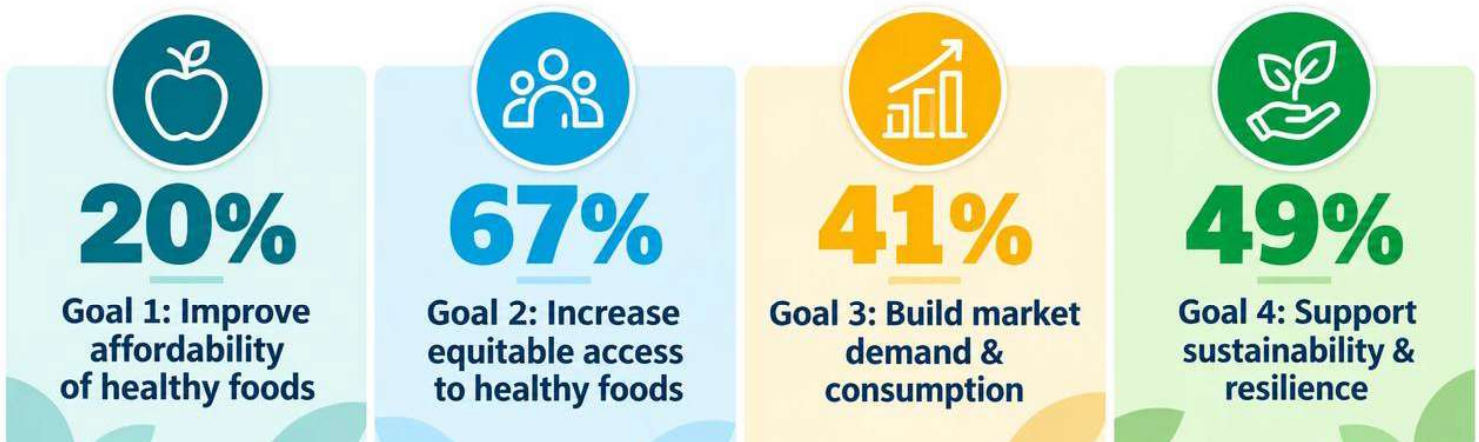
#	Evaluation Questions	Data Sources
Q1	Program Design & Implementation: How well was the LA Food Equity Fund designed and implemented?	Strategy crosswalk; Grantee interviews
Q2	Impact Assessment: What measurable impact did the funding have on food systems and communities?	Document review of progress reports; Phase 2 data collection
Q3	Feedback & Recommendations: What feedback can be provided to Community Partners and the Advisory Committee?	Grantee interviews; Document review of progress reports

Q1. HOW WELL WAS THE LA FOOD EQUITY FUND DESIGNED AND IMPLEMENTED?

To answer this first evaluation question, this section looks at how closely grantee strategies lined up with the goals of the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan, how implementation unfolded over the course of the grant period, and what factors helped or hindered that progress along the way.

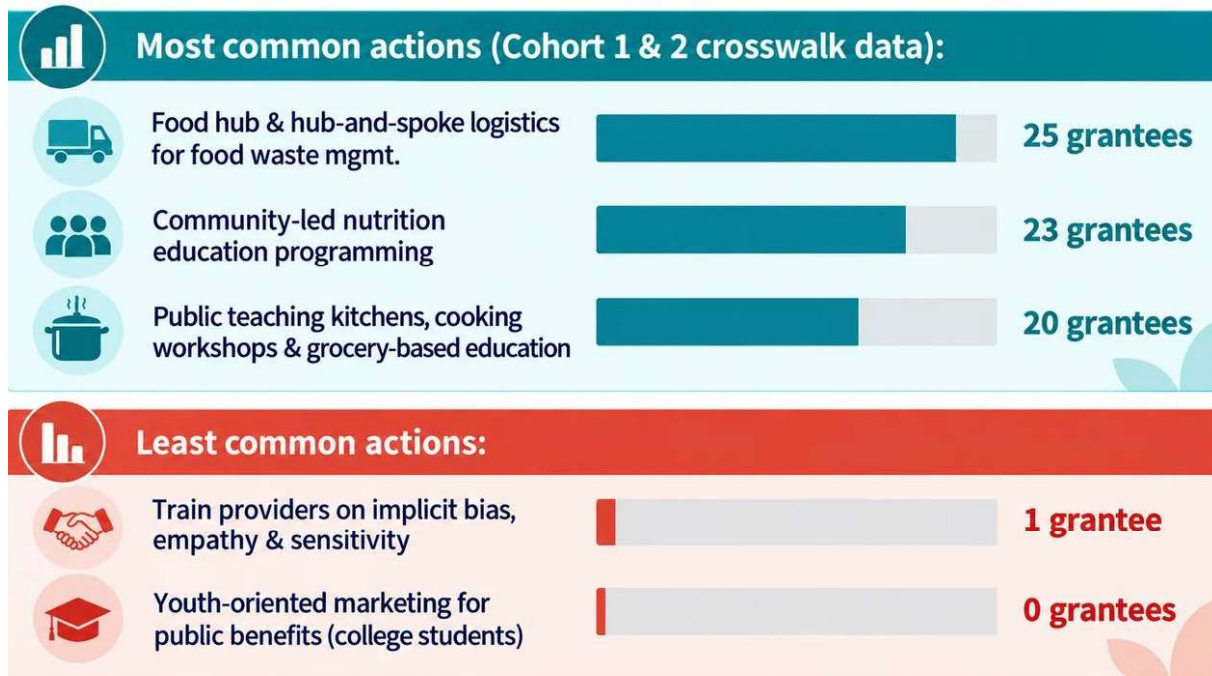
ALIGNMENT WITH ROUNDTABLE GOALS AND MOST COMMON ACTIONS

Grantee strategies showed strong alignment with the four goals of the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan. Sixty-seven percent of grantees addressed Goal 2 (increasing equitable access to healthy foods), 49% addressed Goal 4 (supporting sustainability and resilience in food systems), 41% addressed Goal 3 (building market demand and consumption), and 20% addressed Goal 1 (improving affordability of healthy foods).



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

The most common actions were food hub and hub-and-spoke logistics for food waste management (25 grantees), community-led nutrition education programming (23 grantees), and public teaching kitchens, cooking workshops, and grocery-based education (20 grantees), while the least common actions were training providers on implicit bias, empathy, and sensitivity (1 grantee) and youth-oriented marketing for public benefits such as outreach to college students (0 grantees).



GRANTEE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OVER TIME

A longitudinal view across all progress reports, including the final report, shows grantees advancing steadily from launch and setup into active implementation and, for many, into expansion or scaling of successful models. This pattern suggests that many grantees may have begun the grant period with sufficient foundational capacity to operationalize their projects quickly, while others may have encountered obstacles delaying their progress. The section below explores the common barriers mentioned by grantees.

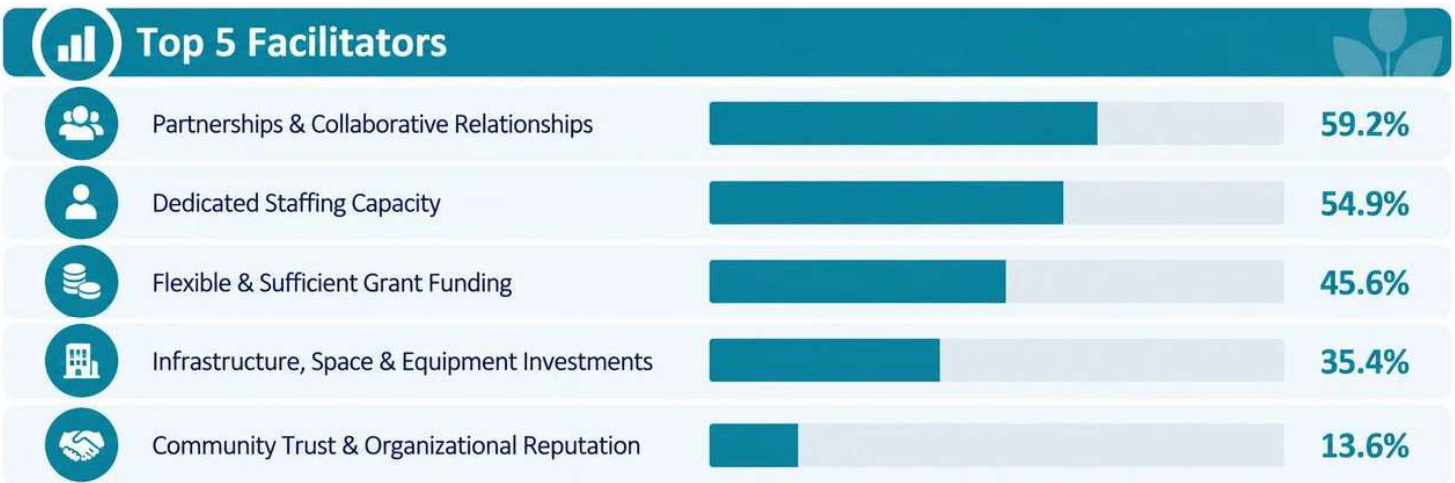
Cohort 1				
Level	6 months	12 months	18 months	24 months
Launch & Setup	9	1	0	0
Implementation & Engagement	24	17	18	17
Expansion or Scaling	2	16	16	5

Cohort 2			
Level	6 months	12 months	18 months
Launch & Setup	3	0	0
Implementation & Engagement	22	13	12
Expansion or Scaling	4	15	12

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The most cited driver of success from analysis of progress reports was partnerships and collaborative relationships (59.2%), followed by dedicated staffing capacity (54.9%) and flexible, sufficient grant funding (45.6%).



"The most valuable resource in implementing our project thus far has been our strong relationships with our team of partners." – Grantee narrative response

Similarly, collaboration emerged as the most common theme across grantee progress reports and interviews. Many grantees cited specific partnerships as key drivers of project success; 13 grantees cited collaboration with community partners and other organizations as a major contributor to their success more broadly; and 9 grantees described how the grant fostered new partnerships and collaborative models that enhanced resource sharing, community connections, and long-term systemic change in food access.



Narrative responses submitted across all progress reports were coded to identify common barriers and facilitators to implementation. The most frequently cited barrier was the political and immigration climate, reported in 43.2% of responses, followed by funding and financial constraints (42.7%) and staffing capacity and workforce challenges (36.9%).

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

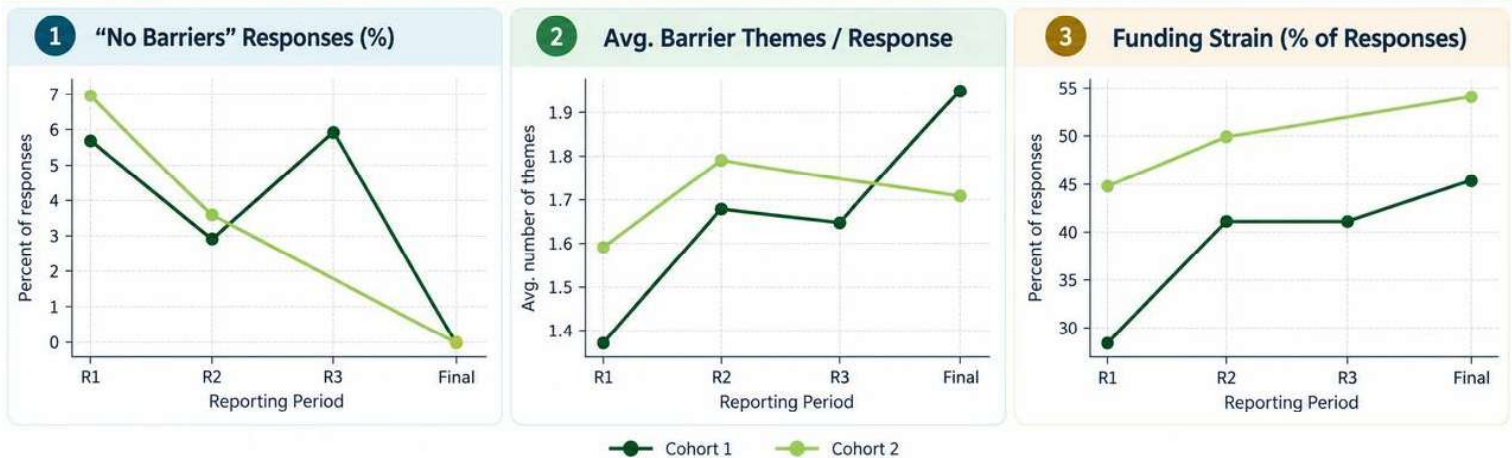
“The cancellation of USDA funding and the pervasive presence of immigration enforcement continues to pose challenges for our team, partners, and wider LA community. There’s been decreases in personnel capacity and in attendance at schools and farmers markets.” – Cohort 2 · Final Report



“The indiscriminate ICE detentions in the community led to a climate of fear whereby many individuals were afraid to leave their homes.” – Grantee narrative response

Comparing barrier themes across each reporting period (from each cohort’s first report through its final report) reveals three notable patterns. First, fewer grantees reported “no barriers” over time by the final report, suggesting that new barriers surfaced as grantees progressed in their program implementation. Second, barriers compounded over time: the average number of distinct barriers named per grantee rose from roughly 1.4 in early reports to nearly 2.0 by the final report, meaning grantees were more often naming multiple simultaneous challenges rather than a single issue. Third, funding strain climbed in every single reporting period, rising from 28.6% of responses in Cohort 1’s first report to 54.2% in Cohort 2’s final report.

Trends in Grantee-Reported Barriers Across Reporting Periods

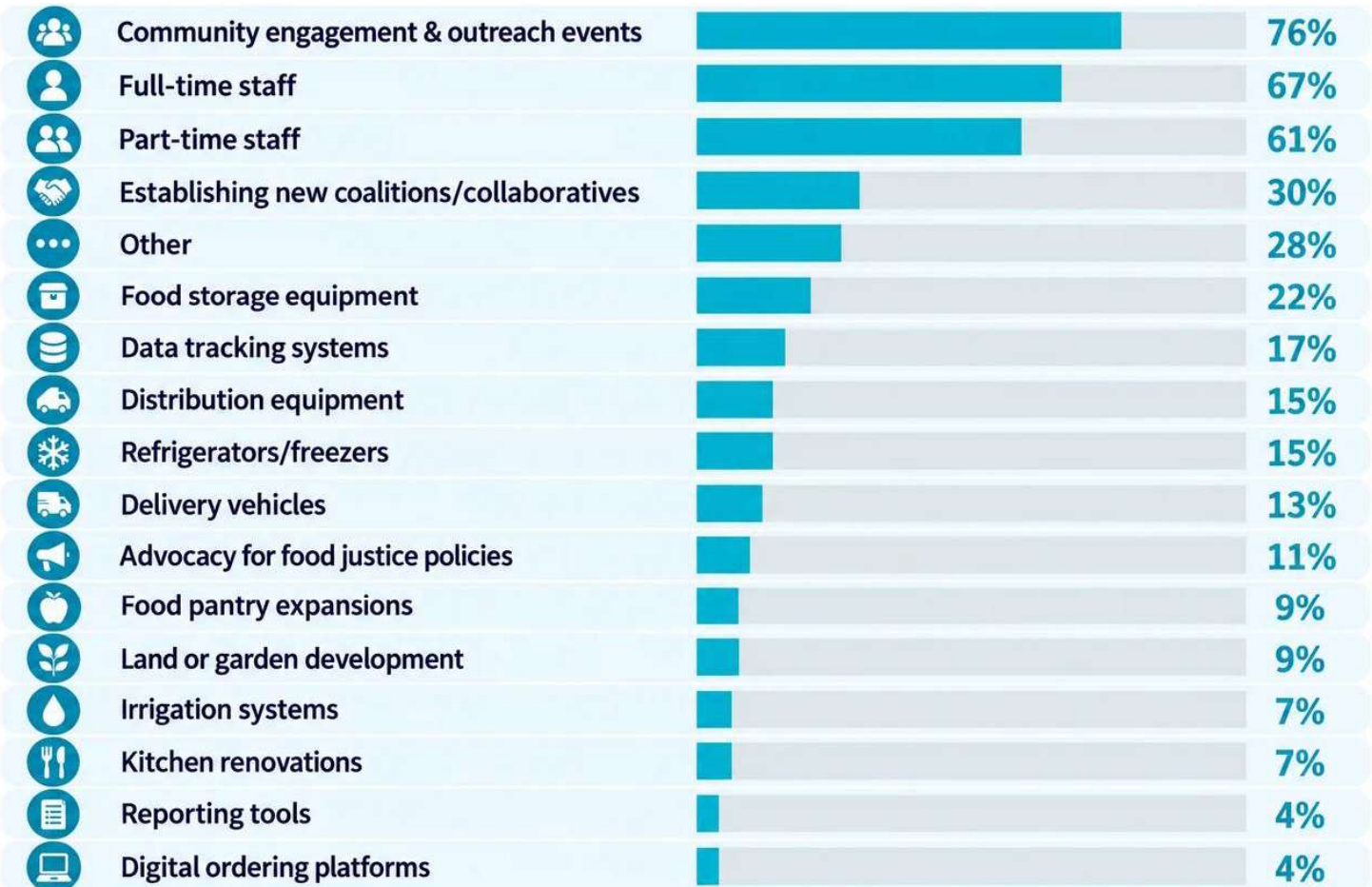


1. “No Barriers” Responses Vanish: 5.7% to 0.0%. By the final report, 0% of responses in either cohort reported no barriers, every grantee had something substantive to report by the end of the grant.
2. Barriers Compound: 1.37 to 1.95. One response now spans four barrier themes at once, versus mostly single-theme answers (e.g., funding-only delays) in Report 1.
3. Funding Strain Keeps Climbing: 28.6% to 54.2%. Funding constraints were the only theme to rise every single period.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

CAPACITY-BUILDING INVESTMENTS

Grantees most frequently invested grant funds in community engagement and outreach events (76% of grantees), full-time staff (67%), and part-time staff (61%). Smaller but meaningful shares of grantees invested in establishing new coalitions or collaboratives (30%), food storage equipment (22%), data tracking systems (17%), distribution equipment and refrigeration (15% each), and delivery vehicles (13%). A smaller percentage of grantees invested in advocacy for food justice policies (11%), food pantry and garden expansions, irrigation, and commercial kitchen renovations (7-9% each).



GRANT-FUNDED FOOD DISTRIBUTION REACH

The 10 distribution grantees and 11 capacity building grantees who also conducted food distribution reported zip-code-level distribution data spanning February 2024 through May 2026. Across 5,224 distribution events (deliveries, pantries, and markets), grantees served an estimated 1.89 million individuals.



Note: Individuals are counted once per distribution event attended. Totals reflect visits, not unique people. Approximately 86% of the combined total flows through FoodCycle's partner-agency deliveries.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

Q2. WHAT MEASURABLE IMPACT DID THE FUNDING HAVE ON FOOD SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITIES?

This section addresses the second guiding evaluation question by presenting the Fund's cumulative, measurable impact on food systems and communities across Los Angeles County.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS

Cumulatively, grant efforts through the LA Food Equity Fund have produced 2,552 community events or workshops that reached 111,688 community residents, created 86 new jobs (55.6 part-time and 30 full-time) and supported numerous existing positions, formed 956 new partnerships, provided public benefits enrollment assistance to 2,747 residents/households, and generated 95 advocacy or policy efforts. (Note that no LA Food Equity Funds were used for lobbying.)



2,552

community events
or workshops held



86

new partnerships
(e.g., pantries, etc. built new)



956

new grant programs
funded



111,688

community members
reached through events
or workshops



2,747

meals and household
essentials provided to
individuals or families



95

nutrition/food
security classes
or pantry efforts

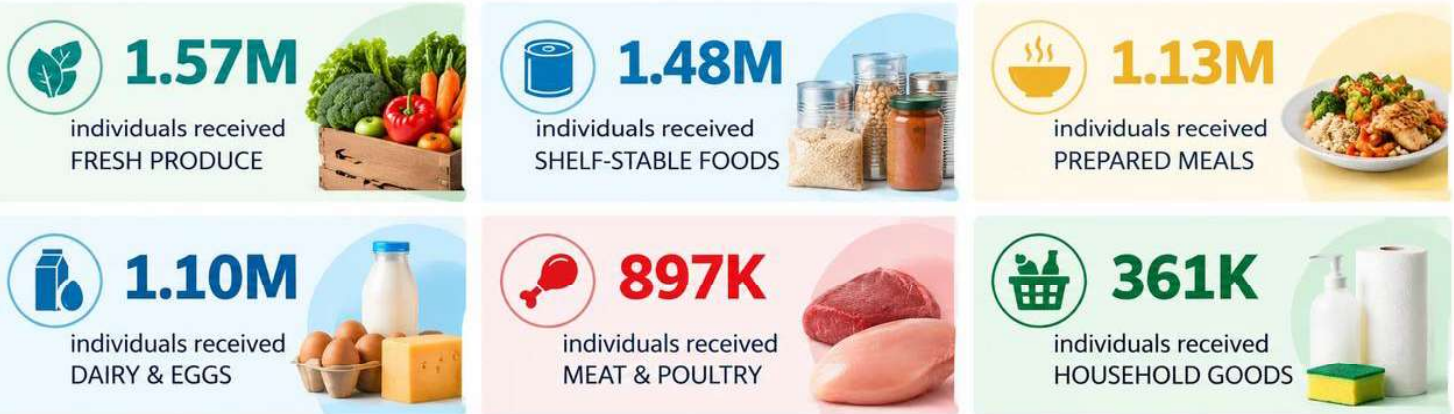
Of the new positions that were described, the most common roles were program and community coordination. The most common events/workshops offered were farmers markets and nutrition education. One grantee's school-based program alone delivered 84 nutrition and cooking classes across nine schools in a single reporting period. Of the partnerships described, the most common were peer nonprofit collaboration, such as sharing food warehouses, formalizing referral pipelines through MOUs, and developing training and sharing with partners. Lastly, advocacy activity tended to include coalition and working group participation, including CalFresh expansion advocacy that community members carried to Sacramento. Grantees' advocacy ranged from uplifting the importance of CalFresh and the need for zoning changes for community farms to providing regular feedback on CalFresh systemic issues to County departments and serving on regional oversight commissions.



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS

A total of 1.89 million individuals were served by the food distribution efforts, with 1.57 million individuals receiving fresh produce, 1.48 million receiving shelf-stable foods, 1.13 million receiving prepared meals, 1.10 million receiving dairy and eggs, 897,000 receiving meat and poultry, and 361,000 receiving household goods. Beyond the sheer scale of reach, the strong showing for fresh produce and dairy alongside shelf-stable staples suggests grantees are prioritizing nutritionally balanced, culturally relevant food access rather than just caloric volume, a distinction that speaks directly to the Fund's food equity goals of improving both access to and quality of the food reaching at-risk households.



ALIGNING IMPACT WITH THE LA COUNTY FOOD EQUITY ROUNDTABLE'S FOUR GOALS

Grantees made real progress on all four goals in the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan:



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

IMPACT: GRANTEE AND COMMUNITY VOICES

The evaluation team coded open-ended community stories submitted in response to the prompt "Please share any community stories that highlight the impact of your food work." Three themes emerged consistently across these stories: food assistance is easing financial pressure beyond groceries alone, food distribution spaces are becoming sources of connection and dignity, and nutrition education is contributing to tangible improvements in participants' health.



Food Security & Financial Relief

CalFresh enrollment, produce distribution, and pantry access are freeing up money for rent, medication, and utilities, not just food.

"I applied for CalFresh on March 18, 2025... I have a family of 5 and I am very grateful that CHIRLA was able to assist me with this application. I am no longer struggling to buy groceries thanks to my CalFresh benefits."



Dignity, Belonging & Connection

Food spaces are becoming gathering places that reduce isolation and build trust, especially for seniors and families facing crisis.

"She began attending twice a month, finding not just groceries, but community. 'You come here after a rough day, and everyone is kind. You don't feel guilt or shame. You just feel supported.'"



Improved Health Through Nutrition Education

Cooking and nutrition classes are translating into measurable behavior change, including lower glucose, new foods tried, and healthier routines.

"The food provides a balanced nutritional meal each day. It also helps my mother manage her blood sugar and cholesterol."



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

PHASE 2 EVALUATION: LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Phase 2 of the evaluation tasked every grantee with implementing one of five evidence-based assessment tools to measure the impact of their grant work, creating a shared, community-wide data picture: the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), the Transportation & Food Access Survey (TFAS), the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NEMS-S), the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), and Supply Chain & Food Recovery Data. Full results from these tools can be found in the appendix.

Tool	What It Measures	Early Finding
 CHIS: California Health Interview Survey	Tracks fruit & vegetable consumption among vulnerable populations vs. local & state benchmarks	 High healthy food consumption despite persistent barriers
 TFAS: Transportation & Food Access Survey	Measures transportation-related barriers to obtaining healthy food	 Long travel times, cost & safety concerns limit access
 NEMS-S: Nutrition Environment Measures Survey	Assesses availability, quality & affordability of healthy foods across stores	 Substantial differences across neighborhoods
 TFP: Thrifty Food Plan	Evaluates affordability of a nutritious diet relative to local food costs	 Households relying on SNAP may face difficulty affording a USDA-aligned food basket
 Supply Chain & Food Recovery Data	Documents grantee roles in recovering, redistributing & increasing food access	 Grantees play an essential role preventing food waste & expanding access

Q3. WHAT FEEDBACK CAN BE PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

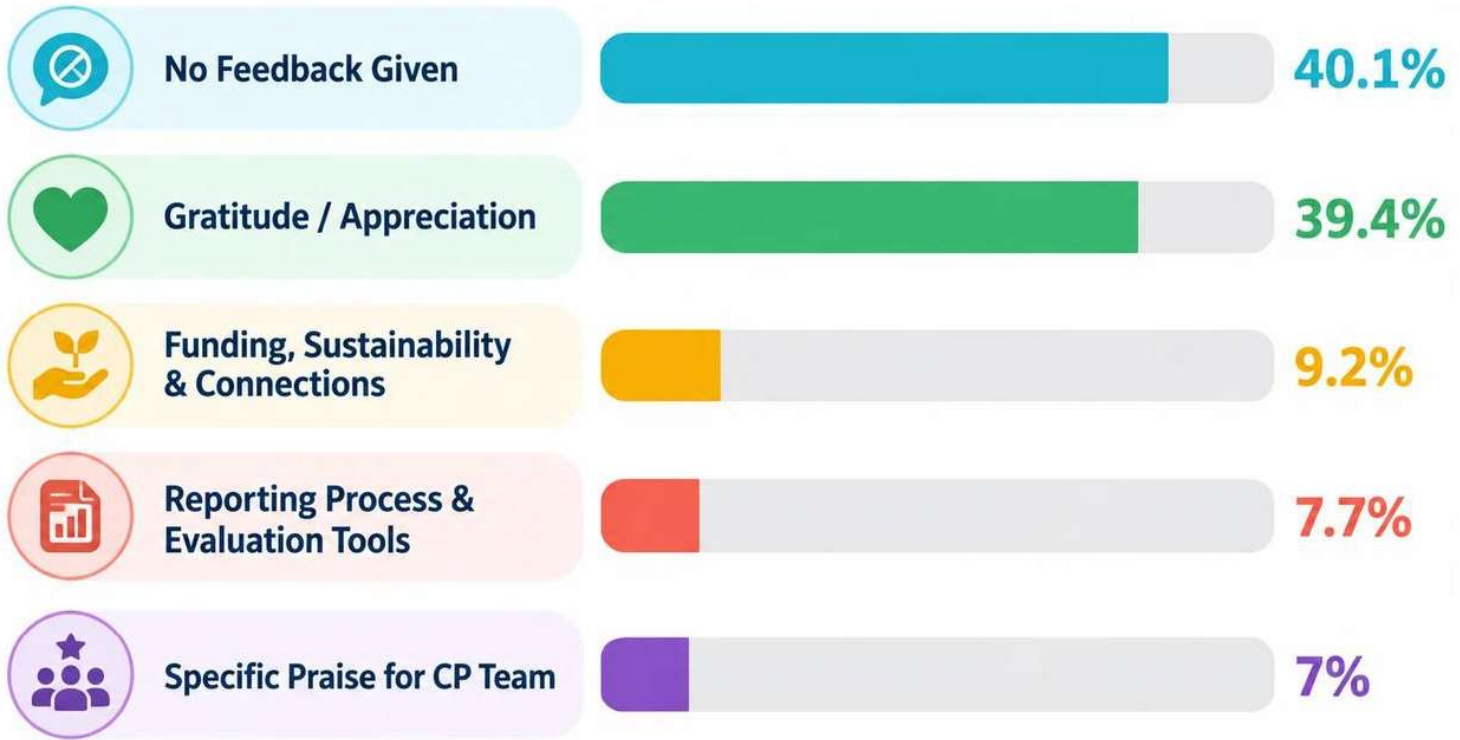
This section addresses the third evaluation question by examining the feedback grantees offered on the Community Partners team and the broader grant program, drawing on both progress report responses and grantee interviews to identify opportunities for strengthening the Fund's administration going forward.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS FEEDBACK: TOP THEMES

When asked directly for feedback on the Community Partners team in progress reports, grantees most often had no additional feedback to offer (40.1%) or expressed gratitude and appreciation for the team's flexibility and support (39.4%). A smaller share raised questions about funding, sustainability, and future connections (9.2%); concerns that new reporting and evaluation tools duplicated existing data collection and added administrative burden (7.7%); and specific praise for the Community Partners team's communication and support (7%).



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT



“Thank you for your flexibility and support!” – Grantee narrative response



GRANTEE VOICES: AREAS FOR STRENGTHENING

Beyond direct feedback on the Community Partners team, interviews surfaced a broader set of recommendations for how the Fund's administration could evolve to better support grantees going forward. These suggestions do not reflect dissatisfaction with the current program, but a genuine investment in its long-term success, with grantees offering constructive ideas for how the Fund could deepen its impact in future rounds.



Sustainability & Future Funding

Grantees request warm connections to new foundation or corporate funders to ensure program continuity.





Peer Learning & Convenings

A platform for all partners to share experiences, successes, and lessons learned would be highly beneficial.





Streamline Data Collection

New measurement tools are seen as duplicating existing data collection and adding administrative burden.





Simplify Reporting

Grantees ask for consolidation of repetitive report sections to reduce administrative burden.





Technical Assistance & Connections

Requests for collaboration opportunities and connections to other food distribution partners in the community.



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT

CONCLUSIONS

Across all three guiding evaluation questions, the LA Food Equity Fund demonstrates strong, measurable progress toward a more equitable and resilient food system in Los Angeles County. These findings show that the LA Food Equity Fund is not only meeting immediate community needs, including food, benefits access, and nutrition education, but is also building the workforce, partnerships, and systems infrastructure needed to sustain a more equitable food system in Los Angeles County over the long term.



Question

1

How well was the LA Food Equity Fund designed and implemented?

- All grantees reached the Implementation or Expansion phase by the end of the grant period.
- Grantee efforts aligned closely with the goals and actions of the LA Food Equity Roundtable, furthering its intended outcomes.



Question

2

What measurable impact did the funding have on food systems and communities?

- The Fund put people to work and built lasting relationships: 86 new jobs, 956 new partnerships, and 95 advocacy or policy pushes across the county.
- Grantees ran 2,552 community events and workshops that reached 111,688 residents and helped 2,747 households sign up for CalFresh and other benefits
- On the distribution side, grantees put healthy food directly into 1.89 million people's hands across 4,567 events (food pantries, deliveries, mobile markets)



Question

3

What feedback can be provided to Community Partners and the Advisory Committee?

- Grantees expressed strong overall satisfaction with the grant administration.
- Grantees are asking for clearer sustainability pathways, reduced administrative and reporting burden, and more peer-learning opportunities.
- Grantees built meaningful partnerships throughout the grant period that have helped strengthen the broader LA County food system.

The LA Food Equity Fund is one chapter in a longer arc of work to strengthen food equity across Los Angeles County. It builds directly on the LA Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan, in which community and cross-sector stakeholders defined shared goals and strategies for a more equitable food system. As the LA Food Equity Fund sunsets its grantmaking, Community Partners has invested in partnerships to continue advancing food equity and system transformation. These include the Los Angeles Food Policy Council and Los Angeles County Office of Food Systems, which lead research, data collection, and collaboration among community-based organizations across LA County.



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND REPORT



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: PHASE 2 EVALUATION TOOL FINDINGS

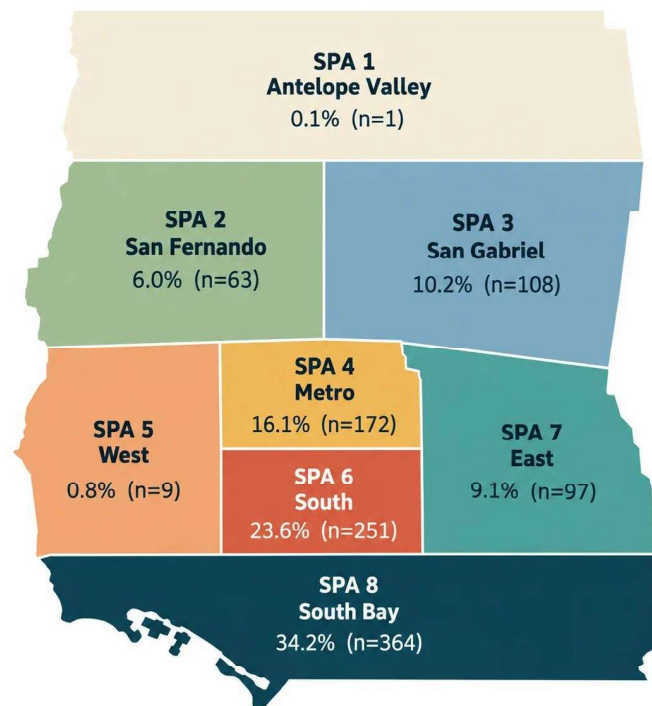
In Phase 1, learnings were primarily pulled from grant documents and interviews conducted in the first year of the grant, giving us a picture of the grant work and initial impacts. In Phase 2, grantees were asked to pick up one of five shared, evidence-based tools (CHIS, TFAS, NEMS-S, TFP, or Supply Chain & Food Recovery Data) to begin to expand our understanding of their impact. It also provided shared metrics to examine impact across the organization using the same data language tied directly to the four goals in the LA County Food Equity Roundtable Action Plan. This is significant because standardized tools make it possible to see patterns that no individual organization could surface on its own. This shared approach can also provide funders with information to point future investment toward where it's needed most, and track real progress over time in ways that individual grantee stories can't do on their own.

We recognize that adopting a new data collection tool midway through a grant period demands real time and effort from every participating organization, on top of already-demanding program work. The findings below are a direct product of that effort. They represent one of the first countywide, cross-organizational looks at food access, nutrition behavior, and food recovery to come out of the LA Food Equity Fund, and they will continue to inform the county's food equity work well beyond this grant cycle.

CHIS FINDINGS: NUTRITION BEHAVIORS & FOOD SECURITY

The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) tool was administered by 23 grantee organizations, yielding 1,064 completed surveys across LA County; two grantees also ran pre/post comparisons. Survey questions, adapted from CHIS, measured fruit and vegetable consumption, soda and sugar-sweetened beverage intake, fast food consumption, and food insecurity, benchmarked against CHIS 2022–2023 pooled adult data from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Responses were concentrated in Service Planning Area (SPA) 8 (34%) and SPA 6 (24%).

CHIS Surveys by Service Planning Area (SPA)

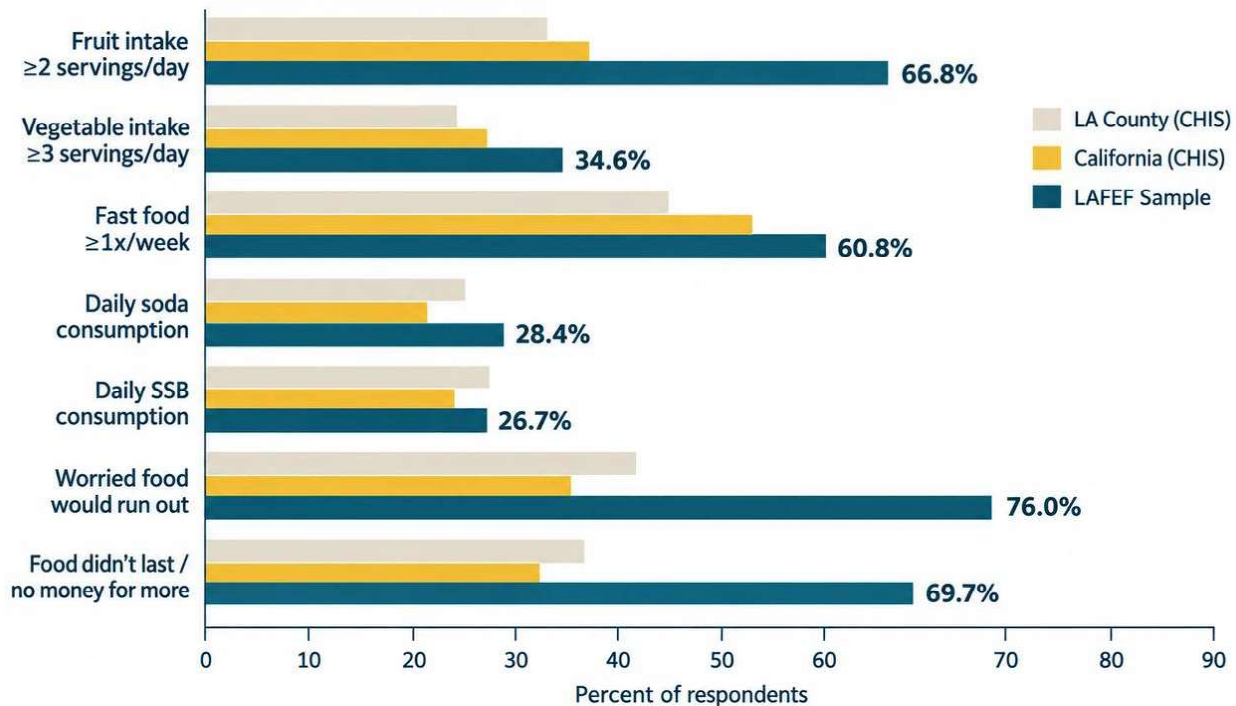


Schematic layout of LA County Service Planning Areas — relative position only, not to scale.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

Compared to state and county benchmarks, the LAFEF sample skewed more Latino/Hispanic, more Spanish-speaking (57% primarily speak Spanish at home), more female (74%), and lower-income (roughly 24% of households earned below \$20,000 per year), a more vulnerable population overall.

CHIS Key Findings: LAFEF Sample vs. Benchmarks



LAFEF sample compared to California and LA County adult populations (CHIS 2022–2023)

Relative to state and county benchmarks, LAFEF respondents reported higher fruit intake (66.8% ate 2+ servings/day vs. roughly 33–34%) and higher vegetable intake (34.6% ate 3+ servings/day vs. roughly 24–25%), alongside higher fast food consumption (60.8% at least weekly vs. roughly 49–52%) and higher daily soda and sugar-sweetened beverage intake. Food insecurity was substantially more common in the LAFEF sample: 76.0% worried food would run out, compared to roughly 32–37% in the benchmark populations, and 69.7% reported food didn't last and they lacked money to buy more, compared to roughly 28–34% in the benchmarks.

Two grantees conducted pre/post surveys with program participants. Health Consortium of Great SGV (N=20) expanded its CalAIM Community Information Exchange network with area hospitals and health centers; between 25% and 35% of its participants showed improvement across the measured nutrition and food security indicators. El Nido Family Center (N=31) delivered nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, and farmers market engagement in partnership with CSUN's Marilyn Magaram Center; 35% to 45% of its participants improved on most indicators, and 71% showed improvement on food lasting through the month, the strongest single result across both grantees.

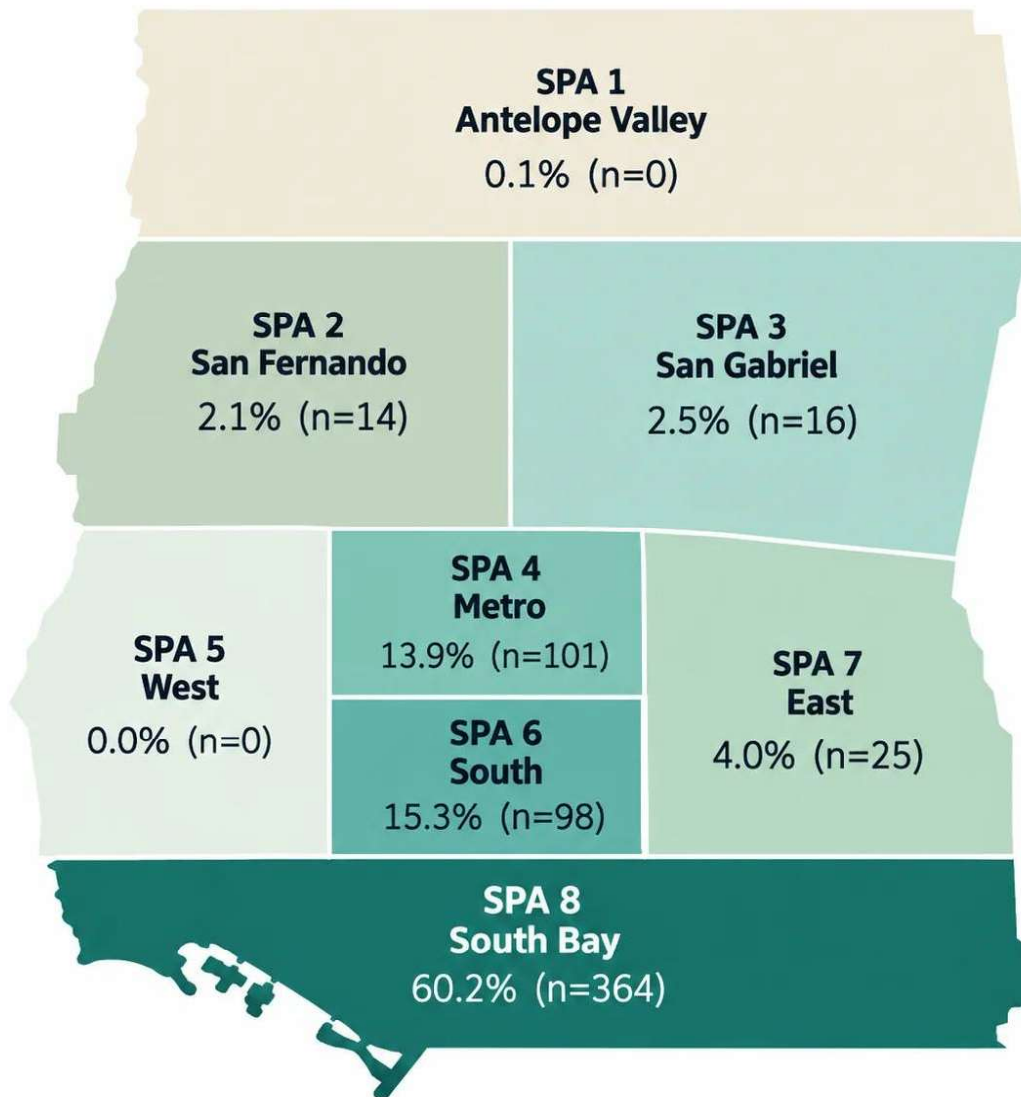
Takeaway: LAFEF reached a more vulnerable population than CHIS benchmarks, and that population reported higher food insecurity, fast food, and soda consumption alongside higher fruit and vegetable intake. Grantee pre/post data show measurable, if partial, improvement in nutrition behaviors and food insecurity following program participation, with El Nido's nutrition-education model showing the strongest gains.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

TFAS FINDINGS: TRANSPORTATION & FOOD ACCESS

The Transportation & Food Access Survey (TFAS) was administered by 10 grantee organizations, yielding 638 completed surveys, with one grantee running a pre/post comparison. TFAS evaluates the availability and affordability of transportation to purchase healthy food, especially in underserved areas, and is benchmarked against the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, CDC Healthy Food Environment Indicators, and the USDA Food Access Atlas. Responses were concentrated heavily in SPA 8 (60%).

TFAS Surveys by Service Planning Area (SPA)

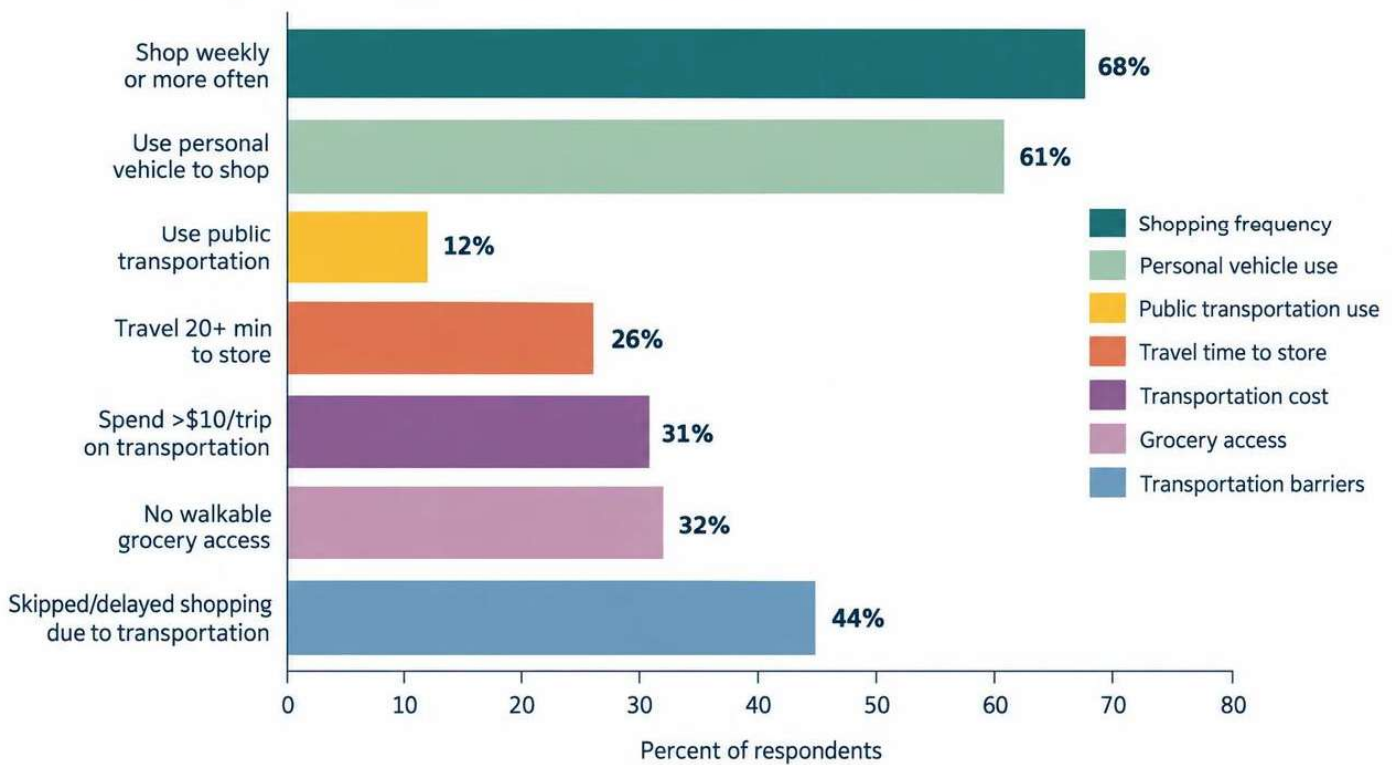


Schematic layout of LA County Service Planning Areas — relative position only, not to scale.

The TFAS sample had higher proportions of Latino/Hispanic and Black/African American respondents, lower incomes (roughly half of households earned \$30,000 or less annually), and greater linguistic diversity (68% primarily Spanish-speaking at home) than benchmark populations.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

TFAS Key Transportation & Access Metrics



Share of LAFEF respondents reporting each transportation or access pattern

Sixty-eight percent of respondents shop weekly or more often, and despite lower reliance on personal vehicles (61%, versus higher benchmark rates) and higher public transit use (12%), respondents reported real barriers: 26% travel 20 or more minutes to a store, 31% spend more than \$10 per trip on transportation, 32% have no walkable grocery access, and 44% have skipped or delayed a shopping trip because of transportation. Asked what would help most, 49% of respondents said they would use a grocery delivery or drop-off service and 45% said they would use a mobile food market.

Antelope Valley Partners for Health (N=15) ran a pre/post comparison using food-handling and ServSafe training to strengthen pantry operations, food safety practices, and staff/participant capacity. Results were mixed: most participants reported no change on most measures, but 20% improved on reduced costs, reduced barriers, and preferred or healthy location access, while 47% reported that barriers to transportation actually increased over the course of the program.

Takeaway: LAFEF's TFAS respondents face greater transportation-related barriers to healthy food access than regional and national benchmarks, including longer travel times, higher costs, lower walkable access, and more frequent shopping disruptions, despite lower reliance on personal vehicles and higher public transit use. There is strong stated demand for delivery and mobile market supports. Pre/post data from one grantee suggest transportation-focused programming has so far produced limited measurable change, with cost and walkability showing the most improvement.

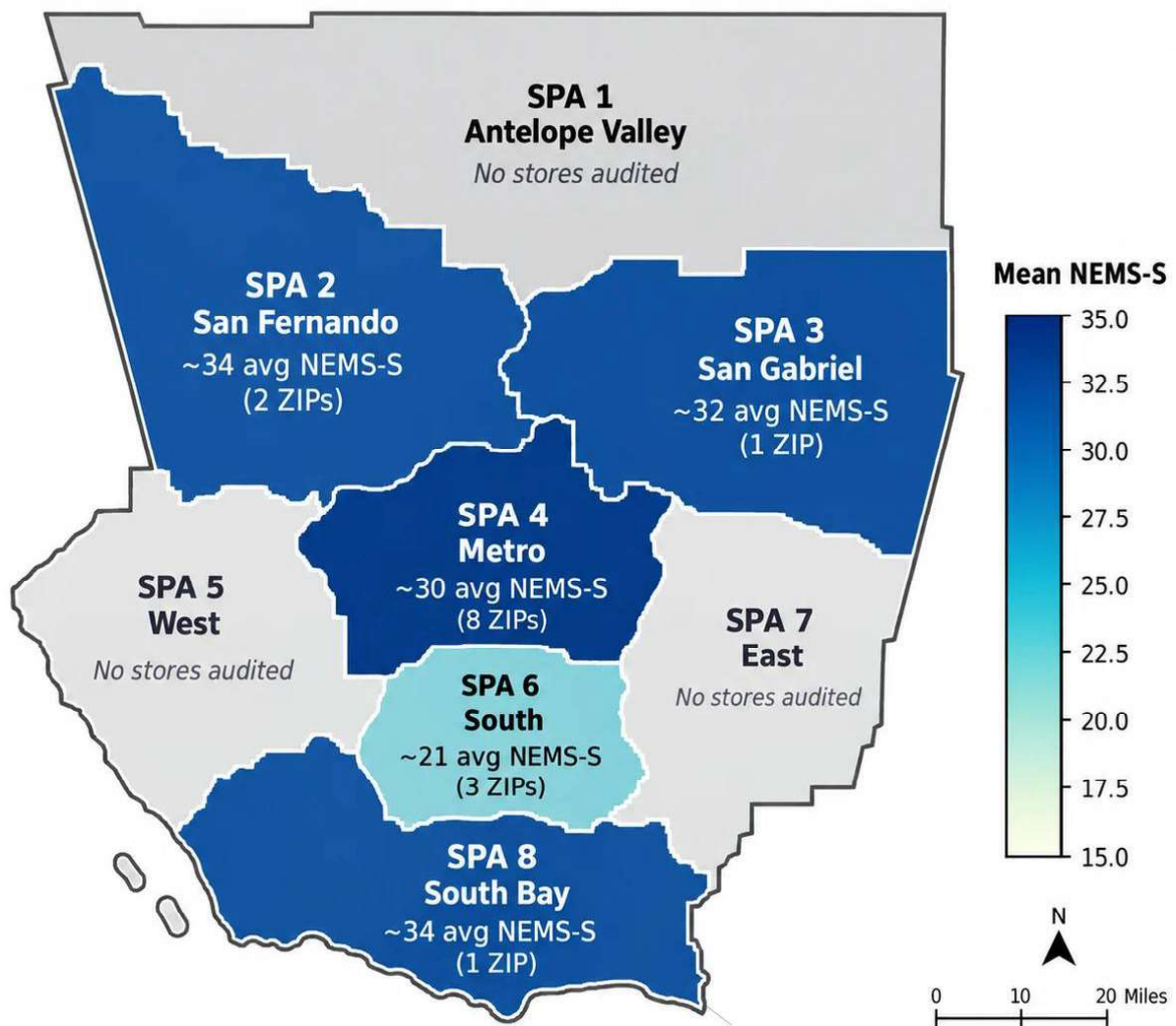
LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

NEMS-S FINDINGS: HEALTHY FOOD IN NEIGHBORHOOD STORES

Between August 2025 and April 2026, eight community organizations used the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey in Stores (NEMS-S), a validated observational audit tool (Glanz et al., 2007) to complete 32 store visits at 21 different stores across 16 ZIP codes, covering 5 of LA County's 8 Service Planning Areas. Trained community surveyors rated each store on the availability of healthy options, whether healthy options cost more than regular versions of the same foods, and the freshness of fruits and vegetables. The stores visited included 17 grocery stores, 2 corner stores, 1 farmers market, and 1 large retail store (Target); these findings describe the stores that were visited and are not representative of every store in LA County.

Overall, the stores visited performed near the established national standard for grocery environments: about 2 in 3 stores (65.6%) carried a full selection of fresh produce, the average healthy food score was 22.13 (close to the grocery-store validation benchmark of 22.58), and 3 in 4 stores (75.0%) priced healthy foods the same or less than regular versions. But these overall numbers mask meaningful differences by store type and geography. Grocery stores scored far higher than corner stores (23.6 vs. 9.5), not because corner stores charge more for healthy food, but because they simply carry far fewer healthy items and less fresh produce.

NEMS-S Store Audit Scores by Service Planning Area (SPA)



*Schematic layout of LA County Service Planning Areas — relative position only, not to scale.
SPA-level values are approximate, visually estimated from the source ZIP-level NEMS-S map (n = 21 stores across 16 ZIPs in 5 SPAs).*

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

Regional coverage was uneven. Metro Los Angeles (SPA 4) stood out, with more than 8 in 10 stores carrying a full produce selection, while South Los Angeles (SPA 6), represented by just one small neighborhood market, had the lowest scores in the entire project, echoing long-standing concerns about food access in that community. No stores were visited in the Antelope Valley, West LA, or East LA, and two additional regions were represented by only one store each. Looking item by item, fresh fruit was harder to find than vegetables: about 71% of stores carried a good fruit selection compared to about 90% for vegetables, with items like cantaloupe, honeydew, and pears most often missing, especially in smaller stores.

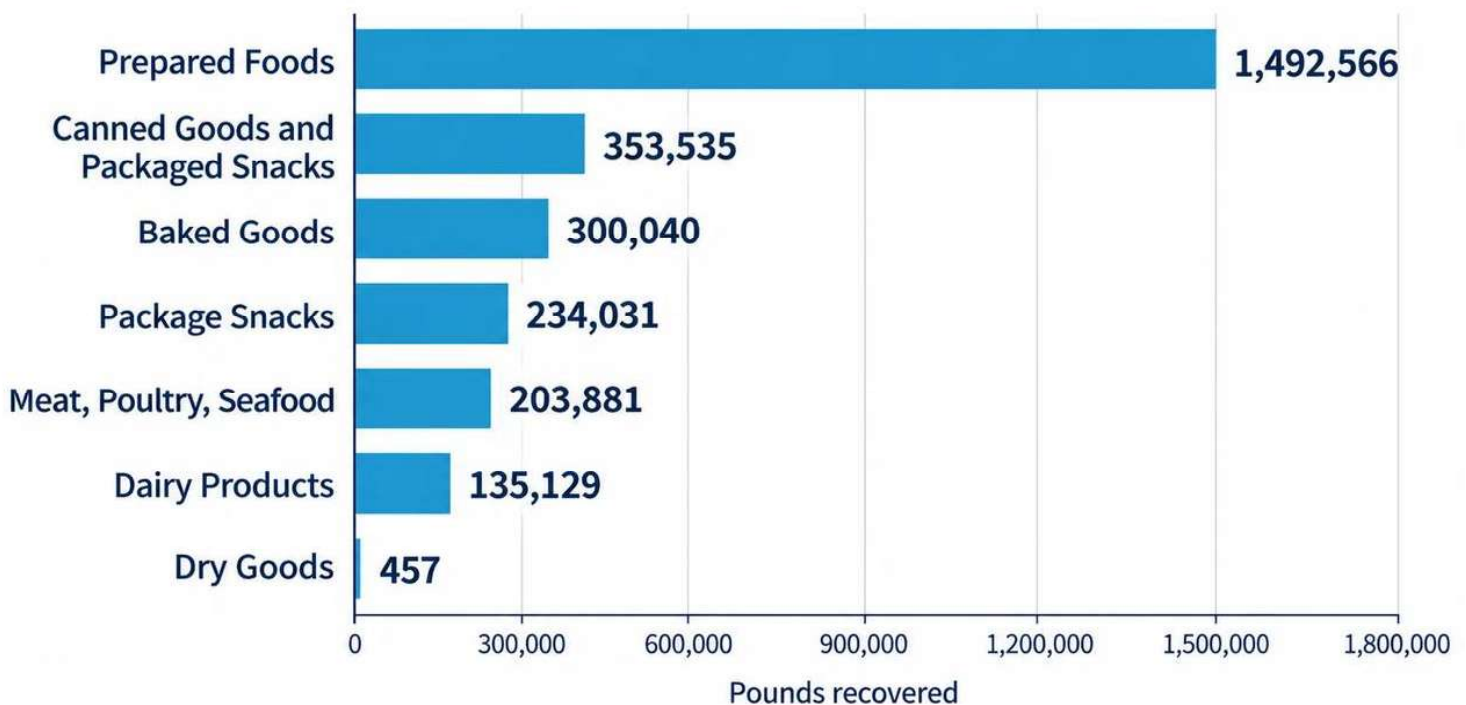
Takeaway: Most stores visited offer a good variety of healthy food at fair prices; the problem is what is - and isn't - on the shelf, not the price tag. Corner stores carry far fewer healthy items and less fresh produce than grocery stores at similar prices, so working with store owners on stocking and freshness is likely to help more than price-focused interventions. Just as importantly, three regions of LA County had no store visits at all and two more had only one, so a fuller picture of food access will require expanding these community-led store assessments countywide.

SUPPLY CHAIN & FOOD RECOVERY FINDINGS

Four grantees participated in food recovery work, collecting and redistributing surplus and donated food to communities facing food insecurity across LA County. Together, they recovered 103,528,019 pounds of food, 97% of which was fresh produce (slightly more than 100 million pounds), underscoring the need for refrigerated storage capacity, which this grant helped many grantees obtain. Within the remaining categories, prepared foods were the next most common item recovered (1,492,566 pounds.), followed by canned goods, baked goods, packaged snacks, meat/poultry/seafood, and dairy products.

Pounds Recovered by Category

Excluding fresh produce



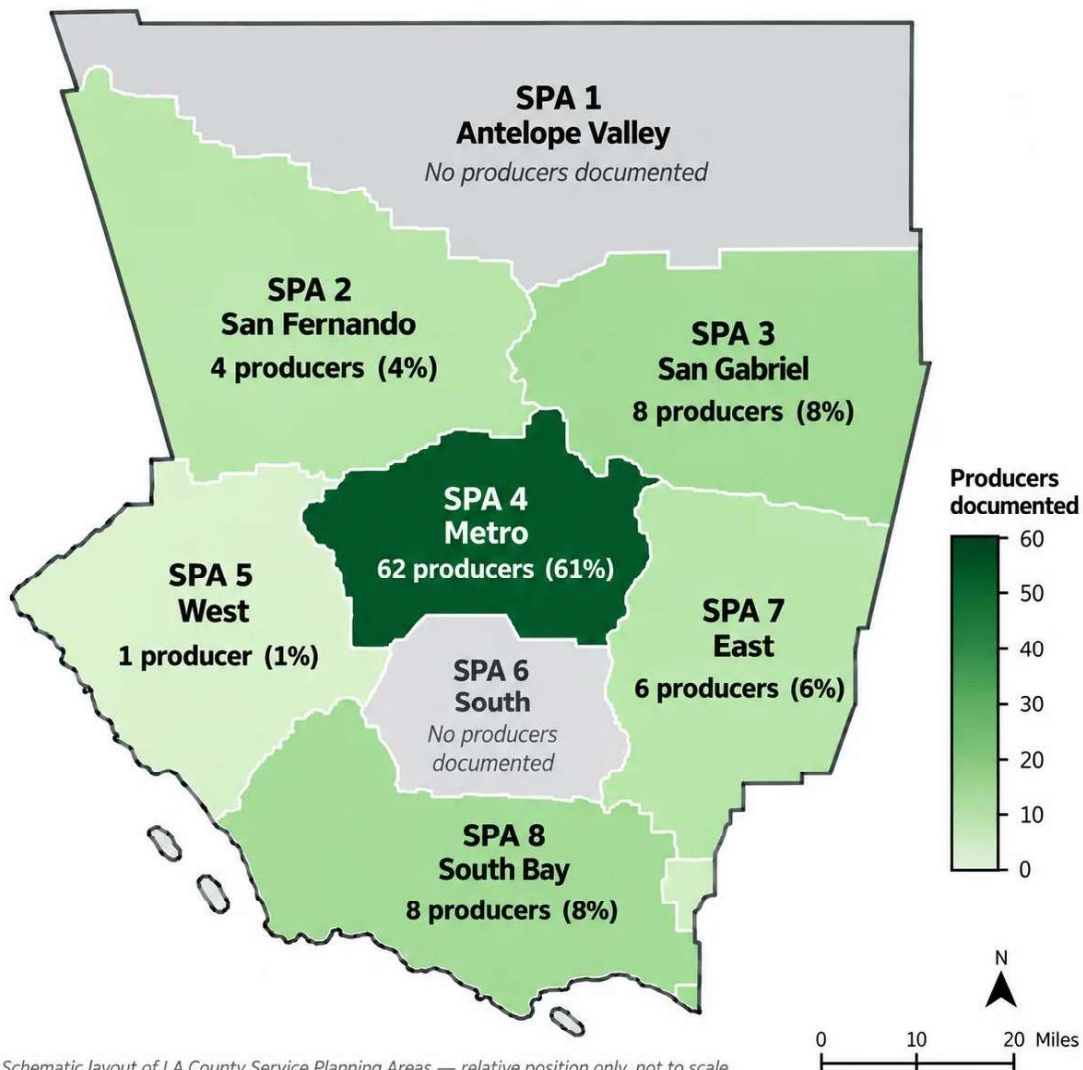
Pounds recovered by category, excluding fresh produce

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

Separately, five grantees participated in documenting food producers. For purposes of this report, food producers are defined broadly to include any site or organization engaged in growing, aggregating, distributing, marketing, or facilitating community access to local food across LA County. This encompasses direct growers such as farms, school gardens, community gardens, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) sites, as well as food hubs (organizations that serve as aggregation and distribution intermediaries), farmers markets, agritourism locations, and community-based organizations supporting local food systems. Grantees determined themselves how to categorize each food producer.

In total, 102 producers were documented, 38% of which (39 producers) were noted as having started in 2025. These producers were concentrated in Metro LA (62 in SPA 4), with far fewer documented elsewhere (13 unknown or outside the county, eight each in SPA 3 and SPA 8, six in SPA 7, four in SPA 2, and one in SPA 5). Grantees were able to document the acreages of 65 producers and the pounds produced each year for 70 producers. A quarter of documented producers are community gardens, though food hubs dominate by scale: food hubs account for 84% of the 29,036.55 acres documented and 54% of the 242,643,521 pounds per year documented.

Documented Producers by Service Planning Area (SPA)



LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

Takeaway: Grantees played an essential role recovering more than 103 million pounds of food and documenting 102 food producers across the county, with fresh produce and food hubs dominating both categories. Notable data gaps remain, however: acreage is known for only 64% of documented producers and annual poundage for only 69%, suggesting an opportunity to strengthen this data collection in future phases.

THRIFTY FOOD PLAN (TFP) FINDINGS: FOOD AFFORDABILITY

The USDA Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) assessment evaluated whether households relying on SNAP benefits could realistically purchase a USDA-aligned healthy food basket across LA County. Nine grantee organizations assessed 28 retail food outlets, including 20 grocery stores, 7 ethnic markets, and 1 farmers market, across 7 of the County's 8 Service Planning Areas. Affordability was measured using a Food Affordability Index (FAI): the weekly cost of the TFP basket divided by the weekly SNAP benefit (\$230.80), multiplied by 100. These findings should be read as illustrative of the retailers assessed rather than representative of every store countywide.

FAI Score	Interpretation
<85	Highly affordable
85–100	Affordable
101–115	Borderline affordability
>115	Unaffordable

Across surveyed retailers, healthy food costs frequently exceeded SNAP purchasing power: the average USDA-aligned food basket cost \$312.82, roughly 36% higher than the weekly SNAP benefit, the average FAI was 135.5, and 57% of stores exceeded affordability thresholds.

SPA	Stores Surveyed	Avg Basket Cost	Avg FAI	Interpretation
SPA 1 – Antelope Valley	6	\$297.41	128.9	Unaffordable
SPA 2 – San Fernando Valley	2	\$369.41	160.1	Unaffordable
SPA 3 – San Gabriel Valley	4	\$175.42	76.0	Highly affordable
SPA 4 – Metro LA	4	\$376.95	163.3	Unaffordable
SPA 5 – West Los Angeles	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
SPA 6 – South LA	3	\$407.14	176.4	Unaffordable
SPA 7 – East LA	1	\$438.83	190.1	Unaffordable
SPA 8 – South Bay	8	\$326.50	141.5	Unaffordable

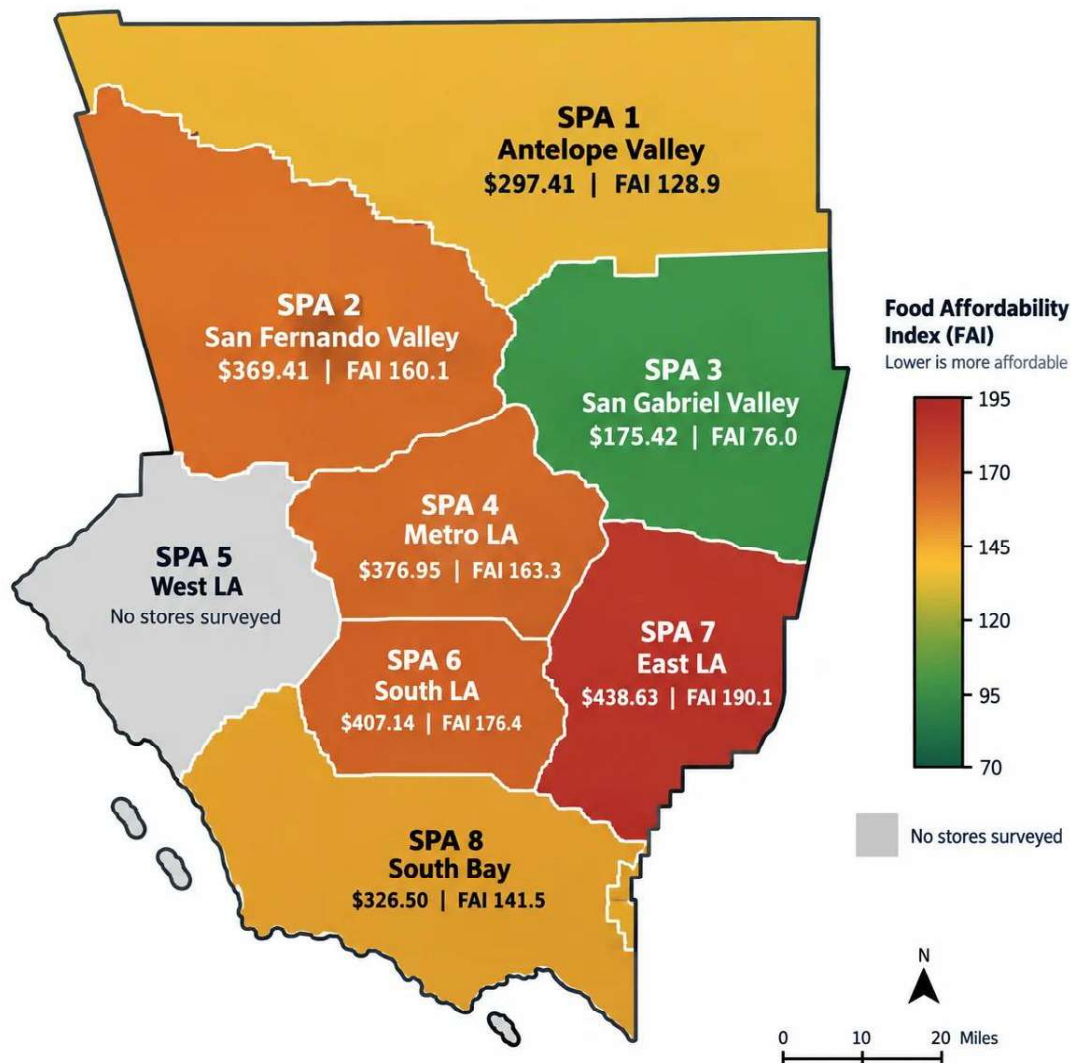
Average basket cost and Food Affordability Index by Service Planning Area (SPA)

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

Affordability varied considerably by community. Of the seven SPAs with surveyed stores, San Gabriel Valley was the only one classified as highly affordable, with an average basket cost of \$175.42 and an average FAI of 76.0. Every other surveyed SPA was classified as unaffordable, with average basket costs ranging from \$297.41 in Antelope Valley to \$438.63 in East LA and average FAI scores ranging from 128.9 to 190.1. East LA had the highest average basket cost and FAI, followed by South LA, indicating the greatest affordability challenges among the communities surveyed. No stores were surveyed in West Los Angeles.

TFP Food Affordability Index (FAI) by Service Planning Area

Average USDA-aligned basket cost and FAI by SPA (schematic layout, not survey-grade boundaries)



Product selection and store choice also drove major cost differences. Protein was the largest driver of basket cost variation: lower-cost baskets relied more heavily on staple foods and lower-cost proteins such as eggs, while premium proteins, prepared foods, and specialty substitutions substantially increased costs. Locations within the same grocery chain also showed notable pricing differences, suggesting that local pricing and product selection influence affordability as much as which retailer a household shops at.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX



Most Affordable Stores

Smart & Final (South Bay)	\$142.77 FAI 61.9
Food4Less (San Gabriel Valley)	\$158.95 FAI 68.9
Walmart (South Bay)	\$164.16 FAI 71.1
El Superior (Metro LA)	\$165.65 FAI 71.8
Winco (Antelope Valley)	\$174.44 FAI 75.6



Least Affordable Stores

Vons (South Bay)	\$774.49 FAI 335.6
Food4Less (South LA)	\$545.90 FAI 236.5
Northgate (Antelope Valley)	\$526.46 FAI 228.2
Ralphs (Metro LA)	\$500.31 FAI 216.8

Notably, the same store name appears on both lists (Food4Less), and both South Bay and Antelope Valley have entries among the most and least affordable stores, reinforcing that individual retailer and product choices matter as much as neighborhood.

Takeaway: Healthy food affordability remains a significant food equity challenge across LA County: even though healthy foods are often available, as NEMS-S found, the cost of a full, USDA-aligned food basket regularly exceeds what SNAP benefits can cover, and affordability varies substantially by community, retailer, and the specific products a household selects. Improving food equity will likely require pairing access-focused strategies with efforts that address the underlying cost of a healthy basket, particularly around protein, and with continued attention to the communities, like East LA and South LA, where both access and affordability challenges compound.

LA FOOD EQUITY FUND APPENDIX

CONCLUSION

Across the four tools, the findings converge on a common conclusion: availability and access, rather than cost, represent the primary barrier to healthy food consumption among LAFEF communities. NEMS-S data indicate price parity between healthy and standard food options across store types, with the meaningful variation instead occurring in product availability and freshness, particularly at smaller retail outlets. TFAS findings are consistent with this pattern, showing that respondents rely less on personal vehicles than regional benchmarks yet report longer travel times, higher transportation costs, and more frequent disruptions to shopping routines. Supply chain data further reinforce this access-oriented narrative, revealing that food recovery infrastructure is concentrated among a small number of grantees and within a single service planning area. Collectively, these findings support the Roundtable's second goal, of improving food access, as a continued priority area.

CHIS data provide preliminary evidence of behavior change associated with program participation. While the LAFEF sample reported higher rates of food insecurity than state and county benchmarks, pre/post results, most notably from El Nido Family Center's nutrition education programming, indicate measurable improvement in several target behaviors. This suggests that interventions combining food access with skill-building components may be more effective at producing near-term, measurable outcomes than access-only models, an important consideration for future program design aligned with the Roundtable's habit-formation goal. Supply chain data additionally point to meaningful progress toward system resilience, though the concentration and documentation of that infrastructure remain uneven across the county.

These findings highlight some recommendations for future approaches. First, the limited number of grantees conducting pre/post assessments constrains causal interpretation of program impact; broader adoption of pre/post designs, even in abbreviated form, would strengthen the evidence base considerably. Additionally, triangulating NEMS-S, TFAS, and supply chain data geographically, and incorporating TFP findings once available, would allow for identification of compounding-risk neighborhoods facing multiple, overlapping access barriers simultaneously, an analysis that no single tool can support in isolation.