The Good Food Toolkit
A Food Sustainability and Justice Evaluation and Planning Guide for Faith Communities

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in association with
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Acknowledgements

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- GreenFaith for allowing us to adapt many of the thoughtful words and creative ideas for this toolkit from their guide, *Repairing Eden: Sustainable, Healthy Food Opportunities for Religious Institutions*. We hope that we can return the favor one day. (To receive a free copy of *Repairing Eden*, which contains resources and tips on sustainable food practices for faith-based groups, see greenfaith.org/resource-center/stewardship/food-and-faith).

- The Good Food Toolkit is also adapted from Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s *Congregational Health Index*, which was developed through a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We are grateful to EMO for allowing us to adapt the format and process they developed for the (CHI) to our use. For those of you who are also interested in creating healthier, more active faith communities, the CHI (www.faithandwellness.org/CHI/congregational-health-index.html) is a great place to begin.

- Hazon for graciously sharing some ideas and language from their Food Guide (www.hazon.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Hazon-Food-Guide-April-20121.pdf). An important compilation of resources on sustainability and justice, it helped make this toolkit that much more comprehensive. The *Hazon Food Guide* was a collaborative effort of Nigel Savage, Judith Belasco, Anna Hanau and many dedicated Hazon interns. If you are interested in learning more about Hazon, please contact them at info@hazon.org

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**A Note about the Language**

Every attempt was made to be inclusive of all faith traditions in the wording used throughout the toolkit. However, there are instances when language specific to one or more faith communities was utilized. Also, we use the term “congregation” to mean “faith community” periodically, but realize that not every faith community refers to itself as a “congregation.” These decisions were made in order to simplify use of the toolkit for the greatest number of people.
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A Word from Rev. Fletcher Harper of GreenFaith

At its heart, religion is about preserving and protecting life - physically and spiritually.

But before there can be religion there needs to be food, because food sustains our bodies and makes a spiritual life possible. Without food there is no life, and without food there is no religion.

Food comes first.

The world’s great religious traditions have long recognized this, and have used food to symbolize and convey the reality of the spirit.

Religions from around the globe pray and celebrate with ritual meals and sanctified foods. The thread that links these meals is the recognition that food sustains, delights, and reveals our dependence on the Earth and its self-giving bounty. Whether through Christianity’s Holy Communion, Judaism’s Passover Seder, the Muslim Iftar meal, or the sharing of sweets during Hinduism’s Diwali, the world’s religions all recognize food as an occasion to offer thanks and to celebrate. No matter the religion or culture, food sustains us physically and helps us to appreciate and find meaning in life.

In recent years in the U.S., however, food has taken on an ambivalent significance, part joyful, part ominous.

On the one hand, many people enjoy healthy, delicious foods from local farms, and have access to foods from far-off lands - a blessing in many ways.

But more commonly, supermarket shelves are filled with packaged food which lacks real nutritional value. Not only are the flavors in these foods many steps removed from the good tastes nature offers, but their many unhealthy ingredients lead to a range of food-related diseases. It is the most vulnerable communities—those in “food deserts” that cannot afford fresh, healthy foods—that suffer the most.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, childhood obesity in the U.S. has more than tripled since 1980. Over 33% of U.S. adults are also clinically obese, and the same number have high blood pressure. Nearly 28 million children and adults suffer from diabetes, and these diet-related diseases disproportionately affect those who are most vulnerable. All of these rates are far higher in communities of color than in wealthier and Caucasian communities. Over one billion people in the world suffer from diseases related to overeating and a poor diet - not hunger.¹

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These statistics are stunning. They signify a food-related breakdown of massive proportions, our bodies serving as billboards broadcasting our unsustainable relationship with the planet. Clearly, our food system is out of balance.

This guide addresses these vital issues. It aims to mobilize religious institutions to use the many opportunities they have to teach and model healthier, more sustainable and just food practices. It aims to protect life - the lives of people, the life of the planet.

It includes a range of resources and ideas which, if applied, will make religious communities into leaders that promote healthy, “good” food.

From a religious perspective, the question is clear. Does the food we serve represent the values we profess - values related to the protection of human health and the Earth?

It is important that we make food choices aligned with our calling.

This guide offers us the ability to do exactly that. Let’s get started!

Rev. Fletcher Harper
Executive Director
GreenFaith
Introduction

Spirituality, sustainability, and justice. These are all related to each other, and to food. Our faiths teach us to be good stewards of our world, to be thankful for the gifts of creation, to consider how our actions will affect those who come after us, and to treat others with respect and kindness. The way we eat - how our food is produced and shared - influences how well we are able to live mindfully. It can also help connect us to God and to each other. When we choose to eat “good food,” we nourish not only our physical selves, but our spiritual selves as well. And when our rituals and celebrations include food that is wholesome, produced in a just way, and humanely raised, they are more meaningful and representative of the values we hold.

What is “good food” then? It is food that was raised in such a way as to respect the earth and the people who grew and harvested it. It is food that is healthy, nourishing, culturally appropriate, affordable, and accessible to everyone. It is meat, dairy, and eggs which come from animals that were raised humanely. And it is the type of food which helps us develop a more meaningful relationship with God.

For thousands of years, food cultivation and harvesting has offered a spiritual experience because to connect with the land is to connect with God. With fewer people now living off of the land, people have necessarily looked elsewhere for spiritual connections, and the spiritual significance of our daily meals - blessings aside - has often been forgotten. In addition, some modern methods of industrial farming have further eroded our relationship with the earth and with our neighbors. For example, the use of toxic pesticides and herbicides in agriculture has polluted water, air, and soil, harming ourselves and other living creatures. While cheap, processed foods with little nutritional value are commonplace, fruits and vegetables can be expensive and out of reach for many among us. Farmers, farmworkers, and those who process and serve our food frequently labor long hours under harsh and dangerous conditions for little pay and often lack adequate health insurance and health care. Finally, the vast majority of animals raised for meat live in environments where they are unable to move around, breathe fresh air, see sunlight, and/or express their natural behaviors.

People of faith must ask: Are the foods we eat and share within our religious institutions in line with the values we hold? Can we better care for our neighbors through our food choices? Are our meals “just” meals? And when we eat together, whether during the holidays or at an informal gathering, can we give thanks for and celebrate food if it was not produced in a way that respects the earth?

As a society, what we eat matters. What we share with others matters. And faith communities have an important role to play in helping to move toward a food system that embraces sustainability and justice, and can help make a better world. Whether a congregation studies these issues in its community, switches to Fair Trade coffee, creates an organic vegetable garden, or hosts a farm stand, an endless number of opportunities exist to serve delicious food that represents more ethical eating.
The Good Food Toolkit (GFT) consists of an evaluation tool, planning guide, and resources to help your faith community assess what you are already doing to promote “good food” and identify areas where you can incorporate more sustainable and just choices into your daily practices. It provides information about food issues, a glossary of terms and food labels, and action ideas for making changes. Conducting the evaluation will also help you establish a “Good Food Team” at your congregation who can take leadership of this process, and provide a vehicle for ascertaining your priority areas and what types of resources you may need in order to offer more ethical foods. Finally, the Toolkit includes Success Stories from Baltimore to highlight congregations that have already started down the path to putting their beliefs into action.

As with any journey, one begins by taking small steps, and while these steps are not always easy, no matter how big they are, they can have a significant impact. Not only will you be helping to create a more just, sustainable, and humane world, but the “good food” that you share together and with others will be more nourishing in every sense of the word.
GETTING STARTED
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. What is the Good Food Toolkit?

The Good Food Toolkit (GFT) contains an evaluation tool, planning guide, and resources that will enable you to:

1) Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your congregation’s policies and practices for promoting food sustainability and justice through an assessment process that covers four main categories: “Eating Well,” “Donating Well,” “Teaching Well,” and “Acting Well.”
2) Develop an action plan for improving your congregation’s food sustainability and justice policies and practices, and;
3) Involve your faith community through implementing this plan.

There are three activities included in the GFT:

1) An evaluation tool to be completed by a Good Food Team from your congregation.
2) Planning questions to help you identify actions your congregation can take to improve in areas that received lower scores.
3) An implementation/action plan. Your congregation can then create an ongoing system for monitoring progress and reviewing recommendations for change.

These activities involve your congregation’s clergy/ministers/rabbis/imams, leaders, and all members in taking a broader look at the ways you eat and share food, and how these relate to earth stewardship, social and economic justice for farmers and farmworkers, animal welfare, and healthy food availability for others in your community.

II. What Resources Are Needed?

The GFT is a free resource that can be found on the Baltimore Food & Faith Project’s website (www.jhsph.edu/clf/projects/BFF/). It can be completed in just a few hours with your Good Food team, which you will assemble before starting the assessment. Many of the improvements you will want to make after completing the evaluation can be done with existing staff and volunteers and with few or no new resources. For priority actions that require new resources, your assessment results can help provide information needed to build community support for change and help you develop strong funding requests (The Baltimore Food & Faith Project can also help you in identifying possible funding sources). Some congregations will want to address only one section or goal at a time, and some might already have funding or ministries in place to address more issues. Your Action Plan will be unique and the resources required to implement it will vary, too. Included at the end of the Toolkit are resources and links for where you can purchase sustainable foods and find more information about implementing your action steps.
III. What if We Don’t Know the Answer or Understand a Term?

It may not always be possible to know the answer to a question regarding where a particular food came from, or how it was produced. This is one important problem with our food system – the labeling of our foods does not always contain the information we need to make informed, sustainable, just purchasing decisions. Do the best you can. Ask questions of your grocer, caterer, baker, etc. The more people indicate their desire for these types of foods, the easier it will become to locate them. Local farmers who sell at farmers’ markets will usually share with their customers whether and why they use pesticides if asked, and may welcome you to visit their farms to see for yourself how their crops are grown, their workers treated, and their animals treated. Even if you’re unable to locate the source of something, having a discussion about this difficulty is a worthwhile endeavor and will help shed some light on changes needing to be made to our food system.

If you are unfamiliar with a term used in the evaluation, we have also included definitions and labels you can trust in the Glossary of Terms and Labels (Appendix C).

IV. What If a Question Seems Irrelevant for our Faith Community?

Some questions in the evaluation might not be relevant for every congregation or faith tradition. If this is the case, you may choose to not answer the question - just make sure that you adjust the total number of points possible to calculate the overall Section Score (i.e., subtract 3 points from the Overall Section Score for each question deemed irrelevant).

In many cases, questions that might appear as irrelevant can be re-interpreted to become relevant, or it may be something you want to work towards in the future. For example, a question might ask whether produce from a garden is donated to those in need, and your congregation might not have a garden. However, if congregants donate fruits and vegetables from their personal gardens, you can modify the question to fit your circumstances. If meals are cooked off-site, it may be more difficult to obtain information about the source of the food and to influence those practices - but it can be done. Planning Question 3 will ask you to consider feasibility. Trying to influence practices - like preparing and cooking meals at home that are brought to the congregation - might not be a high priority because it may be low on feasibility.
V. What the Good Food Toolkit Can’t Do.

The evaluation tool is not meant to assess the healthfulness of the food served in your congregation, with the exception of food donations to those who are in need. Another survey, the Congregational Health Index (CHI), mentioned in the Acknowledgements, can easily serve as a supplement to the GFT. The CHI is an excellent tool to help faith communities examine the nutritional value of their food, and how well their physical environments encourage exercise among congregants. For more information about the CHI, please visit www.faithandwellness.org.

Also, the GFT does not delve deeply into the issue of kitchen energy usage, although freezing and refrigerating food and cooking it can use considerable amounts of electricity and other fuels. For those interested in learning more about where energy use can be reduced in your congregation (not only in the kitchen, but for all facilities and buildings), Maryland & Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light (www.gwipl.org) conducts energy audits of congregations and helps them identify where energy-saving measures can be instituted.

Finally, we have briefly discussed the issue of food waste and how to minimize it, but GreenFaith offers a much more comprehensive guide to reducing all forms of waste within a religious institution. For more information and to access their do-it-yourself Waste Audit, visit greenfaith.org/resource-center/stewardship/waste-reduction-and-recycling.

VI. How Can We Contact the Baltimore Food & Faith Project?

If you have a question that cannot be answered by the resources provided in the toolkit, need any further information, would like technical assistance in implementing changes within your faith community, or would like to know more about the Baltimore Food & Faith Project, please get in touch!

Additionally, please let us know as you make changes within your faith community! We would love to hear about your experience using the GFT and the accomplishments that your community hopefully achieved as a result. We want this toolkit to be a resource for all congregations to use to learn from each other as they go about implementing more sustainable and just food practices.

Contact information:
Baltimore Food & Faith Project
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Bloomberg School of Public Health
615 North Wolfe Street, W7010
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 502-7578
goodfood@jhsph.edu
AT A GLANCE: STEPS FOR COMPLETING THE EVALUATION

1. Review all the sections and planning questions so you will have a good understanding of the whole process.

2. Talk to your clergy or spiritual leader and your congregation’s governing body about this evaluation and get their support.

3. Identify a Good Food Team Coordinator(s) to lead the evaluation process.

4. Recruit a Good Food Team to keep the evaluation work moving along and to have a core group of people advocating for food sustainability.

5. Gather the Good Food Team, clergy, and other leaders to tell them about the survey and what your congregation could gain by using it. Together, plan how to move forward.

6. Before you begin your assessment, take a moment for a reflective reading or prayer and think about how you see food sustainability and justice as a faith issue (see Appendix B for some ideas).

7. Go through and answer all the evaluation questions for the sections you are choosing to complete in whatever way works best for your congregation. Be sure to get input from your key leaders and a majority of members.

8. Score each sub-section as you go along, and then add up your total scores at the end in the given chart.

9. Complete the planning questions and choose your top priority actions.

10. Complete the Good Food Action Plan that helps you come up with steps for meeting each of your goals.

11. Make your action plan come to life! Ideally, the Good Food Team will continue meeting to keep track of and to make sure action items get done. The Team can also offer educational opportunities to help people adjust to and support the healthy changes at your congregation.

12. Evaluate your progress over time. The evaluation should be used every 2 to 4 years to assess how well your congregation has been able to implement your identified action items, and to select new areas for improvement.
More Detailed Instructions for Using the Good Food Toolkit with your Faith Community

Thank you for volunteering your time to help your congregation promote “good food” throughout its operations and daily practices. There is no single way to best work through the GFT. There are many possible approaches that will work well. You need to find the one that meets your congregation’s needs. The most essential thing to remember is that completing the GFT should be a group effort. You will need to form a Good Food Team that will work together through the evaluation and planning process to decide how best to improve your congregation’s facilities, policies, and practices regarding food sustainability and justice.

What follows are general guidelines for the different stages that you will progress through as you complete the GFT.

STAGE 1
*Please note that you should feel free to adapt the order in which these activities take place to best fit your congregation’s needs.

Familiarize yourself with the Good Food Toolkit.

Browse through the evaluation section, planning guide, and resources so that you have a good understanding of the entire process. Do not feel overwhelmed by all of the questions in the evaluation. You do not have to do everything all at once! You can choose to complete only one section at a time, or whatever sections are most important to your congregation. Our food system is imperfect, and it takes time to make even small changes. The Action Plan will help you outline your specific goals; figure out what is economically, emotionally, and logistically feasible to change now; and prioritize actions you want to take over time. Remember that religious institutions represent formidable purchasing power, and even incremental steps towards your goals can help bring about a more sustainable and just food system.

Talk to your clergy or spiritual leader and your congregation’s governing body about the GFT and get their support.

Meet with your clergy, leadership groups, and/or governing body to communicate the purpose, solicit input, and secure support for the GFT and share how this effort can benefit your faith community. Invite them to an orientation meeting so they can learn more. Ask explicitly for their support for the effort and in recruiting a Good Food
Team. Support from congregational leaders greatly improves commitment to the GFT process and to implementing your Good Food Action Plan. Leaders can give the Good Food Team the power to make changes in your congregation’s food environment.

Identify a GFT Coordinator(s).

The person who coordinates the GFT process will be the point person for organizing a collaborative effort to conduct the evaluation and implement the Action Plan. Ideally, s/he will be:

- An individual who knows the congregational facilities well and understands the decision-making process within the congregation;
- A good listener who can ensure that all viewpoints are heard;
- A good communicator who can explain what the GFT is, why your congregation should use it, and how the results can help your faith community;
- An individual who is respected by participants and the congregation’s leadership; and
- A facilitator who can help guide meetings and keep participants on task while making them feel good about their contributions.

Having some kind of background or interest in environmental stewardship and food justice issues helps, but it is not essential. The Good Food Team will bring additional skills, knowledge, and talents to the project. Also, the toolkit provides all the necessary resources needed to complete this survey.

Form a Good Food Team.

The next step is to identify a team who will be responsible for completing the evaluation and who will create your Action Plan.

You may choose to: 1) create a new team, or 2) use an existing team, such as the Care for Creation or Social Justice committee, or 3) create a new subcommittee of the congregational governing body or council. Try to involve as many people from your congregation as you can in the Good Food Team. You will likely add members to the team as you work through the process, so it is fine to start off with a small number of people. In addition to your clergy or spiritual leader, include any kitchen staff and people in charge of food purchasing to help the team understand existing policies and practices related to food. Also, consider inviting people involved in religious education for children, youth and adults; worship; community ministry/outreach; parish nursing or health ministry; fellowship time or hospitality; events; building use and maintenance. Members of your congregation who are not actively involved in leadership activities can also be included.
Diverse participation is important for a meaningful assessment and successful planning and implementation. The strength of the process comes from having individuals from different parts of the congregational community sit down together and work towards a more sustainable and just institution. The connections and sense of community that develop among participants may be among the most important results of this process.

**Meet with leaders and potential members of the Good Food Team to tell them more about the GFT and plan how to move forward together.**

Invite congregational leaders and potential Good Food Team members to a meeting to learn about the GFT, even if they are not sure they can join the team.

Explain what the GFT is and its purpose. Make sure they understand the results are not meant to be used to evaluate staff or volunteers or to compare congregations. Look over the questions together, talk about why working on food sustainability and justice is important, and what your congregation could gain by using the GFT. Team members should know that their work on the GFT can make a great difference in bringing about a healthier planet, and that the changes they encourage within their faith community might also be adopted within the homes of individual congregants as well.

Finally, talk about how you can use the Good Food Toolkit. If your congregation’s clergy and other spiritual leaders have not already come up with a process for moving forward, you can have the group at this introductory meeting (or team members later on) decide on a timeline and concrete steps for moving forward.

The Baltimore Food & Faith Project will be available to help your congregation use the GFT and to apply the results from the evaluation to make sustainable and just food changes that fit the unique circumstances, culture, and religious beliefs of your faith community.

**STAGE 2**

**Before starting the evaluation, take a few moments for a reflection, prayer, or other ritual that is meaningful to your team.**

It may help to center the group to talk about why your congregation has decided to do the assessment. You might want to:

- Read the introductions at the beginning of the assessment that explain why this is an important subject for faith communities to care about;
- Share a reading or prayer that is particularly meaningful (see Appendix B: Texts, Reflective Readings, and Prayers for suggestions);
• Find out whether your denomination has already adopted some Good Food policies that can lend some support to your efforts (visit tinyurl.com/denominationalpolicy for a list);
• Have each member briefly express how s/he believes food sustainability and justice relates to her/his faith.

(You can explore these themes in more depth later with your whole congregation, through worship, religious education, study of Holy books, educational sessions with invited speakers, etc.) What are the environmental, spiritual, and social justice consequences of the way we eat? How can improving your faith community’s policies and practices help you to put your faith and values into action? A reflection, prayer, or other ritual led by your clergy or spiritual leader done with the entire congregation at the weekly gathering can also lend support to the effort.

Complete the evaluation questions for all sections in each of the four main categories (Eating Well, Donating Well, Teaching Well, and Acting Well), and record your scores as you go along.

There are many ways to complete the evaluation, so choose what works best for you, while ensuring that each of the three activities listed below gets accomplished. Some congregations have their entire team stay together to answer all sections of the evaluation, sometimes in just one meeting. Others form sub-teams to work separately on each of the four sections. It is very important to have at least two people working on each section, because having more than one person will increase accuracy and encourage a variety of creative ideas for improving congregational policies and practices.

1) Answer each section’s questions. For each item, circle the number corresponding to how often your congregation does that particular action. (e.g., Always, Sometimes, Rarely, or Never). Please note: If you come across a term that is unfamiliar, you can use the Glossary of Terms and Labels in Appendix C to locate a definition.

2) Add up the scores for each sub-section and record on the line provided.

3) Once you have completed a section, add each sub-section’s scores together and record your total score for that section on the line provided.

Whoever completes the sections will need to receive photocopies of the following documents:

• The evaluation tables for each section (pages 13-33)
• Score Table and Overall Score Card (pages 34-35)
• Planning Questions (pages 37-39)
You may also want to make copies of Appendix A: Notes to Help with Evaluation. This page will assist you with figuring out who is currently in charge of a particular area, what practices your congregation is already engaged in, and whether your practices and management of them differ by event, holiday, or venue.

However you decide to conduct the evaluation, team members will need to come to an agreement about how to answer each item. Think about circumstances at your congregation right now, not where you hope to be. The assessment is meant to show your congregation’s strengths and identify the areas you may want to improve in order to better support sustainable and just food choices.

**Complete the Score Card.**

Transfer the scores from each sub-section to the Score Card and calculate your total scores for each section and overall. Make copies of the completed Score Card for every Good Food Team Member.

**STAGE 3**

**Answer the Planning Questions.**

Refer to your results from the Score Card to answer the planning questions. Use the answers to the third planning question (see page 39) to find the highest priority actions that the Good Food Team will recommend for implementation within the year.

**Complete the Proposed Good Food Action Plan.**

Based on the priority action steps the team developed in the chart for Planning Question 3, fill in the Action Plan worksheet (pages 40-42) with information about how your community will implement each action. Some congregations choose to do this part as a Good Food Team first, before getting feedback from the rest of the congregation.

After completing the worksheet as a team, it would be a good idea to produce a brief report of the proposed Action Plan to present to and elicit feedback from the rest of your faith community. Based on the suggestions and input you receive, refine the Action Plan and present a final report to your clergy or spiritual leader for formal endorsement.

To help make your Action Plan come to life, you may need to apply for external sources of funding. Sources of funding are available nationwide, and we would be happy to work with you to identify potential opportunities. Remember that funds should be used to promote a change of practice or develop policy to increase more sustainable and just eating for all congregants.
STAGE 4 (ongoing)

Evaluate Your Progress Over Time!

After completing the Action Plan and starting to implement changes, it will be a good idea for the Good Food Team to continue meeting from time to time. This way, the team can make sure action items are being carried out, plan for future changes, and provide a forum for congregants to bring their food sustainability and justice ideas and concerns. The evaluation can be used periodically (e.g., every other year) to reassess your practices and identify opportunities for continued improvement. The toolkit also contains a form to help the team assess which parts of this process were helpful and which might need to be refined in the future to better facilitate your work.
TIMELINE

The amount of time that it will take your congregation to complete the process outlined in the Toolkit will depend on many factors and will vary by faith community. It will be important, however, to complete the assessment and Action Plan in a way that allows you to maintain the momentum that led you to undertake this effort in the first place. Ideally, the process should be completed in about two to six months. This should be enough time for your congregation to carefully assemble a Good Food Team, conduct the assessment, and create an Action Plan. Please note that if you choose to complete only certain sections in the assessment, but not others for the time being (e.g., you decide to do Eating Well now, but wait to do Teaching Well until later), the process might take less time.

We recommend that you be creative in completing this Toolkit in order to maximize volunteers’ time. Delegate tasks wherever possible, to help each team member feel included in your efforts, and to complete the process more efficiently. If meeting in person is difficult due to volunteers’ schedules, find ways to share ideas and complete the assessment virtually, such as through Google Docs.

Don’t forget to have fun! When you meet together to get some work done, start the meeting with a good, sustainable meal or snacks to help team members connect with each other, and set the stage for a conversation around the topic.

Finally, please remember that the Toolkit is meant to be regularly revisited. Your Team will want to meet regularly to assess the progress that you’re making in implementing changes. Completing the assessment and devising a new Action Plan every 2 to 4 years will allow you to indentify new areas where you can make positive changes and continue to promote Good Food over time.

CERTIFICATION

Become a Good Food Sanctuary! Once you have finished the evaluation and implemented the actions you’ve identified in your Action Plan, make a copy of each of the evaluation sections that you completed showing your scores, the answers to the planning questions, and your action guide (Evaluation sections appear on pages 13 to 33; Planning Guide is on pages 37 to 39; Action Plan can be found on pages 40 to 42) and send these to us at the address shown on page 4.

Once we’ve received the above, we will issue your congregation a Good Food Certificate for each section completed that you can proudly display in your institution in recognition of all the hard work that you did to make positive changes in your faith community.
Section 1.
EATING WELL
Eating is an environmental and a moral act. Whether we live in big cities or rural towns, on a farm or in an apartment, our most profound and intimate connection to the earth is through the food we eat. We don’t often think of our meals in environmental terms or as having much to do with peace and justice, but every time we put food into our mouths, we connect ourselves to other people and other species - sometimes in ways that cause harm to our earth and our neighbors, and sometimes in ways that help to sustain the creation.

Eating foods that are produced nearby helps support our farmers and preserve our farmland, keeps money for schools and other services in our own communities, and reduces the amount of pollution that is generated from shipping the average food item on our table the 1,500 miles it usually travels to get there. Eating less meat also helps to reduce our impact on the planet. Fruits and vegetables that are grown sustainably help prevent harmful pesticides and fungicides from polluting our air, soil, and water. This is especially important for farmworkers who are exposed to these sorts of chemicals and fall ill from them, and for the soil microbes, insects (not all are pests!), birds, and other animals passing through farm fields. And insisting that farm animals are raised with enough space to move around, engage in their natural behaviors, breath fresh air, and bask in warm sunlight acknowledges that these, too, were created and seen as “good” by God, and that we have a responsibility to care for them as part of the greater whole. Finally, when we become more reverent of God’s gifts of food - and what else is food but a miraculous gift? - we take our time eating it, savoring it, sharing it with others, and serving it in ways that reflect its significance and value. We try to reduce how much of it we throw away, and decrease the amount of disposable dishes we send to the landfill. We thank God for our meals in ever deeper ways, translating our blessings from words into deeds.

From the bread and wine offered during Christianity’s Holy Communion to a congregational Shabbat meal to an Islamic Iftar meal or Hinduism’s Diwali, every religious community enjoys coming together to share food, reflect, and socialize. Good food and the manner in which it is served can help to make these times even more enjoyable and meaningful. These occasions are also among the best and easiest to model healthy, sustainable food choices.
Did you know...

In 2006, farmers earned only 19 cents of every dollar spent on U.S.-grown food while the remaining 81 cents went to processing and distribution to stores and restaurants.¹

If everyone in the U.S. switched to taking meat out of their diet one day a week, it would be the same as saving approximately 12 billion gallons of gasoline a year.²

Bottled water production in the U.S. used the equivalent of 86 million barrels of oil to produce and transport plastic water bottles in 2007. This is enough to fuel 1.5 million cars for a year. And 75% of those bottles ended up in landfills, lakes, streams, and oceans, where they may never fully decompose.³

This section, Eating Well, is broken up into five subsections:

1) During Worship
2) Refreshments after Worship
3) Beverages
4) Meals and Special Events
5) Sustainable Products

Before you begin, identify all places, times, and events where food is served (circle all that apply):

- Worship
- Meetings
- Fellowship Hour
- Oneg Shabbat
- Small group programs
- Religious Education
- Potlucks
- Child Care
- Fundraisers
- Children and Youth Programs
- Field Trips
- Youth or Adult Retreats
- Special Events
- Holidays/Traditions

Another aspect of your congregation’s food environment will concern where your food is purchased from. Food might be catered by an outside entity, cooked by congregation members in their homes, purchased and prepared at your facility, etc. Keep this in mind while creating your action steps so you know where to best to target your efforts.
### A. DURING WORSHIP: If Christian, does your congregation serve...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local wine for communion?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic wine for communion?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local bread/wafers for communion?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic bread/wafers for communion?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: _______/12

### B. REFRESHMENTS AFTER WORSHIP: Does your congregation serve...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread and pastries from local bakeries?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local fruits and vegetables (fresh, dried, frozen, or canned)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic fruits and vegetables (fresh, dried, frozen, or canned)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair trade fruits (e.g., bananas, etc.)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: _______/12

### C. BEVERAGES: Does you congregation serve...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fair trade coffee?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic coffee?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cream/half-n-half?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic cream/half-n-half?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local milk?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic milk?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: _______/24

**D. MEALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS:** Does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve only vegetarian (or meatless) options at events?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer at least one vegetarian/meatless or vegan meal option at all meals and events?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook only as much food as will be eaten, and encourage people to take only what they will eat in order to reduce food waste?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuse leftovers in other dishes, if you’re not donating them (see Donating Well section)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase organic meat?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Certified Humanely Raised meat?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase local meat?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase organic dairy products?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase local dairy products?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase organic eggs?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase local eggs?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Jewish, purchase Eco-Kosher meat</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Muslim, purchase pastured Halal meat?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase sustainable seafood?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase organic fruits and vegetables (fresh, dried, frozen, or canned)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase local fruits and vegetables (fresh, dried, frozen, or canned)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase fair trade fruits (e.g., bananas, etc.)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask your caterer to purchase food from local, sustainable, fair trade sources?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask your congregants to use local, sustainable, fair trade ingredients in meals they prepare to share at events?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: _______/57
Get Rid of All That Plastic and Syrofoam!

PLASTIC’s convenience comes from being lightweight and its ability to absorb impact shock without breaking, which on its own merit, is hard to argue with. It comes in an endless range of colors and finishes, is pliable, and is easily formed and molded. Most would say it’s a perfect material, right?

Wrong. The long term negative health and socioeconomic effects of plastic at the local and global scales far outweigh the benefits realized by the use of plastics. Its inexpensiveness is the result of a large portion of the costs associated with its life—production, use and disposal—being put onto society as a whole.

The harmful chemical typically found in plastic items with a recyclable symbol number 3 is Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), which leaches into food and liquids that we consume. Another chemical in plastic, Polycarbonate, which contains bisphenal A (also known as BPA), has also been found to leech into the contents/liquids that a plastic container is holding. When you eat or drink things that are stored in plastic, it is incorporated into your body. You quite literally “are what you eat” and in this case, it’s not a good thing.

Transitioning your plastic plates and utensils over to the more sustainable options (reusable, compostable, biodegradable) is the best choice when it comes to serving your food. If you absolutely need to buy plastic plates for some reason, make sure they are BPA free and never microwave food on them. It’s hard to avoid plastic, especially at an institutional level. If this is the case, an alternative can be to reuse safer plastics for storage around the institution.

For example, if you are a congregation that receives large plastic containers of food, these containers can then be used to keep materials for pre-schools, religious schools, and for office storage.

As for STYROFOAM:

You have probably heard this over and over by now, but just in case you forgot, Styrofoam is one of the absolute worst things for the environment and your health. Not only does it leach toxic chemicals into foods, it’s made from petroleum, our #1 non-renewable energy source and pollutant. Further, Styrofoam never really breaks down, so it ends up sitting in our landfills indefinitely. If you take even one small step at your institution, replacing Styrofoam with reusable, compostable, or biodegradable options is a great first start!

Sustainable Math

Sustainable plates and utensils are most likely going to cost you more than standard products. One option is to purchase compostable plates. A pack of Leafware compostable 9-inch plates made from fallen palm leaves averages $0.66/plate, whereas a pack of Solo plastic plates comes out to about $0.15/plate. However, the price of these products is continuing to go down as demand increases. When you consider the costs of cleaning up landfills, an extra $0.51/plate starts to sound like a good deal!

For an even more cost effective and environmentally friendly way to go, think about purchasing used plates and utensils. While the upfront cost might be somewhat greater (Goodwill [www.goodwill.org] sells plates for between $0.75 and $1.00/plate and knives, spoons, and forks for $0.25/each), you’ll save a lot of money in the long run as you only need to buy these things once.

When looking at price, it is important to keep in mind a “systems perspective”, understanding the long term benefits for the greater whole—your community’s health, protecting the environment, and helping to move towards a more sustainable future. (Sections on plastic adapted from “Get Plastic out of your Diet” by Paul Goettlich)
### E. SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS:

Does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase milk in reusable glass containers?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase products and supplies in bulk to help reduce packaging waste?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cloth totes for transporting groceries?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycle, reuse, or donate (e.g., libraries, day care centers, etc.) plastic grocery bags?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use reusable plates and bowls (e.g., ceramic, glass, etc. that can be washed and used again)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use reusable utensils?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use reusable cups and mugs?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use plates and bowls made from recycled materials?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use utensils made from recycled materials?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cups and mugs made from recycled materials?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use recyclable (e.g., plastic) plates and bowls?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use recyclable utensils?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use recyclable cups and mugs?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Points</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use biodegradable/ compostable plates and bowls?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use biodegradable/ compostable utensils?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use biodegradable/ compostable cups and mugs?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cloth napkins?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use reusable or cloth table cloths?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use napkins and tablecloths made from recycled materials?*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use pitchers and glasses, or a water cooler, instead of individual plastic water bottles?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase environmentally friendly cleaning products (e.g., dish soap, dishwasher detergent, all-purpose cleaner), or make your own?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air dry or use cloth towels for drying dishes?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use sustainable centerpieces (e.g., locally-grown flowers, potted plants, bowls of fruit, etc.) for meals and events?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 3 points are not available for these items. Although these are good alternatives to using Styrofoam or other plastic and paper dishware, they are not as environmentally sound as using entirely reusable plates, cups, utensils, etc.

Score: _______/39

TOTAL SCORE EATING WELL: _______/144
Section 2.

DONATING WELL
2. Donating Well: Food You Give to Others

Did you know...

In 2011, 15% of households were food insecure at least some time during the year, including 5.7% with “very low” food security. Children were food insecure at times in 10% of households with children.4

Up to 20% of America’s food goes to waste each year, with around 130 lbs of food per person ending up in landfills. Roughly 49 million people could have been fed by these lost resources.5

Religious communities play an important role in helping those who are hungry, and food donations to emergency service providers are often a large part of this effort. These donations are much needed in our communities, and congregations should continue to keep up this good work. While we need to make sure hungry bellies are fed now, we also need to think about hunger in a different way - one that considers the systemic and structural inequities of our world. These inequities make healthy food available to some, while others have a hard time locating good food in their communities, let alone affording it. Changing the system to ensure that everyone among us is food secure -- a state in which all community residents are able to obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system (Hamm, 2001) -- involves policy decisions at every level of government (see Appendix D for organizations working on food policy issues). For example, municipalities can change zoning ordinances to be more favorable to urban agriculture or the placement of grocery stores in lower-income neighborhoods.

Changing the system also means standing in solidarity with those communities who struggle to eat well so they can exercise their right to grow, sell, and enjoy healthy food. Practicing food justice in this way leads to a strong local food system, self-reliant communities, and a healthy environment.

Of course, this is a long-term goal. In the meantime, there are several things your congregation can do to bring healthier foods to the hungry. This is a particularly important task given that those in need are at greatest risk of having high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, and of being overweight - all diseases related to diet. Fresh fruits and vegetables can augment canned foods, and meals that are lower in sodium, fat, and sugar are also crucial in helping to improve the nutritional status of these at-risk individuals.
In this section, consider all of the ways and times in which your congregation collects food items to be donated to a local food pantry, soup kitchen, or other similar organization.

A. CHARITABLE DONATIONS: When donating to those in need, does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donate leftover food from events to soup kitchens/homeless shelters?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into meals prepared to be donated?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate healthier substitutes into meals prepared to be donated*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate healthy nonperishable food items to food pantries*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate produce from a garden to a local food pantry?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in a gleaning field trip to a farm to help harvest food for the hungry?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: ______/18

TOTAL SCORE DONATING WELL: ____/18

* Examples of healthier foods include:
  - Canned vegetables (low sodium/no salt added)
  - Canned fruit and fruit cups (in own juice, not in syrup), or dried fruit
  - Canned and powdered low-fat/fat-free milk
  - Low sugar/high fiber breakfast cereals; oatmeal; hot cereal mixes
  - Brown rice
  - Whole wheat pasta
  - Jarred spaghetti sauce/canned tomatoes (low sodium/no salt added)
  - Dried beans and lentils, or canned beans (low sodium/no salt added)
  - Low sodium/low fat soups and stews
  - Whole grain crackers/pretzels
  - Peanut butter
  - Trail mix, or low-sugar granola bars
Section 3.
TEACHING WELL
We are called to be stewards of God’s creation and to work to bring about a more just world, but it’s not always easy to know how to do this through our food choices. It can take a lot of time to locate “good food” which is challenging given our already busy lives. Trying to figure out what to purchase based on often imperfect information from many different (sometimes conflicting) sources also complicates matters. Members of religious institutions need direction and support in learning how to eat in a sustainable and just manner, and houses of worship provide excellent venues for education about this topic. Through events, activities, and services, members of your congregation can learn about the principles of good eating and receive encouragement for their efforts in this direction. This sort of education is especially important for youth and children who are subjected on a daily basis to advertisements encouraging them to eat food that is neither good for them, nor the planet. Helping kids understand that what they eat matters can provide them with a sense of purpose and empower them to make “good food” choices wherever possible throughout their lives.

In the previous two sections, you considered the food you serve in your congregation, the manner in which you serve it, and the food you donate to those in need. Now think about how your congregation talks about food and educates its members and community about sustainable and just food practices. Food, being an integral part of your faith community, can be connected in many ways to existing teachings and ministries.

This section is broken up into three sub-sections:

**General Communication** considers how sustainability messages are conveyed within the congregation and/or community.

**Adult Education** examines how your congregation educates adults about the principles of food sustainability and justice.

**Child/Youth Education** looks at how children and youth are taught about these issues.
**A. GENERAL COMMUNICATION:** Do clergy members and lay leaders...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Once a Year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include information pertaining to food sustainability and justice issues in the bulletin/newsletter?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally incorporate messages or text excerpts referring to food sustainability and justice issues in the sermon?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally incorporate messages or text excerpts referring to food sustainability and justice issues in the announcements during worship?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally incorporate messages or text excerpts referring to food sustainability and justice issues in the announcements during study sessions or other events?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing hymns or other songs with food, agriculture, or harvest-related themes?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place signs on tables indicating when food, etc. was purchased locally, is organic, fair-trade, or humanely raised, etc.?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize congregants for making changes related to food sustainability and justice in their own lifestyles?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: ________/28
B. ADULT EDUCATION: To teach adult congregation members about the basics of food sustainability and justice, does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Once a Year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invite speakers (e.g., farmers, food justice workers, etc.) to teach about food sustainably and justice?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post signs to educate members about food sustainability and justice issues?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute recipes using local and seasonal foods?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make books, films, pamphlets, and other resources related to food sustainability and justice available?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote local farmers’ markets and farm stands in your newsletter/bulletin?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate members about Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable congregants to learn about food, faith, and agriculture through text studies, curriculum, participation in relevant study groups (e.g., Food &amp; Faith Lenten series)?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer cooking classes focused on local and seasonal foods?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organize field trips to “green” restaurants or to a local, organic farm to see sustainable food practices in action? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0

Encourage vegetable gardening at home or in the community? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0

Encourage members to play leadership roles in food sustainability and justice activities? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0

Encourage members to use sustainable, just, humanely raised foods and beverages (e.g., organic, local, fair-trade) in their own homes? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0

Encourage eligible members to participate in WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) and the Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program? | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0

Score: ________/52

**C. CHILD AND YOUTH EDUCATION:** To help educate children and youth about where their food comes from, does your congregation…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invite speakers to teach about food sustainably and justice?</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Once a Year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate lessons and activities related to food sustainability and justice?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Make books, films, pamphlets, and other resources related to food sustainability and justice available to children and youth?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teach songs related these issues?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offer simple cooking and food preparation classes focused on local and seasonal foods?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offer food tastings for children and youth highlighting a seasonal fruit or vegetable?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organize field trips to “green” restaurants or to a local, organic farm to see sustainable food practices in action?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encourage youth to play leadership roles in food sustainability activities?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participate in a Food &amp; Faith Vacation Summer Camp?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Score: _______/36 |
| **TOTAL SCORE TEACHING WELL: _______/116** |
Section 4.

ACTING WELL
4. Acting Well: Using Your Physical Property to Promote Sustainable Food-Related Activities

O you people! Eat of what is on earth lawful and good! -- Qur’an 2:168

Anyone who gardens knows that it can be a spiritual exercise. Dependent on forces beyond our control - the weather! - and witnessing firsthand life coming forth from seed and soil places us in awe of the processes which bring us our food, and remind us that this beautiful earth was given to us as an act of love by our Creator. A garden can give us joy and peace; nurture the relationships that come from working together on a common project; and improve the health of your congregation or those in need, should you grow enough to feed yourselves and supply a food pantry in your community. Gardens can be planted in containers, in raised beds, or directly in the ground, and people of all ages can take part and enjoy literally getting their hands dirty in God’s green earth!

This final section looks at your congregation’s involvement in other aspects of food sustainability, including your involvement in community-based agricultural projects. It also considers the entire food chain by examining waste reduction practices - not just what happens before our food reaches our tables, but also what happens after it leaves - as this is a part of sustainable eating as well.

A. WASTE: Does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Try to reduce the overall amount of material you purchase and use?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to reduce the overall amount of waste you generate?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect garden/yard waste to be composted on-site or picked up and composted off-site?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect food waste to be composted on-site or picked up and composted</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-site?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycle all recyclable materials (paper, plastic, glass, metal, etc.)?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have clearly labeled recycling bins set up in convenient areas?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: ______/16

**B. COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE:** Does your congregation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have an herb, fruit, or vegetable garden?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, do you use organic and sustainable gardening practices?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act as a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) host site?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host a farmers’ market or farm stand?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable congregants and other community members to use the kitchen for</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooking, etc.?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: ______/5

TOTAL SCORE ACTING WELL: ______/21
Once you are done answering all of the questions and calculating your scores from each section, transfer them to the chart below. In the boxes to the right, add up and record your totals for each of the 4 main sections. Finally, calculate your overall score for the entire survey and record it at the bottom. **Remember! Some questions may not be relevant for your faith community. If you did not answer a question because it was not applicable, remove the points associated with that question from the total score for the section before calculating the total percentage.**

### 1. Eating Well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. During Worship:</td>
<td>/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Refreshments After Worship:</td>
<td>/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Beverages:</td>
<td>/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Meals and Special Events:</td>
<td>/57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Sustainable Products:</td>
<td>/39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION 1 SCORE:** /144 = %

### 2. Donating Well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Charitable Donations:</td>
<td>/18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION 2 SCORE:** /18 = %

### 3. Teaching Well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. General Communication:</td>
<td>/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Adult Education:</td>
<td>/52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Child and Youth Education:</td>
<td>/36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION 3 SCORE:** /116 = %

### 4. Acting Well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Waste:</td>
<td>/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Community Agriculture:</td>
<td>/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION 4 SCORE:** /21 = %
OVERALL SCORE CARD

Use the total percentage scores you calculated for each section in the Score Table above (page 34) to complete the following table by writing an X in the column where the section score falls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low 0 - 20%</th>
<th>21% - 40%</th>
<th>Medium 41% - 60%</th>
<th>61% - 80%</th>
<th>High 81% - 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eating Well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donating Well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLANNING GUIDE
The Planning Questions will help your congregation use its evaluation results to identify and prioritize changes that will improve your policies and practices to promote a “good food” environment. Please feel free to use as many sheets of paper as needed to answer these questions.

Planning Question 1

Look back at the scores you assigned to each question. According to these scores, what are the strengths and the weaknesses of your congregation’s policies and practices?

Planning Question 2

For each of the weaknesses identified above, list several recommended actions to improve the congregation’s scores (e.g., purchase locally grown flowers).
Planning Question 3 (see next page for an example of a completed table)

- **List each of the actions** identified in Planning Question 2 in the following table. You may have more actions than will fit on the table below, so feel free to make additional copies of this table or use scrap paper as needed.
- Use the five-point scales defined below to **rank each action** based on five factors (importance, cost, time, commitment, and feasibility).
- **Add the points for each action** to get the total points.
- Use the total points to help you **choose one, two or three top priority actions** that the Good Food Team will recommend for implementation this year. **THOSE ACTIONS WHICH SCORE THE HIGHEST TOTAL POINTS SHOULD BE THE ONES THAT YOU FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS ON. YOU CAN RETURN TO THE LOWER SCORING ACTIONS LATER ON.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>How important is the action to our congregation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderately important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Not important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>How expensive would it be to plan and implement the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Not expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderately expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Very expensive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>How much time and effort would it take to implement the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Little or no time and effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderate time and effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Very great time and effort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>How enthusiastic would my faith community be about implementing the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Very enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderately enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Not enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>How difficult would it be to complete the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Not difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderately difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Very difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Top Priority Action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38
SAMPLE Planning Question 3

- List each of the actions identified in Planning Question 2 in the following table.
- Use the five-point scales defined below to rank each action based on five factors (importance, cost, time, commitment, and feasibility).
- Add the points for each action to get the total points.
- Use the total points to help you choose one, two or three top priority actions that the Good Food Team will recommend for implementation this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>How important is the action to our congregation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = Very important</td>
<td>3 = Moderately important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>How expensive would it be to plan and implement the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = Not expensive</td>
<td>3 = Moderately expensive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>How much time and effort would it take to implement the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = Little or no time and effort</td>
<td>3 = Moderate time and effort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>How enthusiastic would my faith community be about implementing the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = Very enthusiastic</td>
<td>3 = Moderately enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>How difficult would it be to complete the action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = Not difficult</td>
<td>3 = Moderately difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below is just one example of how a congregation might address serving more sustainable options during and after worship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Top Priority Action?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve fair-trade coffee.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve local wine for communion.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>MAYBE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve bread and pastries from local bakeries.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve organic fruits and vegetables.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

(You may want to photocopy before using.)

Your Action Plan is a road map to help you achieve policy and environmental changes in your congregation. Your Action Plan will help your Good Food Team monitor progress towards agreed upon goals discussed in the Planning Questions.

1) In the first column: list, in priority order, the actions that the Good Food Team has agreed to implement.
2) In the second column: list the specific steps that need to be taken to implement each action.
3) In the third column: list the people who will be responsible for each step and when the work will be completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>STEPS</th>
<th>BY WHOM AND WHEN</th>
<th>DONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS</td>
<td>STEPS</td>
<td>BY WHOM AND WHEN</td>
<td>DONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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Take Action, Anticipate Challenges, and Evaluate Your Success!

Now that you have completed the survey and created your congregation’s individualized Action Plan, it is time to put this plan and everything you have learned throughout this process into practice! This is the most exciting part – when you start implementing small, but significant changes in your congregation’s food sustainability and justice environment. Here are a few suggestions for getting started with the implementation and evaluation processes.

SET UP MEETINGS with your clergy, kitchen manager, people in charge of food purchasing, etc. to share the results of the survey, the proposed action step(s), and the reasoning behind making these changes. Place yourself in the shoes of the person you are meeting with and consider how you can best frame these issues in the context of your congregation’s values.

SHARE YOUR VISION with the rest of the congregation. Consider writing a statement, sharing at the end of a worship service, scheduling an event, or creating a presentation that will share the results of the survey and the proposed improvement plan to educate and inspire your congregation, making it clear that adopting sustainable and just food practices will enrich your community without compromising traditional values. Recruiting volunteers to help implement these new changes is crucial for success, so that current staff and volunteers do not become overwhelmed and burned out.

KNOW YOUR FACTS, AND SHARE EXAMPLES. Use the information and links in this toolkit to find data to back up your points (particularly those listed in Appendices 3 and 4). You’ll want to show that you have done your research and that you have looked at this topic from different angles. Use examples of what other congregations have done from the success stories in this toolkit to show that the kinds of changes you’re talking about are not only possible, they’ve been undertaken in other communities with great success.

ANTICIPATE CHALLENGES. You might be faced with criticism and skepticism, but don’t get defensive or discouraged. It’s important to show that you understand your congregation’s values and position and that you can respond in a calm, collected way. You don’t want to add stress to their jobs; rather, you want to offer an opportunity that will benefit both your congregation and the community. Here are some examples for how to address these concerns.

- **Prices**- Buying “good food” does not always mean higher prices. Remind people that a higher price will reflect the higher quality of the food. If it is really out of your budget, figure out where you can make the most important adjustments.
• **Complicated Distribution**- Describe how important purchasing “good food” is to you and the Good Food Team. Explain that there are people willing to make this happen—including working with existing food providers to help them add sustainable foods to their repertoires.

**EVALUATE.** Evaluation is key to see how far you have come in attaining your goals. Every few months, check in with the Team to see how progress is coming in implementing your Action Plan. And complete the assessment again every 2 to 4 years, so that you can identify new areas where you can make positive changes over time.

**SHARE YOUR SUCCESS!** Spread the good news. Share all you have learned with members of your institution and the community by educating them about the changes you have made. Write an article for the newspaper or bulletin, or hold an educational event such as a film night or potluck. In the process you can also gain more support and momentum for effecting change.

Contact us, too! Ask us for help (we’re happy to give some) and/or share the great work you have done. Email goodfood@jhsph.edu with any great program or idea we will spread the word for you as well. **CONGRATULATIONS** on a job well done!
Appendix A

NOTE TAKING PAGES

It can be helpful when you are completing the assessment to take note of who is currently in charge of a particular area (e.g., who purchases the coffee for fellowship hour?), what practices your congregation is currently engaged in (e.g., we already buy bread from the local bakery), and whether your practices and management of them differ by event, holiday, or venue. Use the following page to take notes as you go along, and feel free to make copies of it to accommodate all of the information you need to record.
Notes

Section (circle one):   Eating Well    Donating Well    Teaching Well    Acting Well

Subsection: ________________________________ (Letter A  B  C  D  E)

Item: ________________________________

Notes:

Section (circle one):   Eating Well    Donating Well    Teaching Well    Acting Well

Subsection: ________________________________ (Letter A  B  C  D  E)

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Section (circle one):   Eating Well    Donating Well    Teaching Well    Acting Well

Subsection: ________________________________ (Letter A  B  C  D  E)

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Appendix B
Suggested Texts, Reflective Readings, and Prayers
And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden.
- *Genesis 2:8*

Truth springs up from the earth
and righteousness peers down from heaven.
Indeed, YHWH will give what is good
and our land will give its yield.
- *Psalms 85:11-12*

The field of the poor may yield much food, but it is swept away through injustice.
- *Proverbs 13:23*

If you listen willingly, the good of the land you shall eat.
- *Isaiah 1:19*

Sow for yourselves justice: reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground; for it is time
to seek the Lord, till (God) may come and rain righteousness upon you.
- *Hosea 10:12 (NRSV)*

It is He who produceth gardens with trellises and without and dates and tilth with produce
of all kinds and olives and pomegranates similar [in kind] and different [in variety]: eat of
their fruit in their season but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest
is gathered. But waste not by excess: for Allah loveth not the wasters.
- *Qu’ran 6:141*

And He sent down rain from the sky and made every kind of species grow on the earth.
- *Qu’ran 31:10*

When the Holy One created the first man, He took him around all the trees in the Garden
of Eden and said to him: See how beautiful and wonderful my works are. Everything I have
created, I have created for you. Be mindful that you do not ruin or devastate my world,
for if you ruin it, there is no one to repair it after you.
- *Kohelet Rabbah 7:13*
Though he works and worries, the farmer
Never reaches down to where the seed turns
into summer. The earth grants.
- *Rainer Maria Rilke*

Eaters... must understand that eating takes place inescapably in the world, that it is inescapably in an agricultural act, and that how we eat determines, to a considerable extent, how the world is used.
- *Wendell Berry*

To live, we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation. The point is, when we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament; when we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration... in such desecration, we condemn ourselves to spiritual and moral loneliness, and others to want.
- *Wendell Berry*

Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation.
- *Pope John Paul II*

Anyone who cares about good food has a stake in good farming and in methods of food production, processing, and distribution that accord with the long term health and sustainability of farmers, farming communities, and the land upon which they, and we, depend.
- *Robert Clark*

Humans are part of the web of life. What we do to the planet, what we do to other species, and what we do to other people, we end up doing to ourselves.
- *John Robbins*

Because we eat two, three or four times every day, it’s easy to forget how wondrous that is. It’s like the sunrise or the sunset. The sun rises and sets every day. If it’s an especially beautiful sunrise, we may notice it. But if it’s not “special” we may not even see it.

But if we can see it as if for the first time, each sunrise becomes very special and very beautiful. And so with each meal we create.
- *Bernard Glassman, Instructions to the Cook*
O God, to those who have hunger give bread, and to us who have bread give us a hunger for justice.

- from Latin America

I remember a number of years ago, when Jim and I were first traveling together in the United States, we sat under a tree and shared a tangerine. He began to talk about what we would be doing in the future. Whenever we thought about a project that seemed attractive or inspiring, Jim became so immersed in it that he literally forgot about what he was doing in the present. He popped a section of tangerine in his mouth and, before he had begun chewing it, had another slice ready to pop into his mouth again. He was hardly aware he was eating a tangerine. All I had to say was, “You ought to eat the tangerine section you’ve already taken.” Jim was startled into realizing what he was doing.

It was as if he hadn’t been eating the tangerine at all. If he had been eating anything, he was “eating” his future plans.

A tangerine has sections. If you can eat just one section, you can probably eat the entire tangerine. But if you can’t eat a single section, you cannot eat the tangerine. Jim understood. He slowly put his hand down and focused on the presence of the slice already in his mouth. He chewed it thoughtfully before reaching down and taking another section.

- Thich Nhat Hanh, Miracle of Mindfulness

Why is eating a vegetable one of the steps to freedom? Because gratitude is liberating. And how do we get there? We focus on the details.

Close your eyes: You are holding a piece of parsley, which you are about to dip into salt water. But before that - what things needed to happen to get this parsley into our hands? Who placed the parsley seeds into the ground? What sort of conditions did it grow in? Was it a hot summer? What did the soil feel like? How was the parsley harvested? What did it look like at that perfect moment when it was mature and ready to be picked? Who picked it? Where did the parsley travel next? Was it packed into cardboard boxes? How did it travel to the store or farmer’s market? Who unloaded and unpacked it? Who placed it on a scale and weighed it so it could be purchased? Think for a moment about the number of hands that played a part in getting the parsley to this table and into our hands.

Now open your eyes: Look a little more closely at the parsley in your hand - what does it look like? How many leaves does it have? What does that specific color green remind you of? What does the stem feel like? Imagine what it tastes like…

Take a piece of parsley and dip it in salt water. Then we say the blessing together, and then we eat. Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who brings forth fruit from the earth.

- Leah Koenig (Pesach 2006)
It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality. Did you ever stop to think that you can’t leave for your job in the morning without being dependent on most of the world? You get up in the morning and go to the bathroom and reach over for the sponge, and that’s handed to you by a Pacific Islander. You reach for a bar of soap, and that’s given to you at the hands of a Frenchman. And then you go into the kitchen to drink your coffee for the morning, and that’s poured into your cup by a South American. And maybe you want tea: that’s poured into your cup by a Chinese. Or maybe you’re desirous of having cocoa for breakfast, and that’s poured into your cup by a West African. And then you reach over for your toast, and that’s given to you at the hands of an English-speaking farmer, not to mention the baker. And before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you’ve depended on more than half the world. This is the way our universe is structured, this is its interrelated quality. We aren’t going to have peace on Earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality.

- Martin Luther King, Jr. from “A Christmas Sermon on Peace” 1967
Prayers and Blessings

Bless the hands of the people of the earth,
The hands that plant the seed,
The hands that bind the harvest,
The hands that carry the burden of life.
Soften the hands of the oppressor and
Strengthen the hands of the oppressed.
Bless the hands of the workers,
Bless the hands of those in power above them
That the measure they deal with will be tempered
With justice and compassion. Amen.

- “Farm Workers Prayer of Praise.” United Farm Workers

We thank You, Lord our God, for having given the heritage of a lovely, fine and spacious
land to our fathers, and for having brought us out, Lord our God, from Egypt, and for
rescuing us from slavery, and also for Your covenant which You sealed in our flesh, as well
as for Your Torah which You taught us, and Your laws of which You told us, and for the
life, grace and kindness You have granted us, and for the food which You supply and
provide for us constantly, every day, all the time, and at every hour. And so for
everything, Adonai our God, we thank You and bless You- may Your name be blessed in
the speech of all living beings, constantly, for all time. For it is written: “And you shall
eat, and be satisfied, and bless the Lord your God for the good land God gave you.”
Blessed are You, God, for the land and for the food.

- Jewish prayer from Hazon’s “Food for Thought” guide

Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, thank you for the gift of another day and for the chance to
be together. Thank you for providing us with our day by day dependence on your creation.
For your presence in our lives we thank you. May we learn from our own lives, from each
other, and from your presence among us. Amen.

- From Michael Schut’s “Food & Faith” (pp. 248)

I thank God for dirty dishes, they have a lot to tell
While others are going hungry, we’re doing pretty well
With food and faith and fellowship, we shouldn’t want to fuss
Because by this stack of evidence, you’ve been mighty good to us!

- Rev. Dred Scott, Pastor of St. Matthews United Methodist Church,
  Turner Station, Maryland
Blessed be the Creator
and all creative hands
which plant and harvest,
pack and haul and hand
over sustenance -
Blessed be carrot and cow,
potato and mushroom,
tomato and bean,
parsley and peas,
onion and thyme,
garlic and bay leaf,
pepper and water,
majoram and oil,
and blessed be fire -
and blessed be the enjoyment
of nose and eye,
and blessed be color -
and blessed be the Creator
for the miracle of red potato,
for the miracle of green bean,
for the miracle of fawn mushrooms,
and blessed be God
for the miracle of earth:
ancestors, grass, bird,
deer and all gone,
wild creatures
whose bodies become
carrots, peas, and wild
flowers, who
give sustenance
to human hands, whose
agile dance of music
nourishes the ear
and soul of the dog
resting under the stove
and the woman working over
the stove and the geese
out the open window
strolling in the backyard.
And blessed be God
for all, all, all.

- Alla Renee Bozarth
We return thanks to our mother,  
the earth, with sustains us.  
We return thanks to the rivers and streams,  
which supply us with water.  
We return thanks to all herbs,  
which furnish medicines for the cure of our diseases.  
We return thanks to the corn, and to her sisters,  
the beans and squash,  
which give us life.  
We return thanks to the bushes and trees,  
which provide us with fruit.  
We return thanks to the wind,  
which, moving the air, has banished diseases.  
We return thanks to the moon and the stars,  
which have given us their light  
when the sun was gone.  
We return thanks to our grandfather He-no,  
that he has protected his grandchildren  
from witches and reptiles,  
and has given to us his rain.  
We return thanks to the sun,  
that he has looked upon the earth  
with a beneficent eye.  
Lastly, we return thanks to the Great Spirit,  
in whom is embodied all goodness,  
and who directs all things  
for the good of his children.  
- An Iroquois Prayer
APPENDIX C
GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND LABELS
There are all sorts of independent certifying organizations whose standards vary from very stringent to more lenient. Unfortunately, we can’t list them all here, but should you run into any and you can’t find any information about them, please contact us, and we’ll find out for you.

**American Humane Certified™**
American Humane Certified™ was the first program in the United States certifying the humane treatment of farm animals. The program is third-party administered, with regular on-site audits. American Humane claims to conduct video monitoring of all of their producers to ensure that the animals are treated humanely on a continual basis. Under this program, animals must be kept in conditions where they have clean and sufficient food and water; are able to express normal behaviors; and have shelter, a resting area, company of their own kind, and sufficient space to move around; however, outdoor access is not required. Hormones are prohibited, and only sick animals are given antibiotics. The organization certifies beef, pork, chicken, egg, and dairy products.

**Animal Welfare Approved™**
Animal Welfare Approved™ offers a seal of approval to family farmers who meet its standards for raising and slaughtering pigs, dairy and beef cattle, bison, poultry, sheep and goats. The Program is third-party administered. Under this program, animals must be kept in conditions that allow for exercise and freedom of movement, and they must spend the majority of their lives on pasture. Growth hormones are not allowed, and antibiotics are only given to sick animals. Unlike other humane certifiers, approvals are only given to independent family farmers, and farmers are not charged any fees to be approved. Animal Welfare Approved™ was recently lauded by the World Society for the Protection of Animals as having the highest animal welfare standards of all third-party certifiers in the United States.

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A Third-party administered and certified means that an independent agency, not the one who is operating the program, validates that a producer is meeting the standards as set out by the labeling organization. Third-party certification programs differ greatly from one another, and confidence in a certification depends on the type of program and its comprehensiveness (e.g., how often a farm is audited, etc.). Also, it is not always clear who is paying the third-party to conduct the audits and whether there may be conflicts of interest as a result.
Biodegradable
Biodegradable products break down through the action of naturally occurring microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, over a period of time. These products are usually made from plant or animal sources. Examples of biodegradable materials include paper, vegetable scraps, and some forms of plastics made from ingredients such as corn starch.¹

There are currently no specific standards for the use of the word “biodegradable” on products, and no official organization exists to verify the use of the claim. However, the Federal Trade Commission in the United States has issued some general guidelines indicating that only products that break down and decompose into elements found in nature within a reasonably short amount of time when they are exposed to air, moisture and bacteria or other organisms should be marketed as “biodegradable.” It is important to note that even if a product is appropriately labeled as biodegradable, if it is buried under a landfill or otherwise not exposed to sunlight, air, and water – the key agents of biodegradation - it may not break down easily. Products can biodegrade without oxygen, but this can take hundreds of years depending on the material, and the potent greenhouse gas, methane, may be released during the process.²

Bird Friendly
The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center of the National Zoo has developed criteria and works with organic certification agencies that certify “Bird Friendly” coffee as 100% organic and shade-grown, meaning that the coffee grows beneath a tree canopy that provides quality habitat for birds. This contrasts with normal coffee production, where trees and shade bushes are removed to grow the coffee in full sun, which creates poor habitat for animal life. This label is third-party administered. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this coffee go to support the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center’s research and conservation programs.³,⁴

Cage-Free
Cage-free is not a third-party administered label, and is not regulated by the Food Safety Inspection Service of the USDA. Commonly seen on egg cartons, it suggests that birds are not confined in cages, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that the birds were raised outdoors on pasture, if they had access to the outside, or if they were raised indoors in overcrowded conditions. The label is not significant when used for poultry, because birds raised for meat are rarely caged (although they still may not have much space to move about or access to...
the outdoors) before they are shipped to the slaughterhouse. If you are looking for meat and eggs from animals raised outside, talk to your farmers and grocers.\textsuperscript{7,8}

**Certified Humane Raised and Handled**

Certified Humane Raised and Handled\textsuperscript{®} is a non-profit animal welfare program certifying the humane treatment of farm animals from birth through slaughter. The program is third-party administered. It is the only animal welfare certification program in the United States that is accredited under the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). As part of the ISO process, the program is audited annually by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that it meets its standards.\textsuperscript{9}

Under this program, animals must be kept in conditions that allow them access to ample fresh water and healthy food, and allow exercise and freedom of movement. However, outdoor access is not required for poultry or pigs. Crates, cages, and tethers are prohibited, animals cannot be overcrowded, and every animal is given bedding materials. Hormones are prohibited and only sick animals are given antibiotics. The organization certifies meat, eggs, dairy, and poultry products.\textsuperscript{10}

**Community Food Security**

Community Food Security occurs when all people are able to obtain a culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through non-emergency food sources at all times. In other words, community food security calls for a change in the broader food system such that community members, no matter where they are located, are always able to access affordable, healthy foods rather than having to rely on food pantries and soup kitchens for meals.

**Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a farming business model that connects farmers directly with consumers. Prior to the start of the growing season, a consumer purchases a ‘share’ of products produced by a farm for a set price, normally ranging from $350 to $500. In exchange for this share, the CSA member receives a box of fresh produce at regular intervals for a season, as defined by each CSA. The produce distributed is dependent upon what is seasonally available and what is growing successfully. The investment is non-refundable, so members share the risks and benefits of the farm’s operation throughout the season. The profit from sale of the ‘shares’ provides the farmer with upfront capital, allowing her/him to invest time, energy, and resources
into farming in place of investments in marketing and distribution. Due to lowered marketing and distribution costs, the price to the consumer can often be competitive with grocery store prices. In addition, since the farmer knows the demand for her/his crops at the beginning of the season, s/he can plant and harvest crops that cater to shareholders’ interests. This lends itself to more efficient production and less wasted produce. Shareholders benefit by receiving fresh, healthy foods each week, and by learning about new foods and seasonal eating.

Some CSAs also provide weekly subscriptions, whereby consumers pay a set price per week and can cancel at any time, and others allow shareholders to work for a specified number of hours on the farm in exchange for a share. Many CSAs also allow individuals to split shares with others (e.g., if there are only two people in your family, an entire share might be too much food, and so you can split the cost and the share with another family).

Many CSAs are organic or use fewer pesticides than other farms, and are often small and family-owned. Many shareholders visit their CSA farm, contribute volunteer hours, and get to know the farmer, creating an enjoyable relationship between farmer and consumer.

**Compostable**

The Federal Trade Commission in the United States has issued some general guidelines indicating that only products that break down into, or otherwise become a part of, usable compost (e.g., soil conditioning material, mulch) in a safe and timely manner in an appropriate composting program or facility, or in a home compost pile or device, should be marketed as “compostable.” Similarly to products labeled biodegradable, compostable products, if buried under a landfill or otherwise not exposed to sunlight, air, and water may not break down easily, and if the composting occurs without oxygen, the potent greenhouse gas, methane, may be released during the process.\(^\text{11,12}\)

Compostable plastics, such as those used for tableware, must be able to break down into carbon dioxide, water, and usable compost at the same rate as paper. The broken down products also need to look like compost, should not produce any toxic material, and should be able to support plant life. Compostable plastics are made from plant materials such as corn, potato, cellulose, soy, and sugar.\(^\text{13}\)
Concentrated (or Confined) Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)

Defined and regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a large CAFO is a farm animal facility which stables or confines and feeds or maintains for 45 days or more within a 12-month period at least:

- 700 dairy cows;
- 1,000 beef cattle;
- 2,500 hogs over 55 pounds;
- 30,000 broiler chickens (used for meat) producing wet manure or 125,000 broiler hens producing dry manure; or
- 82,000 egg-laying hens.

CAFOs congregate animals, feed, manure and urine, dead animals, and production operations on a small land area. Feed is brought to the animals rather than the animals grazing or otherwise seeking feed in pastures, fields, or on rangeland. Please note that cattle spend the majority of their lives on pasture before being confined in a feedlot for the last 90 to 300 days of their lives.14 (See also feedlot.)

Smaller operations that raise fewer numbers of animals can be classified as “medium CAFOs” (for example, 750 to 2,499 hogs over 55 pounds) or “small CAFOs” (for example, fewer than 750 hogs) if they discharge manure directly into waterways or have been deemed a significant contributor of pollutants by the EPA.15

Factory farming is a term often used by animal welfare advocates to describe today’s most common animal production methods in the U.S., particularly at CAFOs. Similar to a factory, farm animals are raised and slaughtered in a way that maximizes production and profits. These production practices can lead to inhumane conditions and suffering for farm animals. For instance, egg-laying hens in CAFOs are usually kept in wire cages stacked floor to ceiling indoors, where the birds cannot spread their wings or always turn around. Such close quarters can lead to fighting, as the chickens’ natural ‘pecking order’ instinct is heightened. In order to limit the adverse effects of fighting, such as injury or death, part of the chicken’s beak is cut off when it is young. In addition, birds are not considered by the USDA to be livestock, and therefore unlike other animals they do not receive protection under the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, which requires that animals are rendered ‘insensible to pain’ before slaughter.16
Similarly, breeding pigs in CAFOs can be housed in gestation crates during their entire pregnancy and while feeding the piglets; these crates are barely bigger than the pigs' bodies and do not allow the animal to turn around, engage in instinctual nesting behaviors, or interact with the piglets aside from feeding them. The European Union has banned the usage of gestation crates, and has taken similar action on battery cages, veal crates, and other types of confinement. While some states in the U.S. have started to ban these types of cages, these practices remain commonplace.17

These facilities may also produce excess amounts of waste that can pollute air and water, and cause health problems for workers and neighbors living nearby.18

Conventional/Industrial/Modern Agriculture

Conventional farming is a term used to describe a wide range of agricultural practices. In general it is assumed to be any type of agriculture that requires high energy inputs (e.g., oil, synthetic pesticides and fertilizers) from off the farm to achieve high yields, and generally relies upon technological innovations, uniform high-yield crops (i.e., monocropping or having a large number of acres devoted to growing just one type of plant), and high labor efficiencies. In the case of livestock, most production comes from confined, concentrated systems. (See also CAFO).19

"Conventional farming," also called "modern agriculture," or "industrial farming," is the most common form of agricultural production in the world. It has delivered tremendous gains in productivity and efficiency. Food production worldwide has risen in the past 50 years; the World Bank estimates that between 70 percent and 90 percent of the recent increases in food production are the result of conventional agriculture rather than greater acreage under cultivation.20 However, some industrial practices have contributed to:

- Environmental problems (e.g., soil erosion, loss of soil nutrients, water and air pollution, water scarcity, increased pest resistance to pesticides, and increased greenhouse gas emissions);
- Economic and social concerns (e.g., loss of small and mid-sized farms; increase in market concentration by fewer agribusiness companies);
- Human health issues (e.g. pesticide exposure of farmworkers; development of antibiotic resistant bacteria).21

Conventional farming systems vary from farm to farm and from country to country. Elements of industrial agriculture can be found on smaller, mid-sized
farms\textsuperscript{8} as well as on farms that are certified organic. Conversely, not all large-scale farms employ every practice associated with conventional agriculture.

In most stores, conventional produce is not labeled as such, but you can identify it by a sticker on the fruit or vegetable that has a four-digit number starting with 4.

**Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)**

COOL is a labeling law that requires retailers, such as grocery stores, supermarkets, and club warehouse stores, to provide their customers with information regarding the country of origin of certain foods. Food products covered by the law include beef, veal, pork, lamb, goat, and chicken; wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; peanuts, pecans, and macadamia nuts; and ginseng. COOL allows consumers who are concerned about lenient pesticide regulations in other countries or mad cow disease to make more informed decisions about their produce and meat purchases, and can simplify the process of tracing an outbreak of disease.\textsuperscript{22,23} The program is administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service of the USDA.

**Demeter Biodynamic Certification**

The non-profit organization, Demeter® USA, is the only certification agent for Biodynamic® farms, processors and products in the United States. Developed in the 1920s, biodynamic agriculture meets all the requirements of a certified organic label, but exceeds them, envisioning the farm as a self-contained and self-sustaining organism. In an effort to keep the farm, the farmer, the consumer, and the earth healthy, farmers avoid chemical pesticides and fertilizers, do not make use of genetic engineering, utilize compost and cover crops, and set aside a minimum of 10% of their total acreage for biodiversity. The entire farm, not just a particular crop, must be certified, and farms are inspected annually. When meat is labeled Biodynamic®, there were no animal

\textsuperscript{8} There is no widely accepted definition for what constitutes a mid-sized farm, but researchers at the Agriculture of the Middle Project (\url{www.agofthemiddle.org}) approximate them as full-time family farms with annual gross sales between $50,000 and $500,000, though there are likely many farms of higher or lower gross sales levels that can also be considered “mid-sized.” They are usually farms that are too big for direct markets or too small for commodity markets, depending on geography, markets, and crops produced. Farms of this size are being lost at a higher rate than small and large farms.
by-products used in the livestock feed. Not every farmer who practices biodynamic agriculture will be certified as such, so talking to your farmers about their production methods is important.\textsuperscript{24,25}

**Eco-Kosher**

In response to concerns about the conventional kosher meat industry - which often suffers from the same environmental, worker rights, and animal welfare problems as the non-kosher meat industry - a number of different companies have begun to make sustainable meat available for Jewish consumers. While there is no official definition of “eco-kashrut” to date, the term includes notions of sustainable agriculture, fair labor practices, and ethical treatment of animals. The idea has been a staple of Jewish Renewal since Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi began promoting the term decades ago.\textsuperscript{26}

Please note that eco-kosher labels do not necessarily indicate that a food was produced according to traditional kashrut laws, although some do.

**Tav HaYosher** is an ethical seal for restaurants created by the Orthodox social justice organization, Uri L’tzedek. While not technically an eco-kosher seal (Tav HaYosher does not deal with environmental sustainability), this certification is a local, grassroots initiative to bring workers, restaurant owners, and community members together to create just workplaces in kosher restaurants.\textsuperscript{27}

**Magen Tzedek** is the ethical certification seal of the kosher food industry developed by the Hekshher Tzedeck project of the Conservative movement. It addresses decent pay and treatment of workers, animal welfare concerns, and environmental sustainability, and is designed to function exclusively in addition to the traditional kashrut certification.\textsuperscript{28}

**Fair Trade**

Fair Trade certification ensures that the workers who produce an item are given a fair price and experience safe working conditions. Environmentally sustainable farming methods are sometimes required as part of Fair Trade certification, as these methods protect the health of farmers and the environment. Fair Trade importers purchase as directly as possible from the producers, enabling the producers to make more money and helping them to strengthen their businesses. Fair Trade practices also promote the development of small business skills among farmers and artisans, who often form cooperatives to market their products. Members of these co-ops decide
how to invest the revenues from their Fair Trade business activity. Studies have shown that these co-ops often invest in social and business development projects in their community such as organic certification, education and training programs, and scholarships. Common Fair Trade foods include coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate, herbs, bananas and other fresh tropical fruits, sugar, rice, vanilla, and honey. Flowers can also be certified Fair Trade.

Farmers’ Market
Farmers’ markets are an integral part of the urban/farm linkage and have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm. Farmers’ markets allow consumers to have access to locally grown, farm fresh produce; enables farmers the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with their customers; and cultivate consumer loyalty with the farmers who grows the produce. Direct marketing of farm products through farmers’ markets continues to be an important sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide. As of mid-2011, there were 7,175 farmers markets operating throughout the U.S. This is a 17 percent increase from 2010.

These markets come in a variety of sizes and include a diversity of products, ranging from fruits and vegetables to eggs, cheese, meat products, and various homemade goods and crafts. Almost 75% of farmers’ markets in the U.S. are “producer-only” which the USDA defines as markets in which vendors must grow at least some of the product sold. Typically, producer-only farmers’ markets have specific rules governing the producer-only status. Some have rules specifying what types of food and other products can be sold, and some may allow any product to be sold at the market as long as it is grown or crafted by the vendor. Others have rules allowing vendors to sell products obtained from other sources (which may also be specified), as long as these products do not exceed a certain percentage of a vendor’s display. A lesser number of farmers’ markets allow vendors to resell goods produced locally or otherwise, or sell to wholesale customers, regardless of whether they produced the goods themselves.

Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) for WIC and Seniors (SFMNP)
The WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Programs provide WIC recipients and low-income seniors (who are at least 60 years old and who have household incomes of not more than 185% of the federal poverty income guidelines) with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods at farmers’ markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs. The FMNP and SFMNP are administered through a Federal/State partnership in which the Food and
Nutrition Service of the USDA provide cash grants to State agencies who disburse the money in the form of coupons according to a federally approved plan.

The Federal FMNP benefit level must be at least $10 and cannot be more than $30 per year, per recipient. However, State agencies may supplement the benefit level with State, local or private funds. The Federal SFMNP benefit, whether a household or individual, may not be less than $20 per year or more than $50 per year, except for certain State agencies that were grandfathered in the SFMNP using a different benefit level. State agencies may also supplement the benefit level with State, local or private funds, but not every state participates.

In Maryland, FMNP benefits are $20 per recipient per season (June to October) and SFMNP benefits are between $15 to $30 per recipient per season. Vouchers can be used to purchase fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs.

More and more farmers' markets are also accepting SNAP/EBT benefits. Participants in these federal food assistance programs need only to bring their EBT cards with them when they go to a market.

Feedlot
Feedlots are lots, yards, corrals, or other areas in which livestock, notably cattle, are confined for about 140 days prior to slaughter for the purpose of feeding (or fattening up) until an animal reaches the desired weight. (Please note that this confinement can be as few as 90 to as long as 300 days depending on how long it takes an animal to gain weight). The term does not include areas which are used for the raising of crops or other vegetation upon which livestock are allowed to graze or feed. While the majority of a cow’s life is spent eating grass on pasture, feedlot rations are generally 70 to 90 percent grain and protein concentrates. Meat bearing the label “No Feedlots” indicates that the animal went straight from the farm, or ranch, that is was raised on, to a USDA certified slaughterhouse, but there are no entities currently verifying this claim.

Food Alliance Certified™
Food Alliance Certified™ is an independent third-party certifying organization that promotes safe and fair working conditions, humane animal treatment, and careful stewardship of ecosystems for food producers in North America. It requires that farms practice Integrated Pest Management to reduce pesticide use, provide safe and fair working conditions for farm workers,
conserve soil and water resources, protect wildlife habitat, and provide healthy and humane care for farm animals. The use of growth promoting hormones and antibiotics is prohibited, as is the use of genetically engineered crops and livestock. Food Alliance Certified™ products include meats, eggs, dairy, mushrooms, grains, legumes, a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, and prepared products made with these certified ingredients.  

**Food Justice Certified**
The Food Justice Certified label and third-party certification program were developed by the Agricultural Justice Project (AJP), a social justice standards setting initiative. The AJP is a partnership of four non-profit organizations: The Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI-USA), The Farmworker Support Committee (CATA), Florida Organic Growers (FOG), and the Northeastern Organic Farming Association (NOFA). Meant to act as a domestic fair trade label, food bearing this label indicates that farm employees and food system workers are able to freely associate and take part in collective bargaining, receive fair wages and benefits, and work and live (when housing is provided) in healthy and safe environments; and that farmers have fair and equitable contracts with buyers, and are paid fairly.

**Food Miles**
The term “food mile” refers to the distance between the place where a food was grown or made and the place where it is eaten. The typical produce item found in a grocery store travels 1,500 miles from farm to shelf. In many cases, the farther a food item travels from where it is produced to where it is consumed, the more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are released, contributing to global climate change. This is not always the case, however. Higher food miles do not always translate into higher energy use as mode of transport and efficiency in production are factors. A tomato grown in a heated greenhouse in Maryland in winter may use more energy (and thus produce more GHG emissions) than a tomato grown in season in California and shipped across the country on a train. Thus, it is important to ask questions not only about where your food is grown, but how your food is produced.

**Free-Range/Free-Roaming**
The Free-Range or Free-Roaming label is not third-party certified, and is only verified on a limited basis. “Free-Range” means that poultry have some access to the outdoors for 51% of their lives (even if the outdoors is a dirty or concrete feedlot), but doesn’t guarantee that the animal actually spent any time
outside. As long as a door to the outdoors is left open for some period of time, the animal can be considered Free Range.\textsuperscript{44} For poultry to claim “Free-Range” status, the USDA requires that producers submit affidavits that they allow animals to access the outdoors. Generally, poultry products bearing these labels are from animals raised indoors, albeit with somewhat more room to move around than products that carry none of these labels. The Free-Range label is only regulated for poultry, and there are no set standards for beef, pork, and eggs, so its use on these products has no significance.\textsuperscript{45}

**Genetically Engineered Foods (GMO)**

Genetic engineering (GE) is the process of transferring specific traits, or genes, from one organism into a different plant or animal. The resulting organism is called *transgenic* or a *GMO* (genetically modified organism).\textsuperscript{46} Farmers and plant biologists have modified plants’ genes for thousands of years through breeding, but whereas in traditional cross breeding genes can only be exchanged between closely-related species, with genetic engineering, genes from completely different species can be inserted into each other. The most common GE crops are soybeans, corn, cotton, and canola. The majority of genetically modified crops grown today are engineered to be resistant to pesticides and/or herbicides so that they can withstand being sprayed with weed killer while the weeds in the field die.\textsuperscript{47}

Besides plants, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is currently considering approval of genetically modified Atlantic salmon eggs. These eggs include a gene from the Chinook (Pacific) salmon that provides the fish with the potential to grow to market size in half the time of conventional salmon. This fish would be the first genetically modified food animal for human consumption.\textsuperscript{48}

Although the FDA has declared that genetically engineered foods are “not inherently dangerous” and do not require special regulation, there is controversy surrounding GM foods, since there is not yet an understanding of their long-term impacts on human health or the environment. Some scientists believe that genetically modified foods could adversely affect biodiversity, native crops, and insects. GMO seeds are also patented, copyrighted intellectual property. However, seeds are designed to spread with the wind and rain and can therefore mingle with other seeds. When this happens with GMO seeds, the owners of their patents can sue unwitting farmers for “stealing” their property.

93% of Americans want GMO foods to be clearly labeled, but GM foods in the U.S. are not required to have a label on the approximately 70% to 75% of foods
(mostly processed in the form of high-fructose corn syrup, other corn products, and soy products) present in a grocery store.\textsuperscript{49,50} In contrast, the European Union requires that all products containing GMO above 0.9% for each ingredient must be labeled as such. Also, GMO foods must be separated along the supply chain to safeguard against "contamination" of organic farms, and records on GM crops must be kept for 5 years. Far fewer GM crops have been approved in the EU (9) than in the U.S. (58).\textsuperscript{51,52}

**Grain-Fed/Grain-Finished**

*Grain-fed* indicates that an animal was fed grain - industrial animal farms are reliant on corn and soy as a cheap source of protein-rich feed - rather than grass as forage at some point in its life. *Grain-finished* signifies that an animal spent the majority of its life on pasture before being fed grain during the last 90 to 300 days of its life. However, ruminants like cows have stomachs that evolved to digest cellulosic material (e.g., grass, etc.). As a result, animals fed a grain-heavy diet often have digestive issues, poor liver health, and, in extreme cases, death caused by the build up of acids in their stomachs which aren’t designed to digest these grains. Grain-fed cows also pose health problems for people in that the fat content of their meat is higher than from cows raised on grass (the marbled meat Americans so enjoy results from their diet of grain). If you are looking for meat that was raised under more favorable health and environmental conditions, look for “Pastured” or “Grass-fed” and talk to your farmers.\textsuperscript{53} (See Grass Fed and also Pastured or Pasture-Raised below.)

**Grass-Fed**

According to the USDA, any ruminant animals (animals such as cows, sheep, and goats) that are claimed to be grass-fed must have grass and forage as their sole feed source for their lifetime, with the exception of milk consumed prior to weaning. Animals cannot be fed grain or grain byproducts and must have continuous access to pasture during the growing season. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may also be included as acceptable feed sources along with routine mineral and vitamin supplementation.\textsuperscript{54}

Grass-fed labels on animal products are not third-party certified, and are only verified on a limited basis. The USDA sets the basic requirements for this label, however these standards are voluntary, and producers must submit affidavits to support their claim that they meet the requirements.\textsuperscript{55} The “grass-fed” label is used only by the USDA primarily to designate beef cattle that have been raised on grass and forage.
American Grassfed is one certifying body that requires animals to be on pasture most of their lives, prohibit hormones, and allow antibiotics only for sick animals. However, the organization rarely inspects the farms that claim to fulfill the standards, there are few standards related to animal welfare, and the standards are set by the organization’s own board of directors. It is best to talk with your farmers whenever possible to find out what sort of food they feed their animals.\(^56\)

Heirloom/Heritage

Heirloom and heritage foods are derived from rare and endangered breeds of crops and livestock. (“Heirloom” is usually used when talking about fruits and vegetables; “heritage” when discussing livestock). While there is no official definition of “heritage,” these are generally recognized as traditional livestock breeds that were raised by farmers in the past, before the drastic reduction of breed variety caused by the rise of industrial agriculture. (Within the past 15 years, 300 of 6,000 animal breeds have gone extinct worldwide, and there are currently 1,350 others at risk of becoming extinct.\(^57\)) Breeds used in industrial agriculture are bred to produce lots of milk or eggs, gain weight quickly, or yield particular types of meat within confined facilities. Heritage breeds are generally better adapted to withstand disease and survive in harsh environmental conditions, their bodies can be better suited to living on pasture, and they serve as an important genetic resource, preserving valuable traits within species so that future breeds can survive harsh conditions.\(^58\) The American Heritage Breeds Conservancy works to conserve rare breeds and genetic diversity in livestock.

According to Seed Savers Exchange (a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving rare plant varieties), an heirloom plant is “any garden plant that has a history of being passed down within a family.” \(^{iv}\) While some argue that an heirloom variety must be at least 50 to 100 years old, all agree that heirloom fruits and vegetables are unique plant varieties which are genetically distinct from the commercial varieties that are mass-produced to withstand long distance shipping and long shelf lives by industrial agriculture.\(^59\) About 7,000 different species of plants have been raised as food crops in the history of human agriculture. Yet in part because of modern tendencies towards mass production, only fifteen plant and eight animal species are now relied upon for about 90% of all human food.\(^60\) Preserving heirloom fruits and vegetables helps to maintain genetic diversity in the food system.
**Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**

Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, is an environmentally sensitive method of agricultural production that uses less harmful pest management techniques. IPM uses a combination of common-sense practices, information on the life cycle of pests and their interaction with the environment, and both bio-based and conventional pest control methods to manage pests in a way that poses the least hazard to people, property and the environment. While conventional pesticides are used in IPM, they are used less often and in smaller doses than conventional agricultural production.  

**Irradiation**

Food labels that include the radura, a plant-like logo, indicate that a product has been irradiated. When meat is irradiated, it is exposed to very high doses of radiant energy which kill all of the bacteria - good and bad. Forms of radiant energy include: microwave and infrared radiation, which heat food during cooking; visible light or ultraviolet light, which are used to dry food or kill surface microorganisms; and ionizing radiation, which penetrates deeply into food, killing microorganisms without raising the temperature of the food significantly. Many claim that irradiation makes food safer and more resistant to spoilage; however, it is ineffective against such diseases as foot and mouth, mad cow and hepatitis. Irradiation is currently approved for beef, eggs, horse meat, lamb, pork, poultry and many other products.  

**Local**

Unlike organic food, there is no legal or universally accepted definition of local food. In part, it is a geographical concept related to the distance between food producers and consumers, but there are varying opinions about what the distance must be to make a product “local.” Population density is important because what is considered local in a sparsely populated area may be quite different from what constitutes local in a more heavily populated region. This is referred to as “flexible localism,” with the definition of “local” changing depending on the ability to source supplies within a short distance or further away, such as within a state.  

One section of one program (the Business and Industry Program) in the 2008 Farm Bill defines the total distance that a product can be transported and still be eligible for marketing as a “locally or regionally produced agricultural food product” as less than 400 miles from its origin, or the State in which it is produced.
Besides being defined by distance, there are a host of other elements that may be used by consumers to characterize local food systems. Some may associate production methods, such as sustainable production and distribution methods, with the term “local food.” (See also Sustainable Agriculture.) The concept of local food may extend to who produced the food: the personality and ethics of the grower; the attractiveness of the farm and surrounding landscape; and other factors that make up the “story behind the food.” Local food systems have also been inappropriately conflated with small farms that are committed to place through social and economic relationships. While local farms may be small and invested in a particular locale, this is not always necessarily the case.

Two predominant types of local food markets include those where transactions are conducted directly between farmers and consumers (e.g., farmers’ markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), farm stands/on farm sales, and “pick your own” operations), and direct sales by farmers to restaurants, retail stores, and institutions such as government entities, hospitals, and schools. Other less formal sources of local foods include home gardening and sharing among neighbors, foraging and hunting, and gleaning programs. Locally produced foods may be sold via larger supply chains as well.

**Natural or Naturally Raised**

According to a new standard issued by the USDA in 2009, marketing meat as “naturally raised” indicates that livestock have never been fed animal by-products and have been raised entirely without growth promotants and antibiotics (except for some used to control parasites). The standard is voluntary (meaning producers can continue to use the term “natural” on their meat products without meeting these requirements), but producers can choose to operate a USDA-verified program involving a naturally raised claim. This claim has no bearing on the way the animal was raised or the food and additives that it consumed.

“Natural” meat and poultry products cannot contain artificial colors, artificial flavors, preservatives or other artificial ingredients, and they should be minimally processed so as to not fundamentally alter the product. Labels that include the term on meat and poultry must include a statement explaining the meaning of “natural” (e.g., no artificial ingredients, minimal processing, etc.) However, as with “naturally raised,” this term does not indicate how animals were raised, what they were fed, if antibiotics or growth hormones were used, or other aspects of production that consumers might logically expect from something labeled “natural.”
For other foods besides meat and poultry, the term “natural” is essentially meaningless as the FDA does not have an official, enforceable standard detailing what can be considered a “natural” food. From time to time, the FDA will issue warning letters to companies who it feels are not following the guidance it has provided on the topic, but there is no other regulatory action that it can take to ensure that “natural” is being used consistently and meaningfully.72

While some producers and companies will use “natural” inappropriately, other farms and producers do use the term to indicate foods that are minimally processed and that do not contain hormones, antibiotics, sweeteners, food colors, and flavorings that were not originally in the food. Look for additional labeling like USDA Organic on foods labeled as “natural” to provide more reliable information or, if possible, ask a farmer or company directly how their food was produced.

No Added Hormones, Hormone-Free, rBGH-Free, or rBST-Free
These labels indicate that animals were not given synthetic growth hormones. On dairy products, this means the cows were not dosed with rBGH or rBST, genetically engineered hormones that increase milk production, and can also cause health problems for the cow (e.g., cows can become malnourished when they lose more nutrients in their milk than they can ingest in their feed; udders suffer painful infections, etc.)73 Currently, many milk brands, especially those that are private label, do not use hormones, but the milk labels will not necessarily indicate this. If you are curious, you can ask the store where you are purchasing your milk for more information about the use of hormones in the milk they sell.

Hormones are also commonly used to speed growth in beef production, and the European Union’s Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures Relating to Public Health found that the use of six growth hormones in beef production (three naturally occurring and three synthetic) poses a potential risk to human health, but this finding has not been accepted in the U.S.74 The term “no hormones administered” may be approved for use on the label of beef products if sufficient documentation is provided to the USDA by the producer showing no hormones have been used in raising the animals.75 By law, hogs and poultry cannot be given any hormones, so the use of the label on these meats is misleading. To ensure that meats were raised without added hormones, ask your farmer or butcher as there may be some verification of this claim, but not necessarily.76
No Antibiotic Use and No Routine Antibiotic Use

“No Antibiotic Use” means that no antibiotics were administered to an animal during its lifetime. If an animal becomes sick, it will be taken out of the herd and treated with antibiotics, but it will not be sold with this label.77 “No Routine Antibiotic Use” indicates that an animal was only given antibiotics to treat illness. About 70% of antibiotics used in the United States are given to farm animals to promote growth and prevent disease, often caused by living in confined, stressful, and unsanitary conditions.78 Several of these antibiotics are also used to treat human illness. While antibiotic resistance can be traced in some measure to the over-prescription of antibiotics in the medical field, there is a growing body of research demonstrating that antibiotic-resistant bacteria are developing on CAFOs.79,80 Since people rely on the effectiveness of some of these same antibiotics to treat human illnesses it is worrisome that meat, dairy, and egg production which relies on antibiotics could contribute to antibiotic-resistance in people as well.

No Meat/Animal By-Products

Meat and poultry bearing this label should indicate that the animals were raised on feed that contained no byproducts from other animals (e.g., beaks, bones, tails, soft tissue like brains and spinal material, etc.). However, unlike the organic label, this claim is not verified by any third-party source, and there is no labeling standard for this claim. (See also 100% Vegetarian Feed.)

100% Vegetarian Feed

100% Vegetarian Feed means that animals are fed no animal byproducts which can include rendered protein from slaughtered farm animals like bone, meat, blood, and feather meal; digest from dead, dying, diseased, or disabled farm, wild, and other domesticated animals; marine byproducts (fish meal, fish oil, crab meal, fish by-products, etc.); dairy products; animal fats; and animal waste. Feed that contains animal byproducts can have pathogens and drug and pesticide residues which may have public health consequences.81 Also, mad cow disease is transmitted when a cow eats the infected brain or spinal material from an infected cow. Under current law, pigs, chickens, and turkeys which have been fed rendered cattle can themselves be rendered and fed back to cattle, thereby possibly allowing mad cow agents to infect healthy cows.82

100% Vegetarian Feed does not guarantee that animals were raised outdoors or on pasture, but it should indicate that they were raised on grasses, hay, silage and/or grain, such as corn.83 Please note, however, that some animals are omnivores, meaning that they were meant to eat both meat and non-meat products. For instance, one will often see “100% Vegetarian Feed” on packages
of chickens and eggs. While this may be better than having these chickens eat animal byproducts, chickens living on pasture typically eat grass, grain, and insects, and are meant to have some protein. It is best to ask your farmers about how their poultry was raised in order to determine how balanced of a diet they had.

**Organic (Certified Organic or 100% Organic)**
Organic farming refers to agriculture that relies on developing biological diversity in the field to disrupt habitat for pests, and maintaining and replenishing soil fertility. All kinds of agricultural products are produced organically, including produce, grains, meat, dairy, eggs, fibers such as cotton, flowers, and processed food products. Approximately 2% of the U.S. food supply is grown using organic methods. Over the past decade, sales of organic products have shown an annual increase of at least 20%, the fastest growing sector of agriculture.

In order to be certified and labeled as “organic” by the USDA, a food must have been produced without the use of most synthetic pesticides, petroleum-based or sewage-sludge based fertilizers, genetic engineering, or ionizing radiation. In addition, organic meat, poultry, eggs and dairy are produced without the use of antibiotics or growth hormones, and the animals are given organic feed (which does not contain animal byproducts) and access to the outdoors. Certification includes annual submission of an organic system plan and inspection of farm fields and processing facilities.

Not every farmer who grows according to or exceeding organic standards chooses to be certified. The regulatory process required for certification can sometimes be too costly, lengthy, and complex for those operating at a small scale. These farmers cannot use the phrase “certified organic” on their products. It is therefore best to talk to your farmers or visit their farms to learn about how the food is produced. Many farmers who participate in farmers’ markets, etc. will be happy to share their production methods and philosophies with you, or to invite you for a visit to their farm.

Organic food is not necessarily more nutritious than other food, but a 2002 report indicates that organic food is far less likely to contain pesticide residues than conventional food. In this study, 13% of organic produce samples vs. 71% of conventional produce samples contained a pesticide residue. (See Pesticides, Herbicides, Fungicides)
The cost of organic food may be higher than non-organic food because the organic price tag more closely reflects the true cost of growing the food: for example, substituting labor for chemicals is generally more expensive, and the health and environmental costs of cleaning up polluted water and dealing with pesticide contamination. Cost, however, is dependent on where a food is sold and product choice. \(^{89}\)

Organic produce in a store is labeled with a four-digit number starting with 9.

Sometimes you may hear food referred to as being “sustainably produced” as synonymous with “organically produced.” Organic farming is usually considered to be sustainable farming, but not always as some organic food is raised at an industrial scale that can also cause environmental harm. Likewise, as mentioned above, there are farmers who aren’t certified organic that farm in ways which can sustain a farm’s productivity for generations. (See also Sustainable Agriculture)

**Pastured or Pasture-Raised**

Pastured or pasture-raised indicates the animal was raised on a pasture and that it ate grasses and food found in a pasture, rather than being fattened on grain in a feedlot or barn. Pasturing livestock and poultry is a traditional farming technique that allows animals to be raised in a humane, ecologically sustainable manner. This is basically the same as grass-fed, though the term pasture-raised indicates more clearly that the animal was raised outdoors on pasture. The USDA does not have a formal rule governing the use of the terms “pastured” or “pasture-raised,” so products bearing this label do not necessarily indicate that an animal spent its life outside on pasture. However, the USDA will certify claims from producers that their livestock is pasture-raised, and if a product is USDA-certified as “pasture-raised,” consumers can be assured that the animals have had “continuous and unconfined access to pasture throughout their life cycle” and have never been “confined to a feedlot.” \(^{90}\) Because the pasture-raised definition does not impose any limitations on antibiotics or hormones, some consumers may be misled into thinking that a “pasture-raised” product includes those attributes. (See also Grass-Fed)

**Pesticides, Herbicides, Fungicides**

Pesticides, herbicides and fungicides are chemicals used to kill unwanted pests, weeds and fungi. Most of the chemicals are man-made, but several are botanical/plant-derived and other nonpersistent pest controls that can be used under restricted conditions in organic production (for example, pyrethrum is a
pesticide derived from chrysanthemums; BT is a naturally occurring soil organism that is toxic to some insects). Synthetic chemicals are linked to chronic illnesses as well as being suspected to cause cancer, reproductive disorders, endocrine disruption, and respiratory damage. Plant-derived chemicals, while typically breaking down more quickly with exposure to oxygen and sunlight than synthetic chemicals, can still cause acute health problems, like respiratory damage, for those farmworkers and others who are directly exposed during or after their spraying. Consumers are also exposed to these chemicals through pesticide residues found on fruits, vegetables and other foods that have been sprayed. (See also Organic).

Before a company can sell or distribute any pesticide in the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency must review studies on the pesticide to determine that it will not pose unreasonable risks to human health or the environment. Once EPA has made that determination, it will license or register that pesticide for use in strict accordance with label directions. Before allowing a pesticide to be used on a food commodity, EPA sets limits on how much of a pesticide may be used on food during growing and processing, and how much can remain on the food you buy. EPA also sets standards to protect workers from exposure to pesticides on the job.91

Seasonal
Food can be considered “seasonal” or “in season” when it is: outdoor grown or produced during the natural growing/production period for the country or region where it is produced. It need not necessarily be consumed locally to where it is grown. This applies to seasonal foods produced both in the U.S. and overseas.92,93

Sustainable Agriculture
The word “sustainable” does not have a hard and fast definition in general, although “sustainable agriculture” is defined legally by the USDA as being an integrated system of plant and animal production practices that will over the long-term: 1) Satisfy human food and fiber needs, 2) Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends, 3) Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls, 4) Sustain the economic viability of farm operations, and 5) Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.94

The basic goals of sustainable agriculture are environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic equity (sometimes referred to as the
“three legs” of the sustainability stool). For a broader discussion of the philosophies behind sustainable agriculture, visit the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program at http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/concept.htm or ask us for a hard copy of the principles detailed on their website.

**Sustainable Seafood**

According to The Smithsonian Sustainable Seafood Cookbook, sustainable seafood is fish or shellfish caught or farmed in a manner that doesn’t risk the future of the species. In the past several decades, consumer demand and advances in commercial fishing technology have resulted in the overfishing or depletion of many fish species to the point of commercial extinction (i.e., there are no longer enough to catch to sell). In addition, methods used to catch seafood can harm the environment when trawl nets and dredges are dragged along the bottom, sometimes destroying habitat, and very large numbers of “bycatch” (fish, birds, and marine mammals that are caught by accident and then killed when fishing for a targeted species; in the U.S. 2.3 billion pounds of sealife were discarded as bycatch in 2000 alone.)

Farmed fish and shellfish can provide an alternative to overfishing the oceans - especially for filter feeder species grown in clean water like clams, oysters, mussels, and scallops, or inland finfish operations which raise rainbow trout, catfish, striped bass, white sturgeon, and tilapia - but not all fish-farming practices are ecologically sound. Most of the negative issues involve coastal farming operations, such as those for Atlantic salmon and shrimp. Issues include the destruction of wetlands or mangroves (which serve as nurseries for many fish) for construction of farms; discharge of large amounts of waste into surrounding water; the spread of disease from farmed to wild fish; the interbreeding of wild populations with exotic or genetically engineered farmed fish that escape from ponds; and the amount of wild fish being caught to feed the farmed fish (e.g., it takes 2 to 3 pounds of wild caught fish to produce 1 pound of farmed salmon).  

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) label ensures that seafood comes from fisheries that meet strict environmental standards. The standards address various parts of the fishery, including the condition of the fish stocks, the effect of the fishery on the marine environment, and the way in which the fishery is managed overall. All products with the Marine Stewardship Council label are traceable back to the fishery, and the label is also accessible to developing countries and...
small fisheries. Independent certifiers inspect the fisheries, better ensuring that they meet the environmental standards set forth by the label. ⁹⁷, ⁹⁸

**Food & Water Watch**
(http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/fish/seafood/guide/) and the **Monterey Bay Aquarium**
(http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/sfw_recommendations.aspx) have printable guides available that indicate which fish are more sustainable than others. They will also send you hard copies by mail.

**Transitional Farming**

Transitional farming refers to a farm that is taking steps towards organic agriculture, but cannot yet be considered a certified organic farm. Organic certification requires that the soil is free from active use of certain chemicals for three years, disqualifying farms that are in the very beginning stages of chemical-free production. Supporting transitional farming is important to provide needed income to the farmer during the costly certification process, and also to demonstrate support for the farm’s transition.

**United Farm Workers’ Label**

Products bearing the UFW label indicate that the farm workers who picked or processed these foods enjoy decent wages, benefits, and working conditions. ⁹⁹

**Vegan**

Vegan diets are stricter than vegetarian diets. While vegetarians choose not to eat flesh, vegans also avoid dairy, eggs, and honey, as well as fur, leather, wool, down, and cosmetics or chemical products tested on animals. ⁶⁰

Approximately 1% of U.S. adults are vegan. ¹⁰¹

**Vegetarian**

A vegetarian diet excludes all meat, including fish. There are several types of vegetarian diets: *lacto-vegetarians* consume dairy products but not eggs; *ovo-vegetarians* eat eggs but not dairy; and *lacto-ovo-vegetarians* eat both eggs and dairy products. About 3% of U.S. adults are vegetarian. ¹⁰²

**Whole grains**

A whole grain contains the whole seed from a plant—the bran (or ‘outer shell’ which contains vitamins and trace minerals), germ (the nourishment for the seed which
contains antioxidants, vitamin E, B vitamins), and endosperm (the energy for the growing plant which contains protein and carbohydrates). Processed foods often remove the bran and germ from the seed, which subsequently removes the beneficial vitamins and minerals.

Many products now claim they are ‘made with whole grain’, but there is no government standard regulating use of the claim. The Whole Grain Council has a label which requires that the product contains at least 8 grams or more of whole grain per serving. The exact grams of whole grains in the product will be listed at the bottom of the label.

It is also helpful to check the product ingredient list, and see if the grain is preceded by the word ‘whole’, such as ‘whole grains’, ‘whole wheat’ or ‘whole oats’.
Appendix D

RESOURCES AND LINKS
Caterers

Green Restaurant Association
Works with caterers across the country to reduce the environmental impacts of their operations through a rigorous certification process.
www.lvfnb.com/112012issue/1112p26gra.html

Guide to Sustainable Catering
Created by MIT, this guide includes a list of questions to ask caterers in order to assess their degree of alignment with principles of sustainability.
web.mit.edu/workinggreen/docs/sustainable_catering_guide.pdf

*JHU Office of Sustainability “Greening Your Event” Guide
Resources for planning an environmentally sustainable event, including a green event planning checklist and a preferred green caterers directory of Baltimore.
http://tinyurl.com/greeneventjhu

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association
Information and resources about CSAs.
www.biodynamics.com/csa.html

Hazon
Resources for Jewish Communities to start a CSA program.
www.hazon.org/CSA

Local Harvest
Find farmers’ markets, CSA farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area.
www.localharvest.org/

*One Straw Farm
The largest organic farm in Maryland with a CSA program that tithes an extra share for every 10 shares sold through faith communities.
www.onestrawfarm.com/csa.html

USDA Alternative Farming System Information Center
Publications and resources about CSA programs.

Wilson College, Robyn Van En Center
CSA Farm Database
www.wilson.edu/wilson/asp/content.asp?id=1567

Compostable, Biodegradable & Recyclable Dishes, Utensils, Table Linens

Green Event
Biodegradable and compostable table settings.
www.greenevent.biz

Leafware
Disposable dinnerware made from fallen palm leaves and water.
www.leafware.com

Let’s Go Green
Eco-friendly home, business and office products.
letsgogreen.biz

World Centric
Sustainable and compostable dishware and tableware products.
www.worldcentric.org

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
Composting

Baltimore Food & Faith Project
Composting for Congregations resource guide.
http://tinyurl.com/compostcongregations

*Chesapeake Compost Works
One of the largest organic waste compost facilities, located in Baltimore City.
www.chesapeakecompost.com

*Compost Cab
For a small fee, they will pick up your organic waste weekly and bring it to an urban farm to compost.
http://compostcab.com/

Earth Ministry
Recycling and composting information for faith communities.
http://earthministry.org/take-action/lifestyle-choices/recycling-composting

How to Compost
www.howtocompost.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
General composting information.
www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/composting

*Waste Neutral
Baltimore-based sustainable waste management company for commercial and institutional applications.
www.wasteneutral.com

Curriculum and Education Resources (Books, Films, etc.)

Baltimore Food & Faith Project
Faith-based food system study guides and curriculum, video library, recommended reading list, and more.
http://tinyurl.com/foodandfaithresources

Center for a Livable Future Blog
Blog on current food systems issues, with links to additional blogs and resources.
www.livablefutureblog.com

Food for Thought and Action
A food sovereignty curriculum with one module specifically designed for faith groups
http://tinyurl.com/foodsovereignty

The Food Project
Various activities to teach young people about the food system.
http://thefoodproject.org/food-systems-curriculum

Hazon
Sustainable food curricula and sourcebooks for Jewish communities.
www.hazon.org/type/curricula-and-source-books

Northwest Earth Institute
‘Menu for the Future’- Small group discussion guides on food and sustainability.
www.nwei.org

Teaching the Food System
Lesson plans, slides, readings, and more on food system issues from field to plate.
www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/teaching-the-food-system/

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
**Denominational Policy Statements about Food and Agriculture**

**Baltimore Food & Faith Project**
List of links to denominational policy statements.
http://tinyurl.com/denompolicy

**Environmentally Friendly Cleaning Products**

**Center for Health, Environment & Justice**
Offers a Guide to Non-Toxic Cleaning among other green cleaning resources.
http://chej.org/campaigns/cehp/resources/green-cleaning/

**Eartheasy**
Non-toxic home cleaning information.
http://eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm

**Eco-Cycle**
Alternative cleaners and recipes.
http://ecocycle.org/hazwaste/ecofriendly-cleaning

**Environmental Working Group: Guide to Healthy Cleaning**
Rates everyday cleaning products on the basis individual and environmental health impacts.
http://www.ewg.org/cleaners


**Fair Trade Products**

**Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade**
Information about fair trade products specifically for Catholic institutions.
www.crsfairtrade.org/

**Equal Exchange Interfaith Program**
Offers 100% fairly traded coffee and other products at wholesale pricing to congregations and faith groups.
www.equalexchange.coop/interfaith-program

**Fair Trade Federation**
A trade association that strengthens and promotes North American organizations fully committed to fair trade.
www.fairtradefederation.org

**Fair Trade USA**
A third-party certifier of fair trade products in the United States.
www.fairtradeusa.org/

**Pura Vida Bishop’s Blend**
Certified fair trade organic and shade grown coffee; proceeds help to fund Episcopal Relief & Development programs throughout the world.
www.er-d.org/BishopsBlend

**Ten Thousand Villages**
A fair-trade retailer in Fells Point, Baltimore.
http://baltimore.tenthousandvillages.com

**Zeke’s Coffee**
Local coffee brewer with a large variety of fresh roasted coffee, roasted in small batches. Many organic and fair trade varieties available.
www.zekescoffee.com

**Farmworker Issues**

**Coalition of Immokalee Workers**
A community-based worker organization of mainly Latino, Mayan Indian and Haitian immigrants working in low-wage job throughout Florida.
www.ciw-online.org

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
Farm Labor Organizing Committee
A union of tens of thousands of migrant farm workers aiming to improve wages and working conditions.
www.supportfloc.org

United Farm Workers of America
Nation’s largest farm workers union.
www.ufw.org

Gardening

American Community Garden Association
Lists community gardens by state, provides a good newsletter, and lists funding opportunities.
www.communitygarden.org

*City Blossoms
An organization working in the Washington D.C. and Baltimore area to create urban gardening experiences that enrich the lives of children and their communities.
http://cityblossoms.org

*Civic Works- Baltimore’s Service Corps
Community Lot Team transforms vacant city lots into thriving community gardens and shared spaces.
http://www.civicworks.com

Food Corps
Nationwide team of leaders that connects kids to real food and helps them grow up healthy.
http://foodcorps.org/

Kids Gardening
Children’s gardening website.
www.kidsgardening.org

*Parks and People Foundation
The Community Greening Resource Network is a program that assists individuals, community gardens and green spaces throughout Baltimore.
http://www.parksandpeople.org/greening/resource-network/

University of Maryland
Home and Garden Information Center
http://www.hgic.umd.edu

Gleaning

Ample Harvest
Connects backyard gardeners with food pantries so that excess produce can be shared with those in need.
www.ampleharvest.org

*First Fruits Farm
A Christian ministry in Freeland, MD growing fresh food for the hungry.
http://firstfruitsfarm.org

*Garden Harvest
A non-profit, volunteer-run farm in Reisterstown, MD that donates fresh produce to disadvantaged citizens in the area and teaches others to replicate the Garden Harvest model.
http://www.gardenharvest.org

*Gather Baltimore
A volunteer-based Baltimore program that collects unsold produce from local farmers’ markets for redistributes to those in need.
http://www.gatherbaltimore.org/

*Maryland Service Access and Information Link (SAIL)
List of food pantries and soup kitchens in Baltimore City to contact regarding donating gleaned or leftover food.
http://tinyurl.com/baltimorefoodpantries

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
**Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network**  
Partnership of farms, donors, volunteers and food providers working together to fight hunger by harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables from farms and orchards and distributing them to those in need.  
[www.midatlanticgleaningnetwork.org](http://www.midatlanticgleaningnetwork.org)

**Humanely and/or Sustainably Raised Meat, Dairy, and Eggs**  
For a detailed description of animal welfare labels, view the “The Good Food Toolkit: Glossary of Terms and Labels”

**Amazing Grazing Directory**  
A listing of sustainable farms that produce grass-fed beef and dairy and pastured poultry and pork products in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.  

**Animal Welfare Institute**  
Created ‘Animal Welfare Approved’ label—the only 3rd-party certified label limited to independent family farms. Highest standards of all 3rd-party animal welfare certifiers in U.S.  
[www.animalwelfareapproved.org](http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org)

**Eat Wild**  
Clearinghouse for pasture-based farming with links to local farms selling grass-fed meat.  
[www.eatwild.com](http://www.eatwild.com)

**Food Alliance**  
A comprehensive label for sustainable food, from humanely produced meat to fewer pesticides used on crops.  
[http://foodalliance.org](http://foodalliance.org)

**Grow and Behold**  
Kosher, pastured meats without antibiotics or hormones.  

**Humane Farm Animal Care**  
‘Certified Humane Raised & Handled’ label.  
[www.certifiedhumane.org](http://www.certifiedhumane.org)

**Humane Heartland**  
Created the ‘American Humane Certified’ label—the first-ever certification program for humane meat.  
[www.humaneheartland.org](http://www.humaneheartland.org)

**Kol Foods**  
The largest supplier of 100% grass fed, sustainable kosher meat in the U.S.  
[www.kolfoods.com](http://www.kolfoods.com)

**Flowers (Local, Sustainably Grown and/or Fair Trade)**

**Organic Bouquet**  
An online collection of organically grown cut flowers and other eco-friendly gifts.  
[www.organicbouquet.com](http://www.organicbouquet.com)

**VeriFlora™**  
A sustainability certification program for fresh cut flowers and potted plants, which includes fair labor standards.  
[www.veriflora.com/](http://www.veriflora.com/)

**Fair Trade Certified™ cut flowers**  
A list of retailers in the area that sell fair trade certified flowers.  
[www.fairtradeusa.org/products-partners/flowers-plants](http://www.fairtradeusa.org/products-partners/flowers-plants)

***Local Color Flowers**  
A Baltimore florist specializing in locally grown cut flowers.  
[http://www.locoflo.com](http://www.locoflo.com)

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
Rainforest Alliance Certified Ferns and Flowers
Ferns and flowers from certified farms across the world.
www.rainforestalliance.org/agriculture/crops/ferns-flowers

Local Food (Directories of Farms, Farmers’ Markets, Wine, etc.)

*Baltimore Food Makers
Local food sources in the Baltimore area.
http://www.foodmake.org/localfood

*Buy Fresh Buy Local Chesapeake Region
A coalition working to market locally grown Maryland food products and to support local food system priorities.
http://bfblchesapeake.groupsite.com

Eat Well Guide
Guide for finding local, fresh, sustainable food in your area.
www.eatwellguide.org

Eat Wild
Clearinghouse for pasture-based farming with links to local farms selling grass-fed meat.
www.eatwild.com

Epicurious
Interactive map to identify fresh foods in your area, and to find ingredient descriptions, shopping guides, recipes, etc.
www.epicurious.com

Food Routes
Information on local food purchasing, news and advocacy.
www.foodroutes.org

Local Harvest
Find farmers’ markets, CSA farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area.
www.localharvest.org

*Maryland’s Best
Database of local products from Maryland farmers.
http://www.marylandsbest.net

*Maryland Wine
Information about Maryland vineyards, including maps, directions, and educational content.
http://www.marylandwine.com

Rodale Institute
Organic farm locator.
www.rodaleinstitute.org/farm_locator

*So. Maryland, So Good
Directory of Southern Maryland farm products.
http://www.somarylandsogood.com

United States Department of Agriculture
A national farmers’ market database, searchable by location and form of payment accepted.
apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets/

Nutrition Assistance Programs

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Provides information and resources about Food Assistance Programs, including SNAP, WIC, Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, etc.
http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
**Organic Foods**

Environmental Working Group  
“Pesticides in Produce” guide—a guide that can be distributed to members, describing the most important produce to buy organic.  
[www.ewg.org/foodnews](http://www.ewg.org/foodnews)

Organic Center  
Communicates the benefits of organic farming through peer-reviewed scientific articles.  
[www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org)

Rodale Institute  
A nonprofit organization dedicated to pioneering organic farming through research and outreach.  
[www.rodaleinstitute.org](http://www.rodaleinstitute.org)

**Policy**

*Baltimore Food Policy Task Force*  
A collaboration of stakeholders in Baltimore’s food system working to create a demand for healthy food, and to ensure access to affordable healthy food options for all Baltimore citizens.  
[http://tinyurl.com/foodpolicyinitiative](http://tinyurl.com/foodpolicyinitiative)

Food, Inc. The Movie: Hungry for Change  
Learn about the issues presented in the movie Food, Inc. and how you can take action.  
[www.takepart.com/foodinc/action](http://www.takepart.com/foodinc/action)

Fresh, The Movie: Call to Action  
[www.freshthemovie.com/call-to-action/10-fresh-actions](http://www.freshthemovie.com/call-to-action/10-fresh-actions)

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Works to create environmentally and economically sustainable rural communities through sound policy.  
[www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org)

IATP Food and Society Fellows  
“Understanding the Farm Bill: A Citizen’s Guide to a Better Food System”  
[http://tinyurl.com/understandingfoodsystem](http://tinyurl.com/understandingfoodsystem)

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
Supports economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture, natural resources, and rural communities.  
[www.sustainableagriculture.net](http://www.sustainableagriculture.net)

National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service  
Information on policies that support or influence local food production.  
[atra.ncat.org/attra-pub/local_food/policy.html](http://atra.ncat.org/attra-pub/local_food/policy.html)

Sustainable Food Policy  
A guide to help institutions create, promote and implement practical, sustainable food purchasing policies.  
[www.sustainablefoodpolicy.org/SustainableFoodPolicyGuide.pdf](http://www.sustainablefoodpolicy.org/SustainableFoodPolicyGuide.pdf)

**Recipes**

Angellic Organics  
Guides highlighting different vegetables.  
[http://tinyurl.com/angellicorganics](http://tinyurl.com/angellicorganics)

Epicurious Seasonal Recipes  

Simply in Season: A World Community Cookbook  
[www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/index.html](http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/index.html)

Vegetarian Times  
Thousands of vegetarian recipes, with a search feature.  
[www.vegetariantimes.com](http://www.vegetariantimes.com)

* * Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
The Veggie Table
Vegetarian recipes and information, organized by season.
www.theveggietable.com/recipes/recipes-byseason.html

Recycling

*Baltimore City Public Works Single Stream Recycling

*Baltimore County Recycling and Waste Prevention
http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/agencies/publicworks/recycling

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
General information about recycling.
http://epa.gov/recycle/recycle.html

For recycling in your area, contact your city or county government.

Reusable Dishes, Utensils, Table Linens

Goodwill
www.goodwill.org

The Salvation Army
www.salvationarmyusa.org

Selected Other Organizations Working on Food and Agriculture (Faith-based and Secular)

*Baltimore Green Works
Green Resource Guide
http://baltimoregreenworks.com/resource-guide

Campaign for Fair Food (Presbyterian Church USA)
www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/fairfood

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)
The leading Jewish environmental organization in the United States.
http://coejl.org

The Color of Food
A public network directory of farmers, urban growers, food activists, chefs, nutritionists and other folks of color involved in the food system all over the nation, as well as internationally.
http://thecoloroffood.org

Community Alliance with Family Farmers
A movement of rural and urban people to foster family-scale agriculture that cares for the land, sustains local economies and promotes social justice.
http://caff.org

Earth Ministry
A nonprofit organization committed to engaging the Christian community in environmental stewardship.
http://earthministry.org/take-action/lifestyle-choices/food-farming

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership promotes rural-urban alliances for just and sustainable food systems that improve community health.
http://www.emoregon.org/food_farms.php

*Future Harvest
A Chesapeake alliance for sustainable agriculture.
www.futureharvestcasa.org

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GreenFaith</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sacred Foods Project</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspires, educates, and mobilized people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership.</td>
<td>An interfaith project incorporating religious and ethical principals in the ways in which we produce and distribute food.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.greenfaith.org">www.greenfaith.org</a></td>
<td><a href="https://www.aleph.org/sacredfoods.htm">https://www.aleph.org/sacredfoods.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Growing Power</strong></th>
<th><strong>Samaritan Women Farm</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A national nonprofit organization and land trust providing hands-on training, demonstrations, outreach and technical assistance through the development of Community Food Systems.</td>
<td>A Christian ministry farm in Baltimore City donating produce to local shelters and families in need.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Hazon</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sustainable Table</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Jewish environmental organization working to build a healthier and more sustainable Jewish community.</td>
<td>Educates consumers on food-related issues and works to build community through food.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Kayam Farm at Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center</strong></th>
<th><strong>The Jew and the Carrot</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A farm and retreat center in Reisterstown, MD that embodies and inspires social and ecological responsibility through hands-on Jewish agricultural education.</td>
<td>Blog on food organized by Hazon; focused on Jewish communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://pearlstonecenter.org">http://pearlstonecenter.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.jcarrot.org">www.jcarrot.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Pearlstone Center</strong></th>
<th><strong>Lists of additional organizations working on food and agriculture issues</strong></th>
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</thead>
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<td>A farm and retreat center in Reisterstown, MD that embodies and inspires social and ecological responsibility through hands-on Jewish agricultural education.</td>
<td><a href="http://tinyurl.com/foodagorganizations">http://tinyurl.com/foodagorganizations</a></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture</strong></th>
<th><strong>Baltimore Food &amp; Faith Project’s list of other organizations</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotes profitable farms that produce healthy food for all people while respecting the natural environment.</td>
<td><a href="http://tinyurl.com/foodandfaithotherorgs">http://tinyurl.com/foodandfaithotherorgs</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.pasafarming.org">www.pasafarming.org</a></td>
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<th><strong>Sacred Foods Project</strong></th>
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<td>Lists of additional organizations working on food and agriculture issues</td>
<td>Baltimore Food &amp; Faith Project Worship Materials</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.aleph.org/sacredfoods.htm">https://www.aleph.org/sacredfoods.htm</a></td>
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* *Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.*
Sustainable Centerpieces

Jews United for Justice: Green & Just Celebration Guide
Information about sustainable centerpieces & decorations on pages 20-23.
www.jufj.org/green_just_celebrations

*Jewish Community Services in Baltimore
“Centerpieces for Tzedakah” are sustainable, custom-decorated baskets that reflect a donation to Jewish Community Food Fund.
http://www.jcsbaltimore.org

Sustainable Seafood

Monterey Bay Aquarium
Seafood Watch Guide.
http://tinyurl.com/seafoodrecs

Food And Water Watch
Smart Seafood Guide
www.foodandwaterwatch.org/fish/seafood/guide

Waste Audits

Greenfaith Waste Audit
A step-by-step guide to conduct a waste audit in your institution to give a snap shot of the current waste stream and to take effective measures to reduce waste.
http://tinyurl.com/greenfaithwasteaudit

Natural Resources Defense Council
Webpage of information and resources regarding waste audits.
www.nrdc.org/enterprise/greeningadvisor/wm-audits.asp

Vegetarianism, Veganism

Christian Vegetarian Association
An international, non-denominational Christian organization promoting vegetarian eating.
www.all-creatures.org/cva/default.htm

Jewish Veg
Information about the Jewish vegetarian movement.
www.jewishveg.com/

Vegetarian Resource Group
Resources, guides, and news about vegetarian eating.
www.vrg.org

Vegetarian Kitchen
Recipes, cooking tips, and nutrition information on vegetarian cooking.
www.vegkitchen.com

* Indicated a Baltimore-area resource.
Appendix E
SUCCESS STORIES
The Episcopal Church of the Messiah, Baltimore, MD

**Congregation Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

The Episcopal Church of the Messiah has a long tradition of community outreach, with a particular emphasis on improving access to healthy food among its neighbors. For the past six years, Messiah has been promoting community health and relationships through hosting a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) pick-up site on its property, located in the Hamilton neighborhood of Northeast Baltimore. With shares from One Straw Farm ([www.onестrawfarm.com](http://www.onestrawfarm.com)), the largest certified organic farm in Maryland, Messiah congregants have not only worked to support local, sustainable agriculture, but they have helped make fresh, healthy produce more readily available to the residents of their community.

In joining a CSA, congregants and others in the community become a member of the farm by purchasing a ‘share’ for a set price prior to the start of the growing season. In exchange, the member receives a box of fresh produce weekly for the entire season, which they pick up at Messiah. The idea to begin a CSA program arose in 2003 when one of Messiah’s signature ministries, a large community Thanksgiving dinner that served hundreds of people in need, ended.

Senior Warden, Ira Gooding, notes that though the Thanksgiving dinner was a valuable ministry, “Many of us recognized its glaring shortcoming - it fed people only once a year.” As a result, Ira and other members began brainstorming ways to have a more profound and sustained effect on the community’s food supply.

Shortly thereafter, Ira and CSA-coordinator, Sarah Miranda, met fellow Episcopalians, Joan and Drew Norman of One Straw Farm, who were, coincidentally, looking to expand their CSA operation. Upon learning that One Straw tithes a share for every ten shares the church signs up, the members of Messiah were on board and began publicizing this opportunity to parishioners and community members alike. According to Ira, “We quickly realized this was a perfect fit for us. We could offer an alternative food supply to the Hamilton community while also receiving fresh, local produce that could be distributed to those in need,” using produce from the tithed shares, which are distributed to the Harford Road Senior Center, St. Matthias’ Loaves and Fishes free lunch program, and other small poverty-relief ministries.

Messiah was one of the first churches to host a CSA drop-off site; but it is now one of ten other churches and synagogues in the...
Baltimore area participating in a CSA with One Straw Farm. Ira and the other members feel that this program has been a blessing on a personal, community, and regional level. Not only are they brought into personal contact with neighbors on a weekly basis, but they have also been instrumental in raising regional awareness of CSAs to other faith communities.

In the Spring of 2010, Messiah took their food-related initiatives to the next level by hosting a container gardening workshop with a Master Gardener from the neighborhood. In the well-attended workshop, participants learned valuable skills for how to supplement their meals with homegrown produce of their own.

Messiah plans to continue the CSA program and other community-based food initiatives to support local farmers and help provide neighbors with healthy food options and resources. The congregants feel truly grateful for the positive impacts their efforts to be faithful stewards of God’s creation have had on the surrounding community, and they hope to continue encouraging sustainable practices and programs long into the future.
The Franciscan Center, Baltimore, MD

Serving Food with Dignity

The Franciscan Center, founded by the Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore in 1968, has a long history of feeding the poor and homeless in Baltimore. Four days a week, the Center serves a hot lunch meal to as many as 500 hungry people, totaling 114,333 meals in 2009 alone. Edward McNally was the Center’s executive director from 2010 to 2012; during his tenure there, he placed a new emphasis on healthy eating. St. Francis of Assisi said, “It is not fitting, when one is in God’s service, to have a gloomy face or a chilling look.” McNally adds that, “You can’t serve an unhealthy meal with a smile... There is nothing more dignified than a nutritious meal.”

Toward that end, the Center began partnering with various local farmers, chefs, businesses, and organizations like the Center for a Livable Future (CLF), the Abell Foundation, the Johns Hopkins University Campus Kitchens, and Wegmans Supermarket to bring more fresh produce to Baltimore’s most needy in an attempt to increase the personal health of an at-risk population. McNally believes that, “If we can increase the nutritional content in the food served to the City’s poorest and most disadvantaged citizens—many with or at risk for contracting disease—then we will positively impact public health.”

The Franciscan Center recently launched a Healthy Monday campaign as part of a national movement that dedicates the first day of every week to promoting healthy behaviors that help prevent chronic disease and reduce environmental footprints. Every Monday at the Center, a delicious vegetarian option is offered to clients in an effort to encourage people to eat less meat and more fruits and vegetables. On this new campaign’s kick-off day in September 2010, celebrity chef Kim O’Donnel took time out of her busy schedule to give a cooking demonstration to the center’s two full-time cooks, Kim and Rick, to teach them how to incorporate fresh produce into healthy, tasty meals. O’Donnel was very proud and honored to take part in this event; she says, “Helping to promote the idea that everyone deserves access to healthy, delicious food is very important to me.”

For the two cooks, who were former clients at the Franciscan Center, launching the Healthy Monday campaign has been a challenge, but as they explain, “By bringing in experts, like Chef O’Donnell, to teach us how to prepare healthier, balanced lunches, we’ve been able to not only better prepare fresh vegetables, but we take that knowledge home and feed our own families better.”
The clients have also been very receptive to and excited about the improvements in the quality of meals served at the Franciscan Center. The vegetarian lasagna with roasted vegetable marinara sauce served on the Healthy Monday kick-off was a hit! And the vegetarian shepherd’s pie is the most popular option each Monday now.

The Franciscan Center plans to continue their Healthy Monday initiative, with the hopes of promoting additional related programs, such as nutrition education and composting leftover food scraps. The Center has been an inspiration in changing how folks in Baltimore are serving the homeless and hungry. As former Associate Director Heather Newman said, “All our clients know they will be treated with dignity and respect. We try to care for the whole person, their mental and physical health.” This philosophy of serving healthy food with dignity and a smile is one that is spreading throughout other soup kitchens and food pantries in the area.
Congregation Netivot Shalom, Pikesville, MD

Community Kiddish Garden

Seen from the road, it’s just another house on a residential street, but at a closer glance, Netivot Shalom is a small yet vibrant modern-orthodox synagogue with a beautiful community garden. As a 60-person congregation without professional staff, Netivot Shalom relies on the leadership and commitment of volunteers to lead services, carry out projects, and to grow food.

After completing a 2-year Green Synagogue Covenant with the assistance of the Baltimore Jewish Environmental Network, Netivot Shalom was looking for a capstone project that would promote values of sustainability, ecological responsibility, and connection to the Earth. The environmental committee decided a community garden fit the bill.

The community at Netivot Shalom has come together several times to work on major garden projects, such as double digging and tilling the beds; planting the spring, summer, and fall crops; and building compost bins. Each week, a congregant or family signs up to water, maintain, and harvest food from the garden to serve after worship services on Saturday. The congregation is able to grow enough food to donate fresh produce to a Jewish food bank, Ahavas Yisroel, which provides Jewish families in Baltimore with several meals for the Sabbath.

“Over tending to this garden, I met people who I never knew,” said Abbe Zuckerberg, a garden captain at Congregation Netivot Shalom. “It became a place for schmoozing and connecting. People who never lifted a hoe were enthralled by this project. And it was a very public statement that we were doing something positive for our Jewish community and for the earth.”
Maryland Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, MD

Raising Consciousness

With only 100 members, Maryland Presbyterian Church (MPC) is a small congregation that has worked to make big improvements in their environmental practices over the years. Because of their commitment to caring for God’s earth, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.'s Environmental Ministries program certified MPC as an Earth Care Congregation on July 1, 2010. With this honor, MPC affirmed the Earth Care Pledge to integrate environmental practices and thinking into all facets of its church life and activities in the fields of worship, education, facilities, and outreach.

Switching to fair-trade coffee was one of MPC’s earliest efforts to encourage sustainable practices on site and among its members. The fair-trade certification ensures that the farmers who produce an item are given a fair price for it, that their work conditions are safe, and that environmentally sustainable farming methods are used to grow the food. According to Pastor Mary Gaut, “People really enjoy the fair-trade coffee and respect what the fair-trade certification means. Many members even ordered coffee through the church for their own use at home before the fair-trade label was widely available in supermarkets.”

This year, to further their efforts, MPC began composting on church property with several large compost bins placed outdoors. The idea behind the new compost bins, according to church member, Dr. Bill Breakey, was to reduce the amount of food waste sent to landfills and to encourage members to do the same by bringing in their household food waste to add to the outdoor bins. There is also a small compost pail next to the church coffee maker with a sign that encourages members to add the coffee grounds and filters to be composted instead of throwing these in the garbage. Dr. Breakey notes that, “It’s been a slightly challenging adjustment for people, but everyone is beginning to catch on and use our compost bins more and more.”

Among many of MPC’s practices and programs aimed at raising awareness among congregants about food sustainability and justice issues, the 2011 Lenten Soup Series was a major success. For five weeks, Pastor Gaut held a series of study sessions, each combined with a potluck dinner, in which congregants were encouraged to use organic, local ingredients in their dishes. This was not an easy task to accomplish in February and March given the cold temperatures, but Pastor Gaut shares, “This at least allowed us to start conversations about where our food comes from.” Throughout the series, cookbooks using local, seasonal ingredients were highlighted, and Pastor Gaut raised important questions about faith’s role in eating habits and food choices. Participants took away important lessons about eating as a moral act.
MPC congregants constantly engage one another in conversations about food justice and environmental stewardship and always look for ways to improve their practices. Pastor Gaut explains that she tries to use any event that involves the sharing of food as an opportunity to educate and raise consciousness among her members. Important issues are also discussed and ideas generated every Sunday morning during an open forum that MPC holds for congregants and community members. Many future plans are in the works for MPC, including a spring film series on food justice, more waste reduction strategies, and the use of local communion wine.
St. Matthews United Methodist Church, Turner Station, MD

**Kids for Christ Community Garden**

Located in the Baltimore County neighborhood of Turner Station, St. Matthews United Methodist Church (UMC) has a strong commitment to social justice issues in the surrounding community. Turner Station, historically an industrial neighborhood, has lost much of its industry since the 1950s, leading the community to suffer economic decline over the years. Between 1950 and 1970, nearly half the population of Turner Station was lost; apartments and row houses were abandoned; and problems such as drug abuse and crime became common. This predominantly African American community exists today much as it did fifty years ago; and according to 2000 U.S. Census Data, 31% of families with children under the age of 18 are living below the poverty level. The good news is that things are starting to turn around in Turner Station and encouraging signs of redevelopment have occurred. One such change has been inspired by Katherine Scott, Master Gardener, community activist, and wife of St. Matthews’ pastor, the Rev. Dred Scott.

After witnessing an increasing number of impoverished youth and community members suffering from obesity and other diet-related health issues, Mrs. Scott became determined to do something about it. Believing that people’s health and self esteem can be improved growing vegetables and fruits by themselves while saving money at the same time, Mrs. Scott began working with a community garden in 2008 that had existed since the 1960s. Her vision: “To transform a community one child at a time.”

In a wide swath of land directly under Baltimore Gas and Electric power lines, the 2500 square foot garden, divided into many different plots, is truly a community endeavor, as church members and nearby neighbors work together to manage the green space.

One of the most successful aspects of the garden has been the St. Matthews’ Kids for Christ Garden, a plot of land set aside to be used as a teaching garden for children. Mrs. Scott brings children to the garden to help
plant seeds, to harvest produce (which they can then take home with them), to experience the beauty of nature, and to have fun learning about how food is grown. Mrs. Scott’s goals for the children are that they make healthier food choices, get outside and exercise more often, learn how to be better stewards of the earth by gardening according to sustainable practices, and have fun! She is also working to teach the kids important values concerning the needs of others, showing them how to pass on the knowledge they’ve gained about growing food to help others plant their own gardens, thereby reducing grocery bills and ensuring increased access to healthy produce.

The garden is a beautiful place. The bounty of ripe eggplants, peppers, beans, and herbs in the summer; the butterfly garden; playful children’s plots of land; funny scarecrows; and large crosses signaling God’s presence make this space whimsical, peaceful, and vibrant. Mrs. Scott admits that the garden is a “work in progress” and that it’s been a challenge trying to get more people to take ownership, but she says, “I enjoy it.

Everyone gets together and we have fun... We are just trying to set good examples for the community to follow.” She is especially excited when the children take the produce home with them or when neighbors come to the garden to harvest fresh produce because the ultimate goal is to get healthy foods into the hands of the community members who need it most.
References


