

# VALUES-BASED INSTITUTIONAL PURCHASING AND THE OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS' MEALS ON WHEELS PROGRAM

Assessing capacity for values-based purchasing policy implementation within Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments' (OCWCOG) Meals on Wheels program.

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## Executive Summary

This research assesses the capacity for values-based institutional purchasing policy within the OCWCOG MOW program. Values-based food purchasing policy directs and prioritizes purchasing spend for nutritious, sustainable, and fairly produced food; generates sustained benefit for regional food systems. Using values-based purchasing policy standards, researchers assess current grocery and food purchases, creating a baseline level of good-food purchasing. This baseline assessment, combined with stakeholder interviews, shows that OCWCOG MOW has capacity to implement GFPP standards.

This research uses a set of standards called the ‘Good Food Purchasing Program’ (GFPP), developed by the Los Angeles Council of Governments’ Food Policy Council. The GFPP analyzes purchasing across five value categories: 1) a strong local food economy, 2) environmental sustainability, 3) valued workforce, 4) the humane treatment of animals and 5) high nutritional quality. Each category has baseline criteria for Level 1 compliance; to be considered a “good food provider” an institution must meet at least the baseline (Level 1) standards in all five categories.

Research partners include OCWCOG Meals on Wheels and Bateman Community Living staff. Additionally, three regional food-systems stakeholders consented to interviews, shedding light on the regional institutional purchasing policy landscape. The purchasing assessment uses MOW purchasing and program information provided by MOW staff. This purchasing data is used to assess the baseline level of good-food purchasing, using the GFPP standards and criteria. Data limitations were encountered when accessing full purchasing records. The findings and recommendations contained in this report strongly support increased purchasing data collection and management within the agencies.

The OCWCOG Meals on Wheels program operates ten congregate senior dining sites and a central production kitchen, servicing Lincoln, Benton and Linn counties. Purchasing and meal preparation costs are shared within an Area Agency On Aging (AAA) consortium that includes Lane Councils of Government (LCOG), Northwest Senior Disability Services (NWSDS) and OCWCOG. The consortium has contracted with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC), Bateman Community Living, for meal preparation and food purchasing.

The GFPP assessment shows areas of needed improvement in Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability, with both falling under baseline levels. The agency excels in the Valuing Nutrition category, meeting most GFPP standards criteria and gaining two points. Strong workplace protections, Oregon’s minimum wage increases, and union organizing meet criteria for Valued Workforce. More data is needed to ensure workplace protection criteria are

met earlier in the supply chain, such as ensuring protections and fair wages for field workers and food processors. Purchases partially meet Valuing Local Economies criteria with existing local foods providers for dairy, some produce and bread products. More, detailed purchasing data is needed to complete a thorough economic analysis; this data was not available for this report.

Based on these findings, this report suggests eight ways that OCWCOG can build on current capacity to meet baseline criteria, becoming a 'good-food provider'.

1. Reduce the volume of animal products purchased.
2. Switch one (of the two) daily entrée choices to a vegetarian meal.
3. Increase purchases of local, sustainable and humanely raised meat, dairy, fish and eggs.
4. Expand fruit, vegetable and whole grain purchases to reach 50% of total purchases by volume.
5. Expand zero-food waste practices to all central production kitchens and dining sites.
6. Create a simple tracking system for food purchasing.
7. Request written documentation from the FSCM regarding labor law compliance of food vendors and suppliers.
8. Promote OCWCOG as a leader in valued workforce.

These recommendations provide an opportunity for OCWCOG and Oregon's Area Agencies on Aging to show their commitment and support of regional food systems. The report addresses barriers such as cost, access and infrastructure. The research found several opportunities for implementation of GFPP practices and standards, including: expanding good-food partnerships, highlighting MOW purchasing economic impacts, reducing food waste and curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Projects and research investigating governmental and private institutions' role within local food systems (LFS) are gaining ground within regional planning circles. Additionally, research has revealed the importance and impacts of values-based food policy development within urban and rural regions.<sup>1</sup> Merging these two ideas, local food leaders are promoting values-based institutional purchasing platforms and are advocating for 'good food' purchasing policy interventions.

Food procurement—the processes through which institutions such as hospitals and schools purchase and serve food—offers powerful opportunities for public institutions to prioritize accessibility to nutritious, sustainable, and fairly produced food and to generate sustained benefit for regional food systems.<sup>2</sup> Prioritizing regional social, economic, health and well-being, values-based purchasing policy can serve this critical policy function. Likewise, uniting local leaders into food policy coalitions can draw together groups working in different sectors and bring wide-ranging changes to a food system.<sup>3</sup>

Knowing the potential to leverage public funds for greater good, many leaders are calling to expand the implementation of values-based 'good food' purchasing policies and decision making. For example, Farm to School efforts have secured national funding and technical support to increase local foods purchasing and expand school gardens.

Within the rise of values-based purchasing policy interventions, special attention has been given to programs using public funds to provide community services including hospitals, schools and worksites.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, research is pushing to prioritize healthy food procurement policy implementation for settings where food is provided or sold to children, Native American, elderly and other highly vulnerable populations for whom dietary-related diseases are particularly prevalent.<sup>5</sup> Even so, there are over 5,000 independent and locally run senior meal programs in the United States, serving 900,000 meals daily.<sup>6</sup> Connecting hospitals and school districts have been a main focus; in many occasions, senior food programs are overlooked.

A recent regional report by EcoTrust researching institutional purchasing leaves out Oregon's senior nutrition program in its entirety.<sup>7</sup> The "Farm to Institution Metrics Platform" report defines important regional food-systems institutions as: 1) schools, including elementary,

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<sup>1</sup> Hooks, Teresa and Áine Macken-Walsh, Olive McCarthy and Carol Power. "The Impact of a Values-Based Supply Chain (VBSC) on Farm-Level Viability, Sustainability and Resilience: Case Study Evidence". *Sustainability*. 2017

<sup>2</sup>Reinhardt, Sarah, MPH, RD and Ricardo J. Salvador, PhD, MS. "Health Professionals as Partners in Values-Based Food Procurement". *AMA Journal of Ethics*, 2018

<sup>3</sup> Christy Anderson Brekken, J.D., M.S., "Why and How to Include Policy in Ag of the Middle Research". *Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota*, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Niebylski, Mark L. "Healthy Food Procurement Policies and Their Impact". *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Cambell, Norm, et, al. "Healthy Food Procurement Policy: An Important Intervention to Aid the Reduction in Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases." *Canadian Journal of Cardiology*, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Meals on Wheels America. <https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>

<sup>7</sup>Enelow, Noah, PhD, Amanda Osborne, MS and Stacey A. Sobell, MPH. "Farm to Institution Metrics Platform". *EcoTrust*, 2018.

middle, and high schools, as well as pre-k and early childcare programs; 2) health care facilities, including hospitals, and any clinic that serves food; 3) institutions of higher education, including community colleges, public and private four-year colleges and universities, professional schools, and other institutes of post-secondary education that offer dining services; and 4) privately owned assisted living facilities, juvenile detention centers and corporate cafes.<sup>8</sup> Institutions serving seniors (and those with disability), such as the Oregon Area Agencies on Aging, COG's or Meals On Wheels programs are not mentioned within the report.

Values-based purchasing solutions are arriving, with policy standards that encourage and direct institutional purchases to good-food producers and distributors. Still, questions remain within the adaption and implementation of these policy frameworks for senior meal programs, such as Meals on Wheels. As the Meals on Wheels research gap continues, more questions arrive upon the institutional purchasing policy landscape, such as:

- Is a values-based purchasing policy framework feasible for local agencies providing nutrition services to seniors and those with disability?
- What opportunities and constraints exist to align current institutional spending with values-based policy and purchase more 'good food'?

Based in the central Willamette Valley of Oregon, the OCWCOG senior nutrition program operates ten congregate senior dining sites and a central production kitchen, spanning three counties: Lincoln, Benton and Linn. They have made great effort to serve healthy, fresh and appealing food for seniors (and those with disability) within their region. Meals on Wheels staff want to build and expand on current successes within their senior meal program and expand their offerings of 'good food' for their clients. Moreover, OCWCOG planning and economic development staff are interested in data-driven decision-making options that could positively affect their regional food systems.

The Good Food Purchasing Policy (GFPP) framework provides a data-driven, standards-based assessment structure, with a possibility serve both of these functions for OCWCOG. Using this structure allows staff to assess current values-based food purchasing capacity and explore opportunities to purchase more "good food"; affect positive food systems change.

**This investigation assesses the capacity of the Oregon Cascades West Council of Government's (OCWCOG) to adopt values-based purchasing policy within the senior and disability meal program, commonly known as 'Meals on Wheels' (MOW).**

The scope of this research is limited to the OCWCOG service region and findings are limited to available data and the Good Food Purchasing Project assessment framework. There is hope to expand these conversations to all of Oregon's Meals on Wheels programs and Oregon State Area Agencies on Aging.

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<sup>8</sup> IBID

## Methods

The ‘good food’ purchasing assessment starts with a baseline look at OCWCOG’s food and grocery purchases using a set of standards called the ‘Good Food Purchasing Program’ (GFPP). The GFPP analyzes purchasing across five value categories: 1) a strong local food economy, 2) environmental sustainability, 3) valued workforce, 4) the humane treatment of animals and 5) high nutritional quality.<sup>9</sup> Analysis across the five value categories concludes with a ‘good food scorecard’; a summary of points earned.

Interviews with three OCW Meals on Wheels staff explore current purchasing practices and express current constraints and opportunities within good-food purchasing. Speaking with food-systems leaders from Portland and Eugene provides insight into regional institutional purchasing connections and capacity for GFPP implementation. This report concludes with comments concerning the GDFPP assessment process; recommendations for future research and values-based food purchasing policy expansion.

### Key Acronyms

**MOW:** Meals on Wheels

**LFS:** Local Food System

**FSMC:** Food Service Management Company

**VBSC:** Values-based supply chains

**AOM:** Agriculture in the Middle

**NWSDS:** Northwest Senior Disability Services

**COG:** Council of Governments

**OCWCOG:** Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

**LCOG:** Lane County Council of Governments

**GFPP:** Good Food Purchasing Project

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<sup>9</sup> Center for Good Food Purchasing. (2018). *Good Food Purchasing Program*. Retrieved from <http://goodfoodpurchasing.org/>.



## Chapter 2: Institutional Purchasing Power

There is movement to view food systems from a regional level.<sup>101112</sup> These regional food-shed conversations are gaining quick ground, exploring the systems and geographic locations that produce food for a particular population. Regional food-sheds contain more than just food production areas. A food-shed includes the land it grows on, the route it travels, and the markets it passes through with a final destination at the table.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, researchers have argued that topography, water availability, land, and other inputs, farm scale, crop options, and market proximity are operable at the regional level.<sup>14</sup> Economic and community development work is commonly accomplished on a regional level, as are agricultural land-use plans.

Kate Clancy and Kathryn Ruhf present the idea of a model regional food systems comprised of four dimensions: food supply, natural resource sustainability, economic development, and diversity. Their definition of an ideal food system is regionally based,

*"in which as much food as possible to meet the population's food needs is produced, processed, distributed, and purchased at multiple levels and scales within the region, resulting in maximum resilience, minimum importation, and significant economic and social return to all stakeholders in the region."*<sup>15</sup>

Regional institutional food purchasing and procurement policy can be leveraged to increase the overall demand for more healthy products, drive the reformulation of foods by food manufacturers, and increase the availability of healthier foods to the general public.<sup>16</sup> Public health researchers from the University of Calgary found that 'healthy food purchasing policies' are relatively inexpensive to implement, can encourage local production of foods (if the policy requires sourcing food from local growers), and, when coupled with education, raise awareness about the importance of a healthy diet.<sup>17</sup>

### Values-based policy and supply chains

Purchasing policies built around access to 'good food' must be able to access those food products within the supply chain. Values-based supply chains (VBSC) are gaining in popularity, with early results showing positive impacts for mid-range family farmers and regional food systems. Goals of VBSCs are to (1) provide greater economic stability for producers and others

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<sup>10</sup> Pirog, Rich "Creating Change in the Food System: The role of regional food networks in Iowa". *Center for Regional Food Systems*, Michigan State University. 2012

<sup>11</sup> Massey, Abby. "Building Local and Regional Food Systems". *Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education (SARE)* [www.sare.com/localfood](http://www.sare.com/localfood)

<sup>12</sup> EcoTrust. "Building a Values Based Supply Chain for Chicken in Oregon's Institutions", June 2016

<sup>13</sup> Food Shed Alliance. <http://foodshedalliance.org/what-is-a-foodshed/>

<sup>14</sup> Clancy, Kate and Kathryn Ruhf. "Is Local Enough? Some Arguments for Regional Food Systems". *Choices Journal*, V25 2010. Agriculture and Applied Economics Association

<sup>15</sup> " IBID

<sup>16</sup> Mark L. Niebylski, et.all, "Healthy Food Procurement Policies and Their Impact". *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> IBID

along the supply chain; and (2) provide high quality, regional food to consumers.<sup>18</sup> Examples of values-based program and policy interventions include, Farm-to-School programs, 'buy-local' marketing campaigns and healthy workplace policy. Understanding the national prevalence of values-based food policy interventions provides the context for values-based purchasing policy implementation at a local level.

Using the five values from GFPP framework, the following sections show how values-based policy implementation is appearing in local (and international) food systems.

### #1 Valuing Local Economies

Local food supply chains, particularly direct market (producer to consumer) chains, are more likely than main-stream chains to provide consumers with detailed information about where and by whom produces products.<sup>19</sup> Most local food systems exist as hybrid models (containing both short and long supply chains); based on dynamic, flexible supply chains embedded in scales of economy, public health, and social networks.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, local food systems strive to deliver a set of "intangible qualities that are expected to accompany local food- qualities including trust, authenticity, safety, and confidence".<sup>21</sup>

Developing local, shorter supply chains relies on support from organizations and institutions in the region. When examining case studies of short, rural supply chains, researchers have found supporting these supply chains strengthens sustainable rural development. To be successful, these supply chains must have both institutional support and associated development but flexible enough to alter and reconfigure over time.<sup>22</sup>

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems has shown that most processors, distributors, and retailers are often engaged in both local and conventional markets. Producers target both markets in a conscious strategy: using the profile and relationships generated through one to facilitate entry into the other. For local food producers, expanding into new markets is dependent on taking risks as young/beginning farmers (entrepreneurs) and funding capital projects, such as building food processing and storage infrastructure. Many farmers and local food producers would like to scale-up and enter new territory. Building stable markets for agricultural products (through institutional purchasing) can incentivize farmers to take that risk.

Nationally, many local food producers fall somewhere in the middle of conventional and local markets. This position 'in the middle' can provide more flexibility than industrial producers to transition to more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable systems while also

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<sup>18</sup> Feenstra and Shermain Hardesty. "Values-Based Supply Chains as a Strategy for Supporting Small and Mid-Scale Producers in the United States." *Agriculture*, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> King, Robert P. "Comparing the Structure, Size, and Performance of Local and Mainstream Food Supply Chains". *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service*, 2010.

<sup>20</sup> Mount, Phil. "Growing Local Food: Scale and Local Food Systems Governance". *Agriculture and Human Values*. V 29, 2012.

<sup>21</sup>.<sup>1</sup> IBID

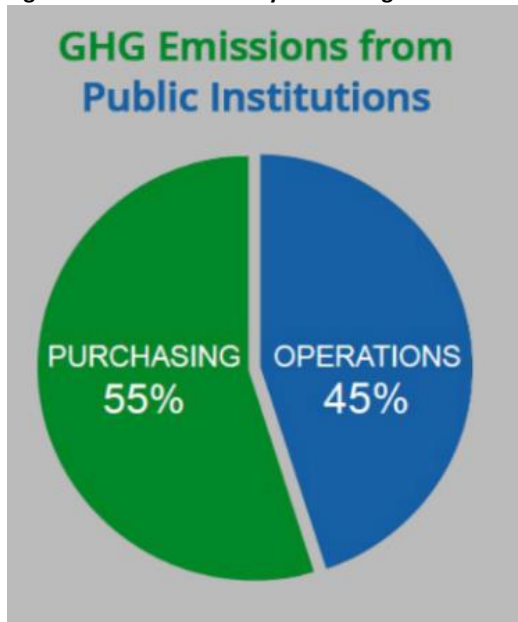
<sup>22</sup> Marsden, Terry, Jo Banks, and Gillian Brist. "Food Supply Chain Approaches: Exploring their Role in Rural Development." *Sociologia Ruralis*, 2000.

meeting a significant portion of regional food demand.<sup>23</sup> The structure of agriculture is changing, (with mostly very small or very large farms on the landscape), and the environmental, social and economic values of mid-scale farmers are at risk or rapidly diminishing.<sup>24</sup> To combat the loss of middle-range food producers, food-system developers target farmers identifying as, or showing characteristics of being, an 'ag in the middle' producer.

Groups such as EcoTrust and Oregon State University (OSU) have collaborated on various projects, including "A needs assessment of Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM) producers supplying Oregon's Food-shed" and "Oregon Food Infrastructure Gap Analysis," both published in 2015. The studies explore barriers, needs, and opportunities for the development and success of AOTM operations within the State of Oregon. The findings speak directly to institutional purchasers, calling for increased preferential buying of local farm and agricultural products for institutions receiving significant state funds.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, EcoTrust's report, "The Impact of Seven Cents"<sup>26</sup> demonstrates the economic effects of implementing institutional values-based purchasing policies. This policy experiment tested the effects of increasing local food purchasing funds (by seven cents per meal), with results showing increased local food sourcing and positive economic impacts.

## #2 Valuing Environmental Sustainability

**Figure 1.1. Climate Friendly Purchasing Toolkit**



Responding to climate change observations and experiences, institutions are looking for ways to reduce their negative environmental impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These types of policies are aimed at mitigating further deterioration of the environment and natural resources.

Institutional purchasing and climate mitigation are linked, with many interventions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Another regional effort, "The Climate Friendly Purchasing Toolkit," was produced by The West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum.<sup>27</sup> The group is a collaboration of state, local, and tribal governments, (including the Washington and Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality) that develop ways to

<sup>23</sup> Fitch, Claire, and Raychel Santo. "An Overview of Institutional Food Procurement and Recommendations for Improvement." *The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future*, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> IBID

<sup>25</sup> McAdams, Nellie. "Organizing To Rebuild Agriculture Of The Middle: A needs assessment of Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM) producers supplying Oregon's Foodshed". *EcoTrust*, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Sobell, Stacy. "The Impact of Seven Cents". *EcoTrust*, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> "Climate Friendly Purchasing Toolkit". *West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum*. <https://westcoastclimateforum.com/cfpt>

institutionalize sustainable materials management practices. The tool-kit includes model and sample specifications, evaluation criteria, contract language, and vendor qualifications. Additionally, they have created graphics and charts to educate institutions and communities about the impact of purchases on the climate, shown in figures 1.1 and 1.2.

### #3 Valuing Workforce

Figure 2. Fair Trade Values

## 10 PRINCIPLES OF FAIR TRADE



Many consumers are turning toward fair and just labor practices in food production, service and distribution.

The call for purchasing policies that value equitable labor is visible within the Fair Trade movement, started in the United States in 1946. This movement was a response to western anti-poverty programs that prioritized charity to ‘third world countries’ over locally-led, sustainable economic development. The term ‘trade not aid’ was coined during these times. Collaborative Fair Trade Organizations

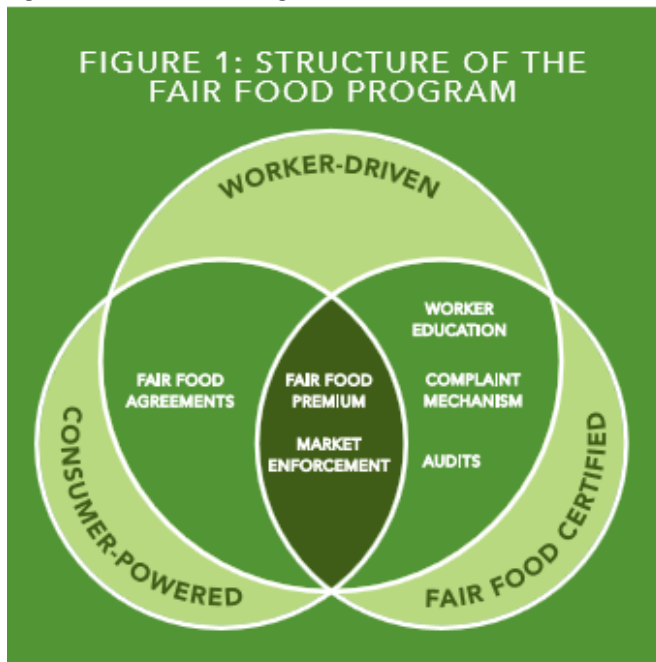
systematize producers and production in Asia, Africa and Latin America and provide social services to producers, and export goods to larger markets. Coordination and relationships are based in equitable partnerships, dialogue, supply-chain transparency and respect with a goal of equitable international trade of crafts and food items.<sup>28</sup>

Fair Trade labeling has become a well-known third-party certification, with Fair Trade certified coffee appearing on shelves in 1988. Increasingly, Fair Trade is seen as a trusted third-party certification route for independent food and agriculture ‘triple bottom line’ social enterprises, certified as ‘B Corps’.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> “History of Fair Trade: 60 YEARS OF FAIR TRADE: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAIR TRADE MOVEMENT”. *World Fair Trade Organization*. <https://wfto.com/about-us/history-wfto/history-fair-trade>

<sup>29</sup> Balch, Oliver. “The future of Fair Trade in South America”. *The Guardian*, 2013. <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/future-fairtrade-south-america>

Figure 3. CIW Fair Food Program



The Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ (CIW) Fair Food Program has led policy efforts to “advance the human rights of farmworkers, the long-term interests of growers, and the ethical supply chain concerns of retail food companies.”<sup>30</sup> Worker-crafted, the CIW labor standards protect over 30,000 tomato production workers in Florida. A holistic structure (Figure 3) produces a policy framework, addressing issues such as wages, slavery, child labor, sexual assault and harassment.

Wage equity is a leading issue and CIW has gained \$15 million in combined wage increases over the five-year organizing effort. This collaborative effort convenes workers, farm owners and more than a

dozen high-profile food corporation purchasers. Participating buyers include: Aramark, Bon Appetite Management Company, Compass Group, Sodexo, Wal-Mart, Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods Market, Yum Brands (KFC, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut), Burger King, Chipotle Mexican Grill, McDonald’s and Subway.

#### #4 Valuing Animal Welfare

Animal protein continues to serve as a popular menu item; increasingly, consumer preference favors animals raised in humane conditions. Animal welfare continues to be a contentious topic within food procurement and distribution. Historically, conventional agriculture stakeholders pushed back on restrictions regarding Confined Feeding Operations (CAFO), antibiotics and animal welfare-based farm policies.<sup>31</sup> As free-range eggs, grass-fed beef and anti-biotic free pork and chicken have gained in popularity among consumers, institutions are taking note.<sup>32</sup>

Global fast-food leaders are changing purchasing policy, based on changes in consumer preference. McDonalds developed the “McDonald’s Antibiotic Use Policy” that addresses public health concerns regarding the, “overuse and misuse of antibiotics in animals and humans is contributing to the raising threat of antibiotic resistance” in beef production in Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany, Ireland, Poland, UK, Canada, USA and Brazil.<sup>33</sup> McDonald’s ties public health and animal welfare values into the new policy. The policy includes a vision

<sup>30</sup> Fair Food Program, 2014 Annual Report. *Fair Food Standards Council (FFSC)*

<sup>31</sup> Greenwald, Glenn. “Consumers Are Revolting Against Animal Cruelty — So the Poultry Industry Is Lobbying for Laws to Force Stores to Sell Their Eggs”. *The Intercept*, 2018.

<sup>32</sup> Spain, Victor, et al. “Are They Buying It? United States Consumers’ Changing Attitudes toward More Humanely Raised Meat, Eggs, and Dairy”. *Animals (Basel)*, 2018.

<sup>33</sup> “Antibiotic Use Policy for Beef and Dairy Beef”. 2017. corporate.mcdonalds.com. Accessed February 2019.

statement: “As one of the world’s largest food companies we will use our scale for good, partnering with industries in transparent conversation to advance practices related to use of antibiotics and susceptibility testing.” This promise is tied to the policy goal, with “an overall reduction in the use of medically important antibiotics for human medicine in food-producing animals in McDonald’s Supply Chain.”

#### #5 Valuing Nutrition

The federally-funded Farm to School program has been a visible example of food procurement policy tied to local-food systems change. Within schools, procurement is a multi-step process for obtaining goods, products, and/or services at the best possible price.<sup>34</sup> Farm to School policy work has secured line-item funding for institutional purchasing support with the U.S. Farm Bill and the State of Oregon’s annual budget. Additional efforts have led to increased local food procurement across the nation and greater awareness of institutional purchasing systems.

In 2015, the Health and Human Services (HHS) General Services Administration (GSA) collaborative team released the *“Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations”* guidelines containing specific goal to improving food-systems through institutional purchasing standards.<sup>35</sup> In Oregon, the Food Alliance, Health Care Without Harm and the Institute for Agricultural Trade and Policy developed the *Healthy Food in Health Care Food Service Contractor Pledge*. A step towards policy creation, this pledge outlines requirements for food purchasing, sourcing, training, developing local supply chains and reducing waste.

In March of 2018, The New York City Council received a resolution, “calling upon the New York City Department of Education to ban processed meats from being served in New York City public schools.”<sup>36</sup> Sponsored by twenty-one council members, the resolution called for banning all processed meats from being served in the 850,000 meals served daily. The resolution’s processed meat policy language is rooted in public health and environmental concern. The resolution states that processed meat (including hot dogs, ham, bacon and sausage) is, “carcinogenic to humans, leading to increased risk of colorectal cancer, pancreatic cancer, prostate cancer, coronary heart disease, stroke and type II diabetes, among other diseases.”<sup>37</sup> Additionally, the resolution states the production of animal protein as an, “important cause of various environmental problems such as increasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, agricultural land expansion and associated deforestation, surface water eutrophication, terrestrial biodiversity loss, and nutrient imbalances.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> “Procurement in the 21st Century, Resource Manual.” *Institute of Child Nutrition. The University of Mississippi School of Applied Sciences*, 2015.

<sup>35</sup> “Food Service Guidelines Federal Workgroup. Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities.” *Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*, 2017.

<sup>36</sup> Resolution #238 The New York City Council. *Legislative Research Center*. Accessed April 2018. <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov>

<sup>37</sup> IBID

<sup>38</sup> IBID

# Chapter 3: OCWCOG & Meals on Wheels

## OCWCOG Senior Food Network

Oregon Councils of Governments

The State of Oregon has seven regional multi-jurisdictional and multi-purpose organizations; voluntary associations of local governments cooperating and working together on issues and problems that cross city, county, and in some cases, state boundaries. <sup>39</sup>

- **Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC)**; Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson
- **Lane Council of Governments (LCOG)**; Lane
- **Mid-Columbia Council of Governments (MCCOG)**; Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler
- **Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG)**; Marion, Polk, and Yamhill
- **Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG)**; Benton, Lincoln, and Linn
- **Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG)**; Jackson and Josephine
- **Metro**; Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington

In 2016, OCWCOG produced a white paper, “COG's Role in Oregon's Food System: How Councils of Government Can Support Regional Food Systems Growth”. This report highlights regional councils of government unique capacities for food system development, including ‘collaborative governance structures and experience, regional planning expertise, models for public-private partnership, and engagement of hundreds of public officials and local governments.’ Impacts within the State of Oregon are many, with current work taking four broad approaches: (1) research & planning; (2) increasing food security; (3) promoting sustainability; and (4) encouraging local economic development. <sup>40</sup>

All of Oregon’s COGs are involved with regional food-system development in some way. Currently, these organizations display a wide range of activities, from providing direct food services to food policy creation, and regional economic development such as developing food-hubs and food-business incubators. <sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> “Local and Regional Governments.” Background Brief. *Legislative Committee Services*, 2011.

<sup>40</sup>Precious, Cheryl, Fred Abousleman and Phil Warnock. “COG's Role in Oregon's Food System: How Councils of Government Can Support Regional Food Systems Growth”. *Oregon Cascades Council of Governments*, 2016.

<sup>41</sup> Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council, Central Oregon Food Hub. <https://coic2.org/community-development/food-hub/>

**Figure 4: Role of COG's in the local food system**

**Councils of Government's Core Competences and Food System Strategies**



The white-paper recommends that COG's engage in food systems change within four competency areas:

1. Research, Evaluation, and Planning
2. Strategic Organizing
3. Facilitating Connections to Assets & Information
4. Expanding Assets & Infrastructure

The report's "Expanding Assets and Infrastructure" section contains a subheading with a call to "align COG-administered programs with food systems goals". COG leaders specifically call for research regarding Meals on Wheels and values-based purchasing:

"As an example, COGs could conduct an analysis of food sourcing for Meals on Wheels (MOW) programs. Cost will likely always be a major factor in sourcing these meals, and it is unrealistic to expect all food to be sourced locally and/ or sustainably. However, the collective bargaining power of a statewide consortium of MOW programs could be strong enough to inspire the catering vendor to make some changes in how food is sourced. Reasonable goals might be, for example, committing to sourcing ten percent or more of all food locally, or growing the amount of locally-sourced product by five percent each year. Another example might be committing to working with caterers that source local products for COG Board meetings and other events."



The report stresses the value and need for cross-sector and inter-regional collaboration. OCWCOG staff conclude the report by listing twenty-six local and regional food-systems models and potential partners. Additionally, twelve sources of food-systems funding are listed, as a resource for COG's implementing food-systems projects.

#### Area Agencies on Aging

Area Agencies on Aging provide nutrition services are authorized under Title III-C of the Older Americans Act (OAA)<sup>42</sup>. Designed to promote the general health and well-being of older individuals, the services are intended to: 1) Reduce hunger and food insecurity 2) Promote socialization and 3) Delay the onset of adverse health conditions.

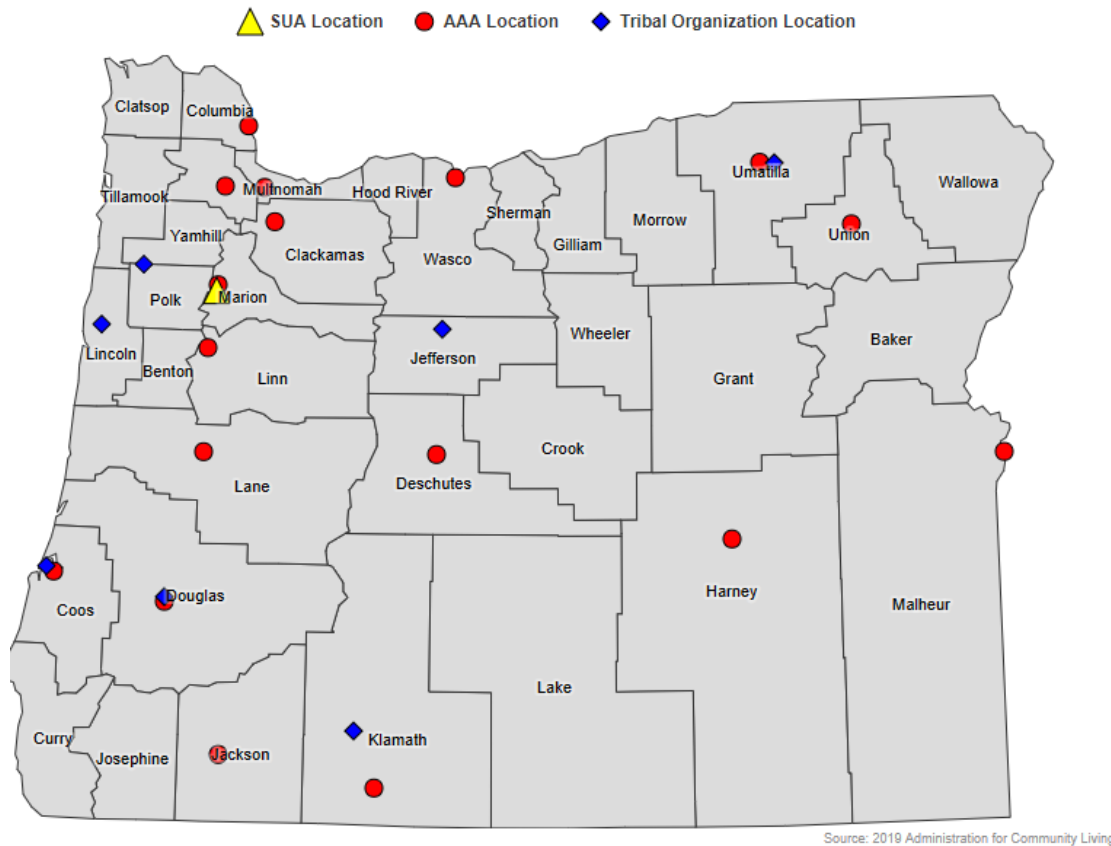
Figure 5, shows the State of Oregon's AAA geographic locations. Tribal Organizations provide similar services to older adults, also funded through the OOA. Programs target adults age 60 and older who are in greatest social and economic need, with particular attention to the following groups.

- Low-income older adults
- Minority older individuals
- Older adults in rural communities
- Older individuals with limited English proficiency
- Older adults at risk of institutional care

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<sup>42</sup> <https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/nutrition-services>

**Figure 5. Area Agencies on Aging, Oregon**



**NWSDS Food Purchasing Consortium**

Three Area Agencies on Aging: OCWCOG, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) and Northwest Senior Disability Services (NWSDS) operate MOW programs that are linked through a collaborative food purchasing and service consortium. This partnership connects leaders and pools senior nutrition funds to better leverage power and share resources. As part of the consortium’s need to provide consistent food services over a wide-geographic area, they have negotiated a service contract with Bateman Community Living, an outside food service management company (FSMC).

Through this multi-jurisdictional agreement, the four agencies manage the elderly nutrition services program for 32 meal-sites in Linn, Lincoln, Benton, Marion, Polk, Yamhill, and Lane counties. As the lead agency, NWSDS manages the FSMC contract and sub-contracts with OCWCOG and LCOG for food production and delivery. Within this arrangement, NWSDS is responsible for the Salem kitchen, OCWCOG is responsible for the Newport kitchen and LCOG manages the Eugene kitchen. Together their FY 2019 MOW budget is \$5 million, with OCWCOG receiving \$3 million for their service region; the Meals on Wheels program employs twelve paid staff and about 350 volunteers.

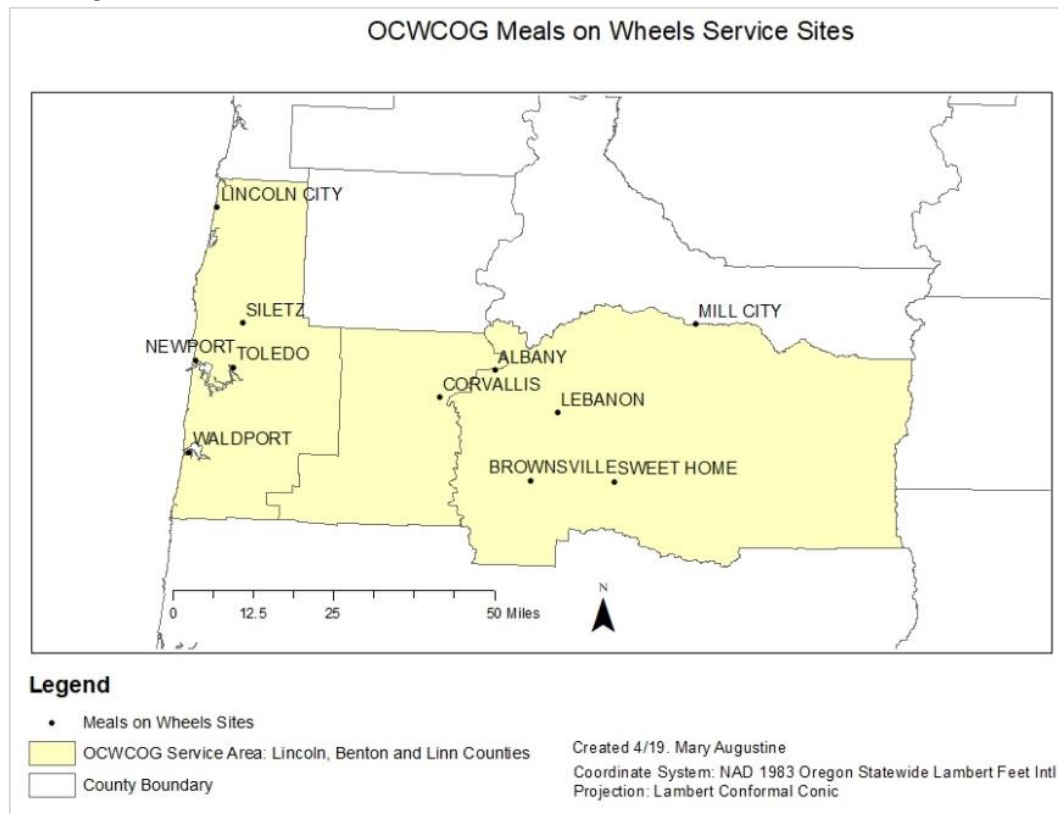
## Meals on Wheels Program

The elderly nutrition services program is authorized under Title III of the Older Americans Act (OAA) and provides grants to state Area Agencies on Aging to support congregate and home-delivered meals (commonly referred to as “meals on wheels”) programs for people aged 60 and older.<sup>43</sup> The home delivered meal program uses volunteer drivers to deliver hot meals during weekdays, as well as a supply of frozen meals for weekends.

These Area Agencies on Aging, coordinate nutrition programs, working with community partners and volunteers (through the Retired Senior and Volunteer Program, RSVP) to provide:<sup>44</sup>

- **Meals offered in community settings:** Also referred to as “congregate meals,” these are usually lunch programs offered in senior or community centers, providing both a meal as well as social connections and links to other aging and community services.
- **Home-delivered meals:** Often referred to as “meals on wheels,” these are meals delivered several times each week to homebound individuals. Home delivered meals also provide a brief social connection and safety check, and an opportunity to connect frail older adults to other needed services. (CITE) Oregon Senior Nutrition Program, Factsheet.

Figure 6. OCWCOG MOW service area and meal sites



<sup>43</sup> Older Americans Act: Title III Nutrition Services Program. Congressional Research Service. [www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov) RS21202

<sup>44</sup> Oregon Senior Nutrition Program Fact Sheet. <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/SUA/Pages/Nutrition-Program.aspx>

The OCWCOG MOW service area spans Lincoln, Benton and Linn counties, supporting ten senior meal site and a central production kitchen. The MOW program serves a total of 1,233 households, providing 164,374 home-delivered meals yearly. The ten dining sites serve 32,251 meals, serving M-F, including holidays. The greatest number of meals are served in Albany (45,847), and Mill City serves the least amount (3,864).

**Figure 7. Meals provided and participating households, OCWCOG Meals on Wheels**

<b>CITY</b>	Home Delivered	Dining Room	Combined	Participating Households
CORVALLIS	22,693	2,820	25,513	178
ALBANY	41,551	4,296	45,847	313
LEBANON	33,840	4,948	38,788	256
MILL CITY	2,104	1,760	3,864	25
BROWNSVILLE	4,400	2,091	6,491	34
SWEET HOME	19,511	2,929	22,440	141
WALDPORT	7,293	3,626	10,919	45
SILETZ, TOLEDO	6,932	2,455	9,387	54
NEWPORT	11,679	3,812	15,491	98
LINCOLN CITY	14,371	3,514	17,885	89
<b>OCWCOG AREA</b>	<b>164,374</b>	<b>32,251</b>	<b>196,625</b>	<b>1,233</b>

Meals On Wheels program services align with OCWCOG’s role as a regional Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) provider for The State of Oregon’s Department of Human Services (DHS). These senior-service programs include:

- Oregon Health Plan (OHP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS)
- Adult Protective Services (APS)
- Older American Act (OAA) Programs
- Oregon Project Independence (OPI)
- Meals On Wheels (MOW)
- Senior Corps Programs, such as the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Benton County Veteran Services

#### Northwest Senior and Disability Services

Northwest Senior and Disability Services (NWSDS) is a local intergovernmental agency that exclusively serves seniors and adults with physical disability. They have a five-county reach across Clatsop, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, and Yamhill counties, with offices in Dallas, McMinnville, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn, Oregon. In addition to food assistance, their services include Medicare/Medicare support, caregiving and assisted living

navigation, elder abuse and prevention and senior wellness, mental health and money management services.<sup>45</sup>

#### Bateman Community Living

As the food service provider, they are the official purchasing agent for all consumable supplies, meal packaging system and small equipment used at the meal site. Within the RFP, the contractor agrees to secure “the most favorable price available” for all purchases. Operating out of three central kitchens, Bateman staff are responsible for producing and delivering (hot and frozen) meals, along with supplies, to thirty-two meal sites daily. Bateman Community Living has a long relationship with the OCWCOG MOW program. They have been the food service provider for around 40-years and have developed significant relationships and processes that respond MOW and OCWCOG needs. Additionally, they are proud of their staff retention, with many staff members working in MOW central kitchens for 10+ years.

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<sup>45</sup> <http://nwsds.org/index.php/home/seniors/>

# Chapter 4: The Good Food Purchasing Program

In 2011, stakeholders from the Los Angeles region convened to address the needs and impacts of their local and regional food systems. Changes to institutional food consumption and purchasing were high on the list of goals. Stakeholders advocated increasing the amount of healthy, just and equitable food amongst school, aging services, and governmental sectors. The Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC) focused on providing three critical functions: connecting diverse leaders and experts; coordinating across existing efforts; and catalyzing new initiatives to foster systemic change.<sup>46</sup>

LAFPC's mission is to "convene diverse stakeholders and initiate innovative policies and programs to promote a healthy, affordable, fair and sustainable food system for the Los Angeles Region."<sup>47</sup> The council developed a tiered, multi-attribute institutional food purchasing policy now known as the "Good Food Purchasing Policy." Modeling the policy as a solution for leveraging institutional buying power, it incorporates five main aspects of concern: a strong local food economy, environmental sustainability, a valued food industry, workforce, the humane treatment of animals and high nutritional quality. This approach addresses the complexity and hybrid structures of regional and local food systems. The structure allows institutions to scale purchasing to meet requirements, with an initial commitment to meet baseline measures and increase good food purchasing over-time.

After three years of following a GFPP, the Los Angeles Area School District and its produce distributor increased the overall amount of produce purchased and served to students, redirecting at least \$12 million in healthy produce purchases to local businesses, generating over 150 new well-paying food chain jobs, and compelled production shifts toward sustainable, California-grown ingredients.<sup>48</sup> The program has expanded, influencing institutional purchasing for Chicago, IL, Austin, TX, the cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, Cincinnati, OH, Oakland, CA and San Francisco, CA.

## Los Angeles County Senior Meals Program

The City of Los Angeles' senior meal program is administered by The Los Angeles Department of Aging (LADOA) and has cited cost burdens and other difficulties within implementation of the GFPP policies. The 2018-19 Proposed Budget includes total funding of \$3,087,845 for the Department's two senior nutrition programs, comprised of \$544,000 for the Congregate Meal Program, and \$2,543,845 for the Home-Delivered Meals Program.<sup>49</sup> The agency has asked for an additional \$2,667,230 (\$2,543,845 current funding + \$123,385 proposed funding) and an

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<sup>46</sup> *The Good Food Purchasing Pledge: A Case Study Evaluation & Year One Progress Update*. Los Angeles Food Policy Council. 2014

<sup>47</sup> IBID

<sup>48</sup> IBID

<sup>49</sup> CITY OF LOS ANGELES, INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE. May 04, 2018

increase for Congregate Meal program funding to \$1,213,788 (\$544,000 current funding + \$669,788 proposed funding).<sup>50</sup> Additionally, LADOA recommends that it be exempted from the Good Food Purchasing Policy until additional funding can be secured to effectively implement and monitor the program requirements. If additional funding is not provided, LADOA has projected a decrease of 99,81 senior meal served, as show in Figure 9.

**Figure 9. LADOA FY 2018-19 Projected Meals Shortfall**

	<b>Congregate Meals</b>	<b>Home Delivered Meals</b>
Projected Meals Needed	678,232	721,312
Meals Funded	592,581	706,982
<b>Projected Meals Shortfall</b>	<b>(85,651)</b>	<b>(14,330)</b>

The City of Los Angeles has been proactive within values-based institutional policy creation, and implemented a Good Food Purchasing Policy, Sustainability Ordinance and City Minimum Wage Ordinance within the 2016-17 fiscal year. LADOA sites rising costs due to these policies, causing an overall decrease in senior meals and financial capacity of the MOW program. According to LAUSD, their cost for chicken increased by two-thirds due to the GFPP policies. The LAUSD contract was for \$50 Million and any efficiencies of scale did not overcome the increased cost.

High administrative costs are of equal concern, with a stated need to “secure staff resources with expertise in pest management; labor contracts; animal safety and welfare by type of animal; farming, fisheries, poultry and cattle practices; processing of food by type (frozen, canned, produce, dry); accounting and fiscal expertise by industry type; commodities valuing; supply chains expertise to name a few of the areas required for proper documentation and verification of compliance”. The high transparency standards and written compliance measures of the GFPP equated to a full-time staff position within LADOA.

LADOA has verified with GFPP Council staff that no other location (of the 24 active GFPP agencies) has attempted GFPP policy implementation as it relates to senior meals funded in part with Older Americans Act funds. In a 2018 Inter-departmental memo, LADOA outlined financial constraints for local service non-profits and ethnic meal providers, as shown below.

**Watts Labor Community Action Committee**

- Report that for GFPP categories under Local Economies they estimate an overall increasing of 35% to their cost of producing meals. Their analysis projects a 75% increase in cost of changing how they acquire produce from their current supplier vs. a farmer’s market.
- Estimate an additional \$33,130 annually associated with the Sustainability requirements.

<sup>50</sup> CITY OF LOS ANGELES, INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE. April 23, 2018

### **Wilmington Jaycees Foundation**

- Estimate an increase per meal in raw food costs of \$0.66 (19.31 %) for congregate and \$0.34 (11 %) for home delivered meals.
- Report needing an additional \$38,419 (3 times their current cost) to implement the Sustainability requirements.
- Living Wage increases estimated at \$34,334.

### **Jewish Family Services**

- Although they have not completed cost estimates due to difficulty in finding qualified distributors and farms, they are concerned about increased cost since their Kosher meals are already more expensive to produce.
- Also noted their seniors will not eat a vegan meal as proposed by the GFPP.

The GFPP has responded and admits that the unique needs and funding structures of senior meal programs were not adequately explored within initial policy creation. They have also requested more purchasing data from LADOA, and suggested cost trade-offs such as increasing vegetable proteins in place of meat. The main food service provider, Morrison, has provided some purchasing data in compliance with GFPP requirements. LADOA also mentioned that protein requirements are higher for seniors, creating a barrier to serving vegan and vegetarian meals.

Administrative cost burden is cited for as a barrier to obtaining purchasing data, especially with sub-contracted meal providers that source meals from local ethnic restaurants. GFPP and City of Los Angeles leaders have allowed LADOA to use the GFPP standards as an aspiration policy and are willing to create a roadmap to future full compliance with the GFPP. LADOA has pushed back, stating that an alternative policy pathway will not address the financial impacts and administrative burdens.

### [Assessment process](#)

The first step to become a certified 'good food purchaser' through the GFPP, is a baseline purchasing assessment. This provides the ground-level data needed to track progress and develop strategic good-food purchasing actions.

This assessment looks at OCWCOG MOW purchases within five value-based categories: 1) valuing local economies 2) valuing environmental sustainability 3) valued workforce 4) valuing animal welfare and 5) valuing nutrition.

**Baseline Standard:** Within these five values-based categories, the GFPP has three levels of standards (Level 1, 2, 3). To be considered a good food provider, an institution must meet at least the baseline criteria (equal to one point) in each of these sections. Over time, institutions are required to advance into higher standard levels by increasing their good food purchasing commitments and purchasing.



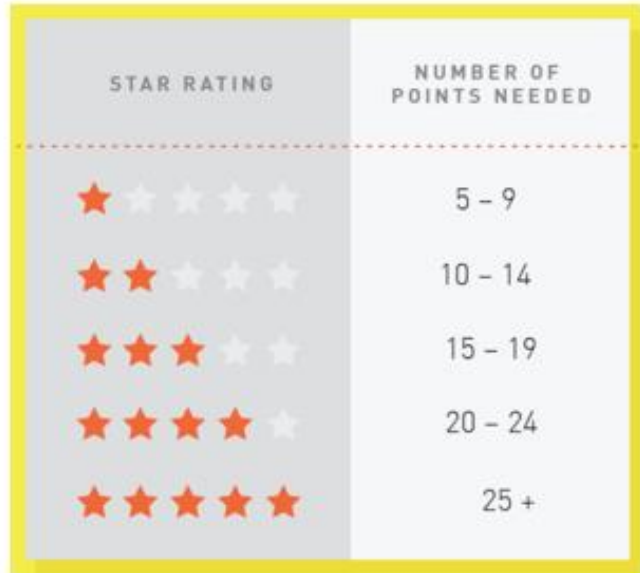
**Flexible Point system:** More points are awarded for achievement at higher levels within each category. This can allow institutions to gain more points by prioritizing higher standards within certain value categories. An institution is required to achieve baseline standards and attain the minimum five points. Then, they can strategically add more points by ‘leveling up’ within a value-category, for example: switching to fair trade coffee, tea and sugar (Environmental Sustainability level 2) or buying five-percent of total foods from union-represented farms (Valued Workforce level 3).

**GFPP Star Rating:**

Each category has extra points, which are gained once baseline standards are met. All points earned within each category are added together and a star rating is awarded. This star rating allows agencies and institutions to track progress and celebrate successes within their good food purchasing journey.

**Certification-based:** Following consumer demand for values-based brands and producers, there is a growing importance of third-party food certification. Also known as ‘trust labels’, these values-based labels contain product standards, which specify the characteristics of the product and process standards hold criteria for the way items are made.<sup>51</sup> Third party certification assures consumers that the product or process conforms to standards and clear labeling symbolizes compliance and verification.

**Figure 10. GFPP Star Rating**



<sup>51</sup> Dankers, Cora. “Environmental and Social Standards, Certification and Labelling for Cash Crops”. *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*. 2003.

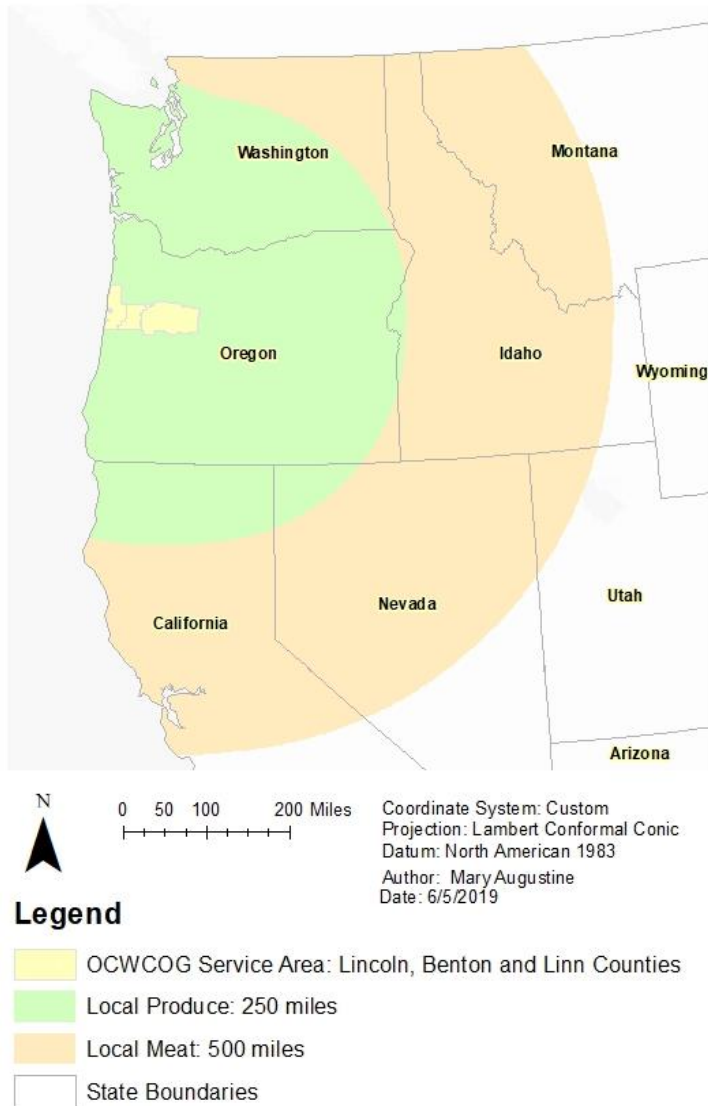
Figure 11. GFPP Third-party certifications



The Good Food Purchasing Program uses around 16 third-party certifications (Figure 11) backing commitments to environmental sustainability, labor rights and animal welfare. Third-party standards used in the GFPP address agricultural processes such as: the feeding of (grass-fed, pasture raised), caring for (anti-biotic free, animal welfare approved), and growing of (USDA Organic, biodynamic) produce, animals and fish.

## Local Food-shed

Figure 12. OCWCOG local food-shed



Picturing the geographic range for local foods is difficult without spatial reference, with many ideas of what is considered 'local' food. Figure 15 shows the local food-shed of the OCWCOG Meals on Wheels program. Food and grocery products produced within this geographic range are considered 'local' by the GFPP standards. The GFPP provides a standard geographic region for 'local' purchasing: 250 miles for produce and 500 miles for meat. In Figure 12, the green area is OCWCOG's local produce food-shed and tan is the local meat food.

OCWCOG's local produce range stays close within the Pacific Northwest region, spanning from Northern California to Northern Washington and covers all of Oregon to the East.

The local meat geographic area is doubled, reaching south into the San Francisco/Bay Area and North into the Canadian border. The local meat area also reaches into the ranching areas of California, Idaho, Montana and Nevada.

# Chapter 4: Good Food Purchasing Assessment for OCWCOG Meals On Wheels Program

The GFPP standards framework is used to assess how current MOW purchases (produce, meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy, seafood, and grocery items) reflect the five value categories: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, and nutrition. To be considered a “good food provider” an institution must meet at least the baseline standards in all categories. Vendors or institutions that are lacking capacity to meet baseline measures must submit a plan for baseline achievement within one year.

The following sections contain the OCWCOG Meals on Wheels purchasing assessment. Each of the five sections describe the baseline criteria needed to achieve Level 1 compliance (1 point) and an analysis of compliance with criteria. Points gained from each section are totaled and assigned a star-rating. Following GFPP practices, final good-food provider status is presented via a ‘good-food scorecard’.

### Current Purchasing Standards and Policy

Current purchasing standards are included in the 2018/19 food service contract. Purchasing Quality Standards are found in section ‘VII: Service Specifications’ and details current food purchasing standards and policies, as stated in the document (Figure 14). These polices are based in food-quality, food safety and nutritional values; include many USDA quality standard certifications (food grade, useable parts) along with standards for use and labeling of Organic and pre-formed processed meat products. Additionally, section “VI. Vendors and Purchasing Contracts” contains two relevant policies, instructing the food service provider to: 1) Identify and describe three to five national purchasing contracts which will support this contract; 2) Define the local vendors to be used to support this contract.

**Figure 13. OCWCOG MOW Current Purchasing Standards**

Produce	Meat/Dairy/Eggs	General
<p><u>Canned Vegetables</u> - U.S. Grade A and/or U.S. Grade B, lower sodium preferred.</p> <p><u>Frozen Vegetables:</u> U.S. Grade A (or U.S. Fancy) and/or U.S. Grade B (or U.S. Extra Standard).</p>	<p>All milk products used and served must be pasteurized.</p> <p>Fluid milk must meet Grade A quality standards as established by law.</p>	<p>Food must be procured from sources that comply with all laws relating to food and food labeling.</p> <p>Food in hermetically sealed containers must be processed in an establishment operating under appropriate regulatory authority. No home-canned food may be used.</p>

<p><u>Canned Fruit</u> - U.S. Grade A and/or U.S. Grade B. Packed in water, juice or light syrup.</p> <p><u>Fresh Fruit</u>: U.S. Grade A and/or U.S. Grade B.</p>	<p><u>Beef</u>: Stewing IMPS #135A, U.S. Good.</p> <p><u>Roast Beef</u>: Top (inside) Round #168, U.S. Choice.</p> <p><u>Ground Beef</u>: Regular, IMPS #136. Use of TVP (textured vegetable protein) is allowed up to (15%).</p>	<p>Food must be safe for human consumption, sound and free of spoilage, filth or contamination.</p> <p>NWSDS will identify the allergens to be included in the Recipe Descriptors.</p>
	<p><u>Chicken</u> Broiler or fryer (9-12 weeks of age), U.S. Grade A, whole legs, joints to include thigh and drumstick.</p> <p><u>Ground Poultry</u>: Prepared from ready-to-cook poultry.</p> <p><u>Turkey Roasts</u> Whole muscle, all breast, oven roasted in broth.</p>	<p><u>Organic</u>: Organic crops cannot be grown with synthetic fertilizers or pesticides and cannot be genetically engineered. Animals must eat only organically grown feed and cannot be treated with hormones or antibiotics.</p> <p><u>Secondary Markets</u>: purchase of overruns and discounted grocery products are required to meet the same U.S. Grade A and/or U.S. Grade B Standards and specifications listed within the Purchasing Standards</p>

## #1 Local Economies

**Goal:** Support diverse, family and cooperatively owned, small and mid-sized agricultural and food processing operations within the local area or region.

**Strategy:** Increase spend on local food.

Local economies criteria uses current purchasing data to assess the total amount of local meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, seafood and grocery items purchased from local family or cooperatively owned farms and fisheries. GFPP local food geographies are a 250 mile radius for produce, dairy, eggs, grocery, seafood and a 500 mile radius for meat.

*Level 1 criteria states that 15% of all produce purchases must come from very large-scale operations (>5 million), which are family or cooperatively owned farms operating locally. 15 % of all meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, seafood and grocery items must be sourced from very large operations (>50 million), which are family or cooperatively owned farms operating locally.*

OCWCOG does not regularly track or request food purchasing and/or sourcing data. A full analysis (percent of total local foods purchases) was not possible due to this gap in data.

Sysco representatives state that many local food varieties are available through their Fresh Point program. The OCWCOG Sysco representative states that, “we buy fish approved through the Seafood Watch list, sourcing grass-fed co-op programs for beef, cage-free farms and free-range chicken options, organic produce, etc.” Some items, such as: apples, potatoes, onions and mushrooms are currently locally sourced, when in season.

Dairygold, OCWCOG’s dairy producer is based in Seattle, an example of a large-scale operation that is within the local food purchasing range. Dairygold is operated by the Northwest Dairy Association, referred to as NDA, a cooperative with nearly 450 dairy farm members in four Northwestern states: Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. These farmer-members all operate independently owned and managed farms, having collective ownership in the Dairygold business.

Franz Bread, an Oregon-based family owned bakery, is the sole contract for all buns and sandwich bread used in the program. Franz has been an important part of the regional food economy since 1907, priding itself on sourcing local ingredients and local economic impacts.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the MOW central kitchens take pride in baking scratch-made whole-grain bread for daily food service. Scratch-made bread ingredient sources (flours and grains) were not made available for the study. It is possible that scratch-made bread ingredients are purchased through local sources, such as the large-scale Grain Millers operation in Eugene.

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<sup>52</sup> Our story, Franz Bakery. 2018. <https://franzbakery.com/HTML/story.html>

## #2 Environmental Sustainability

**Goal:** Source from producers that employ sustainable production systems to reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers; avoid the use of hormones, routine antibiotics and genetic engineering; conserve and regenerate soil and water; protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity; and reduce on-farm energy and water consumption, food waste and greenhouse gas emissions. Reduce menu items that have a high carbon and water footprints, using strategies such as plant forward menus, which feature smaller portions of animal proteins in a supporting role.

**Strategy:** Increase environmentally sustainable food spend OR reduce carbon and water footprint.

*Environmental Sustainability criteria assesses current purchasing data for the presence of Third-party certifications. In addition to satisfying certification requirements, there are two paths to full compliance: Option #1, a percentage of purchases from environmentally sustainable sources or Option #2, reduce carbon and water footprint.*

Level 1 criteria has two non-negotiable compliance criteria: no seafood listed as 'avoid' by the Seafood Watch Guide and 25% of all animal products are without antibiotics.

**Option #1** criteria mandates that 15% of purchases contain the following third-party certifications. Produce must be certified Whole Foods Responsibly Grown (or better), poultry and meat must be AGA Grass-fed, eggs are humane raised and handled, no wild and farm raised fish under 'avoid', dairy and milk must be AGA Grass-fed and grains must be pesticide free.

**Option #2** criteria mandates a reduction of meat, poultry and cheese purchases by 4% per meal. Additionally, agencies must perform a waste audit that identifies types and quantities of food in the waste stream and implementation of two waste reduction strategies.

Current meat purchases do not qualify for the GFPP criteria, as they are not antibiotic free or grass-fed. MOW's red meat is bought according to USDA quality standards (prime, choice or select). USDA beef is graded in two ways: quality grades for tenderness, juiciness and flavor; and yield grades for the amount of usable lean meat on the carcass.<sup>53</sup> Purchases for fish gain points, as all fish served is not listed as 'avoid' under the seafood watch list. Portland Sysco, the main food service provider, does not offer fish labeled "avoid" for distribution.

OCWCOG's eggs are not certified humanely raised and handled. OCWCOG prides itself on its scratch-made whole grain breads, but grain purchases come from non-Organic sources, that do not meet GFPP standards.

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<sup>53</sup> "What's Your Beef – Prime, Choice or Select?" USDA, 2013. <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2013/01/28/whats-your-beef-prime-choice-or-select>

OCWCOG MOW provides a vegetarian entrée option at least three times a week and rarely serves all red-meat options. The Lincoln City central kitchen is a zero food-waste kitchen, as food waste is donated to local farms as supplemental hog feed. All to-go food containers are compostable, and the kitchens do not use paper plates, plastic glasses or plastic silverware. All beverage containers are recyclable, with the exception of milk containers containing a wax film.

### #3 Valued Workforce

**Goal:** Provide Safe and healthy working conditions and fair compensation for all food-chain workers and producers from production to consumption.

**Strategy:** Increase spends on fair food and supports labor law compliance along the supply chain.

Assessing for a valued workforce addresses labor law compliance through contract and vendor documentation. Additionally, current purchasing data is assessed for the percentage of procured goods containing third party labor-rights certifications.

Level 1 criteria mandates that all vendors must provide, in writing, compliance with all domestic labor laws (state, federal and local) in the counties that they produce goods and services.

Additional labor standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO) must be followed, including: 1) freedom of association and collective bargaining; 2) elimination of forced and compulsory labor; 3) abolition of child labor; 4) elimination of discrimination with respect to employment or occupation.

Secondly, the criteria dictates 5% of total dollars spent annually come from sources that have social responsibility policies which include: 1) union or non-poverty wages, 2) respect for freedom of association and collective bargaining, 3) safe and healthy working conditions, 4) proactive policy on preventing sexual assault and harassment, 5) prohibition of child labor (ILO), 6) employer-paid health insurance 7) paid sick days and 8) profit-sharing with all employees.

The MOW program and OCWCOG follow all State and Federal workplace safety and labor laws. All agencies are compliant with OSHA standards (safe and healthy working conditions). Staff is unionized and represented by Local SEIU 503. Agencies enter into yearly collective bargaining sessions and provide paid health insurance, payed sick/vacation/holiday days. In the 2018/19 contract, they have raised wages of all staff to comply with the State of Oregon minimum wage increase. Additionally, OCWCOG provides tuition reimbursement and has an anonymous workplace reporting system via the Local SEIU 503. Data limitations were encountered when



accessing labor rights information across the purchasing spectrum; all members (field workers and farmers) within the supply chain are not analyzed for labor rights compliance.

## #4 Animal Welfare

**Goal:** Source from producers that provide healthy and humane conditions in farm animals.

**Strategy:** Increase high volume welfare food spend OR reduce the total volume of animal products purchased.

Animal welfare criteria assesses the percent of total dollars spent annually on animal products that meet animal welfare third-party certifications.

To successfully meet Animal Welfare Level 1 criteria, agencies have two options: buy more products that are animal welfare certified or reduce meat intake.

**Option #1** mandates that 15% of total dollars spent come from the following third-party certifications, dairy must be Certified Humane or USDA Organic, eggs and poultry must be certified humane cage-free; or GAP 1,2,3; or USDA Organic, pork and beef must be an approved American Grass-fed Association Producer; or certified humane; or GAP 1,2 or USDA Organic. Standards for fish are currently in development.

**Option #1** Replace 15% of total purchases of animal protein with plant-based protein.

Based on data collected, the agencies do not purchase food items containing GFPP animal welfare certifications. Meat reduction strategies are becoming more common for the central kitchens, serving vegetarian options 1-3 times a week. Meat blends are created often, to reduce the intake of red-meat and reduce food costs, but do not meet the 15% criteria for plant-based protein. These blends can contain either chicken, vegetable protein (TVP) or most recently, mushrooms. Fresh vegetables and salads are served every day and staff encourages vegetable consumption alongside the meat (protein) options.

## #5 Nutrition

**Goal:** *Promote health and well-being by offering generous portions of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and minimally processed foods, while reducing salt, added sugars, saturated fats, and red meat consumption and eliminating artificial additives.*

**Strategy:** *Implement healthful practices in procurement, food preparation and food service environment.*

The 21 check-list items contain three themes: healthy procurement, healthy food service environment and healthy food preparation. The nutrition checklist has 9 high priority criteria and 11 priority, worth two and one points respectively.

To meet level one targets, participants must meet 51-64.9% of checklist items. Six 'extra points' are available for menu labeling, portion control, culturally appropriate foods, worksite wellness and healthy vending

A registered dietician (contracted by the food service provider) reviews and signs the menu plan including individual diet substitutions for compliance with the contract. The consortium follows the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) as established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academies Institute of Medicine and as recommended the Oregon Aging and People with Disabilities (APD). The Salem and Eugene Kitchen Managers meet monthly with NWSDS to review food service quality, menus, and resolve problems.

Healthy food for seniors and people with disability must meet specific criteria in menu planning. Agency staff use nutrition requirements based on the dietary needs of a 70 year-old man with heart disease. Around 20 nutrients are tracked for every meal served with the MOW program (Figure 15). The consortium currently has policies for menu design that limit fats (total, saturated, trans-fats and cholesterol) and added sugars; encourage low-sodium cooking, and appropriate calorie counts. Special diets are accommodated, such as a diabetic dessert option.

**Figure 15. Meals on Wheels Nutritional Analysis, 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines**

Nutrient	DRI/ Dietary Guidelines Daily level*	State Target Values Averaged over week.	NWSDS Compliance Values 2020 Averaged over week.
Calories	2000	700 calories	600-850 calories
Protein	56 g	19 g	≥19
Total Fat	20-35% calories; no more than 35% per meal	20-35% calories; no more than 35% per meal	<30%
Saturated Fat	<10% calories	<10% calories	<10%
Trans Fat	No trans fat	No trans fat	Zero Trans Fat
Fiber	30 gm	>10 gm	≥ 7gm
Calcium	1200 mg	400 mg	400 mg
Magnesium	420 mg	140 mg	≥88 mg
Zinc	11 mg	3.7 mg	3.1mg
Vitamin B6	1.7 mg	.6 mg	.6 mg
Vitamin B12	2.4 mcg	.8 mcg	.8 mcg
Vitamin C	90 mg	30 mg	30 mg
Sodium	2,300 mg*	767-1,050 mg*	<1000 mg
Added Sugar	<10% of calories	<17 grams	monitor when available

## GFPP Scorecard Results

Based on the baseline assessment (using available data), current OCWCOG purchasing does not meet the baseline good food purchasing criteria. The agency gained 4/5 points within the value categories. Especially strong results within the nutrition value category, fulfilling Level 2 criteria; gaining two points.

Planned improvements are needed to meet environmental sustainability (waste audit and meat reductions) and animal welfare criteria (meat reduction, humane foods increase). If additional purchasing data becomes available, environmental and economic impacts can be further assessed, creating a possibility to gain additional points.

Figure 16. OCWCOG Meals on Wheels GFPP scorecard

<b>GFPP SCORECARD</b>		
<b>LOCAL ECONOMIES</b>	1 point	Dairy and bread products are purchased from local farms that are family owned. Potatoes, onions, apples and mushrooms are sourced locally.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	0 points	Meat products do not meet Grass-fed, Organic and Humanly Raised certification standards. Current reductions in amount of meat served, with an increase in vegetarian options. Point-source waste reduction efforts, including: composting, portion control and recycling.
<b>VALUED WORKFORCE</b>	1 point	Agency and partners follow all State and Federal workplace safety and labor laws. Union labor is organized under a collective bargaining agreement with Local SEIU 503. Paid health insurance and paid sick, vacation and holidays.
<b>ANIMAL WELFARE</b>	0 points	Purchases do not meet certification standards of: Certified Humane, Cage-free, Organic and Grass-fed. Some meat reduction practices, such as: plant-meat blends and increased servings of fresh salads and vegetable sides.
<b>NUTRITION</b>	2 points	Met over 65% of nutrition criteria and fulfilling all but four criteria in healthy procurement, preparation and food service environment criteria. Improvement can be made in red-meat reduction, plant based main dishes and increased purchasing of minimally processed fruits, vegetables and grains.
<b>TOTAL: 4 points</b>		<b>Star Rating: zero</b>

All five value categories have criteria for extra points, showing increased commitment to good food purchasing and practices. These points count within the star-rating only after meeting baseline requirements in all five categories. OCWCOG Meals on Wheels gained 13 extra points in areas of environmental sustainability, valued workforce and nutrition. The high number of extra points gained shows a dedication to GFPP values and demonstrates capacity to implement good-food actions and standards.

Figure 17. OCWCOG Meals on Wheels GFPP extra points

<b>GFPP EXTRA POINTS</b>	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<p>3 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution participates in a weekly meatless meal.</li> <li>• 100% compostable service items</li> <li>• No bottled water sold or served.</li> </ul>
<b>VALUED WORKFORCE</b>	<p>5 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution has established anonymous reporting system for workplace violations.</li> <li>• Institution has a living wage policy, to ensure non-poverty wages (2 points).</li> <li>• Institution has a written labor law compliance document and agreement between food service providers (2 points).</li> </ul>
<b>NUTRITION</b>	<p>5 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Menu lists nutritional information for all meals.</li> <li>• Institution uses portion control measures.</li> <li>• Menu items are culturally appropriate.</li> <li>• Work-site nutrition and wellness education</li> <li>• Healthy vending machine policy</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13 extra points</b>

## Chapter 5: OCWCOG GFPP Capacity

Within the GFPP assessment, OCWCOG needs two points to reach base-line levels for good food purchasing. These points must come from improvements to environmental sustainability (sustainable food increase or waste audit and meat reductions) and animal welfare (meat reduction and humane foods increase) standards. The following chapter outlines areas of opportunity and recommendations for fulfillment of baseline GFPP levels. Additionally, constraints to values-based food purchasing policy are discussed, with recommendations to increase capacity and reduce good-food purchasing barriers.

Recommendations are suggested with the five GFPP value categories in mind. Overall, OCWCOG has the capacity to implement parts of the GFPP policy within their future food-service requests for proposals (RFP's). Conversations between the full purchasing consortium and food service vendor can provide guidance regarding future action and priority value categories.

Issues regarding the higher costs of good-food certified products is a concern for both OCWCOG and the FSMC. These cost increases can be mitigated using creative spending trade-offs. The GFPP suggests trade-offs such as increasing lower-cost vegetable-protein substitutions to make up for the added costs of sustainably grown and humanely processed animal proteins. Additionally, cost is addressed in relation to expanding local foods funding opportunities.

### Food Access and Waste Reduction

Increasing purchases of sustainably and humanely raised products can partially satisfy baseline GFPP criteria for valuing environmental sustainability and valuing animal welfare. The following sections describe recommendations and opportunity to increase sustainable food purchases, including: grass-fed, locally produced and humanely raised products. Criteria for environmental sustainability provides an option for reducing food waste instead of purchasing (more costly) sustainably produced items. Recommendations for meeting these criteria builds on current program capacity and existing waste reduction practices.

#### GFPP Recommendation

- **Increase purchases of local, sustainable and humanely raised meat, dairy, fish and eggs.** Access to local, sustainable and humanely raised foods is not a barrier for OCWCOG, as their main food distributor carries a large selection of food products that meet GFPP criteria. Increased cost can be mitigated by reducing overall animal product consumption.
- **Expand zero-food waste practices to all central production kitchens and dining sites.** Promote this program as supporting environmental sustainability and local farmers. OSU Agriculture faculty and staff can help locate family-owned hog and pig farms in a close radius to central kitchen locations.

## Local foods access

FSMC representatives identified Sysco Corporation as the main distributor for the MOW program. With \$55.4 billion in revenues, Sysco is the world's largest broad-line distributor, with a regional office in Portland.<sup>54</sup> Previously, the FSMC has contracted with Food Systems of America, headquartered in Arizona with a \$3.6 billion in revenue. These distributors are considered some of the largest, leading institutional food distributors in the United States (and internationally).

**Figure 18. Sysco Freshpoint Program**



Fresh Point, a new subsidiary of Sysco, focuses on values-based produce, sourcing within a 250 mile radius from warehouse distribution centers. The map within Figure 18 shows the FreshPoint distribution centers. These FreshPoint distribution centers provide built-in data tracking and transparency measures alligning with GFPP standards. The could make data reporting easier for the FSMC and OCWCOG.

Representatives from Sysco Portland's distribuion center provided information about local foods access. Within animal offerings, antibiotic free choices and Never-Ever programs 'are abundant' in all of Sysco's meat categories. Larger farms such as Foster Farms, source antibiotic free and humanly raised/certified chicken and eggs from Washington and Oregon farms. Foster Farms remains a family-owned, family-managed company, so soucing chicken and eggs from Foster Farms could gain points within all of the five GFPP categories.

Sysco also reccomended Coleman Natural meats, which are anti-biotic free and humanely raised. Digging deeper, their

company website shows they are headquartered in North Carolina, not family owned and source meat nation-wide. The geographic and ownership differences between these two 'good

<sup>54</sup> "Sysco Corporation 2017 Annual Report (Form 10-K)". U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. February 2018. 2017.

food' chicken distributors demonstrates the need for increased transparency and record keeping within 'good food' production and purchasing.

Portland Sysco works with the Country Natural Beef program and their Local Ranchers Co-Op. The Co-op is comprised of 200 local ranches in the Northwest region. The Sysco representatives state that their local meat offering is, "so local we have ranchers that will come to your location to talk with you and your customers about the program, the animal husbandry that they employ, etc." Additionally, grass-fed options are available through Portland based Fulton Provision Company, the first meat processor and distributor in the United States to be certified for sustainable business practices.<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, Fulton Provision Company's third-party certifier is the Food Alliance, a key partner in the GFPP framework and program development.

Switching from Sysco to a local produce and meat distributor is not recommended, based on current distributor capacity and established food service contracts. Regional stakeholders describe huge barriers for local foods distributor success in Oregon. The more local you get, the lower your net profit margins are, with Sysco averaging 7%, Food Services of America at 4% and (local) Organically Grown Company achieving an approximate 1% profit margin. This low return does not incentivize the development of local-foods distributors within the region.

#### Reducing Waste

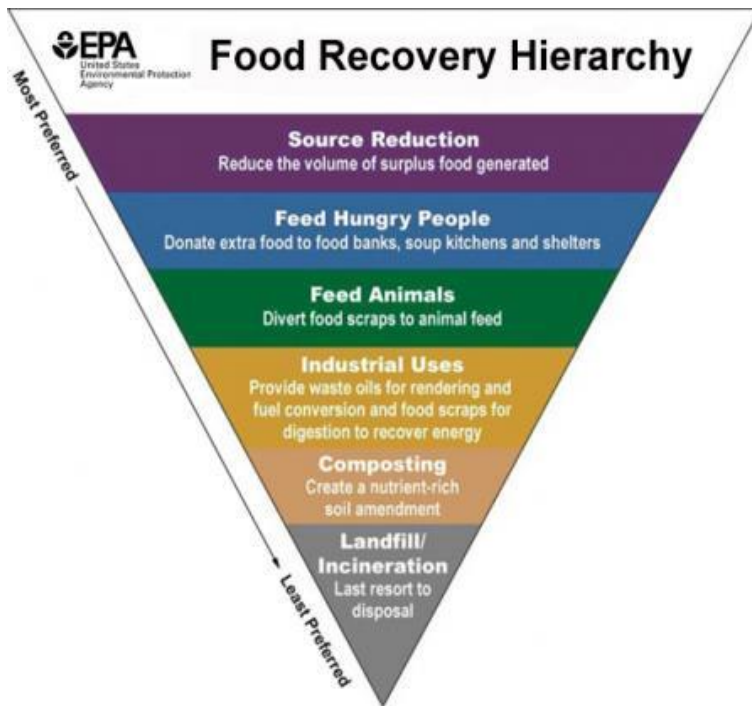
OCWCOG has been proactive in addressing waste issues within its program with efforts like using all compostable, non-plastic alternatives for disposable products and implementing portion control measures. The most promising effort is somewhat under the radar, occurring at one of the central kitchen sites.

The kitchen operates using zero-food waste practices by diverting food-waste from the landfill, thereby reducing methane and greenhouse gas. The efforts are in-line with strategies suggested by the EPA, by diverting food scraps to animal feed, figure 19. The EPA is an existing regional partner and can be used as a technical resource for food waste prevention and recovery.

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<sup>55</sup> "Demand for Transparency in Meat Industry Inspires Fulton Provision Company to Be First in U.S. Certified for Sustainable Business Practices". *Business Wire*, 2008.

Figure 19. EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy



Current efforts in community-based food recovery are led by a MOW volunteer who is also a local hog farmer. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday food scraps are collected from the kitchen (in a gallon ice-cream buckets) as supplemental hog feed. This arrangement is a low-cost, accessible way to cut food-waste and reduce greenhouse gas and methane emissions.

Expanding this practice seems 'doable' for agency staff. Current volunteer capacity and networks can link OCWCOG with existing local hog-farms.

## Costs & Funding

Reducing meat purchases fulfills GFPP animal welfare and environmental sustainability criteria. Costs saved from reducing overall animal products can be directed to increased purchases of 'good-food' such as: local, sustainable and humanely raised meat, dairy, fish and eggs. This trade-off can reduce the increased costs of good-food purchasing among agencies.

## GFPP Recommendations

- **Switch one (of the two) daily entrée choices to a vegetarian meal.** Reach out to the FSCM and Sysco to access innovative plant-based protein choices, such as ancient grains, dark greens and legumes.
- **Reduce the volume of animal products purchased.** Expanding current mushroom-meat mixes and other innovative supply-chain solutions that provide similar dietary outcomes with less meat consumption.
- **Expand fruit, vegetable and whole grain purchases to reach 50% of total purchases by volume.** If animal products are reduced and plant-based options expanded, there should be an increase in total fruit, vegetable and whole grain purchased. Current successes with innovative meat 'blends' (ground beef/chicken) and reduction in red-meat consumption are in-line with suggested GFPP nutrition criteria improvements.



### Reducing meat and animal products

Sourcing the right meat replacements that satisfy the nutritional needs of seniors is a priority. Specifically, there is a need for equal protein equivalents when preparing vegetarian main entrees. MOW staff expressed concern over regional preference for vegetarian and plant-based meals. Some sites would welcome the change, while others might be resistant. Overall, OCWCOG values senior nutrition as the highest program priority. If consumers do not eat enough food to gain the appropriate amount of daily required nutrients, then policy changes can be viewed as contrary to MOW overall program goals. MOW stakeholders stressed that GFPP values should not supersede providing nutritious, consistent food options for OCWCOG senior and disabled populations.

### Added cost

Cost is the highest constraint; all stakeholders interviewed identify increased costs as the main barrier for 'good food' purchasing. There is a sense that paying more for better food could interfere with expanding senior nutrition services to those in need. Typically, OCWCOG staff prioritize lower food costs, as they have the highest per-meal food cost for MOW programs in the State of Oregon. The higher food costs are a result of serving a choice of two daily entrees, rather than one. OCWCOG staff see this cost as a worthy trade-off in support of overall consumer satisfaction and increased meal consumption. Hypothetically, if cost was not an issue, agency staff would place priority in valuing local economies (buying more food from local farms and producers). FSMP representatives mentioned that Los Angeles (which follows the GFPP) had to hire a full-time staff person to track the data and build capacity in response to GFPP policy implementation. This was concerning to OCWCOG staff who, at this time, are averse to creating new financial burdens for OCWCOG.

Overall, stakeholders are hesitant to increase 'good food' purchasing, if it increases overall food costs. To offset higher prices for some food products, the GFPP suggests "creative strategies that institutions can employ to offset potential cost increases, such as shifting toward local producers to reduce travel and storage cost of perishables or redesigning menus to reduce relatively more expensive meat purchases and redirect to produce and alternative proteins". These strategies are uniquely tailored to each institution; based on budget, current purchasing patterns, and short and long-term goals. The GFPP also suggests connecting institutions to expert food-systems partners (such as university extension agencies and food non-profits) to provide additional technical support.

Changing policy has the possibility to create new costs, at least initially. OCWCOG has Nationally, MOW programs are funded by multiple streams of grants and meal sales revenue combined with state and federal Senior Nutrition Program, Medicare and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds (Figure 20).<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> OCWCOG Y2017-2018 Work Program and Budget. May 2017

Figure 20. OCWCOG Meals on Wheels funding sources, 2018 FY

<b>Meals on Wheels / Senior Meals</b>	<i>Contract Revenue</i>	State	\$75,000.00
	• OPI Young Disabled		
	<i>Donations</i>	Local	\$220,982.00
	• Annual solicitation to member jurisdictions		
	• Mother's Day tea solicitation mailing		
	• Senior Services Foundation (SSF)		
	• Voluntary donations to the meal sites		
	<i>Grants</i>	Local	\$170,000.00
	• Samaritan		
	• United Way of Linn County		
	• United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties		
	• Kiwanis and other service organizations		
• Banfield Pet Food			
• Lincoln County Commissioners			
<i>Misc. Revenue</i>	Local	\$1,000.00	
<i>Older American Acts (OAA)</i>	Federal	\$546,000.00	
<i>Program Meals Revenue</i>	Local	\$165,000.00	
• Self-pay meals at the meal-sites			
<i>Senior Meals XIX</i>	Federal	\$378,000.00	
<i>Siletz Revenue</i>	Federal	\$4,000.00	
<i>Title XIX</i>	Federal	\$90,000.00	
<i>USDA</i>	Federal	\$132,000.00	

The national chapter of MOW acts as a 5013c umbrella non-profit to local MOW chapters, allowing them to apply for and access grant funds. OCWCOG agency staff apply for grants throughout the year to make-up for an approximate \$170,000 yearly gap in MOW funding.<sup>57</sup>

OCWCOG acknowledges the lack of sustainable funding within the MOW program and states that, “without additional revenue streams, cost cutting measures such as meal site closures and consumer wait lists may be inevitable”. Within the FY 2017-18 budget, Senior and Disability Services leaders suggested the following budget solution:

“Diversify and increase MOW funding streams by partnering with health system providers to reimburse for meals, developing business sponsorships, and building relationships with individual donors to increase contributions.

<sup>57</sup> OCWCOG Y2017-2018 Work Program and Budget. May 2017

Strengthen program capacity by recruiting, training, and retaining staff and volunteers to provide more capacity, and develop infrastructure.”

#### Funding opportunities

In July of 2017, Oregon Farm to School proponents lobbied the state legislature to pass Oregon House Bill 2038, which funds ‘procurement grants’ enabling all Oregon school districts to be reimbursed for purchasing Oregon grown or Oregon processed food items.<sup>58</sup> The bill was passed unanimously and was signed into law by Governor Kate Brown in August 2017. School districts will be reimbursed the lesser of 15 cents per lunch, or the per meal cost of purchasing in-state food products.<sup>59</sup> On the federal level, the Farm to School program has secured an additional \$5 million in federal appropriations within the 2018 Farm Bill, totaling \$7.5 million.<sup>60</sup> According stakeholders, the most persuasive argument for local-food purchasing incentives lies within the projected positive economic impacts on Oregon food producers. These Farm to School economic multipliers have convinced Oregon lawmakers that a little bit of money directed at local food systems can have positive economic results.

State Agencies on Aging are a naturally collaborative group and currently meet quarterly to discuss State and Federal policy updates regarding Meals on Wheels and senior nutrition policy. Existing partnerships can leverage the State of Oregon to pass a bill (similar to the successful F2S bill) appropriating funds to Area Agencies on Aging encouraging increased ‘good food’ purchasing from Oregon producers. This additional state money could incentivize COG’s to invest in local foods, without having to shift money from other programs.

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<sup>58</sup> “House Bill 2038” <https://gov.oregonlive.com/bill/2017/HB2038/>

<sup>59</sup> <http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/11/State-food-procurement-report-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> “FY 2019 Funding Bill Includes \$5 Million for Farm to School”. <http://www.farmtoschool.org/news-and-articles/fy-2019-funding-bill-includes-5-million-for-farm-to-school>

Figure 21. Albuquerque MOW Local Harvest Program

**Local Harvest**



Through our Local Harvest program, Meals on Wheels of Albuquerque is purchasing locally farmed fruits and vegetables for use in our meals. The program allows us to support local farmers, our economy, and the environment while providing our clients with fresh and healthy produce that they would be unable to obtain on their own.

The goal of the local food movement is to create thriving community-based food systems that will make high quality, local food available to everyone—including our homebound clients. Local Harvest is about allowing our clients to enjoy real food, grown by people in the communities we live in. It's about developing strong, local economies. It's about eating seasonally and allowing our clients even more opportunities to enjoy the services we provide.

Our Local Harvest Program:

- Supports the local economy
- Allows clients to eat fresh, local produce
- Keeps your donations in the community
- Exposes clients to new and different foods
- Helps build sustainable food systems
- Provides the healthiest, freshest food possible to our clients

Albuquerque, NM Meals on Wheels has developed a Local Harvest program to successfully incorporate locally grown foods into its meal program. This program is funded through community donations and targeted fundraising, appealing to local foods supporters within the region.

The Local Harvest program is advertised as leveraging donations for double the community impact, by increasing food security and supporting local farmers. Though it is located in an urban metro area, their MOW program has a similar sized volunteer (~400) and customer base. This type of funding mechanism could work well for OCWCOG, as the local community values local farms and a healthy, active senior population.

## Local food economies and data

Increasing the awareness of environmental and economic impacts of OCWCOG MOW purchases requires more data. Tracking and analyzing results of food purchases within the MOW program provides opportunity to demonstrate current food systems impacts, especially within the valued economies category. Highlighting current successes within valued workforce promotes COG's as an essential good-food employer.

### GFPP Recommendations

- **Create a simple tracking system for food purchasing.** When purchasing data becomes available, assess purchases for local foods economic impacts using the GFPP baseline standards.
- **Request written documentation from the FSCM regarding the status of vendors and suppliers regarding GFPP labor law criteria.**

The assessment shows that current labor policies for all OCWCOG and FSMC workers exceed GFPP baseline standards. More data collecting is needed, allowing for increased labor transparency along the food-chain. Labor compliance documentation is essential for all supply-chain workers, including (but not limited to): field workers, meat packers, fruit pickers and warehouse staff.

- **Promote OCWCOG as a leader in valued workforce.** Highlight recent wage adjustments, union support, paid sick leave and tuition reimbursement.

#### Data Collection

To gain the full story of OCWCOG local foods purchasing impacts on the economy and environment, better purchasing data must be collected. Based on OCWCOG and partner capacity, the agency should start with the basics: amount, sources, distributor, cost and relevant third-party certifications. Designating one COG employee as a purchasing contact can streamline data requests and ensure information is efficiently distributed to stakeholders.

OCWCOG purchasing data from Sysco via Bateman Community living is currently not easily accessed or tracked. This limits the agencies capacity to make a full, detailed GFPP purchasing assessment and visualize regional food-systems impacts. These limitations are not unique to OCWCOG, as full supply chain transparency is still growing as a market standard. Within the current contract, the FSMC tracks and documents thirteen different program variables, such as: monthly records of meals ordered by menu category, documentation of invoice costs, maintenance and cleaning records, daily food temperature records and pest extermination. Knowing this, there is a possibility to include food purchasing data collection and reporting in section 'VI. Special Provisions SP-1 Records and Reports' of the RFP and service contract.

The GFPP assessment shows a large amount of purchases from local producers such as Dairygold Co-op, Franz Bakery and local vegetable farmers. Collecting deeper and more precise data allows MOW staff to highlight areas of current success and address areas of concern. Additionally, increased data collection can demonstrate total spending directed to meat/animal products. This information can be used to reduce overall purchases of animal products and red meat, to meet GFPP standards. Cost savings from reducing the total amount of animal products can be used to purchase products meeting GFPP criteria, such as: cage-free eggs, grass-fed beef and anti-biotic free poultry.

Out of the 493 data sets in the Oregon Spatial Data Library, a "Century Farms and Ranches" is the only farm and/or agricultural GIS spatial data layer. Useful for historians and land-use planners, it does not provide information needed for most food systems research. Additionally, the Oregon Explorer Natural Resource Digital Library has limited agricultural and local food systems data. OCWCOG (and their neighbor OSU) has the capacity and technical knowledge for a creative partnership to produce open-sourced, up-to-date food-systems spatial data records and files. Making this data accessible can fuel food-systems research, reduce programmatic duplication and drive data-driven decision making.

Most local foods maps and online local foods purchasing resources are targeted towards direct to consumer markets, rather than institutions. Commonly featuring farm stands/markets, these regional guides highlight specialty and seasonal products. Databases or publications containing local producers by size, location and institutional purchasing scale are not available for the region. Without access to listings of local food sources (operating at the appropriate scale), institutions are limited when advocating for increased local foods procurement and purchasing practices.

### Local Food Economies

Highlighting the economic impact of Meals on Wheels purchasing can deepen relationships across food leaders, farmers, institutions and food service management providers. Interviews with regional stakeholders (outside of OCWCOG) show that local food economies and environmental issues are valued as top priorities within their regional networks.

Not only does Oregon have organizations focused on food policy work, but it also has an abundance of producers and producer groups who are actively involved in the food system community. These organizations are working continuously to improve and expand local and regional food systems across the Pacific Northwest. An OSU economic analysis of Oregon food and fiber shows that if production could be increased and that production substituted for imports (moving from 31.5 percent to 50 percent), the economic effects would be additional sales of approximately \$350 million dollars in the agriculture, food and fiber industry. Looking at the whole Oregon economy, researchers project an additional \$600 million in sales, 2,600 jobs and \$200 million could be created with this shift to local and regional agricultural production. Additionally, researchers stressed that import substitution needs to come from increased production, given there are sufficient capacity and inputs, and preferably not come from production that is exported.<sup>61</sup>

Substantial work has been done by local food-systems experts, including the Oregon Community Food Systems Network (OCFSN), setting the stage for additional showcasing of good food actions. This collaboration brings together fifty-three nonprofit organizations and allies dedicated to strengthening local and regional food systems, with a specific focus on local and regional food economies. The OCFSN is based out of Oregon State University's Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems, located within the OCWCOG service area. Regional stakeholders stress that a local-foods system needs a critical mass of institutions adopting values-based food purchasing standards in order to see effects of policy decisions. Additionally, regional leaders highlight the importance of localized, institutional policy changes, stating that RFP's 'hold all of the power' when implementing values-based purchasing changes.

Relationship building between agency/institutional leaders, food service contractors, non-profits and farmers is key to developing the networks that support local institutional purchasing. Agencies are more likely to enter into local purchasing if they are assisted and

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<sup>61</sup> "Oregon Agriculture, Food and Fiber: An Economic Analysis." *Oregon State University Extension Service Rural Studies Program*, 2015.

guided by farmers, distributors and food-systems leaders. In Oregon, regional and state food systems policy projects have been harder and taken longer to coordinate. Stakeholders mentioned that policy work can be seen as ‘less flashy’, time-consuming and costly. This perception has created some barriers for innovative food-systems policy work and produces a high-level of burnout. The Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council (PMFPC) was established in 2002 and dissolved in 2012, after local government agencies expressed that the council was losing relevancy.<sup>62</sup> Combining the GFPP assessment results and assistance from local food-systems experts (OSU, EcoTrust), OCWCOG Meals on Wheels can showcase the impact of values-based institutional purchasing within the Willamette Valley food system.

## Conclusion

COG’s and Area Agencies on Aging (and Meals on Wheels programs) can become leaders in values-based institutional purchasing regionally and state-wide. This can be accomplished within the current capacity, building off of current strengths and highlighting institutional good-food actions. These agencies already lead the way by committing resources and staff to the MOW program, providing essential nutrition services to vulnerable populations in the region.

Excelling in areas of nutrition allows OCWCOG to focus purchasing priorities to other good-food value categories such as environmental sustainability, local economies and animal welfare. This report suggests eight ways that OCWCOG can build on current capacity to meet baseline criteria, becoming a ‘good-food provider’.

1. Reduce the volume of animal products purchased.
2. Switch one (of the two) daily entrée choices to a vegetarian meal.
3. Increase purchases of local, sustainable and humanely raised meat, dairy, fish and eggs.
4. Expand fruit, vegetable and whole grain purchases to reach 50% of total purchases by volume.
5. Expand zero-food waste practices to all central production kitchens and dining sites.
6. Create a simple tracking system for food purchasing.
7. Request written documentation from the FSCM regarding labor law compliance of food vendors and suppliers.
8. Promote OCWCOG as a leader in valued workforce.

## Assessment Process

All senior food programs are unique and depend on varied funding structures, purchasing and food service agreements and consumer demographics. Though some critique the GFPP criteria as tailored to school food service, there is great opportunity for adaption within senior nutrition

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<sup>62</sup> Coplen, A., & Cuneo, M. “Dissolved: Lessons Learned from the Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council”. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 2015.

programs. The biggest barrier within the assessment is data collection. As policies (such as the GFPP) push for greater market and supply chain transparency, collection will become easier and more efficient. We see shifts in thinking, as Sysco and Bateman Community Living have started to track some good-food criteria in response to market pressure.

The tiered, flexibility of the program is attractive. Having a flexible framework allows institutions to 'come as they are', with clear criteria within each value category. The five value categories allow institutions, such as COG's, greater opportunity to connect values-based purchasing with regional economic development, healthcare and land-use topics. There is power within a holistic assessment framework that addresses economic, social and environmental aspects of our regional food systems. Data, evidence and standards driven, the GFPP stands up to academic reviews and can be adjusted based on user and stakeholder feedback.

#### Future Research and Action

Area Agencies on Aging and Meals on Wheels Programs should be included in all institutional purchasing conversations within the State of Oregon. These agencies hold a unique position within regional food-systems and are tasked with serving 'good food' to a growing vulnerable and at-risk population. OCWCOG can lead the way by collecting and analyzing their total purchases using the GFPP standards and criteria. OCWCOG can leverage its unique resources, technical capacity and regional partnerships to conduct larger-scale purchasing impact studies. There is hope that this report is just the start of a large conversation regarding Meals On Wheels and values-based purchasing within the State of Oregon.



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