

APPENDIX A

Model climate-friendly food purchasing policy and standards

Background:

This model policy and corresponding standards are geared toward reducing embedded greenhouse gas emissions associated with municipal food purchases or foods served on municipal property.ⁱ The model climate-friendly food purchasing policy includes several components: a model ordinance or executive order, policy targets, definitions, food standards and model tracking language for contracts. Jurisdictions may choose to adopt all of these components in one policy vehicle, though most likely they will be adopted through distinct processes. For instance, the standards, which address which food is *served* as opposed to food *purchased*, may be adopted by municipalities without a formal purchasing policy. In some cases climate-friendly provisions could be integrated into existing health or nutritional standards.ⁱⁱ This model policy and standards are offered with the understanding that municipalities face varying financial and political limitations and may choose to pursue only certain aspects of this policy or enact the policy through an incremental approach that applies to a limited number of entities purchasing or serving food. This policy was developed by Friends of the Earth and the Responsible Purchasing Network with feedback from a range of knowledgeable individuals and organizations (see the [Acknowledgements](#)). We welcome feedback and look forward to seeing how municipalities adapt this for their particular circumstances.

1. Model ordinance or executive order

WHEREAS [city/county] recognizes the importance of supporting the health and safety of its employees and community, preserving and protecting our planet for future generations, and promoting the vitality of our economy;

WHEREAS the food sector is a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with livestock production accounting for 14.5% of global GHG emissions, and the United Nations recognizing that “Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today’s most serious environmental problems;”

WHEREAS food represents a significant portion of a municipality’s consumption-based GHG emissions but is not currently addressed in [city/county’s] climate action planning;

WHEREAS greenhouse gas emissions from plant-based protein foods such as beans, lentils, peas and tofu are considerably lower than those from beef, pork, cheese and other animal products;

WHEREAS a diet high in plant-based foods and low in meat is recognized by leading experts to reduce risks of cardiovascular disease, obesity, hypertension and diabetes, and more than two thirds of adults and nearly a third of children and teens are overweight and obese in the United States, and obesity is associated with a higher risk of various health ailments including heart disease and type-2 diabetes;

WHEREAS Americans eat, on average, significantly more meat and significantly less plant-based food than is recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans jointly developed by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services;

WHEREAS [city/county] can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and improve the health and well-being of its employees and community residents by purchasing and serving less meat and more plant-based food in facilities operating on municipal property; now, therefore

i See [page 12](#) for an explanation of embedded GHG emissions.

ii See [page 29](#) for an explanation of when a municipality may be able to enact standards in lieu of a formal purchasing policy.

BE IT ENACTED that [city/county] shall substantially reduce its greenhouse gas emissions associated with its food purchases and food sold on municipal property by its vendors.^{iii, iv}

Within one year of enactment, [overseeing agency, department, or office] shall establish:

- a. a time-bound target for reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the consumption of animal products;
- b. climate-friendly food standards and purchasing targets;^v
- c. a list of departments, facilities and other entities covered by the policy;^{vi} and
- d. a plan for tracking the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the implementation of the standards that includes tracking animal product purchases by weight.^{vii, viii}

Within 60 days of the establishment of the standards, the standards shall be distributed to [city/county] covered entities implementing the policy. Within 150 days of receiving the standards, each covered entity shall provide to the [overseeing agency] a plan to incorporate the standards into all [city/county] food commodity contracts, food service agreements, leases that cover food concessions and restaurants on municipal property, and agency meetings and events where food is served.

[City/county] departments permitting mobile food vendors shall either apply food standards, issue percentage targets for the sale of plant-based foods or give preferences to businesses that sell such food.

[City/county] departments shall provide documentation of implementation to the [entity overseeing implementation] within 2 years after the issuance of the standards. Every year thereafter, departments shall provide an annual report to [overseeing agency] showing progress meeting GHG emissions reduction and purchasing targets. Staff from [relevant departments, such as department of health and/or department of the environment] will provide guidance and technical support.

2. Model policy target

Covered entities shall reduce the carbon footprint of animal product purchases by:

- 8 percent within two years of adoption of the policy;
- 25 percent within five years; and
- 30 percent within eight years..^{ix, x, xi, xii}

iii A reduction in water usage could be added to this goal depending on the jurisdiction's preferences.

iv In order to simplify baseline data gathering, municipalities could focus solely on animal products because those typically represent 70-80% of total GHGs associated with food and are much easier to track. See [Step 6 \(page 38\)](#) on tracking and reporting progress.

v See "Model Policy Targets". These could be included directly in the policy or be part of the standards.

vi This could include municipal-run facilities (e.g., hospitals) and food served on municipal properties (e.g., stadiums). For a full list of potential entities that could be subject to the policy, see [Table 1](#), page 18. This model ordinance could also specify which entities are covered directly as opposed to establishing the scope of the policy through the implementation process.

vii Implementation periods will vary depending on the jurisdiction, but the policy should lay out a specific timeframe for various stages of implementation in order to create accountability.

viii The plan for tracking GHG emissions will necessitate a baseline assessment of the embedded emissions associated with a municipality's food purchases or food purchased on municipal property; or at a minimum the amount of animal products being purchased. See [Step 6 \(page 38\)](#) for suggestions on tracking and reporting progress.

ix The 5 year target mirrors the Good Food Purchasing Program's target and focuses specifically on animal products since these are easier to track than the entire amount of food purchased and sold by municipal food operations or food venues on municipal property. Once tracking systems are established, it is ideal to create a target that is aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of all food.

x Special calculations of carbon reductions for "grass-fed or organic meat" that may have a lower carbon footprint than its conventional counterparts could be considered in cases where a municipality is purchasing a significant amount of this kind of meat and dairy and there is a credible analysis has been conducted to evaluate the carbon emissions associated with the production of that particular animal product.

xi Reducing – and eventually eliminating – [processed meat](#), which has been classified as a known carcinogen by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), should be a key strategy in meeting this target.

xii For a table that lists CO₂eq of major food groups, see [Appendix E](#)

3. Model policy definitions

Animal products shall include meat, poultry, dairy, eggs and seafood.

Dairy shall include food produced from or containing the milk of mammals.

Meat shall include lamb, beef, pork and goat products.

Plant-based shall mean food that is wholly derived from plants, including but not limited to vegetables, legumes, grains, mushrooms, nuts, seeds and fruits.^{xiii}

Seafood shall include freshwater and saltwater fish and shellfish.

4. Model standards

These standards are meant to apply to concessions, cafeterias and restaurants on local government property as well as food served in all institutional settings, including settings where there is typically only one main dish available to customers at a time.

- At least one entirely plant-based option must be made available at every meal, emphasizing high-protein, plant-based foods such as peas, lentils, soy and other beans.^{xiv}
- Prioritize protein-rich plant-based foods and ensure that at least 20 percent of main dishes served per week are plant-based within 2 years and at least 5 percent more main dishes are plant-based each year after up until at least 40 percent of main dishes are plant-based.^{xv}
- Meat, poultry and/or eggs must not exceed 3.7 ounces per meal (or 3.7 ounces per day if serving several meals to the same people).^{xvi, xvii}
- If serving dairy-based milk, offer at least one unsweetened, non-dairy option.

- Drinking water must be offered at no charge at every meal.^{xviii}

Additional requirements that apply only to concessions, cafeterias and restaurants on local government property include the following:

- One entirely plant-based main dish option must be on the menu at each meal, emphasizing high-protein, plant-based foods such as chickpeas, lentils, soy and other beans.
- Make available reduced-size portions for at least 25% of menu items offered — prioritizing dishes that include animal products.^{xix} Reduced-size dishes should be priced proportionally to full-sized portions.^{xx}
- When offering multiple meat and/or poultry options, include at least one main dish that features less than less than 2 ounces of animal protein, either by including meat and/or poultry as a condiment, as part of a blended option or as a mixed meat vegetable dish.^{xxi, xxii}

xiii Friends of the Earth strongly discourages the use of plant-based foods that are derived from genetic engineering due to lack of safety testing and inadequate regulatory frameworks.

xiv This guideline should be inclusive of options to substitute a plant-based protein to a dish that otherwise contains animal products.

xv Reducing – and eventually eliminating – [processed meat](#), which has been classified as a known carcinogen by the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), should be a key strategy in meeting this target.

xvi Daily ounce limit is based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommended servings of 26 ounces of meat, poultry and eggs per week for an average 2000 calorie diet.

xvii Reducing portion sizes of meat is a key strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with food purchases while also adhering to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

xviii Water has the lowest carbon footprint of all beverages.

xix As described in the Good Food Purchasing Standards, reduced-sized portions are at least one third smaller than the full-size item and are offered in addition to the full-size versions.

xx This guideline is intended to reduce GHGs and reduce food waste and is modeled on language from the Good Food Purchasing Standards. See [page 13](#) for more information about the link between food waste, particularly food waste associated with animal products, and GHG emissions.

xxi A condiment size portion should be less than 1 ounce and ideally less than .5 ounces.

xxii A blended option is anything that has meat blended with a plant-based food. See [page 33](#) for an example of a blended burger.

5. Model tracking language for contracts

Contractor shall comply with all climate-friendly, [healthy and sustainable] food guidelines outlined in this Agreement, as well as any future food procurement policies approved by [governing body]. [Overseeing entity] may periodically monitor the Contractors' compliance with the guidelines. Contractor is required to submit quarterly to [relevant staffperson] the following records: food production records, product inventory, purchasing lists, itemized monthly sales and a complete nutrition analysis of all menu products/items offered. Meat and dairy amounts shall be reported in pounds broken down by general product type (beef, chicken, pork, cheese, etc.). [Overseeing entity] shall review records and communicate its findings to [entity responsible for food purchasing policy implementation]. Failure to comply with the food guidelines may, in [overseeing entity]'s sole discretion, constitute a breach of this Agreement. Contractor may contact [relevant staffperson, phone, and email] if Contractor has questions on the climate-friendly [healthy and sustainable] food guidelines and compliance.^{xxiii}

xxiii This tracking language is based off of language in an RFP from Los Angeles County, CA.

APPENDIX B

Additional considerations for a broader sustainable food procurement policy

Reducing meat and dairy purchases is a core, measurable strategy to mitigate consumption-related climate impacts that also has clear benefits to human health. At the same time, reducing meat and dairy purchases may save money that can be used to purchase more sustainable food that is locally or regionally produced,ⁱ organicⁱⁱ or third-party-certified grass-fedⁱⁱⁱ, fair trade or humane. Given that some municipalities will want to address climate-friendly food procurement in conjunction with broader sustainability goals, we have included suggested policy language, purchasing targets and definitions for those other sustainability criteria. The certifications included in this model policy have been endorsed by The Center for Good Food Purchasing and/or Real Food Challenge based on a comprehensive community consultation process. In [Appendix C](#), we provide additional background on several of the third-party certifications for animal products that have been endorsed by these organizations. The language below can be incorporated into the climate-friendly purchasing policy and standards (see [Appendix A](#)) depending on a municipality's goals and resources.

1. Sustainable food procurement policy language

Additions to the model climate-friendly food procurement policy above are italicized.

WHEREAS supporting local food production helps protect farmland, build a prosperous local economy and can reduce transportation- and urban-sprawl-related greenhouse gas emissions;

WHEREAS organic agricultural practices and certified organic products eliminate chemical pesticide

and fertilizer use and can have important climate benefits, including reduced energy use and carbon sequestration;

WHEREAS the overuse of antibiotics in livestock contributes to antibiotic resistance in humans, a public health crisis that kills at least 23,000 people each year according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

WHEREAS many species of fish are overfished or caught or farmed in ways that harm marine life or the environment;

WHEREAS third-party certified food products such as American Grassfed Association Certified by A Greener World 100% grassfed, Animal Welfare Approved, Global Animal Partnership Steps 3-5+ and Certified Humane Raised and Handled promote higher animal welfare practices and do not allow for the routine use of antibiotics;

WHEREAS ecological certifications such as Rainforest Alliance, Protected Harvest, Food Alliance, Grasslands Alliance and USDA Transitional Organic require production practices that are beneficial to the environment;

WHEREAS Fairtrade USA, Ecocert Fair Trade Certified, Fairtrade America, Fair for Life, FairWild, Hand in Hand, Equitable Food Initiative and Food Justice Certified demonstrate a commitment to fair trade or fair labor practices;

WHEREAS Seafood Watch has developed a set of "best choice" recommendations for fish and seafood that are well-managed and caught or farmed in ways that cause minimal harm to habitats or other wildlife; and

ⁱ Locally and regionally produced food can also have climate-specific benefits, but they are harder to measure. See [page 16](#).

ⁱⁱ In some cases, organically produced food—including pasture-raised animal products-- can also have smaller climate impacts than their conventional counterparts, but vary by production systems and are harder to measure. See [page 16](#) for a discussion on the climate benefits of regenerative, organic agriculture.

ⁱⁱⁱ When considering carbon sequestration in soils, several studies have found that some U.S. pasture-based and cattle grazing systems produce a smaller carbon footprint than industrial confinement systems. For more information on the environmental and health benefits of well-managed grass-fed livestock, see [Less and Better Meat is Key to a Healthier Planet](#).

WHEREAS [city/county] can improve the health and well-being of its employees and residents as well as animals, workers, farmers and the planet by purchasing lower carbon-intensive food and food *that is certified organic, higher animal welfare, grass-fed and fair trade; locally or regionally produced; or produced without routine antibiotics.*

BE IT ENACTED that [city/county], for all food purchased by [city/county] and for all food sold on municipal property by its vendors, shall substantially:

- a. reduce its embedded greenhouse gas emissions; and
- b. increase the amount of food that is certified organic, grass-fed, higher animal welfare, ecological and fair trade; locally or regionally produced; and produced without routine antibiotics.

Within one year of enactment, [overseeing agency, department, or office] shall establish:

- a. a time-bound target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with animal food purchases *and for meeting purchasing targets for food that is certified organic, grass-fed, higher animal welfare, ecological and fair trade; locally or regionally produced; produced without routine antibiotics and;*
- b. sustainable and climate-friendly food standards and purchasing targets;
- c. a list of entities covered by the policy; and
- d. a plan for tracking:
 - 1) the amount of food that is certified *organic, grass-fed, higher animal welfare, ecological and fair trade; locally or regionally produced; produced without routine antibiotics;* and
 - 2) the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the implementation of the standards that includes tracking animal product purchases by weight.

Within 60 days of the establishment of the standards, the standards shall be distributed to [city/county] departments and other municipal entities implementing the policy. Within 150 days of receiving the standards, each department shall provide to the [overseeing agency] a plan to incorporate standards

into all [city/county] food contracts, leases that cover food concessions and restaurants on municipal property, agency meetings and events where food is served.

[City/county] departments permitting mobile food vendors shall:

- a. apply food standards;
- b. issue percentage targets for the sale of foods that are plant-based, certified *organic, higher animal welfare, grass-fed and ecological; locally or regionally produced; and produced without routine antibiotics; or*
- c. give preferences to businesses that sell such food.

[City/county] departments shall provide documentation of implementation to the [entity overseeing implementation] within 2 years after the issuance of the standards. Every year thereafter, departments shall provide an annual report to [overseeing agency] showing progress on emissions and purchasing targets. Staff from [relevant departments, such as department of health and/or department of the environment] shall provide guidance and technical support.

2. Sustainable purchasing targets^{iv}

Within 2 years of implementation, at least 10 percent, and within 5 years, at least 25 percent of all plant-based food purchases must be certified organic or ecological.

Within 2 years of implementation, at least 15 percent of food and beverages purchases shall be locally or regionally produced, of which at least 5 percent should be locally produced; within 5 years, at least 25 percent of food and beverages purchases shall be locally or regionally produced, 10 percent of which should be locally produced.

Within 2 years of implementation at least 15 percent and, within 5 years, at least 25 percent of animal products must be certified as grass-fed, higher

^{iv} Most of these targets mirror those established in the Good Food Purchasing Standards level 2 and 3, which allow entities to comply with its environmental standard either by reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with animal products or by purchasing a percentage of its food from environmentally sustainable sources. While GFPP establishes most of the initial targets for 1 year, we have provided 2 years to allow more time to find adequate supply of third-party certified products.

animal welfare, organic, or ecological.

Within 2 years of implementation, at least 5 percent of products and within 5 years at least 15 percent of products must be from fair trade sources.

Within 2 years of implementation, at least 30 percent and, within 5 years, at least 60 percent of animal product purchases must be produced without the routine use of antibiotics.

Within 2 years, at least 25 percent and, within 5 years, at least 50 percent of seafood purchased should be listed as “Best Choice” and no seafood purchased listed as “Avoid” in the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s most recent Seafood Watch Guide.

Definitions

Higher animal welfare shall mean a product has been certified as Animal Welfare Approved, Global Animal Partnership (Steps 3 through 5+), Certified Humane Raised and Handled or other certifications deemed meaningful by the Center for Good Food Purchasing at level 2.

Grass-fed shall mean animal products that are certified as 100% Grass-fed, Certified Grassfed by A Greener World, Certified Grassfed by Food Alliance or certified by the American Grassfed Association or other certifications deemed meaningful by Real Food Challenge or the Center for Good Food Purchasing.

Locally produced food shall mean food that is:

1. produced by a privately or cooperatively owned enterprise;
2. if the food is produce,
 - i. produced and processed at a facility located within a 250-mile radius of the city/county;
 - ii. (ii) procured from a farm that grosses \$5 million/year or less; and
3. if the food is meat or poultry,
 - i. produced and processed at a facility located within a 500 mile radius of the city;
 - ii. procured from a farm or a company that grosses \$50 million/year or less.^v

^v This definition is from the Real Food Challenge standards. See [Appendix D](#) for more about the Real Food Challenge standards.

Certified Organic shall mean a product that has been certified by the United States Department of Agriculture’s National Organic Program established pursuant to the federal Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. Sec. 6501 et seq.) and the regulations adopted for implementation. Demeter Certified Biodynamic products shall be considered equivalent to Certified Organic for the purposes of this section.

Ecological certified products refer to products that require production practices that are beneficial to the environment and have been endorsed by Center for Good Food Purchasing (level 2) or Real Food Challenge, including Rainforest Alliance, Protected Harvest, Food Alliance, Grasslands Alliance and USDA Transitional Organic or seafood products that are considered “best choice” by Seafood Watch.

Fairtrade certified products refer to products that have been certified by Fairtrade USA, Ecocert Fair Trade Certified, Fairtrade America, Fair for Life, FairWild, Hand in Hand, Equitable Food Initiative or Food Justice Certified.

No routine antibiotics shall mean that use of antibiotics is limited to treatment of animals diagnosed with an illness or controlling a verified disease outbreak.

Regionally produced food shall mean a food product that is raised, produced, and distributed in (a) the locality or region in which the final product is marketed, so that the total distance that the product is transported is less than 400 miles from the origin of the product; or (b) the State in which the product is produced, except that if the food product is meat or poultry, regionally produced food shall also include a food product that is raised, produced and distributed in the locality or region in which the final product is marketed, so that the total distance that the product is transported is less than 600 miles from the origin of the product.