



Community Perspectives: Improving Food Access



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Food Access in King County

Public Health—Seattle & King County is a longstanding recipient of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grant supporting Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH). In King County, the overarching goal of this grant is to improve health, prevent chronic disease, and reduce health disparities for African-born, African American, and Asian American populations in south Seattle, SeaTac, and Tukwila through nutrition, physical activity, and building community-clinical linkage strategies. Information on the REACH grant partners and strategies, as well as a map of the geographic focus region, can be found in the appendix.

Northwest Harvest is one of several partners on the REACH grant engaging in strategies to address nutrition, specifically to improve access to and affordability of culturally-relevant foods. Low-income populations, individuals, and groups not represented in the dominant culture consistently face barriers to accessing food that is nourishing, affordable, and culturally desirable. These barriers may be around convenience, access to transportation, personal mobility, cultural preferences, and other factors. The Seattle-based *Food Availability & Food Bank Network Report*¹ noted gaps in food access around food bank service hours and locations, as well as detailing constraints that food banks face in improving their services. Constraints include limited space, limited autonomy to control the food available, and an increasing volume of customers in need of food. The report offered insights from personal interviews with food bank users as well. The themes that arose in users' comments were the importance of dignity, availability of quality food, and convenient access. Surveying the current landscape of food availability in the REACH geographical area and understanding the unique needs of the focus populations was the starting point for defining strategies to improve access to culturally relevant foods.

Why Listening Sessions?

Centering the voices of the communities the grant is intended to benefit is key to the grant implementation process. Although we had an idea of the landscape of food access in King County from previous research, reports, and relationships with providers in the emergency food system, it was critical to hear directly from communities in south Seattle, SeaTac, and Tukwila. In order to provide a space and an opportunity for individuals to express their needs and desires around food access, their experiences at food banks, and their ideas for improvement, Northwest Harvest initiated several community-based listening sessions. Ultimately, these listening sessions and the resulting learnings will inform the trajectory of short- and long-term strategies to improve access and affordability of culturally relevant foods for African American, African-born, and Asian American populations in King County.

Report Summary

Section 2: Process & Approach outlines the steps that were taken to organize and hold the listening sessions, to review the group discussions and individual survey responses, and to compile, draft, and review this final report.

Section 3: Digging Deep offers an in-depth discussion of the listening sessions, populations included, findings, food preferences, and key outcomes identified by participants in each listening session. This section includes key outcomes according to the listening session populations as well as trends across all groups. All the listening session supporting documents, including the community organization expectations, facilitation guidelines, discussion questions, and survey questions are available in the appendix.

Section 4: Opportunities provides specific and actionable recommendations for improving food access for African American, African-born, and Asian American populations. These opportunities encompass both ideas for removing existing barriers to food access as well as ideas for improving access to healthy food across all the geographic focus regions and populations.

¹ Bolt K, Carter L, Casey D, Chan NL, Chen R, Jones-Smith JC, Knox M, Oddo VM, Podrabsky M, Saelens BE, Schachter A, Ta M, Pinero Walkinshaw L, Yang A. Healthy Food Availability & Food Bank Network Report. Report for City of Seattle and Seattle City Council. Feb 2019.

SECTION 2: PROCESS & APPROACH

Approach

Background:

Centering community voice was a crucial part of this process. To do that, we partnered with seven different community-based organizations that worked directly with Asian American, African American, or African-born populations. Our goal was to hear directly from these communities as to what prevents them from using food banks so that we could, ultimately, increase dignity and access to culturally appropriate foods.

Our first step was to identify organizations that we already partner with that would be a good fit for this project. The next step was to look at where we had gaps in relationships, in which case, we looked to current relationships that could connect us to those organizations. The entire process, from identifying organizations to holding listening sessions, began in June of 2019 and completed in May of 2020. We worked with African Community Housing and Development, Atlantic Street Center, Congolese Integration Network, Asian Counseling and Referral Service, Seattle Neighborhood Group, South Park Senior Center, and The Shop at Earthseed.

Process with Community-Based Organizations:

Once we identified an organization to work with, we met to review roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Each organization received \$3,000 to host a listening session. These dollars went to cover staff time to facilitate the session, recruit participants, administer surveys, and translation services. The funds also supported participant compensation. Six sessions were held at the organization's physical space where community gatherings are already taking place, and one was held virtually. Northwest Harvest paid additional funds to support interpretation services which five of the seven required. Only two sessions were in English.

Northwest Harvest also provided support in offering a facilitation guide and meetings with facilitators before the scheduled sessions as needed. We created the discussion questions and reviewed the questions with each organization prior to hosting to ensure that the wording would be translatable for that group. We created a survey for each organization to use, made available in print and online. We also made ourselves available to be present at the listening sessions to provide any technical assistance along the way.

Each listening session was unique. At two sessions where there were three languages represented, the facilitators decided to split the group into the languages spoken and lead three separate discussions. Each group had a facilitator and note taker. At another session, they had the entire group sitting at small tables where they cycled between small and large group sharing. Yet another session was hosted at a farm during their community meal as one large group. A final series of sessions were hosted online due to COVID-19 stay-at-home implications. Each session ranged from 20 to 30 participants with only one session having upwards of 40. The larger groups took place at sessions where there were multiple languages.

Data and Recommendations

Reviewing Data:

Within our approach to capturing what we learned from the sessions, we first reviewed all session notes and survey responses. They were then grouped into two main categories which are 1) the accessibility and environment of food banks and 2) choice, quality, and types of food. The accessibility and environment section includes data around transportation, specific food banks visited, open hours, accessibility concerns for seniors or those with disabilities, and the level of feeling understood and respected when visiting a food bank. Choice, quality, and types of foods includes data of foods with specific cultural or religious significance that, if offered, would increase the likelihood of participants visiting food banks. The data in this section also includes the overall quality of foods.

The *Digging Deep* section of this report is organized into the three focus populations. Each population sub-section highlights specific food preferences. A full list of these preferences can be found in the appendix under *Food Preferences Charts*.

Lastly it is important to note that while the staff at Northwest Harvest who reviewed this data have years of experience working within the emergency food system, we worked as best we could to center only what came out of the sessions and surveys. For example, even though we may know that some food banks give out food to someone without proper identification, we didn't infuse that knowledge into the review if it didn't come up.

Making Recommendations:

The recommendations in this report, called opportunities, were built directly from the most predominant findings within the session and survey data. We decided early on to take a zero-tolerance approach to any comments about feeling misunderstood or disrespected at food banks. Any and all comments in this category rose to a level of recommendation forming an opportunity for staff and volunteer trainings around cultural competency and anti-racism.

Once we were at the phase of predominant findings and opportunities, we took a step back and applied the Northwest Harvest equity filter to the outline of this report. Northwest Harvest uses this filter for all decisions programmatic or otherwise. The filter includes four questions:

1. What equitable outcomes are achieved by this decision (or policy, or program, or practice)?
2. Which stakeholders did the process intentionally and meaningfully include to reach a conclusion?
3. How does the conclusion have potential to do harm to people with lived experiences of oppression (generally) and with lived experiences of hunger (specifically)?
4. How does the conclusion advantage people and/or groups who have traditionally benefited from privilege, thus risking perpetuation of the status quo (for example—perpetuating white dominant culture)?

What we found was that while we included and centered community voice in the listening sessions, they were missing from the report. To rectify this, we sent out the *Digging Deep* and *Opportunities* section of this report to each organization that hosted a session and asked them to review. Specifically, we asked if they felt the summaries were complete or were missing something. We also asked if they felt the opportunities were natural next steps to help increase access to food.

Next, we took questions one, three, and four and applied them to each of the ten opportunities. This process confirmed that the opportunities offered achieve equitable outcomes. These questions also informed how we frame the opportunities to ensure we are reducing harm to people with lived experience while minimizing any advantages to those who have traditionally benefited from privilege.

Lessons Learned

We learned many things from this process and as we move forward we offer a few learnings that would change the approach in the future.

1. Ensure that each session splits the large group into smaller groups for discussion. We didn't enforce this process, and at some locations this seemed like a difficult task to accomplish based on the room set up. However, moving between small and large groups allows for full participation. On the occasions where the large group remained together, we noticed that not everyone spoke.
2. Build into the timeline, from the beginning, how the organization and community will continue to be centered throughout, even within the data review and report creation. Note: Northwest Harvest has built into our project timeline and work plan incorporating community voice into the implementation process of the report.
3. Build in time after initial listening session to assess discussion questions and whether they need to be edited to ensure that the host is getting the information needed to create a full assessment. Also, understand that depending on the population, wording might need to change to be better understood.

SECTION 3: DIGGING DEEP

Overview

Below are details on each listening session categorized by population: Asian American, African American, and African-born. Each section summarizes accessibility and environment of food banks, specific food banks visited, quality of food, and cultural food preferences.

The major themes that emerged are related to 1) chaotic environments at food banks with too many people; 2) long wait times; 3) inconvenient hours; 4) a lack of accessibility for those with disabilities; 5) a need for more locations and the ability to frequent food banks more often; 6) language barriers to feeling understood and respected; 7) lower barriers at intake; and 8) the availability of fresh produce.

African American Population

Key Findings

Background:

The Atlantic Street Center session had 21 participants and was held in the evening from six to eight during one of their Kinship Care Support Group meetings in south Seattle. The room had five tables with a notetaker at each table and one facilitator leading the whole group through each question. At the end each notetaker assisted each table in completing the written survey. Transportation, food, and childcare were provided.



The Shop at Earthseed hosted sessions online due to COVID-19. Four sessions were held online with small group sizes over the course of three weeks. A total of twenty people participated. Unique comments came from this session that are worth highlighting and note the difference of needs and desires between different ethnicities. More so than other sessions, here, participants discussed alternatives to the emergency food system for accessing food. Across all potential missing links, what stands out is community members' relationship to food, to others, and to their community.

"[There's a] stigma that if you are poor, you use food banks. Many agreed that this stigma, among others, needs to be remedied."

For instance, several participants noted that more programming and outreach would improve access, not just for their family but for all families. More specifically, however, were ideas that centered Black-owned establishments. One idea was to create partnerships between food banks and black businesses, community-based organizations, and churches to distribute a variety of food products, especially fresh produce. Participants also mentioned that programs which helped sustain Black-owned businesses and restaurants would greatly improve access for them.

Further alternatives surrounded accessing fresh food, education, and community. The ways to improve access to fresh produce ranged from increasing land ownership with fertile soil so that people can grow their own food, to increasing access to community gardens to increasing the number of farmers markets in the area. One community member stated that, "I've been wanting to start my own garden for years, it's been hard to do... I feel more and more urgency to put food into my own soil." Another suggestion related to the availability of fresh produce was to have a community-led, Black farmers/gardener collective¹.

The Accessibility and Environment of Food Banks:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. Do not know where food banks are located
2. Inconvenient hours to access a food bank
3. Food banks tend to be too crowded and too busy
4. Waiting in line over 30 minutes to visit a food bank
5. Seniors and individuals with disabilities need transportation to access food banks
6. Restrictions placed on ability to access a food bank
7. Ability to visit a food bank more frequently
8. Assistance accessing other resources besides food
9. More locations/Not easy to access locations

"It seems like it's the bottom of the barrel or the throw away food. [The food is] about to expire and if they do have meat it's the brown meat that no one wants at the store."

¹ Excerpts from the Shop at Earthseed listening sessions.

Sixteen of the 41 participants had specific food banks that they visit listed below. For those that didn't visit food banks, reasons included feeling that food banks are for those with less, not comfortable with "hand-outs" and the stigma surrounding this, not being sure of locations, and having inconvenient hours or locations. Most visitors access food banks by car, with eight getting rides, six accessing by bus or train, two walking, and one using a taxi/rideshare service. Specific comments include that transportation is needed for seniors and people with disabilities or to provide delivery services for these populations; locations near bus stops or within walking distance to other stores; shuttle services; allow all zip codes to access food; educate/inform families of where to access food programs; offer other products like toiletries, baby products, storage containers, hand and laundry soap; and allow for visits more than once per month.



Specific to the Shop at Earthseed sessions, community members noted that some missing links are relationships and information. Regarding relationships, one participant remarked, "I would like to know a farmer who I can have a relationship with." Emergent throughout the dialogues, others realized that existing outreach efforts may be missing the community connections which may be contributing to the fact that community members would like more information about when and where the food banks are open and information about quality of food. Some people noted that more information would help counteract the stigma of food banks in terms of what is available and who it's available to.

In terms of outreach, some participants suggested that a reminder text about local food bank hours and/or farmers markets hours would increase the likelihood that they would access these more regularly. Related to outreach, community members suggested that a food delivery system would also improve access for their family. This theme included ideas about neighborhood fruit and vegetable stands that come directly from the farmers and a delivery of organic vegetables on a weekly basis¹.

Table 1.1: Specific Food Banks Visited

**If food bank was mentioned more than once, the number of mentions is noted in parentheses in the table.*

Ballard Food Bank	Kent Food Bank	Salvation Army
Food Bank at St. Mary's	Mt. Baker (unknown location)	St. Vincent de Paul
Food Not Bombs	Rainier Valley Food Bank (2)	University District Food Bank
Hopelink	Restoration House (2)	West Seattle Food Bank

As for the environment within food banks, some differences were noted between the two sessions. In the Atlantic Street Center group, 17 participants stated that they felt they were treated with respect, and the same number felt that food banks understood and respected their culture. In contrast, in the Shop at Earthseed group, 12 participants felt they were treated with respect, while only three participants felt that the food bank understood and respected their culture. This highlights an important nuance, as it shows that creating a culturally sensitive environment requires more than respecting individuals who enter the food bank. Thirty-two participants across both groups stated that they would like food banks to help them access other services beyond food. Specific comments from participants included having more organization at food banks, offering interpretation services, offering meal options and recipes, and creating

"We don't get enough information as to why eating nutritious foods is better for us for longevity. So it would be great if there was more access to this information."

¹ Excerpts from the Shop at Earthseed listening sessions.

a better system for families. Overcrowding and food bank “traffic jams” were highlighted several times as discouraging food bank usage and ideas on how to manage this included staggering hours, extending hours into evenings, and creating an online shopping platform.

Many comments were related to making the act of using a food bank more humanizing like offering better quality foods or having more compassionate staff and volunteers.

Choice, Quality, and Types of Food:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. Allowing for choice in food selection
2. Seeing rotten and expired foods too often
3. Offering organic, kosher, and gluten free food options

Once again, with the Shop at Earthseed sessions, many community members illustrated the classist nature of so called “health foods” in their recognition of the lack of information about the health and healing properties of many ‘health foods’. The dialogue about needing more information on healthy living also included demystifying the ideas behind convenient foods and related health risks.

“Just having something quick and cheap doesn’t mean it’s good for you. We need more information about how deadly things like diabetes is. We need more access to health planning to help community members, like younger children to teach them how to cook.”

Table 2.1: Food Preferences in African American populations

Fruits	juice, fresh and frozen fruit varieties
Vegetables	sweet potatoes, yams, turnip greens, collards, mustard greens, okra, cabbage, root vegetables, plantains, fresh and frozen vegetable varieties, tropical climate produce
Plant Protein	nuts, black eyed peas, beans, mung beans
Animal Protein	ham, beef, chicken, turkey, beef jerky, catfish, white fish, shrimp, canned seafood (<i>sardines, tuna, smoked oysters, etc.</i>)
Dairy & Non-Dairy Substitutes	milk, eggs
Grains	grits, flour, injera, teff flour
Spices & Herbs	Johnny’s, Zatarain’s, O’Bay, and Slap Ya Mama
Cooking Ingredients	oil, honey
Prepared Meals	precooked frozen meals, twist top soups and chili for homeless populations

Among the other cultural foods, community members listed foods that regard dietary restrictions such as gluten free, low sodium, sugar-free, halal, kosher, nut-free, raw vegan food/plant-based food.

Asian American Population

Key Findings

Background:

Two sessions were held between Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) and South Park Senior Center with a total of 76 participants from South and Southeast Asia. The ACRS session was held after their community lunch in the afternoon. The South Park Senior Center session was held on a Sunday afternoon during their community meal program. For both sessions, participants were split into groups based on the language that they spoke since there were multiple languages. In both cases, the surveys were completed prior to the listening session. The below table breaks down the ethnicity and languages present for both sessions.



Table 3.1: Ethnicities Represented in Asian American Listening Sessions

(# of participants)	Ethnicity	Time since immigration
	Asian (2)	30 years
	Vietnamese (32)	46-16 years
	Cambodian (16)	35-37 years
	Chinese (15)	47-8 years
	Filipino (1)	40 years
	Khmer (1)	37 years
	Laos (1)	43 years
	Japanese (1)	Did not answer
	American (1)	Born here

The Accessibility and Environment of Food Banks:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. More locations/not easy to access locations
2. Inconvenient hours to access a food bank
3. No one speaks customer’s language
4. Do not know where food banks are located
5. Prioritize accessibility for disabled individuals
6. Waiting in line over 30 minutes
7. Assistance accessing other resources besides food

“Food banks should be near Vietnamese or Cambodian temples, churches, markets, and/or neighborhoods.”

Forty-four participants mentioned which food banks they visit, listed below. For those that didn’t visit food banks, reasons included not being able to stand long enough, locations being too busy and crowded, and being unaware of locations. Specific comments from participants include having food banks near Vietnamese or Cambodian temples, churches, markets and/or neighborhoods. Most visitors access food banks by car with 26 accessing by bus or train, four getting rides, and six walking. Specific comments from participants include needing delivery for disabled people and for those who cannot come in to get food and providing transportation for mobility issues.

Table 1.2: Specific Food Banks Visited

**If food bank was mentioned more than once, the number of mentions is noted in parentheses in the table.*

Food banks mentioned were predominantly mentioned by streets or intersections, not actual food bank names.

Cherry	High Point	SODO Community Market
Federal Way Food Bank	Issaquah Food Bank	South Park (6)
Filipino Community Center	Rainier Valley Food Bank (7)	West Seattle Food Bank
Food Bank at St. Mary's	Salvation Army	White Center Food Bank (10)

As for the environment within food banks, 33 participants said that there is no one at the food bank that speaks their language and that access would improve if people spoke their languages. Twenty participants said that they do not feel understood and five felt like staff/volunteers at food banks were not nice to them. Nine participants feel that the food bank does not understand or respect their culture. Many participants would like to be able to visit multiple food banks.

Choice, Quality, and Types of Food:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. Less canned foods
2. Seeing rotten and expired foods too often
3. Allowing for choice in food selection

“Allow families to choose what they eat to limit waste of food they will not eat.”

Other comments that emerged from the sessions include managing lines at food banks better so that people cannot hold a place in line for someone else and better monitoring of amounts taken by customers.

Table 2.2: Food Preferences in Asian American populations

Fruits	mangos, pineapple, dragon fruit, jack fruit, sour sob, coconuts, cassava, taro, longans, lychees, bitter melon, oranges, green papaya, grapes
Vegetables	bitter greens, Chinese broccoli, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, celery, green beans, ong choy, squash, pea vines, Asian eggplant, yardlong bean, Chinese cabbage, yu choy, sweet potatoes, garlic, green onions, shallots, cauliflower
Plant Protein	edamame, tofu, red beans
Animal Protein	fish (or any seafood), salmon, pork, chicken, beef
Dairy & Non-Dairy Substitutes	butter, milk (cow, almond, rice, soy)
Grains	jasmine rice, noodles, oatmeal
Spices & Herbs	lemon leaf, waterlily, ginger, galangal root, turmeric, cilantro, mint, coriander, basil, lemongrass
Cooking Ingredients	fish sauce, soy sauce, sugar, salt, oil
Prepared Meals	N/A

African-born Population

Key Findings

Background:

Three sessions were organized by African Community Housing and Development, the Congolese Integration Network, and the Seattle Neighborhood Group, for a total of 72 participants.

The African Community and Housing Development session was held in the afternoon at their office in SeaTac. Refugee and immigrant individuals from all ages participated in an equity-focused Community Café, each in their native language. For two hours, participants residing in Tukwila, SeaTac, and Des Moines engaged in paired, small-group, and whole-group conversations to build shared understanding of the role of food banks in their community. The survey at the end was completed in participants’ native language and then translated into English.

The Seattle Neighborhood Group session was held in the afternoon at the Rainier Urban Farm and Wetlands in south Seattle during their senior community meal gathering. The participants sat in one large group and after eating lunch, began a facilitated discussion in their native language with a notetaker transcribing the conversation into English. The survey was completed afterwards with the facilitator translating and interpreting.

The Congolese Integration Network session was held on a Saturday afternoon in south Seattle. Small group discussion took place in six groups based on primary language spoken. Each small group had a notetaker. Surveys were completed one-on-one with the facilitators and translated as necessary. All participants were provided with lunch following the discussion.

Table 3.2 lists all the countries represented across all three listening sessions with African-born populations.



Table 3.2: Ethnicities Represented in African-born Listening Sessions

	Country of Origin	Time since immigration	
(# of participants)	Somalia (21)	3-26 years	
	Congo (3)		
	Iraq (1)		
	Congo (16)	7 months-17 years	
	Central Africa [includes Central African Republic, Angola and Chad] (6)		
	Kenya (3)		
	Eritrea (15)	3-10 years	
	Ethiopia (6)		
	Sierra Leone (1)		

The Accessibility and Environment of Food Banks:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. Never heard of food banks
2. Do not know where food banks are located
3. Not enough locations
4. Do not feel respected
5. No one speaks language
6. It is hard to get food without accepted identification (government issued ID, driver's license); this is critical for recent immigrants who do not yet have IDs

Across all groups, 48 participants did not regularly visit food banks. The reasons for this were because they had never heard of a food bank, did not know where or how to access food at a food bank, and had no reason to visit a food bank. The food banks identified by the participants that did regularly visit are listed in Table 1.3. Several respondents also identified food banks by their cross streets, nearest bus stop, or general location rather than their name, e.g., "Seattle" or "20th and Jackson."

In group 1 (Somalia, Congo, Iraq), five participants commented that they do not visit food banks because they don't offer foods they prefer and can eat, and that the food available is unhealthy. Participants in this group primarily drove a car or got a ride to the food bank with family/friends. Regarding the food bank environment, two participants out of the seven who go to food banks said someone spoke their language, five felt understood, and four felt that the food bank understood and respected their culture. Thirteen participants would like food banks to help access other needs besides food. In discussion, participants noted that having someone who speaks their language at the food bank, as well as culturally-relevant foods, a welcoming environment, and a clearer understanding about what a food bank is and is not would be beneficial. Specifically, there were misunderstandings around the safety of canned goods and expired foods.

In group 2 (Congo, Central Africa, Kenya), a lack of transportation to food banks and short open hours were cited as serious issues in accessing food. Three participants out of 25 said someone spoke their language, 10 felt understood, and 12 felt that the food bank understood and respected their culture. Twenty-three participants would like food banks to help access other needs besides food. In discussion, participants in this group suggested that having interpreters available and having a feedback form to comment on what they liked and did not like at each visit would be beneficial.

In group 3 (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone), most participants did not drive and expressed the need for more convenient locations and more accessible hours. Regarding the food bank environment, four out of 22 said that someone spoke their language and two felt that the food bank understood and respected their culture. Two participants would like food banks to help access other needs besides food. In discussion, participants commented that there has been a lot of mistreatment and misunderstanding of their culture and language. One participant from the Seattle Neighborhood Group discussion stated, "When we have gone to food banks, many of us have been treated very poorly and disrespected. This makes us not want to go back. In our culture, if someone disrespects you do not continue to go back to them."

The majority of participants in all groups noted that they wait longer than 30 minutes in line when they visit the food bank.

"When we have gone to food banks, many of us have been treated very poorly and disrespected. This makes us not want to go back. In our culture, if someone disrespects you do not continue to go back to them."



Table 1.3: Specific Food Banks Visited

**If food bank was mentioned more than once, the number of mentions is noted in parentheses in the table.*

Food banks mentioned were predominantly mentioned by streets or intersections, not actual food bank names.

Byrd Barr Place	Food Bank at St. Mary's (2)	Northgate
Cornerstone	Helpline	Rainier Valley (2)
Des Moines (5)	Kent (2)	Tukwila (2)
Federal Way (6)		

Choice, Quality, and Types of Food:

Predominant findings about food banks included:

1. Fresh food is desired but not available (food is expired, rotten, or very close to going bad)
2. No foods that are preferred or needed

Many comments and concerns were raised about the quality and kinds of food available in food banks. Participants in all three groups noted that fresh foods were often rotten or very close to going bad and were concerned about the health and safety of canned food. Concerns were raised around canned goods causing cancer and containing pork. There was a clear misunderstanding around the quality of fresh food available at food banks as opposed to markets or conventional grocery stores. One participant at the Seattle Neighborhood Group discussion stated, "We know our diet and what is good for us. If you tell them [food banks] what we eat and they have it, we will access it."

"We know our diet and what is good for us. If you tell them [food banks] what we eat and they have it, we will access it."

Because several African countries were represented across all three African-born groups, the food preferences in **Tables 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5** are presented by listening session group instead of being combined or grouped geographically.

Table 2.3: Food preferences in African-born populations from Somalia, Congo, Iraq

Fruits	banana, juices (orange, grapefruit, and apple)
Vegetables	corn, onion, garlic
Plant Protein	beans
Animal Protein	fish, halal meat (chicken & beef)
Dairy & Non-Dairy Substitutes	milk
Grains	bread, rice, pasta
Spices & Herbs	coriander, turmeric, cloves, ginger, black pepper, cumin
Cooking Ingredients	oil, sugar
Prepared Meals	N/A

Table 2.4: Food preferences in African-born populations from Congo, Central Africa, Kenya

Fruits	N/A
Vegetables	cassava leaves, sweet potato leaves, maize, sour-sour vegetable (also called ngai-ngai or red sorrel)
Plant Protein	N/A
Animal Protein	fresh and dried fish, lamb
Dairy & Non-Dairy Substitutes	N/A
Grains	semolina flour, cassava flour, amaranth
Spices & Herbs	bitter herbs
Cooking Ingredients	palm oil
Prepared Meals	N/A

Table 2.5: Food preferences in African-born populations from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone

Some participants talked about religious significance around canned food (not containing pork) and meat needing to be prepared by a Muslim, among other specifications (Halal). Participants who are not English speakers do not know which cans do not contain pork so steer away from all canned goods, but noted that if they knew the canned beans did not contain pork they would take them.

Fruits	N/A
Vegetables	garlic, onions, carrots, jalapenos
Plant Protein	lentils, kidney beans, fava beans (no pork or canned food)
Animal Protein	N/A
Dairy & Non-Dairy Substitutes	N/A
Grains	gluten free oats, barley, whole wheat flour, teff flour
Spices & Herbs	berbere spice
Cooking Ingredients	N/A
Prepared Meals	N/A

SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

Considerations

Reflecting on the emerging recommendations for these listening session participants, as well as marginalized communities experiencing food insecurity more broadly, highlights the need for a trauma-informed approach to food access. Overall, when considering the feedback and next steps, it will be important for food banks and distributors to think about how the environment and person-to-person interactions are potentially inflicting additional trauma onto their customers whether intentionally or unintentionally. An excellent way to increase accountability is through customer advisory groups that create a feedback loop between staff, volunteers, and customers. Another key approach is to engage in on-going anti-racist trainings.

What is trauma-informed care? Trauma-informed care is an approach, based on knowledge of the impact of trauma, aimed at ensuring environments and services are welcoming and engaging for service recipients and staff. A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.² This is especially critical within the field of social services and emergency food. There are six principles of trauma-informed care:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and transparency
3. Peer support
4. Collaboration and mutuality
5. Empowerment and choice
6. Cultural, historical, and gender issues

Feedback

For the *Digging Deep* and *Recommendations* sections, Northwest Harvest sent copies of each to the participating organizations to have them review and provide feedback on the following questions.

- Is the summary inclusive of what you felt you heard?
- Is there anything you heard that you feel is missing?
- Do you feel like the recommendations mentioned would help your community members access food banks?
- Do you think there is an recommendation missing? If so, what do you suggest?
- Do any of the recommendations feel like they could cause harm to your community members?

Here are some of their responses:

Seattle Neighborhood Group found the summaries and recommendations representative of their community's discussion. They especially highlighted the importance of having alternative locations to access food, like at their Friday meal on the farm, and having the food banks take a critical look at how discrimination and microaggressions are showing up for customers.

Congolese Integration Network stated, "Yes, microaggressions hurt sometimes more than huge action. Especially for a different culture that is trying to transition from known to unknown culture." They also stated that there is a need for education around the difference between a grocery store and a food bank, as well as clarity on canned food labels. Immigrant Muslims carry a mistrust towards canned foods and whether or not they contain pork. Lastly, they commented, "Food bank workers attitude discourages many of us. So, you included training of staff around the racial and culture respect, that is great! Many of us cannot go to a place twice when we feel discriminated or outsmarted, which happens a lot with people who look like us."

²Trauma-informed Oregon. <https://traumainformedoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/What-is-Trauma-Informed-Care.pdf>

African Community Housing and Development stated that the summary encapsulated the general theme of what cafe participants were sharing and they were appreciative that their cultural diets are included in the report. They agreed that having alternative locations, “such as clinics, community-based organizations, and credit unions,” would be helpful. They also suggested that there should be “educational materials to share with the community that is geared towards transforming assumptions”. Overall, they felt that this report was a good step in the right direction.

Asian Counsel and Referral Service stated that some of respondents at the listening session requested a food bank at ACRS Senior Center, and that they believe they are referring to a mobile food bank site. They stated that “mobility/transportation was a factor for not being able to access food banks.” They also added that another opportunity lies in looking “into how food can be brought to seniors where they’re at with mobility/transportation issues, similar to a grocery delivery program.”

ACRS shared that “community members would support the actionable recommendations and opportunities expressed in the report.” Lastly, they shared another recommendation: “One thing to note (though not discussed for this project) is that a handful of the ACRS seniors love to grow their own food and tend to their gardens... ACRS supports the Seattle Community Farm a couple of blocks from our main building and many seniors, youth, and community members till the farm and grow food. Maybe, if there could be access to specialty seeds for these urban farmers when they are coming to food banks.”

The Shop at Earthseed shared that the summary overall was inclusive of the listening sessions that were held. They also called out opportunities to highlight themes, commenting: “Although not missing in its entirety, it should be noted that the opportunity to partner with organizations, at least among the members in our sessions, were specific to Black-owned or Black-led organizations.”

Recommendations

There are countless possibilities for what could be formulated from the listening sessions. An internal team at Northwest Harvest, as well as the participating community organizations reviewed the key findings presented in this document and spent time discussing thoughtful and actionable recommendations. Based on our review we’ve shaped a wide-ranging list of recommendations that serve as next steps for food banks, meal programs, and distributors. We also believe that the below recommendations can be useful when partnering with other organizations like WSU Extension or within housing, health, and transportation. While our research was confined to the REACH region, we believe that these recommendations are useful for any food bank or meal program working with these populations of people.

The recommendations we have outlined here are simply a starting place but we hope that through starting with these, future recommendations will grow and emerge from your community members.

Community Specific Recommendations:

1. Make food available in more locations.
 - Mobile or pop-up pantries and/or delivery to locations where focus populations already congregate.
 - Partnering with health foundations, clinics, or credit unions who have larger potential funding sources.
 - Community-led initiatives in partnership with other BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) -led, community-based organizations, growers and/or gardens amongst other possibilities.
2. Increase access at food banks:
 - Reduce check-in requirements—especially for new immigrants and refugees who may not have IDs or other requirement forms.
 - Increase amount of times customers can visit a food bank in a month.
 - Expand food bank hours.
 - Reduce wait times at food banks.

-
3. Source culturally relevant foods.
 - Create a nutrition policy focused on how your agency will receive—through donations or purchases—such items. Ideas could include cooperative purchasing models, a food bank garden or farm, or working with local farmers markets and BIPOC growers.
 4. Prioritize translation and interpretation.
 - Hire and retain staff and volunteers that represent the community and speak their languages.
 - Partner with BIPOC-led organizations to create and support translation and interpretation services.
 5. Food banks and meal programs build and maintain customer advisory groups to consistently engage with their customers.
 - Customer advisory groups should be representative and inclusive of all food bank customers and should accommodate diverse languages as needed.
 6. Provide ongoing anti-racist trainings and other learning opportunities specifically around microaggressions.
 - For example, SODO Community Market holds monthly lunch and learns with volunteers on different race equity topics.
 - Utilize an anti-racist assessment tool to understand what you do well and where there are opportunities for growth.
 - You can find a self-guided anti-racist assessment tool here (foodshopperequity.org/wp-content/uploads/FB-Anti-racism-Assessment.pdf), or on page 26.
 7. Create community resource rooms at food banks and meal programs.
 - Provides access to resources such as housing, healthcare, transportation, and other services for customers.
 - Include connecting customers to gardens, cooking classes and other expertise in the community.
 - When seeking out partnerships, prioritize BIPOC-led organizations.
 8. Provide information about where and how to access food banks.
 - For example, distributors, food banks, or food bank coalitions could create and supply official maps with food bank locations, open hours, and any restrictions to grocery stores and other community-based organizations.
 9. Implement quality control measures to reduce and eliminate expired or rotten foods.
 - There are gaps between expectations customers have and the control of food banks receiving close to expiring produce. Because of this we have thought of two ways in which this could be mitigated:
 - a. Encourage staff and volunteers to go through fruits and vegetables to remove rotten foods more frequently.
 - b. Staff and volunteers track and dispose of expired foods.

Northwest Harvest Specific Recommendations:

1. Northwest Harvest creates and distributes a culturally relevant food guide for partner food banks and meal programs.
2. Education around ongoing and pervasive beliefs about food and food banks.
 - Northwest Harvest builds materials to outline best by/sell by dates to clarify when food is still safe to eat. These materials will need to be available in several languages and distributed to their partner network. The listening sessions highlighted the greatest need for this in the African-born populations surveyed.
 - Northwest Harvest promotes outreach, education, and narrative change to reduce the social stigma associated with food banks. The listening sessions highlighted the greatest potential for reduced access to food banks due to stigma in the African American populations surveyed.
3. Northwest Harvest hosts listening sessions to incorporate other populations like Russian and Latinx into this report and distributes to partner food banks and meal programs throughout the state.



APPENDICES

- A: KCREACH One-Pager**
- B: REACH Areas by Zip Codes**
- C: REACH Community Cafe Organization Expectations**
- D: REACH Community Cafe Facilitation Guide**
- E: Discussion Questions**
- F: REACH Community Cafe Survey**
- G: Anti-Racist Assessment Tool for Food Banks**

King County Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (KCREACH) Year 2: 2019-2020



Strategies and Outcomes

Goal: Improve health, prevent chronic disease, and reduce health disparities for African born, African Americans, and Asian Americans in south Seattle, SeaTac, and Tukwila through nutrition, physical activity, and building community-clinical linkages strategies.



Nutrition: Improve access to and affordability of culturally relevant healthy foods.

Food Innovation Network, Northwest Harvest and a consultant with expertise in small ethnic grocers will create a joint fruit and vegetable purchasing and distribution agreement among small ethnic grocers, farm stands, food banks, and emergency food providers.

Northwest Harvest will work with emergency food providers to implement culturally relevant healthy nutrition standards.

Food Innovation Network, and a consultant with expertise in small ethnic grocers will establish and expand the use of Fresh Bucks/EBT systems at small ethnic grocers and at community-based farm stand locations.

Public Health- Seattle & King County will expand culturally-appropriate breastfeeding services by offering training and support groups to African American women in SeaTac/Tukwila and develop a community action plan for King County.

Short-term outcomes

- Improve nutrition and increase access to healthier foods.

Intermediate outcomes

- More places offering healthier foods.
- More persons with access to available and affordable healthy foods.
- More continuity of care/community support actions implemented for breastfeeding.

Long-term outcomes

- Increased purchasing of healthier foods.
- Better health outcomes.
- Less health disparities in chronic conditions.



Physical Activity: Improve physical activity by improving the design of transportation infrastructure where focus communities live, study, work, and play.

Transportation Choices Coalition will create a mentoring program for community leaders that links them with specific built environment projects, and **Healthy King County Coalition** will provide training to build capacity to engage in bike/pedestrian/transit planning projects.

Short-term outcomes

- Connect safe and accessible places for physical activity.

Intermediate outcomes

- Increased number of places with improved community design to connect safe and accessible places for physical activity.
- Increased number of persons with safe and accessible places for physical activity.

Long-term outcomes

- Increased physical activity in racial and ethnic populations.
- Improved health outcomes.
- Reduced health disparities in chronic conditions.



Community-Clinical Linkages: Increase referral and access to community-based health programs for focus communities.

Center for MultiCultural Health will help African Americans navigate health care systems, provide culturally appropriate support for their follow up care plans, and partner with community health centers and churches.

International Community Health Services will use community health workers to increase referrals to local health and preventive care programs and will develop partnerships to assure their clients needs associated with social determinants of health are met.

Short-term outcomes

- Increase access to relevant health or community programs for our priority populations.

Intermediate outcomes

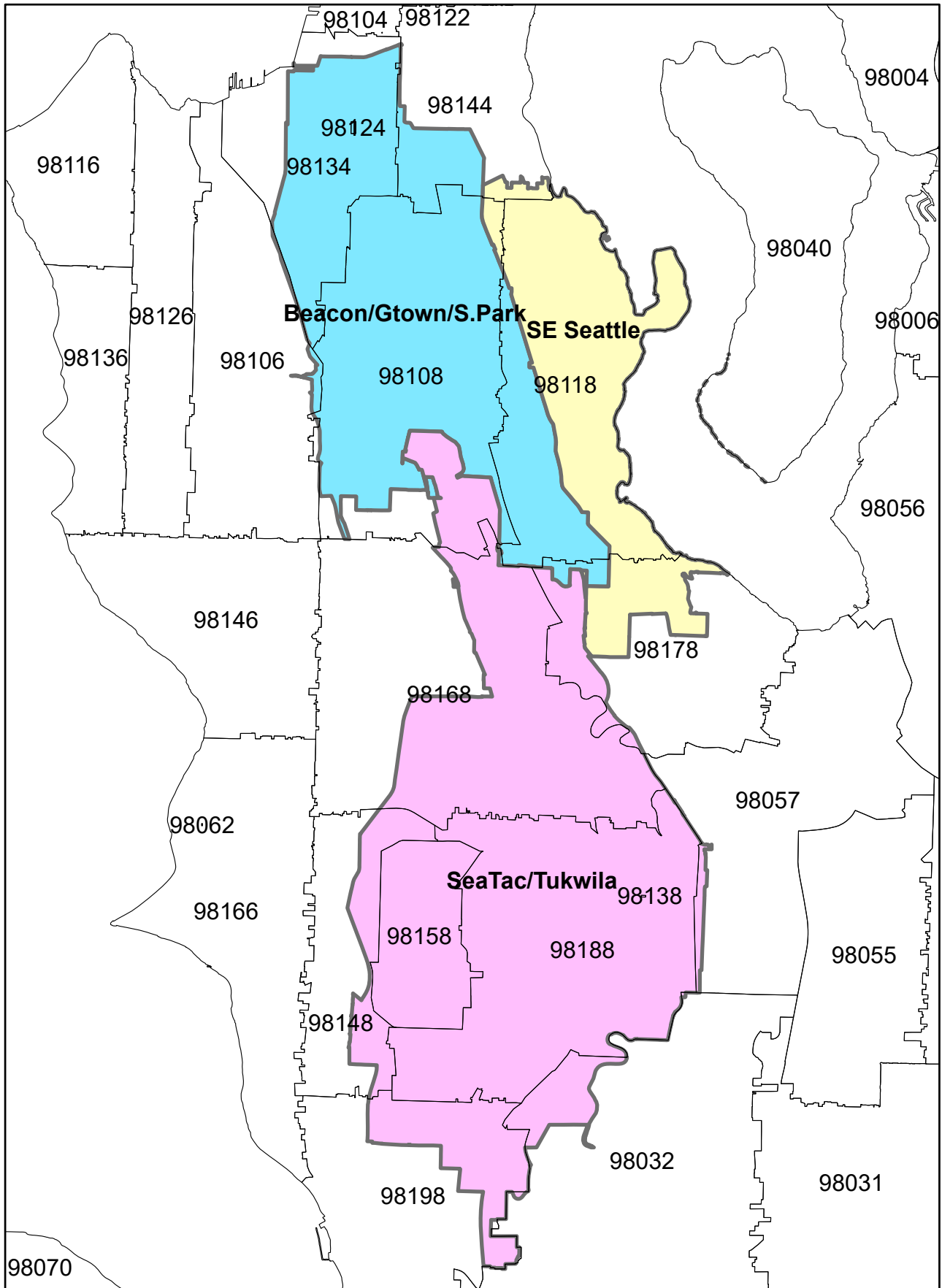
- Increased use of appropriate and locally available health or community programs.

Long-term outcomes

- Improved health outcomes.
- Reduced health disparities in chronic conditions.

KCREACH is a collaboration between the Healthy King County Coalition, Seattle Children's, and Public Health-Seattle & King County and is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, contact Jan Capps, KCREACH Program Manager at jan.capps@kingcounty.gov or 206-263-8615







Date:

To:

From: Laura Titzer, Community Initiatives Manager, Northwest Harvest

Re: Community Conversations about Accessibility and Barriers to Food Banks

Thank you for your participation in our Community Conversations about Accessibility and Barriers to Food Banks. Your Conversation will take place _____. The Conversation will help inform King County food banks how they can better support individuals and families and reduce accessibility barriers. We look forward to hearing from the communities that you work with.

Your Community Organization is expected to:

- Recruit no more than 20-25 community members for the conversation including inviting and confirming attendance.
- Reserve a space for the event.
- Facilitate the conversation.
- Administer print/online survey.
- Translate survey if needed.
- Provide survey responses to Northwest Harvest in English via Survey Monkey online survey.
- Provide note takers for conversations and provide a final typed transcript in English
- Be on site during the conversation to coordinate logistics, set-up and tear down.
- Coordinate any additional resources as required by your group (ie. child care, interpreters).
- \$30 cash compensation to each participant. Reimbursed by Northwest Harvest.

Northwest Harvest staff will provide:

- Survey and discussion questions.
- Facilitation guide.
- Payment for interpreters at \$40 per hour.
- Payment of \$3000 to cover venue, staff time, participant compensation, and any other materials.
- Follow up report to the group with the results of our project, likely in the fall/winter.

To receive the reimbursement for this event, you will need to complete and print the attached invoice onto your agency's letterhead, complete the Northwest Harvest New Vendor form. (also attached) and make a copy of your agency's W-9 form. The payment will be processed and sent to you within 30 days. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at (206) 923-7467 or laurat@northwestharvest.org

REACH Community Cafe Facilitation Guide

Discussion Questions:

1. What are all the ways you can think of that would improve food access for you and your family?
 - a. What's still missing from this picture?
2. What foods have a special significance from either an Ethnic or Religious standpoint?
3. Which types of foods do you want but do not usually get from the food bank?
4. What would make it easier and better for you and your family to visit a food bank?
 - a. What keeps you from visiting a food bank?
 - b. How could your local food bank be improved to fit your needs better?

Set-Up:

1. Have 5 people maximum sitting at tables.
2. Each table should have a notetaker.
3. Work through each discussion question, one at a time.

Roles:

A notetaker is someone who will ensure the conversation is being captured on paper, translate as necessary, and encourage participants to share insights, and connect ideas, thoughts and conversations, and ensure participants complete the survey at the end. Notetakers should make sure that each person at the tables has a chance to share. We want to make sure to hear from everyone.

A facilitator is the person or persons leading the conversation for the whole room. They track the time for each question. Introduce each question to the group, monitor if groups are ready to move on before the allotted time is up. Note: Only move forward to another question before the allotted time if all tables are ready. Do not push any groups to move on if there is still allotted time left. Facilitators also float the room while tables are discussing to see if there are any questions or assistance needed, but don't allow yourself to get stuck at a table for too long.

Community Café Session:

1. Introduce facilitators and why we've asked participants to attend.
2. Mention snacks and where restrooms are located.
3. Mention the survey that we would like each participant to fill out at the end of our time together.
4. Begin the conversations:
 - a. Show the first question: *What are all the ways you can think of that would improve food access for you and your family?*
 - i. Allow 25 minutes for this question.
 - ii. Have each table host have the follow-up question: *What's still missing from this picture?* If conversation begins to wane prior to the 20 minutes.
 - b. Show the second question: *What foods have a special significance from either an Ethnic or Religious standpoint?*
 - i. Allow 15-20 minutes depending on how conversations flow.
 - c. Show the third question: *Which types of foods do you want but do not usually get from the food bank?*
 - i. Allow 15-20 minutes depending on how conversations flow.
 - d. Show the fourth question: *What would make it easier and better for you and your family to visit a food bank?*
 - i. Allow 30 minutes for this question and follow-up questions.
 - ii. First follow-up question for table hosts: *How could your local food bank be improved to fit your needs better?*

- iii. Second follow-up question after the above has been answered by all: *What keeps you from visiting a food bank?*

Survey:

At the end of the last question, thank people for sharing their stories and insights.

Next ask each one to complete the survey that the table hosts have.

Table hosts help participants complete the survey.

Thank them all again!!!!

What are all the ways you can think of that would improve food access for you and your family?

What's still missing from this picture?

What foods have a special significance from either an Ethnic or Religious standpoint?

Which types of foods do you want but do not usually get from the food bank?

What would make it easier and better for you and your family to visit a food bank?

What keeps you from visiting a food bank?

How could your local food bank be improved to fit your needs better?

Survey

Please complete the below survey to further help us provide feedback to our partners and make food bank experience better for you. Your responses will be kept confidential. Online Survey: <https://forms.gle/GYEWQMRdTvBB66iJA>

1. What is your ethnic background? _____
2. Did your family immigrate to the United States? Yes or No: _____
If yes, how many years ago? _____
3. Do you have a religious affiliation(s)? Yes or No: _____
If yes, what are they? _____
4. Do you have a specific food bank that you visit? Yes or No: _____
If yes, which one or ones? _____
If no, why not? _____
5. Based on your experiences, when you or someone you live with, needs food
 - a. Is it easy to access a food bank? Yes or No: _____
 - b. Are there food banks near/accessible to you? Yes or No: _____
 - c. Are their open hours accessible to you? Yes or No: _____
 - i. If no, what hours would make it more accessible? _____
 - d. Are there people at the food bank who speak your language? Yes or No: _____
 - e. Do you feel they understand you? Yes or No: _____
6. When going to the food bank, how do you usually get there? Circle the one you most use to get to the food bank.
 - a. Drive a car
 - b. Bus or train
 - c. Taxi/Uber
 - d. Get a ride from family or friend
 - e. Other (please specify) _____
7. Based on your experience, when you visit a food bank:
 - a. Are people nice to you? Yes or No: _____

 - b. Do you feel you are treated with respect? Yes or No: _____

 - c. Do you feel that the food bank understands and respects your culture? Yes or No: _____

 - d. Do you feel comfortable talking about your food and other needs? Yes or No: _____

 - e. Would you like the food bank to help you access other needs besides food? Yes or No: _____

 - f. Are you satisfied with the amount of choice you have in the foods you can take home?
Yes or No: _____
 - g. Do you have to wait over 30 minutes in a line at the food bank? Yes or No: _____



ANTI-RACIST ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FOOD BANKS

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This assessment is for food bank managers and other staff in decision-making roles to identify and accurately assess where food banks are in their anti-racism journey and where they want to be. Thus, providing a roadmap to guide them through a continuous improvement process towards seeking racial equity. Additional reasons why we believe this work is essential and we think we can all learn:

- Ensures everyone understands the need to lead with race.
- Learning what the values and the most critical issues are of the organization
- Understand the food banks knowledge base of anti-racism work
- Understand why food banks believe this work is necessary Determine how much time the food bank is willing to invest in becoming an anti-racist organization
- Determine whether the food bank views this work as an expense or an investment
- Naming, from the food bank perspective, what they believe the barriers are to becoming an anti-racist organization
- Understand, from the food banks perspective, how to overcome those barriers
- Understand the food banks view on those they serve and their volunteer base
- Help to bridge the understanding of differing cultural values as it may or may not relate to the American (White) value system
- Understand, from the food banks perspective, what success would look like in becoming an anti-racist food bank
- Determine ways to help staff and volunteers understand culturally appropriate behaviors from food to customs, traditions, and greetings
- Learn some of the issues that are preventing people from becoming anti-racist
- Understand what harms are created by continuing the status quo

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ANTI-RACIST ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR FOOD BANKS

Directions: For each question, choose one of the following rankings and provide comments below each section as to why you chose these answers.

Power/Leadership	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
When it comes to leadership, is your organization racially & ethnically representative of the community your organization is serving?						
Do managers, leadership, and those in decision making roles interrupt racism?						
During meetings, does leadership make space for staff to contribute authentically?						
Does your leadership desire to create an anti-racist organization?						
Do you have a board structure that reflects communities most impacted by hunger?						
Short Answer						
How is power shared at your organization?						

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Comments for Power/Leadership Section:

Strategic Planning	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Does your organization incorporate equity into its mission, vision, and values?						
Does your organization have policies and procedures regarding equity? Are policies and procedures rooted in equity?						
Short Answer						
How has your food bank prioritized racial equity in planning goals and processes?						
What policies or procedures do you have in place that might be preventing you from being an anti-racist organization?						

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Short Answer (cont.)	
What policies or procedures do you have in place that might be preventing you from being an anti-racist organization?	
How are we including those who are most impacted by food scarcity in identifying issues and solutions?	

Comments for Strategic Planning Section:

Operationalizing Equity	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Do you have measurements and/or impact evaluation practices that reflect a racial justice lens?						
Are anti-racist values and outcomes a part of your organization's metrics for success?						

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Operationalizing Equity (cont.)	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Is equity performance included in staff performance reviews?						
Are all staff and volunteers trained on intervening when racism occurs in the workplace?						
Does your organization provide a living wage based on area median where they live?						
Do staff, leadership, & volunteers have a shared language & understanding of concepts and actions related to racial justice, food justice, and anti-racism?						
Does your organization practice what it preaches? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does your external anti-racist messaging reflect the internal culture of the organization? 						
Short Answer						
What do you believe is necessary to overcome the challenges and work with your organization around anti-racism work?						

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Short Answer (cont.)	
<p>What are the challenges that you foresee in your organization doing the work of race equity & inclusion in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational leaders commitment Creating organizational culture change for equity Recruiting and hiring practices Building relationships with community members Building relationships with community partners Including community voices in programming and decision making 	
<p>How has your organization created achievable goals in their areas of race equity, diversity, and inclusion?</p>	
<p>How will you know if you've achieved your goals?</p>	

Comments for Operationalizing Equity Section:

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Internal Staff/Volunteer Engagement	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Does your organization do any work with your board members around race equity, diversity, & inclusion?						
Does your organization provide ongoing trainings for staff, board members, volunteers on equity, anti-racist and anti-bias work?						
Does your organization provide meaningful opportunities with staff, board members, and volunteers to talk about race?						

Comments for Internal Staff/Volunteer Engagement Section:

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External Community Engagement	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Does your organization have authentic, value-based relationships with Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) community members & leaders?						
Does your organization have authentic, value-based relationships with BIPOC farmers and producers to procure items for the food bank?						
Does your food bank actively partner with and search for ways to collaborate with, support, and uplift farmers & food producers of color locally?						
Short Answer						
What ethnic and cultural groups/communities does your organization serve?						
What ethnic and cultural groups/communities does your organization have value based, reciprocal relationships with?						

Short Answer (cont.)	
Does your organization take the opportunity to listen to community members and get community feedback on programming?	
Who does your organization exclude? Who does your organization have strong ties with already? Why?	
Looking at the Continuum of Community Engagement (attached), please share where your food bank is with regards to community engagement. What steps do you need to take to get the realm of shared power?	
Comments for External Community Engagement Section:	

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Accessibility	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Is your organization thinking about accessibility needs from the start of when a shopper arrives at your food bank? (i.e. language access so people can access services, documentation status so people who are undocumented feel safe & comfortable when accessing services, cultural competency training for staff/volunteer)						
When hosting community events or activities, does the organization consider basic needs of those participating, including but not limited to, childcare, interpretation, food, proximity to transportation, and accessibility accommodations?						
Does the organization provide culturally appropriate food for its shoppers?						
Is there communication with the community to ensure the above is consistently the case?						

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Short Answer	
How often does your food bank collaborate with the diverse community you serve to decide the types of food that is provided at the food bank?	
Do consumers get to choose what foods they are receiving? (i.e. Grocery Model vs food distribution model.)	

Comments for Accessibility Section:

Workplace Culture	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Do community members believe they need to conform with dominant white cultural expectations to feel welcome and comfortable in the your food bank environment?						
Do staff & volunteers believe they need to conform to dominant white cultural expectations to feel welcome and comfortable at the workplace?						
Does your organization tokenize (to only make symbolic efforts) BIPOC staff, especially those in leadership? Ex: You hire BIPOC person to say that you have a BIPOC on staff, yet their thoughts and ideas are never heard or listened too						
Do BIPOC staff members & volunteers feel tokenized by the organization?						
Do BIPOC staff have opportunities to contribute to/in organizational development meetings?						
Are staff ideas that are in alignment with anti-racism acted upon and prioritized?						

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Comments for Workplace Culture Section:

Diversity	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
Are the demographics of the whole organization (staff, volunteers, board members) racially & ethnically representative of the community your organization is serving?						
Short Answer						
Are most of your BIPOC staff in: a) Upper management b) Program staff c) Frontline staff						

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Comments for Diversity Section:

Anti-Racist Food Justice	Yes	Somewhat	I don't know	No, not at all	Want to know more?	What action steps might you take to improve in this area?
My organization is 100% committed to dismantling white supremacy and challenging normative ideas around food security, charity, the anti-hunger industrial complex, etc.						
Short Answer						
How is your organization shifting to address the root cause of food insecurity? What are the areas of improvement? What is needed to get there?						

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Short Answer (cont.)	
Who does your food bank positively affect? Who does it negatively affect?	
How does your organization feed into the anti-hunger industrial complex?	
What does accountability as an anti-racist food bank look like to the community you serve?	
What does success as an anti-racist food bank look like?	

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Short Answer (cont.)	
What are the barriers faced in achieving racial equity in your food bank?	
Comments for Anti-Racist Food Justice Section:	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Reflect and Act	Short Answer
What did you notice? What facts or observations stood out?	

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Reflect and Act (cont.)	Short Answer
Why are those observations important?	
What patterns or conclusions are emerging?	
Now what? What will you do moving forward? What actions make sense?	
Additional Comments:	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

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Northwest Harvest gratefully acknowledges the partnership of all those who contributed to this project.



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