

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 19 May 2021 13:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Second U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue: Building More Sustainable U.S. Food Systems
CONVENED BY	USDA
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/15282/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	United States of America

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE



PARTICIPATION BY GENDER



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

16	Agriculture/crops	7	Education		
3	Fish and aquaculture	3	Communication		
11	Livestock	2	Food processing	2	National or local government
2	Agro-forestry	2	Food retail, markets		Utilities
10	Environment and ecology	1	Food industry		Industrial
1	Trade and commerce	1	Financial Services	44	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

1	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	6	Workers and trade union
4	Large national business		Member of Parliament
9	Multi-national corporation	1	Local authority
1	Small-scale farmer		Government and national institution
4	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
1	Large-scale farmer	1	United Nations
19	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
21	International Non-Governmental Organization	10	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
3	Indigenous People	1	Consumer group
6	Science and academia	17	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

In recognition of the urgency of organizing the Food Systems Dialogues as contributions to the Food Systems Summit, the United States hosted its second National Food Systems Dialogue (“the Dialogue”) on May 19, 2021. The event centered the Summit principles of engagement: Act with Urgency, Commit to the Summit, Be Respectful, Recognize Complexity, Embrace Multi-Stakeholder Inclusivity, Complement the Work of Others, and Build Trust. See below for specifics.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The U.S. National Food Systems Dialogues seek to empower U.S. domestic stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the UN Food Systems Summit. The second National Dialogue, held virtually, embraced multi-stakeholder inclusivity and included stakeholders from across the food system, ranging from U.S. producers, agricultural organizations, food industry, research and academic institutions, farm and food workers, and civil society groups. The Dialogue included more participants than the first National Dialogue held in January in order to strengthen representation from minority groups, women, and youth in food and agriculture, but all those invited to the first dialogue were also invited to this second. Through multi-stakeholder inclusivity, the Dialogue provided a forum for participants to share diverse perspectives, learn from each other, and collaborate to identify solutions to pressing challenges. Small group discussions at the Dialogue emphasized respect and building trust through facilitation by objective U.S. government experts and researchers. The Chatham House Rule of non-attribution encouraged participants to engage in frank discussion and a collaborative approach. The Dialogue discussion topics highlighted the complex challenges and tradeoffs of food systems policy interventions and solutions. To build trust, promote transparency, and accurately reflect the voices of U.S. food systems stakeholders, readout reports and summaries went through multiple levels of review and validation. The notetakers sent anonymized notes from the breakout rooms to facilitators, who developed anonymized reports that were shared and validated by participants before incorporation into the final official UN Dialogues Gateway feedback form. A complementary report highlighting high level outcomes will be posted on the USDA Food Systems website.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

The Chatham House Rule of non-attribution encouraged participants to engage in frank discussion with a collaborative approach. Only dialogue participants, facilitators, expert researchers for consultation, and note-takers were permitted in each dialogue breakout session. Sessions were by invitation and no observers were invited, which facilitated distribution of participants into multiple breakout sessions.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

This report represents the views of U.S. stakeholders invited to the Dialogue; it does not represent the official views of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the United States Government.

In following with the guidelines of the UN Dialogues Toolkit and to ensure a systematic, comprehensive approach to assessing food systems, the second U.S. National Dialogue focused on identifying solutions to building more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable food systems in the United States. The discussions focused on building on the results of the first U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue, breaking away from the five “action tracks” framework used in the first dialogue.

The event agenda consisted of opening remarks, followed by two one-hour breakout sessions with small groups (where each breakout session had a different composition of participants) led by U.S. government experts and researchers, and concluding with read-outs of the breakout session discussions by facilitators. The participants noted in Section 1. Participation of this report are only those who participated in breakout rooms, not including U.S. government facilitators and notetakers.

To motivate the breakout discussions, participants were requested to come to the Dialogue with 2-3 solutions addressing one or more of the three overarching challenges identified in the first U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue: 1) information gaps with respect to nutrition and sustainability, 2) inequalities in access to healthy diets and opportunities in farming and food industries, and 3) environmental degradation and climate change. The solutions could be crosscutting and provide benefits to more than one of the overarching challenges or targeted to one specific challenge. Participants were asked to share their solutions in both breakout sessions and to narrow down the top solutions as a group. In the second session, participants were asked to refine their solutions based on something new learned in the first session. This iterative process aimed to build consensus to arrive at a core set of solutions across distinct stakeholder groups.

Discussion Questions: To encourage a systematic assessment of solutions, breakouts considered the following questions:

• Breakout Session One:

- o What are two-three top solutions that address the major challenge areas identified in the first U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue and advance sustainable food systems in the United States?
 - o Identify the top three solutions for further discussion to address the three challenges identified in the first Dialogue. Is there any overlap or divergence in the solutions? What is the most promising bucket of solutions to prioritize for discussion?
 - o For each of the three challenge areas:
 - Does the group note any evidence gaps or tradeoffs related to this solution?
 - Does the solution respond to the three pillars of sustainability (social, economic, environmental)?
 - How urgent is implementation of this solution?
 - Is this solution applicable at a local/regional/national/international scale?
 - Is there consensus from the group on who would need to implement/finance the solution? What are the costs for implementation?
 - What are the unintended consequences that could result from this solution?
- Breakout Session Two: Same questions as session one, but these solutions should reflect something new learned in the first discussion group, so please highlight what has changed/what is different about your solutions now.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

The focus of the second Dialogue was to identify solutions to improving the sustainability of food systems. While the discussion topics were organized around the three overarching challenges outlined above, some solutions addressed a single challenge while others were cross-cutting to holistically consider challenges and tradeoffs across food systems. Conversations aggregated and analyzed individual solutions to arrive at different clusters with greater consensus, or topics for further exploration. The solutions clusters that emerged in response to the challenges were: 1) Technology (including rural broadband) and dietary and food production choice, 2) Bolster the participation of socially disadvantaged groups, infrastructure for nutritious foods sustainably produced, and competitive markets that serve all size producers, 3) Voluntary incentives and technical support for sustainable production, and 4) Food systems policy and planning and youth involvement.

• **Solutions Cluster #1 (Information gaps about healthy diets and sustainably produced food):** Technology (including rural broadband) and dietary and food production choice

Dialogue participants identified increasing the application of technology (including rural broadband), clear definitions and standards, and dietary and food production choice as the most promising solutions to address information gaps about healthy diets and sustainably produced food. Some participants expressed that broader access to technology could eliminate information gaps and help consumers and farmers make healthy food choices and produce food in a sustainable manner. Some participants discussed information silos and noted that standardization of nutrition and sustainability definitions could assist in meeting shared goals, particularly with respect to climate and equity. Some participants noted the importance of broadening food choice through public outreach to consumers on nutrition and producers on environmental impacts.

• **Solutions Cluster #2 (Inequalities):** Bolster the participation of socially disadvantaged groups, infrastructure for nutritious foods sustainably produced, and competitive markets that serve all size producers

Dialogue participants identified bolstering the participation of socially disadvantaged groups, infrastructure for nutritious foods sustainably produced, and competitive markets that serve all size producers as the most promising solutions to address inequalities in access to healthy diets and opportunities in farming and food industries. Some participants emphasized that centering the voices of socially disadvantaged groups is vital to the success of any food system. Primary avenues identified by some participants to create the conditions for the participation of socially disadvantaged groups in the food system included community engagement, agricultural land preservation and resource access, focus on land tenure laws, public support for community-led and regional approaches, and research and extension. Some participants highlighted that better infrastructure and resilient and equitable supply chains can increase access to nutritious food. Some participants noted that competitive markets that serve all size producers are key to addressing inequalities.

• **Solutions Cluster #3 (Environmental Degradation and Climate Change):** Voluntary incentives and technical support for sustainable production

Dialogue participants identified voluntary incentives for sustainable production and technical support for sustainable production as the most promising solutions to address environmental degradation and climate change. There was consensus amongst participants that the provision of incentives for producers of all sizes is a key solution to more sustainable consumption and production. Incentives mentioned by some participants included keeping land in reserve (e.g. easements) to protect the environment, rewarding and recognizing on farm stewardship practices, recognizing the role of retailers and restaurants in reducing food/packaging waste and repurposing food, and supporting sustainable practices that may not be economically feasible in the short-term. Some participants shared support for aligning incentives with national conservation goals. In setting environmental goals, some participants noted the importance of addressing environmental impacts beyond carbon footprints by including issues such as nitrogen, water quality, and waste reduction.

• **Solutions Cluster #4 (Cross-Cutting):** Food systems policy and planning and youth involvement

Dialogue participants agreed that cross-cutting solutions require participatory and adaptive food systems policy and planning and the involvement of youth across food systems. Participants agreed that food systems policy and planning should be science and evidence-based, and support inclusive, diverse, and integrated approaches that address all three challenges identified in the first U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue. Some participants elaborated on the approaches needed to achieve sustainable food systems, highlighting voluntary, adaptive, and participatory approaches. Participants agreed that involvement of youth in food systems was a cross-cutting requirement for solutions in all three challenges. One group reached agreement that through additional training on healthy foods, youth will fill information gaps and solve problems affecting food systems.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/6

Solutions Cluster #1 (Information gaps about healthy diets and sustainably produced food): Technology (including rural broadband), clear definitions and standards, and dietary and food production choice

Participants identified increasing the application of technology (including rural broadband), clear definitions and standards, and dietary and food production choice as the most promising solutions to address information gaps about healthy diets and sustainably produced food.

Some participants highlighted that broader access to technology could eliminate information gaps and help consumers and farmers make healthy food choices and produce food in a sustainable manner. There was consensus amongst participants on the importance of rural broadband. Some participants noted that increased access to rural broadband and smartphones could improve information flows as well as increase adoption of novel digital technologies and data management systems. Some participants also noted that rural broadband would serve food system stakeholders ranging from rural communities to the seafood industry who could better monitor environmental conditions on cargo ships. Some participants highlighted that technology should be accessible to diverse users and appropriate for linguistic and cultural differences. Access to technology could address issues such as climate change, some participants noted, along with improving food security. Some participants noted that sustainable, resilient food systems are both a food security and national security issue.

The absence of clear and shared definitions of nutrition and sustainability generated concern amongst some participants. Some participants suggested that while nutrition or traceability labels exist, such as in the seafood industry, consistency in labeling would improve public knowledge and information gaps. Some participants noted that components of sustainability including recycling and food waste lacked a common definition. Some participants recommended standardization of nutrition and sustainability definitions and clarity around expectations, goals, measurement, and best practices. Some participants elaborated that information gaps exist because distinct regulatory structures oversee different food products, resulting in a “silo-ing” that produces information gaps. Some participants suggested the creation of an interdepartmental U.S. government task force on food systems to alleviate the gaps in information flows.

Some participants noted the importance of food choice. Some participants posited that public outreach is needed to educate consumers about food labels, nutrition, and the environmental impacts of food production so they can make informed choices. Some participants noted the goal of providing consumers and producers with more autonomy to choose what, where, and how their food is grown. Some participants noted the importance of building nutrition literacy, teaching not only the “what” but the “how” and additional awareness around nutritious foods and healthy choices that are tasty. The nutritional needs of different populations were noted by some participants, and as was the need to communicate information to help people better understand the importance of fruits and vegetables and whole grains and share cooking methods and recipes. Some participants noted that culture and tastes should be included in discussions of nutrition and dietary guidelines, and that food choice could be broadened through increased focus on nutrient dense culturally appropriate foods. Regarding health and nutrition, some participants mentioned that we need new partnerships catalyzed by many groups including state, local, and federal government to promote healthy eating to prevent disease. Some participants mentioned that prevention and discussion of nutrition is not currently mainstreamed in the health field, which could potentially generate savings in healthcare costs.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/6

Solutions Cluster #2 (Inequalities): Bolster participation of socially disadvantaged groups, infrastructure for nutritious foods sustainably produced, and competitive markets that serve all size producers

Participants identified increasing the participation of socially disadvantaged groups in the food system as one of the most promising solutions to address inequalities in access to healthy diets and opportunities in farming and food industries.

Some participants noted that innovation does not only happen with machines and methods of production, there can be innovations in power structure. As such, some participants noted that creating the conditions for socially disadvantaged groups to have voice and thrive in the food system is a critical part of any solution. Some participants considered that barriers to local and regional food system solutions constitute discrimination, leaving underserved populations without access to healthy and culturally appropriate foods. Primary avenues to increase participation of socially disadvantaged groups in the food system mentioned by some participants included community engagement, agricultural land preservation and resource access, focus on land tenure, public support for community-led and regional approaches, and research and extension.

Community engagement was a central focus of discussion, with some participants noting the importance of asking the people who are impacted rather than prescribing solutions using a top down approach. Some participants also noted that programs should center the needs of farmers and producers. Some participants agreed that land tenure and ownership are important to address historical inequities regarding land access. Some participants noted that expanding land access opportunities and succession planning options to ensure longevity are important to assisting with a land transition to next generation and minority farmers.

Some participants noted the importance of re-examining and re-aligning public support for agriculture and food systems through regional, community-led approaches that focus on enabling land use and food sovereignty (this term was used but not defined in group discussion) for disadvantaged communities and youth. Some participants mentioned the importance of supporting Indigenous-led systems in Indigenous communities. One form this public support could take, mentioned by some participants, is providing resources to next generation and minority farmers, and leveraging existing programs to enable climate change mitigation. Some participants posited that the impact of public support could be maximized through a regional food systems approach with an emphasis on regional food sovereignty, and a systematic approach to strategic land conservation and tenure policies in generational turnover.

Some participants noted the importance of proven, evidence-based practices to address local food system challenges, along with research and extension focused on hard-to-reach small producers and low-income populations. For example, some participants mentioned the model of churches providing land for communities to grow and produce foods to address the problem of food deserts. Specific ideas mentioned by some participants included investment to ensure equitable access to food and technology, support for small and medium sized businesses, regional networks, and urban agriculture, and extension services to produce higher-value products and supply chains that support a diversified workforce. The extension capability of research institutions and land grant universities to support small and medium-sized enterprises, young farmers, and Indigenous farmers was highlighted by some participants. The need to raise wages for food production workers and innovate policies to empower workers, as well as incentivize food worker protection through unions to improve the safety of workers in the entire food chain, was also mentioned by some participants.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
✓	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/6

Solutions Cluster #3 (Inequalities): Infrastructure for nutritious foods sustainably produced and competitive markets that serve all size producers

Participants identified infrastructure to increase nutritious food access and competitive markets that serve all size producers as ways to address inequalities in access to healthy diets and opportunities in farming and food industries.

Some participants highlighted using infrastructure to increase nutritious food access. Some participants suggested using the Biden Administration's transportation infrastructure approach to rebuild the infrastructure of U.S. food systems, and to begin comprehensive food system planning that could include regional food sovereignty, access to fresh foods, or retail available to certain communities. Some participants mentioned food hubs as an example of infrastructure, which bring together local producers with consumers to build resiliency. Some participants mentioned the need to rethink our supply networks, reorienting them so they are adaptable and accessible to assure reliability and equity. Some participants noted that local and regional food systems should focus on processing as well as production. Some participants noted that improved healthy food access goes beyond transportation to food pricing. Some participants mentioned reconsidering the Food Box program to support local and regional food systems and provide nutritious, culturally appropriate foods. Food production suggestions mentioned by some participants included increasing the variety of crops for core consumption beyond staple crops and increasing the contribution of blue and aquatic foods to diets. Some participants suggested that philanthropic organizations could do more to produce, process, and distribute food.

Some participants called for more work to ensure markets are competitive and serve all size producers to address inequalities (see further discussion in "Divergences" section of this report). Some participants noted that existing regulations and policies may be harmful for some small producers, highlighting the need to internalize the externalities of food production and consumption, anti-trust, and public investment in local infrastructure. Further, some highlighted the potential for free markets around the world to increase efficiency and a rules-based trading system which is resilient to meet global demand. Some participants noted the importance of removing access barriers to technology and funding technology transfer globally. Some participants elaborated that this could include facilitating trade agreements requiring harmonization and regulation to create environments for technology and innovation to flourish. Additionally, some participants highlighted that not every jurisdiction is equal in terms of what they can produce or export. Some participants posited that improving communities' access to trade, including global markets, lowers risks and can therefore address this challenge. Some participants hypothesized that this would include reinforcing and establishing key partnerships that include local farmers and global trading players and to open new markets domestically and internationally. Some participants suggested acknowledging that the United States and the rest of the world are interconnected and noted that sustainable U.S. food systems support sustainable food systems across the globe.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/6

Solutions Cluster #4 (Environmental Degradation and Climate Change): Voluntary incentives and technical support for sustainable production

Participants identified voluntary incentives for sustainable production, reducing food loss and waste, and technical support for conservation as the most promising solutions to address environmental degradation and climate change.

There was consensus amongst participants that the provision of incentives for producers of all sizes is a key solution for consumers and farmers to adopt more sustainable consumption and production behaviors. Incentives mentioned by some participants included sparing land for conservation purposes, rewarding and recognizing practices that protect farmland (including climate smart agriculture and crop rotation, no till, and cover crops), recognizing retailers and restaurants for reducing food waste and repurposing food, and supporting sustainable practices that may not be economically feasible in the short-term. Some participants highlighted the solution of reducing food loss and waste, noting that 30-40% of calories harvested are wasted or destroyed, creating an environmental burden. Some participants noted that use of innovative tools and technologies, such as biotechnology, crop protection products, and precision agriculture technologies could improve sustainability outcomes in agricultural production. Some participants agreed that increasing adoption of the latest technology interventions, such as biotechnology, could address the environmental sustainability and nutrition problems of commodity crops. However, some participants noted that international regulations on biotechnology/biosafety need attention to facilitate free trade. Some participants noted that use of innovative technologies in food production including lab-based meat and fish could improve sustainability outcomes in food production. Some participants noted that targeted investment could help to reach goals with respect to nutrition and sustainability, and the importance of transparency and access to existing incentives, particularly amongst socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Repurposing public support to align with conservation goals was a second solution on which some participants agreed. Some participants posited that repurposing existing public support could better achieve environmental outcomes, including making crop insurance more conservation friendly and reallocating domestic support from large to small farms. Some participants noted that an increased conservation budget would be important and could fund goals such as climate smart agriculture, access to key inputs of land, water, and labor, and the climate resiliency of domestic fisheries. Some participants noted that additional research is needed on the sustainability of regenerative and sustainable feeds, and the nuanced differences between animal production systems that are not fully recognized or considered in the marketplace. Some participants posited that the pathway forward could include the creation of technical and financial support for diversified farming, food processing, outreach and education programs, and food business communities.

In setting environmental goals, some participants noted the importance of addressing environmental impacts beyond carbon footprints by solving for issues such as nitrogen, water quality, and waste. Some participants suggested that USDA itself could apply standards in environmental impacts, labor requirements, and equity as it does in procurement and providing funds to farmers or eligibility to various programs.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/6

Solutions Cluster (Cross-Cutting): Food systems policy, planning, and approaches

Participants agreed that a cross-cutting solution that addresses all three challenge areas is participatory and adaptive food systems policy and planning.

Participants agreed that food systems policy and planning should be science and evidence-based, and support inclusive, diverse, and integrated approaches that address all three challenges identified in the first U.S. National Food Systems Dialogue. Some participants agreed that the goal for food systems is to ensure access to safe and nutritious food that is sustainably produced and contributes to resiliency. Some participants suggested that rethinking our framework for food safety, security, stability, and resiliency is critical to responding to climate change, demographic shifts, and landscape changes.

Some participants noted that the cross-cutting nature of the food system and its tradeoffs requires comprehensive planning. One example cited by some participants was that nutritious food affordability is a key component to healthy diets, but low-priced food creates challenges for safe worker conditions and sustainable livelihoods. Another example cited by some participants was the lack of synergy between the dietary guidelines and production incentives, which contribute to high rates of diet related illnesses. An additional consideration noted by some participants is the need to adjust for new consumption and population and growth trends, and scale food systems planning regionally. One of the outcomes of food systems planning mentioned by some participants could be the evaluation of research funding, with some participants noting research should be directed to areas that solve food system challenges.

Some participants elaborated on the approaches needed to achieve sustainable food systems, highlighting voluntary, adaptive, and participatory approaches. Some participants noted that solutions are not “one size fits all” and should not pit one thing against another. Some participants highlighted that challenges should be addressed through the creation of targeted incentives that move us towards goals, combined with the removal of incentives that work against goals. Some participants noted that solutions should be adaptive and developed through iteration before reaching scale. Some participants stressed that all stakeholders need to have equitable voice and that solutions should be responsive to needs on the ground. Some participants elaborated that community-centered solutions could include factors such as knowledge systems, innovation, ecological and systems change, and valuing localized approaches. One group reached the following consensus on approaches to sustainable food systems: “integrated, inclusive, and intercultural approach based on science, incentives and innovation to support and advance local change and connect with holistic systems to create common understandings in our language, address inequalities in access to healthy diets, food production, mitigate and adapt for environmental degradation and climate change.”

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/6

Solutions Cluster (Cross-Cutting): Involvement of youth

Participants agreed that a cross-cutting solution that addresses all three challenge areas is the involvement of youth across food systems.

Participants agreed that involvement of youth in food systems is a cross-cutting solution to all food systems challenges. Some participants highlighted the importance of building a sense of agency in youth, and suggested that policies, discussions, and possible solutions need to be discussed with future leaders in high school and college. Some participants noted the necessity of increasing youth education and training in food systems with a focus on nutrition, economics, science, and technology. Some participants agreed that engaging youth through school and programs such as 4H could promote healthy food messages, and that children and young people are agents of change that can spread awareness about food safety, food loss and waste, new methods of production, and the interconnectivity of food systems. One group reached agreement that through additional training on healthy foods, youth will fill information gaps and solve problems affecting food systems.

Regarding youth currently employed in food systems, some participants noted that young people are committed to farming and there was an increase in young farmers in the last census. Some participants noted that programs to bring youth into the agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture sectors (analogous to AmeriCorps) could be a way to increase youth engagement.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- Data & Evidence
- Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Participants expressed divergent views on the role of consolidation and global, regional, and local food systems. Some participants expressed that smaller scale food systems are more sustainable while others countered that smaller is not always more sustainable, as smaller operations cannot always afford to support workers or achieve the efficiency of larger operations. Facilitators flagged this as an area requiring further exploration.

One dimension of this divergence focused on modern technologies, including biotechnology. One participant noted the importance of biotechnology to contribute to nutrition, production, worker health and safety, and the importance of science-based agriculture and use of science-based risk assessments as a foundation of food systems for the future. In response, another participant expressed that new technologies could negatively impact the ability of people to feed themselves, concluding that local ownership of the food system and promoting ecological diversity to ensure soil health is also important. Some participants stressed that food production should emphasize quality over quantity and soil health, with fortification of foods an interim solution while soil health practices become more widespread. Participants agreed that the tradeoffs of using modern technologies in agriculture need to be considered and weighed.

Another dimension of this discussion focused on resilience. Some participants noted the tradeoffs between sourcing food locally versus externally during emergency situations. Some participants noted that sourcing food locally during emergency situations could stabilize the food supply. For example, in response to COVID19, one organization paid restaurants and community centers to support meals for the public, a model which was initially funded by philanthropy and requires longer term investment to sustain. On the other hand, one participant noted that some local and regional markets are highly dependent on external food sources, citing the example of Hawaii whose entire food supply could be disrupted if ports and airports are shut down. Participants agreed that the United States has an opportunity to lead in producing and providing access to nutrient dense foods at all scales, and that the UN Food Systems Summit should take into account the vulnerabilities and gaps in investment or tools of entry to create market access for all size producers.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate