Growing People, Hearts, and Hope

I am not a traditional FoodBank director
I am not a Farmer, but I love food & I’m a life long learner

Food is a Social & Economic Determinant of Health

Availability of resources to meet daily needs (e.g., safe housing and local food markets)

Having food or being able to get food (food security)
**Health Factors Contribute to Health Outcomes**

- **Health Outcomes:**
  - Health Outcomes: 45 out of 57
- **Health Factors:**
  - Health factors: 56 out of 57

*2015 County Health Rankings [http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/california/tulare]*

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**Poor Food Access at Home**

CBS NEWS CUTLER, Calif., March 4, 2004

*An Obesity Paradox Poor Face Higher Obesity Because Unhealthy Food Is More Affordable*

The working poor, like Iris Caballero, often have no time for cooking, little money to buy fresh vegetables. (AP)

MS NBC Cutler, Calif, March 3, 2004

*Working poor face higher obesity rate Unhealthy food is cheaper, easier to obtain*

Iris Caballero, left, who suffers from diabetes, and her sister Zaida eat lunch at their home in Cutler, Calif. Obesity has replaced malnutrition as the most common nutritional problem among America’s poor, research suggests.
### Economic Determinants & Relationships to Obesity

#### Comparing Overweight and Obesity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Teens &amp; Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulare</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Joaquin Valley</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A recent report from UCLA used Physical Fitness Testing scores and found that overweight and obesity among 5th, 7th, 9th grade students during the years 2005-2010 has grown to 43.78%.

Socioeconomic Indicators, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Median Family Income</th>
<th>Total children in Poverty</th>
<th>&lt;HS education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tulare Co*</td>
<td>429,668</td>
<td>44,543</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutler</td>
<td>4,491</td>
<td>24,432</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinuba</td>
<td>16,844</td>
<td>33,769</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlimart</td>
<td>6,583</td>
<td>21,544</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>9,168</td>
<td>37,033</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmersville</td>
<td>8,737</td>
<td>29,629</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>10,297</td>
<td>24,934</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pixley</td>
<td>2,586</td>
<td>23,750</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porterville</td>
<td>39,615</td>
<td>35,136</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terra Bella</td>
<td>3,466</td>
<td>24,750</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulare</td>
<td>43,994</td>
<td>36,935</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visalia *</td>
<td>122,112</td>
<td>57,946</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2000 Census estimates, except where noted * 2009, ACS estimates;

Death, Premature death, and Life Expectancy vary by location

Life Expectancy >80 years
Census Tract 3.01
Kingsburg/South Dinuba
Life Expectancy: 84yrs
AAR= 483/100,000
YPLL2005-2007 = 1769
HS/GED and above = 65.3%
Families in Poverty= 12.6%
Under age 5= 7.5%
Over age 65= 11.9%

Life Expectancy <70 yrs
Census Tract 38.02
Porterville Area
Life Expectancy: 69yrs
AAR= 1254/100,000
YPLL2005-2007 = 5025 yrs
HS/GED and above = 48.6%
Families in Poverty= 32.8%
Under age 5= 9.8%
Over age 65= 12.8%
**Food Insecurity**

Low food security (old label=Food insecurity without hunger): reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.

Very low food security (old label=Food insecurity with hunger): Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

Source: California Health Interview Survey.

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**Food Desert**

- Broadly conceptualized as limited access to affordable and nutritious foods, particularly in low income areas
USDA definition

- a food desert is a *low-income census tract* where a substantial number or share of residents has *low access* to a supermarket or large grocery store:

Food Deserts in Tulare County

According to USDA data, 14 census tract food deserts

In one of those, as many as 34% of children ages 0-17 yrs live with low access to foods;
Mission

• The MISSION of BeHealthyTulare is to nourish healthy minds and healthy bodies for a Thriving Tulare county.

Organizational Focus

• We cultivate hope and dignity by validating everybody's input and knowledge and providing opportunities to share this knowledge….We believe these activities change the social fabric in our community and foster cooperation across the generations toward a resilient sustainable and healthy community.
Huerto Esperanza

The garden’s mission is to inspire, support, and educate community by deepening our relationship to food, learning from each other through our cultural food traditions, and cultivating a healthier and sustainable table.

Cooperative & Participatory
Food Systems/Gardens for Health

We learn from others too!

Food Systems/Gardens for Community Building
Food Systems/Gardens as Crime Prevention

“Communities where that (fresh food) exists are far safer and have far less crime. All of those things we really think are intertwined.”

— Sgt. Marty Neidaffer, Alameda County Sheriff’s Activities League

Food Systems/Gardens for Self-Sufficiency/Resilience
Where we began

Where we are now
TC Harvest Purpose

- TC Harvest is a local, grass-roots effort dedicated to raise awareness on food waste and food insecurity

What we do

- **Harvesting**... overabundant neighborhood fruit trees, providing thousands of pounds of food for the hungry.
- **Education**... on use and appreciation of overlooked natural resources, skills in fruit tree care, and food preservation
- **Connection**... growing a deeper sense of community by caring for people, plants, and sharing the excess
Food should Feed People, Not Landfills

- As much as 40% of US food gets wasted.
- 21% of waste in landfills is comprised of food
Growing Hunger Awareness & Compassion

Why we do it (cont).
Youth involvement & leadership is taking on a life of its own.
Service brings together generations
Family Flicks at the Garden with Produce!

Appreciate Natural Beauty
Beauty in our food & ourselves

We continue to dream….

A farm stand at our garden?
Could this trailer be our future mobile market?

Food Lab/ La Cocina Con Sabor

Our educational food laboratory & cooking club

Our mission is to close the food loop by linking food production to food consumption and share the ways that food can bring a together a diverse group of people.

* healthy food * food preservation * traditional culinary knowledge
From our garden!

Yes, this is edible!!
FoodLink was founded on Sept 24, 1978.

For 36 years FoodLink has been locally-operated and serving our community.

FoodLink Nutrition Policies & Standards

50% All Tulare County residents should have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of their income, education or ethnic background

40%  

10%
How a food bank works

Food System and Food Banks overlap
Pantry Locations

34 Pantries;
In 2014 almost 7.5 million pounds of food disseminated
2013 103,205 families
2014 163,203 families
Increase 58%

Direct Community Programs:
Pantries
Direct Community Programs: Nutrition on the Go

10 Sites

In 2014, 437,691 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables to 21,003 people
Direct Community Programs:
Drought Distribution

Direct Community Program:
SmartPacks & Summer Food Service
Direct Community Program: SmartPacks & Summer Food Service

Food pantries are being accessed as a consistent, supplemental food source.

**Chart 1: Percentage of Pantry Clients within each Visitation Category**

- Recurrent: 36%
- Frequent: 18%
- Intermittent: 27%
- Nascent: 19%
- 6 months or more: 54%
Food pantries are being accessed as a consistent, supplemental food source.

Chart 3: Percentage of Pantry Clients within each Visitation Category by Age

Vision for the Future: Food Literacy & Hub for Healthy Food Resources

Modify our existing programs that take a chronic challenges in our community – hunger, nutrition, and disease—into positive sustainable solutions that promote health and nourishment.
Challenges

Given the current conditions:

- Drought -- production, economic status (58% increase in participants)
- Unemployment, Underemployment, Seasonal Employment
- Higher numbers of children below poverty (40.2% in Tulare)
- Poor Access to fresh & healthy foods
- Growing aging population on fixed Incomes

How do we create a resilient food system to address the needs of everyone including those without adequate access?

Transform our definitions of Food Security

Food security has been defined in many ways, but here is one for the future.

The ability for “all community residents [to] obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice” (Hamm and Bellows 2003).
Where food builds health, skills, and community

FoodLink will bring together families in low-income communities to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food for all while also working with a broader food movement to empower our communities to create a healthier food system.

EATING TOGETHER
INCREASING ACCESS TOGETHER
COOKING TOGETHER
GROWING TOGETHER
MAKING CHANGE TOGETHER
LEADING OUR FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Designing for our future

- Change the conversation around hunger
- Teach enjoyable skills and reduce isolation
- Promote respect & dignity
- Reduce the blame & shame experienced by those in poverty by linking daily challenges with systemic issues
- Builds the consensus that all people have the opportunity to access good food for a healthy life
Designing for our future

- Increase gardening knowledge
- Engage in transferable skills
- Reduce social isolation
- Celebrate diverse food growing traditions
- Increase access to fresh produce

Designing for our future

- Build confidence and skills in the kitchen
- Understand how personal food choices influence health and the food system
- Celebrate diverse food cooking traditions
- Promote nourishing and delicious food for all
Discussion

Is it possible to help create a more sustainable food bank? If so, in what ways can we make food banks more sustainable?

Given that every sector of the food system overlaps and intersects with food banks, where in the food system might these changes need to take place for a sustainable food bank?

Can the food bank, a model that is only 40 years old, be salvaged or are we looking at a new model?

Thank you!

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