

9. Agriculture and Food

A strong local food system can positively impact the resiliency, health, economy and environment of the Boulder Valley and surrounding region. Food choices and their method of production represent one of the most significant impacts that humans have on the world around us. Sustainable agricultural practices and short distances to transport food can help reduce energy used to feed the community. Access to safe food, including locally grown food for all Boulder residents is a top priority for our community. It is important that healthy food be available to individuals and families in all neighborhoods, regardless of economic situation and location.

Roots in progressive food movements run deep in Boulder County and have contributed to the dynamic and thriving natural foods industry. Many local restaurants specialize in providing local ingredients in their food, garden to table processes have been developed in local schools, and the desire for a year-round farmers market are all indications of people's growing interest and demand for locally produced food.

The city and county have made significant contributions to the preservation of lands suitable for agricultural production, and the water needed to use these areas for agriculture. Most agricultural production in the Boulder Valley occurs on city and county open space.

The following policies on agriculture and access to local food guide public policy and decision-making to move our community toward a more robust agricultural economy and ensuring everyone has access to food.

- Support for Agriculture
- Local Food Production
- Sustainable Agricultural Practices
- Regional Efforts to Enhance the Food System
- Urban Gardening and Food Production
- Access to Locally Produced Food

9.01 Support for Agriculture

The city and county will encourage the preservation and sustainable use of agricultural lands as a current and renewable source of food and feed and for their contribution to cultural, environmental and economic diversity. These areas are important for preserving the rural character of Area III. The city and county will demonstrate and encourage the protection of significant agricultural areas and related water supplies and facilities, including the historic and existing ditch systems, through a variety of means, which may include public acquisition, land use planning, and sale or lease of water for agricultural use.

9.02 Local Food Production

The city and county will encourage and support local food production to improve the availability and accessibility of healthy foods and to provide other educational, economic and social benefits. The city and county support increased growth, sales, distribution and consumption of foods that are healthy, sustainably produced and locally grown for all Boulder Valley residents with an emphasis on affordable access to food for everyone and long term availability of food.

9.03 Sustainable Agriculture Practices

The city and county will promote sustainable agricultural practices on publicly owned lands and will encourage them on private lands. Sustainable practices include food production methods that

are healthy, have low environmental impact, respectful to workers, are humane to animals, provide fair wages to farmers and support farming communities. These can include a range of production types that take into account land suitability, water availability, invasive species, energy use and labor and capital needs.

9.04 Regional Efforts to Enhance the Food System

The city and county will participate in regional agricultural efforts and implement recommendations at a local level to the extent appropriate and possible.

9.05 Urban Gardening and Food Production

The city will encourage community and private gardens to be integrated in the city. This may include allowing flexibility and/or helping to remove restrictions for food production in shared open spaces and public areas, encouraging rooftop gardens and composting and planting edible fruit and vegetable plants where appropriate.

9.06 Access to Locally Produced Food

The city will support cooperative efforts to establish community markets throughout the community and region. Such efforts include working to identify a location or develop facilities to allow a year round farmers market and support sales of produce from small community gardens.