

Our Local Food System Onkaparinga Workshop Summary

10 August 2021



This workshop was part of a project is funded by the Local Government Association of South Australia and coordinated by the following organisations:



Contents

Our Community Vision	2
Project Background.....	2
What is a local food system?	3
Local context	4
Workshop content	5
Visioning – What we heard is important?.....	5
Back casting – what actions could we take?.....	7
Roles and responsibilities	9
Council role.....	9
Individual and Community role	9
Casual mapping	9
Feedback	14
Next steps	15
Attachment 1	
Themed identified from the visioning activity.	16

Kaurna Acknowledgement

The City of Onkaparinga acknowledge the Kaurna Nation and its people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land in the area now known as the City of Onkaparinga and pays respects to Elders past and present.



Our Community Vision

A healthy sustainable food system in Onkaparinga looks like:

- Building knowledge and skill through food education and training
- All people have access to fresh, affordable food – no one left behind
- A strong food economy that value our local producers
- Diverting and reducing food waste from landfill
- Support of local food growing
- Building better business models
- Learning traditional food culture and practices from our Kaurna community

Project Background

In 2020, an emerging group called the Food Systems Network were successful in obtaining a grant from the Local Government Associations Research and Development Scheme for a project called **Local government: Enabling resilient food systems in South Australia.**

The project aims to engage local government, communities and stakeholders to build the resilience of local food systems in the face of climate change risks.

A consultancy team, Ethical Fields in association with Sustain and Collaborative Futures, were successful in their tender to work on the project.

One of the key goals is to offer a guide for local governments to understand their role in enabling local food systems. All the resources developed will contribute to building the capacity of local government staff, elected members and communities to value local food systems, remove barriers and support climate-resilient initiatives.

To develop this guide, local workshops are planned to invite people to join us to explore what a healthy and sustainable food system looks like. How can it drive climate change action? How can it support local jobs? How can it reduce food waste? And how can it connect us as diverse communities?





What is a local food system?

A local food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of an area. It incorporates everything that gets our food from paddock to plate.

Figure 1 shows the components of a food system, highlighted in the Greater Bendigo's Food System Strategy 2020-2030.



Figure 1. Components of a food system

Local context

The City of Onkaparinga's Community Capacity Strategic Plan commits to working with partners and networks to explore, understand and strengthen our food systems to promote food security for our residents.

Recent climate shocks and stressors such as bushfires and COVID-19 have also shown us the need to strengthen the resilience of our local food system and reduce dependence on more distant sources of food and ensuring access to affordable, nutritious food for all.

In 2015-16, the total value of agricultural output in the City of Onkaparinga was \$59m. The largest commodity produced was Grapes (wine and table), which accounted for 50.2% of the City of Onkaparinga's total agricultural output in value terms (ABS, 2015-2016). The City of Onkaparinga's Draft Economic Growth and Investment Strategy 2020-24 identifies agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing as key growth opportunities.

Most Adelaide councils now provide food waste recycling, but participation/diversion remains low. Food waste typically comprises a significant proportion of the residual bin contents (approx. 50%) and therefore remains the largest opportunity to reduce waste landfill through diversion to the organics stream for recycling. Global food waste, according to Oz Harvest, is responsible for approximately 8% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. A breakdown of waste bin materials in a 2014 waste audit, found that uneaten food accountable for 7% of waste in Onkaparinga (Waste and Recycling, Strategic Management Plan 2017-2021).

The proportion of food insecure Australians seeking food relief at least once a week throughout COVID has more than doubled since last year from 15% to 31% (Foodbank Hunger Report 2020). Foodbank's report identifies that three in ten Australians experiencing food security had not gone hungry before the pandemic and that young people and our international students are two groups that have been hardest hit.

Puddle Jumpers, an organisation that provide food relief in Onkaparinga reflected recently following the July 2021 lockdown:

"Last night I was reflecting that there are so many people doing it tough, and the tears have flowed as I've watched a 3-year-old overjoyed at the simple things of getting apples, or bananas."

"The tears have flowed as I hear mothers cry in relief that they could eat tonight and so could their kids."

"The tears have flowed as I handed over shoes to a man whose feet were blistered and cut and all he wanted was bread."

"Today the tears flowed as I heard a mother had to leave groceries with another agency because she couldn't pay, and she was embarrassed as her 8-year-old watched her cry and walk away empty handed."

"Tonight, the tears flowed as a man called and said he hadn't eaten in a few days and was shocked I could get food to him in the space of 30mins."

In Onkaparinga, only 4.4% eat the recommended vegetable intake (Draft of Regional Public Health Plan 2020), continuing the burden of disease.

These are all the reasons why this conversation is so important and timely.

Workshop content

Onkaparinga were the first of four local councils to host an Our Local Food Systems workshop as part of the project. Participants at the workshop included representative and advocates from most components of our food system.

The following was an outline of the agenda:

09:30 – 10:00am	Welcome and introduction
10:00 – 10:40am	Visioning
10:40 – 11:00am	Ranking
11:00 – 11:15am	Tea Break
11:15 – 11:55am	Back-casting
11:55am – 12:15pm	Roles and responsibilities
12:15 - 12:35pm	Report back
12:35 – 13:20pm	Lunch
13:20 – 14:20pm	Causal mapping
14:15 – 14:45pm	Report back, reflections and comments
14:45 – 15:00pm	Next steps and close

Visioning – What we heard is important?

Vision theme	Key points:
Food education, training and skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education on growing your own food• Teaching children to taste & enjoy different foods• Education freely available on health and nutrition• Understand the medicinal qualities• Teaching food gardening in school curriculum• Education and information guides on what can be foraged locally• Education around cooking healthy organic meals• Communal kitchens for use
Food justice (No-one left behind)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affordable meals for all• Equitable food for all• Food: top of agenda = council, state, Fed• GM free foods accessible and secured• Ability to choose food• Basic needs are met• Funding for set up gardens

Vision theme	Key points:
Valuing local food production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and transport to farmers • Community gardens accessible to all • Less reliance on supermarket duopoly • Supporting local businesses • Tax on pesticides • Farmers incentives for regenerative farming • Pay farmers what they deserve • Social supermarkets • People value food & where it comes from
Diverting and reducing food waste from landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Waste: Learn and share edible food • Zero waste cooking • Education around reducing food waste • Businesses diverting waste going to landfill • Food valued • Central compost in every region
Access to fresh food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network or system to share excess food • Community food swaps • Grow free carts and community gardens • Food hubs in Community Centres and other places • Food available on our streets • Community harvest and preserving • More green spaces to grow food • Diverse food growing bowl
Better Business models and incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and educate what grow well locally • Eliminate cosmetic standards for food • Social Enterprise and Micro Enterprise investments • Economy circular • Cooperatives for growing, processing & distribution • Water tanks every home for food gardens
Indigenous foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous food sovereignty • Bush Tucker Trail on community land • Learn more and grow cooking & businesses with local native foods • Encourage regenerative farming • Buch Tucker plantings as part of revegetation for people to harvest • Indigenous food knowledge



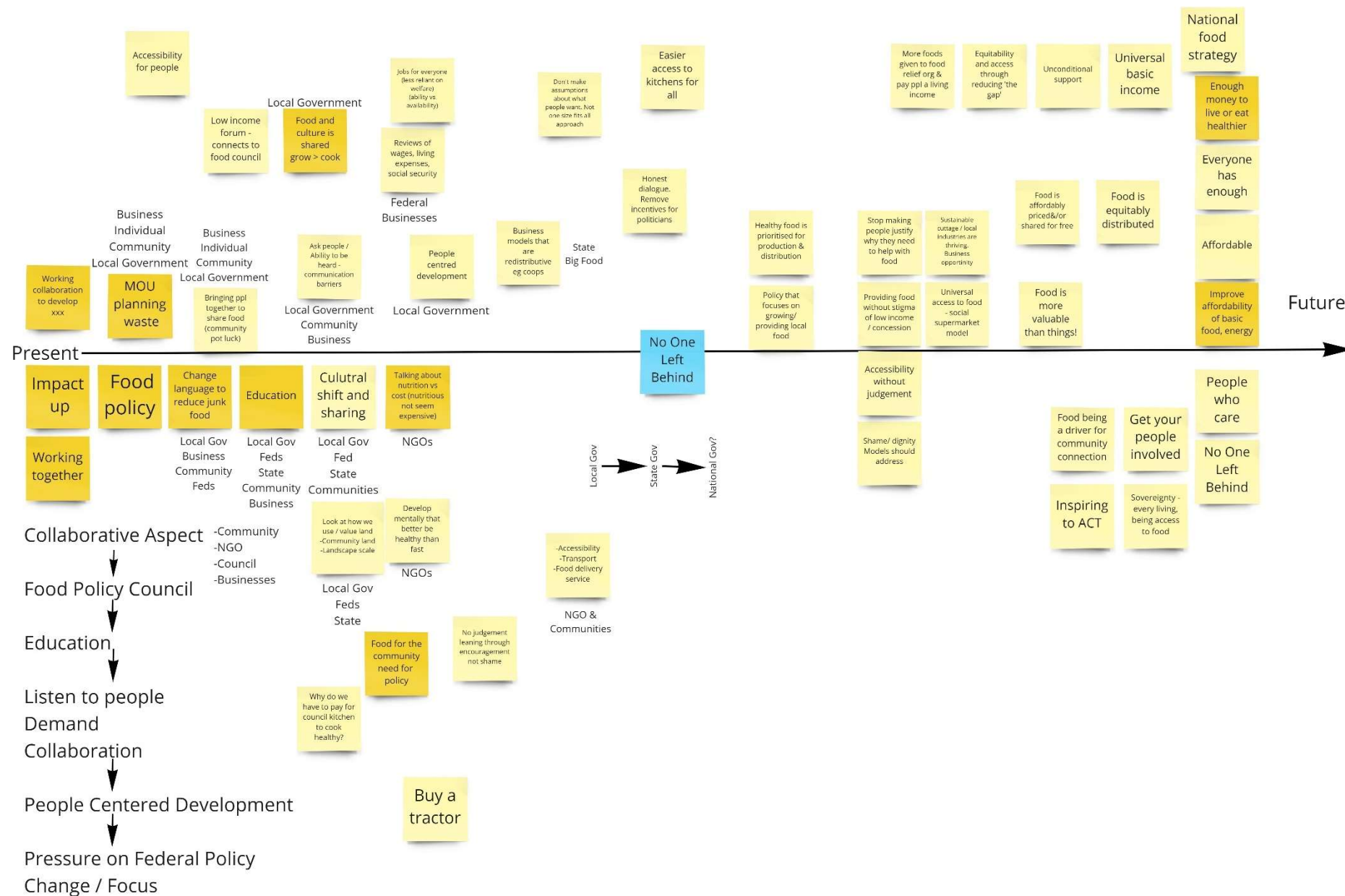
Back casting – what actions could we take?

Back casting is the process of working backwards from the future to reach your identified desirable outcome rather than forwards from the future. When working from the present, people are often blinded by their present difficulties and limitations. However, working backwards from the future produces a huge spectrum of options people had not previously thought about.

From topics identified from the visioning process, we choose a number of themes to back cast through a process of prioritisation.

The following is an example for the vision theme of “No one left behind”.

No One Left Behind



Roles and responsibilities

It was identified that there is a role of everyone to play in building a healthy and sustainable food system in Onkaparinga.

Council role

At the conclusion of this project, a guide will be developed to support Local Government to understand their role in enabling local food systems.

Individual and Community role

Individuals can become a food citizen where they consciously make decisions about what and where they eat and become active in food system activities.

Community groups and organisations can help to create resilient local food systems by undertaking food system activities such as community gardens, cooking programs, food education and other opportunities mentioned in our key vision themes.

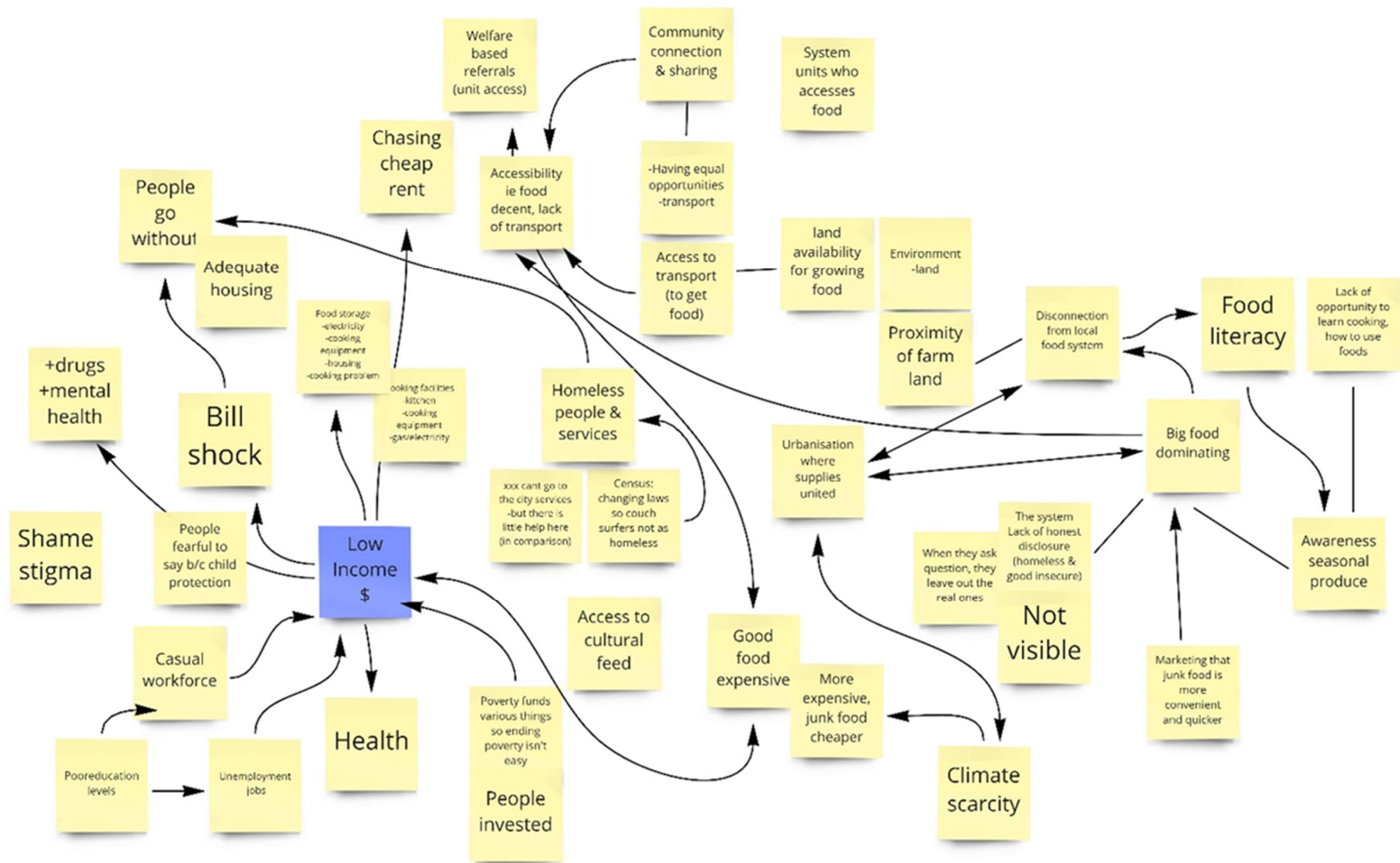
There are already many projects and actions that occur throughout the City of Onkaparinga that align with our new vision. A key next step is to begin to raise awareness of these projects through mapping and the collation of this information. This will be an opportunity to take stock, celebrate the existing work and further identify potential opportunities to strengthen the local food system.

Casual mapping

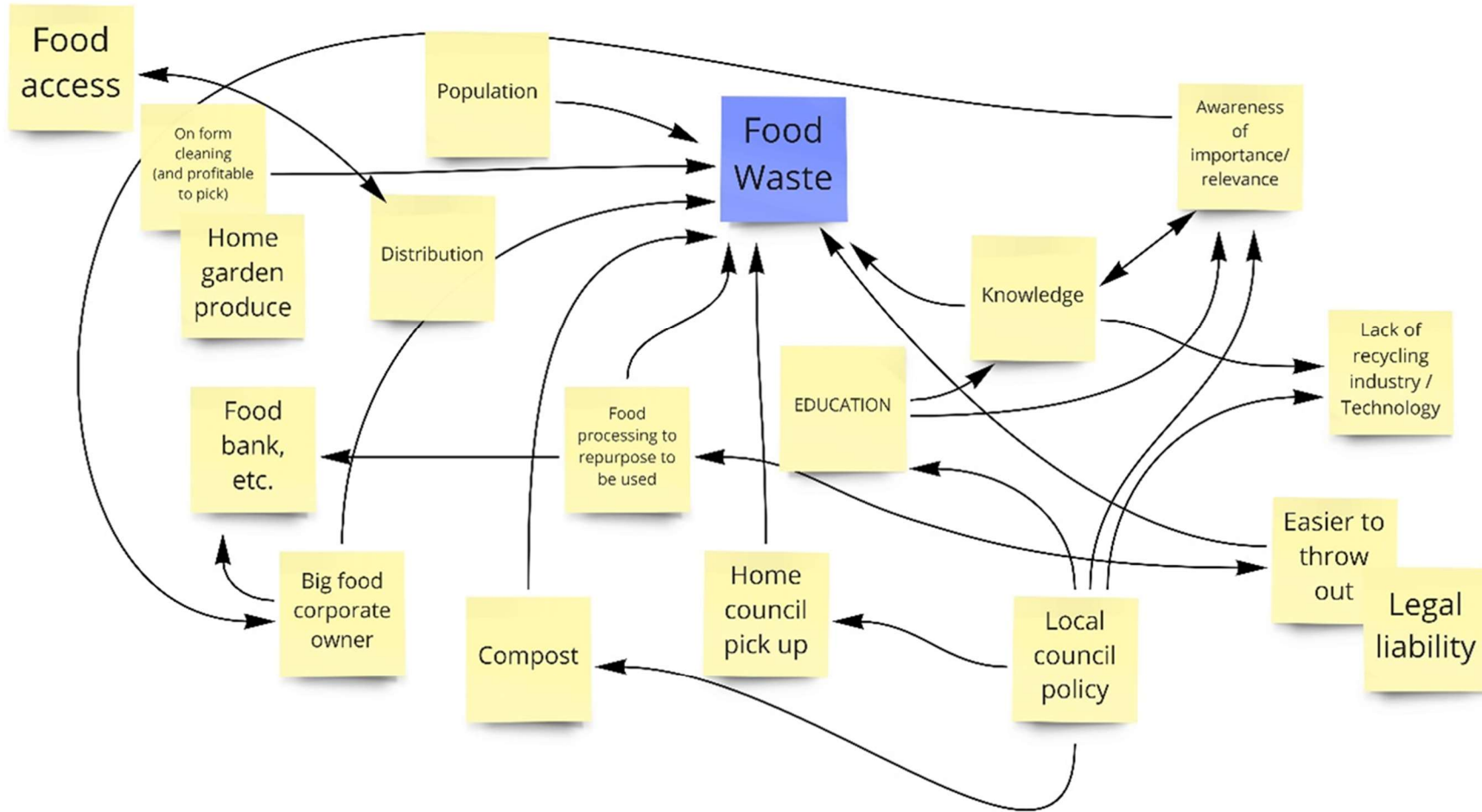
The casual mapping showed that the food system is a complex web of activities which includes governance, economics of food productions, it includes sustainability, the degree to which we waste food, how food production affects the natural environment and the impact of food on individual and population health (www.futureoffood.ox.ac.uk/what-food-system)

We mapped and identified the causes that influence four themes.

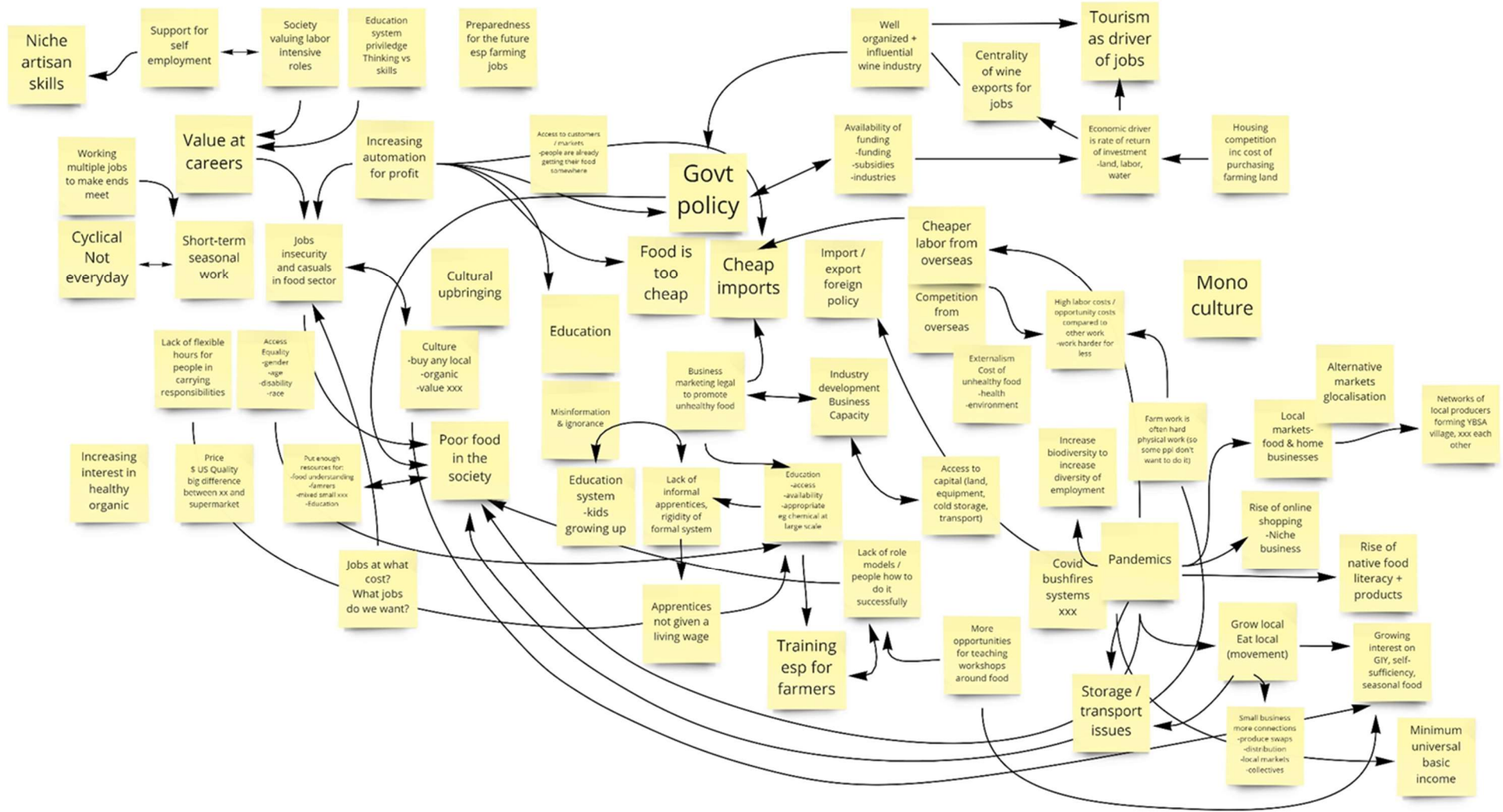
Food Insecurity



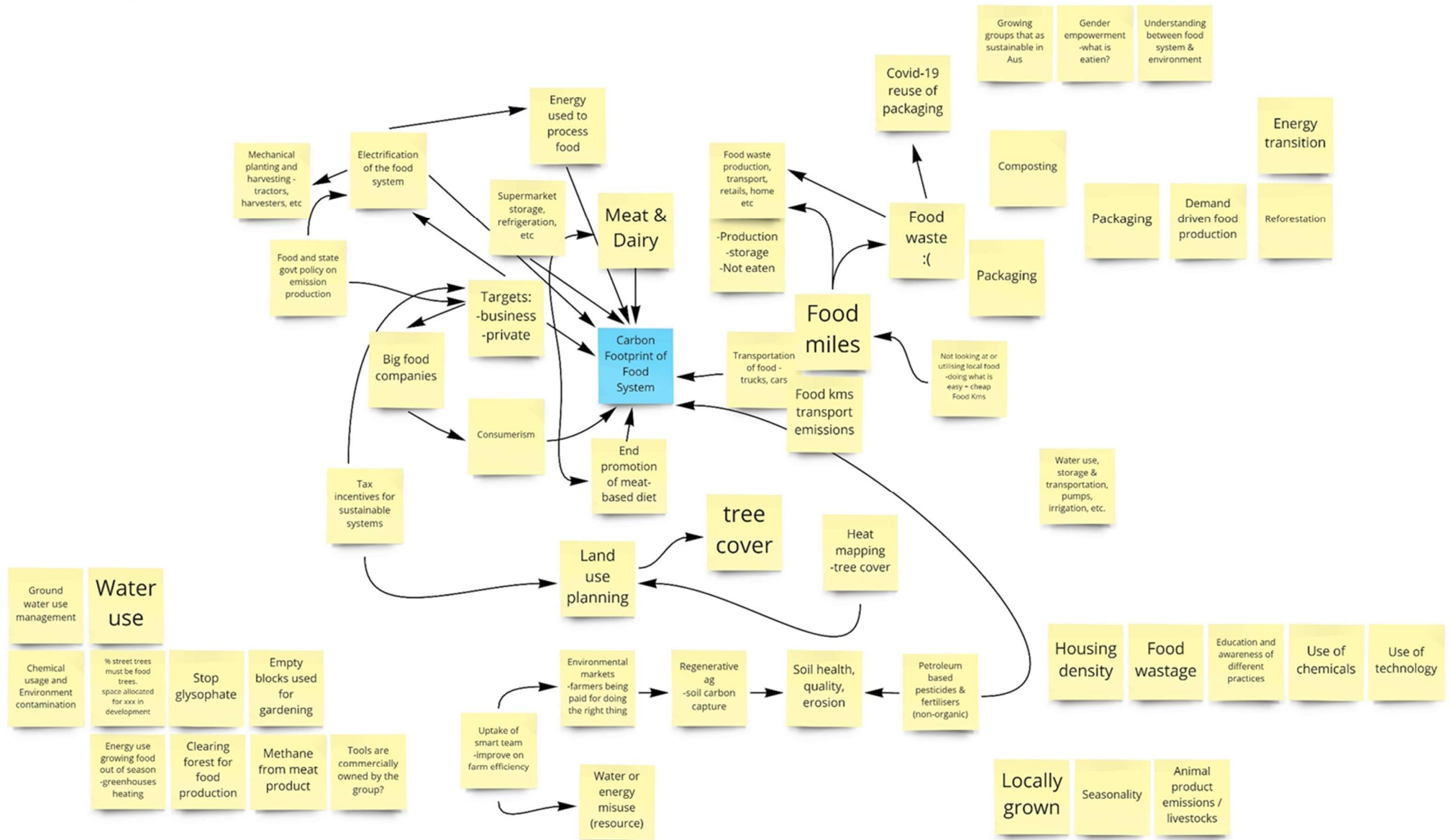
Food Waste



Local Jobs



Carbon Footprint



Feedback

Key challenges we heard were

- Gaining government support to change policy
- Lack of local resources and funding
- Lack of accountability at state and federal govt levels
- Monopoly of big retail supermarkets and big food in making decisions on price of food and quality of food
- Feeling though we lack power and influence
- Lack of value & knowledge of connections within food systems
- Communicating the vision and maintaining the momentum
- Capturing the breadth of work and further opportunities to get together
- Policy, passive consumer mindset, behaviour, perverse incentives for cheap unhealthy foods, externalising of the costs in terms of health and environment
- Attitude around food as a 'product' rather than a basic human right
- Lack of understanding around the extensive benefits of food sovereignty including economic benefits
- Lack of ongoing collaboration and consultation with the community being embedded in food system decision making

How we heard these could be overcome

- Council taking a leading role and championing our cause
- Strong advocacy and support from Local and State Government
- Ensuring that all food system actors can be involved
- Capacity with time
- Lobbying for support from decisionmakers and funders
- Awareness raising, education and skill development within council and community
- Data collection by council, universities and citizen science data
- Embedding ongoing collaboration and consultation with the community in food system decision making

What people committed to taking action on?

- More focus on local produce and food waste
- Continuing support small businesses and buy locally
- Sharing information with others and getting them involved
- Do the best I can to improve the way I treat food
- Continue to gain relevant information
- Talk to schools about food security
- Exploring how we can continue to work together, share experience and outcomes of work
- Keep working and advocating in this space
- Eat more, do cooking lessons, grow and share more vegetable and fruit
- Being more proactive in meeting officials in various governmental departments and other similar entities in order to come to a shared vision for community gardens and fruit and vegetable growing in urban spaces
- Have conversations around food security and include the topic as part of lobbying work
- Explore avenues to be involved in food system initiatives within the council

The following were identified as the top priorities (in order) for future action:

Priority	Theme
1	Food security – No one left behind
2	Growing locally
3	Climate change response/sustainability
4	Education
5	Supporting local
6	Food policy
7	Food distribution and hubs
8	Collaboration
9	Waste

Next steps

1. Engage a local artist to develop visual impression of our community vision.
2. Map and collate all current food system activities against the vision themes.
3. Establish a vision working group to help plan of the top priorities and to lead actions.
4. Follow up get together to continue collaboration.
5. A land use audit that identifies land ownership and use.
6. The development of a state-wide guide with recommendations, tool and templates for Local Government and community use.



Photo credit: Baxter Wiles, [SA Urban Food Network](#)

Attachment 1

Themed identified from the visioning activity.

Visioning

Culture - 6	Fresh food - 19	Indigenous foods 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Food Equity -Ability to choose -Basic needs met -Resources Available to choose -Less stigma around eating healthy -Food accessible -Accessible food for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Website wanted + excess food -Community food swaps & sharing grow free community garden -Sharing acts of kindness through system -Spaces/hubs to give + share without \$\$ -Food must be free -Fresh food exchange -Food hubs using assets eg Community Centres -Make Community Centres food hubs -Community Centre food/cooking/educ. Inclusion EAT -Produce swap centres everywhere -Give food to other people -Regular access to food swap -Free food on tresie tables -Food available on street -Access to free fruit & veg unlimited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Indigenous food ways/ sovereignty -Foods & other plants in the landscape -Bush Tucker Trail on community land -Learn more and grow cooking & businesses with local native foods -Encourage regenerative farming -Bush Tucker plantings as part of re-vegetation for people to harvest -Indigenous food knowledge

Grow Your Own Food - 25	Waste 16	Education & Cooking class - 43
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Water tanks every home for food gardens -More green spaces to grow food -Educating the public -Community connection & sharing food & growing skills -Grow your own veg and fruit -Grown your own on your backyard -Pass it on: teaching each other to grow -Magic Harvest -Educate = Multiple education growing -Growing your own food -Homegrown -Best quality organic food in schools and nursing homes in the region -Backyard food gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No Waste: Learn and share edible food -Zero waste cooking -No food waste to landfill (Education) -Food valued: penalty if wasted for business -Reduction of food waste -Central compost every region -Shelves out the back of supermarkets for food that was going in the bin so people can intercept it -Shops don't waste food - low cost if giveaway produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Education on growing your own food -Teach children to taste & enjoy different foods -Healthy food -Growing own food and education -Children taking garden homes -Young children experiencing lots of different healthy foods at kindy -Education freely available on health, nutrition -Understand the medicinal qualities -Education for children -Teaching food gardening in school curriculum Education on what can be foraged locally -Education for children around cooking healthy organic meals -Foraging information guides -Education at schools program -Education: Community cooking, pantry -What type business -Understanding of nutrition

Better Business Models - 14	Quality - 5	Valuing Farmers - 18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collectives for food co growing -Research and educate what grows well - hybrids that can cope with not dry summer -Scrap cosmetic standards for food -Social Enterprise and Micro Enterprise investments -Economy circular -Cooperatives for growing, processing & distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Secure GM-free status -Organic council area -Create an organic health hub down south -Quality available fresh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community gardens accessible to all -Food is valued. Change the supermarket duopoly Supporting local businesses only have seafood, local food -Tax on pesticides -Farmers incentives for regenerative farming & tax on pesticides -Pay farmers what they deserve -Social supermarket -People value food & where it came from

Food Justice - 22	Community Kitchens - 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funding for set up gardens -Affordable meals for all -Equitable food for all -Communal Kitchens -Food: top of agenda = council, state, federal -GM free, local food -Men own this too -Food procurement via large organisation -Healthy food cheaper vs. junk food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Easy access to locally grown food -Easy access to locally produced foods/sauces etc -Community harvest and preserve -Accessibility + transport to farmers -Or place in Community freezer -Diverse food growing bowl -Smaller bins pay for picking for volume zero waste -Smaller retails -Local mills and mobile xxx -Localise food as much as possible -Food rules -Buy local produce -Communal food eating -Cooking food then placing a meal or 2 into container to give away -Diversity of veggies/fruit grown & eaten