

City of Seattle
Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Summary Sheet
Cover Sheet and Questions

Department/Office: Office of Sustainability & Environment

Name of policy, program, etc. analyzed: Food Action Plan Update

Names and titles of key staff that led this RET process: Bridget Igoe, OSE Food Policy and Programs Advisor; Chris Iberle, OSE Food Policy & Programs Advisor, in collaboration and consultation with the Food Action Plan IDT which includes staff from DON, HSD, OCR, OED, OLS, OPCD, OSE, PHSKC, SPU, and SPR.

Dates of RET process (e.g., 7/2016 – 10/2016): 09/2021 – 12/31/2022

This Summary Sheet should be completed by those who worked on this RET with input from Change Team members and department leadership. Representatives from these different groups should review the final version so that there is consensus on content before it is shared with the Mayor's Office. Please fill out a separate Summary Sheet for each of the 4 required RETs that your department named in your director's Performance Plan with the Mayor.
For questions about using this Summary Sheet, please contact your OCR RSJI liaison.

Please respond to the following questions in a separate document (no more than 2.5 pages) and include this page as the cover sheet along with your response.

1. Describe the project, program, policy or budgetary decision that you assessed using the Racial Equity Toolkit.

This RET focused on the Food Action Plan Update.

The Food Action Plan is the City of Seattle's roadmap for an equitable, sustainable, and resilient local food system that supports healthy, vibrant communities. The Plan outlines strategies and actions the City can take to improve our local food system while advancing interrelated goals of race and social justice, food security, health, environmental sustainability, economic development, fair labor standards, and more. The Plan is also a framework to coordinate and align the many City departments that develop and implement food programs and policies. In Q3 2021, a multi-department effort began to update the Food Action Plan for the first time since 2012.

2. List the racial equity outcome(s) that you set in Step 1 of the RET process.

- *Increase Community Food Security:* All Seattle residents have enough to eat and easy access to fresh, affordable, nutritious, and culturally relevant food, regardless of race, place, and income.
- *Support Local & Traditional Foods:* Seattle food policies and programs support traditional food practices, regenerative practices, locally grown and harvested foods and community food production, focusing on those communities historically excluded from land and water access.
- *Expand Equitable Economic Opportunities & Fair Labor Practices:* Seattle food policies and program create economic opportunities for food producers and a valued workforce, centering workers and communities most impacted by racism.

- *Prevent Food Waste and Climate Pollution:* Seattle food policies and programs protect and improve the environment, prevent food-related waste, and protect and improve neighborhoods and communities harmed first and worst by climate pollution.

Note: These are the four goal areas of the draft Food Action Plan Update. Additional community outcomes are defined in the eight Strategic Priorities and specific racial equity outcomes are defined at the Action level.

3. Which stakeholders (groups and/or key individuals) did you engage in this RET? In what ways did you engage them?

The process to update the 2012 Food Action Plan began in 2019, paused in early 2020 as the COVID pandemic began, and resumed in September 2021. Staff advisors and managers from the following City departments are actively involved in the Food Action Plan Update process and implementation: DON, HSD, OCR, OED, OLS, OPCD, OSE, PHSKC, SPU, and SPR, with additional departments consulted as needed (FAS, SCL, SDOT, OIR, OIRA, and more). The IDT is facilitated by OSE and HSD.

Involving community members and stakeholders in the work has been at the core of our process. We interviewed dozens of subject matter experts across 13 City and County departments on their food-related programs, policies, priorities, and racial equity impacts of the work. We also conducted deep engagement with over 250 community leaders and stakeholders representing different sectors of the food system, from food business, workers, community-based organizations, food and environmental justice leader, advocate, other government institutions, and philanthropy. Our community engagement goal was to center the voices of communities most affected by the combined and lasting impacts of settler colonialism, systemic racism, and food system inequities.

We synthesized initial [community input](#) into a draft set of goals, strategic priorities, and actions, then vetted and built upon them during and after a [public comment period](#). The resulting Plan addresses a range of food system issues, with a deep focus on addressing the root causes of inequity and focusing on the priorities of communities most impacted by racism.

Initial reports from community engagements—with full details on who participated—are available on the [Food Action Plan webpage](#):

- [Community Engagement Report Back Presentation](#) (from July 12 & July 15, 2022)
- [Community Engagement Full Report](#)
- [Community Leader Interviews Report](#)

Note: we also conducted a 2021 RET on Food Action Plan community engagement.

4. Please describe up to five key benefits and/or burdens for people of color of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which the RET process helped you to identify or confirm.

The data and community conversations from this RET highlight the persistent racial and ethnic inequities across the food system that harm people and communities of color. Patterns of racial disparities exist in every aspect of the food system, from who experiences food insecurity and related health impacts to who is exploited for labor in food and agricultural industries to who has access to land and waterways to

produce food. Often what kinds of food traditions and knowledge are valued in the food system center on white culture, norms, and values without query or critique. Communities of color also experience disproportionate and cumulative exposures to harmful environmental and climate pollution, to which the food system is a major contributor.

To address these burdens (see full RET report for details), we have developed a draft Food Action Plan Update organized around four goals, eight strategic priorities, and 49 Actions with a vision for an equitable, sustainable, and resilient food system and a focus on benefits for ***RSJ priority populations****.

****RSJ priority populations:*** People and communities most impacted by racism: Black, Native, Indigenous, and People of Color. People and communities most impacted by social inequalities based on class, immigration status, preferred language, gender, sexuality, ability. Youth, elders, and households with children from the communities named above.

5. Please describe up to five key actions – things that you will do differently or begin to do now – of this policy, program, project, or other decision, which will increase opportunity and/or minimize harm for people of color.

To advance racial equity through these strategies and actions, the IDT developed shared values and practices to guide us in the implementation of the Food Action Plan. **If we do not lead with these values, we run the risk of perpetuating racial disparities in our programs, policies, and practices.**

- **Racial Justice & Equity:** We recognize that systemic racism through the investments and policies by government and the private sector have caused generational harm and resulted in disinvestments in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. We commit to undoing racism, eliminating racial, social, environmental disparities, and achieving racial equity within the City's food work by focusing investments and shifting decision-making power to those most impacted by inequity.
- **Community Collaboration:** We recognize that the programs and policies that will create a just, equitable and sustainable future require effective collaboration with a variety of stakeholders and leaders working on food systems solutions that center racial and social justice. We commit to investing the time and resources for inclusive engagement, trusting relationships, and clear and transparent processes.
- **Accountability & Stewardship:** Our work as individuals is connected to the collective work of all City departments and we commit to working across institutional siloes to align our efforts and find bold and creative solutions. We are accountable to the people we work with and serve through clear, shared processes for developing policies and programs and by taking responsibility for our decisions, actions, and outcomes. We take responsibility for our work by being data-informed, consistently tracking and reporting on progress, course correcting when we do not meet goals, and using measures of success that are meaningful and important to the communities most impacted by this work.
- **Whole System Approach:** The [food system is interconnected](#) to other complex social, environmental, economic, and agricultural systems that impact environmental and human health. We examine the root causes of the food system issues we work to address, and our responses and solutions assess the interaction the City's food policies and programs have with other systems. We test our assumptions about the benefits and burdens of programs and policies and develop creative opportunities to make positive change across systems and sectors

and contribute to solutions that address racial and social injustices in the broader local and global food system.

6. How will leadership ensure implementation of the actions described in question 4?

The Food Action Plan Update aims to advance the vision, values, and priorities of community stakeholders and the City leadership, which will help to align action and support behind the Plan.

Through every step of the Food Action Plan Update process, the IDT has kept City leadership (within departments, CBO, and the MO) informed of the work and efforts through memos, briefings, and review opportunities. City Council has expressed an interest to adopt the Food Action Plan Update by resolution. Additionally, we will continue to apprise City leadership, community stakeholders, and the public of Food Action Plan progress through regular and meaningful reporting on our investments and outcomes. We think this proactive communication helps to create awareness and support of the Food Action Plan and its implementation.

Additional resources and partnerships will be needed to realize the full potential of the Food Action Plan. The IDT is actively working to identify needs/gaps in existing programs/services and key investment priorities for expanded work. We are elevating resources resource needs and opportunities in memos to department Directors, the City Budget Office, and Mayor's Office. Additionally, the IDT intends to collaboratively develop a Food Action Plan budget paper in 2024. Meanwhile, we are also pursuing state and federal funding opportunities to support the priorities of the Food Action Plan.

7. How have/will you report back to your stakeholders? (This includes the people who were directly engaged in this RET process, those who will be affected by decisions made, and other departments or divisions impacted by the RET findings and the actions described in question 4.)

We have provided several report backs to stakeholders, including:

- July 2022 – we offered webinar ([click here](#) for slide deck) for community engagement participants, to share key findings and how they were used to develop an early draft of the Food Action Plan Update.
- May 2022, Sep 2022, Jan 2023 – we briefed department directors, CBO, and MO
- Monthly – the IDT meets to track progress on the Food Action Plan Update process and discuss future work (progress reporting)
- Ad hoc – responding to questions and check-ins with community stakeholders and staff as we continue to scope and develop specific Actions in the draft Plan.

Looking forward, we expect to involve stakeholders in the following ways:

- Release of the Food Action Plan Update (via communications and a press event)
- Regular reporting on Food Action Plan progress (via digital communications and live meetings)
- Ongoing community engagement opportunities (TBD)