

## San Francisco County's Community Food Guide

*This guide maps the community food systems in San Francisco County and discusses how to support them during the economic dislocation caused by coronavirus*



San Francisco Land Use

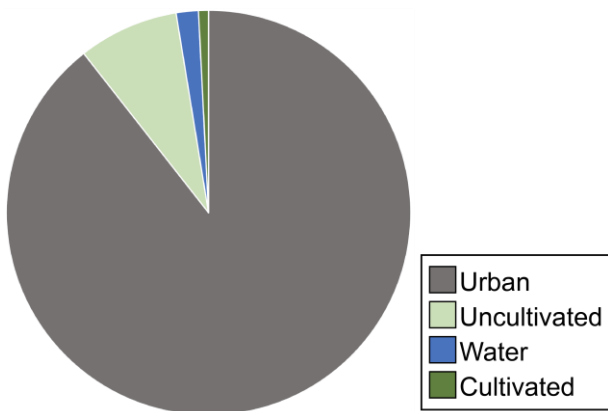


Figure 1. San Francisco County Land Use. Source: satellite imagery from the National Agriculture Statistics Service.

A community food system integrates food production, processing, distribution and consumption to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular place (Garrett and Feenstra, 1999). Many farms connect directly with their communities at farmers' markets and through Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), and form relationships with local restaurants and institutions committed to supporting the community's combined needs for healthy diets, soils, and development patterns. These direct connections help make farming practices and consumer needs transparent, building a more just food system that meets the needs of ecosystems, farmers, farmworkers, and consumers.

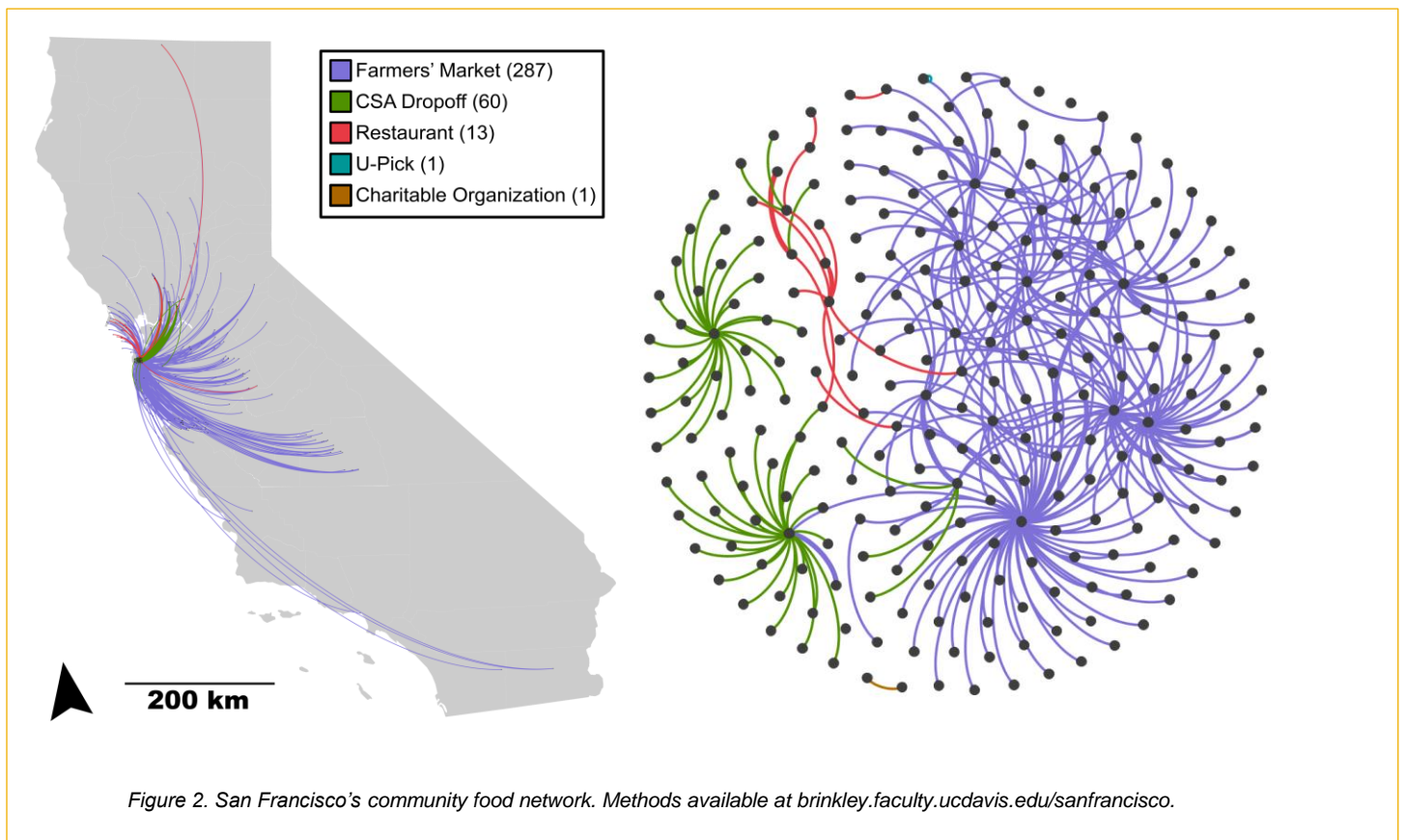
Today, the state grapples with new challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis, with low-income families and communities of color impacted most severely. Food insecurity has doubled and is continuing to rise. Many national food supply chains have been disrupted, and local farmers and ranchers more directly connected with consumers are pivoting distribution to fill gaps. The resilience and adaptability of local food systems can be further strengthened with support from consumers like you – when you shop local, vote for farmland conservation, and support policies that benefit farmworkers, food-insecure families, and family farmers.

## Find out what your community food system looks like and how to support it!

### Land and Population

San Francisco is located in northern California at the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area, home to 900,000 people. San Francisco is uniquely placed between California’s greatest agricultural producing regions and supports a thriving “locavore” culture. A majority of the city’s residents earn more than \$100,000 a year, making San Francisco a lucrative opportunity for farmers across the state and driving the flow of fresh and organic produce toward the city (U.S. Census, 2019). Less than 1% of San Francisco’s total land is agricultural (Figure 1), and nearly all produce is trucked in from nearby agricultural regions, including the Central Valley.

The map in Figure 2 was created by gathering information from farm websites and their first point of sale or donation for unprocessed fruits and vegetables. To be included, the farm, market or both must be located within the county. The network represents 100% of the farms in San Francisco that direct market, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Figure 2 shows **174 farms with 362 market connections**.



## Spotlight Contributors

Despite having very little agricultural land, San Francisco is a hub for farmers who sell directly to consumers. San Francisco’s community food network draws from farm communities all over the region and the state. The majority of connections are through San Francisco’s 22 farmers’ markets, located throughout the city and offered every day of the week. The top five contributors to San Francisco’s community food

	Contributors
Farm	174
Farmers' Market	22
CSA Pickup	61
Restaurant	6
Institution	1

network are all farmers’ markets, highlighting the importance of farmers’ markets in connecting urban communities to agricultural regions. Many of the farmers’ markets in San Francisco are operated by nonprofit organizations that manage two or more markets in San Francisco Bay Area. The **Ferry Plaza Farmers’ market** is run by the Center for Urban Education on Sustainable Food (CUESA), established in 1994. CUESA and the Ferry Plaza Farmers’ market are based out of the Ferry Building in San Francisco’s business district. CUESA’s mission is to educate people about sustainable food through their long-running farmers’ market on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. CUESA also runs an education program for children and adults, with programs like Foodwise Kids and seasonal events that connect the restaurant/bar industry with producers throughout the region. The **Clement Street Farmers’ market** and **Stonestown Farmers’ market** are both run by the Agricultural Institute of Marin (AIM). AIM has supported local farmers in the Bay Area for 35 years and runs eight farmers’ markets throughout the region. Their mission is to “educate the public about the health, environmental and economic impacts of eating locally grown food directly from farmers and to connect and support communities and local and regional food systems so the public can access healthy and sustainably-grown food.” The **Heart of the City Farmers’ market** takes place three days a week in San Francisco’s United Nations Plaza and has been independently run by constituent farmers since 1981. Heart of the City is the largest farmers’ market food-assistance program in the nation, taking in \$1 million a year in food assistance vouchers and credits and serving 20,000 customers at each market. The Heart of the City market is located in a neighborhood without a nearby grocery store, providing the only access to fresh produce for residents of the Civic Center and Tenderloin neighborhoods. The **Inner Sunset Farmers’ market** is operated by the Pacific Coast Farmers’ market Association (PCFMA). PCFMA was established in 1988 to “connect California farmers to their local communities,” and is the largest operator of farmers’ markets on the West Coast, managing over 50 markets in the region. San Francisco has a reputation for being a city full of farm-to-table restaurants, however restaurants make up only 3% of the total connections in this network. This is likely due to many restaurants not advertising connections to farms on their websites. While many restaurants use the term “farm-to-table” to describe their cuisine, there is further opportunity to support small farmers and their families by showcasing farms, allowing diners to have a deeper sense of connection to their food and how it is grown.

## Take Away

Agricultural and food workers are now eligible for coronavirus vaccines. Protecting those who grow, package, distribute, sell and serve food helps protect us all. Learn more about food safety during coronavirus at [https://ucanr.edu/Coronavirus\\_and\\_COVID-19](https://ucanr.edu/Coronavirus_and_COVID-19). Get the word out to your food system. While you are at it, use your purchasing power to advocate for greater equity in your food system and learn from the network of growers and retailers which policies can help support the environment, farmworkers, and fellow eaters.

Importantly, San Franciscans are impacted by policy decisions made about farming and agriculture throughout the state, and can use their voices to speak out in support of farming and agricultural policies they want to see implemented. Consider supporting organizations like the Community Alliance with Family Farmers and the California Alliance of Farmers' markets (more info: [farmersmarketsalliance.org](http://farmersmarketsalliance.org)) that have a long history of working to preserve California's productive farmland, share its bounty and showcase its beauty.