

Shasta County Community Food Guide

This guide maps the community food network in Shasta County. We also provide information about sustainable farming practices in the county and how to support local producers.

A community food system is one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution, and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of a particular place (Garrett and Feenstra, 1999). Shasta County farms engage with their community through farmers' markets, farm-led food hubs, community-supported agriculture (CSAs), and locally-owned restaurants. In addition, EBT users can obtain fresh, locally grown food through the county's certified seasonal farmers' markets. This inclusion of lower-income consumers in supporting local farms highlights one of the many values of a community food system.

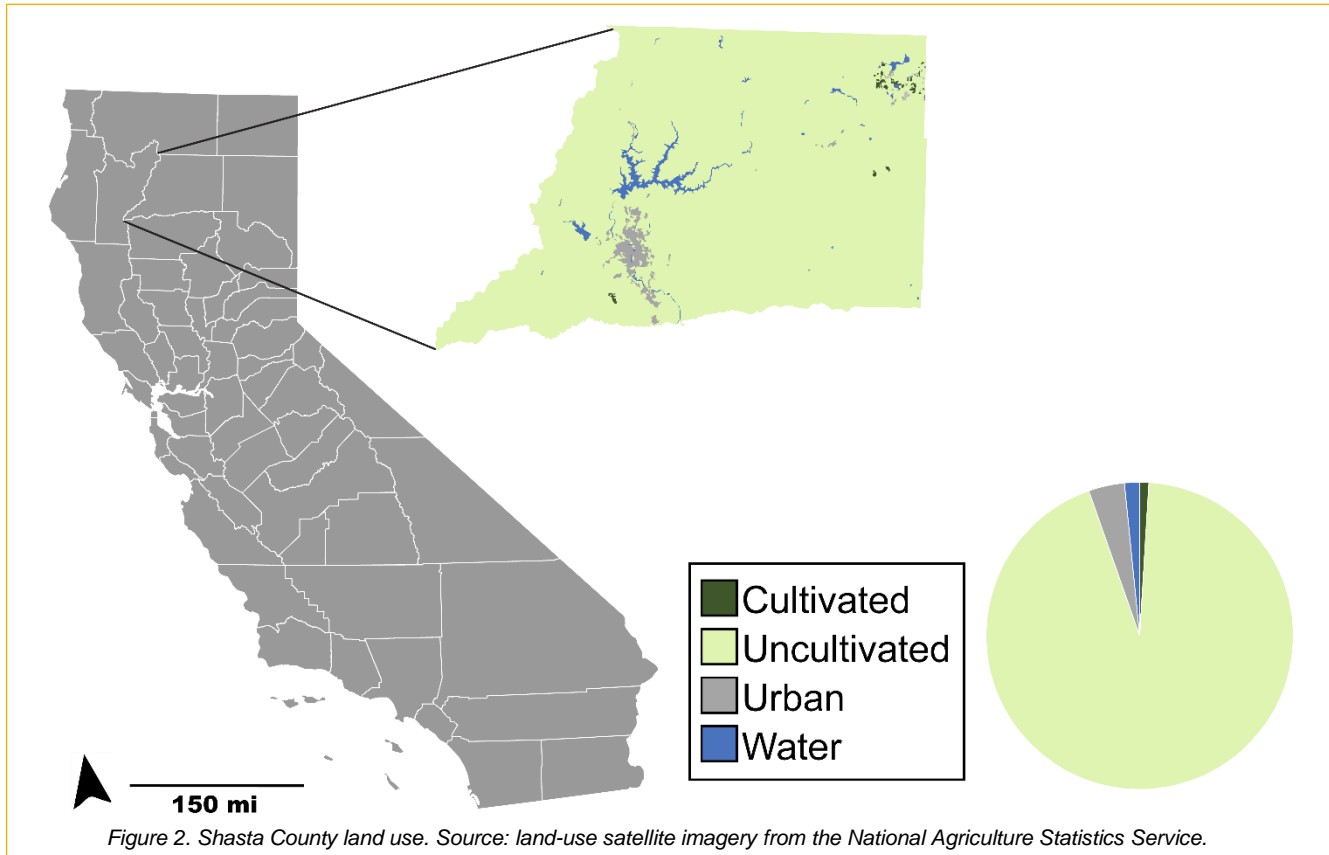
This food guide describes the transparent market connections within Shasta County's local food system. Such connections provide information about the most central farms and markets as well as how to support the overall food network and the many people involved with it. With this knowledge, engaged community members can work to expand community support for farms and businesses that provide locally sourced food. Such support is especially needed during the COVID-19 pandemic as marginalized communities and essential workers have been impacted by rising rates of food insecurity.

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



Land and Population

Shasta County is located in north-central California. According to the 2020 Census Bureau, the county is home to 182,155 people, with about 94,000 residents in Redding, the most populous city. Of the county's 2,462,525 acres, 12% is farmland or pasture (2017, Census of Agriculture). The top 5 crops by landcover in Shasta County are other hay/non-alfalfa, alfalfa, winter wheat, walnuts, and olives. By revenue, the top five farming products are cattle, other animal products, grains, other crops and hay, and fruits. There are 1,337 farms in the county; 1% of farms sell organically; and 13% of farms sell directly to consumers (2017, Census of Agriculture). Additionally, there were 25,910 food-insecure people in Shasta county (around 14.5%) in 2019.



Methods

The data collected to create this guide were found through internet searches of farms and markets that advertised their connections through farmers' markets, restaurants, food banks, grocery stores, and other outlets. It is important to note that many farms do not have websites or do not showcase their marketing outlets. The data we present is not the full number of farms or markets involved in the food system, but does highlight the farms and markets that advertise their connections online. Our network shows 103 farms in Shasta County selling directly to markets, compared to the USDA's 2012 census count of 263 direct-sale farms. The network contains a total of **132 farms and 84 markets with 286 connections between them.**

Shasta County's Community Food Network

Farms in Shasta County sell to various locations such as restaurants, grocery stores, farmers' markets, etc. Most of the advertised connections to farm products (22%) were through on-site farm sales. Shasta County is fairly unique in offering many on-farm venues for engaging with the local food system. Farmers' market sales followed, represented by 21% of connections, and grocery stores made up 19% of the total connections. In Figure 3 (top), the spatial representation of Shasta County displays the marketing across California. Most Shasta County farms sell their goods regionally to the community, though the overall network spans nearly half of northern California.

Identifying local connections can highlight ways to increase community engagement and provide more policy support for local food access. As the network image shows, farms and markets tend to specialize in a marketing typology, but there is diversity, which may allow farms (or markets) to pivot food supply should stores close or other disruptions in the region necessitate rapid shifts in marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic tested such pivots as restaurants scaled back and grocery stores scaled up in supply temporarily.

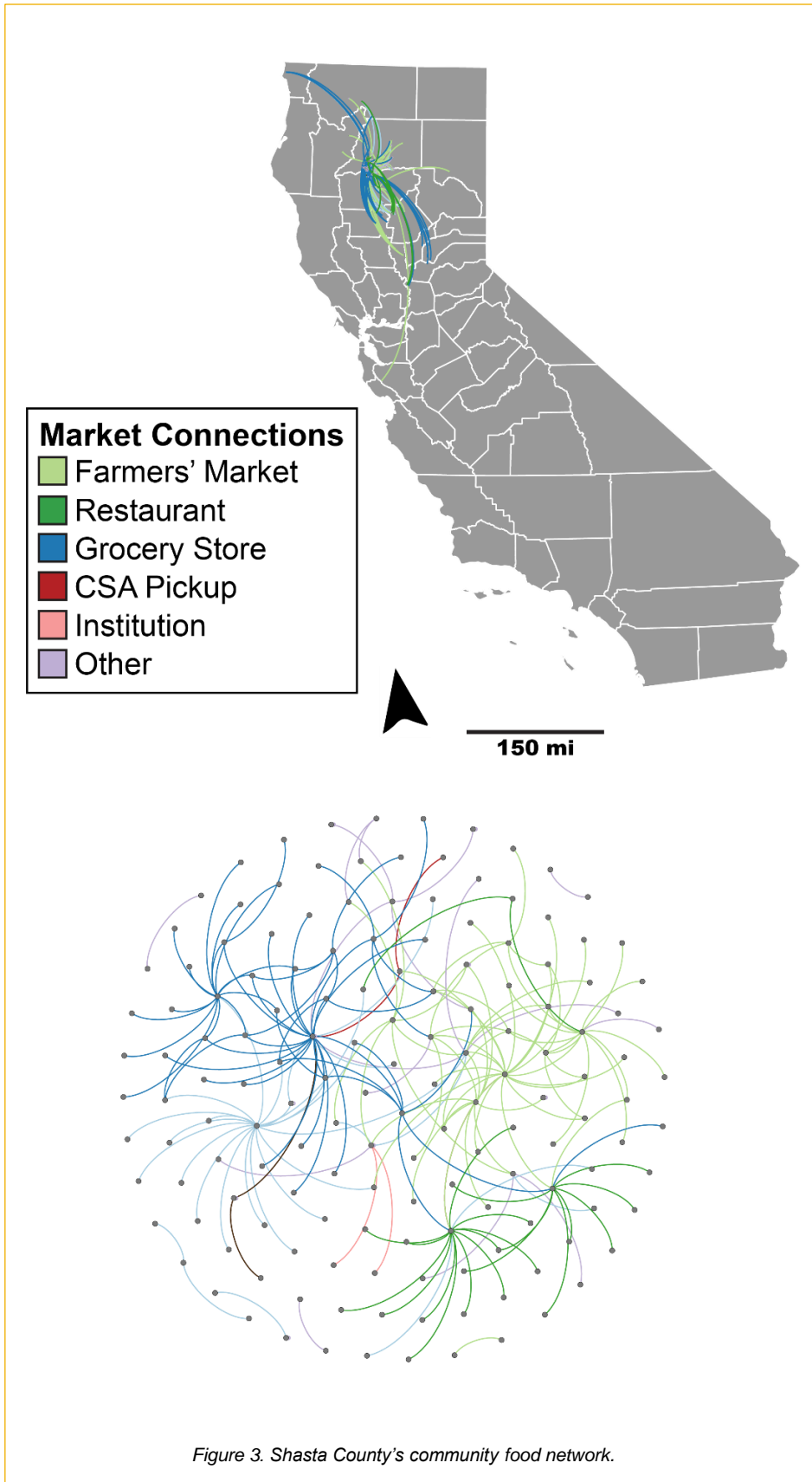


Figure 3. Shasta County's community food network.

Spotlight Contributors

The most central locations in Shasta County's community food system include farmers' markets, farms, and food hubs. The most populous city in the county, Redding, has a Saturday **farmers market**. The market is organized under the **Shasta Growers Association** and aims to support their community farmers and makers to provide the county with locally sourced foods and goods. Next most central to the network is **Duivenvoorden Farms**, located in Anderson, CA. This family-owned dairy farm in Shasta County sells milk to restaurants, grocery stores, and other farms within the county and beyond. The farm has a variety of on-site events that include other farmers and makers. **Hooker Creek Farm**, located in Cottonwood, CA, is another family-owned farm that sells honey, pasture-raised pork, poultry, and duck eggs. **Little Sprouts Micro-Farm** sells microgreens and edible flowers in the Redding region. They are a locally-owned urban farm with certified organic and chemical-free seeds and products. The farm provides CSA boxes, online sales, restaurant sales, and sales through regional farmers' markets. Their CSA boxes feature their own produce as well as goods from nearby farms. Little Sprouts Micro-Farm also helped found the **Gather NorCal** market in Redding, CA. The market provides more exposure for local farms, ranches, and other producers in Shasta County and the surrounding area. Another central hub in the food system is **The Farm Ground**, a dairy farm located in Shasta County that has the primary mission of providing an opportunity for smaller farmers and local businesses to sell and display their hard work and dedication. Another location with a similar mission is **Field to Fork Tehama**. It is located near Red Bluff, CA, and is a family-owned business that organizes CSA boxes with local produce from farms in the area. They aim to build community and embrace local agriculture. A grocery store in Redding called **Orchard Nutrition Center** works to sell products from local farms. A variety of farms found in the data were connected to this market. Another grocery store central to the network is **Country Organics** in Redding. They work to build a healthier community by providing healthy local organic food. Their store collaborates with other farms local to the area. Although not as central to the network, it is essential to highlight producers that focus on food equity and community involvement. **Inwood Community Farm** is a non-profit farm whose primary mission is to provide sustainable community produce in Shasta County. They work to give free food and goods made from the farm to individuals that need it most. Their mission is very impactful for undersupported and lower-income folks. **Amos Fairy Farm** is a new beekeeping, honey production, apiculture, and farm pollinating business in Shasta County. They are an LGBTQIA+ owned business that works to sell their goods to community members. They also sell beautiful bee brooches!

Contributors	
Farm	132
Grocery Store	30
Restaurant	20
Farmers' Market	20
Other	14

It is also essential to include and support the individuals that work hard to place food on our tables. Farmworkers are the backbone of the agricultural industry, but their work largely goes unappreciated. Without farmworkers, our food system would not even exist! A majority of farmworkers are immigrants, Latinx, and lower-income. Although there are no farmworker-specific organizations in Shasta county, there are additional resources and events that can work to help and support this population of hardworking and amazing individuals. **The Shasta Beloved Community** is an inclusive, social-oriented grassroots movement organization that works to provide unity to Shasta County through various community events. This organization has worked to create and celebrate Cesar Chavez Day by showcasing Latinx culture and providing drive-through donations to support farmworkers. **Shasta County Citizens Advocating Respect (SCCAR)** is another community organizing group that works to promote social justice, equal opportunity, and to bring awareness of the needs and concerns of Shasta county individuals. Organizations like these are fundamental to providing equity and a safe space in the county.

Take Away

To help support Shasta County's local food network, use your purchasing power to support their local farms and markets. This support positively influences the environment, farmworkers, and many other interconnected influences. To learn more about food safety during COVID, use this link to UCANR:

https://ucanr.edu/Coronavirus_and_COVID-19/. Additionally, you can support organizations such as local non-profits and food banks, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF.org), and the California Alliance of Farmers' Markets (farmersmarketsalliance.org), which have a long history of working to preserve California's productive farmland, shares its bounty and showcase its beauty.