



# GROW

*your own*

# FOOD

Food Systems



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## SUMMARY

Access to healthy food is essential to every family's well-being -- yet **roughly 34% of low-income Angelenos live more than a half mile from fresh food**. In order to build a more sustainable, self-sufficient city, we need to increase the amount of food we produce locally -- which will help improve food security for our communities and minimize the harmful environmental impacts associated with importing food from long distances to our homes.

## BENEFITS

- Save money on groceries, eat healthier meals, and create healthier families and communities.
- Minimize the emissions associated with importing food from far away sources.
- Improve the beauty of your home and community by planting edible gardens.
- Boost your mental health by spending more time outside.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION:

## Participate in free workshops

Participate in free urban gardening workshops provided by LA Sanitation & Environment (LASAN), or watch an educational video to hone your skills. To learn more, go to [Lacitysan.org/compostworkshops](https://Lacitysan.org/compostworkshops) or call Customer Care at (800) 773-2489.

- To prevent the spread of COVID-19, LASAN has suspended in-person workshops until further notice. LASAN – in collaboration with Horticulturist Steve List and Pacoima Beautiful – has launched an educational video series:

- [Part 1: History and Significance of Victory Gardens](#)

- [Part 2: Varieties of Garden Vegetables](#)

- [Part 3: Vegetable Planting Tips](#)

**REMEMBER!** LASAN provides free mulch to Angelenos for your home gardening needs. Visit [Lacitysan.org/organics](https://Lacitysan.org/organics) to learn more.

## Learn to regrow vegetables

Many common vegetables are able to sprout again from vegetable scraps in your kitchen with the right care. Visit [Masterclass.com](https://Masterclass.com) to learn more. To find other ways to reduce your food waste, be sure to reference the “How to Reduce Your Food Waste” action guide.

## Consider applying

The Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones program provides vacant property owners with an opportunity to access reduced property taxes by allowing urban agriculture on their property for an initial period of five years. Applications are due annually the second week of October. [Visit Planning.LACity.org](https://Planning.LACity.org) to learn more.



## Volunteer

Volunteer with the LA Garden Council. Visit [Lagarden-council.org/get-involved/volunteer](https://Lagarden-council.org/get-involved/volunteer) to learn more.

## Host a contactless Crop Swap

- Participants can swap extra organic food and herbs with neighbors. Crop swaps are usually hosted in backyards, but are now encouraged to drop food off at a safe distance during the pandemic.
  - Look around your property for food that is growing. There may be fruit, vegetables, medicinal herbs, or other beneficial plants hidden out of sight.
  - Find ‘swappers’ online: Use the [Cropswap App](#) or find groups on Facebook and Nextdoor to swap with nearby neighbors.

# HELPFUL TIPS AND LINKS

Guide from the L.A. Food Policy Council:  
[L.A. Grown: A Guide to Selling Good Food in Los Angeles County for Urban Growers](#)

[Learn to Certify Your Garden as a Garden for Wildlife](#)

## Workforce Development Training

The **Safe Place for Youth** Community Garden Internship is an engaging and educational setting for youth to develop job skills that can be carried into related professions in the food industry. Visit [Safeplaceforyouth.org/community\\_garden](http://Safeplaceforyouth.org/community_garden) to learn more.

**Alma Backyard Farms'** training program focuses on restoring the lives of formerly incarcerated women and men through hands-on technical education in urban agriculture. Visit [Almabackyardfarms.com](http://Almabackyardfarms.com) to learn more.

# PARTNERS

Below are some L.A.-based organizations working in the urban tree space. If you know of other organizations that should be included, please email [sustainability@lacity.org](mailto:sustainability@lacity.org).

**City Plants'** mission is to grow a greener future for Los Angeles by engaging Angelenos to plant and care for trees throughout the City. You can request a free tree – including a fruit tree such as orange, plum, or avocado depending on time of year and availability. For an application visit [Cityplants.org/trees-for-your-apartment-or-hoa](http://Cityplants.org/trees-for-your-apartment-or-hoa). Note, you will be responsible for watering your tree.



The **Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC)** works to create a local food system free from hunger, rooted in equity and access, supportive of farmers and food workers, and guided by principles of environmental stewardship and regeneration. LAFPC serves as a backbone organization for a network of over 400 organizations and agencies working for healthy, sustainable, and fair food.



LAFPC facilitates several Working Groups which act as subcommittees, each dedicated to furthering goals of the Good Food for All Agenda. LAFPC hosts the Urban Agriculture Working Group, which focuses on land use and access for urban agriculture, and successfully won the first urban agriculture program in the County and City of Los Angeles. To join one of their working groups, visit [Godfoodla.org/get-in-touch](http://Godfoodla.org/get-in-touch).

**Crop Swap LA** is a social enterprise aiming to lead the agricultural revolution, uniting the community by transforming unused spaces into productive vegetable gardens, creating green job training and sharing the abundance. Their evidence-based regenerative-organic farming methods and direct action aim to restore vitality and vibrancy to our earth, our community, and our economy. To learn more about the organization and participate in a crop swap, visit [Cropswapla.com](http://Cropswapla.com).



**Food Forward** collects fresh fruits and vegetables that would normally go to waste from backyard fruit trees, public orchards, farmers markets, and the downtown Los Angeles Wholesale Produce Market. 100% of the produce recovered is donated to hunger relief agencies across 8 counties in Southern California. Have a backyard fruit tree with too much fruit? Visit [Foodforward.org](http://Foodforward.org) to donate your excess fruit.