



METRO CARING

Metro Caring is an anti-hunger organization located in Denver, Colorado, that has provided food and advocacy for Denver residents for nearly fifty years. Metro Caring offers innovative programming in Healthy Foods Access, Nutrition Education and Cooking Classes, ID Procurement, Urban Gardening and Agriculture, and Community Organizing and Development to not only address hunger, but broader social and wealth inequities.

BACKGROUND

When market forces are allowed to dictate access to basic human needs- like food- our food system becomes a vehicle for health, economic, and environmental inequities. To address this, Metro Caring is leading an effort to establish a Community Food Utility that moves access to nutritious and culturally rooted foods to a public good.

As a utility, we can ensure that our food system is accessible, equitable, and centered on human dignity, not profit. To explore food as a utility, Metro Caring has launched a pre-development phase focused on the Universal Basic Food program (UBF).

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this capstone project is to contribute to Metro Caring's ongoing research alongside community to better inform both a future UBF program, and Metro Caring's existing food and program offerings.

Our capstone team collected data through consumer surveys, conversations with producers, community events, and a landscape analysis.

Each of these approaches works towards deepening Metro Caring's understanding of how to expand their local food procurement and how community members engage with food.


UNIVERSAL BASIC FOOD PROGRAM

UBF is one of five core programs within the CFU, and would involve high-quality, culturally connected foods being made freely available at select locations near public transportation.




METHODS

PRODUCER SURVEY




The goal of the producer conversations is to increase Metro Caring's values-aligned food procurement by better understanding producers' practices, values, and barriers to expanding their market streams.

CONSUMER SURVEY




Our capstone team distributed surveys to community members to gain insight into their current food purchasing decisions and values.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS



We collected secondary data on Colorado producer directories to enhance our awareness of existing local procurement resources and the data currently being collected on Colorado farms and ranches.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Our capstone team worked at the annual Denver HarvestSHARE festival and weekly at Metro Caring's market to become more familiar with Metro Caring's programming and engage with community members.

DELIVERABLES

LOCAL FOOD PROCUREMENT CATALOGUE (LFPC)




The LFPC includes the landscape analysis as well as a compiled list of local producers with whom Metro Caring is developing procurement relationships, incorporating information gathered during our producer conversations.

ArcGIS MAP



This final deliverable will be a map of Colorado with data on the producers we have had conversations with over the course of this capstone, as well as producers Metro Caring is already procuring from.

STORYMAP






Our StoryMap will provide a narrative on UBF and serve as a public-facing resource about this program. Our pre-development research findings from the capstone project, including an overview of survey results, will also be incorporated as a way to share out data.



MASA SEED FOUNDATION

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