

Eastern Shore Food Lab

Strategic Plan Impact Summary

Our Mission

Promoting nourishing foods for humans.

Our Vision

The Eastern Shore Food Lab optimizes personal and community health by drawing upon the dietary past that built us as a species. We research, reimagine, and share strategies that meet and exceed our biological and cultural needs. We transition culture by strengthening the ties between environment, society, family, and ourselves through food as we address issues of sustainability, food access, and dietary and social health. We provide a model that institutions within any region can emulate, achieving zero waste by conscientious design and a commitment to revitalize human and ecological communities with every action.

We'll know we're making progress as we:

I. Create a movement

- a. **Empower people to practice and share our skills, knowledge, and ethos.**
 - i. Enable people to take charge of their health through food.
 - ii. Help people to become agents of systemic change.
 - iii. Tap the talents of chefs and restaurateurs to advance our mission.
 - iv. Support healing in people to rebuild their lives through food.
 - v. Train a corps of volunteers to radiate our practices outward.
- b. **Promote the benefits of nutrient density, bioavailability, and food variety.**
 - i. Transform the food system with corporate and non-profit partners.
 - ii. Build a vanguard for school lunch reform.
 - iii. Encourage healthy lifestyles and informed food choices.
 - iv. Elevate community health and appreciation of our shared lives.
- c. **Build a culture that reinforces core values.**
 - i. Show values through compelling stories, rituals, and symbols.
 - ii. Empower people to reconnect with what it means to be human.
 - iii. Establish credibility as a wellspring of human reclamation.
- d. **Mobilize community to solve problems of food security.**
 - i. Radiate an ethos of right livelihood into the community.
 - ii. Inspire individuals and organizations to help end malnutrition.
 - iii. Make food access a matter of conscience and action.
 - iv. Help people live their values by supporting us.
- e. **Position our approach as a model for communities around the world.**
 - i. Earn income to extend reach and meet triple-bottom line goals.
 - ii. Sustain work through business ventures and corporate partnerships.
 - iii. Provide resources to groups seeking to replicate the ESFL model.

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II. Preserve prehistoric and fading foodways for future generations

- a. **Conduct ethnographic research important to our dietary future.**
 - i. Protect the health of all people, including future generations.
- b. **Share our research to reach the largest audiences possible.**
 - i. Maintain hundreds of webpages of useful, original content.
- c. **Provide context for the continued relevance of ancestral technologies.**
 - i. Create stories based on patterns of gathering, cooking, and eating.
- d. **Advocate appropriate food even when it leads in unfamiliar directions.**
 - i. Showcase foods that prompted evolutionary change in our anatomy.
- e. **Host an annual food summit with partner institutions.**
 - i. Position Washington College as a leader of human food advocacy.

III. Make the healthiest and most sustainable food the most affordable

- a. **Demonstrate authority in the food safety and policymaking processes.**
 - i. Combine advocacy with programs on the ground to gain traction.
 - ii. Work with food safety experts to change policy on traditional foods.
 - iii. Brief the media and national and local policymakers on food issues.
 - iv. Gain a reputation for producing authoritative and accessible material.
 - v. Play an important role in influencing public policies and programs.
- b. **Create new ways to access food supporting social and ecological justice.**
 - i. Promote scalable food production, from homes to communities.
 - ii. Leverage the resources of government through policy advocacy.
 - iii. Showcase and promote the ethical use of wild foods in a diverse diet.
 - iv. Build capacity of leaders to support the distribution of healthy food.
 - v. Expand economic opportunities for community residents.
 - vi. Show our support for local food systems.
 - vii. Examine what food security looks like at family and regional levels.
 - viii. Promote educational reform initiatives connecting people with food.
 - ix. Create model ordinances for compost and backyard livestock.
- c. **Share the products of our work across economic barriers.**
 - i. Offer culinary training and apprenticeship to all segments of society.
 - ii. Make high-quality food accessible among low-income households.
 - iii. Design and implement a Community-Supported Kitchen.
- d. **Create policy solutions that win lasting economic and social support.**
 - i. Show how access to human food can revitalize local economies.
 - ii. Oppose ill-conceived policies in concert with proposed alternatives.
- e. **Promote alternatives to harmful food products and production methods.**
 - i. Phase out unhealthy fats and oils at Washington College.
 - ii. Promote distribution of nutrient-dense and waste-free snacks.
 - iii. Advocate for awareness and avoidance of addictive food additives.
- f. **Meet the needs of our community today.**
 - i. Connect with wellness program for faculty, staff, and students.

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- ii. Support people recovering from sugar, alcohol, and other addictions.
- iii. Monitor and optimize health of the Washington College community.
- iv. Link ESFL research with seasonal menu offerings in the Dining Hall.

IV. **Champion zero waste ethics**

- a. **Work toward net-zero energy use and a carbon neutral footprint.**
 - i. Optimize daily operations to reduce energy expenditures.
 - ii. Explore methods of offsetting carbon emissions.
 - iii. Prioritize food and personnel transportation that avoids fossil fuels.
- b. **Promote community composting and zero waste cooking education.**
 - i. Compost food waste to remediate and build soil for food production.
 - ii. Close food production loops to economize nutrient cycling.
 - iii. Utilize every aspect of food via root-to-stalk / nose-to-tail methods.
- c. **Implement a procurement policy to lead toward self-sufficiency.**
 - i. Demonstrate frugality, thrift, and conscientious ingredient sourcing.
- d. **Promote safe, durable goods in the home kitchen / food service industry.**
 - i. Advocate for reduction of plastic bottles and beverage containers.
 - ii. Develop alternatives to single-use disposable packaging of food.
 - iii. Adhere to a purchasing policy that avoids disposable packaging.
 - iv. Promote alternatives to yogurt cups, soft drinks, and power bars.
 - v. Promote reusable cups for beverages.
 - vi. Use cleaning products that avoid waste and environmental toxicity.
- e. **Work with local businesses and institutions to avoid food waste.**
 - i. Share local resources to avoid overconsumption and overproduction.
 - ii. Solicit donations of food products that might otherwise go to waste.
 - iii. Promote food waste collection for composting at public events.
 - iv. Promote use of compost in public projects and low-income housing.

V. **Research and promote ethical methods of food production**

- a. **Promote edible landscaping guided by permaculture design processes.**
 - i. Document, research, and promote functional plant polycultures.
 - ii. Promote water conservation and fertilizer/pesticide avoidance.
 - iii. Emulate the tendency toward food abundance in the natural world.
 - iv. Create examples of food access that support ecosystem health.
 - v. Demonstrate alternative strategies to conventional agriculture.
 - vi. Ethically work with insects, chickens, pigs, and other livestock.
 - vii. Conduct research on urban gardening and broad scale farming.
 - viii. Help nurseries to prioritize sales of multifunctional plants.
 - ix. Develop models of regenerative food production and distribution.
 - x. Produce ethically grown food with a focus on nutrient density.
 - xi. Promote regenerative households and local economic exchange.
- b. **Ignite ecotourism in the region celebrating food security.**

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- i. Guide campus and community edible landscaping and signage.
 - ii. Work with government agencies to develop and share research.
 - iii. Recognize food producers that restore soil and wildlife habitat.
 - iv. Recognize existing programs that advocate responsible land use.
 - v. Design edible landscapes with landowners and government.
- c. **Become known for the diverse and influential nature of our work.**
- i. Share findings in social media, podcasts, and video/television.
 - ii. Produce reports, newsletters, fact sheets, and educational materials.
 - iii. Seek publication in books and peer-reviewed and popular journals.
 - iv. Give presentations with professional papers, posters, and lectures.
 - v. Be the reputable source for safe use of traditional foodways.

VI. Pioneer a powerful paradigm of food education

- a. **Create a completely new culture of eating.**
- i. Unite people from diverse economic and geographical backgrounds.
 - ii. Translate what we do in the ESFL to a home kitchen.
 - iii. Help people connect our work to their everyday lives.
 - iv. Offer public programs and professional development for educators.
 - v. Host workshops for families.
 - vi. Implement a K-through-gray environmental educational program.
- b. **Educate students poised to become the next generation of leaders.**
- i. Create a food studies academic program at Washington College.
 - ii. Promote horticultural credentials and wild food expertise.
 - iii. Build a pipeline of leaders committed to food and ecological justice.
 - iv. Provide an engaging place for youth to go during after-school hours.
 - v. Organize after-school and school vacation programs.
 - vi. Place students as participants in the living landscape.
 - vii. Host student interns, classes, and community events.
 - viii. Train students to grow and prepare the most nutritious food possible.
- c. **Create space within traditional institutions from which to reshape them.**
- i. Develop scalable programs geared for distribution in schools.
 - ii. Institute programs targeted at middle-school students.
 - iii. Partner with organizations to implement our replicable processes.
- d. **Address bioregional food security through education**
- i. Establish multifunctional outdoor learning spaces in diverse venues.
 - ii. Provide horticultural training focused in edible landscaping.
 - iii. Train students to design resilient food production systems.
 - iv. Introduce microlivestock/livestock capacities at Washington College.
 - v. Support the development of edible schoolyards.
- e. **Serve as an aspirational model for educational institutions**
- i. Establish a stable, sustainable, and flexible funding base.
 - ii. Write business plans for program ideas.
 - iii. Create lasting relationships with students, donors, and participants.