

UPDATE: NOV 2022

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# IMPROVING FOOD ACCESS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY



Urban Food Equity  
Center for Community Health  
Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute  
University of California, San Diego

**UC San Diego**  
ALTMAN CLINICAL & TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**Center for  
Community Health**

# Overview

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- UC San Diego ACTRI CCH
- About the Team
- Food Justice & Dimensions of Food Access
- Asset-based Approach
- Nutrition Pantry Program
- San Diego Urban Growers' Collaborative
- Live Well Community Market Program
- Summary



**UC San Diego**

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Center for  
Community Health



[ucsdcommunityhealth.org](https://ucsdcommunityhealth.org)



## Urban Food Equity

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## Improve Food Access by Building Upon Existing Neighborhood- Level Food Assets

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We support small grocery markets, urban farms, farmers' markets, food pantries, and community members in building an inclusive, equitable, and economically thriving local food landscape.

Foodshed Small Farm Distro at Mt Hope Community Garden  
Southeastern San Diego, 2021

## Director

- Practitioner, researcher, advocate, collaborator, lifelong learner, all things food-oriented, first generation American and college graduate, mom, and partner.
- Joined UCSD CCH in 2014
- MSc. in Food Systems & Society in Oregon
- 15 yrs food access and health equity work in California
- 17+ yrs community engagement work

**Elle Mari**

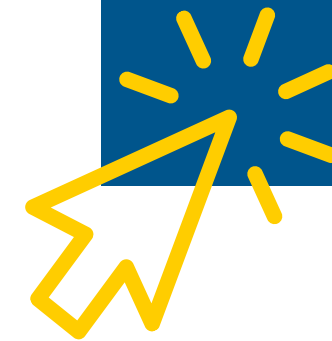


*"In our work and in our living, we must recognize that difference is a reason for celebration and growth, rather than a reason for destruction." -Audre Lorde*

# Community Food Project Manager

- Organizer, advocate, mother, lifetime learner
- Backyard gardener
- Climate ambassador
- Food justice leader
- 10+ yrs community engagement experience
- Life-long San Diego resident
- Joined UCSD CCH in 2020

Lakisha McZeal

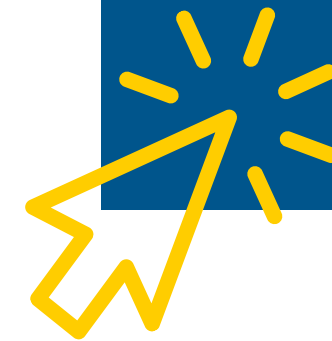


*"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." -MLK*

## Community Food Project Coordinator

- Organizer, researcher, lifelong learner, advocate, partner, first-generation college graduate
- UCSD MPH '23
- Alliance Healthcare Foundation Resident Leader
- UCSD Youth Advisory Council Alumni
- 10+ years community engagement

# Nghi Dang



*"Be the change you want to see in the world" - Mahatma Gandhi*



UC San Diego Youth Advisory Council  
Center City Market Makeover in City Heights, 2019

**"Food justice is the right of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, ability, religion, or community. [It] Includes: freedom from exploitation; ensures the rights of workers to fair labor practices; values-based: respect, empathy, pluralism, valuing knowledge; Racial justice: dismantling of racism and white privilege; [and] gender equity."**

*-Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, 2012*

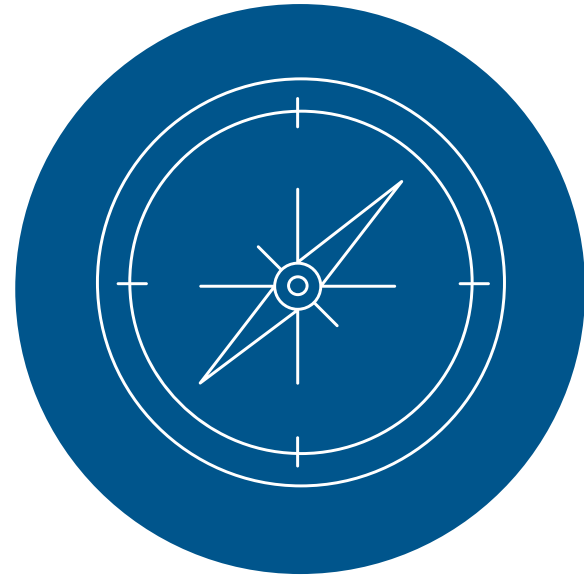
# Dimensions of Food Access

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## **Availability:**

Is the food supply physically here? Is what I want on the shelf?



## **Accessibility:**

Where is the food grown, sold, or provided?  
Can I get there?  
Do they deliver?



## **Affordability:**

How much does the food cost? Do I have enough money?



## **Accommodation:**

Are my needs met here?  
Can I use SNAP EBT or WIC? Can I read the signs or speak to someone in my language?



## **Acceptability:**

Is this quality food?  
Is this relevant to my culture, diet, health, values, and preferences?

Second Chance Youth Garden, Encanto, 2021



What does "**asset**" mean?

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What are examples of **food** assets in your neighborhood?

- 3 urban farms
- 3 engaged and active CBOs
- 25+ small food markets
- 6+ supermarkets
- Mobile farmers' market route stop in development
- Public food hall in development
- Affordable housing with community garden
- Supportive municipal government
- Supportive coalition of partners
- Strong civic engagement and resident leadership
- Diverse and multilingual resident base

# National City



Olivewood Gardens, Donation-based Farm Stand, 2021

	State	Counties	Zip Codes
	California	San Diego County	91950
Ever diagnosed with diabetes (18+) 2018	10.6% (10.2% - 11.0%) 29,698,600	9.9% (9.8% - 10.0%) 2,434,600	14.3% (13.9% - 14.5%) 45,500
Fair or poor health (18-64) 2018	20.1% (18.6% - 21.6%) 23,991,800	16.7% (16.6% - 16.8%) 1,969,600	25.1% (24.9% - 25.4%) 38,400
Living in poverty (<100%FPL) (0-17) 2018	19.3% - 9,186,800	15.9% - 798,900	27.6% - 16,100
Living in poverty (<100%FPL) (18+) 2018	12.4% - 29,698,600	11.2% - 2,434,600	15.8% - 45,500
> Low-income food insecurity (18+) 2018	6.4% (5.8% - 7.0%) 29,698,600	5.7% (5.5% - 5.7%) 2,434,600	9.3% (9.0% - 9.5%) 45,500
Obese (BMI ≥ 30) (18+) 2018	26.8% (25.6% - 28.1%) 29,698,600	24.6% (24.3% - 24.7%) 2,434,600	33.7% (33.1% - 34.2%) 45,500
Overweight or obese (BMI ≥ 85th percentile) (12-17) 2018	33.4% (22.7% - 44.0%) 3,142,100	30.3% (29.1% - 31.2%) 259,000	36.6% (35.4% - 38.4%) 5,300

This is part  
of the story,  
but  
not the  
entire  
narrative for  
National  
City.

# City Heights

**Unique**, densely populated, **culturally diverse** neighborhood, with over **30 languages** spoken, **numerous foodways**, low economic prosperity, **food insecurity**, and significant **health disparities** contributing to **poor health outcomes**.



Center City Market Makeover, City Heights, 2019

Again, very important to understand the disparities in City Heights but this doesn't tell us the full story.

	State	Counties	Zip Codes
	California	San Diego	92105
Ever diagnosed with diabetes (18+) 2018	10.6% (10.2% - 11.0%) 29,698,600	9.9% (9.8% - 10.0%) 2,434,600	11.8% (11.5% - 12.0%) 42,000
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# Asset-based Understanding of City Heights' Food Landscape

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- 82 small retailers with staple foods
- 12 yro farmers' market and 3 pop-up farm stands
- New community farm retail hub
- 3 community gardens
- 5 urban farms/market gardens
- Many restaurants offering diverse delicious cuisine
- Multiple emerging women and refugee or immigrant owned food enterprises
- Active promotora and resident groups

This work is part of Live Well San Diego: Healthy Works and is implemented by UC San Diego Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute, Center for Community Health. Funded by USDA SNAP, an equal opportunity provider and employer. This work supports Live Well San Diego, the County's vision for a region that is Building Better Health, Living Safely, and Thriving. For more information, visit [www.LiveWellSD.org](http://www.LiveWellSD.org). Visit [www.CalFreshHealthyLiving.org](http://www.CalFreshHealthyLiving.org) for healthy tips.

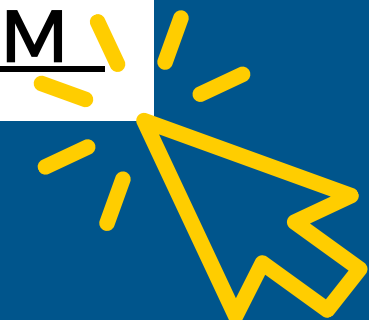


Rema Halal Foods, El Cajon, 2017  
UC San Diego Youth Advisory Council



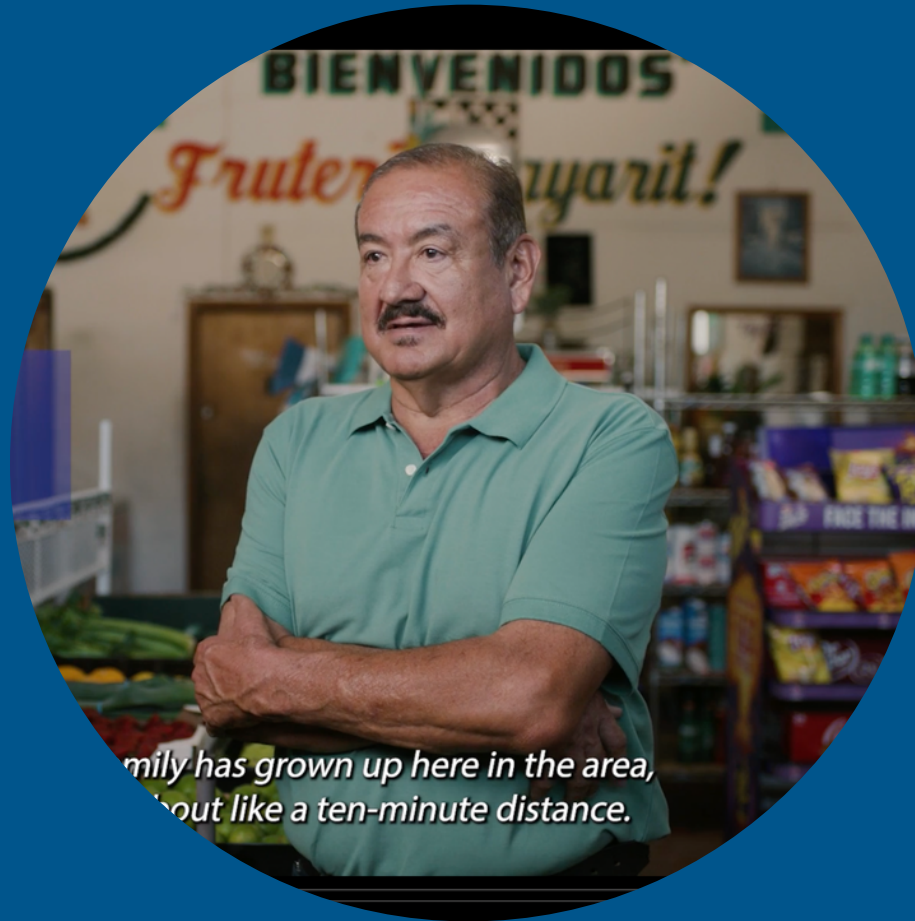
# BUILDING ON ASSETS: COMMUNITY MARKETS

LIVE WELL COMMUNITY MARKET PROGRAM



## Frutería Nayarit, Barrio Logan, 2022

Featured in upcoming film,  
*Fighting for Food Justice: San Diego  
Community Heroes*



New \$8,000  
energy efficient  
produce cooler  
and increased  
produce stocking.

# FRESH GARDEN MARKET



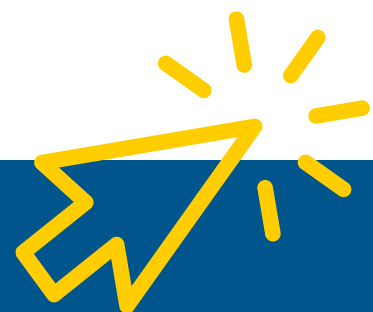
Fresh Garden Market & Project New Village, 2017



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# BUILDING ON ASSETS: FOOD PANTRIES



NUTRITION PANTRY PROGRAM

# Trauma-Informed Nutrition Security

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Supporting food pantry operators with practical, client-centered strategies.



Working with food distributions across San Diego County, emphasizing client dignity, trauma-informed practices, and providing clients with culturally appropriate, nourishing options.

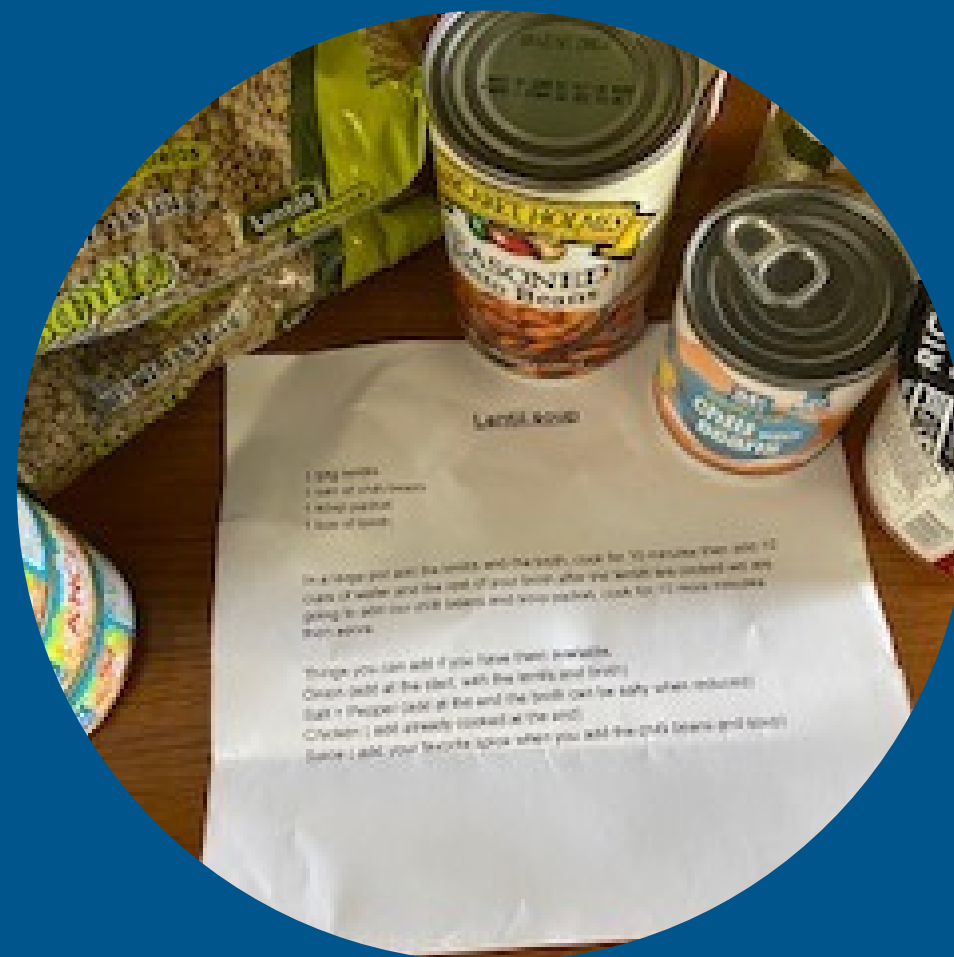


Fresh Fruit Swap, Fair @44 in City Heights

# IMPERIAL BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER PANTRY AND GARDEN REFRESH



# OCEAN BEACH LOAVES AND FISHES

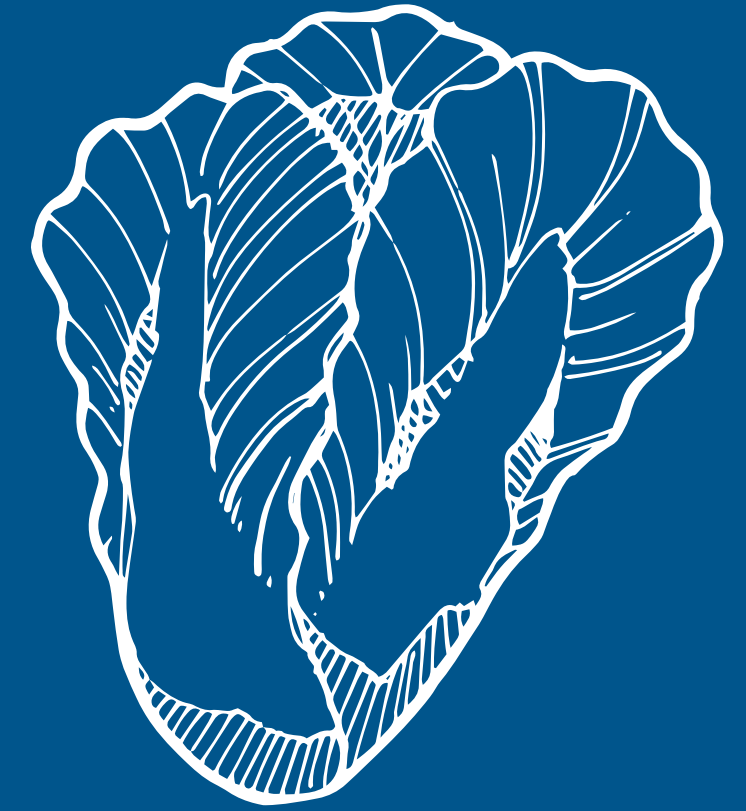


# Building on Assets: Urban Farms

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Cristina Juárez García, Farmer Co-Owner  
Pixca Farm  
Tijuana River Valley Regional Community Garden,  
2021

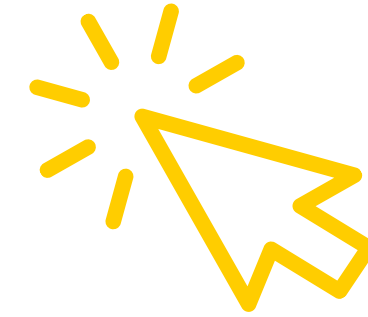


# URBAN AGRICULTURE

SAN DIEGO URBAN GROWERS' COLLABORATIVE



# San Diego Urban Growers' Collaborative



ASSESS SUPPLY,  
SKILLS, ASSETS,  
NEEDS



UNDERSTAND DEMAND &  
PROVIDE TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE & TRAINING



COLLABORATE & SUPPORT  
AGGREGATION &  
DISTRIBUTION



# Bridging Resource Gaps & Building Infrastructure

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Hernan Cavazos, Solidarity Farm & Foodshed Small Farm Distro, Pauma Valley Tribal Lands, 2020

## Invested \$125,000 in Walk-in Refrigeration Equipment in San Diego County Farms & Gardens

- WD Dickinson Farm, National City
- Wild Willow Farm, Tijuana River Valley, SD
- BCDI Community Roots Farm, Oceanside
- Solidarity Farm for Foodshed Small Farm Distro, Pauma Valley
- Pixca Farm, Tijuana River Valley, SD
- Project New Village, Mt Hope, SD
- Foodshed Hub, City Heights, SD
- Grow Eco Farm, Tijuana River Valley, SD
- Ranchito Milkway, Bonita
- Second Chance Youth Garden, Encanto, SD
- Quantum Microgreens, City Heights, SD
- Papa Joe Farm, Jamul
- Fred's Urban Farm, Spring Valley

# Project New Village Good Food District People Produce Mobile Farmers' Market



## Making Locally Grown Good Food Available to More Low-income Households in Communities of Color.



- Advising on development and launch of new mobile FM serving Greater Southeastern San Diego neighborhoods. Opened Sept 2022!
- Planning Southeastern food aggregation site in partnership with Foodshed Small Farm Distro to supply mobile FM.
- Providing operating capacity and infrastructure (e.g. cold storage) support to build and sustain Good Food District food justice agenda.

# Good Food Finder



## Find Good Food

Neighborhood



Price



POC-Owned & Operated



11 Results | [Clear](#)



### Chino Family Farm →

Rancho Santa Fe



DELIVERY

PRICE



### Community Roots Farm →

Cardiff, Carlsbad, Encinitas/  
Leucadia, Oceanside, Solana  
Beach



DELIVERY

PRICE



### Foodshed Small Farm Distro →

Cardiff, Carlsbad, City Heights,  
Encinitas, Hillcrest, Mission Hills,  
Mt Hope, Normal Heights, North  
Park(...)



DELIVERY

PRICE



### Garden Unidos, Blessing Bags →

Escondido, Oceanside

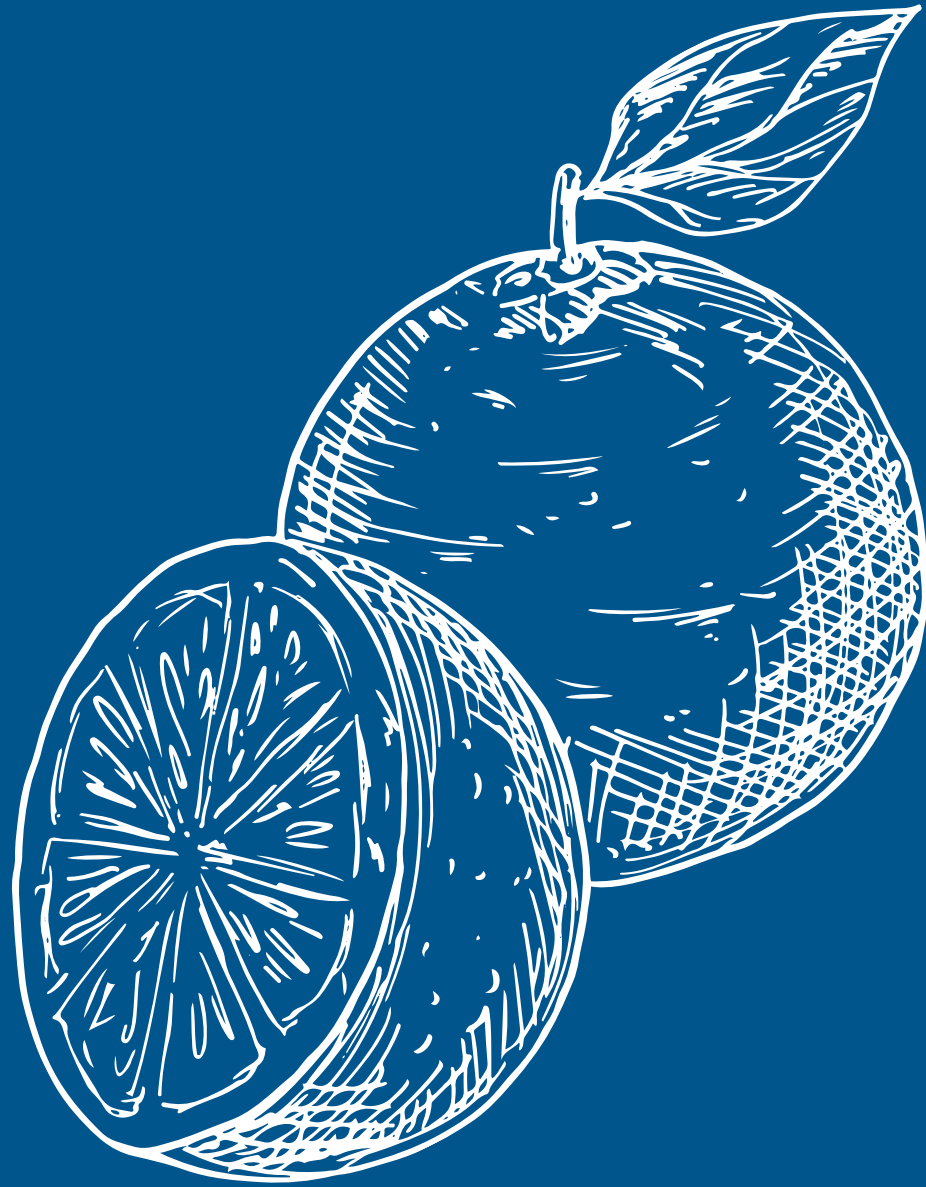


DELIVERY

PRICE

# Summary

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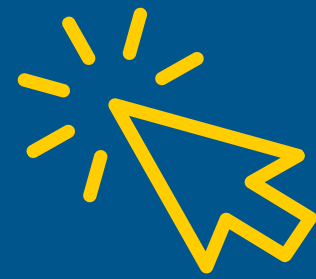
Starting from an **asset-based perspective** allows us the ability to **build and grow meaningful community partnerships to be in authentic service to residents, farmers, small businesses, and other stakeholders in our local food system to improve access to good food.** An **equitable and resilient community food system** is needed, deserved, and within reach.

This work contributes to addressing significant population health disparities by deeply engaging with local stakeholders in our urban food settings in San Diego County.

**ELLE MARI, DIRECTOR**  
Urban Food Equity  
Center for Community Health  
University of California, San Diego

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**WEBSITE**  
[ucsdcommunityhealth.org](https://ucsdcommunityhealth.org)



Thank you for your time!  
Be well.



Urban Food Equity Staff, Lakisha McZeal & Nghi Dang delivering Second Chance Youth Garden CSA in Encanto, 2021

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