



Cheryl Davila
Councilmember
District 2

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 9, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Cheryl Davila (Author)

Subject: Support Vision 2025 for Sustainable for Sustainable Food Policies

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt a Resolution Supporting Vision 2025 for Sustainable Food Policies
2. Join [San Francisco](#), [Chicago](#) and [Austin](#) in signing the [Milan Urban Food Policy Pact \(MUFPP\)](#) which includes forming an advisory body on sustainable food policies.
3. Support adoption of a Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing Policy as described by [Friends of the Earth](#) to replace 50% of the City's annual animal-based food procurement with plant-based food.
4. Short Term Referral to the City Manager to:
 - a. Track the amount of animal-based food replaced with plant-based food
 - b. Use Friends of the Earth's Municipal Guide to Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing for the procurement of plant-based food.

POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On February 8, 2021, the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity and Community Committee moved the item to Council with a qualified positive recommendation to take the following action:

1. Express support for the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP)
2. Refer aspects of the original item to the Community Health Commission (or future commission addressing public health) to take the following actions: a) Consult with appropriate City staff to evaluate the feasibility of altering food sources within the City's existing food service contracts - with a specific focus on the feasibility of replacing meat and dairy-based offerings with plant-based options - given contractor procurement practices and any federal or state nutrition requirements for seniors and other affected populations; and (b) Solicit input from potentially affected communities, particularly seniors, for their feedback on shifting to more plant-based foods through a short survey or other means; and
3. Adopt the resolution as amended. Vote: All Ayes.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In June, 2018 the City of Berkeley unanimously passed a Climate Emergency Declaration, then in September, 2018 passed the Resolution Establishing Green Monday. Berkeley should understand the impact of our food sector on the environment, sustainability of natural resources, health, and social equity. By adopting Vision 2025 for Sustainable Food Policies, Berkeley will

sign MUFPP and join C40 Cities in developing sustainable food systems through forming an advisory body with local activists, organizations, and business owners. Berkeley would join the C40 North America cities, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Montreal, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, San Francisco, Toronto, Vancouver, and Washington DC and more cities may follow suit. Adopting the Vision 2025, the City of Berkeley would be committed to making food purchasing decisions that protect animal welfare, environmental sustainability, and provide healthy food options. By adopting the proposed Vision, Berkeley would also pass Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing Policy and commit to replacing 50% of annual animal-based food purchasing with plant-based food.

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATIONS:

Berkeley City Council would receive policy recommendations from the established advisory body for increasing climate-friendly, healthy and sustainable plant-based food options. The City Council should evaluate and update contracts with food vendors.

BACKGROUND

According to MUFPP, our food choices are directly linked to our environmental, health and social wellbeing. What we put on our plates every day either contributes to, or harms our physical wellbeing, our local economy, and our global resources. Approximately, 80% of the U.S. population lives in urban areas.¹ This means that urban cities are responsible for a significant portion of the national food consumption, and with it, the environmental and social impacts of those food choices. As a result, the C40 cities like San Francisco, Chicago and Austin have signed MUFPP agreements in order to develop environment-friendly, healthy and socially equitable food policies.² The City of Berkeley has wisely adopted Green Monday and the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP). But there is certainly a need to develop broader policies for significant improvement. Vision 2025 is designed to achieve this significant change over the next five years without causing a financial burden to the City of Berkeley. In fact, could result in overall cost savings.

By adopting Vision 2025, the City would be agreeing to sign MUFPP developed with the support of international organizations including the United Nations Farm and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO). The MUFPP suggests forming an advisory committee that would include local activists, organizations, business owners and other stakeholders to propose sustainable food policies. The second action item under the resolution is to pass a Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing policy that requires the City to replace 50% of animal-based food procurement with plant-based food.

Globally, several agencies are reporting the devastating impacts of a meat- and dairy-based diet for our physical and environmental health. The UN FAO reports that animal agriculture is responsible for emitting 18% of our planet's total greenhouse gas (GHG).³ These numbers are larger than the total GHG emissions from fossil fuels burned by the global transportation sector. The agriculture sector is expected to contribute 70% of total allowable GHG emissions by 2050, risking the Paris Agreement.⁶ Livestock and poultry account for more than 60% of the global

agricultural GHG emissions and, therefore, addressing the emissions from animal agriculture is crucial in order to meet the Paris Agreement.^{3,6} According to the consumption-based GHG inventory described in Berkeley's Climate Action Plan, the food sector contributes more than 7 metric tons of CO₂ Eq. per household.⁵ Most of these emissions are from animal products like meat and dairy.⁵ The GHG emissions from meat consumption alone is more than the combined natural gas emissions in the City of Berkeley.

The negative impact of producing meat and dairy goes beyond global warming. In a drought-affected state, the average Californian consumes 1,500 gallons of water, and 50% of it is associated with meat and dairy consumption.⁷ According to UN FAO, we have enough cropland to feed 9 billion people by 2050 if 40% of all crops produced today for livestock is directly used for human consumption.⁸ Globally, animal agriculture is the leading cause of tropical deforestation and it has massive impacts on climate change and biodiversity.^{9,10}

The destruction of forests and biodiversity forces wildlife to live closer to human populations, risking the spread of infectious diseases like Ebola and COVID-19.¹¹ Additionally, the production of meat and dairy puts us in close contact with domesticated animals resulting in the spillover of zoonotic pathogens like the influenza virus. The consumption of meat and dairy is associated with an increased risk of chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.^{12,13} This type of diet significantly increases our healthcare costs, disproportionately jeopardizing the well-being of low-income families. The growing livestock biomass within confined spaces demands the increased use of antibiotics. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the excessive use of antibiotics serves as a breeding ground for antibiotic-resistant bacteria like Salmonella¹⁴. As a result, we are facing an uphill battle of antibiotic resistance. Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Antibiotic Awareness Week in November.

According to multiple reports, the single solution to achieve environmental sustainability within the food sector is by reducing the overall number of livestock and increasing our plant-based food options. The University of Oxford's most comprehensive meta-analysis reports that 83% of world farmland is used for livestock production to provide only 18% and 37% of our calories and protein, respectively.⁴ The replacement of animal products with plant based food can free-up farmland that could remove additional 8.1 billion metric tons of CO₂ Eq. every year for next 100 years.⁴ As a result, the 50% replacement of animal products with plant-based food can reduce 20% of total anthropogenic GHG emissions across all sectors.⁴ According to World Resource Institute, the almost 50% reduction of animal products in the average U.S. diet can reduce more than 40% of the country's agriculture GHG emission and land use.⁶

The City of Berkeley purchases almost \$5 million worth of food for places like senior centers, the Police Department's jail facility, public meetings, and events. As a result, Berkeley's purchasing power has a huge role to play in increasing plant-based food options. The municipal guide from Friends of the Earth (FOE) on Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing is an effective tool for increasing plant-based food options. It provides a stepwise process for municipalities to meet their target of increasing plant-based food options. Berkeley's potential to provide sustainable

food is beyond the city's purchasing power. It includes, but is not limited to City parks, public schools, restaurants, and other food businesses.

Berkeley would join a good company by adopting Vision 2025. Recently, U.S. legislators have identified the importance of increasing plant-based food and milk options across various cities, states, as well as in Congress. Senator Cory Booker has introduced the Farm System Reform Act to completely phase out of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO). Senator Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are co-sponsoring the bill, and Representative Ro Khanna has introduced a companion bill in the House. California Assembly Bill 479 encourages public schools to provide healthy, climate-friendly (plant-based) food and milk options. This active bill has been well-received by both the State Assembly and Senate. Los Angeles and other C40 Cities have committed to establish a planetary diet of consuming only 300 grams of meat per person in a week. New York City Council recently declared a plan to phase out processed meat and to cut down its beef purchasing by 50% in city facilities. The decision was part of the City's Green New Deal for addressing global warming. More locally, Oakland Unified School District decreased carbon footprint by 14%, water consumption by 6% and saved \$42,000 through increasing fruits, vegetables and legumes purchase and reducing meat and dairy consumption by 30%.¹⁵ This low-carbon commitment by one of California's largest school districts has shown the potential for protecting the environment and natural resources through healthy and cost-effective plant-based food options.

REVIEW EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

Vision 2025 is aligned well with Berkeley's Green Monday initiative and GFPP. Green Monday recommends serving plant-based food once a week along with raising awareness about the positive impacts of plant-based food choices on the environment. Various reports suggest that animal products alone can jeopardize the Paris Agreement to keep the global surface temperature below 2C and could threaten scarce natural resources by 2050. Significant changes in our food choices need to happen for the wellbeing of our environment and global sustainability. It demands us to extend our efforts in increasing plant-based options through specific policies in the next 5 years.

GFPP is a certification-based program that also promotes antibiotic-free and grass-fed beef. The increasing demand for animal products requires that livestock are kept in confined spaces making them vulnerable to diseases. Therefore, it is not feasible to harvest animal products at a global scale without using antibiotics in livestock. The excessive use of antibiotics has already resulted in many antibiotic-resistant bacteria, pushing countries like India and China to use last-resort antibiotic drugs, like colistin.¹⁶ It will also be socially inequitable if we were to use excessive resources, like pastureland, to harvest grass-fed and antibiotic-free animal products only for wealthy families and developed nations. Additionally, the grass-fed cows contribute more methane than the grain-fed cows in CAFO.¹⁷ As a result, these existing initiatives and programs require Berkeley to extend plant-based options through other programs and policies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no imposed cost but could result in savings associated with adopting this recommendation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This item is in alignment with Berkeley's commitment to environmental sustainability and programs like Green Monday and GFPP. The adoption of Vision 2025 for Sustainable Food Policies will significantly reduce Berkeley's food sector associated GHG emissions, deforestation, fresh water and antibiotic consumption. It will also help Berkeley to transition towards healthy and globally sustainable food practices.

CONTACT PERSONS

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution

REFERENCES

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2. Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Signatories <http://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/signatory-cities/>
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5. Berkeley Climate Action Plan Updates 2020 [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2020/07_Jul/Documents/2020-07-21_Presentations_Item_5_\(6pm\)_Pres_CMO_pdf.aspx](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2020/07_Jul/Documents/2020-07-21_Presentations_Item_5_(6pm)_Pres_CMO_pdf.aspx)
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13. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicines <https://www.pcrm.org/good-nutrition/nutrition-information/health-concerns-about-dairy>
14. Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2016/12/fda-antibiotic-use-food-animals-continues-rise>

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16. The Statesman <https://www.thestatesman.com/supplements/8thday/heading-for-a-disaster-1502677575.html>
17. A Well-Fed World <https://awellfedworld.org/issues/climate-issues/grass-fed-beef/>

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA,
ADOPTING VISION 2025 FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD POLICIES

WHEREAS, roughly 80% of the U.S. population live in urban areas, suggesting the important role of U.S. Cities for establishing a culture of sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has declared a Climate Emergency for protecting our environment, human population and biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is putting best efforts to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to reverse global warming as quickly as possible; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley's consumption-based GHG inventory shows significant emissions associated with the City's food system; and

WHEREAS, the World Resource Institute (WRI) reports that the agriculture sector will be responsible for 70% of the total allowable emissions by 2050, risking Paris Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) reports that more than 60% of agriculture emissions come from the livestock sector, and it is estimated to be higher than fossil fuel emissions from the entire transportation sector; and

WHEREAS, the scientific analysis shows the urgency to reduce GHG emissions from animal agriculture in order to meet the Paris Agreement of keeping an average global surface temperature below 2C; and

WHEREAS, California is one of the most drought-affected states, and almost 50% of Californian's water footprint is associated with consumption of meat and dairy; and

WHEREAS, the cattle industry is the leading cause of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest that is home to 10% of the world's species and a major source of vital oxygen; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. food sector is globally interconnected because of the import-export trading and therefore, our food choice directly impacts the Amazon deforestation and biodiversity loss; and

WHEREAS, 83% of agriculture land is used for raising livestock and producing their feed, but meat and dairy only provide 18% of the world's calories; and

WHEREAS, the WRI estimates a 56% increase in crop calorie demand in order to feed 9 billion people by 2050, requiring an extra 593 million hectares of agriculture land, which is twice the size of India; and

WHEREAS, the world already produces enough food to feed 9 billion people if we use crop calories to directly feed the human population; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. pours significant agriculture resources to grows crops for feeding livestock and poultry while more than 800 million people are food insecure, and 45% of children die under 5 years of age due to malnutrition; and

WHEREAS, the WHO reports that 60% of all human disease originates in animals and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates 3 out of every 4 emerging infectious diseases come from animals; and

WHEREAS, the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) risk spillover of zoonotic pathogens by confining animals and bringing human beings into proximity with them; and

WHEREAS, the CAFO negatively impacts the health of surrounding communities through air and water pollution, and the majority of these homes belong to African Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicines (PCRM) reports that meat and dairy consumption is associated with the increased risk of chronic illness like cancer, diabetes and heart disease in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified processed meat like ham, bacon, hotdogs, sausage, and some deli meat as carcinogenic and red meat as a probable carcinogen; and

WHEREAS, studies show that over 90% of the people dying from COVID-19 have had pre-existing conditions, mostly from chronic diseases such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color, with black Americans hospitalized at 4.5 times the rate of white Americans and Hispanic Americans hospitalized at 4 times the rate of white Americans; and

WHEREAS, communities of color experience higher rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, the socio-economic and cultural factors that cause poor health conditions in many communities of color can be found in all of our nation's struggling communities; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of the slaughterhouse workers are undocumented and forced to meet ever-growing line speed under the threat of deportation; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. workers in meat plants are three times more likely to suffer a serious injury with an average of two amputations per week; and

WHEREAS, the slaughterhouse workers are exposed to extremely stressful environments including physical, psychological and sexual abuse and many of them develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, overfishing is destroying marine biodiversity, and aquaculture imposes a threat to our environment; and

WHEREAS, Project Drawdown reports shifting our diet towards plant-based food as one of the most significant solutions to climate change; and

WHEREAS, WRI recommends shifting our diet to plant-based in order to reduce GHG emissions, agriculture land-use and protect public health; and

WHEREAS, WRI reports that replacing almost 50% of animal-based food in the average U.S. diet with plant-based options could reduce more than 40% of agriculture land and GHG emissions; and

WHEREAS, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) summit delivered a letter signed by 65 scientists calling world mayors to reduce the consumption of animal-based food; and

WHEREAS, Los Angeles and 13 other C40 Cities have signed a declaration to reduce procurement of meat products to 300 grams (two burger patties) per person per week by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has already started establishing sustainable food systems through passing Green Monday and Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) and recognizes the need of expanding these efforts; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Berkeley hereby adopts Vision 2025 for establishing sustainable food systems, wherein the City of Berkeley joins San Francisco, Chicago and Austin in signing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) along with referring to the Community Health Commission and Environmental Commission or relevant future commissions to explore the implementation of the City adopted sustainable food programs, identify gaps and propose new policies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Berkeley supports adoption of a Climate-Friendly Food Purchasing Policy as described by Friends of the Earth for working towards replacing 50% of the City's annual animal-based food procurement with plant-based food.

