

FEBRUARY 2022

AIM STRATEGIC PLAN

YEAR 1 REPORT



01**OUR MISSION &
VISION**

Our mission is to educate, inspire, and connect communities, responsible farmers, and producers as part of a healthy, Earth-friendly, equitable local and regional food system.

We envision a responsible food and farming system that is environmentally beneficial, economically viable, and socially just.

2021 - 2024 GOALS

Create a regional alternative to the large-scale industrial agriculture complex by connecting producers directly with eaters and shoppers.

Advocate for a healthier, equitable food and farming system to contribute to a healthier planet.

Increase opportunities for producers--many of whom are disenfranchised--to access markets, funding, and technical resources to innovate and grow.

Expand the regional impact and reach of AIM's education programs and access to address food-related health concerns by inclusively serving additional communities.

Address equity in our food system.

02**NOTABLE
ACHIEVEMENTS
2021**

Created a new mission, vision, guiding principles, and Path to Racial Equity.

Partnered with Growing the Table, ExtraFood.org, and Performing Stars of Marin to pack and deliver 2,500 Bounty Boxes to communities experiencing food and nutrition insecurities

Recipient of the 2021 Heart of Marin Excellence in Innovation Award for the Rollin' Root mobile market, presented to an individual, organization or partnership that has developed new, creative and effective strategies for advancing solutions to critical issues in our community.

Implemented and communicated Covid-19 market safety guidelines resulting in 100% of our nine certified farmers markets remaining open on schedule in 2021.

Obtained a 6-year license agreement with the City of Oakland for the use of Splash Pad Park for the award-winning Grand Lake Farmers Markets.

Successfully took over the management of the beloved Point Reyes Farmers Market to give new life to a market that was struggling for several years.

Advocated on 4 successful policy initiatives for healthy food access, universal school meals, sustainable agriculture, and nutrition incentives.

03**NOTABLE
ACHIEVEMENTS
2021 (CONTINUED)**

Secured \$150,000 from the County of Marin to provide drought relief funding for vegetable and nursery stock farmers.

Implemented the AIM's first environmentally preferred purchasing policy and supported 11 farmers in accessing 621 reusable transport containers to sustainably bring produce to market.

Raised \$20,000 in funding to support new Black, Indigenous Peoples, and People of Color (BIPOC) producers and other socially disadvantaged producers to access markets by awarding racial equity market scholarships.

Launched a workplace culture team working on a variety of training and enrichment activities, conducted burnout prevention training, and created a new organizational wellness policy.

Raised over \$5.4 million and are about 34% of the way towards our fundraising goal for the Center for Food and Agriculture.

The Center for Food & Agriculture was recognized by San Francisco Design Week as the "Future of Foods" representing "culinary innovations improving the manner in which we grow, consume and dispose of what we eat."

04 GOAL 1 STRATEGIES

CREATE A REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE LARGE SCALE INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE COMPLEX BY CONNECTING PRODUCERS DIRECTLY WITH EATERS AND SHOPPERS.

WE BEGAN THE YEAR WITH 8 STRATEGIES AND ADDED 2 NEW ONES MID-YEAR: 8 WERE COMPLETED & 2 PARTIALLY COMPLETED

Strategy 1.1 Improve billing and records management with an electronic system for market payments, applications, and renewals.

Completed: MarketWurks implemented in November 2021; payments will be added in 2022.

Strategy 1.2 Implement a partnership with Square to provide cashless card readers at markets.

Completed: Square provided a \$10,000 sponsorship of AIM's Markets and offered 100 free chip card readers for Market Participants.

Strategy 1.3 Reach market specific goals for a 3-5 % increase in market stalls occupied from over 2020.

Completed: In 2021, AIM's markets exceeded their stall fees by 8% over 2020. This increase was reflected in our seven year-round markets.

Strategy 1.4 Curate 650 Bounty Boxes per month, on average, in response to demands & changing market conditions.

Completed: Packed 9,707 Bounty Boxes (809 monthly average; 55% community boxes and 45% consumer boxes).

Strategy 1.5 Implement a communications campaign to highlight the unique value of AIM's markets and individual producers.

Partially Completed: Produced three market promotional videos; planning a larger communications effort in 2022.

Strategy 1.6 Implement and communicate Covid-19 market safety guidelines to ensure farmers markets remain open and essential.

Completed: Implemented market guidelines and on-going weekly communications.

05 GOAL 1 STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

CREATE A REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE LARGE SCALE INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE COMPLEX BY CONNECTING PRODUCERS DIRECTLY WITH EATERS AND SHOPPERS.

Strategy 1.7 Raise \$150,000 in the Farmers Market Assistance Fund to support market operations.

Completed: Raised \$170K in donations and sponsorships.

Strategy 1.8 Finalize the Business Plan, Value Engineering Design, and Entitlements for the Center for Food & Agriculture, featuring a world-class authentic, welcoming, climate friendly farmers market and educational space for a healthier food culture.

Partially Completed: Developed value engineering design and fundraising plan; drafted Business Plan that needs feedback and finalization; started Entitlements Process with County.

Strategy 1.9 (NEW): Took over the management of the Point Reyes Farmers Market.

Completed: Successfully managed the Point Reyes Farmers Market, a market that was struggling for several years. Positive feedback and experiences by shoppers, producers, and community members.

Strategy 1.10 (NEW): Revamped our Market Applications process for timely customer service.

Completed: Improved and expanded our market applications process with new teamwork and decision-making structure to review 217 new applications and accept 60%.

06 GOAL 2 STRATEGIES

ADVOCATE FOR A HEALTHIER, EQUITABLE FOOD AND FARMING SYSTEM TO CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHIER PLANET.

WE HAD 8 STRATEGIES: 3 WERE COMPLETED, 4 WERE PARTIALLY COMPLETED, 1 WAS NOT YET STARTED

Strategy 2.1 Advocate on four initiatives at the legislative level on behalf of market participants and farmers markets both independently and as a member of state and local coalitions.

Completed: Advocated on 4 state initiatives

- Assembly Bill 125 (Rivas), resulting in over \$1.3 billion in funding for healthy food access, farm worker housing, sustainable agriculture and other key measures to build a healthier, more equitable, and resilient food and farming system.
- Senate Bill 364 (Skinner) - School Meals for All, launched the Universal School Meals Program.
- Senate Bill 464 (Hurtado) - Food for All Achieved achieved in the 2021 budget; provides nutritional benefits to households that are ineligible for CalFresh benefits solely due to their immigration status.
- Assembly Bill 1009- Farm to Community Food Hub Program (Bloom) – Establishes the farm to community food hubs program, for nonprofit organizations, school districts, cooperatives, and food and agriculture-related businesses, to serve as aggregators for local or regional farms or ranches.

Strategy 2.2 Advocate to protect and expand the value, reach, and impact of farmers market nutrition programs (CalFresh/EBT, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition)

Completed: Advocated on 2 state initiatives:

- California Nutrition Incentive Program: \$10 million for 2021-22. \$10 million proposed for 2022-23.
- Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program: \$500,000 for FY 2021-22.

Strategy 2.3 Improve upon the Farm Audit program to ensure AIM standards are being met and identify environmental impacts.

Not yet started: Will develop protocols in 2022 with partners, such as Point Blue.

07 GOAL 2 STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

ADVOCATE FOR A HEALTHIER, EQUITABLE FOOD AND FARMING SYSTEM TO CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHIER PLANET.

Strategy 2.4 Ensure that all fish and seafood sold at AIM's markets, including prepared foods, meet labeling and sustainable sourcing requirements

Partially completed: Completed preliminary seafood audits and developed fisher load lists, but will need to implement verification systems in a multi-year effort.

Strategy 2.5 Develop new guidelines for Ranchers at AIM's markets focused on environmental stewardship, working conditions for staff, and healthy and humane animal care (w/ Board Rules & Regs Committee).

Partially completed: Hired a livestock consultant, developed new guidelines for ownership, raising animals, load lists, annual applications process, and labeling requirements. Developing further guidelines in 2022.

Strategy 2.6 Reduce waste at all AIM's markets by 'right-sizing' market bins and offering color-coded educational signage.

Partially completed: Prioritized obtaining three-bin waste systems at each market and will focus on new signage in 2022. Developed new eco-station in Point Reyes with the West Marin Climate Action Team.

08 GOAL 3 STRATEGIES

GOAL 3. INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS--MANY OF WHOM ARE DISENFRANCHISED--TO ACCESS MARKETS, FUNDING, AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES TO INNOVATE AND GROW.

WE BEGAN THE YEAR WITH 5 STRATEGIES: 4 WERE COMPLETED AND 1 WAS PARTIALLY COMPLETED

Strategy 3.1 Develop a system for tracking characteristics of producers who participate in AIM's markets to ensure equitable access.

Partially Completed: MarketWurks implementation will allow us to track producer characteristics.

Strategy 3.2 Create a market recruitment team to recruit prospective market participants in a culturally relevant way to provide an ongoing pipeline of market opportunities for new producers.

Completed: Launched a new market recruitment team to attend events and proactively invite market participants to apply. Generated market-specific wish lists and shared with partner organizations.

Strategy 3.3 Raise \$20,000 in funding to support new Black, Indigenous Peoples, and People of Color (BIPOC) producers and other socially disadvantaged producers to access markets by awarding racial equity market scholarships.

Completed: Raised \$20,000 for distribution in 2022.

Strategy 3.4 Offer technical assistance through 6 webinars and technical assistance to 20 producers on direct marketing and business development.

Completed: Organized 6 webinars attended by 58 participants:

How to apply to AIM's Markets (in Spanish), Agricultural Law Changes for 2021, Are Value-Added Products Right for Me?, Best Hiring Practices, How to apply for the Pandemic Response Grant, How to create your MarketWurks Account. Coordinated technical assistance with Kitchen Table Advisors and SBDC for approx. 30 producers.

Strategy 3.5 Create a job board to help producers find qualified candidates for staff positions on the farm, in the kitchen, and at markets.

Completed: 37 jobs posted on AIM's online job board. Next step is follow-up with producers to determine how many jobs were filled.

09 GOAL 4 STRATEGIES

GOAL 4. EXPAND THE REGIONAL IMPACT AND REACH OF AIM'S EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACCESS TO ADDRESS FOOD-RELATED HEALTH CONCERNS BY INCLUSIVELY SERVING ADDITIONAL COMMUNITIES.

WE BEGAN THE YEAR WITH 9 STRATEGIES: 6 WERE COMPLETED AND 3 WERE PARTIALLY COMPLETED

Strategy 4.1 Provide 7 virtual Diggin' the Market tours highlighting each year-round AIM farmers market.

Partially Completed: Provided 4 virtual market tours during COVID-19, with over a dozen additional Zoom classroom lessons.

Strategy 4.2 Produce 10 educational on-farm videos & 10 farmer interviews per year.

Completed: Produced and shared 20 educational videos on AIM's YouTube Channel.

Strategy 4.3 Grow Market Match incentives to \$258,000 while attracting racially and economically diverse shoppers through education and outreach.

Completed: Distributed \$374,000 in Market Match incentives through an increase in demand and raising the daily maximum from \$10 to \$15 per household. Among East Bay and SF EBT shoppers,

- A vast majority of market survey respondents (96%) reported that the Market Match program is important for choosing the Farmers' Market
- 73% of customers reported an increase in buying fruits and vegetables each week
- Asian and Pacific Islanders were among the highest percent of CalFresh/EBT participants (43%) who had utilized the Market Match program at AIM's markets.

Strategy 4.4 Attain \$120,000 in Rollin' Root produce sales annually, including benefits and discounts applied.

Completed: Sold \$115,000 on the Rollin' Root, including \$13,000 in Market Match discounts for CalFresh/EBT cardholders.

10 GOAL 4 STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

GOAL 4. EXPAND THE REGIONAL IMPACT AND REACH OF AIM'S EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACCESS TO ADDRESS FOOD-RELATED HEALTH CONCERNS BY INCLUSIVELY SERVING ADDITIONAL COMMUNITIES.

Strategy 4.5 Expand service for the Rollin' Root mobile market from Marin County to new locations in San Francisco.

Partially Completed: Applied for and received USDA LFPP grant for expansion to San Francisco. Started community outreach with site partners for March 2022 launch date.

Strategy 4.6 Recruit and train 10 Rollin' Root ambassadors in multi-cultural outreach and Rollin' Root operations.

Completed: Recruited and trained 9 Rollin' Root ambassadors in a 3-part training series.

Strategy 4.7 Create an organizational plan that integrates and sustains funding for AIM's community programs in a holistic way (w/ Board Programs Committee).

Completed: Work underway to design a seasonal programs map in coordination with staff and Programs committee members.

Strategy 4.8 Develop, implement, and maintain an online sign-up process and orientation for market and program volunteers.

Completed: Launched Better Impact volunteer portal. Supported 126 volunteers in 2021 who donated 2,180 hours to AIM's programs.

Strategy 4.9. Conduct outreach to 7 WIC clinics and other health-related organizations to promote farmers markets and the Rollin' Root as a health intervention

Partially Completed: Outreach conducted in select markets for distribution of WIC checks. More to come in 2022.

11 GOAL 5 STRATEGIES

GOAL 5 ADDRESS EQUITY IN OUR FOOD SYSTEM.

WE BEGAN THE YEAR WITH 5 STRATEGIES: 2 WERE COMPLETED AND 3 WERE PARTIALLY COMPLETED

Strategy 5.1 Create a workplace culture team to help ensure staff feel welcomed and appreciated for their individual identities..

Completed: Launched our new workplace culture team working on a variety of training and enrichment activities, conducted burnout prevention training, and created new wellness policy.

Strategy 5.2 Provide organization-wide racial and gender equity trainings attended by all staff.

Partially Completed: Conducted two-part training on gender equity for staff and Board members with the Spahr Center, postponing racial equity trainings until 2022 with a new racial equity consultant.

Strategy 5.3 Seek out and partner with 3 BIPOC-led public and private organizations to gather meaningful feedback on markets and programs design

Completed: Formalized 7 new partnerships with Oakland TRYBE, Solidaridad Guatamatelca, Bayview Hunters Point Advocates for ALBA, Kitchen Table, Advisors, La Cocina, and Black Cultural Zone for market outreach, incubator program, and the Bounty Box community boxes.

Strategy 5.4 Translate Market applications into two additional non-English languages.

Partially Completed: Translated applications and Rules into Spanish, choosing a second language (either Cantonese or Hmong) in 2022.

Strategy 5.5 Ensure that at least 10 new BIPOC market participants meeting AIM's market standards join AIM's markets.

Partially Completed: 60 new producers who publicly identify as BIPOC were admitted to AIM's markets: 8 farmers, 1 rancher, 38 food purveyors, and 13 artisans.

12 GOAL 6 STRATEGIES

GOAL 6. PROVIDE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION TO SUPPORT AIM'S PROGRAMS AND MARKETS.

WE BEGAN THE YEAR WITH 6 STRATEGIES AND ADDED 2: IN TOTAL, 6 WERE COMPLETED, 1 WAS PARTIALLY COMPLETED, AND 1 WAS NOT YET STARTED.

Strategy 6.1 Finalize new AIM Employee Handbook

Partially Completed: Developed a new comprehensive employee handbook to replace out dated handbook from 2010; approved by Board in Dec 2021.

Strategy 6.2 Implement QuickBooks Online.

Not Yet Started: Began researching transition from QuickBooks Desktop to QB Online, but postponed implementation until MarketWurks is completed.

Strategy 6.3 Develop accounting cost centers. .

Partially Completed: In progress, setup cost centers in Paylocity.

Strategy 6.4 Implement Paylocity as AIM's new HR Information System.

Completed: Work underway Completed migration to Paylocity for all HR related matters, including time and labor, performance, and onboarding.

Strategy 6.5 Move AIM's office to a new location for better resource utilization.

Completed: Created a Tiger team to complete office move.

Strategy 6.6 Sign a long-term lease agreement with the City of Oakland.

Completed: Executed a 6-year license agreement for the operation of the Grand Lake Market.

Strategy 6.7(NEW) Develop organizational wellness policy.

Completed: Developed by the Culture Team with input from all staff and approved by the Board at the Dec 2021 meeting.

Strategy 6.8 (NEW) Implement new Boomerang Donor System.

Completed: Migrated from Salsa to Bloomerang for a more efficient, donor-friendly management system with web integration.