FOOD + CLIMATE CHANGE

City of Austin

Health and Human Services Council Committee

August 8, 2018

Process and Participants

October 2016 - Present	• Project Work
February 2018	• Austin Travis County Food Policy Board passed Council Committee Request • Joint Sustainability Committee passed Council Committee request

- Alexandra van den Berg, PhD – UT School of Public Health
- Adrienne Haschke, MS, RD – Sustainable Food Center
- Christine Jovanovic – UT School of Public Health
- Karen Magid, PhD – Huston-Tillotson University
- Danika Trierweiler, RD – Sustainable Food Center
- City of Austin, Office of Sustainability Staff

A Complex Issue

By far, the most impactful way to reduce Austin's food-related carbon footprint is to encourage climate-friendly food choices, which benefit both human health and natural ecosystems

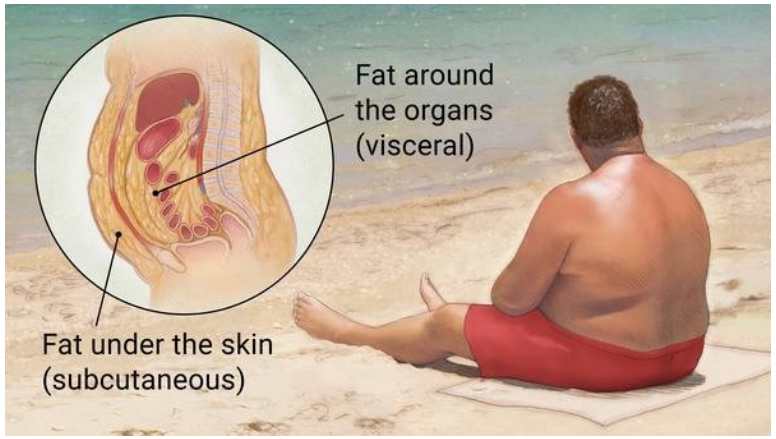
Environmental Impacts

If every American reduces beef consumption by ¼lb per week, it would be the equivalent of taking 4 million cars off the road *(NRDC)*

Fertilizer, soil erosion and runoff have contributed to a “Dead Zone” in the Gulf of Mexico which is bigger than the state of Massachusetts *(EPA)*

Health Impacts

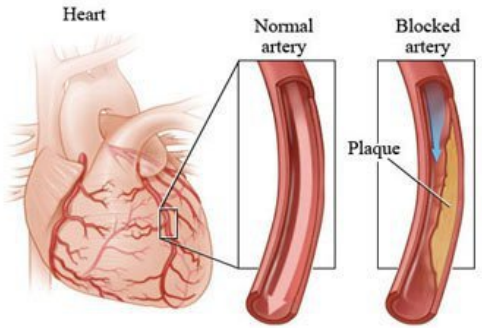
An epidemic of *preventable* diet-related chronic diseases



In 2016, 34% of Texas adults were obese *(CDC)*

Only 1 out of 10 adults eats enough fruits and vegetables *(CDC)*

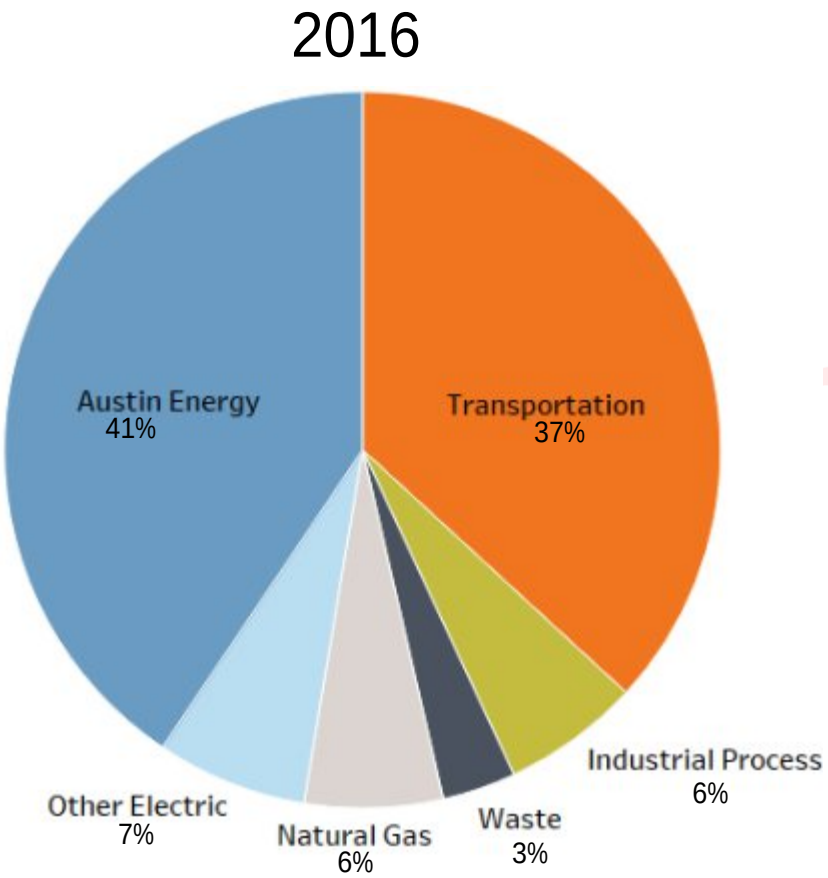
Average American man eats nearly double the amount of protein he needs (WRI)



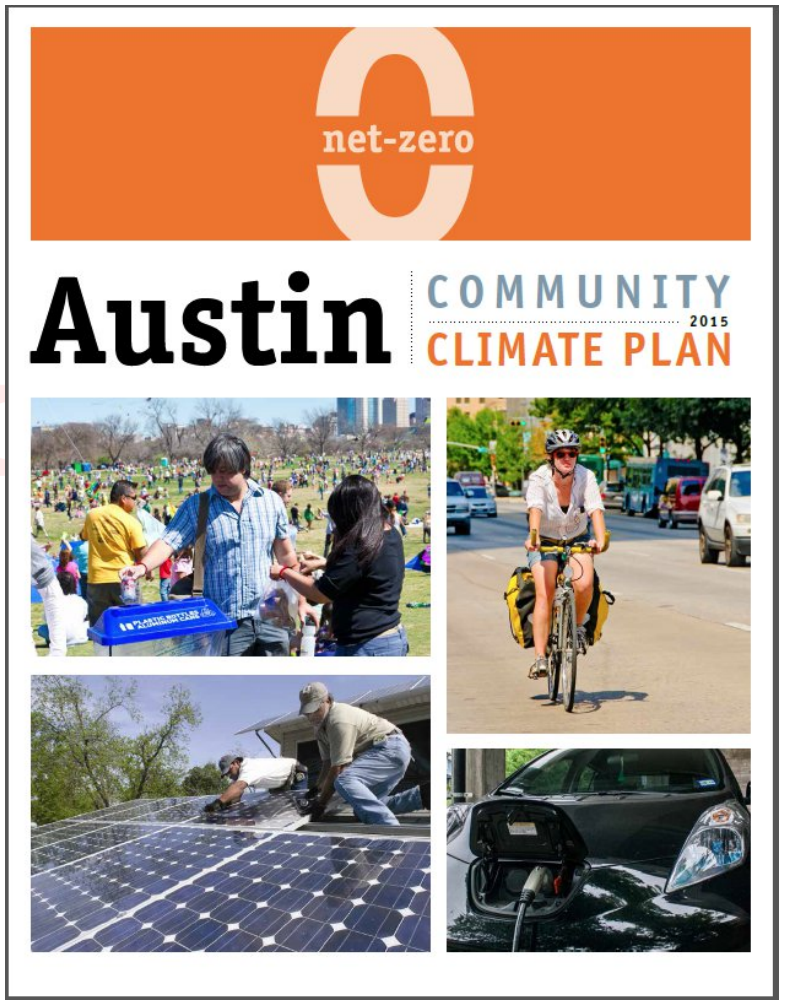
Why Address Food in our Climate Plan

- The food system contributes 30% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Healthy soil and pasture associated with sustainable agriculture has the potential to sequester 100% of annual global emissions
- Climate-friendly food also represents a nutritionally-balanced diet
- The food supply is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts.
- San Francisco, NYC, Portland, Minneapolis, and Seattle are addressing this issue in their climate plans

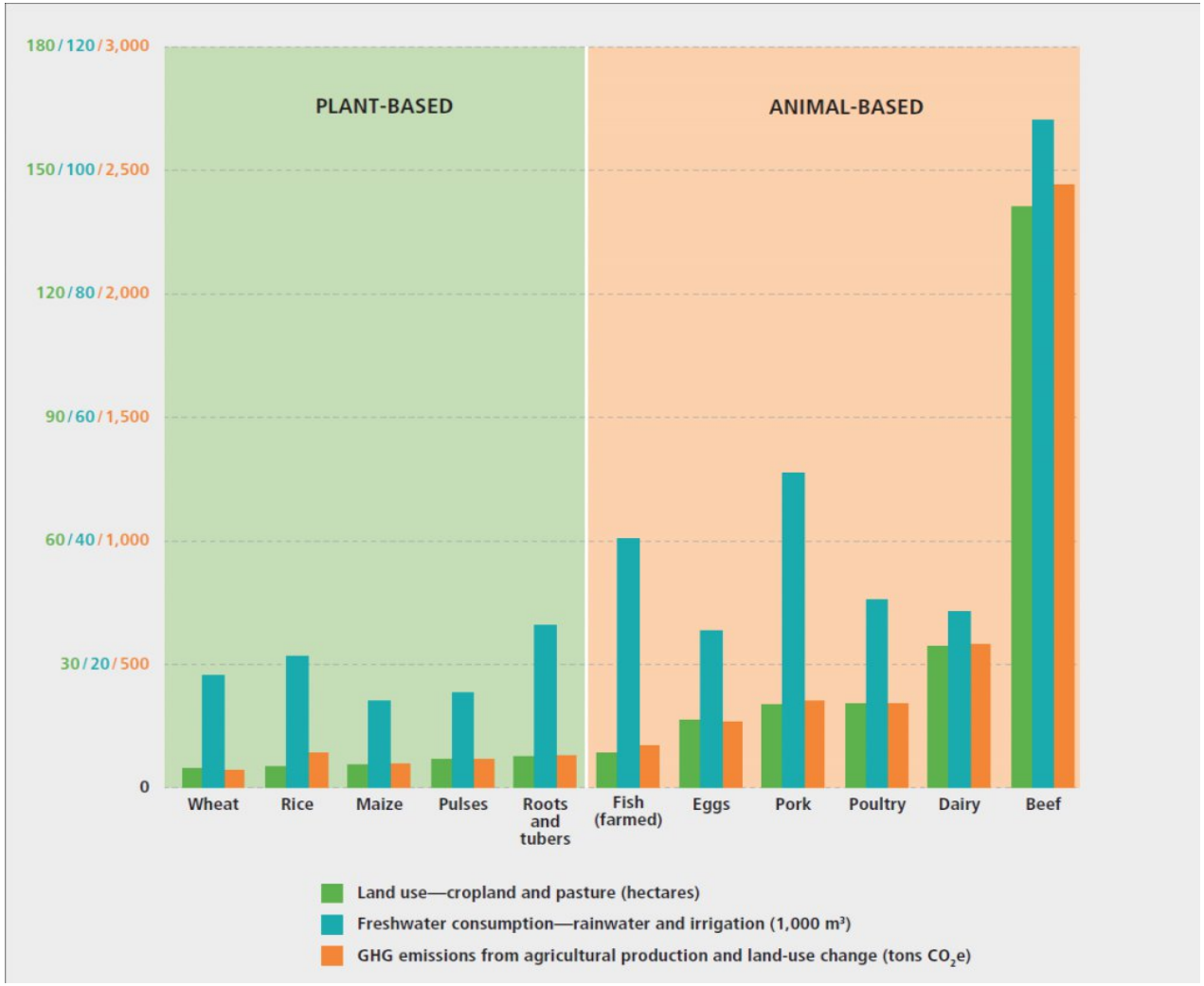
Austin Community GHG Inventory



13.4 Million Metric Tons CO2e

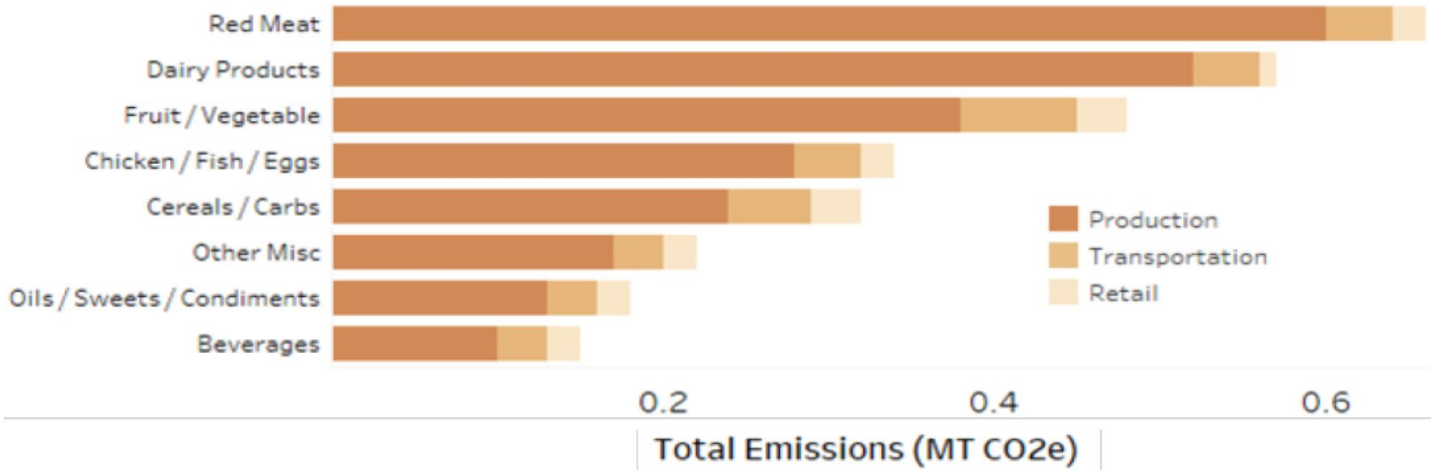


Different foods have different impacts



Consumption Based Emissions from Food

- Life Cycle Assessment can estimate GHG emissions from upstream activity
- (2,174 Lb Food / Person / Year) x (Emissions by Food Category) x (1,200,000 People)
- 2016 consumption based food emissions are estimated to be 3.4 Million Metric Tons of CO2e



1) Food Production

Bouldin Food Forest, Rogers, TX

2) Distribution and Retail

Greenmarket Co, NYC

3) Consumption

4) Food Recovery and Waste

1) Reduce Emissions, Support Sequestration and Enhance Resilience in Food Production

TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Create City of Austin staff position, or Travis County Ag Extension position, to provide farmers with TA related to (but not limited to) regenerative agriculture practices and best practices for planning and permitting farms.
- Work with Austin Water and other water providers to determine the feasibility of offering rebates or other incentives to farmers for irrigation water management equipment, water storage, reclaimed water, and conservation tillage equipment that saves potable water.
- Develop a comprehensive farmland conservation plan that prioritizes food production while taking into consideration other Imagine Austin priorities. The plan could also include specific maps or areas prioritized for farmland conservation or identify those areas most at risk from development.

2) Reduce Emissions in Logistics (processing, storage, distribution) and Retail

TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Enhance regional sustainable food producer access to markets by identifying City of Austin, Travis County, and privately owned facilities and / or land for collective aggregation, storage, sales, and distribution. Support Sustainable Food Center's Food Hub feasibility study.

- Work with distribution and retail establishments to voluntarily phase out refrigerants with high ozone depletion and global warming potential. Explore conservation, efficiency and weatherization rebates for improving refrigeration efficiency.

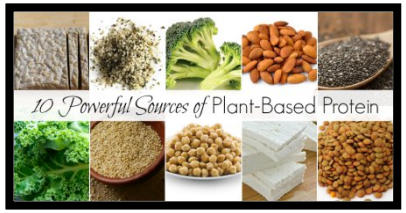
3) Reduce Emissions Associated with the Purchase and Consumption of Food

TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Identify funding options and partner organizations to promote public awareness of a climate-friendly diet through public education campaigns
- Explore opportunities to make proteins per the hierarchy of carbon intensity more available and accessible in the consumer market.

Grass Finished Beef
Parker Creek Ranch
Medina County, TX

Pasture Poultry
Richardson Farm
Rockdale, TX



4) Reduce Emissions from Food Waste

TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Explore options to update the Austin Resource Recovery organic diversion ordinance and incentives to prioritize feeding humans first.
- Support the implementation of an end-to-end food waste reduction and recovery technology infrastructure to support recovery of food for human consumption (see: Austin / Travis County Food Policy Board Recommendation 20170522-2).

- Explore options to expand the Universal Recycling Ordinance Requirements to include collection of food residuals and other compostable material at multi-family residences.

Next Steps

- Council Formally Adopt this Addendum to the Climate Plan
- Fund and Implement Actions in the Plan
- Report Annually on Progress