

# Equity Summit 2015

## Highlights:

### Building Equitable Food Systems

October 27-29, 2015  
Los Angeles, California



#### The Equitable Food Systems Initiative at PolicyLink

A healthy, equitable food system is one that supports and protects all Americans, especially those living in low-income communities and communities of color. For years, these communities have been marginalized and excluded from the opportunities that a healthy, equitable food system brings. The country's changing demographics creates both a moral and economic imperative for full inclusion – ensuring that all communities can participate in and benefit from the food system is critical to a thriving future.

For more than a decade, PolicyLink, through the Center for Health Equity and Place, has been partnering with community leaders, advocates, and government officials across the

country to ensure that everyone can benefit from the food system – from farmworkers to food service workers and truck drivers, to local entrepreneurs, to students and other consumers. Through research, policy advocacy, and capacity building, PolicyLink and our partners have made a real impact with innovative projects and policies – and our collective work is paying off. We've been able to advance cutting-edge strategies across the spectrum of the food system, from food hubs, mobile markets to local procurement policy. [The Healthy Food Financing Initiative](#), for example, has distributed over \$162 million in grants, which have been leveraged to more than \$1 billion, to support over 200 innovative healthy food projects across 30+ states that are improving access, finding new markets for small farmers, creating new distribution mechanisms, building entrepreneurship, and creating quality jobs (check out the [Healthy Food Access Portal](#) for more

information). Together, we've worked to lift up powerful voices of emerging leaders and share the experiences of underserved communities, including native communities, youth advocates, food system workers, and entrepreneurs of color, that are promoting equitable change.

This October 27-29, join fellow advocates, community leaders, policymakers, and innovators at Equity Summit 2015 where attendees will have the opportunity to engage across a range of cross-cutting topics and activities all aimed at developing collective strategies to rebuild local, regional, and our national food system with equity at the center. Learn more about the equitable food systems track in the pages that follow, including interactive mobile food tours, workshops, and a dedicated food system caucus.

## Building Equitable Food Systems Events at Equity Summit 2015

### MOBILE WORKSHOP

#### **Food Tour: *Building an Equitable Food System***

Join PolicyLink and local advocates for an up close look at the key components of the Los Angeles food system. Co-sponsored by the [Los Angeles Food Policy Council](#), this mobile workshop will focus on exciting efforts that are transforming Los Angeles into a “good food” region with a food system that is fair, healthy, affordable, and sustainable. We will travel to various neighborhoods to experience the innovative methods that are changing how food is being grown, distributed, sold, and discarded. Participants will engage in conversations with an array of creative and passionate food system activists, including street vendors, food chain workers, small business operators, youth leaders, and independent grocers. The workshop will culminate in a community meal that will engage Summit participants and Los Angeles community members in a discussion of food justice and equity, and the intersection of food and culture, while enjoying fresh, local food.

## FOOD SYSTEMS CAUCUS

A healthy, equitable food system is one that supports and protects all Americans, particularly those living in low-income communities and communities of color. This includes the entire system, beginning with production and moving all the way through distribution and retail, and is inclusive of all workers, from farm workers, to aggregators and processors and drivers, to retail workers. This food systems caucus connects advocates and leaders from all backgrounds in order to identify strategies for working together to build more equitable local and national food systems. Participants will have the opportunity to network in small group discussion sessions in order to learn from each other about successes and challenges in food justice advocacy.



### WORKSHOPS

#### ***Food Procurement as an Economic Development Driver***

Food procurement—how and from whom government institutions purchase food—matters when it comes to ensuring the health and well-being of millions of families, workers, and consumers. By procuring food locally, communities can improve access to healthy food for low-income families and communities of color, support local entrepreneurship, and create high-quality local jobs that increase wealth, quality of life, and purchasing power for food, shelter, and health care. A movement to purchase locally, fairly, and sustainably grown healthy food is beginning to build momentum, with cities such as Los Angeles, Oakland, and Chicago, and states such as Vermont, leading the way to enact equitable procurement

policies. This session will feature a discussion of school board officials, activists, and food workers as they explore successful procurement policies and practices that have been used to benefit low-income entrepreneurs of color, small family farmers, and sustainable agriculture, while providing consumers access to healthy food.

### ***Labor and the Food System***

The way our food is grown, processed, distributed, sold, and disposed of forms a continuum that too often traps low-income workers and people of color in jobs that pay too little and expose them to hazardous working conditions. Food system workers, especially those in the fast-food industry, are now at the forefront of battles for increasing the minimum wage, food servers are pressing for reform of tipping policies, and agricultural workers have been pioneers in the movement for elevating the rights of workers to decent wages and safe working conditions. The adoption of equitable public policy is central to achieving these needed reforms. This session will focus on the efforts of the labor movement and food justice allies to achieve quality food system jobs. The panel will discuss policy opportunities for reforming the food system workforce with a focus on employee safety, minimum wage efforts and successes, tipped wage advocacy, and labor organizing in the food industry.



### ***Fighting for a Just Food System***

For countless American communities—particularly those home to low-income residents and people of color—decades of selective disinvestment have left their neighborhoods isolated, overlooked, and marginalized. Recent discussions of food deserts have helped raise awareness of the specific impact that access to food can have on the health and quality of life for these communities. This session will broaden attendees’ understanding of the impact that disinvestment in local food systems has on marginalized communities, including its ramifications on health, employment, and economic vitality. Speakers will explore how policy decisions made long ago continue to have devastating consequences for people living in rural communities, Native communities, and immigrant communities, and will share examples of local policy strategies grounded in the experience of community members which are re-casting local food systems in ways that promote equity and sustainability. Conversations will cover topics ranging from access to labor, job systems, education and school systems, cultural connections, cultural sovereignty, and more.



## Registration and Additional Information

The nation is in a moment of transformational change. Across the country, movements to end police brutality, defend workers' rights, and address widening income inequality have put issues of racial and economic justice on the national agenda—demanding action, collaboration, and meaningful change on a local, regional, and national level.

This October, join thousands of dynamic leaders, advocates, and other equity stakeholders as they take on some of the most pressing issues of our time at Equity Summit 2015 in Los Angeles, California. Summit attendees will get to explore Los Angeles through mobile workshops, build new skills through over 60 session offerings, and learn about cutting-edge strategies in organizing, research, communications, and advocacy from a dynamic cast of speakers and presenters who are putting equity at the center of their demands for real and lasting change. Come prepared to engage with others to develop plans to advance an equity-driven agenda for city councils, state legislatures, Congress, and the next President!

**For more information:** <http://plcyk.org/equity2015>

**Register today at:** <http://www2.policylink.org/summit-registration>

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**EQUITY  
SUMMIT  
2015**

All in for inclusion, justice, and prosperity  
October 27–29, Los Angeles

## CONNECT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

The [Healthy Food Access Portal](#), a collaboration between PolicyLink, The Food Trust, and The Reinvestment Fund, and supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, will be posting highlights from the equitable food system sessions through our social media channels. **Tweet, like, share, and follow the live action on our Twitter and Facebook!**



<https://twitter.com/AccessFood>

<http://on.fb.me/1NDcl2k>

Connect with us and post your own highlights using the following tags:

**@AccessFood**

**#healthyfoodaccess**

**#equitablefoodsystems**

**#equitysummit2015**