2020-24 STRATEGIC PLAN
MISSION STATEMENT
Transforming lives and strengthening community through fresh, local, seasonal food.

TWO GENERATIONS AGO, PEOPLE ATE FROM THEIR OWN GARDENS AND FARMS AND COMMUNITIES RELIED ON A LOCAL NETWORK TO FEED THEMSELVES. Today, the priorities of convenience and cost have replaced healthy, wholesome food. Most produce travels an average of 1500 miles1 from farm to plate leaving people disconnected from the food they eat. Even though the world produces one and a half times more food than the global population, food insecurity or a lack of access to enough healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food is an enormous and complex problem and is directly related to community resilience. Sierra Harvest exists to deliver solutions in the areas of consumption, production and access to fresh, local, seasonal food.

CONSUMPTION: Today families have access to fast, convenient food, but fewer and fewer people spend time on farms, participate in growing or cooking their own food or eat meals together. The result is that the diversity of fruits and vegetables and nutrition in our diets has diminished. This is why we teach 9,500 children how tasty local fresh food can be through our hands-on, educational farm-to-school program.

PRODUCTION: The devaluing of wholesome food negatively impacts our farmers and environment. Less than 5% of food consumed in Nevada County is grown locally. Local, sustainable farms in our community have a hard time competing with larger, out-of-region industrial farms. This is why we offer in-class and on-farm training and mentorship to hundreds of local farmers, building wealth for generations to come.

ACCESS: In Nevada County, 17,000 residents qualify for food assistance while 40% of food produced every year in the U.S. is wasted. This is why we teach people how to grow food where they live and operate a gleaning program providing fresh, organic food to those in need.

Sierra Harvest educates, inspires and connects people to fresh, local, seasonal foods. We do this so that people may again feel empowered by growing food in their own garden, cooking together, sharing their bounty with neighbors and buying directly from their local farmer. We strive to create a place where delicious, nutritious food is available to everyone and eating foods grown organically using regenerative methods are what sustains our resilient community.

With appreciation for the privilege of working with local food and farmers, Sierra Harvest Board and Staff

## A LOOK BACK AT THE LAST 5 YEARS

### Children
- 2014: Schools: 3, Students: 3,300
- 2019: Schools: 3, Students: 3,500

### Farmers
- 2014: Farmers trained: 29
- 2019: Farmers trained: 100
- 2014: Farmers supported to certify organic: 1
- 2019: Farmers supported to certify organic: 5

### School Gardens
- 2014: Schools: 12
- 2019: Schools: 33

### Food Love Farm
- 2014: Students: 5,300
- 2019: Students: 9,500

### Local Food Purchasing
- Managing 225 acres of farmland
- 2014: Sierra Gardens: 30
- 2019: Sierra Gardens: 90+
- 2014: Gleaning: 4,500 lbs/year
- 2019: Gleaning: 12,000 lbs/year

### Supporting Local Food & Farmers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1254x327</th>
<th>304x186</th>
<th>238x327</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sierra Gardens: 30</td>
<td>Managing 225 acres of farmland</td>
<td>Local Food Purchasing</td>
<td>Supporting Local Food &amp; Farmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>ughting from local farmers</td>
<td>$100k</td>
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### Vision Statement
Sierra Harvest envisions a thriving local food economy where everyone has access to fresh, local, seasonal food through strong connections among farmers, schools and the community. We envision a network of financially viable farms providing food for the community, where health and wellness is the norm and people are engaged in growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing fresh food.
THE FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLING OF RESEARCH BASED THEORIES ON HOW CHANGE HAPPENS THAT INFORM THE STRATEGIES WE EMPLOY TO MOST EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVE OUR MISSION.

EATING
- People eat and make purchasing decisions based on what is convenient, affordable, looks delicious, tastes good, is familiar to prepare and carries on family tradition.
- Increasing the consumption of locally produced, nourishing food reduces the incidence of chronic diseases.
- Spending time outside, engaged in growing food and then preparing and sharing that food, has significant benefits to not just physical health, but also mental, social, and emotional health.

PRODUCING
- Creating access to land and working capital allows for an increase in active farms producing food and allows for farmers to build wealth.
- Education and a resilient network among farmers give them critical skills and a community that is crucial to success.
- Organic farming can be profitable when farmers build relationships with diversified, reliable local markets.

AVAILABILITY
- Income and the availability of places to purchase healthy, fresh food are the most influential factors in gaining access to that food.
- Teaching people how to grow their own food is ultimately more empowering and provides more nutrients than giving people cheap food for free. Education on how to prepare fresh local food helps people overcome barriers to accessing, cooking and enjoying that food.
- There is enough food in the world to feed everyone; the distribution of it is a large part of the problem. By re-capturing food that would otherwise go to waste, people can eat even better for a fraction of the cost.

CAPACITY BUILDING
- Continued focus on investing in people and talent development and organizational capacity drives results.
- Strong branding, professional communications and public relations build credibility that attracts volunteers, partners and funding.
- Strategic implementation of relationship-based fund development programs will generate sustainable funding streams.

IN 2019, WE ASKED WHAT OUR COMMUNITY NEEDED TO IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING. We talked to farmers, business leaders, program participants, kids, parents, teachers, supporters, our partners and other community members. Our board and staff spent time at a retreat, at a full day community workshop and sat down with individuals one-on-one to understand the complex problems and opportunities associated with feeding a community locally and creating resiliency to weather the impacts of a changing climate. We distilled the creativity, inspiration, perspectives and feedback into a FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN that builds on what we have already accomplished and guides our work keeping a long-term vision active and within reach. The plan includes four unique ENDS POLICIES which define outcomes as a result of the work done by the organization along with corresponding strategies that we believe are the most effective way to meet our ends.

Sierra Harvest thrives on feedback and we will continue to commit ourselves to receiving opinions and suggestions to ensure the plan itself lives and breathes with what is the only sure thing – change!

As the plan unfolds and becomes part of the fabric of our community, we hold ourselves accountable to creating a community where everyone has a seat at the table filled with local fresh foods that nurture and sustain us.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP!
**STRATEGIES**

a) Work with partners to sustain existing farms and support new organic ones through the protection and acquisition of local and regional farmland.

b) Support the growth of local farm businesses through training, education, collaboration and exposure to cutting edge knowledge, infrastructure and innovation.

c) Host and produce events that showcase organic farmers and their products and connect them to buyers to expand markets for local farms. Create ways for people to be on farms and ranches, engaging with one another and their food.

d) Facilitate relationships between local farmers and purchasers helping them overcome the challenges of working together.

e) Support policies that protect agricultural land, reduce regulatory burden on small farmers and support regenerative food production.

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**STRATEGIES**

a) Provide experiences that educate people by connecting them to fresh, local, seasonal foods; thus enhancing their mental, physical and emotional health. (Gardening, food tastings, cooking classes, u-picks, farm field trips)

b) Be a food and farming center that connects people and builds relationships which support a community culture that values and invests in a thriving local food economy.

c) Help people make choices to buy fresh, local, seasonal food at stores and restaurants by ensuring that these foods are among choices available when purchasing fresh or prepared food.

d) Transform meal programs in schools, correctional facilities, hospitals, senior centers and other local institutions to provide scratch cooked meals that are sourced from local and regional farms and ranches in a way that reduces food waste and supports viable businesses.

e) Advocate for local, state and federal policies that incentivize institutions to buy organic, sustainably-grown local food.

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**ENDS POLICY 1**

A community that values and eats an abundance of fresh, local, seasonal food.

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**ENDS POLICY 2**

Successful local farmers that are increasing sustainable food production.

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**STRATEGIES**

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d) Facilitate relationships between local farmers and purchasers helping them overcome the challenges of working together.

e) Support policies that protect agricultural land, reduce regulatory burden on small farmers and support regenerative food production.
STRATEGIES

a) Create programs that build and strengthen partnerships to increase the ability of vulnerable, economically insecure and historically marginalized populations to access affordable local food.

b) Facilitate the procurement of local and regional nutritious foods by institutions that serve vulnerable, economically insecure, and historically marginalized populations.

c) Consult with grocers and local restaurants to offer locally sourced, healthy, seasonal food in a way that is inclusive of all populations.

d) Educate and inspire potential recipients of public food assistance programs to utilize that assistance for fresh fruits and vegetables.

e) Advocate for policies that support equitable access to local, nutritious foods.

ENDS POLICY 3

Equitable access to fresh, local, seasonal food.

ENDS POLICY 4

A thriving, financially viable non-profit loved by the community and by the people who work at Sierra Harvest.

STRATEGIES

a) Centralize programs and operations in a location that builds in efficiencies, serves as a hub of activity to showcase the organization’s programs and partnerships and cultivates community connections.

b) Develop strong and sustainable fund-raising capabilities and nurture a collaborative network of individuals, non-profits, businesses and government agencies invested in a vibrant local food system.

c) Sustain financial resources and secure a return on investments that allow the organization to maintain and expand programs to achieve its mission and vision.

d) Invest in talent development that fosters a culture of innovation and excellence.

e) Create a flexible work environment where staff are valued and rewarded for their contributions.

f) Nurture a board of directors that provides governance, policy and strategic direction to the organization and is able to lead through transitions in executive leadership.
Transforming Lives & Strengthening Community through Fresh, Local, Seasonal Food Since 2008

2019-20 Budget: $900,000

22,000 hours per year of farm fresh education

You’re Invited

Meet new friends, develop new skills, and gain a sense of accomplishment by volunteering. Bring fresh, healthy food and nutrition education to families while having fun too!

Sierraharvest.org/volunteer

Give Monthly

Twelve gifts in 12 months! You can improve access to fresh, local, seasonal food for our community all year-long by giving monthly.

Sierraharvest.org/donate

Come to our one-hour Good Food Tour or host one with a group of friends and hear about Sierra Harvest programs while seeing the impact firsthand.

Sierraharvest.org/goodfoodtours

Photos (left to right): Sabrina Dobbs-Zeitler, Lenkaland Photography, Cynthia Chiechi
From 2014-2019, Sierra Harvest’s budget grew by 200%. The board and staff built financial reserves over the last five years to fund the growth plan for 2020-2024.

### Sierra Harvest Staff

- **Brianna Abundiz**, Senior Farm Educator
- **Jamie Bedony**, Development Associate
- **Makani Bishop**, Engagement Director
- **Edy Casas**, Sierra Gardens Coordinator
- **Frances di Cristina**, Farm to School Director
- **Sandra Barrington**, Farm Institute Director
- **Sophie Larsen**, Farm Educator
- **Miriam Limov**, Engagement Manager
- **Carlyle Miller**, Operations Director

### Farm to School Liaisons

- **Brianna Abundiz**
- **Joy Drew**
- **Melia Cowan Rose**
- **Sophie Larsen**
- **Lori Long**
- **Michelle McDaniel**
- **Anna Mudd**
- **Uta Reimnitz**
- **Shauna Schultz**
- **Lauren Valentino**

### Board

- **Aleta Barrett**, President
- **Kwong Chew**, Vice President
- **Marty Coleman-Hunt**, Secretary
- **Kathy Grimes**, Director
- **Laura Barrytt**, Director
- **Tania Carbone**, Director
- **Shari Elia**, Director
- **Jeannine Glista**, Director
- **Roger Ingram**, Director
- **Erin Silverman**, Director

### Board Members

- **Laura Barhydt**
- **Aimee Retzler**
- **Lauren Scott**
- **Stephanie Stevens**
- **Produce and Food Policy Council Manager**
- **Kellie Todd**

### Community Partners and Advisors

- **Sierra Harvest wishes to thank our board, staff and community partners and advisors in the creation of the 2020-24 Strategic Plan**

### 5-Year Strategic Growth Financials

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This list reflects the Board and Staff members at the time that we completed this Strategic Plan, December 2019.
Fresh Food Education & Access

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Nevada City, CA 95959
530-265-2343
Sierraharvest.org

Photo: Miriam Limov

Designed by amyhalter.com