

INSIGHT 09

COMMUNITY GENERATED SOLUTIONS HOLD THE KEYS TO PROGRESS.

The participants in all identity conversations discussed solutions based on the needs of their respective communities. However, it was noted repeatedly that continued collaboration is necessary to make this work move forward.

The white identity conversation expressed a desire for space for visioning. To build community leadership and voice, BIPOC and Latino identity conversations highlighted the importance of embedding racial equity and shifting power dynamics. In addition, there is a call for both a structural and cultural shift. This recognizes that a shift in culture can cause a shift in food system structure. The goal of this shift was to change how communities and larger institutions spend and share their dollars to provide food and support small farmers' businesses at the same time.

A successful model mentioned throughout identity conversations was food hubs. Food hubs are central to community-generated solutions, as they provide infrastructure, marketing, jobs, and connect farmers with the community. The solution, however, must be accompanied by infrastructure investment to make food hubs a realistic option.



“More institutional procurement, schools purchasing, more money in the system to sustain it to make sure we don’t have a scarcity mentality.”

- URBAN

Other solutions include redistributing resources to communities and farmers who need them. This way, you are not reinventing the wheel but mobilizing existing resources. Additionally, a collective impact model was needed to push solutions forward. By doing so, efforts are coordinated instead of duplicated. A collective impact model is a method of intentionally collaborating and sharing information and resources to address a complex social issue.

There were discussions specific to engaging youth and rural farmers in agricultural work. These included stronger connections between the education system and food system, and more education about land access, wholesale selling, and profitability.

In particular, the Latino identity conversations advocated for the establishment of effective channels and methods of sharing information. Specifically, this group highlighted creating awareness of healthy food options and honoring their existing healthy cultural traditions.

Participants in the Latino identity conversation specifically emphasized the need for engagement in policy and advocacy. A discussion of the various policy influence positions individuals can hold in their communities and at the state and federal levels followed.

“We are a unique group of people due to our culture; the specific food we cook. It would be beneficial to organize ourselves and to invest in growing locally the ingredients we need for our dishes instead of importing them. There should be a focus group who research and invest in farming those specific ingredients that are part of our culinary needs, while at the same time finding a way to support and celebrate our roots and culture.”

- LATINO

Calls to Action:

- Institutions and local governments should be funding community-generated solutions.
- We need to develop mechanisms to hold funders more accountable for how they spend their money and for which programs or solutions they are supporting.
- Projects/organizations should be funded in a way that reflects the interests of those most impacted by the system.

