



## **Maricopa County Food System Coalition Charter**

### **Mission**

To support and grow a food system in Maricopa County that is equitable, healthy, sustainable, and thriving.

### **Core Values**

Our local food system includes: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, selling, eating, recycling and composting, considering how each affects the community, the environment, and the economy.

Four core values unite and guide us in our work. The Coalition will collaborate to support existing initiatives and grow new ones that align with the following values.

#### **Equitable**

- Equal access to quality, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for all residents of Maricopa County
- All parts of the food system have value

#### **Healthy**

- Supports the physical, mental health, and well-being of all residents of Maricopa County

#### **Sustainable**

- Supports the current population without compromising future generations
- Responsible stewardship of our natural resources, particularly of our unique desert ecology

- Resilient in the context of the community, the environment, and the economy

### **Thriving**

- Empowers the community
- Drives a vibrant economy
- Embraces our cultural diversity
- Inspires innovation

### **Methods**

The Coalition will achieve its mission through a variety of methods, including but not limited to:

- Identifying and strengthening existing assets
- Convening diverse stakeholders
- Educating and raising awareness
- Engaging the community and seeking feedback
- Fostering partnerships
- Influencing policy
- Conducting research
- Developing specific projects

### **Principles of Operation**

The Coalition will:

- Work together toward common goals and the greater good
- Share leadership
- Be community focused and collaborative
- Be inclusive rather than exclusive - diversity is our strength
- Respect the values of the communities we serve
- Listen to and respect all opinions and ideas
- Be open to new perspectives
- Acknowledge that no one person is an expert on the entire food system
- Maintain an open exchange of information

### **Membership**

Maricopa County Food System Coalition membership guidelines are intended to provide a clear set of practices outlining membership.

The Coalition membership will consist of four categories:

- Friends of Maricopa County Food System Coalition,
- Coalition Members,
- Committee Members, and
- Work Group Members.

**Friends of Maricopa County Food System Coalition** will consist of individuals who are not members but who are interested in the work of the Coalition. These individuals opt to support the Coalition by subscribing to communication networks to stay informed of the Coalition's work.

**Coalition Members** will consist of individuals who have an active interest in and commitment to the Maricopa County Food System Coalition's Mission, Core Values, Methods, and Principles of Operation. These individuals will seek an active role in completing the work of the Coalition. The Coalition strives to maintain a balanced and representative membership drawn from the entire spectrum of the food system.

- *Attendance* – Coalition Members must attend at least at nine Coalition meetings per year to remain in good standing with the Coalition.
- *Decision-Making* – Coalition Members in good standing are able to participate in the Coalition's consensus decision-making process.
- *Term* – Coalition Members must serve two-year terms.

**Committee Members** will consist of Coalition Members who have an interest in serving on a committee that supports the work of the Coalition.

- Host Committee will be responsible for finding a location for Coalition meetings, providing refreshments, and securing necessary equipment or supplies.
- Communications Committee will be responsible for maintaining a list of Coalition members, their status, and their contact information. Committee Members will keep minutes of Coalition meetings, notify Coalition Members of the time and location of upcoming meetings and important events and information, and coordinate Coalition outreach and public relations activities.
- Program Support Committee will be responsible for ensuring that there is a Coalition meeting facilitator, developing the agenda for each Coalition meeting and ensuring that the work of the Coalition is consistent with its purpose and

values. Committee members will also develop the collaborative capacity and leadership capabilities of the Coalition.

**Work Group Members** will consist of individuals who have an interest in issue-based projects that support the work of the Coalition. Work Group projects must reflect the Maricopa County Food System Coalition’s Mission, Core Values, Methods, and Principles of Operation. Work Group membership will not be limited to Coalition Members so that we remain inclusive of community members that wish to participate. However, each Work Group must have one active Coalition Member to report back to the Coalition.

- *Attendance* – Work Group Members will decide the appropriate definition for attendance based on the project.
- *Decision-Making* – Work Group Members will follow the same consensus model when making decisions within the group. However, work groups make recommendations to the Coalition as a whole and do not have a final decision-making authority.
- *Term* – Work Group Members will decide the appropriate definition for terms served.

### **Endorsements**

Individuals or organizations may wish to express public support of the Maricopa County Food System Coalition’s Mission, Core Values, Methods, and Principles of Operation. The Coalition accepts endorsements as a way of demonstrating standing and influence within Maricopa County.

### **Decision-Making Process**

The Coalition will use a consensus model to reach decisions. We define consensus as an absence of substantive disagreement with the proposal at hand. Where there is a disagreement that is substantial and of deep ethical nature, we invite the member who has that disagreement to suggest a way to constructively address that concern.

Once a proposal has been discussed, the facilitator will test for or call for consensus. At that time, Coalition Members in good standing will be asked to indicate their level of agreement on a three point scale:

1. I have substantive or deep ethical concerns about this proposal

3. I may not prefer the proposal, but I do not have any substantive or deep ethical concerns

5. I wholeheartedly agree with the proposal

Consensus will be used by the Coalition and by its Committees and Work Groups. Committees and Work Groups make recommendations to the Coalition as a whole and do not have final decision-making authority.

The Coalition and each Committee and Work Group will have a facilitator (i.e., moderator, discussion steward) who will host the meeting, ensure there is an agenda that includes items for consensus, and ensure that notes are taken.