

◆ Wednesday, March 6: Online ◆

10:00AM – 11:15AM Opening Remarks

Welcome by Rodger Cooley, Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, & Keynote by Alita Kelly

A warm welcome by the Executive Director of Chicago Food Policy Action Council, Rodger Cooley along with Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Chief Operating Officer of the Cook County Department of Public Health concluding with the inspiring keynote speaker Alita Kelly, founder of South East Market & Jade Rabbit.



11:45AM – 1:00PM

Climate Survival: Envisioning the Next Era of the Food Justice Movement

Mariyah Jahangir

In the face of climate crisis, explore using food, land, and community initiatives as tools for resilient movements. Join an action-oriented session to empower communities, build cross-issue movements, enhance community power, and discuss the future roles of mutual aid, community food projects, and land hubs.

Scaling Chicago Metro Farms for Food Sovereignty

Kelly Larsen

Learn from Working Farms Fund farmers scaling to meet community needs, achieving land ownership, and implementing climate-smart agriculture. Silvia Abel-Caines shares regenerative practices at Garlic eEscape, while Tony Williamson discusses organic growth for CSA and African American restaurants, with healthcare partnerships.

Help This Garden Grow: Mothering EJ Movement in Altgeld Gardens and Beyond

Damon Williams

Explore climate resilience and collective care lessons from Hazel Johnson's life through the audio documentary Help This Garden Grow. Join co-creators Damon Williams, Daniel Kisslinger, and Cheryl Johnson to discuss tangible steps for environmental justice in Gardens, Chicago, and beyond.

Shaping Federal Food and Farm Policy with Your Story

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Key moment for federal food policy: Congress is crafting a new farm bill, and you can influence it. Learn to leverage local experience for national impact in this interactive workshop, enhancing your ability to advocate for climate-friendly, socially-just farm policy.

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02:00PM– 03:15PM

Spring is on The Horizon

Sebastian White

Join our virtual cooking demonstration led by Evolved Network Founder & Chef Sebastian White as he prepares a seasonal Spring recipe. The recipe and instructions will be available if you would like to follow along in your own kitchen or feel free to watch and take notes.

Building Political Power for Climate and Food Justice

Emma Fisher & Markeya Thomas

What is the role of state and local governments in shaping our food systems, energy systems, community resilience, and ability to respond to climate change? How can you make your voice heard? How can we build political power to see action on food & climate justice, which we know are popular with the public? What is the role of narratives, policy, elections, activism, and more?

CASL's Nutrition and Food Equity Efforts in Chicago

Carl Wiley, Shawn Hinkle, Chef Philip Thigpen & Dr. Felicitas Aquegho

Join a 'podcast style' conversation between LYTE Cafe and Chinese American Service League, exploring how each uses food programs for equity, healing, and holistic support. Chef Shawne Hinkle & Creative Director Carl Wiley discuss LYTE Cafe, a youth-led space at LYTE Collective. CASL shares efforts in fighting senior food insecurity with culturally appropriate nutrition in their Senior Meals Program.

Eat Fruit, Capture Carbon: Utilizing Agroforestry for Climate Resilience

MJ Oviatt

This session is one part learning, one part visioning. MJ will talk about the climate benefits of planting trees and shrubs. She will showcase several native and native-adjacent plant species that the Savanna Institute has identified as key perennial crops that could be grown and eaten more in the Midwest. Some of those crops include Elderberry, Hazelnut, Persimmon and Currants. Participants will envision where in their community, on their farms, or on their dinner plates, perennial crops could be incorporated. A climate resilient food system includes trees.

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Mindful Mushroom Growing

Kevin Erickson
Tom Knapp

Learn simplified mushroom cultivation—whether in a lab or at home using common items like toilet paper, straw, woodchips, pants, books, eggs, and coffee byproducts. Explore historical context, our cultivation experiences, and resources for fungi enthusiasts.

Deep Listening and Dreaming Worlds into Existence

Karen Lemke

Explore BIPOC-centric futures through music, meditation, and foodpaths emphasizing reciprocity. Using "Easy Walks and Paddles in Milwaukee," map Foodpaths aligning with the Good Food Purchasing Initiative, amplifying BIPOC-owned businesses and addressing health, environment, labor, local, and animal rights.

Community Food Mobilization in Metro Chicago

Weslynn Ashton
Laura Nussbaum-Barberena

CF-MOB, a 1-year USDA pilot in Chicago, aims to transform food structures for racial justice and community access. Explore public procurement's role in equitable supply chain development, empowering Black, Indigenous, and People of Color stakeholders. Learn about project goals, activities, and discuss potential involvement aligning with participants' goals.

NJ Leaves No Bite Behind: A Climate & Food Waste Curriculum for Students

Sabrina Subhit

Explore the impact of climate change education with the NJLNBB case study—a 5th-grade program on food waste reduction and sustainability. Highlighting post-intervention changes, we discuss how it inspired the NJ School Climate Change Corps. This project involves AmeriCorps members and NJ schools, implementing the "Guardians of the Food Galaxy" curriculum with a lesson walkthrough and audience participation.

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05:30PM – 6:45PM

Urban Porch Gardening

Jatohn Reado

Learn how urban porch gardening can provide fresh produce, foster community engagement, support sustainability, offer educational opportunities, enhance aesthetics and contribute to food security.

An Interconnected Approach to Supporting the Chicago Region's Food System

**Lenore Beyer, Jose Oliva & Cortney Renton
Jack Westwood (moderator)**

Join an interactive talk on Chicago's post-pandemic food system support. New funding models address regenerative agriculture, hyper-local systems, BIPOC leadership, and innovation for resilience amid climate impacts. From Chicago Region Food System Fund to Proofing Station, philanthropy and investment are more collaborative, intentional, and responsive, fostering systemic change. Panelists discuss funding initiatives and community engagement, aiming for a robust conversation.

Creative Movement (Beginner Friendly)

Corine Jones

Artist Corinne Jones' philosophy is to exist in a state of playful exploration. Through the art of movement, she, along with others, discover new ways of existence in the dance space. Corinne is deeply passionate about kinesthetic improvisation and spreading the message that "anyone can dance!" She encourages class participants to be curious, emotive, and continually surprise themselves. This creative session is imaginative for both the body and the mind.

Mobilizing Collective Action through Storytelling

Kola Souza

Addressing climate change, Katherine Hayhoe notes its unequal impact due to racist structures ingrained in colonialism and capitalism. To restore our environment and humanity, rewriting narratives is crucial. Stories, powerful tools for shared understanding, language, and practice, will be used in a creative collective to develop a compelling message for the climate change movement.

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◆ Thursday, March 7: Online ◆

10:00AM – 11:15AM

Narratives to Action – A Community Town Hall

Nick Davis

Empower marginalized communities for food sovereignty and climate resilience through education, storytelling, and collective decision-making. Contextualize food system's history for equitable action.

Re-Naming and Claiming Permaculture: Centering the Margins

Alvyn Walker & Joanna LaFollette
Gabrielle Powell (moderator)

BIPOC Chicagoans reclaim permaculture's roots, centering justice and renaming certifications. Grass-roots founders and certificate students discuss food sovereignty, community care, and environmental justice, fostering dialogue in a digital space.

An Abundance of Growth – The State of Food is Medicine in Illinois

Lucy Peterson, Saria Lofton, & Mary Mora

Celebrate the rise of food as medicine and explore lessons from pilots and subcommittees. Discover Illinois opportunities, like the Medicaid 1115 waiver, to strengthen connections between programs and local food systems. Share program insights and discuss values for equitable, sustainable policies.

Solutions For Food Apartheid: An Approach To Sustainable Food Systems

Dahlia Quintanilla & Taylor Ryan

In this workshop, Taylor Ryan and Dahlia Quintanilla address food apartheid, offering practical tools from CTCT for community organizing and advocacy. The session encourages somatic reflection on participants' ties to food ecosystems, highlighting the revolutionary aspect of communal sustainable food creation and reclaiming food sovereignty.

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From Plate to Purpose: Tackling Food Waste in Chicago

Amy O'Rourke, Anthony Tindall, Adam Peterson,
& Jennifer Herd (moderator)

In the U.S., 40% of food is wasted, with 20% filling landfills. Learn how Chicago and Cook County combat this issue, showcasing city initiatives like composting pilots and school programs, alongside innovative suburban efforts.

Climate Change's Impact on Food Chain Workers

Alexandra Sossa, Fredy Amador, & Martin Unzueta
Rachel Mallinga (moderator)

In this session, panelists will highlight how climate change affects food workers and why they're vital to the climate resilience movement. Despite efforts to address environmental issues, workers face risks from harmful practices, emphasizing the need for their inclusion in climate justice initiatives.

Poetry as Resilience

Gracie Novacek

Explore poetry's role in collective resilience & liberation. Discuss climate resilience in works by authors like Octavia Butler, Diane Di Prima, and Bayo Akomolafe. Write a short poem, no prior knowledge needed.

Decolonize Your Diet: How to Catalyze Global Change through Local Action

Maggie Martin, Nancy Demuth, & Katherine Bissell Cordova

In this workshop by Chicago Fair Trade and Rainforest Action Network, discover the hidden narratives of global staples like coffee, sugar, and palm oil. Participants will explore how they can advocate for justice in global supply chains and learn practical steps for collective global change in minimizing the environmental impact of diets.

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2:00PM – 3:15PM

Serving Up Sustainability: Community institutions' Climate Commitments

Justine Britten, Erica Block, Kevin Smith, & Alex Rodriguez (moderator)

Metro Chicago institutions committed to sustainable food purchasing under the Good Food Purchasing Initiative aim to buy sustainably grown items, reduce carbon emissions, cut plastic use, and divert food waste. Hear from Chicago Public Schools, Rush University Medical Center, and CBM Premier at Cook County Sheriff's Office about their progress.

How SNAP Benefits Can Serve as a LINK to Seed Money for Your Home Garden

Karla Armour

Demystify growing food at home. Learn to use SNAP/LINK benefits for gardening. Utilize kitchen scraps for garden roots. Everyone can afford to grow food and compost in small spaces, empowering steps against food apartheid.

Opportunity Knocks: Cultivate Inclusive and Sustainable Farming Practices

Diana Ibarra & Harlow Righetti

Join Opportunity Knock to witness our mission. We offer cooking and farming programs fostering sustainability, safety, and the joy of homegrown produce. We donate excess harvests, create job opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and aim to empower a resilient, inclusive community.

Black Food Matters: Book Club

Joel Luciano

Join our mini book club delving into "Black Food Matters" by Hanna Garth, exploring contested Blackness through food and cultural survival. Reviewing select chapters, we'll discuss and share perspectives on preserving food culture within our lives. PDF/printable chapters provided.

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Authentic Brand Activism: Ensuring Impact in a Social Media World

Nora Rahimian

Every entity, from large corporations to small entrepreneurs and creatives, holds influence. Audiences now demand genuine impact from brands, not just performative activism. This workshop delves into authentic campaign creation for meaningful change.

Food Justice for All: Empowering Communities With Food Education

Paul Floyd & Ryan D. Johnson

Discover Pilot Light's impact on quality food education in schools. Explore teacher partnerships, engaging resources, and the transformative power of circular food systems. Learn how urban schools can reduce waste and foster connections with food.

Food & Farming Justice: Meeting Short-Term Needs, Tending to the Long-Term

Amy Stamm, Kia Aoki, & Alisa Klein (moderator)

Addressing food insecurity goes beyond distributing culturally relevant food. Access to farmland, education on agroecological practices, and power shifts to marginalized growers and eaters are crucial for food sovereignty. This panel discusses building an equitable local food system that nourishes communities and protects the earth.

You + Me and State Policy: Building Power Together

Molly Pickering, Kiara Jackson, & Rep. Sonya Harper

Join us for a panel discussion focusing on key food and farm legislation introduced this year. Participants will learn about the potential impact of laws on food systems and gain resources to engage and take action. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or new to the field, this session will equip you with tools to shape the future of food and agriculture.

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How Resilient is YOUR Community from a Food/Ag Perspective?

Kim Hines & Joyce Tian

Explore indicators of community resilience in food/ag and how to measure, address weaknesses, and track improvements. Discover CARAT, an open-access tool assessing local food system assets through stakeholder self-assessment, aiming to enhance community resiliency and food sovereignty.

How Aggregate Structure influences Water Flows: Flour Vs. Bread

Shemuel B Israel & Kimberly George

Participants will observe rain's effects on degraded versus aggregated soil, discussing impacts on crops, plants, water cycles, the environment, and climate. Gain holistic insight into unseen factors crucial for preserving life dependent on healthy soil.

Stewardship: Cultivating Joyful Kinship with Land

darien hunter golston

This workshop and reflection space invites participants to examine the ways capitalism, coloniality, and extractive forms of agriculture might still be embedded in our thinking about solutions for the harmful agricultural systems we live within.

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