

# California Healthy Food in Health Care

Harnessing the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to build a sustainable food system



Health Care Without Harm  
San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility

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California Healthy Food in Health Care Survey coordinated by Sapna Thottathil and Kendra Klein. Survey completed by 85 hospitals and health care facilities. See facilities with asterisks at the end of the report for a full list.

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## Abbreviations:

<b>HCWH</b>	Health Care Without Harm
<b>HFHC</b>	Healthy Food in Health Care
<b>HHI</b>	Healthier Hospitals Initiative
<b>SF PSR</b>	San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility
<b>GPO</b>	Group Purchasing Organization
<b>GMO</b>	Genetically Modified Organism
<b>USDA</b>	United States Department of Agriculture
<b>FDA</b>	Food and Drug Administration



# California Healthy Food in Health Care

This report outlines the activities that California health care systems, hospitals, and clinicians are currently engaged in through the Healthy Food in Health Care Program. We wish to extend our sincerest gratitude to all of the health care champions who are working hard in their facilities, their professional associations, and their communities across the state to build a healthier food system. Our future depends on it.

## 127 hospitals participate in the California Healthy Food in Health Care Program

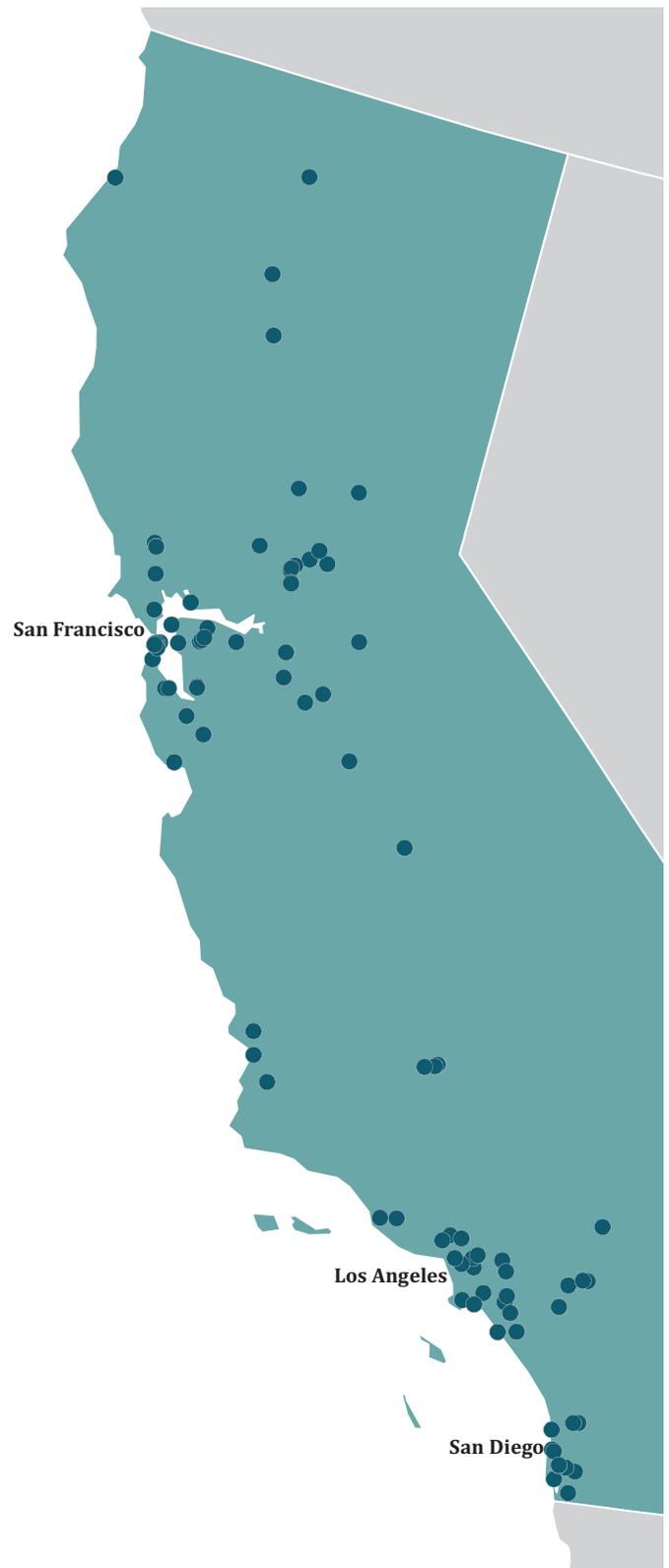
- 78% have a meat reduction and sustainable meat procurement program
- 78% have a healthy beverages program
- 91% purchase local and/or sustainable foods and beverages
- 22 facilities spent a combined total of \$3,582,924 on local and/or sustainable food and beverages in 2012

Statistics are based on the 2013 California Healthy Food in Health Care Survey

## 25% of all hospitals in the state of California participate in the Healthy Food in Health Care Program

Participation includes one or more of the following actions:

- Sign the Health Care Without Harm Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge
- Sign the Healthier Food Challenge of the Healthier Hospitals Initiative
- Engage as leaders and participants in Healthy Food in Health Care efforts regionally
- Use the resources and tools provided by the Healthy Food in Health Care Program to transform hospital food service operations to be more healthful and sustainable



California Healthy Food in Health Care Hospitals



San Francisco General Hospital Signs the HFHC Pledge, 2012. Pictured from left to right are Dr. Michelle Schneiderman, CEO Susan Currin, Dr. Robert Gould, President, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Shermineh Jafariieh, Director of Diagnostic & Wellness Services

Healthy Food in Health Care (HFHC) is a nationwide program of Health Care Without Harm which serves to harness the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system.

Through advocacy and education, we motivate facilities to implement programs that explicitly connect all aspects of the food system with health. We catalyze sustainable procurement efforts, create clinician advocates, and inspire health care institutions to become leaders in shaping a food system that supports prevention-based health care. To date, over 460 hospitals nationwide participate in the program and over 2,000 clinicians have participated in our educational trainings and advocacy efforts.

In California, the HFHC program is coordinated by the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility and a team of organizers throughout the state. The program has grown to include 25 percent of all hospitals in the state, becoming a model for the national program.

“The Healthy Food in Health Care (HFHC) Program has provided benchmarking tools for sustainable food in health care, allowing hospitals and health care systems to better align our purchasing priorities and leverage our volume to change the food industry. The HFHC team has provided guidance and support to Kaiser Permanente by helping us to develop our sustainable food criteria in 2008, and more recently, our Sustainable Food Scorecard. Both of these efforts have enabled Kaiser Permanente to achieve our own sustainable food purchasing goals and set standards that will hardwire sustainable food into the broader food system.”

—Jan Villarante, Director of National Nutrition Services, Kaiser Permanente

# Healthy Food for People, Communities, and the Planet

The Healthy Food in Health Care Program is built on the understanding that all aspects of the food system, including how food is grown, processed, packaged, transported, and consumed, have implications for the health of individuals, communities, and the environment. This system-based approach broadens our sphere of concern beyond individual responsibility and illuminates many avenues for creating positive change. The HFHC Program guides health care facilities to make food a fundamental part of prevention-based health care, moving beyond a medical model focused on treating the symptoms of systemic problems to promoting health at multiple scales.

Over the past century, the food system in the United States has dramatically transformed, becoming more mechanized; dependent on inputs of fossil fuels, synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides; more oriented toward production of crop and livestock monocultures; and more highly consolidated in terms of land ownership as well as control of processing and distribution infrastructure.

In terms of its impacts on human health and the environment, this system can be understood as “broken.” Pesticides harm wildlife while contributing to rising rates of cancers, neurodevelopmental and reproductive disorders;<sup>1</sup> overuse of synthetic fertilizers lead to nutrient-poor soils, an 8,500 square mile hypoxic ‘dead zone’ in the Gulf of Mexico,<sup>2</sup> and *blue baby syndrome*;<sup>3</sup> manure lagoons at Confined Animal Feeding Operations leach pollutants including phosphorus, heavy metals and ammonia while providing ideal habitat for foodborne pathogens and creating noxious, asthma-inducing odors;<sup>4</sup> routine non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in livestock production allows for overcrowded living conditions while leading to antibiotic-resistant bacteria<sup>5</sup> and food production and shipping account for high greenhouse gas emissions, accelerating feedback loops with resultant negative impacts on human health and ecosystem resilience.<sup>6,7</sup>

Industrial food production, processing, and distribution practices are major drivers of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, some kinds of cancer, malnutrition, and other chronic diseases. The current system favors distant distribution of highly processed foods over local and fresh foods, and despite producing large quantities of food, it is wrought by poor nutrition and food insecurity.

Rising rates of food-related chronic diseases are socially and economically-devastating to families and communities and represent an increasing drain on health care resources. Cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions account for \$3 out of every \$4 spent on health care nationally.<sup>8</sup>

In California, two in five adults have at least one food-related chronic disease condition, and one in five adults has multiple chronic conditions. Sixty one percent of adults and one out of three children age 2 - 5 in California are overweight or obese.<sup>9</sup> The time is ripe for prevention-based interventions in health care.

## Nourishing Health Care Employees

It is not only patients who benefit from Healthy Food in Health Care initiatives in hospitals. In fact, employees are poised to reap the greatest benefits since they often eat in the cafeteria multiple times per week. Employing 1.5 million people in California, the health care sector is a key site of intervention to bring healthier food to a racially and socio-economically diverse population. The community of employees within a hospital often reflects the community beyond hospital walls.



Doctors Medical Center, a Tenet Healthcare facility in Modesto, partners with FreshPoint to bring locally-grown produce to employees.

Research shows that health care workers are no exception to rising rates of obesity and decreasing overall health status.<sup>10</sup> What’s more, there is a clear social gradient in health disparities among the health care workforce. Only eight percent of the health-diagnosing professions such as doctors are obese, while 14 percent, 17 percent, and 25 percent were obese in the health assessing, health technician, and health services categories respectively.<sup>11</sup>

## Hospitals as Anchor Institutions

Hospitals can also have significant impacts beyond hospital walls, playing a major role in addressing the broader environmental, economic, and social needs of the communities in which they’re located.

As HFHC facilities across the state recognize, there are mutual benefits that result from supporting a healthy, sustainable food system, including the development of robust regional food systems that can provide the freshest food, improvements in employee health and wellness through increased access to healthy food, and potential reductions in the chronic disease burden of communities served, which could help to keep health care costs under control.

As mission-driven institutions, hospitals across the U.S. are undertaking innovative community and public health strategies and are finding new support through the Affordable Care Act for devising community benefit programs that incorporate environmental and community health factors. As one example, the Farm Fresh Health Care project described in this report was made possible by a grant from the Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit Program.

This report details the variety of ways HFHC hospitals are using their economic power to move the marketplace toward health and sustainability. A single hospital may have an annual food budget of \$3-8 million, while the health care sector spends an average of \$12 billion annually on food and beverages.<sup>12, 13</sup> Even small shifts in food service budgets can create significant, positive changes within the food system.

## Models and Advocates

### Models of Health and Wellness

As recognized authorities on health and wellness, hospitals can model healthy, sustainable food choices and can provide an ideal setting to inform patients and the community about the connections between diet and human and environmental health. Hospitals participating in the HFHC Program are transforming their food and beverage environments to make the healthy, sustainable choice the easy choice.

California HFHC hospitals don't let the story of their facilities' nutritious, socially-just, and ecologically-sustainable food practices stop at the plate, they:

- Post cafeteria signage, such as table tents and posters, and/or use patient tray cards or bookmarks with information about sourcing from sustainable companies, vendors, and farmers
- Promote local, healthy, and sustainable items in cafeterias and on patient menus
- Post signed copies of the Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge in cafeterias
- Include local and sustainable food programs and issues in newsletters
- Create wellness committees and green teams
- Host employee and community engagement classes and educational events
- Upon hire, teach food service staff about the facility's sustainability initiatives

**"Hospitals should become both models and advocates of healthy, sustainable food systems that promote wellness and that 'first do no harm'."**

—American Medical Association, Sustainable Food Resolution, 2008

### Food Matters

In 2011, Health Care Without Harm launched the Food Matters clinical education and advocacy program to educate and activate a broad range



of clinicians on food and health issues. The program offers CME-accredited trainings and webinars that explore the health and environmental implications of our industrialized food system from production to consumption and linkages to chronic disease and the obesity epidemic. Programs review current science around environmental exposures to toxins within our food system and their impacts on pediatric, reproductive, and ecological health. Topics include: pesticides, antibiotics in livestock production, Bisphenol-A (BPA), arsenic, and more.

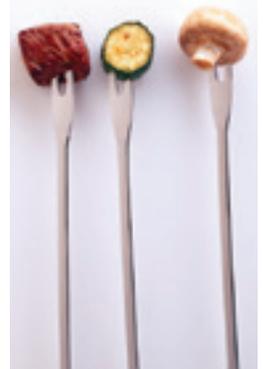
### Advocates for Change

The health care sector can also play an important role by standing behind policies and legislation that support prevention-based health care and a healthier food system. The Healthy Food in Health Care Program creates clinician advocates and inspires health care institutions to become leaders in shaping regional and national policies. In California, hundreds of clinical professionals have taken action, many of whom work on sustainability and public health issues within their hospitals or clinics.

This work builds on over a decade of success achieved by the California Medical Association, the California Nurses Association, and regional medical societies to pass resolutions regulating pesticide use, minimizing exposure to toxic chemicals in food production, reducing carbon emissions, and other environmental health issues.

## YOUR BALANCED MENUS MEAL

We strive to reduce the amount of animal protein on our hospital menus and serve the healthiest, most sustainably produced meat available in order to improve our community's health.



Hospitals communicate about sustainable meat choices with patient tray bookmarks; PDF available on the HFHC website: [www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org](http://www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org)

# Timeline of the California Healthy Food in Health Care Program

Since 2005, the momentum of the Healthy Food in Health Care Program in California has grown tremendously to include 127 hospitals, three hospital leadership teams, and well-established program work on sustainable and local food procurement, meat reduction, and healthy beverages.

2005	<b>FOODMED</b> The first national Health Care Without Harm FoodMed Conference on health and sustainability in hospital food service is held in Oakland, California.
2006	<b>HEALTHY FOOD IN HEALTH CARE PLEDGE</b> The Health Care Without Harm Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge is launched nationally, providing a framework for the health care sector to support a food system that is environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially just. <i>By 2013, 112 California hospitals, along with 349 hospitals nationally, have signed the Pledge.</i>
2007	<b>SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA HOSPITAL LEADERSHIP TEAM</b> The Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team is organized by San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility, bringing hospitals together to share knowledge and to combine purchasing power to create a healthier food system. <i>In 2013, the Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team includes 16 constituent hospitals and health systems.</i>
2009	<b>BALANCED MENUS: LESS MEAT, BETTER MEAT</b> The Balanced Menus Program aimed at reducing meat procurement by 20 percent is launched by four San Francisco Bay Area hospitals. A 2010 pilot investigation conducted by Johns Hopkins University Center for a Livable Future shows that implementation resulted in the reduction of 1,648 tons of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of meat and poultry and can save an average of \$20,000 annually for an average-sized hospital.
2011	<b>FOOD MATTERS</b> The national Health Care Without Harm Food Matters clinical education and advocacy program is launched with a training held at Children’s Hospital Oakland. Food Matters encourages hospitals and health care professionals to become leaders and advocates for a food system that promotes the health of people, communities, and the environment.  <b>POOLING PURCHASING POWER</b> By combining their usage, the San Francisco Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team secures cage-free, humanely-raised eggs from Wilcox Farms through food distributor US Foods. Three participating hospitals’ annual demand of 91,000 pounds of liquid eggs saves approximately 3,500 hens from living in battery cages every year.  <b>SAN DIEGO NUTRITION IN HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP TEAM</b> At the invitation of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, a program facilitated by Community Health Improvement Partners, twenty hospitals come together in the San Diego region to form the Nutrition in Healthcare Leadership Team to increase the health and sustainability of their food service and to support the development of a healthier food system.
2012	<b>FARM FRESH HEALTH CARE PROJECT</b> Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team members pool their purchasing power to secure local produce from family farmers through their produce distributors. The project, co-coordinated by Community Alliance with Family Farmers, ensures farmer-identification throughout the supply chain, allowing hospitals to prioritize family-farmed produce. <i>By 2013, six hospitals have sourced 29,217 pounds of produce from nine farmers.</i>  <b>HEALTHIER HOSPITALS INITIATIVE</b> The Healthier Hospitals Initiative (HHI) is launched nationally, placing the Healthy Food in Health Care work within a comprehensive sustainability platform for the health care sector. The HHI Healthier Food Challenge encompasses the HFHC Pledge, Balanced Menus, Healthier Beverages, and Local/Sustainable Purchasing. Kaiser Permanente, Dignity Health, Tenet Healthcare, and Stanford University Medical Center are all sponsoring systems. <i>By 2013, 95 California hospitals out of 297 hospitals nationally have signed the HHI Healthier Food Challenge.</i>
2013	<b>STATEWIDE MOMENTUM</b> As a result of funding from The California Endowment, the California HFHC Program expands by hiring part-time coordinators in Los Angeles and San Diego and by hosting regional convenings in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego.  <b>LOS ANGELES HOSPITAL LEADERSHIP TEAM</b> Thirty HFHC hospitals in the Los Angeles region come together to share best practices for healthy and sustainable food service and to create a healthier food system.  <b>ANTIBIOTICS IN ANIMAL AGRICULTURE</b> California hospitals lead the nation in addressing the overuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Nearly half of California HFHC hospitals surveyed purchase meat and/or poultry produced without the use of non-therapeutic antibiotics and 78 percent are implementing meat reduction strategies. As a result of funding from the Pew Campaign on Human Health and Industrial Farming, SF PSR hosts <i>Balanced Menus: Meeting Health Care’s Demand for Sustainable Meat</i> at the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) Medical Center. Additionally, 355 health professionals from California participate in national policy actions on the overuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture led by the Healthy Food in Health Care program.

# California Healthy Food In Health Care Survey

The data in this report are drawn from the 2013 California Healthy Food in Health Care survey conducted by San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility. Eighty-five facilities completed the survey, representing 76 percent of California HFHC hospitals at the time the survey was administered.

## Design

The survey was designed to benchmark and highlight the incredible range of HFHC efforts happening at hospitals across the state. Survey questions were developed based on the HFHC Pledge, HHI Healthier Food Challenge, and the criteria established for the national HFHC Awards. SF PSR administered the survey online via Survey Monkey. From June-July 2013, SF PSR emailed announcements to all 112 California facilities engaged in HFHC initiatives at that time.

## Limitations

The survey was not meant to be broadly representative of facilities in the health care sector. It is a measurement of work self-reported by hospitals engaged at some level in HFHC work. Not all questions were answered by all respondents. SF PSR designed the survey to utilize “skip logic” to allow respondents who answered “no” or “don’t know” to skip follow-up questions intended for those that said “yes.” In a few cases, respondents used their own “skip logic.” Thus, we note percentages and/or number of respondents who answered the question in this report.

## Facility Information

Responding facilities ranged in size from 25 to over 1,000 beds. Three quarters of reporting facilities served urban communities.

# Sustainable Purchasing

By prioritizing sustainable food,<sup>14</sup> hospitals can improve the health of patients, staff, and visitors; invest in the well-being of communities and the environment; and help create a healthier, more just food system.

Sustainably-produced foods are not only defined by an absence of unhealthy inputs such as pesticides in crop production or non-therapeutic antibiotics in livestock production, but are more broadly defined as being of minimal harm to the environment, healthy for consumers and producers, more fair in terms of wages and working conditions for farmers and farm workers, more respectful of animal welfare, and supportive of the economic well-being and sustainability of communities, both rural and urban.

Third-party certified eco-labels and USDA and FDA approved label claims are the most clear and traceable way for a hospital to know that the food it is purchasing is sustainable and consistent with its mission as a health provider,

Sustainable Purchasing: Third-party certifications	Percent of facilities
USDA Certified Organic	<b>62%</b> (53/85)
Certified Humane Raised and Handled	<b>52%</b> (44/85)
Fair Trade	<b>35%</b> (30/85)
Food Alliance	<b>34%</b> (29/85)
Rainforest Alliance	<b>10.5%</b> (9/85)
NON GMO Project Verified	<b>8%</b> (7/85)
Marine Stewardship Council	<b>7%</b> (6/85)
Salmon Safe	<b>6%</b> (5/85)
Animal Welfare Approved	<b>5%</b> (4/85)
Protected Harvest	<b>3.5%</b> (3/85)
American Grass-fed	<b>2%</b> (2/85)
None	<b>6%</b> (5/85)

Sustainable Purchasing: Federally-Regulated Label Claims	Percent of facilities
rBGHfree/rBSTfree	73% (62/85)
Cage-free eggs	48% (41/85)
Raised without antibiotics/No antibiotics administered	48% (41/85)
Raised without added hormones/No hormones added	41% (35/85)
USDA Grass-fed	7% (6/85)
No genetically engineered ingredients	3.5% (3/85)
None	6% (5/85)

### Engaging the Supply Chain: Distributors and Group Purchasing Organizations

Broadline distributors like US Foods and Sysco and Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs)<sup>15</sup> such as Novation and Premier are increasingly responsive to the health care sector’s demand for local and sustainable foods. According to survey results, 70 percent of facilities (60/85) report purchasing local and/or sustainable foods and beverages through their broadline distributor.

There are many strategies a hospital or health system can use to increase the availability of sustainably-produced products via existing supply channels and relationships.

“Our biggest accomplishment to date was to build a team and develop tracking mechanisms in order to grow the programs. We decided to focus on three areas: increasing Sustainable, Local, and Organic (SLO) produce; reducing meat consumption; and increasing healthier beverages. We worked with our food vendors to identify ways for us to procure SLO produce and worked with our chefs to assist them in this purchasing process, as well as to focus on seasonal menus in order to match the available fresh produce. The menu planning process was also a vehicle to select more meatless options.”

—Barbara Hamilton, Sustainability Manager, Palomar Health, San Diego

Hospitals can:

- Use the HFHC resources available online, including purchasing guides and contract conditions for distributors and GPOs incorporating sustainability criteria
- Know what is going out to bid
- Clarify preferences through internal food policies and communicate preferences to distributors and GPOs
- Take advantage of the power in numbers by joining with other hospitals and health systems to articulate your preferences as a group
- Ask for information on current availability and for regular updates on new products as they become available
- Encourage vendors to improve search and tracking functions for sustainable items on ordering forms and invoices
- Establish contracts with specifications that meet your sustainability goals and requirements
- Serve on GPO food advisory contract development committees
- Refer specialty suppliers

### Creative cost containment

Hospitals find many creative solutions to manage, minimize, offset or accommodate any additional costs associated with sustainable procurement goals. California hospitals report using the following strategies for containing costs:

- Adjust pricing as needed (38/53)
- Focus on food waste reduction (30/53)
- Reduce spending on other budget items (24/53)
- Streamline inventory (22/53)
- Explain reasons for increased pricing to cafeteria patrons (17/53)
- Commit to purchasing a specific volume (15/53)
- Increase pricing on less healthy items (8/53)
- Increase overall budget (9/53)
- Switch to a room service model (9/53)



### 62% of Facilities Purchase Organic Food

By prioritizing organic food, hospitals support agricultural methods that are healthier for the land, farm workers, rural communities, and hospital patients and visitors. A growing body of scientific data demonstrates that many pesticides used in conventional agricultural production are linked with a range of adverse health impacts including cancers, birth defects, neurodevelopmental disorders, and reproductive health problems.<sup>16</sup>

Purchasing organic food helps to protect vulnerable segments of the population. Farm workers experience the highest level of exposure to pesticides and therefore have the greatest risk of associated health problems, while pregnant women and children are at high risk due to sensitive windows of exposure during which physiological development can be adversely affected.

# Building Regional Food Systems

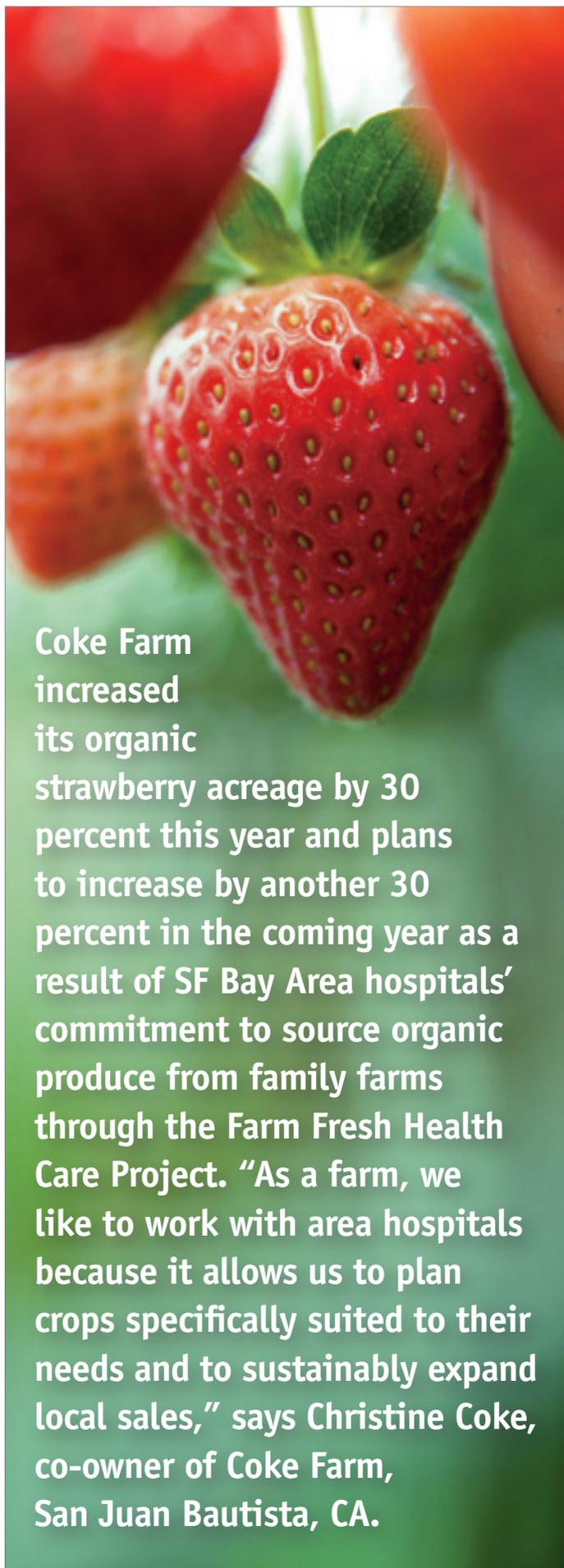
Purchasing local food<sup>17</sup> can help support local farmers, preserve farmland, bolster the local economy, and connect hospital patients, staff, and visitors to the origins of their food. However, over the past few decades, the number of regional food aggregators, processors, and distributors that connect local farmers with hospitals and other institutional buyers has declined as a result of consolidation within the food system.

Health care facilities can play a key role in redeveloping vibrant regional food systems. By prioritizing the purchase of local food through food hubs, farmer cooperatives, and other intermediaries such as regional produce distributors, hospitals can establish important links from farm to plate.

Hospitals can create positive change by prioritizing local foods; defining local food in a way that incorporates criteria related to farm scale and family farming, not just to distance; and by encouraging distributors to increase traceability from farm to hospital by including farm names on order forms and invoices.

## Farm Direct

Hospitals can also support local food economies by establishing a variety of direct connections with farmers and ranchers. Of 85 hospitals surveyed, seven report purchasing directly from farms and ranches, 43 report hosting farmers' markets or farm stands, and 14 report facilitating Community Supported Agriculture programs at their facilities.



**Coke Farm increased its organic strawberry acreage by 30 percent this year and plans to increase by another 30 percent in the coming year as a result of SF Bay Area hospitals' commitment to source organic produce from family farms through the Farm Fresh Health Care Project. "As a farm, we like to work with area hospitals because it allows us to plan crops specifically suited to their needs and to sustainably expand local sales," says Christine Coke, co-owner of Coke Farm, San Juan Bautista, CA.**



Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team members learn about farmland preservation, farmworker concerns, food safety practices, and the impacts of weather on production on a visit to Dwelley Farm, Oakley, CA.

Sourcing pathways for local and sustainable foods and beverages	Percent of facilities
Via local/regional produce distributor	<b>81%</b> (69/85)
Via local/regional dairy distributor	<b>26%</b> (22/85)
From a local, independent company (e.g. a local bakery)	<b>20%</b> (17/85)
Via local/regional meat and seafood distributor	<b>19%</b> (16/85)
Directly from farms/ranches	<b>8%</b> (7/85)
Via farmer cooperatives/local food hubs	<b>5%</b> (4/85)

### Farm Fresh Health Care Project

In 2011, the SF Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team launched the Farm Fresh Health Care project to increase sourcing of local produce from family farmers through their regional produce distributors. Participating hospitals asked distributors to identify farm names throughout the supply chain from order forms to invoicing and even on packaging of fresh-cut produce, allowing the hospitals to wield their purchasing power in favor of local, family farms.

The Leadership Team expanded their definition of “local food” beyond food miles by using the following criteria on farm scale and production practices: Tier 1 - Locally produced on small- to medium-scale family farms, Tier 2 -Locally grown on small- to medium-scale family farms using sustainable farming practices free of toxic pesticides and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

As a result of the commitment of six hospitals in the San Francisco Bay Area, nine family farmers are now selling a portion of their harvest or are selling a greater proportion of their harvests to hospitals; this means more income and more economic stability for the farmers involved. In addition, several hospitals are coming together to work with Dwelley Farms on crop planning, hoping to see more acreage devoted to crops they have committed to purchase in the coming seasons.

The Farm Fresh Health Care project is co-coordinated by SF PSR and Community Alliance with Family Farmers and is funded through a Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit grant.

“Our collaboration with the Hospital Leadership Team on sourcing fruits and vegetables from local family farms has been very rewarding and has been a very good opportunity to educate our staff about sustainability. The project has improved quality and ensured sustainable stewardship of the land as well as increased local commerce.”

—Alison Negrin, Executive Chef, John Muir Health, Walnut Creek, CA

# Balanced Menus: Less Meat, Better Meat

The national HFHC Balanced Menus Initiative is a two-tiered strategy for hospitals to reduce their meat purchases by 20 percent and then invest cost savings in sustainable meat options.

Significant health and environmental costs associated with industrialized meat and poultry production include the overuse of non-therapeutic antibiotics leading to increased rates of antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections, air and water contamination from Confined Animal Feeding Operations, and the contribution to global climate change through methane emissions and land use change.

The Balanced Menus Initiative helps to reduce health care's climate footprint through reducing meat and poultry servings and to create market demand for sustainably-produced meat and poultry. Seventy-eight percent (66/85) of California HFHC hospitals surveyed report implementing a Less Meat, Better Meat strategy at their facility.

“We purchase local Prather Ranch fresh ground beef weekly and have developed our menus and recipes using this product only for our patients and customers. We make our own hamburger patties, meatballs, meat loaf, chili, and taco filling from this beef. (Prather Ranch grazes animals on certified organic pastures and does not administer growth-hormones or feed antibiotics.)”

—Katy Chapman, Manager of Nutrition Services, Mercy Medical Center Mount Shasta, Dignity Health



## Policy Action on Antibiotic Overuse in Agriculture

June 2013: In an action coordinated by SF PSR and Health Care Without Harm, nearly 800 health care professionals (251 from California) signed a letter to President Obama urging him to “move forward with stalled U.S. Food and Drug Administration actions to reduce the overuse and misuse of antibiotics in food animal production.”

## Balanced Menus Strategies

**Less Meat** - HFHC hospitals use a variety of strategies to reduce meat and poultry servings:

- Offer at least one protein-balanced vegetarian or vegan menu option at each meal for patients and in cafeteria (24/33)
- Cafeteria menu is meat-free one day per week (9/33)
- Patient menu is meat-free one day per week (6/33)
- Reduce portion sizes of meat and poultry offered in patient and cafeteria meals (12/33)
- 50% or more of daily meals served are vegetarian or vegan (3/33)

**Better Meat** - Hospitals across California are buying a range of better meat and poultry products:

- Raised without antibiotics/No antibiotics administered (41/85)
- Raised without added hormones/No hormones added (35/85)
- American Grass-fed /USDA Grass-fed (8/85)
- Certified Humane Raised and Handled/ Animal Welfare Approved (48/85)
- Marine Stewardship Council (6/85)

## UCSF Medical Center Says NO to Meat and Poultry Produced With Routine Antibiotics

There is strong consensus among independent health experts that overuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture poses a threat to human health by contributing to increasing rates of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Acting on that concern, the University of California, San Francisco's Academic Senate Coordinating Committee, the School of Pharmacy Faculty Council, and the School of Medicine Faculty Council unanimously approved a resolution in April 2013 to phase out the procurement of meat and poultry raised with non-therapeutic antibiotics at UCSF, urging all University of California campuses to do the same.

# Healthy Beverages

The national HFHC Healthy Beverage Initiative is an opportunity for hospitals to initiate strategies to combat obesity and to reposition themselves as leaders in prevention-based care. The production, consumption, and waste associated with sugar-sweetened and bottled beverages have numerous negative environmental consequences that are often overlooked, such as pesticide use associated with corn production or water use and excessive waste associated with plastic bottles.

Meanwhile, public drinking water in the U.S. has been proven to be just as safe, or safer, than bottled water, making it the healthiest and most cost-effective beverage for health care.

Hospitals across California are increasing education about and access to public drinking water, reducing and eliminating sugar-sweetened beverages, and reducing bottled beverage waste. Seventy-eight percent of hospitals surveyed report having initiated a Healthy Beverages Program at their facility. Over one third are increasing offerings of healthy beverages and decreasing offerings of sugar-sweetened beverages.

California hospitals report using the following strategies to reduce use of plastic bottles and to create healthy beverage environments:

- Offer beverages in pitchers for meetings and conferences rather than single-use beverages (28/43)
- Provide bulk or fountain beverage stations in cafeteria, such as infused water, iced tea, coffee (19/43)
- Offer discounts to customers using reusable containers in cafeteria or at coffee kiosks (15/43)
- Use price incentives to encourage use of fountain drinks over bottled drinks (14/43)
- Provide reusable water containers in cafeteria & indicate availability through signage or shelf space (11/43)
- Eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages (9/43)
- Eliminate single-use water bottles throughout facility, including vending machines and conferences (8/43)
- Provide clear signage in break rooms and vending areas indicating the nearest publicly available water fountain (6/43)

“Here at Downey Medical Center, a healthy beverage initiative for one hundred percent elimination of sugar-sweetened beverages was initiated on December 1, 2011. The Medical Center Administrative Team and physician champions at Downey played an important role in supporting this effort. The 2010 obesity map reveals a high childhood obesity rate amongst the Downey service area; this compelling evidence further bolstered our effort to be a role model as a health care facility.”

—Hellen Chen, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center



A man with a beard, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, dark pants, and a wide-brimmed hat with sunglasses on top, is kneeling in a greenhouse. He is holding a large, ripe red tomato in his right hand. In front of him is a black plastic crate filled with many more ripe red tomatoes. The greenhouse is filled with rows of tomato plants, some with green tomatoes still on the vines. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

**“The hospital farm provides us with the freshest naturally-grown, poison-free produce available to any food service. We strive to include produce grown in the farm in each meal,” says Todd Heustis, Food & Nutrition Services Manager. The 2-acre Mad River Hospital farm, including 4,000 square feet of greenhouse space, yields twenty to eighty percent of the hospital’s produce depending on the season.**

**Pictured here is hospital farmer  
Isaiah Web**

# Healthy Food Environments

California hospitals are rethinking their menus, changing available options, and transforming the hospital food and beverage environment to make the healthy option the default option from both a nutritional and sustainability standpoint.

## Strategies to increase offerings of healthy foods

Over half of the facilities surveyed provide a minimum of one vegetarian option during each meal. Close to fifty percent have created seasonal cafeteria menus to allow for increased use of fresh, local produce when available. Around a third of facilities reported doing one of the following: promote breast feeding, use whole grain options for a minimum of fifty percent of grains and breads, and/or create seasonal patient menus to allow for increased use of fresh, local produce when available. Around a quarter of hospitals have reduced prices on healthier options, eliminated the practice of free formula giveaways, and adopted minimum standards to incorporate nutritionally-healthy and sustainably-produced foods in vending machines, such as USDA Certified Organic snacks and beverages, Certified Fair Trade coffee and tea, and rBGH-free dairy products.

## Strategies to decrease unhealthy fats and sweetened foods

Over half of the facilities surveyed have eliminated trans fats (partially hydrogenated/fully hydrogenated) and created a heart-healthy oils purchasing policy. Close to half have reduced products with high fructose corn syrup while nearly a third have eliminated deep-fried foods from patient meals and cafeterias. Hospitals also report implementing the following strategies: increasing pricing on unhealthy items, implementing a purchasing policy to eliminate artificial food coloring and flavoring, implementing a policy requiring disclosure and elimination of nanotech additives, and ending contracts with fast food companies.

“In 2011, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital passed new Food and Beverage Guidelines addressing food characteristics such as fat, sugar, and salt content, portion sizes, and increased use of whole grain breads and vegetables. These efforts were fully supported by Christopher Dawes, CEO and led by Thomas Robinson, MD, director of the Packard Children’s Center for Healthy Weight. Patients, parents and the community look to Packard Hospital as a leading advocate for children and for health, and this should be reflected in the food and beverage offerings we model.”

—Sylvia Shih, Manager of Dietary Services, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, Palo Alto, CA

# Climate Connection: Reducing Energy and Waste

Hospitals can influence the climate change impacts of our food system through the power of their purchasing dollars by taking steps to select and serve foods that minimize greenhouse gas emissions. These include reducing meat portions, increasing vegetarian options, purchasing and promoting local and seasonal foods on the menu, and purchasing organically-grown food.

Hospitals can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing food waste in their food service departments and by establishing composting programs to divert organic matter from landfills. Research shows that approximately 40 percent of food in the U.S. goes uneaten. As the single largest component of municipal solid waste in landfills, food accounts for a large proportion of landfill-related methane emissions.<sup>18</sup> California HFHC hospitals report using the following strategies to reduce food waste:

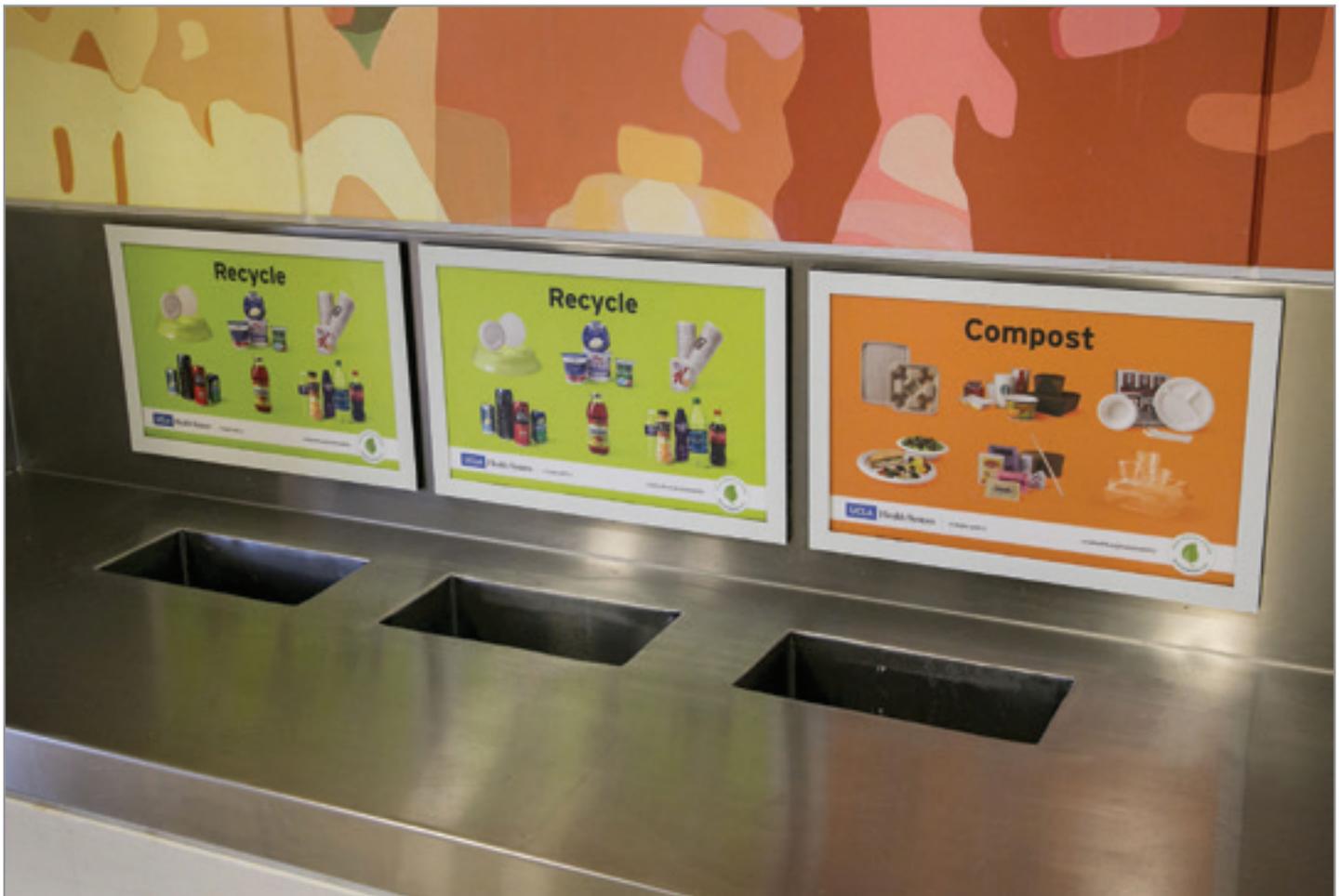
- Prevent overproduction (42/61)
- Track food waste (27/61)
- Reduce trim waste, spoilage, burnt/dropped/contaminated items (22/61)
- Use compostable service ware and take-out containers (20/61)
- Reduce portion sizes (17/61)
- Cook to order/provide room service (14/61)
- Implement a composting program for organic materials (13/61)
- Set food waste reduction goals (11/61)
- Usable food donation program in place (11/61)

In addition, hospitals are major consumers of energy, operating 24 hours per day and expending about twice as much total energy per square foot as traditional office spaces. California HFHC hospitals use the following strategies to reduce their energy and water use:

- Purchase energy efficient light bulbs for cafeteria and back of house (28/60)
- Train staff to turning appliances off when not in use (27/60)
- Purchase Energy Star and/or WaterSense rated commercial foodservice equipment (24/60)
- Conduct energy audits (14/60)
- Create an equipment purchasing policy that prioritizes “total cost of ownership” and “energy/water efficiency” instead of lowest initial purchase price (10/60)
- Replace all pre-rinse spray valves with low-flow alternatives (9/60)
- Implement demand control ventilation systems (6/60)

“When I first started working for UCSD Health System two years ago most of the disposable products used in the cafeterias were made of foam. It was my goal to eliminate foam from both hospitals within my first year of service, and I am happy to say that it was accomplished. Several of the products we use now are made from recycled product and some are compostable. We still have a long way to go, but we are on the right track. Education plays a huge part in what we are trying to accomplish.”

—Jill Uhlman, Retail Manager, Thornton Hospital UC San Diego Health System



Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center diverts an average of 6.44 tons per month of food waste through composting efforts in the kitchen and cafeteria.

# Hospital Leadership Teams

There is strength in numbers. The California Healthy Food in Health Care program brings hospitals together to share knowledge and to combine purchasing power to create a healthier food system. By working together, hospitals can:

- Share innovative strategies, best practices, and product information for healthier and more sustainable food service
- Leverage collective buying power to move the marketplace and to improve access to cost-effective, healthful, sustainably-produced foods
- Create and foster opportunities for collaboration among health care systems
- Work together to make food a part of the healing process and to make healthful, sustainable food and beverages the standard at their institutions
- Raise the “food literacy” of patients and their families, employees, physicians, and the community
- Support evaluation and tracking of food and beverage practices across healthcare systems

“The Bay Area Hospital Leadership team with all of its partners has been instrumental in advancing UCSF Medical Center’s commitment to sustainability. The coordination provided by Physicians for Social Responsibility and other partners such as the Community Alliance for Family Farmers has provided Bay Area hospitals invaluable linkages and perspective from the local farmers. We look forward to expanding and continuing this partnership, which is creating a new model to provide the freshest food to our patients and customers.”

—Dan Henroid, Director of Food & Nutrition Services, UCSF Medical Center, San Francisco, CA

“The San Diego Nutrition in Health Care Leadership Team (NHLT) has developed shared definitions for healthy and sustainable food and beverages to assist with vendor communications, leverage purchasing power, and promote common messaging. In July 2013, the NHLT brought together CEOs from the major health care systems and most of the hospitals in San Diego County to encourage participation in the HHI Healthier Food Challenge and active support for the NHLT. By the end of 2013, the NHLT anticipates that all San Diego County hospitals will have enrolled in HHI and more than a third will have adopted the HCWH Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge.”

—JuliAnna Arnett, HFHC Regional Organizer, San Diego Nutrition in Health Care Leadership Team

There are currently three HFHC leadership teams in California. Please get in touch with the following regional organizers if you would like to learn more or to get involved.

*SF Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team (16 members)*  
Organizer: Kendra Klein, Senior Program Associate, SF PSR  
kleincec@yahoo.com / 415-350-5957

*Los Angeles Region Hospital Leadership Team (30 members)*  
Organizer: Patti Oliver, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, UCLA Healthcare  
POliver@mednet.ucla.edu / 310-267-9224

*San Diego Nutrition in Healthcare Leadership Team (22 members)*  
Organizer: JuliAnna Arnett, Senior Manager, Operations & Food Systems, San Diego Childhood Obesity Initiative, facilitated by Community Health Improvement Partners  
jarnett@sdchip.org / 858-609-7962

# Healthy Food In Health Care Award Winners

In 2011, Health Care Without Harm launched the HFHC Awards Program to recognize excellence in sustainable food service at health care institutions across the country. All HFHC hospitals can apply for awards by completing the bi-annual national HFHC survey.

California hospitals and individuals have been recognized nationally for their leadership on HFHC initiatives. For more details about award winners, please see the Menu of Change Reports at [www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org](http://www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org).

**The Sustainable Food Procurement Award** recognizes leading facilities that promote health by providing sustainable food choices for patients, staff, and the community.

- 2011 Third Place: John Muir Medical Center, Concord, CA

**The Food Climate Health Connection Award** recognizes leading facilities that are taking significant steps toward reducing their climate footprint.

- 2011 Second Place: John Muir Medical Center, Concord, CA
- 2013 First Place: Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Palo Alto, CA
- 2013 Second Place: Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA

**The Exemplary Food Service Professional Award** recognizes leading food service professionals for making the critical link between our industrialized food system and public health.

- 2013 Second Place: Jack Henderson, UCSF Medical Center, San Francisco, CA

# California Healthy Food in Health Care Hospitals

*\* represents facilities that completed the 2013 CA HFHC Survey*

Alvarado Hospital

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center \*

*Cottage Health System*

Santa Ynez Valley Cottage Hospital

Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital

Cottage Rehabilitation Hospital

Cottage Children's Hospital

Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital

*Dignity Health*

Arroyo Grande Community Hospital

Bakersfield Memorial Hospital

California Hospital Medical Center \*

Community Hospital of San Bernardino \*

Dominican Hospital \*

French Hospital Medical Center \*

Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center

Marian Regional Medical Center

Mark Twain St. Joseph's Hospital \*

Mercy General Hospital \*

Mercy Hospital of Folsom

Mercy Hospitals of Bakersfield – Southwest Campus \*

Mercy Hospitals of Bakersfield – Truxtun Campus \*

Mercy Medical Center Merced \*

Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta \*

Mercy Medical Center Redding

Mercy San Juan Medical Center

Methodist Hospital of Sacramento

Northridge Hospital Medical Center \*

Oak Valley Hospital

Saint Francis Memorial Hospital \*

Sequoia Hospital

Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital \*

St. Bernardine Medical Center \*

St. Elizabeth Community Hospital

St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital

St. John's Regional Medical Center

St. Joseph's Behavioral Health Center

St. Joseph's Medical Center Stockton \*

St. Mary Medical Center Long Beach

St. Mary's Medical Center San Francisco

Woodland Healthcare

*Hoag Health Network*

Hoag Hospital Irvine

Hoag Orthopedic Institute

Hoag Hospital Newport Beach \*

Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital

*John Muir Health*

John Muir Health Behavioral Health Center  
John Muir Health, Concord Campus \*  
John Muir Health, Walnut Creek Campus \*

*Kaiser Permanente*

Antioch Medical Center \*  
Baldwin Park Medical Center \*  
Downey Medical Center \*  
Fontana Medical Center \*  
Fremont Medical Center \*  
Fresno Medical Center \*  
Hayward Medical Center \*  
Los Angeles Medical Center \*  
Los Angeles Mental Health Center \*  
Manteca Medical Center \*  
Modesto Medical Center \*  
Oakland Medical Center \*  
Ontario Medical Center \*  
Orange County - Anaheim Medical Center \*  
Orange County - Irvine Medical Center \*  
Panorama City Medical Center \*  
Redwood City Medical Center \*  
Richmond Medical Center \*  
Riverside Medical Center \*  
Roseville Medical Center \*  
Sacramento Medical Center \*  
San Diego Medical Center \*  
San Francisco Medical Center \*  
San Rafael Medical Center \*  
Santa Clara Medical Center \*  
Santa Rosa Medical Center \*  
San Jose Medical Center \*  
South Bay Medical Center \*  
South Sacramento Medical Center \*  
South San Francisco Medical Center \*  
Vacaville Medical Center \*  
Vallejo Medical Center \*  
Walnut Creek Medical Center \*  
West Los Angeles Medical Center \*  
Woodland Hills Medical Center \*

Kentfield Rehabilitation and Specialty Hospital

Mad River Community Hospital \*

Methodist Hospital of Southern California \*

Newport Hospital

*Palomar Health*

Palomar Pomerado Hospital \*  
Palomar Medical Center \*  
Palomar Health Downtown Campus \*

*Providence Health*

Providence St. Joseph Medical Center\*  
Providence Holy Cross Medical Center

Rady Children's Hospital San Diego \*

San Francisco General Hospital \*

San Francisco VA Medical Center

*Scripps Health*

Scripps City Heights Wellness Center \*  
Scripps Memorial Hospital Encinitas \*  
Scripps Green Hospital \*

Scripps Mercy Hospital Chula Vista

Scripps Mercy Hospital San Diego

Scripps Memorial La Jolla

*Sharp HealthCare*

Sharp Coronado Hospital \*  
Sharp Chula Vista Hospital \*  
Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital \*  
Sharp Memorial Hospital \*  
Sharp Grossmont Hospital

Simi Valley Hospital, Adventist Health

*Stanford University Medical Center*

Stanford Hospital  
Lucile Packard Children's Hospital \*

*St. Joseph Health System*

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital Main Campus \*  
Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital Ambulatory Surgery Center  
St. Jude Medical Center \*  
St. Joseph Hospital of Orange \*  
St. Mary Medical Center \*  
Petaluma Valley Hospital

*Sutter Health*

Alta Bates Summit Medical Center \*  
Sutter Amador Hospital  
Mills-Peninsula Medical Center \*

*Tenet Healthcare*

Tenet Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center  
Tenet Doctors Medical Center of Modesto \*

Tri-City Medical Center \*

*University of California Health System*

UC Davis Medical Center  
UCLA Medical Center, Ronald Reagan \*  
UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica  
UC San Diego - Hillcrest Hospital \*  
UC San Diego - Thornton Hospital \*  
UC San Diego - SCVC  
UCSF Medical Center \*

Washington Hospital Healthcare System \*

# Endnotes

1. Sutton, Pattrice, David Wallinga, Joanne Perron, Michelle Gottlieb, Lucia Sayre, and Tracey Woodruff (2011). Reproductive Health and the Industrialized Food System: A Point of Intervention for Health Policy. *Health Affairs*. 20(5): 888–897.
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13. Harvie, J. (2006). Redefining Healthy Food: An ecological health approach to food production, distribution, and procurement. Paper presented by The Center for Health Design and Health Care Without Harm at a conference sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *Designing the 21st Century Hospital*. Hackensack, NJ. September.
14. Sustainable is foods and beverages are defined by HCWH as: Third-party certified, i.e., USDA Certified Organic, Food Alliance Certified, Rainforest Alliance Certified, Protected Harvest, Fair Trade Certified, Bird Friendly, Certified Humane Raised and Handled, Animal Welfare Approved, Salmon Safe, NON GMO Project, Marine Stewardship Council. AND/OR Approved to carry one or more of the following USDA or FDA approved label claims: "Raised without antibiotics" or "No antibiotics administered" (poultry and meat products); "Raised without added hormones" or "No hormones added" (beef and lamb only); "No genetically engineered ingredients" (products made from corn, soy, canola or their derivatives); "rBGH-free", "rBST-free", "Grass-fed" (products from ruminants such as beef cattle, dairy cattle, lamb).
15. Hospitals typically commit to purchasing 80 to 90 percent of their food budget through a Group Purchasing Organization (GPO). GPOs serve as brokers between hospitals and vendors, pooling many hospitals' buying power to negotiate lower prices and to secure rebates. GPOs source the majority of food and food service products through broadline distributors.
16. Sutton, Pattrice, David Wallinga, Joanne Perron, Michelle Gottlieb, Lucia Sayre, and Tracey Woodruff (2011). Reproductive Health and the Industrialized Food System: A Point of Intervention for Health Policy. *Health Affairs*. 20(5): 888–897.
17. Local is defined by the national HFHC Program as grown/raised and processed within 250-miles of the health care facility. For processed foods with multiple ingredients, including breads and other bakery items, only products with the majority of ingredients (>50% by weight) grown/raised and processed within the 250-mile radius may be considered local.
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