



## Culminating Project

# Food Citizen Action Project



Students will identify a food system problem and design an intervention to address it. This project has students apply what they have learned from prior lessons, and empowers them to create change.

Divide the class into small groups. Each group will:

1. Choose a food system problem to address
2. Describe any downstream effects of the problem on public health, society, and/or ecosystems
3. Identify factors that contribute to the problem, and choose one factor that the intervention will act upon
4. Design the intervention, including:
  - an achievable goal (encourage students to keep it realistic)
  - specific action steps
  - how the effects of the intervention will be measured
5. Identify allies who could help implement the intervention
6. Anticipate potential barriers, including groups in opposition to the intervention, and how they could be overcome

Groups may implement all or part of their intervention, if possible. Local interventions will generally be more feasible, but ambitious students should not be discouraged from working on a state or national issue. Examples are provided in the teacher guide on page 2.

Have each group share what they learned (and what the intervention achieved, if it was implemented) through a written report and/or presentation. Reports and presentations should include all of the numbered items above.



*Share Your Impact: Ask students to spread the word about their projects on social media and the Food Citizen Action Project page. Tag **#foodcitizen**, **#foodspanaction**, and **#foodspan** to join the conversation.*

# Teacher guide

If students need help generating ideas, the following examples might jump-start their brainstorming.

|                             | Example 1   | Example 2  | Example 3  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Problem</b>              | High consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages among students  | Lack of access to healthy food in the community                                  | High rates of wasted food  |
| <b>Downstream effects</b>   | Increased risk of obesity and diet-related disease  | Hunger, food insecurity, increased risk of obesity and diet-related disease      | Greenhouse gas emissions from landfills, wasted resources, missed opportunities to feed people           |
| <b>Contributing factors</b> | Availability of sugary drinks in the food environment, behaviors of friends and family, marketing, lack of knowledge about health risks, etc. | Poverty, lack of supermarkets, corner stores may not carry healthy options, etc. | Unwillingness of stores to stock “ugly” produce, large portion sizes, plate waste, etc.                  |
| <b>Intervention</b>         | Campaign to change school policy on selling sugary drinks   | Develop a plan for a farmers’ market and present it to government officials      | Measure the amount of wasted food at school and offer a prize to the lunch period with the lowest amount |
| <b>Potential allies</b>     | Teachers, school administrators, PTA members, public health experts   | Local farmers, community leaders, non-profits working to promote food security   | Teachers, cafeteria staff  |
| <b>Potential barriers</b>   | Sales of sugary drinks may generate revenue for school sports teams and clubs   | Available land may be designated for other uses, e.g., real estate development   | Measuring food waste may be difficult, and would require permission from school administrators           |