



# Episode 2: An Exploration of Urban Food Policy

## Background & Relevance

**Circular local government development** is dependent on the "rethink, regenerate, reduce, reuse, recover" of goods and materials. Urban food policy is an intersectional, multidisciplinary topic that lives primarily within ICLEI's Circular Development Pathway but it is influenced by the low emissions, equitable and people-centered, and nature-based development pathways.

**Food justice, the movement that identifies healthy food and access as a human right**, shapes how policy aligns with community needs. Food insecurity is a result of insufficient distribution and access, causing mental and physical harm and ultimately contributing to food injustice, food waste and climate injustice. Food is the single largest component of disposed municipal solid waste. Its policy is integral in ensuring a community's sustainable transition and circular development. Local governments are uniquely positioned to develop and implement solid waste programs and have direct regulatory control.

### Key Takeaways

- 1** The decolonization of food and food access is critical to achieve sustainable, equitable food security.
- 2** Successful food policy and its implementation is symbiotic with extensive community engagement.
- 3** When beginning to implement community food policy, have an understanding of the shared vision, food data analysis and scope of plan.

## Food Justice Statistics:

- 40% of all food in the United States is wasted, generating greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 37 million passenger vehicles each year.
- In 2020, 21.7% of Black households experienced food insecurity, compared to 7.1% of White households.
- Landfills account for 16% of all US methane emissions. These methane emissions are 84 times more potent than carbon dioxide.
- \$165 billion, 300 million barrels of oil, and 21% of the US fresh water supply is used to produce wasted food.

([Climate Equity Policy Center](#))



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](#). It may not be used for any commercial purpose. Any non-commercial use of this material must provide attribution to ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability USA.

