



**For Immediate Release
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INAUGURAL LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF FOOD EQUITY LAUNCHES Food advocate and leader Paula Daniels named first Executive Director

A partnership formed by the County of Los Angeles and leading Los Angeles philanthropic organizations today announced the formation of the **Los Angeles County Office of Food Equity (LAC-OFE)**. The L.A. County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported the creation of the initiative, which aims to address the root causes of food-system problems in our region.

The partnership also announced that **Paula Daniels** -- who previously served as Senior Advisor on Food Policy to former L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and founded the L.A. Food Policy Council -- will be leading the L.A. County Office of Food Equity. The initiative is being incubated as a public-private partnership among the County of Los Angeles, the Annenberg Foundation, the California Community Foundation and the Weingart Foundation.

Daniels will work to expand the Countywide commitment to food system goals and advance implementation of key priorities in the multi-prong [Action Plan](#) developed by the [Los Angeles County Food Equity Roundtable](#), a stakeholder advisory group of diverse experts from various sectors of the food system. The County's Emergency Food Security Branch and the three foundations created the Roundtable in 2021. Nearly 200 thought leaders from various sectors engaged in the initiative, all focused on fundamentally transforming the region's disconnected food system.

This multi-sector effort began in response to the global pandemic, when food from the supply chain went to waste and many farmers faced financial crisis even as vulnerable populations sought greater access to health and nutritious food.

[According to a USC report](#), 1 in 3 households (34%) in LA County experienced food insecurity during the pandemic; the number still hovers at around 30% today. Yet, the County is home to

more than 1,000 farms and sits adjacent to Southern and Central California counties that are the country's largest producers of fruits, nuts and vegetables.

“The County has a responsibility to act as a safety net for our most vulnerable communities, who disproportionately suffer from food insecurity,” said **L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn, who helped create the Food Equity Roundtable**. “This new Office of Food Equity marks an important first step in bringing the Roundtable’s Action Plan to life and helping those most in need. This investment will pay dividends throughout the County for years to come.”

The new Office of Food Equity represents a deepening commitment by L.A. County toward creating comprehensive approaches and developing concrete solutions to address food and nutrition insecurity regionally while at the same time creating markets for the region’s local farmers. The Office seeks to improve the affordability of healthy foods; increase the equitable access to nutritious foods; build market demand and consumption of nourishing food; and support sustainability and resilience in food systems and supply chains.

“In order to prevent the paradox we experienced during the pandemic – of long lines for food at the same time that so much fresh food from local farmers was wasted with nowhere to go – we need to work toward a renovation of the local food system. We need more resilience all along the supply chain,” said Daniels. “That means building a more robust, community-focused food system that can support our local businesses from farm to fork while incentivizing for affordability for our populations of need. This will be an office of innovation and entrepreneurialism.”

The new Office will be housed at Community Partners, the Los Angeles-based nonprofit fiscal sponsor and intermediary organization. The Office will benefit from private sector support as well as a list of L.A. County multi-departmental staff liaisons that was curated by the County’s Chief Executive Office.

“We are happy to support this innovative approach to solving critical issues like food insecurity. Bringing together key stakeholders through public-private partnerships like these creates the level of sustained focus and collective impact needed to achieve the results we all want,” said **L.A. County Chief Executive Officer Fesia Davenport**.

“This Office represents the commitment of many stakeholders to tangibly reduce food insecurity and re-create a food system that supports all of Los Angeles,” said **Cinny Kennard, executive director of the Annenberg Foundation and co-chair of the Los Angeles County Food Equity Roundtable**. “We are thrilled to have Paula Daniels as our inaugural Executive Director as she brings a lifetime of experience, knowledge and creativity to this critical challenge.”

Read more about Paula Daniels’ vision for values-driven food policies [here](#). Daniels is also known for co-founding the Center for Good Food Purchasing, which works with large food service operations in over 25 major metropolitan areas around the country to improve their “Good Food” purchasing scores; the organization’s signature program received recognition from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2018.

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