

Food Security Survey Results



Creating a resilient local food system

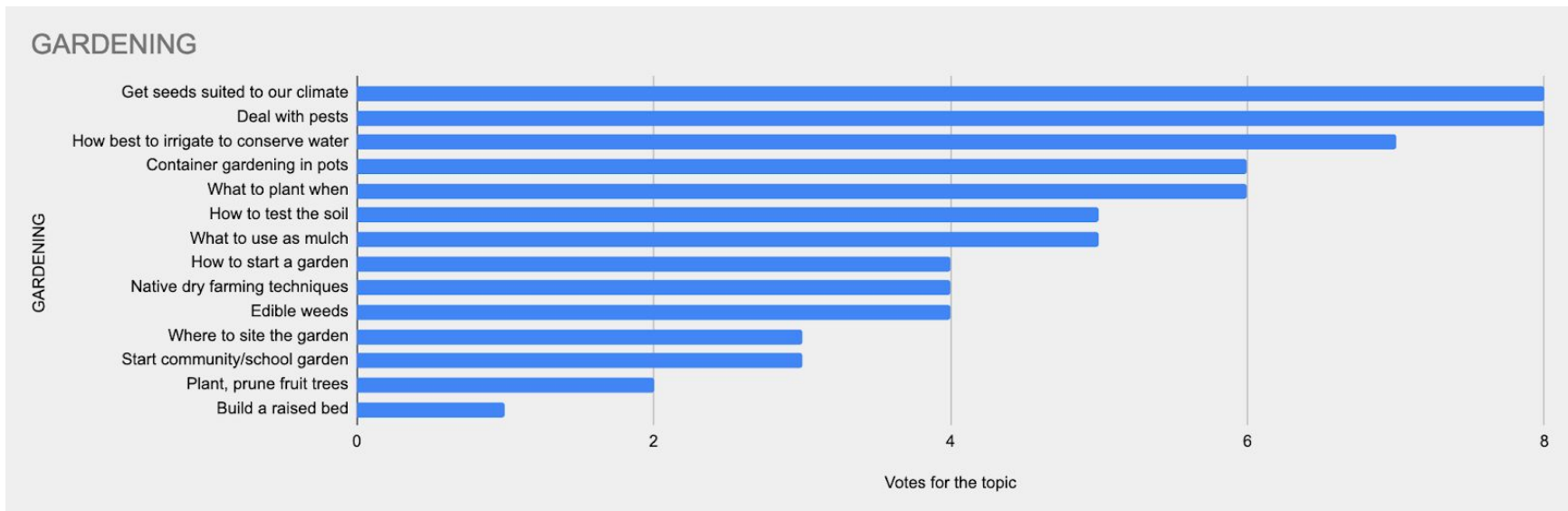
How can the Sustainability Alliance help you grow food and source it locally

In May 2020, the Sustainability Alliance conducted a simple survey to identify food-related interests and needs in the region around four general areas: gardening, cooking, sourcing and food waste/recovery.

This report summarizes our findings and provides links to resources.

GROWING FOOD

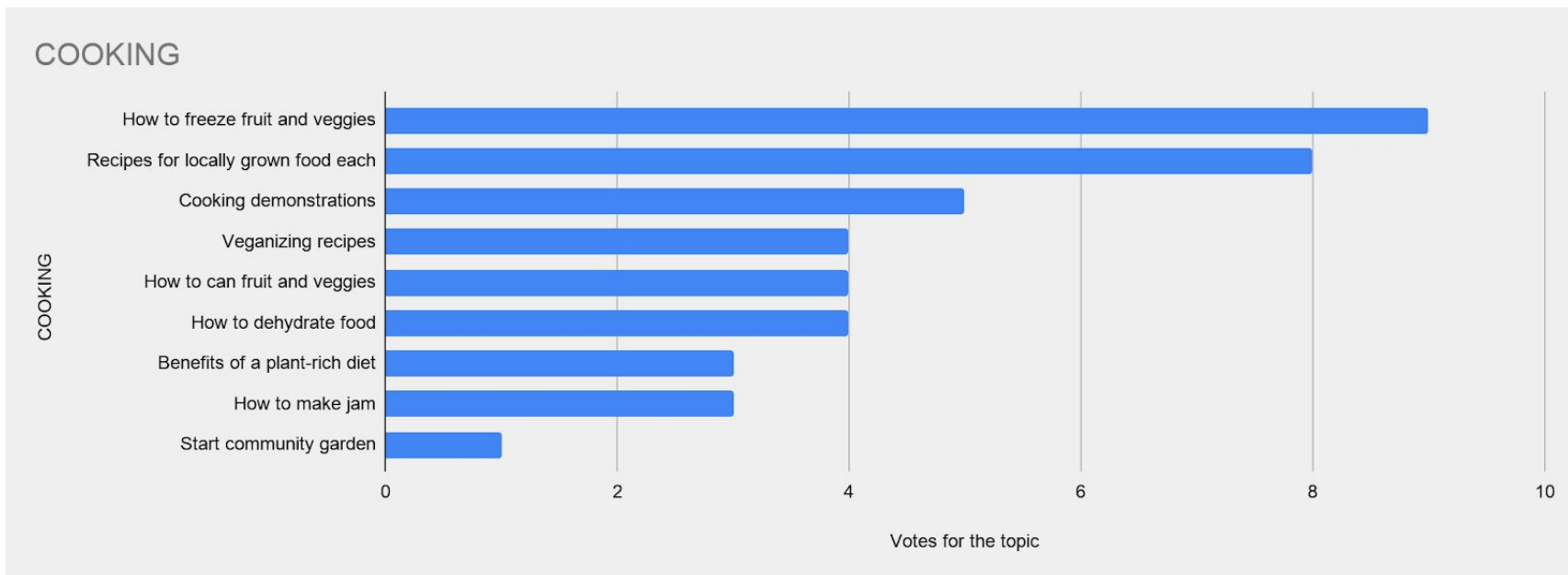
Related to gardening, the greatest interest was in getting seeds suited to our climate, dealing with pests and conserving water. Our member, Gardens for Humanity, has published [a number of resources](#). You can [request seeds](#) through the Seed Library and [Verde Valley School](#) has been selling plants and seeds.



There are two local newsletters that provide a lot of information about gardening: [Gardens for Humanity](#) (subscribe button is on right column) and [Slow Food Prescott](#) (you can subscribe on this [recent newsletter](#)).

Preparing Food

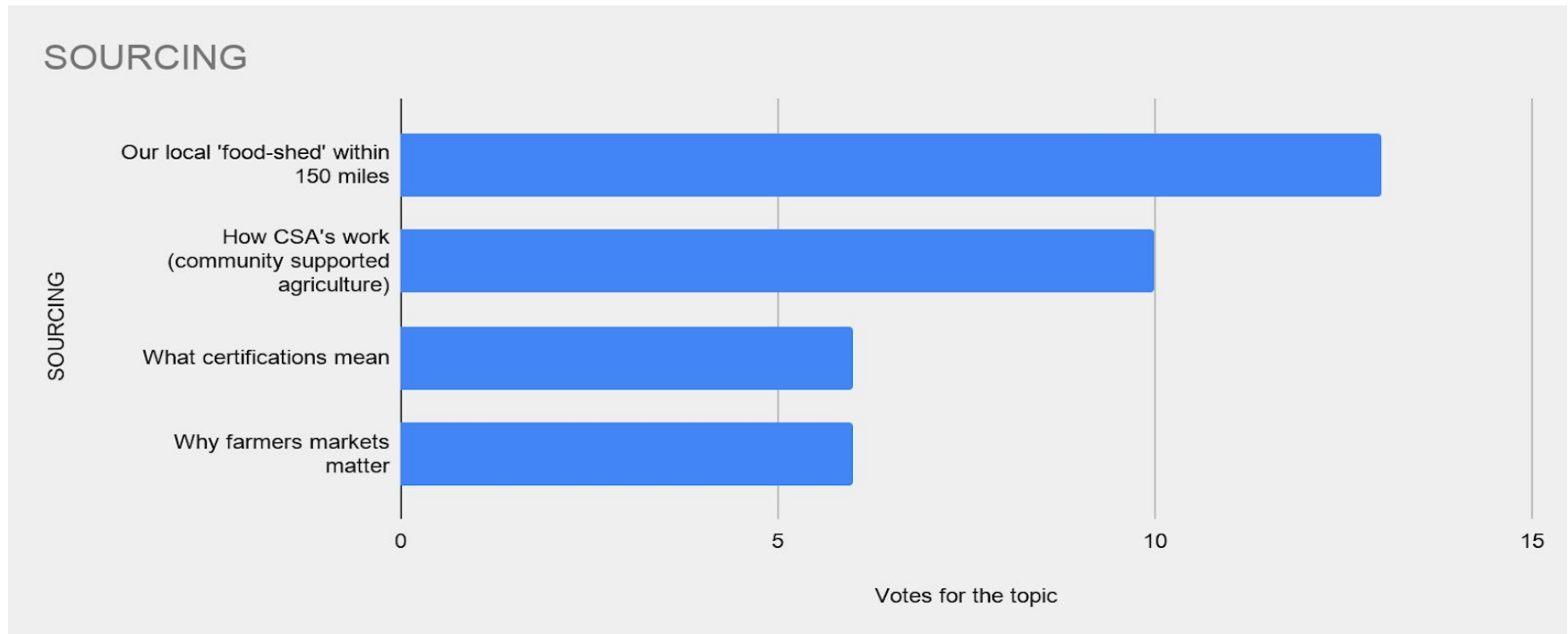
Regarding food preparation, there was quite a bit of interest in various methods of food preservation (freezing, canning, dehydrating) and a number of people wanted recipes for locally grown food for each season. Two of our certified sustainable businesses offer training and recipes on plant-based menus: Chris Kalinich with [Plant2Platter](#) and Linda Voorhis of [Veganification](#). We may develop an online cookbook with recipes tied to what's available each season.



You can learn more about how to cook healthy meals through [Healthy World Sedona](#). [Slow Food Prescott](#) often includes a recipe in their newsletter as well. (You can subscribe on this [recent newsletter](#)). Two of our certified sustainable businesses offer coaching and cooking demos around a plant-based diet: [Plant2Platter](#) and [Veganification](#).

Sourcing local food

Regarding sourcing our food, there was a lot of interest in what can be purchased within our local area.



The [GoodFoodFinder](#) helps you find farmers markets, CSA's and local food near you (in Arizona). Watch [NextDoor](#) for offerings in your neighborhood or share your excess backyard bounty there.

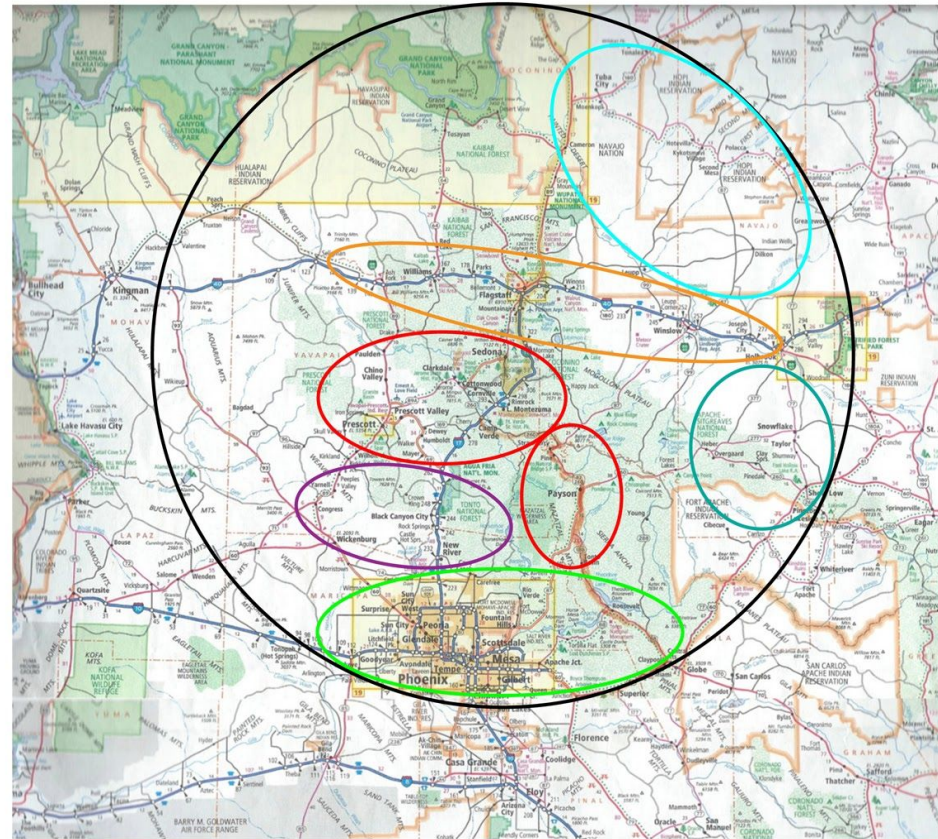
LOCAL FOOD SHED - THE 120 MILE DIET









On this map, you can see the many types of foods available within 120 miles of the Verde Valley. Within quite a small radius, we have most of the foods we would need to be healthy. The map was prepared by Richard Sidy for the Verde Valley Food Coalition. (Download this [map](#).)

He notes that Arizona actually exports agricultural products:

Historically the [Flagstaff area was an exporter of beans](#).

Also, [AZ exports food and ag products to over 70 countries](#) (not bad for a state that depends largely on imported food)

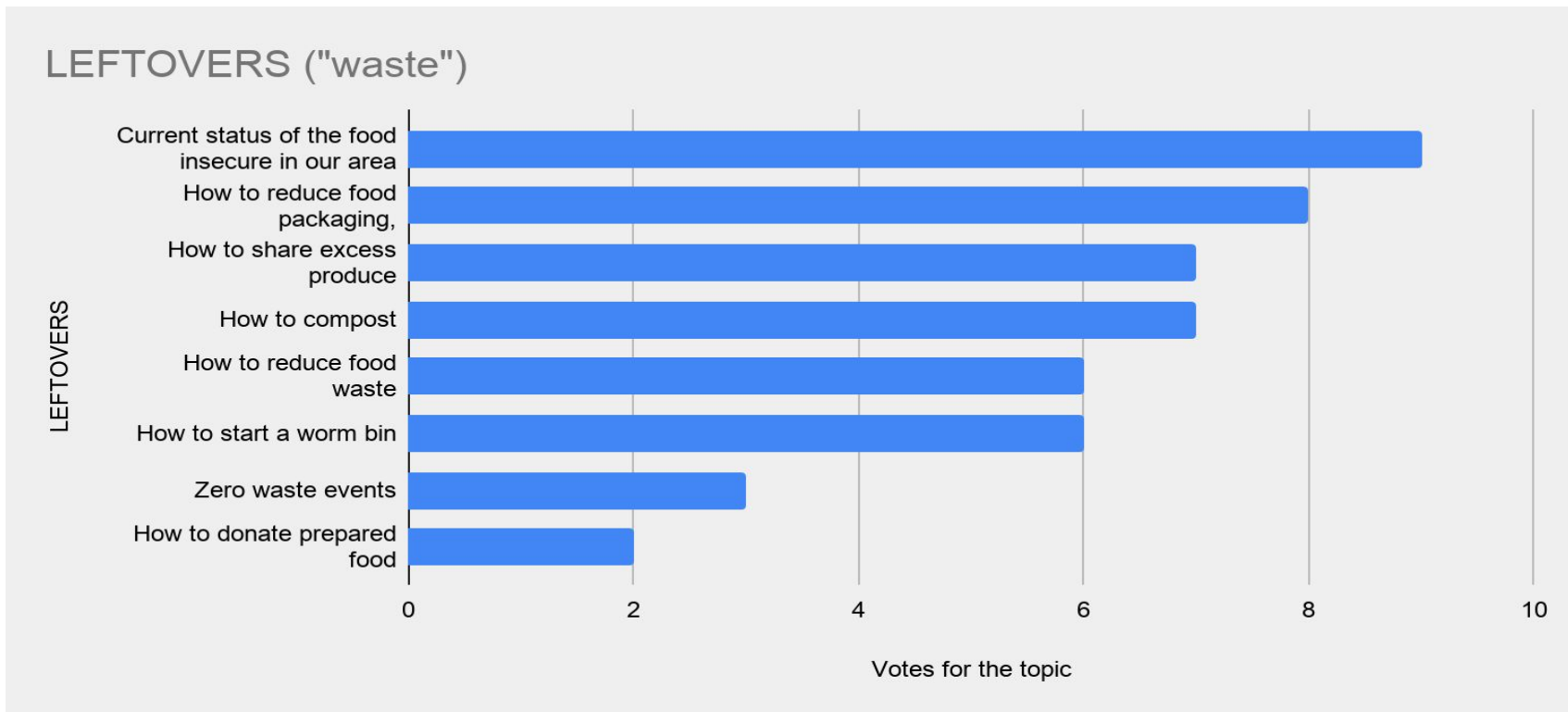


-  120 Mile radius of Sedona - the local food shed
-  Verde watershed: Fruit trees, diverse produce, mesquite, grapes, livestock, chickens, aqua-culture, grains, nuts. Commercial agriculture, home, institution and community gardens. Mainly Spring to Fall season.
-  Middle Gila watershed: Citrus, Olives, diverse produce, desert foods - mesquite, palo verde, cactus; grains, livestock, chickens, aqua-culture, grapes. Commercial agriculture, home, institution and community gardens. Mainly Fall to Spring season.
-  Rural communities: Range cattle, home gardens. No large retail food outlets - food desert.
-  Flagstaff I-40 corridor: Range cattle, potential for grains, potatoes, home and community gardens. Several communities far from retail food outlets.
-  Rural communities: Small scale farming, diverse produce, livestock, chickens, home gardens. Morman influence emphasizes community self-reliance, preserving and storing foods.
-  Navajo & Hopi reservation: Churro sheep, traditional small-scale agriculture, home and community gardens. Very far from major retail food outlets - food desert.
-  Undefined Areas - National forest, sparsely settled. Rural communities are food deserts. Range cattle.

NOTE: All areas are suitable for raising bees for honey production and pollination. While not food, many areas are suitable for fibers such as cotton, flax and hemp, as well as for production of ethanol or other biofuels, lumber. Most areas may be suitable for greenhouse food production, but would require infrastructure providing water and energy.

Food waste and recovery

Regarding food recovery and food waste, people were most interested in the status of food insecurity and what to do with surplus and food waste.



Regarding food insecurity, the most recent information we have comes from Cornucopia Community Advocates. According to their report,

“In 2020, the Verde Valley has roughly 25,000 residents earning up to \$24,000 per household per year at 185% of the federal poverty level. These persons are food-insecure or at risk of becoming food insecure. They comprise 33% of the 74,372 Verde Valley population.”

Getting data about food insecurity during the pandemic is difficult, but it’s fair to say it’s much worse than the situation that was already alarming and widespread. See the table by zipcode.

As [Jasmine Crowe points out in her TedTalk](#), we’re addressing food insecurity all wrong. I put it this way in a [recent blog post](#).

Have you ever sent a family member to the grocery store and they came back with bags of groceries but nothing that could be combined to make a meal? Chips, bananas, waffles and broccoli. It may be food but it’s not dinner.

This is largely how food banks and other hunger programs often work. We give people ingredients but not meals.

The Verde Valley Food Policy Council has been created to form a strategy for the Verde Valley area including a vision, goals and steps. They’ll try to answer questions like:

- How to produce more food locally and distribute it to people in need?
- Where best to situate a food hub as a collection and distribution center?
- How to improve education about nutrition and cooking?

It is not an implementation body but they will create the framework that can be used to implement solutions. To learn more about food insecurity, sign up for the [Cornucopia Community Advocates newsletter](#).

FOOD INSECURITY IN THE VERDE VALLEY 2020					
Rank	Zip Code	Community	Food Insecure Persons 185% FPL	Population	Food Insecure Percentage
Verde Valley			24,653	74,372	33%
1	86331	Jerome	224	521	43%
2	86326	Cottonwood-VV	10,121	24,624	41%
3	86322	Camp Verde	4,454	11,118	40%
4	86342	Lake Montezuma	1,676	5,013	33%
4	86335	Rimrock	1,700	5,141	33%
5	86324	Clarkdale	1,333	4,315	31%
6	86351	Village of Oak Creek	1,536	6,697	23%
6	86336	Sedona	2,658	11,663	23%
7	86325	Cornville	951	5,280	18%
Source: American Community Survey 2013-2017					
Compiled by Harvey Grady, Cornucopia Community Advocates 2-26-2019					