



FOOD FOR CLIMATE LEAGUE



ANNUAL REPORT
2022





Eve Turow-Paul

Founder & Executive Director

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I never could have imagined that a coffee break conversation in April 2019 would crystallize into the organization that Food for Climate League (FCL) is today. Now, three years later, we are working with corporations, organizations, and governments to make climate-smart eating the norm. Together, these partners influence what millions of people around the world eat each day. During that fateful conference rendezvous with the trailblazing Dorothy Shaver (now Global Food Sustainability Director at Unilever) and Lisa Feldman (Director of Recipe Management at Sodexo), we landed on a key hypothesis: **without a shift in narrative, sustainable food culture will remain niche instead of the norm.**

Over the last few years, we've learned that people often perceive climate-smart eating to be expensive, flavorless, dissatisfying, culturally irrelevant, inaccessible, reductive, and unscalable. Ultimately, we've determined that these negative perceptions of climate-smart eating are key barriers to more widespread adoption. Yet, we've also found that **we can change behaviors, and spark excitement, buy-in, and a collective sense of empowerment by altering the way people talk about this topic.**

We are now seeing tangible progress toward our organization's mission of making climate-smart eating the norm. All around the world, Sodexo chefs are utilizing our Agrobiodiverse Menu Naming Toolkit to increase eater interest in plant-rich menu items. (As Lisa Feldman told us, it has become a verb in Sodexo: "Have you toolkitted it yet?"). This September, we hosted a Food and Climate Communications Training for the New York City Mayor's office at City Hall to kick off Climate Week. In a post-workshop survey, 89% of attendees reported feeling empowered to better communicate their agency or department's climate-smart initiatives in order to reach and excite a wider audience, and 91% of attendees reported feeling confident that they would use information gained through the training in the future.

Narrative is a strategy towards an end; a tool for restructuring the way people feel, think and respond to the world.

Ryan Senser of Pop Culture Collaborative

We're also seeing college campuses adding plant-based items to their menus based on results from pilots we've led. Through our Default Plant-Based study at Tulane University, for example, culinary staff enjoyed trying new plant-based recipes and noticed an increase in demand from students for plant-based dishes. As a result, they plan to permanently integrate more plant-based dishes to the menu. Finally, culinarians with whom we've worked this year have shifted their own personal eating habits after attending our workshops. In particular, after one workshop presentation on the racial and cultural diversity of the plant-based movement, a significant number of workshop participants self-reported higher engagement with plant-forward lifestyles.

This has been a pivotal year for Food for Climate League. We brought on our first payroll staff members along with rockstar contractors. We honed our areas of expertise and ways to make real-world impact. Thanks to this new stage of pandemic living, we are back out in the world at conferences, trainings, and 'friendraisers.' We've also had the opportunity to (finally) run real-world field research with many of our partners, including Sodexo, Better Food Foundation, and Google.

Along the way, we have learned a few lessons. First, that **food is love, and without excitement and buy-in from chefs and line cooks, sustainable food options will never be as delicious as they can be.** Many foodservice organizations are launching impressive corporate sustainability initiatives that call for climate-friendly menus. But, in order for these initiatives to be successful, chef and line-level staff need to be brought along on the journey to co-create, learn —

and contribute. People need to find their own *why* for sustainable cooking. It's been immensely rewarding to see the light of inspiration that we can ignite by linking climate-smart eating with food trends, diverse cultures, personal health, and equity. In doing so, we also overcome ingrained cultural narratives around climate-smart eating that bring to mind kale and tofu instead of dishes like minestrone soup and chana masala. In the end, culinarians are inspired to create delicious, diverse, and, yes, sustainable dishes.

Second, **we've learned the importance of proving that eaters are open to more sustainable food choices.** All too often foodservice leaders believe that eaters don't want climate-smart options, and this assumption keeps many from putting more sustainable dishes on the table. A key way to create change is to show folks that their customers are not just willing but eager to eat in new, sustainable ways.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, **we've come to more deeply appreciate that a sustainable food future is full of diverse ingredients and diverse cultures.** We will only reach our global goal of a healthy, just, sustainable future if the dominant vision of a sustainable future becomes more inclusive. Some of our most inspiring moments this year have occurred when our team members were able to connect the dots between climate-smart eating and a diversity of needs, values, and cultures.

Moving forward, FCL is dedicated to expanding our work at the intersection of sustainable food culture and race, and to reflect this commitment within our own organization with new staffing and projects. In our professional world, structural racism has contributed to an —

environment in which siloed communities work separately on food and climate issues. We seek to break down these barriers, to learn from communities of color in the food and climate space, and to share our expertise in support of their initiatives. Furthermore, by doing this work, we can work to address not only issues of sustainability, but also important issues including nutrition equity, food sovereignty, and food justice.

I have never felt more optimistic about, nor more proud of, the work of the Food for Climate League. I appreciate the inquisitive, boundary-pushing, and dedicated individuals who have joined our team, the Board of Directors who continue to serve as critical champions for our work, the Board of Advisors who dedicate their time and expertise to make us a better organization, and our growing ecosystem of partners and funders from whom we continue to learn and receive inspiration on a daily basis.

While change takes time, climate science is clear that time is something that we don't have much of. As we grow as an organization, it's heartening to see the many ways we're learning to expedite and scale meaningful change with larger projects and an expanding network of like-minded collaborators.

Thank you for supporting us on this journey and we hope that you will [make a donation today](#). I look forward to all we will learn and accomplish in 2023.

With appreciation,

Eve Turow-Paul
Executive Director
Food for Climate League



Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek. people feel, think and respond to the world.

Barack Obama

WHAT IS CLIMATE-SMART FOOD?

For FCL, climate-smart eating is plant-forward, regenerative, and respectful of resources; it celebrates diversity, improves human nutrition, provides equitable access, connects communities, and preserves our shared planet.

CURRENT PROJECTS

STRATEGIC NARRATIVES TO DRIVE DEMAND FOR SEA VEGETABLES, MUSSELS, AND CLAMS

With funding from **Builders Initiative**, and in collaboration with **Food + Planet** (F+P), we are developing new **narratives that can drive demand for bivalves** (mainly mussels and clams) **and sea vegetables** (kelp, nori, dulse, etc). These tested narratives will serve a diverse ecosystem of organizations that promote and market food, including nutrition professionals. In the initial stage of our work, we worked with **MotivBase** to assess how eaters perceive these foods, hosted focus groups, and conducted expert interviews and surveys. We also cultivated relationships with a broad network of organizations working toward our shared goal. Coming out of this work, we created narrative prototypes and tested them with 900 survey takers. **Coming January 2023, we will have open-access toolkits available on how to talk about sea vegetables, mussels, and clams.** Next year, we will be disseminating these toolkits to entrepreneurs, foodservice leaders, and culinary and health professionals through conference presentations, social media, and more.

In 2023, we will be testing the impact of product placement, formats, and messaging in **retail, grocery, restaurant** and/or **foodservice** settings, to make sea vegetables and bivalves easier and more appealing for eaters. Now, **we are looking for prototyping partners. Please reach out if you are interested in collaborating!** Next year, F+P will be focused on engaging health professionals with an open-access Blue Foods as Medicine curriculum and an inspiring *Blue Foods as Medicine* digital cookbook. They will also be engaging sea vegetable farmers in roundtable discussions on how to improve eaters' trust with greater transparency about the nutrition and safety profiles of these foods.



CURRENT PROJECTS

DEFAULT PLANT-BASED DINING IN U.S. UNIVERSITIES

With funding from **Better Food Foundation**, and in collaboration with Sodexo and Dr. Gregg Sparkman, we are **testing the ease and viability of shifting university dining menus to a default plant-based format**. To do so, we are hosting randomized controlled trials on three college campuses across the United States (Tulane University, Lehigh University, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute). This fall, we have been collecting data on the number of eaters who choose the plant-based default meals and their reactions, as well as whether or not they ask for animal proteins, and the economic and environmental implications of these trends. Next year, we are discussing expanding this work internationally and developing a second iteration of this research in U.S. universities. More to come!



INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATING PLANT-FORWARD DISH CREATION

Sponsored by the **Google Food Program**, we are **developing a program to generate excitement and buy-in amongst chefs to develop plant-forward dishes**. To do so, we are applying the lessons of Self-Determination Theory to help people feel autonomous, connected, and masterful as they bring plant-forward food culture to life in a café setting. After assessing motivations and barriers, we ran an intervention pilot in Chicago that will be updated and rolled out globally in 2023.



SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT

In collaboration with **Veris Strategies**, we are **helping to shape the core programs and value pillars, as well as the stakeholder engagement strategies and narratives, in support of Brookfield Properties' development, Halley Rise, envisaged as a climate-smart food district in Reston, Virginia**. In 2023, we will continue to help lead their advisory committee and guide their tenant and resident charters, as well as key infrastructure programs and impact measurement frameworks.

CURRENT PROJECTS

PLANT-BASED FOODS LANDSCAPE

Under sponsorship from one of the world's largest contract foodservice companies, we completed a thorough literature review and expert interviews to **analyze the current landscape and projected future of plant-based food culture**. We focused on assessing who prefers whole, minimally-processed plant-based foods versus processed plant-based meat analogs in the U.S., France, and England, among other research questions.



CITY FOOD COMPETITIONS

With funding from **Builders Initiative**, we are developing a **city-to-city competition for best climate-smart food culture**, promoted by local sports stars and media, to inspire a shift among residents toward plant-forward, regenerative, and/or wasteless ways of eating. This three-year project will also include the development of city-wide networks of sustainable food advocates, farmers, restaurant owners, chefs, sports leaders, nonprofit leaders, and city officials dedicated to food and climate issues.

This project will include a **communications campaign** that emphasize flavor and each region's unique climate-friendly ingredients, purveyors, producers, and culinary talent. We will first develop the approach through a university-based pilot to assess the effectiveness of the campaign design, including behavioral nudges, messaging, and guides for culinarians. Stay tuned for which cities get selected!



DONATE



2022 HIGHLIGHTS

FOOD & CLIMATE CONVERSATION EVENTS (CHICAGO AND NY)

We hosted a Meet and Greet in Chicago this summer as well as a Food and Climate Leaders reception in New York City, co-hosted by PlanetFWD, where we shared eats, drinks, and danced to some beats to kick off Climate Week.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

We were honored on *Fast Company's* 2022 list of **World Changing Ideas**.

REPORTS & PRESS

- We published an article in *The Washington Post* on the **future of the plant-based food movement**. We've heard from many people how much it struck a chord, and the piece has sparked some interesting new leads.
- We **collaborated with Datassential**—along with The **Culinary Institute of America** and the **Menus of Change University Research Collaborative**—on the **2022 Plant-Forward Opportunity Report**, which, after its publication, received press in *MindBodyGreen*, *RestoBiz*, and *SmartBrief*.
- We promoted FCL's work on a number of **podcasts**, including **Stand Up! with Pete Dominick**, **AnthroDish**, and **NextGenChef**. FCL's work was also highlighted in a feature on **Canvas8**, on **how to adopt climate-friendly diets**.
- We published our **How to Talk About Food and Climate Report** (sponsored by Google) and our **Plant-Forward Menu Naming Toolkit** (sponsored by the Sodexo Future Food Collective)—**both now available for free on our website**.

Chicago Food & Climate Conversations event



New York City Food & Climate Leaders event

The hype over plant-based foods overlooks a key ingredient: Plants

Perspective by Eve Turvo-Paul and Sophie Egan
September 2, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. EDT



2022 HIGHLIGHTS



NYC Mayor's Office training participants (Credit: Ed Reed).

PRESENTATIONS & TRAININGS

- Hosted a **Food and Climate Communications training** with the **NYC Mayor's Office**.
- Hosted a **Food and Climate Communications training** with **Center for Good Food Purchasing**, with both members of the Center's staff and **representatives from C40 and city offices in Austin, Los Angeles, and Santa Clara County**.
- Held **three trainings** for cohorts of food industry leaders participating in the UK-based **Veris Future Food Movement**.
- Participated in the **"Own Your Influence to Shape Consumer Food Choices"** panel at **VERGE22** in San Jose, CA, with Sara Burnett, VP of Food Beliefs, Sustainability and PR at Panera, Julia Collins, Founder and CEO at Planet FWD, and Rebecca Chesney, Director of Food Systems Design at IDEO .
- Presented at a two-day interactive **Messaging Framework Workshop** in Monterey, CA, that focused on creating the foundation for better messaging about aquaculture and food, funded by **WWF** and the **Aquarium of the Pacific**.
- Participated in a **UN General Assembly side-event organized by the Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology**.
- Participated in the **Consumer Goods Forum's Healthier & More Sustainable Diets Learning Series**
- Led a panel at **South by Southwest** on the consumer conundrum of choosing the best milk, as a proxy for how to navigate healthy, sustainable, ethical food choices at large.

SXSW Panel



LEADERSHIP

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Chiara Cecchini leads Business Development at Savor, a stealth company pursuing transformational technology to create climate negative food ingredients. She is a Partner at Future Food Institute and Board Member at Food for Climate League. Former researcher at UC Davis, Chiara is part of the Expert Network at the World Economic Forum, she lectures about sustainable business and innovation at San Francisco State University, and has been recognized as Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe for Social Entrepreneurship.



Lisa Feldman is the Director of Recipe Management and oversees Culinary Systems for Sodexo North America. A graduate of The Culinary Institute of America, Lisa has over 30 years of experience in all facets of foodservice management. As a Certified Research Chef, she specializes in product and concept development. She is also the Plant-Forward Working Group Co-Chair for the CIA's Healthy Menus Research and Development Collaborative and the Co-Chair of CIA's Healthy Kids Collaborative. Lisa is on the Board of Directors at the Food for Climate League.



Amy Kull is a Marketing Communications specialist in the food and beverage sector. In March 2022, she joined Google as Marketing Communications and Engagement lead for its Global Food program where she oversees programs supporting this exceptional Food program's nutrition, sustainability and social justice values. Before joining Google, Amy was the Founder of an independent agency, Marin Restorative Communications. She also served as General Manager of Edelman's Edible agency and was a Partner at Ketchum. Amy serves on the Communications Advisory Committee for Colorado's Butterfly Pavilion, and plays a marketing advisory role for Forested Foods.



Sara Roversi is Founder and Director of Future Food Institute—a food and sustainability non-profit organization focused on innovation, research, and education—and You Can Group, a group of 30 companies focused on digital design and food. Sara works with high-profile think-tanks to set the agenda for the sustainable food industry.



Dorothy Shaver is Global Sustainability Director of Foods & Refreshment at Unilever and a member of the Global Sustainability Leadership Team. Over the past fifteen years, Dorothy has worked across media, retail, health care, and the fitness industry championing food choices to enable personal and planetary health. Her most recent piece of work is the *Future 50 Foods* report, which is a collaborative thought-leadership report in which food system issues are outlined and nutrient-dense foods that promote agrobiodiversity and reduce the negative environmental impact of food are identified.

LEADERSHIP

STAFF



Eve Turow-Paul is the founder and Executive Director of Food for Climate League. She is a globally-recognized thought leader on youth food culture, well-being, and sustainability. Turow-Paul supports groundbreaking strategic narrative and behavioral design research around food and climate issues at FCL. Through her writing, consultancy (**ETP Insights**), and nonprofit leadership, Eve focuses on harnessing food culture as a tool for mental, physical, and environmental health. Her latest book is *Hungry: Avocado Toast, Instagram Influencers and Our Search for Connection and Meaning* (BenBella, 2020), which explores the ‘why’ behind today’s biggest food and lifestyle trends.



Sophie Egan, MPH is Director of Strategy for Food for Climate League, where she leads strategic partnerships—including hosting the FCL Partner Roundtable, featuring diverse organizations around the world—spearheads implementation and impact strategies, and facilitates trainings of FCL’s best practices for how to talk about food and climate. An internationally recognized leader at the intersection of food, health, and climate, Sophie is the author of *How to Be a Conscious Eater* (Workman, 2020), a contributor to *The New York Times*, and the founder of **Full Table Solutions**, a consulting practice that’s a catalyst for food systems transformation. Sophie is also Director of the **Stanford Food Institute** and **Sustainable Food Systems**, where she is Co-Director of the **Menus of Change University Research Collaborative**.



Gesina Beckert is Director of Research and Operations at Food for Climate League. She has a degree in International Business and holds multiple design-thinking certificates. Over her career in food supply chains, circular economy and renewable energy organizations, she implemented social and environmental impact on four continents. She is dedicated to applying the latest research from those fields to develop narratives and design environments that inspire climate-friendly and healthy eating behaviors.



LEADERSHIP: STAFF



Dr. Ashawnda Fleming, PhD is Director of Development at Food for Climate League. She is also the Chief Executive Officer of A. Marie Fundraising and Development Consultants. She possesses more than twenty years of nonprofit management experience. Dr. Fleming has served as the Chief Executive Officer of the American Psychological Foundation and the Executive Director of the Hetrick Martin Institute New Jersey. She has also served as Chief Development Officer to national nonprofits including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Prevent Child Abuse, National LGBTQ Task Force and First Candle/SIDS Alliance. Dr. Fleming holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from The American University in Washington, D.C., a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from St. Thomas University in Miami, FL, and a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communications from Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, FL.



Ting Ting Eeo is the Project Manager at Food for Climate League. Before joining, she held roles in program management, sales, and operations across various nonprofits and social enterprises, working in climate change policy, technology, and sustainable agriculture sectors. A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, she holds a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies/Business from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is dedicated to addressing climate change at scale with equity-centered solutions.



Chhavi Jatwani is Design Lead at the Future Food Institute and Design Strategy Lead at Food for Climate League. She has international experience in food design and prosperity thinking. With two masters in Food Design and Innovation, Chhavi is a research fellow and grant holder at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in Italy, studying innovation methodologies in food supply chains. She continues to polish her method that combines elements of life-centered research, makers' approach, eco-systemic thinking, culinary science, and food design.



Stephen Mattson is Business Development Associate at Food for Climate League. He is a graduate of The Ohio State University, where he was a member of its Environmental Behavior Change Research Group. Stephen is passionate about sustainable food systems and has published a research distinction thesis on behavioral spillover associated with Meatless Monday. He has also served as a startup operations intern and has been credentialed by the International Society of Sustainability Professionals.



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2022 GRANT FUNDERS



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2022 LEAD SUPPORTERS

- Rob & Wendy Millet Trice
- Annette Turow
- Sally & Richard Schulman
- Sarah Gomel
- + Others

SUPPORT FOOD FOR CLIMATE LEAGUE

WE CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT YOU

A gift of any size makes a difference!

From \$25 to \$10k, with a one-time or recurring gift, you can fuel our work and the movement for climate-smart eating. Make your gift at:

FoodForClimateLeague.org/Donate

Your gift stands to:

- Provide **benefits** to our staff members.
- Support our core staffing **salary needs**.
- Provide **paid internship opportunities**—mentoring and activating the next generation of climate-smart food leaders with equitable opportunities.
- Provide support to our projects in the form of project management **software tools** and **software upgrades**.
- Host **FCL fundraisers** to grow our reach and impact.
- Cover the cost of **How to Talk About Food and Climate trainings** for companies and organizations, like those we provided in 2022 at no cost for the New York City Mayor's Office and city representatives participating in the Good Food Purchasing Program.
- Cover the costs of an **annual team retreat**, to support strategic planning, team-building, and organizational culture.

As a nonprofit organization, the Food for Climate League depends on financial support from grassroots donors, private foundations, and corporations to advance its mission. Thank you to all of our donors for supporting our work.

DONATE





Clockwise from the top: Climate Week Food & Climate Leaders reception; Outside City Hall post-NYC Mayor's office workshop; Team retreat in Los Angeles, CA; VERGE22 panel; Mayor's office training participants (Credit: Ed Reed)

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