

Supplemental Material 1. Questionnaire Questions

Supplement to: Solorzano-Morera, G., Durango-Cohen, E., & Ashton, W. (2026). Minding the implementation gap: A mixed-method study of producer capabilities and institutional pressures in U.S. Midwest values-based food procurement. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2026.154.012>

- Participant name
- Name of company or organization
- I consent to participate in this survey.
- Zip Code
- Number of employees
- Approximate annual sales
- In what industry sector would you classify your business?
- Legal structure of the organization
- Other ownership characteristics
- What food safety training and certifications do you have?
- What sales channels do you have?
- Please tell us if you have implemented any of the following practices to improve the nutritional value of your products.

Response options: None; Choosing culturally-relevant, nutrient-rich crops; Choosing heritage breeds; Choosing genetically-modified inputs; Growing locally seasonal fruits and vegetables; Produce value-added products; If animal products are produced, offer Fat-Free, Low-Fat or reduced fat products; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have implemented any of the following valued workforce or labor practices in your business.

Response options: None; Building safe and healthy working conditions; Restricting the employment and abuse of children as workers; Eliminating all forms of forced or compulsory labor; Eliminating discrimination with respect to employment or occupation; Providing additional employment benefits (i.e. paid sick days, health care benefits; Respecting employees' freedom of association and collective bargaining; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you implemented any of the following employee diversity hiring priorities in your business

Response options: None; Hire women; Hire BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) persons; Hire veterans; Hire LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) persons; Hire persons with disabilities; Hire persons from local community; Hire persons who are socially disadvantaged; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have implemented any of the following environmental sustainability practices in your business.

Response options: None; Purchase local raw materials; Purchase organic raw materials; Purchase or use renewable energy; Practice regenerative agriculture; Obtain third-party certification for your business; Reduce carbon footprint; Reduce water footprint; Avoid use of potentially hazardous or toxic chemicals in operations; Avoid use of hormones, routine antibiotics and genetically engineered food products; Track and monitor waste; Compost organic waste; Use packaging/shipping materials that are reusable,

compostable/bio-degradable, or recyclable; Ensure workplace conditions are healthy and safe; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have implemented any of the following animal welfare practices in your business.

Response options: None; Have operations certified by a recognized animal welfare certification scheme/standard; Utilize "high welfare" farming practices (e.g. access to pasture, easy-access to food and fresh water; Animal housing, management, care, and use; Prevent pain, injury or disease to animals by rapid diagnosis and treatment; Purchase animal products from sources that have third party certifications for high welfare practices; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have prioritized purchasing goods and services from any of the following groups.

Response options: None; Small and medium sized businesses; Businesses located within the same county as your business; Businesses located within 300 miles of your business; Farmer-owned (small scale, family or cooperatively owned) business; Women-owned businesses; Black, Indigenous, People Of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses; Veteran-owned businesses; Businesses owned by persons with disabilities; Businesses owned by persons who are socially-disadvantaged or have limited resources; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have implemented any of the following practices aimed at supporting local economies

Response options: None; Establish formal hiring policy prioritizing local residents with barriers to employment; Support local workforce development (e.g. hire graduates of workforce training programs); Establish contracts, partnerships or MOUs with community-serving business/organization with mission to serve disadvantaged populations; Establish contracts, partnerships or MOUs with or worker-owned cooperative with majority ownership from disadvantaged populations; Work with other organizations (e.g. businesses, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies) to support local economic development activities; Other (Please specify)

- Please tell us if you have experienced any of the following benefits from implementing 'good food' practices related to nutritional value, valued workforce, environmental sustainability, animal welfare and local economies.

Response options: None; Ensured compliance with food-related laws; Reduced operational costs; Increased productivity and/or output; Increased market opportunity; Improved brand image; Increased owner/shareholders satisfaction; Increased customer satisfaction; Increased employee satisfaction; Other)

- Please tell us if you have experienced any of these difficulties from implementing 'good food' practices related to nutritional value, valued workforce, environmental sustainability, animal welfare and local economies

Response options: None; No demand from customers; No way to signal implementation of practice to customers; No interest from other producers/farmers in my network; Lack of cooperation from suppliers; Not sure how to improve nutritional value of products; Lack of financial resources to implement practices; Lack of additional land/infrastructure/resources needed to implement practices; Lack of assistance from farmer-focused organizations; No government policies that mandate implementation of practices; Lack of support from community/government/enterprises for entrepreneurs of color; Other)

- Please tell us for what reasons (if any), you do not currently sell to institutional buyers (e.g. schools, hospitals etc.).

Response options: Insufficient product volume to meet demands of large orders for institutions or contractors serving them; Insufficient capacity to enter contracts or MOUs with institutions or contractors serving them (e.g., legal status, required certifications); No relationships with institutions or contractors serving them; Lack of Food Hubs/distributors/aggregators that source from local producers; Lack of shared facilities for producers to collaborate (warehousing, distribution trucks, processing/shared kitchen space); Lack of outreach to farmers and producers of color about such opportunities; Lack of financing, infrastructure or other resources for farmers and producers of color to pursue such opportunities; Negative prior experience with institutional buyers or contractors serving them; No particular interest; Others (Please specify)

- Please tell us what are the top challenges to growing your farming operations and farm income

Response options: Limited government support for farmers; Limited customer demand; Limited access to capital; Limited availability of labor; Increasing competition; Covid-19; Changing weather patterns (e.g., drought, flooding, storms); Other (Please specify)

- What is your role, title or position in the farm/organization
- What is your gender
- Your race/ethnicity
- Is there anything else you would like to share with us? If yes, please let us know in the text box below