

# LA County Sustainable & Equitable Food Procurement Policy Report

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We surveyed 500 residents of Los Angeles County, California, on their perspectives on a policy that would require local government to purchase more plant-based foods as a way to reduce environmental and public health harms, as well as align with the *Los Angeles County 2045 Climate Action Plan*.

## Takeaways:

- Residents of Los Angeles County overwhelmingly support (79%) legislation to encourage plant-based food purchasing with taxpayer dollars and believe that Los Angeles County in particular should implement such legislation (82.2%).
- Only 18% of residents said that their representatives were doing enough to encourage food sustainability—52.4% believed that their representatives were “definitely not” or “probably not” doing enough in this area.
- Most residents (74.4%) said that they were more likely to vote for candidates who pursue such legislation.

## Background

Industrial animal agriculture is the leading cause of biodiversity loss, creates harmful air and water pollution, and emits a significant amount of greenhouse gas. Recent scientific **evidence** indicates that even if all other sectors became carbon-neutral, emissions from meat and dairy products alone will push us past 2°C of warming. The EAT-Lancet **report** found that meeting Paris Agreement goals would require substantial shifts toward plant-based diets. The scientific consensus is that shifting from meat and dairy to a more plant-based diet is essential to meeting widely adopted climate commitments, such as the Paris Agreement’s 2°C benchmark, and unlocking a series of health benefits, such as lowered risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and overall mortality from a variety of causes.

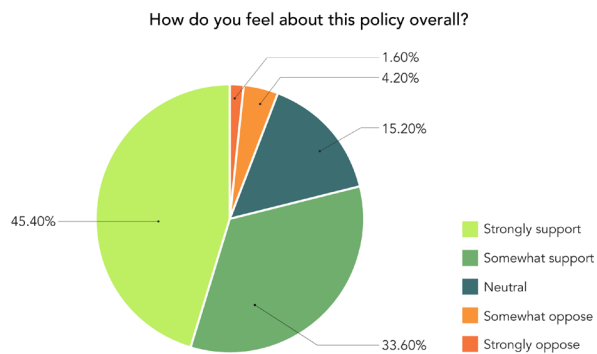
Los Angeles County has an ambitious **climate plan** with an aspirational goal of carbon neutrality by 2045, including plans to improve energy efficiency and increase agricultural sustainability. In 2019, the Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office outlined an even more ambitious set of **strategies** that suggest the county prioritize consumption of plant-based foods over more resource-intensive animal products (meat, dairy, etc.).



How do Los Angeles County residents feel about actions to urge city government to procure more sustainable plant-based foods? We asked the 500 respondents to review hypothetical legislation requiring their local government to take these actions:

- Calculate the city's food-related greenhouse gas emissions for one year.
- Increase and prioritize the amount of plant-based food in government facilities, hospitals, higher-learning institutions, and other food settings.
- Prioritize purchasing this food from local BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) farmers where feasible.

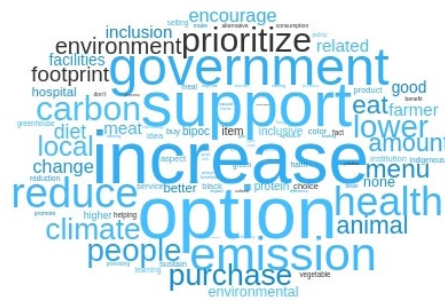
When respondents were asked how they felt about implementation of this legislation in Los Angeles County, 79% said that they supported it (either strongly or somewhat).



**Figure 1.** Pie chart reflecting respondent support for a hypothetical plant-based food purchasing policy.

Residents were also asked what was most appealing about the proposed legislation. Representative comments include the following:

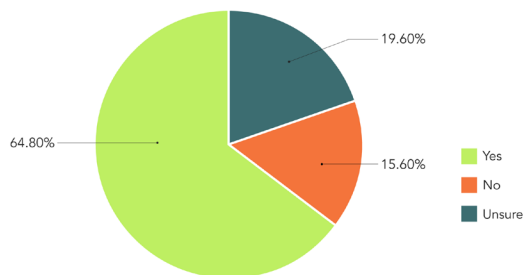
- “ I support the prioritization of plant-based foods to help the environment.
- “ More plant-based foods available and provided by local government.
- “ I think quantifying how much damage the meat industry does may be an eye-opener for some people. A good guideline, similar to that five-minute shower Newsom pushed for during the drought era.



**Figure 2.** A word cloud of written responses about what residents liked most about the legislation.

When asked whether the government had a responsibility to buy climate-friendly food with taxpayer money, 64.8% answered yes.

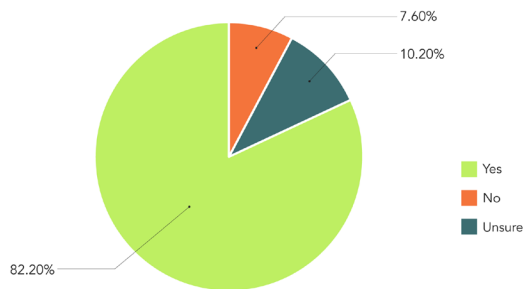
Do you believe that the government has a responsibility to use taxpayer money to purchase food that doesn't contribute to climate change?



**Figure 3.** Pie chart reflecting respondent beliefs about government's responsibility to buy climate-friendly food.

Respondents were then asked whether Los Angeles County should reduce food-related emissions in their jurisdiction—82.2% responded yes.

Should your local government take action to reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions?



**Figure 4.** Pie chart reflecting respondent views on local government action to reduce food-related emissions.

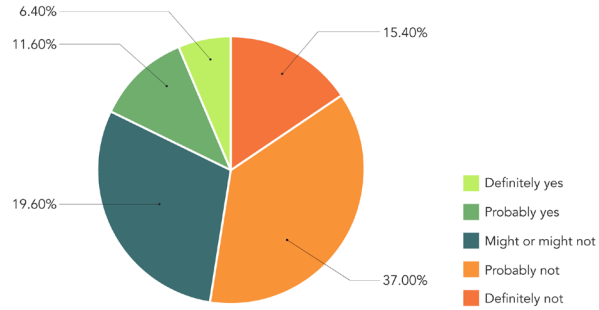




The Los Angeles County residents were also asked whether they felt that their representatives were doing enough concerning food-related emissions. Only 18% responded with either “definitely” or “probably” yes.

Most (52.4%) responded that their representatives were “definitely not” or “probably not” doing enough in this area.

Do you believe that your representatives are currently doing enough on this issue?

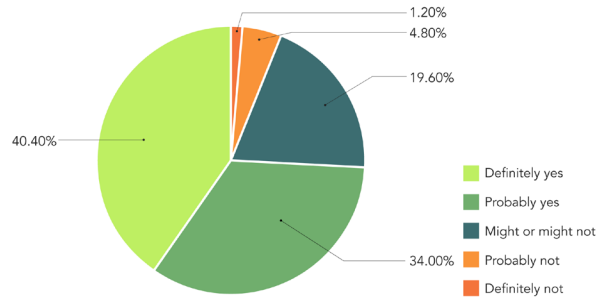


**Figure 5.** Pie chart reflecting respondent beliefs about the adequacy of government efforts to address food-related emissions.

Finally, Los Angeles County residents were asked whether they would be more likely to vote for representatives who pursue climate-friendly food policies.

Most (74.4%) answered “definitely” or “probably” yes, and only 6% answered that they would not vote for representatives who pursue such policies.

Are you more likely to vote for someone who pursues this kind of climate-friendly food plan?



**Figure 6.** Pie chart reflecting respondent likelihood to vote for representatives who pursue climate-friendly food plans.