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We surveyed 500 residents of LA County, California, on their perspective on a policy that would require local government to purchase more plant-based foods as a way of reducing environmental and public health harms, as well as aligning with LA County's 2045 Climate Action Plan.

Takeaways:

- Residents of LA County overwhelmingly support (79%) legislation to encourage plant-based food purchasing with taxpayer dollars or by city governments and believe that LA County in particular should be taking such actions (82.2%).
- Only 18% of residents said that their representatives were doing enough to encourage food sustainability. 52.4% believe that their representatives were "definitely not" or "probably not" doing enough in this area.
- 74.4% of residents said they were more likely to vote for candidates who pursue this kind of 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 emissions. Recent scientific [evidence](#) indicates that even if all other sectors become carbon-neutral, emissions from meat and dairy products alone will push us past 2°C of warming. The EAT-Lancet [Report](#) found that meeting the Paris Agreement goals would require substantial shifts towards plant-based diets. The consensus among scientists is that shifting away from meat and dairy towards a more plant-based diet is essential to meet widely adopted climate commitments, like the 2°C benchmark laid out in the Paris Agreement, and unlock a series of health benefits, such as lowered risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and overall mortality from a variety of causes.

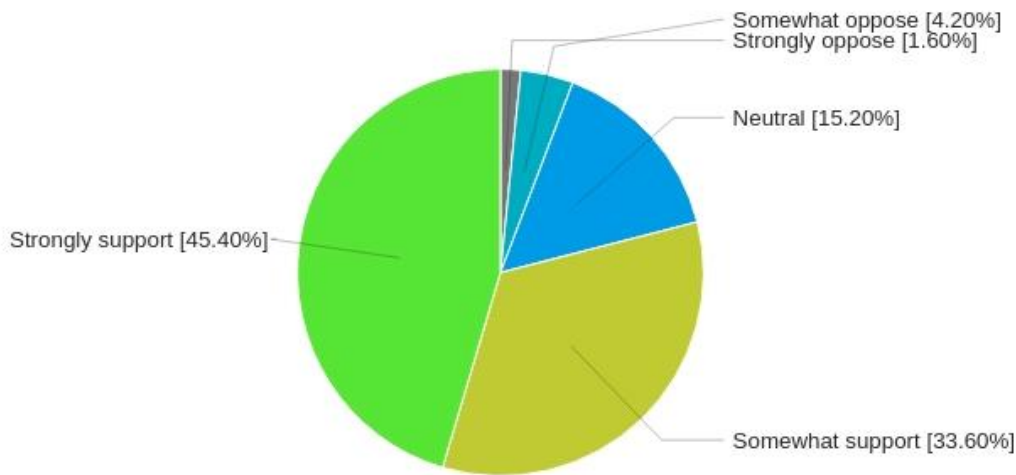
LA County has an ambitious [climate plan](#) with an aspirational goal of carbon neutrality by 2045, including plans to improve energy efficiency and increase agricultural sustainability. In 2019, the LA County Chief Sustainability office outlined an even more ambitious set of [strategies](#) that suggested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

How do residents of LA County feel about actions to encourage city government to procure more sustainable, plant-based foods? We surveyed 500 residents and asked them to review hypothetical legislation where their local government:

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

When asked how they felt about this policy being implemented in LA County, 79% of respondents said that they supported it (either strongly or somewhat).

How do you feel about this policy overall?



Residents were also asked what was most appealing about the proposed legislation. Some representative comments included:

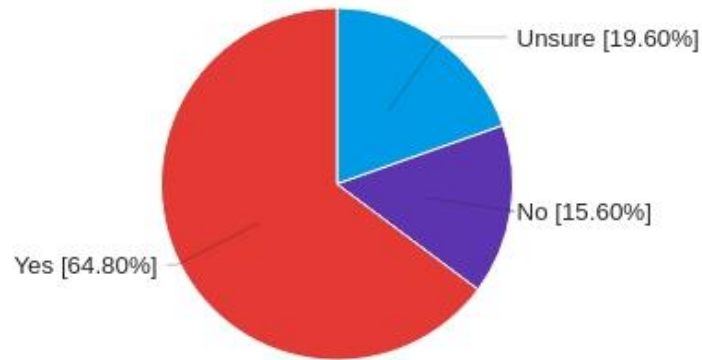
- “I support the prioritization of plant-based foods to help the environment.”
- “More plant-based foods available and provided by local government.”
- “I think quantifying how much damage the meat industry does may be an eye-opener for some people. A good guideline, similar to that five-minute shower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



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

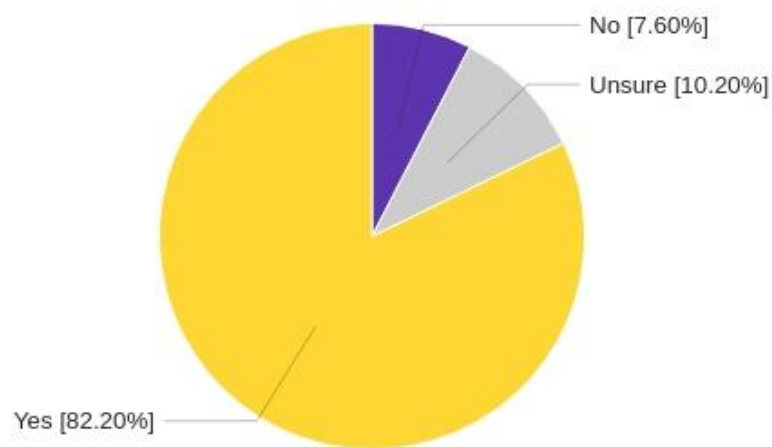
When asked if the government has a responsibility to buy climate-friendly food with taxpayer money, 64.8% answered “Yes.”

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



Respondents were then asked more specifically whether LA County should reduce food-related emissions in their jurisdiction. 82.2% responded yes.

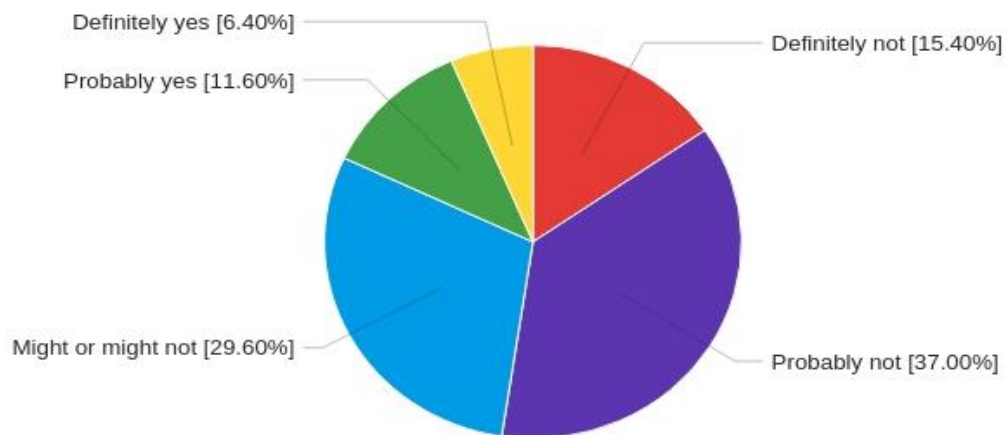
Should your local government take action to reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions?



Residents of LA County were also asked if they felt that their representatives were doing enough on food-related emissions. Only 18% responded with either “definitely” or “probably” yes.

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?



Finally, LA County residents were asked if they would be more likely to vote for representatives who pursue this kind of climate-friendly food plan.

74.4% answered “definitely” or “probably yes” and only 6% answered that they would not vote for representatives who pursue this plan.

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

