Educated Choices Program

3-Year Strategic Plan 2024-2026
Our mission is to provide science-based education about the impact of food choices, empowering current and future consumers and leaders to help create a healthier, more sustainable food system for all.

Our vision is one of a society in which all community members are equipped with the knowledge of how their individual food choices impact health and environmental issues worldwide, leading to improved personal and planetary health.
Our current food system, driven by population growth, increased affluence, globalization, accessibility, and industrialization, has resulted in substantial strain and profound repercussions on both human and planetary health.

The consensus in the larger scientific community is that the world must transition to a healthier, more sustainable food system before it’s too late. Educating about the impacts of our food choices and solutions is one of the most profound ways to address the problems we face. If the next generation of consumers is motivated to take a more responsible and sustainable approach to our food systems, it can have an enormous impact on the future of this planet and all of its inhabitants.

Education should be at the center of every strategy for positive change because of its uncontested effectiveness. Very importantly, the benefits of education are transmitted intergenerationally, making it a powerful force for rapid and lasting change.
STATE OF THE WORLD

FOOD SECURITY
As the global population grows, the concern of how to feed everyone sustainably also increases.

USAGE OF WATER AND LAND
Animals raised for food and the food they eat require large amounts of land and water, competing with humans for these two finite resources.

CLIMATE CHANGE
Animal agriculture, the production of fertilizers, food transportation, packaging and food waste are significant contributors to greenhouse gas emissions.

DEFORESTATION AND OCEAN DEPLETION
Loss of habitat due to industrial animal agriculture and overfishing, plastic waste, and water pollution threaten biodiversity as well as contribute to climate change.

ETHICAL CONCERNS
The growing awareness and concern about the treatment of workers and animals and the negative effects of our food system on disadvantaged communities has led to a public push for more regulation and alternatives.

INDIVIDUAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH
The Western Diet, heavy on animal products and highly processed foods, increases the rates of the most common chronic diseases and zoonotic diseases. This puts a heavy strain on economies and people’s well-being.

ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS AND NEW FOOD TECHNOLOGIES
Driven by a combination of environmental, health, ethical, and economic considerations, alternative proteins and new food technologies represent a significant shift in the food industry and reflect changing consumer attitudes and concerns.
Our focus for the next three years is to reaffirm our commitment to our mission and thus continue to grow our outreach and efficacy. We will do so by combining our expertise and experience with the valuable insights of our stakeholders.

Importantly, we will stay nimble and pivot when needed to ensure that our work accurately represents our organization's core values, goals, and purpose. We will continue to identify areas of improvement to enhance our impact and make a more significant contribution to our mission. By regularly monitoring our progress and holding ourselves accountable, we will continue to evolve and grow as an organization.
Together, we will:

- Improve and expand our educational offerings to reach a broader audience.
- Create new ways to engage those we serve, leading to higher efficacy.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with partners and professionals within the diverse impact areas of our work and those who support it.
- Maintain a work environment that inspires creativity, celebrates diversity and fosters growth.
1. CURRICULUM EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT

To meet the growing demands for our programs worldwide, we are expanding our educational resources and improving their accessibility. We are committed to meeting the unique needs of educators by providing a broader range of subject matter content and doing so through a global lens that will resonate with audiences in all corners of the world. We are developing a library of shorter video packages that delve into single-impact areas of our food system in greater depth, thereby allowing teachers and community leaders to choose topics that more closely align with their curriculum and initiatives. By taking a closer look at specific chronic diseases, environmental impacts, and societal issues and examining their intersections with food, we will facilitate a more holistic and engaging learning experience.
Simultaneously, we will lean into technology, acknowledging and embracing its significance and ability to further engage those we serve. This is essential for us to remain relevant and ensure that our resources are easily accessible to a broad audience in a rapidly evolving digital era. As part of this initiative, we will launch a new digital learning library to serve as our improved resource distribution tool. This unique online platform will streamline access to our materials for the convenience of educators. It will include many state-of-the-art features, such as playback speed adjustments and multi-language captioning capabilities. In addition, we are providing our team with improved software programs, collaborative tools and specialized training to improve the cinematic quality of our videos, leading to a more engaged audience. Using these new tools will also allow us to add more interactive features to our programs and increase active participation, thereby also increasing the likelihood of participants making positive dietary changes post-presentation.
2. INCREASE IN PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

We realize that change doesn’t happen overnight, and that is why we are dedicated to ensuring that our support of those we serve doesn’t end with our education packages. We will be launching a robust follow-up and coaching program to assist our participants with their intended dietary changes. This program will guide and support individuals in their journey toward more healthful and sustainable dietary choices.
FOCUS AREAS

We will provide comprehensive guidance, tools, and referrals, leveraging our network of partners to ensure that program participants have everything they need to access plant-rich foods, feel confident in preparing them and learn how they can discuss their newfound knowledge with others, bringing about more widespread positive changes in their communities.

To further enhance engagement, especially among students, we will introduce a range of post-presentation projects and essay contests, allowing young people to express themselves and share their thoughts and visions for the future with their peers. These activities will be designed to ignite and nurture their interest and passion for a better food system. They will also foster a sense of ownership and personal connection with their dietary choices and the resulting impacts on our planet and everyone who shares it.
3. FURTHER BUILD OUR REPUTATION AND CREDIBILITY

To further solidify our reputation as a trusted academic organization, we are focused on building strategic partnerships with mainstream organizations worldwide working in health, environmental sustainability, education and varied societal issues. As the conversation around food and its widespread impacts gains acceptance, these partnerships are crucial in providing schools and communities with an educational foundation upon which to build a better food system. We are committed to engaging with organizations in a wide variety of sectors and regions and leveraging the expertise of our board, advisors, partners and collaborators to facilitate finding new channels for distributing our educational materials, allowing us to reach a broader audience.
These efforts will be closely accompanied by a well-thought-out PR strategy that will enable us to promote our work and its importance accurately and positively in the media worldwide.

Additionally, we recognize the importance of diversifying our funding portfolio to align with the wide-reaching impact of food on various aspects of life. We actively seek to curate relationships with funders across all channels to allow for the continued growth of our organization and its positive impacts on the world.

Finally, we will continue to utilize our "Living Lab" initiative to aid in our understanding of our audience, reach, and impact, ensuring that we are fulfilling our responsibility to both those we serve and those who support our work by providing educational resources that meet the needs of teachers and community leaders using them and that empower our participants to make the types of dietary changes that lead to a brighter future for us all.
4. NURTURING WORK CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Without our diverse team of talented staff members, our past successes would not have been possible, nor would our future goals be attainable. With that in mind, fostering a thriving work culture and inclusive environment while attracting and retaining top talent is a paramount goal for our organization. To achieve this, we are committed to investing in our team's growth and development through internal training and specialization. This involves earmarking dedicated time and budget for continued education and encouraging the utilization of individual strengths and interests to enhance team performance.

We will also actively promote community involvement by enabling our staff to take time each quarter to volunteer for causes they are passionate about in their local communities. Furthermore, we will embrace collaborative ideas and grass-roots partnerships initiated by our team, recognizing that innovation often stems from within. To further support a work-life balance, we will prioritize employee well-being and offer personal growth opportunities to help avoid burnout and consequently increase productivity and job satisfaction.
We will incorporate opportunities for stress reduction and personal growth into work schedules, fostering an empathetic and mission-driven team that is motivated to excel.

In addition, our ARDI (Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion) Committee initiative will be expanding to become more of a collective effort that involves the entire staff in hosting learning opportunities, ensuring that every team member has the chance to contribute to the organization's commitment to both creating inclusive and accessible materials and also an equitable and diverse work culture. Furthermore, we will maintain an open-door policy for our staff to discuss requests, concerns and ideas for improving our work culture. Our dedication to maintaining a dynamic work culture will also extend to our recruitment and hiring processes, where we will employ steps to ensure that unconscious biases are avoided, and diverse voices and talents are welcomed and appreciated.
Conclusion

Our organization is the first and only one of its kind, with an unparalleled scope and effectiveness in the area of food literacy. We have filled a much-needed niche and amassed an excellent reputation over the years with thousands of academic institutions and millions of people worldwide. Our well-rounded approach guarantees that we can effectively meet the needs of our target audience while maintaining a high standard of excellence.

We are exceptionally well-equipped to spearhead food education at a global scale, providing a unique blend of expertise, innovation, high quality and efficacy, cost-effectiveness, continuous improvement, audience-centricity, and an unwavering commitment to our mission.

Over the next three years, we will educate millions of people worldwide, empowering them to live healthier, more sustainable lives. By providing individuals with information and tools, our objective is to reduce the risk of chronic diseases and extend people’s health span, thereby improving the quality of their lives and that of their communities while concurrently reducing the exorbitant cost and toll on the healthcare system.
Effective education also inspires and encourages people to recognize the importance of nurturing our planet and adopting more environmentally friendly food choices. This, in turn, leads to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, contributes to less environmental devastation and promotes more initiatives for restoration and preservation.

Education saves lives, improves communities, fosters unity, and promotes innovation and development. We at ECP are educating for a healthier, kinder, and more sustainable world.
Education is the foundation upon which to build a better food system.