



Market Umbrella Strategic Plan: 2022-2025



INTRODUCTION



More than a market, for more than 25 years.

Since 1995, Market Umbrella has been working to improve the lives of Louisianans through a wide range of high-impact programming, contributing more than \$12.59 million annually to the local economy between its three weekly farmers markets and the money spent at nearby businesses.

With this strategic plan, we are taking our impact even further, cementing our dedication to excellence across our four areas of programming: the Crescent City Farmers Markets (CCFM), Food Access & Education, Vendor & Farmer Capacity Building, and Systems Strengthening.

Throughout the pages of this plan, you will see the strategies and initiatives Market Umbrella will pursue to amplify our impact, including launching the *Greaux the Good* program. This program is a statewide expansion of our successful Market Match program, which covers half of the cost of food for shoppers using SNAP at CCFM and partner organizations. This initiative is one example of our commitment to supporting farmers and families statewide, and this is only the beginning.

Join us to see what we can grow...



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Our 2022-25 Strategic Plan was developed in partnership with trepwise, a New Orleans-based growth consulting firm with a mission of powering organizations to maximize their potential.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES





OUR PROCESS

OUR PROCESS



In early 2022, Market Umbrella engaged **trepwise** to provide support in developing a strategic plan for 2022-2025, inclusive of a DEAI lens. For development of the DEAI Plan Market Umbrella engaged Monica Sylvain Consulting.

To inform the engagement, **trepwise** conducted discovery with Market Umbrella stakeholders. The insights from this discovery were used to inform a series of working sessions with Market Umbrella stakeholders in the spring of 2022. The following document summarizes these activities and recommends next steps as Market Umbrella charts a path forward.

Discover

The diagram consists of a horizontal line with four green circular markers. Above each marker is a hexagon. The hexagons are shaded in a gradient from light green to dark green from left to right. The text "Discover", "Define", "Plan", and "Act" is centered within each hexagon. Below each marker is a block of descriptive text.

Engaged Market Umbrella stakeholders via five 1:1 interviews, a community focus groups, and a board and staff survey.

Define

Synthesized discovery themes & defined Market Umbrella's place in the ecosystem.

Plan

Conducted 4 working sessions to build out strategic priorities, initiatives, and decision-making processes.

Act

Defined tactical plans for implementation in conjunction with Market Umbrella leadership.



OUR IMPACT

We Envision...

A thriving, equitable, and sustainable food system that supports all community members, including those who bring local, nutritious food to market.

OUR MISSION



To cultivate the power of farmers markets to drive economic and community health in the region.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



Our Vision: A thriving, equitable, and sustainable food system that supports all community members, including those who bring local, nutritious food to market.

Our Assumptions

- Farmers markets provide value to shoppers, community members, and vendors.
- Community members seek and deserve access to nutritious and affordable food.
- When vendors are supported they can increase food access for the community.
- The food access ecosystems in GNO and across the state are filled with impactful, yet disconnected entities.

Our Approach

- Farmers Markets
- Food Access & Education
- Vendor & Farmer Capacity Building
- Systems Strengthening

Our Desired Outcomes

- Farmers markets exist throughout the state, serving as centers for food systems that drive food access and community health.
- The region has robust supports that drive the development and prosperity of local food producers.
- Entities across the food access ecosystem are coordinated in service of strengthened food systems.

WHAT WE DO





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2022-2025

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



EXCELLENT MARKETS

Refocus on the vendor and shopper experience, regularly leveraging community input and innovative approaches to create a world-class farmers market that serves as an economic and social cornerstone for the community.

PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT

Expand the reach, awareness, and depth of Market Umbrella's programs, creating more robust and engaging programming that drives equitable outcomes and increases the community's access to nutritious, local food.

ECOSYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Strengthen the food access ecosystem in the Greater New Orleans region and across the state through advocacy, cross-organizational coordination, and technical assistance.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, & INCLUSION

Increase diversity, equity, inclusion, and access for all Market Umbrella stakeholders, including integrating an anti-racist approach into all internal and external Market Umbrella activities.

THRIVING ORGANIZATION

Ensure Market Umbrella is a financially and culturally sustainable organization in which team members feel supported in their work, connected to Market Umbrella's mission and strategies, and can thrive.



Our Priority: Refocus on the vendor and shopper experience, regularly leveraging community input and innovative approaches to create a world-class farmers market that serves as an economic and social cornerstone for the community.

2022-25 Initiatives

- Institute regular customer and vendor feedback that enhances Market Umbrella's customer experience, drives further community relevance, and better aligns CCFM offerings with community and vendor needs.
- Build and maintain a system of metrics to evaluate and effectively communicate the impact of Market Umbrella's markets and programs.
- Establish and utilize a standardized evaluation process for assessing Market Umbrella's capacity to open new markets, as well as determining the location of additional markets should Market Umbrella decide to expand.
- Explore and institute opportunities to generate more unrestricted funds at markets via sponsorships, donations, and other revenue generating activities.
- Develop a sustainable and diverse pipeline of vendors and market offerings via improvements in recruitment, technical assistance throughout the vendor onboarding process, and through the support of organizational development partners.

Programmatic Impact



Our Priority: Expand the reach, awareness, and depth of Market Umbrella's programs, creating more robust and engaging programming that drives equitable outcomes and increases the community's access to nutritious, local food.

2022-25 Initiatives

- Deepen relationships with community organizations who serve BIPOC and low-income New Orleanians in order to (1) expand the reach of markets and food access programming and (2) tailor the markets and programming for greater diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.
- Amplify marketing to increase community awareness of MU's community programs, incorporating MU's impact work into the Crescent City Farmers Market brand.
- Institute a regular program evaluation process to assess relevance of current programs, phasing out less impactful programs as appropriate. (See *Program Evaluation Rubric*)
- Integrate Board Members and community volunteers into MU's approach to executing programs and markets, including revitalizing the Community Advisory Team to strengthen MU's relationship with and understanding of the community.



Our Priority: Strengthen the food access ecosystem in the Greater New Orleans region and across the state through advocacy, cross-organizational coordination, and technical assistance.

2022-25 Initiatives

- Provide backbone support for statewide and cross-organizational food access efforts, including leading the “*Greaux the Good*” Statewide Market Match, as funding and capacity allow.
- Pursue and advocate for sustainable funding for (1) regional and/or statewide food access programming, and (2) coordination and communities of practice across the food ecosystem.
- Codify Market Umbrella’s approach to providing technical assistance to other markets, building infrastructure for efficient, scalable information and resource sharing.
- Develop and regularly refine a cohesive programmatic and advocacy agenda in collaboration with key partners focused on food access and sustainable policy for local agriculture. Strengthen relationships with government entities and policymakers in service of this work.
- Support cross-organizational planning efforts for managing emergencies that impact food access (e.g., natural disasters).

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion



Our Priority: Increase diversity, equity, access, and inclusion for all Market Umbrella stakeholders, including integrating an anti-racist approach into all internal and external Market Umbrella activities.

2022-25 Initiatives

- Identify and address inequities and disparities in systems and processes in order to increase representation for all stakeholders (board members, staff, vendors, farmers, and shoppers) to reflect the demographics of New Orleans.
- Build a truly inclusive culture of belonging in the workplace and on the board of trustees through continual investments in DEAI ideas, actions, and practices.
- Establish a system to support and avenues to champion vendor owners who are people of color through comprehensive and continuous efforts.
- Create an experience that is welcoming, relevant, and accessible for vendors, shoppers, and farmers of all backgrounds, abilities, and interests.



Our Priority: Ensure Market Umbrella is a financially and culturally sustainable organization in which team members feel supported in their work, connected to Market Umbrella's mission and strategies, and can thrive.

2022-25 Initiatives

- Establish clear roles & responsibilities, accountability structures, efficient communication practices, and standard operating procedures for each program and overarching organizational initiative.
- Build a truly inclusive culture of belonging in the workplace and on the Board of Directors. (See DEAI Initiatives)
- Develop a fundraising and grant application strategy that supports sufficient staffing, effective distribution of responsibilities, and competitive compensation.
- Establish quarterly or semi-annual internal-facing program and market assessments, leveraging rubrics and processes established in the plan. Align assessment timing with existing reporting milestones.
- Establish culture-focused systems and practices (e.g., periodic culture surveys, all-team strategy sessions, and exit interviews) that drive team cohesion and clarity and decrease turnover.

Thank You!



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