

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Tuesday, September 15, 2020

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**URBAN AG ORDINANCE HELPS MEET NUTRITIONAL NEEDS**  
*Agricultural Activities Now Available to City Households*

STOCKTON, Calif. – This evening, the Stockton City Council unanimously approved the adoption of Stockton’s first Urban Agricultural Ordinance for those who live within the city limits of Stockton. The ordinance makes it possible for Stockton residents to keep chickens (no roosters), ducks and/or bees, and allows for additional types of produce stands to sell locally grown fruits and vegetables.

“This new ordinance is very timely,” shared Assistant Director of Economic Development Janice Miller. “Many people recently took up gardening or growing a few fruits and vegetables during this stay-at-home period. The ordinance will also help to improve access to healthier food options in neighborhoods that are considered food deserts.”

With manufacturing, food processing, and agricultural technologies as core businesses in the region, the City’s 2015 Economic Development Strategic Plan included a focus on food and agriculture. This was followed by the 2017 Food and Agriculture Action Plan, prioritizing the creation of a supportive enterprise ecosystem, strengthening communities by helping to address food insecurity, and leveraging the region’s agricultural bounty and entrepreneurial spirit.

“At the City’s Permit Center, we receive several calls each month from people who want to know if they can keep chickens or bees or if they need a permit for these activities,”

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said Assistant Director of Community Development Stephanie Ocasio. “This is a great example of where policy and planning is a call-to-action that helps to address some of our basic nutritional needs and spur the local economy at a time when both are really needed.”

Since the creation of the 2017 plan, initiatives such as “Stocked Full of Produce,” which provides grant funding to existing convenience stores in areas identified as food deserts, the annual “Feast at the Fox” that brings awareness to the “Stockton Full of Flavor” brand and showcases the agricultural bounty of the region, and supporting Stockton Community Kitchen at Bella Vista in Downtown Stockton, all help promote nutrition and the ability to meet our needs within the community.

Kenda Templeton, PUENTES Executive Director agreed. "The Urban Ag Ordinance is a good first step in laying out the goals as stated in the Valley Vision Food and Agriculture Action Plan. In these difficult times, we hope this improves food security and upward economical mobility for Stockton residents. PUENTES looks forward to future steps for building a resilient food economy."

The Urban Agricultural Ordinance was development with extensive public outreach over the last few years, as well as significant research of best practices and successful programs nation-wide. To read more about these new opportunities and how the ordinance applies to properties within the city of Stockton, please visit [www.stocktonca.gov/produce](http://www.stocktonca.gov/produce).

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