



BUILDING RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS FOR CRISIS AND BEYOND

Our new reality is that we must continue to be ready and prepared for not only COVID-19, but more climate disasters, epidemics, and longer recovery periods. How do we stay flexible, and nimble to be of service to the current moment, while creating advancements and more possibilities for the future?

CASE STUDY: URBAN TREE CONNECTION

1. **Making Assessments** (what's needed, what do we have capacity to do, what are the limitations and opportunities?)

- Mid-Season and End of Season Debriefs
- Identification of 2020 Priorities

2. **Focused Goals in alignment with mission, values, purpose of organization/business:**

UTC's mission is to build a neighborhood rooted food and land system through community leadership development and land-based strategies in West Philadelphia

- Community Leadership + Engagement
- Sustainable Growing Practices + other alternatives building work/projects
- Coordinated efforts and resources

3. **Strategic Planning – moving our resources, efforts, time towards our focused goals**

- Pre-COVID-19: Staff Retreat, Collective Planning on Key Priorities
- COVID-19 Crisis + Adjusting / Contingency Planning
 - Anticipated needs/opportunities:
 - Food safety planning/production procedures
 - Increased efforts around free food distribution
 - Connectedness, caring community, support
 - Uplifting Mutual Aid / Alternatives Building vs. Charity and Extraction
 - Strategies:
 - *Virtual Townhalls*: to best understand needs + efforts happening informally/formally in the neighborhood
 - *Online Educational workshops*: Food Safety training, demos of sustainable growing practices, healthy cooking, sharing recipes
 - *Coordinated volunteer efforts*: training / social distancing practices
 - Growing Food using sustainable/regenerative growing practices
 - Subsidized / Free Food Shares, donations, deliveries
 - *Communications*: Social Media, Funders, Partnerships
- **Evaluation**: how did we do? What did we achieve? What did we make more possible?
- **Reassessment** at end of contingency plan to determine path forward





ORGANIZATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING TEMPLATE

Questions to consider and assessments to make when creating a 4, 8, 12-week contingency plan for food production/distribution

1. Self-Care and Team Care Check-in Questions:
 - How am I/we being affected/impacted?
 - How is what's coming up for me impacting my/our performance or work?
 - How am I/we taking care of ourselves? Identify resiliency practices.
 - What needs do I/we have?
 - What supports do I/we need?
 - How can I/we support myself/one another in this process? How can we remain solution-oriented?

2. Community Care Check in Questions?
 - How are people in my community being affected? How am I grounding this assessment?
 - What needs have been identified my community?
 - How can my organization/business and the community collaborate and support each other?
 - Do we need to schedule a virtual meeting?
 - How can my organization/business support the community during this time?

3. Organizational / Business Care Check-in
 - How can we best serve the community in ways that align with our purpose/mission?
 - In what ways can we be flexible to changing conditions and to meeting the needs of our communities?
 - What do we have the capacity to offer now? How do we coordinate our efforts and resources in this moment?
 - What are the limitations?
 - What are the opportunities?
 - Who do we need to partner/collaborate with to meet our goals? To increase our impact?



4. Farm Care: Things to consider

- Listen to and Assess the land
 - Pay attention to the details of what is emerging
 - Discern what to grow now (I.e. survival/staple crops, immuno-boosting, weather resilient)
 - Develop production plans based on previous assessments (self / team / community / organization)

- Capacity
 - *Labor/Staff*: How are staff being protected from getting sick? What happens if someone on staff gets sick? Does our production/ distribution plan match our staffing?
 - *Resources*: do we have all the tools, safety materials, equipment, funding/capital that we need?
 - *Volunteers*: Do we have a clear set up tasks/projects for volunteers? many people should we reach out to at a time? Who can we reach out to? How should we train/prepare our volunteer? How can we promote social distancing/safety among volunteers? How can we tap into their commitment/capacities during this time?

- COVID-19 Safety Protocols and Food Safety Plans
 - Create a plan that is clear, visible and easy for folks to implement (including language accessibility)
 - List of protocols to include:
 - Staggered Lunches
 - Sanitizing Bathrooms, tools, equipment, handwashing stations, etc.
 - Social distancing: working 6 feet apart
 - Food Safety & Handling (pre- and post-harvest)
 - Create visible signage
 - Practice the plan with the entire team before rolling it out to see if there are any kinks
 - Make sure the plan is easy to model. Give folks the opportunity to do the right thing. Make sure everyone is trained on and can access the plan
 - Record Keeping/Proper documentation {Record the process}



5. Food Distribution: Things to consider

- Organizing + Outreach
 - Time re-allocation
 1. For example: instead of running a 6-hour market, consider spending 4 hours on organizing best delivery times for customers, setting up online payments and providing support to customers, and 2 hours on deliveries
 - Diversify forms of payments; flexibility for what works best for customers
 - Craft email/online notices to send out to community and updates about distribution, resources, etc. {i.e. Telegram, WhatsApp}
 - Connect with customers/community through virtual meetings/social media {i.e. Zoom, Conference Calls}
- Packaging and Handling
 - Follow Food Safety Practices/general safety per safety protocols; institute 6ft of social distancing
- Distribution Methods
 - Creative solutions that require minimal physical contact (I.e. Online prepay, drop-off/deliveries, focused distribution locations)
 - Farmers Markets using Farmers Market Coalition COVID-19 Guidelines
 - Share Best practices for customers receiving produce with customers:
 1. Use gloves when receiving produce from drop off
 2. Take any packaging off produce
 3. Safely discard packaging
 4. Store using your personal storage containers
- Record Keeping/Proper documentation {Record the process}

6. Post-Contingency planning: Roads Ahead

- Preparing for Escalated Conditions
 - Forced 24hour shut ins {create letters for staff to leave the home}
 - If we have limited, unstable or no access to internet/telecommunications
 - Emergency Evacuation
- Returning/Scaling up to Regular Operations
 - Evaluation – how did we do? What did we achieve? What did we make more possible?
 - Reassess to determine path forward