



welcome + purpose

how do we get local, sustainable pre-cuts into institutional buyers?

This convening = a **co-design + thinking** space with buyers, advocates, Marcellus, a women-owned values-based processor

This is a continuation of our conversation with farms and food hubs.

We're building infrastructure **together!**

Agenda

- 1 setting the table
- 2 introductions
- 3 CalFIC's emerging role
- 4 about Marcellus Foods
- 5 questions and answers
- 6 wrap-up and next steps

setting the table

(infra)structural change

We are here to explore how **processing infrastructure** across a network of farms and food hubs can deliver processed local + sustainable food to CA institutions



the problem

- **Corporate contracts and market consolidation** block farmers and food hubs from selling to institutions
- Institutions have **severe labor constraints** and need much more **pre-cut and value-added foods** than whole and fresh produce
- They need **stable volumes, competitive pricing and clear reporting** to achieve sustainability goals

the solution

- **Consolidate back:** Find ways to get local food processed and sold to compete with large suppliers at scale
- **Product development that solves problems:** create pre-cuts, sauces, condiments, and more that are local, sustainable labor saves
- **Coordinate with buyers** to understand what solutions work for their procurement policies, costs, logistics, and product needs

what pieces do we have now?

farmers and food hubs committed to partnering with Marcellus and CalFIC

several are experimenting with
local processing partners

struggle to gain entry into bigger
institutional markets

LOIs from buyers looking for a streamlined, networked solution

new produce contract policy
enables new sourcing efforts

current suppliers don't offer enough
local/sustainable pre-cuts

access to a facility via our partnership with Just Fare in Oakland

launching operations in Q2 2025

pledged interest from multiple K12,
university, and hospital buyers

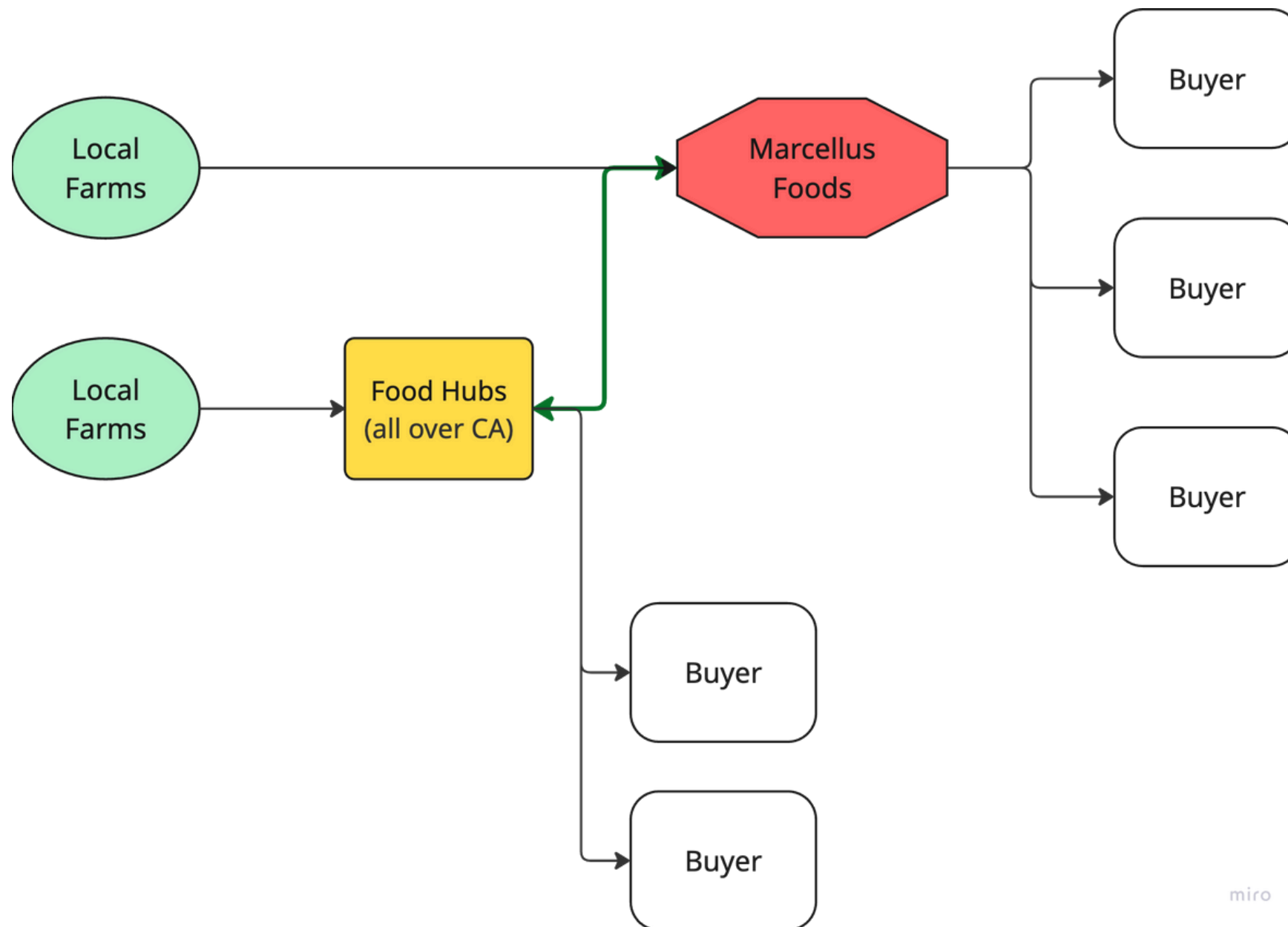
exploring collaboration with farms
and food hubs across CA with a
working financial/ops model funded
by this RFSP grant



What is CalFIC?

- Temporary name: **California Food Infrastructure Collaborative (CalFIC)**
- Represents the collaborative effort to build a statewide processing solution connecting farms + hubs to institutions
- Operator = **Marcellus Foods**, a woman/LGBT-owned processor
- Separate from Yolo Food Hub Network but complementary
- This RFSP grant funded initial business + operational modeling for this effort

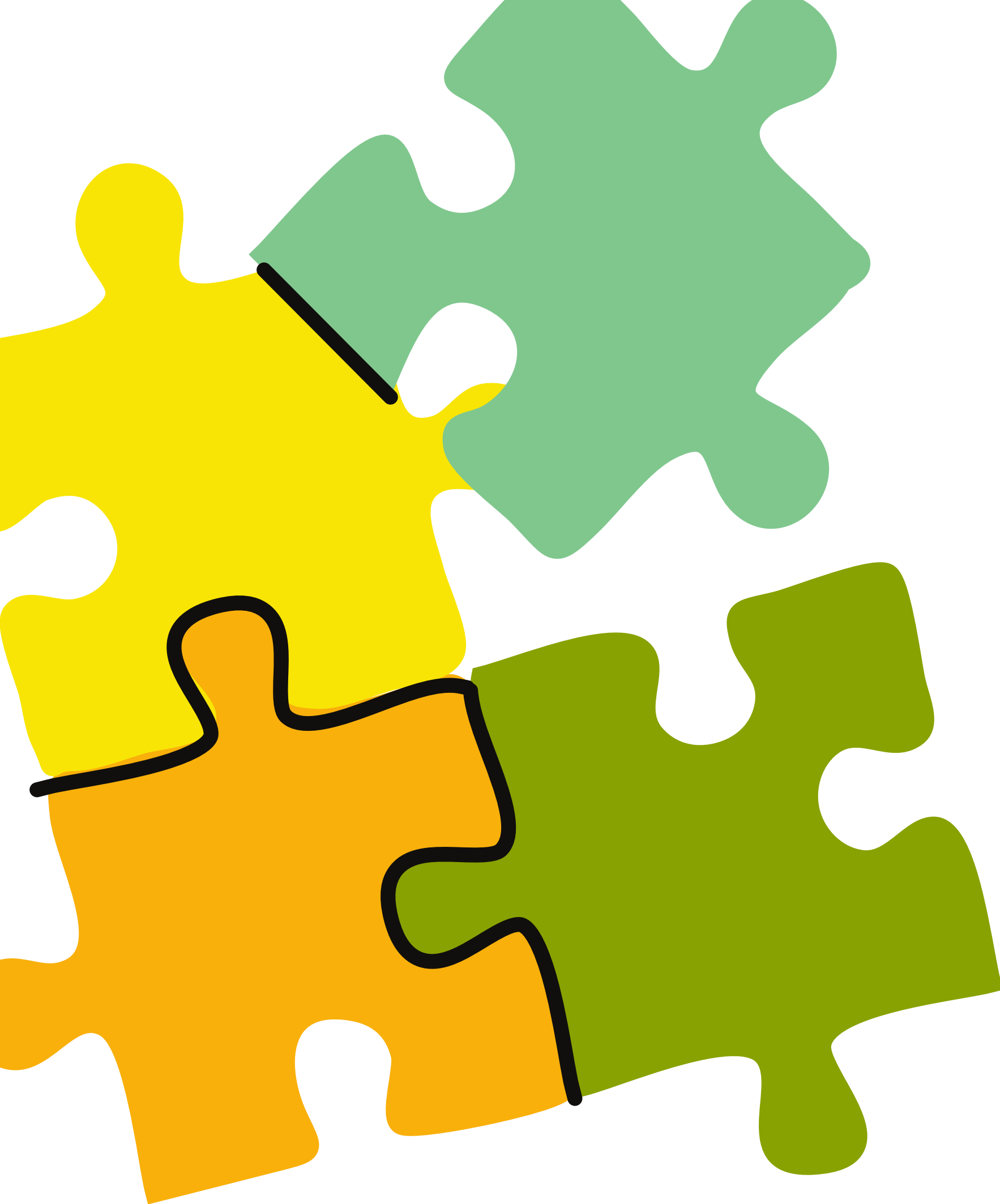
the CalFIC vision



CalFIC networked model

- Food hubs and individual farms can use CalFIC as a sales channel for buyers who prefer the higher-volume, streamlined model
- Food hubs that opt-in can keep their own separate customers
- Can enable a statewide trading network of hubs with an **expanded catalog** sourced from all over CA

Pros: High volume, wide assortment, competitive pricing, reduced # of vendors for buyers, hubs can use Marcellus as a processor



putting the pieces together

**Success = coordinating 4 moving
systems at once**

- farmer + aggregator network
- buyer network
- facility + operations
- funding

all moving at different speeds -
timing is everything



MARCELLUS FOODS

Pre-cut & prepped ingredients for
regenerative institutional meals



Scratch Cooking Made Simple



Our philosophy

Good food should be easy to serve.



**Regeneratively
grown**



**Prepared
with care**



**Easy to use
in any kitchen**

Our team

Marlee Belmonte

Culinary | (she/her)

Executive Chef for offices,
restaurants, and private clients

**RAMEN
SHOP**

Thumbtack

Eve Cohen

CEO | (she/her)

Grocery merchandising and
operations leader

Walmart *



Dana Berge

Operations | (he/him)

Farmer; Private chef;
Catering manager; UX designer

**CHEZ
PANISSE**

Thumbtack

Community partners



Anchor suppliers



Our current work

Supporting the development of regional values-aligned purchasing collectives and **expanding scratch cooking** in K12 schools.



Exploring how preps and precuts can expand LAUSD's **farm-to-school procurement** program.

Scoping how preps and precuts can expand **food is medicine** programs with POH and CalFIMC.



Project Open Hand
meals with love



Pre-cuts

- Fresh-cut raw fruits & vegetables
- Great for salad bars and grab-and-go



Preps

- Lightly cooked, chilled ingredients
- Can be served hot or room temp



Why we're different

Every purchase helps build a more equitable, resilient food system

Sample products

| | Product | Format | Pack size(s) | Price per lb | Price per serving (1/2 cup) |
|---|----------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
|  | Blanched broccoli | Cooked | 5lb, 25lb | \$4.99 | \$0.43 |
|  | Cooked quinoa | Cooked | 5lb, 25lb | \$3.99 | \$0.86 |
|  | Cut okra | Raw | 5lb, 25lb | \$4.50 | \$0.38 |
|  | Sautéed onions | Cooked | 5lb, 25lb | \$4.99 | \$0.47 |

Butternut squash stew with chickpeas

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Servings 200 Amount 30 lbs |  Without preps (raw) |  With preps |
| Steps | Peel, seed, dice, roast | Measure |
| Yield | 84% | 100% |
| Time | 60 minutes | 5 minutes |



Cooking with preps

- Reduced labor and equipment
- Meets nutritional goals
- Meets traceability standards of GFPP, CDFA, SFBP, etc.

Minimum Amount of Food^a Per Week

| Meal Components | Grades K-5 | Grades K-8 | Grades 6-8 | Grades 9-12 |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Fruits ^b | 2½ c (½ c per day) | 2½ c (½ c per day) | 2½ c (½ c per day) | 5 c (1 c per day) |
| Vegetables ^b | 3¾ c (¾ c per day) | 3¾ c (¾ c per day) | 3¾ c (¾ c per day) | 5 c (1 c per day) |
| Dark Green ^c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c |
| Red/Orange ^c | ¾ c | ¾ c | ¾ c | 1¼ c |
| Beans, Peas and Lentils ^c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c |
| Starchy ^c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c |
| Other ^{c,d} | ½ c | ½ c | ½ c | ¾ c |
| Additional Vegetables to Reach Total ^e | 1 c | 1 c | 1 c | 1½ c |
| Grain Minimums ^{*f} | 8-9 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 8-9 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 8-10 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 10-12 oz eq (2 oz per day) |
| Meats/Meat Alternate Minimums [*] | 8-10 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 9-10 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 9-10 oz eq (1 oz per day) | 10-12 oz eq (2 oz per day) |
| Fluid Milk ^g | 5 c (1 c per day) | 5 c (1 c per day) | 5 c (1 c per day) | 5 c (1 c per day) |

Designed to fit
K12 meal patterns and
Eat Real/GFPP standards

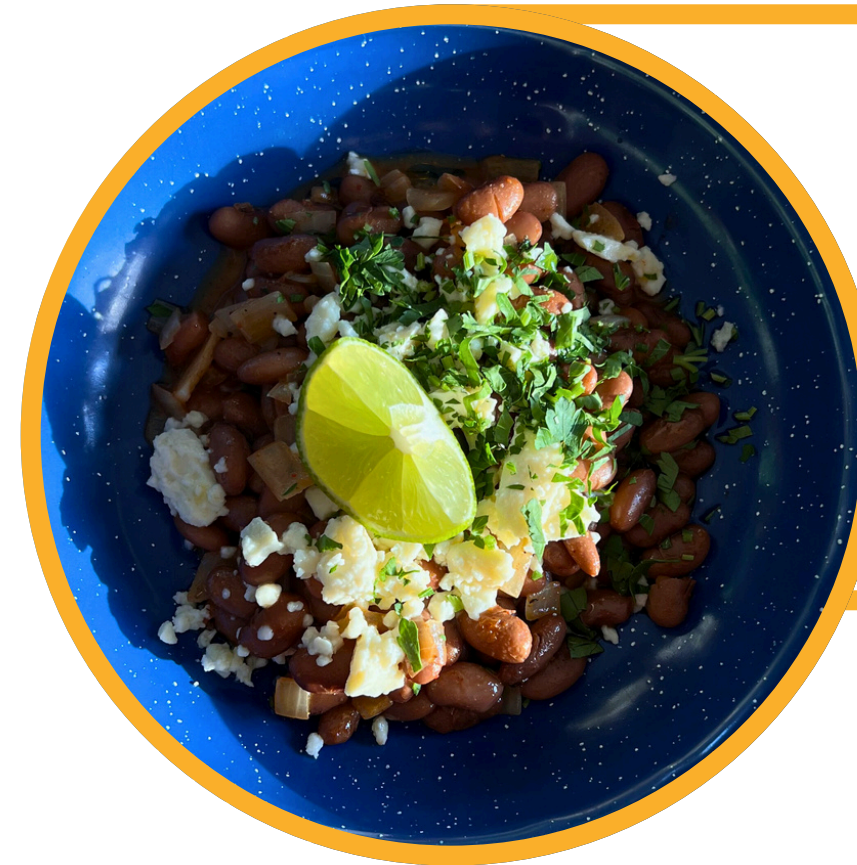


Preps are easy to integrate into menus.



Buttered carrots and broccoli

Blanched broccoli, roasted carrots, parmesan cheese



Pinto beans with cheese

Cooked pinto beans, cotija cheese, cilantro, lime juice



Fried rice with broccoli

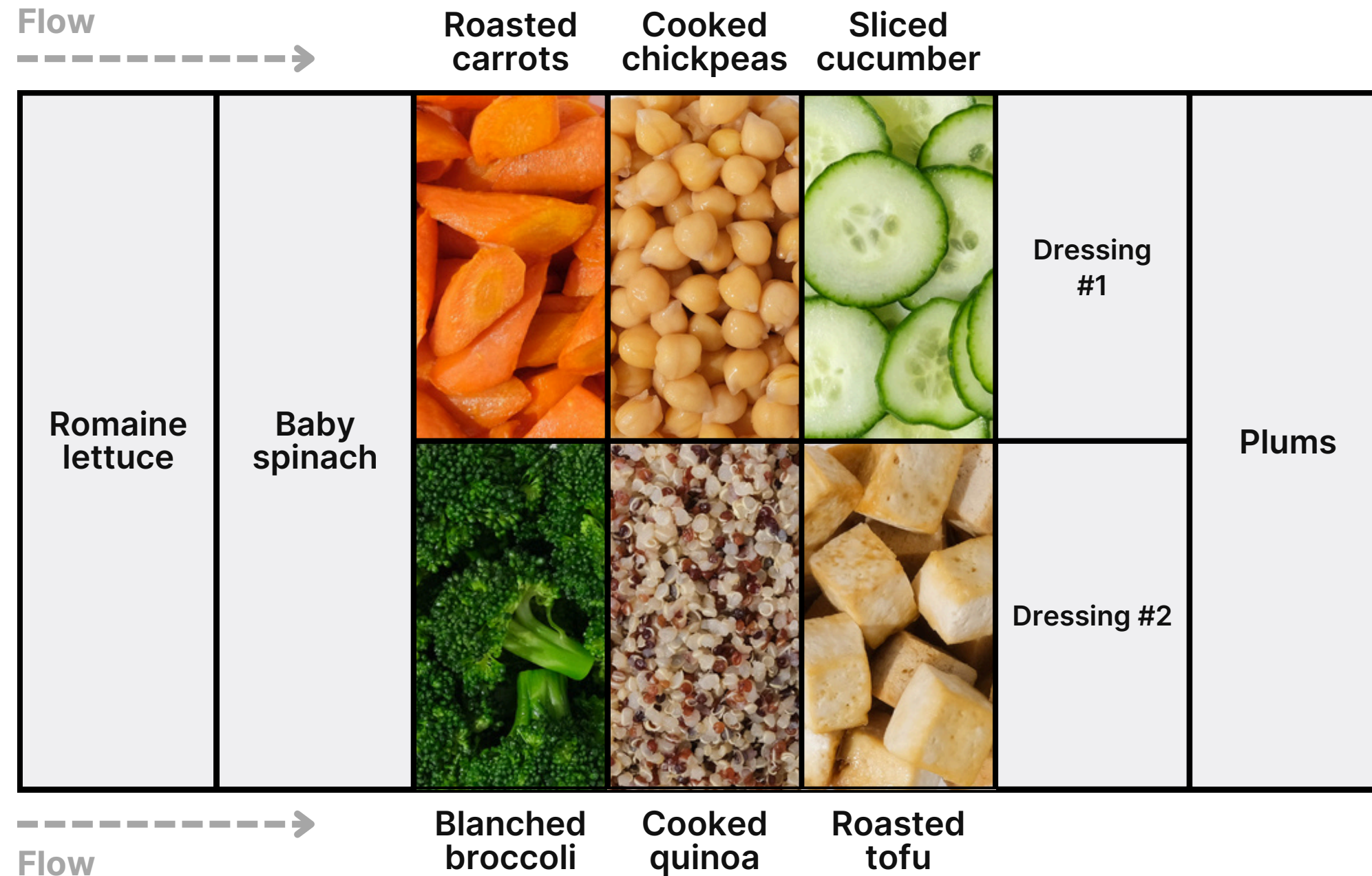
Cooked brown rice, sautéed onions and garlic, blanched broccoli

Aloo gobi naan wrap

Roasted cauliflower, boiled potatoes, cooked red lentils, yogurt sauce



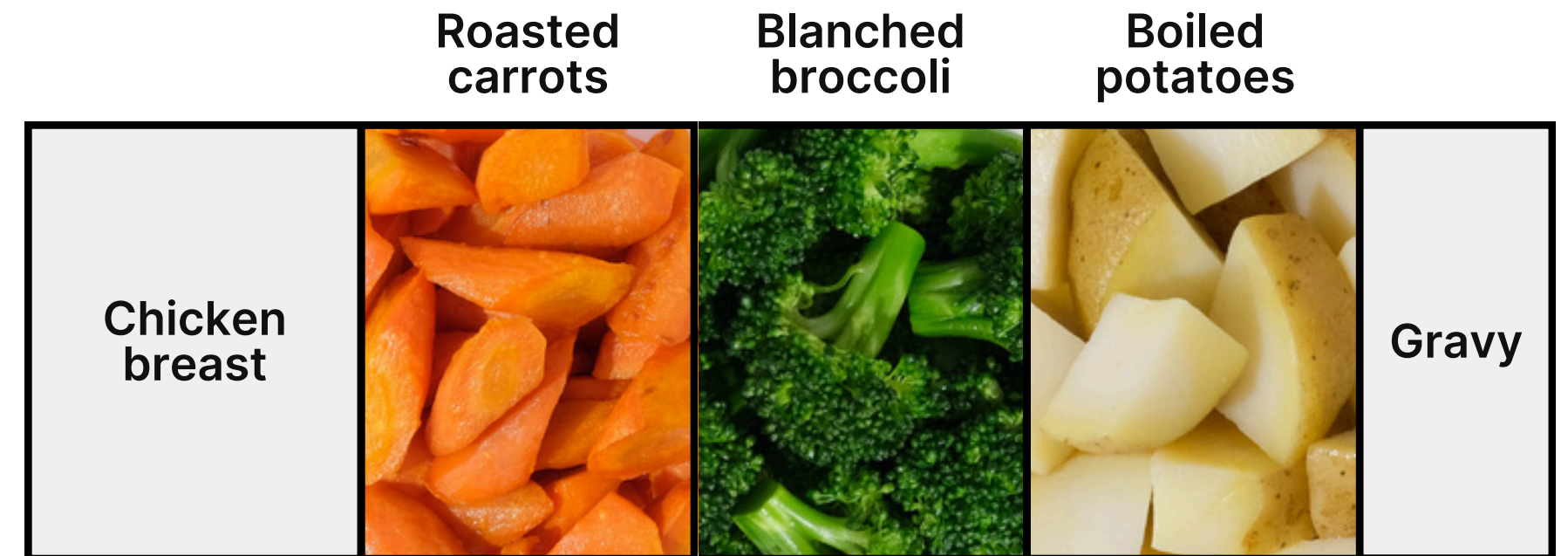
Serve preps in salad bars without additional labor.



- Taste great as-is or combined with sauces and seasonings
- Proteins can be added as desired

Preps become delicious, nutrient-dense meals almost instantly.

- Can be served room temperature
- Customize with sauces and seasonings
- Proteins can be added as desired



Pilot launching Fall 2025

In collaboration with Just Fare

- Values-aligned workplace catering company
- Proven track record as an equitable employer
- Operates out of a licensed kitchen in Oakland
- Serves thousands of meals weekly

Our impact

- \$1.2M in revenue
- \$670K to regional farms
- 230,000 lbs of food purchased
- 2.4 million meals served



Work with us!

- Product available starting September 2025
- Values-aligned delivery partners
- Let's build a plan for your kitchen!





Thank you!!

how to get involved

reach out to us! contact a food hub for more info on how to work with them directly, or H/Eve to learn more about CalFIC

contacts

H Nieto-Friga - heather@supplychange.co

Eve Cohen - eve@marcellusfoods.com