



INVEST IN COMMUNITY HEALTH

Helping Santa Barbara County Eat to Thrive



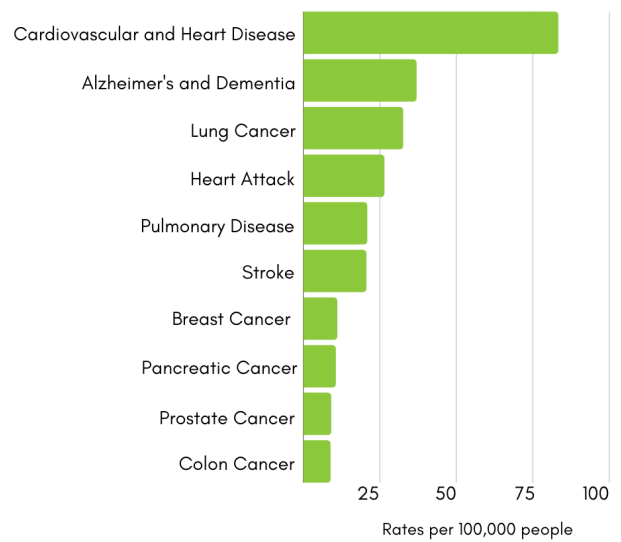
Rooted Santa Barbara County is a community-centered plant-based lifestyle initiative that believes optimal health is rooted in prevention.

A growing weight of scientific studies demonstrate that healthy eating and lifestyle patterns have a critical role in longevity and disease prevention - however, in Santa Barbara County, chronic conditions persist as major contributors to poor health and premature death.

Whole food plant-based eating can reduce risk of developing a range of conditions including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, digestive disorders, and certain cancers. Not only can these conditions lead to poor health outcomes, but they can also lead to premature death and take an emotional and financial toll on entire families. Recently, Cottage Population Health identified chronic disease as the strongest indicator of poor health, and ethnicity, income and education the strongest indicators of health disparity for good health and well-being.

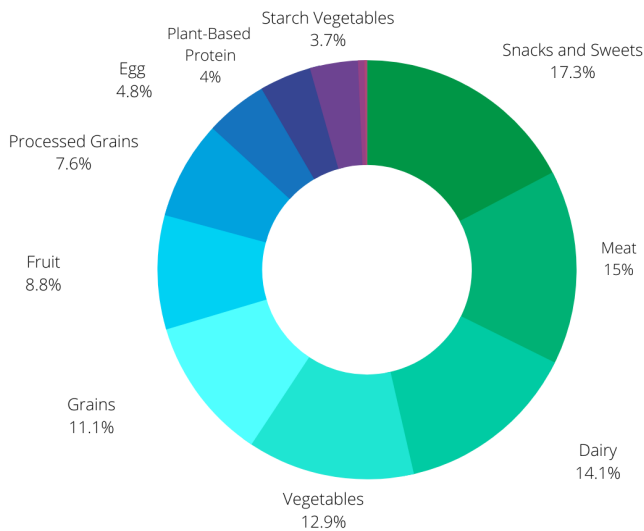
That's why Rooted exists - to grow health equity and resilience countywide through accessible programs and services that prioritize nutrition, education, and prevention.

Leading Causes of Death Santa Barbara County (1999-2016)



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. 1999-2016 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released June 2017. Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates per 100,000

What We Eat in America



US Department of Agriculture and US Department of Health and Human Services, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2017-2018

Why It's Happening

Diets high in animal-based and processed foods have been directly linked with increased mortality,^{1,2} while diets composed of predominantly whole plant-based foods are again and again associated with increased health and longevity.^{3,4} It is estimated that 67% of energy consumed by youth today is from ultra-processed foods⁵ and 55% of Americans' overall dietary intake consists of meat, dairy, and processed foods.⁶ The Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation finds that these low intake levels of unprocessed plant-based foods are the leading risk factors for diet-associated deaths globally.⁷

Case for Support

There are several key factors that influence dietary patterns and the role nutrition plays in medicine.

- **Barriers exist to accessing, preparing, and enjoying whole plant-based foods.**^{8,9,10} While 94% of Americans are willing to eat more plant-based, there are significant perceived and systemic barriers:
 - More than half think plant-based foods cost more than meat and dairy options.
 - 67% would eat more plant-based foods if they tasted better.
 - Approximately 70% say food cost and ease of preparation is important.
 - 50% would be willing to eat more if their family and friends ate more plant-based foods.
 - More than half would be willing to eat more plant-based foods if they cost less than meat options.
 - 91% say health is a top motivation for eating more plant-based foods.

Income, race and ethnic disparities in access to healthy, plant-based foods and fresh produce create an imbalance in the burden of chronic disease and poor health outcomes. Family-focused and culturally-tailored healthcare supported programs to increase plant-based eating are critical to improve accessibility, reduce barriers, improve health outcomes and build health equity.¹¹

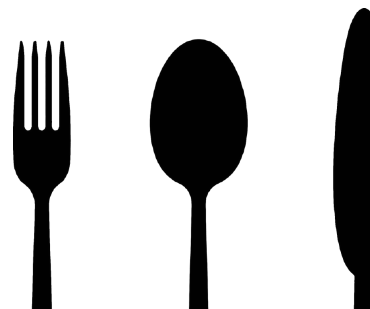
- **Healthcare is heavily weighted on prescription rather than prevention.**^{12,13} Nationally, we have a healthcare system that doesn't prioritize nutrition and a food system that too often doesn't prioritize health. Doctors have very limited time for lifestyle counseling as well as limited nutrition education and training. Our healthcare system is set up to diagnose and treat disease with prescriptions and surgery, with limited dietary and lifestyle guidance and support.

- **There's a lack of knowledge on how the food we eat directly impacts our health.**^{14, 15-20} Marketing and subsidized foods create more imbalance in the perception of food's role in health. There is a lot of nutrition confusion arising from diet culture as well as an obsession with protein and processed foods to the detriment of important nutrients that are abundant in whole and minimally processed plant-based foods – most notably fiber. Numerous large-group longitudinal studies directly link plant-based eating patterns with better health outcomes and longevity compared to other study groups.



With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of a strong foundation of health has made an already urgent situation more critical. Strengthening the health resilience of our residents will help them better weather infectious diseases like COVID-19 where underlying conditions left many community members more vulnerable to severe outcomes.²¹

The good news is, there's more we can do.



How Rooted Fills a Critical Gap

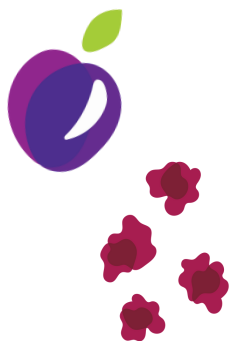
Rooted Santa Barbara County is the first and only local organization specifically focused on plant-based nutrition education and preventive health. More and more leading national health organizations are recognizing the importance of prevention-focused healthcare, based on a growing body of research indicating that human health can benefit from more whole plant-based foods while reducing or eliminating highly processed foods and animal-based foods.

It's time to get focused on a local level. Rooted is passionate about optimizing personal health, family health, and community health through the power of plants. While historically there's been an emphasis on genetic predisposition to disease, research is demonstrating that we can make meaningful lifestyle changes that improve our health by eating more plants. It is now estimated that approximately 80% of the leading causes of death and healthcare spending are attributable to lifestyle-associated conditions that are largely preventable with a whole food plant-based diet and a healthy lifestyle.²⁶

National Organizations Recommending More Plants²²⁻³⁰

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
American Cancer Society
American College of Cardiology
American College of Endocrinology
American College of Lifestyle Medicine
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Institute for Cancer Research
Kaiser Permanente

Here's what supporting more plant-forward lifestyles can mean to our community. Whole food, plant-focused diets centered around fruit, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds have been associated with:



- Prevention, better management and/or potential reversal of many of the leading causes of chronic disease and death including heart disease,³¹⁻³⁶ certain cancers,³⁷⁻⁴¹ type 2 diabetes,⁴²⁻⁴⁵ Alzheimer's,⁴⁶⁻⁴⁸ digestive disorders,⁴⁹ autoimmune diseases,⁵⁰ and obesity⁵¹⁻⁵⁴
- Reduced blood pressure and lowered cholesterol⁵⁵⁻⁵⁷
- Lowered healthcare costs and system strain⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹
- Longevity and reduced risk of premature death^{3,15}
- Increased energy, enhanced sleep, and a healthy immune system^{63,64} ^{65,66}

And what's healthy for humans is healthier for the planet. The EAT Lancet scientific commission on food, planet, and health reports that diets rich in whole plant-based foods with fewer animal sources and processed foods have a range of important benefits including a more sustainable food system that can deliver climate stability and healthy diets for a growing population.⁶⁷ According to the commission:

“Food is the single strongest lever to optimize human health and environmental sustainability on Earth.”

*References for the Case for Support can be found at RootedSBC.org/invest-in-community-health.

A Collaborative Hub - Where Food and Health Meet

Our community-based nutrition and food skills programming and resources fill a critical gap. Rooted empowers county residents with the knowledge, confidence and resources to prioritize, prepare and enjoy whole plant-based foods to reduce medical expenses and medications and increase quality of life. As a collaborative hub, partner and resource for healthcare practitioners and direct service organizations, we do this through:

- Low to no cost, bilingual, plant-forward nutrition and food skills education programs, tools, resources, and support; and
- Community collaborations that ensure inclusivity and accessibility, healthy food access, healthcare community engagement, and culturally relevant support to improve health outcomes county-wide.

We're on a mission to reduce the burden of chronic disease, optimize health, and help our County residents eat to thrive. **Join us and invest in community health.**



How You Can Optimize County Health with Rooted

You can join our movement to grow on-going, dynamic community-based programming, resources and partnerships - and keep our opportunities low-to-no cost. Following are ways that you can support our work.

JOIN THE RADICLES!

The Radicles, named for the strongest root of a plant, is a monthly, quarterly and annual giving program designed to generate community level support.

TURNIP THE BEET SOCIETY

Our Turnip the Beet community of donors take a leadership role in building and growing Rooted's comprehensive range of nutrition, food literacy, and community-centered opportunities through donations of \$1,000 and more.

NONPROFIT, FOUNDATION & CORPORATE PARTNERS

Support our mission through event sponsorships, grants, employee wellness programs or hire us to bring programs to your organization. Let's work together to advance our community's health.

For more information and to support evidence-based, plant-forward nutrition education in Santa Barbara County, visit RootedSantaBarbara.org/donate and contact us at hello@rootedsantabarbara.org.

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