

Challenge 3: Play To Nourish

The Food Systems Game Dev Challenge

Introduction

Welcome to the Game Dev Challenge! In this creative and interactive track, your mission is to design a game centered around one of today's most important real-world issues: food systems, nutrition, and food accessibility. Your game should not only entertain, but also inform, inspire, and engage players to think critically about how food choices impact health, equity, sustainability, or community well-being.

Whether you're imagining a world where players grow nutritious crops, navigate food deserts, learn about the importance of food safety, build and cook affordable meal plans, or explore global cuisines, your game should empower players to learn and take action through gameplay!

Learning Outcomes:

- **Game Design & Development Skills:** Participants will strengthen their ability to develop engaging gameplay mechanics, user interaction, progression systems, and platform-specific implementation.
- **Narrative & Educational Impact:** Participants will learn how to embed meaningful real-world topics into gameplay using story, mechanics, and interactions to teach concepts related to food, nutrition, sustainability, or equity.
- **Creative Problem-Solving:** Develop the ability to transform a real-world problem relating to food into an interactive experience that encourages exploration, decision-making, and critical thinking.

Challenge Overview

Design a game that explores at least one food-related theme (such as nutrition, food access, agriculture/produce, fast food, sustainability, diet, food waste, global food systems, consumer awareness, etc.). Your game should teach players something meaningful, while still being fun, engaging, and playable.

In short, your challenge is to make an impactful interactive tool to explore food systems and make learning smooth and fun.

Potential Game Genres & Ideas:

You are not limited at all to these! They are just ideas to spark your thinking.

Concept	Potential Direction
Puzzle Game	Players must create healthy meals under tight budgets or ingredient limits.
Adventure / Narrative	Explore a town where certain areas have limited food access. Improve them through quests.
Role-Playing Game (RPG)	Each food item gives different “stats” — but healthy choices unlock better long-term perks.

Challenge Rules:

1. **Gameplay Mechanics:** Clearly explain how your game works. This includes but isn't limited to: controls, objectives, player actions, and any scoring or progression system.
2. **Platform Flexibility:** Any engine or platform is acceptable (Scratch, Unity, Godot, Python, JavaScript, Unreal, etc.).
3. **Storytelling & Impact:** Your game should communicate why your food theme matters. What should players learn? What choices can they make? What real-world connection can they walk away with?
4. **Creativity & Engagement:** Innovation is encouraged! The more interactive, thoughtful, or unexpected your approach, the stronger your submission.
5. **AI Usage:** You may use any AI tools, but we strongly encourage using Lovable! At the same time, using AI is optional: creativity and clarity matter more.

Good Luck!
–High School I/O 2025 Team