

*Finding Light in Dark Times by Sarah Imran*



# 2023 Impact Report

STUDIO ATAO

# ABOUT US

Studio ATA0 (*ah-tào, stands for all together at once*) is an award-winning, 501(c)3 nonprofit defining equitable standards for the food, beverage, and hospitality (FBH) industry through community-informed research, education, and programming.

**Our vision is a world where everyone can realize their power to secure equitable and inclusive change.**

## FOR FOOD WORKERS, BY FOOD WORKERS

There are over 19 million FBH workers in the U.S. In this sector, QTBIPOC are *over*represented, taking on jobs that are (by no accident) some of the lowest-paying & least-protected, despite being one of the most significant contributors to the U.S. economy.

As a pro-worker organization run *by* food workers, our mission is to build new infrastructures that celebrate QTBIPOC's contributions to our food system & uplift *their* needs to form new industry standards.

# FROM OUR FOUNDER

It feels insincere to write rosy reflections for the purpose of our Impact Report, especially when so much suffering continues to be unleashed across the globe.

2023 has been heartbreakingly difficult for us. I write "heartbreaking" because, in measures beyond finances, this year held some of the most enriching & emotionally profound moments I've experienced since starting Studio ATA0 5 years ago. But however meaningful, these intangibles make little difference in how funders measure impact under capitalism.

Now, we are faced with the same reality we've seen play out in many organizations we admire: **major reductions in our operations are necessary to give us a chance to keep surviving**, so we have a chance to continue fighting for change in the food industry. It is a recurring symptom of the destructive model nonprofits follow in the U.S., where the power, money, and resources of nonprofits are tied to the whims of the wealthy elite. Especially during economic uncertainty, few dollars are available for infrastructure & community building, research, or education – anything beyond maintaining the basic social safety nets held together by direct-service nonprofits instead of our government.

With the limited monetary reserves we currently have & anticipate for 2024, we will be pausing all external offerings and shifting to solely focus on launching the *Food Systems 101* curriculum. Yes, it's a significant change. But as our cover art, *Finding Light in Dark Times*, reminds us, this can be a chance to slow down, take care of our needs, and **find light in the spirit of our community to move forward**.

This isn't goodbye. I'll see you all in 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. P. J.', located at the bottom right of the page.

# 2023

## AT A GLANCE

3

Hospitality Worker  
Town Halls in  
New York City &  
Los Angeles

50+

Hospitality  
workers across the  
U.S. empowered  
through Town  
Halls

9

Original videos  
created for the  
*Food Systems 101*  
curriculum

35K

Raised for  
continuing  
*Food Systems 101*

67

Vocabulary terms  
defined in our  
*social justice*  
*vocab list*

6

Original op-eds  
penned for our  
*Eat, Drink, Do*  
*Good* newsletters

4

*Ask Me Anything*  
sessions on  
Discord with food  
industry figures

500+

Community  
members on our  
*Discord channel*

28

Short-form food  
education posted  
on social media

# SPOTLIGHT

## FOOD SYSTEMS 101



How is guacamole on Super Bowl Sunday relate to Chile's drinking water crisis?



How did the Cheetos brand influence the messages of World War II ads in the U.S.?



These are just a few of the questions answered in *Food Systems 101* curriculum's



Module 1: *Food History Timeline*

Module 2: *Agriculture*

Module 3: *Food Products & Manufacturing*

Our curriculum is the first of its kind, **democratizing access** to social justice-centered food studies that center frontline workers & QTBIPOC contributions. We aim to empower food workers with the necessary tools, resources & skills to advocate for a better industry.



# DEEPDIVE

## FOOD SYSTEMS 101

Each *Food Systems 101* Module includes:

6

**Original videos** (6-15 minutes)  
examining inequities that have shaped  
the sector & resulting power dynamics

5

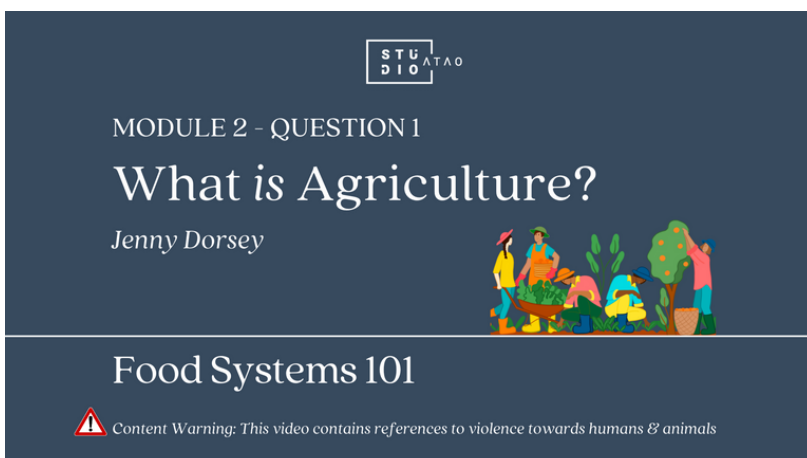
**Key questions** to serve as guiding  
themes for learners during the Module

1

**Interview** with a thought leader  
redefining the industry

1

**Engagement activity** for self-  
reflection & community engagement



*Watch the first video of  
Module 2: Agriculture  
here before it is released  
to the public!*

# SPOTLIGHT

## HOSPITALITY TOWN HALLS

Our Town Halls are the first-ever nationwide forum tailored for frontline hospitality workers to discuss industry issues & brainstorm actionable solutions to implement at their workplaces.



*The Studio ATA0 & Queer Food Foundation team at the NYC Town Hall*



# DEEPLIVE

## HOSPITALITY TOWN HALLS

Read the highlights from each city we've hosted Hospitality Worker Town Halls:



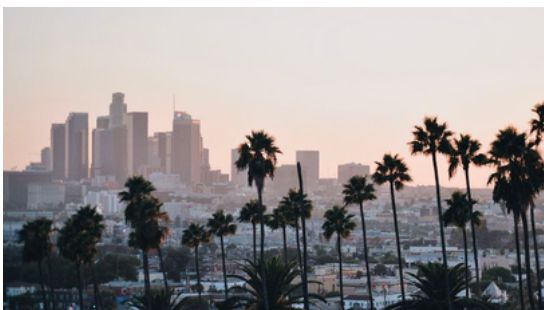
*"The person you need to resolve conflict with is often the person causing the conflict."*

 [NYC Town Hall Recap](#)



*"Firing someone is not the solution. It does not repair the harm or build trust with those left behind."*

 [Chicago Town Hall Recap](#)



*"Without HR we are vulnerable as workers, but when we do have HR they aren't on our side. Who is meant to advocate for us?"*

 [LA Town Hall Recap](#)



**Bring a Hospitality Worker Town Hall to your city!**

If you're interested in bringing our Town Hall to your city, [email us](#) with information about your organization & what you're envisioning. We'll gladly share our Town Hall planning documents with you!



# SPOTLIGHT

## LITTLE BITES



*Little Bites is our newest educational series of “bite-sized” (<90 seconds) videos on U.S. food history & politics.*



Episode 1:  
*A Tale of Three Sisters*



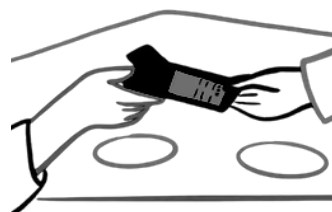
Episode 2:  
*Prohibition's Secret*



Episode 3:  
*The Railroad Strikers of St. Louis Who Defined U.S. Worker Organizing.*



Episode 4: *The 21-Year-Old Latina that Changed the Pecan Industry*



Episode 5: *The Racist Origins of Tipping.*

# FROM OUR TEAM

As we forge a new path forward for ourselves and this organization, here are some of the values we brainstormed as a team that we'll continue holding true:

*Imagination not perfection*

*Staying true to self*

*Intentionality in our actions*

*Creating space for rest & restoration*

*Leading with curiosity*

*Big Softie Energy*

*Small acts \*and\* big acts*

*Courage to be flexible*

*Celebrating awkward first steps*

*Mutual respect*

*Practicing takes effort!*

*Empathy & love a radical acts*

*Honoring our ancestors*

*Searching & growing*

