
A PHILADELPHIA FOOD POLICY ROAD MAP



PHILADELPHIA
FOOD POLICY
ADVISORY COUNCIL

20 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S FOOD SYSTEM: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



1 The Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) facilitates the

development of responsible policies that improve access for Philadelphia residents to culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound, and affordable food that is grown locally through environmentally sustainable practices. FPAC currently operates four programmatic subcommittees, Anti-Hunger, Local Food Procurement, Vacant Land, and Zero Waste. Two standing subcommittees, Governance and Membership, and Communications and Outreach, manage internal and external FPAC logistics. All FPAC meetings are open to the public.

FPAC members serve 3-year volunteer terms, joining a dynamic group of individuals committed to FPAC's mission. Members come from a diverse range of sectors associated with the food system, including private business, academia, non-profit organizations, farms and gardens, City government, and advocacy groups. FPAC therefore illustrates successful and productive collaboration between the City, appointed members, Philadelphia residents, and elected officials.

OUR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

2 Philadelphia is in the Middle of a 100-Mile Local Food System. This foodshed has over 30 million residents, about 43,000 farms, and just under 5.2 million acres of farmland.¹ Unlike the rest of the country, which produces mostly grain and beef products, farms in the Philadelphia region are smaller scale and highly specialized, producing more poultry and eggs, greenhouse and nursery products, and milk and dairy products. (DVRPC) In this 100-mile foodshed, there are about 79,000 farmworkers, 71% of whom are immigrants and 50-70% of whom are undocumented.²

3 Small and Family Farming is Strong in the Foodshed: All but 2% of the region's local farms are owned by a family or individual. And, in fact, 79% of regional farm operators, have operated their farms for more than 10 years. Philadelphia is also one of several urban centers experiencing a resurgence of urban and peri-urban agriculture in places like Philadelphia and Delaware counties, while farming traditions remain particularly strong in Southern New Jersey and Chester, Lancaster, and York counties.³

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HUNGER

4 Universal School Breakfast and Lunch: The School District of Philadelphia now makes breakfast and lunch available to all students at no charge. The District's 182 schools serve 61,200 breakfasts and 74,000 lunches every day, approximately 50% of the overall student body, daily.⁴

5 Feeding Hungry Philadelphians: Philadelphia's 700 food pantries and soup kitchens feed an estimated half a million Philadelphians annually, possibly reaching a full third of the total population every year.⁵

1 USDA Census of Agriculture, via DVRPC • 2 CATA • 3. See DVRPC 2010 report, 26-29
4 <http://www.phila.k12.pa.us/about/#school-meals>
5 <http://www.hungercoalition.org/faq-food-pantries>



- 6 City Hall Gets Healthy:** The City of Philadelphia now offers an incentive for all city employees to participate in the Delaware Valley Farm Share program, a partnership of the Common Market and Farm to City that in 2013 made weekly deliveries to over 1,200 employees from 41 companies, non-profit organizations, and churches (Common Market). Since 2011, 65% of vending machine offerings at City Hall and other city properties must be healthy options including water, dried fruit, and nuts.⁶

LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

- 7 Philadelphia Leads in Food Retail Expansion:** The Food Trust is responsible for incubating the national model for opening supermarkets in underserved areas in Philadelphia. The program, called the Fresh Food Financing Initiative, has now approved 78 supermarket projects for funding statewide, representing nearly 5,000 jobs created or retained and making food more available to almost 500,000 of the state's underserved residents.⁷
- 8 World's Biggest Refrigerator:** Supporting a growing demand for local and regional food, Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market in Southwest Philadelphia, opened in June 2011, as the world's largest fully-enclosed, refrigerated wholesale produce terminal. The state-of-the-art facility was constructed with energy-efficient materials and includes an 18,000 square foot recycling, composting, and waste processing facility and is open to the public.⁸
- 9 Food Manufacturing is Strong:** Philadelphia's 121 food preparation and manufacturing establishments employ 5,272 people, representing a full one-fifth of all manufacturing jobs in the city.⁹



- 10 Philadelphia's Food Hub:** Common Market is the national model for nonprofit food hubs, collecting food grown at more than 80 regional farms and distributing it to over 200 wholesale customers throughout the Delaware Valley. Since its founding in 2008, Common Market has sold more than \$7.5 million worth of food.¹⁰
- 11 Job Training Supports Food Access:** Since the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society started the Roots to Re-entry program in 2010, 84 former inmates of the Philadelphia Prison system have received training in horticulture, landscaping, and food production.¹¹ Through the City Harvest program, more than 850 inmates have grown 10,000 pounds of produce annually, which is donated to food pantries. Along with produce grown locally by over 135 other PHS City Harvest partner sites this City-grown produce provides over 150,000 pounds of food annually to food insecure Philadelphians.¹²
- ## BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL
- 12 Reading Terminal Market:** RTM was named a 2014 Great Public Space in America by the American Planning Association, is the largest redeemer of SNAP dollars in Pennsylvania, with 15 merchants accepting \$1.1 million in SNAP benefits in 2008.¹³ During the summer of 2014, Reading Terminal held its first nutrition education day camp, bringing 120 middle school children whose families are eligible for SNAP benefits to the market to learn about food safety, nutrition, and food preparation.¹⁴
- 13 Community-Supported Agriculture is Thriving:** There are at least 100 Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) operations serving the Philadelphia area, connecting residents to local produce while supporting local business. (DVRPC)

6 http://articles.philly.com/2013-09-06/food/41804746_1_fruits-employees-healthy-recipe

7 http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/grocerygap.original.pdf • 8 <http://www.pwpm.net/about/>

9 <http://www.pidc-pa.org/userfiles/file/FULLREPORTManufacturingGrowthStrategyFINAL.pdf> • 10 <http://commonmarketphila.org/intro/approach/faqs/>

11 <http://www.scattergoodfoundation.org/grantee/roots-re-entry-job-training-program#.VO9aXbPF85A> • 12 <http://phsonline.org/greening/city-harvest>

13 <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2009/04/0087.xml> • 14 <http://www.readingterminalmarket.org/market-news/137-nutrition-program-big-hit>



- 14 Farmers Markets Abound:** Philadelphia is home to over 50 farmers markets citywide.¹⁵ Since 2010, Philadelphia has offered double value coupon programs, providing residents with \$2 coupons for every \$5 in SNAP benefits spent at farmers' markets. Since the program started, SNAP sales at participating markets have nearly quintupled.¹⁶

GROWING FOOD IN THE CITY

- 15 Our Farming Tradition:** Philadelphia has a deep history of food production in the City. For example, Historic Germantown mainstays Wyck and Grumblethorpe have restored kitchens, gardens, and farmers' markets that harken back to the colonial-era. (PILCOP/Historic Germantown), while gardens like Las Parcelas, Glenwood Green Acres, and the Airport Garden have thrived for decades.^{17 / 18} Wyck, Glenwood Green Acres, the Airport Garden, and Grumblethorpe all receive support as part of the PHS City Harvest network.

- 16 New Zoning Code Facilitates Growing:** Philadelphia's 2012 zoning code created a progressive framework for urban agriculture (PHS, PILCOP), making gardening and farming permitted uses in most parts of the city.

- 17 Penn State Extension:** PSE has a County Extension program and office right in Philadelphia, operating Master Gardener, 4H, and nutrition education programs. (PSU) PSE's High Tunnel Alliance has built twenty high tunnels to increase production at market farms throughout Philadelphia.

FOOD EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 18 W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences:** Pennsylvania's largest, single FFA Chapter; has more than a dozen agricultural educators; participates in the World Food Prize; and is one of only a few large agricultural schools nationally.^{19 / 20 / 21} On its 130-acre campus, Saul raises dairy, beef, equine, and swine; and has a small-scale crop production and an orchard run as part of a farm-school partnership with Weavers Way Cooperative.²² Saul is also growing food that is incorporated into its cafeteria.²³ Saul has the only state-approved food science program in Pennsylvania, and is the pipeline/ vehicle for kids from Philadelphia to enter the agricultural arena for food production. 75% of Saul graduates attend college.

- 19 Philadelphia Produces Chefs:** Philadelphia is home to twelve culinary training programs at six schools, with 234 culinary degrees earned in 2010.²⁴

- 20 Young People are Learning Nutrition:** In the Philadelphia region, there are 56,000 children in over 100 schools receiving nutrition education through the SNAP Education System by six partners including the Urban Nutrition Initiative (UNI), School District of Philadelphia, Einstein Healthcare Network, Drexel University, Health Promotion Council, and The Food Trust. (UNI)²⁵ This program resulted in a 50% decrease in obesity amongst participants.²⁶ From 2006 to 2010, the obesity rate among Philadelphia public school students declined by nearly 5%, progress largely attributable to the Get Healthy Philly initiative and the Philadelphia School District Culture of Health.²⁷

15 <http://www.foodfitphilly.org/eat-healthy-near-you/farmers-markets/> • 16 <http://thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/farmers-markets/philly-food-bucks>

17 <http://www.pilcop.org/change-systems-improve-lives-your-gift-makes-a-difference/#sthash.zsWVr9l4.0QffDYvb.dpbs>

18 <https://phillyfoodjustice.wordpress.com/2012/05/01/philly-community-group-fighting-to-save-land-from-sheriffs-sale/>

19 http://articles.philly.com/2012-10-22/news/34629111_1_saul-top-student-roxborough-school • 20 <http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/roxborough-weekly-newsletter/54223-saul-tour-21>

21 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2012/10/10/learning-challenges-and-successes-farming> • 22 <http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/schools/s/saul/about-us>

23 <http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/nw-philadelphia/61003-saul-cafeteria-now-serving-up-school-harvest>

24 <http://www.educationnews.org/career-index/culinary-schools-in-philadelphia-pa/> • 25 <http://thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/schools/nutrition-education>

26 http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/farmbill-brochure-8-5x11-2012-lowres.original.pdf

27 <http://www.rwjf.org/en/about-rwjf/newsroom/newsroom-content/2013/07/philadelphia--signs-of-progress.html>

10 CHALLENGES FACING THE PHILADELPHIA FOOD SYSTEM



1 High Rates of Poverty: Philadelphia is one of the country's poorest major cities, with 27% of residents—and one-third of children—living in poverty.¹ One in four Philadelphians are food insecure, meaning they do not know where their next meal will come from and lack access to enough food for an active, healthy life, as measured by the USDA. This is double the state and national rates.²

2 Dependence on Emergency Food Sources: In 2013, more than half a million Philadelphians received food from a food pantry—more than double the number in 2008—and almost two-fifths of these residents were children. Two-thirds of Philadelphia's food pantries and soup kitchens did not have enough food to meet community demand.³ 44% of Philadelphia's food pantries and soup kitchens cannot provide fresh produce, and only 11% of them offer nutrition or cooking classes.³

3 SNAP Participation Rates: One in three Philadelphians (475,890) received SNAP benefits in 2013. Between December 2007 and April 2014, the number of Philadelphians receiving SNAP benefits increased 45%. Yet there are an additional 180,000 Philadelphians who qualify for SNAP, meaning that 27% of Philadelphians who are eligible for SNAP are not enrolled.⁴

4 Land Access: Community gardeners and urban farmers have a hard time accessing land because at least eight different city and regional agencies—Department of Public Property, Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, Philadelphia Housing Authority, Department of Parks and Recreation, Philadelphia School District, Philadelphia Water Department, and SEPTA—own vacant land. City agencies are

under-resourced and inconsistent, making the processes to lease and purchase vacant land complicated and time-consuming. (PILCOP) The vast majority of the City's community gardens and market farms are not land secure (meaning that the land is owned by a third party) and are threatened by development. Only 34 gardens have been preserved through the Neighborhood Gardens Trust.⁵

5 Diet Related Health Indicators: Philadelphia County has been ranked the least healthy in the state, with a 31% adult obesity rate.⁶ 15% of Philadelphia high school students are obese,⁷ and 41% of children aged 6-17 are obese or overweight.⁸ Childhood obesity is especially troubling as it can lead to a lifetime of unhealthy habits and poor health.

6 Low Produce Consumption: In 2013, 53% of adults and 46% of children living in Southeastern Pennsylvania consumed less than three servings of fruits and vegetables a day.⁹ Philadelphia County residents experience the highest rates of both diabetes (16%) and high blood pressure (37.5%) in the region.⁹

7 Status of Food Workers: While over one-quarter of Pennsylvania's culinary professionals are employed in Philadelphia, employment in this sector has declined since 2006, and the average salary for culinary workers in Philadelphia is 40% less than the average salary for all professionals. In 2010, only 10% of culinary workers in Philadelphia made more than \$43,000.¹⁰ Only 7% of food workers have received paid sick time, so most work while sick, exposing coworkers and customers. (ROC) The average farmworker's family income is less than \$25,000/year, and 25% of farmworkers have a family income below the federal poverty line. (CATA)

1 <http://www.philabundance.org/resources/realities-of-hunger/> • 2 <http://www.hungercoalition.org/hidden-epidemic-single-page>

3 <http://www.hungercoalition.org/pantry-survey> • 4 http://b3cdn.net/phillyhunger/eb5b5b720977bd0b8b_70m6berfw.pdf

5 <http://phsonline.org/greening/neighborhood-gardens-association> • 6 <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/pennsylvania/2014/rankings/philadelphia/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

7 http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/pdf/obesity/philadelphia_obesity_combo.pdf

8 <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/CommunitiesPuttingPreventiontoWork/communities/profiles/both-pa-philadelphia.htm>

9 <http://www.phmc.org/site/71-press-releases/2013/880-phmc-household-health-survey-finds-627-percent-of-adults-in-southeastern-pa-are-overweight-or-obese139>

10 <http://www.educationnews.org/career-index/culinary-schools-in-philadelphia-pa/>

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT THE FOOD SYSTEM AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF PHILADELPHIANS

1 Support Policies and Programs that Promote Community Health and End Hunger

- Become a national leader and a local proponent of food policy, by advocating for programs that increase access to SNAP and WIC benefits—including WIC, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (WIC FMNP and S-FMNP), CACFP, and healthy school meals—and establish programs to support households constrained by distance, cost, time, and other practical and economic barriers to food access.
- Commit to supporting and funding the work of the Get Healthy Philly program of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and continue to support and implement the nutrition strategies outlined in PDPH's strategic plan,¹ and PDPH's community health improvement plan.²
- Maintain existing PDPH nutrition programs for pregnant women, mothers, and infants such as those found in PDPH's strategic plan and community health improvement plan.²
- Commit to continuing to implement the city-wide nutrition standards for city departments, expanding the adoption of nutrition standards (and healthy habits) to early childcare settings, and supporting the development of a farm to school food program for K-12 schools
- Draw on Philadelphia as an “Eds and Meds” center and establish a task force on food as medicine to integrate healthy food as preventative health care throughout the City, using as leverage the new IRS ruling that nonprofit hospitals can claim the help they provide their communities to “ensure adequate nutrition” as part of their exemption from federal taxation.



8 Senior Food Insecurity: Many adults age 60 and older in Southeastern Pennsylvania report cutting at least one meal a day due to financial constraints, and in 2012, 86.7% of adults who reported cutting a meal consumed three or fewer servings of fruits or vegetables per day. Older adults who cut a meal were also more likely to report the overall quality of groceries available in their neighborhood as “fair” or “poor” as compared to seniors who did not have to cut a meal.¹¹

9 School Cooking Facilities: While the School District reopened 13 full-service cafeterias for the 2014-2015 school year, half of the District's 280 meal sites still lack kitchens and serve pre-packaged “satellite” meals made in warehouses and trucked into the City from out of state companies.¹²(PSD)

10 Loss of Farmland: Between 2002 and 2012, Philadelphia's 100-mile foodshed lost tens of thousands of acres of vegetable production. (DVRPC)

¹¹ <http://www.chdbdata.org/datafindings-details.asp?id=115>

¹² http://articles.philly.com/2014-09-06/news/53606290_1_free-meals-school-lunch-program-wayne-grasela



2 Strengthen the Economy by Improving Local Workers and Local Food Procurement

- Continue the Executive Order requiring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for Philadelphia International Airport employees and expand the Executive Order wherever applicable throughout Philadelphia.
- Streamline the permitting processes for small business owners, including food-businesses, by moving the application and permitting processes online (The Enterprise Center, SBN) and reduce barriers to food market entry for local growers and small business owners through scholarship programs or waivers.
- Pledge to locally source all city food procurement by a certain percentage. For example, an initial goal to require that city agencies purchase between 10-20% of their food with food grown or produced locally.³
- Support the FPAC's creation of a Good Food Task Force to assist the City in creating procurement standards to prioritize food purchases that are not simply locally produced, but healthy to consumers, fair to all along the food system, and sustainable to our environment.

3 Empower the Mayor's Food Policy Advisory Council to Lead Food Policy Reform

- Prioritize the role of the Mayor's Food Policy Advisory Council as a convener of food systems leaders brought together to shape food systems policy and affirm the values set by the FPAC, prioritizing transparency, inclusion, and diversity in the Council.
- Actively engage with the FPAC by attending twice yearly meetings, directing the FPAC to

address relevant policy questions, and publicly supporting FPAC's food policy recommendations.

- Dedicate funding and staff for FPAC within the Office of Sustainability.
- Appoint a Food Policy Director within the Office of the Mayor who is empowered to work with staff across agencies. New York City, Los Angeles, Boston, Baltimore, Seattle, Austin, TX, Louisville, KY, Madison, WI, Providence, RI, Salt Lake City, Hartford, CT and Portland all have full-time food policy directors or advisors within the Mayor's Office or closely tied to it, which allows for interagency access and collaboration.⁴

4 Emphasize the Importance of Urban Agriculture as a Pathway to Food Democracy

- Provide ample resources to the Philadelphia Land Bank, enhancing opportunities for productive reuse of land that promote food access, such as urban agriculture and food-related economic development.
- Strengthen food security by establishing urban agriculture, community gardening, and greening as stated priorities for all City of Philadelphia land-holding agencies, including the Land Bank, and mandate interagency coordination and planning to support these initiatives via an urban agriculture ordinance.
- Maintain and provide sufficient resources to firmly establish the role of the newly created FarmPhilly program within the Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Commit to at least 10 acres of cultivated land on public property throughout Philadelphia within three years.

1 http://www.phila.gov/health/pdfs/PDPHStrategicPlan_52114_final.pdf
 2 http://www.phila.gov/health/pdfs/philacommunityhealthimpplan_52814_final.pdf
 3 <http://www.psrc.org/assets/9560/procurement.pdf>
 4 <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/416389>



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