– GREATER –
PITTSBURGH
FOOD
ACTION
PLAN

STATE OF THE FOOD SYSTEM REPORT



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of over a year of collaborative work to understand and accurately represent the current state of Allegheny County's food system. It would not have been possible without significant support from the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council's many members and partner organizations. The report was primarily authored by the Project Core with editing support from Project Team members. The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council is proud to have been part of the process of developing this report, and stands by its findings. We look forward to continuing to work with Council members and partner organizations in the development and implementation of the Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 5

Introduction 6
- Who Are We? 6
- What is the Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan (GPFAP)? 6
- Why Now? 9

Overview 10
- What is a Food System? 10
- What is a Food Plan? 11

Review of Food Plans, Programs, and Funding 12
- National Food Planning Efforts 12
- Regional, State, and Local Efforts 13

Allegheny County Overview 14
- Age 15
- Race and Ethnicity 15
- Income 15

Policy Audit 16

Environmental & Social Factors Affecting the Food System 18
- Food Systems-Related Environmental Concerns in Allegheny County 18
- Food Systems-Related Social Concerns in Allegheny County 19
- Food Systems Workers 23

Food System Sectors 26
- Growing 28
- Processing 30
- Distributing 32
- Retailing - Supermarkets, Groceries, Corner Stores, and Specialty Markets 34
- Retailing - Restaurants and Food Trucks 36
- Retailing - Farmers' Markets and Other Direct Marketing Channels 38
- Community Food Assistance 40
- Cooking & Eating 44
- Managing Wasted Food 46

Glossary 48

Appendix A: Baseline Measures For The Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan 52

Appendix B: Regional Planning and Research 54
- Regional Food Planning and Research 55
- County, Neighborhood, Municipal, & Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plans in Allegheny County 55

Appendix C: Summary of Programs 56

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ACHD: Allegheny County Health Department

CONNECT: The Congress of Neighboring Communities, a multi-municipal organization supporting Allegheny County's urban core

CRAFT: The Center for Regional Agriculture, Food, and Transformation at Chatham University

CSA: Community supported agriculture. A method of direct-marketing from farms to consumers.

FAO: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FMNP: The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, part of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

MUFPP: The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, to which the City of Pittsburgh is a signatory

PFPC: The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

SFMNP: The Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, a federal program

SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. A federal nutrition program, often called "food stamps"

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

WIC: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. A federal nutrition program, often called (especially in combination with SNAP) "food stamps"

WPBC: Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center at Carnegie Mellon University

WPRDC: Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

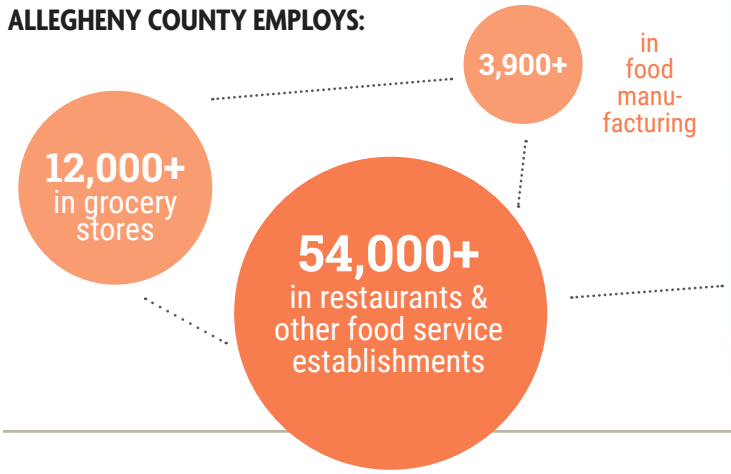
Given critical challenges to food systems, cities, states, and regions are increasingly coming together to imagine and plan for their food futures. Here in Allegheny County, the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council is leading a collaborative effort to develop a Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan (or "GPFAP"), thus adding our region to the cohort of cities and regions working across the globe to advance food systems. Launched in 2018, the GPFAP is a community-centered approach to a policy roadmap and action plan of strategies that prioritize healthy, affordable, and sustainable food for all. This State of the Food System Report sets the foundation of this work by creating a shared understanding of the current conditions within the Allegheny County food system.

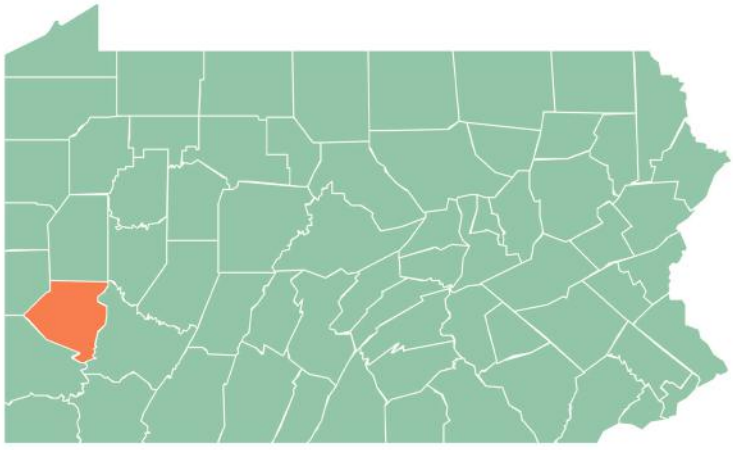
A food system encompasses every aspect of how food moves from farm to table and everything in between. A healthy, resilient food system has far-reaching effects on systemic issues such as human health, economic stability, environmental sustainability, and community vitality. With this report, we lay the foundation for a food action plan that accelerates our region's ability to support an economically robust, environmentally conscious and socially equitable food system.

Allegheny County is the economic and population center of western Pennsylvania, and as a result is a major market for our regional foodshed, which extends into neighboring states. The food system is a major economic driver in the County, with approximately 4,000 people employed in food manufacturing, 12,000+ in grocery stores, and 54,000+ in restaurants and other food service establishments. As more farms in the County shift to vegetable production (60 farms harvesting 959 acres in 2017, up from 25 farms and 445 acres in 2012), farmers markets, farm stands, and on-farm markets provide many residents with access to local food. Restaurants in the region are increasingly visible on the national stage. Indeed, restaurant and hospitality consulting firm af&co. named Pittsburgh 2019 Food City of the Year in its annual trends report.

Despite these encouraging signs, our region faces food system challenges. Racial and economic inequities affect food security and access for many; 13.1% of County residents experience food insecurity with higher concentrations in communities of color. The average wage for restaurant workers in the County is $17,800, which is $7,300 below the poverty line for a family of four. Food retail is increasingly consolidated into large companies like Giant Eagle and Walmart, who together control over 60% of our region's retail food industry. We have seen a loss of nearly 6,000 acres of farmland and 40 farms in the County since 2012. Of the farms still in operation, 71.46% operate at a financial loss, and there are limited processing and aggregation facilities for their products. This lack of processing and aggregation facilities contributes to fragile urban-rural connections.

This State of the Food System Report provides information for residents, stakeholders, policymakers, and planners. It lays out current food system indicators and relevant policies, and asks key questions for future work to strengthen the food system. The report provides a starting point for a community-based, collaborative approach to improving the food system throughout Allegheny County.





Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

INTRODUCTION

Who Are We?

PITTSBURGH FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Since 2009, the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council (PFPC) has brought together over 130 individuals and 80 entities - food businesses, restaurants, farmers and gardeners, conservationists, school food employees, anti-hunger and food justice advocates, community development and healthcare professionals and more - to increase connections, tools and shared resources that can accelerate food systems change and deepen collective impact.

The mission of the PFPC is to create a just, equitable, and sustainable food system. A just **food system** is one that counters systemic injustices, such as economic, racial or gender-based disparities. An equitable food system is one in which healthy, culturally-appropriate foods are available to all people regardless of income levels. And a sustainable food system operates with care for human beings, the environment, and the financial well-being of everyone throughout the system.

Together, the PFPC catalyzes our network to create a food system that provides nutritious, affordable food for all, includes a fair and inclusive food economy, prioritizes opportunities for community wealth building, sustainably stewards our natural resources and actively creates ways for ordinary people to understand and engage in the rules that safeguard our soil, water and ecosystems.

What is the Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan (GPFAP)?

The GPFAP is a community-centered approach to a policy roadmap and action plan of strategies that prioritize healthy, affordable, and sustainable food for all. Through research and community engagement, the GPFAP identifies opportunities to strengthen connections throughout the Allegheny County food system in pursuit of our stated goals:

- Enhance **coordination & communication** among existing food systems' resources and agencies;
- Center the roles of **equity, sustainable agriculture** and **environmental stewardship** in a healthy food system;
- Support a robust **regional food economy** that benefits all;
- Improve **food security and public health** by increasing availability and accessibility of nutritious, high-quality, affordable and locally-sourced food;
- Build **community power** based on the principle of food sovereignty for all residents.

The Food Action Plan project has four phases:

This document represents the culmination of **Phase 2.** The State of the Food System Report is intended to provide an overview of the current conditions of the food system within Allegheny County. The first step in this collective problem solving approach is developing a shared understanding of the root causes and manifestations of the problems. Fostering a shared understanding of these current conditions allows us to build consensus on prioritization of issues and to develop strategies for addressing needs. **Phase 3** of the GPFAP process will include a series of community meetings, thematic roundtables and a County-wide survey to collect input from community members and food systems stakeholders on priorities for recommendations in the plan.

Our community engagement sessions create channels of communication that center community members in the pursuit of building a better regional food system. In **Phase 4**, our Project Core in consultation with our Project Team will synthesize and analyze inputs (from the community engagement sessions, roundtable discussions and surveys), prioritize strategies, and develop policy and program recommendations for action. The GPFAP will advocate for policy implementation pathways at the city, municipal and County levels that seek to establish ongoing collaboration and oversight by our public sector.



Phase 01

BUILDING THE STRUCTURE

- Assemble project & advisory teams
- Develop timeline & process for plan

Phase 02

STATE OF THE FOOD SYSTEM REPORT

- Research & access current conditions of Allegheny County food system.

Phase 03

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Receive input from community members & food stystem stakeholders on priorities for recommendations in the plan.

Phase 04

WRITING THE GREATER PITTSBURGH FOOD ACTION PLAN

- Synthesize the info from Phase 2 & 3.
- Develop specific actionable recommendations.

Phases of the Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan

This project has been guided by a robust leadership team that builds on close partnerships and strengthens public sector collaboration. The structure takes the shape of an avocado with three distinct groups that will aid in this project: the Project Core, the Project Team, and the Advisory Committee.

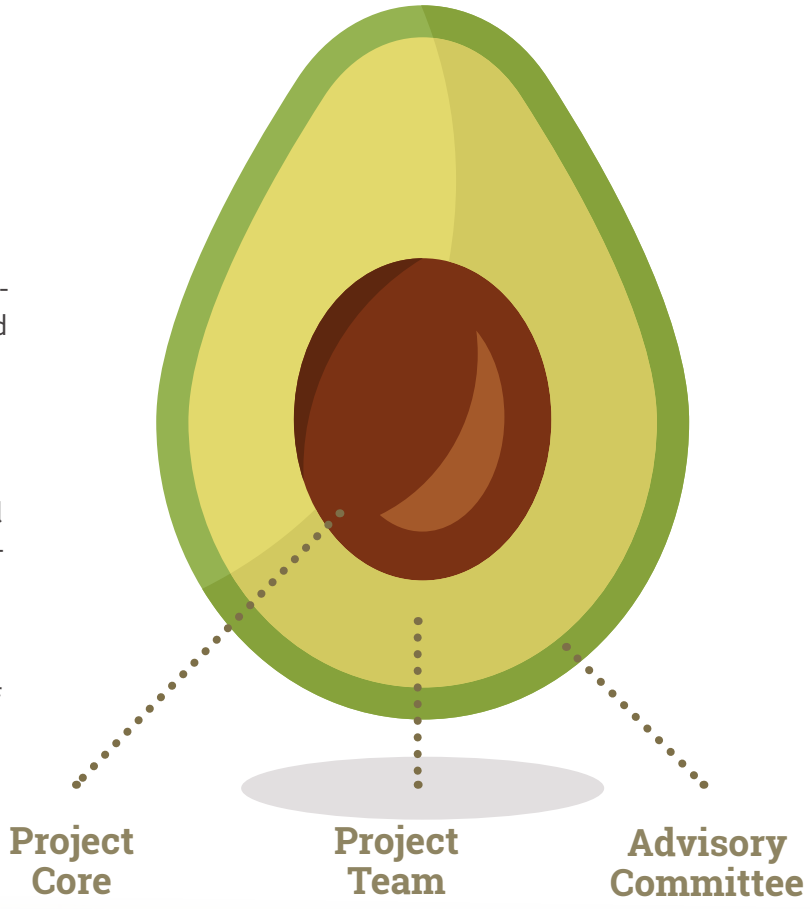
Project Core: consists of PFPC staff, two consultants (Project Coordinator and Data Coordination), and two Emerson National Hunger Fellows.

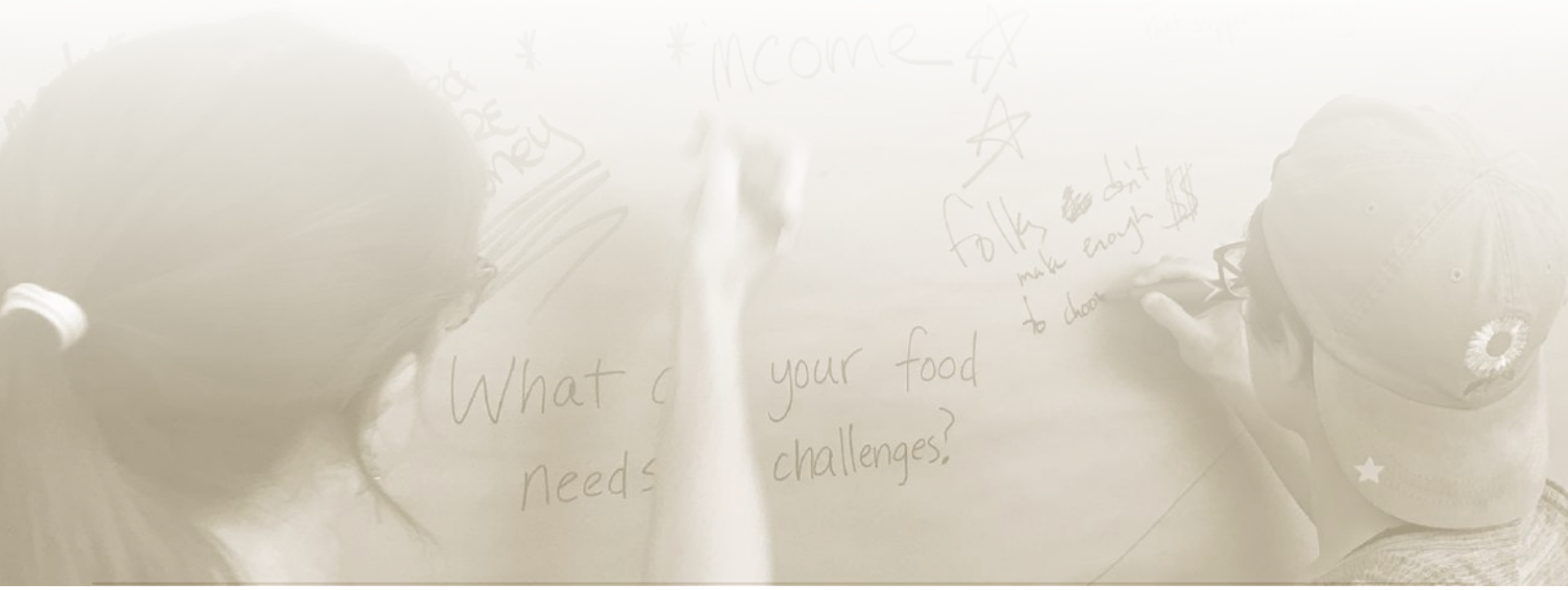
Project Team: consists of PFPC Steering Committee members and representatives from government and academic sectors who meet regularly throughout the process.

Advisory Committee: members of the Advisory Committee are elected officials and high-level decision makers from public health, economic development, environment, and planning sectors.

While Allegheny County's food system is connected to, and influenced by, forces both inside and outside of its borders, the recommendations put forward through the final report will focus on the tools and resources available within the County.

GREATER PITTSBURGH FOOD ACTION PLAN TEAM STRUCTURE





Why Now?

For the past 10 years the PFPC has worked with many partners and stakeholders to develop and articulate a clear vision for our region's food future. Together, we have worked to create a shared understanding of our food system and increase collaboration to achieve commonly identified goals. This moment in the Pittsburgh region--from recent economic growth and development, to inequitable health disparities, to the unfolding climate crisis--is an opportune time to deepen this vision and pathway forward for how we will act on critical food systems challenges such as hunger, climate change, agricultural land loss, regional resiliency, and continued loss of local food resources to industry consolidation.

Across the globe, nations, cities and movements are joining together to take on these critical food systems challenges. Notably, the City of Pittsburgh has made significant local-global linkages and commitments, including the 2011 proclamation recognizing Pittsburgh as the fifth "Human Rights City"[1] in the U.S. and the 2019 announcement of Pittsburgh as the second US city to adopt the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals[2]. Further, Pittsburgh is a signatory to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.[3] The Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan lays out a comprehensive and collaborative, cross-sector agenda to advance food systems objectives that further these commitments. In bringing together local food systems stakeholders across Allegheny County, we leverage our region's strengths and increase our capacity to address critical food systems challenges.

What is the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact?

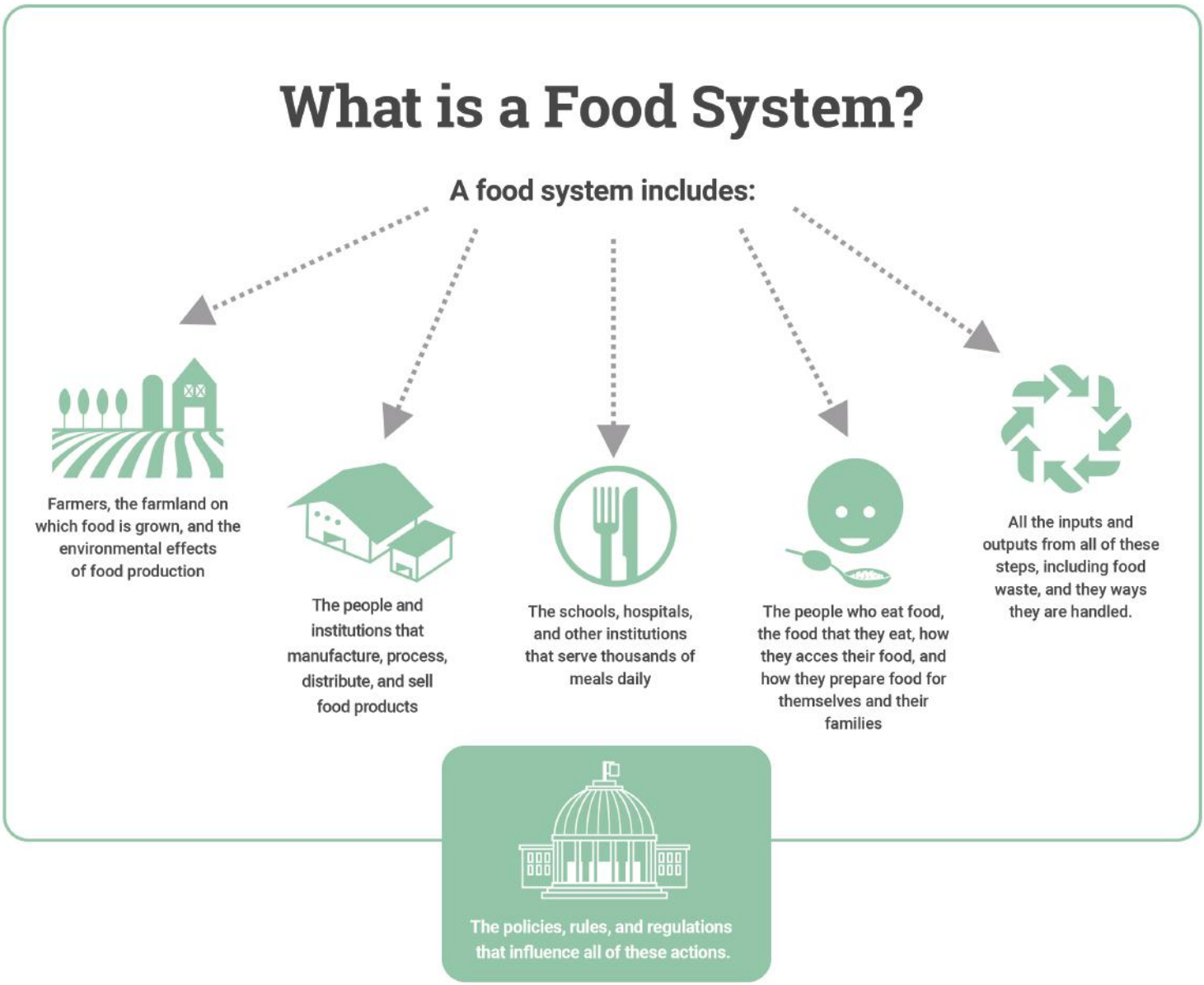
Cities & the areas surrounding them contain over half the world's population. The MUFPP is a pledge by mayors and local governments to "work to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse, that provide healthy and affordable food to all people in a human rights-based framework, that minimise waste and conserve biodiversity while adapting to and mitigating impacts of climate change". The MUFPP encourages cities to work together with cross-sector partners and nearby municipalities to develop coherent policies and plans to create these sustainable food systems. (Source: Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org.)

MILAN URBAN FOOD POLICY PACT

OVERVIEW

What is a Food System?

Simply put, a food system encompasses every aspect of how food moves from source to table to waste. All the activities, people and resources involved in getting food from fields, forests, and fisheries through to consumption and disposal are part of the food system. [4]The graphic below illustrates many of the aspects within a food system.



Globally, food systems vary from being largely based on subsistence and local trade to the international corporate food system. In the United States, most production, processing, distribution, and consumption takes place within a framework of farm consolidation, commodity crops, and corporate ownership. The vast majority of farms in the United States, almost 90%, are small-scale family operations; however, they are responsible for only 26% of total food production.[5] Increasingly larger farms are responsible for a growing percentage of our food supply. While the number of farms over 2,000 acres accounted for 15% of total US cropland in 1987, that number has since more than doubled, reaching 36% by 2012.[6] The food system has also become increasingly consolidated, with small numbers of large companies and multinational conglomerates controlling much of the market. While these companies can provide a wide variety of products, they are also vulnerable to disruptions in international trade, transit networks, livestock and crop diseases, and natural disasters.[7] In response to this increasingly consolidated, global food system, interest in resilient food systems has increased and the **community food systems** movement has emerged in communities around the United States. It envisions a different food system in which consumers, farmers, and other food system actors collaborate to enhance the social, environmental, and economic health for the benefit of all. Community food systems aim to create integrated and sustainable connections between components of the food system, such as food growing, processing, distributing, retailing, cooking and eating, transportation, and waste management.[8]

What is a Food Plan?

The American Planning Association considers the food system significant in community and regional planning endeavors, and suggests a goal of building "stronger, sustainable, and more self-reliant community and regional food systems".[9] Food touches almost everything we do, and food systems are vital to the economic and social health of both individuals and communities. As such, food policies address issues of poverty, public health, land use, transit, local enterprises, energy, and resilience to shocks and stresses. Food plans serve multiple functions. Food plans highlight the intersections of primary food system sectors that form the food system. They map city and regional food systems in order to foster a shared understanding among major stakeholders and decision-makers, and provide a clear path forward with defined steps that allow stakeholders to take action in a unified manner. Analysis of effective food plan strategies suggests that plans should be place-specific, improve social equity, contribute to economic development, and protect the environment.[10] Through the development of a community-driven strategic food plan, we can enhance individual and community health and nutrition, economic well-being, community resilience, and ecological sustainability.

This kind of food planning enables a community-driven approach rather than one that is top-down. Such an inclusive planning process is vital to ensure a sustainable food system that acts as a lever to create social change.[11] [12]

Allegheny County is the population center of western Pennsylvania, and is emerging as a leader in economic revitalization in the 21st century. Allegheny County's food system is embedded in a network of food systems, including global, regional, multi-state, and statewide systems; the 200 mile **foodshed** (a term referring to the geographic boundaries within which food is produced and where that food is consumed[13]) around Pittsburgh covers parts of six states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, New York, Maryland, and Virginia) and 206 counties and cities.[14] A Greater Pittsburgh Food Action Plan thus has the potential to have significant impacts throughout our region.

REVIEW OF FOOD PLANS, PROGRAMS, & FUNDING

National Food Planning Efforts

The last decade has seen a growth in regional food planning across the United States including comprehensive food action plans, food security plans, local economic plans, public health plans, and other planning efforts that incorporate food or diet components. The majority of these plans have focused on cities and the suburbs that surround them. These areas are simultaneously diverse economic centers with access to resources, and are vulnerable to disruptions and inequities in food supply and distribution. Rural areas tend to be addressed in state-level plans or as part of agricultural development efforts rather than as a specific food planning focus. Regardless of where people live, everyone deserves safe, affordable, and healthy food, and food plans offer a way to connect increasingly disconnected urban and rural communities.

The PFPC has drawn inspiration and information about current practices from many regional food plans, including the following:

- City of Columbus & Franklin County Ohio Local Food Action Plan
- Denver Food Vision
- Los Angeles Food System Snapshot 2013
- Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan
- Michigan Good Food Charter
- Multnomah County Food Action Plan (OR)
- Pioneer Valley Food Security Plan (MA)
- Planning for Santa Fe's Food Future
- Seattle Food Action Plan

Food planning is an emerging field; a comprehensive food action plan positions Allegheny County as part of national and international cohorts of cities and regions working to advance food systems for all their residents.



Regional, State, and Local Efforts

The GPFAP seeks to draw information from the many food-related research and planning initiatives that have taken place in Pennsylvania and our region, focusing on topics such as strengthening farmers markets, reducing hunger, or growing the agricultural economy. A table of these relevant reports can be found in **Appendix B: Regional Research and Planning.**

Non-food specific County and regional plans also interact with food systems planning. In particular, comprehensive plans (including land-use planning), public health plans, and transit plans can all relate closely to food needs. Among other aspects, these plans affect access to food, agricultural activity, and dietary quality throughout the County. Where possible, our plan seeks to align with existing plans to encourage collaboration and maximize impact.

Municipalities in Allegheny County and neighborhoods in the City of Pittsburgh conduct local planning efforts. Often these are joint efforts of governments and community organizations, such as benefit organizations or community development corporations (CDCs). The plans may cover more than one municipality or neighborhood, and usually focus on infrastructure, land use, and economic development. In recent years, some of these plans have focused on environmental issues, including the Triboro Eco District (boroughs of Etna, Millvale, and Sharpsburg), the EcoInnovation District (neighborhoods of Larimer, Homewood, Uptown and Oakland), and the City of Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan.

Many of these local planning efforts have a direct impact on the food system. For example:

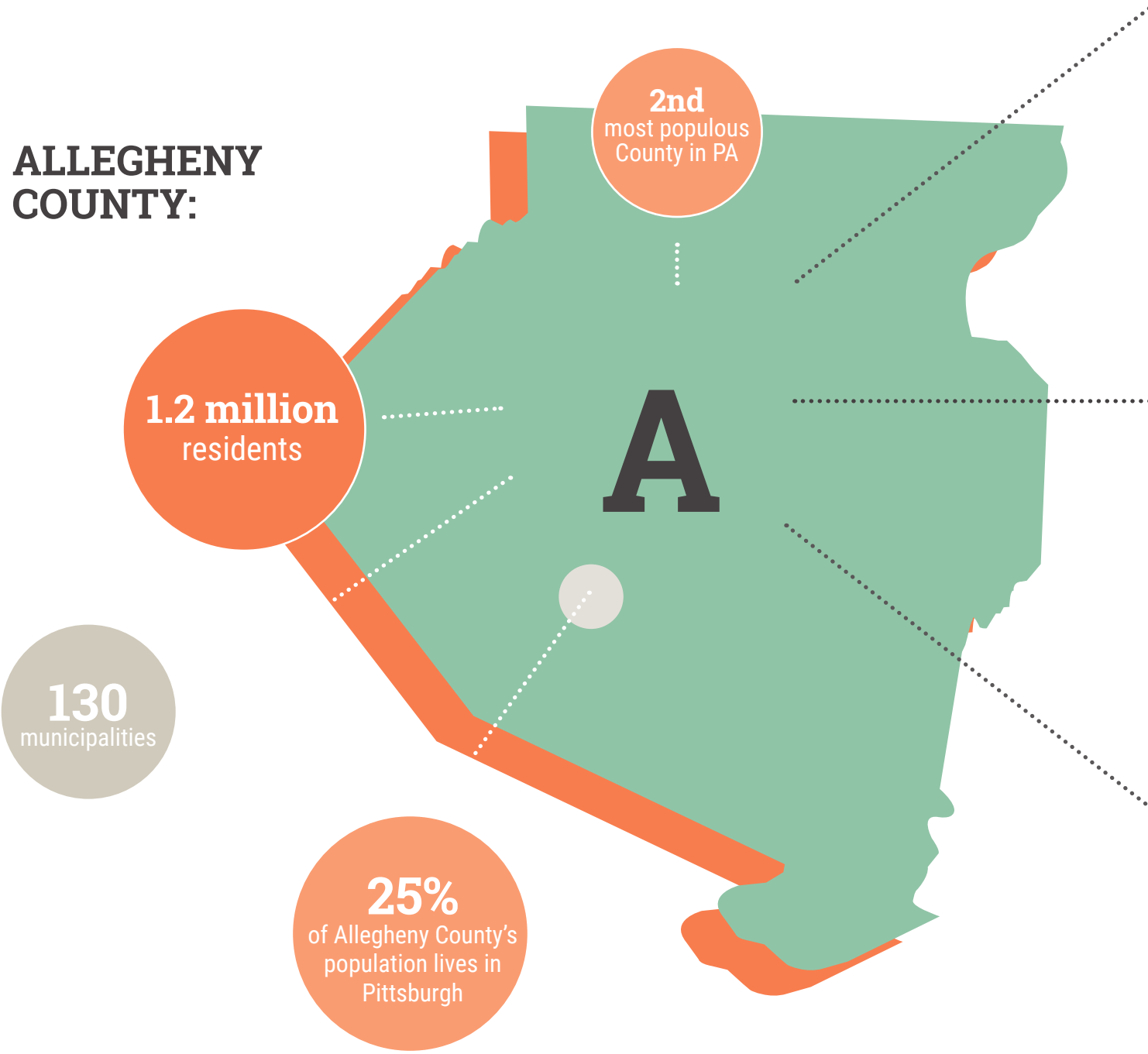
- Zoning and land use planning impact both commercial activities, including food processing facilities and grocery store locations, and agricultural activities
- Policies supporting local business development, including food entrepreneurship
- Transit planning, which affects food access
- Creating and supporting farmers markets
- Addressing watershed and landform issues such as runoff, erosion, and pollution

Neighborhoods and municipalities in the area often have differing food needs from one another, depending on factors like ethnic and racial makeup, poverty levels, and transit infrastructure. As we apply lessons learned from other planning efforts, it is important to recognize the many distinct communities throughout Allegheny County along with their individual food histories, needs, and priorities. Links to additional plans can be found in **Appendix B: Regional Planning and Research**.

Finally, substantial work in food systems has already been undertaken by many PFPC partner organizations, including efforts to support farmers, entrepreneurs, community groups, restaurant workers, and many other initiatives. An overview of these programs is provided in **Appendix C: Summary of Programs**.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY OVERVIEW

Located in southwestern Pennsylvania, Allegheny is the state's second most populous County with over 1.2 million residents, trailing the City and County of Philadelphia with nearly 1.6 million.[15] There are 130 municipalities in Allegheny County, the greatest number of municipalities of any Pennsylvania County. The city of Pittsburgh is the County seat and largest city in the County, with 25% of the population. The County's 129 other municipalities are all much smaller than Pittsburgh, each accounting for, at most, 4% of Allegheny County's population.[16]



Age

In 2016, the median age of Allegheny County residents was 40.8 years old. The city of Pittsburgh has a younger population than the surrounding municipalities, with nearly 40% of its 300,000 residents falling between 18 and 34 years old, compared to 20% in the County. Nearly one third of the 925,000 County residents who do not live in the city are between 45 and 64 years old.[17]

Race and Ethnicity

Both Allegheny County and Pittsburgh's residents were mostly White in 2016, 85.4% and 66.3%, respectively, however the city had greater racial and ethnic diversity. Black or African Americans represented nearly one-quarter (24.3%) and one-tenth percent (9.2%) of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, respectively. The remaining racial categories combined accounted for less than 10% of Pittsburgh's population (9.5%) and 6% of the County (5.4%). Further, less than 3% of people in the city or County were Hispanic or Latino of any race.[19] 5.7% of the residents of Allegheny County are immigrants.[20]

Income

The City of Pittsburgh has a higher percentage of residents in lower income brackets than other municipalities in the County, and nearly twice as many people earning less than $10,000 annually. Conversely, the County has a higher percentage of those in higher income brackets.

The poverty rate in Allegheny County (including Pittsburgh) was 12.7% in 2016. The poverty rates in Pittsburgh for both individuals and families are nearly double those for the County (excluding the city), with 22.3% of individuals in Pittsburgh experiencing poverty compared to 9.8% in the County, and 15.6% of families in Pittsburgh compared to 7% in the County. [18]

FOOD POLICY AUDIT

In 2010, The University of Virginia's Institute for Environmental Negotiation developed a Food Policy Audit Tool to assess "the strengths, gaps, and opportunities in local food system policies, and to identify community priorities for next steps to strengthen the local food system."[21] Food policy audits have since become a popular tool, with different versions created and/or adapted by Ohio State University, the University of Wisconsin, and others.

Cindy Vong, a Congressional Hunger Center Emerson Hunger Fellow working with the PFPC in 2018, adapted the UVA tool to create the Allegheny County Food Policy Audit in conjunction with Project Team members and community leaders. The original audit was filtered to remove questions that were not relevant to the local area and language was edited for clarity and understandability.

The resulting survey was distributed electronically via SurveyMonkey to Allegheny County municipalities, and contained 40 questions pertaining to six different topic areas:

1. Coordination and Communication (5 questions)
2. Public Health (4 questions)
3. Economic Development (8 questions)
4. Environmental Impacts (5 questions)
5. Social Equity (7 questions)
6. Land Conservation (11 questions)

The **Council of Governments** in Allegheny County, **Congress of Neighboring Communities,** and the PFPC's existing municipal contacts were instrumental in ensuring the survey reached all 130 municipalities within Allegheny County. The PFPC received 29 responses. Three of these were significantly incomplete and two were duplicates, for a total of 24 complete, responses (an 18% response rate). Responding municipalities were more likely to be participants in Allegheny County's health and wellness initiative called "**Live Well Allegheny**" (43% of respondents) than municipalities overall (22%)[22], and may, therefore, be more likely to have food-related policies than non-responding municipalities.

Three key findings emerged from our analysis:

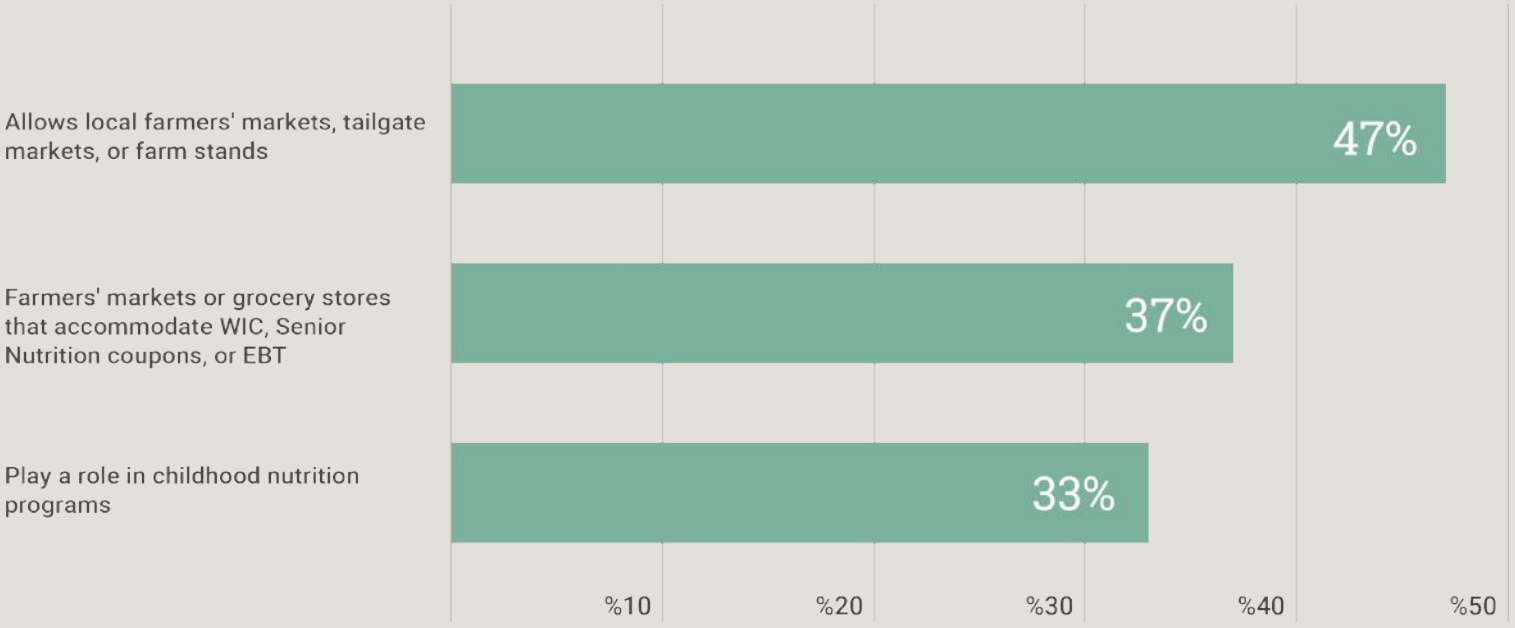
1. **The most frequently cited policies are in the areas of healthy food and food access initiatives.** Nearly half of respondents have a comprehensive plan or zoning code that allow local farmers' markets, tailgate markets, or farm stands; more than one-third have farmers markets or grocery stores that accommodate WIC, Senior Nutrition coupons, or EBT (food stamps), and one-third of responding municipalities play a role in childhood nutrition programs, such as hosting sites for summer or afterschool meals.

2. **The least frequently cited policies are in areas relating to environmental impacts.** These include policies to support and encourage land conservation, (including easements for food production, such as agricultural security areas), policies or goals to fence out all livestock from stream ways, and policies or goals to reduce the municipal "footprint" (the environmental impact of food, including the amount of land required to sustain a diet). Only 3% of respondents reported that their municipality had any of the above policies.

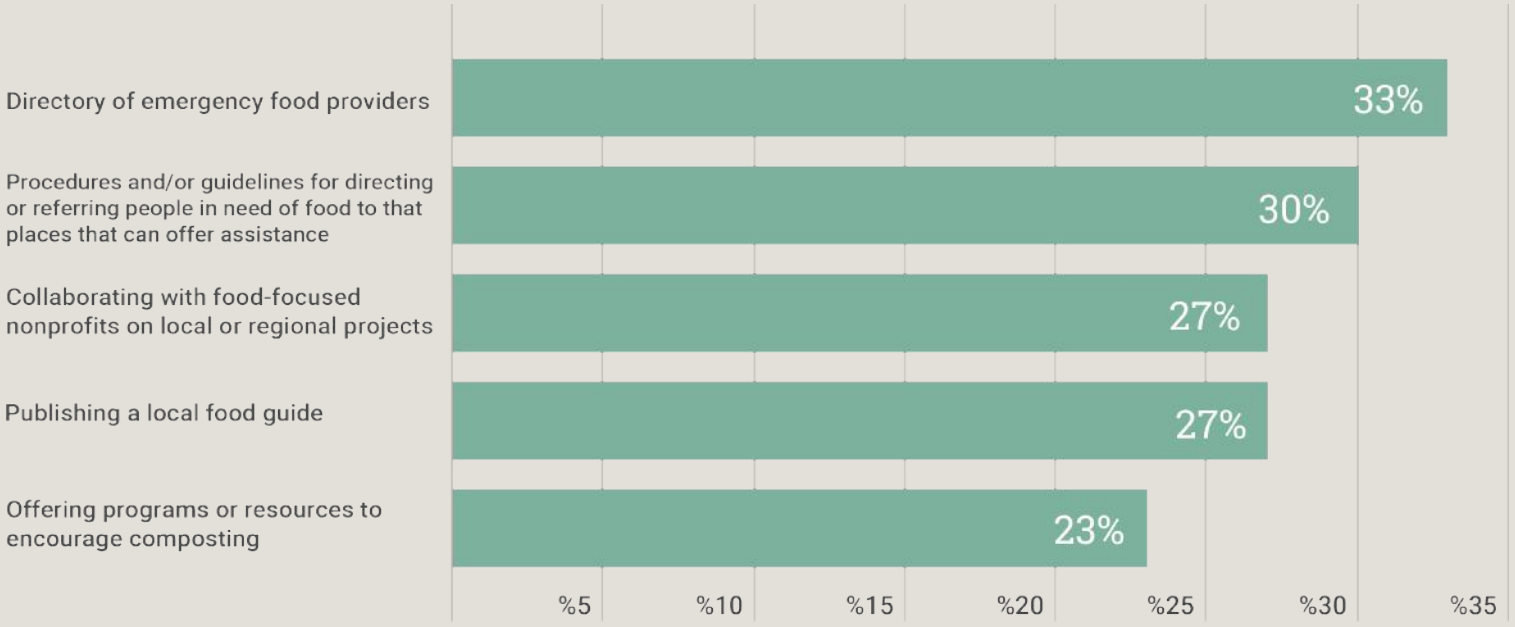
3. **Many municipalities expressed interest in opportunities to better collaborate and communicate about food systems resources.** Interests including having a directory of emergency food providers, establishing procedures and/or guidelines for directing or referring people in need of food to the places that can offer assistance, collaborating with food-focused nonprofits on local or regional projects, publishing a local food guide, and offering programs or resources to encourage composting.

Municipal governments in Allegheny County will play a critical role in supporting food systems that are resilient to climate and economic stressors. A forward-looking approach will include identifying necessary changes to zoning codes, and land-use plans that include environmental and agricultural aspects. Municipalities and food-focused nonprofits should jointly identify areas for collaboration over the next few planning cycles.

Municipalities with policies relating to healthy food and food access.



Interest in various opportunities for collaboration and communication.



ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE FOOD SYSTEM

Food Systems-Related Environmental Concerns in Allegheny County

Soils

Former industrial use has damaged soils. From the mid-1800s until the early 1980s Allegheny County's economy was largely driven by steel manufacturing. While there is a rich agricultural history within the County, it has been severely impacted by industrial land use.

Former industrial sites often require cleanup and soil remediation to be safely returned to use. Reclamation of many of these sites is ongoing throughout the County. The Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center (WPBC) at Carnegie Mellon University conducts research and case studies of brownfields sites, along with many other government, industry, and nonprofit organizations active in reclamation projects throughout the County. Four organizations in the region were recently allocated nearly $2 million to assess the pollution level of a variety of contaminated sites.[23]

Water quality

The water quality in the County's extensive river system continues to be a concern. Among the ongoing issues are current industrial pollution, acid mine drainage, and combined sewage overflow.[24] In June 2019, the Ohio River Valley Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), a multi-state regulatory body, changed its regulations regarding pollution controls along the Ohio River, allowing for more local discretion in complying with standards. Many environmental groups are concerned that this will lead to an increase in pollution along the Ohio's course.[25] Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces and agricultural lands can also affect water quality, although riparian buffers, canopy trees, and green infrastructure can mitigate many of these impacts.[26] Pollution and contamination of waterways has a number of implications for food systems, including:

- Contamination of agricultural land
- Contamination of drinking and processing water
- Impairment of aquatic life, reducing yields and damaging fisheries economy

Lead in drinking water is also a significant concern in the region. Recent testing from the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority found lead levels above the EPA action limit.[27] The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) has completed over 700 public and 600 private lead service line replacements by May 2019 and is on track to replace over 3,700 more public lines by June 2020.[28]

Unconventional natural gas extraction

Hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking") of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale may also have drinking water and land impacts. A 2016 report from the Environmental Protection Agency notes the following possible concerns: water withdrawals for fracking in areas with low water availability, spills of fracking fluids, liquid or gas contamination of groundwater resources, and discharge of fracking wastewater to surface water resources.[29] Fracking is common throughout the Marcellus Shale formation, and much more common in the surrounding, more-rural and agricultural counties that also make up our foodshed. The impacts of environmental violations and groundwater methane-contamination events through-



Unconventional wells in southwestern Pennsylvania. Allegheny County has significantly fewer wells than surrounding counties. Wells in the more rural counties may have an impact on the food supply in Allegheny County. Source: Pennsylvania Unconventional Natural Gas Wells Geodatabase (2019).

out Southwestern Pennsylvania can be felt throughout the foodshed. As fracking in the area increases, the risk of these events also increases, and can result in impacts far beyond their place of origin. In October 2018, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection determined that the Midas unconventional well in Plum Borough had contaminated a water well in the borough.[30] This was the first such determination in Allegheny County. As of April 2019, the Midas well operator was disputing the determination.[31]

In Allegheny County, 34% of leases for oil and gas development, including fracking and the related infrastructure, are on land zoned for agriculture. Overall, 18% of the County is under some kind of oil and/or gas agreement.[32] In addition to the documented negative health and environmental impacts of fracking, industrial development makes unavailable - sometimes permanently - land that could otherwise be used for farming.

Climate change

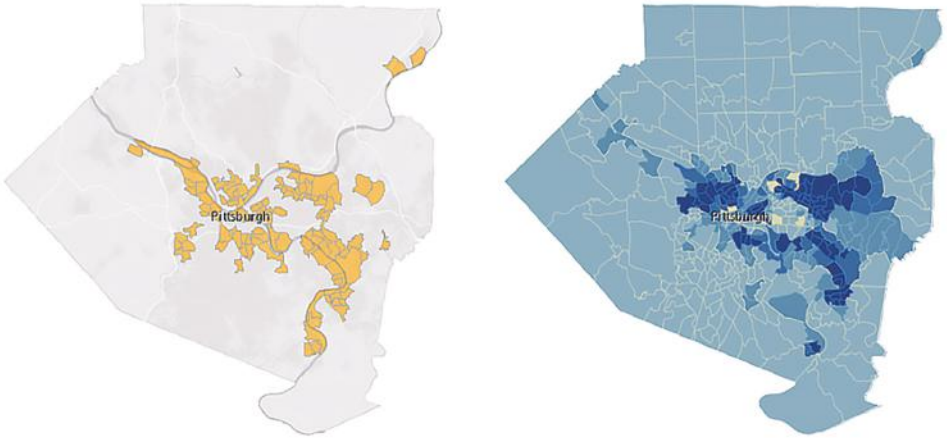
Statewide, Pennsylvania has been seeing broad impacts from **climate change**, including an increase in very hot days, average temperature, precipitation, and intense weather events.[33] Between 1990 and 2012, the USDA hardiness zone of much of Allegheny County changed from 5a/6b (minimum temp -15F) to 6a/6b (minimum temp -10F)[34], and the growing season has increased in length by over 17 days since the 1800s.[35] Heat stress in the summers may affect crops and dairy throughout the state, while higher winter temperatures may affect fruit crops that require a certain number of chill hours. Farmers in the County and throughout the state will need to adapt to the changing climate in order to maintain yields and effectively feed the human population.[36]

Food Systems-Related Social Concerns in Allegheny County

Inequitable food access across racial lines

Throughout the United States, low food access areas tend to have higher percentages of minority residents, higher unemployment, and lower education levels.[37] These communities tend to also experience other structural inequities such as inadequate transportation infrastructure and increased environmental damage. These conditions are driven by **structural racism**, which harms both communities of color and the larger community by eroding the tax base, limiting economic growth and development, and increasing racial tensions.[38] The concept of **food apartheid** appropriately describes both the root causes of these challenges as well as the structural barriers to changing these conditions.

Allegheny County reflects these larger trends in inequitable food access. According to the 2015 Community Health Assessment conducted by the Allegheny County Health Department, "Allegheny County still has a number of food deserts and access to fast foods outweighs access to healthy nutritious foods. In addition, many County residents lack financial resources to afford nutritious food."[39] Moreover, as the maps below indicate, there is significant overlap between low-income, low-access food areas and higher African-American populations. The Department of Environmental Protection also recognizes many of these communities are as **environmental justice areas** which often bear the brunt of industrial development and pollution.[40]



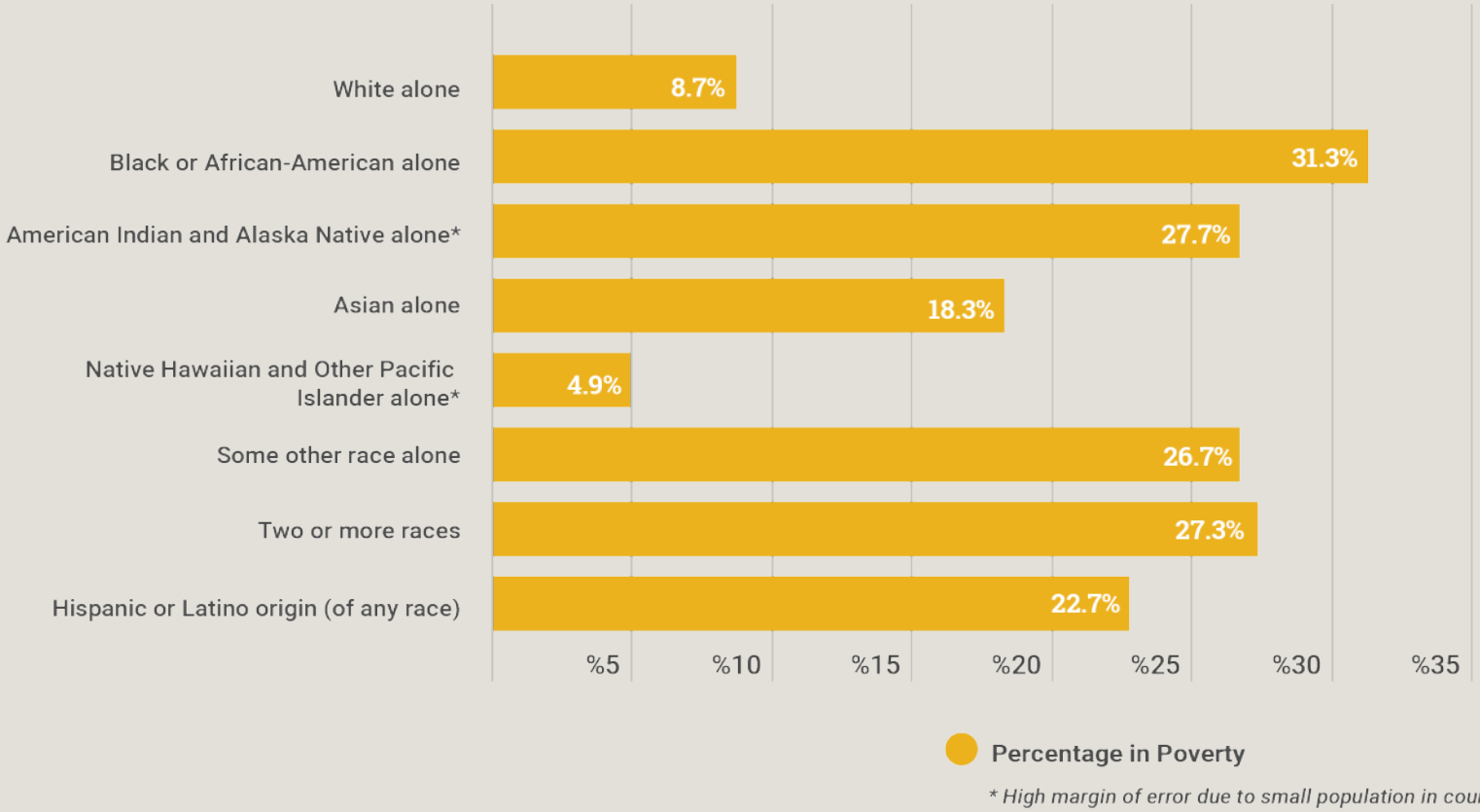
Allegheny County census tracts by Low Income/Low Food Access (left) and African-American population (right). Black County residents are more likely to live in low food access areas than white County residents. Sources: USDA Economic Research Service, US Census Bureau.

In addition, wages for black residents affect the ability of these workers to acquire food for themselves and their families.

Between 2014-2015, median wages for workers of all races in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area increased, except among black workers, where the median wage dropped by 9%.[41]

Lower wages translate to higher poverty rates, and black residents face the highest rates of poverty. In the City of Pittsburgh specifically, black adult residents are the most likely to be actively seeking work but unable to find it, while black children live in poverty at greater rates than other children. In addition, black men who reside in Pittsburgh and are employed in the food system are disproportionately likely to be working in food service, which pays lower wages than many other food system jobs.[42]

Allegheny County poverty rates by race. Source: United States Census Bureau



** High margin of error due to small population in county*

Barriers for immigrants

Immigrants to Pennsylvania participate in the food system on every level, from seasonal farm workers to business owners. 5.7% of the residents of Allegheny County are immigrants.[43] Most immigrants to the area are non-white, with Indian and Chinese immigrants accounting for around a quarter of the total.[44] Systemic barriers, as well as specific language and cultural barriers, affect the ability of immigrants to find employment, create businesses, acquire culturally-appropriate food, and access benefits.

Immigrant workers are a crucial part of the food system, representing 12.7% of agricultural workers and 9.9% of food service workers in Pennsylvania.[45] "Amid renewed federal emphasis on immigration enforcement, farmers are experiencing a shortage of labor....[as] farmers rely largely on immigrants — some of them undocumented" to keep Pennsylvania's #1 industry going.[46] Guestworker agricultural visas (H-2A visas) are not enough to keep up with the labor demands.[47]

Further, between 150,000-200,000 undocumented immigrants, who are foreign nationals residing in the U.S. without legal immigration status, live in Pennsylvania. These residents are vulnerable to exploitation and arrest. Formerly, undocumented residents were able to legally acquire driver's licenses, but as of 2010 undocumented immigrants can no longer access a driver's license required to meet their basic human needs including transportation to food systems. Statewide, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Pennsylvania "have carried out the highest percentage of arrests per undocumented immigrant of any state."[48] ICE often targets undocumented immigrants at courthouses, making it harder for people who are being abused or exploited to obtain protection.[49] ICE raids contribute to the labor shortages experienced by Pennsylvania farms, as many workers decide not to return to the state. Further, due to low wages and long work hours, seasonal farm workers often have face food insecurity and have difficulty acquiring healthy food.[50]

Seasonal farm workers with temporary H-2A visas have more legal protection than undocumented workers, including coverage under the Seasonal Farm Labor Act (1978),[51] but may be unable to access those protections for various reasons such as language barriers, lack of transportation, and reluctance to engage with the police.

Immigrant residents are 47.5% more likely than US-born residents to be entrepreneurs.[52] Most of these immigrant-owned businesses are food-related, and reflect both barriers to other employment and a desire to provide ethnic foods to the local community.[53] Sourcing culturally appropriate foods for many of these food business is a significant challenge. However, there have been exciting partnerships with local growers to provide some of these foods for specific immigrant communities.

Gender inequities

National trends of gender-based discrimination and sexual harrassment in the food industry are reflected in Allegheny County. According to Restaurant Opportunities Center United, 30% of sexual harassment complaints filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission come from the restaurant industry, and 90% of female restaurant workers experience sexual harrassment.[54] Recently, Pittsburgh Action Against Rape and the Pittsburgh chapter of the United States Bartenders Guild have partnered to offer a training program called Project Last Call to address workplace sexual harrassment in the hospitality industry.[55]

Gender inequity occurs at the business ownership level, as well. Women entrepreneurs may face structural barriers to building their businesses, including difficulty obtaining loans and investors even with a proven track record.[56]

Educational gaps

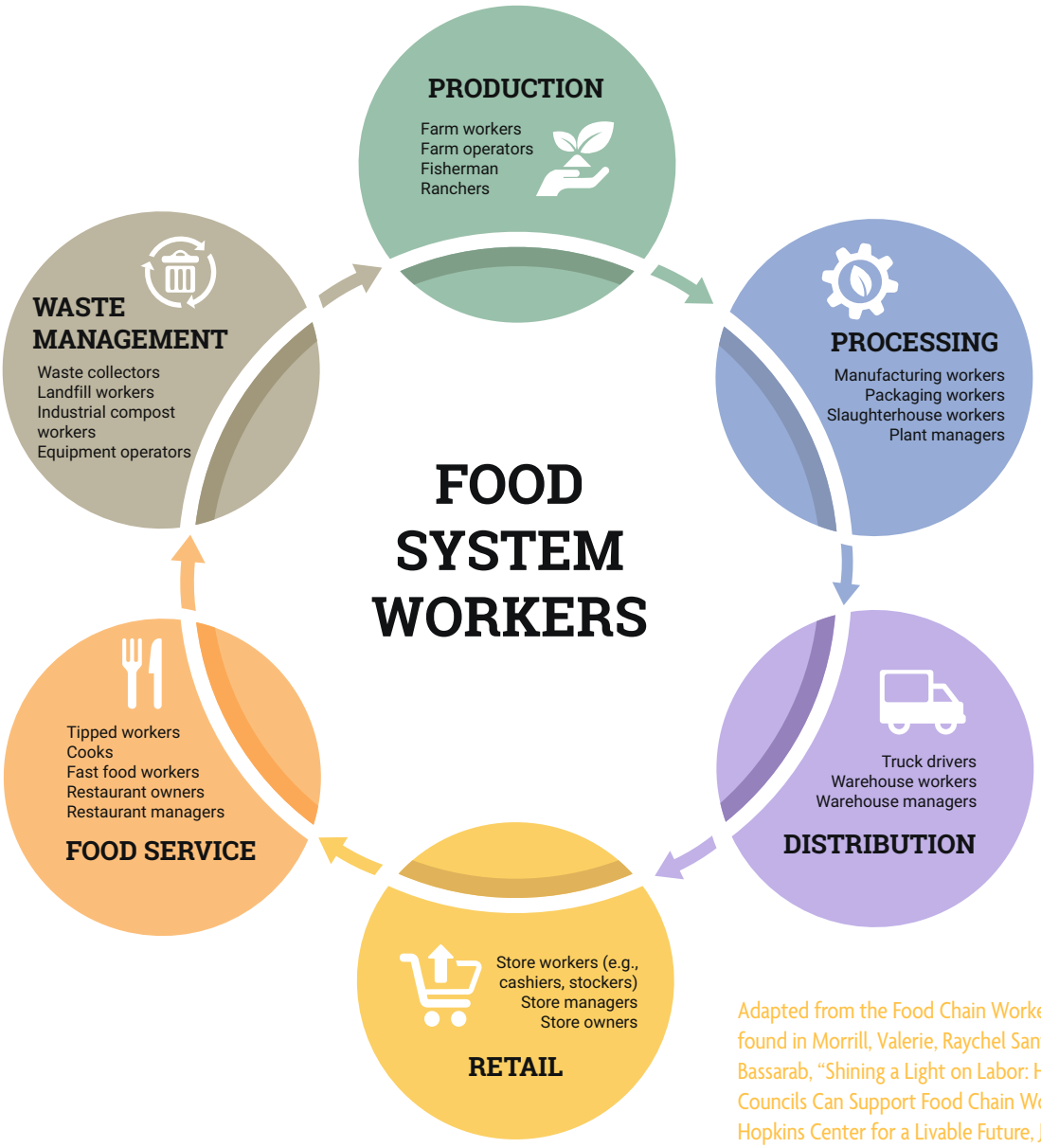
Education for **food literacy** is needed across all age groups in Allegheny County. The increase in available convenience foods and the time crunch many adults face all contribute to a troubling national trend regarding widespread lack of knowledge about preparing and choosing food.[57] Since food literacy provides the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that residents need to manage their dietary quality[58], its lack is a societal problem, even as other social factors (such as poverty) may affect the ability of individuals to make food choices.[59]

Food literacy education needs to be accessible, affordable, and available and where possible woven throughout our educational systems. Although there are a number of cooking and nutrition classes throughout the County, the overall demand and capacity are not known, and current marketing efforts may not be reaching consumers. In addition, food literacy education goes beyond cooking and nutrition as it fosters deeper understanding of the food system, food and health, and the environment.[60] Furthermore, food literacy education needs to be multicultural and to value differences in approach to food across sectors, rather than being a top-down method that can inadvertently reinforce structural inequities.[61]

Food Literacy Programs in Allegheny County

Organization	Program	Description	Link
Grow Pittsburgh	School Gardens	Integrates garden and cooking activities into the regular classroom curriculum.	www.growpittsburgh.org/garden-and-farm-resources/school-gardens/
Grow Pittsburgh	Urban Farmers in Training (UFIT)	A summer high school program with a focus on learning to grow food, cooking, understanding the food system, and building leadership and public speaking skills.	www.growpittsburgh.org/garden-and-farm-resources/urban-farming/apprenticeships-and-ufit/
Penn State Extension	Nutrition Links	Free nutrition education programs to participants eligible for public assistance to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve a healthful diet on a limited budget.	https://extension.psu.edu/nutrition-links
412 Food Rescue	Cooking Matters	Cooking Matters is a national food curriculum developed by Share Our Strength. The curriculum is aimed at parents and caregivers with limited food budgets, and focuses on shopping and cooking skills. More about the curriculum is available at https://cookingmatters.org	https://412foodrescue.org/programs/food-education/cooking-matters/
Eminent Hospitality, Inc.	E.A.T. Initiative	The Empowerment Awareness & Training (E.A.T.) Initiative hosts hands-on cooking demonstrations and provides career development focused in food-vulnerable families.	www.eminenthospitality.com/eat-initiative
Adagio Health	Power Up	A nutrition education program funded by the USDA, through SNAP-Education. Available for preschoolers through seniors.	www.adagiohealth.org/power-up

A non-comprehensive list of food nutrition and literacy education in Allegheny County.
Other organizations and agencies may also offer nutrition and food education through a variety of avenues.



Adapted from the Food Chain Workers Alliance; found in Morrill, Valerie, Raychel Santo and Karen Bassarab, "Shining a Light on Labor: How Food Policy Councils Can Support Food Chain Workers," Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, July 2018.

Food Systems Workers

Food systems workers (also called "food chain workers") usually include farmers, agricultural laborers, employees of food processors, manufacturers, or distributors, employees of food retailers such as supermarkets, and employees of the restaurant industry.

Workers in other sectors may work in the food system, although it can be difficult to get an accurate count of these workers. For example, truckers distribute much of the food in the United States, and food is a major part of the waste stream, but these workers are not usually counted as food systems workers. Employees of food-related nonprofits such as food banks are also usually not counted with food systems workers, but with the general nonprofit sector.

We have used the North American Industry Classification System to select industries for analysis. This undoubtedly leaves out some workers (such as the subset of truckers who are involved in food distribution), but covers most of the food systems workers in Allegheny County.

The largest sector of food systems workers in the County is "food services and drinking places", which includes full-service restaurants, fast-food and other limited-service restaurants, cafes, bars, snack bars, general food service, and catering. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that in 2017, 54,373 people in Allegheny County worked in food services and drinking places, with around 46,811 of them employed in restaurants. Wages for this sector average $17,800 annually. (The federal poverty guideline for a family of four is $25,750 in 2019.)[62] Workers here are the most numerous, and have the lowest wages of any food sector workers. Many people in this category are tipped wage workers. A recent study by Restaurant Opportunities Centers United and the National Employment Law Project established that for tipped workers, over half of their wages come from tips rather than from their employers.[63]

Within the food system, only wholesaling and food manufacturing industries provide wages above the Allegheny County per capita average ($35,280 in 2017 according to the Census Bureau).

Research by the Food Chain Workers Alliance found that, nationwide, around 86.5% of food chain workers earn below a living wage, with 60.7% earning at the poverty level or below. Immigrants and people of color are often segregated into lower-wage jobs, and have fewer opportunities for promotion. Women, immigrants, and people of color all

Food systems workers in Allegheny County. Number of jobs in various food systems occupations according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

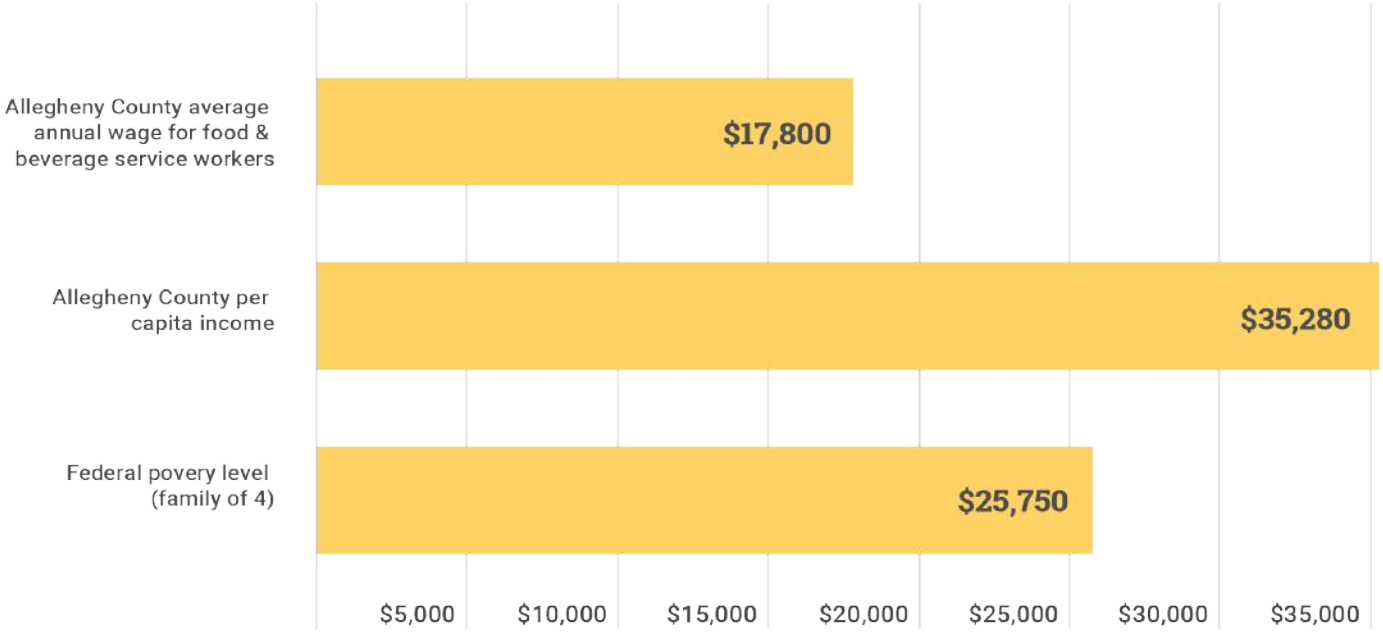
Source: 2017 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

	Number of workers in Allegheny County	Average annual wage (per capita) in Allegheny County
NAICS 722 Food services & drinking places	54,373	$17,800
NAICS 445 Food & beverage stores	13,535	$23,493
NAICS 311 Food manufacturing	3,952	$41,482
NAICS 4244 Grocery & related product wholesalers	1,618	$59,236
NAICS 4249 Misc. nondurable goods merchant wholesalers	980	$66,064
NAICS 4248 Alcoholic beverage merchant wholesalers	731	$48,534
NAICS 312 Beverage & tobacco product manufacturing	629	$38,584
NAICS Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting*	177	$21,649

** because of the differences in the way the Census of Agriculture and the Bureau of Labor Statistics count agricultural employment, the number of workers in this sector should be considered an undercount.*

Allegheny County wages for food & beverage service workers, per capita income, and federal poverty level.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Census Bureau, and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.



reported experiencing higher levels of discrimination and harassment. The research also found that strong union presences in the grocery and processing sectors increased the chances of workers earning living wages.[64]

Wage ordinances and minimum wage

Pennsylvania is one of only 16 states where the minimum wage is the same as the federal minimum wage, $7.25/hr. The majority of US states pay a higher minimum wage.[65] The Center for Social Inclusion estimates that "13% of Whites, 21% of Blacks, 24% of Latinos, and 38% of Asians working along the food chain earn subminimum wages"[66], often because these workers are employed at the "tipped minimum" wage of $2.83/hr. Employers are legally required to make up the difference between the tipped minimum wage and the State minimum if a tipped worker doesn't reach $7.25 an hour with tips, but in practice this rarely happens.[67]

In 2010, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County's Service Worker Prevailing Wage Ordinances came into existence. These ordinances are intended to prevent contractors from paying substandard rates. They require contractors and projects receiving city or County funds to pay the prevailing wage to certain employees, including food service and grocery employees. The current prevailing wage rates are $10.22-18.50/hr for food service workers, and $10.19-17.92/hr for grocery workers.[68]

Pittsburgh also has a 2001 living-wage ordinance, which is not in effect because it requires a corresponding County ordinance.[69]

Future labor needs

The Allegheny Conference on Community Development projects a labor shortfall of 80,000 workers in the County by 2025.[70] Qualified applicants for certain positions, especially skilled positions, within the food system may become more difficult to hire. Living wages, training, and promotion opportunities for food system workers will be vital parts of retaining employees in a challenging hiring environment. This represents a great opportunity to expand food systems workforce development programs, to address this anticipated labor shortfall and contribute to a healthy regional food system.

FOOD SYSTEM SECTORS

The Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems and the Michigan Good Food Charter[71] offer a view of food systems defined by actions that take place in different sectors. This is part of a community food systems approach that focuses on how things happen in the system and what effect they have on the community. We have adopted this action-focused approach, and identified the following sectors to address: **Growing, Processing, Distributing, Retailing, Community Food Resources, Cooking & Eating, and Managing Wasted Food**. For each of the sectors, we looked at trends, challenges, policy highlights, quick facts, and identified priorities.



Growing

Who grows food in Allegheny County? Both community and commercial farms, led by professional farmers, school children, community groups, and others, grow food. Farms in Allegheny County grow commodity grains, diverse vegetables, fruit, and a variety of animals for meat, eggs, and milk.



Processing

From cottage industry to major food manufacturers, processing can include manufacturing for consumers and manufacturing for sale to another entity (wholesale). This includes small-scale manufacturers who sell out of a storefront or warehouse primarily for off-site consumption or as a production input. Bakeries are the most common type of food processor in Allegheny County.



Distributing

Distribution is concerned with how food moves from farm to market. This sector is made up of wholesalers, processors, **food aggregators**, distributors, and large retailers who all contribute to moving food through the system. Growers may need to work with an aggregator to participate in large-scale wholesaling or may produce enough to work directly with wholesalers or retailers. Retailers may have relationships with particular wholesalers or have a wholesale arm of their business. Distribution can be complex or direct.



Retailing

Food retail covers all the ways in which eaters acquire food for their own consumption: the point-of-purchase by the individual or group that will consume it. This includes groceries, corner stores, specialty markets, restaurants, food trucks, and other purchase points. Direct marketing from growers, such as CSA sales, farmstand sales, and farmer's market sales, also falls into this category. We have broken retailing out into three subsectors: (1) Supermarkets, groceries, corner stores, and specialty markets (2) Restaurants and food trucks (3) Farmers' markets and other direct marketing channels.

Community Food Resources

Community food resources include food pantries, emergency food, and other community-based responses to hunger and food insecurity. Local programs to increase food access and availability in communities, such as healthy corner store programs and **mobile markets**, also fall here. These community food resources are a vital part of our food system. Government programs to increase food security interact with these community resources.

Cooking & Eating

How do people in Allegheny County cook and eat their meals? How do they learn about food and nutrition? What nutritional education programs are available to County residents? This is the "end consumer" sector, concerned with the individuals and families who are purchasing food for their own consumption.

Managing Wasted Food

Food waste occurs at all levels and includes both edible and inedible portions of food. In this instance, we are addressing post-processing, post-preparation, and post-consumer waste. This includes retail and wholesale waste, such as scraps and uneaten food from restaurants and commercial kitchens, damaged or unsold food from grocery stores, and scraps and uneaten food in homes.



Growing



In Allegheny County, agriculture takes many shapes and is as diverse as the urban, suburban and rural communities that make up the 130 municipalities of the County. In addition to rural farms, urban and suburban farming has been on the rise. In 2017, the University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics and the Allegheny County Conservation District collaborated to produce Urban Agriculture: A Guide for Municipalities. This guidebook specifically aims to help municipalities in Pennsylvania to develop zoning and legislation to promote local agriculture.

The USDA Census of Agriculture records nearly 400 farms in the County, down 39 farms from 2012.[72] The number may be an undercount: the Census does not count farms that sell or usually sell under $1000, which tends to exclude community farming endeavors and extremely small producers.

In Allegheny County, as in many urban counties around the United States, high-quality agricultural land is being lost to development. Factors affecting this loss of land include the development of low-density housing, policies promoting and subsidizing development, fragmented tax policies, and low agricultural profitability.[73] Farmland preservation programs aim to prevent or slow this process. The Allegheny County Farmland Preservation Program preserves farmland by establishing **conservation easements** and **Agricultural Security Areas** in the County. This program is unique in that it purchases those easements by buying development rights from property owners who maintain their ownership of the land.

The climate of the area is unsuited to year-round outdoor growing without significant investment in high tunnels, hoop houses, or other season extension systems. Recently, our region has seen a growth in indoor hydroponic, aeroponic, and aquaponic growing systems integrated with artificial intelligence, the full impact of which remains to be seen.[74]

Trends[75]

- Farms in Allegheny County covered 28,970 acres in 2017, down from 34,837 in 2012.
- There are fewer farms in the County, and the farms are getting smaller. The number of farms has declined from 428 in 2012 to 389 in 2017, and median farm size has decreased from 45 acres to 32.
- Acres producing vegetables have risen from 445 in 2012 to 959 in 2017.
- Laying chickens and honeybee colonies have both more than doubled since 2012.

Challenges

- Environmental and climate change challenges such as increased extreme weather events, soil quality, erosion, and drought affect crop production.
- Suburban development drives up land prices, which results in farmers selling and loss of high-quality farmland.
- Land falling out of agricultural use due to a combination of lack of transition planning, limited support for transitioning to a younger generation of farmers, and lack of secure land tenure.
- Limited access to labor and capital.

Policy Highlights

- The first ever Pennsylvania Farm Bill (2019) provides $500,000 of funding for a variety of urban agriculture initiatives, including support for agriculture infrastructure, product aggregation, resource-sharing, and community development efforts.
- The "Farm-A-Lot" program (2018), passed by the Pittsburgh's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), is an urban agriculture policy and pilot program to standardize longer-term leases or lease-to-purchase agreements with both commercial and smaller-scale urban agriculture projects.
- City of Pittsburgh Urban Agriculture Ordinance (2015): City residents are permitted by right to raise chickens, ducks, honey bees, and goats on properties within Pittsburgh.
- Adopt-A-Lot Program (2015): Allows access to City-owned properties in the City of Pittsburgh for food, flower, or rain gardens.
- Pennsylvania Right to Farm Act (1982): Protects farms from certain kinds of lawsuits and promotes farmland conservation.
- Allegheny Grows (2011) was established by the Allegheny County Economic Development Department. The program, administered by Grow Pittsburgh, has the goal of turning vacant lots into usable land.[76]

Quick Facts

- Most farms in the County are small, with half being under 32 acres. 278 of the 389 farms, or 71.46%, in the County report operating at a loss.[77]
- Nearly 4,000 acres of County farmland have been preserved by farmland preservation programs since 2002.[78]
- 7 farms in the County are National Organic Program-certified farms, and 5 farms are transitioning to NOP.[79] There is one Certified Naturally Grown farm in the County.[80]
- There are over 100 community gardens and 61 school gardens in the County.

Identified Priorities

- Identify ways that various levels of government can support food growers in Allegheny County and maximize existing resources to increase our local growing capacity.
- Meet critical educational needs for growers.
- Create promising agricultural career opportunities and support economic viability of farms.
- Encourage connections, cooperation, and social support amongst farmers.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

With 23 acres of a plot dedicated to farming, Hilltop Urban Farm in Pittsburgh will be the largest urban farm in the United States when it reaches full operation.

Allegheny County Parks system includes Round Hill Park, a unique 1,101 acre park and farm, located in Elizabeth Township that features a year round animal farm.

Processing

Processing refers to the methods that convert raw ingredients into food, or food into other food products. Processors may perform simple processing, such as milling grain or freezing vegetables, or they may manufacture more complex products, such as salsas, snack foods, and sausages. Food processing preserves foods for year-round access, adds value, and provides opportunities for food entrepreneurship. Despite increasing interest from farmers markets and their customers in **value-added products**, there is limited regional support for local value-added processors.[81] Local and regional **food hubs** can help connect growers and processors,[82] strengthening this part of the food systems infrastructure.

CRAFT at Chatham University released a comprehensive map of processors and producers in Pennsylvania in 2019.[83] While the state is a leading producer of snack foods[84], other parts of the processing sector are less developed. According to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, there is a lack of communication and awareness between processors and producers in the region, as well as a limited number of USDA-certified processing facilities. Reasonable access to processing facilities is required in order to run any livestock operation.

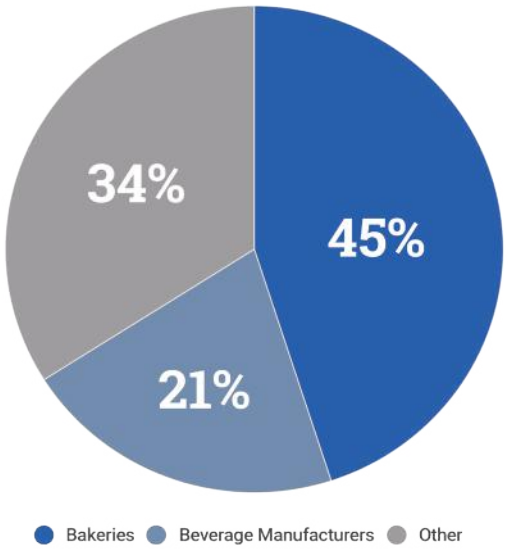
Trends

- Nationally, there is growing interest in supporting local foods, including processed foods such as jams, salsas, breads, meats and cheeses.[85]
- Craft brewing is increasing across the country, including in Allegheny County. There were 19 licensed breweries in Allegheny County in 2016, and 42 by 2019.[86]

Challenges

- Weak connections between growers and processors, including lack of processing connections for fruits and vegetables that don't meet cosmetic standards.[87]
- Lack of capacity or facilities for a wide range of processing needs, including USDA-certified livestock processing, malting barley and drying/pelletizing hops for the fermented beverage industry, and small-scale fruit and vegetable processing.
- Small-scale processors and food entrepreneurs in Allegheny County need access to licensed commercial kitchen space to comply with County health regulations, and limited space is available,[88] particularly spaces equipped to meet the specific needs of small-scale businesses. While some businesses, such as La Dorita and The Bakery Society Pittsburgh, provide kitchen space for rental, a recent study found a general disconnect between Shared Use Kitchens and food entrepreneurs.[89]
- Food processors need to understand and comply with various regulations and food safety requirements, and may need help navigating complex issues and processes.[90]

Bakeries are the most common food processor in the County, at 45%



- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) are voluntary audits from the USDA to ensure food safety. While many producers find the practices overly burdensome, many processors and institutions require adherence to them.

Policy Highlights

- The Pennsylvania Farm Bill (2019) offers a Very Small Meat Processor Grant to reimburse some portion of the costs associated with meeting federal inspection and certification guidelines during the planning and start-up periods for a very small (defined as less than $2.5 million in sales) meat processor.
- Pennsylvania Act 166 (2016) allowed expanded cross-marketing, sales options, and other benefits to breweries, distilleries, and wineries.[91]
- The federal Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (2011) sets new standards for processing and packaging facilities.
- The Allegheny County Health Department is able, under the Pennsylvania Local Health Administration Law (1951), to implement stricter requirements for food-based businesses and to support initiatives protecting the food and water supply.[92]

Quick Facts

- In Allegheny County, around 76,000 people work in the food system.[93] According to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, in the 10-County area that number expands to 184,000.[94]
- In Allegheny County, bakeries (45%) and beverage manufacturing (21%) are the two most common types of processors. There are no commercial processors for fresh produce in the County.[95]
- 12 distilleries operate in the County, distilling a wide range of spirits including vodka, rum, and whiskies.[96]

Identified Priorities

- Understand potential economic impact of meeting the unmet processing needs of local farmers and food entrepreneurs.
- Reduce barriers to expansion of processing facilities.
- Support, increase, and diversify the number and type of processors.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

CRAFT at Chatham University opened a "Food Innovation Lab" to provide recipe testing and product development services to local farmers, food businesses, and entrepreneurs, in order to create market-ready products for today's consumers.[97]

Distributing

Food distribution includes moving agricultural products and processed foods from growers and processors to consumers. Distribution customers may be commercial buyers, retail outlets, food aggregators, or institutions such as schools, hospitals, places of higher education, correctional facilities, and food banks, and they may buy from other distributors or aggregators, or directly from farmers. Distribution can therefore involve long paths to market, including food exports to other states or countries, or shorter paths known as **intermediated markets,** where farmers sell to institutions, distributors, and so on that move food to local markets. The major intermediated markets include farm sales direct-to-institutions, sales to food hubs, and direct-to-retail.[98]

Trends

- "Local food" usually comes from in-state and from nearby states in our foodshed, such as West Virginia, Ohio, New York, Virginia, and Maryland. Farms in West Virginia, Western Maryland, and Southern Pennsylvania also often sell to larger markets in Baltimore and Washington D.C.[99]
- The food distribution network increasingly connects to the global food system. The United States imported $5,475.9m in fresh vegetables from Mexico in 2017 (compared to $1,310.6m in 1999).[100]
- In recent years, more food distributors such as Sysco[101] and Paragon[102] have developed local food purchasing programs. These distributors often require their suppliers to have Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification.



100% of PPS milk is locally purchased.

Challenges

- Local farmers may not produce enough food to meet the quantity requirements for institutions or large distributors.
- Schools that receive reimbursement from federal programs to support school lunch and breakfast programs must adhere to strict federal nutrition guidelines, and often simultaneously face major budget constraints.
- K-12 institutions face logistical challenges connecting to farmers, as well as storing and processing produce for the volume of meals they serve.[103]
- Lack of regional intermediated markets makes it difficult for farmers and small-scale distributors to connect.
- Meeting liability, certification and safety standards such as GAP and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) can be difficult for small operators.[104] While many organizations have offered training for farmers to meet these challenges, this has not been done in any coordinated or predictable way.

Policy Highlights

- The Pennsylvania Farm Bill (2019) includes The Pennsylvania Farm to School Grant Program, which provides $500,000 to improve childhood nutrition and increase schoolchildren's exposure to agriculture.[105]
- The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (2010) established a national Farm to School program. The USDA began collecting information through the Farm to School Census in 2013.[106] The 2019 Census is ongoing.
- The 2017 Census of Agriculture began tracking farms that wholesale to intermediated channels.
- The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, Grow Pittsburgh, and Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) were awarded a $100,000 USDA Farm to School Grant (FY 2018-FY2020) to coordinate farm to school efforts throughout the PPS district. The USDA Farm to School Grant Program provides funding for incorporating local and regional foods into the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Quick Facts

- Five major institutions in our region (University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Duquesne University, and Chatham University) spend a combined total of $45 million annually on food, and serve 100,000 meals per day.[107]
- In 2018-2019, Pittsburgh Public Schools spent $39,758 on local foods, accounting for 6.275% of the school food budget. 100% of milk was locally purchased, representing a significant portion of the overall locally purchased foods.[108]

Identified Priorities

- Identify ways to help distributors better connect to local growers and the strong consumer base in Allegheny County.
- Strengthen and grow local intermediated marketing channels.
- Focus on ways to help farmers meet the purchasing and food safety demands of larger institutions.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

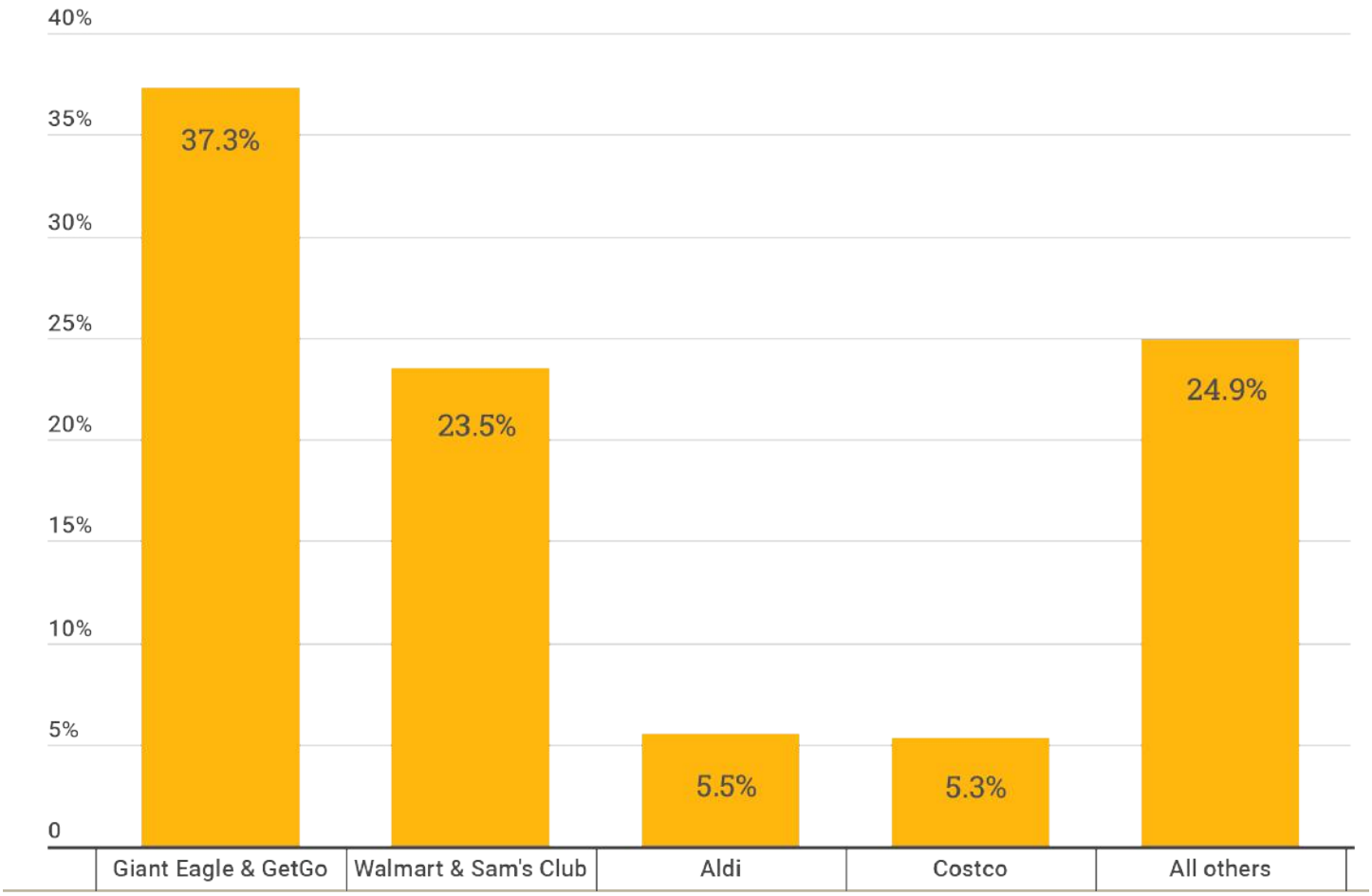
The Food Trust recently released a "Guide to Local Produce in Keystone Schools" to help map out and connect growers and schools interested in local purchasing throughout the State.[109]

Retailing - Supermarkets, Groceries, Corner Stores, & Specialty Markets

Grocery stores, corner stores, and specialty food markets provide food for eating at home, and are usually the main food resources in a community. Access to grocery retail serves as a proxy indicator for food security for many state- and federal-level programs, and is used to determine need for further investment and development. Not all communities have access to full-service grocery stores, and the products provided by stores can limit people's food choices. In the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, 246,285 people live in **low supermarket access** communities (Figure 14, page 48). 78% of these people are low income.[110] Fresh food access in neighborhoods is a critical component of neighborhood livability and of **equitable development** strategies. Providing critical food access often requires innovative, place-based strategies.

Trends

- In 2017, grocery space in Pennsylvania rose by 3.7%.[111]
- Smaller footprint stores are on the rise nationwide.[112]
- Giant Eagle (and GetGo) captures 37.3% of the metro area grocery market, with WalMart/Sam's Club at 23.5% and rising.[113]



Challenges

- In the Greater Pittsburgh Area, communities of color are more likely to experience lower access to healthy, affordable food. While the terms "food desert" or "food swamp" have become commonplace to explain these conditions, the term food apartheid more accruately portrays the racialized inequality of food access and structural barriers to changing these conditions.
- Corner stores have limited space for healthy options and cold storage, limited access to start-up and maintenance capital, and often cannot stock the volume of produce in the minimum requirements set by distributors.
- Zoning codes limit the areas in which small corner stores can open and operate.
- Full-service grocery stores often need subsidies to achieve financial viability in low-income communities.
- People of color and immigrant communities may lack access to culturally-appropriate foods and need support to establish retail outlets for those foods.[114]

Policy Highlights

- The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative (2004-2010, 2018-) provides funds for increasing supermarket access. The original PA FFFI ran from 2004-2010, and in 2018, Governor Tom Wolf signed a budget including $1m for recapitalizing the program.
- The federal Healthy Food Financing Initiative (2010), based on the PA FFFI, was incorporated into the 2018 Farm Bill.[115]

Quick Facts

- In 2016, the County contained 156 full-service grocery stores (including specialty markets) and 515 convenience stores.[116]
- 11 corner stores in the County participate in Just Harvest's Fresh Corners healthy corner store program. This program helps store owners increase the availability of healthy, nutritious foods in corner stores.
- The Food Bucks program is available at 45 locations throughout the County. Through this program, shoppers using SNAP/food stamps can earn free fruits and vegetables when they use their benefits to shop at any participating location. Since the program launched in 2015, shoppers have purchased an additional $150,000 worth of fresh produce using Food Bucks.[117]

Identified Priorities

- Reduce barriers for healthy food retail options within communities
- Establish local food retail as a critical part of equitable development strategies that include **community wealth building.**
- Promote deep connections between Allegheny County markets and the food growers and processors throughout the regional and statewide foodsheds.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Since 2015, Bridgeway Capital's Healthy Food Access program has provided $1.7 million in flexible capital and over 100 hours of technical assistance to 14 grocery retail locations in Western PA to expand or preserve their ability to offer affordable, fresh food in limited supermarket access communities. Bridgeway's program is primarily funded by the federal Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) with additional catalytic funding from regional foundations. One major project was Economic Development South (EDS)'s Produce Marketplace in Clairton, PA, which opened in 2018. Produce Marketplace is a limited-assortment, nonprofit grocery that provides critical fresh food access. The project was funded by predevelopment and operating grants from Pennsylvania's Neighborhood Partnership Program and startup financing from Bridgeway Capital as part of EDS's winning solution presented through the UpPrize Social Innovation Challenge.[118]

Retailing - Restaurants & Food Trucks

Restaurants within the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County are increasingly visible on the national stage. Most recently, the restaurant and hospitality consulting firm af&co. named Pittsburgh the 2019 Food City of the Year in its annual trends report[119]. Restaurants and food trucks throughout the region offer a wide range of price points and diverse food offerings to local residents and visitors. Consumer and business interest in sustainability has seen many restaurants in the County achieve sustainability certification.[120]

Nationwide, Americans spend about $2.4 billion per day on food outside of the home (compared to $2.1 billion for food at home). Individually, American households average spending $3,365 on food outside the home in 2017, representing an increase from $3,154 in 2016 and $3,008 in 2015.[121] Food delivery services are contributing to the growth of this industry.

Restaurants and bars are one of the largest employment sectors in Allegheny County[122], employing over 50,000 people. Immigrants to the region often start food-based businesses, diversifying our culinary landscape.[123] Despite the growth and opportunities in the restaurant and food truck businesses, the industry faces a number of challenges. These include inequities in opportunity for women and people of color[124], low wages and no or limited benefits, a shortage of experienced employees, and low profit margins.

Trends

- Food trucks are a popular choice for food entrepreneurs and eaters alike. In 2018, the County health department permitted around 100 food trucks or trailers, up from around 50 in 2014.[125]
- Restaurant customers continue to be interested in fresh, locally-sourced food, and in restaurant sustainability.

Challenges

- Restaurants are low-margin businesses, and have to be carefully managed to be profitable.
- Culinary employees may need access to high-quality training programs. While there are some opportunities available through Bidwell Training Center, Community College of Allegheny County's Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Tourism program, and Community Kitchen Pittsburgh, there is an unmet need for skilled culinary employees in the region.[126]
- Low wages and limited opportunities for advancement within the industry lead to extremely high turnover rates. National turnover for the "accommodations and food services" sector is 74.9%.[127]
- Immigrants who want to start food businesses face funding and permitting barriers that may be increased by language and cultural barriers.[128]
- Food truck owners need access to commercial kitchen space for preparation, but often cannot afford their own kitchen and struggle to find or access appropriate rental spaces. According to a recent study conducted by CRAFT, the mobile and transient food industry is growing faster than the current infrastructure can support.[129]

Policy Highlights

- Pittsburgh City Council approved new food truck regulations (2015), paving the way for an expansion of food truck offerings.
- Allegheny County Health Department convened a Food Safety Advisory Committee (2018) charged with making recommendations to the Board of Health regarding additions and/or changes to the food safety rules and regulations for Allegheny County. The committee also advises both the Health Department and the Board of Health on the management of food safety issues in Allegheny County.[130]
- Pittsburgh's Department of Permitting, Licenses and Inspections created an online tool where food trucks and other mobile vendors can renew their business permits, decreasing the difficulty of navigating the permit process.[131]

Quick Facts

- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that in 2017, around 54,373 people worked in Allegheny County's restaurant industry.[132]
- Wages for restaurant work are lower than in many other industries. At $2.83 for tipped workers and $7.25 for non-tipped workers, Pennsylvania's minimum wage is the lowest among all surrounding states.[133]
- New restaurant openings in the County are trending upward in the past five years, although they decreased slightly in the first half of 2019. Over Nearly 5000 restaurants operate throughout the County.[134]
- Two restaurants in Allegheny County are part of the Restaurant Opportunity Center's Restaurants Advancing Industry Standards in Employment (RAISE) Campaign. RAISE seeks to professionalize the restaurant industry by increasing wages and benefits, improving working conditions, and promoting racial and gender equity.[135]
- Nearly 175 southwestern PA restaurants have earned a level of sustainable designation through the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program.

Identified Priorities

- Create a pipeline of skilled culinary workers.
- Direct food entrepreneurship resources to marginalized communities as part of an equitable development strategy.
- Research methods of consumer education that drive demand for local food.
- Support sustainability, local food procurement and profitability in restaurants.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program, run by Sustainable Pittsburgh, designates restaurants that have made a commitment to take economic, environmental, and social actions that benefit the region.To earn designation, restaurants' sustainability commitments are measured across a wide range of actions from the following categories: Energy; Water; Waste; Community and Employee Care; Food and Materials Sourcing; Nutrition.[136]

Retailing - Farmers' Markets & Other Direct Marketing

Farmers markets and other kinds of direct marketing, or ways in which farmers sell their food directly to consumers, are popular with both farmers and consumers. Nationally, 53% of farms reported doing direct marketing in 2015, and 67% of these direct food sales were located in "metropolitan" counties.[137] Direct-to-consumer sales channels include farm stands, community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and farmers markets.

The primary way that consumers in Allegheny County participate in direct farm marketing channels is through farmers markets. Visitors to Pittsburgh-area farmers markets form a core of shoppers who demonstrate market loyalty and high expectations of the markets.[138] Many, but not all, of Allegheny County farmers markets accept WIC, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program checks, Food Bucks, and SNAP benefits (food stamps), primarily through the Fresh Access program administered by Just Harvest (at 23 markets across the County in 2019).[139]

CSA programs are another popular way for farmers to diversify their marketing channels. The usual model nationwide is that consumers pay ahead of time for a seasonal subscription to the farm's products, and boxes containing the week's subscription are dropped off at pickup points. Because most CSAs need to be paid up-front, they can be difficult for low-income residents to access. Some CSAs do accept SNAP or offer alternative payment plans. In Allegheny County, CSA subscriptions are available from some individual farms and through food hubs.

Trends

- The share of farmers selling directly to consumers has increased since 2007. Farms with direct sales are more likely to stay in business than farms without.[140]
- The Census of Agriculture tracks farms that market directly to consumers as of 2017.
- CSAs are increasingly diversifying their offerings with meat, dairy, cut flower, and value-added products.[141]



Direct-to-consumer sales of farm products in Allegheny County were $2.8m in 2017.

Challenges

- Lack of infrastructure and low market management capacity affect market sales, stability, and longevity.
- Farmers markets in low-income communities have difficulty attracting vendors, and face logistical complications with accepting SNAP and FMNP/SFMNP benefits.
- Farmers selling at multiple markets may need separate permits for each location, or to comply with different regulations based on location. They also need different permits for selling raw agricultural products than for selling value-added products.[142]
- Lack of access to local aggregators or food hubs makes it difficult for many small farms to access direct to consumer markets through opportunities such as CSAs.[143]

Policy Highlights

- Among municipalities who responded to the PFPC Food Policy Audit, 47% have comprehensive plans or zoning code that allow local farmers' markets, tailgate markets, or farm stands.
- The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FNMP, 1992), part of WIC, was established to both increase access to locally-grown fruits and vegetables and to support farmers' markets. The Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) provides similar opportunities for low-income seniors.
- The Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP, 2002), was recently reauthorized in the 2018 Farm Bill. The program seeks to expand access to and consumption of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.[144]
- The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), formerly the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program (FINI), offers grants from the USDA to support projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among SNAP participants.[145]

Quick Facts

- Pennsylvania ranked third in the nation in direct to consumer sales at $224 million in 2015.[146]
- 21% of farms in Allegheny County direct-market their products, and direct-to-consumer sales of farm products in Allegheny County were $2.8m in 2017.[147]
- The City of Pittsburgh, which operates 8 unique farmers markets, recently published "Strengthening Pittsburgh's Farmers Markets," in collaboration with the Farmers Market Coalition. This report offered recommendations for both city-run and independently-run markets, such as increasing collaboration between markets and partners. To that end, a Farmers Market Manager Network was recently formed to help improve market operations and collaboration.

Identified Priorities

- Research the best strategies for improving product variety and market attendance.
- Improve accessibility of direct-to-consumer markets for low-income residents.
- Strengthen farm-to-consumer relationships.
- Maximize the economic and community benefits of farmers markets throughout our region.
- Continue to strengthen information sharing, resources, and networks between farmers markets.



"Farmers markets don't just happen. Market success requires careful planning, robust promotion, strong partnerships, responsive programming, and constant monitoring."

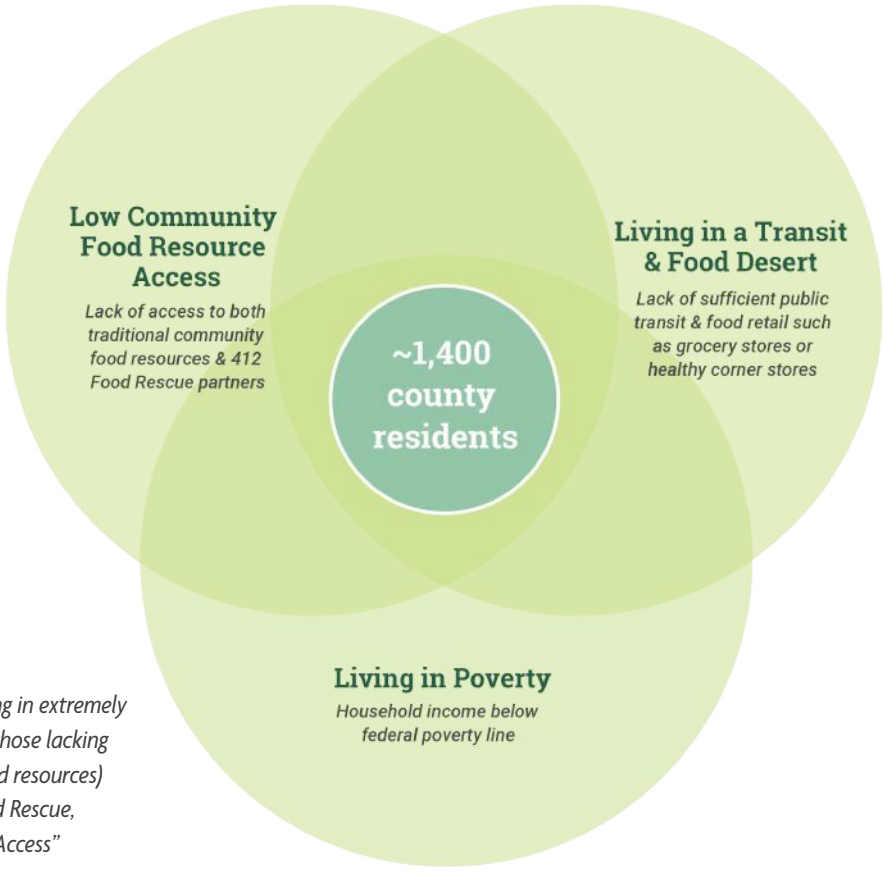
- "Strengthening Pittsburgh's Farmer's Markets"

Community Food Assistance

Many Allegheny County residents experience **food insecurity** or **hunger,** either temporarily or chronically. While these residents may face a variety of unique challenges, the shared, root cause of hunger is poverty. 11.2% of County residents have a household income below the federal poverty line, and many others have incomes not high enough to meet their food needs.

Addressing and eliminating poverty is the only way to fully end hunger and food insecurity. Given that many individuals and households cannot afford to purchase food for a healthy diet, a variety of community food assistance programs exist to address these unmet needs. This includes the emergency food system (food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens) and the government-funded safety net programs such as SNAP (food stamps), WIC, and free and reduced-price school lunch and breakfast. The emergency food system strives to meet the needs of those for whom the safety net programs are either inadequate or do not apply.

Within Allegheny County, organizations take varied and creative approaches to getting food to residents in need. These community food assistance programs provide vital resources to alleviate hunger, although gaps in coverage still exist. In 2018, 412 Food Rescue estimated that about 1,400 people in Allegheny County are all of: 1) in poverty 2) living in a transit desert and food desert and 3) cannot easily reach either traditional community food assistance resources or 412FR partner sites.[148] These residents are facing a combination of extremely low food access and poverty, putting them at risk of chronic hunger.



Allegheny County residents living in extremely low food access communities (those lacking both retail and community food resources) and in poverty. Source: 412 Food Rescue, "Food Insecurity and Resource Access"

Trends

- After holding steady at around 14% from 2014-2016, food insecurity in Allegheny County declined to 13.1% overall in 2017. 16.3% of children are food insecure.[149]
- The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is working to increase its offerings outside of traditional food-pantry settings, such as providing food through doctor's offices to low-income people with certain health needs, and through mobile markets such as their Green Grocer program.
- Nonprofits and local hospitals have created programs to screen for food insecurity and distribute produce prescriptions to patients receiving SNAP. These prescriptions allow patients to purchase fresh food at no or reduced cost.

Challenges

- Low wage jobs make it difficult for many to afford healthy food.
- Food assistance agencies may have to deal with both chronic food insecurity and immediate food emergencies. These issues may require complex solutions that conflict with each other.
- Some areas in the County have inadequate community and retail food resources coupled with inadequate transit access, increasing the difficulty for residents who need food.
- Various agencies may provide overlapping services, or need to partner to cover gaps in the food system. Identifying partnerships and opportunities for collaboration may be difficult.
- Traditional food pantries may not be the most effective way to help people in need, as they often have difficulty providing enough food, food that is culturally appropriate, or food that meets US dietary recommendations. Finding permanent solutions to food insecurity requires political will and systems thinking.

Policy Highlights

- The Governor's Food Security Partnership (2015) was established by executive order. The Partnership aims to reduce food insecurity in Pennsylvania by improving support systems and helping eligible people enroll in assistance programs, and coordinates efforts between the Departments of Aging, Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Education, Health, and Human Services.[150]
- SNAP and several other nutrition programs are authorized through the federal Farm Bill. The most recent Farm Bill was finalized in December 2018.
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the National School Lunch Program are authorized through the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, which expired in 2015. The programs continue to operate.
- The Charitable Food Program (CFP) component of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) provides a tax credit of up to 55% to neighborhood non-profits who improve food security by providing food to low income populations in distressed areas in **enterprise zones**.[151]
- The Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS), first created in 2010 but not funded until 2016, helps connect local producers to the charitable food system by offering producers reimbursement for the cost of harvesting, processing, packing, and transporting surplus food to identified PASS charitable food distributors.[152]

Quick Facts

- 12.6% of County residents receive SNAP benefits.[153] Over 40% of households receiving SNAP have children, and over half have a disabled family member.[154] Most recipients are children or people with disabilities. 906 food retailers in the County accept SNAP benefits.[155]
- The Allegheny County Health Department WIC program served 16,000 women, infants and children in 2018.[156]
- The Summer Food Service Program in Allegheny County distributed over 350,000 lunches to children in the summer of 2018.[157]
- The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and its partners served 68,365 individuals throughout the County in January 2016.[158]

Rates of food insecurity for overall Allegheny County population and for children, percentage of County residents who receive SNAP, and percentage of County residents in poverty.

Sources: Feeding America, US Census Bureau Small Area Income & Poverty Estimation Program.



Identified Priorities

- Improving transit access and community food sites in high-need areas.
- Incorporate food security into City, County, and municipal level decision making for transit, economic development, and neighborhood planning.
- Determine the most effective ways to help residents locate nearby community food resources.
- Center the voices of low-income residents when developing solutions to improve food access.
- Advocate for necessary systemic changes to prevent *chronic* food insecurity while continuing to address the immediate needs of hungry residents.
- Research how a livable minimum wage would address food insecurity and decrease expenditures on federal safety net programs and state and local efforts.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank plays a vital role in distributing food to those in need throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to supplying food for over 400 pantries, shelters, and other partner organizations, the Food Bank offers many programs that help people access food in other ways. These include

- **Backpack Program, providing children with food to eat over the weekend**
- **Green Grocer, a mobile farmers market that visits communities with limited retail options to increase access to fresh, healthy foods**
- **Produce to People, where fresh produce items are distributed to qualifying households**
- **School Breakfast Program, working with school districts to implement alternative options for participating in school meals**
- **Senior Boxes, providing a monthly box of nutritious food to seniors 60 years and older**
- **Summer Food Service Program, providing free meals and fun activities to kids 18 and under during the summer months when school is out of session**

The Food Bank also attempts to reduce hunger through advocacy, nutrition education and providing assistance with enrolling for SNAP (food stamp) benefits

Cooking & Eating

While not having enough to eat over an extended time-frame can have a long-lasting negative impact on physical and emotional health, dietary quality is also critical for health. That is, diets that provide a varied and adequate amount of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds and healthy oils, along with moderate amounts of dairy and animal proteins if desired, and minimal amounts of added sugars, sodium and saturated fats appear ideal for decreasing risk for chronic diseases like heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and many cancers.[159]

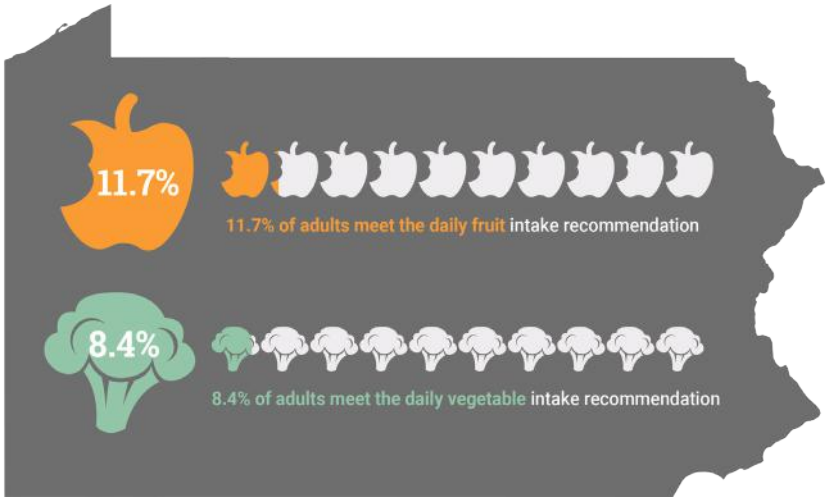
Many people are unable to regularly eat healthy foods for a variety of reasons, including prohibitive cost, lack of cooking skills, lack of nutritional knowledge, lack of kitchen equipment or access, or lack of healthy food access points such as grocery stores. Low income residents in particular are more likely to face these challenges[160], particularly as calorie-for-calorie, foods supplying protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals are more expensive than foods high in fat, sodium, and/or sugar.[161] Nutrition and cooking education programs may be available through SNAP-Ed, some Emergency Food Assistance programs, County Extension programs, and health insurance or healthcare systems. Unfortunately, there is a lack of well-designed research to evaluate the long-term impact of cooking education.

Trends

- Nationwide, 54-57% of adults report cooking at home on any given day, and eat 3-4 meals per week prepared and consumed outside of the home.[162]
- Lower-income households spend a greater percentage of their income on food, and prepare and eat more food at home than higher-income households.[163]
- In Allegheny County, only 25% of adults report eating 3 or more servings of vegetables on a day in the past week.[164]
- Rates of preparing and eating food at home have held relatively steady in the United States since the 1990s, after dropping sharply since the 1960s.[165]

Challenges

- Many people do not get enough fruits and vegetables in their diets, for complex reasons, and this can have long-term health consequences.
- Lack of time for food preparation is a major barrier to increased cooking at home.[166]
- High-quality, healthy food is not easily available to all residents. Culturally-appropriate foods may be difficult to find for some groups.[167]
- Poverty affects food choice in multiple ways, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution.



Most adults in Pennsylvania do not eat enough fruits & vegetables on a daily basis. Source: Seung Hee Lee-Kwan, Latetia V. Moore, Heidi M. Blanck, Diane M. Harris, and Deb Galuska, "Disparities in state-specific adult fruit and vegetable consumption — United States, 2015."[172]

Policy Highlights

- Federal programs such as the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program aim to make farmer's markets and thus local farm products more accessible to low income eaters.
- The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (2010) authorizes funding and sets policy for core child nutrition programs across the United States. This includes the Community Eligibility Provision for schools, where schools or districts where 40% or more of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch can offer free lunch and breakfast to all enrolled students.

Quick Facts

- In 2018-2019, 40% of Pennsylvania schools qualified for the Community Eligibility Provision, and 68% of eligible schools participated.[168] Nationally, eligible schools participated at 55% in 2016-2017.[169]
- Statewide, 11.7% of adults meet the daily fruit intake recommendation, and 8.4% meet the daily vegetable intake recommendation.[170]
- 47% of teenaged County residents report consuming at least one vegetable daily.[171]

Identified Priorities

- Understand the most significant social, cultural, environmental, or other factors that prevent people from preparing food at home.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of food and nutrition educational programs.
- Increase participation in the Community Eligibility Provision program.
- Develop creative marketing and advertising efforts to increase demand for fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

412 Food Rescue's Cooking Matters program, one of many food education programs in the area, has graduated 712 people from their six-week curriculum since Spring of 2016. In addition, 147 people have participated in Store Tours and 428 people have participated in other Cooking Matters educational activities, such as one-time demonstrations and modified programs.[173]

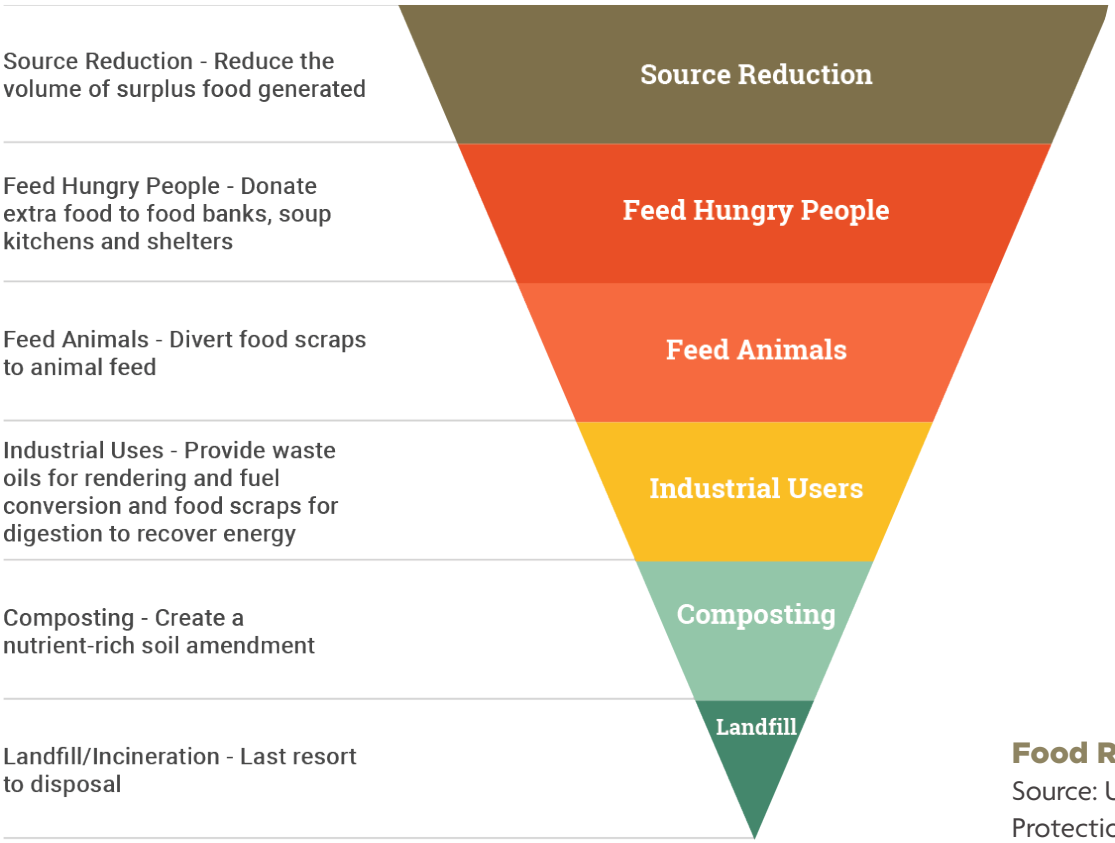
Managing Wasted Food

Wasted food includes excess food (such as unsold products, processed foods with label misprints, food left behind in fields, and produce that doesn't meet cosmetic standards but is otherwise safe for consumption), and food waste (such as uneaten leftovers, food that has gone bad, and scraps).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established a Food Recovery Hierarchy that captures ways to reduce wasted food throughout the food system.[174] Some excess edible food can be diverted before it becomes food waste and redistributed through community food resources such as 412 Food Rescue and the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Some excess food can be sold to make local processed products such as salsas and pickles. Still, some of this food will end up in the waste collection system, even though it is edible, due to a lack of pathways connecting those who have it to those who can use it.

Food waste that is not edible, such as household/restaurant scraps and spoiled food, contributes to the main waste stream. Overall, food wastage contributes around 8% to global greenhouse gas emissions, almost as much as road transportation.[175] We need sustainable ways to decrease the amount of this waste and divert it to alternate systems such as composting. In the Pittsburgh area only two food composting services exist, both of which only take commercial clients[176].

Food Recovery Hierarchy



Food Recovery Hierarchy.
Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Trends

- Some US cities and counties, including Dayton, OH and Ann Arbor, MI, have begun providing composting as a service, like recycling and other waste disposal services.
- Consumer awareness of wasted food is increasing, thanks to public campaigns such as the National Resources Defense Council's Save the Food.
- Food recovery, the rescue of good food from the waste stream, is increasing. The Food Recovery Network, a national nonprofit, started with one chapter in 2011 and now has 230 nationwide.

Challenges

- Low landfill tipping fees in Pennsylvania make alternatives such as commercial composting of food waste too expensive for low-margin businesses like restaurants.
- Difficulty connecting growers with produce seconds to the processing market and limited ability to process food waste for animal feed lead to loss of these foods to the waste stream.
- Many consumers do not know how to tell when food is bad, and rely on marked expiration dates (which are largely unregulated) or guessing.
- There is a lack of public understanding about what can be composted and space to compost at home can be limited or nonexistent.

Policy Highlights

- Five states, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont now have an organic waste ban or waste recycling law. These laws limit the amount of food waste in the main waste stream and promote composting and other forms of waste recycling.
- The federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (1996) provides liability protection for food donations, in order to encourage grocery stores and other food businesses to increase donations to programs that divert good food from the waste stream.
- The USDA and EPA's joint Food Waste Challenge (2013) was followed by a joint food waste reduction program in 2015, with the goal of reducing food waste by 50% by 2030.

Quick Facts

- As of 2012, 40% of the food produced in the United States went uneaten.[177]
- About 1/3 to 1/2 of all wasted food occurs in the home. Approximately 68% of food discarded in the home is potentially edible.[178]
- Between March 2015 & February 2018, 412 Food Rescue diverted 3,000,724 lbs of food from the waste stream to the food donation stream.[179]
- In 2013, Pittsburgh landfilled over 46,000 tons of wasted food.[180]
- 12 farms in southwestern PA participate in the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank gleaning program, which collects produce from farm fields for food bank use.

Identified Priorities

- Study feasibility and the economic and environmental effects of implementing municipal. composting programs for resident households.
- Encourage the County, State, and the City of Pittsburgh to work together to develop needed food waste infrastructure for larger food. producers, retailers, and restaurants.
- Drive reductions in food waste through consumer education.
- Identify policy interventions to make composting cost effective for restaurants and other food providers.

GLOSSARY

Agricultural security area:

A landowner may petition to the local governing body to designate a farm as an agricultural security area. This protects the farm from local laws and ordinances that would restrict "viable farming operations," and gives it extra protection from condemnation.[181]

Climate change:

National Geographic defines climate change as "the long-term alteration of temperature and normal weather patterns in a place. This could refer to a particular location or the planet as a whole. Climate change is currently occurring throughout the world as a result of global warming."[182]

Conservation easements:

A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency to conserve land by permanently limiting the land's development potential. The landowner retains ownership and rights to use the land, sell it and pass it on to heirs.[183]

Community food systems:

A food system based on collaboration between consumers, farmers, and other food system actors to enhance the social, environmental, and economic health of the food system for the benefit of all. Community food systems aim to create integrated and sustainable connections between components of the food system, such as food growing, processing, distributing, retailing, cooking and eating, transportation, and waste management.[184]

Community wealth building:

A collection of economic development strategies which focus on building "collaborative, inclusive, and locally controlled economies."[185]

Congress of Neighboring Communities:

The Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT) links the City of Pittsburgh with neighboring municipalities to "identify common public policy changes and advocate for collective change on behalf of Allegheny County's urban core."[186]

Council of governments:

A coordinating body of local governments, intended to help develop consensus, coordinate interlocal action, and address issues of mutual concern. Membership is voluntary, and member governments are usually cities, municipalities, or counties.[187]

Environmental stewardship:

In 2000, Richard Worrell and Michael C. Appleby proposed the definition "the responsible use (including conservation) of natural resources in a way that takes full and balanced account of the interests of society, future generations, and other species, as well as of private needs, and accepts significant answerability to society."[188]

Equity:

Just and fair inclusion. An equitable society is one in which all can participate and prosper.[189] The goals of equity must be to create conditions that allow all to reach their full potential. Equity creates a path from hope to change. See food equity.

Equitable development:

The EPA defines equitable development as "an approach for meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies and programs that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant."[190]

Enterprise zones:

Areas targeted for economic revitalization by the state of Pennsylvania. The Department of Community and Economic Development administers a program, the Neighborhood Assistance Program/Enterprise Zone Program (NAP/EZP), which incentivizes private businesses to invest in and create jobs in designated areas.[191]

Environmental justice areas:

Census tracts where at least 20 percent of residents live in poverty and/or 30 percent of residents are on a minority racial or ethnic background.[192]

Food aggregators:

Aggregators work with multiple farms or smaller operations to provide access to a wider distribution network. They may pack crops from multiple farms, provide online sale portals for restaurants or end consumers, and move aggregated food to wholesale and retail.

Food apartheid:

The systemic segregation of low-income and minority communities from the food system through a history of deliberate social, economic, and political actions that deprives them of access to healthy foods within a manageable distance and reduces community nutritional and health outcomes. This term, rather than the limiting "food desert", more accurately reflects the litany of forces and decision-making that prevent access to wholesome foods and instead inundate communities of color and the poor with unhealthy and fast food.[193]

Food equity:

A situation in which communities have fair access to food, including the ability to grow, access, acquire, and understand the sources of food. An equitable food system includes equitable land access, prioritizes the health and economic well-being of people and communities, and promotes ecological sustainability.[194]

Food hub:

The USDA defines a regional food hub as "a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand."[195] Food hubs are one way that local growers and processors can connect to distributors, institutions, and eaters. They function as middlemen and can help small farms meet requirements from larger distributors, facilitate distribution, and provide access to value-added processors.

Food insecurity:

"Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways."[196] Households who experience food insecurity do not have the financial resources to ensure consistent access to food, and individuals within those households may experience hunger.

Food literacy:

A relatively new idea in food education, food literacy is a "collection of interrelated knowledge, skills and behaviours required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet needs and determine intake."[197] Food literacy empowers individuals and their communities to understand their food environment and how it impacts food intake, and provides tools to protect dietary quality at both micro- and macro- levels.

Food security:

The state of having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food to support an active, healthy life.[198]

Food sovereignty:

1. The right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. 2. The people who produce, distribute, and consume food have the right to healthy, culturally-appropriate food and to participate in the creation of food policies rather than to have them imposed.[199]

Food system:

All the activities, people and resources involved in getting food from fields, forests, and fisheries through to consumption and disposal. Food systems are embedded in economic, social, and natural environments, and both affect and are affected by those environments.[200]

Food system stakeholders:

A diverse range of actors who are involved in one or more aspect of food systems work. Includes business owners, farmers, farm, restaurant, and food processing workers, non-profit organizations, schools, and others.

GLOSSARY

Foodshed:
The geographical boundaries within which food is produced and consumed. These often nest and overlap.[201]

Hunger:

Discomfort or pain due to lack of food. Anyone can be temporarily hungry, but those experiencing hunger often have no means to resolve it and must continue being hungry for extended periods of time. This kind of hunger "results in discomfort, illness, weakness, or pain that goes beyond the usual uneasy sensation."[202]

Intermediated markets:

A farm-to-market path involving "all marketing opportunities in the local supply chain that are not farmer-to-consumer transactions, including farmers selling to grocers, restaurants, regional aggregators such as food hubs, and buying arrangements with the food service operations of schools, universities, hospitals, and other institutions."[203] Foods in this market path remain in local or regional markets and generally have a short chain from farmer to consumer.

Live Well Allegheny:

A County-wide campaign by the Allegheny County Health Department to improve the health and wellbeing of County residents.[204]

Low supermarket access:

A community or area which is not close to a full-service supermarket or grocery store or doesn't have easy transportation to those stores. Also called "low-access", these areas are measured by the USDA based on proximity to stores (0.5 and 1 mile in urban areas, 10 and 20 miles in rural areas) and on percentage of households without a vehicle in that area.[205]

Mobile markets:

Refrigerated food trucks stocked with fresh produce that travel on fixed routes and schedules. Mobile markets reduce transportation barriers to produce by bringing the supermarket to underserved urban and rural areas.[206]

Public health:

The science and practice of protecting and promoting the health of people and the communities in which they live, work, and play.[207]

Regional food economy:

A cross-sector network of food businesses in a defined region, their customers, workers, and economic impacts within the region. Regional food economies form the economic backbone of a community food system.

Structural racism:

A form of racism where institutional power and authority intentionally or unintentionally perpetuate racial inequality. This can take the form of public and institutional policies, societal norms, cultural representations, and institutional practices.[208]

Sustainable agriculture:

An integrated form of agriculture that is site-specific and which can be sustained over the long term to the benefit of people and the environment.[209]

Sustainable agriculture focuses on three main goals: environmental stewardship, farm profitability, and prosperous farming communities[210] and addresses the ecological, economic and social aspects of agriculture.

Value-added products:

Food products that have additional market value due to changes in form (such as turning wheat into flour), production methods (such as organic production), or market segregation (such a local food label).[211] Value-added processors, on- or off-farm, are needed to produce value-added products with a change in form.



APPENDIX A: BASELINE MEASURES FOR THE GREATER PITTSBURGH FOOD ACTION PLAN

Baseline measures enable us to understand the current state of the food system, and provide a benchmark for the future. These measures were developed using metrics from the Basic Food Systems Report Toolkit[212], the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact[213] (to which the City of Pittsburgh is a signatory), the American Planning Association[214], and extant local work including the Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan,[215] the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project[216], and the Plan for a Healthier Allegheny.[217] Additional measures were developed by members of the Project Team to provide baselines for information specific to Allegheny County.

Measure	Most Recent Data	Geographic Region	Year of Data	Data Source
Agriculture emissions in million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO2e)	7.72	Pennsylvania	2015	Pennsylvania Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2018
Food waste landfilled, in tons	137,575.19	Allegheny County	2015	Environmental Protection Agency Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: 2015 Fact Sheet; Allegheny County 2019 Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan. 2015 Allegheny County MSW * EPA 2015 national average for food waste in MSW
Water contamination due to agricultural runoff, in miles of contaminated waterway	64.5	Allegheny County	2018	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection 2018 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report
Water supply per-capita use (gallons/person/day)	166	Allegheny County	2015	United States Geological Survey Water Use Data for the Nation
Acres in Agricultural Conservation Easements	3,458	Allegheny County	2017	Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Farmland Preservation Annual Report
Acres in Agricultural Security Areas	11,966	Allegheny County	2017	Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Farmland Preservation Annual Report
Number of restaurants (includes fast food restaurants and national chains)	6,489	Allegheny County	2018	Allegheny County Health Department Food Facility Inspection Data (WPRDC data set)
Number of restaurants earning a designation from the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program	134	Allegheny County	2019	Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant
Average wages of employees at "food services and drinking places"	$17,800	Allegheny County	2016	Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
Employees of "food services and drinking places"	54,373	Allegheny County	2016	Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
Number of supermarkets and full service grocery stores	156	Allegheny County	2016	Allegheny County Fee and Permit Data (WPRDC data set)
Number of food trucks	96	Allegheny County	2018	Allegheny County Health Department Food Facility Inspection Data (WPRDC data set, mobile vendors with license plates only)
Number of farms (farms with sales counted by Census of Agriculture)	389	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Value in dollars of direct-to-consumer sales by farms	2,807,000	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Number of farms making direct-to-consumer sales, including CSAs.	81	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Average farm size, in acres (farms with sales only)	74	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)

Change in farmland acres over 5-yr period (farms with sales only)	-5,867	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Farmland, in acres (farms with sales only)	28,970	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Proportion of County land in farmland (farms with sales only)	6.2%	Allegheny County	2017	2017 Census of Agriculture (Volume 1, Chapter 2: County Level Data)
Number of community farms and gardens supported by the Garden Sustainability Fund	97	Allegheny County	2019	Grow Pittsburgh
Number of school gardens	61	Regional	2017	Grow Pittsburgh
% of adolescents age 14-18 who ate vegetables at least once a day in the last 7 days	47%	Allegheny County	2014	Healthy Allegheny Teen Survey
% of adults who report consuming 2 or more servings of fruit at least once in the past week	54.64%	Allegheny County	2016	ACHS 2015-2016 Snapshot
% of adults who report consuming 3 or more servings of vegetables at least once in the past week	24.36%	Allegheny County	2016	ACHS 2015-2016 Snapshot
Food insecurity - count	161,070	Allegheny County	2015	Map the Meal Gap: Food Insecurity in Allegheny County
Food insecurity - percentage	13.1%	Allegheny County	2015	Map the Meal Gap: Food Insecurity in Allegheny County
Businesses accepting SNAP	906	Allegheny County	2019	USDA Food and Nutrition Service
Number of SNAP participants	150,985	Allegheny County	2018	Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
Number of farmers markets participating in Fresh Access (accept SNAP)	19	Allegheny County	2019	Just Harvest
Farms participating in food bank gleaning program	12	Regional	2017	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
Number of Fresh Corners healthy corner stores	11	Allegheny County	2019	Just Harvest
School lunch program, Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch	71,803	Allegheny County	2018	Kids Count Data Center

Detailed information about data sources is available in the methodology document.

APPENDIX B: REGIONAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH

REGIONAL FOOD PLANNING AND RESEARCH

Project	Geographic Scope	Lead Agency	Goals/Outcomes
Setting the Table: A Blueprint for a Hunger-Free PA	Pennsylvania	Governor Tom Wolf's Food Security Partnership	Increasing participation rates in government anti-hunger programs and healthy food access by 2020
Agriculture and Food System Trends in the Appalachian Region: 2007-2012	Appalachian Region's 420 counties	Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)	Assess, benchmark, and document trends in food and farm activity and food economies
Defining the 21st Century Food Shed: Pittsburgh and Beyond	Pittsburgh foodshed - 200 mile radius	Center for Regional Agriculture, Food, and Transformation (CRAFT) at Chatham University	Provides an empirical grounding for future food system analysis, projects, and for community-level access to resources and opportunities in food and agriculture in our region
Local Food Supply Chain Initiative in Southwestern Pennsylvania	10 County region of Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission	Details the resiliency, size and scope of the regional food system and identifies potential goals and actions to generate jobs and investments
Allegheny Place: Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan	Allegheny County	Allegheny County	Agricultural Resource Plan outlines today's conditions, including key challenges and recommendations to make agriculture a viable industry in the County
Strengthening Pittsburgh's Farmers Markets	City of Pittsburgh	Farmers Market Coalition, City of Pittsburgh	To understand the effectiveness of current markets throughout the city and develop a plan for growth that improves equitable access to fresh, affordable, culturally appropriate food, supports our regional food producers and promotes healthy eating choices for all residents
Menu for Food Justice	Allegheny County	Just Harvest	A comprehensive assessment of the food desert status of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County's most vulnerable communities
Pennsylvania Agriculture: a look at the economic impact and future trends	Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture	To provide an updated accounting of the economic impact of the agriculture industry in the Commonwealth; to inform the roadmap for the agricultural industry by identifying where it can build on its existing strengths and capitalize on new opportunities; to provide industry and policy recommendations to help the industry adapt to the macro trends it is facing
Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan 3.0	City of Pittsburgh	City of Pittsburgh	To lay out the pathways and strategies for achieving the Pittsburgh 2030 goals and creating the framework for making progress towards long term emission reduction goals, includes a section on Food and Agriculture
Immigrant Owned Small Business Report	Pittsburgh area	All for All	To make entrepreneurship more attainable for aspiring and established immigrant entrepreneurs and small business owners, so that they can continue to make valuable contributions to the pittsburgh region.

Barriers to Healthy Food Businesses	Allegheny County	Pittsburgh Food Policy Council	To determine collective challenges faced by small food businesses in Allegheny County, with a focus on businesses that prioritize the sale of 'healthy' food
The Pittsburgh School Food Environment: Strengths and Opportunities in the Pittsburgh Public School District	City of Pittsburgh	Food Law and Policy Clinic: Harvard Law School	To examine some of Pittsburgh Public School's (PPS) existing policies and practices and make recommendations regarding how the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council could support PPS in making improvements to the school food environment, based on the successes of other cities and school districts
Urban Agriculture: A Guide for Municipalities	Unspecified	University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics and the Allegheny County Conservation District	To explain the benefits of urban agriculture activities and how to add permissive language to an existing zoning ordinance
Pittsburgh Farmers Needs Report	Pittsburgh area	Allegheny County Conservation District, Hilltop Urban Farm, Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, and Penn State Extension, Productive Places Consulting	To examine consistent trends in agriculture across the US, within Pennsylvania, and regionally in Southwestern PA, and to identify barriers to and opportunities for entry and growth within the agricultural system
Growing Pennsylvania's Future: Challenges Facing Young Farmers and Recommendations to Address Them	Pennsylvania	National Young Farmers Coalition	A first-of-its-kind look at the challenges that young and beginning farmers face in Pennsylvania and the policies and programs they need to ensure a successful, sustainable future for agriculture in the state

COUNTY, NEIGHBORHOOD, MUNICIPAL, & MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Regional and County-Level Plans

- Allegheny Places (Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan)
- Plan for a Healthier Allegheny
- Mapping the Future: The Southwestern Pennsylvania Plan
- Allegheny Green Comprehensive Sustainability
- Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh Action Plan

City of Pittsburgh & Neighborhoods

- 2010 East Liberty Community Plan
- 2014 Allentown Neighborhood Plan Update
- Allegheny City Central Association Community Master Plan
- Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan
- Bloomfield Neighborhood Vision Plan
- City of Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan
- Complete Streets Pittsburgh
- Garfield 2030
- Greater Hazelwood Community Plan (Draft)
- Hill District Master Plan
- Homewood Neighborhood Plan
- Larimer Neighborhood Plan
- Oakland 2025 Master Plan
- OnePGH Resiliency Strategy
- Roadmap to Zero Waste for the City of Pittsburgh, PA
- Southside Neighborhood Plan
- Troy Hill Neighborhood Master Plan

Municipal & Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plans

- Plans for most Allegheny County municipalities are available online at the Pennsylvania eLibrary.

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS

In recognition of the substantial work currently undertaken by PFPC partner organizations, we have compiled a non- exhaustive list of programs, policy initiatives and funding. These strategies include efforts to support farmers, entrepreneurs, community groups, restaurant workers, and many other initiatives to strengthen our food system.

Sector	Category	Program	Lead	Description	Service area
Community & Emergency Food	Farm Stand/ small scale distribution	Farm Stands and corner store distribution	Grow Pittsburgh	This program supports a small weekly farm stand next to existing urban farms in Braddock and Point Breeze to distribute the produce locally at affordable prices and accepting EBT and FMNP benefits. Additional produce from the farms are available at local corner stores in Braddock seven days a week.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Senior Boxes (CSFP)	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Monthly packages of nutritious USDA commodities are delivered to neighborhood sites, where volunteers pick them up for delivery to low-income, vulnerable seniors.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Thrive Food Boxes	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Thrive boxes are designed by a Registered Dietitian to align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and are distributed in partnership with healthcare providers and first responders.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Produce to People	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Eligible recipients can visit one of eight locations in Allegheny County each month and receive 30-50 pounds of free produce.	Pittsburgh; Braddock; Tarentum/ Natrona Heights; Duquesne; McKeesport
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	GPCFB Member Agencies Needs Fund	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Supports the purchase of needed equipment, development of agency standards, and Food Safety and Nutrition Education training.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Healthy Food Center/West Penn Hospital	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	The Healthy Food Center is a collaborative partnership between Allegheny Health Network's Center for Inclusion Health, West Penn Hospital, and the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank designed to provide medically appropriate foods and nutrition counseling to patients who screen positive for food insecurity and receive a referral from their healthcare provider.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	School Breakfast Program	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Under our Food Security Partnership, we are working with school districts to increase participation with this federal program by implementing alternative options for participation, including Grab'n Go and Breakfast in the Classroom.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Eligible participants are issued FMNP coupons and can be used to buy eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets or roadside stands that have been approved by the state agency to accept FMNP coupons.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Rescued Food:Direct Pick-ups	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	We match agencies with retail stores for direct pick-ups, so perishable items are used promptly.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Rescued Food:Gleaning	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Small, local farmers allow our volunteers to glean produce from their fields.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Food Safety Training	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	All Food Bank partner agencies must participate in food safety training to ensure safe food handling at their facilities. Our nutrition staff facilitates this training and hosts cooking demonstrations at agencies.	Allegheny County

Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Nutrition Education	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Through Choose Healthy Options Program (CHOP) — our proprietary food nutrient ranking system – the Cooking, Activity and Nutrition newsletter, our partnerships with healthcare and SNAP-Ed providers, and our Healthy Option Pantry Program, we provide nutrition education across our service area.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Advance Choice	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	To distribute produce while it is fresh, pantries provide client preferences and quantities which are used to create weekly delivery orders based on the produce inventory on hand.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Healthy Options Pantries	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and Adagio Health	Nutritionist educators visit select sites to give cooking demonstrations and provide nutrition education.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Government Affairs and Advocacy	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	The Food Bank advocates for governmental support of anti-hunger programs and policies at the federal, state and local level. We participate in coalitions and compiling hunger related statistics and stories for presentation to government officials and other stakeholders.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	General Procurement and Distribution	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	The Food Bank sources food from manufacturers, retailers, food brokers, farmers, and government entities. We store it in our warehouse until it is delivered to our network or picked up by our partner agencies and distributed for free to people in need.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Community Table	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	Through this program, we pair restaurants and commercial kitchens with our member agencies. Chefs prepare complete and nutritious meals on a scheduled basis for the agencies to distribute to people in need.	Allegheny County
Community & Emergency Food	Food Access	Fresh Access	Just Harvest	The Fresh Access Program enables area farmers markets the ability to accept food stamp benefits, as well as credit/debit cards. For ever $5 in food stamp benefits, a customer receives an additional $2 that can be used to purchase produce.	Allegheny County
Growing	Nutrition	Nutrition Links	Penn State Extension	The Nutrition Links program offers free nutrition education programs to participants eligible for public assistance to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve a healthful diet on a limited budget. Nutrition Links is federally funded and supported by local resources/dollars. Funds come from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), known in PA as PA TRACKS.	Allegheny County
Cooking & Eating	Sustainability	Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program	Sustainable PIttsburgh	The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program recognizes southwestern PA restaurants for their sustainability achievements and provides a tool for consumers to use to identify area restaurants that are committed to building a better Pittsburgh region.	Southwestern PA
Cooking & Eating	Food Access	Summer Food Service Program	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank/City of Pittsburgh/ Various local sponsors	Under our Food Security Partnership, we aim to increase participation in summer child hunger programs by collaborating with local organizations that agree to serve kids during the summer.	Allegheny County

Food Systems Workforce	Restaurant Workers	Restaurants Advancing Industry Standards in Employment (RAISE)	Restaurant Opportunities Center	Through RAISE, ROC convenes restaurant owners to learn about sustainable business models that champion living wages, basic benefits, fair promotion policies, among other "high road" employer practices as recipes for success, not impediments to profitability.	City of Pittsburgh
Growing	Agriculture	Agricultural Conservation Technical Assistance Program	Allegheny County Conservation District but most County CD's have staff	This program, funded in part by the State Conservation Commission, provides for staff support to farmers to assist them with on farm conservation and technical assistance questions. Additionally, the program aims to connect growers with existing resources within other agencies (Extension, NRCS, FSA, etc.) while providing education and insight into addressing issues such as soil health, season extension and water quality.	Allegheny County
Growing	Gardening	Master Gardeners	Penn State Extension	The Penn State Master Gardener volunteer program supports the outreach mission of Penn State Extension by utilizing unbiased research-based information to educate the public and our communities on best practices in sustainable horticulture and environmental stewardship.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Urban Farm Apprenticeship / Farmer Training	Grow Pittsburgh	Our apprenticeship and farmer training programs are designed to introduce participants to working in sustainable agriculture, helping participants enter a food related career.	Pittsburgh, Braddock
Growing	Urban Agriculture	School Gardens	Grow Pittsburgh	We integrate garden and cooking activities into the regular classroom curriculum to support the development and education of the whole child.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Urban Farmers in Training	Grow Pittsburgh	Our urban farmers in training program is a summer high school program with a focus on learning to grow food, cooking, understanding the food system and building leadership and public speaking skills.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Garden Resource Center	Grow Pittsburgh	A tool lending library and resource depot established to support community and backyard gardeners in accessing tools and amendments that would otherwise be hard to afford or access.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Community Garden Sustainability Fund	Grow Pittsburgh	A program established to support existing community and school gardens in accessing resources and technical assistance necessary for long-term sustainability.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Community Garden Program	Grow Pittsburgh	A program that works with community members and organizations to build new community gardens for long-term sustainability and community ownership and operation.	Allegheny County
Growing	Urban Agriculture	Adopt-A-Lot	City Of Pittsburgh	A clearly outlined way for accessing City owned vacant lots for food, flower, or rain gardens.	City of Pittsburgh
Growing	Regional Food Product and Business Development	Food & Agriculture Innovation Lab	CRAFT Chatham University	CRAFT provides affordable services to assist small to mid-sized food entrepreneurs and businesses with recipe testing, market research, product branding, and ingredients sourcing, as well as other business support services that foster connections along the value chain and support a more robust regional food economy.	Allegheny County
Growing	Farmer Education	Education in: Entrepreneurship, Business Management, Marketing	Penn State Extension	The Business Management and Community Vitality team of Penn State Extension offers many workshops and courses for new, beginning, and established farmers in business management, entrepreneurship, marketing, farm food safety, and more.	Allegheny County

Growing	Food Access	Green Grocer	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	A delivery truck of refrigerated, fresh, nutritious, affordable food makes several stops/week, reaching 14 "food desert" communities. Residents choose and pay for the foods they want.	Clairton; Duquesne; Mt. Oliver/Knoxville; McKees Rocks; Sharpsburg
Growing	Food Access	Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP)	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	CACFP is a federal program that is administered by the PA Department of Education through local sponsors that provide meals to at risk afterschool program sites. In October 2018, the Food Bank became the sponsor of 40 CACFP sites in Allegheny County.	Allegheny County
Growing	Agriculture	Allegheny County Farmland Preservation Program	Allegheny County Conservation District on behalf of Allegheny County	The program provides cash payments to qualified farmers for the purchase of a conservation agricultural conservation easement on their property. This ensures the permanent protection and agricultural use of the property. Additionally, the program helps landowners and municipalities create agricultural security areas (ASAs).	Allegheny County
Growing	Gardening	Allegheny County Garden Hotline	Penn State Extension	The Garden Hotline is a free service offered through the Penn State extension office to help Allegheny County residents with gardening questions and concerns.	Allegheny County
Retailing - Grocery	Business Development and Capital	Healthy Food Access Program	Bridgeway Capital	Bridgeway Capital offers funding and resources to expand healthy food options in existing stores, start new stores, or launch innovative programs that address food access challenges.	Western PA
Retailing - Restaurant	Sustainability	Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program	Sustainable PIttsburgh	The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program recognizes southwestern PA restaurants for their sustainability achievements and provides them with resources and support to improve sustainability performance.	Southwestern PA
Retailing - Restaurant	Food Access	SNAP Outreach	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and Just Harvest	Under our Food Security Partnership, we do outreach to increase participation in food assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).	Allegheny County

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