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GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

FEBRUARY 2011



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FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

FEBRUARY 2011

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to uniting the region’s elected officials, planning professionals, and the public with a common vision of making a great region even greater. Shaping the way we live, work, and play, DVRPC builds consensus on improving transportation, promoting smart growth, protecting the environment, and enhancing the economy. We serve a diverse region of nine counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region—leading the way to a better future.



The symbol in our logo is adapted from the official DVRPC seal and is designed as a stylized image of the Delaware Valley. The outer ring symbolizes the region as a whole while the diagonal bar signifies the Delaware River. The two adjoining crescents represent the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey.

DVRPC is funded by a variety of funding sources including federal grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Pennsylvania and New Jersey departments of transportation, as well as by DVRPC’s state and local member governments. The authors, however, are solely responsible for the findings and conclusions herein, which may not represent the official views or policies of the funding agencies.

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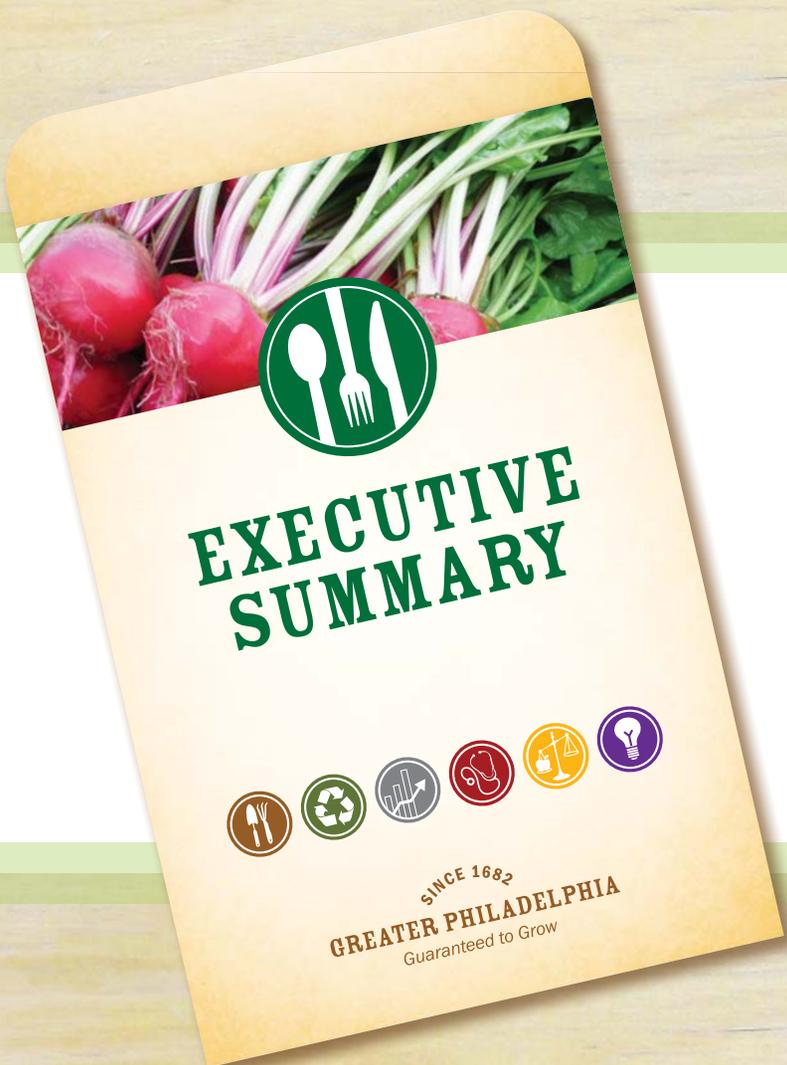
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Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan is based on the ongoing work of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee. This plan is aimed at increasing the security and economic, social, and environmental benefits of the regional food system that feeds Greater Philadelphia.

In 2010, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) published the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, which explores Greater Philadelphia’s agricultural industry, food distribution network, regional food economy, and social capital. While Greater Philadelphia is a part of a global food system, the study focused on the assets, challenges, and opportunities within its 100-Mile Foodshed, a geographic area from which a population’s food may theoretically be sourced. As shown in **Figure 1.2**, the 100-Mile Foodshed comprises 70 counties in five states (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, and Maryland) and includes DVRPC’s nine-county planning area.

Eating Here continues and extends that work, identifying opportunities to develop the regional economy and strengthen our agricultural sector, decrease waste and want, improve public health, protect the region’s soil and water, and encourage diversity, innovation, and collaboration. It contains the Committee’s specific priority recommendations, based on values.

Values and Goals

Using information from committee members’ work on the ground, the findings of the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, and an interactive exercise, the Committee identified six core values associated with a sustainable and resilient food system:

- **Farming and Sustainable Agriculture,**
- **Ecological Stewardship and Conservation,**
- **Economic Development,**
- **Health,**
- **Fairness,** and
- **Collaboration.**

These values are the organizing principles that underlie our visionary goals behind the Greater Philadelphia Food System Plan.

Figure 1.1: Greater Philadelphia Food System Facts

37%	Percent of undeveloped land in the 100-Mile Foodshed considered important agricultural soils.
14 Million Tons	Amount of food freight moved within the Greater Philadelphia Region in 2002.
\$16 Billion	Value of food purchases in the region in 2007.
1 in 10	Households in Greater Philadelphia suffering from food insecurity.
226	Community Gardens in Philadelphia.
2 in 3	Adults in Pennsylvania and New Jersey who are considered overweight or obese.
10-30%	Contribution of food production and distribution to Greater Philadelphia's regional economy.
75%	Projected increase in Greater Philadelphia's international food imports by the year 2035.
58%	Percent of farms in New Jersey and Pennsylvania reporting net losses in 2007.
200 lb/person	Amount of compostable food and organic waste entering the waste stream each year in the United States.
\$6.7 Billion	Total Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold in 100-Mile Foodshed in 2007.
150 (and growing)	The number of organizations and individuals involved in DVRPC's Food System Stakeholder Committee.

Sources: DVRPC’s *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* and *Eating Here: The Greater Philadelphia Food System Plan*, 2010.

The plan is driven by a vision of a food system in which agriculture is a valued and economically viable occupation, natural resources are preserved and regenerated, healthy food is accessible and affordable, and diversity exists throughout the region, as evidenced by the variety of crops grown, types of businesses flourishing, and the amount of consumer choices available to all income groups.

Indicators

Because the region must measure the progress and implementation of any plan, the Stakeholder Committee has identified a set of indicators based on the plan's six values. These indicators can serve to measure success or failure in achieving a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable regional food system.

By analyzing these indicators, Greater Philadelphia can evaluate its current food system, envision a future food system, and measure progress on an ongoing basis. At the time of the plan's publication, Greater Philadelphia's food system shows signs of both negative and positive trends.

- The future of **Farming and Sustainable Agriculture** in and around Greater Philadelphia is under pressure as exhibited by few acres of land in agricultural production and more farms operating with deficits.
- While the region continues to lead the nation in farmland preservation, much work is still needed to improve **Ecological Stewardship and Conservation**. Water quality continues to degrade.
- On the positive side, the "local food" and "healthy food" movements are recognized as **Economic Development** strategies at both the local and national levels. And while healthy foods tend to be more expensive than processed foods,

people continue to purchase healthy foods if they have reliable access to them.

- The region's overall **Health** continues to decline despite the public's growing awareness of diet-related diseases.
- Efforts to abate hunger and improve **Fairness** in the food system are making positive impacts; however, an increasing number of households are suffering from food insecurity and food system workers' wages, while rising in the last few years, continue to be far below living wage and self-sufficiency standards.
- While hard to measure, stakeholders report increased **Collaboration** among many organizations and across political jurisdictions. Many people are recognizing the importance of working together to make the region more economically competitive.

Recommendations

The plan's recommendations include policy reforms, expansions of current initiatives and programs, and new approaches and innovations. *Eating Here* attempts to incorporate recommendations from many sources, including national and state policy statements, food system assessments and plans from other parts of North America, and various planning and implementation projects in and around Greater Philadelphia. These are integrated with new recommendations that were gathered over the course of DVRPC's two-year planning process. Over 100 recommendations were then prioritized by the Food System Stakeholder Committee through an online survey and two group discussions, resulting in 52 recommendations in this document.

The following are the Plan's Top Recommendations for the region. They are organized by value category (but not in ranking order):



Access to affordable farmland: Maintain affordable land for farmers through a range of potential innovations and new business models. These include addressing the retirement needs of farmers, identifying opportunities to transition preserved land into food production, and creating investment vehicles for long-term agricultural production on preserved land.



Natural resource protection through markets: Develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources.



Agricultural enterprise development: Create or expand new and specialized programs to reduce the barriers of entry for new food entrepreneurs and new, beginning, and minority farmers, and encourage value-added activities. Examples include training programs and revolving loan, micro-loan, and low-interest loan funds.



Healthy food awareness and access: Promote the use of new technology and community-based communication outlets by all partners—government, private sector, and nonprofits—to educate people about healthy food.



School system solutions: Integrate all aspects of Farm to School programs into a robust and comprehensive education program.

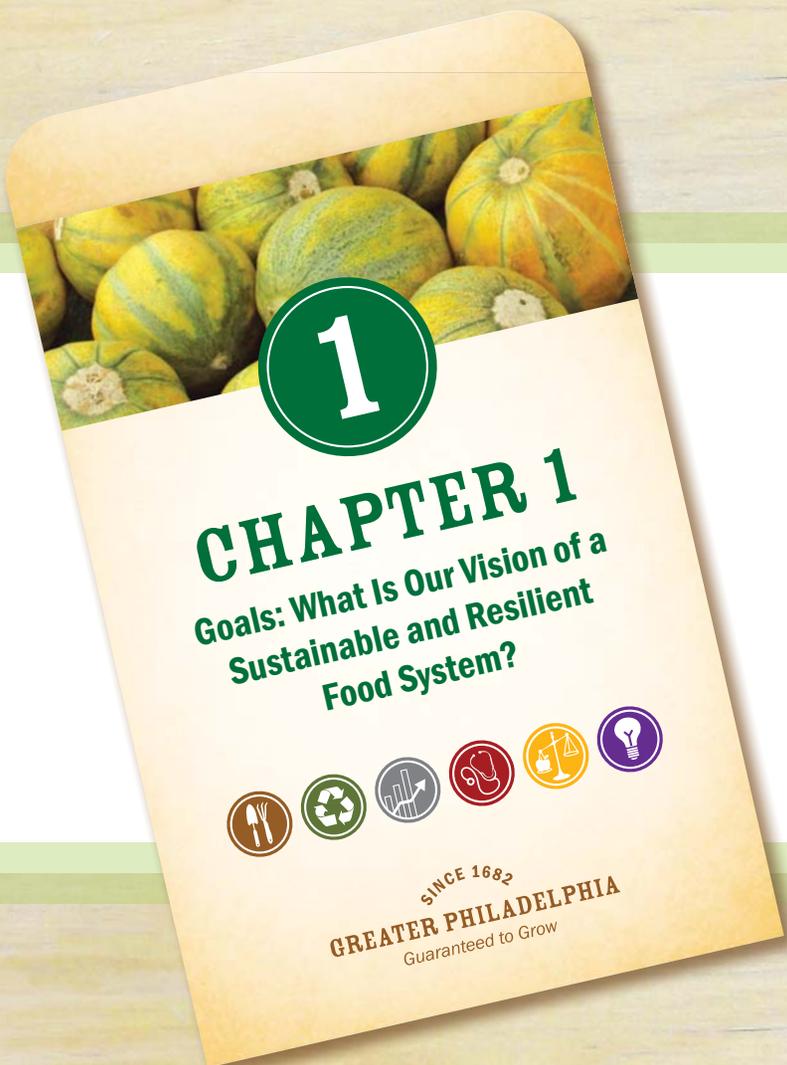


Regional convening and increased collaboration: Continue to convene the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee and encourage shared efforts.

Conclusion

Implementing the numerous recommendations included in this plan will take the dedicated efforts of many actors within the Greater Philadelphia Food System. The award of several *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants*¹ to a number of collaborative efforts has begun to transform several of these recommendations into reality, but more work remains to be done, and each participant in the Greater Philadelphia Food System has a role to play—from those businesses and organizations that actively participate in the food system to those individuals *eating here*.

¹ Many priorities were incorporated into *The Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants* competitive proposal process. See the **Appendices** for the awarded initiatives.



D VRPC and the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee identified values that have guided the development of the Greater Philadelphia Food System Plan. Using information from committee members' work on the ground, the findings of the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, and interactive exercises, the Committee identified six core values—**Farming and Sustainable Agriculture; Ecological Stewardship and Conservation; Economic Development; Health; Fairness;** and **Collaboration**—that are the organizing principles behind *Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan*. From these values, the region's visionary goals emerged.

Greater Philadelphia envisions a sustainable and resilient food system in which:

 Stakeholders maintain open communication and personal connections and forge collaborative and cooperative partnerships.

  Soil, water, and other natural resources are sustained, replenished, and regenerated.

  Farmland is treasured, preserved, and available in a variety of scales and places, from rural to urban, and places in between.

   Farming is a recognized, respected, and profitable occupation; and both current and new farmers have access to affordable land and diverse markets.



Farm located in Warrington, Bucks County, PA

Credit: Darrin Schieber

   Food and farming are cornerstones of a healthy regional economy, with adequate resources and support for business development and entrepreneurship.

   Diversity and innovation are encouraged and rewarded in the variety of crops grown, different farming practices, successful business models, and increased consumer choices.

   Food and farmworkers everywhere have decent and fair working conditions and earn a living wage.

     People have access to, can afford to buy, and know how to cook healthy food that is culturally appropriate, nourishing, and produced in ways that respect the environment and the producers.

      All of these goals can be met while being adaptable over time to changes in land, population, energy, and climate.

 **Farming and Sustainable Agriculture**

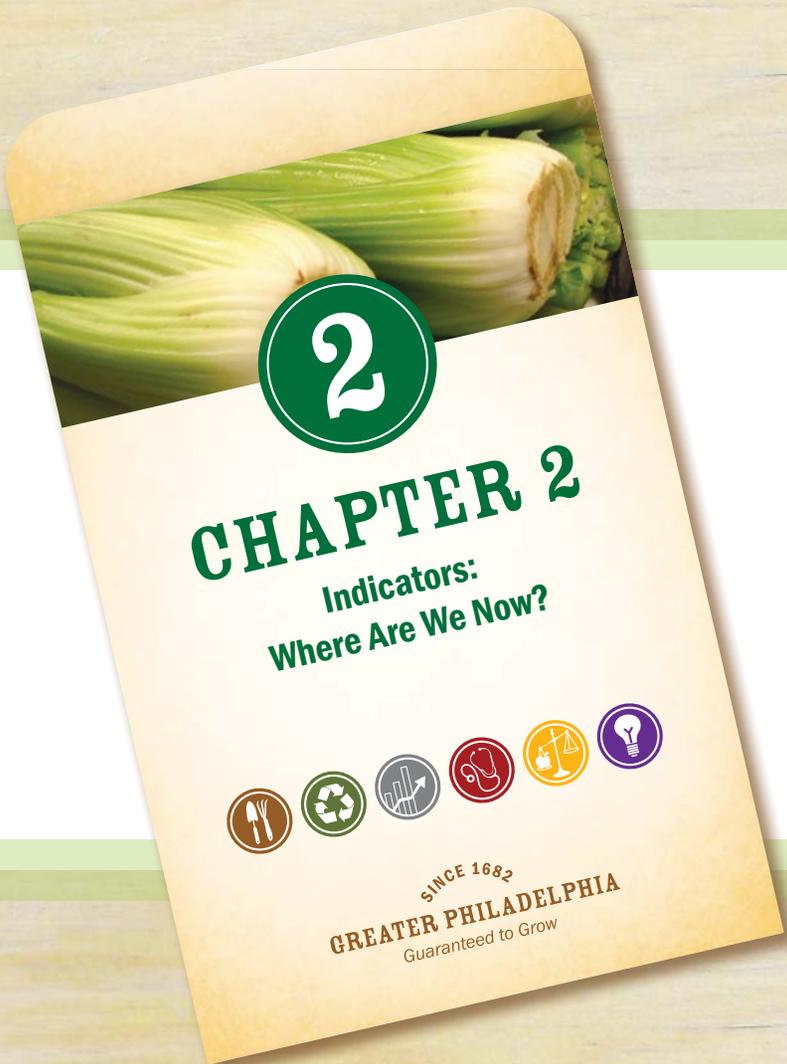
 **Ecological Stewardship and Conservation**

 **Economic Development**

 **Health**

 **Fairness**

 **Collaboration**



After the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee agreed upon visionary goals, DVRPC identified a set of indicators that would establish a baseline to measure the region's progress toward a more sustainable and resilient regional food system. The indicators provide snapshots of various data over time, highlighting recent trends in each of the value categories and providing a way to measure the effectiveness of efforts taken to improve various aspects of the regional food system.

DVRPC regularly undertakes indicator projects to evaluate the region's development patterns and identify trends. DVRPC applied similar criteria to identify food system indicators, some of which can be integrated into the Commission's ongoing work. Ideally, food system indicators should:

- cover the entire nine-county DVRPC region or the entirety of New Jersey and Pennsylvania;
- be publicly available;
- be updated every two to five years; and
- be well-established indicators that are used by other food system indicator projects so that analysis can be compared to other geographic areas.

The following 10 indicators were selected through a process that involved a literature review of other indicator projects, the criteria mentioned above that is already accepted by other DVRPC indicator projects, and extensive input from the Stakeholder Committee. DVRPC analyzed projects and studies undertaken by other governmental agencies such as the United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs,² national organizations such as Winrock International's Wallace Center,³ and state- and community-based efforts such as the Roots of Change Fund's Vivid Picture Project.⁴

The Stakeholder Committee provided guidance and oversight in the identification of indicators and input into selection of the final indicators. Other experts known for their work in food systems and related fields

²Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, Indicators for a Sustainable Food System (London, United Kingdom: Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, March 26, 2010), www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/strategy/indicators.htm (accessed June, 21 2010).

³Wallace Center at Winrock International, Charting Growth: Sustainable Food Indicators (Arlington, VA: Wallace Center at Winrock International, 2009).

⁴The Vivid Picture Project (San Francisco, CA: Roots of Change), www.vividpicture.net (accessed June 21, 2010).

were asked to review DVRPC's development of these indicators and preliminary analysis of current conditions and trends.

Analysis of these indicators can illustrate the impact of past and ongoing changes to the regional, national, and global food systems; illuminate trends in food systems; and help hypothesize what other changes or interventions are needed to shift indicators and create a regional food system that reflects the stakeholders' values, vision, and goals.

Moving forward, the indicators will enable Greater Philadelphia's Food System Stakeholders to have constructive conversations about individual and collaborative efforts, changes to state and federal policy, and changes in the global food system.

The indicators, organized by value category, are:



Farming and Sustainable Agriculture

1. Land in production
2. Profitability of farming



Ecological Stewardship and Conservation

3. Surface water quality
4. Farmland preservation



Economic Development

5. Employment in the Food System
6. Increase in food and farmworker wages



Health

7. The region's healthy food purchases
8. Health of the region's residents



Fairness

- 9. Affordability of healthy food
- 10. Food Insecurity



Collaboration

Because collaboration is hard to measure empirically, the category of Collaboration does not have a set of indicators. Progress in any of these areas or within an indicator can signify that the region and its stakeholders are working more effectively together toward numerous goals.

There are many other indicators that the Stakeholder Committee would like to measure, such as how much local food is sold in local supermarkets, food access, and quality of soil. While those measures, and many others not listed here, are important and may better measure the region's progress toward a value such as sustainability, reliable data collected by a government entity is not available. Despite this deficiency, it is a worthwhile experience to discuss all the aspects of the food system that we would like to measure, as this discussion is an important part of imagining a sustainable food system and creating recommendations that make meaningful changes.



FARMING and SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



Agriculture is a significant part of Greater Philadelphia's landscape, economy, and culture. However, agriculture may cease to be a regional asset if farmers cannot operate profitable businesses. Indicator 1 measures the amount of land in agricultural production in the larger foodshed (Pennsylvania and New Jersey). Indicator 2 measures farmers' ability to maintain profitable operations.

Indicator 1: Land in Production

The amount of land in agricultural production can serve as both a measure for farmland capacity and the health of the regional agricultural industry. A decrease in land in production can result from decisions by a farmer to keep certain land out of production; it can also indicate farmland loss to development. To construct Indicator 1, DVRPC used data from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture. This survey, undertaken every five years, asks farmers for detailed information about their farming operations.

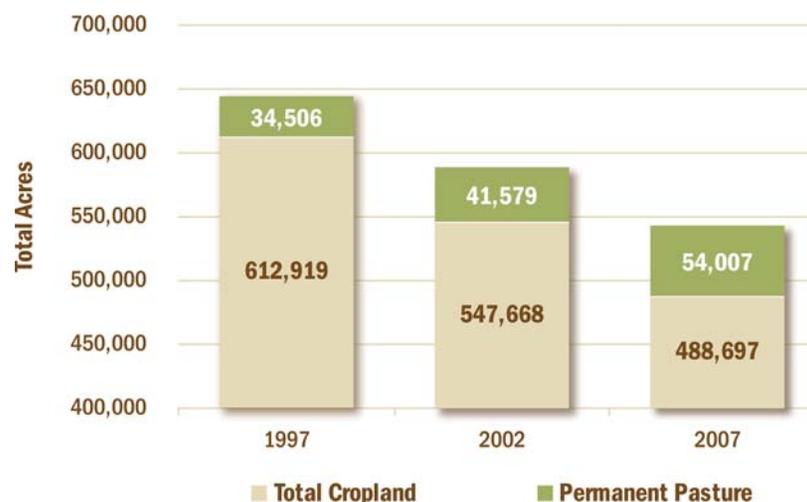
Both New Jersey and Pennsylvania have experienced a steady decrease in land in production, which is defined as cropland and permanent pastureland, but excludes woodlands and land in farm buildings.⁵ As depicted in **Figure 2.1.1**, New Jersey’s land in production decreased by 16.2%, from 647,425 acres in 1997, to 542,704 acres in 2007. In Pennsylvania, depicted in **Figure 2.1.2**, land in production decreased by 2.8%, similar to the nation as a whole, which saw a decrease of 3.4% between 1997 and 2007.

In both states, cropland decreased significantly, while permanent pastureland actually increased. New Jersey lost over 20% of its cropland, while Pennsylvania lost nearly 10%. During the same time period, New Jersey’s permanent pastureland increased by 56.5%, and permanent pastureland nearly doubled (96.6%) in Pennsylvania. This increase may signify that many retired farmers are converting cropland to less labor-intensive production, such as hay production. It may also signify the rise of “retirement farms” and “country estates,” which may lease land to a hay farmer (as well as other types of farmers).

USDA’s 2008 Organic Production Survey indicated that of the 5,602,562 acres in cropland and pastureland in Pennsylvania, only 53,624 acres (about 1%) are in organic production. In New Jersey, proportionally fewer acres (3,329 acres, or 0.6%) are in organic production. Nationally, about 0.5% of land in production in 2007 was considered organic.

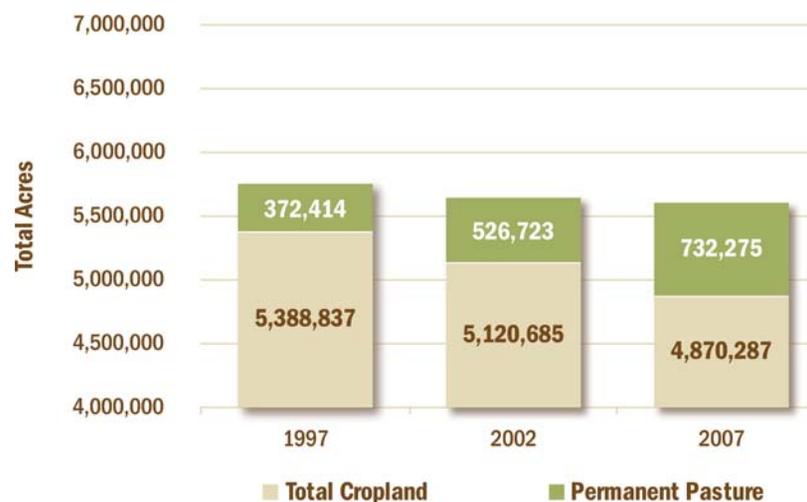
⁵ USDA defines “land in farms” as agricultural land used for crops, pasture, or grazing, as well as woodland and wasteland not actually under cultivation or used for pasture or grazing. Land in farms also includes land enrolled in conservation programs, and therefore not in production, as well as land with farm buildings. New Jersey has a total of 733,450 acres classified as “land in farms,” while Pennsylvania has 7,809,244 acres.

Figure 2.1.1: Land in Production in New Jersey (1997–2007)



Sources: USDA 1997, 2002, 2007.

Figure 2.1.2: Land in Production in Pennsylvania (1997–2007)



Sources: USDA 1997, 2002, 2007.

Indicator 2: Profitability of Farming

Enhancing a farm's ability to operate as a successful and profitable business is arguably the most effective way to sustain farming over the long term. If farming is to be a respected and attractive occupation, farmers must be able to make a living in the marketplace.

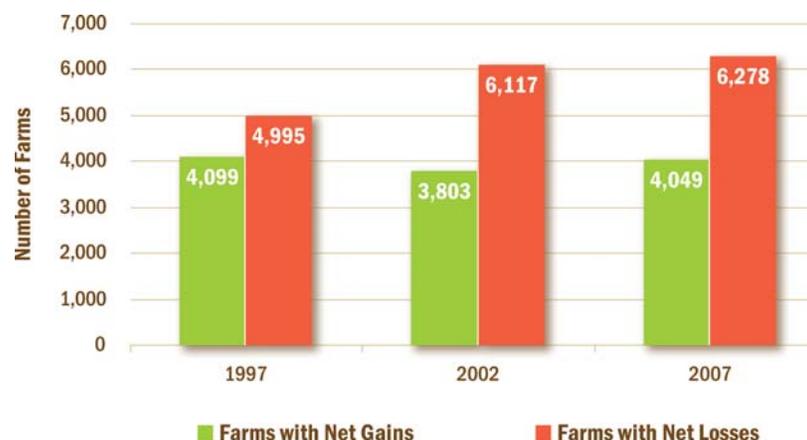
USDA's Census of Agriculture provides a simple measure of farm profitability: the number of farms reporting net gains and net losses. "Net gains" are defined as farm sales outweighing expenses, without including government payments.

In 1997, Pennsylvania and New Jersey had proportionally more farms reporting net gains than in 2007 (**Figure 2.2.1** and **Figure 2.2.2**). In 1997, 51% of all farms reported net gains, while in 2007, only 42% reported gains. In 2007, the average net gains per farm were \$87,040 in New Jersey, and only \$18,567 in Pennsylvania. These numbers may be misleading, as it includes farms of all different sizes, with different ownership structures, and those with gains of over \$1 million.

According to DVRPC's analysis in the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, between 2002 and 2007, farmers within the 100-Mile Foodshed reported increased expenses in gas and fuel (85.8% increase), cash rent for land and buildings (54%), feed for animals (52.7%), livestock purchases (50.3%), and fertilizer and soil conditioners (50.1%). The increase of prices for inputs has outpaced the value of agricultural products sold, as well as the consumer's cost of food (see Indicator 6). Between 2002 and 2007, total receipts for agricultural products sold increased by 35.7% for New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

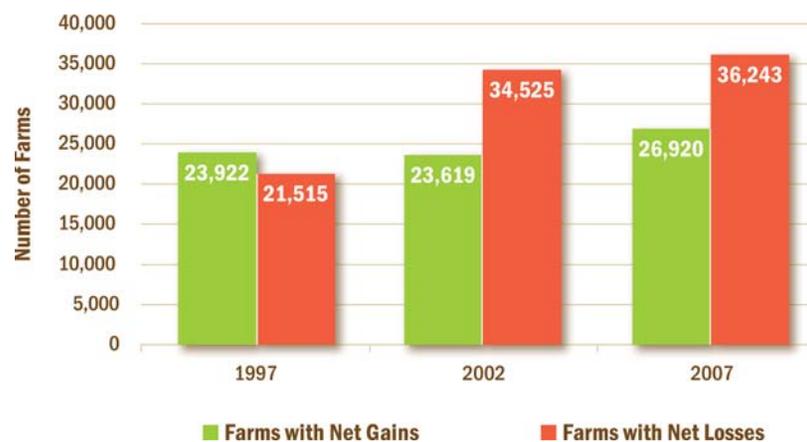
Government payments were established to support farmers throughout various fluctuations in the market, incentivize farmers to remove

Figure 2.2.1: Profitable Farms in New Jersey (1997–2007)



Sources: USDA 1997, 2002, 2007.

Figure 2.2.2: Profitable Farms in Pennsylvania (1997–2007)



Sources: USDA 1997, 2002, 2007.

marginal lands from production and increase conservation practices, and protect farmers from natural disasters and unpredictable weather. As previously noted, net gains does not include any government payments. For more information about government payments and subsidies, see “Level the Playing Field” in the **Fairness Recommendations** section.

Farmers in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey benefit from government payments. In Pennsylvania, 17,441 farms received \$75,975,000 in payments in 2007. This included disaster payments, as well as \$20,079,000 in conservation program payments. In New Jersey, 857 farms received \$6,988,000 in payments. Of this, \$315,000 was for conservation programs. Taken altogether, farmers in the two states received about 1% of the \$7.9 billion in federal payments made to farmers nationally.

Regardless of the future of government payments, if farmers cannot charge a higher price for existing products, produce unique products of a higher value, reduce production costs, or find market efficiencies, they cannot maintain profitable businesses.



ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP and CONSERVATION



As the region continues to grapple with climate and energy uncertainties, it is important for the region to use natural resources in ways that are efficient and regenerative. Water and land are limited resources. When managed responsibly, they serve as invaluable assets and necessary ingredients for a robust regional food system. When used inefficiently, degraded natural resources can make the region vulnerable to human-influenced and natural crises. Indicators 3 and 4 measure the extent to which the regional food system is playing its part to protect the natural resources central to growing food and sustaining life: water and land.

Indicator 3: Surface Water Quality

Along with air and soil, water is one of the natural resources greatly affected by agricultural practices. Many national, state, and regional organizations have a mission to protect and improve water resources.

Indicator 3 captures many different organizations' efforts, enforcement of environmental regulations, and policies already in effect in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Surface water is often impaired by stormwater runoff and other nonpoint pollution (pollution coming from a wide variety of sources). Since the adoption of the Clean Water Act, point source pollution (such as a factory's discharge pipe) has been dramatically reduced and is regulated. Nonpoint source pollution is harder to regulate and requires various mitigation and remediation strategies. As rain falls on farmland, it can carry pollutants and soil into nearby waterways. Extra fertilizers found in the runoff increase nitrogen levels in concentrations high enough to create algae blooms that suffocate aquatic life. The federal Clean Water Act mandates that states submit biennial reports describing the quality of their waters. Both New Jersey and Pennsylvania's departments of environmental protection are required to test waterways on the basis of designated uses, such as drinking, recreational, and industrial.

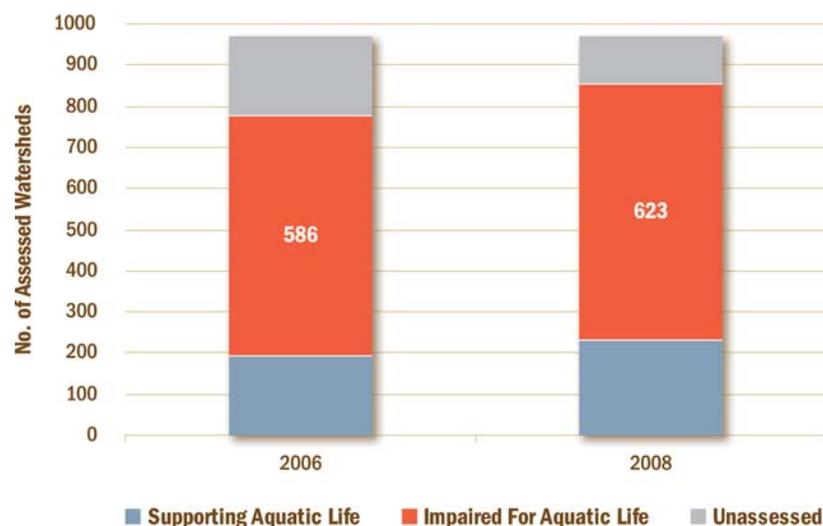
In the absence of consistent collection data and reporting methodology, in addition to the staggered process of identifying nonpoint sources of water pollution between New Jersey and Pennsylvania, DVRPC is not able to list all of the stream segments or subwatersheds that are detrimentally impacted by agriculture. Both states recognize that stormwater runoff and agriculture are the leading causes for water-quality impairments.

This indicator examines the ability of waterways to support aquatic life, one of the most basic determinants of the health of a waterway. If a waterway cannot support aquatic life, it is unhealthy for many additional uses, such as drinking water, recreation, and irrigation for agriculture.

In New Jersey (**Figure 2.3.1**), surface water data is collected at one or more testing sites and extrapolated for a subwatershed. Between 2006 and 2008, the number of testing sites and assessed watersheds increased, as did the number of watersheds that supported aquatic life. However, only 27% of the assessed subwatersheds could support aquatic life in 2008 (an increase from 24.7% in 2006). At the time of this writing, NJDEP had not released 2010 water-quality data.

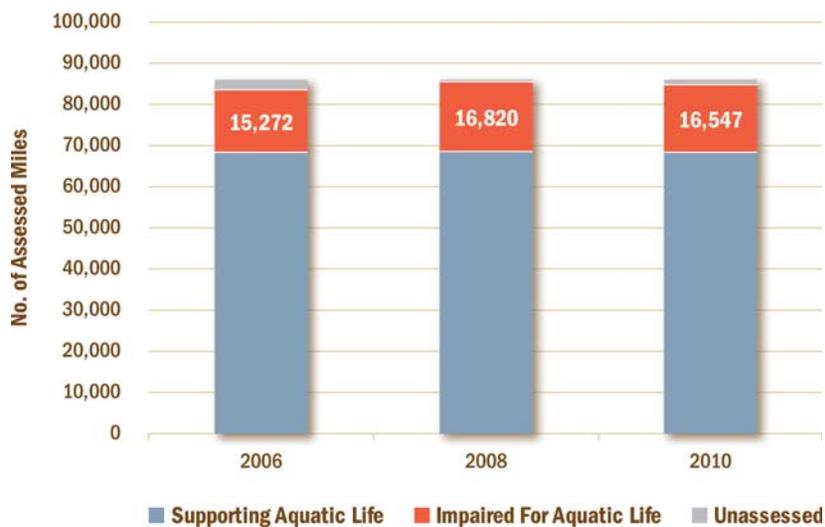
In Pennsylvania (**Figure 2.3.2**), data is reported by assessed river and stream miles. Pennsylvania has nearly 86,000 miles mapped and,

Figure 2.3.1: New Jersey Watersheds Supporting Aquatic Life (2006–2008)



Sources: NJDEP 2006, 2008

Figure 2.3.2: Pennsylvania River and Stream Miles Supporting Aquatic Life (2006–2010)



Sources: PADEP 2006, 2008, 2010.

like New Jersey, cannot test all miles.⁶ Some environmental advocates are critical of Pennsylvania’s testing methodology and suggest that data may be misleading. Between 2006 and 2008, more miles were reported as supporting aquatic life. In 2010, fewer miles were reported as supporting aquatic life, and fewer were assessed. In 2008, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) reported that 31% of all impaired miles were due to agricultural uses. In 2010, this number rose slightly to 32%. (Impairment causes for 2006 were not identified.)

⁶As a point of reference, New Jersey has 18,126 stream and river miles, and it shares an additional 197 miles with other states (i.e., Delaware River).

Indicator 4: Farmland Preservation

Agricultural land is a resource that is essential in a food system. The *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* found that 58% of the 100-Mile Foodshed’s agricultural land was lost to development between 1910 and 2007, yet 37% of all undeveloped land is considered important agricultural soil. Preserving the remaining farmland not only helps to maintain the agricultural industry, but it can encourage smarter development and efficient infrastructure investment decisions. The region benefits from the ecological services provided by working landscapes. A major goal of farmland preservation is to keep land available for future farmers. Additionally, many easements require landowners to retain the land’s high-quality agricultural soils, disallowing an activity that impacts the use of those soils.

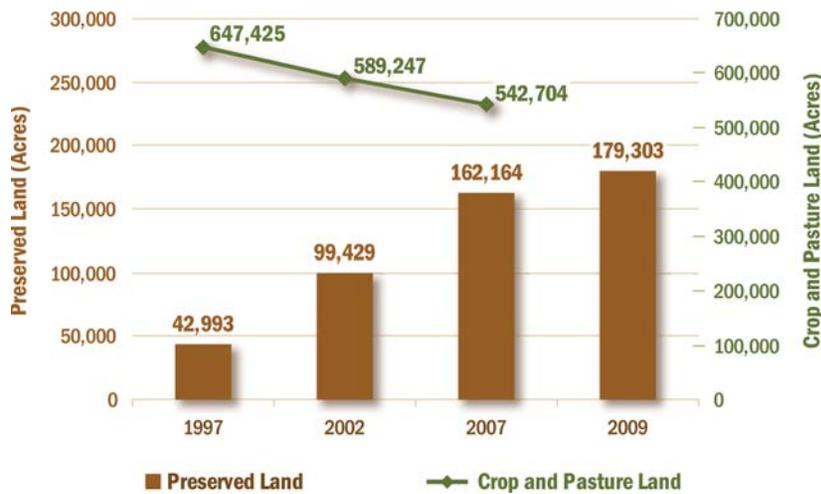


Preserved Farmland in New Jersey

Credit: Marci Green

Figure 2.4.1 and **Figure 2.4.2** compare the cumulative amount of farmland preserved and the remaining agricultural land available in the entire states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. From 1997 to 2009, the amount of permanently preserved farmland has increased by 304%. New Jersey has preserved proportionally more of its farmland than Pennsylvania, but Pennsylvania has preserved more acres in more developed counties, such as Chester and Montgomery counties, and counties with richer agricultural soils, such as Lancaster County.

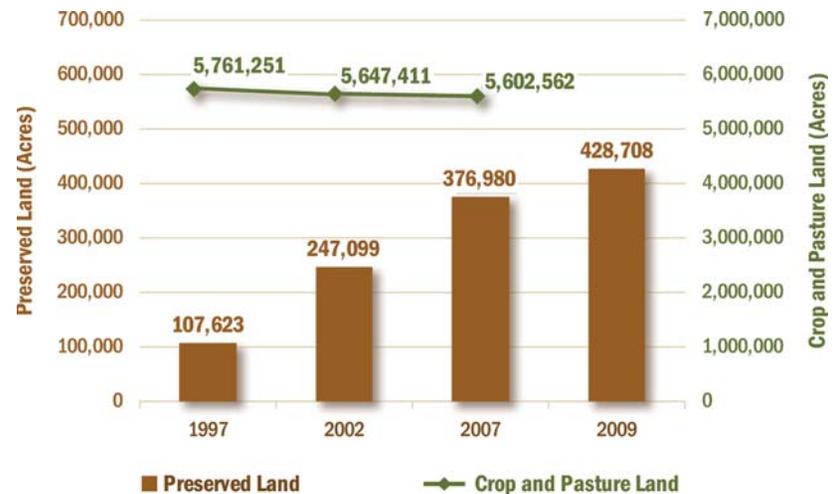
Figure 2.4.1: Amount of Permanently Preserved Farmland in New Jersey (1997–2009)



Sources: USDA 2009, NJDA 2010.

The pace at which each state is preserving farmland is nearly identical. This is probably reflective of the availability of funding. Both states have had large open space funding initiatives—Growing Greener in Pennsylvania and the Garden State Preservation Trust Fund in New Jersey. Farmland preservation may slow down in future years without additional bond funds or dedicated taxes. Long-term investments in preservation ensure the accumulation of contiguous blocks of preserved farmland, which encourages agricultural support businesses to stay in the area.

Figure 2.4.2: Amount of Permanently Preserved Farmland in Pennsylvania (1997–2009)



Sources: USDA 2009, PDA 2010.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The economy is the relationship between supply and demand. Since economic development can be fueled by changes in either supply or demand, indicators 5 and 6 evaluate both. Indicator 5 evaluates whether Greater Philadelphia's food economy is growing, especially compared to the overall regional economy. Indicator 6 measures the volatility of the price of healthy food items.

Indicator 5: Employment in the Food System

One measure of economic performance is the number of employees in a given economic sector. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), a division of the U.S. Department of Labor, publishes employment data on an ongoing basis for counties and states. While some data is available on a month-to-month basis, comprehensive data is only available in the form of an annualized average. To construct Indicator 5, DVRPC used annualized averages for each of the counties in the DVRPC region to assess employment levels in food-related industrial sectors, as identified

by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code. BLS suppresses some data when it fails to meet disclosure standards. Therefore, this indicator should be understood as a conservative estimate of overall food system employment.

Food production, transportation,⁷ warehousing, retail, and preparation provide jobs to individuals throughout Greater Philadelphia. From 2001 to 2008, total food-related employment increased each year, growing 4.4%, from 258,244 in 2001, to 269,546 in 2008 (see **Figure 2.5**). This compares to a 2.5% increase in overall employment in the same time period.

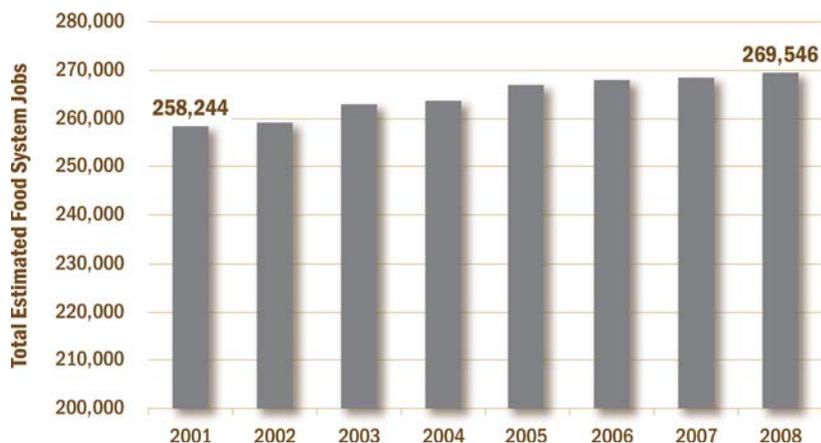
Jobs related to “food services and drinking places” make up the largest portion of all food-related employment. This sector has increased in prominence, from 52.8% of all food-related employment in 2001 to 56.6% in 2008.

The second largest portion of food-related employment is within the “food and beverage retail” category. Food and beverage manufacturing makes up the third largest portion of food-related employment, although its prominence has eroded over time. Between 2001 and 2008, food manufacturing lost 6,366 jobs (20.8% decrease), on par with the 23.4% decrease in all manufacturing jobs in Greater Philadelphia, meaning that food manufacturing is similarly threatened by global competition and the high costs of doing business as are other types of manufacturing.

As many policymakers and economic development professionals see food as an opportunity to create more jobs and nurture community

⁷ 14% of all truck transportation employment is used as a proxy for the total number of employees employed in the transport of food by truck.

Figure 2.5: Food Sector Employment in Greater Philadelphia (2001–2008)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010.

revitalization, analyzing trends in both overall employment and within food sectors can inform strategies and public policy.

There are limitations to this data. While available data reveals that 10% of the 2,578,662 jobs in Greater Philadelphia are in the food sector, it is important to note that this is a conservative estimate. First, due to disclosure standards, many jobs within a small NAICS code cannot be reported on the county level. Second, many food-related jobs are not uniquely documented by NAICS codes. For instance, NAICS codes do not identify food scientists, nutritionists, or advocates separately. Third, nonestimated data is only available through 2008, so more recent changes in employment are not shown. Fourth, many food-related jobs are part of the informal economy and are not counted by the BLS. These jobs may consist of entrepreneurs starting a new business or workers

receiving untaxed pay in cash. DVRPC estimates that the food sector may account for up to 30% of all full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in a given geographic area, such as Philadelphia (a city with a high concentration of food manufacturing and eating and drinking places) or Chester County (a county with a high concentration of agricultural jobs). And lastly, employment figures indicate little about the quality of jobs or wage levels available to individuals employed in the food system. Indicator 10: Increase in Food and Farmworker Wages provides information about wage levels for select food-sector occupations.

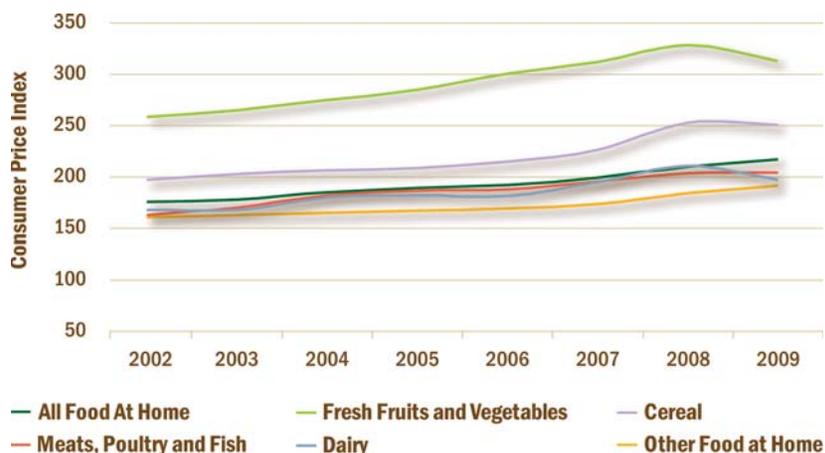
Indicator 6: Affordability of Healthy Food

BLS also publishes the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which tracks the price of specific goods and services in urban areas and approximates changes in the cost of living on a monthly basis. **Figure 2.6** demonstrates CPI volatility of selected food items, specifically the change in price from the previous year. CPI data is only available at a national level and is not available regionally for these food items.

Food, and especially fresh food items such as meat and dairy, shows extreme price volatility from year to year. In terms of volatility, food prices (particularly cereals) generally follow changes in gas prices, as demonstrated by the drastic increase in most food prices between 2007 and 2008.

The CPI for almost all selected food items increased between 2002 and 2008. Fresh fruits and vegetables have consistently been higher than all other food categories. Throughout this time period, other food at home (processed food) has remained the least expensive. This seems illogical since food processing requires additional labor, additional energy inputs, and possibly more transportation. The CPI for processed foods suggests that the production of refined foods benefits from both farm subsidies and industrial economies of scale, among other factors.

Figure 2.6: Affordability of Healthy Food in the United States (2002–2009)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010.

In 2009, the CPI for all consumer goods and services actually fell for the first time since 1955. Food was no different. Prices for dairy, fresh fruits and vegetables, and cereal fell between 2008 and 2009. Prices for “meats, poultry and fish” and “other food at home” (processed foods) increased modestly between 2008 and 2009.



HEALTH



The Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee recognizes that a sustainable and resilient food system is one in which the region’s residents are healthy and have access to a range of food choices. While eating patterns are influenced by a variety of factors, including culture, marketing, knowledge, time, and other resources, price is one of the major determinants of food choices. To see if people are making changes in their diet, Indicator 7 tracks what type of food items Americans are purchasing. Indicator 8 measures one of the best overall diet-related health indicators: the incidence of obesity.

Indicator 7: The Region’s Healthy Food Purchases

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) collects household expenditure data to estimate what Americans purchase and eat. Using household expenditure data for food purchased for consumption

at home, fruit and vegetable expenditures can serve as a proxy for healthy food purchases. **Figure 2.7** shows the breakdown of “food at home” expenditures for the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area.

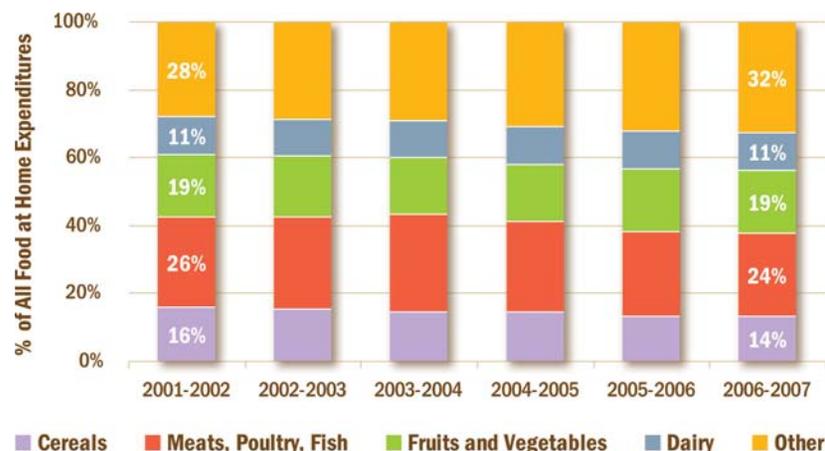
Specifically, this indicator measures whether the proportion of grocery expenditures for fruits and vegetables has increased, and if the proportion of expenditures for “other” food (processed, prepared, and frozen food) has decreased.

Between 2001 and 2007, the percentage spent on fruits and vegetables has remained steady, at approximately 19% of total “food at home” expenditures, but the proportion spent on “other food” increased steadily, from 28% to 32%, in the same time period. Meanwhile, meat and cereal decreased, becoming a smaller share, by cost, of overall “food at home” expenditures.



Produce for sale at the Fair Food Farmstand at Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia, PA
Credit: Harry P. Hunt

Figure 2.7: Food at Home for the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area (2001–2007)



Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2009.

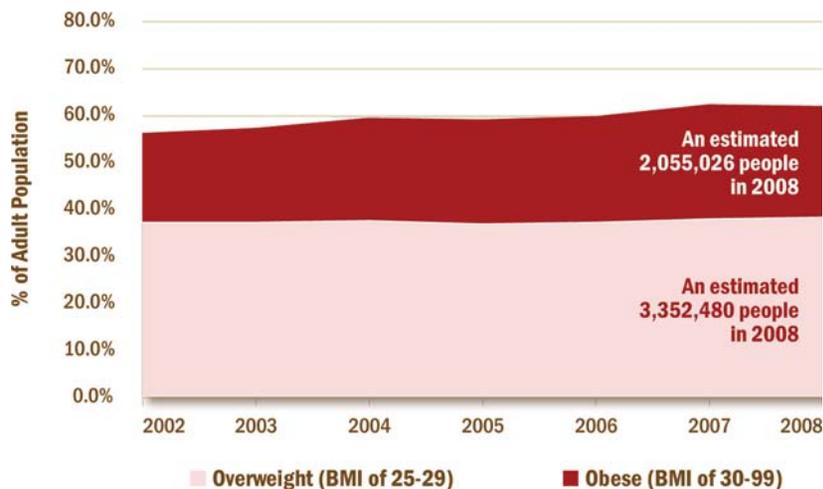
Indicator 8: Health of the Region’s Residents

As many preventable diseases are diet-related, the prevalence of obesity and being overweight in the adult population is an adequate measure of the general health of the region’s residents. As the population’s individual eating habits change and improve, the prevalence of obese and overweight adults should also change and improve.

Throughout the United States, the percentage of the population that is overweight and obese has been increasing dramatically over the past 20 years. These same trends are reflected in our region, although at slightly different rates.

New Jersey’s proportion of obesity and overweight is demonstrated in **Figure 2.8.1**. In 2008, 62% of the population was overweight or

Figure 2.8.1: Rates of Obesity and Overweight in New Jersey's Adult Population (2002–2008)

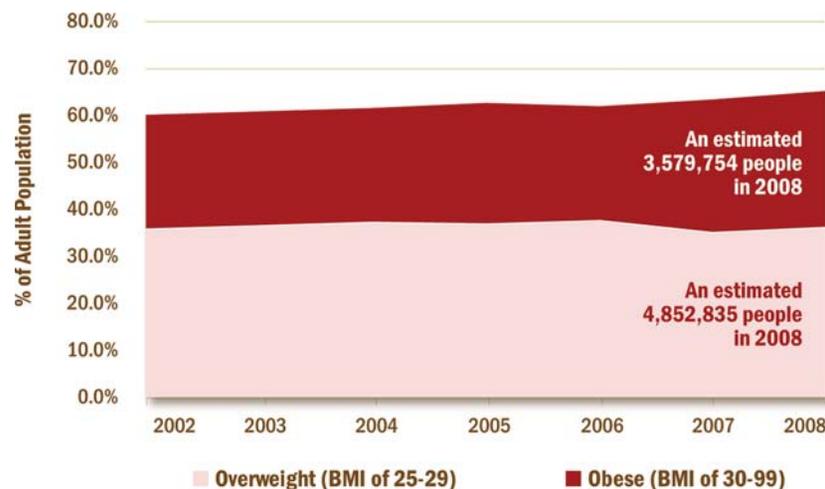


Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2009.

obese. That is an increase from 2002, when 56% of the population was overweight or obese.

In Pennsylvania (**Figure 2.8.2**), there is a similar proportion of people that are obese or overweight. The rate within the state is also increasing. In 2008, 64% of the population was overweight or obese. In 1995, over 53% were overweight or obese.

Figure 2.8.2: Rates of Obesity and Overweight in Pennsylvania's Adult Population (2002–2008)



Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2009.



FAIRNESS

Many argue that hunger exists due to unfairness in the marketplace, society, and governmental policies, among many other causes. Despite consistent increases in food production and farm yields since the 1950s, over one billion people suffer from malnutrition worldwide, and millions of people suffer from hunger in the United States. The following fairness indicators were chosen to represent fairness to the consumer and the worker. Indicator 9 measures the number of households that suffer from food insecurity. Indicator 10 compares the hourly wages for food and farmworkers in relation to overall wage trends.

Indicator 9: Food Insecurity

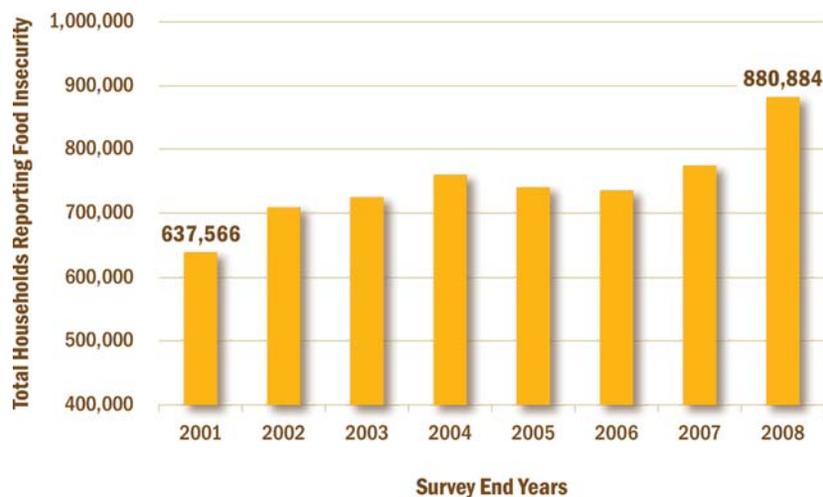
DVRPC and many food system stakeholders define food insecurity as a person or household not knowing where their next meal is coming from. Since 1995, the USDA's Economic Research Service has monitored household food security through an annual survey conducted by the U.S.

Census Bureau and aggregated to the state level. The survey asks a number of questions about experiences and behaviors. Food insecurity is determined by the number of "food-insecure conditions" reported. These conditions include being unable to afford balanced meals or cutting or skipping meals due to a lack of money and other resources. Data is then averaged over a time period of three years.

During the time period of 2006 to 2008, an average of 10.3% of all households in New Jersey experienced food insecurity. In Pennsylvania, the 2006 to 2008 average was 11.2%. The combined prevalence in food insecure households for both states is depicted in **Figure 2.9**.

Both states have seen a large increase (38.2%) in the number of households suffering from food insecurity between 2001 and 2008.

Figure 2.9: Combined Household Food Insecurity in New Jersey and Pennsylvania (2001–2008)



Source: USDA, 2009.

Pennsylvania has experienced a slightly larger increase in the number of food insecure households over the time period, but New Jersey has experienced the sharpest increase of food insecurity between the survey periods ending in 2007 and 2008.

While the release of data is delayed due to surveying, the rise in food insecurity is undoubtedly due to a worsening economy and the growing gap between low-income and upper-income groups. Indicator 9 reveals the inability of the food system to reliably meet the needs of over 880,000 households in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and over 17 million households nationally.



Garden rows at Mill Creek Farm – a farm dedicated to bringing food security to an urban neighborhood in Philadelphia, PA

Credit: DVRPC

Indicator 10: Increase in Food and Farmworker Wages

Food and farmworkers plant, harvest, process, prepare, distribute, and sell the food we eat. It is important that they have fair and decent working conditions and earn enough to afford food and other necessities

for their families. Indicator 10 measures the changes in food and farmworkers' hourly wage, based on data collected by the BLS for all occupations and selected food occupations.⁸

The data show that between 2002 and 2008, total wages have increased in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with a 20% increase in all wages (**Figures 2.10.1** and **2.10.2**). However, food system workers are still paid significantly lower wages. Among the selected food occupations, there are wage differences between distribution (higher skills, possibly requiring special training or certification) and food preparation (lower skills, requiring relatively little training).

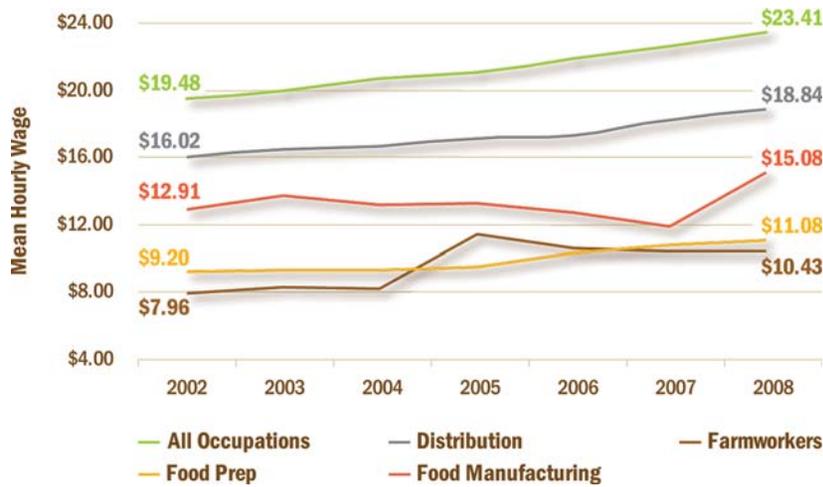
Looking at the two states, Pennsylvania has a lower than average hourly wage compared to New Jersey in all but one category: farmworkers (\$10.43 in New Jersey compared to \$11.11 in Pennsylvania). However, farmworker wages increased more quickly in New Jersey: 31% between 2002 and 2008, compared to only 20% in Pennsylvania during that same time period.

According to the Social Security Administration, a living wage in 2009 would be \$10.31 per hour for employees with health benefits, and \$11.57 for employees without benefits. According to PathWays PA, a self-sufficient living wage ranges from \$10.13 to \$25.90, depending on household size and additional assistance (i.e., SNAP, child support, or state-sponsored health insurance for children).⁹

⁸Self-employed farmers are not included in BLS estimates.

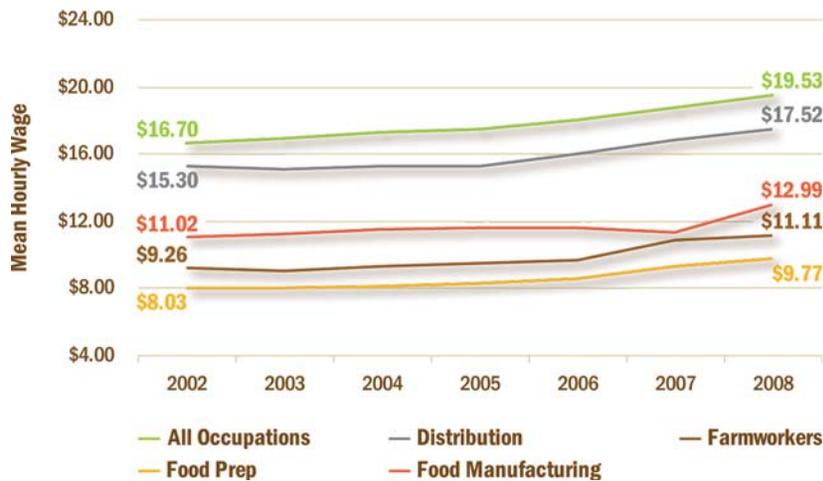
⁹Pearce, Diana M., University of Washington School of Social Work. *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Pennsylvania 2010-2011*. (Holmes, PA: PathWays PA, May 2010).

Figure 2.10.1: Changes in Hourly Wages in New Jersey (2002–2008)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010.

Figure 2.10.2: Changes in Hourly Wages in Pennsylvania (2002–2008)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010.



COLLABORATION



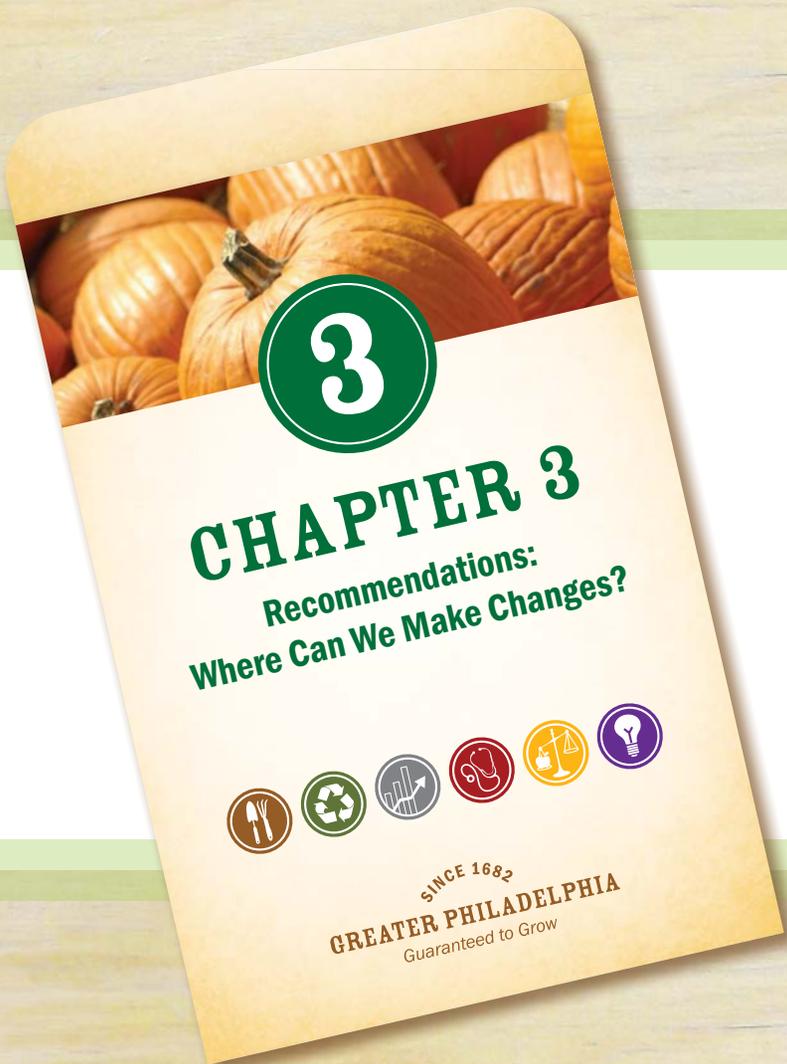
As previously mentioned, collaboration is hard to measure empirically. Therefore, the category of Collaboration does not have a separate set of indicators. The 10 preceding indicators highlight recent trends in sustainable agriculture, ecological stewardship and conservation, economic development, health, and fairness. Taken together, they provide a holistic picture of the current regional food system and establish a baseline for the future.

Because the food system is complicated, with lots of intersecting parts, what happens in one part can affect the other parts. Similarly, an intervention focused in one area of the food system may shift one or more indicators. Progress in any of these areas or within an indicator can signify that the region and its stakeholders are working more effectively together toward numerous goals.

Figure 2.11: Summary of Food System Indicators

 Negative	 Slightly Negative	 Neutral	 Slightly Positive	 Positive	Explanation
					The future of Farming and Sustainable Agriculture in and around Greater Philadelphia is threatened as, exhibited by fewer acres of land in agricultural production and more farms operating with deficits.
					While the region continues to lead the nation in farmland preservation, much work is still needed to improve Ecological Stewardship and Conservation . Water quality continues to degrade.
					On the positive side, the “local food” and “healthy food” movements are recognized as Economic Development strategies at both the local and national levels. And while healthy foods tend to be more expensive than processed foods, people continue to purchase healthy foods if they have reliable access to them.
					The region’s overall Health continues to decline despite the public’s growing awareness of diet-related diseases.
					Efforts to abate hunger and improve Fairness in the food system are making positive impacts; however, an increasing number of households are suffering from food insecurity and food system workers’ wages, while rising in the last few years, continue to be far below living wage and self-sufficiency standards.
					While hard to measure, stakeholders report increased Collaboration among many different organizations and across political jurisdictions. Many people are recognizing the importance of working together to make the region more economically competitive.

Source: DVRPC, 2011.



D VRPC's *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* evaluated the complicated regional food system that feeds Greater Philadelphia. This evolution has been followed up by a stakeholder-driven planning process. The Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee has identified its core values and a collective vision for a more sustainable food system. Indicators have been identified to measure the region's progress toward a sustainable and resilient food system. An analysis of the indicators can reveal an opportunity for intervention or a recommendation.

All actors in the food system, from a policymaker to a farmer, from a trucker to the value-added processor, from a store owner to a consumer, have roles to play in moving these food system indicators toward a more sustainable and resilient food system.

In order to incorporate the important work that other organizations and experts have already undertaken, DVRPC reviewed approximately 50 food system plans, planning guides, and policy statements. Additionally, DVRPC drew upon the stakeholder survey it undertook in the summer of 2008, plus ongoing conversations with stakeholders and partners. From this, DVRPC created a list of over 700 recommendations. These recommendations were synthesized into approximately 100 recommendations and further refined and prioritized through an online survey and facilitated small group discussions. The final plan contains 52 recommendations. While comprehensiveness is important, as the food system is extremely complicated, affecting every person in the world, these plan's recommendations reflect the Committee's priorities for the national food system and Greater Philadelphia's regional food system at a specific period in time. In order for the plan to be palatable, some of the original 100 recommendations were consolidated, while others that appeared to be low priorities for the Committee were not included.

For each value area, a top recommendation, prioritized by the Stakeholder Committee, is identified, with an explanation of the need and possible implementation strategies. Many more recommendations follow, organized by: (a) **Top Recommendation**, (b) **Policy Reforms**, (c) **Expand Existing Efforts**, and (d) **New Approaches and Innovations**. These recommendations range from relatively minor policy changes to major legislative reforms, and from rewriting local ordinances to undertaking large community-based projects.

While the recommendations that follow were developed by the Stakeholder Committee and will primarily be implemented by organizations on the Stakeholder Committee, DVRPC adopted the following policies In *Connections: The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future*, published in December 2009, which will guide the Commission's ongoing food system planning efforts:¹⁰

- Enhance coordination between all food system stakeholders, ranging from the private sector to the public sector, from local food advocates to hunger relief organizations, from farmland preservation coordinators to economic development agencies, in order to collaborate on solutions for the evolving food system.
- Incorporate farming and food into economic development policies and funding programs in recognition of the fact that the food system accounts for 10 to 30% of all economic activities within the region.
- Forge partnerships between land trusts, public agencies, and future farmers to increase food production on protected lands within the region.
- Facilitate local food production and distribution in rural, suburban, and urban areas through supportive land use ordinances.

DVRPC will work to achieve these goals and policies by convening the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee on a regular basis, working with municipal and county constituents on food system planning projects, and working with stakeholder organizations to pursue implementation opportunities as they arise.

¹⁰ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, *Connections: The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future* (Philadelphia: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, December 2009).



FARMING and SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Experts estimate that as much as half of all the country's farmland will change hands in the next 10 to 15 years.¹¹ Many factors influence a farm's transition from one owner to the next or from agricultural production to another use. Those factors include family situations, tax laws, land prices, viability of the farming industry, access to education and training programs, financing, and retirement planning. Recognizing that there are many federal, state, county, and municipal policies and programs trying to address some of these factors, this section offers a range of recommendations, from slight changes in policy to entirely new approaches, to encourage farming to remain in and around Greater Philadelphia.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Affordable Farmland

Maintain affordable land for farmers through a range of potential innovations and new business models. These include addressing the retirement needs of farmers, identifying opportunities to transition preserved land into food production, and creating investment vehicles for long-term agricultural production on preserved land.

As development pressure increases, land values increase, and the need to preserve farmland also increases. Conversely, farmers need access to less expensive land because agriculture is land-intensive, has slim margins for profitability, and is subject to extreme fluctuations in prices.

Farmland preservation originated as a growth management technique in the 1960s as state and local governments saw an explosion of suburban development. Farmland preservation, and protection of other types of open space, is an investment made today for continued use in the future.

Both New Jersey and Pennsylvania are models for state farmland preservation programs. New Jersey's program is one of the oldest in the country, started in 1985, while Pennsylvania's program has protected the most acres of any state-level program.¹²

¹¹American Farmland Trust, "Farming on the Edge Report," www.farmland.org/resources/fote/default.asp (accessed May 5, 2009).

¹²Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Agriculture, "Easement Purchase," www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_2_24476_10297_0_43/http%3B/10.41.0.36/AgWebsite/ProgramDetail.aspx?name=Easement-Purchase-&navid=12&parentnavid=0&palid=11 (accessed August 2, 2010).

Farmland preservation reduces the land's development potential, and therefore reduces its resale value, theoretically making it more affordable for farming in the future. While significant amounts of farmland are preserved, farmers, especially new or young farmers, have expressed frustration in gaining access to preserved farmland, as well as unpreserved farmland. In New Jersey, specifically, the sale price of a preserved farm can be nearly as high as the sale price of a farm with development potential. Some consider this good for a farmer who needs to maintain financial equity in his or her farm, while others consider this bad for a new farmer looking to access land in an expensive and suburbanizing area.

A new model of land preservation that seeks to maximize the financial return on agricultural production in the present rather than on unrealized development potential may allow for more land preserved and more agricultural production on currently preserved land. Additionally, if the traditional model of owner-operator changes, than new farmers can enter the profession without a huge outlay of capital. Several land trusts anecdotally report that a few nonfarming landowners have leased land at lower rates in exchange for services on the farm, such as invasive weed control. See *Recommendations in Action* regarding **Using Preserved Land for Agricultural Production**.

POLICY REFORMS

Property Tax

States should explore tax policies that provide additional tax relief and incentives for agriculture that produces fresh food for local markets.

Preferential farmland assessment can sometimes lead to the proliferation of hobby farms and country estates. Because of the low monetary threshold to claim farmland assessment—\$500 of agricultural sales for production on five acres or more in New Jersey—large landowners have an incentive to take land out of intense agricultural production and transition it to hay production. Raising the minimum sales requirement could encourage more fresh fruit and vegetable production, as well as row crop production.

Urban Agriculture Block Grant

As more cities, such as Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia, become interested in urban agriculture for its food production and job creation potential, environmental benefits, and impact on neighborhood stabilization and revitalization, more federal funding programs should explicitly include urban agriculture opportunities as eligible activities.

Since 1974, the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has provided annual grants on a formula basis to approximately 1,200 local and state governments. These funds can be used for a myriad of purposes, including acquisition of property, relocation and demolition, rehabilitation of buildings, energy conservation activities, and job creation and retention activities. If allowed and promoted among CDBG recipients, the development of urban agriculture would complement these uses, assisting in site acquisition and preparation, and workforce recruitment and training.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

Using Preserved Land for Agricultural Production

Finding affordable land and financing is often a challenge for new and beginning farmers, as well as established farmers hoping to expand. In Greater Philadelphia's suburban areas, this is especially true. A 2010 study by Temple University's Fox School of Business put the average cost of an acre of land in southeastern Pennsylvania at \$45,200. According to this study, the mortgage costs in Greater Philadelphia's suburban areas generally exceed the profits most farms could expect to make from year to year. Thus, the outright purchase of land on which traditional models of farm finance are based is nearly impossible. The study found that leasing can be more profitable for the farmer and provide landowners with steady sources of income and sustainable land management.

With support from a DVRPC Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grant, the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) will launch the pilot of an innovative program to increase the supply of land available for sustainable farming in Greater Philadelphia, and foster new farming models based on leasing and shared benefits. Partners in the pilot project include a team from Temple University's Fox School of Business MBA program, PA FarmLink, the Chester County Economic Development Council, and The Reinvestment Fund.

Developed to enhance the existing Pennsylvania FarmLink program, PASA's "Farming Futures" initiative will tie together the dual needs of farmers for land and capital. This new fee-based service will identify lands suitable for sustainable farming and work with landowners, including land trusts, to make these properties available to farmers seeking to lease. This will build a "land bank" of properties available for sustainable agricultural use. Farming Futures will work with farmers and landowners to establish appropriate leasing terms that allow farmers to build equity in a business operation and obtain affordable financing.

Farmers will benefit from the availability of a wider array of affordable land, while landowners can benefit from lease income. Some landowners, particularly land trusts, can join with farmers to pursue common goals, such as protection of open space and preservation of environmental resources.

The pilot will focus on the Pennsylvania counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery. With success, PASA hopes to eventually expand the effort statewide. PASA will seek participation from a wide variety of landholders, including corporations and private institutions that can lease portions of their campuses that are suitable for sustainable agriculture.

Access to Capital

Encourage more institutions to lend to agricultural and food businesses, including part-time farmers, urban farmers, and entrepreneurs with little equity.

Many commercial banks and mission-driven investment organizations are taking an interest in food systems and sustainable agriculture. Obstacles stand in the way of investing in and financing agriculture, particularly nontraditional agriculture. A W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food and Community Program workshop series in 2010 identified a number of barriers, including insufficient borrower capital or poor credit histories and difficulty in communicating production knowledge, management experience, and profitability potential. Additionally, farmers on leased land cannot use land as collateral. The Kellogg Foundation program recommended the development of a “scorecard” that could offer borrowers and lenders a common language through which to understand profitability and manage risk. They also suggested that the most successful lending programs are accompanied by technical assistance.

Locally, The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) is developing a program to address gaps in the finance system. Financing could be made available to farmers and other food producers and processors for equipment purchases, construction, the development of new retail outlets, and increased working capital.

Farm Credit, a nationwide system started by Congress in 1916 to provide capital to agricultural operations, is also introducing more innovative programs to serve young, beginning, and minority farmers. However, current legislation prohibits Farm Credit from making more loans to different kinds of agriculture-related businesses.

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Community Planning

Local governments and farmers “should work together to ensure that communities maintain affordable farmland, adopt farm-friendly planning policies and zoning ordinances, improve the environment, and work toward food security and food system resiliency.”

—Julia Freedgood, American Farmland Trust, guest speaker at a Stakeholder Committee meeting

There are many reasons why local governments should address food system issues. Food system activities make up a large percentage of land use in certain communities and create economic value. Access to affordable, safe, fresh, and healthy food is a benefit to residents. Integrating sustainable food production into communities makes them more livable, strengthens the local economy, and can improve the natural environment. However, many farmers, local food advocates, public health professionals, and food justice activists lament that local government—municipalities, counties, and states—inadvertently creates barriers for farmers, small business owners, and entrepreneurs as well as retail outlets. (Recommendations that address public health and food access are included in the upcoming sections on **Health** and **Fairness**.)

DVRPC recently published *Municipal Implementation Tool Brochure #18: Food System Planning*, a primer for municipalities interested in using their home-rule authority and community programs to strengthen their local food systems. In urbanized and suburbanized communities, appropriately scaled agriculture can be made a permissible use in all zoning districts. More suburbanizing communities can complete an open-space and farmland preservation plan and then adopt cluster

design or conservation design ordinances to preserve large connected areas of agricultural land. Rural municipalities and counties should provide adequate shoulder widths on rural roadways to increase safety for motorized agricultural equipment and for nonmotorized vehicles used by Plain Sect communities.

Additional tools include right-to-farm ordinances, effective agricultural zoning, growth boundaries aligned with water and sewer service areas, “rural business” zones (see the **Economic Development** Recommendations section), and zoning ordinances that allow nonfarm businesses on a property while maintaining the primary agricultural use.

County Cooperative Extensions

County Cooperative Extensions should continue to increase programming around local food, small farms, fruit and vegetable farming, and urban agriculture.

Land grant universities have a long history of translating academic research into pragmatic applications for regional producers. Greater Philadelphia is served by the Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Additionally, Greater Philadelphia has several colleges, such as Delaware Valley College, that award degrees in agriculture and related fields. All of these academic institutions are broadening their community outreach efforts and many have created research centers and affiliated organizations that engage the agricultural, nutrition, food business, and food policy communities.

As the Greater Philadelphia region has urbanized, extension programs have changed. Penn State now offers specialized advice on a regional basis. For example a horticultural and landscaping expert may now

serve eight counties, instead of just one county. In New Jersey, many county extensions focus on “master gardening” rather than agricultural production. The Philadelphia County office of the Penn State Extension is constantly changing its curriculum and has hired local food system experts, responding to a desire by area farmers and community gardeners for extension services that address their needs.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, a service of USDA with field offices throughout each state, offers technical and financial assistance to farmers and landowners who engage in natural resource conservation. This assistance includes conservation planning and help in accessing an array of federal programs, as well as improving a farm’s operation, such as helping a farmer transition to organic production methods.

State Farm Link Programs

New Jersey and Pennsylvania should expand programs that match interested farmers with interested landowners or retiring farmers.

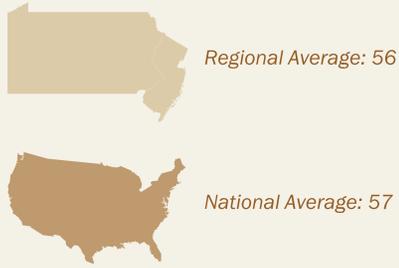
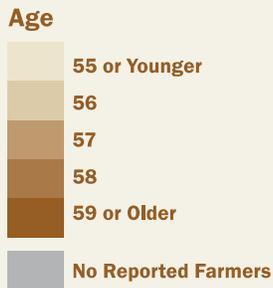
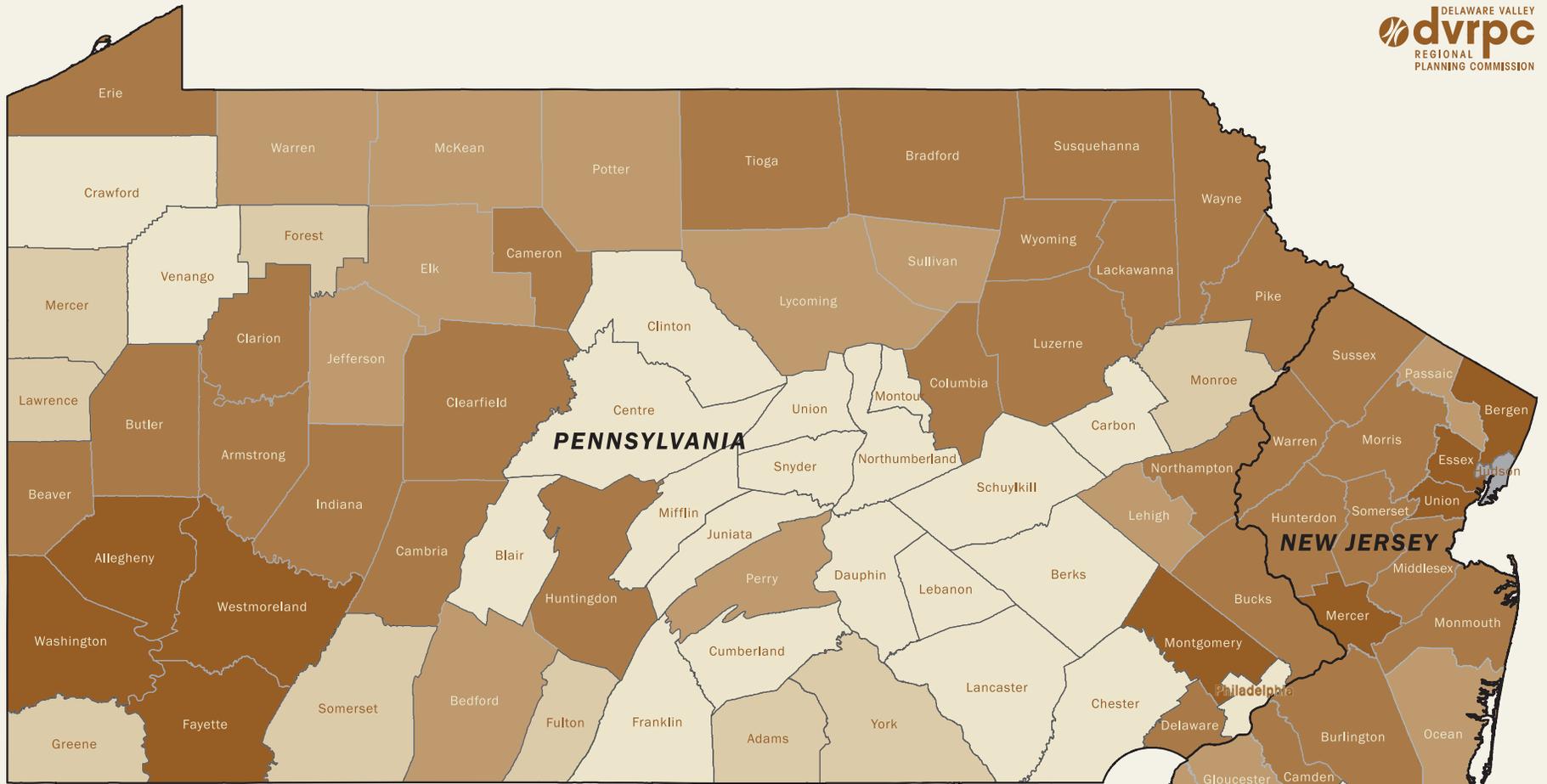
Both the New Jersey and Pennsylvania departments of agriculture offer “farm link” programs, which aim to connect retiring farmers with new or established farmers looking to lease or buy land. While each state maintains websites with information about workshops, estate planning, or listings of land opportunities, many young, beginning, and minority farmers, particularly in urban or suburban communities, state that there is not enough guidance or occasions to connect with established farmers looking for successors. A possible solution is to more closely tie young and beginning farmer educational programs with succession planning efforts focused on established and aging farmers. See **Figure 3.1: Average Age of Farmers (2007)** for an illustration of Pennsylvania and New Jersey’s aging farmers.



EATING HERE

GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

FIGURE 3.1: AVERAGE AGE OF FARMERS (2007)



Sources: USDA NASS, ESRI

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

401(k)s for Farmers

Start or expand individual development accounts that reward farmers for their years of hard work and sustainable practices by creating retirement plans for farmers.

According to Pennsylvania FarmLink, 69% of the state's farmers thinking about farm succession—passing the farm on to another farmer—are not planning to fully retire.¹³ Of those that plan to fully or semiretire, many rely on their land as a retirement account. This has led to many farmers selling their land to whichever buyer can pay the most, which can often mean that it is taken out of agricultural use.

Like other independent business proprietors, many farmers put their income back into their farm operations, acquiring land, paying down their mortgage, paying back loans, or making equipment purchases. At least half of all farmers have not created or contributed to a retirement account. According to a report conducted by Temple's Fox School of Business on behalf of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), farmers indicated a preference for investing in land instead of a retirement account.¹⁴

Because financial equity is not tied to the business operation, client base, or knowledge base, a farmer's equity is in his or her land, encouraging a farmer to maximize the price he or she can get for the land, whether or not the buyer is another agricultural producer.

¹³ Pennsylvania FarmLink, "Farm Succession Survey Results, 2010," www.pafarmlink.org/survey.html (accessed June 24, 2010).

¹⁴ Abhishek Desai, et al., *Market Research: PASA*. (Philadelphia: Temple University, Fox School of Business, January 2010).

A government-sponsored retirement account, similar to a defined-contributions program, could enable farmers to comfortably retire and sell their land for a reduced value. A retirement program may also attract more highly educated beginning farmers into the agricultural sector, providing the profession with financial stability similar to public service or white-collar careers.

Farmland preservation Installment Purchase Agreements (IPAs) can also offer a long payout, with interest. Additional incentives could encourage farmers to save payments in retirement accounts. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized a pilot Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Account program, which could help new farmers purchase land by providing them with savings accounts, in which every dollar they save is supplemented by one to two dollars in matching funds. Though authorized, this program has not yet been funded. However, this proposed program does not directly address the needs of retiring farmers, who presumably will still rely on cashing out their land.



Large Farm in Pennsylvania

Credit: Jim Auchinlenk

Partners in Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture professionals and the antihunger community should build partnerships with property owners and businesses to develop new community gardens and commercial urban agriculture projects on underutilized lands of all types and in various locations.

DVRPC's surveying effort conducted in the summer of 2008 revealed that there are many challenges in providing local foods that are affordable and in ensuring that farmers receive reasonable prices for their products. Despite the challenges, several organizations are undertaking efforts to marry local production with food access, specifically focusing on the cultivation of underutilized (and mostly vacant or abandoned) lands in urban areas.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is working with numerous organizations, including the SHARE Food Program and others, to distribute food grown in community gardens to local food banks in a project called City Harvest. Community gardeners who receive plant seedlings grow and donate a portion of their produce to SHARE. SHARE distributes the harvested fruits and vegetables to food banks. In 2008, the volunteer program produced more than 20,000 pounds of fresh food.

In 2009, PHS received a USDA Community Food Project grant to expand the project and support more entrepreneurial gardening efforts through the City Harvest Growers Alliance. Participants will have access to PHS's "green centers," borrowing tools, receiving plant starts, and using compost and other gardening materials. Participants can sell their produce and are required to donate a portion to City Harvest for distribution to a local food bank. Through the *Greater Philadelphia Food*

System Implementation Grants, DVRPC is supporting two partnerships to grow new urban farming ventures. SHARE and PHS are partners on providing support to community gardeners interested in becoming entrepreneurial growers. Weavers Way Community Programs is partnering with Stenton Manor (a homeless shelter) to explore expanding a small garden into a larger urban agriculture operation.

Similarly, urban agriculture as an economic industry or professional sector is growing. In 2007, the Philadelphia Urban Farm Network was started as an email listserv to share resources, information, and event announcements. In 2010, many members saw a need to meet in person and discuss the future of farming in the City of Philadelphia and other nearby urbanized areas. Participants are actively looking for more land to farm and advocating for the city to adopt supportive policies and make more land available for entrepreneurial efforts. In 2011, Isles, Inc., will hold a conference for municipal officials regarding how communities can encourage, support, and benefit from urban agriculture projects.

The success of the City Harvest collaboration and the growing interest in entrepreneurial urban farming are evidence of a need and desire to put more land into agricultural production. While much vacant land is available in cities, even more underutilized land is available in nearby suburban areas. The Stakeholder Committee recommends that urban agriculture projects and community gardens be undertaken in collaboration with large landowners, such as owners of suburban office parks. Other allies may include commercial landscape companies that manage contracts with large institutional, commercial, and industrial landowners and neighborhood or homeowners associations that are interested in both beautifying their surroundings, creating new income streams, and supporting community-building efforts.



ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP and CONSERVATION



At the root of nearly all definitions of environmental sustainability is the idea that humans must be responsible stewards of the environment to ensure that future generations may enjoy health, wealth, and stability. This section explores recommendations that balance market-based solutions with government subsidies, and that increase governmental regulations while removing policy barriers.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Natural Resource Protection

“Develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources.”

—Elizabeth Ciuzio, New Jersey Audubon Society, guest speaker at a Stakeholder Committee Meeting

Market-based solutions can complement government regulations and subsidies to provide a more well-rounded approach to natural resource protection. The New Jersey Audubon Society’s partnership with local farmers to grow sunflower seed is an example of market-based conservation. NJAS purchases seed from farmers participating in a land conservation program and markets it as bird seed under a “local” brand. This new arrangement provides in-state farmers with a new market and simultaneously creates and preserves habitat for endangered grassland birds, as one acre of grassland habitat is planted for every five acres in sunflower production. New Jersey is a major stop on the Atlantic Flyway for a huge variety of birds, including grassland-dependent species, making this conservation even more important.

Market-based solutions can provide land managers and owners with additional incentives to consider native wildlife in their farm plans, in recognition of the critical role this wildlife plays in local ecosystems. This supports the unique role that agricultural lands can play in sustaining the region’s biodiversity.

POLICY REFORMS

Ecological Compensation

Pay farmers for the ecosystem services they provide, such as carbon sequestration and groundwater recharge.

Natural and working landscapes (farms) perform many environmental benefits that society often takes for granted. A recent study released by the GreenSpace Alliance and DVRPC detailed the economic benefits of protected open space in southeastern Pennsylvania. The study looked at various types of protected open space, from trails to preserved farmland, and found that southeastern Pennsylvania has saved \$133 million in environmental costs. Many farmers, practicing different types of agriculture, provide a myriad of ecological services, such as water supply provisions, flood mitigation, wildlife habitat, and carbon sequestration. According to the study, preserved land provides ecosystem functions that, if lost, would require costly measures to replicate.¹⁵

Congress recessed for the final time in 2010 without passing legislation to establish a “cap-and-trade” system to control greenhouse gas emissions. A bill introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, H. R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, passed in June 2009, but failed to gain the support it needed in the U.S. Senate. It contained a number of provisions that would have allowed farmers to benefit financially from the ecological services they provide.

¹⁵ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, The Economic Value of Protected Open Space in Southeastern Pennsylvania. (Philadelphia: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, First Edition November 2010), www.dvrpc.org/openspace/value/pdf/OpenSpaceReport-FirstEdition.pdf.

Agriculture would not have been a regulated sector under the cap-and-trade system established by the House bill, and therefore farmers would not have to obtain allowances to cover emissions from agricultural operations. However, they would have been allowed to trade in allowances and offsets.

Offsets, financial instruments to regulate industries such as energy producers, can be purchased to compensate for greenhouse gas emissions and are a potential source of revenue for farmers. Farmers could engage in activities eligible for offsets and then sell those offsets in an open market. The house-passed bill stated that offsets would have been offered for agricultural activities that “reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon.” Reforestation, no-till practices, cover cropping, reduction of nitrogen fertilizer use, and conservation of grassland, among many other activities, could have been eligible for offset credits.

In Pennsylvania, local governments are already creating a nutrient trading system focusing on farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The nutrient and sediment trading program’s goal is to use market mechanisms to improve water quality at lower costs to the general public. Those entities, such as farmers, that exceed their environmental obligations could sell credits to those entities, such as energy producers or wastewater treatment facilities, seeking nutrient reduction credits. A handful of successful trades have already occurred, with the full program likely to be launched in 2011.

Compensating farmers for the ecological services they provide would create an additional income stream for farmers, reward farmers for good land stewardship, and further encourage the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices. Expanding compensation could be given for many

endeavors, ranging from connecting a farm to existing conservation programs authorized in the federal Farm Bill to creating or adding to more regional or watershed-specific efforts.

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Alternative Energy on Farms

Continue to support farmers' exploration and development of alternative energy sources.

Alternative energy, such as solar, wind, and biomass, can lower farmers' costs and reduce the need for nonrenewable fossil fuels, while also improving a community's ability to provide for its energy needs and become more resilient. Energy efficiency and conservation can be the first major improvements in energy use. New energy sources must operate at an appropriate scale and be socially responsible, along with being ecologically sound. Energy developments should consider impacts on environmental resources, such as wildlife, wetlands, landscapes, and parks and recreation areas, as well as their impact on stormwater management. Overall, there should be a systems approach to reducing energy usage on farms and implementing new technology when needed.¹⁶

The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), with headquarters in northeast Pennsylvania, is a potential resource for farmers interested in pursuing alternative energy. NCAT provides

¹⁶ Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, *Renewable Energy on Farms: Building on the Principles of Sustainable Agriculture to Achieve Sustainable Energy*. (Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, June 2002)

overviews of farm energy technologies, links to system-specific information, and in-house capacity to perform energy audits, create and apply energy tools, and conducts workshops and trainings.

With the national push, bolstered by state initiatives, to invest in alternative energy production, many commercial energy producers may want to buy or lease farmland to install commercial solar arrays or wind farms. While these developments may further a region, state, or nation's energy independence and reduce carbon emissions, such large-scale installations take agricultural land out of production. Therefore, this recommendation specifically recommends that farmers pursue alternative energy for on-farm use, rather than for commercial production.¹⁷

Farmland Preservation

Continue to preserve the region's farmland while supporting and revitalizing developed areas.

As discussed with **Indicator 4**, 37% of undeveloped land in Greater Philadelphia is considered important agriculture soil, as rated by the National Resource Conservation Service. The region also has many agricultural assets, such as a temperate climate, and thus a reduced need for irrigation, a long growing season compared to other northern hemisphere regions, and proximity to the large markets in Washington,

¹⁷ In January 2010, the New Jersey Legislature passed an amendment (P.L. 2009, c213) that affords farmers who want to install wind, biomass, or solar farm energy systems Right to Farm protections. While administrative rules are not yet drafted, the bill defines a private energy system as one that is limited to two megawatts in size. Such a solar installation could cover up to eight acres of land. A system capable of producing two megawatts would be considered an energy provider, and therefore would be licensed by the New Jersey Bureau of Public Utilities, and not protected under the Right to Farm Act. Preserved farms would have stricter limits of installation size.

D.C. and New York City. As displayed in **Figure 3.2: Percent of Preserved Farmland (2009)**, Greater Philadelphia has preserved a lot of farmland, but much more is needed. Conversion of the region's agricultural lands should be discouraged unless such lands are part of a designated growth area as established by a comprehensive plan. See this section for additional recommendations concerning affordable farmland, farmland preservation, and the importance of community planning.

In 1991, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, created Urban Growth Boundaries throughout the county, designating where future development can occur and establishing strong agricultural zoning outside of the development areas. A Transfer of Development Rights and Purchase of Development Rights program established market mechanisms for transferring development from agricultural areas to growth areas. In 2007, Lancaster County Commissioners issued a bond for \$25 million, of which \$18 million was allocated to the county's farmland preservation program, \$1 million granted to the Lancaster County Conservancy, \$1 million granted to the Lancaster County Farmland Trust, and \$5 million allocated to a new grant program for the county's municipalities that are designated for growth. This grant program offers funds for infrastructure improvements to accommodate increased development associated with defined growth boundaries.

Since 1999, Pennsylvania's Growing Greener program has protected water, preserved farmland, maintained and improved parks, supported the revitalization of communities, and created and enhanced recreational trails and waterfronts. The legislation was established by Governor Tom Ridge and was reauthorized as Growing Greener 2 through a 2002 voter referendum. It has been lauded for its flexible structure, allowing local communities to adopt different solutions. The Renew Growing Greener Coalition is a group of conservation,

preservation, and environmental representatives that advocate the renewal of the program, which is set to expire in 2011.

Many environmental groups, including open space and farmland preservation advocates, continue to push for a dedicated tax or income source to fund open space projects. A proposed tax on Marcellus Shale gas drilling in Pennsylvania would provide such a dedicated funding source for Growing Greener's environmental projects. However, the bill is mired in the legislative process, and gas drilling activities face significant environmental and local opposition.

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

Composting

More local governments should adopt "Zero Waste" strategies or increase composting activities at all scales, from commercial businesses like restaurants to curbside pick-up for residents.

Food waste is an often neglected part of the food system. Yet recent studies have shown that U.S. per capita food waste has risen more than 50% since 1974, and that wasted food in landfills produces substantial amounts of methane, a gas with more global warming implications than carbon.¹⁸ There are also estimates that food accounts for 12 to 36% of municipal waste.¹⁹ Reducing or reusing waste from food can save tax money through reduced landfill costs and reduced emissions from landfills.

¹⁸ Kevin D. Hall, et al., "The Progressive Increase of Food Waste in America and Its Environmental Impact," *PLoS ONE* 4, no. 11 (November, 2009): e7940.

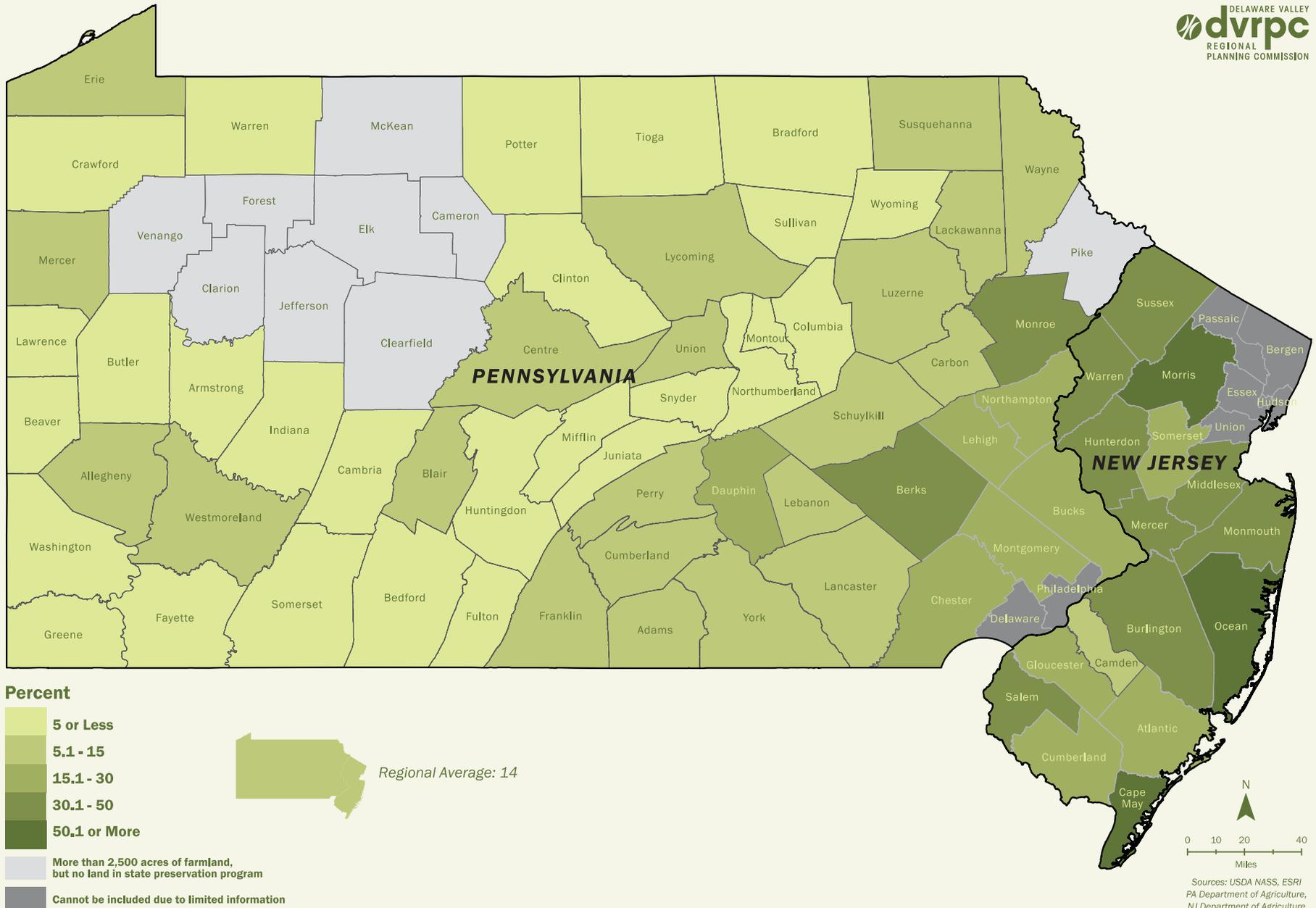
¹⁹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 2007 Facts and Figures* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, November 2008).



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FIGURE 3.2: PERCENT OF PRESERVED FARMLAND (2009)



Composting is the most common way to reduce food waste. Government-supported composting programs can vary from the distribution of bins and hosting composting classes that encourage household or backyard composting, to curbside pick-up of food compostables from residences and businesses.

In the Philadelphia region, small and large businesses are starting to make this into an opportunity, while searching for new end product uses and markets. See *Recommendations in Action* regarding **Composting**.

Tying Urban and Rural Together through Regional Transfer of Development Rights

Local governments and state and county agricultural preservation programs should develop incentives to keep agricultural land in production by encouraging permanent greenhouse development and solar energy production to be located in urban and suburban areas on previously developed land instead of on prime agricultural land.

Among the many barriers to municipal and regional Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs is the identification of “receiving areas”—areas that will receive additional, usually dense, development in order to preserve larger areas of agricultural land in more rural areas.

Greater Philadelphia’s agricultural industry has changed over time, with more farms specializing in greenhouse and horticultural production.²⁰ The region’s prime agricultural lands are permanently lost

²⁰ The *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* discusses this trend in detail and acknowledges that mushroom production is categorized as greenhouse production.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

Composting

Of the 250 million tons of trash entering municipal waste streams in 2008, Americans recovered 61 million tons through recycling and 22.1 million tons through composting, for a combined recycling and composting rate of 33.2%, according to the USEPA’s 2009 report “Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States.” While the rate has continued to increase over the last several decades, large amounts of compostable materials continue to end up in landfills. In 2008, 31.8 million tons of food and other organic wastes (excluding yard trimmings) entered the waste stream. That was just over 200 pounds per person. Only 2.5% of this was composted.

Sending organic materials to landfills not only reduces the usable life of landfills, but also poses other environmental challenges, such as the release of methane, a greenhouse gas resulting from anaerobic decomposition of organics in sealed landfills.

Several companies in Greater Philadelphia are contributing to the sustainability of the regional food system, while tapping the potential economic benefits of composting. One of the most recent, the Peninsula Compost Group, operates the Wilmington Organic Recycling Center, which opened in 2010. This \$20 million 27-acre facility can handle up to 160,000 tons of compostable material per year. Currently, it

...continued

receives the bulk of its material from restaurants and cafeterias, food processors, and municipal leaf collections.

Marvin Dixon, Director of Engineering at the Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia, started his own company, Back 2 Earth Composting, to transport compost from the hotel and a number of other clients to a composting facility at Two Particular Acres Farm in Royersford, Pennsylvania. The Four Seasons estimates that taking into account transportation and disposal fees, composting is 30% cheaper than sending the same materials to landfills or incineration.

Another company, Organic Diversion, LLC, established in 2009 and based in Marlton, New Jersey, provides food waste collection services to commercial customers within the Greater Philadelphia region. These customers include supermarkets, corporate cafeterias, hospitals, universities, food processors, and restaurants. An important part of its service, is the waste stream analysis, training, and support that the company provides for customers to ensure that they choose the service and equipment that works for their situation.

Philly Compost, Inc., provides pick-up services for 20 commercial customers within Philadelphia. From January through July 2010, the company diverted 20.8 tons of food waste out of the municipal waste stream. Philly Compost sells finished material as a soil amendment to area homeowners. Similarly, Bennett Compost provides collection of compostable materials from approximately 200 homes and small businesses in Philadelphia. This material is then delivered to a number

of small compost sites throughout the city, many of which are located within community gardens. Much of the finished material is used in community gardens. Founder Tim Bennett says that his residential customers are driven by a strong aversion to throwing biodegradable material away, and commercial customers are driven by an interest in sustainability, but are also “cost conscious” and need to see savings over commercial trash pick-up.

The City of Philadelphia, in its sustainability plan, *Greenworks Philadelphia*, set a goal of reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills by 70% by 2015, a move that could provide significant savings in the form of reduced tipping fees (the dollar amount, calculated by weight, charged by a waste facility). It aims to meet its goal through a number of programs, such as community-based composting programs, composting at city facilities, such as prisons, and exploring the feasibility of municipal curbside compost collection.

Smaller municipalities are also exploring municipal collection services. Phoenixville, in Chester County, is collecting food waste from one restaurant, which it transports to Two Particular Acres Farm. Once permitted, the municipality hopes to incorporate food waste into municipal yard waste composting at its own five-acre site. In State College, Pennsylvania, a curbside residential pilot project is underway. Including both commercial and residential sources, a total of 33,200 pounds of food waste was collected in the first three months of the year-long pilot.

during the construction process to erect permanent buildings used in such types of agricultural operations.

At the same time, energy producers are exploring more ways to generate alternative energy to meet federal and state requirements, and are looking for acreage to expand solar installations. Some of this development is occurring on agricultural lands. While the generation of alternative energy is beneficial to the region, this type of industrial use can take agricultural land out of production, depending on the type of solar array that is installed.

With funding from the William Penn Foundation, DVRPC has convened a TDR Task Force to address the feasibility of creating a TDR program for Salem County, New Jersey. In a coordinated effort, New Jersey Future convened a statewide task force to create statutory, regulatory, programmatic, and policy recommendations to facilitate the use of TDR at both the municipal and regional scales in New Jersey.

Although recommendations are preliminary, the Salem County TDR Task Force has discussed the need for a regional tax-sharing program that shares the benefits of industrial and commercial development in one community with a municipality having lower density and more preserved land. In addition to residential development, a regional TDR program could provide for the installation of solar energy or permanent greenhouses (which remove and severely impact soil, unlike hoop houses with dirt floors that extend the growing season) in or close to urban areas. This would provide additional compensation to rural landowners, create job opportunities near urban populations, and encourage redevelopment or development in suitable places.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Food and farming are important components of an integrated economic development strategy. Food-based economic development strategies can range from supporting new and existing farmers to cultivating new food processing and distribution businesses. A comprehensive economic development strategy also incorporates financing, identifying and removing barriers, and workforce training.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Business Development

Create or expand new and specialized programs to reduce the barriers of entry for new food entrepreneurs and new, beginning, and minority farmers, and encourage value-added activities. Examples include training programs and revolving loan, micro-loan, and low-interest loan funds.

Food and farm businesses have large capital, management, and technical assistance needs given the generally small profit margins of food businesses and the large asset requirements of some farming models. Many food and farming organizations, such as PASA and the Cooperative Extension, are incorporating business development into their services. At the same time, business and economic development organizations, such as The Reinvestment Fund, The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation, and Temple University's Fox School of Business, are expanding services to include food and farming projects. Many counties have long recognized the importance of including food and farming in economic development strategies. Examples include the Chester County Economic Development Council and Berks County Agricultural Development Office. These organizations provide a range of outreach, support, loans, grants, educational resources, and technical expertise to new and established food and agricultural businesses.

While these efforts are significant and continue to grow, more is needed to identify and address the specific barriers that prevent local farmers from increasing their sales and food processors and independent restaurants from locating and operating in Greater Philadelphia. Small business owners and large businesses alike have identified workforce training as a major barrier to doing business in urban areas. Fair Food's Farm to Institution Working Group recommended food service training, such as knife skills and working with fresh produce.²¹ The Reinvestment Fund and The Food Trust's survey of food retailers revealed higher workforce training costs for supermarket developers in underserved communities.²²

²¹Lindsay Gilmour, Former Farm to Institution Program Manager, Fair Food, personal communication, July 2, 2008.

²²Ira Goldstein, et al., *CDFI Financing of Supermarkets in Underserved Communities: A Case Study* (Philadelphia: The Reinvestment Fund, August 2008).

Local governments might collaborate with workforce investment boards, colleges, and technical schools to promote sustainable farming, urban agriculture, and fresh food enterprises. For example, the Lancaster, Berks, and South Central Pennsylvania workforce investment boards have previously partnered on a food manufacturing training program addressing various topics, including food safety.

Incubator programs are another way to connect job training and food. The Rutgers Food Innovation Center in Bridgeton, New Jersey, can provide producers, processors, and other entrepreneurs with assistance in business development, market research, product and process development, workforce development and training, food safety, regulations and compliance support, and quality assurance. The Enterprise Center CDC is in the process of creating the Center for Culinary Enterprises, supporting food entrepreneurs in underserved communities by providing shared-use kitchens, retail spaces, youth training programs, and an urban farm.

Access to capital is also a major issue for small business operators of all types. There is a growing interest in "mission-driven" investing carried out by various organizations, from a foundation to community development financial institution (CDFI), and from an angel investor to a commercial bank. While farming and food businesses are considered risky businesses, operating on slim profit margins, many financial institutions have a growing interest in supporting sustainable businesses that have a triple-bottom line—people, profit and planet. Greater Philadelphia has a number of financial organizations interested in supporting the growing local food and healthy food movements, in addition to the emerging social enterprise movement. These institutions include The Reinvestment Fund and E3 Bank, in addition to Farm Credit institutions, commercial banks, and numerous foundations exploring program-related investments (PRIs).

POLICY REFORMS

Food Procurement

*Organizations and entities that regularly buy food for meetings, events, and meal services should establish procurement standards and bonus point provisions for the purchase of nutritious, ethical, sustainably produced, regionally sourced and/or fair-trade products.*²³

While incorporating health, sustainability, and other preferences into procurement is limited by regulations and food budgets, procurement still holds the promise of increasing market demand for particular products, producers, or production methods, while increasing consumer access to a range of items. A common procurement preference that is often codified is working with minority- or women-owned businesses. For public entities and many private organizations, preferences must comply with established bidding and competition requirements.

Those entities with self-operating food services can establish preferences for a percentage of the total budget or for particular products. Standards or definitions for attributes such as “healthy” or “regionally sourced” must be clear and consistent within any purchasing entity. Entities that contract for food service can work with suppliers to source healthier or more sustainable items, or to specify a preference for producers with particular attributes or certifications.

State Food Purchase Programs (SFPP) exist in state departments of agriculture and distribute cash grants to emergency food operations

²³ Responsible Purchasing is also mentioned in the **Fairness** Recommendation section.

to serve people affected by hunger. One potential procurement policy implemented at the state or federal level is the dedication of a percentage of SFPP funding for the purchase of locally produced fruits and vegetables.

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Healthy Food Retail

Increase and support “governmental and philanthropic investments in fresh food retail in those instances where consumer demand meets suitable market conditions.”

—Jeremy Nowak, The Reinvestment Fund, featured speaker at a Stakeholder Committee meeting

Fresh and healthy food retail has been identified as a successful strategy to address food access. As recent media attention and national policy analysis has discussed in detail, there are many communities across the country in which residents have limited or no access to fresh food—“food deserts”—or unbalanced access to unhealthy, energy-dense foods like fast food—“food swamps.” **Figure 3.3.1: Number of Fast Food Restaurants per 1,000 People (2006)** and **Figure 3.3.2: Number of Grocery Stores per 1,000 People (2006)** show the geographic inequity of food retail options across Pennsylvania and New Jersey. These disadvantaged communities are often low wealth and are found in both rural and urban areas. Research by The Food Trust and others demonstrate that increasing access to healthy food options results in increased fresh food consumption.²⁴ Healthy food retail not only

²⁴ Sarah Treuhaft and Alison Karpyn, *The Grocery Gap: Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters* (Oakland, CA: PolicyLink, 2010).

improves health, but also creates jobs with living wages and increases economic activity. Large food retail, such as a full-service grocery store, is often an anchor around which more economic activity will be generated.

Approaches can range from creating new food outlets to improving the healthy food options in existing stores. Regardless of the approach, fresh food retail investments aim to incentivize the market to locate in communities with unmet consumer demand. Incentives overcome the initial barriers to entry, rather than provide permanent subsidies.

The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative, a partnership by several organizations, including The Food Trust, The Reinvestment Fund (TRF), Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, leveraged an investment of \$30 million from the state to generate well over \$100 million in private investment through TRF financing. The funds were used to provide one-time grants and small bridge loans to fresh food retailers across the state. These financing incentives addressed barriers such as workforce training, site selection or acquisition, and store development.

President Obama announced in February 2010 a national Healthy Food Financing Initiative, which will combine the efforts of the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, and Health and Human Services to provide various grants, loans, and other investments to eliminate “food deserts” throughout the United States. The Department of Treasury has issued a Notice of Funds Availability for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) interested in participating in the program; however, funding still remains subject to legislative action. As of this writing, no funds have yet been made available.

Marketing

Increase funding for successful and well-established marketing campaigns, such as Jersey Fresh, Philly Homegrown, PA Preferred, and Buy Fresh Buy Local.

Advocates of market solutions argue that consumer demand will drive changes in the regional food system. Regional marketing campaigns inform consumers about the variety of options available and build general awareness about supporting local businesses. The most successful marketing programs have consistent funding sources and can adapt a recognizable brand to changing market demands, consumer priorities, or regional identities.

Buy Fresh Buy Local is a national umbrella campaign that provides marketing material templates and technical assistance to locally operated chapters. These chapters have significant flexibility and creativity in how they market the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* brand.

The Jersey Fresh program of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture was one of the first local food marketing programs in the country. Program evaluation demonstrates that for every \$1 spent on the program, another \$54 of economic activity is generated.²⁵

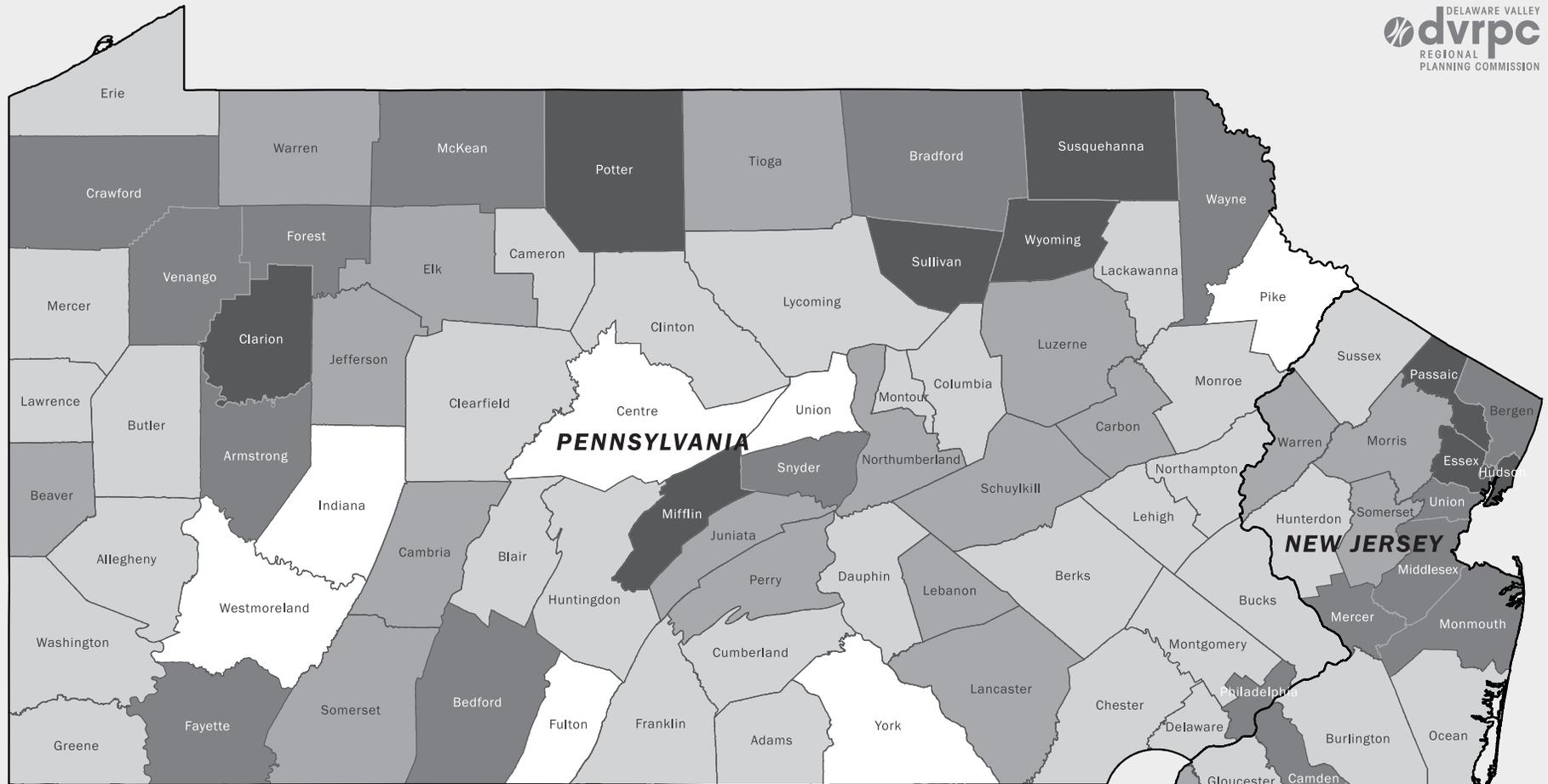
²⁵ Ramu Govindasamy, et al., *Returns to the Jersey Fresh Promotional Program: The Impacts of Promotion Expenditures on Farm Cash Receipts in New Jersey* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Food Policy Institute and Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, March 2004).



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FIGURE 3.3.2: NUMBER OF GROCERY STORES PER 1,000 PEOPLE (2006)



Ratio of Stores to People



Sources: USDA ERS, ESRI

Tourism

Increase and support efforts to encourage nonfarm residents and tourists to engage in agritourism and culinary tourism.

As development patterns increase distances between residents and farmers, it becomes more important to understand and appreciate the components of the agricultural industry and how it affects the region's economy. Food- and farm-based tourism can strengthen ties between growers and eaters and cultivate a deeper understanding of where food comes from. It can also strengthen the regional economy by drawing more visitors to the region who spend money on many different types of activities.

Over the last year, DVRPC and members of the Stakeholder Committee have worked with the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC) on a local food communications strategy to measure current awareness of local food and tourism opportunities and motivate people to shop local, eat healthy, and protect the region's natural resources. GPTMC's local food survey, conducted in early 2010, found that the majority of residents are already interested in eating more local food than they already do, but need assistance in finding out when, where, and how they can access local food. The survey also found that many consumers, when on vacation, are interested in agricultural and culinary activities, such as eating in a nonchain restaurant, eating the signature food of a region, and visiting a farmers' market. This interest is even higher among those who seek out local food in their normal routine at home.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

Culinary Tourism

In June 2010, GPTMC, the organization behind VisitPhilly.com, launched a new \$450,000 marketing campaign called Philly Homegrown. This campaign, funded with grants from DVRPC and the William Penn Foundation, is designed to create awareness of Greater Philadelphia's local foods and the people that bring them from farm to plate.

Planning for the initiative started in the fall of 2009. Using the results of a baseline survey to target and guide their strategy, GPTMC will engage in a number of marketing activities over a period of two years, including the creation of a website; print, TV, and radio programming; special events with the region's local food producers and support organizations; and promotion of local food at hotels and other tourist destinations. GPTMC will use its extensive experience and connections with media to promote the region's local food nationally, including inviting national cable food shows to shoot episodes in the region.

The campaign's website features profiles of local producers, restaurants, markets, and a "food finder" map, as well as highlights of upcoming food events. A number of self-guided food tour itineraries are available to introduce residents and visitors alike to Greater Philadelphia's local food.

Underlying both DVRPC and the William Penn Foundation's investment in a marketing strategy is the goal to increase consumption of foods grown and produced locally. In doing so, the campaign adds vibrancy and authenticity to visitors' experiences in Philadelphia, strengthens local economies and communities, encourages healthy eating, and creates a more sustainable food system.

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

Food Enterprise Zones

Local governments should create model “food enterprise zone” incentives for urban food production, value-added and food processing, and healthy food retail conversions.

As proposed in the cities of New York and San Francisco, “food enterprise zones” are areas identified as lacking access to healthy food that could have incentives such as permissible zoning in place to attract healthy-food retail and other food businesses. These zone incentives can be more effective when combined with incentives for food production, processing, and distribution facilities.

Food enterprise zones can be created in urban, suburban, or rural communities that have limited access to healthy food, or in places strategically located near complementary industries, such as storage, warehousing, and wholesale market operations.

Similar “agricultural enterprise districts” have been recommended to maintain agricultural lands in production by providing a variety of services and incentives, including streamlined and expedited water allocation certification, business plan assistance as well as management and training services, expedited approvals on government loans and costs shares, and minimum wage offset grants. In exchange for these services and incentives, farmers would agree to a temporary agricultural easement on their property. Such a program was proposed in 2006 by the Tri-County Agricultural Retention Partnership, a New Jersey Conservation Foundation initiative focused on farmland preservation in Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland counties in New Jersey, but was not implemented.

Applying the Efficiencies of the Global Food System to the Regional Food System

Large and small businesses alike should apply supply chain management technology to scale the local food system up to the regional.

Supply chains are the network of processes, participants, and product flows that transport a product from producer to consumer. A recent study by the USDA’s Economic Research Service²⁶ outlined three different types of supply chains: (1) the “mainstream,” or global supply chain, that sources major grocery lines; (2) the “intermediated,” or hybrid chain, that uses one or more intermediaries to move local product to diversified outlets; and (3) the direct market chain, in which producers market product directly to consumers. The last two are referred to as “local supply chains,” or “shortened supply chains.” Currently, products from local farmers are marketed through all three chains and the same retail location will most likely carry products from mainstream and shortened supply chains. Sales from both direct market and intermediated supply chains represent a smaller percentage of total demand than the global.

According to the USDA study, all supply chains, including the global, are based on trust and personal relationships and retain a percentage of wage and proprietor income in the local economy. Direct market chains have the added benefit of providing consumers with detailed information about where and by whom the products are produced, and returning higher revenue directly to the producer, even though producers assume packaging, transportation, and marketing costs. However, global supply

²⁶ Robert P. King, et al., *Comparing the Structure, Size, and Performance of the Local and Mainstream Food Supply Chains*, Report Number 99 (Washington, D.C.: USDA Economic Research Service, June 2010).

chains keep costs lower through the use of technological efficiencies and economies of scale, as well as taking advantage of subsidized energy costs and lower labor costs (possibly in other countries).

Compared to the global, intermediated chains have more flexibility in setting prices that are independent of the commodity market price and are based more on consumers' values. Compared to the direct market chain, intermediated chains provide only limited information to consumers about product origin and production methods.

Applying technological innovations already employed by the global food system to intermediated and direct market supply chains can increase transportation efficiencies, which in turn can lead to more affordable local products and more accurate information on product origins for the consumer.

After supply chain management technology is adopted by businesses, the next important steps in efficiency is sharing relevant data to better inform inventory needs, productivity and efficiency trends, and identify areas for improvement.

Local Food Systems, L3L is a local business (and its founder is a Stakeholder Committee member) that delivers cooperative supply chain, resource planning, and relationship management software. It aims to connect farmers, distributors, warehouses, processors, and buyers of all sizes in efficient ways. Many organizations, businesses, and logistics consultants believe that making it easier to share information about supply, demand, and product flows will enable more local and regional products brought to market, create traceable supply chains, and improve communication among all parties, from the producer to the supplier to the consumer.



HEALTH



As Dr. Margo Wootan from the Center for Science in the Public Interest argues, “Eating well takes more than just willpower.”²⁷ Being healthy involves a combination of personal effort along with access to and awareness of healthy food choices and physical activity options. For a variety of reasons, we are becoming much less healthy as a nation, and Greater Philadelphia follows this trend. As the **Indicators** section illustrated, rates of diet-related diseases such as obesity are high and rising, and some research argues that obesity rates are shortening life expectancy by two to five years.²⁸ The following recommendations explore healthy food interventions in the larger food environment through technology, marketing, federal food assistance programs, and school food programs, among other strategies. These changes require new or stronger partnerships with the healthcare community.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Public Awareness and Healthy Food

Promote the use of new technology and community-based communication outlets by all partners—government, private sector, and nonprofits—to educate people about healthy food.

From increasing participation in food assistance programs to providing cooking classes, advocates and professionals working in the regional food system should explore different types of technology and various formats for communicating the connection between food and health. Different educational outreach tools will be appropriate for the target audience and take into account the resources available to that audience. For instance, some households do not have full kitchen facilities, so recipes that require extensive preparation and various pieces of cooking equipment are not helpful. Even more households need to stretch food dollars.

Through the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants*, DVRPC is providing partial support to the Greensgrow Philadelphia Project, an urban farm in Philadelphia, to expand outreach to low-income residents, encouraging participation in its community-supported agriculture (CSA) program. The farm is producing an interactive cooking show on preparing meals from weekly CSA shares. The *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants* are also supporting nutrition education at the Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition

²⁷ Center for Science in the Public Interest, “Nutrition Policy: Because It Takes More Than Willpower,” www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/index.html (accessed July 21, 2010).

²⁸ Robert Lalasz, *Will Rising Childhood Obesity Decrease U.S. Life Expectancy?* (Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau, May 2005), www.prb.org/articles/2005/willrisingchildhoodobesitydecreaseuslifeexpectancy.aspx (accessed July 21, 2010).

Alliance (MANNA), which is specifically tailored to individuals at nutritional risk from chronic medical conditions, such as cancer.

POLICY REFORMS

Addressing the Toxic Food Environment

“The federal government should address the toxic food environment that has led to unhealthy eating.”

—Dr. Roni Neff, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, guest speaker at a Stakeholder Committee meeting

Just as there are strategies to bring healthy food to underserved communities, there needs to be an understanding of and commitment to address the prevalence of unhealthy food. Researchers and marketers have identified the complex biological and psychological responses that create a desire for food high in sugar, fat, and salt. Dr. David Kessler, former commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), argues that the “hyperpalability” of these foods triggers overeating by altering brain chemistry.²⁹ First used by Kelly D. Brownell in his book *Food Fight: The Inside Story of the Food Industry*, the term “toxic food environment” refers to the availability and force with which unhealthy foods are marketed.³⁰

In addition to policies regarding zoning, vending, taxation, and procurement that make unhealthy food easily accessible, marketing triggers humans’ biological craving for and desire to overeat unhealthy

²⁹ David Kessler, *The End of Overeating: Taking Control of the Insatiable American Appetite* (Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2009).

³⁰ Kelly D Brownell and Katherine Battle Horgen. *Food Fight: The Inside Story of the Food Industry, America’s Obesity Crisis, and What We Can Do About It* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004).

food. Some recent examples include Taco Bell’s “4th Meal” advertising campaign, which introduced “the meal between dinner and breakfast,” and Kentucky Fried Chicken’s “Double Down,” which uses fried chicken as bread in a sandwich with cheese, sauce, and bacon.

There are many proponents of regulating food marketing, particularly to children. See **Figure 3.4: Low-income Pre-school Obesity Rate (2006)** for an illustration of the impact that calorie-dense food has had on a vulnerable segment of the region’s population. The U.S. Food System is one of the largest advertising sectors in the American economy, second only to automobiles.³¹ A 2008 study by the Federal Trade Commission found that the food and beverage industry spent \$1.6 billion in advertising to children and adolescents,³² and a study by the Institute of Medicine found that, along with other factors, food and beverage marketing to children is “out of balance with recommended healthful diets” and creates at-risk environments.³³

The Institute of Medicine report recommends working with industry on enhanced self-regulation and partnerships with government on social marketing that promotes healthful diets. Dr. Kessler compares food advertising regulation to that of tobacco, in which the change is driven by consumer pressure and facilitated by regulation and informative marketing and labeling. First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move campaign also recommends new regulations for nutrition labeling and restrictions on marketing.

³¹ Mary Story and Simone French. “Food Advertising and Marketing Directed at Children and Adolescents in the U.S.” *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 1:3 (2004). www.ijbnpa.org/content/1/1/3 (accessed August 13, 2010)

³² Federal Trade Commission, “FTC Report Sheds New Light on Food Marketing to Children and Adolescents,” July 29, 2008, www.ftc.gov/opa/2008/07/foodmkting.shtm (accessed August 12, 2010)

³³ Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, “Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?” December 5, 2005, www.iom.edu/Reports/2005/Food-Marketing-to-Children-and-Youth-Threat-or-Opportunity.aspx (accessed August 12, 2010).

While addressing the food environment may be a tall order for a local government, a regional organization, a nonprofit, or an independent business, the collective voice and combined efforts of a regional coalition of such stakeholders could make a measurable impact. See the “Speaking with a Collective Voice” recommendation in the **Collaboration** section.

Leveraging Public Assistance to Incentivize Healthy Eating

Maximize food assistance programs and create more incentives for participants to obtain healthy foods.

There are many organizations in and around Philadelphia that concentrate on enrolling eligible individuals for nutrition assistance and other income assistance programs. Many of these organizations are using new ways to engage different demographic groups in various geographic areas. These efforts are addressed in the “Leveraging Federal Food Programs” recommendation in the **Fairness** section.

In addition to ensuring that all those eligible are enrolled to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, many advocates are pushing to expand the outlets authorized to redeem SNAP benefits, particularly those outlets with options for affordable healthy food located in underserved neighborhoods. Research has shown that many of the current places accepting SNAP benefits are less likely to have healthy food. For example, in the City of Detroit, over 92% of SNAP benefits were redeemed at “fringe” retailers, such as gas stations, liquor stores, dollar stores, and other convenience venues.³⁴ Besides enrolling a greater variety of retailers into the program, other initiatives include

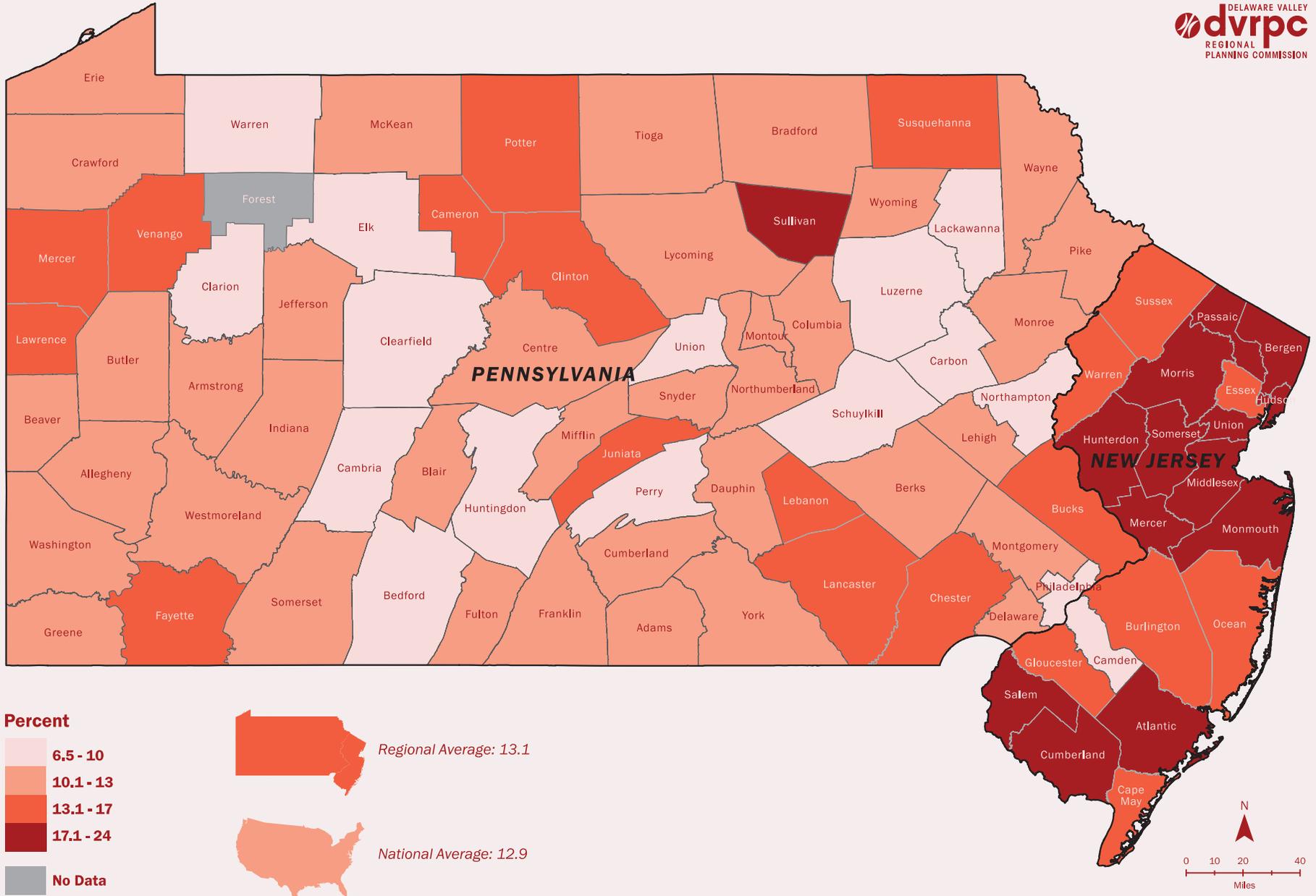
³⁴ Mari Gallagher Research & Consulting Group, *Examining the Impact of Food Deserts on Public Health in Detroit* (Chicago: Mari Gallagher Research & Consulting Group, 2007).



EATING HERE

GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

FIGURE 3.4: LOW-INCOME PRE-SCHOOL OBESITY RATE (2006)



incentivizing the use of SNAP benefits to purchase healthy food by offering additional value. Other strategies include expanding Electronic Benefits Technology capacity at farmers' markets and other fresh food outlets.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), funded by the federal government and administered by the states, provides nutrition education and food vouchers for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women and their children up to five years of age. A new program went into effect October 1, 2009, which included cash vouchers redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thanks to the partnership between the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, The Food Trust, and the City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health, the city has accessed a federal stimulus grant of \$1 million through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, matched by regional private and nonprofit funders, to increase WIC farmers' market vouchers from \$20 a season to \$80 for the 2010 season. In 2009, only \$60,000 in vouchers was redeemed, meaning the redemption rate was below 50%. Complete data will not be available until 2011, but preliminary reporting in December 2010 showed that nearly 74% of all vouchers distributed were redeemed.

Within regulations set by the federal government, states have the authority to determine which foods are WIC-eligible and how to coordinate with farmers, farmers' markets, and other nontraditional food outlets. The major determinants of WIC eligibility are science-based nutrition information and cost containment so that the program can benefit the largest number of people. Unlike SNAP, WIC is not an "entitlement" program, so there is a budgetary limit. There is

current research underway by Professor Amy Hillier at the University of Pennsylvania to explore the effect of WIC food package changes on neighborhood food availability.

Nutrition Standards for Food in Government Facilities

Municipal, county, and state governments and the federal government should develop nutrition standards and labeling requirements for food that is served at cafeterias and in vending machines in publicly owned or managed facilities.

Nutrition standards can increase healthy food options in government food services by requiring that a certain amount of nutritious foods, such as fruits and vegetables and whole grains, are available by limiting the amount of unhealthy components in offered food, such as trans fat, sodium, and sugar. Standards can also be specified for particular locations (such as options in vending machines or at events), or for particular product offerings (such as apples or dairy). Standards are interconnected with procurement policies³⁵ and can vary in stringency. Governments and private employers that subsidize cafeteria meals for employees may also leverage that existing agreement with food service providers to feature more healthy food options.

Besides establishing nutrition standards in publicly owned facilities, municipal governments such as Philadelphia and New York City are also enacting menu labeling within their jurisdictions. Philadelphia's menu labeling law was one of the strictest in the country when enacted in early 2010, mandating restaurants with 15 or more locations to provide detailed nutritional information on printed menus and calorie

³⁵ Recommendations about procurement policies are discussed in more detail in the **Economic Development** Recommendations section.

information on menu boards. This local ordinance will be superseded by recently passed federal legislation that will not only require calorie counts, but will also include vending machine labeling, making it somewhat more comprehensive than the local laws.

Menu labeling inarguably makes more information available to consumers, but to date has had mixed results in changing consumer behavior. Food choices are often influenced by other factors, including income level and perceived hunger. For example, one study found no difference in purchases at fast-food restaurants in low-income communities in New York City, where menu labeling is in place, compared to a control group in Newark, New Jersey. On the other hand, a study of Starbucks customers in New York City found that average calories per transaction fell by 6%. The inconclusive results of these studies demonstrate the need for more robust evaluation of the impact of menu labeling requirements.



Weavers Way Co-op recently opened in Chestnut Hill, the third Weavers Way location in Philadelphia

Credit: G. Widman for GPTMC

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Overuse of Antibiotics

Public health and sustainable agriculture advocates, in addition to the general public, should continue to advocate for the elimination of the nontherapeutic use of antibiotics and growth hormones in the food supply.

Starting in the 1940s, food producers began using antibiotics (or antimicrobials) to prevent diseases and raise larger animals (growth hormones). Currently, half of all antibiotics are used for nonhuman use.³⁶ At the same time, human antimicrobial resistance—caused by prolonged exposure to low levels of antimicrobials—is increasing, thereby making existing antibiotics less effective. Some research argues that this results in an estimated two million infections and 90,000 deaths annually.³⁷

Proponents of antibiotics in the food system argue that their use enables producers to raise fewer animals to produce a unit of meat, resulting in consumer affordability, minimized environmental impact, and decreased production costs.

Engaging the Health Sector

Food system, public health, and planning advocates should engage the health sector in food system planning efforts.

The healthcare industry is one of the largest economic sectors in Greater Philadelphia. The healthcare sector should be engaged to provide

³⁶ Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, *Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Animal Production in America* (Philadelphia: Pew Charitable Trusts, 2008), 15.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

“market leadership” in its own purchasing policies and practices, and to enhance the nutrition education and health promotion activities of partners.³⁸

An innovative example of partnering with the healthcare community is the Wholesome Wave Foundation’s Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program (Fruit and Veggie Rx), launched in June 2010. Piloting at community health centers in Massachusetts and Maine, Fruit and Veggie Rx gives at-risk consumers a “prescription” to trade in for fruits and vegetables at farmers’ markets. Data is currently being collected to evaluate the program’s impacts on fresh food consumption, weight, and other health indicators.

The Kaiser Permanente health system has challenged itself to become “a model for the industry” by promoting healthy food in and around its facilities. It has taken a multipronged approach at sponsoring farmers’ markets and CSA programs at its facilities and instituting procurement and purchasing of more ethically raised and sustainable products.³⁹ As a large purchaser of products and a provider of health services, Kaiser Permanente describes sustainable food systems as a “critical, high-leverage leadership opportunity.”⁴⁰ The organization sees that the healthcare sector has three roles: raising awareness, providing market leadership, and advocating for policy changes.⁴¹

Some of Greater Philadelphia’s hospitals and healthcare organizations have also taken steps toward integrating food systems into healthcare

³⁸ Health Care Without Harm, *Food and Food Purchasing: A Role for Health Care* (Arlington, VA: Health Care Without Harm, April 6, 2006).

³⁹ Lynn Garske, “Kaiser Permanente’s Comprehensive Food Policy,” Southern California Food Roundtable, February 23, 2006.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Kaiser Permanente Institute for Health Policy, “Sustainable Food Procurement and Agriculture Policy: Making the Case for Health Sector Engagement,” *In Focus* 5 (Fall 2009): 1–4.

services. For example, Thomas Jefferson Hospital has been a member of Fair Food’s Farm to Institution Working Group since its inception in 2006 and hosts an on-site farmers’ market. Many hospitals have also partnered with the Women’s Health and Environmental Network for training on sustainable food purchasing and policies, including a hormone-free milk purchasing campaign and a “Balanced Menus” challenge (pledging to reduce meat, substitute sustainably raised meat products, or increase vegetable and grain portions).⁴²

School Meal Monitoring

Increase local efforts to push for new nutrition standards in school meals, for larger budgets available for school meal purchases, and for increased monitoring of school meals by state departments of education and health.

School meals represent a large portion of children’s total dietary intake, especially for low-income students participating in school meal programs. Establishing and improving nutrition standards for school meals will increase children’s access to nutritious foods, and thereby improve their school performance and physical health. It will also make nutrition education in the curriculum more effective and long-lasting if it is modeled in school meals.

The School District of Philadelphia has enacted The School Nutrition Policy Initiative, which establishes goals for nutrition education of students, staff, and family, as well as beverage and snack food standards. Standards include the banning of soft drinks sold or served in school, mandating 100% fruit juice, limiting sports drinks to after-

⁴² Hunger and Environmental Nutrition, American Dietetic Association, “National Nutrition Month,” www.hendpg.org/hen.cfm?page=national-nutrition-month (accessed August 4, 2010).

school hours, and specifying fat, saturated fat, sodium, and sugar content per serving.⁴³ Research by The Food Trust, which helped draft the policy, and local academic institutions found a 50% reduction in the incidence of overweight in students at schools impacted by the policy.⁴⁴

The State of New Jersey passed a School Nutrition and Wellness policy in 2003, with the final phase enacted in November 2007. The legislation mandates school districts to enact standards including restricting “empty calorie” foods of minimal nutrition value; banning food and beverage items with sugar as the first ingredient from being served, sold, or otherwise distributed on school property during the school day; and specifying maximum grams of fat and serving sizes. The curriculum must also incorporate nutrition education and physical activity.⁴⁵

A school’s ability to purchase healthier foods that meet more stringent standards is greatly limited by budgets. The USDA reimburses school districts for meals based on income criteria, although every school meal served in a public school that meets nutritional requirements is eligible for some level of subsidy. For school lunch, reimbursements can be up to \$2.46 per meal for schools with 60% or more students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. However, for other schools, it is as low as \$0.26 per meal.⁴⁶ Schools also receive donated commodities from the USDA (cheese and beef, for example) or products purchased through a competitive bid. Increasing the school meal reimbursement allotted

⁴³ The Food Trust, “Comprehensive School Nutrition Policy and Initiative,” www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/comp.school.nutrition.php (accessed August 4, 2010).

⁴⁴ Gary D. Foster et al., “A Policy-Based School Intervention to Prevent Overweight and Obesity,” *Pediatrics* 121, no 4 (2008), pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/121/4/e794 (accessed August 4, 2010).

⁴⁵ State of New Jersey, Department of Agriculture, “Model School Nutrition Policy,” www.state.nj.us/agriculture/modelnutritionpolicy.htm (accessed August 4, 2010).

⁴⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, “National School Lunch, Special Milk, and School Breakfast Programs, National Average Payments/Minimums, Reimbursement Rates,” *Federal Register* 75.137 (July 19, 2010): 41796.

through the USDA would allow greater options for school food service purchases and make nutrition standards more effective.

Nationally, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in December 2010 will revise standards and provide about a six-cent increase in reimbursement per meal.⁴⁷ It includes many of the recommendations resulting from the 2009 USDA-commissioned report conducted by the Institute of Medicine, which advocated for increasing the amount and variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, setting a minimum and maximum level of calories, and focusing on reducing saturated fat and sodium.⁴⁸ It extends nutritional standards beyond the lunch room to include food sold in vending machines. This legislation has been one of the top priorities of First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move campaign, which focuses on reducing obesity and increasing the health of the nation’s youth.

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

Improved Relationship with Food

Organize regional food celebrations and community events to enjoy and learn about our regional food assets.

The Greater Philadelphia region is home to many diverse culinary cultures and food assets, and has a foundation of family farms and regional food products. From mushrooms in Chester County, Pennsylvania, to cranberry bogs in Burlington County, New Jersey,

⁴⁷ “Obama signs child nutrition bill, championed by the first lady,” *Los Angeles Times* (December 13, 2010), www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-obamas-food-bill-signing-121310,0,2298518.story (accessed December 13, 2010)

⁴⁸ Virginia A. Stallings, Carol West Sutor, and Christine L. Taylor, eds., *School Meals: Building Blocks for Healthy Children* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2010).

there are many foods that have a special connection to the region, taking advantage of its differing microclimates and cultural traditions. Celebrations raise the public's awareness regarding these foods and agricultural practices.

Middlesbrough, a small town in the United Kingdom, has held an annual "town meal" since 2006. Over 200 groups and individuals serve meals, featuring food grown and donated by gardeners and farmers, to their neighbors. The banquet is held in downtown Middlesbrough and provides information on growing fresh food, while also featuring music and performances by local groups. In 2009, more than 10,000 people attended. The meals began as part of Middlesbrough's "Healthy Town Initiative."⁴⁹

In Philadelphia, The Food Trust recently launched Night Market, which features foods from local food trucks and restaurants in a festive atmosphere with music and other entertainment. Rick Nichols, *The Philadelphia Inquirer's* food columnist, estimated that thousands attended the inaugural event in October 2010, attracted by a shared communal sense of food.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Middlesbrough Council, "Town Meal a Brilliant Success," www.visitmiddlesbrough.com/site/whats-new/news/2009/9/29/town-meal-brilliant-success-a305 (accessed July 22, 2010).

⁵⁰ "Night Market vendors in South Philadelphia satisfy a hunger for community," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (October 14, 2010), www.philly.com/philly/restaurants/104882104.html (accessed December 13, 2010).

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

Tying Antihunger and Community Service with Economic Development

Looking ahead to the 2010 growing season, a collaboration of individuals and community groups wanted to bring fresh, healthy, and locally grown produce to an area food bank. According to Joe McArdle, a Phoenixville, Chester County, realtor, the initial idea was to bring local food to people in need, while tying several community-based activities together. At first, the concerned citizens wanted to start a community garden to grow food for the Phoenixville Area Community Services (PACS) food bank. However, after contemplating the logistics of setting up a production garden, the group thought about purchasing a CSA share from the nearby Kimberton CSA farm, using donations and proceeds from community fundraisers.

Proceeds from a recent event at the Phoenixville Iron Hill Brewery enabled the purchase of the 2010 CSA share and an additional half share at another farm. Members of the Phoenixville Area Time Bank pick up the weekly CSA share and deliver it to the PACS food bank. The half share is collected by an individual from the Good Samaritan Shelter from a drop-off location near the shelter. These organizations then distribute the fresh produce to individuals and families in need. A local restaurant, Irish Joe's, has offered its kitchen to host free community cooking classes.

By creatively bringing many community resources together and playing to the strengths of different groups and individuals, this effort has further strengthened community ties and achieved several goals, from encouraging local commerce to helping neighbors in need.



FAIRNESS

The following recommendations look at fairness from many perspectives, including that of the consumer, small and midscale producers, farmworkers, and participants in federal food and nutrition programs. The common threads connecting all of these recommendations are a need for accurate and accessible information in the marketplace, flexibility to adapt to a changing environment, and an understanding of the integral importance of access to fresh, healthy food and decent working conditions.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

School System Solutions

Integrate all aspects of Farm to School programs into a robust and comprehensive education program.

As mentioned in the **Health** Recommendations section, school meals represent a large percentage of students' diet, and create the foundation for long-term eating habits and healthy behavior. School curricula, activities, and meal offerings should provide consistent messages and introduce students to a variety of food choices. Additionally, schools can be an important customer of regional producers and processors, reliably purchasing large volumes.

This recommendation calls for integrating curricula on gardening, nutrition, and culinary and food system careers, and introducing or expanding healthy food options in school meals. Programs can include training for staff to work with whole, fresh foods, or facility improvements for refrigeration, preparation, and storage. Partners can include county cooperative extensions, community colleges, local chefs, and other small business owners.

Through the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants*, DVRPC is supporting a collaborative project between the School District of Philadelphia, Fair Food, The Food Trust, and the Health Promotion Council to expand a Farm to School program. Twenty pilot schools are receiving training, technical assistance, and regionally sourced food products. Students are also engaged in peer education and wellness training.

POLICY REFORMS

Debating Food Safety

Continue to work with the federal government to critically evaluate new food safety measures that add burdens to small and midsize producers, but are necessary to regulate food producers.

As instances of food-borne illnesses and food allergies increase across the country, food safety regulations are becoming a larger part of national legislation and regulation discussions. Currently, the USDA regulates meat and poultry, and the FDA regulates all other food products. There are also food safety inspections and certifications at the state level.

Congressional legislation on food safety stems from legitimate concerns about consumer safety, a desire to increase the traceability of contaminated food products, and a need to create preventative measures. However, small-scale and sustainable farming advocates argued that a “one size fits all” or “absolute sterilization” approach to safety regulations would disproportionately and adversely affect their constituents. As a result, a number of provisions meant to accommodate smaller producers were included in the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, which, as of this writing is expected to pass as part of Congress’ funding bills for FY2011. These provisions allow the FDA to modify requirements or exempt from new requirements farms that engage in “low or no risk processing or co-mingling activities.” Another provision would allow farmers who sell more than 50% of their products through direct marketing to continue to comply with state regulations, rather

than register with the FDA and complying with potentially costly Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Plans.

Sustainable farm advocates argue that food safety rulemaking should be tailored to accommodate farms of different sizes, focusing on systems and “whole farm” safety plans rather than crop-specific, potentially conflicting regulations. Groups such as PASA and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition have also advocated for “identity preserved channels,” meaning that products are clearly labeled with the producer’s name, creating traceability.⁵¹ Ensuring the safety of the nation’s food supply, while not overburdening small and medium-sized farms, should continue to be a priority of national and state policy-makers and regional advocates should continue to push regulations that make sense both for consumers and producers.

Through the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants*, DVRPC is supporting the Common Market, a local foods distributor, in assessing and strengthening its food safety protocols. If Common Market can meet the standards set forth for third-party audits, it can expand its customer base, benefiting many farmers throughout the regional food system.

Level the Playing Field

National and regional policy advocates should work with the federal government to remove or restructure federal farm subsidies to ensure competition and fairness in the global marketplace, while increasing profitability for U.S. farmers and ensuring a steady food supply.

⁵¹ Brian Snyder, “A Message to Public Officials on Food Safety,” Press Release, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, May 22, 2009.

Farming is a risky enterprise, made vulnerable by market price changes, weather and yield uncertainties, and changing consumer preferences. The federal government has assisted domestic farming and agriculture through trade regulation and specific income support for producers of commodity crops, such as grain, wheat, corn, and dairy. These income supports first began in 1933 in response to low crop prices following World War I and have persisted in one form or another through continual revisions of agriculture policy in the United States. Federal farm programs and policy are set through legislation commonly referred to as the Farm Bill, which covers a number of issues, from commodity support to nutrition education. If the Farm Bill expires without reauthorization or extension, the terms revert to the conditions of 1949 legislation.

Commodity payments comprise the largest percentage of farm support programs (including payments for conservation and export assistance). However, farm support is a significantly smaller percentage of the overall Farm Bill budget compared to food assistance and nutrition programs.⁵² Yet commodity payments have been both institutionalized and contentious throughout their history, receiving calls for reform from environmental advocates, some economists, and noncommodity producers of “specialty crops,” such as fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Critics argue that commodity subsidies distort the marketplace, incentivize overproduction, and are not successful in reducing poverty among farmers or feeding the world.

The exact type of income support for commodity producers has varied throughout the years. Until the 1980s, support was primarily in the form of price supports, or “deficiency payments,” government accumulation of

oversupply, and land set-asides (for conservation purposes or to reduce overproduction).⁵³

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 added direct payments, called “contract” or “fixed,” based on historical production and the “production base” rather than on current production. This means that farmers with historically high levels of production or a large number of acres producing “covered commodities,” such as wheat, feed grain, and soy, receive payments even when market prices for commodities are already high. These producers are also restricted from growing fruits and vegetables. At the same time as support shifted



Wheat field in Parkesburg, PA

Credit: Francesca Giovannini

⁵² Ralph Chite, *Farm Bill Budget and Costs: 2002 vs. 2007* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, January 29, 2008).

⁵³ Jim Monke, *Farm Commodity Programs: Direct Payments, Counter-Cyclical Payments, and Marketing Loans* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, December 13, 2004)

from government stockpiling and deficiency to direct payments, more conservation requirements and linked incentives were established for producers to remove vulnerable and environmentally sensitive land from production.

The establishment of direct payments was an attempt to reduce overproduction, although critics argue that there are indirect implications, and the largest producers still receive the highest payments. In 2007, 10.7% of all farm income was derived from government payments. However, only 4.8% of farm income in the 100-Mile Foodshed was derived from government payments.⁵⁴

When commodity prices fell dramatically in 1998, ad hoc legislation raised the payment levels by 50%. Now made permanent as “countercyclical payments,” this support is only activated when specific commodity prices drop to a set level. The 2008 Farm Bill did not significantly reform commodity payments, but it did add a voluntary revenue-based counter-cyclical payment. Both the Bush and Obama administrations have proposed, but not enacted, a cap on subsidy payments for those operations with gross receipts above \$500,000.⁵⁵

Critics of the current income support program argue that U.S. farm policy has lowered the market price of subsidized commodities below the cost of production, benefitting processors who use commodities as inputs and impacting global export markets while not significantly reducing farmer poverty.⁵⁶ The United States is determining the potential trade-

⁵⁴Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* (Philadelphia: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, January 2010), 52.

⁵⁵Jim Monke, *Farm Commodity Proposals in the President's FY2010 Budget* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, March 17, 2009).

⁵⁶Daniel A. Sumner, *Farm Subsidy Tradition and Modern Agricultural Realities*, Paper prepared for the American Enterprise Institute program on Agricultural Policy for the 2007 Farm Bill and Beyond, May 15, 2007, 11.

distorting implications of current commodity policies, as requested by the World Trade Organization.⁵⁷

Noncommodity producers (of fruits, vegetables, and nuts, for example) advocate the replacement of support for specific commodities with investment in conservation incentives, marketing programs, including nutrition education, agricultural research, and control of invasive species.

Enforcing Antitrust

Antitrust laws in agribusiness and other food businesses should be strengthened and enforced to ensure a competitive and fair marketplace with diverse consumer choices.

As the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study* discussed, consolidation has been an increasing trend, with a few large companies dominating sectors, such as distribution, wholesale trade, and food and beverage manufacturing. Vertical integration, in which a single company owns or controls all or most of a supply chain, from production to point of sale, is also increasingly common. Consolidation has been driven by cost-cutting efforts, technological change, and response to consolidation in other economic sectors. However, some of the consequences of this consolidation include decreased choices for both consumers and producers, as a smaller number of firms control a larger percentage of market share.

Meat processing, poultry, dairy, seed, and other sectors were the subject of a year-long series of workshops hosted by the Department of Justice and the USDA throughout the United States in 2010. A working

⁵⁷American Farmland Trust, “WTO Negotiations and the Farm Bill,” www.farmland.org/programs/farm-bill/history/WTO.asp (accessed August 4, 2010).

task force was established with officials from both of these agencies to provide more ongoing cooperation and to recommend action.⁵⁸

The USDA released a proposed rule in June 2010 that would encourage small producers to take legal action against meat processors for anticompetitive practices. Along with protocols for transparent pricing and enforcement, the rule would also disallow meatpackers from signing higher-paying contracts with larger livestock producers than with other producers who can provide commensurate quality and quantity.

In the seed sector, farmers have raised concerns about Monsanto's intellectual property policies, which include contracted restrictions on seed saving and litigation against violating farmers, including neighboring farms that experience seed "drift." Market competitors such as DuPont have brought suit against Monsanto claiming monopoly and price setting in the U.S. seed marketplace. DuPont alleges that Monsanto controls as much as 98% of the U.S. soybean market and 60% of the market in patented soy and corn genetics.⁵⁹ In dairy, the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division is challenging Dean Foods acquisition of Foremost Farms.

Guest Workers

National and regional policy advocates should work on immigration reform to recognize the importance and needs of temporary agricultural workers.

⁵⁸ Varney, Christine A, Joint DOJ and USDA Agriculture Workshops: Concluding Remarks, December 8, 2010.

⁵⁹ David Gutierrez, "Dupont Complains that Monsanto is running a seed market monopoly," *NaturalNews.com*, May 23, 2010, www.naturalnews.com/z028850_DuPont_Monsanto.html (accessed August 4, 2010).

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers are important components of both the U.S. and Greater Philadelphia agricultural industries. Agricultural production and, in particular, fruit and vegetable production, requires access to labor. As wages increase and domestic workers specialize in other industries, it is harder to find local labor. Stakeholder groups and local governments, including the New Jersey State Legislature, have requested federal legislation that "reforms the policies and procedures surrounding temporary agricultural worker visas, creates counterfeit-resistant identification and establishes an earned adjustment of status program, to ensure the availability and supply of farm labor, both seasonal and year-round."⁶⁰

Oxfam America has also issued recommendations for "weeding out abuses" of farmworkers. Their report recommends that the Department of Labor ensure that farmworkers can anonymously file complaints of employer misconduct, attack abuses associated with labor contractors, and improve labor law compliance and communication.⁶¹

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Leveraging Federal Food Programs

"Continue to maximize and leverage Federal Food Program Resources."

—Geraldine Henchy, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), guest speaker at Stakeholder Committee meeting

⁶⁰ State of New Jersey, Department of Agriculture, "Farm Labor," Resolutions of the 93rd State Agricultural Convention (Trenton, NJ: State of New Jersey, February 6, 2008).

⁶¹ Farmworker Justice and Oxfam America, *Weeding Out Abuses: Recommendations for a Law-abiding Farm Labor System* (Washington, D.C.: Oxfam America, June 17, 2010).

FRAC is a national nonprofit organization working to end hunger and pursue comprehensive antihunger strategies at federal, state, and local levels. It recommends maximizing federal food resources.

SNAP is a “mandatory” or “entitlement” program, meaning that all eligible participants will receive benefits regardless of the federal budget. While SNAP is an entitlement program, many people who are eligible for the program do not sign up for the program. The *BenePhilly* program, a pilot project to help eligible seniors receive benefits, asserts that the program can help older Philadelphians retain \$110 million currently lost in federal and state benefits, including SNAP benefits, for which they are eligible.⁶²

The federal School Lunch and School Breakfast programs are also entitlement programs and can provide support to limited school food budgets if schools successfully distribute meals to enrolled students. See **Figure 3.5: Percent of Students Eligible for Free-Lunch (2006)** for a depiction of eligibility rates by county. The Universal Feeding Program in Philadelphia allows eligible schools to streamline administrative requirements, thereby serving a larger percentage of eligible students at a lower cost to the school district and with fewer stigmas for students (see *Recommendations in Action: Fighting for Federal Nutrition Programs*).

Double Value Redemption programs expand federal food assistance in supporting healthy food purchases. These programs provide additional funding or incentives for the purchase of healthy food with SNAP dollars at participating outlets, such as supermarkets, farmers’ markets, and other retail establishments. For example, the new Philly Food Bucks gives an additional \$2 for each \$5 purchase.

⁶² “Using Food Stamps to Fuel Philadelphia’s Economy,” *WHYY News and Information*, with Tom MacDonald, WHYY July 7, 2010, and August 3, 2010, www.whyy.org/cms/news/government-politics/2010/07/07/using-food-stamps-to-fuel-philadelphias-economy/41536 (accessed August 3, 2010).

As mentioned earlier in the **Health** Recommendations section, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is not a mandatory program, meaning it can be capped due to enrollment numbers or budget restrictions. However, WIC also has the potential to maximize food access and nutrition education efforts. The WIC program has undergone changes to include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain options. States can determine if farmers’ markets and farm stands are eligible locations for WIC redemptions. WIC centers may also be potential sites for new farmers’ markets.

There are also federal stimulus funding opportunities that can benefit from collaboration. One example is a recent Philadelphia partnership to access Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding to expand fresh fruit and vegetable access in the WIC program. Low-income mothers and children have received \$60 in additional farmers’ market vouchers for the 2010 season. Local foundations, several nonprofit organizations, and the City of Philadelphia’s Department of Public Health have worked together to provide the program management and local match required to make this program a reality, emphasizing positive outcomes for clients.

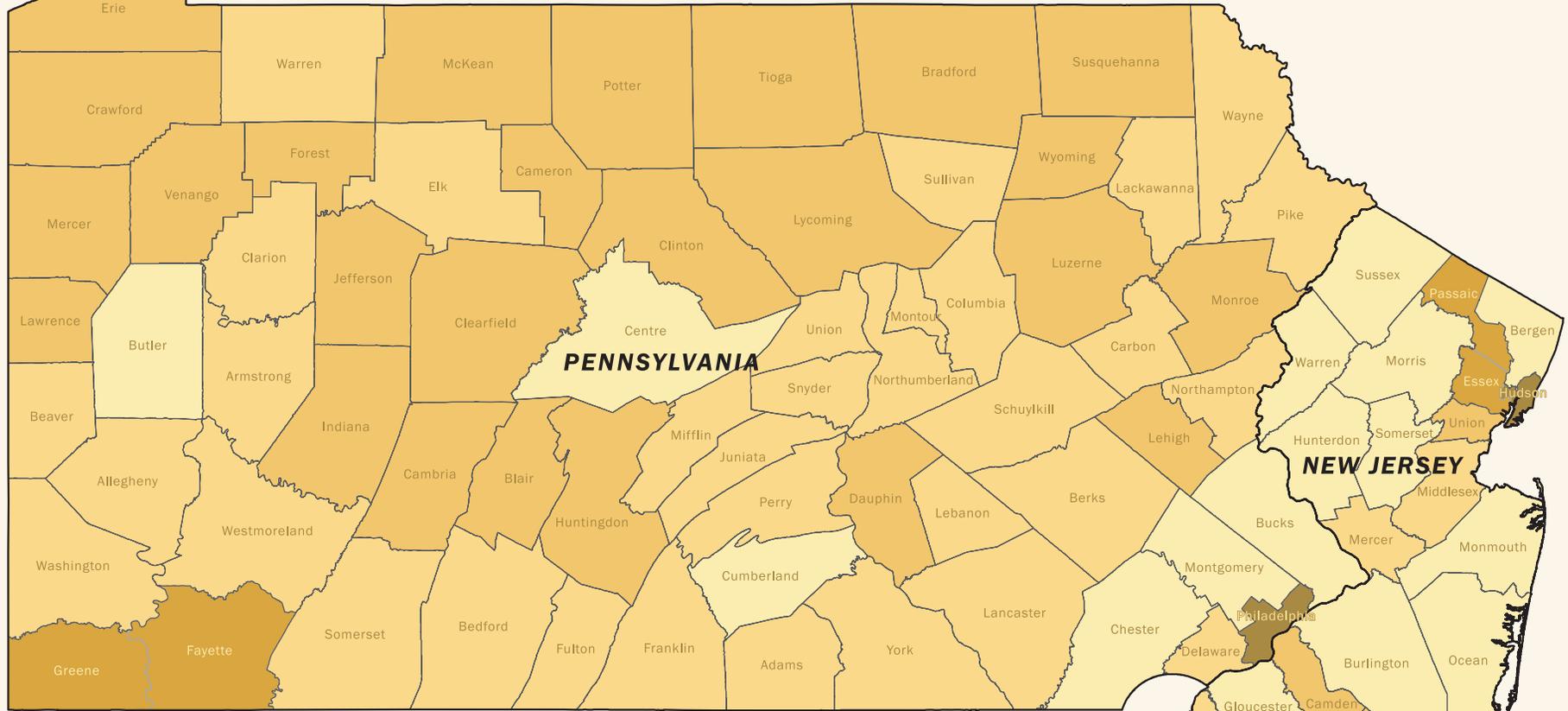
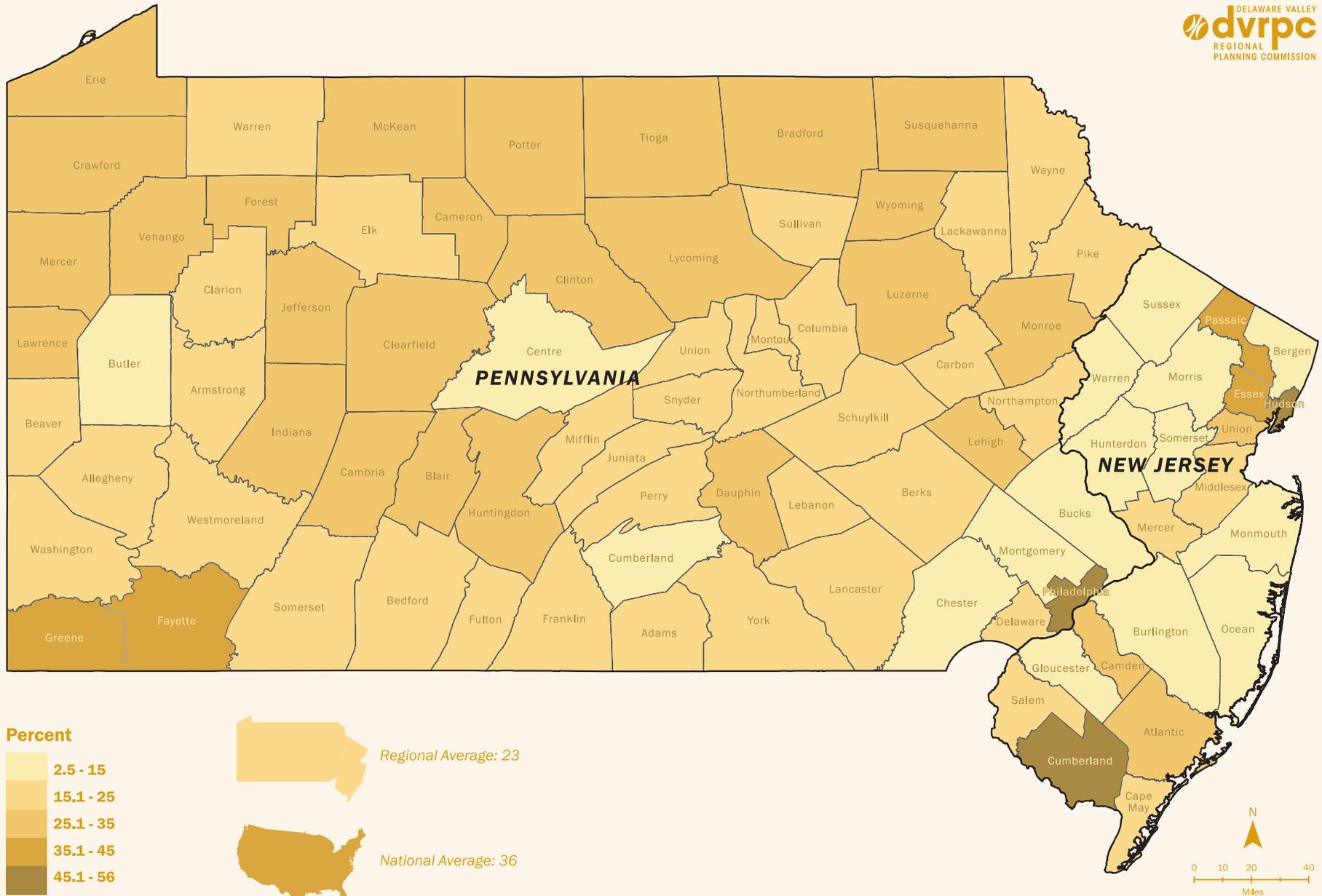
Regional Gleaning

Start or expand gleaning programs that harvest local food from farmers and help feed the food insecure.

Gleaning programs collect “excess” fruits and vegetables from regional producers and distribute them to food banks, food pantries, and other food access outlets, distributing food that might otherwise be wasted. This increases the availability of fresh food for those experiencing hunger.



FIGURE 3.5: PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE LUNCH (2006)



In Greater Philadelphia, New Jersey Farmers Against Hunger has operated a regional gleaning program and has over 50 farms that have donated over 12 million pounds of food since 1996. Chester County, Pennsylvania, has also operated a gleaning program since 1996, with more than 500 volunteers distributing food from community gardens and farms to over 65 food providers.⁶³ Philabundance, a regional food bank collecting and distributing food to food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens in a 10-county region, is also incorporating gleaning into its programming.

Transportation and Food Access

Explore ways to connect transportation services and land use planning with food access.

Transportation is an important component of food access. Food access can be a particular challenge for transit-dependent populations, such as the elderly, low-income individuals, and the disabled. Efforts to link transportation to food access range from low-cost strategies, such as locating farmers' markets at transit stops, to more resource-intensive partnerships, like rerouting buses or offering shuttle services to grocery stores.

The City of Philadelphia Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities is interested in increasing access to healthy food via transit. A forthcoming study, to be completed in 2010, will identify and map areas lacking access to providers of healthy foods and will outline transportation policies that the city and its partners can adopt to increase access.

⁶³ Chester County Food Bank, "About Gleaning," www.chestercountyfoodbank.org/about-gleaning (accessed July 23, 2010); County of Chester, Pennsylvania, *Gleaning Project* (West Chester, PA: County of Chester, Pennsylvania, 2004), dsf.chesco.org/pocopson/cwp/view.asp?A=3&Q=613035 (accessed July 23, 2010).

Besides public transportation, van services for food delivery or customer drop-off and pick-up have been initiated by stores, large residential developments, employers, and joint community ventures.⁶⁴

The cost-effectiveness of these transportation solutions is always a concern and a determinant of continuation. One possible way to minimize costs is to look for partner organizations already operating a van service or maintaining a vehicle fleet. For example, Transit Management Associations or Agencies (TMAs) are one type of potential partner. TMAs are often nonprofit, public/private partnerships that operate within a geographically specific area to solve local transportation needs, including ridesharing and commuter vanpooling. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission is working with its regional TMAs to investigate the inclusion of food deliveries in their commuter van pool.⁶⁵ TMAs might also be able to provide services connecting riders with supermarkets, food banks, farmers' markets, or other designated food access points.

Antihunger Advocacy

Develop an action plan to reduce hunger and to advocate for an antihunger agenda in Harrisburg, Trenton, and Washington, D.C.

State and federal governments have limited resources to redistribute. Developing and presenting a clear and collaborative antihunger agenda will highlight specializations, core competencies, and complementary activities, and demonstrate how the region can both stretch and

⁶⁴ Robert Gottlieb, et al., *Homeward Bound: Food-Related Transportation Strategies for Low-Income and Transit-Dependent Communities*, Working Paper UCTC No. 336. (Berkeley: The University of California Transportation Center, University of California at Berkeley, 1996).

⁶⁵ Comments delivered by Jerry Tinianow, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, at the National Association of Regional Council's Annual Conference and Exhibition on June 15, 2010.

leverage investments. Because hunger negatively impacts a diverse cross-section of the region and affects individuals, communities, businesses, and governments, a broad range of stakeholders will be needed to provide input on regional priorities for fighting hunger.

The Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center and the New Jersey Anti-Hunger Coalition coordinate statewide advocacy. Stakeholders in Greater Philadelphia came together to create an antihunger policy platform in January 2009.⁶⁶ Continued coordination within and between those groups will make the region more effective in gaining support and accessing resources.

Fair Farm Labor

Promote programs and strategies, especially cooperative solutions that create better living conditions for farm laborers, including improved labor housing, living wages, affordable healthcare, and human services for workers and their families.

Fruit and vegetable farming is laborintensive. Since the 1950s, farmers have increasingly relied on out-of-state, often seasonal, workers.⁶⁷ Farmers are responsible for providing workers with decent shelter, food, transportation, and healthcare access, along with compensation. These responsibilities are potentially made more difficult by zoning and other regulations, particularly for housing.

⁶⁶ SHARE Food Program of PA, “Local Leaders, National Expert Unveil Plan to End Philadelphia Hunger,” Press Release, February 2009, www.sharefoodprogram.org/press/FreshStart_pressrelease_021009.pdf (accessed 12 August 2010).

⁶⁷ Bryan Bell, *Good Design, Good Deeds: Community Service through Architecture* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).

Farmworkers and their advocates across the country have explored new ways to increase access to decent living conditions and social services by partnering with growers and others. The Vermont Department of Health has established the Farm Health Connection pilot program for migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Addison County. Composed of a coalition of health providers, the program develops targeted outreach, assesses the unmet healthcare needs, and has laid the foundation for federally qualified healthcare centers specifically for migrant and seasonal workers. Services range from dental vouchers to primary care.⁶⁸

Academic research also recommends strategies to increase the use of Medicaid for those eligible. Medicaid is a state-based program, and migrant workers may need to reapply each time they change state residence or face other enrollment barriers. Policies to increase eligibility reciprocity across states or to establish a “traveling Medicaid card” model are also recommended. Federal guidelines can facilitate “fast track enrollment” or allow states to establish separate eligibility for farmworkers. Regional intermediaries identified by the federal government may also enable faster processing for out-of-state claims and establish provider networks.⁶⁹

In 2008, the New Jersey Legislature passed a Farm Labor Resolution, acknowledging the need for decent wages for farmworkers, while recognizing that state laws stipulating higher compensation put New Jersey farmers at a competitive disadvantage to other states.⁷⁰ The resolution called for the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to

⁶⁸ State of Vermont, Department of Health, Agency of Human Services, *Vermont2010 Healthy Workers Program: Report to the Legislature on Act 61, Section 44 and 45* (Burlington: State of Vermont, January 15, 2010).

⁶⁹ Sara Rosenbaum and Peter Shin, *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers: Health Insurance Coverage and Access to Care* (Washington, D.C.: Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, April 2005).

⁷⁰ State of New Jersey, Department of Agriculture, “Farm Labor.” Resolutions of the 93rd State Agricultural Convention. Trenton, NJ: State of New Jersey, February 6, 2008.

train and educate farmworkers, and for a cooperative to develop “an agricultural assistance program to offset the economic impact of increases in farm labor costs.” Other suggestions include urging the recognition of farm labor housing provisions as affordable housing and requesting that rural municipalities review and amend zoning to reduce barriers to on-farm labor housing.

Burlington County, New Jersey, in partnership with the American Farmland Trust, recently developed a model municipal ordinance for on-farm labor housing.⁷¹ The ordinance defines the permitted and conditional uses and outlines a process for review and compliance of standards.

Design Corps, a nonprofit organization providing architectural services to underserved communities, worked with apple pickers in Adams County and mushroom growers in Chester County, both in Pennsylvania, along with other communities nationally to design culturally appropriate, cost-effective, and practical farmworker housing units.⁷² Houses for single workers in Adams County were built and occupied in 2002, and units for families were added later. HOME funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency covered 70% of the cost of construction and services in the form of a forgivable loan and growers provided the remaining 30% and the land.⁷³ Design Corps’ modular

⁷¹ County of Burlington, New Jersey, *Model Ordinance: Farm Labor Housing*, Draft prepared by American Farmland Trust for Burlington County Farmland Preservation Program, administered by Burlington County Agricultural Development Board, 2010.

⁷² Bell, Bryan *Good Design, Good Deeds: Community Service Through Architecture*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003.)

⁷³ Design Corps, “Migrant Housing,” www.designcorps.org/projects/past-projects#MH_PA (accessed 4 August 2010).

design standardized the cost and construction times and facilitated farmers’ decision-making, while the forgivable loan increased the quality of the structure.⁷⁴

Reducing Hunger by Creating Jobs

Approaches to reduce hunger should emphasize creating jobs with livable wages and empowering those personally affected.

Antipoverty and hunger advocates recognize that there is no single way to end hunger. However, full employment (as opposed to unemployment or underemployment) can lift an individual or a family out of poverty, and therefore out of hunger. Those individuals who have suffered from poverty may also need additional life skills to succeed in a professional



Weavers Way Co-op offers local produce at three locations throughout Philadelphia, PA

Credit: G. Widman for GPTMC

⁷⁴ Personal Communication with Bryan Bell, Design Corps. August 13, 2010.

environment or create a household budget. Additionally, an individual who has experienced hunger firsthand is a powerful advocate.

Many groups in Greater Philadelphia are engaged in this work, including community development corporations, religious institutions, advocacy organizations, social service agencies, and other neighborhood-based organizations. The Philadelphia Grow Project/Witnesses to Hunger program at Drexel University has had great success working with a number of women who have experienced poverty. Some women who have gone through the peer-counseling and life skills program were successfully placed and currently work in nonprofit organizations throughout Greater Philadelphia. Additionally, participants in Witnesses to Hunger have garnered national attention from both the media and lawmakers.

SHARE Food Program in Philadelphia, a nonprofit organization that distributes food across several Mid-Atlantic states, encourages self-help and self-efficacy. In addition to supplying 550 food cupboards in Philadelphia, SHARE sells food packages at 30% to 50% less than retail to 7,000 households of differing income levels. In exchange, participants agree to volunteer a minimum of two hours to their community. The food package allows some participants to stretch their food dollars, while for others it makes the difference in eating or going hungry. SHARE is like a food cooperative, buying food in bulk quantities and passing the savings on to its customers, but does not require an upfront financial commitment, making it more accessible and appealing to different types of households. The food package and SHARE's mission encourage individuals to help both themselves and their community.

These two approaches, among many others in Greater Philadelphia, focus on skill-building and community-building to eliminate hunger.

Fairness Factors

Advocate for food labels that allow consumers to make more informed decisions and enable food producers to be more fully compensated.

The face-to-face interaction of direct marketing, such as farmers' markets, can ease consumer concerns about food safety, production, and business practices. Labeling or certification is often used to convey similar information in a retail outlet. Many facts can be incorporated into a food product label, including nutrition and dietary information, the farmer's share of the food dollar, the use of genetically modified organisms, and the ecological footprint of food production practices. However, it is possible for consumers to have information fatigue and receive so much new and potentially conflicting information that everything gets "tuned out." Too many labels and certifications in the marketplace can lead to confusion and minimize impact. Rather, it might be more effective to use and refine an existing labeling and third-party certification process.

The Food Alliance, a nonprofit organization originating in the Pacific Northwest over 10 years ago, has created one of the most innovative and comprehensive processes for certifying food producers (farms and ranchers) and food handlers (packers, processors, and distributors). The entire business model and production line is incorporated into certification criteria, including working conditions, environmental stewardship, and humane treatment of animals. Continual improvement over time is also a key component. As of 2007, there were an estimated 5.1 million acres certified and over 16 certified processing and distribution facilities.⁷⁵ More recent data from 2009 shows that sales

⁷⁵ Food Alliance, "A History of Food Alliance," www.foodalliance.org/about/history/ (accessed August 4, 2010).

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

Fighting for Federal Nutrition Programs

According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), in 2008 and 2009, 36.1% of all households in Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, which includes portions of South, West, Northeast, and Center City Philadelphia, and parts of Delaware County, reported not having enough money to buy food in the previous 12 months. Nationwide, only one other congressional district, located in the Bronx, New York, had a higher rate.

Despite high need, the widespread availability of free school meals in Philadelphia schools was threatened by the USDA in 2008, when it sought to eliminate the School District of Philadelphia's unique system of universal availability of free lunches at many schools. A coalition of local and national groups, the congressional delegation, and Philadelphia and Pennsylvania leaders came together to advocate for the program and successfully secured its continuation.

Universal availability allows children to receive free school breakfast and lunch without filling out the individual applications that are normally needed to qualify for these programs. As of 2009, the School District of Philadelphia had designated 200 of its 280 schools as sites where school breakfast and lunch is "free for all" and individual applications are not required. In these schools, 75% or more of the student population has been determined to qualify for free and reduced-price lunches based on matching student enrollment with public assistance rolls and surveys of family income. The school district is reimbursed based on the number of students meeting eligibility thresholds and then makes up the difference.

Under a traditional system, applications are submitted by individual students. These applications are processed by the school district and a portion are "validated" (income information verified through documentation) by school district officials. Universal availability was developed and implemented in 1991 as a joint project between Community Legal Services, Temple University, and the School District of Philadelphia to provide a more efficient method of claiming federal reimbursements for school meals. Philadelphia has found it cost-effective to provide universal availability based on periodic economic surveys conducted by a third party than to process individual applications. An article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 2008 estimated the total cost of processing individual applications at more than \$800,000 annually. Another article cited the cost at \$1 million. This compares to \$550,000 spent on a 2007 survey to determine levels of eligibility.

The School District of Philadelphia serves an average of 110,000 free school lunches a day. Of the students served, about 59,000 could be directly certified as a result of household participation in SNAP or another benefit program. The remaining 51,000 would need to fill out individual applications under the traditional system. Participation rates in school breakfast and lunch programs at schools where meals are universally available, according to state figures, are about 80%, and nearly double the 45% participation rate at nonuniversal sites. In the first year of the program, the School District of Philadelphia experienced a 14% participation increase in elementary schools, a

...continued

45% increase in middle schools, and a 180% increase in high schools for the school lunch program. This supports advocates' positions that students, and especially older students who are maturing in a highly volatile and status-minded social environment, are embarrassed to be singled out for free lunch.

In August 2008, the USDA informed the Pennsylvania Department of Education that it intended to terminate Philadelphia's universal availability program. In September, the Pennsylvania Department of Education appealed this decision. In October, this appeal was denied by the USDA. In May 2009, the USDA confirmed that it was following through on its decision to terminate Philadelphia's program and indicated that it wanted the school district to adopt the "Provision 2" system of free and reduced-price lunch application, which requires families to apply for free and reduced-price meals every four years.

Philadelphia's antihunger advocates objected to the change and indicated that "many poor children who normally get free lunch and breakfast may go without" if the program ended. They argued that paperwork is a major barrier to participation and pointed to the differences in participation rates between universal and nonuniversal availability sites.

Levels of school lunch participation are also used to determine other levels of federal funding—a possible loss of \$11 million according to the Pennsylvania Department of Education estimates.

Philadelphia's congressional delegation, as well as Governor Ed Rendell and Mayor Michael Nutter, pushed for continuation of the program. In addition to a press conference, the delegation and governor sent a number of letters and made phone calls to USDA officials opposing termination of the program. In early June 2009, U.S. Senator Arlen Specter pushed for continuation of the program when Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies regarding the USDA's 2010 budget request. Local and national antihunger advocates also pushed for continuation. USDA announced that it would continue Philadelphia's program until Congress had an opportunity to take up the matter as part of reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, which is now under way.

Other cities, including New York City and Los Angeles, have expressed an interest in adopting similar programs. In April 2008, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, wrote a letter to the USDA advocating for nationwide adoption of universal availability. Provisions were included in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, passed by Congress and signed by President Obama late last year, to allow school districts with substantial numbers of students that qualify for free and reduced price lunch to offer meals universally. The legislation gives the Secretary of Agriculture the option to continue the use of Philadelphia's economic survey methodology of determining eligibility.

of Food Alliance certified products exceeded \$450 million nationally, up from \$100 million in 2007.⁷⁶

The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) recently partnered with the Food Alliance to bring Food Alliance certification to the Mid-Atlantic for both food producers and handlers. PASA will market the program and facilitate enrollment for interested parties. According to PASA, Food Alliance certification gives regional farmers “a tool to differentiate their products in that retail or food service setting... Consumers [will have] a better means to separate the marketing of food from the reality of production practices.”⁷⁷

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

Soup Kitchens of the Future

Ensure that charitable food providers include capacity-building in their development activities and work to increase fresh food and vegetables in the emergency food system.

Food relief providers have the significant task of distributing food to those who are experiencing hunger. Even though conceptually they are “services of last resort,” many people experience chronic, long-term hunger and demand has increased for emergency food among the general population due to the economic downturn.

Those experiencing hunger also suffer from high rates of diet-related disease and nutritional challenges, making access to fresh, nutritious

⁷⁶ Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Alliance, “Innovative Non-Profit Partnership Brings Sustainable Agriculture Certification to Pennsylvania,” Press Release, February 4, 2009.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

food critical.⁷⁸ However, food relief providers are often limited by their dependence on volunteer labor, donated food items, insufficient capacity to request particular food items, and inadequate resources to purchase refrigeration and storage equipment that enable fresh food donations.

Throughout the region, many food banks and other food relief providers participate in gleaning programs, work with farmers’ markets and farmers, and provide support for community and entrepreneurial gardening. The Cathedral Kitchen in Camden has also started providing medical and dental care, as well as coordinating a culinary training program and supplementing food in the kitchen with herbs grown in the backyard. Organizations can create development strategies that raise support for storage and refrigeration to take advantage of local food.

Responsible Purchasing Policies

Large-scale buyers, such as institutions, should set responsible purchasing policies that reflect equity along the value chain—from the producer to the shelf.

Large-scale buyers can leverage their buying power to support responsible purchasing and production practices. Theoretically, market demand can scale up sustainable and equitable practices. For example, Wal-Mart has asked suppliers to reduce their packaging and create less waste. Suppliers will be evaluated through Wal-Mart’s packaging scorecard. These changes will be made if they provide costparity or cost savings. Wal-Mart argues, for example, that savings might be found

⁷⁸ Food Research and Action Center, *Hunger and Obesity? Making the Connections*, Working Document Fact Sheet (Washington, D.C.: Food Research and Action Center, 2010), www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/hunger_and_obesity__frac_.pdf (accessed August 4, 2010).

in decreased landfill fees, reduced materials costs, and savings in transportation, storages, and shipping fees.⁷⁹

Low-Income CSAs

Support and expand the number of low-income CSA models to increase fresh food access in low-income areas, while fairly compensating farmers for their products.

CSA programs were created to provide the farmer with cash flow at the beginning of the season, when expenses are highest. CSAs also emphasize shared risk: CSA members agree to accept the share package regardless of yields, severe droughts, or other uncertainties. The challenge has been adapting that lump-sum, risk-based model to include low-income individuals with identical fresh food needs but limited or restricted payment capacity. There are various models of low-income CSAs, including the availability of work shares or where high-income members subsidize low-income members' shares.

In Greater Philadelphia, several organizations are exploring a new low-income CSA model. Through the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants*, DVRPC is providing partial support to Greensgrow Farms, an urban farm in Philadelphia, to expand outreach to low-income residents, encouraging participation in its CSA program. The farm is also producing an interactive cooking show on preparing meals from food items in weekly CSA shares.

Greensgrow and other programs are establishing revolving loan funds with a financial intermediary. The farm or CSA entity is paid up front and the line of credit is established, while weekly or biweekly SNAP payments replenish the fund.

⁷⁹Nidhi Shah, *Green Purchasing: The Issue of Responsible Supply Chain Management for Improving Environmental Performance* (Northbrook, IL: HCS Consulting, 2009).



COLLABORATION

Collaboration is especially important right now, as some environmentalists, social researchers, and other experts think we may be “reaching the limits of our well-intentioned, uncoordinated activities.”⁸⁰ Other policymakers, government agencies, and philanthropic professionals see this time period as one when financial resources are dwindling, while needs, from social services to public infrastructure, are growing. Issues are becoming more complex, and solutions call for interdisciplinary approaches and systemic solutions. This section explores how individuals, organizations, government agencies, and many others are currently working together, and how they could collaborate in the future to tackle the overwhelming issues in the food system.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Regional Food Policy Framework

“Continue to convene the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee and encourage shared efforts.”

—Kimberley Hodgson, American Planning Association, guest speaker at a Stakeholder Committee meeting

Having identified a food system study as a top Board priority in September 2007, DVRPC began meeting with a small group of food system stakeholders in early 2008 to ask the community of experts what value the Commission could add to their work. Staff followed up with additional one-on-one meetings. Stakeholders responded with a list of research questions, such as “how much local food is produced and consumed within Greater Philadelphia?”

DVRPC quickly realized that developing a study advisory committee consisting of the region’s experts and stakeholders on health, nutrition, farming, local food, land preservation, food distribution, freight, and trade would inform and shape the food system study. Particular attention was paid to recruiting organizational representation from organizations with which DVRPC had not previously worked. The study advisory committee, which is now the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee, met at different times to review and provide feedback on DVRPC’s progress on the study and this subsequent plan.

From those informal meetings in early 2008 to the study kick-off meeting in June 2008, the committee grew from 10 individuals to 40.

⁸⁰ Patrick Sanaghan and Nancy Aronson, eds. *Deep Lessons on Collaboration: How Collaboration Really Works* (Doylestown, PA: The Heritage Conservancy, 2009).

In 2010, DVRPC became more aware of different ongoing efforts, met with more individuals, and received support from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation for committee meetings. The William Penn Foundation funded a complementary technical and financial assistance initiative. By this time, the committee had grown to approximately 150 individuals, representing over 100 organizations. See **Figure 3.6: Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee Members** to see the geographic distribution of those members. These organizations include local governments, state agencies, land trusts, economic development organizations, community-based organizations, academic institutions, and philanthropic organizations.

Committee meetings have become important opportunities for organizations to build relationships with colleagues, learn about efforts within the region, as well as some national or neighboring efforts, and discuss shared and dissimilar values. With the conclusion of the plan, committee members have expressed an interest in meeting several times a year to continue to learn about food system issues, network with other organizations, and provide feedback to DVRPC regarding its food system planning efforts.

In the last 5 to 10 years, more similar groupings of stakeholders and experts have been coming together in the form of food policy councils. In Greater Philadelphia, Camden City started a City Food Security Advisory Committee in 2009. In the same year, Isles, Inc., began convening organizations in an informal Mercer County Food Policy Council. With a Food Charter passed in October 2008, the City of Philadelphia is formally starting a city food policy council in the summer of 2010.

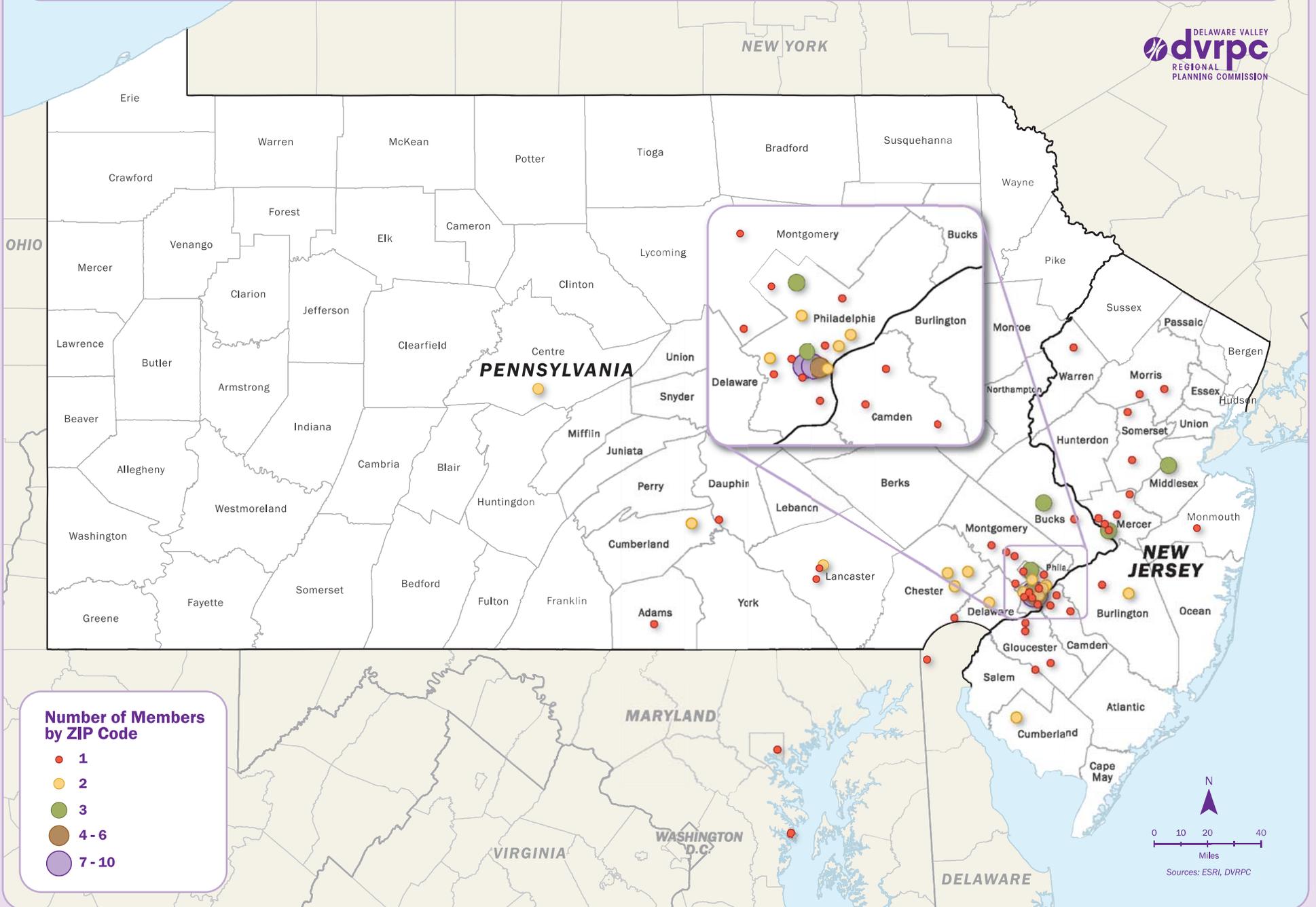
While DVRPC cannot implement food policy, its stakeholders can. A regional council, or committee, can provide more opinions, explore more ideas, and encourage city, county, and state food policy councils to



EATING HERE

GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

FIGURE 3.6: GREATER PHILADELPHIA FOOD SYSTEM STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEMBERS



learn from one another, leveraging the region’s resources. Additionally, the Stakeholder Committee aims to be inclusive, welcoming interested individuals and informed stakeholders to participate, inviting them to become more involved if so inclined.

POLICY REFORMS

Health and Food Safety Regulations

Local governments—municipal, county, and state—should work with local health departments to review and overhaul regulations that inhibit local food businesses or make the costs of operating a legitimate business too high.

While many food safety and public health advocates have long argued for the FDA to revise food safety regulations to more closely regulate the industrial and conventional food system,⁸¹ many local food advocates are worried that small and independent producers, such as family farmers and small food business owners, will be unfairly impacted. Sustainable agriculture advocates are worried that narrowly defined Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) will discourage organic and sustainable production and, specifically, crop diversification and small-scale sustainable animal production on family farms.

While safety is important to all food producers, especially as the local food movement brings more food into households and institutions, larger businesses—those that are a part of a large multinational corporation—have more financial resources. They can train staff, purchase new equipment, absorb losses, and change business models to comply with more stringent regulations, while small food producers cannot do so easily.

⁸¹ See **Fairness** Recommendations section for a similar discussion on changes to food safety legislation.

Similarly, county and state health departments that oversee and enforce food safety regulations are sometimes criticized for being inflexible, especially for new and small businesses. The Stakeholder Committee recommends that more food system advocates and local governments interested in supporting a local food economy work directly with public health departments to better understand valid concerns and important issues in regulating food businesses. The committee also recommends that those in a position to influence food safety policy educate legislators and administrators about the benefits of sustainable agriculture and a local food economy.

EXPAND EXISTING EFFORTS

Integrating Food System and Sustainability Policies

Local governments should comprehensively integrate regional and local food system-related goals, objectives, and action steps into comprehensive and master plans.

DVRPC recently published *Municipal Implementation Tool Brochure #18: Food System Planning*, an introduction to community food system planning, geared toward municipalities. For those municipalities that are undertaking sustainability plans, DVRPC suggests that the local government identify goals, objectives, and action steps that strengthen the regional and local food systems, which in turn will strengthen the regional economy, and may improve the natural environment.

Because the food system is a network of interconnected activities, overlapping economic sectors, and the intersection of commerce and managed resources—similar to the concept of sustainability—actions

taken at all levels of government, and by private and public entities, are needed to create a more sustainable and resilient system.

Making Connections between Markets and Farmers

Support organizations, along with the USDA, state departments of agriculture, county agricultural development committees, and cooperative extensions, should continue to facilitate more meetings between local farmers and the commercial retail and wholesale sectors.

Many support organizations focus on educating farmers, from technical on-farm skills to business planning, and from value-added production to estate planning. Farmers have few opportunities to meet with other actors in the food system, such as produce buyers, store owners, food service managers, and restaurateurs. When such meetings have occurred, farmers, buyers, support service providers, and educators all remark that they learn about one another's business needs and make personal connections that they could not otherwise generate.

These types of exchanges may explain why the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture's (PASA's) annual conference continues to grow in attendance year after year, attracting more people from different professions and exceeding 2,000 attendees in 2009, despite a snowstorm.⁸² Similarly, the annual conference of the Northeast Organic Farming Association—New Jersey Chapter (NOFA-NJ) continues to grow in size, with 400 people attending in 2010.

⁸² Marilyn Anthony, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture Southeastern Regional Director, personal communication, July 28, 2010.



Strawberries from Honeybrook Organic Farm CSA

Credit: Tim Gerdes

The continuing success of the PASA and NOFA-NJ annual conferences and other events suggests that more outreach that connects producers and buyers is needed. Other opportunities may include sponsoring local food receptions and related events at professional conferences and national conventions hosted in Philadelphia.

Interagency Coordinating Committees

New Jersey and Pennsylvania should continue and expand efforts to coordinate interagency committees to streamline regulations affecting independent farmers and food businesses.

Marketplaces, microclimates, and cultural foodways do not always align with political boundaries, making it beneficial to collaborate across state boundaries. The governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut,

RECOMMENDATIONS IN ACTION

The Power of Collaboration

In early 2010, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded a \$23 million grant to help complete the Schuylkill River Trail, fill gaps in the East Coast Greenway along the Delaware River in Philadelphia, and construct and improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Camden City. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant, one of just 51 awarded to communities around the country, was the result of collaboration across jurisdictions and between groups of all types, from local government and advocacy groups to development corporations and conservationists.

In 2008, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia brought together many organizations, governmental partners, and stakeholders to plan, design, and complete segments of the Schuylkill River Trail. The trail had been envisioned in the 1970s and was partially constructed in subsequent decades. Similarly, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) spearheaded efforts along the Delaware River to complete the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile recreational trail running from Maine to Florida. These two projects overlap along West Philadelphia's 58th Street corridor, which could be a connector between the East Coast Greenway and an extension of the Schuylkill River Trail.

The Bicycle Coalition and PEC became aware of possible federal stimulus funding in the summer of 2009 and moved rapidly to merge their efforts and those of other regional groups into a single joint application, entitled GREAT-PA/NJ. The application covered 17 different trail segments in six counties for an estimated cost of \$36 million. As a single application, it garnered significant support, including

letters from 52 elected officials, including all four U.S. Senators, eight U.S. Representatives, and countless agencies, institutions, and nonprofit organizations. The application for funding described economic, livability, environmental, and safety benefits. Several of the trail segments will connect low-income communities to the regional network. Special focus was given to job creation (a federal goal) and regional competitiveness (a local interest).

Although the region was awarded partial funding for 10 segments in Philadelphia and Camden City, the groups continue to work together to pursue additional funds for remaining segments, according to Sarah Clark Stuart of the Bicycle Coalition. Advocates, including Spencer Finch of PEC, believe that there are multiple benefits to groups with different interests working together and supporting regional efforts.

Ongoing collaboration between groups has enabled information sharing, including photographs and maps, and prepared the region to pursue future funding opportunities as they become available. The breadth of the collaboration also meant that it had a wealth of political and public support from which to draw, including the capacity to gather thousands of signatures for a petition in support of the TIGER application. In the end, it was a combination of long-term relationship building and an ability to quickly respond to funding availability that allowed the region to put forward a strong, multifaceted application for TIGER funds.

Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont comprise the New England Governors' Alliance and, in 2009, commissioned a report on land conservation recommendations. One outcome is a directive to develop the New England Farm and Food Security Initiative, which will assess capacity for and barriers to expanded regional food production and consumption. The initiative includes the six New England chief agricultural officers and the USDA, along with landowners, farm organizations, and others.⁸³

NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

Learning from Other Policy Areas

Learn from other policy areas, such as transportation and the energy sector, to quickly mature food system policy and take quick and decisive actions for lasting changes.

While food policies have existed for at least 100 years, it is only in the last 10 years that food policy has captured the general public's attention, thanks in large part to popular books such as *Fast Food Nation* and *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, news articles, and successful documentaries, such as the accessible *Food, Inc.* In the Information Age and 24-hour news cycle, this policy arena is asked to develop at a rapid speed. However, many of the problems in today's food system were once seen as solutions, sometimes enacted by legislation. DVRPC recommends that planners and others recently interested in food policy learn from other policy arenas, such as transportation and energy, which have already matured.

⁸³ American Farmland Trust, "Blue Ribbon Commission on Land Conservation Recommends New England Farm and Food Security Initiative, and More," Press Release, September 25, 2009, www.farmland.org/news/pressreleases/New-England-Farm-and-Food-Security-Commission.asp (accessed July 27, 2010).

For example, there are many similarities and parallels between food system planning and freight planning. Not only is food distribution dependent on a multimodal freight system, but freight is also a transportation sector that relies heavily on private businesses and investment. Food is a sector dominated by private businesses, but is regulated by domestic and international laws and influenced by incentives.

In the same vein, alternative energy advocates saw tremendous gains during the energy crises of the 1970s, and in the 2000s with new financial incentives for both producers and consumers. Some advocates focused their efforts on incentives and rebates for both energy conservation and renewable energy technology. Due to an international community of scientists, Pennsylvania has enacted Act 129, which identifies quantifiable targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy usage by 3% by 2013. Many different actors, from municipal governments to individuals, must take action to meet those targets.

Speaking with a Collective Voice

Food policy practitioners and advocates should reinforce each other's goals and strengthen their alliances by intentionally using communication strategies that emphasize the inter-relationships among food system issues, speaking with a collective voice to increase the region's influence in creating national policy.

Similarly, the food system has an array of stakeholders who have diverse interests and objectives, but not contradictory or opposed goals. In August 2010, ActionMedia, a nonprofit specializing in helping advocates

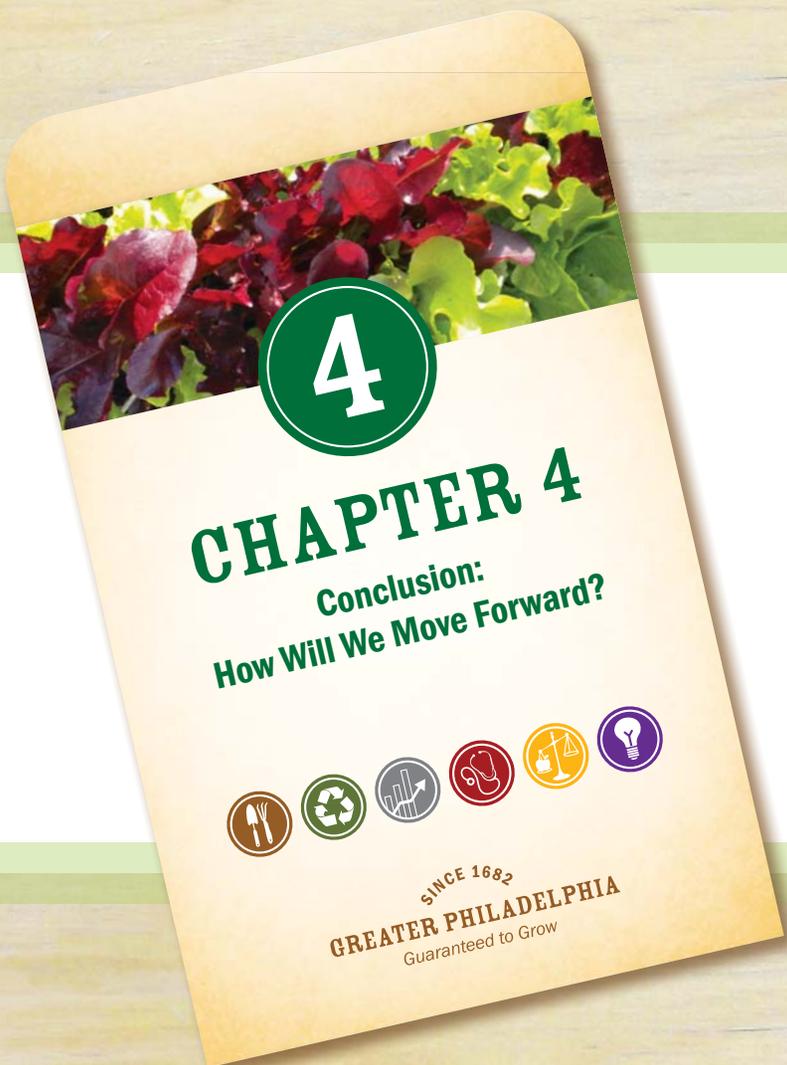
communicate complex public policy issues to voters, undertook public opinion research in the Philadelphia area. ActionMedia suggests that Greater Philadelphia’s food system stakeholders intentionally build communication strategies around a shared frame that emphasizes the inter-relationships between the agricultural industry, nutrition and health, natural resource protection, and social justice—the food system. Although the food system is an abstract concept, ActionMedia’s research and various stakeholders’ (including DVRPC’s) experiences show that people respond favorably to food system issues if the concept is established for them, and if stakeholders identify their values—for security, safety, healthfulness, and community.

Food policy practitioners and advocates can learn from other policy areas and work to create a collective voice around important food policy issues, to act quickly, while the general public and policymakers are interested in food system issues.



A cow in a meadow at Fox Chase Farm in Philadelphia, PA

Credit: Ruth Savitz (www.photosofphiladelphia.com)



While DVRPC is the author of *Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan*, the region's 5.5 million residents are stakeholders of the global, national, and regional food systems. As mentioned before, this document draws on a number of efforts from the past and present, with the aim of identifying opportunities for intervention and action from which the Greater Philadelphia region can move forward. Hopefully, individuals, organizations, local governments, and government agencies can see the unique role that they can play in strengthening the regional food system.

Moving forward, DVRPC will monitor the plan’s implementation and the Stakeholder Committee’s efforts. The **Indicators** are a helpful mechanism for periodic and general assessments. DVRPC’s stakeholder committee meetings are a place to bring colleagues up-to-date on various projects.

Local Food Economy Financial and Technical Assistance Initiative

Because of the stakeholder-driven planning process, DVRPC was asked by the William Penn Foundation to manage a multiphase program—a Local Food Economy Financial and Technical Assistance initiative—designed to strengthen the regional food system. In 2009, this program made leadership, communications, and education grants.



The Brewer’s Plate highlights Philadelphia’s emerging brewer industry and celebrated eateries. Proceeds benefit Fair Food, a nonprofit bringing locally grown food to urban consumers.

Credit: R. Kennedy for GPTMC.

In April 2010, DVRPC issued a Request for Proposals, seeking proposals that implement several key recommendations from the planning process and are identified within the plan as a “Top Recommendation.” Twenty-nine proposals were received and seven grant projects were initiated in August 2010. See *Appendix C: Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants Selected Projects* for a summary of each selected project.

Federal Grant Opportunities

Because of a growing interest in regionalism at the national, state, and local levels, DVRPC anticipates that there will be several grant opportunities in which parts of the Greater Philadelphia Food System Plan can be implemented. USDA’s Hunger-Free Communities Request for Applications is one such example of a new federal grant opportunity.

As federal grants are extremely competitive, the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee meetings provide opportunities for stakeholders to learn about each others’ interests and strengths, and possibly collaborate on projects. This type of collaboration makes the region more competitive in pursuing grant opportunities. DVRPC will continue to support stakeholders’ grant applications, tying individual efforts into a regional framework, and offer technical assistance when appropriate.

Indicators

Annual or biannual review of the **Indicators** will provide the Stakeholder Committee with opportunities to reflect on changes in the food system. DVRPC hopes these indicators will aid stakeholders in securing grant funds and demonstrating measurable results of their efforts. If future indicator analyses show that little has changed or trends have worsened, the indicators may inspire new recommendations, interventions, and strategies.



Summer harvest for sale at Philadelphia's Headhouse Farmers' Market

Credit: Marisa McClellan

Many grant-funded initiatives require organizations of all different shapes, sizes, and expertise to undertake significant evaluation efforts and report measurable outcomes. DVRPC has already begun and will continue to collect various datasets related to specific food system projects. While the Food System Plan's indicators are on a county, regional, or state level, the stakeholder committee meetings can be an opportunity to share results and research.

Recommendations and Implementers

The following pages (**Figure 4.1**) summarize the stakeholder committee's recommendations. Each recommendation is identified as a Top Recommendation, Policy Reform, Existing Effort, or New Approach. While designating implementers is useful, it is important to note that DVRPC has purposely not identified all principal actors.

This plan was created through a two-year stakeholder-driven planning process, but not all of the relevant implementers, such as the federal government, were part of the planning process.

It will take time to realize all of the food system plan's goals, but there are things that an individual can do right now to begin making this vision for a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system a reality. Individuals can support the region's economy and heritage by purchasing fresh, locally grown foods from a nearby farmers' market or by joining a community-supported agriculture (CSA) farm. If one has the space, growing a garden will improve a household's food security. Many municipalities and some neighborhoods have composting programs. Private companies have started to meet the need to compost household food waste. The region has an extensive park and trail network, encouraging people to get outside, enjoy the outdoors, and exercise or commute to work. Lastly, individuals can protect open space and farmland by voting for municipal, county, and state funding referendums or becoming a member of a land trust.

Figure 4.1: Summary of Recommendations

Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="327 415 449 532" style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p data-bbox="285 561 495 662" style="text-align: center;">FARMING and SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE</p> <hr data-bbox="226 711 552 716"/> <p data-bbox="226 764 443 786">Affordable Farmland</p> <p data-bbox="226 797 527 1170">Maintain affordable land for farmers through a range of potential innovations and new business models. These include addressing the retirement needs of farmers, identifying opportunities to transition preserved land into food production, and creating investment vehicles for long-term agricultural production on preserved land.</p>	<p data-bbox="625 383 758 404">Property Tax</p> <p data-bbox="625 415 1010 532">States should explore tax policies that provide additional tax relief and incentives for agriculture that produces fresh food for local markets.</p> <p data-bbox="625 573 947 594">Urban Agriculture Block Grant</p> <p data-bbox="625 605 1010 919">As more cities, such as Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia, become interested in urban agriculture for its food production and job creation potential, environmental benefits, and impact on neighborhood stabilization and revitalization, more federal funding programs should explicitly include urban agriculture opportunities as eligible activities.</p> <p data-bbox="625 959 810 980">Access to Capital</p> <p data-bbox="625 992 989 1143">Encourage more institutions to lend to agricultural and food businesses, including part-time farmers, urban farmers, and entrepreneurs with little equity.</p>	<p data-bbox="1087 383 1304 404">Community Planning</p> <p data-bbox="1087 415 1472 659">Local governments and farmers should work together to ensure that communities maintain affordable farmland, adopt farm-friendly planning policies and zoning ordinances, improve the environment, and work toward food security and food system resiliency.</p> <p data-bbox="1087 699 1409 721">County Cooperative Extensions</p> <p data-bbox="1087 732 1409 883">County Cooperative Extensions should continue to increase programming around local food, small farms, fruit and vegetable farming, and urban agriculture.</p> <p data-bbox="1087 924 1360 945">State Farm Link Programs</p> <p data-bbox="1087 956 1451 1073">New Jersey and Pennsylvania should expand programs that match interested farmers with interested landowners or retiring farmers.</p>	<p data-bbox="1549 383 1755 404">401(k)s for Farmers</p> <p data-bbox="1549 415 1871 594">Start or expand individual development accounts that reward farmers for their years of hard work and sustainable practices by creating retirement plans for farmers.</p> <p data-bbox="1549 634 1850 656">Partners in Urban Agriculture</p> <p data-bbox="1549 667 1871 980">Urban agriculture professionals and the antihunger community should build partnerships with property owners and businesses to develop new community gardens and commercial urban agriculture projects on underutilized lands of all types and in various locations.</p>

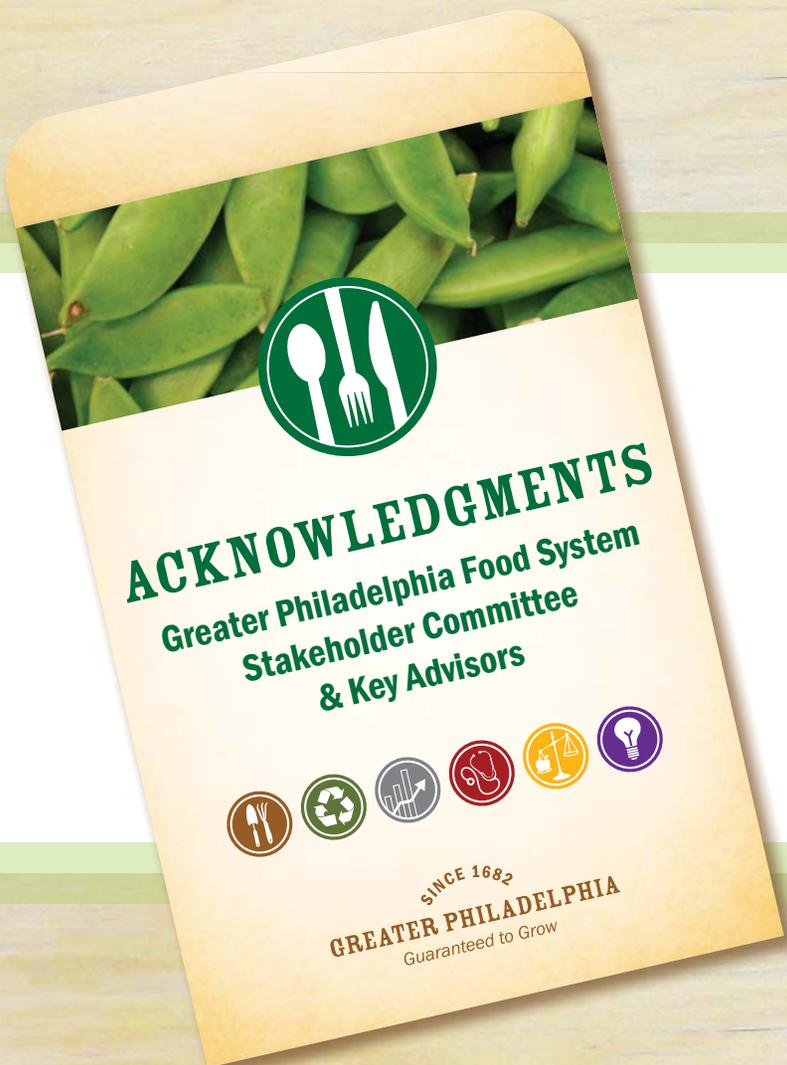
Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="331 358 449 475" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="275 505 499 605">ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP and CONSERVATION</p> <hr data-bbox="226 654 548 657"/> <p data-bbox="226 706 548 727">Natural Resource Protection</p> <p data-bbox="226 738 548 857">Develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources.</p>	<p data-bbox="625 326 911 347">Ecological Compensation</p> <p data-bbox="625 358 1003 477">Pay farmers for the ecosystem services they provide, such as carbon sequestration and groundwater recharge.</p>	<p data-bbox="1087 326 1402 347">Alternative Energy on Farms</p> <p data-bbox="1087 358 1409 444">Continue to support farmers' exploration and development of alternative energy sources.</p> <p data-bbox="1087 488 1346 509">Farmland Preservation</p> <p data-bbox="1087 521 1423 607">Continue to preserve the region's farmland while supporting and revitalizing developed areas.</p>	<p data-bbox="1549 326 1682 347">Composting</p> <p data-bbox="1549 358 1864 574">More local governments should adopt "Zero Waste" strategies or increase composting activities at all scales, from commercial businesses like restaurants to curbside pick-up for residents.</p> <p data-bbox="1549 618 1850 737">Tying Urban and Rural Together through Regional Transfer of Development Rights</p> <p data-bbox="1549 748 1864 1110">Local governments and state and county agricultural preservation programs should develop incentives to keep agricultural land in production by encouraging permanent greenhouse development and solar energy production to be located in urban and suburban areas on previously developed land instead of on prime agricultural land.</p>

Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="327 354 449 472" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="300 500 478 565">ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</p> <hr data-bbox="226 613 552 618"/> <p data-bbox="226 667 468 688">Business Development</p> <p data-bbox="226 699 546 1040">Create or expand new and specialized programs to reduce the barriers of entry for new food entrepreneurs and new, beginning, and minority farmers, and encourage value-added activities. Examples include training programs and revolving loan, micro-loan, and low-interest loan funds.</p>	<p data-bbox="625 321 821 342">Food Procurement</p> <p data-bbox="625 354 978 597">Organizations and entities that regularly buy food for meetings, events, and meal services should establish procurement standards and bonus point provisions for the purchase of nutritious, ethical, sustainably produced, regionally sourced and/or fair-trade products.</p>	<p data-bbox="1087 321 1293 342">Healthy Food Retail</p> <p data-bbox="1087 354 1472 505">Increase and support governmental and philanthropic investments in fresh food retail in those instances where consumer demand meets suitable market conditions.</p> <p data-bbox="1087 545 1199 566">Marketing</p> <p data-bbox="1087 578 1472 696">Increase funding for successful and well-established marketing campaigns, such as Jersey Fresh, Philly Homegrown, PA Preferred, and <i>Buy Fresh Buy Local</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="1087 737 1171 758">Tourism</p> <p data-bbox="1087 769 1457 888">Increase and support efforts to encourage nonfarm residents and tourists to engage in agritourism and culinary tourism.</p>	<p data-bbox="1549 321 1787 342">Food Enterprise Zones</p> <p data-bbox="1549 354 1864 537">Local governments should create model “food enterprise zone” incentives for urban food production, value-added and food processing, and healthy food retail conversions.</p> <p data-bbox="1549 578 1864 664">Applying the Efficiencies of the Global Food System to the Regional Food System</p> <p data-bbox="1549 675 1864 826">Large and small businesses alike should apply supply chain management technology to scale the local food system up to the regional.</p>

Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="327 354 449 472" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="331 500 441 532" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>HEALTH</p> </div> <hr data-bbox="226 581 550 583"/> <div data-bbox="222 630 478 686" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Public Awareness and Healthy Food</p> </div> <div data-bbox="218 691 546 911" data-label="Text"> <p>Promote the use of new technology and community-based communication outlets by all partners – government, private sector, and nonprofits – to educate people about healthy food.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="621 321 921 378" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Addressing the Toxic Food Environment</p> </div> <div data-bbox="617 383 991 570" data-label="Text"> <p>The federal government, and specifically the Federal Trade Commission and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration should address the toxic food environment that has led to unhealthy eating.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="621 607 989 664" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Leveraging Public Assistance to Incentivize Healthy Eating</p> </div> <div data-bbox="617 669 991 760" data-label="Text"> <p>Maximize food assistance programs and create more incentives for participants to obtain healthy foods.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="621 797 978 854" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Nutrition Standards for Food in Government Facilities</p> </div> <div data-bbox="617 859 1001 1078" data-label="Text"> <p>Municipal, county, and state governments and the federal government should develop nutrition standards and labeling requirements for food that is served at cafeterias and in vending machines in publicly owned or managed facilities.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1079 321 1339 345" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Overuse of Antibiotics</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 350 1472 537" data-label="Text"> <p>Public health and sustainable agriculture advocates, in addition to the general public, should continue to advocate for the elimination of the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics and growth hormones in the food supply.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1079 574 1396 600" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Engaging the Health Sector</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 605 1440 729" data-label="Text"> <p>Food system, public health, and planning advocates should engage the health sector in food system planning efforts.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1079 766 1356 792" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>School Meal Monitoring</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 797 1472 984" data-label="Text"> <p>Increase local efforts to push for new nutrition standards in school meals, for larger budgets available for school meal purchases, and for increased monitoring of school meals by state departments of education and health.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1535 321 1803 378" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Improved Relationship with Food</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1533 383 1869 506" data-label="Text"> <p>Organize regional food celebrations and community events to enjoy and learn about our regional food assets.</p> </div>

Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="327 358 447 475" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="327 500 447 529" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>FAIRNESS</p> </div> <hr data-bbox="226 578 548 581"/> <div data-bbox="226 630 506 651" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>School System Solutions</p> </div> <div data-bbox="226 662 516 781" data-label="Text"> <p>Integrate all aspects of Farm to School programs into a robust and comprehensive education program.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="625 326 867 347" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Debating Food Safety</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 358 972 537" data-label="Text"> <p>Continue to work with the federal government to critically evaluate new food safety measures that add burdens to small and mid-size producers, but are necessary to regulate food producers.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 578 877 599" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Level the Playing Field</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 610 1014 821" data-label="Text"> <p>National and regional policy advocates should work with the federal government to remove or restructure federal farm subsidies to ensure competition and fairness in the global marketplace while increasing profitability for US farmers and ensuring a steady food supply.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 862 846 883" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Enforcing Anti-Trust</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 894 1003 1040" data-label="Text"> <p>Anti-trust laws in agribusiness and other food businesses should be strengthened and enforced to ensure a competitive and fair marketplace with diverse consumer choices.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 1081 793 1102" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Guest Workers</p> </div> <div data-bbox="625 1114 1014 1235" data-label="Text"> <p>National and regional policy advocates should work on immigration reform to recognize the importance and needs of temporary agricultural workers.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1077 326 1465 347" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Leveraging Federal Food Programs</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 358 1423 399" data-label="Text"> <p>Continue to maximize and leverage Federal Food Program Resources.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 431 1287 453" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Regional Gleaning</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 464 1434 537" data-label="Text"> <p>Start or expand gleaning programs that harvest local food from farmers and help feed the food insecure.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 570 1434 591" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Transportation and Food Access</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 602 1465 675" data-label="Text"> <p>Explore ways to connect transportation services and land use planning with food access.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 708 1318 729" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Anti-hunger Advocacy</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 740 1413 837" data-label="Text"> <p>Develop an action plan to reduce hunger and to advocate for an anti-hunger agenda in Harrisburg, Trenton, and Washington, DC.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 870 1255 891" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Fair Farm Labor</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 902 1486 1065" data-label="Text"> <p>Promote programs and strategies especially cooperative solutions that create better living conditions for farm laborers, including improved labor housing, living wages, affordable healthcare and human services for workers and their families.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 1097 1455 1118" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Reducing Hunger by Creating Jobs</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 1130 1444 1227" data-label="Text"> <p>Approaches to reduce hunger should emphasize creating jobs with livable wages and empowering those personally affected.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 1260 1266 1281" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Fairness Factors</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1077 1292 1444 1390" data-label="Text"> <p>Advocate for food labels that allow consumers to make more informed decisions and enable food producers to be more fully compensated.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1545 326 1864 347" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Soup Kitchens of the Future</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1545 358 1854 537" data-label="Text"> <p>Ensure that charitable food providers include capacity-building in their development activities and work to increase fresh food and vegetables in the emergency food system.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1545 578 1770 631" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Responsible Purchasing Policies</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1545 643 1864 821" data-label="Text"> <p>Large-scale buyers, such as institutions, should set responsible purchasing policies that reflect equity along the value chain—from the producer to the shelf.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1545 862 1749 883" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Low-Income CSAs</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1545 894 1854 1073" data-label="Text"> <p>Support and expand the number of low-income CSA models to increase fresh food access in low-income areas, while fairly compensating farmers for their products.</p> </div>

Top Recommendation	Policy Reforms	Expand Existing Efforts	New Approaches and Innovations
<div data-bbox="327 358 447 475" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="285 501 489 532" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>COLLABORATION</p> </div> <hr data-bbox="226 581 550 583"/> <div data-bbox="226 631 449 686" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Regional Food Policy Framework</p> </div> <div data-bbox="226 695 546 813" data-label="Text"> <p>Continue to convene the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee and encourage shared efforts.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="623 323 1001 349" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Health and Food Safety Regulations</p> </div> <div data-bbox="623 357 993 570" data-label="Text"> <p>Local governments—municipal, county, and state—should work with local health departments to review and overhaul regulations that inhibit local food businesses or make the costs of operating a legitimate business too high.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1085 323 1388 378" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Integrating Food System and Sustainability Policies</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1085 386 1446 537" data-label="Text"> <p>Local governments should comprehensively integrate regional and local food system-related goals, objectives, and action steps into comprehensive and master plans.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1085 578 1398 633" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Making Connections between Markets and Farmers</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1085 641 1423 919" data-label="Text"> <p>Support organizations, along with the USDA, state departments of agriculture, county agricultural development committees, and cooperative extensions, should continue to facilitate more meetings between local farmers and the commercial retail and wholesale sectors.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1085 959 1352 1015" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Interagency Coordinating Committees</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1085 1023 1455 1203" data-label="Text"> <p>New Jersey and Pennsylvania should continue and expand efforts to coordinate interagency committees to streamline regulations affecting independent farmers and food businesses.</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1547 323 1759 378" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Learning from Other Policy Areas</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1547 386 1871 570" data-label="Text"> <p>Learn from other policy areas, such as transportation and the energy sector, to quickly mature food system policy and take quick and decisive actions for lasting changes.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1547 610 1734 665" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Speaking with a Collective Voice</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1547 673 1871 1015" data-label="Text"> <p>Food policy practitioners and advocates should reinforce each other's goals and strengthen their alliances by intentionally using communication strategies that emphasize the inter-relationships among food system issues, speaking with a collective voice to increase the region's influence in creating national policy.</p> </div>



T The Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee, established in 2008, is composed of members of over 100 organizations, agencies, and businesses. Committee members are experts in issues ranging from sustainable agriculture to public health, from food distribution to farmland preservation. They inform and guide DVRPC's food system planning projects, and membership continues to grow.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) acknowledges their generous contributions of time, support, and expertise. Members of the Stakeholder Committee are Greater Philadelphia's food system experts.

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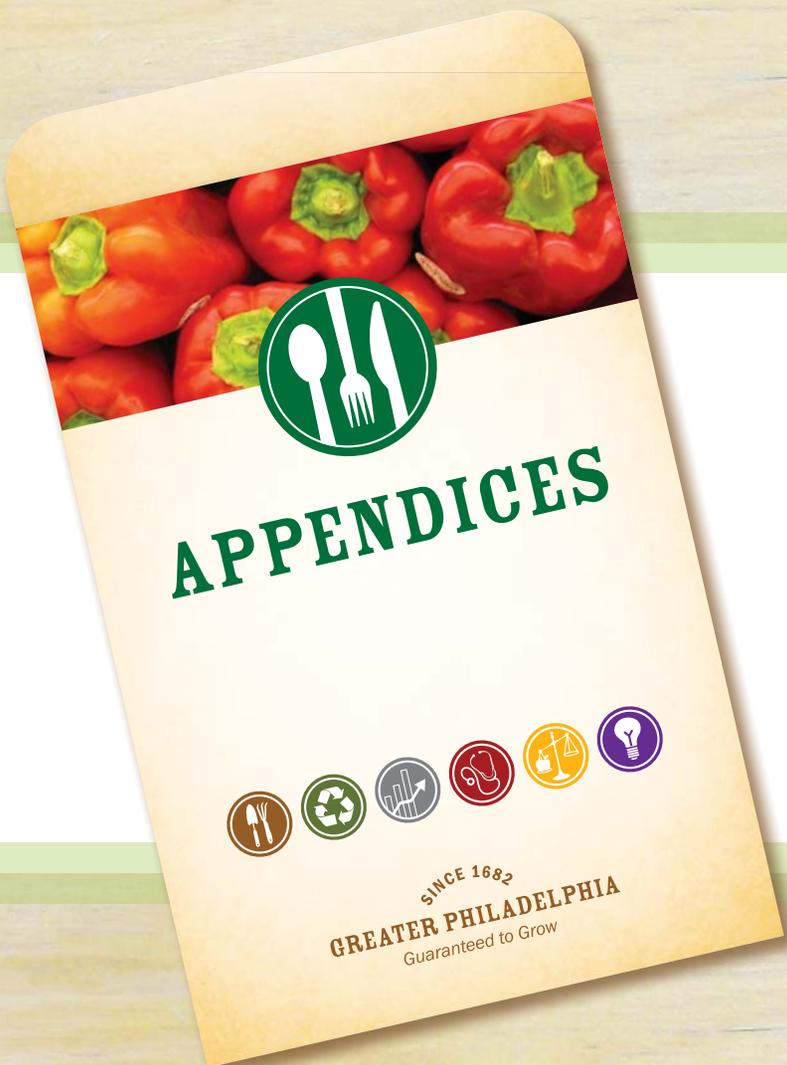
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Appendix A: Bibliography

Appendix B: Glossary

Appendix C: Greater Philadelphia Food System
Implementation Grants—Selected Projects

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Glossary

Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) – private-sector providers of credit and financial services with a special focus on community development. There are six types of CDFIs: community development banks, community development loan funds, community development credit unions, micro enterprise funds, community development corporation-based lenders and investors, and community development venture funds. CDFIs receive funding, in the form of grants and equity investments, through the federal CDFI Fund and other sources, including individuals and private foundations.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) – a purchasing arrangement in which a consumer pays a farmer or operator a set up-front price for a “share” of food, which the consumer receives in regular distributions throughout a given time period. The consumer in this arrangement typically agrees to accept certain risks, including unexpected low yields, severe droughts, or other uncertainties, that could impact the amount and types of food that he or she receives.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) – a measure of changes in the prices paid by urban consumers for a “basket” of good and services. CPI is used as a measure of inflation and as an indicator for price fluctuations nationwide.

Direct Marketing – an activity in which a farmer or other producer sells his or her products directly to the end-user without any intermediary. This includes sales through producer-only farmers’ markets and many Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs.

Farm to School – a national movement, implemented in individual schools or school districts, which brings locally grown farm products into schools to be incorporated in snacks or meal programs. Some programs also encourage nutrition education, as well as experiential learning, such as building and maintaining a vegetable garden, among students.

Food Access – availability of healthy and culturally appropriate food at affordable prices and in locations convenient for consumers.

Food Desert – a geographic area characterized by few healthy food retail options or areas in which people lack “easy access” to healthy food. Deserts can include areas where healthy food is expensive, supermarkets are hard to access via public transportation, and other barriers. The U.S. Congress defined a food desert as “an area in the United States with limited access to affordable and nutritious food, particularly such an area composed of predominantly lower-income neighborhoods and communities,” in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Food Insecurity – According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food insecurity is characterized by the “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods” or the “limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”

Food Policy Council – a group of individuals that advise decision-makers on food-related issues and policies. Some councils are appointed by elected leadership and represent geographic areas, sectors of the food system, and/or different operating departments within a political jurisdiction, while others are based on voluntary membership. Many undertake community food assessments, raise public awareness and advocate for certain policies, advise on plans or policy, promote local food, support food access programs, or engage in any other activity they believe will improve the local food system.

Food Swamp – a geographic area characterized by a large number of unhealthy food options, which are thought to crowd out other food retail options, decreasing the consumption of healthy foods.

Foodshed – a geographic area from which a community or population center obtains food resources or from which it could obtain those resources.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) – generally accepted methods for growing plants and raising animals that produces outcomes consistent with a set of values. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Marketing Service offers a Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Program, which provides certification to products that are raised and processed consistent with standards aimed primarily at maintaining food safety.

Greater Philadelphia – the nine-county region served by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, which includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) – a system used by federal statistical agencies to classify businesses into sectors, subsectors, and groupings for purposes of data gathering, statistical analysis, and reporting.

Obese – a condition characterized by an excess portion of body fat. A person is considered to be obese when his or her body weight exceeds 20%, or when his or her Body Mass Index, an index of height and weight, is 30 or more.

Overweight – a condition characterized by a high portion of body fat. A person is considered to be overweight when his or her Body Mass Index is between 25 and 29.9.

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) – the severance of development rights from land and their sale to a purchaser who retires the development potential on the given parcel or parcels. Unlike in a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), these rights are not transferred to another parcel or parcels. This purchase usually takes place in the form of a conservation easement.

State Food Purchase Program (SFPP) – a state program in which public funds are provided for the purchase and distribution of food to low-income individuals.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – a federal program that provides assistance to low-income individuals and families to help them purchase food. Benefits are provided through states and in the form of Electronic Benefit Transfer cards, which can be used to purchase food at participating retailers.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – a federal program providing block grants to states, through which states can provide temporary financial assistance to families in need (as defined by the state).

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) – the severance of development rights from land in areas where a governing body desires to remain at a lower density or in agricultural use. The development rights are then applied to areas in which higher densities are sought. In this transfer, a landowner in one area generally sells the right to develop his or her land to another landowner in another area who is then allowed to exceed density limits.

Urban Agriculture – the growing and cultivation of food in cities, which can include both plants and animals. This can include both privately owned and leased plots, as well as cooperative arrangements. Urban Agriculture advocates suggest that arrangements should be formalized; however, much of this type of agriculture happens on an informal basis, such as in the case of vacant lot reclamation activities.

Value-Added – the addition of economic value to products through processing or marketing activities.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) – a federal program providing grants to states for supplemental foods, healthcare referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and nonbreastfeeding postpartum women, and children up to age five. Beneficiaries of the food program often receive a check, voucher, or electronic benefits transfer (EBT), which they can use to purchase preapproved food items.

Other Common Abbreviations

BLS – U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

DVRPC – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

FDA – U.S. Food and Drug Administration

GPTMC – Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation

HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

NCAT – National Center for Appropriate Technology

NJDA – New Jersey Department of Agriculture

PDA – Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

APPENDIX C

Greater Philadelphia Food System Implementation Grants—Selected Projects

Common Market

“Common Market and SHARE Food Safety Certification”

Partners: SHARE

Project Area: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Nine-County Region and Beyond

Key Strategies: Business Development

Grant Award: \$45,000

Common Market, a nonprofit local-foods distributor in the Philadelphia region, shares a 70,000 square-foot warehouse space with SHARE, a “self-help food distribution facility serving needy communities.” Common Market will use this grant award to conduct the analysis, training, and protocol development necessary to pass a third-party food safety audit. The audit, training, and certification will enable it to gain new customers, enter new marketing channels, and add an additional layer of food safety for SHARE clients. Common Market and SHARE will work extensively with PennTAP, operating out of Penn State University to conduct the audit preparation.

Fair Food

“Building the Farm to School Movement in Philadelphia”

Partners: School District of Philadelphia, The Food Trust, Health Promotion Council

Project Area: Philadelphia County

Key Strategies: School System Solutions

Grant Award: \$140,000

Fair Food collaborates with the School District of Philadelphia, The Food Trust, and the Health Promotion Council to expand the current farm-to-cafeteria pilot program from 5 to 20 public schools and provide training and support to food service staff, including learning trips to local farms and nearby large, urban school districts with farm to school programs, such as Baltimore. Cafeteria

managers and staff will receive training and technical support for using fresh, local ingredients. The project team will conduct research and develop policy recommendations to foster district-wide changes in school food policy and procurement, such as identifying processors who can provide fresh-cut and frozen local foods for school meals, exploring strategies to improve “satellite meals” in schools that lack kitchens, and advocating for healthier options to be made available through the federal commodities food program. The project team will mobilize youth as leaders in promoting healthy changes in their school cafeterias, through innovative social media to promote healthy food in their schools and communities.

Greensgrow Philadelphia Project

“Local Initiative for Food Education (LIFE)”

Partners: The Reinvestment Fund, St. Christopher’s Foundation for Children, Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, Wharton School

Project Area: Philadelphia County

Key Strategies: Public Awareness and Healthy Food

Grant Award: \$35,000

Greensgrow is developing the LIFE program to increase the number of low-income members in its Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program by establishing a \$20,000 revolving loan fund that covers biweekly Electronic Benefits Technology payments for CSA shares, and providing innovative nutrition education. In the 2010 CSA season, Greensgrow aims to have 25 members consistently participate in LIFE, with the same number or higher participating in the second year. The educational segments, taped in a shared-use kitchen with various local chefs and LIFE members as sous chefs, will be edited and developed into television segments for public access programming and CD/DVD distribution.

Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance (MANNA)

“Get Fresh at MANNA”

Partners: The Fresh Grocer

Project Area: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem counties in New Jersey, Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, Chester, and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania

Key Strategies: Public Awareness and Healthy Food

Grant Award: \$25,000

MANNA provides home-delivery meal services to individuals at acute nutritional risk from life-threatening illnesses, along with nutrition education, diagnostic therapy, and counseling. Over 3,500 meals are delivered daily to clients in the nine-county Philadelphia region. MANNA specifies that its program is a temporary support and would like to reduce recidivism by increasing clients' capacity to access and prepare fresh foods.

Get Fresh at MANNA “helps people choose fresh foods that are appropriate for their medical condition and learn how to prepare those foods to maintain maximum nutrients.” The program involves (1) a series of interactive monthly cooking classes, combining nutrition education and a cooking skills segment; (2) quarterly field trips to The Fresh Grocer to shop with nutritionists, receive produce samples, and learn to select produce and read labels; and (3) a pilot integration of local produce in MANNA's client meal menu. The cooking classes will be open to the public but targeted to those with medically based nutritional needs and capped at 24 participants per class. They will be held at the end of the month to maximize participation and include samples of demonstrated recipes, gift certificates to the Fresh Grocer or local farmers' markets, and reimbursement for public transportation. The cooking component will have minimal facility requirements (e.g., using a hotplate as opposed to a professional stove). MANNA also proposes to purchase fresh, locally grown produce to be featured in a special soup for existing clients and those physically unable to attend classes.

Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)

“Farming Futures”

Partners: Temple University, Fox School of Business;

Pennsylvania FarmLink

Project Area: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties

Key Strategies: Business Development, Farmland Preservation, Natural Resource Protection

Grant Award: \$100,000

The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture will create and pilot *Farming Futures*, a new program for Pennsylvania FarmLink that connects farmers in need of leased land with landowners (land trusts, corporations, private institutions, and individuals). A fee-for-service entity operating under FarmLink, Farming Futures services would include soliciting and identifying land suitable for farming, maintaining a land bank of available properties, soliciting and prequalifying farmer applicants, matching land to farmers with assistance on leasing terms, and facilitating financing through collaborations.

SHARE Food Program

“Expand City Harvest Growers Alliance”

Partners: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), Department of Parks and Recreation

Project Area: Philadelphia County

Key Strategies: Business Development, Public Awareness and Healthy Food

Grant Award: \$100,000

In order to further increase access to healthy food, as well as provide opportunities for entrepreneurship and community development, PHS launched the City Harvest Growers Alliance (CHGA) in October 2009, with partial funding from a three-year USDA grant. CHGA develops a self-sustaining network of urban entrepreneurial gardeners that grow organic fruits and vegetables in residential plots and community gardens throughout the city to be sold to local buyers and at affordable neighborhood farmers' markets. In addition, these growers donate a percentage of their crop to the local food cupboards in the area. PHS supplies these growers with seedlings and materials through green resource centers that serve surrounding communities with educational workshops on gardening and nutrition education.

This project will help PHS and SHARE partner to establish one green resource center and model urban gardening at SHARE. This partnership will enable SHARE to create a “backyard gardening” program encouraging many of SHARE's clients to start a garden for household needs and entrepreneurial aspirations. The backyard gardening program fits with SHARE's mission to empower people to become more self-sufficient.

Weavers Way Community Programs

“The Hope Garden at Stenton Family Manor”

Partners: Weavers Way Co-op, Stenton Family Manor

Project Area: Philadelphia County

Key Strategies: Business Development, Public Awareness and
Healthy Food

Grant Award: \$35,000

Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP) is the professional, nonprofit program of Weavers Way Co-op. It operates under the umbrella of Mt. Airy Community Services Corporation. WWCP started working with the Stenton Family Manor, a homeless shelter for families in transition, in February 2009, when residents and community volunteers assisted WWCP in growing food used in shelter meals and sold at local farmers' markets. This grant will enable WWCP to prepare a business plan to expand the Hope Garden at Stenton Family Manor, from a small garden into a larger urban agriculture project that provides food for the shelter and is sold at local farmers' markets.



EATING HERE

GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

ABSTRACT PAGE

Title:

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The State of New Jersey, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 100-mile radius around the City of Philadelphia, and the nine-county DVRPC region: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

Key Words:

100-Mile Foodshed, agriculture, conservation, distribution, environment, ecological stewardship, economic development, fairness, farms, farmland, farmland preservation, food, food access, food system, fossil fuels, Greater Philadelphia, health, healthcare, hunger, land trusts, land use, local governments, natural resources, planning, sustainable, stakeholders, transportation, working landscapes.

Abstract:

Food can be viewed through the lenses of homeland security, emergency preparedness and human services, private industry and business, environmental stewardship, land use, and public utility, among other categories. This publication is based on the ongoing work of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and the Greater Philadelphia Food System Stakeholder Committee. This plan identifies opportunities to develop the regional economy and strengthen our agricultural sector, decrease waste and want, improve public health, protect the region's soil and water, and encourage diversity, innovation, and collaboration. It contains the Committee's specific priority recommendations, based on these values.

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