



Reducing Food Insecurity in Your Municipality

New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference

November 18, 2021



Facebook: [SustainableJersey](#) | Twitter: [@SJ_Program](#), [@SJ_Schools](#) | Insta: [sustainable_jersey](#) | LinkedIn: [sustainable-jersey](#)

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Food Waste & Food Insecurity

Presented by Dr. Sara A. Elnakib, PhD, MPH, RDN

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Department of Family &
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New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station





FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

NJ FOOD INSECURITY

NJLM 2021

BEFORE COVID-19:



219,760

Hungry NJ Kids



38%

Of NJ Households
receiving SNAP
benefits have
children



777,860

Hungry NJ Residents

1 In 11 New Jerseyans Struggle with Hunger

1 In 9 New Jersey Children Struggle with Hunger

Feeding America, 2019 <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/new-jersey>

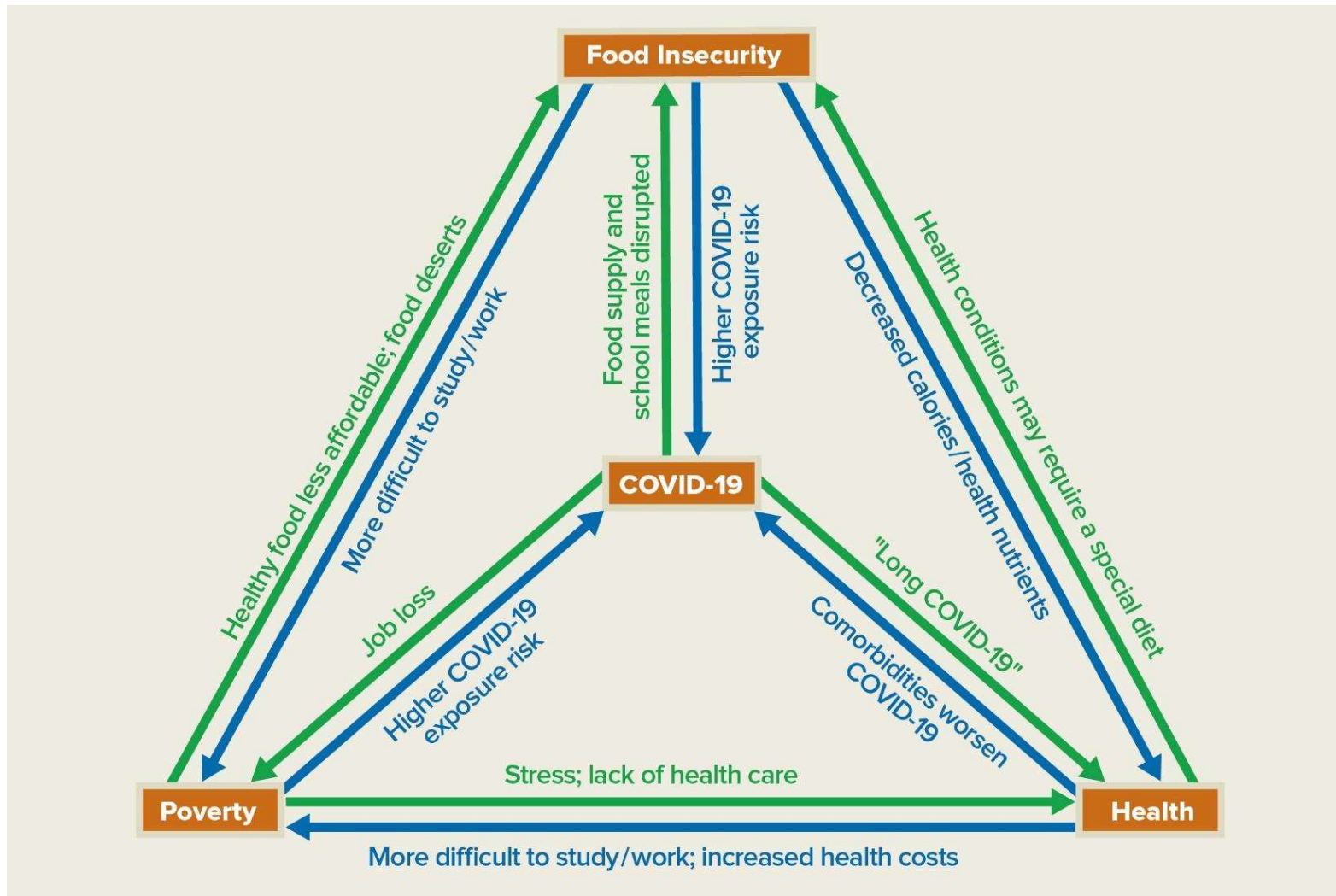
HUNGER IS ON THE RISE



HUNGER ON THE RISE

- COVID-19 has driven NJ Food Insecurity rates significantly beyond levels seen during the 2008 recession with a current food insecurity rate of about **13.5%** now compared to 12.3% in 2008
- The total number of food-insecure New Jerseyans has increased by **56%** compared to 46% nationally
- The number of food insecure children in New Jersey has increased by **75%** with 1 in 5 children now experiencing food insecurity compared to 1 in 9 in 2019.
- Overall, more than **1.2 million** New Jersey residents are now food insecure, including 431,000 newly food insecure individuals

LINKAGES BETWEEN HUNGER, POVERTY, AND HEALTH DURING COVID-19



NJ YMCA RESPONSE

Advocating	Advocating for needed legislation and waivers
Supporting	Supporting Emergency Food Distribution
Participating	Participating in Federal Meal Programs
Connecting	Connecting to Community Supports and Resources

YMCA IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Expanding Meal Distribution as part of Regular CACFP/SFSP Programming:

NJ YMCAs expanded meal distribution through CACFP and SFSP programming.

- NJ YMCAs provided **724,342 CACFP/SFSP meals** from March to December 2020.
- NJ YMCAs provided an additional **223,612 CACFP/SFSP meals** from April – August 2021



YMCA IMPACT SNAPSHOT CONT.

Supporting COVID-19 Relief Food Distributions:

- Through partnerships with NJ food banks, NJ YMCAs have distributed **50,189 boxes** of shelf stable, emergency food.
- NJ YMCAs participated in the initial phases of the USDA's Farm to Family Food Box program and provided **86,682 fresh produce boxes** to families.
 - When the program ended, NJYSA raised funds to support local YMCAs in purchasing and distributing an additional **10,524 boxes** of fresh produce
- Altogether, NJ YMCAs have supported the distribution of **2,149,115 pounds** of shelf stable food and fresh produce to food insecure families.
- YMCAs also provided **1,106,178 meals** through grant funded programs and restaurant partnerships.



HOW CAN YOUR MUNICIPALITY TAKE ACTION AGAINST FOOD INSECURITY?

Sustainable Jersey Food Actions:

- Expanded Supplemental Food Programs
- Community Food Pantries
- Farmers Markets
- Accessible Farmer's Markets (*Coming soon!*)



USING AN EQUITY LENS: INVOLVING YOUR COMMUNITY

- Connect with existing programs, partners, and champions
- Identify opportunities for supporting and enhancing existing programs when possible
- Address gaps in service whenever possible
- Consider cultural and religious food considerations that may be common in your community

EXPANDED SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAMS

- **Summer Food Service Program**
- **Child and Adult Care Food Program**



COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRIES

Municipalities can play an active role in setting up and supporting community **food banks, food pantries,** and **soup kitchens.**



FARMERS MARKETS AND ACCESSIBILITY



RESOURCES AND MORE INFORMATION

- www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/summer_food.html
- www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/food.html
- <https://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions/>
- <https://hungerfreenj.org/feeding-nj-kids/>
- <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/njsnap/>
- <https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank>



THANK YOU

Jackie Bavaro, MPH
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NJ YMCA State Alliance
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What is Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is the outreach arm of Rutgers University; we provide education and outreach to all 21 counties of NJ.

Who We Are

There are 3 main departments of Rutgers Cooperative Extension

- Family & Community Health Sciences
- 4-H: Youth Development
- Agriculture and Natural Resources



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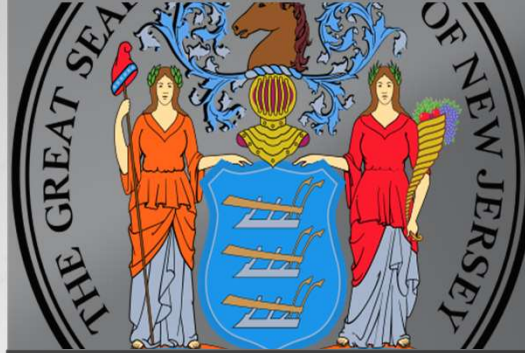


How We Are Funded



Federal

The United States Department of
Agriculture - National Institute of
Food and
Agriculture



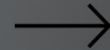
State

Rutgers, the State University of
New Jersey &
New Jersey Legislature through
the New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station



Local

County Commissioners
under different Departments or
Offices depending on the county



1.

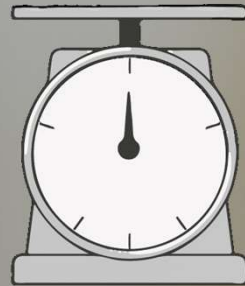


WHY IS FOOD WASTE IMPORTANT?

Environmental
Social
Economic Impacts

Background on Food Waste

In the US we waste
30%-40%
of our food system.



On average, each person
wastes more than
20 pounds of food per
month

**80
billion
pounds**
each year

Enough to
fill the
Empire
State
Building
1,000
times.



Why Food Waste Matters



Environmental Impact

The FAO estimates that if FW globally was a country, it would be the **3rd largest emitter** of greenhouse gas after China and the US.

Economic Impact

Wasting 30-40% of the food we grow in the US is equal to throwing away **\$161-\$218 billion** per year.

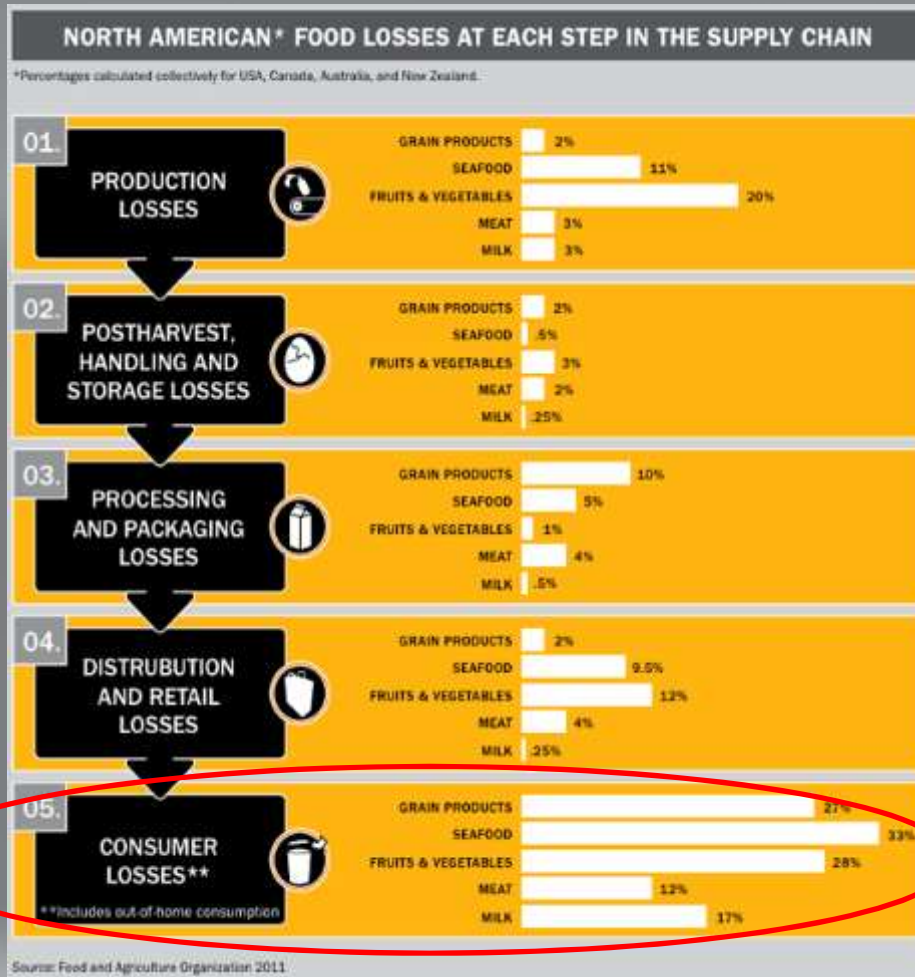
Social Impact

10.5% or 13.7 million U.S. households were **food insecure**, yet we throw out food that is very nutritious.



Where Does Food Loss & Food Waste Happen?

Happen?



National & State Food Waste Reduction Goals



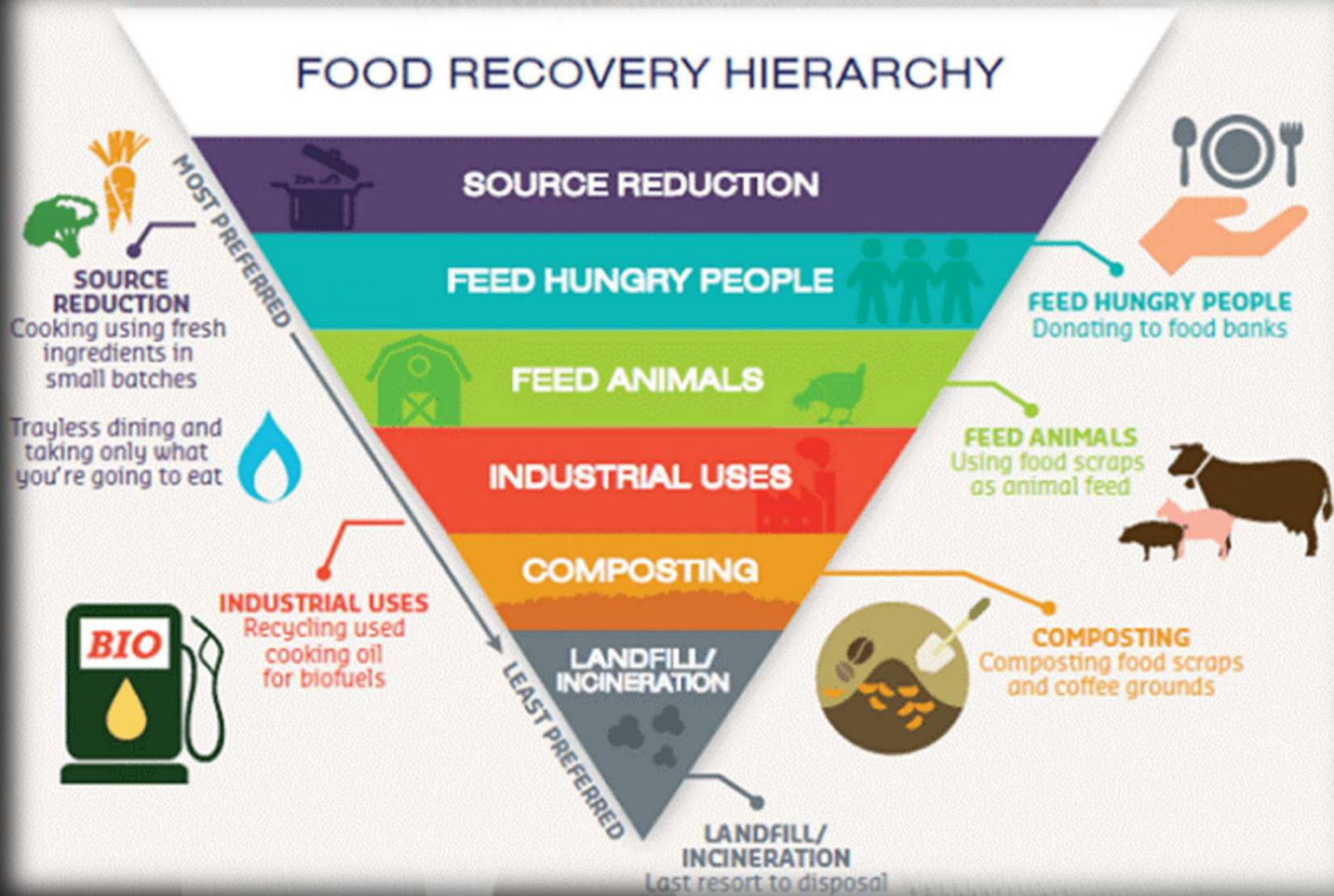
On September 16, 2015, the first-ever national food loss and waste goal in the United States was launched, calling for a 50% reduction by 2030.

USDA Food Loss and Waste Retrieved on May 13, 2020 <https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/>

In August 2017, the first Food Waste legislation in New Jersey was passed. Bill S3027 establishes that NJ will reduce its Municipal Solid Food Waste by 50% come 2030

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection <https://www.nj.gov/dep/food-waste/>

How to Reduce Food Waste?



2.



WHY FOOD DONATION IS SO IMPORTANT?

Food Insecurity
COVID

13%

of NJ residents face food
insecurity
EVERY DAY

NJSHAD: Complete Health Indicator Report of Food Insecurity (2021) →

192,580

of those facing food
insecurity are children
in NJ

NJSHAD: Complete Health Indicator Report of Food Insecurity (2021) →

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Consequences of Food Insecurity

- ❑ Increased risk for Type 2 Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Heart Disease and Obesity.
- ❑ Negative impacts on children's ability to learn.
- ❑ Lost work productivity

We understand Food Donation doesn't solve root causes but is critical for channeling appropriate food to people in need.



State of Food Donation

- More than 3.5 billion pounds donated per year in the US
- Federal and State Legislation support food donation
- To date there has not been one single food donation legal action
- There is room to grow:
 - Institutions like schools, hotels, colleges, event centers
 - Grocery can donate fruit, vegetables, dairy, frozen, meat and deli



3.



HOW CAN HEALTH INSPECTORS HELP?

Tools to support communities with licensed food establishments donate more

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COMMON MYTHS THAT DETER FOOD DONATION

“The city won’t let us donate food”

“We are liable if something goes wrong”

“We would have to transport the food ourselves”

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Food Recovery for Food Security: Reducing Barriers to Food Donation Action

This action awards points to municipalities by promoting and facilitating food “waste” recovery to improve food security for residents by:

- (1) implementing a policy on training health inspectors and municipal representatives, and
- (2) conducting outreach to food surplus and food rescue organizations on the value of food donations and the best practices for ensuring their safety and quality.



Food Recovery for Food Security: Reducing Barriers to Food Donation Action

Health inspectors and municipal representatives training:

- One-hour self-paced FREE training on food donation
 - Food Waste Impacts
 - Food Security Issues
 - Food Donation Laws
 - Food Safety Considerations

Certificate of completion sent by Rutgers Cooperative Extension



Food Recovery for Food Security: Reducing Barriers to Food Donation Action

Health inspectors and municipal representatives to conduct outreach to local businesses to support food donation.

- Distribute factsheets on food donation and food safety
- Provide a list of Food Rescue Organization that can accept donations
 - Advertisement can include in person events as well as other municipal channels
 - Website, social media accounts, food donation events
- Adopt this training & outreach as municipal policy (e.g., by resolution or shared services contract)

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Contact Information

For questions, comments, and inquiries

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Local & Regional Food System Governance: Exploring the Role of Municipal Government in Food Policy Councils

Session: Reducing Food Insecurity in Your Municipality

Jeanine Cava

New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative

November 18, 2021

NJLM Annual Conference

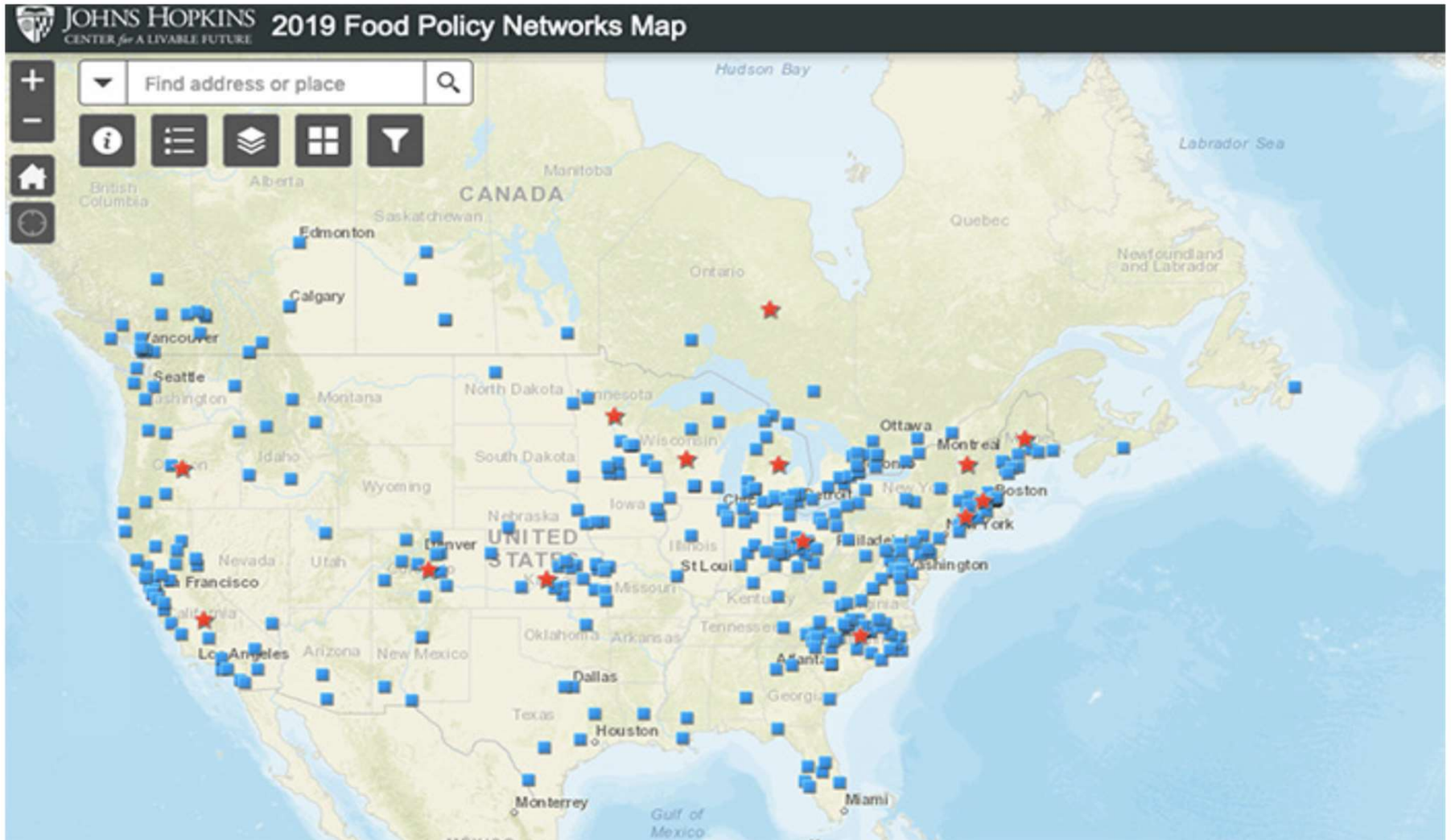
New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative: a state-level food system advocacy network

- Foster collaboration across sectors
- Focus on state-level public policy & process change
- Center resilience, equity, and regenerative solutions
- Advocate for collaborative food system governance at the state level



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Inspired by the Food Policy Council Model



Food Policy Council: a tool in the toolbox of food system governance



An organization that brings together a broad array of people **from each part of the food system** to improve food security for a city, region, or state.

- * **Collaboration & Coordination**
- * **Policy & Programs**

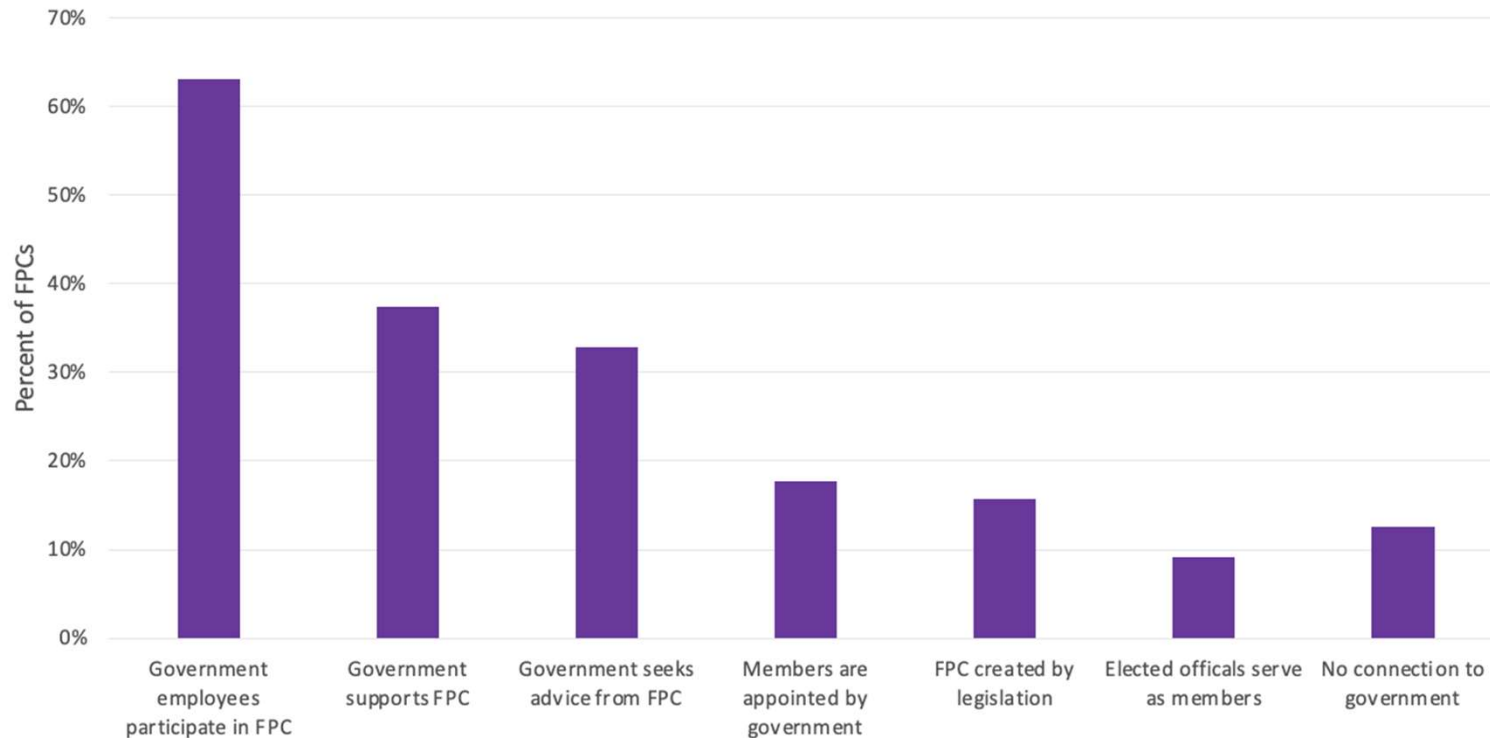
Who participates on food policy councils?



- Farmers
- Market Managers
- Food retailers
- Healthcare organizations
- Anti-hunger groups
- Elected officials
- Cooperative Extension

- Government officials from:
 - Environment and natural resources
 - Zoning and land use
 - Public health
 - Planning
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Economic Development

How does Government Participate in Food Policy Councils?



Percent of FPCs with each relationship to government (n=198)

**FOOD POLICY
NETWORKS**

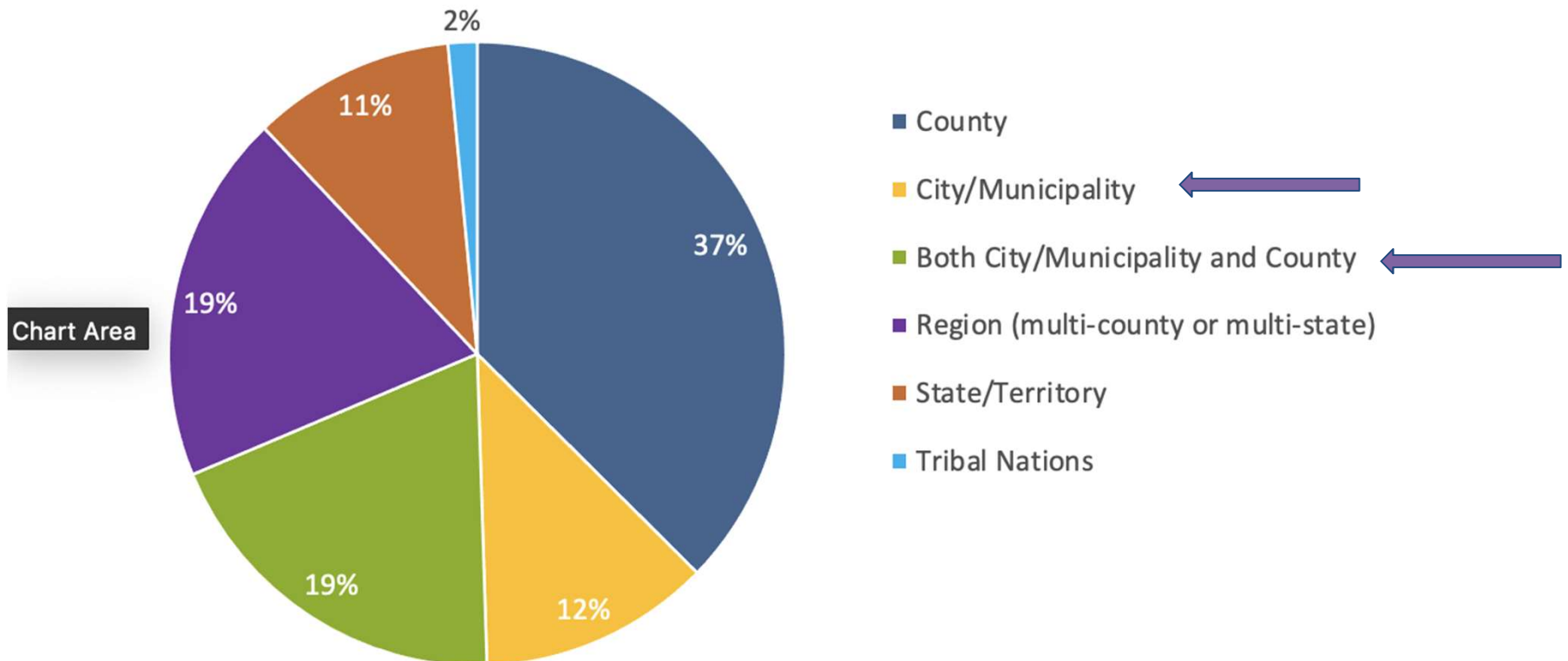
 **JOHNS HOPKINS**
CENTER for A LIVABLE FUTURE



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Source: Santo, et al. Johns Hopkins University, Food Policy Council Network. 2021.

Geographic focus of FPCs



Percent of FPCs by geographic level of focus (n= 198)

**FOOD POLICY
NETWORKS**

 **JOHNS HOPKINS**
CENTER for a LIVABLE FUTURE

Source: Santo, et al. Johns Hopkins University, Food Policy Council Network. 2021.


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Food Policy Councils in our Region

New Jersey: 3 (Passaic County FPC, New Brunswick Community Food Alliance, NJFDC). *More data is needed.*

Delaware: 1 Delaware Council on Farm & Food Policy, led by Secretary of Ag

Pennsylvania: 10 most are county-level councils

New York: 10 most are county-level or multi-county-level/regional councils

Maryland: 5 including MA Food System Resiliency Council, a government appointed body

Connecticut: 5 including a state-level FPC in Dept of Ag

Massachusetts: 17 a state-level FPC & a nonprofit alliance of local councils



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What do Food Policy Councils do?

- **Community Food Assessments & Municipal Food Policy Audits**
- **'Good Food' Action Plans or Food Equity Action Plans**
- **Increase consumption and/or production of local ag products**
- **Foster community-led problem solving for food access challenges**
- **Coordination of emergency food sector organizations**
- **Food waste recovery planning & programming**
- **Advocate for funding for food & farming programs**
- **A voice for healthy food & farming in public sphere**



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Is a Food Policy Council in your municipality's future?

Important considerations:

- Is there already a multi-sector group in your town or region convening to address food insecurity or other community food system issue?
- If so, How can you support or enhance that effort?
- How can the existing FPC be more fully reflective of your local food system? More inclusive and diverse?

- If not, how can municipal governments partner/collaborate with other community leaders to establish a FPC? How can leadership be shared?
- What is the best role for municipal government?



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Is a Food Policy Council in your municipality's future?

Important considerations:

- Is the municipal level the appropriate scale for the FPC?
- How can neighboring towns work together to address interconnected food access issues?



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Sustainable Jersey Actions for Improving Local Food Policy



Possibilities for SJ Actions:

- Participation in or support for a FPC
- Community Food Policy Assessment or Food System Equity Assessment
- Food System Planning element
- Food Waste Recovery
- Mitigating emissions from agriculture
- SNAP outreach and promotion
- Food security data collection

NJ Food Democracy Collaborative & Stockton University present



Registration is open!

2021

NJ STATE OF THE FOOD SYSTEM SYMPOSIUM

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2021

VIRTUAL | 1 PM TO 4 PM

EASTERN TIME (US & CANADA)

ADVANCING EQUITY & RESILIENCE TOGETHER

pre-conference networking sessions &
program details coming soon



free online event | all are welcome



Thank you!

Connect with the NJFDC

On

Instagram

[fooddemocracycollaborative_nj/](https://www.instagram.com/fooddemocracycollaborative_nj/)

Facebook

[facebook.com/fooddemocracycollaborative_nj/](https://www.facebook.com/fooddemocracycollaborative_nj/)

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Browser: sustainablejersey.com

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Sustainable Jersey Certified - A Better Tomorrow, One Community at a Time

Menu: Certification Actions Grants Events Resources Get Involved

2022 Sustainable Jersey Grants Program

Cycle Funded By: **PSEG Foundation**

Applications Due: **Friday, Feb 11**

Need Funding? Sustainable Jersey Grants Available
 Learn more during an informational webinar on December 13. Applications due Friday, February 11, 2022.

Sustainable Jersey Municipal Certification Program

81% of municipalities are participating and 89% of NJ's population lives in these communities	460 Participating Municipalities	224 Certified Municipalities	13,763 Actions Approved
	159 Bronze Certified	65 Silver Certified	1 Total Gold Stars Awarded

View Municipalities and Approved Actions

Find green team contacts and learn how certified communities successfully completed Sustainable Jersey actions.

[View Map](#)

Food ^

Farmland Preservation

Farmland Preservation Plans

10 Points

· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Food Security

Community Food Pantry/Bank & Soup Kitchen

10 Points

· THIS ACTION HAS VARIABLE POINTS: 10, 15
· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Community Gardens

10 Points

· THIS ACTION HAS VARIABLE POINTS: 10, 15, 20
· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Expanded Supplemental Food Programs

10 Points

· THIS ACTION HAS VARIABLE POINTS: 10, 20
· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Support Local Food

Buy Fresh Buy Local Programs

10 Points

· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Farmers Markets

10 Points

· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Making Farmers Markets Accessible

5 Points

· THIS ACTION COUNTS TOWARDS A GOLD STAR

Green Design >

★ Gold Star in Health Framework



Complete a Local Health Assessment & Action Plan



MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

1. Best Practices for Local Boards of Health
2. Integrating Health in Municipal Decision-Making
3. Diversity on Boards & Commissions
4. Improving Public Engagement in Municipal Governing



LAND USE, DEVELOPMENT, & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Housing

1. Healthy Homes Inspection & Training
2. Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach
3. Comprehensive Lead Strategy Action
4. Lead and Housing Hazards Data-Sharing
5. Lead Education & Outreach

Transportation & Mobility



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Water Quality

1. Enhanced Stormwater Management Control Ordinance
2. Green Infrastructure Implementation
3. Private Well Outreach & Testing
4. Removing Lead in Drinking Water
5. Green Infrastructure Planning
6. Household Hazardous Waste

Air Quality

1. Anti-Idling Education & Enforcement Program
2. Community Forestry Management Plan
3. Tobacco-Free Community



INDIVIDUAL HEALTH & COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Food Access

1. Community Food Pantries
2. Expanded Supplemental Food Programs
3. Buy Fresh, Buy Local Programs
4. Community Gardens
5. Farmers Markets
6. Farmland Preservation Plans
7. Making Farmers Markets Accessible

Wellness & Recreation

Sustainable Jersey Supporters & Sponsors

Program Underwriters



Grants Program



Corporate Sponsors

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER

