FOOD POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Message from our Appointed Members

The Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) is made up of 30 Appointed Members from across the food system who advise the Mayor and local government to create a more just food system. We at FPAC envision a food system where all people in Philadelphia have the power and resources to access and control our food, land, and labor.

Today, that is not the reality. White supremacy, anti-Black racism, and interlocking forms of oppression form barriers to our vision. These barriers impede the movement of food from land and sea to the people.

FPAC’s work is to use policy to address these barriers and shift power. We center the wisdom and build the political influence of Philadelphians most impacted by exploitation and injustice—Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people. FPAC aims to be led by and work with these communities to identify and remove the barriers in our food system and to empower the people of Philadelphia to control our food, land, and labor.

Guiding Principles and Values

The following recommendations are informed by the needs and visions shared by more than 500 Philadelphians who participated in FPAC’s 22 community conversations with hunger relief organizations and two Urban Agriculture Plan public meetings.

FPAC prioritized recommendations that have the greatest impact in FY23 towards our long-term vision, based on how well they:

- Are lead by people with the most wisdom and lived experience of food injustice
- Align with priorities of local food justice and sovereignty movements
- Meet the intersectional needs of stakeholders across the food system, e.g., people growing food, working in restaurants, experiencing hunger, feeding our communities
- Uproot racism and fundamentally transfer power and resources

We are calling on the City of Philadelphia to take action in Fiscal Year 2023 towards our long-term vision of a just food system.

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Recommendations

Support City Food Program Capacity
Continue to advocate for and support a local food system by (1) dedicating, sustaining, and increasing resources to City food programs and staff positions, (2) increasing interagency coordination and planning, (3) requiring community input and data-collection to inform food policy decisions, and (4) providing transparent communication and reporting.

Key Opportunities
● Solve complex problems that need strategy and alignment across 50+ food-related City programs, dozens of departments, and many external partners (reference the 2021 Foodscape Report for an overview of City food programs)
● Tackle the interrelated issues of food access, health and racial equity, inclusive economies, and thriving neighborhoods
● Build a healthy, thriving city, supporting Black and Brown communities and businesses

Expand Local Food and Produce Distribution

FY23 Actions and Commitments ✔

☐ Commit funding to support the role of FPAC to shape food policy through its community engagement and in the coordination and development of food work across City agencies.
  ● Maintain current Food Policy Council Manager position to root City food policy work in the community
  ● Increase the leadership of Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized people at FPAC
  ● Create a Senior Food Policy Manager position that coordinates interagency collaboration and leads strategy across departments
  ● Create a Food Policy Operations Lead position that meets the administrative, communications, and finance/development needs of FPAC and interagency food systems initiatives
  ● Continue bi-annual Leadership Table meetings, monthly Steering Committee
meetings, and ongoing communication and coordination with FPAC

- **Implementing agencies:** Office of Sustainability, Mayor’s Policy Office

- **Commit resources, staff, and funding to the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Plan**
  - Create an Office of Urban Agriculture within the Department of Parks and Recreation to provide centralized support for growers and advance the City's agriculture-related programs and policies through interdepartmental coordination.
  - Coordinate across City departments to develop and implement policies, procedures, and processes that support urban agriculture.
  - Reference Philadelphia's Urban Agriculture Plan for detailed asks.
  - **Implementing agencies:** Office of Children and Families, Parks and Recreation, City Planning Commission, The Land Bank, Department of Public Health, Office of Sustainability, Department of Commerce, Procurement Department.

- **Increase and coordinate investment in Black and Brown community-led food justice initiatives**
  - Identify and evaluate opportunities for shared investment across departments and programs.
  - Establish shared criteria and metrics for City-funded programs and partnerships.
  - Track new and existing quantitative and qualitative data to inform decisions and measure impact.
  - Example: Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative (PFJI) funds, State Food Purchasing Program partners, technical assistance programs.
  - **Implementing agencies:** Office of Children and Families, Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Health, Office of Homeless Services, Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, Office of Sustainability, Office of Innovation and Technology.

- **Operationalize a communications and engagement plan to share food-related programs, resources, and information with the public**
  - Continue to publish reports about food-related initiatives ex. Neighborhood Food Retail in Philadelphia report and Walkable Access to Healthy Food in Philadelphia.
  - Make food-related reports accessible to the public in a centralized location on philadelphia.gov.
  - Convene public meetings to share resources.
  - Designate funding to prioritize equitable community engagement including language access.
  - **Implementing agencies:** Office of Children and Families, Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Health, Office of Homeless Services, Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, Office of Sustainability, Office of Innovation and Technology.
Increase Access and Ownership of Land for Agriculture Uses

Focus on the transfer of publicly-owned land for agricultural uses in Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized communities that have experienced disinvestment due to structural racism by adopting and implementing the actions described in the Urban Agriculture Plan, specifically expanding the definition of agriculture uses to individual, community and market gardens; centering farmer and grower leadership; and preserving gardens.

Key Opportunities

- When people grow their own food and own land to grow food, they invest in their food security and contribute to the food and financial security of their neighbors and communities.
- Supporting local urban farms and gardens is a proactive strategy to build healthy, thriving, Black, Brown, Indigenous, immigrant and refugee communities as we come out of Covid-19, navigate climate disasters, and plan for future emergencies.
- Owning land and/or an urban agriculture business can increase economic development and generational wealth.
- Create safer and healthier communities through focused and sustained investment in public green spaces.
- Keep food waste out of the landfill by expanding local and community-operated composting systems.

FY23 Actions and Commitments ✔

☐ Advocate to City Council and work with the Sheriff’s Office to extend the moratorium on all Sheriff and Market Sales of properties that host active gardens.
  - Implementing agencies: Mayor’s Office, City Council

☐ Commit to establish a clear education and communication plan around existing pathways to land access ownership (options for short-term and long-term leases and land disposition)
  - Public facing Standard Operating Procedures for the Land Bank
  - Implementing agencies: City Planning Commission, The Land Bank

☐ Partner with community residents, farmers and gardeners for technical assistance, advice, education and feedback to develop new internal practices
  - Develop a land acquisition and application tracking dashboard for land acquisition and urban garden licensing and/or renewals
  - Partner with growers to design the dashboard to ensure it meets their needs, is accessible and user-friendly.
  - Develop a process for electronically renewing Urban Garden Licenses from year to year
  - Provide technical assistance on the land application process to our city’s farmers and growers
  - Implementing agencies: City Planning Commission, The Land Bank
Adopt a Good Food Purchasing Policy

By 2026, adopt and implement a Good Food Purchasing Policy to be applicable in City food purchases following a 4-year scale-up process that reflects community-identified values of (1) local economies, especially small-sale producers of color, (2) environmental sustainability, (3) nutrition, (4) valued workforce, (5) animal welfare and (6) cultural relevance.

Key Opportunities

- The City indicates its values through its purchase of $25m in food-related supplies and services annually serving 14.5m meals
- With SDP, public meals account for over $80m in annual public food spending
- Just 1 in 40 of private businesses in Philadelphia with employees are Black-owned, indicating a growth area for the Philadelphia food economy
- The City of Philadelphia has an opportunity to invest in our local economy and nourish our communities by allocating public dollars to food contracts with local, small-scale producers of color, and with businesses that support fair labor practices and ecological conservation across the supply chain, while meeting the nutritional needs of our communities
- As indicated in the 2019 Good Eats report, which earned the support of the Mayor’s Office, the City can lead by example to influence other local public food programs to adopt values-based purchasing policies

FY23 Actions and Commitments ✔

☐ Adopt operational Good Food values definitions as part of the Philadelphia Nutrition Standards revision process
  - Incorporate feedback from previous and new community-driven processes to finalize definitions
  - Include values into City food invitations to bid and RFPs, and develop a rubric to evaluate the extent to which bids and proposals for meet good food values
  - Implementing agencies: Department of Public Health, Procurement Department

☐ Lead community conservations related to City food programs' nutrition and cultural relevance to inform enhancements to program menus
  - Make nutrition analyses public, updated annually with a report on Nutrition Standards compliance (to include Good Food values in the future)
  - Brief City departments serving food on opportunities to increase cultural relevance of meals
  - Implementing agencies: Department of Public Health, City departments serving food (Office of Homeless Services, Prisons, Sheriff's Office, Office of Children and Families)

☐ Agree to a one-year food supply chain advancement project to
  - (1) increase the number of certified Minority-owned Business Entity (MBE) food producers in the Office of Economic Opportunity registry, and
  - (2) fund a pilot for City food purchased from small, local producers of color directly and/or through distributors for one city program (e.g. summer meals)
  - Implementing agencies: (1) Department of Commerce, Office of Economic Opportunity; (2) Office of Children and Families
Develop a rubric for evaluating all food-related City contracts and agreements with private and nonprofit organizations as part of determining vendor awards

- Determine the extent to which organizations and businesses providing food-related services beyond food distribution and preparation meet Good Food standards related to treatment of workers, racial justice, environmental justice, and transparency (e.g. meal service at prisons and homeless shelters)
- Implementing agencies: Mayor’s Fund, Office of Children and Families, Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Services, Office of Innovation and Technology, Department of Public Health, Chief Administrative Officer, and FPAC members

Expand Local Food and Produce Distribution
Support the local economy and increase access to local, fresh, culturally-relevant food in communities that have experienced disinvestment due to structural racism.

Key Opportunities

- Increase number of registered farmers markets and stands accepting SNAP by 36% for 464,794 SNAP recipients in Philadelphia
- Increase revenues for small, local farmers by enabling them to accept EBT; for small retailers, benefits redemption can be 50% or more of total sales
- In 2017, every $1.00 of SNAP benefits spent in Philadelphia resulted in an economic impact of roughly $1.70
- Reduce the distance that residents travel to purchase produce similar to how we measure access to public green spaces

FY23 Actions and Commitments ✔

- Establish a coordinated, public support network for farmers markets and farm stands (ex. technical assistance and funding)
  - Provide resources and support for a full-time Farmers Market Coordinator Position and include related responsibilities in the work plans of City staff position(s) that engage with farmers markets
  - Implement solutions that meet the needs of and are led by Black, Brown, Indigenous, poor, and marginalized farmers, growers and community members
- Implementing agencies: Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services, Licenses and Inspection, Office of Economic Opportunity

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1 The estimate of food stamp recipients was reported as underlying program data for the 2018 US Census Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates
3 Coalition Against Hunger, accessed October 22, 2018, http://www.hungercoalition.org/blog/be-change
- Commit to requiring SNAP acceptance at all markets in the City with a phased approach
  - Phase 1 (FY23) - Conduct an initial needs assessment, updated regularly, that establishes key performance indicators to track acceptance of EBT at farmers markets with historical data and determines where to prioritize SNAP implementation at markets
  - Phase 2 (FY23) - Provide education, technical support, and resources
  - Phase 3 (TBD) - Set a requirement or advocate for an ordinance that all markets must accept EBT benefits
  - Phase 4 (TBD) - Extend support to increase acceptance of Philly Food Bucks, WIC FMNP and SFMNP vouchers, and/or other benefits
  - Implementing agencies: Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services, Licenses and Inspection, Office of Economic Opportunity

- Increase and coordinate investment in Black and Brown community-led food justice initiatives (see above under Support City Food Program Capacity)

- Commit resources, staff, and funding to the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Plan (see above under Support City Food Program Capacity)

Contact fpac@phila.gov to receive a copy of a full policy brief for each recommendation.