



**Michigan  
Food Policy  
Council**

Approved  
June 21, 2012

# TASK FORCE REPORT TO MICHIGAN FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

## **Task Force Perspectives and Recommendations**

- *Access Task Force*
- *Farmer Task Force*
- *Food Business Task Force*
- *Institutional Food Purchasing Task Force*
- *Local Food Policy Council Network Task Force*
- *Initiatives for 2012*

MAY 2012

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- NEXT STEPS AND INITIATIVES FOR 2012

# TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP and CHARGE



## FARMERS

**Goal:** Michigan Farmers will supply 20% of all Michigan institutional, retailer, and consumer food purchases

**Charge:** Identify and support opportunities where Michigan farmers can sell more of their locally produced food in Michigan.

**Members:**

Eugene Barnes	Jim Goodheart	Elaine Brown
Bill Bobier	Natasha Lantz	Evan Smith
Jane Bush	Marty Gerencer	Patty Cantrell
Susan Cocciarelli	Michelle Napier-Dunnings	



## INSTITUTIONAL PURCHASING

**Goal:** Michigan Institutions will source 20% of their food product from Michigan growers, producers, and processors

**Charge:** Identify and support opportunities for Michigan schools, hospitals, correctional facilities and public food programs to procure Michigan produced food

**Members:**

Kathy Fedder	Todd Regis	Renee De Windt
Marla Moss	Mike Rowe	Paige Hathaway
Brad Purves	Betti Wiggins	Ben Kudwa
Hillary Bisnett	Rebecca Cook	Deanne Kelleher
Colleen Matts		



## FOOD BUSINESSES

**Goal:** Michigan will generate new agri-food businesses at a rate that enables 20% of food purchased in Michigan to come from Michigan

**Charge:** Identify opportunities for Michigan food businesses to be created and prosper by producing and selling more local food

**Members:**

Auday Arabo	Jim Herbert	Mike DiBernardo
Diana Carpenter	Ken Nobis	Dennis West
Edward Deeb	Tom Kalchik	Lydia Gutierrez
Rob Serrine	Bonnie Bochniak	



## FOOD ACCESS

**Goal:** 80% of Michigan residents will have easy access to food, 20% which comes from Michigan

**Charge:** Identify and support opportunities to make local food available to all populations of Michigan residents.

**Members:**

Amanda Edmonds	Bob Randels	Linda Gobler
Terri Stangl	Dru Montri	Michael Hamm
Stan Bien	Eric Davis	Justin Fast
Ben Kohrman	Susan Goodell	Kareemah El-Amin



## STATEWIDE LOCAL FOOD POLICY COUNCIL NETWORK

**Goal:** Establish Michigan Network of Local Food Policy Councils

**Charge:** Create Michigan Local Food Policy Council Network, define purpose, structure and outcomes and supports

**Members:**

Rich Pirog, Terry McLean  
 Michaela Tarr, Randy Bell  
 Rene DeWindt, Sharon Sheldon  
 Beth Clawson, Diane Golzynski  
 Jeanne Hausler



## EXPECTATIONS

1. Task Forces will make two short term and one long term recommendation about how the MFPC can make progress toward the goal.
2. Task Forces will identify ways to measure the attainment of the MFPC goal, identify metrics or measurement tools.
3. Task Force will refer to Good Food Charter as road map where applicable
4. Task Forces will meet monthly, January to June, Task Forces will report back to full Council at June 21, 2012 meeting

# ACCESS TASK FORCE

## Access Task Force Goal

80% of Michigan residents will have easy access to fresh and healthy food, 20% of which comes from Michigan, by 2020

## Policy Problem and Approach

Public food programs and sources such as SNAP, WIC, Farmers Markets, other federal food programs, and the emergency food network constitute a considerable amount of food and economic impact (worth approximately \$3.75 billion in 2011<sup>1</sup>). These programs are also sources where food access barriers and opportunities are prevalent. It is through these programs that millions of Michiganians access the food they need and where impact is great. Additionally, one-in-ten people in Michigan use a food bank each year<sup>2</sup> and food banks need additional money and resources to meet this continuing need. The Michigan Food Policy Council Task Force on Access explored access opportunities and impediments such as lack of income, transportation, nutrition education, geographic proximity and food program availability.

**State Level policy issues** identified in increasing access to healthy food, and supplying Michigan-produced food, to food insecure citizens throughout the state include:

### 1. UNDERSTAND & BE ABLE TO MEASURE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

- Collaborate among agencies, universities, & nonprofits to develop clear measures of healthy food access, including baseline and data collection/assessment tools and timeline

#### Strategies/recommendations

- Implement methods within state departments (or departmental collaborations) to “own” healthy food access metrics such as program participation, outreach, dollars spent, customer access points
- Support integration of healthy food access metrics into existing data collection, such as BRFSS (MDCH/CDC Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance Survey), data collected by WIC & DHS about retail establishments during licensing, et al

### 2. OPTIMIZE ACCESS TO & UTILIZATION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:

- Remove barriers to participation through improving outreach and customer service in both enrollment and ongoing participation
- Ensure technology is useful & efficient in accessing these programs
- Utilize all options available (such as federal waivers), to help expand access and simplify procedures for benefit eligibility and enrollment. Program eligibility should enable families to receive optimal support

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#### Strategies/recommendations

- Survey and continue to improve on-line application processes

<sup>1</sup> Including SNAP, WIC, Project Fresh, Emergency Food Programs and meals for older adults

<sup>2</sup> Food Bank Council Michigan, Hunger in Michigan report, 2009

- Increase the number of community partners who assist individuals with the on-line application
- Optimize the a statewide food assistance outreach plan to include more partners and increase enrollment in SNAP

### 3. ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD THROUGH FARMERS' MARKET & DIRECT-MARKET SETTINGS:

- Support expansion of SNAP, WIC, Project Fresh, Market Fresh, and Double Up Food Bucks at farmers' markets and other direct-market retail (e.g. farm stands, CSAs)
- Ensure technology is available and helpful for increasing access to healthy food for consumers; removing barriers to producers, businesses, and consumers in participating in food assistance programs

#### **Strategies/recommendations**

- Support policies and funding that allow MIFMA to be continue to be the lead in expanding electronic benefits access (EBT) and overall availability of healthy food at farmers' markets, particularly through food assistance programs, and more markets available year round across the state
- Educate & support initiatives that raise awareness of how other direct-market establishments can participate in food assistance programs, e.g. CSAs and urban farms accepting SNAP and Project FRESH

### 4. MAXIMIZE VOLUME OF HEALTHY, MICHIGAN PRODUCED FOOD IN THE STATEWIDE EMERGENCY FOOD SYSTEM

- Channel Michigan-grown surplus agricultural crops to food banks and food pantries to build the supply of healthy food available
- Increase planned food production to help supply good food through the emergency food network

#### **Strategies/recommendations**

- Encourage food and cash donations to the private sector emergency food network with tax incentives
- Restore a Michigan tax credit for cash contributions by businesses and individuals to food banks and soup kitchens
- Expand support for model gleaning programs to channel agriculture surplus to food banks
- Support pilot venison partnership project to increase healthy, local proteins in food banks

### 5. INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS IN RETAIL ENVIRONMENTS:

- Understand and document food availability statewide in retail settings; developing baseline metrics from which to measure change
- Adopt and expand model programs from across the country that encourage healthy food availability and access through retail settings

#### **Strategies/recommendations**

- Develop statewide mapping of healthy food access in retail settings
- Establish tools and people in state government to be responsible for measuring healthy food access via retailers

- Support existing efforts for Double-Up Food Bucks pilot within the retail grocery store setting
- Engage all state agencies to bring programs to Michigan that incentivize establishing or expanding healthy food retail opportunities in underserved areas.

#### 6. **LEVERAGING IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS:**

- Partner with such statewide efforts including No Kid Hungry Campaign and Healthy Kids/Healthy Michigan and Pure Michigan F.I.T., to build synergy and effectiveness where shared goals exist
- Encourage the sourcing of local food with program sponsors when working to expand participation in childhood nutrition programs
- Encourage creative use of technology for outreach and promotion

#### **Strategies/recommendations**

- Through No Kid Hungry, aim to increase participation in food assistance programs, and develop data collection methods to measure expansion
- Add participation in school lunch, breakfast and summer food program to Governor's dashboard of performance measures

# FARMER TASK FORCE

## Task Force Goal:

Michigan farmers will by 2020 produce 20 percent of food consumed in Michigan.

## Policy Problem and Approach

The Michigan Food Policy Council shall address impediments to Michigan farmers supplying 20 percent of Michigan food by 2020. The Council's efforts shall recognize and encourage the multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits of this supply coming from a large number and diversity of producers across the state.

**POLICY LEVEL ISSUES** involved in increasing the supply of Michigan food from local farms include:

1. MITIGATE RISK IN UNDERDEVELOPED MARKET CHANNELS
2. LACK OF MARKET DATA FOR ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING
3. NEED FOR FARMER-TO-FARMER NETWORKS AND EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION
4. CHALLENGES DIFFERENTIATING/PROMOTING LOCAL PRODUCTS THROUGH THE SUPPLY CHAIN
5. ACCESS TO LAND AND FINANCE, PARTICULARLY FOR THE NEXT FARM GENERATION

## The following over-arching strategies apply to the above policy issues:

Strategies:

- Identify programs and incentives that enable buyer-seller communication and collaboration that can reduce financial risk.
- Implement systems/ pilots for "tracking local".
- Identify and encourage market data collection systems to provide information for establishing baselines, tracking progress, and business planning. Implement systems for "tracking local."
- Find creative linkages and programs to leverage money and resources that can support farmer access to land and capital.
- Utilize regional food system to carry out pilot projects and serve as learning laboratory for the above strategies. Place a high-level of expectation on state-funded food hubs to participate.

The task force will undertake a process of identifying existing policy and programs that support or impede such efforts. The task force will develop next step recommendations based on this analysis.

# FOOD BUSINESS TASK FORCE

## Task Force Goal

Michigan will generate new agri-food businesses at a rate that enables 20% of food purchased in Michigan to come from Michigan, by 2020.

## Policy Problem and Approach

This task force reviewed existing efforts, opportunities and barriers to increasing the creation of agri-food businesses in Michigan. A simple barrier arose early on: clarification of whether or not a food product is considered “Michigan made”.

Michigan is a food and agriculture state. Businesses want to and are succeeding by emphasizing sales of Michigan-made, Pure Michigan and support local” themes. The food business task force identified marketing, promotion and branding as valuable issues and opportunities for increasing the number of food businesses in Michigan.

**State Level policy issues** involved in sourcing local food by institutions include:

1. Lack of specific statewide inventory or data base of “Michigan-made Food Products”. Invest in the creation of and maintenance of a searchable data base of Michigan food businesses (including processors, farmers, direct markets, emergency food providers etc..).
  - **Strategy:** Make a request to Michigan State University’s Product Center to propose what financial cost there would be to fully support Michigan Market Maker annually so that it could serve as this dynamic data base.
2. Optimize and expand the Pure Michigan Brand for food and agriculture
  - **Strategy:** Expand and invest in the Pure Michigan brand for the promotion of ‘Pure Michigan food’.
3. Lack of access to financial capital for new, emerging or expanding food businesses
  - **Strategy:** Work with existing partners and resource holders to explore and implement a Michigan Food Financing Fund focused on access to capital for agri-businesses looking to open, expand or increase production and sales of, Michigan food.

# Institutional Food Purchasing Task Force

## Task Force Goal

Michigan Institutions will source 20% of their food product from Michigan growers, producers, and processors, by 2020.

## Policy Problem and Approach

Public and private institutions such as hospitals, schools, universities, prisons procure considerable amounts of food for the programs and customers. This task force reviewed existing efforts, opportunities and barriers to optimizing the institutional food purchasing dollars for local food purchases.

There are successful efforts and models in Michigan within institutions such as the Michigan Department of Corrections, the Michigan Health and Hospital Association and Michigan Restaurant Association memberships, and the state's food bank network (through the M.A.S.S. and Farm-to-Food Bank programs). Additionally, Farm-to-School programs are thriving and growing.

**State Level policy issues** involved in sourcing local food by institutions include:

1. Procurement processes, rules and regulations at state and federal levels need to place a priority on local procurement and investment

### **Strategy / recommendations:**

- Take caution when considering privatization of any food services so that total cost, not just lowest price is the priority
- Clarify helpful monetary threshold for "spot buys"

2. Improve Supply Chain processes and expertise within public institutions

- Price points for local food are sometimes higher due to supply and demand and logistics
- Meeting nutrition standards while meeting meal reimbursement rates is sometimes difficult
- Need for processing for local food to be available during the entire year.

### **Strategy / recommendations:**

- Integrate private and public sector experts to foster best practices, learning and systems improvements

3. Farm-to- institution programs needs more state level support

- Connect agricultural commodity groups, producers and buyers
- Provide financial incentive for planned production and processing to help supply good food throughout the production calendar

### **Strategy / recommendations**

- Convene a state farm-to-institution conference to share best practices and introduce Michigan producers to institutional buyers
- Support and share learning from the 10 cent solution pilot projects in Northwest Michigan
- Dedicate a full-time staff position to Farm-to-Institution leadership within the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

4. Increase participation in school breakfast by schools and students, Increase purchasing and consumption of locally produced foods

**Strategy / Recommendations:**

- Schools should be required to report their school meal participation to the public. Create a recognition program for schools that increase their student participation in the school breakfast program that have increased participation

# Statewide Local Food Policy Council Network Task Force

## Task Force Goal

Explore, pursue and consider the feasibility of the creation of a statewide, local food policy council network in Michigan

## Policy Problem and Approach

The task force entered into this endeavor with the perspective that changes and improvements that would enhance our food system, including access, institutional food purchasing, farmer capacity and expanding food business often start at the local level. Also, the task force recognized that there would be value in building alignment with the Michigan Good Food Charter. Building the capacity of local communities at the county, city, regional level is essential.

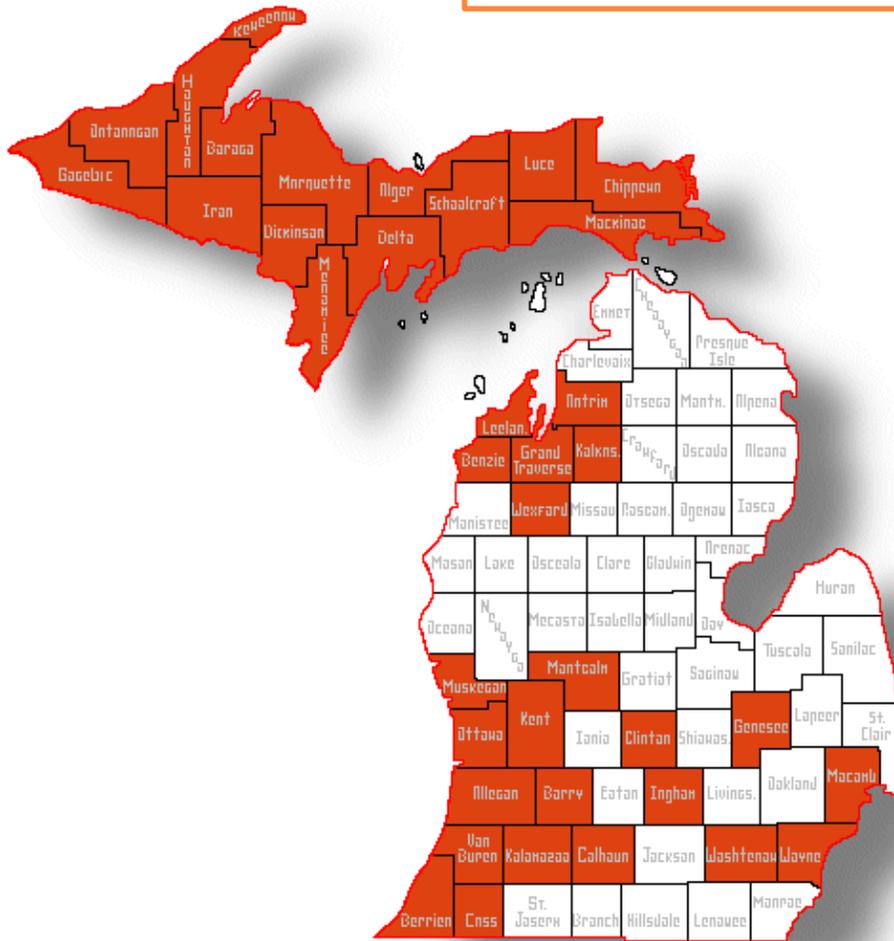
**State Level policy issues** involved in creating a statewide network:

1. A statewide survey showed that common goals for local food councils were generally:
  - Access
  - Food Policy
  - Local Food Systems promotion
  - Helping farmers and producers
  - Good Food for Schools and students
  - Health and education
2. The survey indicated that local food councils faced barriers including:
  - Resources
  - Food policy
  - Organizational development
3. The task force felt strongly that we must approach the creation of a network based on the needs and interests of the local food groups. We need to build from the grass roots, not “top down.

## Goals of the Task Force:

1. Development of a Michigan food policy council directory - COMPLETED
2. Identify and make available resources that will assist local food policy councils - COMPLETED
3. Hold an initial gathering of current and aspiring local food policy councils to determine value, purpose, interest, and goals for a state-wide network of councils – WEBINAR HELD ON MAY 7, 2012
4. Develop a set of membership requirements and structure for a network of councils

**MICHIGAN COUNTIES REPRESENTED BY LOCAL FOOD COUNCILS AS OF MAY, 2012 (in orange)**



**Areas of potential alignment between TASK Force initiatives and local food councils**

- **Farm to school / institution**
- **Tracking local**
- **Food hubs**
- **Create process for measuring healthy food access**
- **Optimize access and utilization of food assistance programs**
- **Participate in partnerships such as Healthy Kids/Healthy Michigan and No Kid Hungry Campaign, 4x4 wellness plan**

## Summary of Policy Issues Identified

### **1. Understand and be able to measure “healthy food access”**

- Collaborate among agencies, universities, & nonprofits to develop clear measures of healthy food access, including baseline and data collection/assessment tools and timeline

### **2. Optimize access to and utilization of food assistance programs:**

- Remove barriers to participation through improving outreach and customer service in both enrollment and ongoing participation
- Ensure technology is useful & efficient in accessing these programs
- Utilize all options available (such as federal waivers), to help expand access and simplify procedures for benefit eligibility and enrollment. Program eligibility should enable families to receive optimal support

### **3. Optimize access to healthy food through farmers market and direct market settings:**

- Support expansion of SNAP, WIC, Project Fresh, Market Fresh, and Double Up Food Bucks at farmers’ markets and other direct-market retail (e.g. farm stands, CSAs)
- Ensure technology is available and helpful for increasing access to healthy food for consumers; removing barriers to producers, businesses, and consumers in participating in food assistance programs

### **4. MAXIMIZE volume of healthy, Michigan-produced food in the statewide emergency food system**

- Channel Michigan-grown surplus agricultural crops to food banks and food pantries to build the supply of healthy food available
- Increase planned food production to help supply good food through the emergency food network

### **5. Increase healthy food access in retail environments**

- Understand and document food availability statewide in retail settings; developing baseline metrics from which to measure change
- Adopt and expand model programs from across the country that encourage healthy food availability and access through retail settings

### **6. Leverage impact through partnerships:**

- Partner with such statewide efforts including No Kid Hungry Campaign and Healthy Kids/Healthy Michigan and Pure Michigan F.I.T., to build synergy and effectiveness where shared goals exist
- Encourage the sourcing of local food with program sponsors when working to expand participation in childhood nutrition programs
- Encourage creative use of technology for outreach and promotion

**7. Mitigate risk in underdeveloped market channels**

**8. Lack of market data for assessment and planning**

**9. Need for farmer-to-farmer networks and efficient communication**

**10. Challenges differentiating and promoting local products through the supply chain**

**11. Access to land and finance, particularly for the next farm generation**

**12. Lack of specific statewide inventory or data base of “Michigan-made Food Products”.**

**13. Optimize and expand the Pure Michigan Brand for food and agriculture**

**14. Lack of access to financial capital for new, emerging or expanding food businesses**

**15. Procurement processes, rules and regulations at state and federal levels need to place a priority ON LOCAL procurement and investment**

**16. Improve Supply Chain processes and expertise**

- Price points for local food are sometimes higher due to supply and demand and logistics
- Meeting nutrition standards while meeting meal reimbursement rates is sometimes difficult
- Need for processing for local food to be available during the entire year.

**17. Farm-to-institution programs need more state level support**

- Connect agricultural commodity groups, producers and buyers
- Provide financial incentive for planned production and processing to help supply good food throughout the production calendar

**18. Increase participation in school breakfast by schools and students, INCREASE purchasing and consumption of dairy and other locally produced foods**

## Next Steps and MFPC Initiatives

The Approved MFPC policy priorities report and plans for MFPC future focus will be shared with the Governor and state agency Directors via the MFPC Chair.

The following areas of focus will be where MFPC will dedicate collaborative efforts and seek leadership report from the state and Governor, June 2012 thru September 2013: Major initiatives:

1. Fresh Food Financing Initiative- explore and create policy options for a coordinated financing program for fresh food initiatives that benefit retailers, processors, farmers and businesses, that lead to improved access to local, fresh and healthy food while improving access to financial capital.
2. Measuring “Healthy Food Access” – work on policy levers that can address the need to define and measure healthy food access.
3. Improving Supply Chain Expertise – find policy opportunities to support Michigan food purchasing, particularly in the leading demand sector of institutional food service by increasing communication, efficiencies and knowledge; reducing cost and encouraging business.
4. Statewide Local Food Policy Council Network – strengthen policy support of efforts of local and regional groups working to carry out the goals of the Michigan Good Food Charter and contribute to statewide efforts of MFPC. This work will be in partnership with the Michigan State University Community Food Systems work group and the Center for Regional Food Systems.
5. Follow up on tactics and specific actions where appropriate, as described in initial task force work, for example:
  - a. Establish specific statewide inventory or data base of “Michigan-made food products”.
  - b. Need for farmer-to-farmer networks and efficient communication
  - c. Need for market data for assessment and planning, “tracking local”
  - d. Farm-to-institution programs need more state level support and leadership
  - e. MAXIMIZE volume of healthy, Michigan-produced food in the statewide emergency food system