

VISION AND GOALS

We envision a thriving economy, equity and sustainability for all of Michigan and its people through a food system rooted in local communities and centered on good food.

By 2020, we believe we can meet or exceed the following goals:

1. Michigan institutions will source 20 percent of their food products from Michigan growers, producers and processors.
2. Michigan farmers will profitably supply 20 percent of all Michigan institutional, retailer and consumer food purchases and be able to pay fair wages to their workers.
3. Michigan will generate new agri-food businesses at a rate that enables 20 percent of food purchased in Michigan to come from Michigan.
4. Eighty percent of Michigan residents (twice the current level) will have easy access to affordable, fresh, healthy food, 20 percent of which is from Michigan sources.
5. Michigan Nutrition Standards will be met by 100 percent of school meals and 75 percent of schools selling food outside school meal programs.
6. Michigan schools will incorporate food and agriculture into the pre-K through 12th grade curriculum for all Michigan students and youth will have access to food and agriculture entrepreneurial opportunities.

Michigan Good Food

CHARTER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barely into a new millennium, the need for a thriving economy, equity and sustainability for all of Michigan and its people rings truer than ever. As part of achieving these goals, we need to grow, sell and eat “good food” – **food that is healthy, green, fair and affordable.**

By reemphasizing our local and regional food systems, alongside the national and global ones, **we have an opportunity to create a system based on good food in Michigan and achieve a healthier, more prosperous and more equitable state.**

Consider the irony:

- *Michigan has the second most diverse agricultural production in the country, and yet 59 percent of our residents (distributed across each of our 83 counties) live in a place that has inadequate access to the food they need for a healthy daily diet.*
- *Currently, it is often easier to buy food from another continent than from a farmer in or near your community.*
- *Consumer interest in local and farm-direct foods is growing rapidly, and yet mid-sized farms are disappearing at an alarming rate and many farms cannot support themselves without off-farm work.*

GOOD FOOD means food that is:

Healthy

It provides nourishment and enables people to thrive.

Green

It was produced in a manner that is environmentally sustainable.

Fair

No one along the production line was exploited during its creation.

Affordable

All people have access to it.

Adapted from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

WHAT IS THE MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTER?















The Michigan Good Food Charter presents a vision for Michigan’s food and agriculture system to advance its current contribution to the economy, protect our natural resource base, improve our residents’ health and help generations of Michigan youth to thrive. **The charter outlines a sequence of steps we can take over the next decade to move us in this direction.**

We need to **enact policies and strategies** that make it just as easy to get food from a nearby farm as from the global marketplace and that will assure all Michiganders have **access to good food** and all Michigan farmers and food businesses have **entrepreneurial opportunities.**

Photo by Cara Maple.



AGENDA PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

SCALE	TYPE	FOOD SYSTEM ARENA	AGENDA PRIORITY
LOCAL AGENDA PRIORITIES	Community-based		1. Expand and increase innovative methods to bring healthy foods to underserved areas as well as strategies to encourage their consumption.
			2. Improve school food environments and reduce school sales of low-nutrient, high-sugar, high-fat and calorie-dense foods through snack and vending machines or competitive food sales.
			3. Maximize use of current public benefit programs for vulnerable populations, especially children and seniors, and link them with strategies for healthy food access.
			4. Provide outreach, training and technical assistance to launch new grocery stores and improve existing stores to better serve underserved people in urban and rural areas.
	Land use-based		5. Establish food business districts to encourage food businesses to locate in the same area and to support their collaboration.
			6. Use policy and planning strategies to increase access to healthy food in underserved areas.
			7. Review and seek appropriate revisions to state and local land use policies to preserve farmland and blend protection with farm viability programs.
	Market-based		8. Encourage institutions – including schools, hospitals, colleges and universities – to use their collective purchasing power to influence the food supply chain to provide healthier food and more foods grown, raised and processed in Michigan.
STATEWIDE AGENDA PRIORITIES	Business or non-profit-based		9. Expand opportunities for youth to develop entrepreneurship skills and learn about career opportunities related to good food that support youth and community economic development.
			10. Establish Michigan as “the place to be” for culturally based good food that is locally grown, processed, prepared and consumed.
	Legislation-based		11. Incorporate good food education into the pre-K-12 curriculum for all Michigan students.
			12. Implement a reimbursement program to provide an additional 10 cents per school meal, as a supplement to existing school meal funds, in order to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables.
			13. Amend Michigan’s General Property Tax Act to exempt certain on-farm renewable energy installations.
			14. Set targets for state-funded institutions to procure Michigan-grown, sustainably produced products.

Please note that agenda priority numbers do not reflect rank order.












SCALE	TYPE	FOOD SYSTEM ARENA	AGENDA PRIORITY
STATEWIDE AGENDA PRIORITIES	State agency-based		15. Direct \$10 million to regional food supply chain infrastructure development investments through the Michigan state planning and development regions or other regional designations.
			16. Implement a food safety audit cost-share or reimbursement program targeted at small and medium-sized farms and work to ensure that audits are conducted in the context of the farm scale.
			17. Provide financial incentives for farmers and for development of food system infrastructure to support institutional local food purchasing programs.
			18. Develop a farm-to-institution grant program to provide planning, implementation and kitchen or cafeteria equipment grants to maximize the use of locally grown, raised and processed foods in institutional cafeterias.
			19. Direct state agencies to maximize capital access through state-sponsored programs that provide farm financing.
			20. Ensure that all state and higher education business, work force and economic development programs include farming and agriculture in their target audiences for programmatic development, training, investment and technical assistance.
			21. Contingent upon further market assessment, establish a state meat and poultry inspection program in cooperation with the federal Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS) to spur new meat processing infrastructure.
			22. Include Michigan food and agriculture in state marketing efforts, such as the Pure Michigan campaign, to build awareness of the state's great variety and quality of local food products and farm amenities.
			23. Charge business support entities, such as the 18 Michigan Technical Education Centers, with identifying and supporting the equipment and process engineering needs of farmers and other agri-food enterprises, and ensure that food and agriculture are included in state and local economic development plans.
		Research-based	
	25. Develop systems for collecting and sharing production and market data and other data relevant to regional food supply chain development.		



Photo courtesy of Blandford Nature Center.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Current policies, practices and market structures keep us from realizing these opportunities. For example, some zoning regulations limit growing food in cities; high quality, healthy food is not always available at places where people use public benefits to purchase food; and institutions, especially K-12 schools, face restrictive budgets for school meals.

Michigan buyers and farmers have limited opportunities to connect directly with one another. Regulations are typically more easily implemented by large-scale farms and markets. Food safety requirements are often inflexible and can be cost-prohibitive for small- and medium-scale growers.

Farmland is unaffordable in many cases. New farmers face challenges in accessing capital to begin their operations and thus have difficulty developing a market.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We can address these barriers through specific, strategic state and local actions, and we can forge new partnerships centered on the values of good food. We can raise public and private policymakers' awareness of these issues and make Michigan good food policies and practices a priority at all levels of decision making.

The 25 policy priorities outlined here offer specific strategies for reaching our goals in the next ten years.

BY THE NUMBERS

In 2007, the average age of Michigan farmers was over 56.

Michigan loses an average of 30,000 acres of farmland every year.

Farms between 100 and 999 acres decreased 26 percent between 1997 and 2007.

Nearly 59 percent of all Michigan residents live in what are considered "underserved areas" with limited access to healthy and affordable food.

Roughly 65 percent of adults and nearly 30 percent of youth in grades 9-12 are overweight or obese.

Only about 14 percent of Michigan farmers' markets accept Bridge Cards (which replaced food stamps) for food purchases.

It costs about \$2.90 to prepare a school meal, but the current federal reimbursement for a "free" meal for qualifying students is only \$2.57.

USDA food safety good agricultural practices (GAP) and good handling practices (GHP) audits cost \$92/hour, including travel time for auditors to get to farm locations. Total costs in 2009 ranged from about \$92 to \$1,600 per farm.

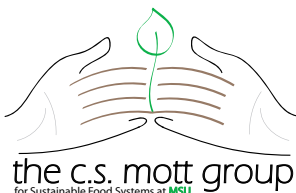
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MORE INFORMATION:

For the complete Michigan Good Food Charter, including references for the numbers cited above, supporting documents and tools, please see: www.michiganfood.org

The following have led the process of developing the Michigan Good Food Charter:



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