

# Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council Meeting (IFNPAC)

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Tuesday, March 1, 2022

9:30am – 11:00am

Location: Zoom

**RHODE  
ISLAND**

# Agenda

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**9:30am Welcome & Introductions, *Chair***

**9:40am Hunger Elimination Taskforce Update, *Nessa Richman, RI Food Policy Council***

**9:50am IFNPAC Annual Report, *Juli Stelmaszyk, Director of Food Strategy***

**10:00am Food Strategy Priorities for 2022, *Julianne Stelmaszyk, Director of Food Strategy***

**10:30am Deep Dive on SNAP Healthy Incentives Overview**

*Thea Upham, Farm Fresh RI, Bonus Bucks Program*

*Kerri Connelly, RI Public Health Institute, Nourish RI*

**10:40am Open Discussion/Comment**

# Welcome and Introductions

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## Department of Environmental Management (DEM)

Acting Director, Terry Gray (Chair)  
Chief of Agriculture, Ken Ayars

## Department of Health (RIDOH)

Health Systems Transformation Administrator, Randi Belhumeur

## RI Commerce Corporation (RICC)

Director of Food Strategy, Julianne Stelmaszyk

## Department of Education (RIDE)

Child Nutrition Programs Coordinator, Jessica Patroliia

## Department of Administration (DOA)

Planning Education, Administration & Coordination, Paul Gonsalves

## Governor's Office

Deputy Chief of Staff, Christopher Abhulime

## Office of Healthy Aging (OHA)

Community Living Director, Dana McCants Derisier  
Aleatha Dickerson

## Department of Human Services (DHS)

Associate Director, Office of Policy Analysis, Research  
& Development, Maria Cimini

## Department of Corrections (DOC)

Administrator Physical Resources, Terrence McNamara

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022 @ 9:30 – 11:00AM

# Rhode Island Hunger Elimination Task Force

Quarter One Meeting  
Report Out to IFNPAC



CELEBRATING  
50 YEARS



RHODE ISLAND  
FOUNDATION

Henry P Kendall  
FOUNDATION



ANGELL  
FOUNDATION





# Key Points

- 75 members attended
- Reviewed the 2022 goal & plan
- Hosted 6 breakout room conversations
- Held a panel on the municipal role in hunger elimination



**HETF Goal:**  
**To reduce hunger and  
increase access to  
healthy, culturally-  
appropriate food for all  
Rhode Island Residents**

# Proposed HETF Objectives & 2022 Activities

## 2022 OBJECTIVES

- **Broaden the network** of actively engaged stakeholders and **lift up effective community-based solutions** to specific food justice and food access problems
- **Deepen the collaborative environment** for medium/longer term problem solving across state agencies, NGOs, CBOs, industry and other stakeholders
- Reduce food insecurity by **generating and providing information that helps member organizations** connect food insecure people with emergency/supplemental food delivery services
- Solve systemic emergency and supplemental food delivery/distribution problems by **identifying and educating decision makers about policy/investment/regulatory solutions** that increase the effectiveness and resilience of the emergency and supplemental system in responding to shocks





## BREAKOUT ROOM TOPICS

- Improving emergency and supplemental food delivery for homebound people
- Getting more local food into the emergency feeding system
- Improving SNAP and WIC utilization and operations
- Connecting with municipal governments
- Serving aging populations (in partnership with Age-Friendly RI)
- Food access and insecurity among students



# 2022 Calendar

## PREVIEW OF 2022 Calendar

### 2022 TASK FORCE MEETINGS:

Tuesday, **May 3**, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Tuesday, **July 26**, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Tuesday, **October 18**, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm



# CONTACT INFORMATION

**NESSA RICHMAN**

NETWORK DIRECTOR

[nessa@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:nessa@rifoodcouncil.org)

**CAITLIN MANDEL**

FOOD ACCESS & EQUITY  
PROGRAM MANAGER

[caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org)

**ALLISON MONTAGNON**

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

[allison@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:allison@rifoodcouncil.org)

**RI FOOD  
POLICY  
COUNCIL**



[rifoodcouncil.org/hetf](http://rifoodcouncil.org/hetf)



# **IFNPAC 2021 Annual Report to the General Assembly**

# 2021 IFNPAC Initiatives & Impact

## Led State's pandemic response to adverse food sys impacts

- Staffed the State's response effectively
- Strengthened inter-agency partnerships to address rising food insecurity
- Facilitated emergency food delivery and improved access to fresh and local food
- Convened agency partners and community orgs to address food insecurity crisis and economic impacts on food & beverage businesses

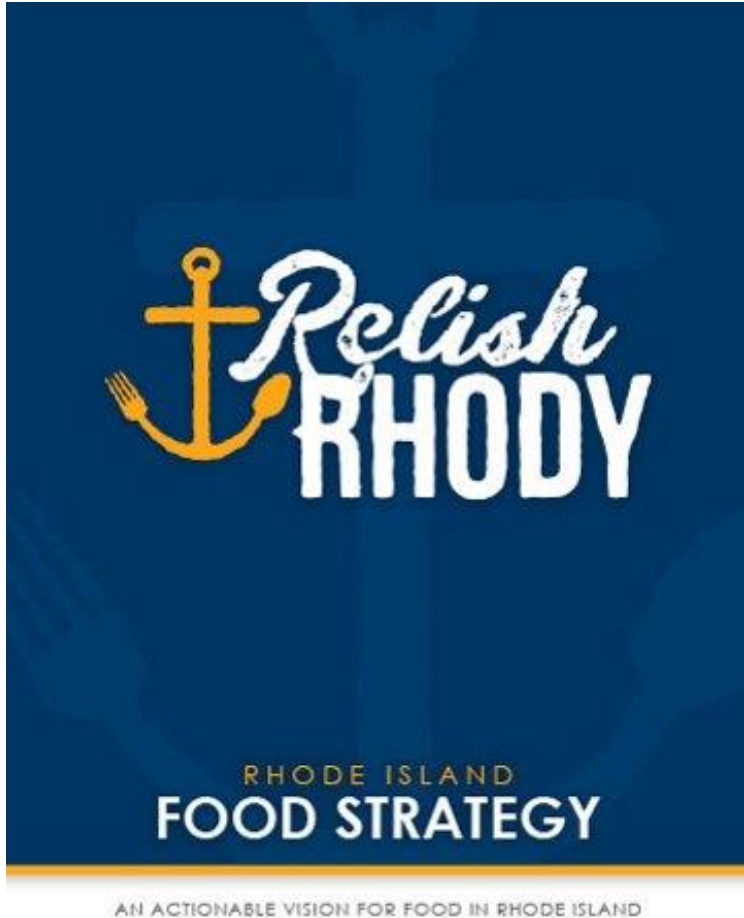
## Supported food, ag and seafood businesses with recovery

- Supported new market opportunities for RI food & beverage products
- Leveraged ~\$1.75M in federal and state funds to support local food businesses, farms, fisheries and non-profits
- Collaborated on \$1M of potential grants to support farm-to-institution and address seafood wastewater issues
- Supported regulatory changes which reduced regulator burden on food businesses

## Connected RI to regional, state and national food system efforts

- Connected State food strategy initiatives to:
  - Farm to Institution New England
  - New England Feeding New England
  - Northeast Farm to School Collaborative
  - Other State agencies with shared goals

# Food Strategy Priorities for 2022



## INTEGRATED FOCUS AREAS:

Preserve &  
Grow Agriculture,  
Fisheries Industries  
in Rhode Island

Enhance the  
Climate for Food  
& Beverage  
Businesses

Minimize  
Food Waste &  
Divert It from the  
Waste Stream

Sustain & Create  
Markets for Rhode  
Island Food,  
Beverage Products

Ensure Food  
Security for all  
Rhode Islanders

# Food Strategy Priorities for 2022



## Department of Health (RIDOH)

- Focus on health equity and the social determinants of health as they relate to the food strategy.
- Coordinate quarterly report outs from agencies on IFNPAC progress.
- Engage with government, education, stakeholders, community organizations and residents to produce a Physical Activity and Nutrition Strategic Plan for RI.
- Collaborate with the RI Food Policy Council to integrate newly hired Food Access and Equity Manager into the work of the food strategy and oversee the efforts.
- Help define metrics for food access as they relate to *Relish Rhody* goals.

## Department of Environmental Management (DEM)

- Continue to support and expand programs which preserve RI agriculture and fisheries, working with partner IFNPAC agencies to grow the local food, farm and seafood economy.
- Develop and support federally funded programs which sustain, promote and enhance agricultural viability and resilience
- Continue to develop resilience and sustainability in the local food system, embracing diversity and equity.



# Food Strategy Priorities for 2022



## RI Commerce Corporation (RICC)

- Ensure Commerce’s business development tools, such as SupplyRI and other business assistance supports are effectively utilized to support growth in the food sector.
- Identify high-growth, high-impact food sector opportunities for job creation which contribute to Food Strategy goals towards resilience, sustainability and equity, where possible.
- Identify more opportunities to connect small food, farm and fish businesses with access to capital and technical assistance.

## Department of Education (RIDE)

- Development of a local procurement tracking system and formalized definition of “local” for use in the school meals programs
- Expand Farm to School activities into the Early Childhood Community
- Mitigate the impact of expiring USDA waivers that allow for the service of universal free meals. Supporting the continuation of alternate service models in school meals (such as breakfast in the classroom) to ensure continued widespread food access even the event of a return to “normal” operations for the 2022-2023 school year
- Expand use of “out of school time” meals programs for communities that have qualifying sites as overall food access in the state decreases with the expiration of COVID-related initiatives

# Food Strategy Priorities for 2022



## Office of Healthy Aging (OHA)

- Strengthen elders and adults with disabilities' access to healthful foods.
- Continue to promote a robust mix of meal programs; explore RI Department of Education (RIDE) partnership to offer intergenerational café program.
- Collaborate with DHS to promote SNAP participation among older adults.

## Department of Corrections (DOC)

- Work to address barrier to more local procurement tied to lowest responsible bidder.
- Explore opportunities to increase food procurement from RI food producers and fisheries.

## Department of Human Services (DHS)

- Increase food security among older adults and individuals with disabilities by increasing SNAP accessing the following ways
  - Seek a waiver from FNS and implementing the Elderly Simplified Application Project.
  - Increase SNAP access through technological improvements and mobile device access.
  - Investigate opportunities for interagency, cross-program outreach and enrollment between WIC, SNAP and free and reduced-price school lunch program.

# Food Strategy Priorities for 2022

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## Overarching Food Strategy Priorities

- Strengthen partnership between neighboring New England states towards achieving the New England Food Vision of 50% local food consumption by 2060
- Lead process to update State Food Strategy for 2030 with a focus on leveraging food systems to address equity and climate change.
- Identify opportunities to more sustainably fund critical programs which incentivize local food consumption, protect and expand agriculture and fisheries and improve food access and health outcomes for Rhode Islanders.

## Department of Administration (DOA)

- TBD



# Food Policy Considerations

# Policy Considerations (TBD)



- **Consider cottage food legislation which allows for early-stage food entrepreneurs** to start catered and packaged food businesses out of their home.
- **Consider increased funding to critical agricultural and fishery preservation programs** such as DEM's Local Agriculture & Seafood Program and the Farmland Preservation Program. Both programs are critical supports for local agriculture. LASA received almost \$1 million in grant requests each year for only \$100,000 to provide access to capital for new farmers and early-stage agriculture and seafood businesses often excluded from traditional funding streams. The LASA program supports continued innovation, adaptation, and development in local agriculture and food (including seafood) industries. On average, projects have shown an 80% success rate in sustaining businesses.
- **Consider incentive program to support institutional purchasing of local food.** This program could be developed and managed by RI Commerce, possibly alongside the Supply RI initiative. This program could take a phased approach to implementation and set a sliding scale of per-meal subsidies that are awarded to institutional buyers who meet state-set targets for percent of total food purchases that come from local producers and processors. Targets could vary for different cohorts of institutions (public schools, universities, hospitals, correctional institutions, etc.). Both New York and Michigan have had good success with using these types of incentives, and their results can be used to guide program implementation.

# Policy Considerations (TBD)



- **Consider opportunities to leverage local and sustainable food systems to achieve Act on Climate goals.** Agroecological food production and sustainable food consumption can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The food system is responsible for between 30-40% of global GHG emissions. Dietary and production changes have potential to mitigate and even sequester carbon dioxide and methane associated with food production.
- **Evaluate, and where possible, maximize opportunities for DEM-owned farmland** to meet food security needs of Rhode Island.
- **Consider legislation for a state local food definition** to build more value for Rhode Island grown food products, raw agricultural products and seafood
- **Consider opportunities to improve and expand school meals** by disentangling the State's funding formula for federal school nutrition programs from meal benefit applications and to fund a universal free meals program.

# Deep Dive: SNAP Healthy & Local Incentives

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Thea Upham

*Director of Programs & Operations*



Kerri Connolly

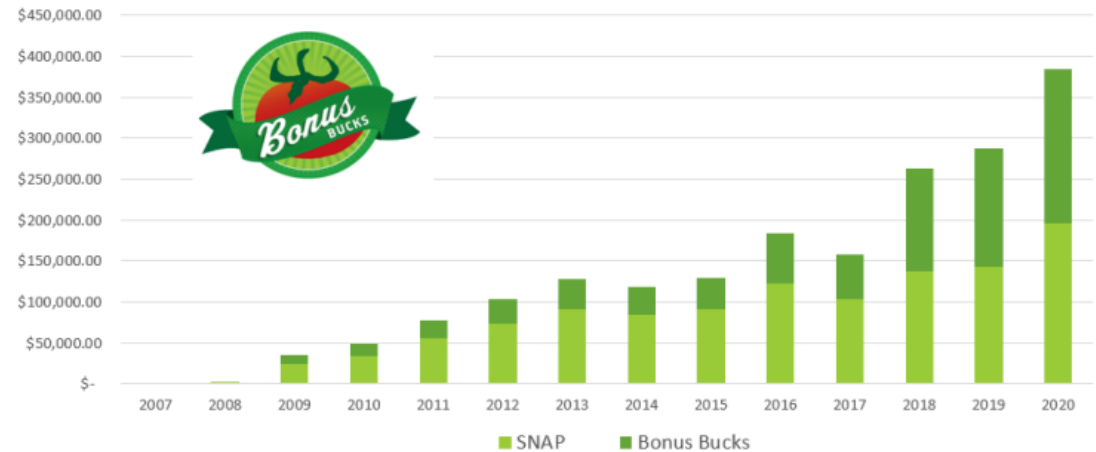
*Food Access Manager*

# Farm Fresh RI Bonus Bucks

## Why SNAP at Farmers Markets?

1. **Economic Impact:** Direct farmer and vendor sales keeps money in the state and supports job creation
2. **Health Impact:** Increased fruit and vegetable consumption is correlated with positive health outcomes and doubling SNAP dollars increases food security
3. **Environmental Impact:** Direct sales to local farmers support the protection of greenspace and natural resources in the state.
4. **Community Building Impact:** Direct sales opportunities create community spaces. Plus, increasing numbers of first-generation immigrant farmers are growing food culturally specific food.

## Fresh Bucks and Bonus Bucks Program



### 2021 Impact

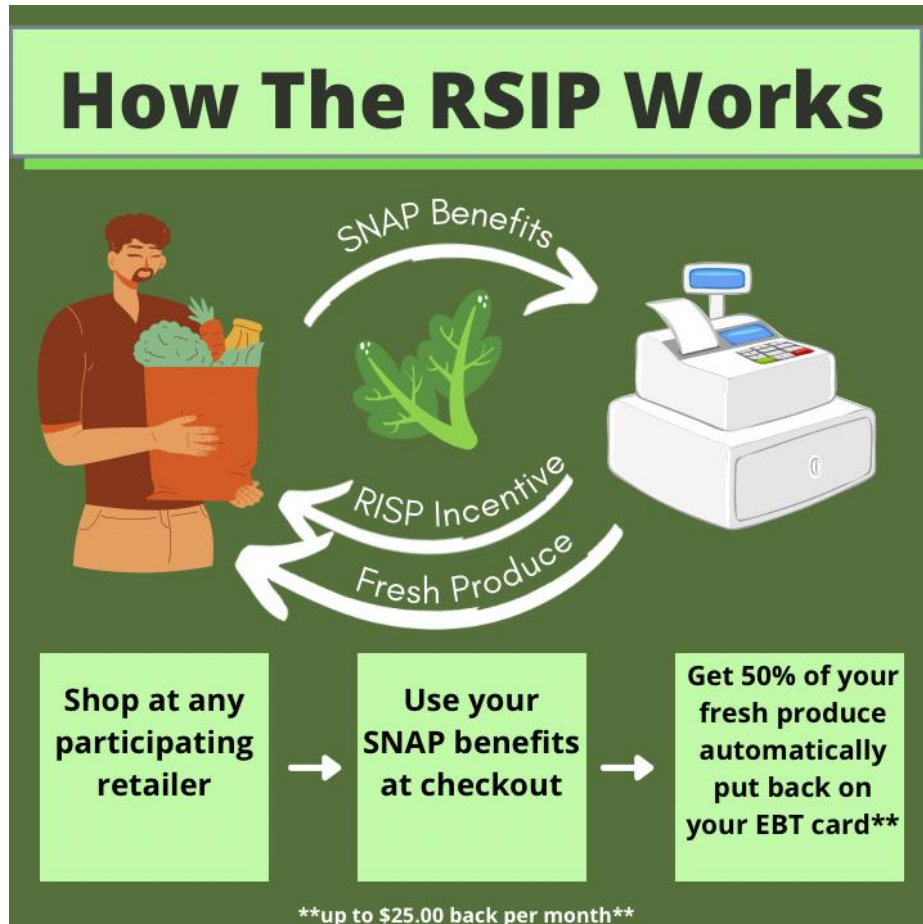
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 weekly seasonal Farmers Markets</li> <li>• 2 Community Supported Ag (CSA)</li> <li>• 1 Farmstand</li> <li>• 2 Home Delivery Companies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 108 Farmers</li> <li>• 117 Local Food Businesses</li> </ul> <p>\$307,000 SNAP<br/>+ \$307,000 F&amp;V Match<br/><hr/>\$614,000 Impact</p> |
|--|--|



Contact: Thea Upham  
thea@farmfreshri.org



# The Retail SNAP Incentive Program



# NOURISH

House Bill: H7490     Senate Bill: S2310

ARPA funds = \$1.19 Billion

Cost of the RSIP = \$25 million / year

Impact: Approximately 140,000 SNAP Recipients including 40,000 children and 30,000 older adults



# Open Discussion and Comment

**Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>  
9:30am-11:00am  
RI Commerce Corporation**

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