

# Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council (IFNPAC) Q2 Meeting

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*Focus: Building long term food system resilience*

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

9:30am – 11:00am

Location: RI Commerce Corporation

**RHODE  
ISLAND**

# Agenda

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- **Welcome & Introductions**, *Chair*
- **Review and approve August 2021 Minutes**, *Chair*
- **Hunger Elimination Taskforce Update & SNAP Food Delivery Pilot**, *RI Food Policy Council*
- **Federal grants update for RI food system**, *RIDE, DEM, RIDOH, Commerce*
- **Deep Dive: Building Longterm Food System Resilience in Rhode Island**
  - RI Emergency Food Response and Preparedness, *RIEMA & RIDOH*
  - Measuring Food Value Chain Resilience, *Center for Agriculture & Food Systems VT Law School*
- **Open Discussion/Comment**

# Welcome and Introductions

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## Department of Environmental Management (DEM)

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

## Department of Health (RIDOH)

Randi Belhumeur, Health Systems Transformation Administrator

## RI Commerce Corporation (RICC)

Julianne Stelmaszyk, Director of Food Strategy

## Department of Education (RIDE)

Jessica Patrolia, Child Nutrition Programs Coordinator

## Department of Administration (DOA)

Libby Kimzey, Chief of Staff

## Governor's Office

Christopher Abhulime, Deputy Chief of Staff

## Office of Healthy Aging (OHA)

Maria Cimini, Director

## Department of Human Services (DHS)

Jenna Maloney, Assistant SNAP Administrator

## Department of Corrections (DOC)

Terrence McNamara, Administrator Physical Resources

TUESDAY, May 3, 2022 @ 2:00 – 3:30PM

# Rhode Island Hunger Elimination Task Force

Quarter Two Meeting  
Report Out to IFNPAC

RI FOOD  
POLICY  
COUNCIL



CELEBRATING  
50 YEARS



RHODE ISLAND  
FOUNDATION

Henry P. Kendall  
FOUNDATION



ANGELL  
FOUNDATION





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





# Key Updates

- 55 Task Force members attended
- Held a panel on community-based programs serving Older RI-ers (featuring PACE-RI, RI DEM, Bristol Health Equity Zone programs)
- *RI Food Access Nutrition Bulletin Launches in June*

## 2022 HETF Calendar

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

Focus: **Innovations in Healthcare**

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

Focus: **State of the State of Hunger in RI**



Email [caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org) to be added to the HETF Email List



# SNAP Delivery Pilot Update

## Background

- Problem: SNAP participants unable to order groceries online, pay with their EBT cards and have the groceries delivered to their homes
- Intervention: The Providence SNAP Delivery pilot
- Objectives: (1) Enable safe, effective, affordable food access for SNAP participants; (2) Measure, evaluate, and report on outcomes; (3) Recommend measures for scaling and policy-based solutions

## Outputs

- 21 households, ~100 individuals served
- 53 deliveries completed
- Average order amount ~ \$44

## Outcomes

- 100% of program participants said the program helped them feel & stay safe
- 87.5% said the program made it a lot easier for them to buy food, including and fresh fruits and vegetables





## DEMAND

# 1

Establish and sustain a statewide, **dedicated help line for SNAP participants** to assist them in ordering food and accessing benefits.

**Provide funding to cover the cost of home grocery** delivery for SNAP participants.

## SUPPLY

# 2

Establish and sustain a **technical assistance program to assist food retailers** in becoming federally-approved SNAP retailers who can accept online EBT payments.

Create a **full/part-time position in Commerce** to work with local businesses to address barriers and create innovative solutions

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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NETWORK DIRECTOR

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**CAITLIN MANDEL**

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PROGRAM MANAGER

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**ALLISON MONTAGNON**

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

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

**RI FOOD  
POLICY  
COUNCIL**



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



# Federal Funding Update for RI Food System

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RIDE, RIDEM, RIDOH, Commerce, RIFPC

# Overview of Federal Grants for RI Food System

2020 -  
2021

<b>USDA Farm to School</b> \$96k (2020)	<b>Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program</b> \$297k	<b>Specialty Crop Block Grant</b> \$250k	<b>EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge</b> \$360k (pending)	<b>USDA Supply Chain Assistance Funding for schools</b> \$2.8M	<b>Farm Ranch Stress Assistance Network Grant</b> \$500k
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**awarded: ~\$4 million pending: \$360,000**

2022

<b>USDA Farm to School Grant</b> \$259k (pending)	<b>Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program</b> \$297k	<b>Specialty Crop Block Grant</b> \$375k	<b>USDA Local Food Purchasing Cooperative Agreement</b> \$720k	<b>USDA Regional Food Systems partnership</b> \$1.M (pending)	<b>USDA Local Food for Schools Coop Agreement</b> \$560k (in process)
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**awarded: ~\$1.4 million pending: ~\$1.8 million**

*There are many federal grant awards led by partner non-profits and CBOs not listed which contribute to the state's food strategy.*

*RIDOH is currently undergoing a strategic planning process to prepare for the next CDC Physical Activity and Nutrition Program Grant*

# Federal Grants for RI Food System

## RI DEPT. OF EDUCATION (RIDE)

### USDA Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program

- **Purpose:** Funding for states to purchase local food for school meal programs
- **Funding:** \$560,189 (Pending)

### USDA Supply Chain Assistance Funding

- **Purpose:** Funding for states to purchase local /domestic agricultural products
- **Funding:** \$2,800,945 (awarded)

### USDA Farm To School Grant (FY20)

- **Purpose:** used to F2S promotion and programs
- **Partners:** RI F2S
- **Funding:** \$96,200 (awarded)

## RI COMMERCE

### EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge

- Sub-project for seafood wastewater infrastructure
- **Partners:** URI, Commerce, DEM
- **Funding:** \$1.2 million (Pending)

### USDA Regional Food Systems Partnership (RFSP)

- To develop RI food brand strategy and build aligned brand for locally grown, made and harvested foods.
- **Partners:** DEM, Commerce, RI Food Policy Council
- **Funding:** \$1.2 million (Pending)

# Federal Grants for RI Food System

## RI DEM

### USDA Farm To School Grant

- **Purpose:** improve access to local foods in USDA Food and Nutrition (FNS) Child Nutrition Programs
- **Partners:** RIDE
- **Funding:** \$259,380 (Pending)

### Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

- **Purpose:** Eligible seniors will receive a free box filled with local seasonal produce.
- **Partners:** OHA, FFRI
- **Funding:** \$297,000 (Awarded 2021)  
\$297,000 (Awarded 2022)

### USDA Local Food Purchasing Cooperative Agreement (LFPA)

- **Purpose:** develop and expand local/regional food businesses to increase access to and availability of locally/regionally produced agricultural products.
- **Partners:** African Alliance, SCLT, RIFPC
- **Funding:** \$720,000 (Awarded)

### USDA: The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Infrastructure

- **Purpose:** a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost.

### Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBGP)

- **Purpose:** enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops (fruit, vegetables, etc.).
- **Funding:** \$250,000 (Awarded 2021)  
\$375,000 (Awarded 2022)

### Farm Ranch Stress Assistance Network RI (FRSAN RI)

- **Purpose:** support mental health and wellness programs for farmers, commercial fishers, and workers in forestry-related industries
- **Partners:** Center for Mediation and Collaboration
- **Funding:** \$500,000 (Awarded)



# Deep Dive: Building Longterm Food System Resilience in RI

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*How might we better prepare for food supply chain disruptions and create a more secure and equitable food supply in RI?*

*What lessons were learned during the pandemic?*

*What actions towards planning, coordinating or preparation can we take now?*

# Deep Dive: Building Longterm Food System Resilience in RI



State of Food & Agriculture in RI  
*RI DEM & RI Commerce*



RI Emergency Food Response and Preparedness  
*RIDOH*



Measuring Food Value Chain Resilience  
*Emily Spiegel*  
*Center for Agriculture & Food Systems VT Law School*



# RI Food System

In aggregate the RI food system...

- supports 75,000+ jobs or 15% of total workforce
- generates over \$4B in economic activity or 7% of GDP
- is made up of mostly small businesses, many of whom are stewards of our land and ocean natural resources.

Source: RI Food Policy Council 2021, RI DLT, RI Commerce

## RHODE ISLAND'S FOOD SYSTEM: PEOPLE, PLANET, PROSPERITY



### AGRICULTURE AND AQUACULTURE

5,331 jobs  
\$789.5 million sales  
1,181 businesses

### FISHERIES

3,147 jobs  
\$538.33 million sales  
42 businesses

### PROCESSING

3,902 jobs  
\$250.3 million sales  
201 businesses

### GROCERY

11,821 jobs  
695 businesses

### HOSPITALITY (RESTAURANTS)

57,600 jobs  
\$2.7 billion sales  
2,926 businesses

### TOTAL JOBS

75,800

### TOTAL SALES

\$4.28 billion

### TOTAL BUSINESSES

5,043



[rifoodeouncil.org](http://rifoodeouncil.org)

# The Big Picture

Over 90% of our food is imported from outside New England.

## Global risks to food supply

- Climate change impacts (drought, floods, loss of habitat)
- Food worker shortages
- Supply chain disruptions
- Rising food prices
- Geopolitical risks
- Corporate consolidation

The New York Times

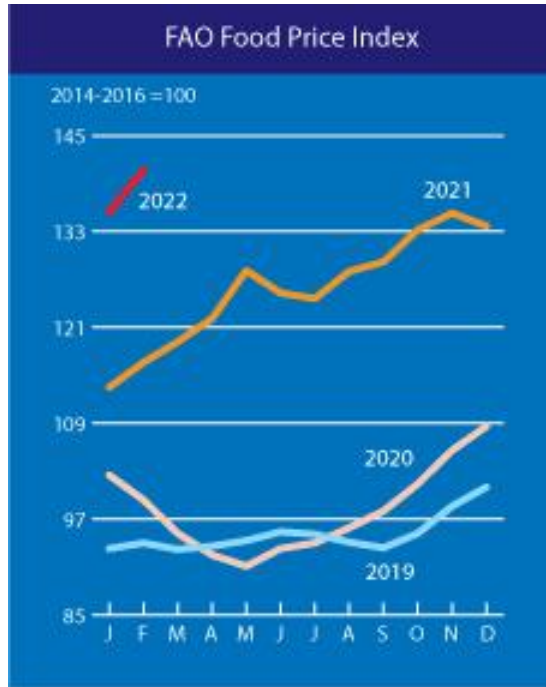
### ***Food Prices Approach Record Highs, Threatening the World's Poorest***

The prices have climbed to their highest level since 2011, according to a U.N. index. It could cause social unrest “on a widespread scale,” one expert said.



Source: [NYT February 23, 2022](#)

# 2022 highest food prices in past decade



March 4, 2022 - The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.

Source: [United Nations Secretary-General \(March 2022\)](#)

## Ukraine and Russia conflict threatens global food supply

**“Russia and Ukraine represent more than half of the world’s supply of sunflower oil and about 30 percent of the world’s wheat...grain prices have already exceeded those at the start of the Arab Spring and the food riots of 2007-2008...”**

We must do everything possible to avert a hurricane of hunger and a meltdown of the global food system.”

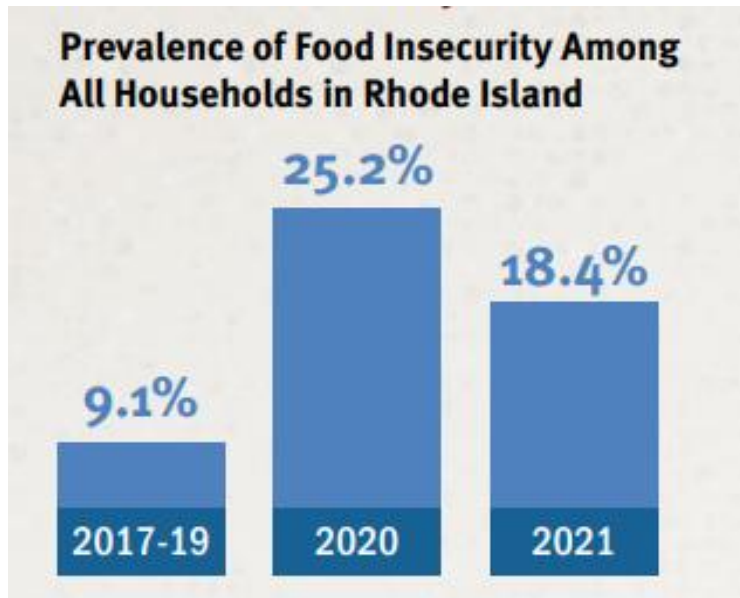
*UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres*

*March 14, 2022*

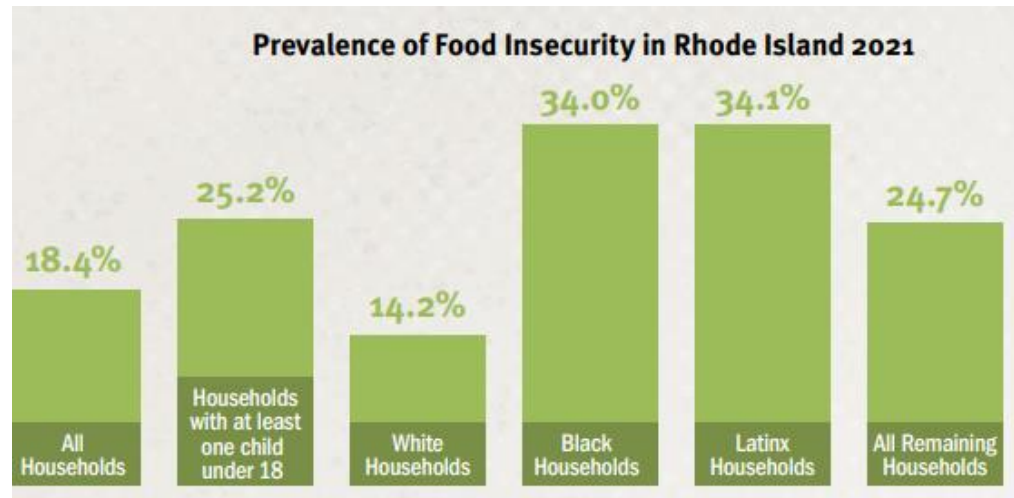


# Food Insecurity Increased 2X During COVID

Food insecurity rates 2017 - 2021



Food insecurity by race/ethnicity



All remaining households includes Asian Native American/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander and more than one race/ethnicity

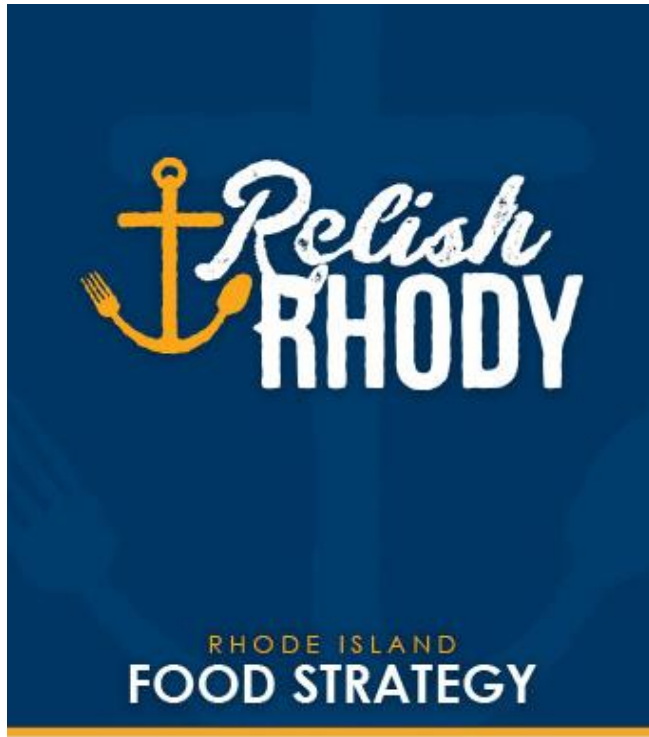
Child food insecurity



Source: RI Community Food Bank (2021), Feeding America, Economic Progress Institute RI

# Our Food Goals...

In 2017 RI launched its first-ever statewide food strategy envisioning a sustainable, equitable and resilient food system that is uniquely Rhode Island



#### INTEGRATED FOCUS AREAS:

Preserve & Grow Agriculture, Fisheries Industries in Rhode Island

Enhance the Climate for Food & Beverage Businesses

Sustain & Create Markets for Rhode Island Food, Beverage Products

Ensure Food Security for all Rhode Islanders

Minimize Food Waste & Divert It from the Waste Stream

# 50 BY 60

## A New England Food Vision

Calls for 50% of our food to be produced in the region by 2060

# Challenges remain to securing food supply...

1. **Lack of access to affordable farmland** inhibits growth and creates insecurity for new and beginner farmers and BIPOC farmers
2. **Limited access to capital** for beginning/BIPOC farmers and fishers who are unconventional borrowers
3. **Corporate food consolidation** limits market access to large institutional and retail markets
4. **Food worker shortages and COVID supply chain disruptions** threaten long-term viability of food, farm and seafood businesses
5. **Lack of food infrastructure** (distribution centers, freezer/refrigeration, equipment) contribute to food insecurity in low-income and BIPOC communities



Photo Credit: RI Food Policy Council

# Emergency Planning in Rhode Island

Cathy Feeney  
Chief for Center of Food Protection  
RI Department of Health



## Plan Outline

Critical Infrastructure  
Sector Specific Plan

Food & Agriculture



# Food & Agriculture SSP

- RI Emergency Management Agency oversees the entire plan
- Responsible for protecting food supply
  - Rhode Island Department of Health
    - Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
- Interdependencies with other sectors including transportation, energy

# Distribution System is Key Critical Component

- RI produces 2-5% of food needed to feed RI's population
- 95-98% of food is produced, processed, warehoused & shipped into RI
- Reliant on the transportation sector and distribution system
- Increased efforts to become more self-sufficient helps

# Emergencies

- Natural Disasters including floods, excess heat, loss of power
- Intentional Adulteration or Terrorism
- Pandemic
- Radiological

# Sector Goals & Priorities

## 1. Ensure a sufficient and safe food supply for people and pet animals.

### Priorities

Identify key components of the food system where human and pet animal food is delivered, stored, and distributed.

Identify gaps and opportunities to strengthen the infrastructure.

Develop and refine processes for ongoing coordination and collaboration through councils and working groups that include governmental agencies, NGOs, industry, associations, farms, and academia.

Partner with the food industry, veterinarians, NGOs, and federal agencies to ensure an adequate food supply for RI humans and pet animals.

Coordinate with other agencies (Red Cross, National Guard, FDA, USDA) to ensure food is delivered to those most in need.

# Sector Goals & Priorities

## **2. Protect the health of humans and pets by keeping food safe and preventing it from biological, chemical, physical, and radiological contamination.**

Collaborate with the food production and distribution industry to protect food from contamination by following food safety requirements and developing food defense plans.

Coordinate with industry selling pet supplies and food as well as veterinarians to ensure safe pet animal food is provided.

Monitor and evaluate the safety of food prior to distribution and consumption for both humans and pet animals to prevent food related illnesses.

# Sector Goals & Priorities

**3. Protect and maintain local food sources including RI agriculture, the seafood industry, food processors, vendors and food services.**

Collaborate with local industry to improve partnerships and address risk mitigation to strengthen the local critical infrastructure.

Identify and characterize local food growers, harvesters, and producers to determine potential food supply from these sources.

Enhance resilience of the local food economy by identifying resources and emergency support.

# Metrics to Measure Progress

Measurable parameters for the above goals include but are not limited to the following:

- Number of governmental dining facilities that have signed on to prepare food for emergency uses.
- Number of institutional dining facilities that have been identified to prepare food for emergency uses.
- Number of commercial kitchens that have been identified to assist with food preparation for emergency uses.
- Number of farms (including aquaculture) that have pledged to provide food for emergency uses, given assistance with harvesting and freedom from liability.
- Number of industries/crops with vetted plans to pivot to emergency processing for emergency uses (e.g., a plan to deliver local seafood to low-income immigrant communities who eat whole fish, a plan to processor oysters into oyster stew for distribution at food pantries).
- Number of NGOs committed to process food orders for people who use SNAP and other Federal supplemental nutrition programs given funding and staff support.



Thank you!



# NEFNE: New England Feeding New England Project



To expand and fortify the region's food supply and distribution systems in an equitable and inclusive way that ensures the availability of adequate, affordable, socially and culturally appropriate products under a variety of rapidly changing climate, environmental, and public health conditions so that ***by 2030, 30% of the food consumed in New England is produced or harvested within New England.***

# The New England State Food System Planners Partnership



NH FOOD ALLIANCE



[www.nefoodssystemplanners.org](http://www.nefoodssystemplanners.org)

# What is a Food Value Chain Resilience Assessment and Who Would Use It?



## What situations might affect food value chains?

- **Supply chain disruptions** such as those caused by COVID's impacts on travel, manufacturing and labor.
- **Climate events** such flooding and drought that may create short term supply chain issues and long-term production issues for farmers.
- **Food contamination** events.

## How can Resilience Assessments help prepare?

- **Identify & prioritize investments that strengthen value chains.**
- **Encourage investments in R&D for new products, technology, or processes** to help communities and businesses prepare and adapt.



# Food Systems Resilience: Building a Resilience Assessment Tool

Emily J. Spiegel,  
Professor of Law, Center for Agriculture and Food Systems at  
Vermont Law School

# Policy Approaches to Improving Food System Resilience











**Food security** is proposed as the normative threshold for a resilient food system, with a focus on the *availability, accessibility, and utilization* of food.

A resilient food system is defined as one that is *aware, diverse, integrated, self-regulating, adaptive, and inclusive & equitable*.

# Draft Assessment Tool

- Three modules focused on the three food security pillars - availability, accessibility, and utilization.
- Each module contains two sections:
  - Section 1: assessment and rating system to identify priority areas to address
  - Section 2: suggested policy strategies, including examples

What change do you want to see?	Planning	Regulations	Funding and Incentives	Information Sharing and Outreach
<p>Increase in the number of farms, including cropland, pastureland, and orchards in your region</p>	<p>Update comprehensive plan (e.g., Land use chapter)</p>	<p><a href="#">Zoning to preserve agricultural land</a></p> <p><b>Tag: Self-regulating</b></p> 	<p>Fund agricultural land protection efforts</p> <p><b>Tag: Integrated, Inclusive</b></p>  <p>Provide incentives for institutions to purchase local food</p> <p><b>Tag: Integrated, Inclusive</b></p> 	
<p>Increase diversity of farmers, ranchers, and food businesses within the region</p>	<p>Remove barriers for participation in regional planning efforts</p> <p><b>Tag: Inclusive</b></p> 	<p><a href="#">Zoning to preserve agricultural land</a></p> <p><b>Tag: Self-regulating</b></p> 	<p>Fund agricultural land access initiatives</p> <p><b>Tag: Integrated, Inclusive</b></p>  <p>Fund agricultural land protection efforts</p> <p><b>Tag: Self-regulating</b></p> 	<p>Connect “socially disadvantaged” farmers to funding opportunities such as USDA’s <a href="#">Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program</a> grant</p> <p><b>Tag: Inclusive, Self-regulating</b></p> 

# Policy Strategies

Thank you!  
Any questions?

Contact me: [espiegel@vermontlaw.edu](mailto:espiegel@vermontlaw.edu)





# Open Discussion and Comment

**Next Meeting:**

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

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