



IFNPAC Q4 Meeting

Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

10:00 – 11:45 am

Rhode Island Commerce

RHODE
ISLAND

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions of New Members
2. Approve Q3 Meeting Minutes
3. Formal welcome DCYF to the Council (postponed)
4. “State of the State” Report and legislative policy priorities from RI Food Policy Council
5. State Planning & Food System Research
6. Local & Healthy State Food Procurement Subcommittee Update
7. Hunger Elimination Taskforce (HETF) Recommendations & Update
8. Department of Environmental Management Updates
9. IFNPAC Updates
10. Public Comment

Welcome & Introductions

**RHODE
ISLAND**

Council Members



Department of Environmental Management (DEM)

Chair, Terry Gray, Director

Ken Ayars, Chief of Agriculture

Department of Health (RIDOH)

Randi Belhumeur, Health Program Administrator

RI Commerce Corporation (RICC)

Kara Kunst, Senior Policy and Budget Analyst, (on IFNPAC while hiring for Director of Food Strategy)

Department of Education (RIDE)

**** Rosemary Reilly-Chammat**, Director, Office of School Health and Wellness (on IFNPAC while hiring for Child Nutrition Program Coordinator)

Department of Administration (DOA)

Max Righter, Chief Procurement Specialist

Department of Corrections (DOC)

Terrence McNamara, Administrator Physical Resources

Office of Healthy Aging (OHA)

Maria Cimini, Director

Department of Human Services (DHS)

Jenna Simeone, Assistant SNAP Administrator

Department of Children Youth & Families (DCYF)

Brandi DiDino, Deputy Director

Approve Quarter 3 Meeting Minutes

2025

Counting on RI's Food System: *Data and Trends*



RIFPC's mission

is to build a more equitable,
accessible, economically
vibrant, and environmentally
sustainable food system.





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The 2025 RI Food System Factbook

IFNPAC | December 11, 2024

Introduction

A data-driven landscape of the status of RI's Food System



You can use this data to help achieve your mission:

- Set strategic goals for your organization
- Establish measurable objectives for your projects and programs
- Add key facts to grant proposals
- Emphasize a trend during public speaking opportunities
- Support your views in testimony at the State House

KEY Features

- ✓ Trusted sources, clear citations
- ✓ Regularly updated data
- ✓ Interactive charts
- ✓ Easy to understand descriptions

Big picture trends are noted throughout:

POSITIVE TREND



Employment increase



Greenhouse gas emissions decrease

NEGATIVE TREND



Poverty increase



Land in agriculture decrease

NO TREND

— Food insecurity rate

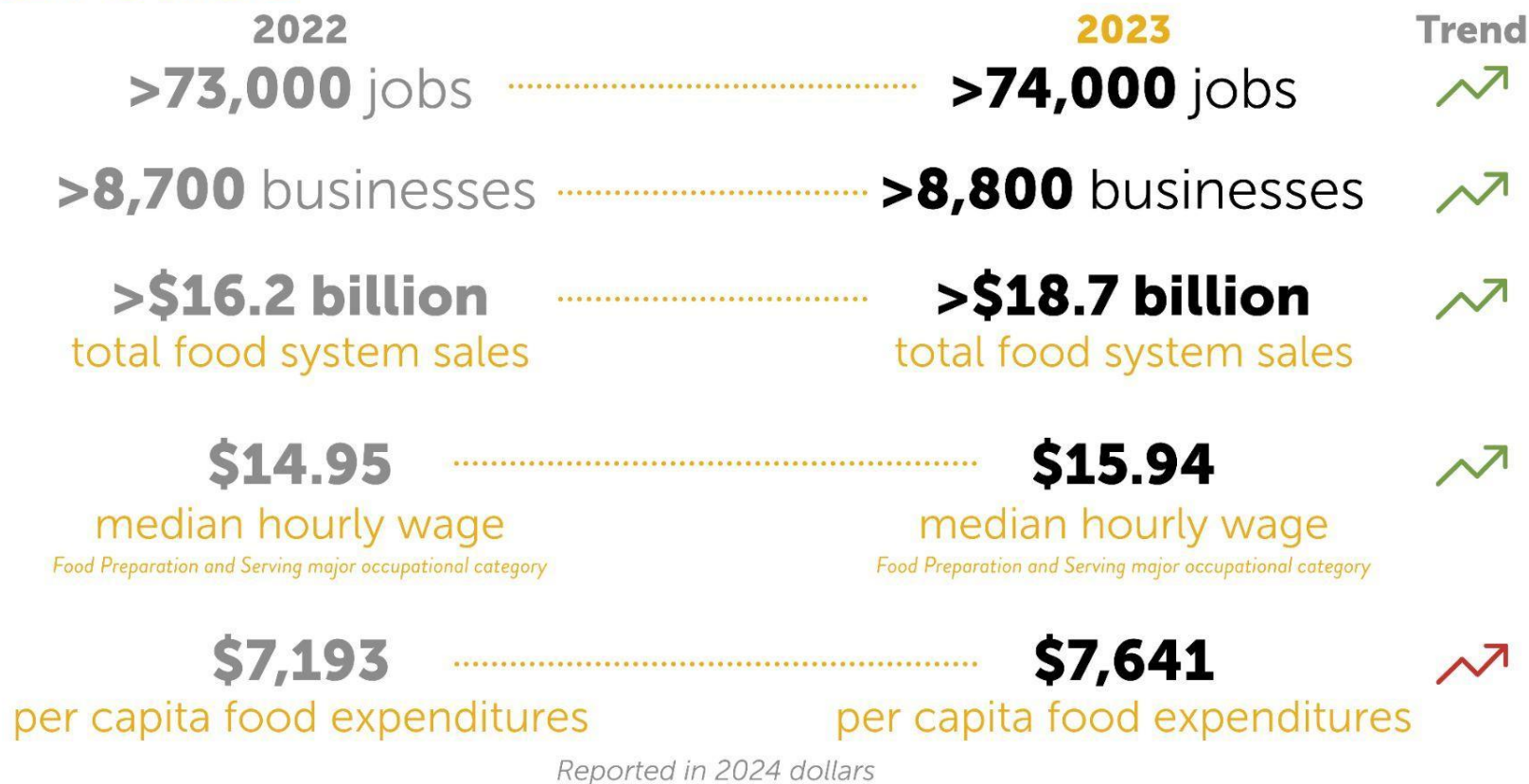
No trend may mean that an indicator has not changed over time, or that only a snapshot in time is depicted.

Food System Economy

**Is Rhode Island's food system
moving in the right direction?**



🍁 KEY STATS

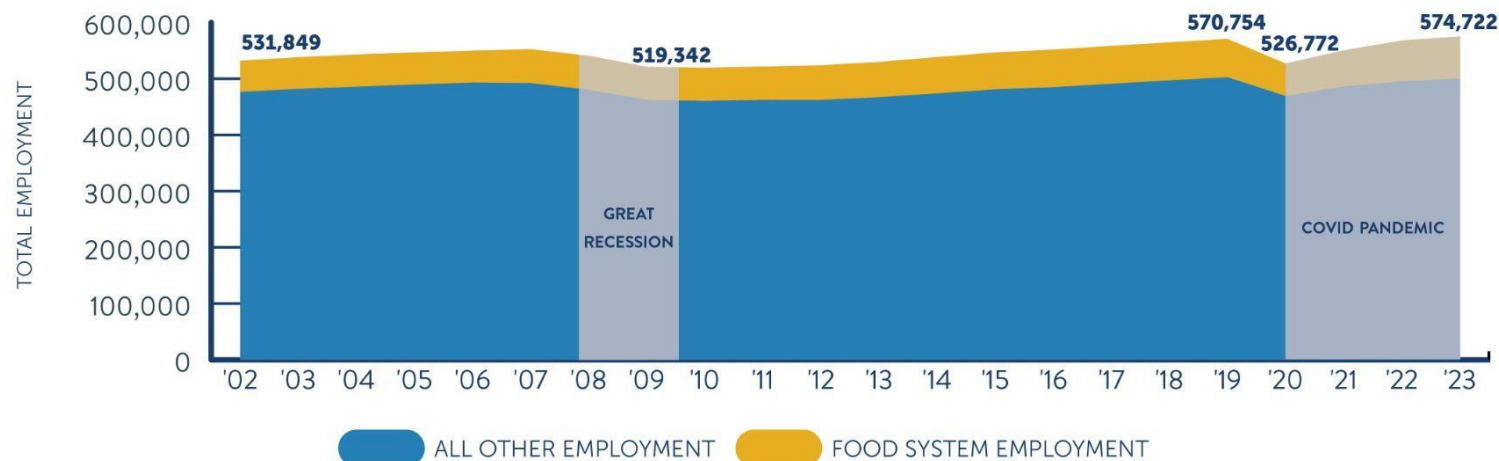


TOTAL AND FOOD SYSTEM EMPLOYMENT, 2002-2023

POSITIVE TREND



Total employment in Rhode Island increased **8.0%** from 2002 (531,849) to 2023 (574,722). Food system jobs account for about **12.9% (74,325)** of all jobs in Rhode Island. This is likely an undercount because we are unable to specify all possible food system jobs (e.g., “general freight trucking” accounts for over 1,500 jobs in Rhode Island. However, although all food ultimately moves via transportation, we can’t delineate trucking jobs that are exclusively for food distribution).



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, and U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides estimates of *covered* employment—work that is covered by unemployment insurance benefits. *Non-covered* employment, or nonemployer statistics, refers to jobs that are excluded from unemployment insurance reporting requirements. Non-covered employment is mostly made up of sole proprietors and partnerships with no paid employees. Combining both data sources together provides a more comprehensive picture of employment in Rhode Island. Farm employment is not captured very well by either data source. Estimates of the number of farmers and hired farmworkers are produced every 5 years by the USDA Census of Agriculture and are not shown in this figure.

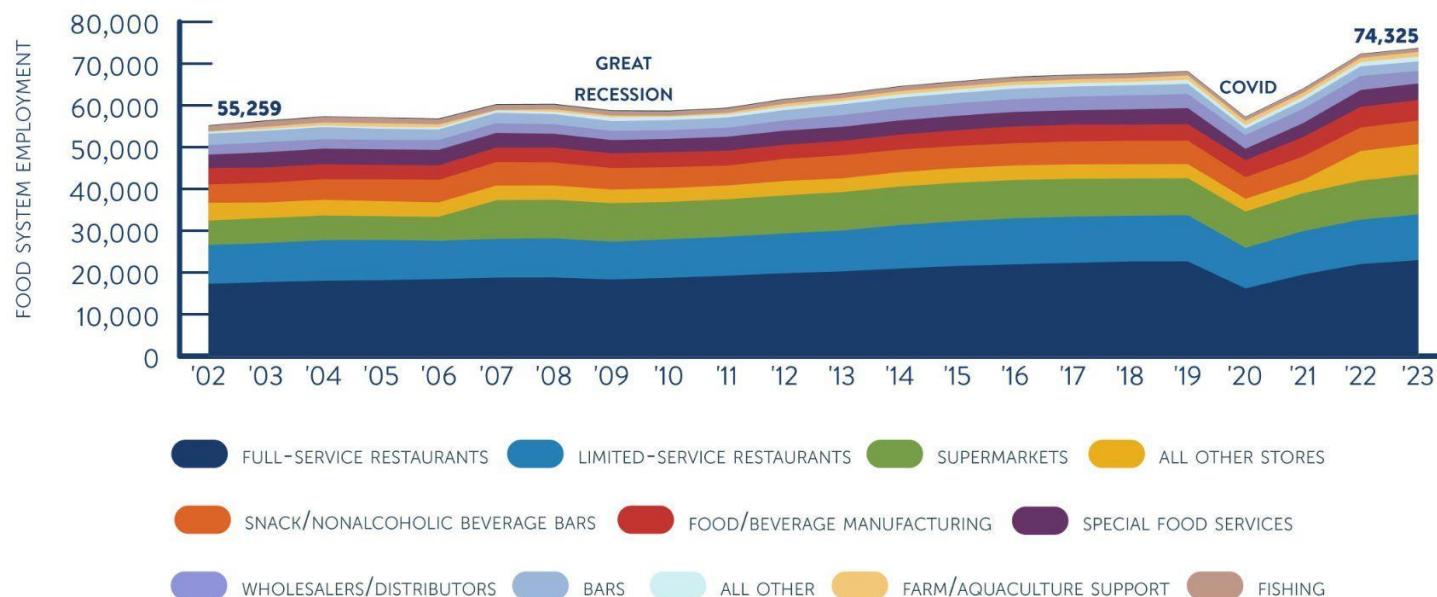


FOOD SYSTEM EMPLOYMENT, 2002-2023

POSITIVE TREND



Total food system jobs in Rhode Island increased from $\approx 55,000$ in 2002 to $\approx 74,000$ in 2023. “Food services and drinking places” (e.g., restaurants, fast food, institutional food services, bars) account for the majority of food system jobs - over 46,000 jobs.



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, and U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics. Estimates of the number of farmers and hired farmworkers are produced every 5 years by the USDA Census of Agriculture and are not shown in this figure. “All other stores” includes convenience stores, specialty food stores, liquor stores, health food stores, vending machine operators, and warehouse clubs and supercenters. “All other” includes community food services (e.g., food pantries), solid waste collection, and agricultural market and commodity regulation.



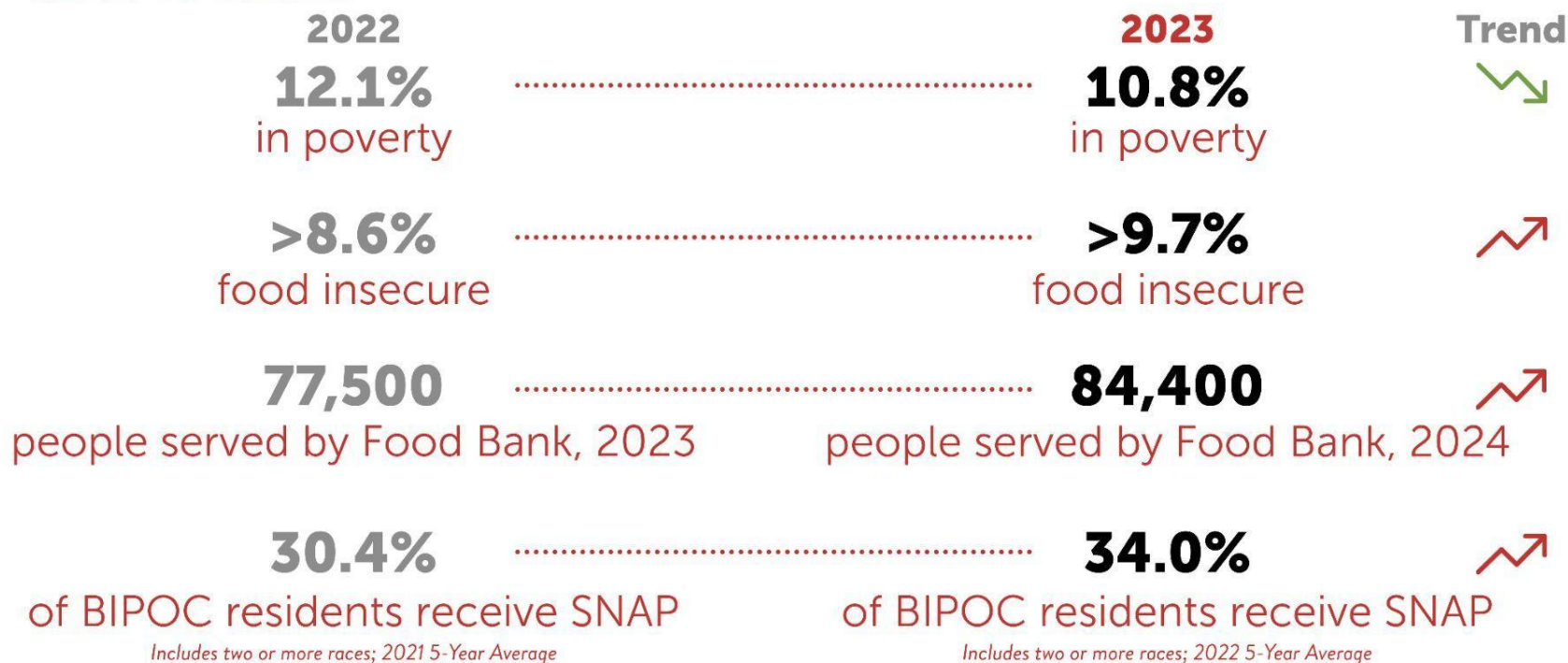
Food Access & Security

Is food insecurity in RI increasing or decreasing? Are some residents disproportionately impacted?

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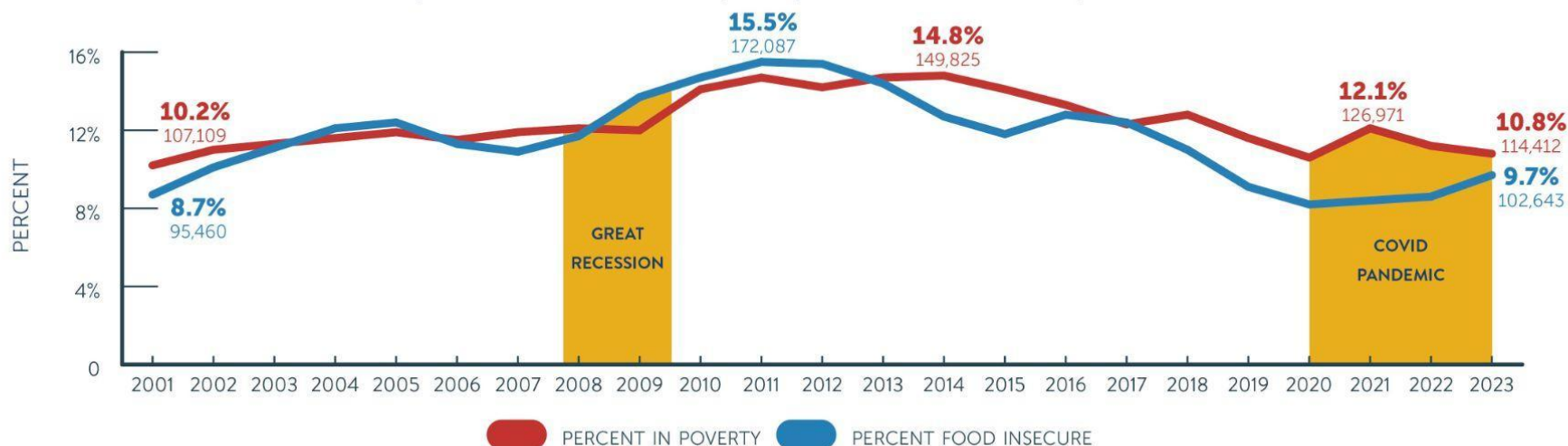
○ KEY STATS



POVERTY AND FOOD INSECURITY, 2001-2023

NO TREND

The percent of Rhode Islanders in poverty gradually increased from 2001 to 2009. Poverty then jumped several percentage points due to the Great Recession and lingered at over **14%** for six years. Poverty then decreased from 2014 to 2019, although it did not go below the percentage in 2001. The COVID-19 pandemic then spiked the percent of Rhode Islanders in poverty to **12.1% (126,971 people)**, before decreasing to **10.8% (114,412 people)** in 2023. **Food insecurity in Rhode Island mirrors poverty trends and has recently increased.**



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (via FRED) and USDA Economic Research Service, Household Food Security in the United States, multiple years.
 Note: the 2023 poverty estimate was obtained from the American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Subjects Tables, S1701.

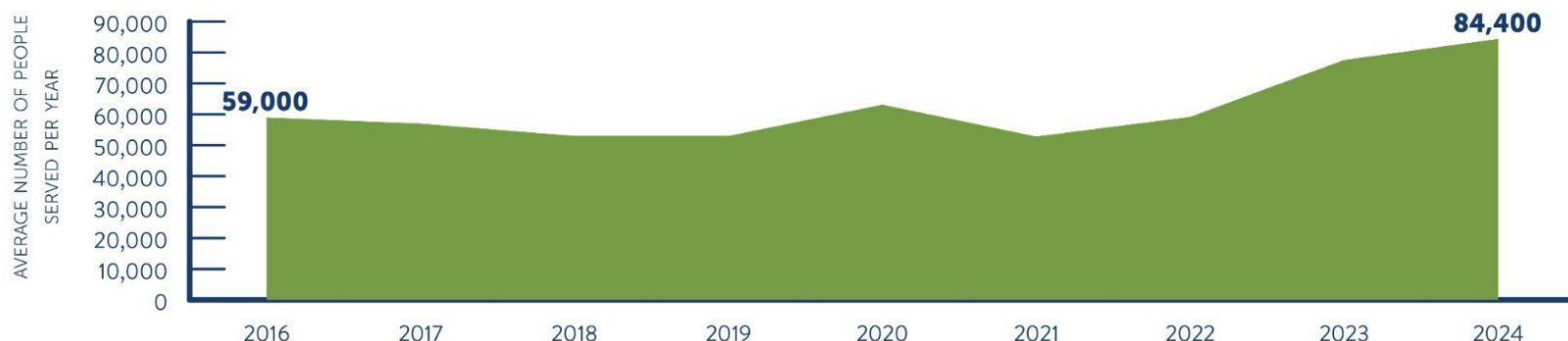


AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED BY CHARITABLE FOOD SYSTEM

NEGATIVE TREND



In 2024, the **Rhode Island Community Food Bank** estimated that a record number of Rhode Islanders—**84,400**—sought assistance through the Food Bank and its network of 147 member agencies. High food prices due to supply chain disruptions—like the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine, and avian influenza outbreak—and the ending of emergency SNAP benefits in 2023 are thought to be the primary drivers of the increased need for food assistance.



Source: Rhode Island Community Food Bank, Status Report on Hunger in Rhode Island, multiple years.








Agriculture & Land Use

What kinds of agricultural products does RI grow/harvest? Is RI's ag sector growing or contracting?



● KEY STATS

2017		2022	Trend
56,864 acres	.....	59,076 acres	
1,043 farms	.....	1,054 farms	
\$74,396,455 total ag sales <i>includes USDA aquaculture estimate</i>	.....	\$99,712,169 total ag sales <i>includes USDA aquaculture estimate</i>	
\$20,740 farm real estate \$ per acre, 2023	.....	\$22,000 farm real estate \$ per acre, 2024	
98% % of farmers White only	.....	97% % of farmers White only	
<i>Reported in 2024 dollars</i>			



MAJOR AGRICULTURAL LAND USES IN RHODE ISLAND, 1945-2017

NEGATIVE TREND



The USDA's *Major Land Uses* series is the “longest running, most comprehensive accounting of all major land uses of public and private land in the United States.” This series shows a steep decrease in land in agriculture in RI after World War II that flattens out around 1987. Since then, acreage has remained ≈36,000 acres, comprised mostly of cropland. Acreage then dropped steeply in 2017 to 29,000 acres.



Source: USDA Major Land Uses. Data for 2022 has not been published. Note: the Major Land Uses series designates “forest with grazing” and not the total amount of forest land (i.e., “woodland”) owned by farmers, as we will see in the next figure on page 14.



Commercial Fisheries & Aquaculture

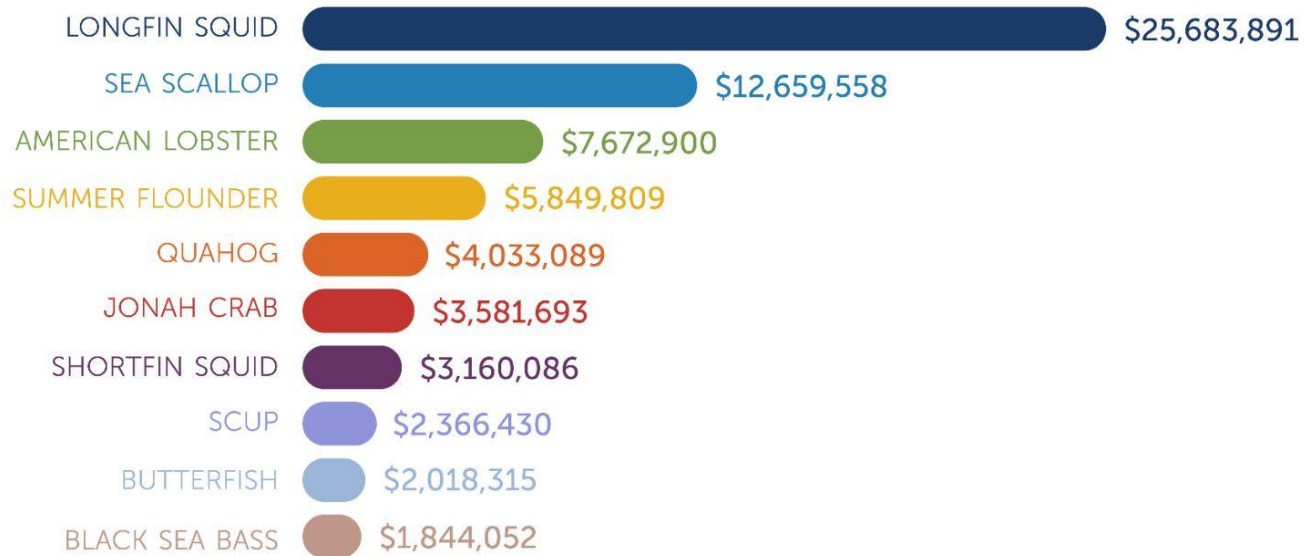
What kinds of seafood products does RI harvest? Are commercial fishing/aquaculture growing or contracting?



📍 KEY STATS



TOP 10 COMMERCIAL SPECIES BY VALUE, 2023



GROSS SALES OF RHODE ISLAND'S SEAFOOD SECTOR, 2016

NO TREND

Dr. Thomas Sproul (formerly at the University of Rhode Island) estimated nearly **\$575 million** in sales from Rhode Island's seafood and fisheries sector in 2016. Wholesalers (e.g., importers and exporters, brokers) generated 45.7% (\$274 million) in sales, followed by commercial fishing (16.4%, \$98.5 million) and service and supply businesses (e.g., nets, commercial tackle and gear, boat and equipment maintenance).

TOTAL = \$573,853,999



Source: Dr. Thomas Sproul and Clayton Michaud, 2019, The Economic Impact of Rhode Island's Fisheries and Seafood Sector, University of Rhode Island.



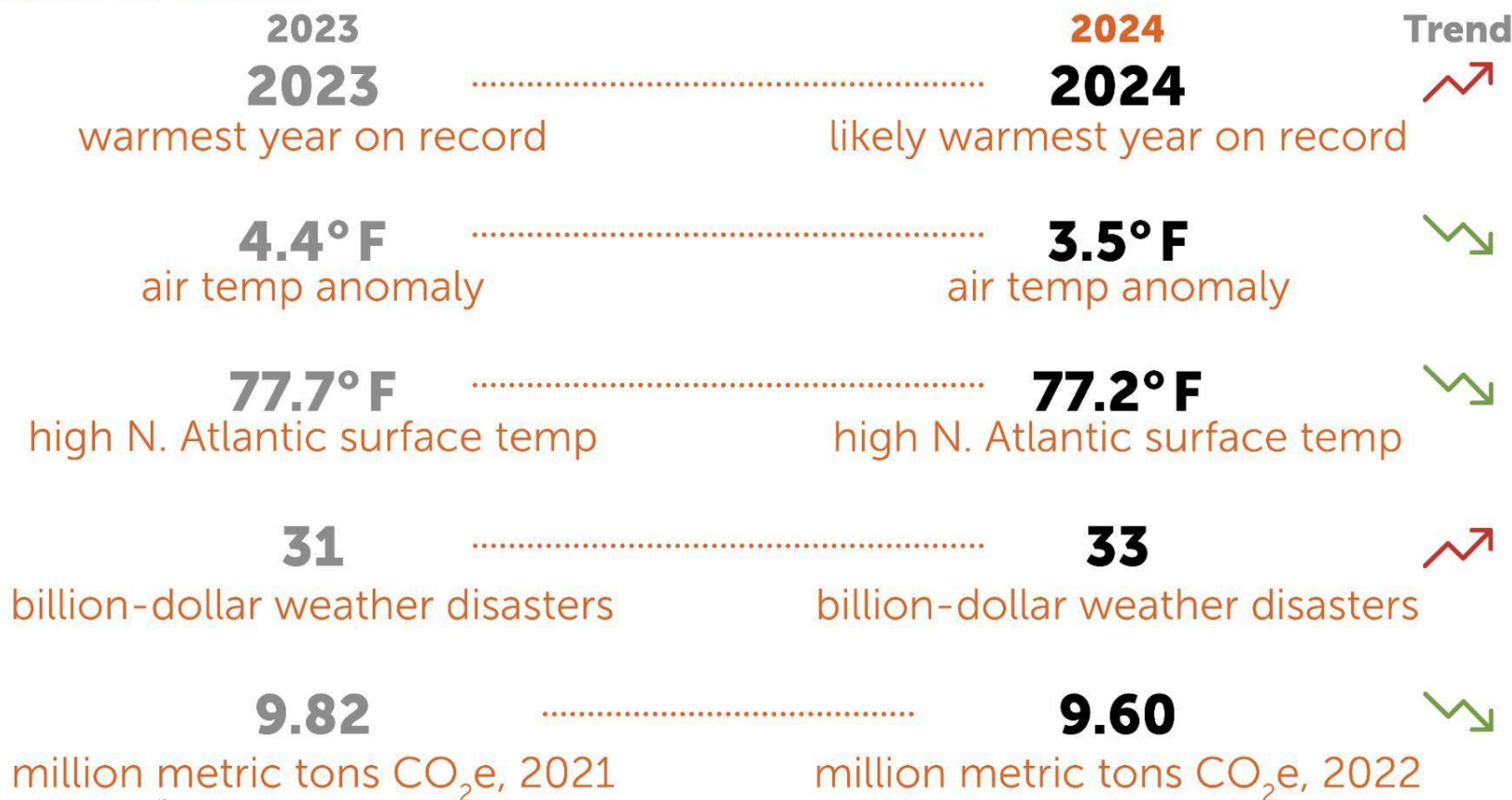
Climate Change

**How is climate change impacting
RI's food system?**

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○ KEY STATS



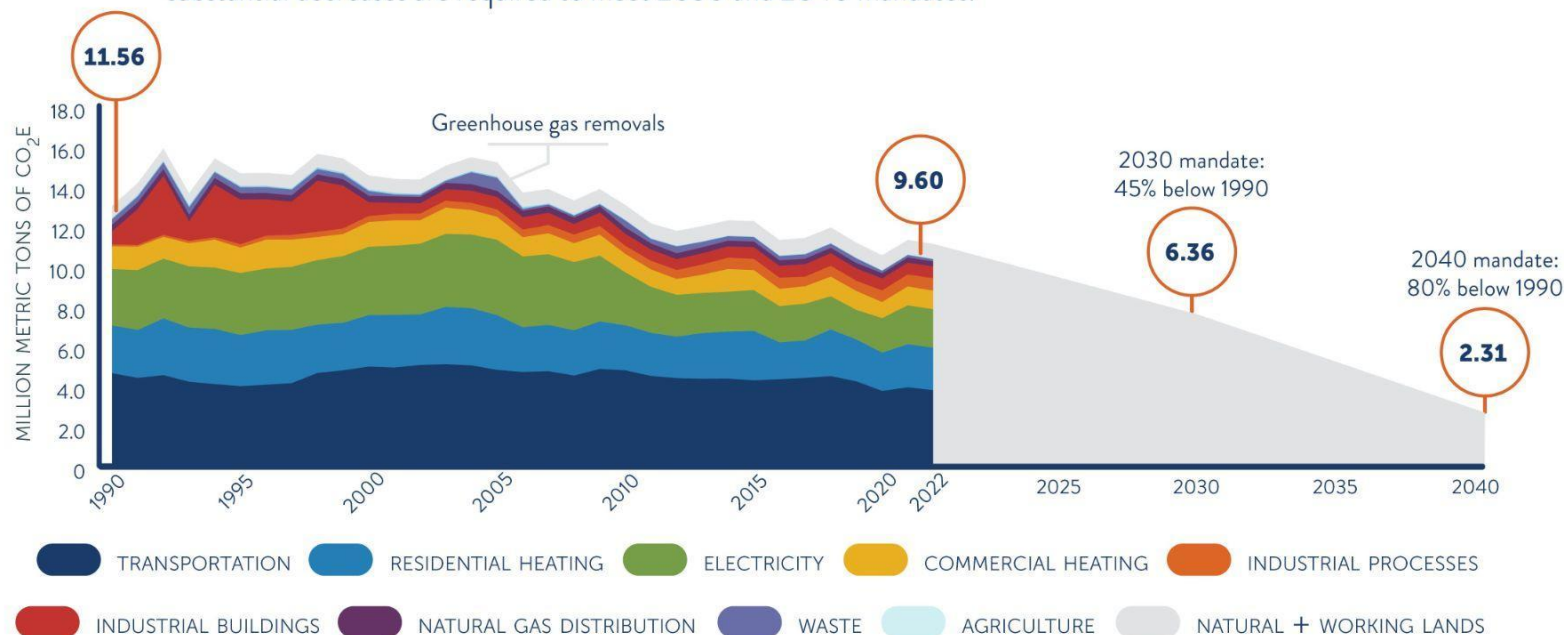
GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY, 1990-2022

POSITIVE TREND



Net greenhouse gas emissions decreased **18.3%** from 11.56 MMCO₂e in 1990, to **9.60 MMCO₂e in 2022**.

Transportation continues to be the largest source of emissions in Rhode Island. Emissions reductions for transportation from 2019 to 2020 are likely due to pandemic restrictions on travel (e.g., -79.6% for aviation emissions). Additional substantial decreases are required to meet 2030 and 2040 mandates.



Source: State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, 1990-2022 Rhode Island Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory.

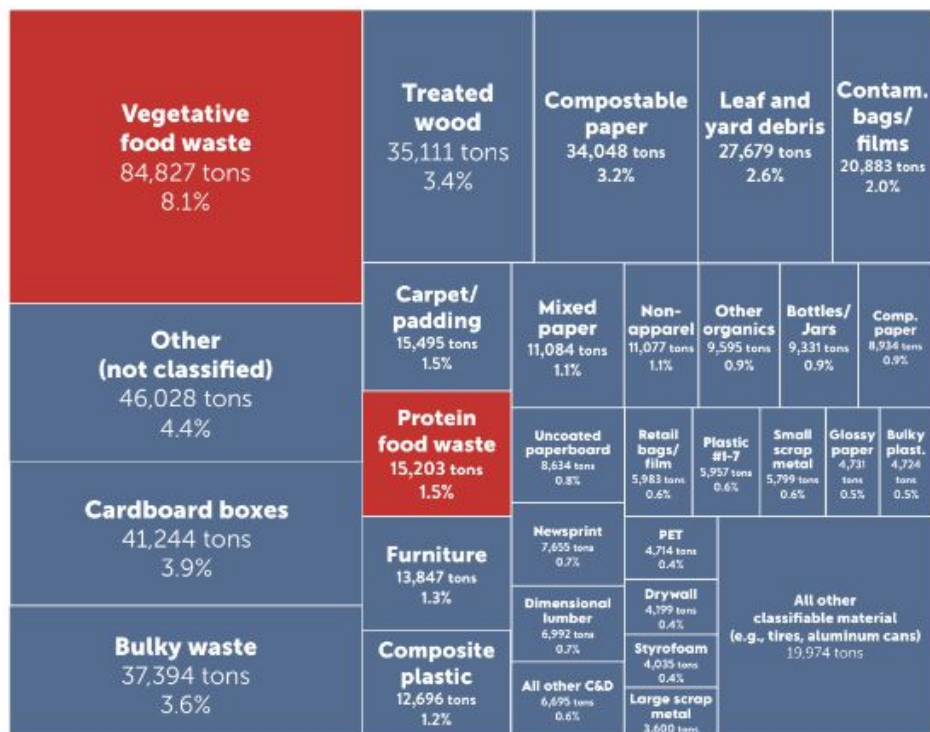


FOOD WASTE, 2015

NET TREND

A 2015 “Waste Characterization” study found that food waste (vegetative and protein) is the top single material in Rhode Island’s municipal waste stream at 100,000 tons (9.6%), or 2 million pounds. While food is landfilled by the ton each day, thousands of people in Rhode Island simultaneously experience food insecurity.

528,168 TONS TOTAL MSW
100,030 TONS FOOD WASTE
60,577 TONS RESIDENTIAL FOOD WASTE
39,453 TONS IND., COM., INST. FOOD WASTE



Source: DSM Environmental Services, 2015, Rhode Island Solid Waste Characterization Study



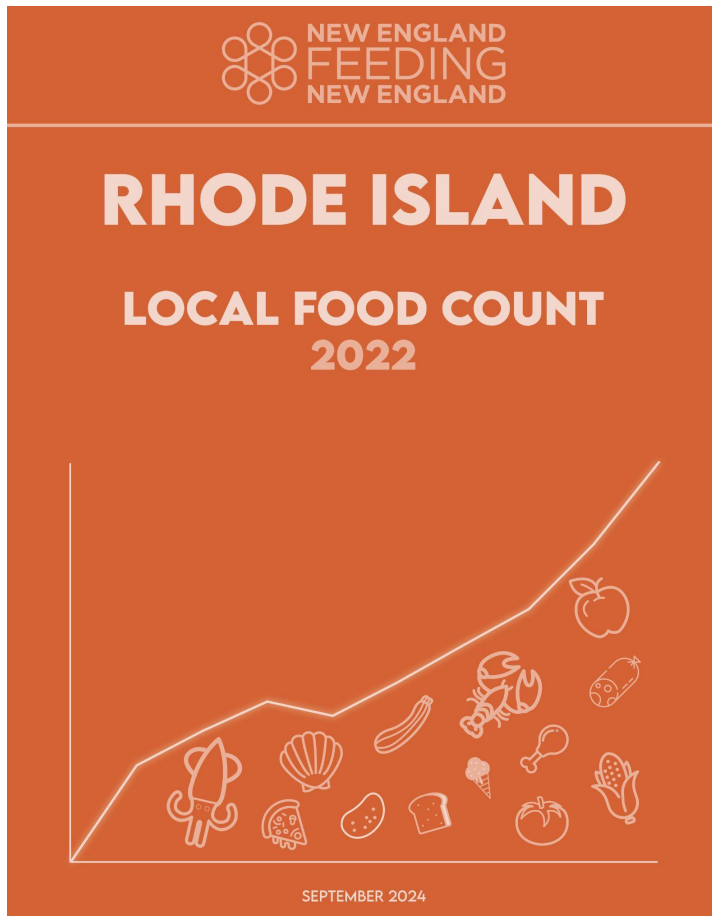
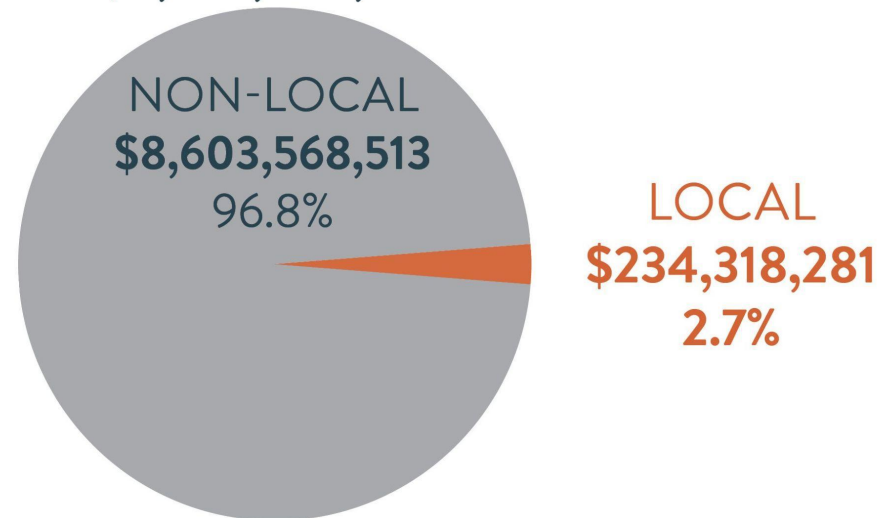


Figure 2: Estimated Total and Local Food Spending in Rhode Island, 2022

RHODE ISLAND TOTAL
\$8,837,886,794



https://nefoodsystemplanners.org/wp-content/uploads/Rhode-Island-Local-Food-Count_2022.pdf

B. The majority of estimated local food purchases take place at grocery stores, full-service restaurants, via direct sales from farmer to consumer, and at schools and colleges.

B. LOCAL FOOD ESTIMATE: \$234,318,281

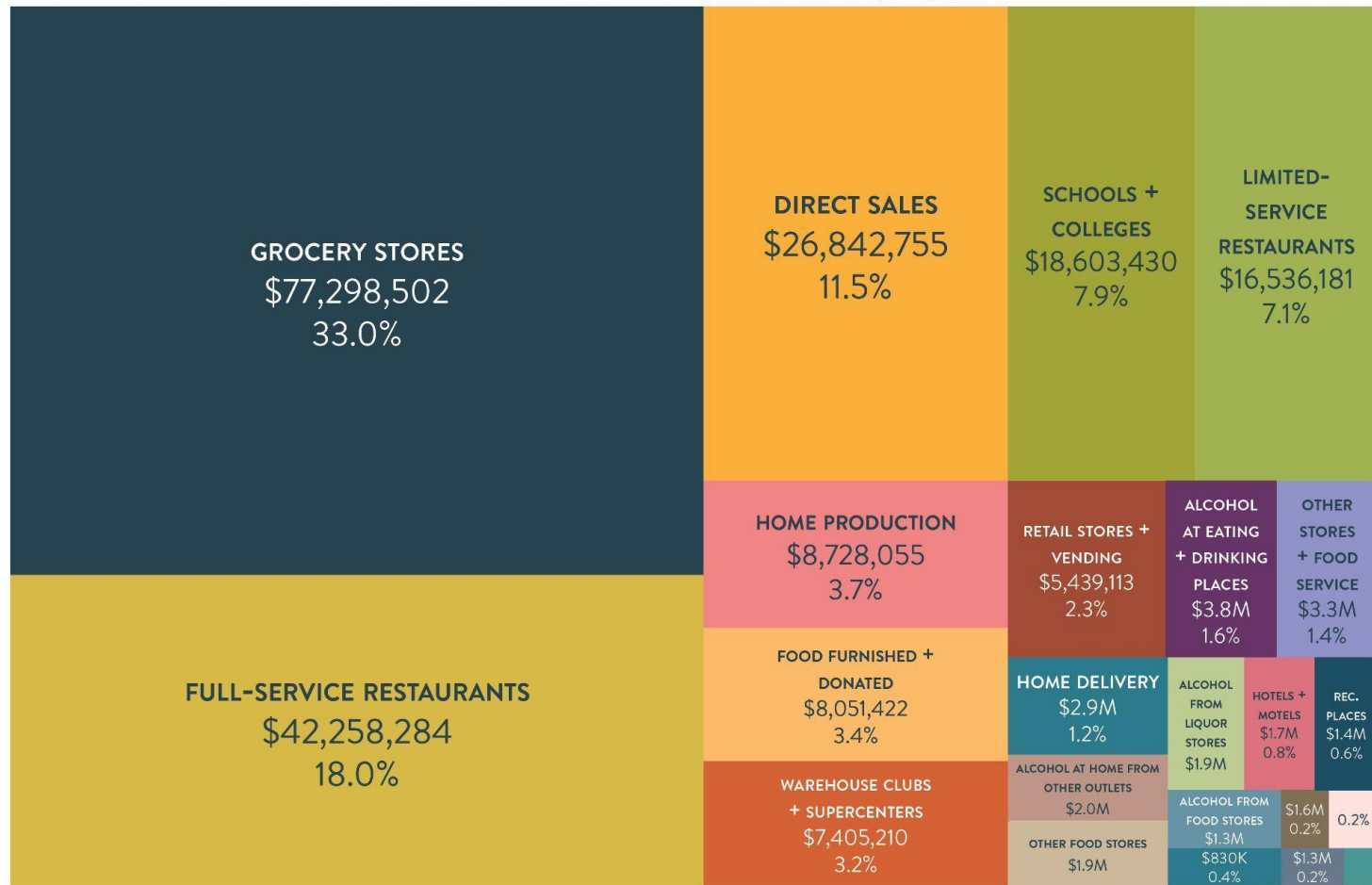
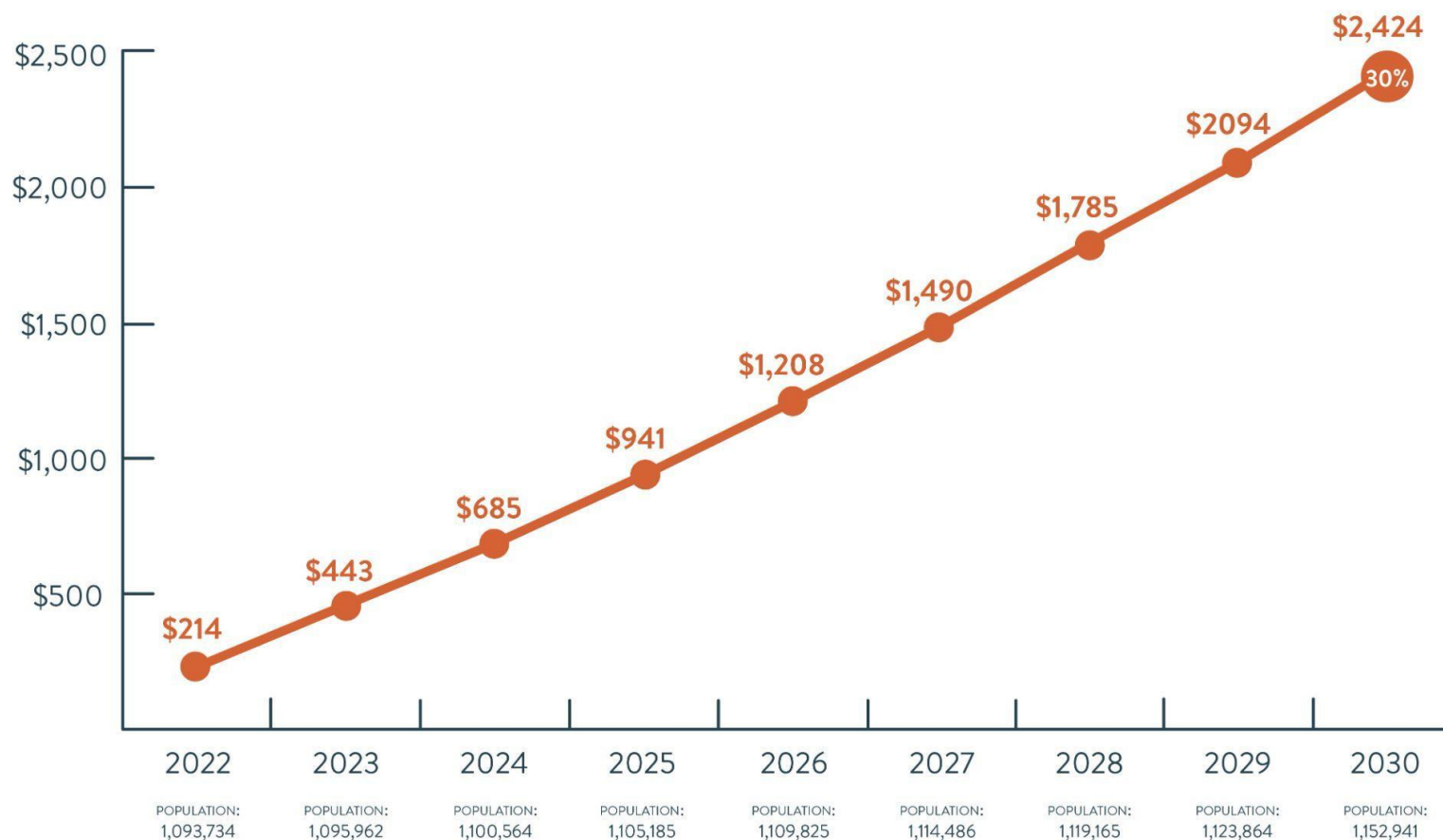


Figure 4: Getting to 2030 – Hypothetical Changes in Per Capita Local Food Spending

Note: USDA State Food Expenditure Series data was updated after *Volume 4* and the *Rhode Island State Brief* were published. This explains why the values shared here deviate from previously published analyses (i.e., the difference between \$2,586 here and \$2,085 in the *Rhode Island State Brief* reflect updates to the underlying data).



CROSSCUTTING ISSUE:

Climate Change

Climate change poses a threat to every facet of Rhode Island

More frequent and extreme weather events—destructive hurricanes, extended high tide flooding, drought—sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, the introduction of new pests, and the generation of waste—are major sources of concern for farmers, fishermen, aquaculturists, food business operators, and communities. The 2021 Rhode Island to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, and state greenhouse gas reduction trends. However, 2023 was the hottest year on record—and warming trends are moving in.

Current Conditions

Food system activities—cultivating crops and raising livestock, land use changes, energy and resource use throughout supply chains, and the generation of waste—are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Food system activities are also uniquely vulnerable to climate change since crops, livestock, and aquatic species thrive in specific habitat ranges that are being disrupted and critical supply chain infrastructure is vulnerable.

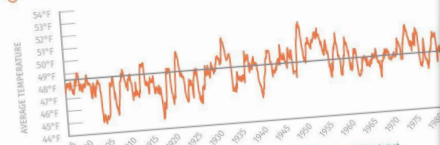
Rhode Island imports the majority of its food from around the country and world, including places experiencing significant climate and freshwater problems, like California's Central Valley and the Midwest. As climate change exacerbates problems globally, an overreliance on imported food could impact Rhode Island's food security. Recent research estimates that the New England states have low regional self-reliance for most food products, with the exception of milk, potatoes, berries, and a variety of seafood. Rhode Island grows, raises, harvests, and lands many food products but, the largest percentage—about 26%—of the value of total agriculture, seafood, and aquaculture sales in 2022 was made up by inedible greenhouse or nursery products (e.g., sod, garden plants).



In 2022, Rhode Island with 46% (27,500) The state's 864 for (45% of total agri fruits, berries, live

As temperatures such as flooding, impact growing o and workers. Rho practices, indoor additional invest nee

STATEWIDE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE



Source: NOAA, National Centers for Environmental Information, Rhode Island Average Temperature, September-August.

website url



Stewardship of Working Waterfronts

From our state appetizer, calamari, to our state shell, the quahog, Rhode Island's cultural identity and gastronomic traditions are rooted in the sea

Rhode Island's fisheries and seafood sector has been estimated to support 3,174 jobs and contribute over \$538 million in revenue to the state's economy.¹ Rhode Island's commercial fisheries and aquaculture industries are an essential component of the State's economy and cultural heritage that contribute to local jobs and carry on the longstanding traditions of harvesting natural resources from local waters that began with the Narragansett Indian Tribe and other Indigenous peoples. The sustainable management and stewardship of coastal waters, offshore fisheries, and commercial ports are essential to ensuring the viability of seafood and aquaculture industries.

Current Conditions

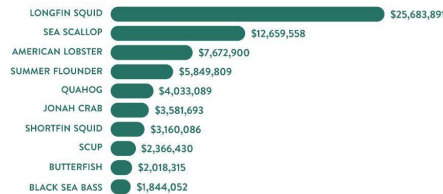
Commercial fisheries in Rhode Island trace back over 350 years, with local Indigenous populations relying on the ocean's natural resources for thousands of years before that.² The first aquaculture lease was granted in 1798 to cultivate two acres in the Providence River near Sabin Point for oysters.³ Rhode Island's commercial fishermen depend on 25 commercial ports to land seafood. Of these, Galilee (Point Judith), North Kingstown (Wickford), and Newport are the top three ports, by value, of seafood products landed in the state.⁴

The Port of Galilee is Rhode Island's largest commercial fishing port, comprising 38 acres of commercial property managed by RI Division of Coastal Resources.⁵ Currently, DEM DCR manages 27 commercial land leases in the Port of Galilee. State ownership and management of these land leases in Galilee provide a stable working waterfront



TOP 10 COMMERCIAL SPECIES BY VALUE

In 2023 Rhode Island landed over 65 million pounds of seafood valued at \$81.7 million. The top five species by value were longfin squid, sea scallop, American lobster, summer flounder, and quahog. The Port of Galilee remained the top port in RI in 2023 landing ~69% of Rhode Island's seafood by value and ~55% by pounds.⁶



Source: Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management - Division of Marine Fisheries, 2024, 2023 Rhode Island Annual Fisheries Report.

website url



KEY ISSUE
6

ELS:

Grocery & Retail

more of their food at grocery stores and through any other market channel

of the most important business drivers in the state, with earnings of chain, independent, international, and specialty markets in operation. Among the largest private sector employers in the state, employing over 12,000 retail state like Rhode Island, our local markets are more than a convenient for connection.



and local markets are focusing on the in-store experience to attract and maintain customers by preserving the shopping experience their base has grown to love. Consolidation is altering the perception of what a community market looks like. In the past twenty years, many of our regional supermarket chains, such as Shaw's and Stop and Shop, have merged with national and international grocers. As more national competitors come into Rhode Island, the more difficult it is for smaller independent grocers to compete from a pricing perspective.

IN RHODE ISLAND



All Others includes dozens of corner markets, specialty food stores (e.g., meat markets) and independent grocery stores.

Source: Grocery Gap Analysis

Legend: Dave's Marketplace, Amazon, Wafers Food Corp (Price Rite), Seara Group, Target, Aldi, Brigid's Fresh Marketplace

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Conclusions and Next Steps

for the 2025 Food System Factbook

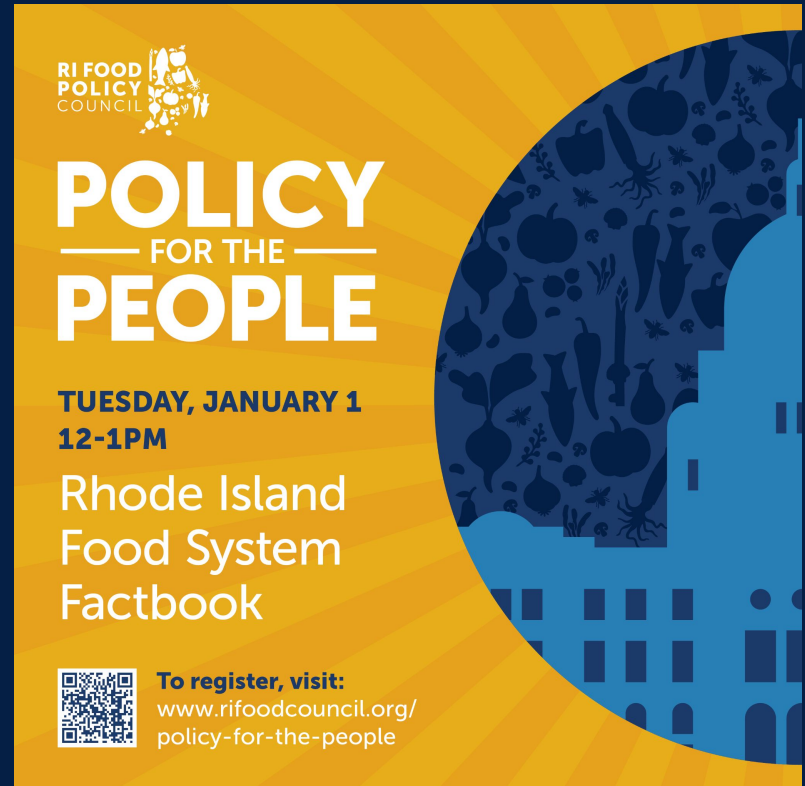


Our Value Proposition

- Annual publication of a Food System Factbook will elevate food system issues in Rhode island and educate our key decision makers.
- Educating key decision makers will result in a better food policy and regulatory environment and more public and private investment in for our farmers, fishers, and food businesses.

NEXT STEPS

- Join us January 21 at 12pm!
<https://bit.ly/FoodFactbook2025>
- Printed copies will be available





Nessa Richman
Executive Director
nessa@rifoodcouncil.org

Josh Daly
Associate Director
josh@rifoodcouncil.org

Max De Faria
Policy & Civic Engagement Manager
max@rifoodcouncil.org

Allison Montagnon
Engagement Manager
allison@rifoodcouncil.org

Isaac Bearg
Food, Climate & Environment
Program Director
isaac@rifoodcouncil.org

Rachel Newman Greene
Food Access & Nutrition Security
Program Director
rachel@rifoodcouncil.org

Rozie Schleinig
Food Business & Economic Development
Program Director
rozie@rifoodcouncil.org

www.rifoodcouncil.org

[@rifoodcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/rifoodcouncil)





State of the State on Food Systems & 2025 Legislative Priorities

Nessa Richman, RI Food Policy Council

State Planning & Food System Research

Alison Macbeth, RI Food Strategy, RI Commerce

RI Local Food Brands Study – *funded through USDA FSMIP*

GROWING DEMAND FOR RI GROWN, CAUGHT AND HARVESTED FOODS



GOALS of grant project:

- 1) determining the current and potential economic impact of our “buy local” brands as well as
- 2) conduct market research to strengthen the impact of the local food brand programs and determine the best marketing strategies to increase brand awareness, member participation and improve the economic impact of the brands.

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ 9 person Advisory Council
- ✓ Conducted economic impact survey:
- ✓ Conducted consumer awareness survey
- ❑ Preparing marketing strategies for strengthening brands

FINDINGS

- 53% of Respondents Believe RI Grown and RI Seafood increase sales: Smaller businesses tend to see greatest sales impact and 36% of the smallest businesses see a sales boost of over 10%, a greater share than the overall average
- There is higher awareness of both brands than expected, especially RI Seafood, which is up from 12% recognition in the 2016 URI survey (40% very familiar RI Grown and 38% very familiar with RI Seafood)

Second Stage Food Business Economic Analysis and Feasibility Study – *funded via EDA grant*

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF RI'S 2ND-STAGE FOOD BUSINESSES TO SUPPORT GROWTH

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Build a framework to support second stage businesses** - Expand and continue to convene the advisory council; Compile industry databases on a regular basis; Expand networking & outreach; Create a food & beverage industry association; Track industry trends and progress
- 2. Develop a food and beverage business accelerator** - To serve as a one-stop shop for food business assistance; To provide food-ready and right sized production space; To provide shared commercial kitchen and equipment for production and packaging; To provide distribution and dry/cold/freezer storage capabilities; To provide shared production and administrative staffing
- 3. Package incentives for emerging and second stage food businesses** - Designate a resource concierge; Improve access to capital (incentivize property owners to build out kitchen spaces in their buildings; establish a revolving loan fund to meet the short-term working capital needs of emerging and young second stage businesses struggling to get financing through other programs; utilize the Innovation Voucher Program to fund feasibility studies for second stage businesses considering co-packing as a strategy to increase equipment utilization); Tap into government contracting



Planning for RI's Food Strategy 2030



- ✓ 2024 - 2030
- ✓ Planning supported by backbone agencies Commerce, RIDEM & RIDOH
- ✓ Co-created and “whole of government” approach
- ✓ Dynamic and iterative
- ✓ Equity-centered and participatory planning informed by impacted communities, industries and stakeholders
- ✓ Accessible and measurable impact metrics

RI FOOD STRATEGY – GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The Rhode Island Food Strategy 2030 envisions a food system where we work together, that works for everyone, that works in ways that are regenerative, and where our resiliency is increased by regional connectivity.

- Collective Impact
- Equity
- Sustainability
- Regionality



RI FOOD STRATEGY - PROCESS



PHASE 0 (Process Development & Fundraising)

- ✓ [Steering Committee](#) Formed
- ✓ [Northbound Ventures](#) was selected through a competitive bid process to provide consulting services throughout process.
- ✓ Funding through the [Henry P. Kendall Foundation](#), [Rhode Island Foundation](#) and [RI Commerce](#) secured.

PHASE 1 (Initial Outreach & Early Engagement)

- ✓ [Advisory Board](#) established
- ✓ The [5 Year Retrospective](#) published
- ✓ Develop Crosscutting, issue and market briefs co-authored by subject matter experts

PHASE 2 (Research & Development of RI Food Strategy 2030)

- ✓ Draft strategies/plan from the issue briefs
- ☐ Hold public listening sessions
- ☐ Public comment period

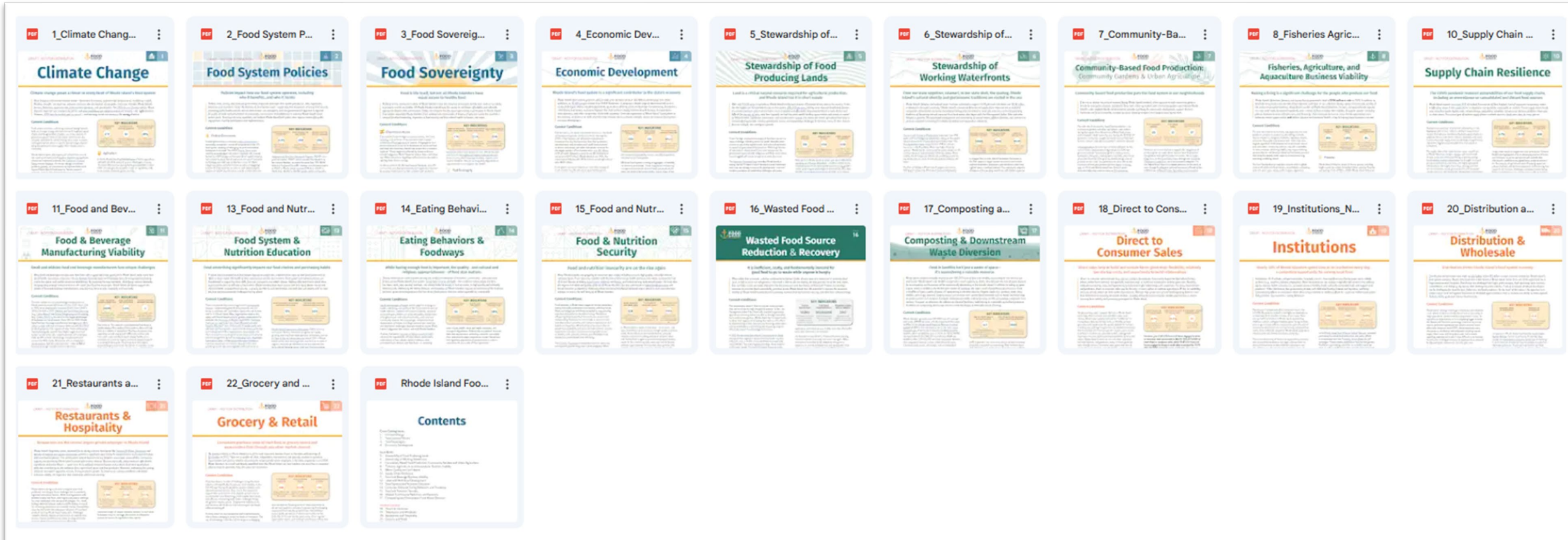
PHASE 3 (Public Launch, Outreach, & Implementation)

- ☐ Launch & widely distribute completed plan
- ☐ Drive implementation of strategies – integrate!

RI FOOD STRATEGY 2030 - BRIEFS



26 Brief Co-authors, 122 Brief Contributors... and a lot of meetings and emails!



RI FOOD STRATEGY 2030 - DRAFT PRIORITIES



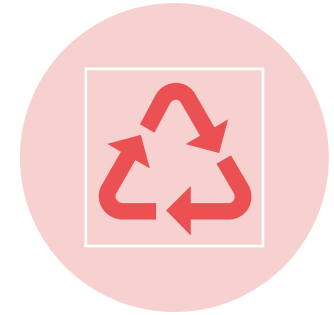
SECURE THE STATE'S LONG-TERM FOOD PRODUCTION AND HARVESTING CAPACITY



INVEST IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT



CREATE WELCOMING FOOD ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL



SCALE UP WASTED FOOD PREVENTION, RECOVERY, AND RECYCLING EFFORTS

RI Food Disruption Plan Process Update

Rachel Newman Greene, RI Food Policy Council



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Setting the Table:

State Priorities and Action Tools for Rhode Island Food Disruptions

December 2024

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Setting the Table Planning Process

Discovery



Review of State, County, Municipal Plans.



Focus Groups & Surveys

140 in focus groups, 70 surveys



Interviews

20 interviews with local food system and community leaders



Asset Mapping

To provide a clear, big-picture view of the state's food system

PRIORITIES

- **Food Availability and Access Systems**

Strengthen local production, storage, and transportation networks to ensure equitable distribution and accessibility, both pre- and post-disruption. Develop a community-driven charitable food system for sustained support.

- **Communication Infrastructure**

Build inclusive, real-time systems for sharing critical information about food resources and fostering cross-sector coordination.

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PRIORITIES (CON'T)

- **Financial Disbursement**

Establish rapid-response funding mechanisms and partnerships to sustain food banks, local producers, and vulnerable populations during disruptions.

- **Training and Workforce Development**

Train stakeholders in crisis preparedness and enhance workforce skills to respond effectively during food disruptions.

- **Strategic Governance**

Integrate the plan into RIEMA's emergency framework and designate leadership within state agencies to oversee implementation, ensuring annual updates and scenario testing.

TOOLS

- **Asset Maps and Catalog of Data**
- **Visual Playbook: Roles and Decision Making**
- **Stakeholder Synthesis and Suggested Priorities and Actions**

BRIEFS

1. **State-Level Leadership for Long-Term Disruptions to the Food System**
1. **Capacity Building for Municipal and Tribal Governments to Address Long-Term Disruptions to the Food System**
1. **Enhancing Communication Before, During, and After Long-Term Disruptions to the Food System**
1. **Expediting Funding During a Long-Term Disruption to the Food System**

A close-up photograph of purple and green leaves, likely from a basil plant, with prominent veins and serrated edges. The leaves are layered, creating a textured background.

QUESTIONS?

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RI Farm & Sea to School Strategic Plan & Update

Stephanie Pike, RI Farm & Sea to School Network



Our Mission

The RI Farm & Sea to School Network engages partners across Rhode Island to develop, expand and strengthen local purchasing, education and gardening initiatives to benefit children and youth throughout the state.

Our Partners

RIDE, DEM, Commerce, Farm Fresh RI, RIDOH



① Build a Diverse Farm & Sea to School Network

**DEFINE
ENGAGEMENT**

**BROADEN
REPRESENTATION**

**COORDINATE
TRAINING**

**IMPROVE
INFRASTRUCTURE**



② Amplify Awareness of Farm & Sea to School



COORDINATED
COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



POLICY
ADVOCACY

3

Create Sustainable Systems

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

LOCAL SOURCING

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

ONGOING EVALUATION



What's Next

Setting up sustainable Network systems for stakeholders

Exploring curricular opportunities

Working on supportive procurement systems
(and Procurement Gathering January 23!)

Developing plans for state funding for these programs

Exploring more official organization for the Network



Local & Healthy Food Procurement Subcommittee Update

Sarah Blau, HEAL Program, RI Dept of Health

Urban Agriculture Course – Brown University

Understand “food flow and supply chain”

- 🍏 Conduct interviews
- 🍏 Review research materials
- 🍏 Design maps (“farm to plate”)

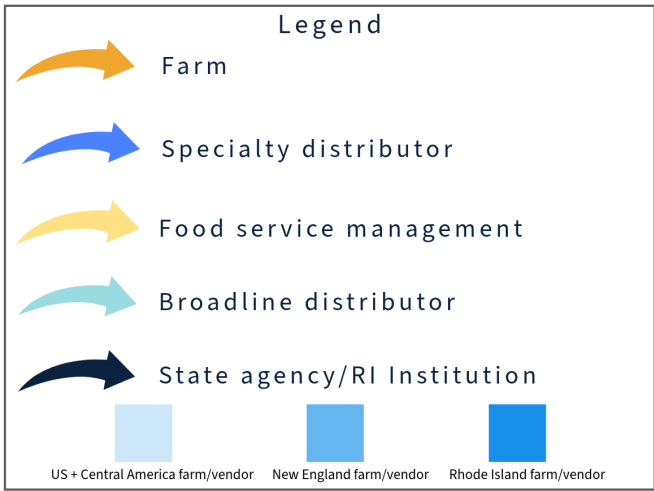
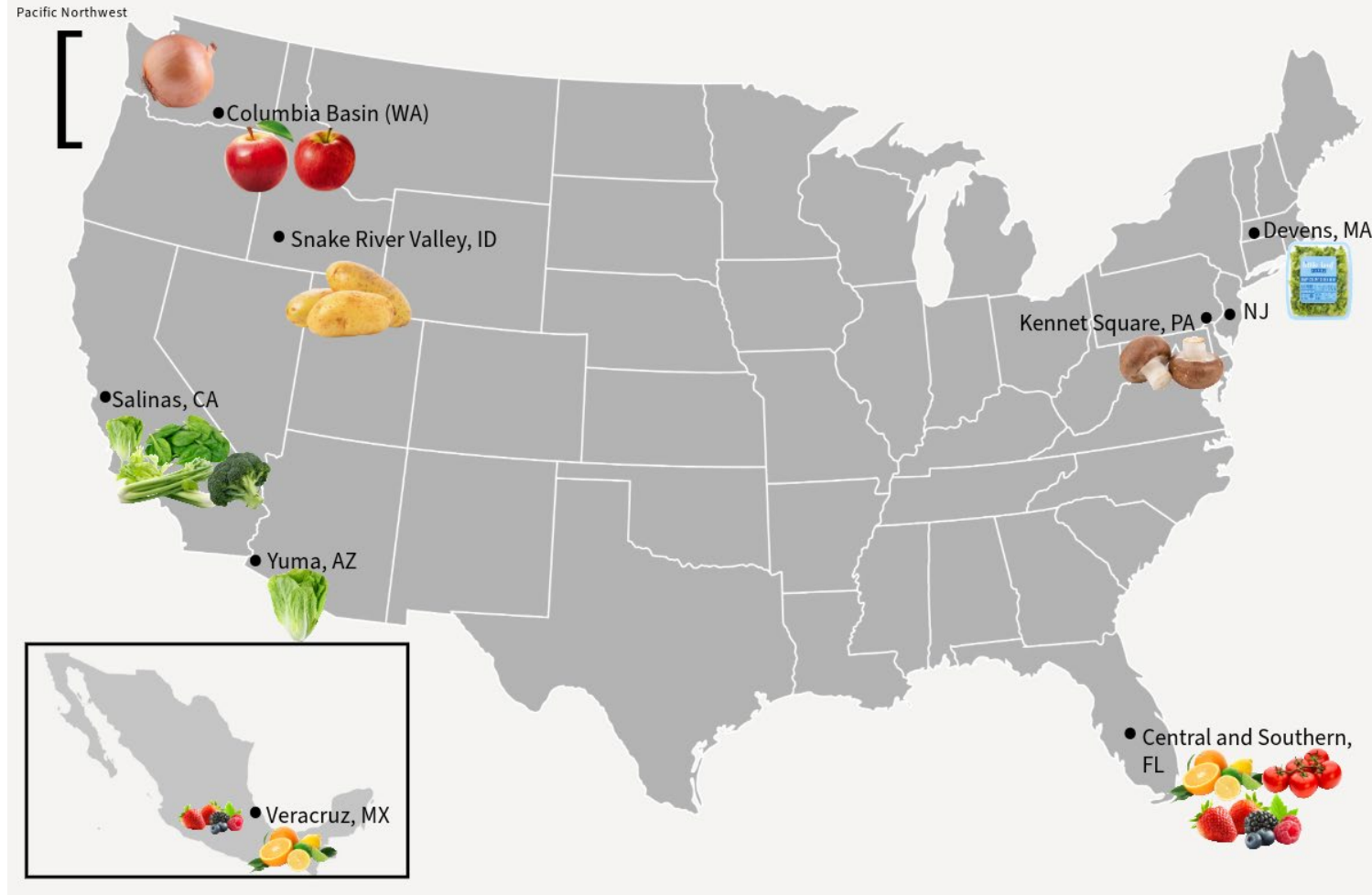


Figure 1. RI state and institution supply chain and food flow diagram



Distribution of Produce

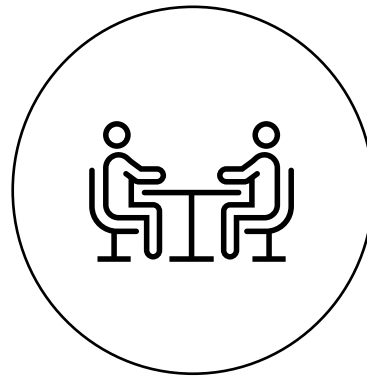
Figure 2. Geographical Distribution of Produce Supplied to RI State Agencies



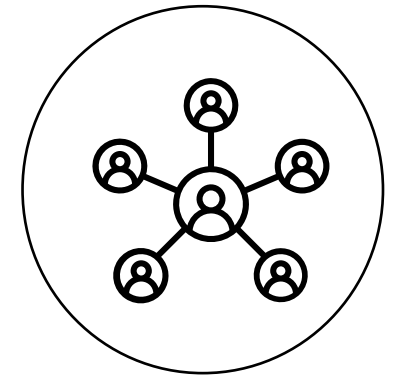
Sub-committee Convening Update



*Held initial
meeting with
DOA*



*Outreach to
members*

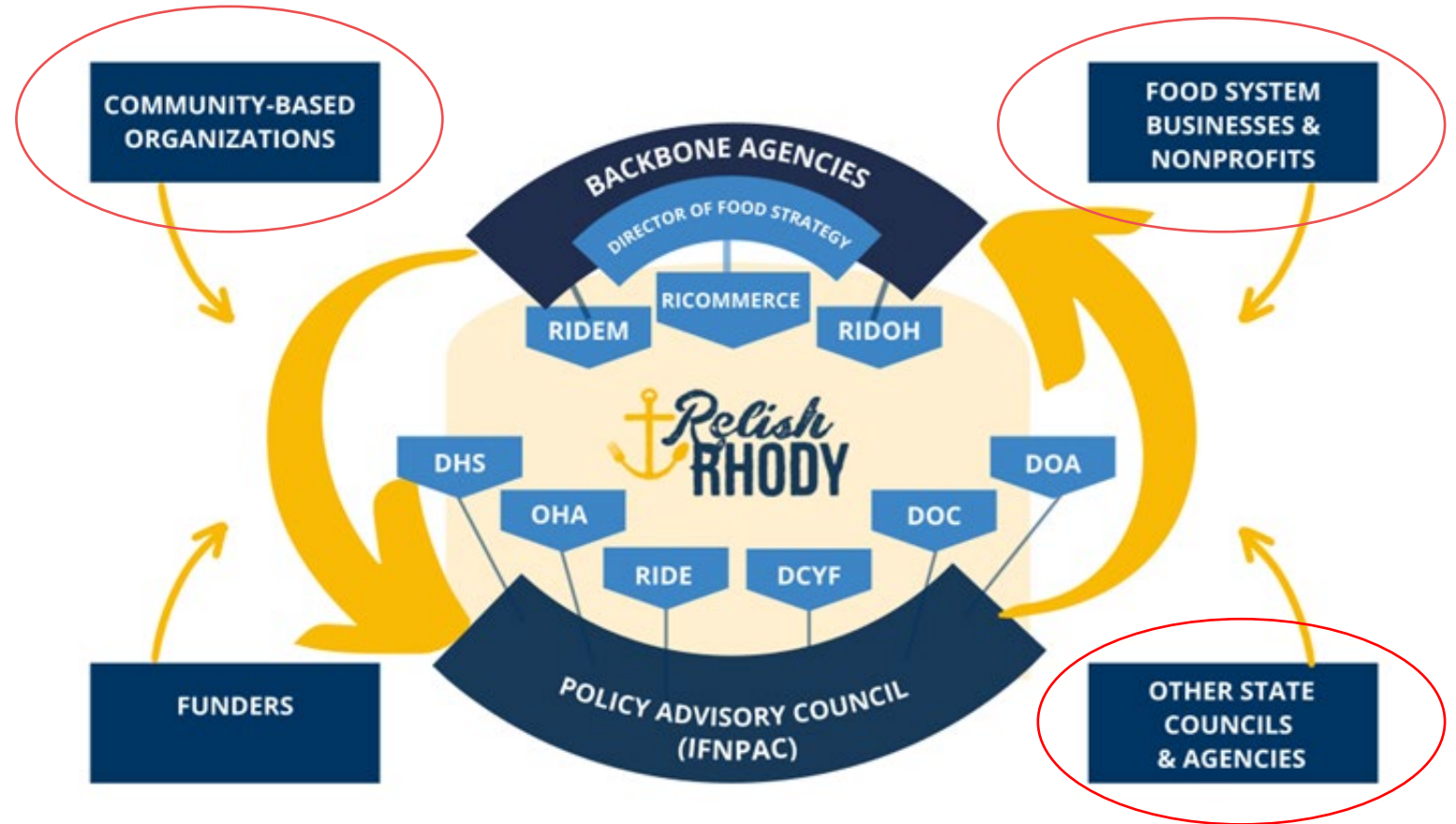


*Connecting
with regional
partners*

Members

CBOs + Food System Businesses and Nonprofits

- 🍏 Farm Fresh
- 🍏 URI
- 🍏 Farm Bureau
- 🍏 Young Farmers Network
- 🍏 FINE
- 🍏 Conservation districts
- 🍏 RIFPC
- 🍏 Interested constituents/members of the public
- 🍏 Any interested parties, groups or individuals





Hunger Elimination Task Force

Recommendations:

Increasing Local and Culturally Appropriate Foods in School Meals

Rachel Newman Greene, RI Food Policy Council



Jocelyn Antonio, Hassenfled Institute

HETF Action Group 3 Recommendations

Increasing local and culturally appropriate meals in public schools served by food service management companies

- Educate school business offices on opportunities to increase accountability of food service management companies in contracts.
- Train School Wellness Committees to engage in and monitor school meal contracts, including by increasing support for and investment in RI Healthy Schools Coalition’s trainings for School Wellness Committees.
- Promote and encourage food service management companies to train staff on and provide equipment for scratch cooking.
- Promote and encourage food service management companies to train staff on and provide equipment for cooking local and culturally relevant foods, ingredients and flavors.
- Research and promote best practices for schools to integrate student and community feedback into meal planning.
- Support schools to leverage partnerships with community-based organizations to increase local and culturally-relevant food options.
- Establish and fund local food purchasing incentives for schools.
- Include funding for Healthy School Meals for All in State Agency FY26 budget request (if not legislated on beforehand).

Hunger Elimination Task Force Updates



Randi Belhumeur,
Healthy Eating and Active Living

RIDOH



Hunger Elimination Task Force Sunset

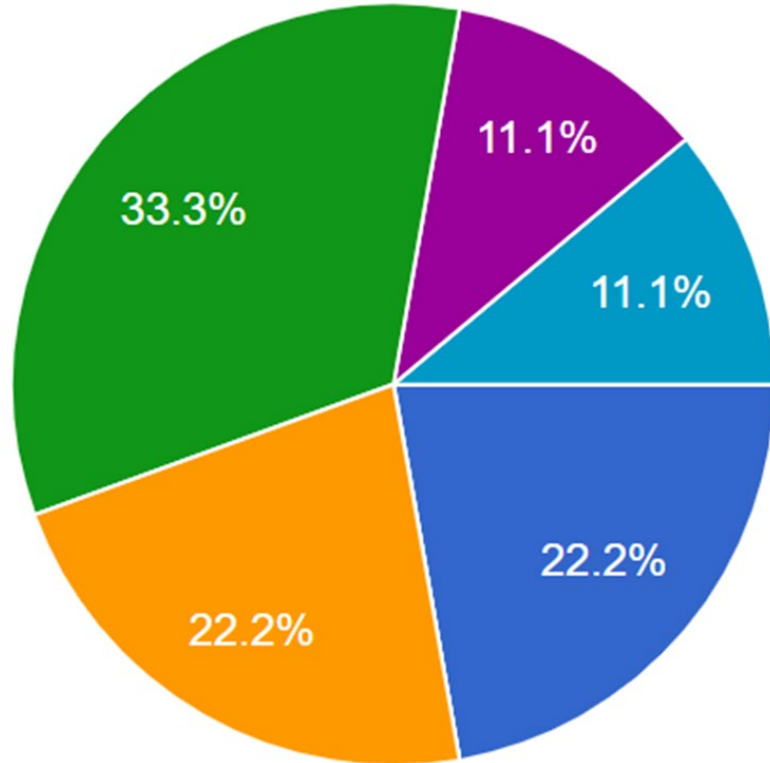
As of December 31, 2024

Next Steps:

1. Survey results from quarter 4 meeting
2. Working groups to arise out of:
 - a. HETF Action Group recommendations (groups 1, 2 and 3); or
 - b. 2030 State Food Strategy
3. Working group governance and structure:
 - a. "Subgroups" under IFNPAC
 - b. Partnerships with community
 - c. Other (need your input)

Quarter 4 Survey Results

What are some reasons you participate in HETF?



- Learning more about initiatives across the state
- Growing my network
- Identifying key actions to address food access and nutrition security within my community
- Learning about resources for my organization
- Sharing with the network about initiatives within my organization
- All of the above

Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

What changes would you like to see as we prepare for HETF transition?

- Do outreach to see who else could be involved throughout the state to widen the breadth of knowledge and experience
- The addition of commercial food entities – distribution companies, stores, etc.
- Better involvement of local food manufacturers into the process
- Increased focus in underserved communities
- Doing more to get to target populations in RI where SNAP outreach is not being done

Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

How do you think we could improve HETF?

- Don't just have state entities involved and have a wider span of groups involved
- Engage more commercial food agencies- stores, distribution companies, etc. They are a part of the process. They may have a lot to offer and may benefit from listening to the "other side" of the process
- Explore innovative ways to get food/prepared meals/options in formats that recipients/participants want to use
- Include the voices of those who are hungry
- Regular meetings and events
- Branch out to organizations not being targeted

Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

How would you like to see the forthcoming RI Food Strategy 2030 advance goals of HETF?

- Having a concrete goal of the task force would be great so the meeting doesn't turn into update sharing around the state but no action
- Consider a less siloed approach; embrace ALL food businesses that want to participate
- Blanket the entire state
- I think this group should continue to serve as an advisory board to advance the 2030 goals
- Continued community voices from across our small state

Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

How would you like to be involved in future facilitated efforts like working groups, etc. related to hunger and food insecurity?

- Would love to continue participating in virtual meetings, calls, workgroups, etc. as available
- Improving resources to older adult communities
- To actively work on a project that elicits change in the system where needed
- RI DHS would like to remain as a partner in this effort
- Happy to participate in targeted discussions/roundtables
- Would like to participate and serve as a liaison to my local work group
- Working groups to address food insecurities

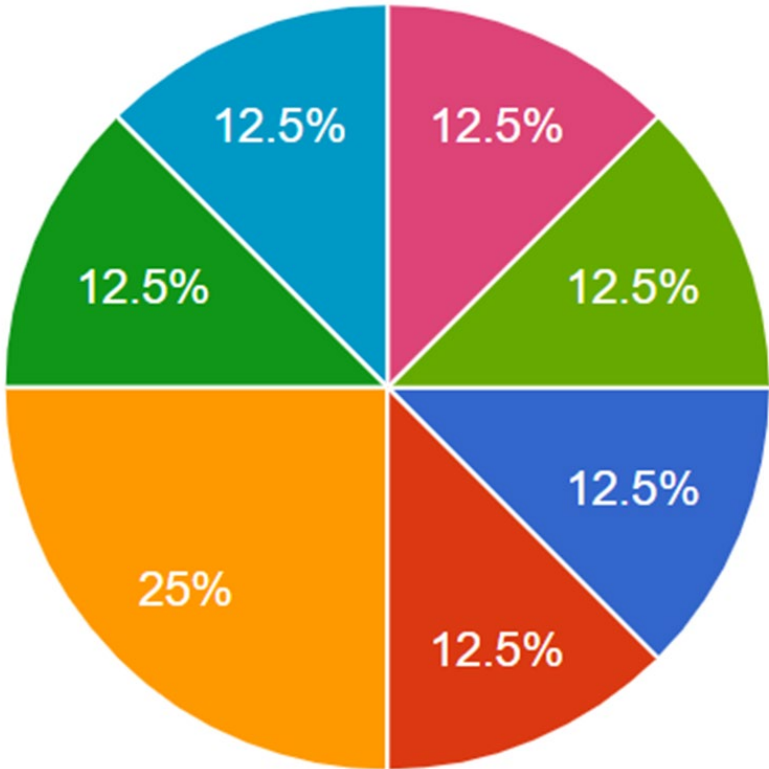
Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

How often do you attend the Community Food Access Office Hours?



Quarter 4 Survey Results, Continued

Reasons you participate in the Community Food Access Office Hours?



- Learning more about initiatives across the state
- Growing my network
- Identifying key actions to address food access and nutrition security within my community
- Learning about resources for my organization
- Sharing with the network about initiatives within my organization
- The new SNAP administrator should participate
- I would like to start joining
- Haven't attended

DEM Updates

DHS Updates



Eat Well Be Well

**Eat Well
Be Well**



IFNPAC Q4 2024

Eat Well, Be Well Rewards Program Overview

- Funded by a one-time state appropriation by the General Assembly to the Department of Human Services.
- Enables all SNAP recipients in Rhode Island (~140,000 individuals) to receive 50% off their fresh fruit and vegetable purchases when paying with their EBT card at participating grocery retailers throughout the state.
- There is a \$25.00 monthly cap for the reimbursement (spend \$50.00 on eligible items, receive up to \$25.00 reimbursement)
- Evaluation is critical to validate success of program to ensure continuous future funding. RI DHS has engaged RI PHI to conduct the evaluation.

EWBW Requirements Overview

Eligibility for Pilot Participation

- All SNAP households will be eligible to participate in the pilot.
- Large chain retailers will be targeted as participating merchants to allow us to reach the largest percentage of SNAP participants, and because they are more likely to be able to meet the technology requirements to implement the program.
- Retailers will be located throughout the State with preference given to retailers in areas where SNAP participants reside.
- Retailers with the required POS technology were targeted first.

Purchases Eligible for Incentive Payments

- SNAP participants can receive incentive payments on purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Eligible Uses of Earned Incentive Payments

- Participants can spend their incentive payment on any allowable food item that can be purchased with SNAP benefits.
- Customers will have a seamless user experience when receiving or redeeming EWBW transactions at retailers. RI DHS has programmed backend system logic and processing to occur without the customer's intervention.

EWBW Pilot Program Roles & Responsibilities

RI DHS is partnering with RIPHI, URI SNAP-Ed, and FIS/Conduent to implement and manage the EWBW program. Roles and responsibilities among the EWBW partners are listed below:

Partner	Role
RI DHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Administer the EWBW program & funds- Communications
URI SNAP-Ed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide EWBW marketing & educational materials
RIPHI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Retailer Engagement
FIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Allow for a state-funded incentive payment to be issued through households' EBT cards and to identify eligible purchases
RIPHI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pilot Program Evaluation, Vendor Outreach

Communications/Outreach

SNAP households need to be informed about the availability of the program.

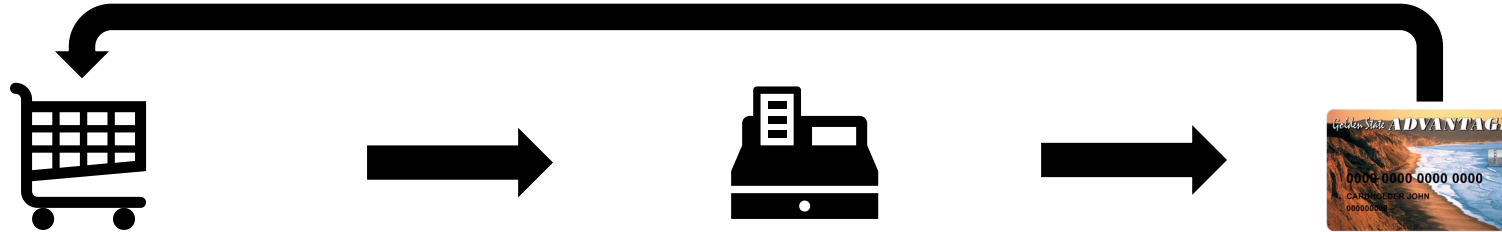
- A branding and communication strategy was been developed in order to promote the Eat Well, Be Well Rewards Program. DHS engaged Duffy and Shanley to prepare and release a comprehensive communication plan.
- SNAP households need to know what it is, how it works, and what stores provide the incentive. Current participating retailers include Stop & Shop and Walmart locations statewide. DHS is working with additional retailers to onboard the program.
- Communications included notices, stuffers, social media and website announcements, sharing information with community partners and having information available in participating stores. Local promotional ads were placed in targeted neighborhoods, including public transportation, billboards and bus stop signage.
- DHS contracts with URI for SNAP Nutrition Education activities. They can assist selected vendor with creating materials about the program such as posters and displays in participating stores.
- DHS staff has been apprised of the program to answer any questions that come through the DHS call centers.

Customer and Cashier Experience

Customer shops like normal
(sees marketing for Ri Eat Well, Be Well incentives)

Cashier rings up like normal.
Customer earns bonus/incentive rewards when they buy fresh fruits and vegetables with their EBT card

Customer's incentive rewards are rebated back to their EBT account and can be spent on anything SNAP eligible (not just produce)



- Customer shops like normal
- Customer sees Eat Well, Be Well marketing in participating grocery stores for fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Customer goes to check-out like normal

- Cashier rings up customer as normal (no change to PLU/UPC codes)
- If customer
 - a) Has qualifying fresh produce in their basket, AND
 - b) Uses their SNAP/EBT-Food Stamp card for tender
- Then POS, TPP, and EBT system calculate bonus dollars earned and rebates money back to customers' EBT card/account. Customers get a \$.50 (50 CENT) reward for every \$1.00 of produce purchased (up to total amount of EBT-food stamp tendered)
[See next page for details]
- Customer can earn up to \$25/month (with monthly cap tracked by state EBT system)
- POS receipt includes information about incentive earned during that transaction and how much earned that month

- Customers' EBT-Food Stamp account includes incentives earned and rebated back to card.
- Incentive dollars can be spent by customer on anything SNAP eligible, not just fresh fruits and vegetables (i.e. bread, dairy, meat, frozen food, etc)
- Incentives can be redeemed at any participating SNAP/EBT authorized retailer (see RI DHS Snap webpage for participating grocers)

Fidelity Information Services (FIS)

Examples of receipts generated by POS from data returned by FIS

YOUR STORE NAME
3609 ANY STREET ADDRESS
YOUR TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE

TERMINAL ID: XX0001
MERCHANT TERMID: XX0001234

CLERK ID: 999
SEQUENCE NUMBER: 001
DATE/TIME: MM/DD/CCYY 00:00 AM/PM

CARD# XXXXXXXXXXXXX0123
STATE: XX
POST - MM/DD/CCYY

	TRAN AMT	END BAL
CASH	\$0.00	\$185.00
FS	\$5.00	\$130.00

FS PUR \$5.00 APPROVED
APPROVAL CODE 000000

INCENTIVE ELIGIBLE AMOUNT \$3.00
INCENTIVE EARNED \$6.00
MTD INCENTIVE EARNED \$6.00

DO NOT DISPENSE CASH
CUSTOMER RECEIPT
****PLEASE SAVE THIS RECEIPT****

YOUR STORE NAME
3609 ANY STREET ADDRESS
YOUR TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE

TERMINAL ID: XX0001
MERCHANT TERMID: XX0001234

CLERK ID: 999
SEQUENCE NUMBER: 001
DATE/TIME: MM/DD/YY 00:00

*** DECLINED ***

CARD# XXXXXXXXXXXXX0123
STATE: XX
FS PUR \$10.00 DECLINED

U-INSUFFICIENT FUNDS
BALANCE IS \$XX.XX
CALL CUSTOMER SERVICE

DO NOT DISPENSE CASH
CUSTOMER RECEIPT
****PLEASE SAVE THIS RECEIPT****

Food Benefit Return Receipt - Approved

YOUR STORE NAME
3609 ANY STREET ADDRESS
YOUR TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE

Terminal ID: XX0001
Merchant Term ID: XX0001234

Clerk ID: 999
Sequence Number: 001
Date/Time: mm/dd/yy 00:00

CARD # XXXXXXXXXXXXX0123
STATE: XX
POST - mm/dd/yy

	TRAN AMT	END BAL
CASH	\$0.00	\$85.00
FS	\$5.00	\$100.00

FS RET \$5.00 APPROVED

Incentive Eligible Amount: \$2.50
Incentive Returned: \$2.50
MTD Incentive Earned: \$10.00

DO NOT DISPENSE CASH
CUSTOMER RECEIPT

Food Benefit Return Receipt - Declined

YOUR STORE NAME
3609 ANY STREET ADDRESS
YOUR TOWN, STATE, ZIP CODE

Terminal ID: XX0001
Merchant Term ID: XX0001234

Clerk ID: 999
Sequence Number: 001
Date/Time: mm/dd/yy 00:00

**** DECLINED ****

CARD # XXXXXXXXXXXXX0123
STATE: XX
FS RET \$50.00 DECLINED

CD-RETURN EXCEEDS PRIOR AUTHORIZATION
CALL CUSTOMER SERVICE

DO NOT DISPENSE CASH
CUSTOMER RECEIPT

EWBW Project Update

Eat Well, Be Well Pilot Rewards Program

2024 Year to Date Rewards:

Month	Total # of ongoing SNAP Cases	Total # of Cases using EWBW Benefits	% of EWBW per Case Usage	Total Transaction Amt (with EWBW Items) at Participating Retailers	Total EWBW Incentive Eligible Amount Purchased	Total EWBW Incentive Earned Amount	Total EWBW Transactions Count
January	91,879	12,405	14.75%	\$1,004,520.53	\$173,279.84	\$81,033.18	17,515
February	91,928	35,567	39.46%	\$4,770,820.84	\$816,243.84	\$351,524.37	70,583
March	92,733	36,488	40.78%	\$4,895,316.68	\$883,114.02	\$375,349.43	74,395
April	93,036	36,097	40.31%	\$4,773,041.88	\$845,882.39	\$361,450.79	74,049
May	93,381	36,297	40.42%	\$4,814,362.48	\$875,150.86	\$371,094.22	75,366
June	93,319	36,592	41.06%	\$4,258,571.27	\$887,558.50	\$377,878.79	75,772
July	93,623	48,998	54.28%	\$6,135,731.39	\$1,139,328.86	\$488,389.13	96,643
August	93,557	38,838	43.45%	\$4,831,955.00	\$874,728.70	\$377,160.20	77,745
September	93,338	36,790	41.38%	\$4,762,665.22	\$808,819.76	\$351,815.49	74,283
October	93,265	36,573	41.25%	\$4,661,024.86	772,330.96	\$337,616.21	73,684
YTD Totals				\$44,908,010.15	\$8,076,437.73	\$3,392,278.63	710,035

* Data is point in time and is subject to change.

EWBW Project Update

Numbers Summary:

- On average in 2024, there were **93,000** active, ongoing SNAP cases per month.
- Of those active cases, there were an average of **35,465** cases that took advantage of Eat Well, Be Well eligible purchases. That totals an average of **39.71%** of SNAP cases participating monthly in the EWBW program.
- Year to date (end of October), reimbursement of benefits have totals **\$3,392,278.63**. That is an average of **\$376,919.85** per month going onto the cards of SNAP users to be used for any eligible SNAP purchases.
- At current funding levels, this projects to the pilot program continuing to offer reimbursements through February 2026, assuming no additional changes to reimbursement levels per household.

IFNPAC Updates

NEXT IFNPAC MEETINGS 2025

Tuesday, March 11th, 9:30-11am

Tuesday, June 10th, 9:30-11am

Tuesday, September 9th, 9:30-11am

Tuesday, December 9th, 9:30-11am