Southeastern Massachusetts
FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

2021
DIGEST

MARION INSTITUTE
SOUTHCOAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Table of Contents

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We cannot talk about food in a place without acknowledging the land from which it comes. We cannot explore the present, or consider the future, without understanding the past, which includes acknowledging the harmful historical legacies that persist within and around us.

For the purpose of the Southeastern Massachusetts Food System Assessment, Southeastern Massachusetts encompasses the present day counties of Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth in the now Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We acknowledge that this land is the traditional unceded territory of the Wôpanâak (Wampanoag) and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusett). Pre-English invasion, this place, its gifts of fertile soil, waters, wildlife, and beauty, had already sustained Indigenous tribes for 12,000 years. We honor and respect the precious food sources discovered, harvested, and cultivated by Native peoples and remain grateful to them for their connectedness to this land and their food traditions.

We make this acknowledgement with intention and accept the responsibility of all we continue to learn. We will honor the resources which sustain us today through their protection. May food be just one of many connections we use in our work to repair relationships with Indigenous people of all Nations living here /today.

Letter From Marion Institute's Executive Director

The Marion Institute's (MI) mission is to engage individuals and communities in an integrative approach to whole-body health. We do this through programming that focuses on creating the foundational norm of building resilient communities, promoting health equity, and advocating for food justice. The final sentence in our mission statement reads, "*We believe optimal health is a basic human right, not a privilege*." In a very real sense, the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged this ideal in ways we never expected. The pandemic has laid bare enormous inequities in the communities we serve and elsewhere. Differences in employment opportunities, earning potential, access to capital, food insecurity, health outcomes, and more are experienced disproportionately by communities of color as a result of institutional and structural racism.

We now know that the vast majority of hospitalized patients and COVID deaths were because patients had pre-existing chronic illnesses related to poor metabolic function - many as a direct result of poor diets. Our current, industrialized food system created a perfect environment for COVID-19 to thrive. It is a system based on a history of inequity that grows, processes, markets and distributes an abundance of cheap, inflammatory, nutrient-depleted, immune suppressing, ultra-processed foods. It is a broken system and one that we cannot afford to continue. Local food policy councils offer a path forward.

The Marion Institute brought the Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) on as an official program of the MI at the end of 2019. The SFPC had previously been known as the Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network (FSN) and operated as a Greenhouse Initiative (fiscal sponsorship) of the MI. As a core member and strategic partner of the FSN since its inception, it was a natural progression to bring this network in house as one of our core programs given its alignment with our mission to increase food security throughout the region and improve community health.

The SFPC is a coalition of nearly 300 stakeholders. Members-at-large include food producers, consumers, government representatives, public and private institutions, local industry, foundations, and social service agencies. Working together, the SFPC promotes community food security, defined as a situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice. For members of the Southcoast Food Policy Council who are predominantly involved in direct services, the MI provides a platform that encourages and facilitates coordination and collaboration among the myriad sectors of our regional food system. Our goal is to address the long-term systemic issues associated with food injustice and insecurity that plague Southeastern Massachusetts communities, while supporting a regionally-based, environmentally sustainable, food economy.

As March 2020 began, no one could have predicted the pivotal role that the SFPC would play in the Southcoast's emergency response to regional food insecurity. The SFPC framework allowed us to rapidly respond to food emergencies exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis and emerge as a response leader because our mission set the stage for such action. While tackling the novel issues that arose from the pandemic, the SFPC continued to work on updating the 2014 Southeastern MA Food System Assessment. Even though the pandemic slowed our progress, it provided insights and opportunities by emphasizing the numerous service gaps and emergency situations caused by an overreliance on an industrial food system. Completion of this assessment will allow the SFPC to look forward and begin to prioritize policies and projects for the future.

To help in building a truly sustainable and equitable future, we need to acknowledge the embedded incentives that reinforce injustices in our food system and do what the MI has always done as an organization – challenge the readily accepted in favor of broader, deeper understanding and intentional engagement. Racial justice, food justice, and environmental justice are inseparable. When we work on one, we are advancing the ideal of all. Looking forward, we are eager to use the amazing examples set by those in our region to advocate for more progressive policy and funding to empower those positioned to lead change.

With gratitude,

Liz

LIZ WILEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARION INSTITUTE

SOUTHCOAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL IN ACTION

These measures represent a portion of the collective organizational effort of Southcoast Food Policy Council members and partners from March 2020 to March 2021.

$26.2M
Value of food delivered

393,719
Households and individuals served

2,903,014
Community meals served and delivered

12.3M
Pounds of food distributed

17,069
Volunteers

264,892
Pounds of local food (PRODUCE, MEAT, DAIRY)

857,644
School meals

1332
Contact hours with food partners in meetings

160
Volunteer chefs

126
Pop-up facilities or pantries

69,114
USDA farmer boxes

$1.7M
Distributed in food-related grants

34,600
Oysters donated to food pantries

14
Restaurant partnerships

60
Businesses that donated

46
Farmers donated food

CONTRIBUTORS

Annelle Delorme-Hagerman Food Pantry, Somerset
BayCoast Bank, Fall River
Boys and Girls Club of Fall River
Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford
Brandy Hill Apartments, Wareham
Bristol Community College
Business Innovation Center, Soup for the Soul, Fall River
Church of the Good Shepherd, Wareham
Citizens for Citizens, Fall River
Coastal Foodshed, New Bedford
Coastline Elderly Services, Inc., New Bedford
Damien's Place- Family Pantry, East Wareham
Dartmouth United Outreach
Elliot Farm, Lakeville
Greater Fall River Community Food Pantry
Immigrants Assistance Center
Lasagna Love, Mattapoisett
M.O. L.I.F.E., Inc., Fairhaven
Marion Institute, Marion
Mobile Ministries, Inc., New Bedford
My Brother's Keeper, Dartmouth
New Bedford Public Schools
NorthStar Learning Centers, New Bedford
PAACA, New Bedford
PACE, New Bedford
Renegades Rising
Round the Bend Farm, Dartmouth
Salvation Army, New Bedford
Shah Foundation, Boston
Southcoast Community Foundation, New Bedford
United Way of Greater Fall River
United Way of Greater New Bedford
Veterans Association of Bristol County Inc.
Wareham Public Schools
Westport Food Pantry
YMCA Southcoast
Youth Opportunity Unlimited (YOU)
YWCA Southeastern MA, New Bedford
Boston Bay Consulting
Massachusetts Aquaculture Association, Oyster Purchasing Program

Introduction

Welcome to the 2021 Southeastern Massachusetts Food System Assessment Digest. The role of this document is to provide readers with a quick reference tool of some of the key findings of the full 2021 Southeastern Massachusetts Food System Assessment, which features 140 pages, 30 figures, 15 tables, and 10 appendices. This digest also borrows content from the assessment's companion infographic.

The Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council initiated the 2021 assessment of the regional food system with four objectives:

1. Provide an updated landscape of the region's food system assets, incorporating broader primary research and food economy perspective.
2. Share progress made since the 2014 assessment and current challenges.
3. Identify intervention points where policy can support an equitable and sustainable food system for all in the region.
4. Help raise awareness of Southeastern Massachusetts' context for contributing to statewide and New England food system planning work.

Since the first Southeastern Massachusetts Food System Assessment was released in 2014, several developments have imprinted directly or indirectly on the region's food system landscape. In 2015, the Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan, a statewide food strategy, was adopted by the Commonwealth. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released the 2017 Census of Agriculture, a comprehensive report of regional agricultural production. The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) was piloted and became a statewide success, exceeding expectations as a model for food access and economic development. Farm to school initiatives gained momentum and resources. The state's organics waste ban went into effect. New food system initiatives were launched and began servicing communities throughout the state. Organizations and enterprises across the food value chain started, stopped, and witnessed every stage of growth in-between. The full report provides deeper detail and context around these developments and more.

To retain consistency with the 2014 assessment, the geographic scope of this regional food system assessment focuses on the three counties of Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth in Southeastern Massachusetts. This area also corresponds to the services and outreach of the Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP). The focus area of the SFPC generally encompasses Somerset to Wareham, including the Gateway cities of Fall River and New Bedford. The City of New Bedford features prominently, in part due to the importance of the seaport as a major economic and food system asset in the region, state, and country.

This study relies on and relates information from the following primary sources:

- an in-person project launch event (February 2020);
- a virtual community conversation, organized with the Town of Plymouth (June 2020);
- exchanges from weekly SFPC virtual meetings;
- more than 20 stakeholder interviews;
- a survey of emergency food relief agencies in the region (43 responses);
- a survey of agricultural producers and study of food hub demand (43 responses); and
- a survey of resident food procurement patterns and preferences (490 responses).

Secondary data was compiled from publicly available data sets, industry reports, community sponsored research, academic studies, media, and organizational websites. All sources are cited in the full report with corresponding figures, tables, and footnotes.

The escalation of the global COVID-19 pandemic coincided with the launch of this project, making it a truly dynamic and unusual, yet simultaneously invaluable time to try to understand recent change, current conditions, and future opportunities in the food system. Readers should take note of dates and consider the potential effects of COVID-19, even when not mentioned explicitly. Our place in time and all the pieces of the food system (e.g., supply chains, processing capacity, labor force, food insecurity) remain precariously fluid as the pandemic continues to shape and alter systems.

Like its predecessor, we anticipate this assessment to be an essential reference for discussion, advocacy, policy making, and planning. We trust readers will find value in the information it provides, the conversations it prompts, and the action it inspires.

Please share your reactions, reflections, ideas, and inquiries with us at **sfpc@marioninstitute.org**.

Project Partners

Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council
The Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) is guided by a mission to connect, convene, and advocate for local food producers, consumers, and community members who seek policy and systems that strengthen our regional food system, improve community health, and eliminate food insecurity. The 300+ members of the council include food producers, government representatives, public and private institutions, local industry, foundations, and social service agencies.

Coastal Foodshed
The mission of Coastal Foodshed (CFS) is to strengthen the local food economy by making it easier for growers to sell, and consumers to buy healthy, affordable, local foods. Coastal Foodshed works to increase public awareness and knowledge of health, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture, and to improve access to food. CFS aggregates, transports, distributes, sells, and promotes local food through four main programs: New Bedford Farmers Markets, Mobile Farm Stand, Virtual Market, Learn to Love Local.

Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership
The Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP) is dedicated to preserving and expanding access to local food and sustainable farming through research and education. As one of nine "buy local" groups in Massachusetts, SEMAP supports area farmers through resource sharing, networking events, legislative advocacy, and technical assistance to navigate regulatory requirements like the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

Funding for this project was generously provided by The Island Foundation and BayCoast Bank.

DESIGN BY MEDIUMSTUDIO

Regional Food Systems

The term food system is often used to convey the value chain that includes the resources and services of food production, transport, processing or manufacturing, distribution, and consumption or end of life. Local and regional food systems refers to place-specific clusters of agricultural producers of all kinds—farmers, ranchers, fishers—along with consumers and institutions engaged in producing, processing, distributing, and selling foods. There are also inputs to the system (e.g., capital, labor, equipment, transportation, natural and synthetic resources, knowledge), without which the system would not function.

The food system both impacts and is influenced by a variety of other factors and systems including the environment, public health, and the economy. These in turn are reflective of varying levels of policy, which is often the expression of a society's culture and values. This is why a systems-thinking approach is needed when addressing change in the food system. While complex, food policy councils must consider these multi-faceted, interdependent relationships as they consider food and agriculture-related policies and programs. Food policy councils work in the outer levels of Figure 1 and are focused on the long-term systemic changes that need to be addressed in order to elevate the direct services of the inner sectors (blue). Addressing policy and decision-making at all levels is necessary to create a food system that works for everyone.

Food Solutions New England (FSNE) is a regional network supported and coordinated by the University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute. FSNE's *A New England Food Vision* was released in 2012 and called for the region's six states to collectively build the capacity to produce at least 50% of clean, fair, just and accessible food for all New Englanders by 2060. The vision is supported by statewide strategies, like the Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan, adopted in 2015, which has four main goals.

1. Increase production, sales and consumption of Massachusetts-grown foods.
2. Create jobs and economic opportunity in food and farming, and improve the wages and skills of food system workers.
3. Protect the land and water needed to produce food, maximize environmental benefits from agriculture, and ensure food safety.
4. Reduce hunger and food insecurity, increase the availability of healthy food to all residents, and reduce food waste.

Implementation of the plan is facilitated by the Massachusetts Food System Collaborative (MFSC), whose mission is to support collective action toward an equitable, sustainable, resilient, and connected local food system in Massachusetts. The MFSC hosts the MA Food Policy Councils Network, which includes SFPC and twenty other councils around the state.

FIGURE 1. FOOD SYSTEM INFLUENCES

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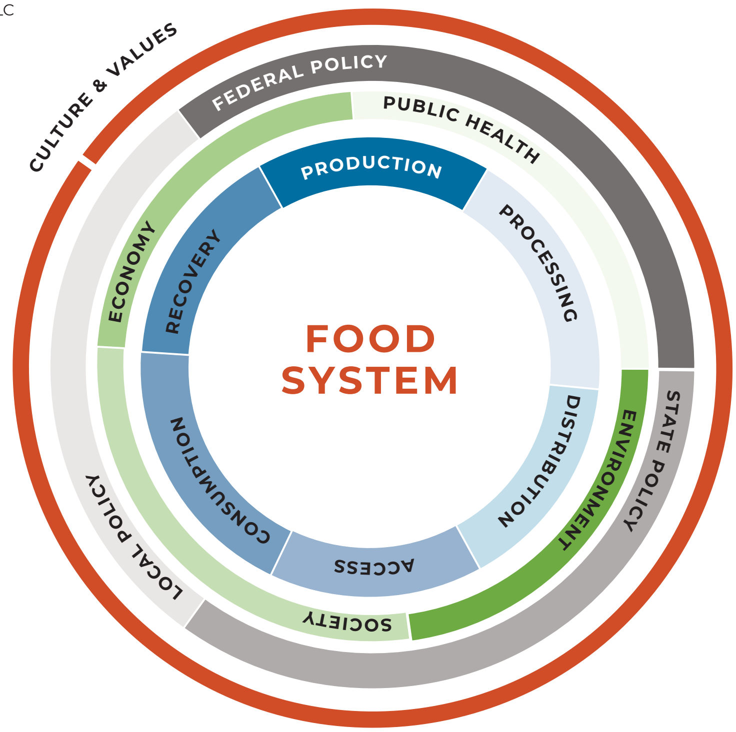


Demographic Profile

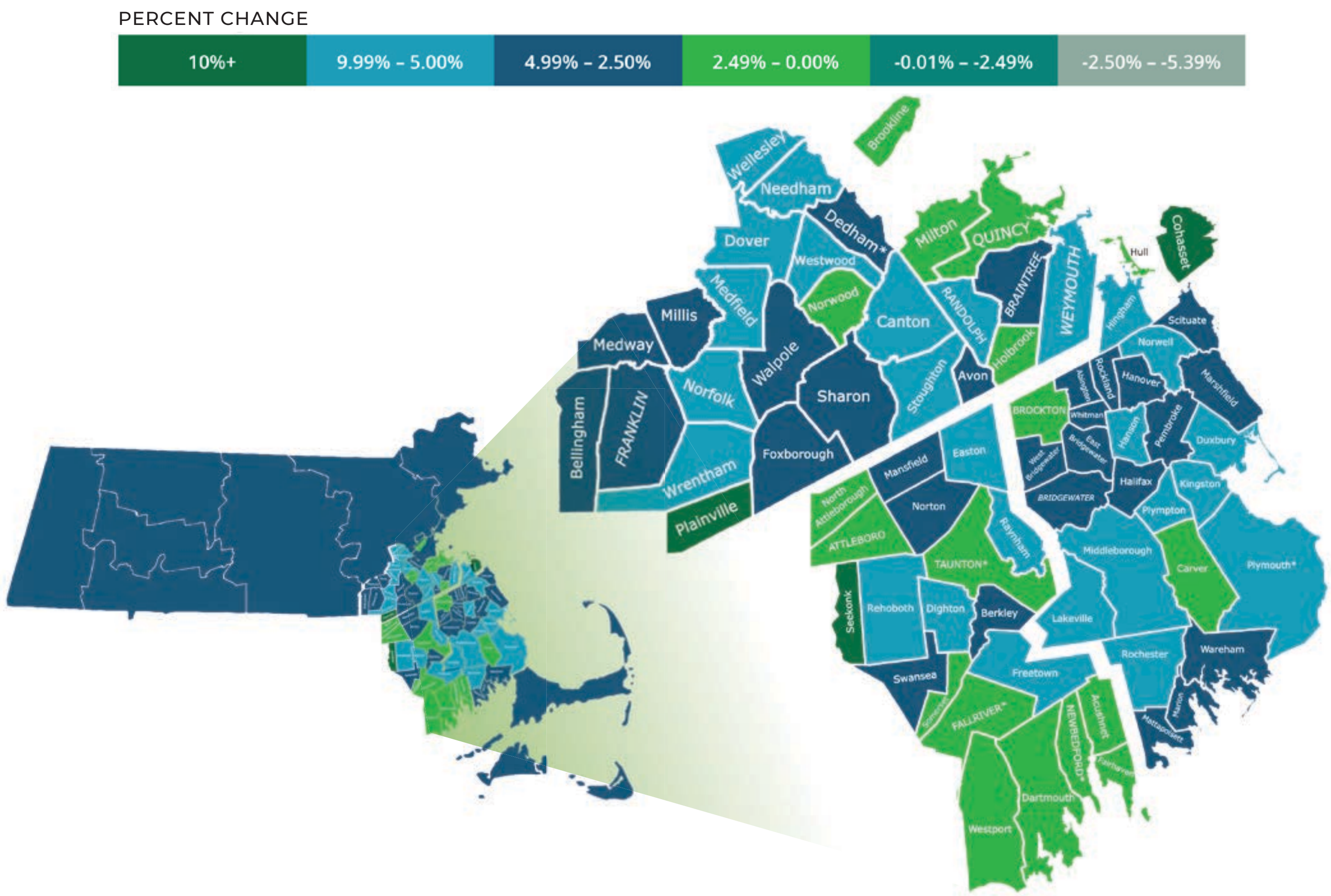
Population

According to U.S. Census data and 2019 American Community Survey Estimates, the national population grew by 6.8% or approximately 20 million people since 2010. Over the same ten-year period, Massachusetts' population grew 5% or by 373,000 people.

The state's Southeastern counties of Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth saw similar population increases but with slower growth in cities and towns in Bristol County (Figure 2). The total combined population for the three counties is 1,699,294, which represents 26% of the state's population (Table 1).

FIGURE 2: PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE FOR THE COUNTIES OF NORFOLK, BRISTOL, AND PLYMOUTH, 2010-2019

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Massachusetts Secretary of State



Income, Poverty and Unemployment

Between 2015-2019, the average median household income in Massachusetts was $81,215, approximately a third higher than the national average of $62,843. Median household income among the three Southeastern counties ranged from above the state average in Plymouth ($89,489) and Norfolk ($103,291) to below it in Bristol ($69,095). Median household incomes for the Southcoast's major population centers, New Bedford ($43,503) and Fall River ($46,321), were even further below Bristol County's already low average. In Bristol County, households of color face poverty at more than double the rate of white households with 18.1% of Black or African American families and 27.2% of Hispanic/Latino families living in poverty compared to 9.5% of white families. These households are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity, housing insecurity, and unemployment.

Income and poverty are linked to employment and a living wage. The unemployment rate between 2010 and year end 2019 dropped significantly across the nation to 3.5%. Due to COVID-19 shutdowns in 2020, unemployment rates in Massachusetts more than doubled from 2.8% in November 2019 to 6.7% in November 2020 (adjusted for seasonal unemployment). This shift impacted young people, those without a college degree, women, and communities of color most profoundly. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average national unemployment rate in December 2020 was 6.7% compared to 16% for teenagers, 9.3% for Hispanics/Latinos and 9.9% for Black or African Americans. High contact professions like restaurant and hospitality workers experienced more layoffs with an estimated 75% increase in unemployment over the past year occurring in food services and bars. Notably, these jobs are among the lowest paying across industries. Many of these jobs have returned in 2021, but also remain unfilled as the nation's eligible workforce re-evaluates the quality of life these jobs afford.

TABLE 1. SELECT DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC COMPARISON OF SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Source: American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimate Subject Tables (U.S. Census)

	New Bedford	Fall River	Bristol	Plymouth	Norfolk	Massachusetts	United States
Population	95,239	89,388	561,037	515,303	700,437	6,850,553	324,697,795
Median Household Income	$46,321	$43,503	$69,095	$89,489	$103,291	$81,215	$62,843
Poverty (children under 18)(%)	--	--	16.7	9.3	6	11.6	18.5
Poverty (%)	--	--	11.3	7.4	6.3	9.4	10.5
Total Households	38,888	38,456	217,912	187,460	265,300	2,617,497	120,756,048
Median Age	36.6	39.6	41	42.7	40.9	39.7	38.1
Education Attainment (%)	51.2	52.5	85.7	92.9	93.9	90.8	88
Foreign Born (%)	--	--	12.7	9.5	18.4	17.3	13.6
Race and Ethnicity (%)							
White	67.1	84.6	84.1	82.9	77.6	78.1	60.7
Black or African American	10.2	8.3	4.3	10	7.1	7.6	12.7
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.8	2.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.8
Asian Alone	2.0	2.1	2.3	1.4	11.1	6.6	5.5
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Other Race	25.8	7.5	6.2	3.3	1.7	4.8	4.9
Two or More Races	5.2	4.4	3	2.2	2.4	3.3	3.3
Hispanic or Latino	20.8	10.5	8.0	3.9	4.5	11.8	18.0

CHAPTER 1.

Food Production & Harvest

Key Takeaways

- Food production relies on both land and water resources and varies in scale from global commercial operations to backyard gardens.
- The total number of farms is in decline and prime agricultural land is threatened by development.
- Low profit margins mean many farms struggle financially. Established farmers still need support to sustain and grow their operations including access to affordable land, working capital, skilled labor, and technical assistance.
- Farmers and commercial fishers continue to age and lack of racial diversity in these occupations calls for increased attention to supporting both young and BIPOC individuals to gain access to the resources needed to start and/or operate a business.
- Climate change and unpredictable weather not only make it harder and more expensive to grow food, but threaten food traditions, supply, and the local economy.
- Over reliance on too few crops could prove devastating to the local economy should any one or combination of them fail or lose market demand for a sustained period of time.
- Research and resident education could help foster consumer demand for more diverse regional products. Producers need markets and methods to increase wholesale and direct-to-consumer sales of locally harvested products, especially landed fish and aquaculture species.
- Urban agriculture remains nascent in a region with a number of densely populated centers ripe for increased green, productive space.
- Community-based food production could be supported and scaled through the adoption of progressive urban agriculture ordinances and resident education.

FOOD PRODUCTION AND HARVESTING

Commercial Agriculture

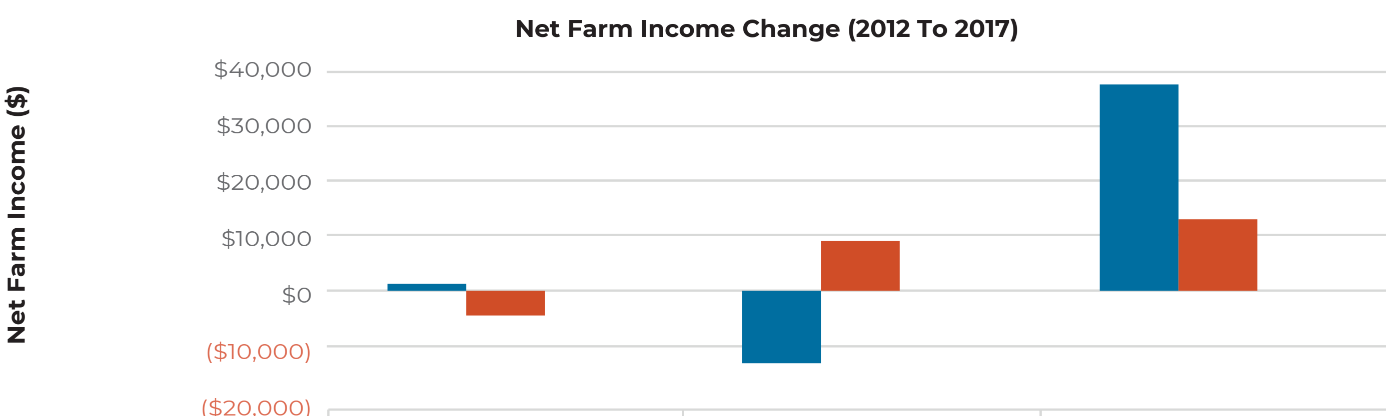
In the Southeastern Massachusetts counties of Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth, there are 1,643 farms and 99,688 acres of land in farms. From 2012 to 2017, the number of farms decreased 8.1% and the amount of land in farms decreased by 8.0%, outpacing the state in both instances. This shift in farm acreage more than reverses a 7.8% gain documented between 2007 and 2012.

Overall, the market value of the region's agricultural products decreased by 25%, from $157,222,000 in 2012 to $118,400,000 in 2017, with Plymouth County witnessing the largest percentage drop (-33%). Massachusetts is the second largest cranberry growing region in the United States after Wisconsin and the majority of the state's cranberry production is based in Plymouth County. The cranberry industry continues to face challenges as a result of climate change, declining demand for key cranberry-based products (e.g., juice), and increasing national and international competition, which has contributed to a 60% decline in price over the last decade.

The top market value category for the region continues to be *Fruit, Tree Nuts, and Berries*, which brought in 44% of total market value, primarily from the cranberry industry ($60 million); followed by *Nursery, Greenhouse, Floriculture, and Sod* at 25% of market value; *Livestock, Poultry and Their Products* at 14%; and *Vegetables, Potatoes, and Melons Harvested for Sale* at 14%. The number of farms raising vegetables fell by 15% from 250 farms in 2012 to 212 farms in 2017 even while the land dedicated to vegetables increased. In 2017, 3,491 acres were devoted to vegetables, representing 10% of the region's total cropland. The top three vegetable crops by acreage are sweet corn (37%), pumpkins (12%), and squash (10%).

FIGURE 3. NET FARM INCOME CHANGE, 2012-2017

Source: 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, County Profiles



	Bristol	Norfolk	Plymouth
2012	$1,203	-$13,764	$36,944
2017	($3,922)	$8,830	$14,144
% change since 2012	-426%	164%	-62%

In the USDA 2017 Census of Agriculture, the average per farm production expense in Massachusetts was $68,038, in Bristol County $62,621, in Norfolk County $56,075, and in Plymouth County $102,004. Average net farm income declined in Bristol County from $1203 to -$3,922. Plymouth County also saw decline, but remained net income positive at $14,144, the highest in the region. Norfolk County gained 164% for an average net farm income of $8,330. These numbers in Figure 3 show just how close many farms are to break even if not accumulating losses. Only 63% of principal operators list farming as their primary occupation, which is in part explained by these numbers.

Direct market sales (e.g., sales from farmers markets, farm stands, community supported agriculture) increased by 23% between 2012 and 2017 from $8,705,000 to $10,633,000, with Plymouth County's sales more than doubling. Direct market sales now account for 9% of regional market value (5.5% in 2012) and $6.27 in spending per capita for the region ($5.02 in 2012) or $15.90 per household ($13.42 in 2012).

Production / Harvesting

1,643 FARMS (49 organic) (-8.1% from 2012)

2,277 PRINCIPAL PRODUCERS (40% women, 98% white, 59.8 years average age)

90% FAMILY OWNED

TOTAL LAND IN FARMS **99,688** ACRES (-8.0% from 2012)

AVERAGE FARM SIZE **61** ACRES

USE OF LAND IN FARMS:

PASTURE	WOODLAND	CROPLAND	BUILDINGS, ROADS, ETC.
6,083 ACRES	22,435 ACRES	34,279 ACRES	36,891 ACRES
6%	23%	34%	37%

12,422 acres (36%) in cranberries across 310 farms
3,648 acres idle (71% increase over 2012)

DIRECT MARKET SALES:

(Sales from farmers' markets, farm stands, and Community Supported Agriculture)

Increased by 23% between 2012 and 2017 from $8,705,000 to $10,633,000, with Plymouth County's sales more than doubling.

Direct market sales now account for 9% of regional market value (5.5% in 2012) and $6.27 in spending per capita for the region ($5.02 in 2012) or $15.90 per household ($13.42 in 2012).

REGION'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS BY CATEGORY:

TOTAL MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS: **$118.5 MILLION** ($9.7 MILLION ORGANIC SALES)

44% · 25% · 14% · 14%

TOP CROPS: Berries (specifically cranberries), Forage, Corn, and Vegetables

TOP LIVESTOCK: Layers, broilers/other meat-type chickens, and cattle/calves

FARM LABOR:

DECREASED 14%

From 2012 to 2017, the number of farms hiring labor decreased from 695 to 595 (-14%)

DECREASED 18%

The number of workers decreased from 3,371 to 2,763 (-18%)

DOWN 3%

Wages paid were down to $39,350,000 from $40,729,000 (-3%)

Commercial Fishing & Aquaculture

The counties of Bristol, Plymouth, and Norfolk are home to a combined 18 coastal towns, all with active commercial fisheries. There were 1,636 active permitted harvesters and 1,417 homeported vessels across the region as of 2018. Commercial fishermen in the three counties took 32,637 trips, landing a total of 571,953,330 pounds of seafood valued at approximately $469,763,709.

The most common species landed within the three counties are the American Lobster, Bluefin Tuna, the Northern Quahog, and the Sea Scallop, and across the Commonwealth's commercial fishing industry, the top five most valuable species are Sea Scallops, Lobster, Oyster, Surf Clams, and Jonah Crab.

Young Fishermen's Development Act (2020)

"Commercial fishing is part of (...) New England's identity and economy, but the legacy will end if we don't make it easier for the next generation to get started. These grants will help the industry expand and evolve. Every fisherman and lobsterman I've ever met wants to keep the fish stock and our oceans healthy. I'm proud that this money will give new opportunities to young people and also help teach fishermen how to build new gear and fish in new ways that protect our oceans. Congress's investment will pay off in new technology that works and has buy-in from the people using it to make a living."

REP. SETH MOULTON (MA-06)

Many commercial fisheries are limited entry, meaning new permits are not available. Those seeking to enter a fishery must obtain an existing permit from someone seeking to leave the fishery. The general trend in limited entry fisheries is a steady decline in the number of permits and a slowly rising median age of permit holders. Various sources put the average age of a New England commercial fisherman at or north of 50 years and almost a third of licensed fishermen in the U.S. are aged 55 years or older. In 2020, Congress passed the Young Fishermen's Development Act, which creates a $2 million annual grant fund "to train and foster the next generation of U.S. commercial fishermen." Modeled after the USDA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program, multi-year grants of up to $200,000 annually will be available for uses other than to purchase fishing permits, quota, or other harvesting rights. This legislation received bi-partisan support from Massachusetts' senators and representatives.

The Port of New Bedford continues to play an outsized role in the regional food system, contributing economic value estimated at $11.1 billion, business revenue of $3.8B, 6,808 direct jobs, and $362 million in direct wages. However, an estimated 78% of product passing through New Bedford is exported, even as fishers and harvesters look for new ways to market more directly to local consumers. Restaurant operators interviewed for the report stated that for them, it is often still cheaper and easier to buy Icelandic than local.

FISHERIES:

32,637
BOAT TRIPS

571,953,330 LBS
SEAFOOD LANDED

$469,763,709
VALUE

Urban Agriculture

In Massachusetts, urban agriculture is institutionalized and supported by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). MDAR's Urban Agriculture Program supports commercial projects designed to increase the production, processing, and marketing of produce grown and sold in urban centers across the Commonwealth. Grants fund strategies to address food insecurity and to increase access of fresh, local produce in urban neighborhoods with a high concentration of low-moderate income residents. The Massachusetts Food System Collaborative maintains an urban agriculture working group and this work is further supported by food policy councils across the state.

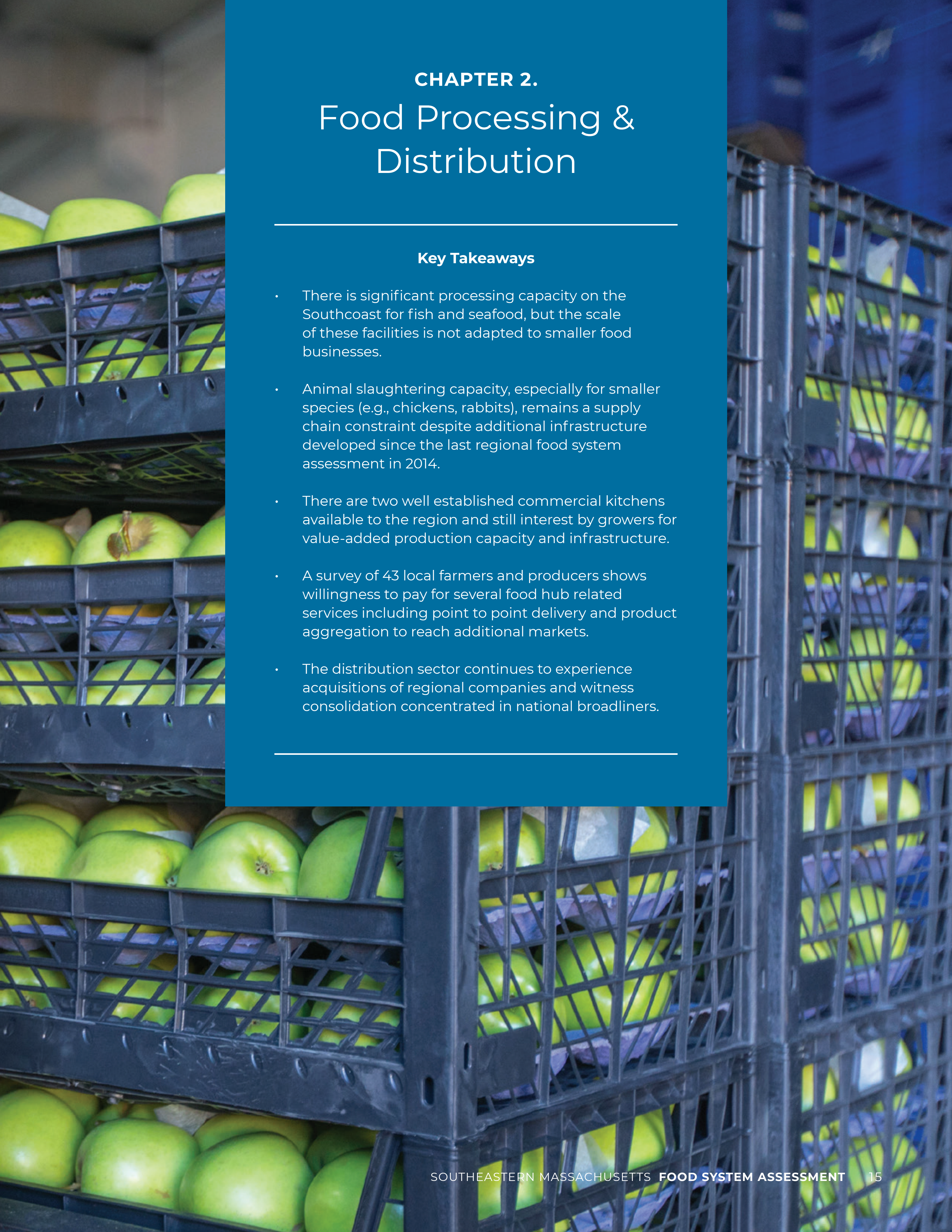
Despite layers of resources and advocacy, urban agriculture remains an emerging part of how and where food is produced in Southeastern Massachusetts. While research found descriptions of planned urban agriculture projects in the region (e.g., 2017 urban agricultural plan for Brockton), no details could be found to confirm their initiation or continuance. Stakeholders with a pulse on urban agriculture across the state were challenged to name urban agriculture operations based in Southeastern Massachusetts with the exception of Groundwork Southcoast.

Groundwork Southcoast is part of a national network of trusts that share a mission "to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement, and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships that empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic, and social well-being." Established in 2017, Groundwork Southcoast assumed responsibility for 25 raised beds in a former parking lot and brownfield at New Bedford's Riverside Park. The organization has been able to install a fence at the site and secure funding from MDAR to double its growing space. Cold frames added to the beds extend the growing season and the fence supports vertical production in an effort to make this the first urban farm in New Bedford, now with 100 raised beds.

Community Gardens

Community and backyard gardens predominantly function to grow produce for individual consumption rather than for sale. Harvested food may be shared with neighbors, donated to food relief, or sold provided local ordinances allow these practices. At the time of the 2014 assessment, there was a lot of momentum around community gardens in the region. The Office of Campus and Community Sustainability at UMass Dartmouth had completed a project entitled "Mapping and Documenting Regional Community Gardens Needs and Best Practices," which inspired a database of regional gardens and coordinators and identified ways to sustain and grow community gardens. The database and community garden project lived briefly under Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) before staff changes left it without leadership. SEMAP hosts a list of 40 community gardens in the region on its website, but central coordination has waned.

While important links in establishing community food security and continuing cultural food ways, community gardens rely heavily on volunteers and typically have limited revenue and funding streams, leaving them vulnerable without dedicated stewardship. Gardens benefit from institutional stability offered by a connection to municipalities, churches, schools, and non-profit organizations. For example, the Marion Institute's Grow Education program will have completed the installation of 19 elementary school gardens across New Bedford Public Schools by spring 2022. With a revitalization of coordination and resources, community and school gardens can provide another avenue for producing local foods and building resilient communities in Southeastern Massachusetts.



CHAPTER 2.

Food Processing & Distribution

Key Takeaways

- There is significant processing capacity on the Southcoast for fish and seafood, but the scale of these facilities is not adapted to smaller food businesses.
- Animal slaughtering capacity, especially for smaller species (e.g., chickens, rabbits), remains a supply chain constraint despite additional infrastructure developed since the last regional food system assessment in 2014.
- There are two well established commercial kitchens available to the region and still interest by growers for value-added production capacity and infrastructure.
- A survey of 43 local farmers and producers shows willingness to pay for several food hub related services including point to point delivery and product aggregation to reach additional markets.
- The distribution sector continues to experience acquisitions of regional companies and witness consolidation concentrated in national broadliners.

FOOD PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION

Food processing and distribution are critical steps in the food value chain for making sure that food produced or harvested reaches consumers in a functional format and efficient manner. Southeastern Massachusetts has long been well equipped with large commercial processing houses, broadline distributors, and wholesale food manufacturers in large part thanks to the massive fish and seafood industry located here. The Port of New Bedford is home to a robust seafood processing cluster with more than 50 processors with a global reach. Significant volumes of seafood come into New Bedford from Asia and Europe to be processed and then distributed back out globally. More recently, food system assets in the form of shared commercial kitchens, food hubs, and humane animal slaughter facilities have been established to accommodate smaller scale business models, often targeting retail and direct to consumer channels.

In September 2018, Meatworks opened an 11,000 square foot USDA-inspected multi-species slaughterhouse and meat processing facility for cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats in Westport, Massachusetts. The facility is owned and operated by The Livestock Institute of Southern New England, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues facing livestock farmers through educational programming and infrastructure improvements. Meatworks adds throughput capacity of 5,000 cattle equivalents per year to the region and to date, the facility has provided processing services to over 400 local and regional producers from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York. Advance reservations of 18 months during the peak of COVID-19 suggests that more capacity is needed if the region is to accommodate sustained scale in the future as part of its food system resilience strategy.

Dartmouth Grange Kitchen (Dartmouth, Massachusetts) and Hope & Main (Warren, Rhode Island) continue to serve as the primary commercial kitchens and incubators in the region. Since opening in 2014, Hope & Main has helped to launch almost 300 businesses. In addition to rental space for its members, Hope & Main also provides small-batch manufacturing or co-packing for a variety of products. Co-packing is an important value-chain tool in helping food businesses scale up and grow without leaving the region. Farmers and food producers surveyed continue to be interested in commercial kitchen spaces where they can have value-added products made for them or rent time directly to produce one or more food products.

In 2017, Coastal Foodshed (CFS) spun off from Mass in Motion New Bedford (MiM NB) to focus on filling gaps in food access and distribution on the Southcoast. Since then, CFS has expanded from managing the New Bedford Farmers Markets to an emerging local food hub. CFS sources locally grown and manufactured products from farmers and food makers and then sells it through three main programs: the New Bedford Farmers Market, the Mobile Farmstand, and the Virtual Market. Customers using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase their food are able to shop through all three programs. CFS programs reach 19 towns, from Fall River to Taunton to Wareham and in 2020, CFS sold more than $340,000 worth of local food directly and indirectly on behalf of more than 50 local farmers and food makers, including processing more than $50,000 in SNAP transactions.

A survey of 43 local producers suggests that Coastal Foodshed could continue to expand its food hub services, offering additional aggregation and transportation options to farmers with the potential to channel more locally grown product to wholesale buyers like restaurants and institutions. In 2020, Farm Fresh Rhode Island (FFRI), moved its food hub from Pawtucket to a new 3.2 acre / 60,000 square feet facility in Providence that also houses Red Tomato produce distribution operations, a farmers market, and space for nine other food businesses. FFRI has been supportive and encouraging of the efforts Coastal Foodshed has made in servicing the region.

Notable in the distribution sector is the 2020 acquisition of one of the region's oldest and most recognized regional produce wholesalers - Sid Wainer & Sons Specialty Produce & Foods. A number of other food distributors that were listed in the 2014 report are now permanently closed or have also been acquired, indicating continued consolidation in the industry. Leading national broadline distributors serving the region are Sysco Boston (Plympton), PFG/Reinhart (Taunton), United Natural Foods International (Providence, RI), and US Foods (North Kingston, RI). Cargill, a national meat wholesaler, maintains a base in Wareham.

CHAPTER 3.

Food Access And Consumption

Key Takeaways

- In Southeastern Massachusetts, 80% of residents surveyed rely primarily on grocery stores and big box stores for their food at home (n=490).
- 19% of census tracts in Southeastern Massachusetts are rated as low-income/low-access, where a significant number or share of residents live more than 1 mile (urban) or 20 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket and where more than 100 housing units do not have access to a vehicle and are more than a ½ mile from the nearest supermarket.
- Consumers surveyed in the region often or sometimes experienced food running out before there was money to buy more over the past 12 months (31%).
- Affordable meat and seafood and then fresh fruits and vegetables are considered the "hardest to get food items" for regional consumers.
- Participation in SNAP has risen across Southeastern Massachusetts by 9.4% since 2014.
- The difference between those eligible for SNAP and those using the benefit is 45% or an estimated 163,307 individuals.
- The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) is a valuable program, but regionally underutilized, that provides additional funding to SNAP eligible families and supports local farms with targeted spending on fresh fruits and vegetables through direct to consumer channels. More educational tools for farmers to share with their customers would be valuable.
- Consumers in the region would welcome more fresh, locally grown food via community gardens, farmers markets, and grocery stores.

FOOD ACCESS AND CONSUMPTION

Consumers access food in a variety of ways, from traditional supermarkets to big box stores, independent grocers and co-operatives, convenience stores, farmers markets, and other direct to consumer channels. Food away from home options include restaurants, institutional food service, and community meal programs. Food pantries, shelters, and other community service agencies that provide food staples and meal components are also resources. In the summer of 2020, supplemental food providers in the region were serving over 27,000 clients each week (more than 10,000 households). These services were provided with an average of just 2-3 staff members, which translates to a heavy reliance on volunteers.

A survey conducted of Southeastern Massachusetts residents (n=490) returned the following:

- 80% rely primarily on grocery stores and big box stores for their food at home
- 3% rely on food pantries as their primary food source
- 39% often or sometimes worry that food will run out before there is money to buy more
- 30% often or sometimes ran out of food before there was money to buy more
- 23% of households in the survey sample had relied on a food pantry in the last 12 months
- 70% are mostly satisfied with food quality and variety, but less so with the price of food available
- The "hardest to get food items" are affordable meat and seafood, fresh fruits, and vegetables

Even while the majority of residents rely on grocery stores and big box stores primarily, 19% of census tracts in Southeastern Massachusetts are rated as low-income/low-access, where a significant number or share of residents live more than 1 mile (urban) or 20 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket and where more than 100 housing units do not have access to a vehicle and are more than a ½ mile from the nearest supermarket. Many of these tracts are in densely populated centers, where lower median incomes struggle to attract full scale grocers.

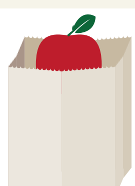
In 2019, food insecurity in Massachusetts was 8.2%, lower than the national average of 10.9%. In Southeastern Massachusetts, 127,220 adults and 29,510 children were food insecure. Bristol County faced the highest numbers with 9.8% food insecurity for adults and 12.1% for children.

Due to the pandemic, food insecurity rose to 17.5% across Massachusetts in 2020, the largest percent increase (+59%) of food-insecure individuals in the nation. Food insecurity for children in the state also rose by the highest relative percentage nationwide (102%). Norfolk County was one of a handful of counties across the nation anticipated to experience some of the worst food insecurity with a 163% projected increase among children.

The federal government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a critical safety net for low-income individuals and families, but not everyone who qualifies for this benefit enrolls in the program. This difference in eligibility and participation is known as the "SNAP Gap." SNAP participation has risen across Southeastern Massachusetts by 9.4% since 2014, but the SNAP Gap is still 45%. An estimated 360,219 individuals in the three county region are eligible for SNAP, but only 196,912 were enrolled in the program as of February 2021.

Consumption

SNAP Gap: 163,307 (45%) eligible and not participating



The National School Lunch Program is the second largest food assistance program in the country after SNAP.
There are 85 public K-12 school districts in the region serving 255,253 students year-round through breakfast, lunch, snack, and summer meal programs.

FOOD INSECURITY

BRISTOL	Overall 9.8%, 54,720 people	Children 12.1%, 14,060 children
NORFOLK	Overall 5.9%, 41,100 people	Children 4.6%, 6,810 children
PLYMOUTH	Overall 6.1%, 31,400 people	Children 7.7%, 8,640 children

Average meal cost (three county average): $3.84

CHAPTER 4.

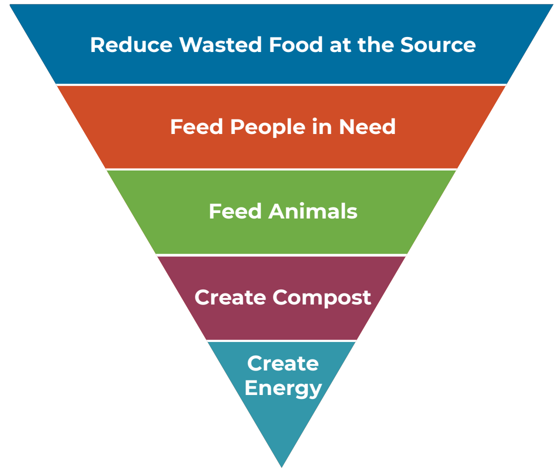
Food Loss & Waste Reduction, Recovery, and Recycling

Key Takeaways

- Reducing organic waste and increasing food recovery benefits local people, the environment, and the economy.
- Since 2014, the Commonwealth's organics waste ban has helped defer an estimated 1.5 million tons of food.
- Food rescued and/or donated has increased 30% since 2014 and food waste collection has more than doubled in the same period of time (currently 2,900 customers statewide).
- There are 12 operations in Southeastern Massachusetts that accept diverted food material.
- There are several municipal strategies available to Southeastern Massachusetts households to assist with residential composting to reduce organic waste and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Gleaning activity remains nascent in Southeastern Massachusetts, yet represents an opportunity to help farmers retain crop value and make more local food available to the community.
- Consumer education about product labeling could greatly reduce food waste.
- Increased awareness of protections for those donating food would prevent waste and help feed those in need.

FOOD LOSS & WASTE, REDUCTION, RECOVERY, AND RECYCLING

According to the U.S. EPA's 2018 Wasted Food Report, a combined 63.1 million tons of inedible or unused food material was generated nationally in the commercial, institutional, and residential sectors, which is 21.6% of total municipal solid waste (MSW) generation. Sending organics to the landfill is a major issue as they produce methane emissions, a greenhouse gas more potent than carbon dioxide. Reducing organic waste and increasing food recovery therefore benefits local people, the environment, and the economy. The EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy has long been a reference for how to reduce food waste, but over the years, many environmental and advocacy groups have seen the need to adapt it in ways that recognize community versus commercial interventions and prioritize composting over industrial energy use. The Massachusetts Food System Collaborative's food waste reduction priorities illustrated here are an example.



There are many strategies from this hierarchy applied in the region. Since instituting a statewide commercial organics waste ban in 2014, Massachusetts has seen the amount of food rescued and/or donated increase 30% and food collection had doubled, helping to defer an estimated 1.5 million tons of food. There are 12 operations in Southeastern Massachusetts that accept diverted food material and several municipal and commercial options available to Southeastern Massachusetts households to assist with residential composting. More than 200 households participating in one of the two private organics management services operating in the region collectively diverted approximately 49 tons of organic waste from the landfill in 2020.

Inconsistency in product labeling and confusion about "best if used by" dates continue to contribute to premature discardment of edible food. Often food that could be consumed or donated is thrown out, either because consumers fear harm to themselves if consumed or are not familiar with their legal protections should the food harm a recipient. National standards for labeling coupled with consumer education about "best if used by" dates and consumer protections around food donations, would help prevent food loss and feed more people in need.

Gleaning is a farm-level food recovery action. More than a third of the edible produce grown in the United States remains in the field. The reason may be due to the cost to harvest it versus the price a crop will fetch, consumer preference variability, and labor availability. In the farmer/producer survey, only one out of 43 farms in the region said that they regularly participate in gleaning and 16 said they had never gleaned. While gleaning activity remains nascent in Southeastern Massachusetts, increased coordination and infrastructure to support gleaning could help farmers retain greater crop value and make more local food available to the community.

Food Loss & Waste Reduction, Recovery, and Recycling

1/3 PRODUCE GROWN IN THE U.S. REMAINS IN THE FIELD

12 SITES SUPPORT DIVERTING ORGANIC FOOD MATERIALS FROM THE LANDFILL

30 COMMUNITIES WITH A COMPOST BIN PROGRAM

As of 2017, the MA Organics Waste Ban had been credited with:

- 500 jobs in the state (150% increase since 2010)
- 1.5 million tons of food waste diverted since inception of the ban
- 30% increase in food rescued and/or donated
- 2x food waste collection rate (currently 2,900 customers statewide, with at least 7% participation in the Southeastern Massachusetts region)

CHAPTER 5.

Local Food Economy

Key Takeaways

- The local food economy is driven by numerous direct and indirect inputs across the food value chain.
- There are over 11,000 total food and beverage stores, food services and drinking places, food manufacturing businesses, and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting entities in the region.
- The sectors listed contribute $5.7 billion in direct wages to the state's overall $15.7 billion direct wages.
- Average monthly employment across these sectors in the region is 208,871.
- The food services and drinking places sector contributes the most to the local food economy in terms of number of businesses, total wages, and average employment, yet its average weekly salaries are consistently below the other sectors.
- Impacts to the food services sector disproportionately affect Latinos.
- Restaurants and other food service establishments are struggling to fill available positions due to a national labor shortage and wage competition.
- Federal and state economic stimulus packages may help food businesses recover from setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

FOOD ECONOMY

The local food economy is driven by numerous direct and indirect inputs across the food value chain. In Massachusetts, food and agriculture are credited with 349,245 jobs and $40 billion towards direct economic activity. In Southeastern Massachusetts alone, there are over 11,000 food and beverage stores, food services and drinking places, food manufacturing businesses, and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting entities. These sectors contribute a combined $5.7 billion in direct wages to the state's overall $15.7 billion direct wages. Average monthly employment across these sectors in the region is 208,871 (Table 2).

The region's agricultural contribution to the economy relies heavily on two major crops - cranberries and oysters. Cranberry production is credited with 7,000 jobs and generates more than $1 billion for the state's economy. The shellfish aquaculture industry in Massachusetts is responsible for over 900 jobs and generated approximately $45.5 million in the Massachusetts economy, $30 million of that from oysters. Duxbury is the largest aquaculture producer of oysters in the state, and therefore in the Southeastern Massachusetts region, with Plymouth, Wareham and Westport also in the top ten. Diversification of how both of these crops land in the market would be a mitigating strategy to this concentration of economic value susceptible to external shocks.

The *food services and drinking places* sector contributes the most to the region's food economy in terms of the number of businesses, total wages, and average employment, yet its average weekly salaries are consistently below the other sectors. The food services sector has been particularly hard hit during the COVID-19 pandemic and restaurants and other food enterprises are struggling to fill available positions due to a national labor shortage and wage competition. Federal and state economic stimulus packages have the potential to help food businesses recover from setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but ongoing advocacy and initiatives will be needed to achieve a sustained recovery.

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT AND WAGE DATA BY FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, 2019

Source: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance

	SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS		
Food and beverage stores	**No. of Establishments**	**Total Wages**	**Average Monthly Employment**
Food and beverage stores	1203	$676,524,179	25,648
Grocery stores	648	$580,147,157	22,161
Specialty food stores	165	$40,301,909	1,278
Beer, wine, and liquor stores	390	$56,075,112	2,208
Sub-totals	2,406	$1,353,048,357	51,295

Food services and drinking places	**No. of Establishments**	**Total Wages**	**Average Monthly Employment**
Food services and drinking places	3682	$1,477,740,547	66,948
Special food services	243	$129,526,643	3,918
Drinking places, alcoholic beverages	140	$17,265,739	970
Restaurants and other eating places	3299	$1,330,948,165	62,059
Sub-totals	7,364	$2,955,481,094	133,895

Food manufacturing	No. of Establishments	Total Wages	Average Monthly Employment
Food manufacturing	204	$435,974,146	7,897
Sugar and confectionery product manufacturing	11	$7,559,893	234
Fruit and vegetable preserving and specialty	6	$24,198,260	357
Dairy product manufacturing	3	$1,636,228	58
Animal slaughtering and processing	7	$6,787,398	142
Seafood product preparation and packaging	23	$98,135,325	1,744
Bakeries and tortilla manufacturing	102	$137,611,091	2,804
Other food manufacturing	32	$72,901,749	1,310
Sub-totals	388	$784,804,090	14,546

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	No. of Establishments	Total Wages	Average Monthly Employment
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	328	$224,166,006	3,049
Crop production	77	$73,647,089	1,700
Vegetable and melon farming	12	$9,992,051	283
Fruit and tree nut farming	23	$16,176,596	240
Greenhouse and nursery production	20	$19,579,045	397
Other crop farming	3	$2,494,955	48
Animal production and aquaculture	31	$4,743,145	129
Aquaculture	8	$1,041,302	28
Cattle ranching and farming	5	$280,405	12
Other animal production	12	$1,408,939	39
Fishing, hunting and trapping	179	$141,888,247	1,101
Fishing	179	$141,888,247	1,101
Agriculture and forestry support activities	35	$3,434,542	108
Support activities for crop production	5	$385,883	9
Support activities for animal production	19	$1,844,052	74
Support activities for forestry	4	$934,327	17
Sub-totals	940	$643,904,831	8,335

Total	***11,098***	***$5,737,238,372***	***208,071***

CHAPTER 6.

Food System Regulations & Policy Horizon

Key Takeaways

- Conservation of working lands is vital to ensuring local food system resiliency. Development should avoid prime agricultural soils and policy should help keep farmland affordable and in production. Maintaining working lands is an important strategy for farmers, consumers, economic development, and climate change mitigation.
- State legislation aimed at increasing economic opportunity through higher minimum wage earnings may stretch those who grow, process, and deliver food to consumers to afford labor without raising the cost of food.
- Addressing food security and access is a priority for promoting health equity. A program like the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) that enables increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income households, while supporting local farmers, is critical.
- New national food loss and waste policy recommendations have the potential to expand successful food waste diversion programs and services, enhance consumer education on household food waste reduction strategies, and enable more food to flow to consumers by resolving misunderstandings caused by current product date labeling.

FOOD SYSTEM REGULATIONS & POLICY HORIZON

There is no food system without food. Agriculture and our environment are inextricably linked, with their fate carrying significant consequences to public health and economic resiliency. According to American Farmland Trust (AFT,) 14,300 acres in Massachusetts were converted to urban and highly-developed use and another 12,800 acres threatened by low-density residential development between 2001-2016. The highest rates of pressure on farmland conversion are parcels adjacent to urban and peri-urban communities, which also tend to represent the greatest levels of economic, racial, age diversity, and inequity. Farmers face the business viability challenge of balancing a higher per acre cost of land in exchange for access to larger consumer markets versus more affordable land farther afield, which may carry additional expenses for transportation, marketing, or other requirements to reach potential consumers.

State legislation aimed at increasing economic opportunity through higher minimum wage earnings may also require those who grow, process, and deliver our food to raise their prices in order to afford required labor. This makes education about the real costs of food an imperative. With adequate employment, livable wages, and other stabilizing circumstances present, higher food costs can be met, but strategic coordination is required. How food costs rise and consumers' ability to pay must evolve together to avoid creating greater gaps in food access than exist today.

Continuing to address food security and access is a priority for promoting health equity. A program like the Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) that enables increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income households, while directly supporting local farmers, is key. Solutions aimed at recovering more edible product everywhere from the field to wholesalers, retail shelves, catering, and home pantries can also help increase food availability for those in need.

Where the generation of food waste is unavoidable, the state's expansion of its own highly successful organics waste ban will mean an additional suite of technical support is required to ensure Southeastern Massachusetts businesses and institutions are informed and equipped to comply with new and expanding regulations.

As a reminder, the goal of the Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) is to address the long-term systemic issues associated with food injustice and insecurity in Southeastern Massachusetts communities, while supporting a regionally-based, environmentally sustainable, food economy. Issues in play related to the food system include those already mentioned and more:

- Access to land and land tenure
- Preservation of prime agricultural land
- Tax implications for small agricultural parcels
- Right to farm laws
- Climate change mitigation
- Soil health
- Minimum wage mandates and labor
- Food access, food justice, and health equity
- Consumer and institutional local food purchasing incentives
- Expanded food loss reduction and recovery strategies

The SFPC and its partners across the region will be monitoring and engaging on these and a number of other federal, state, and local policy issues in the months and years to come.

"Food Policy Councils operate in many cities, towns and regions throughout Massachusetts with the goal to improve the local food system. These coalitions bring organizations and public agencies together to build relationships, share best practices, and reduce duplicative efforts. The councils also advocate for policies to improve the food system in their community. Councils operate in a variety of ways and take on many different issues, but they all share the goal of supporting a food system that best serves their communities."

THE MA FOOD POLICY COUNCILS NETWORK

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All member organizations of the Southcoast Food Policy Council >

Southcoast Food Policy Council

Member Organizations

A.D. Makepeace Company
Algonquin Heights
American Red Cross Cape, Islands & Southeast MA Chapter
Angels Anonymous
Annelle Delorme-Hagerman Food Pantry
BayCoast Bank
Bristol Community College
Bristol County Agricultural High School
Business Innovation Center, Soup for the Soul, Fall River
Cambodian American Rescue Organization
Catholic Social Services of Fall River
Catholic Social Services, New Bedford
Church of the Good Shepherd, Wareham
Citizens for Citizens, Fall River
City of Fall River, Dept. of Health and Human Services
City of New Bedford Housing &
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City of New Bedford, Council
City of New Bedford, Mayors' Office
Coastal Foodshed
Coastline Elder Services
Community Economic Development Center, New Bedford
Congressional Representative Bill Keating
Damien's Place Food Pantry
Dartmouth Council on Aging
Dartmouth United Outreach
Eating With the Ecosystem
Edible South Shore
Eliot Community Human Services
Fall River Family Resource Center
Fall River Public Schools
First Citizens Credit Union
Franklin Food Pantry
Gifts to Give
Greater Fall River Community Food Pantry
Greater New Bedford Community Health Center
Groundwork Southcoast
Hearts of Hope
House of Hope
Immigrants' Assistance Center
Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford
The Island Foundation
M.O. L.I.F.E., Inc
MA Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR)
Mansfield Food Pantry
Marion Council on Aging
Mass in Motion, Fall River
Mass in Motion, New Bedford
Massachusetts Communities Action Network
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
MassDevelopment Transformative Development Initiative
My Brother's Keeper
New Bedford City Council
New Bedford Health Department
New Bedford Public Schools
New Life South Coast Church, New Bedford
Old Bedford Village
PAACA, New Bedford
PACE, New Bedford
Renegades Rising
Representative Alan Silvia
Representative Antonio Cabral
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St. Anthony of Padua, New Bedford
St. Mary's of Assumption Church
St. Patrick's Food Pantry
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The Livestock Institute
Town of Plymouth
UMass Dartmouth
United Neighbors of Fall River
United Way of Greater Fall River
United Way of Greater New Bedford
Veterans Association of Bristol County Inc.
Wareham Public Schools
Westport Food Pantry
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