

Biography and contacts for speakers of the 2024 Food Summit

Keynote:

Alison M. Cohen is a co-founder and the Director of the National Right to Food Community of Practice, a growing network of folks from across the country focused on shared learning and capacity building among those advocating for the Right to Food at a local, state, or regional level. Previously Alison served as the Senior Director of Programs for WhyHunger for 13 years and before that as the Director of the Northeast and Midwest Programs for Heifer International. Alison has thirty years' of experience supporting grassroots-led organizations addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty at the intersection of food insecurity, agriculture, racism, health, human rights, and climate change. A contribution to the sector she's most proud of is her role as an organizer, weaver, and connector. Alison believes in the transformative potential of collective power through strengthening formations of people and communities working for food and farm justice. Alison's training and practice in facilitative leadership, popular education, and the technology of participation have informed processes leading to the formation of networks and collaborative projects where grassroots power turns into solutions that can transform institutions, structures, and systems. Alison is at heart a Southerner from the mountains of North Carolina but has been living, biking, and gardening with her family in Brooklyn, NY for two decades. www.righttofoodus.org. You can reach Alison at alisonmcohen@righttofoodus.org.

Moderator:

Bill Braun is a farmer at Ivory Silo Farm in Westport, where he and his partner Deanna Levanti grow organic vegetables, herbs, fruit, flowers, and seeds. Bill is also co-founder and executive director of Freed Seed Federation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to the preservation, adaptation, and diversification of place-based seeds for the Northeast and beyond. Freed Seed Federation partners farmers, gardeners, and plant breeders for participatory breeding projects and the preservation of culturally and geographically relevant seeds; and educates growers and the general public on seed saving and seed politics. <https://www.freedseedfederation.org> and freedseedfederation@gmail.com.

Panel:

Estefania Galvis is the MA Field Director for the One Fair Wage Campaign. Born and raised in Colombia until age 15, Estefania has lived in the US for 18 years. Estefania has fought for people, food, and economic justice since her arrival. She is a fellow at the Cuny School of Urban Studies and Labor. She is here to talk about what you can do to move Massachusetts towards food sovereignty and the relationships between policy, consumers, workers, and the restaurant industry. She will talk about how you can be part of building a food where fair wages are part of food sovereignty through fighting with One Fair Wage for "Yes on Five." She goes by Tefa and is thankful to be part of this space. <https://www.onefairwage.org/wwwfairwageplustipsmacom> and estefania@onefairwage.org.

Casey Burns, an alumna of Clark University (BA/MS) is the Director of the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester, Massachusetts, and the Central Massachusetts Center on Food Equity co-chair. She is an experienced program manager and community organizer. She brings her foundational experience in grassroots food justice organizing to her current roles engaging with community members, organizations and institutions to implement the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan. You can reach Casey at casey@healthygreaterworcester.org. <https://www.healthygreaterworcester.org/>



UlumPixan Athohil Suk'il, Global Village Farms

Bio: <https://nesawg.org/news/meet-board-ulum-pixan-athohil-suk%E2%80%99il> and you can reach UlumPixan at info@globalvillagefarms.org.

Susannah Hinman, Supply Chain Manager, Red Tomato. As Supply Chain Manager for Red Tomato, it is Susannah's job to ensure that the high-quality produce Red Tomato's network of growers cultivate has the trusted markets they need, at a fair price, season after season. With a background in traditional wholesale produce distribution, Susannah was introduced to the Red Tomato brand in the marketplace through that industry and became intrigued by the non-profit status and unique operational environment. How does an organization that specializes in creating viable, supported market access for mid-size farms – but has no trucks or warehouse facilities – do it? The answer, she's learned, is by building collaborative distribution networks based on trust, understanding, and transparency – with the growers, with customers, the trucking partners, and everyone in-between. It is not just about buying and selling produce – it's about sustaining future generations of farmers and eaters alike. When Susannah isn't working towards the next dignity deal at Red Tomato, she is somewhere in between her two dogs, working in the garden, running, and playing board games with her family. <https://redtomato.org> and shinman@redtomato.org.