



MARION INSTITUTE

Advancing a Culture of Health Through Food Equity

CONNECTOR
SERIES

FROGFOOT FARM
NEIGHBORS FEEDING
NEIGHBORS

GROW
EDUCATION

SOUTHCOAST
FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

BIOMED
PROGRAMS

GREENHOUSE
INITIATIVES

March 18, 2025 SFPC Quarterly Meeting for Members Agenda

- Land Acknowledgement
- 2024 Year in Review
- Working Group Bills and Initiatives
- Outcome of HIP Lobby Day and Legislative Breakfast
- Reconvening Emergency Food Meetings
- Open Discussion

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional unceded territory of the Wapanaak (Wampanoag). 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 further acknowledge the lands the Cape Verdeans, African Americans, and Latinx people farmed in this area that have been lost to them through structural racism. We make these acknowledgements 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 the many connections we use in our work to repair relationships with Indigenous, and People of Color and of all Nations living here today.

SFPC 2024 Highlights



- Coordinated our 1st Legislative Breakfast with 130+ attendees in partnership with the Greater New Bedford Youth Alliance and the Women's Alliance of Southeastern MA.
- Provided food security testimony at the Poverty Commission at UMass Dartmouth.
- Created and implemented Legislative Advocacy training with CAB and Community Partners.
- Hosted a virtual [Candidate Forum for District 10 Bristol](#) with 80 registrants.
- Engaged 1,000+ SFPC Members-At-Large in advocacy, resulting in 465 letters to legislators.
- Trained SFPC Community Advisory Board and community partners on how to do Legislative Advocacy.
- Organized two Statehouse Lobby Days for the [Healthy Incentives Program](#).
- Launched our 2nd annual [Eat Local Southcoast Challenge](#) with over 400 Southcoast residents.
- Held our fifth annual [2024 virtual Food Summit](#): *Shifting Perspectives from Food Security to Food Sovereignty*.
- Initiated the [Community and Agriculture Resilience Audit Tool \(CARAT\)](#) in Bristol County to identify baseline resiliency and food system gaps.
- Officially launched Frogfoot Farm and harvested our first crops for food pantries.

Focus Plans for 2025



- Advocate for regional food system bills.
- Partnering on a Legislative Breakfast: United for Aging Well on March 14 at White's in Westport.
- Continue to educate and engage via our annual initiatives: Eat Local Southcoast Challenge, Food Summit, and a FarmCoast Documentary.
- Expand [Community and Agriculture Resilience Audit Tool \(CARAT\)](#) efforts to all counties in Southeastern MA.
- Address food access issues as they emerge.

Education and Communication Working Group

1.) Policy Focus:

- An Act Establishing Farm-to-School Program.
- An Act to Promote Food Literacy

2.) Initiatives:

- Eat Local Southcoast Challenge
- Food Summit
- FarmCoast Documentary

Food Access Working Group

1.) Policy Focus:

- An Act relative to an Agricultural Healthy Incentives Program
- An Act establishing basic needs assistance for MA immigrant residents

2.) Initiatives:

- Update food pantry data, gather statistics, and conduct focus groups.
- Should we start up the emergency food meetings again?

Policy Working Group

1.) Policy Focus:

- An Act Promoting Equity in Agriculture
- MA Food System Budget programs

2.) Initiative:

- Collect stories for each bill on why that bill is important to use to educate the public and testimony.

Capacity Building Working Group

1.) Policy Focus:

- An Act Encouraging the Donation of Food to Persons in Need
- An Act to Promote Economic Opportunities for Cottage Food Entrepreneurs

2.) Initiative:

- Engage SFPC members to get involved at the municipal level: boards of health, commissions for food waste, and agricultural commissions.

HIP Lobby Day Outcomes and Emergency Food Meetings



On March 13, 11 SFPC Community Advisory Board members met with 16 legislators at the Statehouse to support the Healthy Incentives Program:

- ❑ \$5 million in a supplemental budget for 2025, \$25 million in the 2026 budget to be fully funded at the \$40-\$80 monthly depending on family size, and co-sponsor HIP to be a permanent program.

On March 14, nearly 200 people gathered for a Legislative Breakfast, United for Aging Well with 27 legislators and staff.

- ❑ The Marion Institute's Executive Director spoke about the Southcoast Food Policy Council, two SFPC Food Equity Advisors shared their HIP stories, and 15 SFPC Community Advisory Board members and several SFPC members-at-large participated.

Emergency Food Meetings:

- ❑ Thinking of restarting, but we need to update food pantry lists first.

Join Southcoast Food Alert at sfpc@marioninstitute.org.

How Can You Help

How to Access and Use Action Alerts

Collecting Stories