Community-Based Solutions to Assessing and Improving the Food System

Ashley Beversdorf, Jessica Williams & Amanda Woods
Learning Objectives

- Learn methods for conducting a community health and food system assessment
- Discover strategies for improving healthy food options in schools, food pantries and other community settings
- Understand lessons learned from linking community members to food through a variety of programming, policies, systems, and environmental level changes
Community Needs Assessment and Improvement Planning
Community Health Assessment (CHA)
Reasons to Address Healthy Eating

- **Obesity** was the number one health concern of ECHO Community Survey respondents
- 23% of residents live in census tracts with no healthy food outlets
- Almost 79% of adults eat less than the recommended five servings of fruit and vegetables a day
Mission Statement:
Create a fair and culturally friendly food system in Oakland County that encourages healthy eating

Goal:
Increase accessibility, affordability, and consumption of healthy foods throughout Oakland County.
Purpose and goal

- Better understand what barriers people face trying to purchase healthy foods;
- What assets, such as farmers markets and food pantries, exist in the community;
- What opportunities exist that the Oakland County Food Policy Council can support to improve access to healthy foods for all people who live, work, and play in Oakland County.
### Primary Data Collected:

2,430 Responses (May 1st)

### Survey instrument captured:
- Food Access
- Food Security
- Healthy Eating

### Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to a variety of healthy foods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After-school program</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of the food</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How do you usually get to the store to buy or receive food?**
- Use bus or car
- Home delivery
- Taxi, Uber, other ride service
- Walk or bike
- Other (please specify)

**How far do you usually travel to buy food?**
- Less than 1 mile
- 1-3 miles
- 4-6 miles
- 7-10 miles
- More than 15 miles

**What makes you do or not do the following?**
- Fruits: difficult to find, not in season, not affordable, not healthy, not enough
- Veggies: difficult to find, not in season, not affordable, not healthy, not enough

**What makes it difficult for you to eat fruits and veggies every day?**
- Don’t have enough money to buy
- Not sure how to prepare
- Don’t like fruits and veggies
- They’re too expensive
- Don’t have time to prepare them
- Store doesn’t have them
- Don’t like fruits and veggies
- Other

---

*ECHO - Oakland County Food Policy Council*

*Food System Assessment Survey*
Food System Assessment: Consumption

- **42.10%** ≤ 2 servings of fruit and vegetables each day
- **66.97%** ≤ 2 servings of whole grains each day.
What makes it difficult for you to eat fruits and vegetables?

1. Nothing (42%)
2. Lack of time (18%)
3. Too expensive (14%)
4. Poor quality (7%)
Food System Assessment: Food Security

Worried about food running out or not lasting...

Approximately 20% reported experiencing food insecurity “sometimes” or “often”
Healthy Food Workgroup
Working to increase accessibility, affordability, and consumption of healthy foods throughout Oakland County

Food Security Workgroup
Working to expand equitable access to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food in Oakland County
Finding Community Data

- Local Health Departments’ Community Health Assessments (CHAs)
- Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (MiBRFSS)
- Census and American Community Survey data
- Hospitals Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs)
- Schools
- Feeding America
Additional Strategies

Other strategies include:

• Collecting and analyzing existing data on local and regional food systems
• Using smaller scale assessments to guide action planning
• Participating/contributing to already existing projects
• Revising policies and practices to promote local food systems
Resources – Needs Assessment

- Map the Meal Gap – Feeding America
- Cares Engagement Network
- USDA Food Environment Atlas
- Community Commons
Turning Data into Action
Health Equity & Food Systems

Equality doesn’t mean Equity
Community Food Systems
# Programming vs. Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming</th>
<th>Policy, Systems, and Environmental changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Short-term intervention</td>
<td>• Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May or may not change the system</td>
<td>• Ideally sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing the system or environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>impacts behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MDHHS works with local health departments to implement policies and environmental changes that improve access to healthy food and physical activity.

Local health departments contract with organizations throughout the target community to accomplish project objectives.
Partnering with Schools
Benefits of Farm to School

• Enhanced school meals
• Increased variety of produce
• Link from learning to plate
  • Classroom lessons
• Support of local farms
• Supports economy
Farm to School: By the Numbers

43% of Michigan school districts surveyed by USDA say they participate in farm to school activities.

That's 257 districts, with 1,581 schools, and 702,896 students.

Another 18% of districts surveyed plan to start farm to school activities in the future.

(Note: of the 869 school districts in Michigan, 68% completed the USDA Farm to School Census.)

$19,392,100 invested in local food in Michigan with the average school district spending 20% of their budget on local products.
Farm to School: Community Impact

Benefits of Farm to School

- Economic Development
- Public Health
- Education
- Environment
- Community Engagement
Farm to School in Action
Oakland County Process

- Healthy Oakland Partnership (HOP) Youth Team
- Farm to School Interest Survey - 2016
- Launch beginning of 2017-2018 school year
  - 67% of FSD have connected with new vendors
Farm to School Directory

• Collaboration between MSU-E, Macomb County Health Department, and Oakland County Health Department

• **Purpose:** Connect farms with school food service programs interested in sourcing local foods for students.

• **Goal:** Enrich the connection communities have with fresh, healthy, and local food
Getting Started: Resources

• Michigan Farm to School
• Michigan Farm to Institution Network
• Taste the Local Difference – Farm to School Directory
• National Farm to School Network
• USDA Farm to School
10 Cents a Meal

Purpose

• Improve daily nutrition and eating habits for children through the school setting
• Invest in Michigan agriculture and related local food business economy

Partners

• MI Department of Education
• MI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
• MSU Center for Regional Food Systems
• Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities
• Prosperity Region Offices
Partnering with Healthcare Providers
Prescription for Health Programs

• Addresses one of the Social Determinants of Health
  ➢ Food access and security
• Goal to improve f/v consumption
  ➢ Long term goal: positive change in health status
Pontiac Prescription for Health

- Oakland University & OCHD’s Healthy Pontiac, We Can! coalition partnered to pilot the “Pontiac Prescription for Health” program in summer 2018
- Connected Pontiac residents to healthy foods and physical activity and promoted healthy lifestyles
- Participants were uninsured or under-insured individuals with either high blood pressure or a high body mass index
Key Partners:

• Clinical Sites
• Voucher Redemption Sites
• Gym Membership Sites
Pontiac Prescription for Health

• Participants received:
  • Vouchers to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmer’s markets and grocery stores
  • Vouchers toward gym memberships at their choice of 4 area activity centers
  • Monthly educational workshops on a variety of health topics

• 100 residents engaged the program – 50 completed
Pontiac Prescription for Health Results

• Perceived overall health rating improved
• Increase in fruit consumption
• Decrease in sugary beverage consumption
• Greater food security and increased self-efficacy to eat healthy
• Health education sessions were very popular and will be expanded in future efforts
Addressing Community Food Access Points
Federal Policies

2018 Farm Bill

• Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program
  • SNAP incentive programs
  • Included Produce Prescription Programs
• New office of Urban Agriculture
Federal Policies

Child Nutrition Reauthorization

- Supports WIC, NSLP, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program
- Two marker bills: Farm to School & Kids Eat Local
SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB)

BUY $1

GET $1

Bridge Card

[Image of fruits and vegetables]

[Image of DUFB card]
Building Healthy Communities Fliers

SNAP & Double Up at the Farmers Market.

There are more than 300 farmers markets in Michigan and many accept SNAP Bridge Cards and Double Up Food bucks!
**Take TheRide to your FAVORITE FARMERS MARKET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bus Route</th>
<th>Market Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 21 22 30 31</td>
<td>Ann Arbor Farmers Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 33 36 60 65 91</td>
<td>Cobblestone Farmers Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5D 24</td>
<td>St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 24</td>
<td>Ann Arbor: Westside Farmers Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 30 31 32A</td>
<td>Pittsfield Township Farmers Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 42</td>
<td>Ypsilanti Farmers Market-Depot Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 4 5 6 42 43 44 45 46 47</td>
<td>Ypsilanti Farmers Market-Downtown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consult the RideGuide for bus times and details.
Healthy Pantries
Closing

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC
Questions?
Contact Information

**Ashley Beversdorf, MDHHS**
Email: beversdorfa@michigan.gov
Phone: 517-241-2187

**Jessica Williams, OCHD**
Email: williamsjr@oakgov.com
Phone: 248-563-7792

**Amanda Woods, OCHD**
Email: woodsa@oakgov.com
Phone: 248-858-0845