



SC FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Presentation for the Food Security Council
September 28, 2023

What is a food policy council?

- A community-based or government-supported organization that influences local and regional food systems.
- A coalition that aims to create a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient food system that benefits the well-being of the community and the environment.
- The main goals are to develop, recommend, and implement policies and practices to promote a more sustainable, equitable, and healthy food system.

Mission

The mission of the South Carolina Food Policy Council is to build an equitable, accessible, and economically diverse, local food system in South Carolina by promoting multi-sectoral collaboration, community-based programming, and policy change.

History

Key events

March 2005: Volunteers formed a steering committee to explore creating a statewide food policy council affiliated with the SC Department of Agriculture

March 2006: Held first official meeting

Annual convenings in some years

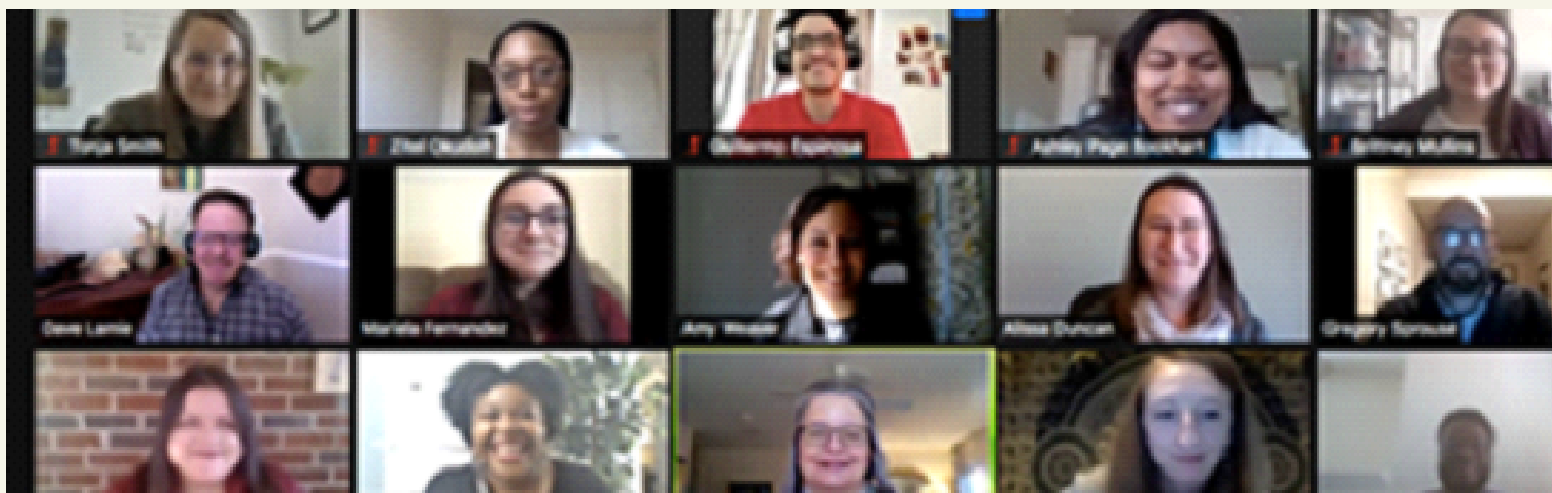
- Growing Food and Opportunities in South Carolina
- Future of Food Safety: Healthy People, Smart Business

Worked closely with the SC Community Loan Fund on their SC Food Access Task Force

November 2020: Expanded to General Membership

July 2021: Began developing committee structure

July 2022 - July 2023: Strategic Planning & Food Equity Policy Platform development



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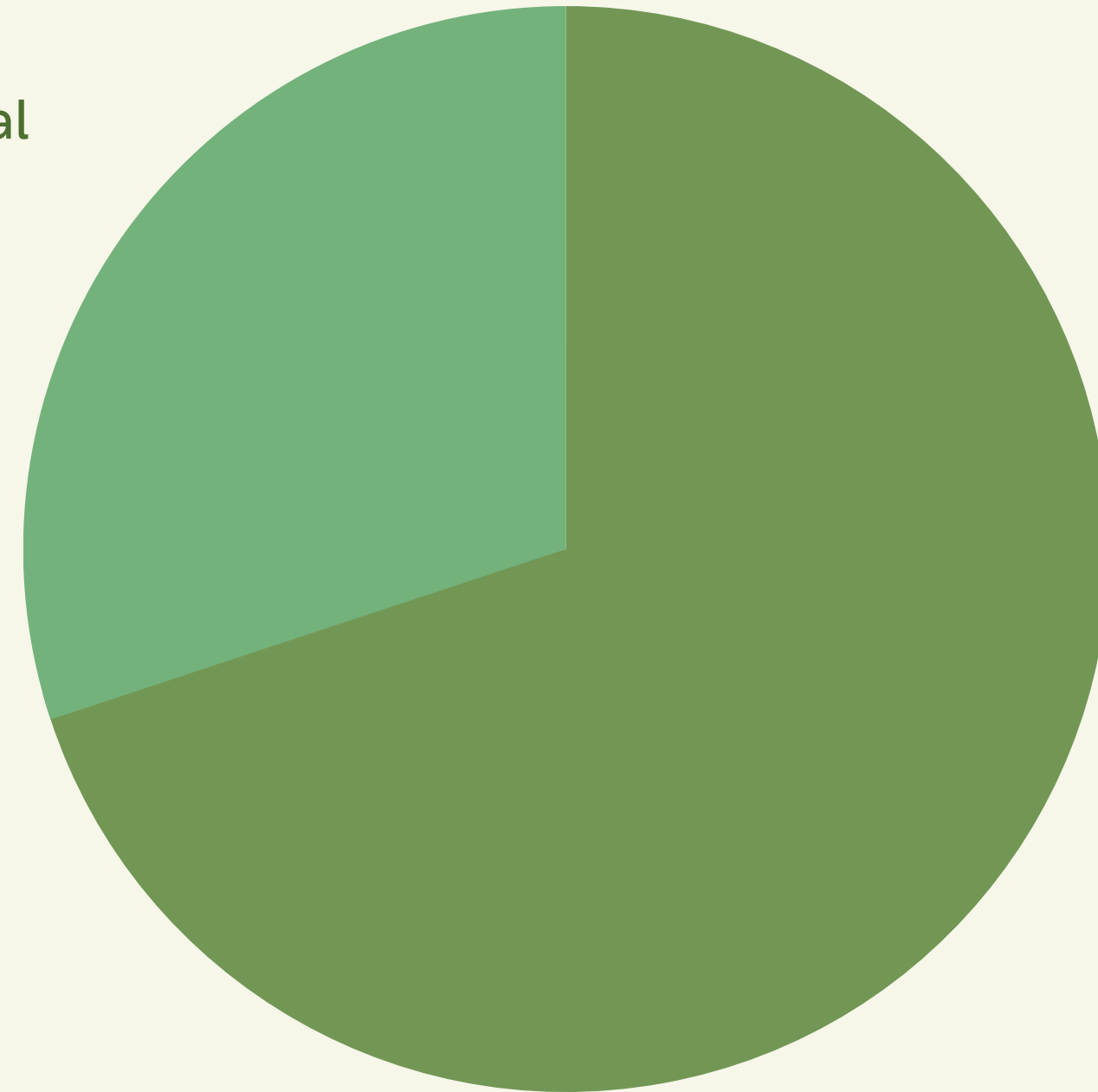
Weatherly Thomas

*non-voting members

Membership

Total = 369 members

Organizational
111



Individual
258

SECTORS

Advocacy

Anti-hunger emergency food

College/university/community

college

Community

Economic development

Elementary/secondary education

Faith-based organization

Farms and farm workers

Food processing/distribution

Food production

Food retail

Food waste/disposal

Food workers

Fundraising/development

Health care

Natural resources and

environment

Nutrition education

Philanthropy

Public health

Social justice

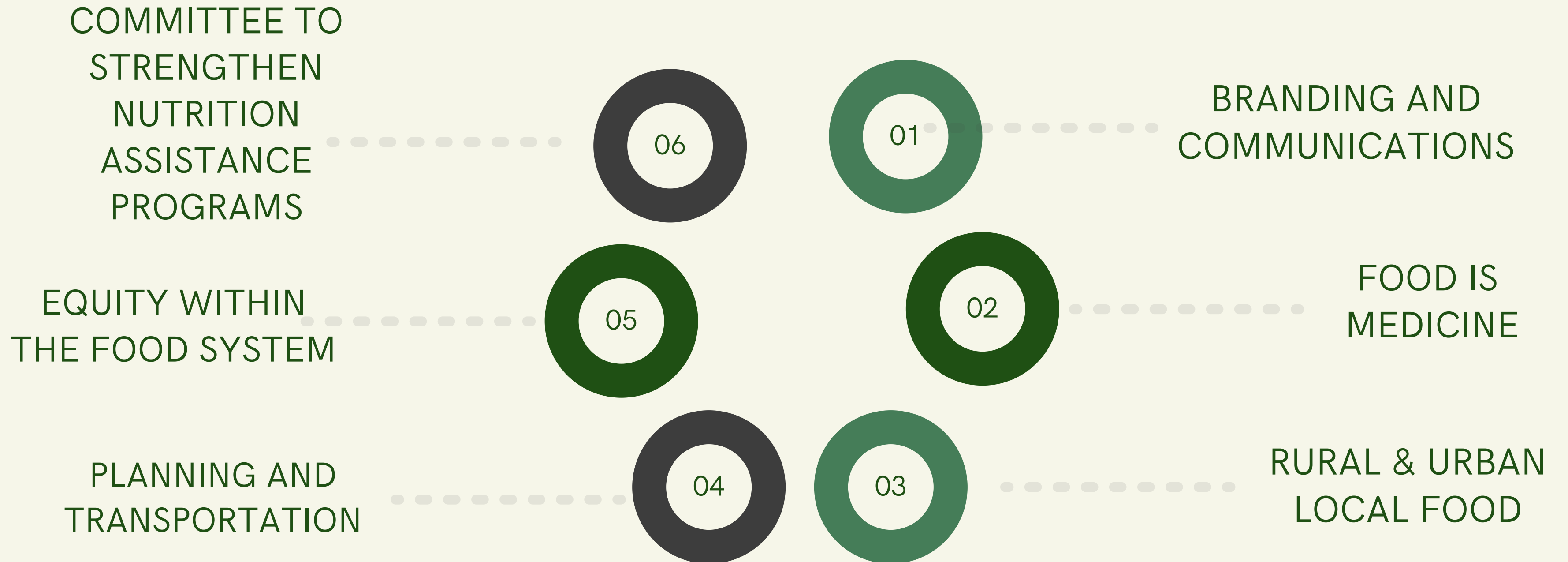
Rural health

Transportation

Other

COMMITTEES

Committees were formed based on what members think are the most pressing issues related to food in SC to address. One goal of having committees is to collectively develop a robust state-level food equity policy platform. In addition to committee meetings, all members are invited to a quarterly virtual collective meeting.

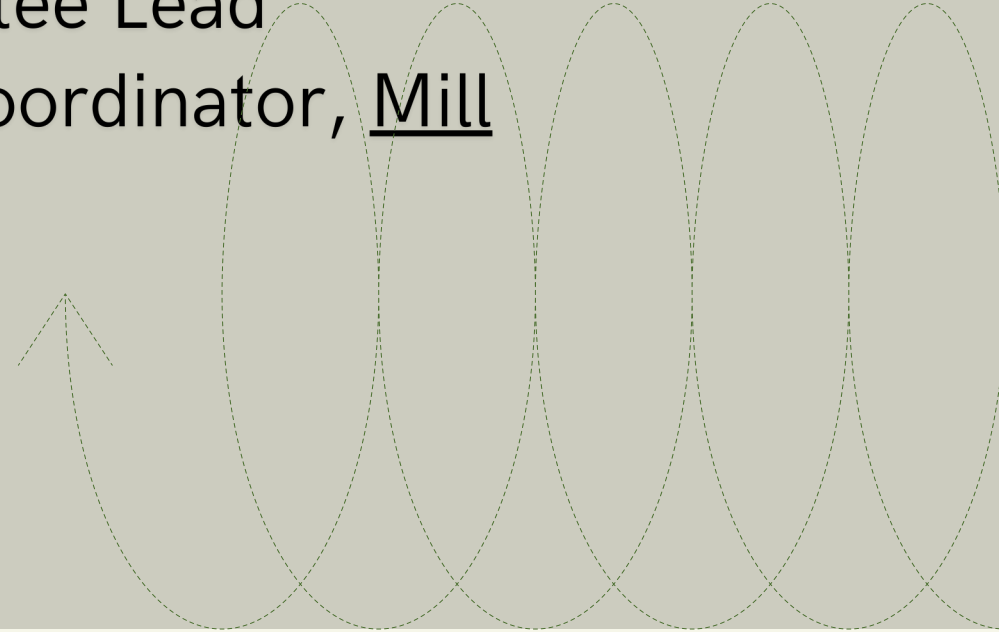


cate@millcommunity.org

STRENGTHENING NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (CSNAP)

This committee works on nutrition program advocacy and policy change bringing together advocates, users/community members and state administrators.

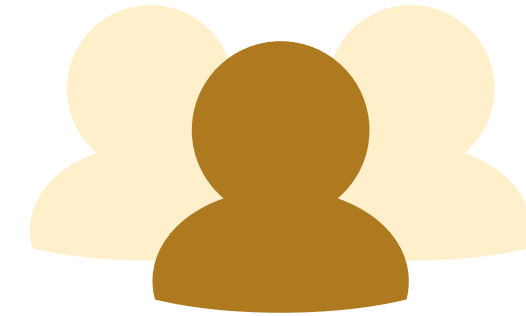
Cate Tedford, Committee Lead
FoodShare Program Coordinator, Mill Village Farms



FOOD IS MEDICINE

Aims to 1) improve the coordination among organizations working to advance healthy food access within health care settings and 2) identify and facilitate the adoption of state-level food is medicine (FiM) policy and system changes.

Amy Weaver, Committee Lead
teixeira@mailbox.sc.edu



5 subcommittees

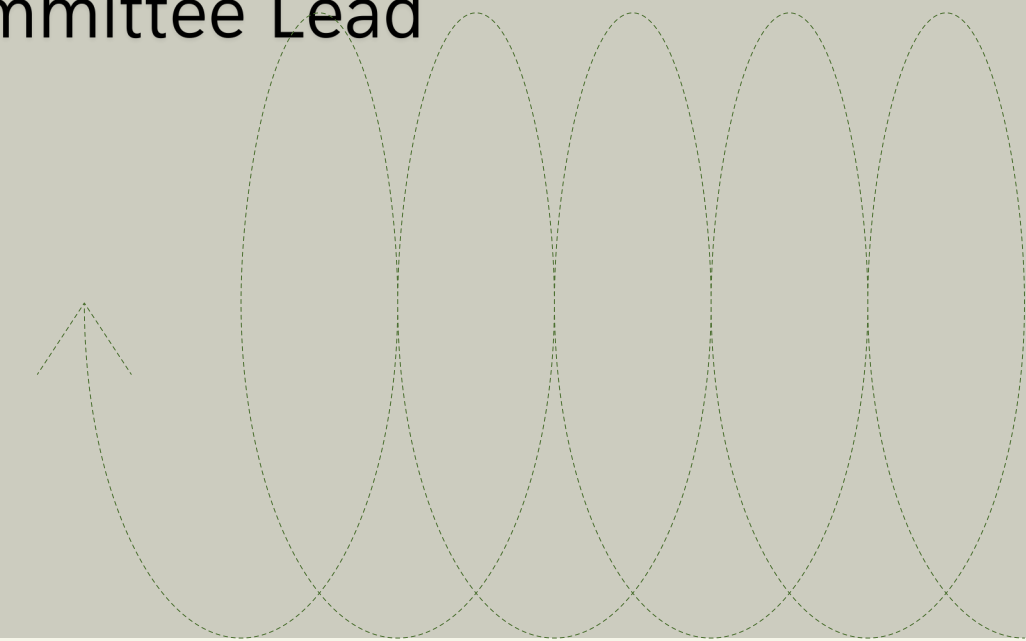
- Food Insecurity Screenings & Referrals
- FiM Map
- Nutrition Education for Health Professionals
- Produce Prescription Community of Practice
- Research & Evaluation

gsprouse@centralmidlands.org

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

The committee is centered around the intersection of public health with planning and transportation. The committee will focus on both food access and physical activity.

Gregory Sprouse, Committee Lead



Strategic Planning & Policy Platform

- Updated Mission
- Created a 3-5 year plan
 - Seeking funding for an Executive Director and paid staff
- Policy Priorities
 - Healthy Food in Public Schools
 - Food Access in Food Pantries
 - Racial Equity in Funding and Advocacy
 - Food Sovereignty
 - Support for and Partnership with Farmers and Distributors
 - SNAP Utilization and Advocacy
 - Transportation as a Key Driver to Food Security
 - Healthy Food Retail Options as a Key Driver to Food Security

Leveraged Resources

- Technical assistance provided by USC SNAP-Ed on policy, systems, and environmental change approaches needed to increase access to healthy eating and active living opportunities. Funding and technical assistance provided to local food policy councils.
- Growing Local SC initiative created with the receipt of a USDA Regional Food Systems Partnership Grant to strengthen the relationships focused on getting food from farms and gardens to the table across South Carolina.
- BlueCross BlueShield Foundation funding to conduct a food is medicine landscape assessment to identify policies and practices needed to scale food is medicine strategies state-wide (funding provided to USC to conduct the assessment).
- Healthy Palmetto funding to participate in strategic planning and develop a food equity policy platform. Funding also to create a Health and Planning Toolkit addendum.

LOCAL FOOD POLICY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

- Work with local organizations to create and expand local food policy councils
- Focus on:
 - Conducting a community food assessment
 - Engage people experience food insecurity and inequities in the work of the council
 - Engage representatives from a wide-range of sectors in the work of the councils
 - Collectively identify priority policy, system, and environmental change strategies
 - Work with partners to advance and sustain the strategies

Local Food Policy Councils

Funding Sources: USC SNAP-Ed*,
No Kid Hungry*, and each
organization's own funding sources

- Greenville Food Security Coalition
- Lakelands Food and Hunger Alliance
(Greenwood)
- Mullins Food Policy Council (Marion)
- Oconee Food Policy Council
- Tri-county Food Policy Council (Bamberg,
Calhoun, Orangeburg)
- West Columbia Cayce Food Policy Coalition
(Lexington)
- York County Food Policy Council
- Columbia Food Policy Committee (*not
funded by these sources)
- Spartanburg Food System Coalition (*not
funded by these sources)

Connections with Partners

Monthly convenings are held to ensure coordination and an understanding of other aligned local level work.

1

Wholespire

2

SC Office of Rural
Health

3

Clemson Extension

Policy recommendations

PROPOSED

These preliminary policy recommendations were developed via SC Food Policy Council committee conversations and analysis and policy priorities identified through the strategic planning process that included conducting interviews with a wide-range of partners and hosting community listening sessions around the state with people most impacted by food inequities.

Expanding Program Eligibility & Enrollment

- Participate in Summer EBT.
- Provide universal school meals.
- Increase gross income limit for SNAP.
- Repeal the drug felon ban on SNAP and TANF.
- Invest in strengthening the technology infrastructure behind Healthy Bucks, as well as staffing to increase capacity for technical assistance and outreach to new and existing vendors.
- Explore opportunities to streamline applications and enrollment processes across nutrition and other assistance programs.

Expanding Program Eligibility & Enrollment

- Expand the use of data sharing and data matching with and between agencies as well as with third party organizations to enable nutrition assistance programs to employ targeted outreach directly to individuals who are enrolled in one program, and as a result, are likely eligible for other programs. This would significantly increase awareness and knowledge of eligibility.
- Pair targeted outreach resulting from data sharing and data matching with information about how to access services to increase participation among eligible individuals/households.
- Improve screening to identify individuals who are exempt from losing SNAP benefits under the Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) rules. These individuals include veterans, former foster care youth, individuals experiencing homelessness, and those unable to work.
- Maximize federal waiver or matching fund opportunities that could expand eligibility or enrollment in nutrition assistance programs.

Food & Transportation

- Build and strengthen transportation infrastructure, especially in rural areas and paratransit services.
- Maximize federal matching fund opportunities.
- Provide vouchers for accessing transportation (e.g., public transit, ride-share, taxis) to get to food and places of employment in tandem with nutrition assistance program participation.

Food & Health Care

- Support the integration of nutrition assistance programs (SNAP, WIC, Senior Nutrition) in food is medicine programs and efforts.
- Leverage 2023 guidance from CMS to encourage produce prescriptions as an “in lieu of services” approach for managed care organizations.
- Provide funding for a food is medicine pilot program across the state, to include a full spectrum of supports and services related to priority health issues – chronic disease, pregnancy, child health, and behavioral health.
- Support health systems and managed care organizations in implementing screening and referral processes related to social drivers of health, particularly food and nutrition insecurity.
- Integrate food and nutrition insecurity screening and referral and food is medicine approaches into SCDHHS’ Quality Achievement Program and other quality strategies.
- Integrate food is medicine approaches into existing state collaboratives working to improve quality and advance health – specifically the Birth Outcomes Initiative and QTIP.

Food Retail/ Infrastructure

- Increase capacity of farmers markets to accept SNAP and Healthy Bucks.
- Incentive local food sourcing for school meals.
- Create a grocery store incentive structure.
- Incentivize retailers to connect with existing health care facilities where people are (reimbursement, development fees).
- Connect with smaller food retailers and dollar stores to have a minimum offering of fruits and vegetables.
- Provide direct capacity building funds to existing community-based organizations providing other services (e.g., childcare & healthcare) to offer healthy food options tailored to the community's unique assets and needs.

Capacity Building & General Recommendations

- Provide funding to support and bolster the capacity of the South Carolina Food Policy Council.
- Provide funding to continue the development and support of local food policy councils.
- Develop a coordinated, sustainable approach for tracking food and nutrition security data across the state.
- Ensure representation on this new council and its future efforts includes representation of people who have/had enrolled in food assistance programs and individuals/organizations from rural communities.

Questions

www.scfoodpolicy.org

scfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com