

THE MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTER



A SUMMARY

The potential in Michigan for a thriving economy, sustainable resource use and equity for all is greater now than ever before. Across our state, citizens and organizations are coming together to provide and promote “good food” – food that is healthy, green, fair and affordable. By basing our food system on these values, we can improve the health, prosperity and equity of Michigan people.



THE MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTER

The Michigan Good Food Charter is a vision and roadmap to advance Michigan’s food and agricultural contributions to the economy, protect our natural resource base, improve our residents’ health and enable generations of Michigan youth to thrive. The charter outlines six goals to make our vision real by 2020 (See side panel).

GOOD FOOD IS:

Healthy

It provides nourishment and enables people to thrive.

Green

It was produced in a manner that is environmentally sustainable.

Fair

No one along the supply chain was exploited during its creation.

Affordable

All people have access to it.

Photo courtesy of Eastern Market Corporation

VISION AND GOALS

We envision a thriving economy, equity and sustainability for all of Michigan and its people through a food system rooted in local communities and centered on good food.

By 2020, we believe we can meet or exceed the following goals:

1. Michigan institutions will source 20% of their food products from Michigan growers, producers and processors.
2. Michigan farmers will profitably supply 20% of all Michigan institutional, retailer and consumer food purchases and be able to pay fair wages to their workers.
3. Michigan will generate new agri-food businesses at a rate that enables 20% of food purchased in Michigan to come from Michigan.
4. Eighty percent of Michigan residents (twice the current level) will have easy access to affordable, fresh, healthy food, 20% of which is from Michigan sources.
5. Michigan Nutrition Standards will be met by 100% of school meals and 75% of schools selling food outside school meal programs.
6. Michigan schools will incorporate food and agriculture into the pre-K through 12th grade curriculum for all Michigan students and youth will have access to food and agriculture entrepreneurial opportunities.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Lend your support and involvement to make the goals of the charter a reality! Visit www.michiganfood.org to:

- Sign the Resolution of Support
- Check out ideas for taking action
- Request copies of the charter or charter summaries
- Connect with a local group working on food system change
- Tell us your good food stories – we’ll help spread the word!
- Share the Good Food Charter with friends and colleagues



... inspires leaders

Community-based



Priority 2: Improve school food environments

Betti Wiggins, Executive Director of Nutrition Services in Detroit Public Schools (DPS), works to ensure healthy, local foods are served to every child in her district. Her philosophy, "Kids will know better if we show them better," has guided her to lead some dramatic changes. Since the start of the 2011 school year, every DPS student has had access to healthy food at school; no fried food is served, fresh fruits and vegetables are available for snacks and lunches and all children are offered a free breakfast. Detroit's Farm to School program is growing, supported by 60 school gardens providing student grown produce in school meals, enabling kids to learn about their food and taste the wonders of Michigan. The Michigan Good Food Charter was a key source of Betti's inspiration to buy Michigan foods and now her efforts are moving DPS toward the charter's goal of sourcing 20% locally. Betti has made a commitment to changing the health and wellbeing of the entire community through helping school kids know about healthy eating. In her own words, "It takes more than books for a student to learn."



Photo by Michael Cuddy

... catalyzes government investment

State agency-based



Priority 15: Direct \$10 million to regional food supply chain infrastructure

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) has been behind several innovative infrastructure initiatives to support good food. In 2012 the agency pledged nearly \$1 million to fund 5 food hub development projects. For 2014, MDARD committed another \$875,000 to agricultural processing and regional food systems projects that will facilitate aggregation and distribution of Michigan crops and livestock. With the support from MDARD and the Michigan Food Hub Network, several emerging food hubs across the state are on a path to build regional food distribution networks and expand access to healthy food.

In 2013, Michigan received a \$3 million Healthy Food Financing Initiative award from the US Departments of Treasury, Health and Human Services and Agriculture to support the Michigan Good Food Fund. This fund will bring healthy food to Michigan residents in areas of limited food access by connecting local food production with local retail and other markets.

"The Michigan Good Food Fund will be a powerful way to harness flows of capital while increasing access to healthy food, supporting farmer viability and growing strong, local economies," Dr. Oran Hesterman, president and CEO of the Fair Food Network, said.

The Michigan Good Food Charter includes 25 agenda priorities. Stories of progress on five of those priorities are included here.



Youth



Good food access



Farms and farmers



Institutions



Food system infrastructure

... promotes environmentally sustainable farming



Priority 14: Support Michigan-grown, sustainably produced products

Legislation-based

The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), which provides verification for farmers who voluntarily complete educational requirements, implement a conservation plan and pass an on-site evaluation, is one way to encourage and acknowledge producers using sustainable growing methods. While the program began in 1999, Governor Rick Snyder assured its continuation by signing it into law in 2011.

"Putting this program into statute secures its place as a model for addressing environmental challenges in a way that also allows our agriculture-based businesses to expand. I am pleased that my first bill signings recognize the critical importance of Michigan agriculture as well as our need to be sound stewards of the environment," he said.

Food grown in a manner that is environmentally sustainable is a core part of the charter's goals. "More than 1900 Michigan farms have put in a lot of work to become MAEAP-verified," said Jan Wilford, MDARD MAEAP Program Manager. "MAEAP farms must reach a high environmental standard while they strive to grow good quality food in a way that can keep their business profitable. Be sure to congratulate farmers when you see their MAEAP signs!"



Courtesy of MDARD

... drives a good food culture



Priority 10: Establish Michigan as the place to be for good food

Business or non-profit-based

Detroit Eastern Market and the Michigan Land Use Institute's Taste the Local Difference campaign are transforming the food culture of their communities. They, like others, are working toward making Michigan the "place to be" for good food that is locally grown, processed, prepared and consumed.

"Since 1891, Detroit's Eastern Market has been a place where growers, processors, distributors, and consumers connect with each other and strengthen the regional food system. These connections increase the conviviality of southeastern Michigan. The Saturday Market is a robust celebration of different food cultures," Dan Carmody, President of Eastern Market, said. Bill Palladino, Senior Policy Specialist at the Michigan Land Use Institute, said "The Taste the Local Difference program is designed to connect farmers to regional markets and is now a focused local food marketing and branding campaign to help our region to be the first in the state to successfully source 20% of its food from local markets."

These and other organizations' efforts to support local farmers and make local food more accessible for consumers are pushing good food further into the mainstream for all Michiganders.

... propels supply shifts

Market-based



Priority 12: Provide an additional 10 cents per school meal for local food

Institutions' growing demand for local food is helping to drive a shift toward a supply chain that prioritizes local food. The Michigan Farm to Institution Network, a group committed to supporting local food sales to institutions, is taking shape and new programs to accelerate local sourcing are emerging.

Cherry Republic, a specialty food retailer based in Northwest Michigan, donated \$28,000 to help the Michigan Land Use Institute (MLUI) launch a two-year pilot program that will provide an additional 10 cents per school lunch to existing food service budgets so that selected schools in the area can purchase more locally grown fruits and vegetables.

"Many children eat up to two meals a day at school, where they're picking up lifetime eating habits. With an obesity crisis threatening the health of our kids, it's important they have great experiences with fruits and vegetables. Serving local food can provide that positive experience while also supporting the economy. It's delicious, and it's fun for the kids to get to know the farmers who grow their food," Diane Conners, Senior Policy Specialist at MLUI, said. At one school, the food service director reported the students eating five times more apples after she made the switch to Michigan-produced apples.



Courtesy of MLUI

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Charter was developed in 2010 via the collaboration of hundreds of people across the state with leadership from the Michigan Food Policy Council, the Food Bank Council of Michigan and the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS).

The Michigan Good Food Initiative is a statewide effort to promote, implement and track progress toward the goals of the Michigan Good Food Charter. The initiative is coordinated by staff at CRFS and guided by the Michigan Good Food Steering Committee.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The goals of the Steering Committee are to guide efforts to move the Michigan Good Food Charter into successive phases of growth and engagement. Their activities include:

- Reaching out to potential supporters and more fully engaging current supporters.
- Supporting organizations in implementing charter goals and priorities.
- Guiding research to better understand progress toward and impact of charter goals.
- Identifying opportunities to sustain and expand funding for the work.

MORE INFORMATION

To read or request copies of the Michigan Good Food Charter or to find good food stories, supporting documents and tools, please see:

WWW.MICHIGANFOOD.ORG

STEERING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION 2013-2014

AFPD – The Voice of Independent Retailers
Community Economic Development Association of Michigan
Eastern Market Corporation
Eaton Good Food
edible flint
Food Bank Council of Michigan
Gleaners Community Food Bank of SE Michigan
Good Food Battle Creek
Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council
Julian Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Michigan Department of Community Health
Michigan Farmers Market Association
Michigan Fitness Foundation
Michigan Food and Farming Systems
Michigan Land Use Institute
Michigan Rural Council
Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems
Michigan State University Extension
Upper Peninsula Food Exchange

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AGENDA PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

SCALE	TYPE	FOOD SYSTEM ARENA	AGENDA PRIORITY
LOCAL AGENDA PRIORITIES	Community-based		1. Expand and increase innovative methods to bring healthy foods to underserved areas as well as strategies to encourage their consumption.
			2. Improve school food environments and reduce school sales of low-nutrient, high-sugar, high-fat and calorie-dense foods through snack and vending machines or competitive food sales.
			3. Maximize use of current public benefit programs for vulnerable populations, especially children and seniors, and link them with strategies for healthy food access.
			4. Provide outreach, training and technical assistance to launch new grocery stores and improve existing stores to better serve underserved people in urban and rural areas.
	Land use-based		5. Establish food business districts to encourage food businesses to locate in the same area and to support their collaboration.
			6. Use policy and planning strategies to increase access to healthy food in underserved areas.
			7. Review and seek appropriate revisions to state and local land use policies to preserve farmland and blend protection with farm viability programs.
	Market-based		8. Encourage institutions – including schools, hospitals, colleges and universities – to use their collective purchasing power to influence the food supply chain to provide healthier food and more foods grown, raised and processed in Michigan.
STATEWIDE AGENDA PRIORITIES	Business or non-profit-based		9. Expand opportunities for youth to develop entrepreneurship skills and learn about career opportunities related to good food that support youth and community economic development.
			10. Establish Michigan as “the place to be” for culturally based good food that is locally grown, processed, prepared and consumed.
	Legislation-based		11. Incorporate good food education into the pre-K-12 curriculum for all Michigan students.
			12. Implement a reimbursement program to provide an additional 10 cents per school meal, as a supplement to existing school meal funds, in order to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables.
			13. Amend Michigan’s General Property Tax Act to exempt certain on-farm renewable energy installations.
			14. Set targets for state-funded institutions to procure Michigan-grown, sustainably produced products.

Please note that agenda priority numbers do not reflect rank order.

AGENDA PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

SCALE	TYPE	FOOD SYSTEM ARENA	AGENDA PRIORITY	
STATEWIDE AGENDA PRIORITIES	State agency-based		15. Direct \$10 million to regional food supply chain infrastructure development investments through the Michigan state planning and development regions or other regional designations.	
			16. Implement a food safety audit cost-share or reimbursement program targeted at small and medium-sized farms and work to ensure that audits are conducted in the context of the farm scale.	
			17. Provide financial incentives for farmers and for development of food system infrastructure to support institutional local food purchasing programs.	
			18. Develop a farm-to-institution grant program to provide planning, implementation and kitchen or cafeteria equipment grants to maximize the use of locally grown, raised and processed foods in institutional cafeterias.	
			19. Direct state agencies to maximize capital access through state-sponsored programs that provide farm financing.	
			20. Ensure that all state and higher education business, work force and economic development programs include farming and agriculture in their target audiences for programmatic development, training, investment and technical assistance.	
			21. Contingent upon further market assessment, establish a state meat and poultry inspection program in cooperation with the federal Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS) to spur new meat processing infrastructure.	
			22. Include Michigan food and agriculture in state marketing efforts, such as the Pure Michigan campaign, to build awareness of the state's great variety and quality of local food products and farm amenities.	
			23. Charge business support entities, such as the 18 Michigan Technical Education Centers, with identifying and supporting the equipment and process engineering needs of farmers and other agri-food enterprises, and ensure that food and agriculture are included in state and local economic development plans.	
		Research-based		24. Examine all of Michigan's food- and agriculture-related laws and regulations (food safety, production, processing, retailing, etc.) for provisions that create unnecessary transactions costs and regulatory burdens on low risk businesses and ensure that regulations are applied in a way that acknowledges the diversity of production practices.
				25. Develop systems for collecting and sharing production and market data and other data relevant to regional food supply chain development.



Youth



Good food access



Farms and farmers



Institutions



Food system infrastructure