

**Food Policy Assessment:**  
**Summary Findings and Recommendations**

**(1) Gaps and opportunities in the Portland food system that could benefit from policy initiatives, changes to the code, or further investigation:**

- **PRODUCING, SOURCING & DISTRIBUTING**
  - Crafting a city goal of encouraging food production in Portland for local markets and businesses.
  - Setting economic development goals to support production and distribution of locally grown or produced food.
  - Implementing procurement preferencing for local food in city institutions.
  - Creating economic incentives for city food purveyors to source from Maine producers.
  - Establishing or incentivizing the creation of a USDA-inspected community kitchen.
  - Revising the zoning code to better address agriculture and the food system. Specific areas that such a revision could assist and on which revisions could focus:
    - Small livestock (including chickens)
    - Beekeeping
  
- **FOOD WASTE/LOSS MANAGEMENT**
  - Determining economic incentives for processing/recycling food waste.
  - Enabling food redistribution from city institutions.
  - Initiating citywide composting.

**(2) The food policy assessment findings map onto the following “Actions” in the STAR (Sustainable Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities) rating system:**

- **Action 1: Inventory, Assessment or Survey**
  - Conduct an assessment of the local food system, including existing policies and programs that increase access to healthful food and nutrition education.
  - ACCOMPLISHED
  
- **Action 2: Policy and Code Adjustment**
  - Adopt zoning and development regulations that allow farmers' markets, community gardens, and urban agriculture.
  - PARTIALLY ACCOMPLISHED
  
- **Action 3: Policy and Code Adjustment**
  - Adopt zoning and development regulations that limit or prohibit the sale of unhealthful foods.
  - ACTION NEEDED

➤ **Action 6: Partnerships and Collaboration**

- Establish a local or regional food policy council that includes health professionals, community organizations, schools, farmers, and/or related businesses. A food policy council provides important input and feedback to local government and other public agencies regarding policies, programs, and other issues related to food access in the community and the economic aspects of the food industry. The food policy council can also lead or serve as a strong advocate or participant in the assessment of the local food system. Recommended participants on the food policy council include:
  - residents, including low-income and food insecure residents;
  - public health professionals;
  - nonprofit and community-based organizations;
  - school representatives;
  - local farmers, farm-to-consumer sales persons, and representatives from farmers markets;
  - business professionals involved in the production, processing, distribution, consumption, and recycling of food; and
  - business professionals involved in supporting the food industry, such as financial institutions, R&D firms or universities, and food transport companies.
- ACTION NEEDED (see overarching recommendation below)

➤ **Action 7: Education and Outreach**

- Develop public outreach materials, classes, or workshops for residents to learn about food, nutrition, and gardening OR develop public outreach materials to promote food assistance programs.
- SOME ACTION NEEDED

➤ **Action 9: Practice Improvements**

- Purchase and sell healthful food at facilities owned, leased, and operated by the local government.
- ACTION NEEDED

➤ **Action 11: Enforcement and Incentives**

- Provide incentives for healthful retail food outlets to locate in underserved areas or mobile vendors that only sell fresh food.
- ACTION NEEDED

(3) **Overarching recommendation:**

- Develop a Portland Food Policy Council that coexists with the Mayor's Initiative.