



# Advancing Food Insecurity Initiatives Through Community Partnerships in the Southern Adirondacks

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# Adirondack Food Systems Network



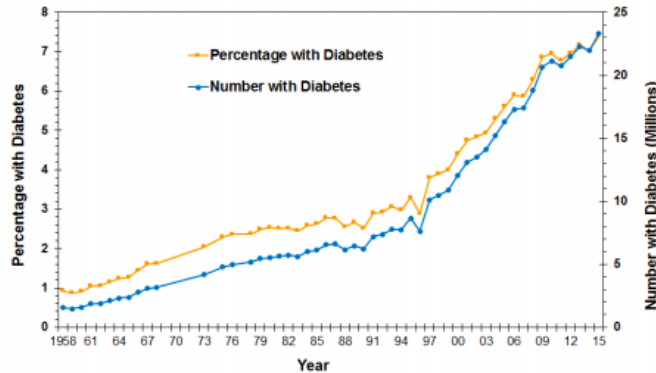
## Why are Food Systems important?

### Globally

- 28% of greenhouse gas emissions come from the food system
- These pollutants directly or indirectly affect health and increase the risk for a range of illnesses and premature deaths.
- Ambient air pollution from particulate matter and ozone causes approximately 4.5 million deaths worldwide annually.
- Sub-optimal diets are responsible for 20% of premature mortality

# Why are Food Systems important?

Number and Percentage of U.S. Population with Diagnosed Diabetes, 1958-2015



CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation, United States Diabetes Surveillance System  
available at <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/data>

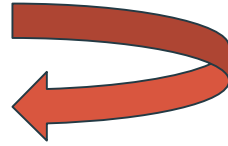
## Obesity

- In 1962 10% of the US population was obese
- 2000-2018 obesity increased from 30.5% to 42.4%

# LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM



# Local to Global (and back again)



# Covid-19 projects demonstrated the benefits of local food systems

Shorter Supply Chains  
Community Resilience  
Ecological Integrity  
Rural Economic Development



# Adirondack Food System Network

The Adirondack Food System Network is a collaboration of multiple organizations working together, and as equal partners, to better understand system-wide issues, identify gaps and realistic solutions to help strengthen and promote a more resilient regional food system.

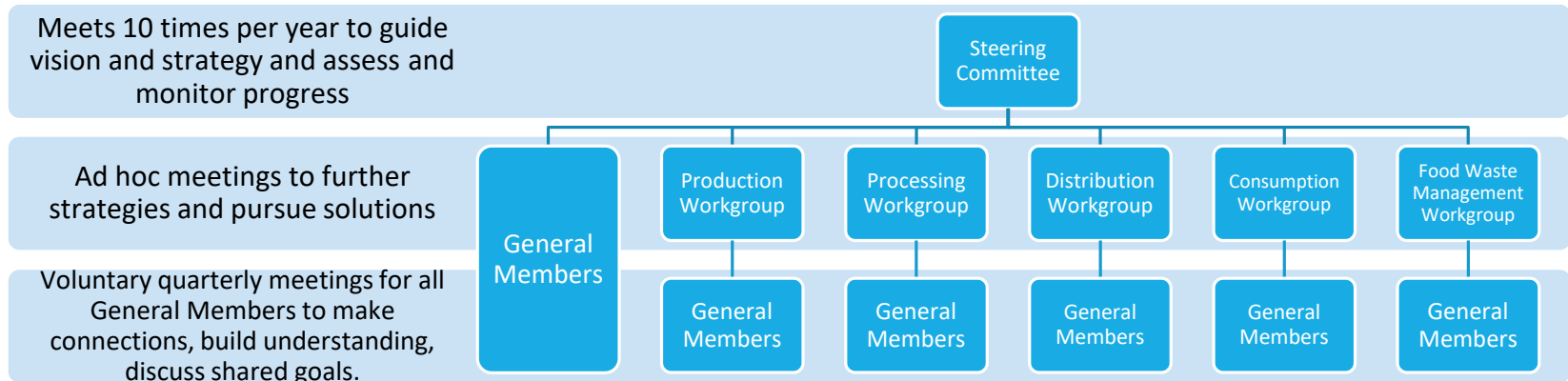
# Adirondack Food System Network

*Vision:* to ensure our regional food system is resilient, just, environmentally responsible, and supports improved human health.

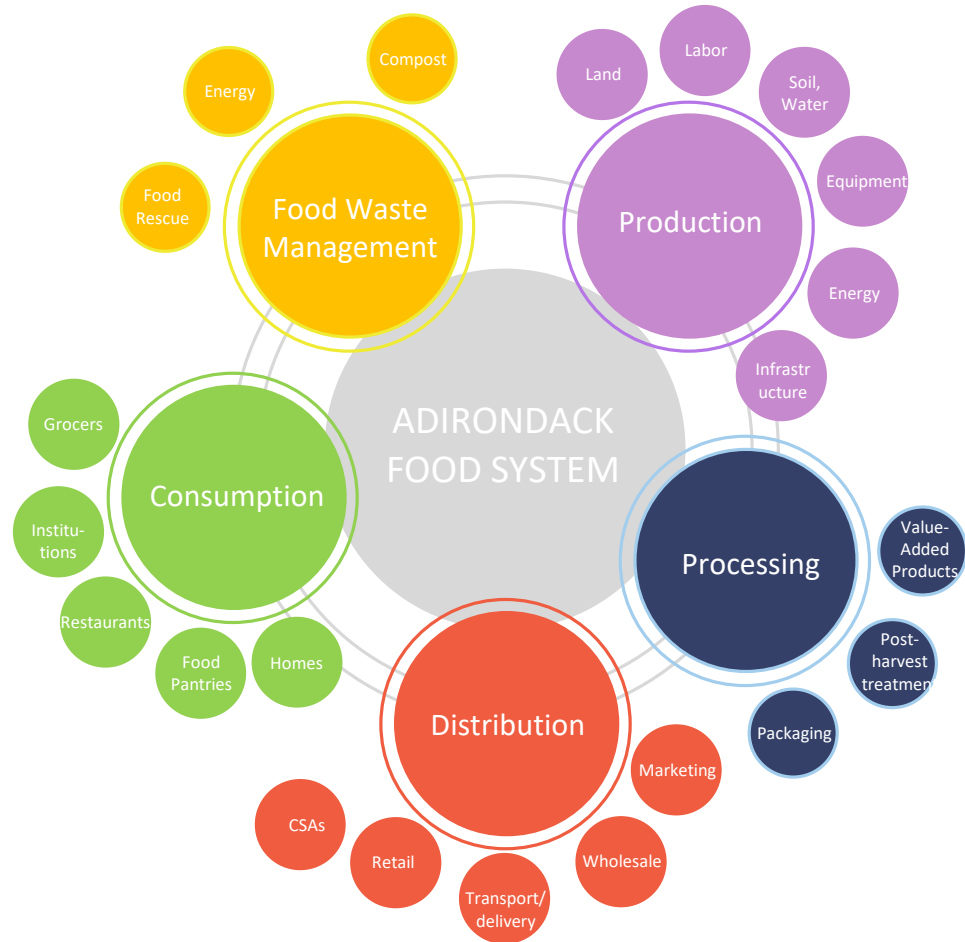
*Mission Statement:* to advance innovative solutions through lasting collaborations that strengthen and improve our regional food system for individuals, the environment and the economy.



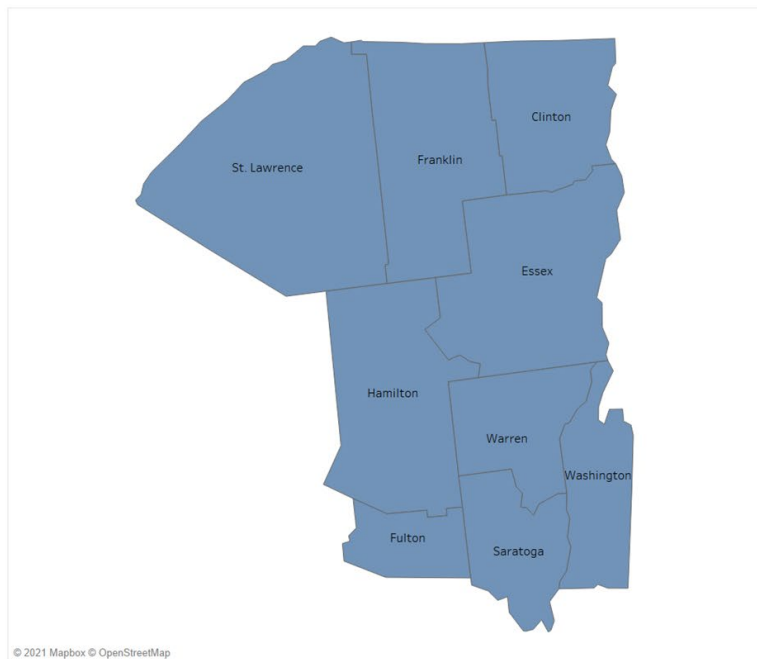
# Network Structure



# Work Groups



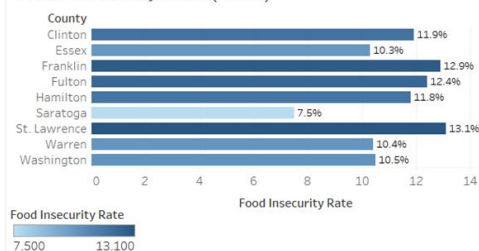
# Adirondack Food System Network



Net Farm Income - cash (\$ per operation, 2017)

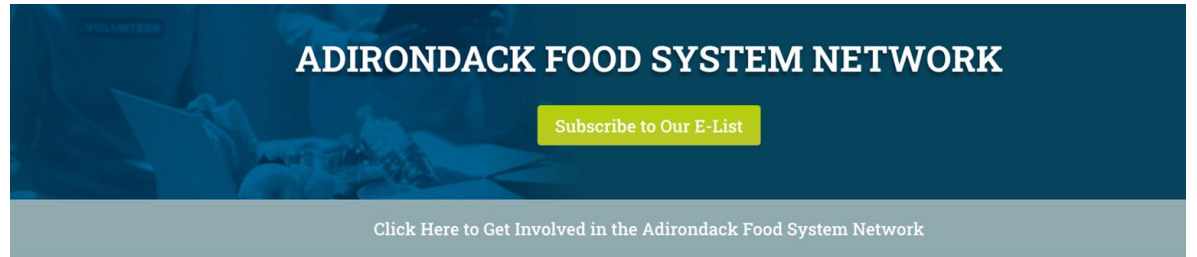


Food Insecurity Rate (2018)



Source:  
<https://www.nass.usda.gov>  
<https://feedingamerica.org>

# Story Map



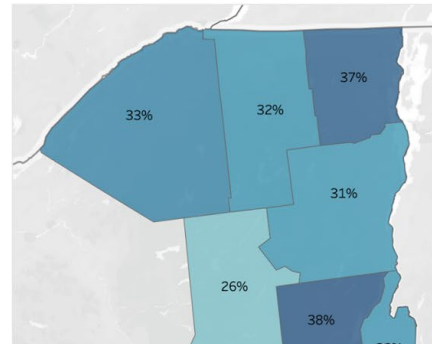
## Food Insecurity

One in four food-insecure children lives in a home that is likely ineligible for Federal Nutrition programs, underscoring the critical role of both the public and private sector in addressing child food insecurity.

### Projected Food Insecurity Rate (Overall)\*

Food insecurity refers to USDA's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

## Food Insecurity



### Measures Set

- ☐ 2020 Projected Food Insecurity Rate (Overall)
- ☐ Annual Food Budget Shortfall
- ☐ Average Meal Cost
- ☐ Food Insecure Children
- ☐ Food Insecure, income-eligible for nutrition p
- ☒ Food insecure, likely ineligible for federal nut
- ☐ Food Insecurity Rate (Children)
- ☐ Food Insecurity Rate (Overall)
- ☐ Population of Children

### Color Legend





Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Essex County

CRAIGARDAN

# Food Insecurity and Health

USDA definition as “lack of consistent access to access to enough food for an active, healthy life.”

Nutrition Deficiency:  
Federal Assistance  
Programs (SNAP, WIC)

Individuals often forced to choose between food and:

Medicine and medical appointments  
Transportation  
Rent, utilities, and household needs

Many chronic illnesses are linked to poor nutrition and poor nutrition can exacerbate conditions

## A Conceptual Framework: Cycle of Food Insecurity & Chronic Disease

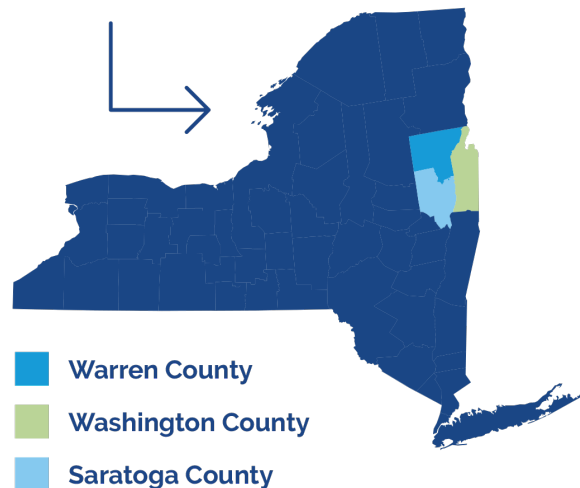


# Our Region

Approx. 360,000 individuals between the 3 counties

14-15% of Warren and Washington counties are at or below the federal poverty line.

## COMMUNITIES WE SERVE





# Regional Challenges

- Reliable transportation
- Lack of options
- Aging population
- Geographic distribution
- Economic opportunities
- 14-16% poverty level

- 1 in 3 adults as well as children are struggling with diabetes
- 1 in 3 adults struggle with hypertension
- COPD, heart disease, and asthma are prevalent
- 30% struggle with tobacco

- 25% report of the population reports eating the minimum number of servings for fruits and vegetables
- 20% report eating less than 1 serving of F&V on a daily basis
- Chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, COPD, hypertension, asthma, and others are exacerbated by poor nutrition

# Our Work

- Emergency Food Assistance and Food Recovery
- Greenwich and Cossayuna Food Pantries
- Resource Navigation
- Culinary and Health Education
- Fresh Food Farmacy and Produce Prescription
- Farm to Libraries program and Fresh Food Collective



# Driving Operational Frameworks

Food As Medicine

Social Determinants of Health

Food Builds Community

## **Feeding America Assessment Findings (2021):**

Partnerships between pantries, CBOs, and health providers can help to address food insecurity.

Food distribution at clinical settings improves food access but gaps exist in referrals to CBOs.

Projects should be feasible, collaborative, and meet local partnership needs.

# Engaging Partners



- Flipping the model of “food” assistance
  - More than just food
- Wrap-around resource navigation
  - Expanding options and connecting households to resources
  - Food pantries, CBOs, health connections
- Community-driven
- Dignity and community

# Last Thoughts

Food insecurity and health intersect significantly.

Food insecurity programs must go beyond nutrition.

Partnerships across sectors take time and deliver more results.



# Resources

Adirondack Food System Network: <https://ahihealth.org/adirondack-food-system-network/>

AdkAction: <https://www.adkaction.org/>

Comfort Food Community: <https://www.comfortfoodcommunity.org/>

# Contact

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