

Local Government's Role in the Food System

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Opportunities for local governments to address food systems

- Policies supporting food access and production;
- Support of food-related projects or programs;
- Inclusion of food-related topics in official plans;
- Departments responsible for food issues;
- Coordination or collaboration with other stakeholders or communities on food system activities; and
- Awareness and use of resources available to local governments for funding food system development.

Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) 2013

Examples of Policy, Program and Planning

- **Community Health & Food Security**
 - Healthy food at corner stores
 - EBT access at farmers markets
 - Grocery store siting
 - Community development planning
- **Production & Infrastructure**
 - Land Access for community and market gardens
 - Food Hubs and processing
 - Backyard and municipal composting
- **Economic Development**
 - Incubator kitchens
 - Local purchasing requirements for government
 - Local food included in economic development plans
- **Planning & Related Activities**
 - Food Assessments
 - Food included in comprehensive and other planning activities
 - Sharing of available grant opportunities and resources
 - Participation in food councils or other food related groups



Imagine Madison
People Powered Planning

Food Policy Councils

Food Policy Councils bring together diverse stakeholders to study a local food system and offer recommendations for policy change.



Leverage points for policy and systems change

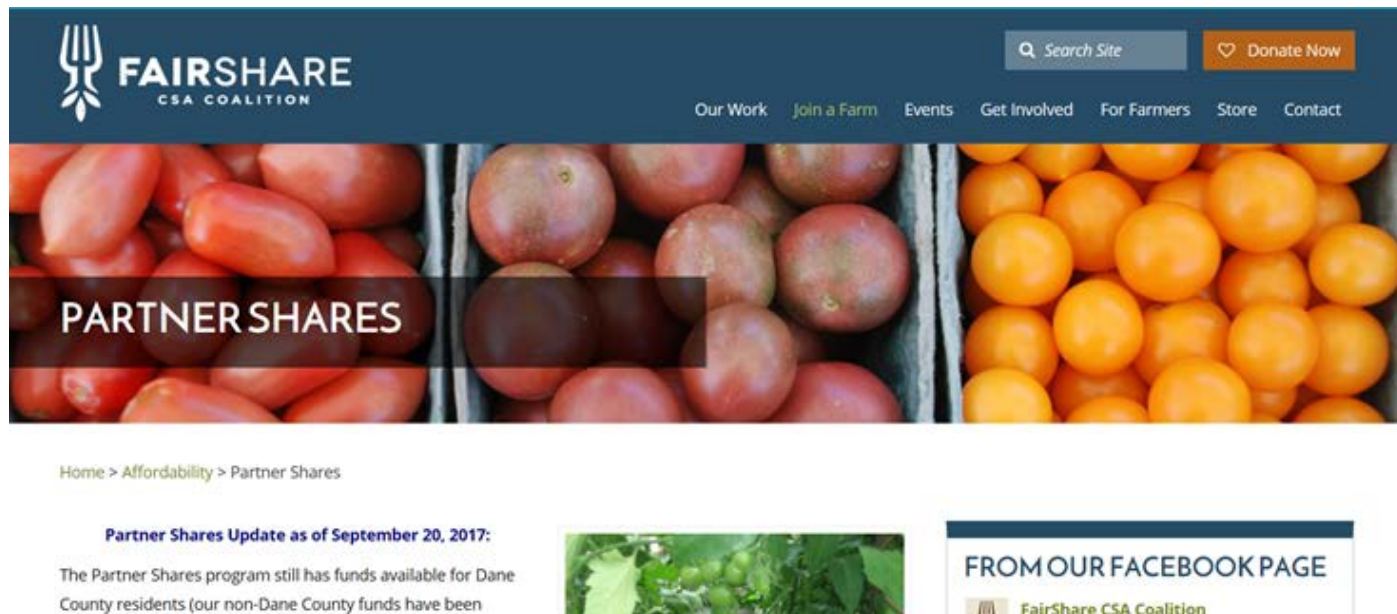
- Build on the experience and passions of those committed to change



20% of milk Americans buy is thrown out before it is consumed.

Leverage points for policy and systems change

- Listen to what is important to policy makers and educate on what they can do to make a difference



The screenshot shows the FairShare CSA Coalition website. The header features the logo on the left, a search bar with the text "Search Site", and a "Donate Now" button on the right. A navigation menu includes links for "Our Work", "Join a Farm", "Events", "Get Involved", "For Farmers", "Store", and "Contact". The main content area is a large image of three crates of fresh produce: tomatoes, grape tomatoes, and cherry tomatoes. A dark overlay with the text "PARTNER SHARES" is positioned over the left side of the produce. Below the image, a breadcrumb trail reads "Home > Affordability > Partner Shares". A text block titled "Partner Shares Update as of September 20, 2017:" states that funds are still available for Dane County residents. To the right, there is a section titled "FROM OUR FACEBOOK PAGE" with a small image of green tomatoes and the text "FairShare CSA Coalition".

Leverage points for policy and systems change

- Explore opportunities to adapt or build on new and existing policies or programs



Dane County Food Council

www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil
5201 Fen Oak Dr. Rm 138
Madison, WI 53718



2018 Funding Request

Dane County Food Council's Innovation, Access and Equity Grants

In Dane County, one out of every three Latino and African American households experiences food insecurity. And nearly one in five of all Dane County children are food insecure. When a household experiences food insecurity, people are unsure of where their next meal is coming from or worry about running out of food without having money to buy more. As a result, they often cut back on the size of meals or skip meals leading to hunger and other health issues.

Leverage points for policy and systems change

- Be ready when funding opportunities become available



Leverage points for policy and systems change

- Be willing to give things a try



New Dane County Pilot Program to Incentivize Organic Certification

In an effort to promote economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and the public health and safety of Dane County residents, Dane County is piloting an Organic Conversion Incentive Program. The program is designed to provide an incentive for farmers to convert to certified organic practices. Dane County will grant \$250 each year for up to three years to help offset costs associated with the three year conversion period and organic certification costs.

The program will grant residents up to \$250 per year for farms located within Dane County that start and complete the conversion to certified organic farming practices



Leverage points for policy and systems change

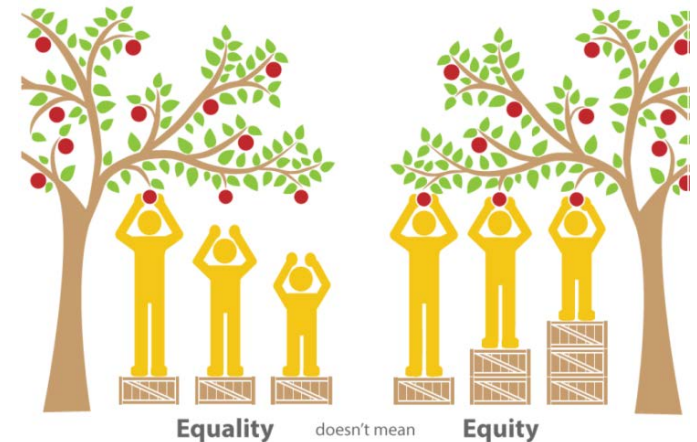
- Build relationships with organizations and individuals who are doing the work



Healthy Food for All

Local government and food councils have a role in promoting equity through food policy

- Insure council members represent the community
- Building meaningful partnerships with non-government organizations and community groups
- Utilize a Food System Racial Equity Tool



The Economic Benefits of an Equitable Food System

- Job Creation
- Business development
- Higher earnings and increased spending
- Increased worker productivity and stronger businesses
- Community economic development
- Reduced health care and public assistance

» Source: An Equitable Food System: Good for Families, Communities, and the Economy, PolicyLink

Food System Racial Equity Assessment Tool: A Facilitation Guide

Lexa Dundore

KEY DEFINITIONS

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Policies, practices, and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally.¹

RACIAL EQUITY

A reality in which a person is no more or less likely to experience society's benefits or burdens just because of the color of their skin.² This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce or fail to eliminate differential outcomes by race.³

STRUCTURAL RACISM

Racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination, supported intentionally or unintentionally by institutional power and authority, used to the advantage of one race and the disadvantage of other races.⁴

WHITE PRIVILEGE

"An invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks."⁵

WHITE SUPREMACY

"An historically based, institutionally-perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege."⁶

The food system is a network in which conscious and unconscious racism creates different outcomes across groups. Racial inequities in the food system create unfair differences in access to fresh and culturally appropriate foods, increase the disproportionate prevalence of diet-related diseases, create barriers to owning land and starting food or farm businesses, and limit the voice and power of those most impacted in policy-making processes.⁷ A racial equity assessment tool specific to the food system is a critical addition to the range of tools available to advance racial equity.

Racism at individual, institutional, and structural levels produces inequalities across life chances for people of color in the United States.⁸ Racism on an individual level, including bias, discrimination, or prejudice based on race, as well as internalization of racism, has profound impacts on both interpersonal relationships and the formation of policies that perpetuate racism on a wider scale.

Structural racism and **white supremacy** are two sides of the same process that concentrate power among white citizens and institutions to the detriment of communities of color. The difference between **white privilege** and **white supremacy** can be understood as a matter of scale (individual to systemic). Given the embedded nature of **institutional racism**, dramatic inequities can result from policies and programs even without the intention to create different outcomes.

The national equity organization PolicyLink estimates the majority of the United States' population will be people of color by 2042.⁹ However, transfer of power, resources, and opportunities will not automatically shift to reflect these demographic changes. Extension educators, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and local governments can all play a role in prioritizing **racial equity** and creating outcomes that are fair for all. Policy making, planning, and programming related to the food system are made stronger and more effective by emphasizing racial equity as a core concern from the beginning.¹⁰ This dedication is a necessary step toward remediating past injustices and building a more equitable future.

Leaders such as Race Forward¹¹ and the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity (LARGE)¹² have paved the way by creating sample racial equity assessment tools for organizations and local governments. The act of using a racial equity assessment tool serves as an equity primer: a reminder to consciously consider race, class, and gender impacts during an important choice point, thereby helping to counteract unconscious bias.¹³

By using racial equity assessment tools in planning, groups can look carefully at how their decision-making processes can influence outcomes. Racial equity assessments encourage critical thinking and context setting before resources are spent on policies or programming that do not advance racial equity in the food system. We are less likely to maintain an inequitable status quo when we take time to consider racial equity at every

Thank you!

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