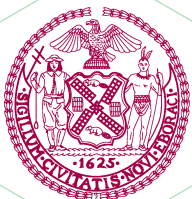




FoodWorks

A Vision to Improve NYC's Food System

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND NEW IDEAS FALL 2013



The New York City Council
Christine C. Quinn, Speaker



This project would have been impossible without the help of countless New York City food advocates and community groups that strive to create a healthier food system every day.



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In particular, we would like to thank the following people for their invaluable guidance and dedication to this project:

Kubi Ackerman, Liz Accles, Daniel Avery, Joel Berg, Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean Kathryn Boor, Amatullah Booth, Brendan Cheney, Katie Codey, Nevin Cohen, Brandon Colson, Michaela Daniel, Caitlin Dourmashkin, Nancy Easton, Raymond Figueroa, Lyle Frank, Hunter Goldman, Kathy Goldman, Christina Grace, Jarret Hova, Michael Hurwitz, Karen Karp, Robert Lewis, Shannon Manigault, Kate MacKenzie, Christine McLaughlin, Rami Metal, Agnes Molnar, Margaret Nelson, Laura Popa, Steven Presser, David Pristin, Triada Stampas, Bill Telepan, Marcel Van Ooyen



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FALL 2013

In the fall of 2010, New York City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn released *FoodWorks: A Vision to Improve NYC's Food System*. This comprehensive, ground-to-garbage report looks at the various phases of the city's food system – agricultural production, processing, distribution, consumption, and post-consumption – and examines its impact on New York City and its residents. FoodWorks proposes 59 strategic actions to improve health, community and economic development, and environmental sustainability.

Over the past three years, we have made important improvements to our food system. Working alongside city agencies, advocates, and communities across the five boroughs, the City Council has taken legislative, policy and programmatic actions to ensure that we have a stronger food system that benefits all New Yorkers. Together, we have made significant progress on our proposals, and, just as importantly, there is a shared and growing

understanding that food plays a vital role in securing better health, environmental and economic benefits for our city.

But there is still more to be done. The City Council has used its legislative, oversight, budgetary and advocacy powers to pursue this bold food agenda. Yet some Foodworks proposals require others – the current Administration, state and federal government, and the private sector – to take action. The City Council has collaborated with a range of stakeholders to accomplish many of the goals laid out in FoodWorks, and the next Administration must continue and expand on this work. This status report summarizes the incredible strides that the City Council and its partners have taken since the release of FoodWorks, and recommends new strategies to further advance a comprehensive and progressive food agenda that meets the needs of all New Yorkers in the years to come.



Agricultural Production

Approximately 8.3 million New Yorkers live across the five boroughs,¹ 52 million tourists flock here on an annual basis,² and more than half a million people commute into the City every day.³ And all of them need to eat. New York City must support farmers – the backbone of our food system – who are responsible for growing and providing quality, healthy food. New York State and the surrounding regions have a rich agricultural heritage; by harnessing New York City's food purchasing power and increasing market opportunities for farmers, we can better support local producers and the regional economy. Additionally, New Yorkers are increasingly exploring innovative ways to grow food right here in the City – whether on a rooftop or in their neighborhood community garden – and the City is promoting these eco-friendly and creative endeavors. 'New York City' may not be synonymous with farming, but over the past three years, the City has advanced policies and programs that have created a more supportive environment for those looking to grow and sell food.

FoodWorks Goals and Strategies

- ◆ ***Preserve and increase regional food production by***
 - ◆ strengthening regional food supply channels and
 - ◆ leveraging the City's economic power to support regional producers.
- ◆ ***Increase urban food production by***
 - ◆ better using existing space for urban food production and
 - ◆ restoring food and horticultural knowledge.





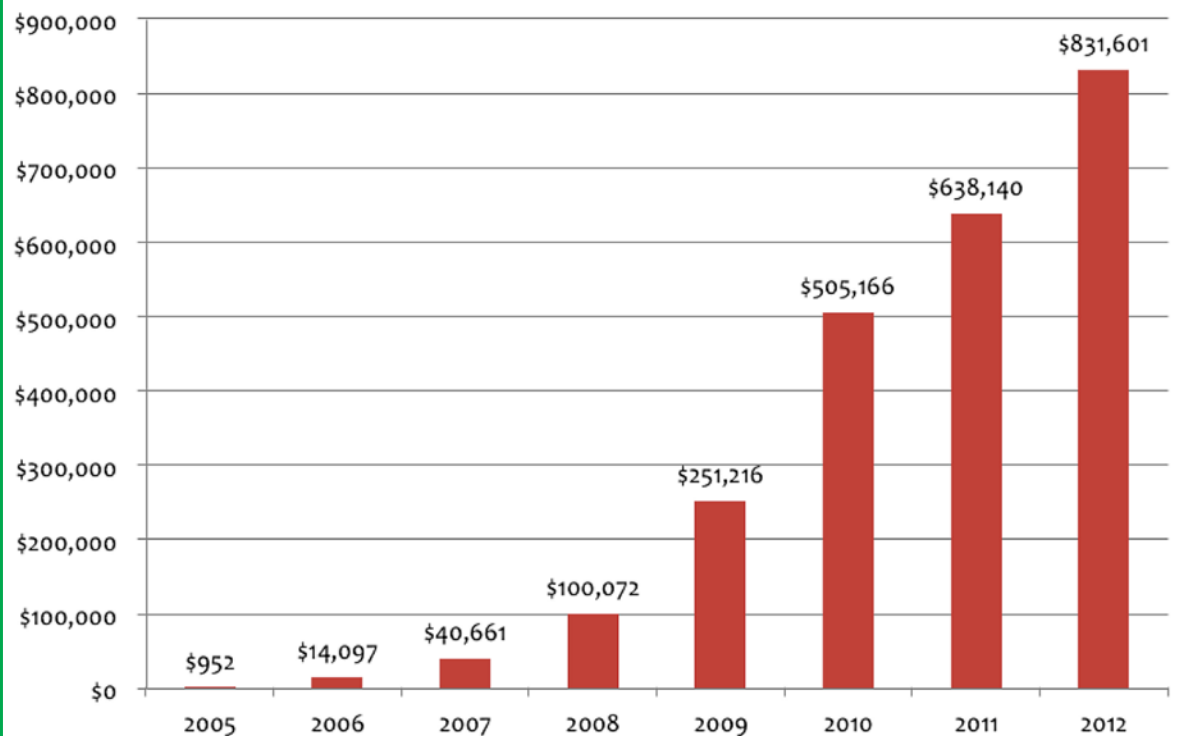
◆ Given that the average age of principal farm operators in New York State is 56.2 years, it is vital to **cultivate a new generation of farmers.**⁴ Luckily, New York City is filled with residents seeking to learn agricultural skills and start their own farming endeavors. The City Council supports GrowNYC's New Farmer Development Program, which has trained 165 immigrant farmers in farm business planning. The program has also helped start 23 new farm businesses – two within City limits – which has led to the conservation of 400 acres of land for regional food production.⁵ This program has produced a new crop of farmers who are community minded, choosing to sell their healthy produce in low-income communities in need of fresh food options. Additionally, Just Food's Farm School has been extremely successful since launching in 2011, running 21 different courses for 30 certificate students and over 150 non-certificate students every year.⁶

◆ **Farmers markets have expanded in all corners** of New York City, providing residents with more opportunities to access fresh and healthy food. 136 markets are operating this season – up from 120 markets in 2010.⁷ The City Council has played an active role in this expansion by funding Harvest Home, which runs 17 farmers markets as well as cooking and nutrition programming in low-income communities.

◆ Just as importantly, **shoppers are increasingly able to use their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) benefits at farmers markets:** 94% of markets now have the equipment necessary to accept Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, which serves as a SNAP debit card. The City Council's \$1.9 million investment in GrowNYC's Greenmarket EBT program has been one of the Speaker's signature food initiatives, producing impressive results. In 2006, when the

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Annual EBT Sales at Greenmarkets



Source: http://council.nyc.gov/html/action/acpdfs/ebt_report_051313.pdf

Electronic Benefit Transfer redemption at farmers markets is on the rise in New York City.

Source: <http://localrootsnyc.org/blog/share-archive/fall-2012>



New Yorkers can join a number of CSAs all across the city.

City Council first started funding the program, only 6 Greenmarkets accepted EBT; today, GrowNYC operates the program in 51 of its 54 Greenmarkets and all 11 of its Youth Markets. As a result, EBT sales at Greenmarkets have skyrocketed, from under \$1,000 in benefits redeemed in 2005 to over \$800,000 redeemed in 2012.⁸ This growth has been spurred by the City's Health Bucks incentive program. Funded by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), the program provides EBT users with a \$2 Health Bucks fruit and vegetable coupon for every \$5 in SNAP benefits spent at a market. The benefits of this EBT program are twofold: not only are low-income New Yorkers able to purchase fresher produce, but local farmers have access to a substantial revenue stream. GrowNYC has estimated that the City Council's investment in their EBT program has generated \$4.25 million in regional economic activity over the years.⁹

- ◆ **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives have been growing rapidly** throughout the City, with the City Council leading by example and running its own CSA for the workplace. Just Food, which organizes

CSAs throughout the City, runs approximately 110 CSAs in the City, and participants enjoy their weekly share while providing the farmer a guaranteed source of income paid at the beginning of the season.¹⁰ CSAs are an increasingly common means of expanding fresh food access, as drop-offs can be located in communities without regular food retail options. CSA models can be adapted to meet the needs of low-income participants, who may be interested in the program yet not be able to commit for a full season on an up-front basis. The City Council supports New York City Coalition Against Hunger (NYCCHAH)'s program that is specifically designed to increase healthy options for SNAP recipients, as well as GrowNYC's Food Box program, a flexible model that distributes boxes of seasonal, affordable produce on a weekly basis.

- ◆ While farmers markets and CSAs provide farmers with more opportunities to sell their product directly to consumers, the City's food system would greatly benefit from a **permanent wholesale farmers market** that could more adequately meet large-scale demand for locally grown food. A wholesale farmers market would create a single access point for buyers seeking



a variety of regional items in large quantity and at a lower price point. GrowNYC has operated a makeshift wholesale farmers market adjacent to the Hunts Point Produce Market for years. Farmers, buyers, the City, the State, and other stakeholders have a long-term vision of creating a large-scale, permanent, high quality market at this location. This is connected to the larger redevelopment plans for the Hunts Point Produce Market, which is still in negotiation. In the interim, the makeshift market set up at the adjacent Oak Point property this summer, and we look forward to watching the market flourish in this new location.

- ◆ As part of FoodWorks, the City Council passed Local Law (LL) 50 of 2011, which required the City to develop **new food procurement guidelines** for agencies purchasing food for senior centers, child care facilities, and beyond. The legislation sought to leverage the City's enormous purchasing power by promoting food procurement from regional farmers. Released in the summer of 2012, the new guidelines encourage city agencies to identify ingredients that could be purchased locally, and provide support around sourcing these items from regional producers. City agencies were also given the ability to grant a price preference for New York State products, and can now choose a local product if it is no more than 10 percent above the cost of the lowest bidder providing non-local options. These guidelines and price preference policies can significantly alter city purchasing habits, contributing to regional economic growth. We are already seeing success, as an Orange County farmer is delivering produce to the Department of Corrections this year. The original legislation asked city agencies and vendors to track their local purchasing when possible, and the Mayor's Office of Contract Services will release the first round of this data in the fall of 2013.

↻ **Updated Initiative: Set local food procurement goals**

Working with a team of procurement and food systems experts, the next Administration should use this baseline procurement data to develop realistic yet progressive citywide goals around food purchasing. Recognizing that agencies purchase different types and quantities of food – and therefore have varying levels of

purchasing power – the team should develop feasible agency-specific goals while working towards a citywide goal. In 2012, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) bought an estimated \$25 million worth of regional products, equaling at least 14 percent of the City's total food budget;¹¹ as DOE continues to purchase more local food and other agencies follow suit, we will put our buying power to work for our local growers and economy.



New Initiative: Strengthen Farm to Campus initiatives in New York City

In addition to city agencies, other New York City institutions should increase the amount of local food they procure. Colleges and universities – including some here in the City – are choosing to purchase local food while supporting nearby economies;¹² half of Columbia University's food expenditures are spent on local or otherwise sustainable food.¹³ Our own City University of New York (CUNY), comprised of 23 colleges and institutions, should think strategically about its procurement system.¹⁴ Although CUNY has a decentralized food system that uses the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to contract with vendors at individual campuses, it could set system-wide policies to increase the amount of food purchased from New York State and regional growers. CUNY could start by evaluating its current food vendors through a program like Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS),¹⁵ which many universities have used to understand their food sustainability performance.¹⁵ CUNY could include local food criteria in its RFPs to prioritize vendors who provide local or otherwise environmentally preferable food as contracts come up for renewal. Throughout this process, CUNY could work with food system consultants who have helped other large institutions streamline food purchasing and procure local food – all without increasing the University's overall food budget. New York City is home to 110 higher education institutions that are responsible for educating nearly 500,000 students.¹⁶ These institutions should work together, sharing best practices on successful Farm to Campus initiatives or potentially entering into collaborative purchasing agreements to augment their buying power, with the goal of increasing the amount of local and sustainable produce in our colleges and universities.

¹ STARS is run by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.



- ◆ For the past two years, **the City Council has organized the Farm to City Expo** in conjunction with the State and its Pride of New York Market Pavilion. Held at the International Restaurant and Foodservice Show at the Javits Center, the event draws approximately 200 farmers and food buyers, from food manufacturers to restaurateurs to supermarkets. The panels and networking sessions are designed to foster rural-urban linkages through information exchanges that help bring locally-grown products into city markets.
- ◆ New York City has made many efforts to use its legislative and purchasing power to support farmers, despite the fact that state and federal authorities are largely responsible for our agriculture, nutrition and conservation policy. The **City Council has lent its voice to the recent debate over the federal Farm Bill re-authorization**, which sets the parameters of agriculture and nutrition spending every five years. The City Council lobbied Congressional leadership and the New York State Congressional delegation to pass a Farm Bill that addresses hunger, improves access to healthy food, fuels economic growth, and protects the environment. The City Council urged lawmakers to support regional farmers by continuing a number of programs like the Farmers Market Promotion Program and the Value-Added Producer Grants, which have supported healthy and sustainable food production throughout the state. The House and Senate have been unable to agree on legislation yet, so the City Council will remain engaged in the legislative process and continue to call for the passage of a fair and responsible Farm Bill.
- ◆ To preserve the State's agricultural heritage and prevent environmental degradation, FoodWorks advocated for the City and State to aggressively **conserve farmland at risk of being sold or redeveloped**. The State's Farmland Protection program, designed to prevent farmers from selling their land for development, had experienced significant delays in executing contracts. This backlog has been reduced from 113 pending contracts in 2010 to 25 pending contracts in 2013, and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

estimates that the program preserved 29 farms – over 7,800 acres – between Fiscal Years 2011 and 2013.¹⁷ Over the years, the City has used its own funds to support the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC), which assists farms located in the New York City watershed. The stability and sustainability practices of the 400 farms in the watershed are critical to preserving the quality of the City's water supply. Since Fiscal Year 2011, the City has provided approximately \$41.4 million to the WAC, and over time there has been an annual increase in funding dedicated to helping farmers maintain environmentally friendly farms while ensuring their long-term financial viability.¹⁸

- ◆ **Community gardens are a treasured asset** in neighborhoods throughout the City. They are havens of open space that provide residents with a way to engage with nature, grow plants (edible or otherwise), and learn about health, science and nutrition. In 2010 the City Council worked with gardeners to create the City's rules governing community gardens, which, among other things, made it very difficult for non-open space development to occur on a pre-existing garden. While various city and state land use actions would have to happen for development to be approved on a garden site under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the City Council explored a variety of models that would allow for the long-term preservation of gardens.

➡ **Updated Initiative: Develop mechanisms to achieve permanence**

The next Administration must work with the gardening community to determine the most appropriate mechanism to achieve permanence, so that neighborhoods benefit from the gardens for generations to come. The new Administration could start by revisiting a promising proposal already developed by the City Council: the creation of a new land trust entity. The City would enter into a long-term preservation agreement guaranteeing that the land be preserved in perpetuity, as long as it is used for open space.



◆ In addition to preserving the City's pre-existing gardens, FoodWorks sought to increase the **amount of land available for gardening**. LL 48 of 2011 required the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to create an online, public database of vacant city-owned property that includes an assessment of the land's suitability for urban agriculture projects. It also provides Greenthumb contact information for those interested in gardening on the plot. In the process of developing an inventory of usable land, more than 100 properties have been identified as potentially suitable for urban agriculture.ⁱⁱ The Administration's complementary Gardens for Healthy Communities initiative made 20 plots of land and program support available for community groups, managed by the City's Greenthumb program.¹⁹

➡ **Updated Initiative: Create access to more land for gardening and farming**
In addition to assessing and regularly updating this inventory, the City should expand this database to include rooftops of city-owned properties, as originally suggested in FoodWorks. But the City's inventory is only the tip of the iceberg; the land advocacy group 596 Acres has estimated that 60 percent of all

vacant property in the City is privately owned.²⁰ In order to harness the full potential of this land, the City could facilitate matchmaking between residents hoping to garden in their neighborhood, and landowners interested in offering their land on a short- or long-term basis. The City could work with interested stakeholders to address some of the insurance and liability issues that may prevent landowners from letting gardeners use their land. Finally, the State recently introduced a bill that would grant a property tax exemption to landowners who offer their land for pop-up parks, gardening or farming uses.²¹ This type of incentive is an important tool that can increase gardeners' access to privately-held, underutilized land.



New Initiative: Develop NYC FarmerWorks, an urban agriculture workforce development program

Community gardens were often born out of New Yorkers' efforts to improve neighborhoods in decline; residents turned vacant and often blighted plots of land into vibrant, beautiful community spaces. Many feel that using the food system to address chronic unemployment in their communities is the next frontier of this work. The City should harness community gardeners' interest in connecting growing



Source: <http://www.brooklyngrangefarm.com/aboutthegrange/>

Brooklyn Grange, the world's largest rooftop garden.

ⁱⁱ Database available here: <https://nycplatform.socrata.com/City-Government/Local-Law-48-Of-2011-Report/2b6x-2bw6?>





practices to job creation by creating an urban agriculture jobs program modeled on 'Farmers for Chicago.'²² Working with private partners, the City could design NYC FarmerWorks, a workforce development program that provides stipends for a range of underemployed New Yorkers, from those seeking a career path in urban agriculture to those seeking short-term opportunities that reintegrate them into the work environment. The program would develop a viable pipeline for those participants looking for permanent placements in the agriculture and food sector, while those interested in other industries would be connected to third party workforce providers.



New Initiative: Develop NYC-EATS, a city-grown produce line

The City should work with urban farmers throughout New York City to develop NYC-EATS, an innovative city-grown produce line sold to restaurants, food retailers, and beyond. This produce line would help meet the burgeoning demand for local food while providing local communities with the opportunity to participate in the food economy. NYC-EATS could be created in conjunction with NYC FarmerWorks; participants could help process, market and distribute locally grown produce and profits from sales could be used to make the program self-sustaining. Not only would a program like this create employment opportunities for New Yorkers, but it would also call attention to the contributions that community gardens and urban farms make to our city.

- ◆ As the City cultivates its gardens and farmers, **those producing at least \$1000 worth of food a year must be counted in the USDA's Census of Agriculture**, so that the federal government recognizes the potential of urban agriculture and makes more resources available for our pioneering urban growers.²³ As described in FoodWorks, twenty New York City farms were counted in the 2007 Census, but we know more farms and gardens are eligible for inclusion.²⁴ Leading up to the 2012 Census, the City Council conducted outreach to alert our community gardeners and farmers of the need to register for the census. The USDA is still analyzing data for this latest Census and we hope New York's farming community will receive more recognition on the federal and state levels.

- ◆ Increasingly, New Yorkers are making better use of their roofs – now potential sites for **greenhouses, farms, or green infrastructure projects**. Not only are these projects viable for food production, but they are also an important tool in increasing the City's resiliency to the growing threats of climate change. Over the past several years, the City Council has pushed a number of policy changes that make it easier for rooftop growers to thrive in the City. LL 49 of 2011 and the 2012 Zone Green text amendments waived floor area and height limits for certain rooftop greenhouses, formerly limited by a zoning code that did not foresee rooftop farming. The City Council passed a 2011 resolution advocating for the inclusion of urban agriculture in the State's green roof tax abatement program, which incentivizes green roofs on private buildings; we are proud that the New York State Legislature recently authorized an extension of the tax credit program that is more inclusive of food production. Not only will the program provide additional funding for applicants, but, as recommended in FoodWorks, the City will streamline the building permit and abatement application process. The New York City Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) green infrastructure grant program – investing \$11 million between 2011 and 2013 to reduce the flooding and pollution associated with stormwater run-off – has funded the construction of three green roof projects that include a food production and education component. Lastly, DEP has continued its Parking Lot Stormwater Pilot, charging \$.05 per square foot to parking lots that discharge water into the wastewater system. The Water Board has not expanded this pilot to all building owners with impermeable services, as FoodWorks recommended in order to catalyze green roofs and rooftop farms, but fee exemptions for parking lots that install infrastructure like porous asphalt or swales incentivize storm water management.²⁵ While we have a long way to go before the roofs and lots of New York City are covered in green instead of black, we have made great strides over the past few years.

- ◆ The City Council has funded a variety of projects that **make garden education more accessible** throughout the City. From gardening programming at the New York Botanical Garden's new Edible Academy; to GrowNYC's Learn It Grow It Eat It, which provides farming and nutrition education to high school students in the Bronx and Harlem; to Edible Schoolyard's



school gardens and kitchen classrooms, the City Council is helping children and families re-connect with nature and food. The Administration's Grow to Learn program has worked with 375 schools seeking to start their own school gardens, providing students with the opportunity to get their hands dirty and learn where their food comes from.²⁶

- ◆ As urban agriculture becomes increasingly popular, New York City has the opportunity to **foster innovation that can make urban growing practices scalable and feasible.** Agricultural experts are considering how to feed a rapidly urbanizing world; New York City is well-situated to serve as a laboratory for testing new technologies. FoodWorks recommended working with growers and academic institutions to encourage and disseminate technologies – from hoop houses to hydroponic systems – that enable wide-scale urban growing.

➡ **Updated Initiative: Capitalize on new academic institutions to pursue urban agriculture technology**

To accomplish these goals, the City should capitalize on significant changes to New York

City's higher education landscape: Polytechnic University's engineering program has merged with New York University, and Cornell University is developing an engineering campus on Randall's Island. By combining engineering capacity with pre-existing university programs focused on food policy and agriculture, these research institutions could work with growers and investors to develop breakthrough technologies. The City currently facilitates the testing of new technologies with its Municipal Entrepreneurial Testing Systems (METS) program, which lets green companies beta test products in City facilities; the next round of applicants could include agriculture and food tech companies looking to test products on the rooftops of city buildings or on city parkland. As the country's largest city and home to a growing number of tech companies, New York City should be a leader in urban agricultural innovation, fostering the entrepreneurship that will help us feed growing urban populations.



Carver Community Garden, Harlem, New York.





Processing

From pickles to cold brew coffee to kimchee and beyond, New York City's artisanal food scene has exploded over the past few years. Food manufacturers have opened up shop throughout the five boroughs, sharing local flavors with New Yorkers and the rest of the country. Not only do these creative entrepreneurs satisfy the City's taste buds, but they are also a growing economic force that employs over 15,300 workers in New York City – up from 14,000 in 2010.²⁷ Recognized by city officials as a bright spot in the economy, the sector grew 11% between 2008 and 2012, compared to 7% growth for all businesses in New York City.²⁸ Over the past several years, the City Council and its partners have sought to support this growing manufacturing sector by reducing the barriers that make it difficult for food entrepreneurs to start, sustain and grow their business here in New York City.

FoodWorks Goals and Strategies

- ◆ ***Generate growth and employment in the food manufacturing sector by***
 - ◆ making affordable space available and
 - ◆ providing technical assistance to food manufacturers.
- ◆ ***Increase regional products processed in and for New York City by***
 - ◆ facilitating rural-urban linkages.
- ◆ ***Reduce the environmental impact associated with food processing in New York City by***
 - ◆ helping businesses reduce energy consumption.





- ◆ Since opening the doors to its kitchen incubator in late 2010, **Hot Bread Kitchen (HBK), with the assistance of the City Council, has supported the growth of food entrepreneurs at La Marqueta**, a reactivated public market in East Harlem. By providing affordable space and technical assistance to the 32 businesses in the HBK Incubates program, HBK's mission-driven kitchen incubator has proven incredibly successful at helping low-income and minority entrepreneurs grow their businesses. To date, four incubator tenants have graduated and are continuing to expand their businesses across the City. Furthermore, with a new HBK Almacen retail counter at the front of La Marqueta, incubator tenants now have additional opportunities to sell their products. HBK also operates a bakery at La Marqueta that employs 53 people – mostly immigrant women – while training the next generation of bakers through its Project Launch program.²⁹ The City also supports the Entrepreneur Space, an Astoria, Queens-based kitchen incubator and technical assistance program that has helped nearly 200 businesses grow. And, thanks to Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC), 3rd Ward will be opening a new food incubator in Brooklyn in 2013.
- ◆ While kitchen incubators allow food entrepreneurs to get their business off the ground, **manufacturers struggle to find affordable production space** once they have outgrown their shared start-up facility. Responding to this need, the City Council contributed \$2 million to subdivide another building at La Marqueta for food manufacturing tenants looking for 'step-up' space to expand their footprint. These spaces will be appropriately sized and priced to meet the needs of entrepreneurs scaling up their business. This space, currently under construction, will be home to three new tenants by fall 2013. Not only will this project support businesses that may otherwise struggle to grow in New York City, but it will continue to leverage food as a driver of economic development and revitalization in Harlem.
- ◆ In addition to production space, **food manufacturers need retail outlets to sell their food directly to the public.** Weekly markets like Brooklyn Flea and Smorgasburg have popped up in the past few years, offering food entrepreneurs an opportunity to showcase their



Hot Bread Kitchen at La Marqueta in Harlem.





product to the hungry and curious masses; while these options are incredibly popular, the City still lacks a large-scale permanent, indoor market. In March 2013, the City Council and EDC reached an agreement with the Howard Hughes Corporation, the developer of the South Street Seaport, to bring a permanent daily market back to the site of the Fulton Fish Market. Housed in the Tin Building, the market will provide locally and regionally sourced food for residents and tourists alike. Howard Hughes has agreed to create an interim food market by the fall of 2014 before construction on the new market is complete.³⁰ We welcome and embrace the development of a destination market here in New York City that furthers FoodWorks' vision of markets driving community revitalization.



New Initiative: Allow third party management of the City's public markets

In addition to developing new markets, it is critical that the City cultivate its pre-existing stock of public markets. When managed correctly, public markets are vital components of the food system, providing retail outlets for farmers and food businesses while increasing food access, revitalizing neighborhoods, and promoting community engagement. This is apparent in the success of Philadelphia's Reading Terminal, Seattle's Pike Place Market, and San Francisco's Ferry Building Market Place. Only four of New York City's original public markets – built under Mayor LaGuardia in the 1930s – still exist, and it is the City's responsibility to make sure they remain vibrant city assets. While EDC has invested substantially in managing these markets, the City can do more. In addition to providing additional expense funding to operate the markets, EDC should subcontract market management to one or more organizations whose sole mission is to develop the markets into thriving hubs of food, commerce, culture, and community. While one responsibility would entail managing building logistics and physical upkeep, market managers would also be responsible for creating anchor institutions that reflect the character of the community: managers would recruit and handle food vendors who appeal to a range of shoppers and residents, engage the local community in the promotion of this public space, and coordinate events and programming that attracts more consumers. These market entities should not be subject to standard

EDC asset management regulations that could limit the viability of the markets. Due to their unique public nature, any funds generated by a market should be reinvested into the continued improvement of market infrastructure, programming and promotion.

- ◆ Whether seeking production space or access to capital, figuring out how to obtain permits, or developing a marketing strategy, food entrepreneurs face diverse challenges in starting and growing a business. **Nonprofits and city agencies alike have ramped up their technical assistance efforts** in order to help businesses manage their growth here in New York City. The City Council funded the Pratt Center for Community Development to conduct a study focused on the distribution needs of food and beverage manufacturers, as the ability to distribute product throughout the City, region, and country is critical to business growth. The study, which makes recommendations on how the City can help businesses make the jump from self-distribution to working with third party distributors, will help guide public officials seeking to support this vital growth sector.

The City Council worked with EDC on the NYC Food Manufacturers Business Expo and Networking Event, which provided a forum for local food manufacturers to attend educational panels, showcase their products, and network with potential buyers. While these companies gain experience at the local level, they were also preparing for the opportunity to attend the Specialty Food Association Summer Fancy Food Show – an all-expenses-paid opportunity provided for the four businesses that win the City's annual competition. EDC is also working with Goldman Sachs and the New York Business Development Corporation to administer the NYC Food Manufacturers Growth Fund, which provides loans of \$50,000 to \$750,000 to food manufacturers seeking to expand their business.³¹ Non-city entities have also stepped up to provide technical assistance, including the Small Food Producers Network – run by the East Williamsburg Valley Industrial Development Corporation (EWWIDCO) – that provides support to approximately 175 food manufacturers through a seminar series, networking opportunities, and assistance navigating government regulations.³²



New Initiative: Open a satellite of the Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship (NECFE) in New York City

Cornell University's Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship is another incredible resource for food businesses. The Center helps companies commercialize their products through business and marketing assistance; they also offer reduced-cost access to faculty guidance in food safety and regulatory compliance. In 2012 alone, the Center provided direct support to approximately 3,000 startup and growing food entrepreneurs.³³ There is only one problem: the Center is located in Geneva, NY, nearly five hours away from New York City. Many of our food manufacturers juggle the making, marketing, and distribution of their product on a shoestring budget, and travel time to Geneva limits their ability to access the Center's services. The City would greatly benefit from a local satellite office, ideally located in one of the City's four public markets. Not only would this benefit New York City's food businesses, but it would continue to revitalize these underutilized markets. The City and other interested partners should invest the money necessary to get a local NECFE office off the ground.

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New Initiative: Develop an appropriately sized co-packing facility in New York City

After working with food manufacturers over the past several years, we have heard one message loud and clear: business growth is limited by a lack of affordable production space. One possible solution to this challenge is to establish a co-packing facility that makes and packages food for clients manufacturing large quantities of

product. When co-packers manage large-scale production, entrepreneurs can concentrate on scaling up their business, focusing on product sale and distribution. Currently, New York City's co-packing options occupy opposite ends of the spectrum: Victoria Fine Foods in Canarsie, Brooklyn, has production runs that exceed the capacity of most artisanal food manufacturers, while the Organic Food Incubator in Long Island City, Queens, performs small, hand-packed production runs. This leaves many food manufacturers without any local options, either limiting their growth or forcing them to use a co-packer outside New York City – depriving the City of business and creating problems for the producer as well. Artisanal food producers have found it increasingly valuable to say that a product is 'made in New York;' by moving production outside the City's limits, manufacturers lose that caché as well as the convenience of producing close to home. Council Member Stephen Levin, who represents many of the Brooklyn food manufacturers, recently conducted a survey of 70 local food businesses to gauge interest in the idea of local co-packing. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were interested in the concept, and, if given the chance, some would sign up to use a local co-packer immediately. The next Administration should direct EDC to conduct an in-depth market analysis of co-packing to determine the target market and work with food manufacturers to develop a feasible financial model. The City should also work with interested parties to provide real estate and incentive options to provide the support necessary to get such a facility off the ground.

Source: <http://www.bkvmag.com/BkFood/archives/2013/06/03/smorgasburg>



Some of the food offerings at Brooklyn's Smorgasburg.





Distribution

Our food distribution system is a complex web of farmers, distributors, brokers, wholesalers, and buyers such as restaurants, supermarkets, hospitals and schools. Products arrive by boat, train and truck, taking different paths into, across, and out of the City. Although this system is integral to putting food onto dinner plates, our growing awareness of what we eat and where it comes from has made it clear that this system has negative repercussions.

The City has the opportunity to make improvements that improve environmental, economic, and health outcomes while also increasing the efficiency of the distribution system. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, this work has taken on a sense of urgency; the City and advocates must increase our resilience and make sure food needs are met during an emergency. Supply chains may be disrupted and traditional pathways broken, so we must develop a food distribution system that is able to adapt to changing conditions and new hazards.

FoodWorks Goals and Strategies

- ◆ ***Improve food distribution in New York City through infrastructure enhancements, technological advances, alternative transportation, and integrated planning by***
 - ◆ expanding on the current vision for the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center to maximize its potential and
 - ◆ diversifying and improving food transport.





Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/06/nyregion/hunts-point-produce-cooperative-says-city-commission-is-interfering-with-business.html>



The Hunts Point Produce Market handles 60% of the city's produce.

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- Many of the FoodWorks recommendations regarding our distribution system centered on **improving the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center**, a 329-acre site that handles produce, fish and meat.³⁴ More than 150 onsite businesses employ approximately 10,000 people³⁵ and the Center brings in roughly \$3 billion in annual revenue,³⁶ making it vastly important to the City's food supply as well as its economic health. Nearly 13,000 trucks travel in and out of the facility every day, often running their engines for hours in order to keep their products cold while waiting to unload because the site is over capacity. Not only does this demonstrate just how much food passes through this one site, but it also illustrates the environmental consequences of Hunts Point's current operations. It is no coincidence that asthma is much more common in the Hunts Point community than it is in the rest of the City: nearby residents' self-reported asthma rates are nearly double those of New York City as a whole.³⁷ The Hunts Point Produce Market, which handles 60 percent of the city's produce,³⁸ has clearly outgrown the confines of its 1969 design and construction; as a result, it does not have the capacity or infrastructure to meet environmental or food safety needs. It is impossible to improve New York City's distribution system without addressing conditions at Hunts Point.

Over the past several years, the City has engaged in negotiations with the Hunts Point Produce Cooperative regarding a \$332.5 million redevelopment project to modernize the facility. The public sector committed to fund half the cost, and since 2010, the city (covering 50 percent of the costs), state (30 percent) and federal (20 percent) government have allocated approximately \$172 million for various aspects of the redevelopment. This funding was earmarked to make the facility the lynchpin in New York City's sustainable 21st century food distribution system by reducing traffic congestion onsite and increasing rail use; improving food safety systems; and upgrading and expanding the facility storage capacity.³⁹ Negotiations between the City and the Hunts Point Produce Cooperative have stalled, leaving the fate of the distribution center unclear.



Updated Initiative: Pursue the redevelopment of the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center

In order to achieve the environmental, economic and health goals set out in FoodWorks – and echoed by many stakeholders – the next Administration must reach an agreement with the Cooperative that allows all stakeholders to move toward a healthier distribution system. Any redevelopment must incorporate resilience measures that prevent this critical



asset from damage in the wake of a disaster, as recommended by the Administration's Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency.⁴⁰

◆ In order to determine optimal food distribution methods and routes, FoodWorks highlighted the **need for information about our current distribution system**. The report posed questions such as: How does food move around the City? Where does our food come from? How much food enters the City every day? Without such basic information, we are unable to design a better system that increases healthy food access, supports local growers and food businesses, and reduces the environmental impacts of transporting food. The City Council has worked with the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability and the Office of the Food Policy Coordinator to align the PlaNYC and FoodWorks efforts to create a food distribution study design. Over the next several months, the City Council and the Administration will continue to engage interested funders and stakeholders to begin a large-scale study of the City's food system.



New Initiative: Explore the concept of short-term shared food storage facilities

Like most New Yorkers, food producers and vendors find that space is hard to come by. When it comes to food storage, there are few affordable and short-term facilities in New York City – those that do exist are geared toward larger businesses that store products for longer periods of time. There are limited options for the farmer hoping to avoid a drive upstate between weekend market days, or the artisanal producer looking to store smaller batches of product before distribution. Community gardeners have also called for

increased access to storage in order to better manage and preserve their harvests and tap into the local food economy. The City could respond to these concerns by exploring the creation of shared short-term food storage and distribution hubs in every borough, allowing a range of food producers to store their frozen, refrigerated or shelf stable product for varying lengths of time. Not only would food-safe and temperature-controlled warehousing help address the storage needs of food businesses, but these facilities can be sited in a way that reduces the negative environmental impact of our food distribution system. Such a facility could be developed in tandem with upstate food hubs, so that upstate aggregation and distribution points are deliberately coordinated with downstate food infrastructure.⁴¹

Onsite logistics managers could help food businesses coordinate product distribution, potentially serving as an aggregation point for food manufacturers who want to distribute collaboratively. Lastly, designated food storage hubs would reduce New York City's vulnerability in emergency situations that might alter regular food distribution patterns; the availability of decentralized storage would be an asset that supports the City's resiliency efforts. The City should conduct a feasibility analysis of this idea, gauging interest, price points, and projected usage level from a variety of potential food users. Depending on those findings, the City could develop a one-borough pilot, working with food systems experts, architects, and members of the business community to test a model that would best support farmers, food manufacturers, emergency food providers, and consumers alike.

Source: <http://urbanomnibus.net/redux/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Truck@TerminalMarket1.jpg>



Trucks delivering produce at the Hunts Point Produce Market.



Consumption

New York City may be regarded as one of the culinary capitals of the world, but many New Yorkers live in communities with limited access to healthy food. Across the nation many families struggle to find affordable, high quality groceries in their own community, instead relying

on more ubiquitous fast food restaurants or bodegas with few nutritious options. Such feeding patterns have contributed to an unprecedented rise in obesity and diet related disease. This is especially true in New York City where 58 percent of adults are overweight or obese and 21 percent of children ages 6-11 are obese, and the burden of the disease is felt most acutely in low-income and minority communities.⁴² In an intertwined public health struggle, far too many New Yorkers suffer from food insecurity and are unable to put enough food on the table for their families. Left with limited options, many resort to the cheapest food available – often the least healthy option. Currently, nearly 1.9 million New



FoodWorks Goals and Strategies

- ◆ **Create a healthier food environment by**
 - ◆ expanding fresh food retail in underserved areas of the City
 - ◆ better supporting food outlets that provide fresh and healthy food and
 - ◆ discouraging unhealthy food consumption.
- ◆ **Strengthen the safety net of hunger and nutrition programs by**
 - ◆ improving federal food programs and removing local barriers to enrollment.
- ◆ **Improve the nutrition of institutional meals by**
 - ◆ expanding the capacity of city agencies to cook whole foods for nutritious meals and
 - ◆ increasing quantity and quality of opportunities for food, nutrition and cooking knowledge.

Yorkers use SNAP benefits and 1.4 million residents rely on the help of the City's food pantries and soup kitchens.⁴³ FoodWorks proposed a range of ideas to address the often overlapping challenges of diet-related disease and food insecurity, and as a city, we have already begun altering our food landscape for the better.



Source: <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/blogs/go-healthy-ny/Museum-Exhibit-Dedicated-to-NYC-Green-Carts-123773339.html>



Nearly 500 mobile Green Carts are now located in underserved communities.

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◆ The City has developed a number of tools to **expand access to healthy food in communities** that lack fresh options. Increasing farmers markets and CSAs is one way to get locally grown produce into communities, but quality supermarkets and grocery stores are necessary as well. In 2009, the City Council authorized the City's Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program, which has approved financial and zoning incentives for 16 new or expanding grocery stores – with more in the pipeline – in areas with reduced access to fresh food.⁴⁴ Since 2011, three stores have opened their doors and one more is soon to do so, demonstrating the power of incentives and zoning to alter a community's food environment. Recognizing the job creation potential of food retail, the City Council worked with grocery workers' union UFCW Local 1500, the supermarket industry and a workforce organization, The Hope Program, to create a food retail training program. GroceryWorks has been remarkably successful in its first two years, training 190 New Yorkers; of these, 76 percent have been placed in steady jobs, and over 70 percent have stayed in the job – or even worked their way up the career ladder – at the end of one year.⁴⁵



Updated Initiative: Build on the successes FRESH to increase healthy food access

In spite of these successes, we know there is more to be done to expand food access in underserved communities. Although FRESH has focused on new or expanding supermarkets, there are many other existing food retailers across the City that – with a little help – may be able to bring more high quality produce to their neighborhood. For example, infrastructure upgrades like new energy-efficient refrigeration units or produce misters could transform stores through the addition of new high quality produce sections. The next Administration should use its experience creating and implementing FRESH and other food access initiatives to expand FRESH, working with stakeholders to develop incentives or grants that support food retailers in new and creative ways. The City must balance the goal of increasing fresh food access with that of creating quality jobs in the food industry. The City Council sees food retail initiatives as an economic development tool that helps create and sustain quality food jobs, and we should work to ensure that market operators receiving city funds meet labor standards, helping workers build a pathway to the middle class.



◆ The City Council has also encouraged the development and **growth of alternative retail options**. The City Council funded The Food Trust, a nationally renowned nonprofit, to provide technical assistance to local food cooperatives. From business plan development, to guidance around volunteer recruitment and management, to the installation of Point of Sale systems, The Food Trust's work has helped make food co-ops a viable retail options in communities throughout the City.

◆ The City Council also **authorized the Green Cart program**, which has put nearly 500 mobile fruit and vegetable food carts on the streets in underserved communities. Through the Mayor's Obesity Task Force, DOHMH has now equipped 88 vendors with EBT machines to make produce affordable to more residents who may otherwise be unable to afford it.⁴⁶ The Green Carts initiative has demonstrated a demand for fresh produce, with some nearby bodega owners now stocking more fruits and vegetables as demand grows. Bodegas are the most common forms of food retail in our city, so there have been many efforts to help storeowners provide healthier options. DOHMH's Shop Healthy initiative has worked with over 1000 bodegas to facilitate the stocking of fresh produce, reduced fat dairy products, whole grains, and reduced sodium and reduced sugar canned goods. Additionally, City Harvest has developed a Healthy Corner Store program to help store owners offer and promote healthier, affordable options.



New Initiative: Extend Health Bucks beyond farmers markets

The City's Health Bucks program has had great success at farmers' markets; municipalities across the country are replicating the program and there may be ways to expand the model to increase the purchase of healthy food in grocery stores and supermarkets. In 2008, the USDA allocated funds to the Healthy Initiatives Pilot (HIP) to develop healthy food incentive programs in food retail environments. The pilot, conducted in Massachusetts, gave SNAP recipients a 30-cent credit for every dollar spent on fruits and vegetables at participating grocery stores. The 14-month study concluded in December 2012 and is currently being evaluated.⁴⁷ If the program was found to

successfully increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables, the City should expand on the success of Health Bucks by replicating this model here in New York City, piloting the program with interested food retailers in high-need communities.



In order to stem the tide of obesity, it is critical to **reduce the number of unhealthy food options** while making healthy options more available. The public health conversation about our food environment concerns has broadened from 'food deserts' to 'food swamps' – communities filled almost exclusively with fast food restaurants and convenient stores that serve high-calorie, high-fat options. The City Council, the Administration, and an active group of community and public health advocates have been aggressively tackling the obesity epidemic from various angles, and we're starting to see some success: between 2006 and 2011, obesity rates for K-8th grade students decreased 5.5 percent.⁴⁸ But there is more to be done, and the next Administration must continue to use diverse strategies to improve health outcomes.



New Initiative: Improve the nutritional quality of 'Kids Meals'

Fast food restaurants continue to proliferate in our communities, serving meals that can lead to obesity and diet-related disease when consumed regularly. Children – who are in the process of forming lifelong eating habits – are particularly vulnerable to their relentless marketing efforts, making this an important developmental time for intervention. The next Administration should work with nutrition experts and the restaurant industry to develop nutritional standards that create appropriate ranges of calories, saturated fat, and sodium, and the City should limit the ability of fast food and chain restaurants to market something as a 'Kids Meal' if it doesn't meet those standards. Such a policy would not limit consumer choice, but would put the onus on fast food restaurants and sit-down chains to improve the nutrition of children's meals – or reign in their harmful marketing campaigns.



New Initiative: Improve conditions for New York City's fast food workers

Recognizing that the food and beverage industry – which includes fast food – is a





sector experiencing job growth, the City needs to ensure that these jobs meet labor standards. The City should require that fast food restaurants and other food service establishments provide their employees with their schedule with at least one week's notice, which would help address one of the biggest challenges facing hourly workers. Workers often don't know their work schedule until the day before or even the morning of the shift, making it challenging to manage family and other personal responsibilities.



The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) provides a critical safety net for nearly one in five New Yorkers** and helps families put food on the table while giving children the chance to eat a balanced diet. 1.87 million residents receive SNAP benefits – up from 1.75 million in December 2010 – yet many are still unable to make it through the month without relying on other emergency food programs like food pantries and soup kitchens.⁴⁹ In addition to providing assistance to those in need, SNAP stimulates our local economy: every \$1 in benefits generates \$1.80 in economic activity that supports our neighborhood supermarkets, corner stores and farmers markets.⁵⁰ The City Council has been a strong SNAP advocate throughout recent Farm Bill negotiations that threatened to gut benefit funding, sending letters to Congress, passing a resolution underlining the importance of SNAP here in New York City, and conducting outreach to encourage New Yorkers to speak out against the cuts.



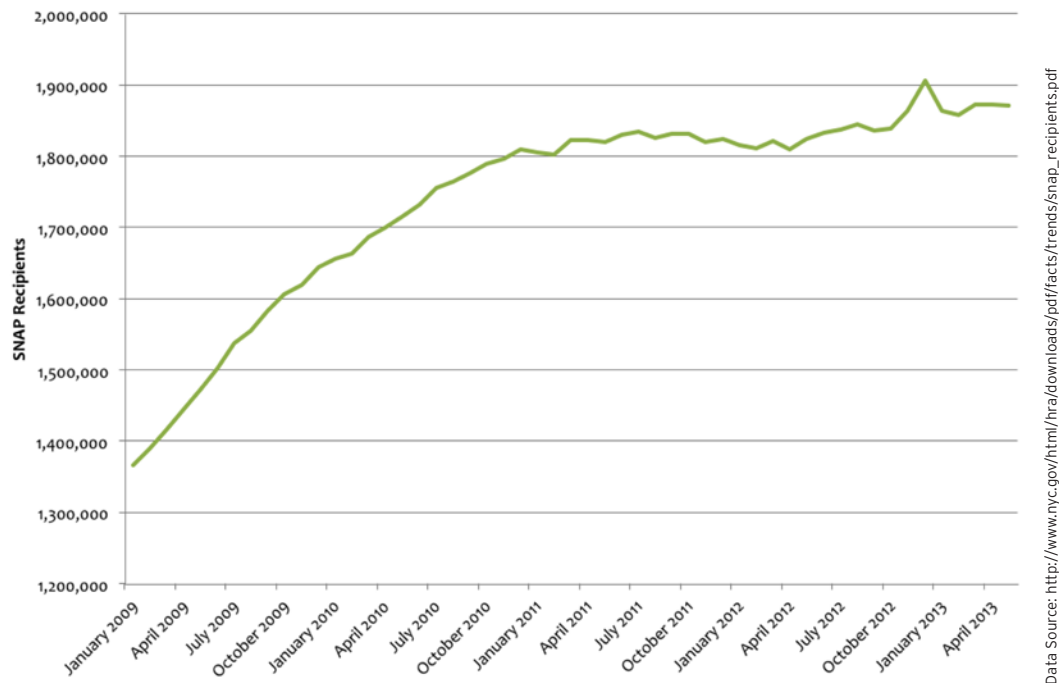
The City Council has also made it a priority to **get more eligible New Yorkers enrolled in SNAP** through initiatives like the Medicaid data match, which helped identify thousands of individuals who qualified for the program based on their Medicaid status. The City Council has also provided support for the Food Bank and the New York City Coalition Against Hunger (NYCCA) to conduct outreach, which has helped thousands of New Yorkers enroll in or recertify for SNAP benefits. The City Council has sought to remove barriers to enrollment, fighting to eliminate the Administration's former requirement of finger-imaging SNAP recipients rather than using other proven fraud detection measures. In the



New Initiative: Target mixed-status immigration households for SNAP enrollment

The next Administration must continue to promote SNAP enrollment in communities that have historically low levels of participation. In 2007 the City Council's food stamp enrollment campaign Food Today, Healthy Tomorrow targeted immigrant communities, which are under-enrolled in this vital benefit.⁵¹ That reality has not changed today, in part because many undocumented immigrants do not know that their legal immigrant or citizen children are eligible for SNAP, and they believe they will have to discuss their immigration status when applying on behalf of their children. The next Administration, led by the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), should conduct a citywide campaign informing immigrant parents that they can apply for SNAP benefits on behalf of their children. To promote this message, the City should collaborate with anti-hunger groups conducting SNAP enrollment as well as social service organizations and legal service providers working with immigrant communities. The Food Bank of New York is particularly well situated to be a partner in this campaign: as a complement to its anti-hunger work, it provides tax assistance and has become the country's largest provider of Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs). These numbers allow anyone without a Social Security number – regardless of immigration status – to file for taxes. Comprehensive immigration reform, currently being debated in Congress, will likely include requirements to show tax payment histories or pay back-taxes, so immigrants have been increasingly interested in filing with the IRS. MOIA should partner with the Food Bank to provide training to other ITIN issuers, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) preparers, and immigrant advocacy groups to promote the message of mixed-eligibility households. During tax season, the Administration should conduct targeted SNAP outreach and enrollment at VITA sites that serve immigrant communities.

Trends in SNAP Recipients: 2009-2013



More New Yorkers are signing up for SNAP benefits



New Initiative: Collect data on hunger and food insecurity in order to guide city programming

Although the current Administration has used data to highlight the most pressing public health issues of the past 12 years, hunger has not been tracked, even as the recession has made food insecurity a pressing problem in our city. While the USDA conducts a food insecurity survey on a national level, the sample size does not provide policy makers or anti-hunger advocates with statistically significant neighborhood-level data. Official city data – which could be obtained by including questions about hunger in the DOHMH Community Health Survey – is vital to understanding the extent of hunger in the City, the populations suffering from hunger, and the locations where hunger is most prevalent. Currently, the City uses poverty data as a proxy for hunger, which is simply insufficient. Accurate data should be used to guide and improve the City's anti-hunger efforts: optimal emergency food provider locations, HRA SNAP outreach efforts, ideal Summer Meal location sites, and more. The information would also help social service providers and anti-hunger

groups develop targeted social media and outreach campaigns, and inform elected officials of their communities' needs. Now is the time to add hunger to the City's list of top public health concerns and use data to combat this problem.



The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program provides support for low-income women and children

in need of nutritional and health support. WIC recipients use their benefits to purchase specific, healthy foods from local food vendors who comply with a strict set of health and nutrition guidelines.⁵² To help more vendors understand and meet the WIC program requirements, FoodWorks advocated that the State translate its vendor handbook into multiple languages to reflect the diversity of food retailers across New York City's neighborhoods. The State is currently revising the handbook to comply with new USDA guidelines, and plans to translate the final product into five different languages in the fall of 2013.⁵³ Additionally, the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides WIC recipients with coupons that are redeemable at farmers markets, which both increases families' ability to access fresh food



and provides necessary support for farmers serving low-income communities. The City Council joined food advocates calling on the federal government to restore the 30 percent cuts proposed by the federal government for Fiscal Year 2013, and the State was able to reduce the full extent of the cuts.



The City Council has been a strong proponent of **using the federally funded school meal programs to provide food insecure children with consistent access to free and healthy meals.** The federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which the City Council advocated for, has led to the creation of new school meal nutrition standards, guaranteeing that our meals are healthier than ever. Two thirds of the City's 1.1 million public school students qualify for free or reduced price meals; of those, 75 percent participate in the National School Lunch Program on a daily basis and only 25 percent participate in the School Breakfast Program.⁵⁴ These numbers mean that far too many students are starting and going through the day hungry. Breakfast in the Classroom programs have successfully increased meal participation across the country, and have been correlated with a range of positive outcomes from reduced absenteeism to improved behavior and test scores.⁵⁵ The New York City Department of Education (DOE) has increased the number of schools running the program in at least some classrooms from 175 in 2010 to 336 this past school year; the City Council and many partners in the School Meals Coalition have advocated for the Administration to expand the program citywide. The City Council also helps students access meals throughout the year – even when school isn't in session. Led by the Mayor's Food Policy Coordinator and the DOE, the City Council collaborates with a coalition of agencies and anti-hunger groups to promote the free Summer Meals program so that no child goes hungry during the summer. In addition to the regular community sites where meals are served, the DOE uses three trucks to deliver meals directly to students spending hot days at local beaches and parks, which has helped increase the number of meals served from 6,854,937 in 2010 to 7,049,123 in 2012.



Updated Initiative: Increase School Meal options and participation

The next Administration has the opportunity to reduce hunger by embracing policy changes that drastically increase school meal participation. Food insecure families should know that their child can regularly access free, healthy meals at school, and the DOE should take advantage of meal delivery models that reduce the stigma associated with free meals. To begin with, Breakfast in the Classroom should be expanded citywide, with schools serving a sit-down meal during homeroom or first period, or using the 'Grab and Go' model that allows students to pick up bagged breakfast in the hall. Either method would ensure that students start off the day on the right foot.⁵⁶

Many students qualify for free lunch, yet the shame associated with being poor prevents many from eating at all. Schools are also burdened by the current lunch system, a labor-intensive process that requires staff to differentiate between 'free, reduced and paid' students and monitor their meal participation on a daily basis. To address both problems, the DOE should expand Universal School Meal (USM) lunch programs, allowing all students to eat for free. The federal government has developed options that allow districts to seek reimbursement without tracking students' eligibility on a daily basis.ⁱⁱⁱ After the DOE made breakfast free for all students in 2003, the participation rate increased by more than 50 percent, and advocates believe that lunch participation would jump significantly as well.⁵⁷ While the DOE uses USM in some schools, it has not substantially scaled up the programs; the next Administration must direct the DOE to take advantage of USM, guaranteeing that students get the meals they need in order to learn and thrive.

Lastly, the next Administration should roll out a 'School Dinner' program: a federally subsidized meal for high-need students participating in after school programming.⁵⁸ Many students do not have a meal waiting for them at home, so it is important to make full use of the school environment to provide nutritious meals throughout the day.

ⁱⁱⁱ The USDA options are known as 'Provision 2' and 'Community Eligibility Option,' which provide varying levels of reimbursement and require varying levels of paperwork. For more information see: <http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/national-school-lunch-program/>

◆ The quality of the meals served by the DOE plays a significant role in improving students' health outcomes. The DOE has made enormous strides in providing healthier, tastier meals in schools. In 2010, FoodWorks called for an **increase in the number of salad bars in schools**. Since then, the Administration has responded and nearly doubled the number of salad bars in schools, from 586 in 2010 to 1043 this past year.⁵⁹ Salad bars allow students to pick and choose among a range of nutritious options and have been incredibly popular across the City.



New Initiative: Use the Wellness in the Schools model to improve school food and develop culinary job opportunities

Improving the quality of school meals is an important step in reducing the rates of obesity and diet-related disease. Wellness

in the School (WITS) strives to do that by bringing culinary graduates into 50 public schools to train and support school cafeteria staff in the preparation of meals cooked from scratch. The WITS model should be fully incorporated into standard SchoolFood operations, so that all cafeteria staff receive training on scratch-cooking, nutrition and whole foods. While new school construction typically includes full service kitchens, the City should upgrade existing schools to provide full service kitchens as well. At the very least, they should be equipped with a burner, a steamer, and a convection oven. This equipment will enable scratch-cooking, as opposed to just warming pre-prepared food. The City should also use this as an opportunity for culinary workforce development and job creation. The DOE should collaborate with the full range of New York City culinary programs – from Kingsborough Community College's Culinary



New York City schools now offer healthier options, such as salad bars.



Arts program to the Institute of Culinary Education – to hire graduates directly into WITS supervisory and training positions. The WITS team would rotate through the City's 1,200 public schools, training school staff on the basics of nutritious scratch-cooked meals for several months before moving onto another school. After serving for at least two years with the City, the pipeline should continue straight into restaurants and institutional kitchens, with program participants receiving help landing jobs in the culinary world.

kitchens to summer meal sites. To provide New Yorkers – regardless of their location or income – with information about **how to access nutritious and affordable food in their communities**, the City Council provides funding to NYCCAH to produce Neighborhood Guides to Food and Assistance. These local guides also outline how and where to enroll in benefit programs like SNAP and WIC. We are pleased that this resource, with versions in English, Spanish and Chinese, reaches over 200,000 New Yorkers every year.⁶⁰

- ◆ There are a tremendous number of affordable food options offered across the City, from soup



Source: http://m.theepochtimes.com/n2/images/stories/large/2011/12/15/Pentchoukov_082511_FreshFoodNYC_-1-of-1.jpg

Increasing the number of supermarkets in underserved neighborhoods has been a priority for New York City.





Post Consumption

As actors across the food system grapple with what it means to be 'sustainable,' food waste has become an increasingly large part of the conversation. Food waste, yard waste, and other organic materials

FoodWorks Goals and Strategies



- ◆ ***Decrease waste throughout the food system by***
 - ◆ improving the net environmental impact associated with food procured by city agencies and institutions.
- ◆ ***Increase resource recapture in the food system by***
 - ◆ increasing residential, commercial and governmental composting and
 - ◆ increasing recycling of waste related to food processing and packing.

comprise thirty percent of New York City's residential waste stream, most of which ends up in landfill.⁶¹ This is no longer tenable from an environmental or financial standpoint, as the Administration has estimated that diverting organic material from landfills could save the City approximately \$100 million every year.⁶² By providing ways to prevent waste generation and increasing environmentally responsible options for food scrap disposal, FoodWorks' recommendations have begun to reduce the enormous amount of waste generated at each phase of the food system.



- ◆ The City Council has passed a number of **bills aimed at decreasing waste**. LL 51 of 2011 required city agencies to create guidelines for reducing the amount of packaging for procured food, and the final guidelines will encourage both city agencies and contractors to minimize the environmental impact of food packaging. LL 55 of 2010 has reduced the use of plastic bottled water by requiring buildings to provide water through water fountains instead of dispensing bottled water, and promoting water fountains that allow people to fill up reusable containers.
- ◆ Thanks to LL 35 of 2010, **New Yorkers are now able to recycle more of their food-related packaging**. This spring, the City's recycling program expanded and began accepting all rigid plastics, which has drastically increased the amount of waste that residents can recycle. Since the City Council passed LL43 of 2010 – an effort to green the city by requiring that homes use at least two percent biofuel for heating purposes – restaurants have found a use for their grease waste, which is now being picked up and converted into biofuel that can heat homes or power vehicles.
- ◆ In addition to collecting food scraps, the **DOE has joined the food waste fight** through efforts to reduce the use of polystyrene trays. Not only does the DOE encourage the use of recyclable paper trays through Trayless Tuesdays, but it is also working with philanthropic organizations and five other large school districts involved in the Urban School Food Alliance – whose mission is to drive down the costs of healthier meals – to develop compostable trays.⁶³
- ◆ The City Council has been a strong proponent of **systematically expanding composting opportunities throughout the City**. After seeing the success of a City Council-funded community compost collection pilot at Greenmarkets, the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) started partnering with GrowNYC to collect food scraps at 25 markets. 1.4 million pounds of scraps have been collected so far, with material transported to compost sites or urban agriculture projects throughout the city.⁶⁴ Soon, residents throughout the City will be able to compost without leaving their home, as DSNY is rolling out voluntary curbside pick-up pilots, kicking off



Source: <http://inhabitat.com/nyc/recyclebanks-ron-gonen-will-join-the-department-of-sanitation-as-part-of-a-plan-to-improve-nycs-recycling-rate/>

New Yorkers are now able to recycle all rigid plastics.



Source: <http://weheartastoria.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/socrates-greenmarket-compost-build-it-green-astoria-queens.jpg>

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New Yorkers can drop off food scraps at farmers markets throughout the city.

in Staten Island. DSNY will also be collecting food scraps from 204 schools by the fall of 2013, and residential buildings with ten or more units near DSNY school pick-up routes can opt into compost collection as well. Introduction No. 1107, which the City Council recently introduced, will ensure that DSNY's composting pilot spans all five boroughs and lasts at least two years. DSNY would also evaluate the pilot's success to determine the feasibility of a citywide compost pick-up program, as required by LL 42 of 2010.

must do more to prevent food waste before it is created. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the USDA launched the national US Food Waste Challenge this summer to do just that. The Challenge aims to reduce the amount of food that is wasted, recover food for food insecure Americans, and recycle food through composting and other uses. New York City should use the US Food Waste Challenge as a model to build its own localized campaign, highlighting the amount of food we waste and its financial and environmental implications. Working off the EPA's guide, the City should develop food waste reduction tips around food purchasing, storage, and reuse so that people can learn strategies for making better use of their food before it goes bad. This information could be distributed by DSNY through pamphlets and kitchen magnets. The City should use the launching of curbside composting pilots as an opportunity to raise awareness about food waste and sustainability goals.



New Initiative: Initiate a food waste reduction campaign

New York City residents generate 1.2 million tons of food waste every year.⁶⁵ The USDA estimates that in 2008, Americans wasted \$390 on uneaten food – more than what the average American spends on food every month.⁶⁶ While New York City's compost expansion is an exciting step toward a more sustainable city, these statistics demonstrate that New Yorkers



Across the System



CONCLUSION

The food system is interwoven into our daily life in countless ways, from school meal nutrition to job opportunities to the creation of a more sustainable New York City. These issues impact every New Yorker, and therefore warrant the attention of the City Council and a range of city agencies. As a natural outgrowth of FoodWorks' comprehensive agenda, the City Council passed LL 52 of 2011, the Food Metrics Act, which mandated city agency reporting requirements in key areas of our food system. The purpose of the bill was to improve transparency around 19 of the City's operations related to the production, processing, distribution and consumption of food in and for the City. The second annual report is due this September, providing two years of data that will allow the City to make more informed decisions about its food system.^{iv}

The next Administration should work with policy makers, advocates and community members to determine additional metrics that should be tracked. The City and the entire food community should use these metrics to set progressive yet realistic goals that push us collectively towards a healthier food system. This process should be used to ignite change in the food system, focusing the attention of city agencies and elected officials on addressing the needs of New Yorkers: reducing hunger, increasing food access, reducing negative environmental impacts, creating job opportunities through the food economy. By engaging a broad community in the development of meaningful metrics and goals – and taking concrete steps towards achieving those goals – New York City will continue to be a leader in creating a food system that works better for the City and its residents.



Source: <http://www.wellandgoodnyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Screen-shot-2013-08-08-at-10:40:50-AM.png>

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