

The Michigan Farm to Institution Network's Framework for 2022 and Beyond

In early 2022, the Michigan Farm to Institution Network (MFIN) formally adopted the framework below to guide our work in the coming years. This new framework concluded a multi-year process of gathering feedback from network members about what we have accomplished and what our work should focus on in the future.

Initially inspired by the 2010 Michigan Good Food Charter, MFIN has provided a space for learning, sharing, and working together to help farm to institution programs grow in Michigan since 2014. Under this new framework, we will maintain a focus on local food purchasing by institutions with a 25% by 2025 goal. We will also align our work with some of the goals, strategies, and action recommendations of the [2022 Michigan Good Food Charter](#).

The Michigan Farm to Institution Network (MFIN) helps people across the farm to institution supply chain learn, connect, and collaborate.

MFIN supports:

- **Institutions that are responsible food buyers and community members**
- **Local and regional food supply chains**



We help institutions:

- Source and serve more local food, including a goal for 25% local food purchasing by 2025
- Adopt supplier diversity programs
- Provide equitable access to quality food
- Offer more food that is environmentally sustainable
- Minimize food packaging and prioritize using sustainable materials in food service
- Develop pathways for career advancement and leadership in food service



We continue to build and strengthen value chains that:

- Promote farms and food hubs as sources for local food
- Support farm viability and the next generation of farmers
- Assist with development of BIPOC- and women-owned and -operated farms and food businesses
- Prioritize environmentally sustainable food production practices
- Increase transparency in communications about local food and producer practices throughout the supply chain
- Advance opportunities for job and workforce development

Our work connects the values of:

DIVERSITY
EQUITY

INTEGRITY
LOCAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
BUSINESS VIABILITY

1

DIVERSITY in the food system contributes to its resilience. We seek diversity in:

- the people who produce our food and move it from field to plate;
- scale of farms, food businesses, and institutions supplying food;
- markets and ownership models for food businesses;
- food production strategies;
- inclusive spaces for people to access quality food;
- flavors of food, including culturally appropriate and global flavors;
- procurement strategies for institutions to find and buy food; and
- products available, including from local sources.¹



2

EQUITY ensures that everyone has what they need to participate, prosper, and make decisions to reach their full potential regardless of differences. It recognizes structural barriers and historic, ongoing, and systemic racism and inequities in our food system.²

3

INTEGRITY encompasses honesty, truthfulness, and accountability in providing safe food and communicating about it—including identifying its source—along the path from farm to fork.

4

LOCAL here means food that is grown, raised, and processed in the State of Michigan because place matters and influences our local and regional food system.

5

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY and climate change mitigation strategies conserve resources and minimize harm to ecosystems so that future generations can thrive. These strategies apply all along the food chain: food production, processing, transportation, packaging, service, recycling, waste reduction and management, and composting.

6

BUSINESS VIABILITY of farms and food operations means that they are economically sustainable and profitable over time while also working to minimize their impact on the natural environment.

MFIN is coordinated by the Michigan State University (MSU) [Center for Regional Food Systems](#) with support from [MSU Extension](#). Our state agency partners and an advisory committee of farm to institution practitioners have provided critical guidance on and practical contributions to MFIN's activities and direction since 2014.

¹ This definition is adapted from the 2010 [Michigan Good Food Charter](#), pg 5.

² This definition is derived from the [Racial Equity Statement](#) of the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems.