



Philadelphia Food Charter

Background

Access to safe, affordable, locally grown and healthy food is critical for achieving Philadelphia's sustainability goals. Some members of our community, particularly children, do not have reliable access to safe and nutritious food. In addition, much of the food we eat travels long distances from where it is grown and processed and is dependent on fossil fuels at every stage. Dependency on imports for our food increases our impact on the environment and our vulnerability to food shortages from natural disasters or economic set-backs. Overall food security is increasingly influenced by global factors that affect our community's ability to meet our food system goals.

In 2008, Mayor Michael Nutter articulated his commitment to making Philadelphia 'The Greenest City in America' and the City adopted sustainability as a fundamental approach for all of the City's operations. Fostering further growth of a regional sustainable food and urban agriculture system is a key component of achieving this goal.

Philadelphia Food Charter

The Philadelphia Food Charter presents a vision for a food system which benefits our community, our economy and our environment and helps push Philadelphia further towards becoming the Greenest City in America. It establishes the City of Philadelphia's commitment to the development of a coordinated municipal food and urban agriculture policy, and articulates the intention of establishing a Food Policy Council populated by key city and regional stakeholders who can inform and advise the city's efforts while helping to provide coordination, momentum and support for the significant activities already underway throughout the city and region.

VISION

The City of Philadelphia is committed to facilitating a sustainable food and urban agriculture system that:

- contributes to the community, economic, health and sustainability goals of our city and region;
- encourages personal, business and government food practices that foster local production and protect our natural and human resources;
- recognizes access to safe, sufficient, culturally appropriate and nutritious food as a basic right for all Philadelphia residents;
- utilizes our land and water resources to foster the growth of community gardens and farming;
- creates economic and job growth opportunities for neighborhood residents
- fosters collaboration and leverages the existing work and capacity of already established stakeholders throughout the city and region;
- celebrates Philadelphia's multicultural food traditions.

To create a sustainable food and urban agriculture system, the City of Philadelphia through the Mayor's

Office of Sustainability will seek to:

- Become a leader in municipal and regional food-related policies and programs
- Coordinate among multiple city agencies to facilitate and promote access to healthy food and foster the growth of urban agriculture
- Establish a Food Policy Council comprised of diverse, regional stakeholders to advise and guide our efforts while providing momentum to efforts already underway
- Improve access to healthy and affordable foods and articulate how rising energy costs impacts food affordability and availability
- Pursue food related economic development and entrepreneurship opportunities
- Create Infrastructure to support urban gardening and farming and large-scale local food sourcing, including distribution facilities, agricultural supply centers, and a reliable, economical water source and processing facilities
- Support the role of community farmers markets and gardens in increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables in neighborhoods, thus increasing food security citywide
- Promote local purchasing among major employers and institutions in the city.
- Partner with public schools to improve food quality, promote school gardens and local purchasing, and articulate the importance of food choices for fostering healthy children and families
- Explore the use of City-owned spaces and City equipment to facilitate getting supplies to people who want to grow food locally
- Overcome barriers created by zoning, irrigation issues and liability insurance in relationship to use of vacant land, equipment, and volunteers for local food production and distribution