



OFPN POLICY AGENDA

February 2021

The Policy Agenda of the Ohio Food Policy Network (OFPN) focuses on four areas: Local Farms, Access & Education, Infrastructure, and Institutions. These policy statements and specific priorities that follow have been informed by OFPN stakeholders through interactive agenda-setting sessions (2017-2020) and shaped by members of the OFPN Policy Committee.

LOCAL FARMS

Local farms are the bedrock of our local food system. OFPN supports policies that encourage the growth and production of farms in all areas of the state, particularly those small- and mid-scale farms that serve Ohio markets and embrace responsible, resilient production methods, and fair-labor practices.

PRIORITIES

- Incentivize and facilitate the transfer of farmland to next-generation farmers with a focus on BIPOC, young, and beginning farmers
- Revise and clarify the Ohio Building Code to provide clear guidance and allow for high tunnel and hoop house construction in all jurisdictions
- Incentivize regenerative/sustainable farming practices that preserve and improve soil health

ACCESS & EDUCATION

The ability to consume nutritious food is a key social determinant of health. OFPN advocates for policies that increase access for locally grown, healthy, affordable food for all Ohioans. We additionally affirm that food education is fundamental to addressing diet-related diseases.

PRIORITIES

- Support for nutrition incentive programming in direct-to-consumer and retail settings throughout the state
- Expand affordable SNAP/EBT online access to small retailers, local farms, farmers markets, and home delivery
- Address SNAP/EBT online and physical infrastructure shortcomings to ensure accessible online sales for all customers, ease of use for benefit processing
- Establish a statewide nutrition and food system education pilot program, and nutrition standards for pre-K-12 education



- Support Farm to School initiatives to promote purchasing, serving, and teaching about locally produced foods in schools (pre-k through 12) and policies to encourage and streamline such activities

INFRASTRUCTURE

A strengthened local and regional food supply chain will increase resilience and economic growth for Ohio communities. OFPN supports policies that develop the civic, social, physical, economic, and values-based infrastructure necessary for aggregation, distribution, processing, and retail to integrate local and regional supply chains.

PRIORITIES

- Create interagency task force (e.g., ODSA, OEMA, ODA) to identify existing food infrastructure development needs across different regions and financing options to support the development of infrastructure to serve small and midsize food system operations
- Create a robust financing tool to support the development of local food supply chain infrastructure, including facilities for aggregation, processing, meat processing, cold storage, packaging, and distribution. State financing would help leverage federal funding as well as public-private partnerships.
- Support the expansion of processing of livestock, aquaculture and specialty crops across the state, including mobile processing options.

INSTITUTIONS

Institutions create and expand markets for local food by vastly expanding their local food purchases. OFPN supports food purchasing policies that reduce barriers for institutional buyers and drive the development of local and regional markets.

PRIORITIES

- Change contracting/procurement rules across state government to allow more vendors to participate in local and regional food purchasing
- Increase the amount of reimbursement available to schools that purchase local food

The above policy priorities are affirmative examples of the ways we work to improve our food system in the State of Ohio. Additionally, we oppose policies that threaten Ohioans from accessing local food or nutrition safety net programs.