



RHODE ISLAND

Hunger Elimination Task Force



As part of implementing **Relish Rhody**, the State's Food Strategy, the Inter-Agency Food and Nutrition Policy Council convened the Hunger Elimination Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of leaders from across State and municipal government, non-profits, and industry, as well as community members from across the state.

GOAL: to reduce food insecurity

from **12.8%** to **10%**

Definition of Food Security: Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security at a minimum includes the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and an assured ability to acquire those foods without relying on the emergency food system.

INTEGRATED FOCUS AREAS:

Preserve & Grow Agriculture, Fisheries Industries in Rhode Island

Enhance the Climate for Food & Beverage Businesses

Sustain & Create Markets for Rhode Island Food, Beverage Products

Ensure Food Security for All Rhode Islanders

Minimize Food Waste & Divert it from the Waste Stream



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The Task Force recognized that poverty is a root cause of food insecurity. Further, food insecurity does not occur in a vacuum. For this reason, the Task Force chose to look at hunger in terms of its **social determinants**, and the recommendations are based on topics that address the root causes of food insecurity.

Economic Development

- Continue to create new jobs & targeted job training programs, with a particular focus on connecting opportunities to the needs of our most vulnerable
- Continue to ensure that jobs created and supported using State-funded economic development tools provide workers with fair and livable wages
- Use the Opportunity Zones and other targeted investment areas to draw investment into under-served communities
- Partner with business support organizations to ensure access to technical assistance for small businesses in all communities

Expand Food Purchasing Power:

- Expand SNAP Incentive Programs into grocery & retail stores
- Support community-scale gardens and agriculture
- Create a statewide baseline scan of all state and municipal properties that could be potential garden/farm sites

Streamline & Maximize Participation in Existing Programs:

- Require alternative breakfast programs in schools with high free/reduced eligibility
- Encourage community eligibility for meals in all eligible schools
- Increase opportunities for SNAP utilization on college campuses
- Increase utilization of WIC through explicit inter-agency partnerships & best practice sharing

Address Transit & Transportation Challenges

- Include the Health Equity Zone in the Transit Coordinating Council to reflect community needs of Rhode Islanders
- Hold targeted community input meetings on the Rhode Island Transit Master Plan within each Health Equity Zone
- Ensure that RIPTA connects Rhode Islanders in need to necessary food-related services (meal sites, summer meals, WIC offices)

Ground in Data:

- Better leverage data through cross-agency partnerships to ensure no Rhode Islander is falling through the cracks

Fully Support the Safety Net

- Increase funding for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank & their member agencies
- Support efforts by Hope's Harvest & other statewide gleaning efforts to connect surplus harvest with the emergency food system
- Expand the participation of RIDOH's Rhode to End Hunger Partnership with MEANS, connecting surplus prepared foods to Rhode Islanders in need

To learn more

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