



BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON

July 14, 2022

Re: White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health Community Feedback

Dear Co-Chairs of the White House Conference on Hunger Nutrition, and Health,

As Bronx Borough President, I have the pleasure of working with Bronx Health REACH, a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's national REACH initiative, and a key health partner that is dedicated to Bronx residents and to eliminating the racial and ethnic health disparities in communities of color. For over two decades, the organization has been a pioneer in addressing food insecurity and identifying steps to eliminate health disparities and diet-related diseases in The Bronx. As trusted partners, they have a discerning view of the challenges we are facing and the expertise to educate and empower our communities. *Therefore, I ask that you give their recommendations and solutions the highest consideration for inclusion in your strategy and plan to end hunger.*

Bronx Health REACH models community organizing by working strategically across many sectors, with community-based organizations, faith-based institutions, health care providers, and public health and social service agencies to improve health outcomes in The Bronx. As Borough President, I have set a health agenda that is closely aligned with that of Bronx Health REACH and strongly support their work. Moreover, they have boots on the ground in underserved communities with unmet needs and minimal resources.

The Bronx continues to have one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the nation, where one in four residents reported feeling food insecure. At the end of 2021, 27 percent of Bronxites were living below the poverty line and 20 percent of Bronx residents applied for SNAP benefits. We understand this problem first-hand. In June, my office's Health Division participated in community listening sessions convened by Bronx Health REACH to gather feedback and recommendations for the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health.

I fully support the following actionable items identified by community stakeholders. Their insightful recommendations include:

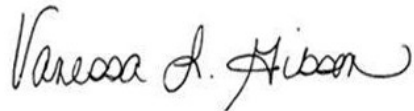
- The integration of nutrition and health education into the curriculum of all K-12 schools. The curriculum should include awareness of chronic health conditions, link physical activity with nutrition, and promote incentives for children to perform physical activity.
- Collaboration with supermarkets and bodegas to stock fresh fruits and vegetables at affordable prices.
- A limit on the marketing and advertisement of unhealthy foods and fast food chains to children.

- The creation and funding of culinary programs that are culturally appropriate and advise healthier food options.
- The promotion of careers in in food science, dietetics, and nutrition.
- The support of research on food nutrition and food insecurity followed by guidelines for health providers, schools, and Bronx residents and community organizations.

Overall, The Bronx needs *sustainable* programs that function systemically, serve to bridge the gap in food access and affordability, and that integrate nutrition and health at the core of public awareness campaigns.

Alleviating hunger and improving access to healthy foods should be a universal right regardless of a person's race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or ZIP code. Because The Bronx remains the unhealthiest county, #62 in New York, I ask that you give urgent attention to the needs expressed by stakeholders in our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa L. Gibson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Vanessa L. Gibson

BIFAC and Bronx Health REACH: Submission to the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

July 15th, 2022

Bronx Impact Food Access Collective (BIFAC)

Identified Barriers and Solutions to Healthy, Affordable, Fresh Food Access in the Bronx

This document presents issues and potential actions collected by BIFAC during recent convenings. BIFAC is a coalition of Bronx-based organizations (see list of member organizations below) that advocate for increased access to healthy, affordable foods on a neighborhood level throughout the Bronx. The Bronx has consistently ranked the [62nd out of all 62](#) New York State counties regarding health outcomes.

In many neighborhoods, there is only one supermarket for tens of thousands of residents, often providing overpriced and poor-quality food options. The Bronx is NYC's lowest-resourced borough yet is also home to the main food hub in NYC. Though all the freshest food brought into NYC lands in the Bronx, hardly any of it reaches the borough's residents. The trucks and highways that tear through the Bronx carrying all this food also have devastating environmental health impacts on the population.

Please see our report [Collective Impact for Food Justice](#) for more information.

Bronx Health REACH Nutrition & Fitness Workgroup

Listening Session for the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

This document includes input from the Bronx Health REACH Nutrition & Fitness Workgroup Listening Session for the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health held on June 15, 2022. Bronx Health REACH is part of the [Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention's REACH initiative](#) and has been dedicated to eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities, especially diet-related diseases, in the Bronx for over two decades.

BIFAC + Bronx Health REACH Nutrition & Fitness Workgroup Member Organizations who Contributed their Perspectives to this Document:

163rd Street Improvement Council, Inc.	Corbin Hill Food Project
American Heart Association	Covenant House NY
Aunt Bertha	CUNY City Tech
Black Feminist Project	Department of Education
Bronx Anti Litter Project	DOT Strategies
Bronx Borough President's Office	Earth Science & Health Teacher
Bronx Community Board 5	Equity Design
Bronx Community Board 6	Food organizer, Chef
Bronx Community Board 7	FoodStream
Bronx Community Relief Effort	Friends of 4 Parks
Bronx Health REACH	Greater New York Hospital Association
Bronx Neighborhood Health Action Center	Hunger Free America
Bronx One Policy	Judson Memorial Baptist Church
BronxWorks	I Challenge Myself
Bureau of Bronx Neighborhood Health, NYC	The LOHM Angel Food Project
Children's Aid	MANYC Food for All
Chilis On Wheels	MARC Academy and Family Center
Community Food Advocates	The Monday Campaigns

Montefiore Health System
Morris Heights Health Center
Mott Haven Community Fridge
Muslims Against Hunger
National Center for Community Schools
New Settlement
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
NY Common Pantry
Phipps Neighborhoods
RAP4Bronx
Rescuing Leftover Cuisine
Sapna NYC, Inc.

South Bronx Rising Together
The Urban Wild
Third Avenue BID
Transportation Alternatives
Tremont Health Action Center
United Federation of Teachers
Voices of Women
Wellness in the Schools
Why Hunger
Word of Life International
Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice

The barriers, solutions, and policy recommendations throughout this document are categorized by the Pillars and guiding Questions provided by the White House Conference toolkit. These bullet points reflect ongoing conversations that have occurred during monthly BIFAC and Bronx Health REACH Nutrition and Fitness Working Group convenings.

Pillar 1: Improve Food Access and Affordability

- **Barrier: Challenge of distributing fresh, healthy foods to hyperlocal retail food retailers (bodegas and corner stores) that can sustainably sell to customers at affordable prices**
 - [Neighborhood Level Food Hubs](#) are necessary for the localization of food distribution. State-level hubs are supported and need to be translated to the neighborhood level to increase ease of access. These hubs also provide Education and Workforce development opportunities.
 - Food Hubs can alleviate barriers retailers experience to [Food waste collection](#) and cold/dry storage, to ensure sustainable systems for local food retailers to stock and sell fresh foods, and incubator kitchens for food entrepreneurs to sell prepared foods to local audiences
- **Solution: Local food hub/s with cold storage that can be used by a group, such as the Bodega Association, with a delivery and distribution system that includes trucks with cold storage and drivers to deliver to hyperlocal retail food outlets.**
 - In the Bronx, the existing wholesale distribution center that handles over 6 billion pounds of food each year is generally only accessible to supermarkets and restaurant suppliers. Next door, the local organization, [GrowNYC is building a food hub](#). This new food hub hopefully will ensure that hyperlocal providers, such as bodegas and corner stores, can access wholesale prices, making fresh foods more cost-effective to stock regularly.
 - Rezoning commercial areas, like the [Jerome Avenue Revitalization Collaborative](#), and [Public Spaces to incorporate local market concepts](#) and food hubs will bring community assets and business opportunities to underutilized areas
 - Pairing local Food Hubs, like GrowNYC, with existing government-sponsored programs like [Shop Healthy NYC!](#) or [Health Bucks](#) can allow for education and marketing of healthy foods accessible to more local food retail operators
- **Barrier: Small food retailers do not know how to sustainably market fresh, healthy foods to allow their businesses to thrive**

- There is an overwhelming lack of marketing and education support for these small, locally, and often immigrant-owned businesses
- Owners have [high overhead costs](#) due to rent, utilities, and labor - and their merchandise is often more expensive due to many stores only being able to shop at market rate distributors; this forces them to concentrate on selling highly processed goods on which they can make a profit, alcohol, lotto, and cigarettes
- The [agreements stores have with food distributors that stock their shelves](#) is necessary due to their lack of logistics infrastructure, which is important for their livelihood, but promotes highly processed food choices to their customers
- Additionally, there is a lack of consumer education, in stores and beyond, that impacts public health and diet-based diseases that proliferate in low-resource communities
- There is an education gap that food is medicine, and what is available in one's close vicinity significantly affects community health outcomes
- **Solution: Training small food retailers to market, store, and sell healthy options more successfully.**
 - Funding and support to complete consumer surveys, compile and share data to determine the level of knowledge, barriers, price points, and favorite options.
 - Investment in community-involved processes, programs that allow to uplift collective decision making and help consumers to recognize better what are the differences seen in their food environment, how [low-resource communities are disproportionately targeted to junk food](#), and pursue their right to advocate for healthy food access
 - Accessibility is the core of improving health; [nutrition education and marketing programs](#) can help show the community how to eat more healthfully, but not everyone realizes that their access is limited - they do not have exposure to the food environment that high-resource communities enjoy.
- **US Federal Government Recommendations:**
 - **Barrier:**
 - The application process to access SNAP benefits is burdensome on people who rely on the benefits
 - **Solutions:**
 - Make the application process easier to get SNAP benefits or make it a central system for benefits (Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, etc.) so that people don't have to submit redundant paperwork for benefits.
 - Those living with Diabetes or other diet-related diseases should automatically qualify for programs like SNAP, making it easier to purchase healthy foods.
- **Recommendations for local, state, territory, and Tribal governments; private companies; nonprofit and community groups; and others**
 - Local/State governments should make it a top priority in their budgets to support and fund programs/projects that address food access and affordability.
 - State government should work with food retailers to provide incentives for stocking healthy food items at affordable prices. (i.e., [FRESH: Food Retail Expansion to Support Health](#))
 - Nutrition needs a holistic approach that includes how your body feels when choosing different diets.
 - Expand SNAP and WIC eligibility and make remote access to services permanent as during the pandemic.

- Establish a hyper-local approach that connects small business owners and various community resources with non-profits and community groups that serve the community.
- Set a price limit on produce sold at local farmer's markets. The federal government should provide more funding to offset additional costs incurred.
- **Barrier:**
 - Community members have shared an increased interest in growing their own food, having control over what they eat, but feeling left out of the community gardens in their neighborhoods.
- **Solution:**
 - There is an opportunity to increase access to community gardens through both an increase in the number of gardens as well as looking into who controls community gardens and how community members get access.
- **Opportunities for public and private sector partners to work together**
 - [H+H \[NYC Health & Hospitals\] Queens partnered with a non-profit](#) to provide farm-fresh food to families with children considered overweight or obese. This is a six-month pilot study; however, more partnerships between the public and private sectors could strengthen food as medicine programs.
 - **Barrier:**
 - Processed/junk food marketing is still disproportionately higher, especially in low-income communities.
 - **Solution:**
 - Private Sector can support more healthy food marketing.
- **Innovative, successful activities already happening at the local, state, territory, and Tribal levels that could inform actions at the Federal level**
 - Programs like [Pharmacy to Farm](#) where those suffering from hypertension are given a prescription for healthy foods by receiving Health Bucks from their pharmacist to purchase healthy foods.
 - Federal level should look at all the work being done by GusNIP grantees.
 - [Health Bucks program in NYC](#)
 - [Healthy Retail - Shop Healthy strategies in NYC](#)
 - [NY Ag & Markets Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#) should expand eligibility.
 - [Assess the food vendors that schools have access](#) to ensure that they have options to choose high-quality, nutritious food.

Pillar 2: Integrate Nutrition and Health

- **Barrier: Healthy options are not affordable at small food retail outlets.**
 - Because these retailers are often not able to access whole foods from their wholesale distributors, they purchase small quantities at close to retail prices from stores like Restaurant Depot to resell with a profit margin; these products end up more expensive for the consumer
 - Since the bodega to supermarket ratio in areas of the Bronx is as high as 1 to 37, it is unreasonably difficult for residents to [access affordable fresh foods](#) within walking distance from their homes

- **Solution: Create a “Bodega Bucks” program where families can purchase healthy options at small food retail outlets in addition to SNAP.**
 - Strengthen [Fresh food prescription programs](#) so families can buy whole food products at local food retail stores, mobile fruit and vegetable vendors, and farmer’s markets.
 - Support more locally owned and operated fresh food distributors like [FRESCH](#), who stock bodegas with healthy options

- **Barrier: Insufficient distributor buy-in and commitment to selling healthy options.**
 - Food system infrastructure supports Coca-cola/frito lay to stock the stores with the products they want - Shelves/Refrigerators are literally PAID for by these companies; we need federal solutions to help balance what is accessible at the local level and the power that large processed food corporations have on what is available on food retail shelves
 - On a nationwide level: [dollar stores provide similar food access as bodegas](#), with processed foods being the majority of products available, which promote poor nutrition and are more prevalent in low-resource [communities](#)

- **Solution: Work with distributors to create incentives for small food retailers to sell healthy options and commit to selling healthy options at a slight discount**
 - Expand and nationalize programs like the [partnership between City Harvest and Fairway supermarkets](#) to sell freshly prepared foods and produce to bodegas in New York City
 - There is a huge need for distributors to sell products to small food retailers at affordable prices - facilitating the ability for bulk purchases split between many retail stores, like the agreement between Baldor and the Bodega Association
 - Some of these solutions are outlined in Food Forward: [A 10-YEAR FOOD POLICY PLAN for NYC](#)
 - Pantries can now order fresh produce through Baldor with a new contract through FeedNYC, we need more incentives for distributors to sell fresh foods at affordable prices not only for food retailers but also for emergency food providers
 - How can we take this concept for healthy food - what is the demand, cost-benefit, and health outcomes - show in numbers to governmental bodies to show that in the long term is more economically viable to sell healthy foods by lower costs of health care, waste collection, other environmental impacts of food processing?
 - [Healthy Bodegas Initiative A Program of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene \(DOHMH\) CEO INTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT](#)
 - [Why Sell Healthy Food?](#)
 - [Philly: Healthy Cornerstores Network w/ City Harvest](#)
 - We need help to get healthy foods on shelves, and national support is essential!

- **Barrier: Lack of community awareness about what to do with unfamiliar healthy foods such as fresh produce and whole grains**
 - With little access to a variety of fresh foods, many community members, especially those who work a lot and have little time to cook from scratch, are unfamiliar with recipes and cooking methods for healthy foods

- **Solution: Expand nutrition education in school and community settings**
 - Expand the food demonstration training program piloted by Bronx Health REACH and BCA Global; these programs train community leaders to offer food demonstrations to food pantry clients and community residents to provide ways to prepare healthy foods with which people are unfamiliar.

- Support nutrition education that extends beyond the benefits of a healthy diet and promotes empowerment and advocacy through learning our food system's history and current state.
- Support nutrition education that promotes cultural understanding by including the meaning and definitions of halal, kosher, plant-based, veganism, and other philosophies in the curriculum.
- **US Federal Government Recommendations:**
 - Funding for school lunches should revert to focusing on hot meals, which in the past have been accepted more among children, as opposed to cold lunches, which a lot of it goes to waste/are not being consumed.
 - **Expand access to healthy, plant-based meal options in K-12 schools**
 - We cannot provide healthy school meals for all until all students – including those who prefer or require plant-based options for religious, ethical, cultural, or health reasons – have options to eat at school. Despite growing demand from students and their families and commendable efforts from many school food operators, plant-based options are typically lacking in school cafeterias. [One analysis of California lunch menus](#) found that meat- and cheese-centric options dominated school meal offerings, with only 4% of entrees being plant-based (and half of those were nut butter and jelly).
 - The USDA should support schools in overcoming the technical, financial, and regulatory barriers to expanding their plant-based offerings. This innovation can diversify protein intake consistent with the DGA recommendations, particularly around lowering processed meat consumption and increasing fiber and legume consumption, and ensure that all students have access to healthy food.
 - **Specifically, we recommend that USDA:**
 - Include the pilot program envisioned by the [Healthy Future Students & Earth Act](#)
 - **(HFSEA) in USDA's newly announced Healthy Food Incentive Fund.** Introduced by Representatives Velázquez and Bowman, in response to requests for more plant-based school meal options from constituents unable to process lactose, the [HFSEA \(H.R.4108\)](#) would establish a new \$10 million voluntary grants program to support school districts in procuring, preparing, and marketing plant-based meal options. This is perfectly aligned with the spirit of the \$100 million Healthy Food Incentive Fund to improve the nutritional quality of meals for students. USDA should devote a portion of this funding to pilot a program modeled after the HFSEA to expand healthy, fiber-rich entree options, bringing student protein, legume, and fiber intake into better alignment with the DGA relative to current NSLP participant intakes.
 - **Adopt regulatory flexibilities at USDA that facilitate plant-based and plant-forward meal options.** As USDA plans to propose new school meal nutrition guidelines in January, the agency should include regulatory flexibilities supported by dozens of school districts and organizations that would make it easier for school food operators to offer plant-forward and plant-based menu offerings.
 - **Offer technical assistance to School Food Authorities** in serving more plant-based foods and fiber-rich entrée options. Food and Nutrition Services could help operators navigate challenges to serving more plant-based foods by offering technical assistance and sharing best practices for procurement, menu development, and marketing plant-based meal offerings.

- Promote state governments in creating model state school wellness policies which include nutrition education
- Greater community buy-in: have community members create the marketing materials. Have the community decide which stores and which foods they want to see.
- Collaborate with one another to strengthen the impact of nutrition education and other food access programs.
- **Opportunities for public and private sector partners to work together**
 - Partner with existing government programs and services to activate underutilized public spaces in ways that leverage existing public resources, services, and programs with the skills, labor, and vision of local residents and community groups with the goal of leveraging vacant and blighted public sites in a long-term, sustainable ways that create healthy affordable choices for consumers
- **Innovative, successful activities already happening at the local, state, territory, and Tribal levels that could inform actions at the Federal level**
 - Leverage place-based food justice initiatives that connect food, culture, and health. Learn from diverse communities about traditional healthy eating and healing practices. Build local spaces that center food production, entrepreneurship, and health as a way of engaging communities
 - Examples of [Youth Ministries for Peace & Justice](#) community development initiatives that aim to address consumer choices by creating opportunities for home-based businesses and "cottage enterprises" to manufacture, distribute and sell healthy, culturally relevant food made by local entrepreneurs: [Bronx River Foodway](#), [Morrison Plaza and Open Market](#), the [Soundview Economic Hub](#), and the redevelopment of the [Amtrak Station at Westchester Ave](#). These sites are known as the Food Sovereignty Network.

Pillar 5: Enhance Nutrition and Food Security Research

- **Barrier: There is limited knowledge of current, accurate assessments of food resources that provide insight to identify where gaps need to be filled.**
 - There are few ways for advocates and community leaders to understand the food environment as it exists currently through mapping or data collection
 - Without these resources, it is impossible to target specific areas that are in greatest need of increased access to fresh food retailers
- **Solution: Map neighborhood food environments**
 - Based on data from food environment maps and consumer surveys, identify gaps that need to be filled; work on policy and zoning incentives to encourage healthier food businesses. Maps would also include food pantries, food boxes, farmer's markets/stands, community fridges, bodegas, grocery stores, and more.
 - Community buy-in through collectively mapping and accessing what is the current state of food in our retail spaces
 - The Bodega Association's idea for the pilot in Hunt's Point would include surveying consumers about what products they want to see in their community. Perhaps this could build in nutrition education when consumers are being asked to provide their recommendations.
- **Barrier: The Department of Health tracks obesity, but no data is collected on malnourishment or lack of food access beside the supermarket to bodega ratio.**

- The data that is collected is often from a small group of people that does not allow for the full story to be understood
- We need to show more than diet-based disease statistics to understand why food insecurity and health disparities remain so entrenched in our communities
- Without data that accurately represents social determinants of health based on food access and economics, it is impossible to gain critical and substantial governmental support for policies and programs that create systemic change and impact improved health outcomes
- **Solution: More robust surveying of previously mapped food resources in contrast with population densities for a better understanding of impacts on urban residents**
 - Take the metrics used on a federal level and translate them to community-based measurements.
 - Investment in more neighborhood-level data collection for robust and accurate implementation of food access and health-based initiatives

Bronx Health REACH Nutrition & Fitness Workgroup June 15th, 2022
Listening session for White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger & Health

This listening session took place virtually on Zoom. There were 15 participants. Participants were all from Bronx-based and Bronx-serving organizations and institutions: local-based community/social service organizations, the Bronx Borough President’s Office, the local health department, Bronx healthcare institutions, an academic institution, a childcare center, a local health promotion non-profit, and a public health initiative associated with leading health institutions.

The workgroup members broke out into three breakout groups focused on pillars 1, 2, and 3 of the White House toolkit – input is outlined below and also recorded here on the Jamboard: [Bronx Health REACH Nutrition & Fitness Workgroup 6.16.22 - input for White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health](#)

The responses to questions #2-5 below have been incorporated into the Bronx Impact Food Access Collective Barriers & Solutions document above.

	Pillar 1: Improve food access and affordability	Pillar 2: Integrate nutrition and health	Pillar 3: Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices
Q1: How has hunger or diet-related disease impacted you, your family, or your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● My family suffers from Diabetes, and we have one of the highest rates of Diabetes in the Bronx. ● The Bronx has the city's highest rates of diabetes and heart disease. ● High rates of hunger and disease impact healthcare costs for communities. Addressing hunger and preventable chronic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ready accessibility of fast food and processed food has created food swamps within our communities and impacted our diets and how we view food. It has made it harder to access nutritious, whole foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The South Bronx has notoriously high rates of diabetes and obesity. There are many reasons for this but making healthier foods more accessible to the community is key

	disease is important for more affordable healthcare.		
Q2: What specific actions should the U.S. Federal government, including the Executive Branch and Congress, take to achieve each pillar? What are the opportunities and barriers to achieving the actions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the application process easier to get SNAP benefits or make it a central system for benefits (Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, etc.) so that people don't have to submit redundant paperwork for benefits. • Those living with Diabetes or other diet-related diseases should automatically qualify for programs like SNAP that would make it easier to purchase healthy foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for school lunches should revert back to focusing on hot meals, which in the past have been accepted more among children, as opposed to cold lunches, which a lot of it goes to waste/are not being consumed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve food policy around marketing and advertising • Funding local food stores to support healthful food initiatives and in-store advertisements of healthful foods to engage the consumers in healthful food purchases • There should be more funding for social marketing ads to compete with the marketing from other large name brands who have more significant budgets to market their less nutrient-dense food products
Q3: What specific actions should local, state, territory and, Tribal governments; private companies; nonprofit and community groups; and others take to achieve each pillar?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local/State governments should make it a top priority in their budgets to support and fund programs/projects that address food access and affordability. • State government should work with food retailers to provide incentives for stocking healthy food items at affordable prices. (i.e., FRESH: Food Retail Expansion to Support Health) • Nutrition needs to have a holistic approach that also includes how your body feels when you choose different types of diets. • Expanding SNAP and WIC eligibility and making remote access to services permanent, as during the pandemic. • Establishing a hyper-local approach that connects small business owners and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it comes to integrating nutrition and health, there should be more nutrition education incorporated among people starting at a younger age. Making it part of the core curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating more funds towards nutrition education, especially for the youth (local & state) • Promote state governments in creating model state school wellness policies which include nutrition education • Greater community buy-in: have community members create the marketing materials. Have the community decide which stores, and which foods they want to see. • Collaborate with one another to strengthen the impact of nutrition education and other food access programs.

	<p>various community resources with non-profits and community groups that serve the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a price limit on produce sold at local farmer's markets. The federal government should provide more funding to offset additional costs incurred. • Community members have shared an increased interest in growing their own food, having control over what they eat, but feeling left out of the community gardens in their neighborhoods. There is an opportunity to increase access to community gardens through both an increase in the number of gardens as well as looking into who controls community gardens and how community members get access. 		
<p>Q4: What are opportunities for public- and private-sector partners to work together to achieve each pillar?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H+H [Health & Hospitals] Queens partnered with a non-profit to provide farm-fresh food to families with children who are considered overweight or obese. This is a six-month pilot study; however, more partnerships between the public and private sectors could strengthen food as medicine programs. • Private Sector can support more healthy food marketing. Processed/junk food marketing is still disproportionately higher, especially in low-income communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking physical activity and nutrition to focus on and teach the mind and body connection when it comes to how we feel when we consume certain foods and how that impacts our physical activity. • Create more "Food as Medicine" or "produce prescription" programs that provide wraparound services (including cooking, snacking, shopping, and take-out guides) to guide consumers in shifting personal health outcomes through diet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with existing government programs and services to activate underutilized public spaces in ways that leverage existing public resources, services, and programs with the skills, labor, and vision of local residents and community groups with the goal of leveraging vacant and blighted public sites in long-term, sustainable ways that create healthy, affordable choices for consumers

<p>Q5: What are innovative, successful activities already happening at the local, state, territory, and Tribal levels that could inform actions at the Federal level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs like Pharmacy to Farm where those suffering from hypertension are given a prescription for healthy foods by receiving Health Bucks from their pharmacist to purchase healthy foods. ● Federal level should look at all the work being done by GusNIP grantees. ● Health Bucks program in NYC; Healthy Retail - Shop Healthy strategies in NYC. NY Ag & Markets FMNP program should expand eligibility. ● Assess the food vendors that schools have access to ensure that they have options to choose high-quality, nutritious food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Monday Campaigns: has provided students with the ability to learn how to cook using healthy ingredients, exposing them to whole foods that they didn't realize could taste good. ● Teachers College, Columbia University has a searchable database of nutrition education programs, the Food-Ed Hub. ● The WELL (Wellness, Equity, and Learning Legislation) campaign from Teachers College, Columbia University for a model state school wellness policy, would reinforce for school districts within states to follow the school wellness policy regulations of the USDA put forward through the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act. In New York, legislation is sponsored by Senator Biaggi and by Assemblyman Benedetto 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leveraging place-based food justice initiatives that connect food, culture, and health. Learn from diverse communities about traditional healthy eating and healing practices. Build local spaces that center on food production, entrepreneurship, and health as a way of engaging communities ● Examples of Youth Ministries for Peace & Justice community development initiatives that aim to address consumer choices by creating opportunities for home-based businesses and "cottage enterprises" to manufacture, distribute and sell healthy, culturally relevant food made by local entrepreneurs: Bronx River Foodway, Morrison Plaza and Open Market, the Soundview Economic Hub, and the redevelopment of the Amtrak Station at Westchester Ave. These sites are collectively referred to as a Food Sovereignty Network
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