

## Data Resources for Food Systems Assessments

Data exists in many different forms and can be used in various ways to assess and evaluate food systems. Due to the complex nature of food systems, there are numerous places to start regarding understanding existing conditions and needs within community food systems. The food system is comprised of five different sectors ranging from production to resource management, typically viewed as a cycle or process. Similarly, food systems are embedded in our communities and both impacts, and are impacted by, community assets such as our economies, natural and built environment, and equitable resource and decision-making abilities.

This resource is meant to support organizations that are looking for a starting place for developing assessments, maps, and other analysis of local and regional food systems related to food systems sectors and community assets.

The matrix below details links to secondary data sources at the national, state and county levels and suggests place-based organizations that may be able to support in understanding your community food system.

The resource first details quantitative data collection through both primary and secondary sources. It includes resources related to community asset areas of equity, economy, environment, education, wellness and policy and then goes into specific food sectors of production, processing, distribution, consumption and resource management. The last section describes additional primary data research that can be conducted through interviews, focus groups, etc.

The goal of this resource is to continue to highlight the breadth of data that is available as a starting point to understanding your community context. However, it is suggested that you also understand your community's desires, vision and mission relating to your specific food system area of concern prior to starting. The amount of data available can be overwhelming, and the more this can be homed in, the more strategic data aggregation and analysis will be.

If you have suggestions to additional resources, or questions regarding the tools shared in this resource, please reach out.

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The tables below identify national, regional and local areas to begin your research. In the resources and indicators column, you can find example reports as well as indicators that may be relevant to that area of research.

The first table indicates secondary data sources. Don't forget to also consider previous reports that may have been completed in local and regional areas. These types of reports are helpful to review and indicate in assessments, as well as respecting and highlighting the previous work that has been completed with community resources.

## Quantitative Data

### Primary data collection options

- Surveys + Polls: develop specific questions related to the food system for particular populations- this might be useful for understanding consumer behaviors, priorities around food markets, changes or trends in habits, etc.

### Secondary data collection:

	National	Regional	Local	Resources + Indicators
<b>Community Assets</b>				
<b>Equity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://data.gov">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.americanfactfinder.gov/">American Fact Finder</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/">USDA Food Access Research Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.census.gov/">Census</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.hud.gov/economic-development/housing-market-analysis/">HUD – Housing Market Analysis</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.worldbank.org/">World Bank</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions</li> <li>• State Department of Housing</li> <li>• State Department of Justice</li> <li>• State Department of Labor</li> <li>• State Department of Health and Human Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Municipality Zoning</li> <li>• Local Government Planning</li> <li>• County Extension</li> <li>• Civil Rights Committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Equity Assessment Tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MSW USC Diversity Toolkit</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Building Movement: Sources of Power</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racial Equity Tools</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racial Equity Tools: Community Assessment</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Bureau of Labor Statistics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Feeding America</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Nutritional Service</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Opportunity Zones</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Department of Cultural Affairs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Equity Atlas</a></li> </ul>
<b>Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">American Fact Finder</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Census</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bureau of Economic Research (Department of Commerce)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">World Bank</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bureau of Labor Statistics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Economic Indicators</li> <li>• State Rural Development Program</li> <li>• Department of Commerce</li> <li>• Economic Development Authority</li> <li>• Small Business Administration</li> <li>• Small Business Development Centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• County Extension</li> <li>• Previous Economic Studies</li> <li>• Community Foundations</li> <li>• Research Institutions/ Land Grant Colleges</li> <li>• <a href="#">Example, Iowa</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Local Food Economics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Local Food Economics, Metrics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AgMrc Business Development</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AgMrc Product Analysis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AgMrc Prices and Profitability Models</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Small Business Administration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Economic and Policy Analysis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm Service Agency and Disaster Assistance</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Energy Information Administration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NOAA Fisheries</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Place (cities and towns)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MapGeo</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Open Street Map</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Opportunity Zones</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farmland Protection</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Department of Agriculture</li> <li>• State Department of Housing and Urban Development</li> <li>• State Department of Transportation</li> <li>• State Department of Energy</li> <li>• Farm Service Agencies</li> <li>• Department of Public Health tracking programs</li> <li>• <a href="#">Example: Iowa</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Parks and Recreation; Planning Departments</li> <li>• County Extension</li> <li>• County Resource and Conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Disaster Reference Guide- Farmers, Ranchers and Communities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Conservation Programs</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">US EPA: Environmental Indicators in environmental justice screening</a></li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">WorldBank Education Statistics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Center for Educational Statistics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Department of Education</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education Data Portal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Common Core of Data: American Public Schools</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Department of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Extension</li> <li>• Local Private and Public Schools (K-12) / community college/ university reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Census</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Educational indicators from OECD</a></li> </ul>
<b>Wellness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Health Data</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community hospitals/ public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Office of Disease Prevention and Health</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">World Health Organization</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Center for Disease Control and Prevention</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Choose My Plate</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Nutritional Service</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Food and Nutrition</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Census of Agriculture</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Healthy Food Access Portal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">State of Childhood Obesity</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Food Access Research Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: Healthy People Data</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Department of Public Health</li> <li>• Department of Public Health tracking programs</li> <li>• <a href="#">Example, Iowa</a></li> </ul>	<p>health needs assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Extension</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Promotion: Healthy People and Social Determinants of Health</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Center for Disease Control Health Indicators</a></li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">HUD – Housing Market Analysis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Congress.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm Bill</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Healthy Food Access Portal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">State of Childhood Obesity- policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Local Government Food Policy Database</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm Bill</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Database</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">State Legislature Websites</a></li> <li>• State Policies</li> <li>• State Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Department of Public Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Municipality Zoning</li> <li>• Local Government</li> <li>• County Extension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Farmland Trust: Laws by local, state and federal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food Systems Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Municipal Zoning for Local Foods (In Iowa)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Economic and Policy Analysis</a></li> </ul>
<b>Resilience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Johns Hopkins- Coronavirus Resource Center</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">World Health Organization: COVID-19</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Track the Recovery</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">FEMA Disaster Information</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Disaster Resource Center</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Johns-Hopkins State Coronavirus</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">FEMA Disaster Declarations</a></li> <li>• State Public Health</li> <li>• State Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Institutions and Research Organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Municipality Zoning</li> <li>• Local Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">COVID-19 Economic Impact on Local Food Markets</a></li> </ul>

**Food System Sectors:**

- [Food Systems Dashboard](#)
- [Food Systems Indicators](#)
- [USDA AMS Local and Regional Foods](#)
  - [Maps](#)
- [Community Commons Maps](#)
- [ATTRA. NCAT Local Food Systems](#)
- [Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute Indicator Maps](#)

<p><b>Production</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Census of Agriculture</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AgMrc Food Searcher Tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food Safety.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm Service Agency</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Open Data Catalog</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA AMS Farmers and Ranchers Market Maker</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Food Directories</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cooperative Statistics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farmland Protection</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NOAA Fisheries</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Department of Agriculture</li> <li>• <a href="#">State Food Safety guidelines</a></li> <li>• Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Market Maker</li> <li>• Farm Service Agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local food directories</li> <li>• Local city and county planning offices</li> <li>• Master gardener programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cooperative Feasibility Study Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farmland Trust: Laws by local, state and federal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Food Safety Modernization Act</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">North Central Region Center for FSMA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">AgMrc Product Analysis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ATTRA. NCAT Sustainable Agriculture Podcasts</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Processing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">USDA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Open Data Catalog</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Market Maker</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Department of Agriculture</li> <li>• <a href="#">State Food Safety guidelines</a></li> <li>• Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Market Maker</li> <li>• Farm Service Agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local processing businesses (specialty crops/ dairy/ meat)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Food Safety Modernization Act</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">North Central Region Center for FSMA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Niche Meat Processing</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Distribution</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Market Maker</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Census</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA AMS Aggregating and Distribution:</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA AMS Directories</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Department of Agriculture</li> <li>• <a href="#">State Food Safety guidelines</a></li> <li>• Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• State Market Maker</li> <li>• Farm Service Agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local food hub/ CSA/ and other directories</li> <li>• Regional distributors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Food Safety Modernization Act</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">North Central Region Center for FSMA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">New England Farm to Institution Metrics Dashboard</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Consumption</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Food and Nutritional Service</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Community Tools</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Census</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Institutions; County Extension</li> <li>• State Department of Public Health</li> <li>• State WIC/ SNAP/ and food assistance programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local restaurant/ business directories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Community Food Systems</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farm to School Network</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">USDA ERS: Food Environment Atlas</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">USDA Food Access Research Atlas</a></li> </ul>			
<b>Resource Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Data.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Feeding America</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Farmland Protection</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NOAA Fisheries</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Waste Management Authorities</li> <li>• State Energy Agencies</li> <li>• State Conservation Programs and Department of Natural Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landfills</li> <li>• Waste Management and compost programs</li> <li>• Energy Businesses</li> <li>• County Resource and Conservation</li> <li>• Food Donation businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Food Waste Reduction Alliance</a></li> </ul>

## Qualitative Data

### Primary Data Collection

- Coalition notes/ feedback
- Network analysis
  - [Department of Health: Force Field Analysis](#)
- Focus groups
- Interviews (track various responses through a spreadsheet similar to below)
  - *IF you are interested in social networks/ trust building- consider network analysis mapping and surveying coalitions on trust developed and various areas of connection.*

*Suggestion: Create a table and make a matrix of who to reach out to in communities*

<b>Community Asset Areas</b>					
<b>Equity</b>					
<b>Business Name</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Economy</b>					
<b>Environment</b>					
<b>Education</b>					
<b>Wellness</b>					
<b>Policy</b>					

<b>Food System Sectors</b>					
<b>Production</b>					
<b>Business Name</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Transformation + Processing</b>					
<b>Distribution</b>					
<b>Consumption</b>					
<b>Resource Management</b>					

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