

THE FOOD SYSTEM IN SHAWNEE COUNTY



The availability and accessibility of healthy food is shaped by activities occurring across all the stages of a community's food system, from growing/raising produce, animals, and pollinators; to how food is processed or prepared for sale or distribution; to what food outlets are available and easy to get to; to how surplus and waste is minimized or recycled. These activities are in turn influenced and shaped by local government laws and systems.

GROW - The process of growing and harvesting fruits, vegetables, and other forms of foods; and raising or keeping animals and insects for food production or pollination; whether for personal or commercial purposes in urban, suburban, or rural areas (e.g. backyard to large farms). Includes protecting and providing access to resources needed to carry out this process, such as access to land.

PROCESS - The function of turning fresh produce, honey, meat, fish, and other animal-related foods into forms ready for sale, including through restaurants (and other commercial settings), including value-added processing that changes the physical form of the product (e.g., making berries into jam), and packaging and marketing.

DISTRIBUTE - The process of transporting and delivering food to wholesale, retail, institutional, and other food access points (such as food shelves, food pantries or food banks). Includes the use of marketing strategies, such as labeling, pricing, placement, promotions, "sell-by" and similar dates, and other marketing techniques; and includes decisions about what types of food will be made available to the consumer, such as procurement decisions.

ACCESS - Facilities, activities, practices, and systems that affect people's ability to obtain and consume healthy food including those that affect:

- The types of food access points available, including food stores of all varieties, restaurants, farmers' markets, feeding programs, food shelf/pantry or food bank locations. The accessibility of or to food access points, including density or number of outlets; accessibility by bicyclists and pedestrians; and proximity to transit routes and neighborhoods.
- What foods are available within access points, including standards or practices that impact the nutritional quality, cultural relevance, value, attractiveness, and other factors relating to appeal and health.

- The affordability of food, including the acceptance of SNAP and WIC.

PREPARE - Baking, boiling, bottling, canning, cooking, and otherwise making food for private consumption, family gatherings, and other non-commercial purposes.

WASTE MANAGEMENT - the process of food recovery, including gleaning; this category also includes minimizing, composting, and recycling of food waste or surplus.

Source: Minnesota Food Charter. Food Access Planning Guide.