



# Maryland's Food System

## Opportunities For Growth

Food cycles through the five sectors below, and impacts our **economy, health, and environment.**

### PRODUCTION

Maryland's farm economy accounts for **\$2.3 billion** annually, of which only 1.2% are direct sales.



### DISTRIBUTION

**Food hubs** and **wholesale auctions** are efficient ways to connect farmers to consumers.



### ACCESS

In 2008, only 3 farmers' markets accepted SNAP benefits. In **2015, there were 120.**



### CONSUMPTION

The DC/Baltimore Metro region spends about **\$26 billion** on food annually, but only 0.1% on local products.



### RECOVERY

Of the nearly **1 million tons** of food wasted annually, **much can be safely repurposed.**





## ECONOMY

The economic impact of food in Maryland is vast: retailers, farmers, fishermen, chefs, servers, truck drivers, artisans, and entrepreneurs among others all contribute to this growing enterprise. However, while there is significant growth in the business of food, there also remains untapped and unrealized potential for communities all throughout the state.



### AGRICULTURE

**\$2.27 billion** Total market value of agricultural products sold in 2012

Maryland's agricultural sector accounted for over **22,000 jobs** (including forestry)



### FARM TO SCHOOL

If all K-12 school districts in Maryland spent 20% of their budget on local food,

**\$21 million**

would be put back into the local economy

The 25 major universities in the state spend an average of

**\$78 million** on local food



### FOOD DEMAND



According to the 2009 American Community Survey, the Washington-Baltimore-Northern Virginia statistical area is the 4th largest combined statistical area in the United States



Total population:  
**8,924,087**



Total income:  
**\$339 billion**



Total annual food expenditures:  
**\$26 billion**



## FOOD & PUBLIC HEALTH

Access to and consumption of food has a direct relationship with the public's health. Where we eat, what we eat, how we eat, and even if we will have access to adequate food are all questions that communities grapple with on a daily basis. The prevalence of food deserts and food insecurity creates significant disparities in population health, especially with diet-related disease and illness.

## NUTRITION & HEALTH DISPARITIES

*Food plays a critical role in maintaining a healthy weight and preventing chronic disease.*



**29.6%**  
of Maryland residents are obese.



Nearly  
**1 in 10**  
residents suffer from diabetes.



**\$13.8B**  
Amount Maryland could save by 2030 if BMIs were lowered by 5%.

African-Americans are  
**1.5 times**  
more likely  
to be obese than whites.

## FOOD SECURITY



**11.4%**  
of Maryland residents are food insecure.



**365,000**  
children  
are at risk of hunger.



**11.8%** of African-Americans rely on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) compared to just 3.6% of whites.



**13.6%** of Maryland seniors are threatened by hunger  
This is a total of 140,463 of Maryland's seniors who reported having limited access to adequate food.



## ENVIRONMENT

The food system significantly impacts both the natural and built environment. Population increases, changes in dietary preferences, and accelerating migration to cities are adding pressures to the food system. Farmland is in conflict with development. Water scarcity is an impending threat in some counties in the state. Food deserts limit access to healthy foods. There are many opportunities to reduce these stresses and strengthen the capability of the food system to successfully bring healthy and nutritious food to all. It will require collaboration, creative solutions, commitment, and policy.

## FOOD WASTE



The quantity of food wasted every day in Maryland would fill an **entire football stadium.**

*(Johnathan Bloom, "American Wasteland")*

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



Watershed health is either **fair or poor** in all but **two** census tracks across the entire state.

### BUILT ENVIRONMENT



**27%** of Maryland residents live in a food desert.



**75%** of Marylanders living in food deserts are low-income.