



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

CENTER FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

# Healthy Food, Safe Food: Striking the Balance

FALL 2016



# Healthy Food, Safe Food: Striking the Balance

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Listening Session and Focus Group Participants

## Other Key Partners:

- Farmers Market Leadership Team
- Farm to School Leadership Team
- Governors' Food Safety and Defense Task Force
- Minnesota Food Charter Network
- Minnesota Food Safety Partnership
- Minnesota Local Foods Advisory Committee
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture Food and Dairy Division
- Minnesota Department of Health Food, Pools, and Lodging Program

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## BACKGROUND

Minnesota is rated as one of the healthiest states in the nation, but not all Minnesotans have the same chances to be healthy. Those with less money, populations of color, and American Indians consistently have less opportunity for health and experience worse health outcomes ([Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature, 2014](#)). One effective strategy to create opportunities to be healthy is to increase access to healthy, safe food — yet there are many barriers to address.

One barrier is Minnesota’s regulatory infrastructure. Ironically, attempts to improve food access and availability can be hindered by some of the rules, regulations, and policies designed to keep people safe from foodborne illness. On the other hand, increasing access to more healthful foods at places like farmers markets and childcare facilities brings forth the need for food safety education and strengthening of food safety practices. In order to better understand the tensions between increasing access to healthy food and ensuring that food is safe, two statewide organizations came together to conduct a comprehensive, action-oriented study.

### The Healthy Food, Safe Food Project

The Healthy Food, Safe Food (HFSF) Project is a partnership between University of Minnesota Extension and Minnesota Department of Health’s Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives (OSHII). HFSF’s goal was to conduct a formative evaluation to aid in developing a plan of action to address regulatory barriers to improve access to healthy foods, while simultaneously maintaining and enhancing food safety. HFSF was supported by funding from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) administered by Extension and in-kind contributions from OSHII.

### Why SNAP-Ed and SHIP?

Both SNAP-Ed staff and SHIP staff implement policy, systems and environmental (PSE) strategies aimed at creating healthier communities and advancing health equity. SNAP-Ed works to make the healthy choice the easy choice for Minnesotans with limited financial resources. Through the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), OSHII provides funding and support to tribal nations, counties, and rural and urban communities throughout Minnesota to address the leading causes of chronic disease, disability and death.

SNAP-Ed and SHIP staff work across disciplines and sectors such as farming, food policy, food safety, business, food science, emergency preparedness, hunger, nutrition, public health law, food sovereignty, healthcare, worksites, child care, human services, and housing.

SHIP and SNAP-Ed staff do similar work, and they collaborate with each other and each other’s partners. As SHIP and SNAP-Ed staff work to “make the healthy choice the easy choice” for Minnesota residents, especially those with the least access and limited financial resources, and to engage communities in upstream public health efforts that focus on prevention, they encounter barriers and challenges in the regulatory infrastructure of the existing food system. The type and similarity of SNAP-Ed and SHIP’s work are two reasons Extension and MDH choose to collaborate on this project.

Another reason is that both Extension and public health staff at the local and regional level have been asked to take on larger roles in changing policies, systems, and environments, to increase access to healthy, safe, affordable food in Minnesota communities. The Healthy Food, Safe Food Project is designed to provide an action guide, toolkits, and other resources to collaborate with partners to create solutions when there are conflicts between food access and food regulations.

## HFSF PROJECT GOALS

The purpose of this study is to identify:

- **Existing food safety rules, regulations, and policies** that hinder Minnesotans from making healthy food choices.
- **Potential food safety rules, regulations, and policies** that, if implemented, would make it easier for Minnesotans to make healthy food choices.
- **Potential efforts** to both ensure food safety and make it easier for Minnesotans to choose healthy foods.
- **Potential training and resources** that would help local SHIP and other public health employees, as well as Extension employees, work with community partners to change policies, systems, and environments.

After identifying these four factors, the next key step is to create and implement a plan of action to make healthy foods accessible to all Minnesotans while maintaining food safety.

In order to achieve these goals, the focus groups and interviews were designed to learn about rules, regulations, and policies that hinder Minnesotans from making healthy food choices, as well as what changes would make it easier for Minnesotans to make healthy food choices while also ensuring food safety. Participants were asked what training, knowledge, and resources would help make PSE changes related to healthy, safe food, including system changes that would make it easier to provide wider access to healthy, safe food — especially to people with the least access.

Participants were also asked for direction and guidance on the top priorities for a plan of action to implement recommendations resulting from the HFSF project. The project sponsors met to review guidance from the participants and provide direction for action plan priorities.

## METHODS

Between July 2015 and July 2016, the HFSF project team conducted a listening session, key informant interviews, and focus groups, followed by analysis and planning meetings. The qualitative data collected from these sessions were analyzed for major themes and regulatory barriers. Then the barriers were cross-referenced for actual impact on food access, and further information was gathered from experts in food safety, food access, nutrition, business, and related sectors in two subsequent focus groups. The project team also asked an adult educator who has direct experience with health inequities to review the HFSF project with a health equity lens.

### Participants

People engaged in the research included those:

- Involved in feeding others or working on systems to create a healthier, safer, more equitable, food environment in Minnesota.
- With an understanding of the importance of a safe, healthy food system.
- From a wide variety of fields and functions, including farming, housing, hunger relief, food distribution, public health, bio-security, and many other sectors that have a role in the food system.

## Key Stakeholders and Partners

In addition to University of Minnesota Extension and the Minnesota Department of Health Statewide Health Improvement Program, key stakeholders and partners in the Healthy Foods, Safe Foods project were:

- Minnesota Food Charter Network
- Minnesota Department of Health Food, Pools and Lodging Services
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture Dairy and Food Inspection Division
- Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
- Minnesota Food Safety Partnership
- Metro Food Access Network
- Public Health Law Center at Mitchell Hamline School of Law
- Minnesota Food Safety and Defense Task Force
- Minnesota Local Foods Advisory Committee
- Minnesota Farm to School Leadership Team
- Food businesses and providers
- Organizations working to advance health equity
- Other state agencies

## Timeline

- Listening session with 12 U of M Extension Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program staff, which informed how the HFSF project team would proceed with the key informant interviews.
- Interviews with 28 key informants, i.e., individuals from various sectors and disciplines who provided systems or special perspectives on increasing access to healthy, safe food.
- Key informant interview group analysis meeting with the seven interviewers who conducted these interviews; this analysis informed the direction for the focus groups.
- Four focus groups with 34 staff members from SNAP-Ed and SHIP (tribal and non-tribal public health agencies).
- Focus group with six people who provide food across Minnesota (from farm, mobile food, emergency food, child care, school food service, and community kitchen settings).
- Mini-focus group with two food safety regulatory staff members.
- Project prioritization session with 14 project sponsors and other team members.

Summaries of the listening session, key informant interviews, and focus groups, as well as the health equity review, are available here: <http://z.umn.edu/hfsf>. The outcome of the project prioritization session and plan of action are included at the end of this report.



## FINDINGS

Participants reported several challenges to the project team.

Food regulations and regulatory systems emphasize:

- Safe foods over healthy foods.
- Compliance over support and education.

Food safety rules, regulations and policies:

- Are important and essential but also complicated and can be confusing.
- Generate fear of liability and enforcement.
- Contribute to food waste.
- Create barriers to food sampling, demonstrations, and teaching.
- Limit healthy food options for vending machines, concession stands, school birthday parties, etc.
- Limit child care providers from offering healthier foods.
- Are hard to navigate for food business operators and other food providers implementing innovative and new kinds of healthy food access business models and strategies.
- Food safety regulations increase costs for child care providers, food shelves, schools, and small businesses.

Furthermore, making PSE changes within the food system can be overwhelming for local public health, Extension, and tribal health staff.

Participants reported other challenges to the HFSF project team that are being addressed outside of the project:

- Lack of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-certified butchers and meat-processing facilities.
- Difficulties experienced by growers in obtaining USDA GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) or organic certification and selling their produce to retail and institutional organizations.
- Issues related to tribal food sovereignty and food code development.





## GOALS GENERATED BY PARTICIPANTS

Based on the challenges related to food regulations and PSE work, participants recommended 10 goals, each with a number of objectives.

GOAL 1. PROMOTE A CULTURAL AND MENTAL MODEL SHIFT TO WHERE FOOD INSPECTORS, PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, AND FOOD ACCESS STAFF COLLABORATE TO SUPPORT HEALTHY, SAFE FOOD.	
CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>The food regulatory system emphasizes safe foods over healthy foods and compliance over support. Here's how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulators have no role in promoting healthy foods.</li> <li>Licensees and potential licensees fear food safety inspectors.</li> <li>People in the food system don't understand the why behind food safety regulations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote policies that change and balance the role of inspectors from enforcers to technical assistants.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide training for community health staff and inspectors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look to the food shelves for another model of how to do food safety inspections, where inspectors play a supportive role.</li> <li>Provide interdisciplinary peer-networking opportunities.</li> </ul>

GOAL 2. MAKE MINNESOTA'S FOOD SAFETY SYSTEM AND RULES EASIER TO NAVIGATE, UNDERSTAND, AND INTERPRET CONSISTENTLY.	
CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations and policies are complicated and confusing. Here's how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple agencies and jurisdictions have conflicting and overlapping authority.</li> <li>People (both operators and staff) are not sure whom to contact for information.</li> <li>Inspectors interpret rules inconsistently.</li> <li>Agencies have not worked out who is doing what, where there is overlap, where there are gaps, or how to work together.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Push to address healthy, safe food at the national level through the Food Safety Modernization Act, FDA, and USDA.</li> <li>Work for more consistent, scaled-to-risk, common-sense food safety policies across the state.</li> <li>Push to coordinate all food safety regulations under one organization and/or strengthen and better integrate the current system of state and local partnerships.</li> <li>Make it easier for child care providers to serve healthy foods.</li> <li>Clarify rules about breast milk across all jurisdictions so it is always a food, not a bodily fluid.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication and Cooperation</b></p> <p>Hold high-level conversations among agencies working on food safety and nutrition to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How parties working for food safety and nutrition can work together.</li> <li>How agencies can help each other.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulatory overlap, inconsistencies, and communications gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an information clearinghouse and hotline for food code regulations and food safety information. This would be the go-to place for information about regulations and funding for all agencies, including MDH, MDA, USDA, MDE, DHS, DEED, U of M, etc.</li> <li>Create clear entry points for businesses and other food providers, as well as parties providing resources and assistance, to make it easier to navigate the system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen relationships between SHIP and SNAP-Ed.</li> <li>Encourage SHIP and SNAP-Ed to get to know their sanitarians (food inspectors).</li> <li>Encourage state-level experts to get to know field staff from SHIP and SNAP-Ed, so field staff feel comfortable asking questions</li> <li>When implementing this statewide plan of action, work across agencies, including MDH, MDA, MDE, DHS, DEED, and U of M. Listen to and include community members, especially those who normally do not have a voice in decision-making.</li> </ul>
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GOAL 3. ADDRESS MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT APPROVED FOOD SOURCES.	
CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations, and policies are complicated and confusing. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misperceptions exist about approved food sources.</li> <li>Foods from local farmers and farmers markets are not approved food sources.</li> <li>Food shelves cannot accept garden produce or donated venison.</li> <li>Schools cannot use foods from school gardens.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require preferential purchasing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach inspectors, hospitals, schools, and retailers about approved sources.</li> <li>Address concerns about liability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate accurate information widely and consistently among regulated parties, SHIP, SNAP-Ed, and state and local regulators.</li> </ul>



**GOAL 4. SUPPORT NEW FOOD BUSINESSES IN THE LICENSING PROCESS.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations, and policies are complicated and confusing, and licensing new food businesses is difficult.</p>	<p><b>Systems, Materials, and Key Contacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it easier for licensees to know what is required and what they need to do to implement their vision; provide technical assistance in navigating the system.</li> <li>• Develop resource materials that licensing agencies and agencies that serve businesses can give to licensees, showing where they can get additional help.</li> <li>• Secure state-level support for a healthy, fresh food distribution system, especially for urban and rural areas with low food access and high health disparities.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 5. DECREASE FEAR OF ENFORCEMENT AND OF BEING LIABLE FOR FOODBORNE ILLNESSES.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations and policies generate fear of liability and enforcement among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHIP and SNAP-Ed employees.</li> <li>• Cities, counties, schools, hospitals, child care providers, and food shelves.</li> <li>• Food businesses.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a law that protects Extension and MDH (SHIP) employees and their organizations from liability.</li> <li>• Create a law that protects community gardens, including gardens on school grounds, from liability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make food safety education, tools, and resources available and easy to access.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities for collaboration among staff from SHIP, Extension, business, and regulatory agencies in group and one-on-one settings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a clear regulatory process for triage and second opinions where there are differences between licensees and regulators or where there are needs for input through the organizational structure.</li> </ul>



**GOAL 6. REDUCE FOOD WASTE AND ENCOURAGE FOOD REDISTRIBUTION.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations, and policies contribute to food waste in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNAP-Ed and SHIP sites.</li> <li>• Schools.</li> <li>• Stores and restaurants.</li> <li>• Food shelves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a waiver that clients would sign in order to take food home after classes or demonstrations.</li> <li>• Support liability insurance for food recovery and distribution efforts.</li> <li>• Create a policy and incentives or change systems to make it easy for stores to redistribute healthy foods.</li> <li>• Push to change large grocers' bylaws so donated foods can be distributed outside, as well as inside, the community.</li> <li>• Require large institutions to compost pre- and post-consumer food waste.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide materials that clarify liability and regulations related to food redistribution for different players, including restaurants, stores, gardeners, farmers, and food shelves.</li> <li>• Provide materials that clarify what the Good Samaritan Law covers, who is covered; these points could be included in handout described in the following point.</li> <li>• Provide a handout for SNAP-Ed and SHIP staff to share with food shelves, farmers, grocers, and restaurants on the financial and other benefits of donating food.</li> <li>• Provide talking points about the benefits of redistributing food for MDH (SHIP) and Extension (SNAP-Ed) to use when approaching potential donors.</li> <li>• Provide materials that address the transmission of foodborne illnesses through compost.</li> </ul> <p><b>Models and Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out how other organizations, such as Carleton College and Minnesota State University in Mankato, deal with liability and food redistribution and create a way for others to do the same, including Extension.</li> </ul> <p><b>Technical Assistance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance to groups trying to repurpose foods.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance to American Indian tribes that consider certain foods sacred.</li> </ul>



**GOAL 7. SUPPORT FOOD SAMPLING AND DEMONSTRATIONS.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations and policies create barriers to food sampling, demonstrations and teaching.</p> <p>Food code regulations governing sampling and demonstrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are confusing, cumbersome, and expensive.</li> <li>• Generate fear.</li> <li>• Limit what professionals can or are willing to do.</li> </ul> <p>There are also organizational barriers to demonstrating foods, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisions in Minnesota statute 28A 151 that make it hard for food shelves to offer food demonstrations.</li> <li>• Lack of three-compartment sinks required for food demonstrations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create common sense food safety rules for food sampling, particularly in food shelves.</li> <li>• Modify the statutory exemption in Minnesota statute 28A.151 to make it easier for food shelves to offer food demonstrations and sampling.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund more mobile kitchens.</li> <li>• Fund more three-compartment sinks.</li> <li>• Fund more community kitchens.</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials</b></p> <p>Create materials to support MDH (SHIP) and Extension (SNAP-Ed) educational offerings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A “cheat sheet” for what is needed to do food demonstrations.</li> <li>• Curriculum specific to food safety.</li> <li>• A range of recipes for demonstrations that are most likely to be safe and appeal to different populations.</li> <li>• A list of foods that are least likely to present food safety issues, so those can be used in demonstrations.</li> <li>• Curriculum to educate parents in quick, healthy, safe, cost-effective food selection and preparation.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 8. SUPPORT HEALTHIER SAFE FOODS IN VENDING MACHINES, CONCESSION STANDS, AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations, and policies limit healthy food options for vending machines, concession stands, school birthday parties, etc. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools require birthday treats to be pre-packaged and purchased at a store or catered through the school.</li> <li>• It is hard to find healthy and stable options for concession stands at school events.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <p>Push for policies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease access to sugar sweetened beverages, including a state tax.</li> <li>• Increase the healthiness of NAPS boxes.</li> <li>• Address corn and sugar subsidy levels.</li> <li>• Subsidize fruits and vegetables.</li> <li>• Require labeling of DV% of sugar per serving.</li> </ul>



	<p><b>Marketing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create marketing campaigns for healthy foods.</li> </ul> <p><b>New Options</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with food companies or the University to create healthy foods that are quick, easy, cheap, and stable.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>Create strategies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNAP-Ed and SHIP staff to work with communities to move from safe foods to healthy <i>and</i> safe foods in vending machines, school concession stands, etc.</li> <li>• Making healthier foods more affordable.</li> </ul>
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GOAL 9. SUPPORT NEW FOOD BUSINESSES IN THE LICENSING PROCESS.	
CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Food safety rules, regulations, and policies limit child care providers from offering healthier foods. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care providers fear regulators, so they avoid seeking information.</li> <li>• Child care providers must have a three-compartment sink to offer safe, healthy foods.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify breast milk rules across all jurisdictions so it is always a food, not a bodily fluid.</li> <li>• Assess food safety requirements for child care providers to serve healthier foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer training to child care providers on providing safe, healthy foods.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidize three-compartment sinks at child care provider sites.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 10. SUPPORT SNAP-ED AND SHIP STAFF IN CONDUCTING PSE ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT HEALTHY, SAFE FOOD IMPLEMENTATION.**

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
<p>Conducting PSE (policy, systems and environmental) change activities within the food system can be overwhelming for MDH, Extension and tribal health staff. This is because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The food system is complicated.</li> <li>• It is difficult to know where to start and what would make a difference.</li> <li>• It is incredibly time consuming, and staff question whether the work is rewarded.</li> <li>• Some staff do not feel they have the power or the resources to make change.</li> <li>• Some staff believe their role is education, not policy change. Sometimes the line between advocacy and education is not clear.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clarify support and roles by answering these questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do leaders of these organizations want staff to work on?</li> <li>• Is it the employees' role to influence policies or ordinances?</li> <li>• How can work like this be justified in Extension's promotion and tenure system, which rewards working on programs and quick outcomes?</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide direction and concrete guidance on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to change food policy.</li> <li>• How to create a healthy food culture.</li> <li>• What staff could do that would make a difference.</li> </ul> <p><b>Garner resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Push for long-term consistent funding for infrastructure and staff to support these efforts.</li> <li>• Allow more flexibility with grant funds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support time and staff positions to do PSE work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create new positions.</li> <li>• Select educators and specialists interested in policy.</li> <li>• Create SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis team that could go from community to community to implement the Minnesota Food Charter.</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide training on PSE work for MDH (SHIP) and Extension (SNAP-Ed) staff. Training should cover:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food safety, food policy, and ways to do this work in the field.</li> <li>• Rules governing child care providers, food shelves, community kitchens, etc.</li> <li>• How to move from working with individuals to PSE work.</li> <li>• How people without authority can lead (See Kansas Leadership Center for model, and Ohio State University Leadership Center and Oregon Food Bank for ideas)</li> <li>• How to change policy, e.g., consult Change Lab Solutions in Oakland, CA.</li> <li>• How to do community organizing and work on complex problems.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is doing what and which best practices are being used.</li> </ul> <p><b>Develop materials and technical outreach (webinars)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See “Food Waste” section.</li> <li>Include food safety training materials for new immigrants in their language, e.g., Somali, Hmong, Russian, Karen, Spanish, and Arabic.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support relationships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between Extension and public health agencies and staff.</li> <li>Between health improvement and food safety agencies and staff.</li> <li>Between inspectors, public health staff, and Extension staff.</li> </ul>
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### PROJECT PRIORITIZATION SESSION OUTCOME

PROGRAM GOALS FOR HFSF ACTION PLAN	ORDER OF PRIORITY*
Promote a food safety cultural and mental model shift to where food safety and community health workers collaborate to support healthy, safe food (Goal 1).	1
Make Minnesota’s food safety system and rules easier to navigate, understand, and interpret consistently (Goal 2).	2
Address misperceptions about approved food sources (Goal 3).	3**
Decrease fear of being liable for foodborne illnesses (Goal 5).	3**
Support educational food sampling and cooking demonstrations (Goal 7).	4
Support child care providers in offering safe, healthy foods (Goal 9).	5
Reduce food waste and encourage food redistribution (Goal 6).	6
Support new food businesses in the licensing process (Goal 4).	6
Support healthy, safe foods in vending machines, concession stands, and in school activities (Goal 8).	6
Support SNAP-Ed and SHIP Staff in doing PSE work to promote HFSF goals (Goal 10).	6
<p>*Based on four factors (Potential Benefit, Doability, Expertise Available, and Energy for the Goal) as assigned in the sponsor prioritization session through a voting process.</p> <p>**Sponsors combined Issues 3 and 4 into one category because they felt that they were connected and progress could be made in both communication and education.</p>	



## PLAN OF ACTION

- Work with the Minnesota Food Charter Network to create an HFSF guide and tool kit.
- Engage participants and partners in the findings and plan of action.
- Learn more about the issues by engaging communities that most directly experience inequities related to healthy, safe food.
- Provide resources and tools to SHIP, SNAP-Ed, state and local food safety Inspectors, and community partners.
- Obtain funding and support for addressing the priority action items.
- Expand and strengthen key partnerships with people and agencies in:
  - Food safety, environmental health, and health impact assessment.
  - Community agriculture and food production.
  - Community planning and development.
  - Healthy Food, Safe Food business development and job creation.
- Expand and strengthen key partnerships with national and international agencies and organizations, such as the Food and Drug Administration, USDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the International Association of Food Protection.
- Implement strategies to address the identified HFSF goals.
- Develop and staff a program to meet the needs of people working in communities across Minnesota to increase access to healthy, safe foods, especially for those who have the least access.



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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
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Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. **Fax:** 202-690-7442
3. **Email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at 1-800-221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the MN Food HelpLine at 1-888-711-1151.

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