Cumberland County Food System Alliance
Developing a Local Sustainable Food System

Updated 01/19/2026

Cumberland County Food System Alliance
Strategic Vision and 2026 Work Plan

Purpose

The purpose of the Cumberland County Food System Alliance (CCFSA) is to support a sustainable local food system that promotes economic vitality, increases food security, promotes wellness, and advances community resilience in Cumberland County.

Guiding Principles

- Food Security: All people have the right to food security, which means having reliable access to nutritious food. We seek approaches to addressing food insecurity that go beyond the immediate task of feeding people who are hungry to working toward developing sustainable, systemic solutions to end hunger.
- Systems Change: Our pursuits will include systems change strategies that empower and educate people, build on strengths within families and communities, challenge mindsets and structural barriers to social equity with an emphasis on ending poverty and systemic racism, by offering alternatives to business as usual.
- Sustainability: We will prioritize approaches and solutions that can be implemented and sustained over the long term and where possible, we will pursue solutions that coordinate with and support our local food economy and enhance the interconnectivity of our larger local food system.

CCFSA Objectives

1. Foster networking and food systems education.
2. Coordinate local food systems efforts.
3. Explore food systems collaboration and pooling of resources where appropriate.
4. Stay apprised of important food systems health and access issues and serve as a repository of relevant data and resources.
5. Advance food policy and advocacy work.

Strategic Focus Areas for 2026

The following strategic focus areas were identified by the CCFSA Leadership Council.

1. Capacity Building and Networking: Ensure our presence is known, expand network, and support partners.
    a. Increase our following on existing social media sites.
    b. Keep the website up to date and make sure it is easy to find information.
    c. Participate in meetings and events hosted by partners to promote CCFSA.
    d. Offer educational sessions that are responsive to emerging trends and have targeted outcomes.
    e. Explore feasibility of CCFSA hosting the 2027 Regional Food Systems Gathering, usually in June.
2. Assist in SNAP/WIC Promotion: Increase awareness of and participation in supplemental food programs.
    a. Increase enrollment of SNAP/WIC.
    b. Leverage federal and state resources to help local offices.

3. Advocate for Child Focused Feeding Programs: Ensure the basic food needs of all children are met.
    a. Advocate for feeding programs partnered with the schools to provide children with food before, during, and after school hours.
    b. Promote and advocate for school backpack programs, school food pantries, and summer feeding programs.
    c. Advocate for Farm to School initiatives.
4. Increase Accessibility of Local Food Banks and Pantries: Ensure fair and equitable access to healthy and nourishing food for those in need.
    a. Identify and direct resources to vulnerable, underserved communities in Cumberland County.
    b. Provide education for those utilizing The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to maximize their food dollars. TEFAP is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of people with low income by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost.
5. Promote Agriculture in the County: Advocate for farmland preservation to ensure local farms and farmers are part of the food system.
    a. Advocate for continued investment in the farmland preservation program.
    b. Support opportunities for agricultural education.
    c. Support and promote the purchase of local farm products through farmers markets, farms stands, and CSAs.
    d. Support and advocate for the expansion of EBT usage with farmers markets, farm stands, and CSAs.
6. Achieve long-term financial stability for CCFSA.
    a. Seek out and pursue grants and other funding sources.
    b. Pursue Shippensburg University Foundation support in partnership with CLUS. The ultimate goal is for CCFSA to be sulf-sustaining.