

POSTER SNAPSHOT

Creating a food system report card to advance the Minnesota food system



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Poster Abstract

The Minnesota Food Charter is a roadmap to improve access to healthy, affordable, and safe food. It proposes 99 specific strategies to guide statewide planning and action to change the food system. A report card to monitor the Minnesota food system is one component of this initiative, but there is a paucity of literature to guide its development. To bridge this gap, a shared measurement action team (SMAT) was created to recommend indicators that could be used to monitor the state of the Minnesota food system, as well as to advance place-based food systems that support unique communities statewide. SMAT established a cross-sector team, created team priorities, developed a theory of change, identified criteria to judge potential indicators, and proposed indicators to be monitored statewide. In this poster, researchers and practitioners can learn about the process of selecting indicators that support the creation of a sustainable, economic, ecological, and equitable food system, and the challenges that arose during these discussions. One challenge

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was that secondary data sources do not provide specific or sensitive enough data to disaggregate differing geographic levels or cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Despite the challenges, we recommended indicators for assessing food access, affordability, and availability; discussed limitations of these indicators; and are in the process of developing indicator recommendations for food system infrastructure. These indicators represent the current state of available secondary data and can be viewed as a springboard for conversation for both researchers and practitioners. They can also serve as a call to action to develop data systems that advance a place-based food system that supports health equity.

Keywords: Food Systems, Indicators, Measurement, Statewide, Strategic Planning

Poster Presentation Key Points:

- There is a need to develop standardized food systems metrics to advance the food system in order to create a system that supports healthy, affordable, and safe food for every Minnesotan.
- To develop food system metrics, collaborate with diverse stakeholders, but recognize that a multisectoral team can generate difficult conversations as well as lead to comprehensive solutions. Embrace the messiness of the food system as well as the different types of thinking of team members. Having a skilled meeting facilitator can help with group dynamics and moving the group forward.
- There is a lack of secondary databases that capture data that can be disaggregated at differing geographic levels and for differing race and cultural backgrounds. This data gap perpetuates the current disparities in the food system. 