

**Participatory state and regional food
system plans and charters in the U.S.**

A summary of trends and national directory

August 2021

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In collaboration with

Michigan State University's
Center for Regional Food Systems

Funding provided by

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Overview of State and Regional Food System Plans and Charters

Some people call it a “vision,” while others refer to it as a “charter,” a “plan,” or even a “roadmap.”

Regardless of the term, **18 states & 2 multi-state collaborations have already developed** and **11 states are in the process of developing** participatory plans and charters for their local food system.

Completed in August of 2021, this report offers a snapshot of national trends, and a directory of food systems plans and charters that exist at state and regional levels across the United States (see the directory at the end of this document). It is intended to serve as a resource to facilitate network building and co-learning among practitioners leading these efforts and groups interested in launching their own plans and charters.

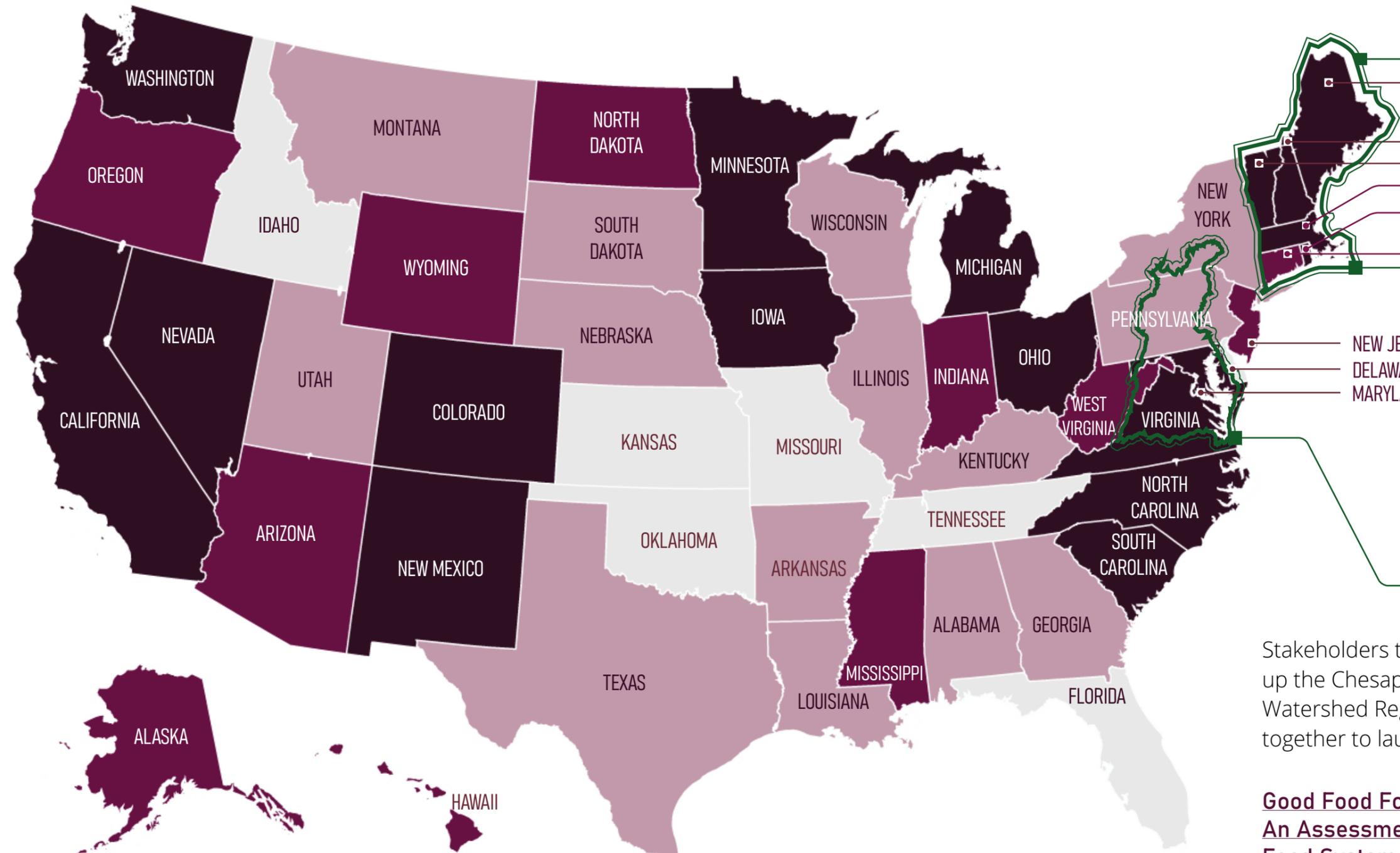
We collected information from plans and charters that are publicly available on websites, and — to the extent possible — followed up with lead organizations or individuals to review information¹ relevant to their state. We looked for plans and charters that:

- a) are systems-based and cross-sector (covering the entire food system),
- b) propose visions beyond 2021 or that are currently being updated (e.g., the 2005 California plan proposed a vision of the food system into 2030), and
- c) were participatory and collaboratively developed (those that crowdsourced ideas and attempted to mobilize stakeholders throughout the state using numerous strategies such as summits, working groups, etc.).

We were unable to determine if all efforts that originally formed to launch plans or charters still exist; in some cases we know such partnerships disbanded, even though stakeholders indicate that the plan or charter still motivates actions today. We did not include the untold number of substate (e.g., city, county) food systems plans, or many statewide strategic plans that focus on single sector issues (e.g., farm to school, etc.). We also could not include the long history of state food system assessments and research² that have been critical for inspiring and informing efforts to eventually develop a collaborative, statewide food system plan or charter.

As shown in the map below, nearly 60 percent of U.S. states have an active food systems plan or one under development. **Eleven of these states are involved in regional food system plans** across the New England region and Chesapeake Bay Watershed, most of which also have their own statewide plan.

Map of state and regional food system plans and charters



New England Region

Six states jointly launched:

A New England Food Vision

All states in the New England region also have their own statewide plans except for Connecticut, which is in development

- MAINE
- NEW HAMPSHIRE
- VERMONT
- MASSACHUSETTS
- RHODE ISLAND
- CONNECTICUT
- NEW JERSEY
- DELAWARE
- MARYLAND

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Region

Stakeholders that make up the Chesapeake Watershed Region came together to launch:

Good Food For All: An Assessment of Food System Efforts in the Chesapeake Foodshed

Maryland, Virginia & D.C. also have their own plans



18 states
Active Plan

36%

11 states
In Development

22%

14 states
No Plan

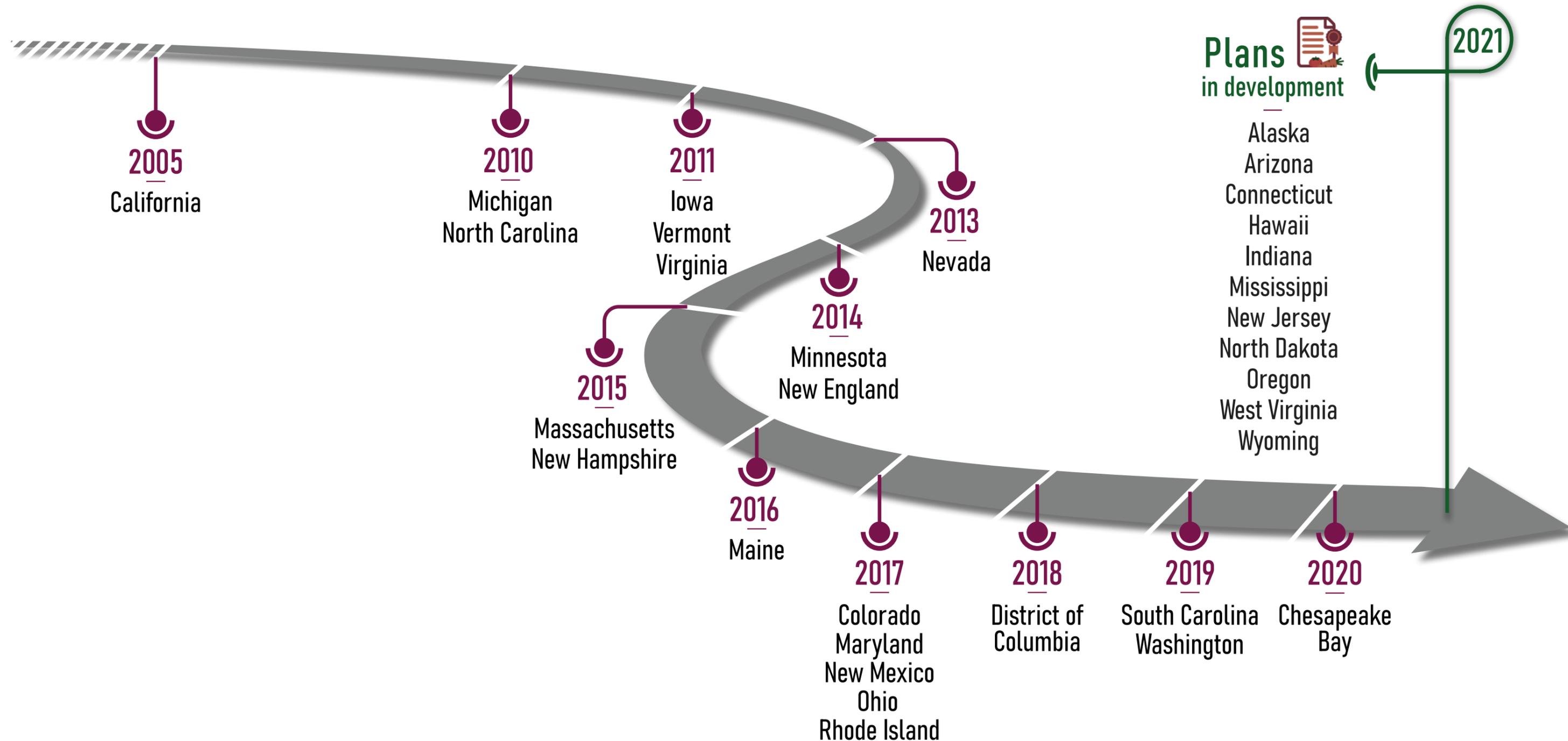
28%

7 states
No Information

14%

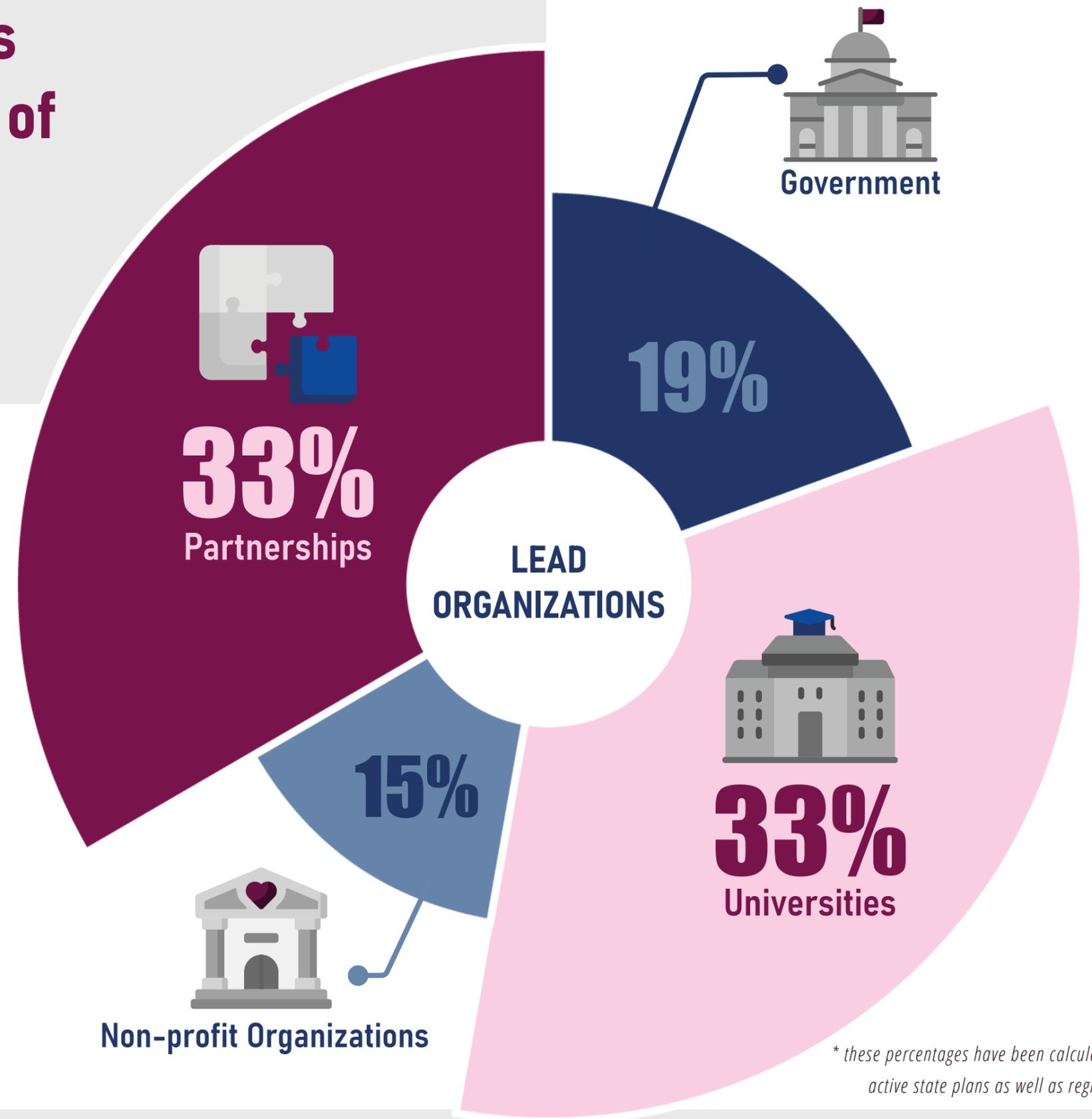
* these percentages have been calculated for the 50 states only and do not include the regional plans.

State and regional food plans and charters in our directory launched as early as 2005 and many are in development



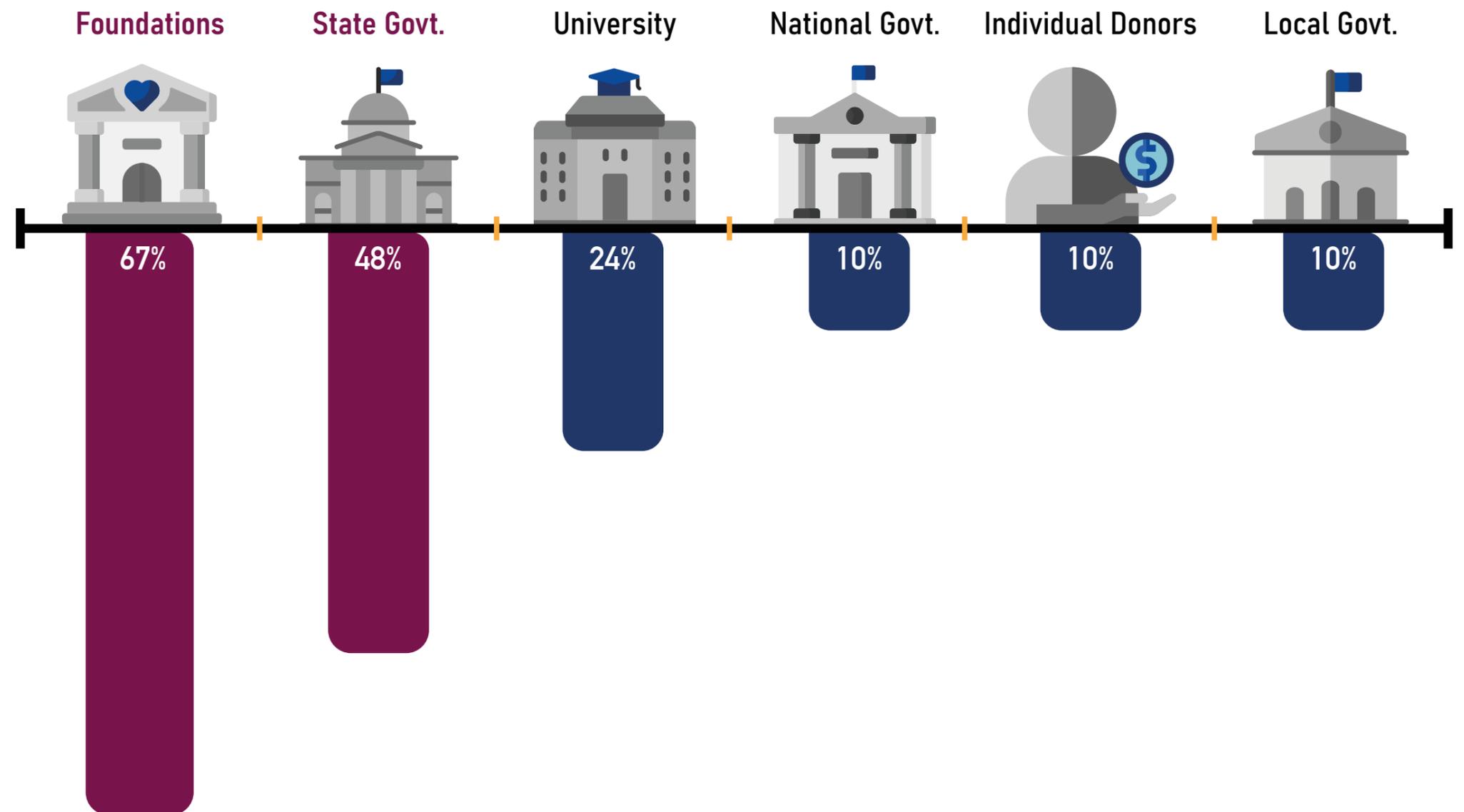
Universities and partnerships are leading the development of most state and regional food system plans and charters

- Organizations leading the development of state and regional food system plans and charters are often referred to as “backbone organizations.”
- They have tended to be either a collaboration of many partners, or a university entity.
- State government agencies and nonprofits have also led some of this work.



The majority of state and regional food plans and charters are funded by foundations and state government

State and regional food system plans and charters draw on multiple sources of funding simultaneously. Over the last 15 years, foundations have supported more than two-thirds, and state governments half, while universities, national government agencies, individual donors and local governments have also contributed.



** these percentages have been calculated for all active state plans as well as regional plans*

State and regional food system plans and charters are supported by **75 different funders**

Several funders have supported food systems plans and charters in multiple states

1772 Foundation

Arkay Foundation

Augusta County Farm Bureau

Baker Foundation

Blue Moon Fund

Boston Foundation

Broad Reach Fund

Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

Claneil Foundation

Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation

Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station

Columbia Foundation

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Doree Taylor Foundation

Ecotrust

Elmina B. Sewall Foundation

Empire Health Foundation

Eos Foundation

Food Action (formerly Washington State Food and Farming Network)

Fred Gellert Family Foundation

Fund for Healthy Nevada

Gaia Fund

General Mills Foundation

Golden LEAF Foundation

Henry P. Kendall Foundation

Hudson Foundation

Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation (InFACT) at Ohio State University

Island Foundation

Jane's Trust

John Merck Fund

Kaiser Foundation

Kresge Foundation

Main Street Resources

Maine Community Foundation

Marisla Foundation

Massachusetts District Local Technical Assistance Program

McCune Charitable Foundation

Merck Family Fund

Michigan Health Endowment Fund

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Minnesota Department of Health

Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation

N.C. Rural Center - Agricultural Advancement Consortium

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

New Mexico Dept of Agriculture

Northern Virginia Health Foundation

Prince Charitable Trusts

Rhode Island Foundation

Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund

Sandy River Charitable Foundation

Santa Fe Community Foundation

Share our Strength

Shenandoah Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council

Shenandoah Valley Buy Fresh Buy Local

Slow Money Northwest

State of Colorado

State of Rhode Island

Thornburg Foundation

Tides Foundation

Town Creek Foundation

University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute

University of Minnesota Extension

University of Virginia Institute for Environmental Negotiation

US Department of Agriculture SNAP Ed

US Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency

Van Beuren Charitable Foundation

Virginia Food System Council

Virginia Foundation for Agricultural Innovation and Rural Sustainability (VA FAIRS)

Virginia State University

Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Internal Integrated Competitive Grants Program

Vitalyst Health Foundation

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Washington Regional Food Funders

William Zimmerman Foundation

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

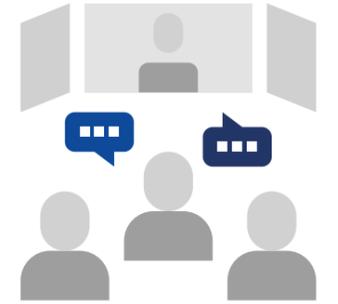
**2 states also drew upon a total of 3 individual donors to finance their planning efforts*

Multiple strategies are used to gather public input in order to develop state and regional food system plans and charters

Committees & Working Groups



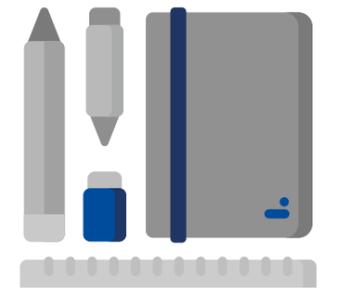
Public Meetings & Listening Sessions



Surveys



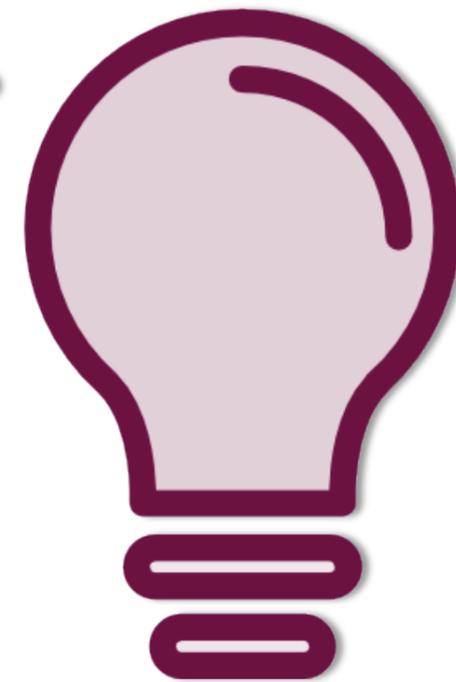
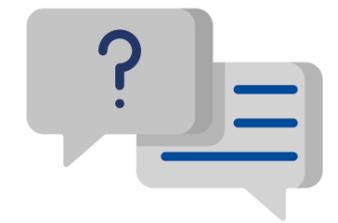
Workshops



Food Summits



Interviews & Focus Groups



Directory of State and Regional Food System Plans and Charters

 Geographic Coverage	 Name of Plan	 Plan Status	 Year Launched	 Lead Organizations	 Contact Information
Alaska	Alaska Statewide Action Plan	In Development	Expected: 2022	Alaska Food Policy Council	info@alaskafoodpolicycouncil.org
Arizona	Under development	In Development	Expected: 2021	Arizona Food Systems Network	Adrienne Udarbe adrienneudarbe@pinnacleprevention.org
California	The New Mainstream Food and Farming System: A Vivid Picture of California's Food System in 2030	Completed	2005	Roots of Change	mail@rootsofchange.org
Chesapeake Bay (Region)	Blueprint for Community Ownership, Empowerment & Prosperity in the Chesapeake Foodshed	Completed	2020	Chesapeake Foodshed Network	Info@ChesapeakeFoodshed.Net
Colorado	Colorado Blueprint	Completed	2017	College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University	Becca Jablonski becca.jablonski@colostate.edu
Connecticut	Under development	In Development	Uncertain	Connecticut Food System Alliance	Meg Hourigan meg@hartfordfood.org
District of Columbia	Food System Assesment 2018	Completed	2018	District of Columbia Food Policy Council	dcfoodpolicy@dc.gov
Hawaii	Transforming Hawai'i's Food System Together	In Development	Uncertain	Hawai'i Public Heath Institute	contact@hiphi.org

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Indiana	Indiana Food Charter	In Development	Uncertain	Indiana University	Jodee Ellett ellett@iu.edu
Iowa	Iowa Local Food and Farm Program (2011-2020)	Completed	2011 (Update began 2021)	Iowa State University Extension and Outreach	Jan Libbey libbey.jan@gmail.com Kamyar Enshayan kamyar.enshayan@uni.edu
Maine	The Maine Food Strategy Framework: A Tool for Advancing Maine's Food System	Completed	2016	Maine Food Strategy	Tanya Swain tswain@mainefoodstrategy.org
Maryland	Maryland Food Charter	Completed	2017	Institute for Public Health Innovation	Evelyn Kelly ekelly@institutephi.org
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan	Completed	2015	Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources	Winton Pitcoff Winton@mafoodsystem.org
Michigan	Michigan Good Food Charter	Completed	2010 (Update began 2020)	Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems	CRFS@msu.edu
Minnesota	Minnesota Food Charter: For Our Healthy Future	Completed	2014	University of Minnesota's Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute	info@mnfoodcharter.com

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Mississippi	Under development	In Development	Uncertain	Mississippi Food Policy Council Mississippi Food Justice Collaborative	Noel Didla noelestherdidla@gmail.com
Nevada	Food Security in Nevada - Nevada's Plan for Action	Completed	2013	Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Food Security	Laura Urban lurban@health.nv.gov
New England (Region)	New England Food Vision	Completed	2014 (Update planned for 2022)	Sustainability Institute, University of New Hampshire	Fsne.info@unh.edu
New Hampshire	Farm, Fish, & Food Enterprise Viability in New Hampshire	Completed	2015	New Hampshire Food Alliance Sustainability Institute University of New Hampshire	Colleen Stewart Colleen.Stewart@unh.edu
New Jersey	Under Development	In development	Uncertain	New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative	Jeanine Cava Jeanine.Cava@Stockton.edu fooddemocracycollabnj@gmail.com

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New Mexico	Resilience in New Mexico Agriculture Strategic Plan	Completed	2017	New Mexico First New Mexico State University	505-221-2140 https://nmfirst.org/contact-us/
North Carolina	From Farm to Fork: A Guide to Building North Carolina's Sustainable Local Food Economy	Completed	2010	Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)	communityfoodstrategies@gmail.com
North Dakota	Growing Local Food Systems in North Dakota	In development	Expected: 2023/2024	North Dakota Local Foods Development Alliance (NDLFDA)	Stephanie Blumhagen, NDLFDA Board President ndlocalfood@gmail.com Karen K. Ehrens karen@ehrensconsulting.com
Ohio	Mapping the Vision for the Future of Ohio's Food System	Completed	2017	Ohio Food Policy Network (OFPN)	Michelle Moskowitz Brown mmbrown@local-matters.org
Oregon	Oregon Food Charter	In development	Uncertain	Oregon Community Food Systems Network	Lauren Gwin Lauren.Gwin@oregonstate.edu
Rhode Island	Relish Rhody: Rhode Island Food Strategy	Completed	2017	State of Rhode Island	info@commerceri.com
South Carolina	Making Small Farms into Big Businesses (2013) Growing Local South Carolina (2019)	Completed	2019	South Carolina Food Policy Council	scfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com

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Vermont	Vermont Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan 2021-2030	Completed	2011 (Updated 2021)	The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund through the Farm to Plate network	info@vsjf.org
Virginia	Virginia Farm to Table: Healthy Farms and Healthy Food for the Common Wealth and Common Good	Completed	2011	Virginia Farm to Table Team: Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and Virginia State University	Eric S. Bendfeldt ebendfel@vt.edu
Washington	Washington State Food System Prospectus: A 25-Year Vision for Washington State's Food System	Completed	2017	Washington Food System Roundtable	Vic Colman vic@copcwa.org Babs Roberts roberba@dshs.wa.gov
West Virginia	Under Development	In development	Expected: 2022	West Virginia University West Virginia Department of Agriculture Value Chain Cluster Initiative	acceleratewv@gmail.com
Wyoming	Under Development	In development	Uncertain	Wyoming Food Coalition	Livy Lewis, Policy Working Group Chair of WFC Wind River Food Sovereignty Project elisabeth@c-prep.org

Endnotes

¹ We researched food systems plans and charters for the seven US territories, but found no information. We included the District of Columbia, which does not fall neatly into either a recognized state or city. We also began an initial search of food systems plans being carried out by tribal nations, but were not able to sufficiently research these efforts to include them in this directory.

² As one example of the long history of state food systems assessments, see the Cornucopia Project of the 1980s: <http://www.crcworks.org/?submit=rodale>