OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). These briefs provide overviews of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarize food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 1

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April – November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 1 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
- Currently 10 sites
- 45,000 food boxes
- Over 1 million pounds

MEALS
- Total: nearly 1 million
- Youth: 341,000
- Older Adults: 649,000

SNAP
- ~5,500 Participants
- 12% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

SNAP Enrollment: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 1

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020
- 55% - 100%
- 38% - 55%
- 25% - 38%

Food Distribution
- Produce Box (6)
- Grocery (1)
- Mixed Box (3)
- Youth Grab & Go (6)
- Older Adult Meals (2)
- Food Pantry (1)
- Community Driven Response (3)

Food Retail
- Supermarkets (7)
- Farmers Markets (1)
- Public Markets (1)

Urban Agriculture
- Community Garden (5)
- Urban Farms (0)
# COVID-19 Food Distribution Response in District 1

## Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Produce Boxes</strong></td>
<td>26,150 produce boxes (523,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Grocery Boxes</strong></td>
<td>Over 11,000 grocery boxes (335,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Mixed Food Boxes</strong></td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 7,850 mixed boxes (235,500 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Older Adult Meals</strong></td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered 649,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Youth Grab and Go Meals</strong></td>
<td>Since March, more than 341,000 meals have been distributed in District 1. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Community Driven Response</strong></td>
<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Food Pantries</strong></td>
<td>The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Food Retail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Supermarkets</strong></td>
<td>The pandemic created supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Public Markets</strong></td>
<td>Public Markets like Broadway Market provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td><strong>Corner and Convenience Stores</strong></td>
<td>These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Farmers Markets</strong></td>
<td>The Fell's Point Farmers Market operated during the pandemic. Some vendors accept SNAP and WIC benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Urban Agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Urban Farms</strong></td>
<td>Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Community Gardens</strong></td>
<td>The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- Resident-driven processes: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- Corners and convenience stores: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- Supermarkets: Retain and attract supermarkets
- Public Markets: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- Food distribution and small businesses: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- Federal nutrition assistance: Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- Urban agriculture: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- Transportation gaps: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). This brief provides an overview of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarizes food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 2

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 2 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

- **FOOD BOXES**
  - Currently 4 sites
  - 10,550 food boxes
  - 270,700 pounds

- **MEALS**
  - Total: 136,700
  - Youth: 116,300
  - Older Adults: 20,400

- **SNAP**
  - ~14,000 Participants
  - 28% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

- **SNAP Enrollment**: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

- **Online SNAP**: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

- **Pandemic EBT**: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 2

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020

- 55% - 100%
- 38% - 55%
- 25% - 38%

Food Distribution:
- Produce Box (3)
- Grocery (0)
- Mixed Box (1)
- Youth Grab & Go (7)
- Older Adult Meals (2)
- Food Pantry (2)
- Community Driven Response (1)

Food Retail:
- Supermarkets (4)
- Farmers Markets (0)
- Public Markets (0)

Urban Agriculture:
- Community Garden (3)
- Urban Farms (2)
COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 2

Current Sites

**PRODUCE BOXES**
4,850 produce boxes (91,600 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

**GROCERY BOXES**
Over 2,620 grocery boxes (78,600 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

**MIXED FOOD BOXES**
Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 3,350 mixed boxes (over 100,000 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

**OLDER ADULT MEALS**
The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered 20,400 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

**YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS**
Since March, over 116,000 have been distributed in District 2. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

**COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE**
Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

**FOOD PANTRIES**
The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

**FOOD RETAIL**

**SUPERMARKETS**
Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

**CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES**
These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

**PUBLIC MARKETS**
Public Markets can provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**URBAN FARMS**
Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

**COMMUNITY GARDENS**
The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
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FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY
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FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:
1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system**: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels**: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy**: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production**: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- **Resident-driven processes**: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Corner and convenience stores**: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Supermarkets**: Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Public Markets**: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Food distribution and small businesses**: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Federal nutrition assistance**: Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- **Urban agriculture**: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Transportation gaps**: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 3

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April – November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 3 FROM APRIL— NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
• Currently 3 sites
• 9,500 food boxes
• 213,000 pounds

MEALS
• Total: 87,000
• Youth: 74,100
• Older Adults: 12,700

SNAP
• ~5,000 Participants
• 14% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

SNAP Enrollment: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
## COVID-19 Food Distribution Response in District 3

### Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Produce Boxes</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,200 produce boxes (144,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grocery Boxes</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Over 2,300 grocery boxes (nearly 70,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed Food Boxes</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, mixed boxes of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Older Adult Meals</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered over 12,700 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Grab and Go Meals</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Since March, nearly 75,000 have been distributed in District 3. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Community Driven Response

- Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

### Food Retail

- **Supermarkets**: Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

- **Corner and Convenience Stores**: These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

- **Public Markets**: Public Markets can provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

### Urban Agriculture

- **Urban Farms**: Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

- **Community Gardens**: The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
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FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system:** By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.

2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels:** By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.

3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy:** By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.

4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production:** By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- **Resident-driven processes:** Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Food distribution and small businesses:** Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Corner and convenience stores:** Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Supermarkets:** Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Urban agriculture:** Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Public Markets:** Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 4

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 4 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD BOXES</th>
<th>MEALS</th>
<th>SNAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Currently 6 sites</td>
<td>• Total: 265,500</td>
<td>• ~11,000 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 18,660 food boxes</td>
<td>• Youth: 186,550</td>
<td>• 25% of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 414,300 pounds</td>
<td>• Older Adults: 78,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

- **SNAP Enrollment**: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

- **Online SNAP**: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

- **Pandemic EBT**: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.

Population Receiving SNAP (Aug 2020)

**DISTRICT 4 IMPACT**

25% of population, approx. 11,000 people
COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 4

Current Sites

**PRODUCE BOXES**
14,550 produce boxes (291,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

**GROCERY BOXES**
Over 4,110 grocery boxes (123,330 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

**MIXED FOOD BOXES**
Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, mixed boxes of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

**OLDER ADULT MEALS**
The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered over 78,900 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

**YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS**
Since March, nearly 187,000 have been distributed in District 4. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

**COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE**
Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

**FOOD PANTRIES**
The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

**FOOD RETAIL**

**SUPERMARKETS**
Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

**CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES**
These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

**FARMERS MARKETS**
The Govanstowne Farmers Market serves the district. The market accepts SNAP and some vendors accept WIC benefits.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**URBAN FARMS**
Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

**COMMUNITY GARDENS**
The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
**FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY**

The Food Policy and Planning Division is led by the Food Policy Director, and staffed by a Food Access, a Food Resilience, and a Food Systems Planner. This division oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI), which has three pillars - interagency collaboration, the Food Policy Action Coalition (Food PAC), and Resident Food Equity Advisors (RFEA). Together, these efforts seek to build an equitable and resilient urban food system by addressing health, economic, and environmental disparities in areas that have high food insecurity.

**COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE**

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

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**FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:**

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system:** By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels:** By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy:** By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production:** By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

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**HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident-driven processes:</th>
<th>Food distribution and small businesses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources</td>
<td>Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corner and convenience stores:</th>
<th>Federal nutrition assistance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores</td>
<td>Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supermarkets:</th>
<th>Urban agriculture:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retain and attract supermarkets</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Public Markets:</th>
<th>Transportation gaps:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment</td>
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**CONTACT:** Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Director, holly.freishtat@baltimorecity.gov

**WEBSITE:** https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/baltimore-food-policy-initiative

**FOOD RESOURCES:** https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites
OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). This brief provides an overview of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarizes food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 5

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 5 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
- Currently 5 sites
- 17,400 food boxes
- 414,400 pounds

MEALS
- Total: 126,000
- Youth: 71,000
- Older Adults: 55,000

SNAP
- ~8,200 Participants
- 20% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

SNAP Enrollment: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 5

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020

- 55% - 100%
- 38% - 55%
- 25% - 38%

Food Distribution
- Produce Box (3)
- Grocery (1)
- Mixed Box (1)
- Youth Grab & Go (4)
- Older Adult Meals (5)
- Food Pantry (1)
- Community Driven Response (1)

Food Retail
- Supermarkets (4)
- Farmers Markets (0)
- Public Markets (0)

Urban Agriculture
- Community Garden (2)
- Urban Farms (0)
COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 5

Current Sites

**PRODUCE BOXES**
10,700 produce boxes (215,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

**GROCERY BOXES**
5,400 grocery boxes (162,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

**MIXED FOOD BOXES**
Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 1,250 mixed boxes (37,500 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

**OLDER ADULT MEALS**
The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered 55,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

**YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS**
Since March, over 71,000 have been distributed in District 5. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

**COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE**
Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

**FOOD PANTRIES**
The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

**FOOD RETAIL**

**SUPERMARKETS**
Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

**CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES**
These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

**PUBLIC MARKETS**
Public Markets can provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**URBAN FARMS**
Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

**COMMUNITY GARDENS**
The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:
- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
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FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

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FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:
1. Use policy to create a more equitable food system: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. Strengthen and amplify the local food economy: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

Resident-driven processes:
Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources

Corner and convenience stores:
Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores

Supermarkets:
Retain and attract supermarkets

Public Markets:
Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment

Food distribution and small businesses:
Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses

Federal nutrition assistance:
Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs

Urban agriculture:
Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies

Transportation gaps:
Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 6

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 6 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
- Currently 8 sites
- 18,500 food boxes
- 440,000 pounds

MEALS
- Total: 335,000
- Youth: 234,000
- Older Adults: 101,000

SNAP
- ~13,000 Participants
- 28% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

SNAP Enrollment: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 6

### Current Sites

| Produce Boxes | 11,600 produce boxes (232,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables. |
| Grocery Boxes | Nearly 4,800 grocery boxes (143,500 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19. |
| Mixed Food Boxes | Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 2,150 mixed boxes (64,500 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice. |
| Older Adult Meals | The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered 101,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes. |
| Youth Grab and Go Meals | Since March, over 234,000 have been distributed in District 6. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites. |

### Community Driven Response

Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

### Food Pantries

The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

### Food Retail

- **Supermarkets**
  Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

- **Corner and Convenience Stores**
  These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

- **Public Markets**
  Public Markets can provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

### Urban Agriculture

- **Urban Farms**
  Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

- **Community Gardens**
  The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

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COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system:** By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels:** By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy:** By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production:** By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- **Resident-driven processes:** Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Food distribution and small businesses:** Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Corner and convenience stores:** Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Federal nutrition assistance:** Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- **Supermarkets:** Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Urban agriculture:** Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Public Markets:** Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Transportation gaps:** Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 7

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April – November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 7 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD BOXES</th>
<th>MEALS</th>
<th>SNAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently 10 sites</td>
<td>Total: 563,000</td>
<td>~18,000 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,900 food boxes</td>
<td>Youth: 497,000</td>
<td>34.5% of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>575,000 pounds</td>
<td>Older Adults: 65,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

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As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

**SNAP Enrollment:** Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

**Online SNAP:** SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

**Pandemic EBT:** This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.

Population Receiving SNAP (Aug 2020)

DISTRICT 7 IMPACT
34.5% of population, approx. 18,000 people
## COVID-19 Food Distribution Response in District 7

### Current Sites

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Produce Boxes</strong></td>
<td>8,110 produce boxes (162,200 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grocery Boxes</strong></td>
<td>Over 9,700 grocery boxes (291,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed Food Boxes</strong></td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 4,025 mixed boxes (120,750 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Older Adult Meals</strong></td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered over 65,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Grab and Go Meals</strong></td>
<td>Since March, nearly half a million meals have been distributed in District 7. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
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<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
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<td>The Druid Hill Farmers Market serves the district. The market accepts SNAP and some vendors accept WIC benefits.</td>
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<td>Right outside the district, Avenue Market is being redeveloped to increase healthy food and Black food entrepreneurism.</td>
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### Urban Agriculture

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<td><strong>Urban Farms</strong></td>
<td>There are 3 urban farms, all of which have farmstands to sell produce onsite.</td>
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<td>The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.</td>
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- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
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</table>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT: Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Director, holly.freishtat@baltimorecity.gov
WEBSITE: https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/baltimore-food-policy-initiative
FOOD RESOURCES: https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites
OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). This brief provides an overview of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarizes food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 8

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 8 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD BOXES</th>
<th>MEALS</th>
<th>SNAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently 6 sites</td>
<td>- Total: 255,000</td>
<td>~13,000 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000 food boxes</td>
<td>- Youth: 187,400</td>
<td>28% of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>385,000 pounds</td>
<td>- Older Adults: 68,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

**SNAP Enrollment**: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

**Online SNAP**: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

**Pandemic EBT**: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 8

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020
- 55% - 100%
- 38% - 55%
- 25% - 38%

Food Distribution
- Produce Box (4)
- Grocery (1)
- Mixed Box (1)
- Youth Grab & Go (5)
- Older Adult Meals (1)
- Food Pantry (3)
- Community Driven Response (2)

Food Retail
- Supermarkets (2)
- Farmers Markets (0)
- Public Markets (0)

Urban Agriculture
- Community Garden (3)
- Urban Farms (0)

Legend:
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Baltimore County
- Harbor, Lakes & Streams
- Major Parks
COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 8

Current Sites

**PRODUCE BOXES**
6,450 produce boxes (129,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

**GROCERY BOXES**
6,670 grocery boxes (200,100 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

**MIXED FOOD BOXES**
Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 1,850 mixed boxes (55,500 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

**OLDER ADULT MEALS**
The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered over 68,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

**YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS**
Since March, nearly 188,000 have been distributed in District 8. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

**COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE**
Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

**FOOD PANTRIES**
The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

**FOOD RETAIL**

**SUPERMARKETS**
Shoprite in District 8 is the only supermarket in Baltimore City limits that can accept SNAP payment online for grocery delivery. More awareness around Online SNAP needs to be generated so people can shop from home. Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products.

**CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES**
These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

**PUBLIC MARKETS**
Public Markets can provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**URBAN FARMS**
Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

**COMMUNITY GARDENS**
The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
The Food Policy and Planning Division is led by the Food Policy Director, and staffed by a Food Access, a Food Resilience, and a Food Systems Planner. This division oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI), which has three pillars - interagency collaboration, the Food Policy Action Coalition (Food PAC), and Resident Food Equity Advisors (RFEA). Together, these efforts seek to build an equitable and resilient urban food system by addressing health, economic, and environmental disparities in areas that have high food insecurity.

**FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:**

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system:** By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels:** By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy:** By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production:** By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

**COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE**

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

**HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY**

- **Resident-driven processes:** Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Corner and convenience stores:** Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Supermarkets:** Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Public Markets:** Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Food distribution and small businesses:** Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Federal nutrition assistance:** Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- **Urban agriculture:** Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Transportation gaps:** Address transportation gaps that impact food access

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 9

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 9 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

- **FOOD BOXES**
  - Currently 12 sites
  - 40,700 food boxes
  - Over 1 million pounds

- **MEALS**
  - Total: 800,000
  - Youth: 563,000
  - Older Adults: 238,000

- **SNAP**
  - ~18,000 Participants
  - 42% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

**SNAP Enrollment**: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

**Online SNAP**: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

**Pandemic EBT**: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 9

### Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Produce Boxes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>More than 22,000 produce boxes (440,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Boxes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Over 10,000 grocery boxes (312,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Food Boxes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 7,875 mixed boxes (236,000 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Adult Meals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered nearly 238,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Grab and Go Meals</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Since March, more than half a million meals have been distributed in District 9. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Driven Response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantries</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Food Retail

| Supermarkets          | 1     | Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021. |
| Corner and Convenience Stores | 22   | These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food. |
| Public Markets        | 1     | Public markets like Hollins Market provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access. |

### Urban Agriculture

| Urban Farms           | 1     | Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic. |
| Community Gardens     | 10    | The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access. |
FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

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COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system**: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.

2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels**: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.

3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy**: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.

4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production**: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

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- **Resident-driven processes**: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Food distribution and small businesses**: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Corner and convenience stores**: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Federal nutrition assistance**: Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- **Supermarkets**: Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Urban agriculture**: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Public Markets**: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Transportation gaps**: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 10

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April – November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 10 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD BOXES</th>
<th>MEALS</th>
<th>SNAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Currently 11 sites</td>
<td>- Total: 631,000</td>
<td>- ~16,000 Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 43,000 food boxes</td>
<td>- Youth: 553,500</td>
<td>- 35% of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Over 1 million pounds</td>
<td>- Older Adults: 77,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

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**SNAP Enrollment:** Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to process them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

**Online SNAP:** SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

**Pandemic EBT:** This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 10

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020

- 55% - 100%
- 38% - 55%
- 25% - 38%

Food Distribution
- Produce Box (5)
- Grocery (2)
- Mixed Box (4)
- Youth Grab & Go (10)
- Older Adult Meals (1)
- Food Pantry (3)
- Community Driven Response (8)

Food Retail
- Supermarkets (3)
- Farmers Markets (1)
- Public Markets (0)

Urban Agriculture
- Community Garden (8)
- Urban Farms (3)

Legend:

- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Harbor, Lakes & Streams
- Major Parks
- County

Note:

- Food Pantry (3)
- Community Driven Response (8)
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 10

### Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRODUCE BOXES</strong></td>
<td>27,000 produce boxes (over half a million pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROCERY BOXES</strong></td>
<td>Over 10,000 grocery boxes (312,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIXED FOOD BOXES</strong></td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 5,650 mixed boxes (170,000 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OLDER ADULT MEALS</strong></td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered nearly 78,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS</strong></td>
<td>Since March, more than 367,000 have been distributed in District 10. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
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<td><strong>COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPERMARKETS</strong></td>
<td>Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.</td>
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<td><strong>CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES</strong></td>
<td>These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FARMERS MARKETS</strong></td>
<td>The B&amp;O Farmers Market serves the district. The market accepts SNAP and some vendors accept WIC benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### URBAN AGRICULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN FARMS</strong></td>
<td>Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY GARDENS</strong></td>
<td>The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.</td>
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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 11

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IN DISTRICT 11 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
- Currently 7 sites
- 30,000 food boxes
- 829,000 pounds

MEALS
- Total: 570,000
  - Youth: 367,000
  - Older Adults: 203,000

SNAP
- ~8,200 Participants
- 17% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

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Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 11

### Produce Boxes
- **Number:** 2
- **Details:** Nearly 7,000 produce boxes (138,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

### Grocery Boxes
- **Number:** 0
- **Details:** Nearly 19,000 grocery boxes (over half a million pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

### Mixed Food Boxes
- **Number:** 5
- **Details:** Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 4,300 mixed boxes (130,000 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

### Older Adult Meals
- **Number:** 7
- **Details:** The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered more than 200,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

### Youth Grab and Go Meals
- **Number:** 7
- **Details:** Since March, more than 367,000 meals have been distributed in District 11. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

### Community Driven Response
- **Number:** 2
- **Details:** Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

### Food Pantries
- **Number:** 4
- **Details:** The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

### Food Retail

#### Supermarkets
- **Number:** 6
- **Details:** The pandemic created supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

#### Public Markets
- **Number:** 3
- **Details:** District 11 has the most public markets of any council district. Lexington Market and Avenue Market are being redeveloped to increase healthy food and Black food entrepreneurship.

#### Corner and Convenience Stores
- **Number:** 76
- **Details:** These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

#### Farmers Markets
- **Number:** 4
- **Details:** The district has four markets that have been operating during the pandemic. Half of them accept SNAP benefits.

### Urban Agriculture

#### Urban Farms
- **Number:** 0
- **Details:** Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

#### Community Gardens
- **Number:** 4
- **Details:** The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
- Convene Resident Food Equity Advisors and Food PAC
- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- Resident-driven processes: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- Corner and convenience stores: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- Supermarkets: Retain and attract supermarkets
- Public Markets: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- Food distribution and small businesses: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- Federal nutrition assistance: Maximize the impact of federal nutrition assistance and meal programs
- Urban agriculture: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- Transportation gaps: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT: Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Director, holly.freishtat@baltimorecity.gov
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FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

The Food Policy and Planning Division is led by the Food Policy Director, and staffed by a Food Access, a Food Resilience, and a Food Systems Planner. This division oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI), which has three pillars - interagency collaboration, the Food Policy Action Coalition (Food PAC), and Resident Food Equity Advisors (RFEA). Together, these efforts seek to build an equitable and resilient urban food system by addressing health, economic, and environmental disparities in areas that have high food insecurity.

FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. Use policy to create a more equitable food system: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.
2. Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.
3. Strengthen and amplify the local food economy: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.
4. Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

DISTRICT 11

2020 COVID-19 FOOD ENVIRONMENT BRIEF
OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). This brief provides an overview of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarizes food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 12

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 12 FROM APRIL—NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES

- Currently 12 sites
- 43,800 food boxes
- 1.09 million pounds

MEALS

- Total: 736,000
- Youth: 566,000
- Older Adults: 170,000

SNAP

- ~15,000 Participants
- 48% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

SNAP Enrollment: Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
# COVID-19 Food Distribution Response in District 12

## Current Sites

### Produce Boxes
- **7** produce boxes (450,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.

### Grocery Boxes
- **0** More than 10,000 grocery boxes (304,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.

### Mixed Food Boxes
- **5** Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 11,150 mixed boxes (334,500 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.

### Older Adult Meals
- **1** The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered nearly 170,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.

### Youth Grab and Go Meals
- **8** Since March, more than 566,000 meals have been distributed in District 12. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.

### Community Driven Response
- **7** Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.

### Food Pantries
- **8** The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.

## Food Retail

### Supermarkets
- **4** Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.

### Corner and Convenience Stores
- **73** These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.

### Public Markets
- **0** Public markets provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.

## Urban Agriculture

### Urban Farms
- **3** Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.

### Community Gardens
- **9** The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.
FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

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COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center and state and federal agencies
- Leverage significant public and private funds for food and transportation
- Expedited Online SNAP and prevented 15,000 residents from losing SNAP
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HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

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OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. This food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI). This brief provides an overview of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarizes food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 13

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April –November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 13 FROM APRIL— NOVEMBER:

**FOOD BOXES**
- Currently 13 sites
- 58,000 food boxes
- 1.53 million pounds

**MEALS**
- Total: 485,000
- Youth: 454,000
- Older Adults: 31,000

**SNAP**
- ~18,000 Participants
- 40% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Historically, BFPI has used Healthy Food Priority Areas (formerly called food desert) to show food access needs. However, with the pandemic disrupting the economy and food system, this indicator was replaced with SNAP after applications reached a record high in the spring. SNAP data are available monthly and can be tracked over the course of the pandemic, providing more real-time insight than the Healthy Food Priority Area map.

SNAP is proven to reduce food insecurity. It is even more vital during the pandemic, providing participants autonomy as supply chain shortages may affect typical sources of food. Citywide, in August, there were 188,800 residents on SNAP, bringing $33.4 million of federal funding into the city for participants to purchase food.

As a safety net, it is vital that Baltimore City residents enroll in, stay on, and maximize the impact of SNAP. Key pandemic considerations:

**SNAP Enrollment:** Eligible residents should apply for and stay on SNAP through recertification. However, the need and number of applications are surpassing the capacity to processing them, creating a lag in time between when residents apply and are approved to receive benefits.

**Online SNAP:** SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

**Pandemic EBT:** This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
2020 COVID-19 Food Environment Map - District 13

% of Population Receiving SNAP Benefits, by Neighborhood
August 2020

Food Distribution
- Produce Box (8)
- Grocery (2)
- Mixed Box (3)
- Youth Grab & Go (13)
- Older Adult Meals (2)
- Food Pantry (7)
- Community Driven Response (2)

Food Retail
- Supermarkets (3)
- Farmers Markets (0)
- Public Markets (1)

Urban Agriculture
- Community Garden (7)
- Urban Farms (1)
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 13

### Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Produce Boxes</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21,000 produce boxes (418,000 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grocery Boxes</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nearly 17,000 grocery boxes (almost half a million pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixed Food Boxes</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, 20,500 mixed boxes (614,000 pounds) of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Older Adult Meals</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered nearly 30,700 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Grab and Go Meals</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since March, more than 454,500 meals have been distributed in District 13. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Driven Response</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Pantries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Supermarkets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corner and Convenience Stores</th>
<th>69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Markets</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public markets like Northeast Market provide opportunities for small food business incubation, employment, and food access.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Urban Agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Farms</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Gardens</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.</td>
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COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

During COVID-19, the Food Policy Director and team of Food Planners:

- Lead the strategic planning for the food security response
- Conduct mapping and data analysis
- Oversee the produce, grocery, and mixed box strategies and implementation, including logistics, funding, community outreach, and site expansion
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FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system**: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.

2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels**: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.

3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy**: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.

4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production**: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- **Resident-driven processes**: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Food distribution and small businesses**: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Corner and convenience stores**: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Supermarkets**: Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Urban agriculture**: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Public Markets**: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Transportation gaps**: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

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SUMMARY OF COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT 14

The City of Baltimore is supplementing federal benefits with direct food resources. The City has provided 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals at over 400 sites and through home delivery from April – November. The current City-sponsored COVID-19 Food Distribution sites and other resources are mapped on the following page.

IN DISTRICT 14 FROM APRIL— NOVEMBER:

FOOD BOXES
- Currently 6 sites
- 13,300 food boxes
- 290,000 pounds

MEALS
- Total: 203,500
  - Youth: 188,700
  - Older Adults: 14,700

SNAP
- ~7,000 Participants
- 18% of residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

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Online SNAP: SNAP payment for groceries online became available for the first time in June 2020. Participants need to be made aware of this opportunity to shop at home.

Pandemic EBT: This additional food benefit can be spent like SNAP and is provided to families with children enrolled in Baltimore City public schools, intended to make up for loss of access to school meals. This will amount to hundreds of dollars per child. Families should not throw away their cards, which will be reloaded every two months.
## COVID-19 FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSE IN DISTRICT 14

### Current Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRODUCE BOXES</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nearly 11,000 produce boxes (218,400 pounds) have been distributed by Coastal Sunbelt and Common Market from June through November 2020. Boxes average 20 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROCERY BOXES</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,370 grocery boxes (711,000 pounds) have been distributed from April through November 2020. Boxes contain 30 pounds of shelf-stable food from the Maryland Food Bank. Home-delivered grocery boxes are available for older adults and residents impacted by COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIXED FOOD BOXES</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Beginning in September, to fill the “center of the plate” needs of food insecure residents, mixed boxes of meat, dairy, and produce have been distributed by Saval Foodservice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OLDER ADULT MEALS</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) and partners have delivered nearly 15,000 meals between April and November 2020 to residential facilities with multiple participants. Tens of thousands of additional meals have been delivered directly to individual homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUTH GRAB AND GO MEALS</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Since March, more than 188,700 have been distributed in District 14. With school in session virtually, students currently can receive meals at schools, rec centers, and other community sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Community members and organizations saw an urgent need and responded with various food resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD PANTRIES</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Maryland Food Bank has entered Phase 2 of its pandemic response while also working to restart standard programming and operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FOOD RETAIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPERMARKETS</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Overall, supermarkets provide the widest variety of healthy staple foods, however the pandemic created some supply chain issues for certain foods and products. Most supermarkets do not currently accept SNAP payment online and BFPI seeks to expand this program in 2021.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>These stores are not shown on the map due to their sheer number. These stores have low availability of healthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FARMERS MARKETS</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Two farmers markets serve the district. The Waverly Market accepts SNAP and some vendors accept WIC benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### URBAN AGRICULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN FARMS</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban farms play a role in local food system resilience and have provided fresh produce during the pandemic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>The community gardens throughout the district may provide opportunities for household-level food access.</td>
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- Support urban agriculture and local food system resilience

FOOD POLICY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

The Food Policy and Planning Division is led by the Food Policy Director, and staffed by a Food Access, a Food Resilience, and a Food Systems Planner. This division oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI), which has three pillars - interagency collaboration, the Food Policy Action Coalition (Food PAC), and Resident Food Equity Advisors (RFEA). Together, these efforts seek to build an equitable and resilient urban food system by addressing health, economic, and environmental disparities in areas that have high food insecurity.

FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH:

1. **Use policy to create a more equitable food system**: By integrating food across government and engaging in equitable research, strategic planning, and policy co-creation with residents.

2. **Increase resilience at household, community, and food system levels**: By addressing acute food insecurity, building long-term food resilience, and righting power imbalances in the food system.

3. **Strengthen and amplify the local food economy**: By implementing “Good Food Procurement” standards, supporting local food-based businesses, and promoting food recovery.

4. **Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production**: By identifying City-owned land suitable for farming; developing land tenure and pathways to ownership; promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible production; and supporting growers to create financially viable urban agriculture.

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

- **Resident-driven processes**: Support resident-driven processes to guide equitable food policy, programs and resources
- **Food distribution and small businesses**: Implement supply chain solutions that support healthy food distribution and small businesses
- **Corner and convenience stores**: Improve small grocery, corner, convenience stores
- **Supermarkets**: Retain and attract supermarkets
- **Urban agriculture**: Support urban agriculture, emphasizing historically disenfranchised populations and geographies
- **Public Markets**: Increase the ability of the public markets to anchor the healthy food environment
- **Transportation gaps**: Address transportation gaps that impact food access

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**WEBSITE**: https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/baltimore-food-policy-initiative

**FOOD RESOURCES**: https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites