



2024-2025

# Year in Review



NH FOOD  
ALLIANCE



University of  
New Hampshire

PUBLISHED JULY 1, 2025

# Who We Are, What We Do

## Our Mission

The NH Food Alliance (NHFA) is a statewide network that connects the people, businesses, organizations, and communities dedicated to growing a thriving, fair, and sustainable local food system in the Granite State. Together we build relationships, learn from each other, and catalyze collaboration to advance our common goals, respond creatively to challenges, and amplify our collective impact.

## Our Vision

We envision a diverse and well-connected network of trusted partners working together to grow and sustain local farms, fisheries, and food businesses, secure healthy food access for all, build climate resilience, and ensure equity in our communities and workplaces.

## Our Impact

We advance our mission and vision by leveraging the connections and relationships we've been building since 2013 across four impact areas: Network Development, Collaborative Action, Communications and Storytelling, and Learning and Leadership. This report highlights the most impactful initiatives, events, and activities from this past year. Thank you to the Henry P. Kendall Foundation, NH Charitable Foundation, You Have Our Trust, generous individual donors, and our network partners for making this work possible.

## Land Acknowledgement

The NH Food Alliance a program of the University of New Hampshire, and operates on land that is N'dakinna, which is the traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki, Pennacook, and Wabanaki Peoples past and present. As we all journey on the trail of life, we wish to acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection the Pennacook, Abenaki, and Wabanaki Peoples have maintained to N'dakinna (homeland) and the aki (land), nibi (water), lolakwikak (flora), and awaasak (fauna), which the University of New Hampshire community is honored to steward today. We also acknowledge the hardships they continue to endure after the loss of unceded homelands and champion the university's responsibility to foster relationships and opportunities that strengthen the well-being of the Indigenous People who carry forward the traditions of their ancestors. For more information about our shared indigenous heritage, please visit Indigenous NH.

## 2024-25 Network Leadership Team

Charlene Andersen, NH Community Loan Fund  
Mike Young, UNH Cooperative Extension  
Josephine Porter, NH Center for Justice & Equity  
Lauren Judd, Cornucopia Project  
Tiffany Brewster, NH Hunger Solutions  
Kelly McAdam, UNH Cooperative Extension

Nikki Kolb, NOFA-NH  
Cameron Huftalen, Vital Communities  
Gavin Macdonald, Genuine Local  
Shawn Menard, Seacoast Eat Local  
Allan Reetz, Hanover Co-op Food Stores  
Joel Moyer, Fair Food Network

## NH Food Alliance Team

The NH Food Alliance is a program of the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA) at the University of New Hampshire.

Nicole Tocco Cardwell, Director  
Colleen Jennings, Network Coordinator  
Katelyn Porter, Value Chain Coordinator  
Stacey Purslow, Farm to School Coordinator

# Growing Stronger Roots

The past year marked growth in almost all areas of our network's food systems work, as well as two exciting transitions for the NH Food Alliance team.

## NH Food Alliance's new home in the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture

As of July 1, 2025, the NH Food Alliance and NH Farm to School will transition from the UNH Sustainability Institute and into the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA). The sentiments behind this transition are alignment and opportunity: our team is poised to provide valuable and complementary programming and resources to COLSA and we are looking forward to benefitting from the college's nationally recognized teaching, research, and service programs, as well as building relationships with its students, staff, and faculty.

Our work transcends the University by engaging with hundreds of businesses and organizations across the state and spearheading collaborative action. By joining the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, we will build stronger alignment with University partners while continuing our commitment to statewide engagement.

As part of our transition to COLSA, NH Farm to School and related work focused on K-12 schools, will fall under the NH Food Alliance umbrella. We will continue to champion farm to school programming and integrate farm to school initiatives into the broader mission of the NH Food Alliance by supporting local food in schools, building strong farm-to-institution connections, and fostering educational opportunities around agriculture and nutrition.

Both transitions will align our collective work with the larger network of food system partners and lead to endless opportunities for collaboration and further growth across New Hampshire's food system. We're excited to see where we grow next!

## Our Network is Growing

Through our work this past year, the NH Food Alliance network of partners increased from 220 businesses and organizations last year to over 360 this year. Newly engaged and involved partners include the NH Fruit Growers Association, the NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs, the NH Agricultural Experiment Station, and many others. Scan the QR code to meet the network!



**11% more people**  
attended the 2025  
Statewide Gathering  
than in 2024

**15% more people**  
registered for the  
2025 Network Café  
Series than in 2024

Our newsletter  
audience grew by **10%**



# Network Development

We aim to deepen our existing network connections and actively develop new relationships between individuals and organizations, especially among traditionally underrepresented communities, policy makers, and groups. This year, we accomplished this through the following events and initiatives.

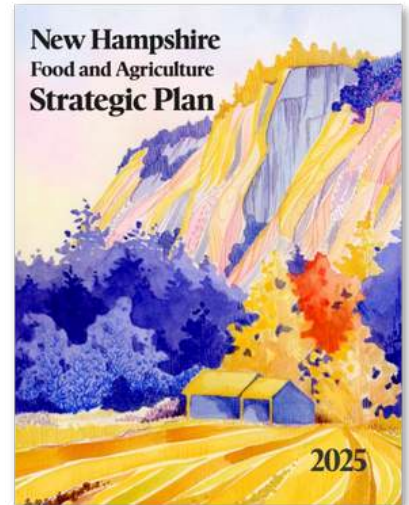
## Developing the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan

On March 18, 2025, we published the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan, the first-ever strategic plan for New Hampshire's food system. The year and half long collaborative effort was spearheaded by the NH Food Alliance, the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, and UNH Extension, in partnership with more than 89 other food system organizations and hundreds of individuals deeply committed to New Hampshire's food system.

The decision to create a strategic plan for New Hampshire's food system developed from the NH Food Alliance's participation in the New England Food System Planners Partnership, a collaboration between seven state-level organizations, six state agricultural, economic, and environmental department representatives.

The New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan proposes over 140 recommendations that address 27 agriculture and food-related topics through Product, Market, and Issue briefs. Each brief touches on a product, market, or issue that is foundational to our food system and briefs are mapped across the Strategic Plan's Vision, Goals, and Persistent Themes to ensure our work is aligned toward our collective goals. Each recommendation lays out a specific suggested action, from policy changes and funding opportunities to program expansion and technical assistance, and is categorized by the stakeholders who are best suited to address it.

The entirety of the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan—every brief, recommendation, and outcome—is grounded in the goal of increasing the farm, fish, and food business viability and equity in our state. It will serve as an actionable roadmap toward positive change, streamlining our collective efforts to obtain funding, pass policies, develop programs, and invest in infrastructure, for our food system for years to come.



*The Strategic Plan Development team (pictured above, left to right), Wania Ahmed, Colleen Jennings, Nicole Cardwell, Celie Boley, Elise Neidecker, and Claire Erley (Food Works Group, not pictured), facilitated the Advisory Committee, Brief Authors, and the general public through each phase of the strategic planning process.*

## The Journey: Process and Timeline

The NH Food Alliance was awarded funding and granted the authority to lead the strategic planning process through the USDA's Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program, administered by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. The NH Charitable Foundation generously provided supplemental funding to enable the project's reach and success.

### September 2023–May 2024: Project Launch and Participatory Engagement

Through the Participatory Engagement Plan, we collected information to provide important context and insight for the brief development process. During this initial phase, the Strategic Plan Development team:

- Formed a New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan Advisory Committee. This group of dedicated leaders from local, regional, and statewide organizations and initiatives provided guidance and oversight to the Strategic Plan Development team on the process, structure, and content of the Strategic Plan. The group represents six governmental agencies, twelve non-profit organizations, four food businesses, the NH Agricultural Experiment Station, and UNH Extension.
- Created a special designation of "Equity Advisor" within the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan Advisory Committee: Equity Advisors provided input, feedback, and ideas on both the process and content of the Strategic Plan. They guided the process of applying equity as a lens to the Strategic Plan and served as content experts on centering equity in brief development.
- Engaged with 600+ individuals through more than 43 listening sessions, focus groups, surveys, and one-on-one conversations. The input provided through these sessions informed the shape, direction, and content of the Strategic Plan in many ways, impacting the list of brief topics, the subject matter experts consulted, the concerns or challenges included, the programs highlighted, and more.
- Hosted a UNH Sustainability Institute Fellow who focused on the integration of equity as a lens into brief development through conducting equity analyses of nearly all brief topics.



*Authors discussing over lunch at the prioritization meeting for the Agritourism brief.*

### May–December 2024: Brief Development

Subject matter experts were invited to participate in the development and drafting of each Product, Market, and Issue brief through prioritization meetings and other collaborative efforts. The content of the plan was written by 118 subject matter experts representing 89 organizations and communities and resulted in 27 Product, Market and Issue briefs.

#### BY THE NUMBERS

27

Product, Market,  
and Issue briefs

143

Specific  
recommendations

118

Subject matter  
experts

89

Organizations  
contributed expertise

26

Advisory  
Committee  
members

190

Comments on  
Briefs submitted





September 2024–January 2025: Public Comment Period

Each brief was shared for a 30-day Public Comment Period, during which the general public could review and provide input on the draft of the brief. After the Public Comment Period for each brief closed, the comments were reviewed by the brief authors and considered for incorporation into the final brief draft. Similarly, the Vision, Goals, and opening pages of the Strategic Plan were shared for a 30-day Public Comment Period before finalization. This process was designed intentionally to provide an additional series of opportunities for community members not directly involved in the development of the Strategic Plan to review, provide input on, and influence it.



Authors of the Fruits & Vegetables brief, Kyle Lacasse, Moulton Farm & NH Vegetable and Berry Growers Association, Wendy Johnnecheck, UNH Extension, Becky Sideman, UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, Jeremy DeLisle, UNH Extension, and Madison Hardy, NH Fruit Growers Association, met at Moulton Farm in Meredith to discuss the topics and information to include in the brief.

February–March 2025: Design and Publication

The same information, two ways to experience it: the print design of the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan happened concurrently with the creation of a Strategic Plan web platform on the NH Food Alliance’s website. The web platform is dynamic, filterable and allows for updates, modifications, comments, and the gathering of related information, ensuring the Strategic Plan is a living, actionable document. All brief recommendations are categorized by goal, type of action, topic, and other tags, and uploaded as a filterable catalog.

Recommendations

TYPE OF ACTION

BRIEF TOPIC

GOAL

- Any -

- Any -

- Any -

TAGS

KEYWORD SEARCH

APPLY

- Any -

Recommendation	Type of Action	Brief Topic	Goal
<b>Increase market access and local sourcing in the value-added product industry</b> The NH Food Alliance to facilitate discussions with grocers, distributors, and food hubs to increase and streamline distribution logistics and market... Tags: Farm, Fish, or Food Business, Nonprofits, State/NH	Coordination/Network development or support	Value-Added Processing & Co-Manufacturing	Nutrition & Access
<b>Add UNH Extension personnel to provide training for cost-benefit financial analysis of value-added production</b> Add personnel at UNH Extension to increase capacity in providing programming and training specific to the cost- benefit financial analysis of value-... Tags: UNH Extension, Technical Assistance Providers, Nonprofits, Farm, Fish, or Food Business, State/NH	Program creation, support, or expansion, Coordination/Network development or support	Value-Added Processing & Co-Manufacturing	Farm, Fish, & Food Business Viability

To dive directly into the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan, scan the QR code.



## From Strategic Planning to Strategic Action

The New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan offers a wealth of insight, knowledge, and ideas. Its implementation will focus on helping stakeholders understand how to use it as a tool to access, prioritize, and present ideas for change to the right people at the right time.

Since its publication, the NH Food Alliance team has:

- Hosted the 2025 NH Food System Statewide Gathering as the official launch of the Strategic Plan. Each breakout session at the Statewide Gathering was focused on moving at least one recommendation from the strategic plan forward. Read more about the Statewide Gathering on page 8.
- Presented about the Strategic Plan to a variety of audiences and at many events. Read on for the full list of presentations.

### Strategic Plan Presentations

**March 28, 2025:** Climate Maple Impacts Breakfast

**April 4, 2025:** NH Food Alliance's Network Café

**Apr 10, 2025:** Kearsarge Food Hub's Annual Meeting

**April 14, 2025:** NH Food System Funders Briefing

**April 17, 2025:** NH Department of Environmental Services' Climate Action Plan Listening Session

**April 22, 2025:** NH House Environment & Agriculture Committee

**April 22, 2025:** Riverwoods Durham

**May 5, 2025:** Sullivan County Farm Bureau Meeting



NH Food Alliance Director, Nicole Cardwell, presented the New Hampshire Food & Agriculture Strategic Plan to the NH House Environment & Agriculture Committee. The Strategic Plan was very well received by the representatives and the committee expressed interest in using the plan to propose policy in the 2025–2026 legislative session.



In the year to come, the NH Food Alliance will be incorporating outcomes from the Strategic Plan into their work in the following ways:

- Ensure the content of the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan is easily accessible to all, connecting organizations, businesses, funders, legislators, state agencies, and others directly with the information they need.
- Continue hosting events to coordinate around the Strategic Plan and chart a clear path forward.
- Collaborate with strategic partners to organize and analyze key recommendations, creating a menu of “shovel-ready” action items that can guide research and policy priorities across the state and region.
- Collaborate with our Network Leadership Team to form Implementation Workgroups to address specific recommendations or issues cited in the Strategic Plan.



“I just wanted to commend you on this document. I’ve worked on a number of strategic plans for urban planning and, as a resource, this is head and shoulders above anything I’ve ever worked on myself. It’s amazing. And one of my favorite things is the list of authors in each section because as a body, here, it will be very handy to us as a resource in who we should be checking with on all of these different topics. The format is excellent, I’m just so impressed.” — Representative Molly Howard, NH House Environment & Agriculture Committee



## Strategic Plan, In the Press

"Effort aims to boost local food system in New Hampshire," September 20, 2024, New Hampshire Bulletin

"Effort aims to boost local food system in New Hampshire," September 24, 2024, Valley News via the New Hampshire Bulletin

"UNH Leading the Way on New Hampshire's First-Ever Food System Strategic Plan: Sustainability Institute's NH Food Alliance helps build roadmap for farmers, fisherman and consumers," October 3, 2024, UNH Today

"Plan released for strengthening New Hampshire food system, reaching ambitious food production goal," March 25, 2025, Concord Monitor

"Plan released for strengthening New Hampshire food system, reaching ambitious food production goal," March 25, 2025, Laconia Daily Sun via Concord Monitor

"Plan released for strengthening New Hampshire food system, reaching ambitious food production goal," March 25, 2025, Business NH Magazine via Concord Monitor

"New plan highlights the many challenges for New Hampshire's food system," April 3, 2025, New Hampshire Bulletin

"Granite Geek: You can't have local food without local farms, which requires local farmland," April 28, 2025, Concord Monitor

"The NH Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan brings together stakeholders on May 21 in Loudon," May 2, 2025, Concord Monitor

"Planning future food system Strategic plan presented to strengthen New Hampshire's agricultural infrastructure," June 3, 2025, Concord Monitor

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"This is just a really impressive and outstanding document and I can't wait to go home and further dig through it."— Chairwoman Judy Aron, NH House Environment & Agriculture Committee

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### New plan highlights the many challenges for New Hampshire's food system

BY: CLAIRE SULLIVAN - APRIL 3, 2025 1:31 PM



For the state's "rapidly" dwindling dairy farms, the plan called for measures like creating an association to advocate for the state's dairy industry, bolstering workforce development, and offering more grant support. (Getty Images)



# 2025 NH Food System Statewide Gathering

May 21, 2025 | Sanborn Mills Farm | Loudon, New Hampshire



Several members of the NH Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan Advisory Committee celebrate its launch at the NH Food System Statewide Gathering (pictured above, left to right), Anton Bekkerman, NH Agriculture Experiment State; Amy Loader, UNH Cooperative Extension; Xochi Salazar, NOFA-NH; Cameron Huftalen, Vital Communities; Todd Horner, Southeast Regional Planning Commission; Commissioner Shawn Jasper, NH DAMF; Jo Porter, NH Center for Justice and Equity; Nicole Cardwell, NH Food Alliance)

Each year, the NH Food Alliance hosts the NH Food System Statewide Gathering as an event that brings together individuals, businesses, and organizations from across sectors who are dedicated to growing a local food system that works for all in the Granite State.

This year, the Statewide Gathering served as the official launch of the first-ever New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan. Over 200 farmers, fishermen, business owners, and food system professionals from across New Hampshire and New England gathered to dive deeply into Strategic Plan content through breakout sessions and made connections through strategic plan-focused networking activities, catapulting our collective work from strategic planning into strategic action.

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**203 participants**

**9 breakout sessions**

**103 organizations represented**

**24 event sponsors**

**Almost every New Hampshire region represented**

**\*100% of attendees agreed the Gathering was valuable to their work**

\*attendees who filled out the evaluation





"I've been to many gatherings about agriculture in the state. Today is the largest gathering of people who really care about supporting New Hampshire agriculture that I've been to."

— Commissioner Shawn Jasper, NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food

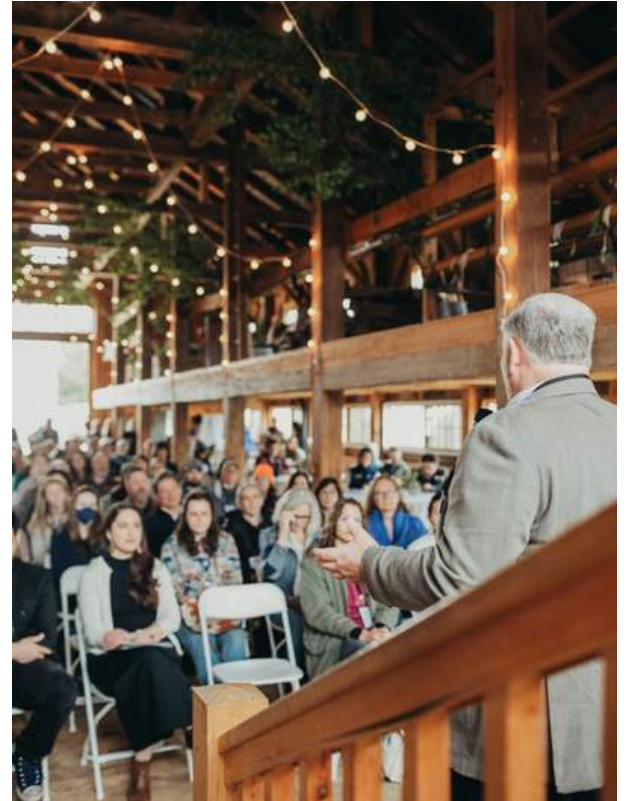


In between connecting with food system friends and colleagues, these were some of the highlights of the gathering:

- Nicole Cardwell, Director of the NH Food Alliance, and Commissioner Shawn Jasper, of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food welcomed attendees and kicked off the morning with remarks about the journey of producing the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan.

**Breakout sessions at the Statewide Gathering focused on moving forward at least one recommendation from the New Hampshire Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan and were led by subject matter experts, food system professionals, and producers. Some highlights from each breakout session:**

- Leaders in **local food access** held a discussion about how their programs can be sustained in the face of an uncertain federal and state funding environment and increased need from Granite Staters. The session was moderated by Tiffany Brewster of NH Hunger Solutions and included Brendan Cornwell and Elsy Cipriani of the NH Food Bank, Xochi Salazar of NOFA-NH, and Erin Germain of the NH Department of Health and Human Services' WIC program, who provided succinct overviews of four local food access programs they lead, Granite State Market Match, NH Feeding NH, NOFA-NH's Farm Share Program, and the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.



*Commissioner Shawn Jasper, NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, helping welcome attendees and urging them to continue their great work in conjunction with the newly launched NH Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan.*



- A session moderated by Sarah Wrightsman of NH Housing, Theresa Walker of the Durham Agricultural Commission, Noah Hodgetts of the NH Office of Planning & Development, and James Vayo of the Southern Regional Planning Commission, outlined various strategies that can be used to **create more housing and preserve land for farming and food production**, including agriculture and food production friendly zoning, cluster subdivisions, and accessory dwelling units.
- Jeff Beard and Nicole Levesque, of the NH Department of Education's Office of Career Development, and David Bressler, of the Wilbur H. Palmer Career and Technical Education Center at Alvirne High School, brought breakout session attendees into the world of Career Technical Education and Extended Learning Opportunities and explored how everyone can create more **pathways for New Hampshire's students to find success in an agricultural or food system career**.



- One session focused on learning from the Composting Association of Vermont's toolkit to help farmers and food businesses **create more opportunities for on-farm composting**. Breakout session leaders Paige Wilson, of the NH Department of Environmental Services, and Natasha Duarte and Cat Buxton, of the Composting Association of Vermont, were so excited by the energy in the breakout session that they hope to schedule a follow up work session with those interested in implementing the toolkit in their own communities and businesses.
- Inspired by ongoing work and conversations within the NH Ag Financiers group, Seth Wilner, of UNH Extension, and Kali Lucey, of Land for Good, hosted a session that **increased collaborative work amongst farm business technical assistance providers** so they can provide more succinct support to farm and food businesses across this state.
- Katelyn Porter, Value Chain Coordinator for the NH Food Alliance, led a session about creating a new and comprehensive **NH Wholesale Producer Directory**. Restaurant owners, food service chefs, and producers to provide feedback on the directory and its usefulness in creating more local sourcing connections across the state.
- Jada Lindblom and Gail McWilliam Jellie, of UNH Extension, and Hannah Bendroth and Meghan Kelley, of Coppal House Farm, hosted a session **to create connections between operators in the agritourism sector** and consolidate best practices to offer better experiences for visitors and smoother systems for operators.
- In a highly anticipated session, Assistant Commissioner Josh Marshall and Director of Agricultural Development, Rebecca Ross, of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, tapped into the experience and knowledge of their breakout session attendees to inform the department's project of **creating a NH grown brand** for New Hampshire's agricultural and food products. The breakout session cleared a path for the values, use, and the visual nature of the brand and will be a firm stepping stone for the department to move the project forward and create a succinct identity for New Hampshire's agricultural products.
- In support of recommendations made across almost every Strategic Plan brief, Director of the NH Agricultural Experiment Station, Anton Bekkerman, was joined by Jason Scruton, Farm Manager for the UNH Organic Dairy Research Farm, and Rebecca Sideman, chair of and professor in the Department of Agriculture, Nutrition, and Food Systems part of the College of Life Science and Agriculture at UNH, to share about **research being done at the university** and how it can be weaved into the real-time work of food system professionals and businesses across the state.



*Jesse Wright of UNH Extension leading a breakout group with producers during the NH Wholesale Directory breakout session.*

**Want to know more? You can see the full schedule of the day, follow up from each breakout session, the Gathering attendee list, and more [here](#).**



"I always look forward to attending the Statewide Gathering! This is a vital opportunity for me to stay informed about the evolving challenges facing our local food system and the innovative efforts underway to address them. This event also helps me step outside of my daily work and see the bigger picture. It allows me to connect the dots between what I do and how it contributes to the broader movement for a more resilient and equitable food system in our state. Engaging with others in the field reminds me that I'm part of something larger, and it re-energizes my commitment to this work." — 2025 NH Food System Statewide Gathering Participant



# Collaborative Action

We catalyze collaboration to find shared interests, advance policy changes, generate knowledge, and build collective solutions at the community, state, and regional levels through the work of our action teams, workgroups, and the facilitation of various strategic meetings.

## Selecting Schools for the Local Food for Local Schools Purchasing Incentive Pilot Program

In January 2025, we partnered with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food to open and promote the application for Local Food for Local Schools Purchasing Incentive Pilot Program. In March, the first cohort of 8 schools were selected, with the program expected to launch in Summer 2025 and local food purchases beginning at the start of the 2025–2026 school year.

The pilot program offers a 33% reimbursement incentive on New Hampshire grown and produced food purchased by New Hampshire school districts and food service directors for breakfast, lunch, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program services.

NH Food Alliance will support the participating cohort with monthly meetings to provide technical assistance, including assisting with the sourcing of local products, reporting and reimbursement, and any general extra support the schools need.

### Pilot Program, in the news

"A new law will help some NH schools access local food"

July 22, 2024, NH Public Radio

"Episode XLVII: Local Food for Local Schools"  
October 2024, Littleton Food Co-op's That's Rad! Podcast

"Pilot program will incentivize school districts to buy from New Hampshire Farm"  
October 17, 2024, Concord Monitor

## Bolstering the Middle of the Supply Chain with Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Funding

The NH Food Alliance has continued our collaborative role in executing the USDA's Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program in New Hampshire, alongside UNH Extension and the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. The intention of RFSI program is to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain, defined as everything after production and before direct retail. In New Hampshire, the program has a strong focus on collaborative sales, marketing and distribution through shared-use equipment and infrastructure.

In January, we hosted Assistant Commissioner Josh Marshall of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food for an informational session about the RFSI Equipment Grant Program. New Hampshire farm and food businesses were invited to submit a proposal for up to \$100,000 to fund the purchase of equipment or infrastructure that will build capacity for their business in collaboration with others. Following the grant application period, we served on the grant review committee. We're looking forward to the official grant recipient announcement and communicating about the awards to increase opportunities for middle of the supply chain engagement.

The next phase of our role in the RFSI program will be hosting field trips for farmers, food business owners, funders, and other middle of the food supply chain professionals to better understand successful value-added and middle of the food supply chain businesses across New England, in the hopes more businesses can be kickstarted to support this sector in New Hampshire.

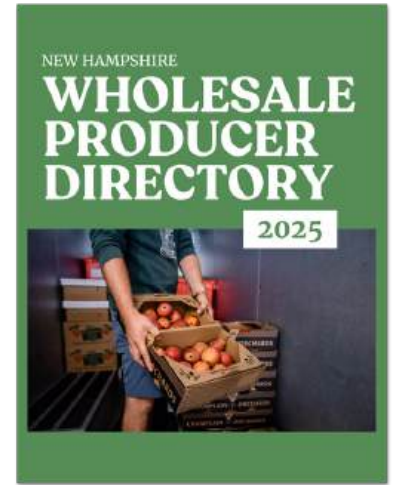


## 2025 NH Wholesale Producer Directory



This year, we partnered with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food to expand their Wholesale Producer Directory. Published in April, the 2025 New Hampshire Wholesale Producer Directory offers at-a-glance information about farms and food businesses from across New Hampshire and New England ready to sell wholesale produce, meat and eggs, dairy, maple syrup and honey, and other value-added products.

Each farm or food business featured in the directory was vetted for wholesale readiness, and individual profiles offer details about product availability, delivery, and ordering. By bringing together information that is most useful to prospective wholesale buyers, we hope to streamline the process of finding and making connections to local food sources.



At the 2025 NH Food System Statewide Gathering, NHFA's Value Chain Coordinator Katelyn Porter, hosted a breakout session around the NH Wholesale Producers Directory. The session included buyers, producers, and other food system technical assistance providers and they contributed feedback on the directory and insights on how they could use it to create more wholesale procurement relationships.

## New England Food Vision Prize for Culturally Connected Cafeterias in Manchester

In October, NH Farm to School was awarded a 2024 New England Food Vision Prize from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation. The two-year project is focused on developing culturally connected school meals and increasing local sourcing in the Manchester School District by training school food service staff, engaging with students as meal ambassadors, and building relationships with two food hubs. Our project partners are the Manchester School Food Service Department, Food Connects, and Fresh Start Farms, a program of the Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success (ORIS).

The first training was held in April 2025 and focused on cuisines of Bhutan, Nepal, India, Burma, China, and Indonesia. Hari Maya Adhikari from Fresh Start Farms (pictured left) demonstrated her recipe for noodle broth. The second training was held in May and focused on the cuisines of Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan. Batulo Mahamed of Batulo's Kitchen in Concord demonstrated recipes for Ugalli, Kola greens, and Somali Meat pies.



During both trainings, everyone tasted the recipes they prepared together and had a discussion about the various ingredients, where they could be sourced from locally, and how to scale the recipes for school food service. Two more trainings will be held in the Fall of 2025 and local purchasing by the Manchester School District began this spring and will continue with the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

### Culturally Connected Cafeterias, in the news

"Grant to increase local and culturally-relevant foods in Manchester schools"  
December 22, 2024, Union Leader

"UNH program awarded grant to bring culturally connected meals to Manchester schools"  
January 19, 2025, WMUR News

## The NH Food Alliance coordinates the following network groups in support of work across our various focus areas, including:

- the Agricultural Land Preservation Program team, which supported the reinstatement of the program within the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, wrapped up its work. In the Spring, applications to the program were accepted and selected projects will be announced later this year.
- the New England Food Hub and Processors Network, which is co-led by the NH Food Alliance, Healthcare Without Harm, Farm to Institution New England, and the New England Food System Planners Partnership. The network consists of over 30 food hubs and processors from across New England who engage in bi-monthly meetings to catalyze learnings and build relationships to create a more connected regional food system;
- the NH Food Hub Network, which meets monthly to bring resources, information, funding and support to New Hampshire's local food retailers and distributors.
- Collaborating to host the New England Young Fishermen Alliance (NEYFA)'s Deckhand to Captain Training Program which provides young fishermen with tools to succeed in their journey to becoming Owner-Operators of their fishing vessels



*Andrea Tomlinson, New England Young Fishermen's Alliance, and Katelyn Porter, NH Food Alliance working together on NEYFA's Deckhand to Captain Training Program.*

**APPLY BY APRIL 11!**



**New Hampshire**  
*Department of Agriculture,  
Markets, and Food*

## NH Food Alliance participated in the following coalitions, groups, and networks:

- the NH Food Access Coalition and Leadership Team, coordinated by NH Hunger Solutions, to represent the intersection of local agriculture and food access work happening in the state;
- the NH Agricultural Financiers, coordinated by New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, to better understand the unique roles of the financial institutions across the state and to help share resources they have to offer our network;
- the Local Food Count Project, as research lead for New Hampshire, to establish baseline local food purchasing data, allowing us to begin to measure progress towards the goal of New Englanders consuming and producing 30% of our own food by the year 2030;
- the New England Food System Planners Partnership with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food to represent New Hampshire's food system interested in variety of regional work, including the New England Feeding New England Project.





# Communications & Storytelling

We amplify the voices and missions of our network partners by developing communications platforms that reach food systems professionals, as well as a broader audience. Our communications strategies include sharing tools and resources, as well as lifting up storytelling that advances food systems work throughout the state.

## Grew the Local Food Movement during 2024 NH Eats Local Month

NH Eats Local Month is a month-long consumer marketing campaign in support of New Hampshire grown, caught, and produced foods, hosted by the NH Food Alliance and its NH Eats Local Action Team, which includes the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. As part of the campaign, farms, restaurants, fisheries, farmers' markets, and other food businesses and organizations are invited to become promotional partners for NH Eats Local Month.

### New Funding, New Partners, New Swag

Funded by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food's Champions of NH Agriculture grant, we were able to create and distribute a suite of marketing materials to 2024 NH Eats Local Month partners to help promote local food. In addition to new marketing materials, we did outreach to New Hampshire breweries and libraries to join as partners. Both partners received additional materials specific to their audiences (breweries received promotional t-shirts from American Farmland Trust and pint glasses from NH Brewers' Association; libraries received informational materials about SNAP, Granite State Market Match/Double Up Food Bucks, and NH WIC) to promote local food. We had 45 libraries and 10 breweries join us as new partners in 2024.

### Live Free & Eat Local Challenge

The focus of 2024 NH Eats Local Month was the Live Free & Eat Local Challenge. New Hampshire visitors and residents were challenged to eat at as many New Hampshire farm, fish, or food businesses to be eligible to win a prize donated by local small businesses.



*We distributed over 28,000 different materials to NH Eats Local Month partners to display, as seen above at the Durham Public Library.*

## 2024 NH Eats Local Month was a year of growth.

We had  
**147**  
partners in 2024,  
increasing from  
100 partners in 2023.

**71%**  
eaters spent \$50+ on  
local food during 2024  
NH Eats Local Month

2024 Live Free & Eat Local  
Challenge participants  
visited over  
**350**  
farm, fish, and food businesses  
across New Hampshire.

## NH Food Systems News You Need to Know

NH Food Systems News You Need to Know, the NH Food Alliance's monthly newsletter, reaches nearly 2,900 subscribers. In addition to sharing information from NHFA, the newsletter delivers food system-focused events, news stories, jobs, grants, and other announcements from partners directly into the inboxes of our network. The information shared in each newsletter is housed on the Network News page on the NH Food Alliance website. The Network News page allows network partners to filter and search food system content from across New Hampshire and beyond, making information accessible and available to all.



### Food System News You Need to Know:

**NH House Finance Committee to vote on Granite State Market Match, Double Up Food Bucks, & WIC Farmers' Market Program funding tomorrow, March 25 at 10am**

## Filterable Clearinghouse for Food System Grants

We continued to maintain, manage, and promote our filterable clearinghouse for grant opportunities available to farmers, fishermen, food producers, and food system organizations

## Raising Awareness for Agricultural Policy

During the 2024-2025 legislative session, we synthesized and distributed information about state-level policy issues relevant to our food system through email alerts and the coordination of the 2025 Agricultural Policy Forum.

## New England FoodComms Community of Practice

The NH Food Alliance co-facilitates the New England FoodComms Community of Practice alongside Food Solutions New England. The community of practice offers a monthly space for food system communicators from New England and beyond to learn about various communications strategies, tools, and resources, and network with other professionals.

“

“The NH Food Alliance's landing page for grants is the best thing since sliced bread.”

— Will Hastings, UNH Extension

”



# Learning & Leadership

We foster learning and skill-building among our network partners so that we can be effective leaders, collaborators, and advocates for change in our food system.

## In the Community

The NH Food Alliance presented at, attended, and participated in a number of conferences, events, and committees, this past year.

- Tabled at Farm-a-Q at Tuckaway Farm
- Tabled at the Keep NH Brewing Festival
- During 2024 NH Eats Local Month we:
  - Presented at the Gilford Library and the Manchester Library
  - Tabled at NOFA-NH's Summer Picnic at Brookford Farm
  - Attended the NH Farm Bureau Summer Picnic
- Served on the nominations committee for the NH Restaurant & Lodging Association Awards
- Toured Gould Hill Farm with our Network Leadership Team
- Co-hosted a breakout session and field trip at the 2025 Northeast Farm to Institution Summit
- Hosted a Summer Farm to School Training for the NH Department of Education
- Co-hosted the 2024-2025 Webinar Series with NH School & Youth Garden Network
- Exhibited at the Across NH Conference
- Hosted a workshop at the NH National Education Association conference
- We attended:
  - NH Hunger Solutions' NH Nutrition Equity Summit
  - North Country Food and Ag Summit
  - New Hampshire Farm, Forest and Garden Expo
  - NOFA-NH Winter Conference
  - New England BIPOC Fest



Colleen Jennings promoting 2024 NH Eats Local Month at the Keep NH Brewing Festival in Concord.

## In the Classroom

The NH Food Alliance team presented in the following University of New Hampshire classes:

- Exploring Sustainability (4 sections)
- Introduction to EcoGastronomy (2 sections)
- Food Systems & Community Resilience



(Top) NHFA's Network Leadership team touring Gould Hill Farm in Contoocook. (Bottom) The New England Food Hub & Processing Network Meetup session at the 2025 Northeast Farm to Institution Summit.

# 2024-2025 Network Café Series

On the first Friday of each month, September through April, the NH Food Alliance network hosts an informal and lively conversation with partners across the New Hampshire food system and beyond as part of their Network Café Series. Each Network Café is designed to be inclusive opportunities for learning and growing in our food systems work.

The 2024-2025 Network Café Series offered a space to learn about and discuss the critical topics and issues facing our food system. Each month, we spent an hour talking about a program, policy, or issue, ranging from farm to school to seafood supply chains and beyond. An expert joined us to share about their understanding of the topic at hand and lay out the implications the issue has for our individual and collective work in creating a thriving food system here in the Granite State. Following the presentation, we came together to ask questions, discuss, and connect about what we learned, strengthening our relationships and connections to inspire solutions through collaboration.

## 2024-2025 Network Café Topics

<p>September</p> <p>Where We Are &amp; Where We're Going: the NH Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan <i>hosted with Food Works Group</i></p>	<p>January</p> <p>2025 Agricultural Policy Forum <i>hosted with NH Farm Bureau, NOFA-NH, and NH Hunger Solutions</i></p>
<p>October</p> <p>Getting Equipped with the Resilient Food System Infrastructure Program <i>hosted with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food and UNH Extension</i></p>	<p>February</p> <p>Envisioning the Future of School &amp; Campus Food <i>hosted with the Henry P. Kendall Foundation</i></p>
<p>November</p> <p>Regional Planning Commissions 101 (and why you should care) <i>hosted with the Southern and Southwest Regional Planning Commissions</i></p>	<p>March</p> <p>Why not both? Providing Housing &amp; Protecting Land across NH <i>hosted with NH Housing and American Farmland Trust</i></p>
<p>December</p> <p>A Fresh Catch for New Hampshire's Seafood Supply Chain <i>hosted with Coastline Seafood</i></p>	<p>April</p> <p>Meet the NH Food and Agriculture Strategic Plan</p>

456  
registered  
participants  
from  
387  
different  
organizations!

### Of all Network Café survey respondents...

100%  
found the café topics useful

98%  
learned something new during a café

73%  
said they made a new connection or deepened an existing connection during a café

37 total responses



# 362

network partners  
(and counting!)

"This is not a matter of one organization or one person doing all of it. Just as there were a lot of people putting this document [the strategic plan] together, we're hoping that there will be many, many more people who are going to be working on the recommendations in the ways that they are able."

— Representative Peter Bixby, NH House Environment & Agriculture Committee



# Thank you for your ongoing support of the NH Food Alliance.



The NH Food Alliance is a program part of the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture at the University of New Hampshire. Our work is made possible by generous support from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation, NH Charitable Foundation, You Have Our Trust, and generous individual donors.



**University of  
New Hampshire**

**NH Food Alliance**  
University of New Hampshire  
Rudman Hall  
(603) 862-8564  
[nhfoodalliance.org](http://nhfoodalliance.org) | [@nhfoodalliance](https://twitter.com/nhfoodalliance)