

Placing North Carolina in the national context: Lessons learned from food councils across the US

December 5, 2019

Raychel Santo

FOOD POLICY
NETWORKS



Overview

- Highlights from national survey
- Examples from the field:
 - Innovative policy work
 - Elevating equity and community leadership

What is a food (policy) council?

An **organized group of stakeholders from various sectors** that may be sanctioned by a government body or may exist independently of government, which works to address **food systems issues** and needs at the local (city/municipality or county), state/provincial, regional or Native American/First Nations levels through **policy**.

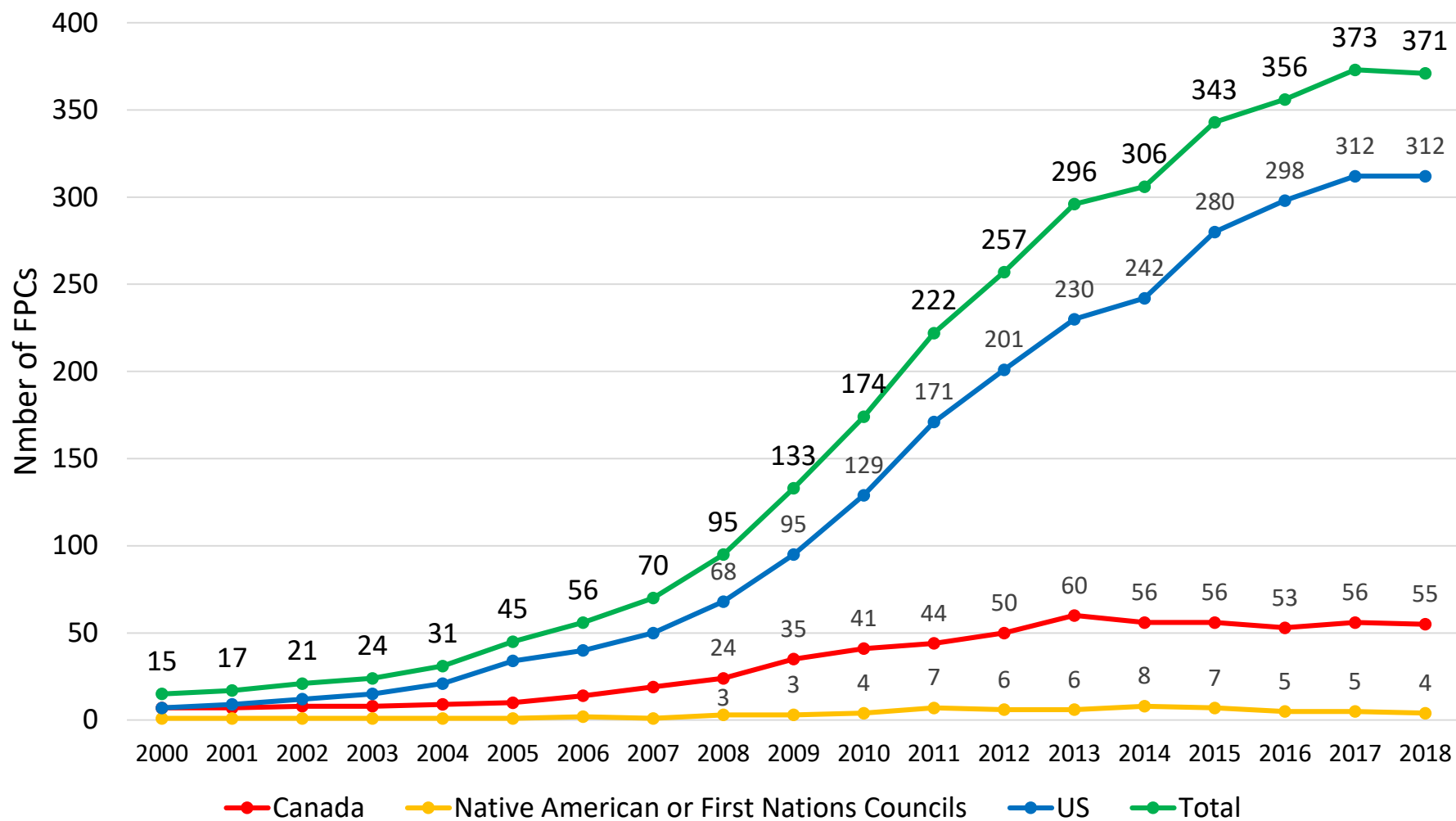




Other names for FPCs

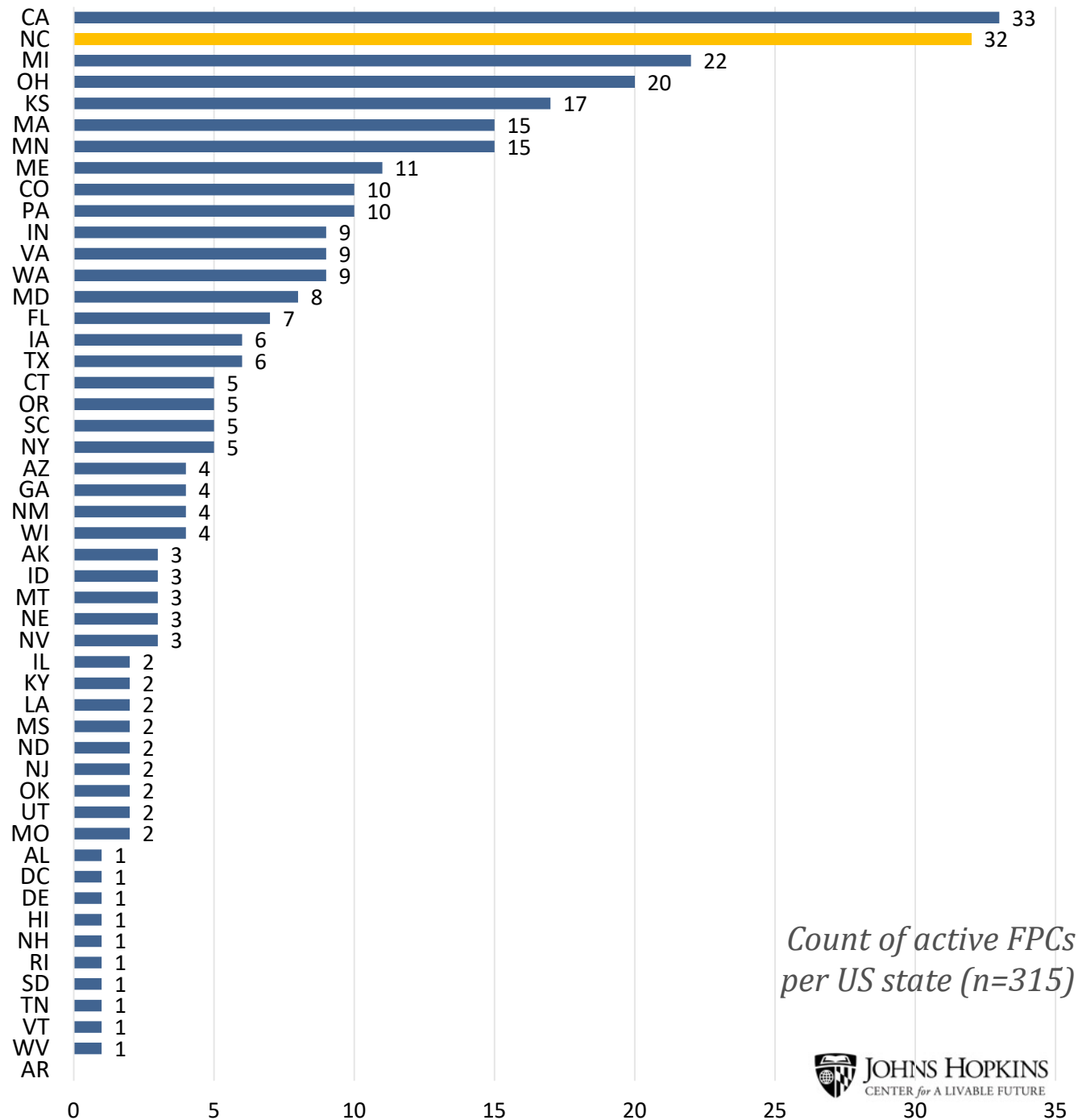
- We use “food policy council” to emphasize the effort of these groups to reform policy. It is also the most common term used among North American groups
- Other names:
 - food council
 - food and farm network
 - food partners alliance
 - food and agriculture coalition
 - healthy food access committee
 - food systems collaborative
 - community food partnership

Active FPCs since 2000



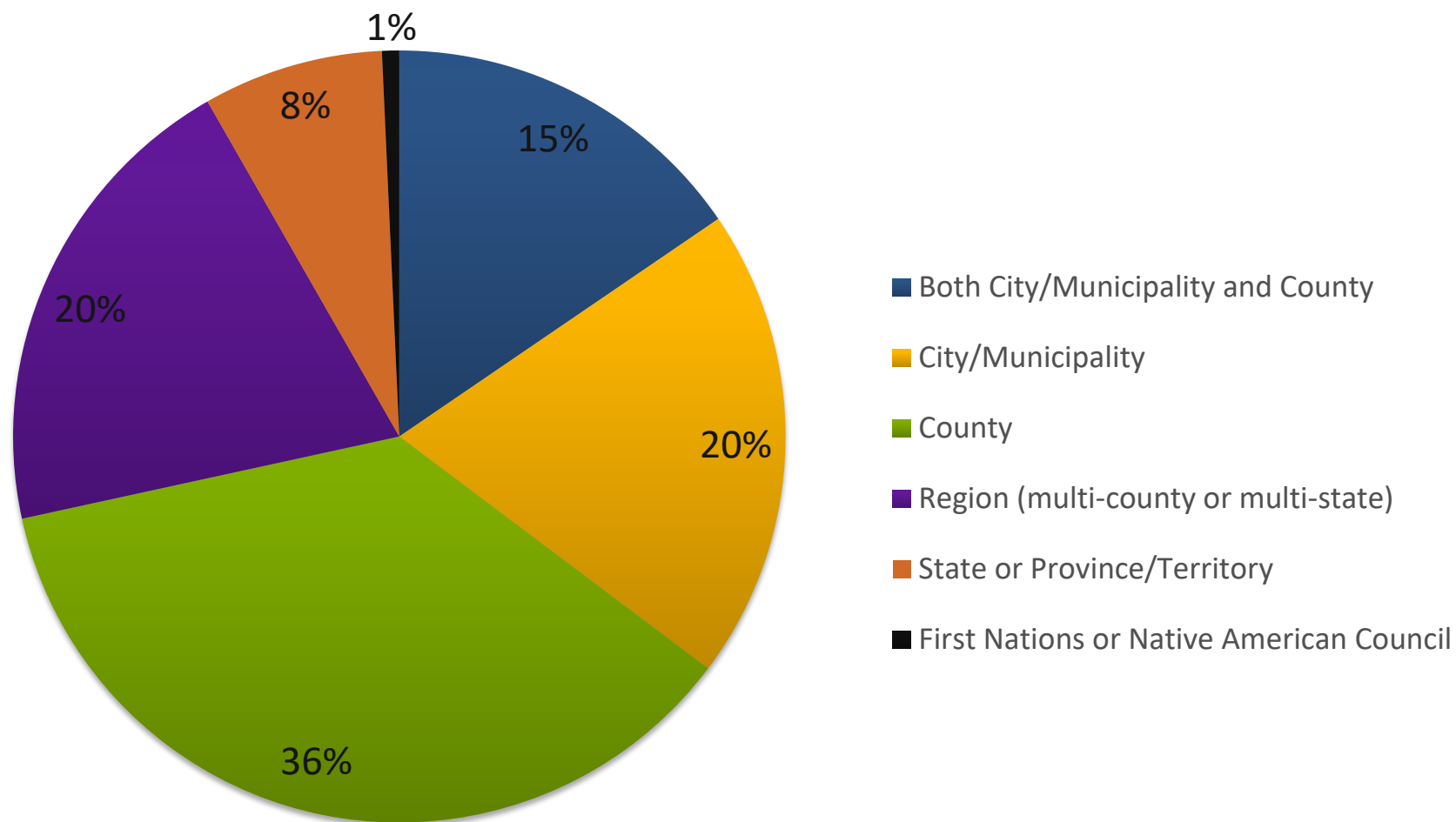
Count of FPCs active at the end of the year (n=520)

FPCs by US state



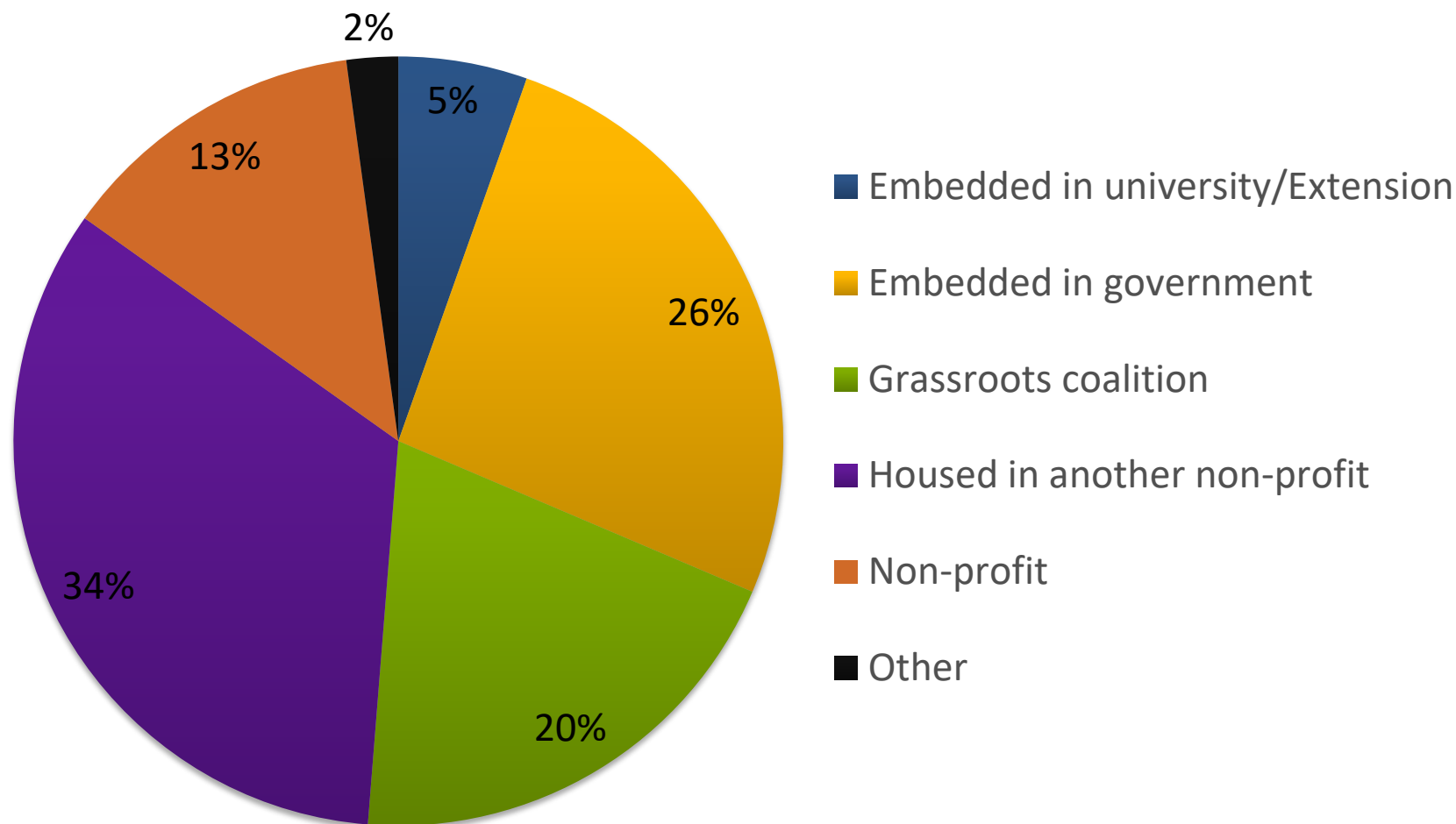
*Count of active FPCs
per US state (n=315)*

Geographic focus



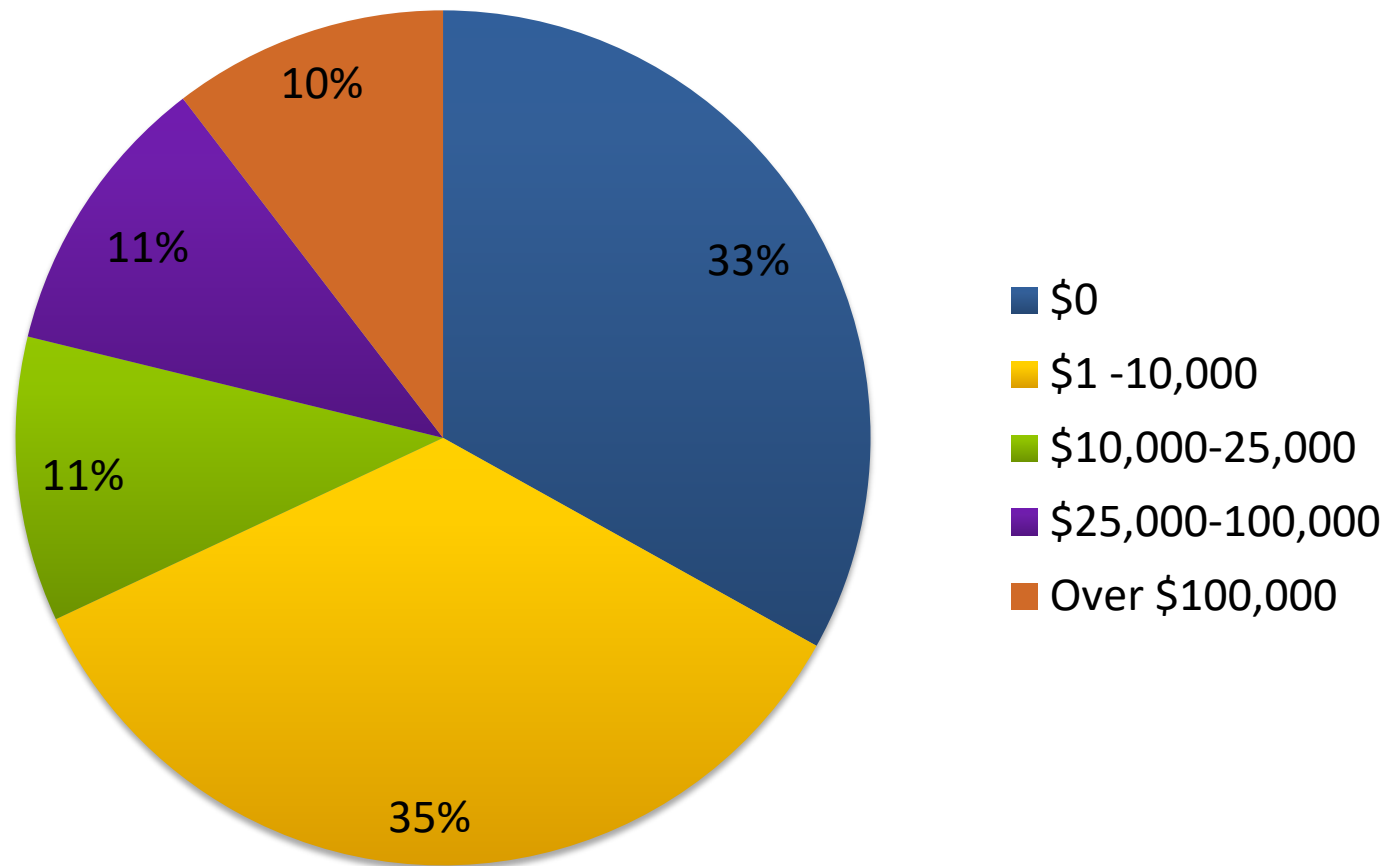
Percent of FPCs by geographic level of focus (n= 278)

Organizational structure



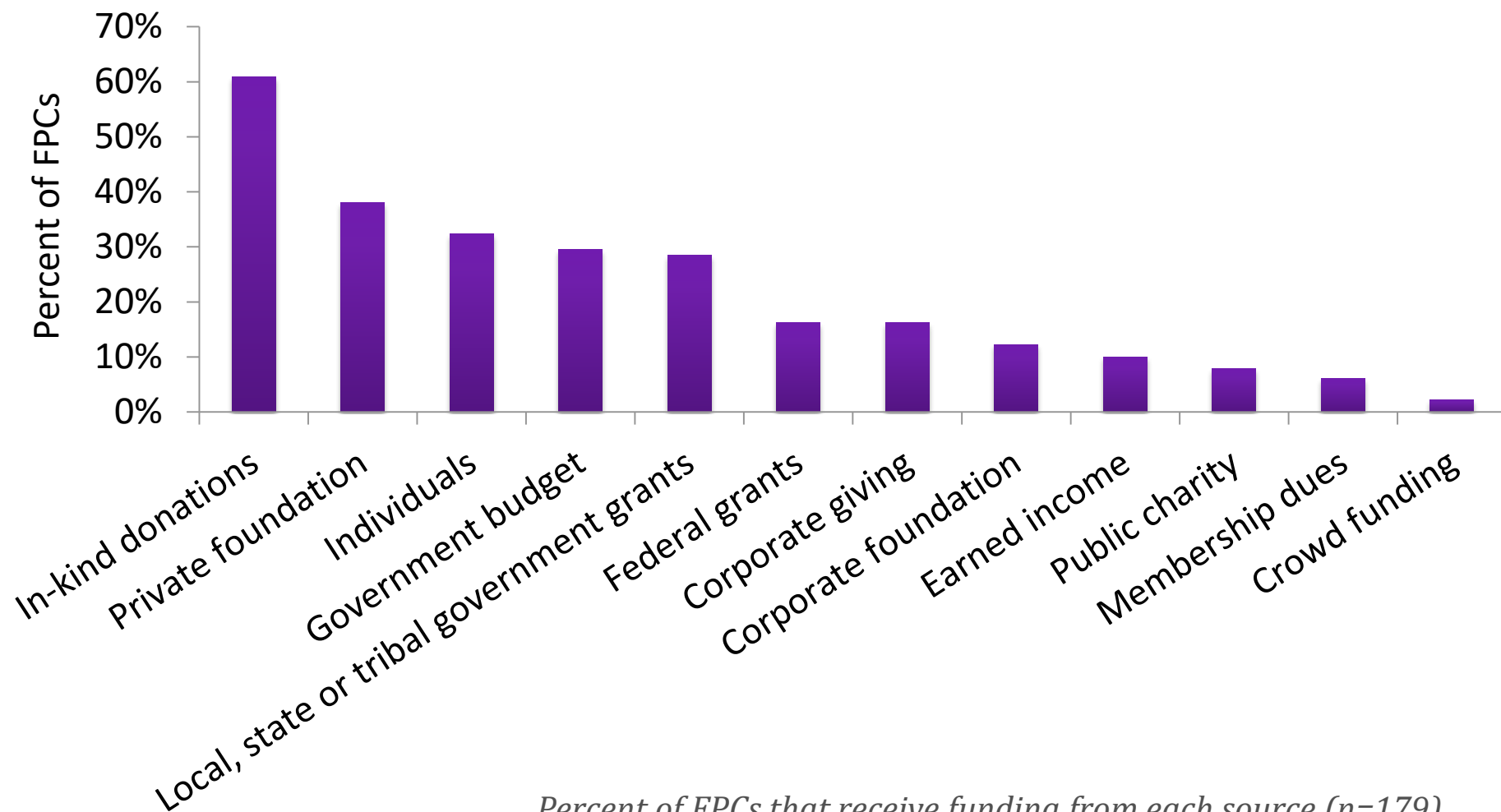
Percent of FPCs by organization structure (n=277)

Approximate annual budget



Percent of FPCs by approximate annual budget (n=269)

Funding sources





Greatest achievements

- Advocacy to policymaker (28% of FPCs)
- Implementing programs to address food insecurity (20%)
- Strategic planning (19%)
- Securing funding (18%)
- Partnering to host outreach event (17%)



Greatest challenges

- Funding (sustaining funding, inability to compensate staff) (34% of FPCs)
- Recruitment and engagement (23%)
- Membership and leadership retention (17%)
- Lacking strategic plan (14%)
- Coordinating time to meet and build consensus (13%)

Examples from the field: Innovative policy work

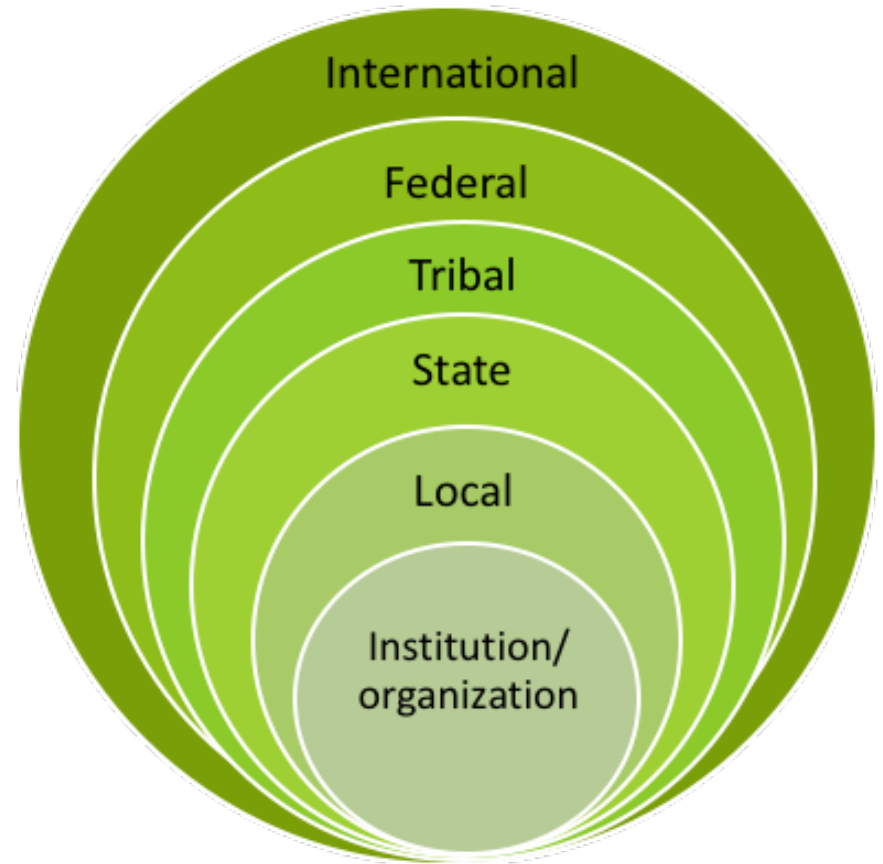
What is policy?

Laws and regulations that govern our environment and behavior by outlining specific conduct, who should do it and how, and for what purpose (Broad-Leib)

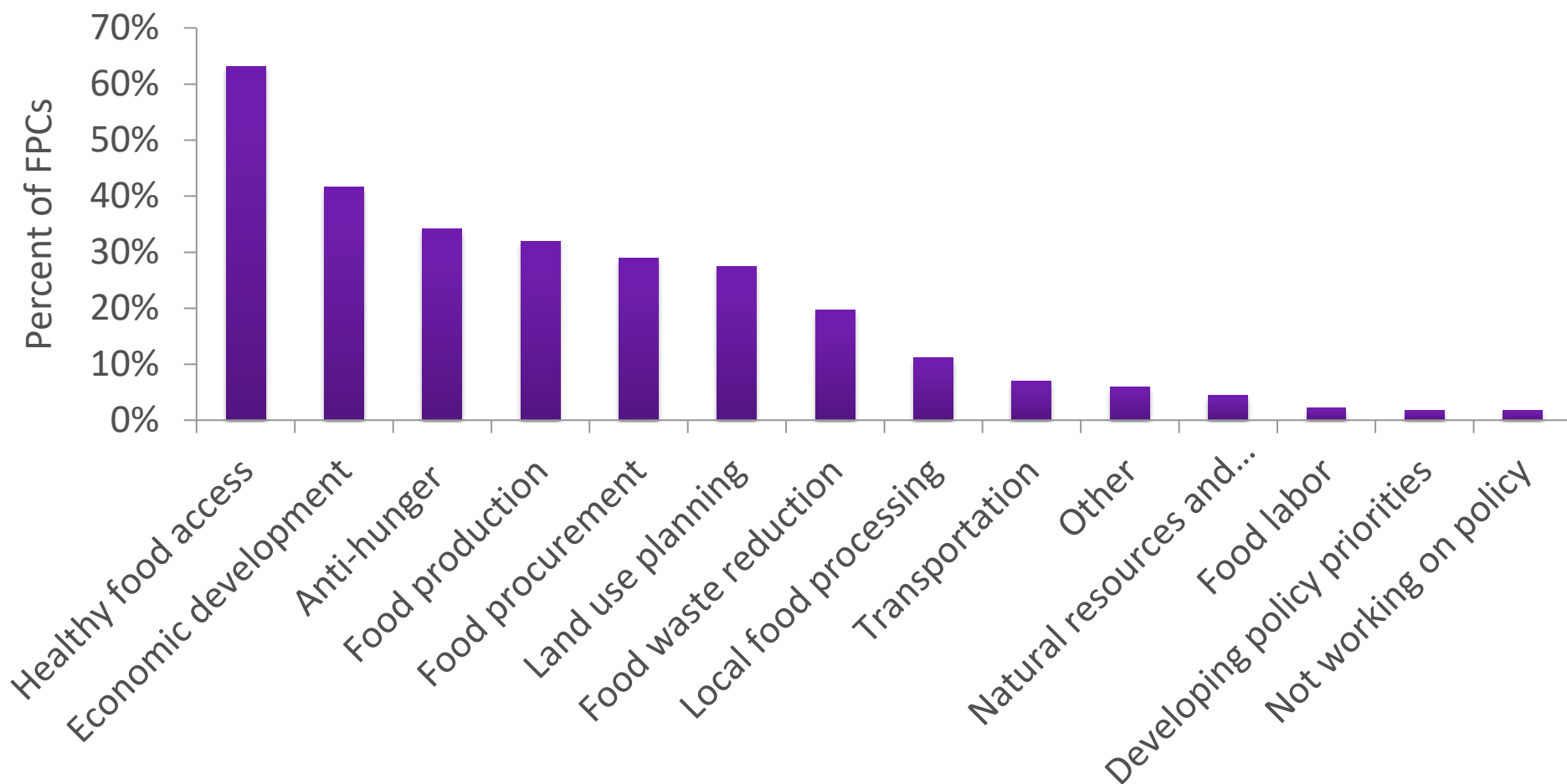


What is public policy?

- ★ Law
 - Statutes, ordinances
 - Regulations
 - Permits and licenses
- ★ Economic decisions
 - Budgets
 - Trade agreements
 - Funded scholarship
- ★ Statements of Intention
 - Resolutions
 - Executive orders

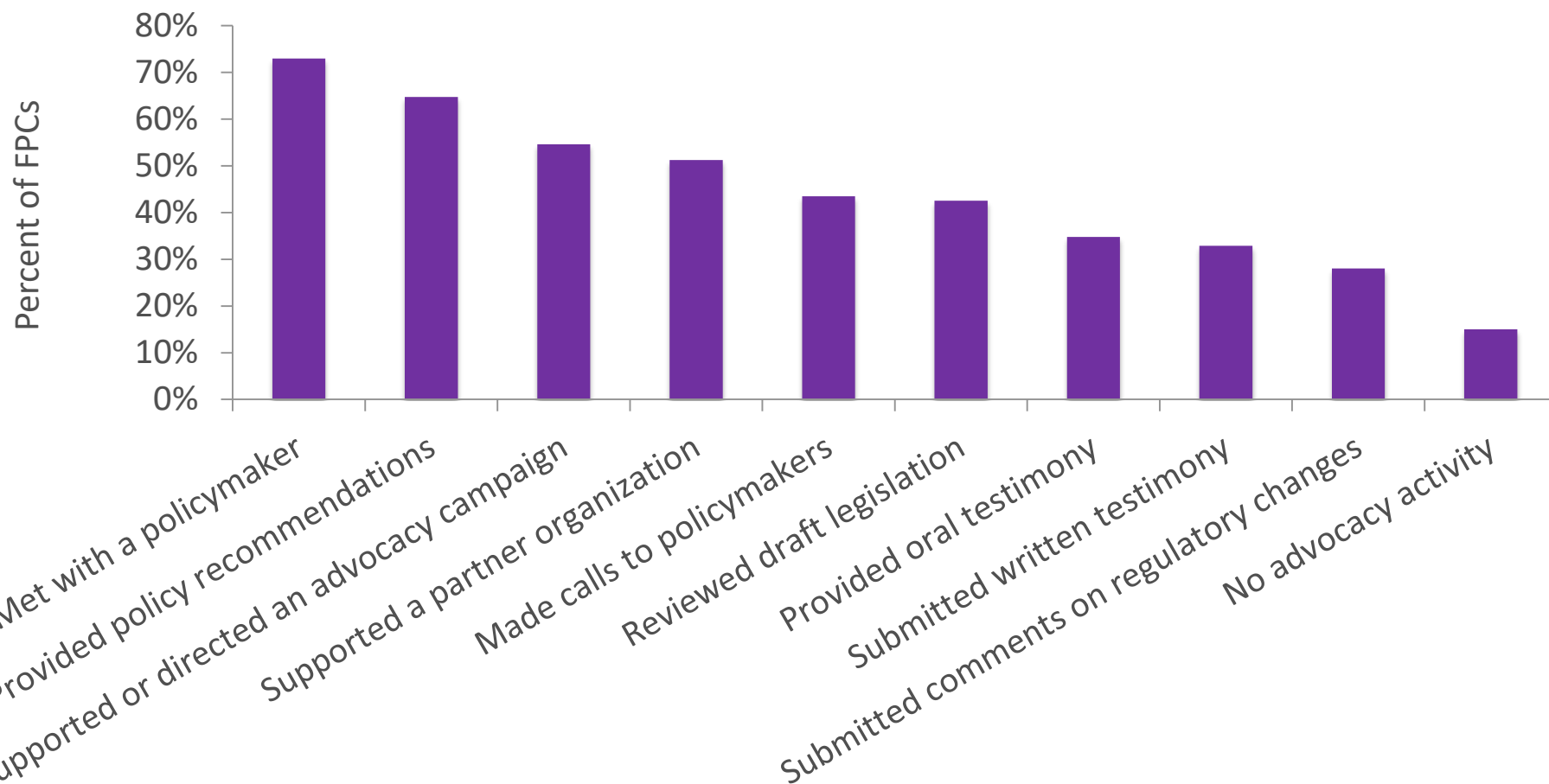


Policy priorities



Percent of FPC indicating each policy priority (n=269)

Advocacy activities



Percent of FPC indicated each advocacy activity (n=243)

Policy work : advocacy vs. lobbying

Advocacy:

- Urging public to vote
- Broadly asking for more attention on social issue
- Educating public on potential effects on specific policy, but not encouraging specific position
- Conducting and distributing nonpartisan analysis, study or research on specific legislation
- Providing advice to government agency that submitted formal request for TA/advice
- Meeting with legislator to educate them about issue

Lobbying:

- Conducting and disseminating research that only presents single position on legislative issue
- Calling on public to urge legislators to take particular stance on pending legislation
- Calling on voters to vote “yes” or “no” on a ballot initiative
- Providing specific advice to legislator on how to vote on piece of legislation

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition

- Convened Grocery Access Task Force
- Evaluated 6 bus stops near grocery stores
- Recommendations resulted in:
 - new bond funding
 - new complete streets ordinance in KCMO
 - new trip planning tools and bus stop signage in KCMO and KCKS
- Dietetic interns created healthy, affordable recipes using easy-to-carry ingredients (lightweight, fit in single bag, won't spoil on way home)

LOCAL BUDGET DECISION :
Food access, transportation

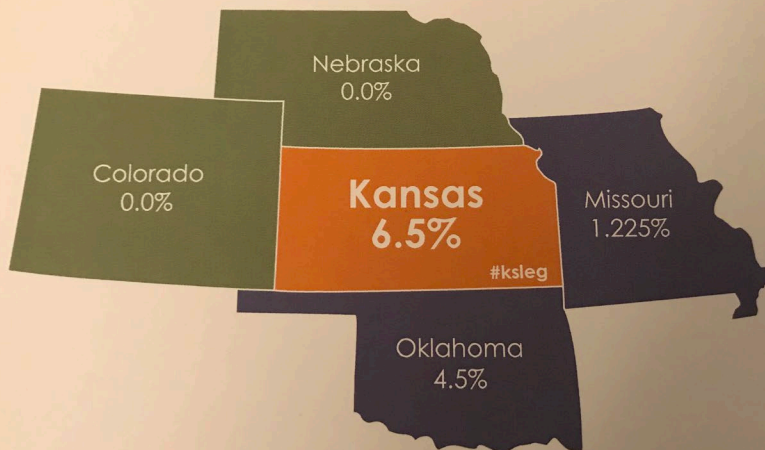


Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition

- Advocating for reduction in state sales tax on food to level competitive with neighboring states:
- Collecting supporting testimony and postcards, delivering to legislators

STATE BUDGET DECISION:
Anti-hunger
Economic development

SALES TAX RATES ON FOOD



kchealthykids™

Dear _____,

Food isn't a luxury and shouldn't be taxed that way.

An average family of four spends about \$1,100 on groceries each month. In most places, Kansans pay around 10% in state and local taxes, which adds up to \$100 every month, \$1,200 a year. It's time to make a change.

Name _____

City/State _____

650 Minnesota Avenue
Kansas City, KS 66101

ATTN: _____

Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Sources: USDA Center for Nutrition and Policy Promotion; Federation of Tax Administrators, Sales tax rates including food & drug exemptions



kchealthykids.org

Worcester Food Policy Council (MA)

- Noticed that 20-25% of their clients who come to food pantry were already working
- Also observed that people with more economic resources were more likely to participate in local food system activities
- Partnered with Raise Up Massachusetts to support raising the minimum wage as well as paid family and medical leave
- Council participated in lobbying, public action, collecting signatures for the ballot initiatives, and hosting community forums on the issue

**FOOD POLICY
NETWORKS**

STATE LEGISLATIVE:
Anti-hunger
Food labor



Massachusetts Food Systems Collaborative

- Led advocacy campaign to increase state funding for Healthy Incentives Program, a dollar-for-dollar match for each SNAP dollar spent on F+V purchased at farmers markets, farm stands, mobile markets, and CSAs statewide
- Wrote toolkit to help farmers market managers and farmers address issues of race and equity
- Connects the 20+ FPCs in MA

STATE BUDGET DECISION:
Anti-hunger
Food production
Food retail

INSTITUTIONAL:
Equity



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.

It's **HIP** to be healthy!



New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee

- Advocated for changes in Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to:
 - limit dollar stores
 - permit on-site farm sales and infrastructure (e.g., bathrooms, sheds)
- Advocated for Local Food Procurement Resolution supporting local food procurement by anchor institutions
- Ideas for these policy changes came from a community policy assessment and community-informed strategic planning process

LOCAL ORDINANCE :
Economic development
Healthy food access
Food production

LOCAL RESOLUTION:
Food procurement

Washenaw County Food Policy Council (MI)

- Advocated for changes in County Procurement Policy to give preference for locally grown, processed, prepared foods
 - Aim to purchase 20% of food products locally by 2020
 - In alignment with goal of Michigan Good Food Charter – that Michigan institutions (and retailers, consumers) will source 20% of their food products from Michigan growers, producers and processors by 2020.
- Member of the Michigan Local Food Council Network

INSTITUTIONAL :
Food procurement



Baltimore Food Policy Initiative

- Passed Personal Property Tax Credit for Supermarkets and created Grocery Incentive Area (2016)
- Extended disbursement period for SNAP benefits from 10 to 20 days
- Integrated access to grocery stores into redesign of bus system

STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE:
Food access
Economic development

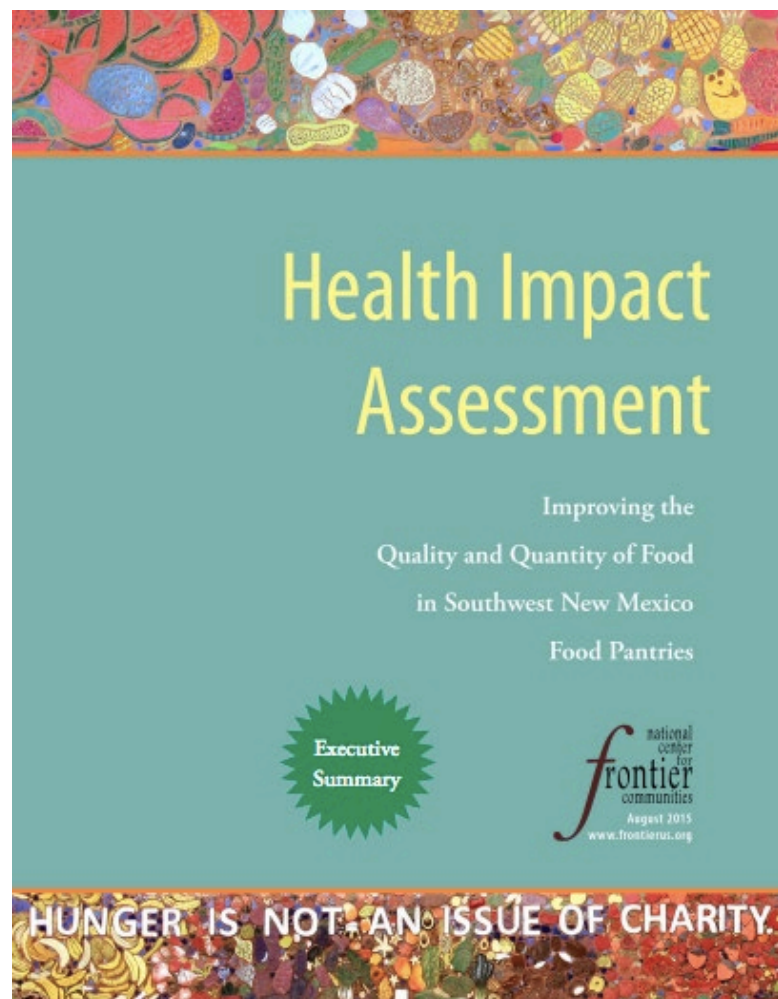
STATE ADMINISTRATIVE:
Anti-hunger
Economic development

STATE ADMINISTRATIVE:
Transportation

Southwest New Mexico Food Policy Council

STATE/FEDERAL :

Anti-hunger, Food access



- Council led Health Impact Assessment to explore region's "emergency" food distribution system:
 - Quantity of food distributed
 - Nutritional value and quality of food sources
 - The unique infrastructure issues faced by rural and frontier communities struggling to address growing food insecurity
- Correlated data to health indicators of low-income families in region, most of whom are children, elderly and/or Hispanic
- Helped advocates and residents learn to collect + utilize data to inform policy change
- Elevated community voices

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (IN)

- Food pantry that's been around for 20 years
- Emergency food and nutrition programs alone don't address root causes – started exploring advocacy and policy work
- Started a Hub Farm Stand, where pantry patrons can sell homegrown produce and handmade goods

INSTITUTIONAL :
Anti-hunger
Economic development



Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (IN)

STATE :

Advocacy and policy capacity building

- They also began Hub Dinners – monthly meals where pantry patrons, community members, Hub staff and interns discuss what makes it hard to access food, learn advocacy tools, and map out how they can impact state policy change
- In 2018, they registered 109 voters in the food pantry through efforts that began at a Hub Dinner



In this photo, attendees learned how the Indiana General Assembly works, and then broke into small groups to look at upcoming bills for 2019.

Discussion

- How could some of these examples work – or not work – in North Carolina?
- What policies have you found successful in your communities?

Examples from the field:

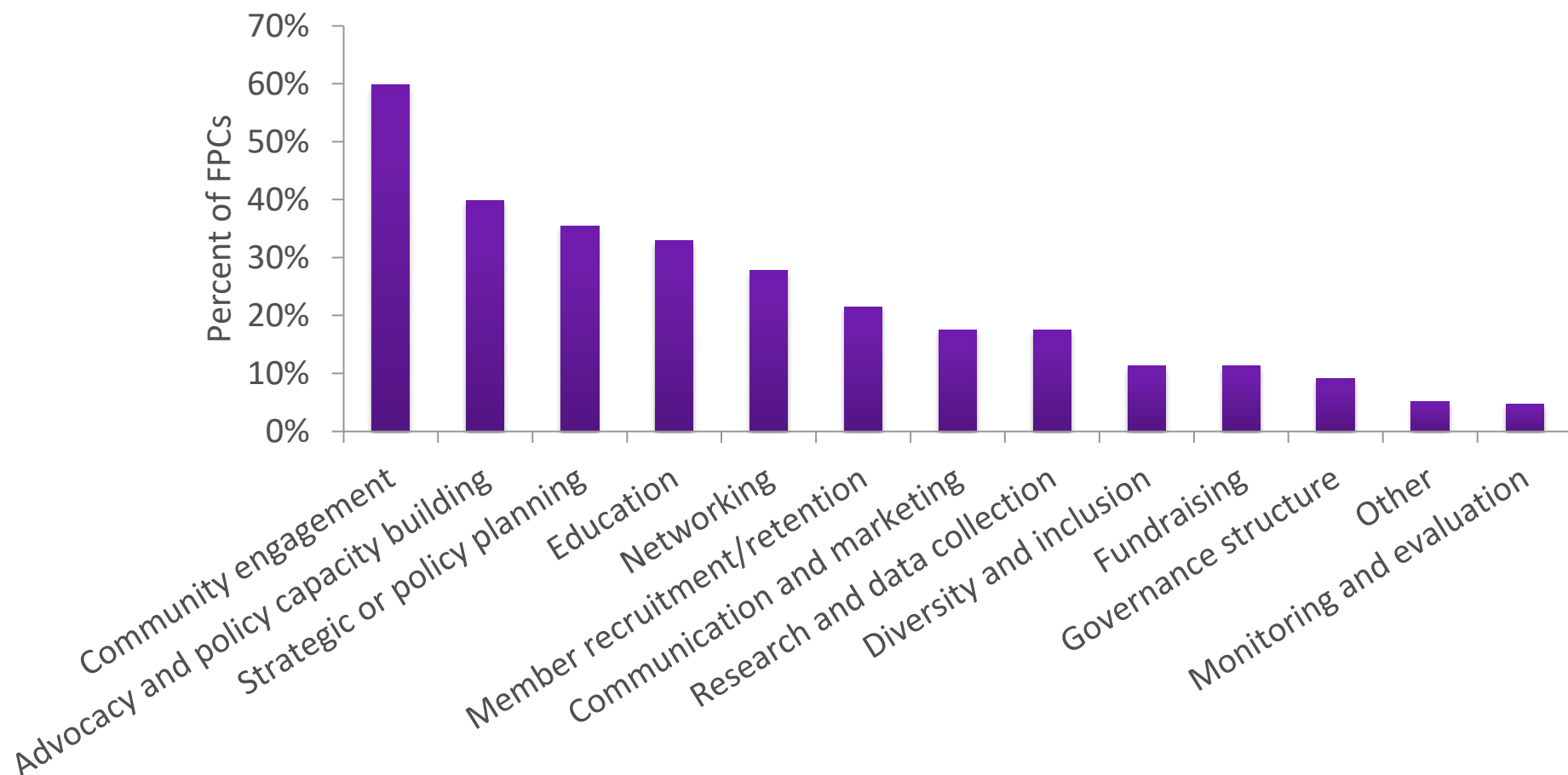
Elevating equity and community leadership



Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement Kip Holley, Kirwan Institute, OSU

- Embracing gifts of diversity
- Realizing the role of race, power and injustice
- Radical hospitality
- Trust building and commitment
- Honoring dissent and embracing protest
- Adaptability to community change

Organizational priorities



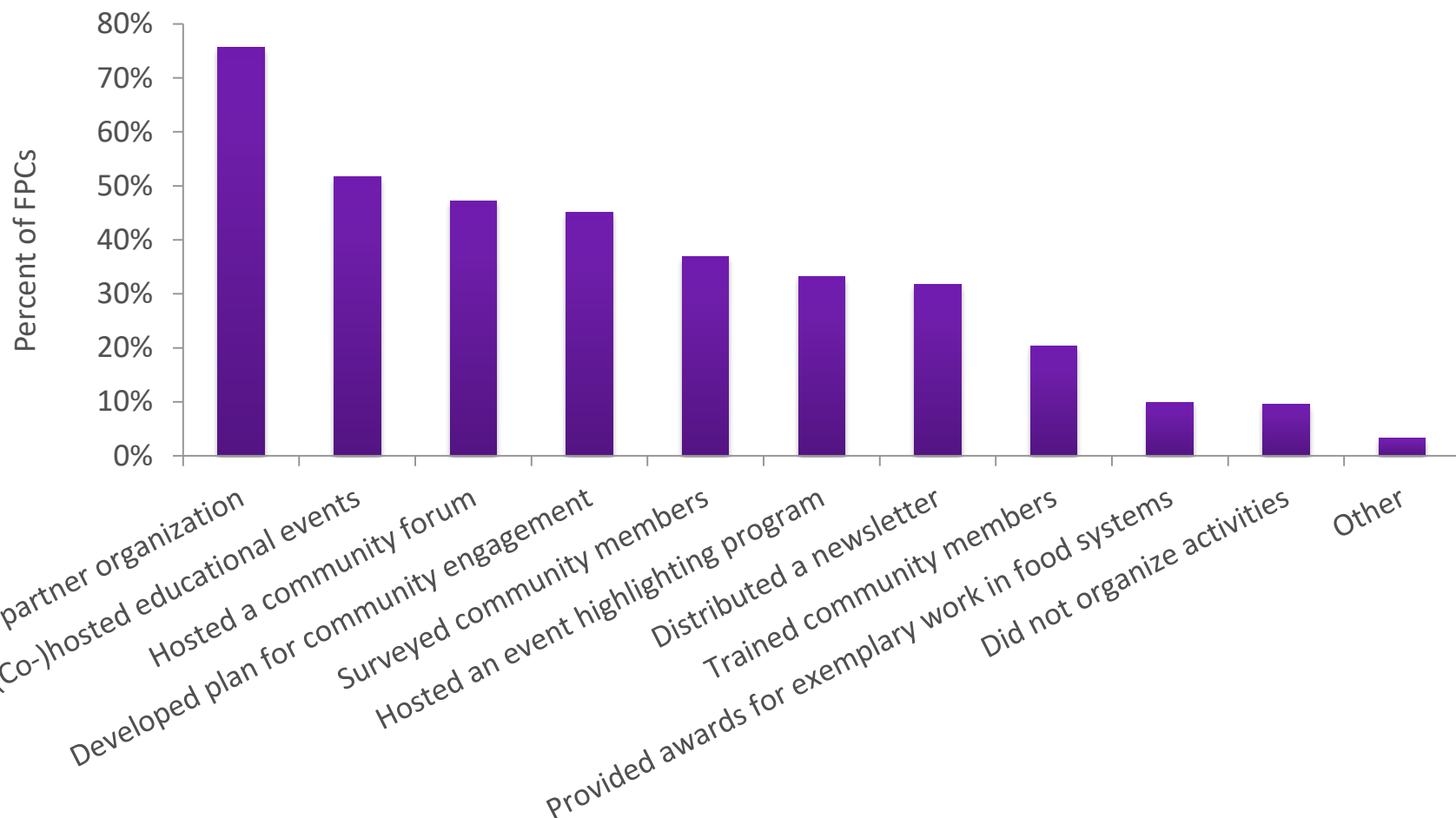
Percent of FPC indicating each organizational priority (n=274)

Equity and inclusive engagement

There are many ways groups are centering equity and inclusive engagement in their work, including via their:

- Internal FPC structure
- Race and equity training for council members
- Events/discussions
- Programmatic changes
- Leadership development for people most affected by food and farm system inequities
- Intention of policy outcomes

Community engagement activities



Percent of FPC by indicated community engagement activities (n=271)

Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement

■ Embracing gifts of diversity

- Recognize the power that already exists in typically undervalued people and neighborhoods
- Intentionally provide people the opportunity to identify, develop and share their gifts
- Value all scales of engagement, including informal leaders
- Strongest networks – members take over leadership roles and constantly encourage others to do so

Mississippi Food Justice Collaborative

- Key values that undergird the work of the MS Food Policy Council and other partner organizations working towards food systems transformation:
 - Leadership development
 - Racial Equity
 - Economic Justice
 - Environmental Justice
 - Ethical Leadership
 - Healthy Communities
- MS Food Systems Fellowship: a year long, intergenerational and intersectional nurturing of Mississippians committed to transforming food systems across the state. Open to people of color from the four targeted regions of MS.



Los Angeles Food Policy Council

LA Food Leaders Lab:

- Trains community advocates and residents on histories of food justice movements, political leadership, and strategies for healthy, resilient and just food system in LA
- 10-week intergenerational, multi-lingual course
- Emphasizes leadership development and skill building relevant to policy, advocacy and community organizing

- Leadership development



Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement

- **Realizing the role of race, power and injustice**
 - Recognize and acknowledge roles of racism and inequity play in experiences of community members
 - By making people aware of power imbalances, they're more able to change them
 - Be mindful of race and class when we identify dominant assumptions, define meaningful outcomes and assign accountability to people and institutions
 - Power shifting may be resisted by those most powerful



Detroit Food Policy Council

- Worked to incorporate equity more explicitly into work during its most recent strategic planning process
- Revised mission statement to reflect equity values:

“The Detroit Food Policy Council is an education, advocacy and policy organization led by Detroiters committed to creating a sustainable, local food system that promotes food security, food justice and food sovereignty in the city of Detroit.”
- Initiated a Food Justice and Equity training for council members
- Internal FPC structure
- Race and equity training for council members

Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement

■ **Radical hospitality**

- Strive for direct and meaningful impact of people's lives – counter “meeting fatigue”
- Meet community members where they are
- Inclusion must be intentional
- Create time and space for community members to share stories about their experiences – overcome urge to be “efficient”
- Address barriers to participation – e.g., rotate meeting locations or pair with other meetings

Montgomery Roots (AL)

- Changed name from River Region Food Policy Council to Montgomery Roots
- Internal FPC structure
- Programmatic changes

“People are so wedded to saying it’s food policy when the average person’s... super turned-off by that terminology...when [the former leaders] were doing ‘food policy listening sessions,’ they had a self-selected group of rich white people. But when I do ‘Food Turnup’ events, I get lots of different people...”

Montgomery Roots (AL)

- Changed name from River Region Food Policy Council to Montgomery Roots
 - Internal FPC structure
 - Programmatic changes
- Conducted community food assessment in rural and urban settings across three AL counties, with intentional focus on including and improving the lives of Black residents



THE FOOD TURN-UP REPORT

Our Food Turn Up Report (@MontgomeryRoots) is an educational tool that shares practical ways to prevent and reduce chronic disease by creating a stronger and more local food system.

Earning potential, generational wealth, access to health education and living in a community that reflects health and monetary success are related to the physical health of a person.

WE FOUND THE BIGGEST ISSUES TO BE AROUND:

-  Hunger and waste
-  Barriers to accessing locally grown, fresh and healthy food
-  Lost skills around growing, preparing and preserving fresh and local food

EAT BETTER. LIVE BETTER.
LOOK BETTER. FEEL BETTER.
EatSouth.org



HERE'S SOME VALUABLE INFO YOU NEED!
@MontgomeryRoots

2017 GAME SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

8/3	@	Florida State
9/9	vs	Fresno State
9/16	vs	Colorado State
9/23	@	Vanderbilt
9/30	vs	Ole Miss
10/7	@	Texas A&M
10/14	vs	Arkansas
10/21	vs	Tennessee
10/28	vs	LSU
11/11	@	Miss SI
11/18	vs	Missor
11/25	@	Auburn

AUBURN

9/2	vs	Ga Southern
9/9	@	Clemson
9/16	vs	Mercer
9/23	@	Missouri
9/30	vs	Miss SI
10/7	vs	Ole Miss
10/14	@	LSU
10/21	@	Arkansas
11/4	@	Texas A&M
11/11	vs	Georgia
11/18	vs	US Monroe
11/25	vs	Alabama

EAT BETTER. LIVE BETTER.
LOOK BETTER. FEEL BETTER.
EatSouth.org



Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement Kip Holley, Kirwan Institute, OSU

■ **Trust building and commitment**

- When community members witness real change, they're more likely to stay involved
- Providing opportunities for those traditionally undervalued to demonstrate their skills fosters mutual trust and accountability
- Trust is built through actions, not words
- Examples: Rotate leadership at meetings – invite those not often in a position of power to take leadership role in meeting.

Baltimore Food Policy Initiative

Resident Food Equity Advisors

- Internal structure
 - Leadership development
- Reps from all city council districts selected to participate each year
 - Explicit goal of having resident advisors reflect racial and socioeconomic diversity of City
 - Residents influence and advise BFPI's work



Baltimore Food Policy Initiative

Resident Food Equity Advisors Outcomes:

- Internal structure
- Leadership development
- \$250,000 annual appropriation to develop and implement corner store strategy
- Replication of program in City Housing department
- Support from City staff for residents with grant and job apps





Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement Kip Holley, Kirwan Institute, OSU

- **Honoring dissent and embracing protest**
 - Strength of diversity relies on ability to accept and respect differences
 - When communities avoid controversial topics, they tend to produce the conflict they hoped to avoid
 - Voices of dissent can strengthen civic engagement by offering alternatives and raising tough questions

Pioneer Valley Grows (MA)

- Created a Racial Equity Working Group to investigate and address systemic racism and inequities in the food system
- Organizes workshops and discussions around these topics
- Hosted a regional forum on immigration, food access and land access

- Events/discussions



“We’ve been just synching up our work... but how do we actually take a position on something?... We updated the urban ag zoning code, a real success. [But] that’s non-controversial...”

[When] there was paid sick leave legislation in the city, it was difficult because we count amongst our membership some restaurants that were opposing the bill. With no clear decision-making structure, we weren’t able to make any advance beyond education, information sharing”

Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Engagement Kip Holley, Kirwan Institute, OSU

- **Adaptability to community change**
 - Communities change over time – we need to be able to adapt
 - People must be willing to forgo comfort for truth, give up old roles for new ones
 - For example, many meetings are confined to procedures, vocabulary and emphasis of charter that is not suitable to current community

Pittsburgh Food Policy Council



- Internal FPC structure
- Revised its bylaws to change its representation and decision-making processes to reflect equity
- Created tiers of engagement for stakeholders that are less hierarchal
 - Supporting member
 - Collaborating member
 - Steering committee member

Discussion

How can food councils and other organizations be more equitable in their structure and work?



FOOD POLICY NETWORKS

Building Community | Applying Research | Cultivating Action

NATIONAL

- FPN listserv with ~1500 members
- Food Policy Council Directory of 300+ councils
- Food Policy Resource Database with 1200+ resources
- Monthly webinars on federal, state and local food policy

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Chesapeake Food Policy Leadership Initiative
- Pre-conference workshops & conference sessions
- One-on-one technical assistance

FoodPolicyNetworks.org