UNION COUNTY

COMMUNITY FOOD STRATEGIES

Community Food Snapshot

Data presented is specific to Union County, NC unless otherwise noted

	NORTH CAROLINA	UNION COUNTY
Population	10,488,084	235,859
People of color	29.4%	18.4%
• Black	22.2%	12.3%
• Latinx	9.6%	11.4%
# of farms	46,418	957
Acres of farmland	8,430,522	186,626

HEALTHY PEOPLE	VIBRANT FARMS & GARDENS	EQUITY	STRONG COMMUNITIES	THRIVING ECONOMIES	RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS
Population eating 5 servings of fruit & vegetables per day **17%, 2017** 18%, NC	Farms with direct-to-consumer sales **4%, 2017** 9%, NC	Children that are food insecure **17%, 2017** 20%, NC	Voter turnout (general election) **65.8%, 2016** 69%, NC	Value of agricultural products sold **$482 million, 2017** $12.9 billion, NC	Farms practicing no or reduced tillage **19%, 2017** 21%, NC
Black, Latinx population with diabetes **43% (B), 2013 NC** **8.1% (L), 2013, NC** 17%, white pop., NC	Young farmers - < 35 years old **5.7%, 2017** 7.5%, NC	Black, Latinx population with low access to a store **2% (B), 2015** **1.8% (L), 2015** 12%, white pop.	Local workforce employed outside of county **71%, 2015** 61%, NC	% change in loans to small businesses **-21%, 2005-2015** -54%, suburban counties NC	Average farm size **195 acres, 2017** 182 acres, NC
Residents without health insurance **10%, 2017** 12%, NC	Black, indigenous, people of color producers **1%, 2017** 99%, white producers	Households receiving SNAP benefits **10%, 2012-16** 13%, NC	Black, Latinx population with Bachelor's degree **24% (B), 2017** **16.4% (L), 2017** 36%, white population	Renters with unaffordable rent **47%, 2013-17** 49%, NC	Air pollution particulate matter **10.4 µg/m^3, 2012** 12 µg/m3, NAAQS USA

Metrics are organized by the six Whole Measures of a Community-based Food System, compared to state level or demographic data in the same year, and based on input from North Carolina food councils. These metrics are connected to a systemic approach to building an equitable food system. Legend: NC = North Carolina Data; Region = Regional data; UC = Union County Data, NAAQS=national ambient air quality standard, B = Black population, L = Latinx population

communityfoodstrategies.org

COMMUNITY FOOD SNAPSHOTS

Our ability to lead a healthy, productive life is determined by many factors, many connected to the food we grow and eat.

We use the six Whole Measures of Community-based Food Systems to guide a broad understanding of a food environment and outreach to potential stakeholders. These measures highlight the values we want to see in our food system such as: Equity, Resilient Ecosystems, Vibrant Farms & Gardens, Thriving Economies, Strong Communities, and Healthy People.

This Community Food Snapshot is designed to encourage conversation and connections through a county's food environment. Multiple partners and perspectives are important to learn, innovate, and make a difference. These data points are not the whole story, just a starting place to ask more questions and drive better understanding. This data spurs conversation to explore underlying barriers and opportunities for collaboration.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Talk with your county partners already collecting data, and ask about their priorities. (ie, County Health Department Community Health Assessments, Agriculture Preservation Board, School Systems)
- Ask your county commissioners what they are doing to promote healthy eating and to support farmers.
- Join your local food council to inspire connection and collective action that improves healthy food opportunities.

BENEFITS OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

"After teaching people about healthy eating, you can't send them back into a food desert.' The benefit of the food council, she says, is that it helps "look at things on a systems level."

- Alyssa Mouton: Health Education Supervisor, Community Health Education, Gaston County Department of Health & Human Services

"It was eye-opening for me to learn about the obstacles for local farmers to sell directly to schools."

- Penny Rich: Chair, Board of County Commissioners, Orange County, NC

When talking about partnership and joint funding for her position, Joni says "It's how communities should work. I feel like I'm supported by my whole community."

- Joni Torres: Community Garden Technician, Cooperative Extension

Data sources: Feeding America; Food Research & Action Center; NC State Institute for Emerging Issues, ReConnect Initiative; NC Division of Health, NC Justice Center, Budget & Tax Center; NC Rural Center; NC State Board of Elections; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings; US Census Bureau; USDA Census of Agriculture; USDA Economic Research Service; USDA Economic Research Service

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