

INSIGHT 02

AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH TO FOOD IS FOUNDATIONAL.

An intersectional approach to food recognizes how societal issues – like representation, transportation, living wage, health, and career growth – connect and overlap. Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a civil rights activist and research scholar. It describes the ways in which identities interact and impact lived experiences. An intersectional approach to food involves understanding the role that racial identity plays in how participants experienced food work.

This approach to food also brings together different groups to achieve a common goal. Participants noted that food and related points are often seen as separate. Yet, a holistic approach can shed light on how things are linked and the new opportunities those links create. The identity conversations discussed food and its connections to many issues, including healthcare, immigration, and education.

There was also discussion about adding food to preventative care as a way to “pay for health” instead of paying for healthcare. Additionally, the Latino community conversation touched on how food plays a role in establishing safe working conditions, wages, and access to education. This point was not only important for farmworkers, but for the wider community as well. The Latino community and youth/elder community were natural leaders in seeing the intersectionality of food.

“People can have plenty of food and still be depressed. It’s not just food; food isn’t just food. It’s a whole thing that happens around food and what you do with food, how it makes you feel and all that. Food is so personal and there are so many associations with it that’s more than just the food itself.”

- ELDER

“Health policy view - health is more than healthcare; food access is part of health, well being, quality of life. There are way more aspects of health, and food is part of it.”

- URBAN



Calls to Action:

- More intentional work and collaboration are required to view food through an intersectional lens. This work is already underway across the state, but needs to be expanded upon, with a focus on better addressing gaps in health and wealth.
- Adding food access into Medicaid expansion in North Carolina would bring the health and food systems together to create preventative solutions.
- Providing safe and equitable working conditions to the agricultural workforce will lead to a more just food system.
- Any solution addressed within communities needs to take into account the different impact on each identity group.