

To: Delaware Farm and Food Policy Council

From: Genna Cicchetti & Anas Mahmoud

Date: March 20, 2025

Subject: Structuring Delaware's Food Access Strategy: Insights from Peer States

MEMORANDUM

Pursuant to Del. Code tit. 16 § 3604, the Delaware Legislature directed the Delaware Farm and Food Policy Council ("Council") to create a Food Access Strategy that includes an analysis of food insecurity, an inventory of food resources, supply chain assessment, and the Council's recommendations for improvement.

I. Executive Summary

This report was developed to provide the Council with a structured approach to crafting the state's food access strategy. To guide this process, we analyzed the food policy plans of the following jurisdictions: Arlington County, Virginia, New York State, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Rhode Island, and North Carolina. These plans were examined to identify their organizational structures, strategic focus areas, and best practices. The findings of this analysis were then used to develop a recommended framework for Delaware's own food policy strategy.

Our comparative analysis highlights key elements common to successful food policy plans, including a well-defined introduction, data-driven insights, strategic policy categories, and actionable recommendations. Each state's report features clear headings, logical organization, and structured policy initiatives that facilitate implementation. By mirroring these effective structures, Delaware can ensure its food access strategy is both comprehensive and practical, making it easier for policymakers, stakeholders, and community organizations to collaborate on addressing food security challenges.

This memo outlines the structural components of each jurisdiction's food policy plan, emphasizes the importance of adopting a similar approach, and provides specific recommendations for Delaware's strategic plan. The goal is to ensure that Delaware's food access initiatives are actionable, sustainable, and aligned with national best practices.

Based on the structures of the aforementioned plans that we suggest, Delaware's food access strategy should include several key sections:

1. **The Executive Summary** should provide a concise overview of food insecurity in Delaware, highlighting the urgency of addressing this issue and key recommendations.
2. **The Introduction** should explain the plan's purpose and significance, including its alignment with broader state and federal food security initiatives. The development process should outline the methods used to create the plan, such as stakeholder engagement, data collection, and policy analysis.
3. **The Strategic Focus Areas** should identify key policy categories and corresponding objectives. These categories should include:

- a. **Food Insecurity:** Examination of how different jurisdictions address food insecurity.
 - b. **Current Resources:** Evaluation of existing resources in each jurisdiction.
 - c. **Identifying the Gaps:** Analysis of supply chain challenges and solutions.
 - d. **Recommendations for Improvement:** Approaches taken by various jurisdictions to enhance food security policies¹
4. **A Targeted Solutions** section should define steps for execution, progress monitoring, and performance metrics. There are also opportunities here to make interactive channels for participant feedback from all levels. This will also make the data collection from each location faster and more effective because it all can be entered in the same away. Arlington, Virginia is in the process of publishing, (with the plan of annually updating), a food security dashboard showing progress towards their strategic plan implementation and food assistive program trends.² Each section will summarize strategies from different jurisdictions, highlighting their effectiveness and relevance to Delaware.

II. Comparative Analysis of Food Policy Plans

- A. **Food Insecurity:** An inventory of food resources is crucial for effective planning.
 - a. The blue font and underline indicate a hyperlink to the exact plans we were analyzing for each state.

WHAT CAUSES FOOD INSECURITY?

Food insecurity does not exist in a vacuum; it is a symptom of larger systemic issues. In Arlington, 6,962 households (6.2%) live below the poverty level.¹³ These families, and many more who are low-income, struggle to pay for housing, transportation, medicine, and food. For many, their wages are simply not enough to adequately provide for their families.

Virginia's minimum wage in 2022 is \$11/hour after being raised in 2021 for the first time in over a decade.¹⁴

The cost of living in Arlington is extremely high. Approximately **39% of households in Arlington are rent burdened**, spending more than 30% of their incomes on rent.¹⁵

Costs of goods have increased significantly across the country as inflation has risen. The Consumer Price Index measures inflation and has regionally adjusted measures for specific categories of goods. In the DC metro region, **inflation for "food at home" items showed a 12.4% increase from July 2021 – July 2022**, which is the highest rate of increase since the measure began in 2018.¹⁶

From 2020 through 2022, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated these root causes of food insecurity with many in Arlington losing work, having their working hours reduced, or staying home with children during virtual learning in public schools and daycare closures. Many of those who could support themselves pre-pandemic sought out government and charitable benefits for the first time, while many occasional users of services became frequent customers. The pandemic's impact on Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) households was much worse than on White and Asian households. For example, Black residents represented 28% of unemployment claims in Arlington from March 2020-2021, while representing only 8% of the workforce.¹⁷

The goal of this strategic plan is to have a food security system in Arlington that works collaboratively to reduce disparities in food insecurity and strives toward food security for all residents.

¹ This is not an exhaustive list. This is a list of the reoccurring sections in other state's plans that were effective to the overall understanding of the plan.

² <https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/wakegov.com.if-us-west-1/s3fs-public/documents/2023-11/arlington-food-security-strategic-plan-report-final.pdf> page 6.

Jurisdiction	Approach to Food Insecurity	Definition of “Food Insecurity”
<u>Arlington County, Virginia</u>	Prioritizes systemic change to address structural inequities and improve affordability and availability.	<p>“Household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food.”</p> <p>This definition emphasizes the economic and social factors that limit a household’s ability to obtain sufficient food.³</p>
<u>New York State</u>	Examines hunger trends at both national and state levels, categorizing food insecurity initiatives into economic vitality, food as medicine, and food assistance programs.	New York State's Council on Hunger and Food Policy focuses on ensuring the availability of and expanding access to an adequate supply of affordable, fresh, and nutritious food. While the Council's 2023 report does not explicitly define "food insecurity," it emphasizes the importance of access to healthy food as a critical component of food security. ⁴
<u>Pennsylvania</u>	Defines the role of a Food Policy Council and identifies food insecurity through state agency-led initiatives.	<p>While the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s website emphasizes the state’s commitment to meeting everyone's food security needs, it does not explicitly define “food insecurity.”</p> <p>However, organizations within Pennsylvania, such as “Philabundance,” define food insecurity as “a lack of access to enough food for a healthy and active life.”⁵</p>
<u>D.C. (District of Columbia)</u>	Focuses on high-risk populations and uses targeted interventions, such as enhancing SNAP benefits and emergency feeding programs.	The District’s 2022 Food System Assessment defines food insecurity as “a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.” ⁶
<u>Rhode Island</u>	Uses statistical analysis to assess food insecurity and integrates equity-	The Rhode Island Food Policy Council aligns with the USDA’s definition, stating that food insecurity

³ [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Improving%20Food%20Security%20and%20Access%20in%20Arlington%20County%2C%20Virginia.pdf?utm_source=page “v”](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Improving%20Food%20Security%20and%20Access%20in%20Arlington%20County%2C%20Virginia.pdf?utm_source=page%20v)

⁴ https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/02/chfpreport_2023.pdf pages 3-4

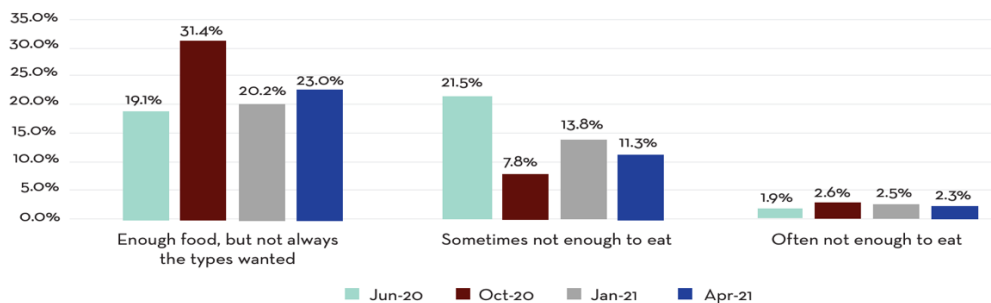
⁵ [https://www.philabundance.org/learn-about-food-insecurity/?utm_source=page “v”](https://www.philabundance.org/learn-about-food-insecurity/?utm_source=page%20v)

⁶ [https://dcfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2022-assessment-of-the-food-system-in-the-district-of-columbia-report.pdf?utm_source=page 6](https://dcfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2022-assessment-of-the-food-system-in-the-district-of-columbia-report.pdf?utm_source=page%20v)

	focused strategies.	is “the lack of consistent access to enough food for a healthy and active life.” ⁷
<u>North Carolina</u>	Takes a nutrition security approach, identifying key strategies to increase food access and improve dietary health.	Specific definitions of “food insecurity” from North Carolina’s food policy plan were not found in the provided sources. Generally, food insecurity is understood as a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. As it is defined on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website and cited to in the North Carolina policy plan. ⁸

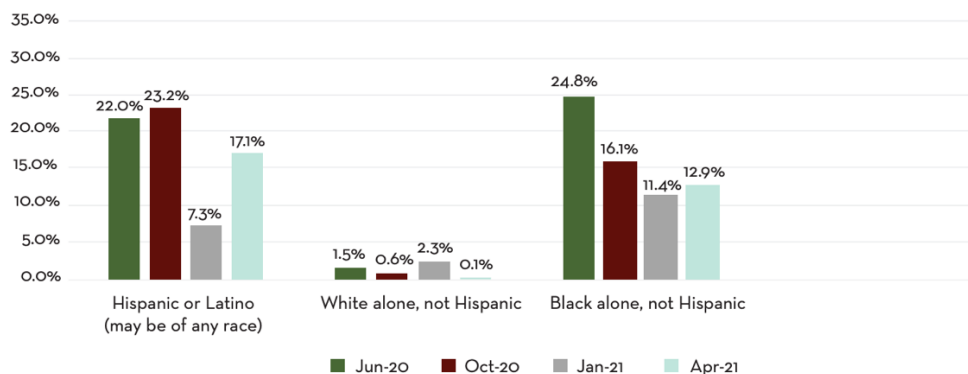
In seeking to identify and find areas of food insecurity some jurisdictions, such as D.C., employ graphs and charts that identify vulnerable groups:

Figure 3: Food Sufficiency Among Households With Children



Source: U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey

Figure 1: Food Insufficiency for Households Without Children By Race



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey. Accessed July 14, 2021.

⁷ https://rifoodcouncil.org/data-dashboard/food-access-and-security/?utm_source

⁸ <https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/food-insecurity>

In identifying gaps in the food supply chain, Pennsylvania discovered gaps by identifying the areas and regions within the state that had the highest food insecurity rates. This allowed them to target those areas and discover why food insecurity exists in those counties and assess factors that lead to the food insecurity within those areas.

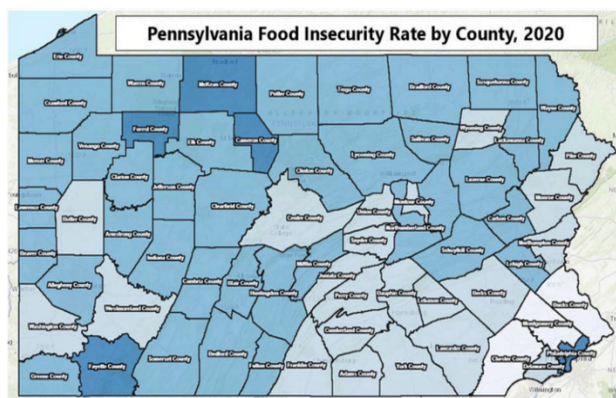


Figure 6. Percentage rate of total population that is food insecure by county in PA in 2020; Data is from Feeding America Map the Meal Gap 2022.

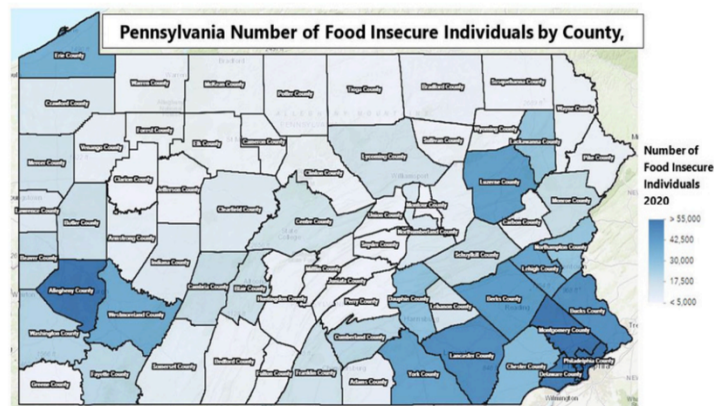


Figure 5. Total number of food insecure individuals by county in PA in 2020; Data is from Feeding America Map the Meal Gap 2022.

B. Current Resources: Understanding the current food resources is crucial information to include in the plan .

Jurisdiction	Approach to Optimizing Current Food Resources	Food Access Points
Arlington County, Virginia	The county’s Food Security Strategic Plan focuses on strengthening partnerships between food assistance providers and increasing outreach to vulnerable communities. It incorporates data-driven decision-making, using metrics of reported data of current volunteers and programs operating in the County to identify service gaps and ensure resources are distributed effectively. The County also supports infrastructure improvements for food pantries and food banks to expand storage and distribution capacity. ⁹	Food pantries, community gardens, farmers markets
New York State	New York conducts comprehensive reviews of existing food policies across multiple agencies and integrates interdepartmental coordination to improve efficiency. The	Food banks, mobile markets, community health centers

⁹ <https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/wakegov.com.if-us-west-1/s3fs-public/documents/2023-11/arlington-food-security-strategic-plan-report-final.pdf> page 26.

	New York Council on Hunger and Food Policy examines food assistance networks, emergency food providers, and meal programs to identify gaps in coverage. The state also supports farm-to-school programs and local food purchasing initiatives to strengthen supply chains and increase access to fresh foods. ¹⁰	
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania lists council-led initiatives and assesses state-supported food networks. The Pennsylvania Food Policy Council maps food insecurity data to guide policy decisions and ensure that food access points, such as food banks and meal programs, are adequately supported. The state works closely with community organizations and food rescue programs to reduce food waste while enhancing food distribution. Pennsylvania also provides funding for mobile food pantries and transportation assistance programs to improve rural food access. ¹¹	State-supported food networks, local food councils
Washington, D.C.	Washington D.C. highlights urban agriculture infrastructure grants and food access funding initiatives. The city actively supports community gardens, urban farms, and hydroponic farming initiatives to expand local food production. D.C. also funds grocery store development in food deserts and provides incentives for small retailers to stock fresh, affordable produce. Additional funding is allocated to nutrition assistance programs, including enhancements to WIC and SNAP. The city's centralized food security toolkit connects residents to available programs, ensuring transparency and accessibility. ¹²	Grocery stores, urban farms, emergency feeding programs
Rhode Island	Rhode Island makes food resource information highly accessible on their	Farmers markets, food pantries, community-

¹⁰ https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2025/01/chfp_2024_annualreport.pdf page 10.

¹¹ https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/pda/documents/food_security/documents/pa%20fpc%202023%20annual%20report_final%20may%202024.pdf pages 19- 23.

¹² https://dcfoodpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/food-security-progress-report-2021_final.pdf page 8.

	website. ¹³ Rhode Island’s Food Policy Council compiles a detailed Food Access & Security Report that tracks the distribution of emergency food programs, state-funded meal assistance, and community food organizations. The state also promotes collaboration between local farms and food banks to strengthen local supply chains and reduce food waste. ¹⁴	supported agriculture (CSA) programs
North Carolina	North Carolina aligns food resources with health care partnerships to maximize impact. ¹⁵ The North Carolina Nutrition Security Initiative integrates food assistance with medical and social services, connecting food-insecure individuals with nutrition prescriptions, food pharmacies, and medically tailored meals. ¹⁶ The state also funds initiatives to increase participation in federal nutrition programs, particularly among rural and underserved communities. ¹⁷	Health clinics, schools, community centers.

C. Identifying the Gaps: Each jurisdiction employs specific policy solutions to improve food security. Understanding where the gaps are in the supply chain is crucial to ensure that the citizen’s needs are met.

Jurisdiction	Approach to Identifying Gaps in Supply Chain Vulnerabilities
Arlington County, Virginia	Arlington County again relies on the collected data from current programs to identify and address gaps in the food supply chain. The County relies on food security mapping, analyzing food access deserts, pantry distribution efficiency, and gaps in food assistance programs. The County also examines transportation barriers affecting food delivery to low-income areas and evaluates the capacity of emergency food providers to respond to increased demand. The county’s strategic plan includes an actionable framework for local government, nonprofits, and food distributors to streamline supply chain logistics.

¹³ https://impactreport.rifoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RIFPC_Digital_Impact_Report_2023.pdf at 4.

¹⁴ https://impactreport.rifoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RIFPC_Digital_Impact_Report_2023.pdf at 1.

¹⁵ <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncdhhs-state-action-plan-nutrition-security-2023-2024/open> at 11.

¹⁶ <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncdhhs-state-action-plan-nutrition-security-2023-2024/open> at 12.

¹⁷ <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncdhhs-state-action-plan-nutrition-security-2023-2024/open> at 9.

New York State	Conducts an economic analysis of food availability and affordability to identify supply chain gaps. The Council on Hunger and Food Policy assesses the impact of inflation, food pricing volatility, and labor shortages on food access. New York also focuses on regional food system coordination, ensuring food production, processing, and distribution are sufficiently connected across different counties.
Pennsylvania	Identifies supply chain barriers through state agency insights and council-led research. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) works with food banks and distribution centers to track logistical issues, transportation inefficiencies, and storage limitations. The state has found that cold storage capacity for perishable foods and last-mile delivery to rural communities remain major challenges. Pennsylvania is investing in infrastructure improvements, workforce development, and transportation subsidies to stabilize food distribution.
Washington, D.C.	Focuses on food deserts and infrastructure investment to address supply chain vulnerabilities. The city has identified a lack of full-service grocery stores in certain low-income neighborhoods, prompting the government to offer incentives for grocery retailers to expand into underserved areas. D.C. also funds mobile food markets and expands urban agriculture programs to bring food closer to residents. The government supports local food distribution networks and food cooperatives to increase access to fresh and affordable food while reducing dependency on large corporate supply chains.
Rhode Island	Conducts an economic impact assessment of food programs to evaluate supply sustainability. The Rhode Island Food Policy Council monitors funding efficiency, distribution gaps, and waste reduction strategies within food assistance programs. The state tracks food donation networks, ensuring surplus food is efficiently redirected to those in need. The state is also working on reducing reliance on emergency food programs by expanding long-term food security initiatives, such as nutrition incentives and school meal programs.
North Carolina	Focuses on expanding nutrition program reach by evaluating food distribution channels. The state identifies supply chain gaps in rural communities, where food pantries and grocery stores are limited. North Carolina is working to strengthen the connection between food banks and healthcare facilities, ensuring that food-insecure individuals can access nutritional assistance through medical providers. Additionally, mobile food distribution programs and transportation subsidies help reach populations without reliable grocery access. The state also supports farmer assistance programs

	that help local producers expand operations and improve distribution logistics.
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D. Targeted Solutions: Each jurisdiction provides policy recommendations and strategies for enhancing food security programs.

Jurisdiction	Targeted Solutions to Keep Improving Access
Arlington County, Virginia	Uses data-driven decision-making to identify and address food insecurity. The county employs food security mapping to track food deserts, pantry accessibility, and community food needs. Additionally, Arlington strengthens collaboration between government agencies, nonprofits, and local businesses to improve food distribution efficiency. The county also integrates transportation planning into food security efforts, ensuring that low-income and elderly residents have access to grocery stores and food assistance programs. A key strategy includes capacity-building support for food assistance providers to improve service delivery.
New York State	Focuses on economic-based strategies to improve food affordability and availability. The Council on Hunger and Food Policy provides recommendations on food pricing stabilization, farm-to-school partnerships, and nutrition incentive programs to support low-income households. New York invests in food processing and distribution hubs to help small farmers and local food producers connect with consumers more efficiently. Additional policies include expanding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility, improving emergency food procurement, and strengthening farm-to-food-bank partnerships to reduce food waste while supporting food-insecure populations.
Pennsylvania	Implements council-led policy solutions to remove supply chain barriers and enhance food assistance programs. The Pennsylvania Food Policy Council coordinates across agencies to expand nutrition assistance, strengthen food bank networks, and develop transportation subsidies for food delivery in rural areas. The state prioritizes farmers' market incentive programs, streamlined WIC and SNAP enrollment, and emergency food assistance expansions. Pennsylvania is also investing in cold storage infrastructure and food transportation logistics to ensure fresh food availability in underserved areas. ¹⁸
Washington, D.C.	Implements targeted urban food security initiatives to address food

¹⁸ https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/pda/documents/food_security/documents/pa%20fpc%202023%20annual%20report_final%20may%202024.pdf at 33.

	deserts and infrastructure challenges. The city incentivizes grocery store development in low-income neighborhoods through grants and zoning changes. Additionally, Washington, D.C. has invested in mobile markets (tents), community gardens, and urban agriculture initiatives to increase food access. ¹⁹ The city funds Healthy Corner Store Programs that improve fresh food availability in small retail stores in underserved communities. D.C. also provides grants to food access nonprofits and supports food recovery and redistribution programs to minimize food waste and maximize food security.
Rhode Island	Uses economic impact assessments to evaluate the sustainability of food programs. The state tracks food program efficiency, funding gaps, and community food system performance. Rhode Island's policies focus emergency food assistance by integrating food access solutions into public health and economic development strategies. ²⁰
North Carolina	Expands nutrition program reach by evaluating and improving food distribution channels. The state prioritizes rural food security initiatives, including mobile food pantries, grocery delivery programs for seniors, and direct-to-consumer farm partnerships. North Carolina is also working to expand Medicaid coverage to include food security interventions, ensuring that healthcare providers can connect patients to nutrition assistance. Additional strategies include scaling up food bank operations, funding school meal programs, and strengthening local farm economies to increase food availability.

III. Key Headings and Organizational Structure in Food Policy Plans

Each of the analyzed reports follows a clear organizational structure, ensuring readability and effective communication of their goals. Below are the key headings used in each plan:

Jurisdiction	Key Headings & Organizational Structure
Arlington County, Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Summary ● Introduction ● Developing a Food Security Strategic Plan ● Strategic Categories (Systemic Change, Food Access, Outreach & Education, Capacity Building, Informed Decision Making)

¹⁹ <https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/wakegov.com.if-us-west-1/s3fs-public/documents/2023-11/arlington-food-security-strategic-plan-report-final.pdf> at 45.

²⁰ https://impactreport.rifoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RIFPC_Digital_Impact_Report_2023.pdf at 11.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Call to Action ● Appendices
New York State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction ● Hunger Data and Trends ● Food Policy in New York ● Council Overview ● Council Activities (Economic Vitality, Food as Medicine, Food Assistance Networks, Food Access Programs) ● Council Recommendations ● Appendices
Pennsylvania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Summary ● Letter from the Director ● What is a Food Policy Council? ● First Year Activities & Accomplishments ● Initial Findings ● State Agency-Led Food Systems Initiatives ● Council Members ● State & Federal Recommendations & Action Steps ● Appendices
Washington D.C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letter from the Mayor ● Introduction ● Definitions ● Higher Risk of Food Insecurity ● Data Limitations ● Progress and Highlights ● Conclusion ● References
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlights ● Letter from the Network Director ● Strategic Objectives (2023-2025) ● This Year's Highlights (including numbers and hyperlinks to specific program details) ● Equity Around the Table ● Members ● Financials ● Funding Partners
North Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Summary ● Introduction ● North Carolina Nutrition Security Initiative, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategy 1: Increase Reach of Nutrition Programs ○ Strategy 2: Build Connections Between Health Care and Nutrition Supports

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategy 3: Increase Breastfeeding Support and Rates ● Conclusion ● References
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Pictured below are two samples of effective Table of Contents sections. The picture on the left being North Carolina’s and the picture on the right being Pennsylvania’s. The importance of mirroring these structures in Delaware’s Food Policy Strategic Plan lies in the effectiveness of organizing information, maintaining logical flow, and ensuring that all relevant aspects of food security are comprehensively addressed. A well-structured plan enhances clarity for all readers, facilitates implementation, and strengthens accountability.

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Delaware should adopt a similar framework, ensuring key elements such as data analysis, policy recommendations, and stakeholder engagement are clearly defined and prominently featured. We recommend that this is done through a comprehensive selection of the major topics that need to go into the memo. We recommend that these topics are laid out in a clear and concise Table of Contents at the top of the memo. Each of the sections in the memo can then have subheadings where different avenues of the overall goal are discussed. This will allow for the major topics to be addressed first without overcrowding the memo with various nuances of the most important points. Further, a clear organizational structure allows for consistency and comparability, making it easier for readers to navigate. It is important to keep in mind while writing this memo that this cannot be written for one audience. The audience can include government agencies, nonprofits, and advocacy groups. Each of these readers will have a different idea and interpretation of what the memo is addressing so it is crucial to be as clear and concise as possible when drafting.

IV. Conclusion & Recommendations for DE's Food Access Strategy

To develop an effective statewide food access strategy, the council should integrate practices from jurisdictions that have successfully enhanced food security. Based on the strategies analyzed across Arlington County, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Rhode Island, and North Carolina, Delaware's approach should focus on economic sustainability, infrastructure investments, and health-focused food access programs.

A strong food access strategy should prioritize the idea of "data-driven decision-making" by implementing food insecurity mapping to identify geographic and demographic gaps, conducting supply chain vulnerability assessments to pinpoint inefficiencies in food distribution, and requiring ongoing data collection and reporting to track the impact of food security initiatives. The data can be collected in one source (i.e. a shared document or link to a form to collect data on the Council's website). Prioritizing data collection from the beginning will ensure that no steps are repeated accidentally, and no mistakes are made twice. This will also make it easier for improvements to be made quicker if certain issues are reported more than once. Identifying reoccurring themes is a crucial aspect to expanding food access in a particular region.

Additionally, economic and policy coordination is crucial. The council should integrate food security policies across state agencies, expand SNAP and WIC enrollment efforts through community-based outreach and digital accessibility, support local farmers and food producers by funding farm-to-table and farm-to-institution initiatives, and establish tax incentives and funding programs for grocery stores and food retailers in underserved areas. The strategy should focus on what is currently operating in Delaware, and look to build off those, or to allocate more resources to those groups. Ensuring that the established ways people have been getting access to food already is pivotal to gaining public trust and spreading awareness about the expansion of the programs.

The strategy should emphasize transparency and stakeholder engagement. Including clear, actionable policy recommendations with defined short-term and long-term goals, engaging community organizations, nonprofits, and local businesses in food security efforts, and providing publicly accessible updates on food policy progress will help maintain accountability and drive ongoing improvements. By adopting these comprehensive, evidence-based strategies, the council can craft a food access strategy that is both actionable and impactful.

In conclusion, by prioritizing transparency, stakeholder engagement, and a focused, strategic approach, the Council can develop a food access strategy that is both practical and impactful. Clearly defining short-term and long-term goals, collaborating with key community partners, and maintaining public accountability will ensure the policy remains actionable and sustainable. By first achieving foundational successes, the council can then look to models like the Arlington Plan to guide long-term capacity building and the effective expansion of food security initiatives.