

## Hunger is a Significant Public Health Issue

Hunger and food insecurity affects one out of every five children in Wisconsin. In Dane County, one in five white households and one in three Latino, African American and single-parent households experiences food insecurity.

When a household experiences food insecurity, people are unsure of where their next meal is coming from, or worry about running out of food without having money to buy more. As a result, they often cut back on the size of meals or skip meals.

*Hunger & Food Security in Wisconsin & Dane County*, a report released in 2016 by Public Health Madison & Dane County, describes the scale of the problem in Dane County, details some of its health consequences, and provides a model for action to increase community food security.

To read the full report visit: [www.publichealthmdc.com/documents/foodSecurityWhitePaper.pdf](http://www.publichealthmdc.com/documents/foodSecurityWhitePaper.pdf)

Primary Food Sources	
Farmers Markets	29
CSA Farms	32
Community Gardens	50+
Food Pantry Gardens	29
Food Pantries	50
Supermarkets & Groceries	77
Convenience Stores	160
Fast Food Restaurants	393
Beer & Liquor Stores	43
Farm Operators	
Total	2749
Female	386
American Indian	3
Asian	48
African American	6
Hispanic/Latino	40
Average Age	57.7

Sources include:  
[USDA 2012 Ag Census](http://www.usda.gov/economicinformation/pubs/2012/2012AgCensus)  
[UW-Extension Dane County Ag Economic Impact Report 2014](http://www.wisconsin.gov/economicinformation/pubs/2014/2014EconomicImpactReport)  
[Wisconsin Food Security Project](http://www.wisconsin.gov/economicinformation/pubs/2014/WisconsinFoodSecurityProject)

Food security	Dane	State
Predicted food insecurity rate* (all persons)	11.6%	12.6%
Predicted food insecurity rate (children)	17.1%	20.7%
Health		
Adult obesity rate	24.8%	29%
Low-income pre-school child obesity rate	13%	na
Adult diabetes	6.1%	9%
Economic Security		
Poverty rate (all persons)	12.8%	13.2%
Poverty rate (children)	12.7%	16.9%
Persons below 185% poverty	23.7%	27.1%
Median household income	61,790	52,627
Federal Food Programs		
Free & reduced school meal eligibility rate	34.4%	43.3%
FoodShare participants total	71,631	1,097,789
FoodShare participants % of population	14%	19.1%
WIC participants total	10,548	185,217
WIC participants # of women	3,159	53,005
WIC participants # of children	7,389	132,212

\* Definition: a prediction of the food insecurity rate for the total population based on local economic and demographic characteristics such as the poverty rate, unemployment rate, and race and ethnicity of the population  
 Source: Map the Meal Gap 2010



### PLEASE JOIN US

The Dane County Food Council typically meets monthly and meetings are open to the public.

Please visit the Food Council website for specific meeting dates, agendas, the membership application, and more:  
[www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil](http://www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil)



# DANE COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL

## 2016 Annual Report



### Note from the Dane County Food Council Chair

Upon reflecting on the last year, it is amazing what the Dane County Food Council (DCFC) has done. This newsletter is chock full of wonderful things that have happened recently. We all need to reflect a little farther back as this past year has seen the last of the original DCFC members leave. Thoughts go back to when my wife and others fought for, organized and established the DCFC. There were so many struggles at the beginning. It is hard to imagine accomplishing what they did during that time, with little or no staff help available. Yet, the foundation they laid is giving us a chance to build a wonderful structure.

Our job is to not only build on the current foundation, but also to enlarge it for the future. When trying to move forward, we often search to see what other entities around the U.S. are doing and borrow the best ideas. There is enough food waste in Dane County to feed everyone, so how do we do it? How do we eliminate the fear of families choosing to go hungry or give up something else? How do we make land accessible to anyone wanting to grow food, whether it is their own garden plot or a small farm? Wouldn't it be great if in 10-15 years other entities are reading about how we made progress? We have the resources and the people to tackle these issues and make substantial progress. And we need your help, whether it is volunteering once a month, getting information/help to the people who need it, or local municipalities giving ideas a little nudge. We have made substantial progress in the past and we need to use that to propel us forward. So please read this report and see the wonderful things the Food Council is doing and let us know if there is something you can do to help us do even better.

To learn more about the Dane County Food Council, please visit [www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil](http://www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil).

Bill Warner, Chair  
 Dane County Food Council

### 2016 Dane County Food Days Brings Attention to Food Waste



According to the EPA, in 2013 alone, more than 37 million tons of food waste was produced in the U.S. Often going to landfills instead of feeding people. This startling fact is the reason food waste was the theme of the Dane County Food Days.

Each year, a food summit is planned and hosted by the Dane County Food Council planning committee and our partners. The summit brings together a wide audience of farmers, activists, chefs, community gardeners, educators, processors, entrepreneurs and community organizations engaged in building a sustainable and equitable local food system.

In 2016, the event was Dane County Food Days and included several community food related events such as a fruit tree workshop, a cooking competition, a FEED Bazaar and more. The main event was *Replated: A Community Meal*. More than 100 people attended the event held at Madison College's Truax Campus to eat, listen to speakers, watch a film and learn about food waste reduction. To highlight and increase awareness of food waste and the tons of perfectly edible food that gets thrown away each year,



a meal was made from gleaned food that would have otherwise gone to waste. Two local chefs, Dave Heide, *Lillianna's*, and Patrick Depula, *Salvatore's*, along with Madison College culinary students and Grow Academy students, prepared a delicious meal from the more than 500 pounds of food donated by Metcalfe's Market and local vegetable farms. Food not used in the meal was donated to Community Action Coalition, a local food pantry distribution center.



### OUR MISSION

The Food Council is a committee of the Dane County Board, comprised of residents and County Board Supervisors.

The Council encourages active collaboration to explore issues and develop recommendations to create an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable local food system for the Dane County region.

### 2016 MEMBERS:

- Bill Warner, Chair
- Nahrissa Rush, Vice Chair
- Ian Aley
- Supervisor Carl Chenoweth
- Supervisor Pat Downing
- Beverly Hutcherson
- Ace Lynn-Miller
- Mariela Quesada-Centeno
- Open Supervisor seat

### Dane Co. UW-Extension staff:

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## Dane County Food Council Work Group Reports

### Land Access Work Group

In 2016, the Land Access Working Group (LAWG) continued to work on policy solutions for improving access to farm land in Dane County with an emphasis on beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, ecological growing practices, and locally marketed products. The working group includes farmers, the executive director of a land trust, a Dane County supervisor, land use planners from the Town of Dunn and City of Fitchburg, and academics studying land access.

The LAWG produced a series of resources including maps of the stages in the process of accessing land, the organizational actors in this process, and possible land tenure arrangements. They developed the idea of setting up collaborative farming sites for farmers graduating from farm incubators.

A one-day conference was held in August to solicit feedback on the ideas developed by LAWG. Twenty people attended the session held at the Farley Center. The group included farmers, elected officials, public sector and non-profit workers primarily from Dane County.

### Equity and Access Work Group

The Equity and Access Work Group of the Dane County Food Council formed in 2016 to identify potential policy recommendations and programs to improve equity in the food system and expand access to food. The group, composed of Food Council members, Extension staff, and community partners, focused on learning about specific access and equity issues in Dane County. This learning provided a strong background for developing a plan for 2017 which includes producing educational materials to help communicate issues of equity and access in the food system and targeting specific projects that support expanding food access in communities throughout the county. With such important and complex issues at stake, the Equity and Access work group is glad to have taken the opportunity for learning, context setting and relationship development in 2016, and is looking forward to the 2017 action phase.

### The Food Waste Reduction Task Force

It is estimated that the average person wastes over 190 pounds of food each year. With over a half million people in Dane County, imagine the amount of food that ends up in the landfill.

The Dane County Food Council and City of Madison Food Policy Council have a joint Food Waste Reduction Task Force that researches and recommends ways to reduce food waste and strategies for recovering food from the waste stream.

The Task Force is focused on supporting gleaning efforts for feeding people, public education, and community composting. The Task Force will hold a meeting of Dane County gleaning projects in early 2017 to learn about the extent of their efforts and explore ways to provide support and build on those current efforts.

### Community gardens are thriving in Dane County!

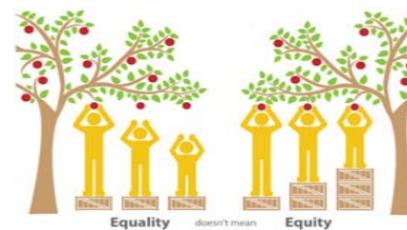
In more than 65 community gardens across 30 acres, over 2000 households come together to grow fresh fruit and vegetables, pollinator plants and community orchards in more than 3100 garden plots. The gardeners also grow social connections, self-sufficiency and leadership skills. Community gardens host a diversity of people across all ages, cultures, incomes and abilities.

On February 20, 2016, more than 80 community gardeners, garden leaders, and advocates convened for the 2016 Community Gardens Summit at Warner Park Recreation Center on Madison's Northside. This year's focus was on celebrating the diverse community of gardeners. There were five different educational tracks: Gardening Skills, Garden Leadership, Youth Gardening and two garden skill tracks in Hmong and Spanish.

The Gardens Network provides support to community gardens throughout Dane County and embraces community development, beautification, environmental justice, crime prevention, shared stewardship, self-reliance and wellness. To learn more about the Garden's Network, the resources they provide and to find a community garden near you, visit <http://danegardens.net/>



### 21 Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge



The Dane County Food Council, Dane County UW-Extension, and other community partners are interested in learning more about racial equity issues and strategies for practicing equity in community food systems work. To provide resources and opportunity to deepen our shared learning and local connections around issues of racial equity, Dane County UW-Extension hosted a Wisconsin platform for the 21 Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge offered by Food Solutions New England in the spring of 2016.

Participants had access to a wide variety of resources including videos, readings, reflection tools, and other resources to learn and address disparity and social justice concerns in Wisconsin. A Facebook group was also developed to encourage sharing and interaction among the participants.

The participants reported they learned a great deal about both historical and contemporary factors that contribute to racial disparities, were inspired by stories of resilience and resistance employed by communities of color, and felt they had a greater understanding of equity and diversity issues. Participants also set goals to continue their learning, focus attention on addressing racial disparity issues in their work, and build intentional relationships across diverse groups.

The 21 Day Racial Equity Challenge resources are accessible at: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/cfsi/equity-in-food-systems/>.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
April 9 - 29, 2017 for the next  
21 Day Racial Equity Habit  
Building Challenge

### Dane County Partners with Healthy Food For All And Epic Systems

Dane County, Epic Systems and Healthy Food For All partnered to distribute fresh, healthy food to the area's most vulnerable in 2016. Since August 2015, Epic Systems has been donating leftover food from their employee food program and large conferences to Healthy Food For All who then distributes the food to local food pantries. Upon learning that Healthy Food For All was limited by lack of access to vehicles to transport food, Dane County donated a van to assist with the effort.

Healthy Food for All is focused on using available local food to provide healthy and culturally appropriate options to families in Dane County struggling to put food on their tables. Healthy Food for All has two primary initiatives: the collection, repackaging, and distribution of prepared foods from large institutions and events that may otherwise be thrown away as well as collecting and aggregating local produce from farms and gardens. As much as 40% of all food produced in the U.S. ends up going to waste and the efforts of Healthy Food for All help reduce the amount of food going into our landfill. Since the project began, more than 60,000 pounds of food has been collected, processed and donated by Healthy Food for All.

