

NJ State of the State:

Strategic Plan, Food Security Commitments, & OFSA Initiatives

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Agenda

1

New Jersey Food Security 3-Year Strategic Plan

Updates on the Strategic Plan since the last Garden State Conference on Food Security

2

2026 New Jersey Commitments for Food Security

Sneak peak summary of the 2026 Food Security Commitments cohort projects

3

OFSA-supported Food Security Initiatives

Overview of OFSA's initiatives supporting the Strategic Plan and food security across New Jersey

The Six Dimensions of Food Security

AGENCY
STABILITY (SHORT-TERM)
SUSTAINABILITY (LONG-TERM)
ACCESS
AVAILABILITY
UTILIZATION

*"Food security exists when
all people,
at all times, have
physical, social and economic access to
sufficient,
safe and nutritious food that meets their
dietary needs and
food preferences
for an active and healthy life."*

The Six Dimensions of Food Security

ACCESS

Resources a household must obtain for appropriate and nutritious food

Finances, transportation, social network



AVAILABILITY

Sufficient and nutritious food physically present

Food deserts, high cost of living environments, store proximity



UTILIZATION

Intake of sufficient and safe food to meet nutritional needs

Food storage, dietary needs (medical, demographic)



AGENCY

Capacity of individuals and groups to make decisions about, and participate in, food systems

Labelling and nutritional info, participatory research



SUSTAINABILITY

Food system practices that ensure food needs of the present are met without compromising the future

Diet sustainability, ecosystem sustainability, food waste



STABILITY

Reliable supply of foods over time to mitigate shocks in the near or immediate future

Market fluctuation, conflict, natural disaster



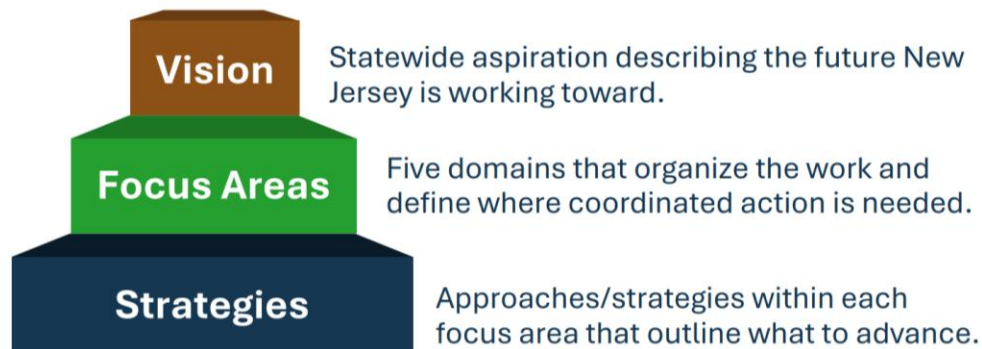
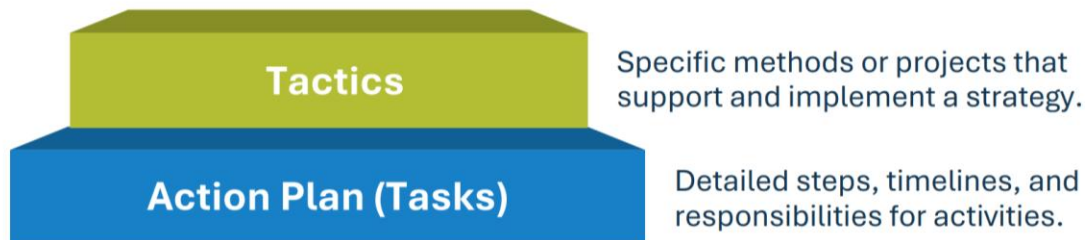
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New Jersey Food Security 3-Year Strategic Plan

Garden State Conference
on Food Security



Strategic Plan Specificity



OFSA's Strategic Plan Legislative Mandate



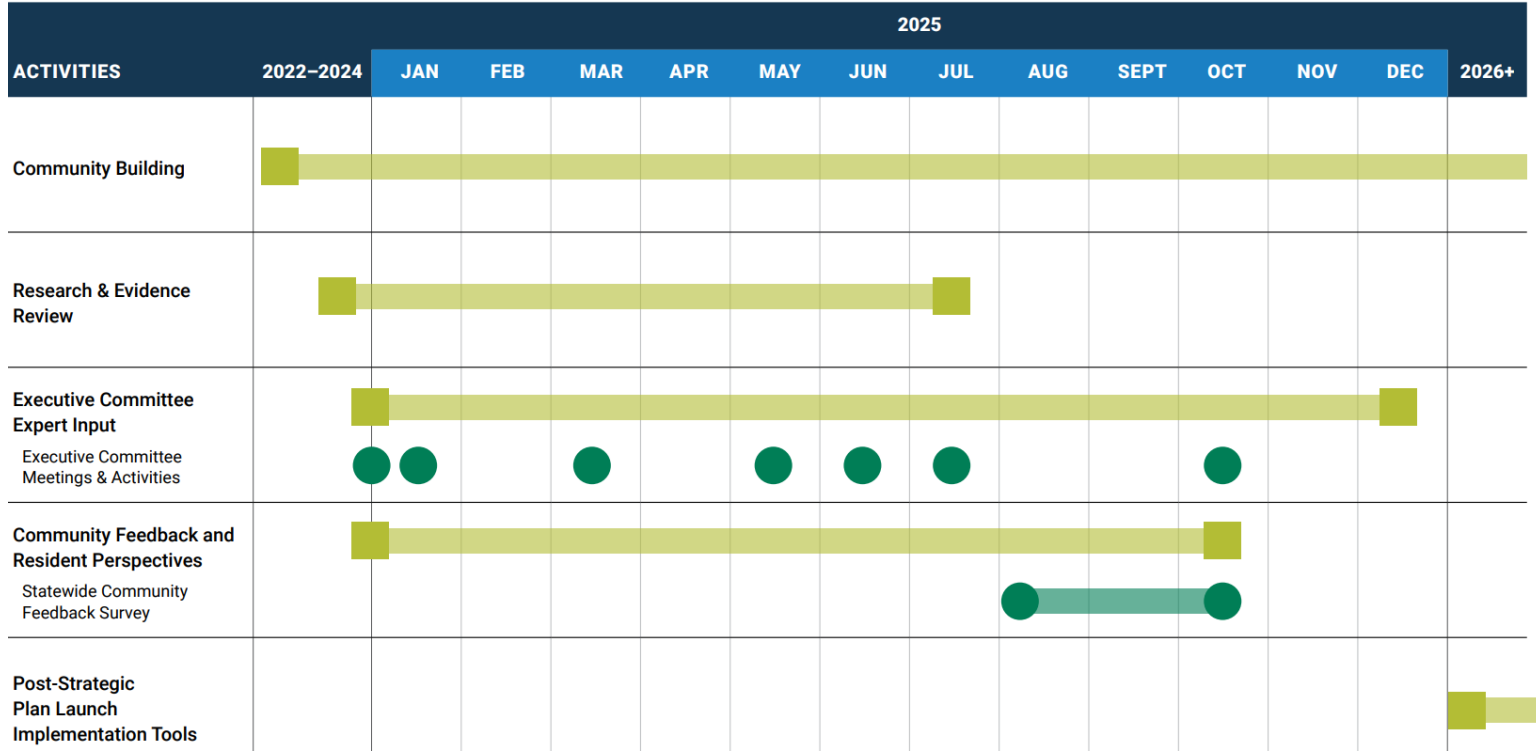
There is created in the Executive Branch of the State Government the Office of the Food Security Advocate... The office shall have the duty to collaborate with the appropriate State agency to:...

(f) cooperate with research organizations and universities to monitor ongoing **gap analysis** that identifies areas that are underserved by current food insecurity programs;

(g) work with State and community partners to develop a **strategic plan** to address identified gaps in areas that are underserved by current food insecurity program



Strategic Plan Development Process: Steps



Strategic Plan Development Process: Evidence Base

Quantitative Methods

- Analysis of more than 2,000 statewide community-based survey responses
- Expert survey of 61 food system leaders
- Review of statewide and national datasets on food insecurity, demographics, and social determinants of health

Qualitative Methods

- Analysis of 22 existing, relevant reports
- Convenings with charitable food providers, state agencies, agriculture stakeholders, healthcare systems, philanthropic partners, and educators
- Community feedback survey on the draft plan

New Jersey Food Security Strategic Plan



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Strategic Plan Focus Areas

1. Enhance Information Exchange and Access
2. Expand Community-Based Food Infrastructure and Market Channel Creation
3. Build and Support Local Partnerships
4. Collaborate Across Sectors and Across State Agencies
5. Strengthen Food Systems Resiliency

**View the Full
Strategic Plan Here**



Strategic Plan Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 1: Enhance Information Exchange and Access to Improve Public Awareness, Optimize Programs, and Support Data-Driven Decision-Making

STRATEGIES

1. Data Coordination
2. Impact Analysis and Research
3. Data Visualization and Dissemination

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

- County partners share data to identify and map overlaps and gaps in service delivery
- Evaluating a Food as Medicine program's impact on economic and health outcomes

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 2: Expand Community-Based Food Infrastructure and Market Channel Creation for Enhanced Ongoing Food Access, Utilization, and Availability

STRATEGIES

1. Food Access and Availability Infrastructure
2. Agriculture Workforce and Land Access
3. Market Channel Creation
4. Food Enterprise Investment

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

- Mobile markets with refrigerated storage
- Connect beginning and early farmers with affordable land, equipment, and training
- Food business incubator

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 3: Build and Support Local Partnerships to Advance Community-Driven Food Security Approaches

STRATEGIES

1. Tailored Education, Outreach, and Awareness Efforts
2. County-level Coordination
3. Bi-directional Community Engagement
4. Screening and Referrals
5. Multi-benefit Hubs

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

- Convene a multi-sector county food security coalition
- Community resource hub with food program referrals and benefits enrollment

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 4: Collaborate Across Sectors and State Agencies to Streamline and Strengthen Federal and State Food Security–Related Program Access and Delivery

STRATEGIES

1. Public Benefit User Experience
2. Program Opportunities to Enhance Participation
3. Federal Nutrition Program Outreach and Referrals
4. State-level Interagency Work Group(s)
5. Cross-sector Coordination, Training, and Resources

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

- Identify and help alleviate enrollment barriers
- Coordinate referrals to federal nutrition programs
- Train healthcare, housing, and other service providers on food need screening and referral processes

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 5: Strengthen Food Systems Resiliency to Enhance Long-term Stability That Withstands Disruptions and Ensures Future Sustainability

STRATEGIES

1. Supply Chain Sustainability Infrastructure
2. Sustainable Food Procurement and Waste Diversion
3. Sustainable Farming Practices
4. Food Distribution Network Disaster Preparedness
5. Food Security Positioning in Climate Work

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

- Invest in regional food aggregation, cold storage, and transportation
- Adopt sustainable food purchasing standards
- Training program to support water conservation and soil health

Strategic Plan Implementation Planning Toolkit

Budget Category	Quantity	Rate / Cost per Unit	Total Cost	One-Time or Ongoing
Personnel Expenses				
Staffing			\$ -	
Fringe/Benefits			\$ -	
Consultants			\$ -	
Program Expenses				
Supplies				
Equipment				
Incentives				
Travel				
Space/Facilities				
Outreach				
Communications				
Translation/Interpretation				
Supplies				
Equipment				
Data & Evaluation				
Incentives				
Transcription				
Overhead/Admin				
Technology				
Administrative/Indirect				
Rent/Lease				

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Purpose of the Toolkit

The New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate (NJ OFSA) and partners created the Strategic Plan Implementation Planning Toolkit to assist local health departments in implementing their strategic plans. The toolkit provides a structured approach to planning and budgeting for the implementation of the strategic plan. It includes a series of worksheets and a budget template that can be customized to fit the needs of your organization. The toolkit is designed to be user-friendly and easy to use, with clear instructions and examples provided throughout. It is a valuable resource for anyone involved in the implementation of a strategic plan, whether you are a health department, a community organization, or an individual. The toolkit is available for free download and use, and we encourage you to explore it and see how it can help you achieve your goals.

NEW JERSEY FOOD SECURITY 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Implementation Planning Toolkit

MARCH 2025

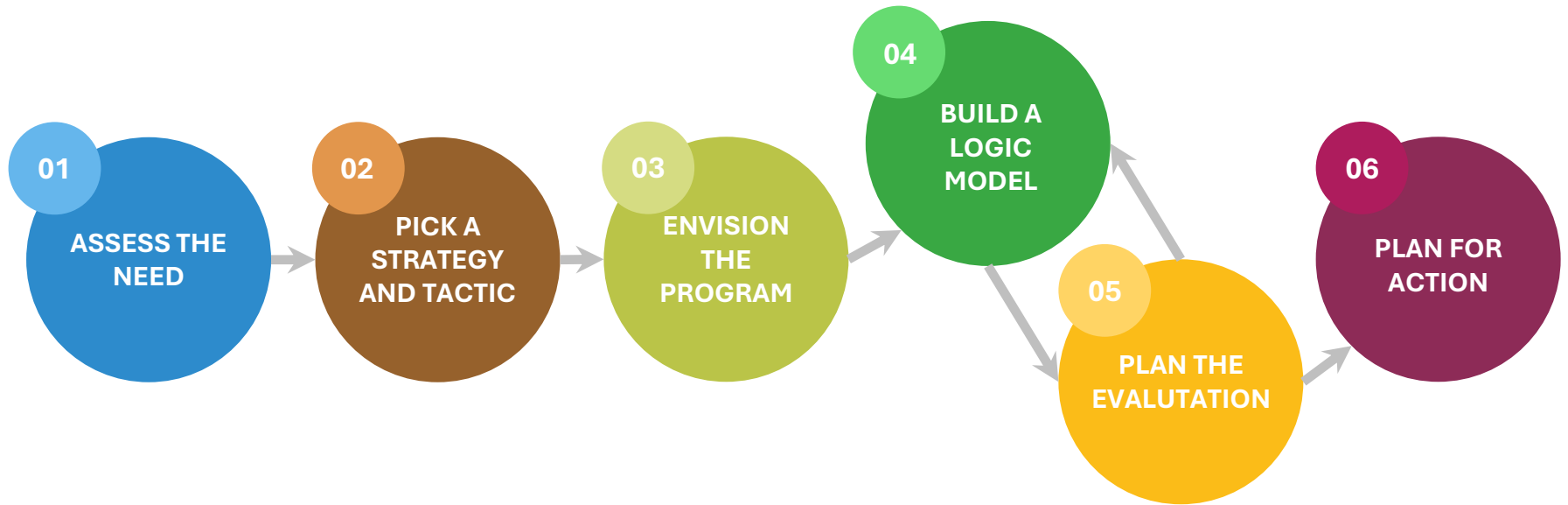
Explore the
Toolkit Here



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Moving Strategy to Action: Toolkit 6-Step Process



OFSA's Resources to Understand Food Security



Food Insecurity
Index



Dimensions of
Food Security
Primer



Data Chart
Book



Public Data
Catalog

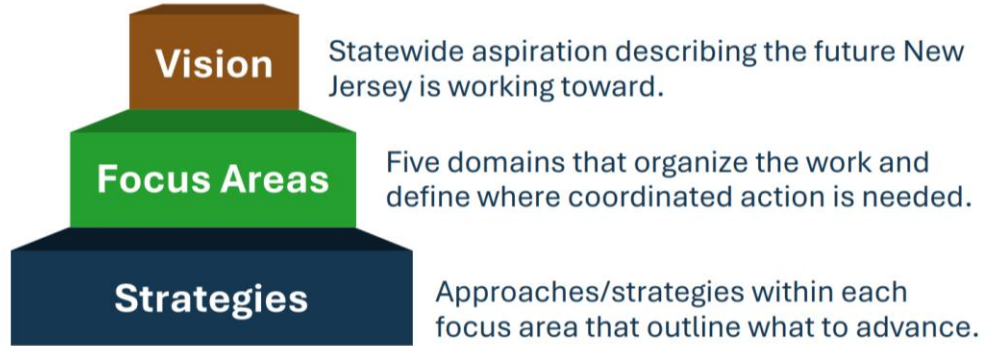
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2026 New Jersey Commitments for Food Security

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Commitments Specified their Focus Area, Strategies, and Tactics



Purpose of the NJ Commitments for Food Security

In Summer 2026, OFSA invited organizations to submit Commitments for Food Security for program(s) that support the NJ Food Security Strategic Plan.

The key purpose of the Commitments is to:



Strengthen alignment, communication, and visibility across sectors impacting food security by highlighting efforts working toward shared food security goals



Document and understand Strategic Plan uptake and impact by documenting how organizations are implementing the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan

2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

153

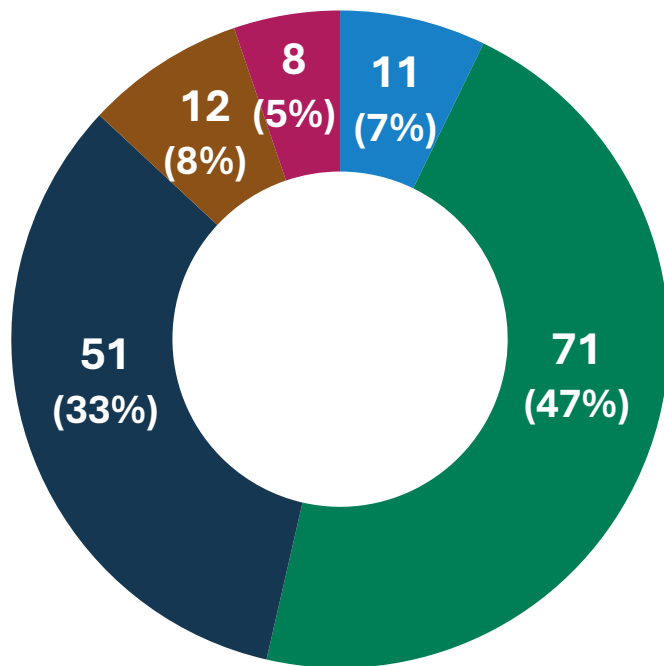
Total Commitments

87

Organizations

2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

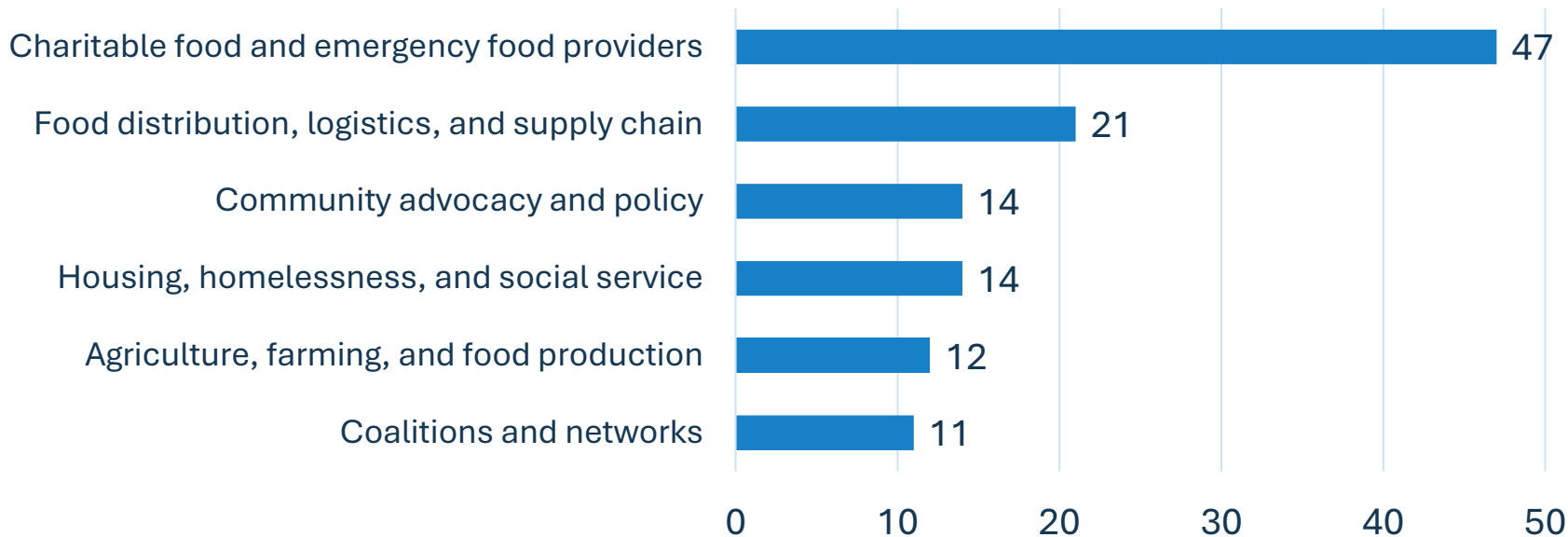
Commitments
Span all Five
Strategic Plan
Focus Areas

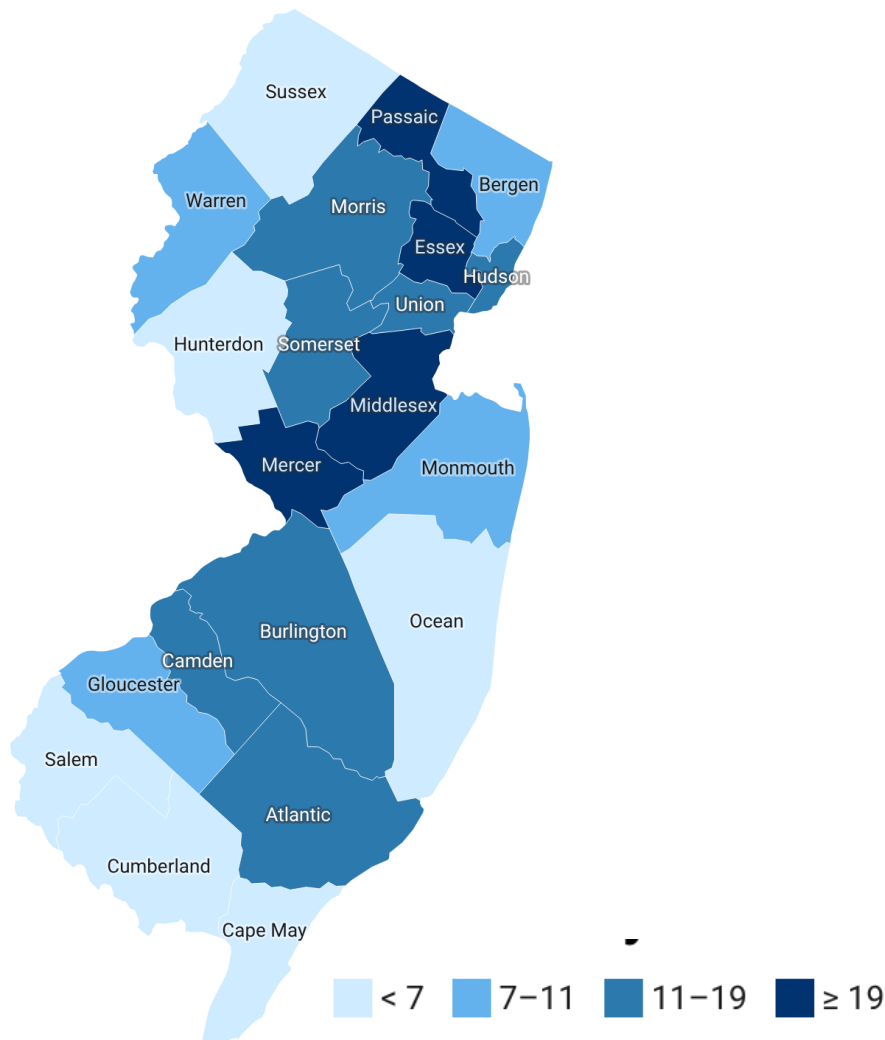


- FA 1 - Data
- FA 2 - Food Infrastructure
- FA 3 - Local Partnerships
- FA 4 - Federal/State Programs
- FA 5 - Sustainability

2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

Sector of Lead Organization, Top 6





2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

- Commitments span all 21 New Jersey Counties
- Number of Commitments by County ranges from 4 in Cape May County to 30 in Essex County
- There are 41 Statewide Commitments

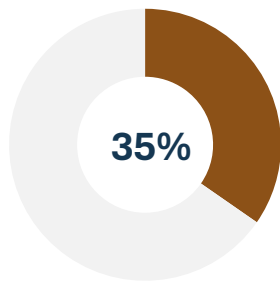
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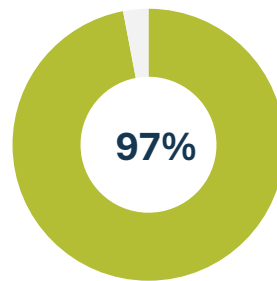
2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

Commitments with partnerships

124 Commitments (81%) Identified Partnerships*



New Partnerships



Existing Partnerships

*Commitments can have both new and existing partnerships

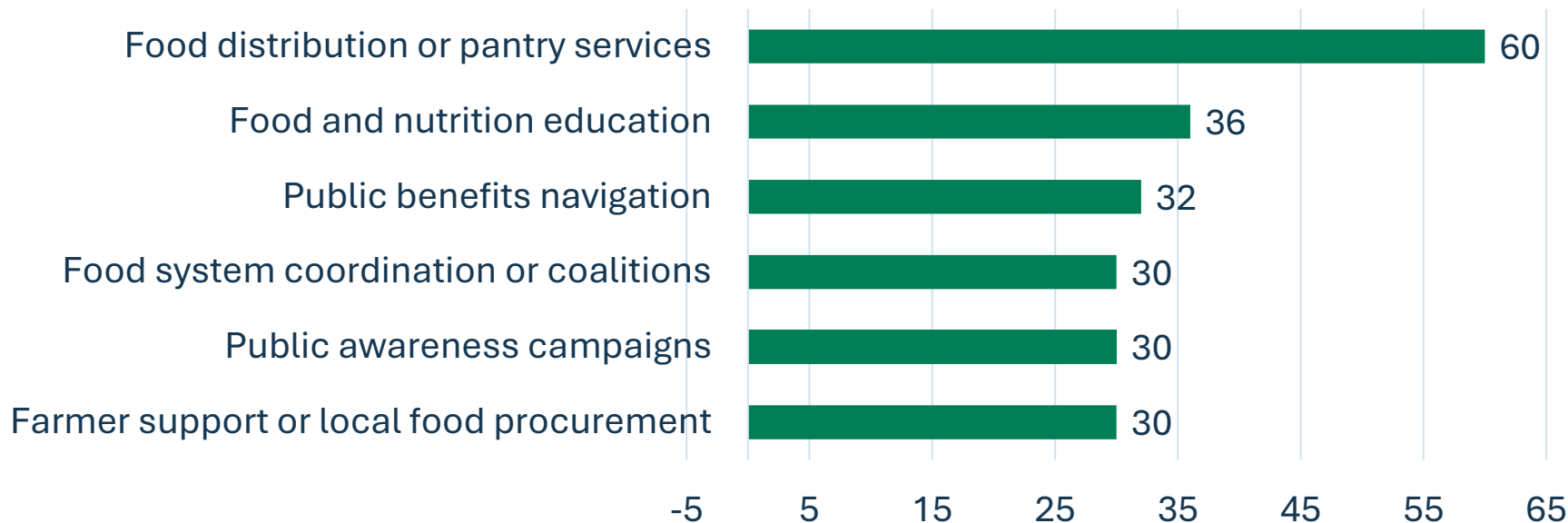
2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

Top Strategy Engaged in Each Focus Area

Focus Area	Strategy
1	Data Visualization and Dissemination
2	Food Access and Availability Infrastructure
3	Tailored Education, Outreach, and Awareness Efforts
4	Federal Nutrition Program Outreach and Referrals
5	Supply Chain Sustainability Infrastructure

2026 Cohort of NJ Food Security Commitments

Program Tactics, Top 6



Learn More and Share Your Feedback



We Want to Hear From You

Tell us about your experience using the Strategic Plan and the Toolkit.

Email: OFSA@ag.nj.gov

Scan for the
Commitments Webpage



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3

OFSA-supported Food Security Initiatives

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OFSA Grant Initiatives Advancing the Strategic Plan

Building Expanded Access to Nutritious School Meals Programs (BEANS)

- Invests in outreach, education, and partnership-building efforts that increase participation in school and childcare meal programs
- **Focus Area 3:** Partnerships
- 12 grantees



New Jersey Food System Enhancements Program (FSEP)

- Invests in efforts that strengthen connections between NJ food producers and communities they serve
- **Focus Area 2:** Food Infrastructure
- 5 grantees



Research, Outreach, and Organizing for Trusted Engagement and Data (ROOTED)

- Invests in efforts that build partnerships, strengthen coordination, and improve access to food security information
- **Focus Area 1:** Data
- 3 grantees



Regional Supply Chain Innovation Pilot Program

- Supports establishment of a philanthropic partner match of \$1M. Re-grants to support food supply chain
- **Focus Area 2:** Food Infrastructure
- Partnership matching with sub-awards



School Meals

OFSA is building a stronger evidence base and expanding outreach to support school meals participation across New Jersey



School Meals
Recommendations
and Reports



School Meals Cost
Estimation Tool



Public Service
Announcement
Videos



School Meals &
Summer EBT
Application Outreach

Food Security Shared Data and Infrastructure

Six Dimension of Food Security Survey

Overview: Collect representative survey data across the six dimensions of food security to allow for robust statewide and county-level estimates. The project will provide actionable findings to support statewide planning, county coalition activities, policy development, and community-driven implementation effort.

Partner: Center for Nutrition & Health Impact

Years: 2026-2028

NJ Food Security Coalition Network

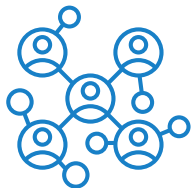
Overview: Establish a statewide network to support the development, coordination, and evaluation of county-level food security coalitions and advance shared learning, accountability, and systems change.

Partner: Rutgers School of Social Work, Center for Prevention Science

Years: 2026-2028

Strategic Plan Success

Strategic Plan success will be measured not by the completion of individual tasks, but by the degree to which it strengthens how New Jersey coordinates, invests in, and advances food security efforts. Success is intended to be reflected in:



**Multi-sector
Adoption and Use of
the Strategic Plan**



**Growth in Aligned
Activities and
Investments**



**Stronger
Coordination and
Partnerships**



**Improved Food Security
and Well-being for New
Jerseyans**

Thank you!



Office of the
**Food Security
Advocate**