



DECEMBER 2015

CULTIVATING CAMDEN

THE CITY'S FOOD ECONOMY STRATEGY





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The symbol in our logo is adapted from the official DVRPC seal and is designed as a stylized image of the Delaware Valley. The outer ring symbolizes the region as a whole while the diagonal bar signifies the Delaware River. The two adjoining crescents represent the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey.

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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO CULTIVATING CAMDEN



Cultivating Camden: The City's Food Economy Strategy is based on the ongoing work of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Campbell Healthy Communities program. This strategy seeks to build off Camden's existing assets by identifying opportunities to increase food access and economic opportunities within the city. It analyzes the city's current food system and food economy, acknowledging the challenges that residents face in accessing healthy food, while at the same time making recommendations to grow food as an economic sector; increase opportunities for food entrepreneurs; engage Camden's institutions; and support organizations already working to increase access to healthy food, healthcare, and job opportunities.

Located across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, Camden City (Camden) was once a booming industrial center, employing tens of thousands of people at companies such as RCA Victor, the New York Ship Building Corporation, and the Campbell Soup Company. At its peak in 1950, Camden was home to over 124,000 people. However, like many other American cities, Camden underwent a steep decline during the second half of the 20th century as people and jobs left the city for the surrounding suburbs and rural areas. Between 1950 and 1980, Camden lost approximately one-third of its population.¹ According to *FutureCamden*, the City's master plan, "Only one-half of the manufacturing firms that were operating during the 1970s remained active in the City in 1990."²

At the same time, the food industry experienced major consolidations across the country, finding efficiencies and cost savings through industrialization and mergers. In the late 20th century, food retail began to consolidate into fewer, larger stores. "In the 1990s, large grocery store chains merged or bought out other regional retailers, while large warehouse clubs and large discount general merchandise stores expanded into grocery products...Between 1996 and 1999, there were 385 grocery mergers—nearly 100 each year."³ In addition to consolidation, many grocery stores and supermarkets left cities to locate in new strip, commercial plazas along busy roads and highways, serving larger, suburban market areas.

Today, approximately 77,356 people live in Camden City. Almost 40 percent of Camden residents live below the poverty line, and only 7.6

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *Table 6. New Jersey Resident Population by Municipality: 1930–1990*, U.S. Census of Population and Housing. <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/census/1990/poptrd6.htm> (accessed February 10, 2015).

² City of Camden, *FutureCamden, Master Plan* (Camden, NJ: Planning Board of the City of Camden, adopted March 12, 2002). <http://camdenredevelopment.org/getattachment/fa8a88c6-7dca-4518-a046-8f431e9a7f07/Test-Plan.aspx> (accessed February 10, 2015).

³ *Consolidation and Buyer Power in the Grocery Industry*, Fact Sheet. Food and Water Watch. December 2010. <http://documents.foodandwaterwatch.org/doc/RetailConcentration-web.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2015).

percent of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The city is home to only one full-service grocery store but has approximately 123 corner stores. Few to no farmers' markets operate in Camden during the summer growing season. The city's lack of grocery stores, high percentage of people living in poverty, and high percentage of people without access to a car led the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to designate Camden a "food desert" in 2010. Healthy food access—whether due to financial, physical, or social constraints—remains a concern for many Camden residents in 2015.

Food Access

Food access can mean several things, including physical access (no stores in a neighborhood or limited transportation between residential and retail areas), financial access (low household income, total lack of income, or lack of cooking facilities or storage space), and/or a lack of personal knowledge of healthy eating habits.

Although it has often been the archetype for urban disinvestment and its associated challenges, Camden, in recent years, is changing. There is new optimism in Camden. New investments from community organizations, healthcare institutions, local universities, government, and the private sector have started to reinvigorate the city, reflected by positive news articles highlighting the work of local organizations, new businesses opening, large businesses relocating, and public investments and incentives.

Residents, business owners, and policymakers alike are experiencing Camden's story of revitalization through new *place-based* investments, many of which are the result of tax incentives made available through the New Jersey Economic Opportunity Act of 2013. At the same time,

many of Camden’s community and faith-based organizations are working to address a number of issues ranging from increasing physical activity to reducing gun violence to advocating for better schools to tending community gardens. These organizations often take a *people-based* approach to economic development, building an individual’s capacity to acquire and maintain stable employment and improve their quality of life.

Both *place-based* and *people-based* approaches have a role to play in revitalizing Camden and improving outcomes for its residents. Developing Camden’s food economy may provide a combined opportunity to invest in both *place* and *people*. Businesses in the food economy range from the very large, such as the Campbell Soup Company, an international food company, to the very small, such as Black-Eyed Susan’s, a small food truck parked daily near Rutgers-Camden. Additionally, there are many different types of jobs within the food economy—from accountants to short-order cooks, from nutritionists to grocery store clerks—that can employ people with a range of education and experience.

Developing Camden’s food economy may also help improve food access by bringing more food outlets (of all different types) into the city while



Camden Waterfront

creating more jobs. However, it is important to note that the food economy struggles to provide high-paying jobs as most jobs are in the food service sector, where, typically, wages are low, benefits are scarce, and many people are not employed full-time. Like other parts of the new economy (or 21st-century economy), the food economy must meet these challenges by creating higher-wage jobs and meaningful work.

Cultivating Camden: The City’s Food Economy Strategy seeks to build off Camden’s momentum by identifying opportunities to increase food access and economic opportunities within the city. It analyzes the city’s current food system and food economy, acknowledging the challenges that residents face in accessing healthy food, while at the same time making recommendations to grow food as an economic sector; increase opportunities for food entrepreneurs; engage Camden’s institutions; and support organizations already working to increase access to healthy food, healthcare, and job opportunities. Stable employment and higher household incomes help to address the root causes of food insecurity and hunger: income and poverty.

Greater Philadelphia’s Regional Food System

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Greater Philadelphia’s Metropolitan Planning Organization, is actively working to address critical food system issues in its nine-county region. In 2010, DVRPC published the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, which evaluated the natural, economic, and social resources of Greater Philadelphia’s foodshed: the 100-mile radius around Philadelphia that serves as the theoretical source of local food. The study highlighted some of the economic impacts of the food system, including how households in Greater Philadelphia spend their food dollars, as well as how employment in Greater Philadelphia’s food system compares to the nation as a whole. *Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia’s Food System Plan*, published in 2011, identified opportunities to further develop the regional economy, strengthen the region’s agricultural sector, decrease food waste and want, improve public health, protect the region’s soil

and water resources, and encourage collaboration. *Eating Here* included seven economic development recommendations, including supporting business development, increasing investments in healthy food retail, and encouraging institutions to establish food procurement standards.

In 2012, DVRPC had the opportunity to apply its regional food system planning experience and expertise at the city level. DVRPC partnered with Campbell Soup Company and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) to develop *Cultivating Camden*, a comprehensive strategy for improving Camden City's food system and economy. The food system is an important part of the regional economy; food manufacturing can provide much-needed low- and moderate-skill jobs; local food production, preparation, and distribution offer entrepreneurial opportunities; and agricultural products are among the nation's strongest and largest exports.

Food System

DVRPC defines a food system as: "A set of interconnected activities or sectors that grow, manufacture, transport, sell, prepare, and dispose of food from the farm to the plate to the garbage can or compost pile."⁴

Many studies have found that supporting the local food sector can help to grow the local economy. Like the food system, the food economy is composed of interrelated components that include both the production and consumption of food. In an attempt to define "local food economy," Sustainable Seattle noted that, "On the production side, [the food economy] consists of all businesses involved in the production, processing, distribution, and retailing (including restaurants) of farm

⁴Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, *Municipal Implementation Tool #18* (Philadelphia: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, April 2010).

FIGURE 1.1: CAMDEN FOOD SYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS



and food products. On the consumption side, it includes households and institutions, such as hospitals, which feed people as part of what they do.”⁵ All of these actors spend money, either buying food or buying components along the food supply chain. On the production side, food producers employ people in the business of growing, distributing, and preparing food. Theoretically, the more money that can be spent locally—from local farms to local restaurants—the more money stays and circulates in the local economy. Looking more comprehensively, the New Haven Food Action Plan found that “strengthening our local food economy will create jobs, encourage neighborhood development, and funnel much-needed dollars back into the community.”⁶

A Stakeholder-based Planning Process

Cultivating Camden analyzes Camden’s current food economy and food system. This report makes recommendations that seek to simultaneously increase food access and improve economic opportunities in Camden, building off of the city’s many assets while acknowledging the serious challenges the city, its residents, and its businesses face.

DVRPC began its planning process by performing a stakeholder analysis. The stakeholder analysis (available as an Appendix in a separate publication) allowed DVRPC to learn about Camden’s food economy in a short amount of time by identifying key stakeholders, policymakers, and other individuals who are actors and experts in various aspects of the food economy. During the first half of 2012, DVRPC spoke with 45 individuals from 36 organizations, large and small, working in Camden (see **Figure 1.1** for a map of Camden-based stakeholders). By interviewing many different people, DVRPC collected information about other programs,

⁵ Viki Sonntag, *Why Local Linkages Matter: Findings from the Local Food Economy Study*, Sustainable Seattle, 2008. http://www.usask.ca/agriculture/plantsci/hort2020/local_linkages.pdf (accessed February 2, 2015).

⁶ New Haven Food Policy Council, *New Haven Food Action Plan*. New Haven, 2012. http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Government/pdfs/NHFAP_draft%20for%20email.pdf (accessed February 2, 2015).



Campbell Soup Company Headquarters

Source: Campbell Soup Company

initiatives, projects, and reports; created a mechanism to collect diverse recommendations; identified the food economy’s most influential actors; and detected gaps in research, support services, infrastructure, programs, and nonprofit activities. This survey effort informed and shaped the subsequent research and strategies recommended in *Cultivating Camden*.

In addition to the initial stakeholder analysis, DVRPC convened both an Advisory Committee and a Work Group to support the development of *Cultivating Camden*. The Advisory Committee was a larger group of approximately 60 decision makers, leaders, and implementers in the public and private sectors who met periodically to review specific project milestones. The Food Access/Food Economy Work Group was composed of 30 individuals who were actively focused on cultivating a prosperous and equitable food system, improving access to nutritious food, and increasing economic opportunities through food-related economic development. The Food Access/Food Economy Work Group met approximately three times per year over a three-year period to help guide the development of *Cultivating Camden* by providing and prioritizing recommendations.



Peeling Cucumbers in an Institutional Kitchen

DVRPC also partnered with TRF Policy Solutions to conduct an economic analysis of Camden City's food economy, as well as to study the impact of institutional purchasing. Specifically, TRF's research included three primary objectives: (1) measuring Camden's economic base and evaluating the potential for developing a larger food economy; (2) assessing Camden's institutional demand and capacity for sourcing regional foods; and (3) analyzing the Food Bank of South Jersey's (FBSJ) influence on the region's food system. TRF then used this research to make recommendations for expanding food systems in the Camden region. A copy of TRF's full analysis can be found in the separate Appendix publication.

DVRPC utilized feedback from the Work Group and Advisory Committee, findings from the stakeholder analysis, and information from TRF's research to develop *Cultivating Camden: The City's Food Economy Strategy*. *Cultivating Camden* is organized into two major parts: Data and Recommendations.

Data: What Does It Tell Us?

To better understand the current state of Camden's food economy, DVRPC identified three major areas to explore:

- **Household:** What are the rates of poverty, food insecurity, and household vehicle-ownership in Camden? How many people receive food assistance?
- **Economy:** How many of Camden's businesses and employees are involved in the food system? Does Camden offer a comparative advantage to food businesses?
- **Institutions:** Camden's institutions, both for-profit and nonprofit, are large employers invested in the long-term success of the city. Can these institutions positively contribute to the local food economy by using their respective buying power?

Recommendations: How Are We Making Changes?

Cultivating Camden proposes a range of recommendations, including policy reforms, expansions of current initiatives and programs, and new approaches and innovations. *Cultivating Camden* attempts to incorporate recommendations from many sources, from innovative programs across the country to efforts that are already underway in and around Camden. These are integrated with new recommendations that were gathered over the course of DVRPC's three-year planning process. Over 50 recommendations were prioritized by the Work Group, resulting in 33 recommendations in this document. The recommendations are paired with possible lead implementers, as well as call-outs of related, exemplary practices.

The following are the strategy's Top Recommendations for Camden City. They are organized by implementer group (but not in ranking order):

- **Institutions:** Implement FreshRx Programs with vouchers for healthy food and integrate nutrition education at each hospital in Camden.
- **Government:** Work with alternative models of grocery stores to locate in Camden City at prime or transit-accessible spots, such as near the universities or at the redesigned Rand Transportation Center.
- **Community Organizations:** Create a community gardeners' cooperative to distribute surplus food and sell food at rotating farmers' markets.
- **Economic Development Organizations:** Expand the Heart Bucks Program for healthy purchases in Camden's corner stores.

Implementing the numerous recommendations included in this strategy will take the dedicated efforts of many actors working in Camden City. Many of these efforts are already underway thanks to the work of a number of outstanding individuals, organizations, businesses, and institutions; however, there is much more work to do.

Campbell Healthy Communities Program

In 2011, the Campbell Soup Company launched Campbell Healthy Communities, a 10-year, \$10 million effort to measurably improve the health of young people in Campbell communities by reducing childhood obesity and hunger. The program follows a collective impact framework, focusing on four strategic areas: food access, physical activity and access, nutrition education, and public will. During the first three years of the program, Campbell Healthy Communities funded 10 organizations to "implement strategic programmatic interventions in six school- and community-based sites. The funding also addressed systemwide change targeting environmental and policy changes in our schools, behavioral changes in our children and families, and citywide changes in our food system."⁷ In FY2014 alone, Healthy Communities' support helped The Food Trust to add 12 new stores to the Camden Healthy Corner Store Network, helped the YMCA and Soccer for Success to provide over 500,000 hours of physical activity, and helped a number of organizations provide over 200,000 hours of nutrition education to Camden children and adults.

⁷ Campbell Soup Company and The Food Trust, *Campbell Healthy Communities Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014*, November 1, 2014. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/campbell-healthy-communities-annual-report-fy-2014-final.original.pdf (accessed August 10, 2015).

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CHAPTER 2

DATA:
WHAT DOES IT TELL US?



VRPC identified a number of indicators to capture the current state of Camden's food system at the household, economic, and institutional levels. The indicators provide snapshots of various data over time, highlighting recent trends in each of the categories and providing a way to measure the effectiveness of efforts taken to improve various aspects of Camden's food system and food economy.

Households

Camden City is a small but dense city with 77,356 people living within 8.9 square miles. Camden is made up of 21 neighborhoods as seen in **Figure 2.1: Neighborhoods in Camden City**. These neighborhoods each have their own character. Waterfront South, for example, is located along the Delaware River and is currently home to a number of port operations, making this a very industrial section of the city. Parkside, named for 70-acre Farnham Park that runs along the Cooper River, was developed as one of Camden County's first "streetcar suburbs" and today is still home to the Camden Historical Society. The sections below analyze some of Camden's demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, broken down by neighborhood, that factor most heavily in assessing access to food and other resources in Camden.

Household Income

The median household income in Camden City is \$26,202, which is well below the countywide median household income of \$61,683 and the statewide median household income of \$71,629. The majority of census block groups in Camden City have a median household income of \$55,000 or less (**Figure 2.2**). Only the neighborhoods of Rosedale, Dudley, and Fairview contain the few block groups with median household incomes of more than \$55,000. Residential neighborhoods with the lowest median household incomes include parts of Marlton, Cramer Hill, Pyne Point, Cooper Grant, Central Waterfront, Centerville, Morgan Village, and Whitman Park. Some of these block groups are mixed-use residential, industrial, and commercial neighborhoods. Additionally, some of the most heavily populated neighborhoods of Fairview, Rosedale, and Stockton contain block groups that span from the lowest to the highest incomes.

The percentage of residents living in poverty is directly related to income. Although the poverty level varies based on family size and composition,

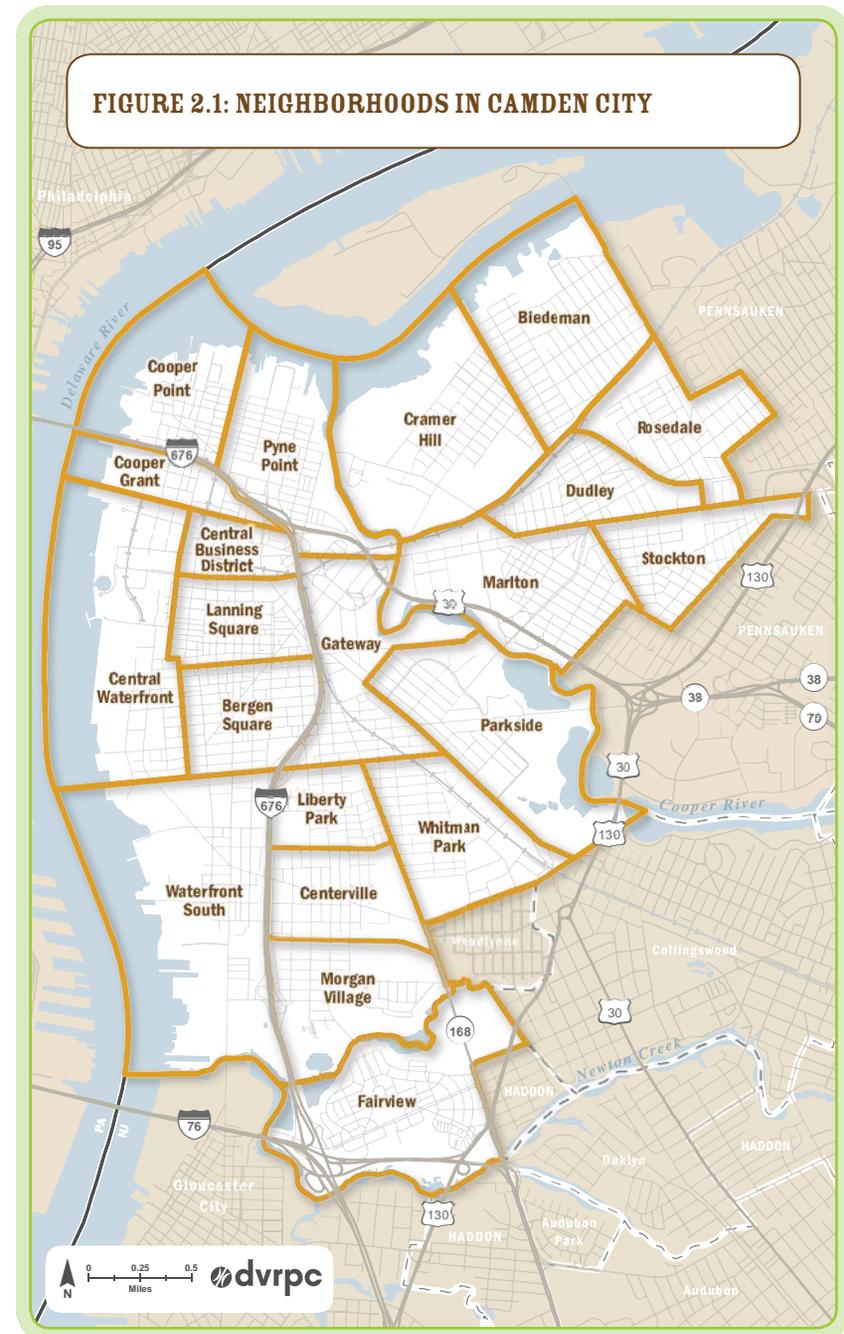
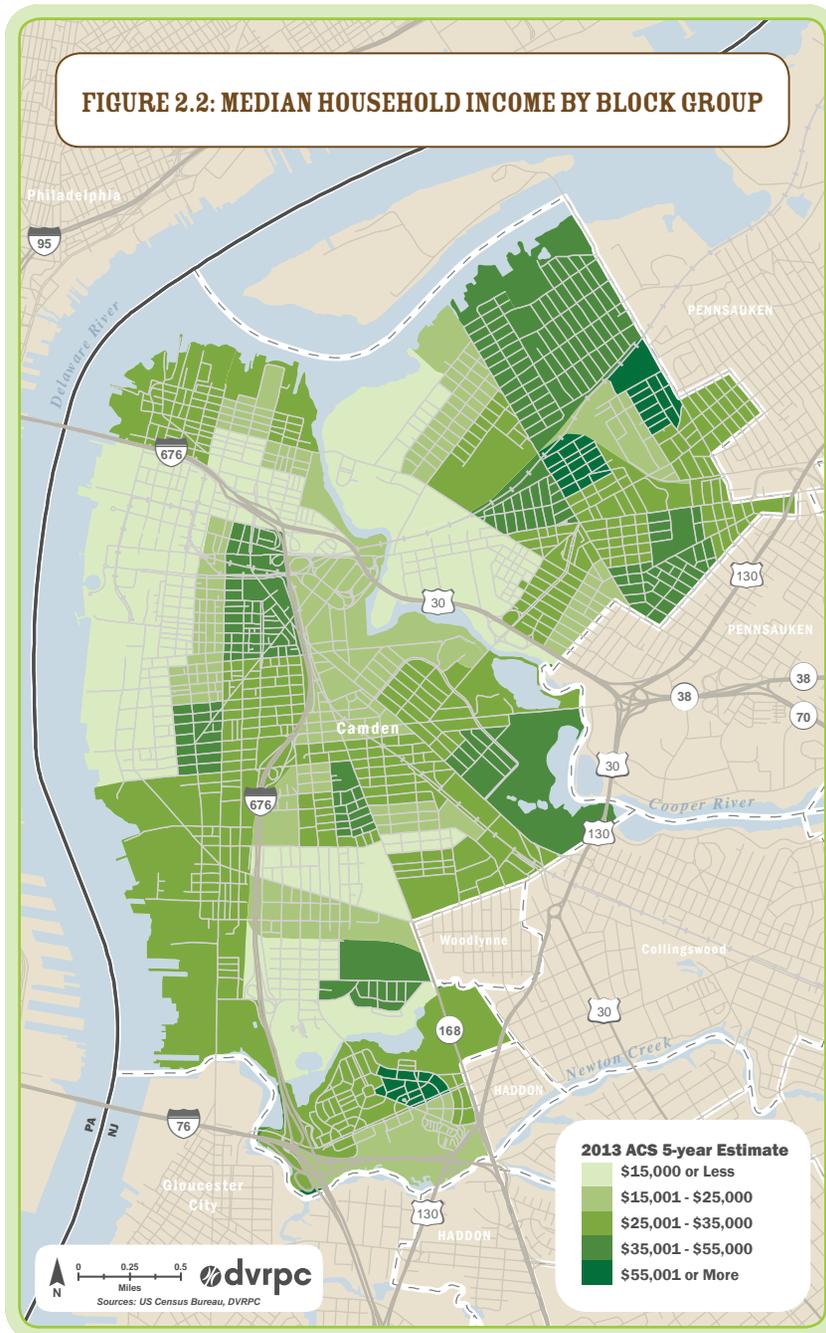


FIGURE 2.2: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY BLOCK GROUP



Cathedral Kitchen Family Tables
Source: Cathedral Kitchen

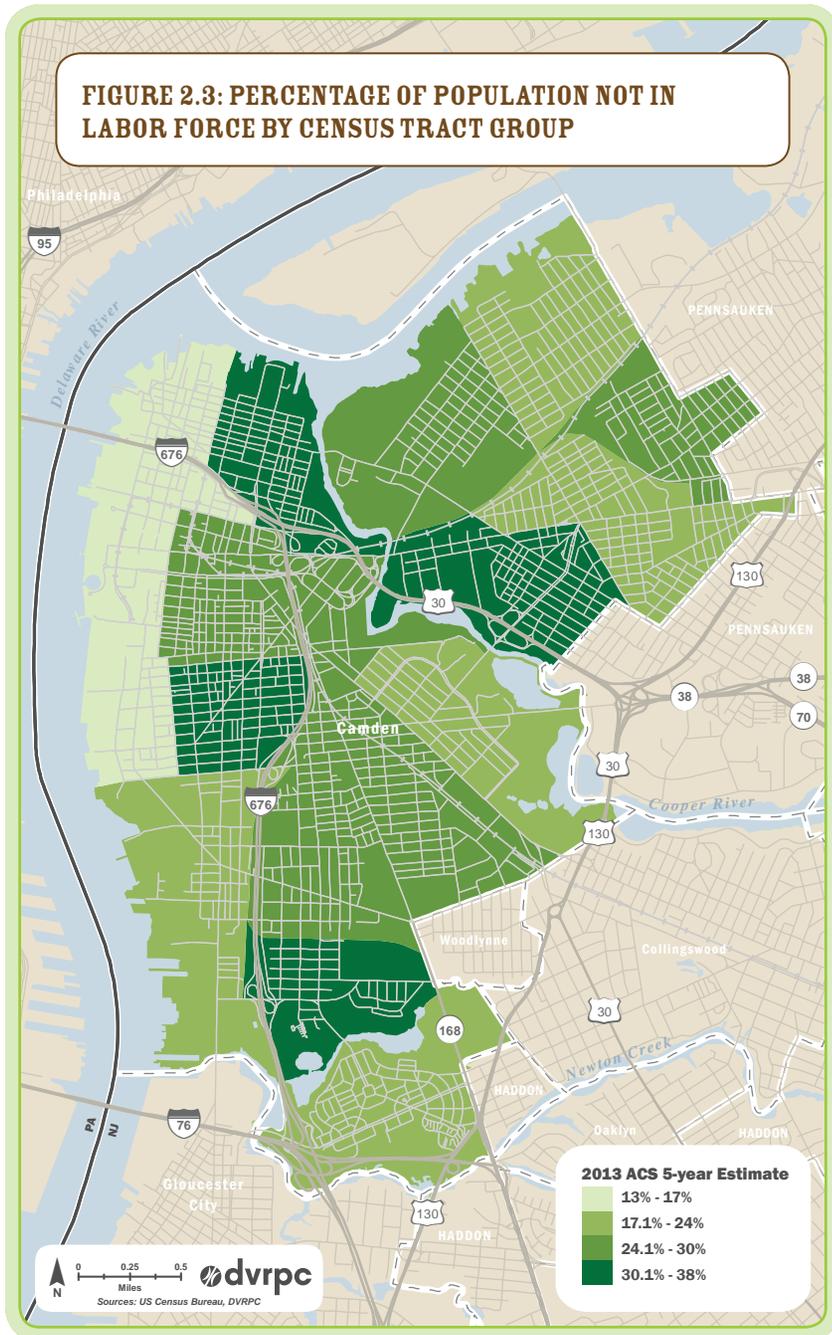
the weighted average poverty level for a family of four is \$23,834.⁸ Approximately 39.8 percent of Camden residents live below the poverty line. This is three times the county's poverty rate (13.0 percent) and almost four times the state's poverty rate (10.4 percent). Overall, the City's low median household income and high poverty rates can strongly and negatively affect food security.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate can also be considered a household-level determinant of food insecurity. The unemployment rate in Camden is 24.4 percent, which is 2.0 times greater than the county's (12 percent) and 2.4 times greater than the state's unemployment rates (10 percent).⁹ Pyne

⁸ Carmen DeNavas-Walt and Bernadette D. Proctor, *U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-249, Income and Poverty in the United States: 2013*. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2014/demo/p60-249.pdf> (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2014).

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, *5-Year American Community Survey, 2009–2013*. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_DP03&prodType=table (accessed October 1, 2015).



Point, Marlton, Bergen Square, and Morgan Village have the highest rates of unemployment, with between 30.1 and 38.2 percent of their civilian labor force unemployed (**Figure 2.3**). This overlaps with some of the neighborhoods with the lowest median household incomes.

Household Vehicle Ownership Rates

Another component of food insecurity is the ability to get to a fresh food retailer. Not owning a vehicle poses a barrier to food security because people who do not live within walking distance of a full-service supermarket must coordinate their schedules with public transportation, rely on friends and family with cars, or make do with convenience stores within walking distance. If using public transportation, the shopper usually limits what he or she buys according to the amount that can be carried. This can lead to the need for more frequent trips to the store, which is not feasible for many people working multiple jobs or caring for children.

As shown in **Figure 2.4** and **Figure 2.5**, the neighborhoods with the highest percentage of carless households are located closer to downtown Camden, where there is generally better access to transit services such as the PATCO and higher student populations. Between 45.1 and 57 percent of households in Centerville, Bergan Square, Gateway, and Pyne Point do not have cars. Some of these neighborhoods also have the lowest median household incomes in the city, which indicates that these families likely do not have cars because they cannot afford it, not because they have made a lifestyle choice not to have a car. Center City Philadelphia is a local example of an area where many residents have chosen to forgo car ownership despite being able to afford one. In Center City, the median household income is 54 percent higher than citywide, but the car ownership rate is lower than the city as a whole (56 percent compared to 66 percent).¹⁰

¹⁰ City of Philadelphia, *Philadelphia 2035: Central District Plan* (Philadelphia: City Planning Commission, June 2013): <http://phila2035.org/home-page/district/central/>.

FIGURE 2.4: PERCENTAGE OF CARLESS HOUSEHOLDS BY CENSUS TRACT

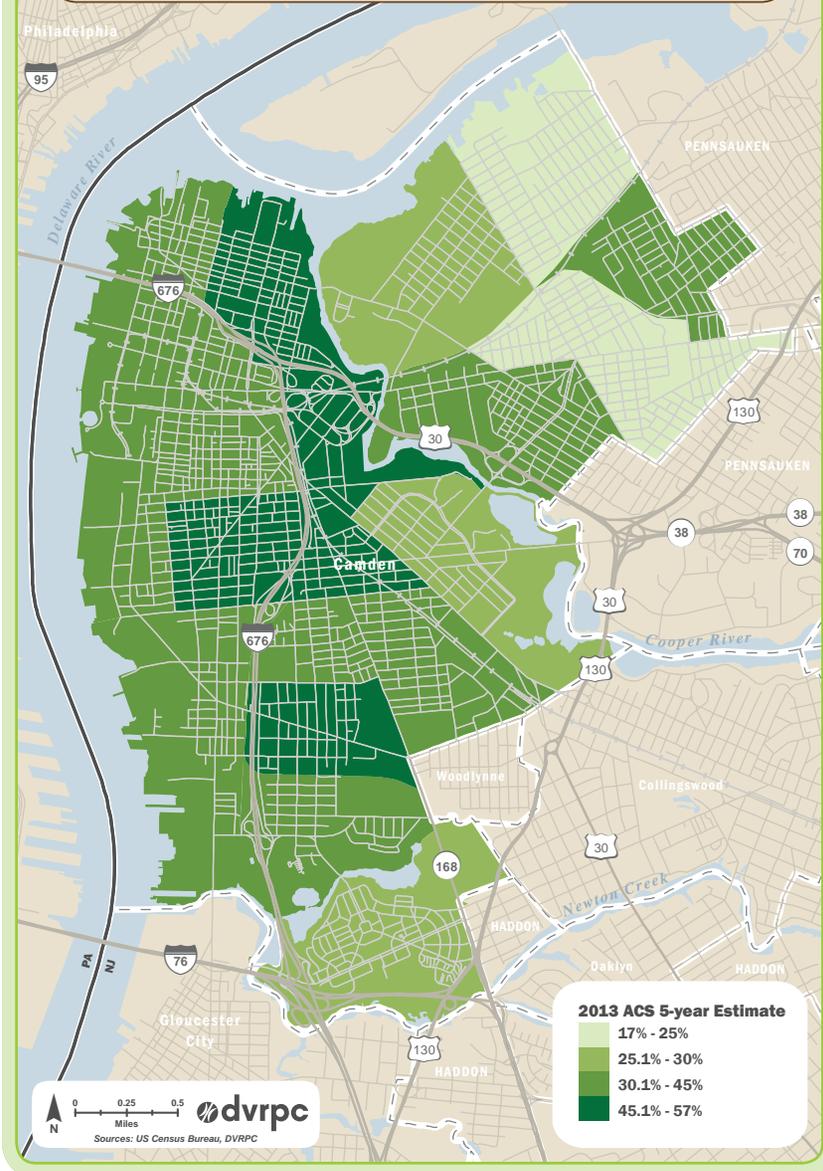


FIGURE 2.5: TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES



Food Insecurity

Most food insecurity data is collected by the USDA and reported at the statewide level; therefore, very little is known about the level of food insecurity among Camden residents. As part of Campbell's Healthy Communities Program, the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers is working with hospitals, healthcare providers, and service organizations across Camden City to collect data on the state of hunger in Camden. The Coalition implemented a validated two-question dataset, available both online and in hardcopy, to allow partner organizations to collect data about food insecurity in Camden:

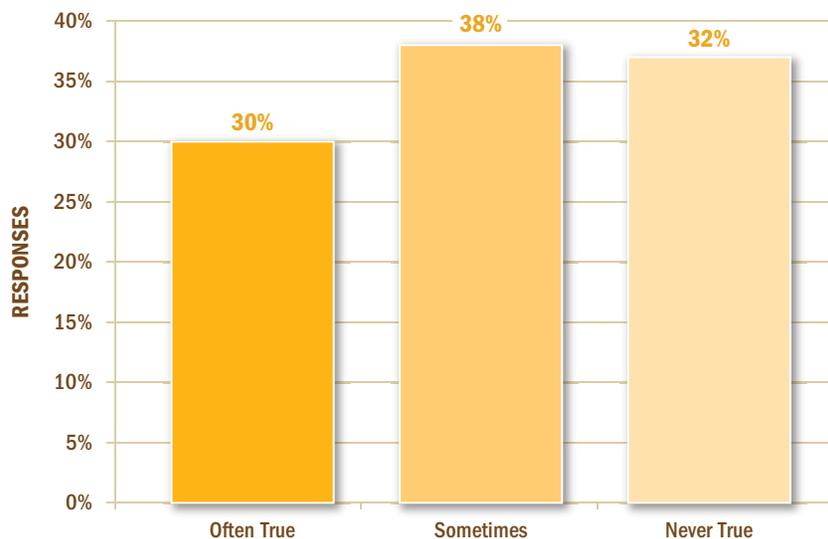
USDA's Definition of Food Insecurity

The USDA defines **low food security** as "reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake." They define **very low food security** as "reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake."

1. "Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more"; and
2. "Within the past 12 months, the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more."¹¹

¹¹ Erin R. Hager et al., "Development and validity of a 2-item screen to identify families at risk for food insecurity." *Pediatrics* 126, no. 1, July 1, 2010: e26–e32. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/1/e26> (accessed October 13, 2015).

FIGURE 2.6: QUESTION 1: WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, WE WORRIED WHETHER OUR FOOD WOULD RUN OUT BEFORE WE GOT MONEY TO BUY MORE

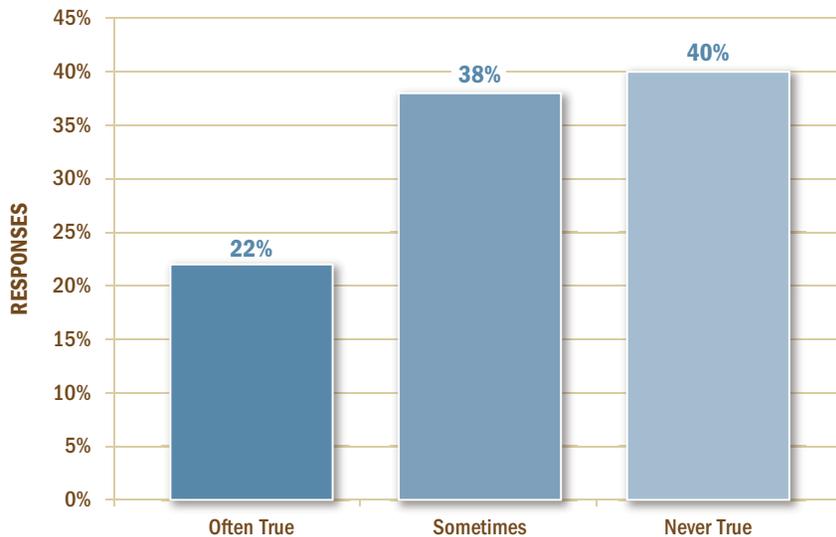


Source: *Our Lady of Lourdes*, 2012

The Coalition piloted the food insecurity survey at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden between October 22, 2012, and December 24, 2012. During this period, the Lourdes emergency department saw a total of 4,787 Camden residents; 816 (17 percent) of the Camden patients completed the pilot survey questions. As shown in **Figure 2.6** and **Figure 2.7**, the pilot survey found that over 65 percent of respondents experienced some level of food insecurity.

The questions are now being implemented as a part of routine care by Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing and the Camden Coalition's Care Management Intervention program. The responses gathered from the expanded food insecurity survey will assist the Coalition in developing a baseline and citywide longitudinal study on the extent of food insecurity in Camden. This information could then be used by Campbell's Healthy Communities Investees and partners across the city to better understand

FIGURE 2.7: QUESTION 2: WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, THE FOOD WE BOUGHT JUST DIDN'T LAST AND WE DIDN'T HAVE MONEY TO GET MORE



Source: *Our Lady of Lourdes*, 2012

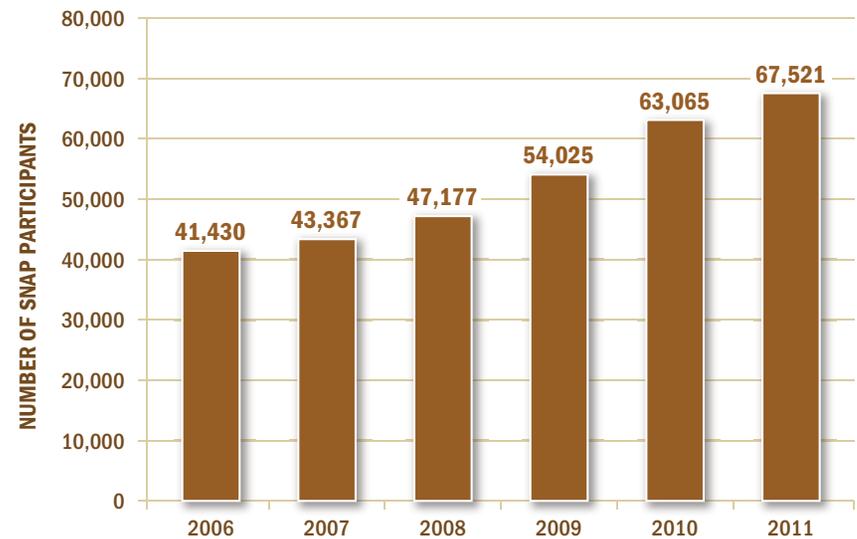
the scope of hunger, its acute and long-term health impacts, and the resources needed to address both the root causes and immediate symptoms.

Food Assistance

Federal food assistance programs are designed to “increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education.”¹² The USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service operates 15 domestic programs, most notably the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the National School Lunch Program. SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, is an entitlement program that distributes resources for food purchases and is available to all eligible applicants. Depending on the size and income of a household, levels of assistance

¹² U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, “About FNS,” August 27, 2014. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/about-fns> (accessed July 29, 2015).

FIGURE 2.8: TOTAL SNAP PARTICIPANTS IN CAMDEN COUNTY BY YEAR



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2011

vary. In 2013 the average New Jersey household participating in SNAP received \$273.60 each month. WIC assists financially and nutritionally at-risk mothers and children (under five years old) by providing them with additional resources for purchasing specific types of food and baby formula. In New Jersey, the average WIC benefit was \$53.48 monthly.

According to the USDA Economic Research Service (USDA ERS), 67,521 Camden County residents participated in the SNAP program in 2011. As seen in **Figure 2.8** above, this represents an increase in SNAP participation of 39 percent between 2006 and 2011. Additionally, according to a USDA brief, only 77 percent of people eligible for SNAP actually participated in the program in New Jersey in 2012.¹³ Increasing participation in federal food assistance programs can be both positive

¹³ Karen E. Cunningham, “Reaching Those in Need: Estimates of State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2012,” February 1, 2015. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/reaching-those-need-estimates-state-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-participation-rates> (accessed July 29, 2015).

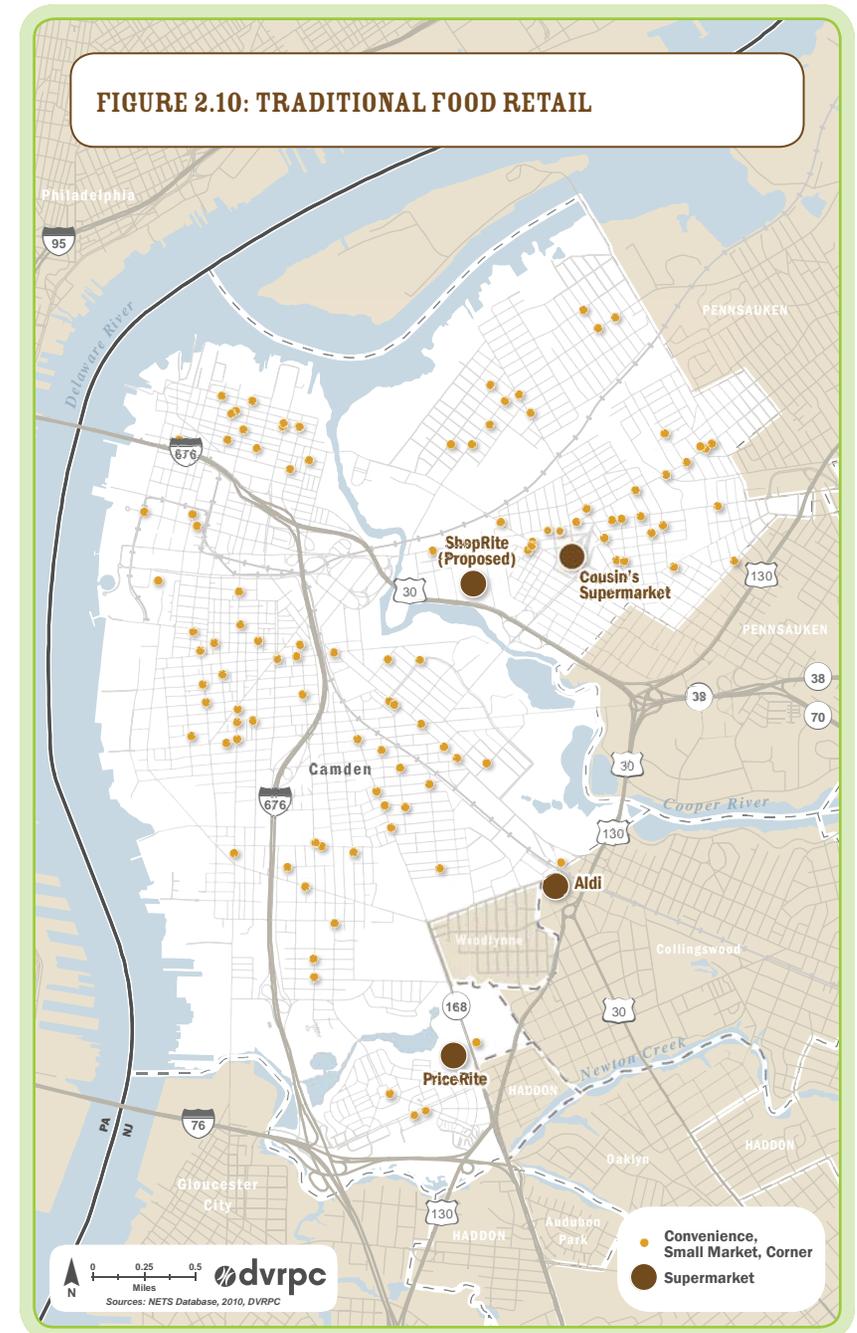
Food Access Outlets

Figure 2.10 shows the locations of convenience stores, grocery stores, and supermarkets in the city. There are over 100 convenience stores, spread throughout the city, while the five grocery stores/supermarkets are located in Fairview, Parkside, Bergen Square, and Dudley/Marlton (see Grocery Industry Store Format Call-out for store definitions). There are two supermarkets within Camden City, Cousins and PriceRite. PriceRite, the city's largest supermarket at 43,000 square feet, is located on the southeastern edge of the city near some of the most densely populated neighborhoods. The Aldi, located just outside of Camden City limits, is accessible by the PATCO line, and the PriceRite in Fairview is



Fruit Stand

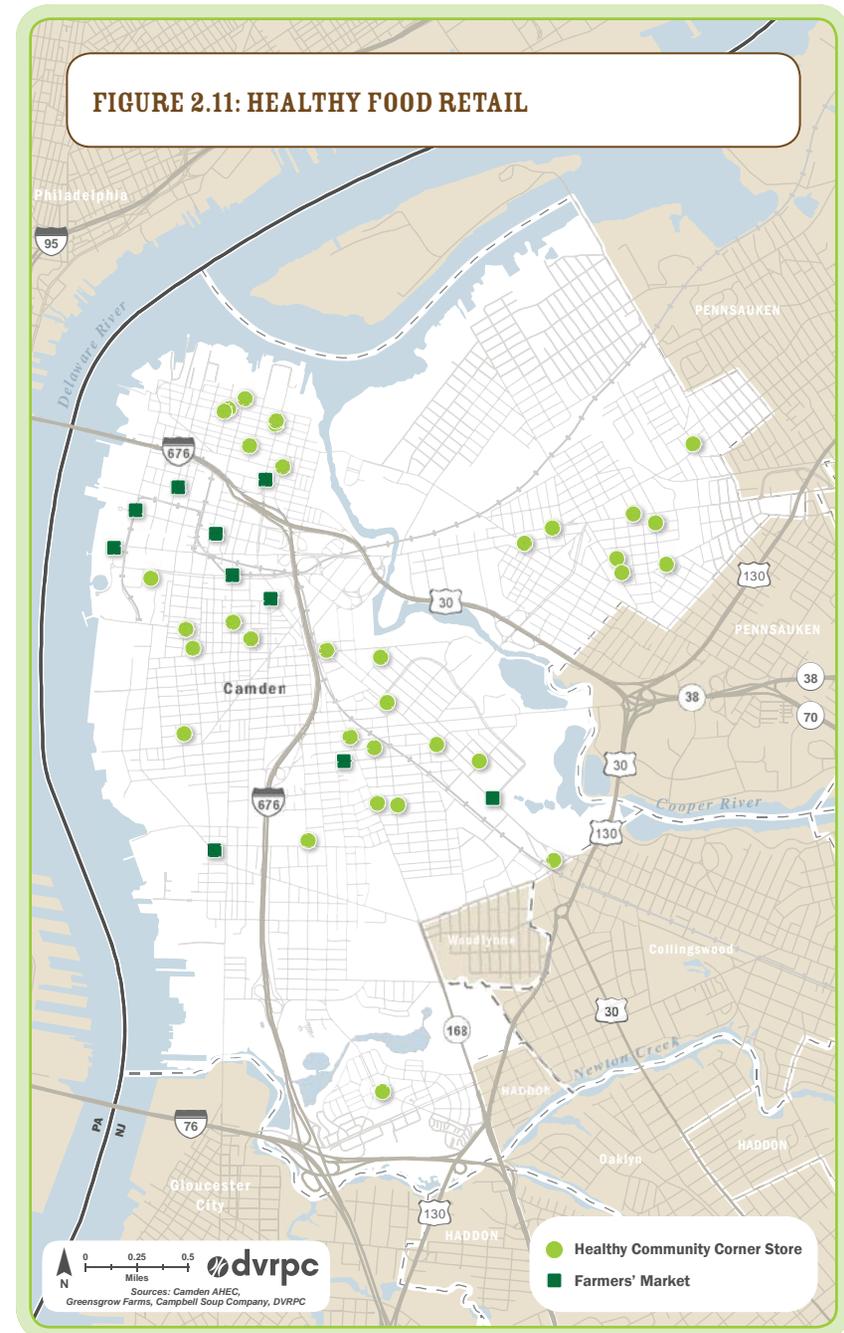
accessible by New Jersey Transit bus routes. However, trips made by public transportation to each supermarket could require at least one transfer. Smaller food retailers such as convenience stores and small markets are dispersed throughout the city, accessible via a shorter ride on public transportation or by foot. While they may be more geographically accessible, these food retailers have a limited selection of items and ability to stock additional products. Fresh items, such as fruits and vegetables,



have a short shelf life, and healthy items, such as reduced sodium soups, may be hard to stock.

As seen in **Figure 2.11**, healthy food retailers such as healthy community corner stores and farmers' markets are less predominant in comparison to traditional food retailers. These healthy food retailers are usually located in commercial areas and near transportation hubs and parking lots throughout the city, most likely because this is where people can access them. There are a number of Healthy Corner Stores in the Stockton and Pyne Point neighborhoods, which are some of the most densely populated areas of the city.

In Camden, where there is a lack of stores carrying fresh produce and other products, farmers' markets provide a way for residents to access locally grown fruits and vegetables, as well as other items such as bread, honey, and value-added goods. Farmers' markets are good options for creating access to fresh food in food deserts due to the low overhead of operating a farmers' market, reduced need for permanent buildings, and the support they can provide to local farmers. Despite their relatively low overhead, many farmers' markets in Camden have struggled to reopen season after season. This could be due to a lack of financial support, the absence of an organization with an aligned mission, or the dearth of customer demand. In the instance of the Greensgrow Mobile Market, which brought fresh produce to neighborhoods throughout the city, it ceased operations due to low customer demand.



Healthy Corner Stores

In many communities without supermarkets, families often depend upon corner stores and bodegas to be their regular source of food. Unfortunately, these stores often sell packaged, high-calorie foods and offer very few healthy options. Understanding the central role that corner stores play in providing food access for many communities, The Food Trust created the Healthy Corner Store Initiative in 2004. The Healthy Corner Store Initiative partners with corner stores to improve access to healthy, affordable foods in underserved communities. The Food Trust provides support, such as training, marketing materials, and equipment, to corner store owners who are committed to increasing the healthy food inventory in their stores. The Food Trust also hosts in-store nutrition education classes to encourage customers to purchase healthier items and connects store owners to other community resources. More recently, The Food Trust partnered with hospitals in Philadelphia to provide free health screenings in participating healthy corner stores. In 2015, The Food Trust also piloted Heart Bucks, a coupon incentive program to provide customers that participate in a nutrition education lesson with four \$1 heart buck coupons to purchase heart healthy items (see recommendation on page 76 for more information).

The Food Trust piloted this initiative in Philadelphia but has expanded it to other cities around the region, including Camden, NJ and Norristown, PA. As of 2014, 669 corner stores had joined in the Philadelphia Healthy Corner Store Network. As of August 2015, 39 corner stores had joined the Camden Healthy Corner Store Network.

Tri-County Community Health Needs Assessment

In 2012, the Affordable Care Act mandated that all not-for-profit 501(c)(3) hospitals complete a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years. The publication must include input from the geographic area that the hospital or hospitals serve and be representative of the community at large. The CHNA must

include a prioritized catalog of the community's health needs. Additionally, nonprofit hospitals must adopt a written implementation strategy that outlines how they plan to address the identified community health needs. Inspira Medical Center, Cooper University Health Care, Lourdes Health System, Virtua Health, Kennedy Health System, and the Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester County Health Departments collaborated on a joint CHNA.

The Tri-County CHNA was conducted from September 2012 to June 2013 and covers a population of 1.25 million people. The research is based on multiple methods: data profiles from secondary sources, a household telephone survey with 2,480 respondents, four data collection sessions with 165 residents, key informant interviews, and focus groups with community members. The findings from the data profile and telephone survey concluded that the tri-county area fares worse than the state average in the following health indicators: (a) access to healthcare, (b) safety, (c) healthy behavior, (d) maternal and infant health, (e) communicable and chronic disease, (f) mortality rates, (g) education attainment, and (h) economic status. Key informants identified (a) obesity/overweight, (b) diabetes, (c) access to healthcare, (d) substance abuse, and (e) mental health/suicide as the top health issues in the community. The most significant barriers that keep people from accessing healthcare include lack of health insurance coverage, inability to pay out-of-pocket expenses, and lack of transportation. The key informants identified that free or low-cost dental and medical care, transportation, and mental health services were the resources most needed by the community.

The resident focus groups made suggestions, such as creating a one-stop shop to find community resources, and creating incentives, such as vouchers for gyms, to encourage healthy lifestyles. Participants also believe that expanded transportation assistance and elderly services would be beneficial.

Economy

Profile of Camden Workers

According to the 2012 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), approximately 29,371 people work in Camden, with the majority working in downtown Camden, as well as the Central Waterfront, Lanning Square, and Gateway neighborhoods (see **Figure 2.12** for an illustration of employment distribution in Camden).¹⁴ TRF found that commuters living outside Camden City exhibit stark economic contrasts to Camden residents who work within the city.

Figure 2.13 uses data from the 2011 Census LEHD and 2011 American Community Survey programs to show job-weighted averages for poverty, unemployment, and the median family income (MFI) as a percentage of the metropolitan area median income (AMI), split by workers who commute into Camden and those who live and work in Camden. **Figure 2.13** also shows the percentage of jobs falling within three income ranges for Camden residents and non-Camden residents working within the city.

The average Camden worker who also lives in Camden resides in a neighborhood with an MFI that is only 37 percent (\$29,513) of the Philadelphia metropolitan area median (\$78,910). Camden workers who do not live in Camden live in census tracts that average 100 percent of the AMI. This analysis may indicate that many Camden residents who work in the city may hold lower-paying jobs, whereas most of the high-paying jobs may be held by nonresidents. It could also signify that residents move out of Camden once they can afford to live in another community.

Food Sector Employment

According to 2010 National Establishment Time-series (NETS) and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) data, approximately

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics*, Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002–2012. <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/> (accessed July 17, 2014).

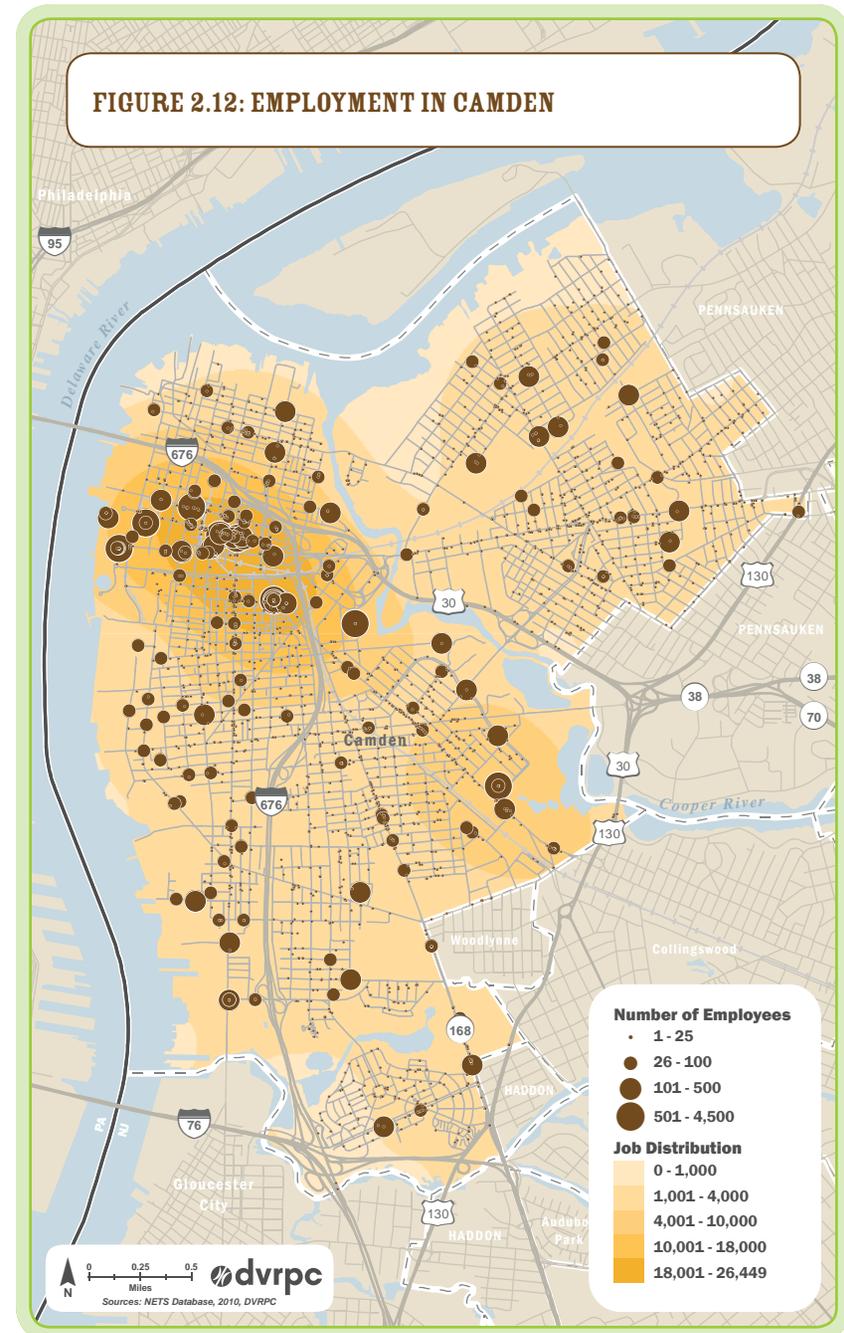
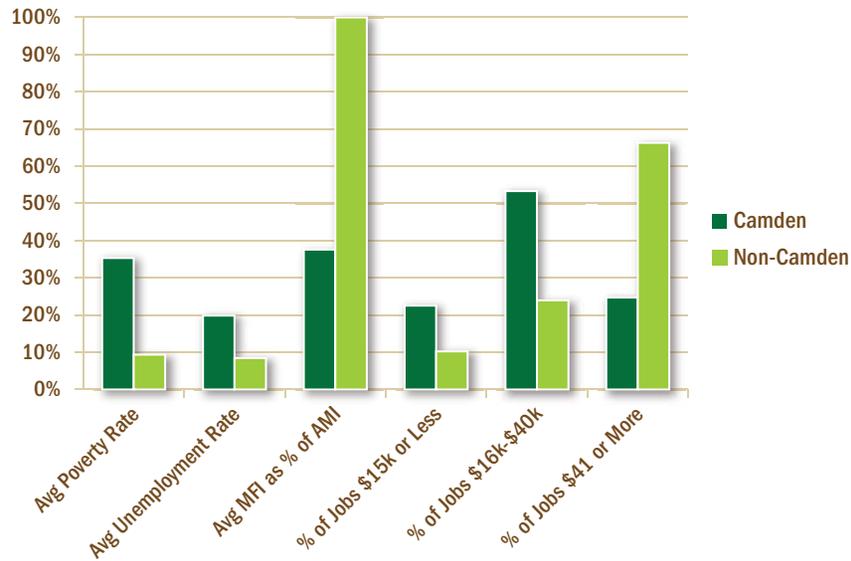


FIGURE 2.13: ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CAMDEN AND NON-CAMDEN RESIDENTS WHO WORK IN CAMDEN



Source: 2011 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics and 2011 American Community Survey

3,000 people are employed in food-related businesses in Camden.^{15,16} As seen in **Figure 2.15**, approximately half of the people employed in food-related businesses work in food manufacturing. Food manufacturing includes a range of companies from larger organizations such as Campbell Soup Company to smaller candy manufacturers and pickle producers. Just over a quarter of people employed in food-related businesses in Camden are employed in the Food and Beverage Trade sector, which encompasses retail outlets such as grocery stores and corner stores. The majority of food-related businesses in Camden are small enterprises, employing an average of nine employees per firm. The neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of food-related jobs are Waterfront South and Gateway (see **Figure 2.14**). This corresponds to the location of food manufacturing

¹⁵ NETS Database, 2010.

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. NAICS Database, 2010.

FIGURE 2.14: FOOD EMPLOYMENT BY NEIGHBORHOOD

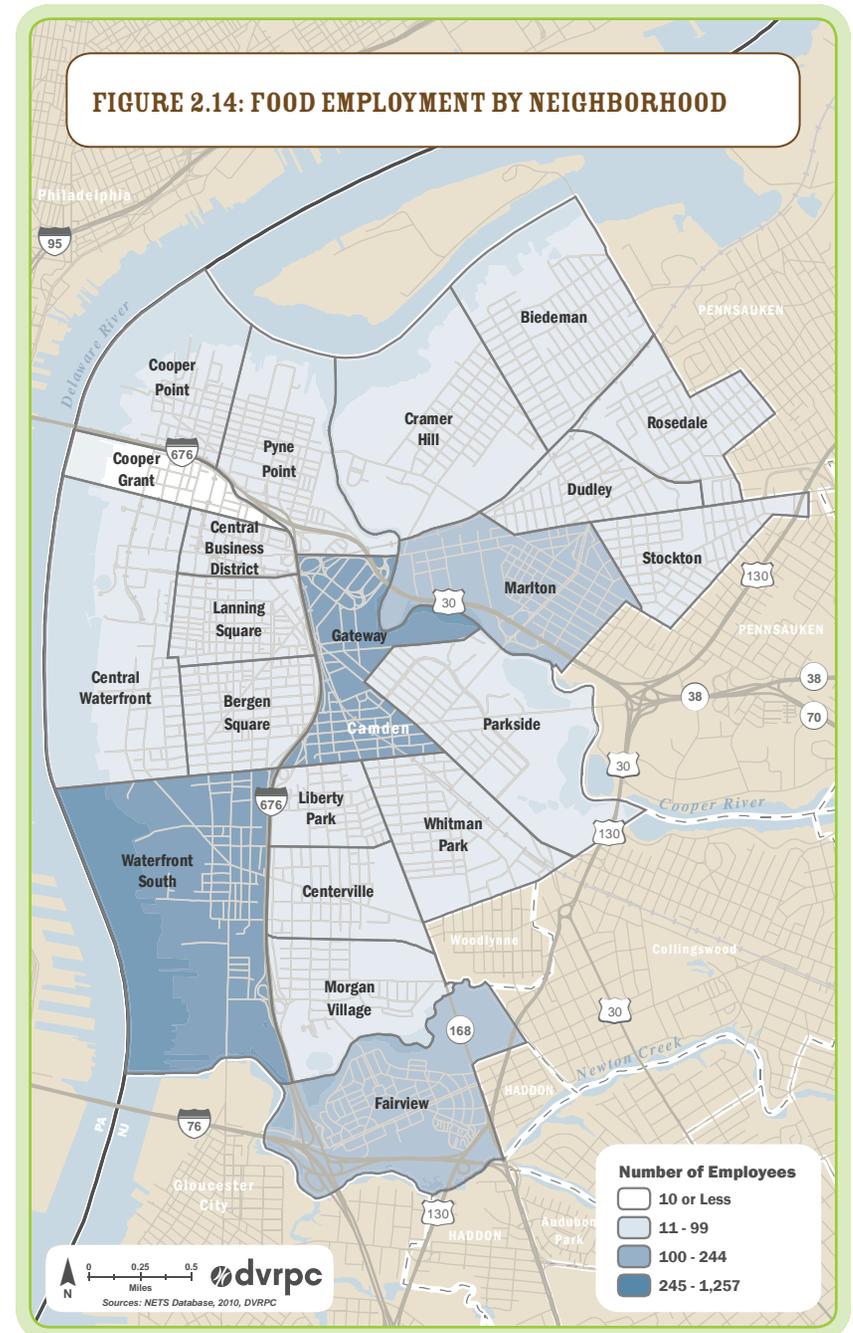
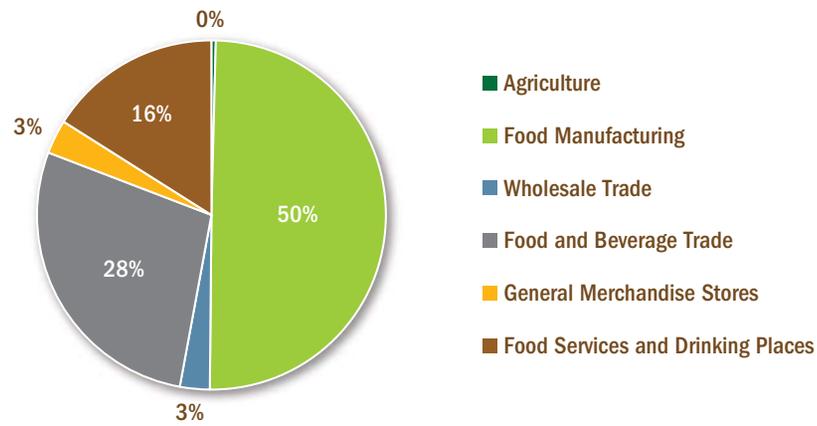


FIGURE 2.15: CAMDEN CITY FOOD-RELATED EMPLOYMENT (2010)



Source: 2010 National Establishment Time-Series and 2010 North American Industry Classification System

companies, with many manufacturing and industrial uses located near the port in Waterfront South and Campbell Soup Company located in the Gateway neighborhood. Fairview is home to the PriceRite grocery store,



Former Pathmark

CamConnect

CamConnect was a member-supported organization that helped Camden residents and stakeholders understand local issues and make informed decisions through access to data. As a data intermediary and warehouse focused specifically on Camden, CamConnect provided its members with data, analysis, research, mapping, reports, technical assistance, program evaluation, survey design, data management, and an online public document library. CamConnect also made a number of its reports available to the public at no charge. Its reports covered a range of topics, including the economy, demography, governance, health, education, safety, and real estate. Although CamConnect is no longer in operation, the public can still access a number of maps that highlight different Camden geographies, as well as demographic data divided by neighborhood through its website. One of its most recent publicly accessible tools is the Camden Interactive Housing Map, which provides parcel-level property information for the entire City of Camden. Specific to the food economy, CamConnect resources could be used to further analyze health impacts such as diabetes and disability, land use trends such as vacancy and ownership, and economic outcomes such as unemployment and business growth.

which contributes to that neighborhood’s strong food employment base. In 2010, the Pathmark (now PriceRite) employed 150 people at its Fairview location. Cousin’s Supermarket, located in Marlton, employed 45 people. Convenience stores employed an average of two to three people.

Economic Base

Economic base theory says that the most effective way to increase overall economic output is to expand production among basic industries. Basic

industries are those that comprise a larger share of a particular economy's employment compared to a region or the nation. In other words, basic industries represent an area's specializations and indicate that the area exports goods and services to other geographic areas. Exports can help drive economic growth as they bring outside money into the local economy.

Location quotients (LQ) are a way to identify an economy's specializations and economic base (see call-out).¹⁷ They can help to reveal what makes a particular area or economy unique in comparison to a broader region or the country as a whole.

FIGURE 2.16: LOCATION QUOTIENTS FOR CAMDEN FOOD INDUSTRIES

NAICS Code	Industry Description	Camden
483	Water Transportation	42.42
311	Food Manufacturing	1.58
424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	1.02
445	Food and Beverage Stores	1.02
493	Warehousing and Storage	0.95
484	Truck Transportation	0.66
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	0.48

White = Food Industries; Gray = Support Industries

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 County Business Patterns

The simplest way to identify basic industries is to include those with LQ values greater than 1.0. However, many industries fall into the plus- or minus-0.10 ranges, especially retail industries, which are typically not export industries. In order to exclude industries within this range (0.90 to 1.10) from the basic categories, this analysis assumes that LQ values of 1.10 or higher represent basic industries, leaving all other industries as nonbasic.

¹⁷ Roger Leigh, "The Use of Location Quotients in Urban Economic Base Studies," *Land Economics* 46/2 (1970): 202–205. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3145181> (accessed October 18, 2013).

Location Quotient Calculation

LQs are a way to quantify how concentrated an industry is in a particular area compared to a larger region, such as the state or the nation. The LQ calculation shown below divides the percent of people employed in a particular industry in a local economy by the percent of people employed in the same industry in a larger economy.

Calculation	Value	Implication
$LQ = \frac{\left(\frac{\text{Local Industry Employment}}{\text{Local Total Employment}} \right)}{\left(\frac{\text{Broad Region Industry Employment}}{\text{Broad Region Total Employment}} \right)}$	LQ ≥ 1.10	Area industry has potential to be classified as exporter (basic industry).
	LQ < 1.10 and > 0.90	Area has about the same number of workers employed in a specific industry as the larger comparison area.
	LQ ≤ 0.90	Local industry has fewer employees than comparison region. May indicate opportunity to develop businesses in the local area.

For example, according to the 2010 NAICS, 482 people were employed in Food Services and Drinking Places in Camden City. If we divide that number by the total number of people employed in Camden City in 2010 (51,430), we discover that only 0.94% of Camden City workers were employed in Food Services. 4.08% of workers in the Greater Philadelphia region were employed in Food Services at this time. To calculate the LQ, we divide 0.94% by 4.08%, which gives us 0.23. Since 0.23 is well below 0.90, this LQ tells us that Camden has many fewer Food Service workers than the region and may have an opportunity to grow this industry.

LQ values for food-related industries in Camden are shown in **Figure 2.16**. Calculations are made using employment data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 County Business Patterns, which provides detailed industry employment counts for nearly all private-sector businesses and

organizations.¹⁸ Camden's LQ values are benchmarked against its core-based statistical area, state, and national economies.

The top four industries in terms of high LQ values *and* relatively large shares of employment are:

- Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing: 11.6 LQ, 1,785 employees (8.6 percent of total Camden workforce);
- Hospitals: 3.5 LQ, 3,675 employees (17.7 percent);
- Social Assistance: 2.8 LQ, 1,898 employees (9.1 percent); and
- Ambulatory Health Care Services: 1.1 LQ, 1,543 employees (7.4 percent).

Although some of these industries, such as Social Assistance, are not typically seen as export industries, they represent the most significant contributors to Camden's economic base in terms of exporting goods and services to other economies, importing income, and supporting a large share of the city's total employment.

Food Manufacturing is also a basic (exporting) industry in Camden (LQ 1.58); however, food manufacturing businesses do not comprise an especially large share of Camden's employment, with only 1.2 percent (252 people) of Camden's labor force working in food manufacturing. Despite the low share of employment, food manufacturing's higher LQ value indicates that most of this industry's output is exported, meaning that growth in food manufacturing could result in larger net increases in employment. Additionally, food manufacturing has a large (3.7) job multiplier (see call-out) in New Jersey, meaning that expanded output and employment is expected to create more jobs in supplier industries.

¹⁸U.S. Census Bureau, "How the Data are Collected (Coverage and Methodology)," <http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/methodology.htm> (accessed July 16, 2014).

Employment Multipliers

"The employment multiplier measures the amount of direct, indirect and induced jobs created (or lost) in the area. Direct jobs are related to the specific industry, while indirect jobs are those that support the industry. Induced jobs are those that are a result of direct/indirect employee's spending money in the community."¹⁹ For example, the Direct Jobs column indicates that for every job added in the food manufacturing industry, an additional 2.7 jobs will be added to New Jersey's economy by increased employment in industries that supply food manufacturers. Higher multiplier values suggest that the food manufacturing industry's supply chain consists of industries that are well represented in NJ, thus additional employment in food manufacturing will result in significant increases in employment in relevant supplier industries throughout the state.

Camden has notably low LQ values in the Warehousing and Storage and Truck Transportation industry groups (0.95 and 0.66). These industries are important industry specializations that often support the food manufacturing supply chain, yet they are surprisingly underrepresented in Camden. It may be that nearby municipalities have large presences in these industries, thus satisfying Camden food manufacturers' need for their services.

Food Sector Wages

Figure 2.17 shows median wages for a few food-related industry groups, as well as benchmark wages, such as minimum wage and living wage,

¹⁹Eric Cetnarski, "The Employment Multiplier – An Important Tool For Promoting The Burgeoning Green Economy," *Triple Pundit*. May 3, 2011. <http://www.triplepundit.com/2011/05/employment-multiplier-green-economy/> (accessed July 30, 2015).

for New Jersey and nationwide. The final column shows the percentage difference between New Jersey’s wage group medians and the state’s living wage (\$11.13).²⁰ The Food Processing and Food Transportation industries represent the types of businesses that would need to be expanded and attracted in order to grow the region’s food economy.

Food Processing and Food Transportation workers typically earn wages that are higher than the other wages shown in **Figure 2.17**, except for the All Industries group, which includes many higher-skilled jobs with correspondingly higher wages. Median wages in Food Processing and Food Transportation are 29 percent and 63 percent higher than the New Jersey living wage, respectively, while the median wage in Food Services is 8 percent lower. Given these figures, TRF estimates that additional employment in food production and processing, as well as food transportation, would provide Camden and surrounding labor forces with opportunities to earn wages that are higher than what is considered adequate. Additionally, Food Services wages may increase as demand for services increases with higher household incomes.

FIGURE 2.17: FOOD SECTOR WAGES

Industry or Benchmark Wage Group	New Jersey Median Wage	U.S. Median Wage	% Diff. from Living Wage
Food Processing	14.31	12.01	29%
Food Transportation	18.20	16.54	63%
Food Services	10.21	9.59	-8%
All Industries	19.17	16.71	72%
Minimum Wage	8.25	7.25	-26%
Living Wage	11.13	NA	NA

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014

²⁰ Amy K. Glasmeier, *Living Wage Calculator for New Jersey* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2015): <http://livingwage.mit.edu/states/34>.

Institutions

Larger institutions, such as hospitals, medical centers, colleges and universities, primary and secondary schools, and major employers are often among a region’s largest purchasers of food, as their cafeterias and food service facilities serve hundreds, if not thousands, of diners every day. Given such a large purchasing volume, these institutions have the potential to expand their local economy by committing to more local and regional foods. To better understand this potential in Camden, TRF interviewed representatives from 13 of the city’s larger institutions, discussing food procurement strategies, budgets, contracts, options, barriers, and other relevant topics. Additionally, TRF interviewed representatives from several organizations that are part of the regional food system’s supply chain, such as food hubs, food banks, and urban agricultural entities. All organizations interviewed are listed below:

- Camden City Garden Club;
- Cathedral Kitchen;
- Catholic Partnership Schools;
- Common Market Philadelphia;
- Cooper University Hospital;
- Food Bank of South Jersey;
- KIPP Charter Schools–Newark Region (opened a Camden school in 2014);
- Lourdes Health System;
- Respond Inc.;
- Rutgers University–Camden Campus; and
- Virtua Hospitals.

Current Regional Sourcing

TRF found that most of the institutions sourced regional foods, though most respondents said their regional share of total procurement was at or below 5 percent, with the remainder supplied by national vendors. Dairy and baked goods were often sourced from regional producers, due to their highly perishable nature and, in the case of milk, expensive transport.



Cooper Hospital

As might be expected, an institution's tendency to purchase regional produce followed the seasonal nature of the Mid-Atlantic region's harvests. Regional proteins are less seasonal, though several respondents said their notably higher costs and relatively limited overall volume make them difficult to source on a regular basis. Institutions typically use regional produce and proteins to fill a gap in a large vendor's delivery schedule (e.g., once or twice per week) or to purchase a niche food that is not included in a large vendor's current supply chain.

Interest in Regional Foods

TRF found that there was plenty of interest in purchasing more regional foods. Roughly half of the respondents said that regional food procurement is either part of their organizational mission or is an institutional objective supported by owners or a board of directors. This interest is primarily driven by a desire to improve the health of employees, patients, students, and/or customers, while also supporting the regional economy and meeting environmental sustainability goals and consumer demand.

Primary Food Sources

Respondents used a wide range of food sources, from local food aggregators ("food hubs") to international food vendors and management companies, though nearly all interviewed institutions use the latter over the former. Food sources cited by respondents include:

National/International Managers

- Aramark; and
- Sodexo.

National/International Vendors

- Sysco;
- US Foods; and
- Compass.

Regional Vendors (New Jersey, Pennsylvania)

- Common Market;
- J. Ambrogi Foods;
- Nu-Way; and
- Novick Brothers.

Note the difference between food managers and vendors—managers handle the entire process of obtaining, preparing, and serving food for an institution, while vendors sell food to an institution that manages its own preparation and service activities. Also, the terms *vendor* and *distributor* are used interchangeably, as businesses tend to refer to themselves as one or the other, even though both are in the business of selling food to institutional buyers.

Options to Purchase Regional Foods

Based on the primary food sources identified above, respondents indicated that food managers offer fewer options for regional sources than food vendors. Given that food managers are tasked with a start-to-finish approach, it is not surprising that clients are less able to influence the process. On the other hand, food vendors respond to their customers' orders, and survey respondents confirmed that vendors are more motivated to satisfy their demand for regionally sourced food, even those vendors with a nationwide footprint. Survey respondents indicated that small- to medium-sized independent vendors, compared to nationwide vendors, are more likely to offer regional options.

Common Market, located in Philadelphia, is a nonprofit food distributor with a mission to increase the availability of local, sustainably grown farm food throughout Greater Philadelphia. In fact, Common Market and J. Ambrogi Foods (below) are the only two distributors that were identified by respondents and included on the New Jersey Farm to School Network's list of "Distributors that Source Local" produce.²¹

²¹ NJ Farm to School Network, "Local Produce Procurement," <http://www.njfarmtoschool.org/who-we-serve/local-food-procurement/> (accessed July 20, 2014).

J. Ambrogi Foods, based in West Deptford, New Jersey, is an independently owned vendor of fruits and vegetables to Delaware, New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania. Ambrogi sources their produce both globally and regionally to balance seasonal supplies with customer demand. Ambrogi's website and e-mail subscription include inventory and pricing information for regional produce that is updated on a daily basis; two respondents specifically mentioned that they use the website and e-mail notifications to purchase regional produce. Lastly, the company's website includes a list of the regional farms from which they source produce, along with farm bios where available.²²

Other independently owned vendors include Nu-Way in northern New Jersey and Novick Brothers in Philadelphia. Nu-Way primarily serves public, parochial, preschool, and charter schools, as well as senior care facilities throughout New Jersey and neighboring states. Novick works with independent institutions, childcare centers, caterers, and restaurants.

Barriers to Purchasing Regional Foods

Cost

Predictably, cost was cited by all survey respondents as a barrier to sourcing more regional foods. However, food product costs were not always cited as the most significant barrier. Several respondents said that the process of purchasing regional food is simply too cumbersome and, therefore, prohibitively expensive, regardless of how much more each food item costs. Because a single regional vendor is typically unable to supply enough variety and volume on its own, institutional buyers may have to maintain numerous purchasing contracts, in addition to their primary contract with the national vendor that supplies most of their food. The increased staff cost of managing multiple contracts and deliveries was seen to be on par with, if not greater than, increased food costs.

²² J. Ambrogi Food Distribution Inc., "Local," <http://www.ambrogifoods.com/local/> (accessed July 15, 2014).

Seasonal Variety

The seasonal nature of most regional foods was consistently cited as a barrier. Menus are often planned quarterly, which requires consistent volume and variety. Several respondents specifically mentioned that the Northeast region is a higher-cost market for regional foods due to a limited growing season (supply) coupled with the nation's largest concentration of urbanized populations (demand).

Safety and Quality

Food safety and quality were also frequently cited among respondents as barriers to regional food procurement. Hospitals are extremely concerned with food safety, since much of their food is consumed by patients who are especially vulnerable. Recent legislation associated with the Farm Bill seeks to require traceability for all foods as a way to improve food safety.²³ While an important step in assuring food safety, this is expected to have the unintended side effect of significantly increasing the marginal cost of production for smaller farms and processors.²⁴ In terms of quality, respondents expressed concerns about the quality-control measures used by regional food aggregators. It is commonly assumed that larger vendors have the financial resources to employ extensive measures of quality control, while smaller vendors may not. Larger vendors may also have access to numerous suppliers, allowing them to quickly replace low-quality inventory with another supplier's product.

Minimum Purchasing Requirements

Perhaps most importantly, respondents from hospitals cited their contract requirements with group purchasing organizations (GPO) as a potential barrier for sourcing more regional foods. GPOs collectively purchase supplies (including food) for institutions as a way to obtain lower prices.

Because GPOs typically require an 80–85 percent minimum share of an institution's total purchasing, the amount of purchasing that can be made from regional providers is capped at 15–20 percent. However, even hospitals with a stated interest in sourcing more regional foods currently dedicate only 5 percent or less of their budget to regional purchases. Therefore, GPOs are important because their very nature reinforces the barriers to regional food purchasing cited by respondents: cost, single point of contact, selection, and quality.

²³ FDA Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011, Pub. L. No. 353, last modified August 5, 2014. <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm247548.htm>.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Burden of Food and Drug Administration Food Safety Modernization Act Fee Amounts on Small Business," FR Doc. 2011-19333 (July 26, 2011). <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=FDA-2011-N-0529-0001>.



CHAPTER 3

RECOMMENDATIONS:
HOW ARE WE MAKING CHANGES?



Drawing upon an analysis of the data in Chapter 2, innovative programs across the country, and ongoing conversations with stakeholders, *Cultivating Camden* proposes a range of recommendations, including policy reforms, expansions of current initiatives and programs, and new approaches and innovations. Over 50 recommendations were prioritized by the Work Group, resulting in the 33 recommendations detailed in this chapter. The recommendations are organized into four implementer groups: Institutions, Government, Community Organizations, and Economic Development Organizations.

Building on its previous Greater Philadelphia Food System work, DVRPC developed the following recommendations to improve economic opportunity and food access in Camden City. DVRPC reviewed a number of food economy studies in order to incorporate the important work that other organizations and experts have already undertaken. Additionally, DVRPC drew upon the stakeholder surveys it undertook in the first half of 2012, plus ongoing conversations with stakeholders and partners. From this, DVRPC created a list of over 50 recommendations. These recommendations were synthesized into over 30 recommendations and further refined and prioritized through an online survey and facilitated small group discussions. For each topic area, a top recommendation, prioritized by the Camden Food Economy Work Group, is identified, with an explanation of the need and the possible implementation strategies. Many of these recommendations highlight the great work currently being done throughout Camden.

While the recommendations were developed and refined by DVRPC and Camden Food Economy stakeholders, they will primarily be implemented by organizations already working in Camden. Potential implementers have been identified for each recommendation.



INSTITUTIONS



Anchor institutions, such as universities, hospitals, museums, and sports arenas, can play a powerful role in shaping the economy, vitality, and quality of life of cities large and small. A 2013 report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defined anchor institutions as “long-standing and deeply rooted community organizations that often are the largest contributors to their communities’ continued economic stability and strength.”²⁵ As major employers, purchasers of goods, and centers for complementary businesses, anchor institutions can be “significant economic engines for their local geographies.”²⁶

²⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Office of University Partnerships, *Building Resiliency: The Role of Anchor Institutions in Sustaining Community Economic Development*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013. <http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/oup/AnchorInstitutions.html> (accessed May 26, 2014).

²⁶ Baltimore Integration Partnership, “Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative, Association of Baltimore-Area Grantmakers, Karp Resources, and Initiative for a Competitive Inner City,” *Anchor Institutions and The Food Cluster in Baltimore*, July 2013. http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.abagrntmakers.org/resource/resmgr/bip/finalreport_bip_kr_082713.pdf (accessed June 2, 2014).

In Camden, these organizations are hospitals such as Cooper University Hospital and Lourdes Health System, higher education institutions such as Rutgers-Camden, and large private employers such as Campbell Soup Company. In 2013, Camden’s “Eds & Meds” sectors employed 9,302 people with earnings of more than \$544 million.²⁷ Of those employees, between 10 and 20 percent resided in Camden.

These organizations have had a significant impact on Camden City as a result of both investments in the city’s built environment and their roles as major employers. Three of the top four employers in Camden are higher education or healthcare institutions.²⁸ In 2013, Cooper employed 4,709 people and Lourdes employed 1,428 people.²⁹ As of November 2015, Campbell Soup Company employed approximately 1,000 people. The Camden Higher Education and Healthcare Taskforce noted that these institutions are leading the city’s revitalization.³⁰

Although place-based organizations such as hospitals and universities are often the most common examples of anchor institutions, any large enterprise or organization, such as a church or nonprofit, that brings together financial and human resources within a community can act as an anchor institution.³¹ Heart of Camden, a community-based organization working to revitalize Waterfront South, and the Salvation Army’s new Kroc Center in Cramer Hill both serve as geographic and metaphorical anchors in their respective neighborhoods. Because of the depth and breadth of Camden’s nonprofits, nonprofits are addressed throughout this report and specifically in the “Community Organizations” section, starting on page 62.

²⁷ A. J. Jensen and Victoria Gilbert, *2014 Annual Report: Rediscover Camden*, Cooper’s Ferry Partnership, 2014. <http://www.coopersferry.com/files/reports/annual-report-2014.pdf> (accessed June 5, 2014).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ CamConnect, *The Camden Higher Education and Healthcare Task Force: A Winning Investment for the City of Camden*, Fall 2012. <http://www.coopersferry.com/files/reports/annual-report-2014.pdf> (accessed June 4, 2014)

³¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Office of University Partnerships, *Building Resiliency*.



Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

The procurement power of traditional anchor institutions, especially within the food sector, presents additional opportunities for anchor institutions to positively impact their local economies and the broader food system. Larger institutions, such as hospitals, medical centers, colleges and universities, and primary and secondary schools are often among a region’s largest purchasers of food, as their cafeterias and food service facilities serve hundreds, if not thousands of diners every day. Given such a large purchasing volume, these institutions have the potential to significantly alter the food supply chain by committing to purchasing more local and regional foods. Baltimore City recently released a study on the impact of anchor institutions in the food cluster and estimated that collectively the anchor institutions spend between \$16 and \$20 million on food purchases and an additional \$11 to \$14 million on catering expenditures each year. The same study found that roughly every \$140,000 that anchor institutions spend on food products with local firms supports one job.³² Although Baltimore’s population is approximately eight

³² Baltimore Integration Partnership, “Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative.”

times greater than Camden's, Camden's anchor institutions may spend a proportional amount on food purchases—about \$2 to 2.5 million.

In addition to the direct economic impact that anchor institutions can have on communities through employment and purchasing, anchor institutions can also serve as community leaders, supporting a number of ancillary services such as nutrition education and workforce development. Cooper University Hospital's recent efforts and investments in the Cooper Plaza and Lanning Square neighborhoods are just one example of the ancillary impact of anchor institutions in Camden. Cooper worked with local partners, St. Joseph's Carpenters Society and Habitat for Humanity, to develop affordable housing in the Cooper Plaza and Lanning Square neighborhoods surrounding the hospital. More recently, Cooper Pediatrics joined Campbell Healthy Communities as one of the sites in which partners such as The Food Trust and the FBSJ provided nutrition education and physical activity programming such as yoga to children and parents in the waiting room.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Implement FreshRx programs with vouchers for healthy food and integrate nutrition education at each hospital in Camden.

Diet-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes are serious concerns in Camden, where 16.5 percent of the children are overweight and 23.3 percent are obese.³³ The Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers found that from 2002 to 2008, 7,041 Camden residents made over 62,000 visits to hospitals and emergency rooms for conditions related to diabetes.

³³ Rutgers Center for State Health Policy, *The New Jersey Childhood Obesity Study: Camden School BMI Data*, January 2010. <http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/charts/2013/rwjf69262> (accessed August 10, 2015).



Boy with Peach
Source: Albert Yee, *The Food Trust*

Total charges for these visits exceeded \$1.2 billion.³⁴ Although good nutrition is essential to reducing the incidence of diet-related diseases and improving overall health, many people in Camden do not have access to healthy food, often as a result of low buying power and physical access barriers. Recently, healthcare providers and public health organizations across the country have begun to implement various “fresh food prescription” programs to help patients access the food they need to get and stay healthy.

Hospitals and health clinics in Camden could implement a “FreshRx” program in their institutions to provide Camden residents with better access to the foods that they need to improve their health. A number of fresh food prescription programs have been piloted across the country, with most programs offering patients a voucher or coupon for

³⁴ Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, “Camden Citywide Diabetes Collaborative.” <https://www.camdenhealth.org/citywide-diabetes-collaborative/> (accessed May 30, 2014).

approximately \$5 to \$7 to spend at a local farmers' market or community supported agriculture (CSA) each week. Many programs also tie the food voucher to nutrition education and healthy living classes. Wholesome Wave requires patients to meet with their doctor and nutritionist once a month to set goals and reinforce the importance of healthy eating. Other programs do not require regular check-ins but instead offer optional cooking classes or demonstrations.

Many of these programs are funded by outside grants or supported by a foundation associated with the hospital. Funding for FreshRx programs in Camden will need to come from hospitals, their charitable arms, or outside grants, as most insurance plans do not cover fresh food prescriptions. Currently, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) does not require Medicaid and/or private insurers to cover the cost of prescribed food and nutrition services. The ACA allows states to determine what insurance companies are required to cover within ten mandated categories of Essential Health Benefits.^{35,36} Fresh food prescriptions and nutrition services could be included as an allowable service category within the prevention and wellness services and chronic disease management category of the Essential Health Benefits. Although there is significant evidence that “the provision of food and nutrition services would result in potential savings in the magnitude of billions of dollars for diabetes and HIV/AIDS alone,” very few states have required insurance coverage of food and nutrition services.³⁷

Alternatively, as more and more people obtain insurance through the ACA, nonprofit hospitals may elect to allocate their community benefits

³⁵ New York City Food Policy Center at Hunter College, “Food as Medicine.” <http://nycfoodpolicy.org/food-medicine/> (accessed May 20, 2014).

³⁶ Robert Greenwald and David B. Waters. “Prescribing Food Like Medicine Would Save Medicare Millions,” WGBH News, March 12, 2014.

³⁷ Association of Nutrition Services Agencies, “Essential Health Benefits and Food and Nutrition Services,” Letter to the Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, January 31, 2012. <https://www.glwd.org/serve.do/content/advocacy/updates/EHBs.pdf;jsessionid=EED9496C8F9D74929D0EAE6916A6D573?property=Publication&aid=9687> (accessed April 5, 2014).

spending requirement toward programs such as FreshRx instead of on subsidized direct care. The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City noted, “As the ACA expands Medicaid and health insurance coverage to millions of Americans who were previously uninsured, at some hospitals expenses related to subsidized direct care may decrease. This gives those hospitals the opportunity to shift their resources to other community benefit activities.”³⁸ Philadelphia-area Lankenau Medical Associates (LMA) is utilizing these newly uncommitted funds to partner with The Food Trust to provide Philly Food Bucks to eligible patients to help them access fresh food (see call-out).

Along with funding fresh food vouchers and offering nutrition education and/or health counseling, hospitals would need to work with local farmers' markets or community gardens to ensure that patients receiving a fresh food prescription can immediately access a market that accepts the vouchers. Our Lady of Lourdes hosts a farmers' markets at least one day a week during the summer months; however, they may want to try to expand their offerings or contract with a CSA to ensure that patients can access fresh fruits and vegetables year round.

In addition to helping local residents address chronic health conditions, fruit and vegetable prescription programs can also support local farmers by expanding their customer base and providing them with an additional source of revenue. In 2013, Wholesome Wave FVRx participants made an average of 12 visits to farmers' markets during the four- to six-month program and spent an average of \$366 per household at farmers' markets.³⁹

³⁸ Austin Nijhuis and Lena Ferguson, “Affordable Care Act Opens Hospital Doors to Greater Community Investment,” Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, May 22, 2014. <http://www.icic.org/connection/blog-entry/blog-affordable-care-act-opens-hospital-doors-to-greater-community-investme> (accessed January 13, 2015).

³⁹ Wholesome Wave, *Wholesome Wave's Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program 2013 Outcomes*, FVRx Factsheet, 2014. <http://www.wholesomewave.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014-Fruit-and-Vegetable-Prescription-Program.pdf> (accessed November 26, 2014).

Lankenau Medical Associates and Philly Food Bucks

LMA is a Lankenau Hospital-owned outpatient practice that provides primary and specialty care to many uninsured or underinsured individuals. Although Lankenau is located in a fairly affluent area of Montgomery County, many of LMA's patients reside in West Philadelphia, where health outcomes and health factors such as diet and exercise, education, employment, and housing quality are ranked the worst in the state.

To help address some of these health factors and ultimately improve patient outcomes, Lankenau partnered with The Food Trust and Get Healthy Philly to pilot a Philly Food Bucks initiative in conjunction with its outpatient practice. Begun in 2012, the program provides eligible LMA patients with \$6 worth of Philly Food Bucks that they can redeem for fresh fruits and vegetables at any participating Philadelphia farmers' market. The program is targeted to patients with body mass indices over 30 or those diagnosed with diabetes. In addition to the Philly Food Bucks, patients receive nutrition education, information on the Philly Food Bucks program, and help connecting to other community resources to help address needs such as housing and child care. Lankenau and The Food Trust finished their first full year of the program in 2014 and are currently in the process of analyzing program outcomes.

In addition to the Philly Food Bucks program, Lankenau sponsors three farmers' markets, including the Overbrook Farmers' Market located a few blocks from the hospital. Lankenau health educators also staff Philadelphia farmers' markets, providing nutrition counseling and blood pressure screenings.

Funding for Lankenau's Philly Food Bucks Program comes from Lankenau Medical Center. As a nonprofit hospital, Lankenau is required to provide benefits to its community in order to maintain its tax-exempt status. In the past, nonprofit hospitals have met

this requirement by providing "charity care" or care to uninsured or underinsured patients. With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the number of un- and underinsured patients is expected to decline, requiring nonprofit hospitals to provide other community benefits. Additionally, hospitals are now required to develop CHNAs and subsequent Community Health Improvement Plans to address the health needs of their surrounding communities. Programs such as the Philly Food Bucks allow Lankenau to serve their community while meeting these new requirements.

MANNA in Camden

MANNA is a community-based organization that cooks and delivers nutritious, medically appropriate meals and provides nutrition counseling to people who are battling life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, renal disease, and HIV/AIDS.⁴⁰ MANNA operates in nine counties in the Greater Philadelphia area, including four New Jersey counties, and partners with many healthcare providers, some specifically in Camden City, to provide services to a greater number of Camden residents. In a recently published journal article, MANNA reported that clients' average monthly healthcare costs fell 62 percent within the first three months of working with MANNA, a cost savings of over \$30,000. MANNA clients' rate of hospitalization decreased by half, and inpatient stays were 37 percent shorter. MANNA clients were over 20 percent more likely to be released from the hospital to home rather than to long-term care or a healthcare facility.⁴¹

⁴⁰ MANNA, "Mission—MANNA," 2013. <http://www.mannapa.org/mission/> (accessed June 30, 2014).

⁴¹ Jill Gurvey et al., "Examining Health Care Costs Among MANNA Clients and a Comparison Group," *Journal of Primary Care & Community Health* 4, no. 4 (2013): 311–317. <http://jpc.sagepub.com/content/4/4/311> (accessed June 30, 2014).

Increase regional food purchasing by creating a Regional Purchasing Organization (RPO) and working with international food vendors and management companies.

TRF interviewed 13 institutions in Camden regarding food procurement practices and found plenty of interest in purchasing more regional foods (and other local products). As noted in Chapter 2, roughly half of the respondents said that regional food procurement is either part of their organizational mission or is an institutional objective supported by management. Despite this stated interest, most respondents said their regional share of total procurement was at or below 5 percent. Many larger organizations such as hospitals and universities use a group purchasing organization (GPO) to source their supplies and are required to purchase 80–85 percent of their goods from the GPO. Although this requirement can be limiting, organizations still have room to increase local purchases.

Each of the respondents noted that cost was a barrier to sourcing more local foods; however, it was not the most significant barrier. Many of the respondents noted that sourcing local foods is simply too cumbersome and therefore, expensive, regardless of how much more each food item costs. One respondent noted that “there is no lack of interest in purchasing local foods, but someone needs to make it easy. Even if it costs more.”⁴²

One way to help local institutions to purchase more of their goods and services locally would be to create an RPO for Camden. An RPO could be similar to current GPOs in that it would use large, pooled purchase orders to help reduce the barriers to purchasing local goods. An RPO would serve as the broker, manager, and administrator of the regional food supply chain by coordinating orders, harvesting, transportation,

⁴² Lance Loethen. “Camden Food Systems Research,” *The Reinvestment Fund*, 2014.



*Common Market Warehouse
Source: Common Market*

packaging, and the distribution of revenues among participating food businesses. For buyers, an RPO could fill the 15–20 percent gap between the typical minimum GPO purchasing requirement (80–85 percent) and full procurement, offering a single point of purchase to institutional buyers interested in regional sourcing. In addition to a single purchasing contract through the RPO, buyers would have access to a wider selection of regional foods.

Technological development and implementation would play a major role in creating an RPO. The structure would be virtual, embracing mobile technology to the fullest extent. Websites and mobile apps dedicated to managing local and regional food supply chains have been developed and

are currently in use throughout the country. FarmLogix⁴³ and Good Eggs⁴⁴ serve as successful examples, using web-enabled technology (developed in-house) to manage supply chain logistics, including specialized interfaces for producers, a website for consumers, and mobile apps for delivery drivers.^{45,46}

In addition to large organizations such as hospitals, a number of smaller organizations such as Center for Family Services (CFS), which administers



Common Market Driver Willin Griffin
Source: Common Market

⁴³ Chicago Innovation Awards, "Past Winners Biographies: FarmLogix, LLC." <http://www.chicagoinnovationawards.com/winner/farmlogix-llc/> (accessed May 5, 2014).

⁴⁴ Ariel Schwartz, "Good Eggs Brings Locally Sourced Grocery Deliveries to New York, Winter Be Damned," Editorial, *Fast Company*, Co.Exist, November 7, 2013. <http://www.fastcoexist.com/3021207/goodeggs-brings-locally-sourced-grocery-deliveries-to-new-york-winter-be-damned> (accessed April 15, 2014).

⁴⁵ Jenna Wortham, "Good Eggs, a Virtual Farmer's Market, Delivers Real Food," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2014, B1. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/technology/personaltech/goodeggs-a-virtual-farmers-market-delivers-real-food.html?_r=0 (accessed November 20, 2014).

⁴⁶ Rochelle Davis, "The Next Chapter of School Food in Chicago," *Healthy Schools Campaign*, June 26, 2013. <http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/blog/the-next-chapter-of-school-food-in-chicago> (accessed November 20, 2014).

Head Start in Camden, and The Food Trust, which manages the Healthy Corner Stores program, have expressed an interest in joining together to increase their purchasing power.

In Camden, an RPO could start as a pilot program hosted by one institution and serving others, or developed as a new service by an existing vendor, such as Common Market or Aramark, the current food service provider for Camden City Public Schools. As noted in the sidebar, FarmLogix partnered with Aramark in Chicago to increase local sourcing for the Chicago Public Schools system.

Another opportunity to increase regional food purchasing would be for local institutions to work with Sysco to make Camden one of its test markets for regional food sourcing. In 2012, Sysco began working with food producers and processors located within the foodsheds surrounding Grand Rapids, Michigan; Kansas City, Missouri/Kansas; and Chicago, Illinois. Sysco's local collaborations have successfully incorporated small producers and processors into its complex and highly sophisticated supply chain.⁴⁷ DVRPC recommends that Campbell Soup Company leverage its existing connections to Sysco to help establish Camden as a test market.

⁴⁷ Kristen Hinman, "Sysco's Produce Division Makes Room for Local Farmers," *Fast Company*, October 19, 2011. <http://www.fastcompany.com/1784748/syiscos-produce-division-makes-room-local-farmers> (accessed November 19, 2014).

Common Market

Common Market is an innovative, mission-driven distributor of local food. Its mission is to provide nutritious, locally grown, and affordable food to everyone, including the most vulnerable communities. Common Market fills a wide gap in the market as the only large-scale distributor of local food in Greater Philadelphia; it purchases from 85 farms and producers, all within 200 miles of Philadelphia, and distributes products to about 250 different institutions, including schools, universities, hospitals, restaurants, and retailers. Common Market works closely with both farms and customers to streamline purchasing, operating as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. As part of its line of services and programming, Common Market operates the Philly Good Food Lab (a shared space for food-based businesses) and offers the Delaware Valley Farm Share (a CSA program). It is often cited as a national best practice for whole local food distribution.

Regional Purchasing Organizations

Based in Evanston, Illinois, FarmLogix enhances connections between farms and institutional kitchens through streamlined logistics, reporting, and marketing. Although its primary customer base is composed of restaurants and major hotel chains in the Midwest, FarmLogix partnered with Aramark in 2013 to provide locally sourced food for the Chicago Public Schools system. Small farmers within 250 miles of Chicago deliver their harvest to one of three FarmLogix aggregation centers, where orders are picked up and delivered to customers. FarmLogix provides customers with a single invoice that details the source of products and reports on pertinent sustainability measures. FarmLogix generates revenues by charging customers a fee that varies based on the volume

purchased; the company does not collect fees from farmers.⁴⁸ In its first six months, FarmLogix signed contracts to sell local food to 200 restaurants and over 1,000 schools. FarmLogix is expanding to Boston and Washington, DC, to serve the East Coast.

Like FarmLogix, Local Orbit is a technology platform that connects small- to medium-sized food producers, processors, and aggregators with buyers seeking to increase their procurement of regional foods—the company’s slogan is “Re-linking the Food Chain.” Market managers ensure that buyers have a single point of contact to procure regional food, pay invoices, and report metrics associated with their sustainability initiatives (such as the distance food has traveled from seller to buyer). Local Orbit software also offers lot number tracking services, which can be used to trace and recall food in compliance with food safety regulations. (Single point of contact and food traceability were substantial barriers cited among Camden’s larger, institutional buyers interviewed by TRF.) Market managers also ensure that sellers use the software to track inventory, distribute their products, create marketing materials (typically e-mail templates with item availability and pricing), and other services needed to grow their business and adopt more streamlined processes.

⁴⁸ Laura Bianchi, “FarmLogix Connects Farmer and Restaurant,” *Crain’s Chicago Business*, July 10, 2013. <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20130710/BLOGS09/130709970/farmlogix-connects-farmer-and-restaurant> (accessed December 4, 2014).

Encourage further collaboration on food-system related research between nonprofits, hospitals, universities, and schools to expand the evidence base for food-related programming.

There are a number of nonprofits and academic institutions working in Camden around food system-related issues such as food access, nutrition, food production, and workforce development. Although these organizations may be working on the same issues, they often do not coordinate their efforts in advance, leading to duplicative services and research. For example, many nonprofits provide services directly to community residents without having the data to support their program's effectiveness. Academics often apply for grants to pursue research on interventions that are already addressed by community organizations.

Moving forward, service providers and academic institutions should be more strategic about their work in Camden to reduce duplication and leverage local and national funding resources. The first step in working more collaboratively is for organizations to be aware of the work of other food system-related organizations. To help accomplish this, DVRPC recommends that Rutgers-Camden host a yearly gathering of researchers, clinicians, and practitioners on Camden's food system, existing programmatic efforts, and ongoing research projects. The yearly meetings could be an opportunity for organizations to share research findings and identify shared research agendas.

This new level of collaboration will benefit both researchers and practitioners. A report by the University of Wisconsin–Madison found that “Collaboration among nonprofit organizations is an opportunity to share information and resources, reach larger populations, expand programs

and services, leverage the comparative strengths of partners and create change more effectively.”⁴⁹

Rowan University/Rutgers-Camden Board of Governors

The Rowan University/Rutgers-Camden Board of Governors was established in 2014 to oversee collaborative health-sciences projects between Rowan University and Rutgers-Camden, leveraging Camden's “educational and research assets to support growth in the region's healthcare capacity.”⁵⁰ The Board grew out of an informal partnership between the universities and is a result of the New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act, a 2013 law that preserved the Camden campus as part of Rutgers and restructured many units of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Using \$2.5 million allocated annually by each university, the Board will help found a College of Health Sciences that will not award its own degrees but will serve as an umbrella for degree-granting programs at each school. In January 2014, the state of New Jersey granted the joint board the power of eminent domain, allowing the Board to acquire private property for public use.

⁴⁹ Jeanan Yasiri, *The Center for Nursing Excellence: A Case Study of Nonprofit Collaboration*, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Center for Nonprofits, Fall 2011. <https://sohe.wisc.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/YasiriCaseStudyofNonprofitCollaboration.pdf> (accessed November 18, 2014).

⁵⁰ Rowan University/Rutgers-Camden Board of Governors, “About the Board.” <http://rurcbog.com/> (accessed November 11, 2014).

Recapitalize the Camden Food Innovation Fund, a collaborative grantmaking fund at the Community Foundation of South Jersey.

In 2014, the Community Foundation of South Jersey (CFSJ) created a new pooled fund—the Camden Food Innovation Grant Fund—to seed innovative projects that will create economic opportunity and increase access to healthy food in Camden City. The fund builds on findings from CFSJ’s partners’ ongoing work, DVRPC’s food system planning efforts, and the Campbell Healthy Communities Program. In addition to Campbell Soup Company, DVRPC, and CFSJ, Wells Fargo Regional Community Development Corporation and TD Charitable Foundation contributed to the pooled fund.

In March 2014, CFSJ announced a competitive grant opportunity to fund innovative food system initiatives in Camden. In July 2014, the fund



Cathedral Kitchen Café Rendering
Source: Cathedral Kitchen

Community Foundation of South Jersey

The CFSJ exists to sustainably improve South Jersey communities in partnership with local philanthropists. CFSJ offers collaborative community leadership to address the greatest challenges in its region and professional management of giving funds for individuals, families, corporations, and local groups. Currently, CFSJ’s efforts focus on creating sustainable food systems that impact local economies and improve the capacity and effectiveness of local nonprofits. CFSJ also facilitates donor-to-donor learning through the *Giving X-Change Project* and offers philanthropic knowledge and expertise to increase the impact of donor generosity.

awarded \$80,000 in grants to three projects that demonstrated three different approaches to economic development through food. Parkside Business and Community in Partnership (PBCIP) received a grant toward building a community garden adjacent to its RENEW building, a planned three-story, mixed-use, LEED-certified building. Cathedral Kitchen received a grant to support its efforts to expand its commercial kitchen and, therefore, its contracted meal service. The Food Trust received a grant to pilot the Heart Bucks program in Healthy Corner Stores (see page 76 for further details).

Several of the original partners in the Camden Food Innovation Fund are interested in recapitalizing the fund and issuing another competitive grant announcement to seed more innovation in the future. The three primary funders will identify additional funders and large funding opportunities to leverage local grant money through collaborative grantmaking.

Launch a Fresh Carts Initiative that partners with local institutions, such as hospitals, to increase access to healthy foods and support local food entrepreneurs.

To help provide Camden residents with greater access to healthy, fresh foods, DVRPC recommends that Cooper's Ferry partner with Camden City to launch a citywide Fresh Carts Initiative. Modeled on New York City's Green Carts and Philadelphia's Healthy Carts initiatives, the Fresh Carts Initiative would provide fresh food access to communities in Camden not served by a healthy food retail outlet such as a Healthy Corner Store or farmers' market. Additionally, the Fresh Carts Initiative would support local entrepreneurs by providing additional support in starting a fresh food cart business.

As the program manager, Cooper's Ferry could accept applications from interested entrepreneurs or farmers' market operators. It could also recruit applicants through community partners such as the Latin American Economic Development Association (LAEDA) and the Camden City Garden Club. Cooper's Ferry should work with Camden City to ease and expedite the permitting process for Fresh Cart operators. As noted in the side bar, Healthy Cart vendors in Philadelphia found the city's assistance with permitting and licensing to be extremely beneficial.

Cooper's Ferry should also partner with local institutions such as hospitals and universities to allow Fresh Cart vendors to operate in a year-round venue that can provide them with a steady stream of customers. The Philadelphia Healthy Carts Program's most successful cart was located in the lobby of St. Christopher's Hospital. Hundreds of people, including visitors and employees from all over the Greater Philadelphia region, pass through Cooper Hospital's lobby every day. In 2013, Cooper University Health Care employed 5,788 people, including 4,530 full-time and 1,258 part-time employees at their hospital and outpatient centers throughout

the region.⁵¹ Additionally, Cooper University Hospital recorded more than 26,400 hospital admissions, more than 76,709 emergency department visits, and more than 486,000 outpatient visits during 2013.⁵² This volume of patients, visitors, and employees represents a significant concentration of potential customers for a fresh food vendor. Finally, locating a Fresh Cart in a hospital would also provide strong synchronicity with programs such as FreshRx, by allowing patients to redeem their fresh food prescription in the hospital lobby.

⁵¹ Cooper University Health Care, *Fast Facts*. http://www.cooperhealth.org/sites/cooper/files/site/pdf/FastFactsJanuary_2015.pdf (accessed October 10, 2014).

⁵² Bob Herman, "10 Things to Know About Cooper University Hospital," *Becker's Hospital Review*, August 15 2012. <http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-profile/10-things-to-know-about-cooper-university-hospital.html> (accessed October 10, 2014).

Get Healthy Philly's Healthy Carts Program

Get Healthy Philly, an initiative by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, piloted the Healthy Carts Program in 2011 as one strategy to increase access to healthy fresh fruits and vegetables across Philadelphia. In the pilot year, Get Healthy Philly recruited seven healthy carts to operate in targeted areas of Philadelphia, specifically in communities with limited access to healthy foods, high levels of poverty, and low rates of car ownership. Entrepreneurs applied to Get Healthy Philly to operate a Healthy Cart, predominantly selling a combination of whole and cut fruits and vegetables, along with other healthy items, such as unsalted nuts. Get Healthy Philly provided Healthy Cart operators with small business training, and streamlined inspections and permit processing, fee waivers, and Electronic Benefits Machines (EBT)



Healthy Cart at St. Christopher's Hospital
Source: Philadelphia Department of Public Health

for SNAP recipients. Cart operators often had formal community partnerships or anchor organizations as well that provided financial or programming support.

A review of the Healthy Cart vendors revealed that vendors considered the city's help in becoming a licensed vendor to be an extremely valuable part of the Healthy Cart Program. Vendors also noted that the free EBT machine and the EBT fee waivers were a few of the top reasons they chose to participate in the program. Get Healthy Philly found that marketing support, in combination with start-up support, was essential to helping the Healthy Carts succeed. Additionally, Get Healthy Philly noted that it was important to ensure that sufficient market demand exists to support cart sales before implementing the program.

After the program's first year, Get Healthy Philly found that AJ's Produce Galleria, located in the atrium at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, was the most successful cart, averaging approximately \$400 a day in sales. Another cart, Preston's Paradise in West Philly, has evolved into Greensgrow West—a farmstand and garden center on a vacant lot on the busily traveled Baltimore Pike. Although Get Healthy Philly ultimately concluded that the Healthy Carts Program would be better administered by another city department, it recommended that the city expand the presence of Healthy Carts in hospitals throughout Philadelphia based on the success of AJ's Produce Galleria.

Better utilize 2-1-1 to coordinate emergency food programs to include referrals and schedule appointments.

Feeding America found that approximately 14.1 percent of Camden County residents—72,570 people—were food insecure in 2012.⁵³ The percentage of residents of Camden City struggling with food insecurity is sure to be even greater since their median household income (\$26,705) is 2.3 times lower than the median household income for Camden County residents (\$62,320).⁵⁴

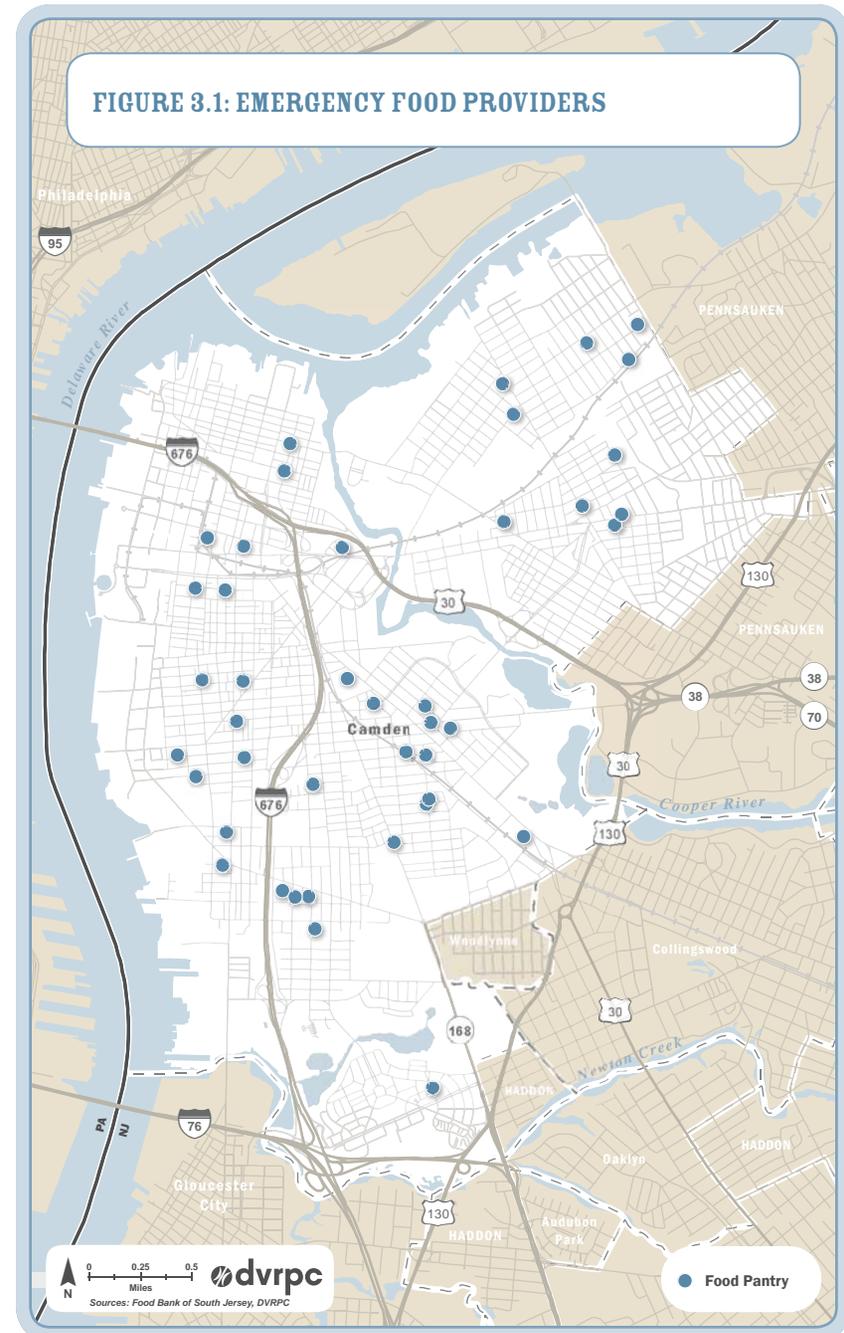
Many food pantries and soup kitchens are located throughout Camden City. The FBSJ provides food to 49 different food pantries in Camden City. These pantries, which are primarily run by faith-based organizations, are open at a range of times and dates. Although these pantries already do significant good in their communities, collectively they could operate more efficiently if their services and hours were better coordinated.

2-1-1, the nationally recognized phone number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to connect people with community resources, could help to coordinate food pantries to ensure that those in need are able to find resources. 2-1-1 could schedule food pantry customers with appointments at various food pantries, as well as work with food pantries to ensure that at least one food pantry is open in each Camden neighborhood every day.

In New Jersey, 2-1-1 is managed by the NJ 2-1-1 Partnership, a subsidiary of the United Way of New Jersey. In addition to a 24-hour call center, the NJ 2-1-1 website allows users to search for emergency food providers located within a given radius of their ZIP code or in Camden. The FBSJ has a more complete list of food pantries organized by county on their website. They are also shown in **Figure 3.1: Emergency Food Providers**.

⁵³ Feeding America, “Map the Meal Gap.” <http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2013/overall> (accessed December 4, 2014).

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *5-Year American Community Survey, 2009–2013*. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml (accessed December 4, 2014).



Food Bank of South Jersey

The FBSJ is the largest source of food assistance in South Jersey. Since 1985, the FBSJ has worked to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by providing food to people in need, teaching nutrition education, and helping people find sustainable ways to improve their lives. Through “Feed More,” the FBSJ’s core food assistance program, the FBSJ is able to solicit, sort, and distribute millions of pounds of surplus food to over 250 emergency feeding programs in communities across Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, and Salem counties. In addition to its emergency food distribution program, the FBSJ operates 60 direct service feeding programs in South Jersey food desert communities. The main foci of the direct service programs are seniors, children, and families through the Hope Mobile, School Pantry, KidzPack, Twilight Harvest, Summer Meals, Snack Zone, and Kids Café programs. Through its network of partner organizations, the FBSJ is able to serve 196,000 people each year.

In Camden City, the FBSJ operates the following direct service programs:

- Kidzpack program: Veterans Family School;
- School Pantries: Molina Family School, METEAST High School, Bonsall Elementary School, Wiggins Family School, and Cooper’s Poynt Family School;
- Twilight Harvest: Westfield Towers, Kennedy Towers, Mickle Towers, Riverview Towers, North Gate II and Ferry Manor; and
- Hope Mobile: Camden Cooper Lanning Promise Neighborhood.

The Healthy Living Initiative (HLI) at the FBSJ was created to ensure that children and adults receiving food through the FBSJ network attend cooking classes and participate in cooking demonstrations that illustrate nutritious ways to prepare the foods distributed by

the FBSJ. HLI classes are taught by FBSJ staff and local volunteers who are committed to helping South Jersey residents in need live a healthy lifestyle.

The FBSJ also offers workshops and technical support services to help their member food pantries and soup kitchens better serve those in need. An annual survey of the FBSJ’s network determines the plan for technical assistance needs. The FBSJ hosts mandatory annual trainings for agencies receiving federal or state foods. These trainings offer good opportunities for food pantries to network and learn from other organizations that may be facing similar challenges. Similarly, the FBSJ uses the results from the annual survey to match new or struggling member organizations with more successful or long-standing food pantries. Training is also conducted in the areas of food safety, USDA civil rights, grant writing, safe food storage and prolonging the shelf-life of produce, client management, cultivating food donors, and technology. One-to-one technical assistance sessions are provided as needed.

Each year, the FBSJ hosts an Annual Meeting where they invite their 250 member agencies and 60 Direct Service programs to attend. In 2014, over 200 people from approximately 185 member food pantries and soup kitchens attended the Annual Meeting. The FBSJ uses this time to provide support and promote coordination among the member agencies. Information tables from community organizations, FBSJ programs, and demonstrations by HLI volunteer chefs are also included. In the past, the FBSJ has utilized the Annual Meeting to provide technical assistance such as grant-funding, food safety, and healthy-cooking classes to its member agencies. Aside from the annual meeting, the FBSJ also provides ongoing trainings in USDA civil rights, Child and Senior Food Programs, distribution of Senior Farmer’s Market Vouchers, and Summer Meal program administration.

Choice Food Pantries

Most food pantries provide individuals with boxes of preselected food items to take home and prepare. This model allows pantries to distribute their food resources evenly among all patrons. However, the traditional model is often criticized and has many challenges. Food can be wasted if it is not what families want, need, or can use (due to many reasons, such as allergies, cultural restrictions, and general dislike).⁵⁵ Pantries can exhaust limited financial resources by purchasing unnecessary items that are eventually wasted. Certain items may be overstocked due to distribution based on surplus rather than on nutritional value. Lastly, clients often have little flexibility in the rest of their lives and feel further undignified by having their food chosen for them.

John Arnold, the director of a food assistance agency in western Michigan, is credited with opening the first choice pantry, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1995. Choice food pantries operate similarly to a grocery store, where clients can browse the aisles and take what they need at low or no cost. Well-established choice pantries may look like a small supermarket with many options and products available to browse; others with limited physical space may have a list of available food, and staff or volunteers retrieve the desired items for the client. Others have nutritionists or staff browse the aisles with patrons to help with making healthy choices. The client choice food pantry model can help cupboards operate at a lower cost by reducing food waste. Choice pantries also benefit the customers by providing a more dignified shopping experience and greater client satisfaction with the food that they are able to choose.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks, “Making the Switch: A Guide for Converting to a Client Choice Pantry,” <http://www.taftb.org/documents/ChoicePantryGuide.pdf> (accessed July 22, 2014).

⁵⁶ Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan, “Client Choice Pantries.” http://www.gcfb.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pg_clientchoice (accessed November 5, 2014).

Although choice pantries may waste fewer food resources, they can require more of other types of resources, such as a larger facility and more volunteers. Additionally, choice pantries have to implement a “point system” to enable “checkout.”

Philabundance, the Philadelphia region’s largest hunger relief organization, distributes food to a number of choice cupboards within Philadelphia.⁵⁷ In January 2010, Philabundance opened a 1,200-square-foot choice pantry in the basement of the Lillian Marrero Library in Philadelphia.⁵⁸ Within its first month of operation, Philabundance’s Community Food Center had “distributed about 160,000 pounds of food and registered 1100 families.”⁵⁹ Visitors to the Community Food Center can fill two hand-held grocery baskets with their choice of food items, although certain products, such as juice and bread, are limited. One client who was accustomed to traditional food pantries said, “It’s pretty neat, man. It’s a better feeling—more dignity.”⁶⁰ Bill Clark, the former executive director of Philabundance, noted, “For an impoverished population with little choice in life, any choice has huge empowering aspects.”⁶¹

The Salvation Army Kroc Center, which opened in October 2014 in the Cramer Hill neighborhood of Camden, includes a choice pantry—the first choice pantry in Camden.

⁵⁷ Philabundance, “The Dignity of Choice.” <http://www.philabundance.org/the-dignity-of-choice/> (accessed July 22, 2014).

⁵⁸ Alfred Lubrano, “Aid with a Side of Dignity: Clients’ Choice of Items Is a Key Ingredient at N. Phila. Food Pantry,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 18, 2010. http://articles.philly.com/2010-01-18/news/25211400_1_food-pantry-nonperishable-food-philabundance (accessed November 4, 2014).

⁵⁹ Philabundance, *Philabundance Needs Volunteers for Its New Community Food Center in North Philadelphia*, February 6, 2010. <http://www.philabundance.org/philabundance-needs-volunteers-for-its-new-community-food-center-in-north-philadelphia/> (accessed November 6, 2014).

⁶⁰ Lubrano, “Aid with a Side of Dignity.”

⁶¹ Ibid.



GOVERNMENT

Government plays a large role in setting the stage to support and incentivize the food economy in Camden City. This starts with the city but also extends to the county (Camden), the region (DVRPC), and to the state (Office of the Governor).

Camden City made significant progress in creating a more equitable and vibrant food system by creating the Camden Food Security Advisory Board in February 2009. Their mission is to study, review, and report on food security issues in Camden to the city government. This work ranges from ensuring access to healthy food all the way to creating systems for growing and processing food. They do this through implementing environmental and policy changes, such as creating and updating ordinances, deploying strategies on urban land acquisition and disposition, and providing incentives for economic development. Key planners and implementers of such recommendations include the city's Department of Planning and Development and the Camden Redevelopment Agency.

Cooper's Ferry Partnership, while not a public agency, is a private nonprofit formed in 2011 from the merger of Cooper's Ferry Development Association (CFDA) and the Greater Camden Partnership (GCP). Cooper's Ferry Partnership works to establish public-private partnerships to create sustainable economic revitalization and promote Camden as a great place to live, work, and visit. As CFDA, they served as the master developer of the Camden waterfront, attracting more than \$600 million of private and public investment. As GCP, they created the Downtown Camden Strategic Development Plan, which established the blueprint for anchor institution-led development in Camden. "GCP's project portfolio has included the establishment of a downtown business improvement district 'clean and safe' program; development of several large transit-oriented real estate projects; a vacant-lot greening and maintenance initiative; public-space arts programming; corridor marketing/retail attraction; and local sourcing initiatives."⁶²

The County of Camden plays a role in economic and community development, parks and open space, utilities, land use planning, health and human services, and the environment, among other duties. The Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA) in particular has been instrumental in stormwater management initiatives via Camden Stormwater Management Resources Training (SMART; see call-out on page 55).

DVRPC plays a role in Camden's food economy by offering technical assistance and planning guidance, building off the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study (2010)* and *Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan (2011)*. DVRPC works to foster regional cooperation in the nine-county, bi-state area. City, county, and state representatives work together to address key issues, including transportation, land use, environmental protection, and economic development. Some recent Camden-related studies authored by DVRPC at the request of local

⁶² Cooper's Ferry Partnership, "History and Mission." <http://coopersferry.com/about-us/history-and-mission> (accessed August 11, 2015).



Camden City Hall

governments and stakeholders include *City of Camden Access Study* (December 2012), *Camden County Transit Expansion Framework Study* (January 2012), and *Finding Space: Balancing Parking Needs and Urban Vitality in the City of Camden* (September 2011).

The state of New Jersey has a number of tools that it can use to impact local economies and communities. The state passes legislation and provides funding that incentivizes economic development in key areas of the state that most need it, including Camden City (most recently through the 2013 New Jersey Economic Opportunity Act). Additionally, regulations and laws enacted by the state can impact how and where businesses operate (e.g., liquor licenses) and who is eligible for social service programs (e.g., WIC).

The following recommendations explore ways in which city agencies and other government agencies can positively impact Camden's food economy.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Work with alternative models of grocery stores to locate in Camden City at prime or transit-accessible spots, such as near the universities or at the redesigned Rand Transportation Center.

Even before the Pathmark supermarket on Mount Ephraim Avenue closed in September 2013, Camden residents were not well served by supermarkets. A new ShopRite supermarket has been proposed for Admiral Wilson Boulevard and 17th Street, but this location is not easily transit-accessible, walkable, or bikeable from most Camden neighborhoods. Although the PriceRite opened in October 2014 in the former Pathmark store, Camden City is still in need of a full-service supermarket that is well integrated into a neighborhood's built environment. The proposed ShopRite has a more suburban site design, with surface parking lots in front (often hostile to pedestrians) and located on a busy divided highway corridor, making it difficult to get to without a car.

DVRPC recommends that Camden City continue to pursue other supermarket models, such as cooperatives, a nonprofit grocery store, or an upscale urban grocery store (see sidebar). Such a market could be located in or near downtown Camden, proximate to Rutgers-Camden and Cooper Medical School at Rowan University. The City and Cooper's Ferry have recommended that the Rand Transportation Center be renovated to reflect its role as a major multi-modal transportation hub. This project could include space for an urban grocery store. DVRPC also recommends updating the Camden comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDs) and the region's CEDs to include these new supermarket projects if seeking funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.



Redesigned Walter Rand Transit Station
Source: Cooper's Ferry Partnership

Upscale Urban Grocery Stores

National supermarket chains are increasingly opening in inner cities, as evidenced by Whole Foods' recent expansion into Detroit and Newark. Whole Foods received over \$5 million in tax credits, to open a 21,000-square-foot store in Midtown Detroit in 2013.⁶³ As part of their commitment to Detroit, Whole Foods signed a long-term lease and instituted transparent policies on local hiring, pricing, outreach, and product lines. Whole Foods estimates that 70 percent of its employees are Detroiters. They adopted a special pricing strategy for the store that is more affordable to those who live in the neighborhood. Outreach has also been important, with Whole Foods employing nutritionists to educate customers on topics such as health and wellness and shopping on a budget. While not able to disclose sales figures, Whole Foods has indicated that the store has exceeded their sales expectations.⁶⁴

Given the success of the Detroit store, Whole Foods is expanding into other lower-income areas of major cities, such as in Newark, New Jersey. A 29,000-square-foot Newark store will open in 2016 and will be an anchor in the transformation of the historic Hahne building, a former department store with historic landmark status that has stood vacant for decades.⁶⁵

⁶³ Daniel Duggan, "\$4.2 Million in Incentives Key to Whole Foods Deal," July 27, 2011, *crainsdetroit.com*. <http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20110727/FREE/110729897/-4-2-million-in-incentives-key-to-whole-foods-deal> (accessed March 30, 2015).

⁶⁴ David Muller, "Whole Foods CEO Tells Bloomberg New Detroit Store 'Exceeding Our Wildest Expectations,'" August 5, 2013, *MLive*. http://www.mlive.com/business/detroit/index.ssf/2013/08/whole_foods_ceo_tells_bloomberg.html (accessed October 14, 2015).

⁶⁵ Heather Haddon, "Whole Foods Coming to Newark," October 9, 2013, *The Wall Street Journal*. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304066404579125623131838750> (accessed October 14, 2015)

Ensure that all Camden neighborhoods have transit access to the PriceRite, Aldi, and the proposed ShopRite.

PriceRite, a 43,000-square-foot store located at 2881 Mount Ephraim Avenue in the Fairview neighborhood of Camden, is the largest full-service supermarket located within Camden city limits. It opened in October 2014 in the former Pathmark building, which closed approximately a year earlier. Described by owner Jason Ravitz as “a hybrid of Aldi and Costco,”⁶⁶ PriceRite is an essential food resource for Camden residents, as well as an important employer.⁶⁷ PriceRite hired approximately 100 full- and part-time employees with an emphasis on hiring locally. More than 70 percent of PriceRite employees are Camden residents.⁶⁸ PriceRite is served by two New Jersey Transit bus routes—the 400 and 450—which primarily serve the areas along Broadway and Mount Ephraim Avenue (see **Figure 3.2** for service areas). Although these routes help a number of Camden residents access the store, many other residents in the northern and eastern areas of the city do not have a one-seat ride to PriceRite. Using transit to get to PriceRite would require at least one transfer and significant schedule coordination.

Aldi Market is a discounted grocery store chain that is located just outside of Camden city limits along the White Horse Pike. Although it does not have a Camden address, it is still an accessible grocery store option for many Camden residents. Aldi is served by three bus routes—the 403, 451, and 453—and is adjacent to the PATCO Ferry Avenue station. The three bus routes serving this store cover some of the same populations served by the routes to PriceRite; however, they also extend service to neighborhoods and households along Haddon Avenue.

⁶⁶ Julia Terruso, “Camden Gets a Supermarket,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 17, 2014. http://articles.philly.com/2014-10-17/news/55112667_1_north-camden-pricerite-camden-counties (accessed December 4, 2014).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.



Finally, as noted above, Ravitz Family Markets, the owners of PriceRite, plan to open a ShopRite at the intersection of South 17th Street and Admiral Wilson Boulevard in 2016. In addition to bringing fresh produce, meat, seafood, and other grocery items to an underserved area of Camden, the proposed ShopRite will anchor a 39-acre retail center called Admiral Wilson Plaza, create 250 construction jobs and 250 permanent jobs, and reportedly generate \$1.5 million in new tax revenues for the City.^{69,70} The developers, The Goldenberg Group, have requested \$64.9 million in tax credits from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJ EDA) to help finance the development of the shopping center, which includes the new supermarket.

Although the new ShopRite will bring fresh food to underserved residents in East Camden and Cramer Hill, the proposed location poses a number of challenges for pedestrian and transit access. Admiral Wilson Boulevard is a large, eight-lane divided highway that will provide significant vehicle traffic; however, it provides limited access for public transit and pedestrians. DVRPC recommends that Camden City and New Jersey Transit work with the developer, the Goldenberg Group, to ensure that the proposed ShopRite is well served by transit or is constructed to accommodate future transit expansions. Certain buses that run along Federal Street—Routes 404, 405, 406, and 407—could deviate from Federal Street and operate through Admiral Wilson Plaza. This one-block detour would provide many Cooper Point, Pyne Point, Marlton, Dudley, Stockton, and Rosedale residents with greater access to fresh food. To accommodate the extended route, the development should be designed from the outset with transit operations in mind. Buses are heavy vehicles that can generate significant wear and tear, increasing pavement

⁶⁹ Jim Walsh, “Developer Wants \$65M in Tax Breaks for Camden Center,” *Courier-Post*, October 23, 2014. <http://www.courierpostonline.com/story/news/local/south-jersey/2014/10/23/supermarket-project-wants-million-tax-credits/17760257/> (accessed October 31, 2014).

⁷⁰ Tara Nurin, “ShopRite to Be Built along Admiral Wilson Boulevard in Camden,” *Newsworks*, March 20, 2013. <http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/new-jersey/52477-shoprite-to-be-built-along-admiral-wilson-boulevard-in-camden> (accessed October 30, 2014).

maintenance and upkeep costs over time if inappropriate design choices are made. Additional information on designing high-quality transit stops that are well connected to the communities they serve can be found in *SEPTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines*, a report jointly published by SEPTA and DVRPC in October 2012.

Develop a lease-to-own option for community gardens and urban farms to purchase land, allowing gardeners and farmers to make long-term investments.

Thanks to a simple Adopt-a-Lot program and pioneering nonprofits closely connected to Camden communities, community gardens and urban farms have proliferated in Camden in recent years. Camden’s Adopt-a-Lot program, which was established in December 1990, allows Camden residents to apply to the Department of Public Works to use the specified vacant lot(s) for flower and/or vegetable gardening. This arrangement has helped community gardens proliferate in Camden since there is an abundance of vacant lots (estimates range from 3,000 to 9,000) in the city.⁷¹

Community Gardening in Camden, NJ, Harvest Report: 2009, a report by University of Pennsylvania professor Dominic Vitiello, observed that “Camden’s gardens may be the fastest growing in the country.”⁷² In 2013, the Camden City Garden Club supported over 120 community gardens,

⁷¹ Kevin C. Shelly, “Camden Tackles Abandoned Buildings,” *The Daily Journal*, November 27, 2013. <http://archive.thedailyjournal.com/article/20131128/NEWS01/311280022/Camden-tackles-abandoned-buildings> (accessed October 29, 2014).

⁷² Kristin Moe, “Meet the Tenacious Gardeners Putting Down Roots in ‘America’s Most Desperate Town,’” *YES! Magazine*, June 9, 2014. <http://www.yesmagazine.org/planet/meet-the-tenacious-gardeners-putting-down-roots-in-america-s-most-desperate-town> (accessed July 9, 2014).



Community Garden

totaling more than 27 acres.⁷³ In June 2014, that number was estimated to have grown to over 130 gardens.⁷⁴ Although community gardens in Camden have proliferated in recent years, most are located on city-owned, vacant lots and therefore lack permanent protection. This tenuous land tenure status is consistent with a nationwide study that found that only 5.3 percent of gardens in 38 cities were permanently protected.⁷⁵

Despite the ease of gaining temporary access to property, the Adopt-a-Lot program is not a permanent solution. Residents are not allowed to sell food or plants produced on the lot. They are prohibited from erecting

⁷³ Jason Laday, "Jersey Fresh: Camden Gardens Turn Empty Lots into Force against 'Food Desert,'" *South Jersey Times*, July 31, 2013. http://www.nj.com/camden/index.ssf/2013/07/camden_gardens_turn_empty_lots_into_force_against_food_desert.html (accessed July 24, 2014).

⁷⁴ Moe, "Meet the Tenacious Gardeners."

⁷⁵ Allison Hagey et al., *Growing Urban Agriculture: Equitable Strategies and Policies for Improving Access to Healthy Food and Revitalizing Communities* (New York: PolicyLink, 2012): http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/URBAN_AG_FULLREPORT.PDF.

structures on the site, which are necessary for storing tools and water. Additionally, the Adopt-a-Lot program does not provide gardeners with long-term land security since the city can reclaim the lot at any time, for any purpose.

Developing a lease-to-own program could help preserve some of Camden's larger, more established community gardens and urban farms by providing them with a path to land ownership. As highlighted in the sidebar, cities and land trusts have piloted lease-to-own programs across the country. Milwaukee's Home Gr/Own program was crafted with the dual intentions of returning vacant and foreclosed properties to productive use and increasing food security in one of the city's poorest and least healthy neighborhoods. Milwaukee used the lease-to-own model in this instance to build trust with the community and monitor proper land use before transferring ownership of the property. The Open Space Institute's (OSI) lease-to-own model helps farmers who do not have the hefty financial resources needed to purchase farmland to access land while growing their farm business and personal capital.

A lease-to-own program such as this could help Camden gardeners and urban farmers obtain greater land security, making investments in their garden or farm more worthwhile and possibly returning parcels to tax-paying status (although at a low, unimproved rate). The program would not replace the Adopt-a-Lot program; rather, it would provide gardeners with additional options for land tenure. It could also help provide the city with additional revenue in the form of real estate transfer taxes from the sale of the property, business and payroll taxes from employment at farms, and property taxes (most likely at a preferential low rate).

Open Space Institute's Lease-to-Own Program

Founded in 1974 to protect significant landscapes in New York State, the OSI works to preserve scenic, natural, and historic landscapes across North America in order to provide public enjoyment, conserve habitats, and sustain communities. OSI's work emphasizes permanent protection on a landscape-level scale in an effort to prevent fragmentation, which disrupts key wildlife corridors, impairs water and air quality, and diminishes the beauty and scenery of natural areas. Although their mission is not directly related to the food system, OSI recognizes the value of maintaining working family farms as a source of local food production and as a basis for a sustainable economy.

In 2012, OSI undertook a pilot lease-to-own program as a way to leverage OSI's land conservation work to support regional food system efforts. The lease-to-own program is intended to help small and beginning farmers access land, grow their farming enterprise, build equity, and eventually graduate to traditional lending institutions.

After selecting an eligible farmer, OSI works with the farmer to identify a suitable piece of land that satisfies both their farming and land conservation requirements. OSI's land acquisition arm, the Open Space Conservancy, then acquires the property. The farmer leases the property from OSI for a set term, generally five to seven years, with the option to purchase the property at any time. The purchase option provides farmers with the land security necessary to make investments in the property, such as soil improvements or fence construction and, in turn, grow their farm business. The purchase option also supports OSI's conservation efforts by positioning a private party (the farmer) to purchase the preserved land. OSI will recover the fee value of the property (property value minus the cost of the conservation easement) once the farmer exercises his or her purchase option.

Adopt agricultural zoning and create an urban farm zone.

As noted above, the Camden Food Security Advisory Board is the official municipal food security advisory council to Camden City and was formed in February 2009 through City Council Ordinance MC-4450. Its mission is to study, review, and report on food security issues in Camden to the city government. It shall advise city council on "the building of strong, sustainable, local and regional food systems that ensure Camden's communities' access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all of Camden's residents at all times; and the development of self-reliance amongst all Camden communities in obtaining their food and to create a system of growing, manufacturing, processing, making available, and selling food that is locally and regionally based and grounded in the principles of food access to all and good health through good nutrition."⁷⁶ The Board works to create a sustainable food system in Camden that is accessible and just by encouraging and implementing environmental and policy changes.

One of the Board's earliest activities was the drafting of an urban agricultural zoning ordinance. Most zoning for urban agriculture includes standards for signage, parking and loading, on-site sales, and allowed structures (greenhouses, hoopouses for offseason produce and/or flowers, farmstands). These ordinances may also include language on whether manure is allowed, whether chemicals or pesticides may be used, and whether tractors or heavier equipment may be used.

Camden must decide whether it will allow urban agriculture by-right or conditionally in certain districts, or by overlay zone. Camden may decide to designate certain areas of the city, such as Waterfront South, as urban agriculture districts, but a better approach may be to allow agriculture by-

⁷⁶ City of Camden, "Chapter 54: NJ Food Security Advisory Board," *Code of the City of Camden*, February 10, 2009. <http://ecode360.com/14721023> (accessed October 8, 2014).

right in most or all districts. This is particularly true in areas where there are already existing community gardens; otherwise, they are “zoned out.”

Until such zoning is adopted, Camden could allow urban agriculture by special exception. Gardens are often allowed as an interim use on vacant lots. It is important to note that this proposed zoning allows the activity to occur but does not permanently protect gardens or urban farms.



Apple Tree
Source: NJTF

NJ Tree Foundation

The NJ Tree Foundation (NJTF) is a statewide nonprofit organization that started planting trees in Camden in 2002 through their Urban Airshed Reforestation Program (UARP). In 2014, NJTF planted 350 new trees in Camden through UARP. In 2012, NJTF began a project now known as Fruit Tree Farmers, planting fruit trees and providing hands-on maintenance and harvesting training to tree recipients. Some of the varieties of fruit trees planted within the first two years of the program include apple, pear, peach, plum, apricot, nectarine, fig, serviceberry, crabapple, cherry, and persimmon. NJTF partnered with many community garden associations and members of the Camden City Garden Club, including Bridge of Peace Church, St. Anthony's of Padua, the Center for Environmental Transformation, the Cooper Lanning Civic Association, Lakeshore Drive Community Gardeners, and Habitat for Humanity to plant trees throughout Camden. Since its inception, the Fruit Tree Farmers project has planted 25 fruit trees a year with support from the Campbell Soup Foundation.

Camden Food Security Advisory Board

The Camden Food Security Advisory Board was founded in 2009 at the Camden City Garden Club. It is the official municipal food security council by order of the city council. Its mission is to study, review, and report on food security issues in Camden to the city government. Members are appointed by the city council and currently include representatives from Campbell Soup Company, the city council, faith-based organizations, community gardeners, and conservationists. The Camden City Garden Club houses and hosts the Advisory Board at the Camden Children's Garden on the Waterfront. Meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

Philadelphia Zoning Code

Philadelphia's new Zoning Code was adopted by the Philadelphia City Council and became effective on August 22, 2012. The new Zoning Code recognizes Urban Agriculture as a land use category. The code outlines four types of urban agriculture, each with its own requirements: community gardens, market or community-supported farms, nurseries and greenhouses for horticulture, and animal husbandry.

A community garden is a garden managed and maintained by a group of individuals whose purpose is to grow food for the people who maintain the garden and not to sell the food for profit. Some incidental sales are allowed if there is a surplus. Community gardens can be on a lot, in a building, or on a roof. The Zoning Code allows them in all residential districts, mixed residential/commercial districts, mixed residential/industrial districts, institutional districts, entertainment districts, and near the stadiums and airports. They are not allowed in port industrial districts or in recreational parks or open spaces. For districts where they are allowed, a use registration permit is all that is needed if it is a new use or a change in use. If not allowed by-right, a variance must be sought.

A market or community-supported farm is a farm maintained by an individual or group with the purpose of growing food for sale. They may also be located on a lot, in a building, or on a roof. Similar to community gardens, they are allowed in most residential districts, mixed residential/commercial and mixed residential/industrial districts, and by the airports. They are not allowed in Center City commercial districts (downtown high density), high-density industrial districts (chemical processing, petroleum, etc.), industrial port districts, stadium or entertainment districts, or recreational or open-space areas. Thus, the code is more restrictive toward farms than it is to gardens. The code requires that a special exception permit

is needed for a farm to locate in single-family detached residential districts or in institutional districts.

For both gardens and farms there are certain performance measures that must be followed regarding water, fertilizer, drainage (not allowed to drain into adjacent lots), refuse (taken out at least weekly), compost bins (must be rodent-proof), storage areas (must be enclosed), accessory structures (permit required), power equipment usage, retail sales (can only be sold on lot where it was grown), and fences (permit required).

A nursery or greenhouse is for the propagation and growth of plants in containers or in the ground for wholesale sales and distribution. Nurseries are allowed in almost all industrial districts, except for port industrial, and allowed in most residential districts and some commercial districts.

Animal husbandry is the feeding, housing, and care of farm animals for private or commercial purposes. In 2004, the city council imposed strict regulations on farm animals, which include chickens, geese, ducks, turkeys, goats, sheep, pigs, cows, and others. Farm animals are allowed only on parcels of three or more acres, and only in some industrial districts, as they are not allowed in mixed residential/industrial or port industrial districts, and not in commercial or residential areas. Many residents would like the law changed to allow for the keeping of chickens on smaller parcels.

Require native plants grown locally in green infrastructure initiatives and landscaping ordinances.

Many communities across the country are adopting native vegetation landscape ordinances (or amending current landscape ordinances) to protect and encourage the use of native plant species, with the ultimate goal of protecting the natural environment. Native plants are defined as vegetation found in the natural community that is suited to the soil, topography, and hydrology of a particular site.⁷⁷ Such ordinances often require the use of native vegetation in all public landscaped areas (including green infrastructure initiatives) and certain minimum percentages for private landscaped areas. Ordinances can vary on how much is required or how much is simply encouraged. Ordinances can also



CFET Waterfront South Tree Nursery

⁷⁷ Florida Native Plant Society, *Model Native Plant Landscape Ordinance Handbook*. Melbourne: Conservation Clinic, (2007). <http://www.fnps.org> (accessed October 8, 2014).

require that existing native vegetation and trees should be preserved to the extent practicable. In addition, language can be drafted that protects threatened, endangered, and rare native plant species.

DVRPC recommends that Camden City pursue native landscaping requirements both to protect its natural environment and to support local growers. Additionally, to accompany the landscaping requirements, the city could develop a handbook with best management practices on how to use native plants. The city could work with existing native plant organizations such as the Native Plant Society of New Jersey or the Pinelands Preservation Alliance to develop a handbook that can recommend different plants based on the site's characteristics (hydrology, size, soil, topography). The handbook could contain plant lists of all commercially available native plants by category, such as groundcover, shrub, understory tree, canopy tree, and wetland plants, among others.

Camden City could take the native vegetation landscape ordinance one step further and try to purchase native plants from local growers. Camden City currently has one native plant nursery, created by the Center for Environmental Transformation (CFET), on property owned by the CCMUA. Native plants from CFET's gardens are used in rain gardens throughout the city. Since local procurement is dependent on an available supply, Camden should encourage more local purchasing and local growing of native plants. Alternatively, Camden City may find that requiring locally grown plants may be challenging if the supply is limited, so "local" could be interpreted more broadly to include the metropolitan region.

Center for Environmental Transformation

CFET is a Camden-based organization that engages and educates people of all backgrounds about environmental issues at their urban farm and environmental retreat center. It is a faith-based organization with roots in the Roman Catholic tradition of social and environmental justice. CFET operates a number of programs for Camden youth and the larger community to support its vision of sponsoring local solutions to environmental challenges. CFET grows plants in six different locations, which include community gardens, a greenhouse, two orchards, and a native plant nursery. In addition to their gardens, CFET has a retreat center housed in a former convent with a fully equipped kitchen, dining room, community gathering rooms, bedrooms, and bathrooms for hosting group retreats. CFET also operates a weekly farmers' market in Waterfront South during the growing season, where students sell the produce they've grown in the CFET gardens.

Camden SMART

Camden SMART strives to develop a comprehensive network of green infrastructure programs and projects in Camden City to reduce future flooding; create sustainable jobs; improve air, water, and climate quality; and beautify neighborhoods. The initiative is a collaboration of many Camden stakeholders, including governmental agencies, community organizations, nonprofits, and Camden residents. To date, Camden SMART has completed a number of sustainable infrastructure projects across Camden, including planting over 1,000 street trees and 30 rain gardens. They de-paved impervious surfaces, laid porous concrete, installed rainwater harvesting systems to support community gardens, and transformed previously contaminated sites into open green spaces.



Camden SMART Rain Garden
Source: CamdenSMART

Create a prioritized land inventory to identify existing and potential community gardens and urban farms.

Community gardens and urban farms can be a stabilizing presence in otherwise blighted neighborhoods, serve as a positive influence in those neighborhoods, and in some cases even generate development interest. Even in strong markets, gardens can be a useful addition to blocks and neighborhoods by providing attractive open space and thus serving as an amenity to nearby residential and commercial spaces. However, community gardens can often fall victim to development, as other uses come into a community.

DVRPC recommends that Camden City, or a nonprofit working with the city, create a prioritized land inventory to help the city better understand its current land resources and develop a strategy to guide future growth.



Vacant Lot

Over the past two years, CamConnect, with the help of local community development organizations, conducted a citywide vacant building survey in Camden and created an interactive map to display the data. The survey found that there were an estimated 3,417 vacant houses in the city (14.8 percent of houses) and 8,142 vacant lots (excludes parks and commercial parking lots). The result is that 37.1 percent of parcels in Camden City are either vacant or contain a vacant house.

Building off the inventory of vacant land, the city needs an updated list of existing gardens and farms with parcel details such as ownership, acreage, and appraised value. The city could also include parcels that would accommodate a garden or farm, such as municipal land, rooftops, or public parks. Working with community organizations, the city could then develop criteria to determine which parcels they should retain for food uses and for nonfood uses, along with which could be assembled for future development (see *Create a land assembly strategy* recommendation, below). Not every parcel of land should be or can be eligible to become a

garden or farm, but a rational process to rank parcels guided by strategy is needed. Such a strategy could also guide the city, other nonprofits, or land trusts to determine their own acquisition plans, along with stewardship options. If the city or others were to pursue an acquisition plan, other factors, such as socioeconomic characteristics, development pressure, and proximity to other open space should be considered when deciding where to locate future gardens or farms.

There are many other cities pursuing similar inventories to use as a tool to promote urban agriculture, including Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, New York City, Oakland, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver, and soon Philadelphia. Beyond identification, inventories have had a wide range of impacts, including increasing institutional awareness and political support for urban agriculture, advancing planning and policymaking, and enhancing public involvement.⁷⁸ Some cities have used the inventories to estimate production potential, which can inform the discussion about food security and reduce the distance food is transported.

⁷⁸ Wendy Mendes et al., "Using Land Inventories to Plan for Urban Agriculture: Experiences from Portland and Vancouver," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74/4 (2008): 435–449: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944360802354923#.VeXjrZeK3bY>.

Philadelphia Land Bank

The Philadelphia Land Bank is a new agency, created in 2013 as a result of the Pennsylvania Land Bank Act (passed in 2012) and the Philadelphia Land Bank Bill (passed in 2013). The Land Bank's mission is to return vacant and tax-delinquent property to productive reuse. It will do this through a number of tools, including acquiring tax-delinquent properties through foreclosure and consolidating Philadelphia's various land acquisition and disposition processes under one agency. These steps make it easier for private individuals and organizations to acquire delinquent or distressed properties and turn them into community assets. In December 2014, the Philadelphia City Council approved the Land Bank's Strategic Plan, which outlines the city's priorities for land acquired by the Land Bank. "Reinforce Open Space Initiatives and Urban Agriculture" is specifically listed as one of the City's five goals for future land uses. To accomplish this, the Land Bank intends to identify and seek to acquire and/or dispose of vacant land where there is a need for more or improved open space. The Land Bank would look to transform properties where there is a lack of green space or gardens, low food access, and high population density.

Create a land assembly strategy to accommodate a business requiring 10 or more acres of land for redevelopment to attract light manufacturing and warehousing.

In addition to the land inventory, a land assembly strategy would benefit the city. As mentioned in the previous recommendation, CamConnect estimates that 37.1 percent of parcels in the city are vacant lots or

contain a vacant house. This does not include other parcels that may contain underutilized or functionally obsolete buildings. City agencies may receive requests from businesses looking for land or buildings in Camden; however, there is often not enough assembled land for sale. The city, working with the Camden County Improvement Authority, has identified almost 600 buildings for demolition. Most were identified based on safety concerns. However, a land assembly strategy can and should be based on existing neighborhood plans and reaching out to community organizations, residents, and businesses to identify areas for future growth.

A land assembly strategy could specifically target the creation of assembled parcels of 10 acres or more for the purpose of attracting light manufacturing and warehousing, including food manufacturing. TRF's analysis found that food manufacturing is a relatively strong sector of Camden's economy. As noted in Chapter 2, approximately 3,000 people work in the food industry in Camden. They work for nuts/peanut butter manufacturers, poultry wholesalers, canners, soft drink manufacturers, and confectioners.⁷⁹ Based on TRF's analysis, the state of New Jersey has an employment multiplier of 3.65 for food/beverage/tobacco manufacturing, meaning one job in this field creates an additional 2.65 jobs to support it. A land assembly strategy that targets light manufacturing and warehousing could build on these existing strengths, utilizing much of the current infrastructure and supply chain to further grow Camden's food economy. See *Encourage Campbell Soup Company to create a "Food Innovation District" and attract other food-related businesses to the Gateway Office Park* recommendation for more information, below.

⁷⁹ NETS database, 2010.

Cooper's Ferry Partnership

Cooper's Ferry Partnership is a nonprofit economic development organization that is dedicated to planning and implementing high-quality urban redevelopment projects to help revitalize Camden City. Cooper's Ferry partners with public, private, and local leaders to strengthen Camden's connections to its parks and waterways; leverage public investment into infrastructure and real estate; and cultivate well-programmed civic spaces that will encourage people to live, work, invest, and play in Camden City.

Streamline the licensing and permitting process for new food businesses to reduce the cost of doing business in Camden City.

Opening a new food business in Camden City can be very burdensome to new entrepreneurs. Like most cities, Camden City requires new food businesses to apply for various licenses with a number of city departments. Depending on the type of business proposed, the licenses generally require business owners to obtain three to four additional types of approval, including a health certificate from the Camden County Health Department, a Zoning Approval Letter from the Camden Planning Department, a Continued Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Bureau, and an Annual Fire Inspection from the Fire Department. The Continued Certificate of Occupancy requires that an inspector from each building trade complete an inspection of the facility. This process can be extremely cumbersome for business owners renovating one of Camden's many vacant buildings. They may face lengthy delays waiting for the various inspections and follow-up inspections, which can be detrimental to a business in need of cash flow.



Donkey's Place

DVRPC recommends that the city focus on streamlining the licensing and permitting process for restaurants and other food businesses since restaurants and retail food businesses play an integral role in revitalizing communities. "Restaurants can anchor neighborhood business districts, drawing more people and thereby making streets feel safer and more active."⁸⁰

To help ease food businesses through the city's permitting and licensing requirements, Camden City could assign case managers to new food businesses to guide them through the application and approval process, provide comprehensive checklists in multiple languages at each agency, and improve the inspection system with pre-inspections and simultaneous final inspections.

⁸⁰ Boston City Council Special Committee on Small Business, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation, "Recommendations for Streamlining Boston's Small Business Permitting and Licensing," *City of Boston*, June 16, 2014. <http://michelleforboston.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/SmallBiz-Permitting-Report-6.12.14-1.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2014).

The Boston City Council recently proposed a number of changes to support small business development in Boston. The council recommended that the city institute on-site pre-inspections to identify structural or physical problems before business owners spend time and money renovating their buildings. Additionally, the city council recommended that the city coordinate follow-up inspections from various agencies so that they occur at the same time or on the same day to improve agency coordination and reduce delays for business owners.⁸¹

Much closer to Camden, the two departments responsible for regulating food businesses in Philadelphia—the Department of Licenses and Inspections and the Department of Public Health—recently revised many of their application procedures and forms to help streamline the approval process for new food businesses. They created an instruction manual to guide entrepreneurs through the process and have started to offer joint office hours once a week to answer questions about starting a food business, inspection reports, and application reviews.⁸²

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Office of Food Protection, “Support for New Food Businesses,” The City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health, January 2015. <http://www.phila.gov/health/FoodProtection/NewFoodBusinesses.html> (accessed December 8, 2014).

City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health—Guides to Starting Food Businesses

Philadelphia’s Department of Public Health published guides to help new food business owners understand the permitting and licensing process. A guide for stationary food businesses was released in 2013, and a guide for mobile food businesses was released in 2015. The reports outline step-by-step procedures for obtaining zoning permits; location approval; food safety certification; building, plumbing, and electrical permits; inspections; and final licensing. Department contacts for the Department of Public Health, Licenses and Inspections, and the Commerce Department are included in the reports. These reports help new food business owners through the series of procedures that need to take place before opening a food restaurant and have perhaps even encouraged more people to open food establishments.

Participate in a state food policy council; encourage the creation of a state food policy council and advocate for issues affecting Camden residents, businesses, and institutions.

A food policy council is an organization that “brings together stakeholders from diverse food-related areas to examine how the food system is working and propose ways to improve it.”⁸³ Although the goals of state food policy councils reflect the particular needs and challenges of the food systems that they represent, state food policy councils generally analyze the

⁸³ WhyHunger, “Food Policy Councils.” <http://www.whyhunger.org/food-policy-councils> (accessed December 8, 2014).

existing conditions of a food system, cultivate partnerships, advocate for food policy change, and develop programs to address gaps in the food system.⁸⁴

A state food policy council could help Camden representatives advocate for broader, state-level policy changes that would improve food access and economic outcomes for Camden residents and businesses. One example of an impact that a state food policy council could have is to change New Jersey's definition of a commercial farm so that smaller farms and food-producing community gardens can accept WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) vouchers at Camden farmers' markets. Currently, the state defines a commercial farm as "a farm management unit of no less than five acres producing agricultural or horticultural products worth \$2,500 or more annually."⁸⁵ Although New Jersey implemented this restriction in part to ensure that businesses are compliant with food safety standards, other states have allowed smaller farms to accept WIC FMNP vouchers, while still monitoring food safety. Because of this provision, only one farmer in Camden currently accepts WIC FMNP vouchers, despite the high rate of WIC participation in Camden. Broadening the definition of a farm to include smaller farms like those managed by the CFET in Camden would allow more farmers to accept WIC FMNP vouchers, increasing the availability of healthy food in Camden and growing a customer base for local farmers.

A state food policy council could also have a significant impact in the area of school food. The New Jersey State Legislature passed P.L.2013 on January 17, 2014, allowing schools to serve fresh produce that has been grown in a community or school garden to students. Additional laws

⁸⁴ Kimberley Hodgson, *Food Policy Councils*, Food System Planning Briefing Paper, Chicago: American Planning Association's Planning and Community Health Research Center, 2011. https://dk-media.s3.amazonaws.com/AA/AY/pittsburghfoodpolicy/downloads/292190/Food_Policy_Council_-_APA_Document.pdf (accessed September 7, 2014).

⁸⁵ New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee. *Right to Farm Act*. State of New Jersey. <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/rtfprogram/rtfact/> (accessed November 9, 2014).

that incentivize and/or fund schools to provide more nutritious offerings to students could greatly benefit Camden schools that have a significant need for fresh produce and a diminishing funding stream.



Healthy School Lunch

State Food Policy Councils

Food policy councils have formed all over the country at both the state and local levels. There are a number of states with active and influential statewide food policy councils, most of which are nonpolitical bodies housed in their respective governors' offices. The goals of state food policy councils can vary greatly, depending on the characteristics of their food systems, the needs they want to address, and the support they receive from lawmakers and the business community.

New York's food policy council was created in 2007 by an executive order of Governor Eliot Spitzer. This food policy council was focused on coordinating policy connected to agriculture, health, and nutrition. Since its formation, two new governors have taken office, but the food policy council has remained a facet of the executive office. The state food policy council has two annual public meetings and delivers an annual report to the governor. The council has helped the state secure grants, such as the USDA Greek Yogurt Pilot Program for the state's school lunches, Farm to School grants, Hunger-Free Community grants, and many more. The state food policy council also worked with local food policy councils throughout New York to learn about regional issues and identify ways to address them at the state level.

Michigan has a state food policy council that is also facilitated by the governor's office and is funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Since its creation in 2005, the Michigan Food Policy Council has delivered an annual report of its accomplishments, most of which are one-year projects. In 2009, the state council, working with Michigan State University's Center for Regional Food Systems and the Food Bank Council of Michigan, created the Michigan Good Food Charter, which outlines several goals to achieve by 2020. The goals include targets for local food procurement, new food business creation, improved food access, and school nutrition standards. To

date, the food policy council has been instrumental in increasing the number of food retailers that can accept SNAP and developing a healthy food financing initiative.

In the agriculture-dominated state of Iowa, the current food systems council is the second of its kind. It was first formed in 2000 through an executive order of Governor Vilsack, who is the current U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The food systems council connected stakeholders from throughout the food system and gave policy recommendations to the governor's office. When a new governor took office in 2006, funding for the food systems council ceased and the council's activities stopped. Since then, the group has met as an independent nonprofit. The group has created a documentary titled "Hunger in the Heartland," received grants to promote small-scale, value-added production, and advocated for more gardening and produce sharing among citizens. Their role as a nonprofit changes their impact at the state level, as they no longer have direct access to elected officials and state agencies.



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Nonprofit organizations, especially community-based organizations, are an integral part of Camden's community and economy. They support Camden residents by providing a wide range of services, including healthcare, workforce training, education, arts and culture activities, after-school programs, and emergency food assistance. They help Camden residents connect to each other and become more involved in their city through communitywide events and service projects. They work on the ground level to help improve the quality of life for current residents and attract new people to Camden.

In addition to a wealth of social and community services, nonprofits also serve as a major component of both the city's and state's economies. A 2009–2010 study of New Jersey's nonprofit sector found that New Jersey was home to over 30,000 501(c)(3) organizations. These organizations employed over 304,000 people, "nearly 10% of the state's private sector work force and more people than many major industries,

including construction, utilities, transportation, finance and insurance."⁸⁶ Additionally, combined, the nonprofits spent over \$37 billion, mostly within New Jersey during the study period.⁸⁷ Internal Revenue Service data revealed that New Jersey 501(c)(3) organizations held approximately \$101 billion in assets in 2014.⁸⁸ Of the over 30,000 nonprofits located in New Jersey, 1,653 nonprofits—5.2 percent of nonprofits statewide—are located in Camden County.⁸⁹

Although nonprofits vary in size, scope, funding, and mission, as organizations in touch with the local community, they are well positioned to continue to support Camden residents, working to increase access to food and food-related economic opportunities. The following recommendations explore ways in which local nonprofit and community organizations can support and grow Camden's food economy.

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Create a community gardeners' cooperative to distribute surplus food and sell food at rotating farmers' markets.

A cooperative is a business or organization that is owned and run jointly by its members, who share both the responsibilities and the benefits. A Camden community garden cooperative could bring together many different gardens, gardeners, and farmers from across the city to create a

⁸⁶ Center for Non-Profits, "New Jersey's Non-Profit Community." <http://www.njnonprofits.org/NJNonprofitCom.html> (accessed December 3, 2014).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ The Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics, "Internal Revenue Service, Exempt Organizations Business Master File," November 2014, <http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/> (accessed December 3, 2014).

⁸⁹ The Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics, "Internal Revenue Service, Exempt Organizations Business Master File."



Beckett St. Garden

shared distribution and sales network. It could aggregate food from many gardens and farms within Camden and use economies of scale to more efficiently distribute the food to people within the region. Additionally, the co-op could provide a venue for gardeners to earn money for their food, increasing the economic activity within the city. It could also allow for regular donation of surplus food to food pantries or the FBSJ. However, it is important to note that business functions of any kind are currently disallowed on land that is leased through the city's Adopt-a-Lot program.

A community gardeners' cooperative could be member-owned or could be housed at one organization, such as CFET or Camden City Garden Club (which already does some of these activities for its members and Camden Grows participants). Cooperatives function by each member contributing a certain percentage or amount of profit back to the co-op to keep it operating. Food co-ops make local food more widely available by having one strong distribution agent rather than each garden or gardener going out to find channels for sales and delivery. Local restaurants and corner

stores could partner with the co-op to receive produce and other products from the member gardens. More local food can be distributed throughout the city without having to build a food hub, which requires significant capital investment.

Camden City Garden Club, through its USDA-funded Camden Grows program, performs many of these activities, from aggregating produce to selling produce via its mobile market to holding educational classes and workshops. A community gardeners' cooperative could create supplementary income for gardeners while increasing the amount of healthy, locally grown food in the city. A 2009 study estimated that Camden's community gardens produced \$65,000 worth of produce (at consumer market values).⁹⁰ However, the role of a professional coordinator and/or salesperson would have to be subsidized by grant funding and donations.

⁹⁰ Domenic Vitiello et al., *Community Gardening in Camden, NJ, Harvest Report: Summer 2009*, Penn's Center for Public Health Initiatives, Summer 2010. <http://camdenchildrensgarden.org/Community%20Gardening%20Harvest%20Report.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2014).

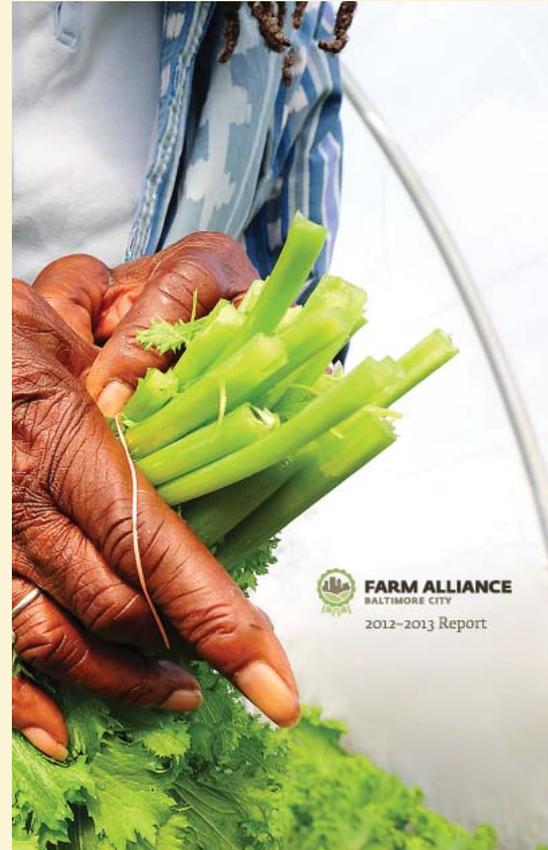
Farm Alliance of Baltimore City

The Farm Alliance of Baltimore City is a consortium of 11 urban farms all located within the city limits of Baltimore. The alliance, which operates as a nonprofit/cooperative hybrid, grew out of existing collaborations and a desire to strengthen Baltimore's food economy on a larger scale than a single farm could do individually. The group formalized and gained fiscal sponsorship through Civic Works, a Baltimore nonprofit, allowing them to apply for grants. They received support from an Open Society Institute fellowship and a USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grant, which allowed them to hire a full-time coordinator in the fall of 2011. The Farm Alliance reports that it was important for them to build trust and form strong relationships between the farms, and for them to take time to document their process and formalize procedures, which allowed the co-op to operate smoothly. The farms in the Alliance are of varying sizes, from a quarter acre to over eight acres, and grow a large assortment of crops, with some farms specializing in food, such as honey or mushrooms. This collaboration does not preclude them from running their own farm stands or CSA programs.

In order for the farms to maximize capital and reach more customers, the Farm Alliance pooled resources to staff and stock a shared stand at one of Baltimore's busiest weekly farmers' market. By selling under a shared brand, revenue went up for all farms. For its second season, the Alliance launched an online marketplace to manage restaurant sales collectively. This expanded their customer base and provided a new source of revenue for the smaller farms and expanded profits for the larger farms. The Alliance purchased a machine for credit, debit, and EBT cards to be used collectively by the group.

Over the course of the 2012 and 2013 growing seasons, the Alliance generated \$165,756 in sales, \$61,475 of which were at

the shared farmers' market stand and \$11,147 through restaurant sales. The group harvested 38,902 pounds of product, coordinated 10,983 volunteer hours, and hosted 5,334 students on the farms.⁹¹



Farm Alliance of Baltimore City 2012-2013 Report
Source: Farm Alliance of Baltimore City

⁹¹ Farm Alliance of Baltimore City, "2012-2013 Case Study," 2013. <http://www.farmalliancebaltimore.org/the-alliance/case-study-report-2012-2013/> (accessed November 10, 2014).

Create a community food resources guide to connect Camden residents to existing food resources.

Although Camden is a city with high need, there are a number of existing community resources available to residents, such as emergency food services, fresh food vouchers, and other human services. However, accessing services can often be a challenge. Many residents may not know that these resources are available, where they are located, or when they can be accessed. Connecting residents with existing resources can be a low-cost but effective way to improve food access and support residents.

Local organizations such as the FBSJ, which provides emergency food to food pantries across South Jersey, and Hopeworks 'N Camden, a nonprofit that trains at-risk youth in web development and geographic information systems, should develop and produce comprehensive guides to healthy food and emergency food by neighborhood. These guides could be modeled after the Philly Food Finder: A Guide to Food Assistance in Philadelphia⁹² or the New York City Coalition Against Hunger's Guides to Food and Assistance,⁹³ and could include information on how and where to access the federal SNAP program, WIC, School and Summer Meals, senior meals, and various other assistance resources for the neighborhoods covered. Additionally, they could include information on farmers' markets, Virtual Supermarket drop-off locations, and Healthy Corner Stores. The guides could be updated annually.

The implementing organization should publish both digital and print versions of the guide in multiple languages, which could then be distributed to local service organizations and schools throughout the

⁹² Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council, Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, and Hack4Impact, "Philly Food Finder." <http://www.phillyfoodfinder.org/> (accessed October 7, 2015).

⁹³ New York City Coalition Against Hunger, "Guides to Food & Assistance." <http://nyccah.org/get-food/food-assistance-guides> (accessed October 12, 2014).

community to help all individuals and families access the existing food resources in Camden.

In March 2015, Hopeworks 'N Camden released an online food access map that shows both corner stores and supermarkets (or grocery stores) and illustrates a quarter-mile buffer to show a reasonable distance a person might walk. The map also includes layers in population density, data, income levels, and population over 65 years old.⁹⁴ This map is a great start to widely distributing food access information and can be a good jumping-off point for more comprehensive, neighborhood-based resource guides.

Co-locate activities and coordinate times to increase access to food resources.

As noted above, Camden is home to a number of nonprofits and agencies that provide a variety of social services to Camden residents. To reduce duplication and increase the benefit to residents, service providers should work together to co-locate complementary activities and coordinate times to enable residents to access more services and obtain a greater benefit from the services provided. For example, organizations that provide food drop-off and/or retail services such as the CFS Virtual Supermarket, Greensgrow CSA deliveries, and Healthy Corner Stores should work with nutrition education providers to offer nutrition education classes that correspond with the food available. Additionally, the FBSJ, which already provides SNAP and/or WIC registration assistance, could coordinate with these events to offer these services to more Camden residents. Service providers could also try to capitalize on existing community events such as Little League registration or regular meetings such as parents' night

⁹⁴ Kim Mulford, "Virtual Desert: Food Access Maps Highlight Big Problem," *Courier-Post*, March 30, 2015. <http://www.courierpostonline.com/story/news/health/2015/03/30/virtual-desert-food-access-maps-highlight-big-problem/70656876/> (accessed March 30, 2015).

at schools, to meet people during their day-to-day activities. Additionally, service providers should work across interest areas, partnering with healthcare providers, schools, and senior centers to reach new or targeted populations.

The new Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center located in Cramer Hill could serve as a one-stop shop for many social services for neighborhood residents. The Kroc Center houses a choice food pantry and health clinic, in addition to its many community spaces and programs. Because of the range of activities and services provided, the Salvation Army offers the opportunity to reach a large and diverse population, making it a great location to provide additional services such as a CSA drop-off, cooking classes, and job training.

Coordinate and expand nutrition education programs to build healthy eating and household budgeting habits.

In *Nutrition Education: Linking Research, Theory and Practice*, Dr. Contento defines nutrition education as “any combination of educational strategies, accompanied by environmental supports, designed to facilitate voluntary adoption of food choices and other food- and nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.”⁹⁵ A USDA Food and Nutrition Service report found that successful nutrition education programs provide participants with the motivation to change their eating habits by working with them to make healthy food choices that fit their daily routine and budget.⁹⁶ This is particularly important in Camden, where

⁹⁵ Isobel R. Contento, *Nutrition Education: Linking Research, Theory and Practice* (Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett, 2007): <http://www.apjcn.org/update%5Cpdf%5C2008%5C5%5C176-179%5C176.pdf> (accessed October 5, 2014).

⁹⁶ Food and Nutrition Service, *Nutrition Education and Promotion: The Role of FNS in Helping Low-Income Families Make Healthier Eating and Lifestyle Choices*, Report (Alexandria, VA: Food and Nutrition Service, March 2010). <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education-and-promotion-role-fns-helping-low-income-families-make-healthier-eating-and> (accessed November 6, 2014).



The Food Trust and Hopeworks Providing Nutrition Education at a Healthy Corner Store

“more than 39% of boys and 40% of girls are overweight or obese as compared to the national average of 32% and 31% respectively.”⁹⁷

Many organizations offer a variety of successful nutrition education programs in Camden. These programs deliver nutrition education to residents of all ages in a number of settings throughout Camden, from prenatal nutrition programs for expecting mothers to classroom instruction for schoolchildren to household budgeting lessons. Many of these organizations and programs are highlighted in the sidebar.

Despite the number of organizations providing nutrition education in Camden, the need for nutrition education remains. Funding constraints can lead to certain sections of the city receiving fewer opportunities to access nutrition education than others. Additionally, many of the programs

⁹⁷ The Food Trust, *Annual Report Campbell Healthy Communities Fiscal Year 2013*, Campbell Soup Company, October 2013. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/campbell-report-2013.original.pdf (accessed October 5, 2014).

offered in Camden are provided through schools or after-school programs and are targeted to elementary-aged children, leaving older children and adults without regular access to these services. Existing nutrition education providers should work to reach additional residents and engage families. They should connect with existing programs and community centers to meet underserved groups where they live. Nutrition education providers have struggled to engage parents and families outside of the regular school day in the past. They have struggled to draw people out to new events and foster community engagement where none exists. As noted in the previous recommendation, instead of working from the ground up, nutrition education providers should try to capitalize on existing community events to reach adults and other underserved communities.

The Camden Physical Activity and Nutrition Education Resource Network began meeting in 2013 to foster partnerships between service providers such as YMCA and The Food Trust, and recipients of nutrition and physical education programs, such as schools and after-school programs. This network should continue to support more coordinated efforts to offer nutrition education and physical activities to Camden residents.



Child in Garden
Source: The Food Trust

New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids–Camden

For the past several years, the New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids–Camden (NJPHK–Camden) has worked to reduce hunger and childhood obesity in Camden. NJPHK–Camden, originally funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has worked to effect environmental and policy changes by partnering with the Camden City Public School District and Catholic Partnership Schools to adopt school wellness policies that will create more opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity during the school day. NJPHK–Camden has also worked in the North Camden and Parkside neighborhoods to increase opportunities for safe physical activity by implementing the Safe Places to Play Initiative.

Throughout the course of its work, NJPHK–Camden recognized that many organizations in Camden are committed to improving the health and quality of life of Camden residents. NJPHK–Camden is now exploring opportunities to transition its work into a collective impact model and bring more organizations, service providers, schools, and residents together to implement school wellness policies, create more safe places to play, and improve children’s lives.

Nutrition Education

Food Bank of South Jersey—Healthy Living Initiative

The HLI at the FBSJ is an innovative program that provides community members with hands-on nutrition education, cooking classes, and recipes made with low-cost foods, including fresh produce. The HLI was created to ensure that South Jersey residents in need of food assistance receive the skills and knowledge to maintain a healthy lifestyle starting with the supplemental foods they receive through the FBSJ network. The HLI includes Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters® program and FBSJ signature courses for preschool children, teens, and adults living with diabetes.

Since 2011, the FBSJ HLI has been a core element of Campbell Soup Company's Healthy Communities strategy in Camden City. Through the Campbell Healthy Communities program, the FBSJ has been able to provide direct nutrition education to over 1,000 children and families in the city.

In 2013 the Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs at Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey, conducted an evaluation to examine the relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the most frequently delivered HLI courses in Camden: Cooking Matters® and Wonder Chefs™ programs. The Rutgers findings showed positive shifts in choosing healthy food and snacks, using nutrition facts, and making meals and snacks at home over time. The report also showed that HLI course graduates cooked at home, chose whole grains, and used nutrition facts more often than did a control group of their peers with similar demographics.

In 2014, the FBSJ also began training Camden youth between the ages of 16 and 22 to support nutrition outreach in the community. Youth are trained in public speaking and healthy cooking techniques in order to conduct live cooking classes and demonstrations that feature locally grown and low-cost wholesome foods.

The Food Trust

The Food Trust's mission is to ensure that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food and information to make healthy decisions. Working with neighborhoods, schools, grocers, farmers, and policymakers, The Food Trust has developed a comprehensive approach to improved food access that combines nutrition education and greater availability of affordable, healthy food. The Food Trust's nutrition education programs reach broad audiences, from children in classrooms to adults at a farmers' market. In partnership with the Campbell Healthy Communities program, the Food Trust works in Camden public schools to provide nutrition education lessons, healthy cooking and tasting activities, and "Train the Trainer" nutrition education for classroom teachers. The Food Trust uses a multidisciplinary approach to nutrition education using grade-specific curriculum aligned with academic standards and seasonal celebrations.

The Food Trust also offers an innovative model to provide nutrition education by offering classes at corner stores participating in their Healthy Corner Stores program. Food Trust staff use healthy foods available for purchase in the stores in their cooking demonstrations, teaching shoppers how to make healthy meals with products available in the corner store.

FoodCorps

FoodCorps—a nationwide team of AmeriCorps leaders—recruits, trains, and places emerging leaders into limited-resource schools for a year of service. FoodCorps members teach hands-on lessons about food and nutrition, build and tend school gardens, teach cooking lessons (sometimes with food that students have grown), and work on Farm to School initiatives.

In Camden, both NJPHK–Camden and CFET host FoodCorps members. Both FoodCorps members, in partnership with the

Campbell Healthy Communities program, work directly with schools in Camden to help build and maintain school gardens, as well as to provide nutrition education to preschoolers, kindergarteners, and youth.

The Salvation Army Kroc Center

In 2012, Campbell Soup Company donated \$500,000 to the Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in Camden to support the creation of the Campbell Healthy Community Kitchen, a place where Campbell chefs and volunteers will provide nutrition education and healthy cooking demonstrations. In addition, the Campbell Healthy Community Kitchen will provide the Salvation Army with a place to prepare meals and snacks for youth and adults participating in a wide range of programs. The Campbell Healthy Community Kitchen at the Kroc Center is expected to feed thousands of members and visitors each year.

Camden City Garden Club

The Camden City Garden Club offers nutrition education as a component of their school-based youth programming, Grow Lab. Begun in 1989, Grow Lab introduces children to the basics of gardening and nutrition sciences, while also integrating important math skills. Nutrition lessons focus on making better food choices. Camden City Garden Club staff provide assistance to Grow Lab teachers through periodic classroom visitations and teacher workshops. The Grow Lab program serves thousands of schoolchildren per year in Camden City.

Center for Environmental Transformation

CFET, a nonprofit organization dedicated to environmental transformation for the neighborhoods of Camden, offers a number of programs for youth, including Garden SEEDS and two workforce training programs: Eco Interns and Assistant Farmers. Garden

SEEDS (Service, Eating, Education, Diversity, and Silliness) is a year-round program for children aged 9–13 that focuses on the hands-on exploration of growing food. Facilitated by a FoodCorps service member, participants learn about soil composition, the plant life cycle, and harvesting techniques. Garden SEEDS runs both on-site at CFET and in local schools.

Rutgers University Cooperative Extension of Camden County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

The Rutgers University Cooperative Extension of Camden County is an educational organization within the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers University that offers a number of programs to Camden residents, including two nutrition education programs. Both the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the New Jersey Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) aim to reduce hunger and prevent obesity by providing practical information on nutrition, resource management, food safety, and physical activity. The SNAP-Ed program is targeted toward SNAP-eligible adults and families, as well as youth who receive free or reduced-price school meals. EFNEP is targeted toward limited-resourced families and youth not served by SNAP-Ed. Both programs partner with community-based agencies, programs, and schools to provide classes over a number of weeks. Rutgers Cooperative Community Assistant educators—paraprofessionals trained at Rutgers in the basic nutrition concepts found in MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010—typically provide six classes at partner locations on a range of topics, including eating more vegetables and fruits, reading food labels, meal planning, and stretching food dollars. They offer adult and youth education classes for both programs. In addition to the nutrition education programs, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension manages a Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Pantry that is open to the community 11 hours a week.

Establish a commercial-scale urban farm that balances the needs for job training, nutrition education, and for-profit food production.

Camden has a well-established community garden culture; however, few urban farms currently exist. While urban farms are similar to community gardens in that they both produce food for consumption, Greensgrow, a nationally recognized leader in urban farming, notes that “urban agricultural assumes a level of commerce, the growing of product to be sold as opposed to being grown for personal consumption or sharing.”⁹⁸

Growing Urban Agriculture, a study by PolicyLink, found that urban agriculture operations with a small number of employees improve economic opportunities for residents by creating jobs, providing job training and skills development, and incubating businesses.⁹⁹ These operations can help provide supplemental income to a number of part-time workers, especially students and young adults. Additionally, PolicyLink found that several urban agriculture projects are specifically dedicated to helping individuals acquire basic job skills that will allow them to enter other job markets. These projects typically focus on youth, the homeless, and formerly incarcerated individuals.¹⁰⁰ Local farms can also help increase the amount of money circulating within the local economy by purchasing goods from other local businesses.

In addition to the economic benefits, urban farms also provide a number of social and environmental benefits to the surrounding communities. Urban farms can help to revitalize communities by creating attractive and safe spaces in formerly vacant and blighted properties. The conversion of

⁹⁸ Greensgrow Farms, “What Is Urban Farming?” <http://www.greensgrow.org/urban-farm/what-is-urban-farming/> (accessed September 20, 2014).

⁹⁹ Hagey, *Growing Urban Agriculture*.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

vacant buildings or paved surfaces to farms can also help reduce water runoff, a significant benefit for a city like Camden with combined sewer outflows and frequent flooding incidents.

While an urban farm will not create large-scale employment opportunities or eradicate food insecurity, it will enable the city and neighborhoods to capture many of these economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Parkside Business and Community in Partnership— Learning Garden

PBCIP’s Learning Garden is a demonstration urban farm on the 1200 block of Haddon Avenue that serves as a way to connect households to hands-on training in backyard gardening. The Learning Garden aims to improve access to healthy food and to provide a means of supplementing income for the many unemployed and underemployed families in the community. Specifically, PBCIP wants to use the garden to “increase access to local and affordable healthy foods; educate families and adults about a healthy food system; eliminate entry barriers preventing Camden residents from becoming backyard food growers; and, increase opportunities for employment and commercial exchanges within Camden City using the local food system and food economy.”



Parkside Learning Garden
Source: Jonathan Wetstein, PBCIP

Identify and preserve long-standing and iconic community gardens that are not permanently protected.

Like other cities, Camden has a rich history and strong culture of growing food in community gardens. Whether as a way to increase access to healthy food, preserve their cultural heritage, reduce stress, or foster stronger community relationships, many Camden residents have turned to community and backyard gardens. The Camden City Garden Club, which was established in 1985, has helped foster this culture of community gardening.¹⁰¹ Although community gardens have proliferated in Camden in recent years, a few of Camden’s community gardens have existed for decades. For example, the Camden Men’s Garden, located in Camden’s Morgan Village neighborhood, has been in operation for over 30 years. At almost two acres, the Men’s Garden is the largest community garden in the

¹⁰¹Vitiello, *Community Gardening in Camden*.

city. In 2009, approximately a dozen gardeners tended plots and produced a total of 24,179 servings of summer vegetables.¹⁰² Brother Jerry’s Garden in the Cramer Hill neighborhood is another example of an iconic community garden that is central to the surrounding community. In 2008, St. Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic Church converted a lot that had previously held a police substation and drug dealers into a community garden. Although only in operation for six years, Brother Jerry’s Garden has become a space for “newcomers and longtime neighborhood residents to get to know each other and grow to appreciate one another’s food and culture.”¹⁰³ Over 35 families, many Spanish-speaking, and friars garden at Brother Jerry’s. Many give food away to neighbors and churchgoers on Sundays.

These two gardens have become an integral part of their respective neighborhoods. Although they are not currently facing development pressures, recent redevelopment efforts, largely around the waterfront and downtown Camden, could threaten some of these long-standing and iconic community gardens. To preserve these gardens and other long-standing gardens for future generations of Camden residents, DVRPC recommends that the Camden City Garden Club partner with an existing land trust, such as the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) or Trust for Public Land, to permanently preserve a select number of community gardens. Since land preservation can require significant resources to acquire the land, Camden City Garden Club should work with community groups and gardeners to identify the gardens that are the best candidates for preservation. They could use their knowledge of the community garden landscape and relationships with Camden gardeners to determine which gardens have the strong commitment from an organization or community group required to care for the land for many years to come. Additionally, the Camden City Garden Club and a preservation organization could work with city government and planning organizations to identify areas most likely to experience development pressures in the next 20 to 30 years.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid.

Permanent preservation will not only provide land security for a few iconic gardens, but it will also allow them to further investments in the land and surrounding neighborhoods, forming deeper community connections.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation

Founded in 1960, NJCF has worked to preserve New Jersey's land and natural resources. Within the South Jersey Metro Region, NJCF works to provide sustainable stewardship of existing and future preserved open spaces, specifically urban green space and trails. NJCF's main projects include the Camden Greenway and Delaware River Heritage Trail, both of which aim to create a continuous system of open space for recreation and environmental enhancement along the shorelines of the Cooper and Delaware rivers and Newton Creek. NJCF partners with community members and governmental organizations such as Camden City and Camden County and state land managers, as well as regional organizations like the Circuit Coalition and the East Coast Greenway Alliance to support land protection and stewardship.

Expand the Virtual Supermarket program.

The Center for Family Services (CFS) is a nonprofit human services agency based in Camden, New Jersey, that operates over 65 programs with the goal of supporting and empowering individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better life. In December 2013, CFS partnered with Supermarkets of Cherry Hill, Inc.—the operator of five ShopRite stores in southern New Jersey—to pilot a Virtual Supermarket program in Camden, called the Camden Food Access Initiative (CFAI), over a 12-week period.



Rutgers Camden Students promoting the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program

Based on Baltimore's Baltimarket Program and initiated by Governor Christie's administration, the CFAI aimed to reduce the barriers to fresh food by providing Camden residents with access to ShopRite's online store and making deliveries at key locations within the city. During the pilot phase of CFAI, residents had the option of placing their orders online from their own homes or with a CFS staff member at the Pine Street Head Start location or the Promise Neighborhood Family Success Center. Orders were delivered once a week to the Isabella Miller Community Center and the Promise Neighborhood Family Success Center. ShopRite waived the cost of packing and delivery during the first 12 weeks of the program, ensuring that the only cost participants incurred was the cost of their groceries. As with traditional grocery stores, customers were able to use their SNAP and WIC benefits on eligible items. In addition to coordinating grocery delivery, CFS conducted three nutrition classes.

In 2014, CFS formalized the program, rebranding it as the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program. In the second phase of the program, CFS changed grocery delivery sites to include Mickle Towers,

a senior housing development. Mickle Towers is located next to another senior housing building, Riverview Towers, enabling CFS to reach an additional 400 Camden residents through the Healthy Routes program.

CFS also recruited and trained two Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program advocates. The advocates advertise the program at community meetings and events, and they engage community members who may be hesitant to try the program. The advocates also help Mickle Towers and Riverview residents to create ShopRite profiles and place grocery orders.

As of April 2015, 105 different participants had placed 533 grocery orders through the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program. By September 2015, 125 people had enrolled in the program, with many participants using it on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. Additionally, CFS recently received a request to expand their grocery delivery locations to five Camden City senior centers, demonstrating a growing demand for the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program.

The program is currently funded through a variety of sources, including a small grant by the Nicholson Foundation. Additionally, ShopRite has continued to waive delivery fees. Staff costs are covered by an Americorps Vista grant and Family Success Center contract. Given the program's increasing success, we recommend that governmental and philanthropic organizations support the expansion of the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program.

Baltimarket

Baltimarket, an initiative of the Baltimore Department of Public Health, includes a wide variety of community-based food access and food justice programs, including the Virtual Supermarket. In 2010, Baltimarket started the Virtual Supermarket program to allow Baltimore residents to order groceries online and pick them up at set locations throughout the city with no registration or delivery fees. The program accepts cash, credit, debit, or EBT/SNAP and is currently funded by Walmart and United Way, in partnership with ShopRite. Grocery pick-ups are available at libraries, public housing, and low-income senior housing. The program works to incentivize healthy food purchases by providing \$10 off of healthy food for every fourth order placed. In 2011, approximately 150 people used the Baltimarkets program, ordering over \$21,000 worth of groceries.¹⁰⁴

Center for Family Services

The CFS is a nonprofit human services agency based in Camden, New Jersey, that operates over 60 programs with the goal of supporting and empowering individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better life. CFS's services range from Head Start to substance abuse treatment to youth mentoring to behavioral counseling. CFS has worked in South Jersey for over 95 years to help people overcome barriers and support them in building a foundation for self-sufficiency.

¹⁰⁴ Vanessa Hoffman, "SNAP to Health Interviews Laura Fox on Baltimarket and SNAP," *Snap to Health!*, February 16, 2012. <http://www.snaptohealth.org/snap-to-health-interviews-laura-fox-on-baltimarket-and-snap/> (accessed September 10, 2014).

Grow the next generation of gardeners by fostering intergenerational gardening programs.

As stated before, gardening is an activity with many benefits, including growing food, increasing social capital, beautifying the neighborhood, and encouraging physical activity. Additionally, gardening is an activity that can be pursued by people of all ages. Intergenerational gardening—bringing people together, including seniors and children, around gardening—can be valuable to the community as it helps to integrate seniors into the community and share with a new generation their wealth of knowledge and experience about growing food and culture.¹⁰⁵

Nuestras Raices, a grassroots nonprofit organization that was started in 1992 by community members in Holyoke, Massachusetts, aims to foster intergenerational gardening at their nine community gardens in the city. They rent out plots at a low price to families who tend their crops together. In addition, the garden functions as a community space where older gardeners pass down gardening knowledge to younger generations. Nuestras Raices is also a cultural organization celebrating Puerto Rican heritage. The garden grows many culturally appropriate fruits and vegetables native to Puerto Rico and is important, especially to older generations, to educate and preserve the cultural heritage of their families for future generations. Intergenerational activities such as gardening, cooking, and eating are ways to preserve both family and cultural traditions.

Camden has a number of culture-based community garden organizations and projects. The Boat People SOS, the nation's largest Vietnamese-American community organization with the mission to empower,

¹⁰⁵ National Gardening Association, "Intergenerational Gardening," <http://www.nationalgardenmonth.org/index.php?page=200903storyline> (accessed November 29, 2014).

organize, and equip Vietnamese individuals and communities in their pursuit of liberty and dignity, operates the Southeast Asian Roots Farm/Resilient Roots Farm in the Dudley neighborhood. Additionally, the Camden City Garden Club manages a Puerto Rican garden at the Camden Children's Garden.

Although preserving cultural heritage is one way to foster intergenerational gardening, the many other community gardens throughout the city can bring together people of all ages to share information and work together to grow both food and increase social capital in the community. The Camden City Garden Club has worked with the New Jersey Foundation for Aging to establish a Senior Citizen Advisory Council, as well as to develop community gardens at senior housing developments Northgate I and Northgate II that serve over 50 residents.¹⁰⁶ The Camden City Garden Club should continue to work with the New Jersey Foundation for Aging to expand their intergenerational programming and increase opportunities for mentorship between seniors and students within the garden setting.

¹⁰⁶ New Jersey Foundation for Aging, "Community Gardening and Its Impact on Seniors," July 17, 2013. <http://blog.njfoundationforaging.org/?p=348> (accessed December 1, 2014).



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

The University of Minnesota’s Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program defines community economic development as “a sustained community effort to improve both the local economy and the quality of life by building the area’s capacity to adapt to global economic changes.”¹⁰⁷ The International Economic Development Council’s *Economic Development Reference Guide* notes that although “there is no single definition, for economic development...the main goal of economic development is improving the economic well-being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements, and quality of life.”¹⁰⁸ Both of these definitions highlight economic development’s focus on growing economic activity for all to improve the community’s overall well-being.

Communities try to achieve these goals through a variety of different strategies, policies, and programs, including implementing workforce development programs, relaxing local business taxes and regulations, developing business incubators, creating small business support centers, and offering incentives to attract and retain businesses.

Within Camden, a number of organizations, including government agencies, business development centers, for-profit companies, and community-based nonprofits have worked for years to improve economic outcomes. The NJ EDA is an independent state agency that provides financing and tax incentives to encourage businesses, nonprofits, and developers to locate and grow in New Jersey. Camden City can support economic development by creating a business-friendly climate through less restrictive regulations and tax policies. Additionally, as a major land owner, the city can use its land to help subsidize new development. As noted in the “Government” section of this chapter, Cooper’s Ferry Partnership is a nonprofit organization that works to attract new businesses and residents to Camden through a number of initiatives such as streetscaping, marketing, and pop-up parks. Other local economic development organizations such as LAEDA; Rutgers-Camden Technology Campus, Inc.; and the New Jersey Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Rutgers-Camden help entrepreneurs and small businesses start and grow their companies by providing technical assistance, access to capital, subsidized office space, and promotional events.

The following recommendations explore ways in which economic development organizations, government agencies, nonprofits, and businesses can support and grow Camden’s food economy.

¹⁰⁷ George Morse and Scott Loveridge, *Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program: Is It for Our Community?*, Rep. no. 72, BR&E International, Penn State Printing Services, 1997. <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/agecon/market/cd1605.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ International Economic Development Council. *The International Economic Development Council’s Economic Development Reference Guide*. http://www.iedconline.org/clientuploads/Downloads/IEDC_ED_Reference_Guide.pdf (accessed December 2, 2014).

TOP RECOMMENDATION

Expand the Heart Bucks Program for healthy purchases in Camden's corner stores.

Founded in Philadelphia in 1992, The Food Trust strives to ensure that everyone has access to healthy, affordable food and the information to lead healthy lives.¹⁰⁹ The Food Trust works at both the community and public policy levels to address the complex issues that lead to food insecurity and diet-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes. As part of its mission to increase access to healthy food in underserved communities, The Food Trust, in partnership with the Campbell Healthy Communities program, has been working with corner store owners in Camden that want to sell more fresh produce and other healthy foods but lack the experience and equipment to source, stock, and sell healthy products. The Camden Healthy Corner Store Network provides technical assistance to Camden corner-store owners to help them stock and sell healthy items and educates children and families about making healthy food choices. Since the Camden Healthy Corner Store Network began in 2011, the network has grown from five stores in two neighborhoods to 39 stores in 11 Camden neighborhoods.

Building on the success of their Camden Healthy Corner Store Network, The Food Trust created a Heart Bucks coupon program to encourage residents to purchase healthy foods at participating corner stores. The Heart Bucks Program is modeled after The Food Trust's successful Philly Food Bucks program and provides coupons redeemable for heart-healthy foods at participating corner stores in Camden. The Food Trust is piloting the Heart Bucks Program in 10 Healthy Corner Stores throughout Camden

¹⁰⁹ The Food Trust, "Our Mission." <http://thefoodtrust.org/about/mission> (accessed October 24, 2014).

during the program's first year. Heart Bucks distribution is tied to in-store nutrition education lessons provided by Food Trust staff. Food Trust staff distribute four \$1 Heart Bucks vouchers to each nutrition education participant to incentivize the purchase of healthy products. The Food Trust anticipates that they will distribute approximately \$3,000 worth of Heart Bucks in the first year. Early indicators have shown great success with over 90 percent Heart Bucks redemption rate.

Funding for the first year of the program was provided by the Camden Food Innovation Fund (see *Recapitalize the Camden Food Innovation Fund* recommendation, page 39) and the New Jersey Healthy Corner Store Initiative. Funding for the second year of the program was provided by the Campbell Healthy Communities program. Based on the early success of the program, DVRPC recommends that The Food Trust work with private and corporate philanthropy to expand the program to all participating Healthy Corner Stores. Further expansion could include point-of-sale software that would allow the rewards to be automated, similar to a supermarket's loyalty program.



Nutrition Education in a Healthy Corner Store
Source: The Food Trust

Double Value Coupon Programs

A number of local, state, and national nonprofits and government agencies have created programs that allow recipients to earn additional buying credits for each dollar of SNAP benefits that they spend at eligible farmers' markets. These programs strive to both increase access to healthy food and generate higher sales for farmers.

Wholesome Wave, a nonprofit that seeks to reshape the American food system by putting entrepreneurial ideas and thinking to work, developed the Double Value Coupon Program (DVCP) in 2008.¹¹⁰ DVCP provides customers with matching dollars when they spend their SNAP benefits at a participating farmers' market that can then be used to purchase healthy food from the farmers' market. Wholesome Wave is currently working with 60 partners in 21 states and the District of Columbia. In 2013, DVCP and SNAP benefits spent at eligible farmers' markets generated nearly \$2.4 million in revenue nationwide.¹¹¹ The program has been embraced by the USDA. The 2014 Farm Bill included the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program, which provided \$100 million for nutrition incentive programs like Wholesome Wave's DVCP.

The Fair Food Network, a national organization based in Michigan, operates the Double Up Food Bucks program. This program matches any SNAP purchases at specific farmers' markets up to \$20 per market day. Matching tokens are only valid for Michigan-grown fresh fruits and vegetables.¹¹² Fair Food Network is piloting a similar program at several grocery stores in Detroit. Every individual

¹¹⁰ Wholesome Wave. "Double Value Coupon Program." <http://66.39.100.79/dvcp/> (accessed October 29, 2014).

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Fair Food Network, "Double Up Food Bucks." <http://www.doubleupfoodbucks.org/> (accessed October 5, 2014).



Philly Food Bucks

Source: Dave Tavani, *The Food Trust*

spending \$10 or more of SNAP benefits on fruits and vegetables could receive a \$10 Double Up Food Bucks card to use on Michigan-grown produce.

Closer to Camden, Philly Food Bucks is a program that provides shoppers with an additional \$2 for every \$5 of SNAP benefits spent on fruits and vegetables at 25 farmers' markets throughout Philadelphia. The program is operated by The Food Trust and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Get Healthy Philly program. Additionally, health practitioners and clinicians can distribute the \$2 coupons to SNAP-eligible individuals. The program has provided nearly \$160,000 of fresh produce to low-income residents and increased the use of SNAP dollars at farmers' markets.¹¹³

¹¹³ Allison Karpyn et al., *Get Healthy Philly: Farmers Market and Philly Food Bucks 2013 Report*, Food Trust and Get Healthy Philly, 2013. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/farmers-market-program-evaluation-2013.original.pdf (accessed August 7, 2014).

Further invest in existing culinary arts training programs, such as Cathedral Kitchen and Respond, Inc., and investigate the possibility of securing additional meal contracts.

A number of organizations in Camden offer culinary arts training programs to provide local residents with marketable skills that will enable them to obtain a self-supporting job. Cathedral Kitchen (see sidebar) and Respond Inc. both offer multi-week, hands-on classroom and kitchen training for adults. Cathedral Kitchen graduates approximately 40 people, and Respond Inc. graduates 120 people, per year.

UrbanPromise is a Camden nonprofit organization that strives to “equip Camden’s children and young adults with the skills necessary for academic achievement, life management, spiritual growth, and Christian leadership.”¹¹⁴ In 2014, UrbanPromise launched the UrbanChefs program, with support from the Walmart Foundation. Teens participating in UrbanChefs receive hands-on culinary arts training and nutrition education. They are then offered employment with UrbanPromise to prepare meals and snacks for UrbanPromise students and summer camp participants. UrbanPromise expects that the UrbanChef program will serve more than 77,000 meals and snacks each year.¹¹⁵

Many of these culinary training programs are funded either partially or in whole through other food-related operations. Cathedral Kitchen operates a contract meal program and catering services that cover a portion of the costs of its training program. Respond Inc. operates a for-profit bakery with a storefront in North Camden that helps to support the culinary arts training program.

¹¹⁴ UrbanPromise, “Our Mission.” <http://www.urbanpromiseusa.org/mission> (accessed November 11, 2014)

¹¹⁵ UrbanPromise, “\$30,000 from Walmart Launches Full-Scale Food Programs at UrbanPromise.” October 28, 2014. <http://www.urbanpromiseusa.org/blog/2014/10/28/30000-walmart-launches-full-scale-food-programs-urbanpromise> (accessed October 13, 2015).



Cathedral Kitchen Students Plating Meal
Source: Cathedral Kitchen

Cathedral Kitchen recently undertook a capital campaign to expand its kitchen in order to prepare meals for daycares, parochial schools, and group homes. They began a contract with Volunteers of America Delaware Valley in December 2014 to provide 1,600 meals a day for their eight residential facilities in Camden. This expansion is promising, as it could mean more jobs within Camden for graduates of culinary arts training programs. In fact, 10 of Cathedral Kitchen’s culinary graduates were hired in November 2014 to launch the contract meal program. Further investing in existing culinary arts training programs while helping to develop supplementary income sources will provide more Camden residents with the opportunity to cultivate marketable skills and obtain self-supporting jobs.

Cathedral Kitchen

Cathedral Kitchen began in 1976 with the goal of feeding the hungry in Camden. Since then it has grown into a multifaceted nonprofit organization that provides hundreds of meals a day, health screenings and basic dental care, culinary training, and employment in their social enterprise programs. Cathedral Kitchen's meal program has been their core program for the past three decades. Cathedral Kitchen serves hot meals to an average of 325 people six days each a week (Monday to Saturday) in its dining room at 1514 Federal Street in Camden.

Cathedral Kitchen launched its first job-training initiative—the Culinary Arts Training program—in February 2009. The program operates twice per year for 17 weeks, enrolls 40 students per year, and includes instruction in various cooking and baking methods, plus ServSafe food safety and sanitation standards. Since the first class in 2009, 195 students have graduated and become ServSafe certified, and 75 percent have obtained jobs within three months of graduation.

In 2014, Cathedral Kitchen underwent a \$2.3 million expansion project, renovating an adjacent building to include a large commercial kitchen, café, and rooftop garden. The commercial kitchen will allow Cathedral Kitchen to contract meal service with other agencies and host a baking arts training program to launch in the fall of 2015, while the café will allow Cathedral Kitchen to expand its culinary arts training program to include “front of house” training and business management.

Expand the Rutgers Food Innovation Center by creating a satellite location in Camden that caters to the needs of low-income and minority entrepreneurs.

Encouraging entrepreneurship can be a powerful poverty reduction tool.¹¹⁶ *Launching Low-Income Entrepreneurs*, a recent study by the Center for an Urban Future, found that “more initiatives to support and encourage entrepreneurship in low-income communities would help to bring economic self-sufficiency to New Yorkers who have long struggled to make ends meet. At the same time, if low-income residents were to open small businesses—food trucks, grocery shops, retail and restaurants—in their low-income communities, it would also help to bring economic vitality to many neighborhoods that currently lack services.”¹¹⁷ The study noted that many people in these communities are already engaged in entrepreneurship in the informal economy. “All over the city, there are barbers cutting hair in their living rooms, people baking cakes for neighborhood birthdays, teens deejaying parties, moms operating informal child care centers, men washing windows of local businesses, kids selling m&m’s on the subway, amateur photographers taking head shots for aspiring models and tech-savvy high school students building Websites for friends.”¹¹⁸ Despite this entrepreneurial spirit, low-income people often face many challenges when starting a new business, including a lack of access to capital and technical assistance. Encouraging and supporting these business-minded people to convert their skills into legitimate

¹¹⁶ Stephen Slivinski, *Increasing Entrepreneurship Is a Key to Lowering Poverty Rates*, No. 254, Goldwater Institute, November 13, 2012. <http://www.realclearmarkets.com/docs/2012/11/PR254%20Increasing%20Entrepreneurship.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2014).

¹¹⁷ Kim Velsey, “Could Entrepreneurship Help Low-Income New Yorkers Achieve Economic Self-Sufficiency?” *New York Observer*, April 25, 2013. <http://observer.com/2013/04/could-entrepreneurship-help-low-income-new-yorkers-achieve-economic-self-sufficiency/> (accessed August 15, 2014).

¹¹⁸ Kahliah Laney et al., *Launching Low-Income Entrepreneurs*, Center for an Urban Future, April 2013. <https://nycfuture.org/pdf/Launching-Low-Income-Entrepreneurs.pdf> (accessed August 15, 2014).

businesses can help them achieve personal economic mobility and benefit the broader community.

One way to support entrepreneurship within the food system is through the development of a kitchen or culinary incubator. Preparing food in a permitted, commercial kitchen can be prohibitively expensive to budding entrepreneurs if a new business has to purchase all of the equipment on their own. Kitchen incubators have been developed as a response to this challenge. Defined as “shared-use commercial kitchens that culinary entrepreneurs can rent by the hour or block of time,” kitchen incubators allow entrepreneurs to pilot their food business idea without the significant financial investment it takes to start a new business from scratch.¹¹⁹

There are many models of kitchen incubators. Some spaces operate only as a shared-use kitchen, whereas others offer “supportive resources, training, or capacity building for entrepreneurs.”¹²⁰ Some kitchen incubators, such as the Rutgers Food Innovation Center, are tailored to value-added products, while others are tailored to developing food businesses such as caterers or bakeries. Some incubators, such as La Cocina in San Francisco, focus on supporting low-income, minority, and immigrant food entrepreneurs. Other incubators, such as Hot Bread Kitchen in Harlem, New York, focus on providing culinary workforce training and building the entrepreneur’s capacity to operate a small business.

Although there are two kitchen incubators in the Greater Philadelphia region, they do not currently serve the needs of Camden residents and businesses. The Rutgers Food Innovation Center, located in Bridgeton, New Jersey, is better suited to serve the needs of new and expanding food and agri-businesses in rural South Jersey. Additionally, it is not accessible for many Camden residents without a car. The Enterprise Center (TEC)

¹¹⁹ Econsult Solutions, Inc., *U.S. Kitchen Incubators: An Industry Snapshot*, August 5, 2013. <http://www.econsultsolutions.com/experience/our-projects/food-incubator-study/> (accessed August 10, 2014).

¹²⁰ Ibid.

Dorrance H. Hamilton Center for Culinary Enterprises (CCE) offers more services to start-up food production businesses, as well as significant classroom training and technical assistance programs. Although the CCE is transit accessible via PATCO and SEPTA, it is not convenient for residents of Camden to travel to West Philadelphia in addition to their daily work and family responsibilities.

To help Camden residents who want to start or expand a food business, DVRPC recommends that the Rutgers Food Innovation Center partner with LAEDA and the Salvation Army Kroc Center to develop a Camden Food Innovation Center that responds to the needs of low-income and minority food entrepreneurs in Camden City. The Camden Food Innovation Center should draw on the experiences of La Cocina in San Francisco and the Low Income Food Entrepreneur program in New York City, which subsidizes the rates of kitchen rentals and helps cover some of the costs associated with starting a new business, such as permitting and licensing fees. It should work closely with Camden entrepreneurs to not only develop new food products but also to create a successful business. LAEDA could work with the Rutgers Food Innovation Center to provide business and technical assistance services such as developing a business plan, finding funding resources, analyzing the market, creating a pricing strategy, and developing a marketing strategy. Additionally, the Salvation Army Kroc Center Café could feature many of the products produced by Camden Food Innovation Center students, giving the entrepreneurs exposure to a broader customer base. This partnership could provide comprehensive support to food entrepreneurs, fostering the creation of new food businesses in Camden.

Rutgers Food Innovation Center

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center is a business incubation and economic development accelerator program that provides shared-use processing space and technical assistance to both new and established food businesses. Opened in 2008, the 23,000-square-foot food business incubator facility located in Bridgeton, New Jersey, supports all levels of food entrepreneurs and businesses—from farmers to start-ups to existing food service companies. The Rutgers Food Innovation Center offers a number of business and technical services, including business plan development, market assessment, pricing strategy, and product design. Additionally, the Rutgers Food Innovation Center can help clients develop new food products and test new product ideas in their state-of-the-art food processing facility.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is an international organization, part of the universal Christian Church, which offers a variety of services and programs that range from disaster response to youth programming to recreational facilities. In Camden, the Salvation Army has focused on providing youth programming such as summer camps and after-school activities, as well as hunger relief services through their food pantry and meal services. The Salvation Army recently relocated from the Parkside section of Camden to the new Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center located in the Cramer Hill neighborhood. Located on 24 acres in a new 120,000-square-foot facility, the Kroc Center is intended to serve as the hub for Salvation Army services in Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, and Salem counties. The center features a number of spaces and resources, including a worship sanctuary, gymnasium, indoor competition pool, black box theater, community gathering spaces, a choice food pantry, early childhood education center, health clinic, conference rooms, and other services.

Dorrance H. Hamilton Center for Culinary Enterprises

The CCE is a shared commercial kitchen space that supports both new and established food businesses by providing physical space and technical assistance. TEC, a West Philadelphia community development corporation, opened CCE in the fall of 2012 in a former Acme Supermarket located at 48th and Spruce streets. The renovated facility totals 13,000 square feet and includes a number of restaurant-quality amenities such as gas stoves, walk-in refrigerators, and commercial stand mixers. The four commercial kitchens are available for rent 24 hours a day, allowing entrepreneurs to grow their business in a permitted space with lower overhead costs. The CCE also has an eKitchen Multimedia Learning Center, which is a fully operational demonstration kitchen and classroom.

In addition to its physical amenities, the CCE supports emerging food businesses by providing technical assistance, such as mentoring, contract placement, and marketing to help them grow and succeed. According to Philadelphia LISC, CCE supported the development of 20 new businesses in its first year.¹²¹

In July 2014, CCE introduced its newest development—The Common Table—to support aspiring chefs and food businesses. The Common Table is a restaurant incubator and a technical assistance program that will allow participants to test their restaurant concepts in a fully staffed, 1,400-square-foot restaurant space. CCE will work with the participants to establish their own restaurant in a more permanent space in West Philadelphia if they so choose.

¹²¹ Philadelphia LISC, *Partnerships That Build Communities and Improve Lives*, (Philadelphia: Philadelphia LISC, 2012). <https://philadelphialisc.wordpress.com/2013/12/09/philadelphia-lisc-releases-annual-report/> (accessed October 16, 2014).

Encourage Campbell Soup Company to create a “Food Innovation District” and attract other food-related businesses to the Gateway Office Park.

As one of the largest and oldest businesses in Camden, Campbell Soup Company continues to be an important presence in the city. Although it closed its Camden plant in 1990, Campbell still employs over 1,000 people at its world headquarters located in Camden’s Gateway District.¹²² In an effort to revitalize its corporate campus and the surrounding neighborhood, Campbell approached the NJ EDA with the idea of redeveloping the Gateway District in 2007. Campbell invested \$132 million to expand its world headquarters, renovate existing buildings on campus, and to acquire several vacant and neglected buildings, empty parking lots, and other parcels that were not being used in order to prepare them for redevelopment. More recently, in October 2014, Campbell announced that it had selected Brandywine Realty Trust as the developer for the mixed-use development.¹²³ Brandywine Realty Trust will develop an office park on the 13 acres of Campbell’s property that run along Newton Street for potential tenants. The site qualifies for numerous state tax incentives, including the new New Jersey Economic Opportunity Act of 2013 and the Garden State Growth Zones (GSGZ) Program, which could prove very beneficial in helping to attract new businesses to this location. In December 2014, Subaru of North America announced that they would locate their new corporate headquarters at the Gateway Office Park, becoming the first major tenant of the new development.

¹²² Daniel Sidorick, “Campbell Soup Company,” *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, Rutgers University, 2013. <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/campbell-soup-company/> (accessed October 16, 2014).

¹²³ Natalie Kostelni, “Brandywine Realty Trust Picked to Develop 13 Acres in Camden for Campbell Soup Co.,” *Philadelphia Business Journal*, October 9, 2014. <http://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/blog/real-estate/2014/10/brandywine-realty-trust-picked-to-develop-mixed.html> (accessed October 16, 2014).

As the Gateway Office Park continues to develop, DVRPC recommends that a portion of the Gateway Office Park be used to establish a Food Innovation District. A Food Innovation District is defined by the Michigan State University’s Center for Regional Food Systems as, “a geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services, and community activities [that] connect and catalyze emerging clusters of food and agriculture activity.”¹²⁴ Borrowing from the theory behind agglomeration economies, food innovation districts encourage the resource and idea sharing that occurs when entrepreneurs and related initiatives work in close proximity.¹²⁵

Activities and services in a Food Innovation District can include food retail and restaurants; food business incubators; shared facilities for food storage, processing, and distribution; public spaces for festivals and events; urban agriculture; and nutrition education.¹²⁶ The Gateway Office Park would be an ideal location for a Camden Food Innovation District because of its proximity to Campbell Soup Company, major freeways, local farmland and producers, and major metropolitan markets. The Camden Food Innovation District could draw on Campbell’s legacy as a food manufacturer, as well as Camden’s growing community garden and urban farming ethos. The Food Innovation District could contain a number of resources and amenities, including:

- a publicly accessible Campbell Soup Company store and/or Campbell museum;
- an office for Rutgers SBDC to provide technical assistance for entrepreneurs that want to start a food business;
- space to create value-added products;

¹²⁴ Patty Cantrell et al., *Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool*, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. March 2013. <http://www.nwm.org/food-innovation-districts> (accessed July 25, 2014).

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

- restaurants and food retail for the new Gateway Office Park tenants;
- space for food-related technology businesses; and
- publicly accessible spaces for programs like nutrition education or farmers' markets.

Ultimately, the Food Innovation District should build on Camden's existing assets, proximity to Campbell and its talent, and should respond to community needs by creating usable office space, welcoming public space, and retail opportunities for residents, workers, and visitors alike.

Project Storefronts in New Haven, Connecticut

Initiated by the City of New Haven's Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism in 2009, Project Storefronts is "an award-winning program that brings fresh, innovative arts-related businesses to life in formerly empty retail spaces in New Haven, CT."¹²⁷ Project Storefronts combines economic development, downtown revitalization, and arts by working with property owners and arts businesses to bring new life to vacant buildings. The long-term goal of the project is to revitalize commercial corridors by attracting permanent tenants to underutilized spaces, support artistic and creative businesses, and increase foot traffic in and awareness of New Haven's various commercial districts.¹²⁸

Project Storefronts operates by first identifying empty properties on commercial streets. The city then works with the landlord to lease the space to artists rent-free for 90 days and, in return, the temporary tenants agree to clean up the space. Past "pop-ups" include art galleries, workshop spaces, vintage clothing shops, and handmade jewelry stores. The program recently received a \$100,000 National Endowment for the Arts grant to continue operation.

More recently, Project Storefronts has taken on a few other, larger projects. In an older building that was previously used as a music center, Project Storefronts created an arts hub with regular events, programming, gallery shows, and artist studio spaces.

¹²⁷ "About Project Storefronts," Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/projectstorefronts/info?tab=overview> (accessed December 1, 2014).

¹²⁸ "About Project Storefronts," *Project Storefronts*, City of New Haven Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism. <http://www.projectstorefrontsnewhaven.com/> (accessed November 29, 2014).

The Food District @ Weinland Park

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is central Ohio's metropolitan planning agency, serving the 12-county central Ohio region. In April 2010, MORPC released the Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan, which contains 24 recommendations for expanding the regional food economy and increasing food access for residents of all income levels. Since the release of the plan, MORPC has worked to help its member counties establish local food councils and develop local food plans.

Weinland Park, a primarily residential neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio, located at the edge of the Ohio State University campus, experienced significant population loss in the past half-century as a result of the loss of industrial jobs. Like many other urban neighborhoods, it faces high levels of poverty and unemployment but has a number of assets, such as substantial foundation investments; underutilized industrial properties; and good access to an interstate highway, downtown Columbus, and Ohio State University.¹²⁹ In 2011, MORPC received an \$865,000 Community Challenge Grant from HUD to create plans for physical facilities and educational programs that would make the production, processing, distribution, preparation, and celebration of food a central feature of the revitalization of Weinland Park.¹³⁰

MORPC worked with a number of grant partners, including a developer, Ohio State University, the City of Columbus, and many nonprofits to develop a proposal to create a food-related business and workforce center that would also provide health, education,

employment, economic, and lifestyle benefits to Weinland Park. The Food District proposal envisioned the development of a 45,000-square-foot facility located on a site of a former 3M facility. MORPC estimated that the new facility would cost \$20 million to construct and would create at least 60 permanent jobs.¹³¹ Brian Williams, the Agricultural Specialist at MORPC, noted that the Food District is intended to be a social enterprise, meaning that while it will be financially self-sustaining, it will provide a public good. MORPC worked with various business experts during the planning process to analyze potential revenue streams and business models that would allow for additional funding to support job training and educational programs.¹³²

Upon completion of the planning process in August 2013, MORPC transferred responsibility for the Food District to a newly formed community development corporation: the Community Economic Development Corporation of Ohio (CEDCO). CEDCO is working to implement the plan and is leading efforts to raise funding for and develop the Food District at Weinland Park. The current strategy is to develop the district in phases, starting with a food-processing business using high-pressure pasteurization technology.

¹²⁹ Gary Seman Jr., "Food District Planned for Weinland Park," *This Week Community News*, January 15, 2014. <http://www.thisweeknews.com/content/stories/2014/01/16/food-district-planned-for-weinland-park.html> (accessed July 25, 2014).

¹³⁰ Community Economic Development Corporation of Ohio, "The Weinland Park Food District Vision." <http://cedcoohio.org/wp-vision/> (accessed July 25, 2014).

¹³¹ Walker Evans, "Food District to Bring Jobs, Resources and Fresh Food to Weinland Park," *Columbus Underground*, August 29, 2013. <http://www.columbusunderground.com/food-district-to-bring-jobs-resources-and-fresh-food-to-weinland-park> (accessed July 27, 2014).

¹³² *Ibid.*



*The Food District @ Weinland Park
Source: Design Group and MORPC*

Create a social media training program to highlight neighborhood businesses.

Many people commute to Camden for work at the city’s many institutions, such as Cooper and Our Lady of Lourdes hospitals. Others visit from around the region to attend concerts at the Susquehanna Bank Center, tour the Battleship New Jersey, or visit other attractions in the city’s redeveloped waterfront neighborhood. Most of the time, these visitors and workers go directly to their destination without venturing into other parts of Camden. They may not be aware of many of the city’s other assets, such as great family-owned restaurants.

To showcase Camden’s cuisine and attract new patrons to local restaurants, LAEDA developed a monthly “Dine-Around Friday” series. Dine-Around invites residents, Rutgers-Camden students, business people, and visitors to explore and support a different local restaurant every month for lunch. The Dine-Around Friday event was started in 2013 and featured five restaurants located in the East Camden and

Parkside neighborhoods of the city. It introduced 117 individuals to these restaurants and generated \$1,703 in new sales.¹³³ LAEDA has continued to host Dine-Around events, connecting new customers to Camden’s culturally rich restaurants. DVRPC recommends expanding this program by creating a branding and social media campaign using Yelp, Google, Chowhound, Foursquare, and other platforms. Developing a logo or brand for the Dine-Around program would help to identify restaurants that have participated in the program and draw additional business.

Additionally, DVRPC recommends that LAEDA extend the impact of Dine-Around Fridays in Camden by (1) creating a social media training program for small business owners and (2) partnering with Yelp to create an “elite” event, which brings the Yelp users who write high-quality reviews on a regular basis to different restaurants in the region. Careful online marketing, combined with an event and positive social media reviews,



*LAEDA Dine-Around Friday
Source: LAEDA*

¹³³ Latin American Economic Development Association, *Dine-Around Friday Write-Up* (Camden, NJ: Latin American Economic Development Association, December 22, 2014).

could help to attract business people and short-term visitors to Camden restaurants, above and beyond the ones that participate in Dine-Around Fridays. An increased online presence could help Camden to become a new destination for adventurous foodies in the region.

Additionally, the state of New Jersey has a Destination Marketing Opportunity Grant that allows tourism organizations to connect travelers with a New Jersey destination. LAEDA and other local economic development organizations such as Cooper's Ferry should apply for funding such as the Destination Marketing Opportunity Grant to support the creation of restaurant events and social media training.

Camden Supper Club

Inspired by LAEDA's Dine-Around events, a group of young professionals, spearheaded by Rutgers-Camden Professor Stephen Danley and web developer Joseph Russell, started the Camden Supper Club in January 2015. The Supper Club meets once or twice a month at different restaurants throughout Camden with the dual purposes of finding fun, new places to eat and supporting local businesses in Camden. The first visit to Corinne's Place on Haddon Avenue consisted of only a small group of friends, but as word of the Supper Club has grown, attendance has also increased to around 30 people per meal.¹³⁴ After their monthly visit to a new restaurant, Supper Club members are asked to review the restaurant on Yelp, helping to develop positive online presences for Camden businesses.

¹³⁴ Tammy Paolino, "Discover Camden's Many Restaurants with Supper Club," Courier-Post, <http://www.courierpostonline.com/story/life/2015/09/22/discover-camdens-many-restaurants-supper-club/72615626/> (accessed October 7, 2015).

Latin American Economic Development Association

The LAEDA is a nonprofit economic development organization dedicated to the creation of small business ownership opportunities for all minorities, to contribute to the growth and success of small businesses and the development of the marketplace in the communities it serves.

The LAEDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (LCEDS) is a grassroots-based plan forged over the past 27 years of LAEDA's history. The LCEDS is a holistic approach to the development of an entrepreneurial business climate from the ground up rather than from the top down. At the core of this plan of action are three strategic thrusts: growing the marketplace through commercial district revitalization efforts, building the business through targeted technical assistance and training, and empowering the individual through LAEDA's successful Entrepreneurial Development Training program.

The ultimate goal of this strategy is to generate both economic and employment opportunities that will contribute to the resurgence of Camden City's economy. LAEDA believes dynamic economies within the city's commercial districts can be created as a result of its LCEDS strategy, resulting in sustained economic and employment opportunities for Camden's current and future residents.

Create a small business and nonprofit circuit rider position in which a new staff person assists nonprofits and businesses by professionalizing services, updating management systems, updating websites and social media, and creating up-to-date marketing materials.

At a Small Business Roundtable at the Camden Waterfront Technology Center, Camden Mayor Dana Redd said, “Small businesses are ‘the lifeblood of our city.’”¹³⁵ Small business owners are generally long-time residents of Camden who have been investing in the city for years. Although small businesses can provide many benefits to a community, such as creating jobs, increasing economic activity, and stabilizing neighborhoods, they often face many barriers to sustained success. Many nonprofits perform services or have special programs that function as a business, such as Respond Inc.’s bakery.

One of the more common challenges among small business owners and nonprofits alike is having enough time and know-how to successfully market a service.¹³⁶ Small businesses and nonprofits may excel at providing their core service or product; however, many struggle with mastering social media, business technology, business management processes, and small but important customer service details.

To help small businesses and nonprofits in Camden become and remain successful, DVRPC recommends that business support organizations such as LAEDA or the New Jersey SBDC create a circuit rider position. Drawing

¹³⁵ Melanie Burney, “Small-business Owners Attend Camden Forum,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 16, 2014. http://articles.philly.com/2014-03-16/news/48247336_1_booker-business-leaders-many-small-business-owners (accessed September 28, 2014).

¹³⁶ Gayle Christiansen et al., *Strengthening Local Economies and Civic Life: The Untapped Power of Small Businesses*, Regenerating Local Economies: Environment, Equity and Entrepreneurship in America’s Post Industrial Cities Series (Cambridge, MA: MIT Community Innovators Lab, 2010). https://colab.mit.edu/sites/default/files/Strengthening_Local_Economies_and_Civic_Life.pdf (accessed September 28, 2014).



Made in Camden

on the tradition of circuit riders that provide technology assistance to nonprofits and local governments, this position would work one-on-one with City of Camden nonprofits and small businesses to build business knowledge capacity within the client organizations. Although the position would be housed at a business assistance organization, the circuit rider would be temporarily embedded in a small business or nonprofit, providing technical assistance to help the company or nonprofit professionalize its operations. The circuit rider could help small businesses and nonprofits develop the skills to organize their financial information, create a stronger social media presence, and update their business management and recordkeeping software. The circuit rider would help to build the business management capacity through deep understanding of the business and one-on-one training so that the new skills remain with the organization once the circuit rider moves on.

Create a Camden entrepreneur fair or meet-up.

As discussed throughout *Cultivating Camden*, fostering business development and entrepreneurship will be a key facet of growing Camden's economy. The city contains many entrepreneurs already, but due to a lack of retail corridors within the city, many small business owners, artists, and inventors who have goods and ideas to sell have no outlet to do so. An entrepreneur fair in Camden can bring together people within the city to sell their products, pitch their ideas to investors, and network with other business people and potential customers to receive feedback and ideas to help them move forward with their company. The entrepreneur fair could include food businesses, tech companies, clothing and accessory lines, and service providers. A series of fairs and meet-ups for entrepreneurs can include classes and workshops on marketing, business development, management, sustainability, and other best practices. Possible partners include LAEDA, Rutgers-Camden's business school, Rowan University, and other businesses in Camden. Bringing people of all industries together in Camden could foster more partnerships and entrepreneurship within the city, helping to create an environment of investment and business development within Camden.



Petty's Island Rum

Source: *Cooper River Distillers and Emily Bucholz*

Cooper River Distillers

In April 2014, founder and Chief Distiller James Yoakum opened Cooper River Distillers—Camden's first legal distillery since Prohibition—in a former auto-repair shop in downtown Camden. Cooper River Distillers produces a number of craft spirits, including a variety of rums, bourbons, and whiskeys, that are available at bars and restaurants throughout the region, as well as in select liquor stores in South Jersey.

Although Mr. Yoakum grew up in Kentucky and lives in Philadelphia, he chose to locate his business in Camden because of its character, history, and connectedness. In an interview with *USA Today*, Mr. Yoakum said, "The main reason for Camden was I liked the kind of edge and character that it has. You say that you're opening a distillery in Camden and people remember that, they notice that, they take interest."¹³⁷ Other benefits to operating in New Jersey are the state's liquor laws. A new craft license allows smaller distillers such as Cooper River Distillers to produce up to 20,000 gallons per year for a much lower license fee. Additionally, Cooper River Distillers can distribute its final product directly to restaurants, bars, and liquor stores without paying a percentage to a separate distributor. Despite these conveniences, Mr. Yoakum found that "in some ways opening a business in Camden is more challenging that it would be in other places—there are up-hill battles to be fought here."¹³⁸ However, he notes that "the benefits of being in Camden outweigh the headaches and make it worth the effort."¹³⁹

¹³⁷ James Yoakum, "Cooper River Distillers," *USA Today*, April 20, 2014. <http://www.usatoday.com/media/cinematic/video/7952251/cooper-river-distillers/> (accessed September 27, 2014).

¹³⁸ Cooper River Distillers, "About Cooper River Distillers," 2014. <http://cooperriverdistillers.com/CRD/about-cooper-river-distillers> (accessed September 28, 2014).

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

Create a network of underutilized commercial kitchens that can be rented out by entrepreneurs.

There are churches and temples located in every neighborhood in Camden, many of which have kitchen facilities. Kitchen facilities in religious buildings are often underutilized assets that support religious services and functions a few times each week but otherwise are left empty. Sharing these often underutilized resources could help to support local entrepreneurs and facilitate economic development without the cost of building new infrastructure.

To better capitalize on these existing resources, DVRPC recommends that a local economic development or community organization partner with local religious institutions to facilitate commercial kitchen rentals between religious organizations and local food entrepreneurs. Facilitating commercial kitchen rentals could encourage catering companies, food trucks, value-added food producers, and cooking instructors to start their business in Camden without having to purchase a space or equipment. It would also provide revenue for religious organizations, which could help to support their programming, services, or facilities.

In Philadelphia, Greensgrow Farms facilitates a community kitchen rental for local food entrepreneurs at a rate of \$20–\$30 per hour or for a set fee if the space is used the whole day. This arrangement came about as a result of the increasing popularity of “Greensgrow Made” prepared products at their farm stand and in their CSA shares. The need for a large kitchen to prepare their foods led them to a partnership with St. Michaels Lutheran Church, located five blocks from the farm. Greensgrow updated the kitchen and began using it to create their value-added products. The updated kitchen also fulfilled a need for new food entrepreneurs who wanted to start creating their own products for sale on food trucks and



Food Truck near Cooper Hospital

at markets but did not have access to permitted space where they could cook. The Greensgrow community kitchen has been a starting point for many Philadelphia food entrepreneurs who have since moved into their own facilities. In addition, the facility is used for cooking classes, demonstrations, instruction in canning, preserving, butchering, and as an educational space for community members. The community kitchen provided over \$17,000 in rental revenue in 2010.¹⁴⁰

Continue “pop-up” activities like Camden Night Gardens that celebrate Camden residents, support local businesses, and make Camden a destination for nearby visitors.

¹⁴⁰ Nessa Richman, “Urban Farms Benefit Low-Income Consumers: Greensgrow,” Financing Healthy Food Options: Implementation Handbook: A Food Systems Overview, Department of the Treasury, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, September 30, 2011. http://www.cdfifund.gov/what_we_do/resources/Food%20Systems%20overview%20for%20Fund%20102411.pdf (accessed January 2, 2015).



Camden Night Gardens
Source: Cooper's Ferry Partnership

On April 17, 2014, over 3,000 people attended the first Camden Night Gardens, a large community event showcasing local talent and culture. Funded by the William Penn Foundation, hosted by Cooper's Ferry Partnership and Camden City, and curated by the art studio Nuit Blanche New York, the one-night festival featured an illuminated bicycle motorcross showcase, a bike parade and pop-up tune-up shop, booths with food from local restaurants, and light shows on the Delaware River and Camden Water Tower. A few months later, Cooper's Ferry hosted the "Harvest Table," a follow-up Night Gardens event, which invited hundreds to a dinner party catered by Respond Inc.'s culinary training program and held under an illuminated canopy of trees in Camden's Northgate Park.

Both of these events were "placemaking" activities, designed to identify and promote the positive use of vacant or underutilized public spaces in Camden. The events temporarily transformed Camden's physical landscape and changed how people experience the city for one night.

Both events received tremendous positive press and community feedback. In fact, Cooper's Ferry Partnership received funding from ArtPlace America to continue and cultivate the Night Gardens in 2014 and 2015. The success of Cooper's Ferry's Camden Night Gardens underscores a desire for more community events in Camden.

The Food Trust organizes a similar but different series of events called Night Markets, a roving food event that celebrates up-and-coming neighborhoods and showcases Philadelphia's diverse food and drinks scene. The first Night Market took place in East Passyunk in 2010. Since then, The Food Trust has hosted over a dozen Night Markets, attracting over 200,000 attendees and more than 300 food vendors.¹⁴¹ A recent study estimated that the Night Market series produced \$11.4 million in economic impact and supported more than additional 123 jobs in Philadelphia.¹⁴²

Both Camden Night Gardens and The Food Trust's Night Market offer two examples of fantastic pop-up events that work to attract people to new parts of a city, support local businesses, and promote existing city and neighborhood assets. Cooper's Ferry or The Food Trust should continue to develop pop-up events like these throughout Camden.

Create a pedal-powered food distribution program.

Begun in 1997 as an urban farm on an abandoned lot in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, Greensgrow is a nonprofit organization that owns and operates a community farm, retail nursery, and food distribution

¹⁴¹ The Food Trust, "What Is Night Market Philadelphia?" <http://thefoodtrust.org/night-market/what-is-night-market-philadelphia> (accessed September 20, 2014).

¹⁴² Senator Robert P. Casey Jr., *Following Casey Effort, Food Trust Wins Grant to Keep Successful Night Market Food Truck Events Going in Philadelphia*, June 17, 2014. <http://www.casey.senate.gov/newsroom/releases/following-casey-effort-food-trust-wins-grant-to-keep-successful-night-market-food-truck-events-going-in-philadelphia> (accessed August 20, 2014).

business specializing in locally grown products. Greensgrow also operates a CSA program, which aggregates food from 80 Pennsylvania farms in order to sell 500 shares of food to Philadelphia-area residents. In 2013, Greensgrow introduced the SNAP Box Program, which provides participating families with five to eight produce items each week that they pay for using their SNAP benefits. In its first year, 75 Philadelphia and Camden families participated in the SNAP Box Program.

In Camden, Greensgrow works with the CFET to offer CSA shares to Camden residents using produce from CFET's gardens. Currently, SNAP Box participants have to pick up their shares at CFET's Waterfront South location between 3:30 and 5:30 on Friday afternoons. The time and location restriction can be very limiting, as Camden residents who cannot travel to CFET at that time are not able to participate in this program.

To help more Camden residents access Greensgrow's SNAP Box Program, CFET has proposed partnering with the Camden branch of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) to develop a bike-powered food distribution system. RTC will work with CFET to establish safe biking routes for delivery services; develop new, user-friendly bicycle maps of the Waterfront neighborhood; and advocate for the addition of future bike lanes and other pathways in city and county Master Plans for Bicycle Infrastructure to create key connections to desired destinations. Camden youth participating in CFET's many programs will deliver weekly CSA shares to participants via bike.

Although initially developed for the Greensgrow CSA program, if successful, the bike delivery system could be expanded to provide additional distribution options for Camden food providers. For example, the bike food distribution system could partner with CFS to make food deliveries for the Healthy Routes Neighborhood Grocery Delivery Program to help them reach more Camden residents.

Rails-to-Trails CYCLE Program

RTC, in partnership with Cooper's Ferry Development Association and the Police Athletic League, started the Camden Youth Cycling, Learning, and Exercising (CYCLE) Program in 2010 as a way to provide Camden youth with the skills and confidence necessary to ride bicycles in an urban environment. Funded by the William Penn Foundation and Campbell's Soup Foundation, CYCLE teaches students about the importance of a healthy, active lifestyle, while giving them the freedom to explore parts of their city and region that they have never seen before. It encourages Camden youth to be stewards of the Camden Greenway trail network, which connects Camden City to Philadelphia and South Jersey.

Students in the CYCLE program learn about bike maintenance and how to ride safely throughout the city and the region. CYCLE leads the participants on rides throughout the region, logging over 40 miles during various rides. The CYCLE program concludes with a long ride through parts of Greater Philadelphia, with past years completing a week-long 250 mile bike ride through Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Participants who complete the 16-session CYCLE program receive a new bicycle, bike helmet, and bike jersey. CYCLE has grown from approximately 20 students in 2010 to more than 300 students in 2012.

4

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS



While DVRPC is the author of *Cultivating Camden: The City's Food Economy Strategy*, Camden's 77,000 residents are the stakeholders of not only the city's food economy but also the broader global, national, and regional food systems. As mentioned before, this document draws on a number of efforts, many already underway, with the aim of identifying opportunities to increase food access and economic opportunities within the city. Implementing the numerous recommendations will take the dedicated efforts of many actors working together in Camden City. Hopefully, individuals, organizations, institutions, and government agencies can see the unique roles that they can play in strengthening Camden's food economy.

Moving forward, DVRPC will monitor the strategy's implementation. The data highlighted in Chapter 2 is a helpful mechanism for periodic and general assessments of Camden's food system and food economy. The Work Group meetings are a place to bring colleagues and stakeholders up to date on various projects, find ways to collaborate, and discuss future research needs.

Funding Opportunities

As noted in Chapter 1, Camden is experiencing unprecedented private-sector interest and growth, largely as a result of the Economic Opportunity Act of 2013. The increasing interest in Camden City coincides with increasing national interest in health, food access, and equity. Because of these two trends, DVRPC anticipates that there will be several grant opportunities in which parts of *Cultivating Camden* can be implemented. Recent grants from the New Jersey Health Initiative, a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to help build a Culture of Health in 10 New Jersey communities is one such example of related grant opportunities.

As grants, especially federal grants, are extremely competitive, the Work Group meetings provide opportunities for stakeholders to learn about each others' interests and strengths and possibly collaborate on projects. This type of collaboration makes the city more competitive in pursuing grant opportunities. DVRPC will continue to support stakeholders' grant applications, tying individual efforts into a citywide framework, and to offer technical assistance when appropriate.

Data

Periodic review of the data outlined in Chapter 2 will provide stakeholders with opportunities to reflect on changes in the food system and food economy. DVRPC hopes the data will aid stakeholders in securing grant funds and demonstrating measurable results of their efforts. If future data analysis shows that little has changed or trends have worsened, the data may inspire new recommendations, interventions, and strategies.

Recommendations and Implementers

The following pages summarize the recommendations put forth in *Cultivating Camden*. The recommendations are paired with possible lead implementers, as well as call-outs of related, exemplary practices. While designating implementers is useful, it is important to note that DVRPC has purposely not identified all principal actors.

This plan was created through a three-year stakeholder-driven planning process, but not all relevant implementers, such as the federal government, were part of the planning process.

It will take time to realize all of *Cultivating Camden*'s goals, but there are things that individuals can do right now to support the goal of increasing food access and improving economic opportunities through food in Camden. Individuals can support the city's economy and heritage by purchasing fresh, locally grown foods from a nearby farmers' market or eating at a locally owned restaurant. If one has the space, growing a garden will improve a household's food security. The city is improving its park and trail network, helping people to get outside, enjoy the outdoors, and exercise or commute to work. Lastly, individuals can advocate for the protection of community gardens, adoption of agricultural zoning, and expansion of transit services.

FIGURE 4.1: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLEMENTERS, AND CALL-OUTS

	Recommendations	Possible Lead Implementers	Call-outs
 <p>INSTITUTIONS</p>	<p>TOP RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Implement FreshRx programs with vouchers for healthy food and integrate nutrition education at each hospital in Camden.</p>	Hospitals	Lankenau Medical Associates and Philly Food Bucks MANNA in Camden
	<p>Increase regional food purchasing by creating a Regional Purchasing Organization (RPO) and working with international food vendors and management companies.</p>	Hospitals, Rutgers University–Camden	Common Market Regional Purchasing Organizations
	<p>Encourage further collaboration on food-system-related research between nonprofits, hospitals, universities, and schools to expand the evidence base for food-related programming.</p>	Rutgers University–Camden	Rowan University/Rutgers–Camden Board of Governors
	<p>Recapitalize the Camden Food Innovation Fund, a collaborative grantmaking fund at the Community Foundation of South Jersey.</p>	Community Foundation of South Jersey	Community Foundation of South Jersey
	<p>Launch a Fresh Carts Initiative that partners with local institutions, such as hospitals, to increase access to healthy foods and support local food entrepreneurs.</p>	Cooper’s Ferry, Camden City	Get Healthy Philly’s Healthy Carts Program
	<p>Better Utilize 2-1-1 to coordinate emergency food programs to include referrals and schedule appointments.</p>	NJ 2-1-1 Partnership	Food Bank of South Jersey Choice Food Pantries



GOVERNMENT

	Recommendations	Possible Lead Implementers	Call-outs
	<p>TOP RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Work with alternative models of grocery stores to locate in Camden City at prime or transit accessible spots, such as near the universities or at the redesigned Rand Transportation Center.</p>	Camden City	Upscale Urban Grocery Stores
	<p>Ensure that all Camden neighborhoods have transit access to the PriceRite, Aldi, and the proposed ShopRite.</p>	Camden City, New Jersey Transit, ShopRite	
	<p>Develop a lease-to-own option for community gardens and urban farms to purchase land, allowing gardeners and farmers to make long-term investments.</p>	Camden City, Camden Food Security Advisory Board	Open Space Institute's Lease-to-Own Program
	<p>Adopt agricultural zoning and create an urban farm zone.</p>	Camden City, Camden Food Security Advisory Board	New Jersey Tree Foundation Camden Food Security Advisory Board Philadelphia Zoning Code
	<p>Require native plants grown locally in green infrastructure initiatives and landscaping ordinances.</p>	Camden City, Center for Environmental Transformation, Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority	Center for Environmental Transformation Camden SMART
	<p>Create a prioritized land inventory to identify existing and potential community gardens and urban farms.</p>	Camden City, Camden Food Security Advisory Board	Philadelphia Land Bank
	<p>Create a land assembly strategy to accommodate a business requiring 10 or more acres of land for redevelopment to attract light manufacturing and warehousing.</p>	Camden City, Cooper's Ferry, DVRPC	Cooper's Ferry Partnership
	<p>Streamline the licensing and permitting process for new food businesses to reduce the cost of doing business in Camden City.</p>	Camden County, Camden City	City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health—Guides to Starting Food Businesses
	<p>Participate in a state food policy council; encourage the creation of a state food policy council and advocate for issues affecting Camden residents, businesses, and institutions.</p>	Office of the Governor, New Jersey Healthy Corner Store Task Force, Camden Food Security Advisory Board	State Food Policy Councils

	Recommendations	Possible Lead Implementers	Call-outs
 <p>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</p>	<p>TOP RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Create a community gardeners' cooperative to distribute surplus food and sell food at rotating farmers' markets.</p>	Camden City Garden Club, Center for Environmental Transformation	Farm Alliance of Baltimore City
	<p>Create a community food resources guide to connect Camden residents to existing food resources.</p>	Hopeworks 'N Camden, Camden Food Security Advisory Board, Food Bank of South Jersey	
	<p>Co-locate activities and coordinate times to increase access to food resources.</p>	Service Providers, Food Bank of South Jersey Schools, Salvation Army, Healthy Corner Stores	
	<p>Coordinate and expand nutrition education programs to build healthy eating and household budgeting habits.</p>	The Food Trust, Camden City Garden Club, Food Bank of South Jersey, Center for Environmental Transformation, Rutgers University Cooperative Extension, Food Corps, Salvation Army, Campbell Healthy Community Program	<p>New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids–Camden</p> <p>Nutrition Education Call-Outs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Bank of South Jersey • The Food Trust • Food Corps • The Salvation Army Kroc Center • Camden City Garden Club • Center for Environmental Transformation • Rutgers University Cooperative Extension of Camden County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
	<p>Establish a commercial-scale urban farm that balances the needs for job training, nutrition education, and for-profit food production.</p>		Parkside Business and Community in Partnership– Learning Garden
	<p>Identify and preserve long-standing and iconic community gardens that are not permanently protected.</p>	Camden City Garden Club, New Jersey Conservation Foundation	New Jersey Conservation Foundation
	<p>Expand the Virtual Supermarket program.</p>	Center for Family Services	Baltimarket Center for Family Services
	<p>Grow the next generation of gardeners by fostering intergenerational gardening programs.</p>	Boat People SOS, Camden City Garden Club	



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ORGANIZATIONS**

	Recommendations	Possible Lead Implementers	Call-outs
	TOP RECOMMENDATION Expand the Heart Bucks Program for healthy purchases in Camden’s Corner Stores.	The Food Trust	Double Value Coupon Programs
	Further invest in existing culinary arts training programs, such as Cathedral Kitchen and Respond, Inc., and investigate the possibility of securing additional meal contracts.	Cathedral Kitchen, Respond, Inc., Urban Promise	Cathedral Kitchen
	Expand the Rutgers Food Innovation Center by creating a satellite location in Camden that caters to the needs of low-income and minority entrepreneurs.	Rutgers Food Innovation Center, Latin American Economic Development Association, Salvation Army	Rutgers Food Innovation Center Salvation Army Dorrance H. Hamilton Center for Culinary Enterprises
	Encourage Campbell Soup Company to create a “Food Innovation District” and attract other food-related businesses to the Gateway Office Park.	Campbell Soup Company	Project Storefronts in New Haven, Connecticut The Food District @ Weinland Park
	Create a social media training program to highlight neighborhood businesses.	Latin American Economic Development Association	Camden Supper Club Latin American Economic Development Association
	Create a small business and nonprofit circuit rider position in which a new staff person assists nonprofits and businesses by professionalizing services, updating management systems, updating websites and social media, and creating up-to-date marketing materials.	Latin American Economic Development Association, New Jersey Small Business Development Center	
	Create a Camden entrepreneur fair or meet-up.	Latin American Economic Development Association	Cooper River Distillers
	Create a network of underutilized commercial kitchens that can be rented out by entrepreneurs.		
	Continue “pop-up” activities like Camden Night Gardens that celebrate Camden residents, support local businesses, and make Camden a destination for nearby visitors.	Cooper’s Ferry, The Food Trust	
	Create a pedal-powered food distribution program.	Center for Environmental Transformation, Rails to Trails, Greensgrow	Rails-to-Trails CYCLE Program



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Sunflower at Beckett St. Garden



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Abstract:

The food system is an important part of the economy; food manufacturing can provide much needed low- and moderate-skill jobs; local food production, preparation, and distribution offer entrepreneurial opportunities; and agricultural products are among the nation's strongest and largest exports. This publication analyzes Camden's current food economy and makes a number of recommendations to improve food access and increase economic opportunities for Camden City residents through food-related economic development. The strategy combines current innovative projects with recommendations for future investments, programs, and policies. It is structured around four broad groups of implementers: Institutions, Government, Community Organizations, and Economic Development Organizations.

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