



City of Boston
Food Justice



GrowBoston
Office of Urban Agriculture

OFJ and GrowBoston Strategic Goals (2023 - 2026)

As new offices within the City of Boston, the Office of Food Justice (OFJ) and GrowBoston: Office of Urban Agriculture want to ensure that we have the biggest impact we can on building food justice in Boston, in partnership with residents, community groups, food producers/businesses, and other governmental agencies. To build on our previous work as the Office of Food Access and the Grassroots Program, we have identified four major goals that will allow our work to have a bigger collective impact on the food system. These goals will drive the majority of OFJ and GrowBoston's work and resources over the next several years.

Why:

Food access is inequitably distributed for Boston residents and the food system is largely destructive to the planet. Addressing the injustices and environmental harm within our food production and distribution systems calls for significant changes. While we work to create a fairer, more resilient, and sustainable food system for the future, we as local government agencies are also committed to the immediate steps necessary to continue creating more equitable food access.

We believe that these goals will leverage the unique power and relationships of local government agencies to address current and future challenges. They are designed to improve food security in Boston; address the food system's impact on climate and workers; and build a more fair and resilient food system. Such a system better represents our residents' values and strengthens BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) -led and -owned food production.

How:

Goal 1: Build equitable access and distribution systems for fresh, culturally relevant, and/or regionally grown food citywide for food insecure communities

OFJ will connect farmers markets and small retail stores in historically disinvested neighborhoods to local and regional producers. Through tools like technical assistance, subsidies, or incentives, OFJ will help strengthen the capacity of these markets to understand community needs and source local and culturally-relevant produce.



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Goal 2: Leverage City food procurement to increase City department food purchases from regional producers and BIPOC producers

Using the City's millions of dollars of food purchasing power to buy food produced in ways that support worker livelihoods, local economies, racial equity and sustainable production would have a major impact on shifting how food is produced. In implementing the Good Food Purchasing Program, the City will align its spending with its values, which would shift the food system within and beyond the City. OFJ will work with Boston Public Schools (BPS)—the City's largest food-buyer—and City departments to prioritize purchasing from local, small, and BIPOC vendors.

Goal 3: Increase food recovery from public and private institutions and strengthen pathways to connect food insecure residents with fresh, healthy recovered food

In Boston, over 100,000 tons of food are sent to landfills or incinerated yearly. To reduce this volume and to increase access to healthy foods that remain safe to consume, OFJ will work across the City to increase fresh food that is recovered instead of thrown away. We will do this by supporting improved coordination and infrastructure for emergency food organizations, food rescue entities, and food waste generators across the City and regionally.

Goal 4: Increase food production in neighborhoods including in public spaces like parks, housing developments, schools, and community centers

GrowBoston, in partnership with OFJ, will invest in educational and professional development activities; support BIPOC-led food-producing organizations and those directly serving BIPOC producers; leverage public land and buildings for urban agriculture; invest in fruit tree care; and make other investments and efforts to expand community-led urban agriculture in Boston.

Achieving these goals and the larger systems changes that they are a part of will require sustained collaboration, community participation, and adaptability. OFJ and GrowBoston will be convening with partners and Boston residents and measuring progress along the way.