



Harvard

Food Law and Policy Clinic

A Division of the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation

**Strategic Policy Advocacy
Recommendations for the
Appalachian Diabetes Coalition
in Tennessee**

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About the Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions

The Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions were organized to address diabetes and its related chronic diseases in rural Appalachia through efforts on local and state levels. The Coalitions consist of strategic alliances of community organizations that join together to address diabetes-related problems. Since 2000, the Marshall University Robert C. Byrd Center for Rural Health (Marshall) has supported the development of Coalitions across the Appalachian Mountain region, from Alabama to West Virginia.

About the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic

Established in 2010, the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic (FLPC) addresses the health, environmental, and economic consequences of the laws and policies that structure our food system. The FLPC utilizes substantive expertise in food law and policy and a robust policy skill set to assist non-profit and governmental clients in a variety of local, state, federal, and international settings in understanding and improving the laws impacting the food system. As the oldest food law clinical program in the United States, the FLPC is also a pioneer in the field of food law and policy, and serves as a counselor and model for attorneys and law schools entering this field. The FLPC is a division of the Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation. Law students enrolled in the FLPC get hands-on learning experience conducting legal and policy research for individuals, communities, and governments on a wide range of food law and policy issues. The FLPC has trained more than sixty clinical students at Harvard Law School, as well as dozens of interns, volunteers, and pro bono students from Harvard and other schools across the United States.

About this Report

In the spring of 2013, the FLPC partnered with Marshall to research local food policy initiatives and conduct local food policy trainings throughout the Appalachian region. Following these trainings, FLPC was asked to lead shorter local food policy workshops in the fall of 2013 at the Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions Conference. As part of the Providing Access to Healthy Solutions (PATHS) grant funding from the Bristol Meyers Squibb Foundation, the FLPC has been working with Marshall throughout the spring of 2014 to provide more advanced technical assistance to some of the Coalitions, presenting research and recommendations on food policy issues in select counties across the Appalachian Mountain region. This Report contains a synopsis of the research done in response to the issues identified by the Grundy and McMinn County Coalitions, examples of policies that could be adapted and advocated for to address these issues, and tools to assist the Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions in the development of strategic policy advocacy action plans.

Introduction

Addressing diabetes is complex. A broad range of social and environmental conditions contribute to the rate of obesity and diabetes, including lack of consumer access to healthy food and lack of incentives for producers to provide healthy food. However, advocating for policies that alter these conditions can help create a healthier food system.

The twin concerns of lack of consumer access to healthy foods and lack of producer incentives to grow healthy foods were highlighted in the food policy assessments completed by the Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions in Grundy and McMinn Counties. In the assessments, the Coalitions reported a concern about underutilized land in their counties. As people have moved away from owning and managing farms, the remaining farmland is either sold for development or left fallow. The Coalitions also reported the need for increased consumption of healthy food. Many residents have to drive long distances to obtain healthy food, and existing farmers markets selling local agricultural products are underutilized.

In response to these issues, the following Report provides background research and policy recommendations on how Grundy and McMinn Counties can stimulate a local, self-sustaining food system. Local farmers would benefit from having more opportunities to sell their produce in their community, and consumers who currently lack access to healthy food would benefit from the increased availability of local food.

A well-developed local food system is important for several reasons because it supports food producers and consumers, and contributing to the economic development of Grundy and McMinn Counties. First, a robust local market incentivizes current and potential producers to increase or begin production and to sell their products locally. Awareness of a local market's potential may also induce more farmers in Grundy and McMinn Counties to begin or expand farming operations. Second, increased local production allows residents of Grundy and McMinn Counties greater opportunity to purchase locally grown and healthy foods. Residents in Grundy and McMinn Counties have had consistent food access problems. In fact, both Grundy and McMinn Counties contain USDA-recognized rural food deserts, which are defined rural areas in which a significant number of residents who live more than ten miles away from a supermarket or lack access to a vehicle that could take them to a supermarket. These residents must travel long distances to obtain healthy food, which can be particularly burdensome for low-income residents without the assistance of public transportation in these areas. As a result, many residents purchase food solely from smaller retailers nearby that have a limited amount of healthy options. Increasing the presence of local offerings of healthy food at smaller retailers could make a dramatic difference in the health of the residents within rural food deserts. Finally, locally focused food system initiatives may bolster the overall economic development of Grundy and McMinn Counties. A self-sustaining food system offers residents many new job opportunities in areas such as food production, processing, distribution, marketing, and retail. A "locally grown" image can attract new businesses to the area, especially those engaged in enterprises like restaurants or vendors of value-added products.

This Report should be used as a guide for the Coalitions as they think of ways in which improving the food system through food policy advocacy can help reduce the incidence and consequences of diabetes. Coalitions can use the examples and recommendations included in this Report to plan for their own local and state food policy advocacy projects.

The Intersection of Policy Advocacy, Diabetes, and Food Policy

Policy advocacy is a way to effect meaningful change on the laws and practices that shape the food system because policy can create longstanding, systemic solutions that mitigate the prevalence of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases. It is important to distinguish between policy and program. Policies are farsighted in scope and can have an impact beyond the people who implement them, while programs are often limited to the people who start them.

Honing in on a policy goal that would foster a local food system could help alleviate some of the problems the Coalitions identified in their assessments. Coalitions can effect change in their food system by advocating for policies that promote the production of healthy foods and make it easier for the community to consume them. While policy advocacy is intensive both in terms of time and effort, the most basic steps of the process can be distilled into three words: *identifying* policies, stakeholders, and opportunities; *educating* both Coalition members and their communities about how these policies can be altered or how new ones can be introduced; and *advocating* for these policy changes.

This Report provides a menu of policy options that the Coalitions can pursue, with suggestions as to what that pursuit might look like. It serves the purpose of helping the Coalitions *identify* and select a policy goal or priority to pursue. Coalitions should research policies that have been implemented in other communities, some of which are included in this Report, and think creatively about how to tailor those policies to the specific needs of their communities.

Coalitions must then *educate* themselves and others about the production and consumption policies for which they intend to advocate. Conducting evaluations, creating surveys, hosting focus groups, writing factsheets about an issue, or holding town-hall style meetings are all ways that Coalitions can educate themselves and others about the needs of their communities and gauge the level of interest or public support for a particular initiative. Coalitions can also contact other communities to find out how they accomplished their food policy advocacy goals. These activities also raise awareness in the community and educate stakeholders about potential opportunities to get involved or directly benefit. Through education efforts, Coalitions can begin to identify potential partners, such as local higher education institutions or non-profits that have an interest in the issue.

Finally, this Report offers ideas for steps Coalitions can take to formulate an action plan to pursue policy advocacy. The final section of this Report outlines the following steps: choosing a policy option, identifying possible partners, assigning advocacy strategies, and gauging challenges and successes. These exercises will elicit the necessary information for an action plan and ensure that that information gleaned in these exercises will be as effective and useful as possible for the overall policy advocacy strategy.

Highlights of the Local Agricultural Landscape

The 2012 Census of Agriculture published by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)¹ reported that Tennessee is home to 68,050 farms² that cover nearly 11 million acres, or about 40% of the total land in the state.³ The average size of a farm in Tennessee is 160 acres, or a square quarter mile.⁴ The majority (40%) of farms are between 50-179 acres, and only about 6% of the farms in the state are over 500 acres.⁵ The average net cash income per farm is only \$10,233,⁶ much lower than the national average of \$43,750.⁷ Generally speaking the value of sales of Tennessee farms is lower as well; about 80% of the farms have an annual value of sales of \$20,000 or less.⁸ In McMinn County, there are 1,043 farms with an average size of 117 acres.⁹ The average net cash income of farmers in McMinn County is only \$1,739 and about 85% of the farms have an annual value of sales of \$20,000 or less.¹⁰ There are only 278 farms in Grundy County and their average size is 119 acres.¹¹ The average net cash income of farms in Grundy County is \$13,010 and around 75% have an annual value of sales of \$20,000 or less.¹²

Like most other states, the number of farms in Tennessee has declined in recent years. Since the last Census of Agriculture in 2007, the number of farms dropped by an alarming 14%, however, the total land in farms dropped by only 1%.¹³ Accordingly, the average size of a Tennessee farm increased by 16% between 2007 and 2012.¹⁴ In Tennessee, about 90% of the principal farm operators are men and nearly 60% of farmers in Tennessee reported that their primary occupation was something other than

¹ The 2012 Census of Agriculture is the 28th Federal census of agriculture and the fourth conducted by the U.S. Department of

² The census definition of a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. The definition has changed nine times since it was established in 1850. The current definition was first used for the 1974 Census of Agriculture and has been used in each subsequent agriculture census. This definition is consistent with the definition used for current USDA surveys. U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, INTRODUCTION VIII (2014) *available at*

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usintro.pdf.

³ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 251 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

⁴ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 251 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

⁵ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 251 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

⁶ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 251 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

⁷ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 245 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

⁸ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

⁹ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47107.pdf.

¹⁰ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47107.pdf.

¹¹ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47061.pdf.

¹² U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47061.pdf.

¹³ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

¹⁴ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

farming.¹⁵ In 2012, less than 4% of farmers in Tennessee reported being a race other than White.¹⁶ The average age of farms is 59.2 years, and only 2,823 of Tennessee's 68,050 principal farm operators (about 4%) are under age 35.¹⁷

In Tennessee, the top crop items by acreage are forage-land used for all hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop; soybeans for beans; corn for grain; and cotton.¹⁸ In addition to these crops, Tennessee also has a thriving livestock economy; poultry and eggs and cattle and calves are also top-selling agricultural commodities in Tennessee.¹⁹ Of the 68,050 farms in Tennessee, only 1,284 (or 1.9%) of them produce vegetables for sale.²⁰ Farms with orchards are even less common, only 719 farms (or 1%) in Tennessee reported land in orchards.²¹ In McMinn County, vegetable, melon, potato, and sweet potato sales totaled \$188,000 in 2012; and fruit, tree nut, and berry sales totaled \$93,000.²² In Grundy County, the total sales of these products were not reported as to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.²³

Partly as a result of this absence of local, sustainably produced fruits and vegetables, it can be difficult for residents in McMinn and Grundy Counties to find retailers selling quality fresh local produce. The Grundy County Coalition mentioned in their assessment that grocery stores are only accessible to three out of the seven communities in the county, and there are consistent complaints about high prices and a lack of freshness. The McMinn County Coalition also stated that accessing grocery stores in the county can be difficult, and as a result there are areas without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. These areas are called "food deserts,"²⁴ and the USDA has identified food deserts scattered throughout McMinn and Grundy Counties.²⁵ Both counties have had farmers markets, but these markets have confronted challenges that have hindered their ability to deliver fresh produce to the communities they serve.

¹⁵ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

¹⁶ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

¹⁷ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 45 SELECTED OPERATION AND OPERATOR CHARACTERISTICS 2012 AND 2007, page 575 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

¹⁸ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

¹⁹ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp99047.pdf.

²⁰ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 259 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

²¹ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, STATE DATA, TABLE 1 STATE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS: 2012, page 259 (2014) *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usv1.pdf.

²² U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47107.pdf.

²³ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, TENNESSEE STATE PROFILE COUNTY DATA (2014), *available at* http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Tennessee/cp47061.pdf.

²⁴ *Food Deserts*, U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., AGRIC. MKTG. SERV., <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/fooddeserts/foodDeserts.aspx>.

²⁵ *Food Access Research Atlas*, U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., ECON. RESEARCH SERV., <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas.aspx>.

Enhancing Rural Agricultural Production

The Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions in Grundy and McMinn Counties identified agricultural production as a topic of interest for policy advocacy. In response to this, the following recommendations focus on ways to bolster current rural agricultural production activities in Grundy and McMinn Counties as well as encourage and support newcomers. The presence of local agricultural production makes consuming locally grown agricultural products easier. Increasing the consumption of locally grown agricultural products, in turn, incentivizes greater local agricultural production. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that a policy that enhances agricultural production would be most successful if coupled with a policy that enhances local agricultural consumption as well.

This section discusses various ways to enhance rural agricultural production, through funding, training, and land-linking. Coalitions can advocate for new initiatives at the state or local level that have been modeled after or adapted from those found in other communities. Additionally, the Coalitions can advocate for the expansion of eligibility or increased scope of services offered by existing policies that serve farmers in Grundy and McMinn Counties.

Policy Advocacy Options

Increase Funding

A straightforward way to increase local agricultural production in Grundy and McMinn Counties is to increase the amount of funding for farming activities. Most commonly, funding is provided through grants, loans, and tax incentives. This funding can encourage farmers to grow fruits and vegetables or implement more environmentally sustainable practices, or encourage agricultural development among beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers.

Grant programs provide funding for agricultural projects seeking to increase local production by supporting current and potential local farmers in various ways. Such program funds may support or enhance local producers' marketing or educational opportunities, raise consumer awareness of locally produced foods in order to expand the market for local growers' products, or provide funds for equipment used in local production.

Loans programs are another potential funding source for current farmers, those seeking to begin farming, or those seeking to increase production on established farms. Unlike grant funding, these programs administer funds that are to be paid back at some point.

There are several well-established grant and loan programs on the federal level. For example, the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) administers grants solely to enhance the competitiveness of fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops.²⁶ Federal programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provide financial and technical assistance to

²⁶ *Agricultural Marketing Service – CommodityAreas*, U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC., AGRIC. MKTG. SERV., <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&rightNav1=SpecialtyCropBlockGrant0Program&topNav=&leftNav=CommodityAreas&page=SCBGP&resultType> (last visited July 6, 2014).

agricultural producers to help plan and implement conservation practices.²⁷ Some federal grant and loan funds are reserved for individuals who are members of certain groups. For example, beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers can take advantage of loan programs specially geared towards their needs. The USDA gives special loan opportunities to beginning,²⁸ female, or minority farmers, as well as to socially disadvantaged individuals, or members of a group that has been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity without regard to their individual qualities, to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches.²⁹

While the Coalitions may choose to focus their advocacy efforts on raising awareness of and increasing participation in federal grant and loan programs like those mentioned above, another high-impact strategy is to advocate for funding programs at the state, or even the local, level. Federal programs can serve as models for these initiatives and be tailored to more specifically address the needs of the local farming community. Another option that Coalitions may want to consider is fund matching; these policies allow states and local governments to leverage existing federal funding in Grundy and McMinn Counties.

Examples of grants, loans, and matching programs for farmers:

- **Vermont's** Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; and Agency of Commerce and Community Development joined together to form the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative. In its second year, the grant program provided \$1.1 million in state grant money and leveraged \$1.5 million in matching funds to assist agricultural businesses on projects such as investments to expand production and improvements to facilities and infrastructure.³⁰
- **Wisconsin's** Grow Wisconsin Dairy Processor Grant program provided \$200,000 to Wisconsin dairy producers to help increase the state's milk production. One recipient received \$13,500 in grant funds to help secure a required food safety audit. As part of the grant, recipients must match 20% of the grant amount.³¹
- The city of **Houston, TX**, provided a \$1.7 million "performance-based" loan to help open a grocery store in an underserved area of the city. The loan will be waived in full if the store meets certain criteria for food freshness and quality, among other requirements, during the store's first ten years.³²

²⁷ *Environmental Quality Incentives Program*, NAT'L RES. DEF. COUNCIL, <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=stelprdb1044009> (last visited July 6, 2014).

²⁸ For purposes of this program, a "beginning farmer" is an individual or entity who has not operated a farm for more than ten years. U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC. FARM SERV. AGENCY, FACT SHEET: LOANS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS 1 (2012), *available at* http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/begin_loans12_ind.pdf.

²⁹ U.S. DEP'T OF AGRIC. FARM SERV. AGENCY, FACT SHEET: SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS LOAN 1 (2011), *available at* http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sdaloans1108.pdf.

³⁰ Kate Jickling, *Grants Designed to Expand Vermont's Diversified Farm Economy*, VT DIGGER, June 17, 2014, *available at* <http://vtdigger.org/2014/06/17/grants-designed-expand-vermonts-diversified-farm-economy/> (last visited July 3, 2014).

³¹ Marisa Cuellar, *Grant Helps Stratford Dairy Producer Secure Contract*, MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD MEDIA, June 30, 2014, *available at* <http://www.marshfieldnewsherald.com/story/news/local/2014/07/01/grant-helps-stratford-dairy-producer-secure-contract/11831689/> (last visited July 3, 2014).

³² David Kaplan, *An Oasis to Bloom in a Houston Food Desert*, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, June 30, 2014, *available at* <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/retail/article/John-Vuong-breaks-ground-on-oasis-for-a-Houston-5591073.php> (last visited July 3, 2014).

- The **Tennessee** Department of Agriculture provides grants to statewide agricultural producer associations to fund education and training programs to Tennessee farmers.³³
- The **Massachusetts** Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture program funds start-up or expansion costs such as equipment and infrastructure for new farm businesses.³⁴ Funding is provided as grants on a one-to-one matching basis up to \$10,000.³⁵ The program also offers consulting and planning assistance to support the needs of beginning farmers in particular.³⁶ Priority is given to new farmers that lack knowledge or direct experience in agriculture, and have potential to develop or expand productivity with the additional technical support and capital the program provides.³⁷ Eligible farm operations must have been operated for at least one but no more than five years.³⁸

Tax incentives are a final strategy that Coalitions can use to increase funding for local agricultural production in Grundy and McMinn Counties. Leveraging state tax laws to promote the production of specialty crops and healthy products is an effective policy tool with a broad reach. Tax incentives may be used to help promote healthy and sustainable food production, local purchasing, and other farming practices can lead to improved local health.

Forms of tax incentives include reduced tax rates, tax credits, tax rebates, and tax deductions. Reduced tax rates can be applied to certain categories of assets, incomes, or transactions. For example, farm property may be taxed at a rate lower than commercial property, or farming income may be taxed at a lower rate than other personal income. Tax credits are set amounts of money that eligible individuals can deduct from their tax bill for various reasons.³⁹ Tax rebates require the government to return a portion of the amount the taxpayer paid.⁴⁰ Finally, tax deductions reduce the amount of taxable income, usually based on expenses that were part of the cost of doing business or producing income. A deduction could be used as a way to reduce the taxable income by the amount spent on farm inputs.⁴¹

Examples of tax incentives for farmers:

- **Maine** offers reduced tax rates on farmland, as long as the farmland comprises at least five contiguous acres used for agriculture or horticulture and contributes at least \$2,000 in gross income from farming activities each year.⁴²
- **Nebraska** provides tax credits for young or new farmers⁴³ who have farmed or ranched for less than ten of the past fifteen years, who intend to farm or ranch full time, who provide the

³³ For information on the 2013 program, see *Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program*, TENN. DEP'T OF AGRIC., <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/enhancement/apaguidelines.shtml> (last visited Apr. 18, 2014).

³⁴ Mass. Dep't of Agric. Res., *Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA)*, MASS. EXEC. OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENV'T AFFAIRS, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/mega.html> (last visited Apr. 6, 2014).

³⁵ Mass. Dep't of Agric. Res., *Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA)*, MASS. EXEC. OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENV'T AFFAIRS, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/mega.html> (last visited Apr. 6, 2014).

³⁶ Mass. Dep't of Agric. Res., *Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA)*, MASS. EXEC. OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENV'T AFFAIRS, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/mega.html> (last visited Apr. 6, 2014).

³⁷ Mass. Dep't of Agric. Res., *Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA)*, MASS. EXEC. OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENV'T AFFAIRS, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/mega.html> (last visited Apr. 6, 2014).

³⁸ Mass. Dep't of Agric. Res., *Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA)*, MASS. EXEC. OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENV'T AFFAIRS, <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/mega.html> (last visited Apr. 6, 2014).

³⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁴⁰ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁴¹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁴² *Current Land Use Programs*, MAINE REVENUE SERVICES,

<http://www.maine.gov/revenue/propertytax/propertytaxbenefits/CurrentUseLandPrograms.htm> (last visited May 12, 2014).

majority of the farm labor, whose net worth is less than \$200,000, and who have previous farming or ranching experience or education.⁴⁴

- **Woodbury County, Iowa** provides tax rebates for organic farming conversion that includes compliance with the USDA's National Organic Program standards and regulations.⁴⁵
- **Tennessee's** Greenbelt law reduces tax rates on qualifying agricultural land as long as the property is composed of at least fifteen acres.⁴⁶
- In June 2014, **San Francisco, CA**, proposed an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Ordinance, which would provide land owners a property tax break if they agree to use a parcel of land for agricultural purposes for at least five years.⁴⁷

Coalitions can also advocate for the following policies to increase funding:

- Advocate for state-level grant and loan programs specifically for fruit and vegetable production, beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers, veterans, or for farmers who are seeking to engage in organic farming or other practices the Coalitions want to encourage.
- Advocate for a state-level funds matching program to bolster current federal funding that is benefiting farmers in the communities that the Coalitions serve.
- Advocate for the expansion of tax incentives to include a greater number of farmers in the communities that the Coalitions serve by including practices or groups that the Coalitions want to encourage or by lowering barriers such as acreage requirements to tax incentives already in place.

Increase the Availability of Training Programs

Advocating for farmer training programs is a high-impact way for Coalitions to help shape and enhance agricultural production. Training programs can be designed to assist farmers in many areas, including agricultural best practices, environmental and sustainability improvements, risk management, entrepreneurship, marketing and sales, and technology.⁴⁸ State and local governments can fund or operate education and training programs for new or existing farmers expanding their operations. In addition, Coalitions can unite local organizations or groups to foster local agricultural production by hosting training workshops.⁴⁹

Examples of increasing training program availability:

- The **University of Kentucky's** MarketReady Training Program seeks to educate food producers on "how to succeed in today's markets, in order to keep farming," and provides training in "communication and relationship building, packaging, labeling, pricing, supply, delivery, storage,

⁴³ *Beginning Farmer Programs — Tax Credit Program*, NEB. DEP'T OF AGRIC., http://www.nda.nebraska.gov/beg_farmer/taxcpbfr.html (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁴⁴ *Beginning Farmer Application: Beginning Farmer Program*, NEB. DEP'T OF AGRIC., <http://www.nda.nebraska.gov/forms/bfe.pdf> (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁴⁵ *Resolution: Woodbury County Policy for Rural Economic Revitalization "Organics Conversion Policy,"* WOODBURY IOWA, <http://www.woodburyiowa.com/attachments/article/42/Organics%20Conversion%20Policy.pdf> (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁴⁶ TENN. COMPTROLLER, GREENBELT: A TAXPAYER'S GUIDE 2 (2010) (internal quotation marks omitted).

⁴⁷ Tara Duggan, *Empty Lots Now Can be Designated Agricultural Zones [Update: Legislative Process Still Pending]*, INSIDE SCOOP SF, June 18, 2014, available at <http://insidescoopsf.sfgate.com/blog/2014/06/18/empty-lots-now-can-be-designated-agricultural-zones/> (last visited July 3, 2014).

⁴⁸ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 23 (2012).

⁴⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 59–60 (2012).

invoicing, insurance, quality and temperature control, . . . marketing, . . . [and in promoting] local products for local markets.”⁵⁰

- **Georgia Organics** provides a mentor program for young and beginning farmers and “coordinates field days and trainings, offers a bulk farm supply ordering program twice a year, and has an organic growing curriculum available.”⁵¹
- **Future Harvest in Maryland** offers a yearlong program that “provides both classroom instruction and shoulder-to-shoulder on-farm training for beginning and transitioning sustainable farmers in the Chesapeake region.”⁵²
- California has an apprenticeship program at **University of California, Santa Cruz**. The program focuses on training potential farmers in small-scale farming and organic gardening.⁵³

Coalitions can advocate for the following to improve training:

- Advocate for a policy that would support training programs that can be either financed or administered by the state department of agriculture or by local chapters of producer associations.
- Advocate that the state adopt a resolution in favor of supporting beginning farmers in accessing funding, specialized training, and farmland.

Improve and Increase the Use of Land-linking Services

Programs that offer or promote “land-linking” services help farmers find land that is available for agricultural production by matching farmers who are looking for land with farmers or land-owners that wish to sell or rent their land for agricultural production. Some programs provide additional services, such as technical assistance for beginning farmers.⁵⁴ Private land-linking programs connect private landholders with farm-seekers,⁵⁵ while public land-linking programs provide public land, typically surplus government land, to private parties.⁵⁶ By removing the financial and logistical barriers of finding land on which to farm, these programs can induce those considering farming to get started.

Examples of Land-Linking Policies and Programs:

- The **Center for Rural Affairs** is a non-profit organization that promotes rural ways of life and provides a national land-linking service that lists farmland for lease, as well as farmer positions available on operating farms.⁵⁷
- **Maryland FarmLINK** provides an online property exchange listing, connects buyer and seller members directly, and provides a discussion board about farm-related issues.⁵⁸ The interface

⁵⁰ *MarketReady*, UNIV. OF KY. COLLEGE OF AGRIC., FOOD & ENVIRONMENT, FOOD SYSTEMS INNOVATION CENTER, <http://www.uky.edu/fsic/marketready/> (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁵¹ *Training Opportunities*, NAT’L YOUNG FARMERS COALITION, <http://www.youngfarmers.org/practical/training-and-helpful-organizations/#South> (last visited May 12, 2014); *see also For Farmers*, GEORGIA ORGANICS, <http://georgiaorganics.org/for-farmers/for-farmers-2/> (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁵² *Training Opportunities*, NAT’L YOUNG FARMERS COALITION, <http://www.youngfarmers.org/practical/training-and-helpful-organizations/#South> (last visited May 12, 2014); *see also Sustainable Agriculture Programs*, FUTURE HARVEST, <http://www.futureharvestcasa.org/programs> (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁵³ *Apprenticeship Information*, THE CTR. FOR AGROECOLOGY & SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYS., <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/apprentice-training/apprenticeship-information> (last visited July 6, 2014).

⁵⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, RHODE ISLAND LAND-LINKING PROGRAM: BACKGROUND RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS 1 (2014).

⁵⁵ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, RHODE ISLAND LAND-LINKING PROGRAM: BACKGROUND RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS 11 (2014).

⁵⁶ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, RHODE ISLAND LAND-LINKING PROGRAM: BACKGROUND RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS 15 (2014).

⁵⁷ *See Land Link Landowner Public Listings*, CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, <http://www.cfra.org/node/3770> (last visited Apr. 18, 2014).

⁵⁸ *Welcome to Maryland FarmLINK!*, MARYLAND FARMLINK, <http://www.marylandfarmlink.com/> (last visited May 12, 2014).

was created by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, which was established in 2000 by the Governor of Maryland's Task Force.⁵⁹

- **Pennsylvania Farmlink** is a non-profit organization that provides a land-linking database that matches landowners with prospective farmers and facilitates those connections by providing educational workshops.⁶⁰
- A **Connecticut** statute provided authority to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to establish a "database of farmers and agricultural land owners who intend to sell their farm operations or agricultural land" and describes the linking mechanism.⁶¹

Coalitions can advocate for the following to improve land-linking:

- Advocate that the state legislature adopt legislation supporting land-linking programs, either by setting up the structure of a public land-linking program or by providing funding.

Using the suggestions provided in this section as a starting point, the Coalitions can determine which policy advocacy goal might fit the needs of its community best.

Enhancing Consumption of Local Agricultural Products

The Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions in Grundy and McMinn Counties also identified the consumption of local agricultural products as a topic of interest for policy advocacy. In response to this, the following recommendations focus on ways to improve the current systems that promote the consumption of locally grown foods in Grundy and McMinn Counties as well as encourage and support new initiatives in this area. The following policy advocacy options address both existing sources of demand for locally grown foods, such as current food retailers and institutions, as well as new sources of demand, such as those created by expanded farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs. As discussed in the previous section, strategies that bolster the production and the consumption of local agricultural products are most successful when they are implemented in tandem. Therefore, enhancing local consumption is a critical step toward building self-sustaining local food systems in Grundy and McMinn Counties.

Policy Advocacy Options

Increase Contract Purchasing of Local Foods

Coalitions can advocate for local purchasing policies, contracts, and economic incentives to increase the consumption of locally produced foods. Purchasing from local producers ensures that food producers have a steady local market and incentivizes increased coordination between local producers and local markets. Local purchasing has the added benefit of increasing access to healthy food for community members, as well as decreasing fuel emissions from lower transportation requirements.⁶² Agricultural producers can find local markets for their goods in both institutions and retailers.

⁵⁹ SMADC: *Who We Are*, S. MARYLAND AGRIC. DEV. COMM'N., <http://www.smadc.com/aboutsmadc/overview.html> (last visited July 6, 2014).

⁶⁰ *About Pennsylvania Farmlink*, PA FARM LINK, http://www.pafarmlink.org/about_pafarmlink.html (last visited May 12, 2014).

⁶¹ CONN. GEN. STAT. ANN. § 22-26I (West 2013).

⁶² HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, *GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES* 85 (2012).

Institutions

Coalitions can work to promote local purchasing by institutions that provide food, such as schools, universities, hospitals, state agencies, and prisons. Connecting these institutions with local farmers creates and expands the market opportunities of local producers and increases access to healthy food for consumers at those institutions.

Institutions generally have procurement policies that govern how and from where the institution obtains food and other materials. States have control over the procurement policies of institutions that use government funds for food purchasing. Local school districts and municipal government agencies have their own procurement policies as well.⁶³ Coalitions can work with the state and local governments to change their food procurement policies, such as by advocating for a monetary preference to discount locally grown foods in comparison to other potential suppliers.⁶⁴ Additionally, Coalitions can work directly with privately run institutions, like hospitals, to improve or change their procurement policies in favor of local purchasing. However, policies at the state or local level can reinforce local procurement by creating incentives for privately run institutions to privilege local foods when purchasing.

Schools can implement local purchasing through a number of policy avenues. Schools can directly contract with local farms, use a price preference in their procurement activities, or purchase food outside the formal bid process.⁶⁵ Schools seeking to increase consumption of local food may particularly benefit from a “Farm to School” program, which connect schools to local farms.⁶⁶ These programs support both local agricultural production and student learning, as the farms can serve as opportunities for students to learn about food and farm production, depending on how the school incorporates the Farm to School program. Coalitions could consider advocating for a state-level policy establishing farm to school programs throughout the state or first establishing a farm to school week that would educate residents about the importance of these programs.

Examples of increasing local purchasing:

- In **Tennessee**, state agencies may purchase locally without competitive bidding up to \$10,000; beyond this amount, agencies must engage in formal or informal competitive bidding.⁶⁷
- Local governments around Tennessee affirmatively authorize a preference for local sources, such as **Memphis’s** policy of giving a five percent discount to local business purchases over \$10,000.⁶⁸
- In **New York**, the legislature passed several laws encouraging government institutions to preference New York products in their food procurement. This policy was originally implemented only for schools but now has expanded to encompass even local government

⁶³ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 12 (2012).

⁶⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 74–76 (2012).

⁶⁵ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 73 (2012).

⁶⁶ See, e.g., HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 80 (2012); HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 87–88 (2012).

⁶⁷ *Doing Business with the State of Tennessee: Bid Thresholds*, TENN. DEP’T OF GEN. SERVICES, <http://www.tn.gov/generalserv/cpo/bid-thrs.html> (last visited Apr. 22, 2014).

⁶⁸ Mayor A.C. Wharton, Jr., *Purchasing Policies and Procedures*, CITY OF MEMPHIS §7.8.1 (Mar. 2013), available at http://www.memphistn.gov/portals/0/pdf_forms/purchasingpoliciesproceduresmanualcurrent.pdf.

entities.⁶⁹ New York has also recently enacted a system for state agencies to track and report their food procurement in order to gather baseline data about the geographic source of food.⁷⁰

- In **Washington**, the state provides funding for low-income schools to purchase local fresh food, and the state has piloted a “Farmer to Food Bank” program to enable farmers to work with local food banks to deliver their fresh produce.⁷¹
- In **California**, a Parent Teacher Association in Davis instituted a salad bar at lunch that sourced only locally grown produce. Parents were given a handout with monthly menu options as well.⁷²
- In **Washington, D.C.**, the 2010 Healthy Schools Act provides an extra five cents in reimbursement—in addition to what the federal government provides through the National School Lunch Program—when schools provide a component of locally grown, unprocessed produce in their school lunches.⁷³
- A **Massachusetts** law requires state agencies to purchase in-state food products if they are not more than 10% more expensive than the out-of-state food products.⁷⁴

Retailers

Coalitions can work to promote local purchasing through independent or private food retailers, such as smaller grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, and bodegas.⁷⁵ These retailers could be incentivized to purchase their supply locally as a marketing strategy or to develop goodwill within the local community. Local and state governments can offer economic incentives for retailers who purchase locally. For example, food retailers could receive a property tax deduction for procuring a specified percentage of their supply locally.⁷⁶ Local governments or non-profits could offer grants to assist with the purchase of local food, marketing campaigns promoting their local supply, or tangible assets such as new refrigeration and shelving.

Coalitions can also help local farmers secure contracts to supply retailers with agricultural products by advocating for a policy that provides incentives for storeowners to sell local products. Local producers can contract directly with these retailers to schedule quantity, variety, and delivery of local healthy foods. Direct contracting would be especially useful for smaller retailers, as small farms can produce enough food for the stores’ supply requirements.⁷⁷ Alternatively, farms can go through Regional Food Hubs (RFHs) to aggregate food for delivery to larger food retailers, if available.⁷⁸ Local farms may choose

⁶⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 27 (2012) (citing N.Y. State Council on Food Policy, ANNUAL SUMMER MEETING MINUTES (June 28, 2010), *available at* http://www.nyscfp.org/docs/activities/NYSCFP_PanelMins_6_28_10.pdf).

⁷⁰ *Governor Cuomo Signs the Local Food Procurement and Food Metrics Bill*, NEW YORK CITY FOOD POLICY CENTER, <http://nycfoodpolicy.org/governor-cuomo-signs-local-food-procurement-food-metrics-bill/> (last visited Apr. 20, 2014).

⁷¹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 64 (2012) (citing Local Farms-Healthy Kids Act of 2008, WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 15.64.060 (2012); *Local Farms – Healthy Kids*, THE WASH. SUSTAINABLE FOOD & FARMING NETWORK, <http://wsffn.org/our-work/local-farms-healthy-kids> (last visited Oct. 3, 2011)).

⁷² HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 76 (2012) (citing *Farm-to-School Salad Bar Program Celebrates Grand Opening*, UC DAVIS NEWS AND INFORMATION, Apr. 9, 2001, *available at* news.ucdavis.edu/serach/news_deatial.lasso?id=5673).

⁷³ *What’s In the Act*, D.C. HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACT, <http://dchealthyschools.org/whats-in-the-act-2> (last visited Apr. 20, 2014).

⁷⁴ MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. ch. 7, § 23B(a) (West 2013).

⁷⁵ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

⁷⁶ Property tax rates vary by county, with Grundy County ranging from \$2.5054 to \$2.9054 and McMinn ranging from \$2.1171 to \$3.0755. *2013 Tennessee County Property Tax Rates*, TENN. COMPTROLLER OF THE TREAS. DIV. OF PROP. ASSESSMENTS, <https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/pa/LR.asp?W=13> (last visited Apr. 22, 2014).

⁷⁷ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

⁷⁸ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

to target specialty retailers, such as those that provide ethnic foods, to grow and produce the retailers' preferred food items.⁷⁹

Although the following examples are not specific to local agricultural products, if selected for the Coalitions' policy advocacy efforts, they can be tailored to meet the goals of the Coalitions.

Examples for encouraging retailers to purchase local foods:

- In **New York City**, the Healthy Bodegas Initiative provides grants to help with the cost of refrigeration and shelving. Similar grants could be made available for local food retailers willing to supply locally grown foods.⁸⁰
- In **Minneapolis**, the city sets nutrition standards for food retailers—including corner stores—to require them to carry produce and other staple foods. Similar standards could be set up for new or existing food retailers at the local or state level.⁸¹
- In **Washington, D.C.**, the non-profit D.C. Central Kitchen partners with thirty local corner stores to supply them with reduced cost fresh produce for a short time period, permitting corner stores to obtain baseline information on customer preferences before buying produce at wholesale prices. D.C. Central Kitchen also offers the retailers nutrition education, marketing support, and technical assistance.⁸² These strategies could be employed specifically for locally grown produce.
- The **Virginia** Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund provided a \$50,000 grant to help expand an online grocery store's operations in Charlottesville. As part of the grant, the store agreed to buy at least \$350,000 worth of local produce and meat from Virginia farms over the next three years.⁸³

Coalitions can advocate for the following with regard to local procurement:

- Advocate for a state-level policy that promotes or funds farm-to-school programs.
- Advocate for state or local procurement policies that encourage the adoption of farm-to-school programs that incentivize school purchase of locally grown food.⁸⁴
- Advocate for funding programs that incentivize agencies and institutions to implement local purchasing policies on the local and state level.
- Advocate for a tracking system to be put in place for state and local agencies so that purchasing sources may be reviewed to establish a baseline for local purchasing improvements.
- Advocate for state-level financial incentives for local purchase, such as grant funding or tax incentives.

⁷⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

⁸⁰ Sarika Bansal, *The Healthy Bodegas Initiative: Bringing Good Food to the Desert*, THE ATLANTIC (Apr. 3, 2012, 11:06 AM), <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2012/04/the-healthy-bodegas-initiative-bringing-good-food-to-the-desert/255061/>.

⁸¹ Marice Ashe, *Should Cities Require Food Stores to Sell Healthy Food?*, SUSTAINABLE CITIES COLLECTIVE, SEPT. 20 2012, available at <http://sustainablecitiescollective.com/sustainable-cities-institute/111116/should-cities-require-food-stores-sell-healthy-food>.

⁸² *Healthy Corners*, D.C. KITCHEN, <http://www.dccentralkitchen.org/healthycorners/> (last visited Apr. 20, 2014) ("In 2013, our corner store partners sold 7,500 healthy snacks, totaling \$40,000 in sales.").

⁸³ *State Grant to Aid Expansion, Add Jobs at Relay Foods in Cville*, NBC29.COM, June 30, 2014, available at <http://www.nbc29.com/story/25904919/state-grant-to-aid-expansion-add-jobs-at-relay-foods-in-cville> (last visited July 3, 2014).

⁸⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 85 (2012).

- Advocate for local purchasing campaigns that can be run with the help of local governments that encourage retailers and individuals to commit 10% of their food budgets to purchasing local foods.⁸⁵
- Advocate for local purchasing by food retailers such as restaurants, wholesale clubs, grocery stores, and convenience stores, encouraging them to seek out local producers for their supply of fresh produce.⁸⁶

Improve Local Aggregation and Distribution of Local Foods

To meet increasing demand for locally grown foods, farmers would benefit from services that aggregate or process their products. Small farms may struggle to individually produce the quantity needed by certain retailers, and failing to meet their supply contracts would terminate a potential long-term business relationship. Further, food retailers may demand some level of pre-processing before purchasing. Thus, farmers would benefit from local facilities that aggregate their foods with other suppliers or provide the space and proper equipment to process their foods to increase access to broader markets. Aggregation and distribution of local foods can take a variety of forms, like a local food hub or shared processing space, among others.

McMinn County has Mayfield Dairy Farms for processing milk products,⁸⁷ and Grundy County has access to the South Cumberland Food Hub in Tracy City as well as Savage Gulf Meat Processing in Nunnally.⁸⁸ While these facilities are a great first step, Coalitions could work with local and state policymakers to increase services available to farmers.

Food hubs

Food hubs take in locally grown foods, aggregate, and sometimes aid in processing the supply from a variety of different farms, and then distribute products to larger food retailers or institutions.⁸⁹ By combining local farm products and distributing them in bulk, food hubs help foster transactions between farmers and larger retailers or institutions.⁹⁰ Thus, food hubs can help ensure local farmers have a reliable market for their products.⁹¹

Food hubs vary in size and scope of services. Small food hubs may aggregate products from local farmers and have limited processing facilities. In contrast, Regional Distribution Hubs (RDHs) bring together many different supply chain components—including processors and retailers—to create an efficient, streamlined supply of aggregated farm products.⁹²

⁸⁵ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 85 (2012).

⁸⁶ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

⁸⁷ See *McMinn County*, TENN. CENTURY FARMS, <http://www.tncenturyfarms.org/mcminn-county/> (last visited Apr. 24, 2014).

⁸⁸ See Megan L. Bruch, *List of Custom Meat Processing Facilities in Tennessee*, CTR. FOR PROFITABLE ACRIC. 4 (2010), <https://ag.tennessee.edu/cpa/Information%20Sheets/CPA%20171.pdf>.

⁸⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁹⁰ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁹¹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22 (2012).

⁹² HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 22–23 (2012).

Examples of improving aggregation and distribution via food hubs:

- In **Charlottesville, Virginia**, the Local Food Hub serves farmers within 100 miles of the city by helping them to connect their supply to local markets, in addition to providing conservation educational programs.⁹³
- In **Iowa**, the community farming cooperative GROWN Locally aggregates meats, poultry, eggs, fruits, vegetables, honey, and baked goods to sell wholesale to retailers and institutions.⁹⁴
- In **Tracy City, Tennessee**, the South Cumberland Food Hub aggregates locally grown produce, meats, eggs and cheeses for distribution to local schools, institutions, and restaurants.⁹⁵
- The Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative is a farmer-led cooperative and a public-private partnership with **Dane County, Wisconsin**, that makes it easy for the retail, institutional, and foodservice sectors to buy locally by helping farmers access wholesale markets.⁹⁶

Food processors

In addition to improving the accessibility of the processing services offered by local food hubs, Coalitions can also work to increase the availability of independent processing facilities. Agricultural processing includes any food preparation used to transform raw foods into a different product. These services provide a critical link in the supply chain by transforming foods into a more marketable form, so that farmers can access more retailers who are looking for processed foods. Additionally, this transformation adds value to the raw products allowing them to be sold at a higher price, bringing additional benefits to farmers.⁹⁷

There are many kinds of processing facilities, such as cold storage facilities, shared-use processing centers, grain milling facilities, dairy-processing facilities, and meat and poultry slaughter facilities.⁹⁸ In McMinn County, Mayfield Dairy offers processing facilities for milk bottling, but other facilities can be established to address the needs of a variety of farmers. USDA-certified facilities could also be used to aid local schools, as administrators could use the facilities during the summer months to prepare foods and then flash freeze them for use during the winter. Coalitions can also advocate to establish new shared-use processing facilities, which have been very successful in helping farmers by permitting them to invest in the facility itself, either by contract or time-share basis.⁹⁹

One type of processing facility is a commercial kitchen, which gives suppliers access to commercial-scale food processing equipment.¹⁰⁰ Farmers can use these facilities to transform their raw products into packaged goods, expanding their market access. These facilities have an additional benefit of permitting farmers to use their culled items (which have defects preventing them from being sold on the market,

⁹³ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 23 (2012) (citing *About Us*, LOCAL FOOD HUB, <http://localfoodhub.org> (last visited Apr. 19, 2012)).

⁹⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 23 (2012) (citing *Financing Food Hubs*, NAT'L GOOD FOOD NETWORK (2011), available at <http://ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-cluster-calls/financing-food-hubs/Financing%20Food%20Hubs.pdf>).

⁹⁵ *Welcome to the South Cumberland Food Hub*, ROOTED HERE, <http://rootedhere.locallygrown.net/> (last visited July 21, 2014).

⁹⁶ *Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative at a Glance*, WISCONSIN FOOD HUB COOP., <http://www.wifoodhub.com/?q=aboutus> (last visited July 6, 2014).

⁹⁷ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 24 (2012).

⁹⁸ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 24 (2012).

⁹⁹ See John G. Bonham, *Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of a Shared-Use Agricultural Processing Facility in Catawba County, NC*, CATAWBA COUNTY 1 (Aug. 2012), <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/planning/Sustainability/SharedUseAssessment.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ See John G. Bonham, *Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of a Shared-Use Agricultural Processing Facility in Catawba County, NC*, CATAWBA COUNTY 5 (Aug. 2012), <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/planning/Sustainability/SharedUseAssessment.pdf>.

but are otherwise edible) in different forms, rather than having to discard them.¹⁰¹ Shared commercial kitchens vary in size and scope of services, ranging from large regional value-added food processing centers to small community kitchens.¹⁰² Both make a significant impact by providing local farmers with needed services and attracting new farmers and other food producers to the area.

Examples of increasing the availability of processing facilities:

- In **North Carolina**, Blue Ridge Food Ventures offers local farmers 11,000 square feet of processing facilities and services, including packaging equipment, product development, guidance for regulatory compliance, and marketing advice.¹⁰³
- In **Washington**, farmers joined together to form the Island Grown Farmers Cooperative (IGFC) to serve their processing needs. The IGFC has the first USDA-inspected mobile meat-slaughtering unit, permitting farmers to sell USDA-inspected meat without having to travel long distances to process their meat at a USDA facility. States can similarly approve mobile units for processing, so long as processed meats are sold only within the state.¹⁰⁴
- **New Mexico's** Economic Development Department provided \$100,000 in grant funding to the Taos County Economic Development Corporation's Food Center to finance infrastructure updates and other upgrades. The Food Center, which includes a commercial kitchen, serves as a food hub for local small businesses.¹⁰⁵

Coalitions can advocate for the following to improve aggregation, distribution and processing of local foods:

- Advocate for state assistance to improve community infrastructure for local purchasing by expanding space for farmers markets, helping to facilitate the development of a food hub to aggregate and distribute local foods, or starting marketing campaigns for local-purchasing.¹⁰⁶
- Advocate for state or local investments in new processing facilities or the implementation of new services in existing processing facilities, and state financial incentives for the utilization of aggregation services and food hubs.¹⁰⁷

Increase Direct to Consumer Access of Local Foods

Both producers and consumers benefit from increased opportunities for farmers to sell their agricultural products directly to the community. Farmers gain a direct market outlet for their fresh produce, and establish stronger links with community members.¹⁰⁸ Consumers benefit from access to fresh, healthy food, often in areas remote from easy grocery store access. Coalitions can work to establish these direct routes through programs such as CSAs and farmers markets.

¹⁰¹ See John G. Bonham, *Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of a Shared-Use Agricultural Processing Facility in Catawba County, NC*, CATAWBA COUNTY 5 (Aug. 2012), <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/planning/Sustainability/SharedUseAssessment.pdf>.

¹⁰² See John G. Bonham, *Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of a Shared-Use Agricultural Processing Facility in Catawba County, NC*, CATAWBA COUNTY 5–6 (Aug. 2012), <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/planning/Sustainability/SharedUseAssessment.pdf>.

¹⁰³ BLUE RIDGE FOOD VENTURES, <https://www.advantagewest.com/food-and-natural-products> (last visited Apr. 17, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 24 (2012) (citing *About IGFC*, ISLAND GROWN FARMERS COOP, <http://www.igfcmembers.com/2.html> (last visited Apr. 17, 2014)).

¹⁰⁵ Andrew Oxford, *Governor Pledges Further Support for Taos Food Center*, TAOS NEWS, June 30, 2014, available at http://www.taosnews.com/news/article_0be38106-00a3-11e4-aad1-001a4bcf887a.html (last visited July 3, 2014).

¹⁰⁶ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 85 (2012).

¹⁰⁷ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING STATE FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

¹⁰⁸ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 26 (2012).

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets host local producers in a pre-scheduled market setting, permitting producers to market their products directly to the consumers who attend these events. Services at farmers markets can be expanded to attract new producers and improve access for consumers. Because both counties have large rural populations, setting up additional farmers markets would permit more residents to access locally grown produce. While expanded farmers markets locations may impose additional time and costs on existing farmers, the increased demand may justify these expenditures as well as incentivize new producers to join farmers markets, but only if that demand exists. Additionally, local governments can sponsor public transportation to and from farmers markets, perhaps on weekends to encourage maximization of use. The provision of transportation could be coupled with a marketing campaign to increase awareness of the farmers markets, hours of operation, and food products offered.

Examples for increasing direct-to-consumer food access via farmers markets:

- In **California**, farmers markets have access to wireless EBT devices on loan from the California Department of Social Services, which also covers fees associated with use of the device.¹⁰⁹ This policy makes it easier for SNAP recipients to use their benefits at local farmers market, at no cost to the participating producers.
- In **Oregon**, the Portland Farmers Market has used a grant from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Specialty Crop Block Grant Program and other sponsors to launch a \$110,000 advertising campaign to expand consumer awareness of local farmers markets, scheduled times and locations, and vendor offerings.¹¹⁰ Fifty-one farmers markets are participating in the campaign, and many have contributed additional funds.¹¹¹ The original ODA grant of \$68,650 was funded by the USDA,¹¹² and could be replicated by other state agricultural departments.
- In **Michigan**, the Fair Food Network's Double Up Food Bucks program lets SNAP participants double their money when spent at local farmers markets. Participants simply use their normal food assistance card to purchase fresh foods at farmers markets, and the electronic record of these purchases can be redeemed for bonus tokens to use for the purchasing of Michigan-grown fruits and vegetables.¹¹³

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Another way to market locally grown agricultural products directly to consumers is through CSA programs. Consumers who participate in CSAs pay farmers in advance for portions of their harvests, and farmers deliver these portions directly to the consumers in scheduled periods throughout the year.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 65 (2012) (citing *A Simple Guide for Market Managers: EBT access at Farmers' Markets*, ECOLOGY CENTER, available at: <http://www.ecologycenter.org/ebt/pdf/SimpleGuide201107.pdf>).

¹¹⁰ *Grant from Oregon Department of Agriculture Funds Campaign to Promote Farmers Markets throughout the Willamette Valley*, PORTLAND FARMERS MARKET 2 (June 11, 2013), <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/index.php/press/press-releases/> (hosting press releases for user download).

¹¹¹ *Grant from Oregon Department of Agriculture Funds Campaign to Promote Farmers Markets throughout the Willamette Valley*, PORTLAND FARMERS MARKET 2 (June 11, 2013), <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/index.php/press/press-releases/> (hosting press releases for user download).

¹¹² *Grant from Oregon Department of Agriculture Funds Campaign to Promote Farmers Markets throughout the Willamette Valley*, PORTLAND FARMERS MARKET 2 (June 11, 2013), <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/index.php/press/press-releases/> (hosting press releases for user download).

¹¹³ *How It Works – At Most Markets*, FAIR FOOD NETWORK, <http://doubleupfoodbucks.org/about> (last visited Apr. 19, 2014).

¹¹⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 66 (2012).

CSAs typically consist of fruits and vegetables, but they can also include meat, eggs, milk, baked goods, and other farm products.¹¹⁵ Farmers benefit from these programs by having a direct and predictable market for their goods as well as advanced payments, while consumers benefit from the delivery of fresh farm products and improved connection to community farmers.¹¹⁶ These programs may be especially beneficial in McMinn and Grundy counties, as many residents have limited opportunities to access locally grown produce at farmers markets or through local retailers.

CSAs come in many variations. Consumers may be required to pick up farm products directly at the farm, at centralized locations such as farmers markets, or they could get home delivery. Consumers may be required to pay for their portion of the entire growing season's harvest up front, or the CSA could use a modified payment schedule to accept payments weekly or by a sliding scale method.¹¹⁷ Prior to 2014, SNAP beneficiaries could only use their benefits on CSAs that permitted scheduled payments because of a federal prohibition on use of SNAP for traditional up-front fees.¹¹⁸ However, the 2014 Farm Bill permits SNAP redemption for CSA shares at the beginning of the growing season.¹¹⁹

Examples for increasing food access via CSAs:

- In College Grove, **Tennessee**, the Delvin Farms CSA offers participating consumers certified organic produce weekly in May through October. Presently, the CSA has 700 shares, which cost \$725 at the beginning of the growing season or \$425 for a bi-weekly delivery of produce. Consumers must pick up their bushels at various locations, set up for pick up on different days of the week. Consumers also receive suggested recipes for cooking the freshly harvested produce.¹²⁰
- In Bellingham, **Washington**, participating customers in the Uprising Farm CSA can make payments up front, at \$300-400 per season, or on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.¹²¹
- In **New York**, the Chelsea CSA scales its payments according to a customer's income and ability to pay, with membership prices ranging from the \$275 discounted share to \$425 standard share. The CSA also accepts SNAP benefits by permitting customers to pay through installments.¹²²

Coalitions can advocate for the following to improve direct-to-consumer food access:

- Advocate for the expanded use of SNAP benefits by encouraging local and state government officials to offer "Double the Dollars" or "Double Bucks" incentive programs, permitting SNAP participants to have double the purchasing power at farmers markets.¹²³
- Advocate for the acceptance of additional nutrition assistance benefit programs at local farmers markets. For example, some states allow Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) participants to use the fruit and vegetable portion of the WIC monthly allotment to be spent at farmers markets. Other similar programs include the WIC

¹¹⁵ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 25 (2012).

¹¹⁶ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 25 (2012).

¹¹⁷ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 67 (2012).

¹¹⁸ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 67 (2012).

¹¹⁹ Agricultural Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-79, § 4012.

¹²⁰ *Delvin Farms*, LOCAL HARVEST, <http://www.localharvest.org/delvin-farms-M6995> (last visited Apr. 20, 2014).

¹²¹ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 67 (2012)

(citing *A CSA Option for the Poor*, LOCAL HARVEST, <http://www.localharvest.org/newsletter/20080130/csa-for-the-poor.html> (last visited July 6, 2014)); see also *Uprising Organics Farm*, GREEN TOWNS, <http://www.greentowns.com/initiative/community-supported-agriculture/uprising-organics-farm-bellingham-wa> (last visited Apr. 20, 2014).

¹²² *Community Supported Agriculture in New York State*, HUNGER ACTION NETWORK OF NEW YORK STATE 8, <http://www.hungeractionnys.org/CSAProfiles.pdf> (last visited Apr. 24, 2014).

¹²³ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 64 (2012).

Farmers Market Nutrition Program (WIC FMNP) and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (S-FMNP).¹²⁴

- Advocate for the expansion and promotion of farmers markets and CSAs by working with local government and community leaders to host markets or designate pick-up spots in additional areas of the county to serve a greater number of people, or expand opportunities for public transportation to and from existing farmers markets to improve the accessibility of the markets.

Using the suggestions provided in this section as a starting point, Coalitions can determine which policy advocacy goal related to enhanced agricultural consumption might fit the needs of its community best.

Developing a Strategic Policy Advocacy Action Plan

Advocating for a policy can seem daunting at first, but creating an action plan to pursue a policy goal can provide structure and guidance to this process. This section will introduce an assessment schematic to determine who, what, and how are the best partners, tasks, and strategies to go about advocating for a policy, whether or not it was selected from this Report. It will employ the suggestions of identifying, educating, and advocating with regards to policies that increase production and consumption of local agricultural products.

Choosing a Policy Option

First and foremost, Coalitions must come to consensus on a long-term policy goal that it will pursue. After careful consideration of the options, Coalitions should narrow down their list of potential policy options to a few and weigh them against each other to ensure the policy they advocate for is impactful and attainable. Using a schematic that can plot a potential policy goal by its attainability and its impact, a Coalition can discuss which goals are both attainable and impactful and choose to advocate for them.

	HIGH IMPACT	VERY ATTAINABLE
LESS ATTAINABLE		LOW IMPACT

Questions to consider while plotting options on the graph include:

- How attainable is the policy?
- What sort of impact would this policy have?
- How long will it take to achieve this policy change?

Identifying Possible Partners

Next, identify possible partners that could help further the policy goal, based on how supportive they would be of the policy and how influential they would be in advocacy efforts. While public support for a policy would provide strength in numbers, a Coalition should devote most of their time to securing the attention of the most supportive and influential individuals and groups. These individuals

¹²⁴ HARVARD FOOD LAW & POLICY CLINIC, GOOD LAWS, GOOD FOOD: PUTTING LOCAL FOOD POLICY TO WORK FOR OUR COMMUNITIES 64 (2012).

and groups can come from the public or private sectors; they can also relate to the policy goal itself. Thinking creatively about who has a stake in a policy change can involve individuals or organizations that might not be so obvious. An economic development agency, for example, is not the first partner one might think of, but could provide information and resources to an initiative since food businesses and restaurants fall under the purview of that agency.

	HIGH SUPPORT	VERY INFLUENTIAL
LESS INFLUENTIAL		LOW SUPPORT

Consider the following questions:

- What support will this individual or group lend to the initiative?
- What kind of influence does this individual or group have?
- Does this individual or group have contacts in the Coalition, and is he or she easily accessible?
- Whose guidance, help, or voice could the Coalition incorporate to best advocate for this policy change?
- Who are some partners that could have a stake in this policy that are not so obvious?

Members of the Coalition should decide amongst themselves which members will contact and reach out to which partners, and set a timeframe by which the reaching out activities will take place.

Assigning Advocacy Strategies

After partners are identified, the Coalitions should create a list of strategies to advocate for a policy change. This series of short-term actions would serve to educate stakeholders about the policy change, like community members, as well as those who have the power to enforce the policy, like a school board or local representative. Attending meetings, creating publicity materials, publishing op-eds, or canvassing neighborhoods can serve Coalitions well in explaining how a policy change could improve the county's food system. Priority should go to strategies that are both feasible and impactful.

	HIGH IMPACT	VERY FEASIBLE
LESS FEASIBLE		LOW IMPACT

Questions to consider include:

- What kind of impact would the strategy have?
- With what ease can the strategy be completed?
- How much time would it take to implement the strategy?
- What partners could be involved in executing the strategy?
- Which Coalition member will carry out the strategy?

Strategies should be assigned to members of the Coalition or other partners with specific due dates to ensure their timely execution. These due dates should be put together into a schedule or timeframe on which the larger policy goal should be accomplished. These short-term actions are significant, actionable pieces of attaining the larger policy goal.

Challenges and Successes

After considering what the moving parts of reaching the long-term policy goal will require, Coalitions must consider the challenges they might face in going about their advocacy work and be flexible to any sudden changes in their agenda. Having a backup plan ahead of time can save Coalitions from having to start over if plans change. If these challenges are anticipated ahead of time, Coalitions can best use their energy and resources.

A final step in creating an action plan is determining what success should look like, and by what standard it should be measured. Success can come in many forms; it can look like a policy being passed through legislative means, the execution of that policy by a local agency or individual, or the tangible effects a policy has on local farmers or consumers. Defining success creates a better idea of when a policy goal has been accomplished and suggests progress, or lack thereof, on the part of the Coalitions.

Materials to aid in the creation of this action plan are in Appendix I at the end of this Report.

Conclusion

The Appalachian Diabetes Coalitions serve a vital role in marshaling state and local resources to create a more local food system as a way to improve public health. This Report presented a variety of policy recommendations on how the Coalitions in McMinn and Grundy Counties can work to create a local, self-sustaining food system in their respective counties and throughout Tennessee. Using the Coalitions' unique and specialized knowledge of their local needs and capacities, these food policy recommendations should serve as "food for thought" as the Coalitions plan their food policy advocacy initiative.

Appendix I: Tools for Developing a Strategic Policy Advocacy Action Plan

Choosing a Policy Option

First and foremost, a Coalition must come to consensus on a long-term policy goal that it will pursue. After careful consideration of the options, Coalitions should narrow down their list of potential policy options to a few and weigh them against each other to ensure the policy they advocate is impactful and attainable. Using a schematic that can plot a potential policy goal by its attainability and its impact, a Coalition can debate which goals are both attainable and impactful and choose to advocate for them.

Questions to consider while plotting options on the graph include:

- How attainable is the policy?
- What sort of impact would this policy have?
- How long will it take to achieve this policy change?

LONG-TERM POLICY GOALS

	HIGH IMPACT	
LESS ATTAINABLE		VERY ATTAINABLE
	LOW IMPACT	

Identifying Possible Partners

Then, identifying possible partners that could help further a policy goal, based on how supportive they would be of the policy and how influential they would be in advocacy efforts. While as much public support for a policy would provide strength in numbers, a Coalition should devote most of their time to securing the attention of the most supportive and influential individuals. These individuals can come from the public or private sectors; they can also relate to the policy goal itself (e.g. farmers, food retailers, or local policymakers).

Consider the following questions:

- What support will this individual or group lend to the initiative?
- What kind of influence does this individual or group have?
- Does this individual or group have contacts in the Coalition, and is he or she easily accessible?
- Whose guidance, help, or voice could the Coalition incorporate to best advocate for this policy change?
- Who are some partners that could have a stake in this policy that are not so obvious?

Members of the Coalition should decide amongst themselves which members will contact and reach out to which partners.

EFFECTIVE PARTNERS

	<p style="text-align: center; color: red;">VERY SUPPORTIVE</p> <p style="text-align: right; color: red;">MORE INFLUENTIAL</p>
<p style="color: red;">LESS INFLUENTIAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: red;">UNSUPPORTIVE</p>

Assigning Advocacy Strategies

After partners are identified, the coalition should create a list of strategies to advocate for a policy change. These actions would serve to educate stakeholders about the policy change – like community members – as well as those who have the power to enforce the policy – like a school board or local representative. Attending meetings, creating publicity materials, publishing op-eds, or canvassing can serve a Coalition well in explaining how a policy change could improve the county’s food system. Priority should go to strategies that are both feasible and impactful.

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- What kind of impact would the strategy have?
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- What partners could be involved in executing the strategy?
- Which Coalition member will carry out the strategy?

Strategies should be assigned to members of the Coalition or other partners with specific due dates to ensure their timely execution. These due dates should be amalgamated into a schedule or timeframe on which the larger policy goal should be accomplished. These short-term actions are significant, actionable pieces of attaining the larger policy goal.

SHORT-TERM ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

LESS ATTAINABLE	VERY ATTAINABLE
	LOW IMPACT

Creating an Action Plan

LONG TERM POLICY GOAL	
SHORT TERM STRATEGIES	ASSIGNMENTS AND DATES
EFFECTIVE PARTNERS	CONTACT
CHALLENGES	