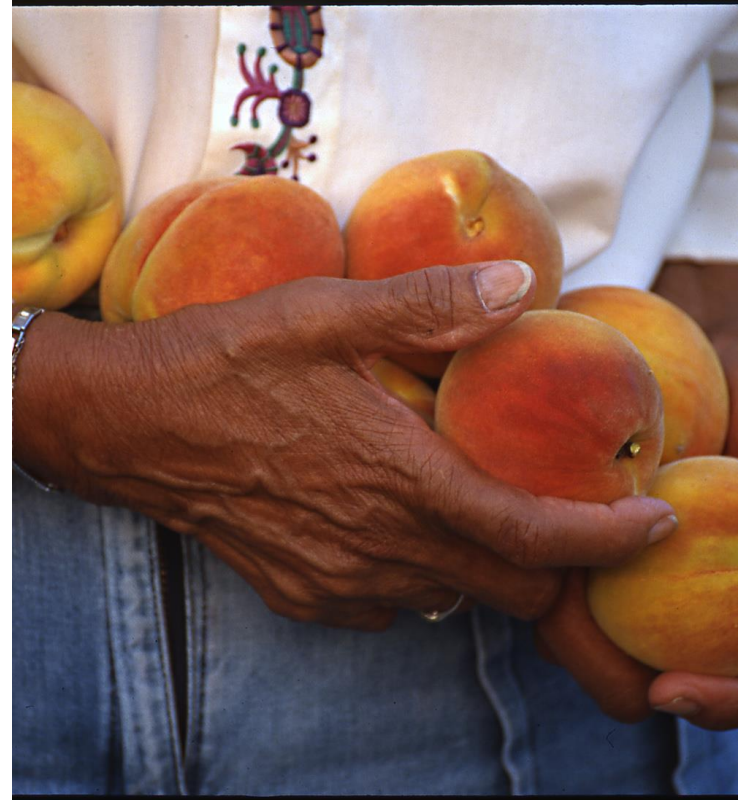


Building more resilient food systems that support health, local economies, and equity: Stories from Michigan, Kansas, and North Carolina

December 17, 2020

- ❖ Center for Regional Food Systems – Michigan State University
- ❖ Center for Environmental Farming Systems – North Carolina State University
- ❖ Kansas Health Foundation
- ❖ KC Healthy Kids



The image shows several clear plastic crates filled with fresh blueberries, arranged in rows. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The word "MICHIGAN" is printed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

MICHIGAN



MICHIGAN
GOOD FOOD
CHARTER

Building food council networks that support health, local economies and equity

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Center for
Regional Food Systems

Introductions



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MSU Center for Regional Food Systems



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What is the Charter?

The Michigan Good Food Charter is a roadmap for a food system that is rooted in local communities and centered on good food.



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What is the Charter?

The Charter outlines a vision, a description of a good food system, and six priority areas to advance the vision.

How can we use the Charter?



Explore ideas
that advance a
good food system
in Michigan



Identify common
ground for
collaboration
across sectors



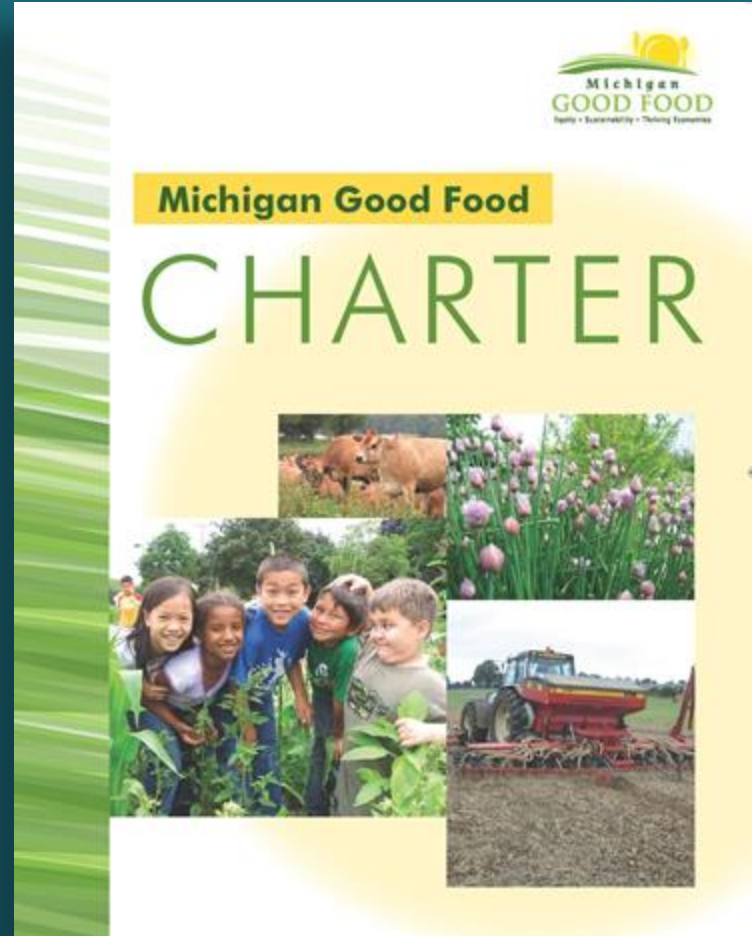
Organize
collective action
and
measurement for
greater impacts



Inform
policymakers of
statewide and
local priorities

HISTORY

Initially published in 2010, the Michigan Good Food Charter helped build momentum for efforts across Michigan to advance **a food system that promotes equity, health, sustainability, and thriving economies.**



MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTER

PUBLISHED 2010

Vision

We envision a thriving economy, equity, and sustainability for all of Michigan and its people through a food system rooted in local communities and centered on good food.

Good Food Is...

Healthy

Affordable

Fair

Green

Six Goals

Michigan institutions will source 20 percent of their food products from Michigan growers, producers and processors.

Eighty percent of Michigan residents will have easy access to affordable, fresh, healthy food, 20 percent of which is from Michigan sources.

Michigan farmers will profitably supply 20 percent of all Michigan institutional, retailer and consumer food purchases and be able to pay fair wages to their workers.

Michigan Nutrition Standards will be met by 100 percent of school meals and 75 percent of schools selling food outside school meal programs.

Michigan will generate new agri-food businesses at a rate that enables 20 percent of food purchased in Michigan to come from Michigan

Michigan schools will incorporate food and agriculture into the pre-K through 12th grade curriculum for all Michigan students and youth will have access to food and agriculture entrepreneurial opportunities.

25 Agenda Priorities

2

Scales

Local
Statewide

7

Strategy Types

State agency
Research
Market
Land Use
Community
Business or non-profit
Legislation

5

Arenas

Youth
Good food access
Farms and farmers
Institutions
Food system
infrastructure

Michigan Local Food Council Network



AGENDA PRIORITY 6:

Use policy and planning strategies to increase access to healthy food in underserved areas.

“ Food policy councils

Food policy councils can provide a forum to address the food system as a whole rather than in a fragmented way. ”

MI Good Food Charter (2010)

2010

MI Good Food Charter Published

2014

Convened councils to investigate need for a statewide network

2015

Michigan Local Food Council Network launches

2016

Seed Grant Program launches

2014

17 Councils

2020

26 Councils
+2 In Development



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Center for Regional Food Systems

DRAFT September, 2020

Funding



Since 2014

Collaboration
infrastructure & capacity-
building



Since 2019

Network support,
alongside statewide food
& health networks/
associations

Network Activities

- Seed grant program
 - Approx. \$133,000 to 20 councils since 2016
- Monthly video/phone conferences
 - State and federal legislative updates
- Participation in statewide meetings on food policy
 - Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Food Access Policy Action Team
 - Michigan Food Security Council
- Information digests
- MIFoodCouncil listserv
- Capacity-building trainings
 - Fund development
 - Policy advocacy & relationship-building
 - Diversity, equity & inclusion

Equity Activities

- Participatory grantmaking - 2019
- Racial Equity & Food Justice training - Oct 2020
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Team - Dec 2020
- Experience Series - early 2021
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Learning Cohort - early 2021
- Inclusive Meetings & Membership Training - spring 2021



COVID-19 Council Interviews

Conducted late summer 2020

With 19 council leaders

Covered adaptations, impacts, needs, and the “new normal”

What Councils said:

- Food councils working to stay on top of policy changes, share information and ways to advocate
- Councils supported food assistance operations, created guides, worked on zoning, helped farmers sell online
- Federal programs like Pandemic EBT and school food service flexibilities were crucial, and need to continue increased benefits or relaxations



Impacts of COVID-19

Council Interview Quotes

During COVID, they say this is an emergency, but a lot of the folks who are needing a food bank, their **daily life is an emergency**. Right? And so we are removing barriers. That's what these policies all did - removed barriers. **Why are we putting the barriers back up?**

We need the ability to be able to **develop sustainable food systems** - specific Black-led sustainable food systems... The relief efforts that are being disseminated and the resources that are being allocated are not being specifically targeted to us... **Black-led initiatives need to be prioritized right now**, period. Across the board. ... We need to be leading our own initiatives. "The people closest to the pain should be the closest to the power," as Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley said.



Lessons from COVID-19

Council Interview Quotes

The biggest lesson... is that we **shouldn't hold back in the language that we use** about some of the higher-level issues. We should be **very candid and direct about the issues** because we're in a situation where we can't dance around things... if we're going to be able to make change. We've spent many years being nice about issues like **racism and wages and healthcare** and we need to be much more direct about things now.

Forming new relationships when you're already busy and stressed is not ideal... One of the biggest lessons is just the **importance of having networks**, of working collaboratively and having those **trusted relationships already in place**. I think we don't value that enough, those organizations like ourselves and other policy councils that are those containers and those touch points where people who work in different areas can connect with one another...so that **at a time of crisis or a time of need people have a place to go to work with others**, or to ask for help and **be connected with help**.



COVID-19: Adaptations & Innovations

How are Food Councils Responding?

SPOTLIGHT

Detroit Food Policy Council

Shorter-term:

Build on existing work with Grocery stores to create the Detroit Grocery Coalition and get safety kits out to grocers throughout the city

Longer-term:

Partner with city planners to develop a disaster plan for public health and economic emergencies

www.detroitfoodpc.org



Photo: Alex Palzewicz

**WE'RE ALL ESSENTIAL!
PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY
FROM COVID-19**

STAFF & MANAGERS

Creating a safer store environment:

Have you checked yourself?

Don't come to work if you have a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.



Stay home if you are sick or have any symptoms to prevent the spreading the virus in the community

Disinfect all high touch surfaces, including carts.

Regularly clean cash registers, carts, and baskets as often as possible



Provide hand sanitizer to staff and customers

Wash hands for 20 seconds on a regular basis, use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol



Vulnerable Populations

Consider specific shopping times for seniors and others at high risk for the virus

Keep 6 feet (2 cart lengths) apart from fellow employees and customers





Food Security Council

Established by Executive Order, August 2020

- Charge: “formulating a cohesive, collaborative, and actionable plan for achieving food security for all of Michigan’s residents, both during this pandemic and thereafter”
- Two reports:
 - COVID-19-specific due in Nov 2020
 - General report due in Feb 2022
- Michigan Local Food Council Network presented to FSC in Sept
- Coordinators attend FSC meetings



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Going Forward NETWORK

- Equity within network and council work
- Capacity-building: policy, equity, new council development
- Role in Charter collaboration infrastructure



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Going Forward

STATEWIDE FOOD
POLICY VOICE

Continue to develop the

**“collaboration
infrastructure”**

to support participation
in policy action and
advocacy

- Be Informed
- Decision to Act
- Mobilize

2010

A Michigan Good Food Charter priority

2013

Regional pilot under a non-profit partner in northwest Lower Michigan

2016

Regional pilot funded by Michigan Legislature

2020

Statewide program funded by Michigan Legislature



10 CENTS
A MEAL
FOR MICHIGAN'S KIDS & FARMS



MICHIGAN
GOOD FOOD
CHARTER

Thank you!

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Dec 17, 2020

NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina's Food Council Network
Community Food Strategies



Community Food Strategies

supporting the network of food councils in NC



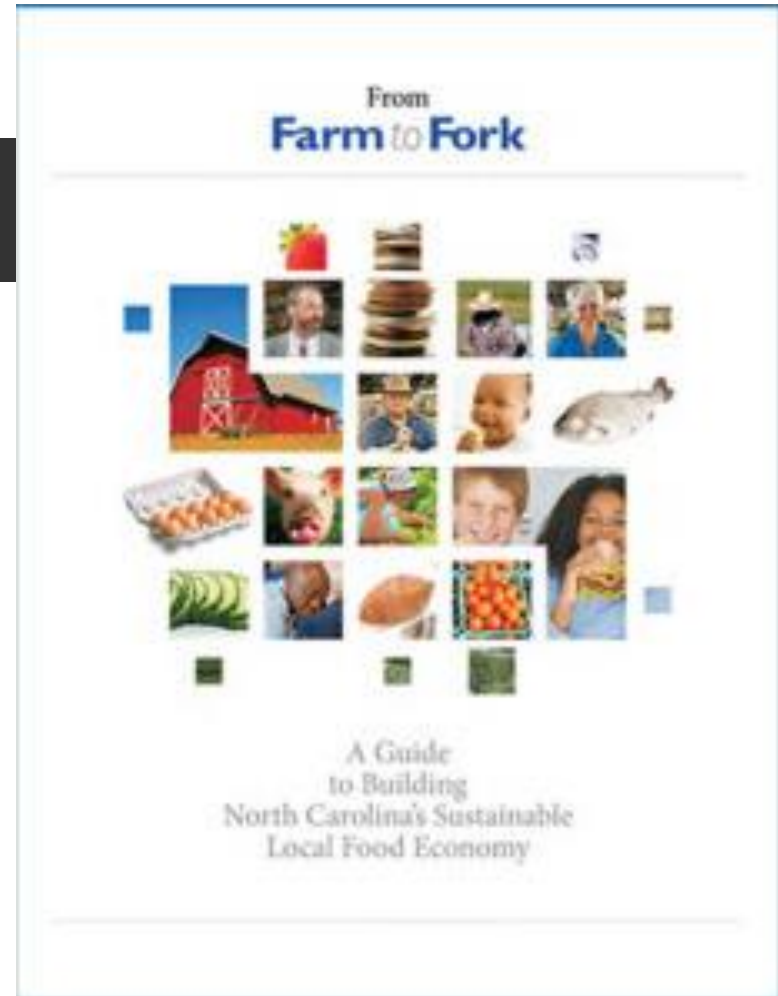
- 6 organizations
- 9 team members



How we started

Recommendation 1:
Engage decision makers
in strategic food systems
planning and
implementation

- Establish statewide food policy council
- Support local food policy council development



Thank you, Nancy!

Thank you for all you've done for local and community based food systems in NC and beyond.

Happy retirement!

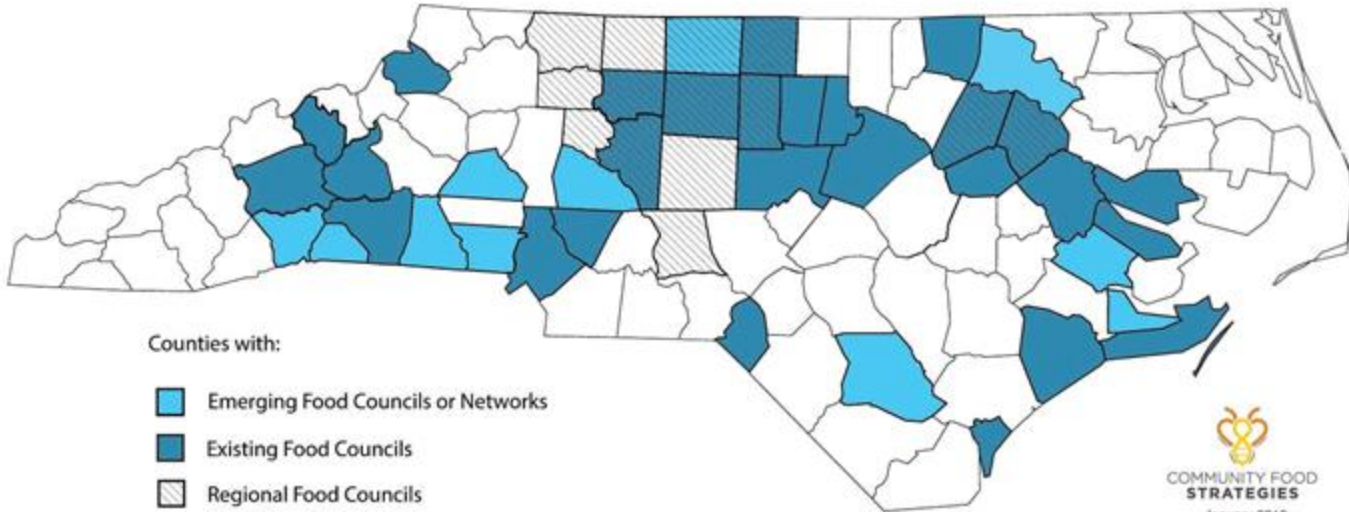


North Carolina Local Food Council



38 Local Food Councils

NORTH CAROLINA FOOD COUNCIL NETWORK



Evolution of the Network

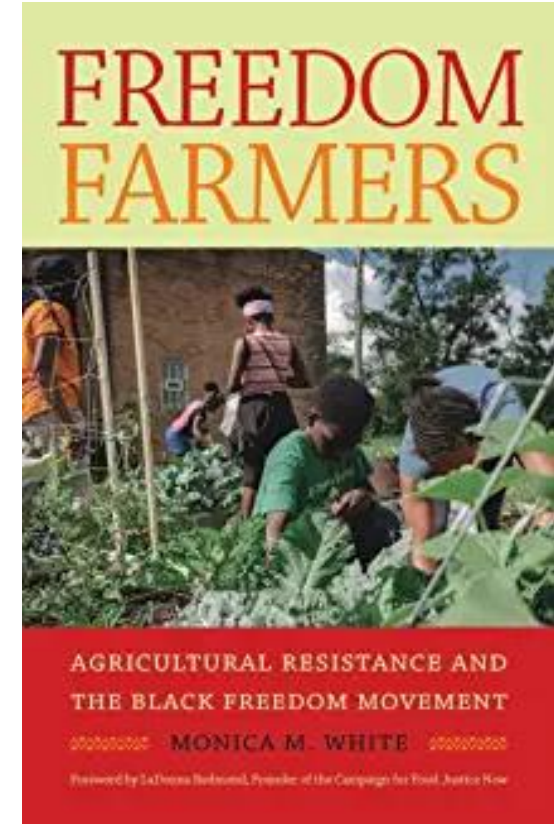


Alamance Food Collaborative

Alamance Food Collaborative is a food policy council in transition, identifying food insecurity as the catalyst for restructuring the way we function together to create effective strategies to address inequities.

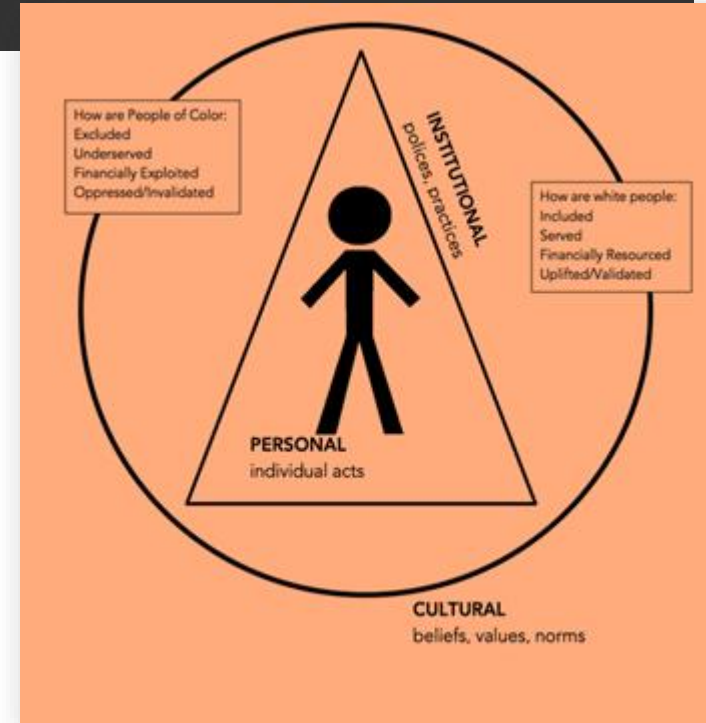
Lessons Learned:

- The work moves at the pace of relationship
- Having leadership invested in these changes is critical
- White groups need to align with POC led groups to listen and learn
- Go to other groups' meetings
- Starting with emotional intelligence as an entry point for racial equity work has been really useful



Impacts of the work

- Equity Coaching & Caucusing
- Democratizing how we work (practices/policies) → Shared Gifting
- Developing Relational Culture



Looking ahead

- Quarterly policy cohort modules for learning + action
- Move towards a cohort training and support model to support shared learning & collective action
- A commitment to majority BIPOC team, and to relational accountability in multi-racial teams across the network
- Continued coaching for racial equity & relational culture
- Continuing shared gifting & exploring solidarity economies

Network impacts

Local:

- County Present Use Value Tax Funds (2015) → Black & Brown Farmer Roundtable (2019)
- Living Wage Working Group
- Neighborhood Emergency Food Planning (with County Sustainability Office)
- City budgets supporting local food infrastructure
- Regional Food Policy Planning

State:

- Unified food waste practices (DHHS, food safety)
- Local seafood marketing campaign
- County Health Assessment Strategy re: food security & equity
- CFAP & local farmers support
- Cold storage for emergency food, & ongoing infrastructure investments

These existing networks were critical in COVID response locally and at the state level.





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Thank you!

communityfoodstrategies.org



Project Milestones



KANSAS



**Kansas
Alliance for
Wellness**



KANSAS HEALTH
FOUNDATION



FROM THE GROUND UP:
About the Kansas Alliance for
Wellness

RIPE FOR HARVEST:
How food councils harnessed
2020

COMPOSTING CHANGE:
Modeling the future of
Kansas food systems work



‘KAW’ FOR SHORT

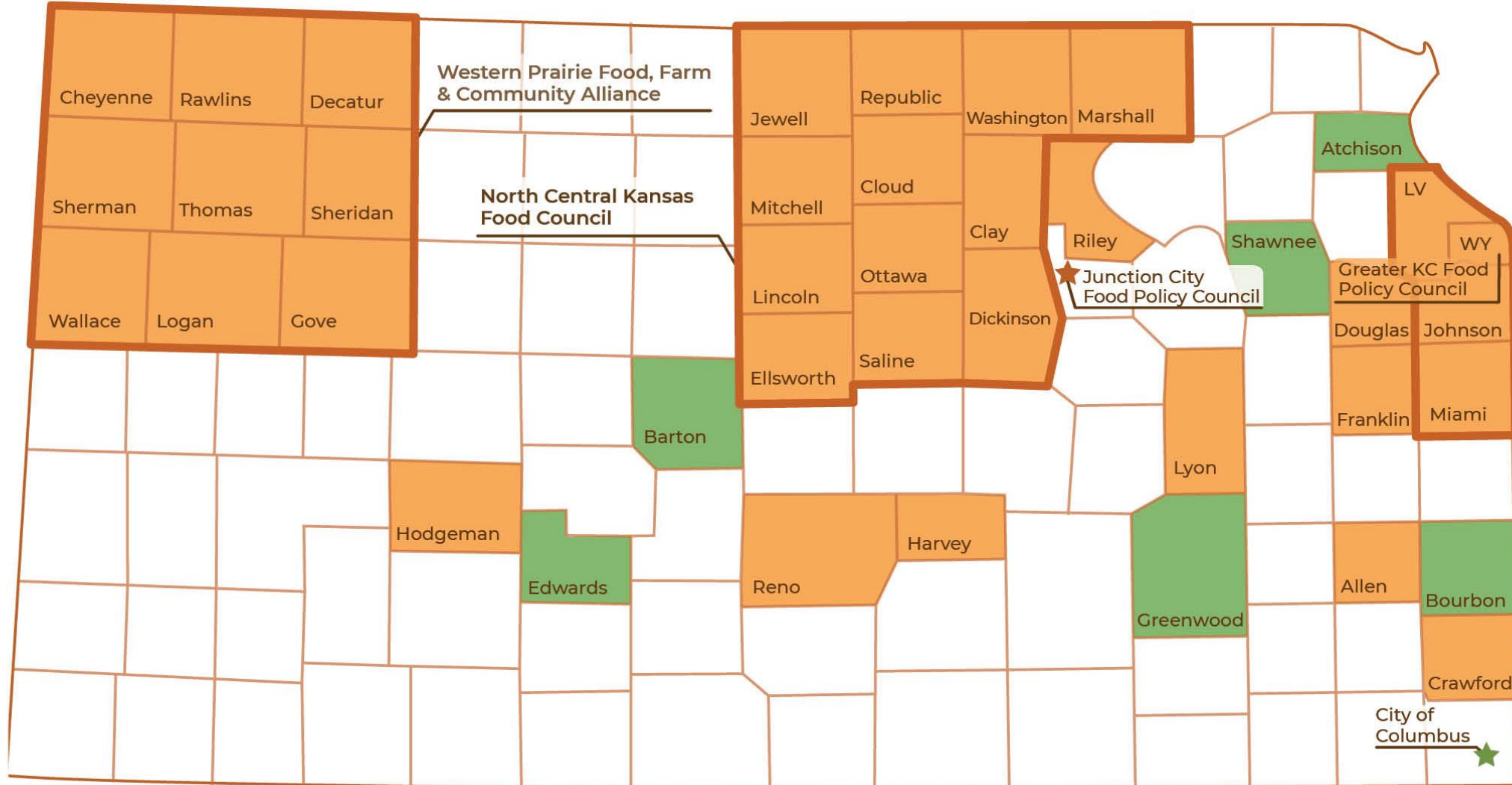
- ▶ Moved to KC Healthy Kids in 2020
 - ▶ Broader food system focus
 - ▶ Increased emphasis on policy, systems, and environmental change
- ▶ We provide:
 - ▶ Technical assistance
 - ▶ Engagement opportunities
 - ▶ Policy and advocacy training and support



KANSAS FOOD COUNCIL 101

- ▶ 31 councils covering 43 counties
 - ▶ Highest number of councils per capita
- ▶ ‘Food, farm, and policy councils’
- ▶ A coalition of concerned citizens, but make it formal:
 - ▶ Governmental
 - ▶ Grassroots
 - ▶ Hybrid
- ▶ Most are volunteer-led with budgets of \$10k or less

Kansas Food & Farm Councils 2020



■ Current Council ■ Emerging Council



Work Horses:

How Kansas Food Councils Harnessed 2020

Emergency Food Access

- USDA Food Box Distribution
- Increased planting at community gardens to supplement local pantries
- SNAP outreach

Racial Equity

- Restructured to increase diversity
- Formed RE task forces
- Prioritized minority-owned businesses when providing grant aid

Advocacy

- Lobbying calls to Sen. Roberts
- Sign-on letter and campaign participation

\$4.6M in COVID relief funds

96 org sign-ons for nutrition waiver extensions

2 new councils formed



A large, cylindrical hay bale is the central focus in the foreground, set against a backdrop of a golden field at sunset. The sky is filled with soft, orange and blue clouds, creating a warm and serene atmosphere. In the distance, other smaller hay bales and a line of trees are visible on the horizon.

KAW 2.0: Co-Creating the Future of Food Systems Change

**Increased capacity for
work of change**

**Network approach for
learning and alignment**

Resilience through policy

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December 17 webinar
Michigan, North Carolina, Kansas

Building food council networks that
support health, local economies and equity

DISCUSSION TIME