



**LOCAL FOOD LESSONS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC:  
Examples from Michigan and beyond**



Ypsilanti, Michigan  
London, UK

## Amanda Maria Edmonds

Owner/Consultant, Beehive Strategies (2018- )

PhD Candidate, Wageningen University (2020- )

Mayor of Ypsilanti, Michigan (2014-2018)

Founding Executive Director, Growing Hope (2003-2017)

### Expertise in:

Local food systems, healthy food access, nonprofit management/organizational development, local government, food policy

### Current focus on:

Strategy, evaluation, policy,  
& communications



# MY BACKGROUND: Transforming Values into Tangible Change



# MY FOCUS NOW:

## Transforming Values into Policy & Systems Change

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

Washenaw Food Policy Council

### POLICY AGENDA

(Approved 7/14/2014)

County	Action	Priority
Full Council	Advocacy	1. Identify opportunities for the County to engage in establishing a living wage and safe working conditions for all food service and seasonal/migrant farm workers.
Zoning & Land Use	Advocacy	2. Coordinate with municipal planning departments to stress the importance of including food systems as part of the Master Planning Process.
Farmers & Purchasing	Standards	3. Place an emphasis on food system development in the countywide economic development strategy utilizing SPARK and other county resources to ensure strong and investment of food system infrastructure in a systematic and deliberate way.
Waste & Packaging	Standards	4. Support change to the County Procurement Policy to give preference to locally grown, processed, and prepared foods, local goods and services, with an aim of the County and its vendors purchasing 20% of food products locally by 2020.
Full Council	Guidelines	5. Amend the Environmentally Preferred Purchasing section of the County Procurement Policy to mandate the purchase of foodservice ware and packaging that is reusable, compatible, or recyclable. Require funds to be allocated for the education and resource development of County purchasing staff as well as for adequate recycling and composting containers and services at every county building.
Waste & Packaging	Advocacy	6. Develop system to examine and provide opportunities to utilize (foreclosed) vacant/abandoned land in the food system.
Fed / State	Advocacy	7. Advocate that municipalities implement a landfill ban on commercial and institutional organic material generated within 20 miles of a composting facility and an anaerobic digester.
Access & Nutrition	Advocacy	8. Ensure the preservation of funding, and respond to changes to eliminate enrollment barriers for food assistance programs.
Farmers & Purchasing	Advocacy	9. Identify and support opportunities and alternative models that increase small farmers to participate in the marketplace.
Institutional	Advocacy	10. Identify and support programs and policies that increase beginning and historic farmers and food producers, particularly beginning and historic farmers.
Access & Nutrition	Guidelines	11. Recommend and support that institutions within the county preserve or restore essential pollinator populations by utilizing best management practices.
		12. Encourage institutions to adopt policies and practices that increase 20% of food products locally by 2020.
		13. Recommend and support that institutions within the county implement environmental and organizational changes that increase affordability and sensory appeal of nutritious and, when possible, locally sustainable food.

Some of this agenda was made possible through a grant from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation



# CONTEXT: OUR GEOGRAPHY



Canada

State of Michigan

City of Detroit

City of Ypsilanti

City of Kalamazoo

City of Chicago  
(in State of Illinois,  
not Michigan)

# CONTEXT: OUR POPULATION



State of Michigan Population  
**10 million**

United Kingdom Population  
**67 million**

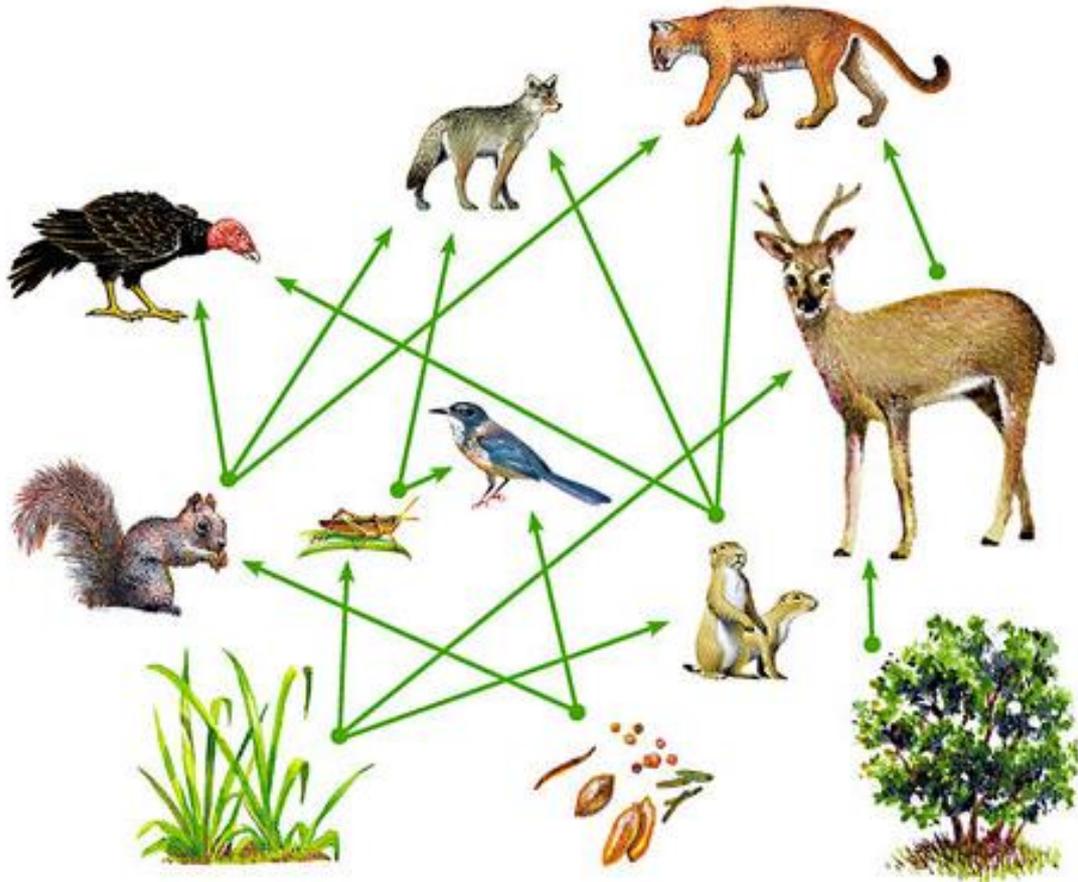
***Similar land mass,  
far less density than the UK!***

# CONTEXT: MICHIGAN'S AG SECTOR



- Michigan is the **second most agriculturally diverse state** in the United States
- The state produces more than **300 commercial agricultural products**, on **50,000+ farms**, averaging 195 acres
- Agriculture **employs 22%** of the state's workforce
- **Over 200 farmers markets**

# CONTEXT: OUR APPROACH



Some characteristics of Food Systems work in Michigan:

- Systems approach (win-wins, overlaps)
- Networks (long-term, big-tent)
- Rooted in equity
- Collective impact
- Policy change
- Backbone support

A vibrant collage of fresh vegetables including beets, Swiss chard, carrots, and radishes, with a central white text box. The background is a close-up, top-down view of various root vegetables. In the upper left, there are several beets with their characteristic reddish-purple skin and green leafy tops. To the right, there's a bunch of Swiss chard with bright green leaves and prominent red stems. The bottom half of the image is dominated by a large pile of bright orange carrots with their green leafy tops. In the center, a semi-transparent white rectangular box contains the text "FOOD CHARTERS" in a bold, dark teal, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in two lines: "FOOD" on the top line and "CHARTERS" on the bottom line. The overall composition is fresh and colorful, emphasizing natural and healthy food.

# MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTERS

Initially published in 2010, the Michigan Good Food Charter help build momentum to advance **a food system that promotes EQUITY, HEALTH, SUSTAINABILITY, and THRIVING ECONOMIES.**



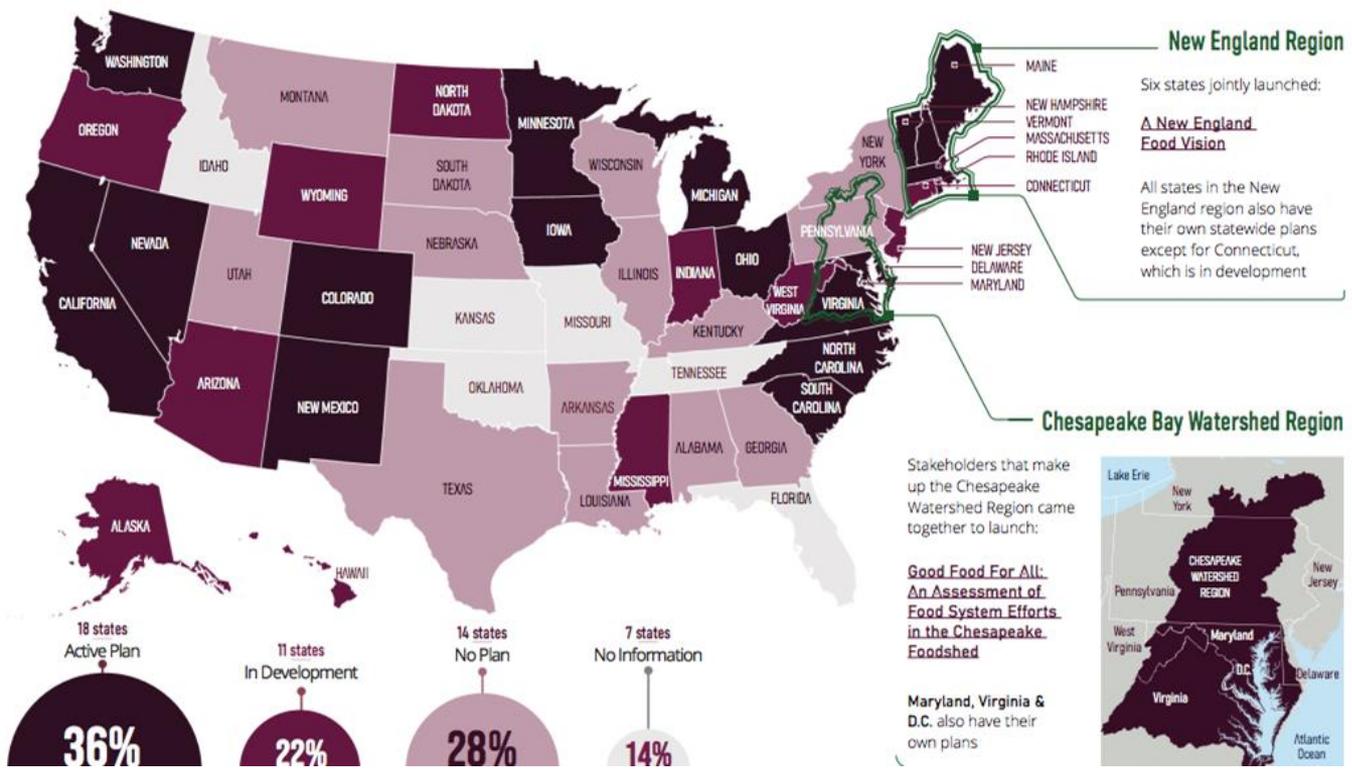
# FOOD CHARTERS & PLANS ACROSS THE US

State and regional food plans and charters in our directory launched as early as 2005 and many are in development



# FOOD CHARTERS & PLANS ACROSS THE US

## Map of state and regional food system plans and charters



Source: [Participatory State and Regional Food System Plans and Charters in the U.S.: A Summary of Trends and National Directory](#)

# MICHIGAN GOOD FOOD CHARTER STRATEGIES

## Farm and Food Business Development

Cultivate thriving local/regional farm and food businesses.

## Local/Regional Food Value Chains

Prioritize local and regional food systems within a global economy.

## Collaboration Infrastructure

Use the power of collaboration to dismantle racism and systemic inequity in food systems.

## Employment Equity

Establish fair compensation, safe working environments, and opportunities for career advancement in food systems.

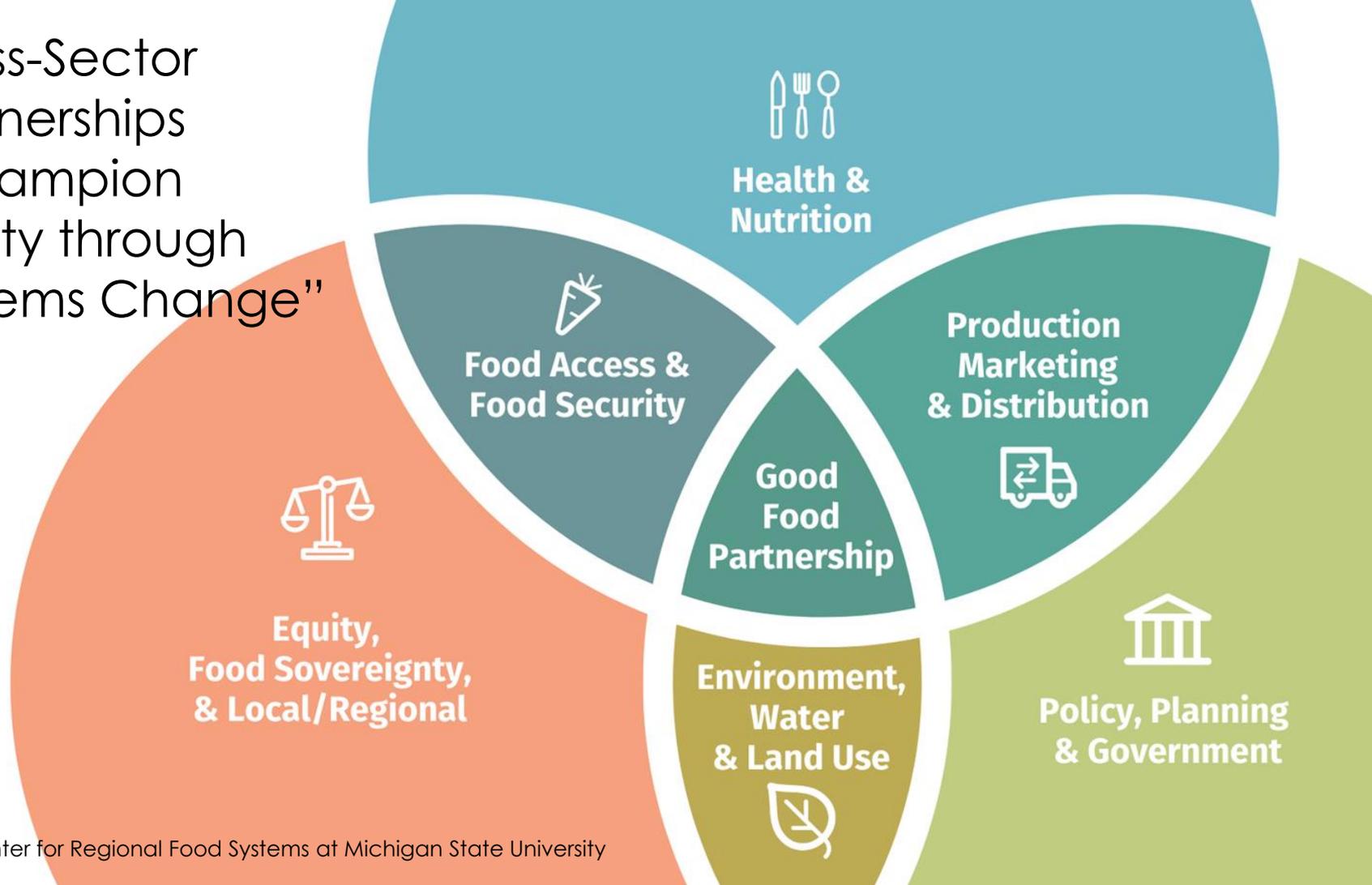
## Land and Ecosystem Stewardship

Foster climate resilience through equitable land stewardship.

## Nutrition, Health, and Food

Support people to have real choices that lead to good food and health.

# Cross-Sector Partnerships “Champion Equity through Systems Change”





# Nutrition, Health, and Food

Support people to have real choices that lead to good food and health.

20. Eliminate barriers to food and nutrition security and ensure the nutritional needs of Michigan's children are met.
21. Establish healthy and culturally relevant food environments in community-led, public, food service, and food retail settings.
22. Design food and nutrition education to incorporate culturally relevant foodways, cultivate understanding of the connections between food and health, and foster food systems literacy.

We must expand food access, foster the vitality of local/regional farm and food businesses, and address deeply rooted, systemic issues that lead to inequitable health outcomes.

**We can foster dignity and choice in food systems by prioritizing approaches that connect food, health, and community food sovereignty.**

# HOW WE USE THE CHARTER



**Explore ideas,**  
illuminate  
gaps and  
**systemic  
inequity**



Identify  
**common  
ground** within  
and across  
sectors



Build **action  
coalitions**  
around food  
systems policy  
change



**Inform  
policymakers**  
of statewide  
and local  
priorities



Organize  
**shared  
measurement**  
to understand  
impacts

Engaging the people of Michigan, the United States and the world in developing regionally integrated, sustainable food systems.



## Active Networks

- Michigan Good Food Charter Council
- Michigan Farm to Institution Network (Cultivate Michigan)
- Michigan Good Food Fund
- Michigan Farm to Early Care and Education Network
- Michigan Local Food Council Network
- Michigan Food Hub Network
- Michigan Kitchen Incubator Network



**FOOD POLICY  
COUNCILS**

# MICHIGAN LOCAL FOOD COUNCIL NETWORK

2024

## Geographic Coverage

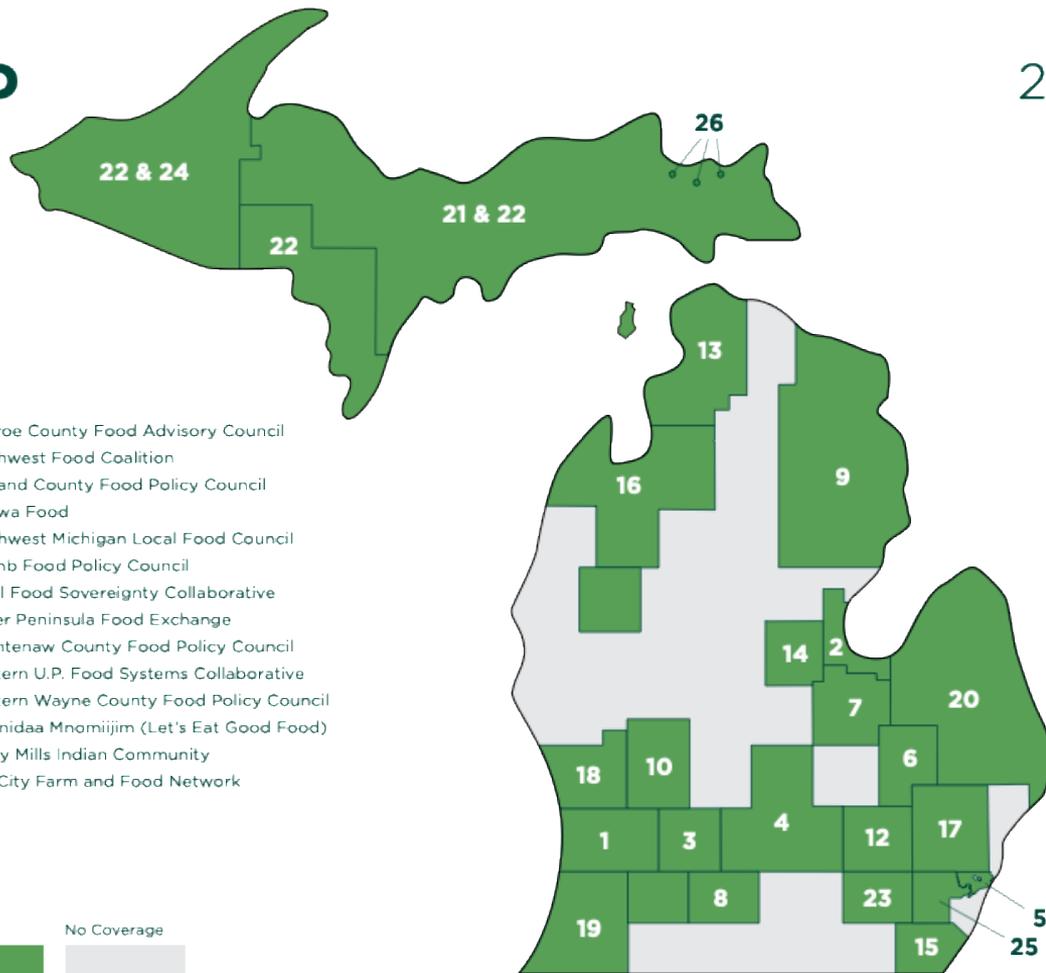
### Local Food Councils

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Allegan Food Alliance</li> <li>2 Bay County Food Council</li> <li>3 B. Healthy Food Council</li> <li>4 Capital Area Food Council</li> <li>5 Detroit Food Policy Council</li> <li>6 Flint and Genesee Food Council</li> <li>7 Food Access Collaboration Team of Saginaw (FACTS)</li> <li>8 Hunger Free Calhoun County Coalition</li> <li>9 Huron Shores Regional Food Council</li> <li>10 Kent County Food Policy Council</li> <li>11 Lake County Community Food Council</li> <li>12 Livingston County Hunger Council</li> <li>13 Local Food Alliance of Northern Michigan</li> <li>14 Midland County Hunger Connections</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 Monroe County Food Advisory Council</li> <li>16 Northwest Food Coalition</li> <li>17 Oakland County Food Policy Council</li> <li>18 Ottawa Food</li> <li>19 Southwest Michigan Local Food Council</li> <li>20 Thumb Food Policy Council</li> <li>21 Tribal Food Sovereignty Collaborative</li> <li>22 Upper Peninsula Food Exchange</li> <li>23 Washtenaw County Food Policy Council</li> <li>24 Western U.P. Food Systems Collaborative</li> <li>25 Western Wayne County Food Policy Council</li> <li>26 Wiisnidaa Mnomijim (Let's Eat Good Food) in Bay Mills Indian Community</li> <li>27 Zoo City Farm and Food Network</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

<https://foodsystems.msu.edu/localfoodcouncil>

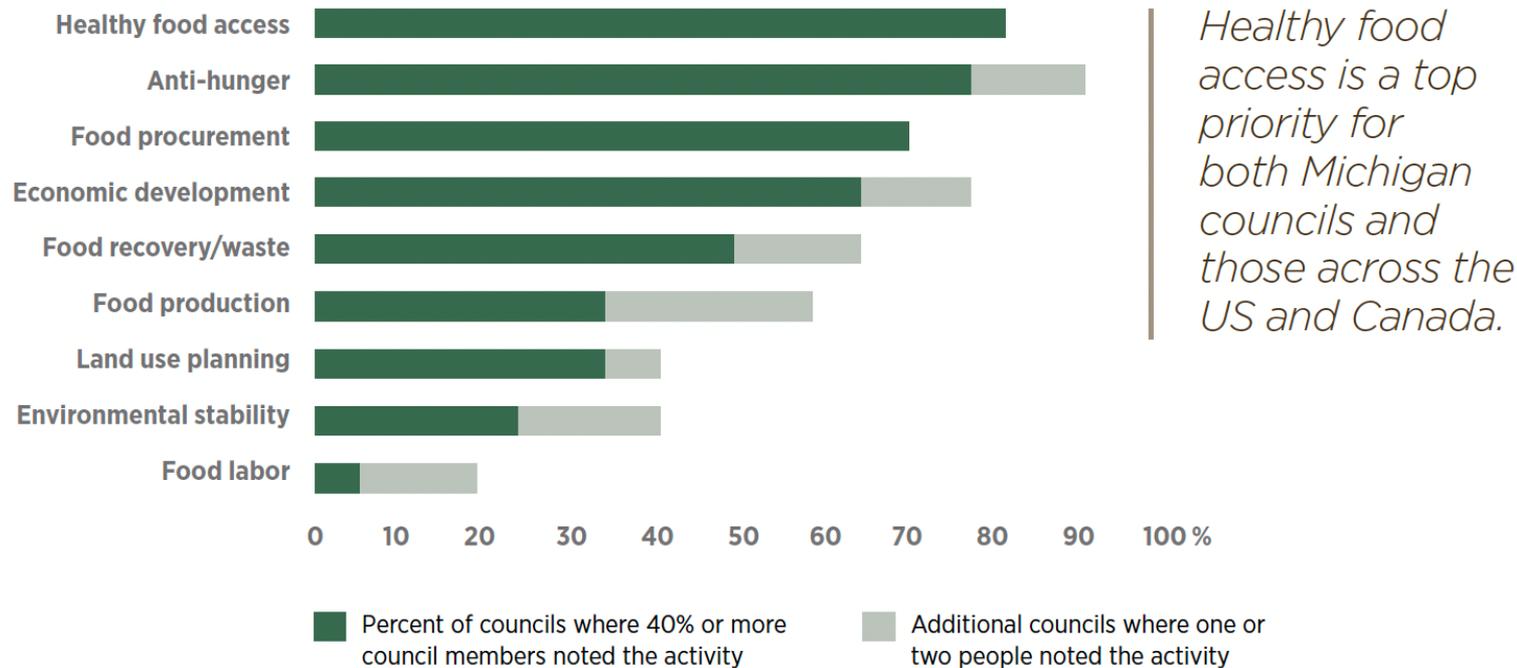
MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Center for  
Regional Food Systems



# WHAT LOCAL COUNCILS ARE WORKING ON

**FIGURE 2.** Topics councils prioritize





# **GOOD FOOD POLICY**

This diagram compares lunch in schools that participate in the **Michigan School Meals** program, **10 Cents a Meal**, or both to demonstrate how the programs work together. The labels show where the produce on each plate was grown and how much money went back to a Michigan farmer to pay for the produce. The "Where's the Money?" box\* shows how much a paid lunch would cost families in each school, and how much profit is made by Michigan farmers because of the produce the school bought.

### Michigan School Meals Only

Three bean chili with beans grown in New Mexico      Sugar snap peas grown in California

Apple grown in Washington      Spaghetti with tomatoes grown in Florida

**Where's the money?**

**Paid school lunch cost: \$0.00**

**Profit for Michigan farmers: \$0.00**

Michigan School Meals provides better meal **access** by ensuring that families don't have to pay for their children to eat breakfast and lunch.

### 10 Cents a Meal + NSLP Only

Roasted carrots grown in Dickinson County, MI (\$0.25)      Stewed pinto beans grown in Montcalm County, MI (\$0.25)

Apple grown in Kent County, MI (\$0.50)      Broccoli grown in Macomb County, MI (\$0.50) with mac & cheese

**Where's the money?**

**Paid school lunch cost: \$3.50**

**Profit for Michigan farmers: \$1.50**

10 Cents a Meal provides better meal **quality** by ensuring that the most delicious, locally grown fruits, veggies, and beans are served to kids in schools.

### Michigan School Meals + 10 Cents a Meal

Roasted carrots grown in Dickinson County, MI (\$0.25)      Stewed pinto beans grown in Montcalm County, MI (\$0.25)

Apple grown in Kent County, MI (\$0.50)      Broccoli grown in Macomb County, MI (\$0.50) with mac & cheese

**Where's the money?**

**Paid school lunch cost: \$0.00**

**Profit for Michigan farmers: \$1.50**

Pairing the two programs together ensures that we use school food service dollars for the **greatest benefit** of Michigan's children and farmers.

Visit [tencentsmichigan.org](https://tencentsmichigan.org) and <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/food/michigan-school-meals> to learn more!

\*Prices included in the comparison chart are for demonstration only and are not based on actual sales data.

**2010**

A Michigan Good Food Charter priority

MI Farm to School Network

**2013**

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

**2016**

Regional pilot funded by Michigan Legislature, \$250 K

**2020**

Statewide program funded by Michigan Legislature

**2021**

Statewide funding increased from \$2 to \$5 Million, expands to Early Care & Education sites

**2022**

Statewide funding increased from \$5 Million to \$9.3 Million

MI Farm to Institution Network

MI Local Food Council Network

Group GAP Pilot

MI Food Hub Network

HKHM



**Goals: Healthy Kids, Thriving Farms**

[www.tencentsmichigan.org](http://www.tencentsmichigan.org)

# FOOD HUBS



Kalamazoo Valley Community College's  
Sustainable Food Systems Programs:

# Education is our #1 Crop

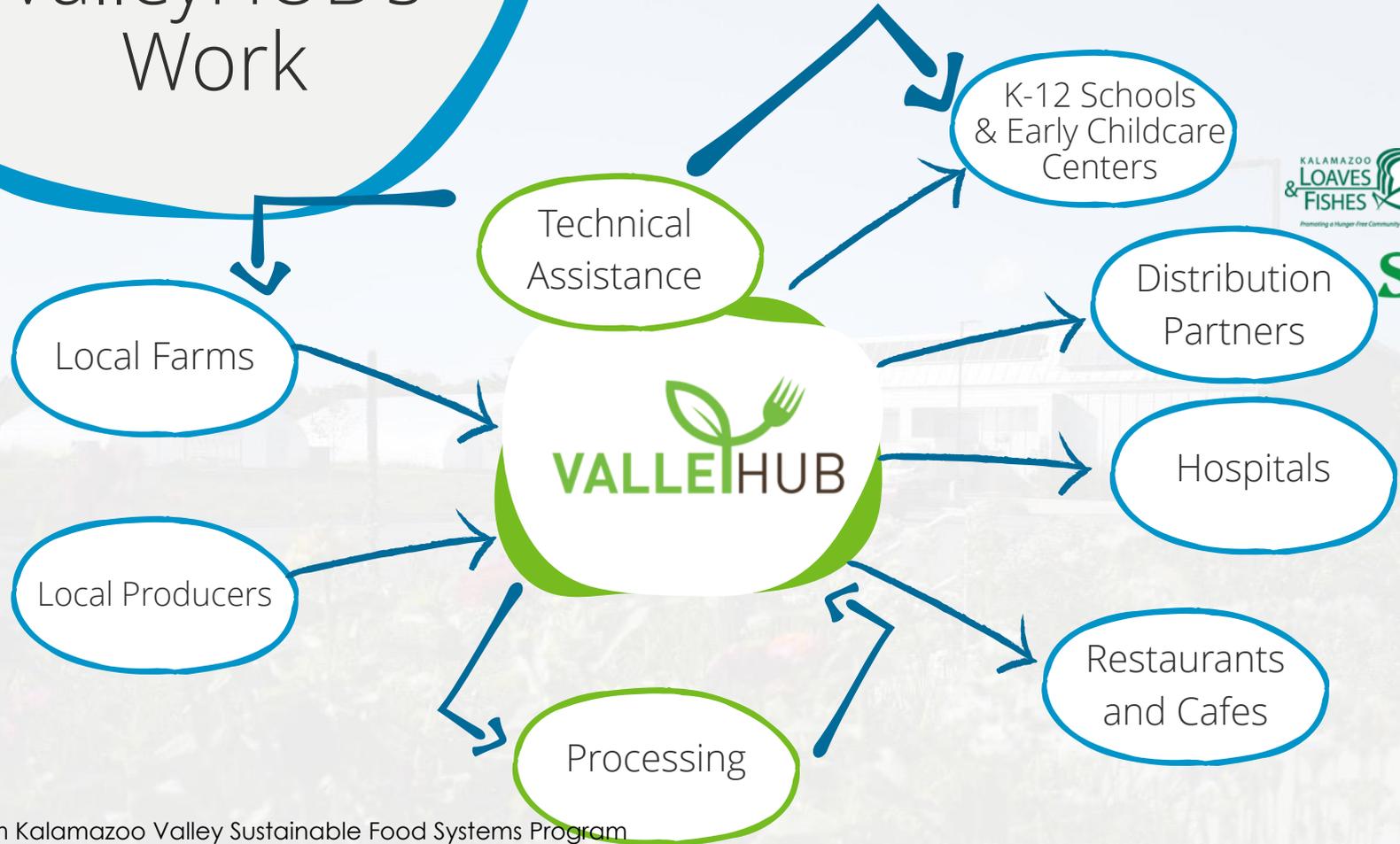


Grounded at the intersection of food production, social justice, environmental sustainability, nutrition, & health

# What is a food hub?

According to the USDA, “A regional food hub is a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail and institutional demand.”

# ValleyHUB's Work



# Alignment with Academics = Practical Education



Slide adapted from Kalamazoo Valley Sustainable Food Systems Program



# FRESH & FROZEN PROCESSING

Expanding seasonality and making it easier to use farm-fresh products

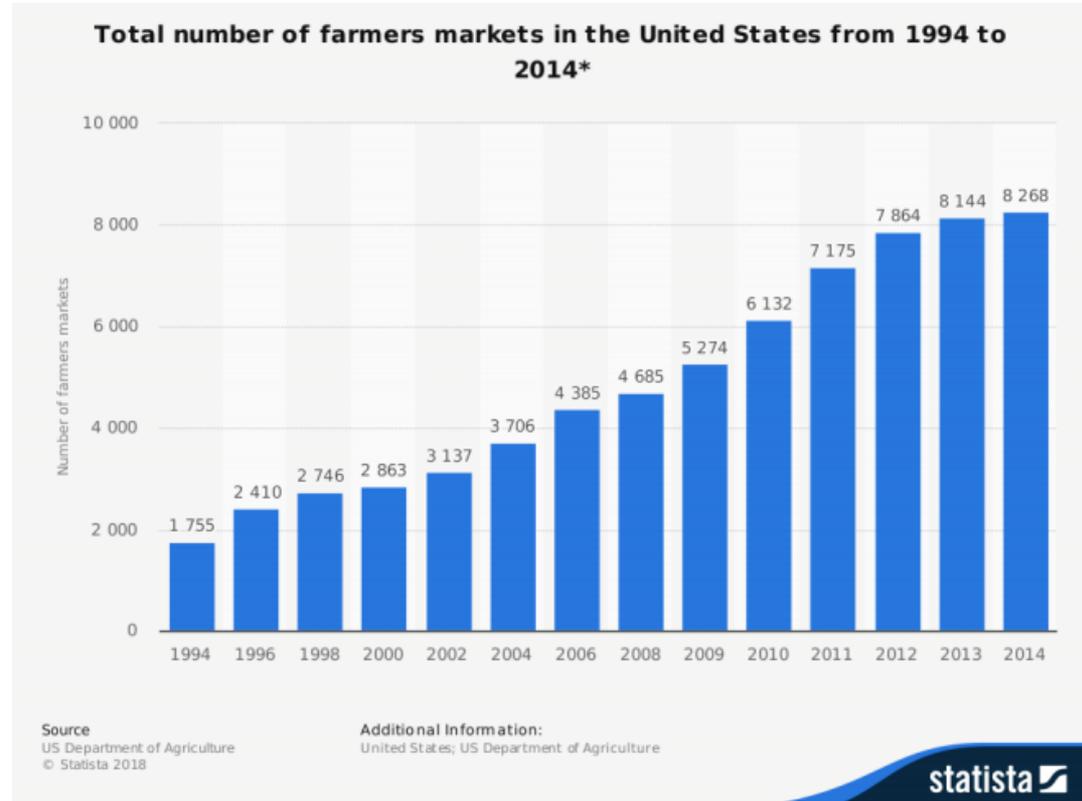


An aerial photograph of a farmers market. The scene is filled with numerous pop-up tents in various colors, including white, blue, green, pink, and red. People are seen walking between the tents, some interacting with vendors. The market is set outdoors, with lush green trees and bushes in the background. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the text "FARMERS MARKETS" in a bold, dark teal font.

# FARMERS MARKETS

# FARMERS MARKETS in the US

- There are 8140 farmers markets in the US
- They are the dominant form of market
- Farmers Markets are operated by:
  - 45.6% Nonprofits
  - 28% Municipalities
  - 19.2% Other government
  - 4.1% Other
  - 3.1% For-profits



# FARMERS MARKETS SUPPORT ORGS



Michigan has a very strong nonprofit membership organization – the **Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA)** supporting and advocating for the 200+ farmers markets across the state.



Similar state-level organizations or networks exist in more than a dozen other US States. Nationally, the **Farmers Market Coalition** supports the entire sector.



Globally, a World Farmers Market Coalition (based in Italy) is emerging.

# Introduction to the Census of Michigan Farmers Markets



The Census of Michigan Farmers Markets was conducted by the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) in the spring of 2021. The Census asked questions about both the 2019 and 2020 seasons.

## The goals of the Census were to:

- Understand how Michigan farmers markets operate and serve their communities
- Identify market needs for managers, vendors, and shoppers
- Guide MIFMA's programmatic and advocacy efforts to best support the future of Michigan farmers markets
- Understand how COVID-19 impacted market operations

## DEFINITION

### Community-based farmers market

A public and recurring assembly of farmers or their representatives selling direct-to-consumers food and items they have produced themselves. In addition, markets may include a variety of vendors as determined by market management. A farmers market is organized for the purpose of facilitating personal connections that create mutual benefits for local farmers, vendors, shoppers, and communities. Not included in the Census were farms stands or retail outlets that sell pre-generated products on behalf of farmers.

## The Respondents

Respondents were typically managers who understood operations and had access to information about their markets. Each received a \$50 stipend and a discounted registration to MIFMA's annual conference.

The excellent response rate (157 organizations, representing 176 markets) is a testament to the excellent MIFMA's relationship with market managers. MIFMA's commitment to data collection and sharing in the 2021 Census to track sector changes over time and guide decision-making.



# Census of MI Farmers Markets Market Operations

This document is part of the MI Farmers Market Census series. More available at [mifma.org/census](http://mifma.org/census)



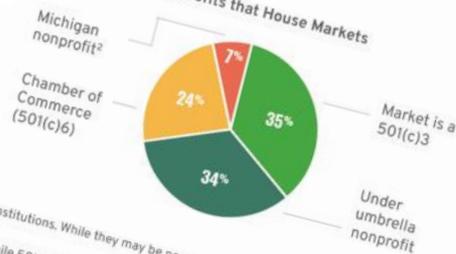
## Trends in Market Operations WHO OPERATES MARKETS?

Most farmers markets in Michigan are operated by local governments or nonprofit organizations, among markets that are, or are part of:

Most commonly, the market has incorporated as its own nonprofit organization (35%), or exists as a branch of an existing nonprofit organization, often one dedicated to the market or neighborhood.



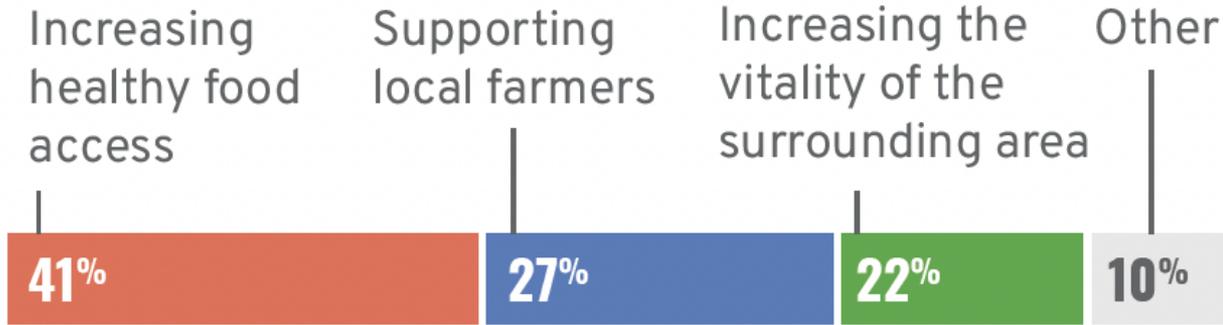
### Nonprofits that House Markets



<sup>1</sup>Examples of anchor institutions. While they may be nonprofits, in the farmers market sector they are categorized as anchor institutions.  
<sup>2</sup>Michigan nonprofit status is a state designation, while 501(c)3 status is a federal designation awarded by the IRS.

# FARMERS MARKETS ARE MISSION DRIVEN

Markets exist for a variety of reasons, and address many issues in their communities. Their top goals are:



# MARKETS AS CRITICAL ACCESS POINTS

**100%**  
of MI counties  
send vendors to a market



**4,900+**  
vendor stalls  
open each week



**102,500+**  
visitors  
each market day



# MICHIGAN IS A LEADER IN ACCEPTING FOOD ASSISTANCE

Program	MI % accepting	National % accepting
Any form of federal food assistance	71%	50%
Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (Project FRESH in MI)	64%	29%
WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (Project FRESH in MI)	60%	29%
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	58%	39%
Nutrition Incentive Program (Double Up Food Bucks in Michigan)	54%	27%
Produce Prescription	13%	3%

# WHAT FOOD ASSISTANCE LOOKS LIKE



Many ways to pay at our farmers markets in addition to cash!

+ Project FRESH  
& Market FRESH

# THE IMPACT OF FOOD ASSISTANCE

More than 73% of our Ypsilanti Farmers Market customers report that the markets have increased their household's access to fresh, healthy food.

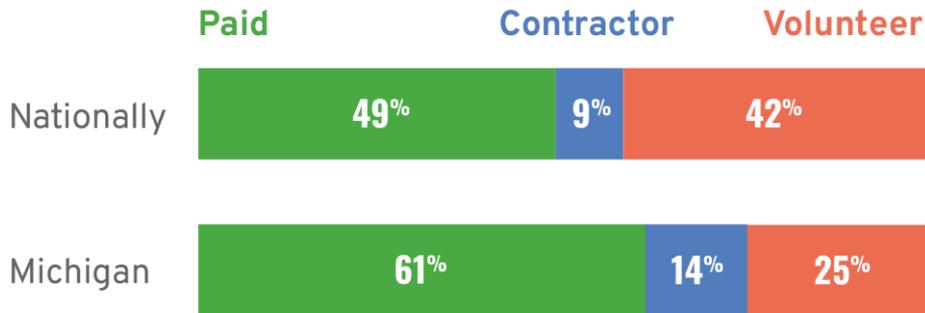
Our markets serve the diversity of our community; 43% of our customers have household incomes under \$25K/year.



# MARKETS OPERATE ON VERY LITTLE

**50%**

operate on \$6,000 or less in annual revenue



**25%**

are unpaid

**79%**

are women

**\$6,000**

median salary

# MY RESEARCH: MARKETS & MUNICIPALITIES

## ***Some of the municipal roles in farmers markets***

### Functional

- Owning and/or operating
- Issuing permits
- Use of public space
- Financial, marketing, or other resources

### Legislative/Policy

- Municipal plans
- Municipal codes/regulations



# FOCUS HAS BEEN ON URBAN AGRICULTURE

Beyond backyard chickens: A framework for understanding urban agriculture policies in the United States



Regulatory Practices of Urban Agriculture: A Connection to Planning and Policy

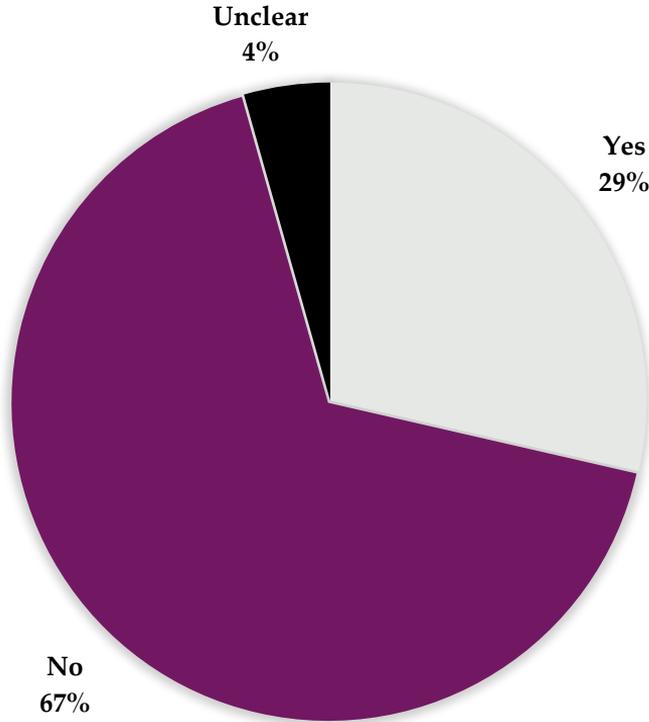
The Intersection of Planning, Urban Agriculture, and Food Justice: A Review of the Literature



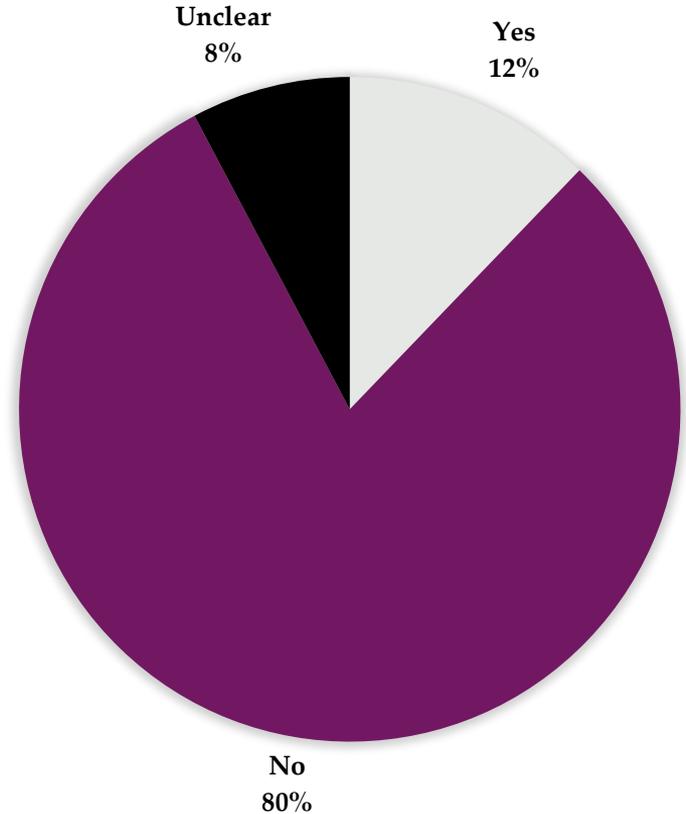


# SELECT RESULTS FROM MICHIGAN STUDY

## MARKET IN ZONING CODE



## MARKET DEFINED IN CODE



# IMPLICATIONS OF UNCLEAR POLICY



- Technically illegal in most places
- Temporary activity/seen as less priority/easy to move/shut
- Unclear regulations on use of public space
- Barriers re: what to do, how much to pay, who to talk to, difficult processes
- Inconsistent treatment

# THANK YOU!

**Amanda Maria Edmonds**

Beehive Strategies

AmandaMEdmonds@gmail.com

WhatsApp: +1 734 714 6892

Connect with me on LinkedIn!

