

The Basic Questions to Consider When Getting Started

When starting to think about building a healthy food project or program in your community, it is important to address some basic considerations and questions as you prepare your effort. The following is a quick summary of those key considerations.

What is healthy food retail? How does it differ from regular food retail?

Healthy food retail includes supermarkets, farmers' markets, corner stores, or any other commercial business where customers can buy healthy fruits and vegetables as well as other healthy products to prepare at home. Some communities have created standards for healthy food retailers requiring them to devote a certain amount of shelf space to healthier items.

What is an underserved community?

An underserved community is a rural or urban community where there are few stores that sell healthy food, so it is more difficult to buy an apple or a carrot than to buy a soda or a candy bar. Many funding opportunities are limited to underserved communities. For resources to help you determine whether your area is underserved, go to ["Defining Underserved Primer."](#)

What are the types of healthy food retail?

There are a wide range of food retail formats that can help meet a community's food needs. Healthy food retail includes supermarkets, corner stores, farmer's markets, mobile markets, and many others. For a full list of retail options, and a tool to allow you to evaluate which will meet the needs of your community, go to ["Food Retail Strategy."](#)

What are key policies that support healthy food retail?

There are a range of policies that support healthy food retail from statewide grant and loan financing initiatives for fresh food retail operators in underserved neighborhoods, to local policies such as zoning laws that require new stores to carry healthy foods. For more information on policies supporting fresh food retail go to ["Policy Efforts."](#)

What can community organizations and advocates do to increase healthy food in their communities?

Community groups can provide many types of support to increase healthy food access. They can partner with government to form a task force to evaluate the healthy food barriers of the community. They can work with this task force, with a local food policy council, or with policymakers to advance policy proposals that will remove barriers and provide new resources and incentives to improve access to healthy food. They can work with existing store operators to identify the types of healthy foods that neighbors will buy and then follow up to ensure that they purchase the new products to cover the operator's costs. Organizations also can promote healthy foods through education campaigns and community outreach. To learn more about initiating a policy effort in your community, go to ["Policy Efforts."](#)



Healthy Food Access Portal

www.healthyfoodaccess.org

PolicyLink



What are key funding sources that support healthy food retail?

The issue of healthy food access has received national attention due to its ability to bolster resident health and the local economy. Many of these programs involve public-private partnerships that generate lasting changes. Funding programs that support grocery and other fresh food retail businesses have been created at the federal, state, and local levels. For more information on potential funding available for your fresh food retail project, go to ["Find Money."](#)



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