

## UnFed: Creating Equality in Our Food System



### Food Policy and Impact Organizations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziei7H-lklk>

Most of us don't give a second thought to food policy and how it affects what we eat, but being aware of what's happening keeps us in the driver's seat when it comes to making an impact. There are regulations and laws being passed every year that affect a wide range of food-related topics such as use of pesticides, food waste, local farm support, and the quality of food in our schools and hospital. There is more on the table than you probably realize!

Just recently there are reports about arsenic in baby food, and we are all learning about the presence of glyphosphates, which is weed killer, in our food. You don't have to be a food activist to know that doesn't sound right. These are the kinds of things that make you want to have a more of a voice in what is going on. In this webinar, we highlight a few of our favorite organizations that are doing important work across the state of CT and beyond as well as some simple things we can all do to support the efforts that benefit everyone.

#### What is Food Policy?

Food policy is the collective laws and regulations relating to food production and distribution. It's important to know what regulations are impacting our food and our food choices, what bills are currently on the table, who the consumer advocates are, and who are the people making the rules.

No matter what level you want to get involved, there are organizations and wonderful intelligent people who have stepped into the role of communicating these issues, and they lay out what legislation is on the table. Here are some great organizations that are dedicated to representing the best interests of consumers, and keeping us informed.

#### **Foodprint.org** – <https://foodprint.org>

A national organization dedicated to research and education on food production practices. They help define our food policies, such as doubling SNAP benefits at farmers markets. They have a nice definition of food policy. <https://foodprint.org/issues/food-policy-101/>

#### **Farm to Institution New England** - <https://www.farmtoinstitution.org>

A six-state network of nonprofit, public and private entities working together to transform our food system by increasing the amount of good, local food served in our region's schools, hospitals, colleges, correctional facilities, and other institutions. This page keeps you up-to-date on food policy issues in Connecticut.

[https://www.farmtoinstitution.org/sites/default/files/imce/uploads/Policy%20Snapshot\\_CT.pdf](https://www.farmtoinstitution.org/sites/default/files/imce/uploads/Policy%20Snapshot_CT.pdf)

### Some Great CT Non-Profits

- **CT Farm to School** – Trying to get more local farms connected to schools. <https://www.ctfarmtoschool.org>
- **Hartford Food** - Focused on understanding and addressing the underlying causes of inadequate community access to healthy food. <https://www.hartfordfood.org>
- **Common Ground** - Nature-based agricultural school. <https://commongroundct.org>
- **Green Village Initiative** – An organization in Bridgeport Connecticut that has been doing wonderful work for years getting urban gardens, farmers markets, and schools connected. <https://www.gogvi.org/>

### 3 Excellent e-Newsletters. Seriously, subscribe today, and stay informed!

- **CT Food Systems Alliance** does a phenomenal job of providing a weekly summary of current legislation and resources that everyone can read and take action steps if they wish to. <https://ctfoodsystemalliance.com>
- **Food Solutions New England** is a regional organization that has real food system goals. They are a collaborator between governments, nonprofits, and state departments, and they are working to ensure that we have a thriving regional food system. <https://foodsolutionsne.org>
- **Farm to Institution** is a regional, six-state network that unites the food system community around a shared set of values - democratic empowerment, racial equity and dignity for all, sustainability, and trust - and strengthens the movement's ability to achieve New England Food Vision goals. <https://foodsolutionsne.org>

### It's our Food Future. Be Aware!

This upswell of policy organizations that educate and provide information stimulates local grass roots efforts, and that are making a tremendous impact. Even if you don't have the time or ability to really get involved with food policy, staying aware of the current events keeps you in a position to contribute or at the very least spread the word. There are local leaders in this field that are making it easy to stay in touch with food policy. Get on their newsletters and support the work they do. Here are three simple tips to get you started on the journey.

- **A Small and Passionate Effort Can Evoke Change:** If you find yourself passionate about a topic related to food or food security, make the effort and find some like-minded folks to team up with. That's exactly how change happens.
- **Be Part of the Solution:** We carry tremendous weight as consumers in this world. If you don't like the way certain companies or organizations conduct their operations, then take your money elsewhere!
- **It's a Journey:** It's OK to slowly get in the game here. Just getting on some newsletters and reading up a bit more is a great first step. You may be surprised at how certain topics may light a fire for you!

These things create the swell. These things create the path to change. Change happens at every level, from the small changes in individual choices, to educating yourself and spreading the work, all the way up to being directly involved in writing and advocating for policy in your town, state, or country. All together it makes an impact.