



Initial Focus Areas

VIBRANT FOOD SYSTEMS What We Learned

SINCE COVID-19
only 33%
of survey
respondents
expressed that
they could
find affordable
food in their
neighborhood

While what we eat impacts our physical health, systemic inequities have made it more difficult for some to acquire the necessary food to support a healthy diet. How we grow our food impacts our environment; housing insecurity can make it more difficult to purchase healthy food; our public schools are often the only place where children can eat a healthy meal.

- According to the American Community Survey 5-year estimate, 4,264 households (50%) in 02907 utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- In our 02907 HEZ Survey, 28% of survey respondents had reported requiring food assistance in the past 60 days with most of them utilizing family or friends for assistance.



COMMUNITY GARDENS and Fresh Affordable Produce

- Community gardens are an opportunity for residents to save money on food, grow crops that are relevant to their culture, and spend time outside building community with neighbors.
- There are **approximately 21 community gardens that operate in the 02907 zip code.**
- Due to the high number of renters in the HEZ, many residents can only garden in community gardens, making the waitlist for garden plots in 02907 very long. During the 02907 HEZ assessment process, **the need for additional community gardens came up repeatedly.**

“I think what a good idea [is]...how they find empty lots, throw in soil, and develop a garden program to grow fresh produce and vegetables and herbs where they ordinarily wouldn’t have.”
– 02907 Focus group participant

FOOD AVAILABILITY and Affordability

- There are **41 food stores in 02907.** These stores are primarily culturally-specific food stores and small convenience stores and bodegas.
- During our Community SpeakOuts, many residents indicated that they leave their community to purchase food, with the majority of residents going to Price Rite or Stop and Shop, both in Cranston RI.
- According to the 02907 HEZ survey, **50% of respondents had expressed that they could find affordable food in their neighborhood in the year prior to COVID-19.** Since COVID-19, that number fell to 33%.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT and Food

- Supporting job training opportunities in the food system is vital as **COVID-19 has impacted the employment of many in 02907.**
- Many in **our community have advanced agricultural and culinary skills;** what is needed is technical assistance and coordination of existing resources.