

Arizona Statewide Food Action Plan

2022–2024

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Priority Summaries



Arizona's Food System Framework

The Arizona food system encompasses a range of activities from growing, foraging, and ranching; processing; transporting and distributing; retailing and marketing; preparation and cooking; consumption; waste management; safety; land and water stewardship; and environmental preservation. All these inputs are deeply interconnected with socioeconomic, cultural, and political influences. AZFSN also recognizes food and agriculture as key drivers influencing all levels of the social determinants of health with impacts grounded in each level of the social ecological model recognizing that many factors at multiple levels within this plan—from individual knowledge and community norms to public policy—influence the outcomes. Decisions about the way we grow, move, share, and think about food across Arizona and the twenty-two sovereign tribal communities has a powerful ripple effect that is deeply connected to our shared agricultural history and unique culture.

The Elements of Arizona's Food System



Priority 1: Food Access and Distribution

Goal:

Increase access and distribution of healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for all people in Arizona.

Objective 1: By December 2024, increase local food production by 5%.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Establish a baseline for the number of Arizona food producers that are selling products in local markets, such as farmers markets, grocery stores, restaurants, and institutions.	2022–2023
Establish a baseline of the number of businesses and institutions that are procuring Arizona-grown food.	2022–2023
Determine sustainable funding source for a locally grown marketing campaign.	2023
Enhance the mapping and visibility of local food system players, including producers, suppliers, processors, aggregators, food hubs, restaurants, and institutions such as farm-to-school and farm-to-food banks.	2023
Provide technical support and opportunities to deepen relationships for farm-to-institution (scale up or scale down).	2023–2024
Support policy efforts aimed at incentivizing local food procurement.	2022–2024

Objective 2: By December 2024, collectively accumulate at least \$3 million in state and/or federal funding to support infrastructure for food distribution (e.g., infrastructure money to support transportation, refrigeration, storage, road conditions, and technology).

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Identify and secure funding for local processing centers, including mobile food processors, such as a mobile beef processor.	2022–2023
Identify/apply for funding to invest in infrastructure with development of local/hyperlocal food hubs.	2023–2024
Identify and apply for funding to expand the capacity for supplying culturally appropriate food through emergency food systems and programs.	2023–2024

Objective 3: By December 2024, ensure equity in 100% of all food access and distribution policy initiatives passed in Arizona.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Develop policy objectives in partnership with local communities and populations being served by food system programs.	2022
Deepen relationships with BIPOC-led groups to codevelop policy initiatives.	2022–2023
Increase culturally appropriate local foods for food assistance programs defined and stated by those who will be receiving the food.	2023
Ensure tribal members are involved in codesigning and reviewing food distribution policies and plans to ensure that distribution is equitable and areas that are not served are reached.	2022–2024

Priority 2: Land and Water Access and Protection

Goal:

Foster and advance values that support preservation of agricultural land with access to safe and viable water sources for Arizona’s food producers.

Objective 1: By December 2024, facilitate/develop five trainings and/or resources focused on easing barriers to land access for the next generation of farmers.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Compile and disseminate (through resources, training) land preservation and access tools/best practices that cross geographic boundaries.	2022–2023
Collaborate with USDA to streamline barriers in existing processes and programs.	2023–2024

Objective 2: By December 2024, engage twenty food producers to implement or improve water-efficient agricultural practices to reduce demand on limited water supply.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Assess threats and opportunities that will affect agricultural water supply most significantly in the next five years.	2022
Showcase water conservation and stewardship practices at regional level and peer-to-peer producer workshops/gatherings.	2023–2024
Facilitate connections to grants that link producers to tangible water- efficient technologies.	2023–2024
Develop and implement a plan to communicate land and water policy solutions with policymakers, decision-makers, and private sector interest groups.	2024

Objective 3: By December 2024, increase the number of state and local policies passed that protect and preserve agricultural land and water for smaller farmers and food producers.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Assess land utilization and conversion patterns/trends throughout the state.	2022
Present and share policy recommendations with city and town councils.	2024

Priority 3: Climate Smart Foodways

Goal:

Leverage our existing knowledge, experience, and creativity with Arizona’s environmental and cultural diversity to scale and uplift the adoption of climate-smart foodways.

Objective 1: By December 2024, increase access to and utilization of climate-smart agricultural data that are shared in new ways to inspire action around climate-friendly farming practices through the creation of a state climate-smart agricultural data practices and measures hub.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Compile and leverage university data gathering efforts for integration into the practice’s hub.	2022–2023
Conduct systems/actor mapping to inform leveraging and combining of efforts.	2023
Develop an online hub platform for the sharing and dissemination of practices.	2023
Uplift Indigenous knowledge and growing practices for replication and scale.	2023–2024
Engage regional coalitions in establishing shared measures with a focus on carbon footprint measurement data aggregating.	2023–2024

Objective 2: By December 2024, engage a minimum of ten Arizona municipalities in adopting climate-smart agricultural and food practices in city/town planning processes.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Compile food and agricultural strategies in current city/town and county plans to establish baseline.	2022
Incubate and innovate city/town climate-smart foodways practices already in place, such as composting programs, to scale and expand to other municipalities.	2023
Implement pilot study of consumer food waste perceived benefits/barriers, practices, and resulting behavior change.	2023
Identify and secure infrastructure funding to support the incubation and innovation of new practices.	2024
Incubate and innovate practices and programs addressing barriers identified in pilot study.	2024

Objective 3: By December 2024, increase the number of AZFSN partners mobilizing to act on climate-smart agriculture policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Develop policy objectives in partnership with local communities and populations being served by food system programs.	2022
Deepen relationships with BIPOC-led groups to codevelop policy initiatives.	2022–2023
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Deepen relationships with BIPOC-led groups to codevelop policy initiatives.	2022–2023
Increase culturally appropriate local foods for food assistance programs defined and stated by those who will be receiving the food.	2023
Ensure tribal members are involved in codesigning and reviewing food distribution policies and plans to ensure that distribution is equitable and areas that are not served are reached.	2022–2024

Priority 4: Agriculture Workforce Development

Goal:

Increase the number of growers, ranchers, and food systems workers in Arizona with an emphasis on development with tribal communities.

Objective 1: By December 2024, increase the number of agricultural apprenticeship opportunities for tribal members.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Enhance coordination and communication about agriculture apprenticeship opportunities with tribal communities.	2022
Provide technical assistance pathways for new and future apprenticeship programs to successfully apply for state funding through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension program.	2022
Create peer-to-peer learning opportunities with a focus on youth engagement to increase awareness of agricultural career opportunities.	2023–2024
Identify tribal governance policies and barriers affecting implementation and scale of apprenticeship opportunities.	2023–2024

Objective 2: By December 2024, improve the well-being of food system workers by advocating for equitable protection, compensation, and care policies and practices.

Strategies for Action	Timeline
Expand food system business technical assistance and support services with a focus on compensation and care equity.	2022–2023
Identify and increase investment in food systems jobs and career pathways that align with pay and care equity best practices.	2023–2024
Assess opportunities to improve workplace satisfaction and equitable compensation to share with Arizona-based food systems businesses.	2023
Assess opportunities for improving economic viability among the tribal agricultural workforce and share and disseminate findings.	2024
Increase awareness and recognition of the food economy as a driver of economic opportunity, jobs, and positive workforce development.	2024