

RHODE ISLAND FOOD SYSTEM  
2015 SNAPSHOT

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POPULATION 1,052,567



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**DID YOU KNOW?**

Rhode Island is the first state in the country in which all school districts purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables.

**STATE FOOD SYSTEM DATA**

**BUSINESSES**

**7,023**

**JOBS**

**65,605**

# RHODE ISLAND FOOD SYSTEM: 2015 SNAPSHOTS

This fact sheet is one of a series developed for every Rhode Island municipality. The Fact Sheets are intended to give Rhode Islanders a better sense of the current impact the food system has on individual communities, and a better understanding of the network of businesses, agencies, organizations and institutions that make up our local food system. A *food system* encompasses all of the processes involved in feeding people: it includes the production, harvesting, and processing of food; its distribution and marketing; its consumption (whether at home, in schools and institutions, or in restaurants); and ultimately, the recycling or disposal of food waste. The fact sheets present a dynamic “snapshot” of the local food system, and we hope they will stimulate discussion about growing the local food system and using data to track and measure progress. This is a first attempt to pull together data from a range of sources, however, so we invite corrections or additional information that will help us more accurately represent Rhode Island’s local food system.

## DEFINITIONS AND DATA SOURCES

### POPULATION

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

## RHODE ISLAND FOOD SYSTEM

### PRODUCTION & HARVESTING

#### Farms

The 2012 USDA Census of Agriculture estimates there are 1,243 farms in RI but does not provide data by municipality. No single RI entity maintains a count of farms by municipality. The numbers provided are the best data available at this time.

Sources: RIDEM, Farm Fresh RI website, June 2015

#### Aquaculture Farms

Includes all aquaculture farms that lease submerged land in state waters.

Source: RI CRMC, June 2015

#### Commercial Fishers

Includes municipal residents who hold any type of commercial fishing license for fish and/or shellfish.

Source: RIDEM, June 2015

#### Community Gardens

Includes (1) public/private properties that provide plots of land on which people raise food mainly for household consumption, and (2) public/private properties on which volunteers raise food for the RI Community Food Bank and food pantries.

Sources: Numbers compiled as of June, 2015 from multiple sources, including Farm Fresh RI, a 2014 survey of religious institutions, and municipal planning staff

### PROCESSING

#### Food Processors

Includes businesses that process raw fruits and vegetables, meat, seafood and milk into value-added products.

Source: RIDOH licensee list, accessed May 2015

### DISTRIBUTION

#### Distributors

Includes businesses involved in transporting and warehousing raw and processed foods.

Source: RIDOH licensee list, accessed May 2015

#### Markets

Includes supermarkets, grocery, and convenience stores.

Source: RIDOH licensee list, accessed May 2015

#### Farmers Markets

Source: Farm Fresh RI website, June 2015

#### Farmstands

Source: Farm Fresh RI website, October 2015

### CONSUMPTION

#### Restaurants

Includes full service, limited service, fast food restaurants and food trucks.

Source: RIDOH licensee list, accessed May 2015

#### Public Schools Purchase Locally Grown Food

Source: RIDE, 2015

### RESOURCE RECOVERY

#### Annual Tons of Residential Food Waste *estimated*

#### Annual Tons of Commercial Food Waste *estimated*

#### Municipal Fee to Landfill Residential Food Waste *estimated*

Municipalities currently pay a fee of \$32/ton for waste disposal. Total fee is based on estimated tons of residential food waste.

Source: Estimates provided by RI Resource Recovery Corporation based on 2014 waste tonnage

#### Food Waste Recycling Facilities

Includes all composting and/or anaerobic digestion facilities that are currently processing food waste with a state license.

Source: RIDEM, June 2015

## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RESOURCES

### Participants in SNAP and WIC

Source: URI Center for a Hunger Free America, SNAP and WIC, June 2015

### Participants Receiving Meals on Wheels Home Delivery

Includes all individuals receiving meals through Meals on Wheels Home Delivery Service.

Source: Meals on Wheels of RI 2014 statistics

### Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Meals

To be eligible for free/reduced meals, a child’s household income must fall below 185% of the federal poverty guideline. Children in foster care, and households receiving SNAP Benefits or in the Rhode Island Works Program are automatically eligible.

Source: 2015 RI KIDS COUNT Factbook

### Food Pantries

Includes sites that provide free food to households in need.

Source: RI Community Food Bank Emergency Food Provider List, May 2015

### Congregate Meal Sites

Includes sites that provide low or no-cost meals in a group setting for individuals in need.

Source: RI Community Food Bank Emergency Food Provider List, May, 2015; web pages for Senior Services Inc., Meals on Wheels, East Bay CAP, and West Bay CAP.

## FOOD JOBS AND FOOD BUSINESSES

Data from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Nonemployer Statistics, and USDA Census of Agriculture, 2012.

Source: ProvPlan, July 2015