

RI FOOD  
POLICY  
COUNCIL



Policy for the People  
**Rhode Island**  
**Food Policy**  
**Legislative Review**



# AGENDA

- **Welcome & introduction**
- **Introduction to the RIFPC Bill Tracker**
- **Summary of 2023 state legislative outcomes**
- **Panel: *Looking Back - Looking Ahead***
- **Q&A**

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## OUR MISSION

**The Rhode Island Food Policy Council is building a more equitable, accessible, economically vibrant, and environmentally sustainable food system in Rhode Island.**

est. 2011

**INDEPENDENT • 501C3 NONPROFIT**

# RI FOOD SYSTEM HIGHLIGHTS



**\$12B**

Economic impact of Rhode Island's food system



**63,900**

Number of food systems-related jobs in Rhode Island



**\$13.73**

Average hourly wage for workers in RI's largest category of food system jobs: food preparation and serving. These are the lowest wages of any occupational category in the state.



**56,864**

Acres of agricultural land in Rhode Island



**\$600M**

Annual sales from Rhode Island's seafood and fisheries sector



**348**

Acres of aquaculture farms in Rhode Island waters



**31%**

Households in Rhode Island that are food insecure and unable to afford adequate food



**100,000**

Tons of food waste (vegetative and protein) entering the landfill. This compostable and sometimes edible material is the biggest single type of waste entering RI's landfill.



**CLEAN AIR**

FARMS & FISHERIES PRODUCTION



**SUPPORTIVE  
POLICY**

PROCESSING



**CAPITAL ACCESS**

FOOD WASTE



**RI FOOD  
SYSTEM**

**CLEAN WATER**

DISTRIBUTION



**LAND ACCESS**

CONSUMPTION



RETAIL

**HEALTHY SOIL**



## COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

RIFPC recognizes the fact that many negative impacts of Rhode Island's current food system are grounded in a history of colonialism, genocide of indigenous people, slavery, private ownership of land, and the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of too few.

We also recognize that people with visible and non-apparent disabilities are among the most marginalized groups in our country. **RIFPC believes that when power shifts to be shared more equitably across our communities and our state, we transform our future together for generations to come.**



# CORE ISSUES



## **Food Access & Nutrition**

Building equitable, culturally-relevant solutions to food and nutrition access problems.



## **Food Business & Economy**

Empowering farmers, aquaculturists, fishers, and food entrepreneurs to thrive.



## **Food, Climate, & Environment**

Addressing issues at the intersection of climate change and food systems.



## **Food Education & Workforce**

Growing educated stakeholders, informed youth, and a robust food sector workforce.

# 2023 POLICY PRIORITIES



## **PRESERVE OUR FARMS**

Support land access for farming across Rhode Island, in both urban and rural environments..

## **DIVERT FOOD FROM LANDFILLS**

Develop a comprehensive strategy for minimizing and diverting wasted food from business going into the landfill.

## **ENSURE FOOD ACCESS**

Support food access and nutrition security, with a focus on increasing opportunities for local producers and harvesters to sell nutritious, affordable, and culturally-relevant food to organizations that feed food insecure residents.

## **SUPPORT FOOD BUSINESSES**

Support second stage food businesses with shared-use infrastructure, marketing and technical assistance, grants, tax incentives, and low-cost loans.



# RIFPC BILL TRACKER

- Tracks all legislation introduced
- Updated continuously
- Summary provided weekly

[www.rifoodcouncil.org/billtracker](http://www.rifoodcouncil.org/billtracker)

The image displays two overlapping screenshots. The top screenshot shows the RIFPC Bill Tracker website. The header includes the RIFPC logo and navigation links: Who We Are, Our Work, Resources, Data Dashboard, News Feed, Get Involved, and Contact. Below the header is a banner image with the text "RESOURCES Bill Tracker". The main content area features a section titled "2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: IMPORTANT VICTORY FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION, BUT WASTED FOOD SOLUTIONS REMAIN". Below this is a list of categories: ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD, AGRICULTURE, CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, EQUITY AND JUSTICE, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, FOOD BUSINESSES, FOOD SAFETY, and RECYCLING, RECOVERY AND WASTED FOOD.

The bottom screenshot is a social media post from the RIFPC Council (@RIFoodCouncil). The text of the post reads: "It's a big week for RI #foodsystem legislation! 🗳️ 2 new bills are now in our tracker + committees are hearing legislation on #fooddonation tax credits, reimbursable public #schoolmeals, AND #foodwaste diversion requirements: rifoodcouncil.org/bill-tracker/". The post includes a graphic that says "Bill Tracker Update" and shows the RIFPC logo. The post is dated 4:31 PM - Apr 24, 2023, and has 3 likes and 1 reply.

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2023-2024

*Looking Back - Looking  
Ahead*





# PANELISTS



**Diane Lynch**  
Moderator



**David Dadekian**



**Steven Arthurs**

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# Looking ahead to the 2024 Legislative Session





**QUESTIONS?**



# GET INVOLVED!

## *Join a Work Group!*



- Active Farmland Access
- Benefits Cliff (SNAP)
- Communications
- Compost
- Farm Bill
- Fisheries
- Food Business
- Healthy School Meals for All
- Surplus Food Donation
- Urban Farmer Advocacy

## *Share & Stay Connected!*



@rifoodcouncil