



COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

HOLLY FREISHTAT
FOOD POLICY DIRECTOR & CHIEF OF FOOD POLICY & PLANNING

LEPC Meeting

June 8, 2021



FOOD POLICY AND PLANNING DIVISON

Oversee the [Baltimore Food Policy Initiative \(BFPI\)](#), a three-tiered approach to building and equitable and resilient urban food system

Food Policy & Planning Staff

- Food Policy Director, Food Resilience Planner, Food Access Planner & Food Systems Planner

Inter-agency collaboration

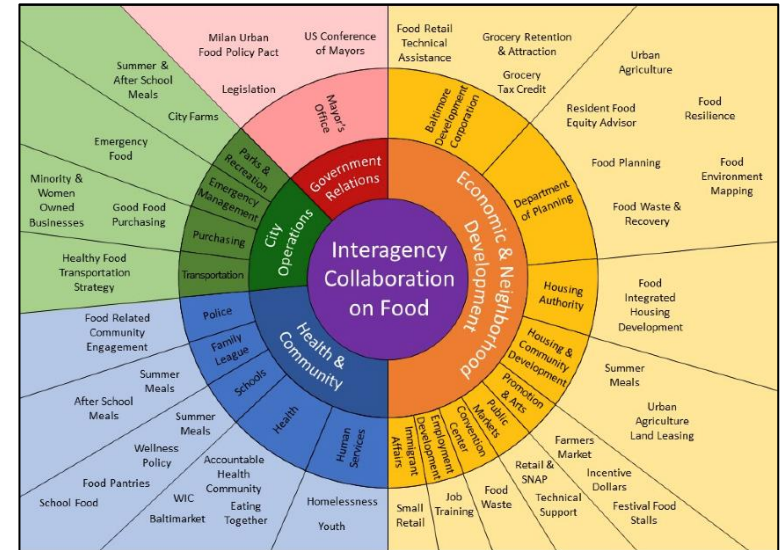
- 19 agencies addressing food systems

Food Policy Action Coalition

- 60 diverse stakeholders and growing
- Collaboration, idea sharing and collective action and advocacy

Resident Food Equity Advisors

- Compensated for their time





A CITY COMMITTED TO BUILDING AN EQUITABLE AND RESILIENT URBAN FOOD SYSTEM



EQUITABLE & RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS



Guiding Principles:

1. Support policy, data, and programs to create a more equitable food system
2. Strengthen and amplify the local food economy
3. Create agriculture land-use policies that encourage urban farms and local food production
4. Increase food resilience at
 - Household
 - Community and
 - Food system levels

Healthy Food Environment Strategy

-  Resident-driven processes
-  Corner and convenience stores
-  Supermarkets
-  Public Markets
-  Food distribution and small businesses
-  Federal nutrition assistance
-  Urban agriculture
-  Transportation gaps



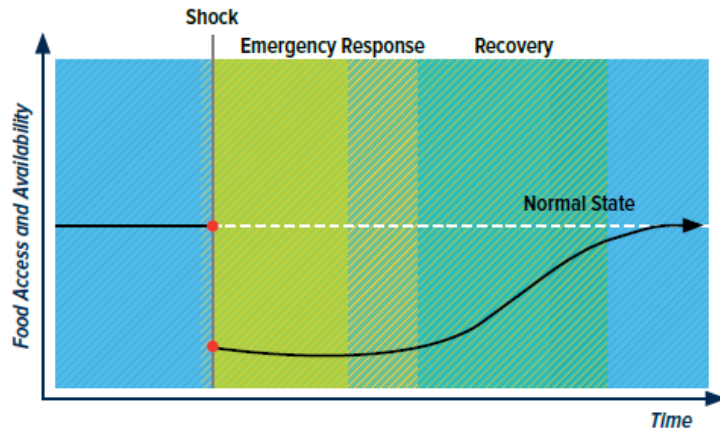


COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

PLANNING

FOOD RESILIENCE PLANNING

Figure 1: Resilience Timeline



Food System Resilience:

- “Ability to prepare for, withstand, and recover from a crisis or disruption”
- A resilient food system is able to withstand and recover from disruptions in a way that ensures a sufficient supply of acceptable and accessible food for all.

Reports and Plans:

- Baltimore Food System Resilience Advisory Report with Johns Hopkins
- Created Plan for Food Access During Incidents and Disasters for the City of Baltimore

August 2017

Baltimore Food System Resilience Advisory Report

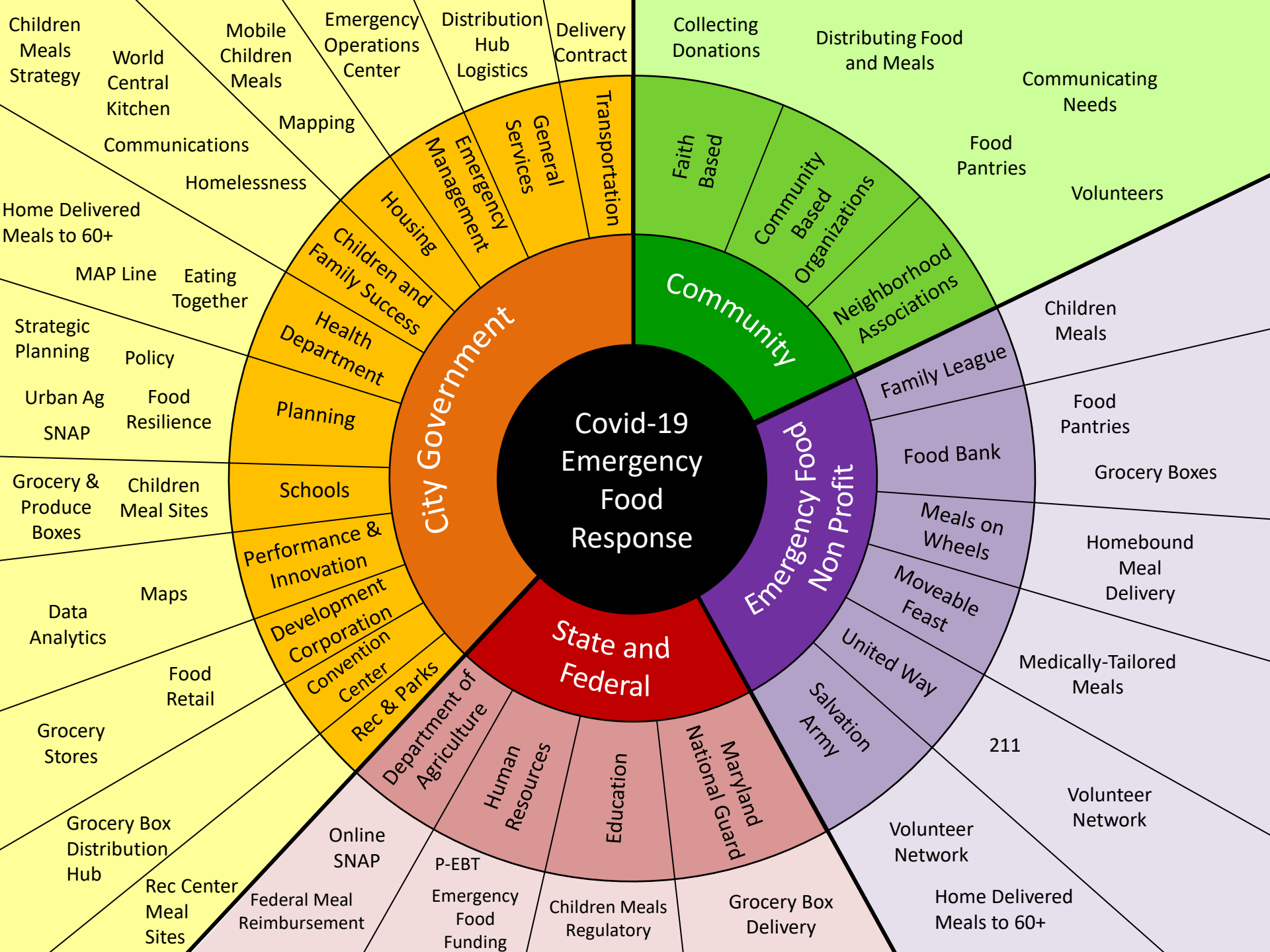


STANDING UP A COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE

Role of Food Policy & Planning

- Lead strategic planning
- Conduct mapping & Data Analysis
- Coordinate with Emergency Operation Center and state and federal agencies
- **Planning Assumptions**
 - Adapt plan from congregate feeding to pandemic response
 - Procurement contracts in place
- **Planning Process**
 - Daily calls with Emergency Food Response Team
 - City agencies & schools
 - Non-profit food providers



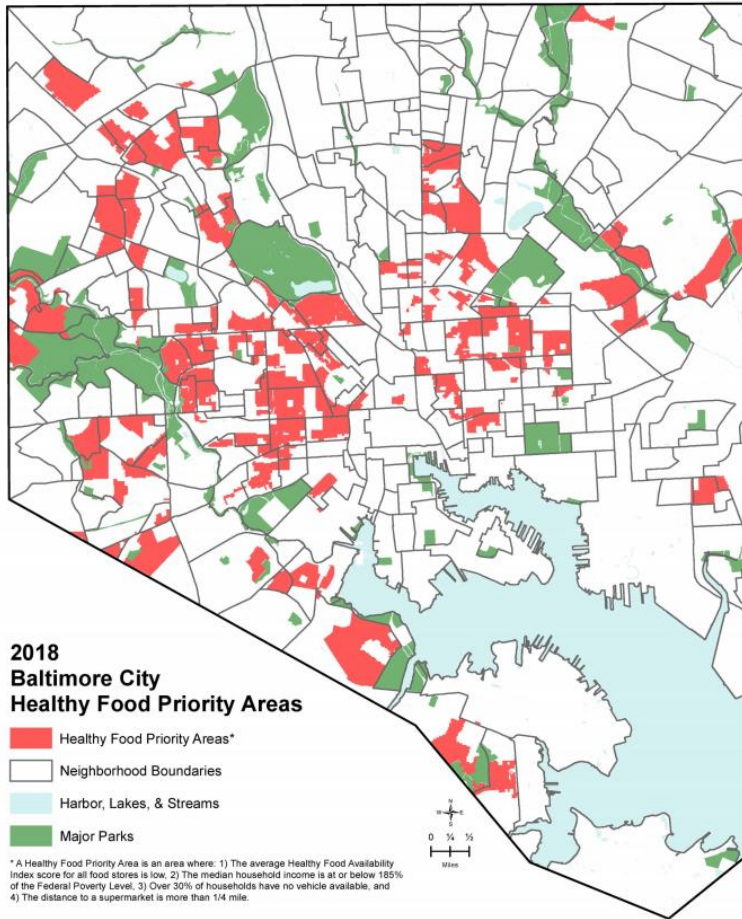




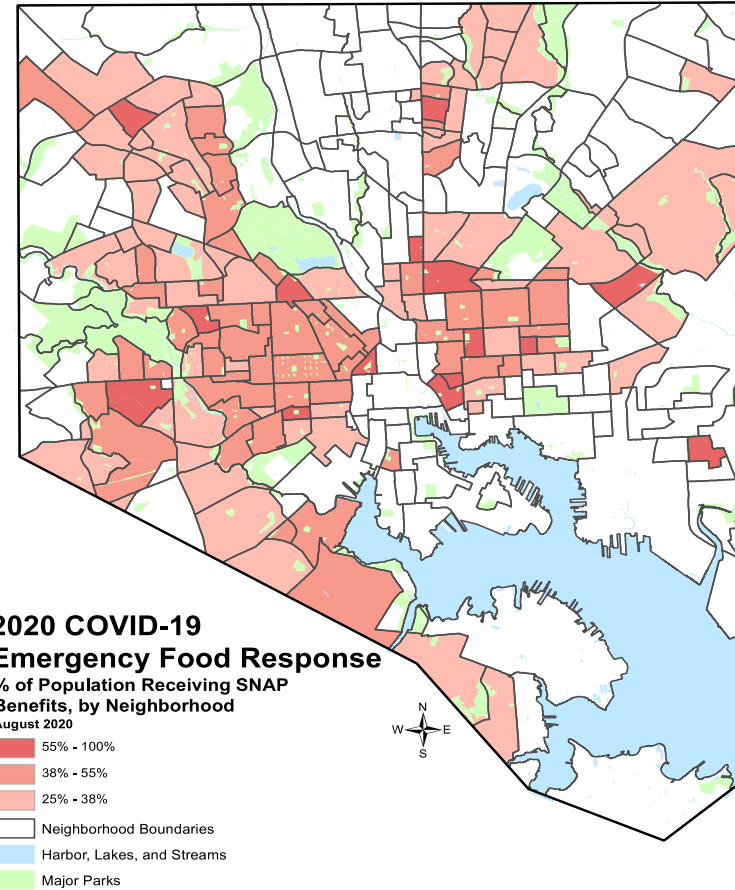
COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

State of Food Insecurity: Data & Mapping

FOOD ENVIRONMENT MAPPING



Impact: 146,000 residents in Priority Areas
Strategy: [8-point Healthy Food Environment Strategy](#)
Resource: [City & Council Food Environment Briefs](#)

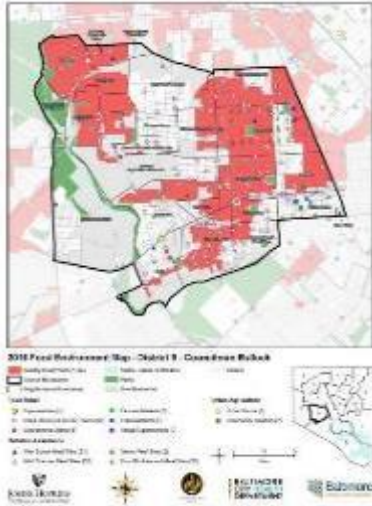


Impact: 188,000 residents on SNAP
Strategy: [COVID-19 Emergency Food Response](#)
Resource: [COVID-19 Food Environment Brief](#)

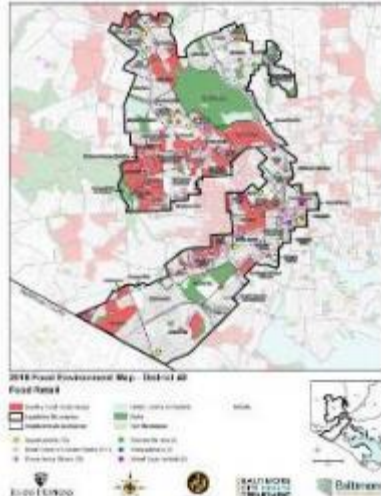


FOOD ENVIRONMENT REPORTS & BRIEF

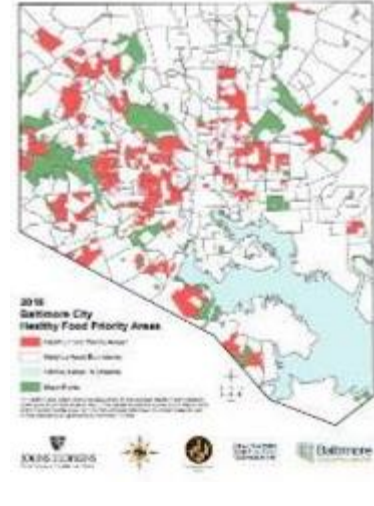
COUNCIL



LEGISLATIVE



CITY



COVID-19 FOOD ENVIRONMENT BRIEF

BALTIMORE CITY
COVID-19 FOOD ENVIRONMENT BRIEF
 November 2020

TARGETED STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving many city agencies and critical nonprofits, business, and community partners. The food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute groceries, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The map below depicts the wide network of distribution sites for meals, food boxes, and other food resources. Since April, 9 million pounds of food boxes and 5.7 million meals have been provided at over 400 sites and through home delivery. As food insecurity escalates, SNAP participation has risen to nearly one third of Baltimore residents. Mapping areas with higher concentrations of SNAP, among other factors, guides the response.

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
COVID-19 FOOD ENVIRONMENT BRIEF
 December 2020

OVERVIEW

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore developed a comprehensive Emergency Food Strategy involving city agencies and critical nonprofit, business, and community partners. The food security response is based on four key pillars: (1) distribute food boxes, (2) distribute meals, (3) protect and maximize federal nutrition benefits, and (4) build food system resilience through urban agriculture.

The Food Policy and Planning Division of the Department of Planning oversees the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFI). These briefs provide overviews of the food environment per city council district during the COVID-19 pandemic, and summarize food policy priorities moving into pandemic recovery and long-term resilience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CLICK COUNCIL DISTRICT BELOW)

Council District 1 – Zeke Cohen	2
Council District 2 – Danielle McCray	6
Council District 3 – Ryan Dorsey	10
Council District 4 – Mark Conway	14
Council District 5 – Isaac Schliefer	18
Council District 6 – Sharon Middleton	22
Council District 7 – James Torrence	26
Council District 8 – Kristofer Burnett	30
Council District 9 – John Bullock	34
Council District 10 – Phyllica Porter	38
Council District 11 – Eric Costello	42
Council District 12 – Robert Stokes, Sr.	46
Council District 13 – Antonio Glover	50
Council District 14 – Odette Ramos	54

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT: Holly Freihat, Food Policy Director, holly.freihat@baltimorecity.gov
WEBSITE: <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/baltimore-food-policy-initiative>
FOOD RESOURCES: <https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites>



COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION

FEMA Rationale & Reimbursement

COVID-19 High Risk Factors

- Food insecurity plays a prominent role in underlying diet-related diseases that are deemed high risk for COVID-19

Food boxes strategy to mitigate COVID-19 Transmission

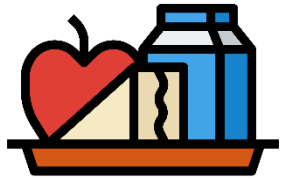
- Neighborhood-Level Distribution
- Outdoor Distributions
- Food for multiple days
- Produce and perishable
- Home delivery

FEMA Reimbursement

- \$ 9.4 Million approved (March -Dec 2020)
- \$14.7 million is the expected total reimbursed (March 2020 – March 2021)



COVID-19: Addressing Food Insecurity (2020-2021)



Leverage & Expand Federal Meals

- 9 million meals for older adults and youth
- Equivalent to 19.5 million pounds
- Health Department, Schools, Department of Housing, Rec and Parks, and many non-profit partners.



Distribute Food Boxes

- 18 million pounds (788,000 boxes)
- Produce, meat, dairy and shelf-stable food boxes to over
- 100 community organizations, schools, rec centers & churches
- 20,000 Home delivered Grocery Boxes



Protect & Maximize Federal Nutrition Benefits

\$6 million in direct cash assistance, \$400/household



Build Food System Resilience through Urban Agriculture

\$1 Million+ in community food grants to build food system resilience



URBAN AGRICULTURE AND LOCAL FOOD

Urban Farms & Community Gardens

- Growing food as a form of resilience and response
- Encouraging local purchasing to keep farms growing
- COVID Resilience Fund for Black-led Farms



Farmers Markets & Community Supported Agriculture

- Essential business
- Nutrition incentives
- Support buying from local growers



Funding

- \$82k Healthy Food Priority Area Funds
- Linking funders with urban ag organizations
- Length of response proves need to invest in longer-term food solutions



RESIDENT EQUITY ADVISORS - 2020



Public Housing Resident Food Equity Advisors

- 13 residents from 8 public housing sites, provided guidance & feedback during COVID-19 Emergency Food Response



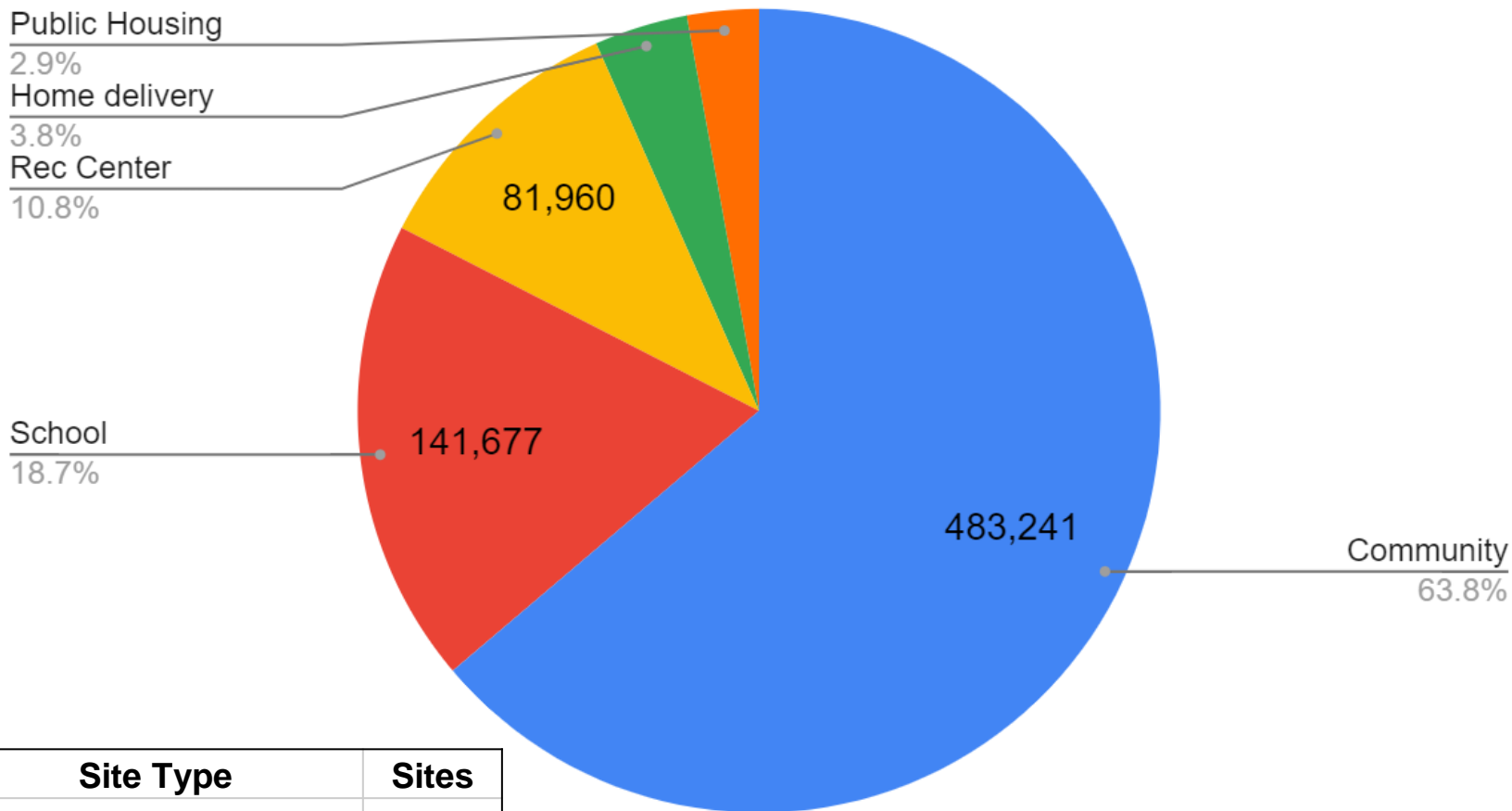


COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS

One Year in Review:

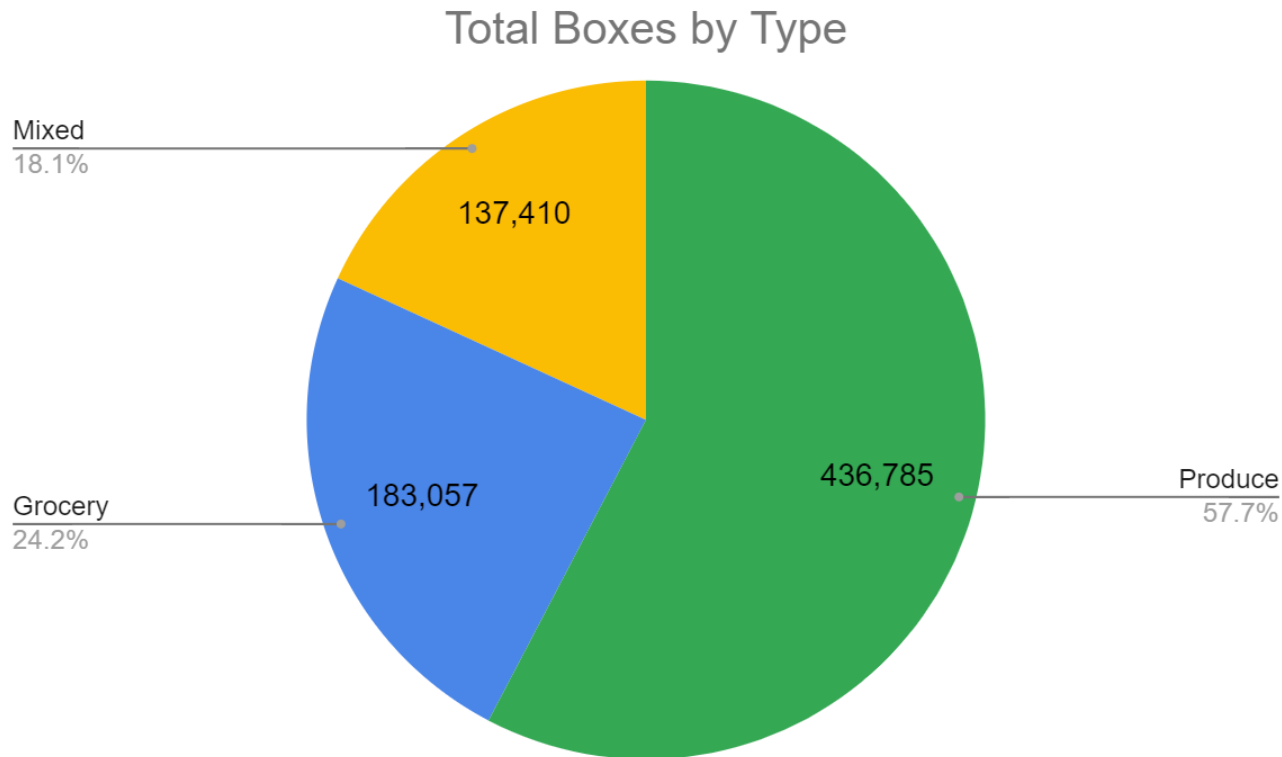
Boxes Distributed by Site Type



Site Type	Sites
Community	106
Schools	63
Recreation Centers	23
Public Housing	14



One Year in Review



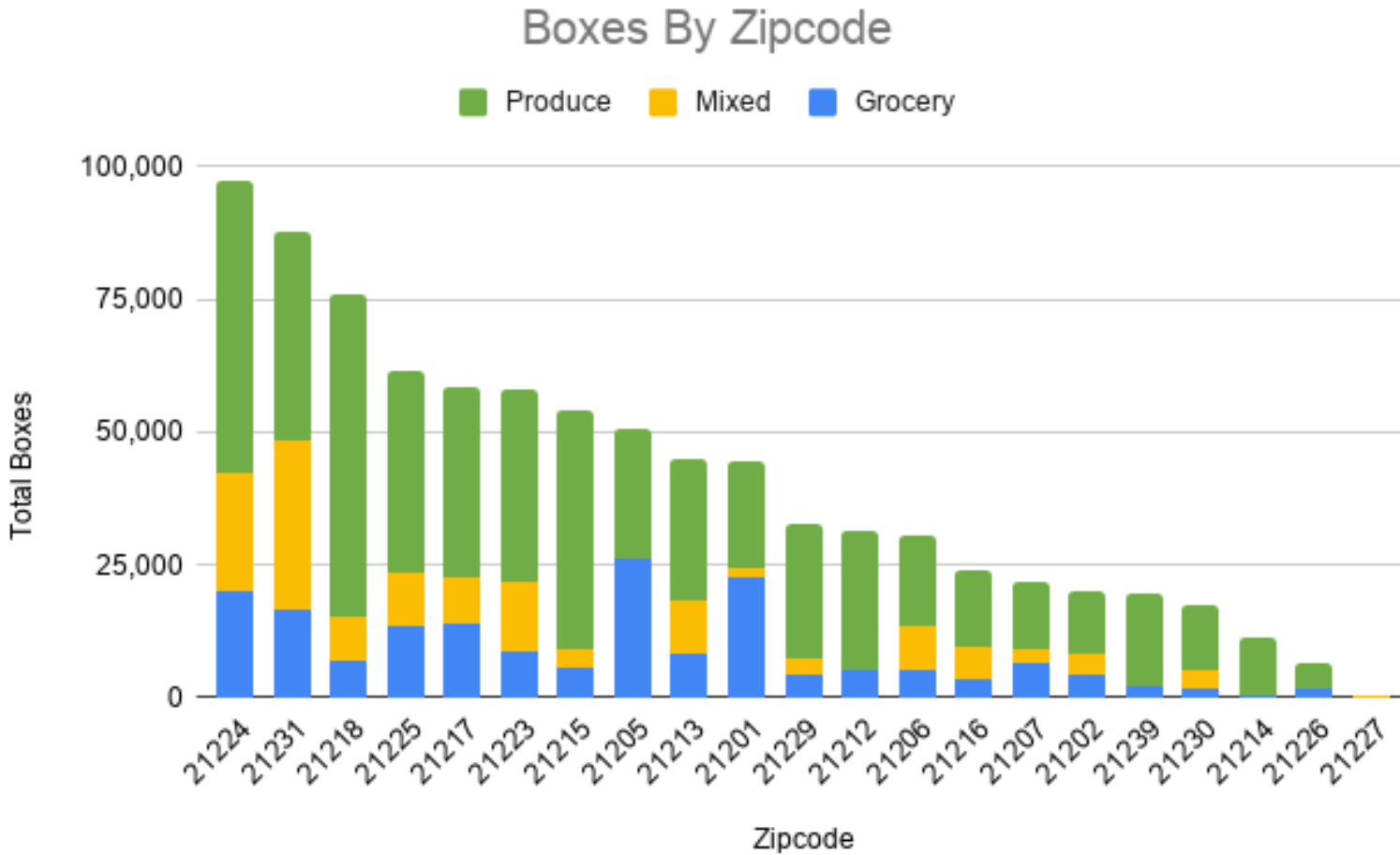
Nutritional Food Security

- 75.8% perishable products- produce, meat & dairy
- 55.6 million servings of fruits & vegetables
 - Equates to an additional serving of F&V for every resident living in a healthy food priority area for one year



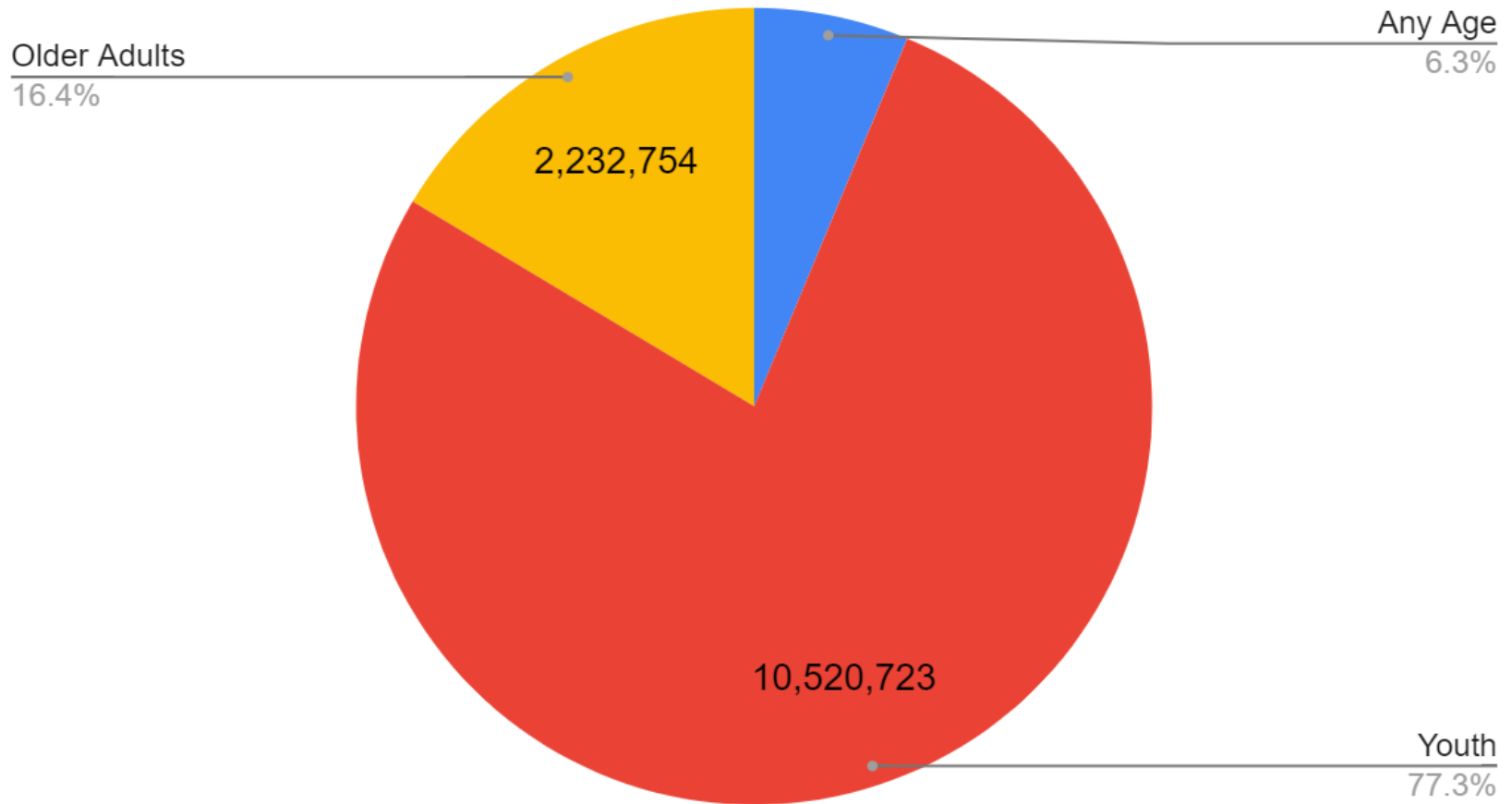
Impact to Community

500,000 boxes distributed to community sites

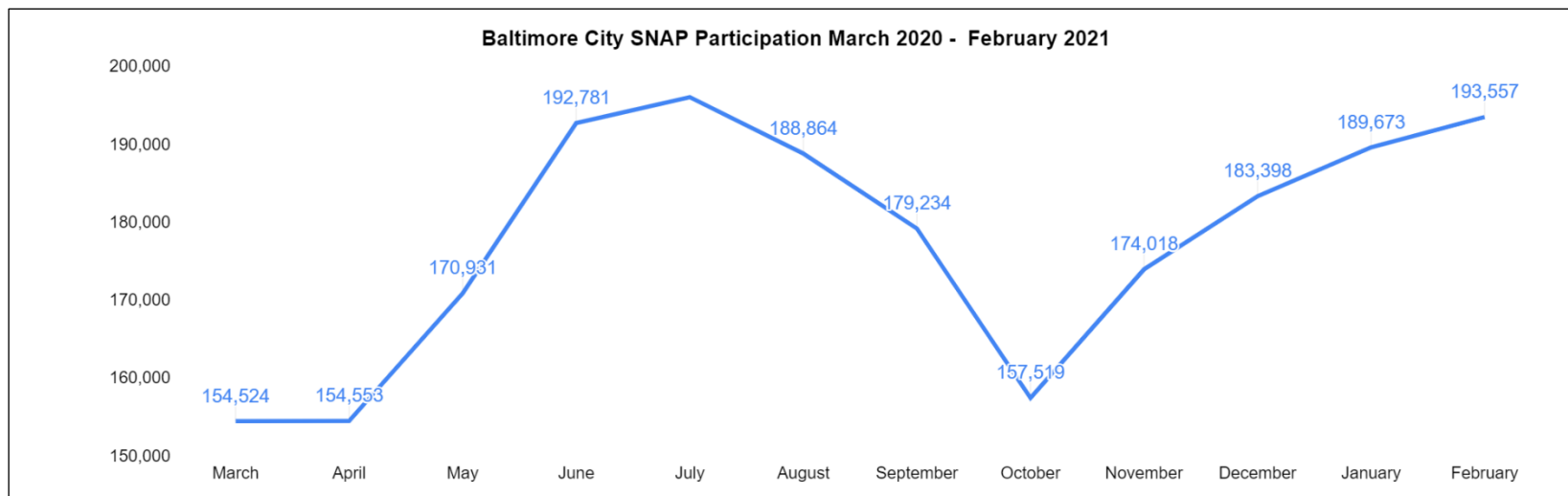


By the Numbers

Meals: March 2020 - March 2021



COVID-19 RELIEF THROUGH SNAP



SNAP

- Excluded unemployment compensation from being counted as income for the purposes of calculating SNAP benefits & eligibility
- Increases SNAP's monthly benefits
- Suspends work requirements for SNAP-eligible college students

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)

- \$5.86 provided to all Baltimore City Public School students per school day

Online SNAP

- Implementation in May with ShopRite, Amazon, and Walmart



COVID 19 VACCINE READINESS

Priority Group 1C

Definition: Front-line essential workers hold critical jobs essential to the functioning of society and have potential occupational exposure to individuals with COVID-19.

List includes Food and Agricultural workers

- Restaurant workers
- Food Pantries
- Farmers Markets
- Farms
- Grocery/Convenience store workers

COVID-19 VACCINE DISTRIBUTION


PHASE 1^A. 2. 3.

*As of Jan. 25th 2021. Phases subject to change due to CDC, MDH, or FDA updated guidance

We are in Phase 1C

PHASE 1A.	PHASE 2.	PHASE 3.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare workers • Residents and staff of nursing facilities • First responders, public safety, corrections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults 16-64 at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness due to comorbidities • Essential workers in critical utilities transportation, food service, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General population, including healthy adults age 16-64
PHASE 1B. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults 75 years and older • People experiencing homelessness • Shelter staff and residents • High-risk, incarcerated individuals • Individuals in group home settings • Education sector (K-12 Teachers and support staff in schools) • Child care workers • Continuity of government 		
PHASE 1C. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Marylanders over 65. • All other public safety (not in Phase 1A) • All other healthcare (not in Phase 1A), including, but not limited to Lab Services, Public Health, Vaccine Manufacturing, other healthcare professions). • Food and Agriculture Production • Critical Manufacturing • U.S. Postal Service • Public Mass Transit • Grocery Stores • Veterinarians and Support Staff • Clergy and other essential support for houses of worship 		

It's Baltimore versus COVID. Let's win this together.



BALTIMORE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Brandon M. Scott Mayor

To learn more, visit coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/covax

[Coronavirus 2019 Disease\(COVID-19\) \(baltimorecity.gov\)](https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov)



COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD RESPONSE

CONCLUSION & LOOKING FORWARD

REFLECTIONS & NEXT STEPS



COVID-19 Next Steps

- Produce Box Distribution continues through Sept. 30th
- Revise Emergency Operations Procedures
- Food Resilience Plan Update
- Create strategy for American Rescue Plan Funding



Reflections

- Shifting from direct feeding to creating community food resiliency



RESOURCES

Strategy to Improve Nutritional Security and Minimize Hunger

City of Baltimore
COVID-19 Emergency Food Response



Food Policy & Planning Reports

- Strategy to Improve Nutritional Security & Minimize Hunger: City of Baltimore COVID-19 Emergency Food Response - May 2021
- COVID-19 Food Environment Brief - Nov 2020
- COVID-19 Council District Food Environment Briefs

COVID-19 Food Resources

- Baltimore City COVID-19 Food Resources





FOR MORE INFORMATION

Holly Freishtat

Baltimore City Food Policy Director

Holly.Freishtat@baltimorecity.gov

Website: <https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/baltimore-food-policy-initiative>