



**Indiana**  
**Department**  
**of**  
**Health**

# FOOD SYSTEMS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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ACTIVITY

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## OUR MISSION:

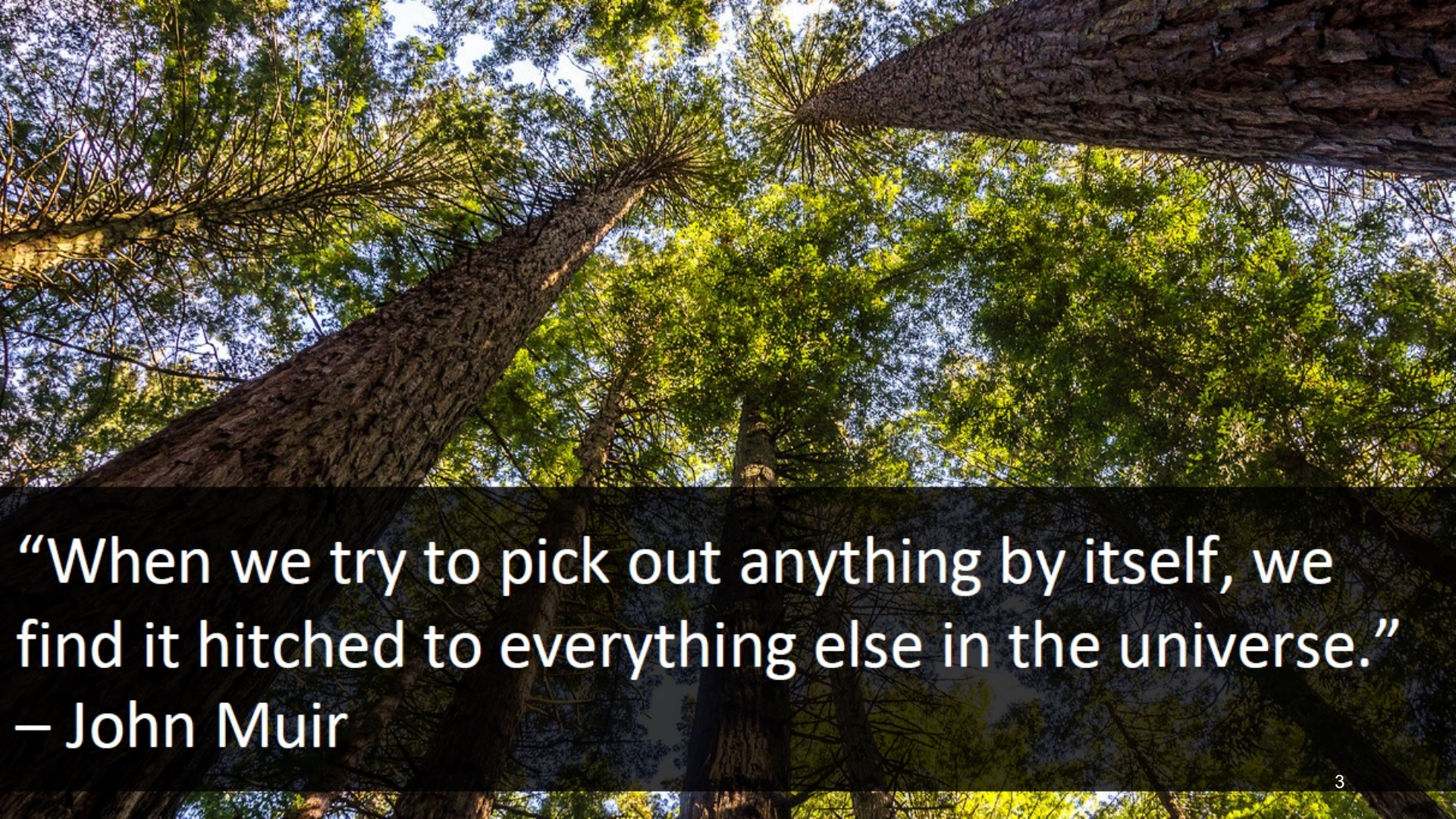
To promote, protect, and improve  
the health and safety of all  
Hoosiers.

## OUR VISION:

Every Hoosier reaches optimal  
health regardless of where they live,  
learn, work, or play.







“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we  
find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”  
— John Muir



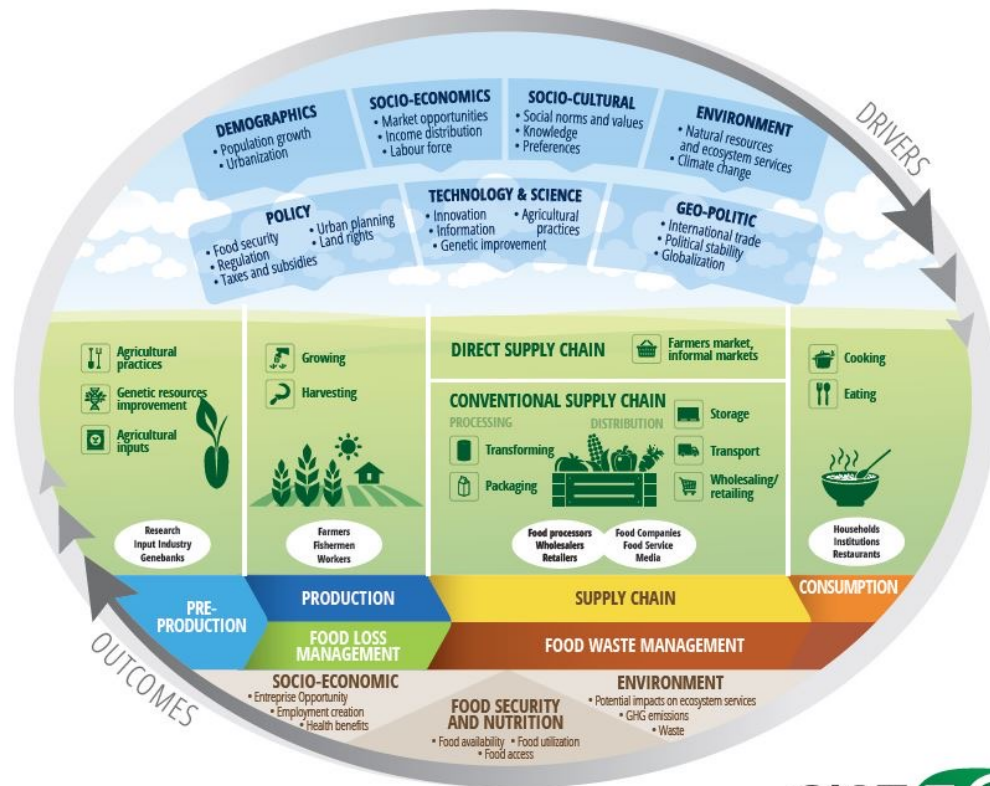
# A Food Systems Approach

A sustainable food system:

- Is **profitable** throughout, ensuring economic stability
- Has broad-based **benefits for society**, securing social sustainability
- Has a **positive or neutral impact** on the natural resource environment

# THE FOOD SYSTEM

DRIVERS • ACTIVITIES • ACTORS • OUTCOMES



# Food Systems = Public Health

- Food is a powerful tool for building healthier communities
- Food connects us with our environment, our bodies, and each other
- Despite the interdisciplinary nature of public health, we tend to address food systems issues in isolation:
  - Nutritionists examine and improve dietary patterns in institutional settings
  - Health care administrators install food pantries in clinics and hospitals



# Goal: Healthful Eating

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It's about more  
than just personal  
responsibility

"It is unreasonable to think that people are going to change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural, and physical environment conspire against the change."

-Institute of Medicine

# Socio-Ecological Model

**Policy:** Federal/state regulations with enforcement such as child labor restrictions, workers compensation, immigration, OSHA rules

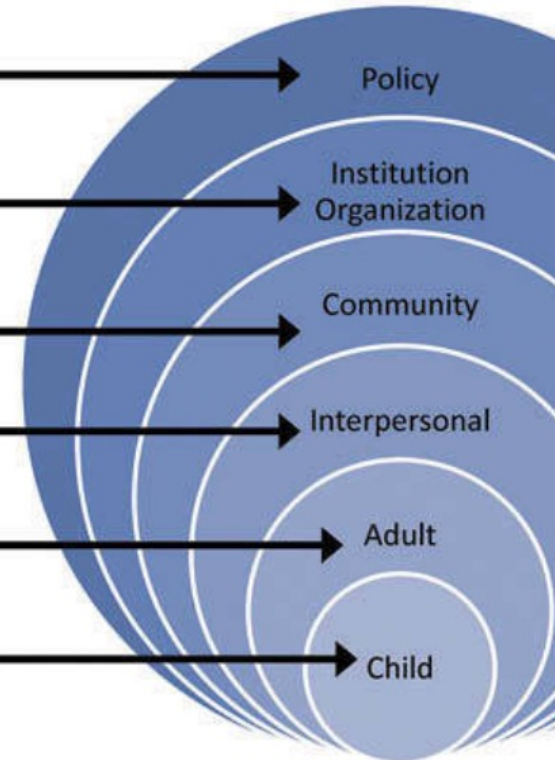
**Institution/Organization:** Corporations, national organizations, agencies that set standards and protocols for their trade agreements, employees and members.

**Community:** Childcare centers, schools, churches, media, advocacy groups and community-level organizations such as farm cooperatives or FFA chapters.

**Interpersonal:** Persons with close relationships to the immediate family such as relatives, friends, healthcare providers, or peer groups.

**Adult:** Parent, guardian, farm owner, employer, other individual who bears primary responsibility for a child living, visiting, or working on an agricultural production site.

**Child:** An individual 0-18 years-of-age who lives on, visits, or is hired to work in an agricultural production site.



# Social Determinants and Nutrition

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- Individual nutrition status and food choices are influenced by a variety of factors.
- **Social determinants of health** are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age that can contribute to or detract from the health of individuals and communities. Circumstances are shaped by distribution of money, power, and resources at global, national, and local levels.
- **Examples of Social Determinants:**
  - Safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods
  - Racism, discrimination, and violence
  - Education, job opportunities, and income
  - Access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities
  - Air and water quality
  - Language and literacy skills



## Social Determinants of Health

Economic Stability	Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Education	Food	Community and Social Context	Health Care System
Employment	Housing	Literacy	Hunger	Social integration	Health coverage
Income	Transportation	Language	Access to healthy options	Support systems	Provider availability
Expenses	Safety	Early childhood education		Community engagement	Provider linguistic and cultural competency
Debt	Parks	Vocational training		Discrimination	Quality of care
Medical bills	Playgrounds	Higher education		Stress	
Support	Walkability				
	Zip code / geography				

### Health Outcomes

Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations

# Food Environments

- What is a food environment?
  - The physical presence of food that affects a person's diet
  - A person's proximity to food store locations
  - The distribution of food stores, food service, and any physical entity by which food may be obtained
  - A connected system that allows access to food
- Food Environment Index
  - Index of factors that contribute to a healthy food environment, from 0 (worst) to 10 (best)



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# Food and Nutrition Insecurity

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- **Food insecurity** is defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life
- **Nutrition security** places additional emphasis on access to nourishing, healthful food
- Effects of food insecurity:
  - Serious health complications, especially when people facing hunger are forced to choose between spending money on food and medicine or medical care
  - Damage to a child's ability to learn and grow
  - Difficult decisions for seniors – often living on fixed incomes – such as choosing between paying for food and critical health care

## What Hunger Looks Like in Indiana

In Indiana, 834,530 people are facing hunger - and of them 239,540 are children.



# Food Access

**Food Access is having access to fresh, affordable, culturally appropriate, healthy food in a dignified way.**

1. Can you get the food?
2. Can you afford the food you want to buy?
3. Is it the food you want to eat?
4. Can you prepare it?





# Food Production

- Who grows the food we eat?
- Where is our food grown?
- What methods were used to grow our food, and how might that impact our health?
- How does food production impact our economy?
- What structural barriers exist that influence who chooses to grow food as a career?



# Food Justice

- Food justice
- Food sovereignty
- Food apartheid
- Intersectional Antiracism
- Equity



# The DNPA Food Systems Initiatives

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- SNAP-Ed
- Indiana Grown for Schools  
(Indiana Farm to School Network)
- CDC Health Disparities Grant (I-HOPE)
  - Produce Rx
  - Rural Food Access Grants
  - SNAP-Matching at Farmers Markets
- Local Food Purchase Assistance  
Cooperative Agreement (LFPA)
- The Regional Food Systems  
Partnership (RFSP)
  - Community Food Systems  
Workshops
  - Trauma-Informed Learning  
Collaboratives
  - Indiana Food Charter
- Local Food for Schools  
Cooperative Agreement (LFS)

# Questions?

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