



**EATING HERE**  
GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S  
FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DVRPC UNVEILS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO STRENGTHEN  
GREATER PHILADELPHIA FOOD SYSTEM**

*Agency Announces \$500,000 in Grants, Presents "Plate of Distinction" Awards*

**(PHILADELPHIA, PA)** – The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) today unveiled a comprehensive plan to strengthen the food system that feeds the Greater Philadelphia region and announced nearly \$500,000 in grants to help implement the plan.

*"Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan"* is the result of a two-year collaborative effort to identify opportunities and provide recommendations to increase the security and economic, social and environmental benefits of the regional food system.

"How we grow, package, transport and distribute our food are significant factors in the health of our economy, our environment and our community," said DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour. "This plan is designed to help strengthen our complex food system so it sustains the Greater Philadelphia region for decades to come."

The plan is organized around six core values – farming and sustainable agriculture, ecological stewardship and conservation, economic development, health, fairness, and collaboration – and outlines more than 50 recommendations to improve the Greater Philadelphia food system. A stakeholder committee comprising farmers, antihunger advocates, farmland preservation experts, public officials, small business owners, and others collaborated on this effort and identified the following top recommendations:

- Maintain affordable land for farmers through a range of potential innovations and new business models.
- Develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources.
- Create or expand new and specialized training and loan programs to reduce barriers for new food entrepreneurs and new, beginning and minority farmers, and encourage valued added activities.
- Promote the use of new technology and community-based communications by all partners, including government, private sector and nonprofits, to educate people about healthy food.
- Integrate all aspects of Farm-to-School programs into a robust and comprehensive education program.
- Continue to convene and encourage shared efforts.

(more)

DVRPC also announced nearly \$500,000 in grants, made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation, and presented the Plate of Distinction Award to seven local organizations already working to achieve the recommendations laid out in the plan. These organizations are:

- **The Common Market** – A distributor of local food to wholesale customers, The Common Market received a \$45,000 grant to engage a food safety consultant to help it obtain necessary third-party food safety certification.
- **Fair Food** – Fair Food is a multi-faceted organization that maintains a local food farm stand at Reading Terminal Market. Fair Food is working with several partners to expand an existing farm-to-school program to other schools in the Philadelphia School District. Fair Food received a \$140,000 grant to support this expansion.
- **Greensgrow Farms** – Greensgrow Farms is an urban farm located in Northeast Philadelphia that provides city residents access to farm-fresh foods through a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program. The farm received a \$35,000 grant to create interactive cooking classes and videos to help increase the number of low-income households participating in the CSA.
- **Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance (MANNA)** – MANNA provides nutrition services to people suffering from HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. MANNA received a \$25,000 grant to augment its existing home-delivery meal service with a series of cooking skills and nutrition education classes for its clients.
- **Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)** – PASA, the largest statewide member-based sustainable farming organization in the United States, received a \$100,000 grant to support the creation of “*Farm Futures*,” a business venture designed to connect aspiring farmers with land. PASA is engaging the Fox School of Business at Temple University to assist with the project.
- **SHARE** – The SHARE Food Program operates a community food distribution center providing affordable food packages through numerous host sites throughout the region. SHARE received a \$100,000 grant to work with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s City Harvest Growers Alliance to create a “backyard gardening” program encouraging SHARE clients to start a garden for household needs.
- **Weavers Way Community Programs** – Weavers Way Community Programs received a \$35,000 grant to create a strategic plan to expand the Hope Garden, a community garden project at Stenton Family Manor. The Manor serves as a shelter for homeless families.

“By teaching our clients how to cook and how to eat healthy, we help ensure they can meet their own nutritional needs when they are no longer part of our program,” said Richard Keaveney, CEO of MANNA. “This grant will go a long way toward addressing nutrition-deficiency in some of the most vulnerable members of our society.”

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*“Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia’s Food System Plan”* is the second phase of a regional planning effort to examine the local food system. The plan was born out of the *Greater Philadelphia Food System Study*, which evaluated the natural, economic and social resources of the “foodshed” or the geographic area within a 100-mile radius of Philadelphia.

For a copy of the complete plan and for more information about DVRPC’s work on regional food system planning visit [www.dvrpc.org/food](http://www.dvrpc.org/food) . DVRPC’s food system planning activities are made possible by a combination of funds from the Commission, the William Penn Foundation, and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

### **About SHARE**

The SHARE Food Program, Inc. is a nonprofit organization serving a regional network of community organizations engaged in food distribution, education, and advocacy. SHARE promotes healthy living by providing affordable wholesome food to those willing to contribute through volunteerism. “Do good, feel good, eat good: A smart idea that brings community and healthy food together!”

### **About Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission**

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to uniting the region's elected officials, planning professionals and the public with the common vision of making a great region even greater. Shaping the way we live, work and play, DVRPC builds consensus on improving transportation, promoting smart growth, protecting the environment, and enhancing the economy. We serve a diverse region of nine counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC is the official metropolitan planning organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region - leading the way to a better future. DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities.

### **About William Penn Foundation**

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that foster rich cultural expression, strengthen children’s futures, and deepen connections to nature and community. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance a vital, just, and caring community. The Foundation's assets were approximately \$2 billion at the close of 2010.

### **About Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation**

For more than 30 years, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation has nurtured people, ideas, and institutions which transcend self-interest and contribute to a sustainable human society and the environment which shelters it. The mission of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation is to support and encourage those educational, cultural, social and environmental values that contribute to making our society more humane and our world more livable.

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