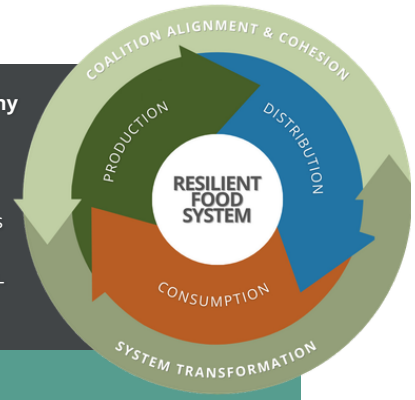


RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEM

FY26 Mid-Year Update | April 2026

The **Resilient Food System** project, implemented by the **Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities (HSHC) Lab** at American University and funded by **Novo Nordisk, Inc.**, advances work across the three pillars of the food system: Production, Distribution, and Consumption. In the third year of programming, the project has expanded investment in the **production and distribution sectors** through grants and financial support to partner organizations. Core work convening food system stakeholders across the DC food system to strengthen cohesion continues. At mid-way, achievements in FY26 include the following:



PRODUCTION



FY26 PRODUCTION SUB-AWARDEES

- **Future Harvest** is training **27 students** in the region via the Beginner Farming Training Program (BFTP).
- **Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)**, in partnership with the Food Finance Institute, trained **10 regional farms** on implementing effective business models and financial systems.
- **The Chesapeake Agriculture Innovation Center (CAIC)** is providing tailored coaching and technical assistance to **11 farms** to help them expand into wholesale and other markets.



INFRASTRUCTURE & EQUIPMENT GRANTS

Over **\$72,000 in agricultural infrastructure and equipment** has been awarded to **16 farmers** in the Mid-Atlantic region as a result of their demonstrated a commitment to serving the region and D.C. Wards 7 and 8 with fresh produce. The awarded infrastructure and equipment directly addresses critical operational gaps, increasing farms' production capacity and sustainability.



CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIPS

To support learning, capacity-building and collaboration in the agricultural sector, the Lab sponsored two key regional conferences, the **Mid-Atlantic Black Farmers Caucus (MABFC)** second annual conference and the **Ujamaa Cooperative Farming Alliance (UCFA) 2026 Seeds & Culture** conference. Combined attendance exceeded over **400 producers and other stakeholders**.

DISTRIBUTION



FY26 DISTRIBUTION SUB-AWARDEES

- **D.C. Central Kitchen (DCCK)** is sourcing local produce and other healthful foods for **three schools' student meals**. DCCK is also in the process of designing a **new market** that will also source from local and regional producers.
- **FRESHFARM** delivers locally grown produce directly to **residents and 27 institutions** in Wards 7 and 8 via farm stands and Food Hub partnerships with more than **40 regional farmers**.
- **Fresh Food Factory** is opening its second location east of the Anacostia River in Kenilworth; the market will increase healthy food and local produce access in Ward 7.
- **Arcadia Mobile Markets** is preparing for its 2026 market season. The Mobile Markets will serve customers in four core locations with regular access to local produce.



LOCAL AND CHARITABLE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The **Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church**, in partnership with aggregator and food hub **The People's Market**, is serving families fresh, local produce through **monthly charitable food distributions**.

COALITION ALIGNMENT & COHESION



DC FOOD SYSTEM DATA DASHBOARD

In partnership with the **DC Food Policy Council**, HSHC developed the **DC Food System Data Dashboard**, which identifies a set of core metrics to monitor the performance of the DC food system over time. The Dashboard and other associated resources will be launched in **Summer 2026**.



SALON DINNER

To strengthen relationships among stakeholders in academia, government, and the private sector and increase dialogue on transforming the DC food system, **leaders from 12 organizations** were convened to identify avenues for collaboration.



ADVISORY BOARDS

The **Board of Advisors** and **Community Advisory Board** were convened across **three meetings** to shape the refinement of the data dashboard and its launch.