



# DETROIT Food Metrics Report 2020

with 2021 Update

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## INTRODUCTION

The Detroit food system was hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. The City of Detroit saw many community members become infected with COVID-19 and die at rates higher than surrounding areas.

Before the pandemic, food system stability was precarious with high rates of food insecurity, regular grocery store closings, and hurdles for Black-owned establishments to gain financing.

Many businesses and organizations pivoted to ensure Detroiters had food on the table while the pandemic disrupted everyday activities. Restaurants became small neighborhood grocers, farmers moved to online platforms for sales, and new mutual aid efforts made sure those in need had food to eat.

The year 2020 was the moment that structural racism and systemic inequity became completely unmasked. We have long sought to address racism and inequity, but now no one can hide from their well-documented impacts on neglected and exploited communities.

## DETROIT FOOD METRICS REPORT

Our annual report provides a snapshot of data and information as well as trends in the food system since the 2017. Yearly updates are shared to track change and every 3 years an in-depth report is released. This year, 2020, is an in-depth report and a year marked by an unprecedented global pandemic. It is meant to be a snapshot of data in time.

Our goal to release the report in early 2021 was delayed, so we've now added a "2021 Update" to this report with updated metrics.



## FOOD SYSTEMS









A food system is everything from field to fork and back again.<sup>1</sup>

There are many important steps along the way that are typically unseen, such as the manufacturing and application of farm inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds), the processing and packaging of food products, and the management of food waste. The food system also includes both the human actors and the natural resources needed to keep it moving.

A healthy and sustainable food system encompasses the goals of social equity and human health, economic vitality, and environmental health. A sustainable food system exists when production, processing, distribution, access, consumption, and waste management are integrated and these practices improve or maintain natural resources, are just and accessible, and support the resilience of local communities and economies.

<sup>1</sup> Rust 2 Green. [http://www.rust2green.org/food\\_systems.php](http://www.rust2green.org/food_systems.php)

## TRACKING CHANGE

		Baseline	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>Number of full-line grocery stores</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>▼ 3</b>	<b>▼ 3</b>	<b>▼ 4</b>	<b>▲ 2</b>
<b>Percent households eligible but not utilizing SNAP</b>		<b>19%</b>	<b>▼ 1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>▼ 1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Percent met grocery square footage</b>		<b>92%</b>	<b>▼ 5</b>	<b>▼ 1</b>	<b>▼ 3</b>	<b>▲ 1</b>
<b>Percent households food insecure</b>		<b>70%</b>	<b>▼ 8</b>	<b>▲ 1</b>	<b>▲ 7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Percent households using SNAP</b>		<b>40%</b>	<b>▼ 1</b>	<b>▲ 1</b>	<b>▼ 7</b>	<b>▲ 3</b>
<b>Number of community gardens</b>		<b>432</b>	<b>▼ 6</b>	<b>▼ 52</b>	<b>▲ 23</b>	<b>▲ 32</b>
<b>Number of farmers markets and farm stands</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>▼ 2</b>	<b>▼ 1</b>	<b>▼ 4</b>	<b>▲ 2</b>
<b>Number of Detroit-based growers at Eastern Market</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>▼ 9</b>	<b>▲ 21</b>	<b>▼ 53</b>	<b>▲ 27</b>



# POLICY UPDATES

When the coronavirus pandemic hit in March of 2020, it unleashed a tide of federal and state aid the likes of which have not been seen since the New Deal of the 1930s. Most of the aid money was aimed at bolstering food assistance for people who suddenly lost jobs when businesses began to shut down; other aid was related to the food system, such as programs to help restaurants and other small businesses maintain their payrolls during the shutdown or to help farmers find markets for their produce after their usual buyers were gone.

Many of the policies enacted were ones food advocates had been working towards for years. For example, waivers for school lunch programs that allowed them to serve meals grab-and-go style for any child aged 18 and under, regardless of whether that child was enrolled at a particular school.

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## FEDERAL

### Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- Additional funding for WIC, SNAP and TEFAP (which provides commodities to food banks).

- Waivers to allow grab and go school lunches
- Pandemic EBT
- Waivers easing certain SNAP and WIC requirements

### CARES Act

- Paycheck Protection Program for businesses

### USDA Farmers for Families

- Provided food boxes to people experiencing food insecurity during the pandemic

### American Rescue Plan

- Debt forgiveness and outreach for socially disadvantaged farmers
- Restaurant Revitalization Fund

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## STATE

- Piloted Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)
- MEDC Pure Michigan Small Business Relief Initiative
- Temporary removal of cap on Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) purchase
- Increased SNAP funding
- Food Secure Detroit Grant

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## ii. BY THE NUMBERS

**83%**

goal reached for 30k square feet of grocery per 10k people<sup>2</sup>

▼ **3%** from **2019**

**69%**

of households food insecure<sup>4</sup>

▲ **7%** increase since **2019**\*

\* The ALICE threshold of 39% in 2019 should have been added to the 30% of households living below poverty.

**33%**

of households using SNAP<sup>6</sup>

▼ **7%** from **2019**

**64**

full-line grocery stores<sup>3</sup>

▼ **4** from **2019**

**38k**

of children enrolled in WIC<sup>5</sup>

▲ **3k** from **2019**

**17%**

SNAP eligible households not enrolled<sup>6</sup>

▼ **1%** from **2019**

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<sup>2</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative. based on Census Bureau, ACS 2019 5-year estimates.

<sup>3</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative (2021). <http://detroitfoodmap.com>

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<sup>4</sup> United Way, Michigan ALICE Report 2021

<sup>5</sup> MDHHS WIC Program, 2021 (from forthcoming PedNSS 2020 report)

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<sup>6</sup> Census Bureau, ACS 2019 5-year estimates.

10

farmers markets<sup>7</sup>

▼ 4 from 2019

8

Detroit-based growers  
at Eastern Market<sup>9</sup>

▼ 54\* from 2019

397

community  
gardens<sup>9</sup>

▲ 23 from 2019

\*Grown in Detroit cooperative shifted to online sales through Shop Detroit Farms.

2k

school meals served  
each day<sup>8</sup>

▼ 83k from 2019

114k

pounds of food  
wasted in Detroit<sup>10</sup>

-- from 2019

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

annual loss in grocery  
retail revenue<sup>11</sup>

-- from 2019

<sup>7</sup> Eastern Market, Detroit Community Markets (2020), Detroit Food Map Initiative (2021).n

<sup>8</sup> DPSCD, Office of School Nutrition

<sup>9</sup> Keep Growing Detroit, 2020 Annual Report (2021).

<sup>10</sup> NRDC Food Matters Project, 'Food Waste and Potential in Detroit'.

<sup>11</sup> No updated data available.



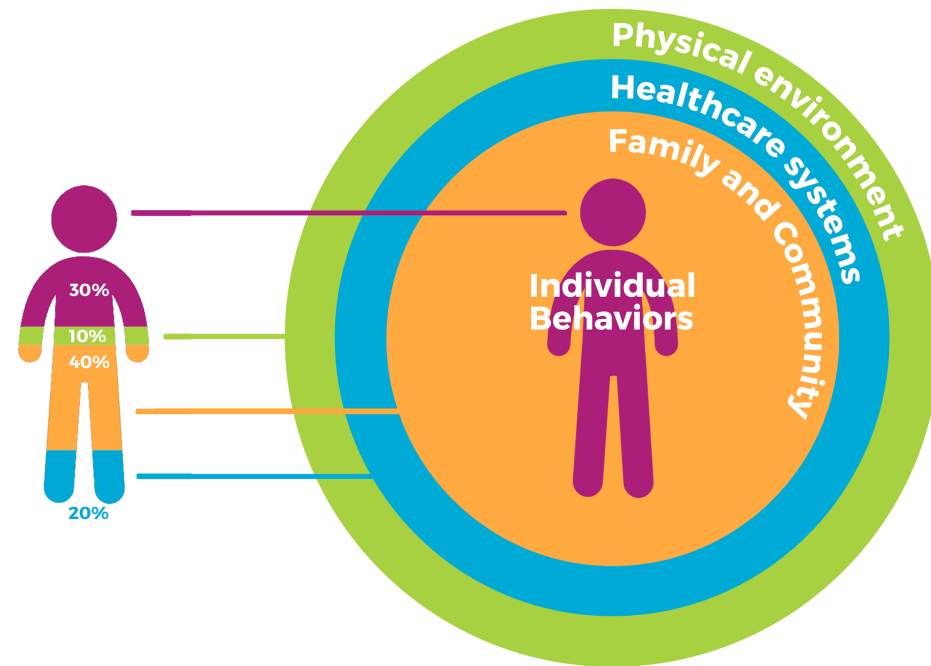
# 1.

## Food, Health, & COVID-19

### CORONA VIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

The 2019 outbreak of coronavirus hit the State of Michigan hard with the first reported cases in March of 2020. The City of Detroit saw its first cases of COVID-19 soon after.

#### WHAT GOES INTO COMMUNITY HEALTH?



The COVID-19 pandemic showed the significance of what is often called the “social determinants of health” - or the social and economic factors that impact health as well as the political and structural factors that have caused communities to experience neglect and disinvestment.

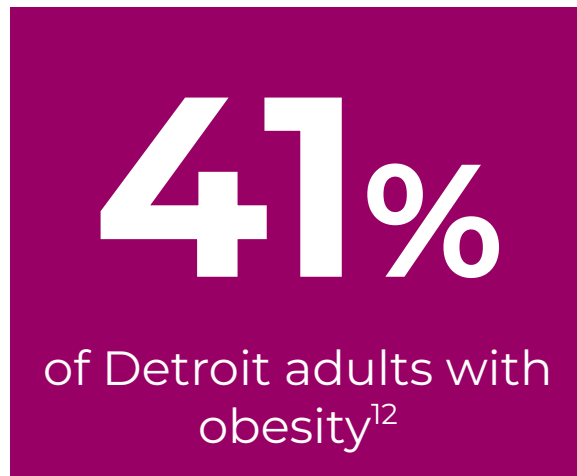
Public health is focused on population health impact rather than focusing on the individual.

At least 80% of what goes into health is not related to health care systems or medicine.

Pandemics function in a similar way where it takes community immunity in order to reduce the spread or disease impact on individuals.

## CHRONIC DISEASE & COVID-19

Chronic health conditions like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease can lead to early death. In 2020, COVID-19 was second only to heart disease as a primary cause of death. Chronic diseases were found to increase a person's likelihood of having a higher risk for COVID-19 complications and death.

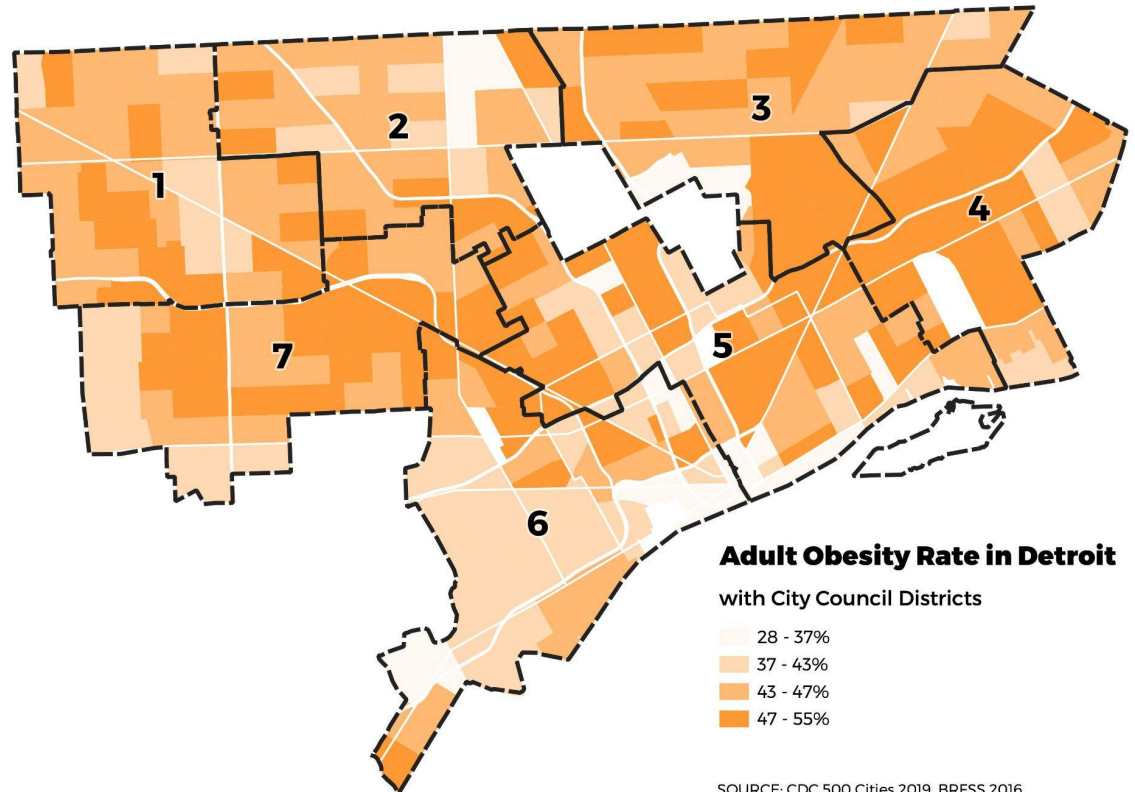


Chronic diseases, driven by inequitable access to healthful foods, were found to be a significant factor in a person's ability

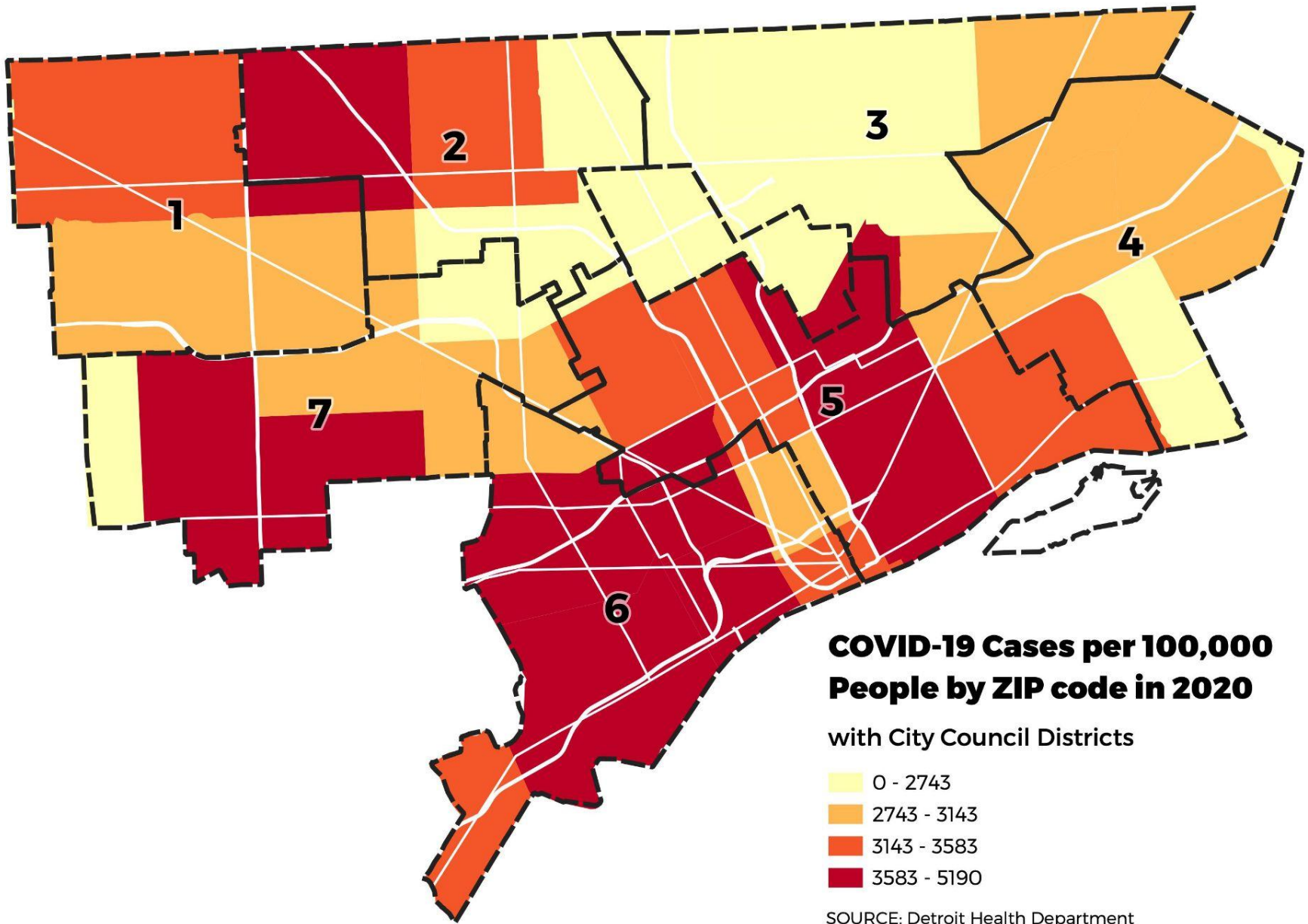
<sup>12</sup> Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS) Regional and Local Health Department Tables, 2017-2019.

to manage COVID-19 symptoms. Obesity in particular was found to triple the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19 and remains a widespread health burden in the city.<sup>13</sup>

The pandemic revealed the on-going health inequities that increased the risk of COVID-19 for so many Detroiters.



<sup>13</sup> Obesity, Race/Ethnicity, and COVID-19 (CDC)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/obesity-and-covid-19.html>



# 2.

## Healthy Food Access & Awareness

### HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

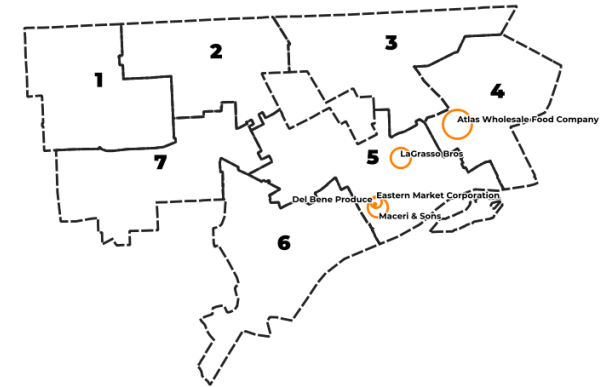
“The majority of Detroit is not a geographic “food desert” as much as it is an “opportunity desert” where income, time, and transportation exacerbate lack of access to good food for health and nutrition.”<sup>14</sup>

Most grocers remained open during the pandemic, yet the word “groceries” became synonymous with food boxes in 2020. Five farmers markets started distributing food boxes along with countless other organizations working to serve a new unmet need for food or adding a box as a contactless safety measure.

In 2020, numerous mutual aid organizations launched, including community tables and fridges where residents can walk up and take what they need.<sup>15</sup> Many efforts partnered with

Food Rescue US - Detroit, that was recovering extra food across the region.

The USDA launched the “**Farmers for Families**” food box program to help farmers continue to sell their produce. Five suppliers in Detroit were awarded funds from the USDA program.



Farmers for Families recipient contractors in Detroit included:<sup>16</sup>

- **Atlas Wholesale Food Company** - \$34,023,954
- **LaGrasso Bros** - \$8,073,000
- **Maceri & Sons** - \$5,186,500
- **Eastern Market Corporation** - \$584,000
- **Del Bene Produce** - \$80,000

<sup>14</sup> Hill, Alex B. and Amy Kuras. Detroit Food Metrics Report 2017. *Detroit Food Policy Council and Detroit Health Department* (2017).

<sup>15</sup> Daniels, S. M. (2021), Tostada Magazine. <https://tostadamagazine.com/2021/06/30/with-no-stove-no-ca>

r-no-money-for-rent-a-single-mom-found-a-neighborhood-lifeline/

<sup>16</sup> USDA (2021): <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box>

## FARMERS MARKETS & NEW FARM STANDS

A few farmers markets closed for the 2020 season due to COVID-19. Despite the pandemic, three new farmers markets launched:

- **Jefferson-Chalmers Farmers Market**
- **Palmer Park Farmers Market**
- **East Warren Avenue Farmers Market**

Due to restrictions and restaurant closings, many local growers had nowhere to sell their produce. Many started their own “farm stands” by setting up a table right at their farm sites.

## 2020 NUMBERS

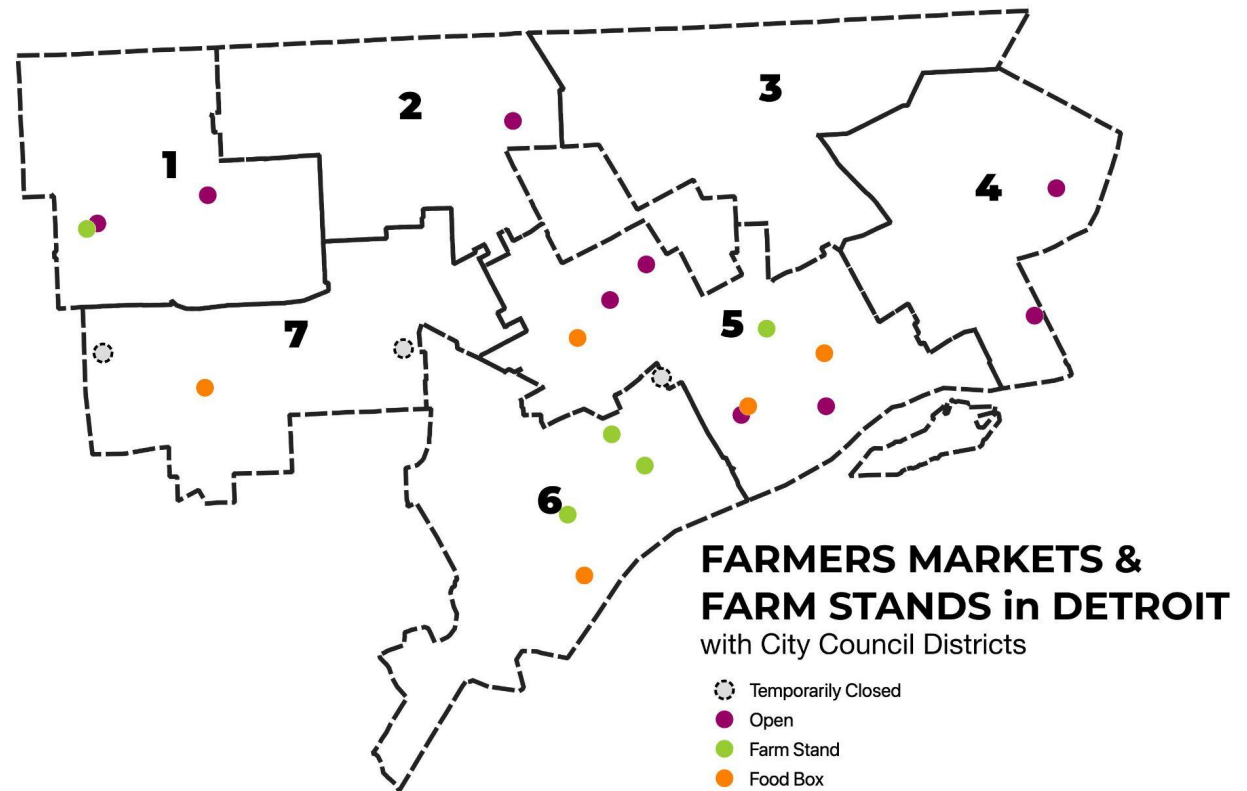
**Farmers Markets: 10**

**Eastern Market Farm Stands: 2**

\*additional to Farmers Markets to avoid double counting

**New Farm Stands: 5\***

\*possibly more that are unknown



SOURCE: Detroit Food Map Initiative, 2021

## FOOD RETAILERS

Detroit has been steadily losing full-line grocery stores. Selling groceries is not an easy business and profits are slim. Recently a handful of longtime grocers have closed down, others have been victims of fires, and only a few have sold.

The grocery landscape is impacted by the regular changes in Detroit's secondary food purchasing locations including convenience stores and dollar stores.<sup>17</sup> Small grocery stores often get converted into dollar stores and the same happens with convenience stores.

In 2014, Dollar Tree purchased Family Dollar for \$8.5 Billion. Now Dollar Tree and Dollar General dominate the market.

## 2020 NUMBERS<sup>18</sup>

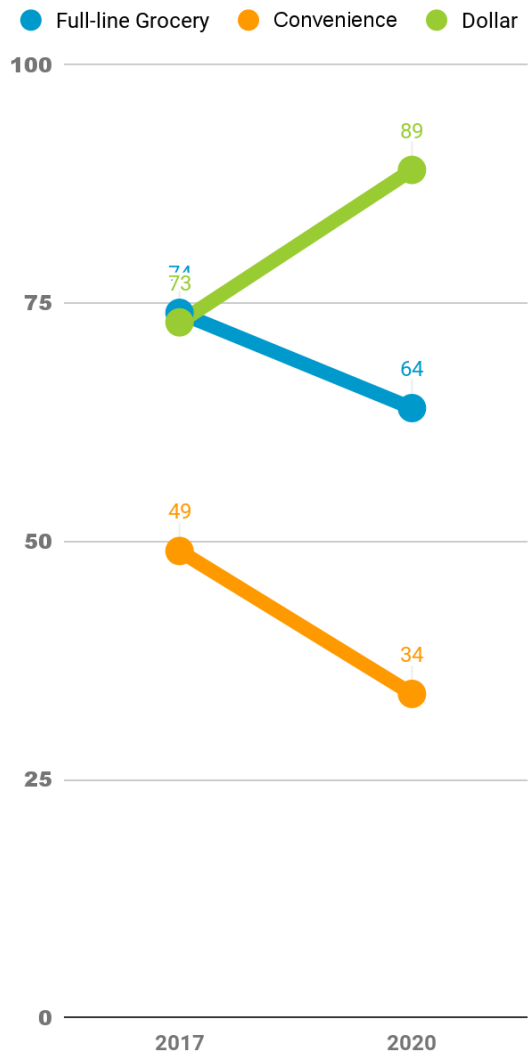
**Full-line grocery stores: 64**

**Convenience stores: 34**

**Dollar stores: 89**

<sup>17</sup> Hill, A. B. (2021). "Treat everybody right": Examining foodways to improve food access. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 10(3), 1-8.

<sup>18</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative, 2021.



Data tracked by Detroit Food Map Initiative, 2021.

## COVID-19 GROCERY SAFETY

The Detroit Grocery Coalition (DGC), a subcommittee of the Detroit Food Policy Council, mobilized around the lack of information and signage about safe grocery shopping in independent grocery stores.<sup>19</sup>



Photo credit: Banner Sign Co.

The DGC developed materials and worked with the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) District

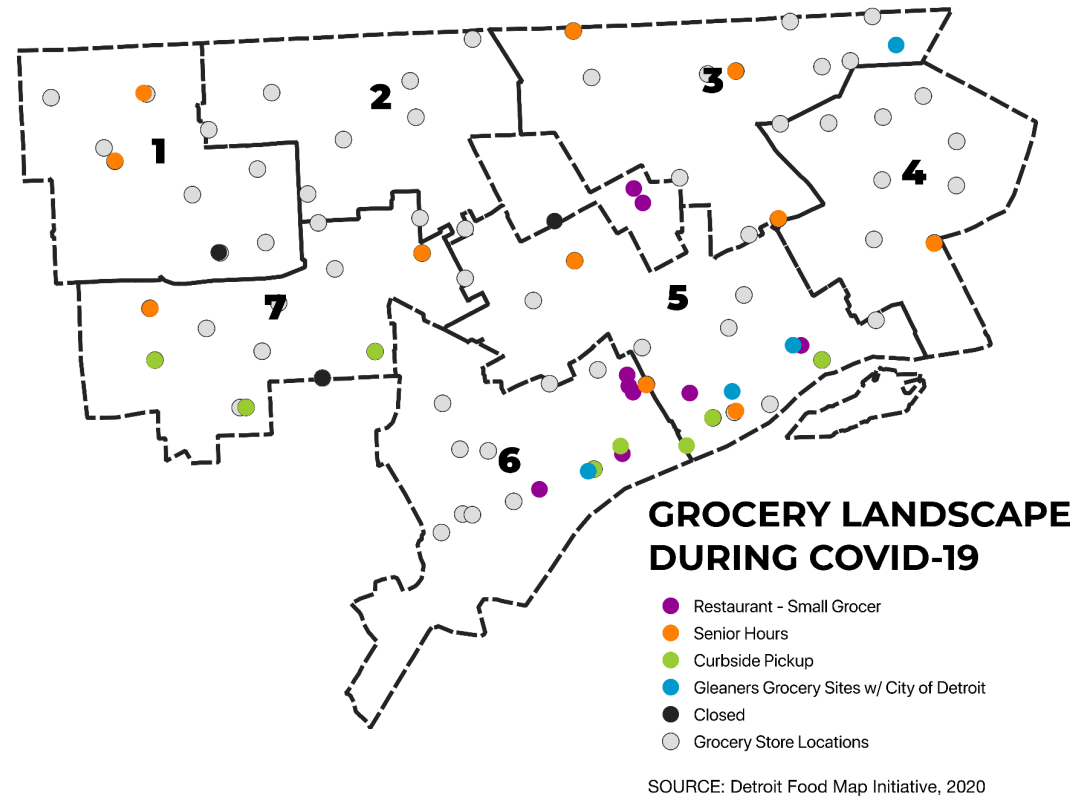
<sup>19</sup> Hill, A. B. (2020). "Independent Grocers, Vulnerable Residents, and Community Coalitions: We're All Essential!." *Gastronomica*.

Business Liaisons and the Detroit Health Department (DHD) to reach local retailers with safety signage, masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer.



The DGC's efforts became the standard for the City of Detroit's food retail outreach. Additional funding was awarded to DGC to expand the safety campaign to corner and small stores in the city by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Photos credit: Banner Sign Co.



# 3.

## Emergency Food & Food Security

### FOOD SECURITY

In Detroit, the emergency food landscape exploded in 2020 as existing food pantries had to close and multiple new sites were established to meet a growing demand during the pandemic.

The latest ALICE numbers show that nearly 70% of Detroit households likely experienced food insecurity. During the height of Detroit's first wave of COVID-19 cases, research from the University of Michigan found that almost 50% of Detroiters surveyed had lost their job due to the pandemic.<sup>20</sup>

Michigan was the first State to institute Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT), which meant additional funds were dispersed to existing SNAP recipients with school age children. The P-EBT was set up to cover the gap caused by children staying home from school and missing out on programs like school breakfast and school lunch. SNAP benefits were also

<sup>20</sup> Detroit Metropolitan Area Community Survey (DMACS), COVID Survey 2, Wave 8: [https://detroitssurvey.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-Survey-2-Wave-8-Toplines\\_Final.pdf](https://detroitssurvey.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-Survey-2-Wave-8-Toplines_Final.pdf)

boosted, first to the maximum amount for a person's family size, and then by an extra \$95 per an order from Gov. Whitmer. This has allowed many people who typically would not qualify for any significant benefit to participate in SNAP and have the program more adequately meet their nutritional needs.



### 2020 NUMBERS

**Emergency food providers: 3**

\*Many community and mutual aid efforts started during the pandemic that are not well captured in the data

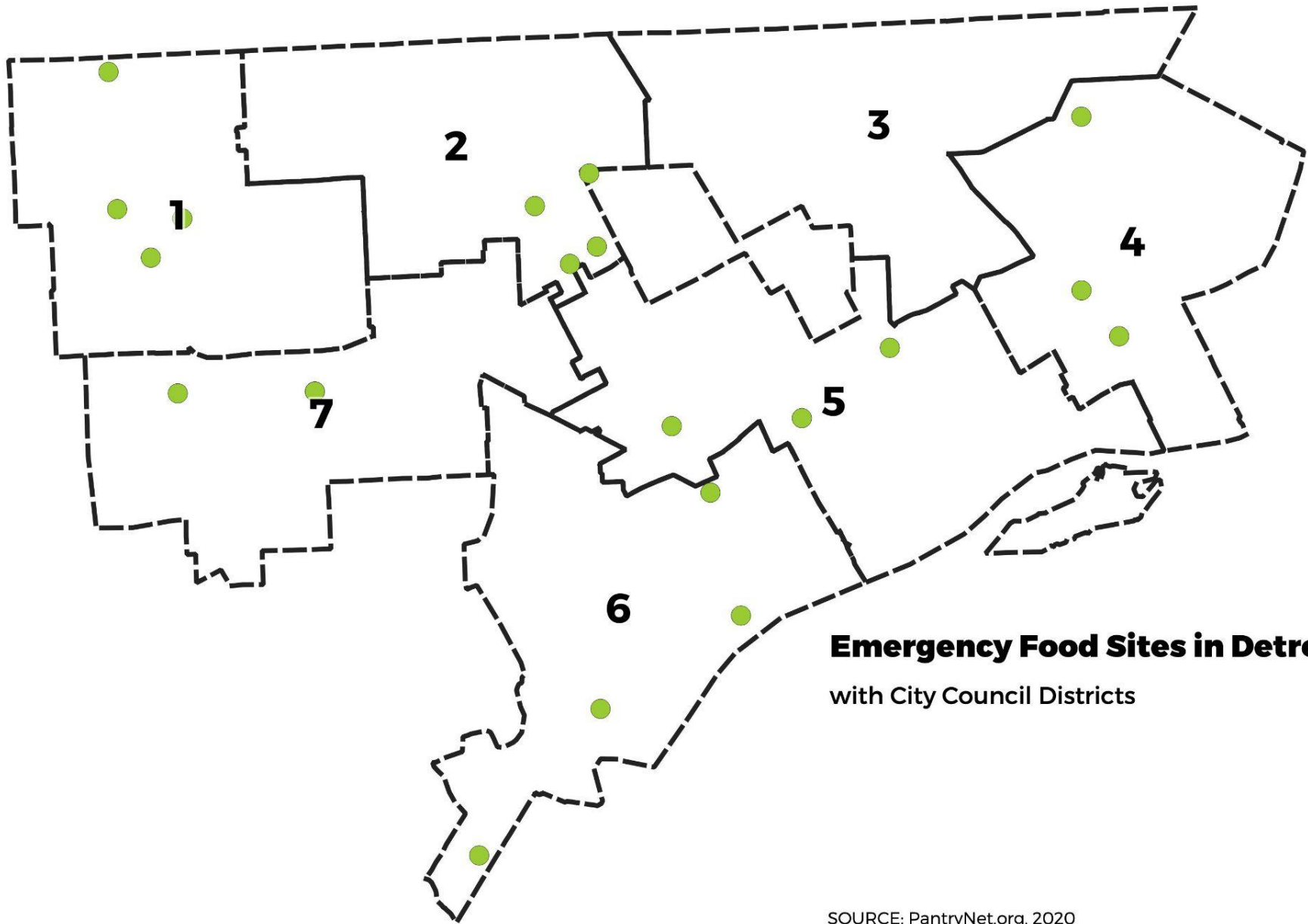
**Food pantries: 21\***

\*Not all sites, some prefer not to be listed, but many ceased operations due to COVID-19

**Community fridges or sharing tables: 5**

<sup>21</sup> ALICE Report (2021): [https://www.uwmich.org/s/2021ALICEReport\\_MI\\_FINAL-3-15-21.pdf](https://www.uwmich.org/s/2021ALICEReport_MI_FINAL-3-15-21.pdf)





**Emergency Food Sites in Detroit**  
with City Council Districts

SOURCE: PantryNet.org, 2020

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## FOOD SECURE DETROIT

**3 months. \$1 million.**

Those were the factors that added up to **Food Secure Detroit**, a project led by Detroit Food Policy Council in late 2020 that fed over 29,000 people.

Colleagues at the State of Michigan approached DPFC Executive Director, Winona Bynum, about applying for a grant that would disperse leftover COVID-19 relief money to organizations that served people of color through the state government task force on racial inequities in COVID. The \$1 million grant was larger than any single grant DFPC has ever received, and all of it had to be spent in the last quarter of 2020.

Food Secure Detroit went from a vision to a completed project in a remarkably short period of time, finishing out an unprecedented year with a rush. In many ways, it showed how a local, interconnected food system made up of people with a strong sense of mission

can make a huge impact when given the resources to make it happen.

### Partners:

- **Saffron De Twah**, a restaurant, became a distributor of community meals for people in need.
- **Make Food Not Waste** packed boxes with food as well as basic cooking equipment and personal protective equipment.
- **Keep Growing Detroit** distributed grow kits for mushrooms and greens that could be grown indoors through the winter season.
- The **Detroit Grocery Coalition** distributed hand sanitizer stations, signage and floor stickers for social distancing, and PPE to 220 stores throughout the city.
- **Detroit Food Academy** built in more time in their cooking classes for youths to socialize with each other and talk about their lives beyond the kitchen.
- **Eastern Market** filled its role as a food hub, but also distributed PPE to growers, vendors and market visitors

As one grantee said:

**“This was the busiest project and the most meaningful and fulfilling thing I’ve been involved with in my years of doing this work.”**

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Food boxes distributed: 10,439** (with cooking equipment and PPE)

**PPE and cleaning supplies distributed: 200** baskets

**Cooking classes provided: 251**

**Grocery stores and markets supplied with PPE and COVID-19 safety materials: 220**

# Office of School Nutrition

Kevin Frank, Assistant Director

## SCHOOL FOOD

The second week of March in 2020 started like a normal week for many of us -- and by the time it ended, most of us would not see anything resembling normal for more than a year. Schools shut down with only a few days notice, for what was originally planned as a few days off, then a few weeks. Before too long schools throughout the state were pivoting to online learning and buildings would not open until fall, if then.

This meant the **Detroit Public Schools Community District Office of School Nutrition** (OSN) had to figure out how to feed the 50,000 students it usually serves breakfast and lunch at no cost. After a few hiccups figuring out the best way to distribute food to students while keeping workers, kids, and their families safe, the OSN went to a system where parents or children can pick up multiple meals at any school on Mondays and Thursdays.



Meanwhile, the federal program under which the district operates its food service (and gets reimbursed for meals) switched to the summer food program, which allowed more flexibility in the types of food offered. Because the school lunch program is only open to families with children enrolled at a particular school, while the summer feeding program is designed to feed any child under age 18 wherever they are, operating under the summer feeding program meant that any child could get meals at any school instead of having to travel to the school they would normally be attending.



While the Office of School Nutrition pulled off a successful year of feeding children, reaching kids has remained a challenge, according to Kevin Frank, Assistant Director of the Office of School Nutrition. The district is running at about 75 percent of the number of meals they once served.

**“We have 5-10 people at most, and other places have multiple, hundreds of people,” Frank says. “I think that speaks to socioeconomic differences in different pockets of the city.”**

One bright spot in a difficult year has been **10 Cents a Meal**. The program grants districts an extra 10 cents per

meal served that must be used to purchase Michigan grown fruits and vegetables. It began as a pilot program in 2016, and DFPC led the local effort to expand the program statewide.



In the 2020 state budget, it faced a last minute line item veto, then several months later it was almost added back as a budget amendment but was pulled back as the Legislature dealt with COVID-19's impact on the state. Finally, advocates were successful in more than tripling the budget for the program and

bringing it statewide. **Detroit Public School Community District** was the largest grantee in the first round of grants, garnering \$100,000 to support their efforts to put healthy, local food on students' plates.

# 4.

## Sustainable Food Purchasing & Production

### INEQUITABLE LAND ACCESS

From 1920 to 1997, the number of Black farmers dropped by 98% and Black farmers lost almost 90% of their land.<sup>22</sup>

For over a decade the USDA discriminated against Black farmers, including foreclosing on their property at higher rates than white farmers and passing Black farmers over for loans. As a result, the Obama administration attempted to settle a class action lawsuit against the USDA's discrimination of Black farmers dating back to the Bush administration.

Under the Trump administration, 99.5% of funds from the Market Facilitation Program, then the largest source of federal farm subsidies, went to white farmers.<sup>23</sup>

In 2021, the Biden administration's American Rescue Plan included a \$5 Billion fund for Black farmers specifically impacted by decades of documented discrimination.

<sup>22</sup> The New Food Economy (2019): <https://thecounter.org/usda-black-farmers-discrimination-tom-vilsack-reparations-civil-rights/>

<sup>23</sup> The New Food Economy (2019): <https://thecounter.org/usda-trump-trade-war-bailout-white-farmers-race/>

In the Detroit Tri-county region of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb county, only Wayne County had any Black or African-American farmers noted in the 2017 data from the US Census of Agriculture. Black farmers (n=32) made up just 13% of all farms and 7% of farm acres.<sup>24</sup> By sales value, 41% of Black farmers in Wayne County made profits of less than \$2,500 annually.

7%

of farm acres held by  
Black farmers in  
Tri-County area<sup>23</sup>

Black farmers in Detroit face similar issues of land access and inequitable opportunity. The Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) embarked on an extensive design and review process to

<sup>24</sup> Census of Agriculture 2017, Race/Ethnicity/Gender Profile - Wayne County, 2019.; Census of Agriculture 2017, Race/Ethnicity/Gender Profile - Oakland County, 2019.; Census of Agriculture 2017, Race/Ethnicity/Gender Profile - Macomb County, 2019.

demystify the land acquisition process and improve access for more Detroiters.

The effort was called “**Land Based Projects,**” but has yet to be fully implemented. Dr. Pothukuchi conducted a series of interviews with City of Detroit and DLBA officials and found widespread disinterest and efforts actively working against more urban agriculture development in Detroit.<sup>25</sup>

## 2020 NUMBERS<sup>26</sup>

\*Only KGD members are tracked

**Family gardens: 1,326\***

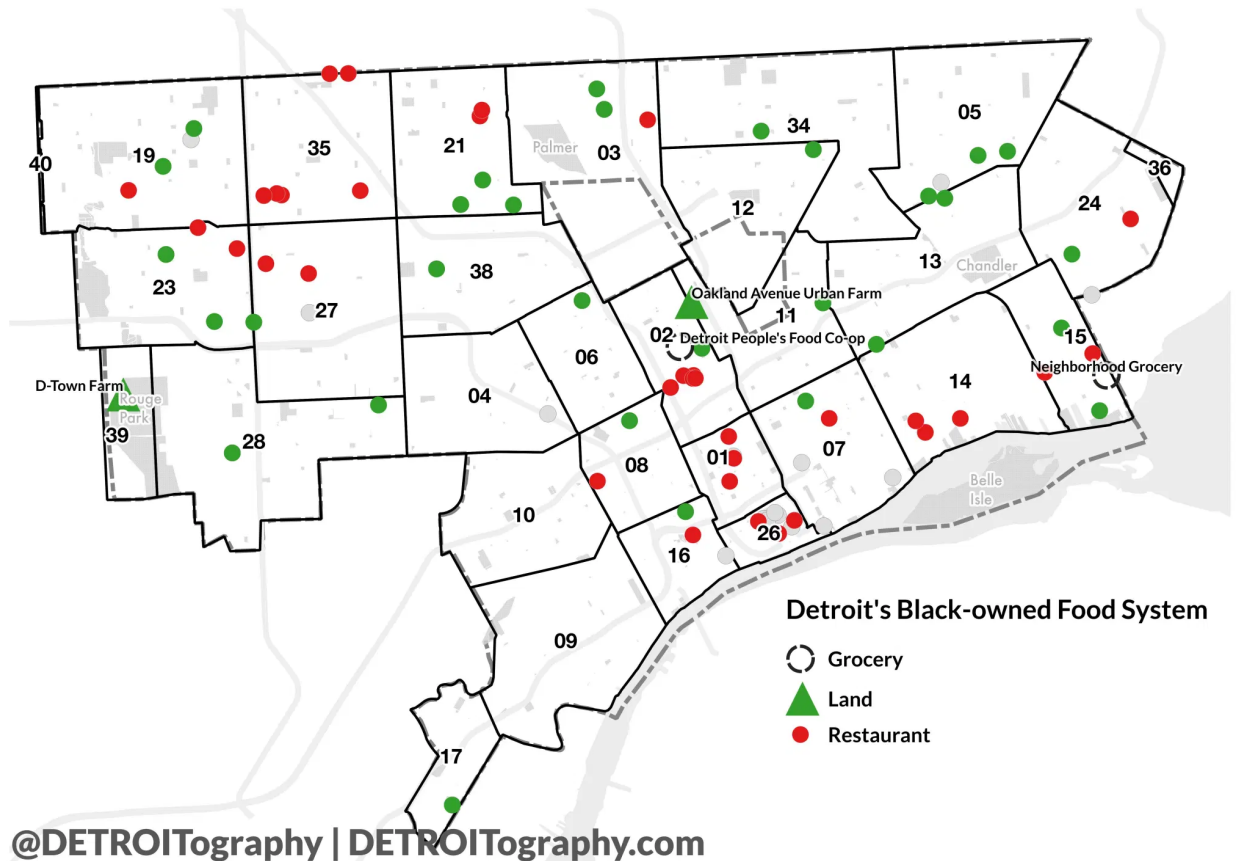
**Community gardens: 397**

**Market gardens: 97**

**School gardens: 121**

In 2020, the Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund launched after many working in Detroit’s urban agriculture ecosystem noticed that white farmers were more often securing land for their growing operations.

The fund selected 30 recipients out of 60 applicants for the inaugural program. However, only a few of the 30 have been able to successfully navigate the DLBA process to secure land.



<sup>25</sup> Pothukuchi, K. (2017). “To allow farming is to give up on the city”: Political anxieties related to the disposition of vacant land for urban agriculture in Detroit. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 39(8), 1169-1189.

<sup>26</sup> KGD Annual Report (2020): [https://detroitagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2020\\_KGD\\_Annual-Report\\_12.10.20.pdf](https://detroitagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2020_KGD_Annual-Report_12.10.20.pdf)

# Keep Growing Detroit

Lindsey Pielack, Co-Director

## GARDENING

As a distraction from the daily deluge of bad news, the media did a lot of reporting on “pandemic trends”. Amid the sourdough and Tik Tok dances, one trend emerged that reflected people’s anxieties over weaknesses in the food system and the economy as a whole: Gardening.

That trend was apparent in Detroit as well. **Keep Growing Detroit** (KGD) reported a larger increase in new gardens -- 740 in 2020 versus the usual 500 to 600 that might join the **Garden Resource Program** (GRP) in a given year.



Photo credit: Crafted in Carhartt

The pandemic stay-at-home orders could not have come at a worse time -- KGD was dealing with the normal rush of the start of the growing season, starting hot crops for summer distribution, just as the supply of volunteers to tend the thousands of seedlings distributed through the GRP was cut off. Crop distributions, usually a highlight of the gardening season, moved online. So did KGD’s popular series of gardening classes.

**“We definitely upped our game in terms of our use of technology. I think we learned a lot about why those formats work for certain people. It really pointed out the technology gap (for city residents).” - Lindsey Pielack, KGD**

Pielack points out that gardening allowed people to come together in a safe way and experience a degree of normalcy in a very unsettling year. It also allowed people to take control of their own food security in a proactive way.

The pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of the global, industrialized food system, and people wanted to take back control of the foods they had available to them and cultivate survival skills along with their vegetables. “A lot of people this spring experienced the ah-ha moment of ‘this is what our food system is and this is how very global it is,’” Pielack said. “When people were only going to the store every three weeks, the first thing to go are things that are not shelf-stable; those are things you will still have if you have a garden.”



Photo credit: Crafted in Carhartt

Detroit already has a strong degree of interconnectedness within different food system sectors -- one of the reasons the Detroit Food Policy Council was formed.

**“That’s all invisible work, these partnerships,” Pielack said. “You don’t get grants to do this, but when the rubber meets the road it’s the most valuable aspect of what we have.”**

People jumped in to help out where it was needed: Pielack helped one of the early child education systems find personal protective equipment, while farmers collaborated instead of competed to set up curbside pick up for fresh produce, and helped promote and distribute each others’ value added products.

All of this helped contribute to a sense of community resiliency even as the pandemic and its attendant economic crisis ravaged the city.

**“This is one crisis, and there will be others -- climate, racism, etc.,” Pielack said. “This year the food system really demonstrated its value among different sectors as a magnet for actually sustainable change.”**

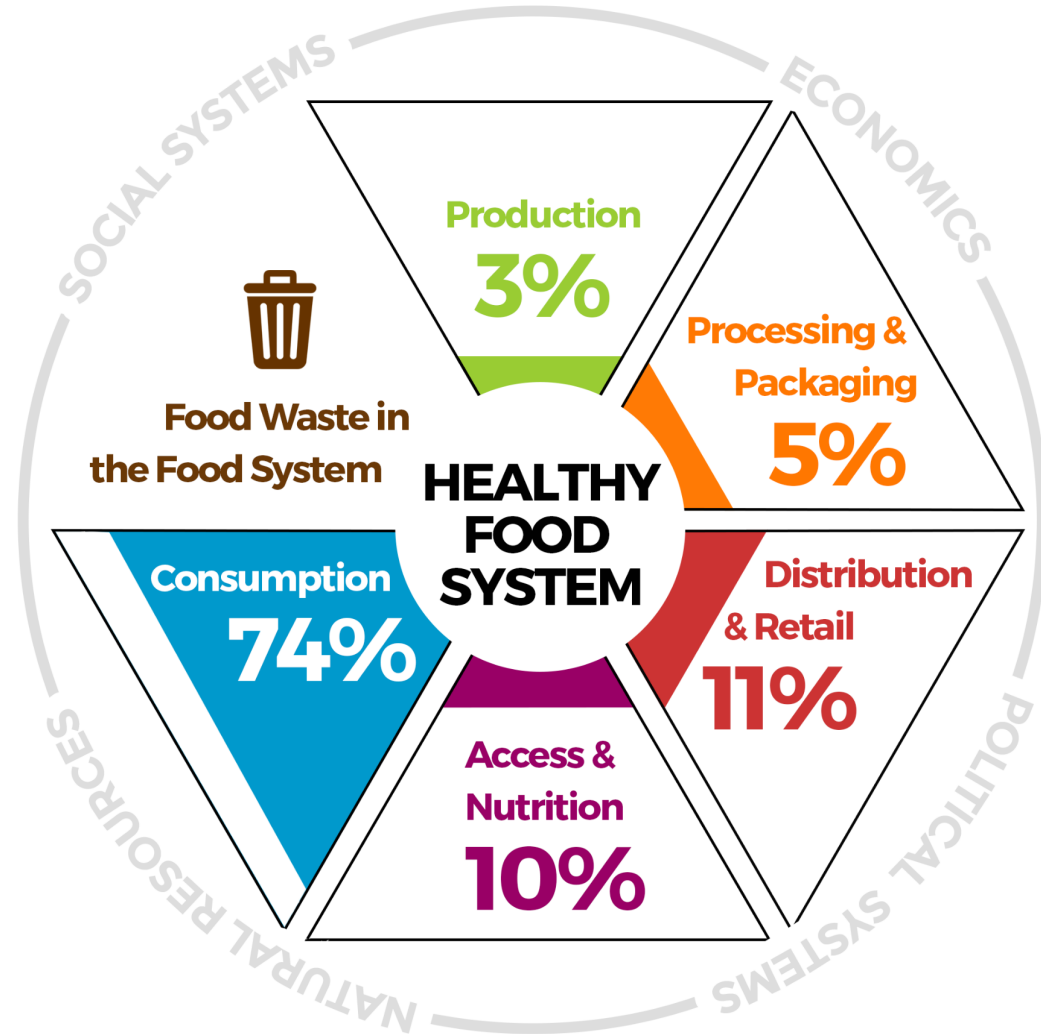


## FOOD WASTE

There is no good data or any that is regularly collected about how much food is wasted across Detroit's food system.

There is a significant degree of waste in food production - not every tomato makes it out of the fields, nor through the transportation journey. There is waste in food retail - not every tomato gets purchased before it gets moldy. There is food waste at home - Americans throw out more food than they eat. Then, there is also food waste in food rescue efforts - almost 40% of rescued food ends up as waste.

In 2020, **NRDC** with **Make Food Not Waste** completed an assessment of food waste in Detroit.<sup>27</sup> Their research resulted in the first estimates of food waste specific to Detroit.



<sup>27</sup> NRDC (2020). Food Waste and Rescue Potential in Detroit. \*Consumption combines residential and restaurant estimates; Access & Nutrition combines healthcare, events and recreation, hospitality, and college and K-12 education.



Photo credit: Make Food Not Waste, 2020

The annual **Make Food Not Waste** event was first held in 2017. Danielle Todd and Chef Phil Jones collaborated to inspire home cooks to waste less food. The effort included the **Upcycling Kitchen** that recovers, cooks, and distributes food in Detroit. Chef Ederique Goudia of Gabriel Hall is the lead chef.

### URBAN FARMS

**D-town Farm, Keep Growing Detroit, Brother Nature Produce,** and other large-scale urban farming efforts maintain their own composting for food waste from the fields.

**Forgotten Harvest** has had a partnership with **D-Town Farm** to take in food waste from the food rescue efforts. Roughly 40% of food rescued ends up as food waste.

### COMPOSTING

**Detroit Dirt** launched in 2010 and reports diverting 90 million pounds of waste from landfill to make compost.

**WSU Office of Campus Sustainability (OCS)** launched a composting pilot program in 2020 and collected over 6,000 pounds of food waste in its first year. The program is run in collaboration with the Georgia Street Community Collective who use the compost in their urban farming operations.

### RECOVERY

**Food Rescue US - Detroit** Chapter was very active during the pandemic. Volunteers picked up foods from mostly suburban grocers and restaurants and delivered to food pantries, local first responders, and community programs. The organization focused in 48213 and has recently launched a food hub.

**Postmates** food delivery launched a food donation effort for restaurants at their close of business. Instead of throwing out unsold foods, Postmates would pay a delivery driver to take the food to a local homeless shelter.

**WSU Food Recovery Network** Chapter engaged numerous students to engage in food recovery operations. Students used their personal cars to pick up food donations.

# 5.

## Opportunity & Economic Mobility

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### FOOD ECONOMY

The leading industries and jobs in Detroit's food economy reside within the fast food industry, as well as soft drink manufacturing, and snack food manufacturing.<sup>28</sup>

#### **Detroit Black Restaurant Week**

launched in 2017 and the founder, Kwaku Osei-Bonsu, received racist diatribes and death threats. The week featuring Black restaurants is now in its 6th year with 30 participating restaurants. However, COVID-19 has hit Black-owned restaurants hard with both *Ima* and *Detroit Vegan Soul* temporarily closing one of their two locations and many others struggling to hold on.

The last Black-owned grocery store in Detroit closed in 2014. James Hooks ran *Metro Foodland* on Grand River Ave. right up until a *Meijer Superstore* became his neighbor. The financial case for opening a grocery store is difficult to make to lenders, but trying to convince a lender to invest in a Black-owned business is even harder. Two current

Black-owned grocery store efforts are relying on memberships and crowdsourcing to finance the opening. The **Detroit Food Commons** and the *Detroit People's Food Co-op* closed on their land deal and are moving forward with thousands of member-owners and large institutions backing the project. **The Neighborhood Grocery** has secured a small store building and nearby land to grow produce in collaboration with **Deeply Rooted Produce**.

Since 2020, there have been multiple grocery closures with far fewer openings. Detroit's Eastside has lost the most grocery retail creating new gaps in the food access landscape.

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<sup>28</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Economic Census 2017.

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## OPPORTUNITY & MOBILITY

Pandemic Support in the form of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), to rehire or keep people on payroll, was dispersed by the Federal government, but quickly reflected racial inequities.

In a poll, 23% of Black-owned small businesses said they were denied PPP loans compared to only 9% of white-owned businesses.<sup>29</sup>

In Michigan, only 3 restaurants requesting over \$150,000 in PPP loans identified as Black-owned compared to the 223 white-owned restaurants that were awarded the same PPP loan amount.<sup>30</sup>

Researchers at NYU found that automated, online systems that processed PPP loan applications were more racially neutral than in-person

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<sup>29</sup> Vox (2020). The Paycheck Protection Program failed many Black-owned businesses. <https://www.vox.com/2020/10/5/21427881/paycheck-protection-program-black-owned-businesses>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

banks where racial discrimination was found to be more likely to occur.<sup>31</sup>

The New York Federal Reserve called this phenomena the pandemic “double jeopardy” for Black-owned businesses.<sup>32</sup> The geographic concentration of COVID-19 in predominantly Black communities combined with existing weak financial positions of Black-owned businesses, weak connections with banks, and existing funding gaps lead to higher rates of closure.

One example in Detroit was the successful, Detroit Vegan Soul (DVS), who had to close its original location in West Village due to staffing difficulties. The second DVS location on Grand River in Northwest Detroit is still open and operating.

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<sup>31</sup> Howell, Sabrina T and Kuchler, Theresa and Snitkof, David and Stroebel, Johannes and Wong, Jun, Automation and Racial Disparities in Small Business Lending: Evidence from the Paycheck Protection Program (February 4, 2022). <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3939384>

<sup>32</sup> Mills, C. K., & Battisto, J. (2020). Double jeopardy: COVID-19's concentrated health and wealth effects in Black communities. *Federal Reserve Bank of New York*, 8. [https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/smallbusiness/DoubleJeopardy\\_COVID19andBlackOwnedBusinesses](https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/smallbusiness/DoubleJeopardy_COVID19andBlackOwnedBusinesses)



Image: Detroit Vegan Soul location in Northwest Detroit

# 6.

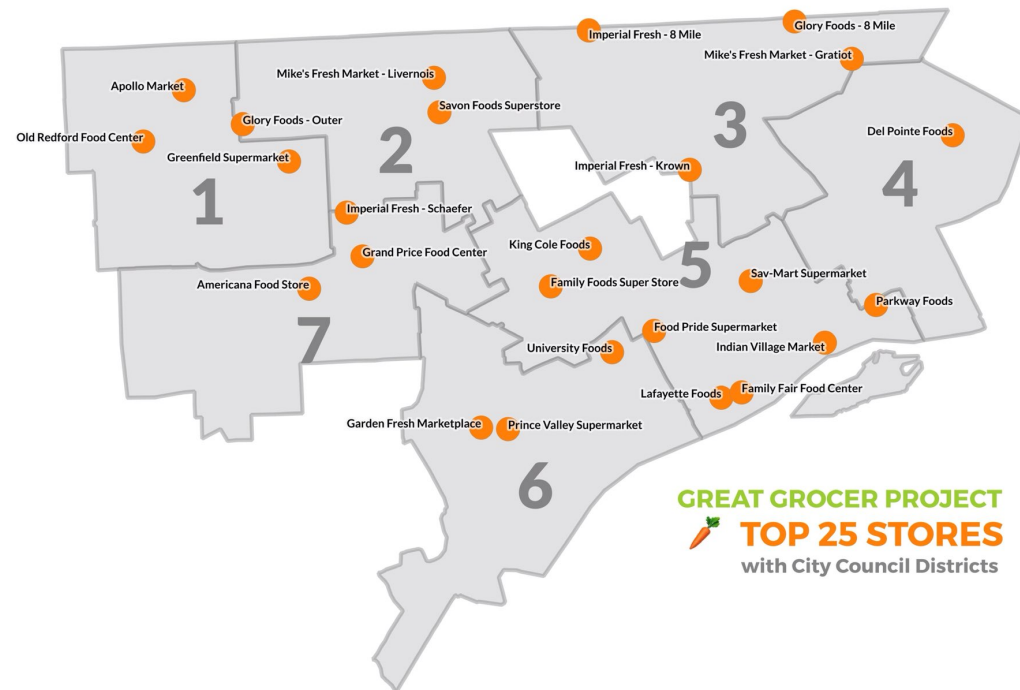
## 2021 Updates

### GREAT GROCER

The DGC launched a new project with 3 years of funding support from the USDA and MDHHS. The program is called the Great Grocer Project (GGP) and will assess and score grocery stores, connect community fellows with grocery store owners and encourage stores to

adopt healthy food stocking and promotion for residents.

The project released its first set of scores for “Great Grocers” and named the top 25 stores across the city.<sup>33</sup> Scoring will be updated on a semi-annual basis in order to track change and improvements in Detroit’s grocery landscape.



<sup>33</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative, 2021

## OTHER 2021 UPDATES

**Meijer** opened their third Detroit store under their “urban concept,” called **Rivertown Market** in October 2021 on East Jefferson Ave. The original plan was to include apartments above store, but financing fell through during the pandemic.

DPSCD received \$100,000 for **10 Cents a Meal** from the Office of School Nutrition’s dedication to creating meals from scratch with Michigan-grown produce.

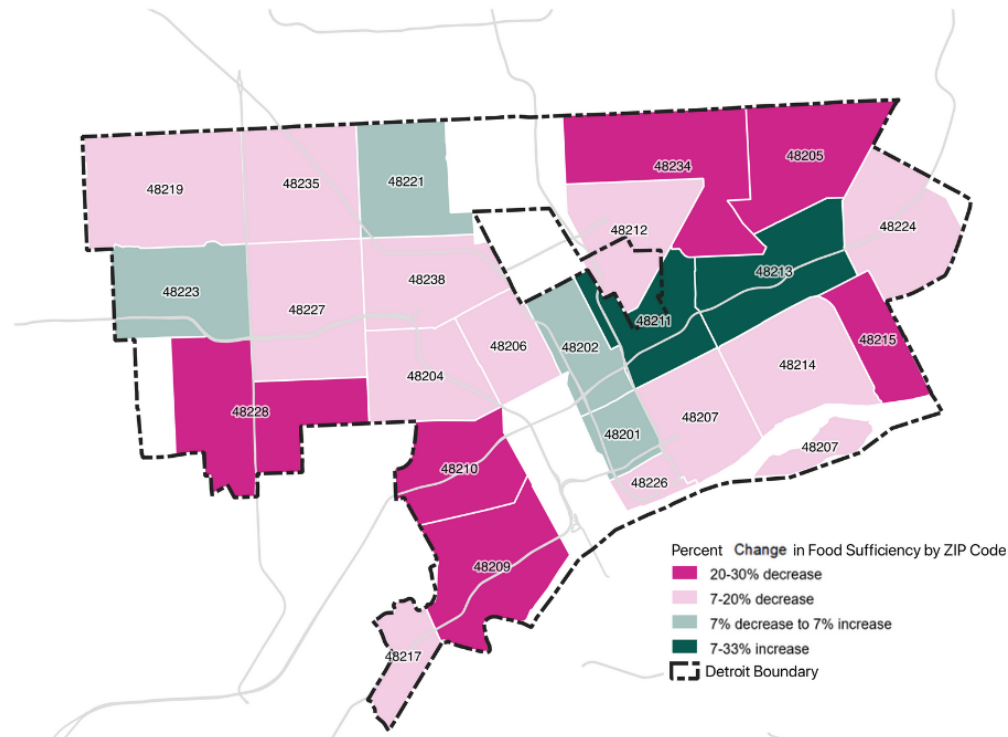
**Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)** was extended and updated for the 2020-2021 school year as remote and hybrid learning continued.

**Black Farmer Land Fund** awarded 40 additional farmers, bringing their total to **70 Black farmers**. To date 28 of their awardees have purchased 10.4 acres of land.

## COVID-19 IMPACTS

The pandemic continues to strain Detroit households and the city’s social service sector. **COVID-19** variants continue to emerge and vaccination rates remain low at just 50% of the city population.<sup>34</sup> Vaccine booster coverage is only at 20%.

**Food insecurity** has been a related destabilizing factor in everyday life for Detroiters. Even into the second year of the pandemic, rates of food security increased significantly when compared to the pre-COVID time period. Some areas of the city saw an almost 30% increase in food insecurity.<sup>35</sup>



<sup>34</sup> City of Detroit, COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard

<sup>35</sup> Beavers, A. and Hill A. B. (2021, unpublished). “A Qualitative Examination of the Detroit Food System Response to COVID-19.” United Way of Southeastern Michigan (UWSEM).

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**BY THE NUMBERS: 2021**

**84%**

goal reached for 30k square feet of grocery per 10k people<sup>36</sup>

▲ **1%** from **2020**

**69%**

of households food insecure<sup>38</sup>

◇ increase since **2019**

**36%**

of households using SNAP<sup>40</sup>

▲ **3%** from **2020**

**66**

full-line grocery stores<sup>37</sup>

▲ **2** from **2020**

**35k**

of children enrolled in WIC<sup>39</sup>

▼ **3k** from **2020**

**17%**

SNAP eligible households not enrolled<sup>6</sup>

◇ from **2020**

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<sup>36</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative. based on Census Bureau, ACS 2019 5-year estimates.

<sup>37</sup> Detroit Food Map Initiative (2021). <http://detroitfoodmap.com>

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<sup>38</sup> United Way, Michigan ALICE Report 2021

<sup>39</sup> MDHHS WIC Program, 2021 PedNSS LA Report

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<sup>40</sup> Census Bureau, ACS 2019 5-year estimates.

12

farmers markets<sup>41</sup>

▲ 2 from 2020

32

Detroit-based growers  
at Eastern Market<sup>43</sup>

▲ 24 from 2020

429

community  
gardens<sup>45</sup>

▲ 32 from 2020

2k

school meals served  
each day<sup>42</sup>

▼ 83k from 2019

\_\_k

pounds of food  
wasted in Detroit<sup>44</sup>

-- from 2019

\$\_\_

annual loss in grocery  
retail revenue<sup>8</sup>

-- from 2019

<sup>41</sup> DPSCD, Office of School Nutrition

<sup>42</sup> No updated data

<sup>43</sup> Keep Growing Detroit, 2020 Annual Report (2021).

<sup>44</sup> NRDC Food Matters Project, 'Food Waste and Potential in Detroit'.

<sup>45</sup> Eastern Market, Detroit Community Markets (2020), Detroit Food Map Initiative (2021).



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## NOTES