



Food Hub Resources and Networks

Many communities and organizations in Massachusetts are considering starting a food hub. These spaces can strengthen the local food system in various ways: they can be a place to aggregate and store locally grown and produced food, a commercial kitchen for farmers and small businesses to create value-added food products, and a space to provide food-related education and support to the community. The organization spearheading the food hub must consider the needs and gaps in the community as well as the infrastructure and staffing that would be required. It is important to be thoughtful about reducing unnecessary competition between food hubs, not duplicating programming or infrastructure, and ensuring that enough demand exists to sustain such a complex facility. Many turn to consultants to conduct a feasibility study. Communities may also find the reports and networks listed below helpful to informing the planning and implementation of local food hubs.

Regional networks of food hubs

Eastern Food Hub Collaborative

The [Eastern Food Hub Collaborative](#) connects over 15 food hubs on the east coast through partnership agreements. For more information, contact info@easternfoodhubcollaborative.org.

The New England Food Hub Network

The New England Food Hub Network is a group of established food hubs around the region, including Farm Fresh RI, Red Tomato, 3 River Farmers Alliance, and Food Connects, who meet monthly to bolster trade with one another, share experiences and best practices around hub operations, and otherwise collaborate. For more information, contact Shayna Cohen at shayna@kkandp.com.

The New Hampshire Food Hub Network

The [NH Food Hub Network](#) is a new network of six hubs. They are developing an MOU and hope to build trust within the group so they can enter into more trading relationships, share technology and infrastructure, and use common templates. For more information, contact Katelyn Porter at katelyn.porter@unh.edu.



The Northeast Food Collective

This Collective is a group of Northeast food processors, including Western MA Food Processing Center, CommonWealth Kitchen, and VT Venture Center/Just Cut, that are working to collectively meet institutional demand for local food. They meet quarterly with the New England Food Hub Network and have a USDA grant to develop a website and joint sales strategy. For more information, contact Betsy Skoda at bskoda@hcwh.org.

Vermont Way Foods

[Vermont Way Foods](#) connects local food hub organizations, including Intervale, Center for an Agricultural Economy, Food Connects, and Green Mountain Farm Direct, which are serving various parts of the market, including processing, distribution, business incubation, direct to consumer, and sourcing to schools. For more information, contact Matt Landi at Matt@vermontwayfoods.com.

Food hub reports, listservs, and courses

Conservation Law Foundation

The Legal Food Hub at CLF wrote [A Legal Guide for Community Kitchens](#).

Farm to Institution New England

FINE commissioned a report called [New England Food Hub Network: Exploring Options to Enhance Food Hub Collaboration & Increase New England Farm to Institution Sales](#). They also have many resources about [food processing](#), including culinary incubators.

Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic

They have written several reports on [Cottage Food Laws](#), or the ability to cook food in a home kitchen and sell it.

Michigan Food Hub Learning and Innovation Network

The [Michigan Food Hub Network](#) is a regional collaboration that is focused on the needs of about 12 Michigan-based food hubs and based at Michigan State University. They have written [a report](#) based on a survey of food hubs and have [a database](#) of food hub resources. For more information, contact Noel Bielaczyc at bielacz1@msu.edu.

New Venture Advisors

This group has created a free online tool, the [Local Produce Hubsizer](#), to help inform food hub decision making. Communities can input rough estimates of produce throughput, square



footage, storage needs and other components of a food hub facility to see the financial implications of each parameter. It also allows users to explore ownership structure and product types for the potential food hub. For more information, contact Caroline Myran at caroline@newventureadvisors.net.

University of Massachusetts

UMass Food Science Extension Program offers [FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food Certification Training](#) which has helped food hub operators learn more about food safety.

University of Vermont

UVM's Professional and Continuing Education school offers a [Community Food Resource and Hub Management Program](#).

United State Department of Agriculture

The USDA has many reports and other resources about food hubs. The [Regional Food Hub Resource Guide](#), [The Role of Food Hubs in Local Food Marketing](#), and three reports on running a food hub: [Lessons Learned](#), [A Business Operations Guide](#), and [Assessing Financial Viability](#). They also have a [food hub directory](#), searchable by state.

Wallace Center Food Hub Library and Listserv

The Wallace Center has [a database](#) of resources about food hubs from around the country. They also organize the Food Hub Collaboration Community of Practice; sign up for [the listserv](#) here. For more information, contact Annalina Kazickas at annalina.kazickas@winrock.org.

Funding

Food hubs may qualify for funding from the USDA's [Local Food Promotion Program](#) and [Farmers Market Promotion Program](#) and from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' [Food Ventures grant program](#).

Existing Food Hubs in Massachusetts

USDA has a [food hub directory](#), searchable by state. MDAR also has a list of [shared use kitchen spaces](#). To get a sense of the geographic distribution and varying scales and programming of food hubs in Massachusetts, here is an incomplete list:

- [Boston Food Hub](#), Acton
- [CommonWealth Kitchen](#), Boston
- [Marty's Local](#), South Deerfield



- [New Entry Food Hub](#), Beverly
- [Phoenix Food Hub](#), Lynn
- Revere Food Hub, Revere
- [Western MA Food Processing Center](#), Greenfield
- [Worcester Regional Food Hub](#), Worcester
- [World Farmers](#), Lancaster

3/8/2022