



**Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
2022 State Representative and Senator Questionnaire**

Your name: Anthony Christakis

Office Sought, including district: State Senate, Middlesex & Worcester

Website:

What are three of your priorities that reflect your commitment to a healthy food system for Massachusetts and your constituents?

Priority 1

Disclosure: my family owns farmland in Greece. It is comprised mostly of olive groves and farmland which is mainly used to produce vegetables.

Enhance the food system so it is financially sound and creates economic opportunity.

Priority 2

Help draft policy that considers the needs of the food system and balances it with the needs of land use, land owners, the environment and transportation.

Priority 3

Help draft policy that helps food producers compete in mainstream markets and supply chains.

How would you support the Healthy Incentives Program?

Support policies that improves food producers access and competitiveness in larger markets and supply chains and distribution networks. In addition, I would support policies that streamline the farmer's ability to adopt processes which improve efficiency, production, reduce waste, and are sustainable.

How would you support farmers in adapting to climate change?

This question is must-faceted: Many farmers need capital for investments to update equipment for everything from seeding and harvesting or livestock feeding and housing as well as packaging and distribution. Increased funding is critical. In addition, I would support our farmers by helping to reduce burdensome regulation so they can develop specific plans to address issues like soil erosion, land productivity, invasive species, diseases, etcetera.

How would you help to ensure that children understand where food comes from, the importance of healthy eating, and other essential food literacy issues?

I would support education about the food system, workforce development and careers in farming including summer jobs programs to help children develop their own farming skills and appreciate healthy eating.

What policies or investments would you support to protect farmland and increase farmland access?

I would support a conversation between farms, conservation organizations and State and federal agencies about farmland protection issues and challenges.

What strategies would you support to reduce food waste?

I would support policies that improve food producers access to markets and supply chains/distribution networks. In addition, strategies are required to address liability protection as well as streamlining decision processes which distinguish between feeding people in need or feeding animals or other uses. Financial incentives may be included in this approach.

How would you work to ensure that food system stakeholders of color - consumers, workers, farmers, landowners, and others - have equitable access to opportunities in all aspects of the food system?

Encourage farmers, landowners and others to connect with the communities they are serving. Encourage them to embrace market diversity and help reduce language and cultural barriers. Support initiatives that create a strong and sustainable food system that is financially sound and creates economic opportunity/access. This includes support of the Healthy Incentives Program.