



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

Your name: Robyn Kennedy

Office Sought, including district: State Senate, 1st Worcester

Website: <https://kennedy4senate.com/>

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

Priority 1

Support the safety net- ensure that systemic barriers are eliminated.

Priority 2

Support access to healthy food through programs like the Healthy Incentives Program.

Priority 3

Support local food and the environment.

How would you support the Healthy Incentives Program?

1) by voting to increase the budget, 2) supporting farmers to have produce in the winter, 3) work to expand HIP in hard to reach areas, 4) Support SNAP so that people can get HIP

How would you support farmers in adapting to climate change?

1) Working with experts (we have many schools in our area that focus on the environment & agriculture) to provide support for farmers who may not know about different ways they can adapt to climate change. 2) Push for an understanding of local plants and native foods, 3) working towards support controlled environments like green houses

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

By supporting programs like the SNAP-Ed program but pushing for cultural adaptability and accessibility. Working with pediatricians to engage in conversations with parents on how food is medicine. Supporting more local school gardens and agricultural education in early education.

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

By protecting farmland from conversion to non-farm uses by prohibiting or restricting development on farmland. Would work towards increasing farmland access by pushing for agricultural zoning and working with local governments in my district to consider right-to-farm ordinances.

What strategies would you support to reduce food waste?

The first strategy is education- in general, most people are not aware how much food we waste. I oversee afterschool programs that receive federal funding. They prohibit the giving of the remaining food. We are forced to discard food. I know there are anti-hunger advocates working on this issue and I will provide my support as much as I can. I would support organizations that work to eliminate food waste, there are a couple in my district, they take food and properly distribute it to other sources. Lastly, working to support locally grown food so that we can eliminate issues in food distribution which may contribute to food waste.

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?

By speaking in spaces and elevating this issue - that the food system stakeholders of color - consumers, workers, farmers, landowners, and others-- have been left out from the resources and access. By ensuring that grant funding from the state around farm/farming/agriculture opportunities, is accessible and widely shared through different venues and languages. By pushing for more culturally relevant food.