



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

Your name: Jake Oliveira

Office Sought, including district: State Senate, Hampden, Hampshire, Worcester District

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

Priority 1

Education - Throughout my career as an elected official, I have been a strong supporter of public education in Massachusetts. In regards to healthy food systems, I support including robust nutritional education in our state's curriculum to ensure that students learn the importance of eating a healthy diet from a young age. I was proud to vote in favor of the House's FY23 budget that made universal school lunch permanent for every public school student in Massachusetts. One of the first caucus I joined as a member of the House was the Food Systems Caucus. I have participated in several caucus events at local farms and will be hosting the Fruit Growers association at Cold Springs Farm in my district in July.

Priority 2

Environment - I support investing in clean renewable energy to counteract climate change, which poses an existential threat to our food production systems, and creating stronger regulations to protect our farmlands from harmful pollution. I would also support investing in making our farmlands more climate change resilient and in helping our farmlands to adapt to climate change.

Priority 3

Equity - I would support improving access to SNAP, instituting free universal school meals, and other efforts to improve access to affordable food for disadvantaged and low-income communities.

How would you support the Healthy Incentives Program?

The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) is instrumental in providing fresh, healthy, local foods for SNAP recipients and provides local farmers and fresh food vendors with millions of dollars in additional revenues. I will work to ensure that the HIP receives the funding that it needs to meet demand, and I will support efforts to make the program more equitable by filling geographic gaps in program coverage.

How would you support farmers in adapting to climate change?

I would support providing technical assistance to farmers to help them with climate change adaptation strategies and including climate change adaptation strategies as eligible practices under the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

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 nutrition education for elementary school students, and the re-introduction of home economics curriculum into middle and/or high schools, which could include lessons on nutrition and healthy eating habits, nutrient label literacy, basic cooking techniques, food safety, etc. I have the honor of having UMass Amherst's Cold Springs Farm in my current House district and I have promoted the educational farm with school districts.

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

I would support expanding the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program to provide permanent protection for more farmland. I would also support efforts to make more land available for farming by offering resources that would allow for more crop production in urban areas. I am the author of the bill in the legislature to protect farmland and open spaces from the overdevelopment and under regulation of large solar farms. That bill, H. 4331 is now in the TUE committee in the House.

What strategies would you support to reduce food waste?

I would support gradually expanding the Massachusetts Commercial Food Waste Disposal Ban to cover smaller food waste generators, instituting a State tax credit for farmers that donate surplus food to encourage hunger relief efforts, and maximizing the composting of expired surplus food. I have been working with a local group called Commonwealth Sustainability that picks up food scraps and organic waste, and returns it as compost.

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?

I would support efforts to provide resources for nutritional education campaigns in communities of color, I would support efforts to improve the SNAP application process to enhance accessibility and ensure that low-income people can access financial support for nutritional food, and I would support targeting resources to people of color and other traditionally disadvantaged groups that are interested in owning and operating food production/processing businesses.