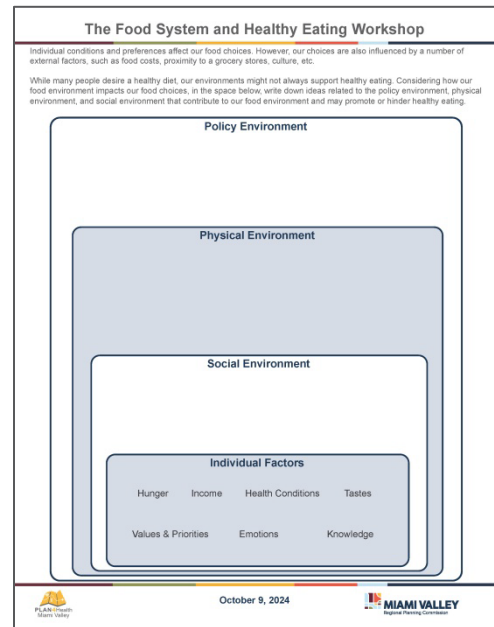


Food System and Healthy Eating Workshop Summary

The Food System and Healthy Eating Workshop was held on October 9, 2024 at the Montgomery County Business Solutions Center. This event, the seventh in a series of PLAN4Health – Miami Valley workshops, brought planners, public health professionals, and food systems stakeholders together to learn about our regional food system, how it influences healthy eating, and the impact our professions can have on shaping a better food environment. Below is a summary of the workshop.

I. Welcome and Warm up Activity – Influences on our Food Environment

Participants were invited to brainstorm influences on our individual food choices. Food choices are shaped not only by individual factors but also by our social, physical, and policy environments. [Click here to view the worksheet.](#)



II. Miami Valley Food System and Healthy Eating Briefing

MVRPC staff provided an overview of the regional food system and highlighted how planning can improve the region’s food environment and bolster healthy eating. Representatives from the Montgomery County Food Equity Coalition provided an overview of their organization and outlined their mission and goals create a sustainable food system accessible to all in Montgomery County. [Click here to view the presentation.](#)

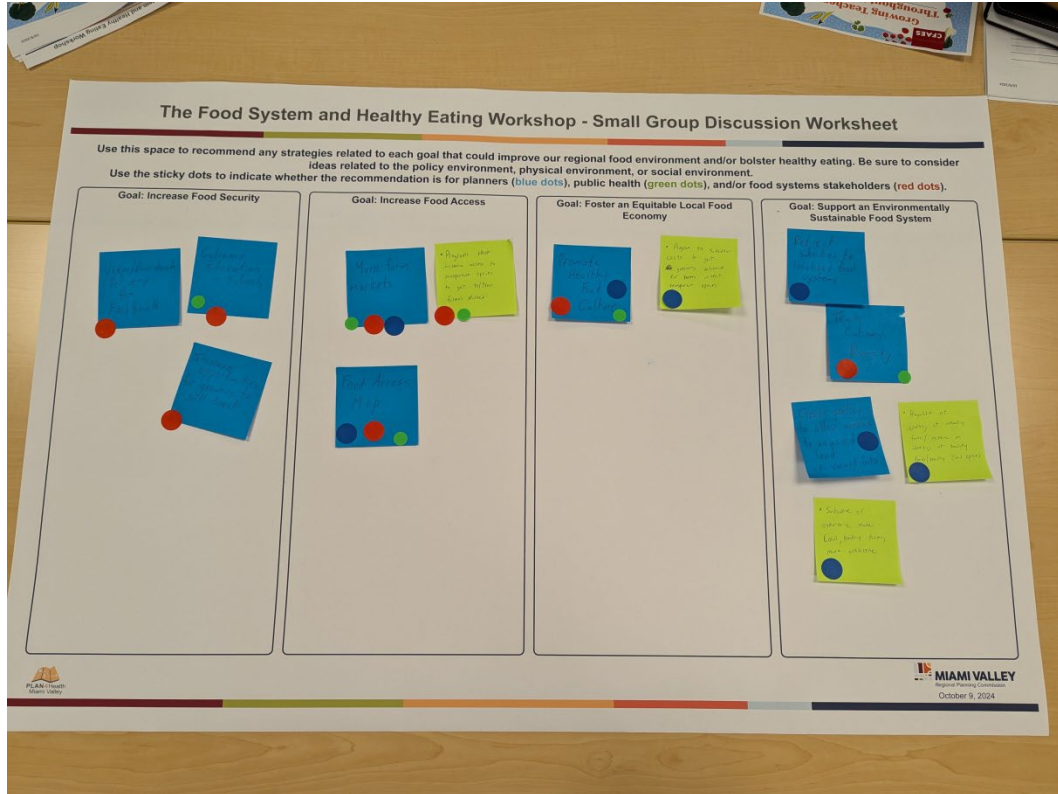
III. Small Group Activity and Discussion – Identifying Strategies to Improve the Regional Food System and Bolster Healthy Eating

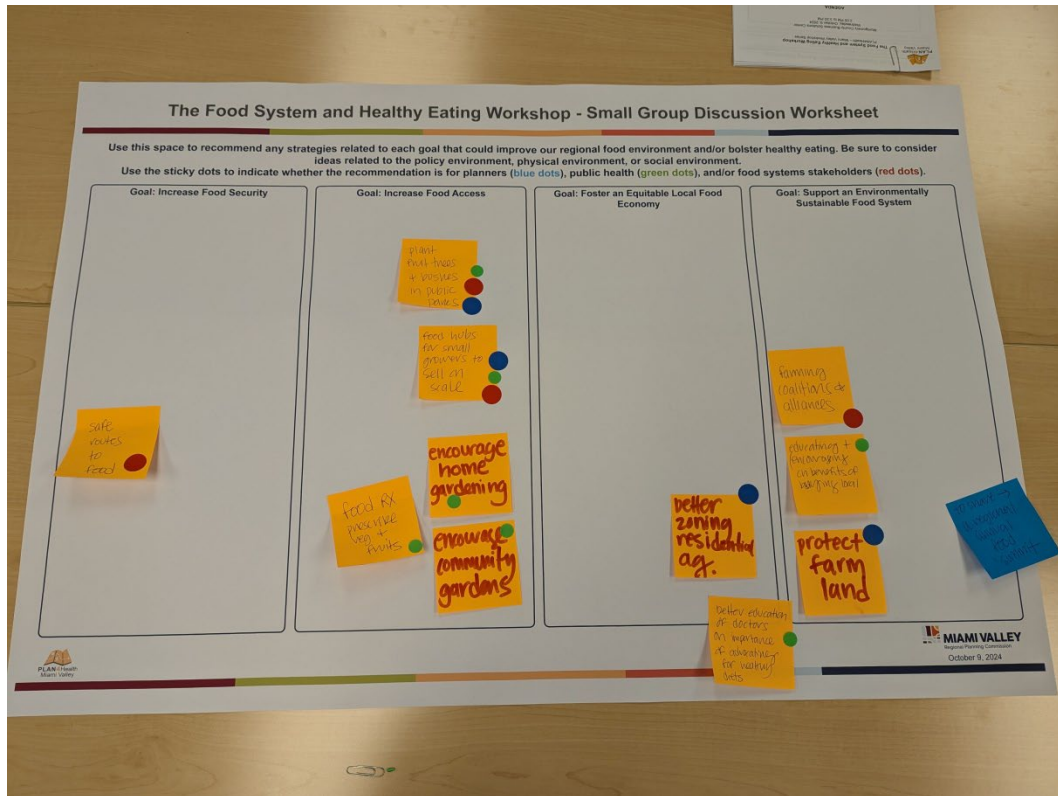
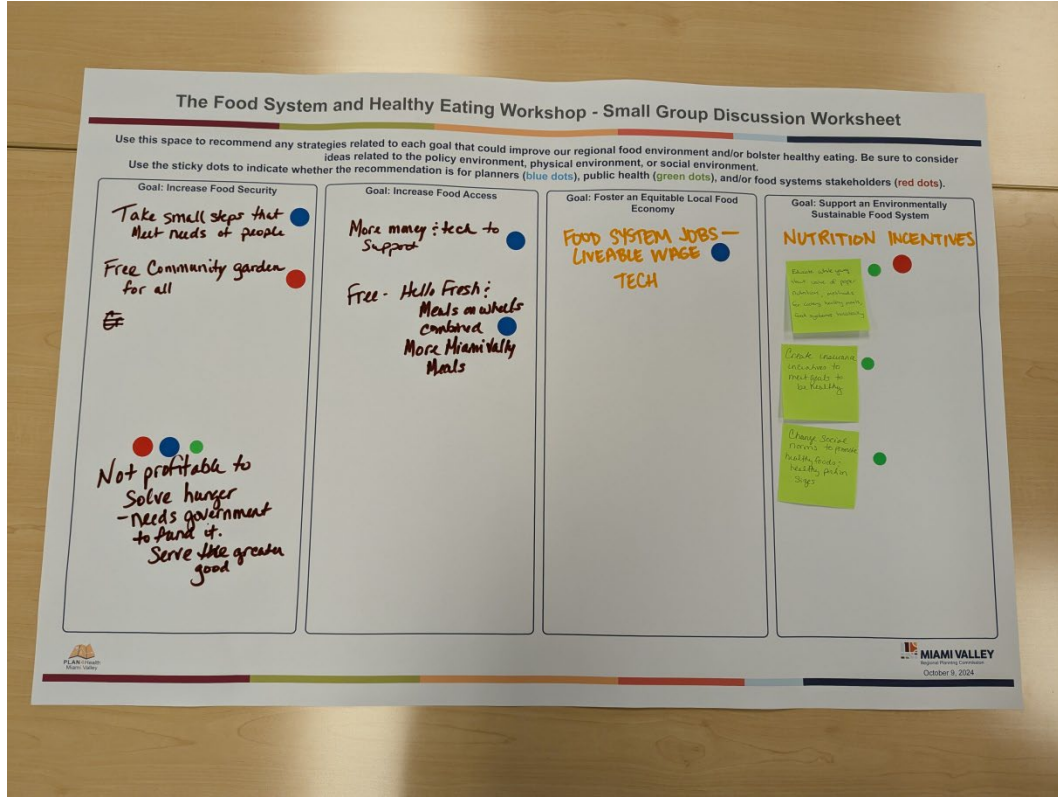
Working in small groups, participants were provided with a large worksheet that included four major themes to improve the regional food system and/or bolster healthy eating. The themes, which align with the Food Equity Coalition’s goals, were:

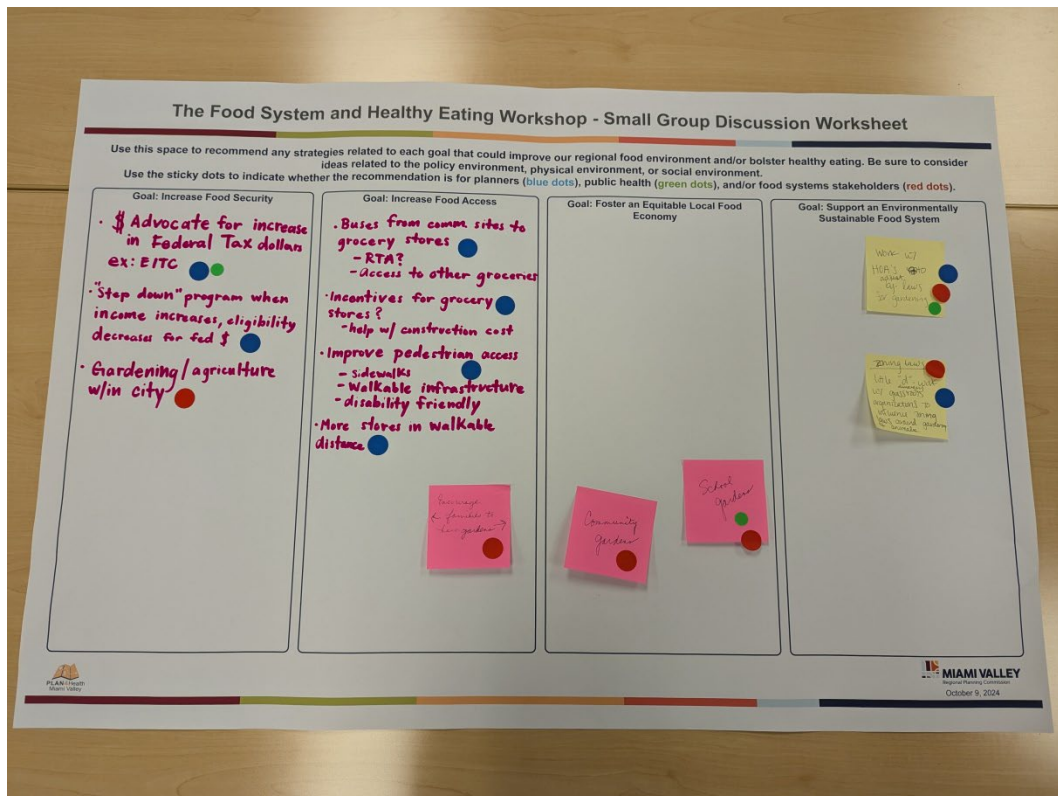
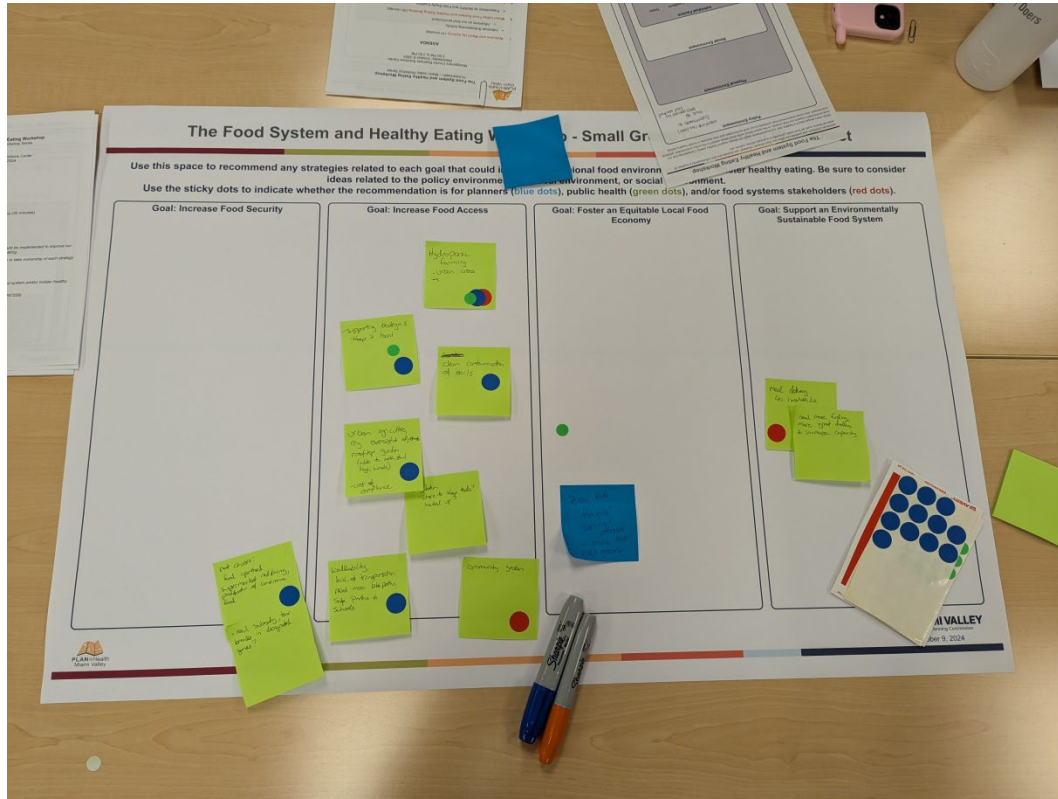
1. Increase food security
2. Increase food access
3. Foster an equitable local food economy
4. Support an environmentally sustainable food system

Participants were asked to identify strategies that could be implemented to address each topic area. Participants were encouraged to identify approaches that ranged from very practical items to moonshot ideas. Additionally, participants were asked to identify which group – planners, public health, or food systems stakeholders – should take ownership of the strategy. [Click here to view a copy of the worksheet.](#)

The following pictures feature the worksheets completed by each small group.







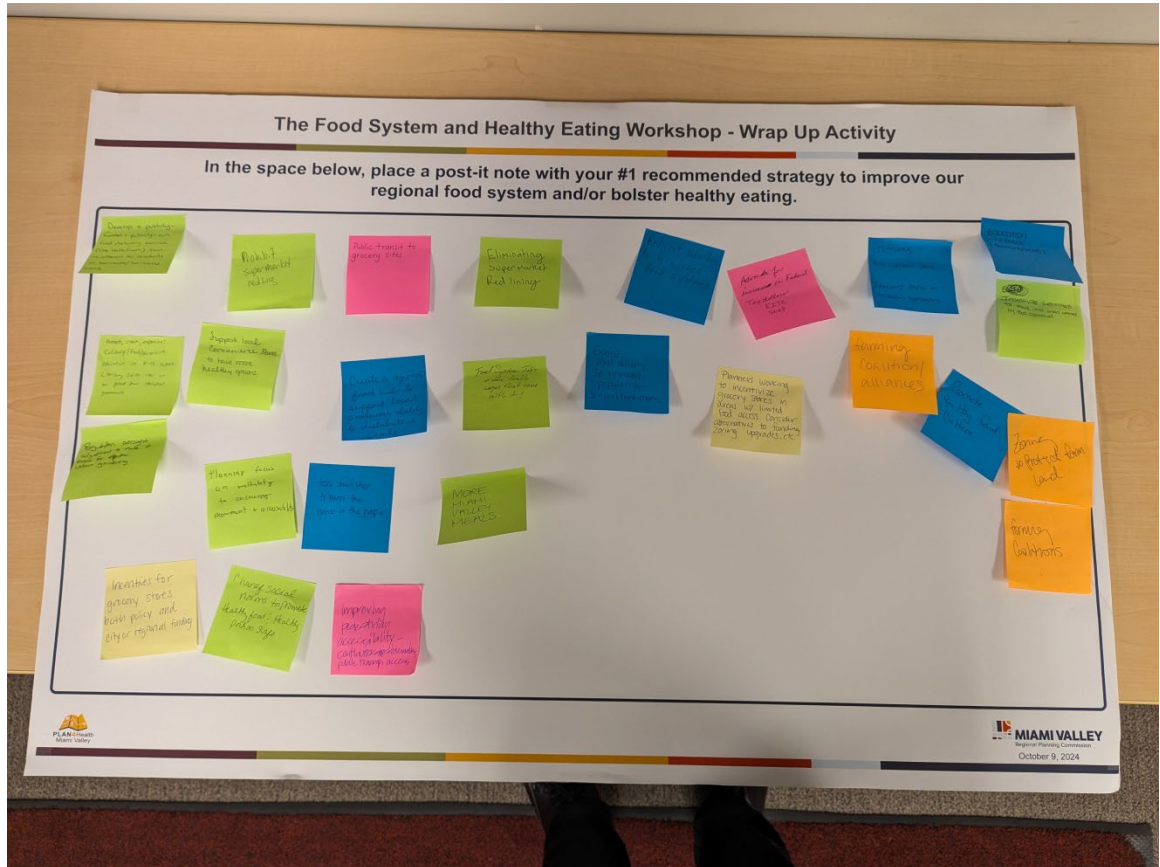
Strategies Identified by Participants

	Planner	Public Health	Food Systems
Increase Food Security			
Take small steps that meet the needs of people	x		
Free community garden for all			x
Not profitable to solve hunger - needs government to fund it to serve the greater good	x	x	x
Advocate for increases in Federal Tax dollars for food assistance	x	x	
"Step down" program when income increases, eligibility decreases for federal aid	x		
Gardening/agriculture within the city			x
Address root causes: food apartheid, supermarket redlining, proliferation of convenience food	x		
Provide subsidies or incentives in certain zones	x		
Uber/Door dash delivery from food bank			x
Increase opportunities for growers to sell direct			x
Culinary education in schools		x	x
Safe routes to food			x
Increase Food Access			
More money & tech to support	x		
Free Hello Fresh & Meals on Wheels Combined	x		
More Miami Valley Meals			
Buses from community sites to grocery stores	x		
Incentives for grocery stores (i.e. help with construction costs)	x		
Improve pedestrian access (sidewalks, walkable infrastructure, disability friendly)	x		
More stores in walkable distance	x		
Encourage families to have gardens			x
Hydroponic farming in urban areas	x	x	x
Support bodegas, keep it local	x	x	
Clean contaminated soils	x		
Urban agriculture, oversight adjustments for rooftop gardens	x		
Walkability, lack of transportation, more bike paths, safe routes	x		
Community gardens			x
More farmers markets	x	x	x
Food access map	x	x	x
Programs that increase access to transportation options to get to/from farmers markets		x	x

	Planner	Public Health	Food Systems
Food RX - prescribe vegetables and fruits		x	
Plant fruit trees + bushes in public parks	x	x	x
Food hubs for small grocers to sell at scale	x	x	x
Encourage home gardening		x	
Encourage community gardens		x	
Foster an Equitable Local Food Economy			
Food system jobs with living wages	x		
School gardens		x	x
Community gardens			x
"Easy path forward" zoning + process in areas that need grocers			
Promote healthy food culture	x	x	x
Program to subsidize costs to get groceries delivered to homes without transportation options	x		
Better zoning residential agriculture	x		
Better education of doctors to advocate for healthy diets		x	
Support an Environmentally Sustainable Food System			
Nutrition incentives			
Educate while young about value of proper nutrition, methods for cooking healthy meals, food systems holistically		x	x
Create insurance incentives to meet goals to be healthy		x	
Change social norms to promote healthy foods & healthy portion sizes		x	
Work with HOAs to adjust bylaws for gardening	x	x	x
Zoning laws - work to influence zoning laws around gardening and animals	x		x
More funding, more grant dollars to increase capacity			
Meal delivery to households			x
Redirect subsidies to localized food systems	x		
Teach culinary diversity		x	x
Create policy to allow access to unused land (i.e. vacant lots)	x		
Regulation of advertising of unhealthy foods, increase advertising of healthy foods	x		
Subsidize or make local, healthy farming more attractive	x		
Farming coalitions and alliances			x
Educating + encouraging benefits of buying local		x	
Protect farmland	x		
Host annual regional food summit			

IV. Wrap Up – Priority Strategies

To conclude the workshop, participants were asked to identify which strategy they thought should be prioritized to improve the region’s food system and/or to bolster healthy eating. Each participant was asked to write their preferred strategy on a post in note and place it poster.



Priority Strategies Identified by Participants

- Food education (awareness)
- Incentivize supermarkets to move into areas affected by food apartheid
- Zone to protect farmland
- Promote healthy food culture
- Forming coalitions
- Redirect subsidies to localized food system
- Planners working to incentivize grocery stores in areas with limited food access. Consider alternatives to funding, zoning upgrades, etc.
- Advocate for increases in Federal Tax dollars – EITC, SNAP

- Farming coalitions/alliances
- Protecting agricultural land
- Educating people on residential agriculture
- Expand meal delivering for vulnerable populations (seniors, new moms)
- Eliminate supermarket redlining
- Public transit to grocery sites
- Prohibit supermarket redlining
- Develop a publicly funded + publically run food delivery service (like Hello Fresh) that is offered to residents in low-income, low-access areas
- Promote, create, and emphasize culinary/food/nutrition education in K-12 schools. Life-long skills that can be passed down throughout generations
- Regulation oversight adjustments to make it easier for effective urban gardening
- More Miami Valley Meals
- Food system jobs + the livable wages that come with it
- Create a regional food hub to support local producers ability to distribute at scale
- Support local convenience stores to have more healthy options
- Take small steps to meet the needs of the people
- Improving pedestrian accessibility – sidewalks, public transportation, access
- Change social norms to promote healthy food; healthy portion sizes
- Planning focus on walkability to encourage movement and accessibility
- Incentives for grocery stores both policy and city or regional funding