

Mid-Atlantic Food Resilience and Access Coalition

Feed and be Fed

More than 15 million Americans have applied for unemployment insurance in recent weeks. Food insecurity continues to increase, leaving the Region, which already faces high rates of need, scrambling to serve those most vulnerable while facing unprecedented conditions and supply and distribution disruptions.

It is imperative we invest in the local food system now to keep farms and food businesses viable for the long-term, and to mitigate disruptions to labor and supply chains, which are increasingly vital as this pandemic quarantine continues across the Nation.

The Mid-Atlantic Food Resilience and Access Coalition is a diverse group of more than 25 partners across the Mid-Atlantic region coming together to keep communities fed, farmers harvesting, and local businesses operating. We are mobilizing farmers, schools, food hubs, food banks, commercial kitchens, rideshare services, food service workers and more to form a supply chain that brings nutrient-dense, locally sourced food to those in need while simultaneously keeping those people involved in the supply chain meaningfully employed.

The health of the food economy is tightly bound to food access in countless ways. An unprecedented number of food economy workers find themselves unemployed and suddenly reliant on food assistance. MAFRAC leverages the problem — newly unemployed people who will soon require public assistance — to solve the problem.

Growing, processing, and distributing food locally for this crisis response not only makes for a more resilient and self-sufficient supply chain, it provides employment and economic support to the Region.

The common vision among the MAFRAC partners is to build an equitable and resilient food system in the Mid-Atlantic that can withstand this crisis — and future crises — to insulate our communities from greater disruption, scaling up as the need grows.

MAFRAC is well-positioned to swiftly tackle the immediate food crisis by utilizing existing assets and infrastructure and long-standing partnerships in and among good food actors.

Mission: Feed and be Fed.

Goal: Consolidate local food, transportation, labor, and monetary resources to ensure the continuous and efficient flow of necessary food resources to a wide range of stakeholders throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Priorities:

1. Meet emergency food needs in the Mid-Atlantic Region and support the local food economy from farmers to processors to drivers to food service workers.
2. Efficient and cost effective balanced by the need to bolster and utilize local businesses and labor in a way to minimize disruption of jobs and income across the Region.

Created: Operations Team consists of food entrepreneurs, farmers, and non-profit leaders.

Developed: Online intake forms and database to track requests and resources.

Identified: software and platforms to facilitate the entire process.

Identified: warehouse space available to accommodate operations as they grow.

Onboarding: Program managers.

In the process of standing up MAFRAC, we're already feeding people. We connected Fresh Farm Market with Neighborhood Restaurant Group to leverage some of their 800 furloughed employees to pack food for 750 families. We're talking with Nationals Philanthropies and World Central Kitchen to distribute 50,000 meals daily. We've delivered 2,765 meals in local communities and we've raised nearly \$300,000.

We know the need is growing throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region. *We know* the food is available. *We know* there are thousands of furloughed employees in the restaurant industry hungry to get back to work in order to provide for their own families.



Either we do nothing, and imperil the local food economy, put farmers, processors and restaurants out of work, or we use the local food economy to address the food access problem, and thereby shore up the regional food system and diminish the number of people who rely on public assistance to be fed.

They're ready to feed and be fed—are you ready to be part of the solution?