



COVID-19 FOOD RESPONSE AND POLICY INVENTORY

Overview

Keeping people fed with nourishing food is critical to public health, and now even more so. It takes a multi-level response from every angle of society to respond.

In speaking with CPH's vast network of food systems stakeholders, it became apparent there is an urgent need for a consolidated source of information to monitor the food system's responses and actions taken around COVID-19. We created a multi-tab, living Food Response and Policy Inventory in response. The document will serve as a historical record of food systems responses, helping us move into the recovery phase, and prepare in the future.

Helping vulnerable populations, providing support to the food industry workforce, and supporting and protecting every link of the vast supply chain is a way to ensure the health of both businesses and the population. We hope that seeing the breadth of response will inspire others to take action within their own organization.

This tool also includes a policy tab, highlighting federal, state, and local policies, regulatory actions, and waivers directly impacting food access.

All information is compiled from publicly available sources, including organizations' websites, food systems media blasts, trade association press releases, government websites, and official company social media accounts.

[Click here](#) to submit inquiries or updates, or email co-creators Athena Rae Roesler aroesler@milkeninstitute.org and Niyeti Shah nshah@milkeninstitute.org.

FAQs

Why did you create the Food Response Inventory?

We recognized the urgent need for a consolidated source of information to monitor the food system's responses and actions taken around COVID-19.

Who is included in the inventory?

The inventory includes individual tabs for each of the following food system stakeholder groups: nonprofits, retailers, and restaurants. Given the overwhelming response from the food system to COVID-19, we've also included an "other industry" tab to reflect a diverse group of additional for-profit companies that touch the food system.

This tool also includes a policy tab, highlighting federal, state, and local policies, regulatory actions, and waivers directly impacting food access.

How did you decide who to include in the inventory?

To be included as a nonprofit, retailer, or restaurant, the organization must operate in at least three states or serve one of the ten most populous metro areas in the US and affect food access – either directly or through donations – or provide support for essential workers. There are several other tab specific inclusion criteria detailed within the inventory.

Who is the intended audience for the data in the inventory?

Food System stakeholders including nonprofits, retailers, restaurants, academics, policy makers, trade associations, distributors, and other industry stakeholders.

Why should the general public care about how the food system is responding to COVID-19?

The COVID-19 Food Response and Policy Inventory was designed for food systems stakeholders to better understand the opportunities, needs, and how to best collaborate on nourishing responses to the pandemic. Since every consumer plays an important role in our vast food system, all can benefit from the tool.

The food system encompasses all the stages of keeping us fed: how we produce, collect, store, transport, transform, ensure access to, and dispose of foods. Changing one seemingly small part of the system affects the others. Americans are getting a crash course in this while watching milk be discarded by the ton with the disappearance of commercial demand and meat packaging plants shutter as line workers test positive for COVID-19.

Now more than ever, every consumer plays a crucial role in deciding the future of our food system. We are at a pivotal moment with the collective opportunity to create most nourishing, sustainable food system.

Is the inventory regularly updated?

This inventory is a living document, updated on Tuesday and Thursday each week on the Milken Institute website. We welcome updates from food systems stakeholders addressing COVID-19 through this online form.

What are the benefits of the inventory?

It provides an objective overview of the actions and responses being taken by food systems stakeholders and allows for organizations to understand the opportunities, needs, and how to best collaborate on responses to COVID-19.

The inventory also creates an historic record of food systems responses, helping us move into the recovery phase to help identify how we can help vulnerable populations move to the new normal, and prepare for additional response needs in the future.

What's next for this data?

The value of the inventory only increases over time and will provide a historical record to be used in examining the future of our food system, importance of public-private partnership, and food systems policy.

We hope that seeing the breadth of responses will inspire others to take action within their own organizations and potentially increase coordinated partnerships.

For additional information about the Inventory, please contact co-creators Athena Rae Roesler aroesler@milkeninstitute.org and Niyeti Shah nshah@milkeninstitute.org