

Right to Food Narrative Framework

Advancing the Right to Food in Law and Policy

Goals

The right to food is legally enforceable at local, state, and federal levels

Corporations and governments take responsibility for harm they cause to our health, communities, and the planet

Laws, policies, and practice support coordinated action and accountability to advance the right to food at local, state, and federal levels

Obstacles

A lack of political will to ratify international laws and enact state-level legislation that would protect people and the planet

The economic system in the United States (and globally) creates uncertainty and fragility by incentivizing low wages, cheap food, and industrial-scale overproduction

Governments subsidize and protect extractive, industrialized systems

Chronic underfunding and government regulations undermine small-scale food and farming programs that prioritize people and planet over profit

Funding initiatives pit efforts to build community-centered food systems against other efforts aimed at creating equitable futures

Solutions

Human right to food codified in state constitutions

International laws protecting the right to food ratified by the U.S. Congress

Racial, gender, housing, and health equity in food and nutrition policies

Wages and financial assistance that keep pace with the cost of living

Right-scale approaches for independent businesses and farmers to participate in vibrant local food economies

Strong accountability measures at local, state, and federal levels

Integrated laws and policies to end hunger, promote local food economies, support food and farm workers, address inequities, and mitigate the effects of climate change

Right to Food Narrative Framework

Advancing the Right to Food in Practice

Goals

Everyone has the means to secure, prepare, and consume nutritious and culturally valued food

Everyone has access to land and waterways, and means for food production (growing, raising, harvesting, catching) and distribution

Communities most affected by food injustice lead, shape, and drive proposed policy and initiatives that meet their needs

The food system is part of the solution in addressing climate change, not part of the problem

Obstacles

High prices, low quality, and limited availability prevent access to nutritious food, especially in low-income communities where competing expenses like healthcare, housing, and transportation create additional barriers

Benefits, like SNAP and WIC, are often insufficient to meet people's nutritional, cultural, and social food needs

The lack of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change leaves farmers, fishers, food producers, and communities vulnerable to escalating climate disasters

Systemic racism disproportionately restricts access to resources, land, and opportunities for communities of color

Solutions

Fair labor and employment practices that support and protect food system workers and small-scale food businesses

Effective right to food coalitions at local, state, and regional levels

Community participation built into institutional budgetary guidelines

Resources and support for community advocacy and campaigns

Inclusive decision making processes for food system design and operation

Leadership of color in state and regional food security efforts

Participatory, transdisciplinary, community-led research

Regenerative and agroecological practices that support healthy soils, communities, and local economies

Right to Food Narrative Framework

Advancing the Right to Food in Public Discourse

Goals

Food is universally understood as a right

Food is considered a cultural connector, public good, and main component of a transformed society that prioritizes equity, compassion, and sustainability

Health and well being are understood as interdependent with the right to food

Obstacles

False narratives are perpetuated by large-scale industry, politicians, and media that solidify harmful approaches to food access, maintain industrial production of food, and perpetuate individual-oriented cultural norms

Solutions

Narratives that promote rights and solidarity as solutions to hunger, rather than short term emergency aid.

Human rights integrated in civic education in schools, universities, and the community

Integration of the right to food in advocacy coalitions working across issues and sectors