

The EFSNE project engages more than 40 individuals at multiple universities, non-profits and government agencies, including:

- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Delaware State University
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
- Penn State University
- Tufts University
- University of Vermont
- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- USDA Economic Research Service
- West Virginia State University

EFSNE also engages a national advisory committee. For a complete list of project team members, visit the project website: [agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security](http://agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security)

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## Enhancing Food Security in the Northeast through Regional Food Systems



*EFSNE is a USDA-funded Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) project that seeks to determine whether greater reliance on regionally*

*produced food could improve food access*

*in low-income communities, while*

*also benefiting farmers, food*

*supply chain firms and others in*

*the food system. This systems*

*project engages the entire food*

*chain and much more. As*

*an integrated project,*

*it includes research,*

*outreach and education.*



*An initiative of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development*



## Over 7 million Northeast citizens are food insecure.

Low-income communities are also disproportionately affected by lack of access to healthy, affordable foods. Families in those communities face many barriers to achieving food security. Challenges to food security for everyone in the region also come from climate change, farmland loss, and sourcing most of our food from outside the region.

### EFSNE, a five-year project, began in 2011.

The project focuses on low-income community sites within nine locations



The research focal point is a full-diet market basket of eight foods that are or can be produced or

Northeast, defined as 12 states from Maine to West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Teams work with one or two grocery stores in each site.

processed in the Northeast states in significant quantities. These are milk, bread, ground beef, potatoes, apples, cabbage, canned peaches and frozen broccoli.

**Learn more about the project and sign up to receive our quarterly email newsletter at:**

**[agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security](http://agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security)**

The EFSNE project is an initiative of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development. The Center's mission is to enhance the capacity of land-grant universities to foster regional prosperity and rural development. Learn more about the Northeast Center at:

**[nercrd.psu.edu](http://nercrd.psu.edu)**

## Researchers from 16 different disciplines at 11 universities, nonprofits and agencies are pursuing biological, economic, and sociological research.

The **Consumption Team** assesses current and potential community level constraints and opportunities for improving access to regionally produced and healthy food for people in the community sites.

The **Distribution Team's** task is to identify and assess food supply chain practices in low-income areas of the Northeast, construct regional models of market basket items, and identify policy interventions.

### Outreach & Education

The **Outreach Team** disseminates project research knowledge to policymakers and other stakeholders, and engages community members and other interested parties in the project.

### Project collaborations have generated cross-disciplinary lessons, insights and novel applications of existing methods.

The entire project team of faculty, educators, advisors, practitioners and students has already gained a greater understanding of how other scientific disciplines operate and how scientific research differs from applied outreach in a project that is doing both. Team members well anchored in their study sites have provided insights to others

The **Production Team** is quantifying the current and potential future capacity of the urban and rural Northeast to produce the foods in the market basket.

The **Scenarios and Modeling Team** guides and integrates the models being developed to provide a coherent, trans-disciplinary analysis of the potential for a regional food system to enhance food security in the Northeast of the entire population including its low-income residents.

The **Education Team** is preparing students at Delaware State, Penn State, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Tufts Universities with skills to research and develop sustainable food systems.

developing stakeholder relations in new project communities. Team member learning and awareness-building ranges widely, from how to conduct meaningful focus groups, to how to develop and use sophisticated mathematical and statistical models. We have indeed become our own project learning community.