

CCFAN Community **Focus Group** -Interview Guide

All participants will arrive and be handed (or it will be displayed in the room) Food Access Diagram and Definitions. Participants will have already completed the community survey before arrival or will be given time to complete it.

Introduction

Carroll County Food Access Network ([CCFAN](#)) is a resource to optimize access to affordable, nutritious, food for all people with efforts focused on supporting the local food system in Carroll County, New Hampshire. In collaboration with [UNH Extension](#), CCFAN received a grant through [Well Connected Communities](#) to complete a needs assessment to learn more about access to food, including local food. From this information we will create action steps to increase and improve access to healthy, affordable food in Carroll County.

If you have questions about the Carroll County Food Access Network Needs Assessment please contact Joy Gagnon at joy.gagnon@unh.edu or Lora Colten at lora.colten@unh.edu (Post contact info in the room). For participating in this focus group, you will receive a \$50 gift card that we will give to you at the end of the session.

*Your participation is completely voluntary, and we thank you for helping us with this important effort. This is a consent form for you to review and sign if you agree to allow CCFAN to use your responses to help us better understand Carroll County's food resources and household food usage? **Give participants the consent form and give them a moment to review and give permission.***

Direct participants to review the Food Access Diagram and Definitions. and allow about 5 minutes for discussion or questions.

We want to have a conversation with you today on food access in Carroll County. _____ will be taking notes and helping me out. We will be following up with some stakeholder interviews to gather additional information, including information about the dynamics of the Carroll County food network.

Introductory Question:

- 1. Local food – how important is it to you? Are there benefits to buying local?**
 - Taste, freshness, strengthening local economy/jobs, environmental, less resources

- 2. Are you aware of incentive programs such as SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks, Granite State Market Match, Food For All, WIC?**
 - What works well and doesn't work well
 - Can we think of some ways to improve the incentive programs?

Local Foods

We would like to have local food more accessible to everyone in Carroll County.

Show participants white board and SWOT model we will use.

We will use the SWOT model here, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. When we are answering the questions, we will try to consider each piece of the SWOT model. Write questions on white paper to hang around the room during the discussion to write responses on as we go.

3. There are many ways of getting local food, including some grocery stores, community gardens, farmers' markets, and CSAs. Can anyone share thoughts on these options?

- Are you aware that some **stores, businesses, schools, and food pantries** serve locally grown foods?
 - Why would you choose (or not choose) to buy local food?
- Do you participate in a **community garden**?
 - If yes: what do you like about it? What if anything makes it difficult?
 - If No: would you like to? What makes it difficult for you to use a community garden?
- Do you shop at a **Farmer's Market**?
 - If yes: what do you like about it? What if anything makes it difficult? (probe: location, hours, seasonality, costs)
 - If no: tell us more about why
- Do you or have you ever used a **CSA**?
 - What do you like about it? What limits if any are there for using one?
 - Do you know that you can use SNAP benefits to purchase a CSA or shop at a local Farmers Market?

Finding Solutions

4. Are there any challenges to accessing the food you want to eat? If you have dietary restrictions, can you find what you need?

If needed, prompts could be: location, price, time, transportation, knowledge

5. What would make it easier for you and your family to access the food you want to eat?

If needed, prompts could be:

- Increase the number of **food retailers**?
 - Increase double up food bucks locations
- **Increase fresh choices** where foods are sold?
 - Incentivize stores (dollar stores, corner stores, etc.) to stock certain amounts of fresh/healthy foods
- Improve **transportation** to healthy food outlets?
 - How far are you willing to travel for food?
 - Is transportation an issue? Car, bike, walk, ride share
 - increasing public transportation routes with stores and pantries

- Are the places you go to get food close enough to go as often as you want?
- Encourage residents to choose healthy foods through **education**?
 - nutrition or cooking classes – adult and youth
- What are other ways?
 - funding the food pantry and emergency food distribution network
 - supporting a network of community gardens in city park spaces

- **Open Discussion**
 - What are we missing?
 - What other ideas do you have?

- **Wrap Up**
 - End the discussion by summarizing the main themes.
 - Invite participants to reflect on the main ideas and confirm if this was what they heard as well.
 - Thank the group for participating.