



Farm to Plate Network: Guiding Principles

Farm to Plate is Vermont's food system plan being implemented statewide by the 350+ member organizations of the Farm to Plate Network. The Network creates the space for strategic conversations and action across multiple audiences and perspectives to collectively implement the three legislative outcomes and 15 Strategic Goals of Vermont's Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan 2021-2030.

Our Guiding Principles as a Network are:

- **We believe in the power of collaborative interdependence** - We acknowledge that collective impact comes from collaborative and interdependent action that has greater impact than any one organization can achieve alone. We acknowledge our limitations and knowledge gaps within the Network, and look to collaborate and consult others for support and expertise.
- **We are brave, bold, and compassionate** – we encourage others and ourselves to act with courage, and not limit what we think is possible together because we are afraid to fail. Failure is the “first attempt in learning.”
- **We embrace continuous learning, and encourage creativity, innovation, and openness to different forms of knowledge and experiences** – We actively seek out new ideas and ways of working together. We are willing to embrace, and be receptive to, new ways of thinking, and encourage this by providing members the opportunity to practice with and learn from people with a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds within the food system. We acknowledge we do not always agree, tension exists, and that is a part of healthy shared growth.
- **We cultivate equity through transparency, inclusiveness, power and resource sharing, and mutual accountability** – Transparency is essential to building trust, creating access to resources and opportunities, and being accountable to others. We work to understand unique cultural nuances, and center our work in the reality experienced by eaters, farmers/producers, and workers in the food system. We actively work to decolonize Network spaces by not holding members of communities of color as sole representatives of those communities, distributing power and resources, and actively seeking guidance.
- **We think systemically, embrace complexity, and value intentional and reflective analysis** - We examine the root causes of issues affecting the food system. We



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recognize that systems are dynamic, complex, and require us to be nimble but mindful of the unintended impacts of our decisions. We recognize that analysis and system level understanding comes through quantitative and qualitative data and the lived experiences of people involved in the system.

- **We are committed to providing welcoming spaces and ensuring that all Network members can fully participate** - To ensure all Network members are able to fully participate, discrimination, bullying or harassment of any kind and/or based on race, color, religion, gender identity, and sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability is prohibited within the Network. Instances of the above should be shared as soon as possible with Farm to Plate staff.