

#15: LOCAL FOOD

OPTIONAL METRIC FOR CATEGORY A & B & C COMMUNITIES

Bold, green font indicates metrics that must improve to be recognized at Step 5

METRICS

- 15.1 **Number of local food venues** (# of venues)
- 15.2 Percent of housing within 1 mile of a local food venue (%)
- 15.3 Percent of housing within 1 mile of fresh fruits and vegetables (%)

METRIC DEFINITION

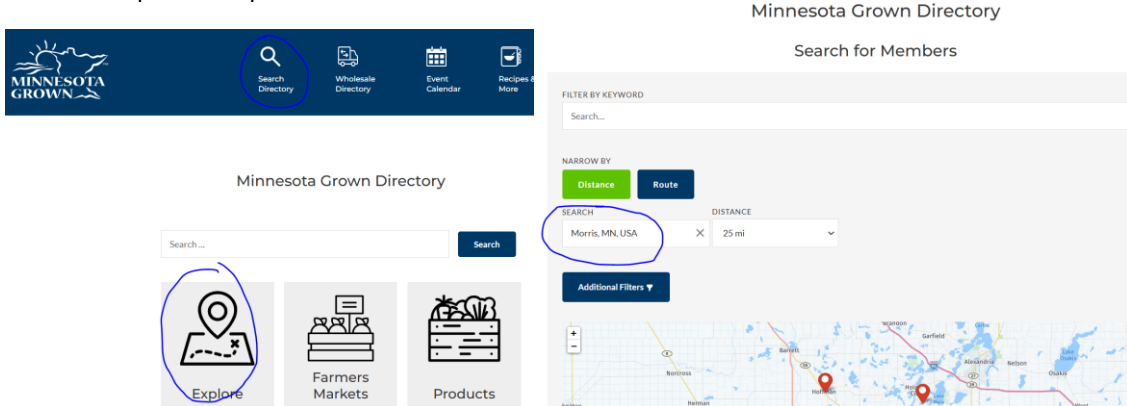
- **Local food venues include:** farmer's markets; community gardens; CSA (community-supported agriculture) drop-sites; institutions focused on serving local food; grocery stores (especially food cooperatives) selling local foods; restaurants serving local food. (Metrics 15.1 and 15.2)
- **Local food is a broad term** with multiple attributes, defined differently in different communities. Attributes typically include one or more of: sourced within Minnesota or a region of MN; fresh; healthy; indigenous, produced using more ecologically sustainable practices. Sustainable can include raised organically or using IPM (integrated pest management), humanely raised animals, fairly compensated farm workers. (Metrics 15.1 and 15.2)
- **Local food venues typically have some standards.** Often farmer's markets will accept vendors with food grown within Minnesota, or perhaps the Upper Midwest, but not food from Arizona, or Argentina. (Metrics 15.1 and 15.2)
- **In counting local food venues** communities should settle on a rough definition that fits the community culture and sense of what is local and healthy food. (Metrics 15.1 and 15.2)
- **Institutions and restaurants serving, and stores selling** local food is a judgement call. An elementary school or restaurant that routinely buys Minnesota fruits and vegetables for cooking/serving should be included, just as a grocery that always buys Minnesota foods in season would be included. But a community may use a different/stricter threshold that might include minimum procurement percentage requirements at hospitals, prisons, colleges and other institutions. (Metrics 15.1 and 15.2)
- **Housing** includes residential dwelling units that are within one mile of one or more local food venues. (Metrics 15.2 and 15.3)
- **Stores selling fresh fruits and vegetables** have a NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) code of 445110 (supermarket/other grocery) or 445230 (fruit/vegetable market). (Metric 15.3)
- **Alternative metrics:** if you have been gathering slightly different metrics, report those and explain in the notes section of the GreenStep reporting survey form how they differ from these GreenStep metrics.

DATA SOURCES

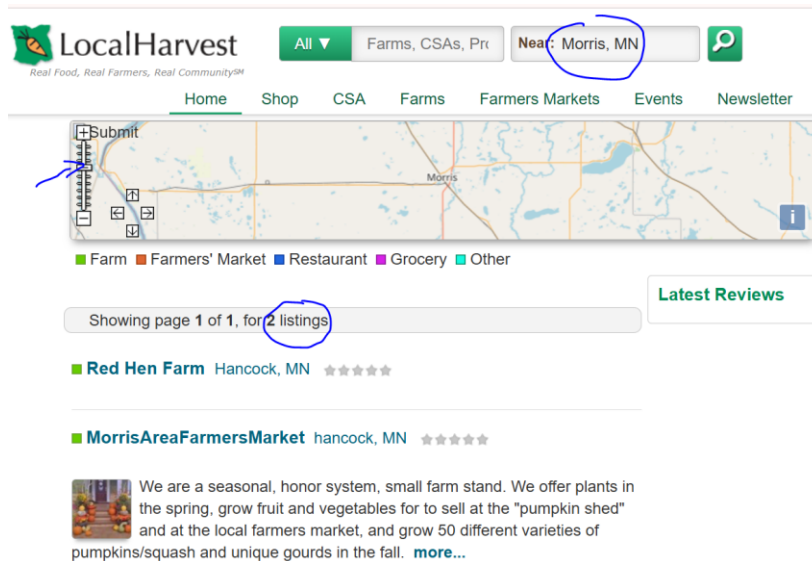
- Local licenses, records, and common knowledge of city staff; local chamber of commerce (Metric 15.1)
- **Minnesota Grown** (Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture) – search the directory at <https://minnesotagrown.com/member/> (for farmers markets, CSAs, and pick-your-own) (Metric 15.1)
 - Click on “Search Director” at the top, if needed

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- Select the “Explore” button
- Use the Search tool to search for your community
- Zoom in the map further to get closer to your specific area
- Count up the total pins



- <http://www.localharvest.org> (for farms, farmers markets, restaurants, groceries, CSAs) (Metric 15.1)
 - Search your community at the top
 - Zoom the map in a time or two to get closer to your area
 - See the total options listed below



- GIS maps and/or plat maps and census tract data (Metrics 15.2 and 15.3)
- The USDA Food Access Research Atlas at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas> has compiled data regarding access to grocery stores by census tract for the entire United States. (Metric 15.3)

METRIC CALCULATION AND PUBLIC REPORTING

- **Annual measurement and reporting** for these metrics is based upon the cumulative numbers as of December 31st before the reporting year. ([Metrics 15.1-15.3](#))
- **The number of local food venues will be normalized** and reported on the GreenStep web site as number of venues per 1000 population. ([Metric 15.1](#))
- **Using a mapping (GIS) system**, map zones within which street walking (or, as the crow flies) is within one mile of one or more local food venues. Then calculate the number of residential dwelling units within the zones. Finally compare the total number of units in all zones to total housing units in the city and express the ratio as a percent. ([Metric 15.2](#))
- **For smaller communities**, dwelling units in census tracts within a mile of one or more local food venue can provide rough estimations. Or estimation from a plat map may work fine. ([Metric 15.2](#))
- **Counting groceries selling fresh fruit and vegetables** provides a more limited view of local food access, and is easy to do in a small/medium size community. For a larger community it can be done using the two NAICS codes and web data from the U.S. Census. ([Metric 15.3](#))

METRIC RATIONALE

The benefits of greater community access to and consumption of local foods include increased food security for residents, more healthful food and improved human health, enhanced soil and water quality, reductions in energy use and CO₂ emissions (in general), improved wildlife habitat, enhanced community livability and vitality, creation of green jobs, and stronger local economies.

Depending on what's included as a local food – fresh fruits and vegetables is one partial, limited definition used in one GreenStep metric - the evidence base for these benefits ranges from very strong to somewhat weak. (See studies and reports under the Local Foods Best Practice at [BPA 27.3](#)) On the strong side, for example, for Minnesota farmers markets, of each \$100 spent by community members, \$62 stays in the local economy and \$99 stays in Minnesota's economy.

The 1-mile accessibility threshold comes from work in 2007 by Design for Health (<http://designforhealth.net/food-access>), a collaboration between the University of Minnesota and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota that serves to bridge the gap between the emerging research base on community design and healthy living with the every-day realities of local/tribal government planning. Walking/biking/busing within one mile of healthy foods is a key issue, particularly for people without cars and people of limited means.

Local food is like local beer, walking, biking and outdoor dining: important to attracting and retaining a mix of residents – especially younger residents - in most any community in Minnesota. Thus annual measurement to track improvement in the metric is important to many communities.

STEP 5 METRICS

There are no state-wide goals for these metrics nor any guidance useful at this point in time for all communities in Minnesota. Therefore individual communities are best equipped to set realistic goals for metric improvement, and any improvement in the metrics – higher numbers, higher percentages – is desirable.

LEED FOR CITIES & COMMUNITIES

<https://www.usgbc.org/leed/rating-systems/leed-for-cities-communities>

QL Prerequisite: Demographic & Social Equity Assessment

- Conduct a demographic and social equity assessment for the city that addresses the following categories:
 - Demographic and socio-economic characteristics: Age cohorts; race/ethnic composition; other prominent sociocultural groups present, such as migrants, religious groups, and linguistically isolated; people with disabilities, median household income and proportion of residents living below poverty line; education attainment (people with less than high school education).
 - History of housing and neighborhood development: Brief history of development noting critical points of change for the overall city or specific neighborhoods; housing market analysis; information on unhoused population.
 - Distribution of social infrastructure, assets, and services: Parks, libraries, recreation centers, schools, fire stations, police stations, hospitals/health services, internet (broadband) connectivity, and supermarket/grocery stores with a produce section.
- Provide a series of maps (or interactive layers) showing distribution of social infrastructure, assets, and services. Address disparities in distribution and access as well as concentrations of issues of concern. Explain how these findings will be used in future planning and decision-making.

QL Credit: Public Health

- Option 2. Policies for better public health
 - Demonstrate adoption of any two of the following policies, and programs to improve public health:
 - Affordable food access and nutrition in underserved areas, and low-income neighborhoods
 - Community health improvement plan: Include policies, strategies, and interventions to address health issues and deliver better health services; and identify roles and responsibilities for community stakeholders other than the local health department and health care providers.
 - Provision of medical and/or mental health services in underserved areas, low-income neighborhoods, and broader community.
 - 100% smoking free public spaces.
 - Restrictions on marketing sugary drinks and/or unhealthy foods.
 - Healthy public food procurement policy which includes all food procured by the city and served at the city run institutions and events.

RELATED BEST PRACTICE ACTIONS

- [27.3](#) Create, assist with and promote local food production/distribution within the city:
 - a. A farmer's market or co-op buying club.
 - b. An urban agriculture business or a community-supported agriculture (CSA) arrangement between farmers and community members/employees.
 - c. A community or school garden, orchard or forest.
- [27.4](#) Measurably increase institutional buying and sales of foods and fibers that are local, Minnesota-grown, organic, healthy, humanely raised, and grown by fairly compensated growers.
- [27.5](#) Assess, plan for, and enhance the community's local food system.

Minnesota GreenStep Cities & Tribal Nations
Performance Metrics for Recognition at Steps 4 and 5

[NEED HELP? CONTACT](#)

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