

The Food System

A food system is everything from the field to the fork and back again. There are many important steps along the way that you may never see, such as the manufacturing and application of farm inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds), the processing and packaging of food products, and the management of wastes. The food system also includes both the human actors and environmental resources needed to fuel it. A truly viable and sustainable food system encompasses the goals of social equity and human health, economic vitality, and environmental health.

A sustainable food system exists when production, processing, distribution, access, consumption, and waste management are integrated and these practices improve or maintain natural resources, are just and accessible, and support the resilience of local communities and economies.

