



# FY 2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

**January 2020 Update**

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# Part 1: Guiding Ideas

## Mission

To mobilize the power of New England institutions to transform our food system.

## Vision

Preamble: FINE's vision is in alignment with those of many other food system entities, including the [New England Food Vision](#) created by Food Solutions New England. The vision we hold places emphasis on both the way that institutions and the farm to institution network will be operating, and the cultural conditions we see existing by 2030.

By 2030, we envision New England institutions and the FINE network playing leadership roles in cultivating a region that is moving towards self-reliance. We envision an equitable and just food system that provides access to healthy and abundant food for all New Englanders, and is defined by sustainable and productive land and ocean ecosystems.

## Role

In alignment with our values, mission, and vision, FINE works in three primary ways. We: 1) serve as the backbone for the farm to institution network in New England, 2) catalyze collaborative projects that address key barriers in the New England institutional supply chain, and 3) advance a policy and programmatic agenda.

## Core Values

Preamble: FINE's values have been developed to reflect our collective aspirations and guide us in carrying out our mission to transform the food system. These values reinforce each other and are not to be viewed in isolation. Together they reflect the need for whole systems thinking to understand and integrate the complex connections of the people, programs, and policies related to the food system. They aim to create a high level of accountability, trust, and identity, both internally within the network and externally to our stakeholders and the broader public. Our values guide our behavior and articulate what we think is important. We commit to being intentional and aware about how our work reflects these values.

We value:

**Collaboration:** Networks of diverse actors working together with a spirit of trust and generosity toward shared goals.

**Community & Place:** Place-based multi-state approaches that build on the unique geographic identity and history of our New England communities and region to promote relationships and foster productive change.

**Diversity:** All dimensions of diversity, which include (but are not limited to) age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ancestry, gender identity, race, physical abilities, marital status, military experience, religious beliefs, economic class, geography, education, parental status, and/or work experience. These inform a wide range of opinions, traditions, approaches, backgrounds, communities, and ways of knowing.

**Equity:** Fair and just access to resources and opportunities for all within the food system and beyond, regardless of any dimension of diversity.

**Healthy Ecosystems:** The integrity and biodiversity of natural systems. From recycling nutrients to promoting healthy fish stocks, crop diversity, soil and water quality, energy conservation, and resilience in the face of changing climates, we recognize that the wellbeing of people and planet are inextricably linked.

**Strategic Disruption:** Actions that directly challenge elements of the food system that run counter to our values.

**The Right to Food:** The belief that everyone deserves access to nutritious, affordable, sustainably produced, culturally appropriate food.

**Thriving Local Economies:** Economies that cultivate socially equitable, financially viable, and environmentally healthy food systems and ensure that economic power resides locally to the greatest extent possible. This includes ensuring decent and dignified livelihoods for farmers, community-based fishermen, and all supply chain workers.

**Transparency:** Open access to information that has the potential to create positive change in the food system, and a commitment to honesty regarding goals and purpose when working in collaboration.

# Part 2: Goals, Indicators, & Targets

Following are the FINE goals for our work, indicators of success, and strategies that we will follow over the next three years (fiscal years 2020-2022). They are built on the foundation of our enduring values, vision, mission, and role.

## Definitions of key terms for this document

Farm to Institution: The infrastructure, processes, supply chain relationships, and policies that enable food to travel from producers to institutional consumers within the region.

Stakeholder: A person with some relationship to the institutional food system, including institutions, distributors, food service operators, food system organizations, and producers, including all members of the FINE network.

FINE Network: People who are connected to FINE via projects, events, committees, or communication platforms.

Institution: Any organized entity that creates a demand for food and serves food to a defined population. FINE's programs target K-12 schools, colleges, hospitals, and correctional facilities.

Local food: At this time, FINE does not have a single definition of "local food." FINE recognizes that many of the New England states and partner organizations have their own definitions of "local food," as does the USDA.

Regional food: FINE defines "regional food" as food grown, raised, or harvested within the six New England states plus a 50 mile buffer.

Sustainable: A means of production that promotes the long-term viability of natural or social systems and is reflective of FINE's values.

Food: Any item that is a form of sustenance. FINE's priority is to increase the proportion of foods consumed that meet healthy diet standards and are culturally appropriate.

Community of Practice: A temporary cohort of practitioners and partners with expertise in a given topic who gather to share information related to that topic. In some cases, these COPs generate cooperative solutions to common challenges.

Region: FINE's region is New England. We recognize that for states that border states or provinces outside New England, their definition of region may include those border states or regions.

## Summary

**Goal 1:** More regional food served at institutions

**Goal 2:** A more developed and diverse regional network of individuals and entities across all parts of the food system who mobilize the power of institutions to transform the food system

**Goal 3:** Stakeholders have knowledge, tools, and resources for advancing farm to institution in New England

**Goal 4:** Stronger state and federal policies that support farm to institution

**Goal 5:** A robust and sustainable organizational foundation that supports FINE’s mission driven work

## **Goal 1: More regional food served at institutions**

### **Indicators of Success**

- 1. More regional food purchasing expenditures\*:**
  - a. 5% average increase in regional food purchases across surveyed schools, campuses, and health care facilities between 2020 and 2023 (as measured by FINE’s metrics initiative)\*
  - b. Establish baseline measurement of regional procurement at correctional facilities in New England
- 2. More environmentally sustainable, fair, and humane food purchasing expenditures:**
  - a. Baseline measurement of sustainable, fair, and humane purchasing expenditures by 2023 as defined by standard setting organizations such as Real Food Generation, Center for Good Food Purchasing, and Healthcare Without Harm
- 3. More institutions with food purchasing goals\*:**
  - a. Baseline measurement of the number of K-12 schools and hospitals that have stated goals around regional food purchasing in their food service contracts or other documentation. Increase in number of campuses with stated goals from 53% to 75% by 2023\*.
- 4. More regional food tracking by institutions:**
  - a. Percentage of colleges and universities that track local purchases with specified tool increases from 79.4% to 90% from 2019 to 2021
- 5. Increase in producers selling to institutions:**
  - a. Increase in the number of producers selling to institutions through intermediaries
  - b. Increase in the volume of direct-to-institution sales

\*Key indicators and targets

## **Goal 2: A more developed and diverse regional network of individuals and entities across all parts of the food system who mobilize the power of institutions to transform the food system**

### **Indicators of Success**

- 1. Deeper participation in the FINE network\*:**
  - a. Establish baseline of FINE network participation
  - b. 15% increase in the number of individuals and/or organizations in total and from each state who consider themselves “somewhat” or “very” active members of the FINE network, according to responses to FINE’s stakeholder survey\*

- c. FINE engages with state level farm to institution stakeholders and decision makers in each New England state at least two times per year
- 2. Comprehensive sector & geographic representation across FINE advisory groups:**
  - a. FINE advisory bodies (e.g., NAC and committees, program/project advisory groups) have representatives from government, business, and the nonprofit sectors, across the supply chain, and all New England states
  - b. FINE advisory bodies engage 5 first time members annually
- 3. Increased engagement with FINE communications:**
  - a. 15% increase in e-newsletter subscribers each year for the next three years, with a 30% open rate, on average
  - b. Perform annual audit of listserv activity
  - c. 15% increase in unique visitors across FINE's websites per year, on average
  - d. 15% increase in FINE social media engagement per year
  - e. At least five communications requests, on average, per month for support in sharing events, activities, research findings, and other similar services
- 4. Increased engagement with FINE events:**
  - a. 5% increase in proposals submitted to FINE events each year for the next three years
  - b. Increased diversity of sector and supply chain representation at events as measured by registration and evaluation surveys.
- 5. A more diverse network\*:**
  - a. Identify a FINE staff lead and/or consultants to lead diversity efforts by February 2020
  - b. Establish a clear and comprehensive diversity action plan by July 2020
  - c. More diversity in FINE network and program participation as reflected in diversity action plan\*

\*Key indicators and targets

## Goal 3: Stakeholders have knowledge, tools, and resources for advancing farm to institution in New England

### Indicators of Success

- 1. FINE programs are designed to meet the needs of stakeholders\*:**
  - a. Advisory teams provide input into programming (yes/no)
  - b. Programs are adapted based on stakeholder survey input and/or needs assessments (yes/no)\*
  - c. Annual audit of engagement with programmatic outputs (webinars, reports, etc.)
- 2. Evaluations of resources indicate that FINE's program learning objectives are met:**
  - a. Evaluation questions that assess the value of events and programs are at 3.75 or above (on a scale of 1-5)

- b. Apply principles of equitable evaluation into all program evaluations
- 3. Food system stakeholders embrace and understand the role of farm to institution in reaching the NE Food Vision\*:**
  - a. Each New England Farm to Institution Summit has at least 5% first time attendees and serves as a platform for at least three New England food system organizations/initiatives to meet
  - b. FINE identifies and prioritizes new target audiences for each event\*
  - c. Each New England state has a food policy council(s) or similar organization that includes farm to institution work as one of their priorities

\*Key indicators and targets

## **Goal 4: Stronger state and federal policies in support of farm to institution**

### **Indicators of Success**

- 1. Clear policy role established:**
  - a. Critical partners are identified and engaged regularly
  - b. FINE has identified a list of potential roles to play in the policy arena and has clearly articulated criteria, including criteria for equity and diversity, to guide role selection
- 2. Clear policy platform established\*:**
  - a. Highest leverage state-based FTI policies are identified with goals and priorities for coordinated action\*
  - b. Highest leverage federal FTI policies are identified with goals and priorities for coordinated action
  - c. Policy agenda is established with specific process and outcome goals articulated

\*Key indicators and targets

## **Goal 5: A robust and sustainable organizational foundation that supports FINE's mission driven work**

### **Indicators of Success**

- 1. More and broader funding\*:**
  - a. FINE has a fund development plan that meets revenue needs and ensures long term sustainability that is in alignment with FINE values and mission\*
  - b. FINE will replace JMF funding with other sources by 2023
  - c. FINE will retain or increase funding from 80% of current funders
- 2. Stronger governance:**
  - a. The roles and responsibilities of the Network Advisory Council, committees and individuals are clearly defined in operating procedures and NAC Guidelines and reviewed annually by the NAC.

- b. There will be an 80% attendance rate for all Network Advisory Council (NAC) general meetings and simple quorum subcommittee meetings
  - c. NAC approves annual budget and provides guidance on major shifts/decisions FINE is considering
  - d. FINE staff supports four formal sub-committees that each meet a minimum of four times per year
- 3. Strong staff team:**
- a. All staff have current job descriptions and professional development plans, and annual performance reviews. We prioritize and implement feedback from staff to sustain a creative, productive, and healthy work environment.
  - b. Staff share responsibilities for leadership and/or decision making
  - c. There is adequate staff to meet goals and commitments
- 4. More accountability and clearer direction\*:**
- a. FINE staff with support from Network Advisory Council members use the strategic plan to track work on a quarterly basis and adjust indicators and work plans\*
  - b. Staff use the strategy filter to evaluate new opportunities before adding to grant proposals or work plan (team or project in Asana)
- 5. Stronger evaluation:**
- a. FINE work plan includes metrics/indicators of success and also aligns with strategic plan measurements
  - b. FINE funder reports include qualitative and/or quantitative measurements of progress for each deliverable
  - c. FINE's review of indicators and metrics considers their value to our stakeholders.
- 6. A more diverse team:**
- a. FINE's diversity plan includes a pathway to create a more appropriately diverse team (Network Advisory Council, Program & Event steering committees, staff, consultants, and interns)

## Part 3: Implementation

### Strategy Filter

*This filter is used to assess opportunities (or threats) that arise and to help FINE determine whether and how to adjust the current work plan. Opportunities may include a new project, partnership, involvement in a meeting or conference, or other effort that will require a commitment of energy, resources, thinking, and brand. The filter helps FINE remain nimble and responsive to new opportunities and yet be accountable to existing commitments and plans.*

*The filter is divided into two sections. The first eight categories correlate to FINE's strategic plan and organizational mission. The last two categories relate to staff and budget capacity. **When an opportunity receives between 16 and 24 points in the first part of the filter, it will progress to the second section.***

If it scores below 16 points or receives any zeros, it will be revisited and modified before moving ahead to the second section. Note that “New England” is abbreviated to “NE.”

		0 POINTS [RED FLAG]	1 POINT	2 POINTS	3 POINTS
PHASE 1	<b>Values &amp; Mission &amp; Vision</b>	In direct conflict with FINE’s mission, vision, or conflicts with one or more key values	Not directly aligned with FINE’s mission or vision but may address 1 or 2 core values	Aligned with FINE’s mission and vision and addresses 1-5 core values	Aligns with FINE’s mission and vision and addresses 5 or more core values (including diversity and/or healthy ecosystems)
	<b>Geography</b>	No NE connection	Nationwide with a moderate impact on NE	1 to 5 NE states, may inform regional strategy or benefit other NE states	All six NE states and may include nationwide impacts
	<b>Sectors</b>	Does not relate to institutions	Serves only one of our core sectors	Serves two or three of our core sectors	Serves all of the core sectors and additional sectors
	<b>Regional Food Served at Institutions</b>	Does not directly increase regional food at institutions (directly or indirectly)	Indirectly supports regional food at institutions (e.g., education)	Directly supportive of activities that increase regional food at institutions	Creates measurable increase in regional food at institutions
	<b>Develops and diversifies the network</b>	Does not contribute to development or diversification of the network	Creates some increase in the number and diversity of individuals in the network	Increases the number and diversity of individuals in the network and creates at least 1 new organizational partnership	Increases the number and diversity of individuals in the network and creates at least 3 new organizational partnerships
	<b>Stakeholder knowledge, resources, tools</b>	Does not increase stakeholder access to knowledge, resources, or tools	Low visibility and unclear impact of shared knowledge, resources, or tools	High visibility or measurable impact of shared knowledge, resources, or tools	High visibility and measurable impact of shared knowledge, resources, or tools
	<b>Uniqueness/network need</b>	Duplicates, confuses or conflicts with work of other partners	Unclear demand from or conflicts with partners	High demand for work, some overlap with other partners	No other partner does the work; all partners want the work done
	<b>Broader Food System Impact</b>	No impact on regional food systems development	Impact on regional food systems, or institutional markets (national or state level)	Small impact on both regional food systems and institutional markets (national or state level)	Large impact on both regional food systems and institutional markets (national or state level)
PHASE 2	<b>Staff Capacity</b>	No staff capacity or project funds to support additional staff time	Hire new staff with project funds	Have staff skills but need to shift workload	Will put existing staff skills and capacity to work
	<b>Budget/Funding</b>	Prevents us from doing other core work	Pays for project costs	Pays for project costs and generates some unrestricted revenue	Generates unrestricted revenue

***\*BONUS! ADD ONE EXTRA POINT IF PROJECT DIRECTLY ADDRESSES CLIMATE CHANGE***