The EFSNE project engages more than 40 individuals at multiple universities, non-profits and government agencies, including:

- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Delaware State University
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
- Penn State University
- Tufts University
- University of Vermont
- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- USDA Economic Research Service
- West Virginia State University

EFSNE also engages a national advisory committee. For a complete list of project team members, visit the project website:

agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security

EFSNE is a USDA-funded Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) project that seeks to determine whether greater reliance on regionally produced food could improve food access and affordability in disadvantaged communities, while also benefiting farmers, food supply chain firms and others in the food system.

This systems project engages the entire food chain. As an integrated project, it includes research, outreach and education.
Over 7 million Northeast citizens are food insecure.

Over 7 million Northeast citizens are food insecure. Low-income communities are disproportionately affected by lack of access to healthy, affordable foods. Families in those communities face many barriers to achieving food security. Challenges to food security for everyone in the region also come from climate change, farmland loss, and sourcing most of our food from outside our region.

EFSNE, a five-year project, began in 2011.

The project focuses on underserved community sites within eight locations across the Northeast, defined as 12 states from Maine to West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Teams work with one or two grocery stores in each site.

The research focal point is a full-diet market basket of eight foods that are or can be produced or processed in the Northeast states in significant quantities. These are milk, bread, ground beef, potatoes, apples, cabbage, canned peaches and frozen broccoli.

Learn more about the project and sign up to receive our quarterly email newsletter at:

agsci.psu.edu/research/food-security

The EFSNE project is an initiative of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development. The Center’s mission is to enhance the capacity of land-grant universities to foster regional prosperity and rural development. Learn more about the Northeast Center at:

nercrd.psu.edu

Researchers from 12 different disciplines at 11 universities, nonprofits and agencies are pursuing biological, economic, and sociological research.

The Consumption Team assesses current and potential community level constraints and opportunities for improving access to regionally produced and healthy food for people in the community sites.

The Production Team is quantifying the current and potential future capacity of the urban and rural Northeast to produce the foods in the market basket.

The Distribution Team’s task is to identify and assess food supply chain practices in underserved areas of the Northeast, compare site-specific, regional, and national chains, and identify policy interventions.

The Scenarios and Modeling Team guides and integrates the models being developed to provide a coherent, trans-disciplinary analysis of the potential for a regional food system to enhance food security in the Northeast of the entire population including its low-income residents.

Outreach & Education

The Outreach Team disseminates project research knowledge to policymakers and other stakeholders, and engages community members and other interested parties in the project.

The Education Team is preparing students at Delaware State, Penn State, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Tufts Universities with skills to research and develop sustainable food systems.

Project collaborations have generated cross-disciplinary lessons, insights and novel applications of existing methods.

The entire project team of faculty, educators, advisors, practitioners and students has already gained a greater understanding of how other scientific disciplines operate and how scientific research differs from applied outreach in a project that is doing both. Team members well anchored in their study sites have provided insights to others developing stakeholder relations in new project communities. Team member learning and awareness-building ranges widely, from how to contact meaningful focus groups, to how to develop and use sophisticated mathematical and statistical models. We have indeed become our own project learning community.