



2026 Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Election Power Guide

This power guide is intended to help every voter in Maine know what decisions about our food systems are made at what levels of government, and to offer suggestions on specific questions you can ask your candidates regarding these issues. If you have questions, email us at:

mainefoodcouncils@gmail.com

School Board Candidates– The primary way that members of a school board can support food sovereignty and the right to food is through allocating funds for local foods, experienced school kitchen staff, and proper equipment for scratch cooking in their school nutrition budget. Here are a couple questions you might ask your school board candidates:

- How will you support getting more local foods into our schools?
- How will you ensure our schools can offer the pay, hours, equipment and benefits needed to attract and keep qualified kitchen staff?

Town/City Council Candidates– There are a few different ways town and city councils can support food sovereignty and the right to food. The most directly impactful ones may be passing food sovereignty ordinances, updating zoning laws to allow for more urban agriculture, and creating a local foods action plan. Other actions like developing municipal composting programs or increasing public transportation are related, and certainly worth bringing up if you choose. Here are a couple questions you might ask your town/city council candidates:

- Would you support the development of a food sovereignty ordinance for our town?
- Would you support revisiting our local zoning ordinances to help increase community gardens and other forms of urban agriculture?

- Would you support the development of a local foods plan, similar to the one created by Lewiston-Auburn?

State Legislature Candidates- The Maine State Legislature can support food sovereignty and the right to food in numerous ways- from state investments for agriculture and forestry, to protecting SNAP access, to protecting working waterways. For a deeper dive on the state legislature- including what food related bills were passed last session, check out the resources from the National Right to Food Community of Practice, linked below and on our website. To start though, here are a couple of questions you might ask people running for state legislature in your area:

- How do you plan to protect existing SNAP benefits for eligible people?
- How will you support small and medium-sized farmers to thrive in our state?
- What would you prioritize to strengthen Maine's local food infrastructure?
- How will you work to address cost of living across the board (groceries, housing, healthcare, ect)?

Federal Delegation Candidates- The federal government could support food sovereignty and the right to food for all communities in the United States in many ways, perhaps the most impactful being breaking up the corporate monopolies that have consolidated our food systems, removing the harmful cuts to SNAP made by H.R. 1, and shifting Farm Bill subsidies. Other issues worth studying and raising are the removal of Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (MCOOL) laws for beef in 2015, and the efficacy of ethanol as a clean fuel. Here are a couple of questions you might ask people running to represent Maine at the federal level:

- How would you support the creation and enforcement of effective anti-trust measures for the agriculture sector?
- How would you support shifting Farm Bill subsidies away from the largest, wealthiest producers and towards small to mid-sized farms?
- Would you support removing the harmful cuts to SNAP that were made by H.R. 1, and which have led to thousands of citizens (many of them children) losing SNAP benefits?

Additional resources (go to our website at mainefoodcouncils.org to access hyperlinks)

- **The National Right to Food COP 2026 Maine Election Conversation Guide:**  **State of Maine - 2026 Election Conversation Guide**
 - Election guide appendix- background information on the Maine State Legislature, 2026:
 **Appendix: Background Information for Maine - July 2026**
- **Navigating the school budget process:**
<https://maineea.org/maineeducatoronline/navigating-the-school-budget-process/>
- **Local Foods Action Plan, Lewiston-Auburn:** <https://lafoodplan.com/>
- **For information about corporate consolidation:** farmaction.us
- **For information about the current Farm Bill:**
<https://youngfarmers.org/2026/08/young-farmers-analysis-of-the-agricultural-act-of-2026/>
- **For information about SNAP and other anti-hunger initiatives:**
<https://frac.org/>
- **For information about Maine Food Sovereignty ordinances:**
<https://www.localfoodrules.org/>