

MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Food summit open to public

Erie, PA — Community members who work with producing or distributing food are invited to attend “**Erie Food System Summit: Rooted in Resilience**” on Jan. 24, 2023 at PennWest Edinboro University.

Organized by the **Erie Food Policy Advisory Council** (Erie FPAC) and the Erie County Department of Health, the summit aims to gather partners from across Erie County to streamline efforts in improving our food system. “The goals are to identify the biggest barriers facing our food system and to identify how we can work toward finding some solutions,” said Stephanie Thauer, Erie FPAC Co-Chair and farmer/food entrepreneur.

“Our discussions will be more meaningful if we interact with community members who are part of the food system. Please join us if you are a farmer, if you have a business that sells food like a grocery store or restaurant or if you have an organization or agency that provides food to the community like a food pantry. We welcome those who have an interest in how food is prepared, distributed and consumed in Erie County and the surrounding community,” Thauer added.

Clancy Harrison of The Food Dignity Project will give a keynote discussion on prioritizing barriers. There will also be action-oriented planning workgroups for addressing these issues. The Food Dignity Project is a nonprofit humanitarian organization that works to address food insecurity and social reform. Their goal is to remove stigma and ignite compassion around hidden hunger and support the development of programs and platforms that offer dignified and equitable access to nutritious food.

“I’m looking forward to participating in the Food Summit,” said Marti Martz, president of Edinboro Market, a store that sells foods grown or made within 150 miles of Edinboro. “For the past five years, I’ve worked with students, farmers, local and state agencies, and many other organizations and individuals working to build a more resilient food system in our area. The summit will provide an opportunity for a large-scale, inclusive discussion that brings together folks from across northwest Pennsylvania. I’m hopeful that the event, and the next steps that come from it, will help to build a collaborative model that moves us forward in a more unified and organized way.”

The **Erie Food Policy Advisory Council** is a network of several organizations including government agencies, community-based organizations and non-profits, food retail outlets, farmers and food business owners, schools and universities, healthcare organizations, community leaders and advocates; anyone involved in the food system from farm to fork.

“**Erie Food System Summit: Rooted in Resilience**” will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Free admission, space is limited, registration required. Register at <https://eriefoodsystemssummit.eventbrite.com/>. Register by Jan. 16, 2023. For questions, email awhipple@eriecountypa.gov.

You can stay updated even if you won’t be able to attend the summit. Follow the Erie FPAC at <https://www.facebook.com/ErieFPAC> or email eriefpac@gmail.com.

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