



Getting Organized

To help you initiate the discussion about food sovereignty for your community, we offer the following:

- ☑ Know your community. What is the governance structure in your community? Who makes the decisions? For example, do you have town meetings, or a city council, or a town manager?
- ☑ Identify unofficial community leaders.
- ☑ Identify people and groups who will be on your side, and those people or groups who will oppose you. Think about churches, civic organizations, your local Chamber of Commerce, activist groups, etc. Connect with others who would support adopting a LFCSGO—they are probably already in your circle of friends.
- ☑ Review the ordinance template, and tailor it to your town if changes are needed. When the ordinance is complete, you will have to get it on the warrant for the next town meeting.
- ☑ Talk with your elected officials.
 - If they are receptive, they may simply agree to include it on the next town meeting warrant.
 - If they are not receptive, you will have to circulate a petition to have it included. There are specific requirements for gathering signatures, so check with your Town Clerk to determine the format for the petition and for the number of signatures required. A model petition is available as well as an Excel file (.xls) for you use.
 - Local Food Rules personnel are available to attend board or council meetings.
- ☑ The Maine Food Sovereignty Act (MFSA) requires the State to recognize local ordinances regarding those food transactions defined in the ordinance, so do not let any opposition try to convince you otherwise. This is particularly important if anyone insists on the “site of production” wording found in the MFSA.
- ☑ Shape your arguments. Develop the best reasons for supporting your ordinance, and provide the evidence that you are right. Anticipate the positions of those who will be against you. Develop responses to those arguments.
- ☑ Publicity strategy
 - Is there a local newspaper where letters could be printed?
 - Create your own media, in addition to or instead of the press (if they are unreceptive). E-mail lists, a Facebook page for your town efforts, and going door-to-door are all effective ways of reaching people.
- ☑ Have informational meetings. Make a presentation at your library, Grange, or other venue. Local Food Rules personnel are available to attend.
- ☑ Local Food Rules personnel are available to attend select board or council meetings.
- ☑ Gather a small group, get started, and watch it grow. Use existing networks and models, and add new ones as they arise. Don’t stop refining the message, putting the word out, and adding allies.
- ☑ Commit and persist!

Related Documents at localfoodrules.org:

- Getting Organized
- Petitioning for Food Sovereignty
- LFCSGO Petition Sample
- LFCSGO FAQs
- LFCSGO Template (.pdf)
- LFCSGO Template (.doc)