

Dear Readers,

We are just past the summer equinox as I write. Planting season is winding down, and the first produce of the season is being harvested in kitchen gardens and has been hitting farmers' markets around the state. It is somehow fitting, in this time of renewal and growth, that we present this special issue of *Maine Policy Review* devoted to food and Maine's food system. As this project has developed, I've been telling people that it has turned into more than a journal issue—it is almost a book, both in its size and in the scope and depth of the topics covered.

When Deb Felder and Andrea Perry of the Broad Reach Fund, our guest editors, came to us almost a year ago to propose a special issue on food, we thought it was an interesting idea, but perhaps a little narrow. We quickly came to realize how a focus on food and the food system touches on almost everything important in our lives and in both the state and national economy—ranging from health, food insecurity, and food safety to energy and resources, the environment, business, and the workforce. These topics and many more are covered in this issue, along with interesting case studies of new food-related businesses, local and regional community endeavors, and private philanthropic activities around food and the food system.

The guest editors have helped us assemble a large and diverse group of authors—academics; representatives from nonprofit agencies, state government, and the philanthropic community; business people; journalists; and others. (A few of our writers are also farmers, and many have gardens or are self-reported “foodies.”) We are grateful to Deb Felder and Andrea Perry for their consultation and guidance in putting this issue together and for helping us in our efforts to raise additional funds to support it. We would also like to thank the organizations and individuals who generously contributed their support through direct giving or grants, who are noted on the “Thanks” page at the start of the issue.

After working on this issue and reading all these interesting pieces, I'm never going to think of food the same way again. We hope that your reaction is the same, and that you gain new insights and understanding about the myriad aspects of the food system and the culture, policies, and practices that affect it and are a part of it.

Best,


