

Toolkit

CARAT Pilot Program 2024





COHORT LIST:

Twelve communities will participate in the CARAT Pilot Program in 2024.

Here's a [contact list](#) of facilitators from each of these lead organizations.



Western Massachusetts



State of Washington



Santa Clara County California



Frederick County Maryland



Erie County Department of Health

Erie County Pennsylvania



Northeast North Carolina



Atlantic County New Jersey



Hillsborough County Florida



Hudson Valley New York



Southeast Iowa



MARION INSTITUTE SOUTH COAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

South Coast Massachusetts



Southwest Indiana

OUR TEAM:



This pilot will be coordinated by a team of three through the North American Food Systems Network. [Kim Hines](#) will act as your point person.



Jodee Smith
Indiana University
CARAT Circle Chair



Kim Hines
North American Food
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CARAT Pilot Coordinator



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USING THIS TOOLKIT:

This Toolkit will act as a living document throughout the pilot. We will add to it as needed to provide you with a central location for all pilot materials.

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PURPOSE STATEMENT:

The North American Food Systems Network is conducting this CARAT Pilot in 2024 in partnership with the Food and Agrarian Systems group at Indiana University.

Our objective: to learn from the collective experiences of community-based CARAT lead facilitators and their collaborators to:

- **support** communities to fully complete CARAT audits in 2024;
- **create** a CARAT facilitation training for national release;
- **improve** the CARAT tool based on pilot user input;
- **strengthen** CARAT's accessibility for all communities.

TIMELINE & ZOOM LINKS:

Pilot orientation for selected cohorts
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Monthly cohort meeting & audits check-in
Findings shared with cohorts & others

Mon, Mar 18, 1P-3P ET -registration

Mon, Apr 15, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, May 20, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Jun 17, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Jul 15, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Aug 19, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Sep 16, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Oct 21, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

Mon, Nov 18, 1P-3P ET -Zoom link

TBD Dec, 2024



ASSIGNMENTS

Homework will be assigned at each monthly cohort meeting. Assignments will be designed to support your continued completion of the CARAT audit.

Assignments:

Due March 25

Due June 10

Due Sep 9

Due April 8

Due June 24

Due Sep 23

Due April 22

Due July 8

Due Oct 14

Due May 13

Due July 22

Due Oct 28

Due May 27

Due Aug 12

Due Nov 11

Due Aug 26

Due Nov 25



YOUR NOTES

Please use your community's document to capture notes that you take during our sessions and throughout the process. These links have been shared with you and your identified team members.

- [Hilltown Community Development](#) (MA)
- [Washington Gleaning Network](#) (WA)
- [Santa Clara County](#) (CA)
- [Frederick County Food Council](#) (MD)
- [Erie County Department of Health](#) (PA)
- [ABC2](#) (NC)
- [New Jersey Democracy Collaborative](#) (NJ)
- [Hillsborough County](#) (FL)
- [Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust](#) (NY)
- [Urban Seeds](#) (IN)
- [Marion Institute Southcoast Food Policy Council](#) (MA)
- [Iowa Food System Coalition](#) (IA)



VISIBILITY:

Visibility of this pilot and its participating communities, including lead organizations, is an important component of this pilot. Visibility will help other communities learn about and value the purpose and process of using the CARAT tool. We intend these activities to benefit your own organizations and communities, and to create opportunities to share your work with a national audience.

In sharing news of your participation, NAFSN will not share your CARAT data.

Promotions may include:

NAFSN social media

Cohort social medias

NAFSN website

Cohort websites

NAFSN media communications

Cohort media communications

NAFSN & IU fundraising

Cohort fundraising

COSTS FOR THE PILOT:



- **No Charge from Pilot Organizers** - NAFSN and IU will provide guidance to CARAT pilot communities free of charge.
- **No Charge for Use of CARAT** - CARAT is offered to the public as a [free, open-access tool](#).
- **Costs of a CARAT Audit** - In addition to supporting the work of their CARAT lead facilitator, communities will also be expected to cover any additional costs incurred for collaboration work.



INTENTIONS:

We intend this pilot to be a valuable learning experience for all involved.

We intend to provide guidance as you facilitate your CARAT audit.

We intend to help you engage a wide variety of people from within your community who will contribute insights to get your CARAT audit to completion.

We intend to help you use your complete audit to identify priority actions.

This pilot is not a comparative process. Collectively, you represent a diversity of communities and lead organizations, each with a different starting point, a different set of advantages and disadvantages, and a different quality of resources at hand with which you do your work. These differences are valuable as a whole, but there is no value in holding one community's complete audit up to another.

For this reason, we won't talk about data. We'll talk about the experience of seeking and reporting your data and understanding its impact in your community.



OUTCOMES:

Here's what we hope to learn from each of you:

- What went well?
- What didn't?
- What challenges did you experience in using the CARAT tool?
- What communication & facilitation methods worked successfully?
- What communication & facilitation methods were less effective?
- How did others in your community respond to the process?
- What resources (people, funds, time) were needed to complete the CARAT audit?
- Is a cohort structure beneficial to the process of a CARAT assessment?
- Has your CARAT audit changes your approach moving forward?
 - If so, how?
 - If not, why?
- How will you use your finished CARAT audit?
- Do you intend to use the CARAT tool again to measure change over time?



RESOURCES:

We will continue to add resources to this page throughout the pilot. We welcome your suggestions!!

- [CARAT Tool](#) hosted by NAFSN
- [ACRE Facilitation Training](#) hosted by NAFSN

TEMPLATES:

- [spreadsheet template for planning work with collaborators & sub-collaborators](#)

Elements of a Communications Plan:



- **Opportunity** - What is CARAT?
- **Purpose** - Why are we conducting a CARAT Audit?
- **Locality** - Where is our focus? What community are we auditing with CARAT? Why?
- **Plan** - How are we organizing CARAT? lead contacts, timeline, funding, outcomes
- **Collaborators** - Who will contribute knowledge to the audit? Who will benefit?

- **Consistent language & look** - feel free to use CARAT colors, logo if they're helpful
- **Concise language & brevity** - elevator speech and one-pager, plain language
- **Redundancy** - post your messaging in multiple places
- **Tie In** - convey how this advances other efforts (link to strategic goals, mission, etc)

- **Audience Work** - Who *wants* to be a part of this effort now? Who *will want* to see the final product when finished? Who *needs* your audit to accomplish their own responsibilities and goals? What *new audiences* will this audit bring your way?