

Leah Costlow

last updated May 2026

<https://sites.google.com/view/leahmcostlow>

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

1855 Assistant Professor, Michigan State University (2025 -)

Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics

Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition

EDUCATION

PhD (2025) Food and Nutrition Policy and Programs, Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition

MS (2021) Agriculture, Food, and Environment, Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition

BA (2013) Liberal Arts, St. John's College

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition

Graduate researcher, [Food Prices for Nutrition](#), 2021–2025

Research assistant, [Changing Access to Nutritious Diets in Africa and South Asia \(CANDASA\)](#), 2020

Tufts University Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

Research associate, [EconoFact](#), 2021–2025


Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation (CHLPI)

Graduate intern, [Health Law and Policy Clinic](#), 2020

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

(Author sequence puts primary author first and senior author last.)

1. **Costlow, L.**, Gilbert, R., Masters, W.A., Ortenzi, F., Beal, T., Deo, A., Sutiyo, W., Noor, S., & Gonzalez, W. (2026). [Healthy diets are affordable but often displaced by other foods in Indonesia](#). *Food Policy* 140:103076.
2. Friesen, V.M., Free C.M., Adams, K.P., Bai, Y., **Costlow, L.**, Beal, T., Dewey, K. Mbuya, M.N.N., Nordhagen, S., Vasta, F., Masters, & W.A. (2026). [Impact of large-scale food fortification programs on micronutrient inadequacies and their implementation costs: a modelling analysis](#). *The Lancet Global Health* 14(5), e762-e771.

3. **Costlow, L.**, Herforth, A., Sulser, T.B., Cenacchi, N., & Masters, W.A. (2025). [Global analysis reveals persistent shortfalls and regional differences in availability of foods needed for health](#). *Global Food Security* 44:100825.
4. Gilbert, R.  **Costlow, L.**, Matteson, J., Rauschendorfer, J., Krivonos, E., Block, S.A., & Masters, W.A. (2024). [Trade policy reform, retail food prices and access to healthy diets worldwide](#). *World Development* 177: 106535.
5. Bai, Y., **Costlow, L.**, Ebel, A., Laves, S., Ueda, Y., Volin, N., Zamek, M., & Masters, W.A. (2022). [Retail prices of nutritious foods rose more in countries with higher COVID-19 case counts](#). *Nature Food* 3, 325–330.
6. Bai, Y., **Costlow, L.**, Ebel, A., Laves, S., Ueda, Y., Volin, N., Zamek, M., Herforth, A., & Masters, W.A. (2022). [Retail consumer price data reveal gaps and opportunities to monitor food systems for nutrition](#). *Food Policy* 104: 102148.

BOOK CHAPTERS & WHITE PAPERS

7. **Costlow, L.** (Forthcoming, 2026). Food availability and access to healthy diets worldwide. Chapter for *Handbook of Eating and Drinking*, 2nd. edition. (Ed. Herbert L. Meiselman).
8. **Costlow, L.**, Martinez, E.M., Gilbert, R., Nakasone, E. & Masters, W.A. (2025). [Price dynamics for foods of varied nutritional characteristics](#). [Background paper for *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025*](#). FAO Agricultural Development Economics Working Paper. Rome, FAO.
9. Herforth, A., Venkat, A., Bai, Y., **Costlow, L.**, Holleman, C., & Masters, W.A. (2022). [Methods and options to monitor the cost and affordability of a healthy diet globally](#). Background paper for *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022*. FAO Agricultural Development Economics Working Paper 22-03. Rome, FAO.

PREPRINTS & WORKS IN PROGRESS

10. **Costlow, L.**, Bai, Y., Adams, K.P., Beal, T., Dewey, K., Free C.M., Friesen, V.M., Mbuya, M.N.N., Nordhagen, S., Vasta, F., & Masters, W.A. (In review). [Impacts of large-scale food fortification on the cost of nutrient-adequate diets: a modelling study in 89 countries](#).

OUTREACH & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

["Does the world produce enough healthy food?"](#) (2025), for EconoFact

["COVID, jobs and prices in the U.S. food system: How much has changed?"](#) (2020), with W. A. Masters

RESEARCH FUNDING

Total funding: \$376,019

United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) April - November 2026

Analysis of Factors Contributing to the High Cost of a Healthy Diet in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Funding: \$40,000. Role: PI.

United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) December 2025 - August 2026

Analysis of drivers of the Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) and its variations across countries.

Funding: \$90,000. Role: PI.

United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) March - June 2025

Global and country-level price dynamics for foods of varied nutritional characteristics.

Funding: \$58,434. Role: Co-PI.

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) June 2024 - March 2025

Global costs of nutrient adequacy with improved fortification.

Funding: \$5,000. Role: PI

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) March 2023 - March 2025

Assessing the affordability of target foods: A least-cost diet approach.

Funding: \$90,950. Role: Co-PI.

United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) January - December 2022

The effects of trade policy measures on the cost of healthy diets.

Funding: \$91,635. Role: Co-PI

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Joan M. Bergstrom Award for Excellence in Global Nutrition, Tufts University (2026)

Teaching Fellow, Graduate Institute for Teaching (GIFT), Tufts University (2023 - 2024)

Richard D. Weigle Prize for Best Senior Essay, St. John's College (2013)

TEACHING

Michigan State University

Instructor of record - Undergraduate level (Fall 2026 -)

AFRE 340: Food Marketing Research and Analytics

Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition

Instructor of record - Graduate level (2023 - 2024)

NUTR 341: Environmental Economics of Food and Agriculture

NUTR 303: Determinants of U.S. Food Policy

Teaching assistant - Graduate level (2020 - 2025)

NUTR 341: Environmental Economics of Food and Agriculture

NUTR 303: Determinants of U.S. Food Policy

NUTC 263: Sustainability and the Food Consumer

NUTR & NUTC 238: Economics of Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition

NUTR 210: Fundamentals of U.S. Agriculture

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Affordability of dietary guidelines. (*Organized symposium presentation*). Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, Kansas City, MO. Scheduled July 2026.

Diet cost modeling metrics and global food security. (*Presentation and round table discussion*). BARD Workshop on Food Innovation, Nutrition, and Health, Washington, D.C. Scheduled July 2026.

Improving diet quality across the income spectrum in Indonesia: Insights on the cost, affordability, and consumption of healthy diets. (*Track session presentation*). Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. August 2025.

Leveraging the Cost of a Healthy Diet toolkit for research and policy insights: a case study from Tanzania. (*Workshop*). ANH Academy Week, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. June 2025.

Using least-cost diets to measure food access globally: Results and implications. (*Track session presentation*). Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. August 2023.

Trade policy and the cost of healthy diets in Africa and worldwide. (*Lightning talk*). Tufts Nutrition Data Symposium, Boston, MA. March 2023.

Availability of healthy diets in 174 countries, 1961-2019: A food system assessment. (*Selected poster*). Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, Anaheim, CA. August 2022.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Michigan State University

AFRE Seminar Committee (2025-)

Tufts University Friedman School

MS Admissions Committee (2023-24)

Faculty Search in Nutrition, Food Systems, Climate, and Sustainability (2022-2023)

Professional Memberships

Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Health (ANH) Academy

American Society for Nutrition (ASN)

Referee Activities

Agricultural & Food Economics; Agricultural Economics; American Journal of Agricultural Economics; BMJ Public Health; FAO Statistics Division Working Paper Series; Food and Nutrition Bulletin; Food Policy; Food Security; Global Food Security; Nature Food

GRADUATE ADVISING**MS Students**

Samuel Yenesew (MSU AFRE)