



FOOD: THE NEW INGREDIENT FOR A SUCCESSFUL MISSION

**A GRANT MAKER'S GUIDE TO FOOD SYSTEMS
FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY**



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[credits] By Michael DiRamio, Enterprising Agriculture, LLC, and Patty Cantrell, Core Communications

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GETTING AT THE FOOD ISSUES BEHIND YOUR ISSUES

Why does fresh food cost more than junk food? Why can't you find strawberries from nearby farms – even in season – at your nearby grocery? What if kids never really learn that milk comes from cows?

Until the last few years, such questions had become almost rhetorical. In particular, the absence of fresh food from nearby farms in our schools and stores had become just another fact of modern life. And it's one many had been prepared to accept, because it all seemed beyond our control.

NAGGING QUESTIONS

But here at the start of the 21st century, a number of irrefutable realities are bringing these questions to the forefront for people concerned about a number of problems. Food, we are finding, is a basic ingredient in problems that so many are trying to solve, from the nation's childhood obesity and diabetes crises to the loss of open space where family farms have given way to congested roads and Big Box sprawl.

Community and family foundations are, therefore, increasingly asking questions about where food comes from and how it gets to us. That's because almost anything they try to address – human services, the economy, the environment, even the arts – has ties back to food and our system of producing, processing and marketing it. In asking why local fresh food is not more affordable or available, for example, grant makers are discovering and pioneering a whole new way to improve the well-being of people and communities.

THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to introduce grant makers to the world of food system issues behind your issues. It offers real examples and practical steps you can take to pursue your foundation's particular mission through fundamental change in the food root of the problem.

For example, the national health care crisis around abnormal rates of obesity and diabetes is just one area of need that grant makers are finding they can influence by addressing deeper food system causes. A recent study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*¹ suggests that the steady rise in life expectancy over the last two centuries could soon end if current obesity trends, related largely to poor dietary health, continue. A major contributing factor is that a dollar now buys families three to four times more calories' worth of treated, packaged, processed food than of fresh, healthier food.

How? Whether it's technology, government policy, or Wall Street leverage, many decisions in many areas have ultimately rewarded junk food makers and crowded out healthy food makers. Community and family foundations can play a significant role in improving these decisions as they invest in projects that advance new approaches. Helping small farms to reach local residents in need of fresh, healthy food is one example. Foundations can assist on many interconnected levels, from helping farmers develop new distribution options for local food sales to supporting healthy food outreach campaigns.

¹ The New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 352, No. 11, 1138-1145, March 17, 2005 ² American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Vol. 79, No. 1, 6-16, January 2004

MANY ANSWERS

The good news is that people and their communities are recognizing and acting on the connection between counterproductive tendencies in the current food system and whatever it is they are trying to affect – graduation rates, local entrepreneurship, cultural offerings, etc. In the process, they are both increasing their opportunities for success with their missions and changing the bigger food picture in thousands of little ways.

Digging into urban garden projects, for example, communities find opportunities for neighborhood art and youth entrepreneurship coinciding with diet-changing awareness that the gardens build around fresh foods and ecology. By offering school cooks training in preparing fresh vs. packaged foods, communities find the schools doing more scratch cooking, which helps build healthier kids, more sales opportunities for local farms, and – combined with similar efforts across the country – more pressure on Capitol Hill to allow schools more food purchasing flexibility.

So, why does fresh food cost more than junk food? Why can't you find in-season strawberries from nearby farms at your local grocery? And what do we risk in terms of dietary health, environmental awareness, and even citizenship if kids never really learn that milk comes from cows?

Communities and local grant makers are asking such questions with a new understanding and urgency. In asking, we find that our current food system is not delivering the economic, environmental or social results we want. In answering, we start to build a new food reality and better quality of life for our communities from the ground up.





FOOD SYSTEM PHASES

TARGET YOUR INVESTMENT

Finding your mission's place in the food system

The simplest way to get your grant-making arms around these food system issues is to start with the view from 30,000 feet. As in trying to find your home from an airplane flying over your town, you can find your foundation's place in the complex system of food – how it's grown and how it gets to us – by first identifying landmarks that relate to your world. From there you can trace the byways and intersections that lead to your grant-making interests.

The landmarks that tell you you're looking at a food system are the six interconnected phases that go into getting food from the soil to you and back again: growing, processing, wholesaling, retailing, eating and recycling.

A food system naturally starts with natural resources like soil and water. The health of these resources and the quality of food they produce, however, depends on the inter-workings of the food system's six main phases. In addition to the people and businesses involved, these phases also turn on many different practices (how we do things) and policies (how we decide things).

It's important to keep all three – people, practices and policies – in mind for effective investments. For example, if your goal is to reduce childhood obesity with more fresh, local foods, then an important strategy, in addition to perhaps supporting farmers' markets, may be to encourage schools and hospitals to broaden their purchasing policies and ask their food suppliers for local farm products.

Again, looking at it from 30,000 feet, your ultimate mission may be to influence the growth of farm businesses in your community. But making your way there involves navigating a number of food system intersections.

The payoff of such a whole system approach can be powerful.

Efforts that shrink the distance between the growing of food and where it is eaten, for example, connect people to their food source (education), grow the agricultural economy (economic development), reduce carbon emissions (environment), and offer opportunities to preserve unique local food varieties and recipes (arts and culture). With a whole system approach to food related issues, grant makers can address many community interests and needs at the same time.



“Grant makers are discovering and pioneering a whole new way to improve the well-being of people and communities.”

YOUR LANDMARKS: THE SIX FOOD SYSTEM PHASES

To pursue grant-making interests, follow the people, practices and policies involved

GROWING

Growing involves all that goes into producing food in its “raw” form – raising a cow or tomato, catching fish at sea, or harvesting nuts from trees. People include farmers, ranchers, farm workers and farm suppliers in the United States and abroad. Practices include preparing the soil, feeding animals, harvesting crops and buying tractors. Policies include types of financing, federal food and farm programs, university research and farm worker pay rates.

PROCESSING

Processing is everything and everyone involved in preparing farm, forest and fishery food products for sale. This ranges from livestock slaughter and meat packaging to freezing fruits and salting peanuts. People include apple sorters, pickle makers, yogurt strainers and meat cutters. Practices include line speeds at processing plants, special recipes, additive levels and quality controls. Policies include sanitation and labeling regulations, types of economic development incentives, and local planning and zoning rules.

WHOLESALING

Moving products from processing to retail shelves and restaurant tables involves a system of warehouses, brokers, shippers and distribution routes. The wholesale sector takes orders from restaurants and others who will resell the food, then delivers the desired amounts at the desired times in the desired forms. People include truck drivers, sales staff and logistics managers. Practices include supply chain strategies, target marketing and wholesale packaging. Policies include gas taxes and truck weight limits, product labeling laws, and occupational safety rules.

RETAILING

Any person or organization that sells food to the public fits into the retail category, which involves preparing food and marketing it. People include restaurant owners and kitchen staff, grocers and their employees, and all kinds of food vendors, from Lions Club hot dog sellers to farmers at farmers’ markets. Practices include purchasing, advertising and food handling. Policies include school rules on soda machines, ingredient listing requirements and even downtown development designs for mixing retail and residential uses.

EATING

Eating encompasses not just taste buds and digestion, but the family feeling around a meal, the joy of a new recipe and teaching kids about nutrition and the importance of washing their hands. The people include everyone in the world about three times a day – if we’re lucky. Practices include family traditions, religious observances and the cultural flavors of what people eat, when they eat it and with whom they eat it. Policies include government food assistance, support for nutrition education and a community’s stand on providing plentiful, safe, affordable food.

RECYCLING

Whether it’s a compost bin for the potato peels from your supper or turning French-fry oil into bio-diesel fuel, recycling is an important part of the food system. People include food producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and eaters. Practices include farmers applying manure to fields for fertilizer and food processors developing new items from the by-products of other items, such as the shells of nuts as ingredients in cleansers. Policies include zero-waste approaches to events, with bins for food waste available to participants along with bins for paper, glass and plastic. Policies also include waste management regulations, such as for large livestock operations, where manure from thousands of animals can accumulate to levels that are dangerous to the health of neighbors and nearby streams.

**THE FOOD SYSTEM:
FROM THE SOIL TO YOU AND BACK AGAIN**



“The food system is more than consumers and markets. And the issues we face as a result of our current food system are more urgent and basic to the well-being of society than how local or well-traveled the tomato on your hamburger is.”

GETTING TO THE FOOD ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

The chart below offers examples of investments that accomplish grant maker goals by influencing the people, practices and policies involved in the food system's six phases.

	FOOD SYSTEM PHASE	SAMPLE MISSION
	Growing	Youth
	Processing	Open Space Protection
	Wholesaling	Jobs
	Retailing	Health and Nutrition
	Eating	Arts and Culture
	Recycling	Environment

PHASE PROGRAM

Grant makers can support youth through entrepreneurship programs around growing and marketing food. Such programs build life skills and understanding of the links between soil health and human health. They also add to a potential new generation of farmers, which is needed with most farmers now in their 50s and 60s. With a focus on immigrant populations and minorities, such programs can also open the largely white male world of farming to children from diverse backgrounds or build cultural bridges back to a family's agricultural heritage.

Grants to help update planning and zoning laws can preserve open space by allowing farmers to make food products from farm products on their land. Most planning and zoning ordinances in agricultural areas allow for farm production only; that is, growing crops and raising livestock only. Yet small-scale food processing operations on farms, such as custom meat curing or maple syrup bottling, can be important ways for farmers to add value to their products, make more money in niche markets and avoid having to sell their land for development. Zoning that is both more flexible for farms and in harmony with nearby residences, therefore, can be a useful strategy for building farm profitability and thereby preserving open farmland. Policies, such as state and federal processing regulations, are a related factor. Grant makers can also help small farms increase on-farm processing by supporting efforts to assess and address how regulations, often designed for large industry, affect local farm entrepreneurship.

Grants to help farms join forces and sell their products together can grow new jobs in communities. Such collaboration allows producers to pool their products and, with this volume, invest in warehouse space, distribution and other wholesale infrastructure needed to compete. The emerging market for locally produced foods, in particular, is in need of more distribution and other wholesale functions because the existing system of moving food thousands of miles bypasses the shorter connections between farms and nearby food buyers. Yet demand for local food is growing. Helping farms and related local businesses build the infrastructure needed to meet this demand leads to new jobs on farms and in a whole range of businesses involved in getting food from the farm to the table.

Investments in "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" campaigns can improve child and family nutrition because the campaigns provide important information about where to find fresh, local foods; about the benefits of eating them; and even how to shop for and prepare these foods on a budget tight for money and time. Such campaigns publish guides to local farms that families, school food services and others use to find fresh-picked foods. They also develop marketing materials that farms, stores and others use to catch the consumer's eye and promote fresh, locally grown products. Newspaper articles and other coverage of such efforts also build awareness about nutrition issues and build the community's commitment to making more fresh, healthy foods available for all.

Food is such a fundamental part of our society that gathering social groups around it can spark powerful, community-building projects and cultural events. Councils that do such gathering help communities focus on food's value and its many interconnections. Often called "food policy councils," these groups help the larger community understand the food system and then address the community's food needs and wants. Food policy councils do this through a wide range of activities, from developing municipal policies for local food purchasing to multicultural harvest festivals and committees of local health and human service agencies designing collaborative ways to reach their common public health goals.

Helping communities deal with and develop alternatives to pollution that can come from our current industrial food system is an important role for grant makers. In areas where industrial-scale livestock operations have proliferated, for example, grant makers can assist local citizens on the front lines of monitoring environmental and health issues related to waste cesspools that may be larger than those of many cities. Other assistance can include support of citizen efforts to educate state and federal lawmakers about environmental and health concerns. Potential outcomes of such support can range from more local control of industrial facilities to greater consumer awareness of the environmental realities behind industrially produced meats.

GLOBAL/GENERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

FOOD SYSTEMS FROM THE SEVEN GENERATIONS PERSPECTIVE

Planning for planetary health and sustainable communities

Grant makers have a special role in the work of shifting our current system of producing, processing and marketing foods so that the system as a whole – including local to international political decisions – gives us more of what we want: healthy people, communities and land. Family and community foundations can work with local leaders and groups to incorporate the long view into current actions. As some Native American cultures look seven generations ahead to evaluate current actions, so too can grant makers take a stand for future generations in their current investments.

NOT JUST LOCAL FOOD

Today's burgeoning local food movement is one way that chefs, parents, farmers, and many other food producers and consumers are taking a stand. Buying local farm food, consumers send important signals to the wider mass market about the taste, variety and accountability they want. In choosing local vine-ripe tomatoes, for example, they communicate their concerns about the farm, environment and health issues involved in the current mass-market system of harvesting tomatoes green, shipping them thousands of miles, and then softening them up for consumers by gassing them with ethylene.

But the food system is more than consumers and markets. And the issues we face as a result of our current food system are more urgent and basic to the well-being of society than how local or well-traveled the tomato on your hamburger is.

IT'S A HUMANKIND ISSUE

Over the course of a few generations, our system of producing, processing, and marketing food has jumped its tracks; like a runaway train, its momentum is out of control. Many observers from many different points of interest warn that, unchecked, this system will alter the foundations of life as we know it. Pesticides and weed killers that help farms grow more food for more people, for example, harm the very soil and rural communities needed to keep the food supply strong. Genetic engineering of foods and mile-long fishing nets dragging the ocean floor come forward first as technological innovations but bring with them legitimate and urgent concerns about irreversible changes in our biology and ecosystems.

Getting this runaway food system back on track, therefore, involves going beyond buying local. It involves establishing what we want from the food system and taking the initiative to lead at whatever level of influence makes sense for you. By including a food system perspective in your grant making, you can serve your mission, whether that is growing jobs or protecting the environment. You can also be part of changing our food system's current direction, which experts agree is not sustainable for our bodies or our planet.

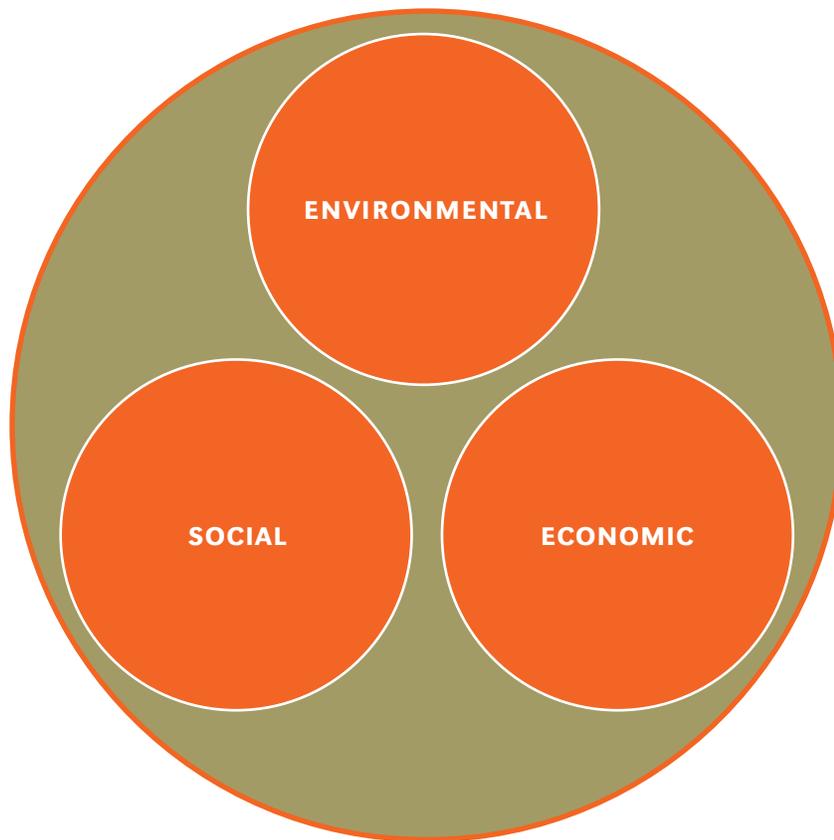


“Getting this runaway food system back on track involves going beyond buying local.”

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Community and family foundations are essential participants in the local to global effort needed to signal markets, hold leaders accountable, and support new models for a food system that results in healthy people, communities, and land. Grant makers can influence the larger planetary issues involved through any number of approaches – from influencing how children think about their food to how scientists approach their research. Many public and private decisions go into our broad, interconnected food system, which is the sum of all the people, resources, processes and politics involved in putting food on our tables. Informing and advancing these decisions so they result in healthy people, communities and land is the urgent work at hand. Doing this in whatever way makes sense for their mission, community and family foundations can play a major role in determining how safe and healthy our food will be in the future – and how strong and sustainable our communities and resources will be.

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE



“Our system of producing, processing, and marketing food has jumped its tracks; like a runaway train, its momentum is out of control. Many observers from many different points of interest warn that, unchecked, this system will alter the foundations of life as we know it.”

A SEVEN GENERATIONS SAMPLER

Here are two examples of how the current food system plays a significant role in how healthy people and the planet will be over future generations.

EXAMPLE 1: OBESITY AND THE RUNAWAY FOOD SYSTEM

We are just beginning to understand all the factors that lead to obesity and the way in which the foods we are eating are contributing to a health crisis. Farm policy is not helping the problem. With the goal of protecting America's farmland and rural heritage, 35 years of federal farm policy has had a counterproductive effect. By subsidizing farms to produce as much as possible of a few basic commodities (principally corn and soybeans), total production now far exceeds what the market would otherwise demand. This overproduction drives crop prices down, which has squeezed out nearly all of the nation's small- and medium-scale farms and discouraged the planting of more healthy fruits and vegetables. The derivatives of these excess commodities (think corn syrup, soybean oil) also have become cheap ingredients for processed foods. The effect: One dollar now buys three to four times more calories in the form of processed food than in fresh, healthy food.

Another food system factor contributing to obesity is poor access to healthy foods in many distressed communities. Poor, inner-city neighborhoods and very rural areas, in particular, often have no place for residents to go for groceries. That's because larger supermarkets bypass these populations, and smaller independent grocers, just like smaller farms, have largely disappeared as the large-scale, cross-country food system squeezed out their lower sales volumes. Known as "food deserts," communities without grocery stores leave residents with only convenience stores nearby, which typically offer only low quality processed food. Residents generally have limited transportation options and may be miles from the nearest source of fresh, healthy food. Along with the relatively low cost of processed and fast food, food deserts contribute significantly to the highest rates of obesity where incomes are lowest.

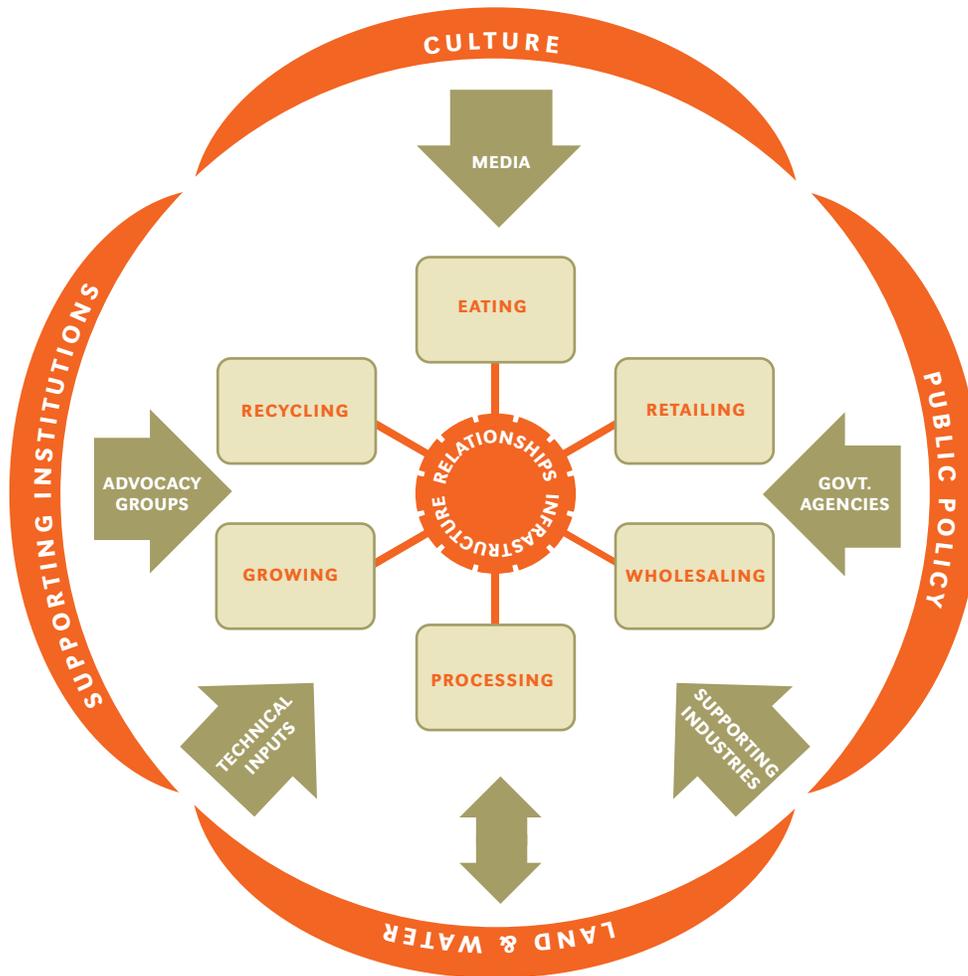
EXAMPLE 2: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE RUNAWAY FOOD SYSTEM

The agricultural practices and energy required to fuel the food system also fuel global climate change. As a whole, the food and agriculture system – growing, processing, manufacturing, distributing, refrigerating and preparing food and other agricultural products – accounts for 10 to 20 percent of the United States' total fossil fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Our food now travels on average more than 1,500 miles from farm to plate, an increase of more than 20 percent since 1980. Choices of fertilizers and practices in livestock management in agriculture also contribute to global warming, with large use of two of the more potent greenhouse gases common in agriculture: 70 percent of total U.S. emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O) and 30 percent of methane emissions (CH₄) come from agricultural uses. Chemical nitrogen, the fertilizer used most frequently, is often applied in excess of what is needed, which increases nitrous oxide emissions. In addition, the trend toward larger, more concentrated livestock operations generates an enormous amount of manure in a very small area. Instead of being recycled back into the land as fertilizer (as would happen on a less concentrated farm), the manure is stored and disposed of in a manner that often pollutes waterways and continues emitting methane, which further contributes to climate change.



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FOOD SYSTEM RELATIONSHIPS



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ACTUAL PROJECT EXAMPLES

REAL PROJECTS THAT BUILD HEALTHY PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND LAND

Grant makers across the country are successfully advancing many community goals by investing in projects that both advance their missions and help change the food system to one that produces healthy people, communities and land. The following table provides examples of actual projects and lists one or more grant makers that have invested in the projects. Note: Some projects span many years and involve more fund sources than is practical to list here.

PROJECT: Food Policy Councils **FOCUS:** All aspects of the food system
AGENCY: Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council (OR)

OVERVIEW: The Council “brings citizens and professionals together from the region to address issues regarding food access, land-use planning issues, local-food purchasing plans and many other policy initiatives in the current regional food system.” For more on this food policy council, see www.portlandonline.com/osd. For a listing of city and state food policy councils across the U.S., see www.statefoodpolicy.org.

FUNDING: Public funding

PROJECT: Local Food Campaign **FOCUS:** Economic / Community Development, Environment
AGENCY: Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (NC)

OVERVIEW: The Appalachian Grown local food campaign is one among many buy-local campaigns springing up across the United States. The purpose of this particular project is to increase demand for locally grown foods, promote farmers’ “tailgate markets” and develop distribution links among farmers, grocers and restaurateurs. It includes support for a “Local Food Guide” (online and in print). For more, see www.asapconnections.org.

FUNDING: NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, NC Golden LEAF Fund, USDA Southern SARE, USDA Risk Management Agency, Asheville Merchants Fund, Community Foundation of Western NC, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission, Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, Janirve Foundation

PROJECT: Healthy Food in Hospitals **FOCUS:** Health, Economic / Community Development, Environment
AGENCY: Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CA)

OVERVIEW: Kaiser Permanente launched its first on-site hospital farmers’ market back in 2003, serving staff and patients. The program was a huge success, and there are now farmers’ markets at 32 Kaiser hospitals in six states. In its work to build a “farm-to-tray” cafeteria procurement system, which buys from small, sustainable, minority farmers, Kaiser Permanente turned to Community Alliance with Family Farmers to study Kaiser’s produce buying patterns and needs. A pilot program was launched in 2006 that sourced eight fruits and vegetables from nearby farms. For more, see www.members.kaiserpermanente.org/redirects/farmersmarkets. See also www.noharm.org/us/food/issue.

FUNDING: Kaiser Permanente

PROJECT: Youth Leadership **FOCUS:** Youth, Education, Economic / Community Development
AGENCY: The Food Project (MA)

OVERVIEW: The Food Project gives teens responsible roles and purposeful work. Through its Youth Changing Communities Initiative, the Project provides year-round opportunities for youth to work on rural and urban farms, serve the community, work in shelters, attend conferences and grow market enterprises. For more, see: www.thefoodproject.org/youth/index.asp?ID=69.

FUNDING: Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation, KeySpan Foundation, Klarman Family Foundation, Laura J. Niles Foundation, Putnam Investments, Starbucks Foundation, Stranahan Foundation, Stride Rite Foundation, William E. & Bertha E. Schrafft Charitable Trust

PROFILE 1: BUILDING BRIDGES AND FUTURES IN THE GARDEN



It is not often that youth from diverse backgrounds, living in different communities, get the opportunity to work together. It is even less often that these young people have the chance to contribute to one of the most purposeful jobs in society: growing and distributing high quality food.

Since 1991, The Food Project has employed and trained 750 teenagers from diverse backgrounds through innovative youth programs that integrate hands-on work, experiential learning, and community service.

On a suburban farm in Lincoln, MA and urban gardens in Roxbury, young people not only care for the land and grow thousands of pounds of produce, but also partner with staff to create a socially, economically, and racially diverse community dedicated to healthy food, environmental stewardship, and personal integrity.

“I continue to work at The Food Project because of all the people that have been a part of my life for the past year,” said Kira Rogers, 15, of Dorchester, Mass. “The people here have occupied a special place in my heart and they make this a comfortable place for me to be. This is one of the only places where I feel that everyone here I can consider a friend.”

More at www.thefoodproject.org.

PROJECT: Food Business Incubator **FOCUS:** Economic / Community Development
AGENCY: Taos Economic Development (NM)

OVERVIEW: The Taos Food Center lowers the cost-of-entry for entrepreneurs by providing a produce marketing center and affordable use of a licensed, commercial kitchen. For more, see www.laplaza.org/b_e/tcedc/foodcenter.html.

FUNDING: U.S. Department of Agriculture, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, Oxfam America Foundation, LANAL Foundation, Healy Foundation

PROJECT: Farm-to-School **FOCUS:** Youth, Education, Economic / Community Development, Environment
AGENCY: Ojai Education Foundation (CA)

OVERVIEW: Food for Thought is one of dozens of farm-to-school programs in the country. It's a group of parents and other interested community members working with the Ojai Unified School District. The Ojai Healthy Schools Project has introduced farm-fresh, locally grown produce into school salad bars throughout the district. The project includes plans for in-class nutrition education, garden-based learning, food demonstrations, farm tours and farmer classroom visits. For more information on this and similar programs throughout the United States, see www.farmtoschool.org.

FUNDING: UC Hansen Trust, Crown Family Foundation, Johnson Family Foundation, Western Growers, Slow Food Ojai/Ventura

PROJECT: Youth Education Programs **FOCUS:** Education, Youth, Human Services, Environment
AGENCY: Norris Square Neighborhood Project (PA)

OVERVIEW: The Garden Program exposes youth to culturally themed gardens with "mini-museums" that showcase cooking utensils, homemade crafts and other cultural artifacts associated with food in different countries. Where there once were dilapidated houses, there are now urban gardens instilling neighborhood pride. The project teaches environmental science and horticulture in a way kids can see and understand. For more, see www.nsnp.com/parcelas.html.

FUNDING: Hispanics in Philanthropy, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, PEW Charitable Trusts, United Way

PROJECT: Breakthrough School for Teen Mothers **FOCUS:** Education, Youth, Human Services, Environment
AGENCY: Catherine Ferguson Academy (MI)

OVERVIEW: The Catherine Ferguson Academy is a Detroit public high school for pregnant teens and teenage mothers. Though located in the heart of a major city, the school has developed a small farming program including chickens, bees, rabbits, goats, a cow and a barn constructed by the students. Because this farming program provides important life skills for young parents, it has improved their sense of connectedness and purpose. As a result, more than 90 percent of the mostly minority students at the school graduate and are accepted to college. For more, see www.metrotimes.com/editorial/story.asp?id=7026.

FUNDING: Public funding

PROJECT: Place-Based Foods **FOCUS:** Arts and Culture, Education, Environment
AGENCY: Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (IA)

OVERVIEW: The Iowa Foodways Taste of Place project identified and documented common foods and also foods that are uniquely Iowan in heritage (in terms of history, ethnicity, ecology and geography) and the people who produce them. For more, see www.iowaartscouncil.org. Also see the Smithsonian Institution's "Key Ingredients - America by Food" tour at www.keyingredients.org.

FUNDING: Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture

PROFILE 2: SATISFYING OUR APPETITE FOR A SENSE OF PLACE



Wisconsin flaunts its famous cheese curds. Maine has lobster. And Texas boasts its barbecue. But what foods are truly Iowan?

There are lots of them, says Riki Saltzman, folklife coordinator for the Iowa Arts Council.

Saltzman spent the past two and a half years researching Iowa's "place-based" foods, dishes that are tied to the places and people who grow, process and eat them.

These are foods that are both tasty and can help Iowans connect to their regions and heritage, Saltzman says. "We can really use food as a window into people's traditions and culture."

Some are Maasdam's Sorghum Syrup from Lynnville, traditional rhubarb wine made in the Amana Colonies, mettwurst sausage from western Iowa, paw-paws (pictured) and black walnuts that grow in southeastern Iowa, and K&K "Tiny but Mighty" brand popcorn raised near Shellsburg.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University funded Saltzman's work researching local foods. The Center hopes the food research and related internet resources can help growers and processors find new markets for Iowa products, says Rich Pirog, who directs the Center's marketing and food systems initiative.

The Center also hopes that Saltzman's research and other work will help Iowa communities take advantage of a growing interest in culinary tourism.

Adapted from an Iowa Farm Bureau article. More at www.iowaartscouncil.org.

PROJECT: Traditional Foods **FOCUS:** Arts and Culture, Economic / Community Development, Social Advocacy, Environment
AGENCY: Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (OK)

OVERVIEW: MFSI's Community Tradition, Foods and Future Project helps people provide for their food and health needs by improving public nutrition programs, reconnecting tribal members with traditional foods, promoting community-based agriculture, and revitalizing the Mvskoke people's heritage as an agrarian society. For more, see www.noyes.org.

FUNDING: USDA-Community Food Project, Jesse Smith Noyes Foundation, First Nations Development Institute, Heifer International, Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group

PROFILE 3: RECLAIMING TRADITIONAL FOOD AND WAYS



The Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative is a grassroots organization addressing food and diet-related health concerns of the citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and their neighbors in northeastern Oklahoma. Governed by a Native American board of directors, the Initiative has launched many programs for reclaiming Native American foods and integrating traditional ways into modern lives.

PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Bringing the "Indian Pumpkin" back to the area by working with a Mvskoke farmer to cultivate heirloom seeds. The Initiative distributed seeds that members saved in 2006. Now many "Indian Pumpkins" are growing in the service area.
- Working with the Tribal Elderly Nutrition Services to include fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables in some 18,000 meals served monthly to seniors.
- Mvskoke, Cherokee, Choctaw, Seminole and non-Native youth working together to create a food heritage documentary film recording stories and information related by community elders regarding food.

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The Buy Appalachian local food campaign increases demand for locally grown foods, promotes a “tailgate market,” and develops distribution links among farmers, grocers and restaurateurs.



The Catherine Ferguson Academy in Detroit is a school for pregnant teens and teenage mothers. The school has developed a small farming program including chickens, bees, rabbits, goats, a cow and a barn constructed by the students.



The Garden Program exposes youth to culturally themed gardens with “mini-museums” that showcase cooking utensils, homemade crafts and other cultural artifacts associated with food in different countries.



The Food Policy Council “brings citizens and professionals together from the region to address issues regarding food access, land-use planning issues, local-food purchasing plans and many other policy initiatives.”

PROJECT: New American Farmers **FOCUS:** Social Advocacy, Economic / Community Development, Education
AGENCY: Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (ME)

OVERVIEW: The New American Sustainable Agriculture Project reaches out to immigrant farmers and farm workers and provides educational programs and technical assistance. The goal is to help them build successful farms in Maine consistent with their cultural practices (e.g., Halal meat production, etc.). For more, see www.ceimaine.org.

FUNDING: Maine Initiatives, Maine Community Foundation, Heifer International, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Whole Foods Market

PROJECT: Fresh Local Food Banks **FOCUS:** Human Services, Health **AGENCY:** Just Food (NY)

OVERVIEW: The Fresh Food for All Program delivers fresh local produce to emergency food providers across New York City and educates clients on food and farm issues. They are developing a toolkit to assist others in replicating this model. For more, see www.justfood.org.

FUNDING: NY State Dept. of Health and Human Services

PROJECT: Farmers' Markets **FOCUS:** Health, Youth, Education, Economic / Community Development
AGENCY: Denver Urban Gardens

OVERVIEW: The Fairview Youth Farmers' Market project is working to expand the community-run Fairview Farmers' Market and Garden in a low-income, ethnically diverse neighborhood in Denver. The project recruits new farmers and works with the Fairview Elementary School in creating student "nutrition ambassadors." For more, see www.dug.org and www.pps.org.

FUNDING: Project for Public Spaces, LiveWell Colorado (a partnership of Colorado Health Foundation, CO Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, and Kaiser Permanente), Colorado Dept. of Agriculture (grant with Slow Food Denver), Integrated Nutrition Program of Univ. of CO Health Sciences Program



The Fairview Youth Farmers' Market project expands the community-run Fairview Farmers' Market and Garden in a low-income, ethnically diverse neighborhood in Denver.



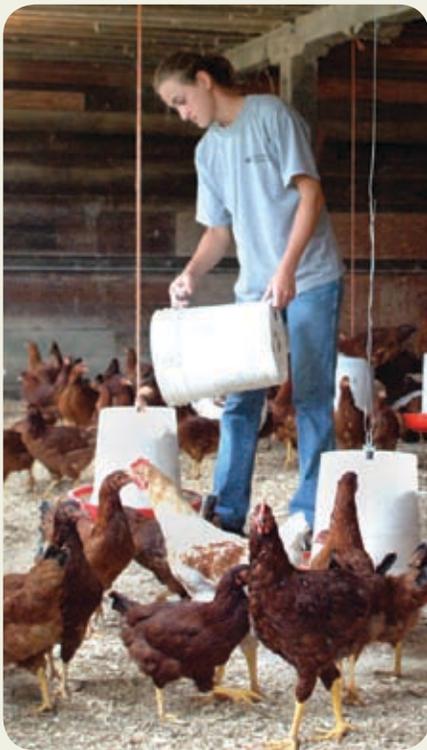
The Ojai Healthy Schools Project has introduced farm-fresh, locally grown produce into school salad bars throughout the district.

PROJECT: Farm-to-Retail Markets **FOCUS:** Economic / Community Development, Environment
AGENCY: Good Natured Family Farms (KS, MO)

OVERVIEW: Good Natured Family Farms is an alliance of more than 40 family farms that collectively process and distribute to two local retail grocery store chains in the Kansas City area. With support from the nonprofit Bridging the Gap and its Buy Fresh, Buy Local campaign materials provided by Food Routes Network, Good Natured Family Farms and Balls Food stores (operator of the two grocery chains) nearly tripled total sales of locally-grown food in just a few years, reaching \$7 million in 2006. For more, see www.goodnatured.net and www.bridgingthegap.org.

FUNDING: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, SBA Small Business Innovation Research Program

PROFILE 4: BUILDING A FUTURE FROM THE PAST



Emma Edelman, named for her great-grandmother, decided to make a go of life as a small farmer. She cleaned out her great-grandmother's chicken house and now delivers farm fresh eggs to grocery stores in Kansas City through the Good Natured Family Farms cooperative.

"We've always had fresh eggs, so I know how good they taste," Emma said. "I thought it would be neat to raise all natural eggs in my great-grandmother's barn."

Today Emma has more than 800 chickens, which roam free and roost in the old barn. Along with her mother, dad, grandparents and eight brothers and sisters, Emma gathers, grades, washes and packs the eggs on the farm and ships them directly to 29 Hen House Markets and Price Chopper stores in the Kansas City area.

Emma's family is one of more than 40 in a 200-mile radius of the city that sell under the Good Natured Family Farms label to these two grocery chains, owned by Balls Food Stores. Sales of locally produced food – meats, milk, cheeses, eggs, honey and fruits and vegetables – have tripled over recent years at the stores for a total of \$7 million in 2006.

"The Good Natured Family Farms products are enjoying double-digit sales increases," said Matt Jonas, vice president of marketing for Balls Food Stores. "Most major brands can't say that."

More at www.goodnatured.net.

Photo courtesy of Good Natured Family Farms



RESOURCES

WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE

There are many ways to get connected and learn more about sustainable food systems as a potential area of programming and grant making. What follows is a partial list. If you don't see what you need here, please feel welcome to contact the H.A. Wallace Center for assistance.

PEER NETWORKS

The following is a list of regional grant-maker networks that promote sustainable food systems.

National: Sustainable Agriculture and Food System Funders (www.safsf.org)

California: Roots of Change Fund (www.rocfund.org)

Midwest: Fresh Taste Initiative (www.cct.org)

Southeast: Chesapeake Bay Funders' Network (www.cbtrust.org)

Northeast: New England Food Systems Funders (contact Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation at www.noyes.org or Sandy River Charitable Foundation at www.srcfoundation.org for more information)

RESOURCES

- H.A. Wallace Center at Winrock International (www.wallacecenter.org).
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Food and Society Initiative (www.wkkf.org/foodandsociety).
- "Eating up the Earth," Redefining Progress paper commissioned by the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders group in 2003 (www.safsf.org).
- "Seeking Balance in U.S. Farm and Food Policy," report published by a coalition of organizations funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (www.farmandfoodproject.org).
- "The New Mainstream," a report sponsored by the ROC Fund (www.vividpicture.net).
- The Omnivore's Dilemma, a book by Michael Pollan (2006).
- "Local Donor Collaboration: Lessons from Baltimore and Beyond," Alice C. Buhl, 2004, Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers (www.abagmd.org).
- "Moving Ideas and Money: Issues and Opportunities in Funder Collaboration," Ralph Hamilton, 2002, Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (www.fundersnetwork.org).

FOR YOUR LOCAL CONTACT

Space for local food systems organization
label or business card.

THE HENRY A. WALLACE CENTER

The Henry A. Wallace Center at Winrock International was established in 1983 to increase opportunities for small and mid-size agriculture. Today the center's research, policy analysis, educational outreach, and leadership development are focused on market-based strategies for sustainable food systems; that is, food production, processing, and marketing that builds social, environmental, and economic health. The center accomplishes this work with an appreciation for diversity and commitment to justice in the systems it helps to develop. Winrock International is a nonprofit organization with main offices in Little Rock, AR and Arlington, VA that works with people in the United States and around the world to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources and protect the environment.

For help with food system program planning, contact the Henry A. Wallace Center:

Henry A. Wallace Center

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wallacecenter@winrock.org
www.wallacecenter.org

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- Reed Davaz McGowan, Norris Square Neighborhood Project
- Asinas Andrews, Catherine Ferguson Academy
- Amy Carrington, Coastal Enterprises Incorporated
- Jen James, The Food Project
- Jacquie Berger, Just Food
- Judy Elliott, Denver Urban Gardens
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- Rachele (Riki) Saltzman, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Diana Endicott, Good Natured Family Farms

The success of the projects featured here starts with creative leadership and community involvement, including key funding from local community and family foundations. Nearly all have also benefited from the foresight and strategic investments of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Food and Society initiative. The initiative has worked since 2000 toward its vision of a future food system that provides all segments of society a safe and nutritious food supply, grown in a manner that protects health and the environment and adds economic and social value to rural and urban communities. Put simply, the initiative seeks to make good food – defined as healthy, green, fair, and affordable food – available to all people. Powerful and persistent funding from Kellogg's Food and Society initiative has advanced the Good Food Movement to a point today where more communities and grantors are recognizing and acting on the imperative of food system change available to all people, especially the most vulnerable children and their families. For more on the initiative, see www.foodandsociety.org.



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