



THE CENTER for ENVIRONMENTAL FARMING SYSTEMS

Cultivating Thriving Communities & Sustainable Farms

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www.cefs.ncsu.edu



Community-Based Local Food Systems

Community Based Local Food Systems

- Background: Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)
- Some definitions
- Why Local?
- Barriers and Opportunities

Center for Environmental Farming Systems

Mission: *To develop and promote agricultural systems that protect the environment, enhance rural and urban communities, and provide economic opportunities in North Carolina and beyond*

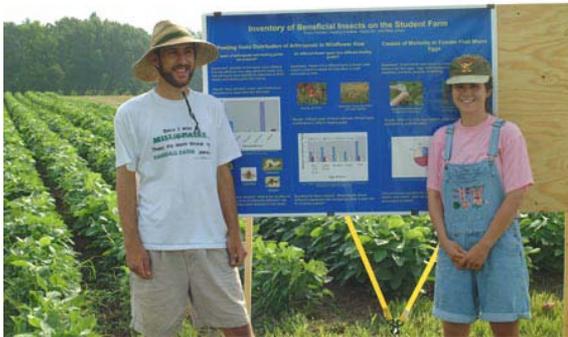
- Partnership initiated in 1994
 - NCSU
 - NCA&T SU
 - NCDA &CS

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Program Elements

- Field Units
- Research
- Academic and other educational programming
- Extension and Outreach
- Community Based and Local Food Systems



What is a Food System



CS Mott Group



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Bringing Product to Local Market

- Infrastructure
- Processing
- Aggregation
- Distribution
- Coordinated Supply
- Value Added

**Local food system was broken....
No matter how good the
production systems were we
were developing, we had to
address these issues so that
our growers could take
advantage of the growing
opportunities.**



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Changing Consumer Landscape

- **Consumer interest: local, sustainable, organic, fresh**
 - *70 percent of consumers want to know where their food comes from and would pay more for locally grown food if they could find it (packaged facts, 2007)*



Why Local and not just more Fruits and Vegetable

- Taste
- Nutrition
- Experiential opportunities





**FOOD
CORPS**

NORTH CAROLINA
NC4-H & CEFS www.ncfoodcorps.org



Why Local and not just more Fruits and Vegetable

- Taste
- Nutrition
- Experiential opportunities
- **You also get..**



Food Systems Impact

- Health
- Economic Development
- Job Creation
- Vitality of Rural Communities
- Farmland Preservation
- Environment
- Physical Activity
- Hunger/Access



Statewide Farm to Fork Initiative Launched in 2008

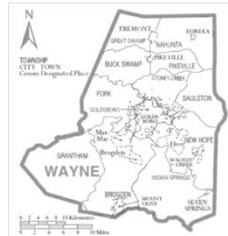
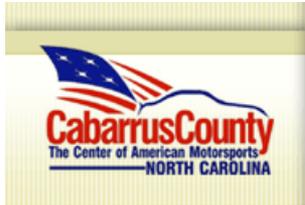
Goal was to develop a **Statewide Action Plan** for building the **Local Food Economy**

- **Describe** the current food system
- **Highlight** important successful models in the state
- **Prioritize** policies and programs for the private and public sectors.

Asset: Diversity



Across the State We Saw: Community Leadership, Business Entrepreneurship, Regional Planning, Public Policy



NC Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund

The Farm to Fork Local Foods Initiative

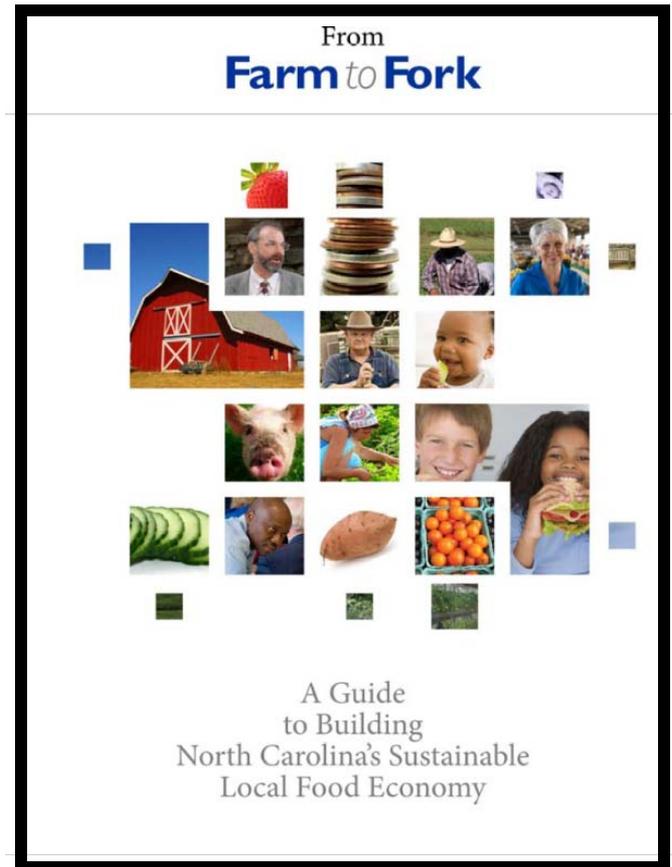
- Established advisory committee
- Regional meetings across the state
- Working Issues Teams established
- **“Game Changer” Ideas Developed**
- Sold out Statewide Summit



Game Changers

The Importance of Partnership

- Legislated Sustainable Local Foods Advisory Council
- NC 10% campaign
- Community Garden in every County (BCBSFNC)
- Pre-service Teacher Education for Farm to School (ASAP)
- Recurring Dollars for Farmland Preservation Trust Fund
- Increased Access and Education in Low-Income Communities
- Beginning Farmers
- Food Corps



Partnerships

Local government officials, nutritionists, farmers and farmer organizations, anti-hunger groups, faith based organizations, youth-based organizations, economic developers, entrepreneurs, retailers, consumers, academic institutions and other agencies.



Barriers and Opportunities



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Barriers: Price

- Prices are impacted by economies of scale, production practices, wages paid to labor, risk, government subsidies.
- We have to address the trade-off between improving access of local foods and insuring the farmer receives adequate compensation.
- Cheap Food is a societal issue and shouldn't be solely on the backs of farmers.

Barriers: Price

- Average age of farmers is 59
- Farmers receive just 19 cents on the food dollar
- Since 1964, we have lost approximately 1 million farms in the US (USDA ag census).
- There are now more people in prison than on farms.

Structure of Agriculture

- Four firms control 87% of beef slaughter, 66% of pork slaughter, 55% of poultry, 62% of milling. Less than 4% of the farms produce 66% of the vegetables.
- Loss of farmers impacts rural community viability and vitality, and opportunity. Food Security is a National Security issue.

bringing new farmers to the table www.ncnewfarmers.org

A USDA funded *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program* of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Developing resources, providing training, and implementing a network of incubator farms



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



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Barriers: Availability/Access

- **Farmer Readiness:** GAPs Certification (Food Safety) and other training needs
- **Infrastructure:** Need to assess and develop infrastructure for local supply chains: Storage, cold chain availability, transportation, processing, distribution. Include repurposing or underutilized infrastructure.
- **New Distribution** companies or models

Innovation in the Food System

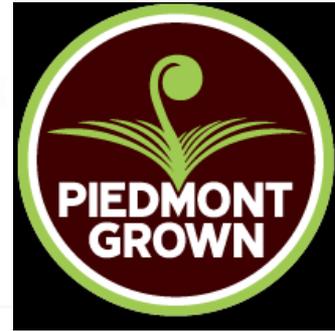


FARMER Foodshare

The Produce Box



Inter-Faith Food Shuttle
a member of Feeding America



**PIEDMONT FOOD & AG
PROCESSING CENTER**
HILLSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA



A community supported fishery

Larger Retail Markets



- **Developing Models at Lowes Foods and Fort Bragg.**
- Work with existing large distributors and food hubs to develop supply chains for seafood, produce, beef, and dairy
- Access is an important part
- Demand-side research
- Farmer Training
- Specifications, etc



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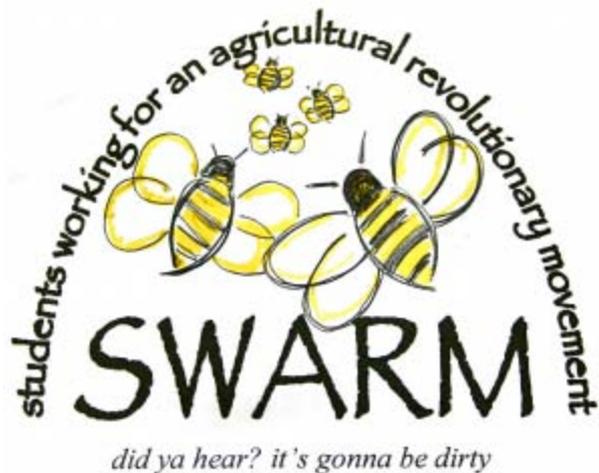
Increasing Access to Fresh Foods

- A Food Desert is a low-income area without ready access to healthy and affordable foods and perhaps limited transportation (currently about 23.5 million people)
- Often more access to fast food restaurants and corner stores without healthy options



Increasing Access to Fresh Foods

- USDA Farmers Market Promotion grant: Produce Peddlers



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Barriers: Availability/Access

- Need improved access and models to be able to use EBT for fresh products. NC behind the national average for farmers markets equipped to take EBT.



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Barriers: Availability/Access

- “I can go and buy every variety of fried chicken imaginable on the west side of Chicago. I can get it in great variety. I can buy cigarettes. I didn’t know there were so many kinds of cigarettes. I can get liquor. I can get designer clothes. I can get heroin, I can get crack. I can get a gun, but I can’t get an organic tomato. I can’t get a cup of yogurt. I can’t get romaine lettuce. (I can’t get *iceberg* lettuce. Let’s just keep it simple.) I can’t get a banana or an apple. But I can get every variety of potato chip there is”.

-----La Donna Redmond



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Barriers: Availability

- Need Consumers to be advocates for change



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10% BUILDING NORTH CAROLINA'S LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY *Farm To Fork*



Join the 10% Campaign
a Center for Environmental Farming Systems

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In Season



[View Seasonality Chart](#)

Here's How It Works

Join us in support of North Carolina's farmers, businesses and communities.

- ✓ Pledge to spend 10 percent of your existing food dollars locally
- ✓ We'll email you with a few simple questions each week
- ✓ We'll track your progress, and you'll see our progress statewide

[Sign Up Now](#)

Watch Us Grow

4586 people
and **522** businesses
spent **\$13,230,000**

Since July 2010.

Help us build North Carolina's local food economy by joining the campaign, encouraging your family, friends and neighbors to do the same.