

# Report of the North Central Cooperative Extension Association Metropolitan Food Systems Symposium

September 19, 2011



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## Acknowledgments

Many people deserve recognition from the symposium planning committee\* for their contributions and support for the North Central Cooperative Extension Association Metropolitan Food Systems Symposium. In July 2010, the deans and directors in the North Central Region held a roundtable in St. Paul, Minnesota, to identify a broad list of current and emerging issues facing metropolitan areas in the region. Their active support for this symposium is a reflection of their commitment to follow through on the work accomplished in St. Paul, where food systems was clearly identified as a priority issue that extension must address.

Twenty-four symposium participants contributed significantly to this effort through two days of hard work in Kansas City, and additional hard work in preparing and hosting five follow-up webinars. Their efforts provided the foundation of what the reader sees in this report.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the many extension professionals who took the time to participate in one or more of the webinars. The questions they asked and the feedback they provided helped amplify our thinking about where we go from here.

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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	3
Part I. Opening Remarks .....	4
<i>Michael Quart</i>	
<i>Vice Provost and Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Missouri</i>	
Part II. Symposium Process .....	5
Part III. Symposium and Webinar Outcomes.....	7
A. Introduction – Overarching Challenges .....	7
B. Food infrastructure – Webinar held July 26 .....	7
C. Food Policy – Webinar held July 28.....	9
D. Consumer-centric Food Information – Webinar held July 26 .....	10
E. Collaboration, Networking, and Capacity Building - Webinar held July 13 .....	11
Part IV. Concluding Remarks .....	13
<i>Tom Coon</i>	
<i>Director of Extension at Michigan State University</i>	
Part V. Synthesis and Next Steps.....	14
Appendix A: Kansas City Symposium Participants.....	16
Appendix B: Kansas City Symposium Agenda .....	18



# Report of the North Central Cooperative Extension Association Metropolitan Food Systems Symposium

## Executive Summary

On May 11 and 12, 2011, 24 North Central Region extension directors, state program leaders, specialists and educators from across all program areas gathered in Kansas City to discuss the opportunities for cooperative extension programming in the area of metropolitan food systems. Through facilitated dialogue this group took the first steps toward (1) developing and prioritizing a list of issues related to metropolitan food systems that cooperative extension is uniquely positioned to address, (2) identifying opportunities for collaboration on metropolitan food systems programming among universities in the North Central region and across program areas, and (3) identifying next steps necessary to bring food systems programming to fruition.

Seven programmatic issue areas were identified. These can be conceptualized as seven components of a comprehensive portfolio of programming for food systems in a given metropolitan area, although the symposium participants acknowledge minor overlaps across some issue areas. Of these, four were given priority by participants for further exploration during the symposium:

- **Food infrastructure** refers to the systems that move food products from the point of production (be it an urban area or nearby outlying areas) to consumers in urban and metropolitan areas, and includes scaling-up, aggregation, wholesaling, processing and distribution to all potential consumers (public and private institutions, individuals).
- **Food policy** refers to the scope of priorities, decisions, policies, and/or legislation articulated by institutions, organizations and decision

makers that affect how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased and disposed. In any given situation it may encompass formal and informal policies, public and private actors, and policies at all geographic scales (local, regional, state, national, international).

- **Consumer-centric food information** refers to information need by consumers to make informed choices about food access, nutrition, preparation and better health generally. Food literacy.
- **Collaborations, networks and capacity building** refer to the leadership, networks, volunteerism, and social capacity in general to support and sustain a diverse community food system.

The remaining three programmatic issue areas were:

- **Food production** refers to the growing/raising of food products for consumption within the foodshed, and includes seasonally grown, sustainable and organic production; production on reclaimed or contaminated urban sites; and use of water and chemicals in urban areas.
- **Food safety** includes safe food processing, preparation and preservation practices, and larger-scale safety issues such as production and distribution risk assessment, food-borne pathogens, diseases and bioterrorism.
- **Business planning and entrepreneurship** refers to the leadership, management, financial and other skills necessary to run enterprises associated with food systems (producers, processors, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, etc.)



Five webinars were conducted in June and July 2011 to provide any and all interested extension professionals background information on the Kansas City symposium, a review of the four priority programming areas, and an opportunity to provide feedback, fill in perceived gaps and provide suggestions for next steps necessary to develop metropolitan food system programming in the North Central Region.

Through the symposium and webinars the following next steps were identified as priorities:

### **1. Form Teams to Advance Work in Seven Programmatic Areas**

Teams should be organized to amplify the logic models begun for the four priority areas, to develop logic models for the other three, and to plan for logic model implementation. Program planning efforts are critically needed to adapt existing extension system capacity in the North Central Region to the unique challenges associated with metropolitan food systems. These seven teams each need representation from all four extension program areas, and should represent multiple universities. In developing more robust planning models these teams should address the key themes and challenges identified through the work thus far, and further identify needs for successful programming.

### **2. Form Team(s) to Develop Pilot Programming Plan for Specific Metropolitan Area(s)**

Extension programs cannot be developed in a vacuum. It is suggested that separate local teams be formed in one or two select metropolitan areas to “road test” the ideas coming from the programmatic teams. These local teams should develop comprehensive food systems programming plans for their metropolitan areas—plans that incorporate all seven programmatic themes. This road test will expose gaps in programming, identify how programs can be carried out through real-world collaborations among program areas and across universities, and suggest where the line between generalized, transferrable programming and uniquely local programming needs to exist. Each state should also consider convening issue or expertise teams around metropolitan food systems, as appropriate.

### **3. Use Web-based Collaboration Technologies for Working and Networking**

The North Central Region should establish at least one place (using Sharepoint, Basecamp, or other) where extension professionals can collaborate on food systems programming, materials can be uploaded, information shared, and web meetings can be held.

### **4. Inventory and Provide Access to Existing Related Extension Programming**

A survey should be conducted of all extension faculty and staff across the twelve states to determine what related research, training, expertise, centers, curricula, projects and programs currently exist. In addition, state plans of work should be collected and examined to look for existing programs and opportunities for collaboration. The resulting database must be compatible with the selected collaboration technology, so that the results are accessible by all extension educators.

### **5. North Central Deans and Directors’ Support for Collaboration**

It is important to recognize that important extension work in local food systems is going on today. At the same time, much of what is taking place is locally initiated and driven. In addition to the suggestions above, extension administration in each university, through NCCEA, can provide support for the desired collaborations in two ways: by redirecting funds to create a pool of funding to support regional collaborative efforts, and by supporting involvement of educators in regional teams as a part of individual plans of work.





## Report of the North Central Cooperative Extension Association Metropolitan Food Systems Symposium

### Introduction

On May 11 and 12, 2011, a group of 24 North Central Region extension directors, state program leaders, specialists and educators from across all program areas gathered in Kansas City to discuss the opportunities for cooperative extension programming in the area of metropolitan food systems. Through facilitated dialogue this group took the first steps toward (1) developing and prioritizing a list of issues related to metropolitan food systems that cooperative extension is uniquely positioned to address, (2) identifying opportunities for collaboration on metropolitan food systems programming among universities in the North Central Region and across program areas, and (3) identifying next steps necessary to bring food systems programming to fruition.

Five webinars were conducted in June and July 2011 to provide any and all interested extension professionals background information on the Kansas City symposium and a review of the four highest-priority programming areas identified by the symposium participants, an opportunity to provide feedback and fill in perceived gaps in the results of the work accomplished in the symposium, and suggestions for high-priority next steps necessary to develop metropolitan food system programming in the North Central Region.

This report is intended to capture the discussions from Kansas City and the webinars and outline a broad road map for moving forward with metropolitan food system programming in the North Central Region. Part I summarizes the opening remarks made at the Kansas City symposium by Michael Quart, vice provost and director of University of Missouri's Cooperative Extension, who provided valuable background on previous extension metropolitan food systems programming that led to the symposium, and charged participants with goals for the symposium and an sense of urgency for extension's involvement in this critical issue facing our metropolitan areas. Part II briefly reviews the process followed by symposium participants to identify and detail high priority programming needs in metropolitan food systems, while Part III reviews the product of the



work of symposium participants by drilling deeper into the discussions and deliberations of breakout groups focused on the four issue areas identified as the highest-priority needs for extension programming. Part III also incorporates the feedback and direction taken from the post-symposium webinars. Part IV reviews the concluding remarks offered in Kansas City by Tom Coon, director of Michigan State University Extension, who emphasized that with the complexity that comes with food systems comes an opportunity for all extension systems to contribute their particular expertise to a greater, regional effort. Finally, Part V is the authors' efforts to distill the work accomplished to date into next steps needed to bring to fruition successful extension programming in metropolitan food systems.

We encourage you to provide your suggestions to the authors, or your own deans and directors. This is an ongoing process, and the success of extension metropolitan food systems programming (or for that matter, *any* extension programming) hinges on the input of everyone delivering programs in metropolitan areas, coordinating the work of metropolitan-area extension offices, collaborating with potential stakeholders, and conducting research on these critical issues.

## Part I. Opening Remarks

### Michael Quart Vice Provost and Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Missouri

Today we are here to focus on metropolitan food systems. Each and every one of you has a different experience with food systems, metropolitan food systems and extension. What we want to do is capture that. This will have real value.

Today is the result of various discussions that have taken place for a number of years. One of the key starting points was the Food Systems Leadership Institute. In 2007, 28 leaders gathered in Moline, Illinois, for a joint symposium to discuss higher education's role in creating the preferred food system of the future. This was a discussion about the whole of the land-grant university—the whole of the research, academic programs and extension components of the land-grant system. A number of interesting points came out of this discussion: public health concerns related to the food system, sustainability and environmental concerns, the dilemma that we're in regarding food versus fuel, cultural values, religion, socioeconomic status, community health and economic viability. These are going to be major factors impacting universities' approaches to research, teaching and extension in food systems.

We also looked at the institutional and structural challenges for higher education in addressing these issues. Funding was right at the top of the list: how it shapes future academic expertise; how we make strategic investments to match expertise to needs; how we meet the challenge of integrated, targeted responses through

interdisciplinary work. How do you meet society's needs while respecting faculty, self-direction and governance?

Then in July 2010, the deans and directors held a two-day roundtable in St. Paul, Minnesota, at the end of the Mini Land Grant Conference to identify a broad list of current and emerging issues facing metropolitan areas in the North Central Region. A number of important issues were identified during this meeting. We saw that nutrition, health and wellness, and food systems were the things we felt, as a region, extension needed to be dealing with. It was decided in a subsequent meeting in Milwaukee that the list would be pared down so that the region could focus on one or two high priority programming issue areas. From that list, metropolitan food systems was identified as an area where the need is great and common programming goals are shared among extension program areas and across universities. As a next step, this symposium was designed as a way to brainstorm how the region as a whole and the extension systems within those regions could move forward with programming related to metropolitan food systems.

When we're finished here today we are going to have a road map. We're going to have a direction that we want to go. Your task is to go to work to help us answer: (1) What is extension's niche in metropolitan food systems? (2) How can we be most effective? (3) What can each university and each program area bring to the table, and how can we all work together? (4) How do we move forward?





## Part II. Symposium Process

### Assembling Symposium Participants

To assemble a working group of appropriate size and interests, state program leaders from each of the four program areas (4-H, ANR, CRED, FCS) generated a list of 24 symposium participants (Appendix A), which was approved by the NCR state deans and directors. The individuals chosen were a mix of state program leaders, state specialists and educators with interests in food systems and/or experience in extension programming in metropolitan areas. A small number of directors and associate directors were also in attendance to provide input and gather firsthand information on the discussions as they took place.

The sessions were facilitated by extension specialists from the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) Community and Economic Development (CED) unit: Gary Taylor, associate professor and extension specialist in community and regional planning, and Alan Vandehaar, ISUEO CED community development specialist.

### Wednesday Morning, May 11, Kansas City Issue Identification

After opening remarks by Robin Shepard and Michael Ouart, participants were introduced to the symposium agenda. A logic model framework was used throughout the symposium to center the discussions on questions germane to extension programming. Participants then engaged in a facilitated discussion focused on the following questions (among others) of the logic model:

- What conditions related to metropolitan food systems demand a programmatic response from extension?
- What factors will impact what extension can/cannot accomplish in metropolitan food systems programming?

A significant number of issues needing a programmatic response were identified. Participants spent considerable time discussing and debating the most appropriate aggregation of the issues into broad programmatic areas. The result was the identification of seven areas, with numerous issues clustered under each theme. Participants concluded the morning by individually voting for the four highest-priority areas. The seven programmatic areas, and their rankings were as follows:

1. **Food infrastructure** refers to the systems that move food products from the point of production—be it in an urban area or nearby outlying areas—to consumers in urban and metropolitan areas, and includes

scaling-up, aggregation, wholesaling, processing and distribution to all potential consumers (public and private institutions, individuals).

2. **Food policy** refers to the scope of priorities, decisions, policies and/or legislation articulated by institutions, organizations and decision makers that affect how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased and disposed. In any given situation it may encompass formal and informal policies, public and private actors, and policies at all geographic scales (local, regional, state, national, international).
3. **Consumer-centric food information** refers to information need by consumers to make informed choices about food access, nutrition, preparation and better health generally. Food literacy.
4. **Collaborations, networks and capacity building** refer to the leadership, networks, volunteerism, and social capacity in general to support and sustain a diverse community food system.
5. **Food production** refers to the growing/raising of food products for consumption within the foodshed, and includes seasonally grown, sustainable and organic production; production on reclaimed or contaminated urban sites; and use of water and chemicals in urban areas.
6. **Food safety** includes safe food processing, preparation and preservation practices, and larger scale safety issues such as production and distribution risk assessment, food-borne pathogens, diseases and bioterrorism.
7. **Business planning and entrepreneurship** refers to the leadership, management, financial and other skills necessary to run enterprises associated with food systems (producers, processors, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, etc.)

### Wednesday Afternoon, May 11 Logic Models

Participants were divided into four groups, corresponding to the four high-priority areas identified in the morning. Each group was asked to address the following aspects of a logic model as it related to their priority area:

- Outline programming ideas related to [priority area]
- Identify target audiences, outputs and outcomes
- Identify how the program ideas integrate collaboration across program areas

At the conclusion of the breakout sessions each group reported back to the large group and sought feedback on their discussions.

### Thursday Morning, May 12 Concluding the Logic Models and “The Elevator Speeches”

Breakout groups resumed on Thursday, with participants addressing the following questions relevant to extension programming in their thematic areas:

- What inputs are needed?
  - ✓ What resources are currently at our disposal?
  - ✓ What additional resources do we need?

The final task asked of each group was to develop a short “elevator speech” to concisely summarize its work up to that time. Each was asked to complete the following sentences:

- Our big programming objective is....
- We have a competitive advantage/niche in this area because....
- It involves collaboration across program areas in the following ways....

Each group again reported back to the large group and sought feedback. The symposium concluded with a facilitated debriefing of the large group, and concluding remarks offered by Tom Coon.



## Part III. Symposium and Webinar Outcomes

### A. Introduction – Overarching Challenges

Participants in the Kansas City symposium identified seven broad themes for programming in metropolitan food systems:

1. Food infrastructure
2. Food policy
3. Consumer-centric food information
4. Collaborations, networks and capacity building
5. Food production
6. Food safety
7. Business planning and entrepreneurship

During the process of establishing these themes, symposium participants identified a number of internal and external challenges to moving forward with food systems programming that apply broadly across all themes:

- The expertise we currently have in the extension system does not align with programming needs in a number of areas
- There is a lack of public awareness of extension in metro areas, or a perception of extension as being strictly for rural areas
- We lack the cultural competencies needed to work in metro areas
- We will need to develop new partnerships in metro areas
- There already exist “many, many players” in food systems related education in metro areas
- We need flexibility in our approaches to programming that encompass:
  - ✓ A stronger emphasis on collaborations with external partners
  - ✓ “We don’t always need to be in charge”
- We need to quickly ramp up our use of new communication technologies or risk not reaching entire demographic segments
- We need to clearly define our role as one of education and not of advocacy (as are many organizations involved in food systems) or risk losing our credibility
- Food systems work is progressing rapidly. We must move rapidly too, and overcome the perception that “we move too slowly”

Subsequent detailed discussions focused on the first four themes primarily because (a) the size of the group was most amenable to four breakout groups, and (b) it was thought that extension already had broad and deep experience with issues of food production, food safety and business planning, making it necessary to do more detailed exploration of the first four issues. The following sections summarize the logic model work of the breakout groups, and the feedback each received during the corresponding webinar.

### B. Food infrastructure – Webinar held July 26

*Food infrastructure* refers to the systems that move food products from the point of production—be it in an urban area or nearby outlying areas—to consumers in urban and metropolitan areas, and includes scaling up, aggregation, wholesaling, processing and distribution to all potential consumers (public, private, institutions).

#### 1. The Elevator Speech

The big programming objective is...

- To develop and enhance systems to move food products from the point of production—be it in an urban area or nearby outlying areas—to consumers in urban and metropolitan areas. The focus is on designing and providing professional development and evaluation for scale-up and aggregation for wholesale and institutional markets

Extension has a **competitive advantage/niche** in this area because...

- We link to research and have the ability to affect research based on people’s needs
- We link to entrepreneurship education
- Education is our business
- We have the proven capability to facilitate the conversation to move forward in area/region with focus and a sense of urgency

It involves **collaboration** across the following **program areas** and disciplines:

- Food safety and packaging
- Business and industry
- Ag businesses
- Community facilitation
- Community planning
- Organizational development
- Youth entrepreneurship
- Engineering

- Basic production sciences with the product in mind
- Data collection and analysis
- Institutional food service
- Hotel and restaurant management
- Marketing
- Journalism

## 2. The Logic Model

- 1) Issues that demand a programmatic response from extension
  - a. Processing and distribution
  - b. Promoting consumer access to healthy local foods
  - c. Entrepreneur development
    - i. Business planning
    - ii. Scaling up for small producers, aggregating producers for wholesaling
    - iii. Funding and financing
    - iv. Value-added businesses
    - v. Market access
    - vi. Food waste
    - vii. Production issues
      1. Soil contamination
      2. Less-than-optimal farming conditions
      3. Farmland preservation and acquisition
- 2) Long-term outcomes
  - a. Enhanced availability and selection of nutritious and affordable food in metropolitan areas in the broader foodshed
  - b. Enhanced economic viability of food system entrepreneurs (producers, processors and distributors) as a result of scaling up, aggregation, etc.
  - c. Creation of environmentally sound local food systems
- 3) Intermediate-term outcomes
  - a. Metropolitan regions generate and produce food sufficient to supply food needs—including surrounding regions that are part of foodshed
  - b. Municipal and entrepreneurial investment in systems that capture food waste; keeping energy and waste in the foodshed
  - c. Metropolitan consumers support buying local, support “buy local” campaigns

- d. Increased success, profitability, sustainability of local entrepreneurs
- e. Increased aggregation for processing and distribution

- 4) Short-term outcomes
  - a. Businesses and entrepreneurs have developed knowledge, skills and business plans
  - b. Retailers market food produced in the region
  - c. Understanding of markets and gaps through food inventories and analyses
  - d. Increased consumer education
  - e. Understanding of concept of food security (insecurity)
  - f. Increased awareness of these issues by state and local policymakers
  - g. General public knowledge and understanding of food systems and their economic impacts

## 3. Key considerations for “next steps” that emerged from the symposium and July 26 webinar

- 1) The need to know what related programming currently exists in the extension system
  - We need to know what is out there now that we can draw on: people, programs, research, models of what has worked elsewhere
  - A survey to all North Central Region cooperative extension systems
  - A review of state plans of work
- 2) The need for in-service training for extension professionals on topics related to food infrastructure:
  - How to stimulate infrastructure development
  - Scaling up production
  - Reaching low-income farmers and low-income consumers
  - Helping urban policy and planning people understand policy, zoning and infrastructure necessary to support an urban food system
  - Aggregation points and how we help create them
  - Economic information that is readily accessible, for producers to make sound financial decisions for entering (or not) into the food market
- 3) The need to develop a web-based system for collaborative learning and sharing on metropolitan food systems. The need to create a system within extension for networking and communication
  - A way to learn about in-service/training opportunities being offered in other states



- A way to learn who is doing education in metro food systems, state plans of work in metro food systems, where expertise lies, where projects/ programs are occurring
  - A way to coordinate training on similar topics
  - A way to share existing models
  - eXtension is the primary way to disseminate work to the outside world, but a way to work internally is also needed
    - ✓ Many related eXtension CoPs are emerging, such as children and gardening, Organic CoP. We need a way to link, share, and work with them, recognizing that, while there may be overlap, these areas do not address all we need topically
  - Linked In and Facebook could be ways to work with collaborators outside our extension system
- 4) Programming should be broadly built on fundamental knowledge and transferrable, yet capable of localization
- There will be overlapping needs, but some priorities and situations are probably state-specific and/or metropolitan-area-specific
    - ✓ Create opportunities for multistate sharing (programming, expertise and personnel) especially in metropolitan regions that cross state lines.
- 5) Separate “education” from “advocacy.” It is important that our efforts be based on sound science and research, and not be seen as “crusading” for local foods as with many organizations.

## C. Food Policy – Webinar held July 28

**Food policy** refers to the scope of priorities, decisions, policies and/or legislation articulated by institutions, organizations and decision makers that affect how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased and disposed. In any given situation it may encompass formal and informal policies, public and private actors, and policies at all geographic scales (local, regional, state, national, international)

### 1. The Elevator Speech

The big programming objective is...

- To inform decision makers about the necessity for well-thought-out policies that are needed to inform, develop and implement a functional food system, and inform those affected by the policies so that they can change and adapt

Extension has a **competitive advantage/niche** in this area because...

- We effectively facilitate discussions and groups
- We provide needed leadership for work groups
- We provide unbiased analysis and research
- We aggregate resources and develop databases
- We facilitate relationship building
- We have a local/state/regional/federal structure

It involves **collaboration** across **program areas** and disciplines because...

- Policy by its nature crosses all disciplines—from production to consumption, to the communities (public, private, others) within which policy is enacted and implemented
- Farm Bill example
  - ✓ Policies that relate to crop production of the major crops regarding price support programs, import/export programs, crop insurance programs, conservation compliance programs
  - ✓ Policies that relate to rural development
  - ✓ Policies that relate to nutrition (SNAP, WIC, Seniors program)
  - ✓ Youth (farm to school) and the agencies that administer or the community groups that help educate the recipients of these programs.

## 2. The Logic Model

- 1) Issues that demand a programmatic response
  - a. Lack of coordinated, aligned food system policy (no Department of Food)
  - b. Current policies are detrimental, or impede the development of “metropolitan food systems”—i.e., local, foodsheds, etc.
- 2) Long-term outcomes
  - a. Scientifically informed policies that optimize nutrition and health
  - b. Access for producers and consumers
  - c. Economic viability for food producers, processors and distributors that result in resilient food systems
- 3) Intermediate-term outcomes
  - a. Implement new policies or policy changes that optimize nutrition and health, access for producers and consumers, economic viability for food producers, processors and distributors,
  - b. Utilize these new policies in practices and decision making

- 4) Short-term outcomes
  - a. Increased awareness of what policies affect our food systems
  - b. Increased ability to analyze the impact of policy on our food system
  - c. Increased desire to create new policy to benefit our food system or adjust policies that negatively affect our food system
- 5) Our resources
  - a. Human resources—university systems
  - b. Platforms for collaboration
  - c. History of working together
  - d. Dense network of people
  - e. Access to people outside of extension (e.g., NCRCRD) farm foundation, Farm Bureau
- 6) What resources are we lacking
  - a. FTEs needed to build capacity in this area
  - b. Technology
  - c. Curriculum
  - d. eXtension connection on food policy
  - e. Access to legal expertise
  - f. Structure and resources needed to ensure that we connect our resources and provide a place where people can plug in
  - g. Incentives to engage in this area (divert from current programming)

### 3. Key considerations for “next steps” that emerged from the symposium and July 26 webinar

- 1) We need to think broadly about policy
  - Policy is not simply the Farm Bill. Includes local community policy (zoning, infrastructure, tax policy), state agriculture and land use policies, public sector food purchasing policies, etc.
    - ✓ People at all levels of government need to recognize that many policies need to be re-examined and possibly changed to accommodate a thriving metro food system
  - Discussions about food policy need to include social justice questions related to the food system
    - ✓ How do we ensure that food infrastructures and policies acknowledge social-economic inequities? Food deserts and their disproportionate impacts on the poor. Most successful (sustainable) local food programs, conversely, focus on providing local foods that often come at a premium cost.

✓ At the same time, we need to be sure that any such programming is balanced.

- 2) Community development has a key role to play in food policy programming
  - Leadership and resource development
  - Bringing all stakeholders to the table for dialogue
    - ✓ Especially important on issues covered under 1) above.
- 3) Need to share what successful extension programming exists across the system. Also need to examine successful food systems that are in place that extension is not involved with. Lessons to learn.

### D. Consumer-centric Food Information – Webinar held July 26

*Consumer-centric food information* refers to information need by consumers to make informed choices about food access, nutrition, preparation and better health generally. Food literacy.

#### 1. The Elevator Speech

The big programming objective is...

- To be the trusted source of information on food access and food literacy that ensures adequate nutrition and better health for residents of our states. Food literacy is the knowledge of food, farming and the land.

Extension has a **competitive advantage/niche** in this area because...

- Extension is the complete package to deal with the issue of food systems—community development, FCS, Ag-Hort, Natural resources (waste and water) and youth development.
- Breadth of knowledge
- Distribution of educators
- Work with all demographics
- Ability to expand
- Balanced—research-based
- Professional staff development
- Direct contact with university faculty
- Implement educational theory
- Intentional use of evaluation

It involves **collaboration** across the following **program areas** and disciplines...

- FCS
- Communications

- Technology
- Community development
- 4-H/youth
- ANR/Horticulture
- Community partners
- Tenured faculty

## 2. The Logic Model

- 1) Issues that demand a programmatic response from extension
  - a. Consumer education on:
    - i. Food selection and preparation
      1. Financial education
      2. Nutrition
      3. Media marketing messages and critical thinking
    - ii. Food literacy (where food comes from)
      1. Small production, resources and systems
    - iii. Food safety
    - iv. Food access
- 2) Long-term outcomes
  - a. Improved health
  - b. Reduced health care costs
  - c. Increasing local food consumption
  - d. More households food secure
  - e. Student academic performance
  - f. Extension dollars up
  - g. Improved household financial stability = better quality of life
- 3) Short-term outcomes
  - a. Spending behavior
  - b. Buying behavior
  - c. Food prep
  - d. Eating behavior
  - e. Food safety practice
  - f. Production

## 3. Key themes that emerged from the symposium and the July 26 webinar

- 1) Need to find a common measure and a way to evaluate food literacy—identify measurable outcomes, instruments to measure outcomes, and aggregate outcomes at local, state and national levels

- 2) Concerns about ability of staff to help with consumer issues—most current work is funded by SNAP dollars and hard to include in other projects
- 3) More collaboration and information sharing within cooperative extension:
  - A website or more efficient way to gather and share information and resources throughout the region
- 4) Need more ways to reach out to consumers to engage them and increase food literacy:
  - Partner with local health departments and hospitals
  - Podcasts, social media, in-person trainings
  - Publications, curricula, message points, media spots
  - Online courses (for staff and general public)
  - Build an interactive component for community members
  - Develop community points of contact
- 5) Needed resources:
  - Reallocation of resources
  - Technology improvements
  - Social media specialists
- 6) We need a shift in extension culture
  - We need to prioritize collaborative work across program areas in food systems, and reward that collaborative work
  - We need to reward collaborative work across disciplines
  - We need to lower barriers to working with other university's extension systems, or raise the incentives by priority funding of multistate programs

## E. Collaboration, Networking, and Capacity Building - Webinar held July 13

*Collaborations, networks and capacity building* refer to the leadership, networks, volunteerism, and social capacity in general to support and sustain a diverse community food system.

### 1. The Elevator Speech

The big programming objective is...

- To build capacity in communities in order to design, resource, lead and sustain a food system that meets the needs of all residents.

Extension has a **competitive advantage/niche** in this area because...

- Experience in volunteerism and leadership development

- Bring together disparate groups (farmers/ consumers, conventional/organic farmers, city planners/community gardeners, etc.)
- Faculty expertise
- Play lead role in engaging campus resources
- Non-biased facilitator
- Existing relationships in communities (know farmers, people)
- Holistic assessment/evaluation tools (not everyone in group felt confident in their ability to evaluate and measure outcomes)

It involves **collaboration** across **program areas** and disciplines...

- Because it requires a systems approach to be successful
- Because it requires diverse content expertise
- Because it requires access to multiple sectors of the community
- Training needs exist in all program areas (and cross-program training, i.e., agriculture literacy, school gardens, farm to school)

## 2. The Logic Model

- 1) Issues that demand a programmatic response from extension
  - a. Community capacity building
  - b. Leadership
  - c. Volunteerism
  - d. Consensus building
  - e. Networking
- 2) Long-term outcomes
  - a. A community that engages the diverse strata of the community
  - b. Community-driven and sustained (ownership)
  - c. Dense network—lots of linkages
  - d. Embraces the diverse food system
- 3) Intermediate-term outcomes
  - a. Recording metrics and making decisions on data
  - b. Building tolerance and relationships, cooperation and linkages
  - c. Increase numbers of volunteers
  - d. Increase people taking on leadership role

- 4) Short-term outcomes
  - a. Increase knowledge of community (metrics: health, food, business, organizations, demographics)
  - b. Increase understanding of the food system (complex and diverse)
  - c. Increase knowledge and competence of volunteers (extension is a volunteer-dependent organization)
  - d. Increase exchange of knowledge within and between groups
  - e. Create common vision

## 3. Key themes that emerged from the symposium and the July 13 webinar

- 1) More collaboration within the North Central network:
  - Form working groups
  - Survey the work being done at all universities within the region, including a list of resources, inventory of research projects and programs
  - Collaborate to complete asset maps and community food assessments
  - Gather regional food systems information to use for multistate grant applications
  - Share plans of work and other resources and include more food systems work in local and state plans of work
- 2) More in-service training for extension professionals on specific issues areas:
  - How to engage potential collaborators
  - How to educate collaborators and the general public to give them a wider base of knowledge about agriculture and the food system
  - Best practices from specific metropolitan case studies that illustrate how extension can address issues with programming
  - Technology training
- 3) More training for general public and stakeholders:
  - How to collaborate with stakeholders in rural areas and stakeholders in metropolitan areas
  - Training—production, cooking, food entrepreneurship, business planning, collaborating, policy, leadership, consensus building, conflict management, accessing resources



## Part IV. Concluding Remarks

**Tom Coon**

**Director of Extension at Michigan State University**

The following is a summary of Dr. Coon's concluding remarks:

This symposium has been a great experience for me personally and I really enjoyed listening to everyone. You've heard the history of how this came to be, and you've heard our discussion on "metropolitan." Let's not let that constrain us. If we think more broadly, we realize that we're really talking about regional food systems. The dynamic of the conversations that we've had in the past day and a half really improves us as an organization, and I appreciate everyone's contributions.

We at extension are charged with building relationships in a community setting as a way to address change—and not just relationships among each other, but relationships within a community. Food system issues are part of a larger system, and we haven't gathered data around it for very long in a way that would allow us to understand this complex system. Addressing this issue on a regional basis has a lot more potential for each one of us being successful than if we each do it alone. If we try to do it on our own, we're probably not going to have nearly as much success as we had hoped. So let's keep these groups working. Let's bring more people to the table in these groups so, as a region, we can really start to have an influence on this system.

First, help people understand that it is a complex system and it has manifestations, and promise to address problems that we haven't always put together. There are many issues: obesity and health issues, social justice around food, economic development, job opportunities, whether it's for a farmer out in the middle of Kansas or a farmer in downtown Detroit, we can create opportunities for them to access a market, sell a product, make a living and be profitable. Communities are struggling with a lot of challenges, and it would be great to bring them together around something like this, something that's bigger than the community and yet has benefits for the whole community.

What is our unique role? We've had many different attempts to answer that. One is that extension brings research. We bring evidence to understand how these complex issues work. Sometimes we don't know what we're going to find when we gather the data and build the maps; we end up with solutions we hadn't anticipated. Take, for example, this distribution issue that was the most identified challenge for us to work on in food systems. I never dreamed that that issue would surface, and yet it

surfaced. I think that illustrates the value of doing this as a group and as a region. Our best chance of being successful is to do this as a region and perhaps focus on these metropolitan statistical areas as the story that we tell and then go deeper. Once people understand the foodshed as a system, then I think that they will logically make the same transition that we did in here.

I happen to be in a state where food systems are one of the top priorities of our program. Other states may not make those investments, and I think that those are judgments that everyone has to make in their own context. For me, there's tremendous value in being part of the whole, even if not everyone is putting the same amount of investment in this work. Ultimately, there are ideas and experiences that come from each of those. And with all of us working together across the region, we have to be able to demonstrate our value proposition daily at the local, state, and federal level. I appreciate your time and effort here today and yesterday, and I look forward to seeing what great things you all are going to create.

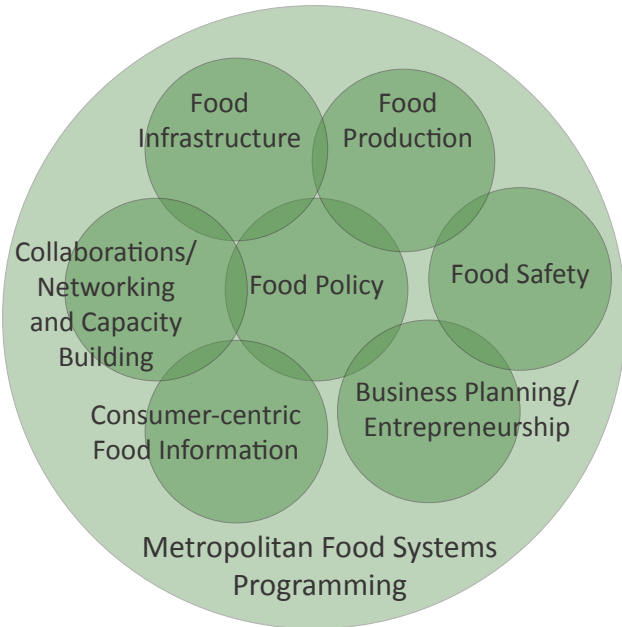


# Part V. Synthesis and Next Steps

Participants invited to the Kansas City symposium were asked to perform some “heavy lifting” over the course of one and a half days. Participants were charged with developing and prioritizing a list of issues related to metropolitan food systems that cooperative extension is uniquely positioned to address, and identifying opportunities for collaboration on metropolitan food systems programming (a) among universities in the North Central Region, and (b) across program areas. Using the logic model development process followed in Kansas City and the feedback received during the subsequent webinars, a conceptual framework of metropolitan food systems programming was created, and a number of important key next steps were identified.

## A. Collaborations Across Program Areas: Conceptualizing the Results of the Symposium and Webinars

It is helpful to conceptualize the seven issues identified at the Kansas City symposium as seven potential components of a comprehensive portfolio of programming for food systems in a given metropolitan area. Vetting the symposium results through the webinars validated the belief that these seven issues offer largely comprehensive coverage of the spectrum of issues connected to metropolitan food systems. There is admittedly overlap among the issues—as was evident from considerable discussion at the issue identification phase of the symposium. Undoubtedly, gaps also still exist in our understanding of problematic conditions and resulting programming needs. These will certainly become evident



as this work continues, and vary among metropolitan areas in the North Central Region.

Collaborations across program areas flow naturally from this conceptualization. When the Kansas City symposium breakout groups shared their work, the need for 4-H, ANR, CRED and FCS programming was evident in each issue. Food policy, for example, cannot be adequately addressed without touching on the Farm Bill—which touches agricultural production (ANR), nutrition and farm to school programs (4-H, FCS)—or city and county policies related to land use (CRED). As the work product from the breakout groups illustrates, organizing by programmatic themes rather than extension program areas promotes collaboration in furtherance of responding to the real-world challenges presented by current conditions.

## B. Collaboration Among Universities – Putting the “Metropolitan” in Metropolitan Food Systems Programming

What do we mean by metropolitan food systems? From the discussions in Kansas City the concept of a “foodshed” emerged as the appropriate paradigm for program planning purposes. The term has been used in the literature to describe the geographic area that supplies a population center with food and the population center that consumes it, areas of land near population centers that could theoretically provide part or all of a metropolitan areas food needs, or, more generally, the flow of food from producer to consumer. Drawing a precise boundary around a metropolitan region’s foodshed is less important for programming purposes than the concept itself. The foodshed concept—and indeed the term “metropolitan”—suggests a geographic context for collaborations among universities. Many of the major metropolitan areas in the North Central Region span two or more states, making for natural collaborations among land-grant universities. Such collaborations will also allow for the development of expertise in an aspect of food systems in a single university, in response to the unique challenges faced by metropolitan areas in that state. This university then can become a resource for and a contributor to programming across the entire North Central Region.

## C. Next Steps

The concepts outlined above suggest ways to organize, collaborate, learn, teach and move forward generally on metropolitan food systems programming. To counter the perception that “we move too slowly,” extension should pursue the following activities (and more, as they become

evident) simultaneously. As was suggested by the food infrastructure group during the July 26 webinar: “We should not think about this linearly—i.e., gather the data, plan, then act. We cannot afford to wait until we have all of the information before we do more.”

### **1. Form Teams to Advance Work in Seven Programmatic Areas**

This report reflects the work accomplished by 24 people in one and a half days, and the feedback received during webinars totaling approximately five hours. Thus, the report is only a first step toward developing collaborative metropolitan food systems programming across the North Central Region. Teams should be organized to amplify the logic models begun for the four priority areas, to develop logic models for the other three and to plan for logic model implementation. It is important to note that a complete portfolio of programming in metropolitan food systems includes all seven areas. The symposium participants focused on four priorities simply because four was the appropriate number for the size of the group present. Although extension’s existing capacity is high in the three areas of food production, food safety, and business and entrepreneurship, program planning efforts are still critically needed to adapt that capacity to the unique challenges associated with metropolitan food systems.

As in Kansas City, each of these seven teams should represent all four extension program areas, and should represent multiple universities. In developing more robust planning models these teams should address the key themes and challenges identified through the work thus far, and further identify needs for successful programming.

### **2. Form Team(s) to Develop Pilot Programming Plan for Specific Metropolitan Area(s)**

Extension programs cannot be developed in a vacuum. It is suggested that separate local teams be formed in one or two select metropolitan areas to “road test” the ideas coming from the programmatic teams. These local teams should develop comprehensive food systems programming plans for their metropolitan areas—plans that incorporate all seven programmatic themes. This road test will expose gaps in programming, identify how programs can be carried out through real-world collaborations among program areas and across universities, and suggest where



the line between generalized, transferrable programming and uniquely local programming needs to exist. Each state should also consider convening issue or expertise teams around metropolitan food systems, as appropriate.

### **3. Use Web-based Collaboration Technologies for Working and Networking**

The North Central Region should establish at least one place (using Sharepoint, Basecamp, or other) where extension professionals can collaborate on food systems programming, materials can be uploaded, information shared, and web meetings can be held.

### **4. Inventory and Provide Access to Existing Related Extension Programming**

A survey should be conducted of all extension faculty and staff across the twelve states to determine what related research, training, expertise, centers, curricula, projects and programs currently exist. In addition, state plans of work should be collected and examined to look for existing programs and opportunities for collaboration. The resulting database must be compatible with the selected collaboration technology, so that the results are accessible by all extension educators.

### **5. North Central Deans and Directors’ Support for Collaboration**

It is important to recognize that important extension work in local food systems is going on today. At the same time, much of what is taking place is locally initiated and driven. In addition to the suggestions above Central extension administration in each university, through NCCEA, can provide support for the desired collaborations in two ways: by redirecting funds from each institution to create a pool of funding to support regional collaborative efforts, and by supporting involvement of educators in regional teams as a part of individual plans of work.

## Appendix A

### Kansas City Symposium Participants

\*\*Breakout group affiliation (FI=Food infrastructure;  
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## Appendix B

### Kansas City Symposium Agenda

#### Wednesday, May 11

- 8:00 am Welcome and introductions
- Goals for the symposium
- Speaker: Setting the context:
- What is extension's niche in metropolitan food systems educational programming?
  - What do we bring to the table that others do not?
- 9:00 am Open discussion: What issues and questions raised by the speaker resonate with you?
- 9:45 am Break
- 10:05 am Facilitated discussion – Begin logic model work:
- What conditions demand a programmatic response from Extension?
  - What external factors will impact what Extension does/does not do in the area of metropolitan food systems?
- 11:30 am Breakout groups – Introduce afternoon topics
- Noon Lunch
- 1:15 pm Breakout groups continue logic model work:
- Outline programming ideas related to metropolitan food systems
  - Identify target audience(s), outputs, and outcomes
  - How the program idea integrates collaboration across program areas
- 2:45 pm Break
- 3:00 pm Breakout groups report. Prioritize programming initiatives and set agenda for next day
- 4:00 pm Adjourn for the day

#### Thursday, May 12

- 8:00 am New breakout groups continue logic model work:
- Identify necessary inputs across program areas, and potential external partners
- 9:15 am Breakout groups report. Discussion/feedback/refinement of program plans
- 10:00 am Break
- 10:20 am Facilitated discussion:
- What resources are currently at our disposal? What additional resources do we need?
  - What are the next steps?
- 11:30 am Synthesis Speaker – summarizing the work of the symposium and outlining next steps
- Noon Adjourn



# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Extension and Outreach

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cathann Kress, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.