FOOD SYSTEMS

Models for Community Systems

WHAT IS A FOOD SYSTEM?

 Food systems are the sum of actors and interactions along the food value chain—from input supply and production of crops, livestock, fish, and other agricultural commodities to transportation, processing, retailing, wholesaling, and preparation of foods to consumption and disposal.

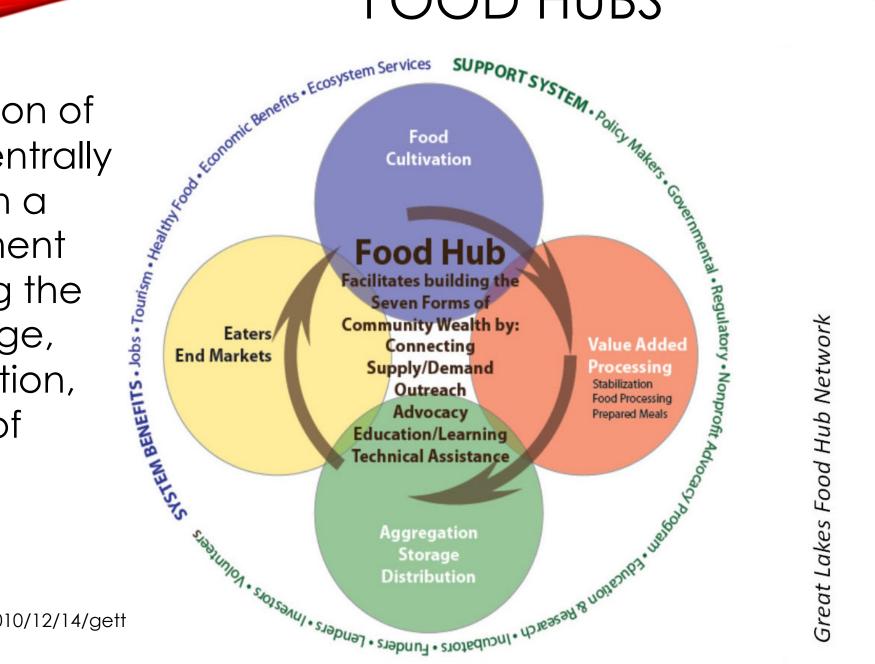
International Food Policy Research Institute

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

- A local food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic, and social health of a particular area.
- Increasingly, communities are organizing "food hubs" around co-ops or other community wealth building enterprises to anchor local food systems.

FOOD HUBS

The working definition of a food hub is "a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products."



https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2010/12/14/gett ing-scale-regional-food-hubs

FOOD SYSTEM PLANNING

Where in the process of planning a micro community food system do we need to rely on external contributors and where can we contribute?

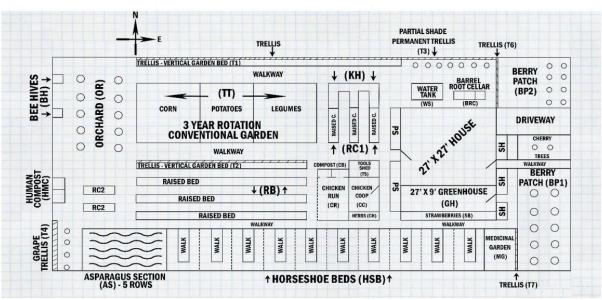


STEP 1: PRODUCTION

- What goes in: Knowledge of how to raise crops and livestock, sun, soil, water, air, seeds, livestock, access to land, tools, farm equipment
- What comes out: Food ready for processing
- Production can look very different depending on the scale and growing methods used.
 - Acreage
 - Types of crops to produce
 - Organic or synthetic fertilizers
- Inputs
 - Saving seeds, composting
 - Buying seeds, soil, etc.

The Self-Sufficient Backyard





HOW MUCH CAN YOU PRODUCE ON LESS THAN AN ACRE?

The Urban Homestead model at a Glance

- Location: Northwest Pasadena, one mile from downtown Pasadena [California]
- Property Size: 66' x 132' = 8,712 sq.ft. (1/5 acre)
- House: Simple, wood frame craftsman bungalow.
 Circa 1917.
- House Size: 1,500 sq. ft.
- Garden Size: ~ 1/10 acre (3,900 sq.ft. / ~ 66' x 66')
- Garden Diversity: Over 350 different vegetables, herbs, fruits & berries
- Productivity: Up to 6,000 lbs harvest annually on 1/10 acre

SOURCE: http://urbanhomestead.org/urban-homestead

The average American family of 4 consumes about 4 tons (8000 lbs) of food annually.

- What goes in: Harvest, packaging, storage, and processing facilities
- What comes out: Food ready for sale and/or distribution
- Every food requires some level of processing, storage, and/or packaging, whether it's rinsing off freshly pulled carrots or blanching tomatoes.

https://sustainablefoodcenter.org/

STEP 2: PROCESSING



STEP 3: DISTRIBUTION

- What goes in: Food ready for sale or distribution, sales outlets, marketing efforts
- What comes out: Food ready for purchase and preparation
- In the distribution step, food gets to those who will prepare it for consumption.
- Direct-to-consumer sales outlets like farmers' markets, farm stands, and CSAs all link food producers directly to their customers. Food banks distribute food to partner food pantries where they provide it for free to low-income households.





- Local farmers market cooperative
- Works with local producers
- Provides multiple avenues for sales
- Provides multiple locations for purchasing

"Public markets are not just places of commerce. Successful markets help grow and connect urban and rural economies. They encourage development, enhance real estate values and the tax base, and keep money in the local neighborhood. Public markets also offer low-risk business opportunities for vendors and feed money back into the rural economy where many vendors grow, raise and produce their products."

https://waccamawmarkets.org/about-us/

Strawberries from Sweet Home Farm – Market Member Miracle Lewis

STEP 4: CONSUMPTION

- What goes in: Food that is ready to prepare, knowledge of food preparation techniques, cooking appliances
- What comes out: Ready to eat food
- This is the part of the food system that everyone takes part in—eating!
- Family traditions, cultural heritage, time, dietary needs, budget, and personal preferences guide how we cook at home, and some of these factors may evolve over time.

EAT IT CLEAN, FRESH, CRISP AND HEALTHY!

- Nutrition issues are often cited as problems related to how we consume food.
- According to the US Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 89% of us consume more sodium and 70% of us consume more added sugar than the recommended limits, which can contribute to higher levels of dietrelated diseases like hypertension and type-2 diabetes.
- The structure of our current national food system promotes sodium- and sugar-rich processed foods.
- We can build up the health of our community and local economy by consuming fresh, locally produced fruit, vegetables, and lean protein, and SFC is working to ensure those choices are available and accessible for everyone.
- 21 Reasons to Eat Healthy

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

SO WHAT MIGHT A LOCAL, COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM LOOK LIKE?

HOW CAN WE USE WHAT WE DISCUSSED TODAY TO CREATE AN OPPORTUNITY ON A SMALL SCALE?

