



Media Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation awards \$50,000 to Center for Environmental Farming Systems' NC 10% Campaign

Two-year grant to develop local food markets at NC colleges and universities for low-resourced farmers

Raleigh, NC (March 17, 2016) – Trustees of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation have awarded a grant to the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) to support the NC 10% Campaign's efforts to create more markets for low-resourced farmers by connecting universities across the state, especially Historically Black Colleges and Universities, with farmers who can supply fresh, local food.

This project is an expansion of the NC 10% Campaign – a statewide collaborative initiative of CEFS and NC Cooperative Extension – to increase demand for local foods by encouraging consumers, institutions, businesses, and organizations to commit 10 percent of their existing food dollars to locally produced foods. Funds from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation will help establish student leadership on campuses across the state to assist with outreach to local farmers and producers.

"The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation supports organizations that aim to increase local economies and foster collaboration," said Joy Vermillion Heinsohn, assistant director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. "The Center for Environmental Farming Systems is working to build healthy community food systems that sustainably and justly enhance community economic development efforts and provide under-resourced farmers with new opportunities to build individual wealth. We are proud to be a partner in achieving this shared vision."

The NC 10% Campaign's Local Food Ambassador (LFA) Program cultivates student leadership, promotes awareness of local foods, and supports place-based food access solutions at NC universities and colleges. This grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation will allow the NC 10% Campaign to connect low-resourced farmers with new markets specifically at Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, North Carolina Central University, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Winston-Salem State University, and will inform statewide models for farm-to-institution procurement.

"Many of these universities are major economic drivers in their communities," said Robyn Stout, State Program Coordinator of the NC 10% Campaign. "Connecting university markets with local farmers encourages local food infrastructure development and economic viability within the community, which are aspects of a thriving and resilient food system. This award is a win-win because it will also serve the students who are passionate about increasing access to healthy foods on their campuses."

The grant is awarded through North Carolina State University, and will enable Campaign program staff at both NC State University and North Carolina A&T State University to collaborate with the *Real Food Challenge* – a successful national organization promoting equitable, sustainable food systems – to provide support and training for the Local Food Ambassador students and their university teams of NC Cooperative Extension agents, local farmers, University Sustainability Offices, Dining Services, and faculty/staff.

On November 20, 2015, Trustees voted to approve 83 grants totaling \$7.5 million to organizations across North Carolina.

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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL FARMING SYSTEMS (CEFS)

CEFS develops and promotes just and equitable food and farming systems that conserve natural resources, strengthen communities, improve health outcomes, and provide economic opportunities in North Carolina and beyond. CEFS is a partnership of NC State University, NC Agricultural and Technical State University, and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. For more information about CEFS, please visit www.cefsnc.org.

ABOUT THE Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation (ZSR) is committed to improving the quality of life of all North Carolinians. ZSR invests in statewide, regional and community-based organizations that are dedicated to building an inclusive, sustainable and vibrant state. The groups that ZSR supports both work to build healthy, robust communities at the local and regional level and engage in education, civic dialogue and advocacy around issues of importance to communities and to North Carolina. ZSR currently focuses on the areas of community economic development, environment, public education, social justice and equity and strengthening democracy. The Foundation is a 79-year-old private foundation based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. For more information or to learn more about ZSR, visit www.zsr.org.

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*Please note: this is a corrected version of this press release. The earlier version incorrectly stated the amount awarded as "nearly \$70,000".