

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS IN COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

An annotated bibliography of local food in community and economic development literature (2016)

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Ahearn, M., Brown, J., Goetz, S., & Liang, K. (2014). Linkages between community focused agriculture, farm sales, and regional growth. *Economic Development Quarterly*.

This study considers the regional economic impact of community focused agriculture by reviewing county-level information from the Census of Agriculture and reported growth in total agricultural sales. Results varied marginally across different U.S. regions yet were generalized with the finding that \$1 increase in agricultural sales resulted in a \$0.04 increase in county personal income. It is important to contextualize this finding with the fact that agriculture only accounts for about 1% of U.S. GDP.

BALLE and Kaiser Permanente. (2016). The Future of Health is Local: A Field Guide for Health Sector Leadership. Retrieved from <https://bealocalist.org/sites/default/files/Future-of-Health-is-Local-2016/flipviewerxpress.html>.

Written for an audience of health workers in order to promote a systemic approach to health and wellness, this guide highlights economic stability as one of the most vital social determinants of health. Central to this report's argument for supporting the local economy is research that reveals lower mortality rates and health costs in communities that boast a well-supported small business sector in contrast to economies dominated by big firms. This argument translates into support for local food systems as the field guide purports that with the economic shift to local business comes increased job opportunities, local tax activity, and charitable activity.

Bowen, B. (2015). Growing a Healthy Economy with Local Foods: 6 Steps to Success Toolkit. NC Cooperative Extension. Retrieved from <https://communitydevelopment.ces.ncsu.edu/economic-development>.

In this toolkit, Bowen outlines the processes by which agricultural and local food system professionals can increase awareness of and connections between local food systems and economic development efforts. Geared towards an audience unfamiliar with economic development, the guide emphasizes the importance of understanding development language, metrics, and strategies

in order to successfully integrate agricultural and local food systems work into the planning and growing of social and economic prosperity.

Colloredo-Mansfield, R., et al. (2014). Communities, Supermarkets, and Local Food: Mapping Connections and Obstacles in Food Systems Work in North Carolina. *Human Organization*, 73(3).

This North Carolina-centric case study reveals potential for corporate grocery retailers and their local consumer base to be successful allies in rebuilding the supply chain as one that supports local food producers. Though corporate retail chains are often seen as responsible for the economic challenges faced by small and mid-sized farm businesses, consumers also see these chains as valuable community connectors by way of educational-support programs and informal encounters with friends and neighbors. As such, the research revealed retail chains to be positioned as strategic partners for promoting local food and supporting economic sustainability within the food system.

Conner, D. (2008). The Food System as an Economic Driver: Strategies and Applications for Michigan. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*, 3(4), 371-383.

Researchers at Michigan State University implemented the input-output model to reveal the economic impacts of investing in food and agriculture. The study was motivated by a lagging state economy and an understanding of the interconnectedness of public health, environmental conditions, and economic outcomes. The IMPLAN analysis performed specifically considered how local, seasonal purchasing to meet nutritional recommendations for fruit and vegetable consumption would increase revenue and jobs within farming. The study reported that increasing local produce purchasing would generate more than \$200 million in income and nearly 1800 jobs. The study operates on several assumptions within the IMPLAN analysis and is geographically specific to the Michigan economy.

Donald, B. (2008). Food Systems Planning and Sustainable Cities and Regions: The Role of the Firm in Sustainable Food Capitalism. *Regional Studies*, 42(9), 1251-1262. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00343400802360469>.

In this article, Donald considers the potential of food systems planning as a sustainable approach to regional development. Historically, food systems planning has considered either small scale efforts, such as community gardens, CSAs, and farmers markets which are meant to foster self-reliance, or large scale commodity retail markets which are dominated by a handful of large companies when thinking about food systems. Donald warns planners not to consider the firm a static 'black box' but rather tap into the innovative problem-solving, market-responsive powers of the individual firm, particularly those of small to medium size. Donald asserts that the food firm must be empowered as an actor in the capitalistic system; Donald further addresses the explicit need for planners to be aware of the existing subsidies and supports which foster an increasing amount of scaling up and consolidation within the food chain.

Dougherty, M. L., Brown, L. E., & Green, G. P. (2013). The Social Architecture of Local Food Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities for Community Economic Development. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences* 28(2), 1-27.

This article emphasizes the benefits and challenges that local food systems, explicitly in the form of local food tourism, offer to advancing community economic development goals. The authors found that working to foster and develop an integrated local food network is overwhelmingly beneficial to human and social capital. However, the economic benefits are decidedly ambiguous particularly when considering the increased transaction costs, required cultural capital, and potential for commodifying the farming culture in a way that gives restaurateurs inequitable power over the local farmers. The survey conducted as part of this research revealed that preconditions of shared responsibility, strong social networks, and established economic relations are precursors for local food tourism having reasonable success in community economic development. Creating efficient means for distribution, for example in the form of a food hub, was identified as

Feenstra, G. (1997). Local Food Systems and Sustainable Communities. *American Journal of Alternative Agriculture* 12(1), 28-36.

This literature review evaluates local food systems work and determines prevailing themes and necessary conditions policymakers and local food advocates need to foster in order to promote the success of a local food system. The paper revealed that foundational to the local food system community is an acknowledgement that local food is critical to both individual and community health, be that social, environmental, physical, or spiritual health. What is important for economic development work, however, is that these food systems can only thrive when urban-rural linkages have been thoughtfully structured, farmland preservation has been prioritized, and regional policy councils are working to support the various facets within this complex system.

Hodgson, K. (2012). Planning for food access and community-based food system." *US: American Planning Association.*

Providing an evaluation of local comprehensive and sustainability plans across the United States, this document reveals that local food systems are most often connected to land use, agricultural, and conservation planning. Planning for economic development was listed in about 25% of the plans reviewed, demonstrating great potential for increasing the connections between local food systems and economic vitality. Ultimately the study touts the significance of local government planning in having implications for activating a local food system that increases food equity, public health, sustainability, and economic vibrancy.

Hughes, D.W., Boys, K.A. (2015). What We Know and Don't Know About the Economic Development Benefits of Local Food Systems. *Choices: The magazine of food, farm, and resource issues.* Agricultural & Applied Economics Association.

Hughes and Boys offer several lens through which future research ought to be directed to determine how local food systems may affect economic development. Of particular concern, is the proven effectiveness of economic clusters noted in other development efforts. The authors highlight that research ought to focus on determining the nature of how such clusters may be implemented

to support local food systems. Hughes and Boys tout the importance of spatial-based econometric analysis as used to understand the relationship between local food systems and social capital, quality of life, and business development.

Jenkins, C., Schepker, A., & Rhodes-Conway, S. (2014). Local Food and Economic Development: A guide for Local Governments. Center on Wisconsin Strategy, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Center on Wisconsin Strategy, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The authors, specialists in promoting health and innovative public policies, highlight the growing trends supporting local food movements and the subsequent growth of food businesses to support the argument for investing in local food systems as a means of economic development. This guide suggests that local governments can help support the scaling up of local food systems and their economic benefits by: 1) developing and enabling food policy councils, 2) growing and supporting food hubs, 3) create policy that increases local purchasing, and 4) direct existing economic development work to incorporate food systems and businesses.

Mamen, K. (2004). Ripe for Change: Rethinking California's Food Economy. International Society for Ecology and Culture.

This summary report speaks to the ongoing cross-disciplinary conversation that has been happening in regards to California's flawed agricultural economy, particularly as related to existing patterns of production and distribution. The report points to globalization as being central to issues ranging from natural resource depletion, growing obesity rates, loss of rural jobs, and increasing dependence on large-scale farming systems and chemicals. Pointing to the global economy as a leading contributor to the current challenges of the food system, the report requires that public policy be changed to favor local economies. Support for local systems could be achieved through farm subsidies, transportation and energy policy, tax reform, and regulations that all prioritize local trade and production while tightening the requirements and decreasing support for the global trade networks.

Martinez, S. et al. (2010). Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts, and Issues. Economic Research Report. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service.

This report, compiled by Economic Research Service, establishes an overview of the existing understandings and implications of local food systems in the United States. The report largely acts as a glossary for local food, the existing markets and relationships of producers and consumers, and relevant government programs and policies that shape the field of local food systems. As related to economic development, this report acknowledges a lack of data points and the relative nascency of local food as an economic development strategy as a challenge to determining the strength of local food systems' benefit to economic growth and sustainability. The report points to the intermediate stages of food production as the area of greatest potential for reclaiming the local food dollar for the local economy and small to mid-size farmers.

Meter, K. (2008). Local Food as Economic Development. Crossroads Resource Center. Community Food Security Coalition. <http://www.crcworks.org/lfced.pdf>.

This short, informative brief points to investment in local food as a solution to issues of both public health and economic development. Meter determines that by reversing the existing paradigm in which communities across the nation import much of their food supply, while also increasing small-farm production rather than large-scale farming, communities will benefit from a larger multiplier effect within the economy. This displacement will also affect falling medical, transportation, and distribution costs while increasing local job viability.

O'Hara, J.K., & Pirog, R. (2013). Economic impacts of local food systems: Future research priorities. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 3(4), 35-42.

This article is a review of existing studies that feature a quantitative approach to measuring the impact local food systems have upon the larger regional economies in which they are embedded. The review found that local food systems consistently reported positive economic impacts at the regional level. Despite positive findings, the methodologies and study scope have made it difficult to apply the results for a broader interpretation local food systems' economic impacts. As a result of this review, the authors recommend four ways to enhance local food systems research: improved data collection, expanded geographic scope, quantifying the various economic aspects of food beyond number of jobs, and establishing a community to critically review academic food systems work.

Perry, R. (2011). Agricultural Development Is Economic Development: Kentucky State Parks Local Food Purchasing Case Study. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 3-13. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2011.014.010>.

In this article, Robert Perry recounts his experience as director of food service for Kentucky State Parks and his concerted effort to source locally produced foods. Local sourcing was sought 1) to increase the quality and thus sales of in-park meals and 2) to support and improve the farm economy. His time in this position revealed that price and payment method were two obstacles that required regulatory adjustments to be successful. With price being the driver for many government contract bidding processes, quality and locality of food sourcing are often jeopardized. Perry asserts that legislative action which prioritizes local purchasing, thus expanding the market for local farmers would require no tax breaks or credits yet would effectively "re-create" farm jobs while also indirectly growing non-basic industries.

Rosenfeld, S. (2010). Sustainable Food Systems Cluster, Vermont Style. *European Planning Studies*, 18:11, 1897-1908.

A detailed examination of Vermont's agricultural economy, this article reveals the importance of economic clusters in growing and maintaining a local food economy that is globally competitive. This study points to value-added products and creative business operations as being important for effectively leveraging the local food economy as an asset to economic, environmental, and social sustainability. Establishing a successful supply chain that can support the value-added production, however, requires a strong network among producers at all levels of the supply chain. Paramount to the success of Vermont's pursuit of small farm production, rather than investment in large-scale agriculture, was a policy environment that encouraged diversification, value-added goods, agritourism, and management intensive grazing. The Vermont example offers insight for how other

local food systems might creatively integrate agricultural production with other sectors including, but certainly not limited to, arts and culture, energy production, apparel, and design.