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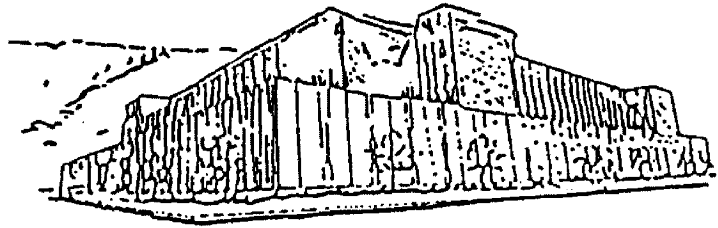

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REGIONAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE MARKETING: PROMOTING LOCAL FOODS TO BENEFIT LOCAL COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENTS AND ECONOMIES

by

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B.A. Middlebury College, 1994

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science

The University of Montana

1998

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Executive Summary

Within the context of a globalized food system, there are environmental, social and economic reasons for working toward creating a localized food system. The recent development of a Community Food System (CFS) movement is evidence of an organized effort to design and promote food systems that are beneficial to local communities. The CFS approach utilizes a variety of strategies but thus far has not explicitly adopted marketing as a food system tool. All around the country many groups, including county extension offices, health departments and various non-profits, are recognizing a need to better support local agriculture and are implementing regional marketing programs to increase consumption of local foods.

Regional marketing programs focus on developing and maintaining markets for locally grown, raised and processed foods. There are many benefits of local foods and some inconveniences. Yet, there are signs that many consumers are already interested in or could be easily convinced of the value of local foods. Regional marketing programs can tap into consumer's desires for fresh, nutritious, safe foods and their connection to the place they live.

There are at least four different kinds of efforts that could be considered as regional marketing. "Discrete" projects are annual events by non-profit groups and local governments, like organizing food festivals or publishing a farm guide, that promote local farmers. "Single product/industry" projects use the concept of regional marketing to promote one type of product—i.e. milk, beef, cherries. "State-led" programs rely heavily on advertising to promote the agricultural products of their state to local and non-local consumers. "Comprehensive collaboratives" combine many kinds of marketing and education projects, including labeling programs that "brand" the region, to promote local foods for primarily local consumption.

The components, successes, challenges and future outlook of two comprehensive collaboratives—Select Sonoma County and From the Ottawa Valley—are explored in this paper. There is anecdotal evidence that each groups efforts do increase the consumption of local foods. However, neither has collected any conclusive data that proves regional marketing really does promote local food self-reliance. It is imperative that this change so that local food system programs can prove they are benefiting local communities.

For groups that are considering starting a regional marketing initiative, there are some guidelines to keep in mind. A regional

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marketing program is a long term project that needs long term funding and leadership. Before embarking on such a commitment, a feasibility study should be done of the region to determine the agricultural production and consumer purchasing characteristics. If a group decides to go ahead with a regional marketing project, they should commit to yearly evaluation and dissemination of successes and challenges.

Regional marketing is a potentially powerful tool, especially within a community food system context. More research needs to be done to determine to what extent investing in regional marketing provides returns to local communities, environments and economies. This is the kind of information that is essential to prove that the concept of a localized food system is legitimate.

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I. Introduction

There was a time when people bought lettuce in the spring, peaches in the summer and potatoes in the fall. Winter diets were based on root crops, squashes and food preserved from the summer garden or fall hunting season. The food was fresh, locally grown and tasted delicious. Now, in the name of progress, people can buy any kind of food at any time of year (Gussow 1997). Food is abundant, cheap and well-packaged. It is preserved using modern methods like irradiation and chemical baths. This food is generally not very fresh, it is grown in every corner of the globe and it is often fairly tasteless.

For most people, bright grocery store displays of abundant foods obscure the host of social, economic and environmental impacts associated with the system that produces, processes, packages, distributes and markets food. But awareness is growing among a number of consumers, nutritionists, environmental groups, economists and small farm advocates. These various groups are finding ways to promote a more regionally based food system. Around the country, they are coming together to create Community Food Systems (CFS) in an effort to revitalize local food self-reliance while stimulating local economies and protecting local environments.

This paper discusses the dominant, global food system as a context for emerging efforts to create local food systems. Based on the premise that buying locally grown foods is beneficial in many ways, it then considers the benefits of and barriers to purchasing local foods. Next, one tool for promoting local agriculture—regional

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marketing— is defined and discussed. A concluding section outlines a set of guidelines for planning, sustaining and defining the goals of a regional marketing initiative.

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II. Study Objectives

The purpose of this study is to show that there is a context within which projects aimed at promoting local food systems make sense for environmental, economic and social reasons. It then focuses on regional marketing— one such tool for promoting local agriculture. Regional marketing is a relatively new and little studied concept and thus this research aims to: define what it is, why it is needed in some places, who is doing it, and how non-profit groups can use it as an important tool for promoting local food systems.

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III. Study Methods

The information for this paper comes from a literature review, a listserve inquiry and interviews. In each case, sources were used to lead to other sources, resulting in the development of a wide range of information on regional marketing programs and the theories supporting them. The relevance and specifics of each method are described here.

A literature review searched articles on topics such as community food systems, consumer attitudes toward local food, agriculture and food marketing and the social and environmental impacts of industrial and alternative agriculture. This information was used to develop an argument for buying local foods and supporting local agriculture.

The literature review also aided in developing a list of people who have published articles on, or are referred to as leaders in regional food marketing. These "experts in the field" were contacted via phone or e-mail and asked to suggest more sources or contacts in the area of regional food marketing. The purpose of making these contacts was to begin gathering information that would give a sense for the range and organizational characteristics of regional marketing programs around the country and to identify two groups on which to do case studies.

The people contacted include: Gail Feenstra, an expert on community food systems from the University of California at Davis, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program; Jenifer Wilkens, a nutrition professor with Cornell University and Cornell

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Cooperative Extension who has developed a guide to regional eating in the Northeast; Sally Leong, former coordinator of the Foodshed Working Group at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; Ellen Rilla, County Director of Cooperative Extension in Marin and Sonoma Counties and a leader in promoting regional food marketing using cooperative extension resources; Michael Dimock, president of Sunflower Strategies, Inc., a professional marketing consultant who focuses on regional food marketing; and Mary Pittaway and Josh Slotnick of the Garden City Harvest Project, a USDA Community Food Projects recipient in Missoula, Montana. Based on their suggestions, several groups were contacted and information on their regional marketing efforts was obtained and reviewed .

In addition to contacting these leaders, a request via the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SANET) listserve was posted, asking the 700 recipients for information on any groups working on regional marketing programs. From this, fifteen people responded with more information and more leads on regional marketing. These groups were then contacted and information on their programs was obtained and reviewed.

From this compendium of information on regional marketing efforts, two groups were chosen for case studies. Groups were chosen based on: age of the organization (at least 5 years), non-profit status and a demonstrated comprehensive approach to regional marketing. Case studies were developed through interviews with organization leaders (Betsey Timm, the executive director at Select Sonoma and Peggy Patterson, a founding coordinator at the

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Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance) and use of secondary sources such as organizational and promotional literature and articles written about the organizations.

Another interview was conducted with Michael Dimock, president of the only professional marketing consulting group that focuses on helping non-profit groups develop regional food marketing initiatives. Further information was obtained by attending one of Dimock's regional marketing workshops.

Conclusions drawn and guidelines suggested in this paper are based solely on my review of relevant articles and organizational literature and the interviews conducted with important players in the regional marketing movement.

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IV. Examining the Dominant and Alternative Food Systems

A food system can be understood as the journey of our food from "farm to fork". It encompasses production, distribution, preparation and preservation, use and consumption, recycling and disposal, marketing, transportation and storage (Dahlberg 1993). There are two different food systems simultaneously operating in the United States — the formal, globalized, industrial food system and an emerging localized, alternative system. With every food purchase, a consumer participates in either a global or local food system. The following discussion highlights the impacts of food choice within the context of these two systems.

The Globalized, Industrial Food System

In the globalized food system, fruits, vegetables, meats and spices are grown and raised in large quantities, then shipped to every corner of the world. The outcome of this system is easily observed during a trip to the grocery store where heaps of inexpensive, attractive produce are available year-round. In February, the produce section has strawberries from Mexico, tomatoes from Holland and pears from Chile while the rest of the store shelves are stocked with thousands of processed products with ingredients from all over the globe (Wilkins 1995).

This kind of year round abundance is made possible by the industrialization and corporatization of agriculture around the world, a process which is responsible for a variety of social and environmental impacts (Korten 1995). Industrialized agriculture is a high-input, high yield mode of production that is characterized by

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large-scale, monocrop farms maintained with mechanized labor, petrochemical fertilizers and synthetic pesticides. Once seen as the great technological panacea for solving world hunger, this kind of production is now to blame for a host of environmental problems including groundwater contamination (Kittredge 1996, Strange 1988), soil erosion (Donaher 1988), a decline in some wildlife species and an increase in human disease (Carson 1962; Colborn, Dumanoski and Meyers 1996, US GAO 1992).

Today, industrialized agriculture is practically synonymous with corporate agribusiness which controls much of the world's agricultural production and related business, including fertilizer, pesticide and seed companies, as well as processing facilities and grocery store chains (Donaher 1988, Strange 1988). Industrialized farms often operate under contract with corporations, producing a single crop to sell in the commodity market. In this model, farmers need only farm, while a corporate entity takes care of processing, marketing and distributing the product. There is of course, an array of other advantages and disadvantages to this system but exploring those goes beyond the scope of this paper.

The increased presence of corporations in agriculture has contributed to the decline of small family farms, which are either outcompeted and/or bought out and consolidated into mega-farm enterprises (Korten 1995). About 500 family farms go out of business every week in the United States (Community Food Security Coalition News 1997). In 1935 there were 7 million family farms; by 1991 the number was 2.1 million (Kittredge 1996).

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Now, many corporations are taking their farms and processsing facilities, as well as jobs, out of the country where labor is cheaper and restrictions on chemical applications are less stringent (Leeson 1998). Just as General Motors has discovered it is cheaper to make cars in Mexico, Dole has found it can earn higher profits by raising strawberries in Argentina. Many of the countries that are producing foods for U.S. markets are doing so at the expense of maintaining their own food security (Goering, Norberg-Hodge and Page1993, Gussow 1997, Wilkins 1995a).

In this complicated system, the average piece of produce now changes hands six times and travels 7 to 10 days and 1,300 miles before it lands on the grocery store shelf (Kloppenburg, Hendrickson and Stevenson 1996, Kittredge 1996, The Cornucopia Project 1981). Thus, the main attributes of global foods are durability and their ability to travel long distances without spoiling (Freidmann 1993). Crops are bred not for flavor or nutrition but to be invulnerable to rough handling and long distance travel (Ausubel 1994). The quality and flavor of foods that have undergone such treatment is questionable. Consider some of the most prized foods — a classic fresh-baked French baguette, the homemade Mexican tortilla, vine-ripened tomatoes from a neighbor's backyard. None of them would make it more than a few miles or hours and still be desirable foods (Friedmann 1993). Many nutritionists believe foods consumed many days after harvest and those processed with chemical additives have lost much of their nutritious value (Gussow and Clancey 1986, Gussow 1991, Wilkins 1995a).

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There are many other costs associated with a system so dependent on transportation. According to a 1981 study of the U.S. food system, trucks alone burn 5.5 billion dollars of fuel in distributing food every year (Wilkins 1995a, 154). Of course, the costs of this transportation-oriented food system go beyond dollars. The environmental impacts of oil exploration and refining, air pollution from vehicle exhaust and the resources used to maintain an ever expanding network of roads are all external costs related to a reliance on a transportation dependent food system (Auburn 1988, Wilkins 1995a).

Comparing the energy costs for growing and transporting food in the global system reveals some absurdities. For example, Pimental determined the cost of flying one 5 calorie strawberry from California to New York is 435 calories (Gussow and Clancey 1986, 3). Along those same lines, it has been calculated that primitive agriculture expended 1 calorie of human energy for every 5 calories of food produced while modern agriculture uses 8-10 calories, mostly fossil fuel powered, to produce one calorie of food (Kittredge 1996, 260). Can these inefficiencies really make sense in the long term? Some speculate if we were to remove oil subsidies and factor in environmental costs, growing food with petrochemical fertilizers and transporting it long distances would no longer be cost effective (Jackson 1987, Wilkins 1995a).

The global food system has been successful in part because for every commodity there is a marketing board that invests money in persuading consumers to buy its product. Consumers have been

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convinced of the superiority of Chiquita bananas, Florida orange juice, coffee grown in the Andes and California raisins, to name a few. This investment in marketing is significant. The California Almond Board, for example, spent almost $6 million dollars on marketing in 1997, helping to earn the industry just over $1 billion in profits (CAB).

In many ways, the globalized food system has revolutionized the way people eat. People no longer need to wait for the cherry, plum or watermelon seasons. No one has to raise a garden or worry about preserving food for the winter. And food prices are relatively cheap. The value of this is, of course, a matter of perspective.

The Return to a Localized Food System

As global foods take the place of local foods in grocery stores and food service industries, the need for local agriculture diminishes. But there are many reasons why buying local foods can enhance a community. When local farms are lost, so are agricultural and food processing jobs, open space, a supply of high quality regional food and a connection to farmers and the biological cycles related to food production (Feenstra 1997b). There are many groups that are working to return to a food system that is more local in nature.

Local farmers

Farmers that choose to remain small and independent really cannot compete in the global marketplace. They either don't produce enough to sell in the commodities market, or commodity prices are too low relative to the costs of small-scale production. In order to

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survive, these farmers must sell their products within the local marketplace (Dimock 1998b).

Farmers can sell their products locally at roadside stands, farmers' markets, "pick-your-own" operations or through a Community Supported Agriculture arrangement (Gibson 1994, Welsh 1997). Selling wholesale through a farmer cooperative or developing purchase agreements with local stores and restaurants are other options (Gibson 1994). For many small farmers, taking the time to sell and market their products is burdensome, but it is essential since they do not have commodity boards doing it for them (Dimock 1998b, Kittredge 1997, Vossen 1992).

Food Professionals

There is also a growing movement among nutritionists to sustain local agriculture. From their perspective, locally grown foods are not only more nutritious than imported ones, but essential for maintaining healthy people. Because local foods are picked at the peak of ripeness and delivered to stores or markets within hours (instead of days) of harvest, the foods retain more nutrients than their global counterparts (Bruhn, Vossen, Chapman & Vaupel 1992, Wilkins 1995a). Some would argue the new reliance on durable, nutrient poor, overprocessed global foods has led to the increase in diet-related diseases, as well as the growth of the nutritional supplement and exercise industries (Gussow 1991, Orr 1991). Many propose that nutrition education be reformed to align food choice with environmental impact, following a philosophy that says what is

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good for the planet is good for human health (Gussow and Clancey 1986, Hahn 1997, Wilkins 1995, Herrin and Gussow 1989).

Chefs and restaurant owners are another group of professionals that have organized to support local agriculture. These purveyors of high quality foods are finding that local sources provide the most fresh, flavorful and unique options for fine cooking. If they want to have continued access to these fine ingredients, it is in their interest to work together to help sustain local farming.

Many of the culinary industry's leaders have joined the Chef's Collaborative 2000 and pledge to uphold principles that include:

"1) Sound food choices emphasize locally grown, seasonally fresh and whole or minimally processed ingredients.
2) Good food begins with unpolluted air, land and water, environmentally sustainable farming and fishing, and humane animal husbandry.
3) Cultural and biological diversity is essential for the health of the planet and it's inhabitants. Preserving and revitalizing sustainable food and agricultural traditions strengthen that diversity.
4) The healthy traditional diets of many cultures offer abundant evidence that fruits, vegetables, beans, breads and grains are the foundation of good diets." (CC2000 1998)

Restaurants like Chez Panisse in California and Nora's in Washington D.C. work directly with local farmers to create gourmet meals from ingredients that are in season and regionally appropriate. This approach is both highly successful and well respected in the culinary world (Kirshemann 1997, CC2000 1998).

Environmentalists

Environmental groups work on many issues related to food systems and agriculture, including: preserving open space, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, eliminating overpackaging and promoting

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sustainable agriculture (Gottlieb and Fisher 1996). All of these efforts are relevant to a more localized food system. Preserving farmland as open space with conservation easements is one way to help local farmers stay in business. In fact land trusts, groups that coordinate land preservation through easements, are one of the fastest growing branches of the environmental movement (Van Slambrouck 1998).

Exercising the power of the consumer dollar to support environmentally friendly products has long been a strategy of the environmental movement. Local foods are transported a shorter distance, saving oil and gas and they are often less packaged since the risk of damage in transport is diminished (Auburn 1988, Goering et.al 1993). Of course, buying locally grown foods does not necessarily equate with buying "organic", "sustainably produced" or any other alternative mode of production that reduces environmental impacts.

There is some indication that small, local farmers will be *more likely* to employ alternative methods. Organic foods demand higher prices and offer a viable alternative to small farmers (Gussow 1991, Thomas and Hanscom1998). And, sometimes when producers have a relationship with their consumers, they have more incentive to use alternative production methods (Patterson 1998). But really, locality and production practices are separate issues.

Then from an environmental point of view, is it better to buy organic broccolli imported from Mexico or local broccolli grown using conventional methods? A quantification of the costs associated with

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transporting the organic broccoli compared with the costs of the chemicals used on the conventional broccolli would have to be done to really answer this question. "Organically grown" represents production methods, only one step in the food system. Organic foods are not necessarily seasonally appropriate or particularly fresh. Buying organic and buying locally are each better for the environment and local community than buying imported, conventionally grown foods. Ideally, consumers could have the option to buy a product that is both locally grown *and* produced using regionally appropriate alternative agriculture methods.

Economists

Money spent on local products supports local people and stimulates economic self-reliance (Daly & Cobb 1989). Self-reliant communities depend less on outside sources for survival and some economists believe that this makes the economy of a community more stable (Daly & Cobb 1989, Dahlberg 1996, Freidmann 1993). In terms of food, a community that is self-reliant will have a viable agriculture and related processing facilities and therefore, more jobs (Berry 1987, Wilkins 1995a).

Also, spending money on local foods keeps the dollars within the local economy. Using the economic multiplier principle, every dollar spent on local foods will actually add at least three extra dollars to the local economy (Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance 1998). Many state, county or city governments have used this idea to initiate programs like "BuyAlaska", "Made in Montana" and "BuyAustin" to promote locally made products.

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Farmers want to maintain their livelihood, nutritionists are concerned about human health, chefs want high quality ingredients, environmentalists want to conserve resources and preserve open space and some economists are calling for more self-reliant communities. Recently, these groups and others have begun to realize that they share a common goal—promoting viable, local agriculture. Around the nation, they are coming together to form collaborative efforts at promoting the food systems of a different scale—community food systems.

Community Food Systems

There are quite a lot of people and lots of infrastructural development that went into creating a global food system, and so it must also be for developing a system that is based at the community level. In the fall of 1996, a conference was held in Davis, California that brought together people working at every level of the food system to highlight efforts at promoting a localized food system and to envision a new paradigm to guide future efforts (Feenstra 1997c, v). This was their conclusion:

"*A community food system is a collaborative effort in a particular place, to build more locally-based, self-reliant food economies.* Community food systems seek comprehensive solutions to food and agricultural problems by involving community members in promoting community food security; farmland preservation; local, direct marketing; community economic development; a stable base of family farmers that use production practices that are less chemical and energy-intensive; improved working and living conditions for farm labor; and public policies and planning that encourage a more sustainable food system." (Feenstra 1997c, v)

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There are many types of community food system projects, but according to Feenstra (1997b) they tend to fall into three different categories: college food systems, community demonstrations and comprehensive community projects.

College food systems focus on the campus by increasing the amount of locally grown foods served, composting food waste and including agriculture in the curriculum and/or through an educational farm. Hendricks College, Carlton College and Tufts University have all implemented these types of programs (Feenstra 1997b).

Community demonstrations usually combine community garden projects with entrepreneurial efforts. One example is the "Willard Greening Project" in California which employs five homeless men at a small garden. The food produced there is sold to a local elementary school. Another example is "Food from the Hood" in which a community garden provides the ingredients for a community kitchen where high school kids are employed making gourmet salad dressing (Feenstra 1997b). These projects are meant to demonstrate to the community the viability of local food production and processing.

The comprehensive community projects combine many strategies to recreate a local food system. They may maintain community gardens, provide educational workshops on gardening and food preservation, run a low-income CSA farm, coordinate gleaning and marketing programs, start a community kitchen or work to change local food policies (Feenstra 1997b). It is their use of

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many approaches on many levels and their desire to overhaul the entire community food system that differentiates the comprehensive community food projects from the college and demonstration approaches.

Related to and informing the community food system movement is the concept of community food security: "all persons obtaining at all times, a culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through local, non-emergency sources (Fisher and Gottlieb 1995)." Largely due to the efforts of the recently formed Community Food Security Coalition, the community food system agenda has gained ground quickly (Gottlieb and Joseph 1997, Seidenburg 1997). As part of the 1995 Farm bill, Congress passed the Community Food Security Act which makes available 2.5 million dollars each year until 2008 to community groups interested in carrying out comprehensive community food projects (USDA 1997).

Thirteen groups in year one and 18 in year two were funded with money made available through this act (CFSC). The strength of their proposals was "their effort to extend the single purpose project (i.e. a food bank, community garden, etc.) to incorporate multiple objectives (e.g., by supporting both farmers and low income residents) (Gottleib 1997, 67)." They were also rewarded based on plans to develop partnerships between the public and private sectors (See appendix A for brief descriptions of these projects). "The passage of the CFS Act was a relatively minor event in terms of actual resources located, but significant in terms of the impact it has

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had for both policy makers within USDA and for its consolidation of a national community food security movement (Gottlieb 1997, 68)."

For a group like the Garden City Harvest Project in Missoula, Montana, the availability of this funding jump-started an array of projects aimed at improving that community's food system. In year one this group partnered with more than a dozen community organizations to develop infrastructure that would improve low-income access to locally grown foods. It established a new community garden, developed three gardens to supply food for the food bank, founded a horticultural therapy garden for people with mental disabilities and helped start a University educational farm which runs as a CSA for low income people and others. Organizers also held a harvest festival and sponsored a community event to promote locally grown foods. In year two, Garden City Harvest will expand some of these programs and launch a citywide gleaning and food recovery project. The group feels their next focus should be on working to better promote local farmers and increasing consumption of locally grown foods. Their motto — "we're teaching self-reliance and the medium is food." (Garden City Harvest Project 1997)

There are many strategies that can be incorporated into a community food system approach: community gardens, gleaning programs, community kitchens, local food policy councils, educational farms and regional marketing iniatives. Gottlieb (1997) believes that all food system projects should show that the community food security agenda is a livable, workable one and not an idealistic pipedream. Ideally then, each strategy used should be well

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researched, documented and evaluated. What should emerge is a solidly researched, sensible strategy that has a chance to succeed in all kinds of communities.

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V. Consumers and Local Foods

A community food system rests on the idea of providing more of a community's food needs through local sources. But, is it realistic to assume that consumers can survive on a primarily local diet? In a Montana study, researchers looked at indigenous diets and agricultural history and found that it would be both possible and nutritionally adequate to obtain a diet from only regional foods (Herrin and Gussow 1989). A Cornell University project matches foods available in the Northeast with the Federal Dietary Guidelines and finds the same thing (Wilkins 1995b). Other studies that compare statewide food production with national data on consumption reveal that "food self-reliance has declined over time, but that residents *could* get more of their nutrients from local sources, especially if they changed their diets to reflect seasonally available foods (Feenstra 1997, 29)."

Whether or not it is socially acceptable or attractive to consumers is another issue. In general, there is little recognition of the seasonal or local availability of many foods (Bruhn et. al. 1992, Kittredge 1996). It could take a long time to convince consumers to eat the locally available turnips, cabbage, potatoes and carrots all winter instead of the broccoli, tomatoes, asparagus and spinach shipped in from every corner of the globe.

But there is some indication that consumers don't care about having every single kind of food available year round. One study found that consumers did not feel they needed year round access to melon and berries. On the other hand, they did want to buy

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tomatoes and lettuce in every season (Wilkins 1996). Another study found, despite the fact that grocery store selection did not change with the seasons, consumer eating habits did (Wilkins 1995a).

There is an issue of balance here. Asking consumers to exist on an entirely local diet is not realistic. However, promoting a move toward a *more* local diet is. There are some foods available through the globalized food system that people may never be willing to give up — bananas, citrus fruits, coffee and spices like cinnamon are some likely examples. On the other hand, eating a peach from California in the midst of a Georgia summer is absurd. And similarly, is it really necessary or desirable to eat hard, pink tomatoes in February when local beets or carrots will provide a more flavorful, nutritious and lower impact alternative?

Perceptions and Trends Related to Local Foods

Next it is important to consider consumer perceptions of local foods and what influences their food buying behavior in general. The number of farmers' markets in this country has doubled in the last decade and the number of Community Supported Agriculture farms grows every year, even as most kinds of farming are in decline (Gussow 1991, 96; Kittredge 1997, 258). And, there seems to be a backyard gardening renaissance taking place (National Gardening Association 1989). Also, locally based businesses like micro breweries and bakeries have been enjoying a brisk business (Kirshemann 1997, Friedmann 1993). These seem to be signs that consumer interest in local foods is high. Yet, it isn't clear that the "local" characteristic is necessarily what drives these trends.

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Although one survey conducted at a farmer's market found that shoppers found "locally grown" to be very important reason for making purchases (Pelsue 1984), another found it was entirely unimportant (Estes 1985). The social experience, the interaction with farmers and the feeling that the money spent on food goes directly to the farmer are more important to consumers than the fact that foods are locally grown (Lockeretz 1986). Other studies on local foods show that the freshness, quality and taste of the foods were what motivated buying (Adrian 1982, Bruhn et. al. 1992).

On the other hand, there seem to be few negative impressions of local foods. When asked, consumers can come up with lots of reasons why buying locally is a good idea. Even so, there is no evidence that signs identifying local foods will, on their own, influence food choice (Lockeretz 1986, Bruhn et. al. 1992).

Then, what are the things consumers base their food buying decisions on? And how do local foods stack up? The commonly accepted factors influencing consumer food choice include: "health and nutrition concerns, sensory-affect or taste, food preferences, familiarity, family customs, household income and price (Wilkins 1996, 329)." In addition, certain consumers, notably members of food cooperatives and natural food store customers, have long based food choice on environmental and social concerns (Goldman & Clancey 1991, Wilkins and Hillers 1994).

Americans in general have clearly become more environmentally concerned in recent decades. It is becoming socially unacceptable to support industries that harm the environment,

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including conventional agriculture. The rise of the organic foods industry is one indication that people place value on the environmental impacts of food choice (Hartman 1998). The organic foods industry has experienced a 20% rate of growth each year for the past seven years and is projected to be a 6.5 billion industry by 2000 (Organic Trade Association 1998). There is no indication that this steady rate of growth will slow anytime soon.

Michael Dimock of Sunflower Strategies makes his living promoting local food and agriculture. From his experiences with consumers, he believes that people are becoming more concerned with where and how their food is grown. According to him, "for every trend, there is a counter trend (1998b)." People are feeling the effects of a globalized food system and as a result, there is now "an emotional desire on the part of consumers to know where their food is coming from." Also, people are longing for "the way things used to be (Dimock 1998b)." They remember fresh, in-season peaches and homemade jams and they long for "the way food used to taste (Dimock 1998b; Jolly, Schutz, Diaz-Knauf and Johal 1989)."

Food safety may also begin to influence food choice. With increased incidence and greater media coverage of food poisoning related to improper food handling, people are likely to become concerned with being able to quickly trace food poisoning to the source. It is inherently easier to identify the cause of any food safety problems if the product in question comes from a local source. The recent California lettuce scare is a case in point. This past winter, it took five days for USDA inspectors to link several cases of

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e. coli poisoning from ten restaurants, in three states, to four distribution centers in two states, and finally back to one farm in California where investigators *think* but are not completely certain the lettuce was washed in contaminated water (Belluck 1998, A8).

A few of the attributes of local foods match very well with the list of factors that affect food choice in general: local foods are nutritious and they taste good, and for customers concerned about the environment and/or food safety, local foods are good choices. But for those making their choices based on price and familiarity with the food product, local foods may be less attractive.

Barriers to Buying Local Food

First, let's consider price. There are times when local foods are more expensive than global substitutes, for reasons already discussed. If the true cost of cheap food were somehow considered, local foods would probably not look very expensive, but in the mean time Americans may have to pay more for local food (Gussow 1991, Thompson 1991). The fact that local food already sells well in certain settings, like farmers' markets and food cooperatives, indicates that people might not object all that much to higher prices. For those who are unable to pay higher prices, programs like the USDA's Farmers' Market Coupon Project which gives low income mothers participating in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program coupons redeemable for local produce at farmers' markets (USDA 1996) and subsidized CSA shares assure that everyone has access to fresh, local food. Maintaining these kinds of programs within a community food system is very important (Clancey 1993).

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Convenience is another deterrent to buying local foods. In a survey conducted in California, shoppers at a large chain said they would like to eat more local foods but that the typical outlets for local foods (farmers' markets, roadside stands, etc.) were not convenient (Bruhn et. al. 1992). A New Jersey study made similar conclusions (Nayga, Govindasamy, Wall and Thatch 1995). The average trip to the grocery store includes shopping for many non-food items. For busy consumers, expanded hours, convenient locations and the availability of a wider array of products at typical markets for local foods, could greatly increase the consumption of local foods (Lockeretz 1986). For example, if a consumer could leave work and within a few minutes conveniently park and purchase veggies for dinner, a loaf of bread, a hunk of cheese, a bottle of cider, some fresh flowers, a bar of soap, a birthday card and a snack for the ride home, all produced locally, the appeal of local markets might increase.

Familiarity with the local varieties of food and with seasonal variability are two more barriers to buying local foods (Feenstra 1997b, Wilkins 1995a). If a shopper does not recognize a type of food and has no idea what it tastes like or how to cook it, he or she may be less likely to buy it. And for people accustomed to having certain foods available year round, dealing with the seasons might be frustrating. While some food aficionados enjoy changing menus with the seasons and experimenting with unusual vegetables like bok choy and arugula, a busy father of four may see it as a hassle (Gussow 1991).

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Also, being able to eat seasonally, especially in places with winter requires an individual or community investment in storing and processing local foods. Commercial or home canning, drying, milling or other food processing helps "extend the season" in places where fresh produce cannot be grown year round. Berries become jams and jellies, grain gets ground into flour, herbs go into gourmet vinegars or salad dressings. But, preserving foods at home takes a lot of time and in many communities it is difficult to find locally processed foods (Goering et. al. 1993, 35).

Even for the customers who already value local foods, like older people and food cooperative members, there are reasons why they do not buy as many local foods as they might (Bruhn et. al. 1992, Wilkins 1996). One simple explanation is that locally grown foods are not always available or labeled as local in grocery stores. Large grocery store chains are sometimes unwilling to stock local products because of concerns with sufficient quantities and acceptable quality (Mochi 1997). Or, they are bound to pricing contracts that will only assure them tomatoes in winter, for example, if they continue buying tomatoes from afar in summer. Or, local potatoes get mixed with non-local because produce managers do not have the time or space to separate them (Leeson 1998).

To summarize: consumers believe local foods are high quality, taste good and are nutritious; local foods also alleviate some environmental and food safety concerns; and, the typical markets for local foods are expanding. There are some barriers to buying local foods but many of these—price, convenience and lack of familiarity—

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could be overcome by efforts to educate consumers, particularly those who are able to afford local foods and are concerned about environmental and social issues, on the many values of buying locally grown foods. When education is linked with buying choices, marketing is the appropriate tool.

If a community food system is going to be viable, there must be a focus on marketing, just as there is in the global food system. Corporate agribusiness spends a ton of money on marketing and will likely continue to do so but small, local farmers do not benefit from a similar infrastructure (Morr 1989, 29). A regional marketing initiative that promotes local foods and local farms could be the missing link in developing a community food system.

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VI. Regional Marketing- What is It?

Regional marketing is a relatively new and little studied concept. The remainder of this paper will look specifically at regional marketing as a community food system strategy. Assertions and conclusions are based on information collected from interviews with leaders in regional marketing initiatives, and from a review of project reports, feasibility studies and related publications. This section begins by exploring the definitions of "region" and "marketing" within the regional food marketing context. It is followed by a breakdown of the types of regional marketing approaches that exist and it concludes with profiles of two groups currently carrying out a comprehensive collaborative approach to regional marketing.

Regional marketing or regional identity marketing is a means by which a collaborative group can work in the interest of the local economy, environment and community to promote consumer purchase of locally produced products. Appropriate to a food systems context, regional marketing programs focus on supporting local agriculture through developing and maintaining a market for locally grown and processed foods. Among the techniques for achieving these goals are things like regional food labeling programs, harvest festivals, business and marketing education for local producers, and community wide education on the value of eating local foods (Dimock 1997).

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Regions

Region is a concept with many possible interpretations. There are administrative regions with boundaries: cities, counties, states, provinces, countries. In the United States, groups of states make up the commonly understood Northeast, Southwest, Northwest, Midwest, Southeast and Western regions. There are also regions defined by characteristic climate, flora and fauna like the tropical, temperate or arctic regions. And then there are economic regions such as industrial or agricultural regions. Region is also understood as the area surrounding a particular location, i.e. the Great Lakes region.

Some contemporary definitions combine the generic understanding of region with another set of information to enhance the meaning. A bioregion, for example, is "a distinct area with coherent and interconnected plant and animal communities, often defined by a watershed and by the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place (Planet Drum Foundation)." The bioregional movement promotes means of living and livelihood that are regionally appropriate, based on an understanding of place (Orr 1992).

Within the food and agriculture disciplines, another concept of region has emerged — the foodshed. Think of a watershed and replace water with food to imagine a "flow of food" streaming into a particular place (Getz 1991, 26; Kloppenburg et. al. 1996, 114). Unlike a watershed, however, the boundaries for a foodshed are less precise. To some extent it relates to the idea of bioregion — a foodshed is function of "climatic features, plant communities, soil

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types" but there are other factors —"ethnicities, cultural traditions, culinary patterns"— that are equally important (Kloppenburg et. al. 1996, 114). This is a concept of much value as a conceptual framework for anyone working in a community food system project. Unfortunately these kinds of boundaries almost never correspond with political boundaries, making any kind of planning based on bioregions or foodsheds a unique challenge (Wilkins 1995a).

For most regional marketing initiatives, region is determined by the more conventional definitions, mainly county or state (Dimock 1998b). This happens because leadership for the project may come from within a county extension office, county health department or state department of agriculture. Thus the region is based more on who is involved and access to resources than on any broader definition (like bioregion or watershed) that may be more practical in the long run.

Most importantly, there must be a balance between the population size and the producer base in a regional food marketing initiative (Dimock 1998b). Counties and states do not often provide this balance. Thus region can take on new meanings when paired with marketing goals.

Asking to what extent people feel connected, or a part of their county or state, local watershed or nearby mountain range, is also important. The region decided upon in a regional marketing approach should be something to which consumers already relate (Dimock 1998b, Rilla 1998). For example, should a group in Colorado promote foods based on their state: Colorado Grown; their county:

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Made in Delta County; their closeness to the Rocky Mountains: Rocky Mountain Harvest; their orientation to the Rockies: Raised on the Western Slope; or their identity with the local river and valley: North Fork Valley Grown? This decision is very important (Dimock 1998b).

Regional Marketing

In general, marketing is a set of actions or objects that attempt to persuade a consumer to purchase a particular product. The goal of regional marketing is to convince people to purchase regionally produced products, in this case fresh and processed foods. There are many ways to market but a regional food marketing strategy seems to be most influenced by the "social marketing" and "mystique marketing" approaches.

Often used by public health agencies, social marketing is aimed at changing the behavior of a target group (Kotler and Roberto 1989). This approach combines education, media and applied behavioral sciences in order to promote a change that is in the public's interest—i.e. to reduce smoking in teen populations. A social marketing approach has also been used by sustainable agriculture advocates who are trying to get conventional farmers to change their practices (Greishop, Peck and Raj 1996). In the case of a regional marketing initiative, the goal is to change the buying behavior of consumers so that they choose local foods over imported ones. This can be accomplished by educating consumers on the benefits of buying locally grown food.

"Mystique marketing" is another concept that can be incorporated into a regional marketing initiative. The mystique that

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a product embodies is one aspect that makes a product attractive (Dimock 1998a). For example, a customer may perceive a product to be "natural" or "healthy" or they may like the lifestyle a product represents or they may feel connected in some way to the place where the product has come from (Dimock 1998a). They buy it because in some way they value what that product represents. For example, buying "pure Vermont Maple syrup" evokes a warm feeling about the rural nature of Vermont (Hinrichs 1996).

Regional food marketing should both tap into and promote consumer loyalty to the place they live. If it is successful, a consumer will perceive a locally grown carrot, for example, as having more value than one that's not locally grown. This is ofcourse, based on the idea that some consumers place a high value on certain places. Hinrichs calls this the "consumption of rurality", and says this is becoming a highly marketable concept especially to an increasingly urbanized consumer base (1996).

Labels

In a way, regional marketing aims to actually turn a region into a "brand" and to create identity with and loyalty to that brand (Hartman 1998, Dimock 1998b). If generations of families can remain loyal to a particular brand of laundry detergent or breakfast cereal, it should also be possible to develop that same kind of commitment to high quality, locally produced foods. Labels are the first step. The core of many regional marketing programs is a label that identifies locally produced and processed foods. The best labels use a visually appealing logo that evokes the mystique of locally

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produced foods (Dimock 1998b). The logo can be on a sticker used on produce and processed food packages, on signs in the produce section of grocery stores, on the edges of shelves where local products are displayed, on billboards, television, t-shirts, aprons for grocery store staff — basically anywhere and in as many places as possible (Morr 1989).

For a local label to gain meaning, producers should be held to a strict set of standards, that is well understood by consumers (Patterson 1998, Timm 1998, Dimock 1998b). For those convinced of the benefits of buying locally, the label can provide the consumer with, "an immediately available, objective and accurate evaluation" of where and how the product was grown and processed (Sitarz 1998, 40). For groups that want to promote foods that are both locally grown and sustainably produced and processed, the label can identify this. The BuyGreen Virginia Program is one example of a regional marketing program that promotes both regional identity and environmental sustainability. Another program — Mendocino Bounty in Mendocino County, California — will identify products that are grown, raised and processed locally *and* in accordance with a set of watershed protection criteria (Dimock 1998b).

Educational campaigns

Ideally, labeling programs should be supported by an overall campaign to promote local foods (Dimock 1998b, Timm 1998). Producers can do food demonstrations at local grocery stores or farmers' markets, a monthly news column could highlight what foods are in season with recipes from local chefs, and billboards, radio,

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print and television ads can all pitch the benefits of local foods. There should be local food celebrations going on throughout the season: a cherry festival in July, a corn festival in August, a wine festival in the fall or whatever local foods are loved and abundant. Guides to local foods vendors and direct market farms should be distributed throughout the community and to tourists.

To groups or agencies more accustomed to coordinating social or environmental programs, planning a marketing campaign may feel odd. But marketing should be considered as just another tool— alongside media, education and lobbying— for reaching social and environmental goals (Dowie 1996). Small scale, local farmers often do not feel like they have the time or resources to do successful marketing, but without it they may not survive (Gibson 1994, Vossen 1992).

A Categorization of Regional Marketing Initiatives

Based on a review of materials obtained from a variety of groups from around the country, regional marketing initiatives seem to fall into at least four different categories which I call: comprehensive collaboratives, state-led, product/industry specific and discrete projects. Each type works on some level to promote regional agriculture. The scope, goals and strategies of each approach vary, although there is some overlap.

A *comprehensive collaborative* is a regional marketing strategy that brings together public and private interests and uses multiple strategies for promoting all kinds of fresh and processed local foods. Select Sonoma County and PlacerGROWN in California, Hudson Valley

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Harvest in New York, and From the Ottawa Valley in Northern Ontario are a few examples of this kind of approach (SSC 1998, PlacerGROWN 1998, Junge 1997, Hulcoop, AASR 1997). These projects are run by non-profit groups that represent a coalition of people interested in increasing the consumption of locally grown foods: growers, processors, retailers and nutritionists.

There are at least sixteen *state-led* marketing programs that operate through the state departments of agriculture (Morr 1989). The goal of these projects is to help maintain the economic viability of agriculture in the state by working to expand markets for foods grown or raised and processed in the state. They use some of the same techniques—labeling, advertising and food festivals—but the goals differ from those of the community collaboratives. In addition to increasing consumption of state products at the local level, they work to build national and global recognition for the quality of the state's products. The "Jersey Fresh" program was one of the first of this kind. The program increased consumption of local produce but it has also developed a broader recognition by neighboring states of the high quality of New Jersey produce (Brown 1988). Jersey peaches and tomatoes, for example, are now sought after products in nearby states. The "Jersey Fresh" program and others such as "Massachusetts Grown and Fresher!" and "Georgia—Always in Good Taste" are funded by state and federal government (Morr 1989).

A third type of regional market program, *product/industry specific*, focuses on promoting specific products or industries within agriculture, i.e. dairy, beef or fruit. These programs are led by non-

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profit groups or farmer cooperatives and funded from a variety of public or private sources. In some cases, ecologically friendly attributes of the product are emphasized as much as or more than regionality. One example is a project called "Core Values Northeast" (CVN) led by the non-profit group Mothers and Others for a Livable Planet in New York. The goal of CVN is to "build public awareness of and demand for local, ecologically-grown apples through consumer-centered media and market-based education strategies (CVN 1998)." A similar project in Pennsylvania called the "Milk Marketing Initiative" will promote milk from farmers who agree to invest profits in environmental enhancement projects. The project will focus on the Chesapeake Bay watershed and intends to expand to other commodities if the environmental milk program is successful (Dairy Network Partnership 1998). And in Colorado, a group of independent ranchers market their "Rocky Mountain Beef" which is locally grown, free of additives and raised using ecological range practices (Hansen 1998).

Finally, there are the *discrete projects*. These are projects for which the goal is clearly to increase awareness about locally grown foods or to help expand markets for local farmers but the approach is one of single, perhaps yearly projects, and not an overall comprehensive food system strategy. Any group that works to start and promote farmer's markets, sponsors a harvest festival, prints a local farm guide or does some other project to support local agriculture could fit into this category. Alone, these projects will not have the same kind of impact that a more comprehensive approach

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can. However, the discrete and single product/industry projects are each valuable initiatives and would be valuable partners in a more comprehensive collaborative regional marketing effort.

Scant information exists for groups looking to start a regional marketing program but there are two groups that are becoming leaders in offering advice in this area. The first is Sunflower Strategies, a professional marketing firm that specializes in regional marketing consulting. At the1996 Community Food Systems Conference, Sunflower President Michael Dimock said, "Sustainable communities must include sustainable food supplies that maximize local production and consumption. Sunflower Strategies is dedicated to the development of regional marketing systems for every community in the nation (1997, 80)." His firm has assisted with the development of five of the seven regional marketing initiatives in California and many more around the country.

Another group, Red Tomato, in Massachusetts was recently established by Michael Rozyne, one of the founders of Equal Exchange Coffee. This group is currently working with the Northeast Organic Farm Association to develop regional organic foods marketing in New England (Red Tomato 1998). These food system focused marketing professionals can be important allies for groups embarking on a regional marketing initiative (Dimock 1998b).

Regional Marketing in Action

Regional marketing is perhaps best understood by taking a look at some projects that are in progress. This section examines the characteristics of developing, implementing and sustaining a regional

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marketing initiative for two comprehensive collaboratives—Select Sonoma County and From the Ottawa Valley, a project of the Association for Agricultural Self Reliance. These case studies are based on interviews with the organizations' leaders and a review of their promotional materials and news articles highlighting the programs.

Select Sonoma County

Fifty miles north of San Francisco is Sonoma County, a topographically diverse and economically affluent region famous for its wine, and becoming well known for its regional food and agriculture marketing program. In the late eighties, agricultural leaders realized that even though the county produced an abundance of local food, the grocery stores shelves were stocked with foods from all over the globe. Other counties, states and countries were doing a better job of marketing to Sonoma County's 350,000 residents than were the farms within its boundaries (Gibson 1989, 3).

These mostly small and medium-size, alternative farms were not producing enough volume to sell to the commodities market or to local grocery stores without a coordinated marketing effort. "Small growers often don't have the time, money, energy and knowledge to get major exposure for their products," according to Paul Vossen, a farm advisor at the Cooperative Extension in Sonoma County (Gibson 1989, 5). Yet the abundance and quality of local products in the county was undeniable.

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In 1987, the Extension office invited "innovative, farmers, processors and marketers" to participate in a program to promote their products or services (Vossen 1992, 26). Of this group, a 21 member task force was eventually appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The task force's mission was to determine whether or not the county actually needed an agricultural marketing program and if so, to figure out how to develop one cost effectively. The group met once a week for six weeks and determined quickly that, yes, the county could really use a regional marketing program (Vossen 1992).

In the end, the group recommended conducting market research that would "establish an understanding of existing and potential markets and create a comprehensive promotional program (Vossen 1992, 26)." Some suggestions for the promotional program were: designing a logo, educating consumers, making media contacts and doing product tastings at food fairs (Vossen 1992, 27).

Initial funds for the program came from the County Economic Development Board and the County Board of Supervisors. In the second year, they received a grant from the Federal State Market Improvement Program. Later, the county added promotional funding from its existing advertising budget (Vossen 1992, 26).

Today, ten years later, those early efforts have grown, blossomed and re-seeded. The group, officially called Select Sonoma County, is now a non-profit organization of "approximately 300 growers, processors and allied businesses. It has an 11-member board of directors from the agriculture, food processing, restaurant,

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wine, education and marketing sectors (Select Sonoma County)." It is still funded through some grants and county advertising funds but it now collects membership fees and fees for some sales and services (SSC). Its varied and comprehensive approach to regional marketing is outlined in table 1.

Table 1: *"Techniques and Strategies of Select Sonoma County"*

Retail & Restaurant Promotions
*promoting Select Sonoma in Bay Area grocery stores
*product and producer referrals
*member support services
*on-going Point of Sale (POS) program
*restaurant signs and product referrals

Consumer Education: Advertising & Publicity
*display posters & Point of Sale materials
*distribute Farm Market box ends
*advertising: regional TV, magazines and newspapers
*develop and mail press releases
*conduct Select Sonoma County Recipe Contest
*coordinate the Press*Info* Recipe line for local papers
*publish Ag Insider consumer newsletter six times per year
*increase member use of Select Sonoma County logo

Select Sonoma County Products Guide
*develop guide with Sonoma Business magazine
*distribute 45,000 guides

Education & Networking
*connect members to business education offered through other agencies
*publish Select Marketing News six times per year
*act as an information clearinghouse between members and event coordinators
*coordinate seminar on Sales Through the Internet
*maintain Select Sonoma website

Events & Trade Shows
*attend board-selected events
*assist members at events with signage and POS items
*assist cooperative, member-driven efforts

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Internal Affairs
*focus on member benefit and logo use
*board and staff retreat (every other year)
*recruit new members: goal of 100 new members
*develop larger funding; reduce operational expenses
*increase volunteer participation

SSC was the first county-based regional marketing program and many others have looked to them as a model (Humboldt Harvest and Placer Grown, for example) but in the ten years that they have existed, there have been many ups and downs. Executive Director Betsey Timm says SSC was lucky to receive a large grant from the USDA early on, but once that funding ran out, finding comparable funding has been a major challenge. As a result, they have had to cut some programs that they started with and are now focusing on designing programs that are self-financing. Unfortunately, even some self-financed programs have failed. One example of this was a program called "Hot Sheets". SSC staff would ask growers what they had available, compile the information in an easy to read Hot Sheet, and fax the list to local restaurants and stores. SSC charged growers $25 per season for this service. If growers got even one response, their costs would be covered but most got many responses. Growers, retailers and chefs reported really liking the service but for some reason the grower participation eventually dwindled and SSC couldn't maintain the program.

In some ways, this example illustrates a broader problem area for SSC—working with independent-minded growers. Timm says the organization began with the intention of helping out small growers

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but they have found that the growers don't necessarily feel they need any help. SSC sees ways that membership can help the growers, through marketing support and professional development, but for many there is a "why do we need you?" attitude. Timm sees many directions for the group to expand its services to farmers but without support from producers and other funders they may be forced to downsize.

Timm definitely feels that Select Sonoma County has raised awareness of the value of buying local foods. And there is anecdotal evidence that indicates this is true. Farmers report that the SSC label "opens doors" into retail outlets that previously had no interest in local products. However, the group is not tracking any data that could conclusively proves to their membership and the larger agricultural community that their regional marketing is really worth the investment of funds.

Timm says they did do some research early on to get consumer's impression of their logo and they were researching ways to revive the declining lamb industry. But other than that, no research has been conducted. The only solid indication that support for the program has grown is the increase in membership from under 50 growers in the first year to over 300 currently and the increased demand for some of their services.

Timm's advice to others is—be realistic! SSC assumed they'd have tremendous grower support and in the end this support has been tenuous. They have been much more successful working with processors whom she says "understand the value of marketing."

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Also, she says it is important to really get a good picture of the agriculture and food system in a region. Agriculture could be a big industry in an area but if it is all commodity producers, there will not be a need for a regional marketing initiative.

It is worth reflecting on why a regional marketing program, despite some ups and downs, does seem to be succeeding in this Northern California county. First, it is a very affluent county so residents may be more able and willing to spend a bit more for locally grown food. There is also a strong tradition of consumer support for organic farms in the county. Perhaps, people who are convinced of the value of organics are also easily educable on the concept of locally grown. Another notable characteristic of Sonoma agriculture is that it produces an abundance of produce year round. For most products, consumers do not have to worry about seasonal availability. And, finally, Sonoma may be one of the few counties in the country where the number of farms, especially small, organic farms, is on the rise. The constant supply of fresh, locally available foods being marketed to a population that is already in favor of supporting environmentally friendly farming and has the income to do so could be the secret to Select Sonoma County's success.

From the Ottawa Valley

In 1992, a group of public health advocates from the District Health Unit in Renfrew County, Ontario organized the "Forum on Local Food Self-Reliance" to introduce the concepts of food security and self-reliance to the agricultural and food industry communities. According to Peggy Patterson, a nutritionist and one of the forum's

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organizers, "We see agricultural self-reliance as making a big contribution to health by ensuring long term access to local food (1998)." The mainly rural county of approximately 90,000 people is nestled into northern Ontario. Despite a short growing season, agriculture has been an historically important part of the economy. But the number of farms has been steadily declining since the mid-seventies. Through the forum, Patterson and fellow organizers hoped to stimulate interest in maintaining the viability of farming in their community.

The participants in the forum were invited by the organizers and included representation from the farming, food distribution, marketing, retail and public health sectors. The keynote speaker was a well known and respected leader, responsible for the revival of farmers' markets in Ontario. He encouraged the 70 participants to be open to imagining an entirely new paradigm—food self-reliance. Panel discussions by a marketing professor, two producers, one distributor, one retailer and a nutritionist addressed the question, "What would food self-reliance mean to me?". By the end of the meeting, fifteen people agreed to commit significant time and energy to promoting food self-reliance in Renfrew County. This group soon incorporated and became the non-profit organization, the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance (AASR).

For the past six years, AASR has been working to gain community support and funding for a variety of programs aimed at increasing the food and agricultural self-reliance in Renfrew County. The AASR vision is for Renfrew County to be able to provide at least

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50% of its own food and agriculture needs. Organizers have three goals: to increase consumption of locally grown foods, to promote local agricultural production and to promote local foods processing.

The group's central project is a labeling program that identifies products as "From the Ottawa Valley." Growers and processors who meet certain criteria can use the label and grocery store signs to promote their products (see Appendix B for usage criteria). AASR works on educational promotions to support the labeling program. For example, the group publishes a quarterly newsletter "Growing in the Valley" and an Ottawa Valley Products Catalog. It also co-hosts many events that celebrate regional agriculture: the "Rural Ramble" is an annual fundraising event that gives people, mainly urban, an opportunity to visit farms and participate in on-farm activities like milking cows, weeding and bobbing for apples and the "Farm Comes to Town" is an opportunity for elementary school students to interact with local farmers and animals. Another example is "Food, Glorious Food", a festival that involves local chefs and producers in doing displays and cooking demonstrations using local foods. AASR also maintains a very informative website and is putting together a local foods cookbook. A new program will provide business and marketing workshops to local growers.

Even with these successes, the group continues to experience challenges. Some of the initial founders have left the program and those that remain find the issue of funding to be a constant burden. AASR has been very successful in obtaining grant money but because most of the grants come in the form of matching funds, organizers

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find they spend more time on fundraising than they do on programs. This frustration is common among non-profit groups that often must apply for funding on a yearly basis. Until AASR can afford a full time director, the future of the program may be shaky. Unfortunately they are between a rock and hard place—until they get more funding, they cannot do research that shows they are meeting their goals; until they can show they have reached some of their goals, it will be hard to get more funding.

It could be argued that by implementing enough programs at enough levels in the food system, there must be some impact felt. But without tracking and measuring the effects of programs, it is difficult to know. AASR wants the community to meet 50% of its food needs locally. Unfortunately, they don't have more than a rough estimate on what that percentage is currently. Patterson guessed it was somewhere around 10% based on a comparison of foods produced with amount of those foods consumed in the county. A survey of retailers and distributors done in 1994 revealed the extent of and potential for expanding markets for local foods (Campbell 1994). Repeating this study could be one way to measure the increase in consumption of local foods. One idea that Patterson has for AASR is to begin tracking data from farmers' markets in Renfrew County. This is information that is already being collected (and paid for) by someone else and is easily accessible.

Despite some funding and evaluation troubles, AASR has made progress in increasing the visibility of their mission. Patterson believes that the key to getting a regional marketing program started

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is involving the right group of people. Those involved must have expertise in the program areas. She says getting the support of well respected community members is also vital. AASR has found that these people can be some of the most important advocates in assuring program success.

Can a regional marketing program on its own revive a dwindling agricultural base in a fairly isolated, rural region? Only time will tell with AASR. With a relatively small population to demand local products, the group may need to focus on helping farmers to expand their markets in a nearby urban area. The popularity of the Rural Ramble indicates that there is a sizeable urban population outside of the county that is very interested in maintaining the rural nature of Renfrew County. This case is a good example of program that is missing the balance that Dimock says must exist between population and producers in a regional marketing program (1998b). Where a county's population is relatively small in comparison to the amount of food being produced, the concept of region will need to be expanded to include a larger consumer/population base.

To sum up, two very different regions decided to help local, small farmers survive. In the more cosmopolitan Sonoma County, the goal of regional marketing is to help growers compete in an increasingly challenging marketplace. In rural Renfrew County, it is an attempt to revive an eroding agricultural tradition. Both groups are working to help growers by promoting expanded markets for

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local foods. Each has had successes and challenges, particularly in the area of funding. But neither is conducting important research to track their success and document their legitimacy as organizations.

Research is time consuming and can be expensive but it is absolutely essential, if not immediately for these groups, in the long term efforts to prove the viability of a regionalized food system. Dimock believes that one of the biggest mistakes regional marketing programs can make is to not do thorough and regular evaluations (1998b). Feenstra also makes this point within the context of community food systems projects (1997b). Leaders at the Community Food Security Coalition concur (Gottlieb 1996). We can look to these groups for creative ideas and inspiration but unfortunately, not necessarily for any conclusive evidence that regional marketing initiatives really do help sustain local agriculture or improve community self-reliance.

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VII. Guidelines for Developing a Regional Marketing Initiative

What should a group interested in starting a regional marketing initiative consider? How should they begin? What are the keys to success? And the pitfalls? This section aims to answer these questions by providing a set of guidelines that summarizes the lessons learned from Select Sonoma County, From the Ottawa Valley and Dimock's experience with many other groups. It is not a step-by-step guide but a list of general, broad suggestions. Regional marketing is a relatively new concept and the way in which it is carried out will differ in every region, depending on the people involved and the agricultural potential of the area.

This research indicates that initiating a regional marketing initiative that has a chance to succeed relies on these elements:

1) Core Group or Coalition- There must be a group of people who are *really committed* to work on developing and sustaining a regional marketing initiative (Dimock 1998b, Patterson 1998). According to Dimock, it could take five years before a group begins to see any results of their work. Thus, it would be best if participants were in it for the "long haul."

2) An Understanding of the Foodshed which includes:

Information on the Producer Base-There must be enough producers in an area to provide a steady and abundant supply of food during the growing season and to finance at least some of the marketing program. There is no sense designing a comprehensive regional marketing plan that is promoting only a handful of farmers. At the beginning, a program should involve at least 50 producers and processors (Dimock 1998b, Timm 1998). If the chosen region does not have that many producers, the boundaries of the region should be expanded until it does.

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Information on the Population Base- There is an element of balance here, between the number of producers and the number of people. A region must have enough people that can consume the amount of food produced. For example, a rural region might have only 15,000 residents but be currently producing enough food for 60,000 people. If this is true, the concept of region should be expanded to include a larger populace or there should be an emphasis on export in addition to local consumption (Friedmann 1993, Dimock 1998b). Also, is the population one that is financially free to choose local foods? In other words, if local foods are more expensive is there a significant affluent population to market to?

3) Sustainable Leadership- Regional marketing programs are a lot of work and need to be guided by a coordinator and a board of directors (Timm 1998, Dimock 1998b, Rilla 1998, Patterson 1998, McGourty 1997). Funding for this position should be included in planning and maintained throughout the life of the project.

4) A Business-Like Perspective- Regional marketing programs can be expensive. Dimock estimates that a minimum of $350,000 will be invested over a five year period (1998b). There needs to be a commitment to getting this kind of funding and a commitment to keeping it by implementing a well thought out evaluation process.

5) A Feedback Loop- One of the biggest threats to these programs is a loss of the original vision (Dimock 1998b). From the very beginning there needs to be a mechanism put in place for reminding project members about the purpose and importance of the initiative. Members should be committed to re-evaluating every few years (Rilla 1998).

6) Community Support- The future of these projects is dependent on the support of the community at large. Leaders need to be continually cultivating relationships with important community members and groups. Institutional relationships should be developed as often as possible with civic organizations, local publications and county governments (Dimock 1998b, Patterson 1998, Timm 1998).

As mentioned above some groups choose to invest in professional consulting services. Dimock estimates that only a third

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of the regional marketing projects attempted actually succeed (1998b). Soliciting research or advice from a professional marketing firm that has carried out similar projects could be the difference between a successful or failed project.

With or without the help of a professional marketing service, a group should plan to do a feasibility study of the region (Rilla 1997 and1998, Dimock 1998b). This study would involve at least a year of collecting data (new and existing) from producers, processors, retailers and consumers in order to get an accurate picture of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) in implementing a long term regional marketing project. This information will also help to determine the scope of the region to be promoted. Marketing is about targeting and until a group can determine their target, any marketing effort will be like shooting in the dark. A feasibility study takes time but it will be worth it if the project endures and becomes an important part of the community.

There are some methods used in planning any marketing strategy that may be particularly helpful to a group considering a regional food and agriculture marketing initiative. Two possibilities are "S.W.O.T. analysis", mentioned above, and the "4 P's". S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and the 4 P's for product, price, place and promotion. Here's an introduction to SWOT analysis based on the Hudson Valley Harvest regional food marketing program in New York:

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> "*Strengths* and *Weaknesses* may be seen as factors we can greatly influence...In contrast, *Opportunities* and *Threats* emerge from phenomena outside the control or primary influence of the stakeholders in the region. For example, a *strength* would be the region's undeniable natural beauty that attracts visitors. A *weakness* would be a number of decaying farms that are unsightly to visitors. A *threat* would be loss of agricultural land due to state laws that encourage urban sprawl. An *opportunity* would be consumers' increasing interest in eating fresh vegetables." (Dimock 1997, 4)

A SWOT analysis could be a valuable tool for a group to use in determining whether or not regional marketing could succeed.

Use of the 4 P's (product, price, place and promotion) is another framework for groups to consider (Grieshop et. al. 1996). Within this social marketing approach, "product" is whatever practice it is hoped that the target group will adopt. In the case of regional marketing, the "product" or practice is— buying more food locally. "Price" might be better understood as costs and benefits. What will the cost to the consumer be in adopting the new behavior? Local food may cost more money, may require time to learn how to cook, or it may not be available when they need it. On the other hand, local food is fresher, may taste better and buying it supports the local economy and helps preserve open space. "Place" refers to the need to consider how, when and where customers will gain access to information on adopting the new behavior. Will they learn about eating locally at a festival, through the extension office, their nutritionist or at the grocery store? And finally, "promotion" refers to how the concept is communicated. Rice and Atkin (1989) define promotion as "actively reaching out to the right people with the right message at the right time in order to obtain the right effects." Promotion could include

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public service announcements, billboard or television ads, displays and taste testing in grocery stores and labeling programs.

A social marketing perspective suggests the various techniques that can cause people to change their behavior. Table 2 aligns these techniques with their potential importance within a regional food marketing initiative. The applications are the inclinations of this author and are not given as rules to follow, but to suggest some of the possible connections to regional marketing in respect to social marketing techniques.

Table 2: *"Social Marketing Techniques Applied to Regional Food Marketing"*

TECHNIQUES	APPLICATION
Information and education: disseminating information and allowing people to draw their own conclusions	*Important.* Educational posters, brochures, food guides that explain some reasons for buying local foods.
Persuasion and Propaganda: dramatic commentary on effects of certain behavior, often biased and designed to change attitudes	*Not appropriate.* This could reduce reputability of the efforts and should probably be avoided.
Social controls: peer pressure	*Not applicable.* This may occur naturally but there is no real way to plan for it.
Delivery systems: being accommodating to the consumer	*Important.* Consistent and convenient access to high quality local foods are important to sustaining demand for local foods.

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Economic Incentives: cost reduction tactics	*Important.* In the case of a CSA, consumers may save money. For a jar of locally produced jam, they may not. Reminding consumers of the external costs (social and environmental) of conventional foods and the high quality of local foods is important.
Economic Disincentives: cost increasing tactics	*Important.* A group could work to actively reduce federal and state government subsidies for agribusiness and petroleum. If the true cost foods produced under those systems were realized, price of local food could theoretically be much lower.
Mandatory Rules and Regulations: legal or administrative restrictions on behavior	*Important.* Local governments can and in some places do require public institutions (schools, prisons, hospitals) to buy a percentage of their food needs locally.
Behavior Modification- unlearning socially undesirable behavior or learning socially desirable behavior	*Somewhat Important.* This concept might be applied in an educational workshop situation but it would take effort to track participants buying behavior before and after.

Adapted from Sheth and Frazier,1982

The purpose of including these marketing frameworks is to remind groups that regional marketing must be well planned and strategized. Marketing frameworks offer one way to start forming a long term plan to increase consumption of locally grown food.

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Analysis

Regional marketing is just one of many models that suggests ways to improve the economic, environmental and social condition of a community. Like any other model, it needs to be tested to prove whether or not it really will achieve the hopeful goals for which it is aiming. Of the groups profiled here, there is no truly conclusive evidence that regional marketing does increase consumption of locally grown foods or contribute to an improved economic or environmental situation.

Yet, it is not a concept that should be brushed off. The emergence of a community food systems approach, the federal support for community food projects and the many trends related to maintaining access to local foods that currently exist indicate that the timing could be right for a regional food and agricultural marketing approach to succeed.

Right now, it is clear that many groups are working to promote local agriculture but it is not as clear to what extent they are succeeding. As the concept of regional marketing matures more research should be gathered which helps to better understand the successes and failures of these kinds of projects. It seems reasonable that comprehensive collaborative projects, especially, do have some impact on local food self-reliance. But if these projects are to endure, data must be gathered that shows the costs of a regional marketing initiative are marginal in comparison to the benefits of the stimulation of local economies, the protection of local environments and the strengthening of local communities. That kind of information

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could make a powerful statement on the viability of a community food system approach.

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Appendix A

USDA COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT GRANT RECIPIENTS:

1997 Recipients:

The Tohono O'odham Community Food System
Jubilee Agriculture Ministries, Sells, Arizona
This project will increase the food self-reliance of the Tohono O'odham people by developing linkages between producers, markets, consumers and nutritionists. Program directions include the development and expansion of community gardens, organization of a desert food collecting program, redevelopment of traditional Tohono O'odham flood-based farming practices, development of direct-to customer and wholesale markets for traditional Tohono O'odham foods, initiation of culturally sensitive nutrition education programs and support for the development of agriculture-based micro-enterprise projects.
Contact: Tristan Reader 520-383-4966

Food Security Among Farm Worker Communities in the Salinas Valley
Rural Development Center, Salinas, California
This project will create permanent, self-sustaining ways for low-income farm worker and migrant communities to access, produce and market high quality, safe, nutritious and affordable food. Members of the community will be trained to grow a wide variety of organic vegetables, and to create permanent, self-supporting ways to market and distribute their produce. A Public Education and Policy Council will be established to coordinate local food security issues, initiate appropriate policies and implement a community education program.
Contact: Jose Montenegro 408-758-1469

Community Food Security Coalition Training And Technical Assistance Projects
The Community Food Security Coalition, Hartford, CT
This project is national in scope and designed to promote community food projects by direct assistance to communities, pro-actively promoting the concepts of comprehensive community food system planning, offering small grants to communities to help communities develop linkages, conduct needs assessments, and support entrepreneurship. Contact: Andrew Fisher 310-822-5410

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From Crisis Management to Creative Construction: Building Sustainable Food Systems
Five Loaves and Two Fish Food Pantry, Griffin, Georgia
Over thirty partners have come together to conduct this project which will transform their community response to poverty and hunger from "firefighters" to "architects" building food security and self-reliance. A systems approach will bring representatives from academia, food retail, local business, financial, educational, health, social service, religious and governmental organizations together in multi-sector, multi-agency involvement enhancing and building local capacity to respond to issues of food security.
Contact: Kate McLaurin 770-227-4453

Field to Family
Practical Farmers of Iowa, Boone, Iowa
Local churches, social service organizations, community supported agriculture (CSA) groups, sustainable agriculture organizations, academia, and businesses are coming together to rebuild community ties between diverse sectors of the food system. The goals of the project are to 1). make fresh, locally grown produce available to low-income households along with the opportunity to design and develop the local food system, 2). Link low-income CSA members and other Field to Family participants with churches and agencies now organizing to help families leave welfare successfully, 3). Increase use of locally grown food and foster the start-up and growth of small to medium sized producers, and 4). promoting the role local agriculture can play in supporting communities.
Contact: Gary Huber 515-294-8512

Beauregard Community Food and Nutrition Program
Beauregard Community Action Association, Inc., DeRidder, Louisiana
In this project building coalitions among low-income residents and a renewed spirit of cooperation between resource agencies in all sectors and volunteers. The project will increase access to fresh produce and increase household incomes. Increased self-reliance over food will be attained by providing households the opportunity to produce their own food, preserve the food, learn how to prepare nutritious meals, preserve their seeds for the next planting season, make a compost fertilizer, and to shop for foods in a more economical manner.
Contact: Winkie Branch 318-463-7895

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Western Waldo County Food Project
Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Wiscasset, Maine

This is a comprehensive food system project that creates new linkages in an economically stressed rural region in Maine. The three main activities of this project include; a downtown center, the community cafe, organized around local foods, and used to prepare, distribute, and celebrate good food from local farms and gardens; a school based education program, "Kids, Food and Community," that teaches local children about food, farming and the interconnections with community; and the "Community Farm Incubator" that supplies farm products to local markets and offers job training and provides a low-cost means of starting out in farming. The funded project will act as a agent to bind these three activities into a whole project to benefit the community.
Contact: John Piotti 207-948-3335

Detroit Urban Cooperative Agricultural Network (Detroit U-Can)
Hunger Action Coalition of Michigan, Detroit, Michigan

Project participants have come together to create a sustainable alternative food related economic sector that can enhance food security in severely blighted urban communities. Five specific projects will develop community capacity within Detroit1s empowerment zone's economic sector. Youth projects will build hope for children and a foundation for the future of urban agriculture.
Contact: David Hacker 313-963-7788

The Youth Farm and Market Project: Building a Neighborhood, Youth-based Food System
The Regeneration Partnership, St. Paul, Minnesota

The Youth Farm and Market Project established in 1995 has successfully brought youth in the food system in both producing and marketing produce in low-income communities. This project will expand to three new neighborhoods and create opportunities for urban youth to be an integral part of neighborhood-based food systems; provide high quality food to low-income people; and catalyze a neighborhood food system that incorporates a wide variety of neighborhood organizations and local agencies as collaborators.
Contact: David Brant 612-374-3993

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Missoula Food System-Community Agriculture Project
Missoula Nutrition Services, Missoula, Montana

A comprehensive collaboration of food, health, university, volunteer and social organizations will continue with a variety of community food projects plus initiate intensive gleaning, composting, marketing, and community education activities. The coalition of organizations integrates families and individuals into the food system to produce high quality food for low-income people while developing skills that lead to household self-sufficiency and agricultural entrepreneurship. Some unique characteristics of the project include; a Community Supported Agriculture Farm for low- income people; welfare recipients participating to complete required community service; food bank production plots plus a "Grow a Row" in home gardens for donation; marketing and sustainable agriculture education programs.
Contact: Mary Pittaway 406-523-4740

Isle's Community Farm Project Isles, Inc.
Trenton, New Jersey

The Isles' Community Farm Project plans to develop a model program with a five-acre community farm to increase the supply of affordable, nutritious food to low-income families while creating economic development opportunities. Forty-low income residents will be trained in food/plant production and business skills and 14 seasonal jobs will be created. Revenues will be generated from the sale of fresh produce and horticulture products including ornamentals. Produce will be distributed to low-income people through on-site retail farm stand, CSA shares, farm-stands in low-income communities, and emergency food providers.
Contact: Ronald Friedman 609-393-5656

The City Farms
Just Food Alliance, New York, New York

The City Farms project is an alliance of 5 New York organizations to improve regional food security. The project will improve availability of fresh food in New York's low-income neighborhoods by expanding the capacity of urban growers to produce healthful, nutritious food and distribute it through established food sites; promote community-based entrepreneurship and economic opportunity through food production, processing and marketing; strengthen urban markets for farmers by fostering relationships among city residents and regional and local growers and produce, help retailers gain expertise build

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public support for the preservation of open space for food production. Contact: Kathy Lawrence 212-674-8124

Expanding Access to Fresh Produce for Poor New Yorkers
Community Food Resources Center, New York, New York
The project activities will demonstrate to retailers that consumers will buy quality produce, help retailers gain expertise buying and selling produce, prove to wholesalers that they will make money if the change their operations and help create linkages between urban retailers and regional farmers.
Contact: Pamela Fairclough 212-344-0195

Washburn Community Food System Development Project
Narrow Ridge Earth Literacy Center, Washburn, Tennessee
Diminished agricultural enterprises and weakened economic base within Washburn have created significant barriers to food security. The purpose of this project is to build community organizational infrastructure and leadership capacity to enhance the nutritional well-being of Washburn families by increasing access to high quality food through lowering of physical and economic barriers, strengthening of educational resources to enhance capacity for informed decision making and appropriate resource utilization choices, and building of community infrastructure for long term collaborative partnerships among stakeholders inside and beyond the Washburn community. Contact: Bill Nickle 423-497-2753

Central Texas Sustainable Food Project
Sustainable Food Center, Austin, Texas
This project will leverage the success of their earlier project that showed community food production was a viable method for meeting the food needs of low-income people. Two communities will collaborate, sharing expertise in operating community food programs. The Sustainable Food Center will expand its program to include food-based business development to move low-income people form "clients" to self-employed entrepreneurs. This will be accomplished by piloting a "Farm-to-Chef Marketing Network" developing a micro-enterprise program and expanding Team Green!, a youth training program. Contact: Kathleen Fitzgerald 512-385-0080

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Houston Wards Youth Food-for-Market Project
Urban Harvest, Inc., Houston, Texas
Inner city middle school youth gain practical gardening skills and learn not only about food and nutrition, but also how to apply this knowledge to income earning enterprises in this project. By selling produce to a community center co-op and cafe, money is returned to the community while providing nutritious food to the center's patrons. In addition, the sale of food and value-added products at a city-wide green market enables youth to demonstrate that training and diligence can provide income. The youth can further help the food security of the community by building raised bed intensive gardens for backyard gardens in return for payment.
Contact: Robert Randall 713-880-5540

People Grow
The Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger, South Burlington, Vermont
Eight leading Vermont agriculture, food and anti-hunger organizations have come together to work in one rural and one urban Enterprise Community to build these communities' self-reliance in meeting their own food needs. Strategies will include involvement in community gardens and Community Support Agriculture; development of food preparation, preservation and marketing skills that can be used to grow, preserve and market Vermont produce and to prepare low-cost, nutritious meals at home; increasing availability of fresh, local produce at emergency food sites; coordinating food assistance and education that offer gardening and nutrition education and healthy meals to low-income children; creating opportunities for local purchasing and market development for foods produced through micro-enterprise. Contact: Robert Dostis 802-865-0255

Tahoma Food System
The Tahoma Food System, Tacoma, Washington
Southeast Asian families, already trained in agriculture in their native countries will be given training in organic farming and direct niche marketing until they have the experience and funds to start their own farms, or become economically self-sufficient. This builds on an already successful urban farm that provides paid jobs for homeless people and farm labor for an organic Community Supported Agriculture Project and assists the Tahoma Food System develop into a strong multi-sector food and farm system non-profit organization.
Contact: Carrie Little, 253-572-6582

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1996 Recipients:

Connecting Small Farmers with Low-income Communities
Community Alliance with Family Farm Foundation, Davis, CA
This project establishes a partnership between family farmers and two low-income Latino community development groups to provide marketing outlets for small-scale farmers and provide greater access to fresh nutritious produce for low-income communities.
Contact: Jered Lawson, 408-459-3964

Watts Growing
Southland Farmers' Market Association, Los Angeles, CA
This project involves training community gardeners in production techniques, small business management, and produce-marketing. It will increase the availability of locally grown, fresh, nutritious produce and generate economic development opportunities for low-income gardeners.
Contact: Marion Louise Kalb, 213-244-9190

The Urban Farm at Stapleton Community Food Project
Denver Urban Gardens, Denver, CO
This project involves expanding community gardens, establishing a community food council, developing a livestock center, initiating a community-supported agriculture program, and beginning an entrepreneurial program for low-income youths and homeless citizens.
Contact: David Risek, 303-592-9300

Anahola Self-Sufficiency Program on Hawaiian Homelands
Kauai Food Bank, Lihue, HI
The project includes using donated lands to expand the food bank's farming capacity, marketing the food bank's produce to hotels and tourist resorts, providing job training opportunities to the bank's volunteers, and increasing the availability of locally grown food.
Contact: Gregg Gardiner, 808-246-3809

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The Community Farm Project
The Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Bloomington, IN
The project involves training tenants of public housing to produce food and to increase income by selling produce and value-added products at local stores and restaurants. A local food bank provides space, volunteers, and expertise. Contact: Emily Schabacker, 812-332-0999

The Economics Micro-Enterprise Development Initiative
Loyola University, New Orleans, LA
The project establishes a partnership between rural growers and inner city dwellers to cultivate small businesses from a thriving farmers market. The community enterprises that result from this project will enhance local agriculture and provide public housing residents with a means to attain economic self sufficiency.
Contact: Richard McCarthy, 504-861-5898

Maine Urban/Rural Community Food Project
Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Wiscasset, ME
This proposal involves two aspects of community food security; development of an urban and rural food policy council and the creation of several new projects including farmers markets, community gardens, and educational projects.
Contact: Carla Dickstein, 207-882-7552

Centro Agricola (Community Agricultural Center)
Nuestras Raices, Inc., Holyoke, MA
This project combines a greenhouse classroom, children's garden projects, food farm awareness, micro-enterprise development with kitchens, and micro-processing to create value-added products for retail sale. The project services a predominantly Hispanic population.
Contact(s): Daniel Ross, Francisco Ortiz, 413-535-1789

Common Ground Initiative
The Food Project, Inc., Lincoln, MA
This project connects urban and rural youth and adults to address the lack of access to fresh produce in Roxbury. It involves the creation of a youth-run food system including farms and farmers' market and results in more jobs for teens and an increase in fresh produce for Roxbury and Lincoln.
Contact(s): Patricia Gray, Gregory Dow Gale, 617-259-1426

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Garden City Harvest Project
Missoula Nutrition Resources, Missoula, MT
This comprehensive project includes many activities strongly rooted in the community and linked to varied community organizations. The goal is to develop a community farm and neighborhood and backyard gardens using sustainable agriculture methods. Participants will grow, harvest, glean and distribute fresh produce to people in need. This project will demonstrate to the community the art, science and practice of sustainable agriculture while reducing dependence on outside sources of produce, encouraging community service and volunteer opportunities, and addressing welfare-reform.
Contact: Mary Feuersinger-Pittaway, 406-523-4740

CAC's Food Connections Project
Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, Knoxville, TN
This project will involve creating a green market, picking up produce from farms, providing "veggie vouchers" for WIC recipients, establishing community gardens, encouraging restaurants to purchase local produce, increasing summer food program sites, and developing a data base to monitor performance of the food system.
Contact: Gail Harris, 423-546-3500

New Farmers/New Farm Projects
Institute for Washington's Future, Seattle, WA
The project creates opportunities for low-income area residents to gain organic farming and business skills and subsequent access to farmable land. The project is expected to result in partnerships designed to help low- income residents and keep farmable lands in agriculture.
Contact: Don Moshe Shakow, 206-324-3628

The Potomac Highlands Community Food Projects
Lightstone Foundation, Moyers, WV
The project will improve access to locally grown food, increase economic opportunities for low-income households, support local diversified farms and build community support for sustainable family farming and food security in 5 counties.
Contact: Anthony Smith, 304-249-5200

Adapted from the Community Food Security Coalition website

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Appendix B

Guidelines for Use of Local Labels: The Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance and Select Sonoma County

Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance

Guidelines for identifying agricultural goods from Renfrew County with the official mark of the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance - Renfrew County:

Each product labeled with the official mark of the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance - Renfrew County must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Type of Product:

The product is an agricultural good or is prepared with agricultural goods. Agricultural goods are:

a) foods for human consumption- eg. vegetables, legumes, fruits, grains and grain products, meat, fish, poultry, eggs, herbs, maple products, honey, prepared foods;

b) horticultural products- eg. bedding plants, potted plants, landscape plants, cut and dried flowers;

c) animal products- eg. hides and leather, fleece and wool, bonemeal and other byproducts, soap, tallow and beeswax, etc.;

d) animal feed;

e) hay and straw;

f) manure and compost;

g) lumber, firewood, and other wood products.

2. Origin of Product:

The product was grown (plant products) or raised (animal products) in the Ottawa Valley.

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In the case of processed goods such as prepared foods, animal feed and wood products, at least 50 percent of the weight or volume excluding packaging must be grown and/or raised in the Ottawa Valley. Weight or volume is to be measured before preparation or manufacture. There is no restriction on the origin of packaging materials.

3. Processing Location:

All of the processing takes place in the Ottawa Valley. Goods may be processed outside of the Ottawa Valley only if facilities do not exist in the Ottawa Valley.

Ingredients may be processed outside the Ottawa Valley, but the final product for sale must be processed in the Ottawa Valley. For example, a strawberry jam consisting of over 50% local berries by weight and prepared with Redpath sugar processed in Montreal meets the criteria - even though the sugar was processed outside the Ottawa Valley, the jam was processed in the Ottawa Valley.

4. Membership:

The producer or processor holds a current, individual membership in the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance - Renfrew County. (The membership year is January 1 - December 31.)

5. The product's production, processing and packaging is consistent with the goals and guiding values of the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance - Renfrew County.

Permission to use the official mark can be revoked at any time at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The user assumes all responsibility for the quality and safety of any product he/she markets bearing the sticker with the official mark of the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance - Renfrew County.

Adapted from the Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance website.

Select Sonoma County

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Grower/Processor members shall be those members who derive income directly from the commercial production of agricultural products cultivated, produced, or livestock raised in Sonoma County or those members whose firms have a processing and/or manufacturaing plant in Sonoma County and which regularly use some agricultural raw materials from the county. This shall not preclude products processed in Sonoma County with ingredients that are not grown in sufficient quantities in Sonoma County (ex: wheat); nor shall it preclude products such as fish and lamb that are considered part of a regional crop.

Rules for Logo Usage (all uses of logo are permission only)
1. Member businesses that use iocal products as on e of their primary ingredients may use the **Grower-processor logo**:

Products sold in raw form must be 100% Sonoma County grown. example: produce
Meats must be finished off in Sonoma County prior to processing.

2. Member businesses that create value-added products (significantly change the nature of a product) utilizing local products, may use the **Grower-processor logo**.

Products must be processed in Sonoma County with member's recipe (no co-packers outside Sonoma County).
example: sauces, mustards, jams, dressings, cheeses

3. Member businesses that create value-added products (significantly change the nature of a product) without local products, may use the **Processor logo**.

Products must be processed in Sonoma County with member's recipe (no co-packers outside Sonoma County).
example: sauces, mustards, jams, cheeses, coffees, breads

4. Member businesses that do not significantly change the nature of a processed product to a value-added product and which do not use products from local sources may not use the logo.

example: any product from outside the county that is available in Sonoma County.

Exceptions that will be considered to use a logo:
A. Producers which are an established part of Sonoma County's agricultural heritage, economic base, support industry, and who have

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tried all reasonable means to continue that agricultural processing endeavor with local products and who have failed to do so.

B. Producers with established products that are marketed under a Sonoma County label, whose corporate headquarters is established in Sonoma County for at least 5 years, and is determined to be making a significant contribution to Sonoma County agriculture and/or local food/beverage/nursery product marketing.

The Board of Directors with advice from local agricultural organizations will make such determination and/or exceptions.

Associate membership use of logo: In subsequent meetings it was confirmed that associate members may be permitted to use the logo on non-consumables and non-ag products, with the word "Associate" in the ribbon.

Note: All uses of the logo are by permission only. Producers must be in business one year prior to logo use only.

Adapted from Select Sonoma County "Membership Information".

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Appendix C

Interview Questions

Peggy Patterson, Association for Agricultural Self-Reliance- 3/23/98

1) Please characterize Renfrew County- population, landscape, extent that it is or isn't rural, is or is not affluent, relationship to metro areas and how it compares to the rest of the Province.

2) Can you tell me more about how the project was initiated? There was a meeting that jumpstarted the effort but who initiated that meeting? who were the participants? how was it determined who would be invited? And, did you use a professional marketing group?

3)Are there any other groups doing related work in the area?

4) AASR's vision is to provide 50% of the county's food and agriculture needs through local sources. What percentage do local sources now fulfill the needs of the county? How are you measuring progress toward or away from the 50% goal?

5) How would you characterize the farms you are working with, particularly in size and production methods?

6) How did you develop the guidelines for using the label/defining what is local?

7) What is the future outlook for this organization?

8) What suggestions or guidelines would you give to another group wishing to start a regional marketing program?

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Betsey Timm, Select Sonoma County- 4/1/98*

1)Please characterize Sonoma County- population, landscape, extent that it is or isn't rural, is or is not affluent, relationship to metro areas and how it compares to the rest of California.

2) Are there other groups in the are doing related work?

3) How is SSC measuring success of its programs? Are you collecting any data? Doing any research?

4)How would you characterize the farms you are working with, particularly in size and production methods?

5) How did you develop the guidelines for using the label/defining what is local?

6) What is the future outlook for this organization?

7) What suggestions or guidelines would you give to another group wishing to start a regional marketing program?

*Questions regarding initiation of the project are excluded because a secondary source covered it.

Michael Dimock, Sunflower Strategies, Inc.-3/27/98

1) Is anyone other than Sunflower Strategies working specifically on regional food and agriculture marketing? If so, who and how do they compare to your group?

2) Why have you chosen to focus on regional food and agriculture marketing?

3) What are your thoughts on state-led regional marketing efforts? Is there any advantage to a collaborative, non-profit approach vs. these state-led efforts?

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4) From your experience, what makes a region a region?

5) How does regional food and agriculture marketing relate to other marketing efforts that promote buying locally, both historically and in relationship to goals of these efforts?

6)Why should a group consider having Sunflower Strategies or another professional marketing firm advise them in carrying out a regional marketing campaign? Is there any correlation with professional advice and program success?

7) What are the essential "ingredients" for designing and sustaining a regional marketing initiative? How about the pitfalls?

8) Do you know of anyone else who is doing research on the topic of regional marketing? Or, is there anyone else I should be certain to contact on this topic?

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