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Examining the Food Networks of Small Businesses in a Food District and the Potential for Fostering Local Economic Development

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Abstract

Food systems are complex, interconnected webs which connect everything from small local businesses and farmers to large multinational corporations all over the world. The recent spike in food prices as the value of the Canadian dollar declines has highlighted how much of our food is grown in California and other international regions. Where do small food businesses source their food from and how do they make those decisions? To examine this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 business owners in the Old East Village Food District, in London, Canada. Interview data were analyzed two ways: (1) foodshed analysis of business supply chains, and (2) qualitative content analysis to identify opportunities and challenges for growing small businesses and sourcing local food. Foodshed analysis revealed how businesses source food from local farmers, but the majority of food comes through distributors at the Ontario Food Terminal. Findings identified the interconnectedness of food systems; regions underserved by local distribution networks; and the value of in-depth interviews for better understanding the food system. Content analysis highlighted the role of farmers' markets and locally-oriented business clusters in fostering local economic development. The farmers' market was a low risk, affordable place for businesses to access food production space and its integration with the food district was vital for growing businesses. Policies supporting local economic development must address logistical challenges preventing small businesses from sourcing local food, and assist small businesses with accessing capital.

Keywords

Local Food Networks; Foodshed Analysis; Food Districts; Farmers' Markets; Small Food Businesses; Local Economic Development; Urban Food Planning

Co-Authorship Statement

The two papers contained within this thesis are manuscripts which are being prepared for submission to academic journals. The research project, analysis methods and interview guides were selected and adapted by myself with input and advice from Jason Gilliland. I, Michael A. R. Clark, am first author on the following manuscripts:

Chapter 3: “Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada”, co-authored with Jason A. Gilliland. The manuscript has been presented at the Association of European Schools of Planning’s 2015 Sustainable Food Conference, and is in consideration for publication in a special issue of an academic food and planning related journal. All interviews, mapping and network analysis was conducted by myself with supervision and advice from Jason Gilliland. Draft manuscripts for the paper were prepared by myself, with guidance and edits from Jason Gilliland.

Chapter 4: “Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada”, co-authored with Richard C. Sadler and Jason A. Gilliland. The manuscript has been drafted, and is currently in preparation for submission to Urban Studies. All interviews, coding and content analysis was conducted by myself with supervision and feedback from Jason Gilliland. The draft manuscripts were prepared by myself, with guidance and edits from Richard Sadler and Jason Gilliland.

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction & Background

1.1 Introduction

On November 14, 2013, HJ Heinz Canada announced that it will close its Leamington factory. This meant 2,300 direct and indirect jobs were lost across Ontario (Groenewegen, 2013). Due to a number of factors such as a high Canadian dollar and increasing globalised competition, Ontario's broader manufacturing sector has been hit hard, and food and beverage manufacturing was no exception. The majority of the food sold in grocery stores, cafeterias and restaurants comes from the industrial food system which is characterised by large scale, global supply chains, industrial scale production techniques, and highly processed foods.

In response to this event and other factory closings there has been renewed interest in supporting small and medium sized businesses in the food industry to fill the void left by large multi-national agribusinesses. The Martin Prosperity Institute claimed that the Ontario food industry has the potential to replace the auto industry as Ontario's economic powerhouse and indicated that the small scale specialty food industry is the fastest growing segment of the industry (Donald, 2009). Recent decades have seen a resurgence in 'alternative food networks,' which are often characterised by small scale, organic / ecological farming and short food supply chains which directly connect farmers to consumers. It is crucial for policies to be implemented which support the continued growth of this segment.

Associated with resurgence of alternative food networks, there has been a wave of research interest around the subject (Watts et al., 2005). Donald (2008) suggests that future research needs to focus on the role that small and medium sized firms can play in creating widespread changes in AFNs. Recent research also suggests that farmers' markets contribute to this change by successfully incubating food businesses (Cameron, 2007; Sadler et al., 2013). Farmers' markets only represent a fraction of small local Ontario food businesses, however, and more research is needed to identify opportunities to grow small businesses across the industry.

1.2 Research Questions

Despite the interest in local and alternative food networks, there is little empirical data that has been used to map and analyse the connections and linkages along and across existing food networks. The overarching objectives of this research are to develop a greater understanding of the food network supplying the Old East Village Food District in London, Canada and to explore the potential for small businesses in the food industry to drive local economic development. This study will utilise the concept of ‘foodshed’ first developed by Walter Hedden (1929) to map the supply chains of small food businesses. This will be done using an adaptation of the roster-recall interview methodology developed by Ter Wal and Boschma (2008). In order to pursue these objectives this thesis will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the ‘foodshed’ of the Old East Village Food District?
 - a. Which producers, processors, distributors and other suppliers do small food businesses purchase their food supplies from?
 - b. Where are these suppliers located?
2. What factors (e.g. geographic, economic, social, environmental) influence the decisions that small food business owners make about where they source food supplies?
3. What are the opportunities and constraints for growing small food businesses?
4. What opportunities and limitations affect the amount of locally grown and processed food used by small businesses.

In addition to the research questions listed above, this study will pursue the following methodological research questions:

5. What are the benefits and limitations of using foodshed analysis to study a food district?
6. What are the benefits and limitations of using semi-structured interviews as the data collection methodology to map the foodshed?

1.3 Study Area & Background

1.3.1 City of London, Canada in Southwestern Ontario



Figure 1.1 Study Area: London, Ontario.

London is a midsized Canadian city, population 366,000 (Statistics Canada, 2012), located in Southwestern Ontario (see Figure 1.1). The region (highlighted in green) has a long history of agricultural production with some of the most agriculturally productive land in the world, as well as considerable longstanding activity in both auto and food manufacturing due to its proximity to the major urban centres of Toronto and Detroit. London is also the largest municipality in the agriculturally fertile SWO region. The region’s farms produce \$6.1 billion of farm outputs, which accounts for over half of Ontario’s farm outputs, and including related industries, represents 11.4% of Ontario’s GDP (Econometric Research Limited et al., 2015). This history has led to agriculture and food being identified as an economic driver of the both urban and rural areas in the region (Donald, 2009). Policy makers have looked to the food industry to fill the

void left by the decline of the auto industry in the Rust Belt cities located in the US Great Lakes Region and Southwestern Ontario. London and the surrounding region has a long history of large food manufacturers and recognisable agri-food brands such as Kraft, Heinz, Kellogg's, Cargill, McCormicks, Maple Leaf Foods and Nestlé (Ontario Food Cluster, 2015).

Ontario has been subject to significant restructuring in the food manufacturing industry between 2006 and 2014, as approximately 60 plants closed, representing 52% of all plant job losses due to plant closures in Canada (Sparling and LeGrow, 2014). The authors report that across Canada the food manufacturing sector market share is dominated by large corporations with the largest 3% of firms controlling 50% of shipments, while the smallest 84% of firms only represent 17% of shipments. Between 2006 and 2014 approximately 40 of the 60 plant closures in Ontario were plants owned by large, primarily US-based, multinational firms. Small and medium sized Ontario firms on the other hand accounted a third of Ontario Plant closures, but approximately a half of plant openings and expansions. The potential for growth among Ontario's small and medium craft food manufacturers is identified by Donald and Blay-Palmer (2006), which they argue are held back by government policies that favour large corporations.

Table 1.2 Selected crops produced in SWO. Source: (Econometric Research Limited and Harry Cummings & Associates, 2014)

Crop	Hectares	% of SWO Agricultural Land	% of Ontario's Production
Soybeans	608,793	32.9%	61.0%
Total Corn	544,023	29.4%	58.3%
Total Wheat	327,807	17.7%	66.5%
Total field vegetables	36,254	2.0%	69.1%
Total area of fruits, berries and nuts	6,570	0.4%	30.8%

Agriculture in the SWO region is heavily focused on the global commodity crops of Corn, Soybeans and Wheat. Table 1.2 shows the breakdown of major crops in the region. Corn, soybeans and wheat account for 80% of total agricultural land. In contrast, field vegetables account for 2% of SWO's agricultural land, while fruits, berries and nuts account for just 0.4% (Econometric Research Limited and Harry Cummings & Associates, 2014). Despite all this food production, Ontario is a net food importer. The only crops that Ontario is a net exporter of are

Grain Products and Oilseeds, while Ontario net imports \$1.0B worth of vegetables (Econometric Research Limited et al., 2015).

A discussion of the SWO food system is not complete without mentioning the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto. The food terminal brings together farmers, brokers, importers, exporters, restaurants, institutions and other buyers to exchange food. Collectively, the buyers at the food terminal represent the largest buyer of Ontario produce in the province, and rank in the top four terminal markets in North America with 2 billion pounds of produce distributed annually (Ontario Food Terminal Board, 2015). The food terminal fulfils an essential role for the produce industry, making it easy and convenient for sellers and purchasers to meet in the largest urban centre in the country. Many products grown in SWO are shipped to the terminal, sold there, and then shipped back to the region to be consumed. In this context, the local food movement in the region has largely focussed on cutting out that step of distribution system by either sourcing directly from farmers or through local distributors.

1.3.2 The Old East Village Food District

The Old East Village is an inner city neighbourhood located east of the downtown core of London (see Figure 1.2). The area has a long history as an industrial working class neighbourhood and vibrant shopping destination. The community is adjacent to the old Kellogg's Canada factory that produced cereal for 100 years and employed over 600 people before closing in 2014.

Following a period of decline experienced by many inner city neighbourhoods in conjunction with the growth of suburbs and malls in the 1980s-90s, the revitalization of the Old East Village gradually began to take hold at the end of the 1990s. The Old East Village Food District has emerged organically following the opening of the Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market (WFM) in 2006. Prior to the market, the only places to purchase food products were in convenience stores since the last large supermarket had closed in 2003. Due to the limited availability of fresh food in the convenience stores, the Old East Village was identified as a food desert until 2006 when the market opened (Larsen and Gilliland, 2008, 2009).



Figure 1.2 The location and types of food businesses in the Old East Village Food District, in London, Canada

The market is located on the grounds of the Western Fair District, an agricultural society, in the Confederation Building, a heritage building that was originally used as a craft market and event space. The market has over 100 vendors on two floors, approximately half of which are food businesses. The market is open every Saturday year round. The market has now been open for 8 and a half years and is one of the most popular markets in the city (Sadler et al., 2013). The market has a mixture of farmers and producers, as well as value added food processors and businesses which sell food in the market. Many of these businesses have commercially-certified kitchens in their market booths.

The WFM is an ‘unofficial’ farmers’ market since it is privately owned and less than 51% of its vendors are primary producers and therefore it does not qualify for membership with Farmers’ Markets Ontario. Many of the most popular markets in the province also fall into this category, including the St. Jacob’s Farmers’ Market (North of Waterloo), St. Lawrence Market (Toronto) and Covent Garden Market (London). Primary producers in these markets are complemented by

value added processors and vendors who purchase and sell food year round from wholesalers. The market is run by a small management staff which promote the market and its vendors, manage & maintain the building and run special events. Vendors are charged an affordable weekly rent for anything from a temporary fold up table to a permanent booth with a full commercial kitchen.

Since the market has opened 5 businesses have expanded from the market and opening retail locations in the Old East Village. In addition, another 6 businesses from other parts of the city have either opened in the Old East Village or relocated to the neighbourhood. In total there are now approximately 75 small and medium sized food businesses in the neighbourhood (see Table 1.3). This growth has led the Old East Village Business Improvement Area to identify and begin marketing the Old East Village Food District.

Table 1.3 Summary of businesses located in the Old East Village Food District by type of business, and by location inside or outside the farmers’ market

Number of...	Inside Farmers’ Market	Outside Farmers’ Market	Total
Produce Retailers	10	3	13
Meat / Dairy Retailers	11	3	14
Prepared Food Retailers	18	5	23
Restaurants and Cafes	8	17	25
Total	47	28	75

As a result of this growth, the Old East Village Business Improvement Area (OEV BIA) has identified food as an economic driver for the local economy. Initiatives are under way to encourage the continued growth of food businesses. This research project aims to assist these initiatives by helping to understand the regional food system which the food district is linked to, as well as the opportunities and challenges facing small businesses in the food industry.

1.4 Rationale for Selection of Study Area

The study area was chosen for a number of reasons including: (1) the potential for the growth of the Old East Village Food District to serve as a case study for other inner city commercial areas, and (2) the existing relationships between the researcher and businesses in the area.

The Old East Village is an ideal study area due to the potential lessons that its revitalization and growth of its Food District can have for other inner city neighbourhoods in North America.

When the revitalization began, the Old East Village had a number of characteristics which allow it to serve as a case study for other similar inner city neighbourhoods in mid-sized urban centres:

(i) dense built form of late 19th / early 20th century commercial buildings with accessory residential units above; (ii) close proximity to the downtown core and well serviced by public transit; (iii) a negative stigma associated with an over concentration of social services; and (iv) high vacancy rate of commercial and residential units. In addition, the Old East Village is set in London, Ontario, which offers a case study of the potential for other urban areas located within traditional agricultural regions.

The lead researcher on the study worked for the Old East Village Business Improvement Area as Research and Program Coordinator. In this role, the researcher was responsible for assisting businesses and property owners with: applying to municipal grants and loans; finding spaces to lease or purchase; as well as acquiring permits and licences. In this role, the researcher developed strong trusting relationships with many business owners and developed a reputation in the neighbourhood for assisting business owners with growing their businesses and overcoming challenges. This relationship was based on assisting in business development rather than a specific ethic or philosophy in the food system (e.g. local, organic, small scale, GMO-free, global, large scale). This reduced the bias in the interviews and ensured all types of supply relationships were discussed rather than just the attractive ones that business owners wanted to highlight.

1.5 Outline of Thesis

This study examining local food businesses in the Old East Village Food District and their role in local economic development is divided into five thesis chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the food

system literature, including discussions of the globalization of food and the extensive debates over the alternative food networks, short food supply chains, and the conventional food system. This literature review provides the rationale for the research project, which are presented in the form of two manuscripts. The first of the manuscripts presented in this thesis is Chapter 3, titled "Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada". This chapter uses spatial and network analysis to create a map of the foodshed for the Old East Village Food District. After describing the existing foodshed, the second manuscript (Chapter 4), titled "Growing Small Food Businesses: Investigating Local Economic Development in a Food District in London, Canada" examines how businesses within the food district achieved their current status, and identifies what they are doing to continue to grow. These chapters also provide more detailed reviews of the relevant literature and methods of data analysis specific to each manuscript. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the thesis by summarizing the results of the research, and discusses the study contributions, limitations, and directions for further research.

As this thesis is written in the integrated article format, the two case study chapters (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4) are designed primarily to be stand-alone articles, however some common background sections have been located within the introductory chapters. Two introductory chapters cover the background and research questions (Chapter 1), and overview of the food system and food geography literature (Chapter 2). As such, some repetition of material (e.g., background, literature review and methods) between chapters is necessary.

1.6 Bibliography

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Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

Food systems and networks have been heavily studied in geographic, economic, social, health and environmental academic literature. Food geography has previously been divided into geography of agriculture on the one hand, and retail geography and economic geography on the other hand (Winter, 2003b). Winter (2003b) credits the growth of agro-food geography, which considers the food system from production to consumption, to the rise in popularity of political economy and the cultural turn in geography. This shift in research focus is exemplified by the interest in various ways in which food moves from producer to consumer such as through farmers' markets, weekly box deliveries of food or community supported agriculture schemes, as well as grocery stores and multi-national corporations. Food is a unique lens to look at supply chains through since, the quality of the product is intrinsically connected to the place, the soil or water, that the food was grown in. As a result agro-food geography has a long history studying the food system and discussing the meaning the place where food is grown and the paths that it travels.

Allison Brown's review (2002) identified research on farmers' markets as early as 1940 and Feenstra (1997) identified academic interest in local food systems in the 1970s. Since these starting points, interest in 'alternative food networks' has intensified prompting an updated review of local farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) programs (Brown and Miller, 2008). The literature review will begin by discussing some key terms in the field: alternative food networks (AFNs), local food systems and short food supply chains (SFSC). Many of the debates in the literature revolve around the confusion among these terms, so it is therefore necessary to clearly define them before looking at other themes, debates, and gaps in the literature. After providing clear definitions, the various types of AFNs and SFSCs will be discussed, followed by a review of some of the criticisms of these concepts. Discussion will also focus on the roles and experiences of small businesses in the AFN and SFSC compared to the industrial food system. The final section will discuss some areas in the literature requiring further research, which illustrate the value of pursuing the present research project.

2.1 Globalization of Food

The 'conventional' food system today is characterised as global in scope, based on sophisticated distribution and storage facilities, highly processed food and industrial farming and agricultural practices. This has been linked with the push towards global free trade, which has allowed the private sector, and retailers and chemical / seed companies in particular, to reorganised the market to suit their needs (Busch and Bain, 2004; Hendrickson et al., 2001). As retailers in the food industry have gained monopolistic power on the food supply chain, they have used this power to force shrinking margins on agricultural producers (Kaditi, 2013). This pressure has led producers to increase production in order to compensate for shrinking margins. As a result, the industry has been rapidly consolidating at all stages of the food supply chain. Midsized farms are disappearing (Kirschenmann et al., 2008), local abattoirs and other small scale producers are going out of business or being bought (Carter-Whitney, 2008; Charlebois and Summan, 2014), and small food retailers are being priced out of the market by large grocery superstore chains (Clarke, 2000). The conventional food system is often criticized that the industrialization of agriculture, particularly beef and chicken production has occurred at the expense of nutrition and food safety. In Europe, this is exemplified by the reaction to the 2001 Foot-and-Mouth outbreak in the United Kingdom. This outbreak is often cited as an example of the growing underlying concerns that the public has with the industrial food system (Murdoch et al., 2000). Policies that promote trade liberalisation and deregulation are often credited with enabling the globalization of food on the basis of efficiencies and lower costs, have been unable to prevent chronic hunger around the world (Watts and Goodman, 1997). This is the case even in highly productive agricultural countries. The American food system is defined by its contradiction that hunger persists despite the most productive agricultural system in the world (Allen, 1999). These and other criticisms of the industrial food system have led to a resurgence of alternative food systems.

2.2 Defining the 'alternative'

Alternative methods of food production, processing and distribution go by many names, including 'alternative food networks' (Renting et al., 2003; Watts et al., 2005; Whatmore et al., 2003); 'local food systems' (Feagan, 2007; Feenstra, 1997; Hinrichs, 2003; Morris and Buller, 2003); 'short food supply chains' (Marsden et al., 2000; Renting et al., 2003; Watts et al., 2005)

and the ‘(re)-regionalization of food systems’ (Kneafsey, 2010). A weakness in the literature is a lack of a coherent label and the slightly varied definitions which accompany each (Renting et al., 2003; Tregear, 2011). In addition these terms are further problematic since they are defined by what they are not, instead of by what they are. Tregear states that “[alternative food networks] tend[s] to be employed as a universal term, to denote food systems that are somehow different from the mainstream” (2011: 423). In these definitions the ‘mainstream’ or ‘conventional’ is generally characterised by industrialised, homogenous, global systems of food production, processing, and distribution (Winter, 2003a). This is problematic since it creates an ambiguous term which is then applied to a wide range of food systems, from farmers’ markets to community supported agriculture, local procurement strategies and urban agriculture. Each food systems have very different characteristics, and impact different stakeholders with different motivations. As a result, these systems have very different priorities and outcomes.

In this review, alternative food networks (AFNs) will be used as an umbrella term to denote any food system that is alternative to the conventional food system. Short Food Supply Chains will be used as a more specific form of AFN which will be discussed below.

2.3 Differentiating short food supply chains

The term short food supply chains (SFSCs) is a specific type of AFN which will be used here to indicate an emphasis on the network through which the food moves, instead of focussing on the qualities of the food. Renting, Marsden and Banks note that “the SFSC concept is more specific than AFNs, and, rather, covers (the interrelations between) actors who are directly involved in the production, processing, distribution and consumption of new food products” (2003: 394). Similarly, Watts, Ilbery and Maye (2005) discuss a need for this shift of focus away from the food in alternative food networks and focus more on the network. They argue that AFNs focussing on the food and the ‘turn in quality’ to the production of high quality food (e.g. organic) are weaker since these are “vulnerable to incorporation, and subordination, within conventional [food supply chains]” (2005: 30). Donald (2008) notes this very occurrence in the dominance of one corporation, SunOpta Inc., within Ontario’s organic industry. This is not just confined to Ontario or Canada: Michael Pollan (2006) notes that the Organic Trade Association in the United States includes large multinational corporations from the conventional food system

such as Kraft, Dean Foods and General Mills. These companies used their influence to successfully lobby for synthetic fertilizers to be permitted in foods labelled as organic.

Watts, Ilbery and Maye (2005) suggest that there are some SFSCs which are more likely to resist being co-opted by the conventional food system. The authors consider SFSCs which comprise a local spatial element or 'local food system' (Feenstra, 1997), a stronger flow of social interaction (Hinrichs et al., 2004; Renting et al., 2003), or an alternative economic dynamic where producers sell directly to the end consumer and retain more of the 'food dollar' that is spent by the consumer (Morris and Buller, 2003). These local, spatial and alternative economic dynamics will make the networks in alternative food networks stronger (Watts et al., 2005). Winter argues that 'embeddedness', which is based on the trust and meaning developed through social interactions, comprises a critical difference from the conventional food system (Winter, 2003a). These differences are often used by researchers and policy makers to criticize the mainstream food industry and justify supporting alternative food networks. Bloom and Hinrichs (2010) emphasize the importance of these interactions by labelling these alternative food systems as 'value chains' characterised by value-based interactions which have ethical as well as economic considerations.

2.4 Criticisms of the notion of alternative food networks

There are two common criticisms of AFNs: (1) the tendency to romanticize AFNs and (2) the extent to which AFNs are actually different from the conventional food system. DuPuis and Goodman (2005) join a growing number of agro-food researchers, starting with David Harvey (1996), who criticize the tendency to romanticize AFNs and the 'local'. Born and Purcell (2006) argue that this is problematic since it ignores the influence of politics when making policy decisions and implementing solutions. Tregear indicates that this romanticization impacts our presumption of "(i) desirable outcomes, (ii) actor behaviours, and (iii) food properties" (2011: 425) from AFNs. For example, not all food sold at farmers' markets is healthy or produced by alternative agriculture practices (Winter, 2003a), not all producers participate in local AFNs for social and environmental reasons and the local scale is not inherently more socially just than any other scale (Born and Purcell, 2006; Tregear, 2011). Born and Purcell (2006) go on to label this fetishism with the local as 'local trap' and call for awareness that both benefits and consequences can arise at any scale, including the local.

A second main criticism of AFNs is based on the notion that they may not be as different and separate from the conventional food industry as is often assumed (Sonnino and Marsden, 2006; Tovey, 2008). Tregear notes that food systems rarely operate exclusively as either an alternative or conventional food system, rather “they dip into, or borrow from, diverse logics” (2011: 424). This complexity is seen in transnational retail corporations, such as Wal-Mart Canada, who displayed characteristics of embeddedness by adapting their business model to the local retail environment and providing more organic selections than their American counterparts (Donald, 2008). Winter (2003a) gives the example of a popular local dairy farmer who indicated that his motivation to sell in a farmers’ market was economic, following the dissolution of the Milk Marketing Board in the UK. This farmer uses conventional farming techniques, yet he is an important and popular vendor in the farmers’ market (Winter, 2003a). Farmers markets are thought of as hubs for AFNs where important social exchanges occur (Hinrichs et al., 2004). However, they have also been shown to be powerful economic generators as incubators to help small businesses grow and expand beyond the local scale (Cameron, 2007; Guthrie et al., 2006; Sadler et al., 2013).

The opportunity for producers and consumers to engage in social exchanges is commonly cited as one of the advantages of local AFNs (Hinrichs et al., 2004; Tregear, 2011). The implication is that limited social interactions occur in the conventional food system and that beneficial exchanges occur more often in AFNs (Tregear, 2011). This critique feeds into the debate of whether AFNs are separate from the conventional system or whether they are in competition with each other and therefore inter-related (Holloway et al., 2007; Sonnino and Marsden, 2006). Some empirical examples draw on case studies to show that the alternative and conventional are not entirely separate (Murdoch and Miele, 1999), but many researchers still frame them as separate, vilifying the conventional and romanticizing the alternative (Born and Purcell, 2006). Renting, Marsden and Banks propose three scales of SFSC, with the largest termed “extended relations” (2003: 400) which can have global reach. At this scale the customer has no personal experience with the producer, but recognises the quality and values of the product through the use of labelling and branding (e.g. Champagne wine and fair trade coffee). Others would disagree that this extended relations SFSC is in fact a true AFN, and argue instead that it is a part of the conventional food system (Winter, 2003a). This research project will start by mapping out

the complex and intertwined conventional and alternative food networks in which small food businesses participate.

2.5 Small Businesses in Alternative Food Systems

As demonstrated above, alternative food networks are increasingly being recognised by academics (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999, 2007), which has led to long overdue recognition for food planning by planners and politicians (Kaufman, 2009; Morgan, 2013). Cities across the developed world are increasingly having to deal with food policy due to, among other things, persistent concerns regarding access to food by urban residents (Morgan, 2014). In addition, food has been identified as an important component of creating a vibrant exciting city that attracts people and investment (Roberts, 2001). Alternative Food Systems have long been touted as tools to help foster rural development (Goodman, 2004; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 1998; Marsden et al., 2000; Tovey, 2008) and it is only more recently that the role of food has been recognised in urban centres. In Southern Ontario, the proximity to an abundance of fertile agricultural land means that food can also play a major part in the economies of the urban centres in the region (Donald, 2009). It has been more difficult to determine exactly how to encourage economic growth among small businesses in the food sector.

There is a growing body of research which suggests that small and medium enterprises use networks with other firms to overcome disadvantages they face when competing with large corporations (Lamprinopoulou and Tregear, 2011). Traditional marketing theories and model have been incompatible with small businesses due to their varied and unique characteristics (O'Donnell, 2004). Traditional marketing theory highlights a number of challenges that small businesses face such as time and financial constraints and a lack of a strategic plan or marketing expertise (Blankson and Ming-Sung Cheng, 2005).. Network analysis has been suggested as a potentially powerful tool for assisting with the study of business clusters, and regional systems (Ter Wal and Boschma, 2008). This network analysis has been used previously to help with delineating functional labour market regions, rather than simply using political boundaries (Kropp and Schwengler, 2014). Network analysis can be used to see if regional clusters or alternative food networks actually do exist, how their members interact and how large a region they cover. This can be used to assess the usefulness of physical clusters such as food incubators

/ kitchens and farmers' markets as tools for facilitating businesses growth and economic development. When considered as part of the broader food supply chain, there is potential for combining this network analysis of linkages between similar businesses with linkages to suppliers and customers (Lazzarini et al., 2008). This has implications for addressing concerns about the absence of small-to medium sized systems for food storage, processing and distribution (Campbell and MacRae, 2013).

In addition to the networks that businesses operate in, there is a debate about whether certain small business owners should be considered entrepreneurs, interested in growth, or as instead artisans, interested in pursuing a lifestyle (Hinrichs et al., 2004; Tregear, 2005). This distinction has an impact on the type of policy that will effectively encourage growth – such as education and training for entrepreneurs or policy which influences external firm environmental factors (Davidsson et al., 2010). In their review of the research on small firm growth, Macpherson and Holt (2007) identify a number of areas that require further research including industry / sector specific research, citing a bias towards manufacturing and hi-tech sectors in the existing literature on small firm growth. Tregear (2005) concludes that artisanal food producers pursue both entrepreneurial growth oriented and lifestyle goals, provided there are positive socio-economic environments. As such, she recommends that policy makers refrain from trying to “‘fix’ or ‘train’ individuals” (2005: 13) and focus on encouraging positive socio-economic environments for businesses to thrive in. The proposed research project will help to address this gap by gaining a better understanding of some examples of positive socio-economic environments that small businesses have succeeded in.

2.6 Areas of further research

There are numerous calls for scholars and policy makers to abandon the focus on the conventional-alternative food system divide and focus on research into how different food systems relate to each other (Renting et al., 2003; Tovey, 2008; Watts et al., 2005). Winter (2003a) and Tregear (2003a) both call for a better understanding of “the complex meanings and significations attached to acts of consumption [and production] so as to avoid false dichotomies” (2003a: 31). In addition to the need for more theoretical and conceptual research, there is also a need for more rigorous empirical research, as there is an overreliance on case studies in the AFN research (Tregear, 2011). The food systems studied in these case studies are often picked for

their unique characteristics and as a result their conclusions are difficult to generalise and apply to other food systems. Lamprinopoulou and Tregear (2011) call for more research into clusters of small and medium sized enterprises to evaluate different configurations of networks. The concepts of network analysis, supply chain analysis and ‘netchain’ analysis are suggested as tools for facilitating empirical research of alternative food networks.

In Ontario there have been calls for a firm centred approach to AFN research (Blay-Palmer and Donald, 2006; Donald, 2008). Research of the specialty, ethnic and organic food industries in Toronto, Ontario identified small businesses as key sites of innovation (Blay-Palmer and Donald, 2006; Donald and Blay-Palmer, 2006). Geographer Betsy Donald (2008) calls for more research into the role that small and medium sized firms can play in food planning and development. Similarly, in entrepreneurial and firm management literature, a lack of research has been identified in sectors other than hi-tech and manufacturing. The research project reported in this thesis will address some of these gaps, by focusing on small businesses in the local food sector.

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Chapter 3

3 Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada

3.1 Introduction

Local food has experienced a resurgence in recent years with the proliferation of farmers' markets and artisanal food producers who are competing in an industry dominated by large multinational agri-businesses and retailers. Small businesses are important actors, since they are small enough to quickly respond to changing consumer demands and market trends (Donald, 2008). In order to meet these customer demands, however, small businesses often need to challenge and work around the conventional food system. The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the food supply chains of a local food district in London, Ontario, a midsized Canadian city. The paper begins with a review of the literature on conventional and alternative food networks, and the analysis of foodsheds, food networks and supply chains, which provides the basis for our study objectives. Following an outline of the study area and methods, results of our analyses are presented and a discussion of the findings. The diverse interconnected and relational nature of the food system has important implications for the development of food and local economic development policy for both urban and rural regions.

3.2 Review of Literature

An introduction to the theoretical debates surround food systems was provided in Chapter 2, this literature review will build on that and then discuss the literature surround supply chain analysis, network analysis and foodshed.

3.2.1 Consolidation and Globalization of Food Systems

The 'conventional' food system today is characterised as being based upon capital intensive, petroleum based industrial farming techniques, complex global distribution systems and highly processed foods. This has been linked with the push towards global free trade, which allowed the private sector—especially retailers and chemical / seed companies—to reorganise the market to suit their needs (Busch and Bain, 2004; Heffernan et al., 2000). As retailers in the food industry have gained market share and power in the food supply chain, they have used this power to force

shrinking margins on agricultural producers (Kaditi, 2013). This pressure has led producers to increase production to compensate for shrinking margins. As a result, the industry has been rapidly consolidating at all stages of the food supply chain. Midsized farms are disappearing (Kirschenmann et al., 2008; Severson and Pirog, 2008), local abattoirs and other small scale producers are going out of business or being bought (Carter-Whitney, 2008; Charlebois and Summan, 2014), and small food retailers are being priced out of the market by large grocery superstore chains (Clarke, 2000).

3.2.2 Local / Alternative Food Systems

The term alternative food networks is problematic since it is defined by what they are not and “tend[s] to be employed as a universal term, to denote food systems that are somehow different from the mainstream” (Tregear, 2011: 423). This is problematic since it creates an ambiguous term which is then applied to a wide range of food systems, with a wide range of objectives, including: reducing the number of intermediaries by encouraging direct farmer-consumer relationships, organic or ecologically grown food, food grown and consumed locally, food grown in socially just ways, or food grown in specific localities using traditional farming techniques. Each of these food systems have different values, priorities and motivations that underpin them, and as a result have very different impacts and outcomes. Often these food systems are positioned along three dimensions of alternativeness: the qualities of the food (Goodman, 2004), the characteristics of the networks through which the food moves (Renting et al., 2003; Watts et al., 2005) and the locality where the food was produced.

Food systems based on providing high quality food, such as the organic industry, have been criticised for being susceptible to being co-opted by the industrial food system (Watts et al., 2005). In response a greater focus developing stronger networks through which food is transported has been proposed as a ‘stronger’ alternative which can resist being co-opted. These networks are typically exemplified by bringing farmers and consumers closer together with fewer intermediaries (Feenstra, 1997). These direct relationships are argued to allow, among other things, for beneficial social relationships and trust to develop between consumers and farmers, and improved economic viability of farming and small food businesses (Holloway and Kneafsey, 2000; Jarosz, 2008a; Sadler et al., 2013). Value based supply chains and short food supply chains are two more concepts which have been proposed to differ from conventional

supply chains based on a number of dimensions, including degree of cooperation, trust, transparency, and a commitment to the welfare of all participants in the supply chain (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Marsden et al., 2000; Renting et al., 2003; Severson and Pirog, 2008). It is suggested that if relationships and networks are based upon these values they will be harder to co-opt and will be able to drive significant change and retain their alternativeness.

The 'local' has long been a scale that was considered to challenge the conventional food system by bringing farmers and consumers together and providing social, economic and environmental benefits (Feenstra, 1997). However, the tendency to romanticize the local or use it in an exclusionary and discriminatory way has been criticized since it is false to assume that any scale is by default more socially, environmentally or economically just (Born and Purcell, 2006; DuPuis and Goodman, 2005; Hinrichs, 2003). The push towards localization may even exacerbate local and regional inequalities between localities (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005; Feagan, 2007; Tregear, 2011).

The universal criticism of these attempts to define the 'alternative' is that there is a tendency to dichotomize the food system into two opposing options, an alternative and a conventional system. Instead, there is a need to better understand the complexities of the food system and the ways in which the alternative and conventional overlap and intertwine (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Sonnino and Marsden, 2006; Tregear, 2011).

3.2.3 Analysing Foodsheds, Networks and Supply Chains

The concept of a foodshed was first proposed by Walter Hedden in his book *How Great Cities are Fed* (1929). Hedden first conceived of the term foodshed while considering where all the food eaten in New York City came from. A key component was the network of terminal markets which aggregated and moved food around the continent. It was not until Author Gertz (1991) reintroduced the concept to describe regional food systems that the term became commonly used. Since then, foodshed analysis has tended to: (1) determine the potential for supplying an urban area from the local foodshed by measuring net consumption and production (Kremer and DeLiberty, 2011; Peters et al., 2008); (2) study large scale international trade (Billen et al., 2011); or (3) focus exclusively on the local food system (Kremer and DeLiberty, 2011). It is argued here that foodshed analysis techniques which incorporate spatial analysis and network

analysis can offer valuable insights into how the current alternative and conventional food systems interact, as well as showing the potential for growing the alternative.

While foodshed analysis inherently implies a spatial component there are parallels with studies of food supply chains and food networks. Ilbery and Maye (2005a) note the interaction between local and global supply chains in their investigation of specialist livestock products. Ter Wal and Boschma (2008) argue for the potential of social network analysis to contribute to economic geography and gain a better understanding of clusters, regions and formal networks.

Consequently, social network analysis has recently been applied to studies of food systems where there is an easily defined and contained population of actors (Chiffolleau and Touzard, 2013; Christensen and O’Sullivan, 2015). These types of networks, however, are limited in their applicability, since most food systems are not closed and are always influenced by outside actors. Network analysis and supply chain analysis have been criticised for solely focussing on either horizontal or vertical connections respectively, while ignoring the other (Lazzarini et al., 2008). This paper will use foodshed analysis combining spatial and network analysis of alternative and conventional supply chains used by small businesses.

3.3 Relevance and Objectives

3.3.1 Objectives

The objective of this study is to demonstrate the use of foodshed analysis techniques to investigate the supply chains and networks used by small businesses in a food district. This aims to incorporate the experiences of small food business owners, typically a difficult to access group of actors, into a fuller understanding of the open and diverse food systems used by businesses.

Analysis will focus on a case study of a food district in the city of London, Canada to determine where the food comes from that is used by small businesses and how networks vary between businesses within the food district. Businesses in the food district exhibit varying degrees of ‘alternativeness’, however they are all independently owned, small businesses which differentiate themselves by offering ‘quality food’.

3.3.2 Impact and Relevance

It is argued that the foodshed analysis techniques described below are valuable for academics, planners, and policy makers to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges in growing local food networks. This has important implications for local economic development initiatives in both urban and rural contexts. In particular, these techniques can provide new methods of evaluating policy changes and local economic development initiatives in the food system. Additionally, the case study provides further evidence of the misconception of distinct ‘local’ or ‘alternative’ food systems, as well as the need to think regionally, across local and regional political boundaries when considering the implications of food system policies and initiatives.

3.4 Methods

A range of different study methods have been used to evaluate AFNs. These range from in-depth interviews and case studies (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Ilbery and Maye, 2005b; Marsden et al., 2000), to customer and vendor surveys (Donald, 2008; Sadler et al., 2013; Winter, 2003a). This study used semi-structured interviews with small business owners located in the Old East Village food district to develop a fuller understanding of the food district’s foodshed. Below is a brief description of the study area, (A full discussion of the study area is included in Chapter 1), followed by a discussion of the methods for recruitment, structure of the interviews, and foodshed analysis of the supply chains discussed in the interviews.

3.4.1 Study Area

As discussed in Chapter 1, this study was conducted in the Old East Village Food District (OEVFD) in London, Ontario, Canada. The food district is located in an inner city neighbourhood just east of London’s the downtown core. London is a mid-sized city, located within the agriculturally fertile Southwestern Ontario region. The city is approximately 200km from the large urban area of Toronto, where the Ontario Food Terminal is located. The Ontario Food Terminal is one of the largest terminal markets in North America where produce from Ontario, Canada and around the world is bought and sold.

3.4.2 Recruitment of Study Participants

Interview participants were recruited using emails, phone calls and in-person visits to local food businesses. As part of a larger research project, businesses and farmers across SWO were emailed and asked if they would be willing to participate in an interview. Businesses located in the food district who indicated a willingness to participate were approached in person or contacted via phone to schedule an interview. In addition, businesses located in the food district who had not replied via email were contacted and asked if they would participate in an interview. Interview participants were selected using a snowball sampling strategy (Miller and Crabtree, 2004). The relationships identified by each interviewee helped identify additional key businesses in the food district. These businesses were then contacted to participate in an interview and further expand the map of the network. Interviews continued until there was a strong representation of different types of food businesses in the food district including: raw food retailers (produce, meat and dairy), value added / prepared food retailers (bakeries), and restaurants and cafes. When additional interviews repeated previously mentioned themes and did not reveal new ones it was determined that saturation had been reached and there was strong representation of each business category (Charmaz, 2004).

Table 3.1 Description of businesses interviewed by business type, business age, primary business location in the food district and business niche

By Primary Business Type	Raw Food Retailer	Prepared Food Retailer	Restaurant / Café
# Interviewed	8	7	6
By Business Age	0-5 Years	5-10 Years	11+ Years
# Interviewed	7	9	5
By Primary Location	Inside Farmers' Market	Outside Farmers' Market	
# Interviewed	12	9	
By Market Niche	Artisanal / Quality	Local	Healthy
# Interviewed	21	10	5

In total, 24 food district businesses were approached to be interviewed. Interviews were held with 21 businesses and three declined to be interviewed due to time constraints. Table 3.1 above provides some basic descriptive features of the interviewee businesses.

All businesses in the OEVFD were emailed as part of a larger study and asked to fill out a survey and if they would be willing to participate in an interview. Follow up requests for interviews were made via email, phone and in person with businesses owners in the OEVFD. In total 24 businesses owners were approached, 3 business owners declined to be interviewed due to time commitments and 21 interviews were conducted. Interviews were stopped after 21 since the sample was representative of business types, ages and locations within the OEVFD. The food system is an open network which extends globally, and it is impossible to interview every business in the network. For feasibility purposes, interviews were limited to businesses that operated within the Old East Village Food District. These businesses either had booth within the Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market or a commercial retail location outside the market within the Old East Village Food District.

3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with owners of small food businesses based on a series of open-ended questions; length of interviews ranged from 30 to 75 minutes. The interviews were comprised of two main sections, the first discussed the history, market niche and experience of the business in the food industry, and the second section involved describing the supply chains and partnerships used by the business. Business owners were asked a series of questions relating to four themes:

- (1) the history and growth of their business;
- (2) the advantages and disadvantages they perceive to being a small business in the food industry;
- (3) the opportunities and challenges for the business in the future; and
- (4) the networks of people, businesses and organisations that the business interacts with.

The interview guide was developed in consultation with local food industry contacts. Several sources were used to develop the interview guide, including a food processing business interview guide used by Bloom (2012), the Local Food Business Retention and Expansion interview guide

developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (2014), as well as interview strategies outlined by Ter Wal & Boschma (2008) for using network analysis in geography (See Appendix 3:Business Owner Interview Guide).

The aim of the interviews was to discover all supply relationships used by businesses, including local and non-local, and alternative and conventional. To ensure this, the terms ‘local’ and ‘alternative’ were avoided during interviews. Instead, the research project was described to interviewees as an investigation of supply chains used by small businesses. Interviewees were asked to identify all food supply, partnership and other relationships used by their business. Prompting questions were used to ask how relationships were developed, or why a particular supplier was chosen. When a distributor was identified, interviewees were asked if they knew where distributors sourced the food they supplied to the interviewee. If part of a network was unclear then follow up interviews were conducted with interviewees to clarify the names, locations, or the type of relationship with a supplier. In addition, interviewees were asked to identify businesses that they supplied food products to, and other businesses with whom they had partnered or turned to for advice.

3.4.4 Methods of Data Analysis

3.4.4.1 Foodshed Analysis and Visualization

Using the transcripts of each interview a list of suppliers (including where possible the suppliers of the suppliers), partners and customers were created for each business. These relationships were inputted into the social network analysis software NodeXL (Smith et al., 2010). Additional descriptive information for each relationship (“edge”) was recorded, including: the type of relationship (partnership or supply) and, in the case of a supply relationship, the types of food products supplied and the importance and status of the relationship to the interviewee. In this way the network recorded both the horizontal ties between like-firms and vertical ties between producers and businesses at different stages of the supply chain (Lazzarini et al., 2008). Additional information for each business (“node”) was also added, including: type of business, business age, address and coordinates of their primary location.

Descriptive statistics for businesses in the network were calculated including the numbers and types of suppliers and customers (“out-degree”) as well as the number of farmers and distributors

supplying a business. Visualizations are used to depict the network and allow for visual analysis of the organisations of the relationships. Visualizations of the network were also used to identify additional businesses that could be interviewed, as well as identify clusters or groups of businesses within the network.

3.4.4.2 Spatial Analysis and Mapping

The nodes and edges from the network were also imported into a Geographic Information System (ArcGIS 10.3, ESRI) and mapped to provide a clearer understanding of geographic clusters, groups and gaps in the network. In addition, the length of the edges was calculated to provide a proximate measure of the “food miles” that food travelled through the supply chain to reach a business or consumer.

3.5 Analysis and Results

3.5.1 Supply Chain and Network Analysis

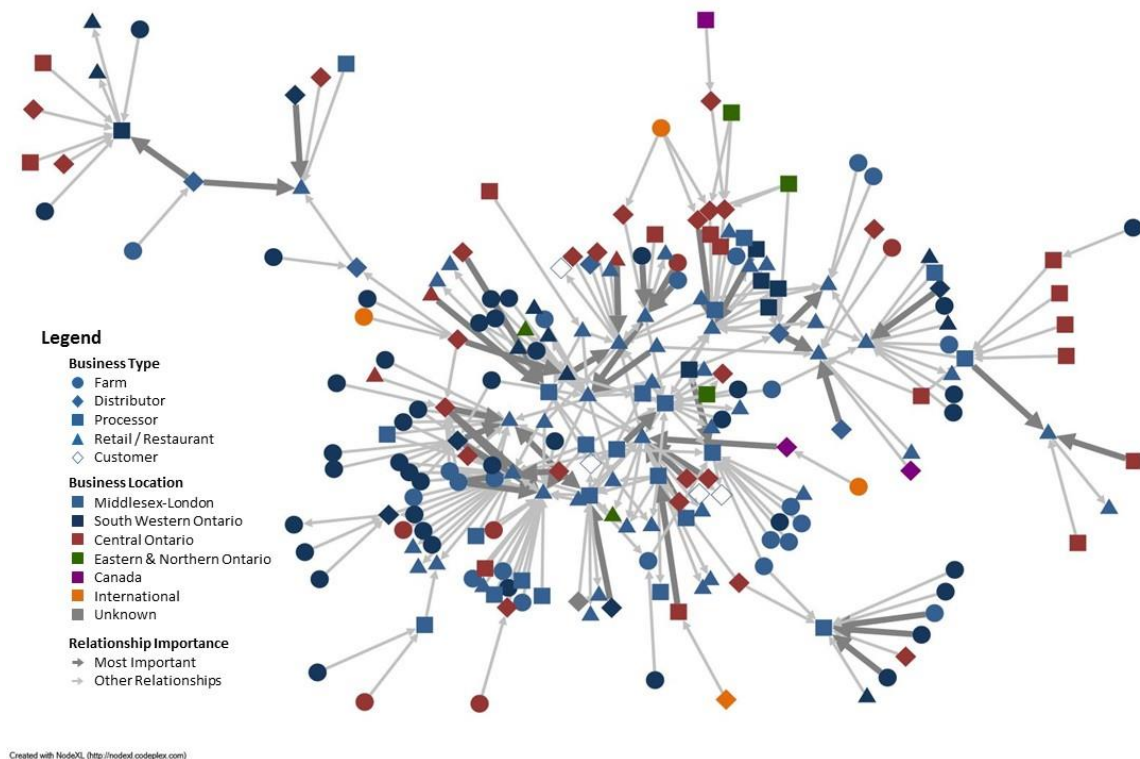


Figure 3.1 Food supply chain connections to the Old East Village Food District

The 21 businesses interviewed collectively identified 303 supply chain relationships with 221 businesses, farmers, businesses and locations (see Figure 3.1). The food network visualization was created in NodeXL (Smith et al., 2010) and groups connected points together, and pushes unrelated ones apart. Colours of the points relate to the region in which the business is located. The symbols refer to the different primary food system activities that a business was engaged in, and the darkness and thickness of the lines indicate the importance of the relationship. Based on the interviewees description of their supply relationships, the most important or critical relationship(s) were coded.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the differences in information availability and transparency of different food supply chains. In a perfectly transparent food system all supply chains would originate on a farm (indicated by arrows pointing out from a circle). However, it is the nature of our food system that businesses need year round consistent supply and rely on distributors who can import food from all over the world. In these supply chains, typically the only information about the food that is passed on to the consumer is the country or state of origin of the food. Supply chains that originate in a diamond or square, or any other shape indicate an instance where the interviewee only knew the distributor, processor or other type of business which directly supplied them with the food.

Table 3.2 Descriptive statistics of supply chain relationships for interviewees

All Direct Suppliers	All (n=21)	Raw Food Retailer (n=8)	Prepared Food Retailer (n=7)	Restaurant / Café (n=6)
Mean # of Direct Suppliers	10	14	7	8
Median # of Direct Suppliers	8	12	7	8
Minimum # of Direct Suppliers	2	3	2	5
Maximum # of Direct Suppliers	27	27	11	12
Direct Farm Suppliers				
Mean # of Direct Farmer Suppliers	4	7	3	2
Farmers as % of Suppliers	33%	46%	30%	20%
Businesses with No Farm Suppliers	5	1	3	1
Direct Distributor Suppliers				
Mean # of Direct Distributors	3	4	2	4
Distributors as % of Suppliers	39%	34%	39%	45%
Businesses with No Distributors	1	0	1	0

On average, businesses had 10 direct suppliers, 4 of which were farmers and 3 were distributors (see Table 3.2). In addition, 5 businesses interviewed did not source directly from any farms. Raw food retailers had the highest average number of suppliers (14), and one raw food retailer had the maximum number of suppliers (27) of any interviewee. These raw food retailers also had the highest average number of direct farm supplier relationships (7), and on average, farmers represented the largest percentage of their suppliers (46%). Raw food retailers also tied for the highest average number of distributors with restaurants and cafes (4). On average, businesses in the categories of restaurants and cafes and prepared food retailers had fewer suppliers, and also proportionally worked with more distributors and fewer farmers. Only 20% of the suppliers listed by interviewees from restaurants and cafes' were farmers, and 45% were distributors.

Table 3.3 Numbers of 'important' supplier relationships for interviewees with different types of suppliers

Number of 'important'...	All (n=21)	Raw Food Retailer (n=8)	Prepared Food Retailer (n=7)	Restaurant / Café (n=6)
Farm Suppliers	8	5	3	0
Distributors	25	11	4	9
Others (processors, retailers, etc.)	11	3	4	4
Total Important Suppliers	44	19	11	13

Interviewees tended to identify their most important relationships by either their largest food expense, most frequent delivery, or oldest relationship. Typically, these relationships are the first ones that were mentioned, and only after prompting questions about other products were other relationships revealed. Distributors were much more frequently identified as important suppliers than farmers, and this was true across all business types (see Table 3.3). Food retailers identified 5 important farmers that they work closely with, however they also work with a large number of distributors (11). Restaurants and cafes did not identify any farmers that were important suppliers and instead relied on 9 distributors.

3.5.2 Spatial Analysis

The businesses and relationships identified in the interviews were mapped and analysed using ArcGIS. If a business had multiple locations, then the primary location typically where production occurs, was used for the map. This spatial analysis deals only with the inter-firm

relationships between two businesses, whereas the intra-firm supply chains between a business' multiple locations are not considered.

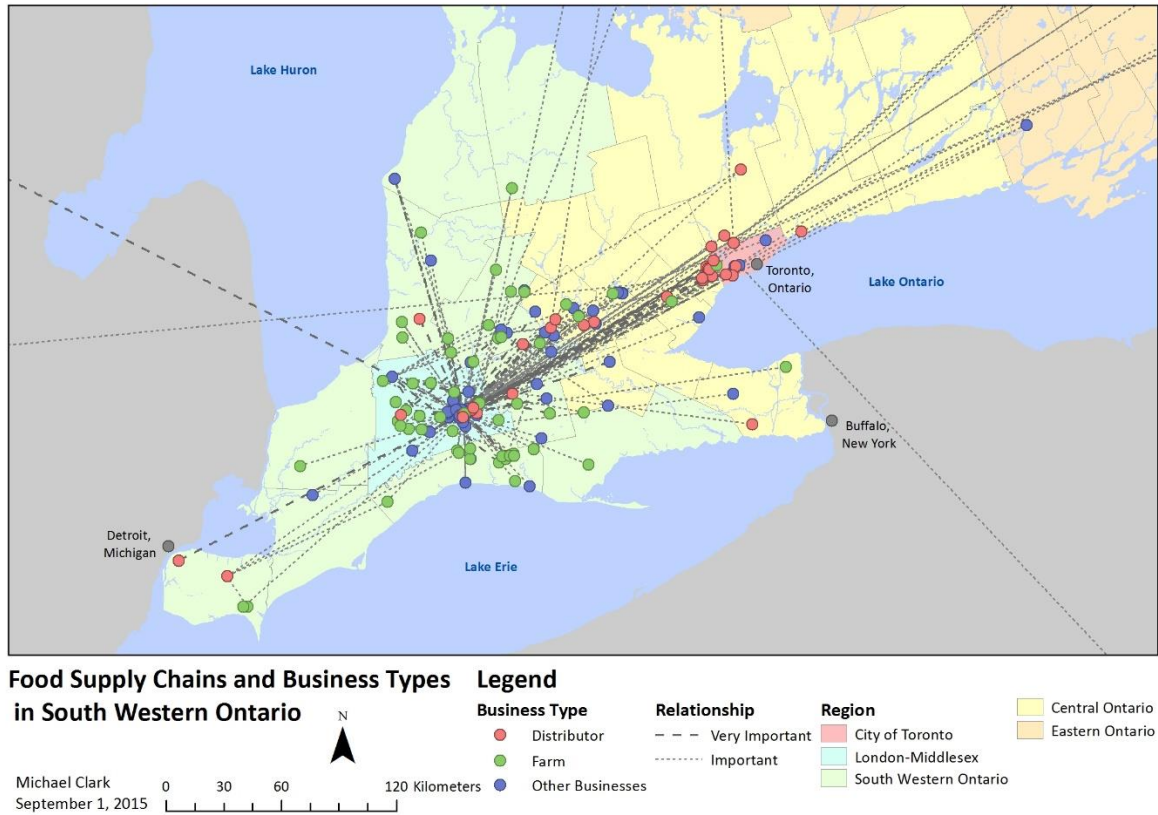


Figure 3.2 Food supply chains in South Western Ontario of businesses in the Old East Village Food District

Figure 3.2 depicts the supply chains that bring food to the Old East Village Food District in London, Ontario. As is expected, many of the businesses are located nearby in London and surrounding Middlesex County. A large number of farms supplying businesses are located in the counties immediately adjacent to Middlesex, including Elgin (South), Oxford (East), Huron and Perth (North). There is relatively little food from counties southwest of London (Lambton, Chatham-Kent, and Essex). A large number of distributors from the west end of Toronto (Central Ontario) were identified near the Ontario Food Terminal, with others further north near the airport and the #401 highway. About halfway between London and Toronto, distributors and food processors and other businesses from the cities of Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph (Central Ontario) had numerous connections to businesses in the food district.

Businesses in the Old East Village Food District source food from as far away as California, South America and Europe.

Table 3.4 Locations of direct suppliers, by interviewee business type

	All Interviewees		Raw Food Retailer		Prepared Food Retailer		Restaurant / Café	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Old East Village Food District	46	22%	15	14%	13	27%	18	37%
London-Middlesex	95	46%	43	40%	21	43%	31	63%
South Western Ontario	58	28%	39	36%	14	29%	5	10%
Central Ontario	47	23%	24	22%	12	24%	11	22%
Eastern Ontario	1	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Canada	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%

Table 3.4 indicates where suppliers of the businesses interviewed were located. Among all interviewees, 22% of suppliers were other businesses located in the Food District, ranging from a high of 37% for restaurants/cafés to a low of 14% for raw food retailers. Further, 46% of direct suppliers were located within London-Middlesex, another 28% were from the rest of SWO, and 22% from the Central Ontario region around Toronto. This indicates where the businesses providing the food are located, not necessarily where the food itself was grown or raised, since many suppliers are distributors and processors.

Table 3.5 Types of businesses in the supply network, by selected regions

	Farm		Distributor		Other Business		Total Businesses	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
London-Middlesex	21	21.4%	4	4.1%	73	74.5%	98	100
South Western Ontario	42	67.7%	5	8.1%	15	24.2%	62	100
Central Ontario	6	12.5%	24	50.0%	18	37.5%	48	100

Table 3.5 indicates the differences in the businesses in the three major regions which were represented in the network, highlighting the role that each region plays in the food network. A total of 74.5% of the businesses identified in the interviewee’s supply network from surrounding London-Middlesex (LM) were ‘other’ food businesses such as small food processors, retailers and restaurants. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion of suppliers from LM were farmers (21.4%). Businesses identified in the rest of SWO (outside LM) were primarily farmers (67.7%), with a quarter being other food businesses. In contrast, 50% of businesses identified in the

Central Ontario region (home to the Ontario Food Terminal) were distributors, and another third were processors.

Table 3.6 Average distance (KMs) between an interviewee and direct farms suppliers

	All Interviewees	Food Retailer	Prepared Food Retailer	Restaurant / Café
Mean	48	47	45	66
Median	35	33	44	41
Min	3	3	10	28
Max	170	170	102	153

Most of the farms identified as suppliers were located in or immediately around the City of London. On average, direct farm suppliers were located only 48km away from the businesses interviewed, while the median distance was 35km (Table 3.6). The furthest direct farm supplier was 170km from the interviewees; however, 65% of direct farm suppliers were within 50km of the interviewee.

3.6 Discussion

The discussion section will first outline some of the key characteristics of the food district, and then follow with a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the methodology.

3.6.1 Breaking Assumptions of Food Systems

3.6.1.1 Availability of Local Food

London is located in South Western Ontario, a region which specializes in the production of the global cash crops of corn, soybeans and wheat; however, there is also produce, fruit and meat that is grown/raised in the region. The 21 interviewees in this study identified 63 farms from Middlesex County and South Western Ontario which supplied food to their businesses in the Old East Village Food District, either directly or through a distributor. This demonstrates that small food businesses can be leaders in establishing direct or short food supply chains between local farmers and businesses. Nearly half (10) of the interviewees mentioned that they offer local food as a selling feature of their business. Businesses had different definitions of local; however, the longest direct farm relationship was only 170km, which is consistent with boundary of the ‘100 mile diet’, while 65% of direct farm relationships were within 50km of the business.

3.6.1.2 Role of Distributors

Interviewees identified a surprisingly large number of food distributors. Aside from the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto, the most commonly used distributors only supplied a maximum of 3 of the businesses interviewed (14%). The food industry is highly competitive and a total of 24 different distributors were identified. These ranged in business size and coverage area from London-based businesses that only served the city to Canada-wide distributors. Some distributors specialize in specific products such as grains and spices, while others offer a wide range of products.

Large distributors were typically located in the Greater Toronto Area, possibly with a regional office in London or nearby. These distributors were not feasible for many businesses since the minimum order size was too high for the size of the businesses interviewed. In addition, very little information about the food provenance, such as where and how it was produced was provided. In contrast, a number of the smaller local distributors located in or around London specialised in offering local or organic food sourced directly from farmers. The counties South West of London account for 30% of Ontario's field vegetable agricultural land, however only a few farms were identified as suppliers. This may be partially explained by a lack of established distributors in the region. The only two distributors in the region are a food retailer who has recently expanded to undertake some small scale distribution and a specialty food distributor. The term 'distributor' is often given a negative connotation as a middleman that increases the price consumers pay for food, however they also provide a very valuable service. This is seen in the recent trend calling for regional food hubs to help aggregate and distribute local food (Blay-Palmer et al., 2013).

3.6.1.3 Horizontal Linkages

Business owners interviewed identified varying numbers of horizontal linkages, or relationships with businesses at the same step in the food chain. For example, many of the businesses interviewed worked with neighbouring businesses in the Food District, often selling each other's products, or purchasing together. However, this was not universally true, there were also many other businesses that did not work with or have supply relationships with other businesses in the Food District. This study focused on supply relationships, however several business owners did

mention casual and other informal relationships where they cross promoted each other's products to consumers, gave advice or discussed business and marketing strategy. In some cases the number of horizontal relationships between businesses in the Old East Village Food District appeared to be limited due to the relative importance of other groups and clusters of businesses. Many of the business owners interviewed worked more closely with businesses in other non-geographic 'clusters' such as industry specific networks, or political / social / environmental networks and ethnic communities. The overlapping nature of 'clusters' exemplifies the difficulties with defining the borders of a cluster, or the food district and the challenges with attempting to interview all members of a cluster. Some businesses might be geographically proximate but not networked into the Food District, while others might be networked into many businesses in the Food District even though geographically they are not.

3.6.2 Value of Methodology

3.6.2.1 Foodshed Analysis

This research used interviews with business owners to map the foodshed, including the supply chains and partnerships, of businesses in a food district. This approach provides a number of benefits to studying food districts and developing public policy to support local food systems. It allows for the identification of existing successful supply chains as well as gaps in the distribution system that limit businesses from sourcing local food.

The food system offers challenges for social network analysis, since it is not a closed system, and it is therefore not possible for researchers to interview every business in a food network. This study included interviews with a sample of businesses in a food district; however, even if all businesses within the food district were interviewed, the district boundary is irrelevant to the businesses when they are determining who to work with. This limitation in the use of social network analysis illustrates the fact that food systems cannot be assumed to be constrained or limited by municipal, regional or provincial political boundaries. In today's globalised world, food from all over the world is consumed all over the world. Despite all of the local supply connections identified, the majority of food consumed in the food district, especially in the winter, is likely produced in California and South America and brought to Canada via distributors through the Ontario Food Terminal.

3.6.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Using interviews to build the networks allows for a rich understanding of the importance and strength of each relationship. The perspectives of small business owners are often neglected in food system research since they have limited time to participate in research studies. Interviews were used instead of surveys since it was found that surveys were often ignored or only partially completed. Interviews require active face-to-face recruitment and the building of mutual trust between the interviewer and the interviewee that proprietary supplier information will remain confidential. Using interviews was useful for prompting interviewees to list all of their suppliers for all the food products they use, rather than just the largest ones. Due to the complexity of our global food system, many businesses only knew their direct suppliers and did not know where exactly the food was grown. Interviews allow not only for the identification of suppliers, but also for understanding when and why other suppliers are not mentioned.

3.7 Conclusions and Areas of Further Study

The foodshed analysis techniques used in this study can be of great benefit to policy makers and planners when considering policy changes and investments in infrastructure. Small businesses need to be recognised as important actors in ‘alternative’ and ‘local’ food systems since they are well positioned to take advantage of new and niche opportunities which large agri-food businesses cannot respond to. The research shows that the regional implication of local food policy needs to be considered, since the food system crosses local, regional and even international boundaries.

Further research using foodshed, network and supply chain analysis is needed to study the evolution of a food system over a period of time, to provide valuable insight into how food systems grow, develop and adapt to policy and other changes. Foodshed analysis could also be used to compare different communities within a food system. This study focussed on small food retailer and processors; however, a similar study with farmers would improve the understanding of the other side of the food system and the opportunities and challenges for supplying food to the food district.

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Chapter 4

4 Growing Small Food Businesses: Investigating Local Economic Development in a Food District in London, Canada

4.1 Introduction

A group of small food businesses who collectively make up the Old East Village Food District have emerged as an economic driver of the local economy in London, Ontario, Canada. These small businesses are growing, investing, hiring new employees, looking for more space, and renovating buildings in London's Old East Village neighbourhood. Immediately east of the Old East Village is the former Kellogg's factory, which closed its doors in 2014 and laid off over 600 employees as the multinational food corporation moved its production to Thailand. The contrast between big and small in the Old East Village is representative of a broader trend across Ontario municipalities where small and medium-sized food businesses have been filling the void left by large multinational agri-food firms since 2008 (Donald, 2009; Sparling and LeGrow, 2014).

This article begins with a discussion of the relevance and objectives of the study, followed by a review of the literature of food systems and urban planning, small business incubation, local economic development, and alternative food networks. Further background is provided on the study area (the Old East Village Food District), followed by a discussion of the methods used for interviewing and analysing small business owners. Results from the semi-structured interviews are reported, followed by a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further areas of study.

4.2 Study Objectives and Relevance

4.2.1 Purpose & Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the revival in small food business entrepreneurship and local economic development occurring in the inner city urban neighbourhood of the Old East Village in London, Canada and develop a case study to inform further local economic development initiatives.

Specifically, the objectives of this study are to investigate and characterise (1) to examine how farmers' markets can act as small business incubators, and (2) the role of food business clusters or business districts with respect to local economic development.

4.2.2 Impact and Relevance

This study aims to advance the research on business clusters by investigating the potential for locally oriented business clusters to impact local economic development. In addition, the study will build upon the existing research on business incubation at farmers' market by focussing specifically on value added food processing by small businesses and larger business cluster context within which business incubation at farmers' markets occurs.

By identifying the drivers of local economic development in the study area and developing a case study the research project aims to impact public policy and urban planning by informing local economic development initiatives involving the food system, small businesses and business districts.

4.3 Literature Review

In Chapter 2 the Literature review discussed the consolidation and globalization occurring in the mainstream food system and the increasing interest in local and alternative food systems challenging the status quo. These alternatives were often positioned as challengers to the global industrial food system, however the distinction is not so clear cut as recent research has discussed and as was shown in the supply chains mapped in Chapter 3. This chapter will continue discussing the overlap between the alternative and mainstream by investigating how pillars of the alternative food system – farmers' markets and local food networks / local business clusters – act as economic drivers.

This literature review begins with a discussion of the rise of food within the planning industry, followed by reviews of research on business incubators, business incubation at farmers' markets, business clusters and local food networks.

4.3.1 The Rise of Urban Food Planning

There is a growing recognition among academics, planners and politicians of the need for urban municipalities to consider the food system and alternatives to the industrial food system (Kaufman, 2009; Morgan, 2013; Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 2007). Cities across the world are increasingly recognising that food systems are not just a rural issue and that urban food policies are needed to deal with food production, processing, distribution, access and waste (Gertz, 1991; Hedden, 1929; Mansfield and Mendes, 2013; Morgan, 2014). In addition, food has been identified as an important component of creating a vibrant exciting city that attracts people and investment (Donald and Blay-Palmer, 2006; Lee and Wall, 2015; Roberts, 2001). Alternative food systems have long been touted as tools to help foster rural development (Goodman, 2004; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 1998; Marsden et al., 2000; Tovey, 2008), but only more recently has the role of food been recognised in urban centres.

4.3.2 Small Businesses and Local Economic Development

Researchers have studied a number of innovations which impact small businesses and have the potential to foster local economic development, including small business incubators.

4.3.2.1 Small Business Incubators

Business incubators and accelerators have become an increasingly common tool used by governments to encourage local economic development and support small businesses in accessing capital and space (Bruneel et al., 2012; Hackett and Dilts, 2004). They are common in many industries including information technology, manufacturing, medical sciences and agri-food. These business incubators gained popularity in the 1980s and have in general expanded from an initial focus on simply providing space for businesses to co-locate, to providing business mentorship and advice, and finally assistance with networking with potential funder and business partners (Bruneel et al., 2012).

4.3.2.2 Business Incubation at Farmers' Markets

Incubators for food businesses have gone by many names including: food business incubators, kitchen incubators, or culinary incubators. In addition, research has suggested that other entities such as community kitchens, food hubs and farmers' markets can serve as incubators of food

businesses. Farmers' markets in particular have long been studied as a tool for local economic development (Cameron, 2007; Feenstra et al., 2003; Gillespie et al., 2007; Guthrie et al., 2006; Hinrichs et al., 2004; Sadler et al., 2013). Farmers' markets support business incubation in a number of ways: reducing the barriers to entry; exposing new entrepreneurs to other successful businesses; and by providing formal and informal mentorship and learning opportunities (Gillespie et al., 2007). Studies by academics and practitioners have measured the multiplier effect that farmers' markets create when market patrons spend money at local vendors in the market and shop in the surrounding community (Project for Public Spaces, 2015; Sadler et al., 2013). Research has investigated the impact that farmers' markets have specifically on farmers who are able to gain a greater share of the consumers' 'food dollar' by selling direct at a farmers' market (Brown and Miller, 2008).

Farmers' markets also serve other functions such as assisting businesses with developing networks, testing products on consumers and learning from other market vendors (Feenstra et al., 2003; Hinrichs et al., 2004). Feenstra et al. (2003) reported that medium and large market vendors (those with above \$10,000 in annual sales) tend to display more entrepreneurial characteristics than the smaller vendors. However, the smaller vendors still do use the market to develop their business and marketing expertise and slowly grow their business. Hinrichs and her colleagues (2004) also found that some of these smaller businesses were satisfied with the current size of their business and did not display the same entrepreneurial desire to continue growing the business as did larger market vendors. This phenomenon has been found in other studies which question whether small businesses owners are entrepreneurs interested in business growth or artisans interested in maintaining a lifestyle (Tregear, 2005). Cameron (2007) identified that for value added food processors, farmers' markets played an incubator role, helping them grow and get established. The present study builds on Cameron's findings by investigating how a farmers' market in a food district can incubate businesses.

4.3.2.3 Business Clusters and Districts

Once businesses outgrow the farmers' market, they need somewhere to expand their businesses. This research project investigates this relationship between the farmers' market and the larger food district or cluster. Geographic clusters of interconnected companies are a persistent feature of the global economy (Porter, 1990, 2000). Clusters are defined as "geographic concentrations

of interconnected companies [...] in a particular field that compete but also cooperate” (Porter, 2000: 15). Much of the focus of the academic literature on business cluster theory has focussed on export oriented clusters and very little attention has been paid to locally oriented clusters (Rodríguez-Pose and Comptour, 2012; Taylor and Miller, 2010). They argue there is a misconception that growing locally oriented business clusters is a net zero economic development strategy which has led to the focus on export oriented clusters. Taylor and Miller (2010) compare a local oriented produce cluster and export oriented seafood cluster and suggest that the locally oriented clusters can indeed be local economic drivers by engaging in import substitution. In addition, they suggest that they may be potentially more stable than export oriented clusters since they rely on a stable local customer base. The locally oriented produce cluster in their case study was in fact growing due to the decline of an export oriented commodity food cluster. Donald (2009) notes a similar reaction in the food industry with her study of the Ontario Specialty Food Cluster in Toronto, which is seen to be responding quicker than large export-oriented agri-businesses to local changes in demand for specialty and ethnic foods.

4.3.2.4 Local Food Networks

In the food sector, much of the research on what could be called locally oriented business clusters is done under the banner of alternative / local food networks or short food supply chains. The local and the alternative food networks are similar to the concept of business clusters since they are premised on closer and more collaborative relationships between consumers, businesses and farmers (Feenstra, 1997; Holloway and Kneafsey, 2000; Jarosz, 2008b). Similarly, the study of short food supply chains explores the benefits that arise when businesses and farmers work to support each other, develop trust and collaborate together rather than simply compete against each other (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Marsden et al., 2000; Renting et al., 2003; Severson and Pirog, 2008). These trusting relationships are critical for small businesses to improve supply and distribution systems since they are competing with efficient, vertically integrated, large retailers which are often a part of larger export oriented cluster and trade associations (Heffernan et al., 2000; Jie et al., 2013). Small and medium sized businesses have additional challenges with developing trust relationships with local farmers since they are often sole proprietor or owner-operated businesses with little to devote to developing new relationships.

The labelling of research into locally oriented food business clusters as alternative food network research is likely a function of the conflict between the ‘alternative’ and the ‘conventional’ food systems. Business cluster research is situated within the local economic development, business development and entrepreneurship literature, and as such has an economic focus at its core. Alternative food network research is conflicted since on the one hand, as the name suggests, it claims to differ from the mainstream economic system. However, numerous academics have criticised the alternative food network literature as being overly simplistic when neatly dividing it from the conventional, and instead claim that the two systems are intertwined with each other (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Sonnino and Marsden, 2006; Tregear, 2011). This is exemplified in the previously discussed literature on farmers’ markets which heralds them as potential small business incubators (Cameron, 2007; Feenstra et al., 2003).

4.4 Methods

This study used semi-structured interviews with small business owners located in the Old East Village Food District to develop an understanding of the business’ history, as well as the opportunities and challenges they face.

4.4.1 Study Area

As discussed in Chapter 1, this study was done in the Old East Village Food District (OEVFD) in London, Ontario, Canada. The food district is home to approximately 75 food retailers, processors and restaurants and is located in a revitalizing, inner city neighbourhood east of London’s downtown core. The Western Fair Farmers’ and Artisans’ Market (WFM) is a year round, weekly Saturday market located within the OEVFD and has approximately 50 food and 50 artisan vendors. The OEVFD and the City of London are a part of the large export oriented Ontario Food Cluster which stretches from the City of Windsor in the south-west to the Greater Toronto Area and Niagara, to the City of Kingston in Eastern Ontario.

4.4.2 Recruitment of Study Participants

The methods of recruiting interview participants were discussed in full in Chapter 3. All businesses in the OEVFD were emailed and asked if they would be willing to participate in an interview. Follow up requests for interviews were made via email, phone and in person with

businesses owners in the OEVFD. In total 24 businesses owners were approached, 3 business owners declined to be interviewed due to time commitments and 21 interviews were conducted. Interviews were stopped after 21 since the sample was representative of business types, ages and locations within the OEVFD. In addition, saturation of themes mentioned in the interviews by business owners had been reached, where the final interviews conducted were confirming what previous business owners had mentioned.

4.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with owners of small food businesses using a series of open-ended questions as an interview guide. The interviews were comprised of two main elements: the first discussed the history, market niche, and experience of the business in the food industry, while the second section involved describing the supply chains and partnerships used by the business.

The interviews used a series of open ended questions, such as: ‘Can you tell me about the history and growth of your business?’, ‘Can you tell me your business pitch - why should I purchase your products?’, ‘Can you tell me about your plans for the future of the business?’, and ‘Can you discuss some of the biggest challenges that you face in growing your business?’ Probing questions, prompts and follow up questions were used to inquire about the reasons for certain decisions.

In the second segment of the interview the business owners were asked to identify the suppliers, farmers, and other businesses that they worked with. Follow up questions were used to determine why certain suppliers were chosen over others and what principles and priorities helped business owners pick and choose suppliers.

4.4.4 Qualitative Analysis and Coding of Interviews

Digital recordings of interviews were first transcribed by a research assistant and then reviewed and verified for accuracy by the author. Interviews were coded in chronological order in a series of stages. Themes that emerged in each interview were identified coded within the transcripts (Charmaz, 2004), and excerpts were copied out of the interviews and organised by theme. As new themes emerged in subsequent interviews, previous transcripts were reviewed to see if these

new themes were present in the previous interviews. This process continued with all interview transcripts to ensure that coding was consistent across all interviews.

4.5 Results

Findings are reported in themes that arose during the interviews. The following naming conventions are used when quoting business owners: NB = New Business (0-5 years old); MB = Medium-Aged Business (6-10 years old); and OB = Older Business (over 10 years old). The Medium-Aged Businesses were generally the original group of vendors that have been in the farmers' market since it opened, many of which have now expanded and opened an additional location outside of the market. The New Businesses were typically comprised of a second wave of businesses that more recently moved into the market. The Older Businesses were established businesses in the neighbourhood ranging in age from 10 years to 54 years. These were a mix of businesses that had been located in the Food District outside of the market since they were founded and others that had relocated to the area. Some of these businesses also expanded and added a booth in the market when it opened.

The results section is organised according to the themes that emerged from the interviews. First, a number of interview findings fit under the theme of 'Opportunities for Business Growth', including the role that the market and food district played: (1) providing opportunities for 'Starting the Business'; (2) expanding and 'Securing (More) Production Space'; (3) transitioning from 'Part Time to Full Time' business owner; (4) Deciding whether to enter 'Wholesale Market'; and (5) developing 'Collaborative Partnerships'. Additional findings related to factors which slowed or hindered the growth of small businesses and are organized under the second major theme of 'Challenges Facing Small Businesses'. This second section included the following sub-categories: (1) difficulty 'Accessing Capital' for new businesses; (2) challenges organising 'Logistics and Distribution'; and (3) balancing 'Food Cost, Quality, and Quantity'.

4.5.1 Opportunities for Business Growth

Small business owners identified that the farmers' market and the surrounding food district offered small food businesses a number of opportunities for growing their businesses. A number of phases for business growth were identified, each with a hurdle that needed to be jumped before moving on to the next.

4.5.1.1 Starting the Business

When asked to tell the history of their business, many of the owners of new and medium-aged businesses confirmed that the farmers' market was an ideal place to start a business due to the low risk, cost, and time commitment involved with opening a stall combined with an established potential customer base of weekly market patrons.

The low cost offered by a market enabled owners to begin their businesses slowly in a low risk environment. As one business owner recalled, it is a "low risk opportunity, and you could make your [product] here and test the market, see how it goes" (NB4). Farmers' markets offer a good option between online home-based businesses which struggled to gain market exposure, and the high expense of opening a bricks and mortar location right from the beginning. One business owner was struggling to start their business: "I started on eBay, just selling. I set up a store on eBay. It wasn't really getting a lot of traction" (MB2). Another owner recalled the market was much more affordable compared to developing a stand-alone location for the business:

I saw within the markets restaurants, like tiny little restaurants that are operating, and I thought, ok, our food could be easy, being able to prepare it in these booths. But at the time I wasn't sure if this would work or not, but I was trying to find, I would say a cheaper avenue to start up the business (MB5)

Aside from the low cost of renting space in the farmers' market, it also offered entrepreneurs a flexible way of running their business while they were still working another permanent job. As one business owner recalled they were:

working probably 70 hours a week, but wasn't working weekends so I thought, ok, well this will be an opportunity to test the entrepreneurial waters without jeopardizing my main work. (MB2)

Farmers' markets are an attractive option for small businesses since they are only open for a limited amount of time, in this case once a week for 7 hours every Saturday. As one business owner stated:

farmer's markets are great in that they provide us with a very small window for a very small amount of money to do an incredible amount of business (NB2)

An established farmers' market with a regular base of market patrons also reduces the risk for a new business by making it easier to get their brand out and gradually build a customer base.

the market made it really possible to really start something slow and see how it worked. So it was just a lot of opportunity to kind of perfect what you're doing, and people are more forgiving because you're at a farmers' market, and you know, they're not expecting something that's perfect (NB4)

4.5.1.2 Securing (More) Production Space

Once businesses had opened their first space in the market and been able to develop their customer base and grow demand for their products, they eventually need to find larger or more suitable production facilities. In some cases, this involved renting a permanent booth in the market instead of a temporary table, for others this involved moving their production from their permanent market booth to a larger location outside the market. The market and the small to medium-sized commercial retail buildings in the Food District provide a wide range of opportunities for small businesses to grow.

Permanent spaces within the market are in high demand—one new business owner told the story of their wait to secure permanent production space:

the summer they offered us a table here, and that went over really well, here at the front door, and 2 years later a booth came up. So it's been a very patient, long wait but, you know, it's good now (NB3)

When businesses begin to outgrow their 10x10 foot booth at the market, the surrounding food district offers affordable spaces at a range of different sizes and amenities. Everyone has different tolerances for risk and no one size is going to fit every business. One of the more risk-oriented owners mentioned:

[I have] always been a believer of always building your business above what you really need, which is risky. It's a risky business because it exposes you to financial risk. (MB2)

The variety in available space is important to ensure that there are always options for each business, at every stage of their development. The variety also assists businesses with minimizing the investment and risk by allowing them to expand to the scale that is right for them.

4.5.1.3 Part Time to Full Time

Among the business owners that were interviewed, most had already made the transition and were currently working full time at their business. The owners of a few of the new businesses, however, still relied on a permanent salaried job for the majority of their income. In some cases, businesses were started after the entrepreneur had been laid off from their previous job, and the business in the food industry was a way back to employment. Depending on their tolerance for risk, the market provided entrepreneurs with a number of options. The market offered some businesses that were comfortable with taking on more risk, a quick, clear signal that they should leave their permanent job and focus on their new food business. As one business owner noted:

we made \$700 worth of [product], and we sold out in 4 hours. The very next week I made twice as much. I sold out again. The next week I quit. I quit my job (MB1)

For the business owners who were risk averse, the market offers a chance to gradually build up a customer base and consider the decision to leave their permanent job:

ultimately we'd like to expand so we don't have to work at other jobs, and make this our full time career, but right now we don't know (NB3)

The market works for both situations by providing a venue to quickly show whether a business will work, as well as allowing entrepreneurs to gradually improve and refine their business until they are ready to expand. This decision about entering the wholesale market is closely tied with

the decision that business owners eventually have to make about what their fulltime job should be.

4.5.1.4 Wholesale Market

Often related to the decision to look for larger space or to leave a permanent salaried job was the decision to start selling wholesale. The business owners interviews typically had one of three distinct perspectives regarding the decision of whether or not their business should get into wholesale: (1) No, it is not worth selling product below retail value; (2) No, not yet, there is still room to grow the retail component; and (3) Yes, selling everything directly to consumers requires too much overhead and cannot provide a sufficient income. This decision typically had to do with the owner's long term ambitions for their business. Those who were content with their current size, and who saw wholesaling product for a lower price as a trade-off not worth making, provided advice such as:

mathematics don't lie, if I sell my product at full price, now why would I work extra to make 10 cents on a pound? Right? It makes no sense. For what? So I can make an extra 100 pounds ... for what, \$10? No thank you. (MB3)

These business owners were typically satisfied with the current size of the business which was able to support the owner and staff. Other businesses enjoyed the direct relationships with customers:

I have no reason to expand into another location or create a large processing facility. I don't want to get into wholesaling. I like just being a special, unique vendor here at the market (MB6)

Other businesses were open to the possibility of going wholesale, but they had not reached a point where they felt limited by their retail options. One business owner agreed with the advice they received from a mentor who told them:

don't do wholesale until you've got people lined up out your door and around the block because you don't have to, because you're doing the same work for less money (NB2)

As businesses grew larger they tended to see the benefit of adding wholesale accounts to their businesses. If a business owner wanted to continue to expand their business, their options included opening a stall in another market or looking for other wholesale accounts where they sell their product in bulk to other businesses and restaurants. The attraction of selling wholesale was the reduced time and effort required to sell food products:

I realized, I was killing myself. Trying to go after all of these retail contracts. Wholesale is so much better. You make it. You hand it to them. They give you the money and you're done. Retail, you've got to stand there for hours and hours and hours. I don't do that anymore (MB1)

4.5.1.5 Collaborative Partnerships

One of the most prominent themes that came up throughout the interviews was the collaboration and partnership that business owners had with each other. This was especially evident in the farmers' market, which one vendor likened to a village:

It's like a village, so if you run out of something, they go 'hey! Can I have some?' Like bang, you don't have to go anywhere, so then you can replace for them. That's how it used to be in my village, if I run out of the sugar, the salt, hey can I borrow that, right? And the next day I go buy in the city or wherever and then give it to you. This is exactly what it is here (MB8)

This concept of a collective, mutually supportive village is revealing of a number of ways in which the market operates and how it supports businesses. The market provides a clear mutual benefit that all businesses benefit from when they work together.

coopetition, you know, it's cooperation with competition, and it's like yeah, we're all trying to get a piece of that but if we're all working together we're all going to get some, we're all going to benefit from this (NB2)

Despite the mutual benefit, and like a village, it can succeed despite not everyone getting along perfectly with everyone else in the village. There is very little hierarchy within the market, since as long as a vendor is paying their rent they are allowed to have a booth. This informal setting

then allows vendors to develop direct partnerships with a couple other businesses, and collectively the whole market benefits. This means that it can be a “little bit messy at times” (MB7), but they still collectively support one another. Another vendor in the market felt that “there’s a core group that started at the beginning and...it’s hard to break that core group” (NB3). Despite this core group, all business owners interviewed were still able to find at least a couple vendors within the market that they could partner with or turn to for advice.

Conversely, some vendors expressed lament over the state of collaboration within the broader city of London.

as much as you can talk about collaborative and channels and stuff like that, and they’re very beneficial, there’s equally non-collaborative, equally detrimental businesses in London, and the channels run really deep (MB2)

The partnerships within the market are typically between restaurants, prepared food retailers, and businesses that are at the same stage of the supply chain. There were some supply relationships within the food district; however, most were mutual support relationships, rather than supplier-customer relationships. In addition to the support from other businesses in the Food District it was crucial for businesses to develop trust based relationships with the farmers and distributors that they purchased food from. Longstanding relationships were common among the businesses interviewed, and there was often a deep commitment and loyalty to their suppliers and the sense that “he’s been good to me, how can I turn my back on that?” (MB3). Developing that level of relationship with their suppliers was crucial for businesses to ensure that they received the best quality food. Many business owners expressed how they work with their suppliers to establish an understanding, where the supplier knows what to expect from the businesses and vice versa:

we are very loyal to our suppliers because consistency is something you must strive for when it comes to authenticity. If you don’t have consistency, because you aren’t using the same ingredients you will go for a very rough ride trying to come up with the same results when it comes to flavour and tastes of the foods (MB5)

Some businesses were adamant that whenever possible they only wanted to develop relationships with the original farmers and producers of the food they were buying:

I won't source anything that's local through a distributor. I will take the avenue myself and go direct, in hopes of meeting the business owner. Building my own relationship with them (OB6)

For most businesses, however, it was very difficult, if not impossible, to source everything directly from local farmers and producers. Businesses were therefore required to rely on distributors and middle men to purchase food. It was seen as too difficult to develop direct relationships with farmers and producers due to the logistics, time and cost required:

if there was even a simpler way to get in touch with these people, to see what kind of products they have, these kinds of things, yeah, I'd much rather work with them than somebody outside of the city for sure. But it has to be practical, it has to be efficient for us (OB1)

4.5.2 Challenges Facing Small Businesses

The farmers' market and food district provide a number of opportunities for small businesses; however, a number of challenges continued to slow down and restrict this growth.

4.5.2.1 Accessing Capital

One of the most commonly cited themes was the inability of small businesses to access the capital required to invest in their business and grow. This was especially true for small businesses just starting out who do not have significant assets or contracts which they can leverage to get financing. A number of business owners expressed frustration with the lack of support that they felt they received from banks. There was clear frustration among some business owners who expressed that "it's very, very difficult for small businesses because we need funding, honestly, to get to that next stage, you need some, you need capital" (NB4). Other businesses had turned to non-profit organisations that mentor and support businesses, but frustration remained that these organisations were not able to provide financial assistance to businesses, summed up by one business owner as "they can't do didley squat for you" (NB1).

Due to this frustration with the banks and other financing organisations, some businesses had “considered crowd funding” (NB1) as an alternative. Businesses were hesitant to undertake crowd funding, however, due to the added promotion required and ‘rewards’ that projects must give out. Unless the project is well thought out then these activities were perceived to be distracting from the business’ main work. Other businesses were lucky to be in a situation where they were able to qualify for public funding from development corporations. As noted by one business from rural Ontario that had a booth at the market:

it’s a federal business development bank, helping small local businesses get up and going. So, their rates are a whole lot more favourable than the bank’s are so we’ll give them a shot first. (NB2)

Despite the frustration with being unable to raise the amount of capital that businesses wanted, some viewed this as positive. The limitation required businesses to plan carefully and grow in an organic way, while not taking on much, or any debt. This lack of capital required that businesses grow slower since their only source of investment for their business was from the profits that they made:

one of the strong points is that the money, literally, if we would have a big catering event, we’d buy a new freezer, so we buy things when we got money but we’ve just started with... I don’t know if “organic growth” makes sense because I don’t really know what that means but, it’s just grown from the ground up, slowly, slowly, slowly. There’s been no business loan, no bank loan (MB8)

The most frustration with accessing capital was experienced by businesses that had recently established themselves in the food district, but still did not have significant assets to be able to grow to the next level. Business owners mentioned that in most cases they “don’t need a lot to get to the next level” (NB4), but that it was still difficult to find even that small investment.

A number of the much older businesses (over 15 years) mentioned how in comparison to today it was much easier to access capital when they were starting their businesses. They mentioned that they were able to get financing from commercial banks immediately after starting their business:

we graduated in June and three of us classmates decided to open up this store in the fall. So it was right after. We made a business plan. We presented that at the bank. We got financing. (OB4)

The general sense that business owners conveyed was that previously personal relationships with the bank manager counted, whereas currently the only thing that mattered was a business' balance sheet of assets and liabilities. One business owner recounted the relationship between bank manager and business owner when the business was founded:

when he was first starting out the bank was behind you. His bank manager would come in and he would see him, and he would see how hard [he] worked (OB1)

4.5.2.2 Logistics and Distribution

Many of the businesses interviewed wanted to source more food directly from small farmers and producers. A number of challenges, however, prevented the independently owned businesses in the food district from being able to source more local food, including: (1) informational barriers, (2) logistical limitations of transporting food, and (3) the time and cost required to find and pick-up / deliver local food.

Some of the businesses interviewed were trying to fill a specific 'local' niche by offering local food or products made from local food. These businesses tended to be connected to the local food movement in the region. Typically, they already knew farmers due to connections through their family and friends as one business owner mentioned of their business partner: “[she] knew a farmer, and she does ask a lot of her friends who are in the farming business [...] where to find the products” (NB3).

Other businesses not tied into the local food movement struggled to even find out about what products local farmers could provide them. These businesses typically wanted high quality food, but they were busy running their business and did not have the time to research and find local food unless it was brought to them by a distributor. Distributors have sales staff for each region who will approach businesses and offer to supply food. Small scale local farmers and producers do not have the same amount of time or resources to market their food to prospective restaurants and businesses. Similarly, small businesses and restaurants in the food district did not have the

time to go out to local farmers to find the food, and as a result very few direct supply relationships were formed:

I would like to see easier access to local food here. I really would. In some cases I have to go and look for it, but at the same time I'm trying to run my business... I don't have a lot of time to go to the farms, speak with the owners, the farmers, talk to them about their product. You know, I would like to see a little bit more effort on their part to come to us (OBI)

Some businesses that had attempted to overcome the challenge by picking up and sourcing their own food felt that time constraints limited them. In particular, one business owner mentioned that as their business continued to grow it would not be feasible for them to continue themselves and picking up all their supplies:

sometimes I would need stuff and I find I would have to be driving, so that's one of things that I'm trying to change, because I can't be driving all over anymore to get stuff. It's just too much time (NB5)

It is difficult for restaurants and other food businesses to work with local farmers, but it can also be difficult for businesses to source their food from distributors. Even the businesses that do focus on local food still need to use distributors to bring in food that is out of season, or not available in Ontario. Larger food distributors, often located in Toronto or the Kitchener-Waterloo region, would only deliver to London on certain days and required businesses to order a minimum amount. These minimums were at times prohibitive to the smaller businesses:

my biggest challenge was having suppliers that weren't ones with a minimum order. We're again, with small businesses and space restraints, I can't have deliveries because I can't order \$750 worth of food (NB7)

The numerous local distributors in London and throughout the rest of Southwestern Ontario could potentially meet this need. As one business mentioned, “we started with them because they were a small business that started out wanting to serve mom ‘n pop diners” (NB2). These distributors bring in products from the Ontario Food Terminal and supplement this in season with produce sourced directly from farmers in Southwestern Ontario.

4.5.2.3 Food Cost, Quality, and Quantity

Many of the businesses struggled with finding the right balance between the three considerations of food prices, food quality and volume. Typically, these businesses were filling a niche in the market, supplying a specialty artisanal product that was of higher quality than what is found in the grocery store or conventional chain restaurants. As a result, many echoed the sentiments of this owner when talking about how they price their products:

there's no one in the market that can afford to compete [with grocery stores] on price. You can't. It's a stupid game. If you start to do that you'll lose. Um, but in order to not compete on price, you've got to have a really strong brand (NB6)

Food products provided by many businesses were typically more expensive than what grocery stores sold their products for. Higher prices were due to a number of factors including: small businesses' lack of distribution and economies of scale, as well as the reality that small businesses generally provided a higher quality product. The increased price, however, was a challenge for businesses trying to ensure that both customers could afford their products and farmers were compensated fairly. As one business owner noted "consumers want this stuff, and ... they will therefore want you to stay in business" (NB6). A common theme among those interviewed was that "this business is all about volume. That's what this business is, it's about volume" (OB1). A certain volume of food is required in order for businesses to achieve economies of scale and cover the costs of renting space and other overhead costs and so the challenge becomes "how do you keep your prices affordable for people and make it accessible but still pay for your operation?" (OB5).

The low risk environment of the farmers' market and food district helps businesses owners minimise these overhead costs and gain business experience while they are improving their products and becoming more efficient producing them. As businesses are starting out and growing, efficiencies need to be built in to ensure that the amount of waste is minimised. It takes time for business owners to develop management experience to know for example when the business will be busy and when it will be slow. In addition, it takes time for business owners to develop partnerships and relationships with other businesses to ensure that excess product is always sold:

it's not how much you make, it's how much you have left; because it has no legs. It has no shelf life. I mean, you only have a couple days, it's got to move. So, everything I make is sold. (MB1)

4.6 Discussion

This study builds upon the work of Feenstra et al. (2003), Hinrichs et al. (2004) and Cameron (2007) by using in-depth interviews to gain a better understanding of the mechanisms that encourage small business incubation at farmers' markets. The results from this research project suggest that one of the key ways in which farmers' markets can assist and grow businesses is by providing affordable access to commercial kitchen space. Secondly, the results indicate that a successful farmers' market on its own will only be able to satisfy businesses of a certain size. In order to continue developing small businesses, there needs to be medium sized commercial retail spaces which are available for growing businesses to move into. This study however indicates that businesses currently struggle to take this step due to a lack of access to capital from commercial banks. If businesses are able to access capital to continue growing their businesses and generate new economic activity, then the research supports the concept of locally oriented clusters driving economic development (Taylor and Miller, 2010). Finally, the links between the food district and the broader foodshed (Gertz, 1991; Hedden, 1929) must be considered by urban planners and policy makers. The case study of the Old East Village Food District is used to show how local economic development and small business growth can begin in a market and spill out to the surrounding neighbourhood and regions.

4.6.1 Information Nature of Incubation at Farmers' Markets

Previous research demonstrated how farmers' markets can be places of growth and learning for small and medium businesses (Cameron, 2007; Feenstra et al., 2003; Hinrichs et al., 2004). This study contributes a unique investigation into understanding more about how this happens at the WFM in London, Ontario, Canada.

The primary role of markets is to be a unique retail destination which connects customers directly with farmers and small businesses owners. Businesses want to locate in the market due to the weekly stream of customers who go to the market each week because their favourite

businesses are located there. Many businesses mentioned that they wanted to locate in the market due to the traditional atmosphere, the market's popularity, and the affordability of a booth.

One of the key reasons that markets can successfully work as a space for businesses to grow is the informal way in which they allow a business to grow, learn, and adapt their businesses (Feenstra et al. 2003; Hinrichs et al. 2004). The WFM works well in this role, as an informal 'village' where business can work together to attract customers and adapt and grow their businesses. Vendors do not need to partner with everyone in the market, as simply by growing their business and drawing customers to the market, they are helping out their neighbours. Vendors tended to be selective about who they turned to for advice and who they worked with. One vendor highlighted this by mentioning a 'core group' of vendors who had been in the market for a long time. Despite not being members of the 'core group', owners of new businesses are also able to succeed in the market, however, by finding connections with key vendors and working together with them.

The informal nature of the market also means that businesses owners are able to grow their businesses at a pace that is right for their level of risk tolerance. Some business owners entered the market and very quickly decided to turn their weekend businesses into their full time occupation. Others gradually build up their customer base and adapt and improve the products they offer while they get ready to leave their 'day job'. It is argued that this vibrant mix of micro, small and medium-sized businesses with varying levels of entrepreneurial ambitions contributes to the overall attraction of the market.

4.6.2 Access to Commercially Certified Kitchen Space

New businesses are constantly opening and existing businesses are continually growing and with this growth their needs change. As has been suggested in previous literature, farmers' markets provide a valuable opportunity for growing businesses, but there must be other options to assist businesses at all stages of their growth.

4.6.2.1 Small Scale Food Processing in the Farmers' Market

Feenstra et al (2003) identified that both small and medium businesses engaged in entrepreneurial activities like developing new 'product categories', 'product lines' and

‘beginning additional processing’. Cameron (2007) identified specifically that markets acted as an incubator for value added food processor by primarily offering an attractive retail location for them to sell, adapt and improve their products. The WFM provided these retail and product development opportunities for businesses, but it is argued that its ability to offer access to low risk food production space is more important to the growth of small businesses.

During the interviews with business owners in this study it became apparent that accessing this ‘additional processing’ was one of the greatest challenges faced by businesses. The market helps very small businesses overcome this by reducing the cost and risk of investing in a small commercial kitchen in the market. The market is already equipped with washrooms, fire exits, and many other investments that are required under various health and safety regulations. Businesses are then only responsible for purchasing equipment, renovating, and renting their booth in the market. A year round permanent market is ideal for this since businesses can access the space throughout the week to do food prep, store products and supplies, and prepare their products. There are an increasing number of businesses who use their booth in the market to do food preparation. Having a permanent space means that businesses can also use their booth in the market as a delivery and storage location.

The market reduces the cost of creating a food production space since there are common facilities that all vendors benefit from and the overhead costs are shared by all. In addition, short term, flexible leases make it easier for businesses to grow in a sustainable way and not over extend themselves. Businesses can start off renting simply a table, move to a permanent 10x10 foot booth, and then move to a larger booth as their production needs increase.

4.6.2.2 Full Commercial Kitchens in the Food District

The greatest source of frustration expressed by business owners was related to getting access to commercially-certified kitchen space outside the market. Typically this was either (1) when a business owner was first starting and needed access to a commercially certified kitchen for short periods of time, or (2) when owners felt their business’ growth was being limited by their small space in the market.

When starting out many business owners rented time in a shared kitchen space such as a church, community centre or restaurant, when they were not being used for their primary purposes. Several business owners however, expressed frustration with how difficult it was to find commercially certified kitchen space that could be rented.

In contrast, owners of older businesses looking to grow their business from the market to the next level were looking for their own private kitchen space. The OEVFD has proved to be ideally suited to meet that demand, due to its stock of commercial buildings near the market that meet the requirements of small but growing businesses. The district offers a variety of different sized commercial units – often in unique heritage buildings – which are affordable to rent or purchase. This highlights how the local economic impact of a farmers’ market is connected to the surrounding community in which it is situated. To be successful, most food businesses will eventually need other opportunities to grow their business, increase their production capacity, and expand retail opportunities.

Despite this affordability, many businesses still struggle to make this step due to the large capital investment required.

4.6.3 Limited Access to Capital

The underlying issue limiting businesses from having access to the right size of food processing facilities was a lack of access to capital. Businesses are still able to grow and gradually accumulate the capital required to expand their businesses, but this process is delayed by the inability of small businesses to access traditional sources of capital. Businesses are instead turning to alternative sources such as crowd funding investment from the public to buy equipment needed to run their businesses. Other businesses had access to publicly funded business development banks which provided debt financing at below market rate. In Ontario, these banks and development corporations only operate in rural and northern regions. Urban areas of Southwestern Ontario do not have access to equivalent organisations to assist businesses.

Instead, most businesses were relying entirely on the small profits they make to purchase new equipment every time they have a big sale or catering event. This method was viewed as a mixed

blessing since it slowed progress and held the business back, but it also forced business owners to prioritise their decisions and investments. In many cases this was felt to have improved the sustainability of businesses, by ensuring that they did not grow too fast and over extend themselves.

There was a clear frustration that traditional lenders, such as banks, used to be much more supportive of small businesses. A number of the older businesses interviewed noted how, compared to today, they had been able to relatively easily secure bank loans when their business was started.

4.6.4 Infrastructure of the Middle

Small and medium sized food businesses are underserved by both the local food system and the industrial food system. Business owners mentioned that they often struggle to find, access and afford local food. Collaboration and partnerships based on trust were important for business owners in determining where to purchase food from. Due to the barriers finding local food providers it was difficult to develop partnerships directly with producers, Despite these challenges local food was used by many businesses and there is potential to grow this niche.

4.6.4.1 Informational Barriers

During the interviews, many small business owners mentioned that it was difficult for them to develop partnerships directly with suppliers. When lacking existing connections in the farming community, business owners were unaware of many local opportunities since they typically resorted to internet searches to find and contact potential suppliers. Businesses typically had connections within their own industry or ethnic community, but they struggled to connect with businesses and farmers outside their industry.

Developing trust with suppliers was one of the most important factors mentioned by businesses for why they chose one supplier over another. This was true regardless of the type of supplier. Some businesses were committed to working with local farmers since they knew about and trusted the farming methods used by a farmer. Other businesses trusted their distributor to be reliable to provide consistent product, deliver on time and anticipate their business needs. If local food supplied through short supply chains is going to play more than a minor role in the food

system then it must be easier for farmers, distributors, and business owners at various stages of the supply chain to meet and develop relationships.

4.6.4.2 Logistical Barriers

Some owners of small businesses indicated that they were currently sourcing food directly from farmers' however, this was often seen as unsustainable due to time constraints and logistical challenges. As a result, many businesses used large distributors sourcing from all over the world through the Ontario Food Terminal for at least some of the food needs. The divide between these two systems is not clear cut, given small specialist distributors which target small businesses. These distributors source conventional produce and food through the Ontario Food Terminal, but they also source food directly from local farmers when it is in season. In order for more local food to be available and affordable for small businesses, the distribution options for local food need to be improved.

4.6.4.3 Small Business' Opportunities

Small businesses have the potential to collectively have a large impact on the food system. Small businesses unable to compete with large businesses on volume need to develop a niche to be successful. Local food has the potential to provide that niche which small businesses can use to differentiate themselves from the mainstream. Small businesses have to struggle to work within the high-volume industrial food system, but it is still perceived as easier than sourcing from local farmers due to a lack of local distribution. If just a few of the challenges limiting the distribution of local food to local businesses are overcome, then there is potential for small businesses to drive this shift.

4.7 Limitations and Future Research Priorities

This research project is limited due to the scale of the project and further study will be required to see if other farmers' markets and food districts which have successfully incubated food businesses share these characteristics. This research project only interviewed businesses that are successful and currently operating, and as such it is limited by a selection bias towards successful businesses. To overcome this future longitudinal studies are needed to follow the food district over time as new businesses continue to open, and existing businesses grow, expand, contract and

close. This study identified several characteristics of food districts and farmers' markets that it is suggested encourage small business growth, however, further study is required to test this in other markets and food districts.

4.8 Conclusions

This research aimed to investigate the potential for small food businesses to be drivers of the local economy in London, Ontario. Interviews with owners of small food businesses in the Old East Village Food District demonstrated the existing growth that is occurring in the district. Small businesses are growing in popularity while traditional large food manufacturers are contracting or moving their productions out of the region. To continue this small business growth and encourage local economic development, stronger policies aimed at supporting small food businesses are needed.

The study highlights the role of the Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market in providing a low risk retail environment for small food businesses, as well as low cost access to small scale commercial kitchen space. It is successful in this role due to the informal village of vendors which occupy the market and its ability to provide year round permanent access to affordable food production space. In addition, the proximity of the farmers' market to the rest of the Old East Village Food District is identified as critical for continuing the growth of small businesses when they begin to outgrow their space in the market.

The study also highlights the need for improved distribution of local food. Owners of small businesses in some cases went to great lengths to source local food, however, in order for this to be widespread it needs to be easier for businesses to find and purchase local food.

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Chapter 5

5 Discussion and Conclusions

This thesis used semi-structured interviews with 21 small business owners in the Old East Village Food District (OEVFD), in London, Ontario, Canada to gather information on their businesses history, practices, and goals, as well as their role in local economic development. Interview data were analysed in two ways: (1) foodshed analysis of the supply chains of the interviewed businesses; and (2) qualitative content analysis investigating the opportunities and challenges for growing small businesses and sourcing local food. Chapter 3: “Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada” reported on the results of the foodshed analysis. The chapter aimed to answer research questions 1, 5 and 6 regarding the mapping of the foodshed, exploring the value of the exercise and the qualitative methods used to map it. Chapter 4: “Growing Small Food Businesses: Investigating Local Economic Development in a Food District in London, Canada” reported the results of the content analysis. The chapter aimed to answer research question 2, 3 and 4 regarding how businesses chose suppliers, the opportunities and constraints for growing small food businesses, and the opportunities and challenges purchasing local food.

5.1 Integration of Thesis

This thesis is organised in an integrated article format. As such, some background on the study area and a summary of the academic literature is provided in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. The thesis is based around two main manuscripts, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, which together achieve the objectives of the research and answer the research questions. The two manuscripts fit together by first describing the current state of the supply chains connecting the food district to the region, and then digging deeper into the interviews to understand the history of their development and opportunities for the future. Chapter 3 investigated and mapped the supply chains of small businesses as they currently exist and created a baseline description of the food system that the businesses had developed. Chapter 4 built on this by attempting to understand why those particular suppliers were chosen, and what needed to be done to continue the growth of the businesses and enable them to source more food locally. Together, these two studies provide a

comprehensive analysis of the current food system and some recommendations for how to strengthen it.

5.2 Foodshed Analysis

Chapter 3: “Mapping and Analysing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada” used the foodshed concept, first developed by Walter Hedden (1929), to describe the current supply chains used by small businesses in the OEVFD. The purpose of this was to demonstrate what the current foodshed of small businesses looks like and understand to what extent the ‘alternative’ and ‘conventional’ food systems overlap. Rather than, as Walter Hedden did, describing the food system ‘as is’, recent research has used foodshed analysis to describe theoretically how much land would be required for an urban area to feed itself (Kremer and DeLiberty, 2011; Peters et al., 2008). This paper makes a contribution to the literature by moving away from the theoretical and unrealistic possibility of a city growing all its food locally, and instead mapping the realities of a locally, regionally and globally integrated food system (Tregear, 2011).

5.2.1 What is the Foodshed of the Old East Village Food District?

The research achieved its aim of mapping the foodshed of the Old East Village Food District by mapping the supply chains of a representative sample of businesses within the district. This analysis identified producers, processors and distributors – including local, regional, across Canada and around the world – which were linked to the Old East Village Food District. The foodshed however is a not an entirely transparent system, and in some cases all that is known is a country of origin rather than a specific farmer or producer. In many cases the knowledge of the provenance of food stopped at the Ontario Food Terminal. Interviewed business owners knew the importer and distributor who purchased the food at the food terminal, but they did not know anything other than a country of origin about how the food was grown.

The analysis showed that despite the prevalence for global commodity crops in Middlesex County, there was a significant amount of local food being used by businesses in the OEVFD. This was led by some dedicated businesses that used local food as their niche and went out of their way to purchase food directly from local farmers. All except one business, however, still relied upon distributors from the Ontario Food Terminal to provide food to London, especially

when local food was out of season. Many of these distributors were located near the Ontario Food Terminal in the Greater Toronto Area and were supplying a mixture of Ontario and international products. This demonstrated how integrated food systems are and that there is no entirely independent food system.

5.2.2 What is the Value of Undertaking a Foodshed Analysis?

The research also had the stated purpose of determining the value of conducting a foodshed analysis. Developing a map of a region's foodshed is a valuable exercise which can help inform agricultural policy and public investment priorities. The analysis provides more than just a list of places where food is from, it shows how the food moves through the supply chain to the processor and end consumer. Mapping the OEVFD's foodshed revealed extensive distribution capacity anchored by the Ontario Food Terminal; however, it also revealed a dearth of distribution from other nearby regions southwest of London in Chatham-Kent and Essex counties. To improve the availability of local food, more will need to be done to improve distribution from these and other rural areas to nearby regional urban centres like London. This is valuable since it is important to know the geographic areas in which targeted policy change and public investment is required and will have the most significant impact.

In addition, the research is valuable for identifying the 'actors' in the food system that need to be engaged if changes are to be successfully implemented. This research focussed on a food district comprised primarily of small businesses which relied upon dedicated distributors and terminals to transport food from both nearby and distant regions. The essential role that distributors play in the food system is often not considered, especially the role that they currently and potentially could play in ensuring more food is grown, processed and consumed locally. Distributors need to be engaged to ensure that attempts to improve this local distribution are successful.

In addition, foodshed analysis was valuable for identifying the potential of small businesses to impact change in the food system. In food policy a large amount of attention is given to local procurement of food by large public sector institutions such as hospitals and schools which are considered to have enough buying power and leverage in the food system to create significant changes in the food system with only small changes in their purchasing habits. However, conducting a foodshed analysis was valuable for identifying the potential of small businesses

which are more dynamic and adaptable than large businesses and public institutions. Small businesses are small enough to be different and can more easily adapt to consumer demands and as such they are the vanguard in the food system innovating new practices, identifying opportunities to source local food and limitations in its distribution.

5.2.3 What is the Value of Using Interviews to Map the Foodshed?

The research also demonstrated the value of using in-depth interviews with business owners as the data collection method for mapping the foodshed and identifying the suppliers and partners that business owners sourced their food supplies from. Recent attempts to conduct foodshed analysis or map food supply chains in the food industry have either relied on aggregated national agricultural production and import-export statistics (Billen et al., 2011), or hypothetical calculations of the land area immediately surrounding cities that would be required to grow the food consumed in the city (Kremer and DeLiberty, 2011). These approaches have value in their own right, however they do not illuminate the mechanics of the logistical system that moves food from producer to consumer. Using interviews with individual business owners limits the size of the study however it provides a much deeper understanding of the food supply chain.

Interviews allowed the researcher to: ensure that all suppliers were discussed, clarify names of suppliers, and gain a deeper understanding of the relationship with the supplier. In a previous study, the researcher attempted to use an online and paper survey to collect information on the food supply chains of small businesses. The results, however, were biased due to respondents only identifying the signature relationships that they wanted to highlight. A business would identify the local farmer that they purchased food from in season, however they would not identify the distributor that they used for the rest of the year. Using interviews, the researcher was able to overcome this bias by reiterating the interest in identifying all types of suppliers. The researcher had previously built a relationship in the neighbourhood as a business development officer, not a food researcher, and the interview process provided further opportunity to develop trust relationships with business owners. Mapping the foodshed of a larger urban area would be possible by a collaborative team that works with local partners (such as BIAs, and other community and business organisations who have established relationships with the local businesses).

Developing trust based relationships is important since the supplier lists of businesses are typically trade secrets that business owners are hesitant to disclose for fear of losing their competitive advantage. Using interviews to do data collection was the only way to overcome this limitation and ensure that accurate data was collected. Using interviews also allows for more nuanced analysis of the seasonal variability and longer term temporal changes of the foodshed which will be discussed below. In addition, using interviews for data collection permitted the analysis conducted in Chapter 4 examining why specific suppliers were selected and the opportunities and challenges of growing small businesses and using local food.

5.2.4 Limitations and Areas of Further Research

This study, and network analysis in general, is limited by the time-intensive nature of conducting in-depth interviews, and is therefore unfeasible in larger samples without significant resources (Ter Wal and Boschma, 2008); however, this methodology could easily be used in other small case studies. The food system is an open network and it is therefore impossible to interview every business in the network. To overcome this research barrier, the study was constrained geographically to a sample of businesses from the OEVFD. Nevertheless, geographical restrictions, as well as temporal restrictions (one time point), could be seen as limitations of this research.

The study was not intended to create a map of the OEVFD's foodshed and extrapolate that to London as a whole. The food district is unique in that there are no large food manufacturers, chain restaurants grocery stores or other large food businesses in the food district. Further research into the distribution systems of these larger businesses would be valuable, but difficult to obtain. It was not the intention, and it should not be assumed that the foodshed identified in this research is representative of London's foodshed. The intention of this research project was to map the Old East Village Food District's foodshed, which is just one of London's foodsheds. This still has value since, mapping the niche foodshed of new and growing niche businesses shows what may become the mainstream in the future.

Further research is recommended to compare the foodshed of the OEVFD to (1) other urban areas, and (2) the evolution of the OEVFD's foodshed over time. This would allow for a comparison of London's food system, which is dominated by the major urban area of Toronto

and the Ontario Food Terminal, to other food systems. There is a need to understand and learn from how other regions food systems operate in order to improve the food system in Southwestern Ontario. Other case studies which map the foodshed of similar commercial districts in mid-sized urban areas near large urban centres would be valuable to the Old East Village's attempts to develop its Food District. Understanding more about the foodsheds of midsized urban areas is critical since while a majority of Canadians live in urban areas, a significant number live in small or mid-sized cities.

Another gap in the literature that has been identified is the lack of longitudinal studies of foodsheds and food networks. Longitudinal analysis of food networks would offer a wide range of potential benefits including providing the opportunity to study the impact of interventions such as local food initiatives and policies. In addition, longitudinal analysis would allow for the analysis of the growth and decline of different businesses and relationships within the food network. Currently there is a recognition that number of small and mid-sized producers and processors are declining and the food industry is becoming more concentrated in a few large firms. However longitudinal foodshed analysis would show over time how these changes impact supply chains and the growth of businesses that previous relied on those producers.

5.3 Growing Small Businesses and Local Food

After mapping and analysing the foodshed and supply chains of small businesses in the OEVFD, Chapter 4: "Growing Small Food Businesses: Investigating Local Economic Development in a Food District in London, Canada" attempted to understand more about how the current system evolved and what could be done to strengthen the network in the future. This study drew insights from and expanded upon a recent line of research investigating the potential for locally oriented business clusters to contribute to local economic development (Taylor and Miller, 2010). Furthermore, within the economic geography field this research also contributes important research evidence on the role of farmers' markets' as small business incubators (Cameron, 2007),

Using content analysis of in-depth, semi structured interviews with 21 small business owners in the OEVFD, a series of key characteristics of the food district and farmers' market were identified as important for fostering small business growth. The Western Fair Farmers' and

Artisans' Market (WFM) was successful in helping small businesses grow due to the low risk environment it provided for businesses. With minimal investment, business owners were able to use the market for small scale food production, and retail their products to the market's customers. The market has a diverse group of small businesses which were likened to a village in the way they support each other. Within the market all businesses interviewed had been successful in partnering with one or more other businesses, and collectively, the market as a whole and all its vendors benefitted from partnerships. The WFM should not be considered separately from the surround OEVFD, however, since businesses need a place to expand to once they have out grown their booth in the market.

5.3.1 What Factors Influence where Small Businesses Purchase Food Supplies from?

If significant change is going to be made in the food system, then a better understanding of how purchasing decisions are made by businesses. The research achieved this purpose by exploring how businesses in the Old East Village made their decisions. Businesses at all points within the food system wanted to have high quality raw ingredients to ensure that the food they served their customers was also high quality. Business owners however also need to run their business, and ensure they can afford the quality food. As a result, business owners must find a balance between the cost and quality of their food supplies. The cost for businesses included both time and monetary considerations. Small business owners wanted the freshest food and to be sourcing more food from local producers however they often did not know of local producers, and did not have the time to search for producers or pick up supplies. If businesses did know of local producers then additional considerations were made for whether business owners wanted to pay the premium price for local produce.

Similar to the diversity within the food system in general, businesses had diverse responses to these challenges. Some were committed to supporting specific alternative niches of the food system such as local or organic. These businesses were willing to pay the premium price for the higher quality food and in turn so were their customers. Other businesses, even if they valued local or organic produce, could not afford to pay the premium price because they could not pass the cost on to their consumers. If local food is to play a more prominent role in the food system,

then measures need to be taken to make it more efficient to produce and distribute and reduce the costs of purchasing it, as will be discussed further below.

5.3.2 What Opportunities and Constraints Face Growing Small Businesses?

One of the main purposes of this research was to identify what opportunities small businesses can take advantage of to grow, and what is limiting them. The food industry is a critical economic driver in Ontario and London, however many of the largest agri-food companies in the region are foreign owned and susceptible to move or relocated to if circumstances make it more profitable to do so. To protect against this risk more needs to be done to support the small businesses growing in the industry which can fill a void left as larger manufacturers relocate or close.

Small business owners felt they had an advantage in the quality of the products they could offer their consumers compared to the large scale competitors. They were able to offer fresher products with fewer preservatives or additives, and they were able to offer superior service by responding quickly and customizing their products to changes in their customer needs.

There were however, a number of challenges that small businesses faced. The biggest were the closely tied difficulties accessing capital and space. The Old East Village Food District, a revitalizing inner city commercial corridor offered affordable and appropriate retail and production space for small businesses, however access to capital remained a challenge. As the area develops and rents rise these challenges are going to increase.

Evaluating policy changes was not a primary objective of the research however a number of potential policies for further study in economic geography are identified. As cities have grown areas for industrial production have been pushed further and further to the edges of cities. Recently however, there has been a shift towards creating complete communities which integrate residential, commercial, recreation and employment uses in close proximity. To date this has largely excluded consideration for small scale, or light industrial, production. The spatial implications of zoning policies do not enable small retail businesses to add wholesale production and distribution aspects to their businesses without relocating to industrial parks away from their

established customer base. More research is needed to understand the costs and limitations of current zoning practices that prohibit small scale, artisanal production in commercial areas.

In Ontario the Federal and Provincial government has identified access to capital for small and medium sized businesses as a problem in rural and northern Ontario communities. Publicly funded development banks have been established in these areas to offer affordable access to capital for businesses. This research shows that conventional banking sector views small businesses as high risk and ineligible for financing in urban areas and similar innovative measures are needed to assist small businesses.

5.3.3 What Opportunities and Challenges Exist for Increasing the Supply of Local Food

Small businesses are small enough to be different in that they only need to purchase a moderate amount of food and can therefore work with smaller, local producers. There are however, significant costs and challenges which limit the number of businesses that access local food. The research found that reasons for the limited access to local food were primarily due to information, logistical, and cost barriers. It is easier for businesses to use distributors from the Ontario Food Terminal where they can find producers of every product under one roof. Even though the terminal is 200km away, it is often more cost effective and reliable for businesses to purchase their food there. More research is needed to investigate if a publicly owned, regional food terminal is feasible for London. This process will need to consider the roles that small businesses and local distributors play in the food system as well as large corporations, institutional buyers and farmers – both large and small. Large institutional buys and corporations are needed to ensure there is a steady and reliable demand for food at the terminal. However, the needs of small businesses must also be considered when investigating a food terminal. Small businesses will improve the viability of the food terminal by being able to respond quickly to new opportunities such as a surplus of a particular process. As businesses expand, close, and move we must continually be encouraging the next generation of small local entrepreneurs to grow their businesses.

A regional food terminal potentially could aggregate enough food supply in one place to offer a number of benefits including: (1) the efficiencies of scale to reduce the cost of local food; (2) a

critical mass of producers and purchasers to ensure a reliable market for goods; and (3) by creating these stable markets it will make it easier for local businesses to find local producers and vice versa.

5.3.4 Limitations and Areas of Future Research

As has been outlined above, this research has implications for improving urban planning policy to be more supportive of small businesses. Small businesses in urban areas in Southern Ontario have trouble growing and accessing capital due to an unwillingness of commercial banks to provide financing. Publicly funded development corporations have been used to address this challenge in rural and northern Ontario; however, these organisations currently do not operate in southern Ontario urban areas.

The qualitative analysis of the interviews provided further insights into the foodshed of the OEVFD and supply chains of the small food businesses. The interviews revealed that small business owners struggle to (1) find out about local farmers and producers, (2) arrange for distribution of local food, and (3) afford the premium price at which local food is often sold. Despite these challenges with the local food system, these businesses also face challenges working with conventional food distributors with high minimum order sizes. If some of the informational and logistical barriers to local food are removed, there is a desire among small business owners to source more local food. In addition, as these barriers are reduced and the local food system becomes more efficient, there is the potential to reduce the cost to small businesses while still providing farmers with fair compensation.

The research is limited in that it only focussed on one case study, the Old East Village Food District. Further research will be needed to see if the key characteristics identified in this study are found in other food districts and in other geographical regions. Additionally, future research should investigate if other farmers' markets serve the same role in business incubation and local economic development.

Despite its geographical and temporal limitations, this study makes important contributions to the academic literature on local food systems, and presents several important lessons for municipal policy makers and other decision-makers involved in local economic development.

The farmers' market offers a low risk, affordable place for businesses to access food production space and its integration within the local food district is vital for helping to small food business to grow and promote local economic development. Any provincial and municipal policies aimed at supporting local economic development must help small businesses to access capital and must also attempt to address the logistical challenges which prevent small businesses from sourcing local food.

5.4 Bibliography

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Project Description and Letter of Information

Dear Local Food Providers,

I am working towards my Master's of Arts in Geography at the University of Western Ontario. My research project is aiming to gain a stronger understanding of the local food economy and local food networks. I am interested in learning more about:

- The networks of people, businesses and organisations that your businesses work with and supply;
- The importance that these networks have for your business;
- What business strengths have enabled you to succeed; and
- What opportunities and challenges you foresee in the future.

This research is aimed at identifying the need and priorities for policy change and other projects which can foster local economic development in London and Middlesex County.

Why am I trying to map out food networks?

There is plenty of academic and theoretical talk about alternative food networks, and the local food system. These are seen as potential options for revolutionizing the food industry, and creating resilient and sustainable communities. In order to do this we need to ground the theory in the networks and systems that that actually exists and that businesses work in on a day to day basis.

What do you have to do to be involved?

I would first invite you to participate in an approximately 40-60 minute interview. The interview will help us understand more about your current business and business goals, your business experience working in the local food network. If you are not available to be interviewed we have an approximately 15 minute survey online or in hard copy that you can fill out.

How will this project affect you and your business?

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no risks of participation in this study, nor is there any requirement to participate. All information collected during the study is confidential and no identifiable information will be published.

What if you have questions?

I would be happy to talk more, please contact me below. I look forward to talking with you about your business and the food system!

Regards,

Michael Clark (BA)
Graduate Research Associate
Human Environments Analysis Lab
Western University



Dear Local Food Providers,

We invite you to participate in a new project called “SmartAPPetite”. To foster greater resilience in the local food economy and strengthen growing local food networks, our goal is to connect local consumers with local farmers, food producers and retailers. Through the use of a smartphone application and website, users involved in SmartAPPetite will be able to get healthy eating tips and locate local farms and businesses with an up-to-date interactive electronic app and map.

What is SmartAPPetite?

SmartAPPetite is a smartphone application (app) that delivers messages about local food. The goals of SmartAPPetite are to encourage users of the app to buy healthy, local foods and achieve their personal food-related goals. Throughout the study the app will provide participating users with short ‘tips’ about health benefits of specific foods, healthy recipes using those foods, and timely information about local foods available in season. Participating local farmers, food producers and retailers can also use the app to promote products or advertise product sales.

Who is SmartAPPetite?

The project is a Labour Market Partnership of the London Training Centre, funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. SmartAPPetite is staffed by a team of university and community partners, including research support from Dr. Jason Gilliland and his Human Environments Analysis Laboratory at Western University, Dr. Colleen O’Connor from Brescia University College, and Dr. Sean Doherty from Laurier University. We bring expertise on food systems development, nutrition, app development, and social research.

How will this project affect me and my business?

This project provides free targeted advertising and has the potential to expand your permanent customer base. We do not intend to charge any fees, and are in the process of developing a sustainability plan for the app. We are interested in working with you and finding out how such a technology can help you meet your business goals, grow your customer base and sell more food, but recognize the importance of making this project economically viable as a free marketing tool.

What do I have to do to be involved?

Involvement is easy and can vary depending on your available time. We would first invite you to participate in a 30-60 minute interview with one of our graduate research associates. The interview will help us understand more about your current business and business goals, your experience in the local food system and your use of technology to market and promote your business. If you would like to have your business listed and promoted in the app we also invite you to fill out a short online survey that will help us collect information on your business that we can use to promote your business to customers.

If you have any questions about the project please contact the research team at the phone numbers and emails listed below.

Appendix 2: Business Owner Consent Form

Thank you for your consideration in participating in the ‘SmartAPPetite’ interviews. The interview will help us understand more about your current business and business goals, your experience in the local food system and your use of technology to market and promote your business.

Before continuing, please read the information below.

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no risks of participation in this study, nor is there any requirement to participate. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any particular questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions. All study participants will remain anonymous. All information collected will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this study. The interview will take approximately 30-60 minutes.

Should you agree to participate, any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes, and names will be changed to promote privacy. Completion of the attached consent form indicates your agreement to participate in the study.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the Director of the Office of Research Ethics at The University of Western Ontario at [REDACTED] or e-mail [REDACTED]. Additionally, you may keep the letter of information for your records if desired. You may also make general inquiries about this survey to the researchers by e-mailing [REDACTED]. If you do not wish to participate, or if at any time you wish to withdraw from the study, simply discard the survey and do not return it to. Your results will be destroyed and there will be no repercussions. If you do wish to participate, please read the following consent statement: “I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.”

Participant’s Name: _____ Date: _____

Participant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3: Business Owner Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me a little about the history of your enterprise?
 - a. What does your business do?
 - b. Tell me about why started (joined / took over) your business?
 - c. How has the business changed over the course of its existence?
 - i. What factors led to those changes?
2. Can you give me your business pitch: why should I buy from you?
 - a. What strengths or special qualities does your business have?
 - b. What advantages over other businesses does yours have?
 - c. What disadvantages does your business experience versus your competitors?
 - d. Do you compete with large corporate businesses?
 - e. What advantages and disadvantages do you have when competing against large corporations?
3. Can you tell me a little about your goals and plans for the future of the business?
 - a. What opportunities are there for your business to take advantage of? How will you meet these?
 - b. What challenges do you need to be aware of? How will you meet these?
 - c. What do you see as the most important change needed to strengthen or grow your business?
4. Do you purchase any local food for your business?
 - a. Which products do you purchase locally? how often?
 - b. What are some of the reasons that you decided to source your products locally?
 - c. Do you market your products as using local food?
 - d. How do you get local food get delivered to your business?
 - e. How do you get other food delivered to your business?
 - f. How has your use of local food changed over the lifetime of your business?
 - g. What are the limiting factors that prevent you from sourcing more products locally?
 - h. Are you aware of any food products that you currently source from outside of the region that could be sourced locally?
5. I am going to ask some questions now about other people, business and organisations that you interact with: (*How was this relationship established? How long have you been working with this business? How often do you purchase / sell from / work with them*)
 - a. Recall:
 - i. Where do you buy the food products you need for your business?
 - ii. Do you sell food products to other businesses?
 - iii. Where do you sell your products?
 - iv. When you need business advice who do you turn to?
 - b. Roster:
 - i. I have a list of other food businesses. I am going to read out the name of a business we have not already discussed. Can you tell me:
 - ii. Continue through the list until all have been discussed.
 - c. Final Recall:
 - i. Are there any other food businesses that we have not discussed that you work with?

Appendix 4: Ethics Approval Forms



Research Ethics

Use of Human Participants - Ethics Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jason Gilliland
File Number: 103856
Review Level: Delegated
Protocol Title: Development of a smart phone 'app' to examine the influence of a spatially and temporally targeted intervention on food purchasing, diet, and food literacy.
Department & Institution: Social Science/Geography, Western University
Sponsor:
Ethics Approval Date: February 26, 2014 **Expiry Date:** September 30, 2014

Documents Reviewed & Approved & Documents Received for Information:

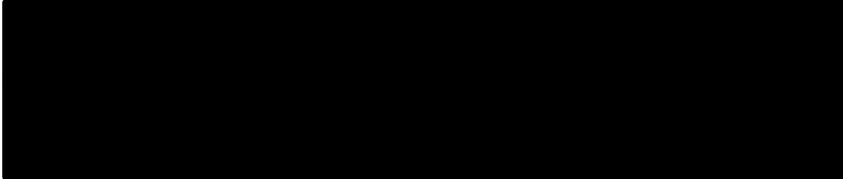
Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	Vendor Short Survey	
Recruitment Items		
Revised Western University Protocol		
Letter of Information & Consent		
Other	Email summary from PI	

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above referenced revision(s) or amendment(s) on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

The Chair of the NMREB is Dr. Riley Hinson. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 0000941.



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Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Amendment Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jason Gilliland
Department & Institution: Social Science/Geography, Western University

NMREB File Number: 103856
Study Title: Development of a smart phone 'app' to examine the influence of a spatially and temporally targeted intervention on food purchasing, diet, and food literacy.

Sponsor:

NMREB Revision Approval Date: November 10, 2014
NMREB Expiry Date: May 31, 2020

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Revised Study End Date	The study end date has been revised to May 31, 2020. The study approval has been granted from September 30, 2014 to May 31, 2020.	
Instruments		
Instruments		
Instruments		

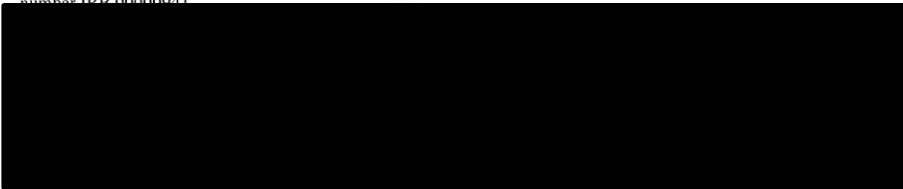
The Western University Non-Medical Science Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the amendment to the above named study, as of the NMREB Amendment Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941



This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.



Curriculum Vitae

Name: Michael Andrew Robinson Clark

Post-secondary Education and Degrees: The University of Western Ontario
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Honours Specialization in Urban Development
2007-2011 B.A.

The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
2013-2016 M.A.

Honours and Awards: Dean's Honour List
Faculty of Social Science
2007-2011

Millennium Scholarship
Post Secondary Excellence Award Recipient
2009

The Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS
Urban Development Award
2011

UWO Gold Medal for BA Honours in Urban Development
2011

Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)
Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship
Master's Degree
2013-2014

Province of Ontario Graduate Scholarship
2014-2015

Related Work Experience Senior Researcher and Program Administrator
Old East Village Business Improvement Area
2011-2016

Research Associate
Human Environments Analysis Laboratory

The University of Western Ontario
2013-2016

Teaching Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2013-2015

Publications:

- Clark, MAR & Gilliland, JA (forthcoming) Mapping and Analyzing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada. 2015 Association of European Schools of Planning's Sustainable Food Planning Conference – Proceedings. Torino, Italy.
- Gilliland, JA, Doherty, S, O'Connor, C, Corke, D, Milczarek, M, Sadler, RC, Clark, A, McGregor, M, Clark, MAR (2015) The SmartAPPetite Project: Network and Technology Development for the Local Food Economy in Southwestern Ontario. London, ON
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Presentations:

- Clark, MAR & Gilliland JA. (2015, October 9) "Mapping and Analyzing the Networks and Supply Chains Feeding a Food District in London, Canada". Torino, Italy. The Association of European Schools of Planning's Sustainable Food Planning Conference.
- Clark, MAR, & Gilliland, JA, (2015, April 24) "Investigating the Role of Local Food Networks in Fostering Small Business Growth in London, ON". Chicago, IL. Assoc. of American Geographers Annual Meeting
- Clark, MAR, & Gilliland, JA, (2013, June 17). "Community Revitalization: A Case Study of London's Old East Village" [Public Lecture]. 2013 Learning Symposium - Session 1.3 Good Spaces: Using Good Design Principles to Create Safe and Supportive Places for At Risk Communities. Ottawa, Canada: Ontario Municipal Social Services Association.
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