

Piedmont Local Food Community Visioning Process

Summary Report

HunterKemper Consulting

May 2010

Introduction

This report provides a summary of our work together to support a community visioning process for local food in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina. The visioning process was led by Noah Ranells, Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator for the Orange County Economic Development & Cooperative Extension, with support from Charlie Jackson and Allison Perrett of the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project.

The goals were to:

- Conduct a process that is both collaborative and participatory and that engages partners in a steering committee role, encourages broad community input through an electronic survey, and develops regional priorities based upon survey input and a 3-hour Community Stakeholder Forum to include approximately 25 to 30 people.
- Identify a priority project to be funded by the Strong Roots Project grant and to be implemented in the 12 months following the conclusion of the community visioning process in May 2010.
- Identify other priorities for local food initiatives in the coming months and years as determined through the community visioning process.

This report includes a summary of:

- Leadership;
- Outcomes and Information Gathered;
- Piedmont Local Food Community Visioning Forum; and
- Activity and Timing.

Appendices include:

Appendix A: Electronic Survey Summary;

Appendix B: Community Visioning Forum Participant List; and

Appendix C: Community Visioning Forum Working Group Notes.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this community visioning process as you work to increase access to and availability of local food, and to preserve agricultural heritage and family farms.

Summary Report for Piedmont Region Local Food Community Visioning Process

Leadership			
Steering Committee Members	Roles	Steering Committee meeting Schedule in addition to Community Stakeholder Forum	Community Stakeholder Forum
Alice Ammerman, UNC HPDP Gerry Cohn, Consultant Nancy Creamer, NCSU CEFS Robin Crowder, UNC HPDP Molly DeMarco, UNC HPDP Mary DeMare, Chatham Marketplace Barry Jacobs, Orange County Commissioner Cathy Jones, Farmer Sandi Kronick, Eastern Carolina Organics Rudi Collerado-Mansfield, UNC-Anthropology Bernadette Pelissier, Orange County Commissioner Noah Ranells, Orange County Economic Dev. Debbie Roos, Chatham CES Jonathan Romm, Company Shoppes Kathryn Spann, Farmer Joe Schroeder, RAFI Field Coordinator Aaron Vendemark, Panciuto	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and finalize documents such as the constituent survey, Plan of Work, and agenda for the Community Stakeholder Forum. 2. Participate in planning teleconferences. 3. Reach out to and encourage colleagues in your network to complete the constituent survey; suggest persons to participate in the Community Stakeholder Forum. 4. Work with the consultant to ensure that the process is on track in terms of outcomes and timing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-hour teleconference 2/17. Review Plan of Work for the process; constituent survey and survey distribution plan; possible dates and participants for Community Stakeholder Forum. • Via email, finalize Constituent Survey. • 1-hour teleconference 3/2 to review steering committee survey feedback and discuss Forum date, time, location and participants. • 1-hour teleconference 3/16. Review constituent feedback; review agenda and finalize relevant details for Community Stakeholder Forum. • 1-hour teleconference 4/26 to review content from Forum, debrief Forum meeting, and provide feedback on the community visioning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-hour session March 22.

Outcomes and Information

Outcomes

- Conducted a process that was both collaborative and participatory and that engaged partners in a steering committee role, encouraged broad community input through an electronic survey that was completed by 961, and developed regional priorities based upon survey input and a 3-hour Community Stakeholder Forum that had 35 participants.
- Identified a priority project to be funded by the Strong Roots Project grant and to be implemented in the 12 months following the conclusion of the community visioning process in May 2010.
- Identified other priorities for local food initiatives in the coming months and years as determined through the community visioning process.

Information gathered via electronic survey*

**A Summary of survey data has been provided as an Appendix to this report.*

Responses:

Date of Survey: February 25 – March 10, 2010

	Emailed Surveys*	Steering Committee	Website	Total
# of Surveys Completed	59	10	892	961
# of Surveys Successfully Distributed	216	16	N/A	N/A
Response Rate	27%	62.5%	N/A	N/A

**Individuals receiving the emailed survey may have used the internet link, so response rate was likely higher.*

Distribution:

- Farmer incubator groups, small farmer networks, regional slow food orgs, local foods action plan listserv, sustainability listserves, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association listserv, voluntary agriculture district boards, NC agritourism networking association, county-based farm listserves, school and nutritionist network
- Survey was posted on the Home Page at www.orangecountyfarms.org and the initial email invitation included the link so that people could forward the email and others could access the survey on the web

Content:

- Connection to local food system issues
- Participation in local food system issues
- Views about possible initiatives and related priorities
- Defining local and regional as it relates to local food system work

Piedmont Local Food Community Visioning Forum

Format

**A 'Summary of All Working Group Notes' has been provided as an Appendix to this report.*

The agenda was developed based upon data from constituent surveys and was refined by the steering committee. Approximately half of the meeting time was spent in working groups and the other half was spent having the groups report the content of their conversations; reports were followed by questions and discussion among members of the entire group.

Topic areas:

1. Grocer/retailer
2. Restaurants
3. Institutions
4. Distribution and processing
5. Direct markets

Related to each topic area and with/in the Piedmont region, small groups discussed the following questions:

- What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?
- How would local food be verified and identified?
- What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?
- Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?
- What are some of the challenges in this area?
- What resources are needed?

Participants

**A 'Participant List' has been provided as an Appendix to this report.*

The three-hour session was held at Orange County West Campus Office Building in Hillsborough, NC on March 22 from 5:30 – 8: 30 pm. An invitation list of approximately 80 people was developed with input from the steering committee. Email invitations followed in some cases by phone calls resulted in 35 individuals participating in the Forum.

Prospective participants were sought from the following groups:

- Farmers (at least one of each: meat/cheese, produce, conventional, organic/alternative)
- NGO (with at least one from food access)
- Buyers (wholesaler, grocer, restaurant, institutional)
- Government (economic development, tourism, extension, college/university)
- Consumers (possibly include a teacher, some ethnic diversity, youth)

Activity and Timing					
	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May
1. Steering Committee members invited		Wk. of 2/1-5			
2. Steering Committee teleconference to ratify: Plan of Work for the process including outcomes, role of leadership, information to be gathered, activity and timeline; draft survey; distribution plan		Conducted 2/17			
3. Constituent Survey drafted and distributed	Initial draft 1/26	Distributed 2/25 and closed 3/10			
4. Steering Committee teleconference to review steering committee survey responses and to approve date, time, site and participant list for Community Stakeholder Forum			Conducted 3/2		
5. Analysis of Constituent data completed			Report to committee by 3/12		
6. All Forum participants invited; some may be invited earlier if Steering Committee agrees as to ensure more lead time for participation			Wk. of 3/8 to 12 15 steering committee participants;		
7. Steering Committee teleconference to review constituent feedback; draft agenda for Community Stakeholder Forum; finalize participant invitees			Conducted 3/16		
8. Community Stakeholder Forum			Conducted 3/22		
9. Forum Notes provided to Steering Committee			By March 31		
10. Steering Committee teleconference to discuss Community Forum; provide feedback on Community Visioning process				April 26	
11. Final Report provided to Noah Ranells					By May 15

Appendix A

Electronic Survey Summary

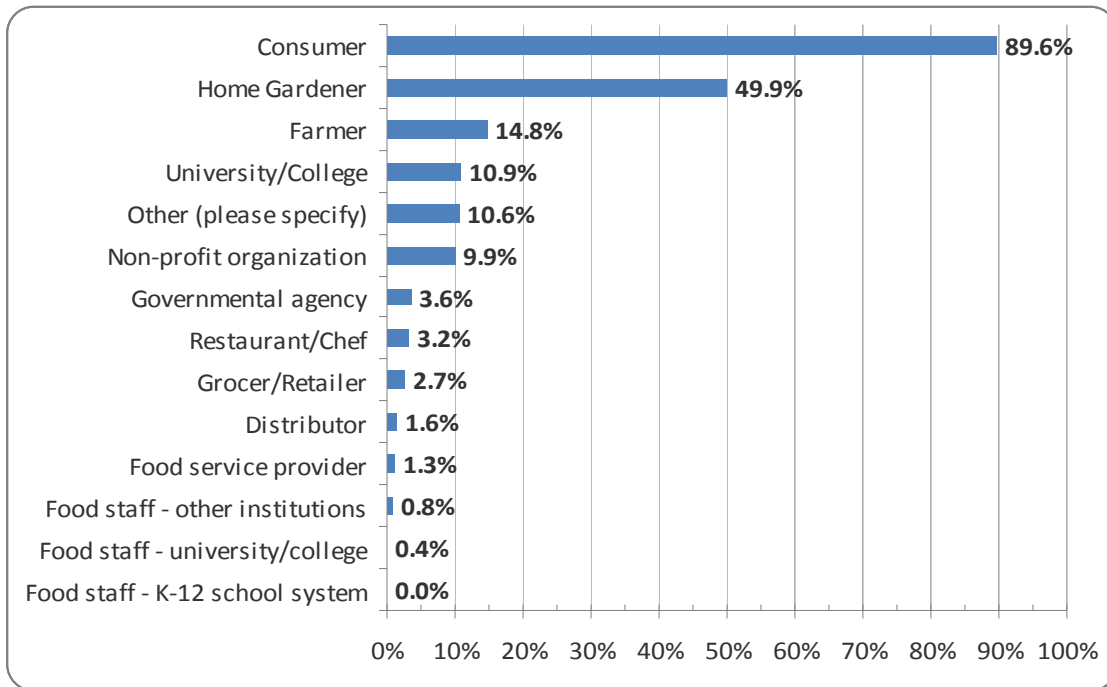
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Response Rate:

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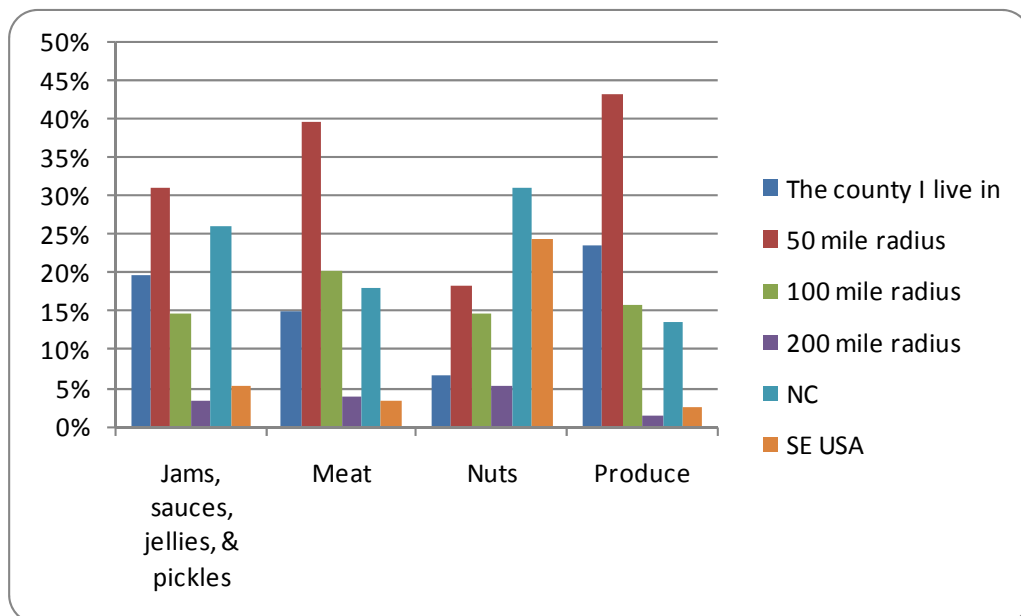
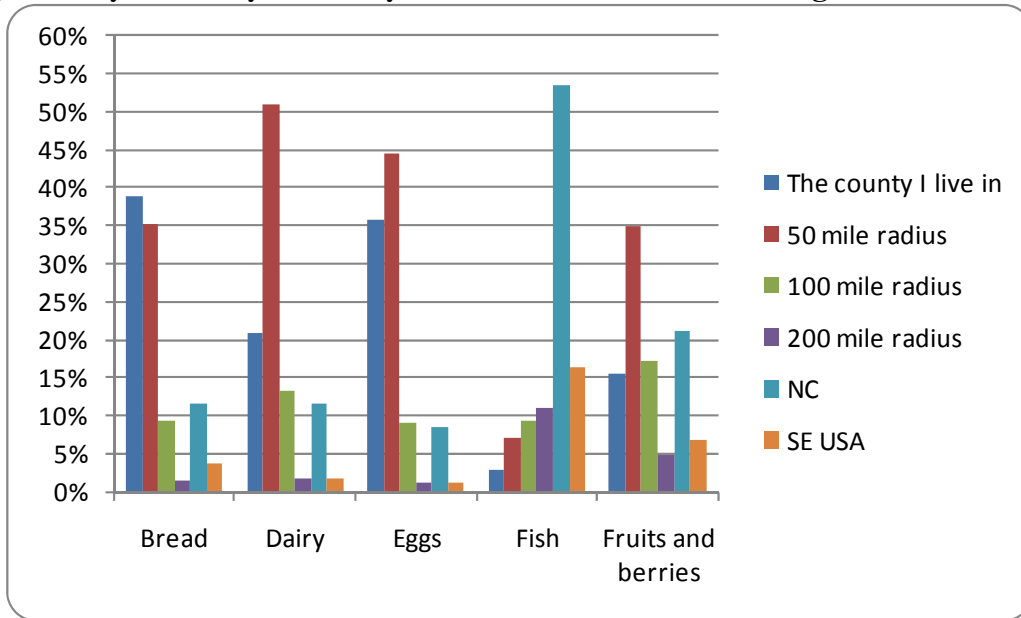
1. What is your connection to local food system issues? Please check all that apply.



Among the approximately 100 respondents who indicated ‘Other’ in terms of their connection to local, the following primary categories surfaced based upon responses.

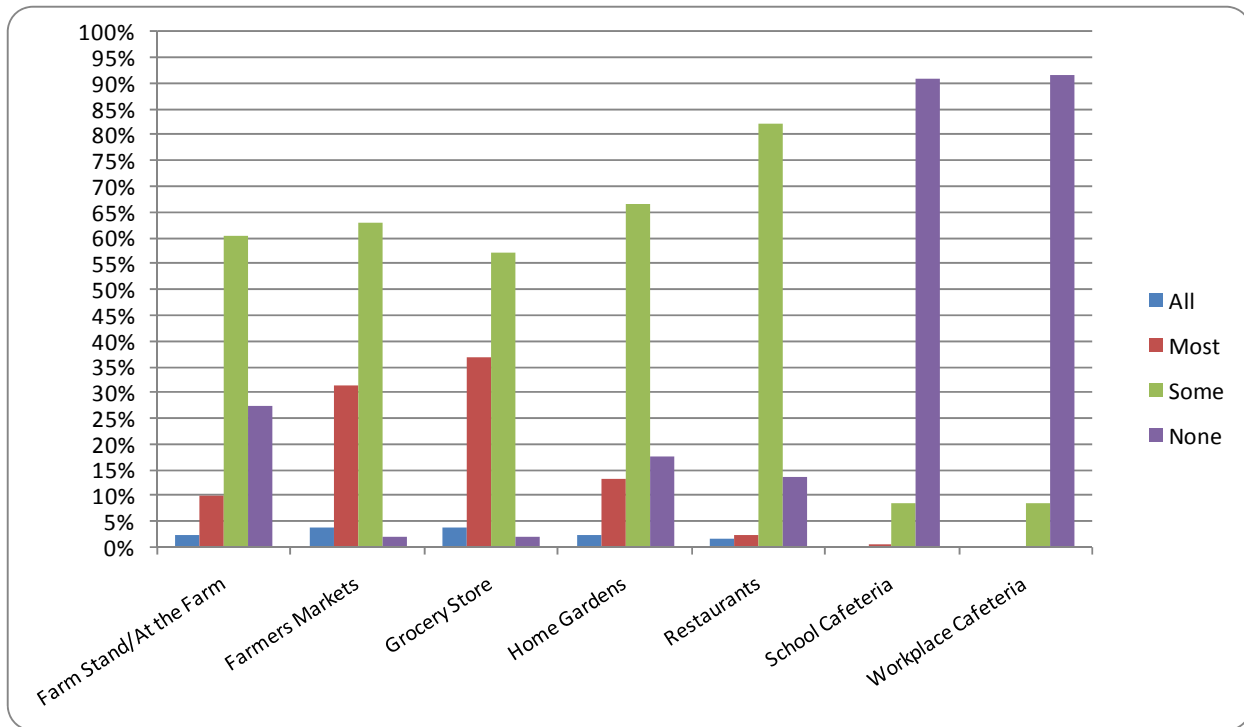
- Farmers markets;
- activist/community benefit org;
- food journalist/writer;
- educator/nutritionist/researcher;
- food business/consultant; and
- community garden/farmer/future farmer

2. For you and your family, how do you define local for the following foods?



Responses indicated that people try to buy produce locally and that for many they consider local to be within their county and generally within a 50 miles radius. For items that are less readily available within that radius (an example given was fish and defining local as NC/SC) respondents indicated a conscious effort to buy products that are as 'local' as possible versus similar choices that come from farther away.

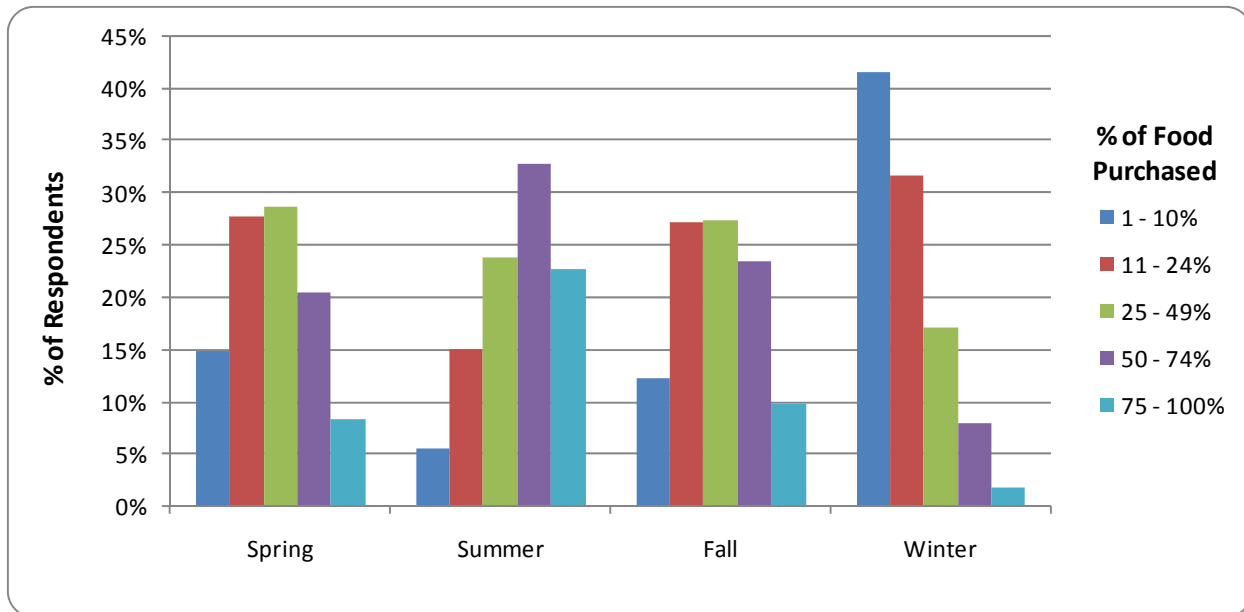
3. Where do you obtain your local food products?



Among the approximately 125 comments from respondents indicating ‘Other’ in terms of where they obtain local food products, the following primary categories surfaced based upon responses.

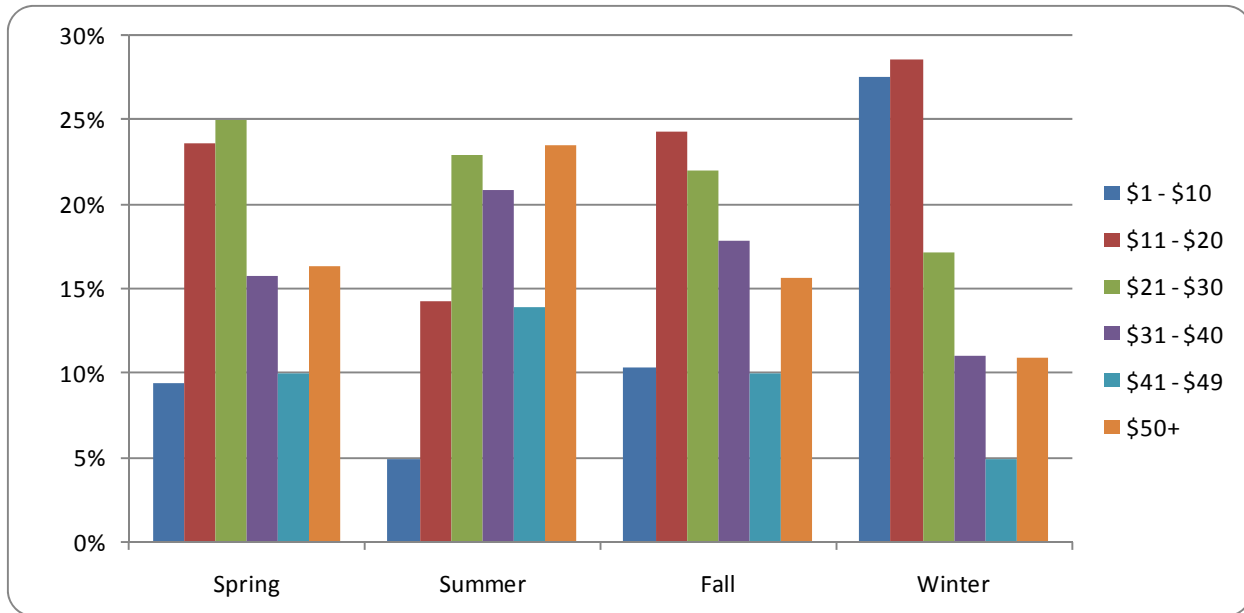
- CSAs – at least 50 responses
- Food co-op – at least 30 responses
- Personal garden/community garden/direct from the farm – approximately 20 responses
- Local retail outlets – approximately a dozen responses

4. If you purchase local food, approximately what percent of your food comes from locally grown, raised, or produced foods?



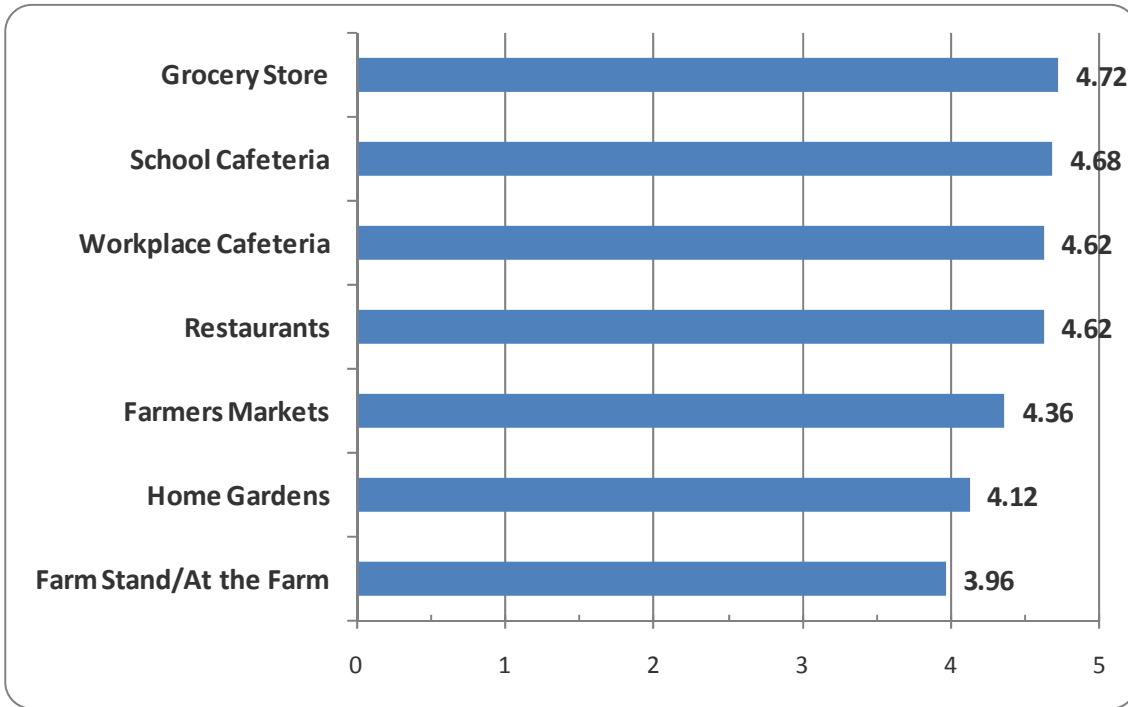
Of the approximately 115 comments, responses indicated that they buy local but are limited by limited availability where they live generally, or by limited seasonal availability. Comments reflected a general desire to have greater year-round availability of local food. A number of comments were from farmers who raise or produce much of the local food they consume. Some folks indicated that they simply don't know what percentage of local food they consume and many times are not clear about what is local for many products. Limited time and transportation to get to markets for locally grown items were listed by a number of people as barriers. Dairy, meat and eggs were listed by several respondents as the local items they purchase year-round. The question of locally grown versus organic was raised in response to this question with some respondents indicating that their first preference is locally grown organic food but that they will purchase organic from elsewhere before purchasing non-organic local products.

5. If you purchase local food, approximately how much per week do you spend on local food?



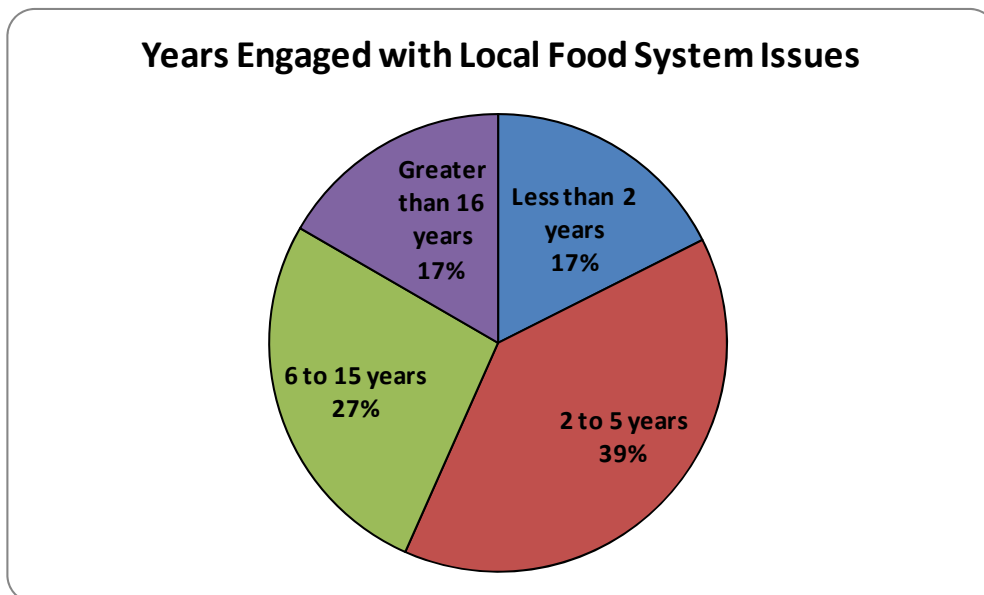
Of the approximately 90 comments, responses indicated that many do not know the weekly amount they spend on local food and that it is greater when seasonal availability is high. Some people indicated that they preserve seasonal foods for use throughout the winter. A number of people indicated that it was difficult to answer given that they produce quite a lot of food themselves and from their own gardens.

6. Please rate the following venues based on how much you would like to see greater availability of local food.

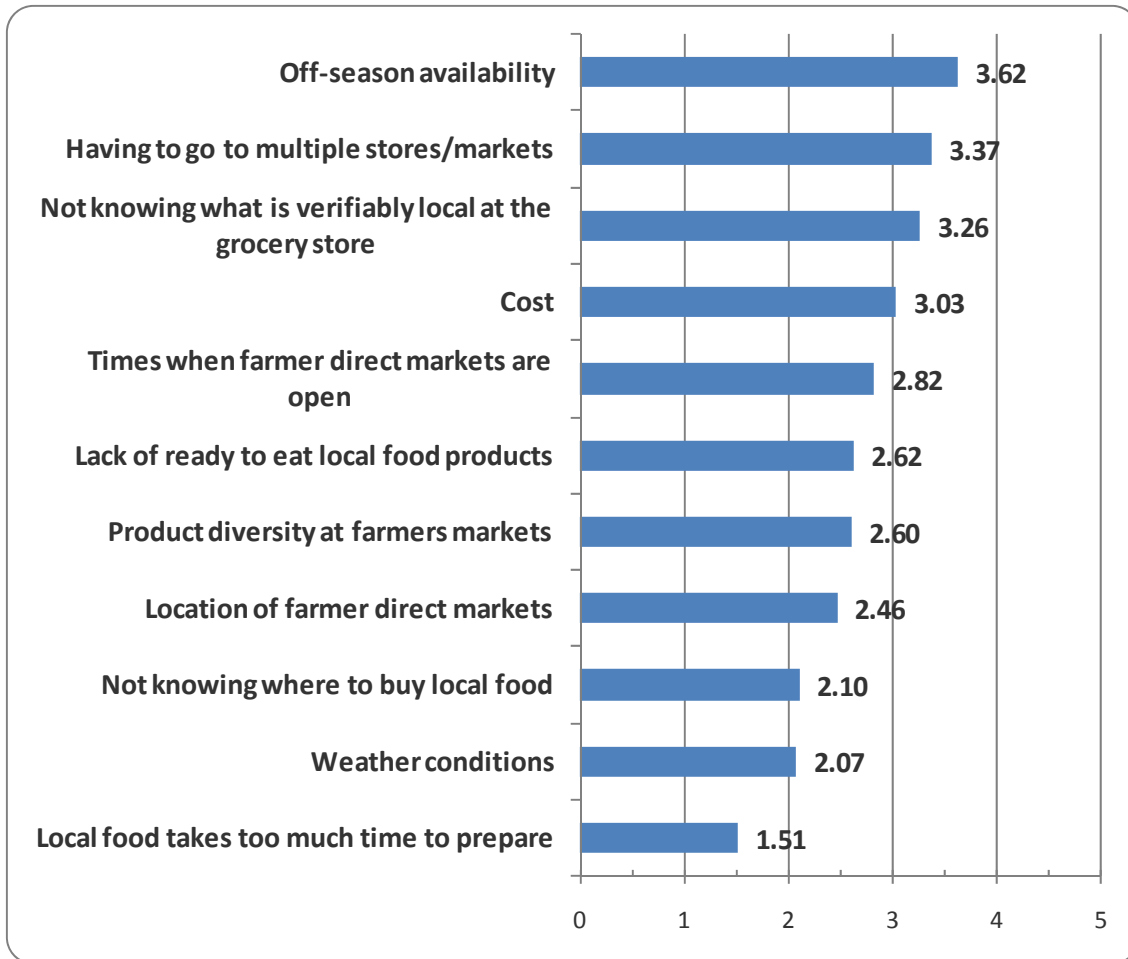


Of the approximately 75 comments, many indicated being confused by the question. Many responses indicated satisfaction with current availability through farmers markets and indicated a desire to have more local food available in 1) grocery stores and 2) school cafeterias as the most often stated priorities followed by restaurants. Respondents indicated a desire to have more co-ops and local stores carrying locally grown products.

7. How long have you been engaged with local food system issues?

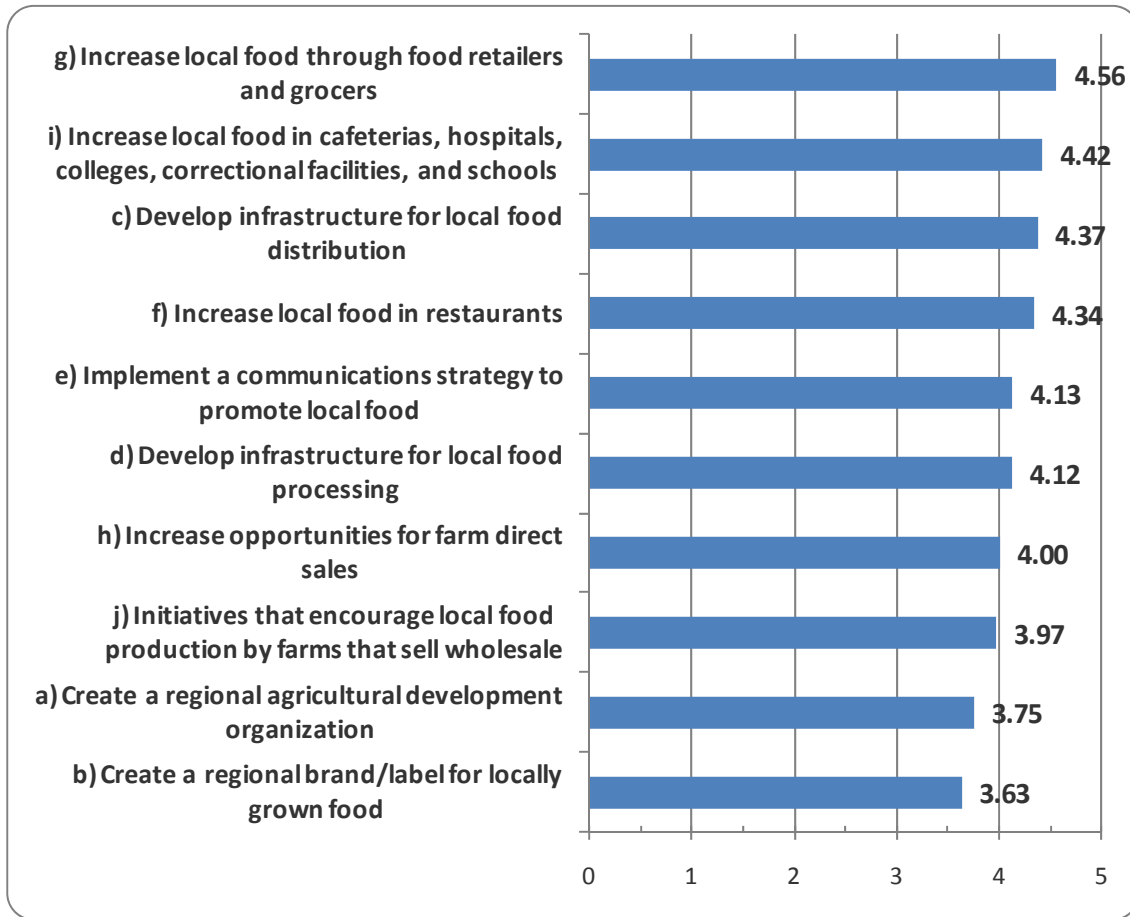


8. Please rate the extent to which the following options are obstacles to you purchasing locally grown, raised, or produced foods.



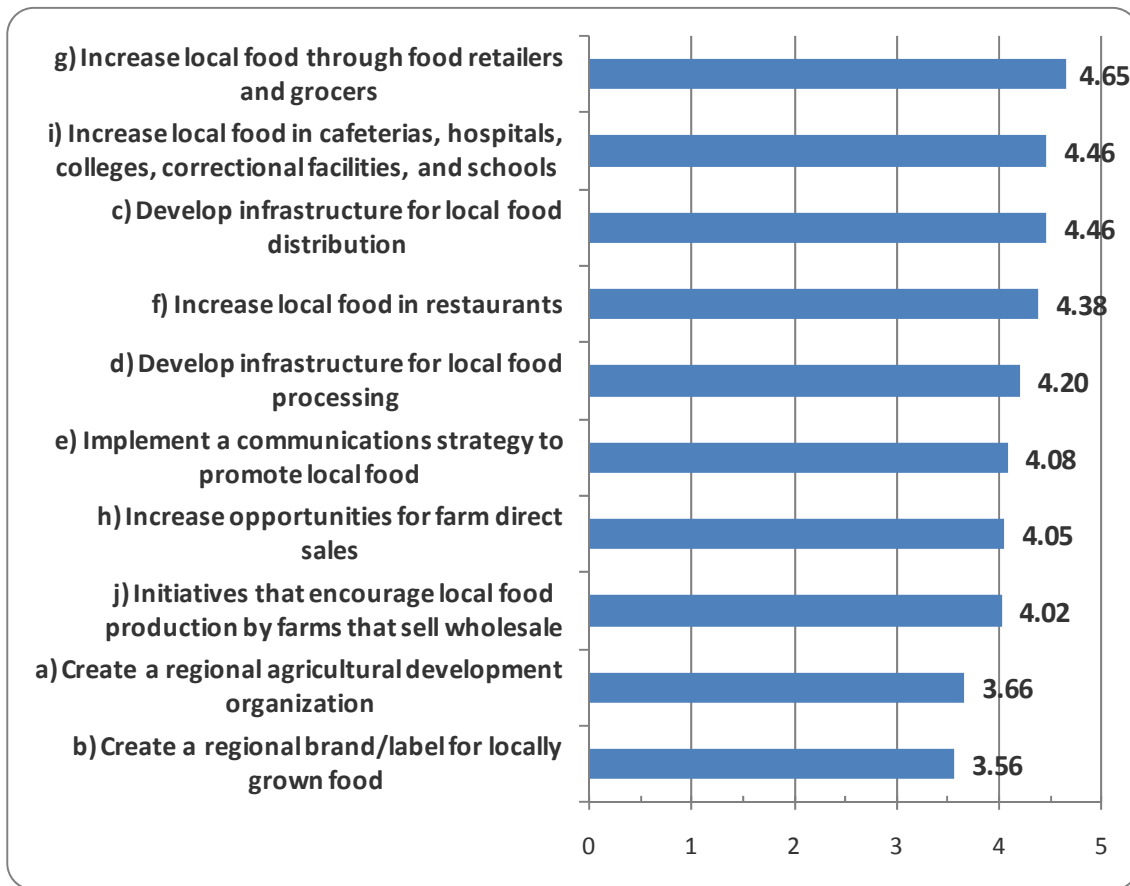
Of the approximately 75 comments, obstacles cited included the lack of local organic products; the convenience of timing or locale of farmers markets; lack of seasonal availability; lack of availability in local grocery stores; and lack of verifiable local products.

9. Please rate the impact of the following options on the economic viability of farming in the Piedmont Region.



Of the approximately 130 comments, people cited the importance of increasing the percentage of locally grown food that is organic; of improving branding, communications and marketing of locally grown food as well as publicizing sales outlet locations and times; of removing barriers for processing and distribution, especially for farmers who cited being turned away from potential markets as a concern; and of increasing demand and the number of markets for smaller growers.

10. Please rate the impact of the following efforts on increasing availability and access to local food in the Piedmont Region.



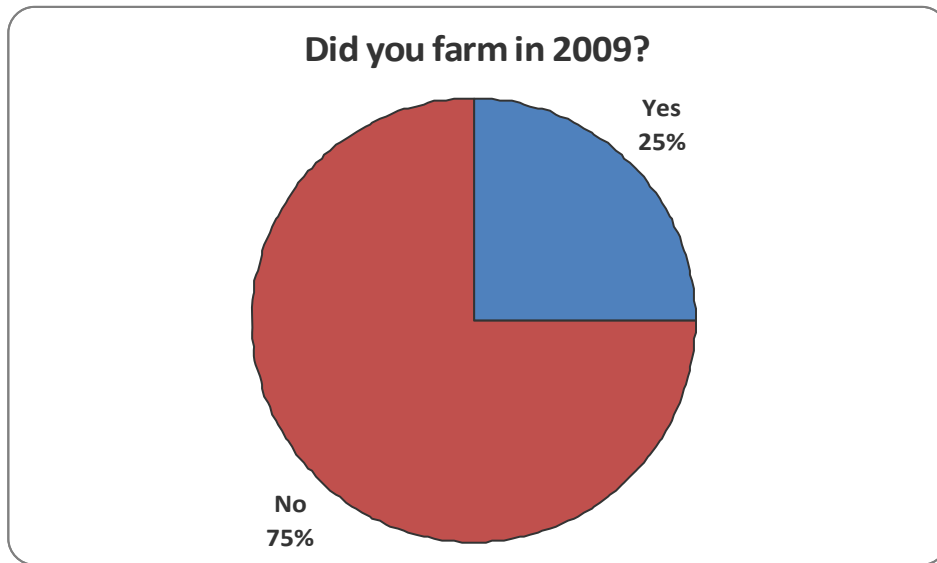
Of the approximately 70 comments, increasing affordability was commonly cited as being connected to increasing availability. Supporting smaller farmers; having more government and institutional involvement; increasing demand; and educating consumers were cited in comments as ways to increase availability.

11. What metropolitan areas, counties or geographic regions do you think should be included in a coordinated effort around local food and farms?

Of the approximately 700 responses, following is a general breakdown of responses:

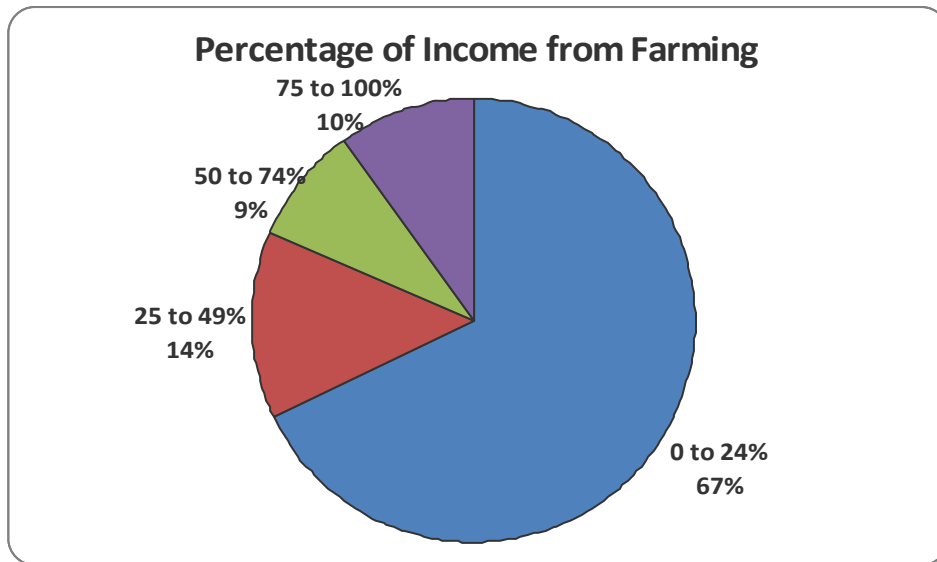
- 200 Piedmont Triad/Triangle
- 100 Orange/Durham/Wake or Orange/Durham/Chatham/Alamance or Wake/Orange/Durham/Chatham
- 20 Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill
- 20 Charlotte and environs
- 16 Greensboro/Winston/Guilford areas
- 15 Chapel Hill/Carrboro or Chapel Hill/RDU
- 15 Western NC counties/region
- 10 RTP
- 10 Winston
- approximately 50 said they didn't know

12. Did you farm in 2009?

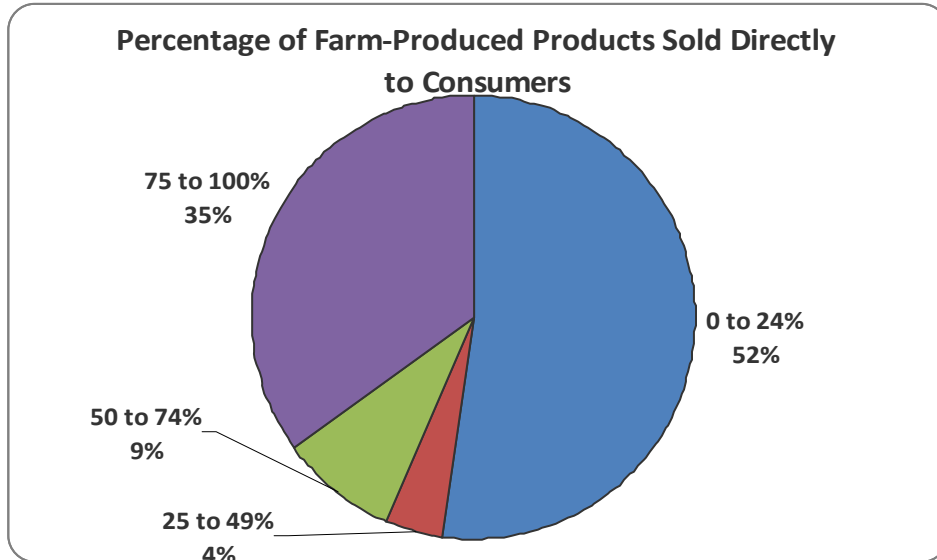


The following questions were only asked of those who indicated that they did farm in 2009 (209 respondents).

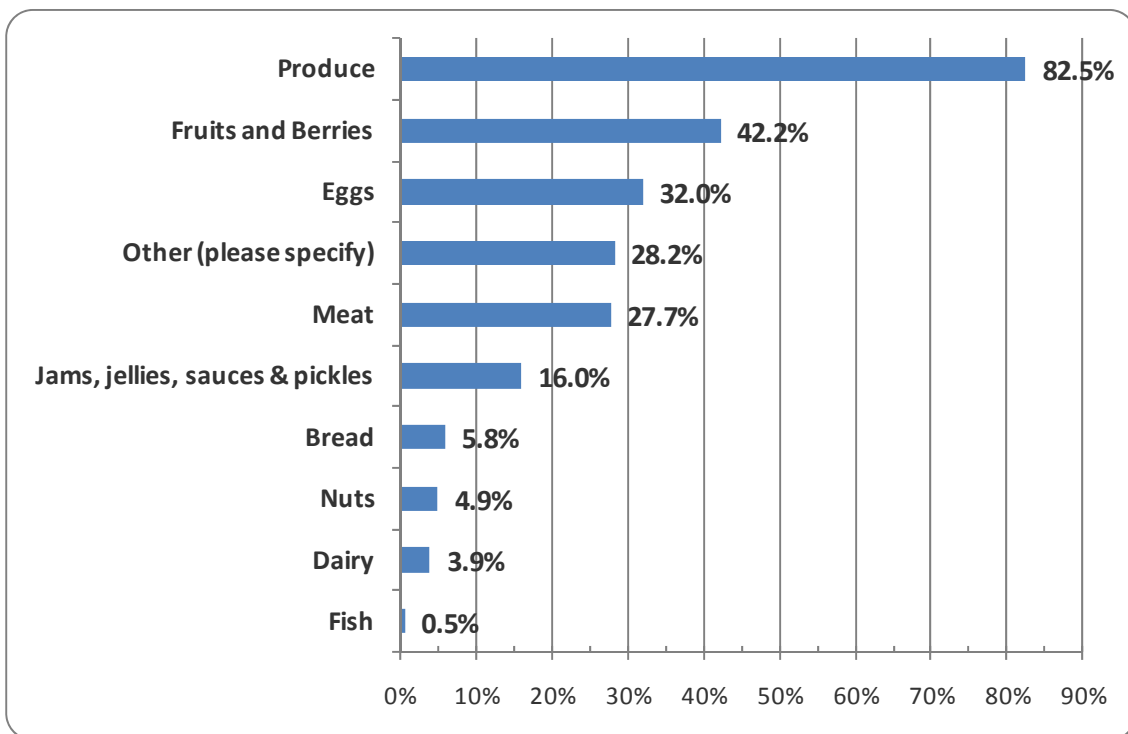
13. What percentage of your income is from farming? (Results will be reported in aggregate, not individually.)



14. What percentage of your farm-produced products do you sell directly to consumers?



15. What product(s) do you produce on your farm? Select all that apply.



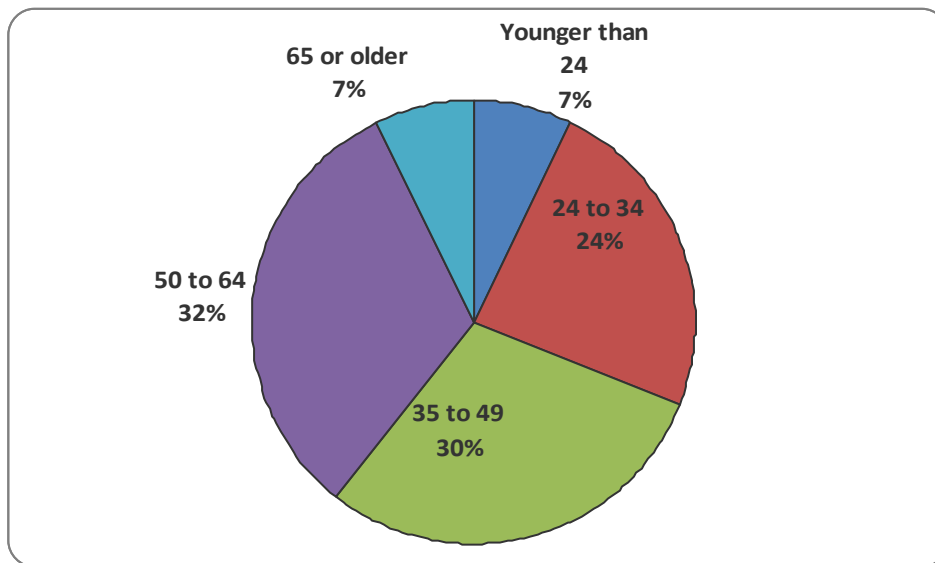
The following questions were asked of all respondents.

16. Which organizations working on food and farm issues do you rely on most for information?

Among the approximately 850 responses, the following list includes those organizations that were listed more than 5 times and it indicates the approximate number of times an organization was listed.

Organization / Venue	top info source for # of respondents
Cooperative Extension (NCSU / NCATSU)	109
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association	71
Slow Food	56
Farmers Markets	54
Center for Environmental Farming Systems	27
Fair, Local, Organic (UNC)	25
Weaver Street Market	18
NC Dept of Ag & Cons Services	15
Local Harvest	9
ATTRA	6
Community Supported Agriculture	5
RAFI	5

17. What is your age?



18. Please provide the following information. In what county do you live?

County *	% respondents
Orange	25
Wake	18
Durham	15
Chatham	14
Guilford	9
Forsyth	5

** Counties less than 5% of all respondents not noted*

19. Do you have any other suggestions or comments related to developing local food initiatives across the Piedmont Region?

Access

Consumer access	<p>More farm stands</p> <p>Increase availability of local products</p> <p>Increase availability, decrease prices</p> <p>we have local pita, but need local donuts and bagels; kosher meat; milk home delivery</p> <p>Biggest issues are cost and access</p> <p>ONE website to provide farm information in NC</p> <p>Get more local food into grocery stores;</p> <p>Make options for local food more available</p> <p>Regional map with locations where you can buy local food; like the map for the Piedmont farm tour</p> <p>Up to date inclusive website listing all opportunities to buy local produce</p> <p>Workplace CSAs</p> <p>More fresh produce in places other than grocery stores, like pharmacies and local shopping centers</p> <p>Make local food more accessible in local grocery stores</p> <p>Need a source for local restaurant owners to facilitate local foods in restaurants; a website / commercial CSA</p> <p>More availability and diversity of local produce in winter</p> <p>Food banks</p> <p>Also direct food initiatives to food deserts of NC where food security is the greatest threat</p> <p>The more local food is available, the more I will buy it</p> <p>Local is not convenient; Will buy NC Agriculture when I see sign at my local grocery store</p>
Consumer low income	<p>SNAP at farmers markets</p> <p>Increase local, sustainable, & organic food to low-income families through community gardens</p> <p>More obtainable local foods for persons in lower socioeconomic conditions</p> <p>Include low income consumers</p> <p>serve people of all incomes</p> <p>gleaning</p>
Consumer variety	<p>More local aquaculture</p> <p>More sugar free products</p>
Consumer/ farmer access	<p>Increase local butchering</p> <p>Website for food purchasing for pickup within 10 miles</p> <p>Needs to be accessible to all</p> <p>Include second tier counties</p> <p>Focus more efforts in southern Chatham, Moore, & Lee Counties</p>
Farmer access	<p>Include farm wineries</p> <p>A food bank that takes extra produce at wholesale</p>
Financing	<p>small sustainable / organic farm cooperative to leverage farm inputs</p> <p>Target development assistance for greatest impact in rural small towns</p>

Food processors	Include traditional foods and food producers
Infrastructure	More local food systems in rural areas
Preservation	group investing in farmland need farm preservation support in each county
Preservation/ young farmer	Preserve farmland and provide access to young farmers Help farmers stay on farms and get younger people on the farm land, equipment and tools for younger farmers expand young farmer programs
Variety	Include wild NC caught fish and local aquaculture need more variety of produce at better prices; Local quality is better Not enough organic preserves higher quantity and variety of produce in Charlotte area

Agronomic

Agronomic education	Permaculture concepts for backyard food production Meet quality and grade criteria Emphasis on urban farming and permaculture Farmer to farmer workshops
Agronomic general	Develop onion production and increase availability seasonal farming Local seed networks Local seed banks more support for fruit production
Agronomic infrastructure	Get infrastructure, communication, & distribution in place; branding less important Intensive water reuse practices
Agronomic variety	More Heirloom seeds more fruit farms increase organic farming

Community gardening

General	Home garden vegetable swap meet Home gardening share programs More community gardens and school gardens Community gardens Sustainable community gardens community gardens Urban community gardening Community gardens more community gardening
Government	Work with city and county government to increase home gardening

Distribution

Farmer identification	Efficient distribution with producer identity preserved
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more processing and distribution build local foods infrastructure Increase distribution infrastructure Get infrastructure, communication, & distribution in place; branding less important

Education

Agronomic education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of consumer education in Wake County, especially for home gardens. More info on growing vegetables; Mailer that lists locally grown products
College / University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable ag program at Surry Comm College Expand research at CCCC and NCSU
Communication	Engage and organize consumers
Community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education on where food comes from through fun family event with food demonstrations County based local food festival each year Teach people how to use local ag products; Cooking classes, demos, farm tours, etc. Free consumer cooking classes Local food festivals Cooking classes Educational programs for kids / schools and adults; day on a farm Will Allen style presentations Summer Camps on-farm events that bring consumers to the farm with farm meals Celebration type events to celebrate LOCAL; tasting the difference and where cost is not prohibitive more events to highlight local food, market tastings, talks with school students
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> why local is important Relate to nutrition and health Education on local food Educate consumer about the health of locally grown food Educating public is key to their involvement publicize benefits of local food educational and marketing groups Add hospitals and retirement facilities to institution list Educate the masses to increase demand for local food
Government	Educate state and local government on value of locally-grown food
Media	Involve newspapers in local food initiatives
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve schools and inner city communities Get kitchens back in schools and train staff to prepare fresh local food Elementary school gardens;

Use schools to teach kids how to grow, buy, cook, and eat fresh food.
 Schools are number one
 Develop educational presentations to present in schools
 After school programs
 Funded (not volunteer) programs to improve food education & nutrition at schools
 Farm to school program

Farmers Markets

Farmers market access	Better farmers market locations and times Farmers market location and times are too limited I do not go to farmers markets : time and I don't know where they are
Farmers mkt financing	Grants / loans to farmers markets Farmers markets for orange, wake, chatham
Farmers market operations	Farmers markets have an attitude of protectionism Farmers markets that allow others to sell farm products Expand facilities at Piedmont Triad Market. Abolish sale of products from outside US at farmers markets Give artisan producers and backyard mini-farmers a chance to participate & sell product at farmers markets Volunteers to help staff farmers market farmers More farmers market days and locations
Farmers market support	Focus on supporting farms and markets More city and county support for local farmers markets More county-sponsored events at farmers markets
Farmers market variety	little cafes associated with farmers markets would be nice Bigger farmers markets with more variety Get farmers markets to allow farmers selling neighbor farm products

General

Big picture	Difficult to get farmers to think about big picture, policy issues that affect ability to make a living. Need better way to connect farmers, chefs, co-ops, entrepreneurs, and activists to envision and work together on economic success for all stakeholders in region Traditional agriculture needs to be supported because it maintains the huge base of open agricultural land important to our future; also keeps farm supply dealers in business
Communication	Emphasize food security Improve communication among chefs, farmers, grocers, activists etc; need action / statement as relates to farming in urban and rural setting more communication among farmers local food initiatives should not attack conventional practices Conduct this survey at local markets that also sell imported food (eg bananas) Strengthen cooperation of existing organizations
Community	Connect with Economic Development community (Rural Center) Connect with community and youth

General	Research successful efforts across the country and adapt methods to NC
Infrastructure	Crisis plan for food distribution
Strategy	integrated local food strategy
Support	Find professional with natural foods experience and ties to farming

Government

Big picture	its time for Cooperative Extension to extend itself and become more creative
community gardens	Work with city and county government to increase home gardening
Farmer access	NC State government institutions should serve local food
Farmers market support	get counties to provide prime locations for farmers markets and promote them
Financing	more sustainable ag agents
Infrastructure	Concerned that existing agriculture culture in my area is not really doing much to provide local food in quantity
Preservation	View current county ag preservation plans Commit resources and implement farm preservation plans in communities
Support	Get local food initiatives approved by county commissioners State funded support / co-op for animal processing for small farmers More to make the state and local government more 'friendly' towards 1 to 5 acre farms (taxes / income)

Health

Big picture	Include public health
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Marketing

Agronomic education	Information campaign to have farmers visit a grocery store on the same day of the month to showcase local produce and provide samples; Talk about nutritional value and how to prepare Occasional festivals to bring people together around local food
Agronomic infrastructure	More CSAs
Communication	facilitate improved retailer / producer interactions Statewide campaign that emphasizes buying local; Don't think Got to be NC conveys importance Use social media local label for farm products branding / labeling strategy educational and marketing groups brand local
Consumer access	Incorporate local food into grocery chains local food into chain groceries and restaurants more local food into grocery stores and be sure they are labeled improve product labeling in grocery stores

Farmers market access	Farmer marketing alliances, including restaurant delivery Meet with Whole Foods store to sell local produce in parking lot Carrboro / Chapel Hill could support a local food business open 7 days and year round
Farmers market operations	Give artisan producers and backyard mini-farmers a chance to participate & sell product at farmers markets
Support	food broker / jobber

Policy / Law

Big picture	Examine claims made by producers
Farmers market operations	Give artisan producers and backyard mini-farmers a chance to participate & sell product at farmers markets
Financing	Reduce the cost of meat processing Financial incentives for local goods, perhaps reduced sales tax on 100% grown, manufactured, and sold products.
Policy/law	keep out regulation meant for big ag Change laws related to sale of game (deer) reexamine acreage limits for farmland tax benefits
Preservation	Not much on farmland preservation in this survey More Farmland preservation programs
Preservation/ young farmer	Farmland aces and preservation for current and prospective farmers Help farmers stay on farms and get younger people on the farm
Support	support new sustainable and small farms as well as traditional row crop and beef cattle farmers

Processing

Farmer access	Storage, value-added, animal processing and access to large institutions need most support more processing and distribution Value added facility in triad; processing plants Value added / prepared local food Certified kitchen
Infrastructure	build local foods infrastructure community based systems for production, storage, & distribution

Retail

Communication	recognizable and universal branding and identification of local food products at major grocery chains Legal requirement for large grocery chains to post their definition of local in miles
Financing	Make it competitively priced; Fruit has to cost \$1 or less per pound
Infrastructure	Series of small stores that carry ONLY locally produced veggies, meats, dairy, and other products with information on the producers

Appendix B

Community Visioning Forum Participant List

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Appendix C

Community Visioning Working Groups Notes from Forum on March 22, 2010

Topic Area and Group Participants		
<p>Topic Area: Grocery / Retail – Group #1</p> <p>Working Group participants: Roland McReynolds, Jonathan Romm, Jennifer Curtis, Roland Walters, Kathryn Spann, Elizabeth Newman, Mary DeMare</p>		
Questions	Summary of Notes	Key Take Aways
1. What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?	<p>No one shops in the middle of the store, diversity of venues, no TV dinners, community grocery stores which are accessible for producers.</p> <p>All levels of income have access to local food</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need both new retail (community & locally owned) and put local products into existing retail
2. How would local food be verified and identified?	<p>levels of LOCAL Verification (ie - organic) where and when are ingredients grown?</p> <p>can we work verification into existing agencies? Ie Ag Ext</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Might need to be subsidized, let's not create another organization - use the tools already in place
3. What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?	<p>Education of people about local economy and food.</p> <p>Education about businesses, shopping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Education - Microfinancing - Efficiency in Farming
4. Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?	<p>Middle man/marketing</p> <p>Processor</p> <p>Schools, education (community college)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local government (zoning, incentives for carrying local) - Banks
5. What are some of our challenges in this area?	<p>reeducate consumers</p> <p>economy of scale</p> <p>production, processing, packaging</p> <p>verification - creation, cost and accountability</p> <p>efficiency in farming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to capital - agricultural infrastructure needs to return
6. What resources are needed?	<p>1 person to support school food education, production</p> <p>Capital</p> <p>community events at grocery stores (for education)</p>	

Topic Area and Group Participants		
<p>Topic Area: Restaurants – Group #2</p> <p>Names of Working Group participants: Noah Ranells, Aaron Vandemark, Paul Basciano, Darrell Hall, Andrew Branan, Meredith Robbins, Robin Kohanowich</p>		
Questions	Summary of Notes	Key Take Aways
1. What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?	Local food being accessible to more people	
2. How would local food be verified and identified?	N/A Labels noted where applicable (ie. University “restaurant”) Easy to verify for smaller restaurants buying direct	
3. What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?	Increase supply from the farmers to distributors for consistency reasons as it relates to the customer. Getting farmers working together under one umbrella to sell their goods, possibly eliminating liability cost barriers and allowing for middleman supplier (US Foods) the buying power and consistency needed to supply high volume establishments. “food” awareness necessary to influence consumer choices	
4. Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?	Large use establishments with buying power- “institutional CSA?” Everyone plays a role from farmer, marketing, processing, distribution, consumer.	
5. What are some of our challenges in this area?	Liability costs for farmers. Farmer cooperation challenges Consumer demand for food staples even when out of season (ie. tomatoes). Re-wire consumers minds. Simple economics of cost as related to each restaurant’s business model. Local often too expensive for lower priced food. Margins too tight. Volume of product available, consistent supply	
6. What resources are needed?	Angel donor! Producer willingness to see the long term benefits and returns on investment with “outside the box” approaches (ie. “organic valley” model) getting producers together in a room to brainstorm	

Topic Area and Group Participants		
<p>Topic Area: Institutions – Group #3</p> <p>Names of Working Group participants: Rudi Collerado, Michael Aquaro Marko Shaw, Robin Crowder, Kathy Jones, Nancy Creamer</p>		
Questions	Summary of Notes	Key Take Aways
<p>1. What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?</p>	<p>People come to expect what's in season to be offered on menus- that they change over time.</p> <p>Local being 50 mile radius</p> <p>Customers have expectations that a portion of food is local</p> <p>Kids would have farmers pictures on the walls at school, know where their salad comes from in school-based salad bars</p> <p>School garden programs- then kids talk to parents and parents make the change</p> <p>Education is part of a vibrant food economy</p> <p>Knowledge of farmers- chefs- other buyers so they can know how to get product- information exchange is important and knowing what the resources are that are available.</p> <p>Sick people in the hospital get to eat healthy food</p>	

Topic Area and Group Participants

2. How would local food be verified and identified?

Should they be branded? Would farmers in the area get value from branding their products?

If people have faith in certain businesses, then you might not need a brand.

NCDAs branding “goodness grows” and “got to be NC”. Do we need regional brands if we already have goodness grows? Why not piggy back off of that state- Because the message out of NCDA is a Big Ag message and isn’t representing small, niche producers.

Are ways around the supply dilemma (Michael)- if you’re in it for the long-term can help to work things out.

Michael: in RTP area \$2 million worth of purchases from local sources. They work directly with farms- Eco helps solve the distribution problem. Fresh Point too- 33% local at Duke last year.

Robin: why don’t institutions take advantage of having a local food day, aggregating supply and menus for the day.

Marko: most institutions wouldn’t have the talent level to pull that off. Restaurants could do it- they have the talent. Duke University hospital wouldn’t have someone on staff that can do it.

Robin: rather than asking (pleading) with institutions to “buy local when they can”, would it work better to do one evening-

Marko: people won’t know how to cook it- someone has to show them what to do with it, in addition to getting them to buy it.

Rudi: Consumers have to solve a set of problems or raise understanding in a certain way. Institutions have their own set of problems. Consumer education is behind. Basil seeds in triscuit boxes- trying to get people to plant gardens. What is the profile of Michael’s buying activity- so local farmers are inspired by the fact that they are buying local.

Michael: Yes, they are out there advertising what they are doing, but not to the degree they hope. Missing link between producers and chefs/restaurants-

NCDA needs to fix their website so it’s accurate and goes to the right farmers- it’s not been a useful tool to find farmers

Kathy- if growers knew that Michael would buy, and growers knew they had a definite market- they would grow specifically from him. Michael: once trust develops, the grower would start growing directly for the restaurant.

Marko: Put together a book in Portland with restaurants, farmers, chefs, caterers, also includes how much chef bought- what products- what time of year, and make connection.

Topic Area and Group Participants		
<p>3. What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?</p>	<p>Creating a directory that's useable- and organization whose major work was a directory-</p> <p>Can people get NCDA to redo their website/directory so that it's very helpful.</p> <p>Other critical steps: Get institutions to change their business models to source more local produced foods.</p> <p>Retirement homes could be a part- seniors expect food like they used to get. Discussed challenges of farm to hospital (patients, not doctors).</p> <p>First step for institutions: putting people on staff that can cook seasonally, with changing menus, etc.</p> <p>Michael: accessibility- is it just the student who can afford the tuition at duke, or high end retirement homes? How to increase access.</p> <p>Directory farmers- that works for chefs</p> <p>Organized effort to raise the profile of organizations and institutions that buy local food.</p>	
<p>4. Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?</p>		
<p>5. What are some of our challenges in this area?</p>	<p>paying for product- people are too used to cheap food. Chicken—jump from .79 per pound to \$4.00 per pound.</p>	
<p>6. What resources are needed?</p>		

Topic Area and Group Participants		
Topic Area: Distribution and Processing – Group #4		
Names of Working Group participants: Molly Hamilton, Bernadette Pelissier, Jeff Tant, Wes Ward, Debbie Hamrick, Ruffin Slater, Sandi Kronick, Scott Waters		
Questions	Summary of Notes	Key Take Aways
1. What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?	Profitable. The players are making money. Farmland accessible. Processing for fresh markets- whole animal utilization and slaughter facilities. Hub points for small farms to deliver. Wholesale price lists ID location source. Storage and off-season production support b/c distribution requires year-round availability of key crops. Food safety restricts many distributors from working with small suppliers – cost-share could help. How do you enforce local promotion?	There's no clear definition of 'local.' Milk & bread are key items. Grain processing facilities should ID as NC. Labeling is key. Buyers' policies help influence distributors to think of source. Menu promotion could help chefs want to utilize seasonal.
2. How would local food be verified and identified?	How do we promote NC heritage foods?	
3. What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?	Centralized storage facilities Production support so local quality can compete with CA. ID what is exported from NC and how to preserve that.	
4. Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?	This table ☺ Organic Valley, Lindley Mills, Bay State Milling, Southern Biscuit	
5. What are some of our challenges in this area?	Keeping our local 'gems' around in the coming years	
6. What resources are needed?	It has to be consumer-driven; how do we measure demand? How do we get local food to compete on cost? Other state promotion efforts	

Topic Area and Group Participants

Topic Area: **Direct Markets – Group #5**

Definition: Direct retail sales to from a farmer; Example: Farmers market, CSA, farmstand, PYO, Subscription, Pre-ordering

Names of Working Group participants: Alice Ammerman, Debbie Roos, Cole Fairchild, Howard McAdams, Joe Schroeder, Tandy Jones, Jim Wulforst

Questions	Summary of Notes	Key Take Aways
1. What would a vibrant and accessible local food economy look like?	Howard- all the farmers look like millionaires Cole- large diverse quality-driven product base Every community that wants one, has a good farmers' market Farmers can produce their wares and be able to sell most of them Accessible piece is important Demand and supply balance Convenience Increased level of awareness about who the farmers are in the community Sensible scale appropriate food safety legislation	
2. How would local food be verified and identified?	If the identity of the farm is inherent in the sale, and the standards of the market are enforced.	
3. What are some concrete steps to achieve the goal of strong local food support and access? What is the first step?	Help for farmers' markets. Help starting farmers' markets, listserv is a good step. Help programs that are already in place work WIC, FMNP, SFMNP, EBT Need more education about ways to buy direct. More farmers doing season extension	
4. Who could best carry out the work? Are there other criteria for who should participate?	Extension, RAFI, CFSA, Farmers! They are increasingly taking on the work of telling their own stories through many ways	
5. What are some of our challenges in this area?	Commodity farm transition, off-season availability	
6. What resources are needed?	Labor, affordable agricultural land, loans, human capital,	