



Crossroads Resource Center

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Tools for Community Self-determination

Regional "Finding Food in Farm Country"TM (FFFCTM) studies

Potential Generic Scope of Work

[Each local economic analysis is geared to issues, concerns, and conditions addressed by our local partners. The following represents one possible method, that will be adapted to each locale.]

Purpose:

To strengthen local community networks, promote health, and retain local wealth through economic activity generated in local food systems.

Goal:

To compile solid quantitative data that can be used (a) as baseline data to understand the workings of the regional farm and food economy; (b) to unify the work of diverse stakeholders who will be involved in strengthening local food systems, and (c) to assist local stakeholders in identifying strategic priorities for community economic development and (d) to assess the economic impact of community-based food systems.

Objective:

To compile comprehensive economic and production data covering the prevailing conditions in the local farm and food economy in a given locale.

Activities:

- Compile data published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis data covering personal income in various industries, including farming, for the period 1969-2008, for a region of up to 8 counties as identified by local partners. This data will be presented in historical trend charts.
- Compile food consumption estimates for the county/region using Bureau of Labor Statistics data. This would give a basic food budget for households.
- Compile data from the 2002 and 2007 Agricultural Censuses showing farm and production characteristics; acreage devoted to organic food production and value of commodities produced; and value of direct sales from farms to consumers.
- Compile additional data from these and other public databases to illuminate issues that are unique to the county/region.
- Having compiled this data, Ken Meter would then prepare (a) a short written summary and (b) a PowerPoint presentation of perhaps 5-30 pages/slides illustrating

the most important findings, which may include several charts or tables, for local partners' use in outreach, publicity and marketing. Local partners will have access to any data compiled for this report.

If additional funds are available:

Present this data three times to ever-larger audiences in the county/region.

- First presentation would be to a core group of about 10-12 core partners or local leaders. The purpose of this meeting is to both inform local leaders about research findings, and also to ensure that insights local residents hold about local conditions, and interpreting this data, are incorporated into later presentations.
- Second presentation would be to a larger circle of people with more diverse stakeholders represented. The purpose of this meeting would be to create a common analysis of local economic conditions, form a stronger core of local leadership who will strategize future local food system efforts, and to create a broader public discussion.
- Third meeting would be planned by the previous group at a venue where perhaps 100 or more people could attend a presentation of the data. Purpose of this meeting would be to engage even more local stakeholders, and a broader public discussion, and to implement strategies chosen by local leaders.

[Note: this is simply one suggested process, and may be modified based on local needs and schedules].

In addition, for grassroots groups, Meter would be available for a small number of hours of strategic discussions, etc., at no charge, to assist local partners to make maximal use of the data, during the project or after completion. This might involve fielding questions about the data, strategic planning for making use of findings, or related work.

Crossroads Resource Center welcome longer-term partnerships with local groups. The outline above is meant to help launch a local planning process for food; further implementation will be built upon this foundation. Each community is unique, so this approach may be modified as need to suit local conditions and concerns.

Contact Ken Meter at Crossroads Resource Center for prices and availability.