

Multistate Research Activity 2014 Accomplishments Report

Project/Activity Number: NC1198

Project/Activity Title: Renewing an Agriculture of the Middle: Value Chain Design, Policy Approaches, Environmental and Social Impacts

Period covered: October 2013 to September 2014

Date of This Report: October 10, 2014

Annual Meeting Date(s): October 7-8, 2014

Members of NC1198

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Brief summary of annual meeting:

Date: October 7-8, 2014

Location:

Campus Club in Memorial Union, University of Minnesota
300 Washington Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Attendance:

Christy Anderson Brekken, Lily Brislen, Kate Clancy, David Conner, Lindsey Day
Farnsworth, Gail Feenstra, Shermain Hardesty, Mary Hendrickson (Tuesday), Jan
Joannides, Rob King, Bill Lacy, Larry Lev, Michelle Miller, Marcia Ostrom, Hikaru Peterson,

Mary Ahearn (called in on Tuesday), Ge Backus (guest), Larry Burmeister (called in on Wednesday)

General Project Discussion:

The state project group members individually had another productive year. In addition to the activities listed here, many members were involved in issues on food and agriculture closely related to Ag of the Middle (AOTM). The two AFRI proposals generated from the 2012 meeting were resubmitted in 2014 and were recommended for funding. The proposals will contribute to the project objectives directly in coming years. The attendance was slightly lower than last year, but included a few new members.

The sub-committee on the Ag of the Middle website (<http://agofthemiddle.org/>) formed in the 2013 meeting presented the site redesigned by the UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS) to reflect the group discussion in 2013. The AOTM website committee was officially formed, including the chair (Ostrom), reviewer for publications by non-members (Conner), and CIAS coordinator (Miller). Contextual contributions were assigned among website committee members and others. The group named groups of individuals that would form the target audience of the website and discussed the process to determine which publications would be included.

The group discussed various ways to promote AOTM to our professional audience. A small group decided to propose an organized symposium for the Food and Agricultural Marketing Policy Session track at the 2015 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) meetings. Yet another small group was formed to develop an AFRI conference grant proposal on supply chain governance, seeking to partner with other professional groups, such as the Inter-institutional Network for Food, Agriculture, and Sustainability (INFAS), Ag and Human Values, and peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* and *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*. The conference/workshop would be scheduled in Boston in 2016, where both Ag and Human Values and AAEA meetings are held in summer.

In addition, the group had an annual phone conference with the USDA AFRI Program Leader (Denis Ebodaghe), who administers the Small and Medium-Sized Farms priority area, and learned that no major change is expected in their Foundational Programs in terms of grant size and scope. Ebodaghe informed us about other upcoming grant opportunities, and the group informed him about the meaning of AOTM. The group learned from the guest attending the meeting about a producer-customer linking app that is developed and tested in the Dutch food system. The group was also briefed on a policy update.

The last topic of discussion was about a longer-term vision for the group's work on AOTM. Since usable funds at UW-Madison CIAS are limited to support the AOTM site, the group members agreed to write in expenses to maintain it in future grant proposals. The

group also agreed to apply for another five-year multi-state research project on AOTM when this project is completed.

Accomplishments - October 2013 to September 2014:

Outputs:

Activities:

Listed are the major grants involving NC-1198 project members. Members have written and submitted other grant proposals with other collaborators on issues related to AOTM that are not listed here. For example, **Francis** et al. have applied for a three-year grant from CERES Foundation called "Efficient Research Methods for Minimal-Cost Organic Agriculture" that will establish four demonstration/commercial gardens in each of two communities with Native American entrepreneurs in Northeast Nebraska. This is a cooperative project with Center for Rural Affairs.

Grants Submitted and Awards Received by members

Peterson, H.H., G.W. Feenstra, M.R. Ostrom, K. Tanaka, and C. Anderson-Brekken. "Impacts of Values-Based Supply Chains on Small and Medium-Sized Farms." 2015-2017. USDA-AFRI, Small & Medium-Size Farms Priority area. Recommended for funding. [Obj 1, 2, 3, 4]

Lev, L., R. King, J. Joannides, G. Feenstra, S. Hardesty. "Cultivating Specialty Food Industry Sales: New Opportunities for Small and Medium-Sized Farms." USDA-AFRI, Small & Medium-Size Farms Priority area. Recommended for funding. [Obj 1, 2]

Miller, M. "Regional food freight transportation study". September 2014 – August 2015. USDA-AMS, Transportation Division [Obj 1, 4]

Grant Proposals Submitted, not Funded

De Master, K., S.K. Bowen, D. Conner, P. Howard, L. Lev, M. Miller, M. Ostrom, T. Yifat. "Factors Influencing the Resilience of Multifunctional Agri-Food Clusters in the U.S." USDA-AFRI, Rural Communities and Regional Development Priority area. Not funded.

Milestones:

The major milestone was the two AFRI grants proposed by the NC-1198 project members being successfully recommended for funding starting in January 2015. Looking ahead, the launch of the renewed AOTM website and proposed organized symposium and AFRI conference proposal grant will be milestones.

Impacts

Activities:

Many members are prolific in sharing the vision of Agriculture of the Middle and the latest research findings pertaining to the project objectives. In addition to the specific activities listed below, individual members have multiple ongoing activities related to AOTM.

For example, the Sustainable Agriculture, Research & Education Program (SAREP) has been actively developing three types of research and outreach initiatives that relate to Ag of the Middle for the past several years: (1) farm to school/ farm to institution evaluation focusing on regional procurement, (2) assessing and developing markets for small and mid-scale, beginning and ethnic producers through values-based supply chains, and (3) exploring economic, health and community benefits of urban agriculture (**Feenstra**). All 3 areas involve "Ag of the Middle," but from different perspectives. Having the opportunity to view the challenges of Ag of the Middle from consumer, retailer, wholesaler, distributor, processor and community perspectives, has allowed us to understand the issues in values-based supply chains from more of a systems lens.

Many on-going activities are related to local foods. At Auburn University, for example, **Worosz** has been involved in community food security assessment, consumer study on purchasing local meats, and examination of local foods in colleges and universities. The local meat study emphasizes lower socio-economic status and minority groups which are not typically addressed in the literature. Some policy implications are expected from the last project. A recently-concluded grant at University of Nebraska Lincoln "Building Regional Food Systems," financed by USDA/AMS, surveyed farmers and consumers to assess their interest in growing more food for direct sale and for local markets (**Francis**). Another initiative on "Alternative Funding for Food System Development", funded by NCRC, involved workshops and focus groups looking for creative ways to finance local food systems. Also, a recently-completed North Central SARE grant on "Video Lessons in Sustainable Agriculture for High School Students" developed 20 short videos where high school students interview farmers on various sustainable farming practices, as well as local marketing and other aspects of alternative systems.

Selected Presentations by members

Feenstra, G. "Local and regional food systems: Opportunities for community engagement," keynote speaker at the University of Arizona Food System Network Conference, Tucson, AZ, April 29, 2014 (200 attendees). [Obj 2]

Feenstra, G. "Selling value-added produce in wholesale markets with your farm story," moderator, speaker at the California Small Farm Conference, Rohnert Park, CA, March 12, 2014 (30 attendees). [Obj 1]

Feenstra, G. “Procurement of local produce,” moderator, speaker at the Northern California Farm to School Conference, San Joaquin County, Stockton, CA, November 20, 2013 (10 attendees). [Obj 1]

Feenstra, G. “Community-Based Regional Food Initiatives,” seminar presentation at University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, November 13, 2013 (150 attendees). [Obj 2]

Gray, T. 2014. “Need for Multi-stakeholder Cooperatives,” Presentation. Annual meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society. Baltimore, Maryland, February 22.

Gray, T. 2014. “Democratization and Multi-stakeholder Cooperatives,” Presentation. Annual meetings of the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society. Burlington, Vermont. June 18-22.

Hardesty, S. “Cottage Foods and Other Value-added Products.” Organizer/moderator/speaker at the California Small Farm Conference, Rohnert Park, CA, March 11, 2014 (30 attendees). [Obj 1]

Miller, M. “Farming and Climate Change”, presented at a public forum, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Madison, WI, November 2013 [obj 3 &4]

Miller, M. “The Economics and Culture of Local Food” presented at a public forum, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, November 2013 [obj 1 &2]

Miller, M. “Regional Food for Regional Markets”, Midwest value-added conference, Wausau, WI, January 2014 [obj 1 &2]

Miller, M. “Moving Local Food to Wholesale Markets: Lessons from Practitioners”, Local Food Summit, Milwaukee, WI, January 2014 [obj 1 &2]

Miller, M. “Regional Food to Regional Markets”, Center for Logistics, Trade, and Transportation, Gulfport, MS, February 2014 [obj 1]

Miller, M. “(Re)creating Regional Food Systems”, American Planning Association – Wisconsin Chapter, Madison, WI, June 2014 [obj 1 & 2]

Miller, M. Research conference “Innovations in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Supply Chains”, University of Exeter, September 2014 [obj 1]

Telligman, A., M.R. **Worosz**, and C. Bratcher. 2014. Beliefs Underlying Purchases of Local Beef. Paper presented at Equity, Democracy, and the Commons: Counter-Narratives for Rural Transformation, the annual meetings of the Rural Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA, 30 Jul – 03 Aug. [Obj 2]

Walker, D. and M.R. **Worosz**. 2014. The Role of Chefs and Restaurant Owners in Alabama's Local Foods Movement. Paper presented at Equity, Democracy, and the Commons: Counter-Narratives for Rural Transformation, the annual meetings of the Rural Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA, 30 Jul – 03 Aug. [Obj 1]

Yifat, T. "Sustainability and Farmer Control in an Agrifood Value Chain: The Case of Organic Valley." Presented in the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association for Food Studies, St. Catharines, ON, May 24–27, 2014.

Yifat, T. "Can Alternative Agrifood Value Chains Lead the Market? : The Case of Organic Valley." Presented in the ASFS/AFHVS Annual Conference, Burlington, VT, June 18-22, 2014.

Yifat, T. "Social and Environmental Upgrading in a Producer-Driven Agrifood Value Chain: The Case of Organic Valley." Presented in the Society for the Advancement of Socioeconomics Annual Conference. Chicago, IL, July 10-12, 2014.

Yifat, T. "Environmental Entrepreneurship and the Possibility of Green Capitalism." Presented in the Society for the Advancement of Socioeconomics Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, July 10-12, 2014.

Posters

Walker, D., Y. Hu, M.R. **Worosz**, N. Wilson, J. Zanzot, C. Bailey, C. Zizza. 2014. Access to Nutritious Foods in Macon County Alabama. Poster presented at Collaboration and Innovation Across the Food System, the annual joint meetings of the Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS) and the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society (AFHVS), Burlington, VT, Jun 18-22.

Yeomans, D., M.R. **Worosz**, Y. Hu, J. Zanzot, N. Wilson, C. Bailey and C. Zizza. 2013. Macon County Community Food Security Assessment. Poster presented at Women and Youth: Changing the Landscape of Agriculture, the 71st Professional Agricultural Workers Conference, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, AL, 08 – 10 Dec.

Conferences/Workshops Organized by members

"Cottage Foods: California's Cottage Food Law, Food Safety, Production, Marketing and Managing a Cottage Foods Business". Organized by S. **Hardesty**. 6 2-day workshops from May-July, 2014 in Northern California. [Obj 1]

"Organizing On-Farm Farmers Markets and Farm Dinners". Organized and moderated by S. **Hardesty** at the California Small Farm Conference, Rohnert Park, CA, March 11, 2014 (50 attendees). [Obj 1]

Workshop organized by M. **Miller** at the Eco-apple growers annual meeting, Madison, WI, December 2013 [obj 3]

Milestones:

Looking ahead, the acceptance of the proposed track session on AOTM at the 2015 AAEA meetings and the development and successful funding of the AFRI conference grant proposal on supply chain governance will be milestones.

Indicators:

The list of project members has grown with a few new members attending the 2014 meeting.

Publications

Peer reviewed publications

Anderson, C., L. Brushett, T. **Gray**, and H. Renting. 2014. "Group Editorial: Working Together to Build Cooperative Food Systems," *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. Vol. 4, No. 3. Spring.

Becot, F., **Conner**, D., Kolodinsky, J. and Mendez, V. (2014). Measuring the costs of production and pricing on diversified farms: Juggling decisions amidst uncertainties. *Journal of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers*. 171-194.

Becot, F., **Conner**, D., Nelson, A., Buckwalter, E. and Erickson, D. (2014). Institutional Demand for Locally-Grown Food in Vermont: Marketing Implications for Producers and Distributors. *Journal of Food Distribution Research* 45(2) 99-117.

Conner, D., Sevoian, N. Heiss, S. and Berlin, L. (2014). The Diverse Values and Motivations of Vermont Farm to Institution Supply Chain Actors. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 27, 695-713.

Feenstra, G. and D. Campbell. "Local and regional food systems." In P.B. Thompson and D.M. Kaplan (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of agricultural and food ethics* [IN PRESS]. [Obj 2]

Gray, T. 2014. "Commentary on Agricultural Cooperatives: "Tensions, Institutionalization, and the Need for Multi-stakeholder Cooperatives," *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. Vol. 4, No. 3. Spring.

Hardesty, S., G. **Feenstra**, D. Visher, T. Lerman, D. Thilmany-McFadden, A. Bauman, T. Gillpatrick and G. Rainbolt. 2014. "Values-Based Supply Chains: Supporting Regional Food and Farms." *Economic Development Quarterly*, 28:1,17-27.
DOI:10.1177/0891242413507103. [Obj 1, 2]

Heiss, S., **Conner**, D., Sevoian, N., & Berlin, L. (2014). Farm to Institution Programs: Organizing Practices that Enable and Constrain Vermont's Alternative Food Supply Chains. *Agriculture and Human Values*. Published online July 23, 2014.

King, R., M. Hand, G. DiGiacomo, K. **Clancy**, M. Gomez, S. **Hardesty**, L. **Lev**, E. McLaughlin and K. Park. In press. *Growing Local: Case Studies in Local Food Supply Chains*. University of Nebraska Press.

LeBlanc, J., **Conner**, D., McRae, G. and Darby, H. (2014). Building Resilience in Nonprofit Food Hubs. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. 4(3), 121-135.

Miller, M. and J. Solin (in press). "The power of story for adaptive response – marshaling individual and collective initiative to create more resilient food systems" *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* [obj 4]

Surls, R., G. **Feenstra**, S. Golden, R. Galt, S. **Hardesty**, N.C. Napawan and C. Wilen. 2014. "Gearing up to support urban farming in California: Preliminary results of a needs assessment." *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems*, DOI:10.1017/S1742170514000052. Pp. 1-10. [Obj 2]

Book chapters

Thomas, W., N. Wilson, and M.R. **Worosz**. 2014. "Democratization of the Food System: Interests in a Food Policy Council in Alabama." Pg. 18-25 in *Auburn Speaks: Food*, edited by P. Curtis and J. Lamar. Auburn University, Auburn, AL (ISBN: 978-0-615-97504-7).

Extension reports

Day-Farnsworth, L, **Miller**, M. (2014). Networking across the supply chain: Transportation Innovations in Local and Regional Supply Chains. [Obj 1& 4] <http://www.trb.org/Policy/Blurbs/170956.aspx>

Miller, M., Hirsch, R., Werts, P and T. Green (2014). Extending your business range and reaching new clients with low-cost communications. *Crops and Soils Magazine* 2014 47:28-30. doi:10.2134/cs2014-47-1-9 [Obj 1& 3]

Proceedings

Miller, M. (2014) Resilient regional supply chains for sustainably-grown food. Proceedings of the Center for Logistics, Transportation and Trade Symposium, Gulfport, MS, USA, February 27, 2014 [Obj 1]

Theses/dissertations

Leamy, Ryan. (2014). Diversification Activities of Vermont Dairy Farmers: A Study of Raw Milk And Local Beef Processing In The State. Masters Thesis, Department of Community Development and Applied Economics, University of Vermont.

Authorization: