

# Appalachian

## FOODSHED PROJECT

Cultivating Community Food Security

### Upcoming Regional Opportunities



- **February 27, 1pm** : AFP participates in eXtension Community of Practice webinar (*Community, Local and Regional Food Systems*). More details to come.
- **March 5-7, 1pm**: Webinars on how to apply for 2014 USDA [Farm to School Grants](#). (Application deadline April 24, 2013)
- **March 18-19**: Dynamic Self-Governance Training for Leaders in Food System Change, Asheville, NC. Contact [Tracy Kunkler](#) of Sims and Steele Consulting.
- **April 22**: Deadline for applying to the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows Program: [www.hungercenter.org/national](http://www.hungercenter.org/national)

### West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition celebrates working group successes and plans for future

- AFP partner, the West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition (WVFFC), brought together producers, organizations, and government officials for the **Road Map for the Food Economy Working Conference** on January 29, 2013. This day-long event highlighted the successes of working groups over the last year, and laid the framework for future food systems work in West Virginia. Each working group completed a project in the last year, and shared their learning, along with policy implications and next steps with conference attendees. These included:
  - **Improving Access to Healthy Local Foods**: provided 8 mini-grants for farmers markets to test different strategies for attracting SNAP customers to markets, and tracked the success of the project
  - **Aggregation and Distribution**: began a dialogue about local food aggregation and distribution, to improve understanding of current aggregation and distribution activities in WV, understand how supply chains work, recognize what barriers exist to building local supply chains, and see what the needs of the working group could meet.
  - **Meat Processing Infrastructure**: Created a survey for WV meat processors to clarify regulations for farmer/producers regarding different types of marketing outlets. The group completed the surveys by phone and visited 10 businesses.
  - **Youth and Agriculture**: Ho Regional Gathering on School Gardens on May 2012 and decided to focus their energy on agriculture curriculum development that meets current state Content Standard Objectives (CSOs) and incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The group aligned a selection of CSOs for gardening activities and recruited schools in Kanawha, Cabell, and Putnam counties to participate as pilots. Teachers received training, support, and materials and over 1000 children have participated in hands-on gardening so far.

A summary of working group activity can be downloaded at ([wvhub.org/sites/default/files/Working%20Group%20Summaries%20from%202013%20Road%20Map%20Conference.pdf](http://wvhub.org/sites/default/files/Working%20Group%20Summaries%20from%202013%20Road%20Map%20Conference.pdf))



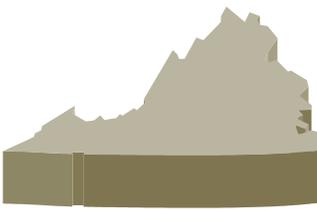
## Updates from the AFP Management Team

The AFP Management Team is composed of faculty, staff, and graduate students from West Virginia University, Virginia Tech, and North Carolina State University. Visit [www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org](http://www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org) for more information on project goals and objectives. For a more detailed update, download the February management team update ([www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org/documents](http://www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org/documents)).

- *Community Food Security Assessment (CFSA) Working Group*: working to finalize a 'white paper'. This short document will help clarify the purpose of the assessment, and will be used as tool for engaging stakeholders in the assessment process.
- *Community, Local, and Regional Food Systems Community of Practice*: establishing a webinar series to provide online trainings and outreach messaging about community food systems. Nikki D'Adamo-Damery and Kim Niewolny will be co-leading a webinar about the AFP on February 27<sup>th</sup>. This will be part of a webinar that includes another AFRI team so that we can learn more about our national and local efforts to enhance food systems.
- *Curriculum Working Group*: Virginia Tech is offering a new graduate course called "Advanced Concepts in Community Food Systems." Seven graduate students are participating and eager to learn more about the AFP as an illustration of a regional effort working to enhance community food security in rural Appalachia. Contact **Kim Niewolny** ([niewolny@vt.edu](mailto:niewolny@vt.edu)) for more information.
- *Coalition Building Working Group (CBWG)*: working to develop a proposal for a Steering Committee that would be an interface between stakeholders and the AFP management team. This would provide a mechanism for joint decision making about key participatory project activities, such as the community food security assessments. The group is finalizing the process for steering committee member election or appointment. Stay tuned for more in the next couple of weeks.
- *Communications*: established a Facebook page for the AFP project.
- *Modeling Working Group*: decided to include larger scale food supplies in our model of local and regional food systems. This is necessary because many of the assumptions regarding the benefits and value of local food systems involve perceptions, assumptions, and interactions with the "external" food supply. Currently we have focused on natural and built capital and relationships between components within and near these areas.

The next management team meeting is **Wednesday, February 20 at 9am.**

## Virginia Updates



AFP partners from southwest Virginia gathered on January 23 at Attimo Winery in Christiansburg, Virginia. The purpose of the gathering was to update the group on the AFP, report out on Action Group progress, discuss next steps, and learn more about what's going on in the region. Project partners shared their ongoing work (including data gathering efforts related to production and markets) and discussed ways to work together to maximize efforts and minimize overlap.

AFP action groups also gave brief updates:

- **Access:** has gathered together a list of curriculums and resources and are looking for gaps. They may try to have students interview stakeholders about the work they are doing.
- **Policy:** need to figure out how to get VA Farm to Table plan into the hands of policy makers and the public. Need to identify policy targets for the region.

- **Agriculture Infrastructure:** group has not coalesced, but individuals are doing work to develop infrastructure in the region.

The group requested another meeting in two months, and an opportunity to work in action groups. Details will be announced soon. For more information, contact **Nikki D'Adamo-Damery** ([nikkid11@vt.edu](mailto:nikkid11@vt.edu))

## West Virginia Updates



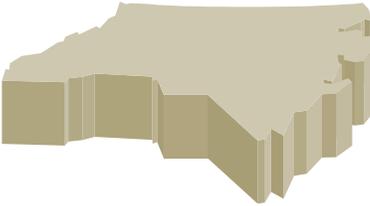
Two members of the AFP management team along with 2 staff from the WVFFC attended the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG) "It Takes a Region" conference in Saratoga Springs New York (February 10-12) with scholarships from AFP. The conference brought together practitioners, academics, producers, policy-makers, organizers, and other food system stakeholders from across the northeast region to share

and plan advocacy and action around key focal areas such as food safety, labor rights, immigration reform, food supply chain development, food processing, hunger and nutrition, data and research, and food system planning. The WV attendees learned about the organizational structure and function of this now 20 year old northeast coalition, and all the successes and challenges that it has experienced in facilitating a network and action across a region. At-

tendees are excited to share this insight, new contacts, and knowledge about successful models through the WVFFC working groups and AFP network. For more information, please contact Cheryl Brown ([Cheryl.Brown@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Cheryl.Brown@mail.wvu.edu))



## North Carolina Updates



Angel Cruz will be attending the Organic Growers School in Western NC in early March. The main goals of her attendance are to:

- physically reconnect with NC state action group leaders,
- gain a general understanding of new activities related to local foods and food security in Western NC, and find ways that the AFP can connect to the work happening on the ground.



## We're on Facebook!

The AFP now has a Facebook page. We'll be posting blurbs about our project partners, as well as highlighting upcoming events in the region.

[www.facebook.com/AppalachianFoodshedProject](http://www.facebook.com/AppalachianFoodshedProject)

# [www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org](http://www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org)

The Appalachian Foodshed Project (AFP) is using a *foodshed* concept to address issues of community food security in West Virginia and the Appalachian regions of North Carolina and Virginia. AFP aims to facilitate a network of organizations and individuals working to address issues of community development, economic viability, health, nutrition, food access, social justice, and agriculture. By working collaboratively, AFP hopes to build on the human and natural resources in the region to cultivate resilient food systems and vibrant, healthy communities.

**A collaboration between NC State, Virginia Tech, West Virginia University, and community stakeholders in Appalachia**

To join our listserv, email [afp@vt.edu](mailto:afp@vt.edu).

Funded through the USDA's Agriculture, Food  
Award Number: 2011-68004-30079



and Research Initiative (AFRI) grants program.

United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture