

October 2013 Appalachian Foodshed Project Updates

CFSA

NORTH CAROLINA

The WNC AFP Food Security Committee met in September and continued working towards building a backbone organization or guiding framework for food security in the region. Important decisions and updates include:

- We will be using the Map the Meal dataset as the main source to measure change in food security in the region. However, we do hope to create county profiles that will convey a more complete message of what is going on in the region and include other important data, such as food deserts in the region, median wages, percent below poverty, and percentage of kids on free and reduced lunches in the schools.
- Darcel Eddins and Jana Bartleson are the NC AFP reps
- We are currently working on figuring out milestones and specific results to work towards as we build towards the common agenda.

Below is the “homework” or continuing discussion from the last meeting.

Action Items/Homework:

1. Questions:

- What milestones or specific results would you add/amend that are significant to achieving the common agenda?
- How was your thinking about the common agenda influenced by the discussion at the end of the meeting?
- Which milestones/results does your organization value and put time and/or other resources towards?
- What other organizations play a key role in the common agenda?

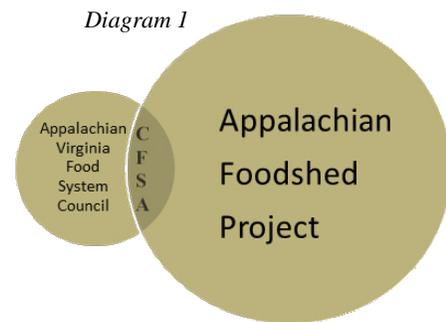
2. Evaluate county profiles

VIRGINIA

VA CFSA Focus: Access and availability of locally produced and distributed foods organizing around collective impact and the Whole Measures for Community Food Systems framework to guide the process.

The Virginia Appalachian Foodshed Project Coalition Building Taskforce¹ that formed from the June 14, 2013 VA-CFSA meeting has been developing an outreach strategy to expand stakeholder base. The Taskforce has decided to organize efforts towards building the Appalachian Virginia Food System Council (AVFSC). The AVFSC’s purpose aligns with the VA-CFSA focus, that is, to enhance access and availability of locally produced and distributed foods across southwestern Virginia. Interactions with Taskforce members and the VA-CFSA lead see the main point of collaboration between the AVFSC and the Appalachian Foodshed Project (AFP) to be the CFSA (*Diagram 1*).

On October 24, 2013, a founding event of the Appalachian Virginia Food System Council is scheduled at St. Paul's Methodist Church in Wytheville, VA. This day will be the start of an ongoing process of strategic collaboration and networking on food system issues in southwestern Virginia. The AVFSC's Charter will be introduced with an opportunity for discussion to ensure the charter reflects the communities' vision for a food secure region. In addition to discussing the evolution of the task force group into a food council, another objective will center on explaining that the VA- CFSA will be central to the collaborative relationship between the VA-AFP and the AVFSC, as well as, identify stakeholders interested in participating with the evolving VA-CFSA design and implementation process. The VA-CFSA academic team will also propose a date and time to gather those interested within a few weeks to finalize the CFSA implementation plan.



As part of the CFSA, we continue to work on a database that will generate static reports (PDF format) for each county in Virginia as well as the other AFP regions using the previously validated secondary questions to form the report. These county-level reports will characterize some of the region's assets, e.g., number and size of farms, number of producers, number of SNAP participants, etc. Once a prototype is developed feedback from stakeholders will be requested. These reports will then be available for download via the AFP website.

¹Appalachian Foodshed Project Coalition Building Taskforce:

- Eric Bendfeldt, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
 - Karen Day, Plenty!, Floyd
 - Joell Eifert, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
 - Kim Kirkbride, New River Health District
 - Jerry Moles, New River Land Trust & Grayson LandCare
 - Kelli Scott, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
 - Kathlyn Terry, Appalachian Sustainable Development
 - Pete Ziegler, Virginia Tech, Appalachian Foodshed Project
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WEST VIRGINIA

The WV team has made progress in the last month on the design of Community Food Security Assessments and on improving management and communication through the selection of two fantastic state representatives to the regional AFP project. Two assessments will take place in WV, one in the Tygart Valley region and another in the Charleston region. Proposals for assessment implementation based on stakeholder and university member expertise have been

drafted and are being reviewed by AFP researchers. The next step will be to submit to WVU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of the plan.

We are excited to have Bob Jacobus of the Region VII Planning and Development Council and Kelly Crane of the WV Farmers Market Association and SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture Entrepreneurs) to represent WV to the Regional AFP management team. Their knowledge, energy, and dedication are most appreciated! WV AFP is also excited to welcome our new graduate research assistant – Jessica Crum – to the team. Jessica comes to us with a background in agribusiness and passion for small farm development. University members of the WV AFP team have also been supporting the development of the food systems model led by Steve Hodges and graduate student Margaret Smith at VT.

CoP: Community, Local, and Regional Food Systems

As part of the national leadership team, Phil and Kim have been working to launch the CoP publically. Currently, the CoP has been partially launched through the following eXtension interfaces:

- “Ask an Expert” <https://ask.extension.org/expert/groups/1775>
- “Learn@ Extension” <https://learn.extension.org/events/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=community+and+regional+food+systems&commit=Search>
- The public dashboard for the CoP will be launched shortly: http://www.extension.org/community_and_regional_food_systems

A full system launch is expected soon! Please see CoP slides for a full update that was presented to CoP membership in September

(www.appalachianfoodshedproject.org/documents/CLRFS%20eCoP%20Update%20Presentation%209_2013.pdf). Join the CoP if you have not yet done so. Contact Kim and Phil for more ways to get involved.

Communications

- We have a brochure! If you need copies to distribute, please contact Nikki.
- The blog (<http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/afpblog>) continues weekly posts, with contributions from grad students and project partners.
- Our student hire web-designer is working on updating the website. He's currently addressing usability issues, but will focus on updating content in the next month.
- We are working to get a monthly webinar series up and running—Sarah Misyak and Meredith Ledlie Johnson will present on their farmers market SNAP curriculum at noon on November 21. Sarah is working to line up presentations for the coming months.

Curriculum

We are developing a focus group and survey at NCSU and Virginia Tech that will help shape the co-developed graduate course offered at both of these institutions this spring 2014. The tentative course title is *Community Food Security from a Local and International Perspective*.

PRACTITIONER PROFILES: Kim Niewolny and Phil D’Adamo-Damery (VT initiative)

One of the project’s aims is to help build community capacity and organizational cohesion for collective impact across the region. This work is being addressed in a number of ways. Recently, in Virginia, through the Advanced Concepts in Community Food Systems course taught by K. Niewolny, spring 2013, practice stories of AFP practitioners were collected that illustrate their reflective experiences of community food system education and as defined by community food security aims. The impetus for creating a regional narrative of food system activism/education comes from the practitioners themselves who are eager to create a regional network yet struggle with the formative process of crafting and weaving their stories and actions together.

Update on progress: The data were collected through in-depth, qualitative interviews with seven practitioners who participate in the VA-AFP. We followed the analytical procedures of the practitioner profile framework with the practitioners participating in the research design process. The process was designed for each practitioner to share: 1) past educational experiences in the community, 2) current instances of “practice,” and 3) future intentions for community food security work. Each narrative has been transcribed and edited. The edited stories have been shared and reviewed for confirmation with each of the authors. On-going editing is taking place to draft a number of public outreach tools that can be shared across the region. An analysis of the documents has recently begun using narrative inquiry methods. Our analytical aims is to exemplify the creation and sharing of these stories, and the reflective practice that is embedded, that gives specific meaning to the place-based activism/education of community food system practitioners focusing on community food security. Further updates will be shared with practice story authors as editing and analysis continues.

Model

The modeling team reviewed its purpose statement and approved some minor changes. Much of our previous modeling work has focused on the farm, food, and built capital components of the model, with emphasis on food demand as a driver for farm production. Work is now shifting to the economic and social considerations affecting diet choices and purchasing decisions, and how these connect with the Farm and Local Economy components. Conversations with the Community Assessment chairs have revealed that focus of the assessments will likely be at the subsystem level. Emphasis has been at the community level and community action, but regional scale factors remain central to food system function. There was also a strong emphasis on making the systems level model accessible to stakeholders through the use of web-based tools such as webinars and graphic outputs. A review of the current model components and connections resulted in a list of indicators and questions that was sent to the CSFA workgroup.

November 2013 Appalachian Foodshed Project Updates

CFSA

NORTH CAROLINA (Michelle Schroeder-Moreno)

The next NC meeting will be on November 7th, 2013.

VIRGINIA (Susan Clark)

On Thursday, October 24th at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Wytheville, VA the Virginia AFP coalition task force held a meeting to discuss the development of the Appalachian Virginia Food System Council (AVFSC). Thirty-one folks from different community organizations gathered to strategize, collaborate, and network on food system issues in southwestern Virginia around the process of creating an Appalachian Virginia Food System Council. Additionally, the meeting schedule included space to clarify how the CFSA would relate to this Food System Council. Eleven folks expressed interest in working on the assessment design and implementation plan with the VT academic partners. The CFSA will be an organizational tool that supports the efforts of the VACFSA to provide information on where food is grown, who is accessing it and how food gets from farm to consumer.

WEST VIRGINIA (Cheryl Brown)

No updates at this time.

COMMUNITY PROFILES (Pete Ziegler)

An access file has been created that houses most of the secondary data we have collected to date. Our undergraduate work-study student, Cody, is developing queries that will inform county profile reports and we are working on prototypes for the county profiles based on the original list of questions created for the assessment around the whole measures framework.

Community, Local & Regional Food Systems: An eXtension Community of Practice

- Community, Local, and Regional eXtension Community of Practice Leadership Team presented two webinars in October:
 - 1) “call to action” with membership of CoP (now close to 250 members)
 - 2) Leadership Team planning session for sustainability of CoP.

To learn more about the **Community, Local & Regional Food Systems eXtension CoP**, please visit:

<http://create.extension.org/node/91605>

<https://www.facebook.com/ExtensionsCommunityLocalRegionalFoodSystems>

- The Community, Local and Regional Food Systems CoP is in the process of compiling an initial round of content for the upcoming full public launch. We have a peer-review process in place and welcome any short (~500-1,000 word), public-friendly articles related to community, local and regional food systems. If you are interested in writing an article, contact Phil D’Adamo-Damery (pdadamer@vt.edu) .
- NOV 11-12, Kim will be attending a multi-state Extension Impact Team now titled “Community, Local, and Regional Food System.” Kim will be presenting at this meeting on behalf of the CoP, which means she will also be representing AFP.

Communications (Nikki D’Adamo-Damery and Sarah Misyak)

- Facebook is still highlighting project partners weekly, as well as articles and sites of interest. We have 83 “likes”. Sarah, Kim, Margaret, Phil and Nikki all have admin privileges—Sarah is primarily responsible for posting. At this point, the facebook page is being used to highlight blog entries from our community partners.
- Blog: Sarah continues to coordinate AFP blog, with new posts every Monday (and occasionally more often). While we have posts scheduled through the end of the semester, we are hoping to have the PD’s contribute posts in the coming months. (21 posts, 556 views, so far.)
- Sarah and Meredith Ledlie Johnson will be presenting their new farmers market curriculum for SNAP eligible populations during a webinar on Thursday, November 21 at noon. This will kick off a webinar series (using our Foodshed CoP space). If you have ideas or suggestions for topics, please contact Sarah or Nikki.
- Our web design student hire has been working to make the website more user friendly, and will be updating with content in the coming months. If you have other web suggestions/needs, please let Nikki know.

Curriculum (Michelle Schoeder-Moreno)

No updates at this time.

Model (Steve Hodges)

No updates at this time.

Regional Products

Kim, Phil, and Nikki have met since the October 14th meeting in Boone, and are drafting an action plan to address suggested activity for short, mid, and long-term outcomes. These recommendations will be presented to the management team for discussion in early 2014.