



# Local Food Systems Development Online Training

*Systems Thinking and Community Engagement as Foundational Competencies*

NACDEP Annual Conference

Cleveland, OH

Joanna Massey Lelekacs, Dara Bloom, Emma Brinkmeyer  
NC State University

June 11, 2018

# Outline

- Rationale
- Program Design and Description
- Results - Outcomes/Impacts
- Conclusion/Recommendations

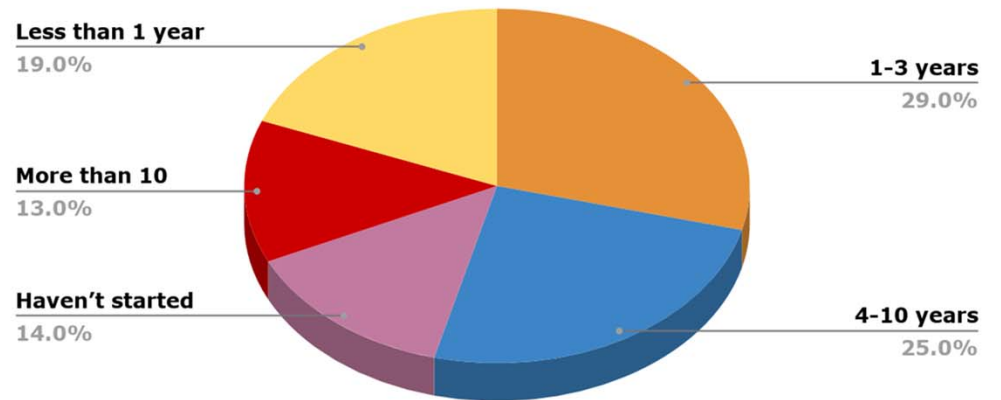


# Situation / Rationale

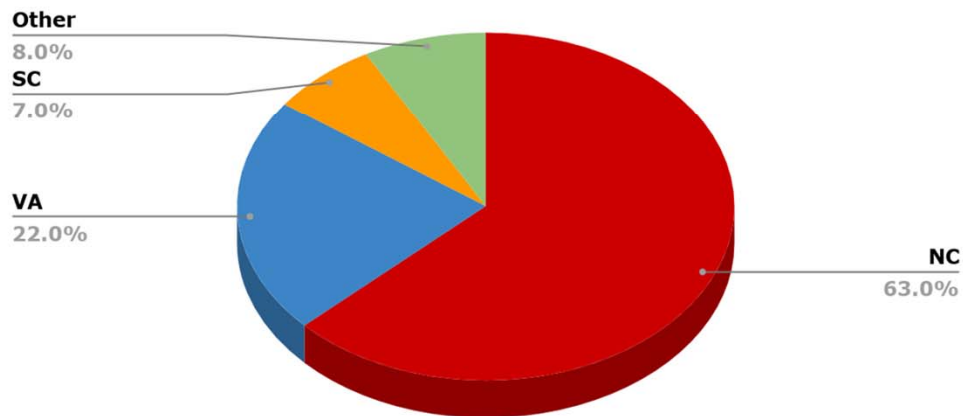


# 2015 Online LFS Training Needs Assessment Survey

Experience in Local Food System Development Work

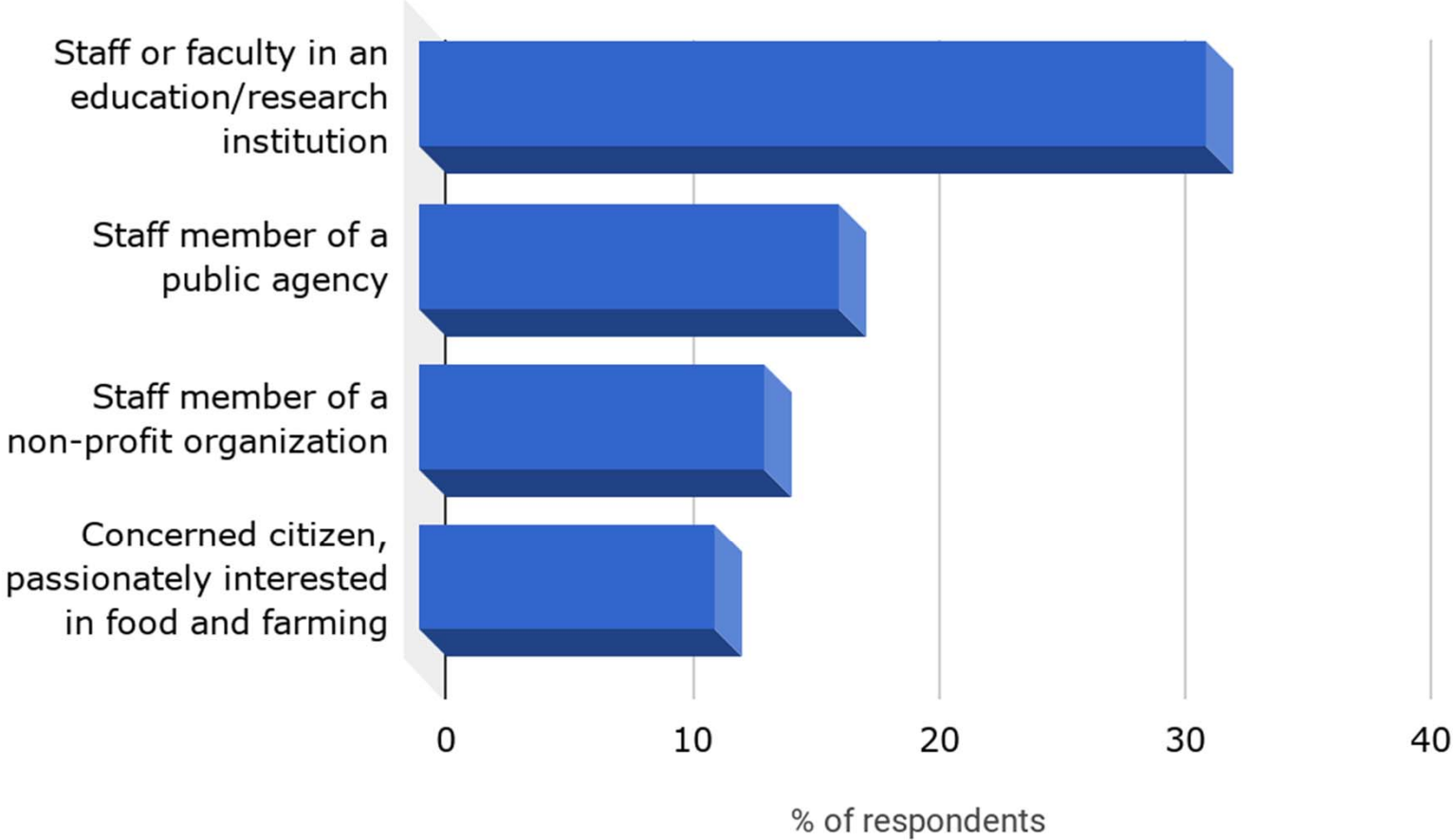


Participant Demographics by State

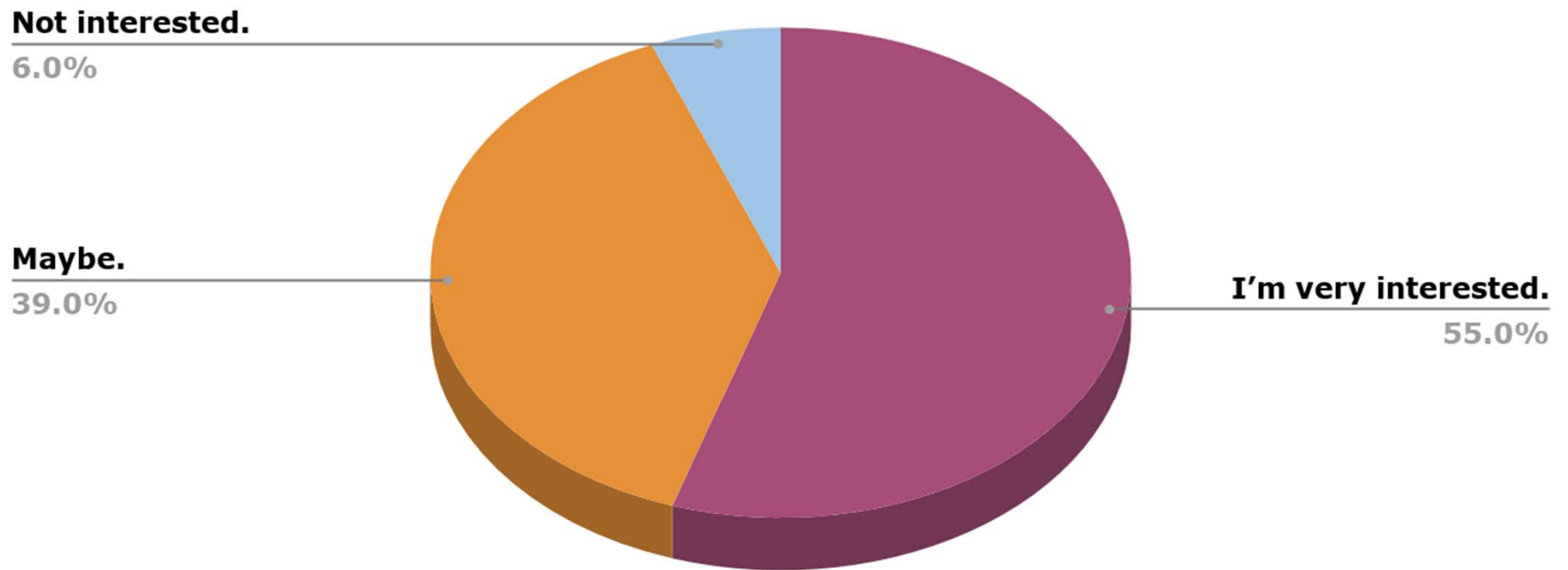


*Survey was adapted from 2012 Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture national survey.*

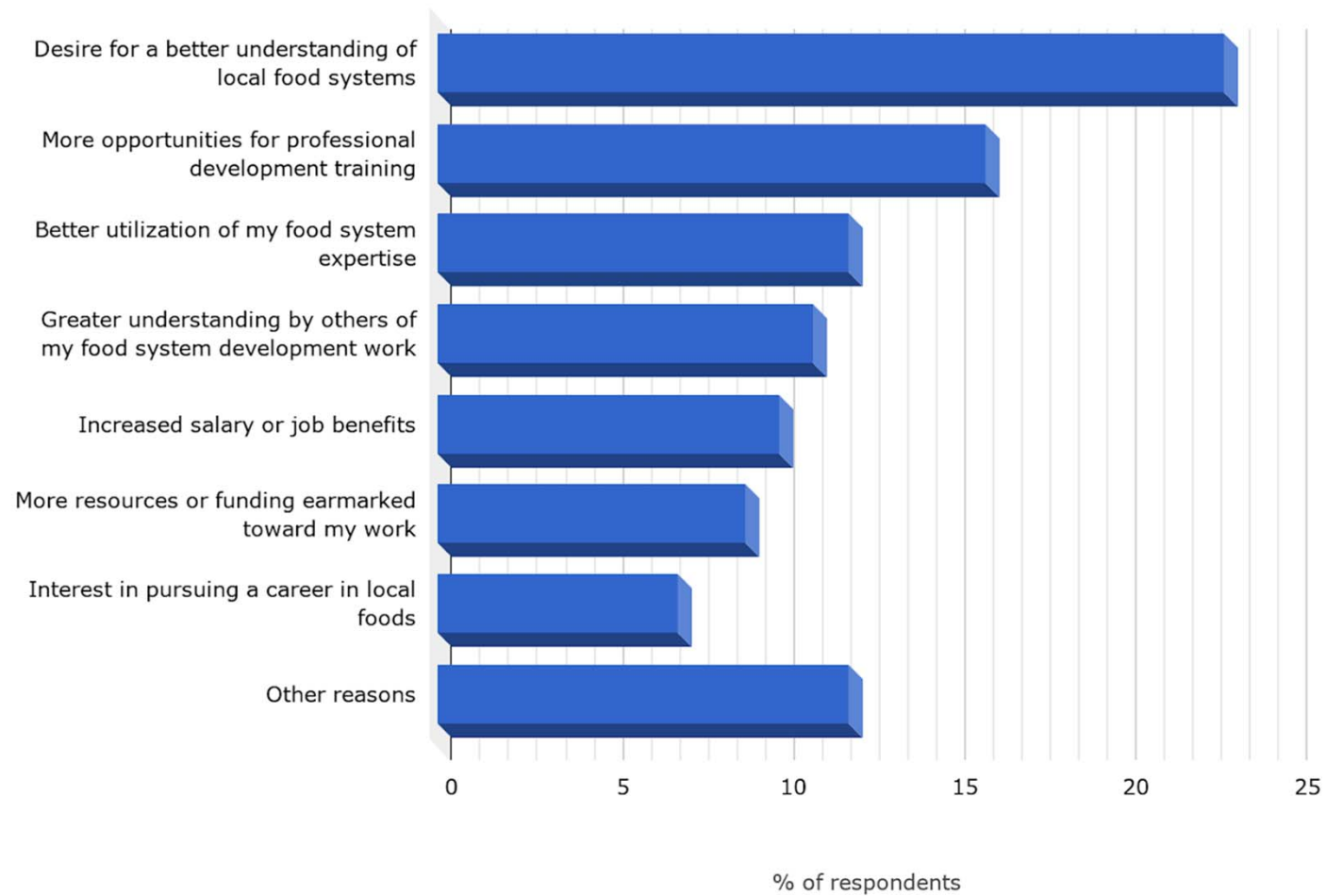
# Who were the Respondents?



## Interest in Enrolling in Local Food Systems Online Course



## Primary Reason for Interest in the LFS Online Course



# **Pilot Program Design and Description**



# Online Certificate Series - Pilot

## **Primary Goal & Objectives**

Build the capacity of Extension and other professionals\* to work with and educate growers, processors, distributors, buyers, and community members in the development and facilitation of high performing local food systems.



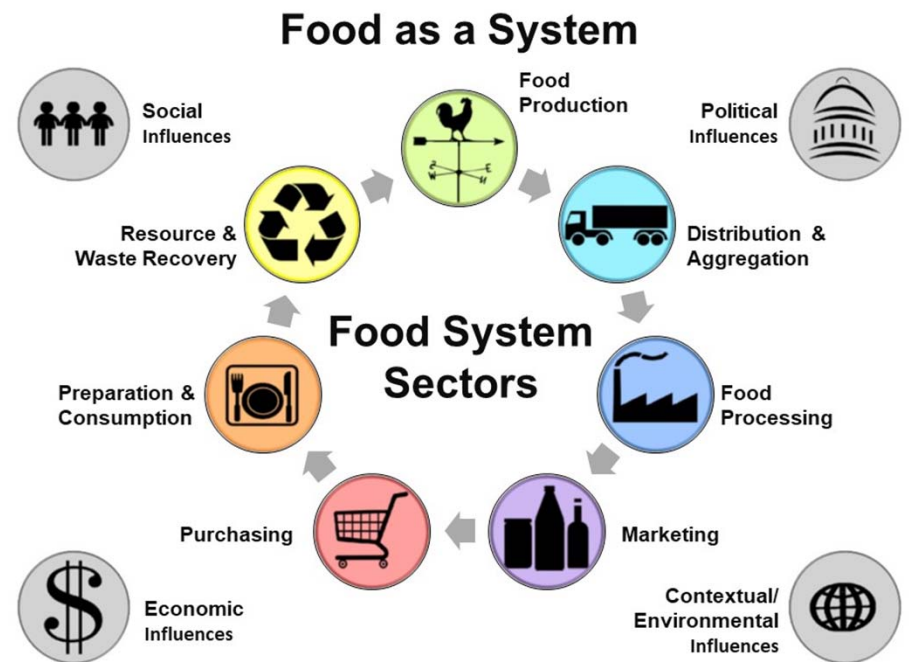
\* *e.g. non-profits, other state agencies, and private sector employees*

# Online Certificate Series - Pilot

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students will understand and utilize  
(in food systems development):

1. A systems approach
2. Place-based awareness
3. Diverse networks and collaboration through community leadership



Adapted by Center for Environmental Farming Systems from Cornell University, *Discovering the Food System; A Primer on Community Food Systems: Linking Food, Nutrition and Agriculture*.

# Overview of Local Food Systems

## *Online Professional Development Training*



## Pilot Courses

1. **Introducing Local:** Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going
2. **Food as a Common Denominator:** Bringing Everyone to the Table
3. **The Bottom Line:** Economic Opportunities & Challenges of Local Food Systems
4. **Value Chain:** Farm to Fork
5. Introducing **Regulatory Policy & Frameworks** for Local Food Systems Development

*Platform eXtension.org Campus, Moodle*

# Online Certificate Series - Pilot Learning Activities

- Recorded lectures
- Voiceover presentations
- Readings
- Forum posts
- Virtual Field Trips
- Storyline interactive activities
- Podcasts



# Online Certificate Series - Pilot

## **Student Assessment**

Requirements for successful completion of courses

1. Post module quizzes.

*Must achieve 85% or higher.*

2. Forum posts based on course activities.

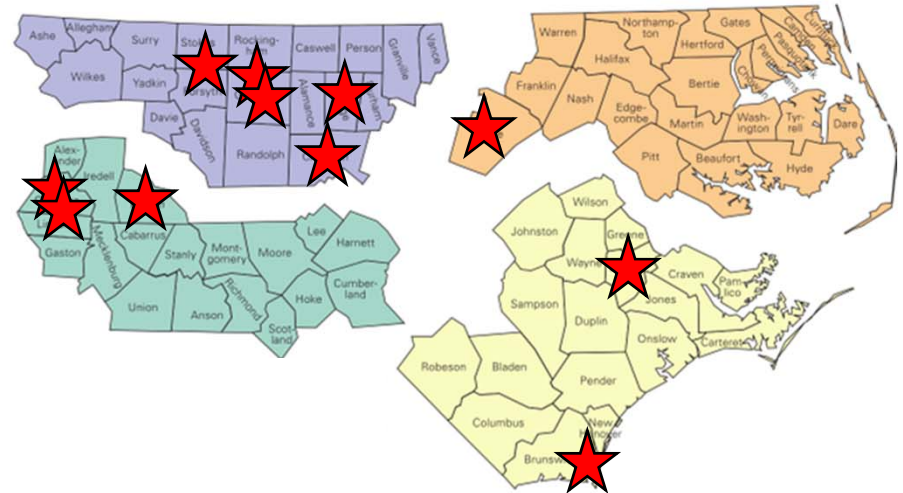
**Results:  
Outcomes and Impacts**

# Pilot Participants / Demographics

12 Participants

## *North Carolina*

- 2 Ag NGO staff members
- 1 Non-Extension Ag-related Educator
- 1 Food Council representative
- 1 Extension Program Associate
- 1 Farmers Market Manager
- 2 FSC Agents
- 2 Hort Agents
- 1 4-H Agent



## *South Carolina*

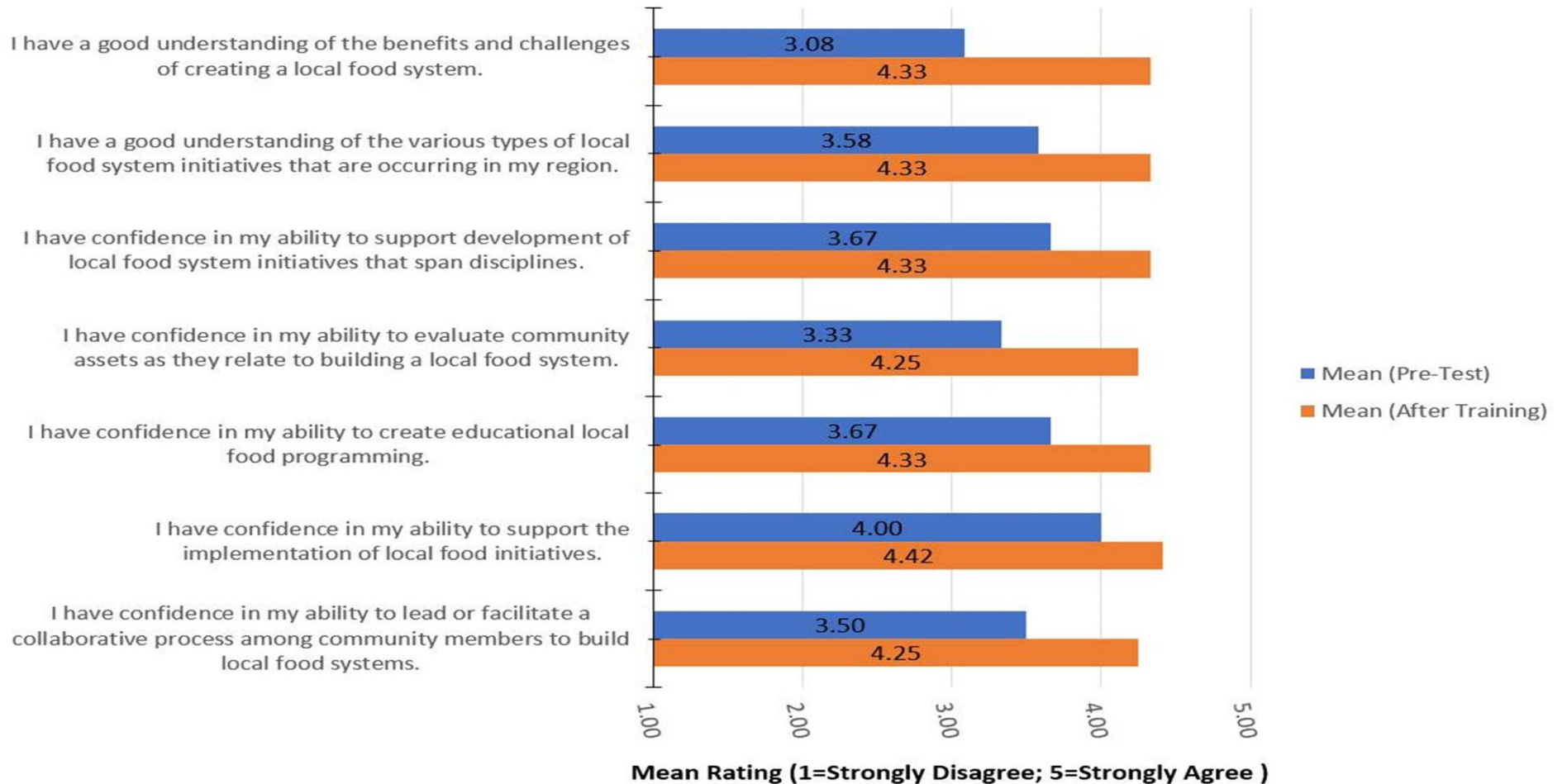
- 1 SC University Faculty

# Evaluation Methods

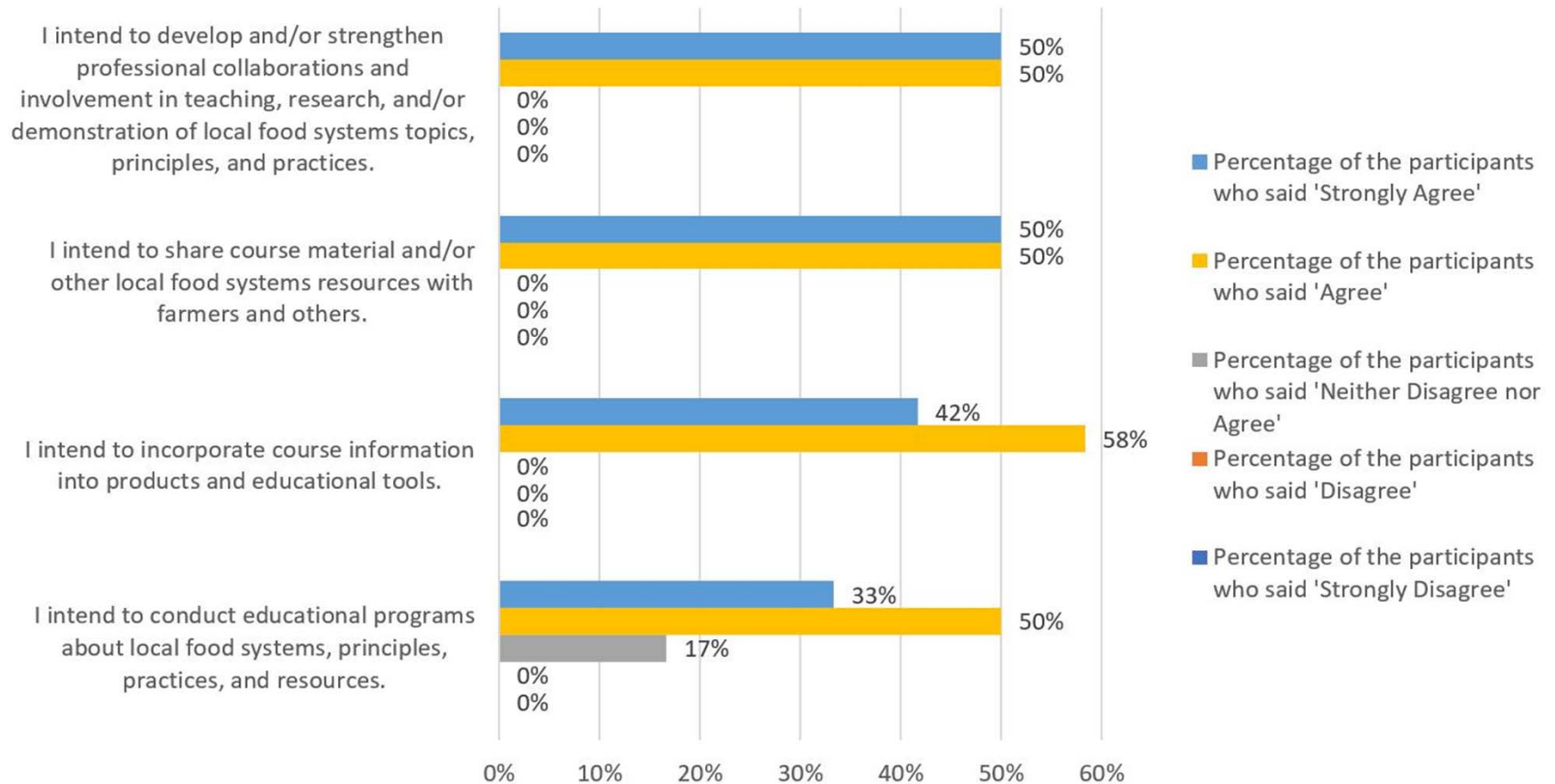
1. Pre-Course Survey to Assess Knowledge/Confidence (Prior to Course 1)
2. Post-Course Survey to assess:
  - a. Knowledge/Confidence and Aspirations
  - b. Satisfaction - strengths and weaknesses of course to glean information for improving course.
3. 6-Month Post Interviews (in process now)



## Comparison of 12 Participants' Confidence/Knowledge Change After Certificate Series



## Potential Practice Changes After Completion of Certificate Series



# Core Competencies / Foundational Knowledge

- *I have a much better understanding of the **history of our food system** which sheds light on to what we take as a given.*
- *I am better able to express the **benefits and impacts of the local food system** which gives me confidence in these conversations moving forward.*
- *I have gained so much knowledge about [**business planning and finance information**] and really learned why it is important to have this knowledge and how I can use it.*
- *The materials in this course were excellent at communicating [the importance of understanding the **various distribution channels** and evaluating their pros/cons] and **how to** go about actually conducting the analysis.*
- *This course was extremely helpful in preparing me for the opportunity to educate the community on how to develop a high performing local foods system by equipping me with knowledge of **direct examples, community impacts and terminology** on how the system operates.*

# Using what they learned

- *I have already used parts of this class in **local food policy council meetings** and **advisory council meetings**. It has helped me to educate **community members** about the sectors of the food system and how we all play a part and what we can do to better the food system.*
- *I've already used NASS data since taking this course (first time I've used it) **to assist a farmer**. I really like the explanation of free, online data tools.*
- *I feel more confident in my ability to speak with a new producer about their farm and the market opportunities available to them. In fact, I did so today. **I spoke with a grower** about where and how she could market her winter squash now that her summer farmers' market has ended...*

# Did we achieve our SLOs?

## Fostered a systems approach for future work

- *This course has helped me to be closer to the possibility of working with educating community members in developing local food systems [by providing] **concrete knowledge of how systems work...***
- *Reviewing the food system through the lens of the grower ... helped me more clearly see **potential gaps** in the food system and **how they would negatively impact the farmer.***
- *This course ... [equipped] me with knowledge of **direct examples, community impacts and terminology on how the system operates.***

# Did we achieve our SLOs?

## Enhanced place-based awareness

- *The case studies shared have given me **new insights into working with my community** through specific projects and through strategies of how to go about projects that I'm currently working on, but am having challenges with.*
- *[This training] has helped me to design more structured and efficient programming/efforts to reach **specifically identified goals** of the population I serve.*
- *I have more **knowledge of NC's food and farm history**, so I have more context to work from. I also have a greater understanding of one local food project in my community and can network resources or people there when it's appropriate.*


# Did we achieve our SLOs?

## Encouraged utilization of diverse networks and collaboration through community leadership

- *The course has helped me to **identify possible collaborators** and to work with them to make the best use of their talents and connections.*
- *I feel more confident in my ability to connect with stakeholders and **understand the different goals in the room.***
- *This course led me [to] better develop my **Circle of Influence...***
- *Understanding the **Collective Impact Model** and the paradigm shift from the Collaboration Model will help strengthen my capacity to work in my local food system.*
- *Being a part of local food policy councils in my area allows me to share the resources and information from the class to **help us determine community assets and create an action plan** that really fits the needs of the community.*

# Revisions to Course Design and Delivery

- Condensed the content (3 courses)
- Certificate for each course
- Increased interactivity
- Improved activities for online audience
- Improved cohesion of content
- Reinforced social presence of participants and teacher presence




**1. Foundations in Local Food Systems Development** (*Register now!*)  
(Prerequisite for the following two courses)

This introductory course is designed to provide a solid general foundation of knowledge of local food systems practice. The course provides a history of the US food system, defines key terminology, and describes benefits and challenges of local food systems.

Course participants are encouraged to learn about and reflect on what values and historical context influence local food system development in their own communities. Participants are introduced to the concepts of equity in food systems, and explore how the structure of the food system affects outcomes for different communities and populations.


Strategies for participatory food system development to affect systems change are shared as well as the importance of community-based leadership on local food projects. The course helps participants to distinguish between government, policy, and law as relates to local food systems, and guides participants towards understanding how to best act to address structural issues in local food system development.



**2. Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply & Value Chains** (*coming soon*)

This course introduces participants to the concept of a value chain, and explores what values drive supply chain configuration in different contexts, as well as how value chain development can support community and economic development.


Participants will also learn about the importance of collaborative relationships in successful local food systems, how local value chains can be upgraded, and what producers need to consider when selecting a market channel.



**3. The Bottom Line: Economic Realities & Other Considerations of Local Food Systems** (*coming soon*)

Local food systems are often promoted in terms of their ability to contribute to community economic development.

In this course, participants will learn about legal structures for local food value chain businesses, the case for triple bottom line impacts of local food systems, and traditional and alternative financing methods. Participants will also explore basic business planning and risk management, and some keys to marketing local food products, including regional branding.





# Course Topics

## Revised Series

**HANDOUT**

1. Foundations in Local Food Systems Development (prerequisite)
2. Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply & Value Chains
3. The Bottom Line: Economic Realities & Other Considerations of Local Food Systems

**Platform:** NC State's McKimmon Center for Extension & Continuing Education, Moodle





NC STATE Moodle Outreach

Foundations in LFS Development

Participants

Badges

Grades

Overview

Getting Started

Module 1: Introduction to Food Systems

Module 2: Community Engagement and Food Systems Change

Module 3: Introducing Regulatory Policy & Frameworks for Local Food Systems Development

Conclusion & Wrap-up

Home

Dashboard

Calendar

Private files

Announcements

Foundations in Local Food Systems Development

WolfWare / Home / My courses / Foundations in LFS Development

Overview

Your progress

## Overview of Local Food Systems

Online Professional Development Training



**NEED HELP?**

Help with this site:  
For help with course functionality, contact the NC State Help Desk at:

- email: [help@ncsu.edu](mailto:help@ncsu.edu)
- phone: 919-515-HELP
- web: <https://help.ncsu.edu/>

Help related to course content:  
For content-specific issues, contact the instructors at [localfoodnocsu@ncsu.edu](mailto:localfoodnocsu@ncsu.edu). In your message, please include a description of the help you need. Please allow one business day for response.

**ACTIVITIES**

- Forums
- Lessons
- Quizzes
- Resources

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

CLEMSON COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Cooperative Extension


NC STATE Moodle Outreach

Foundations in LFS Development

WolfWare / Home / My courses / Foundations in LFS Development / Module 1: Introduction to Food Systems / Session 1: Food System History & Heritage

Session 1: Food System History & Heritage

Overview



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Overview

- Activity #1: Defining Food Systems and Local Food Systems
- Activity #2: Food System Globalization
- Activity #3: Farming Systems and Labor: A US History
- Activity #4: Local Food Systems History
- Activity #5: North Carolina History & Heritage Podcasts

This session will provide a brief history of the global, United States, and state-specific food systems. Students will learn about the origins and characteristics of the globalized food system and factors that led to different food and farming systems in different regions of the US. State-specific content includes:

- North Carolina: how the history and culture led to the emergence of efforts to promote local food systems.

Before beginning, download a worksheet for taking notes on some key issues in this module (available in MS Word format [here](#) or as a PDF [here](#)).

NC STATE Moodle Outreach

Foundations in LFS Development

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Home

Dashboard

Calendar

Private files

My courses

Foundations in LFS Development

WolfWare / Home / My courses / Foundations in LFS Development / Module 2: Community Engagement and Food Systems Change / Session 1: Community Engagement and Asset/Capital Approaches

### Activity #3: Case Studies for Community Engagement in Food Systems Change

**Instructions**

This learning activity is composed of a series of videos. Part 1 offers a case study of community engagement in the Twin Counties region (Wash and Edgecombe counties) of North Carolina, and Part 2 is a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of one particular community-engaged food systems intervention: "produce packs."


Please use your worksheet for Module 2 (available in the Module 2, Session 1 Overview page) to take notes on some key issues in this activity.


These videos are excerpts from presentations that were part of a graduate course in local food systems, delivered in 2015.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Participants can describe examples of community-engaged food systems interventions
- Participants understand that local food systems are intricately intertwined to other systems (such as energy, built environment, water, etc) and therefore local food system development requires cross-sector, multi-discipline collaboration and systems thinking.

**About Our Presenters**

 Sue Perry-Cole is President and CEO of the North Carolina Association of Community Development Corporations.

 Dr. Alice Ammerman is a Professor of Nutrition and the Director of the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

# Online Certificate Courses

## Course 2. Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply & Value Chains

### Virtual Field Trip Activity Link

**NC STATE UNIVERSITY** Virtual Field Trip

**Tour Score**  
0

Select Spots To Visit Area

**NC STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Instructions/Transcript**

**Virtual Field Trip Menu**

Select a tour spot to travel to a location and grab tour points by answering questions. Jeff Bender, Bender Farms, Tim Williams, Working Landscapes, and Joe Otranto, Halifax County Schools will walk you through a tour of the Produce Center Value Chain Virtual Field Trip. Your goal here is to simply enjoy the Tour of the Value Chain and complete the field trip by visiting all of the tour spots while trying to achieve the highest tour score possible by answering simple questions. Choose one tour spot to start. We recommend starting on the 'Plant' hotspot on the top left of the screen. You will watch a narrated video about that tour stop. Once the video is complete, you can answer some follow up (ungraded) questions and then click Submit to return to the Tour map and click on the next tour stop.


**Interviews** **Tour** After viewing, complete the following question slide to complete this module area. **Name** ⚙️

# Online Certificate Series - Pilot

## Course 3. The Bottom Line: Economic Realities & Other Considerations of Local Food Systems

### Virtual Field Trip Activity Link

NC STATE UNIVERSITY
Virtual Field Trip



A map of a farm with several circular icons representing different tour stops. The icons include a sun, a house, a barn, a field, and a fence. A dotted line connects the icons, and a play button icon is visible in the top right corner of the map area.

Instructions/Transcript

**Virtual Menu**

Select a tour spot to travel to a location and grab tour points by answering questions. The owner and main operator of Open Door Farm, Jillian Mickens, will walk you through a tour of the farm. Your goal here is to simply enjoy Open Door Farm, complete the site visit by visiting all of the tour spots, and try to achieve the highest tour score possible, by answering simple questions. Choose one tour spot to start. We recommend starting on the "Open Door Farm" hotspot on the top right of the screen. You will watch a narrated video about that tour stop. Once the video is complete, you can answer some follow up (ungraded) questions and then click Submit to return to the Tour map and click on the next tour stop.

Tour Score

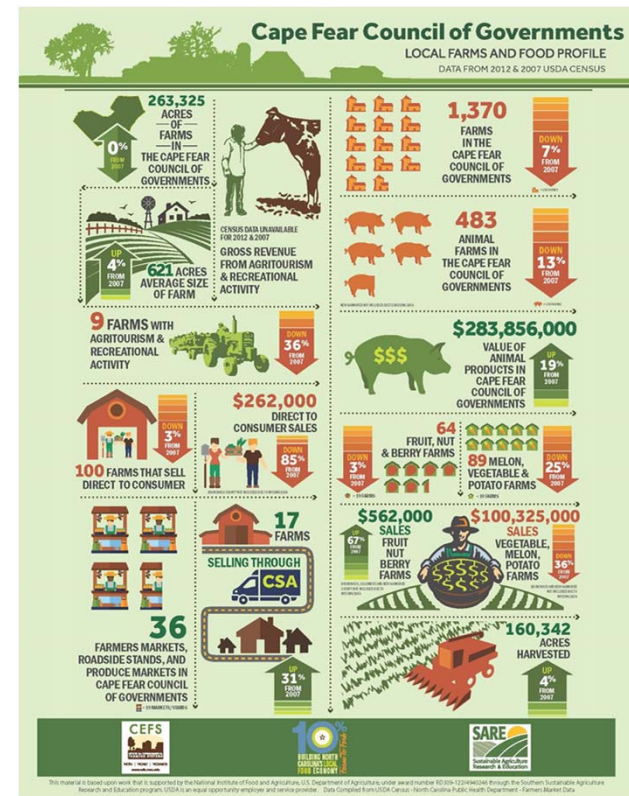
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Interviews

Tour

After viewing, complete the following question slide to complete this module area.

Name



# Conclusions & Recommendations for Practice

*“It [the course] gave me ... a deeper understanding of the challenges that exist for local farms and local farmers. And... I feel more driven to be a more active player in it [local foods work].”*

*“I think overall it [the course] was really helpful to help me lay that groundwork of what does a robust local food system really look like, [and] looking at some examples in other places was really helpful to do that.”*

*“I would definitely say in terms of interacting and engaging with the community... I definitely think that your course helped me in that regard.”*

*~Pilot Participants~*



## Get a Certificate in Local Food Systems

Non-credit online training from N.C. Cooperative Extension

**Who?** Working professionals with an interest in local food systems, or anyone pursuing a career in local food systems development.

**What?** A self-paced, practical research-based online training program featuring engaging learning activities including lectures, videos, readings and virtual field trips.

**Why?** Learn how local food systems are structured and develop the skills to support and expand local food systems. Participants will receive a certificate of completion from NC State University for each course they complete in the program.

**When?** Registration now!

To learn more about our courses, collaborators, and registration, visit [localfoodcourses.org](http://localfoodcourses.org)

Support for development of this online training program is provided in part by Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Professional Development Program, grant #ES13-119.



### Foundations in Local Food Systems Development

Our three-module introductory course.

Module 1: **Introduction to Food Systems**

- > Food System History and Heritage
- > Key Concepts and Evidence-based Impacts of Local Food Systems
- > Systems Issues and Approaches to Local Foods

Module 2: **Community Engagement and Food Systems Change**

- > Community Engagement and Assets/Capitals Approaches
- > Engaging Youth in Food Systems Efforts

Module 3: **Introducing Regulatory Policy and Frameworks for Local Food Systems Development**

- > Introduction to Government, Law and Policy
- > The Basics of Ag and Food System Policy
- > Who are the Actors and What are the Issues?
- > Place-based Case Studies of Food Systems Change



See excerpts of a virtual field trip: [go.ncsu.edu.opendoorfarm/vt](http://go.ncsu.edu.opendoorfarm/vt)

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**When?** Enrolling now! Learn more about our courses, collaborators, dates and registration at [localfoodcourses.org](http://localfoodcourses.org)

Program offered by



### Specialized Training

A new practical, research-based online training program developed especially for current and aspiring local food systems professionals is now available through a partnership between North Carolina, Clemson and Virginia Cooperative Extension services.

The program will prepare participants for a career in local food systems through an overview of local food systems research, tools and resources to support the practical application of research.

*"When I enrolled I thought I knew a lot about food systems, but this course helped fill in the holes in that knowledge to form a full systems perspective." – A recent participant*



### Local Food Systems Courses

**Foundations in Local Food Systems Development**, the introductory course, is available now. Providing a comprehensive understanding of local food systems practice, it targets the core competencies as identified by national leaders in the field. This course takes approximately 15 hours to complete.

**Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply and Value Chains and The Bottom Line: Economic Realities and Other Considerations** are additional courses that will be available soon.

### Engaging Lessons

All training courses provide a variety of learning activities, including lectures, videos, readings, podcasts and virtual field trips.

Course participants will learn the structure and components of local food systems and will be effective collaborators across the disciplines that support local food systems.

Learn more about this comprehensive training program, including course collaborator bios, program updates and how to register online at:

[localfoodcourses.org](http://localfoodcourses.org)

**Enrollment is open to anyone - Localfoodcourses.org**

# Thank you to our Program Advisers

- Abbey Piner, CEFS
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- Jillian Mickens, Open Door Farm
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