

**Community Food Systems: Strengthening the Research to Practice Continuum**  
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**Community Food Systems Literature Review Project** (Jan 2011-present)

- A bibliography of ~1600 articles on local and regional food systems and user guide, downloadable in any of three formats (PDF, Excel, Endnote) at the Ag Sustainability Institute/UC SAREP: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/sarep/sfs/CFSresources>
- Focus: peer-reviewed articles published since 2000, primarily dealing with US;
- 4 broad categories: 1) underlying definitions & assumptions, 2) strategies linking production, marketing & consumption; 3) institutional supports, and 4) ethical concerns/social justice issues;
- Caveats: work in progress...any categorization scheme debatable...lit boundaries fuzzy
- Initial use: Focus for graduate seminar/subsequent thesis projects

**Lesson Learned 1: Three Ways of Reading the Literature**

1. Practices: What's working? What isn't? Why?
2. Ideas: Who's right? Who's wrong? Which ideas animate?
3. Developmental politics: Strategic challenges? Institutional trajectories? Winners and losers?

**Lesson Learned 2: Key Strategic Challenges**

1. *Race and class*: tension between inclusiveness/justice and short-term viability
  - a. Market dysfunction 1: Finding price points that work for farmers while ensuring low-income consumers have access to healthy food;
  - b. Market dysfunction 2: Finding price points that work for farmers while ensuring just pay and working conditions for farmworkers and other food system employees;
  - c. Cultural privilege: The tendency of many local food efforts to reinforce the pre-existing advantages of white/more privileged populations.
2. *Political approach*: tension between 'insider' and 'outsider' change strategies
  - a. Conventionalization of organics
  - b. Compromise/cooptation in policy work
  - c. Values-based supply chains
  - d. Hybrid CSA models
3. *Scale*: tension between the advantages and limits of working at the community scale
  - a. The ambiguous meaning of "local"
  - b. Limits of localism/need for nested scales for economic and political action (local, reg, state, national)

**Moving Forward: A Key Role for Community Development Thinking**

- Ideas matter in directing change, but literature often focuses on broad ideological forces and not enough on how reform ideas take shape close to home, where operational considerations, daily demands, and scarce resources force difficult tradeoffs (Stone, Orr, Wongs 2006).
- To develop/sustain ideas requires civic planning capacity, including institutions to focus attention over time and anchor community problem solving (requires fiscal support!).
- Keys: planning principles/mechanisms (e.g. food policy councils), and focus on multiple forms of community capital (built, social, political, environmental, etc.)
- Research agenda: more situational analysis (e.g. comparative case studies): what matters when and how in animating local reform to meet the strategic challenges noted above.

**CFS Bibliography Project: Articles Reviewed Fall 2011**

Categories/Subcategories	Articles in category	Articles reviewed
<b>DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS</b>		
Definitions of Regional/Local/Sustainable Food System	83	3 (4%)
Assumptions about constraints/opportunities posed by conventional systems	79	28 (35%)
<b>ETHICAL CONCERNS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES</b>		
Labor/farmworkers	21	21 (100%)
Race/Ethnicity/Gender/Class	203	39 (19%)
Food Security/Justice	115	34 (30%)
Local Control/democracy	81	
Local Food Systems/Social Movements	92	27 (29%)
Critique of Localism	50	
<b>STRATEGIES LINKING PRODUCTION, MARKETING, &amp; CONSUMPTION</b>		
Economic and Business Development	76	
Consumer behavior/demand	177	25 (14%)
Direct Marketing	71	
CSA	59	
Farmers Markets	137	
Farm Stands	2	
Farm to Restaurant	13	
Farm to Institution	90	
Regional Food Systems Marketing	95	
Venues for Local Foods Processing and Distribution	109	
Economic Benefits of Regional Food Systems	114	
Agritourism	35	
Values-based supply chains	117	117 (100%)
Gardens	11	
School Gardens	39	
Home Gardens	20	
Community Gardens	110	48 (44%)
Urban Farms	51	
Changing cultural values around food consumption	117	
Energy and environment	47	28 (60%)
Waste/recycling	18	
Food miles	43	
<b>INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTS</b>		
City and Regional Planning and/or Foodshed Planning	91	
Community Food System Assessments/Local Food System Indicators	54	
Farmland Preservation	11	
Policies, Regulations, and Governance Mechanisms or Processes	180	
Local (including Food Policy Councils)	23	
State/regional	14	
Federal (Farm Bill, etc.	82	
Education: The University's Role	95	
Education: Training programs	37	
Education: Tapping local knowledge/Networks for sharing ideas, learning	154	21 (14%)
Education: Nutrition Education	86	
<b>TOTALS (without duplicates):</b>	<b>1598</b>	<b>278 (17.4%)</b>