

Growing a Healthy Economy with Local Foods

6 Steps to Success Toolkit

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Getting Started

County Directors, Extension Agents, and other local foods development professionals are concerned that agriculture and local food system development are sometimes absent from local and regional economic development planning efforts. This Toolkit will give Agriculture and Local Food System Development professionals step-by-step instructions on how to have the work done in Agriculture and Local Food System Development become a recognized and valued resource in the county's and region's economic development work and planning.

Step 1: Increase Your Knowledge Base of Economic Development

Economic development (ED) is traditionally defined as:

"Wealth creation through the mobilization of human, financial, capital, physical and natural resources."

Note the emphasis on **wealth creation**, which is generally connected with **business attraction**, **industrial growth**, home building, and commercial and **infrastructure** construction. In order to determine whether economic development has occurred, analysts examine a community's Economic Base. They are looking for a net gain of money flow **into** the community. This means that economic developers are mostly interested in businesses that produce **and sell** more product, service, or activity **outside of the community** than inside of the community. These businesses are known as "Primary Businesses." Secondary businesses are those who just serve the local population. An example of a Primary Business is an auto manufacturer that creates 500 new jobs locally but sells cars globally. The auto manufacturer takes the money from its

sales of cars around the world to pay the workers' wages, put some money back into the business, and hopefully pay some dividends to its investors. The revenue from global sales has a "multiplier effect" of creating more local wealth because the workers spend their wages locally at the burger joint, the lawn mower repair shop, and the drug store. These local businesses are all examples of "Secondary Businesses," the majority of whose product, service, or activity remains within the community.

Tourism businesses are also now recognized as contributing to the Economic Base of a community because they attract people from outside the community who spend dollars inside the community.

Community Development (CD), in contrast, is typically defined as follows:

"Engagement of community members to pro-actively **understand** and **enhance** economic, social, political, environmental, cultural, physical, and educational aspects of a **community** through visioning, goals, objectives, and implementation."

Note that the emphasis here is on community engagement, which typically involves a closer look at what the community itself can bring to the economic development planning process.

Merging the Two = Community Economic Development (CED)

While some economic developers stick to the traditional notion of industrial recruitment as their brand of economic development, current thinking merges community development principles into economic development strategies. CED is defined as

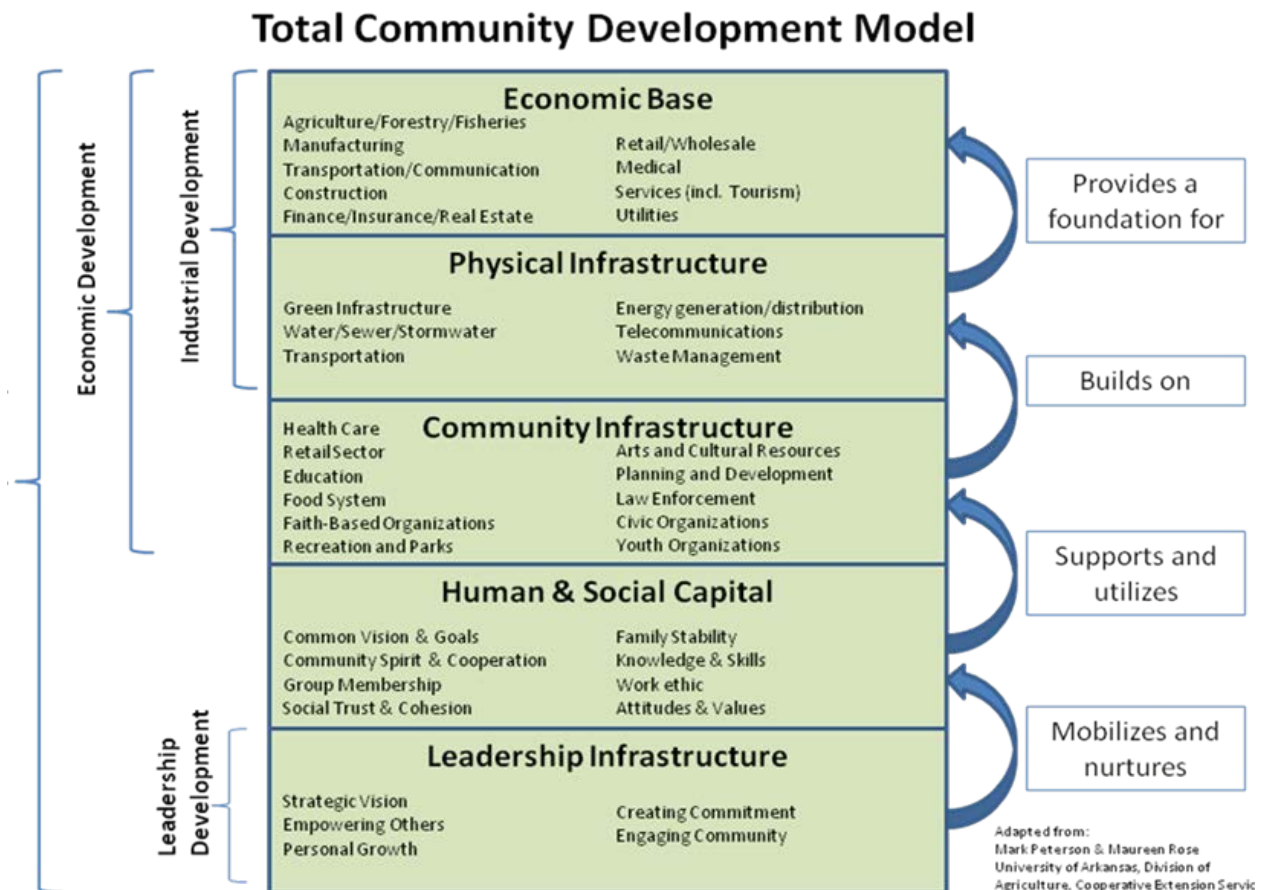
"A field of study that actively elicits community involvement when working with government and private sector to build strong communities, industries, and markets. CED is a multifaceted comprehensive approach to community change that is not limited to just poverty programs, nor is it synonymous with industrial recruitment."

Community Economic Development:

- Uses local resources as much as possible;
- Employs sustainable strategies for improving social conditions; and
- Encourages the development of social capital by engaging community members in the planning process.

Using the model below, communities can understand the value that different societal and political segments have in building a dynamic whole community. While industrial recruitment,

the go-to strategy for traditional economic development, plays a major role in a community's prosperity, it should not be the only tool in the economic development toolkit. The skills built through leadership trainings and community visionings (such as the ones offered through Extension and other community development professionals) provide a strong foundation for the implementation of other effective strategies of community economic development.



Understanding the foundational elements of economic development will help you understand how economic development professionals think. It is also important for Agriculture and Local Foods professionals to know the economic development “language.” Key economic development terms are defined on the CultivateNC Agent Resources Page at:

<http://communitydevelopment.ces.ncsu.edu/economic-development/>. Conversely, economic development professionals should know the lexicon of sustainability, found at <http://www.pbs.org/food/shows/the-lexicon-of-sustainability/> and food system wiki, <http://foodglossary.pbworks.com/w/page/31253712/FrontPage>.

Step 2: Understand Economic Development Strategies

CARE Strategies

Community Economic Developers use a number of strategies to achieve economic growth in their communities. The acronym for these strategies is CARE. C = Creation; A = Attraction; R = Retention; E = Expansion. **Creation** strategies include entrepreneurship trainings, business incubators, youth entrepreneurship, and business coaching. Support for these strategies includes access to capital, education, networking, intellectual stimulation, and community support.

Typical **attraction** strategies include community business matching models, which match the needs of a business to the assets and goals of the community. For example, a business is surveyed about the amenities and infrastructure they seek when making location decisions. These could include a skilled labor force, broadband, access to transportation, high quality education, recreational opportunities, etc. There are many instances where industry has been blindly targeted and recruited through the use of incentives (grants, low interest loans, tax deferments, tax abatements, build to suit, infrastructure development). If the business is lured to the community with taxpayer money and then fails or leaves the community without meeting the incentive requirements, the community and its taxpayers feel cheated or defrauded. By matching the business needs with what the community already has (which could include a supply source through existing businesses), there is greater likelihood that the new business will locate there as well as stay there after the incentives run out.

The final two CARE strategies are **Retention** and **Expansion**. Arguably, these are the most important strategies in the economic development toolkit because they build on the businesses that already exist in the community. Effective BRE (Business Retention and Expansion) strategies include award and certification programs but should also incorporate regular visitation by city and county officials to determine their local business needs and plans for the future. It is extremely important for economic developers to keep and possibly expand existing businesses, especially within a strong industry cluster in a region. These steps help stop trade leakage in the region. For example, an auto factory currently outsources its battery needs to a company in Ohio. If there is a local battery factory that could serve those needs, the automaker would not need to outsource its supply of batteries. Connecting those businesses into a value chain stops the trade leakage.

Step 3: Know How to Apply the Metrics of Economic Development

While there are many indicators of successful economic development, two key ones are (1) **job creation** (and retention), and (2) **wealth creation**. Wealth creation is key to robust community development, because resident workers tend to spend most of their money locally.

In addition to these standard indicators, the local food movement is also impacting **downtown redevelopment** and **quality of place** positively. A downtown farmers market or successful restaurant that serves locally-sourced food not only creates jobs but also increases downtown pedestrian traffic. This increased traffic in downtown businesses may stimulate investment by local government in downtown infrastructure improvements, thus laying the ground for other business startups.

Finally, if your local foods efforts are making inroads into addressing **food access** challenges in your community, be sure to tell your local government and economic development officials. They will definitely want to know, and may be able to assist you in those efforts.

Step 4: Be the Expert on Agriculture and Local Foods

Industry Clusters

There are 17 industry clusters recognized by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) published by the Department of Labor. Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology is one of the industry clusters and is Extension's strength and expertise. Extension should **always** be involved in an economic development planning process around this industry.

Forest and Wood Products; Manufacturing; Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Visitor Industries; and Life Sciences (Biomedical/Biotechnical) are also industries in which Extension specializes. Any recruitment or development effort of these industries by economic development professionals should also involve Extension.

Because of the historic knowledge divide between agriculture and other industry by the economic development profession, it is important that you bridge that gap by being the expert on the economic value of agriculture and agribusiness in your county or region. The 2012 Ag Census <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/> is a great place to start. Your state

department of agriculture (<http://www.ncagr.gov/stats/codata/index.htm>; <http://agriculture.sc.gov/>) also has great information on the impact of agriculture, including levels of value-added income and employment, in terms of total jobs as well as a percentage of total employment.

Local Foods

The local food movement has definitely gained momentum over the past five years. Unfortunately, the research supporting the economic impact, using traditional indicators, of local foods has lagged.

Despite the lack of significant academic research supporting statistical evidence of the positive impact of local foods on local economies, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence. A casual look at how popular farmers markets and locavore restaurants are gives you a pretty good idea that they are producing some pretty amazing results in terms of both social and economic capital.

CultivateNC staff at NC State University has just received the go-ahead on a research project that will provide data on the impact of local foods on downtown redevelopment in small North Carolina towns. Expect that report in 2015.

The North Carolina State University portal of local foods <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-economic-development/> also has great resources on the economic impact of local foods.

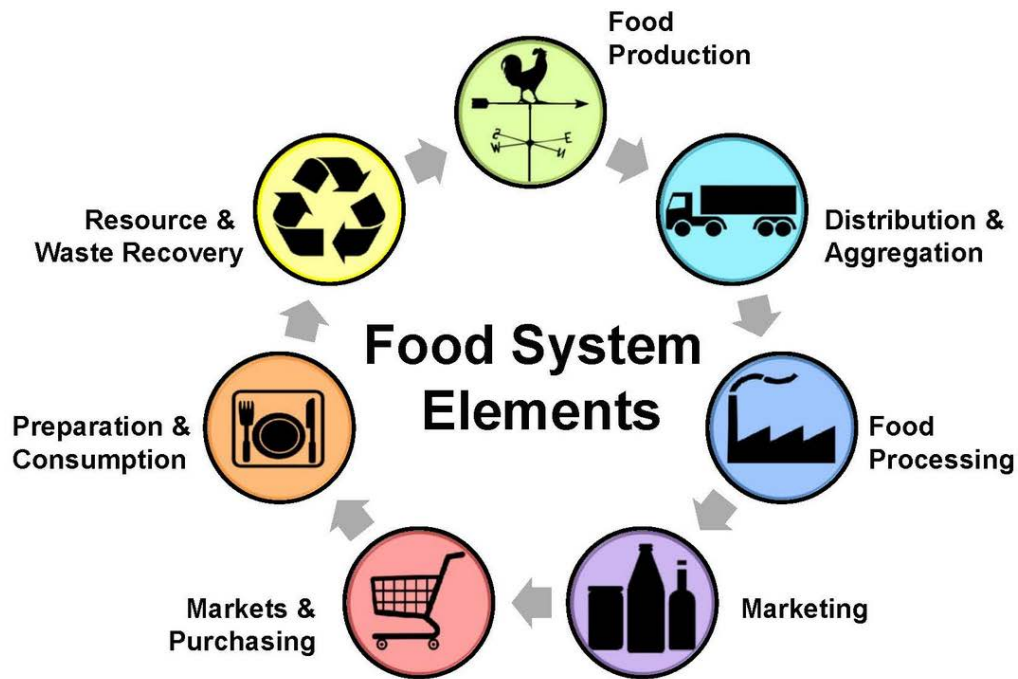
What You Can Do – Asset Inventory

While government statistics and academic reports play an important role in building the message about the value of agriculture and local foods, what you do, in terms of inventorying and recording the impacts you see locally, will only strengthen that message.

If you already have either a formal or informal group of individuals working together as a local food policy council, much of this information may already have been collected. Otherwise, take a few moments to complete the Asset Inventory found at the end of this Toolkit. This exercise will accomplish the following:

- Identify all of the individuals, businesses, and agencies currently involved in the local food system.
 - Include names, contact information, and mission or purpose.
 - Assign each a role in the food system (see Food System Elements figure below).
 - Identify action steps where this person, business, or agency can contribute.
- Inventory their strengths and weaknesses; where they may need assistance from local government or economic development professionals; where they can provide assistance to local government or economic development professionals.
- Work with your local food council, if any, or engage your local citizenry, to develop action teams to tackle economic issues relating to food in your community.

- Provide easy access to this information by local government and economic development professionals, through a link on your web page or as a handout.



Adapted by Christy Shi, Center for Environmental Farming Systems.

From: Wilkins, J. and Eames-Sheavly, M. Discovering the Food System; An experiential learning program for young and inquiring minds. Cornell University, Departments of Nutritional Science and Horticulture. <http://www.discoverfoodsys.cornell.edu/>

As the expert on agriculture and local foods you also may have a better idea than your economic development professional on what federal or state resources exist for grants, loans, and technical assistance. A list of some of these resources is located at the end of this Toolkit.

Some economic development officials, especially those responsible for urban areas, may not know or understand the role agriculture and local foods play in their communities. It may be up to you to let them know what they don't know.

Step 5: Apply Economic Development Strategies to Agriculture and Local Foods

When talking with an economic development official about what you do, it is important to mention that within Extension, the vast majority of agent activities either directly or indirectly support economic development efforts in their county. Specific talking points with Economic Developers include an explanation of the types of services you (as an Extension or other local foods professional) can provide to economic development planning. The lists below are examples of Extension services that fall under the different CARE strategies. They were created by Extension professionals at the Fall 2013 NCCES Conference.

Creation (Entrepreneurship) Strategies:

Leadership Development, Entrepreneurial Development, Youth Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, New markets (food and educational products), Beginning Farmer/Farm School Trainings, Farm Incubators, Site Selection Services, Small Business Planning and Coaching Services, Co-op Formations and assistance, Alternative Enterprise Development, Funding Resource Services, Co-development of Public School Curricula

Attraction (Recruitment) Strategies:

Workforce Development (Job Readiness Programs, Improve Access to STEM in High School, Partner with Local Colleges, Leadership Trainings), Emergency Management Programs, Site Selection Services, Agricultural Supply Chain Assistance, Environmental Stewardships, Industrial Extension Services, Quality of Place and Life Programs (Childcare, Healthcare, Greenway Development)

Retention and Expansion (Working with Existing Businesses) Strategies

Disaster Preparedness Training, Multi-level support for Agriculture and Agribusiness (farmers markets, food processing expertise, Serve Safe, HACCP, GAP trainings), Leadership Trainings, Farm-City Week (Business recognitions), Manufacturing Forums, Industrial Extension Services, Board Governance Trainings, Buy Local Campaigns, Site Development, Public Policy

The point of the above lists is to emphasize that many of you, whether you are Extension agents or specialists or local foods development professionals, already engage in economic development strategies as part of your work. If you have not already done so, think about how you can expand on your current work activities to strengthen the local food movement capacity

in your community. For example, many local foods councils tend to focus their energy more on one food system element than another (e.g., food access). Think more broadly about how each of these elements can be strengthened (production, distribution and aggregation, processing, marketing, markets and purchasing, preparation and consumption, and waste). For example, when bringing fresh, healthy food choices to corner stores, think about how to market those food choices, display them, and support efforts of the stores that sell them. Could the store managers benefit from some business planning or marketing training? Consider your resources and ask yourself whether you have taken advantage of everything or everyone who may provide a contribution. For example, have you worked with your local Small Business Development Center when creating those trainings? Regarding distribution issues, think about engaging not only your growers, but also your business community in a discussion of alternatives. Consider approaching your local chamber of commerce about holding an Ag Appreciation or Local Foods Day in order to build the networking opportunities between agriculture and other local industries.

Finally, do not underestimate the importance of having an economic developer as part of your local food council, if one has formed in your community. Because their time is limited, it is critical that you build and craft your message to the economic developer in such a way as to convince them that investing their energy (and potential development dollars) in agriculture and local foods development is good for their community.

Step 6: Build Your Message

In order for Agriculture and Local Foods to get a seat at the Economic Development table, you have to speak the language and know how to deliver your message effectively. It's important that you have a **handout fact sheet** and **presentation materials** to deliver that message. The tips below will help you develop these messaging vehicles.

Presentation Materials and Handouts (Fact Sheet)

Make It Simple

Don't overwhelm your audience with too much information. Just give them information that is easy to digest.

- "Agriculture accounts for __% of total county employment."
- "Agriculture accounts for __% of total income in the county."
- "Extension is the knowledge leader in agriculture."

You can find much of this information in the 2012 Ag Census

<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/> or at your state's department of agriculture (<http://www.ncagr.gov/stats/codata/index.htm>; <http://agriculture.sc.gov/>).

Emphasize the Unique and Unexpected

You will be telling the story of agriculture in your community, so be sure to provide some not so well known facts, if you have them.

“Did you know . . .

From the Farm Restaurant sources its food from ___ farms around the county?

Down Home Restaurant's sales have increased ___% over the past ___ years?

Just Country Restaurant has increased its staff by ___% over the past ___ years?”

Make It Credible

Before you begin developing your message to your economic developer, be sure that you have done your homework so that you are well-versed on the facts that support your argument that agriculture and more specifically, local foods, should be a part of his or her economic development plan for the community. Be sure to document your involvement in any projects that have advanced the local foods movement in your community.

Give It Emotional Appeal

When making a presentation, it's important to sweeten it with a little emotional appeal, so that the information is not too dry. Can you connect the local food movement in your community to any faces? Community meetings can be great venues for oral story-telling of triumph over adversity, an extraordinary connection, or simply a sweet sentiment. For example, one community had gathered to discuss ways to bring greater healthy food access to their town. One idea generated from that discussion was to build a community-owned grocery store. The people in the room were excited, but also a bit overwhelmed by the sheer number of tasks that had to be done just to plan the endeavor, not to mention the money such an effort would cost. While the anxiety level of the adults there was climbing, it was the voice of a youngster that brought them back to the earth when he respectfully said:

“I think it's very important that our town has a grocery store. But can we start with just a garden?”

The topic of discussion in the room then shifted to this smaller, more achievable goal as the community's first step in promoting healthy food access. The shift of focus allowed everyone in the room the opportunity to taste immediate success, thus giving them confidence to tackle the larger project.

Break It Down

It's important to convey to your audience the sense that you have the capacity to tackle the issues and that you have devoted considerable time to their solution. Break your presentation down into 4 parts:

- Your Team

- Your Mission and Vision

- The Challenge

- Your Solutions (short and long-term), including measurable outcomes*

*A page from *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* is included at the end of this Toolkit, to illustrate "whole measures" of food systems as they pertain to economic development.

The Perfect Pitch

The purpose of the pitch is to make the "ask." Know what you want from local government or your economic development professional before you make your appointment.

The pitch is one sentence that tells your audience who, what, when, where, how, and why. Tell them how their help will make a difference in what you are doing in local food system development.

A worksheet for the development of your fact sheet and presentation, as well as the perfect pitch, is at the end of this Toolkit.

The Green Fields Initiative in the Sandhills area of North Carolina is a good example of a group of people who got the message "right." While the web site is still in development, it nonetheless captures the message of sustainable agriculture and robust community development. Check it out: <http://www.greenfieldsinitiative.com/background.html>.

Resources

(NC) Statewide

Regional Councils (Economic Dev)

- A [Southwestern Planning Commission](#)
- B [Land of Sky Regional Council](#)
- C [Isothermal Planning & Development Commission](#)
- D [High Country Council of Governments](#)
- E [Western Piedmont Council of Governments](#)
- F [Centralina Council of Governments](#)
- G [Piedmont Triad Regional Council](#)
- J [Triangle J Council of Governments](#)
- K [Kerr-Tar Council of Governments](#)
- L [Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments](#)
- M [Mid-Carolina Council of Governments](#)
- N [Lumber River Council of Governments](#)
- O [Cape Fear Council of Governments](#)
- P [Eastern Carolina Council](#)
- Q [Mid-East Commission](#)
- R [Albemarle Commission](#)



Grants, Loans, and Technical Assistance Related to Food System Development

Overview

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/topics/sustainag/gSac/documents/PotentialFoodHubGrants.pdf>

North Carolina

http://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/nc-main-street-economic-impact_placeeconomics.pdf

http://www.nctomorrow.org/NC_Regional_and_Statewide_Strategies.pdf

<http://www.nctomorrow.org/resources/six-livability-principles/>

http://www.ncruralcenter.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86&Itemid=142

<http://www.thrivenc.com/>

<http://www.goldenleaf.org/>

<http://tobaccotrustfund.org/>

National

<http://www.sare.org/>

http://www.farmaid.org/site/c.qII5IhNVJsE/b.2723745/k.9953/Grant_Guidelines.htm

<http://rafiusa.org/>

USDA (US Department of Agriculture)

http://sustainableagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/NSAC_FoodSystemsFundingGuide_FirstEdition_4_2010.pdf

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/programsandopportunities.html>

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/NCHome.html>

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD_EconomicDevelopment.html

Rural Development Seven Strategies for Economic Development

Building 21st Century rural communities requires adoption of strategies that look not only within a community for defining its strengths and opportunities, but to regions where one community can compliment and draw upon the resources of another. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Strategic Partners: The ole adage that there is strength in numbers especially holds true when you build strong and strategic alliances. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Capital Markets: Stimulating local economies requires the infusion of new investment opportunities. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Regional Food Systems: Building markets for local and regionally grown agricultural products makes great economic sense. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Regional Collaboration: Smaller, more remote rural communities do not have to be stand-alone economic engines in an oasis, each looking only from within for sustainability. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Community Building: Creating great places to live, raise families, provide recreational opportunities, and infrastructure for high paying jobs is very important to our efforts at USDA. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Alternative Energy: America development and use of alternative energies is good for our country and good for our environment. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

Broadband and Continuous Business Creation: Expanding access to high-speed broadband is one of our greatest challenges and our highest priority. [Audio](#) | [Transcript](#)

EDA (Economic Development Administration)

<http://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/index.htm>

HUD (Housing and Urban Development)

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs

Economic Development Programs

This site provides a summary of the various programs and initiatives in the Office of Economic Development and links to related federal economic development programs.

Rural Innovation Fund (RIF)

The Rural Innovation Fund (RIF) is a program designed to improve the quality of life for residents of distressed rural areas by supporting innovative and catalytic economic development and housing projects.

Promise Zones

The Promise Zones is an initiative that will revitalize high-poverty communities across the country by attracting private investment, improving affordable housing, expanding educational opportunities, providing tax incentives for hiring workers and investing in the Zones, reducing violence, and assisting local leaders in navigating Federal programs and cutting through red tape.

Renewal Community/ Empowerment Zone/ Enterprise Community (RC/EZ/EC) Initiative

The RC/EZ/EC Initiative is vital to development in more than 100 distressed urban and rural areas nationwide. The Initiative, through a combination of innovative tax incentives, federal grants, and partnerships with government, for-profit and non-profit agencies, has opened new businesses and created jobs, housing, and new educational and healthcare opportunities for thousands of Americans.

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)

The BEDI provides grants on a competitive basis to local entitlement communities. Non-entitlement communities are eligible as supported by their state governments. BEDIs must be used in conjunction with loans guaranteed under the Section 108 Program. Communities fund projects with the BEDI grants and the 108 guaranteed loan financing to clean up and redevelop environmentally contaminated industrial and commercial sites, commonly known as "brownfields."

Rural Housing and Economic Development (RHED)

Enacted in 1999, RHED provides grants on a competitive basis principally to non-profit organizations to support capacity building, housing, and economic development programs.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program (Section 108 Program)

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement communities are eligible to apply for a guarantee from the Section 108 Loan Guarantee program. CDBG non-entitlement communities may also apply, provided that their State agrees to pledge the CDBG funds necessary to secure the loan. Non-entitlement applicants may receive their loan guarantee directly or designate another eligible public entity such as an industrial development authority, to receive it and carry out the Section 108 assisted project.

Section 4 Guarantee Recovery Fund

Section 4 is a loan guarantee provision authorized under the Church Arson Prevention 4 Act of 1996 (the Act). It authorizes a Loan Guarantee Recovery Fund to provide certain nonprofit organizations with a source of financing to rebuild property damaged or destroyed by acts of arson or terrorism.

Congressional Grants

Congressional Grants are authorized each year in the annual HUD appropriation and accompanying conference report. Congress authorizes a specific level of funding to a designated grantee, to undertake a particular activity cited in the appropriation or conference report. Only those entities designated by Congress may apply for funds. Unsolicited applications are not accepted.

Economic Development Initiative (EDI)

This program has not been funded since FY 2001. The EDI provides grants on a competitive basis to entitlement communities. Non-entitlement communities are eligible as supported by their state governments. EDIs must be used in conjunction with loans guaranteed under the Section 108 Program to enhance the feasibility of economic development and revitalization projects financed with Section 108 Loan Guarantee funds. No new grants are being awarded.

THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMIES



A Food System that Promotes Thriving Local Economies*:

1. Creates local jobs and builds long-term economic vitality within the food system

- *Invests, encourages, and promotes community based enterprise development.*
- *Promotes economic support structures for the next generation of producers.*
- *Promotes business incubator programs for community members, youth, and food-insecure individuals that develop skills and cultivate ownership.*
- *Prioritizes hiring of local community members for farm and food system jobs.*

2. Builds local wealth

- *Promotes local and regional agricultural businesses that are sustainable and support a healthy food system.*
- *Ensures that decisions about local economies are directed by members of the community.*
- *Builds community economic literacy to sustain long-term economic sustainability.*

3. Promotes sustainable development while strengthening local food systems

- *Promotes local and regional sustainably grown or harvested agricultural products within the food system, and promotes local businesses to distribute and promote these.*
- *Promotes green building and energy conserving practices on farms and in facilities related to food processing or distribution (be that processing plants, supermarkets, food banks).*
- *Supports active relationships between conservation and working lands.*

4. Includes infrastructure that supports community and environmental health

- *Includes diversified and sustainable farm-based businesses with connection to their history and community.*
- *Includes processing and distribution facilities that are efficient, ecologically sound, safe, culturally relevant, and locally run.*
- *Develops new enterprises and products that respect ecological diversity through accounting for how a product is made, how it may be used, by whom, and the alternative uses of the product or space over many users and time.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using Whole Measures for Community Food Systems.

From Whole Measures for Community Food Systems,
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/ppatch/documents/WholeMeasuresCFS.pdf>

Inventory of Agriculture and Local Food System Assets



(Adapted by Becky L. Bowen from a document developed by Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu, Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University, for the USDA Stronger Economies Together initiative.)

This inventory was completed by _____ on _____ 201_.

Build a thriving local economy through local food system development.

Types of Community Assets	Name	Role in Local Food System Development (Production, Processing, Distribution etc.)	Action Step (What we are going to do – use the CARE strategies)
People (Growers, Processors, Distributors, Health Professionals, Marketers, Logistics Specialists, Retailers, Economic Developers)			
Organizations (CSAs, Farmers Markets, Faith-based Organizations, Chamber of Commerce, Restaurants, Schools, Hospitals, Agribusiness, etc.)			
Physical Resources (Empty buildings, business incubators, computer labs, meeting spaces, motor vehicles, storage)			

Inventory of Agriculture and Local Food System Assets (Example)



(Adapted by Becky L. Bowen from a document developed by Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu, Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University, for the USDA Stronger Economies Together initiative.)

This inventory was completed by _____ on _____ 201_.

Build a thriving local economy through local food system development.

Types of Community Assets	Name	Role in Local Food System Development (Production, Processing, Distribution etc.)	Action Step (What we are going to do – use the CARE strategies)
People (Growers, Processors, Distributors, Health Professionals, Marketers, Logistics Specialists, Retailers, Economic Developers)	John Smith, Farmer Alice Baker, CSA Mgr Carr Allman, Doctor	Production Distribution Consumption	Involve in developing training for new farmers Invite to transportation discussion Present in Public nutrition series
Organizations (CSAs, Farmers Markets, Faith-based Organizations, Chamber of Commerce, Restaurants, Schools, Hospitals, Agribusiness, etc.)	Mountain Farm to Table CSA Allendale Baptist	Distribution Emergency Distribution	Hold listening session on how to improve distribution efforts Invite to Food Access Conversation
Physical Resources (Empty buildings, business incubators, computer labs, meeting spaces, motor vehicles, storage)	123 Main Street	Aggregation	Feasibility for Food Hub



Data on Agricultural and Local Food System Assets

(Adapted by Becky L. Bowen from a document developed by Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu, Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University, for the USDA Stronger Economies Together initiative.)

This information is completed for each name listed on the Inventory of Agricultural and Local Food System Assets.

1. Name of Individual or Organization:

2. Contact Person: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

3. Occupation, if individual: _____

Mission or purpose, if organization: _____

4. How many employees are doing agriculture or local foods related work? _____

5. What important local activities or programs is this person or organization currently carrying out in the community that is related to agriculture or the local food system?

6. What skills or resources can this individual or organization bring to the local food system development?

7. What contacts does this person or organization have in the community who could promote the local food system development? (Please list.)

- a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____

8. If this person is in agricultural production, answer the following questions:

- a. How many acres does he/she farm? _____
b. Is any acreage used as pasture land? _____ If yes, how much? _____
c. What crop(s) does he/she grow? _____
d. Poultry? _____ Livestock? _____
e. What percentage of production is sold through direct sales? ____%
f. What percentage of production is sold through indirect sales? ____%
g. Does this person sell locally? _____ If yes, describe what types of contracts or other arrangements exist (restaurants, schools, farmers markets, CSAs, etc.)

h. Does this person engage in any value-added activities? _____ If yes, describe.

i. Did this person leverage any money for his/her operations through grants? _____
If yes, how much? \$_____ ; through loans? _____ If yes, how much?
\$_____

9. What kind of assistance, if any, does this person need (*technical, financial, labor, marketing, etc.*)?



Building the Local Foods Message

(Created by Becky L. Bowen for North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service)

To Build an Agricultural and Local Foods Fact Sheet and/or Presentation on your Community as well as to identify your “ask” of local government and/or economic development office, consider the following questions:

1. What is the total county/region income based on sales from agricultural production?
\$ _____
2. How many people in the county/region are employed by agricultural production businesses? _____
3. What is the total county/region income based on sales from suppliers to agricultural producers? (Include equipment dealers, seed and chemical sellers and other farm supply dealers) \$ _____
4. How many people in the county/region are employed by suppliers to agricultural producers? _____

The remainder of the questions relate to agricultural production of food for human consumption only.

5. What is the total county/region income based on sales from agricultural production for human consumption? (Include grower direct and indirect sales volume)
\$ _____
6. How many people in the county/region are growers of food for human consumption (produce, dairy, meat, eggs)? _____
7. How many people in the county/region are employed by such growers? ____ full-time ____ part-time ____ seasonal
8. How many people in the county/region, not including the grower employees counted above, provide support services to such growers? (Include Extension and other agricultural support providers, transportation, aggregators, food processors) ____ full-time ____ part-time ____ seasonal

9. How many farmers markets are operating in the county/region? _____
10. What is the total number of jobs in the county/region associated with farmers market administration? _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ seasonal
11. How many retail establishments operate in the county/region that specialize in local foods sales? _____ How many people are employed by these establishments? _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ seasonal
12. What is the total Agricultural/Agribusiness Employment in the county/region? *Total your answers to Questions 6-11* _____
13. How many CSAs (community-supported agricultural businesses) operate in the county/region? _____ How many people are employed by these establishments? _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ seasonal
14. How much money was leveraged by growers of food for human consumption? If yes, break down by grants \$_____ and by loans \$_____.
15. How many restaurants identify themselves as “farm to fork” or serve locally-sourced food? _____
16. How many people work in these restaurants? _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ seasonal
17. Is there a food hub or other local food aggregator in your county/region? _____ If yes, please describe. *(Include whether it packages and labels.)*

18. Is there a processing facility in your county/region? _____ If yes, please describe. *(Identify whether it is a shared-use processing facility).*

19. How many total employees do the enterprises described in Questions 17 and 18 have? _____ full-time _____ part-time _____ seasonal
20. Is there a food broker in your county/region? _____ If yes, please describe.

21. Does your county/region have a farm school, farm incubator, or other beginning farmer program? If yes, please describe.

22. Does your county/region have a university, community college, Small Business Development Center, or SCORE chapter that provides business planning assistance to new businesses? If yes, please describe.

23. Does your county/region have a community college or other workforce developer that trains a food system workforce? ____ If yes, please describe. (*Include trainings in food safety and specific equipment for food processing.*)

24. What emergency food distributors exist in your county/region? Please list with employment numbers. *Include food pantries, food banks, and faith-based initiatives, including community gardens.*

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25. What urban agriculture ordinances exist in your county/region? Does you county have a unified development ordinance? Please describe.

26. Does your county/region offer a local food directory? If yes, please describe.

27. Does your county/region have a brand associated with food sourced there? ____ If yes, please describe.

28. Does your county/region have a policy regarding use of city and county land and resources for local food system development? ____ If yes, please describe.

29. Does your county/region have a food waste disposal system or private enterprise ? ____ If yes, please describe.

30. Are there any efforts in food entrepreneurship being planned in your county/region's food deserts? ____ If yes, please describe.

31. What have you done in local food system development in your county/region? Please describe.

32. What are others doing in local food system development in your county/region? Please describe.
