Emerging Opportunities in the Local Food Economy

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Appalachian Regional Commission
ARC’s mission is to be a strategic partner and advocate for sustainable community and economic development in Appalachia.

Our goal is to bring Appalachia into socioeconomic parity with the rest of the nation.
The Appalachian Regional Commission

- 13 States
- 420 Counties
- 205,000 sq. miles
- 25.2 million people
- 73 Local Development Districts
The Appalachian Regional Commission

1960
295 High-Poverty Counties


2007–2011
108 High-Poverty Counties

Why local food systems (and KYF2)?

- Economic diversification
- Place-based development
- Entrepreneurship
- Wealth creation
- Local leadership capacity development
- Health and competitive workforce
Appalachian Jobs and Local Food Economy tours

- Conducted over 100 site visits
- Visited over a dozen USDA-supported activities
- Highlighted the rich fabric of partnerships
Appalachian Jobs and Local Food Economy tours
What did we see?

- Farmers markets
- Food hubs
- High school Ag programs
- Community gardens
- Kitchen incubators
- Farm to school
- Culinary training
- Specialty food businesses
Importance of Interagency partnerships

2011 Jobs and Innovation Accelerator

- Lead Agencies:
  - EDA
  - Labor
  - SBA

- Winner:
  - Finger Lakes Food Processing Cluster
Importance of Interagency partnerships

2012 Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator

- **Lead Agencies:**
  - EDA
  - USDA
  - ARC
  - DRA

- **Winner:**
  - West Virginia Value-Chain Cluster
  - GrowWNC
Importance of Interagency partnerships

2013 Appalachian Livable Communities

*Appalachian Livable Communities winners

Partners: USDA, EPA, & ARC
Importance of Interagency partnerships

E3 (Energy, Environment, Economy)

- Participating Agencies:
  - EPA
  - Commerce
  - Energy
  - Labor
  - USDA
  - ARC

E3: ECONOMY - ENERGY - ENVIRONMENT
A SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY
Rural Jobs Accelerator – WV

West Virginia Jobs and Local Food Systems Tour

Value Chain Clusters under Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator grant

- Doddridge-Tyler-Ritchie-Gilmer Counties Marketing Co-Op
- Mid-Ohio Valley Growers Association
- Fairmont
- Morgantown
- Hampshire County High School – Romney
- Tucker County High School – Hambleton
- Spencer (Roane County)
- Philippi (Barbour County)
- Charleston
- Webster Springs (Webster County)

Tygart Valley Cluster

Greenbrier Valley Regional Cluster

Distressed County

At-Risk County (FY 2010)

30 Miles

CHANGE THE FUTURE WV

WEST VIRGINIA FOOD & FARM COALITION

ROAD MAP FOR THE FOOD ECONOMY
Rural Jobs Accelerator – NC
- Lots of enthusiasm
- Entering the economic mainstream
- Changing face of agriculture
Hallmarks of success

- Tailored to circumstances of individual communities
- Features an “anchor” organization
- Reflects a diverse set of partners
Words of caution

- Not a “silver bullet” for a local economy
- A major food hub isn’t for everyone
- “Infrastructure” is undeveloped
Areas to focus on

- Technical assistance and ag incubators
- Access to capital
- Value-added activities, including specialty food development and export promotion
Looking forward

- ARC’s food map
- Additional interagency collaboration
- Rural Export Partnership
Questions?

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