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**IN THIS ISSUE**  
**DUNCAN HILCHEY**

## **Sustainable livelihoods: An evolving asset-based strategy for food systems development**

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We are very pleased to announce that noted food systems consultant and researcher **Kate Clancy** has just become a columnist for JAFSCD. Kate is a food systems consultant, visiting scholar at the Center for a Livable Future, Bloomberg School of Public Health Johns Hopkins University, and senior fellow at the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture. I first met her in 1987 while she was helping organize the Onondaga County (New York) Food Policy Council — one of the first county-based FPCs in the U.S. Her column, *Digging Deeper: Bringing a Systems Approach to Food Systems*, will focus on regional food systems, food security, agriculture of the middle, and policies at all levels to encourage the development of resilient food systems.

Coincidentally, we bid farewell to columnist **Joseph McIntyre**. His column, *Views from the Food System Frontier*, focused on the leading edges of food systems work. Unfortunately for us, the success and growth of his own program, the Ag Innovations Network, necessitated his leaving JAFSCD as a columnist. Fortunately for us, he remains as a JAFSCD advisor.

### **Special Topic Focus: Sustainable Livelihoods in Food Systems**

This special issue is focused on sustainable livelihoods in food systems. Though it was not our intent, all submissions in response to the call were from our friends in the global South. Sustainable livelihoods is an emerging avenue of research in the social sciences, especially international development. At its core is the simple idea that helping individuals, families, and communities build assets around which they can sustain entrepreneurial activity can ultimately help them overcome poverty.

**Stefanie Lemke, Farideh Yousefi, Ana C. Eisermann, and Anne C. Bellows** offer us an applied tutorial on the sustainable livelihoods framework in *Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches for Exploring Smallholder Agricultural Programs Targeted at Women: Examples from South Africa*. The farming livelihoods of women are

also the subject of *Association Between Duration of Community-based Group Membership and Sustainable Livelihoods for Kenyan Women Dairy Farmers*, by **Colleen Walton, John VanLeeuwen, Fiona Yeudall, and Jennifer Taylor**. In *The Future of Subsistence Agriculture in Rural Communities in Uzau, Edo State, Nigeria*, **Stephen Onakuse** establishes a rationale for public policy to support subsistence farming for the benefit of the community and the whole nation. Finally, comparing patterns in diversification in two communities in Eastern India, **Chandan Kumar and S. P. Singh** argue for more equitable distribution of government resources to support farmers in *Determinants of Agricultural Land Use Diversification in Eastern and Northeastern India*.

### Open Call Papers

Leading off our open call papers are three that focus on food systems and higher education. Co-authors **Rebecca Dunning, Nancy Creamer, Joanna Massey Lelekacs, John O'Sullivan, Tes Thraves, and Teisha Wymore** challenge the established extension model in *Educator and Institutional Entrepreneur: Cooperative Extension and the Building of Localized Food Systems*. In *Community-Engaged Learning in Food Systems and Public Health*, **Julie L. Self, Becky Handforth, Janelle Hartman, Corey McAuliffe, Elizabeth Noznesky, Rebecca J. Schwei, Laura Whitaker, Amanda J. Wyatt, and Amy Webb Girard** describe a student-driven, community-engaged learning course at Emory University for helping students understand the determinants of food choice. And **Maleka P. Hashmi and Kitrina M. Carlson** offer case studies of integrating service-learning and research into the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curricula in *Interdisciplinary Model for Infusing Food Security into STEM Curriculum*.

Many of the remaining papers in this issue challenge some of the conventional wisdom around food systems. In *Community Food Security via Urban Agriculture: Understanding People, Place, Economy, and Accessibility from a Food Justice Perspective*, **Mahbubur R. Meenar and Brandon M. Hoover** identify some of the challenges in addressing food security through urban agriculture. **Shawn A. Trivette** reviews the literature on local food systems and argues that they are not inherent mechanisms of sustainability in *Close to Home: The Drive for Local Food*. In *Economic Viability of Selling Locally Grown Produce to Local Restaurants*, **Amit Sharma, Catherine Strohbehn, Rama Radhakrishna, and Allan Ortiz** closely examine the entire value chain in direct wholesaling to restaurants and caution producers to carefully weigh their costs and benefits. Similarly, **Brian J. Schilling, Kevin P. Sullivan, and Stephen J. Komar** conducted an economic impact assessment of agritourism and find the majority of farmers engaged in agritourism garner little direct income benefit in *Examining the Economic Benefits of Agritourism: The Case of New Jersey*. In *Surveying Agrifood Stakeholders To Identify Priorities as Part of a Virginia Food System Assessment*, **Matthew C. Benson, Lisa S. Hightower, Eric S. Bendfeldt, Crystal Tyler-Mackey, Kim L. Niewolny, and Gordon Groover** find that Virginia food system stakeholders believe government understanding of local food systems issues should be a top priority. The challenge of improving access to high-quality local foods for food-insecure populations is the focus of *Building Capacity Between the Private Emergency Food System and the Local Food Movement: Working Toward Food Justice and Sovereignty in the Global North* by **Jesse C. McEntee and Elena N. Naumova**.

In the last of our accepted papers for this issue, **Nancy K. Karanja, Mary Njenga, G. K Mutua, C. J. Lagerkvist, E. Kutto, and J. J. Okello** find high levels of contamination in produce raised in wastewater irrigated fields in *Concentrations of Heavy Metals and Pesticide Residues in Leafy Vegetables and Implications for Peri-urban Farming in Nairobi, Kenya*.

## Columns

While papers in response to our special-topic call focused on sustainable livelihoods in the global South, several of our columnists took a crack at applying their own versions of the framework to North America. In his *Economic Pamphleteer* column, **John Ikerd** argues that “the only sustainable alternative to vertical integration and vertical competition is vertical cooperation.” In *Metrics from the Field*, **Ken Meter** draws a parallel between the third world of the global South and the third world in the U.S. In *Global Views of Local Food Systems*, **Rami Zurayk** looks at balancing the right to livelihoods with the right to food — and sees one of humankind’s greatest challenges. Finally, in *Digging Deeper*, **Kate Clancy** applies systems thinking in the context of food policy councils and how they may foster urban and peri-urban regional collaboration.

## Reviews of John Ikerd’s *Essentials of Economic Sustainability*

Because he presents such deeply philosophical arguments, we sought three reviewers — one practitioner, one sociologist, and one economist — to offer their respective takes on John Ikerd’s most recent book, *The Essentials of a Economic Sustainability*. Unfortunately, we were only able to find a sociologist and a practitioner to take on the task! Sociologist **Gilbert Gillespie** and farming educator **Antonio Roman-Alcala** find Ikerd’s latest treatise on sustainable capitalism extremely thought-provoking but also very challenging. 



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