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IN THIS ISSUE

DUNCAN HILCHEY

The depth and breadth of the emerging food systems literature

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Beef origin traceability, cultural sustainability, rural food deserts, climate variability and adaptations, food safety regulations, urban agriculture, and food waste — the topics offered by authors of this open call edition of the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (also called JAFSCD or the *Food Systems Journal*) reflect the enormous diversity of the nascent field of food systems. We hold in high esteem the researchers across a broad range of disciplines working in collaboration with practitioners in the field to produce the papers contained herein. Anthropologists, economists, animal scientists, sociologists, educators, and even lawyers, are working with food policy council members, planners, and staffers from community-based organizations with increasing frequency. It is rewarding to see the transdisciplinary literature on food systems grow, and the *Food Systems Journal* community is very proud to be contributing to it. This issue is a testament to the remarkable depth and breadth of the emerging food systems literature.

We start out this issue with **John Ikerd's** *Economic Pamphleteer* column, in which he gives us a sneak preview of what's to come in our forthcoming issue on cooperatives and food alternative food systems initiatives. And in his *Global Views of Local Food Systems* column, **Rami Zuryak** reveals the devastating impact of civil war in Syria on that country's food system.


Next we share a provocative viewpoint prepared by **Alan Hallsworth** and **Alfred Wong** entitled *Urban Gardening: A Valuable Activity, But...* Four teams of previous authors offer their responses, including **Kathryn Colasanti** and **Michael Hamm**; **Laura Lavid**; **Terri Evans** and **Christiana Miewald**; and **Evan Weissman**.

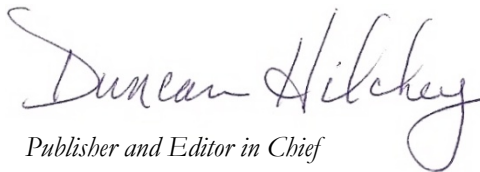
Similarly, **Hannah Chiswell** stirs a constructive debate around the farm succession and intergenerational farm transfer literature with a critique of *Cultivating Narratives: Cultivating Successors*, by Steiger, et al., in this journal (<http://dx.doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2012.022.012>). In turn, **Jay D. Gatrell**, **Thomas Steiger**, and

colleagues respond with a rejoinder, *“Dumb Farmers”: Or, They Can’t Possibly Know What They’re Talking About — We’re the Experts.*

In *A Traceability Model for Beef Product Origin Within a Local Institutional Value Chain*, **Daniel Buskirk**, **Jeannine Schwehofer**, **Jason Rowntree**, **Robert Clarke**, **Daniel Grooms**, and **Tristan Foster** explore a state-of-the-art system for sharing detailed product information with consumers. Their model is featured on the cover of this issue. In *Toronto Farmers’ Markets: Towards Cultural Sustainability?*, **Deborah Bond** and **Robert Feagan** examine how farmers’ markets can address and potentially benefit from catering to an increasingly diverse consumer base. **John Van Hoesen**, **Brandy Bunkley**, and **Cody Currier** move us a bit closer to defining rural food deserts in *A GIS-based Methodology Toward Refining the Concept of Rural Food Deserts: A Case Study from Rutland County, Vermont*. Local knowledge may play a critical role in coping with climate change according to **Sarah Ayeri Ogalleh**, **Christian Vogl**, and **Michael Hauser** in their paper, *Reading from Farmers’ Scripts: Local Perceptions of Climate Variability and Adaptations in Laikipia, Rift Valley, Kenya*.

Christy Anderson Brekken provides a case study of Oregon’s attempt to balance food safety and small producer interests in *Can We Have Our (Safe and Local) Cake and Eat It Too? Oregon Re-crafts Food Safety Regulations for Farm Direct Marketed Foods*. In *Challenges and Strategies Among the Poor: Focus on Urban Agriculture in KwaMashu, Durban, South Africa*, **Hangwelani (Hope) Magidimisha**, **Lovemore Chipungu**, and **Rosemary Awuorh-Hayangah** find that while urban agriculture is flourishing, it could become a much more significant livelihood strategy with government acceptance and support. **Andrea L. Rissing** gives voice to women farmers through an ethnographic study described in *Iowan Women Farmers’ Perspectives on Alternative Agriculture and Gender*. Finally, **Majd Abdulla**, **Ralph C. Martin**, **Martin Gooch**, and **Eduardo Jovel** offer the first study to estimate Canadian food waste over time in *The Importance of Quantifying Food Waste in Canada*.

One final note: We have established a new feature on the Journal website called the **JAFSCD Book Nook**. Here you’ll find books our authors have written, books we seek reviewers for, and a list of all the book reviews published to date in JAFSCD. Feel free to email me at duncan@newleafnet.com to suggest a title for inclusion in the Book Nook. 


Publisher and Editor in Chief