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IN THIS ISSUE

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Adapting to change: A challenge for producers and consumers



Published online September 19, 2014

Citation: Hilchey, D. L. (2014). Adapting to change: A challenge for producers and consumers [Editorial]. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 4(4), 1–3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2014.043.018>

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Change is always in the wind, but the pace at which change is taking place in many aspects of human endeavor is clearly hastening — and leading to a socioeconomic bifurcation that includes some good, and some not so good, trends. Evolving food systems are no exception: witness the growth of both big farms and small farms, obese citizens and hungry citizens, greenfields and brownfields, food oases and food desserts, industrial ag and artisanal production, and so on, while the middle scale of almost everything continues to decline rapidly. Progressive producers and consumers have to work against cultural and economic inertia, making it a bit more challenging to adapt to rapid changes for those building the bandwagon upon which others (e.g., greenwashers) simply jump.

In this issue a number of columns and papers touch on the theme of adapting to change and shedding light on ways of managing it, including climate change (as represented on our cover) and social and economic changes.

We begin this open call issue with a letter to the editor from **Dave Gutknecht** and **Joan Stockinger** regarding **Ken Meter**'s spring 2014 column "Co-ops and Collective Impact" (vol. 4, issue 3, pp. 11–14). Ken had referenced their groundbreaking report "Twin Cities Cooperative Local Food System," and they wanted to offer some clarifying comments. Ken's response follows.

As this is an open call issue, our columnists were able to focus on topics of their choice. In her Digging Deeper column, "A Different Way To Approach Policy Change," **Kate Clancy** explores how to choose which policies offer the best solutions to a particular problem within complex adaptive food systems. In his Economic Pamphleteer column, "Beyond Economic Growth," **John Ikerd** echoes J. M. Keynes in calling for a new vision of food systems that emphasizes the art of living well. **Ken Meter** argues in "Designing Food to Suit Our Infrastructure?" that if we want to, we can invest in shorter supply chains that suit the needs of both family farms and consumers.

In this issue we are including two papers that didn't make it into previous special topic issues. In "Institutional Dimensions of Farmland Conservation: Applying the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework to the U.S. Conservation Reserve Program," **Kerri Morrison** and **Scott D. Hardy** explore factors at the local level that affect implementation of the Conservation Reserve Program. And **Aijuan Chen** and **Steffanie Scott** provide three case studies of producer cooperatives in China that offer insights into how they benefit members and contribute to rural development in "Rural Development Strategies and Government Roles in the Development of Farmers' Cooperatives in China."

Next, **John M. Jemison, Jr., Damon Hall, Stephanie Welcomer,** and **Jane Haskell** report their findings from focus groups with farmers in Maine, including dozens of production practices reported by participants of how they will deal with increasingly variable weather patterns, in "How to Communicate with Farmers about Climate Change: Farmers' Perceptions and Adaptations to Increasingly Variable Weather Patterns in Maine (USA)."

Coincidentally, we accepted a number of papers related to the management or benefits of farmers' markets. In their exploratory study "Understanding Collaboration Among Farmers and Farmers Market Managers in Southeast Michigan (USA)," **Crystal L. Miller** and **Dan McCole** report the results of a survey that sheds light on how farmers and farmers market managers may collaborate to achieve shared objectives.

David J. Connell and **Christopher Hergesheimer** offer a commentary on how a more business-oriented approach to farmers markets management does not have to compromise their unique mission and setting in "Strengthening the Core Business of Farmers Markets through Strategic Business Planning."

The benefits of direct communication on specific topics of interest are the focus of "Consumer and Producer Information-Sharing Preferences at Arizona Farmers Markets" by **Keri Szejda Fehrenbach** and **Christopher M. Wharton**.

In "Where Urban Residents Shop for Produce," **Allison Karpyn, Karyn Tappe, Amy Hillier, Carolyn Cannuscio, Julia Koprak,** and **Karen Glanz** provide a sketch of a sample of urban produce shoppers (mostly people of color) and how financial inducements might encourage them to shop at farmers' markets.

Jared T. McGuirt, Rachel Ward, Nadya Majette Elliott, Sally Lawrence Bullock, and **Stephanie B. Jilcott Pitts** similarly identify the barriers women experience in buying local produce in "Factors Influencing Local Food Procurement Among Women of Reproductive Age in Rural Eastern and Western North Carolina (USA)."

Seeking to understand why the state with the largest number of small farms would have one of the smallest numbers of organic farms, **James R. Farmer, Graham Epstein, Shannon Lea Watkins,** and **Sarah K. Mincey** report the results of a mixed methods study in "Organic Farming in West Virginia: A Behavioral Approach."

Samina Raja, Diane Picard, Solhyon Baek, and **Cristina Delgado** provide an in-depth case study of local food activism in "Rustbelt Radicalism: A Decade of Food Systems Planning Practice in Buffalo, New York (USA)."

As if to summarize many of the challenges raised and addressed in the above, our final paper, by **Connie H. Nelson** and **Mirella L. Stroink,** explores the tensions inherent in a just food system in "Accessibility and Viability: A Complex Adaptive Systems Approach to a Wicked Problem for the Local Food Movement."

Finally in this issue we present two book reviews: **Stacy Miller** reviews Douglas Gayeton's *Local: The New Face of Food and Farming in America* in a review entitled "Language as Lever: Can the Lexicon of Local Make a Global Impact?" and **Nadra Hashim** reviews *Globalization and Food Sovereignty: Global and Local Change in the New Politics of Food*, edited by Peter Andr  e, Jeffrey Ayres, Michael J. Bosia, and Marie-Jos  e Massicotte, in her review, "Locating Nation, State and Identity in the Global Food Debate."

With this summer issue we complete our fourth volume of JAFSCD. A core group of very dedicated advisors and reviewers have actually been with us for **five years**, including our planning year — since October 2009! I'd like to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude for their commitment to us and the mission of JAFSCD.



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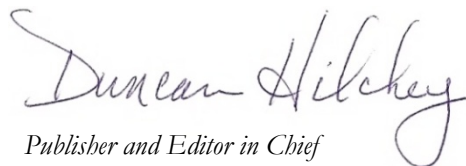
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* These advisors have also served as reviewers for five years.


Publisher and Editor in Chief