

LOCAL GOV, LOCAL FOOD

Building Resilient Local Food Economies
in North Carolina

through Small Agriculture & Food Entrepreneurship

RESILIENT LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES



- What's a local food economy?
- What's happening with local food at the national and state level? Is local food really a trend we should consider in planning and development efforts?
- What motivates local food system development, and who's involved?
- What are planning strategies that support food system development?
- What resources and tools are available to my region?
- What can I do if I want to get involved in local food economies at a local level?

NC GROWING TOGETHER

AT THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL FARMING SYSTEMS



Farmer capacity

- Food safety, market channels, production techniques, buyer connections



Supply chain expansion

- Wholesale and institutional partner connections, infrastructure assessment and business feasibility



Producer & processor capacity

- Resource development for meat, dairy, seafood, produce, and value-added products



Supportive business environments

- Local government integration; small business development and support for food-based entrepreneurs

North Carolina Growing Together is a five-year USDA-funded project aiming to strengthen and expand local and regional food supply chains and to model this work for other geographies in the U.S.



NC GROWING TOGETHER

Connecting Local Foods to Mainstream Markets

Born and raised in Western North Carolina, I received an MPA from UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Government and worked on a number of economic development & food systems projects across the East Coast.

I grew up on farms, owned a farm-to-table restaurant, ran a regional food policy council, and generally adore food in all its forms. Especially cheeses.



I currently live in the Triangle with my family, where I enjoy reading, traveling, and, of course, pulling for the Tarheels and Packers.



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LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

Local food economies encompass everything that is associated with a local food system.

This includes the entire food supply chain – from production to consumption – as well as affiliated businesses and structures.



NATIONAL AG STATISTICS



of American consumers
**prefer food grown in the
U.S.** from regional sources



**13 million acres of
farmland**

needed to produce the minimum
daily requirement of fruits and
veggies in the US for US consumers
by 2020



US Farmers' markets have
increased

350%

since 1994



APA has included food systems in
its planning policy guide since
2007; USDA has maintained farm-
to-fork initiatives since 2000

N.C. AG STATISTICS



Agriculture & agribusiness
account for **1/6 of NC's
income and
employees.**



Total income in Agriculture and
Food industries in NC is **\$70.5
billion (a 14.6% share of NC
income).**



NC ranks **8th in the nation** for
agricultural production. More than
17% of gross state product is
contributed by food, forest and
fiber industries.



Of all NC farms, almost 75% are
family-owned small to medium-
sized businesses reporting less
than \$100,000 in farm revenue
per year.

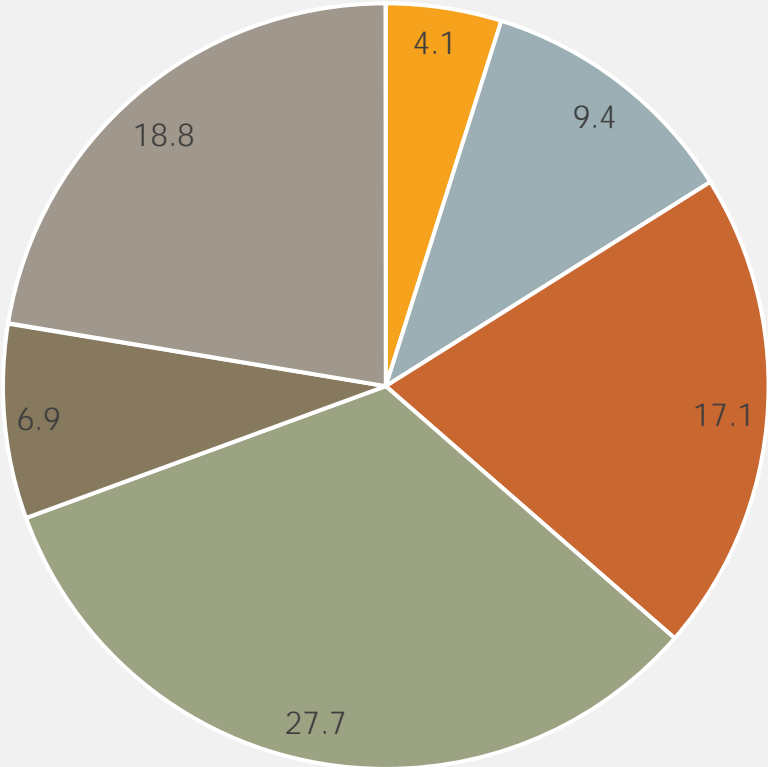
So, what's local?

USDA does not have a fixed definition of "local," and NCGT considers "local" to be statewide. Localities and regions are encouraged to create definitions of local that account for regional geographic, demographic, and land influences. Custom definitions allow for effective place-based planning & development solutions.

**Data sources are provided on the final slide.*

NORTH CAROLINA'S FOOD ECONOMY

\$84 billion in Agriculture, Food, and Forestry Industries (July 2016)



- Fiber
- Forestry
- Farming & production
- Food manufacturing
- Wholesaling
- Retailing

Data provided by Mike Walden, Reynolds Distinguished Professor and Extension Economist, N.C. State University, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**Data sources are provided on the final slide*

INTEGRATING PLANNING & FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT



Local food systems need the unique skills, capacities, and abilities of local and regional planners.

- Skills in spatial and data-based analysis
- A deep knowledge of the communities served
- Awareness of the connections between and across communities
- Partnerships at multiple decision-making levels
- Knowledge of community input & feasibility processes
- Access to technologies and innovations to simplify and engage at each step of the planning process

Food systems offer solutions to many significant social, cultural, and built environment issues that can help planners better meet the needs of their communities.

Food systems offer economic benefits that are place-based, specific to a region's existing natural, built, and human resources.

Food system placemaking is on the leading edge of innovative, multi-disciplinary planning strategies & ideas.



DEVELOPING LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

Motivations & Impacts of Asset-Based Development of Local Food Systems

- Land use & land protection, particularly in conflict smart growth situations on the urban/suburban fringe and for place-based development
 - 1997: 4.8 million acres of farmland lost to development
 - 2012: 24.5 million acres of farmland lost to development
- Rural & urban partnerships: markets & values
- Farmer age gap & transition planning for farmland
 - Average age of North Carolina farmers: 59
 - Average age of US farmers: 55
- Emergency/crisis planning
 - Ensuring access to food is a critical risk management strategy in crisis situations
- Opportunities for rural youth (the “brain drain” problem)
- Health and wellness and increased social capital
- Food insecurity & food access
- Revitalization of downtowns, vacant land, and urban centers
- Economic development recruitment & expansion strategies
 - Economic impact of agriculture & food entrepreneurship
 - Get your “mojo” back!

PARTNERS

- Traditional partners (other local government staff, councils of government)
- Ag partners (Extension Service, NCDA)
- Nontraditional partners (public health, transportation & infrastructure, small business centers & workforce development)
- Community partners (food councils, nonprofits, faith-based groups)
- Higher education partners (universities and community colleges)
- Nonprofits & NGOs
- Social networks

PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Zoning & Regulations

- Ag-supportive zoning: setbacks, infrastructure
- Working with the bona fide farm exemption
- Community gardens, urban agriculture, and farmers' markets

Development Strategies

- Conservation development
- Incentives for farmland conservation
- Farmland protection plans & programs

Strategic & Long-Range Planning

- Whole-systems approach to food & supply chains
- Infrastructure planning for supply chain expansion

Economic Planning

- Local food economies as a recruitment tool
- Local food economies as a creation, retention, and expansion tool

FOOD SYSTEMS PLANNING PROCESS



MAKE IT LAST

- Comprehensive plans are just the start
- Adopted policies and programs
- Committed funds



COMMUNITY

- Food policy councils
- Community partners
- Bridging social capital



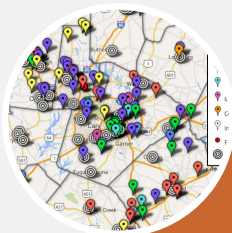
REGULATIONS

- Zoning updates
- Farmland preservation plan
- Bona fide farms



ECONOMICS

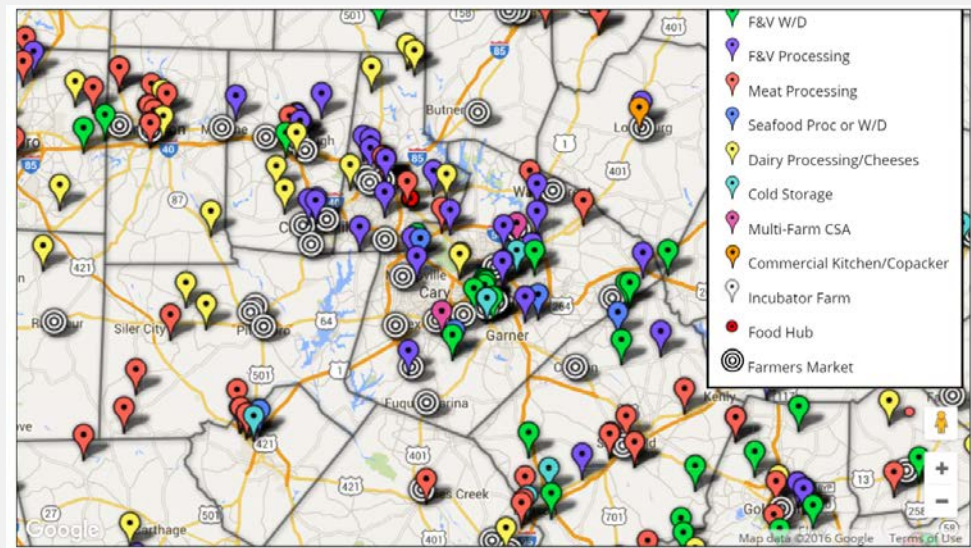
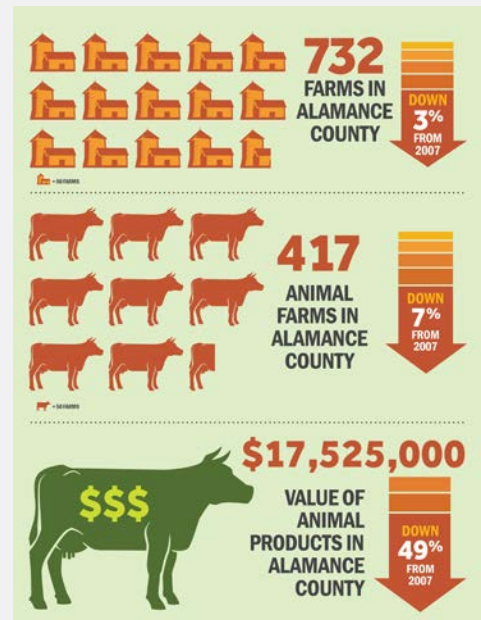
- Local gov purchasing
- Market analysis & support
- Agricultural economic development
- Business & entrepreneurship development



ASSESSMENT

- Data, GIS
- Food System Assessments
- Farmland inventory
- EQUITY

RESOURCES AND TOOLS



National Resources

- USDA's [Economic Impact of Local Foods Toolkit](#)
- USDA's [Farm to Fork](#) Resources
- [American Planning Association](#)
- [Southern SAWG](#)
- [National Institutes of Health](#)

North Carolina Resources

- NCGT has infographics for each county and COG with easy-to-understand data points about local agriculture.
- NCGT maintains the Local Food Supply Chain Infrastructure Map.
- The Local Gov, Local Food Toolkit, with specific ordinances, planning strategies, and economic development tools, will be available August 1, 2016.
- NCGT has case studies on successful projects in North Carolina.
- NCDA & NC Cooperative Extension provide regional and statewide assistance.
- NC DHHS and other statewide health

COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

- One of our presenters could not be here today, so I'll be talking with you about community food system assessments and how to implement them in your community.

The data on the following slides was prepared for this panel by:

- Wes MacLeod, AICP, ASLA
 - Cape Fear Regional Council of Governments
 - wmacleod@capefearcog.org

WHY COMPLETE A FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT?

- Understand relationship between food and public health within a defined study area
- Inventory farms/roadside stands, farmers' markets, and food assistance resources
- Establish baseline data for local food economy
- Understand strengths, weaknesses, and areas for further study
- Tell story of the way our food system impacts our health and economy

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF A FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT?

- No set amount of components
- Can be driven by particular local emphasis, such as public health, food security, or agricultural economic development
- Must identify a study area
- Must establish baseline data
- Local factors and influences should determine the components of your community's Food System Assessment
- Public input from diverse stakeholders
- Advisory or steering committee

SENC Regional Food Systems Assessment:

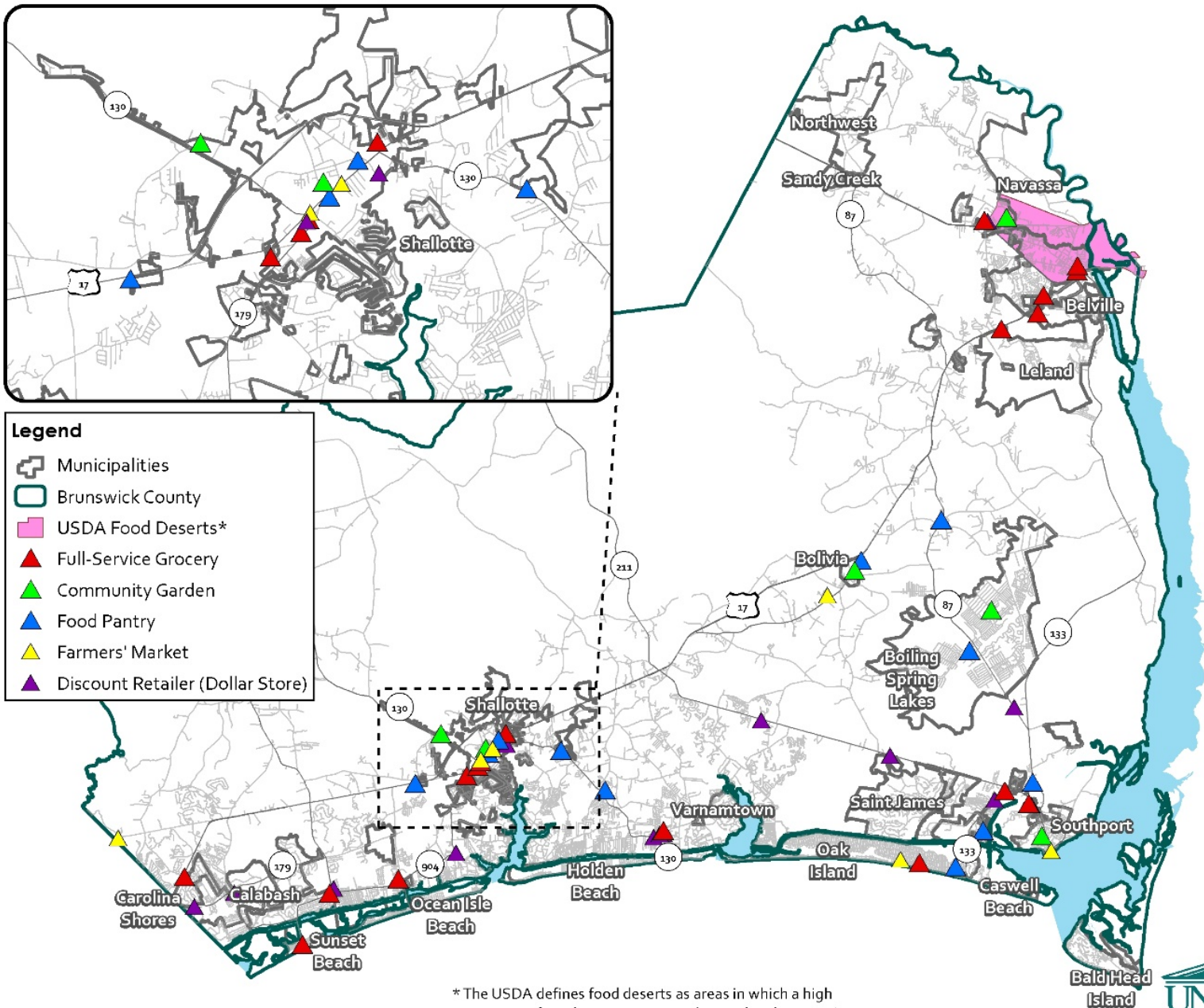
Local Food, Food Insecurity, and Healthy Eating & Nutrition



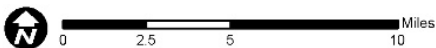
Southeastern North Carolina
Regional Health Collaborative

DEVELOPING A STUDY AREA PROFILE: HOPE YOU LIKE DATA!

1. Current Population and Projected Growth/decline
2. Poverty Rate
3. Diabetic Rate
4. Obesity Rate
5. Leisure time Physical Activity
6. Food Insecure Population
7. Food Waste (annual tons)
8. Health Priorities (from local Community Health Assessment)
9. Full-service Grocery Stores Per Capita
10. Fast Food Restaurants Per Capita
11. Number/Acres/Size of Farms
12. Number of Farms by Agricultural Product
13. Value of Agricultural Products sold Per Farm
14. Livestock Inventory
15. Local Farms & Roadside Stands
16. Farmers' Markets
17. Food Assistance Resources
18. Prime Farmland Soils



* The USDA defines food deserts as areas in which a high proportion of residents are over 1 mile (in urban locations) or over 10 miles (in rural locations) from a full-service grocer.



LOCAL FOOD COMPONENT

1. Define Local Food for Context of Assessment (50 miles/100 miles)
2. Identify key participants
3. Identify farmland preservation efforts
4. Identify Supporting Infrastructure & Programs
5. Summarize input from local farmers
6. Summarize Local Food Economy Statistics for the study area



FOOD SECURITY COMPONENT

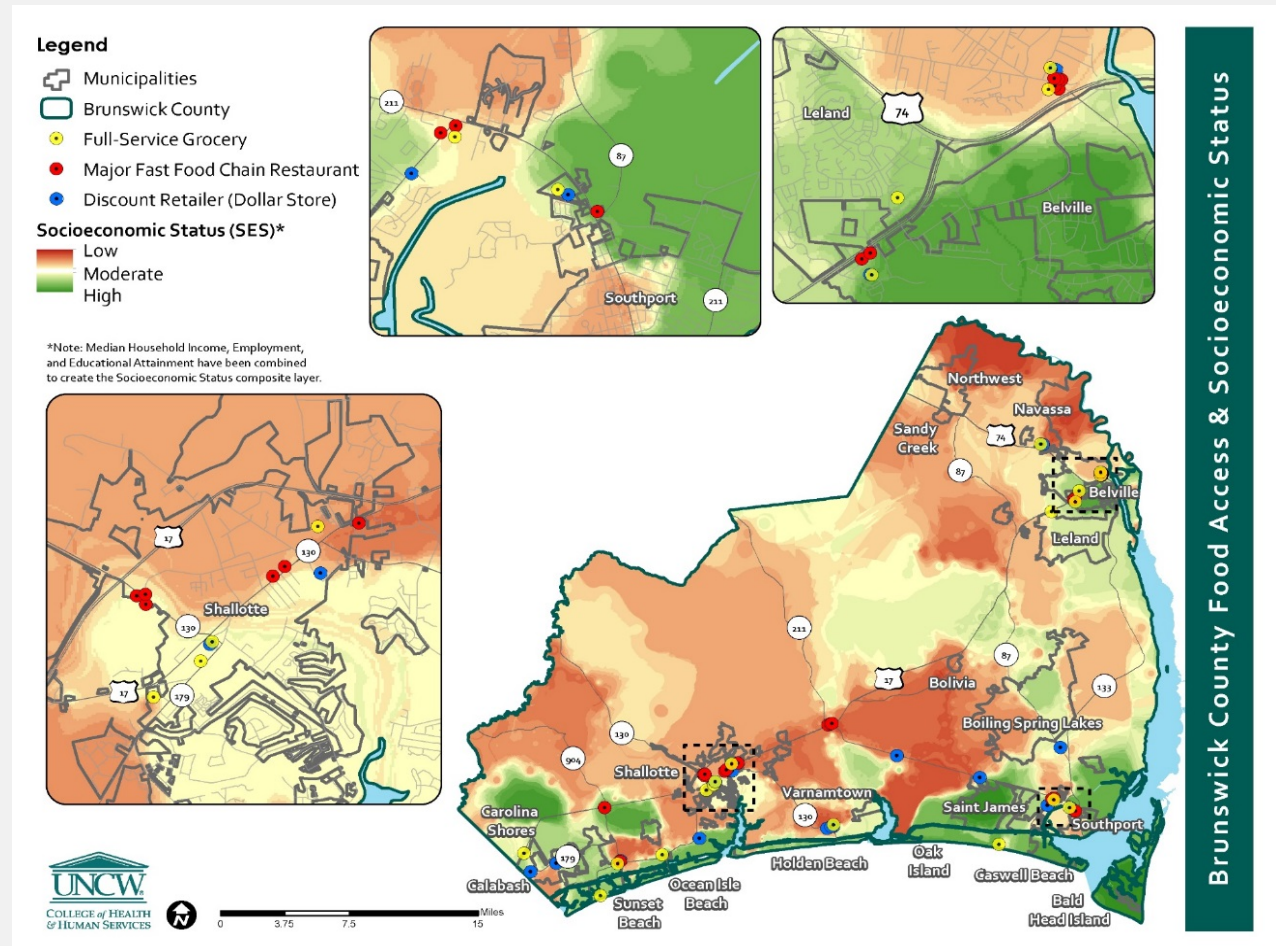
1. Who are the food insecure?
2. Identify food insecure ineligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
3. Identify Food Waste in study area
4. Analyze the Socioeconomic Status (SES) of households within the study area
5. Identify barriers to accessing healthy food
6. Identify full-service grocery stores in the study area
7. Locate zero-vehicle households
8. Identify Supporting Programs



Households that lack adequate and consistent access to the wholesome foods necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle.

HEALTHY EATING & NUTRITION COMPONENT

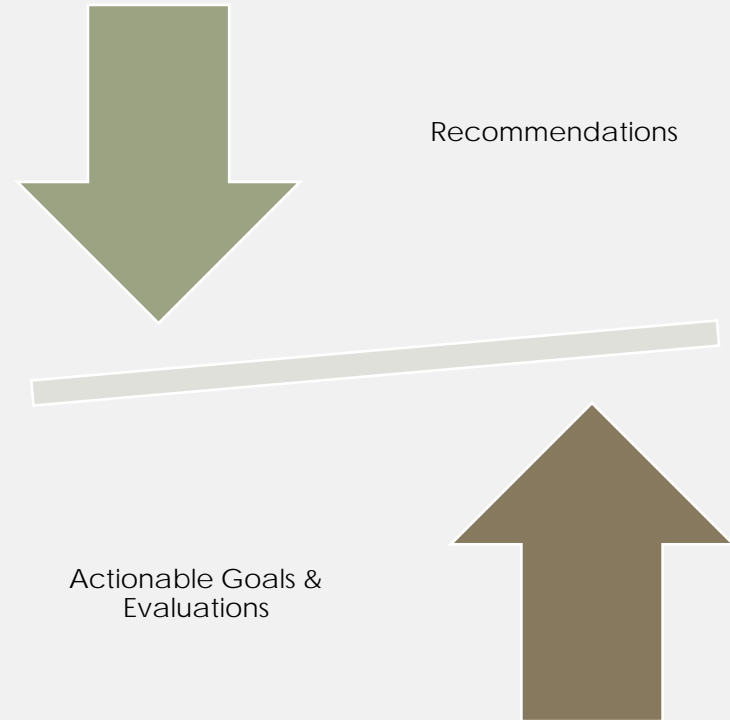
1. Healthy Eating & Nutrition Trends
2. Environmental Factors that influence choices
3. Retail Food Environmental Index
4. Barriers to Healthy Eating in the study area
5. Confronting Price as a Perceived Barrier
6. Consumption data



SETTING GOALS & STRATEGIES

1. Establish an overarching goal for each component of the Food System Assessment
2. Identify Evidence-Based Strategies

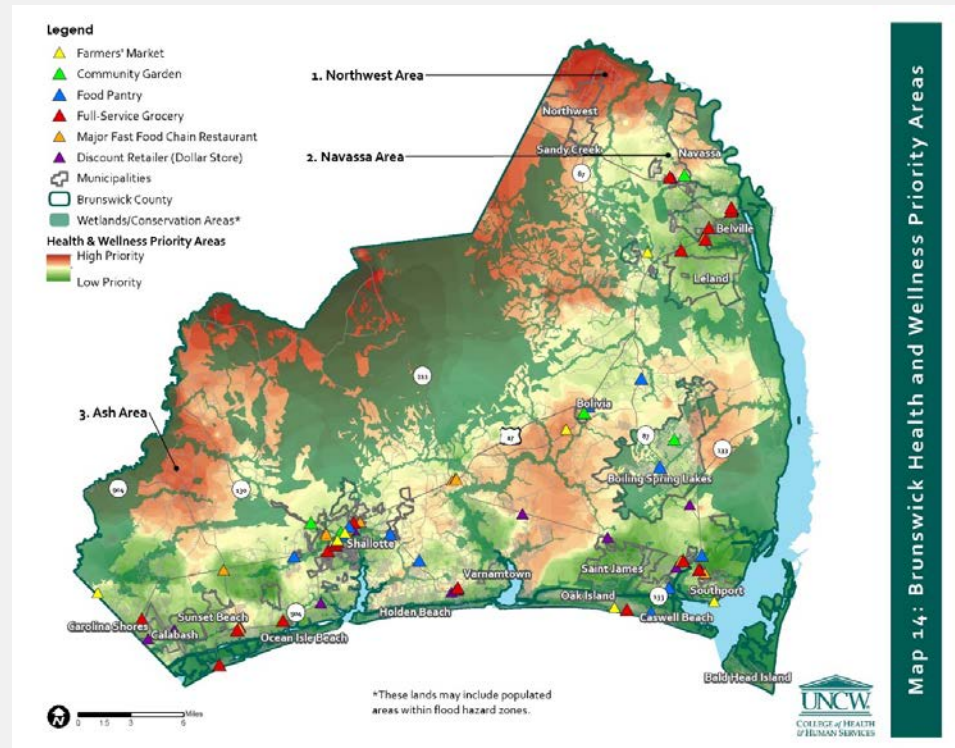
Optional: Identify geographic priority areas



Evidence-Based Strategy: Evidence-based public health is the practice of incorporating scientific evidence about what works into management decisions, program implementation, clinical services, and policy development.

UTILIZING THE FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Support agricultural land uses in a growing county or town
- Identify strategies and goals for Food Policy Councils
- Involve stakeholders in collaborative goal-setting processes
- Provide groundwork for a needs assessment for Cooperative Extension staff
- Help determine priorities for Health Departments
- Reinforce agricultural economic development goals



**Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation –
but the only ones she can call her own.**

Samuel Johnson

THANK YOU!

<https://cefs.ncsu.edu/food-system-initiatives/local-food-economies/>
www.ncgrowingtogether.org

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APA has an On-Demand option for “The Now and Future of Agriculture” session:

<https://www.planning.org/events/course/3030947/>.

Data sources used in this presentation include:

- NC Agriculture & Agribusiness Statistics, NCSU, 2016: https://www.cals.ncsu.edu/agcomm/news-center/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2015_083-WaldenAgBusinessReport-051116.pdf
- USDA ERS & AMS, 2011-2016, citations from Community & Local Government Guide to Developing Local Food Systems, CEFS, NCSU: <https://cefs.ncsu.edu/resources/a-community-and-local-government-guide-to-developing-local-food-systems-in-north-carolina-2013/>
- Growing Food Connections Policy Database, SUNY-Buffalo, 2016: <http://growingfoodconnections.org/tools-resources/policy-database/general-search-policy-database/>
- UNC School of Government Local Food Resources: <https://www.sog.unc.edu/search/#!/search/local%20food>
- Farmland Information Center, 2016: <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/statistics>
- APA Food Systems Planning Working Group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3930672/profile>

Special thanks to Donald Belk, AICP, [N-Focus Planning](#); Erin Sullivan White, [Community Food Lab](#); and Jonathan Q. Morgan, Associate Professor of Public Administration and Government, [UNC School of Government](#), for their time and expertise in assisting the Resilient Local Food Economies initiative.

American Planning Association North Carolina Chapter's Webinar: Planning for Prosperity: Local Food

The Healthy Living Collaborative model in Alamance County



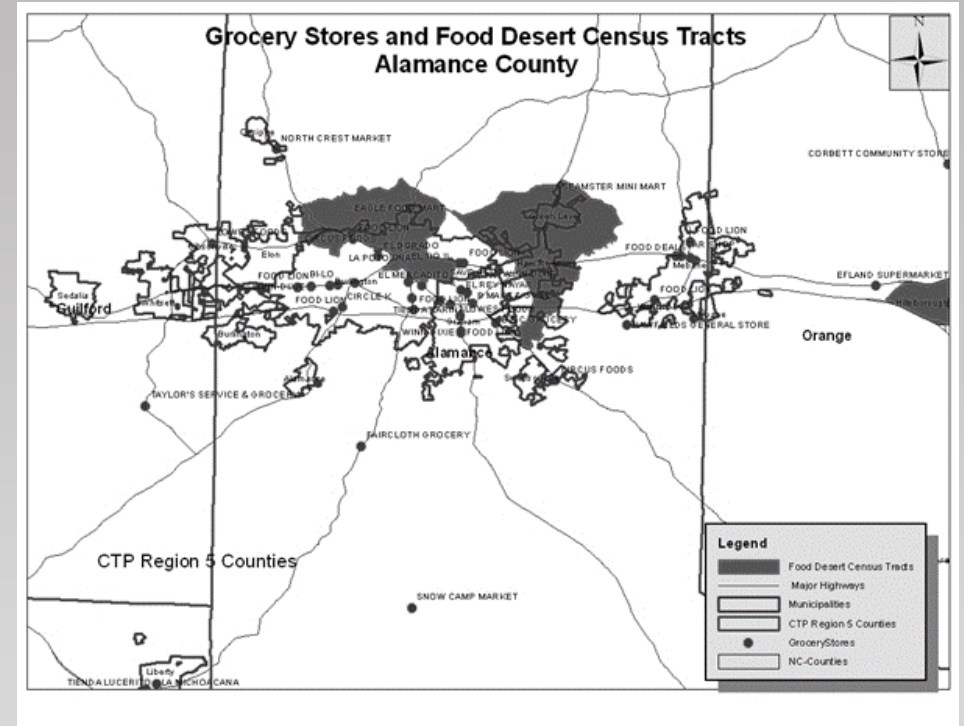
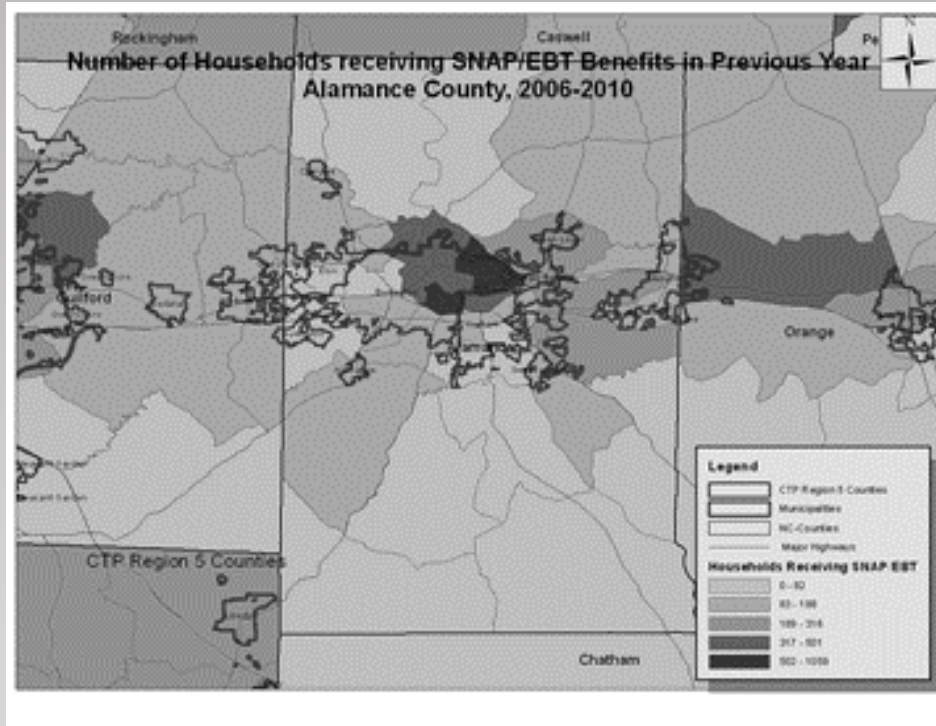
North Park Farmers' Market



Mission: To increase access to fresh food in North Park and the surrounding community.

Vision: The North Park Farmers' Market is a healthy, educated community that engages authentic relationships among our farmers and neighbors.

Why in North Park?



What is Healthy Alamance & Impact Alamance?



Alamance County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Access to Care - Alamance County will implement policies and programs that improve residents' access to high quality comprehensive health care services.

Education - Alamance County will engage and align our community to create pathways so that every child has the opportunity to thrive in their education.

Economic Issues - Alamance County will implement policies and programs that are aimed to improve the local economy and reduce disparities.

Healthy Living Collaborative model – a Health in all Policies approach

Wellness

Mission/Vision Development

Review of plans and best practices
for built environment

Strategic plan development

Action step workgroups

Food

Retreat

Mission/Vision Development

Food Assessment

Strategic plan development

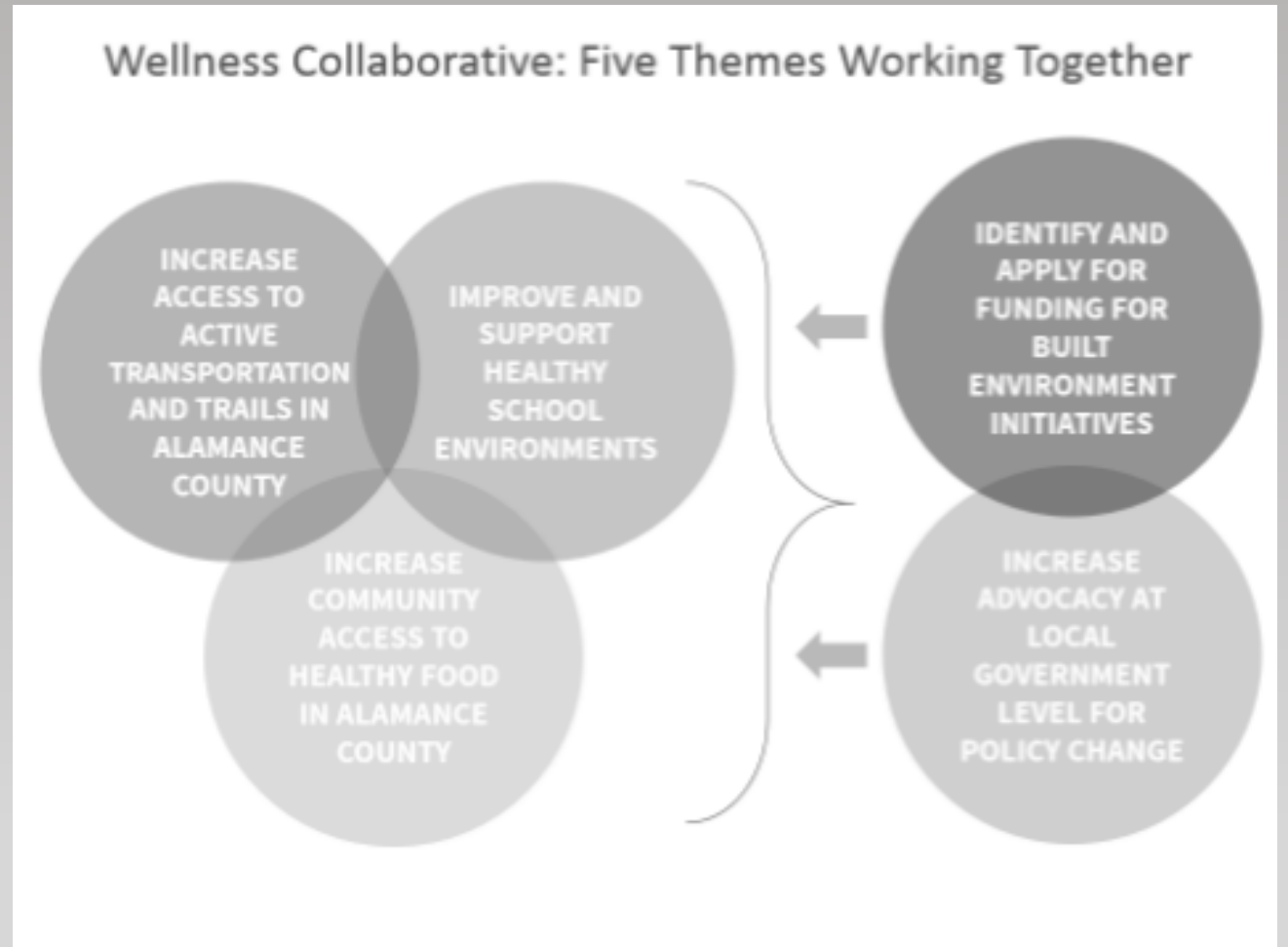
Action step workgroups



NCSU | NCA&T | NCDA&CS



Strategic Plan Alamance Wellness Collaborative



What does a vibrant local food system mean for Alamance County?



Usual & Unusual Suspects

Alamance County Health Department

All Planning Departments

All Recreation & Park Departments

Farmers

Consumers

Cooperative grocery store

Local government (city councils/commissioners)

Entrepreneurs

Farm to Fork restaurants owners & chefs

Non-profits

Homeless shelters

Food pantries

Elon University

Students

“Now I understand how hard it is for farmers to make a living and I am happy to support them”

A Process -



“The Alamance County Food Collaborative creates a sustainable local food system by supporting local farmers and businesses to improve access to healthy food options and education”



– a local food assessment

Utilize available resources and supports

Engage the community

Engage stakeholders

Share results and make recommendations

Include in CHA and CHIP

Strengths – SWOT Analysis for Alamance County

Key Findings:

Increase in SNAP participation and # of authorized retailers

Approximately 30% of acreage is owned by farms

Several school gardens in operation

New public transportation – linking residents to resources

Obesity and Diabetes rates have decreased

Increase in farmers' markets and grocery stores

Goals

Justice & Fairness

Improve community access to a just food system

Vibrant Farms

Improve healthy school food environments

Strong Communities

Increase opportunities for farms to connect to consumers

Healthy People

Increase vegetable intake in residents 2 years and older

Thriving Local Economies

Increase the number of short food supply exchange retail opportunities

Sustainable Ecosystems

Increase advocacy with local government for policy change

Strategies

**Increase #
of female
farm
operators**

**Increase # of
farms that
benefit from
NC Farm to
School
Initiatives**

**Increase # of
farmers'
markets
accepting
SNAP/WIC**

**Increase
advocacy for
built
environment
initiatives**

**Increase
efficiency of
farmers'
markets and
farm to fork
initiatives**

**Advocate for
policies which
support
organic
conversion and
pollinator
conservation**

Projects & next steps

Explore methods for creating infrastructure

Include planning and local government in development and design

Share results and convene conversations with the community

Utilize Community Based Participatory Research to engage community and determine next steps at the neighborhood level

Offer opportunities to educate residents on issues regarding food and built environment



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