

Food Systems Professional Development: A White Paper on the Proposed North American Food Systems Network

Prepared by the
Steering Committee of the North American Food Systems Network (NAFSN)
Version 1.8.14

Contents

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT	2
Operating Definitions of Key Terminology	
Opportunities and Challenges	
SECTION II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF FOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS	8
Food Systems Professional Development Survey Results and Key Findings	
Key Findings by Type of Respondent	
SECTION III. EXISTING AND PROPOSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES	22
Existing Professional Development in NA across Three Food Systems Domains	
What NAFSN's Professional Development Programming Might Look Like	
Proposed Vision and Mission Statements	
Possible Programs and Services	
SECTION IV. WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?	27
A Draft Plan of Work	
Phase I Budget	
SECTION VI. DISCUSSION ISSUES	29
APPENDICES	
Appendix A. N.A. Food Systems Professional Development Survey Full Report	
Appendix B. List of Food Systems Degree and Certificate Programs	
Appendix C. Examples of Existing Online Resources	

Food Systems Professional Development: A White Paper on the Proposed North American Food Systems Network

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The North American Food Systems Network (NAFS Network or NAFSN) is a proposed U.S. and Canadian organization to provide training, networking, and other professional development opportunities for individuals whose current or future career involves helping communities develop equitable and sustainable regional food systems.

The genesis of the network was a survey conducted in 2012 in which 1,300 respondents involved with food systems development reported concerns about the viability of the projects they work on as well as their own livelihoods. Citing the need for training in such areas as asset inventorying, economic impact assessment, and project evaluation, a significant majority of the respondents expressed interest in joining an organization that would cater to their professional development needs (The survey results are summarized below and the survey results are reported in full in Appendix A). While a significant number of professional development training opportunities are currently available (see Section III), they may not be well known, affordable, or convenient, especially for those with limited time and resources. Indeed many available opportunities specific to leadership are patchwork in nature, often single workshops or conferences that do not contribute to a degree or certificate that would be recognized nationally (or otherwise lend any credibility or confidence). A key focus of NAFSN will be to help coordinate these resources, identifying gaps in information, and offering a means of receiving credit for taking them. Another strategy of NAFSN will be to facilitate networking and coordination across the current silos of activity to strategically and efficiently address the professional development needs of its members.

Following the survey, a working group of more than 100 individuals across North America was formed, along with a Steering Committee¹ that was charged with leading the development of the network. We are sharing this document with prospective partner organizations, institutions, and individuals in the U.S. and Canada for their input and partnership consideration. This is a working document and is intended to provide background on the network, data we've gathered,

¹ The **NAFSN Working Group Steering Committee** is made up of Cheryl Danley, Food and Community Fellow (Michigan State University), U.S.; Julia Freedgood, American Farmland Trust (AFT), U.S.; Janet Hawkes, consultant with HD1, U.S.; Duncan Hilchey, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (JAFSCD), U.S.; Hugh Joseph, Tufts University, U.S./Canada; Mark Muller, McKnight Foundation, U.S.; Jen O'Brien, Farmers' Market Coalition (FMC), U.S.; Timothy Olorunfemi, International Rescue Committee, U.S.; Sarah Rocker, The Evergreen State College, U.S.; and Eva Agudelo Winther, National Incubator Farm Training Initiative (NIFTI), U.S. Two very involved members, Jim Hiley, Planning for Agriculture and Food Network (PAFN), Canada, and Kimberley Hodgson, Cultivating Healthy Places (CHP), Canada/ U.S., have had to step down from the steering committee.

and lay out discussion issues for consideration as we move forward with the launch of NAFSN in the coming months.

Recent events among and within key food movement organizations suggest that the way forward will be very challenging. Coming as a shock was the demise of the Community Food Security Coalition, which closed its doors in 2012 after two decades of advocacy and activism, no longer able to support its programs financially. This has left a significant void, as the platform for a unified voice no longer exists. Second, it was with great disappointment that the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) eliminated its Food and Community Fellows program, which fostered a cadre of food movement leaders for more than 10 years. These are only among the most prominent and widely mourned losses; many national, regional, and local organizations struggle daily to financially support innovative and effective programs, eliminating staff positions and even losing impassioned up-and-coming leaders who feel their career prospects to be dim.

Finally, in an internal disagreement gone viral in newspapers (e.g., *The Atlantic*, 1/13/12), blogs, and other social media, a large number of Slow Food USA members who have advocated that Americans pay a *larger* share of their income to support family farmers left the organization when Slow Food leadership announced the organization would begin focusing on promoting more affordable food (e.g., its challenge to cook a slow food meal for less than \$5). This public food fight revealed what has been for some time a gulf between farm advocates (who desire fair prices to support livelihoods) and food security advocates (who desire affordable food). Finding viable supply chain models that bridge the interests of needy family farmers and needy eaters has been elusive and in some cases has revealed dichotomies—many false—such as farmers vs. consumer, black vs. white, foodie vs. hungry, and organic vs. conventional, to name a few.

By fostering constructive discourse across ideologies, cultures, and geographies, which are inherent in the food movement, and creating opportunities to work toward a positive shared vision, NAFSN can help to navigate the challenges in food system theory and practice.

The purpose of this white paper is to provide background on the advent of NAFSN, while laying the foundation for further discussion and deliberation by stakeholders.

Operating Definitions of Key Terminology

We use a number of key terms in this white paper, the definitions of which tend to vary widely across professions, disciplines, and geographies. For the purposes of this white paper we therefore use the following definitions of “food systems,” “sustainable food systems,” “food systems development,” “food systems development practitioners,” “professional development,” “best practices,” “community of practice”. Note we borrow largely from Wikipedia because this is a source of definitions with broad input from stakeholders around the world. We acknowledge the limitations of these definitions and accept that they will likely evolve within NAFSN over time

Food Systems

According to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_systems, retrieved 9/5/2013), the term “food system is used frequently in discussions about nutrition, food, health, community economic development and agriculture. A food system includes all processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each of these steps. A food system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic and environmental contexts. It also requires human resources that provide labor, research and education. Food systems are either conventional or alternative according to their model of food lifespan from origin to plate. [1][2][3]

We note that a food system also includes natural resources (soil, water, air and sunlight) essential for growing food.

1. Discovering the Food System - A Primer on Community Food Systems: Linking Food, Nutrition and Agriculture <http://foodsys.cce.cornell.edu/primer.html>
2. Conceptualizing food systems for global environmental change research – Polly J. Ericksen Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University Centre for the Environment, Oxford, OX1 3QY, UK Received 17 August 2006; received in revised form 5 September 2007; accepted 12 September 2007
3. Development Policy Review, 2003, 21 (5-6): 531-553 Food Policy Old and New - Simon Maxwell and Rachel Slater*

Sustainable Food Systems

The American Public Health Association (APHA) defines a sustainable food system as “one that provides healthy food to meet current needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that can also provide food for generations to come with minimal negative impact to the environment. A sustainable food system encourages local production and distribution infrastructures and makes nutritious food available, accessible, and affordable to all. Further, it is humane and just, protecting farmers and other workers, consumers, and communities.” (American Public Health Association, <http://www.apha.org/advocacy/policy/policysearch/default.htm?id=1361>))

Food Systems Development

Food systems development is a phrase we coined as short-hand for “food systems-based community development.” Food systems development draws from the field of community development, defined in Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_development, retrieved 10/1/2013) as “a broad term given to the practices of civic activists, involved citizens and professionals to build stronger and more resilient local communities. Community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. These skills are often created through the formation of large social groups working for a common agenda. Community developers must understand both how to work with individuals and how to affect communities’ positions within the context of larger social institutions.”

Food systems development work spans a range of community-based activities, which in turn reflect the broad range of components of the food system but which generally fall under the three broad areas of production, distribution, and consumption. These in turn loosely correspond to agricultural development and sustainability; market and value chain development; and food security, health and well-being.

Food systems planning is an emerging evolving subfield of the planning profession, and its relationship to broader food systems development is to be explored.

Food Systems Development Practitioners

For the purposes of the survey, we defined a “food systems development practitioner” as anyone who, “as a significant portion of their work, uses community development strategies in working with farmers, business people, government agency staff, local residents, or other persons or entities to create or strengthen the viability, equity, and sustainability of food systems and, in turn, the communities in which they are based.” This definition includes paid staff, consultants, volunteers, and activists working in the fields of agriculture and community development and/or other kinds of food production; processing, distributing, marketing, and retailing; food security; and food waste management.

Practitioners come from a wide range of occupations and may be professional or nonprofessional. There are a growing number of full-time professionals doing this work, such as extension educators and public agency, community development and nongovernmental organization staff. There are also college faculty and program staff, as well as consultants, farmers, and citizen activists who meet the above definition.

Professional Development

According to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_development, retrieved 9/5/2013), professional development (in the workplace context) “refers to the acquisition of skills and knowledge both for personal development and for career advancement. Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college degrees to formal coursework, conferences and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage [1]. There are a variety of approaches to professional development, including consultation, coaching, communities of practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision and technical assistance [2].

1. Speck, M. & Knipe, C. (2005) Why can't we get it right? Designing high-quality professional development for standards-based schools(2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press[need quotation to verify]
2. National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2008). "What do we mean by professional development in the early childhood field?". Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author."

Best Practices

According to Wikipedia

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_practice#Health_and_Human_Services, retrieved

9/24/2013), a “best practice is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark. In addition, a ‘best’ practice can evolve to become better as improvements are discovered...Sometimes a ‘best practice’ is not applicable or is inappropriate for a particular organization's needs. A key strategic talent required when applying best practice to organizations is the ability to balance the unique qualities of an organization with the practices that it has in common with others...The nonprofit/voluntary sector is generally lacking tools for sharing and accessing best practices.”

Community of Practice

According to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_practice, retrieved 9/24/2013), a “community of practice (CoP) is, according to cognitive anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, a group of people who share a craft and/or a profession. The group can evolve naturally because of the members’ common interest in a particular domain or area, or it can be created specifically with the goal of gaining knowledge related to their field. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences with the group that the members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally [1]. CoPs can exist online, such as within discussion boards and newsgroups, or in real life, such as in a lunch room at work, in a field setting, on a factory floor, or elsewhere in the environment.

1. Lave, Jean; Wenger, Etienne (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-42374-0.; first published in 1990 as Institute for Research on Learning report 90-0013”

Opportunities and Challenges

We are presently in the midst of a wave of interest in food systems development work as form of volunteerism, activism, and even as a profession. Fueled in part by increased public funding and foundation support, and to a small extent by private investment, the growing number of food systems development projects and programs being launched are creating part-time and full-time employment and consulting opportunities.

A cursory analysis of job announcements on the email list COMFOODJOBS between 1/24/12 and 11/13/12 (Table 1) suggests that, while over one-quarter of the announcements were of a low- or no-paying nature (internships, trainees, apprenticeships, and volunteerships), and 7% were of short-term nature (AmeriCorps VISTA, FoodCorps), the remaining two-thirds were regular paying and potentially stable positions with titles such as manager, educator, researcher, employee, nutritionist, etc.

**Table 1. Occupational Categories from
COMFOODJOBS Email List, 2012 (Baseline
Categorization; N= 576)**

CATEGORY	Count	%
Internship	123	21%
Employee of a non-profit organization	109	19%
Program Manager	47	8%
Americorps VISTA	43	7%
Teacher/Educator	33	6%
Farm Manager	26	5%
Project Manager	26	5%
Director of a nonprofit organization	21	4%
Employee of a for-profit business	21	4%
Employee of a public agency	18	3%
Farm Employee	18	3%
Researcher	15	3%
Trainee	15	3%
Farm Apprentice	13	2%
Volunteer	13	2%
Business Manager	10	2%
Consultant	9	2%
Nutritionist	7	1%
Extension Educator	5	1%
Faculty position	2	0%
FoodCorps	2	0%
TOTAL	576	100%

The COMFOODJOBS data indicate that, perhaps contrary to what one might expect, a large proportion of employment opportunities for food systems development practitioners are paid regular positions (though many are likely grant-funded). The flip side is that, despite the growth and diversity of occupations in food systems development work, practitioners and the organizations that employ them have significant challenges. Here we offer some examples of broad and overarching challenges to building a professional development network based on our observations and experience:

1. **Limited Training.** Few people are trained, either formally or informally, in the nascent field of food systems development. The lack of training in food systems must be partly to blame for projects failing after grant funds run out. Many food system practitioners become inspired by an idea and launch it in the belief that “if we build it they will come,” only to find that without sound community development practice such as stakeholder engagement, visioning and goal-setting, financial analysis, and benchmarking the long-term viability of a project is in jeopardy. Indeed, systematic evaluation and impact analysis is almost always an afterthought.
2. **Specialization and Silos of Activity.** If a food systems practitioner has formal training, it might be as a conventional profession such as a nutritionist, city planner, housing specialist, farmer, or academic. He or she therefore tends to focus on a single aspect

(food security, health and well-being, distribution, farmland protection, conservation and sustainable agriculture, and so on). The resulting silos of activity tend to keep projects and programs from maximizing “systems thinking” to more holistically address problems and opportunities. Some colleges have developed new degree programs in food systems to bring a more transdisciplinary approach to food systems work (a list of these can be found in Appendix B). These degrees are expected to increase leadership and scholarship. However, professional development will still be needed to upgrade postgraduate skill as well as to provide an alternative for those not able or interested in pursuing a college degree. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are especially few individuals represented within the most vulnerable groups (in both urban and isolated rural areas) who are formally trained. With little resources for professional development, training is frequently gained on the job, in an ad hoc manner, and without any assurances of thoroughness or quality.

3. **Focus on Symptoms of Problems Instead of Root Causes.** Meanwhile, significant resources and programmatic activity in food systems work is focused on symptoms of problems (e.g., hunger, erosion, food contamination, decline of farms, farm worker exploitation) and not on fundamental causes of these problems (especially the lack of parity, equity, opportunity, education, planning, public policy, etc.). While emergency food assistance, purchase of farmland development rights, and farm subsidies are stopgap measures to mitigate some of these problems, they will not fundamentally transform our way of living in the long run — including the way we treat each other and the earth.
4. **Lack of Best Practices.** Finally, while the food movement needs to remain structurally organic and diverse (if for no other reason than to be a difficult target for opposition), much of the current focus lacks established foundations for practice (e.g., core knowledge, or perhaps even standards). In particular, our research (described below) shows that a lack of resources and training opportunities, and the challenge of balancing multiple interests, limit the capacity of those on the front lines doing the most innovative projects, such as beginning farmer programs, midscale value chains, farm-to-school programs, food hubs, small-plot intensive gardens, and shared-use kitchens. We observe that there is also a replication of efforts and duplication of resources, that if shared and coordinated, could make all efforts more efficient and effective.
5. **Burnout.** This is best described in the words of one practitioner: *There is a cyclical relationship between a) being un- or undercompensated, b) the lack of professional credibility lent to people like (for example) farmers market directors/managers, who have many skills but feel there is no ladder upward, and c) the continued shoestring-level capacity of many local, state, and regional NGOs doing amazing work fed by a champion (soon to be burnt out) founder and a rotating slew of energetic volunteers and maybe even d) boards/governing bodies that are well intentioned but don't know what they're*

doing. Each feeds upon the other and keeps many an organization struggling, unable to fulfill a potential role in cultivating new leaders.

SECTION II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF FOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

We believe that improving the knowledge and skills of practitioners is likely to lead to more effective and efficient programs, and ultimately to more viable and sustainable food systems. To learn more about their specific professional development needs and gauge their interest in forming a community of practice, we conducted a survey of U.S. and Canadian food systems development practitioners. A full copy of the report is found in the Appendix A. The following section presents the key findings of our survey, along with selected quotes from respondents.

Food Systems Professional Development Survey Results and Key Findings

A total of 1,331 individuals responded to the survey. 1,294 (92.7%) indicated they were current or prospective food systems development practitioners (professional or volunteer as per our operational definition) and completed the survey.

Crosstabs show the majority of respondents are highly educated, white females from the nonprofit/education/government sector. Sixty-two percent reported working 4 or more years on food systems development, including one-quarter with 10 or more years of experience. However, only about one-third devote 30 hours or more per week to food systems development issues.

The survey data on reported occupations provides an interesting contrast to the jobs data on the COMFOODJOBS list. The majority of respondents who self-identified as food systems development practitioners in our survey come from the nonprofit/government sector (61%), including those working for nonprofit organizations, education or research institutions, and public agencies (see Table 2). A second group includes for-profit businesspeople (17.1%), including farmers, consultants, and staff members of businesses. More than one in ten (11.2%) of the respondents reports being paraprofessionals or nonprofessionals, such as volunteers, trainees, students, or concerned citizens who work on food system issues. Examples of other specified occupations reported by respondents include teacher, mentor, board member, AmeriCorps, attorney, and activists.

Table 2. Respondents' Reported Occupations (N=1201)

Answer Options	Percent	Count
Staff member of a nonprofit organization	30.1	361
Staff or faculty in an education/research institution	19.7	236
Staff member of a public agency	11.2	134
Farmer or business person who is active in local or regional food system projects	7.7	92
Self-employed consultant working in food systems development	6.2	75

Volunteer with an agency or organization	4.5	54
College student studying food systems development	3.5	42
Staff member of a for-profit business	3.2	38
Concerned citizen, passionately interested in food and farming issues	3.2	39
Exploring new career opportunities in food systems development	2.0	24
Trainee in food systems development program	0.3	4
Other (please specify)	8.5	102

The work of over half of respondents (57%) is focused on cities, while 41% are focused on rural areas. More Canadian respondents reported working at the regional level (including two or more geographic categories) than North American respondents.

Top Issues Respondents Are Engaged In

The top issue areas reported by respondents that they are engaged in are “knowledge, vision, and/or leadership” (65.8%) and “food security/access to healthy food” (62.9%). A sampling of specific open-ended comments on the top issues they are working on include:

Working and developing tribal relationships interested in food systems, especially procurement into the schools, located in within their jurisdiction.

*Supporting the integration of food production with daily life on all levels.
Slogans/mantras: "Good Food Everywhere" "Food systems development IS Economic Development" "Food Security IS Homeland Security."*

Farmers Market Manager and advocating healthier food choices for children, adults, SNAP recipients and seniors.

Community Food Systems, Commercial Kitchen, Mobile Livestock Unit, Garden and Greenhouse, built community facility for this work.

Leveraging institutional purchasing power to support the development of a sustainable food system while also training health professionals/clinicians about the importance of supporting this new system through healthy food and farm policies.

Developing policy to facilitate urban agriculture and opportunities for the City of Detroit to be a major player in various aspects of the food system in southeast Michigan.

Impact of FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and similar regulation on the development of local, healthy food production. Education of supporters of local, healthy food about the implications of the FSMA. Creation of a financial mechanism to enable beginning farmers to obtain appropriate land and the equipment needed to farm.

Creation of a new education mechanism for selecting and training beginning farmers. Creation of a national coalition for healthy food. Development of alternative food system infrastructure, particularly distribution. Creation of a collaborative network of national and local healthy food news sites. Creation of stores specializing in the retail sale of healthy food.

Linking food-related businesses together to develop a stronger learning community amongst local, independently owned business members.

Studying the impact of labor and consideration of producing local farm products as an economic driver: increasing jobs and average area wages.

Reducing food waste.

Top Work-Related Challenges

The top work-related challenges of the responding practitioners (not of the people they serve) were “attaining financial viability” (58.5%) and “balancing multiple interests” (58.2%).

Comments regarding work-related challenges included:

Getting farmers and communities to think and act large enough. There are issues of scale-up that need to be addressed, when everyone is focused on their own little activities. Also, there is a challenge of letting go to [of] aspects of projects that already have experts and professional in that field—for example trucking and logistics. These are best left to professional and we don’t need to reinvent the wheel for every project.

Getting and keeping committed participation from community members (i.e., increasing community engagement) and stakeholders. Time—too much to do, not enough time! (burnout from community organization members).

Need effective methods of communication between people and groups. There’s a lot of information and a strong desire to improve the food system, but the amount of information is almost overwhelming. People need to be able to quickly find their niche in the group and learn practical steps they can take, so we can put people to work and make change rather than talk about making change.

Wow, all of these spoke to me! Focusing on either small scale-high impact OR large scale-lower impact solutions. Contributing effectively to national policy efforts while remaining entrenched in local issues. Managing young, enthusiastic free labor. Building food nonprofit organizations as young, inexperienced leaders. Engaging the business community more. Switching to a model of “empowerment” as opposed to “education.” Sharing a complex food systems message with a busy, low-literacy audience.

General American ignorance and/or distrust at ALL levels (grassroots and officials) about: money systems, government, especially voter participation beyond voting civil rights (as pertains to self AND others at the same time). General lack of skills at ALL levels about: money systems government, especially voter participation beyond voting collective decision-making for win-win outcomes (civil rights for self and others). General lack of opportunities for meaningful civic engagement at all levels of government and decision-making. Contradictory complexity of laws, rules, regulations, interpretations at all levels of government (lack of regulatory harmony).

We need to develop broad networks among ecological farmers, agencies and foundations supporting our work to articulate ag-food policies relevant in the jurisdictions of different levels of government and ensure we are heard among political decision-makers and ag-food regulators.

Lessening project dependence on staff is also a factor of the way nonprofit people tend to work (or everyone). We hone in smaller and smaller when we should be reaching out and being honest about what we can and cannot do. I had to step in as one of my key staff was talking to a group of community leaders yesterday and remind everyone there, that this work is more than any one organization can do, and that it takes us all working and supporting each other to move forward. But it's a mindset that we and other community leaders tend to migrate towards over time.

Top TOPICAL Training Needs

The top topical training needs selected by respondents are “value-adding strategies” (47.7%), “marketing and value chain development” (43.4%), and “working with socially disadvantaged groups” (40.8%). Comments on topical training needs included:

As a local Farm Bureau President, our county identified the need to teach food safety handling and safety to the consumers. Our state Cooperative Extension no longer provides this service and has joined other agencies in chasing things like youth at risk dollars.

1. Supply chain workings and design — opportunities for transparency and openness to sustainable and regionally produced food; 2. institutional food purchasing; 3. mobilizing for policy change; 4. regulatory actions that would impact development of healthier more sustainable food system.

Bridging the gap between those involved in the food and farming world with the rest of the community not so inclined, i.e., making farming and fresh foods relevant to the average citizen.

Community land use policies, support for models of community-based economic exchange beyond conventional retail outlets, support for home-based food-related enterprise (“cottage industries”).

Skills organizing and working with diverse individuals and community groups. How to create a unified vision and work plan when each entity has their own way of doing a project. How to promote group participation amongst “Lone Ranger” Americans. Farm worker cooperatives, need shared workmen compensation, healthcare. Aging farmers need good farm help, need to create internships, mentoring, practical hands-on application/credited programs. Farmers need incentives to train, offer room and board, such as yurts for housing?

Scale appropriate value chain and regulatory models that support regional food systems. Deconstructing “food safety” so that all participants in the food chain understand their responsibilities without undue and unrealistic requirements at the level of the farm.

Developing a stronger mid-sized farmer base.

Community-based, self-determined food cooperatives, grocery stores, buying clubs.

Working with local government (e.g., municipalities, regional districts) to encourage them to better support their agricultural businesses and lands through zoning and planning.

Top TECHNICAL Skills Desired

The top technical skills training desired were “economic impact analysis” (52.1%), “project benchmarking, measurement, and impact metrics” (49.9%), and “fundraising and grantsmanship” (47.6%). Comments from respondents regarding technical skills needed included:

Facilitating communication between polar opposites. So many working in this area are driven by emotional issues that supersede logic and pragmatism.

Working with cultural diverse communities is a priority. Cultural, ethnically, linguistic not just language.

I’m surprised that you didn’t mention all of the “back office” stuff - filing, audits, 990s, financial planning and management ... these are things that many orgs in our movement are ignoring and they will pay for it down the road.

Leadership training, capacity building, especially in communities of color and low income communities where food access is limited.

Also caring about business plans. I haven't yet learned how to do them because I can't relate at all to their screwed-up assumptions about money, time, public values, etc.

Interdisciplinary training in systems thinking and modeling at various levels of expertise.

We need communities and increasing networks of skilled people working on food systems development projects. We need the training to be able to be good managers and to build projects that successfully employ professionals to offer shorter term services and expertise that we don't have or may not need as a successful practitioner.

Time is the limiting factor BECAUSE funding is our biggest limiting factor. We have resources. We just can't implement them. We believe this survey is a step in the right direction—that direction being: acknowledging and honoring a specific community position that grows, strengthens and weaves community around the topic of the production of fresh foods.

Health metrics (need to include in most assessments and work instead of being options so we need to understand them in order to include them properly).

Quantifying economic viability of urban ag into the future—how much of a role in food security/providing affordable healthy food can it realistically provide? What models? What policies, supports are needed? How compare to traditional solutions? Quantify and quality assessment of health impacts of urban ag.

Interpersonal communication negotiation and mediation techniques for facilitating farm transfer/lease parties. Consensus building toward strategy, planning, and agreements.

I'd like to see more about deliberate, targeted outreach and how to use new digital technologies AND existing technologies (i.e., social media and the local newspaper) to engage the general public, and to build community buy-in for small-scale ag efforts. A lot of times, I find that the folks I work with don't have time to do the communications part of the effort, but it is so KEY to long-term sustainability of these efforts. If we could de-mystify some of this, or provide a mechanism for sharing the message for them, that would go a long way.

What we are finding among colleagues in Extension is that they need more support on the evaluative/process side of food systems work, i.e., developing and evaluating food

systems outcomes), working collaboratively across disciplines on food systems issues, using common language and systems thinking tools.

Improving Satisfaction

The most desired changes that would increase work satisfaction were to have “access to more resources or funding” (89.5%), followed by “more opportunities for professional development training” (89.2%). Comments from respondents regarding most desired changes overall included:

I would be totally happy if I made a reliable living wage, had health insurance, and was guaranteed sufficient funding to run my program. If I got reliable pay (or if my organization got sufficient funding so I could get paid), I could devote more time to organization, get everything done that needs doing, and make the changes that would make us able to increase production to a sustainable self-supporting level. It's all about funding and time (related to funding).

I've found the fundamentally cross-disciplinary nature of food systems work made it very difficult for colleagues (especially regional decision makers and leaders of business/agencies) to understand and value food systems work. In turn, this increased the difficulty for me of advancing agendas and programs. This is where creating more recognition for the field and profession of “food systems” might be very helpful. At the same time, some of the power of community food security work in particular is based in its grassroots base with real openness to participation and the lack of a need for specific professional expertise in the field of “food security.” I'd like to see a way for both of these realities to be addressed in a way that is not mutually exclusive.

Less turf warfare, at the state level, more collaboration and support from powers that be, such as Dept. of Agriculture who appear to have big ag industry favoritism, over small organic and sustainable farmers. Our state does not even offer a bachelor program in Sustainable Agricultural Practices??

Per “Better Utilization of food system expertise”—I would desire an opportunity to coordinate with local colleges and universities the ability to co-teach courses in agriculture, community development, food systems, etc. There seems to be a professional barrier to working collaboratively between academia and practitioners in the development of students engaged in food systems.

More opportunities for knowledge-sharing among people doing similar work across North America. In one sense, I am an expert, in another a learner. I want to be both in the knowledge forums I participate in. Multilateral pooling and sharing forums where we can compare contexts and best practices are much better than normal conference formats with speakers and a bit of time for Q & A at the end.

I “desire significantly” to have less political interference in my work from the party in power. I was hired because of my agricultural expertise, and I should provide my opinions based on that expertise, unfettered by the political party that happens to be in charge. They are of course entitled not to act on my recommendations, but my recommendations should not be altered to match the party’s political platform.

For me, sexism is playing out. While I am white, the broad metro work I started has been taken over by white men and my voice and the voice of other women are not being taken seriously. Shortly, we will no longer be heard. Professional development training is critical and getting my staff out to meet others, but the cost of lodging, travel and then the training itself is far too expensive. While I would be happy to host a training, some assistance in finding training is becoming more critical the more isolated I have become from national food systems development work—I just don’t know folks like I used to.

Once you have been in this line of work for more than a decade there are very few increased opportunities for advancement. However, the work is very rewarding.

I’m a young (mid-twenties) leader who founded an organization in Detroit—I need more support with other young food systems leaders who are innovating, building organizations, or are intrapreneurs within their own organizations. I ESPECIALLY want this connection with other people of color who are working in urban settings. There needs to be a space other than invite-only Kellogg conferences, and expensive CFSC conferences for rising leaders who are beyond the “learning stage” and are coming into positions of management (between youth and the level of IATP Food & Society Fellows) to come together and build their skills.

Top-Ranked PD Opportunities

The top-ranked professional development opportunity overall was “networking WITHIN their specific technical field” (60.2% of all respondents; 72% of African American respondents), followed by a conference (56.1%), online training modules (selected by 64% of African American respondents), and an e-newsletter. Comments from respondents on PD opportunities included:

A Food systems development Practitioner Accreditation Program—this is a fantastic idea!!

Again, these are great options but for most, the limiting factor is not (just) the availability of resources, but the time (i.e., money) to make use of such resources. I might like, need, desire to participate in such things but I must have the time freedom to do so that is created when additional staff is hired. I would strongly vote against an

accreditation program. Such good intentions often backfire by pigeon holing and excluding good people while allowing others to believe that such accreditation gives you accurate info about others. Much like the organic certification that we've found means very little and is often used to meet the letter of the law and not the spirit. Webinars are useful only if they are available after the fact. A specific channel on a YouTube-like station—now THAT would be useful. We have begun networking with similar projects in the area but it would be great if there were one, big site where people could connect BOTH regionally and nationally with similar projects while having the freedom to peruse others groups that are doing different things. All in all, not doing things FOR us, but creating infrastructure so that we can do things for ourselves, is most helpful, in my view, i.e., We would love to connect with similar projects in the US, access data and what others are doing easily and quickly, having one-stop places to go for such information, key-word searches of skills, compiling all projects and support for such projects in one place so we can find them. THAT would be a huge undertaking but a huge help to us all.

I don't think more regional networks or national networks are needed. I already attend NESAWG, the CFSC conference, and the WKKF bi-annual conference.

As a current student and future farmer, food system specific training is of critical importance to me both in qualifying for entry level professional opportunities and in creating effective projects and training opportunities in my own community. Online training resources are especially of interest to me, as I'm sure they are for many young farmers and activists, because I live in a rural area. Development of an online portal to increase accessibility to information regarding current and future opportunities for food system professional development, jobs, and skills of colleagues is an excellent idea that I hope this working group will pursue. Thank you for recognizing the need for increased training and networking in this field, I look forward to the opportunities that your research and cooperative efforts will provide.

Cultivating young professionals and people of color into technical assistance rolls through a combination of accredited classes and on the job apprenticeships. Making a place for young professionals and people of color at conferences and networking opportunities. It seems for TA training, we need a more professional system for training. Occasional workshops and conferences will need to be supplements I believe, with stronger accredited/apprenticeship programs taking a lead in the future.

Gatherings of practitioners and endless meetings are already available, as are training sessions with price tags I can't afford. I don't have the time to go to all of the "crucial" networking events, and yet if I don't go, I miss out on the connections and funding opportunities that always go to the same small group of big organizations who have the extra staff to be everywhere at once. I'd appreciate webinars and training I can do

online and in my own time. Also, it seems most training sessions are offered in the spring and on weekends—prime farming time. Why not late fall and winter for indoor training? That’s when we’re all free.

Can’t imagine what a food systems development practitioner accred. program would look like since there are so many facets of the food system and rarely is one person working on them all. Also—I don't know how many jobs exist with people who are focused on all aspects of the food system but it seems the demand needs to increase a bit before the supply... Or instead a focus of how training in all of the food system can be relevant to someone who deals primarily with one aspect of the system.

One-on-one mentoring with a more experienced food system professional (local or long-distance, i.e., by email) who I can relate to and ask questions and get insightful, experience-based responses.

We need to develop the capacity for combining a conference or meeting at one site with the ability of people at a distance to plug into, and participate in, the proceedings. Of course, the face-to-face experience will always be richer, but for those who cannot afford to be there, there needs to be ways they can plug into the proceedings and not just watch the talks given online a month later.

Interest in Professional Development

Over half (54.3%) of respondents indicated they would be “very interested” in participating in a professional development organization, while 39.4% indicated they “might” be interested, and 6.3% were “not interested.” Canadians were more likely to indicate they “maybe” interested. Many reported that having a Canadian point of view in such an organization would be a critical factor in their choice. Additional comments on respondent interest in PD included:

We have many volunteers who would be unable to pay and as we work with more folks of modest income the likelihood of engaging them in training is decreased if they have to pay.

For food systems TA training to be taken seriously, it seems it would need to be designed and offered through an accredited college program. I believe we are at a place in food systems work that occasional workshops and conferences are not substantial enough. Accredited offerings would also draw in new professionals and trainers and provide an opportunity to charge a fair rate for TA services (more likely) which would in turn provide a good livelihood for TA providers. Currently, new folks (young or otherwise) often are left trying to make sense of what is being offered through current conferences and networking gatherings.

For practitioners who aren't formally employed, there needs to be other options that make this kind of training accessible to community members, especially in lower-income communities and for youth (two groups most affected by food system injustice).

I generally can't go to training classes because I'm priced out. Small non-profits, disadvantaged community workers, and others below/at/near the poverty line should get sliding scale or free tuition. Volunteer trades don't always work because the same groups also have less available time since we're working multiple jobs and have few staff. What if we could pay it forward by making the commitment of so many hours teaching learned skills (or other expertise) to others? For instance, I attend a permaculture workshop free, and in return commit to training 10 other people for free, or donating 5 hours of skills training/labor to community. If the goal really is community education/improvement (rather than profit for original trainers), then this model would geometrically increase community knowledge base.

Some kind of pay-what-you-can—some of my colleagues in other organizations would certainly not be able to participate unless training were free, and it is often these organizations that have the greatest training needs. It is those organizations that are well-funded and have core funding that have the time and funds to participate in conferences and professional development. Those who can afford, should pay, enabling those that can't afford to also participate.

Pay it forward model. Log hours of email interaction while I am a trainee, with the understanding that I will offer the same number of hours to trainees less experienced than I am. My "employer" is my spouse, for all relevant purposes. So we're investing his extra income in our local community and would probably prefer not to pay it to outside consultants. Negotiable, depending on value of training offered.

I would never pay for professional development; funds are better spent on our non-profit field work.

Don't make this into a career opportunity for trainers. Keep the costs down to a minimum. I mean, much lower than you probably have in mind.

If there is a professional organization, there could be an opportunity for self-education within the organization. ABA has a great model for this—have presented through their webinar programmes in the past.

More damage is done by "experts" but we have a lot of untrained people out here who could use help. They typically work in underfunded organizations, so you are going to need to make this no cost and accessible or the real work will not get done. Too much theory and not enough application as it is.

Key Findings by Type of Respondent

Food systems development practitioners tended to have similar responses. But some small differences and patterns emerge from the data. Grant-dependent occupations and African American respondents tended to be more concerned with attaining financial viability than those who are likely to have salaried positions with public agencies and educational institutions. As a group, African Americans reported greater interest in professional development as well as online training modules. See Table 3.

Table 3. Key Finding by Type of Respondent

Occupational Category	Top Challenges	Top Desires	Top PD Training Needs	Top PD Opportunities
Staff member of a public agency N=134	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing multiple interests • Expanding the number of people benefiting • Attaining financial viability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • More opportunities for professional development training • Increased opportunities for advancement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic impact analysis • Project benchmarking, measuring progress, impact metrics • Community food assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Online training modules that can be completed on my own time • Conference of food system and agriculture development practitioners • E-newsletter featuring case studies, best practices, and training opportunities
Staff or faculty in an education or research institution N=236	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing multiple interests • Expanding the number of people benefiting • Attaining financial viability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • More opportunities for professional development training • Increased salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project benchmarking, measuring progress, impact metrics • Economic impact analysis • Fundraising and grantsmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Online training modules that can be completed on my own time • Conference of food system and agriculture development practitioners
Staff member of a nonprofit organization N=361	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaining financial viability • Balancing multiple interests • Expanding the number of people benefiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • More opportunities for professional development training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project benchmarking, measuring progress, impact metrics • Economic impact analysis • Fundraising and grantsmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Conference of food system and agriculture development practitioners • Regional communities-of-practice networks • Online training modules that can be completed on my own time
Self-employed consultant working in food system development N=75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaining financial viability • Balancing multiple interests • Expanding stakeholder involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • More stable employment or livelihood in this line of work • Better utilization of my food system expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic impact analysis (e.g., IMPLAN, RIMS III) • Project benchmarking, measuring progress, impact metrics • Conducting feasibility studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals from DIFFERENT technical field; Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Conference of food system and agriculture development practitioners • Regional communities-of-practice networks
Farmer or business person who is active in local or regional food system projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaining financial viability • Balancing multiple interests • Expanding the number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased salary • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • Greater understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising and grantsmanship • Preparing business plans • Stakeholder engage- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Conference of food system and agriculture development

N=92	of people benefiting	by others of my food system development work	ment (especially disenfranchised groups)	practitioners • E-newsletter featuring case studies, best practices, and training opportunities
Black/African American respondents N=84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaining financial viability • Expanding the number of people benefiting • Addressing racial and/or cultural divides • Developing experienced leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities for professional development training • More resources or funding earmarked for my work • Increased salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising and grantsmanship • Economic impact analysis (e.g., IMPLAN, RIMS III) • Food system mapping (geographic information systems (GIS)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with professionals WITHIN my specific technical field • Conference of food system and agriculture development practitioners • Online training modules that can be completed on my own time

SECTION III. EXISTING AND PROPOSED FOOD SYSTEMS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Options for meeting some of the needs and interests identified in the survey do exist and are actually quite diverse. These range from publications and social media all the way to formal college degrees program in food studies, sustainable agriculture, and a growing number of academic programs that specifically emphasize food systems (see list in Appendix B). For currently employed, mid-career, or non- and paraprofessionals there are also many professional development resources (see Table 4).

Table 4. Examples of PD Opportunities With Limited Time or Resources

TYPE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES
Degree Programs	Green Mount College (VT) Master of Science in Sustainable Food Systems (MSFS) distance learning
Certification Programs	U. of GA Local Food Systems Certificate
Conferences/Webinars	National Good Food Network Webinars
Online Training (self-directed; modular)	Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future Distance Learning Course Food Production, Public Health, and the Environment
Communities of Practice	Community, Local and Regional Food Systems Community of Practice (eXtension)
Membership Organizations	Food Secure Canada; Farmers' Market Coalition
Job Listings	COMFOODJOB; Sustainable Food Jobs; JuJu Food System Jobs Listing
Support Networks/Communities	COMFOOD; National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Information Repositories	AgDevONLINE
Publications, Training Materials and Text Books	Farmland Information Center (http://www.farmlandinfo.org/)
Social Media (blogs, Listservs, bulletin boards, RSS, twitters, etc)	Food Hub Blog (http://food-hub.org/news/)
TYPE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES
Degree Programs	Green Mount College (VT) Master of Science in Sustainable Food Systems (MSFS) distance learning
Certification Programs	U. of GA Local Food Systems Certificate
Conferences/Webinars	National Good Food Network Webinars
Online Training (self-directed; modular)	Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future Distance Learning Course Food Production, Public Health, and the Environment
Communities of Practice	Community, Local and Regional Food Systems Community of Practice (eXtension)
Membership Organizations	Food Secure Canada; Farmers' Market Coalition
Job Listings	COMFOODJOB; Sustainable Food Jobs; JuJu Food System Jobs Listing
Support Networks/Communities	COMFOOD; National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Information Repositories	AgDevONLINE
Publications, Training Materials and Text Books	Farmland Information Center (http://www.farmlandinfo.org/)
Social Media (blogs, Listservs, bulletin boards, RSS, twitters, etc)	Food Hub Blog (http://food-hub.org/news/)

In addition, most professions, including many associated with food and agriculture, have professional development organizations; farmers, educators, agribusiness people, nutritionists, food service workers, community developers, planners, scientists, etc., all have professional or trade organizations that provide in-service PD programming on their particular aspect of food systems. An example would be the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), which recognizes economic developers around the world who have achieved a level of excellence in their understanding of the tools and programs of economic development. In order to become a

Certified Economic Developer (CEcD), one must fulfill a number of requirements and pass the exam.

Existing Organizations with Professional Development Activities

Despite the demise of the Community Food Security Coalition and the Food and Community Fellows program, there are a growing number of professional development organizations across the three general domains of the food system. Table 5 presents a very broad typology. In reality, most organizations can be fit in more than domain; however, for illustrative and planning purposes we categorized them by the preponderance of their work. These organizations already provide an impressive volume of online resources (see Appendix C.)

Table 5. National Organizations with Some Professional Development Capacity

PRODUCTION DOMAIN	DISTRIBUTION DOMAIN	CONSUMPTION DOMAIN	OTHER
National Incubator Farm Training Initiative (Eva Agudelo Winther)	Farmers' Market Coalition (Jen Obrien)	The SNAP-Ed Connection (USDA)	Planning for Agriculture and Food Systems Network (Jim Hiley)
American Farmland Trust (Julia Freedgood)	National Farm to School Network	Alliance for Building Capacity (ABC) ???	Rural Development Centers
SARE PD Program	National Good Food Network	Food Secure Canada	Local Food Systems - for Extension Educators Community of Practice (eXtension)
Sustainable Agriculture Education Association (SAEA)	USDA Know Your Farmer Know Your Food	Slow Food USA (Sarah Rucker)	American Planning Association's Food Interest Group (Kimberley Hodgson)
The Land Institute Farm Beginnings Program (Sue Balcom)	Cooperative Food Empowerment Directive		USAIN (Madeleine Charney)
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils	National Cooperative Business Association		The Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) (Joanne Burke)
New Roots Program, International Rescue Committee (Timothy Olorunfemi)	Real Food Challenge (Sarah Rucker)		COMFOOD/COMFOODJOBS (Hugh Joseph)
Young Farmers Coalition (Sarah Rucker)			
Institute for Bioregional Studies Ltd (Phil Ferraro)			

As suggested by our survey results, though, despite the wealth of information, PD opportunities, and organizational infrastructure, these are not highly coordinated, integrated, convenient, or perhaps even well known by practitioners, and there are numerous gaps in the training available (e.g., economic impact

analysis, benchmarking, and GIS are not well represented). PD training, especially for practitioners new to food systems work or who need to update their skills, are likely to find the smorgasbord of opportunities piecemeal, chaotic, and perhaps overwhelming. It is in this context that NAFSN proposes to reorganize the food systems development training landscape.

What NAFSN's Professional Development Programming Might Look Like

While the specific structure, function, and goals of NAFSN are yet to be fully fleshed out, the steering committee hopes that the organization will generally lead to increased impact on regional food systems, more efficient use of diminishing resources, better targeting of resources (by eliminating the reinvention of the wheel), and more satisfying careers for those choosing food systems development work.

NAFSN can achieve these goals by aggregating and promoting existing PD programs; encouraging best practices in food systems development; fostering collaboration through topical and regional communities of practice; and fostering a large cadre of food systems professionals and leaders who may have specialties (such as beginning farmer programming or emergency food assistance), but also have a wider knowledge base and skill set that builds their personal capacity and allows them to collaborate more effectively in their regions.

Proposed Vision and Mission Statements

NAFSN's steering committee drafted the following vision and mission statements. (Note: As of this writing, neither statement has been approved by the entire working group.)

Draft Vision Statements

Contextual Vision:

We envision just and sustainable food systems as the foundation of every community in North America.

Organizational Vision:

In the future, NAFSN will be composed of members who believe a food system should be defined by, and responsive to, the values and needs of each community in North America.

Draft Mission Statement

The mission of the North American Food Systems Network is to support equitable and sustainable food systems by (1) creating opportunities for professional growth; (2) identifying and encouraging best practices; (3) expanding applied research on food systems; and (4) developing tools, methods, and programs to build the capacity of communities to engage in food system innovations.

Many issues, such as the organizational and administrative structure, membership fees, and funding, are yet to be decided. We believe that the best approach to professional development programming is not to reinvent the wheel, but to serve more as a coordinating function for existing PD programs—that is, to promote these offerings, aggregate their links, and encourage the development of new programs to fill training gaps.

Potential Programs and Services

Based on our survey results, NAFSN is considering a range of professional development opportunities that build on existing programming:

- (a) from basic certificates of completion and continuing education credits, to food systems development certification that includes completing a given curriculum, taking an exam, and/or completing a peer-reviewed capstone project;
- (b) facilitating the creation of communities of practice that can be *topical* (e.g., food security, beginning farmer programming, agriculture in the middle), or *geographical* (local, multi-county, multistate), or *cultural* (e.g. people of color in general, Laotians, Latinos, etc.); and
- (c) facilitating networking and action across the current silos of activity to more strategically and effectively address the professional development needs of members.

To provide the above we will aggregate *existing* online training and professional development modules and webinar recordings from partnering organizations; fill in the gaps with new educational modules; build a state-of-the-art social networking platform; and initiate a regular professional development conference. Table 6 presents a number of professional development programs and services that are under consideration.

Table 6. NAFSN Program Components Under Consideration

NETWORK COMPONENT/PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING PURPOSE
Regional/Topical Communities of Practice Online Networking Platform	Customized state-of-the-art social networking platform that allows CoPs to form within and between geographic regions as well as within and between food systems disciplines/domains	Cash or in-kind programming from world-class companies
Online Skills Training Modules Online Educational Platform	Any CoPs, agencies or organizations can contribute modules on skills areas, such as leadership development, project evaluation, etc.	Funding need to develop modules that are not donated
Online Topical Training modules Online Educational Platform	Any CoPs, agencies or organizations can contribute modules on topics such as food hubs, shared-use kitchens, pocket markets, beginning farmers, and farm2foodbank	Funding need to develop modules that are not donated
Certificate of Completion	Complete a given curriculum (set of modules)	Funding to provide scholarships
Professional Certification	In order to become a Certified Food Systems Development Practitioner, one completes a given curriculum and then takes a test and/or submits a capstone project	Funding to provide scholarships
Archived Webinar Repository	CoPs and partner organizations submit webinars; we archive and provide a viewing theatre	Cash or in-kind programming needed for website programming, or in-kind programming
Network Conference	Biannual conference that could be live or virtual	Cash or in-kind programming to develop online conference technology; provide trainer honoraria and scholarships
ePublishing Program	<i>Food Systems Journal</i> (JAFSCD) converts to Open Access; weekly e-newsletters; white papers; how-to best practices guides	Funding to allow JAFSCD to become Open Access and subsidize other publications
Tools and Resources Library	Job bank, employment trend data, sample job descriptions, how-to guides, and other publications	Cash or in-kind programming to create CMS
Listserves	COMFOOD/COMFOODJOBS	Cash or in-kind support to enhance and maintain lists
Study Tours	Sponsored by CoPs	Funding needed for tour hosts and direct costs
Scholarships	Scholarships to support research or PD coursework for network members	Funding for scholarships (generally under US\$1,000 each)
Mentor Program	Certified Practitioners mentor noncertified practitioners	In-kind or funding for mentor honoraria
Senior Corps of Researchers and Educators (SCORE)	Experienced faculty, consultants or others help community organizations conduct surveys or evaluations, with ultimate goal of publishing results in the <i>Food Systems Journal</i>	In-kind or funding for SCORE honoraria
Job Bank	Database employers can use to post announcements and position descriptions, which have automatic expiration	Cash or in-kind programming to create CMS

SECTION IV. WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

This white paper needs to be digested and considered by stakeholders. Depending on the interests and concerns of the NAFSN Working Group, the steering committee proposes that we engage in a minimum of two summits at which representatives of key stakeholder groups may come together to discuss the need, scope, and scale of NAFSN and develop a plan of work.

To launch a fully operational program in the next two years, we will need to leverage the capacity of leading institutions and networks, including the Fair Food Network, the National Good Food Network, Food Secure Canada, Wholesome Wave, American Farmland Trust, National Farm-to-School Network, Resource Center on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAf), and, of course JUSDA (SARE, ARS, AGNIC, NAL, etc.). We may also want to reach out to groups such as the Farm Bureau, United Farm Workers, the Rural Coalition, and others. Social networking tools such as listservs, Twitter, Facebook, etc., can be used to announce online training opportunities and encouraging practitioners to participate.

Until NAFSN has its own nonprofit tax exemption, the network can come under the auspices of the Food Systems Development Project (publisher of the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*), a project of the Center for Transformative Action, which is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization affiliated with Cornell University.

A Draft Plan of Work

The launch of the North American Food Systems Network could include three phases: (1) prelaunch; (2) build-out and soft launch; and (3) full launch.

Phase 1. Prelaunch Organization and Program Development (6 months)

The objectives for this phase are for key stakeholders to meet in person to discuss this white paper and to plan and execute the network launch. The key infrastructure of the network will need to be in place (though it will not be fully developed for another year).

- Create **steering committee** — DONE
- Create **subcommittees** that focus on drafting key organizational components (e.g., vision and mission, program development, promotion/outreach, budget, social networking) — UNDERWAY
- Secure **seed funding** to support all Phase 1 activities (minimum of \$46,000; see budget below) — UNDERWAY
- Conduct an exhaustive **resource inventory** of existing professional development resources, including training and technical assistance providers, online training modules, archived training webinars, degree programs, job banks, etc. — UNDERWAY
- Set up a **website** with basic community of practice social networking features, membership function, databases, tools and resources — UNDERWAY* [See: <http://nafsn.cybersense.us/>]
- Create **outreach infrastructure**: blog, RSS feed, Twitter, Facebook accounts, logo, etc. — UNDERWAY* [See: <https://www.facebook.com/NAFSN>]
- Secure the services of a part-time **coordinator**.
- Begin seeking **funding and other resources** for Phase 2.

- Engage and **secure collaboration** with national partnership organizations (like the Farmers' Market Coalition, National Farm2School Program, American Farmland Trust, National Good Food Network, etc.) that may be offering training, cash, in-kind services, etc.
- Conduct a minimum of two **summits** to bring key representatives of national partner organizations (stakeholder groups) together in order to review the white paper and the steering committee's work; refine specifics of the launch plan, goals and objectives, membership criteria, and evaluation metrics; plan binational conference; develop a long-term plan of work; possibly redraft and sign articles of incorporation.
- Engage the **pro bono services** of an accountant and attorney.
- Complete drafting of **bylaws and articles** of incorporation.
- **Incorporate** as a nonprofit and file for 501(c)(3) tax exemption.
- Set up bank, credit card, and PayPal accounts.

Phase 2. Training Infrastructure Build-Out and Soft-Launch (est. 6 months)

It is important to note that Phase 2 will be based on the decisions and fine-tuning of program development made in Phase 1. However, we can speculate that Phase 2 activities might include:

- Plan and execute **Binational Conference**. This will be a combination of PD workshops for practitioners as well as a series of planning and organizational meetings, elections, etc.
- Explore a food systems professional development **pedagogy work group** (council?) of experienced educators and practitioners. The pedagogy work group will establish a process for identifying and promoting best practices and PD training approaches. This might include outlining a general curriculum for core competencies and specializations and establishing standards for accrediting existing and new training modules developed by partner organizations.
- Provide the curriculum online in a state-of-the art NAFSN **Training Portal** with links to partner organizations' training resources and information on the training module costs (if any), content of training, continuing education credits toward food systems development professional certification, etc.
- Develop a member **dashboard** on the website that will allow each user to track the status of his or her training (continuing education credits toward food systems development certification or some other certification); see upcoming events, new training modules, and best practices resources; access account information; etc.
- Conduct **soft launch**: execute promotion and outreach plan announcing the launch of the Network to partner organizations.
- Conduct a **feedback survey**.
- **Adjust** systems as necessary and prepare for full launch.
- Determine **membership** levels, fee scales, incentives, etc.
- Create **promotional materials** such as ebrochures.

Phase 3. Full Launch (3 months)

- Conduct a **full launch**, including a large-scale promotional campaign and membership drive with outreach programs at conferences, online info, webinars, etc.
- **Identify gaps** in existing training resources and identify strategies for filling them.

- Design state-of-the-art **enhancements to the website** to allow practitioners to build topical, geographic, and cultural communities of practice.
- Develop **special programs** such as scholarships, mentoring, study tours, etc.
- Plan second **binational conference**.
- **Expand** resources on website.

* Activities that are underway but will not be completed until the working group gives input from and the steering committee has granted approval.

Phase 1 Budget

The budget below is proposed for the 6 months of phase one. We will seek a planning grant to underwrite it.

EXPENSE CATEGORY	COST	NOTES
Travel budget for Partnership Summits	\$32,000	40 people x \$800 for transportation, meals and lodging
Part-time coordinator/grantwriter for 6 months	23,000	6 months at .5 FTE @ \$23 per hour (includes wages and 35% fringe)
Honoraria for chair/co-chairs	2,000	\$1,000 x 2
Social networking software	500	GoToMeeting, website hosting
Misc. expenses	1,000	Office supplies, emergency travel fund, communications
TOTAL	\$58,500	

SECTION V. DISCUSSION ISSUES

This white paper provides strong evidence of the need for and potential of NAFSN. However, there's much we need to explore about the scope and operation of what we propose. The following are critical discussion issues, which need to be considered as we move forward.

SCOPE

Professional development was the ostensible focus motivating the creation of NAFSN. However, in subsequent discussions, the demise of Community Food Security Coalition, and the Food and Community Fellows Program have left critical voids. To what degree does a new organization try to fill the void? Does the new organization focus solely on professional development or does it become a public policy lobby, advocating resources, expressing positions on the farm bill, etc.?

FINANCIAL MODEL

What will NAFSN's business model be? The financial model of the network is to be determined, but is likely to include scaled membership fees, fees for services, sponsorships, partnerships and in-kind contributions. There is a strong sentiment to minimize the need for grants beyond the early stages of the network, and establish a means of keeping the organization lean and capable of surviving the likely long term austere economic climate. Naturally, an endowment to sustain

the core functions of the network would not be frowned upon. We are currently seeking seed funding.

COMMENTS

If you have questions or constructive comments on this white paper, please share them with Duncan Hilchey at duncan@newleafnet.com or contact any of the following NAFSN steering committee members:

Cheryl Danley, Food and Community Fellow (Michigan State University), USA;
Julia Freedgood, American Farmland Trust (AFT), USA;
Janet Hawkes, ManagingManagingManagingManaging director, HD1, USA; USA;
Hugh Joseph, Tufts University, USA/Canada;
Mark Muller, McKnight Foundation, USA;
Jen O'Brien, Farmers' Market Coalition (FMC), USA;
Timothy Olorunfemi, International Rescue Committee, USA;
Sarah Rocker, The Evergreen State College, USA;
Eva Agudelo Winther, National Incubator Farm Training Initiative (NIFTI), USA

Appendix A. North American Food System Development Practitioner Survey

Prepared by the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*
Duncan Hilchey

SURVEY PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

Interest in food systems development is growing dramatically. National organizations and federal programs have evolved over the last couple of decades, many new community-based projects have been created, and a growing number of institutions of higher education have begun to expand the academic and scholarly interest in food systems. Funding from public agencies and the private sector (including foundation and progressive food companies) has concomitantly increased. Yet with all this interest and growth there has been, in fact, no large-scale survey of food system development practitioners relating to their professional challenges and training needs.

While Cooperative Extension and other entities have been engaged in food system development for a long time, for many organizations and their staff or volunteers this is new territory. In addition, much of the current focus in this emerging field lacks established foundations for practice. Out of this we are identifying an emerging need for the kind of information, training opportunities, and networking that enable food system development practitioners to be effective in the important work of building and strengthening local and regional food systems. We believe that improving the knowledge and skills of practitioners is likely to lead to more effective and efficient programs, and ultimately to more viable and sustainable food systems.

This survey was formally cosponsored by American Farmland Trust (AFT), the Wallace Center at Winrock International, the Michigan State U. Center for Regional Food Systems (formerly the C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems), and conducted by the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (JAFSCD).

Note: This report does not include the results collected in the French (*Québécois*) version of the survey, which have been analyzed separately. For the Quebec results email duncan@newleafnet.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following individuals contributed their support and expertise to the development of the survey:

Jim Barham	USDA Agriculture Marketing Service
John Fisk	Wallace Center at Winrock International
Julia Freedgood	American Farmland Trust
Gil Gillespie	Cornell University Department of Development Sociology
Joanna Green	Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming
Oran Hesterman	Fair Food Network
Anupama Joshi	National Farm to School Network
Fred Kirschenmann	Leopold Center Distinguished Fellow
Heidi Mouillesseaux-Kunzman	Community and Regional Development Institute, Cornell
Rob Myers	SARE Professional Development Program
Rich Pirog	MSU Center for Regional Food Systems
Gus Schumacher	Wholesome Wave Foundation/AFT
Mark Winne	Community Food Security Coalition

Special appreciation to the following individuals for preparing the French version of this survey:

Gilles Bonneau	Commission de protection du territoire agricole ainsi
Véronik Campbell	Center for Sustainable Food Systems and the UBC Farm
Beth Hunter	J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Rosemarie Lapalucci	J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Alexandra Pronovost	J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

KEY FINDINGS

Respondents are largely highly educated white females. The majority of respondents are from the nonprofit/government sector. Sixty-two percent reported working 4+ years on food system development, including one-quarter with 10 or more years of experience. However, only about one-third devote 30 hours or more per week to food system development issues.

Over half of respondents (57%) focus on cities, while 41% work in rural areas. Canadian respondents reported working at the regional level (including two or more geographic categories) more than North American respondents as a whole.

The **top issue areas** selected by respondents are knowledge, vision, and/or leadership (65.8%) and food security/access to healthy food (62.9%).

The **top topical training needs** selected by respondents are value-adding strategies (47.7%), marketing and value chain development (43.4%), and working with socially disadvantaged groups (40.8%).

The **top challenges** selected overall were “attaining financial viability” (58.5%) and “balancing multiple interests” (58.2%).

The **most desired changes** overall were to have access to more resources or funding (89.5%), followed by more opportunities for professional development training (89.2%).

The **top technical skills training desired** identified were economic impact analysis (52.1%), project benchmarking, measurement, and impact metrics (49.9%), and fundraising and grantsmanship (47.6%).

The **top-ranked professional development opportunity** overall was “networking WITHIN their specific technical field” (60.2%; 72% of African American respondents), followed by a conference, online training modules (selected by 64% of African American respondents), and an e-newsletter.

Over half (54.3%) of respondents indicated they would be “very interested” in participating in a professional development organization, while 39.4% indicated they “might” be interested, and 6.3% were “not interested.” Canadians were more likely to indicate “maybe” interested. Many reported that having a Canadian point of view in such an organization being a critical factor in their choice.

METHODS

In consultation with a group of national agriculture and food system development leaders, JAFSCD developed a questionnaire for discerning the key needs of food system development professionals. The survey was put into SurveyMonkey and beta tested, edited, and tested a second time. The survey was translated into French (for Quebec respondents) and tested (although the Quebec survey is undergoing separate analysis). The survey was completely anonymous unless the respondent choose to share their contact information.

For the purposes of the survey we defined a “food system development practitioner” as anyone who, “as a significant portion of their work, uses community development strategies in working with farmers, business people, government agency staff, local residents, or other persons or entities to create or strengthen the viability, equity, and sustainability of food systems.” This definition includes paid staff, consultants, volunteers, and activists working in the field of: agriculture and other kinds of food production, processing, distributing, marketing, and retailing; food security; and food waste management.

We recruited participants through an announcement with links to the survey posted several times on major national listservs including COMFOOD, SANET, FOOD PLANNING; it was also promoted by the USDA Small Farm program. In addition, numerous national organizations were contacted directly and encouraged to share the announcement with their members (e.g., regional SAREs, SAWGs, and regional rural development centers). The announcement was also sent directly to individuals on the JAFSCD email list. As the responses accumulated we monitored demographic data to identify and possibly correct for lack of representativeness in geography and race/ethnicity. We soon realized that the South and Southwest, certain Canadian provinces, and people of color were significantly under-represented. We then sought advice for promoting the survey among the underrepresented groups and as a result we contacted additional organizations and encouraged them to share the study announcement.

RESULTS

A total of 1,331 individuals responded to the survey. We deemed that 1,294 (92.7%) were qualified to complete the survey based on their indication that they were a current or prospective food system development practitioner (professional or volunteer) as per our operational definition above.

Representativeness

It is important to note that it is not known how many food system development professionals there are or what are their characteristics. Under this condition of uncertainty, our goal was to recruit respondents from a wide set of geographic locations (because food system development practice might vary across geography) and demographic characteristics (because the kinds of jobs, working situations, and

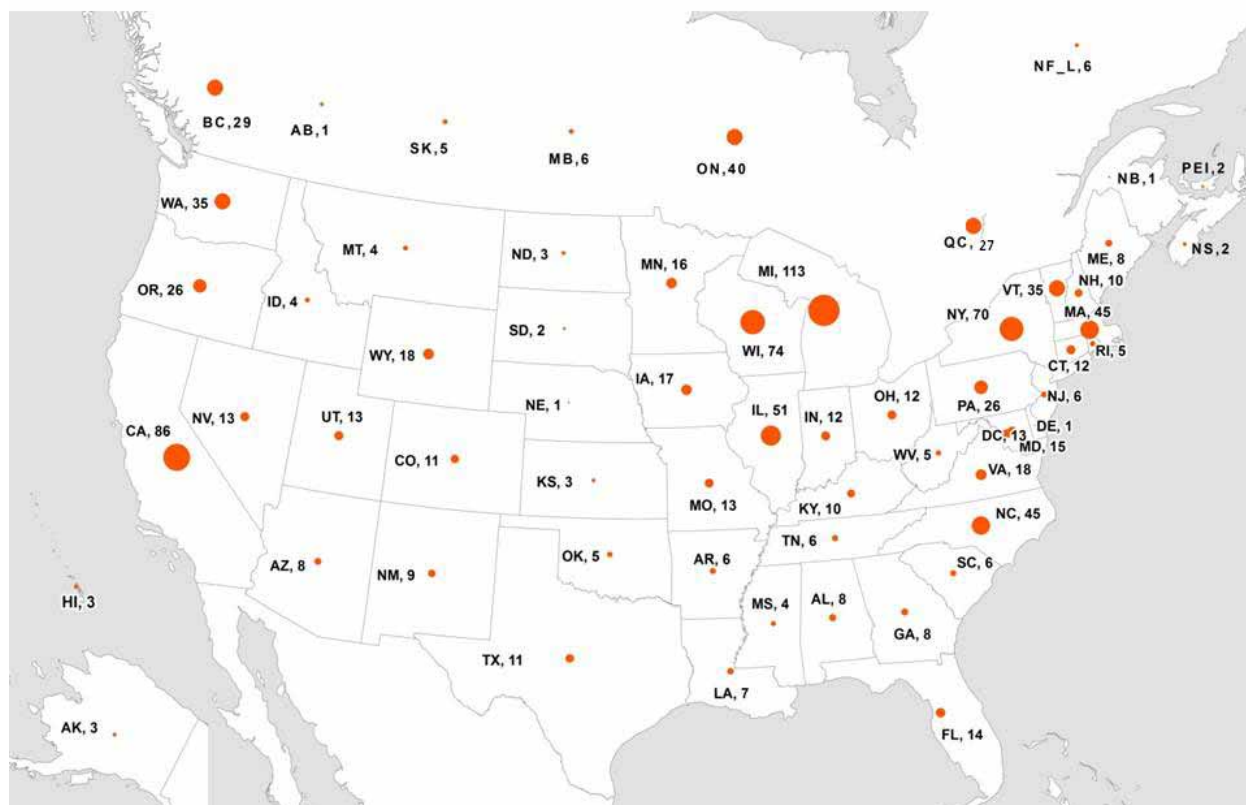
opportunities might vary according to race and ethnicity and other demographic characteristics). It is therefore not known how representative our sample is, and how generalizable the results are. However, we hope this study helps us to gain a better understanding of the whole field as opposed to some narrow subset of it.

LOCATION

Respondents hail from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and other territories, as well as 11 of 13 Canadian provinces (see figure 1). We initially did not include the District of Columbia, and a number of respondents added it in “Other: Please specify.” When aggregating respondents by region, the highest response rates were from the Midwestern U.S. (30%), Northeastern U.S. (24%), Western U.S. (20%), Southeastern U.S. (13%), Canada (10%), and Southwestern U.S. (3%).* Response rates appear to be somewhat correlated to regional populations with the exception of states like Texas and Florida, which appear significantly underrepresented.

Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of Respondents

Note: Circles are proportional to regional level of response.



* The Western U.S. region includes CA, CO, ID, MT, OR, NV, UT, WA, and WY; the Southwestern U.S. includes AZ, NM, OK, and TX.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

RACE

Three quarters of the respondents (76.5%) reported being white/not Hispanic or Latino, 6% reported being Black or African American/not Hispanic or Latino, and 4% reported being Hispanic/Latino (see table 1). Only one percent of the respondents identify themselves as Asian, Native American, or Native Islander. The respondents were less diverse than the U.S. as a whole. Though Canada is less diverse on the whole than the U.S., Canadians represented only 10% of the respondents and therefore their responses do not fully explain the significantly higher white response. Other races and ethnic groups reported include Arab, Persian, human, and variations of white, black and Asian.

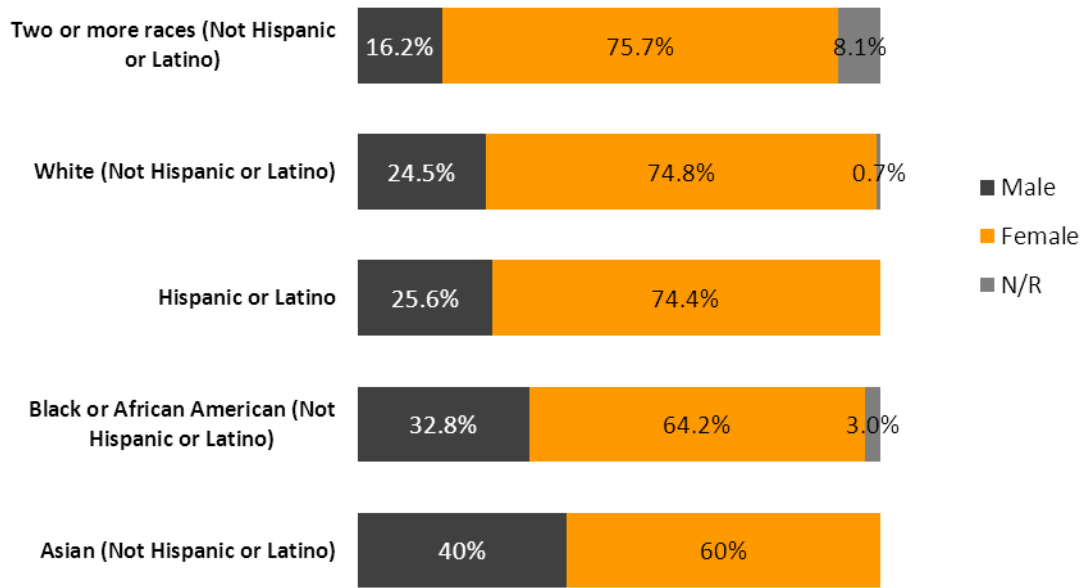
Table 1. Race/Ethnic Group of Respondents Compared to U.S. and Canada as a Whole
(N=1068)

Racial or Ethnic Group	Survey Respondents (%)	U.S. Census 2010 % of Population	Canada 2006 % of Population
White	76.5	63.7	80.9
Hispanic or Latino	4.0	16.3	1.0
Black or African American	6.3	12.2	2.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.2	0.7	3.8
Asian	1.4	4.7	11.3
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.2	--
Two or more races	3.5	1.9	0.4
Some other race	3.3	0.2	0.2
Prefer not to say	4.8		

GENDER

Overall, 72.6% percent of respondents were female. However, the percentage of males varied across racial/ethnic groups (see figure 2).

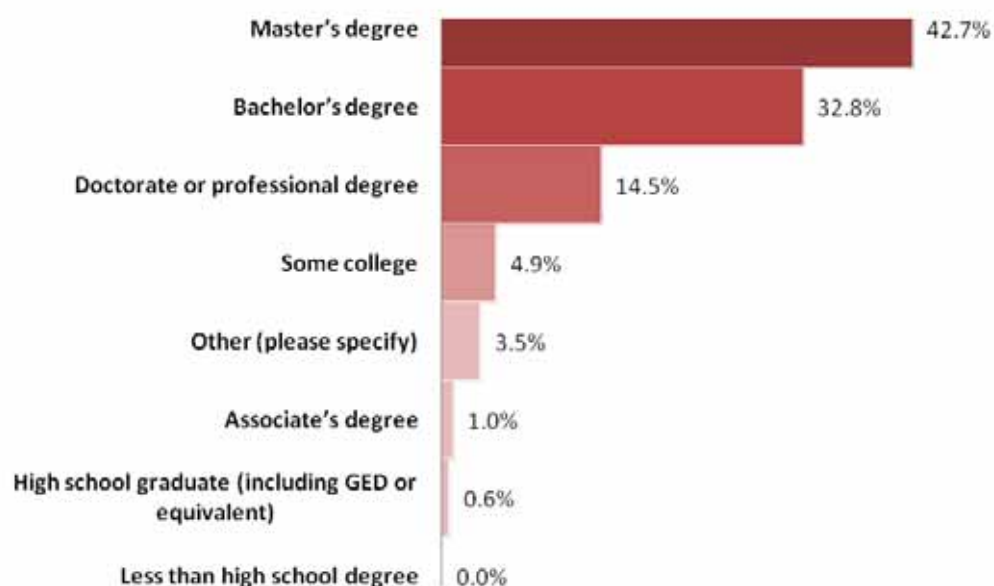
Figure 2. Gender by Race of Respondents (N=1073) (N/R means “No response” to the gender question)



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The respondents, on the whole, are highly educated, with 9 of 10 practitioners having attended an institution of higher education (see figure 3). It is possible that being an online survey biased this result. Other levels of education specified were certificates, apprenticeships, lifelong learning, self-education, and combinations of degrees.

Figure 3. Level of Respondents' Education Attained (N=1072)



OCCUPATION

The majority of respondents come from the nonprofit/government sector (61%), including those working for nonprofit organizations, education or research institutions, and public agencies (see table 2). A second group includes for-profit businesspeople (17.1%), including farmers, consultants, and staff members of businesses. More than one in ten (11.2%) of the respondents reports being paraprofessionals or nonprofessionals, such as volunteers, trainees, students, or concerned citizens who work on food system issues. Examples of other specified occupations reported by respondents include teacher, mentor, board member, AmeriCorps, attorney, and activists.

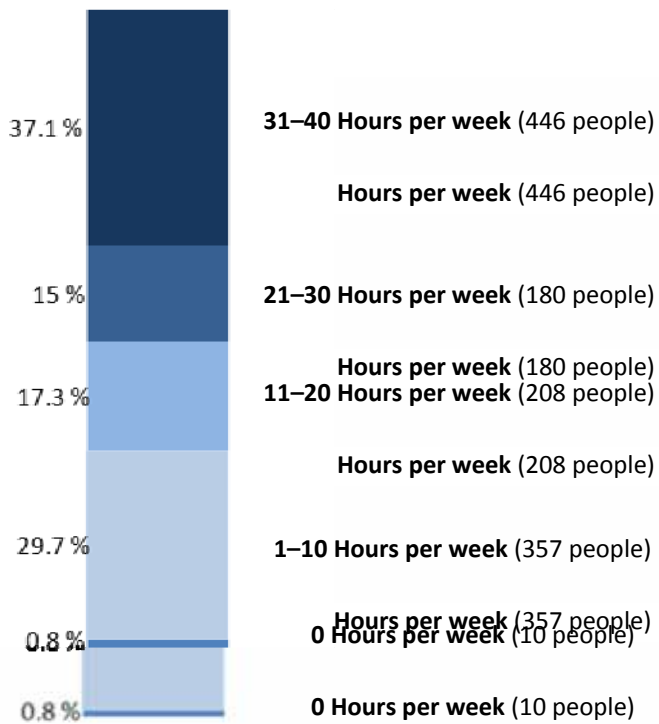
Table 2. Respondents' Reported Occupations (N=1201)

Answer Options	Percent	Count
Staff member of a nonprofit organization	30.1	361
Staff or faculty in an education/research institution	19.7	236
Staff member of a public agency	11.2	134
Farmer/businessperson active in local or regional food system projects	7.7	92
Self-employed consultant working in food system development	6.2	75
Volunteer with an agency or organization	4.5	54
College student studying food system development	3.5	42
Staff member of a for-profit business	3.2	38
Concerned citizen, passionately interested in food and farming issues	3.2	39
Exploring new career opportunities in food system development	2.0	24
Trainee in food system development program	0.3	4
Other (please specify)	8.5	102

HOURS PER WEEK SPENT ON FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT WORK

Over one third (37.1%) of the practitioners dedicate over 30 hours per week to food system development work, while one third of the respondents (29.7%) work between 1 and 10 hours on these issues. The remainder work between 11 and 30 hours (see figure 4).

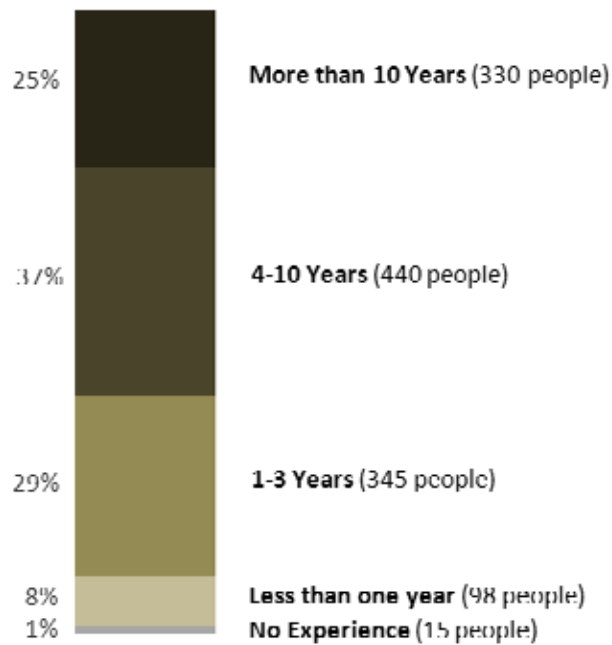
Figure 4. Hours Per Week Spent on Food System Development Work (N=1201)



LENGTH OF TIME IN FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT WORK

Respondents reported a wide range of experience in food systems development work. While 61.9% of the respondents have four or more years of experience, 39.2% have three or fewer years (see figure 5).

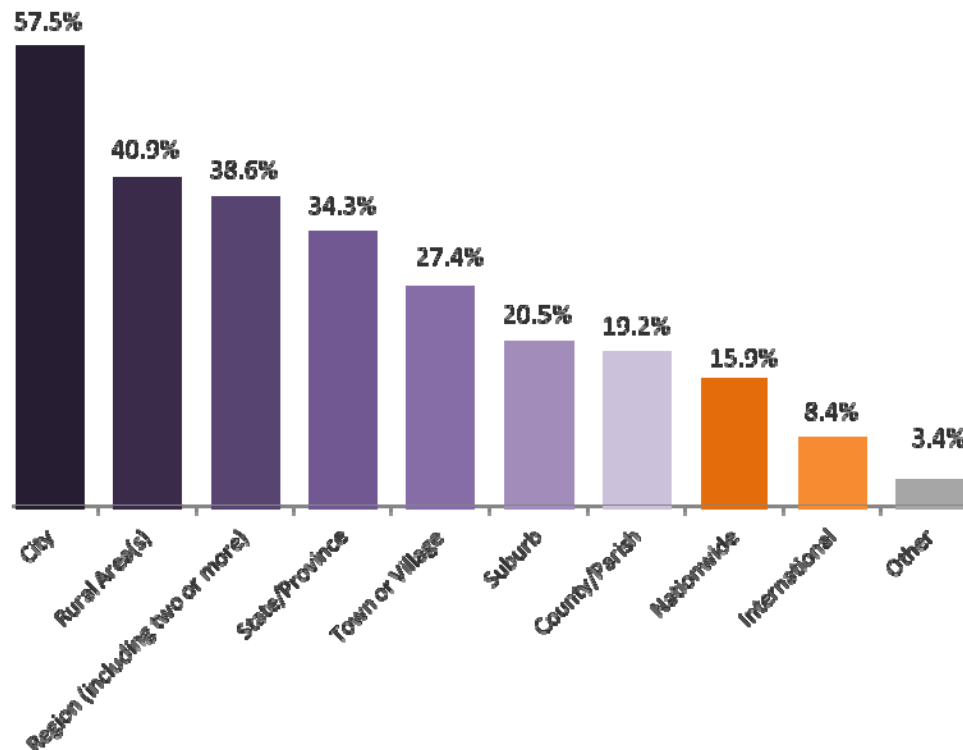
Figure 5. Years in Food System Development Work (N=1201)



GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF WORK

We asked respondents to indicate the geographic scope of their work. Respondents could choose as many areas as were applicable to their situations, so the total is more than 100%. More than half work in cities (57.5%), while 40.9% work in rural areas. Small percentages work nationally and/or internationally (see figure 6). Around 75% of African American and 70% of Hispanic practitioners work in cities.

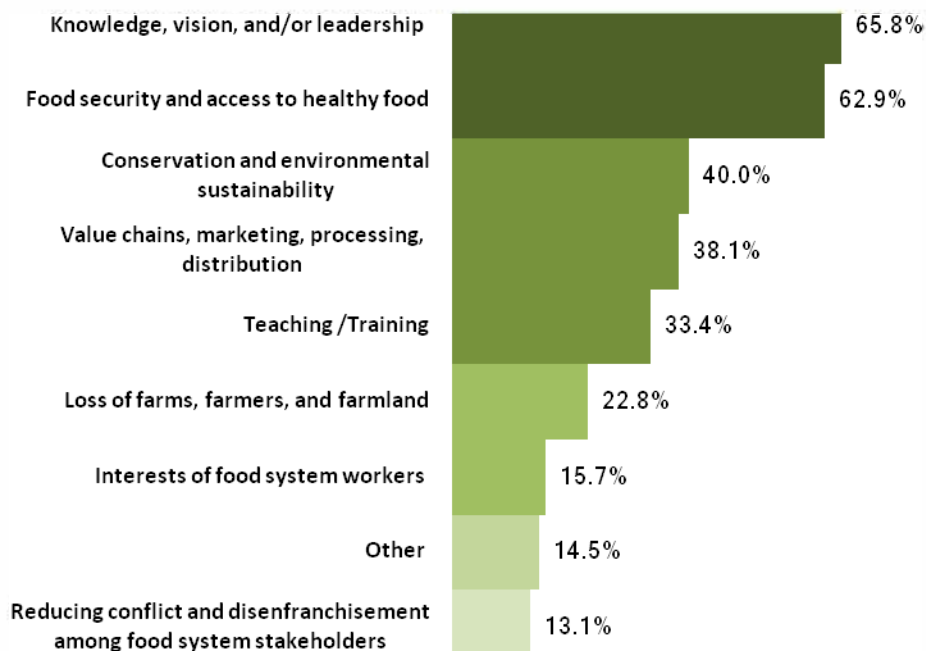
Figure 6. Geographic Scope of Work (N=1201)



KEY ISSUE AREAS

We asked respondents to select the primary food system development issues they are working on from a given list (in ranked order below). They could select more than one, so responses total more than 100%. The top issue areas respondents are working on include knowledge, vision, and/or leadership (65.8%) and food security/access to healthy food (62.9%) (see figure 7). Reducing conflict and disenfranchisement among stakeholders was the least frequently selected issue. Many other issue areas were specified, including nutrition, education, food production, promotion of non-GMO foods, waste management/composting, technical assistance, food policy, and youth leadership.

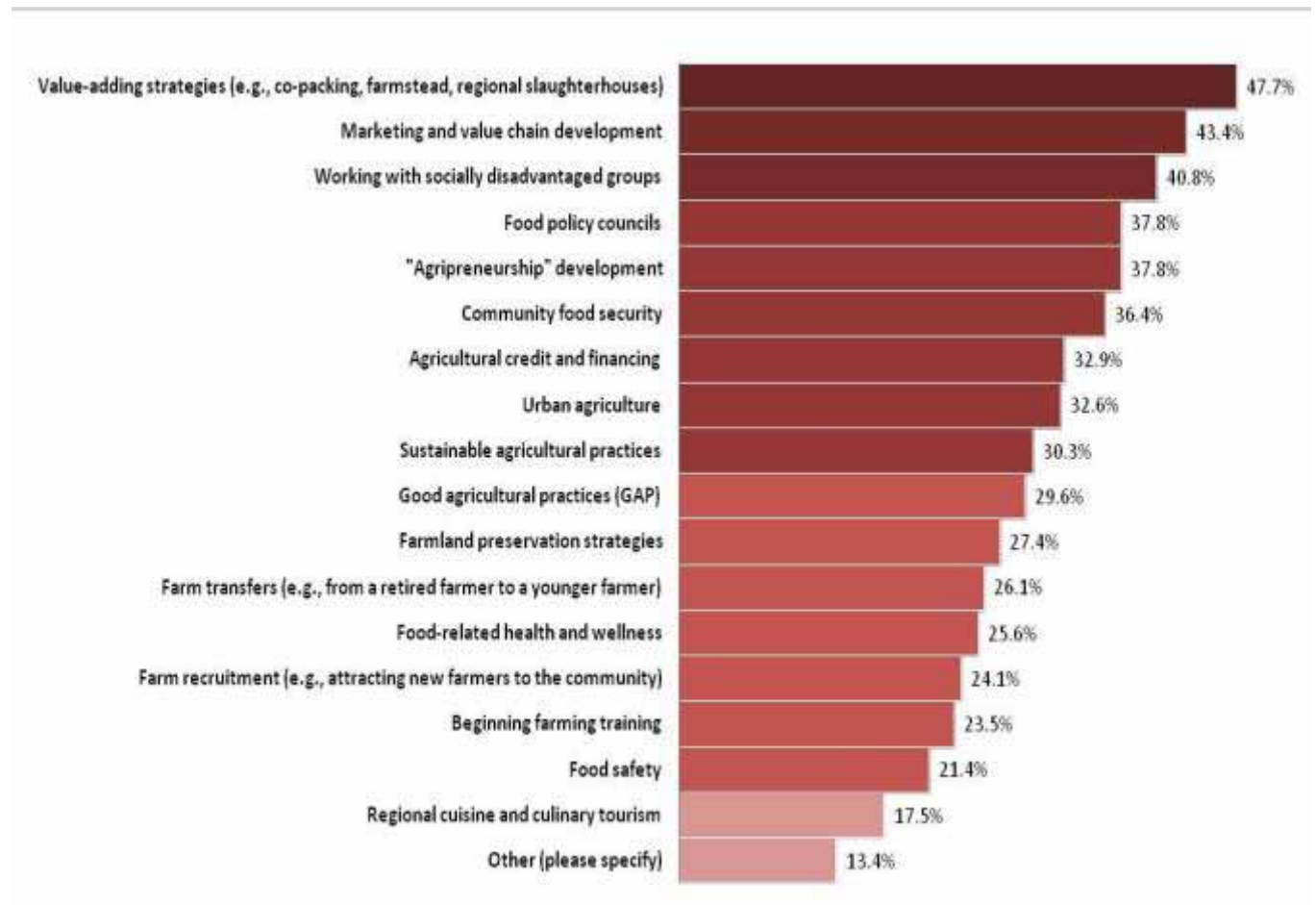
Figure 7. Key Issue Areas (N=1201)



TOPICAL TRAINING NEEDS

Respondents were given a selection of food system development topics and asked to choose as many as they felt they needed training in. The top training needs selected by respondents are value-adding strategies (47.7%), marketing and value chain development (43.4%), and working with socially disadvantaged groups (40.8%) (see figure 8). On the other hand, topics such as food safety, food-related health, and regional cuisine appear to be a lower priority to the respondents as a whole, as are activities directly related to development of farms, such as farm transfers, farm recruitment, and beginning farming training. This may reflect the higher urban geographic orientation of the respondents. The lowest training need selected was community food security. Other reported topical training needs tended to be more specifically related to the given topics, such as food hubs, transportation logistics, real estate law, and shared-use kitchens; however, a few new topics such as corporatism in the food system, cooperatives, and food waste were also noted. African Americans reported a higher level of interest in “agripreneurship” development issues (48%) and agricultural credit and financing (45%).

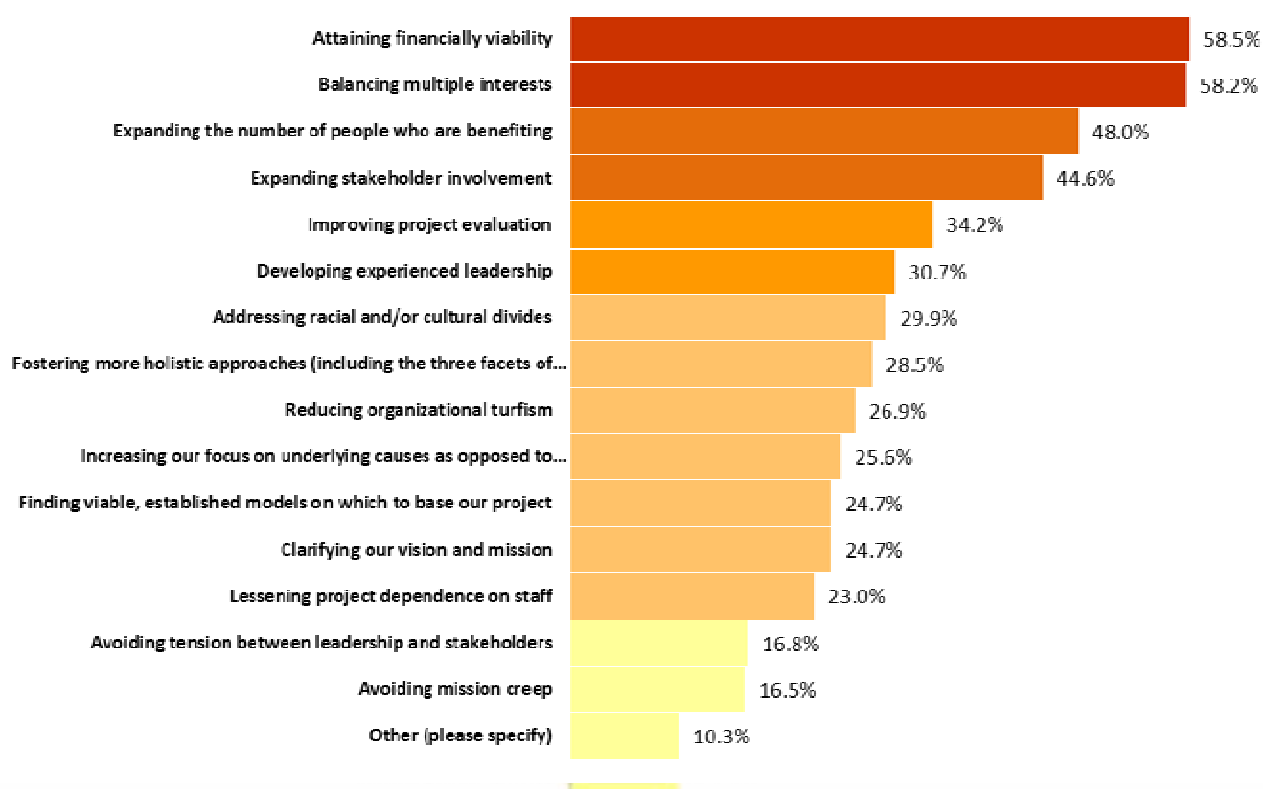
Figure 8. Rank of Training Needs (N=1174)



CHALLENGES CURRENTLY FACED BY PROJECT, PROGRAM, ORGANIZATION, OR BUSINESS

Respondents were given a list of challenges and asked to select as many as their organization experiences. The top challenges selected were attaining financial viability (58.5%) and balancing multiple interests (58.2%) (see figure 9). (Because respondents could choose more than one, the responses total more than 100%.) The least selected challenges included avoiding tension between leadership and stakeholders (16.8%) and avoiding mission creep (16.5%). It is possible that the term “mission creep” was not well understood since we did not define it. Other challenges specified by respondents in the comments section include consumer education about the true cost of good food, food safety laws, institutional contractual limitations, collective impact, “connecting with people who are not part of the ‘choir,’” a general lack of hope and optimism in the farming community, staff burnout, keeping committed participation from community members, retaining a good staff, “balancing the vastness of the mission with the paucity of capacity,” competition for land by nonfarm interests, thinking big enough, and local politics.

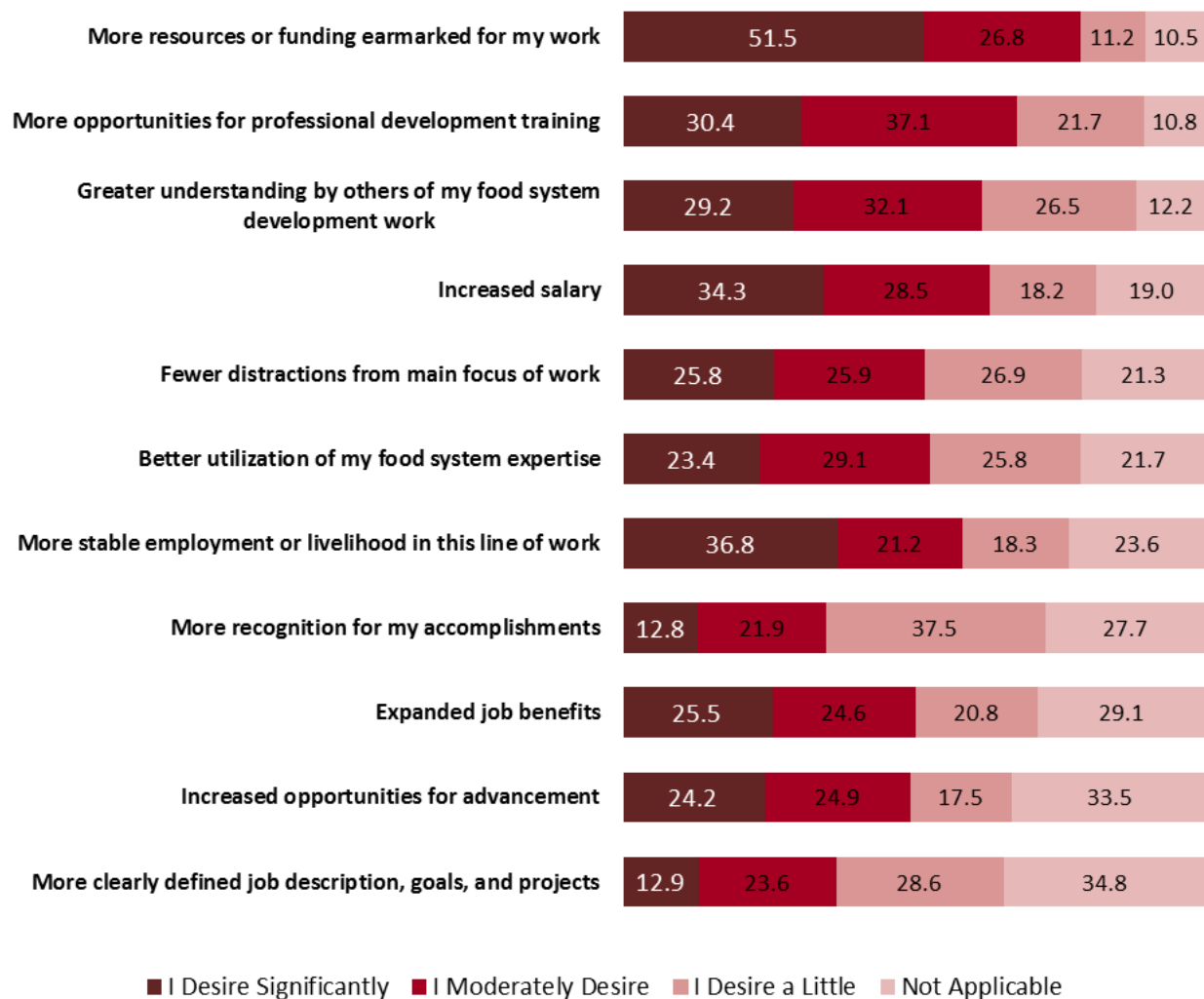
Figure 9. Rank of Challenges Faced by Respondents’ Organizations (N=1142)



DESIRED CHANGES

We provided a list possible changes that would improve respondents' satisfaction in their work. Respondents could indicate their level of desire for each change. There are a number of ways to present this data. In figure 10 we present the rankings of desired changes for the aggregate total of all levels of desire (significant, moderate, and "a little"). The most desired change using this aggregate is to have access to more resources or funding (89.5%), followed by more opportunities for professional development training (89.2%). The two least desired changes were more clearly defined job descriptions and increased opportunities for advancement (although 24.2% indicated a significant desire).

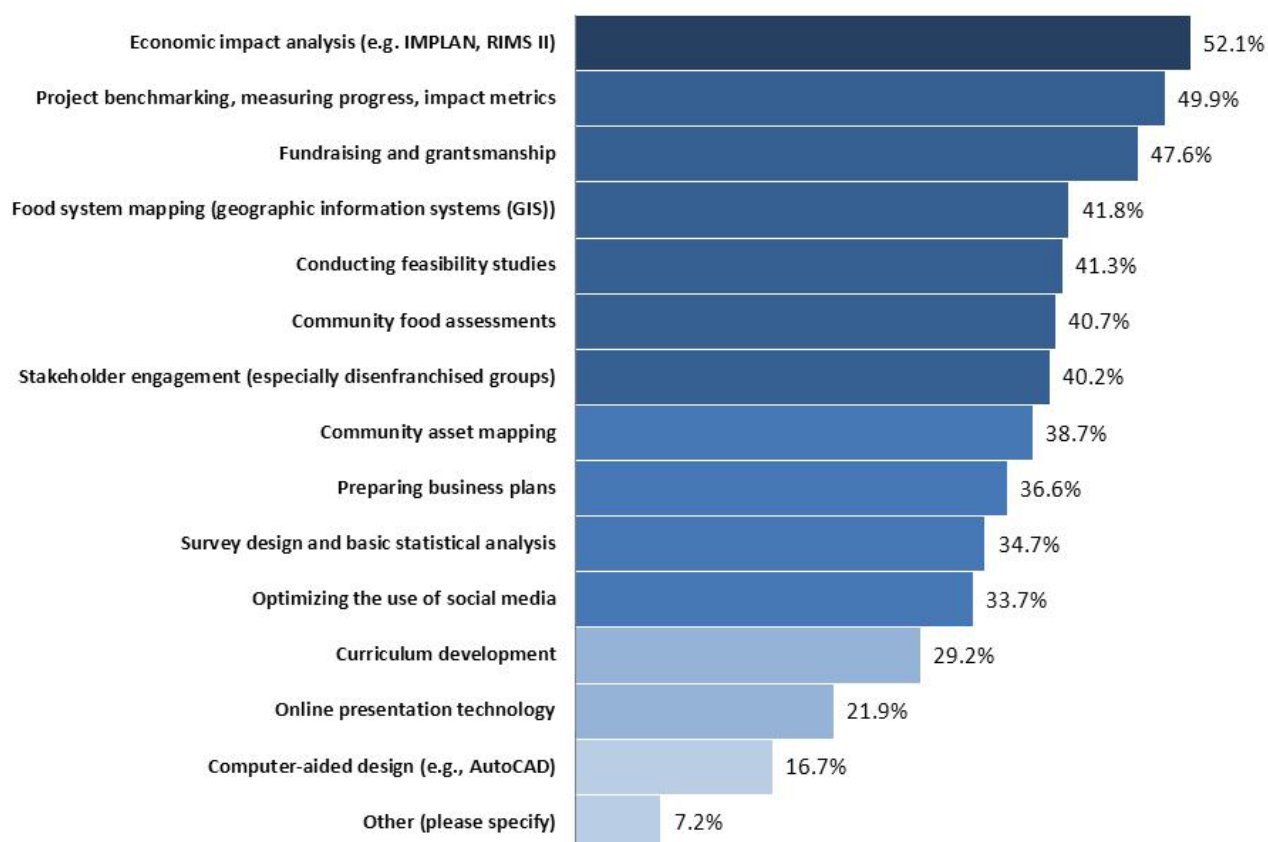
Figure 10. Level of Interest in Changes that Would Improve Satisfaction of Work
(N=1103)



TECHNICAL SKILL NEEDED

Respondents were presented a list of technical training skills, of which they could select as many as they deemed applicable (thus the total is higher than 100%). The three top training skills identified were economic impact analysis (52.1%), project benchmarking, measurement, and impact metrics (49.9%), and fundraising and grantsmanship (47.6%) (see figure 11). The least frequently selected were computer aided design (16.7%) and online presentation technology (21.9%). A higher proportion of African American practitioners identified fundraising and grantsmanship skills (68%) and economic impact analysis skills (62%). A higher proportion of Hispanic respondents (58%) indicated that conducting feasibility studies is an important training need. Other technical training needs specified by respondents in the comment section include production, legal, carbon footprint modeling, marketing their own work, recruiting volunteers, conflict resolution, negotiating skills, human resource protocols, working with difficult people, time management, financial management, and business development.

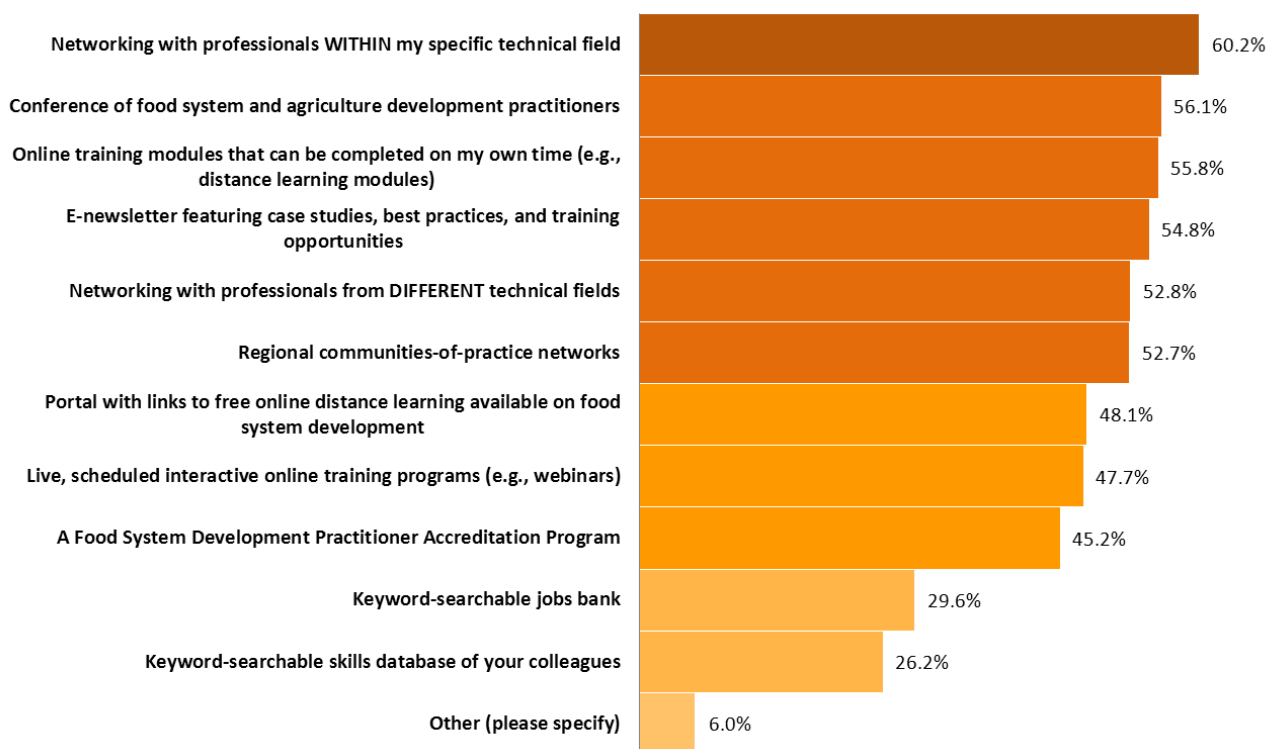
Figure 11. Rank of Technical Skills Needed (N=1080)



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES DESIRED

We listed a range of professional development opportunities and asked respondents to identify all those in which they would be interested in participating (thus the total is higher than 100%). The top-ranked professional development opportunity was networking WITHIN their specific technical field (60.2%; 72% of African American respondents), followed by a conference, online training modules (selected by 64% of African American respondents), and an e-newsletter (see figure 12). The least selected professional development opportunities were a job banks (29.6%) and a skill database (26.2%). Examples of other professional development opportunities suggested by respondents include: “Cultivating young professionals and people of color into technical assistance roles through a combination of accredited classes and on-the-job apprenticeships,” a highly skilled mentor, networking with nonprofessionals, and implementing professional development opportunities within existing organizations and conferences.

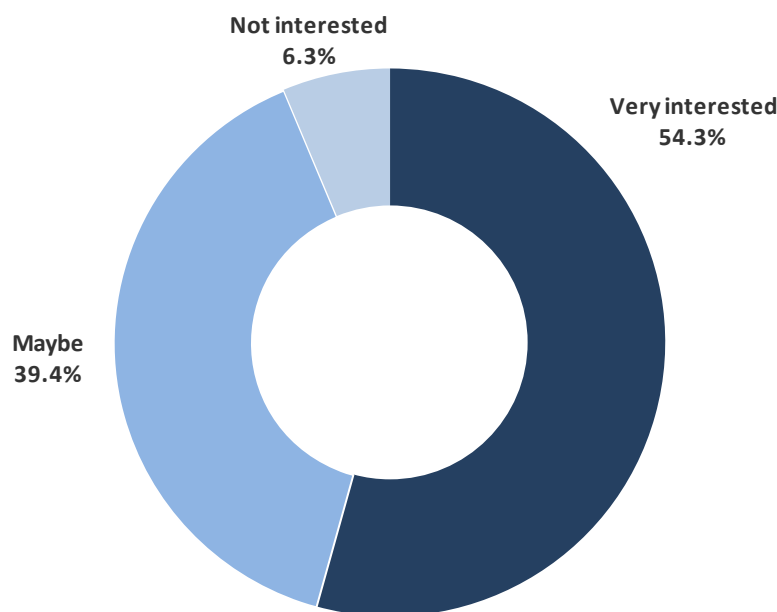
Figure 12. Rank of Professional Development Opportunities Desired (N=1089)



INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Over half (54.3%) of respondents indicated they would be “very interested” in participating in a professional development organization, while 39.4% indicated they “might” be interested, and 6.3% were “not interested”(see figure 13). Sixty-three percent of African American and 58% of Hispanic respondents indicated they were “very interested”. We asked respondents who said “maybe interested” or “not interested” to explain their choice. Most were concerned about time commitment and cost. Those who chose “not interested” frequently indicate they already had access to the professional development resources they need.

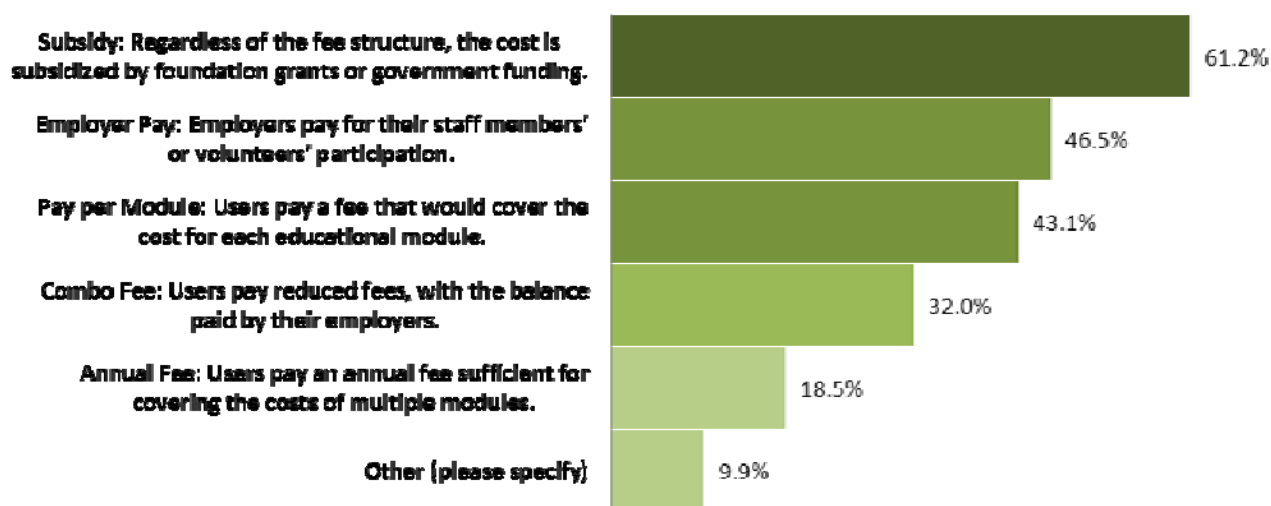
Figure 13. Level of Interest in a Professional Development Organization (N=1081)



PAYING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

We provided respondents with several financial models for supporting their professional development training. They could select more than one preference and thus the total is higher than 100%. A majority (61.2%) indicated that prices should be subsidized by foundation grants or government funding, followed by an employer-pay system (46.5%) (see figure 14). In contrast, less than one fifth (18.5%) of the respondents expressed interest in paying an annual fee for training modules. Other models suggested were sliding scale, pay-what-you-can, sponsorships, expertise swaps, scholarships, volume discounts, student waivers, and offering combinations of the above.

Figure 14. Preferred Methods of Paying for Professional Development Training
(N=1055)



Appendix B. Degree Programs Related to Food Systems

College of the Atlantic Sustainable Food Systems, Bar Harbor, Maine

www.coa.edu/sustainable-food-systems.htm

Offers a B.A. in Human Ecology with a concentration in Sustainable Food Systems. On-campus sustainable facilities include Beech Hill Farm. COA's approach to food systems engages students in examining the many social, cultural, political, ecological, and economic implications of the ways our food is perceived, produced, and consumed. From rural development to the politics of globalization, from land conservation to local food systems and social justice, students use interdisciplinary perspectives to understand, critique, and work to improve global and local food systems.

Gaia College online programs

<http://www.gaiacollege.ca/online-programs.html>

Fee: \$ 695.00; includes: Textbook (e-book); comprehensive on-line educational materials, unlimited access to our on-line community center, including libraries, discussion forums and much more.

Organic Horticulture Specialist Online

Organic Soil Management Online

Online Pruning

Not a degree or certification program, but does have affiliations with accredited educational institutions.

Green Mountain College Masters of Sustainable Food Systems (Distance Learning Degree)

http://msfs.greenmtn.edu/the_program/curriculum.aspx

The Masters of Science in Sustainable Food Systems is the first distance learning program of its kind in the country. We recognize that people working in changing food systems tend to be rooted in place, and the MSFS program allows students to remain committed to their communities and professions. Not only do students explore their own bioregional foodsheds, but they also contrast their findings with students from other parts of the U.S. and abroad, enhancing their understanding of food system dynamics and leverage points for change.

Iowa State University, Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture, Ames, Iowa

www.sust.ag.iastate.edu/gpsa

The GPSA was the first and remains the only graduate program in the US to offer both the MS and PhD degrees in sustainable agriculture. While competing programs have arisen in agroecology and organic agriculture, the GPSA remains the only grad program that allows students to pursue a true interdisciplinary curriculum that includes the biological, social, and economic elements of sustainability.

Michigan State University, Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation, and Resource Studies, East Lansing, Michigan

www.carrs.msu.edu

As scholar-practitioners, and as a multidisciplinary department within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, we address critical issues at the interfaces of agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and communities. Our public scholarship of research, teaching, and outreach helps people in their roles as residents, landowners, businesses, and governmental and non-profit institutions to make informed decisions while not compromising future generations. We seek to help people understand the dynamic interactions in their communities, ecosystems, and the world, as well as opportunities for sustainable revitalization. This work is rooted in our view of a just, engaged, and dynamic society. Toward that end, we are guided by an ethic of responsible and responsive scholarship that engages people in an integrative process to maximize effectiveness. Students may become involved with the C. S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University <http://www.mottgroup.msu.edu/>. The C. S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at MSU engages communities in applied research and outreach to promote sustainable food systems. The group's goal is to improve access and availability of locally produced food.

Montana State University, Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems Program, Bozeman, Montana

sfbs.montana.edu and sfbs.montana.edu/Program_overview2.htm

Interdisciplinary B.S. degree program in Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems. The program has three degree options and is housed within three separate academic departments:

1. Sustainable Food Systems (Department of Health and Human Development);
2. Agroecology (Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences); and
3. Sustainable Crop Production (Department of Plant Science and Plant Pathology).

Research in sustainable crop production issues such as soil fertility, natural resource conservation, pest management, nutrient cycling, variety testing, and other problems specifically associated with small-scale

or market gardening endeavors. Bioenergy-related research areas involve production, processing, and performance questions related to crops grown for biodiesel, ethanol, or cellulosic ethanol production. Food research areas include community food security, public health and human nutrition, and production, marketing, distribution and access within local food systems. Internships are available in a student-run Community Supported Agriculture program.

New York University (NYU) Master's of Arts Program in Food Studies, New York, New York

steinhardt.nyu.edu/nutrition/food/ma

The Food Studies M.A. program includes two areas of concentration:

- Food Culture examines the social, economic, cultural, and psychological factors that have influenced food consumption practices and patterns in the past and present. Students research historical, sociological and anthropological aspects of food.
- Food Systems explores food systems, tracing commodities and agricultural concerns from production through consumption. It emphasizes international, national, and local food systems, where students explore environmental, ethical, and economic factors in food production and distribution.

Unity College, Agriculture, Food, and Sustainability, Unity, Maine

www.unity.edu/Academic/Majors/SustainableFoodAndAgriculture/SustainableFoodAndAgriculture.aspx

Agriculture, Food, and Sustainability majors are farm-focused and community-minded. They are interested in the ways in which local farmers and food enterprises contribute to a healthy food supply — from growing crops and raising animals, all the way through to distribution and fair access to food. They are keenly interested in where their food comes from. They have an innate respect for the land, what it provides, and the people who work it. They are both naturalists and business people.

Agriculture, Food, and Sustainability majors are not afraid to be advocates for social change when it comes to protecting farmlands and furthering best practices in agriculture. They are concerned about changing government food policies. They care about alleviating hunger at the town level and beyond. They see great opportunity in the future of farming. They want to play an active role in producing nutritious food and making it more accessible to all.

University of Alabama, Interdisciplinary Program in Sustainable Food Systems, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

web.as.ua.edu/nc/sustainable_food

This interdisciplinary program involves faculty research projects, undergraduate courses and internships, and community partnerships on a broad range of topics in sustainability, agriculture, and food. Central to the program is a long-standing hands-on course on Organic Farming and the newly established student-run Crimson Clover Farm. We are currently seeking grant funding to scale up our program.

University of British Columbia, Land and Food Systems, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

www.landfood.ubc.ca/about-us

The UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems (LFS) uses student-centered learning to educate new generations of scientists equipped to solve the most fundamental issues faced by society — those focused around human health, a sustainable food supply and the responsible use of finite land and water resources. One of UBC's three founding faculties, LFS (formerly Agricultural Sciences) changed its name in 2005 to better reflect its interdisciplinary research and focus on sustainability. The importance of healthy and sustainable land and food systems cannot be underestimated as the foundation that touches almost

every area of our lives and the lives of our local and global communities. We are educating students to be global citizens, capable of creating change and critically considering issues vital to the sustainability and advancement of local and global communities. Using an integrated approach that unites scientific knowledge and interdisciplinary studies, our graduates use an international perspective to address pressing societal issues. Students are encouraged to direct their own education and bring classroom theories to life through problem-based learning, co-op and exchange programs, community service learning and new learning technologies.

University of California (Davis), Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI), Davis, California

asi.ucdavis.edu

UC Davis faculty and students are developing a new undergraduate major in sustainable agriculture and food systems. The major will include several innovative features designed to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to develop and work in more ecologically, economically, and socially viable food and farming systems. These include:

- Interdisciplinary breadth: Integrating natural and social science knowledge and skills
- Systems thinking: Understanding connections among diverse components of farming and food systems, social institutions, and the environment.
- Skill development: Gaining practical skills including communication, analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork and leadership
- Experiential learning: Engaging in wide range of practical experiences in agricultural and food systems through laboratories, field exercises, internships and other means.
- Linking the real world with the classroom: Bringing practitioners into the classroom, sending students into the field, and discussing and analyzing these experiences.
- Community building: Being part of community that includes students, faculty, internship sponsors, and others enhances learning and reflects the reality of life after school.

University of California–Santa Cruz, The Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems, Santa Cruz, California

casfs.ucsc.edu

The Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems is a research, education, and public service program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, dedicated to increasing ecological sustainability and social justice in the food and agriculture system. On the UCSC campus, the Center operates the 2-acre Alan Chadwick Garden and the 25-acre Farm. Both sites are managed using organic production methods and serve as research, teaching, and training facilities for students, staff, and faculty.

University of Massachusetts, Sustainable Agriculture-Food Systems, Amherst, Massachusetts

www.umass.edu/psis/academics/undergraduate.html

Sustainable Food and Farming allows students who are focused on social, political and scientific issues of sustainable agriculture and food systems to seek a broad exposure to this discipline in the liberal arts tradition. Students are exposed to a range of courses, including the biophysical aspects of agriculture, economic aspects of food production and distribution, as well as the social elements affecting food policy and access issues. The curriculum combines a solid foundation in horticulture and pest management, and then allows customizing by the student in areas such as business administration, nonprofit organization, sociology, political science, community outreach and education, among others. By combining crop production training with skills in communication, education, grant writing, nutrition, resource economics, land-use planning, cultural sensitivity, community organizing, and/or policy development, students gain a

broader understanding of the many socioeconomic aspects surrounding food production, access and distribution. Students can tailor their individual programs to prepare for careers in policy, advocacy, community outreach and education on topics related to crop production, food access, and hunger issues, just to name a few. Graduates will be uniquely qualified to compete successfully for a wide array of emerging careers in the growing field of food systems.

University of New Hampshire, Dual Major in EcoGastronomy, Durham, New Hampshire

www.unh.edu/ecogastronomy

Are you interested in growing food, cooking food, and eating healthfully? Do you want to learn about the complex and holistic nature of our food community? If you answered yes, then get ready to enhance your primary major and expand your professional opportunities with a dual major in EcoGastronomy.

Integrating UNH strengths in sustainable agriculture, hospitality management, and nutrition, EcoGastronomy offers a unique academic program emphasizing the interdisciplinary, international, and experiential knowledge that connects all three fields. And as a dual major, the program provides a complement to any primary major. The dual major is:

- Experiential: Real world experiences on farms, in kitchens, in labs, and in the community.
- Interdisciplinary: Cross-cutting curriculum including studies in sustainable agriculture, hospitality management, and nutrition.
- International: Foreign experience at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Italy.

Related program:

University of New Hampshire Office of Sustainability, Food and Society Initiative

www.sustainableunh.unh.edu

Ongoing programs and educational opportunities related to sustainable agriculture and food systems; student internship and research opportunities.

University of Vermont, Applied Masters Degree in Food Systems, Burlington, Vermont

www.reeis.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/218282.html

UVM has been awarded a grant to develop this as a new program. The objectives of a University of Vermont Master's degree in Food Systems are:

1. To provide students with an interdisciplinary educational experience that offers exposure to the broad range of issues affecting the food system, alongside opportunities to delve more deeply into particular areas of individual interest.
2. To build an interdisciplinary systems framework that allows students from diverse backgrounds to cooperatively apply the analytical tools from their past training to investigate complex issues in food and agriculture.
3. To create meaningful, real-world experiences for students to bring their academic work into practice throughout their time pursuing a Master's degree.
4. To enhance faculty research through building collaborative projects in food systems studies, within UVM, with faculty at collaborating institutions, and with partner organizations outside the university system.
5. To ensure that the work done at UVM strengthens the agricultural sector as a whole by communicating research findings, working with stakeholders to identify priority research areas, and connecting potential employers with graduates prepared to excel in all areas of the food system.

University of Vermont, Minor in Food Systems (FS), Burlington, Vermont

www.uvm.edu/~pss/?Page=pssdeptweb/minors.htm

This interdisciplinary minor in Food Systems gives students the knowledge and skills necessary to understand our complex interdependent food system of food production, processing, distribution, and consumption.

Washington State University, Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Food Systems, Pullman, Washington

afs.wsu.edu

The Agricultural and Food Systems degree program is an exciting, college-wide, interdisciplinary program that offers a Bachelor of Science degree with five majors from which to choose:

- Agricultural Technology and Production Management
- Agricultural Education
- Organic Agriculture Systems
- Agricultural and Food Business Economics
- Agriculture and Food Security

In each major, emphasis is placed on gaining a solid background in the agricultural sciences, including learning to work with and in the complexity of agriculture and food systems. All students take a core set of classes in order to develop a broad interdisciplinary background while also studying specific subjects that prepare graduates for their chosen fields. An internship related to the students focus area is included in these requirements.

Certificate Programs Related to Food Systems

Ryerson University (Chang School) Certificate in Food Security

http://ce-online.ryerson.ca/ce_2010-2011/default.aspx?id=3098

Fee: CAD 515

The four courses, which are all available via distance education, are:

- Understanding Urban Agriculture (CVFN 410) – see sample course outline
- Dimensions of Urban Agriculture (CVFN 411) – see sample course outline
- Urban Agriculture Types (CVFN 412) – see sample course outline
- Urban Agriculture Policy-Making (CVFN 413) – see sample course outline

Sustainable Local Food Certificate, St. Lawrence College, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.stlawrencecollege.ca/parttime/OnlineCredit-SustFood.htm>

This certificate explores the practices, principles and philosophies involved in local food systems development. The focus is on increasing both academic and hands-on knowledge of regional food initiatives across Canada, alongside international best practices. There is a specific concentration on applied learning, online networking, and community research. This certificate is the first of its kind in Canada, providing a cutting edge advantage when competing for work in the sustainable local food sector.

Tufts University, Agriculture, Food and Environment (AFE) Program, Boston, Massachusetts

nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918439/Nutrition-Page-nl2w_1177953852962.html

To educate future leaders at the nexus of agriculture, food, and environmental science and policy, and empower them by providing rigorous training, an ethic of social change, and an intellectual community generating visions and models of alternative systems. The Agriculture, Food and Environment (AFE) program within the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy fuses the disciplines of nutrition,

agricultural science, environmental studies, and public policy. It offers M.S., Ph.D. and combined degree programs, diverse community service and internship placements, and opportunities to participate in research on sustainable agriculture, local food systems, and consumer behavior related to food and the environment. Students in the AFE degree program learn to evaluate the ecological, political, economic and social aspects of food production and distribution. Faculty members come from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Institute for Global Sustainability, Interdisciplinary Focus on Food Systems, University of Vermont (UVM)

learn.uvm.edu/igs/food_systems/#focus

Community members interested in food systems and agriculture. Graduate and undergraduate students interested in food systems and agriculture.

Upon completing the three courses below, emerging leaders interested in sustainable food systems will receive a certificate of completion for the Interdisciplinary Focus on Sustainable Food Systems.

Overview of Food Systems Courses:

- "Exploring New York City's Urban Food System," offered annually in spring (NFS 295), will explore all aspects of the urban food system of New York City, from blacktop farms, city foraging, ethnic food manufacturing, take-out and delivery, and neighborhood restaurants. Students will start the course at UVM to read and discuss the new book *Gastropolis: Food and New York City* and prepare for a 6 day trip to New York City. Students will then spend six days in New York, housed in dorms at New York University. Each day will involve exploring a component of the urban food system through field visits, group discussions, individual reflections, and shared meals.
- "Environmental Cooking," offered annually in summer (NFS 195), helps participants better understand the regional food system and learn to cook and eat in a way that helps meet their needs for a safe and nutritious diet, while ensuring that food production systems are environmentally sensitive, economically viable, sustainable over the long term, and socially responsible.

The Permaculture Design Certification Program comprises the Permaculture Fundamentals and Permaculture courses offered annually in spring (PSS 156 & PSS 196). These courses go above and beyond the standard curriculum, led by a group of some of the most experienced designers, farmers, and educators in Vermont and the Northeast. Together, participants design and implement permaculture solutions, and each student will also be guided in generating a whole systems design for a space of their own choosing. This program focuses on permaculture as a framework for understanding and integrating the vast diversity of technologies and trends in the movement for sustainability, and advances permaculture ethics and skills as a new cultural paradigm.

Certificate in Community and Economic Development, Penn State University

www.worldcampus.psu.edu/CommunityandEconomicDevelopmentCertificate.shtml

This post-baccalaureate certificate program provides graduate-level courses for entry and midcareer professionals who wish to expand their knowledge and skills for dealing with quality-of-life and development issues in neighborhoods, towns, small cities, and rural regions. The program also meets the needs of those who are considering a career in community and economic development and want to find out if this profession is right for them.

Community-Based Development Certificate, Colorado State

www.learn.colostate.edu/certificates/community-development.dot

This online certificate program is designed for people who plan to work or volunteer in community development, or who already work in this field and want to advance their careers. Participants will be prepared with practical tools to meet today's challenges as project directors, community leaders, grassroots activists, funders, and field workers in community-based organizations and governmental and

nongovernmental organizations. With a wide variety of electives, participants are able to tailor the program to meet their needs and interests.

Certificate in Community Development, University of Washington

www.extension.washington.edu/ext/certificates/cdv/cdv_gen.asp

Rural Development Certification Program, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana

www.latech.edu/rural_development/certification.shtml

The Rural Development Certification Program addresses the need to understand the issues facing rural communities and businesses, such as sustainable development, marketing of local businesses on a global scale, and fostering a productive environment for entrepreneurship. Understanding these issues is key to the survival of rural communities. This certification will be available not only to baccalaureate students, but to anyone who wishes to enhance their ability to grow in their rural community. These people may include individuals such as extension agents, community and parish/county public officials, and local business leaders and entrepreneurs. This certification will enhance the resumes and provide a valuable education. The instructors of this program will develop five new courses to provide the necessary education to enhance rural communities. The courses will cover rural development economics, global electronic commerce and internet marketing, international trade and its effect on economic growth, geographic techniques and how they can relate to rural development, and grant writing.

Sustainable Local Food Certificate

www.sl.on.ca/parttime/OnlineCredit-SustFood.htm

This certificate explores the practices, principles and philosophies involved in local food systems development. The focus is on increasing both academic and hands-on knowledge of regional food initiatives across Canada, alongside international best practices. There is a specific concentration on applied learning, online networking, and community research. This certificate is the first of its kind in Canada, providing a cutting edge advantage when competing for work in the sustainable local food sector.

Certificate of Completion in Sustainable Food Systems, Rio Salado College, Tempe, Arizona

www.riosalado.edu/programs/sustainable/Pages/CCL_sustainable.aspx

The Certificate of Completion (CCL) in Sustainable Food Systems is for students who want an overview of the nation's current food model and alternative methods for altering this model and creating more sustainable foods. Course topics cover concepts supporting the real food movement, sanitation guidelines, basic principles and preparation techniques for the cooking and baking process. An Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree in Sustainable Food Systems is also available.

Appendix C. EXAMPLES OF EXISTING ONLINE RESOURCES

American Farmland Trust: *Planning for Food and Agriculture: Taking a Systems Approach* Webinars

<http://www.farmland.org/programs/localfood/planningforagriculture/planning-for-food-and-agriculture.asp>

Free and open to the public.

- State and regional planning
- County and community-based planning

American Farmland Trust (New York chapter)

<http://newyork.farmland.org/publications>

Planning for Agriculture in New York: A Toolkit for Towns and Counties includes:

- Making the Most of Planning for Agriculture
- Helping a “New Generation” Succeed in Farming
- Slicing and Dicing Our Way to New Jobs and Economic Opportunities
- Exploring Alternate Ways to Protect Farmland
- When Local Food Is Illegal: Keeping Zoning Farm-Friendly
- Buy Local First: How to Keep Public Food Dollars in Your Community

National Good Food Network Webinars

<http://ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-cluster-calls>

Free and open to the public. NGFN webinars take place once a month. Current archive includes:

- Two Revolutionary Tools for Beginning Farmers
- Financing Food hubs: Dozens of Ideas
- The Farmer and the Dell®: Technology for Good Food
- Clearing the Roadblocks: Market-Based Strategies for Getting Good Food to All Communities
- Local Food in Retail — Two Models, One Goal
- Food Hubs: Viable Regional Distribution Solutions
- Fair Food: Growing a Healthy, Sustainable Food System for All
- “Healthy” — Institutions and Consumers as Buyers of Good Food
- The Economics of Regional Meat - Interactive Panel Discussion
- The Economics of Regional Meat
- Want to Get Results? You Get What You Measure!
- Getting Banks to “Yes” with Small, Diversified Farms
- Leveraging Existing Infrastructure for Significant Food System Change: Food Hubs, Regional Distribution, Farm to School, and more
- Real Food into University Cafeterias: a Billion Dollar Challenge
- The Business of Food Hubs: Planning Successful Regional Produce Aggregation Facilities
- Food Safety Webinar: United Fresh Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative
- Towards Local and Regional Sourcing - Sysco and Chipotle
- Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development Center
- Building Local Government Support for Good Food
- School Food FOCUS
- Linking Diverse Communities Through Healthy Food: Examples from Metropolitan Areas
- Building Regional Food Systems, Part 2: Creating Networks and Measuring Impacts
- Building Regional Food Systems, Part 1: Foundational Definitions and the Northeast

- Linking Diverse Communities Through Healthy Food: Examples from the Southwest
- Third-Party Certification
- Building the Supply of Healthy Foods — Experiences and Tools from the Field
- Community Food Enterprise
- An Introduction to the National Farm to School Network
- Good Food at Retail - Models of Success
- Food Safety — An Interactive Briefing
- USDA Programs and Funding Opportunities
- Innovations in Value Chain Infrastructure-Red Tomato
- NGFN/Sysco Partnership
- Aggregation/Distribution: Appalachian Sustainable Development

National Farm to School Lunch Bites Webinars

<http://www.farmtoschool.org/webinars.php>

Free and open to the public. Current archive includes:

- Farm to School and Farm-Based Education
- The Lunch Box: Healthy Tools to Help All Schools
- School Food Transformation at the Los Angeles Unified School District
- Farm to School: Cooking with Children in the Classroom
- Farm to School Month Across the Nation
- Farm to School for Parents: How to Get Involved
- Making the Most of Farm to School Month
- Farm to School Innovations in the Mid-Atlantic Region
- Evaluating your Farm to School program — Best practices and tools
- Farm to School: A Legislative History

New Farmer Project Webinars (University of Vermont)

http://www.uvm.edu/newfarmer/?Page=webinars/webinar_recordings.html&SM=webinars/sub-menu.html

Free and open to the public.

Business and Financial Management

- Employment and Labor Law Considerations for Farm and Food Businesses
- Ins and Out of Insurance
- Tax Time Techniques for Beginning Farmers

Crop Production Topics

- Basic Soil Health and Soil Testing
- Choosing Forage Crops for Fall Seeding
- View the Intro to Plant Disease Webinar

Farm Safety

- Farm Safety for the Growing Season

Food Safety

- Practical Food Safety for Produce Farms
- Managing Food Safety Risks in Agritourism

Land Access

- Land Access for Beginning Farmers Part I
- Land Access for Beginning Farmers Part 2 Webinar

Livestock Production Topics

- The Bottom Line on Broilers
- Raising Sheep in Your Future?
- Livestock Slaughter and Meat Labeling Regulations webinar recording
- Practical Poultry Production
- Principles of Pastured Pork
- Raw Milk Webinar
- Rotational Grazing Basics

Marketing

- Building Your Online Presence
- CSA Primer
- Fine Food from the Farm
- Managing Food Safety Risks in Agritourism
- Price Your Product for Profit
- Marketing to Restaurants

Regulation Webinars

- Employment and Labor Law Considerations for Farm and Food Businesses
- Land Access for Beginning Farmers Part 2 Webinar
- Livestock Slaughter and Meat Labeling Regulations
- Practical Food Safety for Produce Farms
- Tax Time Techniques for Beginning Farmers

RUAF Foundation urban agriculture (with a focus on the global South)

<http://moodle.ruaf.org/>

Free and open to the public. Distance learning/self-study. Each course has 13 modules.

- Course 1 — Understanding UA
- Course 2 — Dimensions of UA
- Course 3 — Urban Agriculture Types
- Course 4 — Urban Agriculture Policy Making

SARE (Nebraska) AgriMarketing Webinars

<http://nesare.unl.edu/feasibility#Webinars>

Free and open to the public.

Workshops on business feasibility, marketing plans and strategies:

- Successfully Transitioning from Commodity Agriculture to Value Added Agriculture — Part 1
- Successfully Transitioning from Commodity Agriculture to Value Added Agriculture — Part 2
- Using the Census and Other Sources to Define Market Potential — Part 1
- Using the Census and Other Sources to Define Market Potential — Part 2

SARE (National) Continuing Education Program Webinars

<http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Courses-and-Curricula/National-Continuing-Education-Program>

Free and open to the public.

- Course 1: Sustainable Agriculture: Basic Principles and Concept Overview
- Course 2. Strategic Farm/Ranch Planning and Marketing

SARE (North Central Region)

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/aic/local-food/scaling-up/>

- Scaling Up Local Sustainable Foods (Note: Listed as “Archive of Sept 14th Webinar”)

SARE (North Central Region) Grant Webinars

Free and open to the public.

- NCR-SARE Farmer/Rancher Grant Webinar
- NCR-SARE Farmer/Rancher Grants and Youth Educator and Youth Sustainable Agriculture Grants Webinar
- NCR-SARE Research and Education Grant Program Webinar
- NCR-SARE Graduate Student Grant Program Webinar

SARE (Southern): Perspectives of Systems Research Video Tutorial

<http://www.southernsare.org/Grants/Writing-a-Successful-Grant/Video-Tutorials/Video-Perspectives-on-Systems-Research>

Free and open to the public.

Uses the advice and experiences of systems research experts to help you become a productive systems researcher and a more successful grant writer. The educational program is divided into five video modules:

- Module 1 — Introduction and Meet the Exemplars
- Module 2 — Getting Started in Systems Research
- Module 3 — Building a Systems Research Team
- Module 4 — Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles
- Module 5 — Funding and Support