

# Evaluating Innovation and Promoting Success in Community and Regional Food Systems

Research, education, outreach, and advocacy  
to address food security in urban areas



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**A 2011-2016 collaboration of**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
University of Wisconsin-Extension  
Growing Power, Inc.  
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute

**and numerous community partners:**

Center for Resilient Cities, Walnut Way Conservation Corp., Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition (Milwaukee), Chicago Food Policy Action Council, Community GroundWorks (Madison), Community Services Unlimited (Los Angeles), Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, The Food Project (Boston), Iowa County RC&D (Cedar Rapids), Women's Environmental Institute (North Branch, MN)  
**AND MANY MORE**

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
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# Project Goals/Objectives

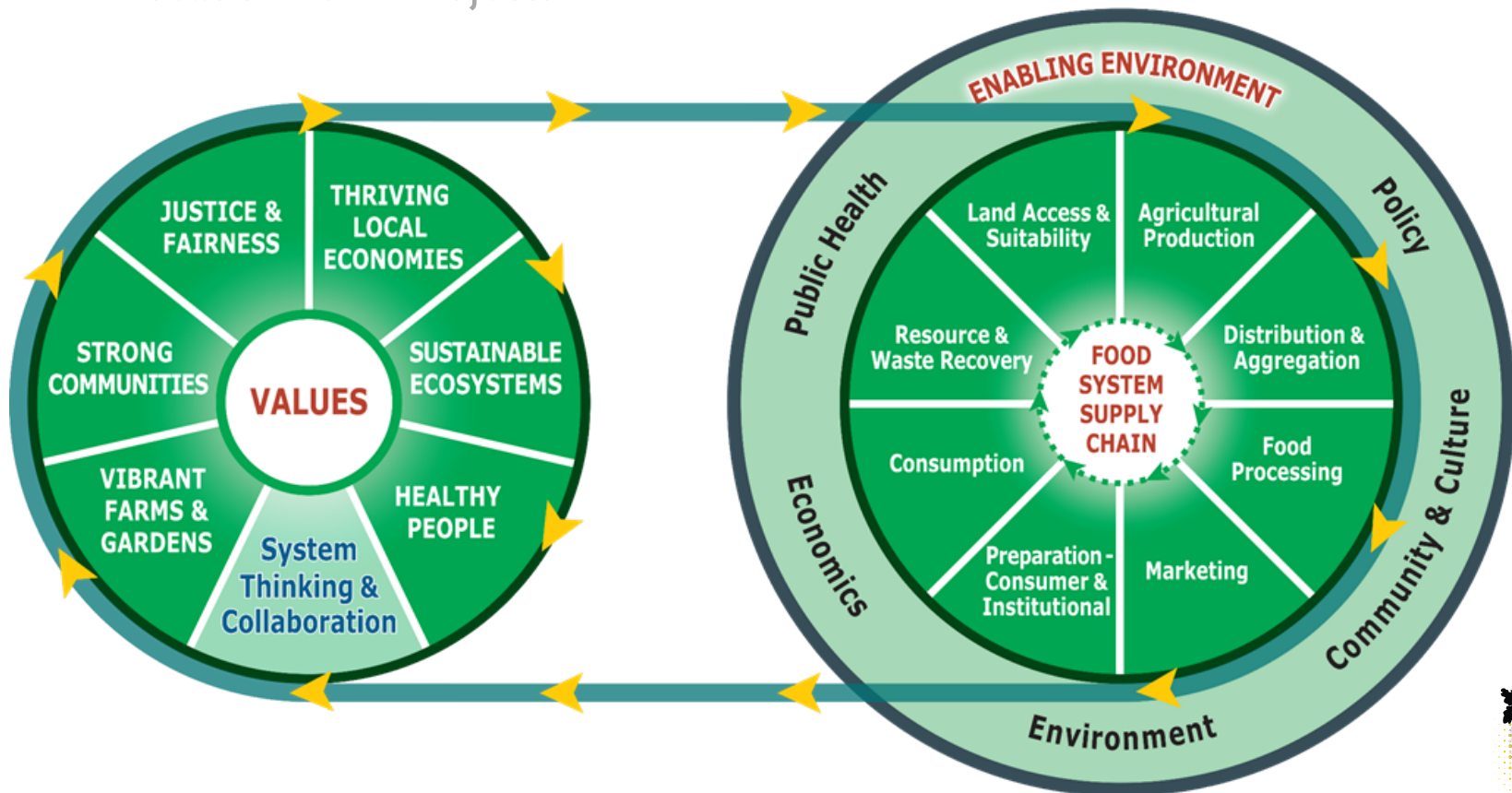
## (Research, Outreach, Education)

- Develop Community and Regional Food Systems (CRFS) framework (research)
  1. characterize relevant dimensions
  2. create a common language linking research and practice
- Identify, document, disseminate innovative practices (outreach, education)
- Increase the capacity of local organizations to successfully participate in CRFS (outreach, education)



# Project Components

- Research
  - CRFS framework
  - city studies
  - Innovation Fund Projects



# Project Components

- **Research**
  - CRFS framework
  - city studies
  - **Innovation Fund Projects**

## Ten Projects, Eight Cities

- community-based research, outreach, advocacy
- few constraints on type of activities, use of funds
- shared learning, contribution to overall project

## One year duration, \$50K available

- user-friendly proposal process
- progress report

## CRFS facilitation

- project evaluation
- bureaucratic guidance



# Project Components

- Outreach
  - training
  - assessment and evaluation
  - website and web resources
  - Community Engagement Projects
  - City Exchanges



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- Outreach

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Community and Regional Food Systems: Exploring innovations in community agriculture and food security.

http://www.community-food.org/

UW Search LICGF Nelson Inst. CALS RSP MyWebSpace Learn@UW dictionary CRFS AFRI base DoIT WiscList Google Docs MyUW

## COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Exploring innovations in community agriculture and food security.

who we are / about the project / community food security / collaborators / community partners / home

WHAT'S NEW  
EVENTS  
BLOG  
CONTACT US

**COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS PROJECT**

We promote the development of equitable, sustainable, and inclusive Community and Regional Food Systems that provide healthy food for all community members.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

recent articles

[www.community-food.org](http://www.community-food.org)

FOLLOW US

# Project Components

- Outreach
  - training
  - assessment and evaluation
  - website and **web resources**

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Community Food Systems Toolkit. At the top, the University of Wisconsin-Extension logo and name are on the left, and 'Cooperative Extension' with a menu icon is on the right. Below this is a dark blue header with the toolkit's title 'Community Food Systems Toolkit' and subtitle 'Action tools aligned with the CRFS framework'. The UW Extension logo is also present in the header. A navigation bar below the header contains links: Home, About, Search by Framework, Browse all Tools, Whole Measures, Development & Evaluation, and Submit Tools. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column has a search box labeled 'Search Titles and Descriptions:' with a search bar and a note '(Or, Search Tools by Framework Category and tags.)'. Below this is a section titled 'Community Food Systems Framework' with a circular diagram showing various components like 'Whole Measures', 'Enabling Environment', and 'Program Development & Evaluation'. The right column has an 'Overview' section with text explaining the toolkit's purpose and how it is based on the CRFSP framework. It also includes sections for 'Starting a new project?' and 'Seeking tools to support your project?' with instructions on how to use the search and navigation features.

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Cooperative Extension

Community Food Systems Toolkit  
Action tools aligned with the CRFS framework

UW Extension  
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Home About Search by Framework Browse all Tools Whole Measures Development & Evaluation Submit Tools

Search Titles and Descriptions:

Search Tools...

(Or, Search Tools by Framework Category and tags.)

Community Food Systems Framework

VALUES

Enabling Environment

Whole Measures

Program Development & Evaluation

Community & Regional Food Systems Project (CRFSP)

Starting a new project?  
See "Development & Evaluation."

Seeking tools to support your project?  
Use the keyword search box, "Search by Framework" category, or "Browse all Tools."

COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS PROJECT



# Project Components

- Outreach
  - training
  - assessment and evaluation
  - website and web resources
  - **Community Engagement Projects**
  - City Exchanges



# Project Components

- Outreach
  - training
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  - Community Engagement Projects
  - **City Exchanges**



# Project Components

- Education
  - high school: UW-Madison PEOPLE program
  - college: internships, graduate practicums



# Project Components

- Education

- high school: UW-Madison PEOPLE program
- college: internships, **graduate practicums**



UW-Madison Milwaukee Area food system policy analysis team, Spring 2015



# Project Components

- Policy
  - Food Policy Councils
  - Federal farm bill development & implementation, appropriations
  - Using federal programs – webinars and workshops
  - City Exchanges and grass-roots action



# What's Next – Beyond CRFS

- The near term
  - “**The Book**” - edited volume giving voice to community partners, with academic interpretation; 2016 publication
  - Urban Agriculture **Production Manual** - season extending structures, crop varieties, composting, etc.
  - **CRFS Toolkit** - Whole Measures for Community Food Systems extended: tools, rubrics, templates, guidance, etc.
  - Culmination Event: November 5-6, 2015
  - EFSNE Meeting: December 10-11, 2015
- After the project...
  - UWEX Food System Team & eXtension **CLRFS CoP** - carrying on the land grant tradition with new tools
  - **Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition**



# Production Manual

## Urban Agriculture Manual



### Introduction

Crop production is an integral part of the overall food system. It includes planting and soil management, weed control, management of pests and diseases, food safety, season extension, and post-harvest management techniques. However, a grower's success is not only dependent on the growing of crops, but also the understanding of their market. This requires the development of a business/marketing plan as well as the evaluation and feasibility of the proposed business and marketability of the product. The following publications are meant as guides for small to medium-scale, fresh-market growers in urban/peri-urban areas emphasizing organic and/or sustainable production practices.



# Community Food Systems Toolkit

- Curated collection of action-oriented resources
- Target audiences:
  - Practitioners & Extension
  - Community groups
- Purpose: to help implement & evaluate community food system initiatives
- Based on CRFS framework - links food systems activities with social, ecological and economic values
- Each tool includes:
  - brief description
  - tags from CRFS framework



The screenshot shows the website for the Community Food Systems Toolkit. At the top, there is a blue header with the title "Community Food Systems Toolkit" and the subtitle "Action tools aligned with the CRFS framework". To the right of the title is the "LW Extension University of Wisconsin-Extension" logo. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, Search by Framework, Browse all Tools, Whole Measures, Development & Evaluation, and Submit Tools.

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has a search section titled "Search Titles and Descriptions:" with a search box labeled "Search Tools...". Below the search box is a note: "(Or, Search Tools by Framework Category and tags.)". Underneath is a section titled "Community Food Systems Framework" with a diagram. The diagram is a circular flowchart with "VALUES" at the top, "CRFS" in the center, and various icons around the perimeter representing different food system components.

The right column has a section titled "Overview" with the following text: "The Community & Regional Food Systems Toolkit is a curated collection of action-oriented resources to help practitioners and community groups plan, implement and evaluate a variety of community food system initiatives. It is based on a framework developed by the Community & Regional Food Systems Project (CRFSP) that links food systems activities with specific social, ecological and economic values that shape community food systems development. Each tool has been briefly described and categorized by CRFSP framework components: Whole Measures value, food system area, enabling environment factor, and program development & evaluation stage. Permission has been sought where possible to host materials directly on this site." Below the overview text are two sub-sections: "Starting a new project?" with the text "See 'Development & Evaluation.'" and "Seeking tools to support your project?".





# Culmination Event



Growing Power, Milwaukee, November 5-6, 2015



# Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition

- Community-academic research, education, practice, networking
- Multi-participant: community orgs, universities, public agencies, businesses
- Cooperative structure
- Collective impact in Milwaukee



FoodLinkMilwaukee

Institute for Urban Agriculture & Nutrition

About Community Collaboration How Do I Get Involved? News & Events Resources People

FoodLinkMilwaukee

A DIRECTORY FOR URBAN FOOD PEOPLE IN MILWAUKEE | CREATED AND ADMINISTERED BY IUAN

Milwaukee is poised to take its place as  
national leader in urban agriculture

GOOD FOOD CIRCLE

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



NIFA AFRI grants make it possible to co-create **resources** and **capacity** with community partners through:

- Applied & participatory research
- Outreach & community engagement
  - Community Engagement Projects
  - Innovation Fund Projects
- Education
  - PEOPLE Program

“Communities know what’s good for them...I think that every community that we look at as having challenges around its food system probably has a vision that would solve those problems and it’s just a matter of asking and then being serious about making sure that it has the **resources** and the **capacity** [it needs].”

- Sutton Kiplinger, The Food Project,  
Boston Community Partner



# Project Lessons and Recommendations

- Community-academic engagement
  - communication and trust-building
  - flexibility, responsive to community interests
- Dismantling racism
- Policy reform
  - local food promotions
  - institutional procurement
- Ag and food enterprise development
  - financial support
  - access to land, water, compost, infrastructure
  - new farmers
  - value added initiatives
  - healthy retail
- Systems thinking and collective impact



# Thank you!

