

IN THIS ISSUE

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Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development **inaugural issue and special topic focus: *Growing Farmers***

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I recently taught a 2-hour workshop on mapping a regional food system network for a new group called the Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming here in Ithaca, New York. More than a beginning farmer program, Groundswell helps youth and adult learners develop the skills and knowledge they need to build sustainable local food systems. In this particular class of college students I saw tremendous enthusiasm, intelligence, and righteousness coupled with just a touch of naiveté. They hung on every word, they asked great questions, they relished the opportunity to map the relationships between all the players in our Finger Lakes regional food system. It was fun, and everyone, myself included, learned something. Yet as I drove home reflecting on the workshop, the feeling was rather bittersweet as I considered the myriad challenges that await these young idealists. Whether they end up working on or owning a farm, starting a cheese-making business, founding a community nutrition program, making a policy argument in a legislative office, or running a nonprofit organization, the global food system is still largely stacked against them.

But was I projecting my own experience of the previous 28 years on them? When I got home I checked my email and there were three JAFSCD manuscript submissions that had just arrived from Africa, Canada, and the U.S. — reminding me that things have actually changed dramatically since I was a VISTA volunteer back in 1982 working for the Central New Hampshire Agricultural Marketing Project. And it dawned on me that these future activists, leaders, farmers, and nutritionists are hitting their stride at just the right time, when both popular opinion and government policy are increasingly on their side. Indeed, as a publisher I have the privilege of hearing about things going on around the world and I can tell you that from where I sit, it is only a matter of time. The local food movement is successfully engaging the mainstream, crafting innovations, influencing policy, and more. It is great to see young folks eagerly considering how they can build a life around the movement. I have faith that, despite the challenges, many will succeed in their careers, as well as in pushing us just that much closer toward a sustainable future. We are lucky that programs like Groundswell are in a position to incubate new sustainable farmers, as well as new talented agriculture and food system development professionals.

Special Topic Call for Papers: *Growing New Farmers*

The topic for this first issue, “Growing New Farmers,” was chosen based on response to a poll we conducted on the JAFSCD website. The poll showed that beginning farming issues are a huge priority across the board. Replacing retiring farmers with individuals who can effectively navigate complexities of today’s farming and food systems is of growing concern around the world. The response to the call was phenomenal. In this issue we present papers by **Matt Lobley, John R. Baker, and Ian Whitehead**, who examine several studies to compare farm succession and retirement in North America and Europe. **Kim L. Niewolny and Patrick T. Lillard** review the wide range of adult agricultural education opportunities for beginning farmers and suggest that they are taking on new forms and patterns to support and sustain a new generation of farmers. **Jan Perez, Damian Parr, and Linnea Beckett** provide us with an evaluation of the 43 year old Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture program at the University of California, Santa Cruz; **Marcia Ostrom, Bee Cha and Malaquías Flores** describe their experiences providing alternative strategies in sustainable farming education to Hmong and Latino new farmers; and **Gilbert Gillespie and Sue Ellen Johnson** explore the factors for success in a study of farm start-ups in the Northeastern U.S.

Open Call for Papers

In addition, we offer several applied research papers on a range of agriculture, food systems, and community development topics. **Carmen Byker, Nick Rose, and Elena Serrano** studied the experiences of 19 adult volunteers on a one-month 100 mile diet. **Christopher Sneed and Ann Fairhurst** applied an activity system map to a farmers’ market to suggest how it might improve strategic planning and long-term viability. And finally, **Brannon Denning, Samantha Graff, and Heather Wooten** identify a potential legal barrier to local food marketing of which practitioners should be aware.

Commentary

This inaugural issue also features a commentary ruminating on “Why Aren’t There Any Turkeys at the Danville Turkey Festival?” by **Howard Sacks**, professor of sociology at Kenyon College. Howard has seen dramatic change in the agriculture community in his corner of Ohio and is doing some innovative work with students at Kenyon to bring local food to campus and to help build a regional food network.

Columns

In this inaugural issue we are introducing regular columns by four distinguished authors: two agriculture and food system professionals (**Joseph McIntyre** of the Agriculture Innovations Network, and **Ken Meter** of the Crossroads Resource Center), and two scholars (retired economics professor **John Ikerd**, and **Rami Zurayk** of the American University of Beirut). The purpose of these columns is to bring you, our reader, some fresh ideas and stimulate discussion on current issues. We invite you to comment on the columns in the [JAFSCD Forum](#).

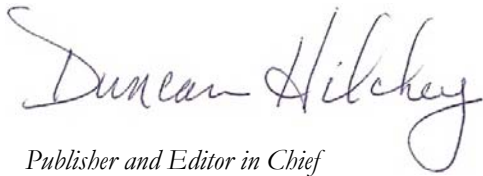
- *The Economic Pamphleteer* by John Ikerd
- *Views from the Food System Frontier* by Joseph McIntyre
- *Metrics from the Field* by Ken Meter
- *Global Views or Local Food Systems* by Rami Zurayk

Book Reviews

Finally, we offer three insightful reviews of books. We select books on timely subjects that are likely to be of interest to both professionals in the field and the academic community.

- *The Town That Food Saved: How One Community Found Vitality in Local Food* by **Ben Hewitt**, reviewed by **Valerie Imbruce**.
- *The Call of the Land: An Agrarian Primer for the 21st Century* by **Steven McFadden**, reviewed by **Kim Niewolny** and **Nancy Franz**;
- *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty* by **Mark Winne**, reviewed by **Cornelia Butler Flora**; and

We hope you relish the work of your colleagues in this inaugural issue, and plan to share your work and also [share](#) this new publication with your colleagues.



Publisher and Editor in Chief

