

## Welcome — and Thanks To So Many!

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Published online August 2010

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Welcome to the *inaugural issue* of the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development!* JAFSCD is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal that focuses on agriculture and food systems and bridges the interests of development professionals (including activist farmers and businesspeople), educators, consultants, and the academic community. While kindred journals focus on critical sustainable food production practices, community food security, and the sociology and political economy of food and agriculture, there has not been a journal supporting the community of practice that is rapidly integrating and evolving around these issues. We look forward to fostering an applied research literature where these interests meet — and may sometimes collide — and the nascent field of agriculture and food systems as a whole advances.

It has been about a year since we completed a survey to gauge interest in this journal, gathered input, and announced our first call for papers. We knew from the beginning we had our work cut out for us. For the authors in this issue, time has virtually stood still as we fussed over details. For those of us in the publishing office, it has been whirlwind race to get to this point. Yet there is still much to do; even as we work on the second issue, we also are planning enhancements to the [AgDevJournal website](#) as well as the journal's companion website, soon to be launched — AgDevONLINE. While we're still in our start-up phase, it sure feels good to get this first issue online! Access to the journal will be free until October 1 to give everyone a chance to try it on for size. However, please support the journal by subscribing right away, and [share it with colleagues](#).

The launch of JAFSCD would not have been possible without the countless hours contributed the members of our [advisors](#) and [editorial](#) committees. These folks have made a leap of faith to work with New Leaf to launch JAFSCD, and they made that leap with a passion for the work that has inspired us to produce the best journal we could. There are a several people I would like especially to recognize: **Sandip Banerjee** of Hawassa University, Ethiopia, for being our top reviewer; **Ken Meter** of the Crossroads Resource Center who helped develop our "[accessible scholarship](#)" concept; **George Chronis**, of Express Academic Services and CyberSense.US, for his assistance in developing our websites and his remarkable technical support over the past year; and publishing consultant **Joachim Engelland**, who provided superlative expertise in business planning. I also want to thank the authors of this inaugural issue for their trust in this new publishing entity, and their patience and persistence. We put them through the wringer as we worked out our processes as well as tampered at length with their manuscripts in our search to find the elusive balance between the needs and interests professionals and academics in food systems and agriculture development — what we refer to as

accessible scholarship. Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to managing editor **Amy Christian**, whose mark has been made on each and every paper in this inaugural issue. She is a remarkable talent and partner in running JAFSCD, as authors and reviewers are getting to know.

Enjoy the inaugural issue and please feel free to contact me with suggestions and constructive criticisms:

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*Duncan Hickey*

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