

IN THIS ISSUE
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Race and ethnicity in food systems work



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It is no secret that despite the best intentions of many, the food movement manifests levels of whiteness and privilege that tend to exclude significant parts of society, and thus does not address the needs of those who are excluded. To be effective in addressing issues like food insecurity, urban agriculture, food policy, small and new farmer expansion, and access to farmland, markets, and capital, organizations need to address lack of racial equity and lack of diversity in organizational leadership. They need to more intentionally embrace diverse leadership and ownership of the food movement by having formal conversations with those currently excluded. It is not just the right thing to do; it is a practical thing to do, since the food movement will not flourish without this diversity and organizations seem unlikely to succeed in their missions without formal anti-racist policies in place.

To advance research and practice in the context of race and ethnicity in food systems work, JAFSCD sought commentaries this summer from activists of color, leaders, consultants, white advocates and project partners, nonprofit organization staff and board members, public agency staff, and academics (scholars, students, and program staff). In this issue we offer 24 thoughtful and challenging commentaries spanning a wide range of communities: Native peoples, migrant workers, African Americans, and exploited ethnic groups, to name a few. The authors speak of the misperceptions, stereotypes, and misunderstandings that happen when well-meaning folks arrive in their communities with ready-made tools, strategies, and programs—many under the guise of empowerment. This is an uncomfortable topic for all concerned.

We hope this issue stimulates both scholars' and practitioners' thinking about how we move forward during a time of renewed interest in civil rights. For me the bottom line after reading these was that while advocacy and service by white allies is generally appreciated and helpful in meeting immediate and short-term needs for food security, this *outside* support can also be frustrating and disempowering to those on the *inside*. We've known for some time that it is not enough to provide handouts, and we must now acknowledge that teaching people to eat better or produce their own food is also not enough. From my perspective the collective call of these commentaries is for transformation, including training trainers and cultivating leaders by supporting people of color to *be* the community nutritionists, the dietitians, the garden developers, the small farm specialists, the food co-op director, the food hub managers, the extension agents, the land-use planners,

the researchers, the land-grant college deans, and the elected officials. Only when the food movement deliberately fosters and embraces the leadership of underrepresented peoples as service and information generators and providers— not just service and information recipients in the ghetto, the barrio, and on the reservation and other isolated rural areas—will the goals of food justice and food sovereignty in some of our most troubled communities be appropriately addressed. JAFSCD looks forward to seeing this leadership arise and take the reins.

The issue begins with a guest editorial by **Kent Mullinix**, professor and director of the Institute for Sustainable Food Systems at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, entitled *Working with Indigenous Peoples to Foster Sustainable Food Systems* that discusses his program's approaches to moving Native interests to the center of their programming.

In his Economic Pamphleteer column, *Ethnicity and the War on Big Food*, **John Ikerd** argues that our food systems cannot be transformed without the rich cultural contributions of people of color, who tend to place higher value on community and social relationships than on achievement and monetary gain.

And in his final column for JAFSCD, entitled *Allowing Ethnic Heritage To Emerge in Farm and Food Policy*, **Ken Meter** similarly points out that food policy is increasingly being formulated and implemented by those who are out of touch with the realities of intended beneficiaries.

In addition to the above commentaries and columns on race and ethnicity in the food system, we also offer a general commentary and several peer-reviewed papers and book reviews. In their commentary *Reviving Farming Interest in the Philippines Through Agricultural Entrepreneurship Education*, **Andrea Santiago** and **Fernando Roxas** lay the groundwork for the Philippines to “decommodify” and fully embrace a more diverse, high-value agricultural industry through a young and entrepreneurial class of farmers.

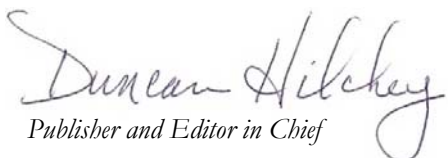
Next **Carolyn Dimitri** and **Lydia Oberholtzer** explore the impacts and tradeoffs of the new federal SNAP benefit redemption matching incentives in *Potential National Economic Benefits of Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentives of the Agricultural Act of 2014*.

Alexander Kaufman finds there may be tradeoffs to adopting organic production in the Global South. He suggests that program planners should take participants' environmental views and perceptions of well-being into account in *Unraveling the Differences Between Organic and Non-Organic Thai Rice Farmers' Environmental Views and Perceptions of Well-being*.

We conclude the issue with three book reviews. **Kathlee Freeman** reviews *The Color of Food: Stories of Race, Resilience and Farming*, by Natasha Bowens. **Gregory Zimmerman** reviews *The Community-Scale Permaculture Farm: The D Acres Model for Creating and Managing an Ecologically Designed Educational Center*, by Joshua Trought; and **Elizabeth Morgan** reviews *Food Utopias: Reimagining Citizenship, Ethics and Community*, edited by Paul V. Stock, Michael Carolan, and Christopher Rosin.

We are sorry to have to share the passing of JAFSCD reviewer **Valencia Coty-Barker**. Valencia was on the faculty at Ashford University in San Diego, California. As a woman of color and a reviewer for the past year and a half, she gave thoughtful and valuable feedback on papers on food deserts and environmental justice, two areas of research about which she was very passionate. While we never met Valencia in person, we appreciated her sharing her expertise to the JAFSCD community and making this contribution to the food movement.

Final note: As I mentioned above, this is Ken Meter's last column. Ken has been with us since the launch of the journal and has provided a unique and valuable perspective as a nonacademic professional in the field of food systems. He has taught us alternative ways of measuring progress in food systems work, gently questioned authority in both academia and government, and provided a candid perspective from someone working in the trenches. We wish Ken well and look forward to seeing applied research manuscripts from him and his team at the Crossroads Resource Center in the future!


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