

CHAPTER. 3

The Food Economy



The Food Economy

Food is big money. Based on U.S. estimated per capita expenditures for food, the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed and its 4 million residents spent \$17.2 billion (\$17,232,012,025) on food in 2011.¹ These per capita figures “measure the total value of all food expenditures by final purchasers[,] . . . including consumers, governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.”² In our Foodshed, that means food expenditures by individual households plus those of universities, colleges, hospitals, corporate employee cafeterias, public schools, military bases, country clubs, soup kitchens, and city jails are reflected in the calculations, as are dollars spent at vending machines, restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, food trucks, food stalls, and Busch Stadium. We used the Economic Research Service per capita data and calculated the figures for our Foodshed to obtain the \$17.2 billion figure. Admittedly, those are coarse figures.

While some data is available on a county basis, many of the values discussed in this chapter are extrapolated from per capita national averages to reflect estimates for the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed population. We used national per capita data and our region’s population for these calculations in order to provide a ‘big picture’ idea of how many food dollars circulate in our Foodshed. Detailed research on the unique consumption patterns of our Foodshed remains to be done. It is possible that these numbers do not accurately reflect the region’s economic situation, but they are a guidepost for understanding the amount of money we contribute to the food sector and how little of it reaches the individuals who grow our food. The data show almost a fair split between food made at home and food made elsewhere.

Our Foodshed spent about \$8.8 billion on food made at home and \$8.4 billion on food outside the home in 2011.³

Because food typically does not travel directly from farmer to consumer, most of the \$17.2 billion spent on food in our Foodshed does not reach the farmers and ranchers that produce it. Consumer food dollars are apportioned among all middlemen involved - the processor, baker, freezer, packager, server, retailer, etc.

The ‘farm value’ share of the retail price of food decreased from 37% in 1980 to 23% in 1997.⁴ That means the farmers who grew the food received an increasingly smaller share of the price you paid for it. USDA analyst Patrick Canning demonstrates in a 2008 “food dollar”⁵ report that 84.2% of the cost of domestically produced food is derived from the marketing and distribution share of production.⁶ Thus, only 15.8% of the cost of domestic food is related to seeds, fertilizers, and farming.⁷ In short, the majority of our food costs are not for food at all.

USDA’s data on “[f]ood expenditures by families and individuals as a share of disposable personal income” show that food expenditures are down to their lowest levels in household budgets in nearly a century.⁸ In 2010, food, including restaurant and prepared food, occupied 9.4% of family budgets, down from 20.6% in 1950 and 24.2% in 1930.⁹ Higher household incomes, coupled with the fact that our nation’s food policy for the past 40 years has been focused on providing Americans with cheap food above all else, contribute to this historically low share of the household food budget.

The majority of the food dollars in the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed do not stay in the local economy. They are pulled out of the region into the global food system. The “hidden” costs of food in the supply chain are dollars that do not buy food - they buy advertising, marketing, design, packaging, and transportation. The majority of food system workers is not found on actual farms but instead is part of the food marketing and distribution system.

The average income of all workers in Missouri’s agriculture sector in 2008 was \$29,974, “which [was] 8% below the state annual average wage.”¹⁰ And while the production portion of the agriculture sector employs more workers than any other portion, agricultural production workers receive the lowest annual average wage in the sector, at \$12,753.¹¹ Thus, not only do Missouri agricultural workers on average make 8% less than the average Missouri worker, the individuals who actually grow crops and raise livestock make less than half of the average income of other workers in the sector.¹² This means that in order for the average wage to reach \$29,974, wages in the processing, fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide, equipment, and storage components must far outpace that of farmers and producers.¹³

This \$17,221 difference between wages of production workers and other agricultural workers shows that the food dollars that circulate in our state benefit the transportation, chemical, and packaging activities of the food system much more than the farmers and workers who grow the food.

¹ See *Food Expenditures: Overview*, USDA ERS (May 21, 2013), <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-expenditures.aspx#26636> (follow “Table 13. Per Capita Food Expenditures” hyperlink) [hereinafter Table 13. Per Capita Food Expenditures]. Table 13. Per Capita Food Expenditures was last updated October 1, 2012.

² *Food Expenditures: Overview*, USDA ERS (May 21, 2013), <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-expenditures.aspx#26636>.

³ See Table 13. Per Capita Food Expenditures, *supra* note 1. For a map displaying restaurant and grocery spending data per census tract in Saint Louis City, Saint Louis County, Madison County, and Saint Clair County, see Neighborhood Data Gateway, <http://www.datagateway.org/map.html> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

⁴ Econ. Research Serv., U.S. Dep’t of Agric., *Food Cost Review, 1950-97* 12 (1999) http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/308041/aer780_1_.pdf.

⁵ Food dollar is defined as the “[t]otal annual market value for all purchases of domestically produced foods by persons living in the United States.” Patrick Canning, U.S. Dep’t of Agric., *A Revised and Expanded Food Dollar Series: A Better Understanding of Our Food Costs* 3 (2011) <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/131100/err114.pdf>.

⁶ *Id.* at 9.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ See *Food Expenditures: Overview*, *supra* note 2 (follow “Table 7—Food expenditures by families and individuals as a share of disposable personal income” hyperlink) [hereinafter Table 7. Food Expenditures by Families and Individuals].

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Mo. Econ. Research & Info. Ctr., *Missouri Economic Research Brief: Agriculture Industries* 2 (2008) http://www.missourieconomy.org/pdfs/missouri_ag_impact.pdf.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

Food dollars leave our region and circulate in the global food system. Missouri and Illinois consumers find produce on their grocery shelves from California, Florida, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, the Netherlands, and China. Meanwhile, a handful of nations buy our agricultural products. Missouri's largest agriculture trading partners are Mexico, China, Indonesia, Turkey, Japan, and Taiwan, as of 2012, according to Foreign Trade Commission of the U.S. Census Bureau;¹⁴ Illinois' top agriculture buyers are Taiwan, China, Mexico, Indonesia, and Vietnam.¹⁵

Still, Missouri's agriculture exports (statewide) in 2012 were valued at just over \$650 million,¹⁶ a figure dwarfed by the

\$17 billion our Foodshed (which is only a fraction of the whole state) spends on food every year.¹⁷ The imbalance is not corrected by Illinois: Illinois' (statewide) exports were valued at nearly \$2.3 billion.¹⁸

Local Food

Most of us depend on food sourced from far away. For commodities we cannot produce- citrus, cocoa, coffee - it makes sense to find trading partners overseas. But why are we exporting our food dollars for eggs, squash, melons, apples, and dozens of other crops we can grow in our region? Despite the so-called 'efficiencies' that accountants can find in their spreadsheets, the food certainly is not 'fresh' after traveling on ships,

trucks and trains to our grocery stores and arriving weeks after harvest. Most will agree - it doesn't taste fresh either. If the point of a food system is to nourish and sustain a people, then the current system is failing. (We cover this more in the subsequent chapter).

And what about safety? Many foreign countries allow chemicals to be sprayed on farm fields that are banned in the U.S. Why would we import those foods? Does our dependence on intricate transportation networks help or hurt our food security? As the price of fossil fuels has swung wildly in recent years, consumers see it in their grocery bills. No longer is the price of food related to the supply and demand of crops and the whims of the weather.



¹⁴ Int'l Trade Admin., U.S. Dep't of Commerce, *2012 NAICS 11 - Agriculture and Livestock Products Exports from Missouri*, TradeStates Express, <http://tse.export.gov/TSE/MapDisplay.aspx> (Select "State Export Data" and follow hyperlink; select "Global Patterns of a State's Exports" and follow hyperlink; select "Missouri" from drop down menu under "State/U.S. Region" title; click "change" button under "Products" section; expand "All Non-Manufactured Goods" option of the Merchandise Classification System, select "Agriculture and Livestock Products" option and then click the "Update" button; once window closes, click the "Go" button and follow hyperlink for data table) [hereinafter *Agriculture and Livestock Products Exports from Missouri*].

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, *2012 NAICS 11 - Agriculture and Livestock Product Exports from Illinois*, TradeStates Express, <http://tse.export.gov/TSE/MapDisplay.aspx> (Select "State Export Data" and follow hyperlink; select "Global Patterns of a State's Exports" and follow hyperlink; select "Illinois" from drop down menu under "State/U.S. Region" title; click "change" button under "Products" section; expand "All Non-Manufactured Goods" option of the Merchandise Classification System, select "Agriculture and Livestock Products" option and then click the "Update" button; once window closes, click the "Go" button and follow hyperlink for data table) [hereinafter *Agriculture and Livestock Product Exports from Illinois*].

¹⁶ *Agriculture and Livestock Products Exports from Missouri*, *supra* note 14.

¹⁷ See Table 13. Per Capita Food Expenditures, *supra* note 1.

¹⁸ *Agriculture and Livestock Product Exports from Illinois*, *supra* note 15.

Because of the role that fossil fuels play in our food system, we generally pay more when fossil fuel prices climb, while subsidized fossil fuel inputs help keep food cheaper than its real costs.

Obtaining food from local sources places more consumer dollars into the hands of farmers, rather than in the hands of “middlemen” industries. When we produce and consume food locally, more of the consumer food dollar reaches producers in the Foodshed, sustaining families here.

Returning food production to the region and redistributing the consumer food dollar to local industries most directly involved in the local food system may help us respond to unemployment and energize our local economy. Despite these economic benefits to the local economy, local food may cost more, and higher cost may continue to deter many consumers. Still, it is worth asking, “Can we capture a larger share of our food dollars locally?” Even half of it would be an \$8 billion stimulus.

To return table food production to our region, we will need more consumers- including institutions, universities, and businesses - to commit to buying local food even if it costs more. We will need to help consumers understand the benefits of higher quality food. We will need to build the infrastructure to support harvesting, storage, processing, packaging, and distribution.

Andy Ayers, a restaurateur turned local foods entrepreneur, has been working for nearly a decade to connect local farmers with local restaurants.¹⁹ After operating Riddles restaurant for 23 years, Ayers tackled the challenge of getting farmers and chefs connected by starting Eat Here St. Louis.²⁰

Ayers eloquently discusses how the current price supports of industrialized fossil fuel-based agriculture, nationally and internationally, make it very difficult for local growers to compete in the market:

The biggest challenge I face in selling local foods to restaurants is the cost advantage that imported food enjoys due to economies of scale of petro-input based, mono-culture plantations and feedlots AND the artificially low cost of shipping food from afar due to the way that government policy allows the true costs of transportation by fossil fuel to be externalized.

Right now the higher per-unit cost of raising a tomato on a small farm in our [Foodshed] puts local tomatoes at a cost disadvantage compared to the economies of hundreds-acre tomato plantations in Florida, Mexico, Texas, etc. This is directly related to artificially low petroleum prices from the fertilizers and pesticides used by the mono-crop farms to the diesel fuel the 18-wheelers use to bring produce into this market.

The cost curves for both local and imported foods are rising. Local growers raise prices as their costs rise and in order to attain for themselves a living wage. But in my view, the inexorable increases ahead for fossil fuels will result in a cross-over point on the cost graph somewhere in the near future at which time local food production will be less expensive than imports. This is already the case at peak season when, for instance, homegrown tomatoes in mid-July were being sold below the cost of production due to a surge of local supply.

I think what we need to be doing right now is work to leverage the added value of local food that derives from its higher quality to nurture the infrastructure of both professional farmers and a local foods distribution system so that when the cost advantage turns to local growers there are enough of them (and a way to get their stuff to market efficiently) so that the cost of food does not sky-rocket with the inevitable cost of petro products. That is being done now by expanding the market for high quality local foods in that niche that is not 100% price sensitive.

Farmers markets, local food clubs and CSAs do that by commanding high prices that go directly to growers from the relatively small segment of the market that values the quality and experience of direct buying even though it is plainly not as convenient and often not as economical as shopping at the 24-hour Schnucks. Eat Here St. Louis is doing that by making it almost as easy for chefs to buy local food as it is to buy imported from Sexton or US Foodservice. But it still costs them more to buy from me. So again, my greatest challenge is to find or convince chefs that the quality difference - and the advantage that accrues from marketing your stuff as locally sourced - is worth blowing up the food cost percentage, the operative financial marker to which a chef's salary and/or job security may well be tied.

- Andy Ayers, Eat Here St. Louis²¹

In recent years, many chefs in the region have embraced local foods and many restaurants now feature food grown locally. In addition to fruits and vegetables, diners in our region can enjoy grains, cheeses, pork, beef, poultry, eggs, sauces, soups, and baked goods from local sources. Unfortunately, there is still much work to be done to make local food systems sustainable, as current U.S. agriculture policy aligns farm profit incentives toward the current mono-culture, fossil-fuel based production system of a handful of commodities. Corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, rice, sugar are the major commodities subsidized today. These incentives, underwritten by taxpayers, help keep products with these ingredients cheap and boost profits for companies that use these ingredients. The structure of the incentives explains why a bunch of unprocessed carrots costs more than a box of snack cakes.

With 64% of the land in our region classed as “land in farms” (we explore this in more detail in the “Land” portion of this report) our Foodshed has made agriculture a priority at least in land use. Have we maximized the potential of those farms to feed the people and the economy of our region?

¹⁹ Email from Andy Ayers, Eat Here St. Louis, to Kathleen Logan Smith, Dir. of Env'tl. Policy, Mo. Coal. for the Env't (Sept., 3, 2012, 9:28 PM CST) (on file with author) [hereinafter Email from Andy Ayers].

²⁰ Who is Eat Here St. Louis?, Eat Here St. Louis, <http://www.eathereatl.com/who-is-eat-here-st-louis/> (last visited July 8, 2013); see also Sarah B. Smith, *Taste of the Region: Riddle's Penultimate Café & Wine Bar*, Saint Louis Com. Mag. (March 2007), <http://www.stlcommercemagazine.com/archives/march2007/taste.html>.

²¹ Email from Andy Ayers, *supra* note 19.

Missouri as a whole ranked second in the nation for the number of farms in 2007 with more than 107,000 farms,²² which suggests that we have a stronger “farmer” base than 48 other states. Illinois is home to 76,000 farms with 80% of its land in farms, the vast majority of them growing soybeans and corn in monoculture or simple rotation.²³

Not surprisingly, the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture reports that food processing is the state’s number one manufacturing activity adding more than \$13 billion in value to the state’s raw agricultural commodities annually.²⁴

We do not have similar data for the narrower area of our Foodshed, which is a subset of both Illinois and Missouri, however we include the information here to highlight these connections between food and the economy.

Not all of our region’s agricultural commodities are food however. Illinois reports that its products (soybean oil, for example) provide the base for products like animal feed, ink, paint, adhesives, clothing, soap, wax, cosmetics, medicines, furniture, paper and lumber.²⁵ Ethanol and soybean-based biodiesel are the other major non-food use of crops.²⁶

Our region is also home to several global, agriculture-related businesses including Monsanto, a company that owns many of the nation’s seed companies,²⁷ produces herbicides,²⁸ and patents genetically modified seeds for herbicide-resistant crops;²⁹ Bunge North America, another integrated agriculture company with fertilizer operations, as well as grain and oilseed processing;³⁰



Nestlé Purina, a pet care company that is part of Swiss-based Nestlé SA;³¹ and Anheuser-Busch/Inbev, a Belgian company now self-described accurately as a “global brewer” producing Budweiser beers, among other beverages.³² These global food system players employ thousands of residents of our region.

Food system businesses with national reach also make their home in our Foodshed, including Panera Bread, whose bakery-cafes are now in 44 states;³³ and Ralcorp Holdings, Inc., a subsidiary of ConAgraFoods, which describes itself as “the nation’s leading producer of private-brand foods” as well as a major purveyor of refrigerated doughs, pastas, sauces, and other grocery staples.³⁴

Other national and global players have operations in our region, though their headquarters are elsewhere such as Archer Daniels Midland or ADM, a grain, oilseed and commodities company headquartered in Decatur, Illinois³⁵ that also has a crop insurance operation;³⁶ and AB Mauri, a British company and makers of Fleischman’s yeast and yeast products for baking;³⁷ and Wisconsin-based Penzey’s Spices, a mail order and retail supplier of spices and seasonings.³⁸

Large regional food economy players include grocery chains like Schnucks,³⁹ Dierbergs,⁴⁰ and Shop ‘N Save,⁴¹ and the St. Louis Brewery, brewer of Schlafly beers.⁴² We must understand that much of the farmland in our region does not produce food for people to eat. So much of what is grown in our region never arrives at our tables in a form we can recognize because soybeans have been pressed for oils used in salad dressings and corn has, for example, been processed for its corn syrup found in our sodas or fed to pigs we encounter as bacon.

Feeding the people in our Foodshed from our Foodshed will require more farms producing the fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy products we put on our tables.

For four decades, U.S. Agricultural policy has emphasized and rewarded production, skewing the system toward higher production levels, regardless of whether there is market demand for the crops.⁴³

Aligning incentives toward production was justified by claims of selling to export markets.⁴⁴ When it comes to farms, however, bigger is not always better.

²² Mo. Econ. Research & Info. Ctr., *supra* note 10.

²³ Facts About Illinois Agriculture, Ill. Dep’t Agric. (2001), <http://www.agr.state.il.us/about/agfacts.html>.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Monsanto Seed Brands, Monsanto Co., <http://www.monsanto.com/products/Pages/monsanto-product-brands.aspx> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

²⁸ See *Weed Control*, Monsanto Co., <http://www.monsanto.com/products/Pages/weed-control.aspx> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

²⁹ See *Agricultural Seeds*, Monsanto Co., <http://www.monsanto.com/products/Pages/monsanto-agricultural-seeds.aspx> (last visited July 8, 2013).

³⁰ See *Bunge North America Locations*, Bunge, <http://www.bungenorthamerica.com/locations/index.shtml> (last visited July 8, 2013) (stating Saint Louis, Missouri has its headquarters’ location); *About Bunge North America*, Bunge, <http://www.bungenorthamerica.com/about-bunge/index.shtml> (last visited July 8, 2013) (explaining the company’s contribution to the agriculture industry).

³¹ See *About Us*, Purina, <http://www.purina.com/meet-purina/about-us> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012); *Petcare*, Nestlé, <http://www.nestle.com/Brands/Petcare/Pages/PetcareCatalogue.aspx> (last visited July 8, 2013).

³² *About AB InBev*, Anheuser-Busch InBev, http://www.ab-inbev.com/go/about_abinbev.cfm (last visited July 8, 2013).

³³ *Company Overview - Our History*, Panera Bread, <http://www.panerabread.com/about/company/history.php> (last visited July 8, 2013).

³⁴ *Ralcorp Holdings: Divisions of Ralcorp*, Ralcorp Holdings, Inc., <http://www.ralcorp.com/Divisions/> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

³⁵ See *ADM: United States of America*, Archer Daniels Midland Co., <http://www.adm.com/en-US/worldwide/us/Pages/default.aspx> (last visited July 8, 2013).

³⁶ See *ADM Crop Risk Services - Crop Insurance*, ADM Crop Risk Services, <http://www.admcrrs.com> (last visited July 8, 2013).

³⁷ *AB Mauri - Yeast and Bakery Ingredients for North American Bakeries and Restaurants*, AB Mauri Food, Inc., <http://www.abmna.com/home> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012).

³⁸ See *Penzeys Spices*, <http://www.penzeys.com> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012).

³⁹ Schnucks, <http://www.schnucks.com> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012).

⁴⁰ Dierbergs, <http://dierbergs.com> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012).

⁴¹ Shop ‘n Save, <http://www.shopnsave.com> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012).

⁴² See *About Us*, Schlafly, <http://schlafly.com/about-us/> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012); Top Breweries in St. Louis, CBS St. Louis, (Oct. 27, 2011, 11:43 AM CST), <http://stlouis.cbslocal.com/top-lists/top-brewery-in-st-louis/> (last visited Nov. 19, 2012) (explaining that “Saint Louis Brewery, Inc.” and “Schlafly” are used interchangeably to describe the same company).

⁴³ Lois Braun, *What Are Commodity Crops and Why Do They Matter?* Hampden Park Co-op (Apr. 3, 2012 2:42 PM), <http://www.hampdenparkcoop.com/node/904>; see also *Volume 23 Issue 2*, Hampden Park Co-op, <http://www.hampdenparkcoop.com/taxonomy/term/246> (listing Braun’s article as part of Hampden Park Co-op’s April-March 2012 newsletter) (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

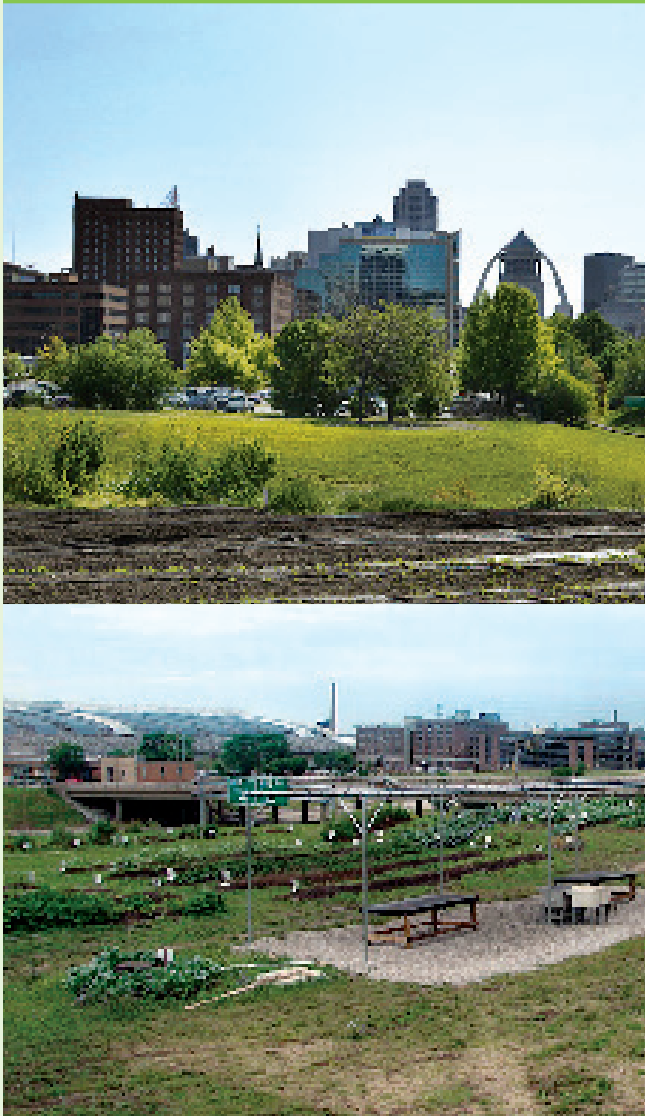
⁴⁴ *Id.*

Bigger farms require massive farm equipment and tend to rely heavily on fossil fuel inputs like pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and fuel. Smaller farms can more easily incorporate manure based fertilizers, crop rotations, and diversified crops to boost yields, build soil, and preserve fertility. Our region has just as many large farms, over 1,000 acres, as those in the smallest segment, 1-9 acres.⁴⁵

How productive can those small farms be? Local farmers report that small farms are productive despite their small acreage.

For example, Eckert's in Illinois, grows apples, berries, and pumpkins and features a store, agritourism attractions and a you-pick-it operation. Eckert's has 150 acres in apples and it produces 2 million pounds annually,⁴⁶ we provide five examples of local food enterprises that provide healthy food, while supporting

FIGURE 3-1. PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN OF GATEWAY GREENING'S CITY SEEDS URBAN FARM⁴⁷



Urban Gardening:

Gateway Greening, a nonprofit in Saint Louis whose mission is to “educate and empower people to strengthen their communities through gardening and urban agriculture,”⁴⁷ is leading the way to a healthier community. Gateway Greening has several programs that enrich local communities including its Community Gardens program, which now sponsors more than 200 gardens, and its City Seeds Urban Farm program (Figure 1).⁴⁸

City Seeds Urban Farm program “is an urban agriculture initiative providing job training and therapeutic horticulture to homeless and underserved individuals.

A collaboration of several local organizations, the farm produces and distributes affordable, healthy, locally grown produce.”⁴⁹

Features found at City Seeds include “48 raised vegetable beds, a native plant nursery, dwarf fruit tree orchard, ... drip irrigation, rainwater catch cistern, [and an] outdoor classroom.”⁵⁰

Gateway Greening has provided numerous job training and volunteer opportunities to the community as well as has produced more than a hundred thousand pounds of food in recent years.⁵¹

As of July 25, 2012, Gateway Greening's City Seeds Program has had an 82.8% job placement rate since August 2009, with 64 clients participating in the employment program.⁵² Since 2006, City Seeds has produced nearly 50,000 pounds of “organic, locally grown food” and has donated more than 13,000 pounds of food.⁵³

Gateway Greening's 2013 projections anticipated that Active community and School Gardens would produce 115,000 pounds of produce and City Seeds would produce 11,000 pounds of produce.⁵⁴

Other local groups that collaborate with Gateway Greening to make City Seeds a success include Operation Food Search, St. Patrick Center, Missouri Department of Transportation, Saint Louis Master Gardeners, and Horstmann Brothers Landscaping.⁵⁵

Since 1984, Gateway Greening has been demonstrating that growing food grows community, neighborhoods, jobs and the economy.⁵⁶

⁴⁵ See 2007 Census of Agriculture - Missouri, *supra* note 33, at 359-88; 2007 Census of Agriculture - Illinois, *supra* note 33, at 346-71.

⁴⁶ Telephone Interview by Kathleen Logan Smith, Dir. of Env'tl. Policy, Mo. Coalition for the Env't, with Jim Eckert, Owner, Eckert's Farms (March 4, 2013) [hereinafter Telephone Interview with Jim Eckert].

⁴⁷ About Us, Gateway Greening, <http://www.gatewaygreening.org/about-us/> (last visited June 7, 2013).

⁴⁸ Our Programs, Gateway Greening, <http://www.gatewaygreening.org/our-programs/> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

⁴⁹ City Seeds Urban Farm, Gateway Greening, <http://www.gatewaygreening.org/our-programs/city-seeds-urban-farm/> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ Email from Andrea Mayrose, Urban Agric. Manager, Gateway Greening, to Kathleen Logan Smith, Dir. of Env'tl. Policy, Mo. Coal. for the Env't (Aug. 29, 2012) (on file with author).

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ About Us, Gateway Greening, *supra* note 46.

local agriculture, strengthening their local economy, connecting people to their food, and decreasing the food supply's fossil fuel dependence.

Purveyors of local food stress the freshness and flavor of their crops. Low mileage food, picked at the peak of ripeness instead of green, just tastes better. It also loses fewer nutrients on its way to the table.

Most medical and disease experts recommend fruits and vegetables as the basis for a healthy diet because bodies need the nutrients found in these foods to function.

The current food system, geared toward cheap and convenient, makes it difficult for people to eat healthy food, especially for those with low incomes.



Farms:

Thies Farm is a commercial, for-profit operation that has been growing food in the region since 1885. Today, Thies Farm has 200 acres of land and 50,000 square feet of greenhouse space at its St. Louis County and St. Charles County locations.⁵⁸

Thies Farm delights families with more than 50 different fruits and vegetables in hundreds of varieties, as well as landscape flowers and herbs.⁵⁹ Pick-your-own strawberries and pumpkins feature prominently in the memories of many families in the area.

Thies has successfully become an “agri-tourism” destination with on farm activities designed for family fun.

Eckert's Farms in Illinois, known for its apple orchards at its three farms in Grafton, Millstadt, and Belleville has also grown an impressive agri-tourism operation that includes festivals, hayrides, classes, a restaurant and store, as well as pick-your-own apples, blackberries, strawberries, peaches, pumpkins and Christmas trees.⁶⁰ Though an agricultural operation, Eckert's mission stretches past the table: To “creat[e] family memories” through connecting people with their food and the farms.⁶¹

In addition to 2 million pounds of apples, Eckert's annually produces 200,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables, 600,000 pounds of pumpkins, and 3 million pounds of peaches.⁶²

In addition, Eckert's employs more than 350 people over the course of a year.⁶³

MCE hopes to inspire residents of the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed to work together to make a stronger local economy, starting with the one thing everyone cares about: food.

⁵⁷ Sources of images: Gateway Greening, *2012 City Seeds Urban Farm Photo 134*, Picasa Web Albums (Apr. 10, 2012), <https://picasaweb.google.com/ggiemployee/2012CitySeedsUrbanFarm#5730624144161272114>; Gateway Greening, *City Seeds Urban Farm Photo 21*, Picasa Web Albums (Jun 30, 2007), <https://picasaweb.google.com/ggiemployee/CitySeedsUrbanFarm03#5538714007753490034>.

⁵⁸ Telephone interview by Kathleen Logan Smith with Dave Thies, owner, Thies Farm (Mar. 4, 2013).

⁵⁹ *Our Homegrown Produce*, Thies Farm, <http://www.thiesfarm.com/our-homegrown-produce> (last visited May 28, 2013).

⁶⁰ *See Eckert's Pick-Your-Own Ripening Schedule*, Eckert's, <http://www.eckerts.com/pyo.htm> (last visited June 5, 2013).

⁶¹ *Eckert's Mission*, Eckert's, <http://www.eckerts.com/mission.htm> (last visited Aug. 8, 2013).

⁶² Telephone Interview with Jim Eckert, *supra* note 80.

⁶³ *Id.*



FIGURE 3-2. LOCAL HARVEST CHALKBOARD DISPLAYING THE NAMES OF SOME OF ITS PARTNERS IN THE LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

Grocery:

Fortunately, there are local restaurants, markets, and farms already working to strengthen the local food economy in the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed.

Local Harvest Grocery is just one prime example of a regional business that connect people with locally sourced and socially responsible food (Figure 3-2). Local Harvest has three locations in the Saint Louis area – Tower Grove Grocery, Local Harvest Cafe, and the Downtown Cafe – and also has a catering service, Local Harvest Catering.⁶⁴

It is [Local Harvest's] goal to provide the highest quality food and personal care items from the St. Louis region. From grass-fed beef, pastured chickens and hogs to fresh produce and baked goods and gourmet dry goods. [Local Harvest] scour[s] the region to find producers of quality, unique products.⁶⁵



FIGURE 3-3. SCHLAFLY GARDENWORKS IN SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI⁷⁰

Restaurants:

The Saint Louis Brewery, commonly referred to as simply “Schlafly” after its beer brand, is another regional business that provides local food. Schlafly has two brewery-restaurant locations, Schlafly Bottleworks in Maplewood, Missouri (Saint Louis County) and Schlafly Taproom in downtown Saint Louis, Missouri (Saint Louis City). Schlafly grows some of its own produce in the Schlafly Gardenworks, purchases a great deal of food from local producers,⁶⁶ and hosts a weekly Schlafly Farmers’ Market between April and October and once monthly during November through March.⁶⁷ Schlafly grows “[t]housands of pounds of produce . . . every year in the Gardenworks for use at both . . . restaurants, such as tomatoes, beets, Japanese white turnips, eggplant, summer squash, sunchoke, garlic, herbs, peppers, edible nopales cactus and all sorts of greens including mustard, kale, shard and salad greens” (Figure 3-3).⁶⁸

The Schlafly Farmers’ Market sells “local, farm fresh eggs, pork, lamb, beef, herbs, mushrooms, artisanal loaves, flowers, pasta, chocolate and more straight from the source.”⁶⁹

Farm policies have made unhealthy food cheap and plentiful. Industrial farming and massive distribution networks have made it more likely for Missouri and Illinois consumers to find garlic from China than an onion from Missouri or Illinois in their local grocery store, for those whose neighborhoods even have grocery stores.

Fresh nutritious food can be hard to find and often costs more than processed high-sugar and high-fat foods.

⁶⁴ See *Local Harvest Café Tower Grove – Keeping it Local*, Local Harvest Grocery, Café, & Catering, <http://localharvestcafe.com/towergrove/> (follow hyperlinks at the bottom of the webpage for each Local Harvest location) (last visited July 8, 2013).

⁶⁵ *Local Harvest Grocery, LLC – Purveyors of Local and Organic Groceries in St Louis, Missouri*, Local Harvest Grocery, <http://www.localharvestgrocery.com/towergrove/> (last visited July 8, 2013).

⁶⁶ *Frequently Asked Questions About Schlafly Beer: What Kind of Sustainable and Green Initiatives Does Schlafly Participate in?*, Schlafly (2012), <http://schlafly.com/faqs/>.

⁶⁷ Schlafly Farmers Market, <http://schlaflyfarmersmarket.com> (last visited Mar. 7, 2013).

⁶⁸ *Gardenworks*, Schlafly (2013), <http://schlafly.com/bottleworks/gardenworks/>.

⁶⁹ *Schlafly Farmers Market*, Schlafly (2012), <http://schlafly.com/bottleworks/farmers-market/>.

⁷⁰ Source of image: *Gardenworks*, *supra* note 68.



FIGURE 3-4. FIVE BISTRO'S LOGO, ROASTER BEEF TENDERLION, AND FITCHNER FARM CATTLE⁷⁴

Restaurants:

Five Bistro is another restaurant located in Saint Louis City that provides all locally-sourced food (Figure 3-4). The menu is updated each day “to reflect what is in season and available locally”⁷¹ and it references the farms from which each ingredient originated.⁷² As of August 2012, Five Bistro currently sourced its ingredients from 15 farms, 11 of which are inside the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed.⁷³

Fast food chains and convenience stores often dominate the grocery options in low-income areas - urban and rural - and farmers markets and grocery stores with produce sections are often scarce in these same areas.

For an aspiring entrepreneur, it can appear easier to start a fast food restaurant or gas station chain store than to launch a new food market or restaurant because of the support and resources parent corporations give to their franchisees, i.e., “a brand name, a business plan, expertise, access to equipment and supplies.”⁸⁴

Food Ventures:

In addition to local restaurants that support the food economy, one developer in Saint Louis City, Craig Heller, has a development concept for the North Saint Louis City he calls FarmWorks, combining housing, urban agriculture, aquaponics,⁷⁵ food processing, and local business, all while working to strengthen and engage the community.⁷⁶ FarmWorks would be an addition to his already existing apartment development called Stamping Lofts, which is composed of “56 studio apartments for ex-offenders, homeless veterans and others, many of whom [could] be trained to help run FarmWorks.”⁷⁷ Heller envisions FarmWorks to include an “aquaponics” fish farm inside a building adjacent to the four-story Stamping Lofts,” “[g]ardens [that would] fill vacant lots on the 4.5-acre site” and “[a] ‘green’ industry business incubator [that would] focus on food processing and distribution to area restaurants and groceries.”

The two-story building . . . used until recently as office space for Hammond Sheet Metal Company, [would] remain office space, to incubate sustainable green businesses. And the vast loading dock [would] accommodate truckloads of local produce, either coming in to be processed in a commercial kitchen or leaving to be distributed to area restaurants and residents.⁷⁸

Heller envisions FarmWorks producing 2.5 million tons of produce and 300,000 pounds of fish annually when it reaches full operational capacity.⁸⁰

Other restaurants in Saint Louis City and Saint Louis County that provide locally sourced food include Mad Tomato in Clayton,⁸⁰ Home Wine Kitchen in Maplewood,⁸¹ and Sidney Street Cafe in Saint Louis City.⁸² The businesses and organizations discussed here only shine light on local food efforts in the Saint Louis County and Saint Louis City areas. More are growing every day.

Despite the convenience of owning a franchise, franchisees have less independence to make decisions about what they offer to consumers because they must conform to much of the franchiser model for running the business.⁸⁶ In areas with more low-income families, there is often limited access to capital, which may deter investment in new local businesses. Subsequently, there tends to be more fast food and gas station chains than independent food-providing businesses in areas with more low-income families. The Saint Louis Regional Foodshed illustrates the trend.

⁷¹ Five Bistro, <http://www.fivebistro.com/> (last visited Aug. 8, 2013).

⁷² August 4, 2012 Dinner Menu, Five Bistro (2012) http://www.fivebistro.com/uploads/dinner_aug12.pdf.

⁷³ Five Bistro, *supra* note 105. The regional farms are: Angel Acres Farm, Baetje Farms, Benne's Farm, Claverach Farm, Eat Here St. Louis, Farrar Out Farm, Fitchner Farms, Marcoot Creamery, Ozark Forest Mushrooms, Rissi Farm, and Vesterbook Farm. The farms outside of the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed that provide ingredients to Five Bistro are Kilgus Farmstead, Living Water Farms, Rain Crow Ranch, and Troutdale Farm.

⁷⁴ Sources of image: Five Bistro, *supra* note 105; Food Gallery, Five Bistro, <http://www.fivebistro.com/food.php> (last visited Aug. 8, 2013); Fitchner Farm cattle from *Farm Gallery*, Five Bistro, <http://www.fivebistro.com/farms.php> (last visited Aug. 8, 2013).

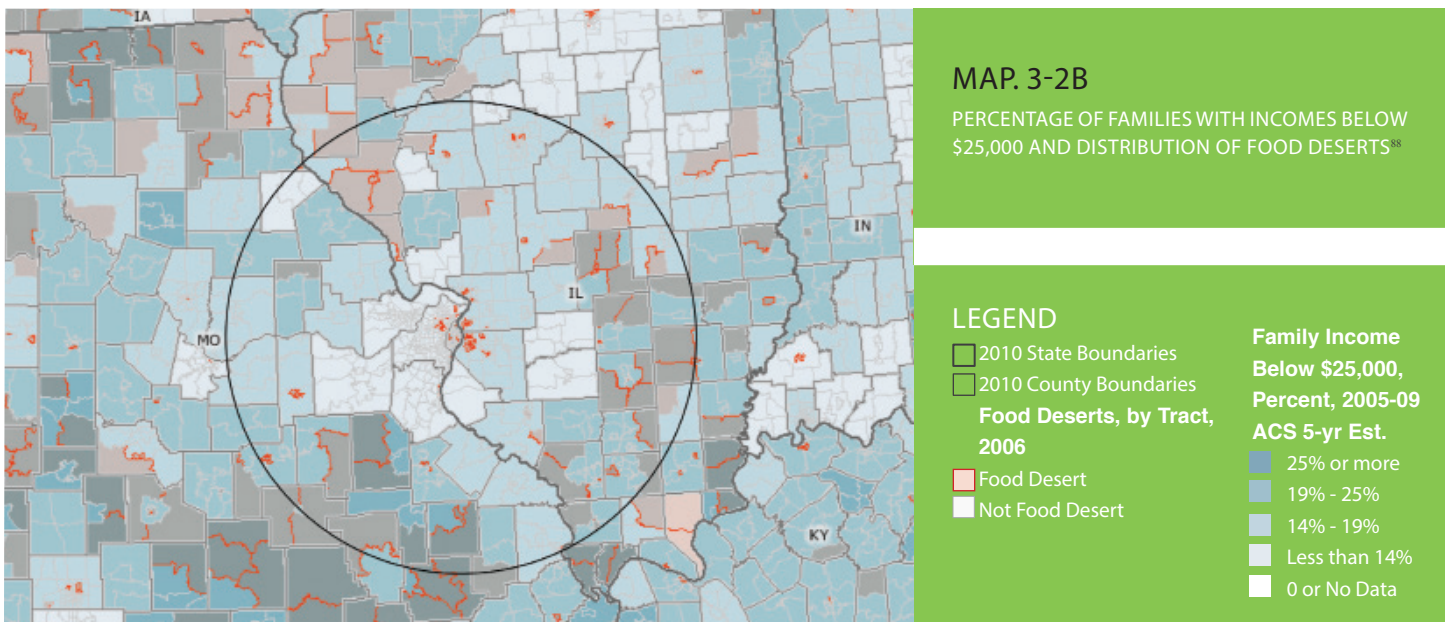
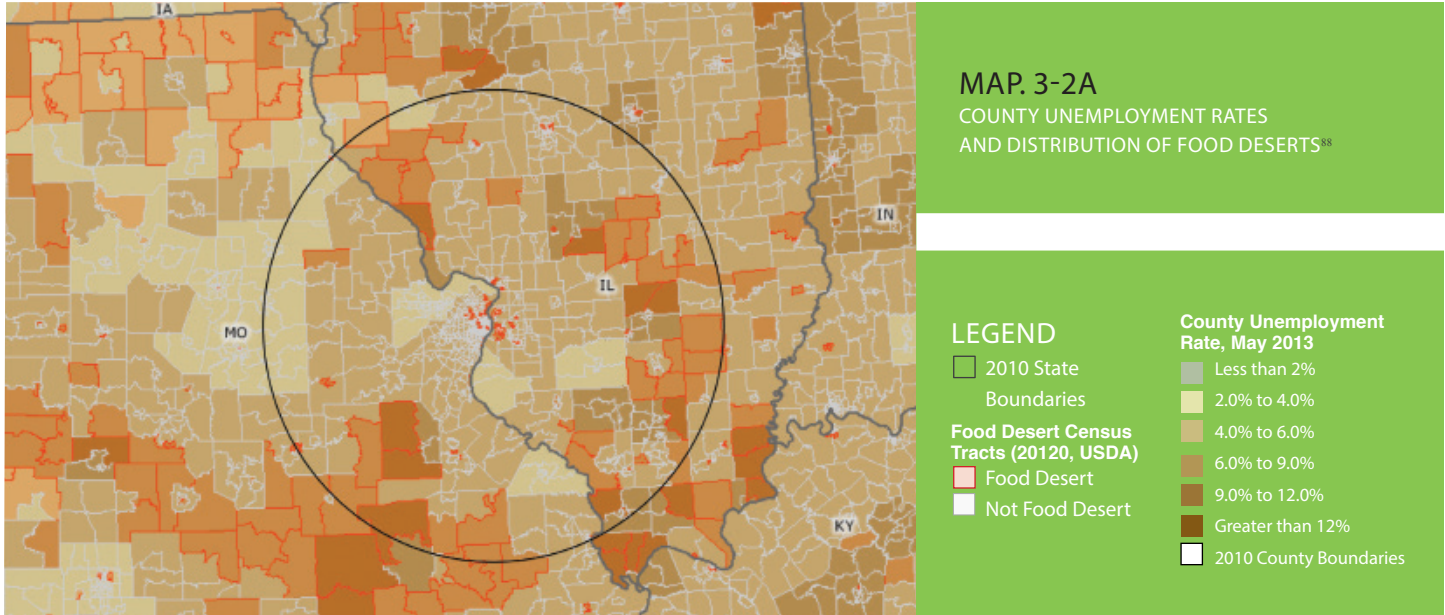
⁷⁵ “Aquaponics . . . is a sustainable food production system that combines conventional aquaculture, (raising aquatic animals such as snails, fish, crayfish or prawns in tanks), with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water) in a symbiotic environment.” *Aquaponics*, Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquaponics> (last visited July 14, 2013); *see also* JD Sawyer, *Aquaponics, Growing Fish and Plants Together*, Colorado State University, http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/adams/gh/pdf/Intro_Aquaponics.pdf (last visited July 14, 2013).

⁷⁶ Tim Bryant, *FarmWorks Project in North St. Louis Begins Second Phase*, St. Louis Post Dispatch, April 17, 2013 5:16 pm, http://www.stltoday.com/business/local/farmworks-project-in-north-st-louis-begins-second-phase/article_e93e4071-1b20-53c1-95cb-263f2539eb2e.html.

⁷⁷ *Id.*

Maps 3-2A and 3-2B illustrate that 11 of the 14 counties with the highest unemployment rates and all four counties with the greatest percentage of total families with incomes below \$25,000 also contain “food deserts,” outlined in red on the map and which the USDA Economic Research Service defines as,

“urban neighborhoods and rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food.”⁸⁷ This suggests that these areas of food need and high unemployment could benefit from food-production entrepreneurial operations to help address both needs.



⁷⁸ *St. Louis Innovators: The Developer*, Craig Heller, St. Louis Magazine, Nov. 2011, <http://www.stlmag.com/St-Louis-Magazine/November-2011/St-Louis-Innovators-The-Developer-Craig-Heller/>.

⁸⁰ Email from Andrea Mayrose, *supra* note 88.

⁸¹ Mad Tomato Italian Kitchen, <http://madtomatostl.com/> (last visited July 14, 2013).

⁸² See Tara Mahadevan, *Find Home-Style Vegetarian Comfort at Home Wine Kitchen*, Feb. 25, 2013 11:00 AM, Riverfront Times, http://blogs.riverfronttimes.com/gutcheck/2013/02/home_wine_kitchen_maplewood_vegetarian_cuisine.php (“Home Wine Kitchen serves ‘responsible food’. Chef Cassy Vires and her team source produce from small, family-owned farms in the Midwest and local shops.”); Home Wine Kitchen, <http://www.homewinekitchen.com/welcome> (last visited July 14, 2013).

⁸³ Sidney Street Café, <http://www.sidneystreetcafe.com/> (last visited July 14, 2013).

⁸⁴ Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* 94 (First Perennial ed. 2002).

⁸⁵ *Id.*

⁸⁶ *Id.* (“The franchisee sacrifices a great deal of independence by having to obey the company’s rules.”).

⁸⁷ Ctr. Applied Research & Envtl. Sys., *supra* note 26 (select “Food Environment” menu and follow “Access to Food” hyperlink; then select info button beside “Food Desert Census Tracts (USDA 2006).”).

⁸⁸ Ctr. Applied Research & Envtl. Sys., *supra* note 87 (Select “Food Environment” menu and follow “Access to Food” hyperlink; then select “Food Desert Census Tracts.” Select “Economy/Income” menu, select “Unemployment,” select “By County,” and follow “2012” hyperlink; then select “May 2013.” Select “Economy/Income” menu, select “Family Income,” and follow “By County” hyperlink; then select “Income Below \$25,000, Percent of Total Families” and select “Make Map” button).