Building a Regional Food System
A Case Study of Market Umbrella in the New Orleans Region

Megan M. Carroll and Jennifer M. Jensen
RUPRI Rural Futures Lab
University of Missouri

April 2012

Supported by
The Ford Foundation’s Wealth Creation in Rural Communities – Building Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative
Rural Futures Lab™

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The Authors

The research was conducted by Megan M. Carroll, graduating Master of Public Affairs student at the Harry S Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, and the report was co-written by Megan M. Carroll and Jennifer M. Jensen, Rural Futures Lab, Harry S. Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri.

Acknowledgements

The authors owe special thanks to Richard McCarthy, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Market Umbrella for arranging Megan Carroll’s interviews with key people connected with the Crescent City Farmers Markets, and for his enthusiastic support for the production of this case study. Thanks are also due to the ten other interviewees who gave up valuable time to share their insights and experience.

Thanks to Market Umbrella for providing the photographs used in this report.

Errors of fact or interpretation are entirely those of the authors.

The research was supported by The Ford Foundation’s Wealth Creation in Rural Communities – Building Sustainable Livelihoods initiative. The grant for the project came through the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship.
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Case Studies of Wealth Creation and Rural-Urban Linkages

This case study is from a collection of four case studies of wealth creation and rural-urban linkages (Dabson, Jensen et al, 2012). These are part of a broader effort supported by the Ford Foundation, known as the Wealth Creation in Rural Communities initiative. The primary purpose of these case studies is to stimulate learning, discussion, and further inquiry about the application of the rural wealth creation framework. The cases were selected to illustrate different facets of this framework in action, and to further clarify the ways in which the framework could prove to be instrumental in achieving sustainable economic prosperity for rural people and places. The subjects of each of these cases represent decades of dedication and hard work by many people and organizations often in extremely challenging economic, social, and political contexts. These case studies are not evaluations or judgments of these efforts; on the contrary they are intended to provide foundations for rich debate on the future of rural regions and communities across the United States.

The other cases are:

- **Transitioning to a Restoration Economy: A Case Study of Oregon’s Forestry Sector**, which focuses on the forestry sector in Eastern Oregon and on the value chain intermediary, Sustainable Northwest, based in Portland, Oregon.
- **Plastics from Plants: A Case Study of NatureWorks, LLC, Blair, Nebraska** describes a subsidiary of Cargill that converts corn into a value-added plastic resin as a replacement for petroleum-based plastics.
- **Wind Energy and Rural Development: A Case Study of West Texas**, which explores the burgeoning wind energy sector across rural West Texas.

The four case studies illustrate different dimensions of wealth creation, value chains, and rural-urban linkages. Table A provides a preview of these dimensions.

*Table A: Case Study Dimensions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Forestry Products</th>
<th>Alternative Energy</th>
<th>Bio-Manufacturing</th>
<th>Food Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Wealth Creation</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shift from exploitative to restoration rural economy</td>
<td>Market driven with multi-level wealth implications</td>
<td>Market driven with multi-level wealth implications</td>
<td>Focus on social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Chains</td>
<td>Market development intermediary</td>
<td>Demand driven entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Corporate driven market development</td>
<td>Market development intermediary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural-Urban Linkages</td>
<td>Rural production, niche urban markets</td>
<td>Rural production, state/national urban markets</td>
<td>Rural/regional production, global markets</td>
<td>Rural production, urban public markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>State/multi-state</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Local/regional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For readers not familiar with the language of wealth creation, some of the terms used in these case studies may be unfamiliar or at least used in unfamiliar ways. Table B offers some definitions ordered alphabetically as an initial guide.

*Table B: Definitions of Key Terms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets or Capitals</td>
<td>Forms of wealth that encompass the financial, natural, social, individual, built, intellectual, and political dimensions of a community or region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asset Accumulation</td>
<td>Savings by individuals and households for key assets such as housing, education, and business start-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions that derive tangible benefits from proximity, common technologies, skills, etc., to enhance their competitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Ability of households, companies, communities and regions to anticipate problems, opportunities, and potentials, reduce vulnerabilities, respond to major disasters, and recover rapidly, better, safer, and fairer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural-Urban Linkages</td>
<td>Mutually beneficial relationships between rural and urban places and economies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Wealth</td>
<td>The stock of enduring assets over which rural places have stewardship, control, or ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Wealth Creation</td>
<td>Value chains that intentionally protect and increase the stock of assets in rural areas, and which embody a set of values about which the consumer cares (such as renewable energy or locally-grown and/or organic food)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Livelihoods</td>
<td>Capabilities, assets, and activities needed to make a living, ensure resilience, and build wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Chains</td>
<td>Sequence of activities and processes required to bring a product or service from conception to final use, where at each stage value is added as tools, labor, knowledge, skills are applied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth Creation</td>
<td>Policies and practices that lead to the retention and creation of wealth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

There are four principles that underlay the wealth creation approach:

1. Respect people and their places.
2. Help people collaborate and tap new markets based on shared values.
3. Build many kinds of wealth so everyone benefits.
4. Keep wealth local.  

Across the nation, the local food movement embodies these values. Regional food cultures and local economies are finding new expression through the rapid growth in direct-to-consumer sales via farmers markets, community-supported agriculture (CSA) farms, and other local food institutions.

This report examines how regional food systems offer a practical way to build rural-urban linkages and grow multiple forms of wealth in rural places. We explore the case of New Orleans and Market Umbrella, a nonprofit organization that is working to strengthen and grow the regional food system within and around the city.

The regional cuisine is an important part of daily life and the identity of the place and people. Yet despite their deep food culture, the local food movement has been slower to take root in the New Orleans region than in many other places across the nation. When Market Umbrella opened its doors in 1995, there were no farmers markets in New Orleans, and it was difficult to find locally grown, traditional foods in the city.

Today, Market Umbrella and its Crescent City Farmers Markets are part of a food system that is expanding and improving all the time. They address multiple challenges to the local food movement in their region by encouraging rural-urban relationships that bridge divides across geography, racial lines, and economic class. On a national scale, Market Umbrella is developing practical ways for local food systems of all sizes to quantify local food’s impacts on regional economies and people.

One way to look at the success of a nonprofit like Market Umbrella is to ask how it impacts various forms of community wealth. Community wealth is more than simply financial wealth. Communities can be rich (or poor) in relationships, infrastructure, natural resources, and human skills. The Wealth Creation in Rural Communities project uses seven forms of capital (Figure 1) that describe various forms of community wealth.

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1 See the “Wealth Creation in Rural Communities” project: www.creatingruralwealth.org
Like all regional issues, some of the challenges in New Orleans are place-specific—like the impact of Hurricane Katrina. The story of people coming together to address economic, social, and environmental issues through food is one that applies in many contexts, however. We find that many of the lessons of Market Umbrella and the New Orleans local food movement are applicable to other regions of the U.S. with nascent or emerging food systems.

2. The National Picture

Characteristics of the food system

Food is a major player in the U.S. and global economy. The U.S. produces nearly $300 billion worth of agricultural products per year, and Americans typically spend around $1 trillion dollars per year on food (USDA, 2007; USDA, 2009). Additionally, many people in the U.S. are employed by the food system. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2008:

- 2 million Americans were employed in agriculture,
- 1.5 million in food manufacturing,
- 2.5 million in grocery stores, and
- 9.6 million in food services and drinking places.

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2 Adapted from Wealth Creation in Rural Communities (http://www.creatingruralwealth.org/wealth-creation-approach/multiple-forms-of-wealth/)
3 See http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgi_index.htm.
Beyond its economic impact, the food system also affects our environment, society, and health. Food production has major impacts on our land, water, and air. The distribution of food can cause social inequalities such as food deserts and higher levels of food insecurity among certain groups. The way we process and consume food has direct implications for our health and environment, and can also affect our sense of community. The decisions we make along each step of the food system supply chain (see Figure 2) can have both positive and negative effects for individuals and communities.

Of course, the system represented in Figure 2 is far more complex than this linear graphic illustrates. Each step of the process is influenced by its enabling environment, and by the presence (or lack) of physical infrastructure, policies, government regulations, business supports, and relationships among the participants along the chain. The supply chain depicted here may look different for specific food industries or at various geographic scales (e.g., local, national, or global).

For our purposes, the basic chain offers a graphical illustration of how the food system links rural communities—our food production and processing hubs—with urban markets. It also provides a basis for thinking about the differences between a “traditional” food supply chain and a “value” chain. The Agriculture of the Middle website\(^4\) explores how goals can be different along each step of the chain, and within the relationships that make up the chain (Figure 3).

Traditional food supply chains can handle both undifferentiated (commodity) and “value added” food products. Food value chains are distinguished from traditional food supply chains by the combination of how they operate as strategic partnerships (business relationships), and how they differentiate their products (focused on food quality & functionality and on environmental & social attributes).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional food supply chains</th>
<th>Food value chains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers/ranchers/fishers) are treated as interchangeable (and exploitable) input suppliers, often operating in restricted markets or under short-term contracts where risks are usually born by producers.</td>
<td>As producers of differentiated food products, farmers/ranchers (and fishers) are treated as “strategic partners” with rights and responsibilities related to value chain information, risk-taking, governance, and decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often framed in win-lose terms. Constructed as competitive, even adversarial, whereby each company seeks to buy as cheaply and to sell as expensively as possible.</td>
<td>Framed in win-win terms, and constructed on collaborative principles that feature high levels of inter-organizational trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits/profits from the selling of final food products are unevenly distributed across the supply chain, with food processors and marketers usually receiving a disproportionately higher share.</td>
<td>Commitments are made to the welfare of all strategic partners in a value chain, including fair profit margins, fair wages, and business agreements of appropriate duration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasingly coordinated on a national &amp; international scale. Food production, processing, and marketing sited for short-term economic gains for those parties who dominate the chain.</td>
<td>Operations can be effectively located and coordinated at local, regional, national, and international scales.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The food system in the U.S. has undergone major changes in the past several decades. The next subsections explore some of these structural changes including increases in consolidation and vertical integration.
Ownership along the food chain

Increased consolidation among agricultural producers and processors mean that fewer firms control more of the production of our food. At the farm level, “large-scale family farms [and] nonfamily farms made up only 12 percent of U.S. farms in 2007 but accounted for 84 percent of the value of U.S. production” (Hoppe & Banker, 2010, p.iv). Among food processors, the consolidation is equally pronounced. For example, only four companies own 64% of the pork-packing industry, and 83% of the beef-packing industry (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2005).

On the other hand, 63% of U.S. farmland is controlled by small family farms, or those with annual sales of less than $250,000 (USDA, 2007). The practices of small farms can thus have a large effect on our environment.

The food system in the U.S. is also characterized by increasing vertical integration, where a single or several cooperating firms control multiple steps along the food production supply chain. Examples of vertical integration include farmers who collectively own their input supply, marketing, or processing cooperatives, or a private firm such as a citrus producer that owns both the orange groves and processing plant (MacDonald & Korb, 2008). Decision making about farming and food processing is consolidated into fewer hands, and the profits earned along the value chain are concentrated there, too.

These phenomena squeeze small farmers out of the national and global food market, contributing to the loss of farmers in the U.S. workforce. Yet local food and direct-to-consumer sales offer alternative markets to small producers.

Rise in popularity of local food

Overall, local and regional food systems make up a small but growing part of our total food system. In 2007, the USDA measured $1.2 billion in direct-to-consumer sales, which were growing twice as fast as total agricultural sales. The growth was three times faster in the Far West and Rocky Mountain regions, and four times as fast in the top ten farmers’ market states (Tropp, 2010). In this report, local and regional food systems are defined by direct sales between farmers and regional consumers, rather than wholesale or commodity sales.

Farmers markets often represent a first step for communities looking to build up their local and regional food system. Even though farmers’ markets are only a small percentage of total agricultural sales in the U.S., they are by far one of the fastest growing segments. In 2011, there were 7,175 farmers markets across the U.S., compared to less than 2,000 in 1994 (Tropp, 2010).

A paper by the RUPRI Rural Futures Lab (Jensen, 2010) notes the diverse reasons that communities are supporting efforts to grow the local food movement:
To generate economic development in their communities by encouraging “buy local” campaigns and promoting local and regional entrepreneurship.

To connect local food with social justice issues and better public health outcomes related to food security.

To address food safety problems associated with the spread of disease through large-scale agricultural production by using the shorter supply chains of regional production systems.

To pursue environmental sustainability through their local food systems, which consumers perceive to be more likely to embrace organic or other sustainable methods.

To build more sense of community by inviting social interaction around local farm markets and community decision making (p.2).

Each of the reasons named above represent different aspects of community wealth that communities are addressing through regional food systems.

3. The New Orleans Regional Food System

For the purposes of this case study, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana make up the region under discussion. This area around New Orleans is known for its unique food culture. Dishes like jambalaya, red beans and rice, and beignets are easily identified with Creole cuisine. The local fare and vibrant tourism industry has encouraged a lively and creative restaurant scene in the city. In addition, the region outside of New Orleans is largely rural and agricultural.

Map 1: Location of Market Umbrella Vendors on Rural-Urban Continuum
As shown in Map 1, the Market Umbrella vendors are spread out in a variety of counties ranging from rural non-metro to urban metro in areas that are farmland, bayous, and grazing land. All of these characteristics support the development of a regional food system.

Yet despite the advantages of a thriving food culture and strong rural and agricultural roots, the New Orleans regional food system is still an emerging model. Across the U.S., there are examples of more and less mature local food systems (see Table 1).

Table 1: Examples of Direct Food Distribution Models by Stages of Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution Model</th>
<th>Start-up / Nascent</th>
<th>Developing / Emerging</th>
<th>Mature / Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail driven</td>
<td></td>
<td>La Montanita Food Cooperative, NM</td>
<td>The Wedge/Coop Partners, MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit driven</td>
<td>MFA/Big River Foods, MN</td>
<td>Market Umbrella &amp; Crescent City Farmers Markets, LA CAFF/Growers Collaborative, CA</td>
<td>Red Tomato, MA Appalachian Sustainable Development, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer driven</td>
<td>Browse and Grass Farmers Association, WI</td>
<td></td>
<td>New North Florida Cooperative, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer driven</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oklahoma Food Cooperative, OK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In fact, according to a common measure of local food systems—agricultural products sold directly to consumers—the New Orleans region is following the slow development patterns of several major U.S. regions. Map 2 illustrates that New England, the Mid-Atlantic, the upper Midwest, and the West Coast have the strongest local food economies by this measure. The southern and western U.S. regions show less engagement in direct-to-consumer sales, indicating that there are large areas of the country with fairly undeveloped local and regional food systems, and that there is still room for growth in regions like New Orleans.

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5 Based on Tropp, 2010, p.26
Some reasons for the slow development of the region’s food system include socio-economic challenges and weak local policies to support a regional food system. In addition, the region is still recovering from a major natural disaster—Hurricane Katrina—that has hindered development projects of all kinds.

**Regional Socio-Economic Challenges**

The region is marked with high poverty rates and high unemployment. There is an acute need for economic and community development in both the city of New Orleans and in the rural places surrounding it.

Race issues are relevant to the everyday functioning of the food system here, since Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama boast the highest percentages of African Americans in their state populations (U.S. Census Bureau). African American land loss is a major issue for farmers in the region, according to the Executive Director of Market Umbrella.

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Race and the Food System

Who has access to land and seed? (The majority of black farmers are small operators who can’t afford to buy seed.)

Who receives the government subsidies? (90% of USDA subsidies go to commodity crops, and only 7% of black farmers grow commodity crops.)

Who experiences the environmental impacts of food distribution? (Similar to the way interstate highway systems and chemical plants are built in low-income black communities, so are food distribution centers. Large delivery trucks come regularly and idle, releasing harmful diesel particulate, an asthma trigger.)

Which communities have better supermarket access? In which communities are garbage transfer stations often located? The answers to each of these questions will inevitably point to a racist system.

Jenga Mwendo
Director of the New Orleans Backyard Food Network
Food Fellow with the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)
(http://foodandcommunityfellows.org/digest/article/racism-food-policy-new-orleans)

Local Policies & Agencies

In New Orleans, there is scant support to develop public markets. When the Crescent City Farmers Market opened in 1995, they were the only first farmers market to open in the city in a century. The market organizers quickly learned why: the city’s public health department did not allow organizations to sell fresh food at public events. By working with the mayor’s office, Market Umbrella was able to operate under a “festival exemption”. Seventeen years later, they still depend on the exemption.

Relations between the farm market community and the state and local government appear to have ups and downs. In interviews for this case study, we found a disconnect between market participants and the state regarding the availability of agricultural and small business services. While the market organizers and vendors say the state does not help small farmers very much, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry says that they will give guidance to anyone who calls. However, Market Umbrella organizers were clear that relations with the state have improved since the election of a new Commissioner of Agriculture in 2007.

The local agricultural extension agencies were cited in several interviews as limited partners to the local food movement. Relationships with extension agents seem to be most useful for making connections across the food system. Today, the producers who come to the Crescent City farmers markets are often referred to the market by extension agents or other producers. However, we found anecdotal evidence that extension agencies have limited experience with sustainable agricultural practices and cannot provide technical help on organic growing practices. For example, one farmer who went to the Louisiana State University’s extension service with a question about growing organic citrus was told that he knew more about the subject than they did.
On the other hand, Market Umbrella’s Executive Director, Richard McCarthy notes that regional fishers enjoy a strong relationship with a particularly helpful group, the Sea Grant extension agents. McCarthy says,

The public nature of commercial fishing means that fishers rely heavily upon Sea Grant agents’ knowledge to conduct their business. An example is the ship-to-shore conversations between fishers and agents when a fisher is uncertain as to the legality of fishing in particular waters. This close and frequent communications leads to a different relationship than what is enjoyed between industrial agriculture agents of land grant universities and small farmers.

** Recovering From Disaster: Hurricane Katrina **

Hurricane Katrina disrupted life in the region at all levels, and its influence has impacted how the region’s food system has developed. After the hurricane, local people that remained in New Orleans focused on fulfilling their basic needs: shelter, food, water, and finding loved ones.

Sources of food at that time were so scarce that some people depended on military MREs (meals ready-to-eat), according to one woman (Mother Nature Network, 2009). Even months after the storm, the few residents of the decimated city were depending on emergency food. Most neighborhoods did not have functioning grocery stores, food production and distribution systems were disrupted, and the population had fallen to the point where it was difficult to find workers for the few stores that did open (Farm Aid blog, 2006). Local farmers lost crops and equipment to the storm (see text box), and many people left the area during the evacuation and did not return for months, if at all (Seattle Tall Poppy blog, 2010).

** Hurricane Katrina and local farms **

Hurricane Katrina did significant damage to one Crescent City dairy farmer’s equipment. After the hurricane, the dairy producer sold her herd for two years and considered permanently abandoning a family business that had lasted 30 years. With encouragement from Market Umbrella, the dairy farmer bought a small herd to rebuild her business in June 2010.

Part of the help that Market Umbrella provided was in the form of business support. Market Umbrella helped the farmer fill out application forms for a grant from the John Besh Foundation. The dairy farmer won a grant, ensuring they had the funds to get back in business so that they could continue to sell their goods to the people of the gulf coast region.

Organizations that had formerly focused on the local food system responded to the new needs of the city:

- Market Umbrella was well established enough by the time Katrina hit that they had reopened one of the Crescent City farmers markets within 10 weeks of the storm. Their market represented one of the few sources of any fresh food, let alone locally grown food, that was available in the city at that time.

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The nonprofit New Orleans Food & Farm Network (NOFFN), founded in 2002, shifted its mission to rebuilding the food system after Hurricane Katrina. To help residents find healthy food in the city, NOFFN built practical maps of food sources and distributed them widely. Today they continue to focus on helping consumers gain access to local foods.

Since Hurricane Katrina, a few organizations have joined the movement to strengthen different aspects of the New Orleans food system. McCarthy has watched some organizations rise and fall, while others have risen and persevered. Most of the growth has been among urban food efforts. Some examples of ongoing efforts since Katrina include:

- The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Council, recognized by the city in 2007, works to increase consumer access to healthy and fresh foods.
- Edible Schoolyard New Orleans operates at five charter schools operated by the First Line charter school network.
- Many small nonprofit organizations are leading volunteer efforts in urban agriculture (e.g., the Latino Farmers Cooperative and Grow Dat Urban Farm).
- Hollygrove Farm and Market is a CSA-style fresh food enterprise associated with an urban community development corporation (CDC).
- For-profit companies offer regional food to local buyers (e.g., Jack and Jakes, a wholesaler).
- Local foundations are providing grants to help farmers and entrepreneurs get back on their feet after Hurricane Katrina. For example, a local chef started the John Besh Foundation, which has supported local farmers and other entrepreneurs since 2011.

4. Building and Measuring a Regional Food System

In response to the challenges and opportunities of the New Orleans regional food system, Richard McCarthy, Sharon Litwin, and John Abajian developed Market Umbrella and the Crescent City Farmers Markets. The founders’ overarching goal was larger than managing farmers markets, however. They sought to build a sustainable regional economy that united both rural and urban areas:

Formerly known as the Economics Institute, marketumbrella.org began with a simple mission: to promote ecologically sound economic development in the Greater New Orleans area, particularly among family farmers and other local agricultural enterprises.

To work toward their vision Market Umbrella partnered with Loyola University’s Twomey Center for Social Justice. The market separated from Loyola and became an independent nonprofit organization in the spring of 2008.

Today, Market Umbrella operates on multiple scales. Locally and regionally, they run the three weekly Crescent City Farmers Markets (see text box below), which focus on building relationships between urban consumers and rural producers.

The Crescent City Farmers Market

In 1995, only six producers sold their goods at the first Crescent City Farmers Market in a lot in New Orleans’ Warehouse district. Today, Market Umbrella manages three weekly markets that operate 50 or 51 weeks a year (details from Market Umbrella, 2011):

- **Crescent City-Mid City**: 3-7 PM on Thursday afternoons. In 2011, an average of 17 vendors earned an average gross receipt of $678.45 per market day. An average of 469 shoppers spent $24.62 per market. While this market does not bring a lot in cash sales, a third of the sales at this market are SNAP, meaning that this market does a good job of reaching out to low-income residents.

- **Crescent City-Uptown**: 9 AM-1 PM on Tuesday mornings. This market operates near the Market Umbrella offices, and appeals more to professionals, retirees, and school and senior groups. The average number of vendors is 23 who earn on average $1,457.23 per market. The average number of shoppers is 1,170 who spend $28.62 each.

- The flagship **Crescent City market** still operates Saturday mornings in the Warehouse district. This market appeals to tourists, families, and locals in the area. An average of 26 vendors earns $1,574.80 each, and an average of 1,300 shoppers spends $31.50 each.

For consumers, the organization maintains a SNAP/cash matching incentive program to encourage low-income residents to participate in the local markets. Market Umbrella has also developed an alternative currency for consumers to use at the Crescent City markets. Many consumers prefer to use credit cards, but individual market vendors usually do not offer that service. In response, Market Umbrella introduced a “wooden currency” in 2005. Using their SNAP cards or credit/debit cards, market shoppers can purchase the alternative currency to pay for their farm market goods. The vendors get the coins reimbursed on a bi-monthly basis for cash.

The Crescent City wooden currency (pictured at right) now accounts for 10 percent of the markets’ sales. They expect to reach $400,000 in wooden currency sales by the end of 2011 (Van Hook, 2011). This innovation has made the point of sale significantly easier to navigate for both the vendors and consumers. For example, as opposed to getting a receipt from each vendor at the market, a restaurant shopper can purchase however much they want to spend at the market with the company credit card and have one receipt, making
accounting significantly easier.

Market Umbrella also provides business services to regional entrepreneurs and community members. The nonprofit helps market vendors write and submit grant proposals for business development, and introduces them to chefs or organizations that might be interested in their goods.

Market Umbrella offers micro-grants to entrepreneurs and community groups through the Crescent Fund. When market consumers purchase wooden coins, they have the option of putting one dollar into the Crescent Fund. Community members and groups can submit applications for a $500 cash infusion for that is either for public market development or for a project that is aligned with the values of the public market (such as improving a neighborhood garden). The Crescent City Farmers Market community—shoppers and vendors—then vote on the projects to decide who receives the funds. Those who receive the money must pay back the funds through their “time, talent, or treasure.” For instance, a woman who was trying to start her own bakery paid back her cash infusion by baking cakes for a Market Umbrella event, according to McCarthy. Other projects that have been funded include school gardening and cooking initiatives, a New Orleans bicycle map project, and a farm that needed money to help remove debris from their farm after a major storm.

On a national scale, Market Umbrella functions as an educational and grant-making organization that supports other public markets. Market Umbrella manages Marketshare, a networking site for public market organizers to share their experiences and data (explained more fully in the next section). Their educational outreach also expands globally, with international speaking engagements and internships.

**Market Umbrella Tools**

Market Umbrella does not just run farmers markets, but also studies them. To conduct their research, they are developing survey tools and a national and international network of public market practitioners:

> By learning, sharing and growing, we cultivate the field of public markets for public good. We develop tools that help other markets build capacity and evaluate impact, stage peer learning opportunities, and launch a number of innovative programs to grow agricultural enterprises. Our reach now extends well beyond the New Orleans area, but our commitment to innovation and the economy of place — and of course, eating well — is still what drives us.⁹

Marketshare is an online forum⁹ that Market Umbrella has developed to bring the people who run public markets together to share data and ideas (see Figure 4). Marketshare has over 900 members, 65 percent of which are market organizations. Other members include local governments, universities, Main Street associations, individuals (like farmers), journalists, and consultants.

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¹⁰ See http://www.marketumbrella.org/marketshare/.
The *Sticky Economic Evaluation Device (SEED)* is a survey instrument that helps market organizers to determine the economic effects their markets have on the local community and market vendors. It is available to people who sign up for Marketshare. Through SEED, Market Umbrella offers detailed instructions on how to complete a full market study. SEED uses basic data about the market, such as how often it runs, what it sells, how big of an area the market occupies, who owns the space, how many vendors, etc. It includes a survey designed for interviewing market customers, and describes how to accurately count the number of customers who enter the market. The resulting SEED report provides data on the average number of customers, the average amount spent by customers, the average amount taken in by vendors, the amount taken in by square foot of space, and where the customers are from. The reports can be used to help market managers solicit investments.

The *Neighborhood Exchange Evaluation Device (NEED)* will help market managers measure the social capital that is generated at their markets between the vendors, shoppers, and community residents. Through a combination of interviews and observations of the markets and interactions at vendor stalls, NEED determines who is coming to the market and what types of relationships, if any, are being forged by the market. The data acquired analyzes the demographics of customers, how different participants typify their relationships with others at the market, why people come the market, and how long they stay there. Market Umbrella is currently in the process of developing and refining NEED, so this tool is not yet available for use on the Marketshare website.
Growing Community Wealth

This section explores several of the community capitals that have been impacted by Market Umbrella’s work. Of the seven community capitals (see page 8), financial, social, individual/intellectual, and natural capital are featured here.

Financial Capital

Using the Wealth Creation and Rural Livelihoods approach, financial capital is made up of stocks, rather than flows, of financial wealth. It “may include savings that households build up over time, or an endowment created in a local community foundation. These are examples of unimpaired financial assets – ones that can be used to invest in creating new forms of wealth.”11 However, flows of financial wealth such as income and sales are more easily measured than stocks such as household savings, so flows are more often reported here.

Providing an opportunity for rural producers to turn a profit through a regional economy has been a primary goal of Market Umbrella since the beginning. One of the organization’s first “green papers” explored the economic impact of the Crescent City markets on rural communities and vendors. At that time, Market Umbrella found that the combined regional economic impact of the Crescent City markets was nearly $549,000 annually for 1995 through 1998. Also, through participation in the market, 15 new businesses and 22 new jobs were created for rural communities (Market Umbrella, 1999).

Unfortunately, there have been no reports since 1999 on the effects of the market on rural communities in particular. The Crescent City markets have grown considerably since that report, which implies more financial capital for more rural communities. Two vendor interviewees noted that they intentionally purchase from locally-owned businesses, farmers’ markets, and co-ops in their rural home communities. Based on this anecdotal evidence, Crescent City markets are indeed connecting rural and urban places in a regional food economy.

Saving a dairy through direct-to-consumer sales at the farmers market

One Crescent City Farmers Market vendor has been in the dairy business for approximately 30 years in Mississippi. The dairy business has been in decline for much of that time in the region and throughout the nation.

Ten years ago, the farmer and her family read about northern U.S. dairies that were experimenting with value-added products and direct-to-consumer marketing. They decided to try both strategies to save their struggling dairy farm.

The family contacted their local agricultural extension agent for ideas of where to start. The agent directed the dairy farmers to Market Umbrella and the Crescent City farmers markets. According to the farmer, her family owns the first dairy in the Mississippi/Louisiana area to pursue direct-to-consumer marketing through farmers markets.

The organization has published its more recent financial impact on New Orleans using SEED. For 2011, the total projected gross annual receipts for all three markets were $4.3 million. Market Umbrella estimates that the total economic impact of the markets is $8.3 million (Market Umbrella, 2011), with a regional multiplier of 1.91. That means that for every dollar spent at the Crescent City markets, $1.91 is generated in the local economy.

The average gross weekly receipts for all three markets per is $34,225. On average, vendors take home $1,301 per market. If they were to attend one market per week for all 51 weeks that the market is open, they would bring home over $66,000. This figure could increase or decrease depending on which market they choose to attend and is a gross. The median household income in Louisiana is $42,505 (U.S. Census Bureau). Based on these figures and personal stories like the dairy farm in the following text box (next page), Market Umbrella’s farmers markets are helping regional producers support themselves and participate in the regional food economy.

There is a common thread among the stories of the Crescent City market vendors: they either would not be in business today or they would not be as successful if they had not participated in the urban farmers markets. This fact was emphasized by multiple producer interviewees.

Social Capital
Beyond the financial benefits, Market Umbrella’s farmers markets have done a particularly good job of improving the stock of social capital across the region. According to McCarthy, the relationship between New Orleans and the surrounding rural areas was very negative and antagonistic at the time of the markets’ inception. McCarthy says that local politicians were using New Orleans as a symbol for all that was wrong with the social and economic policies of the time. In addition, the city’s high crime rates in 1995 meant that people outside the city—including rural producers of local foods—were frightened off from the potential markets of the city. There were few positive interactions on a regional level.

Market Umbrella’s organizers first challenge was finding producers who were “brave enough” to come into the city center to sell their goods. “It was like asking the farmers to come to Baghdad,” McCarthy admits. Luckily, some of the regional farmers realized that there was profit to be made by growing niche crops and providing fresh, local produce for the urban chefs that were gaining national prestige.

Examples of social capital at work among Crescent City farmers markets’ consumers and vendors include:

- When a local family dairy’s processing facility exploded, an attorney who frequented the market assisted the family with completing the necessary paperwork and navigating interactions with the insurance companies and government authorities (Van Hook, 2011).
- When a market shrimper’s wife was diagnosed with cancer, thousands of dollars were raised among the market shoppers and vendors alike to help cover the costs (Van Hook, 2011).

Much of the social capital that has been accrued by the participants in the market—rural vendors or urban consumers—has developed by crossing over racial and economic boundaries. The Crescent City farmers markets are doing a relatively good job of reaching low-income residents, which a challenge for many farmers markets. In some circles, farmers markets and local food are seen as elitist or expensive, yet one-third of Market Umbrella’s Mid-City market sales receipts come from low-income SNAP.
participants. Market Umbrella organizers see room for improvement in diversifying the demographics of the vendors at the Crescent City markets (Carter, 2011).

Diverse participation in the regional food system

In 1964, a group of Mississippi farmers—seven black and one white—founded an association to make themselves eligible for grants from the Office of Equal Opportunity. Their goal was simple: to buy a sprayer for their crops.

More than a decade later, the farmers discovered that African American farmers in the organization were getting paid less than the white farmers for the same goods from certain major buyers. In response, the association purchased a truck in 1979 and started selling their goods directly to certain buyers who offered fair prices for all.

The association has continued to thrive, and became a formal cooperative in 1981. Today, the cooperative has 35 participating members and 10 non-participating members. They built their own packaging facility in 1996, which was used as a warehouse for relief items after Hurricane Katrina.

The cooperative has been a partner of Market Umbrella from the beginning. The cooperative’s current Director is credited with being a co-founder of the Crescent City farmers market, and the cooperative was one of the first six vendors to participate. They were also present at the first market to open after Hurricane Katrina.

According to two Market Umbrella employees, the breakdown of stereotypes occurred faster after Hurricane Katrina. There was a “reordering of the power structure”, and because of the “shared sense of trauma,” it was much easier to do work regionally across political, racial, and class barriers. More neighborhoods were cohering in new ways because it became clear after the hurricane that the government could not necessarily be trusted to help them if they needed, so they had to help each other.

A NEED survey in 2007 found that farmers market vendors, consumers, and New Orleans residents alike saw farmers markets as being important for community life not only for the nutritional aspects but also as an access point to local farmers and a social meeting place. Shoppers interviewed said that the markets were even more important post-Katrina because they promoted social cohesion.

However, the social cohesion encouraged by farmers markets has limits. It may only exist in neighborhoods where there was some degree of social cohesion before, or only among homogenous groups. Another NEED survey of one market in the low-income area of the Upper Ninth Ward found low turnout and participation by vendors. At the Crescent City farmers markets included in the
sample, 80-90 percent of the shoppers were white, and most were white-collar professionals or able-bodied retirees.

**Individual/Intellectual Capital**
For many small producers, farmers markets serve as a valuable first step in running their own business. For example,

- The Crescent City wooden currency develops the vendors’ financial literacy. The wooden currency is reimbursed twice monthly, which requires a different management strategy from cash, and more involvement in the formal economy.
- Through interaction with consumers, vendors at the markets are learning how to cater their businesses to provide better services and products. McCarthy notes that some female vendors are becoming especially adept at being responsive to customers by offering smaller sized ready-to-eat food products.

Farmer vendors are also expanding their agricultural skills by catering to the needs of restaurant customers. Chefs ask for access to new kinds of crops, and some farmers will grow these niche products for them. Once the new crops make it to the market, vendors and customers inquire as to how to prepare them, and some chefs even make recipe cards for vendors to distribute at their stall (Van Hook, 2011).

The skills cultivated at and for the Crescent City markets are transferable to other jobs and industries. McCarthy tells the story of one vendor who taught himself how to process strawberries for wine to sell at the market, and now he processes strawberries for Abita Beer’s Strawberry Harvest Lager and a regional dairy’s strawberry ice cream. This entrepreneur has developed a new stock of individual capital that can be taken anywhere.

Intellectual capital is developed when Crescent City market vendors bring their new skills back to their home communities. Some vendors participate in and help organize farmers markets in rural towns. Others spread knowledge about sustainable production practices that was previously unavailable. Producers have had to figure out many of these techniques on their own through experimentation. There is anecdotal evidence that some of that hard-earned knowledge is transferred from one party to another while selling goods at the market (McCarthy, 2011; Van Hook, 2011).

**Natural Capital**
While Market Umbrella was founded with the intention of promoting ecologically sound economic development, there are no codified standards of environmental sustainability for the producers that sell goods at their farmers markets. At this time, Market Umbrella has no way to measure environmentally focused changes in the region as a result of their markets.

Many of the producers at Crescent City farmers markets rely on conventional agricultural methods. One grower stated that, while trying to use organic methods as much as possible, he is not going to lose a whole crop to pests or disease if he can use a conventional chemical pesticide. For most small farmers in the region, the risks for going officially organic are higher than the potential rewards.

Market Umbrella organizers recognize that a blanket requirement for all of their vendors to have organic certification would leave the market with few or no vendors. The process of becoming a certified organic is often time and cost-prohibitive. A dairy farmer selling at the Crescent City market noted that she
would have to buy organic cattle feed from Missouri, which would raise her costs to the point that her business would no longer be competitive. It often takes three years or more for producers to go through the organic certification process, during which time they cannot sell their products under an organic label.

There is little support from agricultural extension agencies toward pursuing an organic label. As of February 2012, McCarthy says there is no staff among the Louisiana Extension or Department of Agriculture that can administer an organic system. Technical assistance for organic practices is virtually nonexistent. One citrus grower using organic growing practices was told by the local extension office that the grower knew more about organic fruit production than they did.

Yet when consumers ask for organic or sustainably produced goods, market vendors are encouraged to use organic practices. At the Crescent City farmers markets, many of the vendors claim to use sustainable practices in their business. Among the personal relationships that vendors create with consumers at the market, their word is sufficient.

The learning process is slow, but McCarthy sees positive changes. He provides an anecdote about a small-scale poultry producer who has recently started using no-till practices with organic inputs. The farmer told McCarthy, “I’ve never been a huge organic believer, but I’m now understanding how we need to get back to basics with building soils and addressing the health effects from all of these chemicals we’ve been using.”

5. The Rural-Urban Dimension

Food systems of all scales have a rural-urban dimension: in general, food is produced (and often processed) in rural places, and consumed in urban ones where most of the population resides. Yet not all food chains are place-based, meaning that the participants along the chain may not be co-located or geographically linked in any meaningful way. The 2010 Rural Futures Lab paper (Jensen, 2010, pp. 5-6) discusses this distinction in the varying definitions of different scales of food systems:

- **A local food system** comprises the actors and process of growing and processing food near its end market, the consumer. Most people agree that “local” is defined by geographic proximity. Some researchers say “local” food can [also] be identified by certain types of market arrangements that connect farmers directly or nearly directly to consumers (Martinez et al., 2010).

- **Larger scale food systems**, like the national food system, operate at a scale that is not place-based. The terms “agro-industrial” or “conventional” food systems generally refer to the methods used in agricultural production and processing. These terms often assume high-efficiency, large-scale production based on the industrial principles of economies of scale, narrow diversity of crops, and a scientific approach to nutrition and food processing (Hanson & Hendrickson, 2009).

- Some authors differentiate **regional food systems** from local systems to emphasize the need for local foods to scale up to be sustainable or self-reliant. Regions are described as having a wider land base, more varied food products, and larger markets than local systems (Clancy & Ruhf, 2010). Advocates emphasize that regions are a good unit of analysis for
measuring land use needs and priorities because agricultural issues are regional issues: “topography, water availability, land and other inputs, farm scale, crop options, and market proximity are operable at the regional level” (ibid.).

- Regional food systems advocates argue that “local is a necessary but not sufficient component” (ibid.) of a self-reliant food system. They envision regions as made up of multiple local systems. In practice, regions can be a larger partner to local systems, offering opportunities to scale up and diversify local production. The diversity and redundancy of multiple “nested” food system scales may bring more resilience to our food system as a whole.

For rural America in particular, the regional approach may benefit remote communities by connecting them to local food systems that would have otherwise existed apart from them. This hypothesis appears to be true for the New Orleans regional food system associated with Market Umbrella and the Crescent City farmers markets.

**Linkages Back to Rural Communities**

Producers for the Crescent City farmers markets come from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama (see map in Figure 4 on page 12). They are vegetable farmers, fishers, dairy farmers, beekeepers, and more. The average distance a producer has to travel to the Crescent City markets is 72 miles, but some producers come from as far away as Jemison, Alabama, which is approximately 350 miles (Crescent City Farmers Market, 2011). The anecdotes shared in this case study demonstrate that without the relationships developed through the Crescent City markets, these more remote rural producers would not have access to the urban markets of New Orleans.

In addition, once the vendors’ home communities find out that a producer is going to New Orleans to sell at a farmers market, there is interest sparked in the home community to set one up as well. Crescent City vendors attending the new farmers’ markets can use their experience at the New Orleans markets to assist the development of the rural markets. McCarthy estimates that at least half of the rural vendors who sell at Crescent City markets also attend other farmers markets, and at least half of those other markets are in rural areas. According to the USDA’s Food Environment Atlas, eight of Louisiana’s farmers markets are now in the hometowns of Crescent City vendors. Farmers’ markets in these rural towns are thus bringing more financial and intellectual capital into the rural region around New Orleans.
Linkages to the Urban Market

The consumers represent the end market as well as the urban dimension of this rural-urban relationship. The consumers at the Crescent City farmers markets generally fall into two categories: individual consumers shopping for their personal use, and institutional consumers shopping for restaurants or schools. A majority of individual consumers are urban residents of New Orleans, with only small percentages coming from the suburbs of Kenner or Metairie (Market Umbrella, 2011). These consumers tend to spend relatively small amounts at the market.

Institutional consumers, particularly local chefs, are important to the history, management, and continued financial success of the Crescent City farmers markets. As noted earlier, when the restaurant scene was blossoming in the 1980’s and 1990’s, many of chefs had nowhere to go to buy locally grown products. Crescent City farmers markets were the first to fill that niche in 1995, and Market Umbrella has successfully worked to make connections between restaurant shoppers and vendors. Representatives of the restaurant industry have a say in how the market is run, with some seats on the board of directors reserved for chefs and other members of the restaurant industry.

While the restaurant-producer business relationships begin at the market, they often grow and deepen beyond a weekly market interaction. Often restaurant shoppers will ask for specific products or for products to be grown in a certain way. For instance, one producer started feeding whey to suckling piglets at the request of a restaurant group. McCarthy spoke of chefs and farmers “planning their businesses together” by going through seed catalogs and picking out products for the producer to grow and the chefs to buy together. Because of these dealings, the selection of products offered at the market has diversified considerably (Van Hook, 2011), and the market vendors have expanded their knowledge and capacity for producing more diverse goods.

Rural producers also use the Crescent City farmers markets are also a place to test new products and connect to new urban buyers. One dairy producer used the Crescent City market to determine whether or not there is was demand for Creole cream cheese, a regional dish that had not been available commercially in the greater New Orleans area for 20 years. After Market Umbrella started advertising that Creole cream cheese was available at the Crescent City markets, 26 grocery stores approached the dairy producer to buy her product.

Horizontal Linkages across the Farmers Markets

Business relationships between vendors at the market can be competitive or collaborative. Some competition between vendors is good, but if there is the threat of it becoming a disruptive force at the
market, market organizers have to “act strategically so as to not upset the trust between the market and the farmers” (Van Hook 2011).

Crescent City organizers balance their markets in several ways. First, they choose vendors and the markets certain vendors can attend. In addition, to avoid having a surplus of one product while there is dearth of others at the weekly markets, the Crescent City organizers have some say in who is allowed to sell what at the markets. While the market organizers believe that choice is good for the consumers and competition is good for the vendors, they do not want to let their markets get so flooded with one product that producers are not able to make a profit. In theory, if the demand for one product increases, the organizers will allow more vendors into the market.

While some of the vendors at the Crescent City farmers markets view their relationship with others at the market as competitive, there is also a considerable amount of collaboration between vendors at the market. Some of the vendors buy supplies in bulk to cut down on shipping costs, such as one farmer who organizes bulk shipments of Agrande kelp, a fertilizing product used by organic producers. Other informal, mutually beneficial arrangements include a farmer who grows starter plants for other vendors.

**The Enabling Environment**

An important part of any value chain is the environment in which it operates, made up of a system of support structures around the chain that help it function. These structures include the policies and regulations that affect individual businesses and their interactions as well as the business enabling environment.

**Business Support**

The business support that Market Umbrella provides the vendors in its markets is vital to the success of both the regional food system and the participants themselves. One fish producer said that Market Umbrella provides a majority of the business support that her small company receives. She noted that Market Umbrella had referred her company to potential buyers such as chefs and grocery stores, and connected her to film crews for producing advertisements. Market Umbrella also helped her fill out the paperwork that won her company a grant from a local celebrity chef’s foundation that has a program geared towards small farmers.

Serving as a connector of people was even more vital in the time after Katrina. McCarthy remembers,

“...if you were in rural areas, you were isolated, cut off from resources reaching you. And the rural farmers’ connection to the city ended up being one of their assets because we used the market post-Katrina as a place where we could introduce nonprofits, people, farmers to foundations, government officials, and the media.”

**Improving Relations with Government**

Market Umbrella has worked with several local and state governments to improve the enabling environment for the food system. The New Orleans mayor’s office has been very supportive of Market Umbrella and allows their farmers markets to operate under a festival exemption in the city. At the state level, Market Umbrella has continued to work with the health department to meet their guidelines to
operate legitimately under that code. Yet the nonprofit’s organizers have found a significant number of discrepancies between the city and state regulations as well as fire and health codes.

In response, Market Umbrella recently applied for and received a grant to work with the mayor’s office to align the multiple layers of codes and regulations so that none of the rules contradict each other. McCarthy says that his office has just completed a year-long policy project with the city. While the city conducted relevant research, Market Umbrella submitted zoning and permitting recommendations. McCarthy says, “We are poised for major, positive changes on this front.” He also notes that the year-long engagement has “already borne results” for market vendors. The city’s systems of permitting and sales tax collection are becoming more “reasonable”, and vendors report to McCarthy “an improved customer service system and attitude in the Department of Permits” (personal communication, 2012).

Market Umbrella is working to improve the relationship between small farmers, the farmers markets, and the government. Market organizers continue to research ways to make the market processes easier (such as how taxes are collected) and more beneficial to the city, consumers, and the vendors.

6. Lessons Learned

Wealth creation is not just about money – it is about building relationships, skills, and knowledge, and protecting and improving community assets. Market Umbrella and the New Orleans regional food system have made great progress in developing the food value chain and addressing multiple social and economic challenges.

There are many regions of the country – particularly remote and rural places – that do not have well-developed (or even emerging) local food systems. There are lessons to be learned from a place like the New Orleans region, where the food system is not as well-established.

➢ Measuring your food system highlights opportunities

Executive Director Richard McCarthy reports that there is room for economic growth in the local food system, noting that he sees more consumer demand for local and regional food products than the Crescent City and other city markets can provide. McCarthy can confidently report this opportunity because his organization has taken the time and resources to measure their food system. Across the U.S., there is a trend toward mapping and measuring food systems to find sources and demand for local markets. Market Umbrella’s SEED survey offers a practical and transferable tool for existing and potential local food systems across the U.S.

Taking the mapping trend one step further, Market Umbrella has also developed NEED, a tool for measuring the social impact of local markets. Once this survey system is up and running, it will be a major contribution to the increasingly complex and rich system of regional food systems growing up around the U.S.

➢ Disasters can become catalysts for change

Hurricane Katrina represents both a region-specific challenge and a lesson in regional resilience. For New Orleans, the hurricane was a disastrous setback. Yet, looking back on the period since Katrina, it is
obvious that the disaster became a catalyst for local people and new residents to re-imagine the food system. Since the hurricane, many new players have emerged to support many different aspects of the system.

- **Diverse participation in the food system remains a challenge**

While taking advantage of the new energy for building the food system, leaders like Market Umbrella need to make sure African Americans and low-income people are represented as partners, producers, and consumers. Market Umbrella has already partnered with a wide array of rural farmers from the region to build their Crescent City farmers markets.

McCarthy makes the point that if one of the markets’ goals is to increase the wealth of rural farmers, it makes sense to connect them to well-resourced urban consumers.

At the same time, Market Umbrella faces the same challenge of any organization engaged in the creation of an equitable local food system: to increase food access to vulnerable populations. To that end, Market Umbrella has chosen market locations that balance the needs of the vendors and consumers of all stripes. The Mid-City market on the edge of a low-income neighborhood is a good step in this direction. In addition, all of their markets are located on routes for public transportation and feature EBT machines.

There is still work to be done on this delicate balancing act between supporting rural farmers and providing healthy foods to vulnerable urban populations. In terms of encouraging low-income consumers at the Crescent City markets, McCarthy argues, “If it has taken us a decade to build consumer support for local foods and all of its complications among consumers who are literate and engaged, then how long might it take to achieve the same kind of solidarity and support from those who are new to the equation?” He makes the good point that this work will take time.

- **Benefits to rural places and producers in food systems are still not well understood**

Market Umbrella has made great strides in connecting rural producers with new urban markets. The organization’s intentional focus on rural-urban linkages is a model for emerging food systems in rural regions. More study of rural-specific representation and impacts in the New Orleans system would contribute to the organization’s mission of strengthening the system as a whole.

- **Environmental issues are trumped by economic and social issues**

Another challenge for Market Umbrella is its relatively weak focus on environmental outcomes so far. Though environmental issues are part of their mission, economic and social issues have taken precedence over environmental ones when the nonprofit is making decisions about its activities in the community. In the New Orleans region, there are perfectly good reasons to focus on the economy and society first, but there is room for more emphasis on how the food system affects the region’s natural capital.
Sources

Case study interviews

The researcher conducted in-person interviews with 11 stakeholders of Market Umbrella in November 2011. Four interviewees are employees of Market Umbrella. The rest are regional producers and vendors at the Crescent City Farmers Markets, or customers at those markets.

Works Cited


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