Foodsheds, Food Access, and The Issue of Price

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Food and Farm Director
MCE’s St. Louis Regional Food Study
7 Chapters

1. People
2. Health
3. Economy
4. Land
5. What We Grow
6. What We Raise
7. Food Safety Concerns
St. Louis Food Policy Coalition

Our Mission: To promote a thriving, local food system that supports the health, community, environment, and economy of the Greater St. Louis area.

Current focus:

- Urban agriculture in the City of St. Louis
- Food access in North St. Louis City and North St. Louis County
- Supporting rural farmers: 150 miles of St. Louis
“Plate” of the Union
Snapshot of our Food System

Population: 4 million people

0.8% of the adult population worked as hired agricultural labor.

Money spent on food: $16.8 billion

For every “food dollar,” 10.4 cents goes to farmers

14.7% of the Foodshed is food insecure

0.1% of our cropland is designated to fruits and vegetable production

Median net cash income per operation: $38,451
Intersections of Income, Race, & Food Insecurity

14% of white residents report that it is difficult to buy healthy food in their neighborhood.

34% of black residents report that it is difficult to buy healthy food in their neighborhood.
Intersections of Income, Race, & Food Insecurity

30.9% of white residents have low incomes, low access to healthy food, and low vehicle access.

62.7% of black residents have low incomes, low access to healthy food, and low vehicle access.
## Our Land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Land</strong> in the Saint Louis Regional Foodshed</td>
<td>21.4 million acres</td>
<td>21.4 million acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms</td>
<td>13.7 million acres</td>
<td>13.9 million acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cropland</td>
<td>9.9 million acres</td>
<td>9.7 million acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop Type</td>
<td>Acreage by Crop Type</td>
<td>Total Foodshed Acreage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food System Crops</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soybean</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,759,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn for Grain</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,823,848</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corn for Silage</td>
<td></td>
<td>102,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Processed Food Crops</td>
<td></td>
<td>567,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Animal Feed Crops</td>
<td></td>
<td>863,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food Table Crops</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchards (includes non-citrus, citrus, and tree nuts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Berries</td>
<td></td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Vegetables</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Food Crops</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(includes nursery plants, Christmas trees, and sod)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Farms Have Grown in Size

Number of Foodshed Farms by Size, 1925

Number of Foodshed Farms by Size, 2012
Farm Operations, Net Income, Total by County, 2007

Median net cash income per operation in **2012**: $38,451
We Need to Fix Our Food System.
We Need to Change Our Federal Policies.
Federal Policy is Not Helping
Identified Priorities:

- Food Hub Expansion
- Community Partnerships for Education Events
- Urban Agriculture Ordinance
- Changing School Curriculum
- Institutional Purchasing
Three workgroups

Food Hub: Connect environmentally responsible farmers with 150 miles of St. Louis (both Illinois and Missouri) to new markets

Policy: Increase urban agriculture activities in St. Louis

Food Access: Address food access needs in St. Louis
MCE’s Food and Farm Resources
Urban Agriculture Toolkit
Soil Story Map and Sustainable Ag Map
What is soil made up of?

- Plants, animals, and water
- Organic material and air
- Minerals, air, and water
- Minerals, water, air, and organic material
Interactive Local Foodshed Map
Coming Soon: Bi-State CAFO Map
How You and the Missouri Botanical Garden Can Support Our Efforts

**Become a member of MCE!** Your support helps us advocate for stronger environmental, public health, and conservation agriculture policies.

Volunteer with any of the member organizations

Assist with research of best models for helping farmers reach new markets or customers

Assist with research of model policies for increasing food access and improving overall health in urban areas

Testify in support of the urban agriculture ordinance (if you live in the City)
Thank you!

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MCE’s Role in STL’s Local Food System

MCE’s Role in STL’s Local Food System

MCE’s Food/Farm Blog and our “Local Food Heroes”

All MCE Blogs can be found at http://moenvironment.org/environment-blog/
Gaps in a Healthy Food System

- **Education gap** - How to identify and prepare healthy food. Locally supplying healthy food through environmentally friendly agriculture practices.

- **Affordability and availability gap** - Food deserts in urban *and* rural communities. Healthy food, and locally-produced goods in particular, is not affordable to many households.

- **Farmer-buyer connectivity gap** - Local farmers do not have time to grow, market, and sell their products.

- **Policy gap** - National policies mainly incentivize commodity crops. We need economic policies that make it possible for low income communities to afford healthy food grown regionally while also ensuring the farmers are paid a living wage.
Tentative Questions for Leadership Network

1. How are their organizations related to the food system?

2. What role can their organization play in filling the gaps?

3. What role can the Leadership Network play in filling the gaps?

4. What are their thoughts on topic-based collaboratives within the Network?