

## IN THIS ISSUE

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### A good late winter's read



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What a long winter this has been in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York — so much so that the weather might, in fact, be affecting my judgment and sense of humor. We'd normally use a more earnest cover related to a topical theme of the issue, but I couldn't help choosing the very droll image of Vermont farmer Walter Jeffries in his shorts and boots out in the snow appearing to lecture his livestock. It's still the season to enjoy reading, so if you're housebound like we are, it might be a good time to curl up with your tablet, laptop, or other technology and read through this complete issue of JAFSCD. With any luck I'll be using a warm and colorful spring image for our forthcoming issue!

We start out this open call issue with contributions from our four columnists. *Governance* is a term that is cropping up increasingly in submissions to JAFSCD, and in her column *Digging Deeper*, **Kate Clancy** applies the concept to food systems policy and supply chain development. Good governance requires good data argues **Ken Meter** in his *Metrics from the Field* column, but in this era of fiscal austerity some national data sets useful to policy-makers, practitioners, and scholars are on the chopping block. In *Global Views of Local Food Systems*, **Rami Zurayk** uses a plethora of data he's gathered to show how the dual crises of drought and war are devastating local and regional food systems in the Levant. Finally, giving us a preview of what's to come in our spring issue, **John Ikerd** provides a thought-provoking essay, suggesting that "Survival of the fittest' means survival of those who successfully integrate the seemingly opposite tendencies of competition and cooperation."

Our winter issue's first paper is *Land Trusts and Beginning Farmers' Access to Land: Exploring the Relationships in Coastal California* by **Jessica Beckett** and **Ryan Galt**. The authors argue that agriculture-related land trusts could do much more to support and sustain the farmers they host on their properties.

Next are two papers focused on improving access to good food at farmers' markets. In *Evaluating the*

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*On this issue's cover:* Walter Jeffries lectures his pigs in 2014 on economic systems at Sugar Mountain Farm ([SugarMtnFarm.com](http://SugarMtnFarm.com)) in the mountains of Vermont, where his family raises pastured pork they deliver locally. While feigning attention, the pigs were just there for the free lunch. (Photo copyright © 2014 by Walter Jeffries)

*Economic and Nutrition Benefits of EBT Programs at Farmers' Markets*, **Kristin Krokowski** finds in a study of 10 farmers' markets that, while SNAP beneficiaries increased their consumption of produce, farmers experienced little increased sales. The impacts, however, may vary by location and demographics. In their study of healthy food access at one farmers' market, entitled *Evaluating the South Memphis Farmers Market as a Strategy To Improve Access to Healthy Foods: Lessons from 2011*, **Kathryn Hicks** and **Katherine Lambert-Pennington** found significant mutual benefits between consumers and the farmers who accepted vouchers. Continuing the theme of addressing community food insecurity, **Vincent Smith** and **John Harrington** estimate the volume of community food production (e.g., from school, educational, and community gardens) in the city of Madison, Wisconsin, and find considerable underutilized production potential in *Community Food Production as Food Security: Resource and Economic Valuation in Madison, Wisconsin (USA)*.

This is followed by two papers focusing on meat products. In *Beyond the Farmer and the Butcher: Institutional Entrepreneurship and Local Meat*, **Lauren Gwin** and **Arion Thiboumery** share case examples of four projects that are successfully navigating the complexities of developing meat value chains. And in *Premium Potential for Geographically Labeled, Differentiated Meat Products*, **Kynda Curtis** reports on a study of Nevada consumers' willingness-to-pay for high-value origin-labeled meats, and gets some surprising results.

Two papers focus on organic production. In his paper *Resource-Use and Partial-Budget Analysis of a Transition to Reduced-Input and Organic Practices and Direct Marketing: A Student-Farm Case Study*, **Sean Clark** uses the Berea College student farm in Kentucky to look at the bottom line results of converting to more sustainable production and marketing activities. **Alice Beban** then follows with an examination of the potential for the adoption of organic practices in Cambodia. In *Is Organic Agriculture a Viable Strategy in Contexts of Rapid Agrarian Transition? Evidence from Cambodia*, she finds that maximum benefit to organic production can only be attained in the context of significant rural development policy changes.

In *Development and Evaluation of an Introductory Course in Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems*, **Kate Malone**, **Alison Harmon**, **William Dyer**, **Bruce Maxwell**, and **Catherine Perillo** offer a case study of their pilot interdisciplinary, team-taught, experiential education course, including a student evaluation that highlights what worked well and future modifications required.

Our last paper of this issue is *Can Large Retailers Localize Supply Chains? A Case Analysis of the Challenges Facing One Canadian Retailer* in which **Doug McCallum**, **Alissa Mae Campbell**, and **Rod MacRae** conclude that localization of product supply for a large grocery cannot happen without significant investments in product differentiation, a financially viable supplier base, strategic alliances, and shared governance.

Finally we offer two book reviews. In *Leveraging Social Change Through Collective Purchasing*, **Holly Chaille** reviews *Beyond Alternative Food Networks: Italy's Solidarity Purchase Groups*, by Cristina Grasseni, and suggests that Italy may have some interesting lessons for North Americans to consider.

And in *Exploring Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Law and Policy Reforms*, **Sheila Fleischhacker** reviews *Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Law*, edited by Mary Jane Angelo, Jason Czarnezki, and Williams Eubanks II, and finds it a very practical examination of a wide range of legal and regulatory issues facing the U.S. food system.

Here's hoping for a lovely spring (or fall) in your neck of the planet.



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Publisher and Editor in Chief