



IN THIS ISSUE

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Small and midscale food value chains: A state of the art

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In this issue of JAFSCD we present the state of the art in small and medium-sized food value chains — primarily from a North American perspective, but also with perspectives from Europe and South America. Values-based food supply chains (value chains) are strategic alliances between farms, ranches, and other supply chain partners who deal in sufficient volumes of high-quality, differentiated food products and distribute rewards equitably across the supply chain. As Stevenson and colleagues remind us, in FVCs, farmers and ranchers are treated as strategic partners, not as interchangeable — and exploitable — input suppliers. Ideally, all partners in these business alliances recognize that creating maximum value for the product depends on significant interdependence, collaboration, and mutual support.

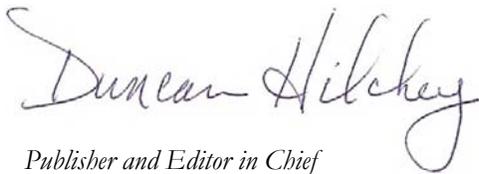
There have been a number of influential initiatives working to develop and extend the concept of value chains in the last 10 years; especially notable are the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (at the University of Wisconsin) and the Agriculture in the Middle research group. The latter is led by a thoughtful group of land grant faculty and staff as well as consultants, all of whom have pioneered many of the principles and practical strategies highlighted and built upon in this issue. We hope it will stimulate further applied research and programming — and we encourage further manuscript submissions that build on this critical body of work.

This issue begins with a reflective essay by University of Kentucky's **Bob Perry** describing his experiences in trying to develop a local food service program for Kentucky State Parks. This is followed by JAFSCD's regular columnists **John Ikerd**, **Joseph McIntyre**, and **Ken Meter**, who offer creative and provocative insights on principles of food value chains and emerging regional food systems business opportunities. We accepted a wide range of papers that cover the range of emerging food value chains, from a cutting-edge multifarm CSA focused on food insecure neighborhoods in New York City, to the revolution of Bolivian potato markets made possible by expanding cell phone technology.

Our special topic call papers lead off with **Steve Stevenson, Larry Lev**, and their colleagues, along with **Adam Diamond** and **James Barham**, and with **Áine Macken-Walsh**, who set the stage for the expansion of mid-scale food value chains in North America and Europe. **Michele Schmidt** and fellow researchers and **Becca Jablonski** and her colleagues provide case studies of small-scale food value chains in the Northeast U.S., while **Dara Bloom** and **Clare Hinricks**, and **Nevin Cohen** and **Dennis Derryck**, explore hybrid versions of the concept. Institutional food value chains are the focus of research by teams led by **Gail Feenstra** and by **David Conner**. **Nadezda Amaya** and **Jeffrey Alwang** round out the food value chain paper with a focus on emerging parity in Bolivian supply chains due to use of cell phones.

Our two open call papers for this issue include a study of consumer awareness of county-of-origin labeling by **Katie Allen** with her co-authors, and a study of agriculture economic development at the rural-urban fringe by **Jeff Sharp** and colleagues at Ohio State and Utah State. Finally, **Fred Kirschenmann** of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture reviews the latest book from the always thought-provoking and challenging John Ikerd, *Revolution of the Middle...and The Pursuit of Happiness*.

With this issue we complete our first full volume of JAFSCD. (We are catching up with reality by calling this our “spring-summer 2011” issue; our first issue took longer to complete than we expected, and thus while we have published four issues this year, they will now align better with the seasons.) We are pleased with the progress of the Journal over the last year and look forward to many issues and volumes to come! Our greatest admiration and appreciation goes out to the over 150 members of JAFSCD Editorial Committee, which includes our advisors, reviewers, and columnists. Please visit the JAFSCD About page at www.AgDevJournal.com/about.html to peruse the lists of these generous volunteers who are contributing not only to the Journal but to the literature and the profession as well. 



Publisher and Editor in Chief