

Article

The Good Food Revolution: Building Community Resiliency in the Mississippi Delta

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Abstract: The Mississippi Delta represents one of the greatest concentrations of rural persistent poverty in the United States. High unemployment, high food insecurity, higher rates of obesity and diabetes, and low access to healthy, affordable food characterize much of the 18 counties in the region. In the face of this, The Good Food Revolution, a community-based program to address food related health and thereby employment, developed in response to significant need in three small communities in North Bolivar County, Mississippi, bringing together community members, public and private sector organizations, researchers and students. This paper examines the process of community-engaged scholarship from the theoretical lens on building community capacity and resiliency developed by Chaskin. Increasing community capacity for all participants in the Good Food Revolution project through community-engaged scholarship has built resilient communities that are engaging more communities.

Keywords: community; resiliency; capacity; mississippi delta; food insecurity

1. Introduction

The Mississippi Delta is one of the poorest places in the United States. High unemployment, low educational attainment, and deep, embedded persistent poverty characterize the area. The geographic location of the Mississippi Delta comprises 18 counties, and about 4.5 million acres; seven of these counties border the Mississippi River. The rich soil made it the focal point of cotton production in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today it is where rice, soybean, and corn production thrive: rich agricultural production that focuses on commodity export out of the region (Snipes et al. 2005; Johnson 2008). When driving through the Mississippi Delta one is immediately struck by the visible lack of vegetable production, the lack of grocery stores, and the sparse availability of any fresh, healthy food. Indeed, Mississippi imports nearly 90 percent of the food consumed (Meter and Goldenberg 2014).

Of 82 counties in the state, 63 (77 percent) are classified as food deserts, areas that have limited access to healthy and affordable food. The state also has the highest prevalence of food insecurity in the nation. Limited access to food, limited amounts of enough food, and poverty contribute to health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, all of which are significantly higher in the region (Hossfeld and Rico-Mendez 2018).

The Delta Fresh Food Initiative (DFFI) formed in North Bolivar County Mississippi, a Mississippi Delta county, in 2010. DFFI is committed to establishing sustainable, equitable community food systems in the Mississippi Delta and is “deeply rooted in the history, land, foodscapes, and people of the Mississippi Delta, their message of collective power for change, and emphasis on the long-term development of truly local leadership for food justice . . . ” (Moore et al. 2015). Concerned with the lack

of healthy food access in their region, DFFI developed programmatic initiatives to redress agricultural production practices that neglect food production and healthy food access for the region. This study examines food insecurity in North Bolivar County in the neighboring towns of Shelby, Winstonville, and Mound Bayou and how DFFI, through community based participatory research, addresses the problem of low healthy food access in the region.

2. Context and Framing of the Project

Around 1990, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) began measuring household food security, a concept centered on understanding whether households have enough consistent food to live a healthy, active life. The development of this measure originated from a 1984 US Presidential Task Force on Food Assistance that drew attention to the lack of a good measure for hunger. USDA has refined the measure over the years to capture the range of severity of food insecure households and their relationship to hunger. Food insecurity is defined as a lack of access to enough food at all times for all members of the household to be healthy and active. The official measure of food insecurity in the US is established through the Current Population Survey's Food Security Supplement. Respondents are asked a variety of questions, from "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more . . ." to "In the last 12 months did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?"

Food insecurity is often associated with living in a food desert (Hossfeld et al. 2015). While food deserts may not directly cause food insecurity, they do provide good indicators of areas where food insecurity is more likely to occur; these areas are primarily in lower-income communities, which are disproportionately, but not exclusively, populated by African Americans, Hispanics, and other marginalized racial and ethnic groups (Hossfeld et al. 2018). Research suggests that these households have higher health care costs, increased likelihood of heart disease, diabetes and higher blood pressure, and health problems associated with access to food, and these households report almost 50 percent higher health care costs than food secure households (Tarasuk et al. 2015).

Mississippi has the highest food insecurity rate in the United States at 22 percent compared to 13 percent for the nation (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2016). Thirty-four of the 82 counties in Mississippi have food insecurity rates over 22 percent and all of these are considered rural except for four. There are 11 counties in the state in which 20 percent of the population has both low income and low access to grocery stores; all but one of these are persistent poverty counties. The food insecurity rate for the 17 urban counties in the state is 21 percent; the rural food insecurity rate is 23 percent (65 rural counties). The child food insecurity rate for Mississippi is 26 percent (population under 18 years old) (Hossfeld et al. 2016).

Mississippi has about 3 million people with whites representing 59 percent of the population, and African Americans 37 percent. The state frequently ranks highest in terms of poverty and low quality of population well-being. The poverty rate is 22 percent, seven points higher than the national average (15.5 percent). The major incidence of poverty occurs in the Delta where poverty rates can be over 40 percent. African Americans comprise about 74 percent of the Delta population. The poverty rate among African Americans (36 percent) in the entire state is more than two times higher than poverty rate among whites (14.2 percent). The state has an obesity prevalence of 35.5 percent (Hossfeld et al. 2016).

Of the 82 counties in Mississippi, 50 are considered persistent poverty counties. Persistent poverty is a USDA measure that captures the dimension of time, hence, these are counties that have poverty rates over 20 percent over the last 30 years measured by the decennial census. In other words, 61 percent of Mississippi counties have deep, embedded poverty of 20 percent or more for over 30 years or more.

In addition, the food environment of the state is characterized by low healthy food access and a primarily rural landscape with low vehicle access, a USDA measure that captures the percentage of housing units located more than 20 miles from a grocery stores, without access to a vehicle. Mississippi has 167 census tracts that are considered food deserts, located in 63 counties or 77 percent of the

state. Of these census tracts, 103 have low vehicle access ([Food Security in the United States 2017](#)). Transportation is an added burden in accessing healthy food ([Hossfeld and Rico-Mendez 2018](#)).

Theoretical Framework

Robert [Chaskin \(2001\)](#) defines community capacity as the relationship between human capital, organizational resources, and social capital to solve problems and build community, involving four key fundamentals: a sense of community; a level of commitment; the ability to solve problems; and access to resources. Social agency is also critical to building community and involves leadership development, organizational development, community organizing, and fostering collaborative relations among organizations (2001).

[Chaskin \(2008\)](#) defines resilience as a positive response to adversity. A community is resilient and can build capacity to be resilient as it is a group of actors with agency and an environment with resources. Yet how does a community build resilience or have a positive response to adversity considering it is a group of actors and resources are not equally available? Chaskin theorizes community resilience is built through three forms of social action: regrouping, redevelopment, and resistance. These social actions differ based upon factors in a community. Community composition, mechanisms, and processes, influence how the three forms of social action will take place ([Chaskin 2008](#)). ([Chaskin 2008, 2001](#)) suggests community resilience, a positive adaptation to problems, plays out differently in different communities, and is the result of having systems in good working order which can support community members.

This project builds upon this concept of resiliency and community capacity by examining community capacity through a community-based participatory research initiative in which building capacity, resiliency, and agency developed through a food systems initiative around food sovereignty in a low-resourced, rural community.

3. The North Bolivar Good Food Revolution

The Bolivar County Good Food Revolution is a multi-sector collaboration focused on economic development opportunities and improved health outcomes for residents. The Delta Fresh Foods Initiative (DFFI) brought together growers, consumers, health educators, food retailers, community organizers, healthy food advocates, and funders to learn about and examine food systems in Bolivar County. Through this project DFFI members began to change the mechanisms and processes of the community and effectually build community capacity ([Chaskin 2001, 2008](#)).

DFFI outreach includes all of Bolivar County, yet for this particular project the group focused on three neighboring communities of Shelby, Winstonville, and Mound Bayou. These communities were selected because DFFI leadership is based in the three communities and has a history of outreach in the area. The three communities are about 5 miles apart running along Highway 61. There is a longstanding history of community organizing in the region and DFFI sought to build on past experiences to create an opportunity for meaningful social change.

Mound Bayou is the oldest historical black town in the US founded by two former slaves, Isaiah Montgomery and Benjamin Green, who designed the community based on the principles of self-reliance and autonomy; strong points of pride for the community even today. In addition, Mound Bayou opened the first Federally Qualified Community Health Center (FQHC) in the nation in 1965 led by Dr. Jack Geiger, Dr. John Hatch, L.C. Dorsey, and Andrew James. The health center, which is still in operation today as the Delta Health Center, was founded on the principle that "health centers could serve as important instruments of social change" ([Ward 2016](#)). In its early days, the Center was one of the first in the nation to implement a Healthy Food Rx Program in which healthy food was prescribed to patients in an effort to promote food as medicine, but chiefly as a means to provide healthy food access. The Center was the focal point for community organizing around the need to address the social determinants of health and poverty and malnutrition in the region ([Hollands 2018](#)). Part of this comprehensive work included the establishment of the North Bolivar County Farm Cooperative in

Mound Bayou that cultivated 600 acres of produce to feed the community, and creating jobs for farm cooperative members (Hollands 2018). This groundbreaking public health initiative was a model rural health program that combined civil rights, health, and social justice. Vestiges of this project are visible in the continued existence of the Delta Health Center yet the large-scale community projects around health and access to healthy food have dwindled. DFFI sought to reinvigorate this earlier project and model the Good Food Revolution on this work with the hope that food systems initiatives could serve as important instruments of social change. Several of the original partners from the 1965 initiative, including the Delta Health Center, are partnering in the DFFI project. The North Bolivar County Farm Cooperative became the Alcorn State University Demonstration Farm and is one of the partners in the DFFI Good Food Revolution initiative.

Below is a brief description of each community.

Shelby

The population of Shelby is 2123 people with 739 households (all data based on US Census 2015 1-year data, American Fact Finder 2016); 97.5 percent of the population is African American and 2.5 percent is white. The median age of the town is 30, and 55 percent of the population is female (see Table 1). The median household income is \$21,348 with 52 percent of the population living in poverty. Seventy-four percent of the population have a high school diploma or equivalent. One of the key leaders of the DFFI is based in Shelby and is the home of Mississippians Engaging a Greener Agriculture (MEGA) a non-profit organization founded in 1999 based at a former Head Start headquarters, that is focused on best farming practices, community supported agriculture, and hosting Food Corps service volunteers. MEGA is a cornerstone, anchor partner in the Good Food Revolution and is where Youth Ambassadors receive food systems training.

Winstonville

The population of Winstonville is 182 people with 85 households (all data based on US Census 2015 1-year data, American Fact Finder) and is 100 percent African American (see Table 1). The median age is 43.3 and 52 percent of the population is female. The median household income is \$19,306, and 44 percent of the population live in poverty. Seventy-four percent of the population have a high school diploma or equivalent. A DFFI staff member who works closely with the Youth Ambassadors is based in Winstonville.

Mound Bayou

The population of Mound Bayou is 1863 with 621 households (all data based on US Census 2015 1-year data, American Fact Finder). Just over 96 percent of the population is African American and 3 percent is Native American (see Table 1). The median age is 24 and 57 percent of the population is female. The median household income is \$22,974 and the poverty rate is 44 percent. 82 percent of the population has a high school diploma or equivalent. As described above, Mound Bayou has a rich and lengthy social justice and civil rights history with key anchor partners based in the community. In addition, the Mayor and several local church leaders serve on the DFFI Good Food Revolution Board of Advisors.

Table 1. Population Characteristics Bolivar County and North Bolivar Towns.

	Bolivar County	Shelby	Winstonville	Mound Bayou
Population	33,322	2123	182	1863
Median Age	34.7	29.6	43.3	24.3
Percent Female	53.0%	54.6%	51.6%	57.4%
Percent White	33.1%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Percent Black	64.0%	97.5%	100%	96.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	21.1%	8.7%	12.1%	24.6%
Median Household Income	\$27,585	\$21,348	\$19,306	\$22,974
Percent in Poverty				
Total	37.1%	52.1%	43.5%	43.7%
Under 18	53.3%	70.7%	62.1%	54.2%

2015 5-year estimate, American Community Survey, American Fact Finder.

Research Design and Data Collection

In 2017 DFFI received funding from the Bolivar Medical Center Foundation to address healthy food access in the region. DFFI board members met to determine the best use of these funds. They sought to expand upon the model work in the 1960s described above and to develop a food system in the three communities that promoted food production, healthy food access and consumption, and job creation. To determine what the community experienced in terms of food insecurity, and what community members wanted in terms of food sovereignty, DFFI reached out to the Mississippi Food Insecurity Project (MFIP) Director at Mississippi State University. MFIP seeks to document food insecurity in the state and to provide research tools and opportunities for communities seeking to address hunger through community-based initiatives. Through a series of meetings with DFFI and MFIP, a project design was developed to survey community members to provide a baseline of hunger in the area, train youth ambassadors to collect data, and bring together key stakeholders and partners to identify a mechanism to meet the DFFI outreach mission. MFIP recommended using a modified USDA survey that was being utilized in Ohio with a team of researchers who had been using the survey instrument to understand hunger in the area. With permission from the Ohio team, MFIP tailored the survey for the community's needs (see survey at <http://foodmapping.osu.edu/about-the-survey/>).

The project focused on three key elements: survey data collection and analysis; youth training and leadership development; and community outreach and community building. The survey data collection and youth training components provided overlapping and symbiotic opportunities to build resiliency through youth development, youth investment, and youth commitment to the project.

Recognizing the positionality of the three authors of this research and our relationship to the study is very important. All the authors are white females conducting research in predominantly African American communities; two are based at a nearby university and one is a founding member of DFFI and has served as the Executive Director (ED) since 2012. The core values of DFFI to build an equitable, sustainable local food system in the Mississippi Delta through social justice are also the personal core values of each author. The ED of DFFI has also served as a community organizer, program director, and administrator for DFFI focusing on grassroots network building and partnership development alongside strategic opportunities to facilitate projects that foster sustainable change and honor the places and the people in the communities where DFFI works. She has been instrumental in all aspects of this project and recruited one of the other authors through their mutual work on the state-wide food policy council. The two authors from the university are both founding members of MFIP (discussed above). The long-standing, recognized work of DFFI in the three communities provided much-needed trust and reciprocity that the university researchers benefitted from as 'outsiders' to the community and facilitated their roles as researchers and trainers of the youth ambassadors.

In September 2017, twenty-three community youth from the outreach area were selected by DFFI, in partnership with community leaders. The youth and four DFFI board and staff members were trained in community-based participatory data collection by MFIP. Community-based participatory research is a method that trains community members to undertake research to address social problems and provide mechanisms to make meaningful social change in their communities that is informed by research (Strand et al. 2003). DFFI sought input from MFIP to identify mechanisms to demystify knowledge and use systematic understanding of need in the community to create change and address the problem of food access in their community. DFFI sought to empower the community through skills-development and utilization of research to inform decisions that would move towards transformative social justice for residents.

The training involved providing background information on food insecurity, food access, and understanding the food environment. Participants received an overview of Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards and the importance of anonymity and confidentiality during data collection. Training in survey administration and the emphasis on rigor, accuracy, consistency, and thoroughness was also covered along with professionalism in data collection. Special emphasis was placed on the role of the interviewer as developing a social relationship. Building community capacity and community outreach is a significant part of this project and youth participants were encouraged to consider themselves key leaders in their community toward building sustainable communities. The youth took on the title of Good Food Youth Ambassadors (GFYA). Finally, a certification in training was provided to note their training completion and skills development at the end of the training series.

The Good Food Youth Ambassadors (GFYA) created teams of two that practiced together and fine-tuned their survey data collection skills. On the days of data collection, the GFYA teams went out with community partners into each targeted neighborhood. Four Saturdays in September and October 2017 were designated as data collection days in the three communities.

Data collection was overseen by a trained community leader who was familiar with the neighborhoods in each location and who assisted in identifying neighborhood characteristics (public housing, Section 8, economic differentiation, if any). Social media blasts indicating the dates that survey teams would be in the community were sent out through the GFYA networks, and other community members. Flyers with the Good Food Revolution logo, along with key information about data collection and contact information, were disseminated prior to each day of data collection, and were also given to each household who participated in the survey. All GFYA wore a deep green t-shirt with the Good Food Revolution Logo on the back on the days of survey data collection. The symbolic, visual representation of local youth walking in pairs throughout the neighborhoods with clipboards and green t-shirts was noteworthy amidst the backdrop of routine Saturday activities.

Based on the demographics of each of the three towns in the study outreach area and the remarkable homogeneity within and across the three sites, the project aimed for a 15% household sample from each location (see Table 1). The survey took between 20 and 25 min to complete. DFFI provided each survey participant a \$10 gift card to Walmart to honor their time. Data collection took place over four Saturdays with a debriefing on the last day. The total number of surveys collected was 211 (15 percent of households in total). Each survey took about 20 min to deliver. The survey administered was based on *Mapping the Food Environment*, a survey created and used in Ohio by The Ohio State University, as well as the USDA Food Security Survey Module (Ohio State University 2018). The survey included questions focused on food access, food patterns, neighborhood environment, health conditions, food security, and participant demographics and background. The Ohio State Survey was modified to be sensitive to regional terminology and several survey questions were modified to reflect the resources available in Mississippi (for example, questions about use of a taxi to get to food store were eliminated since there are no taxis in the area; also, names of grocery stores were modified based on available shopping outlets in the area, or left open-ended for respondents to list where they shop). Questions regarding solutions to local problems were added to measure interest in community gardens, farmers' markets, mobile food trucks, or the construction of grocery stores. These questions

were created specifically for DFFI and generated by the youth ambassadors and the DFFI staff who are from the area and who received survey data collection training; the questions were based upon the resources available and areas where capacity building was already taking place. Data from the 211 surveys were entered into an Excel spreadsheet by a member of MFIP. Data was then analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software program) and translated into frequency tables for each question by a member of MFIP.

In tandem with data collection, DFFI met with key stakeholders in the three communities, including local church leaders, elected officials, and community members. A Good Food Revolution Advisory board was created that included farmers, food insecure community members, elected officials, leaders, key stakeholders, a Youth Ambassador, and DFFI staff. Central to all of the work of the Good Food Revolution was the desire to create community buy-in and trust to ensure the long-term success of the project.

The survey collection and final report allowed an understanding of need in the area, but also engaged with community members to ask their response to possible solutions. Many community members being surveyed expressed delight to see youth involved in the study and actively engaged in community-building.

Survey participants responded overwhelmingly that they would support a mobile market if provided (89 percent). Further, 34 percent of respondents indicated locally grown food was very important to them; 24 percent said important, and 26 percent said slightly important. Only 17 percent said not important at all. The majority of respondents (69 percent) also indicated that organically grown or food grown without chemicals was important to them.

While nearly one-third (29.5 percent) of the entire county reports food insecurity and 32.6 percent of children are food insecure, of those in this study, 43 percent identified as food insecure. The health of residents is affected by the food insecurity, with 37.5 percent of adults reporting a body mass index of 30 or higher and 16.5 percent reporting a diabetes diagnosis.

In December 2017 the final report was prepared for DFFI and then shared during a Town Hall meeting with community members in attendance. Based on the survey findings and community discussion, DFFI Board members decided to create a mobile market to provide fresh, local food for the community.

The North Bolivar County Good Food Revolution worked with a network of growers through MEGA, a key partner in the project. In addition, a key partner became the Alcorn Demonstration Farm in Mound Bayou who worked to scale up their food production to meet increased demand and to establish a mobile market for the three high-needs communities to access healthy, affordable food. To continue youth participation, a youth farmer training program developed at the demonstration farm. In July 2018, ten GFYA youth and three DFFI staff attended and received training at the 2018 Rooted in Community Youth Summit in New York City.

In March 2018, DFFI held its first annual North Bolivar County Farm to Table community gathering at the Lampton Street Church in Mound Bayou. The convening brought together community members, farmers, youth ambassadors, elected officials, and community organizers to share the research findings and celebrate the project. A mobile market was purchased and demonstrated at the event and GFYA shared their experiences and were hosts at the event.

Several youth ambassadors were identified and trained to operate the market, and the community leader who was trained to help lead the survey data collection with the youth served as the market manager. The mobile market launched in June 2018. Healthy food cooking demonstrations were implemented at mobile market designated locations including church kitchens based in each community. DFFI received USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) authorization for use at the mobile market.

The mobile market operated from 30 June through 24 November 2018. Sales for the market started off strong but declined as the season changed and produce availability declined. Eight cooking classes were held during the market operation, three of the cooking classes were held in conjunction

with local festivals. Seventeen GFYA have continued with the project. In October 2018 DFFI held a Town Hall meeting with over 100 in attendance to discuss the project and the first season's results. Community feedback and input provided guidance on ways to tweak and change the program focusing on expanding days and locations for the mobile market and better ways to attract SNAP EBT recipients to the market. The Alcorn Demonstration Farm committed to expanding their youth ambassador grower program utilizing the high tunnels at the farm for season extension production and greater crop variety.

4. Discussion, Reflection, and Next Steps

The compositional factors of the communities of Shelby, Winstonville, and Mound Bayou as well as the mechanisms and processes DFFI used to cultivate and reinforce the resilience described above reflect elements of building community capacity and resiliency. DFFI specifically sought to support and facilitate local food growth and production for the purpose of expanding the local economy, generating jobs, and increasing access to nutritious food (Hanson 2010). The intentional organization of DFFI provided a focus on food systems and especially the reorganizing of resources necessary for building resilience, which Chaskin (2008) refers to as the social action of regrouping.

As discussed earlier, social agency is also essential to building community and involves leadership development, organizational development, community organizing, and fostering collaborative relations among organizations. All of these elements are central to the Good Food Revolution design and implementation, particularly fostering collaborative relations among organizations in the community as reflected in the development of an advisory board of key stakeholders in the community that help reinforce the project and build community commitment in the process. Embedding the project in local churches that serve as meeting spaces for nutrition classes and drop off locations for the mobile market are important mechanisms in entrenching the project in community and ensuring sustainability.

The second social action Chaskin (2008) discusses is redevelopment defined as activities and institutional arrangements that promote specific responses to community pressures. The goal of DFFI to keep food dollars concentrated among these three communities aims to not only boost the economy, but support local growers, provide healthy food options to communities, and hopefully be a catalyst for area jobs. To reach these redevelopment goals a specific social action initiated by DFFI was to engage youth from the communities. By providing leadership opportunities through trainings and community outreach, and training in local food systems development at the national level, DFFI has made youth leadership development a cornerstone of building community and resiliency. This commitment to youth development and training in food systems in its desire to ensure a sustainable, healthy food system in the region mirrors the mission and vision of the organization. Collecting neighborhood and community level data for the purpose of supporting and strengthening communities is not new, nor is involving youth as a way to help build human capital; in fact, in his chapter "Neighborhood Data and Locally Driven Community Change," Chaskin (2014) suggests collecting data as a way to plan, identify needs, and support social action. In this case, DFFI and the Good Food Revolution used community data to inform and support their decision and actions.

The solution of a mobile market is the last social action described by Chaskin, the action of resisting. Chaskin (2008) defines resistance in the context of policy. The mobile market resists the structure of agriculture and food production shift which brought more food imports, increased commodity production, and large-scale agriculture, and provides an opportunity for social change through community-led resistance.

4.1. Reflection

There are challenges to collecting data through participatory-action research. There may be many reasons to collect data, but the use of data is part of a relationship. Choices regarding its publication or promotion should not be entered into lightly. In the case of building community resilience this is especially true since resiliency requires capacity and capacity rests upon relationships involving trust.

Data is not a “neutral resource” and is part of a transaction for many services (Chaskin 2014, p. 200). An equally important survey finding was 67 percent of respondents felt they have neighbors they can rely on. Because community resilience cannot be built without positive social capital, this is a good indicator of the ability for DFFI to build on community well-being. While there is a large group of people who feel connected (67 percent), there is a portion (31 percent) who do not feel as connected to neighbors and this should be kept in mind not only as the mobile market operates, but in the use of data including analysis and interpretation.

DFFI and The North Bolivar Good Food Revolution have had quick successes in receiving funding that jump-started this initiative. They have utilized and built upon long-standing relationships and social capital in the area that they could draw upon to advance their work.

4.2. Next Steps

While DFFI has had quick successes, it is not without an understanding that building community capacity takes time and requires being committed to the long-haul, the long durée. The findings in this article provide the first phase of an ongoing project that at present has the key elements of building community resiliency. The Delta Fresh Food Initiative and the Good Food Revolution embrace an inclusive, community building approach that seeks to increase capacity to expand and replicate ongoing initiatives, document best practices, increase the health and wealth of communities, provide local solutions to local challenges, and promote the health and economic benefits of buying locally grown foods, through youth and community engagement. Using trainings and research to drive and position their projects has been central to their mission. Their inclusive, community-centered frame provides the opportunity for significant change—for a revolution in food consumption and production in their community and food justice and food sovereignty in an area of extreme need.

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