

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Movement in the Willamette Valley

Abstract approved:

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This study investigated the local and sustainable food movements in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. The aim of the research was to better understand the current condition of the phenomenon, what it means to the communities studied and the future role it will play in the state. Other research objectives that were studied included the impact of demographics on food movements, successes and barriers to success and determining the motivations of people involved.

Key players in the city of Corvallis and Portland were interviewed to gather qualitative data about the movement. Interviewees were chosen based on criteria established through literature review that pointed towards groups that would be the most valuable on which to focus.

The study revealed a dynamic and progressive social movement that has profound and beneficial implications on the civic wellbeing of the communities studied both currently and for their future. In addition, through this work key goals were identified that can be transferred to other communities looking to work towards a more sustainable food system in order to better facilitate their growth and prosperity.

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Civic Agriculture: The Successes, Trials and Future of the Local Food Movement in
the Willamette Valley

by

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I understand that that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes the release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Thomas S. Klingensmith, Author

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the Willamette Valley

Introduction

The collapse of the global market place would be a traumatic event with unimaginable consequences. Yet I find it easier to imagine than the continuation of the present regime (Woodin and Lucas 2004).

As many in academic and public domains have noted, the human phenomenon of food production has changed more over the last 50 years than it has over the last 50,000. Farms were at one time family owned operations providing for the nearby community or purely for personal subsistence. Sometimes the land was held in common and different families worked different parts of it without a concept of ownership, or at least a much different one than used today. Farms up until the 18th and early 19th century used techniques and methods that had certainly evolved over the years, but were principally the same as they had been since agriculture first became a facet of human civilization at least 10,000 years ago. These pre industrial methods looked different based on the part of the world and what kind of environment they developed in, swidden agriculture as opposed to rice terracing for example. However they were techniques that had developed out of a deep understanding of the natural world and tended to work with their unique location and conditions, rather than against or in spite of them.

Characteristics of these traditional methods of agriculture included saving seeds, domesticated animals being used to till the fields and transport goods, biological systems being mimicked to increase productivity and protect the environment, human derived energy inputs and in addition there were a startling variety of crops to choose from as each region developed its' own agricultural niche (Lyson 2004, Robbins 2009). While people certainly had the capacity for large scale environmental effects, the changes wrought would have been comparatively minimal.

However, changes began to emerge rapidly after the industrial revolution and they would irrevocably change how humans produced and consumed food as well as how they were connected to the land. The industrialization of food production brought an increase in the use of petrochemicals, pesticides, fertilizers, monocrop agriculture, and the erosion of the family farm (Pollan 2006, Woodin and Lucas 2004, Lyson 2004). The effects these changes have brought have been intense and far flung, affecting people in all parts of the globe. After the industrialization took place, there was the attempt to increase the world's food production known as the Green Revolution. While the intentions of the green revolution may have been noble, the results have largely been characterized by environmental degradation, malnutrition, diseases of affluence, loss of sovereignty, and massive decreases in biodiversity (Hazell 1991, Shiva 1991). In a world that produces more than enough food for the entire population, at least 40 million in Africa need urgent food aid, half of India lives in poverty, yet over 50% of the United States is considered obese (Woodin and Lucas 2004).

Out of this technologically intensive and industrialized agriculture, seeds of resistance and rebellion have been sown by people in communities across the country and indeed across the world as well. Amid fears of tainted spinach and a plague of obesity, some people have decided that there are many things lost in the move away from a localized food system, and that those things are worth fighting for (Morrone 2008). But the question has to be asked, is it too late? Have we come too far and grown too large as a population to return to a more local form of food production? What would such a system look like in modern America and how would it function? These are some of the broad questions and topics that first interested me in the current state of the local and sustainable food movements in Oregon.

The research took place in the cities of Corvallis and Portland Oregon. In the United States today, there is no community that can be said to be fully self sufficient, yet these are two examples of cities where the movement is especially ripe for study

(Lyson 2004). This due to the fact that the cities have a reputation for being progressive in general, as well as being located in a part of the country ideally suited for local agriculture. However they are also very different in terms of their population size. This is a factor that I am predicting will be important both in this localized research project, but across the nation as well as the movement continues to grow and evolve. The two cities will be analyzed together to paint a fuller picture of the region as a whole. While interesting differences will be noted and explored, the information will for the most part be put together in complementary fashion that gives a fuller image of the whole Willamette Valley, using the cities as a lens to understand this phenomenon.

This research is significant for a number of reasons. As I will outline in later sections, we as a society are rapidly coming up on very real obstacles that threaten the well being of the environment, our societies and human health. In the years since these problems first began to develop there have been many and varied attempts to combat the changes, but very little has been able to make a large scale impact that can bring fundamental change. However movements are beginning to crop up that show real potential for this kind of radical innovation to take place (Allen 2004). Many of these movements are still in their earliest stages of development, and they are developing so fast, there is great need for further research (Allen 2004). At this critical juncture research must be done to analyze why things have failed in the past, what is being done wrong today, what is being done correctly, and what can be done in the future as to not lose ground. In fact so many things are happening in this movement that research is actually lagging behind the progress being made (Allen 2004). In my own small way I intend to look at one corner of the local food movement sweeping across the country and try to contribute to a larger understanding of the phenomenon. Much of the research I have seen in the Oregon area is very specific, for example Garry Stephenson's work with farmers' markets. By taking a large scale and holistic approach, I hope to supply valuable perspective. As knowledge about the subject

grows, hopefully people can continue to make informed decisions and develop a system that is truly revolutionary and beneficial for all involved.

Research Objectives

This project will have three main research objectives. The focus on one hand will be on attempting to define and understand how a local, sustainability-minded food system works by viewing and interpreting it as a larger whole made up of smaller entities. This system will be viewed and analyzed through the concept of civic agriculture and economic embeddedness specifically. Through this I will create a snapshot of the movement at this time and place. Secondly I will look at the successes and barriers that the civic agricultural movement has had in the valley through the lenses of economic, political and cultural factors. In addition I will use the following research questions to explore any other themes or ideas that are important to understanding the movement in the Willamette Valley.

RQ₁ What is the current level of success of the local food movement in the Willamette Valley of Oregon? Here success will be determined by comparison to literature as well as defined by interviewees.

RQ₂ What are the most important elements of a local food system?

RQ₃ What factors determine the success or failure of such a system?

RQ₄ How does the population size of a community affect the viability of a local food system?

RQ₅ What will the role of local food be in the future?

Literature Review

Definition of Local Food System

The history of local food and local food movements is long and dynamic one. Local food used to just be the way things worked. There was undoubtedly long distance trade of spices and high value items, and transoceanic trade of certain commodities accelerated with the discovery of the new world, but for most people local was what they knew. The parameters that defined local would have changed based on the culture and community of course. The process of shifting to industrial agriculture, which I will talk about in the next section, was an act of creative destruction, pushing away the old for new and more efficient means of production (Sweet and Meiksins 2008). But it was in the budding environmental movements of the 1960's that it began to become clear that this system was not necessarily an improvement, or at least not worth the cost that it incurred and people began to think about revisiting the local systems that were once so prevalent.

Though food system studies are a complex and growing field, one needs a starting place to approach the issue in question. In this case local food systems are being analyzed, so the term itself must first be defined. In this process, much about the history and issues in the modern context will also be explored.

The term local food system seems a deceptively simple one. In fact entire books can struggle to nail down what the term means in all contexts, but there are certainly a number of facets which are universal and help illuminate the concept. In addition there are a number of aspects of a community that local food systems will affect, such as economics, biodiversity, civics, and health. I will also look at these features of a community in this section.

Local food systems on one level are exactly what they sound like. They are modes of agricultural practice where the item for consumption, be it meat, dairy, or produce, is created, processed and consumed in an inclusive of a space as possible. The space in question will be based on a number of factors, and is absolutely not of a universal dimension or quality. Population size, climate, geography, and demographics will all impact what will be considered local. It could be a collection of small ranching towns spread out over a very large and marginally productive geographic area, or a densely populated metropolitan area. It could also be the classic image of a few medium sized towns clustered around fertile agricultural land. Areas that are defined by such factors are known as foodsheds (Stephenson 2008). Foodsheds are a similar concept to watersheds. Just as a watershed provides water to a naturally defined terrain, foodsheds are self-organizing structures that provide food to a certain area or population (Stephenson 2008). These local areas encompass the environment and facilities that are necessary for high quality of life and wellbeing; for all these reasons it is clear that local is certainly a relative term that will change based upon the circumstance geographic factors (neweconomics.org 2011).

In researching the various definitions of local food systems, one term stood out as a more efficient and concrete way to get at the deep concepts being discussed here. That term is Thomas Lyson's civic agriculture. It is a better term than simply saying local food system because it gets at the full and ideal meaning of such a system. It is not simply a matter of geography, carbon footprints and food miles, but much more. It is what it means to a community, to its identity, and its unique culture. Systems like organic agriculture and sustainable agriculture are important and are a part of this definition, but they are not as encompassing in their meaning as civic agriculture. Often times they may lack the economic and social implications that the civic model does such a good job at including. It is about how the agricultural system engages and exists symbiotically with the community, it is not something that can be separated as a simple economic or geographic concept (Lyson 2004).

The term ‘civic agriculture’ references the emergence and growth of community-based agriculture and food production activities that not only meet customer demands for fresh, safe, and locally produced foods but create jobs, encourage entrepreneurship, and strengthen community identity. Civic agriculture brings together production and consumption activities within communities and offers consumers real alternatives to the commodities produced, processed, and marketed by large agribusiness firms (Lyson 2004).

One of the things I will be looking at in this thesis is if the communities I study in the Willamette Valley will represent more than a simple and literal localization of food production, or whether they will fill Lyson’s definition for civic agriculture. In fact this term encapsulates the sense of what I intend to study.

Characteristics of Civic Agriculture

As stated above, there are a number of inherent characteristics or features of civic agriculture, more than the fact that it is geographically local. These features will be important to keep in mind when comparing a theoretical model of civic agriculture with what is found in Portland and Corvallis.

While Lyson’s concept of civic agriculture focuses on social and economic aspects of agricultural systems, the ideas of sustainability and land stewardship are also central themes in his work (Lyson 2004). It should not be surprising that one of the characteristics of civic agriculture is almost always the practice of sustainable and organic techniques (though producers may not technically be registered as organic with the state). Sustainable agriculture is at its simplest a form of production that does not deplete the resources on which it is dependent upon to continue (Hoffman 2007). Its modern form first gained public popularity in the 1970’s as a reaction to industrial practices that I will go into greater detail about later.

...during the energy crisis of the 1970s, the price of petroleum-based farm inputs (fuel, pesticides, and fertilizers) rose with the price of oil. Subsequently, a people began to question the energy intensification of industrial agriculture and reconsider the deleterious effects of increasing pesticide use, the contemporary concept of agricultural sustainability first emerged (Allen 2004).

Under the sustainability system the earth's resources should be able to meet the entire population's needs indefinitely (Woodin 2004). This would be true with even very large populations (Astyk and Newton 2009). There are many different, overlapping and more complex definitions of sustainable agriculture as well, which touch on everything from spirituality and morality, biodiversity and ecology to social equity and economic viability (Hinrichs 2010). Based on several definitions I would define sustainable agriculture as a form of production that mimics natural biological processes, is not dependant on synthetic products or inputs, and does not view agriculture simply though an economic lens (Fullmer 2011, Lyson 2004, Halweil 2004). It is also interesting to discover the definition of sustainable agriculture according to United States Department of Agriculture. This quote is directly from the 1990 Farm Bill:

An [sustainable agriculture] integrated system of plant and animal production practices having site specific application that will, over the long term: 1) satisfy the human food and fiber needs; 2) enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends; 3) make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and integrate, when appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; 4) sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and 5) enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole (Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act 1990).

An important part from the above definitions that is a key aspect of sustainable agriculture, and by extension to civic agriculture, is the emphasis on biodiversity and a replication of biological systems used by nature. Because people practicing this type

of agriculture do not have access to petrochemicals used in industrial agriculture, a different method is needed to protect crops from disease and maintain healthy soil. The natural world has been doing this very thing for millions of years, so it makes sense that farmers should try and replicate these systems. This could include grouping plants together that will benefit one another (polyculture), using natural pest management, rotating crops, enhanced nutrient recycling, promoting healthy biotic activity in the soil, utilizing cover crops, integration of animals, etc (Gliessman 1998). While this may seem like far more effort than simply spraying chemicals and pesticides as with industrial agriculture, there have been numerous studies that show increased long term crop yields, higher nutritional quality, and far superior protection of the environment using these sustainable methods that are common to civic agriculture (Halweil 2002, Fullmer Interview 2011).

Another term for this technique is agroecology and is a quality that I expect to see in many parts of the Willamette Valley food system (Gliessman 1998). Agroecology is a term that can be used in many ways. Interestingly it can be used in refer to a science, a social movement or a practice (Wezel et. al 2009). In this case I am talking about Stephen Gliessman's conception of the term. This being that agroecology is the application of ecological principles in the practice of sustainable agriculture (Gliessman 1998, 2001, 2007).

A natural result of these methods is not only increased biodiversity on the farm itself (both planned and incidental) but in the surrounding countryside as well, a very different image than the silent spring portrayed by Rachel Carson at the dawn of the environmental movement. This speaks to the idea that truly sustainable agriculture is not about putting nature under the control of people, but proceeding with the assumption that humans are still part of the natural world. The idea of control is most likely an illusion anyways, as Carson states: "The control of nature is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy, when it was supposed that nature exists for the convenience of man (Carson 1962)."

This emphasis on diversity and co-planting tends to result in higher yields as well. A farm can grow multiple crops, on different rotations, at different heights and root depths at different times during the season. This is known as polyculture and is why a sustainable, organic farm can be up to 1,000 times more productive per acre when multiple crops are taken into account (Halweil 2004). And it is of course important to remember that this increased production is also being accomplished without the high levels of inputs associated with industrial agriculture. Additionally crops grown in this system can have huge added values to the product because they are seen as superior or specialized to a conventional product. This can make an organic system more financially productive for a producer.

An important concept in civic agriculture is the idea of economic embeddedness. Before the rise of industrial agriculture, the vast majority of agricultural systems looked a lot like the ideal image of civic agriculture springing up in places like Corvallis. There was simply no way to separate the economics of agriculture from the community fabric itself. In many modern agricultural farming areas there seem to be larger divides between people living in the communities and the people owning and profiting from the farms.

However, there was a much more inclusive system before the industrialization and mechanization of agriculture that took place more recently. “The local economy was not something that could be isolated from society. Rather the economy was embedded in the social relations of the farm household and the rural community (Lyson 2004).”

Civic agriculture seeks to bring the economy back within the community itself. Not only by focusing on a literally local system, but by encouraging practices that circulate workers, resources, and money within the community, rather than having the resources leave as with a more traditional capitalist model (Dillard 2009). This is one of the clearest and most important differences between civic and industrial agriculture. The overall priority of industrial agriculture is profit maximization. While civic

agriculture, with its embedded nature, is concerned with establishing and maintaining local social and economic systems. This is important because there have been studies, some dating back decades (Mills and Ulmer 1946, Goldschmidt 1978) that show communities that are based on large scale industrial systems of agriculture tend to have much lower socioeconomic, social and civic wellbeing (Lyson 2007). In other words, people were happier and had a better sense of a cohesive community under the civic agriculture paradigm. When farms went out of family and community hands and became separate businesses instead of parts of the community, disruption of the community fabric sometimes followed (including but not limited to loss of jobs, urban migration, and loss of community identity) (Hassebrook 2011).

Sense of place is a somewhat esoteric characteristic or benefit of civic agriculture as well. Local food systems create products and specialization that is unique to each particular region, becoming a great source of pride. This idea is known as *terroir* in France. Many European countries have adopted this idea that unique products from certain geographic areas should be encouraged. To do so, many products such as cheese or a certain types of chicken are labeled and everyone knows in the market that they came from this one specific region of the country and nowhere else. The concept behind of *terroir* is “the interacting of natural and human factors in a particular place, which contribute to the specificity and the unique tastes of a product” (Trubek and Bowen 2008). This idea borrowed from the French seems extremely compatible with ideas found in civic agriculture in the United States. It is something that seems popular with Americans as demonstrated by the large variety of heirloom vegetables that are found in farmers’ markets across the country, and more significantly with regions that have become well known and established wine and beer manufactures, and a whole host of other artisanal products like cheese, honey or charcuterie. In some cases it seems Americans have already integrated these *produits de terroir* into civic agriculture.

As this sense of place develops, the larger collection of foodsheds resembles a tapestry of unique parts making a vibrant whole. These individual foodsheds can then trade their unique products with each other, because after all, food localization is not about eliminating trade completely, but practicing it in a more sustainable way.

Civic vs. Organic Agriculture

I would argue that this sustainability based, civic agriculture goes steps beyond basic organic agriculture as well. Unfortunately there is no aspect of organic agriculture by itself that automatically makes it good for the environment, animals or for the workers involved in its production. For example, organic milk may be produced on factory farms every bit as ethically questionable as outfits that may happen to use recombinant bovine growth hormone (Pollan 2006). Or an organic mega-farm growing strawberries in California may mistreat its migrant workers just as cruelly as the industrial farm down the valley.

Another potential problem with the organic movement is the term itself. The popularity of the concept has made the label a very convenient target for appropriation and manipulation by transnational corporations (TNC) as well. In fact, Philip Howard of Michigan State University has been watching closely and documenting the quiet takeover of supposedly ethical and organic brands by larger TNCs over the last decade or so (Levitte 2010). Many brands that present themselves as healthy and organic alternatives (which they technically may be) are now under the control of companies like Kraft, Heinz, Cargill and Pepsi. Some of these purchased companies include Kashi, Dagoba Chocolate, Cascadian Farms, Naked Juice, Celestial Seasonings, Back to Nature, Muir Glen and many others (Howard 2002). This is not to say that these companies are not producing organic food, but that organic food in general has been developed into a marketing tool by TNCs and has perhaps lost some of its original meaning and purpose.

Because civic agriculture focuses on a localized system, I think it can be considered a more accurate representation of what organic agriculture was originally meant to be when the movement started. This was in a time where people were not creating the organic label to simply be able to charge more or gain good publicity, but because a critical flaw was perceived in the way things were being done, and organics were seen as a possible remedy to the problem. More about this critical flaw will be discussed in the following sections.

Despite some of the discouraging trends in the appropriation of organic agriculture through larger economic players, it is imperative not to forget the importance of the organic methods themselves. The definition of organic agriculture sounds similar to sustainable agriculture, and in fact many areas do overlap (Though it is of course important to remember just because something is sustainable does not necessarily mean it is organic, and the visa versa). In the simplest sense, the organic method of agriculture seeks to use biological principles, techniques and inputs as well as concepts like crop rotation and composting to maintain healthy soil, manage pests and increase production. Use of synthetic inputs, genetic modification or other unnatural processes is unacceptable.

Cuthbert argues that simply being local is not enough, just as being organic alone may not be enough (2010). For example, if one technique is practiced and not the other, the effects can be antithetical to a healthy food system. If asparagus is grown in Chile with strict and beneficial organic methods, then shipped by plane thousands of miles to the United States, is that really an environmentally ethical practice? And similarly, just because a food is grown locally, it does not mean that it has been done so in a way that protects the environment or the people working the fields (DeWeerd 2010).

This is one of the reasons that civic agriculture is such an important concept. It takes all the best aspects of these different movements and combines them into a form

that is truly beneficial, and perhaps more resistant to tampering by TNCs who are simply looking for another niche market in which to sell their products.

Industrial Agriculture: a definition through history

In trying to define exactly what civic agriculture is, and what it is not, it can be helpful to briefly look at and characterize the dominant system that is in play during this modern era. Industrial agriculture is certainly the prevailing model in the United States and across the world as well. Industrial agriculture is completely pervasive and universal; a staggering 95% of all food in this country is a product of the industrial system of agriculture (Hoffman 2007). What is remarkable about this is that not only is so much of the food system controlled by industrial systems, but that it is also controlled by so few entities. This is made clear by something called a concentration ratio, or CR4. It shows the percentage of an industry that is controlled by the top four producers (Hendrickson and Heffernan 2005). In the United States, four top companies control 83.5% of beef production, 64% of pork production, and 60% of grain processing facilities (of course these are not necessarily the same companies for each category) (Hendrickson and Heffernan 2005).

The history of industrial agriculture is complex, with fundamental social, economic and agricultural changes all working to create the modern system. Before specific agricultural changes like synthetic inputs and genetically modified crops came onto the scene, there first was a huge change in the nature of labor and economics that took place.

During the time period from the 16th century through the 18th a significant shift in the nature of food took place. Beginning in Europe and due to the expansion of trade and the growing population whose livelihoods had nothing to do with food production, food became a commodity. As with textiles or tools, this commodity could

be produced and sold for profit (Robbins 2008). This was a change that would have profound implications on production methods and the future of agriculture.

In addition to the commodification of food, there was a change in labor due to the Industrial Revolution. As industry grew and European and American cities became much more important hubs of commerce, people flocked to them from the countryside. Because there were more people that no longer worked in the agricultural industry, there was competition between the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy (Robbins 2008). In addition, the people who were now living in cities were heavily reliant on those who were producing and regulating the goods of the agricultural market (Robbins 2008). With less people working the farms to do the actual work, the technology being developed during the industrial revolution became more and more important as well.

Another impact of this process was the fact that the state now had great incentive to have a hand in the control of agriculture. This could result in regulation of prices, quotas and tariffs being set in place, colonizing new land for production, or regulating agricultural wages (Robbins 2008).

Richard Robbins also talks about the other half of the commodification of food during the industrial revolution, this being the fact that there was a massive increase in technology as well as a decrease in human energy in agriculture. He notes four main effects that his shift had. First substituting technology for human energy made agriculture more profitable by reducing labor costs as well as concentrating wealth. Second, the result of this concentration of wealth and reduction in laborers allowed for food prices as well as industrial wages to remain low. Third, with more people forced to look to the cities for work, competition naturally increased. This results in companies being able to pay lower wages. Finally the state now had to subsidize the agricultural sector to keep labor costs down and to increase the amount of technology associated with food production. Robbins points out this is evident in the United States

when the government finances land reclamation, pays for agricultural research, subsidizes farm and energy prices, buys up surplus etc.

In sum, the results for the capitalist economy of the reduction of agricultural labor and the subsequent increase in technology are: a capital intensive agricultural system dependent on the use of subsidized energy; the exploitation of domestic farm labor and of foreign land and labor to keep food prices low and agricultural and industrial profits high; a large labor pool from which industry can draw workers, whose wages are kept down by competition for scarce jobs and the availability of cheap food (Robbins 2008).

Robbins also points out that at this point, despite the technological intensifications brought about during the industrial revolution (whether they being mechanical or chemical) they did not substantially affect the yield of an operation. Rather they made them more economical because they reduced the people they had to pay and support. But a Mexican farmer operating with tradition swidden agriculture would still produce the same amount of food per acre as a European wheat farmer practicing with the newest agricultural methods (Robbins 2008).

This phenomenon of technological intensification persisted well into the 20th century and the example of the tractor shows its wide spread impact. By the 1950's there were 3.4 million tractors on farms in the United States and during the 40 years that led up to this point, the number of workers on American farms decreased by 26.8 percent (Lyson 2004).

As farms began to get larger and more focused on one crop in an attempt to be successful in a commodities oriented market, some of the negative effects of industrial, technologically intensive agriculture began to creep in. By disrupting natural balances and destroying nutrient cycles, farmers began experiencing increased pest activity, sensitivity to climatic fluctuation and other similar problems now associated with industrial agriculture. The solution was not surprisingly to be a

continuation of the industrial revolution's model of technological intensification, especially in terms of chemical inputs. During the bellicose years of the first half of the 20th century many chemical companies found themselves doing quite well producing goods like nerve gas and other chemical weapons used in warfare. But during peace time they were without customers. However killing one biological organism is not all that different from killing another, so the intensification of pesticide use increased rapidly in farming as these companies aggressively sought out new customers for their pesticides. An increase in synthetic fertilizers was also a large part of this time period, with their use increasing 715 percent between 1945 and 1980 (Lyson 2004).

During the 1960's it was obvious that there were extreme inequalities across the globe and that many people, especially in Asia were on the cusp of massive famine and starvation. In order to combat this global hunger, the same techniques and principle that were being used with such success in the Western world, were exported to developing countries in an attempt to increase agricultural production. It would be impossible to argue that this did not in fact produce a huge amount of food, which consequently also resulted in population explosions. This became known as the green revolution, and was heralded as the movement that would lift the world's poor, starving and destitute out of their misery and onto a level playing field with the rest of the world. The movement was started by American scientists working in Mexico, trying to develop higher yielding varieties of cereal grains, and was quickly applied everywhere (Robbins 2008).

Much of the initial success of the movement resulted in the use of high yielding varieties (HYV) of crops like wheat in combination with large amounts of synthetic inputs. These crops could produce significantly more per acre than traditional crops, but they also required larger amounts of water, fertilizer, and sometimes pesticide to do so (Robbins 2008). This started to cause problems when farmer's skimmed on inputs to save money, water became scarce in over populated and

over farmed areas, inputs themselves became far more expensive, pesticide use had to be ramped up to combat problems associated with monoculture or increased weed growth from over irrigation and fertilization required the use of herbicides (Robbins 2008).

In addition to being a chemical intensive style of agriculture, petroleum products are so prevalent in modern industrial agriculture that it might be better called petroculture. Of course large scale agriculture existed before the green revolution, but most of the power and inputs came from domesticated animals, people, or coal. This began to change in the 20th century however, as oil and gas reserves started to replace failing coal mines (Wright 2009).

Oil, oil byproducts, and derived products began to take a central part on how farms were being run, and the list of their applications is impressive.

The takeover by oil heralded more efficient and large-scale industrial, mechanized processes – including the powering of irrigation pumps, production of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, mechanization for crop production, storage, drying and processing, production of animal feed and maintenance of animal operations, and the transportation of farm inputs and outputs (Wright 2009).

This phenomenon of highly intensive petroculture in farming is an antipode to the sustainable nature of civic agriculture. No one in the world, in any industry, will argue that oil reserves are unlimited. Though people may disagree on how much is left, where and what means are justified to get to it. This concept is not new, books published in the 1970's for example claimed that our oil hungry civilization must find a way to deal with the fact that oil may run out one day soon (Green 1978).ⁱ

The country of Cuba represents an interesting cross-reference in the story of industrial agriculture, as they are the only country that has experienced what it may be like when the current system of (relatively) easy to obtain oil invariably (and probably

spectacularly) collapses. During the cold war era, Cuba was supported heavily by the Soviet Union, both in trade and as a market. Cuba relied on the Soviets to acquire the petroleum and machinery needed to run their agricultural system. But after communism faded and the Soviet Union fell, Cuba was almost entirely cut off, over a dramatically short period of time. They were forced to adopt a model of organic, sustainable agriculture on the fly, as they no longer has any petrol to fuel their tractors, create their fertilizer and pesticide to apply to their crops, or partners to trade products with. At first it was a rough transition with some lean times, but in only three or four years Cuba had achieved a relatively successful system of sustainable agriculture. Much of this success was due to agricultural education, biological pest control, state reforms in farm organization (which included higher wages for farmers and easier access to land), dismantling large scale farms, improving biodiversity and variety, farmer cooperatives, urban gardening, and innovative organic techniques (Wright 2009).

The next phase of the industrialization of agriculture occurred as the world continued to shrink under the march of globalization. It became easier than at any point in human history to transport perishable goods great distances to market (Halweil 2004). This was the continuation of a phenomenon that has always existed. Trade has always been a valuable tool to get what you can't find in your particular region. It became international with the expansion into the new world; ships began bringing back tomatoes, potatoes, peppers and chocolate to Europe. But with federally subsidized interstate highways and lower gas prices, and later refrigeration and air travel, this was occurring on a scale never seen before (Halweil 2004). In addition, preservation methods were fine tuned, often using chemical inputs. People no longer had to wait for certain crops to be in seasons to eat them, and this was understandably very popular. There are numerous statistics that demonstrate the great distances our food now travels. One study found that at a wholesale food warehouse in Chicago, an

average kilogram of produce traveled 1491.29 miles, a distance that is 25% farther than it was in 1980 (Halweil 2004, Hendrickson 2004).

However this ability to speed products around the globe has come at a cost. Regardless of one's position on global warming, it is clear that the environment has been damaged and polluted by the immense amount of carbon based transportation used by the shipping industries, either directly or indirectly. In addition to pollution, roads themselves have been damaged, resulting in huge amounts of money needed from the taxpayers to maintain infrastructure (Stoeltje 2010). The term often associated with this phenomenon of externalities associated with long distance food transportation is food miles. There are a few especially clear examples of food miles that may be useful to understand how different this type of production is from civic agriculture.

The first example of issues associated with food miles comes from the United Kingdom and demonstrates the seemingly unnecessary swapping on products across international borders. In 1998, they imported 240,000 tons of pork and 125,000 tons of lamb. At the same time, they exported 195,000 tons of pork and 102,000 tons of lamb (Woodin and Lucas 2004). Even within a country, there can be extremely unproductive transportation set ups. For large scale sellers like Wal-Mart, there are central processing and distribution centers. A crop may be grown in one corner of the state, shipped all the way across to the production facility, and shipped right back to the same city it was grown in (Halweil 2004).

In the decades following the green revolution, agricultural systems in both the global North as well as South did in fact produce new varieties of crops to offset growing population pressures. It seemed to many that the promises of the system may have in fact been valid (Lyson 2004). And indeed huge amounts of grain and other crops were being produced and larger animals were being raised more quickly.

One of the prominent ideological views put forth by proponents of the industrial system is that this is the only way to support a global population of the size

that exists today (Hazell 2009). This question has always been in debate, and it is a very valid and important question. President Nixon's secretary of agriculture famously said that if we wanted to shift all of our agricultural production to organic, non-pesticide intensive methods, someone would first have to decide which 50 million people in the country would be the ones to starve to death (Shapin 2010). In some ways it is easy to see why people might think this way, when you see endless oceans of corn in Iowan fields it is tempting to think that industrial agriculture has it figured out when it comes to maximizing yields and creating HYVs.

However as the practice of industrial farming was drastically increased, cracks began to appear in the foundations of the system and activists, farmers, scientists and journalists began to realize things were not perfect as a series of environmental problems (Altieri 2000).

This section was designed to give a brief history of the industrial system of agriculture, and in doing so also define the system itself. To further this, as well as flesh out some concepts that were only briefly mentioned, the next section will discuss some of the negative effects specifically.

Deleterious Qualities of Industrial Agriculture

The negative issues associated with industrial agriculture can essentially be divided into two broad categories (Altieri 2000). Type one is associated with the fundamental resources needed for agriculture; including soil and water (Altieri 2000). This could include problems like erosion, pollution of water and land, degradation of soil health, salinization, alkalinization, drought, and loss of cropland due to phenomenon like urban sprawl. The second type of negative issue has to do with the actual plant and animal life. This includes the crops themselves, pests, weeds, and the surrounding biomes (Altieri 2000).

Examples of this second type are loss of biodiversity and genetic resources, resistance of pests to extermination methods, chemical contamination or destruction of

natural control mechanisms. A specific example of a type two problem was when farmers began to notice that pests began to develop resistance to pesticides, so more and more needed to be applied to get the same result. This resistance became so strong that while pesticide use increased by 1,000 percent between the 1940s and 1980s, crop losses due to pests also jumped by 50 percent (Pimentel et al. 1991).

This is a trend that led to severely damaged environments. Researchers Pimentel and Levitan highlighted this when they stated that only .1 percent of applied pesticide actually reached the target pests, the rest ended up in the soil, water, and other organisms (Allen 2004).

Type one problems developed partially because pesticides and chemical fertilizers require huge amounts of water and petroleum to apply and maintain. These costs began to weigh farmers down as agriculture moved to more arid and inhospitable environments. Also oil shortages, such as the OPEC embargo of 1973, highlighted the economically precarious position this new form of agriculture had put farmers in (Robbins 1999). Fertilizers also spurred growth of weeds as well, so farmers then had to spend more money and time applying herbicides to their crops. Fertilizers cause other problems too. Because cheap oil makes fertilizers less expensive, applications methods tends to over saturate, and so much is needed to force a overly depleted field into production, that a lot of fertilizer ends up washing right of the farm and into the ecosystem.

A particularly clear example of what this can result in is off shore in the Gulf of Mexico. The massive amounts of fertilizers washed down the Mississippi River cause algae blooms which use up all the available oxygen in the water. The process known as eutrophication occurs and the local food chain collapses, leaving a literal dead zone.

Erosion of top soils is also a pressing concern. A full 90% of top soils in the United States are being depleted faster than they can regenerate due to unsustainable methods (Woodin and Lucas 2004). This concept represents an open environmental

system. Some chemicals, nutrients or other elements may be put in, but many more may be taken out, without being replaced (Altieri 2000). Specifically the decay stage is neglected when wastes are recycled back into the system (Lyson 2004). This is not representative of a natural system, which is closed and recycles nutrients within itself (this idea of biologic closed/open systems can also be applied to the economics of agriculture, with industrial models tending to hemorrhage money from communities, with devastating results). In the United States alone, an estimated one billion hectares of arable land has been lost to the forces of erosion, salinization and over irrigation; worldwide the number stands at six million hectares per year (Pimentel et al. 1993).

One additional aspect of globalized, industrial agriculture that should be mentioned is the social and humanitarian cost it has both at home and abroad. Job loss and destruction of rural livelihoods and identities are a major result that can show up anywhere this system is in place. This is most often due to farm amalgamation, government policy that favors corporate run mega-farms, outsourcing, etc. For example, the European Union has been losing at least 500,000 farmers per year, and the number of farmers in the entire United States is 1.9 million, which is less than the prison population of the country (Woodin and Lucas 2004).

International agencies and their policies also can impact farmers and their communities. Policy set up by organizations like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization that are designed to kick start failing economies around the world often lead to a forced shift away from subsistence based agriculture, to large monocrops specifically designed for export. This has all the same environmental costs associated with it as in developed countries, such as erosion, pollution and loss of biodiversity, but it can also cause severe problems like famine. For example, Malawi would have had sufficient surpluses to protect its self during recent droughts, but were forced to sell off the grain by international lending agencies (Woodin and Lucas 2004). This phenomenon, which has played out in numerous African and Asian countries, is what can be called structural famine because it is not

caused by strictly a natural disaster (though that may be a catalyst). Instead, it is a direct result of policy and action put in place by fellow human beings. Things become further complicated when agencies force countries to spend their money earned from international agricultural trade in ways they (the agencies) see fit. This often is not on education or health care, but further investments in industry and trade which is seen as necessary to pay off international debt.

This international manipulation by agencies is not the only way that external forces associated with industrial agriculture can affect farmers. Trans-national corporations can also have a role in other countries and the way they practice agriculture. For example, due to a misleading and many would argue immoral marketing campaign by international giant Monsanto, many Indian farmers found themselves in a situation with failing crops and no money to repay loans or buy more chemical inputs needed to save their crops. Thousands have literally chosen suicide as the solution to their problem (Shiva 2000). Few examples more urgently or poignantly illustrate the need for a re-evaluation of the current system.

The Cogs of the Civic Agricultural Machine

When I coming up with a suitable analogy that would help describe the structure of the civic agricultural system to be studied, one of the most effective was of a machine. This machine I envisioned would be made up of cogs representing aspects or players within the system. The cogs are different sizes, but all function together to power the machine. At first glance, this may not be the most appropriate imagine when talking about a system that is consciously trying to distance itself from an over mechanized existence. However, in the end it seemed to be an effective way of looking at the different moving parts and judging their effectiveness. These individual elements of a food system all work together to produce change as Patricia Allen notes:

These incremental improvements, significant in themselves, also provide openings for catalyzing further changes as programs and networks expand. The people involved in these diverse efforts can coalesce into a powerful social movement for restructuring and transforming the agrifood system in the direction of greater environmental soundness and social justice (2004).

In this section I will summarize the most important aspects, or cogs, of a local system. I made the decision that these were the most important parts of a system because they were the most commonly mentioned or discussed in the literature. These will be compared to the features found in the Oregon communities in question. This will result in interesting comparisons informing the question of the health of the systems. The other potential interesting question will be if there is a cog in the Oregon system that is not present in the literature, representing a new and cutting edge in the movement. The cogs that I have identified as being the most important based on literature review are: farmer's markets, community supported agriculture, and food policy councils.

Farmer's Markets

Farmer's markets are a form of direct marketing between producers and customers that have huge potential to strengthen and build civic agriculture movements across the country. These often times open air markets have a number of characteristics described in the literature that make this possible, and I intend to compare these ideal characteristics with ones I find in Corvallis and Portland.

Living in this part of the country, it is easy to assume that farmer's markets are a ubiquitous feature on the American landscape, but this is not the case and certainly has been even less so in the past. This type of market was ubiquitous in the pre-industrial era, so much so that they would not have been considered something different, an alternative as they are seen today. This type of market began to disappear quickly as people moved to urban areas of large cities, farmers and small farms

disappeared, and technologies like refrigeration made supermarkets more common (Lyson 2007). The prevalence of automobiles and a drive for efficiency also severely decreased the popularity of markets (Stephenson 2008). In the 1960's, when farmer's markets first began to be seen as an alternative to the system, there were as few as 100 across the entire country (Gillespie et al. 2007). By 1994 this number had increased to 1,755 and by 10 years later the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated the number to be as high as 3,706. Oregon itself has seen over 50 new markets develop in the past 10 years alone, with around 70 operating in 2006 (Stephenson 2008).

This massive increase is mirrored in other countries as well. In the U.K. the phenomenon started much later than in the United States, but from what is considered the flagship model in the city of Bath in 1997, the number grew to 450 regular markets just 5 years later (Woodin and Lucas 2004). Now even large, extremely urbanized cities have many farmers' markets, with New York City having 28 of its own (Lyson 2007).

This huge turnaround is proof that people are hungry for a change in how their food is produced, and perhaps a yearning for a more connected relationship with their community, something that slipped away in the rush of development and change that underscored the last century in this country. This increase is so large in fact, that it represents the first increase in the number of small farmers since their decline began many decades ago. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, small farms have actually grown by 20% in the past 6 years (Gogoi 2010). This can largely be attributed to farmers' markets and other grass roots movements that is reigniting interest and passion about the ideas of small scale locally produced goods.

There are a few main roles that farmers' markets play in supporting the crucial infrastructure of a community. First they make local food visible, both literally and figuratively (Gillespie et al. 2007). The markets occupy public spaces in communities and make people aware of the possibilities for local food. This is a very important educational aspect of the markets.

Second these markets also encourage farmers to diversify their crops, and try new avenues of production (Gillespie et al. 2007). This element of a market is important in an agricultural environment where monocrops have long been the norm and the only way for farmer's to make a living. Gillespie et al. do a perfect job explaining why this diversification is one of the most important results that a farmers' market can bring to a community.

Such diversification is a keystone process because it enhances the economic viability of a small agricultural and food business while also developing consumer demand for local food products and services. For producers, diversifying into new crops or products or new varieties of familiar crops or products can lengthen the market season, add value to products, attract more or different customers, and better utilize resources, including labor and equipment. Diversification is a time honored way to reduce the risk of production failures and market price fluctuations, and it remains important for farmers and food producers marketing locally (Gillespie et. al. 2007).

In addition to the reasons given, diversification helps fix some of the problems associated with environmental and social degradation I mentioned earlier in the chapter. Increasing the biological health of local farms and proximate land is a benefit to the entire community.

Third, farmers' markets can be important incubators of local business. They can be fantastic locations for newer producers to learn from more experienced ones in a somewhat sheltered environment before taking steps out into a larger network of food distribution (Gillespie et. al. 2007). In addition they can be a major marketing outlet for producers who use environmentally friendly techniques and practices (Allen 2004).

Fourth, modern farmers' markets have become an important way to improve food security in the community. In fact, over 50% of farmers' markets national

participate in some type of food assistance program to help a variety of groups in their communities; ranging from low income to seniors (McBride 2009).

A final function of farmers' markets is that as represented in the majority of the literature was the social dimension of the market itself. This reflects the idea in civic agriculture that the economics of a local food system are embedded deep within the fabric of the society. Farmers' markets strengthen ties between consumers and producers, provide important opportunities for socializing, and solidify the notion that the participants are members of a true community that is special and unique.

All these functions are of course not unique to these markets, and many will appear in other cogs. However they are all key things to keep in mind when looking at the impact a market may be having in the community in question.

Community Supported Agriculture

Another important cog that I will look at in my research is that of community supported agriculture (CSA). In its most basic definition, a CSA is an organization of individuals or families that contribute resources to a farming operation in exchange for part of the harvest that the farm reaps (Lyson 2004). The most important benefit of spreading the cost of operation over all the members of the organization is that the true costs of production can be covered, avoiding the externalitiesⁱⁱⁱ associated with industrial agriculture (Ostrom 2007). The movement started in Japan and Europe in the 1980's and then was adopted by citizens and farmers in the Northeastern states (Ostrom 2007).

There are a number of types of CSAs, with the differences being who decides what the farmer grows, how many farmers may be working together in production, who owns the land, the organizational structure, among other factors (Lyson 2004). However, despite how the CSA may be organized, the benefits to the local community are the same. They offer a way for people to be more connected to the land and their

community, as well as taking an active role in their diet as well as impact on their environment.

An interesting benefit is the strengthening of ties between the urban (or suburban) and the rural (Ostrom 2007). This is important because in recent decades there has been a growing divide between communities in these two regions of the country, with both sides feeling increasingly separate from the other in terms of politics, culture, and governmental attention. Bridging this gap would be an important step in creating a more integrated and cooperative community. In the Japanese version of a CSA, known as teikei, this connection is known as “seeing the face of the farmer in the vegetable” (Ostrom 2007).

Concerns of land stewardship often permeate the motivations of CSAs and that results in a form of food production that is better for the health of the local ecosystem and all of its biodiversity. While CSAs may be sometimes isolated pockets of people with similar ideals, the possibility exists for the day when they are much more numerous and interconnected, representing a real alternative to a traditional supermarket (Lyson 2004). Regardless of the fact that at the moment CSAs do not represent a substantial challenge to industrial agriculture, they do represent the extremely important idea that people do have agency in the system, and they can actively take part in their place in the food system (Ostrom 2007).

The Food Policy Council

A third important cog in the civic agriculture machine is that of the food policy council (FPC). FPCs were first defined at Drake University and are institutions that bring together members of the community in order to discuss the food issues facing the community, region, or state. The exact origin of the FPC seems to be murky, with different sources claiming different states to be the first to have a state level FPC. I think this is most likely due to a non-universal definition of what qualifies for a FPC. The first state wide FPC was either in Connecticut or Massachusetts, but since then

other states, counties, and county/city combinations have followed (McBride 2009, Clancy et al. 2007). Knoxville, Tennessee was the first local, non-state level FPC, formed in 1980 as part of a landscape architecture class studying food related planning issues (Clancy et al. 2007).

Whatever the origin, the concept has been around for a number of decades, starting sometime in the late 1970s. It was a result of a number of movements and ideas that were circulating at the time. These included rising food prices, the oil crisis, growing awareness of environmental issues and “a fresh sensibility to food engendered by the back-to-the-land enthusiasts of the 1960s that eventually combined with an interest in sustainable agriculture that emerged in the 1980s” (Clancy et al. 2007). A more official definition of the concept comes from Drake University itself.

[Convening] citizens and government officials for the purpose of providing a comprehensive examination of a state or local food system. This unique, non-partisan form of civic engagement brings together a diverse array of food system stakeholders to develop food and agricultural policy recommendations (Drake Agricultural Law Center 2006).

A FPC could deal with issues such as food insecurity, school lunches, facilitating research on food projects, advising and making recommendations to governmental groups, assisting residents in understanding contemporary and local food issues, community gardens or regulations on farmers’ markets (Clancy et al. 2007). These FPCs are important, because for the most part governments are unwilling or not equipped to take on the issue of providing food security for their citizens on their own (so it seems). The need some type of grassroots movement to help (Clancy et al. 2007).

The membership of these councils typically includes representatives from farming, hunger prevention, retail food, nutrition education, food

processing, sustainable agriculture, religious, health, government and environment organizations (Allen 2004).

Theory

In doing my research I used three main theoretical perspectives in both framing my research, as well as analyzing it. All of these frameworks are large and complex, but they will be invaluable in an attempt to analyze the success of the local food movement in Oregon. In this section I will briefly summarize the three theoretical fields while indicating their relevance to the study. The actual analysis of my findings through the lenses of Structure vs. Agency, social movement theory, and theorists like Polanyi and Block will come in the discussion section.

Bourdieu's Capital and Agency

Two of the fundamental theoretical underpinnings of economic anthropology and general anthropology are the ideas of capital and structure vs. agency. These theories seek to explain how individuals interact with or change their societal environment, or how they are prevented from doing so. Both concepts will be helpful in laying a basic understanding of how individuals and social movements, in this case civic agriculture and the people involved with it, seek to fortify their causes against larger and more entrenched structures.

Structure and agency are concepts that were first discussed in sociology and then found use in other social sciences such as anthropology. The field first developed in the mid 1800's with work still being done to hone the concepts. Pierre Bourdieu was a French theorist that worked in sociology, anthropology and philosophy. His work has some of the closest ties to anthropology and had provided an important theoretical understanding for this research.

Agency is the power that an individual has to make decisions and choices within their social context. It posits that the individual has free will and free choice to determine their engagement with their environment. This also can be thought of in reverse, that an individual's actions are based on the fact that they do own this agency in their lives. Structure is made up of the forces and barriers that may limit an individual to engage their agency. It is the institutionalized norms and phenomenon in a society that is sometimes clear and sometimes embedded deep within a culture or world view. Specifically related to work and economy, Stephen Sweet and Peter Meiksins state:

Although culture creates meaning systems that orient people to work, social structures involve enduring patterns of social organization that determine what kinds of jobs are available, who gets which jobs, how earnings are distributed, how organizational rules are structured, and how laws are formulated (Sweet and Meiksin 2008).

Bourdieu was one of the first social scientists to put forward the idea that instead of this being a one or the other situation, it was a dynamic state where agency and structure affected one another in different situations (Swartz 1997). His conception of structure vs. agency included the ideas of field, habitus and capital. These are three difficult to pin down concepts, but I think that they are valuable to understand because they will provide a basic almost behind the scenes understanding of why certain social movements and certain individuals in social movements succeed or fail in their attempts.

In general, capital is most often thought of in the terms of financial capital or economic goods. It is the money that you can spend to gain objects or status in society. It helps you to succeed if you have it, and puts you at a disadvantage if you don't. There are however other forms of capital and it helps to think of them in the same way

as financial capital. Bourdieu extended this logic of economic analysis of capital to all forms of power; including material, cultural, social and symbolic forms (Swartz 1997).

Social capital is made up of what social connections, networks and resources an individual has access to with which to navigate their situation within the system. This knowledge or possession of resources allows you to know how to behave and how to function properly to ensure you have access to everything you need to be successful. Not having, or being blocked from having are obviously serious barriers to success.

Cultural capital is similar, and refers to non-monetary assets that allow for social mobility within a society. Things like educational background or being brought up in a particular segment of society that naturally puts you at an advantage, or disadvantage. It can even be physical thing, owning nice cloths identifies you as a certain type of individual and allows you to participate in certain areas where that is culturally expected of you. Other examples of cultural capital are verbal facility, general cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences, information about the school system, educational credentials etc. (Swartz 1997).

Symbolic capital can also be important, and is a resource that one can have access to on the basis of their status or perceived status in a society. Coming from a prestigious university for example, will give you high symbolic capital, while coming from a poor part of a city may present itself as a barrier. Symbolic capital plays a large role in social organization and stratification, specifically in regards to its role in symbolic power and violence. This is when an actor that has symbolic capital, and uses it to try and control or manipulate those without it. David Swartz describes this well in his book Culture and Power:

Bourdieu thinks of symbolic power as 'world making power', for it involves the capacity to impose the 'legitimate vision of the social work and of its divisions.' Because symbolic power legitimizes the existing

economic and political relations, it contributes to the intergenerational reproduction of inegalitarian social arrangements (1997).

I see various forms of capital as the tools one has with which to engage their agentic capacity against a structure (or in some cases in concert with an existing structure). It is what allows some people to do so, while barring others from having the appropriate apparatus to change their situation.. The other two concepts Bourdieu is known for, field and habitus, are also important. I see the field as the sociocultural setting itself. The field mediates the relationship between social structure and cultural practice (Swartz 1997). This is the social system that all of this is taking place in, where the individual (or agent as Bourdieu refers to individuals) struggles to obtain and use capital.

Field denotes arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge, or status and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate and monopolize these different kinds of capital (Swartz 1997).

Habitus is a difficult to define concept, but it could be described as the mental conditioning a person has while negotiating their place in the field, a “deep-structuring cultural matrix” (Swartz 1997). It is their disposition, opinions, worldview, expectations, internalized relationships, etc. that dictate how they see and act. This is a product of the culture they are immersed and raised in, created by objective structures they run up against. Jerry Moore creates an interesting metaphor to understand the concept, likening habitus to a “thematic riff that jazz musicians may improvise upon, produce countermelodies against, or restate in a different key, but is not a precoded musical score”.

It provides a coherent thread to the musicians’ play, but they are active creators of a previously unheard cultural experience. And the resulting

music cannot be reduced to a score, a recording of the improvisation made by an onlooker, the individual players or their instruments. This music is the jazz- it is the practice- created by a group of musicians who elaborate upon a theme (habitus), known to all and thus available for modification (Moore 2009).

A more traditional explanation of habitus is laid out by David Swartz.

A system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moments as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems (Bourdieu 1971).

One other term that is applicable is the idea of doxa. This is simply what is taken for truth and reality in a society; it is the dominant set of beliefs about the way things are. I see it as similar to hegemony^{iv}, but not exactly because it is not necessarily used to enact control or dominion. It can however put up barriers to social mobility because people's doxa may inform their view of their place in the world, and what they can and cannot do. Another way to refer to doxa is "...those fundamental, taken-for-granted conceptual categories that shape intellectual practices" (Swartz 1997).

I intend to use this theoretical background to inform my understanding of how and why people are doing what they are in my study. It will also help to analyze why some things are not being done, and why some actions are either succeeding or failing. In particular I will use the ideas of capital in looking at civic agriculture, as it is an especially good example that highlights the different types that interact in a community.

Polanyi and Block

Karl Polanyi was important to my understanding of the issues I looked at, and I found his ideas equally important as Bourdieu's in understanding the basic frame work of what was going on. In further research I found Fred Block to fill a critical gap and strongly contextualize Polanyi's basic theories in the modern milieu.

Polanyi was an economic historian who worked in mostly in the first half of the 20th century writing about the economic and social changes that occurred as the industrial revolution took hold in Europe (Jaffe 2007). He talked about a time before the revolution, when markets were embedded in the societies themselves, never "the central organizing principle of an economy" (Jaffe 2007). Instead of social functions like reciprocity and exchange dictating market function, price became the only signal that the market economy could perceive. As the market became separated from social functions, Polanyi stated that social relations would be replaced only by economic logic, resulting in the degradation of cultural institutions, the environment, national security, and the social fabric (Jaffe 2007, Polanyi 1944).

The creation of goods involved neither the reciprocating attitudes of mutual aid; nor the concern of the householder for those whose needs are left to his care; nor the craftsman's pride in the exercise of his trade; nor the satisfaction of public praise – nothing but the plain motive of gain so familiar to the man whose profession is buying and selling (Polanyi 1944).

I mentioned earlier the specifically agricultural impacts of the industrial revolution; this theory laid out by Polanyi fills in the economic side of the issue. It can be seen then how the economic, social and technological changes associated with the revolution are still at work today, and are still affecting the way people live.

Polanyi also talked about a movement of "self-protection" where people tried to check and re-regulate the market economy, in an attempt to regain some type of socially embedded society (Jaffe 2007). This concept fits with ideas of agency; it

speaks to the ability people have to negotiate within a system and hopefully about the ability to change that system.

Patricia Allen also mentions this struggle that people in the agrifood system deal with, specifically in relation to the failures of the political system.

They witness the failure of electoral politics and political parties to solve agrifood problems, a situation they fear can only get worse, as the decision-making ability of elected governments is superseded by the power of global capital to limit choice. They have decided it is time to take matters into their own hands (2004).

She also mentions one of the “key functions of a social movement is to challenge and ‘rehabilitate’ social institutions, to ‘reform’ public space so that new ideas and relationships can develop” (Allen 2004).

While it was later shown that market systems were not reacting strictly to price signals, theorists like Block used Polanyi’s initial theory and expanded it. Block uses two terms that I found extremely important in understanding how markets function depending on how embedded they are in a society.

“Marketness” classifies transaction based on how much the price is in fact the dominant factor. The more marketness something has, the more the price is the single factor that is important. But if something is classified as having a lower marketness, it means that other factors such as land stewardship or workers rights may be more important. Block states that the marketness is inversely related to the level of economic embeddedness, a statement I find extremely interesting and helpful in understanding these complex economic issues.

The other term he uses is “instrumentalism”. This is the idea that the importance of individual economic gain to an actor can dictate economic behavior. Highly instrumental behavior tends to place this economic gain above social ties.

Under this theory it makes sense that embedded systems will have lower levels of instrumentalism.

Polanyi's idea that the economy was not removed from, and in fact could never be removed from society, was a new idea in the field of economic theory. Although even if in reality it could never truly be removed from a social context, there could still be damage done in attempting to do so, or conceptualizing it in such a way. It went against the idea that the entity known as the economy was a system of interconnected markets that would naturally equalize amongst themselves.

The term "embeddedness" expresses the idea that the economy is not autonomous as it must be in economic theory, but subordinated to politics, religion, and social relations. Polanyi's use of the term suggests more than the now familiar idea that market transactions depend on trust, mutual understanding, and legal enforcement of contracts. He uses the concept to highlight how radical a break the classical economists, especially Malthus and Ricardo, made with previous thinkers (Block 2010).

I think that both of these theorists are especially relevant in relation to the social embeddedness that Lyson talks about. His work does a great deal of demonstrating the benefits associated with this phenomenon, while Polanyi warns of the dangers of the industrial model. The theory associated with civic agriculture states that the more a food system is democratized and the more local involvement there is from community members, the better the socioeconomic health of the community will be. In other words, when people are involved in their food systems at a local level for reasons other than profit maximization, the community will fare better in both quantitative and qualitative ways. Lyson states:

At the local level, the civic community is one in which residents are bound to a place by a plethora of local institutions and organizations. Business enterprises are embedded in institutional and organizational

networks. And the community, not the corporation, is the source of personal identity, the topic of social discourses, and the foundation of social cohesion (2004).

I will use all three of these theorists in analyzing my research. I think it will be especially important to understand motivations of actors, as well as providing a deeper sense of context.

Social Movement Theory

In researching potential theoretical models for this project, social movement theory (SMT) seemed exceptionally relevant in relation to my questions. SMT “seeks to explain why social mobilization occurs, the forms under which it manifests, as well as the potential social, cultural, and political consequences (Stevenson et al. 2007).”

The main researchers in this field that I drew inspiration from, Stevenson et al. describe this social movement framework as having three components that “focuses on the strategic orientation of change activities in the modern agrifood system (Stevenson et al. 2007).” These three stances that are important in actively changing a dominant system are given the names warrior, builder and weaver by Stevenson et al. and are defined as follows.

Warrior work consciously contests many of the corporate trajectories and operates primarily, but not exclusively, in the political sector. This is the work of resistance. Builder work seeks to create alternative food initiatives and models and operates primarily (and often less contentiously) in the economic sector. This is the work of reconstruction. Weaver work focuses on developing strategic and conceptual linkages within and between warrior and builder activities. It operates in the political and economic sectors but is particularly important in mobilizing civic society. This is the work of connection (Stevenson et al. 2007).

To further define the model, these actions can be applied in three directions or intensities. They can be used to promote inclusion, reformation or transformation. Inclusion is the attempt to include marginalized or underrepresented players in the current agrifood system (Stevenson et al. 2007). I think a general example of this would be encouraging traditional supermarkets to carry organic or local foods. Reformation has a goal of altering the operational guidelines of the existing system (Stevenson et al. 2007). This could be changing rules about the dietary regulations associated with public schools. Finally, transformation; it is the attempt to create qualitatively different paradigms, which stand in opposition to current systems (Stevenson et al. 2007). This is a step that has not happened yet, so it is difficult to imagine what exactly this would look like.

Analysis that tries to study social movements rather than just the actions of individuals is important because individual agents have trouble succeeding for a number of reasons.

First, people may not have the inclination or the capacity to behave in a manner that will transform the new economy. Second, individualistic efforts generally leave untouched the underlying forces that shape the contours of work and opportunity. Third, as a cultural framework, individualism reinforces the shift of risk to the individuals, rather than building on the strength of collectives (Sweet and Meiksins 2008).

I intend to use these three activities (warrior, builder, and weaver) in evaluating the food movement in Oregon, attempting to ascertain its health and effectiveness. I also will try and determine if the majority of the local food system is in an inclusive, transformational, or reformatory phase.

Methods

Site Justification

The geographic area studied in this thesis was chosen for a number of reasons. One of my strongest interests in doing this research is the question of long term viability of this type of agriculture. It is obvious that small pockets can exist, or that people can experiment successfully on a small term basis with things like community gardens or CSAs. However as the world faces increasing pressure from over population, resource depletion and environmental degradation, the question of a large scale alternative is becoming increasingly important. What I find most interesting and most important is how local food systems are organizing themselves in a way that might ensure this long term viability and competitiveness. For this reason I wanted to choose a location that has had significant development and history associated with the movement, a place that has had the chance to develop past the first phases of development. Corvallis and Portland both fit this criterion perfectly, both have been investigating civic agriculture for quite a long time, and there are a number of high profile examples of this fact. In addition, agriculture is a very important aspect of the Oregon economy, in fact a third of the state's economic production can be linked to agriculture; this totals around 50 billion dollars a year (Schrader 2011). This statistic represents predominately standard forms of production. However it still reflects the importance that agriculture has in the state's economy, as well as the potential for growth of the local food movement.

There are a few important similarities between the two cities in question. Both are on or very near extremely productive or potentially productive farmland. Part of this is due to a very beneficial climate with a long growing season. Also, both cities have a history of being involved with the local food movement. Corvallis for example had a farmers' market far ahead of the popular national trend.

The difference between the two cities may prove to be even more interesting. Considering Corvallis and Portland, the first obvious difference is population size. On July 1st 2009, Corvallis had an estimated population size of 55,125 while Portland stood at 582,130 (Proehl 2009)^v. This difference in population should have an effect on the food systems of both cities. That is not to say one will work better than the other, but simply that they will both face different challenges implementing a successful system.

Similarly, the cities are different in terms of their urban structure. Portland is of course a denser space with many more characteristics of a large city in terms of not only population and amenities, but also lack of access to large swaths of fertile land. Corvallis on the other hand, is located to large amounts of farmable land and water, with a much less densely packed population.

These differences go back to addressing the question of long term viability of the movement. Looking at cities with notable differences will give a better idea of things will play out in other cities in the country. This will be very important in creating a nationwide shift to local civic agriculture, because there are very different areas of the country that will require specialized versions of the civic model. Factors such as land use history, demographics, politics, climate etc. will combine to create varying contexts in which these cogs may or may not succeed (Selfa and Qazi 2005). Some areas will be easier to change and adapt to civic agriculture, while others will present more of a challenge.

Informant and Sample Justification

I choose a roughly equally sample group from both cities using non-probability sampling methods, specifically purposive sampling. Due to the nature of the research I actively choose informants from expected sections of the local food movement that were highlighted in the literature, such as farmers' markets. These expert informants were chosen specifically, as opposed to random sampling. This was because I was

looking for general cultural data, not specific data about individuals (Bernard 2006). Also, because of the relatively low sample size, due to this being a Master's Thesis as opposed to a PhD project, every informant needed to count, therefore choosing samples on purpose was valid. Additional informants not from these key cogs were also included, and were located through chain referral. This technique was especially helpful because not all members of the civic agriculture movement are easy to find, or are publically visible. This is not necessarily by choice, but simply because they are members of a small movement that may not be in a place of high public visibility. By talking to members of the movement that I was able to locate I was able to track down people whom I would not have otherwise known about and who may have had information about things other than markets, CSAs, or food policy councils in particular. I actually used this chain referral method not only in cases of these additional informants, but for my key "cog related" informants as well. I would generally ask near the end of the interview if the informant knew of anyone else that I should be talking to, or if they knew of any projects going on that I might not be aware of.

This chain referral method worked very well in the research, partially because of the type of system I was investigating. If I had been looking at a more sensitive subject, people may have been less willing to talk or refer friends and coworkers, but that was not the case with civic agriculture. Not only is it a relatively benign subject, most people involved in it are there because they have some strong passion for the work, making them quite willing to talk at lengths about the subject. In fact most interviews conducted suffered from an overabundance of information, not too little.

Interview Methods

Interviews were conducted by a mix of in-person and phone settings. In-person interviews were of course ideal and preferred and the majority of the informants were interviewed in this manner. One of the biggest advantages of this type of interview,

aside from the obvious face to face nature, is the opportunity to conduct the interview in a location that adds to the understanding of the issues. For example, it was educational talking to farmers' market coordinators at the markets themselves. This also ended up facilitating the above mentioned chain referral methods many times because I was introduced to people at interviews I would interview later. At times, necessity dictated a phone interview. While not ideal, for the types of questions I was asking it was acceptable because people I was talking to were used to speaking about their work and were comfortable doing so over the phone. The nature of the work also was not sensitive or extremely personal, so the discussion over a phone was not awkward or difficult. Steps were taken to ensure a smooth and beneficial interview process, such as delivering brief project summary and sample questions to informants via email a few days before the scheduled interview.

All interview questions were open ended and were tailored to the specific interviewee in question. Though of course there were some standard questions that were present in all interviews.

My goal in this project was to talk to people in a variety of fields and professions about the issues surrounding the development of civic agriculture. By asking very different people the same set of questions, I hoped to get an idea of the variety of opinions and feelings out there, and synthesize that data into a picture of what is going on in these cities. I used the information gathered from the two cities in a complementary fashion, rather than a strictly comparative one. I feel that this approach reveals a larger vision of the current state of local agriculture in the Willamette Valley, though still allowing for unique elements in each city to be revealed. This approach helped show how the movement itself was functioning as a whole by making it the focal point of the study.

In both cities I tried to talk to a representative group of people based on the civic agriculture cogs that identified in my literature review. These were designed to give as complete of a view as possible for a study of this size. In both Portland and

Corvallis I also talked to people who came from groups that could have been described as representing different types of cogs. For examples food bank/ hunger insecurity groups, academics as well as grass root start up organizations. There was no food policy group to interview in Corvallis.

I conducted my interviews in Corvallis first for the most part. Most took place at the various offices of the people I talked to; some on campus others around town. It was always interesting to see the places where peopled worked. One especially pleasant interview took place on Sunbow Farm outside Corvallis in the spring. The smell of fresh soil and budding flowers made it a perfect setting for an interview about local agriculture.

A few interviews in Portland were conducted by phone, but most times I drove up to meet interviewees. Driving the hour plus between the two cities I was always reminded of the agricultural richness of the valley, despite the many cities in between, there was also much farmland. Interviews in Portland always seemed a little incongruous, talking about local food in a coffee shop in an industrial looking street downtown somewhere for example. This of course was just because I was so used to Corvallis after living there a number of years.

Everyone I talked to was remarkably kind and fascinated by the work they were doing. This kind of enthusiasm must be part of the reason the local food system seems to be thriving so well here. Having people so passionate about their work allows great things to happen. My favorite interview in Portland was with the owner of Creatures Farm, a small scale CSA. The property was not far from a major artery of traffic, but tucked into a neighborhood was a little permaculture oasis. A reminder of what is possible even in a dense urban setting.

Analysis

After the interviews were conducted they were then transcribed using Express Scribe © software. After transcription I coded interviews based on relevant categories and classes of information that would be important in my analysis section. These included things like “reasons for public interest in LFS” or “Information regarding relation to city size”. Care was also taken to mark specific passages that would be used for direct quotation later.

After all the interviews were coded, I sketched a number of concept maps that highlighted the relationships of themes not only within one particular interview, but across many. This helped a great deal in forming general conclusions and comparisons.

Interviewee list

Corvallis

Rebecca Landis: Market director, Corvallis-Albany Famers’ Market

Bruce Sorte: Instructor, OSU department of Economics

Garry Stephenson: Professor, OSU department of Crop and Soil Science

Jen Myers: Community food organizer, Ten Rivers Food Web

Susan James: Volunteer/Gleaning coordinator, Linn Benton Food Share

Emily Stimac: Marketing coordinator, First Alternative Natural Foods Co-op

Harry MacCormack: Owner, Sunbow Farms

Katy Gaudin: Food systems coordinator, OSU Student Sustainability Initiative

George Brown: Owner, Corvallis Local Foods

Tom Denison: Owner, Denison Farms

Portland

Anna Curtin: Program Manager, Portland Farmers’ Market

Shawn DeCarlo: Metro Services manager, Oregon Food Bank

Anita Yap: Co-chair, Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council

Aurora Erlander: Owner, Creature's Farm

Dan Bravin: Food Program Coordinator, Multnomah County

Monica Cuneo: Marketing and member services manager, People's Co-op

Michele Knaus: Executive Director, Friends of Family Farmers

Amelia Pape: Co-founder, Fork in the Road Mobile Market

Jim Fullmer: Executive director: Demeter USA

Background

In this chapter I will give an ethnographic dimension to the research, setting it in time and place in an attempt to give a deeper understanding of not only what is happening in this corner of the country, but why. This information is a product of the immersion in the community I experienced both as a researcher over this project's life, but as a citizen of Oregon myself, where I have lived for eight years now.

The entire Willamette Valley is a prime setting for agriculture before any consideration of culture, economy or politics need be considered. The topography, climate and most importantly soil make it as close to as ideal as a farmer could wish. Naturally no region can produce every crop imaginable (tropical and citrus fruits for example will not thrive here), however the mild winters, generally long growing season and lack of drought conditions make it well suited for a varied and strong local system. This of course could be a big problem in some places across the country, if the climate or other natural factors limits a community to a few crops, there may be money to be had, but a thriving and diverse food system could prove to be elusive.

While the climatic benefits mentioned above are no doubt helpful, the very ground itself provides this part of the country with its biggest agricultural advantage. Over ten thousand years ago, as great glacial slabs retreated North during the waning of the last ice age, massive lakes formed as water melted and was trapped. A particularly colossal one located in what is now Montana was known as Lake Missoula and was held in place by mountains and the remaining intact glaciers. However in an event that would literally reshape the landscape of the Northwest, one of the walls that retained the water burst, releasing over 500 cubic miles of water in a series of devastating floods. The natural topography channeled the water through Idaho, across Eastern Washington and ended in the Willamette Valley. The effect was that a great deal of the top soil, from Washington especially, was caught up in the torrents (which were often walls of water over 300 feet tall rampaging across the landscape) and deposited in the valley as the water finally dissipated. This created a bed of top soil that was unbelievably thick and rich, resulting in ideal growing conditions.

All these factors combine to create an environment that is very well suited to not only agriculture, but agricultural movements. The state certainly has a long history of agriculture, but independence as well. The idea of self sufficiency and being unique is strong in the Northwest, evident by not only the attitude of people living here, but even historically by things like the attempted secessionist movement known as the State of Jefferson. This sense of independence, when combined with the natural fecundity of the region creates an ideal setting for a movement like civic agriculture to take hold and grow.

In general it is easy to see why issues like local food and sustainability are common place in the communities studied, signs of interest and activity are both visible and topics of discussions that are brought up in conversation as well as local news sources.

The interest and awareness of food in Corvallis seems especially clear. It is hard to move through the community and not see the interest in food held by many people in the community (local, sustainable, organic, or anything along those lines). This is reflected in signage at stores, the prevalence of gardens on private property as well as community events. Of course it would be incorrect to paint the image that every person in places like Corvallis shop at Farmers' Markets or care about where their food comes from, but the feeling certainly is strong that it is an issue that many people talk and care about.

There seem to be different factors creating this presence in the community. First there is of course a good deal of farmland surrounding the city, which itself occupies a relatively small footprint. In fact it is really impossible to drive to any neighboring city without seeing farmland of some sort pass by the window. This certainly brings the idea of food and farming as part of the community out in a clear way. Historically the town has also been associated with food production and processing.

One factor that undoubtedly made and still makes Corvallis a place where issues surrounding food will always be discussed and explored is the fact that the land grant state university is located there. Schools like Oregon State University have traditionally been known as "ag schools" because as land grant schools they were first established to support agriculture and forestry. A great deal of research is done there, and strong ties are made across the state with the agricultural community, naturally making it a place where there issues will be discussed commonly.

Both the nearby farms and the nature of the university bring a great deal of people who are involved in agriculture together in one place, making it a city that pushes agricultural innovation forwards. I would argue this could happen in a number of ways. First would be the model of working through university research in a more traditional sense of crop studies and developing new seeds. But not everyone I have encountered is enamored by the results and methods of this type of work, and people

could come up with new programs and models that are specifically designed to address what are seen as gaps in the current system.

Even if the rest of the city is observed without thinking about the university, the interest in food issues seems to permeate the city. Many large parks have community gardens on their grounds, and in fact gardens in general are wide spread over the city. Many front yards in residential neighborhoods also have the usual green front lawn replaced by a patchwork of edible, native and diverse gardens. Chickens wander through these gardens as well; the fact that this is specifically allowed shows the city is aware of the interest of the community in these types of local issues. Just the fact that so much grows in this environment may turn people's thoughts to food and a sense that they live in a place that had ties to agriculture.

A good place to look for the attitude about food a community holds is in traditional markets, as well as alternative ones. There are a number of co-ops across the city, and larger more traditional stores offer a wide variety of not only organic foods, but even make an effort to offer local products, which of course is a reflection of the interests and the demands of the people living there.

Portland, a much larger city with a population over 500,000 naturally gives a different feel. Certainly the urban environment at first glance might not seem as idyllic and naturally conducive to a civic agricultural system as Corvallis does. And indeed there certainly are areas of the city where people do not have the option or ability to participate in the system due to economic or structural barriers.

However I think Portland shows that having a healthy food system is about far more than just farmland nearby, but that it can be brought about by the motivation and innovation of its people. Of course Portland would have a much harder time offering the abundance and freshness of food options that it does without the farmland that does exist outside its borders. A great deal is shipped in to meet demand. I think it may be truly impossible to pinpoint where a city gets its own unique feel and sense, but through the knowledge I gained by spending time in the city, it has a feel that is very

progressive and ideal for a movement like civic agriculture. And as it continues to be a progressive model for this type of work, it would make sense that the movement will only continue to grow as people relocate because the place matches their own values.

Portland, like the Northwest in general, has an intrinsic feel to it that seems to emphasize the importance of the environment, health and community that meshes well with the idea of civic agriculture. Though I am not aware of a study that has attempted to draw general conclusions about the political and moral leanings of a population based on the bumper stickers and similar modes of expression found there. If that was done in Portland it would be easy to see the interest in things like local food. The elements that make up the feel and culture of the Northwest are proudly on display by the citizens living in Portland. This attitude is not only casually expressed, but is taken on as a matter of pride, with people often talking very fondly of how their part of the country is different and progressive. People may point to the reason for this as the counter culture history this part of the country was known for in the 1960s and 1970s, or simply that the environment is so ideal for agriculture that it is only natural that a system like civic agriculture would grow.

Case Studies

In this section I will flesh out the conclusions previously made on my research objectives by looking at a few programs in particular and show how they are examples of a larger successfully functioning local food system. I will use examples representing two of the cogs listed in the literature review here, with two examples per cog (one from each city) to give this context. In addition I will use two more pairs of examples from types of programs or organizations that I did not specifically single out in the literature review, but turned out to be very interesting elements in the system. The cogs of food policy councils and farmer's markets turned out to be some of the most interesting programs to study, and looking at them in more detail will give both a

better understanding of the phenomenon as a whole, as well as similarities or differences between the two cities.

Markets: Portland

The main farmers' market system in Portland consists of 6 markets and sees upwards of 700,000 visitors per year across those sites, netting over 8 million in sales. The sites vary from small neighborhood lots to the large campus of PSU, where the first official location was located. Started in 1992, the market has grown from 22 vendors, to a current level of 150 food and produce vendors. I spoke to Anna Curtin, the outreach director for the Portland Farmers' market system about the role the market plays in the city.

The format of the market is similar to ones described in the literature. The market only provides space for food vendors, as opposed to markets that allow an arts and crafts section for example. This is due to the fact the creators and current administrators of the market hold the belief that the role of a farmer market is to highlight the agricultural bounty of the region. The mission statement of the market system is as follows. PFM operates world-class farmer's markets that contribute to the success of local food growers and producers, and create vibrant community gatherings.

The definition of local used by the market system includes the state of Oregon, and southern Washington. While it might seem strange to include produce from a whole other state in a market system, it makes sense due to the fact that the border between Oregon and Washington is very close by, making it indeed within the food shed of that part of Oregon. Interestingly there have been no problems with people loading up large trucks with produce and driving great distances, stopping at various local markets to sell produce as local, as has happened in California. Curtin describes the farmers themselves as the best police against this type of action, as they would quickly bring this threat to their profits to the attention of market administrators.

While the market prefers vendors to be certified organic, or certification of a similar meaning, it is not required, though most people do fall into that category. If a person makes claims to be organic, they must display their certification in the booth itself. In an attempt to combat vague and misleading statements that plague other types of markets, signs like “no spray” or “naturally grown” are not permitted in the market.

Curtin talked about the many reasons people in Portland are turning to markets like these in greater numbers than ever. First there is a growing desire to meet the person who is growing your food face to face and to see where it is coming from. This seems to be a reaction to the prevalence of food scares mentioned in the literature review. Bridging the urban/rural divide is a factor that Curtin describes as “one where the importance cannot be overstated”. Especially in state like Oregon there are very strong disconnects between the two areas, and markets are an excellent nexus to literally and figuratively connect and repair some of these breakages.

The value to the community is also clearly explained by Curtin. In large cities like Portland, farm land can be pushed further and further away from the city itself. But markets allow for economic incentive to keep farm land close and of course provide an outlet for farmers to sell their product. This in turn spurs on the local economy, not just for farmers but for local businesses and food vendors. The social capital aspect is strong as well. It provides people plain and simple with a site for social interaction. Curtin mentioned an anecdotal study that claimed the average interaction for a person in a modern supermarket was limited to two people. However, in farmer’s markets, people interacted with ten to twelve different individuals. Food demonstrations and other awareness raising activities further contribute to the social benefits the Portland farmers’ market system provides.

An important component of modern farmer’s markets is the focus on providing healthy food to all socioeconomic groups in a community. The Portland market system achieves this in a number of ways. First, like many markets across Oregon, they accept SNAP, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This means people who

participate in this food stamp program can shop for fresh produce at the six markets. In fact the Portland markets also accept similar programs from other states like Washington and California. In addition there is a program called Fresh Express where some of the markets will match this spending dollar for dollar, up to seven dollars. This is accomplished mostly by fundraising done by the market system, and has had great success not only increasing the fresh produce purchased by people on the food assistance program, but by increasing sales for the farmers as well. Some vendors also are certified to accept Farmers Nutrition Program vouchers, which are given to seniors and WIC participants and can be used on, and only on, fresh produce.

A final interesting aspect of the Portland market system is the barriers they are facing in developing and maintaining their success, or in some cases, lack thereof. One of the good things about the program is that it has been around for over 20 years. Because of this, Curtin states, they have had time to grow sensibly and only add features or employees when necessary. By not over reaching their means, they avoided potential pitfalls, and are now successful enough for example, to employ a full time bookkeeper, something very rare in farmers' markets. There are occasionally difficulties coming up with funds to pay for certain necessities like park leasing fees or to have roads blocked for the markets. While some markets in the city outside the Portland Farmer's Market system have had trouble with permits and similar zoning issues with the city, this is changing. The city is currently revising language in the city code to make things like farmers' markets and urban agriculture easier to start, something that shows the progressive nature of the city in regards to agriculture and local food.

Markets: Corvallis

To learn more about the market system in Corvallis, I talked with Rebecca Landis the Market Director. In many ways, the market in Corvallis makes sense and shows the relationship that population size has on a market. The system has three different markets, two in Corvallis (one large Saturday market and a smaller one on

Wednesday) and a third in the nearby town of Albany. The main Saturday market tends to be between 45 and 50 vendors, occasionally topping out at 60.

Unlike Portland's multi-state system (something that Landis suggested could be called regional, rather than local); the Corvallis market includes 6 counties from the surrounding area: Benton, Linn, Lane, Lincoln, Marion and Polk. However, this definition of local used by the market is not a static one. Landis mentioned that at certain times of the year, during cranberry season for example, she will get the board of director's permission to allow in a vendor from a county slightly further away if he or she offers a crop not found in what is called the local six. This suggests a dynamic and realistic understanding of a food shed, something that is beyond simple arbitrary borders and changes with natural events like the seasons.

The Corvallis market also makes an effort to include all members of the community, regardless of socioeconomic status, something Landis says is important to combat the belief she has occasionally run into that markets like this are elitist. As in Portland, people may use vouchers from SNAP and WIC assistance programs to purchase fresh food at the market. In addition, people are even eligible to purchase vegetable starts with their assistance, creating the ability to grow their own food and support themselves further. Of course not everyone has access to space for a garden, but it is still a great example of an innovative and important component of an inclusive local food system.

Food Policy Councils: Portland

The Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council is an advisory board to the county government in Multnomah County, where Portland is situated and to the city government as well, it has been active for about ten years. They are a group of 20 or so people that serve on a volunteer basis appointed by either the mayor or the county chair, and are headed by a permanent chair, and a co-chair that changes from year to year. I spoke with Anita Yap, who is the current co-chair of the organization. Her

background is in Urban Planning and did a very good job explaining the complex bureaucratic nature of trying to make Portland more sustainable. There members come from a robust representation of food related backgrounds in the community, including people from public health, food insecurity programs, farmers, urban planners, chefs, small business owners, and but not limited to food processors. These members meet once a month to discuss findings and plan new projects.

The specific role of the organization is to advise the city government, and sometimes other large organizations at the government's request, on issues that Portland is facing in the arena of food. In this capacity, the council cannot endorse programs themselves, nor can the initiate programs themselves. Many of the people involved in the program are activists themselves, or are involved in organizations that to create initiatives and programs themselves, the council itself is just not allowed to speak for the city in that way. The majority of issues they research are problems, questions, or projects the city has where the unique insight of the group is desired. This insight is developed most importantly by the council engaging with the community and getting a sense for how people and groups on the group are viewing and reacting to projects initiated by the government.

The council works closely with a number of departments within the city government, including the bureau of planning and sustainability where the groups work together to update the zoning codes in Portland to make it easier to start community gardens, urban agricultural organizations, and the keeping of animals. At the county level the council works with their sustainability board as well, in addition to the health department. Some issues that are discussed are institutional purchasing, growing food on vacant land, new urban farmer support programs and creating a large scale food initiative that looks to set strategic goals for the future. With the health department, issues like health equity, providing healthy corner stores, and obesity's relation to urban design are examples of issues that are covered. In addition to these programs that are already being investigated by the city or county, the council also at

times researches issues based on interest of members, then bringing findings to the governing body.

One of the most successful projects the council has worked on with the office of sustainability is the Multnomah Food Initiative. This program created an action plan that sets goals for the city to meet in the future, as well as lay out things that both the city and citizens can do every day to support sustainability within the food system. The other large aspect is food summits, where the goal is to get together as many players in the community as possible to coordinate and cooperate in achieving the goal of a more sustainable county.

It was interesting to hear about some of the barriers to implementing such a program. Not surprising many were related to the bureaucratic nature of city government. Yap mentioned it was sometimes difficult to work across political lines on contentious issues. Surprisingly, even within the organization that has a common goal, there were at times disagreements, not necessarily due to differences in ideology, but to the fact that people were coming from such varied background they had different ideas of what should be prioritized or focused on. In addition Yap talked about the idea that many members of the council recognize that Portland is only a small part of the state, and there is much that needs to be done outside that comparatively wealthy and prosperous area, if a truly inclusive food system was to be put in place.

Food Policy Councils: Corvallis

Though Corvallis does not have a food policy council as Portland does, I thought it would be interesting to look at a program that serves a similar, though not identical, function. I interviewed Jennifer Myers about her work with the Ten Rivers Food Web, wanting to know more about the programs vision and goals.

The program was created in 2004 after a core group of community players attended a food summit at Oregon State University and became interested finding ways to “build a resilient food system which provides healthy food for all” as the mission statement reads.

The program gets its name from the ten rivers that are situated in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln County. This geographic area consists of terrain ranging from the coast to through the Willamette Valley, into the Cascade mountain range. It is a geopolitical boundary that is useful when thinking of issues of both agriculture and demography.

The organization functions as a virtual and physical (for example at periodically held food summits) way for many different players with in the local agriculture and food scene to interact and share information. As mentioned the program is not directly connected to the city government, instead focusing on education and building markets. Myers translates this as engaging in food literacy with the community and working together with producers and consumers. Three specific examples of these goals I learned about are trying to expand the focus on healthy local food outside Corvallis, revitalizing lost forms of agricultural production in the region, and programs that are designed to show community members the products and services that are available to them.

The first example is something a number of people I spoke with mentioned, Myers included. Talking about the need to branch out to other groups she said:

We really made an effort to work with nontraditional communities. So getting away from the model where food is all about enjoyment and the sort of cultural side of things that are more privileged and realizing everybody has the right to quality and safe food, and the enjoyment.

This attitude reflects the aims and action of the organization, which is currently making efforts to marshal the volunteers to work in counties and cities outside of Corvallis. In addition, the organization has conducted need assessment research in

more rural areas of the region to determine what types of projects may be needed or beneficial there. In addition is the effort made by the organization to have more markets get involved with SNAP and other food assistance programs. Myers talked about the importance of reaching people from all different levels of social and economic status within a community, “It’s exciting though, it is kind of our big push right now in the food advocacy”.

Another common topic that came up in my interview with Myers was the need to regain lost aspects of Oregon’s agricultural system. This means two different things. First, like many places before industrialization and global markets, there were many processing facilities, grain mills and canning plants across the state. Most of these facilities left however, when the valley turned to grass seed production, which at the time was a very profitable option. But as farmers become more interested in producing local food again, one of the goals of the organization to help people bring back this type of infrastructure. On a related note, are projects designed to educate and support the farmers who wish to make this change. The Southern Willamette Valley Bean and Grain project is such a group and works with Ten Rivers. Well over 1,000 acres of grass seed farms have been converted to bean or grain crops, and the resulting products, like bread, are sold not only in small co-ops but some large chain markets as well. Myers talked about one of the most beneficial aspects of this change.

The biggest success is just the collaboration and bringing farmers together, because they are sharing secrets and that is not something that has happened a lot. And we’ve got young farmers and older farmers sharing ideas and knowledge and equipment.

Finally is the effort to put on events and demonstrations for the community that seek raise awareness of both issues and opportunities surrounding local food. This takes on many forms; one Myers mentioned specifically is an “iron chef” style cook off contest featuring local products and chefs. The program also runs events designed

to let people meet the farmers and producers that are responsible for the food they are eating.

Food insecurity group: Corvallis

In Corvallis the person I chose to talk to that represented the food assistance element of the system was Susan James from the Linn Benton Food Share (LBFS). This distribution organization, or food bank, does not distribute food directly to the people in need, but rather to the over 70 organizations within the community such as local food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. These organizations represent both emergency and non-emergency sources of food. This particular organization was started in 1980. It is one part of a network of 20 or so food banks that make up the mother program, the Oregon Food Bank (OFB). While much of the OFB gets support directly from the USDA (which of course is then filtered down to groups like LBFS), LBFS itself relies a great deal on community support as well.

One unique aspect of the LBFS is how they developed a gleaning program they operate. Gleaning defined simply is the re-purposing of food that would be destined for the landfill or compost pile, and then redistributing it to people in the community. This can include, and does here in Corvallis, the classic image of people gathering from the field itself or from fruit trees in a park. In modern times, this practice has changed to include soon-expiring food from grocery stores. This mostly consists of bread and other baked goods. This is technically a non-emergency form of food assistance, though many people that take advantage of it who are well below the poverty line. A large advantage of this type of program is that it takes some strain off of the food pantries themselves, allowing for a new source of product.

There are 14 different gleaning groups working with LBFS made up of members of the community, including a large number of people from the Russian and Croatian populations in the Northwest, which is an ethnic group that is often forgotten about. One of the things that makes the gleaning program here unique is that the

position that oversees the program is the only paid position of its kind in the state. This type of food redistribution system is an excellent example of both the need within the local community, but how local solutions to tackling food insecurity can be a part of a civic agricultural movement.

Similar to gleaning is something called food rescue, where workers will drive to places like the university dining hall and collect hot, prepared food that has not been served yet. This is then directly brought to places like homeless shelters, rather than back to the central LBFS facility for redistribution. When considering the amount of food that is in fact served or put out in buffets in places like campus dining halls, it is unfortunate that it cannot too be rescued. But of course as James points out this is not only unsanitary, but many people who utilize these types of services are at-risk groups who are more prone to disease and other health issues.

James was obviously very proud of the work that her organization was doing in the community, and it is clear that serving this underprivileged portion of the population is as important to a healthy local food system as having a good farmers' market.

Food insecurity group: Portland

In Portland I had a conversation with Shawn DeCarlo who works with the food bank known as Metro Services (MS), which encompasses Multnomah, Clackamas, and Clark (Washington) counties. This too is a member of the larger OFB network, just as LBFS is. Just looking at the numbers DeCarlo mentions it is easy to see how many more people are being served by the program here, obviously a result of the population size. As opposed to LBFS' 75 agencies, MS works with over 250. DeCarlo also mentioned that the number of agencies statewide was over 900, a statistic that shows the complexity and scope over the system. The MS system distributes over 1.5 million pounds of food to people in the community per month, which roughly translates to 50,000 – 70,000 pounds per business day.

I was interested in talking to Shawn DeCarlo in particular because not only does he represent the OFB, which I believe plays an important role in a civic agricultural system, but he also serves on the Portland Food Policy Council, thereby creating an interesting intersection of programs. There were two main programs that he was working on with the council, chairing or co-chairing, which are worth mentioning because they highlight this interesting juncture of groups.

First is an attempt to come up with a extremely fine tuned definition of food justice. By talking with people in the community, they hope to come up with this functioning definition that can then be used as a lens with which to review projects and for which the government to operate within general. He shared that the general definition is that all people within the community share equally the benefits as well as the risks of a food system. The other group that he works with is a county wide attempt to bring the zoning codes up to date to reflect the needs of a progressive food system. This would include things like rules about bees and chickens, but also more complex issues like rules for food kitchens, distribution hubs and county land use planning. He stressed the importance these issues have when it comes to overcoming barriers to small scale food production, distribution and health.

DeCarlo talked about the importance to branch out from relying on large grocery chains to feed the population and attempting to include small scale stores, farm stands and CSA type systems to help and alleviate hunger, especially in food desert situations. He also mentioned the fact that we still very much live in a car culture and working to develop new modes of transportation will actually help alleviate hunger by increasing access. He stated that one of the most important things that a group like his could do was work with local food systems, specifically with regards to “economic development and job creation.” The one danger he mentions here is that there is a fear among food banks that they should not get too far into the realm of economic development or politics because donors to the organization may disagree and not wish to be associated with the group financially. However he does

state that in the future, food banks could have an important role to play in the economic development of a food system because “If you have a healthy food system, it will take care of the least well off amongst us”.

Co-ops: Portland

In Portland the co-op that I choose to look at was People’s Co-op, one that has been in operation since 1970. There I spoke to Monica Cuneo, the marketing and member services manager. The co-op is collectively owned like all co-ops, as system whereby consumers participate by purchasing shares in the organization to obtain a membership and associated privileges. People’s goes one step further and is collectively managed as well.

This is a system where all employees who have been there for a certain amount of time have equal say in all important issues that go on within the organization, such as budgeting and decisions on which products to offer.

One of the most unique things that Cuneo sees in this particular co-op is how stringent the buying guides are. They are strict enough that she sees them as really setting People’s apart from other organizations of a similar nature. She describes it as more than just offering organic foods, but no GMOs whatsoever can be offered in any product. This includes not only produce, but any processed foods as well. Surprisingly this eliminated a number of co-op favorites from the store, as a single GMO ingredient goes against their guide. In addition any company that has merged with a larger one, or has been bought out by a conglomerate will not find their products sold there. As mentioned in the literature review, this will eliminate a large number of products that maintain a local or sustainable image, but have long since been bought by a firm like Kraft or Nestle. Cuneo feels that People’s has stayed exceptionally true to its roots, while still evolving with the times.

One interesting idea that plays well with the inclusive nature of civic agriculture is the fact that Cuneo sees co-ops like People’s as being more than just a

place for people to shop. She describes it as “a hub for information, food and community”. An example of this is that People’s offers a community space that offers classes not only on food and cooking, but yoga and Tai Chi as well.

Co-ops: Corvallis

At the First Alternative Natural Food Co-op I spoke with Emily Stimac about the role that the organization plays within the local community. She works as the Marketing Co-coordinator for the co-op and was very knowledgeable about the history of the organization, as well as the benefits of such a system.

The co-op has been around for over 40 years and started out as a buyers’ club and is a member of the National Cooperative Grocers Association. It is different from a traditional grocery store in that citizens are part owners of the company, and have a say in aspects of operation like voting on board members. Stimac also stresses that there are guiding principles that help shape how the co-op operates, a “grocer with a lot of ideals”.

The most interesting aspect of the co-op is the adoption of a program called local six. This was a branding developed in 2006 as a way to raise awareness about the abundance of local produced food that was available in the community. It refers to the nearby six counties that surround Corvallis, all of which are within 100 miles. It has been taken up by other organizations within the community, and is so successful that it has for some people become their definition for local in general. In addition it has been used in restaurants and institutions in the county.

Stimac talked about the different benefits that co-ops offer a community as well. First was the idea of support a local economy. This includes not only giving local producers a way to sell their product, but also by maintain a unique character and feel to a region. Stimac also thought that the focus on local and sustainable food helped protect the environment as well as protect people from the various health scares that are becoming more common place.

There were also some interesting ways that the co-op tries to accommodate different groups within the community. There are payment plans to get a membership if it is needed, thus allowing people with limited income to participate in the system. The co-op also accepts Oregon SNAP and works to make sure people have as many ways as possible to purchase healthy foods, despite income levels. Finally they work closely with gleaning groups to make sure culled food is not wasted. This is not limited to bakery goods either; even fresh produce is picked up and redistributed by gleaners.

Successes and Barriers within the Willamette Valley

Looking at these case studies, it is clear that there have been great strides made in implementing a system of civic agriculture in to the community, pulling the practice and the economic aspects of the practice back to a local sense of place. While these examples of people and organizations are good specific windows into the movement, I will briefly place them in a larger context to see their role in the political, economic and cultural framework of the community, evaluating their success, difficulties and contributions to civic agriculture.

Looking at the movement in an economic lens is critical because in the end while ideals and principles are important, this is all situated within a larger capitalist system and money is important. There seem to be two scales in which this particular issue can be addressed, a macro and micro scale.

In the micro scale, we would look specifically within the movement itself, asking: Have people involved been successful financially, or have barriers made this difficult? Looking at everything from the number and success of both markets and co-ops, as well as the increase in farmers as well as the new venues available to them to sell their product, the movement has certainly been a financial success. The popularity that the issue of food holds in the public these days has ensured that many people have

ample opportunities to succeed in the process. While success is not guaranteed of course, it certainly is a time with many opportunities to be had. The number of farmers' markets in Portland, the dynamic new programs like the local six in Corvallis, and innovative grassroots programs such as Fork in the Road are examples of a movement moving forward and evolving.

The macroeconomic level changes things however. When all is said and done the civic agriculture movement retains a very small portion of the larger agro-economic picture. Less than five percent of food consumed is local, for example (Myers and Stimac Interviews). In this sense there is a long way to go to achieving goals laid out by various groups of increasing local food consumption, and the path to these goals is unclear. Even regionally produced food may find it difficult to push past a certain percentage of sales and economic success. People working to push for the increase in local, regional, or sustainable food may find other forces that control the majority of the market share pushing back if too much of their dominance is threatened.

In addition, the movement finds itself in a difficult economic reality that is affecting the Willamette Valley just as it is the rest of the country. People are hard pressed to find the resources to engage in a system that is more expensive, or perceived to be more expensive, than traditional ones. This barrier is for the most part out of the hands of producers and activists, except perhaps finding new ways to offer products of civic agriculture at more affordable prices.

In general however, the movement has been very successful in growing into something that is not only a process that people can feel good about, but can also provide a beneficial economic force within the community. It provides access for local producers into the community's economic system, keeping money cycling through rather than bleeding out. As the system develops even further, more jobs will be created along with it, everything from posts at nonprofit organizations to running market stands.

Looking at the idea of political barriers or the successes of political collaboration in the civic agriculture movement again makes the idea of two scales relevant. First viewing the movement in a local sense, dealing with the city and county governments, a picture of cooperation and shared goals emerges. The people I talked to had positive things to say about the role the cities had in helping to support the process. While minor bureaucratic complaints were cited, they were outweighed by stories of collaboration. The most difficult barriers seemed to come from the idea that a government was made up of many different interests and political leanings so it was hard to please everyone (Yap Interview), but also the idea that money was not limitless, so funding could be an issue (something that ties this back to economic barriers to success).

However on a larger political scale, it can be a different picture. One success is the use of federal money and support in the form of the SNAP program at markets. This is a good example of a success in the political realm that the movement is having at the moment. However large scale subsidies and support of industrial agriculture could at some point become very real barriers that a civic agriculture system may have to face, especially if the goal is to grow to a size that is actively competing to be the dominant model of production. However, in this particular study, the larger form of political power was not brought up in interviews and people seemed much more focused on the local, that again was seen to be a partner rather than a barrier.

Culturally the civic agriculture movement, and all its associated facets has experienced both success here in the Willamette Valley, as well as having barriers in front of it that will have to be dealt with if the movement is to continue growing. On the positive side, both from direct interviews as well as participant observation, it is clear that this part of the country has a very strong attachment to the ideas held within civic agriculture, and people see themselves as part of something special. The sheer number of people involved in programs, and number of programs themselves seems to point to this success. Whatever mix of environment, politics, history and social

elements came together in this region, it makes a community that take these issues very seriously.

In addition to the numbers of people that seems to be interested, and the attitude of the people interviewed, the sense of forward motion supports this idea that in a socio-cultural sense, the movement has been a great success here. Looking at future development plans for the Portland Farmers' Market and Food Policy Council, or seeing the yearly summits and conventions designed to press forward with the successes had already, show a movement that is healthy and being adopted by more people every year.

Given the sense of support the movement has in the community, it would be hard to categorize anything as a failure. Rather there is work that needs to be done to raise awareness in parts of the community that have not been exposed to the movement, as well as making it easier for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds to become involved.

Themes and other issues

In this section I want to discuss some of the other themes and interesting things not directly related to my research questions that I discovered during the course of my research.

Technology

One interesting and surprising phenomenon is the utilization of social media and other new technology by people in the local food movement. In retrospect this should not be all that unexpected as many people who are engaging in farming, markets and unique new projects are young and have been brought up in a culture where these types of technology are ubiquitous tools of communication. There were many examples of this in different types of programs. Many farms and CSAs have taken advantage of programs like Face Book to make themselves more visible to consumers as well as letting existing members keep up with what is going on with the

farm. Email is also a very important way to distribute information to clients. An important aspect of the local food movement is the social connection between the producer and consumer. This is evident when producers are present in their own booths at farmers' markets and in the mailing of news letters to CSA clients. Doing this by email lets people stay informed, and is also more environmentally friendly. I also heard an anecdote that shows the value of social media in raising participation in the local food system. A manager of a farmer's market may have a twitter feed and will walk around the market each Saturday letting people know what is especially good that week. It was reported that people who subscribe to this feed often would be enticed by the messages and go out to the market even if they had planned on not going that particular day. All these methods are very important to not only inform the increasingly technology savvy public about the local food system, but to also foster the critical connection between different members of the system.

Another anecdotal example that is starting to be used in markets across the country is the use of cell phone powered credit/debit card scanners. This is a good example of how having a dynamic view of technology and its applications can benefit a producer in an increasingly electronic world.

This phenomenon is interesting because it shows that the issues involved in local food vs. globalized and industrial food is not completely black and white. Social media for instance, is certainly an example of globalization. And yet despite the doctrine of localization, people in this movement have realized the importance of such a tool in their cause. I think it will become increasingly important to utilize such techniques if the movement is to appeal and be visible to younger members of the community, if done effectively it could be a huge contributing factor in informing the public about the issues surrounding food system localization.

The Multifaceted Nature of Local Food

In doing this research and talking to all the different people who had varied backgrounds and fields of work or study, one thing became clear about my understanding going in. This was that I had a much too narrow and static understanding of the nature of the local food movement. I naively thought that there would be a great consensus on what local food should be and how it should go forth. But it became clear that there is not one perception of local food or civic agriculture, but that everyone's view is colored by their own background and interest. This is not a bad thing; on the contrary it makes it a very interesting and dynamic issue.

For example, people like Sean DeCarlo of the Oregon food bank were interested in getting food to those in need above all else. Amelia Pape of Fork in the Road Mobile Market had a similar opinion. She could not always offer strictly local produce in the market, but the fact that she was helping feed people in a neighborhood where it is difficult to get produce at all, shows there are multiple definitions of local.

Talking to people involved in academics also reinforced this view. Both professors I talked to from Oregon State University, Bruce Sorte and Gary Stephenson are people who are interested and passionate about the idea of sustainability and local food. However they also are both highly educated in areas like economics. This gives them a much more sobering and perhaps ultimately realistic view on the issues.

Definition of local

The definition of local is another very interesting aspect of the project I learned a lot about. I talked about the academic definitions in the literature review section, but I wish to talk some about what my informants think of as local, and how they come to those conclusions. Ten Rivers Food Web uses three contiguous counties to define their view of local. For the Portland farmers' market system it is if a vendor can drive to the city in a single day. The most important facet of the concept was its flexibility. Across different programs and organizations, or even within them, the definition changed

depending on the circumstances and was based on the needs or organization of the group in questions. Far from a problem, this is strength of the concept because no community is the same, so having a flexible view of what is local can allow an organization to adapt to its particular environment effectively. The definition of local varied not only between Portland and Corvallis, but between each individual.

Based on all of the accounts and definitions of local I heard from informants I will attempt to define local as I think it is generally perceived by the movement. Local is a socio-geographic region that allows for the principles of economic and agricultural localization to be most effectively and beneficially practiced. I think this definition is different than a standard dictionary definition because it highlights the dynamic and elastic nature of the term (the idea it can be fitted to a specific need), this elasticity's benefits, as well as emphasizing the human element.

Youth movement

One phenomenon that was easy to notice was that of a large interest in civic agriculture among the younger generations. This is easy to see by looking at the interest among students at Oregon State University in organizations like the OSU food group.

But it also is apparent in the people who are becoming the farmers themselves. When I attended the OSU small farms conference it was quite clear that younger people, mid 30's and below, were a significant percentage of the people interested in the farming process, and some of the most enthusiastic. Part of the reason is a reaction to the world they see around them. Younger generations always see something wrong in the world they feel is unjust and in need of changing. In this case they see a very concrete and direct path to make change.

Gary Stephenson also talked about another reason for this involvement, that being the changing perceptions of farmers among the general population. After an

almost adversarial relationship after industrial agriculture took off, things are changing very quickly, including the perception of farming by younger generations.

Right now, among at least a significant portion of the population, farmers are heroes and rock stars. So even though the work is hard and even though the wages are going to be low... the high regard that the work is held in is stimulating a lot of young people to go into it... I was astonished about 15 years ago when I attended a dinner, one of the first all local dinners held in Eugene, and when the farmers were introduced there was a standing ovation for them. That's a big pay check for a farmer (Stephenson Interview 2011).

Complexity

Ultimately one obstacle that I have seen to a sustainable food system is how incredibly complex the issue is, and how many other social issues are tied to this specific one. This is something that I have mostly noticed through literature review and my own reflection. Many interviewees are so focused on their own projects that they don't mention the extremely large picture issues, this is of course not a bad thing, they are so good at what they do because of that focus. Some people that were working with larger organizations, such as the food policy council or the Oregon Food Bank did contextualize the issues they were facing within larger political or social spheres, but for the most part people were focused on their own projects.

One example that elucidates how complex this relationship between food and the rest of society is comes in the form of a critique made by proponents of a global agriculture system. Some of them ask if it is a good, or even if it is an ethical thing to completely localize the European and American food system. What will happen to all the producers in places like Mexico and India that rely on an export market? I would say ideally they would switch back to sustainable, local food production like was practiced before the industrial model was introduced. They would trade between their own communities, growing a multitude of crops that were unique and suited to their environments. Profits would be kept in their own county and invested as they saw fit.

However this deals with ideas far beyond different agricultural models. That change would require some huge changes in international policy. Adoption of fair trade, changes in predatory lending techniques, redistribution of land and wealth, and in some ways a fundamental shift in human behavior.

Theoretical Reflections

Polanyi and Block

Much of the theoretical ideas put forth by theorists Polanyi and Block were reflected in the real life situations I encountered in Corvallis and Portland. It does seem that a feature of local food is a re-embedding of the market system in the society. This can be demonstrated by the fact that money is being kept and cycled in the system and the lines separating the market and other aspects of the community are becoming more blurred. Polanyi theorized that as a market became less embedded, price would become the only important signal, and I believe the local food system in the Willamette Valley proves this to be true by demonstrating the process in reverse. In talking to members of the community it becomes clear that while making a living is important, people involved have many other motivations for being involved in the movement. Because the embeddedness of the system creates closer ties and a sense of community, people respond to factors such environmental stewardship, civic duty, community vibrancy, among others when making consumer decisions. Farmer's markets are an especially clear example of this.

I saw evidence of this when people gave their reasons for having interest in the local food system. For example, Dan Bravin said "I can't say there is just one thing. Food touches so many parts of our lives and so many parts of our morals." And from Jen Myers:

And I think that food offers an excellent bridge for a lot of different social justice issues and environmental issues because it's a way that each of us is connected to the earth each and every single day, whether or not we are aware of it. And so it is the most direct way we interact with the earth on a day to day basis. So learning the fact that this actually grew somewhere in the ground and not just coming from the super market and having that be a part of what we know about our community is really exciting (Myers Interview).

After seeing this idea of economic embeddedness demonstrated in a real world manner, I feel I have gained a deeper understanding of what Polanyi was talking about and why the phenomenon works the way it does. In a community where the market is embedded, there are numerous bridges and ties that connect the market to other aspects of the community. The different areas inform each other and rely on each other as well. In this sense the community is operating as a whole, with the well-being of the entire assemblage as the main goal, or as Lyson described it in a previous quote: “the community, not the corporation is the sense of identity”. When the economic market is pulled up out of that landscape, with broken bridges trailing along behind it, the landscape and peoples’ relationship to it changes. With the market separate, the old checks and balances are forgotten because they are no longer seen. All the community ties are de-contextualized and price and economic logic becomes the only marker for success. Logically it makes sense to apply only price based markers because it is now a strictly market based world, devoid of its previous human and community context.

Polanyi’s idea of self protection is validated as well. Based on the many innovative ways that people are bringing about change to their community food system, it is clear that they are engaging in an effort to re-embed their community. For example, this can be seen literally and figuratively in farmers’ markets as a way to increase the community ties between consumers and producers, people and the market. The many social functions that the farmers’ market fulfills are another indicator of its value in the embedded community.

The Portland Food Policy council is another example, by which people are trying to enact change when frustrated with standard attempts.

The local food movement contains many organizations that are good examples of what Block would describe as having low marketness. That is these are organizations that respond to more than just price, and have other motivations behind them. That is not to say people do not need to make a living and to make tough

decisions, but that there are other factors in play. The biggest example lies in the fact people are doing this type of adaptive farming at all. They probably could make more money, for less work, by selling either conventionally produced agricultural products or a commodity like grass seed. But many people see what they are doing as more than just a business. Farmers that maintain a portion of their land in wild reserve show that ecological concerns are a larger concern than strict profit maximization (Fullmer Interview 2011). The other term that Block uses, instrumentalism, fits in here. The idea that the priority set on profit will dictate behavior. So the farmer mentioned above that maintains a wild element in his land to promote healthy environmental function would have low instrumentalism because the economic element is not his only motivating factor. Instrumentalism represents the human factor in the market, the individual.

Another example of low marketness would be Peoples Co-op in Portland. The organization takes stricter regulations than many other co-ops when it comes to what products are sold, where they come from and how they are produced (Cuneo interview). While there could be opportunities to make more money, they are ignored because there are other factors driving decisions.

Bourdieu

Bourdieu's ideas about capital are most helpful when looking at why the local food movement has had the success it has, and even has clues as to what aspects need to be strengthened and maintained to keep the movement growing.

Currently, civic agriculture is bound partly by the field it is located within. There are political, social and cultural barriers to it flourishing. However within those constraints, individuals are using different forms of capital to navigate the system.

In my interviews and literature review it became clear how critical social capital is to an individual's success within the movement. This has probably always been true in the agricultural business. Having connections within the community

offers many opportunities to individuals they would not have if they lacked this form of capital. Everything from channels for selling their product to cooperation in times of crisis can come from this. In the case of the Willamette Valley there are many organizations that realize this necessity and are attempting to promote it. Friends of Family Farmers and OSU extension services are examples of programs that are designed to increase an individual's social capital. One of the goals of the grass roots organization Friends of Family Farmers has is to educate producers on important issues, as well help forge important networking options that allow small operators to thrive. One example of this work is called the "Farmer Campaign" and is designed to bring ranchers and farmer together to discuss and learn about issues facing small farming in the state. This allows people to be better prepared to navigate the system, increasing their social capital.

Symbolic capital is one of the most important and most interesting types of capital that individuals are making use of when trying to enact their agency within the current socio-economic field. Many times symbolic power is associated with negative and oppressive aspects of a field, however in this case it offers a positive example. While a few decades ago being a small, adaptive farmer may have been an unglamorous position in life, that has changed. With issues of environmental and human health associated with traditional agriculture and industry becoming better known by the general population, sustainable agriculture is actually gaining a symbolic status. It is no longer just a form of food production, but a moral and important choice one can make. Producers in farmers' markets, for example, can use this perception to their advantage, getting more people interested in the movement.

Educating producers on the lessons learned about the importance of social and symbolic capital could have beneficial impacts on the way they see their community. Though it seems likely anyone involved in the agricultural system already knows about these concepts even if it is by another name. Still if producers are aware of the fact that the idea of local or sustainable food carries great social capital, that aspect

can be stressed in marketing techniques to get more people interested in the product. While capital is often mentioned in the context of people lacking it, therefore being at a disadvantage, in this case I have found the opposite. Many people within the movement have great access to both social and symbolic capital at the moment, and that needs to be realized and capitalized upon, or the risk is stagnation and backsliding.

Within the economic and political field that this movement operates, individuals and individual in groups engage in their personal agency to change the system that they see as broken. The larger structure limits the work they can do, so they tend to work within, trying to correct the system rather than change it. However I do believe this is an example of agency, a behavior that shows individuals have the ability to make their own decisions in spite of a larger dominant system in place. This is not to say that there is not a larger system, or that it does not to some degree affect people's action, but that within it people have found an alternative method of doing things. Part of the reason people in this movement have been so successful in acting on this agency, I believe, is their successful use of capital within the field. A specific example of this would be the farmers themselves in a farmer's market. Anna Curtin discussed how important farmers and producers saw maintaining a direct connection with people at markets, talking and socializing with them. This is the use of social capital in a real world setting. Co-ops like People's and First Alternative also can attain this by charging slightly higher prices for example, because they are convincing people that it is worth it because of deeper symbolic reasons.

One reason I think Bourdieu's interpretation of agency and structure is useful is that it seems to understand the ephemeral and changing nature of society. As agents within the field of agriculture and food have decided to move forward with these new goals and demands of a more equitable system, their roles and relationships have changed. Farmers have become heroes and goals of these organizations have been

taken up as important causes. This I think changes the expected role of agriculture and food in society, thereby changing the larger field that Bourdieu wrote about.

Social Movement Theory

The ideas of builder, weaver and warrior that were laid out by the particular version of SMT I used were clearly represented in the Willamette Valley.

First is the builder role. This is the role of reconstruction, of creating alternative structures to carry out this new form of agriculture. Often this is a program that operates within an economic realm, though usually not in a way that is openly contentious or conflicting with existing structures. A classic example, and one that I documented as thriving within the areas I studied, is that of a farmer's market. Co-ops are another example of this role within the social movement. This is the most visible of the three roles and arguably the most successful to date. Providing alternatives to consumers in the form of markets, CSAs, and co-ops is a critical step in creating a strong local food system.

While the role of the builder is very important, to go beyond just providing a niche market for interested consumers, things must change on a political scale as well. While it is difficult to challenge the monolithic agricultural system, work can be done on the local level. "Because of the of the central role of the government in the American agrifood system, the movements for sustainable agriculture and community food security have had to engage public institutions at local, state and federal levels (Allen 2004)."

While the food policy council in Portland does not operate literally within or for the government, their advisory role is one that still fits within the warrior function. The more cities like Portland show success by having a city government that understands the importance of local sustainable food, the easier it will be to spread the model to other cities and communities.

The role of the weaver was also strongly represented in both cities. The task of developing conceptual linkages between warrior and builder positions essentially comes down to education. This means education of both the public, the government, as well as between groups that are working for the same cause. Sharing information seems vitally important for the health of a social movement, it is how they grow and develop into further change. Groups like Ten Rivers and Friends of Family Farmers are prime examples of this attempt to raise awareness of issues, and build support networks for like-minded groups. One thing I noticed in my research was that many different organizations are coming from very different places, even if they are seemingly working for a common goal. This can sometimes result in disconnect or misunderstanding between groups that could be working closely to achieve their goals. When an organization like Ten Rivers or the Portland Food Policy Council organizes a food summit, they are creating the opportunity for this to happen.

Perhaps the most important thing about this framework is not to talk about its relation to this food system, but to use it as a model in areas where a successful local food system has not yet been cultivated. While working in the systems of Portland and Corvallis, it is easy to take for granted the amazing base of knowledge, interest and experience that exists here. For a community that does not share that same beneficial starting point, the idea of trying to develop a civic agricultural system could be daunting. The ideas in the social movement theory used not only are helpful at analyzing something that already exists, but acting as a template for a developing system. It could provide insight in how to go about change, who to involve and what are important elements.

The other theoretical framework mentioned in the theory section has to do with categorizing the social movement into an inclusion, reformation or transformation phase of its evolution. These different phases are a way of looking at change efforts and classifying them based on their goals or directions. Though it does not necessarily have to happen in a ladder-like fashion, it does seem like a social movement like this

one moves along the three steps as it develops. The inclusion phase, the attempt to include all members of a community in the movement, is certainly one that is in full swing here. The perfect example here is the drive to open farmer's markets to all socioeconomic classes. But even the work of the OSU food group is an effort to include a young generation in the dialogue of sustainable food. The organization, which is student run, has the goal of raising awareness among students and staff of Oregon State University in relation to food issues and opportunities through the use of demonstrations and events on campus.

The transformative phase, or orientation, is designed to “alter the operating guidelines of the existing agrifood system (Lyson 2007).” This is a difficult step as it runs into very powerful and entrenched systems. No one I talked to in the course of this research actually believes that this system can be taken on through direct confrontation, but they have developed ideas that still attempt this tactical change, just through different routes. For example, the program of Ten Rivers mentioned above that seeks to shift grass seed land to growing grains and beans, then process them in the same area is an example of fighting the larger system, by simply removing oneself from it, at least partially. It is a small, small step, but one in the right direction.

This leads to the last idea of reformation, something that seeks to “develop qualitatively different paradigms to guide the modern agri-food system (Lyson 2007)”. While a fundamental shift to a new system is a difficult thing to imagine happening in the near future, what all these groups are doing is laying a foundation. The more developed and complex the local system becomes, the better off the community will be when changes like cutting back on massive oil use no longer becomes a choice, but a necessity.

Through social movement theory, we can see that what is happening in the Willamette Valley is not just a cultural fad furthered by special interest groups, but a true social movement. This can be demonstrated by comparing it to definitions laid out by Professor Patricia Allen. She gives two definitions that are helpful in making this

point. First “social movements are efforts to change widespread existing conditions-political, economic, and cultural (pg.3).” And “However imperfectly articulated and integrated, a large group of people working together to achieve sustainability and community food security is considered to be, and should be referred to as, a social movement (pg.5)”.

Allen points out that there has been discussion in the past if the move for sustainable agriculture is actually a social movement, something large that implies deep change to the way things are done. She however points to two interesting points that I think are applicable to the Oregonian example that I studied. First there is no clear consensus on what even qualifies a social movement among sociologists and researchers, and even if there were, the wide scope and coordination exemplified by the alternative agriculture movement seems to fit clearly. Also she talks about how self-identification is important in the role of a social movement, the idea that if people within the phenomenon see it as a movement, there is little scholarly reason to question it. While I did not ask participants specifically if they felt a part of a social movement, I think it is clear judging by their passion, goals and explanations for doing what they do, that would be the general consensus. This importance of self-identification and sense of being is further stated by food researcher Matthew Reed. “A sense of belonging is not a small effect of movement membership, but a profound one” (Reed 2010 pg.18).

Discussion

In this discussion section I will revisit the research objectives posed in the beginning of the paper and evaluate them one by one in light of information obtained through the interviews in Corvallis and Portland. These research objectives heavily influenced the questions I asked participants, and were some of the main thematic guidelines with which I later analyzed my interview data. Later in the chapter I will analyze the information through the various theoretical lens laid out in chapter 3. Following with personal observations on ways to continue to grow and strengthen the local food movement, or help it branch out to new and untapped locales. I will summarize relevant findings, highlight anything of particular interest, as well as reflect on shortcomings or potential future paths in the research. The one exception is the final research question, which will be dealt with specifically in the analysis section due to its theoretical nature.

What dictates the success or failure of such a system?

Coming up with an answer to this question may be one of the most important steps in ensuring that the local food movement maintains momentum and becomes further established as a viable alternative to industrial models. However, part of the difficulty in answering this particular question lies in the fact that in many respects the local food movement is a young phenomenon (at least in respect to this reincarnated form), and it could be argued that there has not been enough time for any one example to fail or succeed. Of course particular markets in one city may have failed, but the reasons for these isolated events have been well established in the literature. One way to look at this question then is to ask what is it that has contributed to the current success of the Willamette Valley local food system.

For example Professor Stephenson points to issues like poor leadership or planning as well as producers who overestimate the size of the consumer market as reasons that farmers' markets may struggle. These types of problems have certainly been avoided by the Portland farmer's market system, whose success can be attributed to careful planning and governing boards. For example they implement a site evaluation plan where each new proposed market site is analyzed in detail to determine its' potential for success. Parking, bathroom facilities, landscaping, advertising, and available vendors are all factors that are evaluated (Curtin Interview 2011). This type of careful planning is clearly a factor that can dictate the success of at least this part of a food system. The larger scale behaviors are less clear and certainly less finite.

I found that a major contributing factor to this success is the interest of the people in the community. This reinforces the importance of community outreach and education mentioned in the previous section. Having this active interest is necessary because without it all the plans and programs in the world would not work because they would not have the public support to thrive.

The reasons for sufficient public support varies but there seem to be a number of critical factors that push people to consider food that is admittedly more expensive and less convenient (at least in most cases). One of the most commonly mentioned things that spur people's interest in local food is a concern of health issues (Myers, Stephenson, Curtin Interviews 2011). People hear about recalls of food tainted through industrial negligence and they naturally seek out other avenues to feed themselves or their family.

Concerns about the health of the environment also fall in this category. Food is one of the most direct ways that we interact with our natural surroundings and people are becoming more aware of the impacts we can have, or avoid, by choosing where food comes from and how it is produced.

A second way of tackling the question is asking: “What are the barriers to success that could potentially trip up a local food system’s progress?” There are many answers to this particular question mainly because there are so many moving parts to the system, each one has particular problems to potentially deal with.

However I believe you can classify the main barriers to successful local food in 3 main descriptive categories: economic barriers, political barriers, and cultural barriers.

Economic barriers can present themselves in a number of ways, but essentially means that there is a cost to starting or maintaining an operation that can be difficult to meet. This could be the day to day operation cost of a non-profit organization in the community, or the start up costs associated with beginning a farming operation that small scale farmers struggle to deal with. In most cases the cost of the land will be the most critical barrier, and the one that is the most difficult to work around (Sorte Interview 2011). Many people starting out in the business of small scale farming will not have the money to buy farms outright, and often banks are hesitant to loan enough money to get started as these types of operations are inherently risky (Sorte Interview 2011).

Another way to look at the economic problem could be from the consumer’s point of view. It may be difficult for some people to justify spending money on more expensive local, artisan products when local mega chains offer steep discounts, especially during a stressed economic climate like the country is currently suffering through. It is difficult to convince a struggling mother of three to purchase expensive organic apples when she can purchase a whole meal from a fast food chain for the same price. This is part of the reason that finding ways to include all segments of society in the local food movement is so critical; there are very real practical reasons, as well as the ethical ones. In addition, it is difficult to convince people other than the “true believers” to shop at a number of different locations (markets, co-ops, etc.) in order to get their groceries (Stephenson Interview 2011). People who appreciate the

one stop nature of places like Wal Mart or Fred Meyer may not even “be on the radar” of food system advocates (Stephenson Interview 2011).

Another type of economic barrier is a vestige of previous economic action. Oregon was once home to a thriving canning, milling and producing economy. But as with many other parts of the country consolidation, industrialization and international production has stripped the area of the means to process its own food. Part of the problem specific to Oregon was the industry shift to grass seed. A lack of small scale oriented animal processing facilities is also an issue (Stephenson Interview 2011). With no one growing wheat, the mills were no longer needed so they disappeared (Myers Interview 2011). This is a big missing link in the chain because to be not only local but self sufficient it is important to have a way to store and process the food that is being produced. This is a big problem without an easy solution, but is one that is slowly being beaten back mill by mill as fledgling programs seek to reintroduce this important economic facet back into the landscape (Myers Interview 2011).

A certain economic barrier with some unforeseen complications is the current economic downturn itself. Some of the effects are more obvious or predictable. When people are stressed financially they may not be willing to spend the extra dollars for artisan cheese or farmers’ market eggs and will turn to traditional vendors like Wal Mart or Kroger stores.

Income drops by 10% you might see local food drop by 5%, or organics. As we saw milk and vegetables stand up pretty well. But you get a much larger drop in your dairy products. So people under stress are still and going back and focusing on getting a full meal, rather than a local meal (Sorte Interview 2011).

But in addition to forcing people to turn to cheaper sources of food, the economic climate may have other effects as well. Stores such as Albertsons’ or Safeway, who traditionally donate bread and other products to gleaned groups, may

order and produce less in order to create less waste during a time their bottom line may be more vulnerable. This means that there is actually fewer leftovers going to the groups, creating a noticeable drop (James Interview 2011). Also groups like the Linn Benton Food Share maybe in danger of having federal grants and funding cut, which has obvious implications on their mission to help the disadvantaged in the local community (James Interview 2011). This particular example shows how different barriers may overlap as it can be explained as a political one as well.

Political barriers can also come in many forms. Many times these are laws or regulations that make it difficult for small scale operations to succeed. For example regulations that apply to massive industrial operations may be applied to small, local operations as well, resulting in costs or requirements that may be too difficult to overcome. Large barriers also exist in the fact that industrial agriculture and the free trade model are protected and subsidized by the government and lobbyist groups as they are the ways that make the people in control the most money (Sorte Interview 2011). Fair trade, trade protection, and subsidies for small scale farms would all be very beneficial to localized food systems, but are all very difficult to imagine in the current political environment.

This is where consumers can “vote with their dollar” and demand that there be alternatives. While it may take time, the fact that Wal-Mart now offers a variety of organic produce seems to point to the reality that if people are willing to pay for an organic product, companies will provide it.

In addition, strong food policy councils can effectively act as a spearhead for the concerns of a larger population. They focus energy and ideas in an effective way of presenting concern among the citizens to the city government that may otherwise be too disparate to be clearly understood by city planners. This is usually accomplished (as it is in Portland) by members of the council breaking into smaller task forces, researching the issue by talking to people in the community, then reporting back to the

city, outlining findings and suggestions, thereby giving people in the community a voice and a way to communicate with the city government.

In addition there can be political barriers in the form of legislation that prevents individuals from purchasing small lots from a larger parcel because they cannot prove that they will make enough revenue. In addition “There is not a lot of benefits for local jurisdictions to work and help a small farmer to become established, because they’re not going to get a whole bunch of revenue, they will get a whole bunch of trouble... (Sorte Interview 2011).” Luckily this is one barrier that the Portland government, for example, is actively working against.

Cultural barriers are also a fundamental challenge in instituting a successful local food system. These types of issues are what the aforementioned attempts of educating and engaging the public is aimed at lessening. Finding a way to get people to change their priorities from cheapest and most convenient, to making a sacrifice to utilize local and sustainable resources will certainly be a challenge. Part of the difficulty in changing this cultural barrier is found dispelling the image of local food as simply an elitist and privileged movement that is based on the enjoyment of gourmet food.

One of the most difficult barriers may end up being the cultural one. People will have to change the way they see themselves and their choices. If people get enough satisfaction from actually procuring the food and knowing where it comes from, they may start to switch to local and sustainable foods more permanently. Bruce Sorte of Oregon State University had two relevant points on this issue. First: “We could make it easy but we would need to have that consumer preference change and then that would permeate your political system and you might see some of those things start (Sorte Interview 2011).”

And in addition: “So local food has to become more of an experience, it has to displace other experiences. That will be half of it. The other half will be the idea of

your idealized sense of self. It has to become a part your attitude part of your psyche (Sorte Interview 2011).”

The success or failure of a local food system is clearly a complicated phenomenon with many parts. This is the case when looking at any social phenomenon from the inside while it is happening. What can be said is that a strong and diverse set of programs and organizations with an engaged and well-informed public has the best chance of navigating the economic, political and cultural barriers that are in place. As this base begins to grow, it may even begin to challenge the larger and more monolithic barriers that prevent localized food from growing into a truly viable alternative.

What is the current health of the local food movement in the Willamette Valley?

This first question proved to be quite complex, but interesting. Part of this complexity comes from the fact that there is no definitive guide for what a successful system must look like. There cannot be, due to the fact that every community is in a different social, cultural and environmental setting and will therefore have different needs. Portland for example is more urbanized, densely populated, and has less farmland in the immediate vicinity of the city due to sprawling suburbs areas. Corvallis of course is more ideally suited to production, but does not have all the same opportunities for farmers to market their product. As an example Portland obviously has far more restaurants and many are embracing the farm to table trend with great enthusiasm (Bravin Interview).

This is to say it is too complex an issue to simply say that every community must have ‘X’ number of farmers’ markets, ‘Y’ CSAs and ‘Z’ food banks to be successful. What if one community has a low number of community gardens but very abundant CSAs? The impact of these programs is difficult to measure and understand

so comparing their relative worth is difficult. Everything from population size, demographics, terrain, climate and cultural identity can affect what a community may need making it very difficult to come up with a one size fits all criteria for judging the efficacy of a local food system.

This being said I think I documented a consistent view of this question, as described by the people I interviewed. And it is important to clarify here that the measure of success was based on the perceptions of the people I talked to, as opposed to an external gauge of my own. Success was defined in a number of ways: Inclusion of community members, successful implementation of programs, and in some case, concrete examples such as the number of markets or pounds of food.

When talking about their programs or organizations in particular, every person interviewed stated that their work has been a success to this date, or at the very least they had several aspects of the project that have been great successes, whether it is the number of pounds of food distributed to the local food insecure population by the Oregon Food Bank system, or the reception of the general public to a new pilot program like Fork in the Road Market which strives to bring produce and healthy groceries to urban neighborhoods.

Everyone of course mentioned that there is a lot of work to do (especially around issues like hunger and inequality), but again, every one rated their progress as positive and felt as if a difference was being made. An example of this attitude comes from Susan James: “:We’ve done good... but the need is always there”. When talking about the larger picture, people had a similar opinion. Many said that no one knows what will happen in the future, but at the moment things seemed to be headed in the right direction, or at least starting to. Comparing the way things are now to a few decades ago, this is a difficult point to argue against and it is easy to forget how far the movement has come.

The change that has happened has also shown signs that it will maintain momentum and change fundamental ways of thinking as well. It will not just be a

trend that introduces high price and chic items in glitzy stores like Market of Choice or New Seasons, but a reimagining of the way we relate to food. School gardens are an example of this idea. As demonstrated by the literature, teaching people at a young age where their food comes from and the connection between food production and global health will hopefully strengthen and develop the movement. The OSU food group also works toward this goal, educating students of a different age what their role is and can be in the local food system (Gaudin Interview 2011). The group puts on events and informational booths around campus designed to inform students about sustainable and healthy eating as many may not have been exposed to these ideas in the past (Gaudin Interview 2011).

Organizations like Ten Rivers also play a role in this shift in perception of food by hosting events designed to raise awareness of the general public to the opportunities and resources around them. Advocacy groups like Friends of Family Farmers also use this tactic of holding fun events for the public to help raise awareness about the importance of protecting small scale farming. I predict that continually more severe environmental pressures will also pressure people to see the movement as a necessity, not a fad.

It is clear that the Willamette Valley is an example of a successful local food movement, and a movement that shows the deeper ideals of civic agriculture. Many interviewees talked about the abundance of interest in the movement they perceive in their city. Dan Bravin of the city of Portland Office of Sustainability states in reference to the movement: "It's growing by leaps and bounds. It's actually very exciting because everyday you've got a new project or food thing popping up somewhere."

A concrete example of this success is the fact that there are six farmers' markets run specifically by the Portland farmer's market organization, and 40 when counting all the other ones run by other groups. Just in the main six alone the statistics

for the 2010 season were over 700,000 customers and eight million dollars in revenue (Curtin 2011).

Traditional permanent markets have been successful too. For an example, there is People's Coop in Portland. This is a small, successful co-op that focuses intensely on healthy ethically sourced food. Despite being located just down the street from a large New Seasons store (a chain of large grocery stores that focus on healthy and high quality foods), it has strong support from the local community and continues to grow (Cuneo Interview 2011). In fact sometimes local food has been so successful there has been a market saturation effect in some cases (Bravin Interview 2011). There are only so many farmers that can sell a certain product at the same market for example.

To conclude this point, every person I interview talked about how special either Portland or Corvallis was in terms of the interest of the local community, and the success of programs and organizations surrounding local food. Of course there is work to be done in the future, but overall these cities are a great model for local food development.

What are the most important elements of a local food system?

This was one of the most interesting elements of this study, precisely because it turned out to be such a nebulous question, and answer as well. I found that to be the case in both in my literature review as well as interviews and field work. It turned out I encountered two main difficulties in defining the most critical parts of a local food system. First it is a very difficult to empirically rank or quantify importance of one element above another and secondly the reality is that a community engages in a complex overlapping of programs that cannot be listed in clean separate elements.

The first problem I ran into early when writing out my literature review as well as research questions. It was difficult to justify why the specific cogs (which I used to identify the best individuals to talk to) I choose were selected. Why not one more or one less? And while in the end they were chosen because they were the most often

mentioned in literature and represented a manageable size for this type of thesis that does not necessarily get at the question. It is impossible to judge which element is most important because there is simply no way to measure something like that. All the programs and organizations specifically studied, and others that were not, play an important role in the local food system.

The food web concept put forth by Ten Rivers comes to mind as a good illustration of the nature of a food system. It really does mimic a biological food web as all the members play out an important role that is interconnected with another. For example a farmer's market may host a booth put on by the campus food group that may use food highlighting a certain CSA in town. I did not find a way to satisfactorily conclude if a farmers' market was more important than a well-developed system of CSAs, because in the case of those two examples, they both address a need and function that the other cannot. So I would argue that this integrated web of organizations and programs itself is the most important element. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts in this case. While there are certain elements that play important roles, having a dynamic and diverse system may be a much greater indicator of success.

Secondly, even if it were possible to concisely rank elements of a local food system in order of their importance, it became clear that to do that you would have to first be able to extract separate elements cleanly, which turned out to be impossible (and not in a bad way). Because so many people involved in these programs and organizations realize the benefits of collaboration and are eager to take on a multitude of issues, there were no cases of an organization that was fulfilling one simple role or taking on one simple issue. Farmers' markets are a great example. In both Portland and Corvallis the main goal of a farmers' market is to make people aware of the bounty of local and healthy foods available to them, and to provide it. But in addition they both followed the national trend in tackling food insecurity as well. So in this case a market is not just a market, but a social justice movement aiming at reducing

the prevalence of hunger in their community by offering affordable, fresh and unprocessed foods. Both Corvallis and Portland participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a way to bring healthy food to disadvantaged segments of the population.

The food policy council in Portland is the ultimate example of this type of collaboration and a microcosm of sorts. Though it is technically one organization, it is made up of representatives of many different groups. For example there are restaurant and small business owners, neighborhood advocates and activists, and people representing organizations like the Oregon food bank.

Despite this difficulty, I feel both these issues were solved by the realization that it is not a specific type of program or organization that is most important to a community, but rather priorities or goals that are shared by all of them that can be said to be most important. In this way the type the ratio of specific organizations is not as important, and the nature of cooperation and collaboration is highlighted.

For example, Portland has a true food policy council, and Corvallis does not. The Ten Rivers Food Web organization accomplished many of the same goals that the FPC does in Portland (education, awareness, outreach etc.), but does not require the direct government cooperation to do so. I think in this case this is partly because the two cities differ in their needs. Corvallis is of course already set up in an ideal way to take advantage of small scale agriculture (at least in a theoretical sense, though currently large amounts of land are occupied by industrial grass seed production). There is a relatively small population, without a dense urban center, surrounded by easily accessible farm land. Portland however is a much more complex issue and there are all types of issues such as zoning and city regulations that require an active dialogue with the city to deal with (Yap Interview 2011).

Working under this new idea of how to evaluate importance of cogs in a system I can in fact come to some answers based on my research. Out of all the types of institutions studied there was one central goal or idea (outside of their actual, literal

function) that was universal and deemed one of the most important, if not the most important mission of the organization. This was the idea of education, raising awareness, and spurring involvement among the community. A recurring theme was the fact that the information, research, and tools are all there, but it is the communication to the public that needs to be accomplished for anything to move forward in a significant way. This could include people being made aware of the simple fact that there is abundance of choices around them to feed their family in a healthy and sustainable way, even if they find themselves in a low income bracket. It is a goal mentioned by people representing every type of group mentioned, from food banks and co-ops to advocacy groups (James, Myers Interview 2010-2011).

Along these lines, it became clear that people were committed to not only informing the public about these issues, but reaching as wide of an audience as possible, both for practical as well as idealistic reasons. As I will mention shortly, there is a perception among some that the local food movement is somewhat elitist and not something that everyone has the ability to participate in. But many groups I talked to are actively trying to break that notion by involving as many strata of the community as possible, as well as branching out into new regions of the state that may not have the literally and figuratively fertile ground that a city like Corvallis has. This attempt at inclusion will be critical to developing a strong system that benefits everyone, and will be a step toward a more equitable society.

Of course another critical element in the success of a local food system is the existence of dedicated activists that are willing to put in the difficult work to bring these programs into existence. An example that Susan James of the Linn Benton Food Share talked about was that of Gleaners. There are volunteers who gather food and resources that would normally go to waste and redistribute it to those in need. This is quite common in Corvallis and though not on the same level of public visibility as a market, an important part of a local food system.

There are also examples of people who take it upon themselves to see a need in the community and create an organization to help where before there was none. The Fork in the Road program in Portland is a good example of a student who turned a school project into a mobile market that is trying to provide fresh food in urban centers that are often void of anything but convenience stores. This particular Portland MBA student saw that the city as not immune to the problems of food deserts that plague many parts of the country. In response along with two fellow students, she developed the idea of a mobile grocery store that could partner with local independent grocers to provide food to areas of the city that may be far from traditional grocery stores. She purchases the food from these independent grocers and sells directly to people living in under-served neighborhoods. This food would be not only accessible but full of options compatible with food assistance programs.

Another grassroots program that I looked at which also embodied this idea of community members addressing gaps that they see in the system was called Corvallis Local Foods. The program is designed to offer people new ways to participate in the local food system. Food from a long list of local growers, producers and manufacturers was offered on a central website. Patrons selected their option, usually things found at farmers' markets or local co-ops, and picked them up at a central location. Thus the organization functions in a way like a CSA, but with a much wider set of options to choose from. The effect was that people had another option to participate in the system if traditional avenues were inconvenient or unappealing for any reason.

People who serve on the food policy council are important examples of activists as well. Many have extremely busy full time schedules but take the time to serve on a board because they think the issues are important.

While many people mentioned the importance of awareness and education about the issues surrounding local food, there were also other answers. Interestingly, though perhaps not surprisingly, these tended to be perceived by the interviewee

through the lens of their own work. For example, Michele Knaus of Friends of Family Farmers talked about how having adequate markets available to producers was critically important. This perception would make sense for someone who was concerned about the well-being and livelihood of family farms. Similarly, people like Shawn DeCarlo and Susan James, both of whom work with food banks, stress the importance of providing nutritious and affordable food to the hungry as a part of a local food system that cannot be ignored.

To conclude this section, I believe that there is not one particular program or organization type that is most important to the success of a local food system, but rather a collection of goals and principles that can be identified as the most important factors to success. For example, there is no reason that a local foods system requires a food policy council to be productive and successful, but without a willingness to reach out to the public and make the issues known, it is likely that the movement will stall and slip backwards.

How does the population size of a community affect the viability of a local food system?

A similar perspective I learned about is the idea of the effects the geographic qualities of a community have on the system's viability. Before conducting research and literature review, I was under the assumption that many parts of the country would be unproductive enough in terms of climate, soil quality, and even awareness to support a truly localized food system. But in talking to people I have come to the conclusion that while not all parts of the country may be quite as ideal as the Willamette Valley, there are in fact many places with more inhospitable weather and soil types that are even farther ahead of the curve. Much of this movement actually developed in the Northeast of the United States in places like New York and has been thriving there for quite a long time. Even places like Minnesota which experiences

frigid winters there is a thriving local food culture, spurred on by dedicated academics, chefs, and farmers willing to investigate new and exciting methods of year round farming (Sorte Interview 2011). So while there may be certain parts of the country where agriculture in general (and one could argue human habitation of any considerable size) may not be ideal, the majority of the country has the possibility of providing large amounts of food. And the idea of food security, not needing to rely on outside sources for food, is likely to be appealing to people regardless of political leaning.

Even massive cities may someday have the ability to feed themselves. There is a pilot project going on in New York City for example, that is experimenting with various types of solar powered hydroponics in an urban setting. According to their research, if every flat roof in the city were converted into their system of solar powered hydroponics, aquaponics, and aquaculture, the resulting production could feed up to 15 million people. Of course this is theoretical and not something that will happen necessarily, but the point is that population does not have to be a limiting factor in the success of local food. In fact, having a large and thriving market may be very helpful, allowing farmers to have the opportunity to sell as much of their product as possible (Knaus Interview 2011) This echoes the point that every city has unique characteristics, both barriers and advantages. More important than what they are specifically is the community desire and awareness needed to develop the movement.

In fact having a large population in a city may be important to allowing small farmers to proliferate. The over saturation effect felt occasionally is due to the fact that despite the interest in local food, less than 5% of either cities food comes from this method. If that number were increased even to 10% or 15%, there would be dramatically more venues for produces to sell their food.

To summarize this question, I think it is clear that population certainly has an effect on the nature of a local food system. It will dictate what types of programs and

approaches are best. However, it will not negatively impact the viability of a local food system.

Can localized food systems replace the industrial model?

This question was one of the most interesting to me before I began my research. I wanted to know if the concept of localized food systems could ever be so successful that it could actually replace, or at least seriously challenge, the globalized industrial model. The other part of this question is asking if the movement can be established as something more than a fad that is only adopted by a certain segment of the population. I was especially curious to see the responses from the large variety of sources I talked to. In the end the answers fell mostly into one of two categories. Some informants talked about the fact that it was certainly a goal, but admittedly an idealized one. This was something abstract and in the future, and there was too much going on in the current moment to worry much about it. Some people did talk about idea that if, or when, the numerous global catastrophes that are predicted (global warming, peak oil, severe resource depletion, environmental degradation) occur, it will be extremely beneficial to have this type of agricultural system in place and running because it might become a necessity rather than an alternative (Myers Interview 2011).

The other answer to the question was a somewhat straightforward “no”. Some informants felt that it was simply not possible to so fundamentally alter a system that is so ubiquitous in the world today. Also argued was the fact that there were some aspects of the industrial model that were a necessity to feed a planet that may eventually need to support over 10 billion people. Gary Stephenson pointed out that the idea that a county for example could live 100% on itself may even be naïve. When talking about a group in Lane County that proposes just that he stated: “It’s foolish to think that just because we see small amounts of salad mix in the corner of the co-op all

winter long that suddenly you are going to expand to Lane county and feed a quarter of a million people.”

Instead he proposes the need for a fundamental redesign of the economy instead of a “bomb shelter attitude” concerning the problem. This is something that a strong local food system could help contribute to. Even if a community was not 100% self reliant, a strong local food system could help alleviate the need to import food from far away, lessening the impact on what may be a future with low resources.

Based on my literature review, the interviews, and my own opinions on the subject, I do have my own theory on the question at hand. I think that if the movement can convince people that this is an important cause, and can make it even more available to people from all walks of life, it will continue to grow to a point that it will not do away with industrial agriculture, but force it to change. If it becomes popular enough of as a model and people start to vote with their dollar, demanding that they want safe and ecologically responsible food, large manufactures may have to continually find ways to provide that type of product. Naturally occurring environmental pressures such as peak oil may also push the industrial model to adopt many of the beneficial practices of local food producers. This may include not only agricultural practices, but actual economic localization as well, if oil spikes too high in price it may no longer be feasible to ship asparagus from Argentina for example. Or long distance transportation technologies may have to become more environmentally friendly. In addition it is possible than these international owned mega farms may be replaced by family run, medium sized farms that operate on a regional, instead of local, scale. In our case, the Willamette Valley would be local, and the Columbia Basin would be the regional (Stephenson Interview 2011).

However the idea that civic agriculture will be viable in at least some aspect of the industry is almost certain. There are many advantages that small scale sustainable farms have to ensure their survival. One being that the people involved, for the most part, truly want to be. They are there because it is about more than a profit, it is

something they enjoy and believe in Aurora Erlander, owner of Creatures Farm CSA describes this in a simple but profound and important way. “It’s kind of an intangible thing... but all my customers have become my friends, I enjoy providing that to them and the relationship I have with them” (Erlander Interview). Because of this individuals are willing to work for less of an economic payout, over a longer period of time (Sorte Interview 2011). This is important and should not be underestimated.

This idea of civic agriculture becoming much more established and industrial models scaling down and changing practices is only based on information I have gathered in this country however. This is an important point because as countries like China and India continue to grow and develop, their actions may have an even larger impact than those of the United States. Trade will never disappear (nor should it), this includes long distance trade. And this is not a bad thing, trade is a part of human nature and has potential for great benefits and is completely critical in some circumstances. But with a stronger focus on local trade, and applying the lessons about sustainability learned from the small scale to the large, it can be conducted in a much more responsible.

Proposals and Keys for Success

In this final section of chapter 6 I will briefly outline a few key factors that I believe will help a local food system be successful, in Oregon or otherwise. This can be actions taken by individuals, non-profit groups, producers or cities.

1) Avoid Market Saturation. As interviews progressed one concept that I encountered that I had not been aware of at the start was that of market saturation. This is the idea that the phenomenon of local, adaptive agriculture could be so popular and successful that there would be a shortage of places to sell one’s product. The danger being people who go into the business of local food after becoming excited

about what they are seeing in their community, may find that there is simply not enough room for another farmers' market stand or CSA in their neighborhood. Frustration would ensue and people may start giving up on their businesses and it is possible the whole movement would stall and slide back. It is easy to see the scenario happening, and may already be in some situations, and yet we know the percentage of food being consumed in places like Portland and Corvallis is below 5%. So the real issue is not that there is too much locally produced food, but that these traditional methods of distribution may become flooded.

The solution seems to be to constantly investigate and develop new avenues for distribution that can be utilized by producers, so that the movement continues to grow and prosper. This will happen naturally in some cases, an example being farmers who have tapped into the chef culture of an increasingly dynamic and innovative restaurant scene in Portland to sell directly to kitchens. Other entities like hospitals or schools would be good targets of institutional models that could increase the options that small farmers have (Curtin Interview 2011). But I believe it could also be the work of a non-profit group or even a task force in the city government.

2. Continue to integrate food issues into city government. I think it has been shown that for a truly successful movement to take place, change and progress come from both the top and the bottom. Grassroots and citizen initiatives are a critical aspect of the process, but the benefits of involving the city are numerous. Portland has done a fantastic job of this, it is clear that their food policy council is extremely successful and a potent tool. This type of model should be replicated and adopted by any city that wishes to develop a local food system.

There are other signs of increased government interaction in the local food system. For example the city of Portland is attempting to change the nature of certain parts of the city code that refer to zoning. This is a specific action designed to make it

easier for farmers' markets to gain the permits necessary to operate within the city limits (Curtin Interview 2011).

3. Investigate ways to include all socioeconomic levels of society. This is not a new lesson or concept, but one that needs to be remembered and continually renewed. If the local food movement is just about catering to a certain elite in the society, without offering real opportunity and choices to the disadvantaged, then it will be destined to just be a fad, and not a genuine social change for the better.

This would include looking not only to different socioeconomic areas of Portland in particular (which is also important) but to all the small outlying cities in Multnomah County. These are places that may slip through the cracks and suffer without the money, visibility, and resources that a place like Portland may have. Seasoned volunteers from successful organizations would be very helpful in these communities as leaders who could help set up local food projects that otherwise may not get off the ground.

Lowering the cost of local food is also an important criterion. One of the reasons that people may not be able to afford nutritious vegetables and fruits, let alone organic and local produce, is that calorie dense processed food is usually cheaper. I see two things that need to change on a local level. First, the price itself needs to drop on local food. This may be difficult, but just the fact that more and more people are producing local food may help drive down the cost. In addition education is important to show that while costs maybe slightly higher for healthier foods, the long term costs may be dramatically lower due to the avoidance of chronic diseases associated with processed food. The wonderful thing about the multidimensional nature of the programs within the local food system that I mentioned above is that many different organizations can help tackle both these issues at once. Farmers' markets are a perfect example, offering Oregon Trail credit as well providing nutritional food and information about it. The market system in Portland will even accept food assistance

cards from any state and also works with gleaners to donate leftover food (Curtin Interview 2011). Ten Rivers Food Web also demonstrates this idea as explained by Jennifer Myers when she talks about the outreach to marginalized groups within a community:

We are adopting the 'That's My Farmer' program which was run by ecumenical ministries of Portland in the past. And it's grown out of interfaith partnership here in Corvallis, and we're going to bring that model to the farmers' market and create an incentive program to have Oregon Trail cards. So every time somebody swipes a snap card and spends at least 6 dollars, they will get an extra six dollars, and so that will be pretty significant. So we are going to be doing a lot of fundraising for that project and we are going to launch it in several different markets this summer and so now just doing the outreach to get folks who are on food stamps to come to the market will be a big part of it. It's exciting though, it is kind of our big push right now in the food advocacy (Myers Interview 2011).

Of course there are other issues, as not everyone can make it to the market, but there are other examples. In some parts of Portland, low cost co-op markets are being developed by citizens in order to provide affordable and healthy food choices to segments of the population that may not usually have access to it (FPC meeting 2011). There is also the example of the Fork in the Road mobile market.

Food banks are an important piece of this puzzle, and may be some of the most inventive and driving players in the local food system (Stephenson Interview 2011). Even in a town the size of Corvallis, the food bank distributes to over 70 different local agencies, including 14 gleaning groups, which represent an interesting and underrepresented factor in local food systems. (James Interview 2011).

Food banks like the one in Corvallis may even help to combat the aforementioned problem of people not being able to make it to markets by distributing gas vouchers to low income groups (Myers Interview 2011).

4. Search for and maintain existing opportunities for people to make money and to create jobs from the local food movement.

One important factor for the survival of the local food movement will be if there are ample opportunities for individuals and companies to make money and support themselves. Though many people have motivations that are not purely financial, people will of course need to support themselves, as well as to encourage further growth. And traditional businesses (such as supermarkets, restaurants, schools) will need incentive to embrace a local and sustainable style of food. Jobs development can and should be coming from multiple fields within the movement. Work in non-profit and non-governmental organizations are important both in terms of the jobs it could create as well as the social benefits. Private sector jobs would be the most plentiful and would include everything from market employees, to actual producers and growers. Retail jobs, such as co-ops would also fall in this category. Finally as city governments continue to see the benefit in including sustainable food systems in the political discussion, positions will hopefully be added here as well.

Part of this marketing should be the continued attempt to market local food and its culture as more than just food. This will help people learn about it, but also offset or justify the potentially higher cost by providing something more than just the product. This is important because if it is just about price, many people will not be willing to pay the price for sustainably produced products. Changing people's views to see it as a beneficial life style choice would help grow the system to a more influential size. And many people are seeing it this way, more and more all the time according to many people I talked to. As Aurora Erlander said, "It just seems to make people happy". Farmers' markets are a good example of this; people go to them for more than just the produce. Anna Cutis of the Portland Farmers' Market adds: "A huge benefits is that it is plain and simple social interaction (Curtin Interview 2011)"

It would of course be nice if all the benefits of local food could be attained through interest and passion in the subject, but it is impossible to separate from the reality that we do live in a capitalist society, and if large scale change is to happen, it must be worked from within. It may start with self correction and grassroots movements, but change will need to come from the top as well, change that will hopefully be informed by the small scale work being done now.

This of course may cause controversy, such as the recent example of Wal-Mart offering organic produce. While it may seem distasteful for some people in the movement to deal with entities seen so long as the enemy, large players like Wal-Mart will need to be included in the future of sustainable, and even local agriculture. The saying is vote with your dollar, and organizations like Wal-Mart have a lot of dollars, so they may be very important agents of change. There have been local examples of this push to include large retailers as well. Farmers associated with the Willamette Valley Bean and Grain Project, which has converted over 1,000 acres of formally grass seed farms to wheat, sells some of the resulting crop to companies like Oregon Grains Bread. This bread is sold not only in the local food co-op, but Fred Myers, a large scale food purveyor (Myers Interview 2001). This type of cooperation and innovation is a key step in the quest to localize the food system. Gary Stephenson highlighted the importance of this relationship in my interview with him:

There needs to be appeal to middle class people who are not activists, so convenience needs to be a factor. So we need to embrace the fact that Wal Mart is selling local food. We need to keep their feet to the fire that it is actually local. I was just at a conference at the end of last week and there was somebody from New Mexico there that the majority of food sold in New Mexico is through Wal Mart. So if there are advocates that think that everybody should shop exclusively at farmers' markets, co-ops and CSA...there is another message there. The power of Wal Mart (Stephenson 2011).

Just as many successful organizations have developed to help companies donate wasted food to shelters and schools to adopt local foods in their cafeterias, intermediary organizations should be developed to actively pursue the goal of convincing large scale sellers of the benefit of local and sustainable food, both to the planet and their bottom line.

Conclusion

The term ‘civic agriculture’ references the emergence and growth of community-based agriculture and food production activities that not only meet customer demands for fresh, safe, and locally produced foods but create jobs, encourage entrepreneurship, and strengthen community identity. Civic agriculture brings together production and consumption activities within communities and offers consumers real alternatives to the commodities produced, processed, and marketed by large agribusiness firms (Lyson 2004).

In Conclusion, I look back to the definition of civic agriculture I applied in the literature review. This was the guiding concept throughout the research, and trying to determine its role in the Willamette Valley my main goal. I want to look at this definition again and use it to help conclude this thesis, drawing out its individual parts and looking at what I have found in a broad sense. Through my interviews in Portland and Corvallis I have discovered that in fact the Willamette valley is a thriving example of civic agriculture. Something that reaches beyond a fad or niche market, to a social movement that is changing the way people produce, eat and relate to food.

The first part of that definition is clearly present. The food systems do in fact provide fresh, safe and locally produced food to the people in Corvallis and Portland. Venues for this food include farmers’ markets, CSAs, co-ops and increasingly even food assistance programs are finding ways to include people from all socioeconomic levels in the movement. While the percentage of food that is local is not yet up to goals set by organizations like Ten Rivers Food Web, the concept of local food is very

much on the table and being discussed by people within the community. As the outreach programs that so many organizations engage in continue to flourish, it seems likely that even more of this fresh food will be locally produced.

There are all the classic examples of a sustainable, local food system here. The farmer's markets and co-ops are widespread and successful, providing a strong base for the movement, and opening up opportunities for people to learn about and engage in the system. There is also no shortage of farmers interested in participating, as the numbers at the local markets show, as well as the phenomenon of over-saturation speaks to. In addition to these standard facets of such a system, there are unique and innovative models developing such as the Fork in the Road mobile grocer, Corvallis Local Foods, and even the food policy council in Portland (which is still one of only a few in the country). All of these are examples of how such a system provides not only fresh food, but economic opportunities within the community.

In addition, the way different organizations work together towards shared goals of the movement, shows how the community is strengthened and a new identity is developed, one surrounding a more just and equitable food system. The motivations that spur the general public to become engaged in such a system that were described by interviewees likewise came from a similar place or motivation. People see the movement as a way to connect more deeply with their community, the way they feed themselves, and the environment around them.

Everything I have learned points to a dynamic social movement, which represents the ideals espoused in the concept of civic agriculture. This is a movement that has real impacts on the social, cultural, environmental and economic present as well as future of this part of the country. It is shaped by people from many different backgrounds that share common goals and motivations, to bring food and production of food back to a place where it can nurture not only people, but community and business as well. While the successes and importance of the movement here can be

explained through theory, one only need walk through the bustling farmer's market on a spring morning to realize its impact and potential.

ⁱ This particular book was very interesting, and with an author whose last name was quite ironic given the tone of the book. The book, which is called Eating Oil seems like it will be anti-petroleum, but it becomes very clear that the consumption, or eating, of oil is a good thing and methods to reduce it only need to be sought in order to ensure the continued ability to do so.

ⁱⁱⁱ A situation in which the private cost or benefits to the producers or purchasers of a good or service differs from the total social costs or benefits entailed in its production and consumption. An externality exists whenever one individual's actions affect the well-being of another individual -- whether for the better or for the worse -- in ways that need not be paid for according to the existing definition of property rights in the society (Johnson 2005).

^{iv} the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group (Merriam-Webster 2011)

^v For reference, the Portland metro area which includes Hillsboro and Vancouver is the country's 23rd largest, coming to 2,241,841 people (US Census Bureau 2009).

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