Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Congress

April 9, 2011
Saturday
9:00am-3:00pm
@ UC Community Design Center

Promoting a healthy, equitable, and sustainable food system in the Cincinnati Region
Acknowledgement

The Community Design Center would like to thank the community members and guest speakers for their collaboration and support. We would like to recognize the following entities and individuals for their involvement:

**Nutrition Council of Cincinnati**, special thanks for sponsoring Mari Gallagher

**Picnic and Pantry**

**Cincinnati Food Policy Council**

**City of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality**

**University of Cincinnati, DAAP, School of Planning**

**UC Sustainability**

**Individuals who helped with Food Congress planning**

John Hemmerle
Deborah Jordan
William Messer
Lauren Niemes
Steven Rock
Frank Russell
Nancy Sullivan

**Food Congress 2010 Speakers and Presenters**

Lauren Niemes
Mari Gallagher
Tiffany McDowell
David Rosenberg
Kate Cook
Luke Ebner
Larry Falkin
Matt Kennedy
Daniel Remley
Matt Ewer
Mary Lu Lageman
Karen Kahle
Keebler Holley
Steven Rock
Wes Duren
Oliver Kroner
Denisha Garland
Tevis Foreman
Laure Quinlivan

**Staff**

Clare Norwood
   Food Congress Organizer
Dominque Delucia
Leila Loezer
Dominique Delucia
Naomi Ng
Aaron Olson

**Volunteers**

Lauryn Alleva
Carol Chan
Joe DePauw
Emily Lewis
Teresa Fadden
Louie Ratterman
Shannon Ratterman
Louis Stillpass

Community Design Center
College of Design, Architecture, Art & Planning
University of Cincinnati

Field Studio Location
2728 (Short) Vine Street, Corryville
www.uc.edu/cdc
Contact: Frank.Russell@uc.edu (Director)

Mailing Address
Community Design Center &
Niehoff Urban Studio
P.O. Box 210016
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0016
Acknowledgement

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Photos courtesy Community Design Center & Brewster Rhoads
The third annual Cincinnati Regional Food Congress was held at the UC Community Design Center on Saturday, April 9, 2011. Food Congress 2011 convened over 100 food interested stakeholders to learn about the ongoing improvements to the Cincinnati food system and discuss the potential for change. Mari Gallagher, a food systems research analyst and consultant and opened the event with a talk on food balance. Following Mari, Tiffany McDowell from The Center for Closing the Health Gap presented the Center's ongoing efforts to alleviate and eliminate barriers to food access and security in the Avondale neighborhood and the Center's partnership with the Philadelphia Food Trust. The day also included a presentation by Larry Falkin, Director of the City’s Office of Environmental Quality. The three speakers primed participants for the three focused panels on supporting local farms, local food distribution models, and capitalizing on food waste as an asset. Each of these panels also questioned the potential for job creation within the local food economy. Food Congress 2011 served to educate individuals on the various activities and organizations working to improve the local food system.
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The Niehoff Urban Studio is a unique interdisciplinary initiative undertaken to address urban issues that challenge the quality of life in Cincinnati. The studio endeavors to engage the community in an urban problem solving effort. The studio is part of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning, but is located off-campus in Corryville and includes classroom, meeting and exhibit areas. Since 2002 more than 600 students and faculty from fourteen disciplines including urban planning, architecture, engineering, design, urban geography and other participated with more than 100 community groups who visited the studio to work collaboratively with students.

The Niehoff Studio is a place for the University led but community driven study and discussion of urban issues for the benefit of Cincinnati and other urban centers. It is a place where University and non-university participants can come to participate in educational classes, events, symposia, and exhibits that explore urban issues. The Niehoff Studio is a unique and innovative off-campus classroom in which an interdisciplinary group of university students and faculty can interact with community stakeholders to study and experience, first hand all aspects of urban issues relevant to the city center. The work of the Niehoff Studio is intended to have a tangible impact on the urban problems under consideration and will contribute to the body of knowledge of research in this area.

In a two-year thematic studio cycle focused on Food and Urban Quality of Life in 2002-04, the studio investigated a variety of food related planning and design issues including street vending, new models for accessible urban supermarkets, urban public markets, small farm preservation, food and entertainment development districts, and equitable food access issues. The student and faculty work of the studio continues to study food issues intermittently through various community design proposals and the studio supports public education programming for food system research and policy.
The Community Design Center organizes collaborative interdisciplinary community/university partnerships for the research and design of physical improvements which serve the University's urban areas. The Community Design Center is a part of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati. The Center provides assistance to community groups, non-profit organizations, and City departments that are representing underserved areas and underfunded projects within the area.

The Center has pursued food related research, planning, and design as an outcome of its associated Niehoff Studio food studies. These include design and construction for a non-profit jon training program in culinary arts - Venice Pizza on Vine Street; Design services for the Avondale’s Gabriel’s Place food campus which includes a community kitchen incubator, community farm, and public farmer’s market. The CDC also supports research in food issues including a study of the University of Cincinnati Food System; Production and consumption capacity in Hamilton County under a USDA CHEF grant with Findlay Market; Barriers to supermarket access in Cincinnati for the Center for Closing the Health Gap; the Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Congress; and early administrative support for the Cincinnati Food Policy Council.

Food Congress History

Food Congress 2011 built upon the objectives established by Food Congress 2009 and 2010. The 2009 Congress operated as a series of visioning sessions with the intent to share best practices, set goals for the local food economy and to identify opportunities for local food systems development. The 2009 Food Congress resulted in the development of Cincinnati’s Food Policy Council Development Group. The FPC Development Group worked for a year, meeting on a monthly basis to identify the purpose, objectives and goals for a proposed Cincinnati Food Policy Council. Food Congress 2010 served as the launch of Cincinnati’s first ever Food Policy Council. Food Congress 2010 also convened local stakeholders to address the issues of food access and the various sections that comprise an equitable food system; including a presentation by Mark Winne, author of Closing the Food Gap and discussion sessions on food policy, community supported agriculture, urban agriculture and youth growers, and what it means to be food insecure. Both Food Congress 2009 and Food Congress 2010 addressed the various social benefits associated with urban agriculture activities.
Food Balance

MARI GALLAGHER
Presentation Summary

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Lauren Niemes
Speaker Biography

Lauren Niemes is a registered dietician and the Executive Director of the Nutrition Council, a nonprofit agency helping to make Greater Cincinnati a healthier community through innovative nutrition education and physical activity programs. Lauren also chairs the recently formed Cincinnati Food Policy Council.

Ms. Niemes has over 25 years of experience in the field of nutrition and diet. She has been the Executive Director of the Nutrition Council since 1994. Prior to that she was the Dietetics Program Director at the University of Cincinnati, a research nutritionist at the University Medical Center and worked at the Cincinnati Center for Development Disorders. Lauren is a member of the American Dietetic Association and The Society for Nutrition Education. Her areas of expertise include nutrition and disease prevention, nutrition education and childhood obesity. Lauren loves to cook and is an editor of the cookbook, “More Nutritious, Still Delicious”.

Mari Gallagher
Speaker Biography

Mari Gallagher is Principal of Mari Gallagher Research Consulting Group. Clients and partners include grassroots community and civic organizations, government entities, foundations, and major international corporations. She and her firm have collaborated with the Institute of Medicine of the Academy of the Sciences, the Urban Institute, Harvard, MIT, the National YMCA, and many other organizations.

Mari is also the Founding President of the National Center for Public Research whose mission is to provide meaningful and unbiased data and information to improve quality of life, quality of health, and financial wellbeing for all people and communities. In addition to her research and consulting work, Mari also teaches at the Institute on Urban Health Research at Bouve College of Health Sciences at Northeastern University in Boston.

Mari has enjoyed a national reputation for diverse, high impact projects around the country for over 20 years of professional history. Expertise includes quantitative and qualitative research projects; financial services, housing, community development, community planning, workforce issues, the economy, immigration, food deserts, and community health; market analyses, commercial site assessments and hands-on redevelopment consulting; business strategies; mapping; expert testimony, facilitation, and public forums.
Larry Falkin
Speaker Biography

Larry Falkin is Director of the City of Cincinnati’s Office of Environmental Quality. OEQ is spearheading implementation of the Green Cincinnati Plan and administers the City’s Urban Agriculture Program. Mr. Falkin's previous positions include: Assistant Environmental Director for the City of Kansas City, Missouri, and Deputy Branch Chief for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Matthew Kennedy
Speaker Biography

Matthew Kennedy is a founding partner of Sustain Brand and CEO at Kennedy Creative. He is a creative CPG industry veteran with 23 years of experience working with industry leaders. During his career, Matthew has created, designed, directed and managed brand solutions that resulted in financial success both nationally and internationally. In 1994, Matthew established Kennedy Creative, a leading Strategy+Design consultancy. Under the umbrella of Kennedy Creative he created Sustain Brand in an effort to help small producers get larger market opportunities and bring local awareness to their products.

The Sustain Brand was born out of Kennedy’s desire to support and sustain regionality. He believes that strong regional brands lead to strong regional economies, as well as more fresh and healthy choices for consumers. Sustain Brand provides a mean for local farmers and manufactures to break into mainstream retail. The company only sources and sells local products. Each product only travels 300 miles, resulting in a lower carbon footprint than the average grocery store product while also omitting the usual preservatives and sodium required by non-local shelf stable brands. Sustain Brand products can be found in smaller grocery stores such as Clifton Natural Foods and Hyde Park Gourmet. Jungle Jims also carries Sustain products as do more accessible grocery chains such as Krogers and IGA.

Tiffany McDowell, Ph. D.
Speaker Biography

Tiffany McDowell, PhD, is the Assistant Director of Research and Programs at the Center for Closing the Health Gap. She holds a bachelors in Psychology from Southern University, a masters in Family and Child Studies from Miami University, and a doctorate in Couple and Family Therapy from The Ohio State University. Dr. McDowell’s research interests include increasing access and removing barriers to improved health for underserved populations. She has several years of experience working to build the capacity of families to advocate for themselves.
Food Balance

Speaker: Mari Gallagher

Summary: Mari Gallagher addressed the connection between food and health, particularly within Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati. Gallagher was hired by Hamilton County Public Health and the Nutrition Council to measure healthy food access at the county and city level. She asked the questions, “To what degree does health relate to food?” While the answer to the question is multi-faceted, Mari distilled the response down to several key points including the geography of food stores, a typology of food outlets, neighborhood demographics and the connection to food choices.

Gallagher introduced the audience to two key terms identifying food outlets. Her research identifies food outlets as fringe or mainstream. A fringe food outlet is not inherently bad, however nor are they necessarily good. Examples of fringe outlets are fast food restaurants, corner stores, gas stations; outlets where choices are limited to primarily “junk” food. Mainstream outlets are small, medium, or large supermarkets that offer food to support a healthy lifestyle and meet all dietary needs. Food deserts, or areas with poor food access are large geographic areas with no mainstream grocery stores. Thus the question of food balance asks whether an individual, or a community has choice, the choice to eat healthy (i.e. shop at a mainstream food outlet) or eat unhealthy (shop at a fringe outlet). Can you make a healthy choice as easily as making an unhealthy choice?

Gallagher measured choice by evaluating the distance between residential areas to both fringe and mainstream food outlets. She measured down to the block level within Hamilton County and within the City of Cincinnati. Gallagher had to categorize which stores are fringe and what are mainstream. She also found that both fringe and mainstream stores accept food stamps, and that the USDA categorizes stores that fall under her definition of fringe, as mainstream. Gallagher also collected block level data on race, income and education.

The results of Gallagher’s study show that clusters within the County and City boundaries reflect a lack of health choice. Approximately 152,993 county residents (37 percent of population) live 2 miles or more from a mainstream grocery store. Around 286,784 Cincinnati residents (69 percent of the population) live 1.5 miler or further from a mainstream grocery store. Within the county, 58,214 residents (14 percent of population) travel 3.75 times further to reach a mainstream store than a fringe outlet; and 120,641 city residents (29 percent of population) travel 3.5 times further to reach a grocery store than a fringe outlet. Gallagher mentions that there is no perfect distance, that establishing a distance incorporates factors such as population density, land use, transporation, commercial density and so forth. However, what these distance reveal is that it is much easier to make an unhealthy choice, rather than a healthy one. Gallagher found that over 120,000 City residents travel 3.5 times as far to reach a mainstream grocery store than they travel to reach a fringe outlet. The data shows that African Americans suffer disproportionately, and that 643 of the 12,000 SNAP stores are fringe. Thus there is and should be a concern about the growing number of fringe stores offering the SNAP program.
Gallagher pulled data on Hamilton County SNAP stores from 2006 to 2010. She found that within this time period there was a rapid increase in gas stations and corner stores. These stores opened in predominantly low-income neighborhoods. Health data shows that that populations in closer distance to fringe stores than mainstream, or areas with a low food balance, face more health problems than populations living in close proximity to a mainstream, or healthy choice food outlet. Thus the general conclusion is that the greater the distance to a mainstream grocery store the greater the health problems in food imbalanced communities.

Gallagher’s presentation did not conclude with a set of recommendations or next steps. However her data should lay the groundwork for what needs to be achieved to close the health gap and alleviate food access disparities within Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati.
Center for Closing the Health Gap & Philadelphia Food Trust

Speaker: Tiffany McDowell

Summary:

Tiffany McDowell opened her talk asking the audience, “What can we do with Mari Gallagher’s data?” She emphasized that the data supports what is happening on a regular basis; full-service grocery stores leaving low-income urban neighborhoods and fringe stores opening in their stead.

The Center For Closing the Health Gap was founded on the objective to decrease obesity. The mission states “To lead the efforts to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in Greater Cincinnati through advocacy, education, and community outreach.” The Center works primarily with African Americans, Hispanics and Appalachians. Currently the Center is one of six local organizations partnered with the Hamilton County Public Health Department to support and implement the Communities Putting Prevention to Work Program (CPPW).

Hamilton County Public Health describes the program as “CPPW is a two-year project funded by the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hamilton County Public Health is one of 44 grant-awarded communities charged with implementing strategies for improved nutrition, increased physical activity and reduced obesity. CPPW is a collaborative community program focused on changing social norms by creating policy, systems and environmental changes with the ultimate goal of reducing the incidence of preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular illnesses. The CPPW project is a county-wide effort building the foundation for sustainable behavior change and healthy communities.”

The Center’s previous and ongoing efforts to prevent obesity and provide healthier food access in low-income communities has greatly contributed to the success of the CPPW program. The Center concentrated their healthy food efforts in the creation of the city appointed Food Access Task Force (FATF). The first FATF initiative involved completing a city-wide community food assessment with an emphasis on and recommendations made for Avondale and Walnut Hills. These recommendations also apply to Roselawn and Bond Hill, both neighborhoods lost full-service grocery stores during the last two years.

To counter the loss of full-service grocery stores the Center partnered with the Avondale Coalition of Churches to provide better access to fresh foods and improve transportation to grocery stores. Avondale Churches, and now churches in other underserved neighborhoods, are sites for community gardens or are in the process of building a community garden program. The success of the Center’s work and need for healthier and improved access to fresh food garnered the attention of the Philadelphia Food Trust. The recent partnership between the Center and the Food Trust will focus efforts in Avondale, with the hope that the success will spillover and provoke change in the City’s other underserved communities.
Prior to partnering with the Food Trust, the Center and the Avondale Community Council reached out to corner store operators and assessed the range of food stuffs offered. They have asked the corner stores to serve healthier food, support reduced crime and improve customer service. A key barrier is convincing these corner stores to care about obesity reduction while still maintaining their bottom line. According to Food Trust, improving corner stores in terms of products, service and aesthetic quality has a three-fold economic impact; job creation for local residents, recycle dollars back into the community, and the revitalization of neighborhoods and improvement of neighborhood commercial corridors. To achieve success in creating healthier corner stores the Food Trust will help the Center and the Avondale Community Council identify which stores are viable. They will also identify a project manager to oversee the development of healthier corner stores and create a plan to address training needs. The objective is to increase healthier food options, but also to identify what the community wants. The Food Trust will encourage the corner stores to buy healthier food together in bulk as one way to minimize cost and loss risk. To help the corner stores market new products the Food Trust and the Center will engage in positive social marketing to inform community residents of new products and expanded options. Continued education on the benefits of physical activity and eating healthy will run in tandem with the marketing of new products.

For further information on the Philadelphia Food Trust visit www.thefoodtrust.org. To learn more about the program in Avondale be alert for forthcoming news coverage or visit www.closingthehealthgap.org.
Summary:
Larry Falkin’s presentation does not fully represent the City’s role in the local food system. However, he did cover quite a bit of material in the brief 15 minutes allocated for his presentation. For further information please visit the City of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality website at http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov.

Larry’s presentation covered four key topics; 1. City perspective on Urban Agriculture, 2. City programs and efforts, 3. City regulations that impact the local food economy and 4. The need for entrepreneurship in the local food economy and how the city can assist.

From a city perspective the local food economy can play a major role in the future of the city. From an economic standpoint each city household spends an average of $6,000 on food with approximately 1 million households in the city. All together we are spending 6 billion dollars on food. What if we spend 1 percent of our food dollars on local food? We would have a 60 million dollar industry with approximately 1,200 new jobs. What if we spend 10 percent of our food dollars? We’d have a 600 million dollar local food industry with approximately 12,000 new jobs. The local food economy is also critical to the environmental health of the city. Urban Agriculture is a part of the Green Cincinnati Plan. Larry mentioned that from an energy perspective, agriculture consumes more conventional energy than transportation. How and what we eat is as important as what we drive. Smaller scale urban agriculture projects and local farms minimize run-off and use of chemicals in way not possible by large agri-business operations. The City also takes into account human considerations; it is healthier to eat local foods with one end result being that a healthier population makes for an economically stronger city.

What is the city doing? The city has an Urban Agriculture program that is small, but growing. At present there are approximately 18,000 vacant parcels of land controlled by the city. Many of those parcels are suitable for agriculture production and can be leased for an annual fee of $1. The city also works with the Civic Garden Center to connect people with the lots. As of April, 2011 the city sponsors 11 sites with 59 people gardening. Seven of those 59 people grow enough to sell commercially. The city made this possible by revising zoning ordinances so that food could be grown on vacant lots. Prior to the zoning change food could only be grown on agriculturally zoned land, or residents could have home gardens. The zoning change made legal the production of food on land as an ancillary use, without spot-zoning parcels for agricultural use. To support local farms and local urban ag programs the City does encourage people, through the Green Cincinnati Plan, to eat more plant-based foods. The City also champions a Meatless Monday campaign and supports the Food Task Team (chaired by William Messer).

While the city supports the local food economy through the above-mentioned programming, the city also supports the local food economy in its role as a regulator, primarily regulating food safety. The Health Department is active in regulating food safety
and keeping the food we eat safe. They monitor conditions such as food temperature and sanitary conditions. For individuals interested in opening a business it is critical to know how the business will be regulated. These regulations protect the public, but also protect the businesses. If people get sick from a farmer’s market they simply won’t go. The bottom line- know what the health department rules and regulations are. The city website makes this information available, however individuals can also speak with health department officials directly to have any questions or concerns answered.

The city also offers assistance to entrepreneurs. Community Development staff offers technical assistance. They can help local entrepreneurs write a business plan, which is an essential planning tool for any entrepreneur. Community Development staff are available to answer questions and guide entrepreneurs in the paperwork process. The city also provides access to capital through a micro-loan program, with small loans at a low interest rate. Larger funds are also available, with a slightly higher, but still relatively low interest rate. The city also assists entrepreneurs in identifying appropriate sites and location. There is a site selection website with zoning code maps, transportation access routes, parcel information and much more. Visit the City of Cincinnati Community Development page for further information on program and technical assistance. For questions regarding urban agriculture contact the Office of Environmental Quality.
Local Food Processing & Sustain Brand

Speaker: Matthew Kennedy

Summary:
Sustain Brand is built on the premise of sourcing and selling local products. Matthew Kennedy, founder and owner of Sustain Brain spoke about what Sustain Brand is trying to do, where the business comes from and why he’s trying to do what he’s doing.

Sustain Bran is committed to bringing locally grown products to mainstream grocery stores. The business developed out of Kennedy’s own experience; he spend the last 25 years packaging and branding products and decided to apply his expertise to local food, with a focus on putting local foods into mainstream grocery stores.

Why mainstream grocery stores? For the most part, consumers do all of their shopping at mainstream grocery stores. For the sake of efficiency, Kennedy puts local producers into one name brand for the resale of local products in the mainstream food system. One of Sustain Brand’s first partners was Matt Madison of Madison’s gelato. While Madison’s gelato now falls under the Sustain Brand name, the packaging promotes Matt’s story and the Madison gelato product. Sustain Brand puts the face of the producer on it’s packaging.

What is local? Some of us adhere to a 50-mile radius, other folks follow the 100-mile rule. Sustain Brand products travel less than half a day or less. Kennedy follows a 300-mile rule, whereas many mainstream grocery items travel 1,500 or more miles. 300 miles sounds pretty good, particularly for frozen and shelf-stable products. Sustain Brand does not work with packaging fresh food, in Kennedy’s words he leaves that to the “fresh guys” or companies like Green B.E.A.N., local farmers markets, Findlay Market, Picnic and Pantry and other organizations and stores who focus on fresh produce, but not solely value-added and processed foods.

Sustain Brand wants to create a local destination in local grocery stores for local products. The idea is to plug into as many local food hubs, from mainstream stores to smaller grocery chains and independent markets. Currently Sustain Brand has a hub in Cincinnati, a hub in upstate New York and 4 more hubs opening this year, in 2011. If you see a Sustain Brand product in New York, you know it’s only traveled 300 miles or less- same for New Mexico and the same goes for Cincinnati.

Why create Sustain Brand? Kennedy shared figures from his own market research, noting that 85 percent of shoppers want local products, and they want them in mainstream grocery stores. Sustain Brands works with the constraints of the system and puts local foods where people shop. Not everyone wants to, has the time or the access to farmers markets, small local foodstuffs shops, or even the home delivery option provided by Green B.E.A.N. Delivery. Sustain Brand does more than make local food products convenient for the shopper, he also wants to keep the “small guy” or the local grower in business. Kennedy believes that Sustain Brand can bring small, local farmers enough volume to help make that farm a viable and economically sustainable enterprise.
Sustain Brand sells, promotes, markets, and distributes frozen and shelf-stable products made from local produce. In the Cincinnati area Sustain Brand products are available in Kroger stores, IGA stores, Jungle Jim’s, Whole Foods and Clifton Natural foods. Read the label to learn the story and, if you’re a farmer and want to grow for Sustain Brand products, contact Matthew Kennedy at (513) 381-4900 or matthew@sustainbrand.com.
Panel 1:
Local Food Production

Moderator:
Clare Norwood

Panelists:
Kate Cook
Luke Ebner
David Rosenberg
Food Production: Supporting Local Farms

Kate Cook
Speaker Biography

Luke Ebner
Speaker Biography

David Rosenberg
Speaker Biography

Clare Norwood
Moderator Biography

Panel discussion summary
Kate Cook
Panelist Biography

Kate Cook is the Garden Manager at Carriage House Farm. Before joining the Carriage House team, she was an independent farmer with the Findlay Market CHEF Program. Her educational background includes a Master Rain Gardener certification and Theatrical Production Design. Kate’s managerial experience includes both large-scale corporate and small-business models, from clothing retail to architectural graphic design.

Kate’s experience as a grower started very early in life, as her parents were avid backyard gardeners. She teaches classes on intensive small-space gardening at the Cincinnati Civic Garden Center: incorporating concepts like companion planting, intercropping and integrated pest management into small-scale production spaces.

Carriage House Farm is an Ohio Century Farm located in North Bend, Ohio. Farm products sold include produce, grains, and honey, which can be found in local area restaurants, retailers, Northside Farmers’ Market and Findlay Market Farmers’ Market. Visit the farm website for additional information: www.carriagehousefarmllc.com.

Luke Ebner
Panelist Biography

Luke Ebner and his wife Angela are DAAP School of Art graduates and co-founders of the non-profit group Permaganic, a 501 (c)(3) focused on Urban Farming and Art with underserved communities. As Operations Manager for Permaganic, Luke’s work involves leading the organization’s farming projects and marketing via farmers’ markets and restaurants. Luke works closely with a group at the Hamilton County MRDD’s Robert W. Franks Center, running their on-site greenhouse and doing horticultural therapy. Luke also works with a crew of 10 teenagers at the Eco Garden at 1718 Main Street in Mt. Auburn, at the edge of Over-the-Rhine. He and Angela have been stewards of the Eco Garden and its resident Youth Internship Program since 2003, bringing it under the Permaganic umbrella in August 2010.
David Rosenberg
Panelist Biography

David Rosenberg is owner and operator of Wooden Shoe Gardens which grows vegetables for commercial wholesale markets around his native Cincinnati. Rosenberg holds a B.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Michigan. A teacher, farmer and advocate, he has been involved in farming for the better part of four decades. In addition to helping start Tailgate Markets and Community Gardens in Cincinnati, he is a founding member of the Ohio Ecological Food and Farming Association, former manager of the Cincinnati Food Coop, officer of several neighborhood and city-wide land-use initiatives, as well as the Home Grown Food Collaborative, and initiative to create a regional food distribution network in the Tri-State area through a Community Supported Agriculture model.

Clare Norwood
Moderator Biography

Clare Norwood is the Food Project Coordinator for the 2010 and 2011 Greater Cincinnati Food Congress produced by the University of Cincinnati Community Design Center and the Niehoff Urban Studio. Clare is wrapping up her graduate degree in Urban Planning at the University of Cincinnati School of Planning. After completing her undergraduate degree in Art History, Clare worked in the curatorial department at the Contemporary Arts Center. She dabbled in construction, metal work and odd jobs before making the leap to graduate school. Clare spent her childhood on a farm and has cooked in a number of restaurants that source local produce, meat, poultry and fish. She loves to garden, run, read and work with people to build community.
Food Production: Supporting Local Farms

Panelists: Kate Cook, Luke Ebner, David Rosenberg

Moderator: Clare Norwood

Summary:
The panel discussion Local Food Production – Supporting Local Farms followed a discussion format. This synopsis will follow the bulk of the conversation and the unfolding of ideas. By no means does the reported discussion fully represent the experience, opinions and beliefs of the three panelists. I encourage you all to contact them should you like further information or visit them at the Northside Farmer’s Markets.

The first question posed asked “what is needed and necessary to make farming locally a sustainable enterprise?” David Rosenberg answered the question by saying we need to solve the problem, the problem with design. By this David described how current policies, distributors, and even farmers markets create a barrier between the farmer and the consumer. Farmers need a direct dialogue with consumers. Farmers simply cannot make a living selling $20 to $30 worth of produce to a store or a restaurant, who then mark up the produce to sell to the consumer. Thus yes, there is a design problem here and David asked the questions, “how many farms do businesses create and support?”
The current middle heavy system does not support local growers. David gave a great potato example: 2 cents out of every chip dollar goes to the potato farmer, whereas 35 cents out of every potato dollar goes to the farmer. This begs the questions, how can the consumer help the farmers get more for their product and create new values for the public? Kate Cook followed David’s comment by mentioning that farmers used to have a single income stream, and that now farms need multiple income streams to be sustainable or economically viable. Carriage House sells to Green B.E.A.N. Delivery, to local stores and restaurants, direct to consumers and runs a CSA. Farmers now have to diversify and create multiple sources of revenue in order to make a living. Ideally farmers could have their own processing facilities, they could make their own potato chips- but such an investment doesn’t just take away from the bottom line, it also takes away the time to actually grow the food, to grow the potato. Regulations also eat away from the bottom line and time spent in the field. Luke Ebner mentioned that the paperwork takes away from one of farming’s biggest inputs, that input being time. Rather than having a full-day growing, small farmers have to spend time in food safety classes or making sure to adhere to the latest regulations. Small farmers do not have the staff to assume these responsibilities and these regulations end up being a huge roadblock between the farmer and the consumer and the consumer and the middlemen. To some extent, cutting out the middleman would help, but as David pointed out the farmers become the middlemen when selling to the public via a Farmer’s Market or seeking out restaurants and stores for the purchase of farm products. Farmers assuming the role of the middlemen also detracts significantly from time that could be spent growing. Thus how can the current system be organized to better link local farms to the consumer? Presently the middle sector decides food prices; ideally farmers should make decisions
with the consumers on what those food prices are and how to best access farm fresh food and products.

Thus, do consumer expectations of food prices limit a greater support of local, sustainable farms? In a sense yes, but Luke mentioned that farmers cannot really fault the consumer. People see the price disparities at supermarkets and farmer’s markets. Luke also mentioned that location plays a huge role in what price people are willing to pay. A consumer in Chapel Hill, North Carolina willingly pays $6 for a dozen farm fresh eggs whereas a consumer in Cincinnati is only willing to pay $2-$3 for a dozen farm fresh eggs. The consumer needs to be educated on not just the health, economic and environmental benefits of farm fresh food, but also the labor, time, sweat and love that are invested in farm fresh products. The education aspect is necessary, but it also takes away from growing time. Luke mentioned that he spends all his time at the farmer’s market educating customers and that by the end he’s more worn out from teaching people than he would be shoveling dirt all day long. Kate reiterated that the education factor is a huge barrier. She works with chefs who don’t even know what products are in season, so how can we expect the general public to know what is in season? Farmers also have to justify their prices, explaining the work it takes to grow, the time it takes to pick, load up and bring the product to the consumer, to the market. Some consumers, even if they know the benefits of fresh produce, simply don’t have the time, energy or interest to prepare fresh food. Will a single mom who has worked all day have the money and time to buy fresh produce and then the wherewithal to cook it in a way that the kids and other household members will eat. Thus, another struggle is selling customers on the value of fresh food, to teach people to value good food as much as they value gadgets, clothes, cars and other material items.

David expanded on the issue of price. He mentioned that he could farm more efficiently, and at a lower cost if he had access to a wholesale market that would take his entire product to sell, market and distribute. If this was an option he feels that he and other local farmers could produce a more efficient levels, thus improving his income and perhaps improving, or reducing the price of food. However, the fact of the matter is that he and most farmers do not have access to a wholesale market and that most family farms, cannot, as a family produce food at the best prices. David even mentioned that his partner works separate from the farm. Again, David reiterated that designing a system that works starts with a discussion with the consumer. He encouraged the audience to ask farmers and to start conversation on what is necessary to support local farms.
Panel 2: Local Food Distribution

Moderator: Daniel Remley

Panelists:
Matt Ewer
Karen Kahle
Mary Lu Lageman
Panel Sessions

Local Food Distribution: Models & Potential for Job Creation

Matt Ewer
Speaker Biography

Karen Kahle
Speaker Biography

Mary Lu Lageman
Speaker Biography

Panel discussion summary
**Matt Ewer**  
Panelist Biography

Matt Ewer resides in Indianapolis, Ind., and currently owns and operates Green B.E.A.N. Delivery, The Feel Good Farm, Tiny Footprint Distribution, and Farm to Kitchen Foods. After graduating in 2000 from Indiana University with a degree in Environmental Management, Matt worked at Stranger’s Hill organic farm in Bloomington, Ind., for two seasons. Enjoying his experience in farming led Matt to Washington State for another learning experience in organics. While in Seattle for four years Matt was the General Manager of Full Circle Farm, which was recently named “one of the most successful small farms in the country” by US news. Since the company’s start in 2007, Matt has created over 40 full time positions withing the community. Through his experiences Matt has created a successful business model that makes organic and natural foods convenient, accessible and affordable to the communities of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbus and Dayton.

**Karen Kahle**  
Panelist Biography

Karen Kahle is the Resource Development Director at Findlay Market. She has more than 20 years of grant writing and fundraising experience. She worked previously as the Director of Development and Community Relations for SUMA and as a Development Specialist for the Butler County Community Grant Consortium. She has worked in a variety of development and management positions with the Children’s Defense Fund, Welcome House of Northern Kentucky, the Northern Kentucky Welfare Reform Task Force, and the Northern Kentucky Housing and Homeless Coalition. From 1995 to 1996 she managed one of two Silverglades stands at Findlay Market. Karen has a Masters Degree in Political Science from the University of Cincinnati and a Bachelors Degree in Political Science from Xavier University.

Since joining the Corporation for Findlay Market in September 2007, she has helped it to secure over $2 million in grants, donations and in-kind contributions, including a 2009 USDA Community Food Project grant. Karen also serves on the Steering Committee of the Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council.
Mary Lu Lageman
Panelist Biography

Mary Lu Lageman is the Farm Activities Coordinator at Grailville Retreat and Program Center and organic farm. She has been involved for many years in teaching Permaculture and various aspects of sustainable agriculture in the U.S. and abroad, with a passion for experiential and holistic learning, and has worked in both non-profit and government sectors. She has co-founded and works with Earth-Shares CSA and is a member of the Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council and southwest chapter of the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association.

Earth-Shares CSA is a like-minded group of individuals committed to sustainable organic farming practices, living wages for farmers, and locally grown produce. It is located at Grailville, is five years old, and has 75 shares for the 2011 season.

Daniel Remley
Moderator Biography

Dr. Remley holds a Masters in Public Health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and a Ph.D. in Nutritional Sciences from the University of Kentucky and has worked for the Extension Services of the University of Missouri and Ohio State University over the last ten years. Dr. Remley specializes in developing healthy and sustainable food systems in southwest Ohio. His most significant accomplishment is developing the Rainbow of Colors Choice Food Pantry System which integrates nutrition education with the process of choice. Around 50 pantries from 15 Ohio counties and 20 other states have used various elements of the Rainbow of Colors model. Dr. Remley has served as an evaluator for a Food Stamp Outreach Grant, facilitated the development of several community and school gardens in Butler County, has coordinated county-wide efforts to promote farmers’ markets, has worked with Miami University Department of Geography to develop a map of food deserts in Butler County, and has helped facilitate the development of the Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council. Currently Dr. Remley is facilitating a local coalition that is exploring the idea of a mobile fresh produce bus. Dr. Remley manages an annual $50,000 grant from the Midwest Food and Nutrition Service which provides nutrition education to SNAP and SNAP eligible recipients.
Local Food Distribution: Models & Potential for Job Creation

Panelists: Matt Ewer, Karen Kahle, Mary Lu Lageman

Moderator: Daniel Remley

Summary:
Dan Remley with OSU Extension moderated the local food distribution panel comprised of Matt Ewer from Green B.E.A.N Deliver, Karen Kahle from Findlay Market and Mary Lu Lageman with Earth-Share's CSA and Grailville. This panel discussion assumed a presentation format, each panelist took 10 minutes to explain their program and how it relates to local food distribution.

Mary Lu Lageman and Earth-Share’s CSA
Earth-Share’s CSA is a 5 year old CSA started at Grailville retreat center, based in Loveland, Ohio. Mary Lu opened her presentation with a story, a story on the history of CSA’s and their roles not just as channels for food production, but also as models for food distribution.

CSA’s really started in 1965 in Japan. A group of women were concerned about pesticides in their food and needing to find food that was safe to feed their children and family. As a solution these women self-organized and found a farmer who was willing to use safe growing practices for the production of vegetables that these women could buy. During this time CSA’s also developed in Switzerland, Sweden, German and other countries in Eastern and Western Europe. About 20 years later, in 1985, the CSA movement came to the United States. The first CSA was in Massachusetts on Indian Light Farm. To promote the CSA the founders created a film called “Not Just About Vegetables”. The short film narrates that CSA’s should be based on community and sharing as much as being based on food. In 1994 Grailville started the Grailville CSA, primarily run by Grailville farmers and managed by interns. The Grailville CSA started with 15 members in Northside with a focus on cooperation and reducing food miles. Each week the CSA members received a bag of fresh produce and farm products. The farmers did all of the growing, all of the harvesting and the CSA lasted for 11 years. In 2004 the CSA became unsustainable for reasons of not charging enough while at the same time not providing enough produce and volume. After shutting down, a small core group from the original CSA agreed to work with farmers to take responsibility for managing the CSA. In 2006 the core group started the Earth-Shares CSA, which is now in it’s sixth season. The core group does all the paperwork and assumes all administrative responsibility. This allows the farmer to manage the CSA garden, but also take on other projects related to Grailville and his other businesses/means of income. During half of the year the farmer is full-time with the CSA garden, during this time he has an assistant. During the other half of the year the farmer has to seek employment elsewhere. The core group was aware, and remains aware that farmer needs to make a living; thus the group decided to increase prices to give the farmer a better living. The Earth-Share’s CSA group and farmer find success because they realize the symbiotic nature of the relationship and are able to meet one another’s needs.
The farmer listens to what people would like grown, but in return he can tell the core group what he requires to have his needs met.

While this model works for the Earth-Share’s CSA, Mary Lu emphasized that models can vary across farms and communities. Carriage House Farms and Enright Urban EcoVillage each have a CSA, each with a variation on the CSA models best suits their needs and participants. The Earth-Share’s CSA offers a work-share program, meaning that individuals who help in the garden pay a smaller fee and some individuals pay for a full-share, choosing not to work in the garden. Some CSA’s form cooperations with other farmers and in doing so are able to reach more consumers and grow more efficiently and at a higher volume.

For information on the other local CSA’s please visit the Central Ohio River Valley website or pick up the most recent edition of the CORV guide.

Matt Ewer from Green B.E.A.N Delivery

Matt expressed that at some point distribution and local food got a bad name. We also heard this in the local food production panel. The GREEN B.E.A.N Delivery companies are proving this wrong, supporting local farmers and acting as a local foods distribution agent. Green B.E.A.N. is a network of local farmers and artisans based on the CSA model. The company focuses on networking other farmers and creating connections between them and the local consumer. The company first started in 2007 in Indianapolis and opened a Cincinnati hub in 2009. Matt started Green B.E.A.N. to support local farmers and to make farm fresh food accessible. Now, consumers can sign up on-line and select local produce along with other grocery staples to be delivered on a weekly basis either to the front door or a convenient, centralized pick-up location.

Matt ascertained that while food should be serious, it should also be lighthearted, it should be here for community, for the people and about people- not just about food. Green B.E.A.N LLC is the parent company of several other enterprises. Green B.E.A.N as a company makes approximately 3,500 deliveries a week and has a warehouse in each hub location with both refrigeration and freezing facilities. Providing this service to farmer’s means that farmers have a place to take their food for safe storage and allows for a quick turn around from the field to the consumer. Green B.E.A.N. either picks up direct from the farmers, or farmers might deliver to the warehouse.

A second company under the GREEN B.E.A.N. umbrella is Tiny Footprint Distribution. This is a low-carbon footprint distribution company that sources local, fresh products to mainstream grocery stores such as Biggs-Rempke and Whole Foods. Farm to Kitchen Foods is third company under the Green B.E.A.N name. This company grew out of the fact that it was hard to find locally made products, such as salsas. Now, instead of selling salsas from California, Green B.E.A.N can offer customers locally made value-added products either via the home delivery service or Tiny Footprint Distribution.

By no means has Green B.E.A.N LLC slowed down. The company attacks problems plaguing the local foods system and comes up with creative solutions that support local farmers, but also local consumers.
Karen Kahle from Findlay Market

Findlay Market is a food distribution hub; a distribution for local foods, local artisan products and also a food center offering grocery store staples. However, Findlay Market is much more than place to purchase food. Public Markets like Findlay also address neighborhood revitalization and create public spaces and places for both Over-the-Rhine residents and members of the greater Cincinnati community and food system.

The market is publicly owned and managed by the non-profit group, The Corporation for Findlay Market. Findlay is now open 6 days a week with three dozen permanent businesses and 130 part-time, seasonal businesses. In addition to these enterprises, Findlay hosts over 2 dozen workers growing food on vacant lots. The market also offers the SNAP Plus program, which offers SNAP participants who attend an education or nutrition class additional food dollars to spend on market produce. The market is also a leader in local sustainability projects. The market composting operations have reduced the amount of market waste going into the landfill by one half. In terms of place making, the market hosts musical performances and community building events. While Findlay accomplishes all of this, the market is still dedicated to serving OTR and the Cincinnati community as a food hub.

Currently the market is hoping to receive funding to develop a food hub plan that would further spur neighborhood and city-wide economic development. The market would like to aggregate food system activities, from more local food production, to a commercial kitchen, food processing, storage, distribution and so forth. Over the past year market staff have been talking to farmers about what it would take to ramp up production for wholesale or a produce auction. As with most projects, funding is a barrier. However, though community support of local foods and Findlay Market, we, the consumers can demonstrate to future investors that we need such a hub in Cincinnati and that as a community we support the local food economy and a healthy, viable and competitive city.
Local Food Distribution: Models & Potential for Job Creation (cont.)

Wrapping up the Local Food Distribution panel

Karen Kahle, Matt Ewer, Mary Lu Lageman
Panel 3: Food Waste: An Asset

Moderator: Keebler Holley

Panelists:
Wes Duren
Oliver Kroner
Steven Rock
Food Waste: An Asset - Environmental and Economic Costs

Wes Duren
Speaker Biography

Oliver Kroner
Speaker Biography

Steven Rock
Speaker Biography

Panel discussion summary
Wes Duren
Panelist Biography

An organic gardening enthusiast, Wes Duren graduated from Ohio State University in 2002 with a degree in Landscape Horticulture and a minor in Natural Resources. He worked at OSU’s Chadwick Arboretum as a Mayhew Scholar while finishing his last year at school. He also received a degree in English Gardening Styles from Myerscough College in Preston, England.

Currently, Wes is the Landscape Division Manager for Marvin’s Organic Gardens, overseeing everything from landscape design and installation to yard clean-up and fertilization. On the side, Wes holds the position of Planting Coordinator at the Historic Loveland Castle in Loveland, Ohio. His hobbies include gardening with rare and unusual plants, edible mushroom cultivation, visiting world-class gardens, hiking, biking, and skiing. Wes also enjoys public speaking on various gardening related subjects.

Wes is certified by the ONLA as a Certified Nursery Master Technician (Garden Center, Nursery, Landscape). In 2006, Wes was a Gold Medal Winner of the 10’x12’ landscape display at the Cincinnati Flower Show.

Oliver Kroner
Panelist Biography

Oliver Kroner is an environmental scientist for TERA, a non-profit dedicated to promoting public and environmental health. He serves on the Board of Directors of Northside Community Council and the Decision Making Committee of FUEL Cincinnati. As a graduate student at Miami University’s Institute of Environmental Sciences, his lengthy commutes from Cincinnati led him to explore renewable fuels. Collaborating with like-minded neighbors, he helped form a biodiesel cooperative in Northside, where waste vegetable oil from local restaurants is converted into fuel. With partnerships amongst multiple restaurants and seed funding from FUEL Cincinnati, the coop is growing in membership and production capacity.
Steven Rock
Panelist Biography

Steve Rock is an Environmental Engineer in the Remediation and Contaminant Branch at EPA's National Risk Management Research Laboratory in Cincinnati, Ohio and has worked for the EPA since 1994. Steve manages field projects using phytoextraction, phytodegradation, plume control and vegetative. He is the author of several phytotechnology publications, including acting as team leader on the EPA's Introduction to Phytoremediation, and a chapter in the Standard Handbook of Environmental Engineering. He co-chairs the RTDF Action Team on Phytoremediation, and has three subgroups researching the phytoremediation issue of petroleum hydrocarbons, chlorinated solvents, and vegetative covers for waste containment. He participates in EPA in-house research, and provides technical assistance to EPA regional staff on questions of phytoremediation. Steve was a member of the ITRC Phyto team and an instructor in the ITRC training classes. He is a member of the ITRC Phyto Revision Team. Steve earned a bachelor's degree in Energy Systems from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and a master's degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Cincinnati.

Keebler Holley
Moderator Biography

Keebler K. Holley was born in New York, and raised in North Carolina and Maryland. He graduated from the University of Maryland with a BS in Elementary Education. He has a Master's degree in Adult Education from the University of The District of Columbia and has pursued additional graduate studies at The Ohio State University. He previously was employed by OSU, in their College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences, and the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District. Keeble is presently employed as a Recycling Consultant with Paper Retriever, and international paper company.
Panelists: Wes Duren, Oliver Kroner, Steven Rock

Moderator: Keebler Holley

Summary:

Steve Rock from the U.S. EPA

Steve Rock opened the food waste panel with the fact that the waste industry is almost as large as the food industry. On average each person (in the United States) produces on a daily basis four and half pounds of waste. We produce waste all day long. The United States is also the only country where obesity and poverty are tied together. So yes, we need to figure out a way to deal with our waste! Steve shared a story from 25 years ago when he was working in South Africa. He witnessed a garbage truck disposing of its contents and immediately about 25 to 30 people came out to scavenge the dump. Everything was recycled with the exception of a few animal carcasses. A number of reasons, mainly extreme poverty that we cannot even begin to fathom, factor in to the scavenging of the dump and reuse of waste. The point is that we need to work just as creatively to find opportunities for our waste. That thinking creatively is perhaps a bit slow to pick up speed, even Steve mentioned that the US EPA is just now paying attention to food and food related research.

Around 20 to 30 percent of the waste stream to Rumpke is food. So, the question is how can we reduce the amount of food waste that makes it to the landfill- and this doesn’t include the food packaging, this is “food” or once edible products that make their way to Rumpke. Everything we create stays on this planet, so we need to figure out how to deal with it and we need to figure out creative and sustainable ways to handle waste disposal.

Wes Duren from Marvin’s Organic Gardens

According to Wes, “composting is recycling at its finest”. Composting is simple backyard technology that can be passed on to anyone and everyone. Even Wal-Mart caught the composting bug. Six months ago Wal-Mart contracted Marvin’s Organic Gardens to compost their food waste. Marvin’s works with over 70 Wal-Mart locations and is composting food products and food waste products that come from all over the world. Marvin’s is also working with Cincinnati neighborhoods as the City ceased its yard waste collection program. One of Marvin’s satellite yard waste composting programs is located at the Village Green in Northside. Any resident can bring their grass clippings and yard waste to the site rather than having it collected for disposal at the Rumpke landfill.

Composting feeds the soil, compost feeds plants and compost grows food. The more we can compost, the more we can grow. Marvin’s also starting collecting manure from the Cincinnati Zoo. The “zoo-nure” mixed with yard waste and food waste creates a rich supply of nutrient heavy matter that can feed local farms and gardens. Even companies such as John Morrell (think sausage) just contracted with Marvin’s to compost
Tradewinds is now thinking creatively about dealing with their waste. The company produces over 15 tons of tea leaves a week that they now want to compost and divert from the landfill. Marvin’s is also working with the University of Cincinnati to establish a full-scale food waste compost program. While licensing and paperwork may seem overwhelming, composting is possible, it’s cost effective and it has the potential to create a significant number of jobs. Composting costs far less than landfill upkeep, the fees to compost are less than landfill fees. To Marvin’s and Wes, the “sky is the limit.” Let’s start keeping composted material in the city rather than trucking it out to the country!

*For additional information on Marvin’s Organic Gardens and their composting program please visit their website at www.marvinsorganicgardens.com.

Ollie Kroner from the Northside Biodiesel Co-op

Food waste is much more than scraps from dinner preparation or the crusts from a kid’s sandwich. Vegetable oil, widely used in restaurant deep fryers, is also a huge source of food waste and not necessarily a product you’ll want to dump in your backyard compost pile. So rather than toss it or landfill it- look at what Oliver Kroner does with his Northside Biodiesel Co-op. Oliver and his co-op members take waste oil from local restaurants and use it to fuel to cars. It’s not as hard as it sounds, but let’s also take a look at a few facts and statistics that Oliver shared during his presentation.

Cincinnati is home to approximately 300,000 residents, who collectively drive around 250,000 cars running on petroleum, i.e. running on fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are not reusable or renewable. Extracting fossil fuels is difficult, expensive- and fossil fuels are dirty. The extraction process and use of fossil fuels creates a whole slew of matter that interferes with our natural ecosystem. Not only are fossil fuel supplies expensive and dirty, but the sources are seriously depleted. The supply of oil is finite, thus it is imperative to find other options and other sources. Oliver decided to take action with several of his neighbors to employ petroleum alternatives. He and the co-op members assembled a processor, and to paraphrase, “they collect the used vegetable oil, filter it, mix it with methanol, stir it, heat it and put the product in our cars.” Cars with diesel engines made after 1995 do not even need to be transformed or altered, one simply fuels up with the biodiesel as one would fill up with petroleum.

What are the benefits of fueling automobiles with biodiesel? The Department of Energy conducted a life cycle study on the benefits of biodiesel. The study results proved that a gallon of biodiesel produces 78 percent less carbon dioxide than a gallon of petroleum. In terms of cost, a gallon of oil amounts to $3.80 (and rising) whereas a gallon of biodiesel cost $1.50. The DOE aslo tracked a biodiesel and petroleum semi-truck making a 2 million mile haul. The biodiesel semi showed a 2.2 percent reduction in fuel miles compared to the petroleum truck haul.

Oliver averages about 40 miles per gallon of biodiesel, which is significantly more than most automobiles running on petroleum. In addition to expanding the co-op membership, Oliver secured seed money from FUEL Cincinnati to upgrade the oil processor, meaning the co-op can significantly increase capacity, processing 45 gallons at one time. Ideally Oliver would like to see other biodiesel co-ops started and operating throughout the city. Should you have questions contact Oliver Kroner at ollie@yahoo.com.
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Moderator: Tevis Foreman

Participants: EVERYONE
Denisha Garland
Tevis Foreman
Laure Qunlvican
Next Steps: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Denisha Garland
Speaker Biography

Tevis Foreman
Moderator Biography

Laure Quinlivan
Speaker Biography

Next Steps Notes
**Denisha Garland**  
Next Steps Biography

Denisha Garland is the Project Director for the “Creating Healthy Communities Grant” at the Cincinnati Health Department responsible for coordinating health initiatives in schools, worksites, communities and healthcare settings. She earned her Master of Public Health degree with a focus on Health Promotion and Education from Wright State University in 2006; and a Certificate in Field Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina - School of Public Health in 2010. She is a Registered Sanitarian, a Healthy Homes Specialist, and a Certified Lead Risk Assessor. She has co-authored a health education curriculum and has worked as a Public Health Educator, giving various presentations on STD prevention and health awareness.

**Tevis Foreman**  
Moderator Biography

Tevis Foreman is the Regional Director of Cincinnati, OH for Urban Farming, Inc.- a Detroit, MI based non-profit that works nationally to convert un-used land into a source for sustainable food production. Tevis is responsible for the management, planning and processes for the Cincinnati-based community farms, in partnership with the Cincinnati Health Department’s Creating Healthy Communities Program. He serves on the City of Cincinnati Urban Agriculture Policy Committee; 2009 and 2010 he served as co-chair of the Health and Environment Committee for Mayor Mallory’s Young Professional Kitchen Cabinet; a 2011 Fellow for the Center for Progressive Leadership; and a participant with the Findlay Market C.H.E.F. program. In 2009 Tevis co-founded OTR Homegrown, an urban farm in Over-the-Rhine that provides education on healthy, sustainable living through community involvement and investment. He holds a Master’s Degree from Hawaii Pacific University in Sustainable Development and Global Leadership.
Laure Quinlivan is the newest elected member of Cincinnati City Council. She chairs Council’s Quality of Life Committee which oversees arts, culture, tourism, marketing, environment, education, health, public services and human services.

In her first year on the job she has accomplished several things to make Cincinnati a better place to live. She created the mobile food vending program, which we can’t help but notice in the 5th and Race parking lot when we gather for lunch every Thursday. It’s a big hit. Laure has funded three neighborhood business district projects, which will allow Mt. Adams to complete its streetscape and Mt. Lookout to finish its Square Revitalization this summer instead of next. She Chairs the Mayor’s Green Steering Committee, advocating for the city’s enhanced recycling program and Cincinnati’s first comprehensive bike plan. She helped create Greerama, the city’s first show featuring all LEED-certified energy efficient homes, to be held for the first time this June. She advocates for the arts, and has proposed 1 percent of casino funds to be used for an annual public sculpture contest. She’s leading discussions to create a national image for Cincinnati that highlights Cincinnati’s excellent arts and cultural heritage. Many of you may know Laure best as the longtime I-Team Reporter at Channel 9, where she won two national Peabody Awards and 18 Emmy’s.
Next Steps: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Moderators: Denisha Garland and Tevis Foreman

Participants: Food Congress Participants and Council Member Quinlivan

Summary:
Prior to the Next Steps session, Denisha Garland, Project Director for the Cincinnati Health Department shared an overview of the Creating Healthy Communities Program. In partnership with Urban Farming Inc., CHD runs an Urban Farm program. As of the 2011 Food Congress the Creating Healthy Communities Program manages seven community farms located in Madisonville, Bond Hill, and Winton Hills/Spring Grove Village.

Participants all received a sheet of paper with room to make suggestions or comments regarding improvement of the Cincinnati local food system. Council member Quinlivan listened to a number of suggestions and complaints. Many of the ideas are listed below, and while Council Member Quinlivan did not necessarily have answers or solutions to questions and problems, we should all find it encouraging that city officials want to learn more about supporting urban agriculture, local farmers, improving food access, public health and so forth. Community members should continue to voice their concerns and ideas to council. If the community does not speak up, then elected officials will remain uninformed of community needs and concerns.

Categories on the sheet included Urban Agriculture, Food Access, Food Security, Job Creation, Public Health, and Other. Most respondents related their idea, concern or suggestion to all categories, a few new categories were shared such as plant-based diets and subsidies (both of which connect to categories given). A general consensus among respondents calls for diversification, education, improved communication, preservation of agricultural land, change in policies that would allow for the sale of produce on the same site it was grown, job training and microenterprise development. The comments below were transcribed from participants sheets and represent the comments from individuals who completed and turned in the form.

Comments:
“Diversification! All initiatives are good their own, yet they are stronger when done in combination. Ex: don't just compost; garden, compost, recycle, try aquaculture, permaculture, slow food, local, CSAs, and work together! There is no “us” versus “them”- we are all in this together!”

“Biggest problem – large scale values modified for eaters. Food access cannot succeed unless eaters demand healthy food.”

“Invite Kroger’s, P&G, and the “opponents” of Food Congress ideas to learn more about their perspective. Invite the US Green Building Council to Food Congress, invite “green” landscapers How can we transform the wasted resources on unhealthy food to healthy food that we can eat? Tax unhealthy foods.”
“More support of full-time, at-scale, making a living farmers. Hobby and non-profit organization farmers are needed, but they are not growing enough to supply large quantities of food.”

“Better public transportation options/routes from neighborhoods to full-service grocery stores.”

“Improve communication between local groups; share resources (ideas, experience, knowledge) rather than continuously reinventing the wheel.”

“Creation of multi-shareholder co-operations to help solve low-income food deserts”.

“Need to recognize the important role of immigrants as consumers, entrepreneurs, and experienced farmers. There is a need for professional expertise in developing business plans for start-ups in related fields to create a more coordinated value chain. This would help strengthen the local economy and create jobs while improving regional food security. Change regulations to all “from gate” sales per San Francisco, Cleveland and other major cities.”

“Educational outreach collaboration between the Department of Job and Family Services and OSU Extension. Encourage people to use food stamps for the purchase of seeds; develop a training program that teaches gardening skills in conjunction with nutrition and cooking. This could lead to job opportunities/and small business creation in addition to providing public health and nutrition outreach.”

“Most of the students I work with are not eating at home. They get their nutrients from school programs, after school programs and summer feeding programs. Do we have the capacity in Cincinnati to produce the volume of food needed to feed kids in schools? How much does CPS spend on food? Are our schools equipped to process and serve whole, unprepared foods?”

“I would like to know how to bring the right people together for a forum in my community to help understand the value and benefits of urban agriculture, to promote a sense of community,”
Next Steps: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

“Improve food access, sustainability initiatives and job creation.”

“Amberly has a large piece of property that could serve several purposes – who could we contact at the county/state level to help develop a plan for a financially sustainable program (compost, sustainable farming, education, food banks, etc.)? How to mobilize/energize a community.”

“More laws, or change laws to allow/encourage composting, agriculture, small-scale animal raising in urban areas, front lawns, vacant lots, etc. Create large-scale industrial compost facility in Queesngate or Lower Price Hill to take food/yard waste from central city residents, businesses and institutions. Put City pressure on Kroger to create more urban grocery stores in underserved neighborhoods and the downtown.”

“Co-op style neighborhood grocery stores would be a potential solution to the farmers’ distribution issue. As an alternative to farmers’ markets, residents could work in their neighborhood store to staff it in exchange for membership. This might reduce the cost of produce to low-income families while increasing access.”

“Examine and explain how policies get made/changed. Policy making is a time-consuming, laborious, and often “behind doors” process that most people don’t have a clue about.”

“Talk about programs that educate the community about eating lower on the food chain (plant-based diet). This could improve food security, improve nutrition, reduce illness (diabetes, heart disease, obesity) and reduce health costs, green house gas emissions, and water & land pollution. This could also save people money.”

“Urban land used for larger scale composting in the heart of the city.”

“Diversify into principles of nutrition, soil biology, and its relation to economic sustainability.”

“Go to Montreal – composting household food waste on-site in tumblers next to neighborhood gardens. Areas restaurants and households contribute.”

“Connection of health and education on local plant-based diet. Inviting families to reconnect with where food comes from, share the truth about nutrition and empower people to make healthy choices. Market the message/philosophy of quality versus quantity. Fund “Permascouts” – an idea to create a cooperative program for children to work together with the earth and play outside.”

“Local development of a hydro sewage treatment facility. For a successful example visit the Oberlin College website.”

“Education! Education! Education!”
“Clifton/Clifton Heights has symptoms of becoming a food desert, but not principally a minority/Appalachian community thus the area is not addressed by the Center for Closing the Health Gap. There are also poor white food deserts- who addresses those areas? We need community/commercial kitchen/food canning services. In terms of health we need to address more than obesity- but also talk about diabetes, heart disease, etc. Promote and support mobile markets, public garden allotments, mall gardens, and subsidies reallocation.”

“Improve education on Food Access. We can get healthy food to food deserts, but we need to educate on what to do with it. Many have no knowledge of handling, preparation or preservation of fresh food. These are the techniques that need attention. With knowledge comes confidence.”

“Continue to develop education programs on the linkages between healthy food and health.”

“Make it possible to sell produce grown on a city lot onsite (like a farm stand ar an urban farm or community garden).”

“Relax regulations on small-scale, local growers/producers.”

“If subsidies are being handed out, then the government should also subsidize fruits and vegetables.”

“City should offer longer tenure for their Urban Agriculture lots- 1 year is not enough.”

“Educate people on where food can be grown- conduct a land suitability analysis for proposed urban ag sites. Not all vacant lots are appropriate for food production.”
Food and community

Bill Witten, Avondale Community Council

Fabulous lunch by Picnic & Pantry
Ananda Nash posing a question to the panelists

A lively discussion
Questions from the audience
Food Congress Participants

Lauryln Alleva
• DAAP: School of Planning
  allevalk@mail.uc.edu

Rocio Denise Atarama
e-mail unavailable

Kelly Baker
kelly.deters.baker@gmail.com

Randall T. Ball
• Paradise Found, LLC.
  Randall.Ball@PFcincy.com

Hannah Bare
barehn87@gmail.com

Bryna Bass
bryna.bass7@gmail.com

Elena Bass
• DAAP: School of Planning
  bassse@mail.uc.edu

Jennifer Bierer
• Hamilton County Public Health
  jennifer.bierer@hamilton-co.org

Annelise Bodary
• University of Cincinnati
  bodaryar@mail.uc.edu

Christie Boyd
• Farm to Consumer Foundation
  christiebrewerboyd@gmail.com

Samantha Brockfield
• LISC
  SBrockfield@lisc.org

Patrick Brown
• University of Cincinnati
  patrick.brown@uc.edu

Mochdel Bruss
brussm@gmail.com

Mark Burwinke
nature_dudes@yahoo.com

Carla Butler
• Gabriel’s Place
  ccbutler0915@yahoo.com

Polly Campbell
• Cincinnati Enquirer
  pcampbell@enquirer.com

Ruth Ann Carpenter
• Health Integration, LLC.
  ruthann@healthintegrationllc.com

Carol Chan
• DAAP: School of Planning
  sycarol@gmail.com

Laura Chenault
chenault513@gmail.com

Amy Cluggish
• Cincinnati Music Academy
  amycluggish@gmail.com

Jennifer Colley
• University of Cincinnati
  colleyja@mail.uc.edu

Kate Cook
• Carriage House Farms
  katecook@gmail.com

Anna Damcevski
• University of Cincinnati
  damcevam@gmail.com

Jean Deckenbach
• Enright Ridge Urban EcoVillage
  j_deckenbach@yahoo.com

Sharon Doering
• University of Cincinnati
  esdoering@mac.com

Madeline Dorger
• Civic Garden Center
  mdorger@civicgardencenter.org

Alex Duren
• Marvin’s Organic Gardens
  wes@marvinsorganicgardens.com

Joe DePauw
• DAAP: School of Architecture
  depauwja@mail.uc.edu

Dominique Delucia
• Community Design Center
  Michelle Dillingham

Food Policy Council Development Group
  mdsmslw5@hotmail.com

Angela Ebner
• Permaganic
  permaganiccincinnati@gmail.com

Luke Ebner
• Permaganic
  permaganiccincinnati@gmail.com

Abby Elsemer
• Cristofoli-Keeling, Inc.
  aelsemer@gmail.com

Matt Ewer
• Green B.E.A.N. Delivery
  matte@greenbeandelivery.com

Teresa Fadden
• DAAP: School of Planning
  tafadden@yahoo.com

Larry Falkin
• Office of Environmental Quality
  Larry.Falkin@cincinnati-oh.gov

Randy Fleg
• Coachrandon@fuse.net

John Foreman
• JTF103@hotmail.com

Tevin Foreman
• Urban Farm Inc.
  teevinforeman@gmail.com

Troy Fraser
• DAPP: School of Planning
  tmfiasier@hotmail.com

Luke Fraley
• University of Cincinnati
  fraleyt@mail.uc.edu

Mari Gallagher
• Gallagher Research & Consulting
  mari@mgallagher.com

Matt Gillespie
• Permaculture
  gillesmh@mail.uc.edu

Karen Graves
karengraves99@gmail.com

Denisha Garland
• Cincinnati Health Department
  Denisha.Garland@cincinnati-oh.gov

Xinyao Guo
• Cincinnati Children’s Hospital
  xinyao.guo@yahoo.com

Marvin Hawkins
• Office of Laure Quinlivan
  Marvin.Hawkins@cincinnati-oh.gov

Brian Hensley
plastikkat@gmail.com

David Hill
davidhil2003@yahoo.com

Allison Hines
• AVI Food Systems
  ahines@AVIFoodsystems.com

Keebler Holley
• AbiBOW Recycling, LLC
  keebleholley@yahoo.com

Suzanne Hopper
• Nutrition Council
  suzanne@nutritioncouncil.org

John Howland
jhowland@gmail.com

Susan Huesken
• Vegan Earth
  swimchessveg@gmail.com

Karen Huseman
• Findlay Market Apprentice Farm
  karen55663@yahoo.com

Andrea James
• Seedleaf
  amjames@lexingtonky.gov

Per Jansen
• UC School of Planning
  perdevise@gmail.com

Kim Johnson
• University of Cincinnati
  ksuejohnson@gmail.com

Karen Kahle
• Findlay Market
  keeskale@mac.com

Regina Kazanjian
• Sustain Brand
  rosekarz@gmail.com

Matthew Kennedy
• The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
  kensuejohnson@gmail.com

Mark Keilior
• TERA, Biodiesel Co-Op
  markkeilior@onevoice4change.com

Robert Killins
• The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
  killinsr@cfan.org

Kendall Knoke
• University of Cincinnati
  kendallknoke@gmail.com

Oliver Kroner
• TERA, Biodiesel Co-Op
  oliekroner@yahoo.com
Food Congress Participants

Brian Kunkemoeller
- University of Cincinnati
  kunkembw@mail.uc.edu
Emily Lewis
- DAAP: School of Planning
  emily.lewis2@gmail.com
Mary Lu Lageman
- Earth-Shares CSA, Grailville
  ml.grailville@fuse.net
Meagan Louise
- University of Cincinnati
  e-mail unavailable
Sherry Maddock
- Blue Grass Community Foundation
  smaddock@BGCF.org
Nathan Maggard
  maggard.nathan@gmail.com
Lauren Magrisso
- University of Cincinnati
  e-mail unavailable
Andrew Maragos
- University of Cincinnati
  amaragos1115@gmail.com
Tiffany McDowell
- The Center for Closing the Health Gap
  Tiffany.McDowell@UCHC.com
Paul McKenzie
- University of Cincinnati
  mckenzoa@ucmail.uc.edu
William Messer
- Food Task Team
  wfm@fuse.net
Josh Moe
- University of Cincinnati
  moejf@mail.uc.edu
Dale Murray
- University of Cincinnati
  dale.murray@uc.edu
Deborah Miller
- University of Cincinnati
  millerdh@mail.uc.edu
Ananda Nash
  anash1357@yahoo.com
Mary-Jane Newborn
- EarthSave Cincinnati
  e-mail unavailable
Naomi Ng
- Community Design Center
  ngni@mail.uc.edu
Lauren Niemes
- Nutrition Council
  lauren@nutritioncouncil.org
Clare Norwood
- Community Design Center
  norwood.clare@gmail.com
Josh Ohrara
  johara@gmail.com
Aaron Olson
- Community Design Center
  aaronjolson@gmail.com
Catharine Orsini
- Cincinnati State
  e-mail unavailable
Lizzy Peckskamp
- Hyde Park Farmer’s Market
  elizabeth.peckskamp@gmail.com
Chelsea Powell
- OTR Urban Farm
  powellc5@mail.uc.edu
Laure Quinlivan
- Cincinnati City Council
  laure.quinlivan@cincinnati-oh.gov
Louie Ratterman
- DAAP: School of Planning
  e-mail unavailable
Shannon Ratterman
  rattermann@gmail.com
Kurt Reiber
- Key Bank
  Kurt_Reiber@KeyBank.com
Dan Remley
- OSU Extension
  remley.4@cfaes.osu.edu
Brewster Rhoads
  brewwhio@gmail.com
Catharine Richards
- Future Blooms
  Richards.Cincinnati-oh.gov
Steven Rock
- US EPA
  Rock.Steven@epa.gov
David Rudemiller
- Freestore Foodbank
  drudemill@hotmail.com
Frank Russell
- Niehoff Studio/CDC
  frank.russell@uc.edu
Amanda Schrier
  amanda.cincinnati@gmail.com
Mary Selhorst
- Freestore Foodbank
  mselhorst@freestorefoodbank.org
Michael James Shepherd
  michael.james.shepherd@gmail.com
Laine Steelman
- Slow Food
  lainesteelman@mac.com
Ken Stern
- Findlay Market
  sternkeneth@gmail.com
Louis Stillpass
- DAAP: School of Planning
  stillplz@mail.uc.edu
Merrie Stillpass
- Amberly Village
  misstillpass@stillpass.com
Molly Storr
  e-mail unavailable
Nancy Sullivan
- Enright Ridge Urban EcoVillage
  nsullivan@ucmail.uc.edu
Michael Taylor
- Real Food Remedies
  realfoodremedies@gmail.com
Jeff Timberlake
- University of Cincinnati
  jeffrey.timberlake@uc.edu
Shawn Tubb
- UC Sustainability
  tubbsp@ucmail.uc.edu
Bob Viebrooks
- Freestore Foodbank
  bviebrooks@freestorefoodbank.org
Phoebe Wallace
- Proctor and Gamble
  wallace.p.6@pg.com
Debbie Weber
- Transition Anderson
  debweb57@gmail.com
Jim Weber
  jim.weber@fuse.net
Stacy Wegley
- Hamilton County Public Health
  Stacy Wegley@hcch.org
Christopher Wells
  willis4@mail.uc.edu
Virginia Westheimer
  virginia.westheimer@uc.edu
Debbie Westheimer
  debbie.westheimer@fuse.net
Alan Wight
- University of Cincinnati
  wightra@ucmail.uc.edu
Tracy Wilking
  tracywilking@yahoo.com
William Williams
  william.allen.williams@gmail.com
Holly Winwood
- University of Cincinnati
  holly.winwood@uc.edu
Tim Wightman
- Farm to Consumer Foundation
  cleavvu@cheqnet.net
Bill Witten
- Avondale Community Council
  witten@cinci.rr.com
Thomas Wuerzer
- University of Cincinnati
  Hamilton County Public Health
  wuerzets@mail.uc.edu
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