Out of our silos, into the movement

Community food systems and Cooperative Extension in Oregon

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August 9, 2018

Oregon State University
Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems
The story in short

Oregon Community Food Systems Network

What’s next?

CFS in Extension

The CFS Movement in Oregon

OSU Extension
Community Food Systems Working Group
What is Extension?

36 county offices
6 research & extension centers

Primary Programs
- Agriculture
- Public Health & Human Sciences
- Forestry
- 4-H
- SeaGrant
How we got here

Mid-2000s: Oregon Food Bank leadership
• FEAST
• Community Food Assessments (2008-on)

2011-2014: MMT Food Systems Initiative
• 13 organizations, annual convenings
**VISION:** All Oregonians thrive with healthy affordable foods from an environmentally and economically resilient regional food system.
MISSION: Bring people and organizations together to broaden understanding of issues, build relationships and trust, develop common purpose, and create collective capacity to realize our shared vision.

CORE VALUES: Connection, Inclusivity and Empowerment, Nourishment

WHO: 50 member groups across Oregon & CFS issues

HOW:
• Process teams: Leadership; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; Communications; Policy
• Connection: Annual Convening, newsletter, trainings...
Extension’s Role: Guiding Concepts
*(TY to Feenstra, Dunning, Clark, et al.)*

- Participation
- Applied research: practitioner-driven
- Education & training
- Indicators
- Policy engagement

- Institutional entrepreneurship
- Look to new partners for transformational frameworks and goals.
How we got here: OSU Extension

Late 1990s: Ninjas
- Extension Small Farms Program
- FCH, MG, 4H one-offs

2013: Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems

2015:
- CFS Working Group
- Extension CFS Specialist
- Invited as OCFSN “backbone”

The first OSU hub linking sustainable agriculture, local food systems, and healthy communities.
Extension CFS Working Group

• 2015: Est. by Extension Director to “guide, advise, and coordinate” Extension CFS initiatives in Oregon

• Now: 22-member working group: Small Farms, Rural Studies, Master Gardener, 4-H, Family & Community Health (w/SNAP-Ed), SeaGrant.

• Info hub, peer learning, interdisciplinary applied research & education projects, systems thinking
How we engage with OCFSN

- Backbone support
- Funding
- Leadership team
- Participate in all content teams
- Policy team
- Indicators team
- Gateway to OSU
- Local partnerships, projects

Democratizing data → “CFS by the Numbers”

Community Food Systems

A collection of indicators sponsored by the Oregon Community Food Systems Network.

Explore Community Food Systems Data

Download CFS Indicators for Oregon: An Introduction (2019)
CFS Working Group Project Examples

- Food preservation curriculum + small farmers → new food enterprises
- Veggie Rx incentives → increased local demand for fresh produce
- Farm to school & youth garden statewide strategy for Extension

Local, regional, state food system coalitions:

What is our role?
What is our impact?

Migrant farmworkers & food insecurity → immigration → farm profitability → regional economy → food prices → ?
The Future: Transformation

Vision: “All Oregonians thrive with healthy affordable foods from an environmentally and economically resilient regional food system.”

Our path with the CFS movement –

- Shared understanding: adopt OCFSN vision & desired outcomes; broaden & deepen engagement
- Use OCFSN outcomes as a guiding framework
- Look to OCFSN as key stakeholders & experts
- Fund OCFSN members as applied research partners
- Continue to build relationships and trust
- Transformative thinking: Communities, Food, Resilience
Communities, Food, Resilience
Rethink “we feed the world”

The Challenge of Change (APLU)
A Deeper Challenge of Change (INFAS)

CAS + OSU Extension event for OSU150

“...to spark bold and visionary conversations around food systems and community food resilience.”

• David Lewis, Ethnohistorian, Past Tribal Historian, CTGR
• Shorlette Ammons, Center for Environmental Farming Systems, NCSU

OCFSN + CFSWG = 10 local events
Questions? Guidance for us?

I’m listening.
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