

*2013 Palouse-
Clearwater Food
Systems
Infrastructure
Assessment*



Kyle Merslich, 2013

Foreword

In the spring of 2012, the Palouse Food Action Coalition (PFAC) did a community food assessment feasibility study to find out what steps needed to be taken and which stakeholders engaged to conduct a countywide assessment of the food system. From this feasibility study came the recommendation to develop a food policy council and collect the resources necessary to conduct a community food assessment. In the fall of that year, Manheim Solutions a Chicago based consulting company conducting a Food Innovation Center feasibility center recommended the region conduct a community food assessment to better understand the assets and infrastructure in the regional food system. They found a lack of available data on the local food system and this was a limiting factor in not only their feasibility study but in others in the region too. With the recommendations from both PFAC and Manheim Solutions advocating for a community food assessment and a better understanding of the regional food system, the University of Idaho office of Economic Development hired an AmeriCorps member to work with the Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition (PCFC) (a wider reaching, renamed Palouse Food Action Coalition that seeks to aid in the development of the regional food system) to conduct a food systems infrastructure assessment and develop a database that could be used in future food systems projects in the region. While the recommendation was to conduct a community food assessment, the logistics of having one AmeriCorps member conduct an entire assessment was unrealistic. It was determined that in conducting an infrastructure assessment, this would be immediately more useful to the regional food system and much of this information would also be useful in completing the missing food security section of the community food assessment.

This assessment was developed to address the lack of data addressing small to mid-sized farms in the Palouse-Clearwater region. These farms (and ranches) typically have much greater involvement in the local food system but little data about them exists. The majority of this data was collected from publically available information via the Internet.

The assessment can be used to complete a community food security assessment and may also be used by organizations, individuals, residents, students, lawmakers and small businesses to develop a better understanding of the regional food system. The University of Idaho Office of Economic Development and PCFC hope this food systems infrastructure assessment will develop a dialogue and conversation that will lead to more collaboration in the development of regional food system. Because locally produced food is new to many in region, this assessment has been written to provide a broad overview of the mélange of issues facing the regional food system.

Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition

The Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition is a group of regional residents, academics, professionals, students and business owners working to aid in the development of the regional food system. They seek to do this by addressing 5 general areas of the food system: hunger and food access, economic development, outreach and education, policy and advocacy, and producer assistance. PCFC emerged out of a series of food summits, existing community groups, and the need for a group that brings together the collective

efforts of people working within the regional food system. This group aims to strengthen the health and vibrancy of the Palouse-Clearwater Food System and increase the production, distribution and consumption of locally grown food and agriculture products. They seek to do this through actively engaging residents, businesses, communities and businesses that stand to make a difference in the lives of the regions citizens and communities.

University of Idaho Office of Economic Development

The University of Idaho Office of Economic Development recognizes that the development of the local food system can impact the quality of our health, land and communities throughout the state of Idaho. The role local food can play in communities stands to increase access to healthy and sustainable foods, improve the quality of life for all members of our communities and the health of the local economy. The University of Idaho looks to build capacity, develop partnerships and encourage collaboration in Idaho's communities.

Executive Summary

Food is a basic human need. It touches the lives of every citizen in the Palouse-Clearwater region. The regional food system doesn't adhere to traditional jurisdictional boundaries. It is complicated and dynamic crossing state, county and city lines each and every day. The food system is encompassed in five general fields: production, distribution, processing, consumption and waste. Numerous groups, individuals and institutions in the Palouse-Clearwater region dedicate time and energy to addressing problems or gaps in our food system. Despite all the work being done to develop the regional food system, many residents do not think or understand the current state of local food in the Palouse-Clearwater region. This lack of support and understanding can have a negative impact on the viability of local farmers and ranchers to the detriment of our communities.

The *2013 Palouse-Clearwater Food Systems Infrastructure Assessment* was developed to provide an integrated overview of the components that make up the regional food system. The primary focus of this assessment was the small to mid-sized farms that make up what is typically defined as the local food system. These farms and ranches do not fit the size and specs standards demanded of the conventional food system and therefore rely on farmer to consumer interactions and relationships to gain access to the market in their communities.

Findings and Recommendations

The Palouse- Clearwater region is passionate about food. There is an increasing demand for locally grown and produced foods.

Many Communities in the region lack land-use ordinances and a Comprehensive Plan that adequately addresses the production and sale of local food and its' important role in the community.

Cities and Counties across the Palouse-Clearwater region can influence the growth and development of the local food system through careful consideration of food issues during the planning process. Local planning's impact on the policies, programs, land-use, and community development can greatly impact growth in the food system and improve the community's access to locally sourced healthy food. Planners have influence on the food system from production through to waste disposal. It is important for them to engage their community and discover where their Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances impose unnecessary restrictions or burdens on the local food system.

- Many communities in the Palouse-Clearwater region have little to no reference in their Comprehensive Plan to the role of food their community. A Comprehensive Plan typically represents a community's vision for their town or county, as envision it growing over the next twenty years. Many of the communities in the region have not completed a comprehensive plan update in nearly twenty years. The Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition along with other community food groups should work with urban and regional planners to develop a vision for the future of food in the many communities across the region.
- County planning departments should work together to update their local ordinances to better facilitate and not restrict the growth in new industries. The growth in the burgeoning wine industry was restricted by the Nez Perce County Zoning Code; it took a revision of ordinances bring wineries into compliance. Other counties in the region who stand to benefit from the growth in the local wine industry should address any similar conflicts they may have before they arise.
- Many urban communities have a zoning code that is too vague and not conducive to the production of food within city limits. With the growth in popularity of backyard gardens, community supported agriculture (CSA), and bee keeping, many communities do not allow or unnecessarily restrict these activities within their communities. Just as the town of Moscow has assessed how its' zoning code addresses local food within city limits, other communities should do the same through engaging their community.

The lack of USDA livestock processing presents a barrier to producers and can inhibit access to locally produced meat.

Within the regional food system, there is a lack of USDA processing. This limits where ranchers can sell and can reduce the prices they receive for an animal if they are forced to sell through the conventional food system. The lack of USDA processing also provides unnecessary hurdles for individuals trying to donate their livestock to local food banks and other emergency food programs. Local officials and food groups will need to work with existing WSDA and ISDA processors or a new business to increase access to processing within the region.

Small town grocery stores are the heart of a rural community but survive with only slim profit margins. Some small town grocers in this region have expressed interest in developing purchasing partnerships to reduce costs and increase profit margin.

Local economic development Clearwater Food Coalition can work with local grocers to develop partnerships within rural communities that reduce operating costs and purchasing requirement by developing partnerships between grocers. These organizations can also work with distributors to better serve the rural communities in the Palouse Clearwater region by developing a plan that is mutually beneficial to both the distributors and grocers. This plan may include a delivery partnership between Spokane based distributors to reduce the costs associated with delivery to these rural communities.

Complete Later

What is a Food System Anyway?

A food system is made up of a variety of activities connecting food through its use cycle from production, processing, distribution, consumption all the way down to waste. Along this path from production to waste, food is impacted by laws, land-use, culture, social norms, and the government within the region. And in creating a sustainable, healthy and just food system, residents will have improved access to affordable and sustainable community based food. Having a sustainable community based food system means that people will participate and contribute to every aspect of the food cycle making the local food system more equitable representative of that place and its community. A food system infrastructure assessment is a valuable tool that can help residents to better understand the connections between the components of their food system and how those components impact the availability, access and equity in their local food system.

Currently, there is no comprehensive evaluation of the regional food system. In the Palouse Clearwater region, there are many different groups from faith based organizations, school lunch programs, farmers, health care providers, food retailers, universities, food access groups, economic development organizations, environmental groups, local government and citizens working within the regional food system. Frequently there is a lack of understanding as to how these groups relate to and can work with each other. Increasing the coordination and collaboration will allow these stakeholders to better understand how their contributions' impact the food system and where there are gaps and room for improvement.

Below are the basic elements of the food system are all equally valuable to the health of a local food system. If one element is not accounted for, it can inhibit potential growth in that field.

Food production refers to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock either commercially by farmers and ranchers or privately by residents. In the local food system, many residents have backyard gardens, participate in community gardens and raise fowl for their own consumption.

Food processing refers to the facilities used to ready any raw food item for sale. This can be livestock processing, which includes slaughter, and packing of livestock. It refers to the

processing and packing of local fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes. Processing at the local level also refers to commercial kitchens and innovation centers.

Food distribution in the food system refers to the networks and processes involved in moving food from where it is processed or grown to merchants, supermarkets and restaurants. This is typically done through a wholesaler in the region such as UTM, Charlie's Produce or Sodexo to name a few.

Food consumption within the food system refers to all the activities and processes in which an individual purchases or acquires food from a retail business (grocery store, corner market, farmers market, or online market). The 9 county region of North Central Idaho and South Eastern Washington has 59 of these throughout their communities. Consumption includes anyway in which a resident accesses food in their community, which includes community supported agriculture programs and food assistance programs.

Food waste is the collection of food scraps and garbage and how those are handled and disposed of. A community may dispose of these products through recycling, composting or in a landfill. Involved in this process are the programs, education, outreach, rules and regulations that can impact how a community approaches this process.

Because of the rural nature of this region, the diversity of programs across county and state lines, this report will not focus on the relationship between food and waste.

Palouse Clearwater Agriculture History

The history of agriculture in the Palouse Clearwater region has been centered primarily in Palouse Bioregion rather than the mountains of the Clearwater. For a region so far inland, it is typically temperate with hot dry summers, relatively mild winters and a wet spring and fall.

Understanding the history of agriculture and describing the significant periods of agricultural land use in the region will provide an understanding of the potential for growth in the regional food system. Today, there is very little agricultural diversity on the Palouse. The primary crops are Wheat, Garbanzo Beans, and Lentils, which leaves less than 1 percent of the region in its natural state.

Prior to the arrival of European settlers in the region the Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene tribes inhabited the region harvesting salmon in the spring, summer and fall. They also burned the Palouse prairie to harvest the camas bulbs and hunted elk, moose, and mule deer. In the 1700's, domestic horses were introduced to the local population¹.

In the 1870's American settlers used the Palouse hills as pasture-land raising horses, cattle and hogs that were sold in the mining towns of Northern Idaho. By the mid 1870's grain

¹ *Biodiversity and Land-use History of the Palouse Bioregion: Pre-European to Present*. Black, Morgan, Scott, Strand, Watson, Wright. USGS.

production began. Most (grain) was consumed locally or fed to livestock in the region². At this time, farmers also discovered the fertile hills were perfect for other types of agriculture. Upon initial settlement, fruit trees were planted in communities across the region. Moscow was famous for its dry farmed Apples but peaches, plums, apricots and pears were all planted throughout the region. But, fruit farmers soon began to struggle as competition from regions better suited (irrigation and climate) for production destroyed the local fruit industry. Regional farmers soon realized they had a greater return on grains and fruit began to fall out of favor.

By the 1880's, farmers realized that they had a competitive advantage in the production of grain. In little time, most fruit trees were removed and the Palouse was broken up and tilled under as spring wheat, oats or barley was planted.

The 1930's forever cemented the place of grains in the region. At this time, the use of mechanized farming techniques became commonplace and farmers began to plant not only in the valleys but also on the hillsides throughout the region³.

The region has great potential to support a number of different types of agriculture. One needs only to look to the past to see what can be produced in the region.

Community Food System Assessment and Food Policy Councils

In an effort to better understand how this infrastructure assessment and a subsequent community food assessment can impact the Palouse-Clearwater regional food system, staff from three regional, northwest based food organizations were interviewed. While these groups are all northwest based, they all have different needs, issues, and populations within their food system than the Palouse-Clearwater region. Despite this, lessons can be learned from each group that can inform the next steps for the community and the Palouse-Clearwater Food Coalition in working to improve the health of the regional food system.

Interviews consisted of 4 open-ended questions with some being two-part that asked the interviewee to assess how the completion of a community food assessment influenced their subsequent years of operation. The interviewer was then free to ask questions as they arose about the challenges of gaining legitimacy in the community, addressing the gaps that arose from the assessment and what successes they had as a result of the assessment.

Below are summaries of the 3 interviews that were conducted in April of 2013.

Puget Sound Regional Council

The PSRC (Puget Sound Regional Council) is a regional planning non-profit that works with communities in the three counties of Snohomish, King and Pierce in Western Washington

² *Historical Land Use and Erosion in the Palouse- A Reappraisal.* Kaiser, Verle G. *Journal of Northwest Science* Vol. 35, No. 4. 1961.

³ *Biodiversity and Land-use History of the Palouse Bioregion: Pre-European to Present.* Black, Morgan, Scott, Strand, Watson, Wright. USGS.

to “develop integrated and sustainable policy and action recommendations that strengthen local and regional food systems”. The PSRC represents the most urban of all the regions interviewed. This organization represents through its stakeholders how the local food web reaches into many facets of the regional economy.

For this interview, Associate Planner Liz Underwood-Bultmann responded to the questions via email.

This assessment was completed by graduate planning students from the University of Washington with close involvement by staff at the PSRC who provided direction, reviewed materials and answered questions. Ms. Underwood-Bultmann said that “starting a council is a challenging process and the lack of consolidated data is definitely a key issue”. This assessment brought together that relevant data. She continues on saying that their assessment didn’t set up any initial next steps or projects but the council found value in the completed report “beyond material community impacts”. These were in the form of an early accomplishment for the newly formed organization, a resource for others in the community, it established the council as topical experts and had intangible impacts that are difficult to measure. She stated that the assessment “served to confirm what council members already expect/(know)” but grounds that knowledge in analysis and data.

In general, the assessment didn’t lead to any specific projects. It is typically used as a reference tool and made available to the community.

Ten Rivers Food Web

The TRFW (Ten Rivers Food Web) aims to build a stronger community food system in the counties of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln in Western Oregon. Their name is derived from the 10 rivers connecting their communities. This three county region is a mix of both an urban and rural populations and has the most similar mix of industries, population and income as the Palouse-Clearwater region. This organization does not engage in policy but rather looks to a more community based grass roots approach to food access, community engagement and economic development in their region.

To gain a better understanding of the impact of the community food assessment Chloe Rico, author of the Lincoln County assessment and TRFW staff member and was interviewed. Ms. Rico said that the food assessments (one for each of the three counties) informed their work, next steps and strategic plan as an organization. She continues to say that it was not only useful to the organization but also to the community as a whole. For the TRFW, this assessment is something they continuously look to update as it informs a variety of their projects and work within their communities.

The Gorge Grown Food Network

The GGFN (Gorge Grown Food Network) is a non-profit community food organization serving 5 counties in South Central Washington State and North Central Oregon. This region known as the Columbia Gorge includes the counties of Hood River, Wasco, Sherman,

Klickitat, and Skamania. This organization looks to address education, demand, supply, and organization within their regional food system.

This food network evolved via existing community organizations and meetings as an effort to develop more farmers' markets, a living wage for farmers, education and a need for economic development in the region.

GGFN Co-Director Michelle McGrath was interviewed via telephone about the evolution of the GGFN and the impact of the community food assessment on the regional food system.

Production

Regional Production (Ag census)

Urban Agriculture

Community and School Gardens

Processing

Livestock Processing

Produce Processors

Commercial Kitchens

Distribution

Food Distribution

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Farm to School

Consumption

Retail Food Stores

Rural Grocery

Owner Survey

Small town grocery stores are a foundation any typically one of the most important businesses in a rural community. A grocery store in a small town (2500 people or less in this case) means healthy food for residents, jobs for the community, tax revenue and an amenity that attracts new residents to a community. These stores provide many services

that by themselves would not be available to a community. They serve as a place for residents to chat about what's going on in the community and are a lifeline for an individual with limited access to transportation.

Despite all the benefits these stores bring to a community, they are still barely getting by in many cases. Small grocers face a number of hurdles and are increasingly going out of business across the country as rural populations stay stagnant or decrease in size.

A few of the general challenges they face are: meeting minimum buying requirements can be difficult for a small store with limited storage space. They frequently will pay more for a delivery if they don't meet the requirement or will be out of stock for an extended period of time forcing customers to go elsewhere. Geography also presents challenges to small grocers today. In many towns, the distance for delivery can limit the number of deliveries per month, the products they receive and the prices they will pay. Many distributors have limited delivery schedules to these communities and make more challenging the task of operating a small business. The rise of big chain stores has been one of the biggest challenges for small stores. These big box chains purchase in such high quantities that small stores cannot compete with their low prices. These stores are also critical for fresh vegetable and fruit access in a rural community. Many communities would have no access to fresh foods and would be forced to substitute frozen or canned goods. On top of these direct challenges, may also do not have the support network of a chamber of commerce or a community economic council.

Compounding all of these challenges leaves a grocery store with a declining customer base, longer shelf times for products, lower profit margins and increased business insecurity. It is in the best interest of the region to develop creative solutions addressing these challenges and keep our small communities dynamic into the future.

The Owner Survey was originally developed in 2007 by the Kansas State University Rural Grocer Initiative to assess the challenges small grocers face in Kansas. In spring of 2013 we distributed their survey to the 24 small grocers in the 9 county region of North Central Idaho and Southeastern Washington. These surveys were sent rural communities with a population under 2500. Of the 24 surveys sent to rural grocers, 10 were returned with a response rate of 41%.

Survey.

This survey was used to: document the challenges, variety of markets, supply conditions, marketing practices, and best practices of rural grocers.

Tables

The following tables are a summary of all the results from the surveys sent out in the Spring of 2013.

Table 1

Question #1. (OS)*Owner Survey

What major products and services does your store offer? Check all that apply.					
ATM/Bank	70%	(7/10)	Hunting/fishing/camping supplies	30%	(3/10)
Books/ cards/gifts	80%	(8/10)	Institutional supply (school, hospital)	20%	(2/10)
Café/restaurant	20%	(2/10)	Pharmacy	10%	(1/10)
Catering	10%	(1/10)	Photo development	0%	(0/10)
Delicatessen	70%	(7/10)	Pre-packaged snacks	90%	(9/10)
Fuel	20%	(2/10)	Self-serve snacks/drinks	70%	(7/10)
Groceries	100%	(10/10)	Video rental	80%	(8/10)
Other:	20%	(2/10)			
Liquor, Hardware, Pick up institutional items for customers					

Table 2

Question #2. (OS)		
Who is/are your primary grocery supplier(s)?		
URM Stores Inc	90%	(9/10)
Associated Foods	10%	(1/10)

Table 3

Question #3. (OS)		
What products do your secondary suppliers supply?		
Pop	70%	(7/10)
Chips/snacks	70%	(7/10)
Bread/bakery	20%	(2/10)
Meat/Fish	20%	(2/10)
Beer/wine	70%	(7/10)
Produce	70%	(7/10)
Ice	10%	(1/10)
Other: fuel, hardware, sausage,		

Table 4

Question #4. (OS)		
Do minimum (purchasing/ordering) buying requirements create a problem for your grocery store?		
Yes	50%	(5/10)
No	50%	(5/10)
If yes how?		
Surcharge if minimum not met	10%	(1/10)
Order quantity too high	40%	(4/10)

Wine - larger orders get better pricing	10%	(1/10)
Cross-dock order size	10%	(1/10)

Table 5

Question #5. (OS)		
If minimum buying requirements are a problem, what solutions might you suggest?		
Combine orders	20%	(2/10)
Lower minimum	10%	(1/10)
Increase sales	10%	(1/10)
Buying Groups	10%	(1/10)

Table 6

Question #6. (OS)		
As an independent grocer, do you feel you are getting fair pricing from your suppliers compared to chain stores?		
Yes	50%	(5/10)
No	50%	(5/10)
Yes-primary, no-secondary	0%	(0/10)
Comments:		
"Big" stores get preferred pricing	60%	(6/10)
Low volume increases prices	30%	(3/10)
No comment	10%	(1/10)

Table 7

Question #7. (OS)		
Have you had problems getting products delivered because of your location?		
Yes	40%	(4/10)
No	60%	(6/10)
Comments:		
Off main highway or remote location	10%	(1/10)
Reduced delivery schedules	20%	(2/10)

Table 8

Question #8. (OS)		
Do you sell locally produced food in your store?		
Yes	70%	(7/10)
No	30%	(3/10)
If yes, what products?		
Produce/fruits/vegetables	60%	(6/10)
Meat	20%	(2/10)
Tomatoes	0%	(0/10)
Wine	10%	(1/10)
Salsa	10%	(1/10)
Eggs	20%	(2/10)
Other: Handmade gifts		

Table 9

Question #9 (OS)					
Which of the following are major challenges for your store? <i>Check all that apply.</i>					
availability of satisfactory labor	20%	(2/10)	lack of community support	30%	(3/10)
competition with large chain grocery stores	80%	(8/10)	low sales volume	30%	(3/10)
debt and/or high payments	10%	(1/10)	narrow profit margins	50%	(5/10)
government regulations	30%	(3/10)	required minimum buying requirements from vendors	40%	(4/10)
high inventory	50%	(5/10)	shoplifting/bad	50%	(5/10)

costs/low turnover			checks/internal theft/unpaid accounts		
shortage of working capital	30%	(3/10)	taxes	70%	(7/10)
high operating costs	40%	(4/10)	other (specify)	10%	(1/10)
Other: advertising, credit card fees, insurance, license, minimum wage, permits					
Which of the above do you feel is the most significant for you and your store?					
Operating costs/utilities				40%	(4/10)
Labor availability/costs				10%	(1/10)
Competition from large chain stores				30%	(3/10)
Taxes, regulations				10%	(1/10)
Lack of community support				10%	(1/10)
Credit Card (interchange) Fees				20%	(2/10)

Table 10

Question #10. (OS)		
Do you collaborate with other small independently owned stores?		
Yes	60%	(6/10)
No	40%	(4/10)
Some	0%	(0/24)
If yes, for which purposes? Check all that apply.		
Cooperative advertising/marketing	30%	(3/10)
Grocery distribution purposes	50%	(5/10)
Sharing concerns and/or ideas	50%	(5/10)
To achieve minimum buying requirements	30%	(3/10)
Other: Best practices ideas,		
If no, would you be interested in doing this?		
Yes	0%	(0/10)
No	20%	(2/10)
Maybe	20%	(2/10)
Why or why not?		
No		
Competition is good for the market,		
Yes		

Table 11

Question #11. (OS)		
Do you feel that a statewide alliance of small, independently owned grocery store owners may have value?		
Yes	30%	(3/10)
No	30%	(3/10)
Maybe	20%	(2/10)
If yes, how could it help?		
<u>Share ideas</u> - Depends on cost, share best practices, ideas, cost saving tips, pool for lower insurance costs, lower grocery costs, buying groups,		

Table 12

Question #12. (OS)		
What marketing strategies have you used in your grocery stores that have been effective in drawing in customers?		
Advertising		
Newspapers	20%	(2/10)
Radio	20%	(2/10)
TV	0%	(0/10)
Flyers/inserts	80%	(8/10)
Internet/WWW	40%	(4/10)
Promotions	50%	(5/10)
Word of mouth	70%	(7/10)

Other: Sell only quality perishables at low margins, charity pizza promotion for community center, in store promotions,	20%	(2/10)

Table 13

When running a grocery store, how important is it to you to offer each of the following? Rate the importance of each by circling the number that best fits your response. (OS)						
	<u>Not Very Important</u>				<u>Very Important</u>	
1. Quality of food	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	
Comments: A reputation for bad food can kill business, keeps customers coming,						
2. Availability of food (variety, brand choices)	0%	0%	20%	30%	50%	
Comments: Big challenge in small stores,						
3. Prices of items offered	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%	
Comments: Prices can be higher for convenience factor,						
4. Customer service	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	
Comments: Small customer pool makes staff friendlier,						
5. Business hours	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%	
Comments: Consistency,						
6. Buying locally.....	10%	10%	50%	30%	30%	
Comments: Demand must be expressed,						
Which of the above do you feel is the most significant for you and your store?						
Customer Service					70%	(7/10)
Quality of food					30%	(3/10)
Prices					20%	(2/10)
Buying locally					0%	(/10)
All					0%	(/10)
Availability of food					10%	(1/10)

Table 14

How does your store do at providing the following to customers? Rate your store by circling the number that best fits your response. (OS)					
	Not Very Important			Very Important	
1. Quality of food	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
Comments: we do our best					
2. Availability of food (variety, brand choices)	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%
Comments:					
3. Prices of items offered	0%	0%	40%	50%	10%
Comments:					
4. Customer service	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%
Comments:					
5. Business hours	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%
Comments: Longer hours in Summer,					
6. Buying locally	0%	20%	40%	10%	30%
Comments:					
Which of the above do you feel is the most significant for you and your store?					
Customer Service				30%	(3/10)
Quality of food				0%	(0/10)
Prices				10%	(1/10)
Availability of food				0%	(0/10)
Buying locally				0%	(0/10)
All				0%	(0/10)

Table 21

How do you assess the buying needs of your customer? (OS)		
Customer requests	60%	(6/10)
Monitor sales	50%	(5/10)
Ask	10%	(1/10)
Experience	10%	(1/10)

Table 22

Is your stocking of products responsive to customer requests? (OS)		
Yes (unqualified)	80%	(8/10)

Yes (qualified)	20%	(2/10)
if customers ask, if possible, try to		

Table 23

Tell us about your store: (OS)		
How long have you been in the grocery business as an owner?		17.7 years
(Average)		
How long has there been a grocery store at your current location?		43.9 years
(Average)		
Do you have more than one location?	10%	Yes
How many?	2 stores (Average)	
What are your hours of operation? (av.)		
Mon	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Tues	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Wed	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Thur	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Fri	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Sat	_8:00_ to _6:00_	
Sun	_9:00_ to _5:00_ (40% closed)	4
Are there other grocery outlets in your community?		
	4 a 'quick shop'	
	4 another full service grocery	
How far is it to the nearest discount grocery (Wal-Mart, etc?)		
	41.9	
How many employees do you have, not counting yourself?		
	6.7 full-time (40 hrs/week minimum)	
	9.6 part-time (less than 40hrs/week)	
What are your average weekly gross sales?		
	0 Less than \$5,000	
	1 Between \$5,000 and \$10,000	
	3 Between \$10,000 and \$20,000	
	6 Greater than \$20,000	

Farmers' Markets

Food Assistance Programs

Outside Influences Affecting Food

Community Organizations

Rules and Regulations (State)

Planning

Food has an important role in almost every segment of our lives. It plays a central role in our health, economy and culture. One of the components of food production and procurement most often ignored is land-use. Land-use planners at the city and county level play an important role in the development of a sustainable and equitable food system. The support planners give in community food systems planning to the health of the overall food system impacts points of sale, where farming can take place, what types of agriculture are permitted, public health and what industries are permitted in their community.

With the consolidation of the food industry across America, many cities and counties have developed ordinances that limit the production and sale of local food in their jurisdictions. As a result, these communities are finding themselves unable to produce local fruits, vegetables, eggs and raise and process livestock on a smaller scale unless the zoning ordinances permit. Many cities across the country are revising their ordinances and comprehensive plans in an effort to be more "food friendly" in response to the sentiments of community residents.

In early 2013, surveys were sent to the 12 planning departments (6 counties in Idaho, 3 in Washington, and the cities of Pullman, Moscow, and Lewiston) in the Palouse-Clearwater region in an effort to better understand how well these cities and counties address the production and sale of food within their comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances. Surveys consisted of 25 questions ranging from how well the zoning code addresses the production of specific foods, whether farmers can sell and distribute directly from their property, and if there had been any recent conflicts with the zoning code in the production or sale of food.

Why is this survey important? It will allow communities to better understand what they can produce, where their goods can be sold locally, it will allow planners to evaluate their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances as relates to food and will develop a dialogue between jurisdictions regarding continuity across the food system.

In an effort to streamline the analysis, the following will focus on a handful of specific questions from each jurisdiction rather than the entire survey.

City of Lewiston, ID

Population: Approximately 33,000

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Land-use				✓
Economic Development			✓	
Community Design		✓		
Climate & Environment			✓	

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops			✓	
Raising Fowl	✓			
Raising Livestock		✓		
Bee Keeping				✓
Aquaculture				✓
On-site retail sales (farm stand)				✓
On-site food distribution (CSA)				✓
Community Gardens				✓
Farmers Markets				✓

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *No specific number listed.*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer: *No person shall keep or maintain any fur-bearing livestock.*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *Yes*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: Local food production is not currently addressed at all in our zoning code, at least not as being distinct from non-local food production.

The City of Lewiston has done a fantastic job in recently passing its urban chicken ordinance allowing the raising of chickens and other fowl within city limits. It is also encouraging that the city is aware of the growth in local food production and the role it can play in helping that growth process.

The city however has much work to do addressing other forms of urban agriculture, community gardens, CSA distribution and bee keeping amongst other things. And, there is room for improvement and updating in how their 1999 comprehensive plan addresses the role of food in the future of the city.

City of Pullman, WA

Population: Approximately 31,000

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Land-use			✓	
Economic Development				✓
Community Design				✓

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops		✓		
Raising Fowl	✓			
Raising Livestock	✓			
Bee Keeping	✓			
Aquaculture				✓
On-site retail sales (farm stand)	✓			
On-site food distribution (CSA)	✓			
Community Gardens	✓			
Farmers Markets	✓			

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: 1 animal per 2,000 sq. ft. of land

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer *1 animal per 10,000 sq. ft. of land*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *No*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *We may need to update code provisions regarding market- gardens (where produce is grown for sale and consumption by the public) since the code may be seen by some as too confining for this type of activity.*

The city of Pullman does a good job of addressing food production. There are only a few areas of concern. The first being production of food and subsequent sale from urban farms/market gardens. The city as said in question 24 understands that their zoning codes might be too restrictive and need to be revised. The second concern is the absence of food in their comprehensive plan. At nearly 15 years old is due for an update in the next few years. Food is an increasingly important part of the community in Pullman and it will be up to community members to involve themselves in the next plan update as they develop a plan for the future of their community.

Latah County, ID

Population: Approximately 38,000

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Land-use	✓			
Economic Development	✓			
Community Design		✓		
Preservation of Agriculture and Forest Lands	✓			

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
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Growing/Harvesting Crops	✓			
Raising Fowl	✓			
Raising Livestock	✓			
Bee Keeping	✓			
Aquaculture	✓			
On-site retail sales (farm stand)		✓		
On-site food distribution (CSA)	✓			
Community Gardens	✓			
Farmers Markets		✓		

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *No max in Ag. Forest Land. 10 animal units in Rural Residential- animal units are based on ISDA numbers.*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer *No max in Ag. Forest Land. 10 animal units in Rural Residential- animal units are based on ISDA numbers.*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *Yes*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *N/A*

Latah County is by far the most thorough planning department as far as addressing a wide variety of agriculture and food sales. In both the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances they address the production of and sale food very well. This is more typical of a county as agriculture is a main industry outside of the city limits.

Whitman County, WA

Population: Approximately 45,000

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
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	well	well	
Land-use	✓		
Economic Development	✓		
Community Design	✓		

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops	✓			
Raising Fowl				✓
Raising Livestock	✓			
Bee Keeping				✓
Aquaculture				✓
On-site retail sales (farm stand)		✓		
On-site food distribution (CSA)	✓			
Community Gardens	✓			
Farmers Markets				✓

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *No answer*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer: *No answer*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *Yes*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *The permitted uses relating to agricultural/food production in chapters where local food production is currently allowed, and conditional uses relating to food production in chapters where it is currently allowed for consistency and continuity. Add a new chapter that focuses on local food production in different zones.*

Whitman County is the largest agricultural producer in the Palouse-Clearwater region. Its zoning code encourages and protects agricultural uses, and sale of agricultural products. The county’s comprehensive plan clearly addresses the importance of agriculture to its residents as the county looking forward.

The county’s ordinances do a very good job of addressing the agriculture production and sale of locally produced food. As the planners note, there are a few improvements that can be made to the zoning ordinances in addressing specifically local food production and the land-use demands that small-scale production.

Nez Perce County, ID

Population: Approximately 35,000

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Land-use		✓		
Economic Development		✓		
Community Design			✓	

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops	✓			
Raising Fowl	✓			
Raising Livestock	✓			
Bee Keeping	✓			
Aquaculture	✓			
On-site retail sales (farm stand)	✓			
On-site food distribution (CSA)	✓			
Community Gardens			✓	
Farmers Markets			✓	

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *Non specified*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer *CAFOs are regulated*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *Yes*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *Yes. We've received several inquiries about wineries. They were not permitted in some areas due to their commercial nature.*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *We have almost completed a text amendment to allow value added agriculture businesses in most zones. Previously only seasonal sales of agriculture products were permitted.*

Nez Perce County as with most counties in this region has tried to be very inclusive of all types of value added agriculture (from beekeeping to wineries) when amending their zoning ordinances. The county will need to work on doing a comprehensive plan update. Their current plan from 1999 is outdated and may not address the importance and value of local agriculture to the residents and community. Updating the comprehensive plan with input from new industries and community organizations such as the Inland Northwest Food Hub will bring a more representative update to the comprehensive plan moving forward.

Clearwater County, ID

Population: Approximately 8,500

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Land-use		✓		
Economic Development		✓		
Community Design		✓		

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops		✓		
Raising Fowl		✓		
Raising Livestock		✓		

Bee Keeping				✓
Aquaculture				✓
On-site retail sales (farm stand)			✓	
On-site food distribution (CSA)				✓
Community Gardens				✓
Farmers Markets				✓

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *No response*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer: *No response*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *Yes*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *No*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *Not sure*

Clearwater County is a very rural and somewhat isolated county with a small population in North Central Idaho. The county, considering its limited resources does a decent job in addressing the role of local food in the community. It does however have room for across the board improvement in both its comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances. Like many of the counties in the region, it addresses the importance of agriculture in its comprehensive plan somewhat well; which is to be expected in a rural community.

The county addresses the conventional food system (fowl, livestock and crops) quite well. As is the case with many counties across the country, their zoning ordinances do not yet address the burgeoning local food system and its small scale.

Asotin County, WA

Population: Approximately 13,240

Q7: Does your comprehensive plan include goals, policies or objectives related to local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
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		well	well	
Land-use		✓		
Economic Development				✓
Community Design				✓

Q8: Does your Zoning Code address the following issues involved in local food production?

Element	Very well	Somewhat well	Not very well	Not at all
Growing/Harvesting Crops		✓		
Raising Fowl		✓		
Raising Livestock		✓		
Bee Keeping				✓
Aquaculture		✓		
On-site retail sales (farm stand)		✓		
On-site food distribution (CSA)				✓
Community Gardens				✓
Farmers Markets		✓		

Q8.1: Raising Fowl: how many hens and/or roosters are allowed?

Answer: *No response*

Q8.2: Raising Livestock: How much land is needed for livestock?

Answer: *No response*

Q16: Do you permit on-site sales of agricultural products?

Answer: *No*

Q20: Is there a limit on the size or number of hoop houses per lot or acre?

Answer: *Yes- up to 40% of lot coverage.*

Q23: Have there been any recent conflicts between the production or sale of food in your community and your zoning code or comprehensive plan?

Answer: *No*

Q24: What elements or provisions of the zoning code does your city or county need to update to create better consistency and continuity for local food production and distribution?

Answer: *None needed at this time.*

Asotin County's 1999 comprehensive plan features very few or no policies or objectives pertaining to the production of local food. The forward-looking plan specifically has no mention of local food in the economic development or community design sections. With

nearly 15 years having past, the county will be due for a comprehensive plan update which will be an excellent opportunity for residents to involve themselves in advocating for the inclusion of food production in their community for years to come.

The county has a few areas of concern in their zoning code, as they do not mention beekeeping, CSA distribution and/or community gardens. The absence of beekeeping and CSAs could certainly limit producers from growing their businesses if they are restricted from operating by the zoning code.

Findings:

Across the region, counties are in general better prepared for the growth in the local food system than the cities. They tend to permit a greater number of agricultural practices and there is less potential for conflict in the zoning code because of the lower density in these areas. This however does not mean that they are all prepared for the growth in these new industries. Work can be done to improve the growth potential, access to and production of local food in the Palouse-Clearwater region. If communities work with their local planning and zoning commissions and departments, they can reduce any unnecessary restrictions on the sale and production of food and develop a forward looking comprehensive plan that recognizes the importance of agriculture as their community grows into the future.

The county of Nez Perce realized that there were potential conflicts in their zoning code limiting new wineries in their ability to sell wines directly from the winery. This was obviously a problem, because the growth in wine tourism brings in people from outside the region to spend not only on wine but also food, lodging and recreation. If the county had not amended their zoning code, this could have restricted the growth in the burgeoning wine industry of the region. There are now 6 wineries in the region and as that number stands to grow, planning departments in other counties should evaluate any potential restrictions or conflicts in their zoning code. To develop continuity, they should contact their counterparts in Nez Perce County and like them pass a similar ordinance that aids in the growth of this new and exciting industry.

Community supported agriculture (CSA) programs have been growing across the country and are one of the foundations for success in the local food movement. Most counties and cities in the Palouse-Clearwater region have addressed the growth in CSAs in their zoning code. A few communities have not passed ordinances explicitly permitting them. The counties of Asotin and Clearwater along with the city of Lewiston all responded that they do not have any ordinances permitting or addressing CSA. None of these jurisdictions have any CSA programs and in a more isolated county like Clearwater where food prices are higher, there would be a great benefit to residents buying into a CSA program.

There has been a movement across the country to bring agriculture back to the cities. Communities like Lewiston, ID have done this through backyard or urban chicken ordinances. Many communities across the country either do not permit raising chickens within city limits or have no regulations at all which could create conflicts between neighbors and the city meanwhile stalling the growth in local food. This is another example of an easy response to the production of local food in the Palouse Clearwater region.

Beekeeping is an industry frequently not considered by local planning organizations but plays a valuable role in the production of local food. Many communities in the region do not address the production of honey and the beekeeping profession. Currently, only 3 of the planners interviewed have ordinances explicitly addressing beekeeping in their community. Most of them have no mention of the practice at all. There are many communities across Idaho aware that beekeeping even in an urban setting stands to benefit both the community, and local beekeepers alike.

While these are only a few examples of inconsistencies and gaps in local plans and ordinances pertaining to local food; they are easy to fix and can have a lasting and considerable impact on the growth in the local food system for years to come. While jurisdictions stop at city limits, county and state lines, food doesn't adhere to these traditional boundaries. It is important for planning departments, planning and zoning commissions and citizens to communicate across city, county and state lines to develop a legal framework that will aid in the growth of the regional food system not restrict it. And, this will start at the ground up with community groups, concerned citizens and involved planning officials laying the groundwork for their communities and the region as a whole.