Finding Common Measures for the Nation's Food Hubs

Update on a Preliminary Exploration

Presented at:
National Good Food Network Food Hub Collaboration
Spring 2014 Conference
Presented by:
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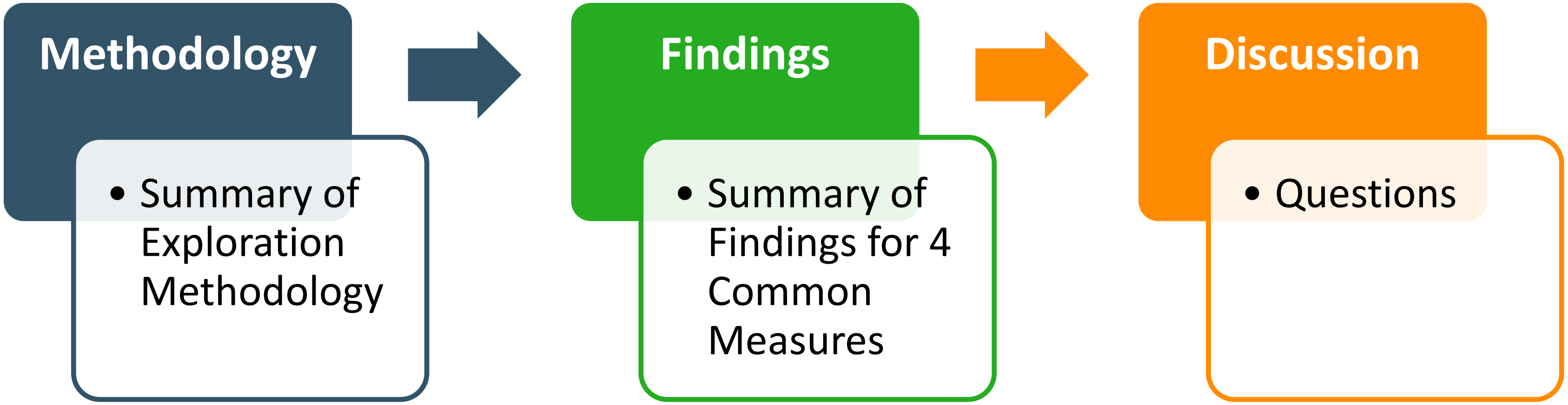
Presentation Overview



Discussion Questions

- What is the value of common measures to the food hub community?
- Are these the right themes?
- How do we move from measuring activities to outcomes?
- What is the value of stronger framing measures?
- What is the role of the Wallace Center in this?

National Good Food Network Food Hub Collaboration

- 9 “study hubs”
- Develop strategies and measure progress toward goals
- Lessons learned to share with larger food hub community

NGFN Food Hub Collaboration

Wallace Center
Winrock International

Methodology

Wallace Center

Identified 4 common measures, focusing on market access, food access, health-related outcomes, and investment

Yellow Wood

- Reviewed National Food Hub Survey to shape questions relevant to each measure
- Reviewed measures from 9 study hubs and developed case studies
- Reviewed literature and secondary data related to common measures
- Prepared report

Study Hubs

ALBA organics
Common Market
Cherry Capital Foods
Farm Fresh Rhode Island
Firsthand Foods
Grasshoppers Distribution
Jack & Jake's
Idaho's Bounty
Local Food Hub

Study Hub Characteristics

	Operational Structure / Prime Motivation	Years in Operation	Stage of Development
ALBA	Non-profit	12	Developed
Cherry Capital Foods	Consumer Cooperative	7	Developing
Common Market	Non-profit	6	Developing
Farm Fresh Rhode Island	Non-profit	5	Developing
Firsthand Foods	For-profit	3	Nascent
Grasshoppers Distribution	For-profit	7	Developing
Idaho's Bounty Co-op	For-profit	8	Developing
Jack & Jake's	Retail	2	Nascent
Local Food Hub	Non-profit	5	Developing

Individual Measures vs. Common Measures

Individual measures

- Developed in the context of specific food hubs to help guide their actions

Common measures

- Developed in the context of the food hub movement as a whole to illustrate collective impact

Common measures, as conceived here, rely on measurement at the level of individual food hubs

Purpose of Common Measures Exploration

How do we know what impact food hubs are actually having?

- To what extent are food hubs already measuring their impacts?
- Would common measures help illustrate the impacts food hubs are having?
- Is it possible to use existing data to build a compelling framework around food hubs impacts?

Common Measure Themes Explored

1	2	3	4
• Increased economic activity and market-access for small- and mid-sized producers.	• Greater food access to underserved communities.	• Increased articulation and understanding of the impact of food hubs in achieving health-related outcomes.	• Investment by federal and private sources into food hub development.

Common Measure Themes & Mission Statements of Study Hubs

Study Hubs	Food Access	Supporting Farmers	Human Health
ALBA		Y	
Cherry Capital Foods		Y	
Common Market	Y	Y	
Farm Fresh Rhode Island			Y
Firsthand Foods		Y	
Grasshoppers Distribution	Y	Y	
Idaho's Bounty Co-op			
Jack & Jake's	Y	Y	
Local Food Hub	Y	Y	

Common Measure Themes & Mission Statements

	Food Access	Supporting Farmers	Human Health
% of Study Hubs	44%	88%	11%
% of Food Hubs *	22%	52%	12%

* National Food Hub Survey data

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Mission Statement Examples
Theme: Market Access & Food Access

*Firsthand Foods' mission is to help build a sustainable food system that allows **small and mid-sized livestock producers to thrive**.*

*Our mission is to **strengthen regional farms** while making the **local bounty accessible** to communities and the institutions that serve them.*

Mission Statement Examples
Theme: Health (and Ecology)

*Farm Fresh Rhode Island is growing a local food system that **values** the environment**,** **health and quality of life of RI farmers and eaters**.*

*Our mission is to advance economic viability, social equity and **ecological land management** among limited-resource and aspiring farmers..*

Common Measure Theme #1

Increased Market Access and Economic Activity for Small and Mid-Sized Producers

Common Measure Theme: Market Access

Data Available: What proportion of food producers are small or mid-sized?

Food Hubs

76% of food hubs indicated that **most** of their producers were small or mid-sized

32% reporting **all** of their producers as small or mid-size

Study Hubs

38% Study Hubs indicated that **most** of their producers were small or mid-sized

50% Study Hubs indicated that **all** of their producers were small or mid-sized

Common Measure Theme: Market Access

Data available: What percentage of Food Hub gross sales come from small and mid-size producers?

Food Hub

60% of food hubs' total gross sales came from small and mid-sized producers

Study Hub

6 Study Hubs reported a total of **$34 million** in purchases from small and mid-sized producers with **average purchases of more than $570,000** per study hub

Telling the Story

- 2012 Purchases of over $335,000
- Small Producers
  – 37 Producers from $20,000 - $150,000 annually
- Tripled the number of producers in past 3 years

Telling the Story

"We develop new marks and relieve them of the responsibility of marketing."

-Firsthand Foods co-CEO Jennifer Curtis.

Telling the Story

Goal

- Vibrant & Sustainable Regional Food System in North Carolina

Indicator

- More consumers demonstrate commitment by putting their food dollars toward local food.

Measure

- How much is customer's total spending on local meat?

Telling the Story

Baseline Data:

- average of 70% of meat purchases being made from local producers across 12 customers
- 16 restaurants spent more than $500,000 on local foods

✓ 71% of that went to FHF and their producers

Framing the Data

Small & Mid-Size Farms in Study Hub States*

	Total small and mid-size (up to $500k)	small and mid-size farms as % of all farms	market value of products from small and mid size (1,000)
CA	72,384	89%	$3,315,104
ID	23,658	93%	$854,400
KY	83,613	98%	$1,751,403
LA	28,580	95%	$639,481
MI	53,538	96%	$1,795,129
PA	60,889	96%	$2,458,417
RI	1,190	98%	$29,018
VA	45,958	97%	$979,585

*Data from 2007 Agricultural Census.

Current Practices: Improving Market Access

Data Available: What services do Food Hubs provide?

- Help producers find new markets?
- Mark and promote services ?
- Brand or label products ?
- Demonstration/Incubator farm?
- Provide production & post-harvest handling training?
- Provide business management services?
- Provide food safety or GAP Training?
- Provide liability insurance ?
- Provide transportation services ?

Study Hubs provide an average of 5.75 services.

All study hubs:

- Help producers find new markets
- Provide branding or labeling to indicate origin

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Questions about Food Hub Impact on Market Access

1: Profit	2: Production	3: Access	4: Reach
• Are more farmers profitable because of food hubs?	• Does the farm product coming through food hubs represent net increases in production or is it just a redistribution of a set level of production?	• Do the services offered by food hubs actually result in increased access to market for farmers?	• How many farmers, as a proportion of all farmers in a market region, are impacted by food hubs?

Possible Common Measures

Producer Engagement	• The proportion of all small and mid-sized producers in a selected region selling products through food hubs.
Volume and Value of Products	• The proportion of the volume and value of products from small and mid-sized producers handled by food hubs.
Market Access	• The level of investment by food hubs in improving market access for small and mid-sized producers.
Market Penetration	• The market penetration of food hubs by market type in a given region.
Investment in Farm Operations	• The level of investment farmers make in their operations as a result of their involvement with food hubs.

Common Measure Theme #2

Greater food access to underserved communities.

Current Practices: Improving Food Access

Data Available: How do Food Hubs support Food Access?

- Accept SNAP, WIC or FMNP benefits?
- Provide matching for SNAP benefits?
- Provide transportation services for consumers?
- Operate a mobile market?
- Subsidize farm shares?
- Donate food to local food pantries/banks?

38% of Study Hubs **accept WIC, SNAP or FMNP** benefits

88% of Study Hubs **donate food**

Telling the Story

- Non-profit with dual mission:
  1. Support the viability of sustainable family farms
  2. Increase access to fresh and healthy food for all people
- Served 212 customers
- Purchased products from 75 local farmers and producers

Telling the Story

- How are we impacting vulnerable populations?
  1. Identify institutional and retail customers serving these communities
  2. Track food going to these customers
- Uses sophisticated inventory system that tracks each item in pounds, cases and $ for each producer and customer

Telling the Story

Data: Customers serving Vulnerable Populations

25 Schools	10,310 Meal Equiv.
6 Hospitals	52,476 Meal Equiv.
3 Retail	32,962 Meal Equiv.

Question about Food Hub Impact on Access for Underserved

Increased Access

- How many additional consumers in underserved communities have the choice to consume fresh, healthy food as a direct result of food hub activities?

Framing the Data

Food Deserts, Food Insecure Population and SNAP participation in Study Hub States

	% of Population - Low-Income, Low Access (Food Desert)[1]	% of Population - food insecure[2]	% of Population participated in SNAP[3]
CA	5%	16.2%	10%
ID	16%	13.7%	15%
KY	21%	16.4%	19%
LA	21%	14.1%	21%
MI	13%	14.2%	18%
PA	10%	12.5%	14%
RI	7%	15.5%	16%
VA	11%	9.1%	11%

1. ERS Data by Census Tract; 2.ERS; 3. USDA SNAP participation data and 2012 census data

Possible Common Measures

Feeding Underserved Communities	• The proportion of food going through food hubs that goes to underserved communities.
Feeding Underserved Populations	• The proportion of the healthy food needs of underserved populations (in a particular geography) being met by one or more food hubs.
Improved Food Access	• The baseline food access conditions in underserved communities and how have these changed because of food hubs.

Common Measure Theme #3

Increased articulation and understanding of the impact of food hubs in achieving health-related outcomes.

Current Practices: Improving Health Outcomes

Data Available: What current practices of food hubs support improved health outcomes?

Food Hubs

- **18%** of food hubs report **sales to Farmers Markets** (making up 32% of total sales)
- **35%** of food hubs reported **sales to K-12 food service** (making up 11% of total sales)

Study Hubs

- **1** Study Hub reported **sales to farmers markets**
- **1** Study Hub reported **sales to K-12 food service**
- **5** Study Hubs indicated there was an **opportunity to expand** into this market

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Common Measure Theme: Health Outcomes

Data Linking Food Access to Health Outcomes

Wholesome Wave Fruit & Veggie Prescription Program makes direct link between access to healthy food and health outcomes.

Increase in Fruit and Vegetable Consumption?	**55%** of participants reported increase
Farmers Market Attendance?	**53%** visited farmers market **8** or more times
Body Mass Index (BMI)?	**37.8%** of **child** participants **decreased BMI**

Common Measure Theme: Health Outcomes

Data Linking Food Access to Health Outcomes

Farmers Markets and Health

- 0.73% decrease in rate of diabetes for each additional farmer's market per 1,000 people

Farm-to-School and Health

- 1.09% decrease in rate of obesity and 0.27% decrease in diabetes for counties with a farm-to-school program

Source: *Obesity and Diabetes, the Built Environment and the 'Local' Food Economy; 2010.*

Telling the Story

- Mission to grow a local food system that values the environment, health and quality of life of Rhode Island farmers and eaters.
- Aggregation & Distribution
- Local Food Marketing & Producer Support
- CSAs
- Farmers Market Support & Management
- Food & Nutrition Education

Telling the Story

- Healthy Food Healthy Families Program
- Nutrition education for 400 low-income families
- Participants are surveyed at the beginning, middle and end of the season

93% increased fruit & vegetable consumption

Telling the Story

- Learning from the Data
- Understand who is succeeding, who isn't, and why?
- Understand participant characteristics associated with desired behaviors
- Develop strategies to address low retention rates at certain markets

"We use it [data] to track our own progress, to make sure we are doing the things we say we are going to do." -Sheri Griffin, Co-Executive Director.

Questions about Food Hub Impact on Health

1. Linking to Healthy Outcomes

- What proportion of the food handled by food hubs is targeted in ways that allow it to be linked to positive health-related outcomes?

2. Existing Food Choices

- In the absence of food hubs, what would the food choices be?

Framing the Data

Prevalence of Obesity and Diabetes in Study Hub States

	% of Population that is Obese [1]	% of Adults with Diabetes[1]
CA	26.3%	7.9%
ID	23.3%	7.9%
KY	25.1%	7.2%
LA	28.7%	9.9%
MI	30.7%	10.0%
PA	28.2%	9.0%
RI	27.8%	8.7%
VA	21.7%	7.3%

1. 2007 Food Industry Center. State Fact Sheets.

Possible Measures

Outlets that Positively Impact Health

- The proportion of food going through food hubs to outlets that have been proven to positively impact health.
  - Quantity/Proportion of food going to K-12 schools
  - Quantity/Proportion of food going to farmers markets
  - Quantity/Proportion of food being distributed through Fruit & Vegetable Prescription Programs

Healthy food for targeted populations

- The proportion of healthy foods to each targeted population that come through food hubs.

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Common Measure #4

Investment by federal and private sources into food hub development.

Understanding Investments
Available Data

Food Hub Revenue Sources as a Percent of Their Total Revenue	
Federal Government Funding	1%
State Government Funding	<1%
Income from services provided by the food hub	**86%**

Understanding Investments
Study Hub Data

	Federal Investment as % of total income	Private Investment as % of total income
ALBA	0%	0%
Cherry Capital Foods	0%	0%
Common Market	0%	19%
Farm Fresh Rhode Island	0%	0%
Firsthand Foods	8%	13%
Grasshoppers Distribution	0.5%	7.5%
Idaho's Bounty	13.5%	0%
Jack & Jake's	NA	NA
Local Food Hub	7%	19%

Questions About Investment Options for Food Hubs

1: Economic Self-Sufficiency	2: Funding and Financing	3: Subsidized Activities
• What are the options for creating viable, economically self-sufficient food hubs?	• How can funding and financing be blended most effectively?	• What are the activities of food hubs that may require (and deserve) ongoing subsidy and how can these be accounted for most effectively without undermining the profitability of the core business?

Possible Measures

Sources of Investment	• Sources of investment a food hub receives in relation to its years in operation and operational structure.
Subsidies (Internal, Cross)	• Measure of internal subsidy or cross subsidy within food hub operations.
Self-sufficiency ratio	• A self-sufficiency ratio equals total earned income divided by total expense.

Discussion

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For More Information

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