MODES OF REFLEXIVITY IN COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE:
THE CASE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DELICIOUS FOODS

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MODES OF REFLEXIVITY IN COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE:
THE CASE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DELICIOUS FOODS

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A candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy,

And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Professor J. Sanford Rikoon

Professor Mary Hendrickson

Professor Joan Hermsen

Professor Antonio Castro

For my partner John Dousek.
I can't imagine life without you.

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For the Hog Killing

Let them stand still for the bullet, and stare the shooter in the
eye,
let them die while the sound of the shot is in the air, let them die
as they fall,
let the jugular blood spring hot to the knife, let its freshet be full,
let this day begin again the change of hogs into people, not the
other way around,
for today we celebrate again our lives' wedding with the world,
for by our hunger, by this provisioning, we renew the bond.

Wendell Berry, 1980

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ABSTRACT

As food has become unknowable, untrustworthy, and deleterious to all involved, people have responded with alternatives to the industrial agrifood system. One method in particular is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in which shares of a farming project are sold in advance of production. Although many particular aspects of production and distribution are unique to each endeavor, all CSAs allow members to act reflexively with their food source. Reflexivity is presented as a process of understanding the situation at-hand while matching it with ones' own identity to produce social action. To examine reflexivity in CSA more intimately, a qualitative inquiry was undertaken. During the 2012 growing season, participants of The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA were utilized to highlight reflexive practices. Reflexive eating was shown in members through the development of deeper connections with food and the strengthening of trust with farmers. Reflexive farming manifested as the application of knowledge and ethics by the farmer in order to cultivate relationships with members and to continue improving upon CSA. Reflexivity, both in farming and eating, exhibits meaningful engagement that expresses and promotes motives and concerns, imbued with politics. CSA provides the farming space to actively engage in reflexive behavior while nourishing a personal experience with agriculture and food. Working in tandem, reflexive farming and eating act as a mode to build trust for those involved and may alleviate problems associated with CSA. Although relatively small in size, CSA encourages reflexive behavior that may spark change well in to the future.

Chapter 1

Intent and Overview

Intent

The following research is an attempt to examine the reflexive processes that drive participation in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The work, which occurred through the 2012 growing season, contains information gleaned from 26 members and the chief farmer of The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA. By utilizing the concept of reflexivity found throughout the social sciences this research aims to clarify and contribute to our understanding of the term by applying it to a mode of alternative participation to our industrial agricultural system. Through careful participation and examination, the research hopes to aide in the betterment of Community Supported Agriculture as both a social and agricultural act. The lack of information available from personal responses to our greater agricultural structures encouraged my intent to research from that perspective.

As part of my own reflexive process, I find it necessary for me to explain my own viewpoint, my own identity in this research. I am a doctoral candidate in Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri. I have had seven years previous experience operating a small-scale dairy CSA farm that serviced 25 families. I am an advocate for sustainable solutions, especially in our agricultural sector. I have taught over the past six years in various settings, from the classroom to the barnyard. In many of my agricultural ventures educational opportunities have been a key element of operation, as I believe it is critical to the success of the

project. The combination of farmer and educator propels me to conduct research, to find ways of improvement for CSA.

I consider myself a nonconformist, radical social activist. I was raised in poverty and I was never encouraged to succeed in school. I am a queer man with many tattoos and largely stretched earlobes. I am also very compassionate and empathetic. Although at times I may be sarcastic and crass, I am an eternal optimist and I look for the good in people more than the bad. I believe that those parts of my identity were present in my work, research included. Through addressing, examining, and constant readdressing my own intent, my own identity, I actively engaged in the reflexive process throughout researching reflexivity in others.

Questions that propelled the research focused on the reflexive process and participation in CSA. The questions include, how does participation in CSA reveal reflexive practices? Can examples be found that display both farmer and member reflexivity? How does CSA encourage or instill reflexive practices? What can constrain or facilitate reflexivity in CSA? Can careful construction of a CSA encourage reflexivity? Does participation in CSA reveal greater resistance to the industrial system?

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2, Agriculture and Reflexivity, places the research into context and provides a current literature review of the related material. Within are detailed descriptions of selected problems based in the industrial agrifood system and how some actors in this system choose to react to these given issues. Specifically,

Community Supported Agriculture is highlighted as a means to reacquaint participants to agricultural production and affect change in future food decisions. The theoretical concept of reflexivity is emphasized and interrogated as a possible social process that describes involvement in CSA. Examples of reflexivity within the alternative food network are provided.

Chapter 3, Methodology, is a description of the methods used to conduct the study. The selected method of qualitative inquiry includes elements of grounded theory, ethnography, and case study, all of which are explained in full detail. Through the use of one-on-one interviews, a self-administered questionnaire, and a personal reflective narrative, the transcripts generated provided data that aided in the formation of the forthcoming chapters, reflexive eating and reflexive farming.

Chapter 4, The People's Republic of Delicious Foods, is a detailed account of the CSA project and elucidates how the project was undertaken. The chapter contains information about the farm, farmers, animals, members, including operating protocols and procedures. The CSA member contract is included that describes the project, including educational materials, motivating factors for engaging in the CSA, and expectations to come from the farming venture. Short member profiles are also included.

Chapter 5, Reflexive Eating, is a report of findings from member transcripts in PRDF CSA. By examining the different aspects of reflexive behavior of members in the CSA, a more holistic understanding of the term is given. From information gleaned from participants, reflexive eating is the process of combining an understanding of an agricultural experience with one's own

identity to produce social action in food systems. Data sources include a summation of the group's responses and two individual member accounts of reflexive eating.

Chapter 6, Reflexive Farming, is a personal narrative of farmer participation in PRDF CSA. By applying the same trifurcated examination of reflexivity used in the previous chapter, an effort to better comprehend farmer participation in Community Supported Agriculture is undertaken. Reflexive farming is shown to be a process of uniting the farmer's own understanding of agriculture with their identity to produce social action in food systems. A reflective narrative is used as the primary data source.

Chapter 7, Implications and Recommendations, is a linkage of the former chapters to produce counsel on reflexivity and Community Supported Agriculture. By examining reflexivity in its different aspects, a more nuanced, improved view of the process can be seen. These different aspects can be targeted for further examination and improvement. The reflexive process as a whole, whether it is by eating or farming, is recognized as an important element to Community Supported Agriculture and requires further research. The driving research questions that propel this study are addressed, as well as the limitations of the work and future directions of research.

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Reflexivity

Introduction

Everyone eats. If we do not eat we will die. Food is a vital element to life and living well often depends on eating well. In addition to eating well, we have to repeat this action on multiple occasions, throughout the day, everyday.

No matter what differences may appear to be among people, food and the absolute need to eat, is common to us all. As people begin to differ according to constructs that are both self-imposed or socially mandated, such as race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or religion, so does their individual and collective food habits. Despite these differences, the need for food security affects everyone, some greater than others, those with little resources often being the hardest hit.

One can safely say that humans have been eating for quite some time. During that time our food, and the way that it is produced, agriculture, has changed dramatically. As people have adapted and evolved, so too has the fuel that propels them. We have moved from hunters and gatherers to savvy consumers dependent on industrial agricultural production. First described by Popkin (1993), the nutrition transition suggests that as societies become more developed and wealthy, their diets will also become more complicated, relying more on animal fats and energy intensive products. These products have been achieved through great industrial measures; however, they have come with tremendous irreversible and damaging repercussions.

Evidence of industrial agriculture's deleterious effects can be seen in all facets of life on Earth. There are multiple bodies of work that describe destruction

to the environment, pollution of waterways, unjust working conditions for laborers, dissolution of communal living, causing illness and disease to beings, and depressing our imagination of future societies. In essence, industrialized food is not necessarily good, but it persists as the hegemonic method of food production in developed and in increasingly developing nations.

Food has been transformed from a basic, vital element of human life into a tradable commodity. Commodified foods are stockpiled, over-produced, hoarded, transformed, inflated, and eventually, sold for a profit. Producing food in this heavily intensified and industrialized manner is not without some merit, as it creates large abundances of relatively cheap products. Abundances, however, are not enough to justify the method, as food and the wealth that it generates, are far too frequently unevenly distributed in society. The low price upfront for cheap foods comes at a steep price in the long run as industrial agriculture is completely dependent on using monocultures, machines, fossil fuels, and toxic chemicals for production, creating externalities that destroy health and well being for everyone and everything that is involved.

These dynamic factors make food studies paramount in society today. Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson (1996) offered this sentiment, “We start with food. Given the centrality of food in our lives and its capacity to connect us materially and spiritually to each other and to the earth, we believe that it is a good place to start.” (p. 4). As do I.

Industrial Agrifood System

The prevailing method of examining agricultural and food systems in sociology today is at the greater structural level. Scholars in this field began work in the time period immediately following World War II, as it coincided with mass consolidation, concentration, and globalization of production, including in the agricultural and food sector (Bonanno, 2009; Friedland, 1984; Friedmann and McMichael, 1989). Although some were early to pioneer this work, such as Walter Goldschmidt (1947) in *As You Sow*, it wasn't until the 1970's that scholars paid serious attention to the study. Bonanno (2009: pg. 31) notes that until that time concepts including farms, farmers, food, and agriculture were all synonymous with each other, but by that decade, "most food items could not be identified with the commodities produced within the "farm gate." Even "fresh" products were now parts of complex commodity chains transcending the farm." This provided sociologists opportunities to examine how these complex commodity chains were transforming agriculture and food. To accomplish this the dominant approach has been to examine greater structures and their outcomes.

Much structural analysis in the sociology of agriculture and food stems from a Marxist, or neo-Marxist viewpoint. The analysis is concerned with modes of production and how they interact with human systems, whether it is political, economic, or social (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). An example of this can be seen in Heffernan's (1972) early work related to industrial poultry production and its effect on workers concerning social stratification and community attachment. Another example is from Friedland's (1984: pg. 222) work in which he identified five foci, or structures, of research in commodity systems that include

“production practices, grower organization, labor as a factor in production, scientific production and application, and marketing and distribution systems.”

This was explored more recently in Bonanno and Constance’s (2006) work about the complexities that are created in the evolving relationship between a large corporate swine producer, the state of Texas, and the federal government.

Although the area of focus can vary among structuralists, those that embark on this type of analysis seem to be ultimately interested in where power resides in the decision-making process and how society at-large is affected.

One of the strongest elements of structural analysis lies in its ability to examine historical factors with forces seen or unseen to the public, providing a larger vision of reality. Friedmann and McMichael’s (1989) work on the rise and decline of national agricultural systems shows how agriculture and food have moved through regimes with varying degrees of involvement by Nations and Nation-States, ultimately with heavy concentration of control resting with transnational corporations. Hightower’s (1972) *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times*, examines how academic departments related to agriculture and food at American Land Grant universities have been captured in many ways by agribusiness, citing a relationship he labeled, “Agribusiness-Agrigovernment”. Burch and Lawrence (2005, 2009) have concentrated their efforts at investigating the role of supermarkets, as both the main contact point for people and this vast, complex commodity chain and for their attempts to capture sales through marketing own-brands. Each of these pieces illuminate factors not easily seen and in many cases is constructed in this manner purposefully by structural entities. As important as it is to expose these issues, it is also important to examine how they endure.

The industrial agrifood system at-large persists today through a carefully crafted campaign that espouses a Malthusian ideological view of humanity and the world. The mantra of any given large-scale agribusiness is one of more demand through a growing human population and a shrinking food supply. In order to head off disaster and famine, production methods that are extremely dangerous are justified and new lands are constantly under development (Kimbrell, 2002; Ehrenfeld, 2002; Kroese, 2002; Moore, 2002; Albritton, 2009; Altieri, 2000; Lobao and Stofferahn, 2008). McMichael (2000: pgs. 26-28) lists these five claims that are pervasive across the agricultural corporate regime,

“1. Biotechnology’s potential for feeding an increasingly hungry, or food-deficient, world...It warns us that low-tech agriculture “will not produce sufficient crop yield increases and improvements to feed the world’s burgeoning population”.

2. Sustainable agriculture. Monsanto’s CEO Robert Shapiro stated: “Sustainable development will be a primary emphasis in everything we do”. Arguably, the embrace of transgenic technology seriously threatens not only sustainable development, but sustainability in general.

3. Efficient agriculture. Breeding crops for resistance to herbicides may improve yields, but there is a fuzzy logic here. The likelihood of intensified use of herbicides, would further attack biodiversity and undermine rural survival strategies.

4. Getting government out of (the food) business. In addition to reducing international food safety standards, for example, governments are writing themselves out of the picture to the extent that they codify inter-state trade relations, from global multilateral, to regional free trade, agreements.

5. Leveling the playing field. –the fifth discursive claim of the corporate regime is belied by the undulating relation between Northern agro-exporting states and the South.”

Core to all of these claims is the terrifying idea of scarcity, that in some way there just isn’t enough or will not be enough food for everyone.

Scarcity of food is a powerful fable that has been proven false by many scholars. Kimbrell (2002: pg. 7) writes, “Every year, enough wheat, rice, and other grains are produced to provide every human with 3,500 daily calories. In fact, enough food is grown worldwide to provide 4.3 pounds of food per person per day, which would include two and half pounds of grain, beans, and nuts, a pound of fruits and vegetables, and nearly another pound of meat, milk, and eggs.” If scarcity of food is false then the problem must reside in accessing these foods, either through markets or land cultivation. Buchanan (1992: pg. 330) states, “The problem is not so much the number of people or the amount of arable land but rather whether the people have the opportunity to grow (and eat) the food they need...People starve in Northeast Brazil despite a favourable agricultural environment because of the social organisation which denies access to land for the vast majority.” Difficulties accessing land, either from private or governmental entities, becomes extremely evident as industrial development spreads across indigenous locations (Robbins, 2004).

Scholars criticize agricultural development as an altruistic endeavor of the industrial agricultural regime, and have exposed its fraudulent nature. Vandana Shiva (1992: pg. 336) states, “Development was thus reduced to a continuation of the process of colonisation; it became an extension of the project of wealth creation in modern western patriarchy’s economic vision, which was based on the exploitation or exclusion of women (of the west and non-west), on the exploitation and degradation of nature, and on the exploitation and erosion of other cultures.” Others have shown that development in this manner only serves wealthy nations that seek to outsource some of the worst industrial agricultural

practices (Guptil, Copelton, and Lucal, 2013; Barker, 2002; Buchanan, 1992; Berry, 1977). Robbins (2004, pg. 10) writes, “The experience of the green revolution, where technologies of production developed in America and Europe were distributed and subsidized for agrarian production around the world, led to what advocates admit to be extensive environmental problems: exhausted soils, contaminated water, increased pest invasions.” Unfortunately, environmental problems associated with development and industrial agriculture are only a fraction of the desolation and destruction that it creates.

The practices used by industrial agriculture have been especially hard on biodiversity, particularly within wildlife communities. One of the first to call attention to some of the ill effects of these practices in the United States was Rachel Carson (1962) in *Silent Spring*, where DDT was shown to cause damage to wildlife, in particular to the American Bald Eagle. Since then there has been an ever-growing body of evidence proving harm to pollinators, small mammals, and grazing animals (Ingram, Buchmann, and Nabhan, 2002; Tucker, 2002; Imhoff, 2010). Scholars have labeled this a war against nature, the purposeful industrialization of our natural world (Norberg-Hodge, 2002; Mander, 2002; Kroese, 2002; Ehrenfeld, 2002; Fitzgerald, 2003). This industrialization has done irreversible damage to one of our most vital of resources, water.

At the center of all agricultural production is water. Due to its natural ability to provide growth and act as a waste sink or depository, water resides in a precarious position. Altieri (2000, pg. 83) states, “In the Gulf of Mexico there is a huge “dead zone,” extending from the mouth of the Mississippi River to the west, where the excessive nutrients from farmland are believed to be responsible for

oxygen depletion. It is also believed that excess nutrients may stimulate populations of the very toxic form of *Pfiesteria*, an organism that kills fish and is harmful to humans.” He speculates that farmers are driven to continually use pesticides and in new forms as resistance is built to previously used chemicals, labeling it a “pesticide treadmill” (Altieri, 2000). Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (2010, pg. 202) has also called into question the CAFO system, or confined animal feeding operation, and its effects on waterways, asserting “the CAFO industry creates a toxic waste stream comparable to those of heavy industry and big cities, without comparable regulation.” Others have raised concerns about the storage and disposal of the expanding amount of animal manure (Lappe, 2010), while facing a decrease in the total amount of freshwater available (Briscoe, 2002).

The ecological effects levied by industrial agriculture happen on a large, over-arching platform that is felt by everyone and everything cohabitating the Earth. On another scale, whole communities of people have endured negative effects of this type of food production. One of the first to work on the community level was Walter Goldschmidt (1947) in *As You Sow*, in which he found the scale of agriculture had a direct effect on the composition and characteristics of rural communities in California. In particular, he found the overall quality of life was greater in smaller communities, physical facilities were better maintained, and that civic engagement was also higher in rural settings. Lobao and Stofferahn (2008) compiled over 50 studies that examined community well being over a 70 year span and found the overwhelming majority reported detrimental effects across socioeconomic conditions and community social fabric. The researchers stated that communities with large scale industrialized farms, “are likely to

experience greater income inequality; government services for the poor and other disadvantaged groups are likely needed. These communities will encounter stresses in the social fabric, particularly increased community conflict.” (Lobao and Stofferahn, 2008, pg. 229).

Much of the stress to communities related to industrialized agriculture comes in the form of inequalities, especially surrounding labor and labor practices. Tom Philpott (2010, pg. 176) writes, “Four multinational companies control over 70 percent of fluid milk sales in the United States: Land O’Lakes, Foremost Farms, Dairy Farmers of America, and Dean Foods. Consolidation has forced many small- and medium- size dairy farms around the country into a corner: go into debt to get bigger, sell out to developers, or try to survive in a market flooded with cheap industrial milk.” The very notion of the family farm is dismantled and merged into the corporate regime, according to Philpott. Lobao and Meyer (2004) have come to similar conclusions in their piece, “farm power without farmers”, where they find industrialized corporate entities praying upon the symbolic iconography of family farmers, driven only by profit. While farms have become consolidated and the landscape of communities undergo dramatic changes, the actual workforce behind agriculture has changed due to industrial pressures. Champlin and Hake (2006) describe how American meatpacking companies have institutionalized the practice of using an immigrant workforce to increase profit margins while decreasing power and authority of their workers. Cook (2010, pg. 232) also writes, “America’s supposedly “cheap” meat supply relies on cheap labor—but the costs to this largely immigrant workforce are astronomical. With declining union power, real wages have shrunk and workers

are routinely denied bathroom breaks and health care.” Producing food in this manner not only disrupts and deteriorates entire communities, it also has become an attack on the personal health and well-being of individuals, for everyone involved.

One group in particular that experience many of the negative health effects related to industrialized agriculture are the workers, many of them migrant. Scholars have documented a number of physical ailments related to this type of production, including fatigue, chronic pain, and carpal tunnel syndrome (Champlin and Hake, 2006; Gouveia and Juska, 2002), but also chronic conditions such as severe depression, cancer, and infectious disease (Holmes, 2013; Champlin and Hake, 2006; Moore, 2002). Beyond the workers are millions of people that ingest the outcomes of industrialized agriculture, providing another host of problems. Albritton (2009) writes in *Let Them Eat Junk*, that our current system seems to be creating and maintaining two conditions that would appear to be diametrically opposed, hunger and obesity. DeLind and Howard (2008) suggest that the products themselves are not as entirely safe as corporations or government agencies would like the public to believe, labeling food safety an “illusion”.

Industrialized agriculture not only assaults our physical existence, but also threatens our identities as food eaters. The industrial system has employed two very successful tactics to dissolve these identities, deskilling and distancing. Jaffe and Gertler (2006, pg. 143) write, “A closer look at the social construction of “consumers” reveals that the agro-food industry has waged a double disinformation campaign to manipulate and re-educate consumers while

appearing to respond to consumer demand. Many consumers have lost the knowledge necessary to make discerning decisions about the multiple dimensions of quality, including the contributions a well-chosen diet can make to health, planetary sustainability, and community economic development.” Pollan (2006, pg. 1) contributes, “As a culture we seem to have arrived at a place where whatever native wisdom we may once have possessed about eating has been replaced by confusion and anxiety. Somehow this most elemental of activities—figuring out what to eat—has come to require a remarkable amount of expert help.” Gouveia and Juska (2002, pg. 371) add that the industry “has labored especially hard to lengthen the material, physical, and symbolic distance between meat production and meat consumption practices.” The combination of these two tactics have forced a large number of people to assume the role as industrial consumer, leaving them little room to question practices and robbing them of the various alternatives that could exist. However, resistance to the industrial agricultural system has been building over time and there are more alternatives to this system than ever before.

From the onset of industrialized agriculture in the United States there has been opposition to this manner of producing and consuming food. Many scholars have contributed to the lexicon of agrarianism and perseverance, but none as much as Wendell Berry. In his piece, *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture* (1977, pg. viii) he poses, “critical questions are being asked of our whole society: Are we, or are we not, going to take proper care of our land, our country?...We are closer every day to the final destruction of private ownership not only of small family farms, but of small usable properties of all kinds.” Berry

(2002, pg. 39) later adds, “Industrialism has provided us innumerable commodities, amusements, and distractions, but these offer us little satisfaction. Instead we suffer ever-increasing alienation from our families, our communities, and the natural world.”

To address the questions Berry poses and to counter the alienation he describes reformers have attempted to transform consumer thinking to view food and the act of eating as a political act. In *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* (2006), Pollan references one of Berry’s most notable sayings, “Eating is an agricultural act”, but also adds that there are political implications. Pollan writes, “Though much has been done to obscure this simple fact, how and what we eat determines to a great extent the use we make of the world—and what is to become of it. To eat with a fuller consciousness of all that is at stake might sound like a burden, but in practice few things in life can afford quite as much satisfaction.” (pg. 11)

Ackerman-Leist (2013) comes to similar conclusions in his work, *Rebuilding the Foodshed: How to create local, sustainable, and secure food systems*, where he explicitly details the sectors that are in the most peril, only to find deep political and economic divides that act as blockades to the remedies. These obstacles may appear to be large and insurmountable, however, people are both eaters and economic beings with the capacity to act politically. Jaffe and Gertler (2005, pg. 158) add, “To the degree that eating can become a political act linked to the development of a deeper literacy about food and the degree that the many (dis)interested parties can find reasons to coalesce around shared interests in a just and ecologically sound provisioning system, there is reason for hope.” The

coalescence of these parties speaks to the momentum that these food movements, or social movements, are gaining in our current agricultural system.

By definition the various food movements that are occurring can be classified as social movements. According to Guptil, Copelton, and Lucal (2013, pgs. 161-163), “The food movement is a social movement, in that people are organizing to change society and culture.” They develop this definition even further by describing five key elements that all social movements embody, that they are either challengers or defenders of a current social structure, collective rather than individual, they act outside of institutional arrangements, possess some form of organization, and lastly, they continue on with some type of continuity. In, *Making Peace with the Earth* (2012), Vandana Shiva speaks to the power of collective organizing, as it disrupts the hegemonic narrative industrialized agriculture currently espouses. From the many food movements that have been organized, such as local foods, organic production, farmers markets, humane production, neighborhood gardens, Community Supported Agriculture, Slow Foods, Fair Trade, many scholars state that it will take multiple methods, or movements, to change the system at-large (DeLind, 2011; Allen, 2008; Allen, 2010; Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson, 1996).

Fortunately, there are many examples of food movements within the United States that exemplify social movement hallmarks. In, *The Good Food Revolution* (2012), Will Allen retells his journey of producing food and building community near a housing project in Milwaukee. From what began as an abandoned two-acre plot, Allen has been able to create an organization that employs local youth, improves food quality, addresses racism, and strengthens

overall community health. Katz (2006) documents food movements that have taken on a political persona, such as raw foods and bread sharing clubs, in *The Revolution Will Not Be Microwaved*. Kloppenburg (2010) speaks to the power of seed sovereignty as a movement to combat corporate dispossession, enabling communities to have control of seed stock. Allen (2009) looks to local food systems as a means to address and realize social justice, as she poses it contains the capacity and capability to do so. Starr (2010, pg. 487) writes, “The local food movement is remarkable (although not unprecedented) in its use of pleasure...to push political analysis forward.” These are just a few examples of people doing work to help mitigate and change our agricultural system. Collectively these movements have become to be known as alternative food networks.

Alternative Food Networks

The discourse that surrounds alternative food networks today is both complex and optimistic. Johnston and Baumann (2010, pg. 38) consider this definition of discourse, especially when discussing food and agriculture, “(it) can be understood as an institutionalized system of knowledge and thought that organizes populations.” Currently, alternative networks are focused on ideas that surround localization to counter the overwhelming global trend. Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson (1996, pg. 34) write, “Counterposed to the global food system...are self-reliant, locally or regionally based food systems comprised of diversified farms using sustainable practices to supply fresher, more nutritious foodstuffs to small-scale processors and consumers to whom producers are linked by the bonds of community as well as economy. The landscape is

understood as part of that community and, as such, human activity is shaped to conform knowledge and experience of what the natural characteristics of that place do or do not permit.” In this sense, localization recognizes both its successes and limitations while considering the community at-large. Starr (2010, pg. 487) adds, “By creating and investing with meaning social and economic space around modes of production and exchange, this movement has generated a lively space of inclusive discourse, yet with evolving normative terms.” Parkins and Craig (2009) highlight both the cultural and political aspects of this discourse, and how it can vary greatly on an individual level.

One of the vast differences between alternative food networks and the industrial agrifood system is how people are regarded. In the industrial system hardly any attention or importance is placed upon the individual, while the alternative system spends much energy on this level. Lockie (2009, pg. 193) introduces the notion of the “citizen consumer” that, “attempts to redefine food consumption as an expression of citizenship that speaks of collective rights and responsibilities.” DuPuis (2000, pg. 285) adds that individuals help shape the current alternative system stating, “consumers participate in the formation of the industry through a process of reflexive consumption.” These sentiments are meant as a means to empower individuals and add in building personal agency, juxtaposed to our current industrial agrifood system. Whether looking at Allen’s (2012) use of ‘citizen consumer’ in Milwaukee or Katz’s (2006) examination of the ‘reflexive consumption’ of illegal raw milk and bread, both provide examples of individual action as it may have impacts on the larger system.

Alternative food networks function to reconnect individuals to the food system and provide some level of agricultural education. Kerton and Sinclair (2010, pg. 411) write, “Having a connection to their food and to the producers of their food is an experience that inspired many other participants to take their learning and consumer behaviors one step further in reflecting their values.” By reflecting personal values through food consumption these networks hope to address the larger complications of production. Jaffe and Gertler (2006) suggest the reskilling of consumers, while Gouveia and Juska (2002) speak to removing the barriers that exist between meat production and consumption. Both are attempts to raise awareness to the current system while creating alternatives.

Through these alternative networks not only have ecological and environmental problems been brought to attention (Altieri, 2000; Lappe, 2010; Briscoe, 2002; Kennedy, 2010), but also many social and economic issues. Dixon (2014, pg. 175) teaches how to see food justice by employing narratives, stating that they, “specify the social and political location of individual people who are trying to nourish themselves. Once this contextual surround is included we are in a position to ask why this person, in this set of circumstances, is impeded in their access to nutritious foods.” Raja, Ma, and Yadav (2008) examine the problems with the USDA labeling neighborhoods food deserts, as racial and class issues have a larger impact on food security than access to a retail chain supermarket. Patricia Allen (2008, pg. 157) specifically calls upon the alternative system for positive social change as she states, “It would appear that many Americans are ready to pay attention to the character of our food system and how to improve it. Alternative agrifood theories, practices, and movements are positioned to

harness this interest and catalyze social change.” Allen (2010) later looks to localization of food systems as a means to encourage and realize social justice.

Alternative food networks also serve as greater opportunities for individuals to identify and socialize with agriculture and food. The current industrialized system has labored quite extensively to alienate and distance individuals from the production and distribution of food, as a function of its economic nature (Marx and Kamenka, 1983; Polanyi, 1944). Alternative networks move in the opposite direction, as it bears the characteristics of a social movement (Starr, 2010; Johnston and Baumann, 2010). These networks also allow individuals to express their ethics and values, something lacking from the hegemonic paradigm (Berry, 2002). Zepeda (2007, pg. 40) raises these important points, “Given its fundamental function, what we eat and how we eat manifest our individual and collective values. What then does this tell us about who we are and what we value? What does the food we buy say about how we value those who feed us? What does the food we prepare and how we prepare it say about our regard for ourselves and those we feed?” Curtin (1992) suggests that expressing values through food production and consumption is a form of “living participatorily”, enabling power and agency where there previously was none. Through the expression of values, individuals form identities in alternative food networks (Belasco, 2008; Johnston and Baumann, 2010; DuPuis, 2002) and find satisfaction and pleasure in the practice (Berry, 1992; Heldke, 1992).

Collectively, alternative food networks are comprised of different forms and combinations of production, distribution, and consumption of agriculture and food. Organic production, or the practice of growing without the use of

chemical inputs such as pesticides, insecticides, and hormones, is one of the most commonly known practice within these networks (Pollan, 2006), but also include practices such as permaculture and biodynamic farming (Kloppenborg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson, 1996). Foods that have been produced using alternative methods may carry some assumptions about the economic exchange between production and distribution (Lockie, 2009), creating the need for explicit modes such as farmers' markets or Fair Trade labeling. In the US, new farmers' markets are steadily opening and those in current operation continue to expand (AMS, 2014). Community gardens are also a part of the alternative food network and have been utilized to increase food security and market sales for local groups (Guptil, Copelton, and Lucal, 2013; Allen, 2012; Kerton and Sinclair, 2010). Organized neighborhood meals, potluck dinners, and food exchanges also highlight alternative modes of modern food consumption (Katz, 2006; Johnston and Baumann, 2010; Ackerman-Leist, 2013). Of particular importance is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), as it can hold the capacity and capability to negate not only the environmental and ecological problems listed above, but also the communal and personal dilemmas created by our current industrialized food system (Henderson and Van En, 1999).

Community Supported Agriculture

Defining Community Supported Agriculture can prove to be slightly problematic. As farmers and consumers have adopted this farming system across the United States, changes have been made in its constituent processes to suit those involved. Broadly speaking, Miles and Brown (2005) offer this definition:

“CSA is a direct marketing partnership between a farmer or farmers and a committed network of community supporters/consumers who help to provide a portion of a given farm’s operating budget by purchasing “shares” of the season’s harvest in advance of the growing season. CSA shareholders make a commitment to support the farm financially (and/or through other roles) throughout the growing season, thereby assuming some of the costs and risks along with the grower.” (p. 3)

Farmers are attracted to this mode of production because it provides an alternative to the industrial model, financial security due to reciprocal payments in advance, and allow some form of environmental remediation from previous practices (McFadden, 1990; Henderson and Van En, 1999; DeMuth 1993). Other reasons that have been noted for farmer participation in CSA include the need to be instrumental in a local community and to educate members about our food source (Cox et al., 2008; DeMuth 1993). CSA also provides the farmer the ability to customize the rules and parameters of production and participation, as long as their members are in agreement.

For many of the same reasons that farmers are drawn to CSA, so are consumers. Cone and Myhre (2000) found that some of the motivations of CSA participants were a concern for the environment, a source for organic or fresh produce, to support a local food system, and to know how and where their food was grown. Findings from Lang’s (2005, p. 77) study state, “that there is a sizeable group of Americans who have an interest in eating locally grown produce and/or consuming organically grown produce”. Members of CSAs may also be involved for their own personal reasons, not necessarily reflected by the farmers who constructed the CSA. In a case study of motivations behind participating in a CSA in Scotland, Cox et al., (2008, p. 211) found, “Many subscribers understood

their participation in EarthShare as part of broader philosophical and political positions even though EarthShare does not position itself this way in its materials”. The diversity behind motivations to participate in Community Supported Agriculture is one of its strengths and challenges for producers, allowing for further growth across diverse populations.

Community Supported Agriculture has a unique past that was established rather simultaneously in different locations around the world. Although not called CSA, the ideals that surround this farming method are thought to have begun in Japan and Germany in the 1960’s (Miles and Brown, 2005). In Japan the system is known as Teikei, or ‘putting the farmers’ face on food’. The system began from a small group of housewives concerned with food shortages and chemical poisonings (Miles and Brown, 2005; Henderson and Van En, 1999). The housewives sought a safe source of food and a way to mutually support a local farmer. Simultaneously in Germany another farming system was developed very similar to the Teikei system named Buschberghof, noted for its exceptional abilities to encourage community involvement and financial sustainability for the farms (Henderson and Van En, 1999).

Nineteenth century thinker Rudolf Steiner’s ideas of biodynamic farming, Waldorf education, and Associative Economics were all influencing agricultural movements at the time. Most closely attributed with CSA is Associative Economics, defined as an “economic arrangement that fosters interaction among producers, traders, creditors, and consumers and where appropriate price, true human needs, the eradication of poverty, greater social equity, and environmental impacts are explicitly addressed in the process” (Miles and Brown,

2005, p. 5). The United States saw the beginning of CSA in 1986 on two farms, in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, both inspired by the German system. According to the Robyn Van En Center for CSA Resources (2012) there are currently over 2,000 CSAs in the United States, with 1,650 registered with the center.

Over the many different variations of Community Supported Agriculture, direct relationships between farmers and eaters seem to be central to all. Henderson and Van En (1999, p. 4) offer this, “Community Supported Agriculture is a connection between a nearby farmer and the people who eat the food that the farmer produces”. Another proposition comes from Robyn Van En, “food producers + food consumers + annual commitment to one another = CSA and untold possibilities” (p. 4). Relationships vary between farms, farmers, and consumers, but all CSAs offer potential benefits not found in the industrial system, including agreements on how food will be produced, at what price, and the ability for the eater to place a person with the process of production.

CSA also encourages a higher level of participation in both the production and consumption of food from its members than the industrial system. It calls upon participants to pay in advance for the bounty or loss of the farm and offers a method to participate in an economic system that is both local and visible.

Henderson and Van En (1996) state:

Farmers alone have been shouldering the risks of this increasingly ruthless global market, which has forced millions of them from the land. CSA offers one of the most hopeful alternatives to this downward spiral, and it is the only model of farming in which customers consciously agree to share the risks and benefits with the farmers.” (p. 3).

In many cases CSA provides the opportunity to experience a deeper connection to a food source, more than can be offered in the industrial system. Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson (1996, p. 37) add that, “CSA represents a concrete example of the real possibility of establishing economic exchanges conditioned by such things as pleasure, friendship, aesthetics, loyalty, justice and reciprocity in addition to the factors of cost (not price) and quality”. Aside from the financial participation, many CSA farms offer ways for members to participate in the planning, operating, growing, harvesting, or processing of the goods from the farm.

By requesting more participation from consumers and producers than the industrial method, CSA also has the potential to increase knowledge about how food is produced and the inherent benefits and limitations that come along with it. Concepts such as seasonality, variety in production and appearance, and resource intensity are not obscured and in many ways embraced. Cone and Myhre (2000, p. 188) write, “Rather than distant, anonymous production of food grown with chemical inputs certified “safe” by a government bureaucracy, CSA members not only know where and when their food is grown, they know who grows it. Households have a “family farmer” whom they can trust”. Community Supported Agriculture holds the capacity to generate and sustain a type of trust either lost or misplaced in the industrial system.

Community Supported Agriculture is not without its own problems. Surveys have shown that CSA farm membership retention can be relatively low and that the farms themselves do not last (Cooley and Lass, 1998; Brown and Miller, 2008). Brown and Miller (2008, pg. 1300) add, “CSA farms will probably

never be more than a small part of the food system. There appear to be farmer financial problems that need to be worked out and adjustments made by consumers.” DeLind (1999) recalls her experience running a CSA farm, ultimately expressing that the ideology that drove the venture did not meet the eventual reality. Galt (2013) finds that CSA farmers are likely to engage in some form of self-exploitation and do not receive adequate compensation for their work. Unfortunately, others have come to the same conclusions, often stating that the farmers are absorbing some of the difficulties and hardships of farming, defeating a core tenet of CSA (Bougherara, Grolleau, and Mzoughi, 2008; Pole and Gray, 2013; Brown and Miller, 2008). Pole and Gray (2013) also focus on the subjectivity of the term community in CSA and show that not all participants prioritize this aspect of the farming project. Zepeda, Reznickova, and Russell (2013) find that participation in CSA can work to fulfill needs for members, but can also drive others away by reducing their autonomy and competency within the project. Through exposing these problems, CSA farms and farmers have an opportunity to make changes that strengthen the social food movement.

Despite its small-scale nature, the successes in Community Supported Agriculture are very promising. CSA farms are facilitating relationships with agriculture, food, and people that have been eroding over several generations and hold the capacity of bridging the gap between consumers and their food (Henderson, 2011; Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson, 1996; Cox et al, 2008; Lang, 2010; Lang, 2005; McFadden, 2003). Community Supported Agriculture also encourages a higher level of civic engagement, cultivates sustainable behaviors, and affects the environmental ethics of its participants

(Sumner, Mair, and Nelson, 2010; Uribe, Winham, and Wharton, 2012; Hayden and Buck, 2012). CSA can be something very personal and unique, as the particular arrangements of the project can vary from farm to farm (Henderson and Van En, 1999), and in that diversity may reside its greatest strength, adaptability.

Whether driven by fears of industrial practices or the need to fulfill some missing aspect of production and consumption, Community Supported Agriculture is just one type of alternative response to industrial agriculture. Just as the Japanese name *Teikei* suggests, individuals that participate in this alternative have the opportunity to link a person or persons directly to their food source. This is radically different from our current system that seeks to distance individuals from production and hide the deleterious effects of agriculture. CSA links people with processes and encourages reflexive behavior for its participants as information is presented and disseminated, different options are examined, and responsibility for production and consumption is addressed. This is no small feat as Community Supported Agriculture is calling upon its members to do more than is required of our consumers and producers in our current system. Despite the added effort, the positive attributes of CSA overlap with other aspects of life, making it a catalyst for greater change.

Reflexive Consumption in Alternative Food Networks

Progress has been made on the local level to address larger food issues, as Community Supported Agriculture and other alternative food networks call upon its participants to engage in a more reflexive manner. Food consumers have a

growing number of methods to make political, ethical, and value based decisions, all of which require some level of effort. Ravenscroft et al (2013) labels this “civil labor”, however participants in their study did not view it as a hardship, more as civil engagement. Participating this closely with food systems can also be seen as a source of empowerment through owning decision-making processes (DuPuis, 2002; Pollan, 2006) and lead to other reflexive practices (Hjelmar, 2010). Allen (2012) shows that individuals can make incredible differences by taking control of their food source and encouraging others to do so as well. Such an importance has been placed on reflexivity related to our industrial food system that corporations have embarked in anti-reflexive campaigns as a means to conceal foodborne illness outbreaks and other nefarious processes (Stuart and Worosz, 2012; Gouveia and Juska, 2002; Jaffe and Gertler, 2006).

The Transdisciplinary Nature of Reflexivity

Reflexivity, as a concept utilized within the social sciences, often imparts characteristics akin to the field of study that it is used in. This can be one of its strongest elements, as it is adaptable, but also a weakness, as it lacks clear definition. Archer (2010, pg. 1) adds, “Though its importance is now accepted by contemporary theorists, there is no consensus about the human practice of reflexivity, its origins, operations, or outcomes.” In order to discuss how reflexivity has been operationalized, I will examine differences and similarities within the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, and sociology. It should be noted that many of the researchers used to illustrate these differences blur the line of disciplinary work, for example George Herbert Mead influenced

psychology and sociology, and Pierre Bourdieu's work is situated between anthropology, sociology, and philosophy (see figure 2 below).

The field of psychology was one of the first to mention reflexivity as a process used by people to negotiate the world before them and how they act upon it. Dewey (1896) sought to use the reflexive arch (see figure 1) found in the biological sciences and apply it to human thought processes, suggesting some form of inner dialogue or conversation. George Herbert Mead was the next social scientist to utilize the concept of reflexivity as a decision making process. Mead's (1934) position is that people develop as a process of interactions with the social world. Specifically, he wrote (1934, pg. 34), "In reflective intelligence one thinks to act, and to act solely so that this action remains a part of a social process. Thinking becomes preparatory to social action." Both researchers were in part responding against the dominant forces in psychology at their time, chiefly Freud's psychoanalysis. As Freud's (1960) position displaced power and control over an individual's life to an 'ego', 'id', and 'superego', Dewey and Mead sought to center control through a participatory and pragmatic approach, a more reflexive approach. More recently seen in the work of Finlay (2002, pg. 532), reflexivity is seen in psychology as a constant evaluation of "subjective responses and intersubjective dynamics." Holland (1999) views reflexivity as a means to examine oneself in a thoughtful process and the ability to react upon the process. The turn to use reflexivity as an engaging process is where the strengths in psychology lie; however, it lacks some type of context. The next discipline discussed, anthropology, attempts to do just that, place reflexivity into context.

Figure 1 Biological reflexive arc

Reflexivity within anthropology is used primarily to discuss the researcher and their role(s) in the study. As evidenced in Clifford and Marcus's (Eds., 1986) *Writing Culture* and Behar and Gordon's (Eds., 1995) *Women Writing Culture*, the pieces selected provide intimate details of how the researcher came to their work, how research questions and participants were selected, how data was analyzed, and lastly, how conclusions were drawn. Two examples of this type of reflexive work come from Behar's (1996) *The Vulnerable Observer* and Lawless's (2001) *Women Escaping Violence*, in which the personal experiences of the researchers were made known early in the work, allowing readers to see motivations, and perhaps contributions of the researchers roles and experiences to the ensuing analysis. Salzman (2002, pg. 806) describes reflexivity as, "the constant awareness, assessment, and reassessment by the researcher of the researcher's own contribution/influence/shaping of intersubjective research and the consequent research findings." Pillow (2003, pg. 179) contributes to the discussion by stating, "reflexivity becomes important to demonstrate one's

awareness of the research problematics and is often used to potentially validate and legitimize the research precisely by raising questions about the research process.” Bourdieu (2003) also adds greatly to this by illustrating the need for researchers to acknowledge in their work the greater structures that they must abide by, such as disciplinary or academic, as well as familial or societal, as this potentially may have an outcome on the work. Reflexivity utilized in this manner has the capacity to address issues related to validity, but in an anthropological sense is limited to just the researcher. In the last discipline discussed, sociology attempts to broaden reflexivity to individuals as a social practice.

Sociologists have applied the construct of reflexivity to illustrate how people interact with the social and cultural world, and how that forms their own identity. Again, the work of Mead (1934, pg. 173) provides some insight, as he states, “The essence of the self, as we have said, is cognitive: it lies in the internalized conversation of gestures which constitutes thinking, or in terms of which thought or reflection proceeds. And hence the origin and foundations of the self, like those of thinking, are social.” Recently, sociologists have been interested in how these internalized conversations have resulted in some form of action in the social world, or how actors have demonstrated a reflexive process. Archer’s (2010, 2012) work examines carefully how reflexivity is being lived out in multiple settings, using many different forms of data. Giddens (1990, 1991) work focuses reflexive practices within the timeframe of modernity or late modernity, suggesting that people have become “projects”, in which he states (1991, pg. 70), “What to do? How to act? Who to be? These are the focal questions for everyone living in circumstances of late modernity—and ones which, on some

level or another, all of us answer, either discursively or through day-to-day social behavior.” Lastly, Beck, Giddens, and Lash (1994) offer ways in which the practice of reflexivity can be applied to the condition of living in late or post modernity, with the construct labeled reflexive modernization. The theory contends that as modernity closes, so does group affiliations, such as state, religious, or even family, and a more individualized focus is maintained. The strengths and weaknesses of this approach are oppositional from the anthropological approach to reflexivity, as sociology has been able to examine individual reflexive practices, but not the researchers own practice. Researchers that utilize reflexivity as a construct, both theoretically and/or methodologically, could benefit by including operationalized definitions from disciplines outside of their own.

Figure 2 Operationalized model of reflexivity

As a theoretical concept, reflexivity draws upon work done primarily in the disciplines of psychology and sociology, such as Mead, Archer, and Giddens. To provide some parameters to the concept, Darity (2008, pg. 122) describes

reflexivity as a way for people to “turn back” upon themselves to observe, reference, describe, predict, assess and explain their own ways and workings.” Weick (2002, pg. 895) contributes to this theoretical understanding of reflexivity by stating, “When people act in this engaged mode, they are aware of the world holistically, as a network of interrelated projects rather than as an arrangement of discrete physical objects and events.” Researchers within the social sciences have utilized this theoretical understanding of reflexivity to investigate specific areas of social life, such the family, work life, and leisure activities. The study of consumption, and more specifically food consumption, has benefited by the construct of reflexivity.

Some researchers have taken a wider approach to understanding reflexive consumption habits by examining the greater structures people consume in and the manner in which marketing and branding techniques are imposed upon these people (Garcia-Ruiz and Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2010; Wee and Brooks, 2010; Beckett and Nayak, 2008; Woodside, Sood, and Miller, 2008). Within the sociology of agriculture and food there have been few researchers concerned about this theoretical reflexivity on a more individual, personal basis. Research has been done to examine how this reflexivity is both generated and maintained, the various meanings and motivations behind participating, and the possible outcomes from the process. The work of E. Melanie DuPuis in *Nature's Perfect Food* (2002) and her further research in reflexive political decision-making processes has been invaluable to viewpoint. Josée Johnston with Szabo (2011) and Baumann (2010) have utilized reflexive consumption to expose the personal, individualized nature of participating in food systems. There has also been, albeit

very little, research within this subfield of study that examines reflexive producer practices. Kaup (2008) examines the effects of farmers' knowledge on the decision-making process on-farm and finds the participants actively engaging in reflexivity. Stock (2007) illustrates the notion of 'good farmers' as those that practice some form reflexive production, concerned with greater environmental, health, and community well-being issues. Across these works each researcher is interested in how the reflexive process is conducted and how it shapes their participants social interactions.

Reflexivity, as a methodological concept, has been utilized in a slightly altered manner, one that is directed to the researcher, research practices, and the work produced. Bourdieu (2003, pg. 291) is helpful again when considering this, as he states, "Each of us, and this is no secret for anyone, is encumbered by a past, his or her own past, and this social past...is particularly burdensome and obtrusive when one is engaged in social sciences." As an attempt to face and perhaps honor this past, researchers have included reflexive elements in their work to instill some form credibility and validity to their findings. Like Bourdieu, May (2011) describes the many barriers that prevent researchers from practicing methodological reflexivity, such as those placed by disciplines or by the academy. Steier's (1991) edited work provides accounts of scientific discovery that are attributed to this form of reflexivity that transcend the social and apply to the STEM sciences as well. The research of Pezalla, Pettigrew, and Miller-Day (2012) and Riach (2009) explore the possible effects on interview data from researcher reflexivity. Cherry, Ellis, and DeSoucey (2011) examine the reflexive role of the researcher within food and consumption studies, suggesting that the work

proposed may also affect the researcher as well. Lastly, DeLind's (1999) piece exemplifies this type of methodological reflexivity, as the researcher's position, motivations, and what she eventually saw, were clear and present. Although this methodological approach has its critiques in reliability and replication, it does attempt to 'see' the researcher in the work, acknowledge their presence, and evaluate this in the findings.

In light of food choices available in modern society, individuals have many opportunities to make decisions about what they will eat, multiple times per day. Food choices have become an important aspect of reflexive behavior in many ways. DuPuis (2000, p. 289) wrote, "Food is a particularly important focus for reflexive consumers, since food consumption is a negotiation about what a person will, and will not, let into his or her body. It is a question of: "Will I, or will I not, refuse?". DuPuis (2002) also finds that individuals that were practicing reflexive food consumption were not necessarily social activists or committed to a particular cause or political party, but that they are able to evaluate various claims made from many different sources in society, such as the media, industry, friendships, and family, constituting a "community of practice" (p. 228). Individuals then have the ability to reflexively form their own identity from these choices. However, choices made today have far reaching effects. Giddens (1994) writes:

"The day-to-day actions of an individual today are globally consequential. My decision to purchase a particular item of clothing, for example, or a specific type of foodstuff, has manifold global implications. It not only affects the livelihood of someone living on the other side of the world but may contribute to a process of ecological decay which itself has potential consequences for the whole of humanity." (p. 57-58).

Understanding that food choices affect more than just the individual is an important aspect of the concept of reflexive eating used in this research. Johnston and Szabo (2011, p. 305) describe, “individual reflexivity as a willingness to think critically about the social and ecological problems of the industrialized food system as well as proposed solutions, and engage with food through more self-aware, democratic processes”. In particular, DeLind (1999, p. 8) posed that Community Supported Agriculture members are “politically aware, environmentally-active and that by belonging to a CSA, by supporting local food production, they are engaged in social resistance. If this is resistance (and I think it is), it is nonetheless a highly individualized or personalized resistance—a resistance primarily of consumers—not of citizens”. Katz (2006) also found that some individuals were driven to ‘civil disobedience’ by participating in food systems that emphasized local trade, or that operated outside of regulation, such as raw milk dairies or bread clubs. Lastly, Soron (2010) writes that this type of reflexive food consumption is a “legitimate but constrained attempt to act in accordance with environmental ideals within the one sphere in which ordinary people typically feel some direct control.” (p. 179-180).

Reflexive eating is an example of an individual displaying some conscious awareness and control over their food source. It involves having an understanding of food, which includes how it was produced and what motivates an individual to it, matching this with ones’ identity and previous knowledge, and reacting in some manner. Guthman (2003, p. 46) states, “consumption practices are driven by a *conscious* reflexivity, such that people monitor, reflect upon and adapt their personal conduct in light of its perceived consequences...the reflexive

consumer pays attention to how food is made, and that knowledge shapes his or her ‘taste’ toward healthier food”. A need for healthier food may not be the only motivation to be more reflexive about food. DuPuis (2000, p. 293) adds to this by stating, “The reflexive consumer is an actor in a larger network...evaluating claims and acting on these claims every time they reach for a milk carton or bottle at the store”. Decisions made by individuals practicing reflexive eating can lead to many different outcomes, as people bring their own unique identity to the process. Kerton and Sinclair (2010) found that, by learning about food, their participants also became engaged in the environment and ethics. They stated, “Having a connection to their food and to the producers of their food is an experience that inspired many of the other participants to take their learning and consumer behaviors one step further in reflecting their values.” (p. 411).

In the current industrialized agricultural system individuals rarely have the opportunity to practice reflexive eating. The act of obscuring and distancing practices from people dissuade them from becoming reflexive. This hegemony is broken by various discourses, including organic and natural foods. One of the few examples is what DuPuis (2000) labels ‘the talking milk carton’, in which labeling, imagery, and packaging display a constructed message that evokes reflexivity. She gives examples of some of the top producers of organic milk and how the carton “talks” to the consumer, saying words like organic, natural, safe, nutritious, healthy, and clean, while showing a picture of a cow grazing in a large field or a smiling farmer with overalls (p. 291-292). Pollan (2006) describes this phenomenon as a “supermarket pastoral”. Despite the “talking” this might not be enough for reflexive eaters, as major problems have surfaced within the organic

milk industry. In 2007, Aurora Organic Dairy, which supplies major retailers such as Walmart, Costco, Safeway, Target, and Wild Oats, became involved in a class action lawsuit for a wide array of charges. The most egregious accusations were that the milk was indeed not organic and that the labeling was misleading consumers as it depicted large pastures for cows and the actual production method was completely in-doors (Davis, October 2007). Reflexive eating requires more than just labeling and packaging, it requires some deeper connection, one that Community Supported Agriculture may provide.

Within the sociology of agriculture and food there is a need for research concerning consumer reflexivity in order to address greater concerns. Lockie (2009, p. 200) writes, “No longer the passive recipients of whatever the food industries supply, “food citizens” must act reflexively and proactively to re-invent for themselves their identities and practices as food consumers”. Although there are many examples of the need for reflexive consumers (Guthman, 2003; DuPuis and Goodman, 2005), authors have not been explicit of what reflexivity actually looks like, its empirical evidence (Friedland, Ransom, and Wolf, 2010; Johnston and Szabo, 2011). However, the majority of those writing this field agree that reflexive behavior may have positive societal affects, spreading well past the agricultural sector in civil engagement, environmental action, and political involvement as examples (Schor, 2010; Katz, 2006; DuPuis, 2002; Johnston and Szabo, 2011; DeLind, 1999; Lockie, 2009).

Reifying Reflexivity in Community Supported Agriculture

Community Supported Agriculture is an opportunity to practice reflexive eating. By ‘putting a face on food’, CSA potentially allows participants to learn more about their food source, establish some connection to how it was produced and by whom, and apply that connection to some reaction or form of social action. DeLind (1999, p. 3) wrote, “What we needed, I believe (and still believe), was to reduce the distance between people and their food supply, to share the responsibility—to share “the risks and rewards” as I was overly fond of saying—of food production”. CSA has the capability to achieve this through a group setting, led by a farmer or farmers. This is an important distinction from other forms of participation in the alternative agriculture system, like eating organic food or buying at a farmers’ market, as Community Supported Agriculture has strong potential to link both land and people to the process of food production. Seeking some form of guidance seems natural as Wee and Brooks (2010, p. 46) point out, “at some point, the search should become one for advice on reflexivity itself, on how to be more self-aware, on the assumption that this will enable the self to make better choices with regard to both itself and to others”. By participating in a CSA, and more specifically interacting with farmers, other members, and the farm itself, individuals have the opportunity to practice reflexivity in agriculture by actual participation in agriculture, something missing in the industrial model. Lastly, Jeff Poppin, a CSA famer in rural Tennessee stated eloquently:

CSA members enjoy many of the pleasures of a farm without having to own one. They can bring their family out for a picnic, see animals and gardens, and eat fresh organic food all week. They are reestablishing a connection to the land, reuniting a lost tie between the city and the

country, developing a mutual trust and friendship with a farmer, and helping wealth to be created locally. (Katz, 2006, p. 13)

There is a need for research that attempts to empirically document what reflexivity actually looks like. By capturing this process perhaps reflexivity can be better utilized in further research and to estimate a range or gauge of this behavior. This work is an attempt to include the operationalized definitions of reflexivity across psychology, anthropology, and sociology, as a means to better clarify the subject.

There is also a paucity of research that includes alternative food producers and consumers within the same context. The case of The People's Republic of Delicious Foods will shed light on the symbiotic relationship that exists between these two groups of people, and that in some cases they are the same. Research is needed to strengthen these relationships and encourage leadership within alternative food networks.

This research also builds upon the literature surrounding producer reflexivity. Like prior work done, this research examines how the knowledge and identity of the producer shapes and affects the outcome of farm or farming project. By increasing our understanding of who embarks in these alternative farming methods we may improve the overall experience for all those involved.

My work hypothesizes that in order to understand the modes of reflexivity in Community Supported Agriculture, there must be an understanding of the knowledge and intent of participants, who they are as individuals, and how that affects further action in alternative food networks. Due to the nature of the question and the context of the work, a qualitative inquiry was undertaken.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methodology in the social sciences describes a line of inquiry that endeavors to uncover how and why a particular phenomenon occurs. Merriam (2009, pg. 5) recounts that qualitative research is, “interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences.” Creswell (1998, pg. 15) puts a finer point to the definition of qualitative research and states, “an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.” Stake (2010, pg. 11) adds to this definition by stating, “By qualitative we mean that it relies primarily on human perception and understanding.” Lastly, Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2011, pg. 9) contribute this vital aspect of qualitative research, “the approach allows you to identify issues from the perspective of your study participants, and understand the meanings, and interpretations that they give to behaviour, events, or objects.”

Contrasting qualitative research in the social sciences is quantitative work. Compared to qualitative endeavors that seek how and why participants respond to a phenomenon, quantitative research strives to measure variables and make generalizations to greater numbers of individuals. Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2011, pg. 16) summarize quantitative work as, “the purpose of quantitative

research is to quantify a research problem, to measure and count issues and then generalize these findings to a broader population.” Whereas quantitative methods typically include surveys and statistical analysis, qualitative work usually depends on interpreting interviews, focus groups, and observations.

Interpretive analysis is a fundamental hallmark of qualitative research. When compared to the more positivist approach of quantitative work, interpretive analysis has had many more criticisms levied against it, including the validity and credibility of the work itself. Denzin and Lincoln (2013, pp. 3) posit this, “Politicians and hard scientists call qualitative researchers *journalists* or “soft” scientists. Their work is termed unscientific, only exploratory, or subjective. It is called criticism and not theory, or it is interpreted politically, as a disguised version of Marxism or secular humanism.” As such, qualitative research is deprioritized in funding opportunities and scientific notoriety, which may act as a deterrent for future research endeavors (Denzin, 2010; Denzin 2009). Despite the criticisms, the research conducted in the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA could not have been accomplished without the interpretive use of qualitative methodologies due to the highly personal nature of the work and critical data concerning participation may have gone unnoticed, thereby lost.

Regardless of the institutional hurdles, qualitative methodologies have made consequential contributions across disciplines. Lincoln (2010, pp. 4) states, “Rather than adopting oppositional identities, we should instead be proud of the stunning array of work we have turned out. We have become, largely because of our methods, lens, and paradigms, rather awesome purveyors of some of the most profound insights into Western society ever assembled. We have seen the

ugly underbelly of this society and been unfaltering and remorseless in exposing our shortcomings as a society to ourselves and the rest of the world.” Qualitative methodologies have been able to give prominence to the lived experiences of participants and push research into new directions.

A Qualitative Inquiry Driven by Agriculture and Reflexivity

The following research can be categorized as a qualitative inquiry. Ultimately, the work seeks to examine participation in Community Supported Agriculture as a reflexive practice. Two of the main tropes under investigation are agriculture, or the way in which we produce and procure food, and the theoretical concept of reflexivity. Both conceptions are complex and qualitative inquiries were pursued on each.

Typically, agricultural lines of questioning are addressed with quantitative research. Agriculture, as discussed in length earlier, is a major undertaking that not only affects large groups of people in society, but also elicits individual responses. Walter Goldschmidt’s (1949) *As You Sow*, and Chambers, Pacey, and Thrupp’s (1989) *Farmer First*, are early examples of using qualitative approaches to examine individual producer responses to the greater system. DuPuis’s (2002) *Nature’s Perfect Food*, utilizes qualitative methods to investigate individual action and reaction to industrialized milk production. Both pieces of work draw upon the lived experiences of participants to make inferences about the greater agricultural system.

Qualitative inquiry lends itself quite well to the theoretical concept of reflexivity. As lived experiences of participants have been discussed as vital to

qualitative work, Giddens (1991, pp.35) contributes, “All human beings continuously monitor the circumstances of their actions as a feature of doing what they do, and such monitoring always has discursive features. In other words, agents are normally able, if asked, to provide discursive interpretations of the nature of, and the reason for, the behavior in which they engage.” The interpretive process of qualitative research also recognizes the subjective nature of the work, as Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2011, pg. 19) adds, “It acknowledges that the perspectives of study participants reflect their subjective views of their social world, and that researchers also bring their subjective influences to the research process, particularly during data collection and interpretation.” As such, qualitative inquiry presents itself as a highly legitimate method to understand personal reflexive responses to agricultural systems.

Agriculture and reflexivity are both complex subjects that could be examined under any number of qualitative methodologies. Although qualitative inquiry is the primary research method used in this investigation, multiple modes of qualitative work were utilized to conduct the project.

A Bricolage of Ethnography and Case Study

Bricolage, for this research, is a term that reflects the assemblage of different modes of qualitative work that comprised the overall effort and created something new. Barker (2004, pp. 17) refers to it as, “the rearrangement and juxtaposition of previously unconnected signifying objects to produce new meanings in fresh contexts.” To conduct research means to act as a bricoleur, or what Denzin (2010, pp. 13) calls, “learning how to borrow from many different

disciplines.” As such, traits of three methods of qualitative work were utilized, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study.

To frame this qualitative inquiry and provide some structure behind the course of action, many research decisions included the Hutter-Hennink qualitative research cycle (see figure 3 below). The research cycle consists of various parts and phases that occur in qualitative work. The cycle also suggests that these phases have an effect on each other and the effects can be seen across the research.

Figure 3 Hutter-Hennink qualitative research cycle with corresponding chapters

The research endeavor began with knowledge of both agricultural systems and the theoretical concept of reflexivity. As the work developed, important

conceptual aspects were made manifest and were pursued with further investigation. This exploratory process was something akin to the grounded theory methodological approach in qualitative research that Charmaz (2006, pp. 2) refers to as, “systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves.” This research aims to generate theory directly from the data provided by participants, but also recognizes that it lacks the rigor (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or hallmark elements (Birks and Mills, 2011) described by leading practitioners, and therefore is not a grounded theory endeavor.

As an attempt to become as close to the research project as possible, added efforts were undertaken, such as designing, promoting, and curating my own CSA project to gather data from. The act of performing ethnography is the optimal way to describe these efforts. Merriam (2009, pp. 27) explains, “Anthropologists ‘do’ ethnography, a research process, as well as write up their findings as an ethnography, a product. Thus ethnography is both a process and a product.” By being involved with this process, the research hopes to capture moments that would normally go unnoticed and unchecked. A large part of this performance is acting as an insider to the group, as access to these moments can be freely exchanged (Myerhoff, 1978; Trinh, 1989; Behar, 1996). The ethnographic act also permits space for the investigators reflexive process by examining their own subjective perspective and objectives. Berry and Clair (2011, pp. 95) write, “We are storied selves entangled with others’ stories (those of our participants, characters and fellow ethnographers), our understandings of their stories, and their understanding of ours.” Although the ethnographic process was utilized, a

fully developed ethnographic product was not. Merriam (2009, pp. 23) contributes, “Ethnography strives to understand the interaction of individuals not just with others, but also with the culture of the society in which they live.” A more developed and nuanced retelling of culture would be required to be considered completely ethnographic work. Ultimately, ethnography fails to describe the assembly, internal workings, and dynamics of the group.

To describe the group under investigation, qualitative case study is the ideal methodology. Creswell (1998, pp. 61) describes case study as, “an exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied—a program, an event, an activity, or individuals.” Yin (2009, pp. 18) adds to this by stating, “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” For this work, the group being scrutinized constituted a single case that existed over a certain time frame in a specific location. The group collectively became a unified voice that could be captured and analyzed further. Although many different concepts were addressed within the group, they were certainly not exhaustive and did not fully describe the complexities of the case (Stake, 1995).

By blending these two different methodologies, a deeper, richer portrayal of the research project was made possible, creating an ethnographic case study. Elements of ethnography and case study were present at different times of the research and aided the collection, structuring, and analysis of data. The overall

effort attempted to combine these qualitative methodologies to provide a fresh, new context in which to conduct research.

Gathering, Structuring, and Analyzing the Data

The research process began in 2011 with the formation and completion of Meating Needs CSA, a meat centered project in Columbia, Missouri. Although structured in a different manner than the forthcoming work, Meating Needs provided an opportunity to see elements in CSA that required further investigation, as well as a group of individuals wanting to experience another CSA project. For the following year another meat centered CSA was designed and a formal research project was undertaken.

In 2012, the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA was formed. Similar to previous farming ventures, PRDF provided meat products and opportunities to participate in agricultural activities on-farm. PRDF attempted to have a total of fifty shareholders, but only sold thirty shares. Shareholders of the CSA were encouraged to participate in the research efforts, but not all became participants in this study, as participation was not required for membership. A total of thirty shareholders became participants of the study, with twenty-six completing all research instruments. The research instruments include two one-on-one interviews and a self-administered questionnaire.

The initial phase of research consisted of personal one-on-one interviews with twenty-eight participants in PRDF CSA, conducted with a question protocol generated previous to meeting (see appendix A). The interviews were completed within the first two months of participation in PRDF. A brief summation and

analysis of the data from the first interview led to refining questions for the self-administered questionnaire that recognized emerging themes in the research (see appendix A). These themes centered on the general knowledge and understanding of CSA and agriculture held by the participant, as well as their personal identity. A total of twenty-seven questionnaires were returned. Within a month of PRDF CSA ending the second and last face-to-face interview with participants occurred. Data produced from the second interview aided in reaffirming theoretical propositions posed in the research and provided a more complete description of the participants and phenomenon.

Once the personal interviews or self-administered questionnaire were completed and submitted, transcriptions were generated for further data analysis. Merriam (2009, pp. 110) states that, “verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis.” Transcription then becomes the method in which data is created from collection efforts. With early transcription of the first interview problems were identified and corrected while the overall quality was assessed (Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011).

After the general assessment from the first interview process occurred, questions were focused on theoretical propositions presented earlier concerning agriculture, alternative agriculture, and reflexivity. From the transcripts, questions were rearranged according to the emergent themes of understanding, identity, or action and a sense of saturation was met through the repetition of responses (Stake 2010; Stake, 1995; Saldaña, 2009). These themes served as an organizational tool and structural elements behind the augmentation of reflexive theory and agricultural participation.

To ensure some sense of validity and credibility to the research two common methods within qualitative inquiries were employed. The first method of participant, or member, checking consists of what Stake (2010, pp. 126) calls, “presenting a recording or draft copy of an observation or interview to the persons providing the information and asking for correction and comment.” The goal is to clear up any misrepresentations or mistakes in the exchange between participant and researcher. Participant checking occurred consistently across both personal interviews and self-administered questionnaire with randomly selected participants. The other method utilized is referred to as triangulation of the data. Triangulation occurs in tandem with the method of participant checking and by affirming assumptions through multiple data sources (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009). Stake (2010, pp. 124) adds, “It may make us more confident that we have the meaning right, or it may make us more confident that we need to examine differences to see important multiple meanings.” Along with participant checking, triangulation transpired through a pathway of personal interviews, participation in the CSA, and observations gleaned throughout the duration of the project.

In part due to the homogenous composition of the CSA (see chapter 4), a clear group voice emerged from the data. Although the sample group of twenty-six participants responded with personal accounts to questions posed in the research process, many repeated and overlapped with what others had contributed, giving a sense of saturation to the data (Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011). The development of the group voice of the CSA permitted the summation and further analysis of the data. To highlight specific examples of

individual responses, two participants were selected at random from the total sample of twenty-six for further scrutiny.

In chapter six, a personal narrative and analysis is presented from my role as chief farmer and operator of PRDF CSA. The narrative is intended to provide my reflexive response to the CSA experience within the context of the themes presented of understanding, identity, and action. Merriam (2009, pg. 202) states, “at the heart of narrative analysis is “the ways humans experience the world”... as a research technique, the study of experience is through stories.” Although a formal narrative analysis was not attempted across all participants in PRDF CSA, my story is offered as a vital, and often unheard, voice in the research endeavor. The chapter also serves to provide examples of my own reflexive contribution to the research, exposing reflexivity in a methodological context.

In order to provide a more holistic understanding of the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA, the following chapter contains a description of the project. Included are details about the physical location of the farm, the farmers, animals, and members involved. The CSA membership form is included to provide some context on the parameters of the project. Short participant profiles of selected data are also included.

Chapter 4

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods

The following is a detailed description of the Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) farm project conducted during 2012. The chapter contains an explanation of the overall organization, the actual farm, the farmers involved, animals utilized, and the members that supported the CSA. Using various sources of information, including transcripts, CSA documents, maps of the farm, short biographies, pictures, and brief descriptions of members.

The Organization

The planning stage for the People's Republic of Delicious Foods (PRDF) occurred in October of 2011 among two CSA farmers, Jordan and John, and two members who took on working roles, Sylvia and Mitchell. The small group had some success in the previous year with a meat focused CSA and wanted to replicate it again for 2012. PRDF was built upon the relationship that Jordan and John had established and maintained with a neighbor, Fred Martz, and his farm of over 400 acres. For thirty-six members and more, the CSA produced 120 broiler chickens, 130 turkeys, and approximately 1,000 pounds of pork. In addition, the CSA purchased two beef cows and ten yearling sheep from the Martz Farm.

The design of PRDF CSA was done in a manner to encourage involvement in the farm, as well as to provide complete transparency in the organizational workings. As a means to ensure equal access to information in the CSA a contract was drafted and thoroughly explained to each participant at the time of

enrollment into the farm. The contract includes a description of what CSA is, a brief biography of Jordan and John, what the farm project hopes to create, and the activities planned throughout the season. The contract further outlines exactly what meat products could be expected and a timeline of events. Lastly, an ‘open door’ policy for the farm was highlighted with expectations that arrangements be made in advance (see image 1 below).

The events scheduled in the CSA were designed to encourage interaction with the members, the farm, the animals, and with each other. These events included potlucks, workdays on the farm, and an event teaching different techniques of cooking with various types of meat, all of which will be discussed in greater detail later. In addition to these planned events there was a series of hands-on workshops of processing the turkeys grown on the farm. Jordan and John also welcomed members and non-members to visit the farm, feed the animals, and help with general chores.

Image 1 Contract side 1

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods 2012 Meat CSA

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods (PRDF) is engaging in a Community Supported Agricultural farm project for the 2012 growing season. Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA, is an opportunity for you to be more involved with your food source. In many cases CSA can help answer those Who, What, Where, When and Why questions about our food and how it is produced. It is a chance to participate in a local economy, where every dollar put in is accountable and traceable. With CSA you are buying a true share of the farm, an equal portion of what is harvested. Along with the bounty that can be grown also comes a risk of failure, both are central to agricultural production and both are distributed to all members. CSA can also be a great way to meet other people who share some of the same concerns or interests.

So what is PRDF? We are a limited run CSA farm project that is focused on growing various meat products for 2012. It is a partnership with Jordan Dawdy, John Doubek and the Martz Farm in Columbia, Missouri. Jordan and John have run other very successful CSA projects and the Martz Farm has been selling grass fed lamb and beef at the Boone County farmers' market for many years. PRDF consists of the two lead farmers, John and Jordan, and three farm aids, and 50 shareholders of the project divided equally. We are a small group of people who believe in giving respect and dignity to those animals that we consume. PRDF understands our unique position and hopes to make changes beyond the our project and into the future.

The CSA begins with raising our broiler (meat) chickens and rearing our piglets. Right before the chickens go to the processor we'll start growing our turkeys. All of our poultry live in moveable pens protected by a solar powered electric fence. Each pen has a large hut for the poultry to eat or roost in. Our hogs are raised in a rather large area with differing land types, trees, wallowing area, and pasture. All of our animals are fed a grain ration free of additives or antibiotics, and are supplemented with fresh produce from time to time. In addition to the above we will also purchase sheep and beef from the Martz Farm to be processed at a local facility. All of this is distributed equally to our shareholders, in excess or deficit.

PRDF will also host events to encourage members to become more active with their food source, and each other. We will have a kick-off event so that we understand the project. We'll also hold two events focused on learning. The first will be about animal agriculture, the biological and social aspects. At another event we'll have a professional chef teach us ways to cook our shares. We'll also give thanks to the Martz Farm by chipping in one day on a farm chore. In the end we'll wrap up the CSA with a potluck so that we talk about our experience. In addition to these events we encourage members to bring their families any Saturday or Sunday. Details are further posted.

Image 2 Contract side 2

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods 2012 Meat CSA

As a member your share

of the harvest can include: 2 chickens (avg 4 lbs. each)
1 turkey (avg 16 lbs.)
8 lbs. grass-fed lamb, various cuts
20 lbs. pork, various cuts
28 lbs. beef, various cuts

Cost of share: \$370

Timeline

Saturday April 7th –Kickoff event
Saturday May 19th—Martz Farm workday
Sunday July 8th—Learn about your food
Thursday July 12th—Chicken pickup
Saturday August 18th—Learn how to cook your food
Saturday October 20th—Pork and lamb pickup
Thursday November 8th—Turkey pickup
Saturday November 10th—Beef pickup
Saturday November 24th—What's next?

*****Please note—Due to limited storage capacity any share that is left at the end of the pickup will be distributed to other members. If you cannot attend one of the scheduled pickups please make arrangements with either John or Jordan. *****

In addition to the events listed on the timeline you also have the option to come out to the farm on any Saturday or Sunday. Please make arrangements with either Jordan or John, by emailing jordan.dawdy@mizzou.edu or calling 615-542-3405. We start feeding at 9, wear clothes you wouldn't mind getting dirty. It can take up to an hour to do the feeding and hut moving.

The Farm

The Martz farm consists of two parcels of land that were bought over a 34-year span. The first parcel of 90 acres was purchased in 1962 and the second parcel of 350 acres in 1996. The farm is located Northeast of Columbia and borders a waste repository, as well as industrial food manufacturers. The two parcels were originally a part of a much larger plantation that focused on corn and beef. The Martz farm today focuses on beef cattle, sheep, and land conservation. The beef cattle and sheep are rotated over paddocks that cover 340 acres. The farm also has a forested area that consists of native hardwood species (see image 3).

The CSA farmers neighbored the Martz family during the duration of the study. The couple had been walking their dogs on the Martz farm for two years previous to the project. They had also raised three pigs on the Martz farm in 2011 in an area adjacent to the pig paddock for 2012.

During 2012 PRDF CSA occupied two areas on the Martz farm. One area had been previously used for grazing sheep and was used as a pig paddock. The entire paddock was fenced with high tensile electric wire. The other area utilized by the CSA included a large Quonset hut for brooding poultry and approximately two acres of grassland for rotationally raising the poultry (see image 4).

Image 3 Martz farm in Columbia, Missouri

Image 4 Total area that The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA managed

The Farmers

The Martz family in Columbia begins in 1961 with Fred Martz completing a doctorate in Dairy Sciences from Purdue and beginning a professorship at the University of Missouri. At MU Fred taught in dairy sciences for over 21 years before conducting research and teaching in forage crops and rotational animal management. In 1962 Fred's parents moved from Indiana to Missouri and changed the family farm's focus on dairy cattle to beef cattle. Today, Fred's youngest son and family manage the farm.

Jordan and John have operated successful CSA projects in the past. Most notable was Short Mountain CSA in Liberty, Tennessee, where the couple ran a dairy focused farm for 25 families. The couple also continues to stay active in Alternative Food Networks including local non-profit organizations, local farms, and neighborhood gardens. In addition, Jordan has a BS in Animal Science and

MS in Rural Sociology and John has spent a considerable amount of time working on various farms.

The Animals

The animals utilized for the CSA project were based on a number of characteristics including adaptability to outdoor living, survivability under local environmental conditions, and a pleasing demeanor. The selection was based on the anticipation of a high level of interaction with members and farmers, the use of outdoor paddock areas, and the ability to avoid predation and damage from the elements.

All animals were fed according to the contract agreed upon. The poultry and pigs were fed an all-natural grain with no animal proteins and vegetable refuse from a local grocery store. The cows and sheep were grown by the Martz family using their own farming practices. All animals were processed at local facilities except for the turkeys, as they were all processed on-farm. Further descriptions of the animals used are below.

Image 5 Rainbow Dixies broiler chickens

The CSA received these broiler (meat) chickens when they were a day old through mail order. They took twelve weeks to reach a maturity weight of eight pounds. The flock varied in color and breed crossing, which increased their camouflage against predators and healthfulness. The flock was very

docile and easy to manage in the movable huts and electric fencing. These

reasons drove the decision to use this breed over the industry standard breed Cornish X, despite that it took 4 weeks longer to grow.

Images 6 and 7 Broad-Breasted turkey (Bronze and White)

The CSA received these turkey poults when they were a day old through mail order. They took twenty weeks to grow up to thirty-four pounds. Almost sixty turkeys were bronze colored and another sixty were white. The flock fared quite well in the movable huts and there were minimal early deaths. Although this breed is not associated as a heritage, or more sustainable breed, the decision to use this breed was based on the predictability of performance by the projected finishing date. The breed was also chosen for their usefulness in the processing workshop held on-farm.

Image 8 Berkshire swine

Image 9 Yorkshire swine

Image 10 Duroc swine

The CSA acquired five piglets at six weeks of age. The breeds present were Berkshire, Yorkshire, and Duroc. These three breeds are industry standards and

are normally crossed to make a pig that reaches two hundred and fifty pounds by six months. The CSA purchased the piglets from a local producer that sells at the farmers' market. The piglets were farrowed, or born, outside, which made them great at adapting to living in a large paddock. The paddock included a wallowing area, a feeding area, a 'waste' area, and a number of trees.

Image 11 Black Baldy beef

The beef cattle purchased by the CSA came off of the Martz farm. The farm uses a cross between Hereford and Angus cattle. This breed crossing is an industry standard. The cattle were raised in a rotational grazing system for sixteen months and then we made corn available for the next two months. The beef was not only readily available, but also the highest quality deemed by those participating in the CSA.

Image 12 Katahdin sheep

The sheep purchased by the CSA also came off of the Martz farm. The farm uses this breed because of their ability to shed their own fleece and their ability to live in hot and humid environments. The CSA purchased yearling sheep and they were entirely grass-fed.

All meat products were distributed according to the contract and all excess was sold at fair market value. There were a total of ten turkeys donated to various families and individuals at the discretion of Jordan and John.

The Members

The original goal was to attract fifty members. A total of thirty members were obtained. Two members were distanced and dropped out early in the CSA project. Another two members did not make appointments for interviewing or respond to the questionnaire.

The following are short profiles of twenty-six members of PRDF CSA. The profiles are constructed from interviews given before and after participation the project and from a self-administered questionnaire. The information includes demographics, thoughts on agriculture, motivation for involvement, and participation in food systems. Text that appears italicized are direct quotes from the member and text that appears in a lighter font are research questions.

ANDREW

Demographics

25 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married and has no children. From Northern Idaho.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *agriculture based on high intensity use of the land that is maintained by fossil fuel derivatives* and it makes me feel *frustrated*.

Alternative agriculture means *community gardens, CSAs, aquaculture, organic, hydroponics, rooftop gardens, farmers markets* and it makes me feel *good about*

my food choices and environmental impact. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is environmental impact and cost.

Motivation for Involvement

Passion for agriculture and a need to work in a more socially and ecologically sustainable way.

Participation in Food Systems

Volunteered in the CCUA community display garden.

BARBARA

Demographics

31 years old. Administrative role at the University of Missouri. Married with no children. From Galesburg, Illinois.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means people who hate commercial agriculture and want it to go away, and it makes me feel it has its flaws and can be improved but is a good system and will remain, despite people who want it to go away. Those people need to have a more pragmatic and balanced view. The answer does not lie in one extreme of the argument or the other, it lies somewhere in the middle.

Alternative agriculture means other means of production that are not “industrial” and it makes me feel glad that it exists. It’s a great option. It’s not the only option, but it’s a good alternative, and it’s always good to support local economies. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is how much it costs, if it’s going to make me gain weight or not, and if it tastes good.

Motivation for Involvement

I have never done this kind of thing before where we buy meat in bulk so I like having it in the fridge, and I like knowing where it was from, and I like going to the grocery store and not spending my money on meat, and I liked supporting, all I really liked it the second year because I thought you guys were going to get a little money. It's also nice to help someone's research project. It was a win-win.

Participation in Food Systems

So Brett is the garden leader of the community garden that's near our house, so I'm his special assistant. We grow food over there, just a few things like sweet potatoes and onions. We've worked together with everybody to do some group stuff like a WIC plot. We've talked about doing other kinds of plots where we would do more perennials like asparagus, strawberries, and herbs. In our backyard we have a hoop house and we grow in there. I just planted for the first time this year a potato bed. I'm thinking of growing some squash too. I also really enjoy cooking with things that I've preserved. In addition to shopping at the farmers market we also buy from Amish families up north, so I end up canning and pickling a lot. I also freeze a lot of fruit during the summer, I just finished up on that.

BRANDY

Demographics

38 years old. Professor at the University of Missouri. Married with two children. From Fairview, Illinois.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *Big. Big land, Big machines. Big responsibility*, and it makes me feel *like it's out of my control*. Alternative agriculture means *Pre-industrial* and it makes me feel *better about the purchases I make*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *how much it costs, if it's going to make me gain weight or not, and if it tastes good*.

Motivation for Involvement

I think that the CSA is a really good thing and I think that it is a healthy choice and we need more of that. That was my participation. I think I have this naive, utopian idea that it would help me connect the girls back to the farm and we just haven't had the time to do that.

Participation in Food Systems

I am not a food-centered person, ever. It's always out of convenience for me. Once in awhile I'll do the farmers' market, but I don't have a garden, I don't can, but I always want too, but I never seem to find the time for those kinds of things. The closest I get to food-centered things are wine festivals, wine tastings.

BRETT

Demographics

35 years old. Administrative position at the University of Missouri. Married with no children. From Eerie, Illinois.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *farming looks much like production of any commodity in a factory, except with much less labor* and it makes me feel

cheated. Alternative agriculture means considering people, profits and the planet equally in its practices and it makes me feel connected to my food sources and hopeful for the future. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is whether it's healthy and was it sourced in a way that honors food justice? Often I can't answer that concretely but think about it with virtually every food purchase.

Motivation for Involvement

I have never done this kind of thing before where we buy meat in bulk so I like having it in the fridge, and I like knowing where it was from, and I like going to the grocery store and not spending my money on meat, and I liked supporting, all I really liked it the second year because I thought you guys were going to get a little money. It's also nice to help someone's research project. It was a win-win.

Participation in Food Systems

So Brett is the garden leader of the community garden that's near our house, so I'm his special assistant. We grow food over there, just a few things like sweet potatoes and onions. We've worked together with everybody to do some group stuff like a WIC plot. We've talked about doing other kinds of plots where we would do more perennials like asparagus, strawberries, and herbs. In our backyard we have a hoop house and we grow in there. I just planted for the first time this year a potato bed. I'm thinking of growing some squash too. I also really enjoy cooking with things that I've preserved. In addition to shopping at the farmers market we also buy from Amish families up north, so I end up

canning and pickling a lot. I also freeze a lot of fruit during the summer, I just finished up on that.

CATHY

Demographics

24 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Married with no children. From Troy, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *I get to eat what I want but I don't always want what I eat* and it makes me feel *hopeless*. Alternative agriculture means *something different* and it makes me feel *less hopeless*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *the grocery bill*.

Motivation for Involvement

Hopefully I would like to not buy any meat next year, because for us meat is the biggest thing as far as expense. I can do my grocery shopping for \$25 a week if I don't have to buy meat. But my husband is a meat eater.

Participation in Food Systems

I do a lot cooking and canning. I don't grow anything because of where I live. I do go to the farmers market to get tomatoes.

GEOFF

Demographics

25 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married with no children. From Tallahassee, Florida.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *production for the commodity market* and it makes me feel *sick*. Alternative agriculture means *practices that produce food in ways that are not necessarily in line with standard “best” practices* and it makes me feel *cautiously optimistic*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *quality and sourcing*.

Motivation for Involvement

I was interested and I’m generally interested in being able to source good and large quantities of high quality meat that has implications of ecological management and socio-ecological system of it. I like to know that the farmers themselves are raising it in a humane manner, that they have an eye towards the quality of the product and they also have an eye towards the quality of the environment and they are also making enough that they can do alright. I hope you’re making enough to do all right. I saw the conditions, y’all are dotting your I’s and crossing your T’s. I remember, at least with the turkey, that it was a heritage breed and I typically seek those out, I enjoy those. It was delicious by the way. I just had that at a friends Easter event. It took awhile to cook. So I felt like I got all that out of it and I’m always interested in social science research, just because it’s a different viewpoint and to help a fellow grad student in his fight to getting it finished.

Participation in Food Systems

I garden not terribly well. I go to the farmers’ market. Just kind of weird things on the side that I’ve found from Craigslist, like I bought eggs, but sometimes it

gets kind of sketchy. I found goat milk off of Craigslist before in Florida. It was great sometimes and then a couple times it was horrible.

HALLIE

Demographics

36 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married with one child. From primarily the West Coast.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means feeding animals food they shouldn't eat just so we can meet the demands of the American people and it makes me feel sad, hopeless and fat. Alternative agriculture means trying to find a better way and perhaps fixing our broken food cycle and it makes me feel hopeful. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food are there vegetables, is this good for me and the earth and how to get my daughter to eat it.

Motivation for Involvement

Oh the people in it were awesome. As someone who has worked in animal science I have seen how animals are treated. As a meat eater I feel bad most of the time when I buy from the grocery store. So I think that there is a better way, so I do buy at farmers markets. Having the opportunity to do the meat CSA was a no-brainer. Good meat, fresh, local, and also I could teach Lucy where her food comes from. I think vegetables are a real pretty way to teach agriculture but animals are not.

Participation in Food Systems

We go to the farmers market every Saturday. Every Monday my daughter cooks dinner. She has to come up with a meal from start to finish and my partner and I help her but she has to do everything. I also cook a lot from scratch. On Sundays we'll usually have biscuits and gravy. We grow food and we have chickens.

HEATHER

Demographics

46 years old. Professor at the University of Missouri. Married with three children. From Dyersburg, Iowa.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means large farms with use of a lot of chemicals or bio invasive processes in production. Also means more monocrop or monoanimal production and it makes me feel depressed... family farms are going away. A way of life is slowly eroding and so are the communities in farming areas.

Alternative agriculture means producing on smaller scale with fewer chemical or bio invasive practices and it makes me feel optimistic about food consumption and local economies. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is that it taste good and is it healthy.

Motivation for Involvement

Good food. That's the main thing and, um, the learning experience for my kids. I grew up on farms and around farm people, so I feel like I have a sense of where your food is coming from and I'm not sure they have the same sense. So part of

this is to have an idea that, OK, your chicken came from here, to know it, to see it is different. I grew up helping butcher chickens and that's very different from my kids.

Participation in Food Systems

Nope. I don't. I did some canning about 5 years ago. I got busy and stopped. I stopped going to the farmers market.

HELEN

Demographics

32 years old. Stay at home parent. Not married with one child. From San Diego, California.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *using big machines* and it makes me feel *sorry for the smaller family farmers*. Alternative agriculture means *family farmers* and it makes me feel *happy*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *if it is healthy or not (heavy vs light)*.

Motivation for Involvement

My friend told me about it and I've always been interested in finding out where my food comes from. I really want bacon. Like food? Um, I mean I really like grilling. I would love to get meat to grill. I would love to get some meat that will last us through the winter.

Participation in Food Systems

I just got chickens. I'm learning a lot about them. I got them for my son so we'd have something to do together. I have a garden every year. I'm pretty successful

at it. I cook all the time, go to the farmers market, and I'm a member of another CSA.

KALEY

Demographics

29 years old. Administrative role at a non-profit organization. Married with no children. From Lexington, Illinois.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means progress for agricultural production, but not always in the best interest of society and environmental sustainability and it makes me feel sad. Alternative agriculture means progress in a variety agricultural practices and it makes me feel better about what I eat and how I am stewarding our resources for the future. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is price, where it came from, and how much sugar and salt it has in it.

Motivation for Involvement

Our friendship. My interest in local food. I had never been a part of a CSA before and it was something that I wanted to experience. It was a really good deal.

Participation in Food Systems

Yeah. I go to the farmers market. I'd like to learn how to can. I've had gardens in the past.

MARK

Demographics

33 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Married with one child. From Holts Summit, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *corporate farming* and it makes me feel *like it is a step backwards for organic agriculture*. Alternative agriculture means *growing soil, not food* and it makes me feel *like there is hope in the future*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *herbicides, pesticides, and GMO*.

Motivation for Involvement

Well I've been wanting to take my son out there to visit but we haven't found the time yet. I want good food. I want food that we have a personal connection with. I think most of the food we have access to is really removed from us.

Participation in Food Systems

I love to cook. I love to cook in front of my son. We can foods when we can. I participate with the CCUA. We grow a container garden for our son. I volunteer at another vegetable CSA.

MITCHELL

Demographics

26 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Married with no children. From Castro Valley, California.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *designing agricultural systems to function like factories to maximize efficiency and profitability by externalizing human and environmental costs* and it makes me feel *torn, I don't know how to feed the hungry folks in my city (let alone the world) but I think that agroecology and sustainable agriculture is the only way to realistically achieve food sovereignty.* Alternative agriculture means *using different knowledge systems to agricultural decisions* and it makes me feel *like I have a lot to learn about becoming a better steward of the land and societies.* In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *it healthy but still satisfying.*

Motivation for Involvement

I hope to learn more about what it's like to work with people while they become connected to their food. I want to learn more about producing meat. In the future if I have land I'd like to be able to practice some of the same strategies. I'd like to see how decisions are made in agriculture.

Participation in Food Systems

I grow a fair amount of food in my neighborhood. I manage a couple different community gardens. I try my best. I've reprioritized my life so that food and food production is my life. Kloppenburg's work on the foodshed is exactly where I'm at, that's my work. I could see my self doing that work for the rest of my life and I think there is enough work to be done. I work in a preschool on campus and my job is the Child Learning Garden program. I think we all need to look harder and more critically at food because it does touch us all. It goes across all kinds of disciplines. I also love cooking and have contemplated many times in my life just becoming a chef.

MOLLY

Demographics

33 years old. Stay at home parent. Married with one child. From Montgomery City, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *large scale farming, monoculture* and it makes me feel *sick* – agriculture is better handled in the hands of small farms – it should not be industrialized at all. Alternative agriculture means *small farms and farmers* and it makes me feel *happy* and I want to be a part of it, whether it is supporting those farmers by buying their food or by helping out on their farms and educating my child on their methods and the need for this type of farming. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *quantity and quality*.

Motivation for Involvement

Meat. That and just I like being involved in something that is local, I know where the meat is coming from, so I'm not scared to give it to my child and put it in my own body. Additionally I like that fact that we had the potluck in the beginning and I know we missed a few things already but I want to go to those things later on in the CSA. I think that if there's enough of us who are thinking about CSA that maybe we can make a real positive change in the market.

Participation in Food Systems

I eat. We do all kinds of food things, farmers markets, canning, everything. We used to work at a vegetable CSA for a share too.

NATHAN

Demographics

30 years old. Administrative role at a non-profit organization. Not married with no children. From Central and Northern Iowa.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *(a frowning face emoticon)* and it makes me feel *hopeless*. Alternative agriculture means *taking a small step to put the planet before profits* and it makes me feel *happy*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food *is it healthy but still satisfying*.

Motivation for Involvement

Quality food. We used to get meat bundles from different sources. So we're looking for a different way to get more of a high grade, local meat bundle without having to go through a butcher.

Participation in Food Systems

Well we do a lot of canning. We make a lot of tomato juice. We even make our own pasta. We do salsas. We've experimented with some condiments. We went on the USDA's website and got recipes for sauces. I even made some jerky from the meat we got from the CSA. I try to garden every year. This year I put in a raised potato bed. Many gardens actually. I started about four hundred onions and twenty pounds of seed potatoes in the ground. We have twenty pepper plants going. It's a lot I know, but we try to grow a lot of our own food during the summer for the winter.

REBECCA

Demographics

32 years old. Administrative role at a non-profit organization. Married with no children. From Butler, Pennsylvania.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *all about profits for agribusiness* and it makes me feel *like a traitor to my values*. Alternative agriculture means *trying to treat people and the land right* and it makes me feel *connected to people and land*.

In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *nutrition and sustainability*.

Motivation for Involvement

Good food and to feel good about where my food is coming from. So we were both vegetarians but it wasn't because we were against killing animals, we were just against how the production was done. So I like to know where my meat comes from.

Participation in Food Systems

I have a garden here and I have a plot in a community garden. I'm on the board of the Community Garden Coalition. I'm a member of the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture. I do a lot of volunteer work. I go to the farmers' market. I cook a lot.

RICHARD

Demographics

32 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Married with no children. From Sterling, New York.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *concentrated food production* and it makes me feel *mixed*. Alternative agriculture means *organic and small-scale farms* and it makes me feel *mixed*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *environmental sustainability*.

Motivation for Involvement

I just really want to know where my meat comes from.

Participation in Food Systems

Well I like to hunt deer in the fall, so I kill deer. I process them myself. My wife and I eat organic most of the time. We go to the farmers market almost every Saturday. My wife is a gardener and I'll help her sometimes. My wife works in organic certification so by default we often talk about her work.

ROBERT

Demographics

58 years old. Professor at the University of Missouri. Married with three children. From Delmar, New York.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *factory farming* and it makes me feel *nauseous*.

Alternative agriculture means *non-factory farming* and it makes me feel *happy*

that it is happening. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is health aspects first, sourcing second.

Motivation for Involvement

Mostly I hope to get meat. Meat that's grown by you guys, raised by you guys. I am thrilled to be able to get good quality food and to spend my money, give my money directly to the people who grow it...I think it's complicated but I think the main thing was you. I need to get my meat from some place and two years ago I got it from you and given the opportunity to do it this year seemed good. The fact it was a good experience the year before. It was within my means of how I want to acquire how I want meat raised. You and last years experience were the main things. I also want to get my meat from somebody rather than just someplace.

Participation in Food Systems

So I grow some of our own vegetables, used to have sheep and chickens. We go to the farmers market sometimes but I get most of the vegetables I need out of our garden. We have canned foods before.

RUTH

Demographics

27 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married with no children. From Waterloo, Iowa.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *scary* and it makes me feel *dirty*. Alternative agriculture means *local and small scale* and it makes me feel *(blank)*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *the chemicals*.

Motivation for Involvement

Meat. And I didn't realize the social aspect but I think it's going to be neat. It seemed like it was going to be a good deal for good quality meat. I always like to support local things. And really we weren't eating much meat before, so it was nice to have the freezer stocked with organic stuff. It just seemed like a good move economically and something to do.

Participation in Food Systems

We love going to the farmers market on Saturday, it's our Saturday morning thing. Oh yeah, we cook all the time. My partner really enjoys it, so its fun to be in the kitchen, but he leads it. Like he's gone this week and I've eaten out twice and it's only Wednesday. But before that we hadn't been out to eat unless we were traveling. But we also can vegetables and salsa.

SAL

Demographics

35 years old. Professor at the University of Missouri. Married with three children.
From Alden, Iowa.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *CAFOs* and it makes me feel *sad*. Alternative agriculture means *better quality* and it makes me feel *good – I like the product*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *health-value*.

Motivation for Involvement

Food that was ethically and well raised in ways that we think is important, at a good cost. We're willing to pay for that cost. Well it was nice to get the kids involved in it but it was a good quality of meat at the price.

Participation in Food Systems

One of our biggest projects last year was raising some pigs and chickens.

SAMANTHA

Demographics

32 years old. Graduate school at the University of Missouri. Not married with no children. From Gales Ferry, Connecticut.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *factory processed food items* and it makes me feel *angry, confused, repulsed*. Alternative agriculture means *change is possible* and it makes me feel *hopeful that we can change one person at a time*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *how my body will metabolize it given my health problems*.

Motivation for Involvement

Skills so that one day when I have a house with more than a patch of grass I can grow things. Really just learning where my food comes from and appreciating

it more. I've noticed there's some sense of connectedness and serenity around knowing where my meat comes from. That last batch of chickens was amazing. I know what kind of life that chicken had, where it came from, and I can almost taste the difference. It was so much better. Reconnecting to where my food comes from really comes out of me appreciating the Natives and their ways, the interconnectedness philosophy is very much like the CSA, seeing it all the way through. It's a cool process that you can be a part of, instead of it being so convenient.

Participation in Food Systems

Talia had asked if I wanted to do it with her. Obviously, knowing you. Not ever being able to experience anything like that was really interesting to me. I really didn't know anything about farming and especially animal farming. Just what I've seen in newspapers and propaganda from the environmental organizations and what they say happens. It was a good learning experience...I love to go to the farmers market in the summer. I live in an apartment complex with no grass. When I'm in a place where I can have more land and money I want to start growing some vegetables.

SCOTT

Demographics

27 years old. Administrative role at a non-profit organization. Not married with no children. From Springfield, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *large scale mechanized, grain for meat production* and it makes me feel *concerned about peak oil*. Alternative agriculture means *non-industrial ag* and it makes me feel *excited about opportunities*. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *my sweet tooth*.

Motivation for Involvement

I'm really excited to see how the pigs will be raised this year and having all that space for pastured poultry will be nice. Just access to meat at a good price. Hopefully meet some people I have not met before... I like food. I like to eat meat and I like to know where my meat comes from. It's an interesting model. I've enjoyed exploring and learning about CSA.

Participation in Food Systems

I do a lot of things with food. I buy in bulk from the Amish. I grow a lot of my own. I'm growing an acre of potatoes with my girlfriend's uncle. I've done hog butchering.

STEVEN

Demographics

28 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married with no children. From Fenton, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *most likely good and bad* and it makes me feel *worried for national health and the ethical treatment of animals*. Alternative agriculture means *community and more control for consumers* and it makes me

feel much better, but still not great. I do appreciate being part of the process though and having the choice to consume or not to consume industrial meat. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is “what the heck is in this?”.

Motivation for Involvement

I’m really excited by the fact that I’m supporting something local. I’ve met some new people and it’s exciting to see a group of people involved in supporting something local. It’s nice to see people take an interest in their food and where it comes from and how it’s raised, what it looks like coming up. And the fact that we know that things are being handled humanely and the animals are well taken care of. It’s probably going to be super, super tasty.

Participation in Food Systems

Some of my favorite things to do is to read about and watch films about it. I started growing some vegetables. I canned a bunch of salsa. I have an apple tree so I can a lot of sauce. Next year I’m putting in way more stuff, garlic, corn, tomatoes. I like to cook. We’re frantic right now because we’re having a baby. Our cooking is crazy right now.

SUSIE

Demographics

31 years old. Instructor at the University of Missouri. Married with one child.
From Aurora, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *processing food/food components, as well as plants that will be used to make fuel or plastics* and it makes me feel *sad and wish I had more time or resources (i.e. money) to grow my own/purchase food from local producers*. Alternative agriculture means *not purchasing food from the present food system* and it makes me feel *good and wish I could participate in more*.

In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is *wholesomeness and healthfulness*.

Motivation for Involvement

Beside the wonderful meat there's letting my daughter know where her meat comes from. We talk about that when we're at the dinner table and hamburger meat. She is getting confused on the bacon because I made turkey bacon. Then there's the fact that she knows she's a part of this circle of life. Animals eat vegetables, we eat the animals sometimes. Connection.

Participation in Food Systems

Well we attempt home gardening. This year we are going to do some straw bale gardening. We do help tend a friend's garden.

SYLVIA

Demographics

33 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Married with a stepson. From Coral Springs, Florida.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means *the use of harmful chemicals and practices that enlarge the scale of production so big that it causes extremely negative consequences like CAFOs and it makes me feel icky and gross and sad and helpless. Alternative agriculture means doing something different and it makes me feel like there is something I can do on a very small scale. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is the cost, the convenience and if it tastes good. Then I worry about where it came from. That used to be first, but that has taken away much of the joy I found in eating, so now I try hard not to think about it But, meat will always be something that I worry about so I try to at least buy all organic and local when I can.*

Motivation for Involvement

Good food that I know where it came from. That it's not full of shit. When I went with you to the slaughterhouse and I got to meet the man who did it for me and that I could say I don't want any nitrates in my food is great. That is the reason why I'm in the CSA, so that I have some agency and control over the structure of my food right now and that food is some peace to my anxiety riddled mind. Even though I eat the crappy food that I do it's almost a response to the influx of information that I have. I study food and I know more about the production and consumption of food so it should terrify me to not eat this shit but I do.

Participation in Food Systems

I guess, well you asked me if I wanted to be a farmer and I didn't even consider no as an answer and the you sweetened the deal with free food. So I was thinking that it would be, and is, the main source of my protein. So primarily a

source of food. Secondly, as a social activity that in the beginning I was very excited about. So I tend to have a lot of passion in the beginning of things and it wanes over time. My husband is also a mitigating factor there. It's not his project. This was my thing. That's how he'd say it.

TALIA

Demographics

28 years old. Graduate student at the University of Missouri. Not married with no children. From Concordia, Missouri.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means agricultural products being produced on a large scale with heavy dependence on modern technologies (not sustainable or organic) and it makes me feel conflicted, as someone who was raised on an industrial-based farm but who is also educated and believes in sustainability. I feel as if both sides of the coin need to learn how they can work together rather than viewing each other as the enemy and drawing a line in the sand. I think a balance of the two practices is necessary to maintain and restore environmental health while still keeping up with market demand. Alternative agriculture means the quantity needed and decreasing land suitable for agricultural use and it makes me feel conflicted for the same reasons that industrial agriculture does. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is safety (I have had dysentery before) and nutrient/sodium content of the foods.

Motivation for Involvement

To me it's about spreading the word a little bit. I'm apart of it so I'm able to tell people about it. When I was at the Graduate Faculty Retreat I told a few people about it. So it makes a great conversation point to let people know it's out there. It's also inline with what I feel is morally and ethically right. Also, just having meat I can feel good about eating. There's no question in my mind that this meat is produced with how I feel meat should be produced. I can go out and see the animals which is how I grew up and that's how I want to eat meat.

Participation in Food Systems

I grow herbs. I would like to have a garden, but moving and timing just doesn't work.

WENDY

Demographics

40 years old. Administrative role at the University of Missouri. Married with one child. From Dyersville, Iowa.

Thoughts on Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means factory farms – large pieces of land (crop farming), big feed lots (animal farming) big machines, little care for the environment, minimum wage labor, profits sent elsewhere and it makes me feel mistrusting. Alternative agriculture means practicing farming techniques that are different than what is commonly accepted. They could be old methods being reconsidered or newer methods being tried out and it makes me feel hopeful. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is chemicals in the

food. I'm worried that what I make isn't even good for me at its core and is actually hurting my body in the long run although it is filling me now.

Motivation for Involvement

Quality meat. I like the idea that I'm connecting it to something I did as a child, meat from a farm, brought straight to you from a farm. Last summer we did the Root Cellar's Bounty Box. I was living with my sister when I first moved to town and she was doing a CSA but it was about vegetables, so I went out there a couple of times.

Participation in Food Systems

No, not really. For holidays we give away food. We go to Peachtree Farms to get peaches once a year.

Summarizing the Case, PRDF

The above profiles are meant to give a sense of the members that made up PRDF CSA. The transcripts from their interviews provided much more insight to modern reflexive theory and participation in Community Supported Agriculture. In the following chapters their responses are used to examine two theoretical terms, reflexive eating and reflexive farming.

Chapter 5

Reflexive Eating

Introduction

To describe the act of eating by using the adjective “reflexive” connotes that an individual is displaying a conscious awareness of their food and are actively attempting to take control of it. Reflexive eating involves having an understanding of food, which includes its production and motivations behind consumption, matching this with ones’ identity and previous knowledge, and reacting in some manner (see figure 3 below). Food, and more importantly eating, is no longer a part of just sustaining the body and has become a platform for addressing much larger issues, even on a global scale (DuPuis, 2002; Giddens, 1994). Reflexive eating begins as a very personal negotiation of what an individual will or will not allow in their body (DuPuis, 2000) and moves into an active, political role (Lockie, 2009). It allows individuals to express their values and ethics (Kerton and Sinclair, 2010) and live consciously within their food system (Guthman, 2003). The process suggests that food consumers are thinking critically about the social and ecological problems associated with their food (Johnston and Szabo, 2011) and acting upon these issues in a highly personal, or individualized manner (DeLind, 1999) with much more effort than our current industrialized system calls for (Ravenscroft et. al, 2013).

Within the context of the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA, reflexive eating occurrences could be discerned through transcripts of the interviews with members. The chief findings below are divided in the major

components of reflexivity presented earlier, which are understanding, identity, and action. The following passages contain summations, analyses, and a synthesis of the data. Two narratives of members are also provided to highlight modes of reflexive eating in the CSA.

Figure 4 Model of reflexive eating

Understanding

Reflexivity itself is an inner dialogue consisting of one's decision-making process developed through social interaction (Dewey, 1896; Mead, 1934). To begin reflexive eating requires some understanding of the situation or event that is occurring or about to occur. For any given scenario, an individual's response encompasses what they know about it, what motivates them to take part, and what they expect to happen (Finlay, 2002). By interrogating ones' understanding of the situation allows for further examination of oneself and the ability to react to similar situations (Holland, 1999).

In this operationalized definition of reflexivity, understanding pertains specifically to the experience that is happening or that is anticipated to happen. Understanding shares similar variables with the following stage, identity, as it is not static and changes over time with new information. This section includes what participants can recall, as it alludes to what was most vital and important for those involved.

To gain some perspective on participants understanding of the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA, questions were asked that included what factual information was retained, knowledge of agriculture, their food concerns, and what were their motivations for participation and expectations from the project. The following are the results from that line of questioning.

When asked about the name of the CSA project, the majority of members could not remember the name, although one member remarked, "*Uh, something with food and power and a fist.*" Most were aware of the amount of the other people participating in the CSA and how many farmers were producing food, including "*technically we were all farmers.*" Only two members of the twenty-six accurately recalled the price of the share and none could specify how much money the farmers were compensated. The majority of members also conveyed being unclear about the feeding practices of the animals. Despite these discrepancies, the members of the CSA expressed some form of connection to the animals, understood how the animals were cared for, and were very clear about knowing the farmers on a personal level. Most members also stated feeling trust in the farmers and linked positive experiences on-farm with the CSA.

Participants in the CSA research expressed well-developed conceptions of industrialized agriculture. Members articulated the meaning of industrialized agriculture as a concentration of factory farms, has an exploitative nature, consists of multinational companies, lacks equitable access for everyone, and has major distributive problems. According to the respondents, workers in industrialized agriculture are critical to feeding the world, are divided between older, rich white men and poorer Hispanic workers, are thought of as patriots, the foundation of the US economy, and are pawns. Members spoke of the animals in this system being treated as products, property, or food. They also reported that the drivers, or motivations, behind industrial agriculture are profits, subsidies and the economy, necessity, and consumer demand. Members also revealed that the current food system makes them feel out of control, ashamed and conflicted, mistrusting, and sad, hopeless, and fat.

CSA participants also communicated a well-developed conception of alternative food networks. They defined these networks as organics, farmers' markets, community orientated, Community Supported Agriculture, people before profits, fixing our broken food system, and more control for consumers. Members added that industrial agriculture is unknowable, unsustainable, and less healthy for the planet and people. One member contributed this, *"people feel they have a right to better food."* As for the people involved in alternative food networks, members thought that they are worthy, important to facilitate change, political, innovators, dreamers, and hippies. Participants indicated that the animals involved are thought of as co-producers, living beings, deserving of care, comfort, and respect. Participants also voiced that these food systems make them

feel like there is something they can actually do, hopeful, and better about personal food choices.

Many of those that participated in the CSA conveyed some interest in their health and saw participation as a healthy practice, even labeling it “*health insurance*”. Participants also articulated the link between their food purchases and the environment, expressing some desire to minimize their own impacts. Commonly discussed was the concept of informed decision making, as it relates to encouraging a healthy economy and a healthy society. The majority of members voiced an anti-corporate sentiment concerning their food supply, stating, “*they are not looking out for best interests. They do whatever they can to undercut the FDA or USDA and if you are trying to do that, then guess what, you don’t have my interests*”. Many members stated that the current poor state of our food system was linked to the profits and power of corporate agriculture, both contributing to undermining our governmental agencies and regulatory process. One member furthered the sentiment by saying, “*I feel like if you spend your money on companies that harm animals and torture them then you should be implicated in how destructive those processes are.*” For some members CSA participation became a way to actively engage in their food supply, “*I guess if the producer has my best interest in mind and his or her own best interests in mind, there should be a lot of overlap between the two, that they are going to make the right decisions. So it’s a matter of picking the right producer.*” Others viewed participation as a way to link their economic practices to their morals and values by promoting farming heritage and small family farms.

Members of the CSA spoke of the desire to learn more about their food source, especially concerning meat. Participants voiced a need to know the farmers involved and how they treated the animals prior to slaughter as a means to ease feelings, one stating, *“As a meat eater I feel bad most of the time when I buy from the grocery store.”* Many of the members made known that a primary motivation behind participating in the CSA was to provide an agricultural learning experience for their children. Another chief motivating factor for participating in the CSA identified by the members were the farmers, specifically Jordan and John. Self-reliance and the need to take control of one’s food source were also repeated as main reasons behind participating. Members of the CSA believed that the motivations of the farmers, Jordan and John, to run the project include a passion for socially and ecologically sustainable agriculture, that they are discontented with the current food system, desire some connection to be with animals and people, encourage activism within the food system, that they possess knowledge about the industrial system and practical experience with animal husbandry, and lastly, a desire to help the community through CSA awareness and disseminating agricultural knowledge. The CSA members also expressed expectations that included getting “good food”, involvement with good people, and a sense of peace and agency over their temporary meat source. Unanimously the group conveyed that the CSA project exceeded their expectations.

Despite the group answering incorrectly to some of the factual information concerning PRDF CSA, many left the project with a deeper connection to their meat source than ever before via some understanding of the CSA experience. This

deeper connection aided in trust building with the farmers and led to more positive, healthy outcomes for the members. The connection reaffirmed the main reason why many members chose to join the project, to be able to make informed decisions surrounding their food. Believed by many in the CSA, our industrial food system is currently in a terrible state caused by corporate greed and the need for power over our regulatory agencies and processes. PRDF CSA existed as an opportunity for members to counteract this greed and regain power over their food source. It also gave space for members to evaluate critically their food decisions and declare what they would and would not allow into their bodies. The CSA experience allowed members to make a personal connection with their farmers and food, participate in active engagement, learn some of the practicalities of meat production, and diffuse thoughts of unease by knowing exactly how the animals were cared for.

Most important to the participants in PRDF CSA were aspects of the farm that were personally experienced and least important was the factual information, such as the name of the CSA, cost of share, economic workings, and how much food was grown and distributed. Members based their understanding of the CSA on farm visits, participating in a farm activity, or speaking to those involved with the project. As compared to the industrialized system, alternative agriculture was viewed as a hopeful and beneficial venture for those in PRDF CSA. Those that participated saw the opportunity to gain knowledge of meat production that appeared to be healthy and sustainable, opposite what they believed the industrialized system to be. The CSA was a method to identify with

worthwhile food production, contribute directly to a producer, and feel better about food decisions for many of those involved.

Identity

Reflexivity requires maintaining some understanding of the situation at-hand while taking a deeper look at one's identity. To examine identity in the context of reflexive eating, research engages in the process of acknowledging, assessing, and reassessing ones' position (Salzman, 2002), while recognizing greater social structures (Bourdieu, 2003). Reflexive eating requires an individual to accept that their personal identity shapes their experiences (Lawless, 2001; Behar, 1996), but also adds validity and credibility to them (Pillow, 2003).

The participants in PRDF CSA answered questions related to their own identity. These questions include a self-description and demographical information. Questions covering participants ideas about community, affect, trust in greater social structures, world-views, equality, agriculture, biotechnology, food identity, and environment were also covered in this section.

When members were asked to give five words to describe themselves, patient, empathetic, compassionate, smart, and hardworking were the most common adjectives given. To describe those that the members consider closest in their lives the most common adjectives were smart, funny, caring, passionate, and compassionate. Members spoke of wanting to make an impact on the current food system and a desire to "*want to be a better person.*" Members also spoke

about being a global citizen and caring about their impact on others, with one member remarking, *“I try to make the world a better place through my actions.”* Participants in the CSA research included a slight majority of women (15) to men (11), with an average age of 32. The group overwhelmingly self-identified as white, the majority were raised in the Midwest and married. The group was evenly divided with those with children and those without. The group also reported not being religious and identify with the Democratic Party. Lastly, the majority of participants hold advanced degrees, with many involved in the University of Missouri system.

Responses to the concept of community ranged from a geographic region to not a physical location at all. Members spoke of shared commonalities, shared values, a shared vision and life. Members also reported that some family members, co-workers, and friends were participating in alternative food networks.

CSA participants described a feeling of thankfulness, responsibility, healthfulness, informed trust, and the antithesis of anxiety concerning their experiences with the project, with one member conveying, *“I don’t know what the opposite emotion to anxiety is being a grad student. So yeah I think it was a positive experience for all those involved in it, even the animals that I was eating. I don’t feel like they had a bad life going into it. A certain level of, kind of, contentedness is a little too much maybe.”*

Members described a general distrust of the greater social structures, like our government system, United States Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Drug Administration, stating that they are all driven by special interests.

Although some members stated that they, “*trust the everyday people who are doing their jobs because I don’t think they are any different from me.*”, but that their trust on higher levels is misplaced. Most spoke of the government being separate from everyday people and that the complete truth of how our governing system actually operates is obscured and that secret agendas are present.

Members directly stated that they felt little to no power within the current system and that our current food agencies did not have our best interests at heart. Some members went further by stating that these agencies have done an outstanding job of producing large abundances of food that damages everyone and everything involved, leaving this sentiment, “*We have a broken system.*”

Respondents articulated that at humanity’s worst we are simultaneously fighting over basic needs, overshooting our carrying capacity of Earth, and giving up our core values. Concerning our food system, the worst is seen when there are large profits for a few corporations, food that no longer resembles its original form, lack of equality, and a lack of information for consumers. Members felt implicated in the current food system by participating, but also stated that they were unknowingly contributing and felt more like victims rather than criminals.

At our best, members stated that we could be sustainable and honorable, not individualistic, and fully participating in community activities. Members spoke of connecting to other people, exposing themselves to other cultures, and participating in local economies, such as Farmers’ Markets and Community Supported Agriculture. A few members could not picture what humanity would be at its best and stated that we are unredeemable.

Members of the CSA communicated that equality means acceptance and empathy. However, many members revealed that they did not believe that equality exists or is possible, expressing multiple times, *“having a long way to go.”* Many members reported that they try to put themselves in others shoes in an attempt to understand motivations and circumstances behind their actions. Members also voiced an attempt to understand their own privilege and a desire to be an advocate and ally for positive change.

When asked about how they ate growing up, member responses ranged across cheap and easy, poor, home cooked, whole farm, processed food, and big dinners with extended family members. Members spoke of the need to have healthful, satisfying, knowable, and high quality food. Some added that they are gardeners, food advocates, preserve food through canning and freezing, purchase meat directly on-farm, and have processed large animals. A few members also added that they are not food centered at all, or that they just like to consume media concerning food. The majority of respondents reported cooking from scratch and using mainly vegetables. Of those that cook, the members added that their cooking skills are good to moderate and continue to grow. Members conveyed that their favorite foods are fresh vegetables, meat, pasta, and raw. Members also voiced that their favorite things about food are the taste, preparing it, human and social aspects, and sharing it.

The environmental views shared by the members of the CSA expressed a great need of general care for the future and for people. Members thought that our current populations effects on the environment was overall negative, exhausting, and devastating. They added that those chiefly to blame are

Americans, or *“the wealthiest and most economically “successful”*.” Respondents stated that biotechnology is manipulating living organisms (people too), controlled by special interests and power, and scary. One member voiced that the way biotechnology is used is, *“tricking brown people into thinking that we can save their agriculture.”* Members also added that biotechnology is a double-edged sword, that there is just not enough research done, is unknown, and terrifying. However, if used positively biotechnology could be, *“important to adaptation to climate change and future food production.”*

As a cohort, The People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA was fairly homogenous consisting of highly educated, politically liberal, non-religious, white individuals from the Midwest who were affiliated with the University of Missouri. Through their own self-descriptions they appear to be well intentioned, empathetic, compassionate individuals consciously aware of their actions in a global setting. At our worst, the group feared drastic environmental damage would lead us to abandoning our core values, however, at our best we could strive for sustainability and participate more in community activities. PRDF CSA appeared to be highly aware of social inequalities, especially within the agricultural sector. As a group they also recognized their own individualized privilege and cited empathy as a possible means to address it.

Food backgrounds across PRDF CSA ranged from farm family suppers made by scratch to suburban, latchkey, microwaveable dinners. Despite where they might have come from, the group spoke of the desire for high quality, local, knowable, and healthful food. Many of those that participated remain active with

their food, partaking in canning, preserving, hunting, growing, and processing. Overall the cohort centered on the social aspects surrounding food, the preparation and sharing of it.

The group distinctly conveyed little to no trust in our social structures, such as our governing system and regulatory agencies, describing a feeling of estrangement from them. The most common and salient message from the cohort was that the complete truth of our industrialized food system remains obscured, especially coming from the agencies meant to protect citizens. For the group, industrial agriculture is not a positive enterprise and many ill connotations are associated with it. They articulated well-crafted ideas about biotechnology and its use in spreading industrialized methods across the globe, expressing a sense of shame and disgust with the application.

Action

To actualize reflexivity, the combination of understanding a situation with ones' identity must lead to some kind of action. In reflexive eating this happens as food decisions are made after an individual has evaluated their understanding in the context of their identity. The action phase is concerned with the actuality of what happened and how it is played out across society (Archer, 2010, 2012). Action is vital to building and performing identity (Beck, Giddens, and Lash, 1994) as individuals attempt to answer the who, what, where, when, and why questions of late modernity (Giddens, 1990, 1991) while interacting with others. By using this line of questioning individuals form their identity with others (Mead, 1934) and begins the reflexive process again with the first phase, understanding.

Participants of PRDF CSA responded to questions directly related to their activities related to food and possible future pursuits. The following section is focused on activism, lasting impressions of the project, participation in the CSA and food systems, and changes in food.

CSA respondents consider themselves actively taking part in food systems, expressing some concern for ethical involvement. Members spoke of the need to make a positive contribution to society, with one member adding, *“It’s also a social thing. It’s what my group of people does. It’s what we talk about. It’s what makes us feel like we are contributing to society. I can’t save the world all on my own but I can do little things here and there.”* Another member contributed this sentiment about consumer activism, *“in America what you spend your money on says a huge amount of who you are as a person. We’re in a disgustingly money orientated society. So if we speak with our wallet then it’s a good way. Maybe real low level activism though. You could do a lot more.”* Many members reported that their degree of activism came down to personal choice and the availability to participate in CSA. Members also spoke about being positively affected by their experiences in the CSA, which led them to participate more at farmers’ markets, home gardening, and other CSA projects. Members indicated that their participation in the CSA was a method to band together and make larger changes in the food system, stating a bottom-up approach. They spoke of the CSA aligning well with their agrarian goals and saw it as a part of a diversified solution to the current ills plaguing the industrial system. Members also revealed that they were driven to participate because of the structural challenges present, a

desire to evenly distribute power and authority over food, and a need to make others care about our food.

CSA participants conveyed that their most lasting impressions of the project were experiential. They spoke of farm visits, workdays, turkey processing, and family meals. Members revealed that wanted to do this CSA project again and will look for other similar projects, one member went further by stating, *“If I ever meet someone with your type of background I’ll encourage them to do this kind of thing. I think there’s a lot of risk but I would encourage them to do it.”* Members expressed that they were left with good feelings about the project and believed it to be worth the effort. Members added they were grateful for the opportunity to learn more about food and to become more active with their meat source. Members also voiced that their connection with the farmers and animals helped deepen their understanding of CSA and brought them closer to their meat source than through conventional methods.

The majority of participants expressed enjoyment in the CSA project and wanted to do it again. Half of the participants had done something like this before. Many members conveyed that they wanted to participate more and regretted missing events. A few members suggested that in future projects there should be more mandatory days of participation, citing their trust in the farmers led to less actual participation. Members also revealed a sense of sadness surrounding the missed events and not getting the opportunity to meet everyone involved in the project. Of those that did participate in the CSA events, both scheduled and not scheduled, all were very pleased with the experience.

Some members of the CSA expressed a marked change from participating in the project and voiced how they felt participation will influence future food decisions. Members spoke of only buying meat at the farmers' market or only through farmers they know personally, with one member adding, *"I'm a vegetarian if I cannot find meat that was produced similar to the CSA."* Other members mentioned hunting and raising animals for slaughter as a means to get meat. Respondents reported having an increase in motivation to participate more in food systems and that they would prioritize CSA more in the future. Many expressed a desire to continue to get meat in this manner. For some members their participation in the CSA led to an increase in questioning their other food sources and for one CSA member, *"I think about it less now because I'm comfortable with it. When I didn't know where my food was coming from I thought about it more."*

PRDF CSA appeared to be made of highly aware and active individuals that believed their participation was a positive contribution to all those involved. By joining and participating in the CSA, the group was able to display some of their ethics, especially surrounding food. CSA participation was viewed as an experiential act, one that propelled future action in food systems. Many of the participants spoke of what they learned from the experience and how they apply them to current decisions, such as locally sourcing food, questioning products and processes they live with, and involving community members more with their everyday lives. While the industrialized system was described as unknowable and untrustworthy, PRDF CSA was said to have reconnected and educated its

members on small-scale meat production, instilling and reaffirming a sense of trust.

Those that participated seemed to have left the CSA with very positive feelings with a need to do more. Actual, lived experiences were described as the most valuable and the biggest regret was missing out on events. These events include farm visits, workdays, the cooking demonstration, potlucks, and meeting with other members. Many in the group were left positively changed by the experience and would encourage others around them to take part. For some, the experience made them reprioritize their food decisions and become more active in the future.

Synthesis of Reflexive Eating

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA provided an excellent opportunity to examine the process of reflexive eating. The members of the project articulated quite well their understanding of the experience as it coalesced with their own personal identities. To continue as a process, members of PRDF CSA also highlighted social actions that came as a result of participating in the farming project. The members contributed to the theoretical concept of reflexive eating by relating and describing the process. Their participation in this work also sheds light on civic engagement in alternative food networks, especially concerning Community Supported Agriculture.

The use of reflexivity, and thus, reflexive eating, draws upon Holland's (1999) call for the operationalization of the theoretical concept. Specifically, Holland (1999, pg. 482) states, "Reflexive movement or realization depends on

breaking out of an existential disciplinary, professional, paradigmatic, or specialty, "thought style" (cosmology, basic assumption, mindset) which limits awareness and thereby movement. Reflexive movement does not need to be argued for since it is human capacity which defines our existence." To build upon the reflexive eating process elements across the social sciences were utilized.

Members of PRDF CSA began their reflexive eating process by gaining some understanding, or knowledge, of the farming project and agreeing to participate. Giddens (1990, 1991) writes that reflexivity in modern life is dependent upon incoming information and how social actors have the ability to turn this information into a self-identity. Giddens (1991, pg. 2) further states, "The self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications." Indeed, the participants of the CSA actively engaged in reflexive behavior through their membership, as knowing more about a particular food source contributed to their ongoing transformation of identity.

Throughout the CSA members spoke clearly of their own identities and how they viewed their participation within the project. PRDF CSA created an environment where participants took part in active self-awareness and self-assessment, as a means to examine their position in the larger food system. Within this context, members articulated what they knew and how they came to know it, as Pillow (2003) describes as a 'turning back' on oneself. Participation became a method to evaluate food decisions and influence future actions (Salzman, 2002), allowing participants to engage in their own self-analysis

(Finlay, 2002).

PRDF CSA reified reflexivity by illuminating a common act that all people must take part in, eating. The detailed accounts of reflexive eating from CSA participants help address the need for research concerning the scope, reach, and modalities of reflexivity called upon by Archer (2010). In the case of the People's Republic of Delicious Foods, details about the CSA population and issues covered across the research project provided a method to see reflexivity in the common activity of eating. The CSA gave space to explore how common reflexive behavior has become, especially concerning agriculture and food (Archer, 2010).

The members of PRDF CSA show that the common act of eating is indeed suitable material for reflexive engagement, as all that participated acted to promote their own motives and concerns (Garcia-Ruiz and Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2010), whether they are related to health and wellbeing, environmental interactions, or civic participation. In this case, reflexive eating became a method to increase participation in food systems and allow expression of the political aspects of agriculture and food, as DuPuis (2000) envisioned. The CSA acted as a form of contestation, as members chose to participate with PRDF rather than with other forms of meat consumption. PRDF CSA actualized what DuPuis (2002, pg. 216) calls a "community of practice", or "a particular way of life that embeds a person in a network of people who support that practice, so that the "performance" of that practice leads to satisfaction and self-esteem." All research participants positively affirmed the CSA and expressed satisfaction with the farming venture.

Although members of PRDF CSA clearly displayed reflexive eating, or what

Guthman (2003) calls a conscious reflexivity of monitoring, reflecting, and adapting personal conduct, the juxtaposition between organic and fast food presented in her work does not represent the participants in this case. The members articulated accounts of reflexive eating with many different types and qualities of food, even when consuming mass-produced, industrialized products. Reflexive eating is shown to be an act that can take place across food systems, but it is also highly personal and requires more engagement than the current industrialized system requires (Johnston and Szabo, 2011).

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA produced a space in which participants learned more about their food source than before. Kerton and Sinclair (2010) write that learning about food systems has ramifications on other aspects of life, such as beliefs and attitudes surrounding environmental and social justice issues, leading to a more sustainable outlook for participants. As in their study, PRDF CSA provided answers to many of the persistent questions presented by participants and illuminated new questions for further civic engagement. Members of the CSA mirrored the findings of Obach and Tobin (2014), as they found participants of this type of farming tend to be more active in local politics and voluntarism. CSA members blurred the line of what Lockie (2009) separates as social agency and citizenship. Many of the members recognized their participation as some form of political or ethical expression, as an extension of their own self-identity. Members also conveyed that CSA can be a more passive act and that greater work needs to be done beyond the farm (Lockie, 2009), however, they valued the platform and opportunity to continue to learn more about and agriculture and food.

PRDF CSA attempted to fulfill DeLind's (1999, pg. 3) hopes of, "through our farming activity, re-establish meaningful relationships, personally and socially, to the earth and to a community of place." In its most basic function, the CSA reduced the distance between members and food, whether the distance is measured in miles or theoretical space. As voiced by members of the PRDF CSA, participation in the farm became a part of their own identity, which may affect future decisions made related to agriculture and food, similar to what others have found (Iwaki, 2014; Endres and Armstrong, 2014). The CSA appeared to be useful for members on their own terms, utilizing different aspects as needed, dispelling the narrow framework of CSA participation offered by Pole and Gray (2013). The single most cited source of enjoyment in the CSA were casual farm visits, similar to Lang's (2005) findings that member satisfaction is directly linked to the number of times visited the farm.

Samantha's PRDF CSA Narrative

Understanding

Samantha could not remember what the name of the CSA project was, how many people took part, or how many farmers were involved. She could not remember how much she paid for her share, but recalled how much food she received, "*Oh. It was a lot. I remember there were two turkeys. It was a lot more than you would just go and get at the grocery store.*" Samantha remembered very clearly about the names given to the pigs, but was incorrect in stating that organic food was used. Her understanding of the living conditions of the animals came from her multiple farm visits, as she states, "*They were out in the sunshine and got a*

great environment. They were raised very opposite of those pictures you see from Greenpeace where the animals are just stuck in cages.” When asked about what was different about what the CSA set out to do versus what the grocery store provides, Samantha stated, *“I think they were a lot healthier. I remember making a comment that it tasted better. I just think happy chickens taste better because they weren’t pumped full all those chemicals to make them look pretty from the mainstream factory farms.”*

Samantha expressed that knowing where her food came from is very important because, *“it’s going into our bodies and people don’t have an appreciation or knowledge about food and what it does to the environment and to our bodies. I think that has a lot to do with answering some of the health problems and why we’re going down the road with the environment too. Just as we’ve separated ourselves from so many things. We’ve become so detached from our food and from our environment that we’re growing that food in and the processes that we go through to get them.”* Her response to knowing more about the processes behind food was unclear, but she stated, *“We had some more of a connection before. I think the more you know the more you can appreciate, the more you can be a part of it. It’s a more enjoyable eating experience when you know that the farmers and animals have been treated well.”* Samantha also communicated that she thought it was important to know where her money was going and that by shopping at farmers’ markets she knew exactly whom she was supporting.

Samantha came to the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA through another member, Talia, and divided their share. When asked what motivated her

involvement she stated, *“Obviously, knowing you. Not ever being able to experience anything like that was really interesting to me. I really didn't know anything about farming and especially animal farming. Just what I've seen in newspapers and propaganda from the environmental organizations and what they say happens. It was a good learning experience.”* Samantha also stated that she thought we were driven to conduct the CSA to produce, *“a community of knowledgeable consumers.”*

She expects to learn something about her food source and gain some skills through the CSA experience. She also expressed that she was looking for a, *“sense of connectedness and serenity around knowing where my meat comes from.”* Samantha also mentioned a reverence for Native American culture and viewed the CSA as having a similar *“interconnectedness philosophy”*. She said the CSA was exactly what she thought it would be, *“Really nice people trying to do something that was healthy and sustainable for the environment. Conscious people about the world we're living in.”*

Identity

Samantha used *“serious, loving, searching, different, and loyal”* to describe herself and *“fun, inspirational, beautiful, generous, and smart”* to describe those closest to her. She used *“self-confident, content, happy”* to describe what she aspires to be and considers herself a good person because *“I want the best for people no matter what goal they are striving to meet.”* Samantha stated that she is a 32 year old, white woman from Gales Ferry, Connecticut and her current occupation is a doctoral student at the University of Missouri. She conveyed that

she is single with no children. Samantha does not consider herself religious and identifies with the Democratic Party politically.

Samantha has worked for the government in the past and displayed some mistrust, *"I've had the unfortunate fortunateness of seeing how it really works. How much power is really resting on those underpaid 20-something year olds is really shocking...On the ground-level, where I was working, we were doing all the work, all the research, all the writing."* When asked about trusting the system we have set in place she responded, *"The founding fathers did not think that the American people had the wherewithal to take care of themselves. That's why we elect officials that represent us. Our system has become bastardized though. It's all about prestige and privilege...I like the philosophy of what we could be but we are not close to that vision at all. I trust that maybe one day we will."* She has no trust in the USDA and mixed feelings about the FDA, *"I have more trust in farmers than I do the agencies that dictate to them.... I know how hard it is to get drugs approved by the FDA. My dad is a pharmaceutical executive and he's told me many stories. It's a torturous process. They check every step. There's always some shady dealings though, humans are involved. I trust as much as you can."*

When asked about her fears about the future of humankind Samantha stated, *"That we become the worst nightmare of ourselves, which is why we left Europe in the first place."* She acknowledges that she helps contribute to this by not sacrificing enough, but recognizes that she is creating a positive change for the future by being a teacher educator. She thinks that equality in the United States is, *"a revolutionary project not yet finished"* and when she comes in

contact with someone asking for money she thinks, *“our country has failed them.”* Samantha expressed that she spends a lot of time trying to put herself in others shoes and to her the phrase means, *“understanding my own privilege and using that to serve as an advocate and ally for change.”* She spoke of community as a group of people with similar interests trying to achieve similar goals. Samantha also indicated that the majority of people she knew, family, co-workers, and friends, were all taking part in alternative to the industrial food system.

For Samantha, industrial agriculture means *“factory processed food items”* and the people involved are *“hard working men and women”, “the foundation of the U.S. economy”,* and *“cogs in the American wheel.”* She feels the need to support the workers, as their work conditions are *“not always the best, but they do the best they can.”* When she thinks of industrial agriculture she envisions *“big trucks filled with corn”* and those that are gaining the most profit are *“chubby white guys.”* She stated that our agricultural system became like this because *“we have grown greedy and no longer see the beauty around us”* and it perpetuates because *“we let it.”* Overall Samantha feels *“angry, confused, repulsed”* about industrial agriculture.

Samantha affirmed that she has heard the phrase “Feeding the World” concerning the industrial agricultural system. She also recognized the use of biotechnology within our industrial system and to her the phrase means *“humans messing up Mother Nature”* and the main use of it is *“to make money and control the means of production.”* Samantha stated that both the possible damages and positive outcomes are *“exponential”* and in the future it will be used

like *“something on SyFy, but with a worldview that seeks to save us, not destroy us.”* When asked what she thought about the environment she stated, *“makes me think of how much humans take for granted.”* She voiced that people were having a negative overall effect on the environment and those that were doing the most damage are *“everywhere... in the US, China, India... the entire world is responsible for our current state of affairs. We are one world. We need to act like it.”*

For Samantha, alternative agriculture means *“change is possible.”* The people involved in alternative agriculture *“are essential to saving the planet”* and *“socialist liberals (to Fox News fans), but I love these people because they are making a difference, even if it is only in their small communities.”* The animals are treated as *“living, breathing creatures who have value.”* Samantha also stated that alternative agriculture became what it is today because *“people got sick of seeing animals and the Earth mistreated”* and it perpetuates because *“it has to... we have no other choice but to change.”* She voiced feeling *“hopeful that we can change one person at a time”* through alternative agriculture.

Samantha remembered that food for her family growing up was a great thing, *“We love food in my family.”* She stated that her food was heavily influenced by Cajun cuisine and that they consumed a lot of meat. What she enjoys the most about food now is *“how beautiful the final product looks and the fun I had getting it to that point.”* Samantha expressed that her cooking skills are pretty good *“(thanks to my mom!)”* and that she cooks primarily for herself, *“I try to cook by scratch.”* What she worries about the most concerning her food is *“how my body will metabolize it given my health problems.”* Samantha also

stated that she shops at the farmers' market frequently and would like to start growing her own vegetables.

Action

Samantha expressed that she was acting as an activist by participating in the CSA and stated, *"I think because you are stepping out of what is the norm."* She also thought that some food solutions on a large scale included *"Other than burning down Monsanto? No I'm just kidding. I think structurally it's going to be a hard fight. As a society we have a very strong infrastructure towards what we'd consider normal food production, you know, big farms, like Perdue. It's a very hard structure to dismantle. Change can happen though from the bottom up."*

Samantha felt she came away from the CSA a more informed food consumer and stated, *"Even on a small level I have far more appreciation for the work farmers do than ever before. I'm more aware of what goes into it. I learned that there's so much that you can't control, like the environment. We couldn't control the drought, look how hard that was. So there's an aspect to farming that we really can't control, no matter the scale. That everybody should do it. Every one should experience it at least once. It was wonderful."*

Samantha missed every pickup and potluck event the CSA held, *"Yeah. I never went. Talia picked up everything for us."* Although she voiced her satisfaction with the project, she did express desire to do more in the future, *"I wish I would have been around to do more, to do more work. I remember helping out with the turkeys and chickens as babies. When I came back months later they were huge. Oh yeah, feeding the pigs bagels, so that was really fun."*

I'm just wishing I was around more to do more. The only thing I haven't done that would really freak me out is the actual processing. Like the turkey slaughter. I don't think I'm up for that." Samantha conveyed that she would do something like this and would not change anything about it. She also felt that the CSA changed her by stating, "Oh god yeah. I think I'll continue to buy food this way, whether that's here or where I end up next" and that she is much more cognizant of her meat source, *"especially when I think about quality. I definitely appreciate it more now."*

Reflexive eating

"That last batch of chickens was amazing. I know what kind of life that chicken had, where it came from, and I can almost taste the difference. It was so much better."

Quotes from Samantha like the one above help elucidate her reflexive eating process. Although she knew very little about the practicalities of the CSA, she did learn many things from her farm visits. She enjoyed her experiences and placed her trust in the farmers to provide healthful, well cared for animal products. She identified as someone who cares greatly about the environment and supports sustainable and equitable agriculture. She lacks trust in her main food system and feels better by knowing a farmer in person. Samantha recognizes inequalities and her own privileged viewpoint. She believes she is acting as an activist by going beyond what's normal in our food system and engaging with the CSA. She loved the experience and actively looks for other opportunities like PRDF CSA.

Steven's PRDF CSA Narrative

Understanding

Steven correctly identified the name, how many members participated, how many farmers participated, and how much a share cost. When asked how many pounds of food he received he responded, *"Tons. I shared with my family in St. Louis. I told them about it so they gave me some money."* He correctly remembered the names of the pigs, but could not recall anything about the feed used in the CSA. Steven did respond with some accuracy about the conditions for the animals used, *"Absolutely. The time that I visited I was really interested in where the chickens and turkeys were kept. There was a neat little pulse fence surrounding them. It was a really interesting setup that I'd be into doing on my own property some day. So whenever they exhaust the ground beneath them it takes little effort to move them to a new spot. In that regard the conditions are really good, they're not just wallowing in their own feces, which is really great that CSA raises animals in this way."* Steven also reported that the chief farmer received no compensation for their work.

Steven conveyed that knowing where his food comes from is very important because *"We have a health crisis. There's people like me who I feel pretty educated on this stuff but I have terrible health insurance, so I think it's important for me to eat as healthy as I can. I think it's a preventative means."* He spoke about the processes behind his food, *"there's a lot of freaky stuff going on. There's a lot of genetically modified stuff happening. Then I learned about the difference between an air cooled chicken and a water-cooled one. The water-cooled chickens are disgusting and I only buy the air-cooled ones."* Steven also

added that knowing where your money is going is important, *“Damn right. I feel like if you spend your money on companies that harm animals and torture them then you should be implicated in how destructive those processes are.”*

A recommendation from another CSA member brought Steven to the project. He stated that he was a vegetarian before joining due to what he knows about the industrial meat system. When asked what prompted the farmers to do the CSA he voiced, *“I can only imagine a number of factors. I’m sure you guys have learned a lot about conditions on factory farms and so I’m sure that drove you to do this. Which I think is pretty cool because it’s not easy to do this. But I would like to think you guys did this out of an interest to help the people in your community see the different ways of doing things. So that when we go to the store now we can make better choices and we’re also able to push or be in an activist role. To make activist decisions.”* Steven expressed that he joined the CSA as a way to support something local and receive well cared for meat products, he stated *“I’m really excited by the fact that I’m supporting something local. I’ve met some new people and it’s exciting to see a group of people involved in supporting something local. It’s nice to see people take an interest in their food and where it comes from and how it’s raised, what it looks like coming up. And the fact that we know that things are being handled humanely and the animals are well taken care of. It’s probably going to be super, super tasty.”*

Identity

Steven used *“curious, energized, frantic, reflective, and caring”* to describe himself and *“motivated, fun, lively, silly, and sweet”* to describe those closet to him. When asked what he aspires to, he replied *“relationships, communication, progressive, and well traveled.”* Overall Steven thinks he’s a good person because *“I care about the state of society and ongoing social problems, but I also try to be grateful when happy moments are occurring; I try to think big and small.”* Steven is a 28-year-old white male from Fenton, Missouri. He is not married and is expecting his first child. Steven is not religious and considers himself liberal in voting matters. His current occupation is a doctoral student at the University of Missouri.

Steven expressed his mistrust in our government and our governing system. When asked why he responded, *“Because of wars and the federal government for building suburbs and creating federally funded white suburbs in society. I don’t because I don’t think they have the interests of all people... I think that not everybody can equally participate in a Democracy. The more money you have the more chance you have of being a political player. It favors the rich.”* Steven communicated a nuanced trust with both the USDA and FDA, as he stated, *“Well if you go to the grocery store and you see an abundance of food everywhere and for the most part it’s really inexpensive, but yet we’re the biggest people. I don’t know, some of the ways we go about growing food seems strange... Both agencies I trust for the most part because I don’t know enough. I’ve never had food poisoning in this country, I’ve never got sick from food and there’s always plenty to eat. I can walk into a grocery store and getting*

seemingly fresh foods and as long as I make the choices to purchase those things versus some of the more preserved foods.”

Steven’s idea of the worst-case scenario for the world includes *“laboratories that genetically alter animals that wind up taking over the planet, pretty much. People are pretty much all dead. I feel like there’s a lot of really crazy stuff happening behind closed doors.”* He stated that he thought our best-case scenario is that *“We recognize that the earth has population carrying capacity, recognize it much more than we are doing today. We need to stabilize the population and that would be a good start. And put our faith in those that are researching a way to make a new earth. Just that we’ll be prepared for the earth to be different instead of giving into bickering and arguments.”* He thought he contributed to this by, *“Well I do little things. I’m trying to eat less and less meat that comes from factory farms. You know they are the second highest in greenhouse omissions, so I’m trying to avoid that. I’m trying to avoid the cruelty to animals and the polluting aspect of how they are. I live in walking distance of where I work, so I walk everywhere. I live in a small place and I am very consciousness about my water use and the food I buy.”* When asked about equality in America, Steven thought of *“increasing social stratification and gaps in opportunity.”* Steven also stated that when he comes into contact with others asking for money he recognizes his own privilege, he stated, *“After I have an encounter with someone asking for money, I feel like I have everything.”* He stated that he spends a lot of time putting himself in others shoes and thought that phrase means *“empathy and working towards mutually beneficial futures.”* Steven’s ideas about community included geographical boundaries and added,

“With the CSA, it’s such a small group that you can see that the rest of the country doesn’t take it seriously, it’s not a player, but there’s some cool people doing cool stuff.” He also reported that many people around him, co-workers, friends, and family, were all taking part in alternatives to the industrial food system.

For Steven, industrial agriculture means *“most likely good and bad.”* The people involved are *“rural citizens, but there is growing urban agriculture”* and *“disposable by Monsanto, etc.”* In the industrial system animals are treated as *“profit”* and it leaves Steven feeling *“worried for national health and the ethical treatment of animals.”* He thought that our food system got this way because *“we believe we are worthy of such access to anything all the time”* and it perpetuates because *“we want it all the time.”* Steven described the industrial food system as *“monoculture fields”, “slaughterhouses”, “big refrigerated trucks and planes”,* and *“grocery stores”*. Steven’s thoughts on biotechnology, especially in the use of modern agriculture, were unclear and lacked a basic understanding. When asked about the environment Steven spoke of *“sad thought, but also vast beauty.”* He thought the world’s population is having a negative effect on the environment by stating, *“we are FUCKED.”* When asked who was doing the most damage Steven responded, *“Americans, hands down. I worry about China, because I believe I have been programmed to worry about China.”* He stated that he has heard of the phrase *“Feeding the World”* in regards to the industrial food system and it makes him think *“of arrogance because there are huge hunger problems worldwide.”* As far as who is retaining the wealth in this system Steven said, *“Monsanto, corporate farming in general.”*

Steven reported that alternative agriculture means *“community and more control for consumers.”* The people involved *“have a lot to offer about how we think about food and relate to food”* and *“cleaner, ethical, healthier.”* In the alternative food system animals are treated as *“more than profit. They are given the opportunity to live their natural habits. I still feel guilty about eating them”* and it leaves Steven feeling *“much better, but still not great. I do appreciate being part of the process though and having the choice to consume or not to consume industrial meat.”*

Steven communicated that while growing-up food was *“Doritos, I was obsessed with Doritos. I drank a lot of soda. In general my dad is huge into barbequing. He likes to hunt so there was always deer in the freezer or maybe even pheasant. So food was always like a meat and a vegetable. I was never served a vegetarian meal growing up, really ever. I think it was very normal. I think what we’re doing here is abnormal, growing up there was nothing like this. There were no farmers markets or anything like that.”* His favorite foods now are *“pizza, egg drop soup, noodles, hot sauce, avocados, chorizo, and basmati rice”* and what he enjoys the most are *“the variety of food and also the relationships that revolve around food.”* His cooking skills *“are impulsive!”* and he reported what concerns him the most about his food is *“what the heck is in this?”* Steven also mentioned other food related activities, *“Some of my favorite things to do is to read about and watch films about it. I started growing some vegetables. I canned a bunch of salsa. I have an apple tree so I can a lot of sauce. Next year I’m putting in way more stuff, garlic, corn, tomatoes. I like to cook.”*

We're frantic right now because we're having a baby. Our cooking is crazy right now."

Action

When asked about what prompts Steven to take part in alternatives to the industrial food system he responded, *"I want to know where my food is from. If I was wealthy with great land and knowledge I would grow my own fruits and vegetables. I'd even mill my own grain, if I had that kind of time. Same thing with animals. I would get milk from someone I know, I would get beef from someone I know. Just that I could know. Just so that I know that it is unadulterated."* Steven conveyed some sense of activism by taking part in the CSA by stating, *"Sure, definitely because in America what you spend your money on says a huge amount of who you are as a person. We're in a disgustingly money orientated society. So if we speak with our wallet then it's a good way. Maybe real low level activism though. You could do a lot more."*

When asked if he thought he was changing the food system he spoke, *"I'm not that delusional. Individuals do make a difference but when it comes down to the bottom dollar the money they aren't getting from me doesn't affect their bottom line."* Steven did add that he thought some solutions for everyone in the food system include, *"Well this CSA and my little garden plot are my first foray into new food possibilities and I see now how much work is involved. Maybe not the whole picture but I have an idea. Almost every community has a farmers' market so maybe that? It's not that expensive really."*

Steven's lasting impression of PRDF CSA includes a piece of advice for those considering participation, *"they should without a doubt that they should*

pursue one in their community. If at all possible they should be a part of one. It was so enjoyable. Some of the best meals I've had this year is because of the meat from the CSA. It's really because I can answer those questions about where does my food come from and that's a neat feeling." Steven also expressed one memory in particular, *"Hanging out with the pigs at the farm and the appreciating my bacon for the first time in a long time."*

Steven missed many of the CSA pickups and potlucks. When asked if he enjoyed his CSA experience he responded, *"absolutely"* and if given the opportunity would do something like this again. Steven also added that he did meet new people as a result of the CSA and these relationships have continued past the project.

Steven admits to thinking more about his meat consumption, *"I still don't make great choices sometimes but I'm getting there"* and *"eating a lot less meat."* When asked if the CSA changed him in any way he responded, *"Yeah, I mean it gave me a practical example of something I theoretically held in my head. I put theory into practice. You can read about a lot of stuff but it's really cool when you can actually practice it. Because it was so successful I'll be much more likely to join something like this again."*

Reflexive eating

"I was a vegetarian just before I joined. I was telling this mutual friend that I was dreaming about sausages and she asked me why I was a vegetarian and I told her it's because I know too much about meat production. She told me all about CSA and how you can buy shares."

“happiness and satisfaction at actually practicing something new. It’s one thing to learn of new things in the world and never really do anything about it and this was really cool to give me the ability to pursue something inline with my beliefs.”

“Yeah, I mean it gave me a practical example of something I theoretically held in my head. I put theory into practice. You can read about a lot of stuff but it’s really cool when you can actually practice it. Because it was so successful I’ll be much more likely to join something like this again.”

The three passages above highlight Steven’s reflexive eating process best. Steven was keenly aware of many of the finer points of the CSA. He came to only one farm visit but remembered many of the practical applications of the project. Steven mentioned mistrust behind the processes in our industrialized food system and believed that CSA participation would be a healthier option. Steven also thought that a part of what we were doing was educating meat consumers to make better food decisions in the future. He described mistrust in many of the scientific applications at work in modern agriculture and thought that CSA would be a step in a more positive direction. He also recognizes his own impact and is actively works in conservation. Steven credits the CSA for allowing him to know exactly where his meat came from and how it was raised. He also stated that he’ll look for similar projects in the future and until then he just won’t eat meat.

Chapter 6

Reflexive Farming

Introduction

To use reflexive as an adjective for farming suggests the same conscious awareness and control over food described with reflexive eating, with the focus shifted from consumption to production. Just as in reflexive eating it involves an understanding of the event coalesced with ones' identity to provide an action (see figure 4 below). Reflexive farming describes the application of knowledge and the decision-making process on-farm (Kaup, 2008), while allowing the farmer to examine their own role (Darity, 2008) in a much broader context (Weick, 2002; Giddens, 1994). This holistic process permits the farmer to acknowledge their own motivations, hopes, and desire in their work (Bourdieu, 2003; DeLind, 1999) and find satisfaction with their final product (Stock, 2007). Reflexive farming provides space for producers to act according to their ethics (Kerton and Sinclair, 2010), provide a vital civic duty (Ravenscroft et. al, 2013), and think critically about the ramifications of food production (Johnston and Szabo, 2011).

The following contains a reflective account from the lead farmer in the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA 2012. The account is divided along the major elements of reflexivity presented earlier, including understanding, identity, and action. Analyses and a synthesis of information are also provided.

Figure 5 Model of reflexive farming

Understanding

Almost equivalent to the description given in the previous chapter, understanding in the context of reflexive farming encompasses the knowledge and motivations of producers engaged in agricultural acts. This type of understanding highlights the importance of examining the decision-making process (Dewey, 1896; Mead, 1934) of producers. It shows that producers are limited by what they know and have experienced, as well as their ability to express it reflexively (Finlay, 2002; Holland, 1999). As described earlier with reflexive eating, understanding is a dynamic concept that not only changes over time but also blends into ones' own identity.

Within this section of the farmer reflection are topics that include previous experiences with Community Supported Agriculture and rural communal living, practical farming knowledge, academic curiosity, desire to create positive change, and aspirations to produce high quality food.

I have been involved with various Community Supported Agriculture projects over the past twelve years. My most notable work with this mode of farming happened over a seven-year span in which my partner and I conducted a dairy and meat farm. What began as a few egg laying chickens and two brush goats, soon was built into a farm of American Alpine dairy goats, Jersey cows, market hogs, and broiler chickens. Our Tennessee farm produced an excess annually and we were able to maintain a membership of twenty-five shares, providing food for approximately 60 people. Our CSA farm came to a close in 2009 only because I continued my education in Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri.

Preceding the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA of 2012, we completed a farming project called Meating Needs CSA of 2011 in Columbia, Missouri. This CSA consisted of a smaller group of people, a less diverse amount of animals raised, and mandatory involvement for members. Everyone involved agreed to help with the daily farm chores of feeding, watering, and moving poultry pens, as well as the slaughter of turkeys. I constructed Meating Needs CSA with ideals that encompass community food security, as everyone (in theory) helped raise and pay for their share of the farming project. In comparison to the other projects I have been involved with, Meating Needs was a considerable amount of extraneous work for the lead farmers, John and I. In many cases members would be late or just not show up. For those that did participate equally, they cited the workdays as a major source of enjoyment. By the end of the project we decided that we would continue for the next year with a few major changes, including pay for the farmers and no mandatory meetings or workdays

for members. The decision came partly from the Meating Needs experience, but also to make PRDF CSA more comparable to similar farming projects.

During my initial seven years of farming I had the pleasure of living within a highly connected rural community. Many members encouraged and supported my efforts of growing local, humanely produced products. It was also through these rural networks that I learned various farming techniques and methods. My community also stood as a strong base of support, either through pooling resources or lending labor when needed. My community also had a part in inspiring me to do events that had not yet been done in our setting, including the slaughter of market hogs and sales beyond our county.

The practical experiences that I endured through our first CSA in Tennessee have aided every other project I have done since. Although I have spent a considerable amount of time planning the social and educational aspects of each CSA project, there are very practical applications and duties that are foremost and that when laid out become the foundation of the CSA. Over time I have experienced successes and failures in the actual growing, dispatching, and processing of agricultural animals, all experiences being cumulative. Along with the necessary animal husbandry skills, I have also gleaned vital business management abilities. There were many aspects of running a small business that at first I completely denied, but I was forced to accept them and strive to improve upon them. One very important aspect that can be frequently overlooked in Community Supported Agriculture is the membership, the people involved. I have garnered extremely valuable information from the interpersonal connections I have formed in CSA. As much pride as I may have felt in the

production of food, I have realized that these projects truly are farming with people. To succeed means not only the production of environmentally and socially respectful food, but also the effort of engaging people in agricultural acts, in both production and consumption.

My competence in the practicalities of animal husbandry and Community Supported Agriculture are strengthened by my baccalaureate in Animal Sciences I received from Middle Tennessee State University in 2008. I had entered higher education not only later in life than the average student, but I also had to complete my G.E.D. Once I had cleared the obstacles to be admitted for university studies, I chose a major that I believed would do the most good for myself and for the world knowing that it would not necessarily lead to the most prestigious or highest paying career. My undergraduate experiences in beef, dairy, pork, and poultry production coupled with the wide array of biological and social science courses helped solidify my personal beliefs about agriculture that I was actively engaging within my rural community. My four years at MTSU taught me not only the methods of industrial food production, but also the damages created in the process through my environmental sciences and social science classes. Without my primary education in industrial agricultural curriculum my understanding of food systems would be incomplete and one-sided.

I also believe that my continued education at the University of Missouri in the field of Rural Sociology has made me a stronger CSA farmer, as it has contributed to new understandings that have directly impacted my decision making process. My graduate coursework has included subjects across environmental sociology, collective action, environmental justice, political

ecology, ethnography, and case study. While completing my coursework I was employed by the Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security at the university. My work for the center brought me very close to the emergency food network, including food banks, pantries, workers, and patrons. Even though hunger was unfortunately too common of an experience for me as a child, being in the position of growing our own high-quality meat for those fortunate enough to participate made it somewhat challenging when faced with those seeking assistance with basic food needs. The mix of theoretical contemplation and composition with empirical experiences of food insecurity across the state of Missouri has made my graduate studies extremely valuable and pertinent in my work with alternative food networks and Community Supported Agriculture.

A big part of who I am and something I consider at my core is a desire to make positive change in the world. I view alternative agriculture and CSA as an entry way for me to help contribute to solutions, rather than creating larger problems. My inquisitive nature propels me to continue to learn more and research methods to improve outcomes in agriculture, for both people and the planet. I am also driven by actual experiences in agriculture with people. I feel as though there is a sense of community that is invoked when people come to together to accomplish something acutely vital to life, especially in a manner that leaves them feeling good about their actions. This feeling of community allows me to take part in something much larger than myself and becomes a structure to help others.

Although my chief role and title in the CSA farms I have participated in is farmer, I would also consider myself a facilitator, as people have come to make

new decisions about food in partnership with me. I feel a certain amount of pressure to ensure this happens in a positive manner and that members desire to take part in CSA again in the future. I am also aware of the relatively short life that most CSA farms live and the poor retention rates of members. In every project I have attempted to make personal connections with members and have been acutely aware of what they were trying to get out of the farm. I continue to believe that it remains my duty as a CSA farmer to make sure that members are satisfied with their experience and that it propels them to make promising food decisions in the future.

My partner and I also have a need to produce what we consider high quality meat products. We do this by providing the animals we raise with the best environment possible and through the kindest management methods available. Our farming decisions have always been influenced by what I understand as the most humane or what might provide a high level of comfort for our animals. I view this production of food as a means to substitute what would have been consumed through the industrial system, despite how small the amount of meat produced. I also believe that by producing meat through CSA farms, members become closer to their food source than before and typically want to keep the membership ongoing.

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA operated under the supervision of my partner John and myself. Coming from the previous productive CSA year, PRDF had a loyal group of participants that desired to take part again and encouraged us to conduct another year of farming. Not coming from a farming

background, I had learned from various sources about animal husbandry and Community Supported Agriculture, with much community support along the way. Clearly evident was my abilities to raise and process animals for consumption in an environmentally and socially respectful manner. By my own admission, the areas that needed the most improvement to make it sustainable were finance and management. I could articulate a well-developed understanding of the motivations behind my involvement and the various roles I undertook throughout the CSA season, but continued to have a financial blind-spot. I felt pressure to perform well in the project (whether self-imposed or from others), because I wanted to encourage participants to engage in future CSA projects and facilitate reflexive eating. The awareness of the low retention rates of CSA members and the average short lifespan of CSA farm's stayed with me throughout the project and I sought to improve that for PRDF CSA. I also had very close friends involved in the farm and I certainly did not want to let them down. Besides conducting up-close and personal qualitative research, the actual production and distribution of what I consider high quality meat was my primary motivating force behind participating in PRDF CSA.

Identity

As vital as identity was indicated in the previous chapter, it is just as integral to reflexive farming. To assess who the farmer is, where they come from, and what they view as their role is within this reflexive context (Salzman, 2002). Reflexive farming provides an opportunity to examine how the personal experiences and

identity performance of the farmer affect agricultural outcomes (Lawless, 2001; Behar, 1996), but also aide in the authenticity and credibility of the work.

Within this section of the reflection are topics relevant to the CSA that include ethnicity, hometown affiliation, age, salient identifiers, characteristics, personality traits, and self-described roles.

I am a 38-year-old native of San Jose, California, which is south of San Francisco in the Bay Area. I grew up in a few HUD neighborhoods, mostly apartments and duplexes. Crime rates were very high and many homes were covered with bars around the windows. As a result, I did not spend much time in my home neighborhoods and lived with various friends. I left San Jose in 1994 and have not returned since.

I consider myself white, of what kind I do not know. A version of ethnicity that I choose to believe from my mother is that her mother was Austrian and her father was Polish. I do know that her maiden name was Solomon, other than that the rest could have been false. As for my biological father, I do not know, but I have been told stories. I was raised by my stepfather, who, to this day, does not know how to pronounce our last name.

More salient to who I am than my pseudo-Jewish or West Coast ethnicity is coming from a very poor family with many instances of living without basic amenities. My mother suffered from an assortment of physical and mental ailments leaving my stepfather as the sole breadwinner of the family. My stepfather's salary as a machinist may have been enough to support a family of five, but not with the insurmountable amount of medical bills. Our family grossed

too much for social safety nets and our pride hindered any help that could have come from outsiders. I can recollect our house being empty of food on too many occasions, with no parental supervision, and active physical or emotional violence. For those reasons and more, I became officially independent at the age of 15.

Though it was difficult navigating the adult working world, I maintained various living situations until I was 21 and then became homeless. I rode a Greyhound bus from Seattle to Portland and from there I hitchhiked all over the U.S. My travels continued for three years in which I spent a considerable amount of time in National Forests and remote rural locations. I encountered many wonderful people and had some very trying times. I rode with truckers, hopped freight trains, and flew a cardboard sign on the side of the road that read, “Traveling, Broke & Hungry”. My time spent on the road provided me with something irreplaceable, something I could have never received elsewhere. It gave me space to learn who I am and find community with others.

Another large part of who I am is imbued with a queer identity. I am gay, but I also reject many of the major tropes associated with mainstream gay culture. Coming out meant not only affirming my love for other men, but also that I denounce the vapid, conspicuous consumption that plagues my community at-large. Queer also denotes my rejection of a heteronormative society. In many instances, being an American means having a career, a marital partner, children, and owning a home. Although I cannot say what the future holds, none of those listed characteristics have ever been a part of my goals or life.

Even though I may reject some aspects of modern life, I care deeply about the fate of the planet, the treatment of the disadvantaged, and the safekeeping of the flora and fauna. I am an active participant in the way that I conduct my life; as such I involve myself in activities that try to improve outcomes. I believe there is value in finding solutions to the ecological and social consequences of living in modern society, especially while including others. I consciously make an effort to be empathetic and hope that those close to me do as well. I find enjoyment in nurturing those around me in activities that better our food source. There is a great sense of satisfaction that comes through the completion of an agricultural venture with others.

I am also fortunate to have been partnered with a great person over the past 13 years. From the beginning of our relationship we have encouraged and supported each other's passions and pursuits in life. Gratefully, our visions of what we find vital and useful to pursue have been very close and at times overlap. We have helped mutually fulfill each other's ideas and give latitude for growth in new ventures. These aspects of our relationship have been extremely useful for farming within the parameters of sustainable agriculture and without them I do not know how I would continue to farm.

From that first egg I waited so very impatiently for, I knew that farming was my true calling, my vocation. The production of food has been the only work that I have known that has brought so much fulfillment, joy, and heartache. I have never felt so proud as when the cow that I artificially inseminated gave birth to a new calf. I realized early on that by farming I could truly live by example, but that it was not enough to produce just for myself. I also came to understand that

the work I was doing could not sustain itself over time and had to include a larger community to ensure its survival into the future.

In everything that I do I consider myself an activist. Each aspect of my life, from the work that I do or activities I engage in for enjoyment, embodies ideologies that speak to conservation and preservation, minimalism, and methods of living that incur the lowest impact on the Earth and each other. I live this naturally and I do so by not forcing my beliefs unto others, but allowing them enough space to ponder their own questions, their own identity. Through this I found another aspect of myself that is truly rewarding, an educator.

As I learned the practical applications behind farming I found myself wanting to share to others how to do so. I also found the same desire to share as I went through my graduate studies and learned of environmental justice, food insecurities, and inequalities across class and race in America. Educational work parallels many of the same feelings that producing food creates, such as joy and heartache, fulfillment, and satisfaction. Ultimately, it is my hope that others will learn from my experiences and examples to make beneficial decisions in the future, with food and in life in general.

My inquisitive mind is also constantly in motion. I actively interrogate the meanings, motivations, and mechanisms behind the activities and people I affiliate with. As such, from the moment I began working within the Community Supported Agriculture paradigm I have sought to find ways to improve this method of alternative agriculture. Although I have never thought that CSA would somehow solve all of the ills of our industrial food system, I do think that it is a valuable part of the solution and one that deserves further research. As long as I

still have the ability to farm using CSA methods, I will continue to find ways to make it advantageous for farmers, members, and the planet.

Farmer identity in the case of The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA appeared to be integral to the formation and operation of the project. I identified as poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged, which developed into empathetic traits and a desire to be active in community. I was able to speak of different aspects of my identity and how these aspects coalesced as a whole. I also expressed that being in a healthy partnership had an effect on my farming ventures, which in turn shaped my views on activism, education, and research. All of these aspects of my identity had an impact on the eventual outcomes for all of those involved.

Action

The last phase of reflexive farming examines the ultimate outcome of when identity is faced with a given situation. Action in reflexive farming is concerned with what occurred and how that affects society at-large (Archer, 2010, 2012). It is also an important part of building identity (Beck, Giddens, and Lash, 1994), as individuals define themselves through their actions (Giddens, 1990, 1991) and form community with others similar to them (Mead, 1934). By completing an action in reflexive farming it brings an individual back to another experience to understand, starting the process over again.

This last section of the reflection includes questions concerning work done in the CSA, educational opportunities, research moments, the production of food, and lasting impressions of PRDF CSA.

I began forming the People's Republic of Delicious Foods (PRDF) CSA in October of 2011. I had just successfully run Meating Needs CSA and had many members asking to do something like it again. I saw the new CSA project as an opportunity to conduct my doctoral research in Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri while producing and providing high quality meat products for all those participating. The 2011 CSA season was based on an attempt to equally distribute the cost, care, management, and products produced, and as such members were required to attend mandatory workdays and meetings. For the 2012 project I decided to operate in a more traditional manner in which food pickups were the only mandatory meetings and a salary was assigned for the farmers involved. This shift was driven by some of the negative experiences mentioned earlier and as an attempt to make PRDF CSA similar to other CSA projects. To encourage some form of reflexivity, I structured events that focused on learning more about meat production and consumption, specifically with rotational grazing, free-range poultry, large paddock area for outdoor swine, on-farm animal processing, and a cooking tutorial dinner. Based on what was grown in the previous year I decided to increase the numbers of animals to allow for more members and bring down the total share cost per member. To make the project comparable to other CSA's, my partner and I did the majority of work in the CSA with two assistant farmer members that would provide occasional support in exchange for the cost of a share. I also kept the decision-making process between my partner and I, which is much more representative of CSA's across the country. The 2011 season allowed me to see how reflexive eating and reflexive farming occurred through a

unique intentional atmosphere, so the 2012 season attempted to be more representable of other meat CSA's.

One of the chief motivating factors behind my participation in PRDF CSA was the opportunity to inform members about their meat source, from production to distribution. For those that were interested, and many were, there were multiple occasions to learn more about the CSA, including why we chose the breeds of animals, how we managed them on a daily basis, what type of feed we used, weather conditions, and how the animals were eventually processed. Most of these learning opportunities happened in farm visits when members would come out and help do daily chores for the animals, whether it was moving poultry huts and solar-fences, filling the water hole for the hogs, or mixing feed for the various animals. During these visits members were able to experience animal husbandry up close and then be able to compare what we were doing with their perceptions of the industrial system. I made special efforts to explain the differences between production using these two farming methods, such as selecting a breed of broiler chicken that takes 12 weeks of growing versus the industrial standard breed that takes 7 weeks, or that the hogs we raised outdoor had less of chance of having respiratory problems and leg issues than the standard CAFO hog. If there was one area that I regret not educating more in was financial sustainability of the CSA. A particular event that impacted the finances in a big way was the heat wave that persisted over a long duration of growing the turkeys. In order to keep the turkeys alive and thriving we had to purchase blocks of ice to put in front of large fans. The cost of this ice added up and I did not feel comfortable passing the cost on to the members. Not only did I shield the truth of

production, I also jeopardized the future of the project. I feel as though my desire to conduct research may have had something to do with overlooking such a vital aspect of Community Supported Agriculture and in future ventures I will ensure that it does not get neglected.

Everything about PRDF CSA was designed so that I would be able to gather information behind the motivations in participating in something like it. I viewed the opportunity as a way to investigate why people were looking for ways to procure food outside of the industrial system, what the members were experiencing during the project, and ways to improve the retention rates of these members. I set out to do this only to enhance outcomes for all of those involved, as I believe CSA to be a move in positive direction in our food system.

I was prompted to take part in PRDF CSA through the desire to produce good food. I love taking care of animals of all kinds. To physically produce thousands of pounds of food and have the ability to control and monitor each stage of life is an opportunity I try to embark in where ever I live. The routine that gets established through animal husbandry is something that I enjoy and is very difficult to replace.

I also believe that by taking temporary control of the member's meat source the CSA diverted energy and attention from the industrial system. I would admit that it only happened over a short amount of time and to a very small group of people, but the CSA provided opportunities for new experiences, many of which are lacking in our current industrialized system. I feel as though these brief moments that our CSA members had may lead into many other directions, including making active decisions with their food. This is the connection between

reflexive eating and reflexive farming that food and reflexivity scholars have been calling for throughout the literature.

At the close of the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA I felt relieved that the project had ended and the majority of people involved believed it to be worthwhile. Although I did accomplish collecting data in which to do research and I feel that many members experienced food in a new way, my partner and I were in the minority, as we did not want to participate again. Two major components were severely neglected and as such, I don't think it was a complete success. The first aspect is that the CSA lost money, enough so that no one was paid for labor. The second aspect, which I feel contributed greatly to the first, was that members were not informed with complete information about the project. Both of these issues were mine to address to the group and I failed to do so because of my own internalized fears. Many of the worst things that occurred during our growing season were minimally discussed, such as extreme drought and price inflation surrounding feed, processing, and housing. I recognize that I was the chief conduit for this information and have myself to blame for not disseminating what was happening. In future CSA projects I will work to become more transparent and hope that members respond positively.

PRDF CSA was designed to provide an opportunity to conduct research on participation in this mode of alternative agriculture. The structure was modeled closely on other CSA projects, but also included educational and experiential opportunities that were not typical. I believe that by providing open farm visits, work days, potlucks, and cooking demonstrations led to positive outcomes for

everyone, but my constricted flow of information to the group was damaging to two participants that maintained tremendous roles, John and myself. Although all members approved of the CSA project and expressed enthusiasm at doing it again and we took pride and joy from the actual production, the project was financially unsustainable. By my own admission, no labor was compensated and a constrained view of the project was given to members. Complete transparency will be one of my chief goals in future CSA projects.

Synthesis of Reflexive Farming

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA provided an opportunity to examine the concept of reflexive farming from a highly personal perspective. This concept is identical to reflexive eating, as it requires some type of inner dialogue to create a social action, in this case farming. Through the investigation of reflexive eating in members of PRDF, reflexive farming appeared to be its parallel behavior in the farmer. With PRDF CSA, reflexive behavior seemed to be embedded in the project, initiated first by the farmer and then reflected by the members. As a result of reflexive engagement, many of the problems that surfaced in the farm were shown to be common with other CSA farmers and may allude to possible solutions for future ventures.

PRDF CSA proved to be a space for reflexive behavior for not only the members that participated, but also for the farmer. Reflexive farming follows what Archer (2010) describes as going beyond just 'looking in' and in this case, responding with the social act of farming. Reflexive farming meets the requirements for reflexive engagement outlined by Archer (2010, pg. 6), in that it,

“depends upon a subject who has sufficient personal identity to know what he or she cares about and to design the ‘projects’ that they hope (fallibly) will realize their concerns within society.” PRDF CSA shows that reflexive farming entails an agricultural producer that brings his or her own unique identity and personal motivations for production (Bourdieu, 2003), and through this contributes and shapes the overall project (Goodman and DuPuis, 2002). Reflexive farming in the case of PRDF CSA can be viewed as an act to build and strengthen alliances between farmers and members and recognize the potential for greater change within food systems beyond the CSA, as Goodman and DuPuis (2002, pg. 17) write, “this movement can be seen as bearing the seeds of a political struggle to re-define consumer –producer relationships that may, or may not, succeed in creating a broader farmer-consumer (or broader class) alliance.”

Reflexive farming encouraged this broader alliance between farmer and member in PRDF CSA, as everyone involved shared many of the same values and goals with their food (Stock, 2007). Stock, (2007, pg. 95) further states, “a good farmer is a reflexive farmer/producer where reflexivity intimates an emphasis on production practices that protect the environment, ensure health (such as cancer prevention by avoiding chemicals and promoting healthy lifestyles), an attention to critical information about healthy and safe food in the media and from their social networks, as well as an ability to consciously discuss their consumption and, now, production patterns.” Although reflexive farming may intimate many of the same concerns and values between farmers and members, the practice is requiring much more from producers in alternative food networks than the industrial system (Stock, 2007; Kaup, 2008), as was seen in PRDF. Throughout

the project there was what Kaup (2008) refers to as a negotiation between expert knowledge and local, or lay, knowledge, as formal activities became less vital than the informal farm visits. The People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA operated as a venue where first-hand knowledge of agriculture was obtainable and connections between farmers, members, and food were forged.

First-hand knowledge and personal connections aided in the development of trust needed for both reflexive farming and reflexive eating in PRDF CSA. Feagan and Henderson (2009) find that CSA can facilitate relationships of trust for members concerning the quality of food and farming practices, as well as provide opportunities to develop values that go beyond market concerns. In PRDF CSA, relationships were fostered throughout to encourage reflexive action, not only for members but for the farmers as well. Feagan and Henderson (2009, pg. 210) write, "The first critical observation we make is that the CSA farmers found that over time, they were confronted with their own conflicting beliefs, feelings, and loyalties with regard to the economics of the CSA... In more detail, the need for the operators to make a living farming organically has unfolded as an enduring valuation tenet for them, even though they find it quite difficult at times." Reflexive farming may allude to ways to overcome these economic pressures through relationships built on trust. Feagan and Henderson (2009) also find, as was present in PRDF CSA, this relationship can be difficult to maintain as commitment may wane for participants and an inability for farmers to ask for assistance when needed.

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods exemplified how reflexive farming can be an embedded practice in Community Supported Agriculture. The

CSA operated with goals that were supported by both farmers and members. A clear success from the farming project is realizing DeLind's (1999, pg. 3) objective to "re-establish meaningful relationships" among people and place while transforming the food system for those who participated (Hendrickson and Heffernan, 2002). Reflexive farming in PRDF CSA allowed for the protected space for participants to reify alternatives to our industrial food system, the space called for by Hendrickson and Heffernan (2002).

Some have come to question the value and validity of reflexive farming in CSA and suggest a more distanced approach to farm management (Lang, 2010; Pole and Gray, 2013). PRDF CSA recognized that informal events appeared to provide the most satisfaction for both members and farmers over the more formal events, but the complete rejection of potlucks, farm activities, and the number of farmer to member and land interactions, seems to be at odds with the findings from PRDF and the literature (Henderson and Van En, 1999; Ackerman-Leist, 2013). The instances that encouraged reflexive farming in PRDF seem to only improve outcomes for those involved.

Outcomes that needed the most improvement include those that appeared to exclude reflexive farming, the economics. The lack of attention and reflexive engagement in this area is not uncommon for CSA farmers, as Galt (2013, pg. 360) writes, "Most CSA farmers, like other farmers, undervalue their own work in monetary terms. Thus, self-exploitation in CSA is a real phenomenon and is unjust because of the value that farmers provide to their members and society more broadly... Yet self-exploitation does exist, in part because social embeddedness creates a sense of personal obligation that cuts into farmers'

economic well-being.” As seen in PRDF, in an attempt to act reflexively and provide a positive experience for members, the farmers restrict and constrain their own economic wellbeing, anticipating returns outside of market considerations. Galt (2013, pg. 362) is correct in that, “CSAs, in theory, should foster an open dialogue about farmers’ and farmworkers’ earnings, how members may better cover them, and issues of access to food. CSA farmers, farmworkers, and members are supposed to be engaging in a moral economy in which these questions are central and, fundamentally, not decided through the dictates of an amoral self-regulating market.” Just as the case of PRDF CSA and so many other CSA’s across the United States, if economic stability cannot be sustained for the farm and farmers, the movement will cease to exist and this type of reflexive engagement will be severely limited.

PRDF shows that Community Supported Agriculture can be an optimal method of farming reflexively. The experience gained through the CSA and deep reflection of events can aid in the success of future farming ventures. In this manner, CSA and reflexive farming can help train future alternative agricultural leaders (McFadden, 2003; Henderson and Van En, 1999; Ackerman-Leist, 2013). The fear that CSA may become lost of meaning or purpose as reflexive engagement is decreased (McFadden, 2003; Henderson and Van En, 1999) is valid, however, the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods provided an example of people farming reflexively. Although there was clear room for improvement, PRDF CSA allowed farmers to address current, on-going agricultural issues with their own personal identity to create not only food, but a possibly stronger connection to the larger food system.

Chapter 7

Implications and Recommendations

Implications

Wee and Brooks (2010, pg. 46) write, “it is also natural that, at some point, the search should become one for advice on reflexivity itself, on how to be more self-aware, on the assumption that this will enable the self to make better choices with regard to both itself and to others.” The aim of this research is just that, to elucidate the often-confusing theoretical concept of reflexivity and show how it may help with participation within the alternative food network, specifically in Community Supported Agriculture. The information gleaned from the People’s Republic of Delicious Foods CSA aided in describing exactly what the reflexive process is, how it operates, and how it can be encouraged for continued practice.

To describe reflexive eating and reflexive farming, reflexivity itself was dismantled into three distinct areas that encapsulated the social science discipline that has developed work on that area. These areas of understanding (psychology), identity (anthropology), and action (sociology) deserve research in their own right, as they may strengthen or weaken the reflexive process. All three can also be examined for how each area interacts and influences the previous and proceeding part of the process. The research with PRDF CSA is an example of examining these different parts to illuminate reflexive behavior.

Reflexivity, in both eating and farming, depends on an understanding of an activity about to transpire and the internal motivation for engaging in participation. Those that took part in PRDF CSA displayed the ability to make informed decisions concerning food choices while forging personal connections

to the process, consistent with the findings of others in the field (Stock, 2007; Kaup, 2008; DuPuis, 2000). In PRDF CSA, this enhanced understanding of the project eased the minds of participants by addressing many of their concerns with meat production and gave space to voice future concerns. Reflexivity in the project allowed participants to express their personal inspiration for taking part and recognized that the experience is a part of an individual's identity, something sorely lacking from the industrialized agrifood system. PRDF CSA also exhibited food as subject of reflexive engagement, one that has many implications and worthy of further investigation (Archer, 2010).

Working in conjunction with understanding, an individual's identity is essential for reflexive engagement in both eating and farming. Giddens (1990, 1991) and Archer (2010, 2012) find that identity is a product of living in the current era, as one must recognize their position within greater social structures and remain conscious of others, even on a global scale. Participants in PRDF CSA exemplified this by being cognizant of their own position and privilege, while attempting to address the social, environmental, and health inequalities found in our current industrialized agrifood system. However, with this awareness came a sense of estrangement from these larger social structures and a general lack of trust in them. Similar to the findings of DuPuis (2000) and Guthman (2003), food as a part of one's identity became a highly personal way to express this distrust and impart agency over their own bodies.

From understanding and identity comes some form of social action. In PRDF CSA participants answered and addressed many of the questions and concerns that go unheeded in the current agricultural system, while displaying

their ethics and values concerning food. The shared experience in the CSA altered future understandings of agriculture and food, having a varied effect on the individual's identity. PRDF CSA provided an experiential learning opportunity that allowed participants to act reflexively, in farming and eating. As in the finding from PRDF CSA and others (Kerton and Sinclair, 2010; Lockie, 2009; Johnston and Szabo, 2011), these experiences may have long-lasting effects on decision-making processes, well beyond agriculture and food.

Addressing Research Questions

The following are research questions posed earlier that propelled the qualitative inquiry into Community Supported Agriculture participation and reflexivity:

How does participation in CSA reveal reflexive practices? Can examples be made that display both farmer and member reflexivity?

Community Supported Agriculture can provide more opportunities for members to engage in reflexive practice than our current industrialized agrifood system. The experience can be based in education, as to clear up any misconceptions or ambiguity behind food practices and it can also be an expression of ones' own identity as modern eaters participate in alternative food networks. By 'putting a face on food', CSA reveals reflexive involvement for participants. Specific examples of both reflexive eating and reflexive farming are provided to illuminate these practices.

How does CSA encourage or instill reflexive practices?

Community Supported Agriculture can bring individuals closer to their food source than our current industrial system allows. The farming practice calls upon its participants to become more active and engaged with their food, providing some experience based in agriculture. It directly links participants to a farmer, forging a relationship long lost in our current system, and clears any questions or concerns about their food production. CSA also lets participants parallel their food decisions with other aspects of their identity, including ethics, opinions, or values. The combined efforts of CSA provide a space for actual alternatives to the industrial system to take place.

What can constrain or facilitate reflexivity in CSA?

Relationships formed between participants are crucial to constraining or facilitating reflexivity in Community Supported Agriculture. The flow of information, development of trust, and the amount of interaction are vital to the process. Actual experiences on-farm also seemed to have a positive effect on the reflexive outcome, for both farmers and members.

Can careful construction of a CSA encourage reflexivity?

Many events can be structured to illicit reflexive responses from participants; however, the most effective from PRDF CSA were on-farm visits. Most of the visits were planned over a short period of time, but made lasting impression with participants. In many instances, only one visit sparked the reflexive process.

Does participation in CSA reveal greater resistance to the industrial system?

The majority of participants in this study had already been engaging in alternatives to the industrial food system prior to their involvement in the CSA. Many expressed their mistrust, disappointment, and fear of the current industrialized food system, and were looking for ways to actively participate with their food source. By taking part in alternatives to the industrial system participants are engaging in a form of substitution and contestation, which ubiquitously is imbued with political resistance.

Recommendations

Active participation in the CSA seemed to be vital to the overall positive outcomes for members. Opportunities that encourage participation were noted by participants as some of their fondest recollections and cited as motivation for further involvement with CSA. By holding an open-door policy for farm visits and animal husbandry practices, participants were able to choose when they became involved and the depth of their involvement. Mandatory involvement in some CSA activities may be suggested to ensure that all involved share a base understanding and commonly shared lived experience.

The most common element mentioned by all of those involved, across all aspects of this research, was trust. In CSA, trust is everything for the farmers and the members. Trust builds the farm by the farmer and brings members to the CSA. The combination of reflexive eating and farming appears to be a way to build trust in food where it has been lost before. An open line of communication across the CSA is vital to building and sustaining this trust. In good times or bad,

a face must be put on the food and the harsh realities of agricultural production have to be told.

Another crucial element mentioned by participants was the experiential educational opportunities available. Many were able to connect their thoughts and ideas about food production to something they actually experienced. These experiences were then later cited for current decision making with food.

Community Supported Agriculture farms may benefit greatly by providing events that focus on the educational aspects, whether personal or large groups. Through the dissemination of knowledge and built trust between farmer and members, new generations of CSA members may be attracted to the farm.

Recognizing the motivations that bring people to participate in Community Supported Agriculture is indispensable. By understanding what both the farmers and members are trying to achieve can help clear up any vagueness or uncertainties in the CSA. As motivations relate to trust building in the CSA, it is important to make these clear when the project is forming, or when new members join.

Ensuring sustainability for Community Supported Agriculture has to be first and foremost for farmers and members. Each aspect of sustainability must be addressed or CSA will be nonexistent. The “three-legged stool” approach of environmental, social, and economic forces should be taken under consideration. CSA has been shown to be outstanding at the environmental and social aspects, but lacking economic success. Focusing on the financial outcomes may prove to be very important.

Limitations

The power to which this research study can be generalized at large is minimal. The relatively small sample size and homogenous composition make it difficult to extrapolate across society. The use of the theoretical concept of reflexivity has been operationalized for this study and thereby becomes subjective and open for examination. Qualitative work itself is interpretive and also adds to the subjective nature of this research. Despite those limitations, the sample from the People's Republic of Delicious Foods CSA does resemble a portion of modern eaters in our current food system.

Future Work

Longitudinal work with participants from PRDF CSA can help further our understanding of reflexive processes. By examining further participation in alternative food networks, a sense of the impacts of involvement can be evaluated. Looking at how the CSA experience effected meat consumption over a longer period of time for participants might highlight its depth and sustaining meaning. Long-term research with participants can conceivably shed light on greater resistance (or lack thereof) to the industrial system stemming from the CSA experience.

Continued work improving the experiences for both farmers and members of Community Supported Agriculture is needed to ensure its place in alternative food networks. Researching methods to improve relations across the CSA may prove to have positive effects on both member retention and farm longevity rates.

Examining the actual lived experiences by those involved may provide key elements for improvement.

Appendix A

Question Protocol Interview #1

PRDF

June 5, 2013

1. You can start off by telling me how old you are.
2. Where's your hometown?
3. So what's your ethnicity?
4. Are you married?
5. Do you have any children?
6. Any brothers and sisters?
7. Other family?
8. So that's how often you see them?
9. Did you grow up in a religious house?
10. So do you practice any type of religion?
11. So what was food like growing up?
12. Okay, do you vote?
13. Do you vote for everything?
14. So do you vote for everything from school board to president?
15. And when you vote what party do you usually vote with?
16. Do you trust the government?
17. Why not?
18. What about the system? Do you trust the system?
19. I will bring up two agencies. The first agency is the USDA, the United States Department of Agriculture, and their sole purpose is behind food security, so that's like growing food, food production. Do you trust them?
20. So I'll bring up another agency the FDA, which is the Food and Drug Administration, and their sole purpose is to make sure that our food is safe. So do you trust them?
21. So you've got a crystal ball in front of you and are able to look in the future, what's the worst-case scenario?
22. So how do you contribute to this worst-case scenario?
23. Okay, other side of the equation, what's the best-case scenario?
24. And how do you contribute to this?
25. Are you happy?
26. If you could change one thing, whether it be real or not real, doable or not doable, to make yourself happier, what would it be?
27. So what's your current job?
28. Okay so how long have you been doing that?
29. Are you satisfied with it?
30. Does it feel more like more than just a job, like a vocation?
31. Okay, okay. Are you involved with any clubs or activities or organizations?
32. Do you do any physical activities?
33. How tall are you?
34. And how much you weigh?
35. And any major health problems?

36. So I'm asking some questions about some agricultural stuff and I want you to just tell me what the first thing you think of is. Okay? So if I say agricultural production what do you think of?
37. And if I say agricultural processing or manufacturing what do you think of?
38. And if I say agricultural distribution?
39. And agricultural access?
40. And if I say agricultural wealth accumulation, what do you think of?
41. So in your house who cooks?
42. And what does the food contain? Is it all by scratch, a mix, or all processed?
43. Tell me what breakfast looks like.
44. And you're eating this together?
45. So what's lunch look like?
46. Are you eating this with other people?
47. So what's dinner look like?
48. Do you give yourself enough time to eat?
49. How often do you go to restaurants?
50. Do you ever eat at the computer?
51. How often you go grocery shopping?
52. And where you going grocery shopping at?
53. Any fast food?
54. And what are you hoping to get out of the CSA?
55. Anything you'd like just to add to this interview?

A Snapshot of _____

Hello and thanks for taking the time to fill this out. What I'm asking you to do is fill in the blanks found below. Take as much time as you need and in the end email it to me. Your answers will be completely confidential. You'll also see that our shared CSA experience isn't talked about here, we'll save that for face-to-face interviews. You can think about this as a journal entry, one that may show you something about yourself. I hope that this allows you to present yourself in your own manner and that it may help further CSA projects in the future.

If I had only five words to describe myself they would be _____. If I had another five words to describe the closest people around me (friends, family, coworkers) they would be _____. When I think of the person I'd like to be, or things I'd like to do, I think of _____. Overall, I think I'm a good person because _____.

When I think of equality in America, I think of _____. When I see someone or come into contact with someone that is asking for money I usually think _____. I spend _____ (a lot or a little) _____ amount of time trying to 'put myself in other peoples shoes'. To me the phrase means _____.

In general, the things I enjoy the most about food are _____. Overall my cooking skills are _____. I spend _____ amount of time each day thinking about food. Usually I'm thinking about _____. My favorite foods are _____. My process of obtaining food (where and how I get food) is _____. My process of storing food is _____. My process of cooking is _____. My process of eating is _____. In general the things I worry about the most concerning my food is _____.

The environment makes me think of _____. The way that I participate in recycling is _____. I think about environmental impacts when I'm buying or participating in _____. I (do or do not) participate in some form of 'environmental karma'. For example, "I drive a hybrid, so I can take extra airplane trips to balance it out." I think that _____. The world's population of people has this kind of effect on the environment _____. Overall, the people who are using the most resources and doing the most damage to the environment are _____.

Industrial agriculture means _____. About _____% of agricultural land in the US is devoted to industrial practices. There's _____% of industrial farmers in the US and on average they are _____ years old. The people involved in industrial agriculture probably think that their jobs _____. The people involved in industrial agriculture are treated or regarded as _____. The animals involved in industrial agriculture are treated or regarded as _____. This form of agriculture, or the way we produce and consume food, became like this because _____. This form of agriculture operates because _____. Overall, I think industrial agriculture makes me feel _____.

Alternative agriculture means _____. About _____% of agricultural land in the US is devoted to alternative practices. There's _____% of alternative farmers in the US and on average they are _____ years old. The people involved in alternative agriculture probably think that their jobs _____. The people involved in alternative agriculture are treated or regarded as _____.

The animals involved in alternative agriculture are treated or regarded as _____. This form of agriculture, or the way we produce and consume food, became like this because _____. This form of agriculture operates because _____. Overall, I think alternative agriculture makes me feel _____.

Biotechnology, especially in agriculture, means _____. The way we use biotechnology today is _____. My feelings towards the use are _____. I think the possible damages are _____. However, the possible positives might be _____. In the future I think the way biotechnology will be used looks like _____.

As far as who actually works in agriculture in the US, I think it's primarily made up of _____. And their work conditions are like _____. Overall, when I think about agricultural labor I feel _____.

I (have/have not) heard the phrase 'Feeding the World' about American Agriculture. The phrase makes me think _____. To 'feed the world' American Agriculture does _____.

Today we spend _____% of our disposable income on food in the US. In South Korea they spend _____% of their disposable income.

Lastly, I'll leave this space for you to add anything you'd like. Remember, any thoughts about the CSA should be left for our next and last face-to-face interviews.

Thanks again for taking the time to do this. Please email this as an attachment. You can also print this out or send it to yourself. My hopes are that we can improve upon Community Supported Agriculture and that this journal entry can show you something about yourself. Please take a look again at the passage I've included from the informed consent form you've previously signed:

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This research is being conducted to help *learn more about Community Supported Agriculture farms and the people involved with them.* **When you are invited to participate in research, you have the right to be informed about the study procedures so that you can decide whether you want to consent to participation. This form may contain words that you do not know. Please ask the researcher to explain any words or information that you do not understand.**

You have the right to know what you will be asked to do so that you can decide whether or not to be in the study. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to be in the study if you do not want to. You may refuse to be in the study and nothing will happen. If you do not want to continue to be in the study, you may stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, feel free to contact me at (Information has been redacted)

Question Protocol #2

PRDF

July 3, 2013

1. What was the name of the CSA we just participated in?
2. How many people participated?
3. How many farmers?
4. How much was a share?
5. How many pounds of food did you get?
6. Where was the farm located?
7. What did we grow?
8. What were the breeds of animals that we used?
9. Did any of them have names?
10. What were they?
11. How much was a share?
12. How many pounds of food did you get?
13. What kind of feed did we use?
14. What were the conditions like for the animals we raised?
15. How was what we did different from the mainstream?
16. What were environmental conditions like when we raised the animals?
17. How much work was involved with the animals? Daily basis
18. How much did money was I paid?
19. What prompted us to do the CSA?
20. What events did we have?
21. Which ones did you attend?
22. What brought you to the CSA?
23. Have you ever participated in something like this before?
24. Do you do any other food related activities?
25. What did you do in the CSA?
26. Did you ever miss any pickups?
27. What did you think the CSA was going to be?
28. Did it match what you thought it was going to be like?
29. Did you enjoy the CSA?
30. Would you do something like this again?
31. What would you change about it?
32. Were you satisfied with the amount and quality of goods you got?
33. Were you happy with the activities?
34. Would you have done more with the CSA?
35. Describe the feeling or emotion you have when you think back on the CSA.
36. Do you think your coworkers are participating in alternatives to the food system like CSA, home gardening, farmers markets, etc?
37. Do you have friends who are doing these kinds of alternatives?
37. a Do you have family who are doing these kinds of alternatives?
38. Do you think it's important to know where your food comes from?
39. Do you think that it's important to understand processes behind the products you buy?

40. Do you think that it's important to know where your money is going, to whom you're supporting?
41. What prompts you to do alternatives to the grocery store?
42. Do you think that you're being an activist by participating in the CSA?
43. Do you think that you're changing the way we eat?
44. Do you think that you're making a difference?
45. What do you think the term CSA means?
46. What are your feelings about the word community? What does it mean?
47. Did you think you'd meet new people? Did you?
48. Are you concerned with our current food system?
49. What are the solutions, for everyone?
50. What did you do with the meat?
51. Do you think you know more about how some meat animals are raised?
52. Do you think you understand the labor and resources that go into meat production?
53. Do you think the CSA has changed you in any ways?
54. Do you think more about your meat consumption?
55. Are you trying to get meat in any other ways outside of the grocery store?
56. What did you tell others about the CSA?
57. Are you planning on doing something like this in the future?
58. If someone had similar plans, would you do it?
59. Are you applying anything you learned in the CSA to any other practices?
60. Where do you go from here?
61. What will you tell people about the CSA?
62. Do you have one memory in particular that stands out?

Appendix B

Selected responses to interview #1, self-administered questionnaire, and interview #2.

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods (PRDF)

What was the name of the CSA we just participated in? 4 correct, 21 incorrect, 1 did not answer. *"Uh, something with food and power and a fist."*

How many people participated? 20-30

How many farmers? *"I would say four. You and John and Fred and Fred's son who works closely on the farm. But, technically we were all farmers."*

How much was a share? 21 incorrect, 2 correct, 3 did not answer.

How many pounds of food did you get? 40-50 pounds. *"A lot."*

Did any of the animals have names? What were they? *"Yes, the pigs were named after Republicans. Michelle, Newt, Mitt, and Ron. And Newt was a jerk."*

What kind of feed did we use? *"Grass fed cattle, grain and forage for chickens, food scraps and feed for pigs.", "It was all top of the line, organic. We kept them as chemical free as possible.", "Oh, uh, it was the organic, all that good stuff, I'm sure."*

What were the conditions like for the animals? *"I know that it was really hot. I know that you did special things to make sure they stayed cool. I remember you talking about hanging bags of ice in front of fans and things like that to keep them cool and I shared that story with friends who were raising poultry and had troubles with the heat and they thought it was funny because if you're not trying to make a living off this, it's unfortunate when they die but people don't think about it too much. So I was really impressed with what you did to keep them alive. They were in easy to move pens. The pigs were in makeshift pen on the Martz property. They had a tarp next to a tree for some shade and a wallowing hole. They seemed like the happiest piggy's they could be."*

How was what we did different from the mainstream? *"I think a lot of care and attention went into the quality of life for the animals. Being able to do what they would do naturally even though they've been domesticated for a long time. Freedom to roam around and forage, as compared to a very small, boxed-in area.", "Well I knew where the food was coming from and I knew the people taking care of it and I trust them. I guess I never came into contact with those who processed the animals but I trust you took care of it.", "Totally different. I*

remember when I cooked the turkey and I had to wash it beforehand. I had my hands all in it and all of a sudden I had a moment where I was so very grateful for the turkey. I imagined myself back on the farm and it was very hippy-dippy. So that's real different from how I get food at the grocery store."

How much money was I paid? No one answered correctly.

Food Concerns

Do you think it's important to know where your food comes from? "Absolutely. It's really about thinking about our health. Understanding that and understanding how growing your food is linked to the environment. It's linked to our long-term success as a whole.", "Each of our choices has ramifications. So you can make informed decisions. If you could choose between an animal that has been treated like shit and an animal that was treated the way we did, it's a no-brainer. If the animal is healthier than they will be healthier for us.", "I think that the better you eat the better you feel. I think that food should be looked at health insurance for the future. It's something that us Americans don't put enough emphasis on. For the health of our economy, for the health of our country and society as a whole, food is something we need to take more seriously and we don't.", "Yes, because now more than ever before we know that companies and corporations do not have our best interests at heart. There's so much processed food out there with chemicals and you never know where it's been. So yeah, I think we're going to find out that all of our health problems are due to the way we eat."

Do you think that it's important to understand processes behind the products you buy? "Well I think that it's important to know for multiple reasons. For health, because you want to know what you are putting into your body and you want to know how that's affecting your body. Also in terms in society there are a lot of people who are...used. There are farm laborers that are mistreated, that are underpaid. I can't think of the word I'm thinking of but you know what I'm talking about. I think that it's important to know whether or not your food has been a part of a process that is partly damaging our society in multiple ways.", "I could know everything about how you guys raised my meat but I don't know how that feed was produced or where it came from. There's a long chain that's connected to what we did. I guess if the producer has my best interest in mind and his or her own best interests in mind, there should be a lot of overlap between the two, that they are going to make the right decisions. So it's a matter of picking the right producer. So I just let them make the decisions. So as long I trust that they are making the right decisions then I don't need to know the details. Same thing with the mechanic and other people that I work with."

Do you think that it's important to know where your money is going, to whom you're supporting? "I think that's actually more to the point for me. I guess maybe because of the family I came from. I see people making good livings off of farming and I want that to stay the same. I realize that at this point I have to

spend my money differently so that still happens. I want people to make nice livings off of farming.”, “Yeah, I’d rather support someone local and I don’t necessarily need to know that person, but as long as they are local versus lining the pocket of a CEO in New York City. It’s a moral concern of mine. The reason why we have the food system we have is because it profits somebody and those people who it profits are a small group of people who have a lot of power and they are not looking out for best interests. They do whatever they can to undercut the FDA or USDA and if you are trying to do that then guess what you don’t have my interests. I don’t like that power part. Putting money into the hands of those people.”, “Damn right. I feel like if you spend your money on companies that harm animals and torture them then you should be implicated in how destructive those processes are.”

Motivations

What brought you to the CSA? “I knew that I’d learn something. And if I was going to continue to eat meat I knew that I had to better inform myself on how to do that for the rest of my life.”, “Oh the people in it were awesome. As someone who has worked in animal science I have seen how animals are treated. As a meat eater I feel bad most of the time when I buy from the grocery store. So I think that there is a better way, so I do buy at farmers markets. Having the opportunity to do the meat CSA was a no-brainer. Good meat, fresh, local, and also I could teach Lucy where her food comes from. I think vegetables are a real pretty way to teach agriculture but animals are not.”, “I think it’s complicated but I think the main thing was you.”, “Talía had asked if I wanted to do it with her. Obviously, knowing you. Not ever being able to experience anything like that was really interesting to me. I really didn’t know anything about farming and especially animal farming. Just what I’ve seen in newspapers and propaganda from the environmental organizations and what they say happens. It was a good learning experience.”, “My daughter. So that she could know where her food comes from. So that it wasn’t just some package at the store. She needs to know that food is cultivated, food is raised, and food is grown. We all need to know how to take care of our food, really anything we consume.”

What prompted us to do the CSA? “Passion for agriculture and a need to work in a more socially and ecologically sustainable way.”, “I’m sure you’re discontent with how animals are raised and the way people are connected to each other. So I know that you’re interested in finding out why people seek out these alternatives in participating in the food system.”, “I can only imagine a number of factors. I’m sure you guys have learned a lot about conditions on factory farms and so I’m sure that drove you to do this. Which I think is pretty cool because it’s not easy to do this. But I would like to think you guys did this out of an interest to help the people in your community see the different ways of doing things. So that when we go to the store now we can make better choices and we’re also able to push or be in an activist role. To make activist decisions.”

If I had another five words to describe the closest people around me (friends, family, coworkers) they would be:

When I think of the person I'd like to be, or things I'd like to do, I think of: *“my family, they make me want to be a better person.”, “having an impact, having fun, having a good time with friends and family.”*

Overall, I think I’m a good person because: *“I care about how my actions impact others.”, “I try to consider how my actions impact others and consider myself a global citizen.”, “I try to make the world a better place through my actions.”, “I care about the fate of the underdog.”*

Demographics

Gender	15 Women 11 Men
Age	Low 24 High 58 Average 32.5
Race	25 White 1 Mixed
Hometown	16 Midwest 4 West Coast 4 East Coast 2 South
Marital Status	17 Married 9 Not
Children	13 No children 8 One child 2 Two children 3 Three or more
Religiosity	19 Not 5 Not asked 2 Actively religious
Political Ideology	24 Democrat 1 None 1 Not asked
Career	12 Graduate students 6 Administration 5 Professors 1 Domestic 1 Politics 1 Unemployed

Community

What are your feelings about the word community? What does it mean? *“I just think it means people who live in a sort of geographic proximity of each other and have some commonality.”*, *“I think it means shared values. Remove the physical sense of it and it always means the same. The community of us, we could move wherever, and it’d still be us. I think shared values. Although I think that there would be multiple values that would bring people to this, but I think there’s some commonality among them.”*, *“Community to me I guess means people who have a shared vision or some shared trajectory. So you can live on a street and not have community if you don’t interact with your neighbors. But when you live on a street and share food from your garden with your neighbors or tell your neighbors when you’re going out of town or let your neighbors dog out, that to me means community. So there’s a shared life between people. Community Supported Agriculture works in the same way in that we are*

supporting a farmer and they are supporting us with nourishment. It's not just a business relationship.", "I just think it means people who live in a sort of geographic proximity of each other and have some commonality."

Do you think your coworkers are participating in alternatives to the food system like CSA, home gardening, farmers markets, etc? *"Yeah. Primarily my peers at my workplace.", "Oh yeah. I know on my floor alone that two people have chickens. A few hunt for meat. A fair amount garden. A few of us have been in vegetable CSAs. Almost all of us go to the farmers' market."*

Do you have friends who are doing these kinds of alternatives? *"Yeah, that's who I've learned the most from.", "Absolutely. A lot of Derby people were a part of the CSA or they are dietitians, or they grow food. They are aware of the farmers market, they go to the farmers market. They have gardens and chickens and can food."*

Affect

Describe the feeling or emotion you have when you think back on the CSA: *"Thankful is the first word that comes to mind.", "One? I feel like it was a responsible thing to do and I feel like it was a good healthy to do. I'm leaving feeling really good about the whole thing.", "Informed trust, I guess. With food systems there's a certain spectrum of anxiety that's involved with it. You never know if what you are eating is a net positive for yourself from a health perspective, for the environment for a ecosystem health level, or for the producers for themselves. You may just be putting food into yourself that may be screwing everyone else. Someone is obviously profiting and it's not the producers, it's not the environment, and it's probably not yourself. But with this it was the opposite of that anxiety. I don't know what the opposite emotion to anxiety is being a grad student. So yeah I think it was a positive experience for all those involved in it, even the animals that I was eating. I don't feel like they had a bad life going into it. A certain level of, kind of, contentedness is a little too much maybe."*

Trust in Greater Structures

Do you trust the government? *"Um, I don't know. I think that our government consists of a lot of different groups competing for their own special interests. The naive part of me would like to think that good wins and I would like to hope that people who get in to these careers, these careers can't be easy, that there's some people who go into government careers that want good things for people, they want a better world, a better society. So I would like to think that by-and-large that these are good people trying their best, but I think that special interests sometimes get in.", "Um, I trust bureaucrats actually, I trust the everyday people who are doing their jobs because I don't think they are any different from me. Many elected officials, I'd say I don't trust them. And I think*

when people say government they're clear on what they mean. The everyday bureaucrats I do trust.", "Having worked for the government in the past I do and I don't. I've had the unfortunate fortunateness of seeing how it really works. How much power is really resting on those underpaid 20-something year olds is really shocking. I know that they are there to do good but they are not elected officials so they don't have that ultimate power. On the ground-level, where I was working, we were doing all the work, all the research, all the writing."

Why not? "Um, I just don't think we get the whole story on everything. I think that there are a lot of secret agendas. I think that people don't have a big of a say as they claim they do. I think that there's just always a bigger agenda going on.", "I've learned a lot about that side of things and it makes me weary and I think that voters don't have any power. I think that we are romanced into thinking we have power but there's so much we don't have any influence in. And if your group doesn't have a good lobbyist then your interests are not going to be heard."

What about the system? Do you trust the system? "We live in a democracy because we can all vote but in the end when you look at who runs for elected office and who gets elected, they don't really represent the people. First of all there's hardly any women, there's no poor people, even when you look at who comes back to represent Columbia in the statehouse, they're all men who grew up in Columbia moved away, they have a big homecoming back to Columbia, they have prominent parents and then they run for elected office and they get elected.", "(laughs) elaborate for me please. OK, I see what you're saying. I think when it originally started in its purest form it probably worked. But now there is a separation. There are the people and the government. And the government does not do what the people need or want. So I guess as far as believing in it, I've lost a lot of faith in it. I think government is bloated. The people in power are rich and they have all and everything they want or need, as the people are suffering."

Do you trust the USDA? "Nope, not at all. Take the school lunch program, the fact that they allow schools to count potatoes as a vegetable and that 50% of meals are pizza, it's horseshit to me. If they really had our best interests at heart this would not fly.", "As far as production, yes. As far as what's best for us, no. Does that make sense? I think they are good at growing food. I think that they are terrible for growing food we don't need. Yes, they're doing their job. But it's a bad one.", "No. Having sat through agriculture subcommittee meetings in the House, there was always testimony going on, like everyone was asleep. The joke in the House when I was working there was if you needed a nap you got to the House agricultural meetings. I have more trust in farmers than I do the agencies that dictate to them."

Do you trust the FDA? "No. I think they are probably trying to do the best they can, but they have to make choices and there are things that they just let slide. I

don't think that all of the food we have now is safe, but there is so much more food than we need and that we've ever produced in the past. I've worked at a slaughterhouse and I know that we went through great lengths to make sure everything was clean. I think that there is a lot of pressure put on producers to make food and they do the best they can. We have a broken system.", "It needs to be strengthened. They are completely at the whim of how they are funded, where they are getting their money. It's so political. Without teeth they are pointless."

World Views

So you've got a crystal ball in front of you and are able to look in the future, what's the worst-case scenario for the world? *"I guess fighting over the most basic needs. People killing others for food or water for their family. Total chaos. Or to give up all of those values society has developed over thousands of years.", "I think we're simply going to overshoot the carrying capacity of the earth.", "Worst case scenario is that we're going to continue to tinker with what we think will produce a large profit and a large gain. So that we'll allow corporate farmers and food processing to take over and we'll be eating food that doesn't even taste like it's original form, look like it's original form."*

So how do you contribute to this worst-case scenario? *"I live and I consume.", "By not paying enough attention to what's going on currently with policies that are leading us down a less sustainable path...and by making decisions that don't make our food system equitable on a local and global scale.", "More passively than actively. I don't think that I'm going to be the direct creator of calamity but I may be an unknowing contributor. I think I may be more a victim than a criminal."*

Okay, other side of the equation, what's the best-case scenario? *"I don't know that there is one.", "Let's go back to how it was 100 years ago, you know. People working together, homesteading. This would be my ideal vision for the future.", "I guess as a society I don't see much of a best case scenario. It's not redeemable.", "We'd live with an economy that lifts people from abject poverty, but we also live in an economy that's environmentally sustainable as well as socially sustainable. Justice for everybody and wealth, but wealth isn't necessarily money. Everybody has access to a basic standard of living.", "I would like to see people be more concerned about each other and the environment, not just so individualistic."*

And how do you contribute to this? *"Uh, I like to contribute by participating in some form of community, be that through food systems or be that through the clubs I'm in and having a connection with people instead of a lack of connection.", "I'm not sure that I really am. Probably more on the idea that I'm trying to expose myself and my kids to other cultures and to see other cultures as equal and not different.", "I participate in my local economy by shopping at the farmers' market and by participating in community gardens, by sharing*

knowledge and resources with others, by joining a CSA. I donate to non-profit organizations that do work I believe in. I vote."

Equality

When I think of equality in America, I think of: *"everyone being accepted. I think we are a long way from that.", "there's no such thing.", "having a long way to go.", "a revolutionary project not yet finished."*

When I see someone or come into contact with someone that is asking for money I usually think: *"it is an unfortunate circumstance of our system.", "they need it more than I do.", "that it must be a hard position to be in."*

I spend (a lot or a little) amount of time trying to 'put myself in other peoples shoes'. 16 reported a lot.

To me the phrase means: *"seeking to understand the path where others have walked.", "thinking about how or what motivates them to action or their beliefs or what circumstances may have contributed to their actions.", "understanding my own privilege and using that to serve as an advocate and ally for change.", "cutting people slack (i.e. not judging their actions based only on what I see)."*

Ideas About Industrial Agriculture

Industrial agriculture means: *"concentrated food production.", "factory farming.", "scary."*

The people involved in industrial agriculture probably think that their jobs are: *"critical to feeding the world.", "important—feed the world complex unless they're the field workers then they may see their work as menial.", "are the foundation of the U.S. economy, but that most people do not know they exist, and therefore feel neglected and/or undervalued.", "feed the world."*

The people involved in industrial agriculture are treated or regarded as: *"patriots.", "indentured slaves.", "pawns.", "heroes/devils.", "cogs in a machine. I respect the farmers and believe they are honorable people. I don't like the industrial agriculture infrastructure that drives them to high intensity production at the cost of their land and with very little return for their families and community."*

The animals involved in industrial agriculture are treated or regarded as: *"products.", "a product, a way of life, and a living.", "property.", "food."*

This form of agriculture, or the way that we produce and consume food, became like this because: *"profits.", "we want low prices.", "of technological advances, population growth, and scarcity of agricultural land."*

This form of agriculture operates because: *“it is driven by profit and maintained by subsidies.”*, *“we allow it—we aren’t willing to give up cheap meat and corn.”*, *“we demand nothing different and our consumer choices allow it to perpetuate.”*

Overall, I think industrial agriculture makes me feel: *“like it’s out of my control.”*, *“sad, hopeless and fat.”*, *“nauseous.”*, *“icky and gross and sad and helpless.”*, *“mistrusting.”*

As far as who actually works in agriculture in the US, I think it's primarily made up of: *“older white men and Hispanic immigrants and migrant workers.”*, *“rural folks.”*, *“small family farmers.”*, *“men.”*

And their work conditions are like: *“crap.”*, *“difficult and dangerous.”*, *“often exploitive.”*

Overall, when I think about agricultural labor I feel: *“sorry for them.”*, *“ashamed.”*, *“conflicted.”*

So if I say agricultural production what do you think of? *“Monoculture.”*, *“Commodity agriculture.”*, *“Monsanto.”*

And if I say agricultural processing or manufacturing what do you think of? *“I think of meat being cut up and packaged.”*, *“Conveyer belts.”*, *“I think of ADM. It smells horrible.”*

And if I say agricultural distribution? *“Farmers’ market came to mind right away.”*, *“The large Cysco truck and food deserts.”*, *“trucks.”*

And agricultural access? *“Not many people have it. I think people are cut off from it.”*, *“Hungry children. People not being able to, distribution that is what I think of. Not being able to get food where it needs to be.”*, *“Grocery stores.”*

And if I say agricultural wealth accumulation, what do you think of? *“Monsanto.”*, *“Cargill.”*, *“I think of Archer, Daniels, Midland.”*, *“White rich men.”*, *“Chubby white guys.”*, *“The death of the family farm. The fact that only two percent of people are involved in agriculture and that they produce more than ever before. That tells me that a small portion of people hold large pieces of land.”*

I (have/have not) heard the phrase 'Feeding the World' about American Agriculture. 16 have, 3, have not, 7 not answered.

The phrase makes me think: *“it’s not a production issue it’s a distribution issue.”*, *“propaganda rooted in a proud tradition.”*, *“we are ridiculous to think we are responsible for feeding the world—when much of the world is hunger because of us.”*, *“it is not America’s place—especially if we can’t feed our citizens.”*

Ideas About Alternative Agriculture

Alternative agriculture means: *“community gardens, CSAs, aquaculture, organic, hydroponics, rooftop gardens, farmers markets.”*, *“considering people, profits and the planet equally in its practices.”*, *“trying to find a better way and perhaps fixing our broken food cycle.”*, *“growing soil, not food.”*, *“community and more control for consumers.”*

The people involved in alternative agriculture probably think that their jobs are: *“worthy, lofty, and much better than conventional agriculture.”*, *“are important to facilitate change.”*, *“political.”*, *“important and worthwhile.”*

The people involved in alternative agriculture are treated or regarded as: *“innovators, idealists, dreamers and hard working.”*, *“strange/hippies.”*, *“hard workers, naïve, maybe ‘hippies’.”*, *“valued individuals.”*

The animals involved in alternative agriculture are treated or regarded as: *“co-producers.”*, *“living beings.”*, *“creatures deserving care, comfort and respect.”*, *“pets in the opinion of industrial agriculturalists and properly by the larger public.”*

This form of agriculture, or the way we produce and consume food, became like this because: *“industrial agriculture is not sustainable.”*, *“the food produced by the factory system is unsustainable, unknowable, and less healthy.”*

This form of agriculture operates because: *“people feel they have a right to better food.”*, *“its better for the environment, for people, for our food, for our health.”*

Overall, I think alternative agriculture makes me feel: *“better about the purchases I make.”*, *“hopeful.”*, *“like there is something I can do on a very small scale.”*

Biotechnology

Biotechnology, especially in agriculture, means: *“manipulating living organisms or specific properties within them to achieve a desirable goal—e.g. increased yields, greater pest resistance.”*, *“humans messing up Mother Nature.”*

The way we use biotechnology today is: *“heavily controlled by powerful corporate interests.”*, *“scary.”*, *“tricking brown people into thinking that we can save their agriculture.”*

My feelings towards the use of biotechnology is: *“that it’s important for progress and advancement.”*, *“complicated.”*, *“a double-edged sword: there are some benefits, but there is not enough research to identify long-term consequences.”*, *“mixed, while I see the positive thrust behind it, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.”*

I think the possible damages are: *“unknown, and that is very scary.”*, *“unknown.”*, *“innumerable. We are short-sighted regarding biotech.”*

However, the possible positives might be: *“important to adaptation to climate change and future food production.”*, *“leverage science to better our lives.”*

In the future I think the way biotechnology will be used looks like: *“terrifying.”*, *“a brave new world.”*, *“nothing we can really imagine.”*

Food Identity

So what was food like growing up?

“Because we were really poor we were on subsidized food and my mom made a lot of rice and beans. When I say a lot I mean in our hallway there were buckets of rice and beans that lined the walls. After he got out of medical school things got better but my mom really doesn't cook. We cooked whatever was cheap and easy. We did eat a lot of moose and caribou.”

“We used to have these big dinners and my grandparents would come over and it would be huge. Aunts and uncles would come over a couple times a month. Once my parents separated that stopped.”

“Processed. I was just thinking about this because I often like to treat myself at the store and buy some processed food. And I remember when I was a kid our treat if we were good or whatever was one of those horrible individual cans of grocery store pop, you know the grocery store brand or whatever, and then Twinkies or one of those pie things. And I remember fast food was a part of our life kind of. My dad was totally against it but my mom, so my dad stayed home constantly he was either unemployed or self-employed, so he was kind of in charge of our food when my mom worked, so I think my mom felt guilty because she was working, so every once in a while she would bring home KFC and pretend like it was a family meal. Um, but as my mom developed health problems that kind of changed over time, like now there is no salt. But I still think my parents eat like crap because they still go to places like Applebee's and stuff. But now they eat vegetables and fish and there is no salt so it's changed. They eat less processed food. But I don't think they understand what processed food is either. (laughs)”

“Food was home cooked, my mom made it. We very rarely ate out or very rarely went out and had food brought in. One thing that was distinctive to me was even when we did stop and get Kentucky Fried Chicken from the big city near by we would still sit at a dinner table, we had family meals every evening and everyone was expected to be there. Mom would take the Kentucky Fried Chicken out of the bucket and put it on a plate and serve it like it was a meal. Yeah, so family meals were a big part of life growing up. When I got to high school my dad starting traveling for his job and the oldest three were out and it was just the younger three meals were not as coordinated but my main memory

is everybody at the table by 5:30 and we ate together. Mom did a lot of canning growing up. I remember the tomatoes and pickles coming from the basement. There was a lot of frozen goods. We also had our own garden growing up, so we'd eat out of the garden during the summertime as well. Our meat would come from when we'd buy half a hog or half a cow or something like that. We'd have that in the deep freeze down in the basement and we'd draw from that."

In general, the things I enjoy the most about food are

Overall my cooking skills are

Do you do any other food related activities?

"I am not a food-centered person, ever. It's always out of convenience for me. Once in awhile I'll do the farmers' market, but I don't have a garden, I don't can, but I always want too, but I never seem to find the time for those kinds of things. The closest I get to food-centered things are wine festivals, wine tastings."

"Well this morning I picked four morels while walking our dog. So we have a small hoop house in our backyard and a community garden plot at the community garden where I am the coordinator. I like to grow food. I don't have a great deal of experience doing it, but so far we've done pretty well. Basically since we've moved back from our Peace Corps service in 2008 we've had a garden every year since then. We can a lot and freeze. Both my wife and I have attended a couple classes that Extension offered about extending the harvest. Each year we've ramped that up a little bit and the CSA helped that because it prompted us to get a deep freezer. So yeah hopefully we'll get a side of beef, some deer, and some vegetables in the freezer for the winter. We try to do a lot of preservation. I'm involved with a few food advocacy groups. I'm trying to start a Who's Who in Boone Food to essentially bring together all people in the food system and give them a way to network and interact in a facilitated way and document that conversation to further advance more local, nutritious foods for people. I would love to be involved with more stuff food related. I don't have the hard skills like soil science or plant science, but you learn as you go and I think I provide my own set of skills to the table."

"I do a lot of things with food. I buy in bulk from the Amish. I grow a lot of my own. I'm growing an acre of potatoes with my girlfriend's uncle. I've done hog butchering."

"Some of my favorite things to do is to read about and watch films about it. I started growing some vegetables. I canned a bunch of salsa. I have an apple tree so I can a lot of sauce. Next year I'm putting in way more stuff, garlic, corn, tomatoes. I like to cook. We're frantic right now because we're having a baby. Our cooking is crazy right now."

contributing to society. I can't save the world all on my own but I can do little things here and there."

Do you think that you're being an activist by participating in the CSA?

"I don't know. I wouldn't use the word activist because I think it implies an intent to change the food system and I am incredibly practical person in that it's going to take, I don't think that, I think that CSAs are important but I don't think that they're the way to change the food system. It's going to take some larger, overarching, scare the shit out of people, kind of thing to get change."

"I think so. I think because you are stepping out of what is the norm."

"Sure, definitely because in America what you spend your money on says a huge amount of who you are as a person. We're in a disgustingly money orientated society. So if we speak with our wallet then it's a good way. Maybe real low level activism though. You could do a lot more."

"I don't intend to be, but... I don't judge people for buying Tyson but it's something I choose not to do. I guess it's consumer activism I suppose, if there is such a thing. Because I'm choosing to purchase these items. Just like any food boycott would. Like, I'm not going to go to something like McDonald's, I'm just not going to give my money to them."

Do you think that you're changing the way we eat?

"Not in a real measurable way. I think it's created a swell in those that participated in it. I think we've been affected by the CSA so that we are looking for alternatives to the grocery store."

"Well I think if enough people acted the way I did we would change the way we eat. I can't do it myself but I could support you. So there has to be others that feel the way that I do. So all of us acting together we will be changing the way that we all eat. Heck we're changing grocery stores and I think they are trying to compete. I think we're starting to have an impact, but it's still pretty small. Getting bigger though."

"I don't know. I think it has the potential. I think it does. When I look at it as part of a bigger thing across the country then yeah I can see the potential but we have to find a way to meet the needs of those who are not yet met through this model."

What are the solutions for our food, for everyone?

"I think a lot of things contribute like farmers markets, home gardening, CSAs, and the popular press like Michael Pollan. I don't think there is a singular answer. I think a diversity of approaches and responses is good for different people for different reasons. I'm not all that concerned with the dangers with the food I eat. Frankly, it could come from the food I raise as it could come from the food at the market. Not that I use pesticides but there are other things out

there. We have the FDA that is working and companies are not stupid. They would not be in business long if they continue to get bad reputations.. So I guess the health aspects don't worry me as much as the agrarian goals that I think are important."

"Other than burning down Monsanto? No I'm just kidding. I think structurally it's going to be a hard fight. As a society we have a very strong infrastructure towards what we'd consider normal food production, you know, big farms, like Purdue. It's a very hard structure to dismantle. Change can happen though from the bottom up."

"Yes I have concern...solutions are a hard one because we just need to push the reset button. These large multi-national companies just need to go away. Communities in the geographical sense would go back to being communities in that people who know how to grow food, cultivate plants and to grow animals, have a little more power and authority instead of big-wigs farther up. I think you have to make people care and that's a hard thing to do, to make people care."

Lasting Impressions on the CSA

What did you tell others about the CSA? "Told them about the experience we had. I remember the first meal we made with the lamb was with my parents. They appreciated it.", "Oh yeah. We talked about how we saw this bird. We'd tell stories about how the birds would follow you around.", "I told my parents a lot. They called me when I was out at the workday and so we talked a lot about it then. I told people in my office about it.", "Oh I just them about the CSA. Where it came from. Showed them the Facebook sometimes. I'd start at the beginning sometimes.", "Oh yeah, we told people that it was a healthy turkey. I think people stopped and paused more with the turkey knowing where it came from."

What will you tell people about the CSA?

"I'll say, "I wonder if Jordan is doing a CSA this year?" I will always be on the look out for people doing this kind of thing now. If I ever meet someone with your type of background I'll encourage them to do this kind of thing. I think there's a lot of risk but I would encourage them to do it."

"I have nothing but good things to say about it. If they have the opportunity to seek out CSA groups for meat or vegetables or whatever, it would be worth the effort. Especially if they come from a background where they don't understand as much as where their food comes from, it's a great opportunity to learn and understand what happens at the ground level."

"I think it's a great way to get people involved, to get them together. It was amazing. It brought me closer to my food than ever before."

"I kind of feel like through you I am more informed about CSA and some of the history and ideology around. Also, some the applications and troubles with it. I hear people dogging on a vegetable CSA and talk about how they didn't really get what they wanted I take it upon myself to remind them that they agreed to some of these risks of agriculture, as well as the rewards. Not getting a lot in the beginning or much variety is normal, it's seasonality. I think there are some things like the Root Cellar that are selling what they call CSA but it's really a buying club. I think that hurts the overall movement."

"It will be this thing I did. It'll be a trendy hipster thing that I did. I hate to say that. But I think I was cool chasing. I think it was a real cool thing I did, but it wasn't me."

"I encourage everyone to do it if they have one in their community and they have the financial means to do it. I think it's something we defiantly need to support."

Do you have one memory in particular that stands out? "Oh there's a lot of them. I don't know but it was real nice when we did the Martz farm visit. We were all on the hayride together and we went out and saw how the pastures were divided up. And the cows would walk up to the hayride and the dog out with the sheep. That farm is a pretty nice place to see where your food is coming from.", "You dumping beautiful fudge on the ground for the pigs. It was great watching them eat it.", "Processing the turkeys. Hands down.", "When we got the pigs...it's really just a montage. Man just the squealing the pigs did, it was horrible. I liked the cooking thing with you, that was great. That felt like a CSA."

Participation

The People's Republic of Delicious Foods

Did you ever miss any pickups? 11 yes, 11 no, 4 not asked.

Did you enjoy the CSA? 18 yes, 8 not asked.

Would you do something like this again? 22 yes, 4 not asked.

What would you change about it?

"Another mandatory workday. I wished I would have been even more involved but with a busy graduate life it was easy to put more involvement off."

"I think I wanted more time to be engaged at the community level. It was just a factor of time for me and how I prioritized things. Also, it has a lot to do with how I understand how meat is grown on that level, and I know you I know that you are doing a great job. It wasn't something that I was engaged with because of that."

“Good question. Nothing comes to mind. I was very happy with it, happy with the quality. Some of the things I’d change would be not missing some of the events. I missed that cooking event and it would have been great to go to it. I know that the things we did go to were fun, like the potlucks. I know that it’s tough to coordinate something like that with that many people, especially if they don’t already know each other ahead of time.”

“I would probably participate more.”

Did you think you’d meet new people? Did you? 14 yes, 4 no, 8 not asked.

What events did we have? “We did farm walks. We came out there, Barbara and I, just a few times just to see the animals. Helped with some turkey processing. Potlucks too, which was cool because there was a lot of people in the CSA that I didn’t know and I got to at least meet them.”, “Well I missed a fair amount of them unfortunately. You had a couple different potlucks out there, you had the pickups too. You also had a cooking event so people could learn how to cook meat a little better. You also had a couple events on the farm so that people could see the conditions.”, “The only one I know about was the potluck that I went to. I mean I knew about the other things, I just didn’t go.”, “Uh, I went to one cooking demonstration which was a lot of fun. And a potluck and a work day. And those were the only things I did. Oh, I came out a couple times and helped move turkey pens.”, “Potlucks and workdays.”

Have you ever participated in something like this before? 10 yes, 10 no, 6 not asked.

Change

Are you trying to get meat in any other ways outside of the grocery store? “Nope I’m a vegetarian if I cannot find meat that was produced similar to the CSA.”, “Well hunting. We buy meat at the farmers market.”, “Yeah, we’ve been raising our own meat. We raised a bunch of different things this past year. We’ll do it again this year.”, “I helped process a pig.”

Do you think the CSA has changed you in any ways? “It has motivated me to seek out other CSAs in the future from my good experience. My food belief system is still the same though.”, “Yeah. I’ve done vegetable ones and I’d like to do more in the future. I always thought meat was just for the farmers market but because this made it so easy and accessible, and I felt so good about it that when we move I’m going to make it a point to find a meat CSA.”, “Oh god yeah. I think I’ll continue to buy food this way, whether that’s here or where I end up next.”

Do you think more about your meat consumption? “Yeah. Before we joined the CSA we were rarely eating meat, almost vegetarian. It was more of a pain then it was worth. Then we joined the CSA and had this giant deep freezer full of it and it was an all you can eat meat fest for the past two years.”, “Oh yeah. I

haven't eaten fish in the past year because when I go up to the fish counter I wonder what's happened to it. I just don't know what to think about it.", "I think about it less now because I'm comfortable with it. When I didn't know where my food was coming from I thought about it more."

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