



From the Field

Spring 2008/ Vol. 3 No. 2

From Farm to Table, Building a Better Food System in Southeast Michigan

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Letter from the Chair

FSEP and Southeast Michigan: A Word on Partnership

Susan Schmidt

In the six plus years that I have been a Michigan resident (Wayne County), I have followed with great interest the collaborative processes of regional public initiatives and projects. That is my very polite way of describing the surprise and sometimes dismay I've felt as fits and starts of regionalism have given way to parochial posturing and ultimate dysfunction. Cobo Hall, anyone? It's not all gloom and doom however, as evidenced by the news of the One D initiative and bright horizons for regional mass transit.

This all makes me appreciate even more what is unique and wonderful about FSEP. From its inception our organization has been, and continues to be, a partnership in every sense of the word. How do we make it work? It's simple really. We appreciate and listen to every point of view of our very diverse leadership team. These dedicated volunteers represent a myriad of interests but there is an overarching common interest for us all; the continuation of a functioning regional food system that creates and sustains a

vibrant agricultural economy in southeast Michigan.

It has been a challenging process for sure, wrought at times with spirited dialogue and discourse. But with respect and compromise we've continued to grow and enable positive connectivity between urban and rural, producers and end users, and numerous other partners. Our work groups continue to achieve measurable successes; real results that allow FSEP to be a clearinghouse for information and a model for other food system entities.

As this important work continues the FSEP Board remains committed to the shared vision of our Leadership Team, communities and partners as we provide financial and strategic stewardship for the present and future. ■

Susan Schmidt is Chair of the FSEP Board and Director of Food Service and Catering at The Henry Ford.



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Jennifer's Food for Thought...

A message from the Executive Director

I was viewing pictures recently that were taken last summer during a visit to the Goetz Farm, near Riga and marveled at the beauty of the farm. Seeing the vivid colors of the red peppers, eggplant blossoms, summer squash, and ripe tomatoes made me long for the warmth of the summer sun and the taste of fresh local produce.

It's been a long, cold winter but a productive one. I was able to get out of the office for a few days and see what's happening with other organizations around the state. On a cold, snowy day in mid-January, I attended the Michigan Family Farms conference in Battle Creek and was impressed with the number of attendees - over 400 participants from several states. This conference was celebrating its fifth year and was created to serve limited-resource and multicultural producers. Keynote speaker, David Kline, an Amish farmer from eastern Ohio, reflected on how we are all connected to the food system, from sustainability, land stewardship, and community support.

On another snowy day in January, the Northern Michigan Small Farms conference in Grayling drew many people from across Michigan. Almost every menu item served during lunch was locally sourced. During one of the conference sessions, Eric Villegas, cookbook author and star of "Fork in the Road" on PBS discussed the challenges he experienced when trying to by local food for his restaurant. The attendance at the Michigan Land Use Institute's (MLUI) regional Farm to School conference in March was also outstanding. Over 300 participants (school administrators, teachers, food service staff, and students) all talking about local food in schools! As we've all been reading, the local food

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The Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP) is an urban-rural collaboration dedicated to the tenets of local food systems within Jackson, Lenawee, Monroe, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.

Our mission is to catalyze change in the food system to enable strong farms, healthy cities, community wealth, and job creation in southeastern Michigan.

FSEP provides research, education and outreach with urban and rural partnerships, resulting in agricultural development opportunities, sustainable communities, and healthy, local economies. A central strength of FSEP comes from the collaboration of our diverse leadership: the combined effort of five county administrations, farm organization leaders, food industry entrepreneurs, community groups, food system and economic development experts and resource providers.

Farm to School

Focus on Chelsea

Ruth Blackburn

Many farm to school programs are successful because they are led by a food service director who was already taking extra steps to provide healthy choices to the students and recognizes the farm to school components as another way to enhance that commitment. This is the situation in the Chelsea Schools with Karen Carty who has been with the district for more than 10 years. Karen is an



Karen Carty restocks samples at Beach Middle School.

enthusiastic and motivated champion for bringing farm fresh items into the school cafeterias.

Through her participation in the FSEP Farm to School Pilot Project, Karen identified Chelsea farms that could provide a variety of items delivered to her dock. Two have emerged as regular partners: Tantre Farm and Merkel Gardens. Throughout the fall and winter, Karen has ordered and received a wonderful variety of vegetables to offer in the school cafeterias including 60# turnips, ½ bushel plus 30# assorted winter squash, ½ bushel blue hubbard squash, 5# radishes, 5# rutabagas, 35# Brussels sprouts, 20# cherry tomatoes, 50# potatoes, 40# cauliflower, 10 bunches and 1 bushel kale, ½ bushel butternut squash, 12 pumpkins and 20# green beans.

Other aspects at Chelsea that help farm to school thrive include talented and motivated staff with indi-

vidual kitchens in each of the five schools, a strong catering operation that runs through the summer, and support from Chelsea teachers and administrators. There is also a program, Move Forward! Healthy Choices for Kids and Families, which is a partnership between the Chelsea Schools and the Chelsea Community Hospital to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

With these favorable conditions, the cafeteria can become a fun learning environment that provides opportunities for students to try new foods and learn about where their food comes from. In October 2007, the elementary and middle schools celebrated Farm Day which featured almost 20 different locally produced fruits and vegetables (including 6 varieties of apples) in a baked potato bar and a colorful salad bar. In November, Chelsea cafeterias started a Farm Fresh Food of the Month program which featured Squash and Pumpkins for November, Kale and Cabbage in December, Whole Grains in January, Turnips in February and Fingerling Potatoes in March.

Items are served in a variety of menu offerings along with interactive activities and point of service information. Collaboration with FSEP provided Karen with help from an FSEP intern from the UM School of Public Health Nutrition program. Natalie Zima created posters, word search and crossword puzzles that featured each Food of the Month. Chelsea has a unique configuration in that the five schools are divided by age. North Creek has K-2, Pierce Lake has grades 3 and 4, South serves grades 5 and 6, Beach Middle is for grades 7 and 8 and the high school covers grades 9 -12. This provides a wonderful opportunity to tailor cafeteria programs and activities for each age group.

FSEP also introduced Karen to Joan Tobin from Eat Local Food and Karen purchased five posters and smaller point of service signs that feature the beautifully distinctive artwork of Eat Local Food and text that says Chelsea Food of the Month. The posters have space in the center to identify that month's food items.

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Far More Than a Food Bank

*An Interview with Eileen Spring
President, Food Gatherers*



The term “food rescue” sounds heroic, but in reality it’s a rather unexciting concept: retrieving edible food that would otherwise go to waste and distributing it to those in need. A potentially more exciting fact is that Food Gatherers, a non-profit food rescue organization serving Washtenaw County, has been ranked the number one such organization in the nation by Charity Navigator, an independent charity evaluator. Food Gatherers is not only the first food rescue program in Michigan, it’s the first ever started by a for-profit organization, Ann Arbor’s Zingerman’s Delicatessen. From its modest origins as a community-centered food rescue operation, Food Gatherers has developed into an extensive network that runs the county food bank, operates a Community Kitchen, and is the largest food distributor in Washtenaw County.

FSEP intern Sarah Cwiek had the chance to speak with Food Gatherers President Eileen Spring, who talked about what makes Food Gatherers unique, its local focus, and some new initiatives.

- ***How does Food Gatherers differ from a “regular” food bank?***

There is a lot of variety in the network in terms of size and service area. Our origins are unique in that we sprang out of Zingerman’s, and our community impact model is different too. The fact that we were started by a local food business means that we have deep connections locally. Our focus is using local resources—both food and volunteers-- to fight local hunger.

The fact that we serve only one county [Washtenaw] is both an advantage and a limitation for us. It limits the amount of food we can collect, but it also allows us to establish great relationships with community groups and even some of the individuals that we serve. For programs whose service area covers a huge geographic range,

it’s very hard to work deeply on multiple levels with the people and organizations receiving food. Food Gatherers has the privilege of working in collaborative, strategic initiatives like the Washtenaw Housing Alliance which address the root cause of hunger.

- ***How local are Food Gatherers’ resources, exactly?***

Because we run the food bank, we’re linked to America’s Second Harvest and a whole network of corporate donors. We get about 20% of our food from them. That means that 80% of our food is local. For better or worse, food banks and food rescue operations are reflections of the larger food industry. We only get donations when there is surplus. Technology and economic forces at work in the food industry are reducing the amount of donated food available right at the time that our communities need food assistance most.

We are trying to think about it in strategic terms: what can we do to support the local food industry, and how can we help local food businesses stay in business and continue to support our anti-hunger efforts? I think we’re grappling with those decisions because we recognize that the number of locally-owned food businesses in a position to donate is declining. One of the things we’ve tried to do as we’ve grown, and had to respond to greater demands for services, is purchase food. For example, we buy food shares from a community farm on behalf of Avalon Housing which provides supportive housing to low income folks. With programs like this we’re helping to feed people, support a fellow non-profit and invest in a local farm.

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Farm to School

Focus on Chelsea

Ruth Blackburn

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The Food of the Month concept and related materials will be included in the FSEP Farm to School toolkit being developed by the project coordinator with a planned completion date of June 2008. With Karen's leadership, and FSEP support during the pilot year, the Chelsea Schools Farm to School program is a shining example for schools in the region. ■

Ruth Blackburn is the FSEP Farm to School Coordinator.

blackburnr@ewashtenaw.org



Left: Beach Principal Patrick Little and FSEP/ UM Nutrition Intern Natalie Zima serve kale and cabbage samples. Below: Chelsea's Tantré Farm is one of several that have formed an ongoing partnership with Farm to School.



Food System Economic Partnership FSEP is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.

If you enjoy this newsletter, please consider supporting us. FSEP projects include Business Innovation and Networking, Farm to School, User-Based Research and Software Development, and Education and Outreach.

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Finding a Way to Make it Happen

East Quad Chef Buzz Cummings proves that local food can work at U-M

Sarah Cwiek

In the kitchen at the University of Michigan's East Quad Dining Hall, Buzz Cummings is easy to spot—he's the man in the giant white chef's hat. While the chef's hat may be the most noticeable thing about him at first glance, anyone who spends some time observing and talking with Cummings realizes that he wears many hats in addition to that of East Quad's Head Chef—that of organizer, supervisor, and local food enthusiast. Cummings has established a campus-wide reputation for his kitchen as a place where local food is valued—and makes up a significant percentage of the food served in a demanding busy, tight-budgeted kitchen. In other words, despite significant obstacles, Cummings and his staff have found a way to make local food *work*.

As much as any other person in southeast Michigan, Cummings understands the joys and challenges of working with local food on a large scale. He supervises a kitchen staff of 15, with whom he is responsible for producing three full meals a day for hundreds of hungry undergraduates. And these undergraduates are more discerning about food than most—East Quad houses the Residential College, where a significant number of students are vegetarian or vegan, and Cummings and his staff provide options for them at every meal.

So as a person responsible for producing a huge amount of labor-intensive, high-quality food three times a day, why is Cummings willing to undertake the challenges—financial, logistical, and bureaucratic—that come with local food? Not surprisingly, like most people involved in the local food movement, Cummings' motivation stems in large part from a personal commitment—to quality food, to the university community he feeds, and to the environment. Cummings' primary hobby outside the kitchen is, as he puts it, "Digging up my yard and planting a garden." He's still learning, but he enjoys producing fresh food as much as he enjoys cooking with it.

The story of local food in East Quad starts



U-M East Quad Head Chef Buzz Cummings.

before Cummings was there, when U-M Food Services Director Mike Lee asked all the Residential Hall chefs to come up with a food niche to specialize in. Cummings' predecessor chose organic and local foods, and the relative cheapness of local foods within that niche pushed them to go even more local. Cummings, as the Head Chef at South Quad during that time, was also interested in going local: he turned to FSEP's Mike Score, who introduced him to local farmer Dale Lesser, who provided apples and honey to start. "In the beginning, for me, there was Dale and his apples," Cummings recalls, laughing. "In fact, the first season Dale provided us with apples at South Quad was also the first season that he didn't have a surplus that he had to feed to the hogs.

When Cummings found out that the former East Quad chef was leaving, he asked to be transferred there, citing his passion for local food as a main reason. He then proceeded to expand his predecessors' efforts on behalf of local food, securing another orchardist to provide local apples to East Quad, which were becoming increasingly popular with students. Cummings was also a presenter at the second annual FSEP conference in March 2007, where he spoke about the rising interest in locally-sourced food, and some of the hurdles that buyers face. That event catalyzed an FSEP-coordinated meeting that brought together local farmers and

members of the U-M food community interested in purchasing more local food. FSEP played the role of facilitator in working out stumbling blocks on both sides, and in the end five local farmers agreed to a sourcing arrangement with the university. Local farmers are now selling eggs and produce to East Quad.

Despite the current success of East Quad's local food program, and the universally positive enthusiasm it has generated from students and staff alike, Cummings emphasizes that it is an ongoing endeavor which requires constant attention and modification. Local food still comprises a relatively small percentage of the total food served in East Quad, and Cummings is constantly working on expanding—into meat and dairy, for example (East Quad is currently the only U-M dining hall given permission to serve Michigan turkey). “Everything has to be done incrementally, in baby steps,” he asserts. “Change won't happen overnight—it's an ongoing process. I just try to make it work in steps, one unit at a time. That's how we got where we are right now.” He credits U-M Dining Services continuing enthusiasm and willingness to work with him around systematic barriers as integral to the program's success thus far. “They've let me do the best job I can do to support local agriculture, provide good food and be fiscally responsible, all at the same time,” Cummings says.

Despite the support he has received from the U-M community for his efforts on behalf of local farmers, Cummings still faces significant obstacles to making local food a larger part of his menu. There are quantity challenges to working with local growers; they may not be able to provide large enough quantities to satisfy Cummings' demand. There are also quality issues at play; though local growers provide fresher food, that food also needs to be transported in accordance with health-code and university-mandated quality measures, which can be a challenge for some local farmers operating on a limited budget. The lack of standardization can also be a time-consuming challenge in working with budgets—local, small producers costs fluctuate at market rates from week to week, and some farmers don't provide price lists on a regular basis.

There's also the fact that dealing with a num-

ber of small producers means that Cummings has to get on the phone with farmers and make logistical arrangements and this is time-consuming, “and in this day and age, everyone's time is money,” Cummings says. And ultimately, money is the bottom line—if Cummings can't make local food price-competitive with what the vendors are offering, his options are limited, especially in tough economic times.

Still, for every challenge he has encountered in working with local food, Cummings has somehow found a way to make it all work. On the financial end, “East Quad is right in the middle of all the dining halls cost-wise,” Cummings says. “I think that if I can make the economies work so that local food is close enough price-wise, it could work and even spread beyond here. I'd like to see all of the salad bars at the U featuring a large percentage of local ag in season. But we don't have enough farms for that right now.” And despite the bureaucratic troubles and other complexities working with local food can bring, “everyone who's been working on it—the accounts people and the administrators—is happy to cooperate. They've been on the phone talking with the farmers just like I have. They're proud to be a part of this.”

Cummings' experience at East Quad shows that with the right ingredients—commitment, creativity,



Tomatoes from the Goetz Farm in Riga. FSEP helped make the connection with U-M Chef Buzz Cummings and the Goetz Farm.

and a willingness to accept that change doesn't happen overnight—local food can work in settings where conventional wisdom says it can't. For Cummings, it ultimately comes down to doing the right thing. “Local food is the right thing to do for a lot of rea-

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Jennifer's Food for Thought

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movement is growing.

This winter has been a time of planning. The Education and Outreach Committee has done an amazing job planning the annual FSEP conference, and we are pleased to report that (finally!) local food



Sunny days and fresh vegetables like these will soon return to the Goetz Farm.

will be served during lunch. Special thanks to the Leadership Council of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sharon McNeil IHM Ecology Director and St. Mary Organic Farm Director, and the IHM conference planning and food service staff, especially Patrick Cavanaugh, Executive Chef and Marilyn Grove and Karin Theisen for working with us on the menu. The conference could not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the FSEP Leadership Team, especially Education & Outreach Committee members Brenda Reau, Joan Tobin, and Van Varner. Monroe County MSUE's Melissa Draganic has been invaluable.

Karlene and Jonathon Goetz have been instrumental in the success of having local food served during the conference. This past summer, the Goetz's constructed two hoopouses (unheated greenhouses) to extend the growing season and produce salad

greens and spinach all winter long. Besides providing greens for the FSEP conference, the Goetz farm has been supplying produce to the University of Michigan.

The Farm to School Committee has been hard at work planning our next steps. The Committee undertook an extensive strategic planning session in February to review where we are at and begin planning for next school year, including moving into Jackson County in the fall. Check out our website in the next few months to see the FSEP Farm to School toolkit.



Lamb nursing at Brenda Reau's sheep farm and rabbitry.

But the highlight of this past winter, was a trip to Brenda Reau's sheep farm and rabbitry. Having never visited a sheep farm and it was lambing season, I experienced the joy of watching a newborn lamb nursing. What an amazing local food system it is! Welcome spring! ■

Jennifer Fike is FSEP Executive Director and Leadership Team Chair.

An Interview with Eileen Spring

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- **Can you talk a little bit about specific community-based initiatives that have spun off Food Gatherers?**

There's our Community Kitchen—that's located in the Delonis Center [site of the Washtenaw County Shelter Association]. In addition to providing daily meals to people in need, we offer job training in the food services for at-risk youth. We have graduated about 40 students now and we are offering paid internships to students to help develop their work skills.

We're also about to start a community garden next to our warehouse in partnership with Project GROW. We're going to start off small and hopefully get larger. Since Food Gatherers is in the neighborhood of Avalon's Carrot Way Apartments, the Chinese Christian Church and the Leslie Park subdivision, this garden has the potential to unite our neighborhood and bring all sorts of different folks together to get their hands dirty and grow some food.

- **What kind of impact has the economic situation had on your services?**

There is a greater demand for our services. 70% of our community agencies have reported increased in demand for food assistance. The cost of food and fuel have gone up dramatically which makes this all more challenging for us as an organization and the people we serve. Each year we provide more food, but we also try to make sure that we are expanding the availability of high-quality nutritious food. We're also working on developing a community food security plan for low-income residents of Washtenaw County.

In part because of this situation, we're looking to work with other community groups to figure out how our existing infrastructure—our refrigerated vehicles, our warehouse, our kitchen and the kind of network we've built up—can help support other cool anti-hunger initiatives. ■

Helpful Websites for Business Planning

Mike Score

There are a few tasks within the business planning process that seem especially difficult for most entrepreneurs. These include finding financial benchmarks for businesses within your industry and understanding the world of packaging and graphic design.

I have found the following websites to be very helpful:

County Business Patterns provides data on the total number of establishments, mid-March employment, first quarter and annual payroll, and number of establishments by nine employment-size classes by detailed industry for all counties in the United States and the District of Columbia.

<http://censtats.census.gov/cbpnaic/cbpnaic.shtml>

Terminal Market Prices For Fresh Produce reports weekly prices for fresh produce at major produce terminals across the U.S. These prices are based on survey results. Farmers suggest that the numbers are not always accurate but I've found them to be a great reference point for tracking ups and downs in the mar-

ketplace.

<http://www.ncagr.com/markets/mktnews/vegetabl.htm>

Food Marketing Institute provides an excellent free website that outlines trends in food industries. If nothing else, read through their report (Food Price Information From USDA) on projected price trends in 2008. They give an excellent analysis of how farm commodity prices will affect different food sectors.

<http://www.fmi.org/>

HACCP plans are required by an increasing number

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Buzz Cummings

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sons,” he says. “I believe whole-heartedly that we should do whatever we can to help small farmers and to reduce our carbon footprint, and to that end it just makes much more sense to throw dollars at people in the area than to go out of state and pay additional funds for transport.”

Sarah Cwiek is an FSEP intern and a graduate student at the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment.



A few of the local foods served in U-M’s East Quad.

Youth Farm Stand Projects

Brenda Rean

FSEP is excited to be a partner on two Youth Farm Stand (YFS) projects within the region. The YFS project is collaboration between FSEP, the C.S.Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University and two local groups in Ypsilanti and Monroe. The goal of the project is to teach kids about food systems by involving them in the growing and marketing process. Another goal

is to provide access to fresh produce in areas where there is little or no access to fresh produce.

The Monroe project will be located at the Arthur Lesow Community Center in the east end of Monroe. The center is located in a disadvantaged neighborhood with a significant population of at-risk youth. The neighborhood also lacks access to quality food options.

Raised beds will be situated on land owned by the city adjacent to the center. The beds will be constructed by Extension Master Gardeners under the direction of Jennie Stanger MSUE Consumer Horticulture Educator. Funding for the bed construction, compost, tools, seeds and plants is being provided by a grant from the Monroe County Environmental Fund. The Master Gardeners will also lend their expertise in working with the youth tending the gardens.

The market will be held in a courtyard area right outside the center and moved inside in inclement weather. This will be the perfect place to showcase the harvest from the raised beds as well as some additional produce grown by local farmers.

The youth development component of the program is being spearheaded by Allen Russell, local 4-H volunteer. Allen has many years of experience in working with youth and helping them realize their potential. The YFS participants will be engaged in starting a 4-H club and completing projects in foods and horticulture that they will exhibit at the Monroe County Fair. Denise Reaume, MSUE 4-H Program Associate will assist Allen in program management and is also recruiting and supervising teens from the traditional 4-H program to serve as mentors to the YFS youth.

Heather Hampel, MSUE Program Associate will be wearing two hats with the program. She will serve as overall program coordinator and will be leading some of the food and nutrition experiences. Heather will be assisted by Joy Cousino, MSUE Extension Educator who will teach Project FRESH classes on site on market days so WIC participants can redeem their coupons right at the center market.

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Helpful Business Websites

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of institutional buyers. If you had to write a HACCP plan where would you start? This site provides a primer on how to complete this work. In addition to institutional buyers, many general consumers will likely be drawn to businesses that provide rock-solid assurances that all steps have been taken to minimize food safety risks.

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/nacmcfp.html>

Understanding Business Finances... Most of us are not economists or professional analysts. With a little bit of patience and persistence you can find a solid education on business, financing, and business analysis on this *Wall Street Journal* website. Use the search box to look up topics like "Balance Sheet" or "Business Ratios".

<http://www.investopedia.com/default.aspx>

Also, check out <http://www.bizstats.com/>

Business Legal Structures have a significant impact on risk management and how your business is run. Most of my clients eventually choose to set up LLCs, but there are other choices. If you become an LLC, make sure you know why this structure is best for you, and why you select it over other choices.

<http://www.agmrc.org/agmrc/business/startingbusiness/legalorganizationstructures2.htm>

Michigan Securities Laws.. Before you sell shares in your company, or even before you discuss selling shares in your business you should review this dry but informative document reviewing Michigan securities regulations.

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/cis_ofis_guide_25011_7.pdf

Starting A Small Business In Michigan.. MEDC provides a helpful, comprehensive guide intended to cover all business types.

<http://www.michigan.org/medc/services/startups/?m=12;7>

Demographic Data For Consumer Research can be found through several web sources including search engines provided by the U.S. Census. A less known source of demographic data is provided by U of M at:

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stdemog.html>

Market Maker is a new on-line tool that can help people find each other in the marketplace. Farmers can find distributors and retailers. Consumers and restaurants looking to buy directly from Michigan farmers can use this

tool to simplify the search process. In addition to Michigan, there are Market Maker projects in several other states.

<http://mi.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>

Market Research gives you a feel for what life would have been like if you had become a spy. Finding out specifically how your competitors are performing can be tough. Biz Miner provides modestly priced reports on industry performance. They also provide several free reports and guides to understanding business.

<http://www.bizminer.com/> ■

Mike Score is an Agricultural Innovation Counselor with MSU Extension - Washtenaw County and a member of the FSEP Board and Leadership Team.

Youth Farm Stand

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Brenda Reau, MSUE County Extension Director will coordinate promotion and outreach for the project. Brenda will be the liaison between the project and community agencies and local decision makers.

In addition to serving the surrounding neighborhood the project hopes to attract customers from other areas of the city. The Navarre Branch library which is adjacent to the community center will be the perfect venue to host gardening and food preservation workshops which will be held in conjunction with market days.

A project of this scope wouldn't be possible without someone to do all the paperwork and reports! The Monroe County team is grateful to have the assistance of Jennifer Fike, FSEP Executive Director to coordinate this task.

The entire team is excited about this new venture in the community and is delighted to be a part of growing good food and growing good kids! ■

Brenda Reau is the FSEP Education and Outreach Committee Chair and MSU Extension Director for Monroe County.



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We are on the web!

fsep.michigan.org

~ Save the Date ~

- **April 22, 6-8 pm**—*Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Earth Day Commemoration Dinner featuring local foods.* Jeremy Moghtader of FSEP and the MSU Student Organic Farm will discuss FSEP's Farm to School program. The dinner will be held at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, 1264 Mel-drum, Detroit. To order tickets, call 313-579-2100 ext. 204.
- **April 22-24**—*Eat Healthy + Play Hard = Smart Students conference, Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI.* For more information call (517) 663-5147, or visit: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/2008_EAT_HEALTHY--FINAL_REGISTRATION_PACKET_219461_7.pdf
- **April 23, 4:30 – 6:00 pm** — *Growing Hope Open House (also April 30 and May 6), 922 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI.* Drop in to see and hear what's going on with the future home of Growing Hope. Visit www.growinghope.net for more information.
- **May 29-30** – *Designing Healthy Livable Communities Conference – The Lansing Center, Lansing, MI.* <http://www.miffs.org/media/2008DHLCbrochure.pdf>
- **June 5** — *Community Support Day at Whole Foods, 3134 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor.* 5% of all purchases go to support FSEP. Please schedule your Whole Foods shopping for this day!
- **August 12-13**—*Choices Conference: The Conference that Celebrates Food and Health, Dearborn Inn, Dearborn, MI.* For more information, visit: <http://www.mottgroup.msu.edu>

FSEP is a non-profit collaboration of urban and rural community and business leaders that exists to catalyze change in the food system of Southeastern Michigan. We provide research, education and outreach with urban and rural partnerships, resulting in agricultural development opportunities, sustainable communities, and healthy local economies. The geographic focus area of FSEP encompasses the five counties of Jackson, Monroe, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.

FSEP Partner Organizations:

Governments

Jackson County
Lenawee County
Monroe County
Washtenaw County
Wayne County

Farm Business Organizations

Michigan Coalition of Black Farmers
Michigan Farmers Union
Organic Growers of Michigan

Businesses/Community Organizations

Agrarian Adventure
Detroit Microenterprise Fund
Eat Local Food, LLC
Food Gatherers

Growing Hope

Lenawee Chamber for Economic Development
Slow Food Huron Valley
21st Century Seeds of Hope
Washtenaw Land Trust

Resource Providers

MSU Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems
MSU Extension
MSU Product Center for Agricultural and Natural Resources
University of Michigan

Sponsors

Chelsea Milling Company
C.S. Mott Chair of Sustainable Agriculture
Hacienda Mexican Foods
SYSCO Food Services of Detroit
United Bank and Trust
Whole Foods Market