

Food Security, Entrepreneurship and Value Added

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Food Security

“when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.”

- World Food Summit of 1996

Challenges to Food Security

- Increasing food prices
- Climate change
- Genetically engineered crops
- Competition for land
- Limited research support
- Global population increase

- Powledge, "Food Insecurity: An Overview", 2012

Value-Added Agriculture

“Value-added products are defined as follows:

- A change in the physical state or form of the product.
- The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan.
- The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product.”

USDA, Rural Business Development

Challenges to Value-Added Agriculture

- Subsidization of the wrong products (e.g. processed foods)
- Subsidization of wrong practices (e.g. use of fossil fuels and toxic pesticides)

- *Factory Farming*, "Agriculture Must Adopt More Sustainable Farming Methods," 2013

Links Between Food Security and Value-Added Agriculture

- Sustainable practices
- The need for innovation = entrepreneurship (most appropriately social entrepreneurship)

Dees's Definition of Social Entrepreneurship

“Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value);
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission;
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning;
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand; and
- Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.”

- J. Gregory Dees, 1998

Benefits of Entrepreneurial Thinking & Acting in Food Production

- Recognizes market opportunities to add value by lowering costs, improving quality, and bettering access
- Orients activities to the customer
- Fosters creativity
- Generates wealth and social return on investment (SROI)
- Encourages productive networking

Examples From Practice

- Founders: Tim McCollum and Brett Beach, former Peace Corps volunteers
- Assist cocoa bean farmers in sustainable agriculture in Madagascar
- For-profit chocolate makers
- Operate chocolate factory
- Recently received \$2.5 million in VC investment



- Kickul & Lyons, *Understanding Social Entrepreneurship*, 2012

Examples From Practice

Local Garden (in Vancouver):

- Verticrop system: hydroponics, no pesticides/herbicides, automated light, recirculated water)
- To local retailers & restaurants within 24 hours of harvest
- Year-round production
- Start-up funding from Vancity's Community Capital
- City provides low-cost 10-year lease

-Berman, "Salad Towers," 2013

Examples From Practice

Civic Entrepreneurship – Boston, MA

- Promotes urban farming
- Created an “Open Space” District (1980s) to permit a more diverse set of uses for open land
- Developed Green Smart Growth Overlay District (2010): permits food production, food-oriented retail, and food production incubator uses
- Brought together citizen groups, nonprofit sector and city government

-Maloney, “Putting Paradise in the Parking Lot,” 2013

Recommendations for Fostering Entrepreneurship for Food Security/Value Added

- Encourage networking of entrepreneurs through the use of co-working spaces
- Foster innovation through business plan/business model competitions for entrepreneurs and/or intermediaries (e.g. NYC's Competition THRIVE)
- Provide technical assistance, access to space, and access to capital through business incubators/accelerators
- Encourage community foundations to invest in start-up businesses (e.g. Center for Rural Entrepreneurship's TOW program)
- Build business coaching programs to facilitate skill building by entrepreneurs (e.g. Entrepreneurial League System)
- Support youth entrepreneurship in local communities and regions

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