Local and Regional Food Systems
Entrepreneurs as Catalysts:
Key Themes from NARDeP Case Studies

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The Focus of these Case Studies

- Building Linkages with Local Systems
  - Demand Driven
  - Supplier Capacity Development

- What Outcomes Might we Measure?
  - Financial
  - Supply Chain Linkages
  - Positive Outcomes for the Broader Community

- Are Redeveloping Food Systems an Incubator for Entrepreneurial Activity?
  - What Indicators could we use?
Food System Development

AN OVERVIEW OF INNOVATIONS
WE WILL REVISIT THEMES TO SPUR DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM PROGRAMMING MOVING FORWARD
Place-Based Linkages to the Food System

- Moving past lacking infrastructure as a barrier
- Recreating linkages with a commitment to people- and place-based factors
- Seasons, geographic “density” and match of products to consumer interests enter most discussions

“Limehouse” generally seen as a major player in the local food system in Charleston and an important element in that growth
How do Local Food Entrepreneurs Differ?

“The [food] business that succeeds will be treating the public like a ‘person,’ not a ‘statistic,’ and like a ‘customer,’ not a ‘consumer.’”

Meter 2012

“The underutilized asset in this consideration is in adding value to our agricultural products grown on our farms. These assets not only create jobs, but they create engaging vocations, which provides entrepreneurial opportunity for young people to stay close to the land. They will also create industry infrastructure, community leadership, educational opportunities, food security and contribution to wealth in the form of higher margins per acre for our producers” (Moody and Reding 2011).
What Metrics Matter for these Models and Values Based Systems?

Sandhills 2011 → sales increased 48%

Farmers receive 70% or more of retail price for their products.
$320,000 returned to farmers and artisans in 2013
Discussion

- Is there evidence that food systems are incubating entrepreneurs? Is this a key positive outcome of food system redevelopment?
- Where can we start better documenting food system outcomes related to entrepreneurs
  - A subtly different measure than job creation?
- How essential are partnerships and linkages between government, non-profits and entrepreneurs to success?
  - Again, what measures these outcomes?