

Embedding Food Systems Development in Local Government:

Urban Food Systems Symposium
June 24, 2014

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- DOUGLAS COUNTY -

FOOD POLICY COUNCIL



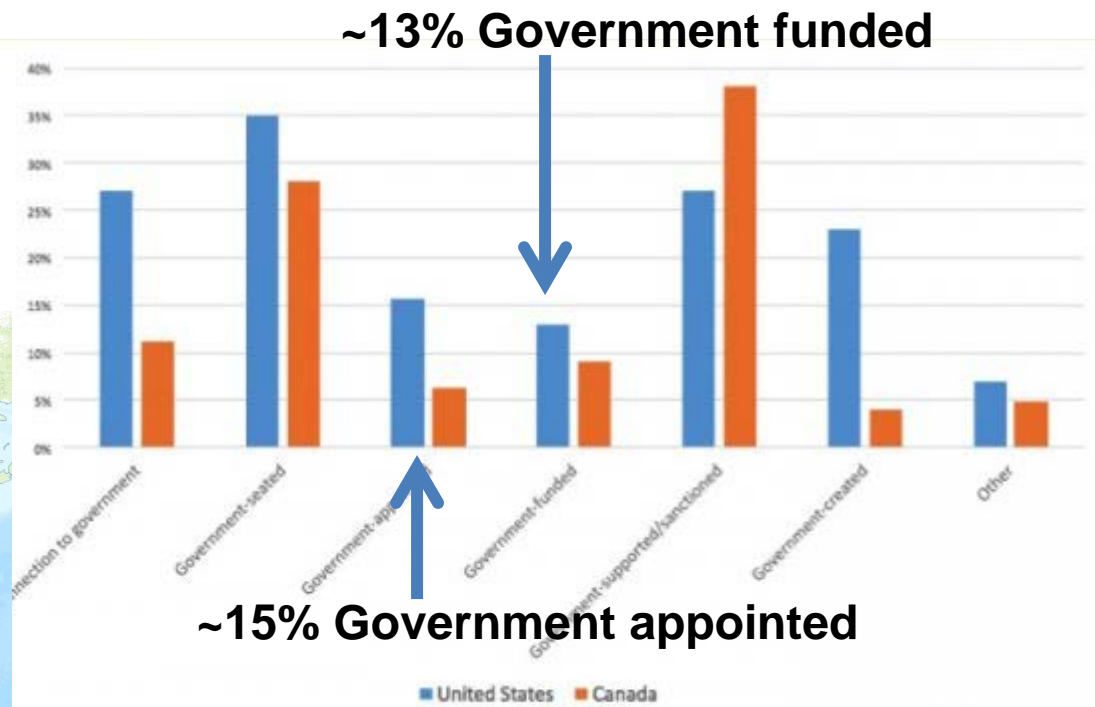
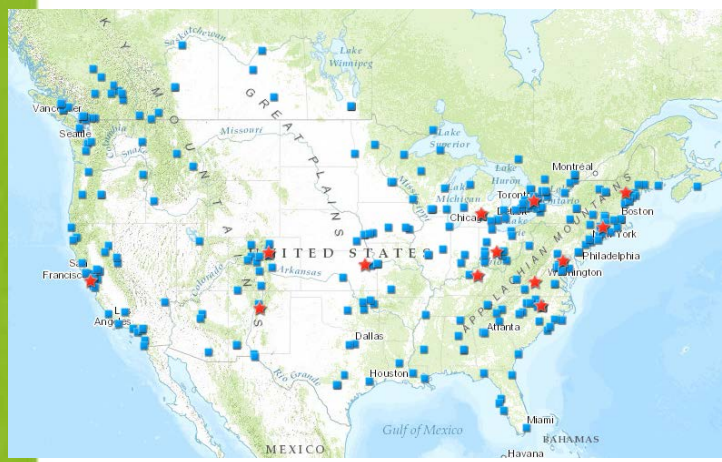
<http://douglascountyks.org/fpc>

OVERVIEW

- 1. The Douglas County Food Policy Council**
- 2. Engaging Local Government**
 - ❖ Spurring innovative use of local government resources**
 - ❖ Initiating regional economic conversations**
 - ❖ Shaping land use policy and the planning process**
- 3. Lessons Learned & What's Next**

THE RISE OF FOOD POLICY COUNCILS

- **Number of councils:**
>200 by 2015
- **Organization Type:**
20% local government



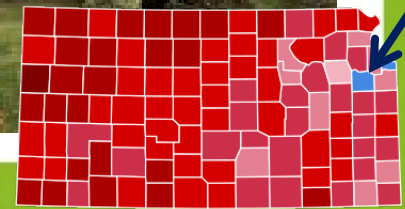
Source: Johns Hopkins Food Policy Network:
<http://www.foodpolicynetworks.org/fpc-map/>

Palmer, A. (2016) "Structuring Your Food Policy Council."
<http://www.livablefutureblog.com/2016/02/structuring-your-food-policy-council>



LAWRENCE & DOUGLAS CO., KS

- **Population:** 118,000
 - 6.6% population growth
 - Median Income: \$47,335
- **Largest City:** Lawrence (97,000)
 - Home of University of Kansas, Haskell University
 - 3 smaller incorporated cities
 - 45 citizen advisory boards
- **County Commission:** 3 elected
- **City Commission:** 5 elected
- Conventional ag throughout county
- Early alternative food system pioneers



THE DOUGLAS COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

- ✓ Established by the County Commission in 2010
- ✓ Convened as a joint City-County Council in 2013
- ✓ Identifies the benefits, challenges and opportunities for a successful food system
- ✓ Recommends local policies to support food system
- ✓ Represents a wide range of stakeholders in food system



FOOD POLICY COUNCIL GOALS

- ✓ **Economy:** Economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities in local food production = jobs.
- ✓ **Wellness:** Improved health outcomes with access to wholesome foods.
- ✓ **Environment:** Improved environmental quality.
- ✓ **Equity:** Increased access to healthy food for all residents, regardless of income.



FOOD POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION

| County-appointed | City-appointed |
|---|--|
| At-Large (Input supplier) | At-Large (Health Department) |
| At-Large (Haskell Dean) | At-Large (Foundation) |
| At-Large (State policy advocate) | Agricultural Producer (Produce, flowers) |
| Agricultural Producer (Poultry) | Retail Food Outlet (Restaurant) |
| Agricultural Producer (Produce, flowers, wheat) | Retail Food Outlet (Co-op) |
| Agricultural Producer (Farm bureau) | Sustainability Advisory Board |
| Retail Food Outlet (Grocer) | Food Security |
| Institutional Food Purchaser (Public school) | Farmers Market in Douglas County |
| Education (KU) | Business Community |
| Extension Service | |
| NGO- Health/Nutrition/MD | |
| NGO- Local Food Systems/Sustainable Ag. | |
| Youth Representative | |
| Senior Food & Nutrition Programs | |

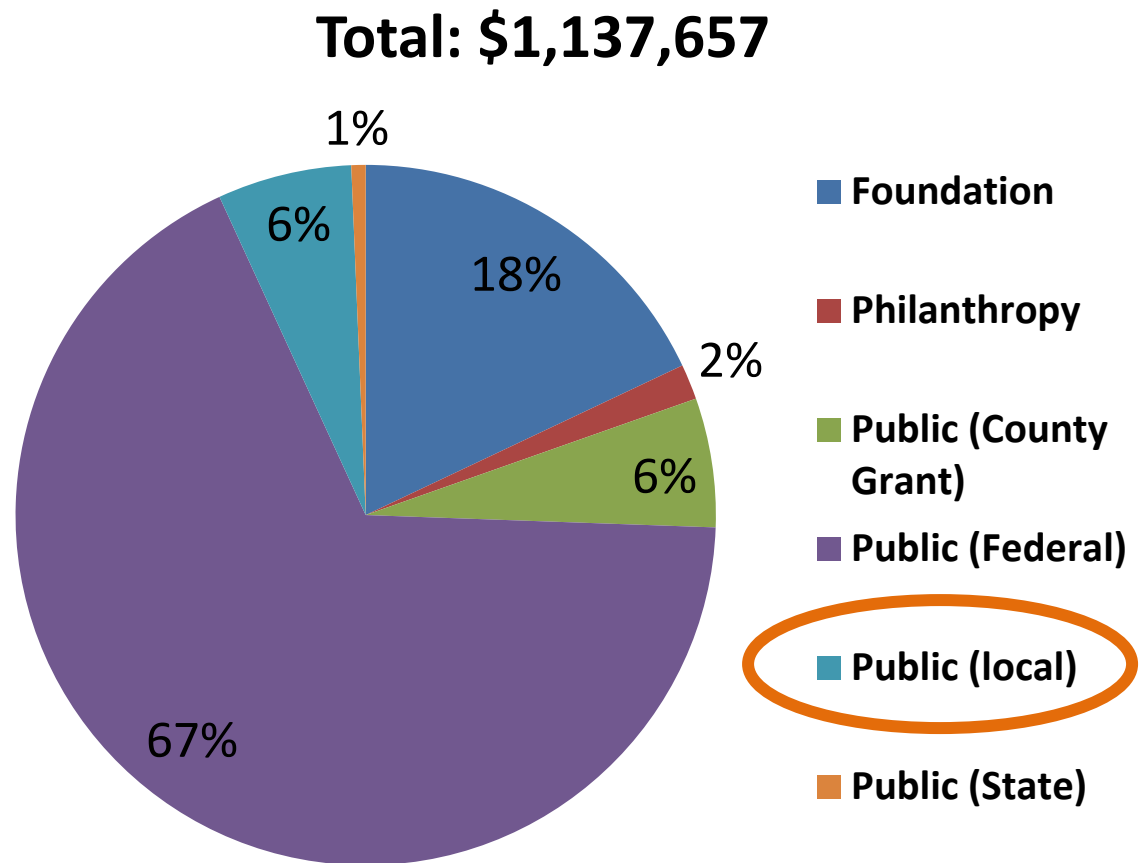
FPC STAFF SUPPORT

- ✓ Sustainability Coordinator staffed FPC from 2010-2015
- ✓ Food Systems Coordinator began in April 2015
- ✓ Staff provide:
 - Strategic guidance
 - Project coordination
 - Knowledge of local government
 - Relationships with agency staff
 - Communication with elected officials
 - Grant writing & oversight



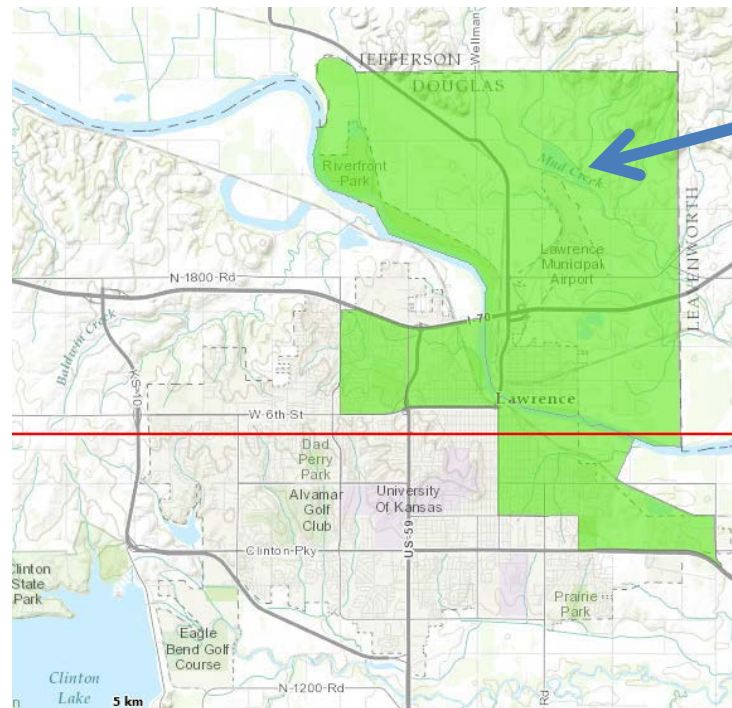
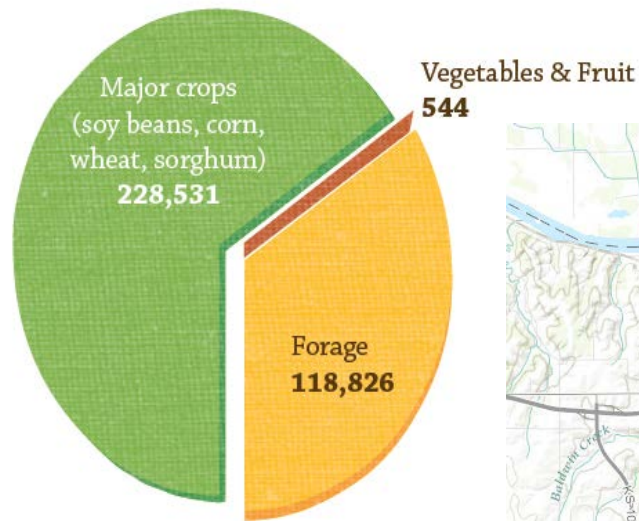
Funding for FPC Initiatives

- Board of County Commissioners allocates \$6,800 annually for DCFPC
- Sustainability Coordinator salary not included
- Includes several grants staff helped community partners secure—but excludes others



COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT RESULTS (2011)

Production (in acres) by Crop



54%
OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY RATE

10,000+
RESIDENTS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO GROCERY STORES & HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

\$392 M
AMOUNT SPENT BY TRICOUNTY RESIDENTS ON FOOD PURCHASES EACH YEAR

<0.1%
FARMLAND IN OUR TRICOUNTY AREA DEVOTED TO VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Spurring innovative use of local government resources

COMMON GROUND PROGRAM

- ✓ Utilizes vacant, under-utilized city owned properties.
- ✓ FREE lease to community gardeners, market farmers + water, compost, mulch
- ✓ “Community Benefit Plan” required
- ✓ ~1000 residents engaged in 2015
- ✓ 10 sites in 2016, including 5-acre Incubator Farm

www.lawrenceks.org/common_ground



LAUNCH LOCAL SNAP MATCHING

- 2014: Created by DCFPC and LiveWell Lawrence
- Initial funding:
 - City of Lawrence (\$10,000)
 - Douglas County (\$10,600)
 - Community Foundation (\$3,800)
- Began at 2 Lawrence markets
- 2015: Expands regionally to 6 markets



BI-STATE COLLABORATION

- ✓ USDA (FINI) grant = \$5.8 million
- ✓ Regional partnership to increase SNAP doubling across Kansas and Missouri
 - 68 farmers markets and 117 grocery stores
- ✓ Full-time Douglas Co. staff to oversee E. KS



FOOD HUB IDENTIFIED AS NEED



Missing infrastructure:
Processing
Canning
Freezing
Packaging
Distribution



Initiating regional economic conversations

- ✓ Economic Development Council strategy
- ✓ Echoed in more recent state-wide reports
- ✓ Joined with Kansas City food hub feasibility group to eventually launch farmer-owned cooperative
 - Chamber served as interim fiscal agent
 - Two DCFPC members founding owners
 - \$40,000 Kansas Health Foundation Grant
 - \$245,000 USDA Value-Added Producers Grant

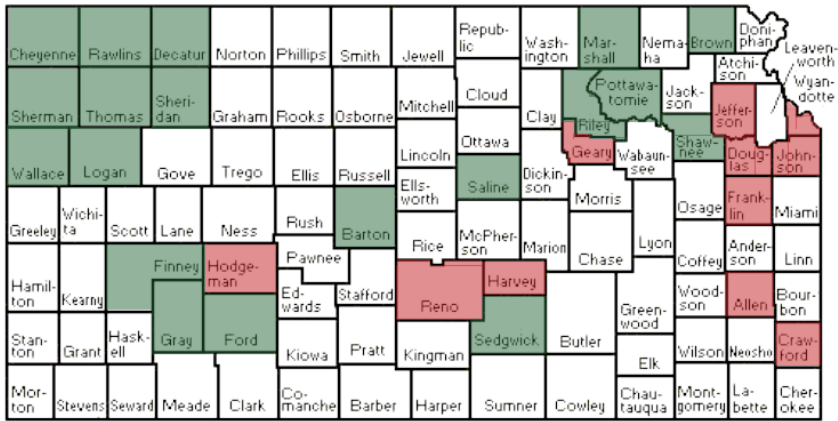
Shaping land use policy and the planning process

- ✓ City Commission asked Planning Dept. to review codes to support **urban ag**
- ✓ DCFPC collaborated for a year:
 - Community survey
 - Public policy forum
 - Reviewed peer communities, draft policies
- ✓ Memos & statements to Planning & City Commission
 - Critiqued items of concern
- ✓ Built knowledge and trust



LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Diverse stakeholders laid essential foundation
- ✓ Paid staff helps build capacity and raise funds
- ✓ Early wins built trust of local officials, allow for larger DCFPC role and innovation



■ Current Councils
■ Emerging Councils



FPC TASKED TO WRITE FOOD PLAN

“a strategic plan should be developed by and maintained with the Local Food Policy Council to...ensure the master plan is fitting the true needs of the community.” --Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee



QUESTIONS?

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<http://douglascountyks.org/fpc>