

Urban rural resilience through community food hubs

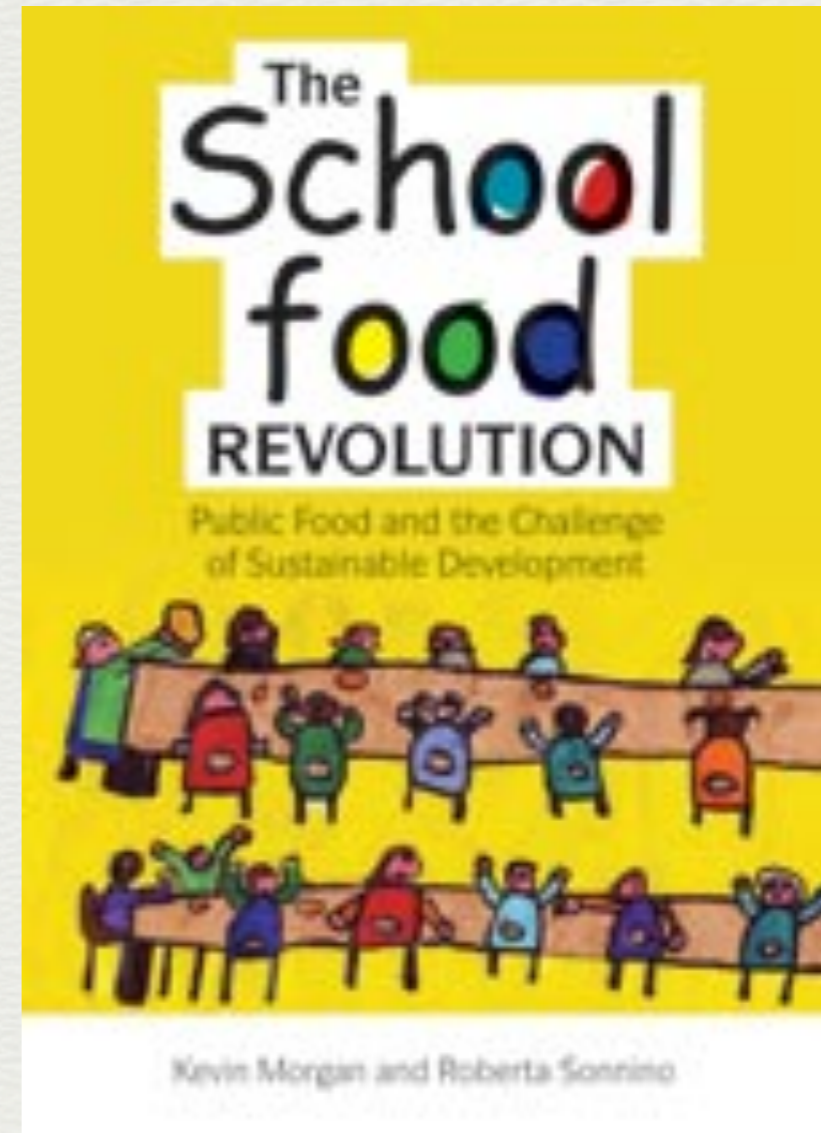


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A conversation about linking farmers to local buyers: Opportunities, challenges and successes

- Leadership and collaboration
- From Food-for-Cities survey:
 - marketing and monitoring systems to ensure farmer and small entrepreneur interests;
 - scale-appropriate technologies;
 - social business models;
 - local, organic food to reconnect people with nature
- Typology:
 - urban/rural;
 - organizational structure and motivation;
 - project scale/scope



A conversation about linking farmers to local buyers: Opportunities, challenges and successes

- From Food-for-Cities post Rio+20:
 - Role of nutrition including access to quality food, provision of a sanitary environment, access to basic income and healthcare, healthy eating information, education
 - Role of improved local urban rural food linkages to stabilize supply especially in the face of climate change
 - Promotion of biodiversity and diet diversity to build and maintain resilient systems
 - Effects of migration
 - Gender
 - Role of cooperatives, social enterprise, and other financing opportunities
 - Need for enabling policy, regulations and programs for improved procurement linkages



Project overview

- Help communities build more resilient sustainable communities of food that respect principles of ecological resilience, social justice and economic viability from field to table to compost heap



Project overview

- Eight universities, nine NGOs and four government offices, international partner
- Scanned 350+ grassroots, community based projects, 170+ interviews, and 19 case studies including selected Premier's Agri- Innovation Award winners
- By region
- Typology:
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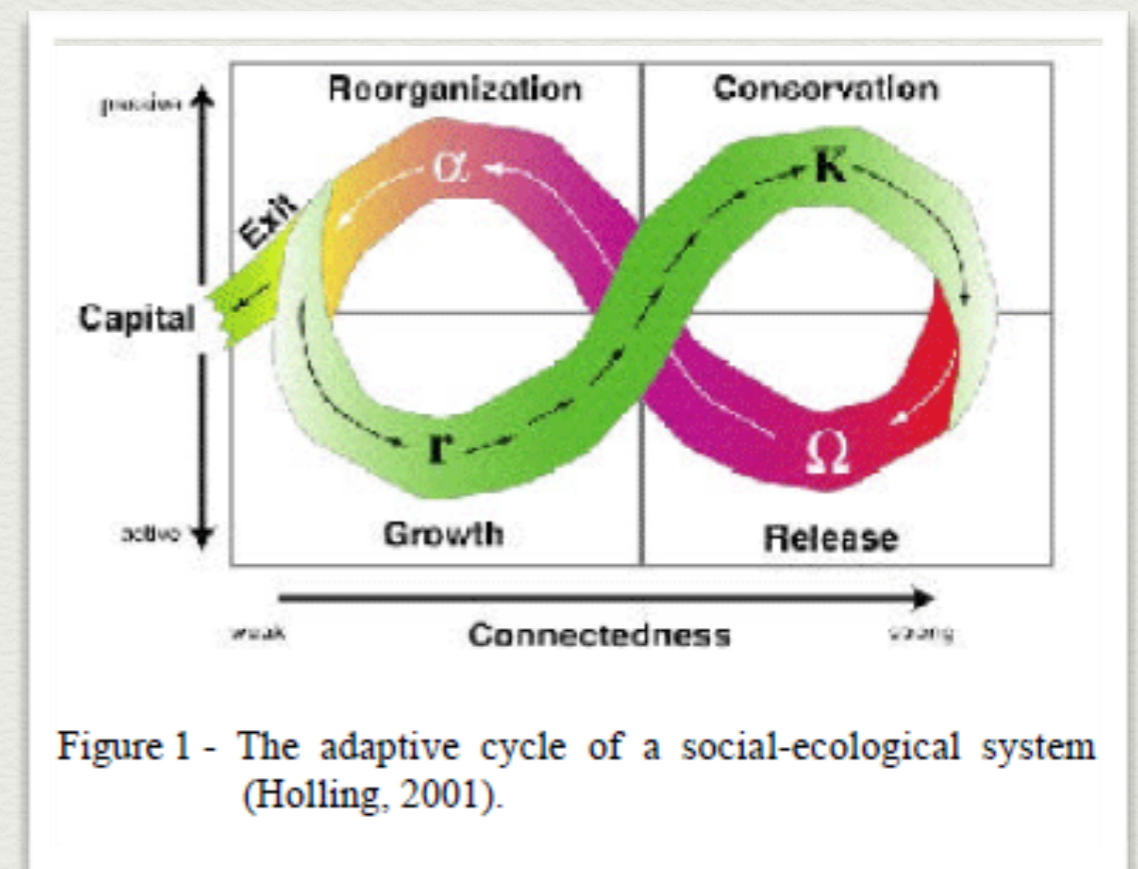
Rationale for project

- Develop understanding of how community food projects emerge, the challenges they face and how they succeed, describe innovation process
- Work in progress
- 'Models and Best Practices' report and toolkit describing case studies and notable projects across the province



Complex Adaptive Systems theory

- organizations that are co-evolving, fluid and emergent, critical from a place-based approach such as urban/rural food and planning;
- connectivity ensure relevance and reciprocity;
- establish shared vision;
- iterative, relevant feedback loops (Stroink and Nelson forthcoming, Levkoe forthcoming, Westley 2010, Meadows and Wright 2008)



Build and strengthen networks

Strongest partnerships include community, public health, CED, educational institution, agriculture



Rural-urban connections

Planning for good food



Rural-urban connections

Elmira Produce Auction

600% increase in 4 years, 30 %
10% from vendors
Buyers must purchase 3+ lots
Links farmers to institutions

Planning for social cohesion

- "In today's world, food projects remain the most economical and effective ways for cities to produce cohesion services. Community gardens, school gardens, and farmers markets are among the best community-building and capacity building sources around. My own favourite is the baking oven in neighbourhood parks - what gathering in kitchens is to house parties, and what the barbeque is to extended family get-togethers, the baking oven is to hanging out in neighbourhood parks." (Roberts 2011)
- **Planners can leave spaces for community interaction, create/foster liveable places**



Virtual hubs

- Based on Oklahoma Food Online Food Hub program (<http://www.oklahomafood.coop/>)
- Started in 2008, 200 members including 35 producers (Delivery/pickups in church basement, bi-weekly, food only)
- Seeded with federal grant money, sustained with memberships, fee-for-use and volunteers
- Convenient but lacks face-to-face interaction (Knezevic forthcoming)
- <http://www.niagaralocalfoodcoop.ca/>



True North Community Co-op (Chevrette, Stroink and Nelson 2011)

- Store front operation, cooperative model
- Regional community buy-in including Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- Share space
- Financially self-sustaining
- Carry anything in North 'from hand or land'
- (See also Eat Local Sudbury Coop for blogs, weekly buying lists, recipes, visioning exercise: <http://eatlocalsudbury.blogspot.com>)



Values based Transparency

- Local Food Plus
 - Commitment and measures of regional, ecological production that respects biodiversity, animal and worker welfare, and reduces fossil fuel use; incremental approach



What do we know?

- Many ingredients, no single recipe, place specific
- Set procurement targets
- Be authentic to minimize co-option risk
- Build and strengthen diverse networks between urban and rural

