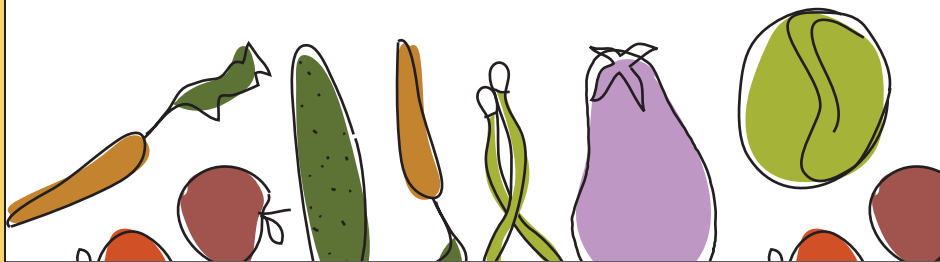


the
Western Lake Superior
**GOOD
FOOD**
MOVEMENT:
2013 Status Report





Acknowledgements

ISF would like to thank Sarah Nelson, M.D., for her contributions and review of this report.

ISF would also like to thank Sally Dover, Community Food Systems Educator, University of Minnesota Extension, for her review and contributions. For help in getting started or locating resources, contact Sally at dover007@umn.edu and (218) 726-6481.

Finally, ISF would like to thank Kristin DeArruda Wharton, Jamie Zak, Michael Latsch and many others that have provided case studies and photographs.

This report is made possible from a Community Transformation Grant, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Program.



Introduction

Within the Western Lake Superior bioregion, there has been a significant change in awareness of the relationship between food and individual, social, ecological and economic health. Hospitals, restaurants, colleges, schools, businesses, government, consumers, producers and others have begun to implement programs and change systems and policy to support a local, healthy food system – how we produce and distribute food. Many of these programs are in the early stages, while other efforts have resulted in significant policy change. A variety of exciting models have been created independently while others are linked together with the potential of significant collective impact. The purpose of this short report is to provide some context to these efforts, celebrate the work of many citizens and organizations, and to highlight the potential for a true transformation in our regional food system.



Background

During the first few decades of the 20th Century, Duluth was recognized as an important focus of mid-west food production. This area grew food for its burgeoning workforce and exported produce to Chicago and other distant markets. Beginning in the mid 1930's our bioregional food system suffered a decline in local investment. After the second World War, the interstate system, new pesticides and fertilizers, refrigeration, packaging, globalization and other factors facilitated the development of a global industrial food system and associated global supply chains. The results of these changes include the loss of regional food processing infrastructure, independent grocery stores and family farms which were supplanted by large transnational retail chains and agribusinesses utilizing agricultural practices with a host of unintended ecological health impacts.

While obesity related chronic diseases are obvious food related impacts, a wide variety of hidden health crises resulting from current agricultural practices are equally at play. These impacts have been well documented and include water and air pollution, decline of socio-economic health, pesticide related health impacts, antibiotic resistance, as well as decreased food access and low nutrient density (1). Experts have compared our industrial food system to a runaway train, and unless it is brought under control, will have a serious impact on the future health of our next generation.

(1) Food Systems and Public Health: Linkages to Achieve Healthier Diets and Healthier Communities, Journal of Hunger Environment and Nutrition Special Issue, Volume 4, Issue 3-4, 2009

Agriculture at a Crossroads



At the global level, these health impacts are well recognized. Agriculture at a Crossroads (2), the Global Report of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) was developed by United Nations organizations including the World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank, and the United Nations Environmental Program. This report highlights the findings of 400 agronomists charged with answering the question:

“What must we do differently to overcome persistent poverty and hunger, achieve equitable and sustainable development and sustain productive and resilient farming in the face of environmental crises?”

Significantly, the report called for a global transition to Agroecology, similar to what in North America is called sustainable agriculture. Now endorsed by 57 countries, the report explored the impact of current trade regimes and “rules of the game” - rules for market regulation, seed registration procedures, food hygiene standards, trade rules, intellectual property rights and the ways that agricultural research is governed - on many countries’ farmers and rural livelihoods. It recognized that the continued reliance on simplistic technological fixes will not reduce persistent hunger and poverty and could exacerbate environmental problems and worsen social inequity.

The report explained that governments must take decisive action to establish appropriate institutions for procurement, food trade and retail markets that direct opportunities and benefits to small-scale producers and local traders and retailers. As well, it included recommendations to promote value chains, fair trade, organic agriculture and local food systems that distribute benefits fairly and equitably along the chain. This landmark report has become the basis for the UN Human Rights Commission support for Agroecology and the Right to Food while also providing a global framework that is consistent with the development of the national Good Food Movement.

The National Good Food Movement

In response to the consequences of an industrial food model, citizens, government and organizations across the country have come together to develop an informal “good food movement”. Generally, this movement works to address the social, economic and ecological consequences of our food system and to provide an integrated alternative to the industrial model. These efforts recognize, in a similar way to the United Nations report, that health, hunger, environment and agriculture are connected in intimate ways.

The term Good Food has been adopted as a means to highlight food which is healthy, green, fair and affordable: healthy food defined as food that provides nourishment and enables people to thrive; green food produced in a manner that is environmentally sustainable; fair means that no one along the production line was exploited during its creation; and, affordable means that all people have access to it. Generally, these efforts are focused at developing local food systems and working to develop value chains, where all participants from farm to fork are provided an equitable share of the economic return. In addition, local food system development is often characterized by a foundational Food Charter, a locally designed set of principles which lay out a vision or goal for local food system development. Food Charters have now been adopted across states, cities and across multiple states including the Western Lake Superior Bioregion. It is anticipated that in 2014, the State of Minnesota will adopt a statewide Food Charter.

(2)Agriculture at a Crossroads <http://www.unep.org/dewa/Assessments/Ecosystems/IAASTD/tabid/105853/Default.aspx>

The Western Lake Superior Bioregional Food System

In 2010, burgeoning interest in local food led three University of Minnesota Duluth associated researchers to ask the important question, “can we grow enough food in our region to support our population on a healthy diet?” Their report, the *Locally Adapted Food System Assessment* (3), provided the answer that our region could indeed grow all our food locally, while also providing substantial health and socio-economic benefits. This report helped lay the foundation for the recent and rapid development of Good Food efforts in our region. Moreover, the report was important because it help delineate a two state, local food bio-region, connected by local economies, soils, people and a shared connection to a sense of place, Lake Superior.



Food and Health Connections in the Northland

The Northland experiences a host of food related health issues such as obesity and obesity related chronic diseases. These are intimately linked to the social determinants of health or how our social and physical environments influence our health over a lifespan, and include issues such as poverty, food insecurity, food access. Northeastern Minnesota has higher levels of poverty and poorer health than the state average. Six out of eight counties in our region are in the bottom fifth of health rankings. According to the Bridge to Health Survey 2010 (a regional health survey done every 5 years), the poverty rate (200% and less of the poverty level) is 29.2%. This is higher than the state and national averages. Five of the top 10 leading medical conditions that afflict adults in our region have a nutritional component. More than half (51.2 %) of adults in our region are overweight or obese, while less than one fifth (16.2%) report eating the recommended 5 or more servings of vegetables and fruits each day. Moreover, almost half (44%) of our citizens report eating at fast food restaurants 1-5 times per week, while just over one fifth (22%) reported never or only sometimes having fresh produce in their homes.

The Northwestern Wisconsin counties in our region rank in the lower half of their state’s health rankings. Two of the top five issues identified in the in the Community Health Improvement Plan 2013-2015 for Ashland and Bayfield counties in Wisconsin are Chronic Disease Prevention and Management and Nutrition and Healthy Foods. The plan identified that, “Many people are concerned about obesity. People think there needs to be better access to healthy foods, as well as education as to how to prepare meals, what foods and portion sizes are healthy.....”.

Having access to healthy, affordable food supported by a food system infrastructure that promotes regional socio-economic health, is an essential foundation for disease prevention and promoting the health of our region. Central to this vision is the development of a local good food economy.

(3) *Locally Adapted Food System Assessment: Western Lake Superior Region* http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/gisl/main/projects_localfoods.php

The Western Lake Superior Good Food Movement

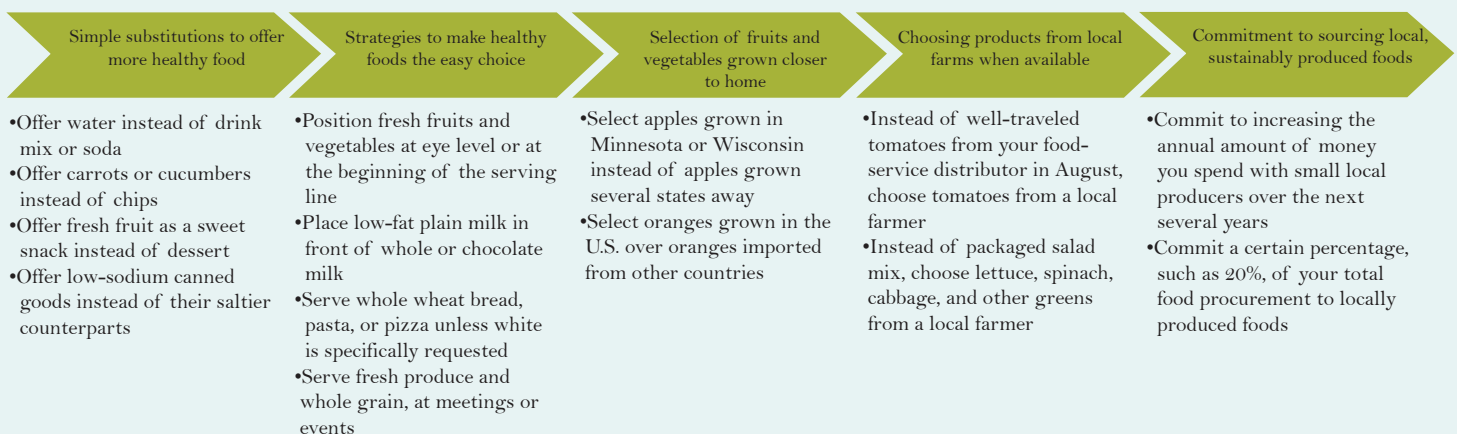
Across Northeast Minnesota and Northwest Wisconsin, a tremendous array of organizations and citizens are involved in advancing projects and policies that collectively support a Western Lake Superior regional food system. A central underlying theme to this body of work is the necessity of a systems perspective that recognizes the interconnectedness of issues of environment, hunger, socio-economics, and nutrition and to evolve a local food system that supports health through investments in local food production.

One effort includes the Lake Superior Good Food Network (GFN), a loose network of nine organizations and individuals representing various areas of the food system. This effort is working to promote principles for a shared regional food system through the Lake Superior Good Food Charter. The Charter was developed from input by citizens at a regional food summit, a green jobs summit, and public input process. To date, more than thirty organizations, businesses and governments have endorsed the Food Charter. A related effort is the Superior Compact, a 20% local by 2020 food purchasing goal. The Compact asks institutions, restaurants and other food purchasing businesses to commit to a 20% local purchasing goal. This aggregated “demand” allows regional producers to scale up production and invest in local production and distribution infrastructure.

Other efforts include the Fair Food Access Campaign in Duluth’s Lincoln Park neighborhood. This Campaign was forwarded by the Healthy Duluth Area Coalition, a group of organizations working on active living and healthy eating efforts, with a focus on food access. In Ashland, Wisconsin, the Good Eats effort is a convening of regional food producers, institutions, school food advocates and others working to build a healthy, local, food system. Along the North Shore of Lake Superior, an effort called the Northwoods Food Project is working to increase Cook County’s long term food sustainability and self reliance by eating and growing locally produced food. In Aitkin, a group of local food, agriculture and health interests have now come together to develop a project to support Good Food through policy and systems changes. And in Grand Rapids, efforts are similarly evolving through the YMCA, local farmers market and local hospital. There are clearly many more collaborative efforts around the region than those listed here, but without a doubt, the Good Food movement is taking hold in the Western Lake Superior Bioregion.

Spectrum of Changes for Healthy Food Access

Everyone is starting in a different place! Big changes can feel overwhelming, but no matter where you are starting, there are attainable small steps institutions and communities can take to improve access to healthy foods. The spectrum below offers different suggestions for improving access to healthy foods. Each suggestion includes a few concrete examples, but the possibilities are quite extensive. There are resources available to help you in your quest to increase access to healthy foods, no matter where you are in the process.



The Good Food Movement: Examples from Across the Northland

Youth Gardening in Itasca County



Youth participating in childcare programming at the Itasca County Family YMCA have an opportunity to play in the dirt while learning about growing their own food. Through collaboration between The YMCA Childcare Department, Itasca County Master Gardeners, and Get Fit Itasca, and with funding from General Mills Foundation and the Itasca County Health Fund, what was once an un-utilized grassy space in the back of the YMCA is now a thriving garden for all to enjoy. In addition to vegetables, strawberries and blueberries are growing in the garden. The children participate in activities include caring for the garden, crafts in the garden, selling mint lemonade with mint from the garden as well as many others. "This is their garden. We encourage them to visit whenever they like and share about all they have accomplished," stated Master Gardener Susan Lick.



University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners give instruction prior to seed starting with Forest Lake Elementary Educare students.

Sawtooth Mountain Elementary School Garden

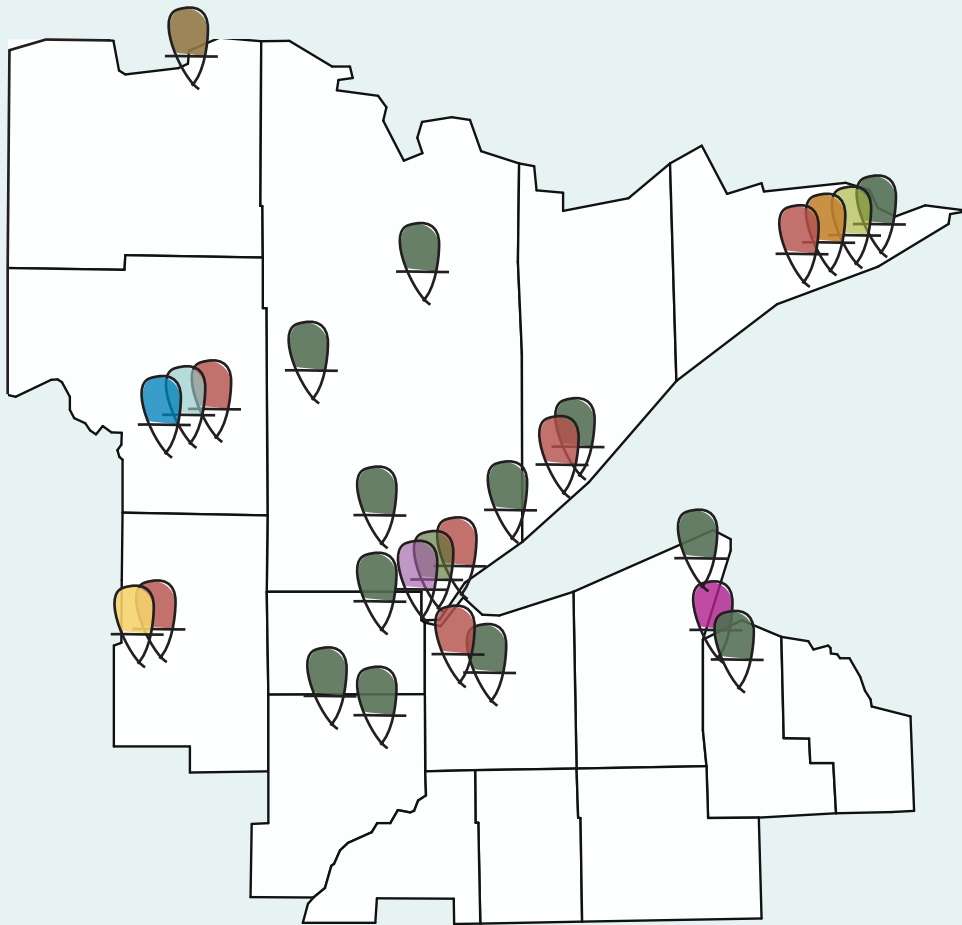



Two years ago, SHIP funds were used to assist Sawtooth Elementary school in Grand Marais to turn an under-used courtyard area into a school garden and outdoor classroom. The Sawtooth Elementary Courtyard Garden is now in its third summer of production, proving that you can grow vegetables in our northern climate! The garden and courtyard is tended by kindergarten through 5th grade students and includes a variety of vegetables and flowers. The students planted the entrance to the courtyard as a Gratitude Garden giving honor to the community members who volunteer in the grade school. The garden is used for classroom activities such as seed starting, plant cuttings, photography, journaling and Spanish and Ojibwa descriptive language skills. A retired teacher and master gardener adopted the student gardeners. She has guided staff and students throughout the growing process and continues to lead the way with expressing her joy and amazement when the seeds sprout and the transplants take root.



Carrots and potatoes growing at the Sawtooth Mountain Elementary School Garden

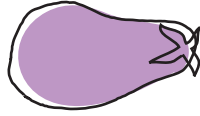
Good Food Examples Mapped



-  Youth Gardening in Itasca County
-  Sawtooth Mountain Elementary School Garden
-  School Gardens in Duluth Public Schools
-  Healthy Food at Itasca Community College
-  North Shore Hospital & Care Center Worksite Wellness Program & Garden
-  Healthy Hospital Challenge
-  Northland College Local Food Initiative
-  New Farmers Market in Duluth's Lincoln Park Neighborhood
-  Bimaaji'idiwin Ojibwe Garden Program
-  Good Food in Aitkin
-  Good Food in International Falls
-  Community Supported Agriculture Guild (CSA) locations

Healthy Food at Itasca Community College

Itasca Community College is helping students explore the food system through a diverse array of activities throughout the semester. In addition to reading Michael Pollan's "The Omnivore's Dilemma", students and community members have the opportunity to participate in the following: a photography exhibit of regional farmers and poetry reading about farming, cooking demonstrations and classes, an onsite farmers market, a wild foods foray, and a variety of presentations and panel discussions with agricultural economists, agricultural researchers, farmers, and other food experts. Students can also take part in campus-wide food challenges, including eating "corn-free," foregoing fast food, and tracking how much sugar they really eat.

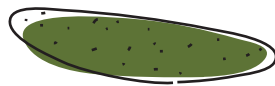


North Shore Hospital & Care Center Worksite Wellness Program & Garden

The Cook County North Shore Hospital & Care Center began thinking about ways to offer employees affordable access to fresh produce, as well as how to incorporate more locally grown produce into its meals for patients and Care Center residents. Through initial SHIP support for a worksite wellness program, the Hospital & Care Center created a Wellness Committee and began thinking creatively about how to get more fresh vegetables to staff, residents and patients. Last summer, through volunteer labor and tending, the Hospital Wellness Committee built 4 raised beds and offered very low cost fresh produce like snap peas, cucumbers, lettuce, beans and spinach to hospital staff in a "Friday Farmers Market." "This summer, thanks to support from a CTG mini-grant, the garden has doubled and has installed labor-saving irrigation. The garden is providing beans, radishes and lettuce to the hospital kitchen for use in meals. Our residents in the Care Center are really enjoying the type of fresh produce they grew up eating at home!" There is a wonderful video on the North Shore Hospital & Care Center Worksite Wellness program & Garden online at the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic's website (<http://bcove.me/36i1223q>).



The Cook County North Shore Hospital
& Care Center Garden



Food Cooperatives

Duluth's Whole Foods Co-op and the Chequamegon Food Co-op have endorsed the Superior Compact. Yet, beyond these recent commitments our regional Food Cooperatives have been instrumental in helping develop local food skills, assets and resources. For years, these Cooperatives have been actively engaged in supporting local sustainable food producers, education in schools, cooking and nutrition classes, low interest loans to farmers and providing substantial support to area food, hunger and nutrition related organizations. These food businesses are an anchor for the local food economy and represent economic democracy, community ownership and control and have spread local wealth and ownership. Nationally, there is significant community demand for Food Cooperatives. A recent study by the Whole Foods Cooperative found that shoppers are relatively even split through the economic spectrum from low to high income, reflective of the diversity of community support.

Healthy Hospital Challenge

The Commons Health Hospital Challenge was developed to recognize and promote those hospitals that are institutional leaders in linking clinical practice with health promotion and primary prevention. The Challenge works with hospitals to encourage adoption of three healthy food goals 1) Baby Friendly Hospitals – promotion of breast feeding, (the most local sustainable food) 2) Sugar beverages sale phase-out and 3) adoption of a 20% by 2020 local food purchasing. As of October 15th, Cook County North Shore Hospital and Clinic, St. Luke's, Essentia, Grand Itasca Clinics and Hospital and Lake View Memorial have phased out sugary beverage sales. Essentia and St. Luke's have committed to a 20% local purchasing goal and Riverwood Healthcare Center is a Baby Friendly Hospital. These exciting models have only accelerated the partnerships advancing further community wellness efforts.



Physicians Supporters of the Hospital Challenge



Northland College Local Food Initiative

Northland College is a regional local food leader and signatory to the Superior Compact and Lake Superior Good Food Charter. During the 2012-2013 school year, Northland had a goal of purchasing 20% local food by dollar value which was exceeded, reaching 25.4% in May. This represents \$77,827 in local purchasing within 100 miles plus an additional \$14,843 going out to 250 miles. During the coming year, Northland plans to pilot a compost collection program with the Ashland Public schools, increase local purchasing up to at least 30%, and continue to pursue a grant funded food processing and storage facility with the goal of having the facility operational by mid-June 2014. Already, Northland is close to achieving their new purchasing goal. For the month of October the total percent of food that was purchased locally was 46.9%, down slightly from September's percent of 47.2!



Good Food in Aitkin

In Aitkin County, a diverse group comprising farmers, school staff, healthcare staff, and others has come together to identify ways they can collaborate to support good food in their communities. The group kicked off with a food charter event and discussion about what good food means to them, followed by brainstorming strategies to foster local markets and greater awareness of the good food produced in the area. The local hospital, Riverwood Healthcare Center, provides the group with meeting space. Riverwood is actively engaged in supporting good food by hosting a weekly produce stand and serving as a food box drop-off site, both in partnership with Sprout MN, an area food hub.



Aitkin County Residents at Good Food Planning Meeting

New Farmers Market in Duluth's Lincoln Park Neighborhood

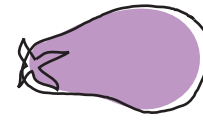


When the Fair Food Access Campaign surveyed 400 households in the “food desert” neighborhood of Lincoln Park in July 2011, the number one suggested food access solution was a farmers market. Eleven months later, with support from Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN’s Center for Prevention and the McKnight Foundation, Community Action Duluth launched the market at the Harrison Community Center at 30th Ave W and 3rd St. The market features products grown and made in the Superior Grown region including vegetables from Community Action Duluth’s Seeds of Success urban farming program, GnarFoodz, Mary Stone (Gittigaan Maa’ishkam), Trina Waters (Celestial Waters Design), On Eagles Wings Farm, John Beaton, an intern at Northern Harvest Farm in Wrenshall, cookies from Positively 3rd St Bakery, and home-made bread from Gary Gagnon, one of the neighbors engaged in the Fair Food Access effort. Customers who receive SNAP (food stamp benefits) get their benefits matched up to \$5 per person per week when they shop at the market.



A \$10 purchase from Seeds of Success at the Lincoln Park Farmers Market

School Gardens in Duluth Public Schools



Through a Community Transformation Grant from the regional Community Health Board, the Duluth Community Garden Program supported five Duluth schools through a planning and building process to include school gardens in all aspects of the school experience. The planning process for the school garden projects has been a testament to the incredible depth of knowledge and experience that is brought to a project when careful consideration is given to inclusion. That means inviting everyone in a school community: students, food service workers, teachers of various subject areas, the building engineer, retirees, neighbors, and local leaders. School gardens have been a powerful project for our community to rally around through the shared value of increasing food literacy and healthy food choices for students. With the addition of these gardens, gardening will find a place in the curriculum as an educational tool for reaching academic standards in math, science, arts, construction, technology, and family and consumer science classes, while creating opportunities for students to taste and enjoy fresh, healthy food in the cafeteria and classroom.



School Garden Building Day!

Regional Food Business Examples

(Signatories to the Superior Compact)



Spirit Creek Farm

Spirit Creek Farm is run by Andrew and Jennifer Sauter Sargent. The business is off the grid, solar powered and situated on the south shore of Lake Superior. In 2006, Andrew was inspired by the book *Salt: A World History*. After a season of growing their own cabbage and pounding kraut, they decided to start making lacto-fermented food for retail sale. They spent the winter of 2007 building a certified kitchen and researching, preparing and pre-ordering vegetables (from other local organic farmers) to be prepared to bring products to market in the late summer and fall of 2007. Spirit Creek Farm is committed to local, sustainable, organic farming. Nearly all of the ingredients in their fermented vegetables are from organic growers in the upper-Midwest; primarily the northern Wisconsin region. Due to how cost prohibitive organic certification is for small-scale farmers many of their growers are not certified, but abide by or exceed organic growing practices. Their products can be found in food cooperatives across the region and the Upper Midwest and during the summer at local farmers markets.



Sassy Nanny Farmstead Cheese

Sassy Nanny Farmstead Cheese is a northern Wisconsin artisanal goat cheese maker producing a variety of handcrafted goat cheeses. Sassy Nanny has been purveying farmstead goat cheeses in northern Wisconsin since 2010. Their products sell at retail and wholesale markets within a 100-mile radius of their Herbster, Wisconsin farm (this would include Duluth/Superior, Hayward, Ashland, Cable, Iron River, and Eau Claire). The goals of Sassy Nanny are to provide superior quality artisanal goat cheeses that are delicious and delightful, to promote the production and availability of locally-produced foods, and to practice impeccable animal husbandry and progressive land management. The nutrition and health of the milking herd is closely monitored, and consequently, confidence about attesting to the benefits of their milk and cheese is a corner stone of this business.



Prairie Kitchen Specialty Foods

Arlene Coco lives, writes and works in Duluth, MN and has made a living in the food industry for over 2 decades, mostly behind a stove. She owns a micro food manufacturing company named Prairie Kitchen Specialty Foods and is a food evangelist when it comes to promoting local foods. Prairie Kitchen makes hand made Artisan grain based specialties for wholesale and retail. Their mission is to produce high quality non-meat food products made with local hands and natural ingredients for the region on a wholesale and retail level.

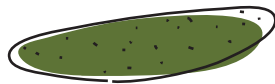
Bimaaji'idiwin Ojibwe Garden Program

The Ojibwe Garden is a burgeoning program developed by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in partnership with Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, University of Minnesota Extension Service, and the United States Department of Agriculture. The aim of the program is to preserve and promote traditional Ojibwe cropping systems as well as educate the greater community about contemporary strategies for organic food and medicinal plant production. There are several strategies in place to accomplish this goal, including a



Ojibwe Demo Garden

demonstration garden that supplies produce to Fond du Lac Ojibwe School's Abinoojinyag Gitigaan Farm to School program and the Elderly Nutrition Program. As well, there is a bimonthly gardening workshop, a weblog, collaboration with other Reservation gardening groups, and garden interns who are available to make house calls to help Fond du Lac community members with their gardens. To follow the garden news and to learn about new events visit the Ojibwe Garden blog at <http://ojibwegardenprogram.wordpress.com/>



Good Food in International Falls

Falls Hunger Coalition in International Falls is actively working to get more fresh produce into their food shelf. They now have a relationship with Rat Root River Farm, located in northern Koochiching County, where the farmers were seeking a way to share their abundance with others. The two are working together to identify the best crops to be grown at the farm and distributed through Falls Hunger Coalition in the 2014 growing season.



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Guild

Across the Northland, there is growing support for Community Support Agriculture (CSA), with fifteen CSA farms now part of the CSA Guild. CSA's consist of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production. A regular, typically weekly, share of farm production is purchased before the growing season with deliveries made at nearby community drop off sites throughout the summer. Most CSA farms focus on vegetables, but many provide meat, eggs, cheese, preserves, and other farm products directly to consumers (www.csaguild.com).

The Superior Compact

20% Local Purchasing by 2020

Across the nation, individuals and communities are embracing the multiple economic, social, ecological and health benefits associated with regional food system investments. Yet, without any measurable goals or benchmarks the potential of this citizen and community led movement is diminished. To that end, local organizations, food policy councils and/or regional food networks have developed local and regional purchasing goals so as to help drive investments in the local food economy and to highlight regional leadership. Complimenting these local food purchasing goals are healthy and sustainable food service metrics and benchmarks developed for healthcare, restaurants and higher education for use by institutions across the country.

Since its reintroduction in 2012, when it was tailored for food purchasers, the Superior Compact has gained over twenty regional signatories. These restaurants, institutions and food businesses have made a public commitment to take measurable steps toward increasing their local food procurement. Moreover, these partners represent leadership by the food service community through their willingness to increase transparency and work together to recognize strengths and overcome weakness in the development of our regional food system.

the signatories

(as of 10.1.13)

ASHLAND

Chartwells Food Service at Northland College
Chequamegon Food Co-op

BAYFIELD

Spirit Creek Farm

CORNICOPIA

Ehlers General Store

DULUTH

Duluth Grill
At Sara's Table/ Chester Creek Cafe
Whole Foods Coop
Zeitgeist Arts Cafe
St. Luke's
Burrito Union
Tycoon's
Restaurant 301
Kitchi Gammi Club
Essentia Health
Prairie Kitchen Specialty Foods
Fitgers BrewHouse

GRAND MARAIS

Angry Trout

HERBSTER

Sassy Nanny Farmstead Cheese

LUTSEN

Lutsen Resort

TWO HARBORS

Mocha Moose

WASHBURN

Cafe Coco

Defining Local: Superior Grown and the Superior Compact Bioregion

Inherent in the development of any local purchasing commitment is the dilemma that the definition of local is subjective, yet to be measurable and meaningful- the definition of local must be objectively defined. The Superior Compact utilizes a definition of local as those counties identified with the aforementioned University of Minnesota – Duluth report or within 100 miles of a purchasing facility within these counties. For processed foods with multiple ingredients, including bread and other bakery items, at least 50% by weight of ingredients must be produced within the Compact region. This region overlays with the new Superior Grown label. If the label says Superior Grown, consumers know that it is what our regional food movement defines as local.

The local food bioregion defined by the Superior Compact includes Western Lake Superior counties in Northeastern Minnesota, Northwestern Wisconsin and Northern Ontario.

Minnesota Counties: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, St. Louis

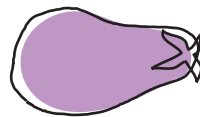
Wisconsin Counties: Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Sawyer, Washburn

*Ontario Counties: Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay.



Superior Grown Regional Label

In a collaborative effort that links consumers and producers across our bioregion, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Minnesota Grown Program and the Lake Superior Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association (LSSFA) launched a new regional food label. The Minnesota Grown/Superior Grown logo is a new way for local consumers who care about buying local to recognize and support regional producers. The logo builds upon the statewide brand equity of the Minnesota Grown logo and allows the Superior Grown region to build upon its regional identity. This logo is available for all Northeast Minnesota Counties and with funding is available for use in the identified North West Wisconsin counties.



Conclusion

Clearly, the local Good Food movement is taking form in the Western Lake Superior bioregion. Many of these efforts are happening through increased communication and collaboration. Moreover, education on the relationship between food production and health is helping to increase support and engagement from new businesses, governments, citizens and organizations. Collective effort, knowledge and financial resources will be necessary to build food production and infrastructure and to develop a healthy local food system. Consistent with Agriculture at a Crossroads, we will need to be mindful to include all citizens in the development of solutions and decisions around issues of promoting food and health. And we will need improved transparency through metrics, benchmarks and reporting to reflect the good food values of our region.



Institute for a Sustainable Future
8 N. 2nd Ave. East. Suite 200
Duluth, MN 55802

isfusa.org