

# Regional Food System Plan



For a robust Upstate

# Agenda



- 
- Introductions
  - Overview
  - Survey Results
  - Research Summit
  - Break Out Session
  - Prioritize

# Plan History



- ❧ February 21 – identifying partners
- ❧ June 6 – identifying challenges
- ❧ June 17 – Upstate Planners' meeting
- ❧ September 25 – organizational structure
- ❧ **Today - Prioritization**

# February 21



## Market Players

- ❧ Farmers
- ❧ Distributors
- ❧ Value Added Producers
- ❧ Finance / Business
- ❧ Regulators
- ❧ Advocates
- ❧ Educators
- ❧ Buyers/ Brokers (Retail & Institutional)
- ❧ Consumers
- ❧ SNAP Users
- ❧ Recyclers

# February 21



## Areas of Focus

- ☞ Communications
- ☞ Storage
- ☞ Production
- ☞ Preservation/Processing
- ☞ Education
- ☞ Asset Inventory
- ☞ Distribution
- ☞ Financing / Capital
- ☞ Employment
- ☞ Cooperative Extension
- ☞ Security
- ☞ Public Health
- ☞ Advertising/Promotion
- ☞ Policy
- ☞ Recycling, Salvage, Composting

# June 6



## Challenges

- ❧ land availability, connecting to farmers that need land
- ❧ plying the marketplace,
- ❧ insurance
- ❧ trespassing
- ❧ scale of liability
- ❧ farmers' markets limits (hours, location)
- ❧ grocery store siting
- ❧ farms as economic engine
- ❧ lingo (food deserts)
- ❧ convenience of local
- ❧ incorporating food stamp usage
- ❧ funding for Co-ops, mobile markets
- ❧ farm education
- ❧ licensing, certification, improving quality
- ❧ high demand, contract growing
- ❧ Culinary training
- ❧ making food more accessible
- ❧ seasonal disparity
- ❧ Asset mapping for specific geographies
- ❧ Obtaining farm inputs like grains for livestock

# June 6



## Challenges, continued

- ∞ inflating costs to the farmer
- ∞ transportation
- ∞ land price
- ∞ matching new farmers to land
- ∞ lack of zoning in Spartanburg
- ∞ farm incubation
- ∞ recreational income on farm
- ∞ communication with community
- ∞ permanent facilities
- ∞ role of local government
- ∞ who heads up food planning, grants
- ∞ distributing information
- ∞ where is the farmer represented on elected board?
- ∞ Waste
- ∞ Upstate inspection center (esp. meat) - currently in Cola. Only
- ∞ Upstate processing facility
- ∞ Enhancing Cottage Law
- ∞ Education and Outreach for SNAP to consumers
- ∞ Mobile Markets, effectiveness
- ∞ Regional processing centers
- ∞ Laws for poultry processing on farm and mobile processing units
- ∞ Changing Consumer psychology, education to using local foods (or whole foods)
- ∞ Considering season extension to meet consumer demand (tomatoes in winter)
- ∞ Making it easier for consumers to approach whole foods/ local foods
- ∞ Average age of farmers
- ∞ Finding the market for local products so farmers can focus on production
- ∞ Storage facilities (freezer, dry, etc.)

# June 17



- ❧ Upstate Planners Meeting
- ❧ Connecting jurisdictions with local food system
  - ❧ Each Upstate SC county has unique assets and strengths
  - ❧ Connect and share assets or products across counties



# Sept 25



- ❧ Examples of other Policy Council Orgs:
  - ❧ Just for networking, open membership, informal
  - ❧ NFP, member run, paying membership, officers and boardmembers
  - ❧ Dynamic governance: representatives from specific locales to attend coordinated, regional meetings.  
Applied at various scales to build to a State level.
- ❧ **What makes sense to you and your business, organization, jurisdiction?**

# Sept 25



- ❧ What is your goal, why are you here?
- ❧ **Don't want to be a subgroup of the State Council. We want to do it ourselves.**
- ❧ **Enjoy the current dynamics of the current group**
  - ❧ Then look at subgroups for this group to look for solutions
  - ❧ Avoid getting bogged down into organizational structure
- ❧ Funding will be an issue, and structure is needed. Must be a recognized group to achieve goals.
- ❧ Would not make funding an initial issue.
- ❧ **Current setup (Regional Food System Plan) is a consortium**
  - ❧ We all have our individual expertise

# Sept 25



- ❧ **Need to build the capacity of existing organization**
- ❧ What is the landscape of SC in the form of organizing food systems?
- ❧ We need to decide if we are 'that someone' to address the challenges
- ❧ Understanding the value of the market (quality and quantity) and representing that to other communities. The Upstate has a great economy that can be leveraged
- ❧ **Another layer of bureaucracy is not needed, but we need to work at subcategories**

# Sept 25



- ❧ Among topics, econ, enviro, social, and then scale like county, or by a goal basis.
- ❧ If we know we need an org involved, then approach them individually.
- ❧ **We aren't ready yet for a Council, but figure out what you want to do first**
- ❧ Make sure we have the right people in the room to be effective
- ❧ **Reconvene in a workshop setting to address task lists to four main topics.**
- ❧ Next meeting: grouping the challenges in a group setting, then address creating subgroups
- ❧ **Many stakeholders will have multiple 'buckets' - revolving round table workshop - speed buckets**
- ❧ Then a leader/expert of the bucket topic identified

# Survey



- ☞ Three Topics: Product, Process, Market
- ☞ Matching challenges/opportunities
- ☞ Priority Topics

# Survey: Product



- ❧ seasonal production disparity
- ❧ increasing product quantity
- ❧ farm inputs like grains for livestock
- ❧ improving product quality
- ❧ allow farmers to focus on production
- ❧ land availability
- ❧ connecting farmers with land
- ❧ farms as economic engine
- ❧ high product demand
- ❧ contract growing
- ❧ inflating costs to the farmer
- ❧ farm incubation

# Survey: Process



- ❧ improving product quality
- ❧ increasing product quantity
- ❧ land availability
- ❧ waste
- ❧ storage facilities (freezer, dry, etc.)
- ❧ connecting farmers with land
- ❧ farmer education
- ❧ transportation
- ❧ considering season extension to meet consumer demand (tomatoes in winter)
- ❧ certification
- ❧ insurance for the small farm
- ❧ access/introduction to insurance by farmer
- ❧ insurance companies adding riders

# Survey: Process



- ❧ farm inputs like grains for livestock
- ❧ allow farmers to focus on production
- ❧ farm incubation
- ❧ insurance for raw milk operation
- ❧ licensing
- ❧ scale of liability
- ❧ Upstate processing facility
- ❧ Upstate inspection center (esp. meat)
- ❧ insurance companies familiar with local farm risk
- ❧ regional processing centers



# Survey: Market



- ❧ local products accessible to low income and high end
- ❧ making local food more accessible
- ❧ incorporating food stamp usage
- ❧ convenient access of local products
- ❧ farmers' markets limits (hours, location)
- ❧ marketplace access
- ❧ making it easier for consumers to approach whole foods/  
local foods
- ❧ communication with community
- ❧ grocery store siting/ replacement

# Survey: Market



- ❧ mobile markets, effectiveness
- ❧ education to using local foods (or whole foods)
- ❧ affecting consumer psychology
- ❧ finding the market for local products
- ❧ education and outreach for SNAP to consumers
- ❧ high product demand
- ❧ food service companies as partner for local products
- ❧ distributing information
- ❧ lingo (food deserts)
- ❧ local food in school cafeterias
- ❧ culinary training

# Survey: Top 5



- marketplace access, market
- convenient access of local products, market
- making local food more accessible, market
- seasonal production disparity, market
- making it easier for consumers to approach whole foods/ local foods, product
- finding the market for local products, market

# Survey: Top 5



- ❧ farms as economic engine, market
- ❧ incorporating food stamp usage, market
- ❧ Certification, process
- ❧ role of local government, other
- ❧ Upstate processing facility, process, other
- ❧ regional processing centers, process
- ❧ land use conflicts, other
- ❧ storage facilities (freezer, dry, etc.), process

# Other Topics



- ❧ Government
- ❧ Policy
- ❧ Politics
- ❧ Organization
- ❧ Education
- ❧ Infrastructure
- ❧ Land Use
- ❧ Legal
- ❧ Business: Public, private, NFP

# Research Summit

