



Community Food Systems

CONFERENCE 2017

IMPACT REPORT



Working with new farmers to build strong businesses, expertise in the field, and a resilient food system.

nesfp.org

IMPACT REPORT

2017 COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

Exploring the intersection of food security, social justice, and sustainable agriculture

The **mission** of New Entry Sustainable Farming Project's 2017 Community Food Systems Conference was to address common underlying themes between food security, social justice and sustainable agriculture by providing space for conversations around promoting, facilitating, and supporting self-reliance; breaking down barriers to racial justice; connecting communities to their food sources; and impacting communities at the local and regional level through sustainable food production.

THE THEMES:

During December 5, 6, and 7 at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel, we brought together leaders and advocates of **food security**, **sustainable agriculture** and **social justice** movements to discuss their range of perspectives, how these areas overlap, and how to support one another's work.



SPONSORS



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture



CEDAR TREE FOUNDATION



Harvard Pilgrim
HealthCare Foundation



KRUPP FAMILY FOUNDATION
BUILDING HEALTHY & THRIVING COMMUNITIES



LEADERSHIP

Steering Committee

Karen Bassarab, *Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future*

Helen Dombalis, *National Farm to School Network*

Andy Fisher, *formerly Community Food Security Coalition*

Regina Ginyard, *Black Urban Growers*

Grace Henley, *International Rescue Committee*

Michelle Horovitz, *Appetite for Change*

Erika Inwald, *Domestic Fair Trade Association*

Gabi Mora, *formerly The Food Trust*

Anne Palmer, *Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future*

Josh Sbicca, *Colorado State University*

Karen Spiller, *KAS Consulting*

Lacy Stephens, *National Farm to School Network*

Tes Thraves, *Center for Environmental Farming Systems*

Cecily Upton, *Food Corps*

Gail Wadsworth, *CA Institute for Rural Affairs*

Hli Xyooj, *Hmong American Partnership*

Local Host Committee

Jess Bloomer, *Groundwork Somerville*

Simca Horwitz, *Massachusetts Farm to School*

Mackenzie Sehlke, *Boston Public Market Association*

Advisor

Emily Becker, *Oregon Food Bank*

Staff

Kristen Aldrich, *National Technical Assistance Manager*

Kristen Irvin, *National Technical Assistance Coordinator*

Courtney Spivey, *Volunteer Coordinator*

Laura Flagg, *Outreach Intern*



New Entry staff

ATTENDEE TESTIMONIAL

"It was extremely powerful to be gathered in such a large group. It seemed 'big' and I don't quite know how else to put it into words, but it's a turning point in our food system history. And I was honored to be there."

Community Food Systems

CONFERENCE 2017

KEYNOTE

WINONA LADUKE, award winning environmental and political activist dedicated to indigenous rights, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and food systems



"The highlight of the conference for me was hearing Winona LaDuke's keynote address. I had never heard her speak before. She was very inspiring, and shared a very powerful message of the reality of the community food movement in the context of our need to continue to address and highlight native and minority inclusion and rights."

WORKSHOP CATEGORIES

*Farm to All *Movement Building

*Community Partnerships *Food Justice

*Social Enterprise *Youth Engagement

*Measuring Impacts *Labor

*Policy & Advocacy

PLENARY PANELISTS

Suzanne Adely, Food Chain Workers Alliance



Aleya Fraser, Black Dirt Farm Collective



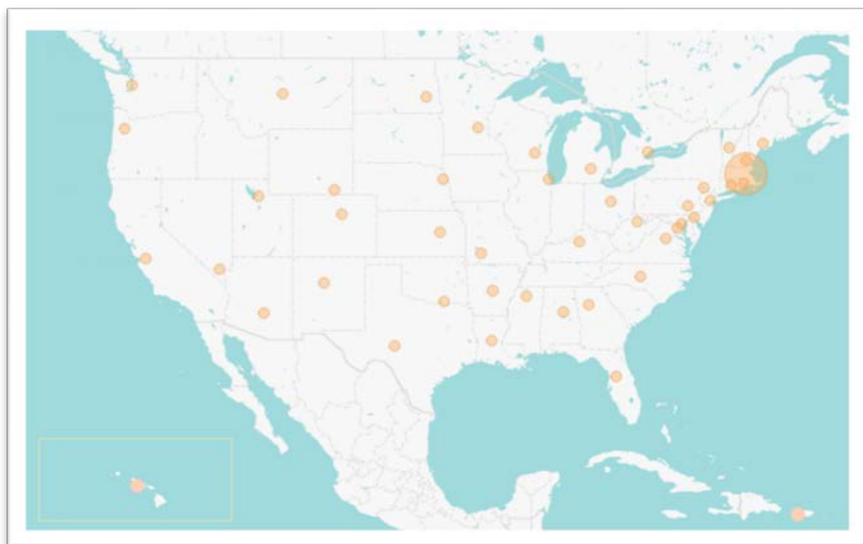
Malik Yakini, Detroit Black Community Food Security Network



Andy Fisher, Co-Founder of Community Food Security Coalition



Geographies Represented

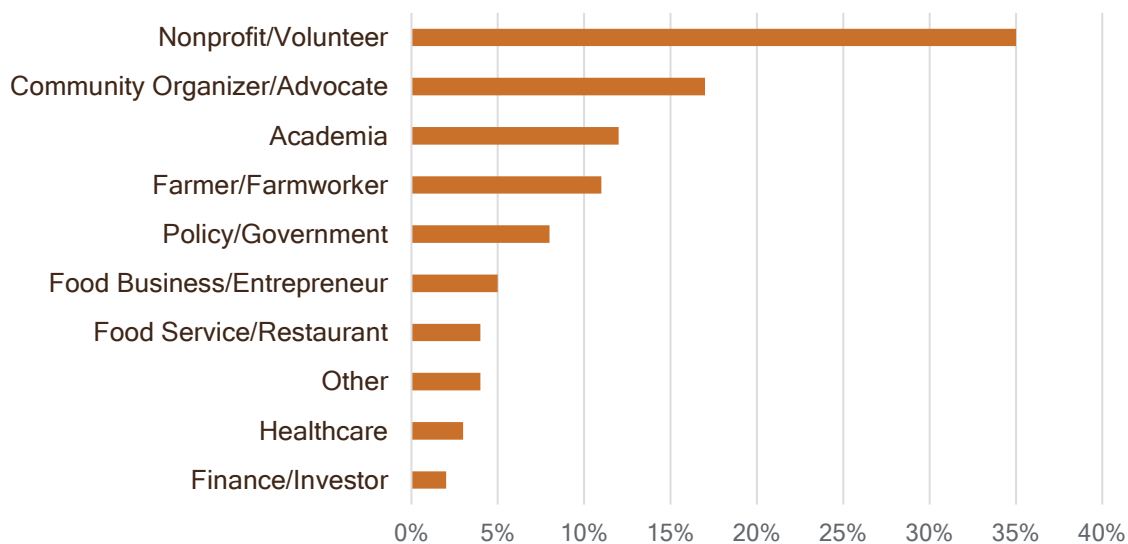


20 Exhibitors
6 Field trip sites
4 In-depth pre-conferences

551 Attendees
107 Presenters
59 Workshop sessions

235 Cities represented
423 Organizations represented
\$25,240 in scholarships given
53 Scholarship recipients

Fields & Professions Represented

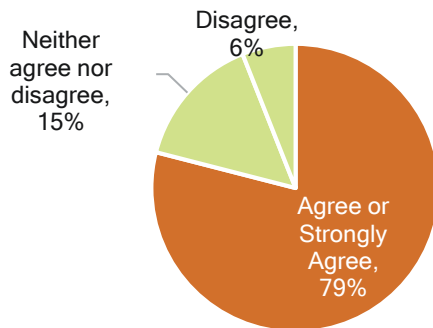


"The Racial Equity pre-conference was one of the best I have attended about this topic. Both facilitators were absolutely wonderful! I have brought back so much in both terms of content and feelings from this one workshop."

"I loved the fact that 4 out of 5 workshops I attended were led by people of color. That has been the very opposite of my conference experiences so far so that was inspiring and refreshing!"

CONFERENCE IMPACT

I'll be taking home and sharing one or more new strategies to address food security in my community.



What were the top action items you plan to implement in 2018 as a result of your attendance at the conference?

"To **organize** hyper-local growers to grow more ethnically diverse crops."

"We now plan to utilize **systems analysis** methodologies to inform our strategy."

"Farm Bill **advocacy**: I got home and immediately wrote letters to my representatives."

"We'll be seeking partnerships specifically with **minority farmers**."

"Involving my clients more in the actual work that we do to **change the focus** from charity to community involvement."

"Continuing to **invest my time** and energy in the creation of a food policy entity in our region."

CONNECTING & TAKING ACTION

"Our organization has already begun an inherent bias and cultural competency training. We had intended to do so prior to this conference, but I would like to note that this conference added energy to the intent."

"I was able to meet and connect with a presenter who has a large fruit operation, and we immediately began a buyer/seller relationship, helping her move over 6,000 lbs of apples to date."

"I brought back several best practices that we will implement in activating regional councils through a statewide council, such as local food leadership training, activating underserved populations in self-sustainability efforts through hunger relief partners, and listening sessions to customize regional activity to their communities."

Which was your favorite workshop or topic?

- “The youth-led break outs were my favorite. The youth literally ran the entire session.”
- “Cutting-Edge Evaluation in Community Food was very powerful because they demonstrated a software solution and allowed us to work through individual examples in small groups.”
- “My favorite session was The Economics of Food in the Rural Landscape because it tied everything else I attended prior to that together for me; I took away some good nuggets that we can weave into our work. And it seems so doable, which was really encouraging!”
- “Movement Building in Food Systems: The case of Puerto Rico - It was amazing to hear their story of how they were able to organize and mobilize people and how agriculture was integral in rebuilding and restoring normalcy.”

MOST POPULAR WORKSHOPS

- **Building Power to Change the Food System:** Grassroots organizing towards Food Sovereignty in the United States
US Food Sovereignty Alliance, North Atlantic Marine Alliance, Farmworker Support Committee, Farmworker Association of FL
- **Strategies for Equitable, Holistic Community-based Food Justice**
Groundwork Lawrence, City of Lawrence, Redeemer Lutheran Church
- **Why Race Matters:** The Importance of Connecting Race to Anti-Hunger Advocacy
Alliance to End Hunger
- **Creating A New Economics That Supports Community Food Systems**
Schumacher Center for a New Economics, Tufts University Urban & Environmental Policy, Terra Cura, The Commons Strategies Group
- **Movement Building in Food Systems:** The case of Puerto Rico
Organizacion Boricua de Agricultura Ecologica de Puerto Rico, Proyecto Agroecologico El Josco Bravo
- **The Youth Are The Truth:** Authentic engagement of urban youth in community led food justice work
Appetite for Change
- **Cutting-edge Evaluation in Community Food - Participatory, Tech, Lean**
Fertile Ground, Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation, Daisa Enterprises, Growing Places
- **Increasing Health Equity and Food Access through Food Hubs:** Strategies, Challenges and Opportunities
New Venture Advisors LLC, Appalachian Sustainable Development, Farm Fresh Rhode Island
- **New American Farmers & Co-op Farm Innovators**
Cooperative Development Institute, New Roots Cooperative Farm, New American Farmers Cooperative, New Mainers Farm Co-op
- **Drawing Connections Between Food Security, Social Justice, and Sustainable Agriculture**
Center for Health Equity Research, Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, Center for a Livable Future, Pleasant Hope Baptist Church
- **Systems Disruption 101:** How to transform the food movement through unlearning
UMN Extension, The Rutabaga Project, The Food Group, Appetite for Change

A CHARGE FROM OUR KEYNOTE ADDRESS

*"Now is the time to evaluate the paradigm with which we look at food."
-Winona LaDuke, Community Food Systems Conference, Boston 2017*

Winona LaDuke issued a strong call to action to attendees of the 2017 Community Food Systems Conference. At the end of her speech, LaDuke reminded audience members that "you can have an entire worldview that doesn't have to do with empire". To her, food is one of the most powerful tools we can use to reshape our collective worldview. By taking concrete steps towards a sustainable and inclusive food system, we can establish community values that will shift us towards a more just society. Some concrete steps Duke laid out include: planting diverse crop species, using compost to maintain soil health, purchasing in-season and local produce, supporting indigenous farmers and farmers of color. We were so fortunate to have LaDuke present the keynote address in Boston and, like attendees, remain energized by her message and fierce ongoing advocacy.

ATTENTION TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The 2017 Community Food Systems Conference was an enormous undertaking that would not have been possible if it weren't for the work of the former Community Food Security Coalition, a network borne out of on-the-ground work led by underrepresented communities and individuals who have experienced generations of systemic racism in the food system and beyond.

The conference steering committee designed the conference theme and curated a slate of presenters that aimed to be inclusive of the many voices and faces of community food systems work across the US. While diversity and inclusion remained cornerstones throughout conference planning, we recognize that we can do more to ensure a truly inclusive and participatory planning process in the organizing of this event (and in *all* the work we do) in the future.

New Entry staff and our conference committee are committed to narrowing the gap to confront racial equity and diversity in planning the 2019 Community Food Systems Conference. From steering committee membership and staff, to partners, presenters, attendees, and sponsors, people of color and individuals from many geographies and backgrounds will be involved in the conference planning process. We encourage our attendees, our partners and sponsors to hold us accountable – as we measure our own accountability – in this effort.

PLANNING FOR 2019

New Entry will host its second national Community Food Systems Conference in 2019. In light of our commitment to confront and improve diversity in the planning process, plus the drive to move the conference location to a geography outside the Northeast, the decision was made to issue a request for proposals for potential local host organizations located in the Southern US.

After reviewing a number of solid proposals from several strong organizations and networks in the South, New Entry is excited to announce our official partnership with the **Georgia Farmers Market Association**! Stay tuned at nesfp.org to stay in the loop as our two organizations work together to craft a memorable and impactful 2019 Community Food Systems Conference.

"From 1997 to 2011, the Community Food Security Coalition held an annual conference, moving it from city to city. These events became the central gathering place for a cross-section of the food movement, with incredible energy and diversity. They transformed many people's lives as they found their calling and inspiration in the food movement. The sense of collaborative hope and vision that they brought was missing for six years until New Entry hosted its community food systems event in Boston in 2017. This conference brought back the energy and excitement of the food movement. It created a space where attendees could forge new working relationships with their colleagues, learn new approaches, reunite old friends, or just problem solve together. For three days, we all felt part of something bigger than ourselves—a movement working toward a sustainable and just food system. I look forward to being in Georgia in 2019 where we can focus on how our efforts fit into a broader resistance agenda for social, economic and environmental justice."

-**Andy Fisher**, Founder and former Director of the Community Food Security Coalition and author of *Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups*

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT INCLUSION

Help us make attendance at the 2019 Community Food Systems Conference more inclusive by **sponsoring scholarships** to increase participation of students and youth, farmers, low-income community members, grassroots organizers, and unaffiliated individuals who do not have funding from an organization or institution. Conference registration is often prohibitive for many of the individuals and groups who are central to community food systems work. Please consider sponsoring the 2019 conference to assist in lowering registration rates and increasing our scholarship funding pool. Please contact Kristen Aldrich (kristen.aldrich@tufts.edu).

To stay connected with the development of the 2019 Community Food Systems Conference, please sign up for our e-list: <https://www.tfaforms.com/446227>.