

WHOLE MEASURES

for Community Food Systems

**Values-Based
Planning and Evaluation**

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VALUES-BASED PLANNING AND EVALUATION

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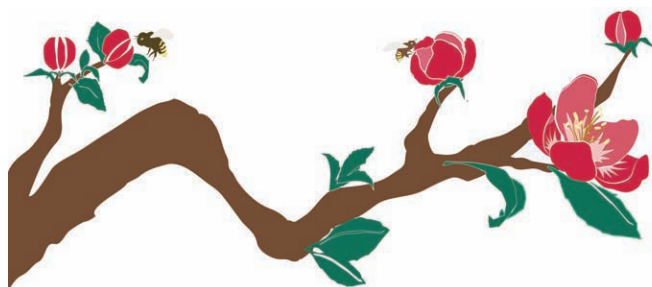
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Working for Whole Communities

THE SPECTRUM OF THOSE WORKING TOWARDS community food security is culturally and geographically diverse, spanning a broad range of people, places and activities. Organizations and individuals working in the food system and building food secure communities create complex relationships and inter-related activities.

For example, an urban farmers' market may also house a job-skills program that trains young mothers to teach cooking skills. At the close of the market, gleaners come by to pick up extra produce for the food bank, while a local composter gathers food waste to be recycled. Farmers at the market may also run a cooperative distribution site for local restaurants and institutions like schools and hospitals, as well as hold a seat on the local food policy council that helps define priorities for the area's food system development.

Complex relationships and connections such as these are at the heart of building whole communities. Because of their intricacy, however, they can also be difficult to measure.

Over the past eight years, Community Food Project grantees have expressed interest in finding ways to communicate the story of their work. In addition to counting the number of pounds produced, partners engaged, youth trained, and other specific outputs, grantees are interested in sharing the importance of the connections between these outputs, the impacts of the relationships cultivated, the reinforcement of underlying values, and the ways in which respect was communicated.

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems is designed to give organizations and communities a collaborative process for defining and expressing their complex stories and the multiple outcomes that emerge from their work.

What is Community Food Security?

Community Food Security is a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that promotes community self-reliance and social justice.

(Based on a definition by Mike Hamm and Anne Bellows)

The World Hunger Year's Food Security Learning Center describes community food security as: *At a basic level, Community Food Security is about making healthy food accessible to all. It focuses on bringing fresh, local food into low-income communities, thereby reducing hunger, and improving individual health. But, as the definition above suggests, it's about much more than that.*

Community Food Security is about:

- Making nutritious and culturally appropriate food accessible, not just any food
- Supporting local, regional, family-scale, and sustainable food production building and revitalizing local communities and economies
- Providing fair wages and decent working conditions for farmers and food system workers
- Promoting social justice and more equitable access to resources
- Empowering diverse people to work together to create positive changes in the food system and their communities.

Community food security is about creating holistic **community food systems** that have the ability to transform the way people connect with food, community and land. It is this integrated and comprehensive approach that makes community food security work so compelling and so complex to measure.

Beyond Outputs and Outcomes

There are many evaluation tools and resources. Mostly, they provide direction for measuring progress towards specific objectives and for tracking **outputs**. What is counted may be based on what project activities are implemented or on expectations from funders for measuring certain **outcomes**. While these outputs and outcomes are important, measuring the success of community food projects requires more than the compilation of statistics.

Understanding a community food system requires asking questions about what is truly

valued: What kind of community do we want to live and work in? How are we, in our organizations, helping build and sustain those healthy and whole communities? And how can we evaluate, define, discuss, and measure the success of our work in a way that supports our vision of whole, food-secure communities? Finding whole measures that give substance to outputs and outcomes requires both exploring and telling a more detailed story about the values reflected in our work and the impacts, both positive and negative, of our efforts.

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems (Whole Measures CFS) is a values-based, community-oriented tool for evaluation, planning, and dialogue geared toward organizational and community change. *Whole Measures CFS* invites organizations to build on the reporting of outputs and outcomes and to highlight and measure the multitude of interconnected indicators that define a healthy, whole community.

Based on the *Whole Measures* tool originally developed by the Center for Whole Communities (www.wholecommunities.org), *Whole Measures CFS* encourages all those who care about people, food, and the land to apply a big-picture approach. By using *Whole Measures CFS*, organizations can look beyond their specific mission and think in terms of the broadest possible picture for a healthy community: access to healthy and affordable food, strong community ties and self-

determination, thriving local economies, sustainable ecosystems, healthy people, vibrant farms, social justice, fairness, and civic participation.

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems is designed as a complement to standard evaluation tools. At its core, *Whole Measures CFS* aims to elevate and inform dialogue about the central values that truly matter while analyzing the impacts of our work and activities. It helps develop a shared vision and common measures among partner organizations. It helps explore areas of difference so that collaborations can cultivate richness and true representation. It helps collaborating organizations answer the question ‘In what ways does our work affect the creation of healthy, whole communities?’ And finally, it helps to share the stories of our complex and dynamic community food projects.

Elements of *Whole Measures CFS*

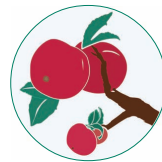
There are many ways to create whole communities. This version of *Whole Measures CFS* includes six **fields** of practices that reflect a vision for whole communities seen through the lens of community food system development. Each field includes: a summary of its underlying intent, a set of four values-based **practices** that express this vision in action, and descriptions of sample outcomes often achieved by community food system groups that contribute to the larger set of healthy relationships that make up a whole community. The related practices and sample outcomes for each field are shown in *rubrics* (scoring tools that use a table to list and rate the criteria for what counts) so that individuals and organizations can respond to and rate their work against these measures.

The *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* Fields and Practices are:



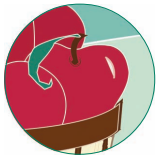
Justice and Fairness

- Provides food for all
- Reveals, challenges, and dismantles injustice in the food system
- Creates just food system structures and cares for food system workers
- Ensures that public institutions and local businesses support a just community food system



HEALTHY PEOPLE

- Provides healthy food for all
- Ensures the health and well-being of all people, inclusive of race and class
- Connects people and the food system, from field to fork
- Connects people and land to promote health and wellness



STRONG COMMUNITIES

- Improves equity and responds to community food needs
- Contributes to healthy neighborhoods
- Builds diverse and collaborative relationships, trust, and reciprocity
- Supports civic participation, political empowerment, and local leadership



SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS

- Sustains and grows a healthy environment
- Promotes an ecological ethic
- Enhances biodiversity
- Promotes agricultural and food distribution practices that mitigate climate change



VIBRANT FARMS

- Supports local, sustainable family farms to thrive and be economically viable
- Protects and cares for farmers and farm-workers
- Honors stories of food and farm legacy through community voices
- Respects farm animals



THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMIES

- Creates local jobs and builds long-term economic vitality within the food system
- Builds local wealth
- Promotes sustainable development while strengthening local food systems
- Includes infrastructure that supports community and environmental health

How to Use *Whole Measures CFS*

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems is both a planning and evaluation tool. The tool was developed for groups to use for a variety of purposes. This section describes how to use *Whole Measures CFS* from the early stages of a project (defining outcomes) through to the final stages of reflection (discussing evaluation results and potential changes). Organizations can plug into this process at various stages and modify the use of the tool to suit their needs and working culture.

One of the most significant ways that *Whole Measures CFS* catalyzes and supports change is through a **dialogue** and learning process. The potential for impact is greatest in settings where groups of people with diverse experiences and perspectives use *Whole Measures CFS* to individually assess the outcomes of projects in their community and then engage in dialogue with each other around how and why they came to their responses.

This process is described below in six basic steps: Forming an Evaluation Team, Understanding the Rubrics, Defining Intended Outcomes, Individual Ratings, Group Dialogue, and Utilizing Results. An Instructions Overview of the steps can be found on page 15. Detailed Evaluation Discussion Guides that supplement the description of these steps can be found beginning on page 32.

STEP

1

Forming an Evaluation Team

Who in an organization or community should participate in the *Whole Measures CFS* process? The **evaluation team**, or group of individuals leading and conducting the evaluation, is often composed of key staff, participants, and project partners. Groups of six to twelve people may offer the greatest opportunities for dialogue, learning, and guiding the evaluation process throughout.

More important than the number of people engaged in

the process is to ensure that different perspectives are brought into the dialogue. Through this dialogue process, a “thinking together” can emerge as different perspectives and experiences are shared and learning occurs among participants.

Forming an evaluation team also includes clarifying the focus and purpose of the work that is being undertaken. It is important to define early on what steps in

the process the group will use. It is also important that everyone on the evaluation team is familiar with the work at hand and has an understanding of or access to information regarding project activities. Providing detailed information to the evaluation team such as project activities, tracking and evaluation results compiled from surveys, work logs, and other evaluation efforts will add richness and relevancy to the discussions.

STEP 2 Understanding the Rubrics

2

Once an evaluation team is formed, it is important to become familiar with *Whole Measures CFS's* framework. *Whole Measures CFS* uses **rubrics** (scoring tools that use a table to list and rate the criteria for what counts) to present each of the six **fields** (Justice and Fairness, Strong Communities, Vibrant Farms, Healthy People, Sustainable Ecosystems, Thriving Local Economies).

Within each rubric are four values-based **practices**. These practices were developed with input from dozens of community food projects and represent common qualities they strive for as they seek to

create healthier, whole communities. They are also qualities that are most often mentioned as essential yet hard to measure. These practices are numbered and highlighted in each rubric.

The fields and practices defined in *Whole Measures CFS* are mostly broad in scope and can apply to a variety of community development initiatives. (A summary of the Fields and Practices can be found on page 8.)

For each practice, there is a list of bulleted sample **outcomes**. These outcomes reflect what many community food projects aim to

achieve through each particular practice. The outcomes are specific to community food system development work and each group is encouraged to modify these to reflect their project. (This process of modifying outcomes is described in Step 3 below.)

Like any tool, *Whole Measures CFS* has its own language. It will be useful (and save time in the long run) to ensure that the evaluation team has time to read the entire document and become familiar with all of the terms and elements included. (Also see the Glossary on page 30.)

STEP 3 Defining Intended Outcomes

3

Once an evaluation team is familiar with *Whole Measures CFS*, it is time to begin

modifying the tool for each circumstance. It is important for an organization to explore how the fields and practices within *Whole Measures CFS* relate to the organization's mission and values. While the authors have strived to make the language as applicable and representative as possible for a wide range of projects and contexts, it will not be equally relevant or appropriate for all groups. Each organization should modify the sample outcomes described in a way that more

specifically describes the outcomes of their project. Rows can be added to each practice for including additional outcomes to be measured.

Clearly defining the intended outcomes for a project up front allows for transparency in planning and a clearer ability to move activities in that direction. Therefore, it is recommended that groups conduct this step together at the beginning of the project. It is also useful to periodically revisit the

At the start of a project:

1. For each practice, ask, "In what ways will our work contribute to this practice?"
2. Agree on a set of concise intended outcomes. (Sample outcomes are included and can be used or modified.)
3. Ensure that they are measurable (if not through data collection, then through observation and discussion).
4. Replace the sample outcomes with your specific outcomes.

THERE ARE MANY ISSUES TO CONSIDER

when defining outcomes. They include:

- Long-term, intermediate, and short-term outcomes
- Changes in outcomes due to changing context
- Negative outcomes

Scope of Outcomes: Many of the sample outcomes listed in the tool are long-term in nature and reflect an ideal community food system characteristic. It is helpful to consider how project activities contribute to or take away from these long-term goals. At the same time, it is also important to incorporate short-term outcomes that reflect the immediate work of a project.

Changing Outcomes: Community food system work is implemented in a broad and changing community context. When defining and revisiting outcomes, explore to what degree the outcomes are specifically related to program activities and in what way they are affected by broader community changes. This awareness will enrich the understanding of a project's ability to effect change.

Negative Outcomes: It is also useful for an evaluation team to consider any potentially negative impacts of their work. Paying attention to what could or has gone wrong in a project provides insight into future planning and helps an organization to be responsible to the people in its community.

purpose of the project, and this tool can be used to check-in with participants regarding their view of the intended outcomes and various stages in the process.

One question that often arises is “*Must we use/rate all of the practices?*” The authors and contributors to *Whole Measures CFS* believe that each of the fields and practices listed in this guide are important objectives for considering the relationship between people, food, and the land. It may be tempting to discard those practices that do not seem to be directly relevant to the intended outcomes of a project,

program, or organization. However, the **fields** and **practices** within *Whole Measures CFS* were written as a set to be considered carefully. A major purpose and value of engaging *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* is to increase recognition of and broaden understanding of the wider set of impacts – both intended and unintended – that community food system efforts may have on creating and sustaining healthy communities.

The **outcomes**, however, were written as examples to be modified according to each specific situation.

STEP Individual Ratings

4

The three steps above are ideally implemented near the beginning of a project, or at least early on in the evaluation process. Step 4, however, is usually implemented either mid-way or at the end of a project, when the evaluation team is ready for reflection on past activities.

The rubric includes an option for users to rate each of the agreed upon outcomes on a scale from negative to highest impact achieved.

There are five ratings in the rubric that correspond to a scale from -3 to +10. Minus 3 represents a negative impact, while +10 corresponds to the highest positive impact. The rating for the “highest impact” is intentionally set at 10, and the next lower rating, (strong) at 5, to show that the highest impact should be perceived as having attained roughly twice as much positive outcome, and should reflect the highest aspiration for a project.

Groups that have used *Whole Measures* have found that individually rating a

project's impact is a useful way to provide time for thoughtfulness and can be a vehicle for incorporating various perspectives. It is recommended that each person on the evaluation team spend time going through the rubrics. For *each* of the practices listed in a field, individuals should place a checkmark in the column that most closely corresponds to the level impact achieved for the relevant outcomes.

Based upon the ratings for each of these outcomes, other information known that is relevant to making a judgment, and each individual's overall perception of the project's impact, he or she selects an overall rating for each practice. This overall rating does not need to be a strict average. The impact ratings are meant to inform, not prescribe, the overall rating for each practice. This overall rating can be numeric

(based on the rating scale provided or some other scale) or narrative (based on a descriptor of the level of impact for that practice.)

During the dialogue process, each person will have an opportunity to discuss the reasons for their rating of each outcome and practice. Because of this, it is helpful to take notes and comment on how this project or organization has or has not achieved the intended impact.

STEP Group Dialogue

5

The individual assessments become the basis for a group discussion intended to produce higher levels of shared meaning and

collective judgment of the project's performance across each field of practices. There is no right or best way to proceed through the rubrics in a small group setting. A group may choose to review and discuss each individual practice and its outcomes one at a time, to discuss the scores given to a complete set of practices under one field (e.g. *Justice and Fairness* or *Strong Communities*), or to pick out only those areas where there seems to be a diversity of responses from many participants. Schedule wise, a group may choose to set up a series of meetings over time or to commit a full day or retreat time to work through this dialogue process.

The most important consideration is that the process is designed to promote learning; help develop a stronger shared understanding of the project's outcomes,

strengths and weaknesses; and point to opportunities for improvement. With this in mind, it is helpful to explore those areas where there is a wide range of individual responses for any given practice or field of practices. Averages are less interesting and perhaps less useful than exploring widely divergent responses. Keep in mind that information about the *differences* in responses across people and groups may be very important and useful. Do not to rush to consensus. Asking questions about why participants in the process hold different views regarding the program or project will be useful. Seeking to understand the perspectives and judgment that different people bring to their

assessment will open up new understanding and learning and form a more effective basis for moving ahead as a group.

Additionally, community food system work is complex and changing. It is helpful to discuss changes in the context of the work and how these changes may have affected the ability or desire to achieve intended outcomes.

"Dialogue", a process where each person in the group has an opportunity to express his or her perspective while the remainder of the group gives their full attention, is a tool that groups can use to enhance engagement. (See *Evaluation Team Discussion Guides* starting on page 32.)

STEP Utilizing Results

6

The power of *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* is its ability to catalyze new ways of thinking and acting together. This is more likely to happen in situations where there is a deliberate and intentional commitment to use and revisit the results to effect changes in actions, strategies, and missions. Consider ahead of time how the results will be summarized and used, and make sure someone is capturing the key points of discussions and decisions made. Consider how to provide a summary of the results that can be readily shared with program participants, the evaluation team, and other stakeholders.

There are a number of ways that the results can be used:

Program and Organizational Improvement: Use insights from the evaluation process to make programs more

Summary of Evaluation Results - What to Include

- Introduction, background, and methodology
- Evaluation results: key themes, lessons learned, evaluation ratings (if used)
- Recommendations: reflections on results, action steps recommended
- Conclusion

Ways to Use *Whole Measures CFS* Evaluation Results:

- Program and Organizational Improvement
- Reports and Fundraising
- Community Education and Outreach
- Contributing to the Body of Knowledge

effective as well as to provide direction for change. The evaluation team can discuss the results in relation to the original goals of a project. Then create an **action plan** to respond to the current degree of impact in a way that will move a project closer to the highest degree of intended impact. An action plan typically includes the suggested action, identifies who is responsible for implementing the action, and includes a timeline for its implementation.

Reports and Fundraising: The results can be wonderful additions to grant and annual reports, or they can be incorporated in new grant proposals. The qualitative nature of the findings can help paint a picture of successes, challenges, and plans for improvement. Quotes and stories from those using *Whole Measures CFS* can serve as testimony to the collective, participatory approach of assessment efforts and impact on diverse sectors of a community.

Community Education and Outreach: Findings and stories gleaned from the *Whole Measures CFS* process may become part of presentations and community education efforts that describe the work of an organization or outcomes of a specific project and thereby encourage community engagement and reflection.

Contributing to the Body of Knowledge: Results and insights from one organization's evaluation experience may be helpful to others in the community food security movement. Many practitioners, especially in grassroots organizations with limited capacity to carry out extensive or traditional research, will benefit from learning about the experiences and results of others who have used the *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* tool. Results may be formulated into articles or research reports that build and enhance the body of research—sharing experience, knowledge and lessons learned.

Whole Measures CFS as a Planning Tool

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems is often described at first glance as an evaluation tool. It answers the question “Are we doing things right?” However, *Whole Measures CFS* is equally productive as a planning and visioning tool. It can help organizations answer the questions “Are we doing the right things?” and, “What is our vision of a whole community?” By providing a stimulating framework as common ground for assessment and dialogue, all members of a community can productively engage with each other, often leading to surprising collaborations among groups that might be very different from one another.

Organizations have used *Whole Measures CFS* as a provocative tool in projects ranging from writing annual plans to designing leadership training programs, developing

town policies, and assessing regional development plans. In addition, an organization can use it within a strategic planning process to assess internal strengths and weaknesses, or to identify external opportunities. Collaborating organizations can use *Whole Measures CFS* as common ground in framing measures of success that normally may vary tremendously from one organization to another. *Whole Measures CFS* can also be used as a polling instrument – community members at large can be asked to rate the status of food security in the community as a whole and thereby revealing the level of perceived needs and opportunities.

The power of *Whole Measures CFS* lies in its ability to stimulate new ways of thinking and acting together.

When used as a planning tool, *Whole Measures CFS*:

- Is an effective training and strategic planning tool that helps staff, board, partners, and community members think big picture and learn more about the potential impacts of the group’s work.
- Initiates a process of organizational change that leads to being more open to the perspectives of others, collaborating authentically with new constituents, and honoring the larger meaning of the organization’s work.
- Offers a sophisticated yet easy-to-use form of project selection criteria to help staff make choices among new projects and programs.
- Is an engaging and easy-to-use assessment tool that allows diverse community groups or individuals to find common ground in the things that matter most to them.

Instructions Overview

- Step 1: Forming an Evaluation Team** Pull together a diverse set of project stakeholders with an array of perspectives and experiences who will work together to implement the *Whole Measures CFS* evaluation and make recommendations on how to use the results for program improvement. Provide team with information regarding program activities and evaluation results. Define scope of team's work.
- Step 2: Understanding the Rubrics** Each member on the evaluation team spends time familiarizing themselves with the framework of *Whole Measures CFS*.
- Step 3: Defining Intended Outcomes** Discuss how the fields and practices proposed in *Whole Measures CFS* reflect the organizational or project mission and values and the strategies proposed for building a healthy, food secure community. Clarify the intended project outcomes that will be measured. [Note: The sample outcomes included within the document can be used as a starting point and modified to suit the unique circumstances of the project, organization, or community during the evaluation.]

For the remaining steps, work on one field at a time. For each of the practices listed in a field:

- Step 4: Individual Ratings** Each member of the evaluation team rates the overall level of impact for this practice and associated outcomes:
- 3 = Negative Impact
 - 0 = Neutral Impact; made no difference, positively or negatively
 - +3 = Some Impact
 - +5 = Strong Impact
 - 10 = Highest Impact
- Narrative ratings may also be used. As individuals rate the outcomes, it is helpful to take notes and make comments on how each person thinks this project (or organization) has or has not achieved the intended impact.
- Step 5: Group Dialogue** As an evaluation team, discuss the individual ratings. Discuss results in a way that promotes learning; helps develop a stronger shared understanding of the project's outcomes, strengths and weaknesses; and points to opportunities for improvement. Come to agreement on key themes and lessons learned.
- Step 6: Utilizing Results** Summarize and share results. Based on the collective understanding of the project's outcomes, create a plan to respond to the current degree of impact in a way that will move the project closer to the highest degree of intended impact.

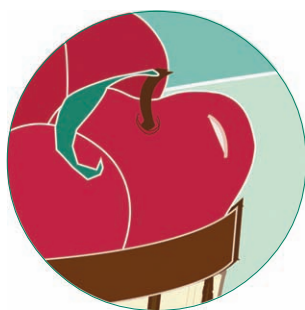
Overview of Values-Based Fields

Justice and Fairness



Just and fair food and farms come from food systems deliberately organized to promote social equity, justice, worker rights, and health through all activities. Achieving justice and fairness is an ongoing and evolving process involving many members of a community. It is a process that cultivates appropriate venues to recognize and dismantle unjust systems and that works to create alternative just systems.

Strong Communities

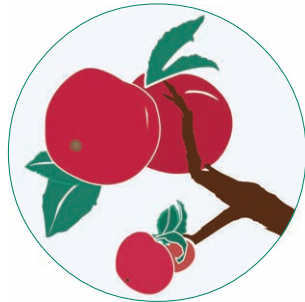


Food can be a common and unifying force socially, culturally, and spiritually. A strong food system builds strong communities across class, race, age, education, and other social categories. Cultivating leadership from within a community and forging relationships based on characteristics such as trust, respect, and transparency can strengthen resilience, build capacity and enhance engagement for change toward a shared vision of whole community.

Vibrant Farms

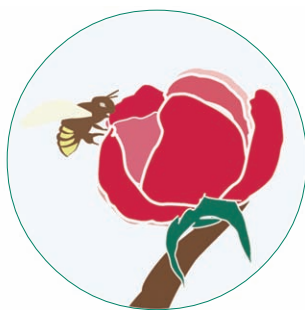


Vibrant farms are central to the health and vitality of community-based food systems. While diverse in scale, methods, crops and markets, farms that contribute whole communities often embody practices that eliminate or minimize pesticides, support biodiversity, promote humane treatment of animals, and provide safe, just working conditions. Vibrant farms are often “local farms” that shorten the gap between farmer and consumer and actively contribute to sustaining and revitalizing regional food systems and economies. The continuation of traditional farms and practices, multigenerational family farms, and support for young farmers and immigrant farmers are essential to the future of farming, and food for all.



Healthy People

Community and individual health includes our physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. All of these dimensions are intrinsically connected to food and food systems. For example, engaging with community members at farmers' markets promotes our social connectedness. Learning to prepare our own food contributes to our mental development and enhances our resiliency. Growing food helps develop our physical and spiritual awareness as we connect to larger natural systems. Whole communities need whole people and community food systems that increase access to healthy food while also cultivating broader dimensions of health.



Sustainable Ecosystems

Sustainable, balanced ecosystems are built upon interdependent relationships, depend upon clean air and water and healthy soil, and provide the foundation for all life. Developing whole communities and strong and just food systems means honoring this interdependence and enhancing ecological integrity through our actions. A sustainable food system depends upon a sustainable ecosystem and produces, processes, and distributes food in a way that supports and enhances rather than destroys ecological systems.



Thriving Local Economies

Thriving local economies depend upon the ecological integrity of the earth, its ecosystems, and species living within those ecosystems. Thriving local economies form decisions that ensure the wellbeing of future generations. They account for hidden costs in decision-making and work to build systems that regenerate output (wastes) into input (resources). Thriving local economies may utilize decentralized, participatory, and democratic processes designed to be informed by diverse community members and based upon a community's assets.

A Food System that is Just and Fair*:

1. Provides food for all

- *Ensures access for all community members to fresh, healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food.*
- *Demonstrates a decrease in food insecurity (hunger, obesity, diet-related disease).*

2. Reveals, challenges, and dismantles injustice in the food system

- *Upholds the dignity and quality of life for all who work in the food system (production, processing, distribution, and sales).*
- *Heals the social, historical, cultural, and spiritual connections among people, food and the land.*
- *Describes a clear vision of and moves towards creating fair alternatives to unjust food systems.*

3. Creates just food system structures and cares for food system workers

- *Develops and implements policies that protect food system worker rights.*
- *Ensures safe working conditions and fair wages without discrimination for those who work in the food system.*
- *Affirms diversity in regards to race, class, ability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and other cultural identities.*

4. Ensures that public institutions and local businesses support a just community food system

- *Ensures that schools and other public institutions serve healthy and delicious meals to all and gives preference to purchasing food from local farms.*
- *Sustains stores in every community that sell healthy, high quality, affordable foods.*
- *Supports local food processing and distribution efforts that are viable and that create safe, healthy, and meaningful livelihoods for all those who work in the food system.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

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A Food System that Builds Strong and Resilient Communities*:

1. Improves equity and responds to community food needs

- *Involves a broad range of community members in defining and supporting food-related goals.*
- *Builds capacity for and community control of food resources and assets.*
- *Supports community resilience to social and environmental threats like food insecurity, violence, disease, illiteracy, and fuel and energy shortages and costs.*

2. Contributes to healthy neighborhoods

- *Ensures space for food production and distribution that is safe, enjoyable, and accessible to a diverse community.*
- *Promotes shared work around food projects that strengthen the community.*
- *Balances community food goals with housing, transportation, and social goals.*

3. Builds diverse and collaborative relationships, trust, and reciprocity

- *Cultivates a learning community among food system advocates that is open to dialogue, research, education, change, and transformation.*
- *Strengthens relationships and partnerships within a community, and strengthens the power of the community's voice externally.*
- *Strengthens the connections between food and spiritual legacies within a culture such that the values associated with community food systems are reinforced.*

4. Supports civic participation, political empowerment, and local leadership

- *Respects the voice of and decisions made by community members that create positive change in their local food system.*
- *Includes and improves access to local government agencies that can support the stability of local/regional food infrastructures according to the community's interests.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

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A Food System that Promotes Healthy, Vibrant Farms*:

1. Supports local, sustainable family farms to thrive and be economically viable

- *Builds capacity for farmers in sustainable farm practices that nourish the land and natural resources.*
- *Develops policies that encourage success in small and mid-scale farming ventures.*
- *Provides support for small and mid-scale farmers to succeed and offer an economically viable alternative to the global agricultural system.*

2. Protects and cares for farmers and farm-workers

- *Develops and implements policies that protect farmers and farm worker rights.*
- *Ensures fair wages and safe working conditions that limit and eliminate exposures to hazards for all farmers and farm workers without discrimination.*
- *Supports farming as a profession that encourages personal sustainability and includes an ability to retain and attract new farmers.*

3. Honors stories of food and farm legacy through community voices

- *Respects the historical context of the agricultural system and works to undo the effects of racial enslavement.*
- *Listens to community members' stories of their food and farm legacy so that communities can shape their future from lessons of the past.*

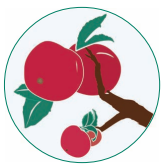
4. Respects farm animals

- *Ensures that farm animals have safe, healthy, and humane treatment throughout their life cycle.*
- *Provides animal habitats that support animal health and reduce disease.*
- *Ensures animal processing is safe and humane and considers the life and needs of the animal.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

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A Food System that Promotes Healthy People*:

1. Provides healthy food for all

- *Ensures that all community members have access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant food for all people in communities, neighborhoods, schools, and institutions.*
- *Recognizes the cultural and spiritual relevance of food to health and well-being.*
- *Utilizes a broad range of public investments and tools (such as land use planning) to increase access to healthy food.*

2. Ensures the health and wellbeing of all people, inclusive of race and class

- *Deepens understanding of the interrelationships between food security, inequities across race and class, and health outcomes.*
- *Decreases inequities across race and class that contribute to food insecurity and compromise health.*

3. Connects people and the food system, from field to fork

- *Promotes a range of diverse connections between local food producers and consumers.*
- *Increases knowledge of the connections between food quality, healthy environments, and healthy people.*
- *Commits resources to teach people of all ages the skills and knowledge essential to food production, preparation, nutrition, and enjoyment.*

4. Connects people and land to promote health and wellness

- *Provides safe settings and opportunities for people to directly experience the land in ways that promote health and wellness.*
- *Promotes equity around access to land and resources needed for public access and personal food production.*
- *Unites and inspires neighbors to grow food and to share food and food cultures.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

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A Food System that Supports Sustainable Ecosystems*:

1. Sustains and grows a healthy environment

- *Protects and improves soil, water, air, energy, and seed quality and quantity for long-term needs.*
- *Eliminates pesticides, genetically modified organisms, and other contaminants that disrupt ecosystems and human health.*
- *Conserves and restores healthy wildlife habitats within agriculture and aquaculture.*
- *Recycles and utilizes waste as a resource.*

2. Promotes an ecological ethic

- *Values ecosystem elements and understands their function in producing food and supporting life (**foodshed**).*
- *Understands and supports the diverse value and character of urban and rural ecosystems.*

3. Enhances biodiversity

- *Protects and improves biodiversity of soil, seeds, plants, animals, water, air, and food.*
- *Protects and improves biodiversity in human systems of agriculture and aquaculture.*

4. Promotes agricultural and food distribution practices that mitigate climate change

- *Reduces reliance on fossil fuels and utilizes renewable energy sources in food production and distribution.*
- *Utilizes agricultural practices that build the carbon sequestering properties of healthy soil.*
- *Provides community opportunities to understand and make informed decisions about climate change and other environmental issues related to agriculture.*
- *Promotes policy changes to mitigate agricultural factors contributing to climate change.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

RATING SCALE:

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A Food System that Promotes Thriving Local Economies*:

1. Creates local jobs and builds long-term economic vitality within the food system

- Invests, encourages, and promotes community based enterprise development.*
- Promotes economic support structures for the next generation of producers.*
- Promotes business incubator programs for community members, youth, and food-insecure individuals that develop skills and cultivate ownership.*
- Prioritizes hiring of local community members for farm and food system jobs.*

2. Builds local wealth

- Promotes local and regional agricultural businesses that are sustainable and support a healthy food system.*
- Ensures that decisions about local economies are directed by members of the community.*
- Builds community economic literacy to sustain long-term economic sustainability.*

3. Promotes sustainable development while strengthening local food systems

- Promotes local and regional sustainably grown or harvested agricultural products within the food system, and promotes local businesses to distribute and promote these.*
- Promotes green building and energy conserving practices on farms and in facilities related to food processing or distribution (be that processing plants, supermarkets, food banks).*
- Supports active relationships between conservation and working lands.*

4. Includes infrastructure that supports community and environmental health

- Includes diversified and sustainable farm-based businesses with connection to their history and community.*
- Includes processing and distribution facilities that are efficient, ecologically sound, safe, culturally relevant, and locally run.*
- Develops new enterprises and products that respect ecological diversity through accounting for how a product is made, how it may be used, by whom, and the alternative uses of the product or space over many users and time.*

*Examples of highest outcomes for this field are included in the italicized bulleted lists. Modify these outcomes to fit the specific characteristics and activities of each project that is using *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

RATING SCALE:

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Glossary

Community Food Security – a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that promotes community self-reliance and social justice. (Based on a definition by Mike Hamm and Anne Bellows.)

Community Food Systems – The interdependent parts of the system that provide food to a community in a way that is sustainable and nourishes all people within that community. This includes the growing, harvesting, storing, transporting, processing, distribution, and consumption of food.

Dialogue – a form of communicating that encourages new ways of thinking and working together. It includes being open, listening to others for understanding, speaking honestly, and suspending judgment. Dialogue is often practiced in a group circle where individuals take turns sharing. This type of dialogue typically begins with a period of no cross-talk, where each person is given full attention and listening before a

discussion begins. For details on how to implement this process, refer to *A Brief Orientation to Dialogue*, found in the Learning Resources page of the Center for Whole Communities' website, www.wholecommunities.org.

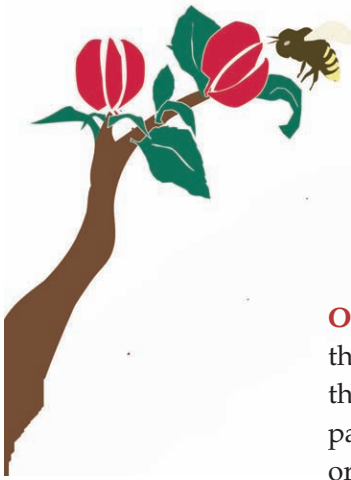
Fields – In *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*, “fields” are the six sets of value-based practices that contribute to whole communities through community food system development. The six fields comprise Justice and Fairness; Strong Communities; Vibrant Farms; Healthy People; Sustainable Ecosystems; and, Thriving Local Economies.

Food Sovereignty – the right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food, and land policies that are ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies. – *Food Sovereignty*:

A Right For All, Political Statement of the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty, Rome, June 2002

Foodshed – coined by permaculturist Arthur Getz in the article *Urban Foodsheds*, the term refers to the flow of food from its source to the end consumer. This is similar to the concept of a watershed which describes the point of origin of water through the systems in place to capture the flow (Kloppenburg, Hendrickson and Stevenson, 1996, 33).

Healthy – indicates characteristics that contribute to quality of life from a holistic perspective. Healthy food makes a significant contribution to a nourishing diet and does not cause diet-related disease under normal circumstances. Dimensions of healthy foods are their intrinsic properties (such as being whole and minimally processed) and safety, which is affected by their journey through the food system and how they are handled at each stage. Used generally, health indicates characteristics that contribute to the quality to life. (Healthy food definition taken from *Charting Growth To Good Food*, by Molly Anderson.)



Outcomes – the changes in the wellbeing of individuals that can be attributed to a particular project, program, or policy, or that a program hopes to achieve over time. They indicate a measurable change in participant knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors. For each practice in each field of *Whole Measures CFS*, a set of sample desired outcomes are included as bulleted items. These sample outcomes represent the highest impact toward which a project might work. Projects are encouraged to modify the language of these outcomes to fit the unique circumstances in their projects and community. For the purposes of this document, “impact” and “outcome” are used interchangeably.

Outputs – the direct products or quantification of program activities. They include, for example: the pounds of produced grown, the number of technical assistance hours, the number of youth trained.

Practices – the core expressions of what it means to create a whole community through community food system development. Practices in *Whole Measures*

for *Community Food Systems* are grouped according to fields of similar ideas. There are three or four practices for each field and these practices are listed in the grey high-lighted areas of each rubric.

Rubric – a scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work or “what counts”. (Definition from Heidi Goodrich at rubistar.4teachers.org.) For this document, the rubrics are tables that include each field of practices and their related outcomes and ratings.

Sustainable – as it applies to food, sustainable means that societies pass on to future generations all the elements required to provide healthy food on a regular basis: healthy and diverse environments (soil, water, air, and habitats); healthy, diverse, and freely reproducing seeds, crops, and livestock; and the values, creativity, knowledge, skills, and local institutions that enable societies to adapt effectively to environmental and social changes. (Taken from the World Hunger Year’s Food Security Learning Center at www.whyhunger.org.)



EVALUATION TEAM DISCUSSION GUIDES

The following five discussion guides can help provide a starting point for organizations in working with *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*. Each guide proposes a process, including a set of discussion questions, which can help facilitate the evaluation team's work.

- A. Facilitation Discussion Guide: Process and Product** This guide provides a helpful set of principles for use in facilitating the *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* process.
- B. Values Discussion Guide** Used at the beginning of a project, this guide will help an evaluation team clarify its scope and purpose.
- C. Defining Intended Outcomes Discussion Guide** Used at the beginning of a project, this guide will lead an evaluation team through personalizing *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems* to fit each particular situation. In doing so, the evaluation team has the opportunity to explore how the values underlying their organizational culture are reflected (or not) in the fields of *Whole Measures CFS*. They will also take the time to define what specific outcomes they hope to achieve through this project.
- D. Evaluation Discussion Guide** Used at the time of evaluation (either mid-way or at the end of a project), this guide provides a process for working together to rate and describe the outcomes of a project to date.
- E. Debrief Discussion Guide** Used after the evaluation results have been compiled, this guide provides questions to help the evaluation team reflect on their work together and determine next steps for project work.

Keen and compassionate facilitation are important to any group discussion or dialogue. The process guidelines outlined on page 33 (Process and Product) provide a simple set of practices that support effective facilitation.

Additionally, groups may want to use the "dialogue" form of communication practiced at the Center for Whole Communities (www.wholecommunities.org) and described in a downloadable document, *A Brief Orientation to Dialogue*, in the Learning Resources section of their website.

A. FACILITATION DISCUSSION GUIDE: PROCESS AND PRODUCT

Measurement and assessment processes should empower participants and contribute to the positive outcomes sought (i.e. not just measuring justice and fairness, but actually building them through the use of the tool). As with any planning or evaluation tool, *how* this tool is used can enhance the relationships and learning among all involved, or not. The following principles emerged out of development of this tool and provide a guide for individuals facilitating the *Whole Measures CFS* process.

- Justice and Fairness** Though justice and fairness are identified as one of the core fields of practice, it is the authors' intent that these values are central to all aspects of community food system work. Expressing these values is integral to every practice in this tool as well as to the way the tool is implemented and dialogue is utilized.
- Pay attention to the process** Ensuring skillful and compassionate facilitation will enhance the process and help create a space for open exploration. The schedule and location of meetings, the facilitation of who has an opportunity to speak, and the process of decision-making are all examples of a process that enhances participation and deepens the impacts achieved.
- Dialogue** Taking care to include openness to new ideas and multiple perspectives, listening for understanding, speaking honestly, and suspending judgment all contribute new ways of thinking and working together. It is critical that each person has an opportunity to share his or her story and perspective and to listen openly to the story of others and of the land.
- Relationships are primary** The tools and processes used are intended to help participants gain a better understanding of the relationships between the parts and the whole. This includes the relationships among activities and programs, the organizational mission, and the larger vision held for shared culture and society as they connect to the relationships between the health of the land and the health of the people.
- Inspire action, don't demand it** Community change will be sustained more effectively when people are inspired. Modeling and making visible positive action are usually more effective than prescribing or demanding positive action.
- Respect and honor the capacities and assets of all people** Assessment processes can be people-focused, accessible, and democratic. The authors' hope for *Whole Measures CFS* is that its use promotes the fullest and most diverse participation possible through offering different means or pathways for people to engage in the process.

B. VALUES DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide refers to Steps 1-2 in the *How to Use Whole Measures CFS* section starting on page 9.

Set Up:

Plan to meet for around two to three hours near the beginning of project implementation. It is helpful to have a quiet and pleasant area with few distractions. Sit around a table where participants can see each other.

- 1. Decide on the purpose and focus of the evaluation. The following questions can help you clarify the Evaluation Team's purpose and focus:**
 - What are the goals of our work together as an evaluation team?
 - Do we have a representative group of individuals to do this work? If not, whom do we need to invite to participate in the Evaluation Team?
 - Do we have the resources and information needed to accomplish our goals?
 - What is our timeline?
- 2. Take ownership for the fields of practice. Each Evaluation Team member should read *Whole Measures CFS* before the meeting and reflect on the six core fields and the following questions:**
 - How do the six core value fields of *Whole Measures CFS* resonate with our organizational values? (They include: Justice and Fairness, Strong Communities, Vibrant Farms, Healthy People, Sustainable Ecosystems, and Thriving Local Economies.)
 - Are there any additional fields that seem critical to include in the evaluation process in order to capture a picture of how this work contributes to whole communities?
 - Are there any fields that seem out of the scope of our current work or could be articulated differently to reflect more of our organizational culture? If yes, what, if anything, does this say about the nature of our work to impact whole communities?
- 3. Decide on the process and product of the evaluation.**
 - Will we use the sample outcomes listed in each rubric, develop our own, or utilize some combination of the two?
 - Will we use the rating scale, and if so, what values will we give each rating?
 - Does the Evaluation Team have decision-making authority or will we make recommendations to staff and Board for approval?
 - What type of evaluation report will we develop and how will it be distributed?

C. DEFINING INTENDED OUTCOMES DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide refers to Step 3 in the *How to Use Whole Measures CFS* section, starting on page 10.

Set Up:

Schedule a series of meetings near the beginning of the project, allowing for one to two hours for each of the six fields of practice. It is helpful to have a quiet and pleasant area with few distractions. Sit around a table where participants can see each other.

- 1. Each committee member should review the practices and suggested outcomes for whichever field(s) you are discussing that day.**
 - Write out two to three specific outcomes for each of the practices that you hope to achieve with this project. The outcomes can be taken directly from the text provided, modified, or created newly. They should reflect your highest aspirations for the project's impact.
- 2. Spend time reviewing the suggested outcomes for each practice.**
 - On this first round, limit the discussion to clarifying questions. Give each person a minute or two to share and briefly explain their answers. You may want to use a flip chart with key words to capture the different impacts people selected.
- 3. After this initial review, go over each practice again discussing your various perspectives. Think of the following questions:**
 - What is similar about our responses?
 - Where are areas where there are differing perspectives on the outcome of our work?
 - Can we come to agreement on what our desired outcome for each practice might look like? (Work to capture these descriptions on a flip chart or through a note taker.)
- 4. After the team has come agreement on desired outcomes, discuss action steps to move you toward desired goals. Think of the following questions:**
 - Have we captured all of the outcomes we hope to achieve?
 - How do the fields and practices overlap or complement each other?
 - Will we be able to measure how well we are doing at achieving these outcomes?

D. EVALUATION DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide refers to Steps 4-5 in the *How to Use Whole Measures CFS* section starting on page 11.

Set Up:

Schedule a series of meetings that take place mid-way or at the end of a project, allowing for one to two hours for each of the six fields of practice. It is helpful to have a quiet and pleasant area with few distractions. Sit around a table where participants can see each other.

- 1. Prior to the meetings, evaluation team members should review the staff reports and evaluation data results on project activities. Then, reflecting on this work and the desired outcomes defined at the beginning of the project:**
 - Individually rate each of the outcomes for each practice listed according to the degree of impact you feel the project has achieved. Think honestly about how the work has affected or implemented this desired outcome. Include notes explaining your selection.
 - Based on your individual ratings for each outcome, select an overall rating for the practice. This rating does not need to be a strict average and can be either numeric or narrative.

- 2. During the meeting, spend time reviewing each person's responses to each of the outcomes. Work on one field at a time giving attention to each practice in that field individually.**
 - On this first round, limit the discussion to clarifying questions.
 - Give each person a minute or two to share and briefly explain their answers.
 - Team members may want to take notes on the ratings of their peers, capturing key words or themes that arise.

- 3. After this initial review, go over each rubric again discussing your various perspectives. Think of the following:**
 - What is similar about our responses?
 - What areas have differing perspectives on the impact of our work?
 - Can we come to agreement on the degree of impact of this project for each of the outcomes listed?
 - Record these ratings in a clean version of the rubrics and include significant areas of discussion in the notes.

- 4. After the team has come to some agreement on current impacts, discuss the overall effect of the project.**
 - Which current activities are moving us most clearly toward our intended outcomes? Can we continue or build on those?
 - What isn't working? How can we change those activities?
 - What action steps can we take with our current resources and timelines?
 - What actions steps could we take with additional resources?

E. DEBRIEFING DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide refers to Steps 6 and beyond in *How to Use Whole Measures CFS* section starting on page 13.

Set Up:

After the evaluation is completed and the results are summarized and distributed, it is helpful to spend time as a team reflecting both on follow up actions needed and the *Whole Measures CFS* evaluation process in general.

- 1. Action Planning – Creating an action plan will ensure that an organization responds fully to the evaluation.**
 - What changes will be made in our project or organization? Who is responsible for these changes and what is the timeline for implementation?
 - Are there processes in place to support and ensure that changes will be made in response to evaluation information and lessons learned?
 - Do we have adequate resources to implement these changes?

- 2. Process reflection - It may be helpful to spend some time as an evaluation team debriefing on how the process of using *Whole Measures CFS* went. Following are some helpful questions that team members could explore:**
 - What did you like about using *Whole Measures CFS* to conduct an evaluation of (or plan for) your project?
 - What was difficult or confusing about it?
 - What, if any, changes could be made in this process to make using the tool more effective?
 - Are there additional ways you can envision using the *Whole Measures CFS* tool in our project or community?
 - How well do the values-based practice rubric fields (and their descriptors) relate to the community food systems work we are doing? How is that important or not?
 - Would you like to continue using this process for evaluating our projects?

A Brief History

In 2001, leaders at the **Trust for Public Land** (TPL) initiated an exploration of the core values and benefits that TPL staff believed their conservation work, at its best, might achieve. By 2003, these articulated values and benefits had been reviewed, modified and sharpened by additional social scientists, biologists, urban planners, writers, and land conservationists, and combined into a rubric template suggested by David Grant of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

Building upon this foundation, the **Center for Whole Communities** (CWC) further developed the tool in an effort to evolve it for use in a wide spectrum of efforts, from land conservation to urban ecology to social justice to community-building. Toward this goal, CWC brought together leaders from diverse organizations and movements – including community food security – in dialogue around how to improve the design and use of Whole Measures. Through this process, representatives from the **Community Food Security Coalition** (CFSC) embraced the potential value in adapting Whole Measures to more directly focus on the community food security, values, activities, and outcomes.

In 2008, CFSC convened the CFS Whole Measures Working Group – eight community food security practitioners with diverse backgrounds and experiences. (For a list of Working Group members and participating staff from CFSC, CPREP, and CWC please go to page 4.) Over the course of 15 months and

with assistance from the CFSC staff and consultants from the **Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy**, Working Group members: (a) reviewed the existing format and language of Whole Measures, (b) articulated a set of community food security principles that would inform the subsequent revision of Whole Measures, (c) developed and refined new values, outcomes, and language for the community food system version of Whole Measures, and (d) advised on the final revisions to this document. A thorough review process collected input from over 50 organizations, including short course participants, in-depth reviewers, a team of pilot testers, and others interested in the document.

As it has throughout its brief history, CFSC hopes that the *Whole Measures CFS* tool will continue to evolve as community food practitioners use and adapt the tool within different settings and for different purposes. Just as this tool promotes dialogue within communities and organizations around what matters and what should be counted, so too is the evolution of the tool itself a dialogue across time, people, and places. Building upon and acknowledging the work that has come before in creating Whole Measures, the Working Group has added its voice to this ongoing dialogue. Likewise, we look forward to hearing additional voices added to the Whole Measures dialogue and the continuing evolution of the tool.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems*.

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Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center
Nella Young

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Kyril Calsoyas, Developing Innovations in Navajo Education, Inc.

Hannah Burton-Laurison, Planning for Healthy Places, Public Health Law & Policy
Darcy Freedman, University of South Carolina
Kai Siedenburg, Community Food Security Coalition

Pilot Testers:

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Susan Carrara
Darcel Eddins

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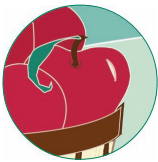
Whole Measures CFS Fields and Practices

Justice and Fairness



- Provides food for all
- Reveals, challenges, and dismantles injustice in the food system
- Creates just food system structures and cares for food system workers
- Ensures that public institutions and local businesses support a just community food system

STRONG COMMUNITIES



- Improves equity and responds to community food needs
- Contributes to healthy neighborhoods
- Builds diverse and collaborative relationships, trust, and reciprocity
- Supports civic participation, political empowerment, and local leadership

VIBRANT FARMS



- Supports local, sustainable family farms to thrive and be economically viable
- Protects and cares for farmers and farm-workers
- Honors stories of food and farm legacy through community voices
- Respects farm animals

HEALTHY PEOPLE



- Provides healthy food for all
- Ensures the health and well-being of all people, inclusive of race and class
- Connects people and the food system, from field to fork
- Connects people and land to promote health and wellness

SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS



- Sustains and grows a healthy environment
- Promotes an ecological ethic
- Enhances biodiversity
- Promotes agricultural and food distribution practices that mitigate climate change

THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMIES



- Creates local jobs and builds long-term economic vitality within the food system
- Builds local wealth
- Promotes sustainable development while strengthening local food systems
- Includes infrastructure that supports community and environmental health