



Food Systems Terminology

A **community food system** is one in which food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular community.

A **community food assessment** is an approach that engages the entire community in discovering who has access to what kind of food and through what means, resulting in an action plan to develop a local, healthy community-based food system.

Food, Education, Agriculture Solutions Together (FEAST) is a community organizing process that allows participants to engage in a facilitated discussion around their local food system. Through this process participants identify and work towards solutions to build a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable food system.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is when a farmer offers a certain number of "shares" to the public. Typically the share consists of a box of vegetables, but other farm products may be included. Interested consumers purchase a share (aka a "membership" or a "subscription") and in return receive a box (bag, basket) of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season. Members also share in the risks of farming, including poor harvests due to unfavorable weather or pests.

Food security is a condition related to the supply of food, and individuals' access to it. People have food security when at all times they have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. Commonly, the concept of food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. Food security is built on three pillars:

- Food availability: sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis.
- Food access: having sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.
- Food use: appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation.

Farm to School initiatives are about communities working to bring local food sourcing and food and agriculture education into school systems. Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and preschools. Students gain access to healthy, local foods as well as educational opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips. Farm to school empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities.

Food hubs are innovative business models emerging across the country specifically to provide infrastructure support to farmers. Food hubs help connect local food producers with local or regional buyers. By helping local producers sell their products in more places throughout a community, such as local and regional grocery store chains, co-operative food markets, local governments, schools, and restaurants, food hubs increase access to fresh, local food.

Incubator Kitchens (commercial kitchen for rent) are for small food businesses who are trying to find a commercial kitchen to prepare their product. These kitchens drive new start-up businesses, for whom, without a health department licensed commercial kitchen, could not legally produce their food. In Kansas it is illegal to run a food business out of a home kitchen. In addition to producing food, commercial kitchens can be used to shoot TV shows, teach cooking classes, host food tastings, and other events.

A **food cooperative** (or food co-op) is a collectively owned grocery store. Most frequently, it focuses on making natural foods more affordable for co-op members, although other products may be carried as well. There are a number of different styles of cooperatives, but all of them share common values of group management and decision making, social responsibility, and equality.

While there is no consensus about how to define **local food** in terms of the geographic distance between production and consumption, defining local based on marketing arrangements—such as farmers selling directly to consumers at regional farmers' markets or to schools—is well recognized.

Local food movement is a collaborative effort to build more locally based, self-reliant food economies - one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution, and consumption is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of a particular place. It is not solely a geographical concept.

Sustainable agriculture can be understood as an ecosystem approach to agriculture. Practices that can cause long-term damage to soil include excessive tilling of the soil (leading to erosion) and irrigation without adequate drainage (leading to salinization). Sustainable agriculture can feed the world without damaging the environment or threatening human health.

A **Food Policy Council** examines how the local food system operates, and provides policy recommendations to improve that system. A food council is often made up of a diverse group of stakeholders for the purpose of improving the food environment within a particular community. Eat Well Crawford County was designated as the Crawford County Food Policy Council by the Crawford County Commissioners in January 2014. Eat Well is a task force of Live Well Crawford County.



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through a contract awarded by the Kansas Department for Children and Families. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more call 1-800-221-5689.

