

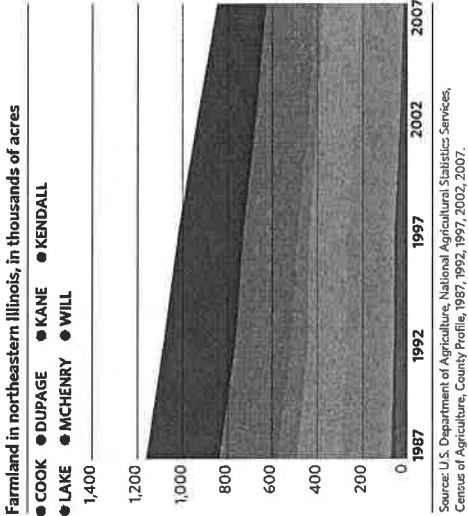
Building a Local Food System

Steve Barg, Conserve Lake County
Brad Leibov, Liberty Prairie Foundation
Lenore Beyer-Clow, Openlands
Jason Navota, CMAP

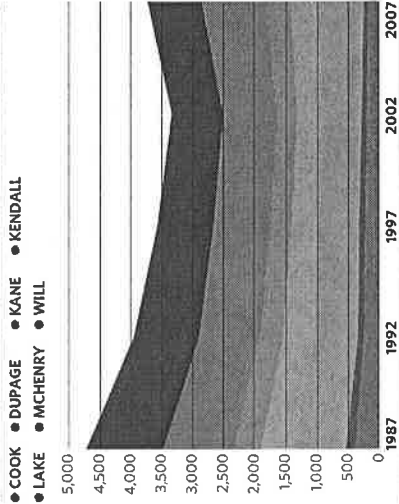
June 5, 2012

Lake County Farming - Decade of Change

- 2001 Lake County commissioned American Farmland Trust Report: "On Thin Soil"
- Lake County is one of the fastest growing counties nationally
- 1,500 acres a year are being developed, much of that is farmland
- Because farmland has high development value much of it has been lost to development and this trend will continue
- 18,000 acres of farmland lost to development between 1987 and 2000
- Conclusion: Farming future is in question - Large grain farming is leaving Lake County



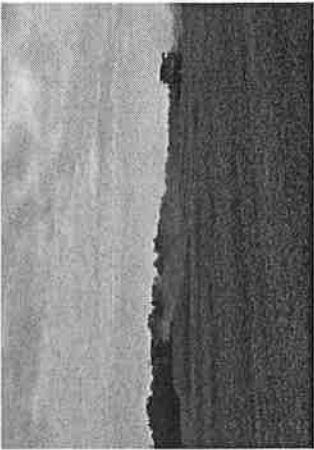
Number of farms in northeastern Illinois, by county, 1987-2007



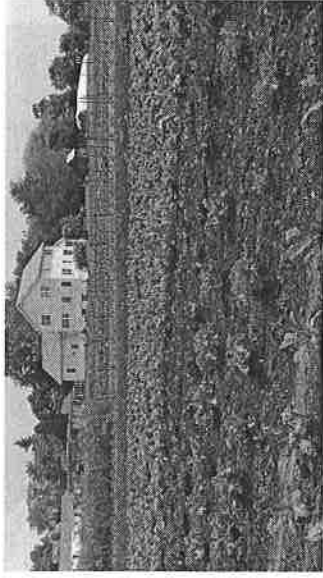
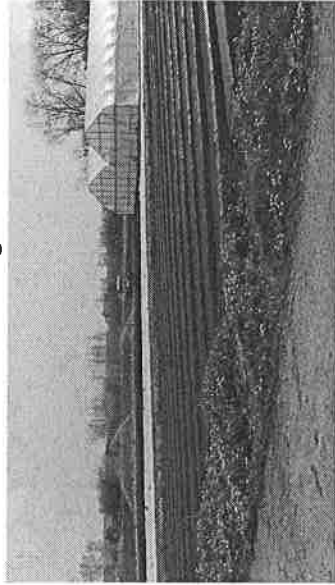
Farm parcels are becoming smaller, fragmented and more isolated



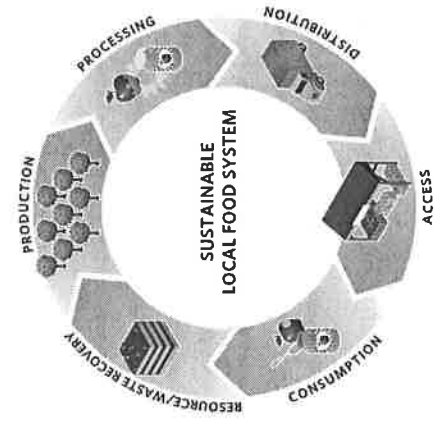
Corn and Bean Farming requires large acreages and large equipment



Smaller parcels work well for local food growers



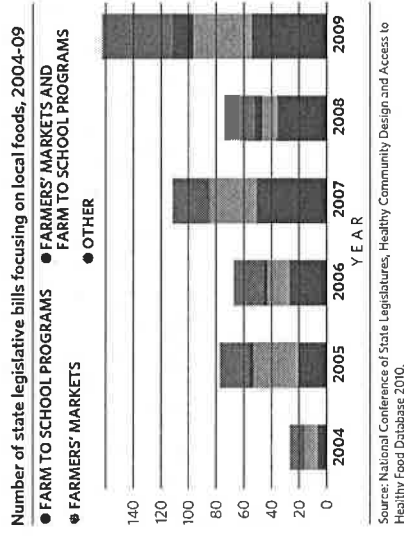
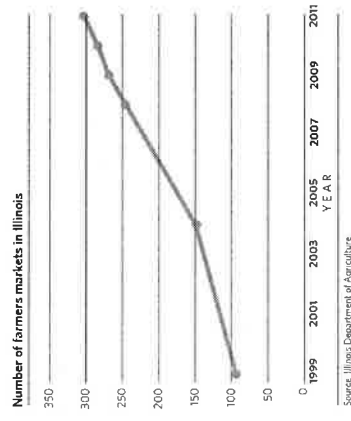
2012 Lake County Sustainable Food Systems Project CMAP LTA Grant



Preliminary Findings

1. National, Regional Trends – Local food production is fastest growing sector in farming
2. Economic development opportunities and job growth potential are both high
3. Lake County is well positioned to be regional leader in local food production
4. Local food system growth aligns with County Strategic Plan Goals and Sustainability Goals

#1 Growth in Local Food Sector



#2 ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF LOCAL FOOD

- ✓ Illinois consumers spend \$14 billion/yr. on fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ IL region capable of producing 85% of this volume (6% currently).
- ✓ 90% of consumers would buy local produce if conveniently available.
- ✓ Potential unmet demand is approximately \$10 billion.

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Basic Financial Picture

	Lake County Fresh Produce Operation (20 acres) ^a	Lake County Corn & Bean Operation
Sales/Acre	\$20,000 - \$23,000	\$810 ^b
Non Labor Costs/Acre	\$6,000 - \$11,000	\$424 ^c
Land Costs/Acre	\$250	\$150
Labor Costs/Acre	\$7,000 - \$9,500	\$10 - \$14 ^d
Operator Return/Acre	\$7,000 - \$12,000	\$224

^a Ranges from last 5 years
^b Acreage is 50% beans, 50% corn; Corn \$5.00/bushel, Beans \$12.00/bushel; Corn 180 bu/acre, Beans 52 bu/acre; \$23/acre government payments
^c University of Illinois Farm Budgets, 2010 Crop Budgets

Economic Opportunity

- Cash receipts for Chicago Metro farmers in 2009 was \$1.8 billion
- If Chicago Metro residents each spent \$5 per week for local food directly from farmers, farms would earn \$2.7 billion of new farm income

» Source: Ken Meter Crossroads Institute

#3 Lake County Positioned to Lead

- Broad-based Private Sector NGO Interest
 - Liberty Prairie Foundation - Farm Business Development Center
 - Conserve Lake County
 - Openlands
 - Foundation Grant Funding
- Broad-based Public Sector Interest
 - College of Lake County (new local Ag. degree program)
 - Lake County FPD (owner of 2,300 acres of farmland)
 - Libertyville Township (owner of 750 acres of farmland)
 - Lake County
 - CMAP GOTO 2040 Recommendation

Policy Analysis and Assessment

Issue trends identified through survey feedback and other primary sources

- **Zoning issues**
 - restrictions on keeping chickens in residentially zoned areas;
 - constructing temporary accessory agricultural structures (like hoop houses) on non-exempt land (less than approx. 5 acres)
- **Food safety regulations**
 - Can food producers sell value-added food products that they prepare at home.
- **Access to Land**
 - Land values too high to acquire
 - Long term lease agreement models

College of Lake County

- Fall 2012 New Sustainable Agriculture Degree and Certificate Programs begin
- Goal is to give students the technical skills and experience to get a job in local food production.
- Program graduates can move on to the Farm Business Development Center at Prairie Crossing



PRAIRIE CROSSING FARM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Goals:

- ⇒ Increase the number of new farm entrepreneurs successfully farming in the Chicago region;
- ⇒ Increase the supply of fresh, locally produced organic produce;
- ⇒ Improve the value/acre of organic farm production to successfully integrate farming as a sustainable land use in the suburban areas of the Chicago region;
- ⇒ Increase the number of new high quality jobs in the farm sector.



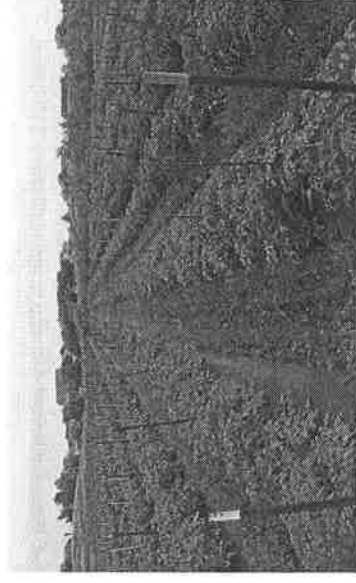
Human Health Benefits

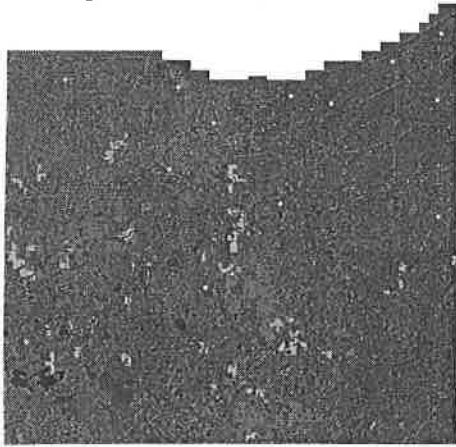


Economic Benefits



Land and Water Health Benefits





Lake County
Agricultural Lands
Publicly or Non-Judicially Owned 4,210 acres
Privately Owned 18,820 acres



CONSERVE
LAKE COUNTY

Next Step

- Create Local Food System Council to carry on public-private coordination of developing Lake County's Local Food System



