



Food LINC:

Leveraging Investment for Network Coordination

Updated July 2016

Food LINC: Description and Purpose

- **Funding: USDA and Federal Partners*** providing initial funding of \$850k (matched at least 2:1 by philanthropy) to support 10 full-time value chain coordinator positions in urban & rural regions.
- **Coordination:** Coordinator dedicated to linking producers (largely in rural areas) to buyers (largely in metro areas) in particular food value chains.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Increased revenue to local producers, job creation along the value chain, and increased access to healthy, affordable food.
- **“Higher” Purpose:** Elevate the value of this work, leading to longer-term support from public & private funders.

**Funding from Rural Development, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Appalachian Regional Commission, and Delta Regional Authority*



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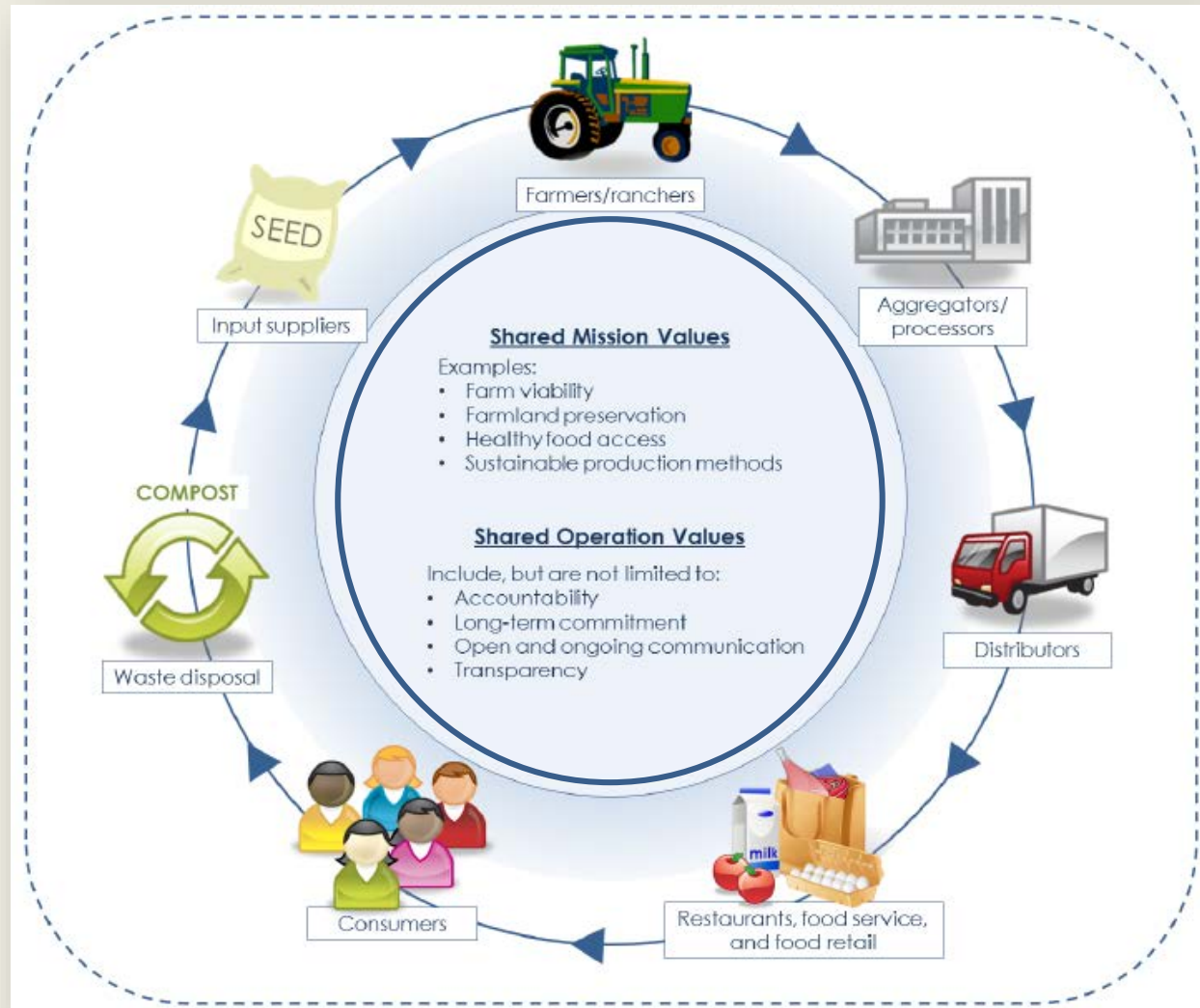


Defining Food Value Chains

What is a Food Value Chain?

The food value chain may look a lot like a traditional supply chain on the surface, but. . .

- Businesses intentionally structure their core operations to **produce both financial success and social benefit**
- **Shared mission and operational values** support decisions and processes



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How Do We Create Successful Value Chains?



Key Takeaway:

It's Not About Infrastructure, It's About Relationships!

- The best investment is often in human capital – i.e., Value Chain Coordinators

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-value-chain>

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Role of Value Chain Coordinators

Market Matchmaker

Identify and connect key stakeholders through referral services and other forms of short-term or one-off engagement. This “public interest broker” role is key to development of food value chains because many businesses are stepping outside their normal channels to find new collaborators.

Convener/ Relationship Builder

Build the necessary relationships across the food value chain by engaging key stakeholders, maintaining communication channels, and fostering a trusting environment. Examples include convening stakeholder meetings, forming working groups, and implementing other forms of longer-term engagement.

Technical Assistance

Work with food value chain members to build capacity through education and training programs in such areas as sustainable production practices, food safety, marketing/branding, etc.

Policy Thought Leader

Raise policy issues and partner with others to address policies and procurement requirements, such as bidding procedures and preferred-vendor practices that may interfere with the ability of food value chains to access certain marketing channels.

Resource Prospector

Identify and pursue resources, such as grants, loans, and services to support value-chain collaborators as they develop their enterprise.

Catalyst / Innovator

As a resource prospector, value chain coordinators can also utilize grants and other external resources to test new business models and thus lower the financial risk of the businesses engaged in the value chain.

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Initial Regions Selected & Value Chain Organizations

Regions	Value Chain Organizations	Federal Place-based Initiative Alignment
Greater Atlanta/South Carolina	Common Market Georgia	Strike Force/SC Promise Zone
Louisville/Eastern Kentucky	Farm to Table (City of Louisville)	Strike Force/KY Promise Zone
North Carolina--Rocky Mount/Coastal Plains	The Conservation Fund	Strike Force
Colorado--Pueblo/Colorado Springs	Rocky Mountain Farmers Union	Strike Force
New Mexico/Southern CO	La Montanita Co-op	Strike Force
Philadelphia/Delaware River Valley	Fair Food Philadelphia	Promise Zone
Chesapeake region--VA/MD	Metro Washington Council of Governments	Strike Force (VA)
Central Appalachia—VA/WV/TN/KY	Appalachian Sustainable Development	Strike Force/KY Promise Zone
Memphis/East Arkansas Delta	Communities Unlimited	Strike Force
Jackson, MS – Delta region	Soul City	Strike Force



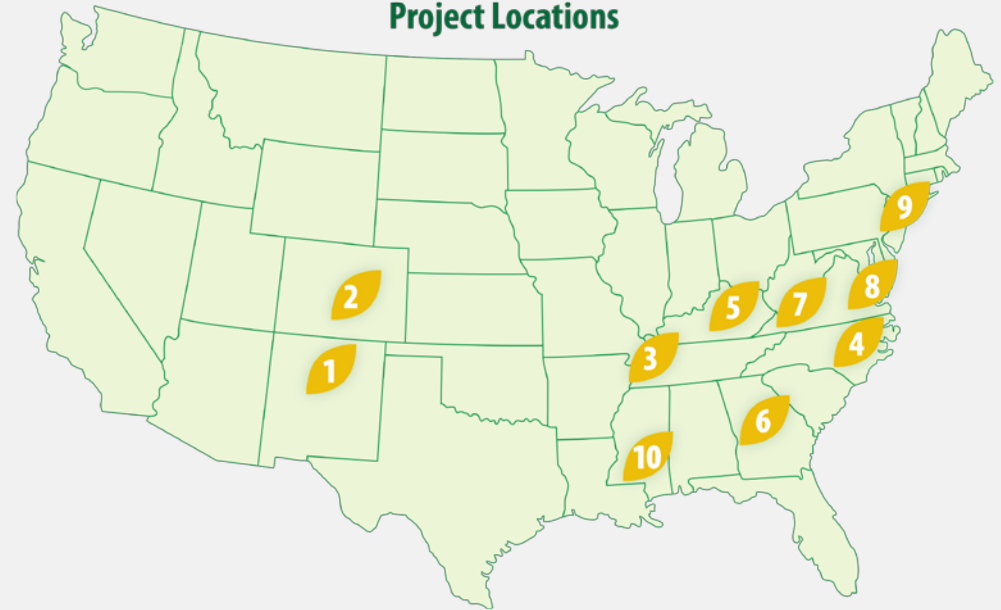
4 Federal Partners (\$850K)

- USDA Rural Development
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Delta Regional Authority

18 Philanthropic Partners (\$2.3M)

- Agua Fund
- Assisi Foundation
- CoBank
- The Duke Endowment
- Gates Family Foundation
- Hyde Family Foundation
- Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
- Kentucky Agricultural Development Board
- Oak Foundation
- Pyramid Peak Foundation
- The One Foundation
- Prince Charitable Trusts
- RSF Social Finance
- 11th Hour Project of the Schmidt Family Foundation
- Surdna Foundation
- Thornburg Foundation
- Town Creek Foundation
- Z Smith Reynolds Foundation

Project Locations



Organizations and Locations

- 1 La Montanita Co-op
- 2 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
- 3 Communities Unlimited
- 4 The Conservation Fund
- 5 Louisville Farm to Table
- 6 Common Market Georgia
- 7 Appalachian Sustainable Development
- 8 Metro Washington Council of Governments
- 9 Fair Food
- 10 Soul City Hospitality



National Coordination Component - The Wallace Center -

Purpose: A national entity coordinating the work of the value chain organizations to maximize impact of the initiative.

National coordination will entail the following (and more):

- Peer exchanges
- Sharing best practices
- Targeted technical assistance
- Webinars, etc.
- Evaluation



Addressing Social Equity

- **Alignment with Administration's Place-Based Initiatives**, *e.g. Promise Zones, Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2), Sustainable Communities, StrikeForce*
- **Targeting assistance to economically-distressed and socially-diverse communities**
- **Food LINC primary focus on impacts to producers** – *revenue generation for rural producers and job and business creation in middle of value chain.*
- **With intentional engagement of under-served communities to ensure healthy food access outcomes**



More Info on Food LINC?

Contact

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