

Creating Community Capital through Local Food

**Christy Shi Day, John Day, Rick Morse
and Nancy Creamer**

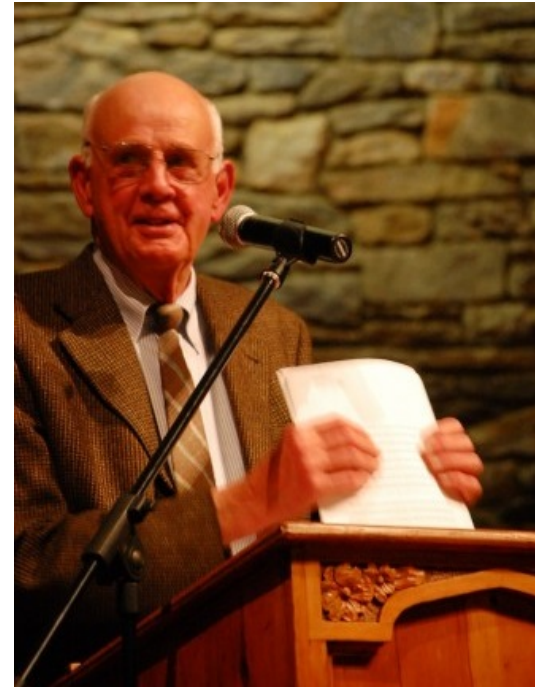
Center for Environmental Farming Systems, North Carolina State University
and School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Go Local

Live Local Buy Local

*The most effective means of local self-determination would be a **well-developed local economy** based upon the use and protection of local resources, including local human intelligence and skills...Local resources...become far more valuable when they are developed, produced, processed and marketed by, and first of all to, the local people – when, that is, they support, and are supported by, a local economy. (Wendell Berry)*



Asset-based Community Development

*Asset-Based Community Development is a growing movement that considers **local assets** as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future.*

(www.abcdinstitute.org)





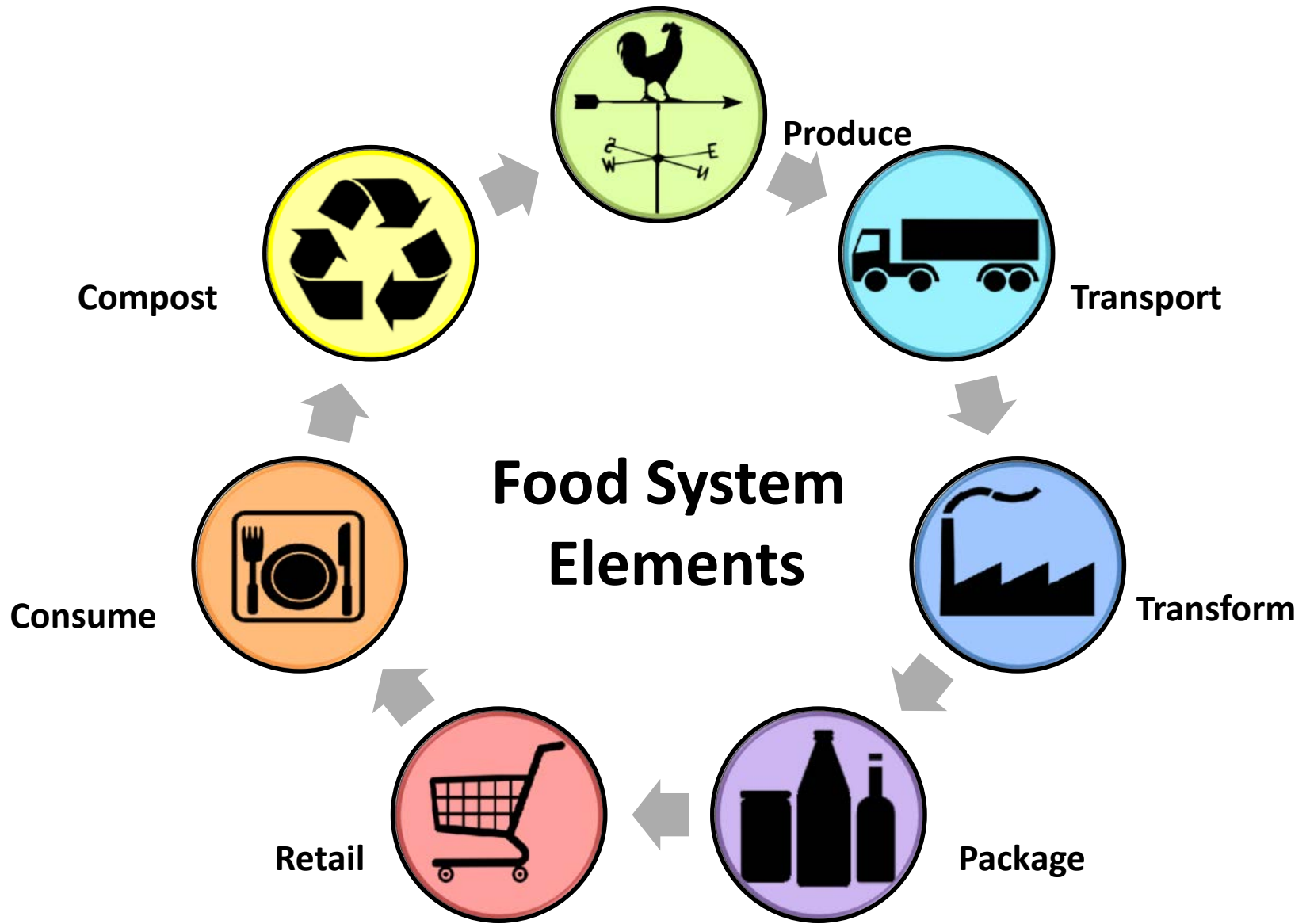
**BUY FRESH
BUY LOCAL**



think
local
food



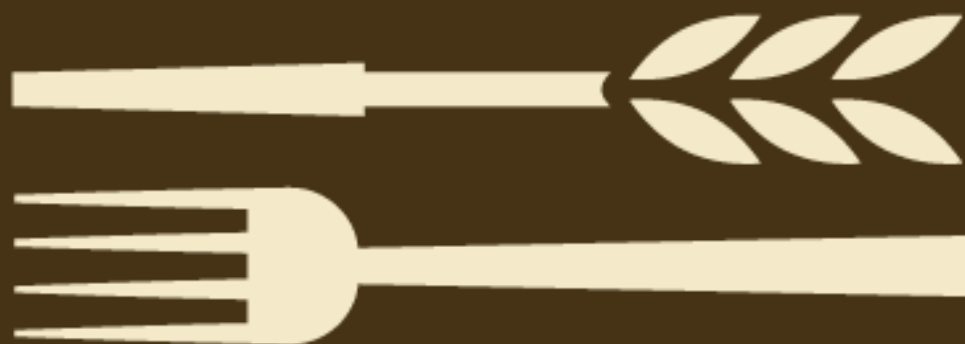
LOCALVORE



Adapted from Cornell's "Discovering the Food System" curriculum.

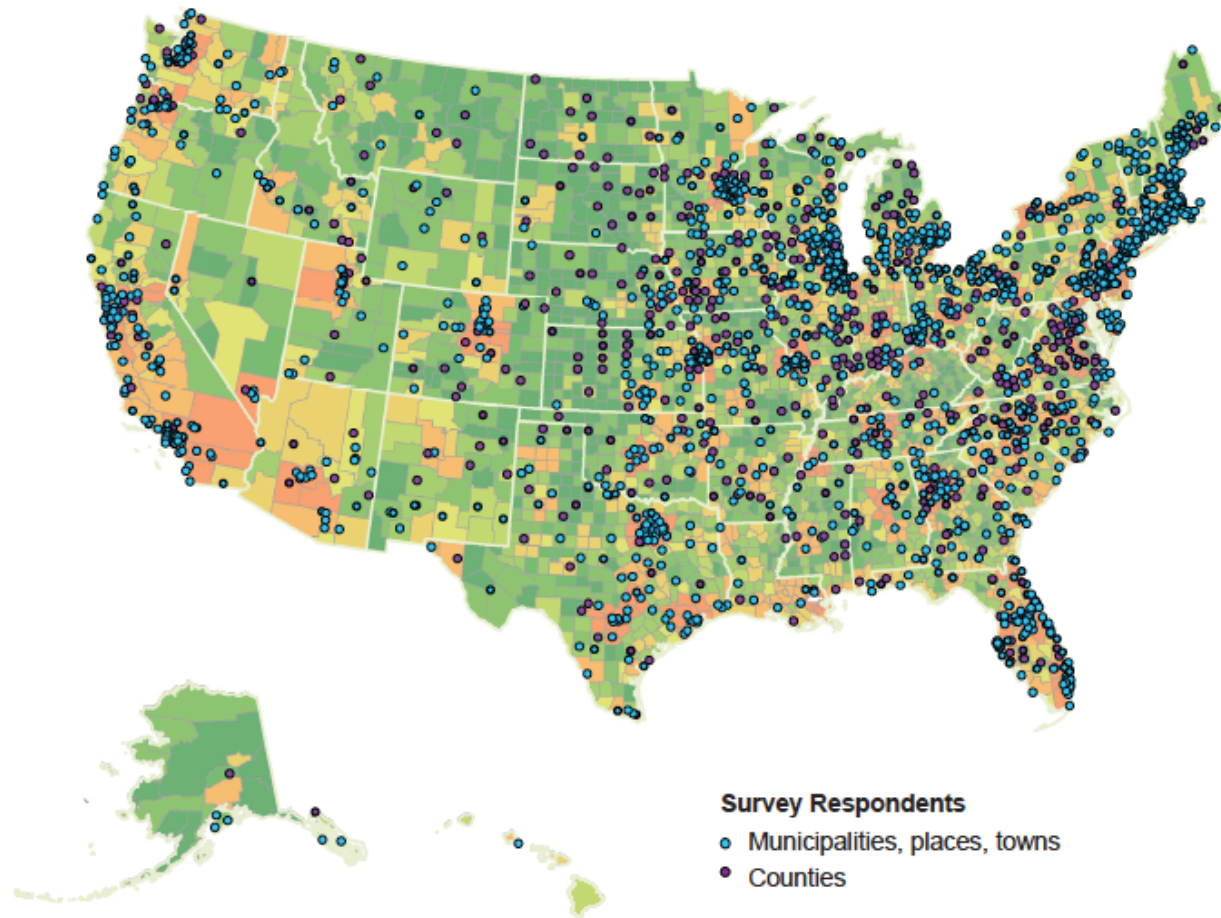


CRFS



MSU CENTER *for* REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



Survey Respondents

- Municipalities, places, towns
- Counties

2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes (source: USDA Economic Research Service)

Metro counties:

population size of metro area:

- 1 million or more
- 250,000 to 1 million
- Fewer than 250,000

Non-metro counties:

size of urban population; adjacency to metro area:

- 20,000 or more; adjacent
- 20,000 or more; not adjacent
- 2,500 to 19,999; adjacent
- 2,500 to 19,999; not adjacent
- < 2,500 urban population or completely rural; adjacent
- < 2,500 urban population or completely rural; not adjacent



2012 ICMA/MSU-CRFS Survey

- Farmers markets widespread
- Lack of systemic planning
- Need more collaboration and strategic local government support for local food
 - Expand infrastructure
 - Economic development
 - Planning and partnerships
- Lack of awareness of federal resources

Select Examples of Food Initiatives Fostering Community Capital

Fostering community capital



Photo from <http://www.piedmont.edu/food-agricultural-processing-center/PFAP/>



**PIEDMONT FOOD & AG
PROCESSING CENTER**
HILLSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA

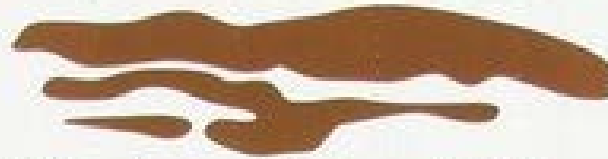


To create a strong base to help launch and grow new food businesses in the Piedmont, focusing on a 75-mile radius in all directions.



eastern carolina organics

eco



We market and distribute wholesale
Carolina organic farm produce
to retailers, restaurants and buying clubs.



Photo from <http://www.facebook.com/easterncarolinaorganics>



ICMA



Sandhills Farm to Table Cooperative
 "Neighbors Feeding Neighbors"
 News From 2011



activerain.com/blog/view/23041751-neighbors-feeding-neighbors-sandhills-farm-to-table-cooperative

To satisfy local food needs with locally grown and produced foods.



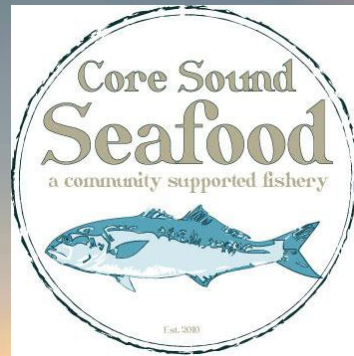
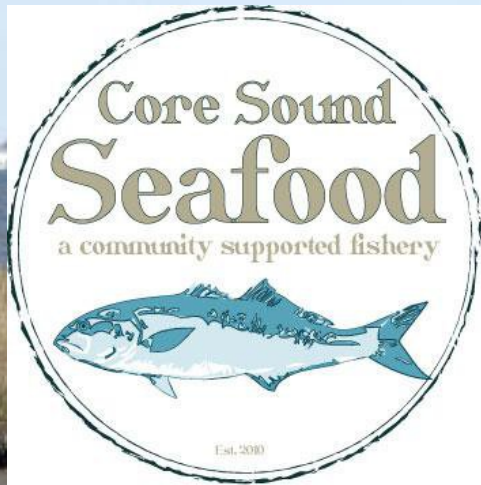


Photo from Carteret County Inland Facebook Photo Album

Provides a market to Down East Carteret County fishermen by offering locally caught, fresh seafood to inland communities through CSF shares.



http://www.facebook.com/CoreSoundSeafood/photos_stream



<http://www.pasturebasedinc.com/index.php>

Connects North Carolina's pasture-based livestock producers with local food lovers, restaurants, and retailers, and is committed to paying fairly.



FIND OUR MEATS



fixing our economy from the ground up
... starting with food.



SLOWMONEY NC



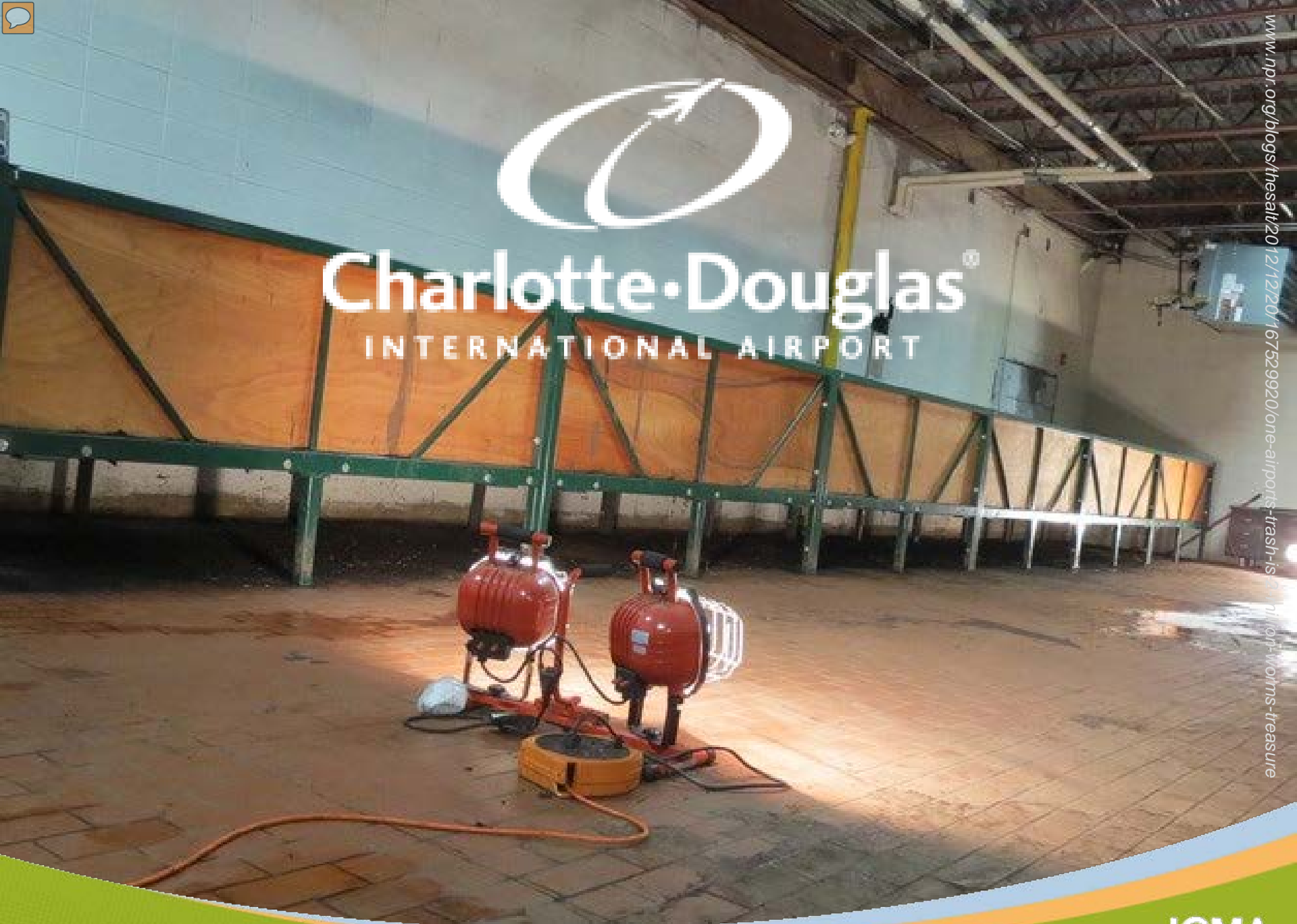
Photo from http://www.facebook.com/SlowMoney/NC/photos_stream





Charlotte-Douglas[®]

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/11/22/20167529920/one-airport-trash-is-a-million-worms-treasure



www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/12/20/16752992/one-airports-trash-is-2-million-worms-treasure

Reduce carbon footprint, transportation costs, and grounds maintenance costs by composting all food and waxy paper from 10K tons of annual waste.



<https://www.facebook.com/friendshipgardens/photos/su2017>



Grow healthy food, making it available to all, especially those with limited access; create community around local food traditions; share knowledge and passion for sustainable food production.





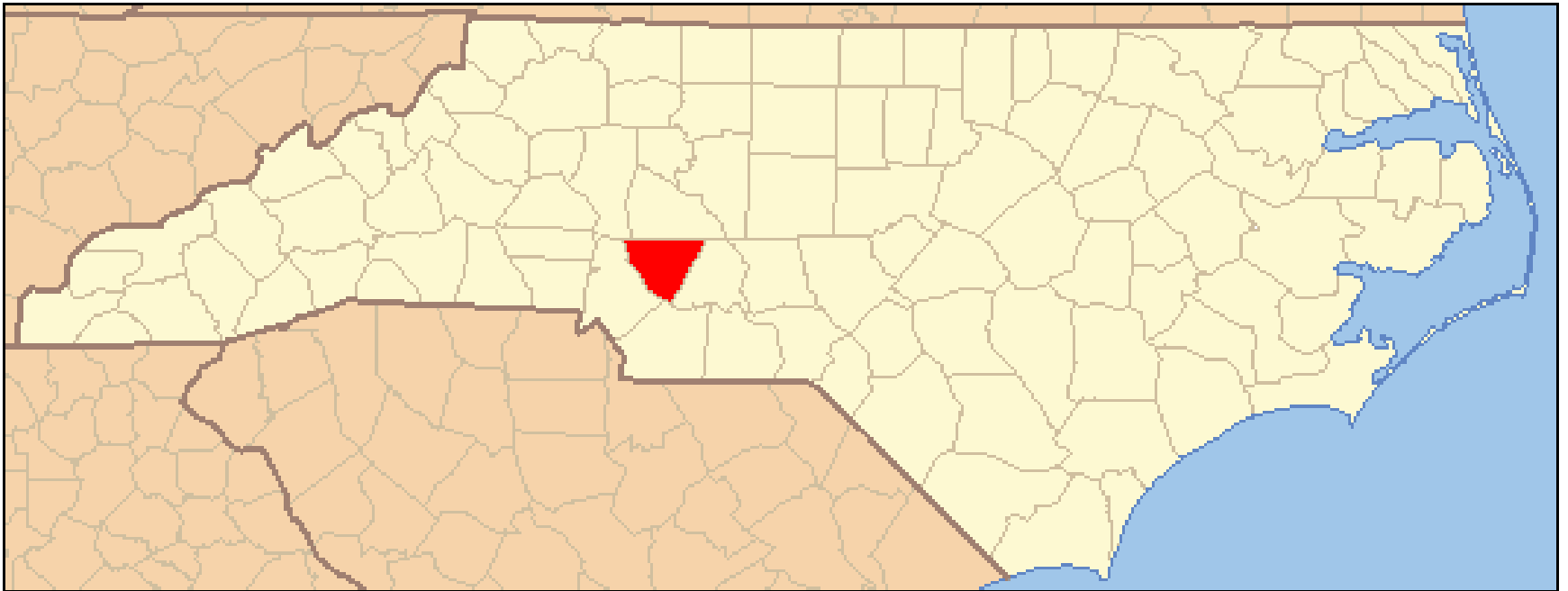
<http://info.ncagr.com/blog/?p=23682>

**Realizing the spirit of excellence, life-long learning,
and pride in self and community.**

One County Manager's Work with Community-based Food Systems

community-based food systems

Cabarrus County, NC – Just Up the Road a Piece!



Cabarrus Context in 2007-2008

- Population – 168,000
- Changing economy:
 - Decline of manufacturing, 1000s of jobs lost
 - Emergence of lower paying service and retail industries
- Rapid, sprawling development
 - Much of it at the expense of farmland
 - Residents increasingly concerned about changing landscape

Our Approach



Community Engagement - 2007

- Invited people with land in the present use value program to a town hall style meeting – 200 attended
 - Concerns Included:
 - Loss of farm land
 - Encroaching development
 - Dwindling number of active farms
 - Lack of support from county government
 - Lack of processing capacity

Policy Making - 2008

- Begin the move from vision statement –

“a county where our children learn, our citizens participate, our dreams matter, our families and neighbors thrive and our community prospers”

- To strategic planning –
 - Goal and outcome development, strategy and implementation plans

Policy Making - 2008

First of 5 goals:

“Preserve and enhance the quality of life by addressing growth with sound public policies that sustain resources, provide high quality services, and fund infrastructure needs.”

Policy Making - 2008

One of the outcomes developed to achieve this goal:

“Begin a comprehensive, sustainable community initiative, with the development a robust community food system as the centerpiece. This initiative will include a plan to ‘green’ county government operations and regulations by employing environmentally friendly practices.”



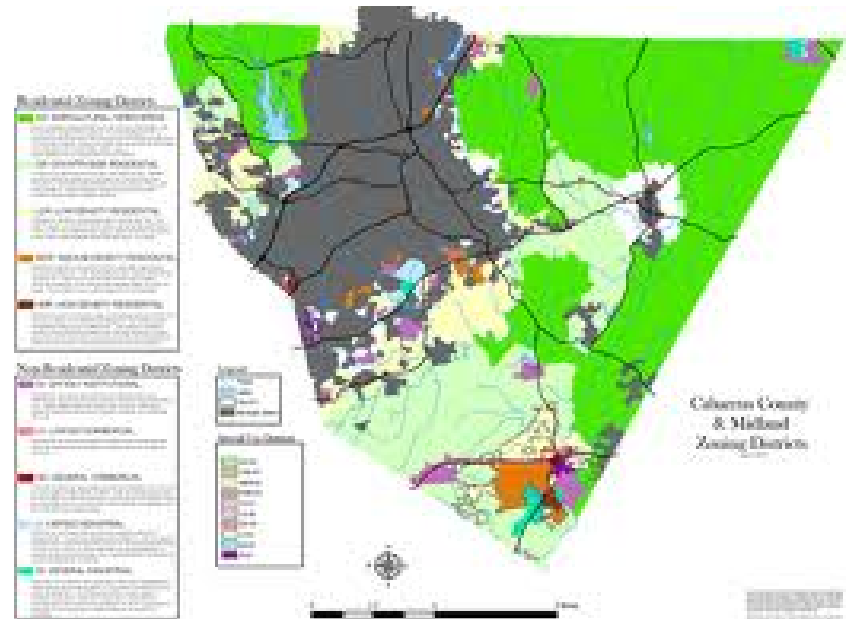
Programs: A Systems Approach

- Engage across sectors: government, business, community groups, producers, others
- Build upon and strengthen community assets
- Apply research or feasibility studies assessing need and possibility of success
- Incorporate multiple pieces of food system
- Address various community capitals through holistic and integrated programming



Land Use Planning/Regulation - 2008

- Award-winning planning and **engagement** effort resulted in regulations that encourage agriculture
- Agreement between Concord and Cabarrus prohibited utility extensions into districts zoned for agriculture



Lomax Incubator Farm - 2009

- 30 acres county-owned land; land bequeathed; initial funding from local grant
- Managed and maintained by county staff; NC Cooperative Extension conducts training
- Participants pay \$240 / year to learn to farm
- Products found Lowes Foods and farmers markets



Dedicated Funding Source - 2009

Cabarrus County Agricultural Development and Farm Preservation Trust Fund

- Funded through proceeds from taxes and interest received as a result of land exiting the present-use value program
- Supports public and private enterprise programs that promote profitable and sustainable farms and food businesses
- Provides for the purchase of farmland conservation agreements



Food Policy Council - 2010

- To identify and strengthen connections between food, health, natural resource protection, economic development and the agriculture community
- 13-21 community members across sectors
- Staffed by **Cabarrus County Local Food Systems Project Coordinator**
- **Institutionalizes community engagement**



Food Policy Council - 2010

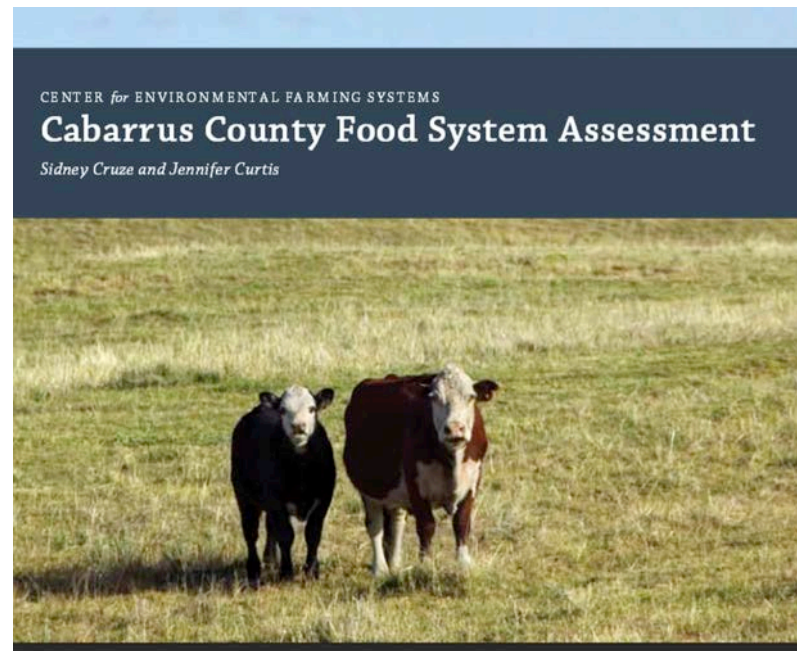
- Develop Local Food Purchasing Policy
- Adopted by Board of Commissioners



“Cabarrus County Government Employees shall locally source at least 10% of all food served at county catered events and small department-sponsored meetings from food producers within North Carolina.”

Food Policy Council - 2010

- Food System Assessment
 - Analysis of: production, potential market channels, and consumer interest
 - Interviews ~70 stakeholders
 - 8 recommendations
 - Overseen by Food Policy Council; funded by grant



Food Policy Council - 2011

- *Locally Grown* certification program to foster stronger connections between residents and farmers within Cabarrus County



Cruse Meats - 2012

- Public/Private partnership
- 4,545 square feet processing facility
- Cost: \$1.2 million from grants and local sources





In Summary: A Systems Approach

- Engage across sectors: government, business, community groups, producers, others
- Build upon and strengthen community assets
- Apply research or feasibility studies assessing need and possibility of success
- Incorporate multiple pieces of food system
- Address various community capitals through holistic and integrated programming



Despite Our Best Laid Plans...



Last harvest at Lomax: Farmers-in-training get notice to vacate

By Karen Cimino Wilson | kcimino@independenttribune.com | Posted: Sunday, June 29, 2014 9:07 am

CONCORD, -- Farmers in training at the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm say they received notice from Cabarrus County on Thursday that the power would go off this week and the water would be cut off after Aug. 30, leaving many wondering whether they'll lose their crops this year.

Angie and Mark Olear stand to lose about \$15,000 worth of Jerusalem artichokes that will not be ready for harvest until after the first frost.

"It's going to destroy us if they shut it down," Mark Olear said, adding that they use the artichokes grown at the farm to make an artichoke relish. They just recently received word that the new Whole Foods Market opening in Huntersville is interested in stocking their product.

"It's just disheartening," said Angie Olear, who owns Crouch's Gourmet Specialties, Inc.

'CAN'T AFFORD THIS STUFF'

The Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm lost county funding on June 16 when the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners voted 3-2 in favor of several last-minute cuts to the fiscal year 2015 budget, which was proposed at \$209.7 million by County Manager Mike Downs. That amount included the funding of \$114,017 for the farm's annual operating budget. The cuts are effective Tuesday, July 1, and included 11 job cuts across county programs, including the farm manager position at Lomax. Commissioner Jason Oesterreich proposed the reduction in the farm budget, stating the county had spent \$400,000 in the last year on the farm. It's unclear where that



Lomax Farms

Cabarrus Homebrewers Society President Ford Craven checks on the hops crop at Cabarrus County Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm, which recently lost funding. Lomax is one of only two in North Carolina where certified hops are being grown. The other is a commercial farm in Western North Carolina. Craven said the society members were hoping to one day brew with Cabarrus County's through Dec. 31, 2014.

UPDATED: Lomax to become nonprofit; power restored

By Karen Cimino Wilson | kcimino@independenttribune.com | Posted: Tuesday, July 8, 2014 3:30 pm

CONCORD, N.C. -- The Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm will survive its elimination from the Cabarrus County budget thanks to a plan to convert the training ground for future farmers into a private, non-profit organization.

The Carolina Farm Stewardship Association has promised to help Lomax make the transition from a county-run operation to a self-sustaining, private entity that is no longer funded by Cabarrus County tax dollars.

On July 2, the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's Board of Directors adopted a resolution authorizing its staff to work with the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm manager to develop an appropriate plan to continue running the farm with a brever through Dec. 31, 2014.

"We recognize the significant accomplishments of the Lomax Farm program in giving new farmers a launching pad for success, and we see significant value to the Cabarrus County agricultural community, and to the surrounding region, in its continuation as an independent, non-government entity," according to a statement provided by the association to Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners.

From 2009 through June of 2014, the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm was managed by Cabarrus County government and served as a teaching facility in cooperation with Cabarrus County Cooperative Extension.

Under the proposed plan, the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm Park Inc., an established corporate entity, will be turned over to a new board of directors. Aaron Newton, the farm manager under the county, will now serve as voluntary interim executive director as the organization works through



Lomax Farms

Angie Olear (left) and Mark Olear (right) could lose \$15,000 worth of Jerusalem artichokes when Cabarrus County locks them out of the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm, which recently lost funding. The plant won't be ready for harvest until after the first frost. The county shuts the power off this week and the water turns off Aug. 30.

County shuts down power at Lomax Farm, closes clinic

By Karen Cimino Wilson | kcimino@independenttribune.com | Posted: Tuesday, July 1, 2014 7 pm

CONCORD, N.C. -- The power went off Tuesday at Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm and Cabarrus County also shut down the wellness clinic that was established to save money on health care for its employees.

Officials confirmed the closing of the clinic and elimination of power Tuesday. Both were cut as part of a long list of program cuts to the county's fiscal year 2015 budget.

The move was proposed by County Manager Mike Downs and approved by the board of commissioners. It made a motion to adopt the proposed budget, which includes many cuts, but no reduction in the tax rate remains 70 cents per \$100 valuation.

Commissioner Jason Oesterreich, Larry Burrage and Chris Measmer voted for it and Commissioner Steve Morris voted against it. It also eliminated all funding for the Lomax farm and also closed the wellness clinic. The county also eliminated 11 positions and one human resources position.

The Lomax farm could lose their crops with the loss of power, they said. The county shut off on Aug. 30, according to an email the farmers said they received.

Olear said they could lose a crop of Jerusalem artichokes worth about \$15,000. The county had spent \$400,000 in the last year on the farm. It's unclear where that money went. Contact Karen Cimino Wilson: 704-789-9141.



Lomax Farms

Lynn MacDougall-Fleming, a mentor farmer, prepares produce for market in this photo taken Friday.

Questions/Comments?

Additional Information...





ICMA
100th

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Charlotte
Mecklenburg County

SEPTEMBER • 14-17 • 2014

