

Building Regional Cooperation:

Where Co-ops, Food Systems, and Geography Intersect

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 - Organizational Development Consultant
 - Specializing in:
 - Innovation
 - Collaborative Leadership
 - Profound Change

Themes

- Planning in collaboration
- How cooperatives support community resilience
- The broader relevance of food systems
- Value of regional approaches
- Rural/urban collaboration
- Turning maps into inspiring stories

Planning in Collaboration

- Scenario findings: **Communication & coordination** key
- Strategic focus: **Relationship-development**
- Target: **Like-minded networks**

How Cooperatives Support Community Resilience



How Cooperatives Support Community Resilience

- **Community ownership & control**
- Focus on service, meeting needs before profit
- Develop local skills & assets
- Ability to assemble limited resources
- Low failure rate & long-lived
- Difficult to move or buy-out
- Mobilize member, customer and supplier loyalty
- **Result: stable food system,
infrastructure, employment & services**

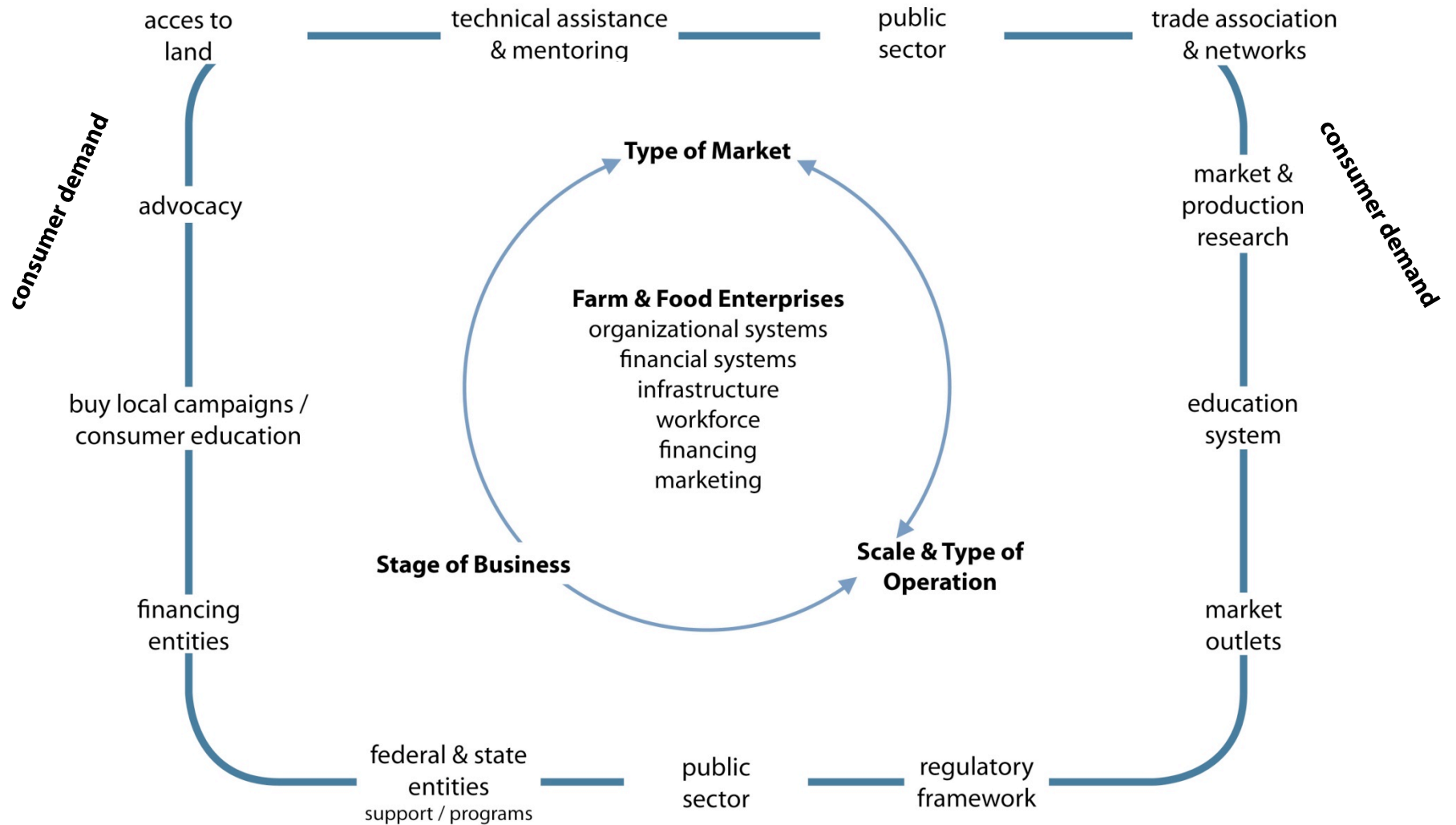
The Broader Relevance of Food Systems

- Local economies
- Climate change
- Mitigate dependence on fossil fuel
- Transition Initiatives
- Bringing people together

Value of Regional Approaches

- A regional food system is “greater than the sum of its ‘locals’ ”
- Meet the population’s food needs from supply chains at multiple levels and scales based in the region.
- The regional scale may be optimal across four key dimensions:
 1. Food needs and supply
 2. Environmental sustainability
 3. Economic development
 4. Diversity

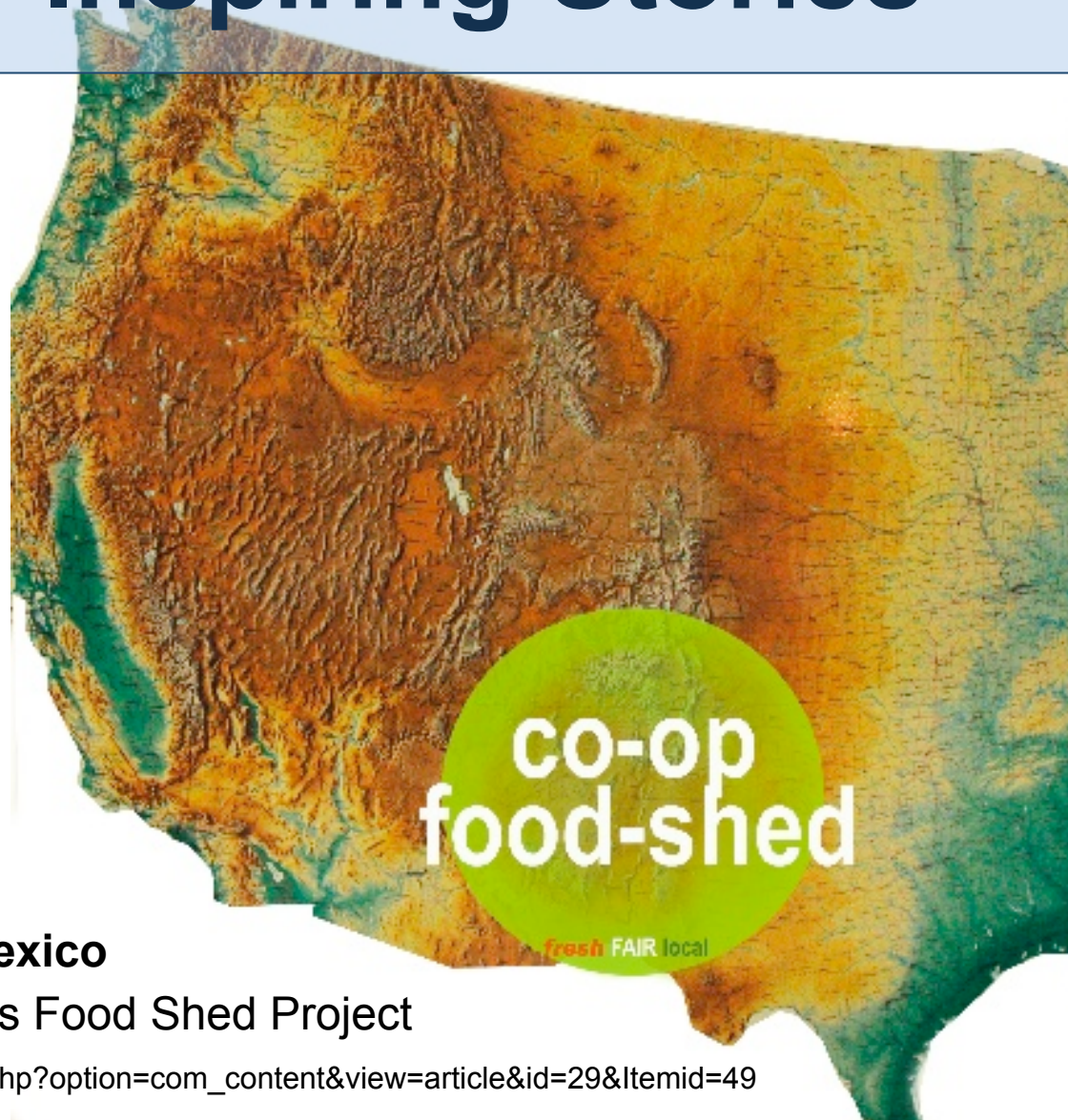
Food System Development: A Private – Public Partnership



Rural / Urban Collaboration

- Urban markets for high quality regional food
- Network development
- Complementary funding sources

Turning Maps into Inspiring Stories

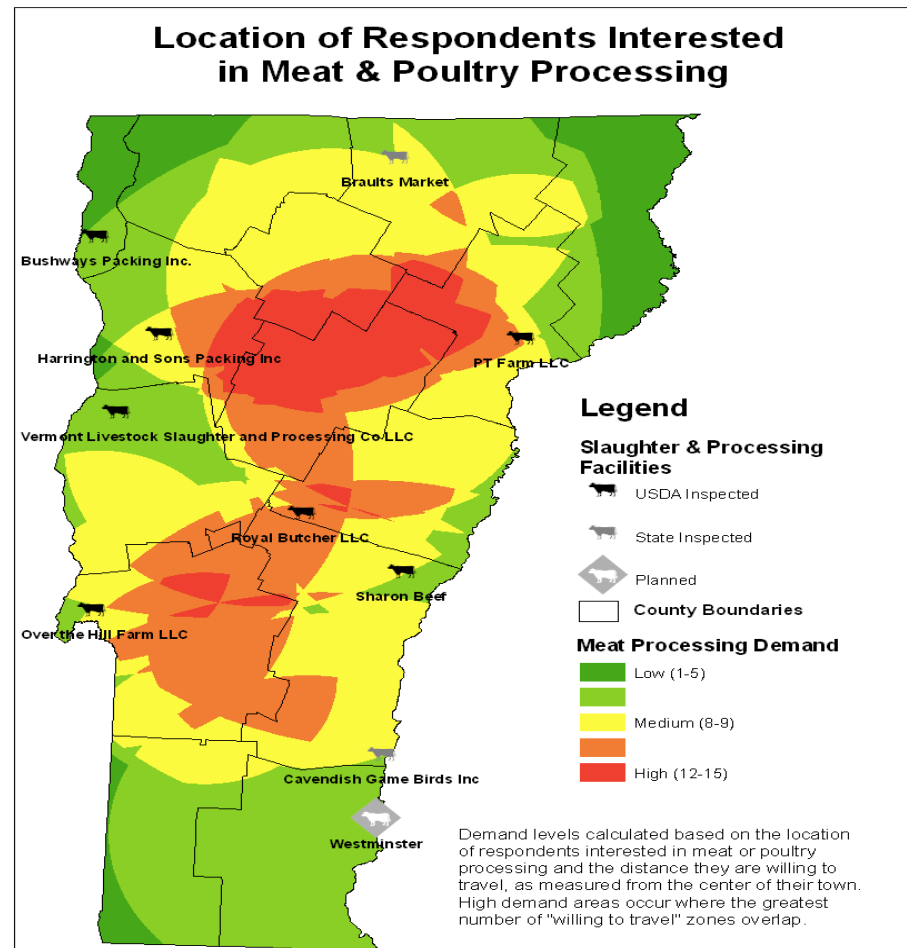


Southwest: New Mexico

La Montanita Co-op's Food Shed Project

www.lamontanita.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=29&Itemid=49

Turning Maps into Inspiring Stories



New England: Vermont
Farm to Plate Initiative

www.vsjf.org/project-details/5/farm-to-plate-initiative

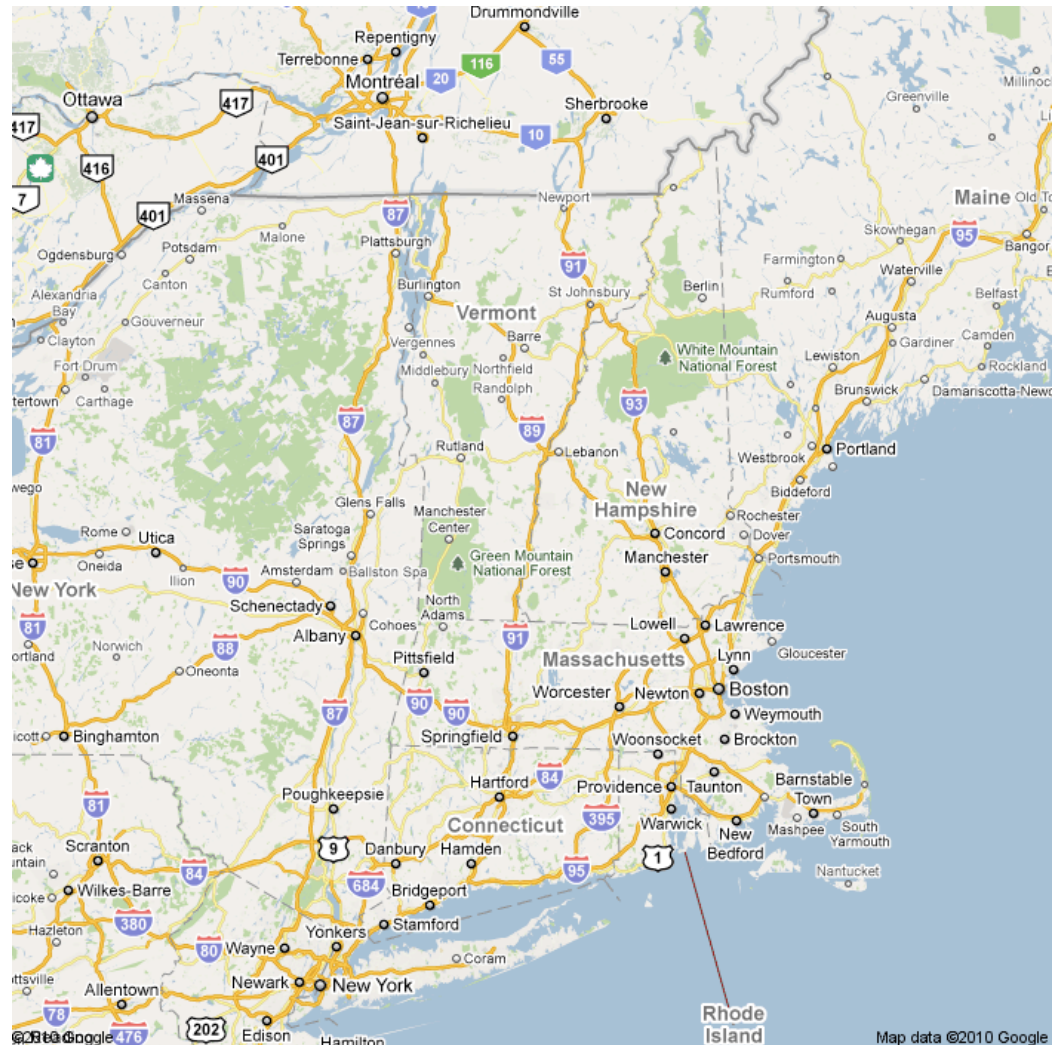
Dan Erickson, University of Vermont
VT Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets
survey

Turning Maps into Inspiring Stories

Northwestern New England

Neighboring Food
Cooperative Association

www.nfca.coop



Turning Maps into Inspiring Stories



Mid-Atlantic Region

Delaware Valley
Regional Planning
Commission

Food System Planning

www.dvrpc.org/Food/

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**What's *your* vision for
Food System & Cooperative Development
Over the next 20 years?**

- Who are the stakeholders?
- Whom would you talk with first?
- What are three simple things you could do over the next three months to begin moving toward your vision?

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Thank You!

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