



2016 Thanksgiving Report

Leadership Team

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This year has been a very active year of growth and development for the [Lyson Center](#). Below we outline our key activities over the last 12 months and give you some idea of where we're headed. As a short refresher about us, have a look at our [values, vision and mission statements](#).

Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development (JAFSCD)

Borrowing from a concept familiar to many in the food movement, JAFSCD is poised to become the world's first **community supported journal**, in which we will be seeking broad support to make the journal open access (subscription-free) to all. In addition, we will be launching a special initiative to secure submissions from authors of color working in or with regions of pernicious and intractable poverty—especially the Mississippi Delta, the Southeastern Piedmont, Tribal areas, and Latinx Borderland areas.

Accomplishments in 2016

- [Published 4 issues](#) spanning our 6th and 7th volumes, including a well received issue on “Labor in Food Systems from Farm to Table” that included 15 peer-reviewed papers. Overall in 2016 we published 40 papers, 6 columns, and 15 reviews.
- Nearly completed our transition to JAFSCD's [new publishing platform](#).
- Recruited new columnist Monica White, an assistant professor of Environmental Justice at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. We will be publishing Monica's column, *Freedom's Seeds: Reflections on Race, Food and Community*, starting in the current (fall 2016) issue.
- Completed our feasibility study for becoming an open access community supported journal. Surveys of stakeholders and potential shareholders showed strong, albeit cautious, support.

Future Plans

- Launch our open access pledge drive. Our goal is to replace all our individual and institutional subscriptions with at least 50 academic and national nonprofit shareholders.

- Launch outreach and impact campaign, including visiting and networking with historically black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges, and Hispanic institutions.
- Institute an Altmetrics program to gauge our impact through our social media penetration and conduct an annual survey to measure impact.
- Recruit a Latinx columnist.
- Launch an author mentoring program to support new authors of color, especially in our target regions of the Southeast, Borderlands, and Tribal areas.

North American Food Systems Network

The North American Food Systems Network (NAFSN) is a professional development community for professionals and activists in the food movement. The Lyson Center is its parent organization. NAFSN is currently administered by a transition team of volunteer leaders, and 11 national founding partnership organizations have signed on in support (see sidebar). To date we have managed all this on a small budget with the volunteer effort of committed volunteers and 2 interns.

Accomplishments in 2016

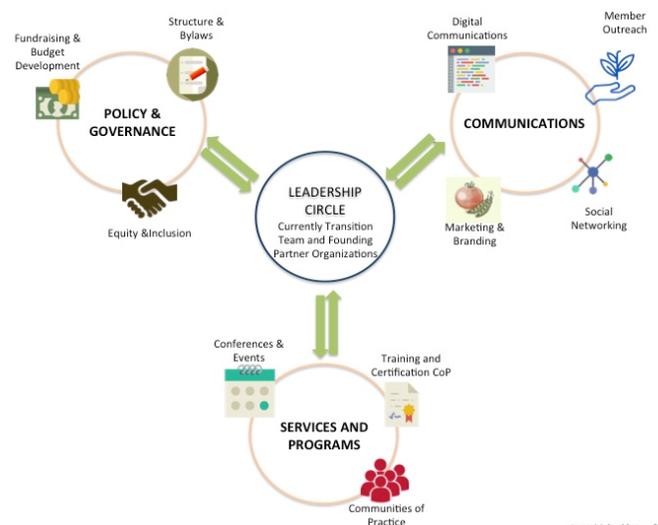
- 210 people joined as founding members.
- 11 founding partner organizations signed on.
- 9 transition team members have put in countless hours of work.
- Held a founding partner organizations meeting on October 7.
- Held a first annual founding members meeting on November 17.
- Established the [NAFSN Good Food Talk webinar series](#) and organized 4 webinars to date:
- Adapted [sociocracy](#) as our governance model (diagram at right).
- Established a community of practice that is developing a food systems development training and certification program (more on next page).

Future Plans

- Obtain core funding for a part-time coordinator.
- Draft and adopt a formal statement of equity and inclusion.
- Finalize the by-laws and organizational structure.

NAFSN Founding Partner Organizations

- **American Farmland Trust**
- **Center for Environmental Farming Systems** (North Carolina A&T, and NC State Universities)
- **eXtension Community, Local & Regional Food Systems Community of Practice** (CLRFS CoP)
- **Farms to Grow** (Oakland, CA)
- **Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab** (University of Buffalo),
- **Kwantlen Polytechnic University** (Institute for Sustainable Food Systems),
- **Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture** (Iowa State University)
- **Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems**
- **National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals**
- **Sustainable Agriculture Educators Association** (SAEA)
- **University of Vermont** (Food Systems Initiative)



- Launch an open membership campaign.
 - Hold first general membership meeting and workshops at a national conference (TBA).
 - Improve member communications through SocialHubSite, website, newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, and other channels.
 - Add new topical communities of practice (CoPs).
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Food Systems Development Training and Certification Community of Practice

NASFN has created a Training and Certification Community of Practice (CoP) to provide ongoing leadership in creating a national food systems development training and certification program.

Accomplishments in 2016

- Met as a group in San Antonio and sketched a concept map of the training and certification program.
- Worked on expanding the CoP's membership to include other national leaders and topical experts in food systems work.
- Formed a fundraising and financial modeling work team to explore funding opportunities for next phases.

Future Plans

- Conduct a survey of existing training programs.
 - Conduct a market research survey.
 - Develop a training platform with a dashboard for individuals to track their progress.
 - Build a collaborative network of accredited training providers to supply online, self-paced modules and [digital badges](#).
 - Launch a pilot program, conduct evaluation, and have a full launch optimistically in 2018.
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Progressive Agriculture Rankings

Duncan is working with two additional former students of Tom Lyson—Dr. Amy Guptill and Dr. Rick Welsh—to develop the Progressive Agriculture Rankings. The PAR uses Census of Agriculture data to rank U.S. counties by how oriented their agriculture and food production are to local resources, markets, and residents' interests and quality of life—a way to measure civic agriculture.

We are currently in the process of comparing the PAR data from the 2007 and 2012 censuses to see how progressiveness in counties has changed over these periods. We hope to map the data and make it available online in early 2017.

The [Thomas A. Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems](#) is a project of the [Center for Transformative Action](#).