

# Real Food on the Colorado Plateau: The professional planners' role in planning for community food systems in Flagstaff, Arizona

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# What Is Planning?

“Planning lays claim to being **comprehensive**, future-oriented, and public-interest driven, and of wanting to enhance the livability of communities.

It is concerned with **community systems** – such as land use, housing, transportation, the environment, and the economy – and their **interconnections**.

The food system, however, is notable by its *absence* from most planning practice, research, and education.”



Pothukuchi, Kameshwari, and Jerome Kaufman. 2000. “The Food System: A Stranger to the Planning Field. *APA Journal*. 66 (2): 113 – 124.



*“Like air, water, and shelter, food is essential for life. Food plays a central role in our health, customs, heritage, and culture. For planners, the corollary is that healthy communities also require healthy food systems.”*  
(Hodgson 2009)

# Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning

- **Support**
  - comprehensive food planning process at the community and regional levels;
  - strengthening the local and regional economy by promoting local and regional food systems;
- **Support food systems that**
  - improve the health of the region's residents;
  - are ecologically sustainable;
  - are equitable and just;
  - preserve and sustain diverse traditional food cultures of Native American and other ethnic minority communities;
- **Support the state and federal legislation** to facilitate community and regional food planning

# Research Questions

1. What are the current food system alternatives in Flagstaff, Arizona, and how are they being supported?
2. What is the potential role of local governments in fostering policies that will encourage food planning?
3. What are practical recommendations for food planning in Flagstaff, Arizona?

# Research Framework



# Literature Review

❖ History of Industrial Agriculture in the United States

❖ Contemporary Food Issues in the United States

*Public Health Concerns*

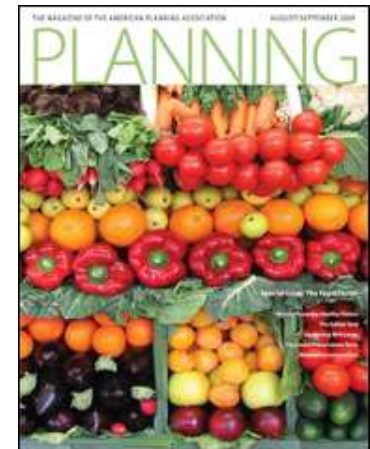
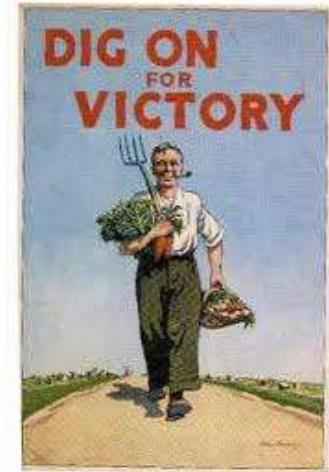
*Environmental Concerns*

*Food Security*

*Economy*

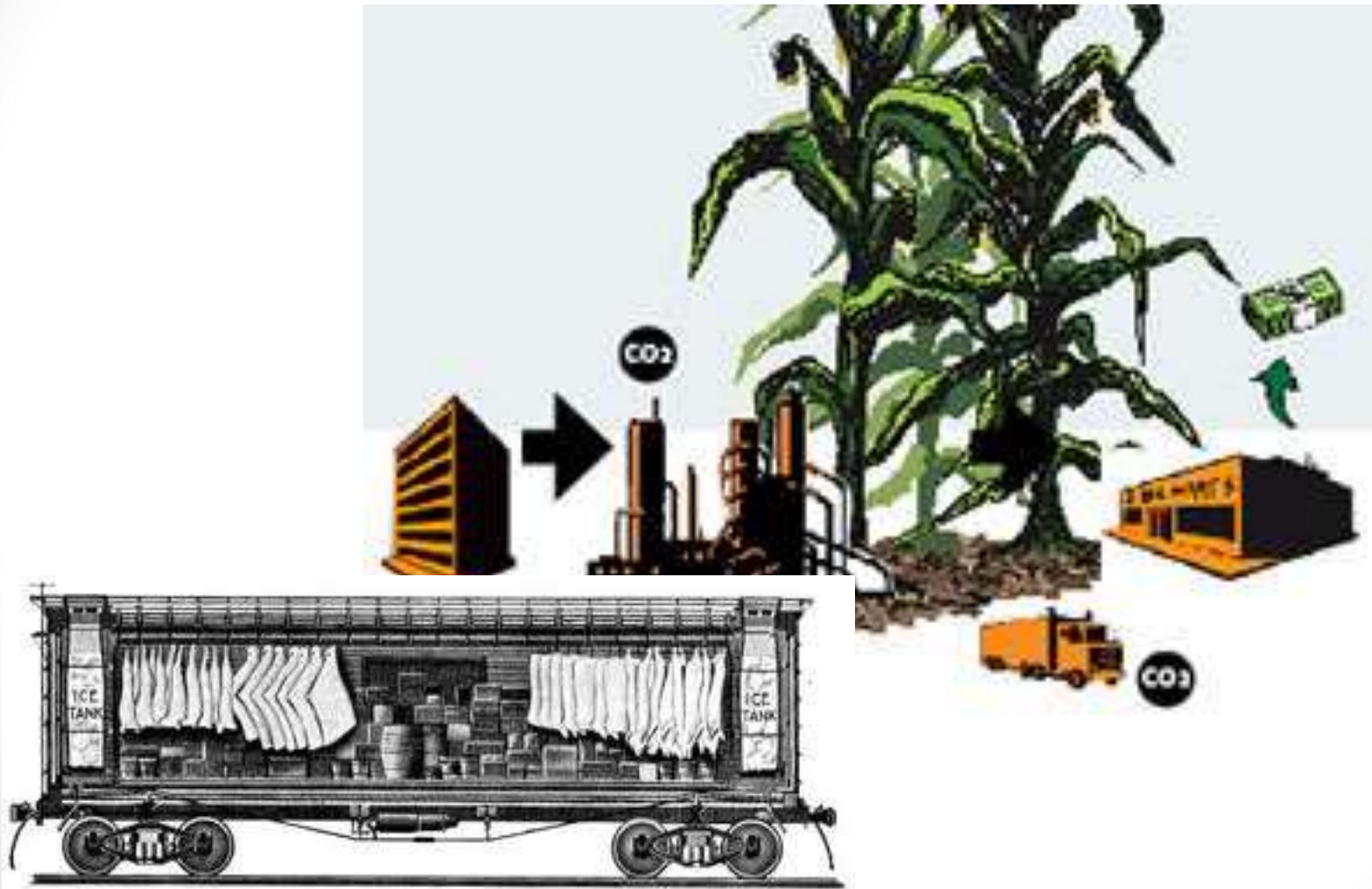
❖ History of Food Planning in the United States

❖ Contemporary Food Planning in the United States



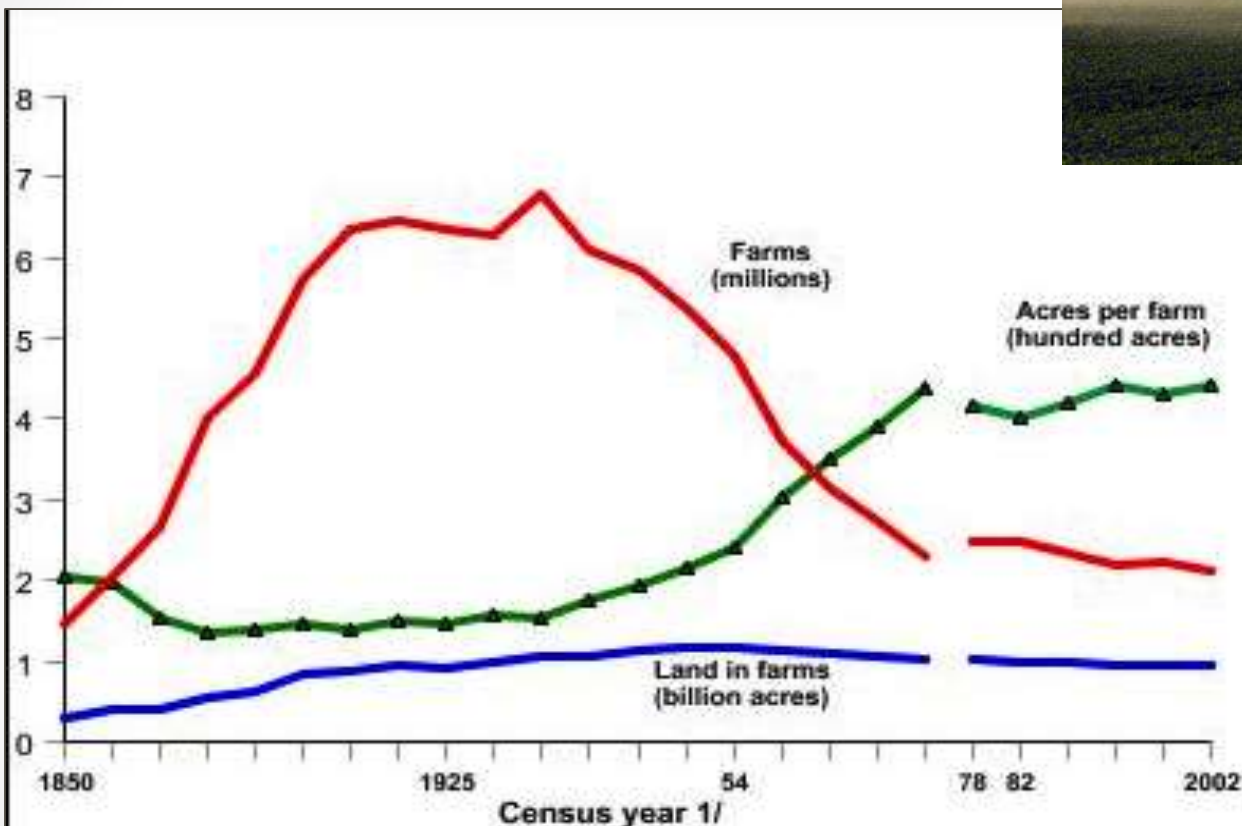


# History of Industrial Agriculture in the United States





In 2002 the top 3% of farms accounted for 62% of all sales



1/ Census years are shown for 10-year intervals from 1850 to 1920, with 4 or 5-year intervals starting in 1925. The break in the lines after 1974 reflects the introduction of an adjustment to estimates of the farm count and land in farms. Beginning in 1978, the data are adjusted to compensate for undercoverage by the census of agriculture.

Source: USDA, ERS, based on census of agriculture data.



# Contemporary Food Issues in the United States

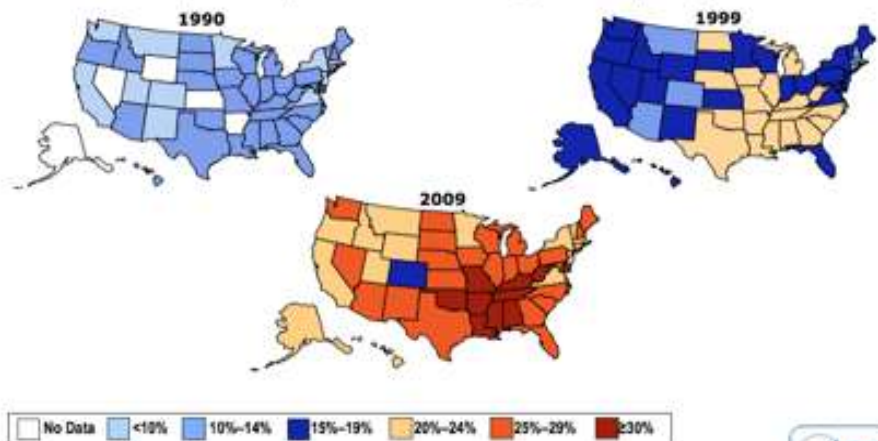
- *Public Health Concerns*
- *Environmental Concerns*
- *Food Security*
- *Economy*



## Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults

BRFSS, 1990, 1999, 2009

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or about 30 lbs. overweight for 5'4" person)

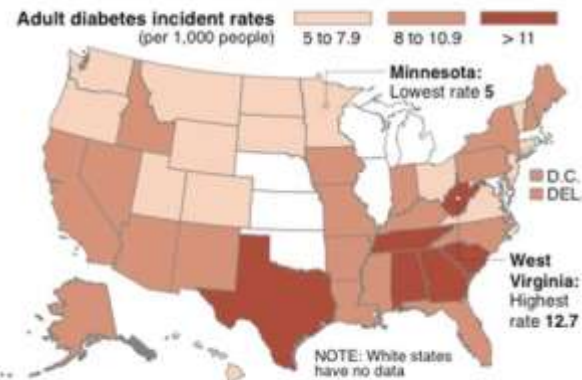


Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, CDC.



## South has highest diabetes levels

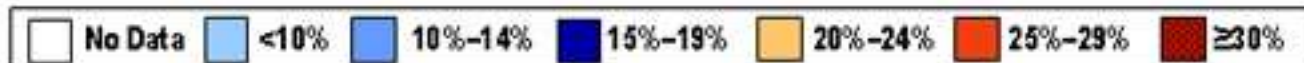
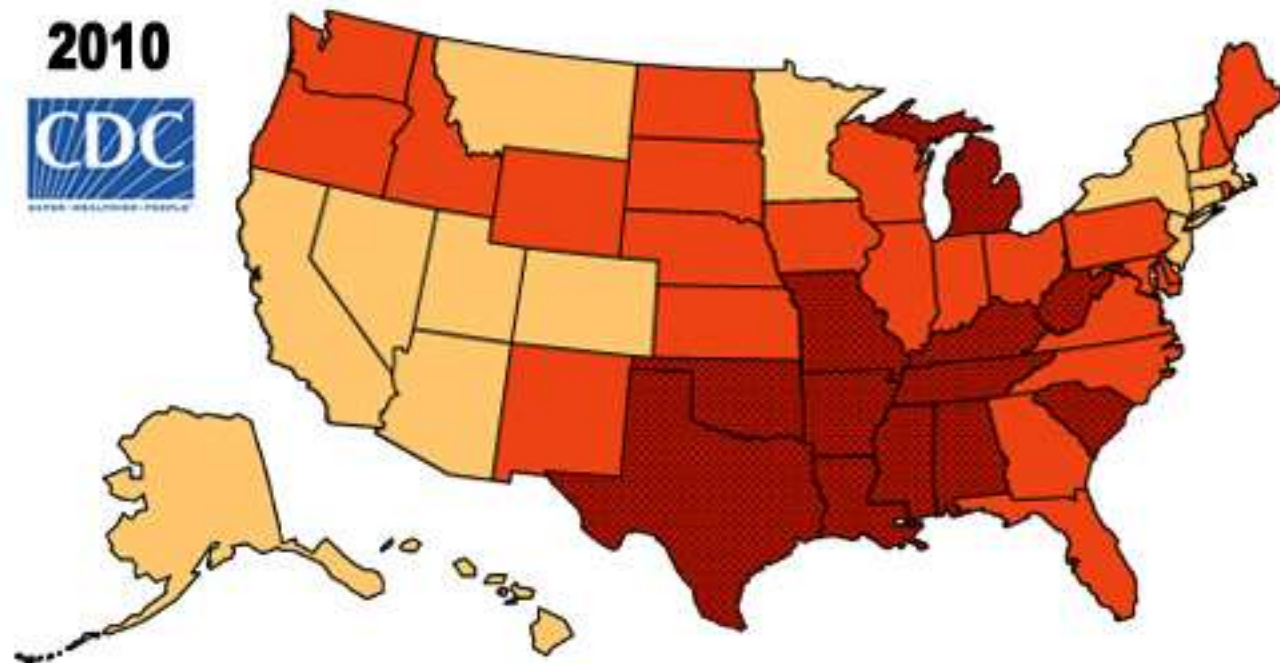
West Virginia leads the nation with the highest diabetes rate. About 90 percent of U.S. cases are linked to obesity.



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

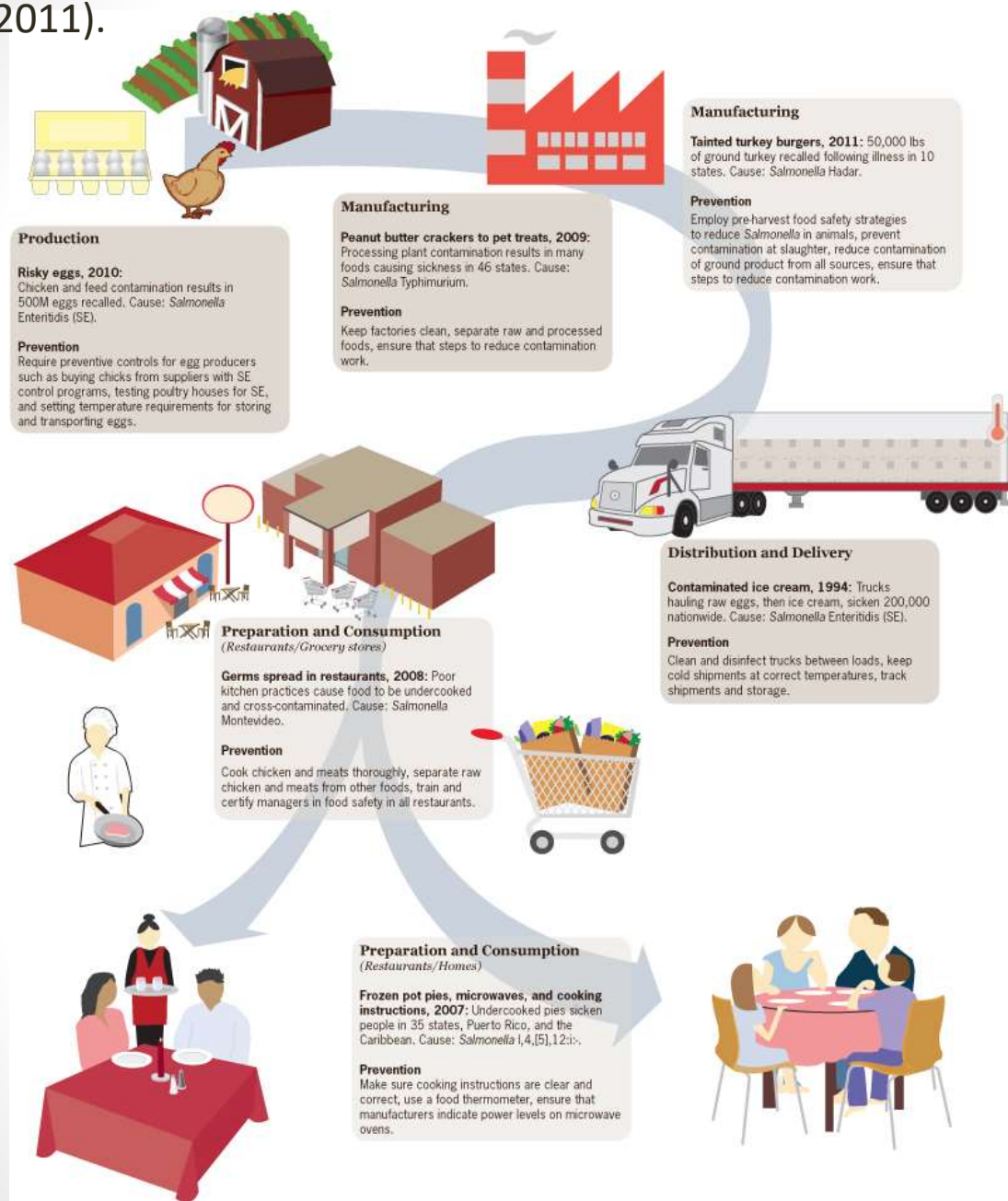
AP

2010





# Foodborne Disease Outbreaks Are Deadly Serious – What You Can Do to Avoid Them (CDC 2011).



# Environmental Concerns

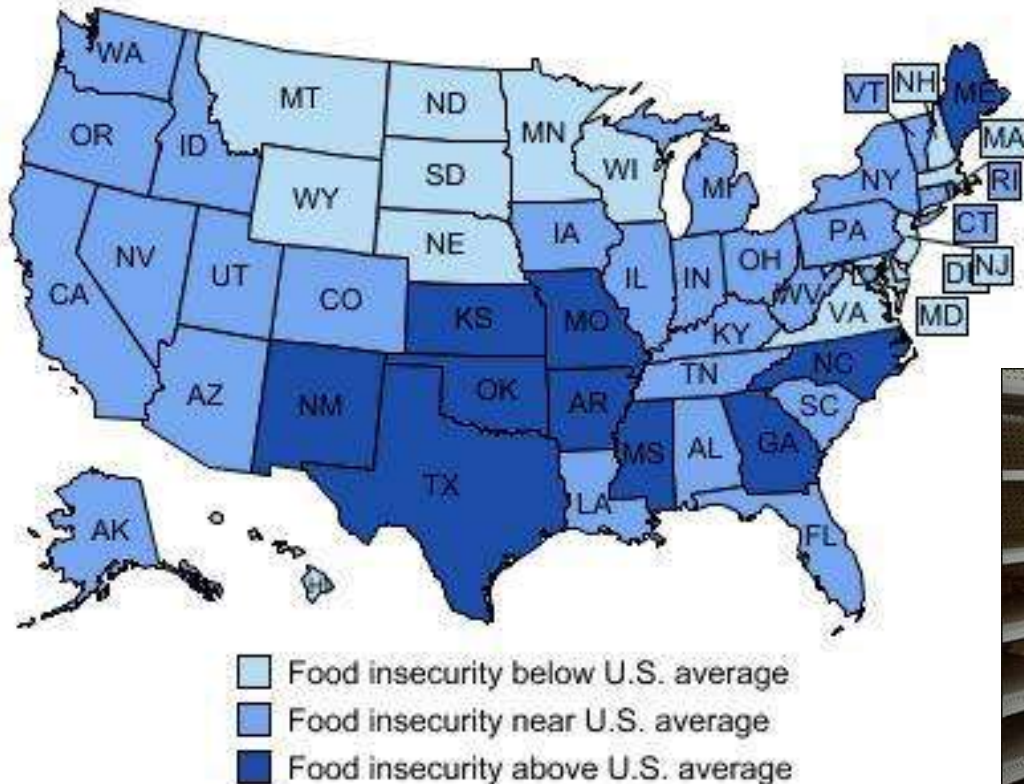
- Air pollution
- Biodiversity loss
- Chemical fertilizers & pesticides
- Damage to soil structure
- Effluence of pollution in waterways
- Factory Farms
- Genetically Modified Organisms
- Heavy reliance on fossil fuels



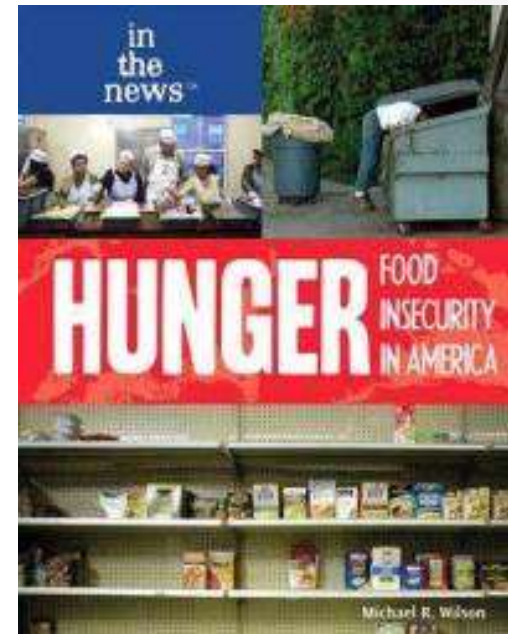


# Food Security

### Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2006-08



Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplemental data.



# Economy

- Employs 17% of the labor force
- Industrial agriculture contributes to job opportunities in the food industry
- Contributes to the national economy
- Contributes to city economies





# Food Planning in the United States



Special journal issues devoted to food planning  
*Journal of Planning Education and Research* (Summer 2004) and *Progressive Planning* (Winter 2004).

Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning (APA 2007)



Helping local, regional, and state governments address food system challenges (APA 2011)

Google Groups: APA Food Policy Council Briefing Report: useful for all, especially planners

YouTube: APA Healthy Communities Webinar Series: Get Healthy Philly

<http://youtu.be/w-S9F682gPA>

# Research Methods

Study Site

Semi-structured Interviews

Key Informant and Participant Selection

Informed Consent

Content Analysis

# Results from Interviews

## **Research Question #1 -**

Interview responses related to existing alternative food systems

“Recent research by those concerned with shopping practices, argued that shopping is more than an individual act but is rather a practice whereby meanings and values are made” (Blake et al., 2010: 412).

## List of alternative food systems and businesses that participate in alternative food systems

Backyard gardens; Front yard gardens; Community gardens; School gardens; Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) - shares and garden starts; CSA store; Flagstaff Community Farmers' Market; Cottonwood Community Farmers' Market; Sedona Community Farmers' Market; Karma Farm (Prescott); Farmer's Market on 4th Street; Camp Verde farms; SLUGG (Students for Sustainable Living and Urban Gardening, student organization at Northern Arizona University); Trout Farm (Page Springs); Dairy Farms (Glendale); Neighborhood Coop delivery for organic bulk items; Diablo Trust; Bountiful Baskets Cooperative; Harvesting from the wild (mushrooms); Pick your own farms (Sedona and Cottonwood); Food vendors - weekend farm stands; Local honey producers; Local restaurants that use local foods (Brix, Cottage Place, Criollo Latin Kitchen, Diablo Burger, Morning Glory Cafe, New Jersey's Pizza); Local Alternative Catering; Flying M Ranch; Trading and purchasing local eggs, chickens, and raw goat milk; Hunting wild game; Purchasing online

# Results from Interviews

## Research Question #2 -

Interview responses related to the potential role of planners

*Education*

*Partnerships*

*Public Health*

*Economy*

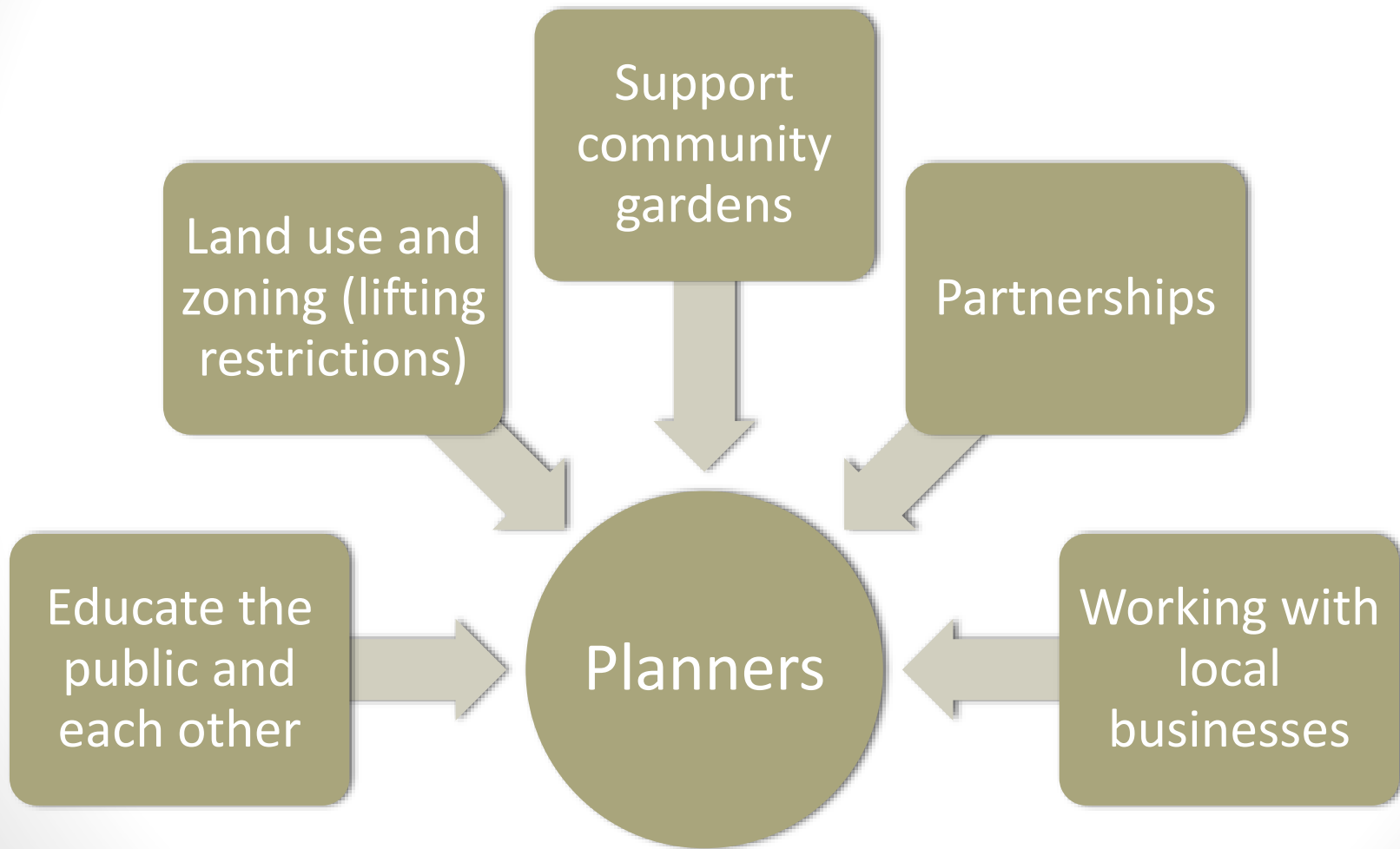
# Education

“I’m not sure that contemporary issues such as food planning are covered in the planning curricula. There are a lot of people in the community that know about growing food here and that dialogue needs to open up.”

“Planners need practical knowledge of farming and gardening, social knowledge of how communities create food systems, and political knowledge; and they need to be able to weave the knowledge together.”

“I need to learn more and I am learning more. Planners would support it, but don’t fully understand it. We need to understand the difference it would make to the community.”

# The Potential Role of Planners...?





Rainier  
Valley  
EATS  
GROW. SHARE. EAT.

FOOD DAY

TREASURE VALLEY FOOD COALITION

New Orleans  
COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER

New Haven Food Policy Council  
Better food for a Better City



CHICAGO  
FOOD POLICY  
ADVISORY COUNCIL



COMMUNITY FOOD CO-OP

FARM  
FUND

FOOD  
MATTERS  
IN SONOMA COUNTY



Community  
Food  
Security  
Coalition



Arkansas Food Policy Council  
From Seed To Table



Oklahoma  
Food Policy  
COUNCIL

oakland  
FOOD POLICY  
COUNCIL  
promoting an equitable & sustainable food system



CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG  
Food Policy Council  
building a better food system

alachu  
county  
Farmers Markets  
ebt project  
taking a bite out of hunger  
putting dollars into the community

The  
Growing  
Project  
food. people. justice.

FOOD  
SUMMIT

# Results – Content Analysis of Food Policy Councils

## Analysis of 113 Food Policy Councils

- 28 state level

- 8 regional level

- 30 county level

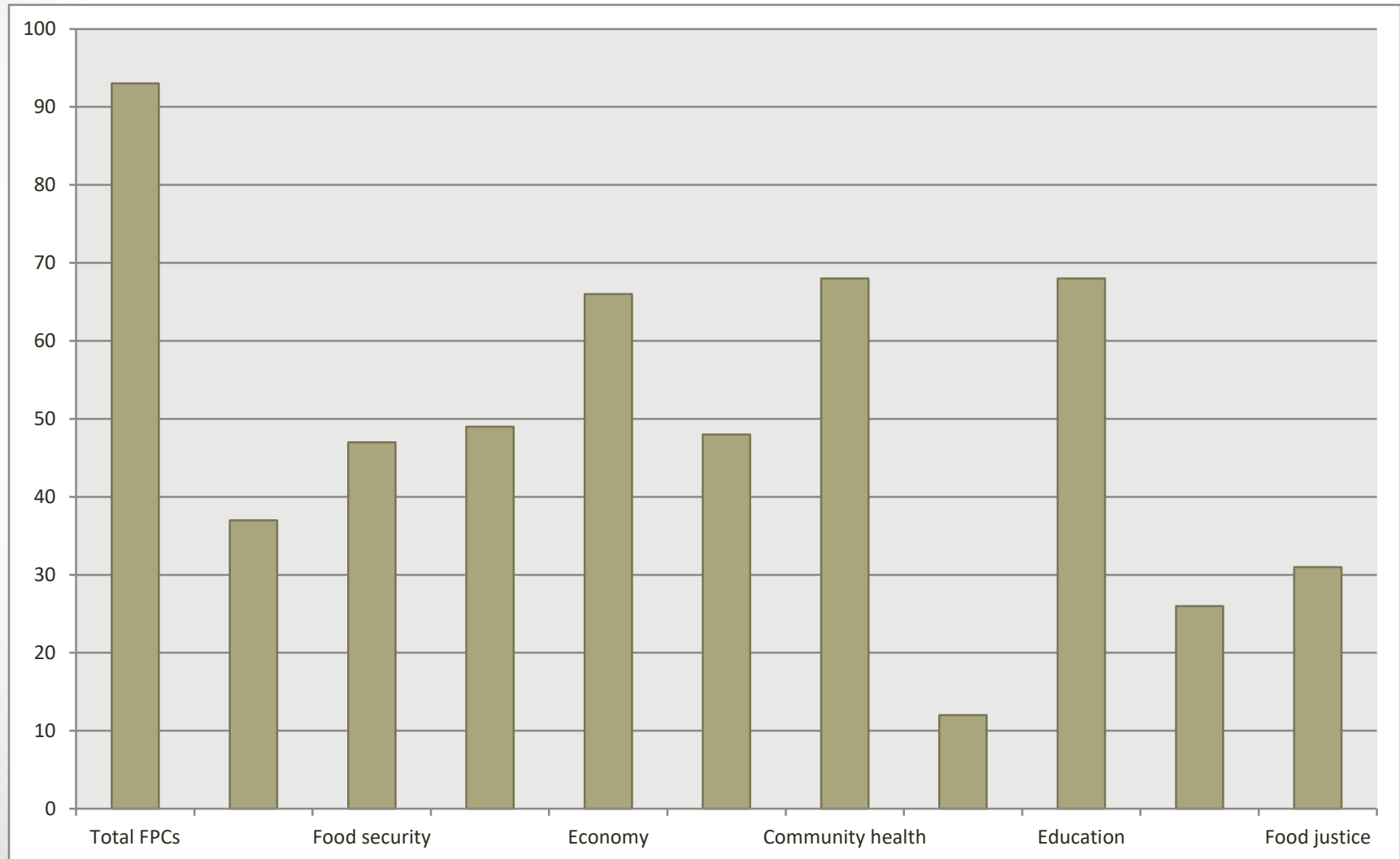
- 27 local level

## In-depth Analysis of Eight Food Policy Councils

# 10 factors

1. Food access (related to transportation)
2. Food security (hunger, presence of “food deserts”)
3. Public health concerns (obesity and diet related diseases)
4. Economic development through local and regional food systems
5. Environmental concerns
6. Community health (access to nutritious food through social development)
7. Food safety
8. Education
9. Farm-to-School programs
10. Food justice (related to policy processes)

# Issues addressed in 93 FPCs





# Flagstaff Foodlink

Linking the Flagstaff  
community to healthy  
local & regional food

[HOME](#) [ABOUT US](#) [OUR WORK](#) [PUBLICATIONS](#)

Mission & Goals

History

Accomplishments

Organizational Structure

Local Collaborators

Credits

#### Stay Connected

Name:

Email:

Zip code:

## Home

Flagstaff Foodlink offers strong educational, organizational and fundraising tools to the exciting, emergent local food movement in the greater Flagstaff community. Our country is in the midst of a health and health care crisis. Local, healthy, local food is a solution to many of our dilemmas. Flagstaff Foodlink offers a variety of resources to local economic conserving agricultural producers and processors. We catalyze professional and community efforts to improve local food systems.

Some of the success stories of the Committee (FY 2010-2011) include the Flagstaff Tea Gardens. In addition, John teaching garden beautification efforts, we have

## Community Food Agriculture Coalition OF MISSOULA COUNTY

[About Us](#)

[Ag Land](#)

[Land Link Montana](#)

[Access](#)

[Education](#)

[Resources](#)



Home



[Farmland Conservation](#)

[Land Link Montana](#)

[Food Access & Markets](#)

[Membership](#)



Farm and ranchlands are the foundation of our food system. Yet, the most productive soils are often the most susceptible to development pressures. In the past 25 years, Missoula County has lost 3 football fields of working farmland every day. CFAC members are working at multiple levels to ensure future development patterns do not continue these trends. Read more about these efforts [here](#).

Be sure to [sign our petition](#) to Missoula's County Commissioners and City Council to conserve the best farm and ranchlands for current and future generation. Only 8% of Missoula County has agricultural soil.



# Critique of Research Methods

## Semi-structured Interviews

- Key Informant - “elite” informant

- Participant Selection - selection bias

## Content Analysis

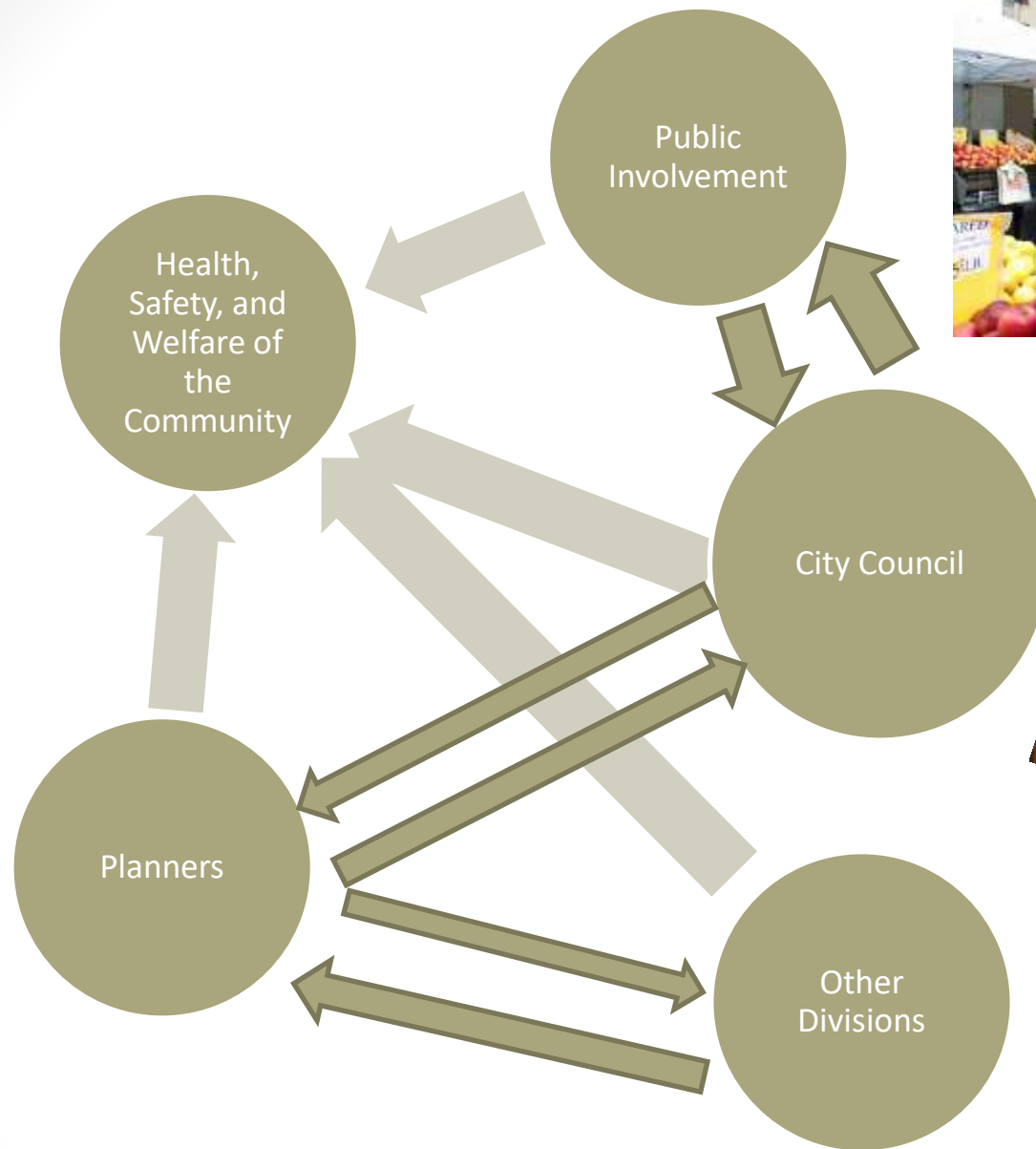
- Not a way to ensure the information was comprehensive or current

# Summary

## Research Questions

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3. What are the practical recommendations for food planning in Flagstaff, Arizona?







*Studies show that community food systems supported by a government sanctioned policy have a greater likelihood of enduring.*

