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Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Food Policy Coalitions in Strengthening Community Food Security in the United States.

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Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Food Policy Coalitions in Strengthening Community Food Security in the United States.

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy Environmental Science and Policy
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beautiful wife, Cortney. Thank you for continuously supporting me through this long and challenging journey. You have always been there for me, you are my best friend, and my favorite person in the world. I would also like to dedicate this to my parents, Jane and Joe England. You both gave me the confidence I needed to reach this goal.
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Food insecurity is experienced most acutely and addressed most innovatively at the community level to which the concept of community food security (CFS) finds purchase (Hamm and Bellows, 2003). In recognition of the many varying dynamics embedded in the CFS concept, Food Policy Coalitions have become an organizational model adapted by communities across the United States. While FPCs have grown in number considerably over the last decade, there remains a considerable lack of empirical research documenting evaluation and engagement methods, as well as strategies used to address community food security. This research, framed by the Community Coalition Action Theory, draws from a nation-wide survey, and key informant interviews to gain a better understanding of the perceived effectiveness of FPCs addressing CFS in the US. This research found that policy advocacy was identified as the most effective strategy being operationalized by FPCs. An additional strategy that was included in FPC responses was networking and/or collaboration/pooling resources. Furthermore, hosting events and/or meetings was identified as the most used strategy for engaging with the community. Overall, research findings confirm the reality that FPCs, due to the complex and multi-level nature of their focus, have a difficult time quantifying tangible success in the community. However, because of the methods employed to gather this evaluative data, it can be concluded that FPCs are indeed aware of the significance of measuring success. The variety of examples given demonstrates that FPCs perceive their work as a needed and essential component to strengthening community food security.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Research Problem

The percentage of food insecure households has been on a steady decline in the United States, decreasing from 14.9% in 2011 to 12.3% in 2016 (Coleman-Jensen et al, 2017). While this drop signals promise, still millions of Americans experience difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for their household, due to resource limitations and various other social and economic constraints. To this end, over one-half of the food insecure households in the US participated in at least one of the three major food and nutrition assistance programs at the federal level. These programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the special SNAP program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the National School Lunch Program (Coleman-Jensen et al, 2017). Many socioeconomic and demographic factors contribute significantly to food insecurity in America; more specifically, certain broader social, economic, and institutional characteristics can also have substantial impact on the quantity and quality of available food, and its price relative to the sufficiency of financial resources available to acquire it (Cohen, 2002). This issue is complex and needs a systems thinking approach to address it.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization defines Food Security as, “a situation in which all households have both physical and economic access to adequate food for all members and where households are not at risk of losing such access.” Further, three specific elements are
Implicit in this meaning: ability, stability and access. Ability referring to, at any time adequate amounts of food is available to meet consumption demands. Stability is the reliability that food consumption will not drop below consumption requirements. Lastly, access refers to having the means at the individual or household level to grow or purchase the food necessary to maintain a healthy living. The concept of community food security expands this meaning from the individual and household level to a scale of incorporated groups of households and neighborhoods, i.e. the community.

Isolating the Issue

Since it is extremely uncommon for Americans to grow/produce or process enough food at the household level to feed themselves and their families, the concepts of food access and availability are more closely tied to the ability to purchase/secure adequate food through appropriate channels, i.e. grocery stores and retail chains. Issues related to income, race, and other factors, indeed contribute to the significant level of food insecurity in the US. Factors impacting food security are not always easily identifiable, nor are they singular in nature. As an example consider access to food as one factor contributing to a food insecure household or community. Within this understanding, the concept of the food desert emerges and provides a loose general framework for the development strategies for addressing the issue.

While the definition of a food desert fluctuates slightly according to different research approaches, mainly with respect to distance and spatiality (Charreire et al., 2010; Eckert and Shetty, 2011; Lette et al, 2012), most descriptions generally accept this concept as areas in which the “transportation constraints of carless residents combine with a dearth of supermarkets to force residents to pay inflated prices for inferior and unhealthy foods at small markets and
convenience stores (Short et al., 2007, p.352).” Numerous studies have documented the connections between low healthy food access in highly concentrated areas of low-income and minority populations (Treuhaft and Karpyn, 2010; Raja et al, 2008; Russell and Heidkamp, 2011; Franco et al, 2008). Within the last decade, research regarding food deserts has expanded widely; however, this concept tends to concentrate on access and overlooks certain other characteristics of food insecurity.

Household access to food outlets, the availability of healthy food within neighborhoods both in urban and rural environments, and the implications related to racial and socioeconomic demographics are among the main lines of discourse dominating the food desert and food security literature. In a thorough and systematic review of the literature from 1966-2007, Beaulac and colleagues (2009) discover that food deserts uniquely exist in the US because of certain local-level deficiencies concentrated in lower-income and minority communities, such as distance to supermarkets, less selling space at retailers, and inconsistent food pricing to name a few; all of which increase an individual’s already disadvantaged situation, a concept referred to as deprivation amplification. However, evidence of the existence of food deserts elsewhere in the developed world is weak and relatively unsupported in the academic literature; supporting the idea that food insecurity within the analytical understanding of food deserts is a particularly distinct phenomenon in the United States.

Moreover, local food environments are documented as being a unique indicator of individuals’ food choices and diet quality, specifically in developed nations like the US. According to Kelly et al (2011), this predictor “has been most clearly demonstrated in observational studies of food outlets and nutrition outcomes in the United States of America, where there is more obvious residential segregation by income and ethnicity (p.1285).” The
study described by Kelly et al (2011) goes on further to explain that research has noted that there is a better access to supermarkets and outlets with better quality food in higher income areas, while there is a higher density of lower quality food outlets with a more limited range of good food options in more socially disadvantaged areas.

Additionally, studies also have shown that similar low-income, primarily minority, populations lack healthy, high quality foods in nearby food stores (Andreyeva et al, 2008; Chung and Myres, 1999; Gittelsohn et al, 2007). Food outlets in these areas are stocked with highly processed food products with little nutritional substance. Gottlieb and Joshi (2010) highlight a study that found through demographic analysis that “the overweight and obese and those manifesting type 2 diabetes indicated significantly higher rates among Latino, African American, and, more broadly, all low-income population groups (p. 69).” Along the same line as Gottlieb and Joshi’s (2010) report, research has supported that better food access corresponds with healthier eating, with higher access to healthy food being associated with lower risk for obesity and other diet-related chronic diseases (Thomsen et al, 2015; Treuhaft and Karpyn, 2010; Hallett and McDermott, 2011).

Ultimately the core issue remains, food insecurity is experienced most acutely and addressed most innovatively at the community level (Hamm and Bellows, 2003). In a document prepared by the Economic Research Service of the USDA, Community food security (CFS) is presented as an extension of the concept of household food security (Cohen, 2002). Where household food security focuses on the ability to obtain food at the household level, CFS concerns broader social, economic, and institutional factors (Cohen, 2002; Winne et al, 2000). Hamm and Bellows (2003) built on this thought stating, “CFS addresses communities of households and individuals, not just the latter two (p.38).” Thus, food security, as compared
with CFS, addresses a broader scale; referring to “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life (Life Sciences Research Office, 1990, p.1560).”

Significance of Research

In recognition of the many varying dynamics embedded in the CFS concept – hunger, diet-related disease, agricultural policy, economic development, poverty and many other community issues – food system stakeholders from differing perspectives are driven to seek alternative organizational models as a response. These models warrant flexibility as well as representation from diverse disciplines and subject areas. Subsequently, food policy coalitions (FPC) are one model in particular being adopted in the US (Harper et al, 2009; Scherb et al, 2012; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2015).

The principal unit of analysis for this research, the food policy coalition, is often denoted in the literature, as well as in practice by a number of labels, including: food policy councils, food advisory councils, food policy networks, food alliances, and food systems councils, to name a few. The “coalition” in general, as an organizational model, is described by the NRC (2006) as “[o]rganizations of diverse interest groups that combine their human and material resources to effect a specific change the members are unable to bring about independently (p. 201; borrowed from Brown, 1984, p. 3).” Food policy coalitions, specifically, are groups of representatives from diverse organizations, factions, or constituencies working together to achieve common food system related goals using holistic approaches specific to a group-determined region or community (Harper et al, 2009; Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). Food policy coalitions generally function in the community to: 1) serve as forums to discuss food issues, 2) foster connection
between food system sectors, 3) evaluate and influence policy, and 4) support and advocate for programs and services that address local food needs (Harper et al, 2009).

The first food policy council was formed on July 1, 1982 in Knoxville TN. This group’s creation accompanied City Council Resolution R-202-81 stating that “local government has a proper role to play in ensuring that all citizens have access to an adequate and nutritious food supply (Yeatman, 1994, p. 51).” According to Webb et al (1997), “Because most of the element of the food and nutrition system which local food systems projects are seeking to influence lie outside the control of the health or community welfare sectors, it has become necessary to establish intersectoral committees or coalitions to formulate and achieve policy agendas (p. 66).” This statement by Webb et al (1997), among many other reasons, are suggestive of why the US has seen a tremendous uptick in the amount of food policy coalitions in recent years.

The Institute for Food and Development Policy affirms that the number of state, county and local FPCs has steadily increased from 1999-2009 (Harper et al, 2009, p. 25). With the trend consistently moving in the upward direction, estimates as of September 2016 indicate that there are approximately 214 active FPCs in the United States, 29 in development and 19 that are in a transitional period. Among these identified councils, approximately 33% are recognized as grass roots organizations, while another 37% are associated with an existing nonprofit or recognized as an independent nonprofit (Sussman and Bassarab, 2017).

The food policy council organizational model is being adopted by local and state governments to address all types of food systems issues. While the trend is heading upward, there is a considerable lack of empirical research documenting the effectiveness of these particular groups. This is apparent when scrutinizing FPCs within the context of community food security. Furthermore, local governments and grassroots organizations expend resources
forming FPCs with limited widely published work supporting their effectiveness in influencing positive change in the community, more specifically, the field of impact evaluation regarding FPC work is in its infancy; this sentiment is supported and addressed recently by Clancie et al (2017) and Clark (2018).

Research Objectives

The general intent of this project is to broaden the research-base regarding the effectiveness of US food policy coalitions in strengthening community food security. This research seeks to: 1) identify the intervention strategies being utilized by FPCs that support community food security objectives in the United States; 2) identify which strategies food policy coalitions are using to most influence community change: policy advocacy, pilot projects and public awareness/education campaigns; 3) determine community engagement and evaluation approaches being utilized by FPCs; and 4) draw conclusions as to the extent of perceived effectiveness of the FPC model with implementing CFS strategies.

Apart from the growing body of work documenting FPC formation, internal organizational structure, and processes (Borron, 2003; Clancy et al, 2007; Schiff, 2008), to date few research studies have attempted to evaluate the strategies used by FPCs, and more specifically, the interventions targeted at addressing food security change in the community. This dearth is partly attributed to a general lack of organizational baseline data, such as documented histories of FPC activity, as well as an insufficiency of comprehensive assessment and evaluation tools (Harper et al, 2009). Results from this research inform communities about how best to maximize the utility of food policy coalitions in their region, either prior to their formation or in sustaining FPCs after development. In identifying areas of effectiveness, or best
practices, regarding coalition interventions, local governments and citizen groups can direct resources to appropriate areas during initial stages of food policy coalition creation and apply lessons learned to existing and evolving food policy goals and objectives. This research utilizes the perspectives of FPC leadership throughout the US to better understand the current strategies being used by FPCs to address CFS and how they are engaging with the community and evaluating what’s working and where limitations and barriers continue to exist.

**Organization**

This dissertation is divided into nine chapters. The introduction, Chapter One, provides a broad overview of the project and lays out the research objectives. This introductory chapter details the significance of this research by placing it within the larger context of the issues associated with food security and lays out the complexities inherent with developing strategies for addressing it.

Chapter Two goes into detail about the academic literature framing the concept of community food security and food policy councils. This chapter starts with a discussion on how scholars have attempted to define CFS, building off models of measurement at the federal level concerning hunger and food security. Further examples are presented on the community food security literature and how it relates to this study in particular. The next part of this chapter discusses the literature regarding food policy councils. This part provides context on the methods scholars have used over the years for examining and describing these unique coalitions. The last part of this chapter describes the theoretical framework utilized for this research study. The scholarship supporting the Community Coalition Action Theory is indeed robust, and this
section describes the history, application, and relevance of this framework for this study on food policy coalitions and community food security.

Chapter Three discusses the research design, including data collection and methods. This chapter outlines the specifics about how data was collected and analyzed. The first section lists the main questions explored with the research. Each question has a brief explanation about how it related to the overarching goal of the project, which is to broaden the research-base regarding the effectiveness of US food policy coalitions in strengthening community food security.

Chapter Four addresses the first research question “how do food policy coalitions define community food security?” This chapter reviews the responses from the nationwide survey and draws comparisons between the varying FPC perspectives about CFS.

Chapter Five responds to the second research question “what are strategies for addressing community food security, and do those strategies serve the objectives of policy advocacy, pilot projects, or public awareness/education?” In this chapter, results are presented from the second part of the nationwide survey. This chapter reviews the CFS intervention strategies and then categorizes those identified by FPC responses into constructs of implementation according to the modified CCAT framework. This chapter presents additional constructs specific to FPCs and food security work in general.

Chapter Six addresses the final research question “How do FPCs evaluate success, and what perceived impacts do their strategies have in the community?” This chapter gauges perspectives on community impacts by focusing on the evaluation methods utilized by individual FPCs. Additionally, this chapter presents the results from analysis regarding how FPCs are practicing citizen/community engagement. This chapter builds off the data collected from surveys, interviews and direct observation.
Chapter Seven presents the finding from the key informant interviews. It lays out real world examples of an FPC working through the implementation of strategies for introducing and passing policy. This chapter provides more depth to each one of the research questions. By utilizing interview methods to collect responses to the research questions, a deeper narrative was presented that works well to support the broader survey.

Chapter eight presents a synthesis of the findings of all three research questions and how they relate to each other, as well as where they fit within the overarching literature. This chapter ties together the broader intent of this work.

The final chapter, chapter nine, concludes the dissertation by presenting in greater detail the areas in which this research comes up a short, highlighting topics and opportunities for future research studies.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE AND FRAMEWORK

Introduction

On the global scale, an individual’s “right to food” is protected through several national and international treaties, conventions and declarations including, the International Covenant of Economic Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to name a few. The latter is a document drafted by individuals representing organizations from various racial and cultural backgrounds from numerous regions throughout the world. The document was proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10th 1948. Article 25 part 1, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “[e]veryone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood of circumstances beyond his control (UN Declaration of Human Rights.)” This document outlines a set of fundamental human rights, which shall be universally protected.

Furthermore, the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals established in 2015 by countries throughout the world set a clear action-based framework for addressing issues related to not only the Earth’s changing climate, but also environmental justice and human rights. Of
the 17 outlined goals, or action items, several focus on sustainable food systems. These food system related goals include, #2 Zero Hunger, #12 Responsible Consumption, and #15 Life on Land (UN SDGs webpage). Among the charges put forth by the UN’s SDGs is to “[b]y 2030, end hunger, and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round (UN SDGs webpage).”

Food insecurity is an endemic problem in the United States. According to numbers calculated by the Economic Research Service of the US Department of Agriculture, over 48 million people in the US live in food-insecure households (USDA, ERS, 2014). Within this population, the highest rates of food insecurity are shown among low-income (33.7%), single-parent households (35.3% - single mom only and 21.7% - single dad only), as well as African American (26.1%) and Hispanic households (22.4%) (USDA, ERS, 2014).

**Defining Food Security**

The conceptual definitions of food security and hunger were made operational with the development of a standardized measurement scale, evaluated at the household level, under the sponsorship of the National Center for Health Statistics and the US Department of Agriculture (Cook and Frank, 2008). This tool, dubbed the Household Food Security Survey Measure (HFSSM), has since the mid-1990s been incorporated and adapted to fit numerous hunger and food security studies (Haering and Syed, 2009). For example, Obersholser and Tuttle (2004) applied a modified version of the HFSSM in order to explore in greater depth the relationship between food security status and certain socio-demographic characteristics, including households with children and those that receive food stamps. Obersholser and Tuttle (2004) discovered that
a high proportion, two thirds (66%) of federal food assistance recipient households with kids experience some form of food security, and these statistics remained equal between urban and rural populations sampled.

Since 1995, the USDA has gathered data on an annual basis regarding food access and adequacy, sources of food assistance at the federal level, and household food spending (Coleman-Jensen et al, 2015). This information is collected using a national survey facilitated by the US Census Bureau as an add-on to the annual and nationally representative Current Population Survey (Coleman-Jensen et al, 2015). Four classification groups were identified on the survey prior to 1996, including, food secure; food insecure without hunger; food insecure with hunger, moderate; and food insecure with hunger, severe.

These categories existed until 2006, when, after years of application, the determination that “hunger [wa]s a concept distinct from food insecurity”, led the HFSSM to re-classify households into one of three categories: food secure, low food security, and very low food security (Wunderlich and Norwood, 2006, p. 5). It was officially recognized that hunger and food security were distinct phenomena, requiring different modes of measurement. Hunger as a concept to measure the degree of food insecurity, continues to manifest differently in the literature depending on the context and breadth of research objectives. Wehler et al (2004) define hunger as “resource-constrained food insufficiency (p.109)” when studying populations of low-income housed and homeless female-headed families. Hunger is defined by the Life Sciences Research Office (1990), conducting research on difficult-to-sample populations, as “the uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food” and/or “the recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food (p.1560).” External community and social factors frame the former definition,
while the latter incorporates the physical symptoms of hunger as well as institutional barriers (i.e. lack of access).

Combining these concepts, hunger and community food security, Winne et al produced *Community Food Security: A Guide to Concept, Design, and Implementation* (1997), which, among many other contributions, outlined a conceptual comparison of CFS and hunger in an easily understandable framework. Winne et al (1997) explain that, while hunger models usually focus on shorter term, treatment and social welfare interventions, CFS models set goals that are longer in temporal scope, and are generally more prevention and community development oriented.

Food security impacts the American population at varying governing levels and social strata. This reality, drives researchers to apply a series of diverse tools for measuring different levels. Addressing food security involves more than simply the support of programs and policies regarding access to calories or addressing issues of availability. In many communities in the US, members have adequate, and often excessive, access to caloric options, yet the food environment is still insecure (Haering and Syed, 2009). Meaning, in some instances, the majority of food available is restricted in nutritional value; or, food may be culturally unacceptable; food may be sourced in an environmentally unsustainable manner; and/or healthy foods may be available but too expensive compared to unhealthy options (Haering and Syed, 2009). Lee and Greif (2008) expound on the complexities of food security research, outlining the four core primary elements as: consumption, quality, sources, and cost dimension. Kelly, Flood, and Yeatman (2011) conducted an extensive literature review on evaluation tools utilized to measure local food environments, which targeted both academic and grey literature. This review concluded that measurement tools that focus on community nutritional environments tend to document quantity
of establishments, types and locations. On the other hand, evaluative tools that focus on consumer/individual nutrition environments include other factors such as availability/diversity of food products, price and quality, as well as any promotional materials focusing on healthy food purchasing.

CFS addresses holistically the broad swath of problems affecting the food system, ranging from local economic development, a rise in poverty and hunger, expanding food deserts to diet related health issues. Further, according to Winne et al (1997) community food security solutions tend to integrate in to a more formal planning process that focuses on assessments, long-range planning, and community participation. Several studies produced in the late 1990s demonstrate the push for developing a more solid conceptual structure around community food security. Anderson and Cook (1999) identify general gaps in understanding and make recommendations for constructing a more practical theory; a theory that can be applied by food system advocates and practitioners. Somewhat similarly in intent, Pelletier et al (1999) sought to better understand the salience of CFS theory for community-level food systems stakeholders, as well as how issue salience can be translated into grassroots participation and changes in the local food system. Allen (1999) on the other hand explored in greater depth the conceptual challenges of community-based, local approaches to food security and further reviewed certain alternative economic strategies such as community-supported agriculture and urban farming projects. These studies all share broadly the similar objective of seeking common ground for the practical utility of CFS; however, all these studies represent the beginning stages of a collectively accepted and unified understanding of the concept.

Taking into account the numerous variations of meanings and scales, CFS shares themes with other intersecting interpretations of food security in focus areas related to health,
sustainability, social and environmental justice, and self-reliance from external sources (Gottlieb and Fisher, 1996; Anderson and Cook, 1999; Pelletier et al, 1999; Hamm and Bellows, 2003; Boden and Hover, 2017). In the context of this research, community food security focuses on community infrastructure and a local food systems approach to meeting food security objectives (Hamm and Bellows, 2003). Some examples of program and policy areas with which the concept of CFS applies in the United States are: direct-to-consumer food marketing, community (re)development, nutrition assistance programs, environmentally sustainable agricultural production, and public health/diet-related issues (USDA, ERS, 2015).

Food Policy Coalitions

The literature to date generally supports the view that food policy coalitions contribute positively to strengthening community food security (Schiff, 2008; Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999; Dahlberg, 1994; Clancy et al, 2007). However, the bulk of the knowledge about FPCs specifically derives from the work of only a handful of food systems and food policy researchers and up until recent, remains relatively sparse (Scherb et al, 2012; Boden and Hoover, 2017). Several years after the first FPC was established in 1982, Houghton (1987) published research that gave credence to FPCs and their potential role in guiding decision-making at each stage of a community’s food system. Since Houghton’s seminal work, other food systems and food policy scholars have contributed to the slow growing body of literature; still, despite their clear national popularity, food policy coalitions remain a scantly focused upon research topic. Furthermore, FPC literature that does exist overwhelmingly concentrates on initial formation, structure, and successes and failures; there is a clear dearth in research measuring and evaluating community outcomes and the impacts on building community capacity (Scherb et al, 2012; Harper et al,
There has been some headway as of late, with several scholars beginning to look into policy activity and community impacts (Clark, 2018; Calancie et al, 2018; Scherb, 2012)

Schiff’s (2007; 2008) research looks at both the role of FPCs in relation to the broader problems associated with the conventional food system, as well as what specific organizational models can be used to ensure effective processes for setting priorities and program implementation. Schiff’s (2007) research concludes little about effective community outcomes; however, her attention to both the stages of FPC formation and the different structural models are indeed pioneering and valuable contributions. It has been determined that FPCs are useful for identifying the need for specific projects and programs; yet, it generally benefits the coalition to pass program and project implementation and maintenance responsibility on to other organizations in the community (Harper et al, 2009). Schiff (2008) states that FPCs “using resources, knowledge, and ideas to help others implement programs is where the strength lies to institutionalise food system perspectives (p. 226).” Furthermore, Schiff (2008) finds that FPCs play a significant role in using resources to help others outside the coalition implement programs, thus building “political capital” and furthering the development of more sustainable food systems.

In a recent study, Gupta et al (2018) compare the organizational structure, resource flows and policy activities of 10 California FPCs. This study found that “structural autonomy—being organized outside of the government while maintaining strong collaborations with the government—helps food policy councils retain their independence while promoting more inclusive policy making processes that link community members to the government (p. 12).” This is among the most up-to-date look at FPC organizational structure in the US. It connects
well the importance of FPC structure to the resources available to them and the policy agendas they pursue.

*Strategic Planning*

FPC research has additionally been approached from a top-down examination, paying close attention to their impact on policy at the federal, state, and local levels (Hamilton, 2002; Scherb *et al.*, 2012). Hamilton (2002) distinctly provides a thorough legal code-focused analysis of the general operations of state food policy councils (Connecticut and Iowa), using it to identify their potential role in supporting the development and sharpening of state and local food policies. Hamilton’s (2002) study is unique for a number of reasons. First, Hamilton concentrates solely on the work of state food policy councils, a vantage unique to date in the literature. Second, Hamilton demonstrates the significance of FPC advocacy strictly from a jurisprudence perspective. In addition to his work providing a legislative model for application, Hamilton (2002) includes a comprehensive model proposal, which he aptly dubs the State and Local Food Policy Improvement Act (P. 441).

Surveying FPCs from all over the US, Scherb *et al.* (2012) take a more detailed look at the role of FPCs in the policy process; specifically focusing on how they engage directly with policy, the barriers they face, and the relevant outcomes. Results from the initial stage of their study identify that FPCs are currently working to effect policy change on various levels, on multiple topics, and through various activities (Scherb *et al.*, 2012, p. 12-13). While Scherb *et al.* (2012) are indeed research pioneers with regard to evaluating the role of FPCs in the policy arena, their results fall short on identifying the particular factors contributing to community outcomes and differentiating the overall strengths of the coalition in the policy process, specifically whether or
not organizational interaction within the coalition impacts outcomes. Differing in scale while still focusing on policy engagement, McClintock et al (2012) examine the efforts of the Oakland Food Policy Council (OFPC) on effecting change to urban agriculture zoning. McClintock et al (2012) highlight that the OFPC’s advocacy toward changing the current urban agriculture model early in the process was integral in achieving official action.

Another angle in which food systems scholars are examining food policy councils is from their practical value within the planning field. At the forefront of the push toward greater attention to urban and community food systems planning were Pothukuchi, Kaufman, and Campbell. In a trailblazing and highly cited article on the potential role of municipal institutions in food systems planning, Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) highlighted food policy councils, as well as a department of food, as being promising institutional responses to food issues at the local level. In their analysis, Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) conclude that while FPCs show potential, “given their resource limitations, most have not shown the capacity to deliver a more comprehensive understanding of the urban food system, its intricacies, limitations, and interrelationships (p. 220).” Based on this result, they propose that external planning agencies can act as complements to food policy coalitions to work toward driving local governmental agendas in the direction of addressing urban food issues (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999, p. 221).

Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) focus on the value of officially sanctioned FPCs, and overlook analysis of third-sector affiliated coalitions. This is a significant oversight considering only about one fifth of US food policy coalitions are recognized as government-appointed advisory bodies (Johns Hopkins, Center for a Livable Future). Similarly, Clancy, Hammer and Lippoldt (2007) review the history and performance of government sanctioned food policy
councils in North America. Clancy et al (2007), from their survey produce a series of lessons learned, among them being that because it is difficult for FPCs to secure funding, particularly from ever tightening governmental budgets, nonprofit organizations may be the logical institutional structure to address food policy (p. 139). Both the works of Clancy et al (2007) and Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) while making assertions about FPCs’ community value with regard to assisting in reshaping the food system, neglect to concretely identify factors contributing to coalition effectiveness.

In an article quite different in scope, but equivalent in impact, Campbell (2004) examines planning for community food systems using a stakeholder analysis framework. Campbell (2004) draws attention to the embedded tensions and conflicts between not only conceptualizations of traditional and alternative food systems, but also between the community stakeholders representing the different stages of the food production chain. Using this approach, Campbell maps the different food system stakeholders into two major categories: those influenced by the global food network and those that make up the alternative movement (Campbell, 2004). The major significance of Campbell’s unique perspective is that it identifies overlapping interests and goals between stakeholders. These shared interests can be used to overcome tensions and provide the foundation for effective coalition creation and maintenance (Campbell, 2002). There is tremendous potential for evaluative coalition research to build upon Campbell’s work, particularly with regard to both internal and external conflicts within food policy coalitions.

Evaluative Research

Evaluating effectiveness is among the most cited challenge associated with food policy coalition research (Clark, 2018; Calancie et al, 2018, Sherb et al, 2012). Noted in the literature,
addressing community impact or effectiveness has been exceedingly difficult, partly because of the deficiency of research studies that adequately measure, evaluate, and quantitatively prove their general benefit to community food systems (Harper et al, 2009; Scherb et al, 2012). Additionally, food policy coalitions engage in complex, multi-sector work, which makes measurable evaluation difficult (Scherb et al, 2012). The lack of baseline data from which to measure, and the slow pace of change, together make measuring food policy coalitions’ impact challenging and time-consuming (Harper et al, 2009; Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). Early on, Dahlberg (1994) outlines and recommends a four-part list for how FPC successes and failures should be evaluated: 1) in terms of their own goals, 2) in terms of their local context, 3) on their efforts to educate decision-makers and the public on food systems issues, and 4) in terms of long-term goals relating to sustainability. While Dahlberg’s (1994) evaluative criteria are indeed logical and relevant for judging internal coalition successes and failures, community engagement and impacts are not fully taken into account and no systematic method is presented or tested.

As per a request by the Penrith Food Project, researchers Hawe and Stickney (1997) were tasked with conducting a formative evaluation of a floundering food policy coalition, not achieving desired results after its first year in operation. Utilizing qualitative methods, their evaluative approach, which was far more comprehensive than Dahlberg’s initial attempt, laid out seven objectives: 1) to assess member perceptions of the roles of the FPC, 2) identify attendance patterns, 3) assess member satisfaction and engagement with processes, 4) gain access into project decision making, 5) assess member success expectations, 6) gauge ideas of group improvement, and 7) to relay findings promptly as to quickly facilitate change actions (Hawe and Stickney, 1997, p. 224). The results from the evaluation led to significant changes to the structure and functioning capacity of their case study coalition. Hawe and Stickney (1997)
further posed the question that maybe the success of their evaluation with regard to influencing positive change had to do with the relevance of its timing in relation to the stages of coalition progression. Meaning, if the evaluation would have been conducted at an earlier coalition developmental stage, maybe before a consensus of direction or agenda was determined, it could have led to frustration or greater opposition by members to participate. These findings are significant because they suggest that evaluations conducted during different stages of coalition progression could potentially result in differing perceptions of coalition effectiveness.

Webb et al (1998) attempt to better understand that while food policy coalitions have been growing in number globally, there has been little to no systematic evaluative models guiding their formation; heavily leaning on the notion that already existing food policy coalitions act as models for newer ones (Webb et al, 1998). Webb et al (1998) designed their study to qualitatively identify factors responsible for hindering evaluation efforts of local food policy coalitions, and to accomplish this goal they sought the views of academics, project organizers, and funders. Some noteworthy findings include: there is a perceived negative connotation attached to the term ‘evaluation’, there is a general lack of consensus about significant evaluation questions, there is inadequate knowledge about evaluation techniques by project organizers, and a lack of attention to mounting accountability pressures (Webb et al, 1998, p.65). While the research of Hawe and Stickney (1997) and Webb et al (1998) represent some promising early attempts at evaluating FPC effectiveness, their studies never fully address, or systematically outline the stages of coalition development and relate those stages to community outcomes.

Calancie et al (2017), evaluate FPCs through the lens of Organizational Capacity, Social Capital, and Council Effectiveness. The researchers utilized structural equation modeling to test the FPC framework. Their study reveals, “interventions aiming to strengthen FPCs should be
directed toward increasing Organizational Capacity components (leadership, breadth of active membership, inclusivity of council climate, and formality of council structure) as they may increase Council Effectiveness more than efforts directed at increasing Social Capital (Calancie et al, 2017, p. 10).” While Calancie et al (2017) were among the first to systematically evaluate FPC member perceptions about effective coalition functioning, their analysis comes up short on identifying how FPCs are actively evaluating their success with regard to community change.

In a separate study by Calancie et al (2018), FPCs were surveyed to identify food sector areas that have the potential for impact. The intent of this study was to target areas, or potential impact domains, to be included in a more comprehensive assessment tool for measuring FPC impact in the community. The impact domains were constructed from FPC responses that were later coded by researchers. This methodology gathered from FPCs the potential impact they could have in the community; it did not suggest categories for framing the implementation of particular intervention strategies or recognize the current methods for evaluation or community engagement.

**Theoretical framework - Background on Conceptual Framework and FPCs**

*Evaluative Application*

In an attempt to synthesize the existing literature on community coalitions with practical and applied wisdom, Butterfoss and Kegler (2002) created the Community Coalition Action Theory (Kegler and Swan, 2011). The CCAT defines the major constructs shared throughout the broader swath of coalition research, drawing from multiple disciplines, including: political science, community development, citizen participation, interorganizational relations and group process (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). Framing the main foundational concepts of the CCAT
are approaches linked with community development, organization, and empowerment, as well as citizen and community participation. Butterfoss and Kegler (2002, p. 158-159) state the CCAT is “based on assumptions that communities can develop the capacity to deal with their own problems; people should participate in making, adjusting, or controlling the major changes taking place in their communities; and, changes in community living that are self-imposed or self-developed have meaning and permanence that imposed changes do not have.” Coalitions are action oriented and generally focus on community issues guided by a purpose. As an example, food policy coalitions often focus on identifying weaknesses in a community’s existing food system; ensuring that food policy is democratic and addresses the diverse needs and perspectives of each food system constituent (Harper et al, 2009).

Community coalitions draw people and organizational resources together to address community concerns more effectively than any single group or agency could have achieved alone (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). Because of certain factors, such as long-term investment and multi-organizational coordination, coalitions should not be created in cases where a less complex organizational structure will suffice for addressing the particular community issue. It was the purpose of Butterfoss and Kegler in 2002 to step back from the practice of coalition building and develop a comprehensive theory framing community coalitions; from that perspective, the Community Coalition Action Theory was created. The CCAT, with its constructs and propositions, aims to raise the level of understanding about how coalitions work in practice (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002).

Butterfoss and Kegler (2002) explain – visually depicted in Figure 1 – that coalitions move forward through stages of development, from initial formation, to maintenance/implementation, and then institutionalization, or the outcomes stage, with regular
cycling back through the process. The CCAT recognizes contextual factors with regard to the community; examples in the context of food policy coalitions include factors such as, racial and socio-economic demography, the political environment, agricultural production and distribution, history, and geography. Kegler et al (2010) took a more in depth look at how community context influences coalitions during their formative stage. From their study, it was determined that first, history of collaboration influenced all the coalitions examined; geography influenced formation mainly from a membership and staffing stance; however, economic and demographic composition impacted the coalition processes in the areas of membership, staffing and infrastructure (Kegler, Rigler, and Honeycut, 2011). While Kegler et al (2011) do well to document the impacts of community context on coalitions during the formative stages of development, their study falls short on examining how these impacts led to change outcomes in the community.

Figure 1. Community Coalition Action Theory
Moreover, coalitions often are created as a response to a threat, opportunity, or mandate (Kegler and Swan, 2011). During the formation stages, the lead agency recruits additional members to ensure that organizational diversity is represented. The leadership then works to develop operating procedures. During the maintenance or implementation stage, coalitions work internally and pool various organizational resources, which creates collaborative synergy and leads to comprehensive community action plans and intervention strategies. The collaborative synergy created during this stage is integral in leading to the last stage of coalition development, institutionalization or community change and outcomes (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). The outcomes of this stage, coupled with the collaborative synergy created during the maintenance stage, support an increase in community capacity, or the ability of the community to identify and successfully address other issues of concern (Kegler and Swan, 2011). The community change outcomes that occur during the stage of institutionalization are the result of successful strategies forged during the maintenance stage. The coalition itself may never institutionalize in the community, but the strategies created by the coalition may, and those are then adopted by other organizations (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). This also increases the overall capacity of a community to address issues. It has been determined that FPCs are useful for identifying the need for specific projects and programs; however, it generally benefits the coalition to pass program and project implementation and maintenance responsibility on to other organizations in the community (Harper et al, 2009). Schiff (2008) states that FPCs “using resources, knowledge, and ideas to help others implement programs is where the strength lies to institutionalise food system perspectives (p.226).”

Moreover, the CCAT model is supported by practice proven propositions and empirical evidence (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002). Each box in the flow chart presented in Figure 1 is
sustained by one or more propositions. The first 16 propositions (1-16) listed in Table 1 relate to the initial stage of coalition formation, focusing on structure and processes. The remaining 7 propositions (17-23) relate to coalition interventions and outcomes. Butterfoss and Kegler (2002) state that much of the coalition research concentrates on the early stages of coalition formation and development and far less is known about the factors regarding the later stages of development, collaborative synergy and outcome success.

Table 1. Constructs and Propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Propositions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stages of development</td>
<td>Proposition 1. Coalitions develop in specific stages and recycle through these stages as new members are recruited, plans are renewed, and new issues are added. Proposition 2. At each stage, specific factors enhance coalition function and progression to the next stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community context</td>
<td>Proposition 3. Coalitions are heavily influenced by contextual factors in the community throughout all stages of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead agency/convener group</td>
<td>Proposition 4. Coalitions form when a lead agency or convening group responds to an opportunity, threat, or mandate. Proposition 5. Coalition formation is more likely when the lead agency or convening organization provides technical assistance, financial or material support, credibility, and valuable networks and contacts. Proposition 6. Coalition formation is likely to be more successful when the convener group enlists community gatekeepers who thoroughly understand the community to help develop credibility and trust with others in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition membership</td>
<td>Proposition 7. Coalition formation usually begins by recruiting a core group of people who are committed to resolving the health or social issue. Proposition 8. More effective coalitions result when the core group expands to include a broad constituency of participants who represent diverse interest groups, agencies, organizations, and institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition operations and processes</td>
<td>Proposition 9. Open and frequent communication among staff and members helps to create a positive organizational climate, ensures that benefits outweigh costs, and makes pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning more likely. Proposition 10. Shared and formalized decision-making processes help create a positive organizational climate, ensure that benefits outweigh costs, and make pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning more likely. Proposition 11. Conflict management helps to create a positive organizational climate, ensures that benefits outweigh costs, and achieves pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning. Proposition 12. The benefits of participation must outweigh the costs to make pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning more likely. Proposition 13. Positive relationships among create a positive coalition climate.</td>
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Table 1. (Continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Propositions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and staffing</td>
<td>Proposition 14. Strong leadership from a team of staff and members improves coalition functioning and makes pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning more likely. Proposition 15. Paid staff who have the interpersonal and organizational skills to facilitate the collaborative process improve coalition functioning and increase pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structures</td>
<td>Proposition 16. Formalized rules, roles, structures, and procedures make pooling of resources, member engagement, and effective assessment and planning more likely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled member and external resources</td>
<td>Proposition 17. The synergistic pooling of member and community resources prompts effective assessment, planning, and implementation of strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member engagement</td>
<td>Proposition 18. Satisfied and committed members will participate more fully in the work of the coalition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and planning</td>
<td>Proposition 19. Successful implementation of strategies is more likely when comprehensive assessment and planning occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of strategies</td>
<td>Proposition 20. Coalitions are more likely to create change in community policies, practices, and environment when they direct interventions at multiple levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community change outcomes</td>
<td>Proposition 21. Coalitions that are able to change community policies, practices, and environment are more likely to increase capacity and improve health and social outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social outcomes</td>
<td>Proposition 22. The ultimate indicator of coalition effectiveness is the improvement in health and social outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community capacity</td>
<td>Proposition 23. As a result of participating in successful coalitions, community members and organizations develop capacity and build social capital that can be applied to other health and social issues.</td>
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</table>

The CCAT defines the significant elements common through coalition research, which in turn form a set of testable propositions. Kegler and Swan (2011) apply the CCAT model to test its functionality regarding relationships between coalition factors and change outcomes as outlined by the theory. The researchers utilize data from an evaluation of 20 California coalitions focusing on healthy cities over time. The primary stages analyzed were formation and maintenance. Their study results supported many of relations predicted by the CCAT. Kegler and Swan (2011) discover that diverse organizational representation correlated strongly with community capacity indicators and those combined with earlier findings “suggest that membership characteristics, most notably the number of community sectors engaged, influence
coalition outcomes, possibly through collaborative synergy but not through effective coalition functioning alone (p. 267).”

Modified CCAT for FPC Research

As part of a larger project concentrating on a standardization of evaluation tools specific to community food projects, the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) in partnership with the US Department of Agriculture, developed a food policy council model that lays out the specific process for effective coalition building through the lens of community food projects. The model developed by the CFSC relies heavily on the CCAT model with some slight adaptations.

The flow chart in Figure 2 depicts the CFSC representation of a coalition’s three development stages, resembling the traditional CCAT model, but not identically copying it. The stages found on the FPC model include formation, action, and maintenance. The CFSC model does not include institutionalization as a stage, and instead places the outcome constructs such as community capacity and change in the maintenance stage. Like the traditional CCAT model, the adapted FPC model too assumes a degree of non-linear development. Meaning, there is regular cycling back through the stages as the coalition matures. Another significant adaptation applied by the FPC model was the grouping of assessment and planning and the implementation of strategies into the action stage. The CFSC details that once a coalition is formed, the member organizations begin to pool resources and plan community intervention strategies. After baselines are established through internal assessments and planning, the FPC begins the implementation of externally focused interventions through policy advocacy, pilot programs and/or public education campaigns. The ultimate goal of coalition work is to effect positive
change through building capacity and empowerment in the community (CFSC, CFP Toolkit, 2006).

Figure 2. Modified Community Coalition Action Theory (Functioning Model).*

*Source: NRC, 2006, p.204. (Adapted from Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002).

The CFSC (2006) refers to the constructs related to policy advocacy, pilot programs, and public awareness/education campaigns as externally focused strategies. Through the implementation of these approaches, it is expected that the community will be impacted in a positive way. Regarding community food programs, community change takes specific distinct forms; the increasing of community food security through economic development, or the building of community capacity through empowerment and social justice. The strategies employed for community engagement can be a factor for better understanding the empowerment
of the community. Butterfoss and Kegler (2002) state that “[a]daptations of interventions that have been previously evaluated (evidence based) or are commonly accepted as best practices increase the likelihood that interventions will result in community change and, ultimately, desired health and social outcomes (p.177).” It is important to note that in the modified FPC model, there shows one way directional arrows leading from membership synergy to assessment and planning, and then to the implementation of strategies. This suggests that any of these constructs need to take place before the other will be effective. This is indeed a logical progression of steps; however, more research regarding FPC progression toward community change is warranted to support this claim.

Below are more detailed descriptions of the recommended interventions, which make up the “implementation of strategies” construct of the modified CCAT model. In the traditional CCAT model, this construct proposes that coalitions stand a better chance of impacting change in community policies, practices, and environment when they focus strategies at multiple levels in the community. The modified FPC model suggests specific strategies (Table 2) FPCs utilize to make change in the community. The implementation of those strategies will lead to community change either through community empowerment or the strengthening of community food security.

Table 2. Constructs and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Advocacy</td>
<td>Influencing of decision makers, at different levels of government, through activities such as litigation, interagency networking, lobbying, and public education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Projects</td>
<td>Also called feasibility studies or experimental trials. Activity planned as a test or trial to inform a group or organization of the potential of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Awareness/ Education</td>
<td>The public’s level of understanding about the significance of certain issues. Educational campaigns can include workshops, presentations, and assessments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002; and NRC, 2006.*
Food Policy Coalitions as organizational groups fit tightly within the constructs outlined in both the traditional CCAT and modified FPC models. FPC work has been shown in the literature to be complex and multi-leveled. A coalition of member organizations to address related food systems issues is a logical vehicle for action, and as such, there has been a significant uptick in the amount of states and municipalities utilizing that organizational structure in their policy and program work (Food Policy Networks). The CCAT provides an excellent frame for organizing the existing structures of FPCs, tracking their work from initial formation, through to institutionalization, and then circling back to focus on continued maintenance. The initial work conducted by the CFSC, with the adapted CCAT model, ties the broader theory into the food systems and policy arena. The following research further brings this into clarity by utilizing FPC member perceptions to better understand and inform the flow of activity, focusing on the implementation of strategies and notions of success in the community, while at the same time highlighting how evaluation is being conducted.

Synthesizing the Literature

This chapter has detailed the literature and theoretical framework relevant to the several main components of the broader focus of this dissertation. First, it reviewed the emergence of the concept of community food security in the literature. Where food security covers a broad, potentially global swath of concerns, and household food security concentrates on the individual or family level, community food security focuses on local or regional issues and the infrastructure and social demographics impacted therein. The next part of this chapter outlined the literature regarding food policy councils, paying careful attention to their effectiveness as organization models for affecting community change and the evolution of community
engagement and evaluative measures. These two subject areas, community food security and food policy councils, are intertwined throughout this examination. Certain connections are highlighted in this chapter, mainly how previous scholars framed their research on FPCs using elements associated with the concept of community food security and how FPCs worked to evaluate their success in the community. FPCs develop strategies to address food security issues in their local geographic focus area, such as a city, county, region or state. These strategies are sometimes based on input from the community or from assessments conducted on the state of the food system in their area (Clark, 2018). Strategies can also be developed based on input from the member organizations. While these are all viable, the other part of this is wanting; the part where community impacts can be directly connected back to the FPC through evaluation and the strategies deployed for community engagement (Calancie et al, 2017).

Lastly, this chapter detailed the literature concerning coalition building and coalition impacts. The main conceptual model focused on is the Community Coalition Action Theory. This theory was explained broadly at first, and then brought into focus for this study through the introduction and explanation of an adapted model developed by the Community Food Security Coalition in 2006.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Purpose

To further emphasize an important aforementioned statement, the purpose of this research is to broaden the academic conversation regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of US food policy coalitions with regard to strengthening community food security. This research is grounded in the examination of three specific questions:

- How do Food Policy Councils define Community Food Security?
- What are strategies for addressing community food security, and do those strategies serve the objectives of policy advocacy, pilot projects, or public awareness/education?
- How do FPCs engage with the community and evaluate success, and what perceived impacts do those strategies have in the community?

The first research question examines the similarities and differences of the concept of CFS from the perspective of the leadership addressing it. This question relies on responses to specific inquiries included in a nationwide survey. Follow up correspondences were also examined to clarify any uncertainties associated with survey responses. The information gathered from this question are significant because they document a collective characterization of CFS from food systems leaders from various regions of the US; a unique addition to the academic literature. This strengthens certain positions highlighted in previous definitions for the concept, and also omits other areas.
The second research question, “what are strategies for addressing community food security, and do those strategies serve the objectives of policy advocacy, pilot projects, or public awareness/education,” first, identifies specific CFS intervention strategies, and then categorizes those identified into the established construct for implementation suggested by the modified FPC framework. To address this question, literature regarding community food security was thoroughly reviewed, samples from both governmental and academic sources. Websites, food policy council archives and personal correspondence with food systems stakeholders were also reviewed. Furthermore, participant observations of food policy council meetings were conducted to gain better insight into strategy implementation at both the state and local/regional levels.

The third question, seeks to better understand the drive behind why FPCs are using specific strategies. This question explores impacts from the perspective of evaluative and community engagement strategies employed by the FPC. There has been a long standing deficiency in the FPC literature regarding how FPCs evaluate success in the community. This question uses survey responses, secondary sources (such as FPC websites and assessment documents) as well as direct observation of activity to identity the methods FPCs use to determine community impact. Results from key informant interviews were also analyzed to better address this question.

Variables

This research concentrates on US food policy councils as the main unit of study. While community food security and community impacts are the concepts explored through questioning, the information gathered relies on the perspectives of US FPC members. Within the food policy
council’s structure, the leadership was targeted for surveying as it was assumed they are the most knowledgeable about the goals and directions regarding community food security objectives specific to their organization, as well as how success and efficiency are evaluated.

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future has developed the Food Policy Networks project, which specifically aids with the development of viable and effective state, regional and local food policies. This mission is accomplished through networking, capacity building, research, and technical assistance. The Food Policy Networks project, as part of their mission, maintains a living directory of FPCs throughout North America. This directory originated from the work of the Community Food Security Coalition in 2012. Using the 2012 list, the FPN conducted a comprehensive survey, and has continued to do so every year since, in order to update the directory with the most current contact information, goals and governance structures. Since 2012, the team at the Food Policy Network has maintained the list up to date. The directory collects self-reported information from Food Policy Councils (including organizations with similar names, like “food collaborative,” “food networks” and “food coalitions.” For the purpose of this dissertation, only FPCs with operating focuses in the United States were examined.

For this research, the Food Policy Network directory was utilized to determine the preliminary sample size for surveying. Since the FPN was created, wider surveying of FPCs has become more accessible. Prior to this database, it appeared that the bulk of academic research was conducted using a smaller sampled case study methodology, utilizing a handful of examples and generalizing across the board. At the time when the directory was accessed for this particular research, there was contact information for just over 230 food policy councils. Again, the sample was drawn from FPCs operating in the US, and only domestic FPCs were considered
in this study. Individual email addresses were compiled for more than 230 different food policy councils, resulting in over 400 unique points of contacts as most FPCs had two or more listed in the FPN database. There were several councils that were added to my survey distribution list, not previously included on the FPN database. These FPCs were discovered through both email inquiries and broad-sweeping internet searches. Out of the 50 US states, 45 had at least one council represented on the FPN FPC directory; Washington DC was also represented with a council. The five states with no councils at the time my sample was pulled included Arkansas, South Dakota, Wyoming, Delaware and New Hampshire. Since that time, the latter two states established regional FPCs.

Of the 233 food policy councils contacted to participate in this study, 74 responded to the request. This is a 32% response rate. Several food policy councils submitted responses by multiple members of the organization’s leadership. Of the responding leadership, only 13% have served in their position for less than a year. The emails I initially sent relied heavily on how up to date the FPN FPC directory was, as well as if the contact information was correct. The directory is populated by the council itself through an electronic form, i.e. self-reported. To correct and adjust for error, I cross-checked all emails sent back with an error message. I conducted several follow up conversations with selected FPC members to gain better clarity on certain activity their respective FPCs were engaging in.

Methods

Over a 6 month period from July to December, 2016 I collected responses to a broad, nation-wide survey targeted specifically to food policy council leadership in the US. The survey contained questions that both allowed for quick multiple choice type answers as well as for more
in-depth descriptive responses. While FPCs are growing in number throughout the world, I chose to concentrate specifically on the United States because of its distinct characteristics regarding food security. The US produces a sufficient amount of food to feed the population; however, food insecurity is still prevalent. The food security issues that communities in the United States face are distinctive when compared to other places in world that experience food insecurity. Large-scale production and processing, as variables, are not as significant in the US, while, factors influencing distribution, both of food and wealth, are (Hassanein, 2003).

**Data, Data Sources and Collection Methods**

To address the research questions posed in my work, I employed three main methods for collecting data. The principal method was an online survey distributed to a contact list of food policy councils across the US. An email containing the link for the online survey was sent to all contact emails noted on the FPN directory. Several emails were added to that email distribution list based on internet searches, email correspondence and recommendations from other FPC members. The Qualtrics online survey platform was utilized to collect the individual responses from participants. One month after the initial distribution of the survey, the link was sent out again requesting input with the intent of ensuring maximum participant capture. The survey link was sent out one more time before it closed; this time however, only the contacts that did not respond yet received the link. The survey remained open for a total of 6 months, from the date of the initial email was sent out containing the link until the day the last survey was received on December 9\(^{th}\). The survey closed after that.

The survey comprised of a mixture of short description and check-the-box responses. The consent form was built into the first page of the survey. A participant was required to check
a confirmation box before they were allowed to proceed to the next page of the survey. If they did not agree to the consent form, the survey was restricted from continuing forward. After consent was confirmed, the next several questions collected background information about the participant and their FPC. These questions included, what FPC the member participant belonged to and FPC jurisdictional focus; how long they held a leadership role; and, duties and responsibilities. Surveys serve as a valuable research method because they represent in summary-form the general characteristics of the study population while at the same time present findings that are statistically effective and accurate for that population (Gomez and Jones, 2010).

Table 3. Jurisdictional Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Survey %</th>
<th>FPN Report %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (Multiple county/city)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County (including municipalities)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Member Roles and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role (coded)</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of Board</td>
<td>Board of directors president; board member</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison</td>
<td>State-local FPC liaison; planning liaison</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator/Coordinator</td>
<td>Secretary; Facilitator; Coordinator</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair/Director</td>
<td>Executive director; president; manager</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member (committee)</td>
<td>Member of steering committee; founding member</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Length of Time in Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time in Role</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+ years</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next set of questions established context about the FPC and its organizational structure. Examples of these questions were: “How long has your FPC been in existence”; “How many different organizations make up your FPC”; and “What sectors of your food system are underrepresented, or not represented at all on your FPC?”

Table 6. Age of Food Policy Coalition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of FPC</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+ years</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Number of Member Organizations Represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Organizations Not Represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underrepresented sectors of food system (coded type)</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Production</td>
<td>Farmers, Fisheries, local growers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Businesses</td>
<td>Restaurants, producers, vendors, entrepreneurs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Grocery, retail food systems</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Food distributors, manufacturing/distribution</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumers</td>
<td>Community, individuals</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable populations</td>
<td>LMI, food security groups</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public entities</td>
<td>Government agencies, local elected leadership</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing</td>
<td>Processors, supply side</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additionally, responses were collected regarding whether or not a comprehensive Community Food Assessment was conducted that looked at all sectors of the food system in their jurisdiction.

After the background information about the participant and context about the FPC was collected, the perspectives about certain concepts related to community food security and community impacts were ascertained. Questions were asked such as: “Please define community food security, as your FPC understands it,” “How would you describe efforts for citizen engagement in your FPC,” and “How has your FPC evaluated success?” The last portion of the survey was intended to collect data regarding CFS intervention strategies. These questions were arranged in a “check all that apply” format, with an opportunity at the end to add any additional strategies or comments. Each of the strategies listed fell into one of three areas highlighted within the ‘implementation of strategies” construct of the modified FPC model; they included: policy advocacy, pilot projects, and public awareness/educational campaigns.

The next main data collection method employed for this dissertation was key informant interviews. These interviews were conducted with members who held a leadership role and who

### Table 8. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waste Stream</th>
<th>Waste management, composting, food waste</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Business, GMO companies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Agriculture</td>
<td>Rural ag, rural farmers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>Food service workers, food chain works</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith based</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
had a solid understanding about organizational structure, objectives and goals. The key informant interview approach of data collection for this study finds strength in the opportunity for in-depth, flexible engagement with research participants (Gomez and Jones, 2010). While informant bias and random error still remain some of the main limitations of this particular research technique, these were addressed and minimized by coupling of the nationwide survey questionnaires and supporting document review and site observation (Kumar et al., 1993).

Interviews were in-person and recorded. During these meetings, data was gathered about the FPC organizational structure, as well as details about the intervention strategies used by the FPC to address community food security. Examples of the questions asked to tease out the information about CFS strategies were, “Do you feel your FPC addresses CFS most effectively through policy advocacy, pilot projects and/or educational campaigns/public awareness” and “Can you give specific examples of strategies that your FPC used to address community food security and what have been their impacts within the community?” In addition to in-person interviews, data was collected through email correspondence and informal phone conversations. The email and phone modes of communication with key informants were utilized mainly for follow up questions and clarification regarding survey responses or info posted on FPC websites.

The last main method of data collection was document review. A thorough search of food policy council activity was conducted utilizing several databases, including the FPN, government websites, and organizational archives. The FPCs that responded to the specific survey question regarding whether or not they conducted a community food assessment were further scrutinized, either through internet searches or email correspondence. If the assessment documents were located, a review was performed focusing on the methods that were detailed for addressing community food security in their area. I also paid attention to other indicators that
would shed light on my research questions, such as if they provided a definition of community food security or if they made mention to actively engaging in policy advocacy, programming or educational campaigns. Finally, within these documents, methods for evaluating success were targeted for follow-up examination. Descriptions of evaluation techniques using interviewing methods worked well to couple with survey responses when discussing similar target questions. Meaning, interview modes and surveys were intended to complement each other, working in concert to gain deeper understanding of the specific research question.

In addition to the three main data collection methods, I carried out direct observation of coalition activity where/when possible as well as policy and program reviews using selected food policy coalition archives when available in order to further establish context. This study was approved by USF Institutional Review Board. There was very low risk for survey participants. While personal perspectives were gathered and documented, all information acquired was de-identified and secured.

This work has both significant academic and policy applications. The published research on food policy coalitions in general is growing; yet, there still remains little research that applies a structured coalition-focused theoretical framework for evaluating their effectiveness and value concerning interventions supporting community food security. This research assumes that since food policy coalitions concentrate on community issues that overlap thematically, their effectiveness cannot be adequately assessed without an evaluative approach that takes into account that complexity. As such, this dissertation incorporates multiple disciplinary approaches, including theories and concepts from environmental policy, public health, organizational theory, and food systems planning. While this research does well to draw conclusions about which CFS strategies FPCs are most using; it also throws light on other areas
in which current FPCs can plan toward in order to more adequately address CFS issues. As well, the results inform communities how best to maximize the utility of food policy coalitions in their region, either by application of best practices prior to formation, or with the sustainment of existing FPCs, specifically with regard to CFS planning. Through the identification of areas of effectiveness in coalition interventions, local governments and citizen groups will be able to direct limited resources to appropriate areas during initial stages of food policy coalition creation and apply lessons learned to existing and evolving food policy goals and objectives.

**Research Limitations**

The effort put forth in capturing as wide a sample as possible yielded positive results with nearly one-third of the FPCs contacted responding to the survey solicitation. This sample was sufficient to draw some impactful results from the responses, particularly concerning specific questions about evaluation, community engagement methods, and intervention strategies. One limitation noted was the less-than ridged nature in which certain organizations identify themselves as food policy councils. There is no concrete framework as yet qualifying groups as FPCs, which adds a certain degree of variability as to how these groups engage with issues of community food security. To address this limitation, I was careful and deliberate about how I framed questions for both the national survey and the follow up key informant interviews.
CHAPTER FOUR
DEFINING COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY

Community Food Security

A significant portion of the following research seeks to better understand how food policy coalitions perceive the concept of Community Food Security and what they are doing to address it. The survey specifically asked selected FPC leadership from across the United States to, “Please define community food security as your FPC understands it.” This question was asked using a surveying method that allowed for open-ended responses. This particular surveying technique was done deliberately as a means for collecting the widest possible variety of answers for analysis.

Of the 74 different FPCs that responded to the survey solicitation, 66 provided responses to the question about defining community food security as it relates to their FPC. Of those 66 responses, 4 responded with the answers of “no response” or “not applicable.” While responses were wide-ranging, the overwhelming majority had some variation of a definition that included access, a specified scope of time, and an identified population. Of the 62 responses that included definitions, 10 of those FPCs framed their responses within the terms of their group’s mission and goals. A few of the FPCs viewed community food security through a slightly different lens, one incorporated perceptions related to a systems approach, such as, “sustainability from farm to table.” One FPC even stated that they rejected the notion of CFS entirely and chose to refocus their attention on concepts like food democracy or food sovereignty because they felt those
concepts were more empowering, “add[ing] a greater sense of people in control of their own food system (FPC15).”

**Structure of the Definition**

As mentioned before, the majority of the FPCs provided definitions of community food security that were similarly structured. An example of a common response to this question was, “[a]ll residents at all times having good access to healthy food (FPC42).” This arrangement includes, access to food, with a description of the type of food; a specified temporal scope; and, by a certain population of people. Access to food more broadly meaning the opportunity to eat. The notion of “access to food” manifests itself differently depending on the approach taken in the literature, as well as many other unique influencing factors. Now, while the majority of responses were structured similarly, the descriptive terms used varied greatly, often times lending a glimpse into a potential policy or program agenda specific to the particular FPC defining the term. As an example, this FPC defines CFS as having “[a]ll residents in a given area know where their next meal is coming from, and [have] the means to secure it (FPC56).”

Regarding perceptions of community food security, this definition was presented in a way that demonstrates a potential focus on social justice and equity. Moreover, all people have the right to good food regardless of income. As another example, “the ability for a community to grow, process, and sell healthy food that meets the needs of all residents (FPC19).” This definition could potentially be interpreted as taking a position framed by economic development and community resiliency through agricultural production and processing. While the former definition views the food system during the end stages of distribution and consumption, the latter focuses on the beginning, with attention paid to production, processing and retail. Overlaps
occur in the space in which food and the average American person interact most regularly - through retail and distribution.

There were indeed some common themes regarding the descriptive words used to mark the food in which people should have access to in order for the community to be food secure. The three most commonly used terms were affordable (16), healthy (15) and nutritious (14). Other terms used were sufficient, local, culturally appropriate, safe, fresh, good and sustainably grown. In addition to using descriptive terms for describing food, several FPCs detail the type of access that should occur to ensure community food security. These included, physical (3), financial/economical (3), equitable (3), social, educational, sustainable or long term, and cultural. A response that included this basic structure was, “[w]here all residents have equal accessibility to affordable healthy and culturally appropriate foods on a regular basis (FPC39).”

Most of the definitions included an expectation of temporal scope regarding the support of community food security. With the example presented earlier, this was demonstrated by the term, “at all times.” At all times was the most commonly used expression given by the FPCs in their perceived definitions of community food security. Other examples of terms used were, on a regular basis, continued access, year round, and daily. When describing access, as outlined in the above paragraph, several FPCs used expressions such as long term or continued. These also represent an inclusion of a temporal scope; however, with a slightly different structure. While temporal scale was included in the definitions of nearly a quarter of the responses received, it did not appear to hold the same weight as description related to food access and the impacted populations.

The last of the structural commonalities included a geographical specified group of people or an impacted population. In the example given above, this was represented by the
terms, “all residents.” The next most commonly used term was ‘all persons.” Other examples included every person in a region or state, all segments of county population, all communities, and in our neighborhoods. Interestingly, there was almost an equal distribution of the responses referring to populations with no geographical delineation, such as all persons or everyone in community. The other half of the responses gave some sense of belonging to a specific jurisdiction or area of responsibility, such as every person in a region or state (name included), in our neighborhood, and all segments the county population.

**Definition in Terms of Goals, Vision, and/or Mission**

While the structure outlined above was the most common format for response, FPCs also responded in other different and more individually specific ways. Fifteen percent (10 out of 66) of the respondents defined community food security in terms of their own mission or goals. More than half of these particular respondents represented counties (6 out of 10), 2 were focused at the city/municipal level, and the remaining 2 had regional focuses that were made up of several counties and municipalities. An example of a common response by this group of respondents was, “The [food policy council] is an open community group dedicated to creating and nurturing a healthy, equitable and sustainable food system for all members of the [City’s name] community (FPC67).” Another example, which deviates from the common structured CFS definition, was, “The [regional] food system of the future grows, provides access to, and makes available, healthy, safe, and sustainably and justly produced food. It engages [regional] communities, responds to changes in the regional market and environment, and accounts for external costs and benefits when considering its economic contributions to the community (FPC35).” One FPC listed out their particular goals, stating them as economy, wellness,
environment and equity. Still, another unique response included an excerpt from the ordinance which, at the same time, declared a policy to improve food availability and established the FPC by the City Council. It first explained the policy established to create the food policy advisory commission with an intent to “integrate all agencies of the city in a common effort to improve the availability of safe and nutritious food at reasonable prices for all residents particularly those in need.” The ordinance further goes on to list a series of goals set out by the local jurisdiction (FPC24).”

Table 9. FPC Defining CFS in terms of Goals, Vision and/or Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Policy Council Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FPC67 Municipality</td>
<td>Open community group dedicated to creating and nurturing a healthy, equitable and sustainable food system for all members of the [Municipality name] community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC30 City/County</td>
<td>Our FPC has never come to an agreed upon definition of community food security. We used the definition from Hamm and Bellows. We talk about the goals of our FPC as economy, wellness, environment, and equity. Equity relates to the ability of all citizens to access healthy food—including food that is culturally appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC24 Municipality</td>
<td>Establishing ordinance: (a) There shall be a policy to improve the availability of food to persons in need within the city, and there shall be a food policy advisory commission. (b) The purpose of the policy shall be to integrate all agencies of the city in a common effort to improve the availability of safe and nutritious food at reasonable prices for all residents, particularly those in need. The goals to be accomplished by the policy are: (1) To ensure that a wide variety of safe and nutritious food is available for city residents; (2) To ensure that access to the safe and nutritious food is not limited by economic status, location or other factors beyond a resident's control; and (3) To ensure that the price of food in the city remains reasonably close to the average price existing in the balance of the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC61 City/County</td>
<td>Goals: Ensure that an adequate and nutritious food supply is available to all citizens. Strengthen the economic vitality of the local food system. Improve the quality of food available to all citizens. Encourage citizens to accept and consume nutritious food. Minimize food-related activities that degrade the natural environment; limit wasteful resources needed for future food production and distribution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FPC</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FPC35</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>The local food system of the future grows, provides access to, and makes available, healthy, safe, and sustainably and justly produced food. It engages local communities, responds to changes in the regional market and environment, and accounts for external costs and benefits when considering its economic contributions to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC12</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>We are looking to not only reduce food insecurity in our communities but also increase the nutritional profile and reduce obesity, diabetes and other public health issues. As this is very much related to the cost of living in our community, we believe that fair wages and educational opportunities are increasingly tied to food security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC3</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>VISION: An integrated, regional, secure food system that is environmentally sound, supports farmers, fosters economic development and expands access to healthy food for all including low income people and children in [County name]. This includes: Investment in local foods driving economic development; Policy incentives promoting biodiversity and agroecology; Food producer networks/education existing at all levels of production; Distributing and marketing networks connecting local producers and consumers; Access to healthful, affordable food for all; Food education and production at a neighborhood level; Powerful partners advocating for local food at all levels, and Awareness of how food affects health.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC18</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Food Action Plan - The social equity pillar: The Social Equity action area explores the root causes of hunger and food insecurity. The long-term health of our community will require more than just increasing access to food and nutrition assistance programs. This section of the Food Action Plan looks at opportunities to address system-wide inequalities in our community that ultimately lead to hunger and food insecurity. Creating system-wide change includes working to ensure that all individuals have the tools and resources they need to make healthy food and lifestyle choices, as well as equal opportunities to shape food system priorities and goals. A socially equitable food system protects the rights of farmers and farm workers, and upholds the dignity and quality of life for all who work in the food system through healthy living and working conditions. According to Occupations Employment Statistics, most food system and farm workers in [County name]. These reported wages are close to the Federal Poverty Level for a family of four. They do not have formal definition of &quot;community food security.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC47</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Making nutritious and culturally appropriate food accessible, not just any food. Supporting local, regional, family-scale, and sustainable food production. Building and revitalizing local communities and economies providing fair wages and decent working conditions for farmers and food system workers. Promoting social justice and more equitable access to resources. Empowering diverse people to work together to create positive changes in the food system and their communities. Regional Food System Assessment - defines and breaks down these goals into visions, indicators and measures around Healthy Environments, Economic Vitality, Farm to Consumer Connections and Healthy People.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. (Continued)

| FPC41 | County | Mission: Our Food Policy Council increases and preserves access to safe, local and healthy food for all residents of the County. |

Summary of Findings

The specific research question addressed in this chapter was “How do FPCs define Community Food Security.” The bulk of the results used to address this question were pulled from the responses to the nation-wide FPC survey. The survey asked the question, “Please define community food security, as your FPC understands it.” There was response rate of 89% from the sample of FPCs that responded to this question. The general structure of responses was as follows: a mention of “access to food,” with a description of the type of food, a specified temporal scope, and, reference to a certain population of people. Regarding access to food the most prevalent descriptive response was affordable. The most common temporal scope listed as a response was “at all times.” Of the last structural commonalities, the most popular response was to populations residing within some jurisdictional boundary. The last distinct group of responses had to do with those FPCs that defined CFS in terms of their mission and goals.

The findings in this chapter were noteworthy for a number of reasons. First, by comparing the responses from a wide selection of food policy councils throughout the United States, we can work to more concretely develop a structure for generally defining the term specific to food policy coalitions. Furthermore, this structure was derived directly from the perspectives of the primary groups responsible for coordinating and distributing the information on the concept, the food policy coalitions and their leadership. Second, responses by each individual FPC potentially shed light on missions, goals and agenda setting. More specifically,
the FPCs that tweaked their definitions, adding additional terms to tailor it to their jurisdiction, draws attention to certain priority areas that are common to many locales. Also, it could be assumed that by incorporating more area specific components to the definition of community food security that the FPC is taking ownership of the responsibility to address it.
CHAPTER FIVE
STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY

Introduction

The following chapter discusses the responses to the second section of the national survey. The question, “Generally speaking, what do you perceive to be the most effective strategies for addressing community food security in your area?”, was posed broadly to FPCs in the US, and the predetermined replies were provided as options to choose from: “policy advocacy,” “pilot projects,” “public awareness/education campaigns,” and “other,” with a space provided for the respondent to write in an alternate response. In addition to the question regarding effectiveness, each one of these broad interventions were parsed out and presented in more detail as a means for retrieving more information from the respondents. Meaning, each FPC was asked to detail particular examples of the ways in which they engage with the strategies of policy advocacy, pilot programs, and/or public awareness/education campaigns.

Overview of Strategies

Within each of these strategies a list of examples were provided, drawn from the most common examples gleaned across a wide breadth of food policy council and community food security literature. Regarding the policy advocacy section, some examples include: urban agriculture zoning change, farm-to-school expansion, backyard chickens, and the cottage food law. With the question about pilot projects, some of the suggestions included food hubs, school/teaching gardens, mobile farmers’ markets creation, and community kitchens (to provide
job training). Lastly, examples given in the public awareness/educational campaigns section included, social media outreach, regular distribution of newsletters, policy papers, and conference sponsorship.

Of the three broad categories, policy advocacy was perceived by food policy coalitions to be the most effective method for addressing community food security. Policy advocacy received 33 out of 74 responses. The next category was pilot projects with 19 responses. The last category was public awareness/educational campaigns with 13 responses. Out of the 74 respondents, 1 FPC did not answer the question about the most effective method for addressing community food security. There were 3 FPCs in which multiple people from the councils’ leadership submitted responses to the survey. One of those 3 councils responded to the questions on perceived effectiveness with the option public awareness/education campaigns, this response was only recorded as one. The other two FPCs that submitted responses from multiple members had conflicting responses to this question, and those responses were excluded from the total count. The rest of respondents filled in their own response, documenting additional methods. Examples of these additional methods were community gathering, convening of the council and its stakeholders, administrative advocacy – facilitating conversation, collaboration opportunities, bring stakeholders together to tackle barriers and challenges, and networking.

There were 36 FPCs that had responses to the perceived effectiveness question that differed from the strategies they have engaged with. More specifically, for example, an FPC responded that they perceived policy advocacy as the most effective strategy for addressing community food security, yet they stated that the council has engaged mostly with public awareness and education campaigns. The FPCs that did not respond to one of the three strategies for addressing CFS, or wrote in their own answer, were excluded from that total number.
Policy Advocacy

A list of suggestions for policy advocacy topics were provided to the respondents. Policy advocacy was also defined within the survey to better clarify the context in which the question was being asked. Policy advocacy was described as follows: “Influencing of decision makers, at different levels of government, through activities such as litigation, interagency networking, lobbying, and public education.”

The policy advocacy topic that was most mentioned was farm to school expansion, with 68% of FPCs stating that they have engaged with that area in one way or another. The second most selected topic was local level SNAP/WIC expansion with 65%. The third most selected topic was local level purchasing preferences (schools and public institutions), with 62% of the FPC respondents documenting that they have engaged in advocacy work in that area. The three least selected topic suggestions were seed saving legislation (15%), winemaking and craft breweries (4%) and calorie counts on menus (3%). This does not include the added topics that FPCs have engaged in. Table 10 displays the responses, which have been listed in order from greatest to least.

Table 10. Policy Advocacy Actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm to School Expansion</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Level SNAP/WIC Expansion</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Food Purchasing Preferences (schools and public institutions)</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Ag Zoning Change</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Ag</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Gardens</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Land Conservation/Evr. and Water Policy</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matching Grants (double value coupon program) for nutrition incentives</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Waste Diversion and Composting</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottage Food Law</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Backyard Chickens</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apiaries (backyard and public and beekeeping)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning for Mobile Food Vending/Food Trucks and Other Food Related Startups</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Food Banking</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugary Beverage Legislation</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm/Restaurant Workers Equity</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers Market Zoning Change</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Saving Legislation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winemaking and Craft Breweries</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calorie Count on Menus</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the FPC checking the boxes of the most common policy advocacy topics for addressing community food security, many also added other topics that their council has worked on. In the table below, the additional comments were grouped based on theme. Several of the FPCs used the write-in option on the survey to make comments about not actively advocating for various different reasons. An example of one of the responses was, “The group doesn’t take a strong advocacy role – but is more advisory in nature to the local legislative bodies, the [City name] Council and the [County name] Commission (FPC61).” Of these groups, nearly all noted that although they do not directly advocate as a group, they support the work of the individual member and organizations that make up the larger coalition. An example of a response is, “We support a variety of organizations doing many of these items above. We sign letters of support, attend additional committee meetings to provide input/support. We also invite these advocates to attend our meetings to educate us on various topics (FPC74).” In addition to these comments, a few FPCs used this area to make mention to their role as an advisory council, rather than an advocacy organization.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coded Group</th>
<th>Additional Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Processing (6)</td>
<td>On-farm meat processing; Less red tape for processing on site if over 51% grown on site; Poultry processing; Home processing; Backyard slaughtering; Regulations around poultry processing and sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small farm (3)</td>
<td>Reduce barriers for small farmers; Ag exemption for farmers owning less than 40 acres; Fair ag valuation for diversified and small acreage farms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use policy (5)</td>
<td>Transfer of development credits for community land trust and for ag and open spaces; Land trusts; Land access; Agricultural overlay zone ordinance; Vacant land issues/open spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food access (2)</td>
<td>Transportation to food access sites; Rural food access and transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food system planning (6)</td>
<td>Comprehensive planning policies – Guides; Food systems planning; agritourism and accessory dwelling units; Urban ag policy; Regional and statewide food plan; Advocating against changes to State Growth Management plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Garden (4)</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial opportunities with community gardens; Community and market gardens; Community gardens; Sales from residential and community gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding programs (3)</td>
<td>Child nutrition reauthorization; Breakfast in the Classroom; Childhood feeding programs (e.g summer meals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource conservation (3)</td>
<td>Conservation and water issues; Water access and safety; Water access for community gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodhub (4)</td>
<td>Food Hub grants; Food hub; Food hub and other food infrastructure development; Food infrastructure development that supports food access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composting policy (2)</td>
<td>Expansion of composting; Composting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food system equity (3)</td>
<td>Restaurant worker rights; Equity issues in the food system; Tribal concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach (4)</td>
<td>Consumer education about food, nutrition and cooking; Direct outreach to policymakers to engage them about food systems issues; Ag education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal programs (3)</td>
<td>“State level” SNAP/WIC expansion; Concurrent enrollment of SNAP and Medi-Cal; 2014 Farm bill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordination between emergency food providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central kitchen at largest local school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperative development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Antibiotics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Healthy Food Financing Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humane treatment policy for livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban farming demonstrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional food served in institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food storage in rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food safety and sanitation support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Already listed/ Cross topic areas</th>
<th>* Chicken ordinance, cottage foods bill and Farm to School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Purchase of 20% of food products locally by 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Farmers’ Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Changes to procurement policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Main focus on systems change at the local level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pilot Projects

Similar to the policy advocacy section, the pilot projects strategy provided a list of the most commonly cited examples of this topic with regard to addressing community food security. The pilot project was defined in the survey as follows, “Also called feasibility studies or experimental trials. Activity planned as a test or trial to inform a group or organization of the potential of the project.” The most selected example was community gardens, with 50% of the respondents stating that their group had engaged with this pilot project. The next was double/triple value coupons for SNAP/WIC benefits at Farmers’ Markets, with 46%. The third example was school/teaching gardens with 43% of respondents engaging with them. The three least engaged areas were vacant lot/brownfield revitalization (16%), backyard chickens/animal pilot programs (14%), and urban beekeeping residential pilot programs (7%).

Table 12. Engaged Pilot Projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilot Project</th>
<th>Engaged (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Gardens</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double/Triple Value Coupons for SNAP/WIC benefits at Farmers Markets</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/Teaching Gardens</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Hubs</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Corner Store Initiatives</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers Market Start up Expansion</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Kitchens (to provide job training)/incubator kitchen</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gleaning Programs</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Supported Agriculture/Food Buying Co-ops</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Farmers markets creation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lots/Brownfields revitalization</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the examples provided for pilot projects, FPC respondents had the opportunity to add any other pilot programs that they have engaged with. The results from the additional comments are in the table below. The comments were further grouped according to appropriate topic. The comments that did not really seem to fit with the other programming examples were included at the bottom of the table and grouped together. These included comments focusing on broad educational topics and policy work, not outwardly relevant to pilot projects. Several of the respondents mentioned not focusing on programmatic work. One FPC stated, “As a council, we try to stay focused more on policy than developing and running programming, although we will occasionally assist with a pilot project (FPC20).” The majority of comments stating that they do not directly run or manage programs, did mention that the FPC was supportive of the program organizers, and/or responsible for its germination. For instance, “We have FPC members who are taking on these projects and have garnered support (technical, fiscal, staffing,) directly from other members. The connections wouldn’t have been made were it not for the trust that has been built between these folks through their involvement with the FPC (FPC8).”

Table 13. Engaged Pilot Projects, Additional Comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coded Group</th>
<th>Additional Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production/processing incubators (3)</td>
<td>Started a farm school for independent farmers which covered business practices and regs; Farm incubation; Culinary incubator kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer food programs (2)</td>
<td>Community summer food service program; Summer food service program expansion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 13. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning/research activities (6)</th>
<th>Map of food resources in the city; Evaluation of farm to school activities; Land use survey; Research project to support farmers’ market policy changes; Mapping local farms and markets; Biosolids research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composting (3)</td>
<td>Institution and on-farm composting; Organic waste composting; Neighborhood scale in-vessel design competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers Market incentive program (3)</td>
<td>Produce perks/SNAP redemption increases at Farmers’ Market; Double incentives; Coupons for local produce at farmers’ markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (2)</td>
<td>Grocery Express – a transit line connecting low food access areas to quality grocery stores; Food transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior culinary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food pantry matchmaking with food providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal mini-grant program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public urban orchards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food rescue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Municipal level healthy food financing initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One off local foods campaign with culinary competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional food marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency food security (disaster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slaughterhouses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bulk purchasing of supplies for food growers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross topic areas</td>
<td>Urban growing demonstrations (aquaponics, hydroponics, rooftops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Healthy food procurement policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Food and climate change discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Food systems thinking and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Comprehensive vision/goals development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Statewide farm to institution conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Public Awareness/Education Campaigns

Like the other two previous sections, the third section, public awareness/education campaigns, set out a list of examples for FPCs to choose from in the areas that they have engaged with. This section was defined as, “The level of public understanding about the significance of certain food related issues. Education campaigns can include workshops, presentations, and assessments to name a few.” In addition to the examples, spaces for adding additional comments or any other methods not listed were provided.
The method that was chosen most for engaging public awareness strategy by those who responded to the survey was social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), with 80% of the respondents engaging in that strategy. The second most chosen method was through utilizing an FPC website, either independent or contained within another organization, with 68%. The third method was workshops open to the public, with 64%. Many of the respondents answered with either all of these top three, or a varying combination of two. The three least engaged methods were host cooking classes (15%), sponsor fairs (15%), and protesting (1%).

Table 14. Public Awareness/Educational Campaigns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc)</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC Website (independent or contained within another organization)</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops open to the public</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press releases</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/County Extension Coordination</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Newsletters to the Public</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor Conferences</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Internships/Mentorships</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Papers</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Surveys</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Cooking Classes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor Fairs</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protests</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, similar to the other two strategies, many FPCs took advantage of the “additional comments” option to add any methods of engagement that were not included in the examples provided. The table below lists the additional comments relevant to public awareness/educational campaigns. The additional comments were grouped thematically. One respondent expressed their council did not directly engage in public awareness/educational campaigns. They stated, “We do many of these through our member organization but not as a coordinated [food policy coalition] effort (FPC7).”
Table 15. Public Awareness/Educational Campaigns, Additional Comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coded Group</th>
<th>Additional Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award recognition (2)</td>
<td>Food security awards; Good Food Fund and Good Food Fellows Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food system tours (3)</td>
<td>Farm tours; Farm and ranch tour events; Visit farm and food operations that help us better understand different segments of the food system, e.g. aquaculture farm tour, grass-fed beef pasture walk, community kitchen tours, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational presentation (4)</td>
<td>Annual statewide conference; Presentations at conferences for the public; Presented webinars; Study sessions on broad food related topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (official) (3)</td>
<td>Presentations at public meetings; Speaking at public meetings (city council and county commission); Presentations to planning commission and county board of supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host experts (3)</td>
<td>Host authors; Invite experts from the ag agencies, universities and finance and leasing experts to present resources; Public meetings with panel discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event presence (5)</td>
<td>Tabling at events; Attend smaller community events to engage residents; Participate in community awareness raising events; Speaking at events; Nutrition education at farmers’ markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host community events (4)</td>
<td>Host community focus groups in targeted neighborhoods; Co-sponsor indoor harvest market; Sponsor community gatherings; Sponsor growers forums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral history collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art exhibits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resolutions via the board of supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open house sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General outreach opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly meetings that alternate between business meetings and mobile study sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting with district councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convened regional conversations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Findings

The specific research question addressed in this chapter was “What are strategies for addressing community food security, and do those strategies serve the objectives of policy advocacy, pilot projects, or public awareness/education?” The second part of the nation-wide
survey was utilized to respond to the question. The survey offered the three strategies from the Community Coalition Action Theory as approach options for respondents. From the results, policy advocacy was noted as the most effective strategy being operationalized by FPCs to address community food security. Interestingly, the additional comments, or when the respondent clicked “other,” mainly focused on the notion of networking or collaboration as a strategy that their FPC perceived as most effective.

Further, farm to school expansion was the strategy that was most noted within the policy advocacy topic. For pilot projects, community gardens were the strategy example most engaged with by the respondents. Regarding the last strategy, public awareness/education campaigns, and the most utilized method for addressing community food security was social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). In addition, multiple FPCs mentioned the strong reliance on their member organizations, both through networking and public outreach and awareness.

The findings in this chapter point to a couple of significant points of interest. First, it is interesting that the majority of respondents view policy advocacy as the most effective strategy for addressing community food security; however, nearly half documented that they engaged in activities that did not include advocacy work. This could potentially be explained through a limited understanding of the defining characteristics associated with that strategy. Or, this could be that the methods used to address CFS are multilayered and incorporated multiple different strategic approaches. Second, the fact that multiple FPC pointed to the value of networking and member pooling of organizational resources as a strategy independent of the others drew attention to its significance as a viable method for approaching issues related to community food security.
CHAPTER SIX
ENGAGEMENT, EVALUATION AND IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY

Introduction
This chapter presents the findings broadly related to community impact as a result of food policy coalition work. The specific research question to which this chapter speaks to is, “How do FPCs evaluate success, and what impacts do their strategies have in the community?” Using responses from two individual questions from the nationwide survey make up the first part of this chapter. The questions are as follows: “How would you describe efforts for citizen engagement in your FPC?” and, “How has your FPC evaluated success?”

Overview of Citizen Engagement
Of the 74 FPCs that responded to the survey, 68 provided a response to the question, “How would you describe efforts for citizen engagement?” From these responses, several different strategies were presented that detailed engagement with the community. The different methods were coded into 5 unique themes. These themes included: Host Events/Meetings, Public Outreach/Online Outreach, Food Systems Assessments, Member Organization Networking, and Project Management. Many of these responses listed a combination of two or more of these different methods. The responses were recorded individually. For example if an FPC listed hosting meetings and making weekly social media posts, this research recorded
hosting event/meetings as well as online outreach. In this case, all parts of the FPCs responses were recorded.

**Results Summary**

There were many different examples of FPCs utilizing the practice of hosting events/meetings as a way to engage with the public. Some examples of the types of events hosted were town halls to gather information, film screening and art shows, strategic meetings with community members, neighborhood and farm tours, monthly meetings open to the public, and panelist presentations. One food policy council responded, “[Our FPC] holds quarterly meetings open to all community members. We also do bulk ordering of growing supplies for gardeners and farmers. This year we are hosting a “Food Festival” to reach out to the broader public. We also support the local farmers market, “harvest bucks” program which is a one to one match for SNAP recipients (FPC34).” In that particular example, the FPC clearly engages with the public regarding food issues and education through hosting a variety of different events, as well as through the support of programming.

Similar to hosting events, public outreach was a popular practice for engaging with the community. Rather than bringing the community to them, examples of public outreach varied among many different ways to extend impact out into the community. This theme differed from the hosting of events in that it concerned more the attending of already established events and being a participant, rather than creating the event and acting in the host or facilitator position. Some of these strategies included, participating in existing events like fairs and festivals, tabling at local events, testifying at public meetings, street surveying, and annual reports. Another part of the public outreach theme was identified as online outreach. Certain consistencies exist
between these two forms of outreach; however, online outreach possesses certain unique
dynamics distinct enough to warrant recognizing it as a sub-theme. Some examples of responses
within the sub-theme of online outreach include, Facebook posts, email distribution lists, and
managing a website. An example of one of the responses was, “Full council meetings are open
to the public. We also have different Policy Action Teams (i.e. workgroups) that complete a lot
of work and projects, and these meetings are open to the public/public participates in these
teams. We have a website and social media to communicate and advertise electronically, and we
attend different events to promote our Council (FPC41).”

Food systems assessments and auditing was also noted as a distinct method for engaging
with the community. Food systems assessments were mentioned several times as a way to
engage the public in the planning process while at the same time learn what the needs of the
community are. Examples of assessments and audits include, a comprehensive food vision, local
food action plan, information gathering, and academic partnerships with assessment processes.
One FPC responded by stating “We began with a large outreach component in order to
understand the regional food system, and continue to hold open sessions throughout our service
territory on a biennial basis (FPC35).” Much of the assessment process relies on information
gathering and with the examples given; this includes engagement with the community to identify
needs as well as community assets.

Several FPCs mentioned community engagement through project and program
management. There was a trend identified where engagement occurred on a project-by-project
basis. Also, community engagement about food issues happened through big projects/programs
that the FPC oversees, such as at a food hub, a farm park or a cooking education program. One
of the specific examples given was “Many citizen gardeners grow for our produce for pantries program and donate time to community meals (FPC22).”

The last theme that was mentioned in the responses regarded relying on member organizational networks for engaging the community. One of the FPCs responded, “Efforts to engage community members has been increasing, but the network is still primarily made up of individuals affiliated with agencies/organizations, farms or businesses involved in the food system (FPC47).” This theme was noted because it points to the unique structure of FPCs, and coalition work more broadly. Other examples of the main points brought up within this theme are, members acting as a starting-off point for information distribution, finding strength in organization representation, and relying on representative organizations to inform groups of specific community needs. Another FPC stated, “Many individual members have expansive networks across the state and we rely on those to raise up issues. We also work with a network of local food policy councils (FPC19).” This last comment points to the multilayered reliance on network connections, both as a coordinator of multiple organizations as well as a facilitator of individual networks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Percentage of Responses</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host Events/Meetings</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>We held 2 food conferences; The Council hosts outreach efforts and events throughout the year to engage our community; Quarterly movie series focusing on food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>We have attended neighborhood meetings and participated in tabling and local events; participate in existing events like CSA fairs and a kids festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>We do a small amount of Facebook posting; We have a website and social media to communicate and advertise electronically</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food System Assessment</th>
<th>8%</th>
<th>We interviewed over 100 food system stakeholders for FSA; we have conducted a series of listening sessions in each Council district of the city, engaging over 400 residents representing a broad spectrum of the city's residents.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member Organization Networking</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Many individual members have expansive networks across the state and we rely on those to raise up issues; communicate to appointed Council members to bring information shared back to their communities for feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>We have three big projects a Food Hub, A Farm Park and a Cooking Matters Program. We are very open to all people having access to volunteer opportunities; We engage with community members on a project by project basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low/None</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Originally good, but we have lost much of the leadership and the council is inactive at this point; It is non-existent; Diminished due to lack of funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation of Impact

Out of 74 FPCs, 63 provided a response regarding evaluation strategy. The question asked in the survey was, “How has your FPC evaluated success?” The groups of responses were separated into two broad categories, process measures and outcome measures. The codes were pulled from the modified version of the Community Coalition Action Theory framework; visually depicted in Chapter 2, Figure 2. Process measures are the characteristics of the FPC used to value success based on structure and internal functioning. Outcome measures are the external impacts as a result of coalition actions in the community or the implementation of strategies. Several FPCs gave responses with multiple different strategies, even some that evaluated success using both process and outcome measures. The strategy itself was recorded regardless if the FPC gave multiple examples in their response. In the case where both process and outcome measures were noted, this research pulled the pertinent parts of the statement and
coded it accordingly. An example of a common response that merged both process and outcome measures was, “By tracking metrics related to our overall food goals on our sustainability dashboard. We also keep track of program impact by tracking relevant metrics (FPC66).” This particular response mentions the process measure related to strategic planning based off mission/goals as well as outcome measures based on program impact assessments.

**Table 17.** Organizational Categories of Evaluating Impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process Measures</td>
<td>Participation, Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic planning – based off mission/goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Measures</td>
<td>Program and policy wins and expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strength in network and increase local capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program impact assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Farmers’ markets and vendors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funders’ requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Process Measures**

There were 14 FPCs that responded with evaluation strategies that relied, or partially relied, on participation and/or attendance. Participation was recorded by both number of participants attending meetings such as with the example, “through increased participation of community members,” as well as by the coalition or group member participation in events, such as with the example, “participation in on-line and webinar activities (FPC6).” If the coalition listed that their members attended different events as a way to evaluate their success, that particular strategy was recorded. An example of a response that was included in this grouping was, “We use attendance and engagement at our events to measure success (FPC13).” Another response example is “Partnerships, meeting and event participation and attendance, fundraising, member retention, policy progress, engagement with elected officials (FPC36).”
The other category relevant to process measures was mission and goal based strategic planning and the achievement of those goals. Of the 34 total responses to process measures, 18 of those respondents included answers that aligned with this sub-code in particular. The notions of strategic planning and the achievement of goals are logical, and common, evaluative approaches; however, quantification can be challenging, as explicitly expressed by certain food policy coalitions in this study, as well as others in the broader literature (Harper et al, 2009). As an example, “Each of our workgroups have strategic goals and objectives that can be evaluated. As a whole though, we are not sure how to evaluate some of the collective impact elements that a coalition can provide (FPC12).” Moreover, multiple FPCs noted that they kept a list of milestones as a way to document progress. Pertinent to this, one FPC responded, “We have a list of priorities and we check in periodically to see how we are proceeding toward our goals and that our actions continue to be in line with our mission and vision (FPC33).”

*Outcome Measures*

Outcome measures refer to the evaluation strategies that focus on the external impacts in the community. The evaluative approach that was most noted was program and policy wins and expansion, which is essentially a multi-part strategy. The first part, policy wins, points to the passing, or directly influencing, particular policies that are intended to lead to strengthening community food security. This is exemplified with the response, “Successful implementation of [FPC] policy recommendations (FPC69).” The second part of this strategy is explained through program implementation, or the expansion of a certain program. An example of a response that focused on program progression was, “we consider our work a success when the policies and programs we choose to advocate for are adopted by the city (FPC20).”
The next most used indicator for evaluative success was strength in network and increased local capacity. While several FPCs made mention to building local capacity, none laid out how this strategy was qualified. One FPC stated that they evaluate impact based on “The quantity and quality of direct network building and actions based on their work (FPC17).” Others made mention to relying on the work of their member organizations as a way to evaluate success. Interestingly, another FPC stated, “We have had very successful initiatives to educate members and coordinate their efforts ... e.g. farm-to-school, food security, urban farming and gardening. Our success at this point is measured subjectively simply by the flow of information among members and the assistance that we provide to each other (FPC7).” While not a variable that is easily measured, the fact that this particular FPC uses this as an indicator shows value.

The last three indicators for the outcome measures were program impact assessments, funders’ requirements, and number of farmers’ markets and vendors. Regarding program impact assessments, each of the responses made reference in some form of program tracking. One FPC even established an online dashboard for tracking sustainability metrics related to their food goals. The indicator related to funders’ requirements was among the most tangible forms of tracking success/impact. Their funders, mainly through grants, establish these requirements at the onset of the grant and the FPC either succeeds in meeting those needs or does not. The last form of evaluative strategy was through counting the number of farmers’ markets established as well as vendors at those markets. In a way, this is a continuation of the meeting of established goals; however, it was determined for this research that it varies enough in scope to warrant its own sub-code.

There were 11 FPCs who responded that they did not yet have an established evaluative strategy for measuring success and community impact. Also, two FPCs in particular responded
in ways that did not really fit into the coding scheme. One FPC stated, “when we have an equitable food system [in their region] (FPC23).” The other response was that they have evaluated success through “continue[d] existence in a competitive funding arena (FPC35).”

Table 18. FPC Strategies for Evaluating Impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process Measures</td>
<td>Participation, Attendance, member surveys</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Attendance at meetings; attendance and interest; We evaluate our success in the following ways: # of monthly Steering Committee meeting with full attendance, # of public attending Steering Committee meetings, # of successful campaigns, # Attending movie series, # Attending community events - Food Day, # Attending Council annual meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic planning – based off mission/goals</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>We review our annual goals and discuss if we have met them. This is done on an annual basis; We created a food systems recommendations report and did some evaluation of this report a few years later to assess progress; success is being measured on implementation of action items from the Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Measures</td>
<td>Program and policy wins and expansion</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>By getting new ordinances passed that support a stronger community food system; Successful implementation of FSC policy recommendations; Policies implemented, Programs and events completed, Surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strength in network and increase local capacity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>The quantity and quality of direct network building and actions based on their work; Our success at this point is measured subjectively simply by the flow of information among members and the assistance that we provide to each other; policy-systems-environmental changes through multi-agency collaboration; engaged/active networking, information sharing, coordination, and communication of members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program impact assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>We have completed a formal evaluation of the commission's impact currently and over time; program level assessments, policy achievements, work plan completion and feedback at annual meeting; keep track of program impact by tracking relevant metrics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Measures</th>
<th>Number of Farmers’ markets and vendors</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Total number of Farmers’ Markets in the county and number of vendors participating. Number of Farmers’ Market coupons redeemed; school involvement in the farm to school program, more farmers and customers at local markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funders’ requirements</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>we evaluate if we have met our grant funded objectives; through grant reports; Through deliverables required by funders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Findings

The results presented in this chapter addressed the broader research question, “How do FPCs engage with the community and evaluate success, and what impacts do their strategies have in the community?” To respond, the answers to the questions “How would you describe efforts for citizen engagement in your FPC?” and, “How has your FPC evaluated success?” were coded and presented. From the responses to the citizen engagement question, five themes were identified, Hosting Events/Meetings, Public Outreach/Online Outreach, Food Systems Assessments, Member Organization Networking, and Project Management. Regarding the question about how FPCs evaluated success, the responses were broken up into process and outcome measures based off the CCAT framework for community impact. More FPCs noted evaluating success using strategies that align with process measures, or internal organization and structure.

The results presented in this chapter attempt to compile for the first time the strategies FPCs use to evaluate whether or not they are having an impact in the community. As with any form of variable metric, the measure of impact is challenging. With this, the measurement is further challenged by the inconsistent nature of both jurisdictional focuses and the individual agendas of the food policy coalitions. However, by placing the particular strategies within the
organizational framework of the CCAT, we are able to identify trends among the different groups across the broader spectrum of work being done by FPCs. This organizational structure based on trends assists with the development of more accurate tools specific to the actual FPC work. Similar uses apply with the results regarding community engagement. The time spent by FPCs reaching the community and positively impacting the food system could potentially be used more efficiently through the operationalization of the trends identified from these results.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CASE STUDY: IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES

Chapter Introduction

The following chapter will discuss the responses from key informant interviews as well as supplemental documentation regarding the strategies one particular food policy council operationalized to address community food security as defined through its goals and objectives. Two broad sets of questions were asked to each of the key members of the FPC. The first set of questions pertained to organizational structure, member representation, and the goals of the group. The second series of questions regarded implementation of strategies and perceptions of community impact. The questions asked to these key informants were framed by the three aforementioned research questions posed for this study. Furthermore, the data gained through the in-depth interview process aided in gaining insight for one of the overarching research goals of determining why FPCs use different community food security strategies for influencing change in the community.

This chapter is organized by first discussing the characteristics of the case study food policy council and its membership, and more specifically, the agenda setting goals and objectives and the member organizations that are both represented on the council as well as missing from the conversation. The next part presents specific examples of the process to implement two community food security strategies and the role the FPC played in that process. Lastly, this chapter gives a summary on perceptions of FPC effectiveness and its impact on the community.
The effectiveness discussion was grounded in the explanations of the evolution of two specific policies, a backyard chicken ordinance and the expansion of the local cottage food law. Within both these examples given, the interviewees highlight where they perceived their FPC was most effective and where it had the greatest impact on community food security.

**Organizational Structure**

At the time when the members were interviewed, the case study FPC had been in existence for three years. The roles of the members interviewed were facilitator and chair of the sub-committee for processing and distribution. Both members were on the original steering committee for the FPC and have been active throughout its existence. The FPC has a multi-county focus that was jurisdictionally defined by the State’s regional planning councils. The main focus is on the largest county in that area/region and the largest of the municipalities within. The FPC was a volunteer organization with no fee collection or annual membership payments. There are five sub-committees within the structure, which include: production, processing and distribution, waste, community outreach and critical resources. The mission of the group is to “advocate for policies and programs that support a healthy, equitable, and economically viable food system.” The goals of the group are as follows: 1) create access to and understanding of foods that promote health; 2) educate the public about our regional food system; and 3) foster collaboration and build capacity among all sectors of the local farm-to-table network.

The FPC is made up of various different member organizations; however, it was stated that the government and non-profit sectors are more heavily represented in this group. Interestingly, it was explained that the organization is flat, meaning that each person/organization
that comes to the table has an equal voice, which sort of flies in the face of the traditional governmental organizational structure based on hierarchy. Furthermore, it was explained that at the beginning, the group was well distributed between policy minded (planners) and private sector (business people). It was noted that the business oriented people wanted to get “something done” and the planners were more about “consensus building and processes,” the former got restless. One of the interviewees stated, “This has been a very interesting experience because many members when they engaged with [the FPC] were under the impression that policy change would soon follow (Intv2).” The reality was something quite different. As the group evolved and began to layout a more structured strategic plan, several members from the private sector groups lost interest, most likely due to the slow pace of progress (something that was noted by the interviewees as it was made vocal at several meetings), and left the FPC.

The organizational makeup of the FPC was explained and attributed to the fact that it is a volunteer group. “People that commit their time are those who have the time commit,” which has essentially self-selected or self-defined itself within the governmental and non-profit sectors, for workers with positions that relate to, and align with the objectives and schedule of the FPC. It was stated matter-of-factly “It is a volunteer organization, and when you have a volunteer organization it is up to people to volunteer time (Intv2).” While this seems like a pretty logical conclusion/statement, there are particular undercurrents present. These refer to the challenge of creating continuity by relying on a group of individuals that are not formally/officially invested. The organizations that were missing from the conversation were identified as consumers, growers, processors and distributors. All of which potentially could have had conflicting schedules.
This case study FPC had not formally defined community food security; however, similar to many other FPCs from across the country, the members did explain the concept as it related to the organization’s goals and objectives. The assumption, as laid out in their goals, is to have food for every neighborhood while at the same time trying to improve local food access. When asked how the FPC engaged with its goals and objectives, the responses aligned with those strategies exposed in the nation-wide survey. The interviewees stated that they engaged through multimedia and word of mouth. More specifically, a number of members have spoken at conferences and have done workshops, which spurred research and got others involved in the food systems planning process. The responses from the interviewees pointed to the most effective strategies perceived as being educational campaigns as well as through networking and pooling resources.

Examples of Effectiveness

It was stated that “[m]ost policy changes involve organizational attitudinal change (Intv2).” A good example of this point is through the evolution of a backyard chicken policy in the FPCs focus municipality. Several key elements came together to move this particular policy forward, which were recognized and supported by the local food policy coalition. The idea was for the City to introduce a pilot program that allowed for residents to maintain a number of chickens in their backyards. There were a lot of upfront misunderstandings, the resistance was enormous and the program proposal received national media attention, both positive and negative. However, as time progressed and the program got sponsorship by a local City Council member, it became more accepted by the larger community. The local FPC member stated, “the fact that we got an early adopter that was a politician, that could move or change policy, could
also introduce it through a pilot program, which in the sphere of food, tends to work effectively (Intv2).” It was explained that launching right into a program can make community members anxious or it could be met with outright opposition. A pilot test lends itself a level of comfort to those people that could change policy because there is a terminal date attached.

Specific to the backyard chicken program in this particular municipality, there was an education campaign administered by the local extension office. Essentially, the extension office had the resources available to teach citizens how to raise chickens at home. Because you had dedicated staff time with the City, the extension office that would educate and evaluate participants, and an early adopter who was a local policy maker that made their experiences vocal to other policy makers and the community, the backyard chicken program shifted to a program that could legitimately work for the City, and policy actions soon followed.

This backyard chicken push started around the same time as the formation/creation of this case study FPC. The FPC worked in concurrence with the pilot to inform and educate other members, often from other governing entities and non-profits. More specifically, the FPC acted as a vehicle to share successes and failures with the pilot, and the policy direction that would accompany it. This FPC specifically would share the experiences of a sister municipality, who was represented on the council as well, where a similar backyard chicken pilot was proposed and never gained traction. The sister municipality moved the proposal forward as an agenda item to City Council to be studied and the idea was voted against and the proposal became dead in the water. The interviewee stated “what I see with policy change is getting together and do education, people come to the table with their experiences with failures and successes, other groups can take that information and make that change and the FPC is there it support it (Intv2).”
With the case of this particular FPC, support through education and networking moves forward as key to making positive impacts regarding policies and programs that assist with strengthening community food security. The FPC may not be the organization to directly carry forward a policy, but rather the reliance on other member organizations to do so. A great example of this particular point is the passing of the cottage food law in the county in which the FPC represents. More broadly, cottage food law in Florida allows for individuals to sell food that was prepared at home in unlicensed non-commercial kitchens. This law applies to only certain food that does not possess a high risk of foodborne illness. The intent of this law is to support and encourage small food producers to sell their products direct to consumers without having to go through the rigorous process of permitting through the State Department of Agriculture, which undoubtedly presents barriers to small food producers. The maximum cap for cottage food operations is $50,000 in gross sales annually. Some examples of cottage food operations are, cakes and pastries, homemade pasta, cereals, and honey. While this is approved at the state level, the cottage food operation must be adopted and comply with all county and municipal regulations regarding processing, storage and sale of the product (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services).

A year after the FPC formation, a municipality member was attending an FPC meeting while a county representative mentioned the recent passing of a cottage food law in their respective jurisdiction. With that, they also mentioned that the City did not have similar rules and charged the group, and the municipal representative in particular, to look more into it. The FPC as a whole, after hearing the positive impacts of such a rule, agreed it was a good thing for the greater region and worked to move it forward. The expertise to pursue action was at the table at the time, backed with planning and policy writing skills. The proposal was presented to the
City and shortly after, a determination was written that administratively amended City code to adopt rules to support cottage food businesses. From that point, residents of the municipality were permitted to use the guidelines laid out in the cottage food law to produce food from home. The interviewee stated that “although the FPC has not pursued policy directly, as things have arisen, partners have tried to address them, and created change as a result (Intv1).”

**Networking and Resource Pooling**

Another example of the strengths of the FPC as expressed by the interviewees is the possibilities for networking and resource pooling. As an example, the case study FPC applied for a grant to do county specific research on food production and distribution through the analytical lens of economic development. This was an idea that came out of group discussions as well as a similar project that focused more on regional policies regarding the different parts of the food systems. Interest in the previous project, but limited time and financial resources, prompted a more structured study to be developed, in which grant funding was requested at the state level. This grant was awarded and the study conducted. It has since been replicated in a neighboring county and there are plans for expanding a similar research model throughout the region. It was noted that a huge impetus for the awarding of this grant was due to the level of support for the research shown by the FPC member organizations. In addition to the grant application, five letters of support were submitted by, municipal governments, local businesses, and various other food system stakeholders (Intv1).

Similarly, the FPC, at one of its monthly meetings, mentioned that there was interest among a couple participants in applying for the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program grant. The interested parties were a municipal government and a local food hub. When they met
challenges internally, they kicked the idea to another member of the FPC, and they ran with it because they were looking for additional funding for food related projects. The FPC rallied behind this organization and helped with the grant application, as well as gathered several letters of support from member groups. One of those letters of support came from a former director of a Farmers Market in the state who came to an FPC meeting and gave a presentation. So, within six days of application deadline, through the work of several members of the FPC and its network, developed and submitted a proposal that was successfully awarded by the USDA. It is the positive relationships created at the council that made examples like this possible. It is not exactly formally working on policy but it’s creating those connections that assist certain partners to pursue projects and programs that benefit the larger community.

**Summary of Findings**

Several conclusions can be drawn from these in-depth interviews, which serve to bolster some of the themes presented by the responses given in the national survey. The first is the alignment with this particular FPC defining community food security within the terms of their goals and objectives. This was similar to 15% of the responses given on the survey. Also, interestingly, this FPC recognized networking as a huge component aiding effectiveness. Through the narrative of a couple policy engagement examples, this chapter highlighted the role that this particular FPC played throughout the process. Also, other strategy examples were exposed, similar with the survey that was not originally identified by the framework. These strategies mainly centered on education through networking and the pooling of member organization resources, both time and monetary assistance.
CHAPTER EIGHT
DISCUSSION

Chapter Introduction

This chapter synthesizes the results from the preceding chapters and places them within the context of the broader objectives of the project. It further presents the larger discussion about the stated issues associated with measuring of impact of policies, projects, and educational campaigns in the community through the lens of community food security. The general intent of this study was to broaden the research base regarding the effectiveness of US food policy coalitions in strengthening community food security. It was intended to critically review the reasons behind the sharp increase in FPCs over the last decade and determine if FPCs are a viable use of resources public entities and non-profits to invest in. More specifically, are FPCs an effective model for addressing community food security?

To further explore the concept of effectiveness, the following objectives were laid out. First, this study sought to identify the intervention strategies being utilized by FPCs that support community food security objectives in the United States. Next, it attempted to broaden the understanding as to the perceptions of which community food security strategies food policy coalitions are using to most influence community change: policy advocacy, pilot projects and public awareness/education campaigns. In addition, this study worked to determine if there are alternative strategies specific to FPCs being utilized to address CFS and how they are being evaluated and engaging with the community. Lastly, this study aimed to draw conclusions as to
the extent of the perceived effectiveness of the FPC model in implementing CFS strategies. To address these overarching objectives, three specific research questions were posed and the responses from multiple data gathering methods were collected and analyzed. The following chapter places those results in the broader literature and discusses how the results from this research contribute to the larger conversation about food policy coalitions and community food security.

While the number of FPCs are continuing to grow throughout the US and abroad, research on these organizations are still somewhat limited regarding how effective they are with strengthening issues of community food security, which leaves several gaps in the overall academic understanding that this research sought to fill. One gap in particular that this research provides insight on is FPC engagement directly with the concept of community food security by looking at how these specific groups are defining it, and identifying strategies for addressing it. The next area in which this research contributes is the interventions used by FPCs for confronting food security at the local and regional levels.

**Defining Community Food Security**

There are a couple significant takeaways from these research findings that add to better understanding how food policy councils define community food security. First, as emphasized in earlier sections, FPCs are becoming the foremost model for organizing action to respond to CFS related issues in specified regions and at the state/local-level throughout the United States. With this being the reality across the US, it is extremely important to understand what specifically defines their strategies; this is where definitions become increasing important. For the respondents highlighted in this study, there was a high degree of similarity in structure and
substance concerning how their particular FPCs are defining community food security. The general structure of responses was as follows: a mention of “access to food,” with a description of the type of food, a specified temporal scope, and, reference to a certain population of people. Support to help better understand this trend can be found in the literature over the years. Bellows and Hamm (2002) state, “[i]nterpretations of food security thus vary according to the scale it is defined at, the sector that defines it (private, private non-profit, and public), and the scale and sector that creates it (p.34).” These authors further make the claim that “a definitional flexibility that encourages multiple interpretations of food security creates a more complete, but also a more complex picture of food needs (Bellows and Hamm, 2002, p.35).” Furthermore, Bellows and Hamm (2002), using examples from social and cultural scholars, refer to the concept of CFS as meaning more than specific space and scale in which food security is monitored, it carries with it the activities and efforts put forth by the community to meet the needs of its members (p35). The FPCs featured in this research’s findings reinforces that position through the responses by each FPC that gave similarly structured definitions; however, unique to their specific goals and objectives in their geographic area of focus. An example of this is, “Our community is a place where all people at all times have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious food in order to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to making [the county] a place where all live in dignity (FPC36).”

With the compilation of responses from a wide selection of food policy councils within the United States, this research uncovered certain unifying trends regarding how they define their work. For instance, 15% of the responses defined CFS in the terms of their own objectives and goals. According to Community Food Security: A Guide to Concept, Design and Implementation, regarding the objectives set for an FPC, “both short and long term food security efforts should be
consistent with that mission (p. 29).” Furthermore, responses by each individual FPC potentially shed light on missions, goals and agenda setting. More specifically, the FPCs that tweaked their definitions, adding additional terms to tailor it to their jurisdiction, highlight certain priority areas that are common across many locales. Also, the incorporation of the area specific components in differing definitions of community food security demonstrated FPCs taking ownership of the responsibility to address the issue. This was demonstrated in the responses from several FPCs. An example is, community food security means, “increasing community resiliency by fostering vibrant local agriculture and increasing access to healthy food for everyone in the [FPC] region (FPC60).”

**Implementation of Strategies**

Schiff (2008) identified a common thread among FPCs relating to the tension between policy and program work. Now, close to 20 years after Schiff’s findings were published, and with considerable growth in the number of active FPCs in the United States and diversity in the work they engage with, this observation remains essentially true. My research exposed, through an analysis of nation-wide survey responses, while FPCs in the US perceive policy advocacy as the most effective strategy for addressing community food security, a large portion are effectively engaging more with other strategies, often a mixture of two or more; for instance, pilot projects, networking, and public awareness campaigns. More simply put, while FPCs recognize policy advocacy as the most effective strategy for addressing community food security, many still continue to engage with strategies related to educational and public awareness campaigns as well as pilot projects and programming. As recognized in the literature it is when these three
intervention strategies are combined where the effectiveness of a coalition is maximized (Butterfoss and Kegler, 2002).

Building on this, creating and changing policy is complex work and requires a long time to achieve. While public policy development is enhanced through multi-stakeholder input (advocacy), the literal policy writing is only realized through select groups within the public entity (McClintock et al, 2012). While FPCs, or the coalition model more generally, are appropriate vehicles for identifying, researching, and advocating for specific policy topics, they are not always equipped with the adequate resources to work through the entirety of the policy process. This research has found that, in order for an FPC it remain effective, particularly with regard to community food security, it needs to engage with several, if not all of the identified intervention strategies on a continual basis. Since the policy process is long and involved, other projects need to be tackled to ensure other members on the FPC are feeling productive. This research has further identified, through analysis of in-depth key informant interviews, that a multipronged intervention strategy is needed to maintain member retention and group interest, which regards to the sustainability of the internal group processes, as well as realizing their change goals. This research found that the policy minded people, or planners, and the business people that work more in the private sector developed a schism early on, during coalition creation, due to the pace of progress. The business oriented people wanted to get “something done” more quickly while the planners were more inclined to be satisfied with consensus building and processes. This alludes to an element of coalition make-up directly influencing the opportunity for long-term stability of internal structure, which strengthens the capacity for change. Clark (2017) found this to be true with a case study of the Franklin County Local Food Council. With a
food policy audit conducted, the coalition characteristics ensured policy readiness through shared strategies, access to resources and the eventual and desired goal of policy change.

This research challenges the method posed by the work of the CFSC, and the adapted CCAT model, that the most effective process for impacting community change is to first identify needs, and then implement strategies to address those needs. This research demonstrates that these two processes need to occur simultaneously, and on-going, in order to ensure perceived effectiveness of the FPC, mainly with regard to keeping member organizations interested. This is also true regarding community outcomes. A multi-pronged intervention strategy ensures greater reach in the community (Intv2). One council stated that, “full council meetings are open to the public. We also have different Policy Action Teams (i.e. workgroups) that complete a lot of work and projects, and these meetings are open to the public/public participates in these Teams. We have a website and social media to communicate and advertise electronically, and we attend different evens to promote our council (FPC41).” This example response demonstrates the utilization of several intervention strategies being deployed in order to push change in the community. For instance, directly working on policy issues through the development of Policy Action Teams as well as spreading awareness and information through online and social media channels. This same FPC measures success with addressing community food security through its progress toward or completion of a policy goal that was prioritized on their group identified “Policy Agenda.”

With regard to policy advocacy, this research found similar trends as findings from Scherb et al (2012) concerning policy activity. Scherb et al asked FPCs to identify policies they are currently working on as well as those they have worked on in the past. The results indicated that the greatest response was on those policies that promoted access to healthy, local foods for
children, and other vulnerable populations, including those living in food deserts (Scherb et al, p 9). My research, while requesting slightly different information from FPCs, garnered some similar trends in responses. In my research, the greatest number of responses reflected FPCs advocating for farm to school expansion, local level SNAP/WIC expansion and local food purchasing preferences for public schools and institutions. These top three responses all deal with policies that promote access to healthy food for potentially vulnerable populations, specifically children and low-income individuals and households. Several interesting additions to these specific policy areas that were not mentioned with the Scherb et al (2012) study were the attention being paid to processing regulations, as well as several other environmental concerns. This area of focus was an added category included by several FPCs that deemed it significant enough to include as a “write-in” policy activity for the survey. Examples include: on-farm meat processing, less red tape for processing on site if over 51% grown on site, poultry processing, home processing, backyard slaughtering, and regulations around poultry processing and sales. This study attributes these additional policy area insights to both the evolution of FPCs over time, as well as the frame in which the survey questions were asked; i.e. through the lens of community food security where the stages of processing and distribution are critical for getting food to people.

The results gathered regarding pilot programs yielded different outcomes from what has been reported in previous studies. While FPCs stated that the most effective strategy for addressing community food security was policy advocacy; a significant number of FPCs stated that they were involved in pilot projects. A number of studies have previously noted that FPCs were more reluctant to engage in this strategy because of lack of resources or organizational will (Schiff, 2008). My research identified that nearly half of responding FPCs have engaged in
projects related to community gardens, nutrition assistance programs at farmers markets, or establishing school teaching gardens. Furthermore, several other FPCs wrote in responses to this strategy as implementing projects related to planning and assessing current trends in their local food system. These activities included mapping food assets, conducting community food assessments and ordinance reviews. These projects are notable and needed contributions to increasing the food security of a particular jurisdictional focus and to date not included in the literature as a strategy employed by FPCs. This research extracted this trend as a point to which FPCs can utilize their structure, as coalitions made up of member organizations, to leverage resources to complete projects that lead to positive community outcomes. The CCAT model recognizes assessment and planning as essential to effective coalitions; however, this stage is identified and positioned before the implementation of strategies stage. Through this research, FPCs are viewing this key activity as a stage that coincides with pilot projects. This is being viewed as an effective strategy to strengthening community food security. FPC respondents have recognized the strength in member networks to lean on the expertise of the group to draw out resources to support their respective projects and programs.

Moreover, educational and public awareness campaigns are also recognized as important strategies for addressing CFS by FPCs. Again, this is a strategy that has not been given too much attention in previous studies. This research has shown that the majority of FPC respondents recognize social media and an online presence as a notable way to strengthen CFS; as well as, hosting public workshops and participating in community events. Similar to the leveraging member organization resources to support the implementation of pilot projects, the public awareness strategy is a way for FPCs to work within their organizational structure to be effective in the community.
These results demonstrate that through the combination of the strategies identified, under the cohesive umbrella of network coordination, FPCs perceive their interventions as effective contributions to strengthening community food security. Also, the responses allude to the understanding and appreciation of the FPC model as adaptive enough to touch on the multifaceted nature of food systems work in general, particularly concerning community food security.

**Community Success**

Scherb et al (2012) state that “since FPCs are frequently cited as an effective way to address local and state food system issues, there is a need for more rigorous evaluation of the processes, outcomes, and impacts of their work.” This research sought to better understand how FPCs were evaluating their work, particularly how they were qualifying success, and what were the perceived impacts in the community as a result of their applied intervention strategies? This research found that FPCs evaluate their success through multiple different approaches.

Regarding this research focus on evaluation, a near even split was found between process measures and outcomes, to which the bulk of prior research concentrated on internal processes and operation, as it was assumed that successful internal functioning is necessary for greater external impact (Butterfoss and Keagler, 2002, p 173).

Again, the results from the survey found an almost equal split between responses dealing with internal elements as compared to external outcomes. Internal process responses were coded into two categories, Participation/engagement/member surveys and strategic planning (based off mission/goals). Examples of process measure responses were, “we use attendance and engagement at our events as a measure of success,” and “we have a policy agenda that
enumerates priorities on which we are working. Success included progress and/or completion of a priority (FPC13 and FPC41).” This grouping demonstrates the qualitative nature of evaluation within FPCs, harking back to the literature. These results concentrated on more traditional methods of documenting the strength of a coalition, such as growing internal participation and attendance at FPC hosted events and meetings. This was often described as member and community engagement.

This research has uncovered some unique characteristics within this understanding, as well as reinforcing some of the difficulties with evaluation cited in previous literature. First, the concept of evaluating a group’s success based-off the adherence to addressing externally, or self-assigned goals and objectives. The majority of responses by FPCs in the survey mentioned in one form or another an evaluation process embedded in the achievement of goals; goals set by the members of the FPC. An example response is “we have a list of priorities and we check in periodically to see how we are proceeding towards our goals and that our actions continue to be in line with our mission and vision (FPC33).” Additionally, several FPCs mentioned achievement of goals, which were set through grant requirements. The latter method for achieving success is more tangible due to its external nature. Meaning a set of qualifying standards set by external requirements; i.e. either you meet the grant-reporting requirement or you do not. The former has the potential to be more effective specific to the needs of the FPCs’ focused jurisdictions. More specifically, when the FPC develops their own set of goals in which success is measured against, there is a more likely chance that member organizations will develop strategies that are more realistic to achieve because they are built into the capacity of the organization.
Another finding was the attention paid to building networks and connecting the ability to pool resources to direct toward increasing community capacity. However, it was also reinforced the challenging nature of quantifying success through building community capacity. An example response is, “[t]he quantity and quality of direct network building and action based on [member organizations] work (FPC17).” Also, nearly 10% of respondents wrote in a “building networks” related response to the question, “what is the most effective strategy for addressing community food security.” The variety of responses is significant because it repositions “networking,” as an evaluative indicator, from a process measure used to strengthen coalition internal cohesiveness, to an approach for measuring success of intervention strategies aimed toward addressing community food security. Lasker, Weiss, and Miller (2000) (found in Butterfoss CCAT), highlight that little has been explicitly shown to demonstrate that member organizational synergy within coalitions is more effective in achieving outcomes than traditional single-organization efforts. The findings from this FPC research has identified the significance of member and community networking and organization resource pooling as both effective strategies for addressing community food security and also evaluating the success of the coalition in the community. This trend was apparent in questions related to the implementation of strategies as well has how FPCs evaluate effectiveness.

This finding was further supported in the responses to the questions specifically asked about how FPCs evaluate success. Over one-third of the responses that were coded as outcome measures had a component related to strength in networks. An example response was “county-level policy wins; policy-systems-environmental changes through multi-agency collaboration; engaged/active networking, information sharing, coordination, and communication of members.” Another reason this is a significant finding is that is reinforces the recognition by FPCs of the
value of adding networking to the selection of viable and deployable intervention strategies. Again, when FPCs were asked to pick the most effective strategy for addressing CFS, nearly 10% of respondents answered with some variation of “collaboration opportunities,” or “bringing stakeholders together to tackle barriers and challenges.”

Furthermore, this research confirms the finding in previous research that success is measured through policy and program wins as stated by several of the FPC respondents. This was highlighted by FPCs also through the influence they have had with policy recommendations that have eventually become implemented. These policy wins often harken back to strategic plans developed by the FPCs as well as through the direct result of hosted workshops and other events. However, it could also be concluded that FPCs that evaluate success on the amount of policies passed could be potentially troublesome for the perceived effectiveness of the coalition. Considering the information collected from the survey and case-study interviews, policy passing is a long and involved process. This reality could skew an evaluation of success simply because of the nature of policy work.

Overall, these research findings confirm the reality that FPCs, due to the complex and multi-level nature of their focus, have a difficult time quantifying tangible success in the community. However, because of the methods employed to gather this evaluative data, it can be concluded that FPCs are indeed cognizant of the significance of measuring success. The variety of examples given demonstrates that FPCs perceive their work as a needed and essential component to strengthening community food security.
Conclusion

The intervention strategies being utilized by FPCs to support community food security objectives in the United States span the entirety of the food system, from production to food waste. The research discussed above is the first attempt to organize the activities being conducted by FPCs to address the food issues in the community. While other studies have uncovered policy priorities for FPCs or how these coalitions are structured, none to my knowledge have attempted to examine how FPCs are perceiving impact based on the interventions they are deploying in the community. These findings indicate that no singular intervention method can adequately address the complexity of food security issues experienced at the community level, and as such focus efforts that overlap in order to increase effectiveness. This is demonstrated through the combining of multiple approaches in the implementation of strategies to reach their established goals and objectives. The FPCs highlighted in this research, which at the time represented nearly one-third of reported FPCs in the United States, engage with several strategies in order to impact change in the community, specific to food security.

To broaden the understanding as to the perceptions of which community food security strategies food policy coalitions are using to most influence community change, this research has revealed that while the FPCs sampled point to policy advocacy as the most effective method, in practice, they are utilizing multi-strategic approaches. These interventions include implementing pilot projects and educational and public awareness campaigns alongside policy action. It was well noted that this multipronged approach is important to not only impact community change, but also maintaining stability in the coalition through successful implementation. Moreover, this research has revealed that FPCs view networking as an additional strategy for impacting
community change. Several FPCs are even utilizing the strength in networks as a key indicator for evaluating the success of the group.

![Diagram of Implementation of Strategies and Assessment and Planning]

**Figure 3.** Adapted CCAT Model Highlighting Outcome Measures

Regarding the conclusions as to the extent of the perceived effectiveness of the FPC model in implementing CFS strategies, this research has found that the strength and reach of member organizations working together is indeed significant and enhanced through this organizational model. The FPC is an appropriate vehicle for working out strategies for addressing the endemic issue of food security in communities; however, more attention needs to be paid to structured evaluation of change in the community. These research finding are significant because they identify how FPCs, already working within their organizational capacity, are evaluating their success. This paints a vivid picture of the groups’ strengths and limitations. There is little doubt that the members feel their work is impactful, it is important; however, that they are able to demonstrate its impact. This could be by developing metrics based on the groups’ existing capacity.
There are some slight modifications to the FPC applied CCAT model that speak to the realities as to how FPCs are implementing strategies to address community food security, referenced in Figure 3. As shown with the results of this research, there is a more back and forth relationship between the stages of assessment and planning and the implementation of strategies. It was recorded that often FPC view strategic planning as a strategy for impacting community change. Also, networking and the reliance of member resources should be identified as a specific intervention for addressing community change. This relates back to the traditional CCAT model where collaborative synergy is the umbrella concept to which the implementation of strategies is possible. This however needs to include a set of metrics that can track the work throughout the life of the coalition. These metrics need to be folded into the FPCs’ methods for how they are evaluating success in the community.
CHAPTER NINE
LOOKING FORWARD: DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Overview of Food Policy Coalitions

Research on food policy councils, which has definitely experienced an increase in attention in recent years, still remains relatively sparse. This area of study is prime for more academic focus, particularly in the sectors of impact evaluation, social and environmental justice, and sustainability. Recent research has indeed started addressing some of these areas; however, there is still much work to be done. It is important to reiterate the words of Butterfoss and Kegler (2002) regarding the development of the Community Coalition Action Theory and the significance of the work of coalitions in the community. They state the CCAT is “based on assumptions that communities can develop the capacity to deal with their own problems; people should participate in making, adjusting, or controlling the major changes taking place in their communities; and, changes in community living that are self-imposed or self-developed have meaning and permanence that imposed changes do not have (2002, p. 158-159).” Through this research, these assertions are confronted, and FPCs are shown to be appropriate vehicles of change specific to working toward strengthening food security in the community.

Research Application

The research findings described throughout the preceding chapters helps us better understand the strategies that FPCs are using to address community food security at the local and
regional levels in the United States. These findings are relevant to both the public and private sectors. Governments, non-profits and the private sector have been increasingly turning to the FPC organizational model as a way to diversify planning strategies through economic development and through the support of sustainability objectives, as well as work to better engage with the wider community; among numerous other reasons and motivations. This research has pointed to how current FPCs are perceiving their effectiveness with regard to impacting change in the community specific to food security. The amount of weight FPCs give to the significance of network building and resource pooling with effecting change was an important finding from this research that can in turn be applied as both an intervention strategy for addressing CFS and an evaluative variable for measuring effectiveness. This is particularly poignant for organizations with limited resources; often how most FPCs operate.

This research also presents the strategies that FPCs throughout the US are employing to address community food security. This research has gathered a variety of strategies from the perspective of food policy coalitions throughout the United States. While it is clear that each jurisdiction is different, subject to different regulations, there is indeed value in knowing what is being implemented in other areas. The identification of trends across jurisdictional boundaries points to the interventions that are utilized in some areas and not as appropriate in other areas. This is beneficial for FPCs that are in their forming stages or those looking to revitalize their existing agendas. It gives these FPCs the opportunity to view the current strategies being utilized in the field as an aggregate and identify which apply to their area, as well as develop interventions unique from this list. This saves time and resources for the FPC that may already be stretched pretty thin. They can work off a list of already established strategies without having to develop from scratch. The same concept can be applied with regard to the development of
evaluation strategies and community engagement techniques. This research presents the techniques that FPCs are using to evaluate their success in the community. It is important for young FPCs to establish a methodology for measuring success early on. It is recommended from this research that developing indicators specific to FPC goals and objectives works best with regard to FPC perceptions of success in the community.

**Next Steps for this Research**

While the findings from this research study help to contribute to a better understanding of how FPCs perceive the effectiveness of their strategies for addressing issues related to community food security, there are some limitations that can be improved upon for future studies in this area. It would be valuable for the next iteration of this research to include metrics for weighing the priority level for the strategies FPCs are engaging with. Meaning, while this study was designed in a way that did well to capture the wide variety of policy, project and educational campaigns FPCs are engaging with, the methodology falls short on its ability to weigh these activities against each other. The amount of strategies presented in policy advocacy were not even with those presented for pilot project as well as educational campaigns. Because of this, it restricted the data analysis to specifically identifying which one of the broad intervention strategies the FPC perceived to be most effective. While this is valuable and has yet to be captured in the academic literature, it would have indeed been interesting if the individual strategies could be weighed against each other to see their related impact in the community. This would have also been useful for potentially breaking down this data quantitatively.

Another limitation exposed through the research methodology that was deployed was the notion of connecting underrepresented organizations to the specific strategies the FPCs were
using to address CFS. While there was some useful data collected as to the organizations not represented at the table for each of the FPC respondents, based off how those data points were captured, after-the-fact, it was realized that there was no sound way to connect those missing organizational voices to the generation of policy agendas or the strategies used by the specific FPC in particular. More specifically meaning, it would have potentially been valuable to better understand the motivations behind defining CFS specific to the FPC and as they are relevant to the organizational make-up of the coalition. That level of understanding could only realistically have been achieved through a more robust case study methodology where the more in-depth responses could have been generalized across a larger sample size.

There is indeed ample room for growth in understanding in this research topic area. While there has been much progress in the field of organizational evaluation, the Food Policy Council model still lacks warrants academic attention. The research presented in the proceeding chapters builds on this literature but there is still much work to do.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent to Participate in Research
Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

Pro # 00026115

Researchers at the University of South Florida (USF) study many topics. To do this, we need the help of people who agree to take part in a research study. This form tells you about this research study. We are asking you to take part in a research study that is called: Strategies for Addressing Community Food Security: A Study of Food Policy Coalitions in the United States. The person who is in charge of this research study is Joseph England. This person is called the Principal Investigator.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is: (1) to broaden the understanding of which community food security strategies food policy coalitions are using to most influence community change: policy advocacy, pilot projects and public awareness/education campaigns, and (2) to investigate why FPCs use different CFS strategies for influencing change in the community.

Why are you being asked to take part?
We are asking you to take part in this research study because you can act as a voice for your food policy coalition in describing the strategies use to address food security in your community.

Study Procedures
If you take part in this study, you will be asked to: (a) participate in an online survey, and (b) you will be asked to share your experiences and perceptions as a representative member of your particular Food Policy Coalition. Your survey responses will be coded, de-identified, and stored securely on a password-protected computer. The PI, Joseph England, will have exclusive access to survey responses.

Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal
You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer; you are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

Benefits and Risks
We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study. This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the...
same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

**Compensation**

We will not pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

**Privacy and Confidentiality**

We must keep your study records as confidential as possible. It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because you are responding online.

Certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are: PI, Joseph England, Faculty Advisor, Dr. Feuda Akwumui and The University of South Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB).

- It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. No guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet. However, your participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person’s everyday use of the Internet. If you complete and submit an anonymous survey and later request your data be withdrawn, this may or may not be possible as the researcher may be unable to extract anonymous data from the database.

**Contact Information**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu. If you have questions regarding the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Joseph England, at joseph68@mail.usf.edu.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. We will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are. You can print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by proceeding with this survey that I am agreeing to take part in research and I am 18 years of age or older.

[Survey Link here]
Appendix B: Notification Email for Member Survey

Hello,

The following information is intended to notify you of an opportunity to take part in a survey of Food Policy Coalitions (FPC) regarding strategies for addressing community food security. You are being asked to participate in this survey in order to reflect on your experiences and knowledge as a leading member of your FPC. This survey is part of a larger research study (eIRB#00026115) that seeks to better understand the intervention strategies that support community food security objectives throughout the US. The survey is administered via the Qualtrics online portal and is completely voluntary. Completion of this survey should take no more than 15 minutes. The deadline to take this survey is July 1st, 2016.

The Principal Investigator in charge of this research study is Joseph England, with oversight by Dr. Fenda Akiwumi at the USF School of Geosciences, Department of Environmental Science and Policy. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, you may contact Joseph England at (321) 217-8736 or joseph68@mail.usf.edu.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best,

Joseph England
Appendix C: Notification Email for FPC Member Interview Request

Hello name of FPC member,

I would like to notify you of an opportunity to take part in a research study regarding strategies for addressing community food security. You are being asked for an interview to discuss your experience as a leading member of a Florida Food Policy Council. This interview is part of a broader research study (eIRB#00026115) that seeks to better understand the intervention strategies that support community food security objectives in the US.

More specifically, if you take part in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a single 45-60 minute semi-structured interview at a locality that is most convenient for you. You will be asked to share your experiences and perceptions as a Food Policy Council member.
- The interview will be audio recorded. The information used for this study will not be identifiable. The PI, Joseph England, will have exclusive access to the recordings.

If you are interested in this project please respond so we can set up a date and time for the interview that is most convenient for you. Also, please provide contact of those on your FPC that you feel would assist with this research.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact me at (321) 217-8736 or joseph68@mail.usf.edu.

Best,
Joseph England
Appendix D: Survey Guide

Background Information

What food policy coalition do you belong?
How long have you held a leadership role in your FPC?
What is your role/duties in your FPC?
What area/jurisdiction does your FPC focus (county, municipality(ies), region, state)? Be as specific as possible.
Is the service area considered more rural or urban or a combination of both?
How long has your FPC been in existence?
How many different organizations make up your FPC?
Has your FPC conducted a Community Food Assessment that looks at all sectors of the food system?
What sectors of your food system are underrepresented, or not represented at all, in the regular decision making of your FPC?
Please define community food security, as your FPC understands it.
How would you describe efforts for citizen engagement in your FPC?
How has your FPC evaluated success?

Intervention Measures

Policy Advocacy

Influencing of decision makers, at different levels of government, through activities such as litigation, interagency networking, lobbying, and public education.

Has your FPC advocated for policies that address (check all that apply specifically to the work of your FPC) -

- Urban agriculture zoning change
- Farmers’ markets zoning change
- Zoning for Mobile food vending/Food Trucks and other food related startups
- Backyard chickens
- Local level SNAP/WIC expansion
- Residential gardens
- Farm-to-School expansion
- Local food purchasing preferences (schools and public institutions)
- Food Waste diversion
- Agricultural land conservation
- Sugary beverage legislation
- Farm workers equality
- Cottage food law
- Winemaking and craft breweries
- Sustainable agriculture
- Calorie counts on menus
- Matching grants (double value coupon programs) for nutrition incentives
- Healthy food banking
- Apiaries (backyard and public area beekeeping)
- Seed saving legislation
- Other policy issues not listed _______________
- Comments about Policy Advocacy

**Pilot Projects**

Also called feasibility studies or experimental trials. Activity planned as a test or trial to inform a group or organization of the potential of the project.

Has your FPC been involved or supported pilot projects that address (check all that apply specifically to the work of your FPC) -

- Traditional Farmers’ Market start-up and expansion
- Mobile Farmers’ Markets creation
- Food hubs
- Community Gardens
- Community Supported Agriculture/food buying co-ops
- School/teaching Gardens
- Backyard Chicken/animals pilot programs
- Community kitchens (to provide job training)
- Urban beekeeping residential pilot programs
- Double/triple value coupons for SNAP/WIC benefits at farmers’ markets
- Healthy corner store initiatives
- Vacant lots/brownfield revitalization
- Gleaming programs
- Other projects not listed _______________
- Comments about Pilot Projects

**Public Awareness/Education Campaigns**

The level of public understanding about the significance of certain food related issues. Educational campaigns can include workshops, presentations, and assessments to name a few.

Has your FPC engaged with public awareness/education campaigns using the following methods (check all that apply specifically to the work of your FPC) -
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Food Policy Coalition Website (independent or contained within another organization)
- Regular newsletters to the public
- Press releases
- Workshops open to the public?
- State/County Extension coordination
- Radio shows
- Protests
- Policy papers
- Host Internships/Mentorships
- Public surveys
- Host cooking classes
- Sponsor conferences
- Sponsor fairs
- Other methods not listed ______________
- Comments about Public Awareness/Education Campaigns

Generally speaking, what do you consider the most effective method for addressing community food security in your area?
Appendix E: Interview Guide

Interview Questions

_FPC overview questions_

1) What FPC do you belong and what is your role?
2) Briefly explain the mission or vision of your food policy coalition and its jurisdictional focus?
3) Can you explain member/organizational representation in your FPC?
4) Can you recognize any gaps in representation with regard to FPC membership?
5) What do you feel is the greatest strength of your FPC?
6) What are the weaknesses?

_Intervention strategy questions_

7) How does your FPC define CFS?
8) In what ways do you feel your FPC engages with food security in the community?
9) Do you feel your FPC addresses CFS most effectively through policy advocacy, pilot projects or educational campaigns/public awareness?
10) Why do you feel that particular approach is better suited than the others?
11) How does your FPC determine the strategies it will use?
12) Can you give specific examples of strategies that your FPC used to address community food security and what have been their impacts within community?