

***Connecting the Dots:
From Expanded Consumer
Interest to Real Public
Support for Sustainable Farming***

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SCALE, Inc

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- **“It’s just my opinion, but it is the word of God”**

» Letter to the Editor, Bristol Herald Courier,

We're in a 'Revival' Moment

Spiritual Awakening in our food system?



Bringing the patient back from near-death?



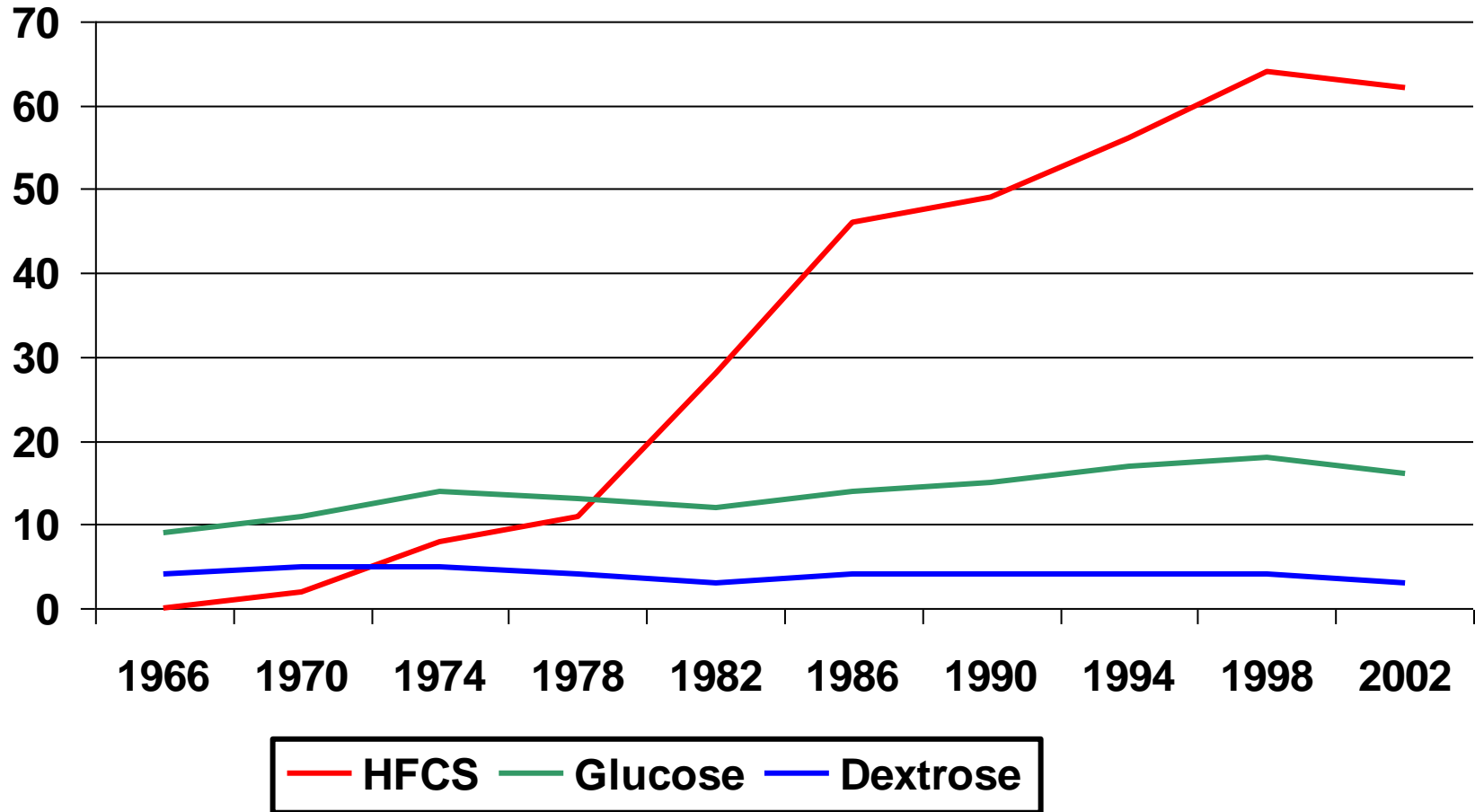
How does 'revival' make a
lasting impact?

Repentance!

That is, changing our ways,
building better habits.

* As Farmers, as consumers, as
economic developers

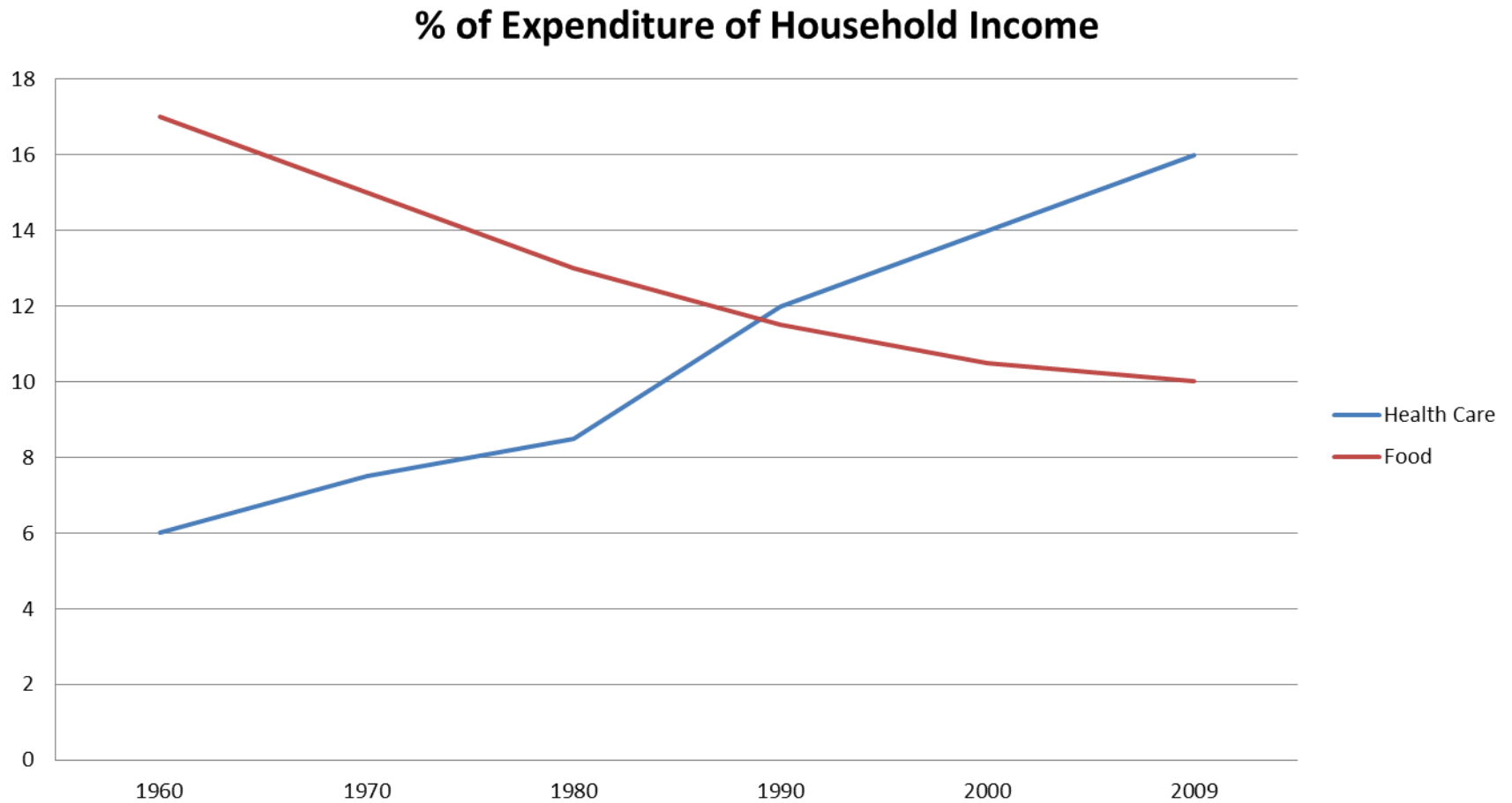
Corn Sweetener consumed in the United States, 1996 - 2002

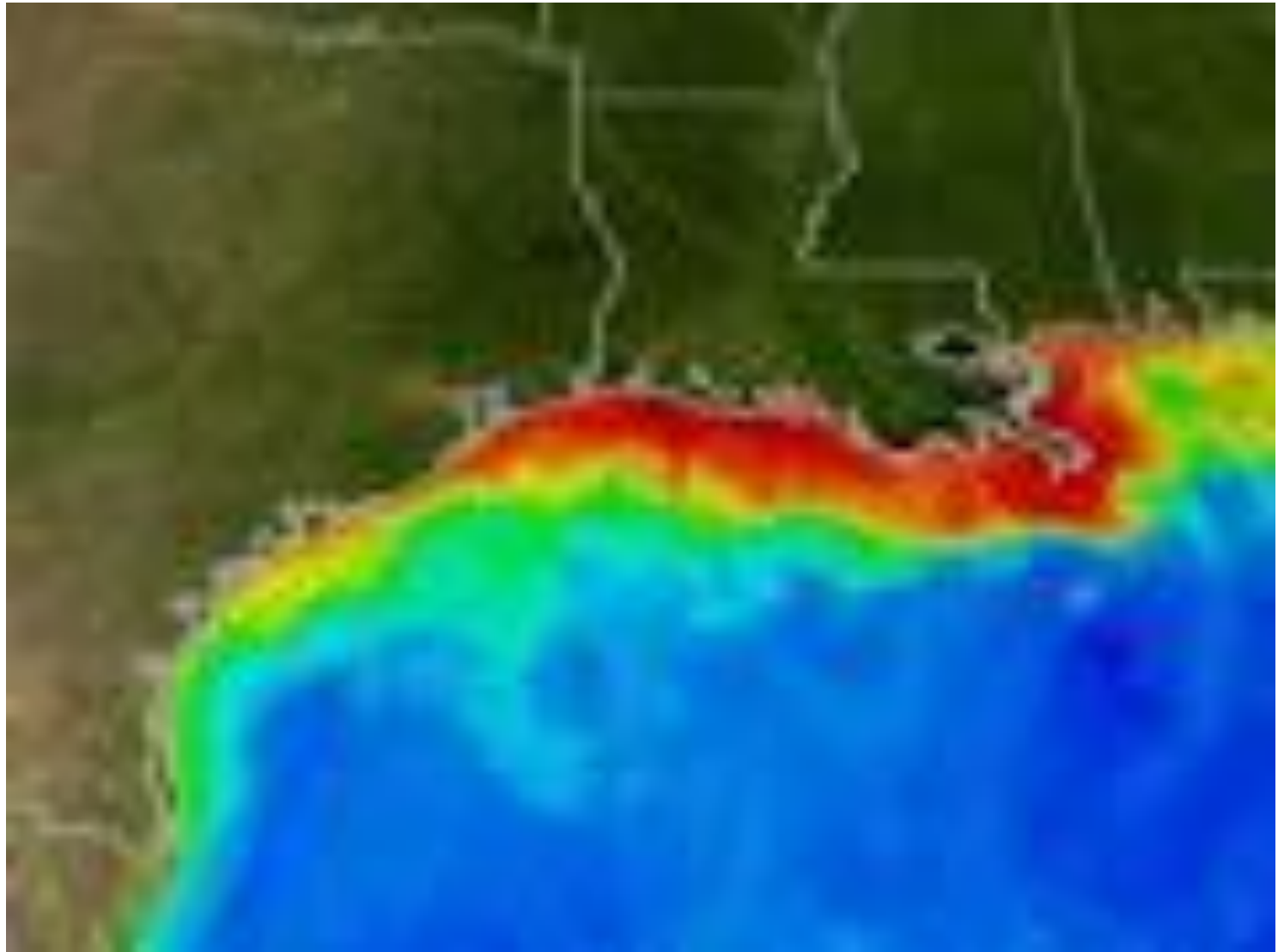


By 1990, over
half the US
population lived
within a 3 minute
drive of a
McDonalds



Food and Health Expenditures as % of Household Income





1970: gas - \$.36
milk - \$1.40/gal
farmer - \$11/cwt

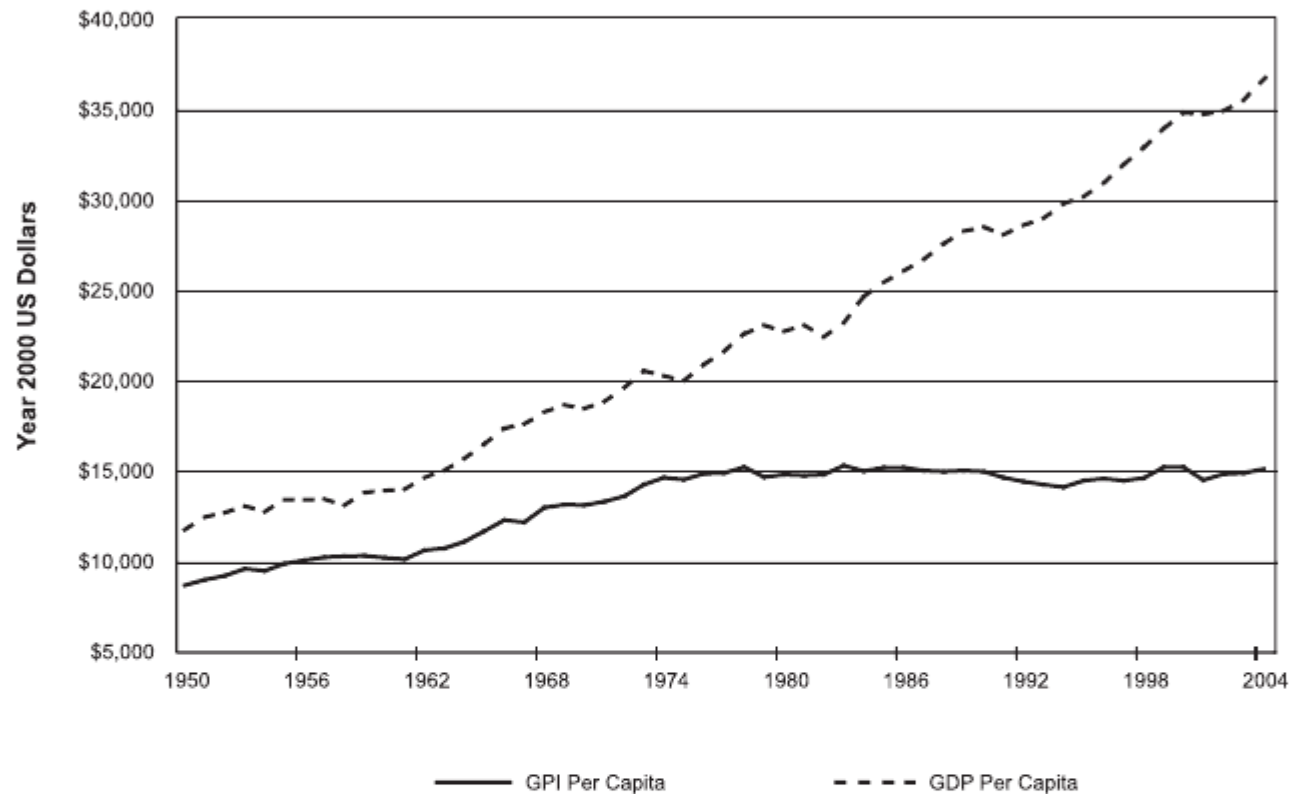
2015: gas - \$2
Milk - \$3.25/gal
farmer - \$13.50



An un-level playing field



Figure 3: Real GDP and GPI Per Capita 1950-2004



Source: Talberth, Cobb, et al. 2007.

Figure 3 shows the trend in GDP and GPI for the US from 1950 to 2004. Despite steady growth in GDP, the US economy, measured by GPI, has actually stagnated since the late 1970s as income inequality, environmental degradation, and the US's failing international position take their toll on real economic progress (Talberth, Cobb et al. 2007).

Green GDP

Numerous attempts have been made to develop Green GDPs – GDPs that

We've Come a Long Way

- Not long ago, sustainable farmers largely learned on their own and from one another, as little help was available.
- 2003 Survey of Land Grants (OFRF) found **“few of the universities had invested much time or money in organic programs.”**

Most Attention, Resources on Commodity Crops



TVA Economist (mid 1990's)

“We don't include agriculture in our statistics because it is not considered part of the economy”

1994 CSA Customer: “Where’s
my sweet corn??”



2014 customer: “Did you get through that
freeze okay?”

II. The progress we've made

- 2012: First census in generations to show **net increase in number of farmers**
- Local, regional food sales exceed \$5 Billion (USDA, 2011)
- Organic sales approach \$30 Billion

The Local Food Movement's Roots: Getting More of the Food Dollar to Farmers



**Abingdon, VA: 8000 pop;
2000+ customers, 50 vendors**



St Paul, VA: 974 people, 19% below poverty; \$25K median income... and 16 farmer vendors



Community Revitalization

National survey (Project for Public Spaces):

- * More than 60% of FM customers only come to town on market days
- * Of these, nearly 2/3 visit other nearby shops when in town for farmers market

Urban and small scale farming drives innovation



Urban farms and gardens take root, expand



Land Grants and Extension

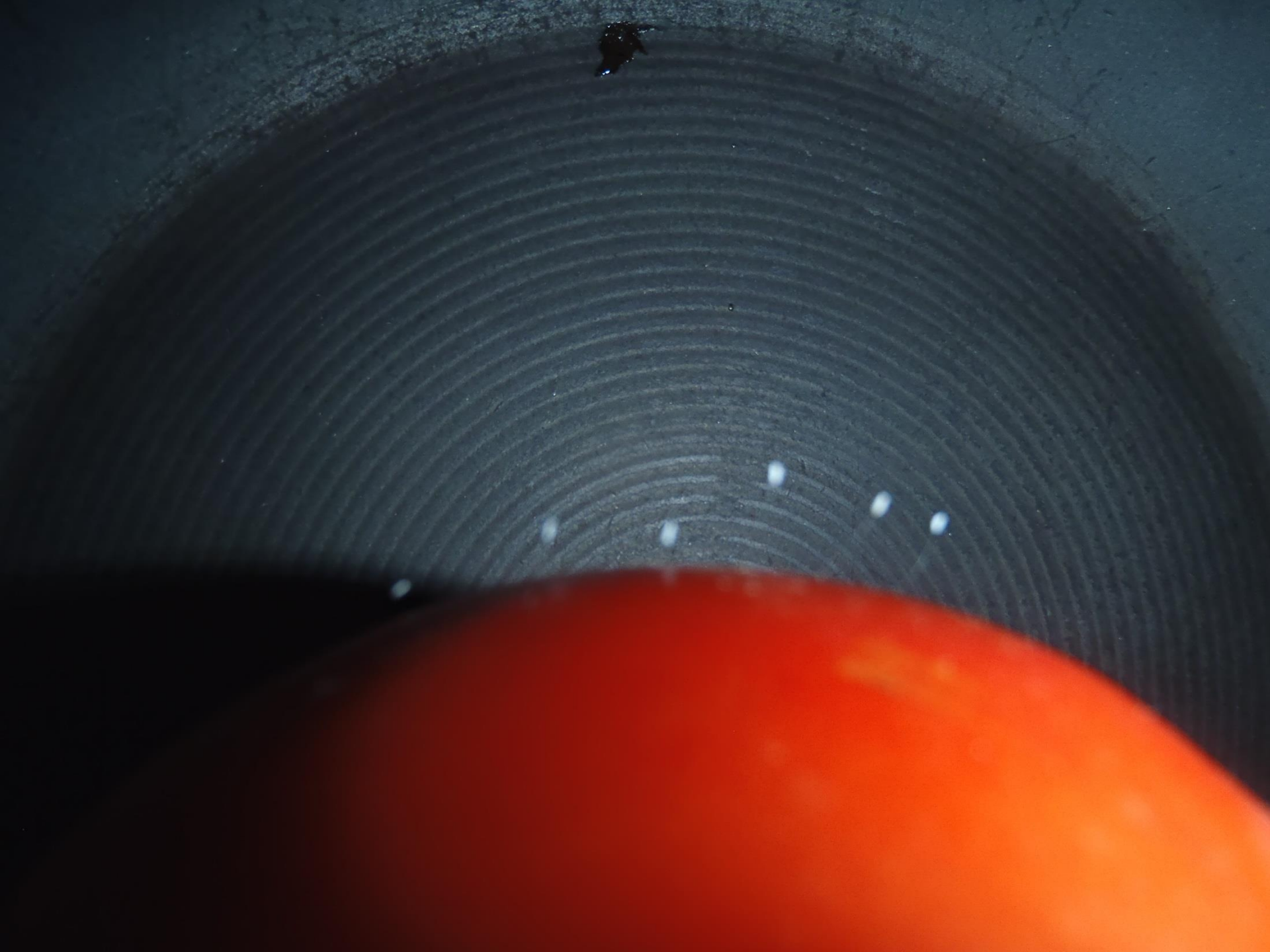
- UK, Kentucky State, UT, Virginia Tech, WVU, many more...all now have:
- **Organic/sustainable farms** on site and/or faculty and curriculum supporting small farms, sustainable farming
- Local marketing, season extension programs.
- ... Even ARC is involved!











Multispecies, controlled grazing





Nutritional Facts		Percent Daily Values	
Serving Size: 1 Egg (50g)		Amount Per Serving	
Calories 70		Total Fat 5g	
Total Fat 5g		Cholesterol 200mg	
Total Cholesterol 200mg		Sodium 150mg	
Sodium 150mg		Total Crap 0g	
Total Crap 0g		Protein 6g	
Protein 6g		Vitamin D 100IU	
Vitamin D 100IU		Calcium 50mg	
Calcium 50mg		Iron 1mg	
Iron 1mg		Zinc 1mg	
Zinc 1mg		Copper 1mg	
Copper 1mg		Manganese 1mg	
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Emergence of “food hubs”, both rural and urban



BUT... We still have major problems



Eating well vs eating fast and cheap

- Fast food restaurants spent \$4.2 Billion on marketing in 2009 alone; they vastly outnumber grocery stores
- Average calorie intake has increased by 25% since 1970
- Eating well is ***still*** much less convenient, seems more expensive

Distribution of Farm Subsidies 1995 - 2010

- Top 10 % of farmers - \$30,750 per year
- Bottom 80% of farmers - \$587 per year
- Nearly 2/3 of all farmers receive no federal subsidies

USDA 2015 study

- From 2002 – 2007, # of farms selling Direct To Consumer increased by 17%, and total DTC sales increase 32%
- However, from 2007 – 2012, the number of farmers selling DTC increased by 5%, but total DTC ***sales did not increase***

Moving Forward: Three thoughts

1. It's time to reach out to the next tier of consumers

*Beyond the foodies and locavores to the

Vaguely concerned and sporadically motivated food shopper

HOW?

Outreach to 'ordinary folks'



Reconnecting farmers and consumers



From kale and kohlrabi to cucs and burgers?







ingoles



Less food waste, less hunger



Building a “Healthy Food Culture”

- New crops, meals, cooking methods

AND

Traditional ideas of cooking,
preservation, canning and making
the most of what you have





Moving Forward

2. “Solving for Pattern”

- *Avoid solutions that create new problems, new dependencies

- *Find solutions that fix several problems, increase overall health









Reduced herbicides, fewer
weeds, healthier meats





Moving Forward

3. Build **Food Citizens** who are

Responsible, dedicated shoppers

AND

Willing to work on better public
policies

Two Views:

Thomas Friedman:

“The Market has created a global parliament”

Benjamin Barber:

“The victory of consumers is not synonymous with the triumph of democracy”

Can we cultivate “food citizens”



**Can we make “farm to fork” a
grass roots political strategy?**



Adding value to logs





Local Banks and Capital

- The “Big Five” banks hold twice as many financial assets as all the community banks combined, yet...
- Community banks do twice as much lending to small businesses

Join forces with the Local Economy Movement



Anthony Flaccavento

www.ruralscale.com

www.bottomupeconomy.org

You Tube: Take Five with Tony!