Environmental benefits of local food systems

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Ag Environmental Impacts

• Pollution from heavy use of ag inputs
  – Decreased soil fertility
  – Water pollution: fish kills, eutrophication, dead zones, polluted drinking water

• Reduction of pollinators

• Lost biodiversity

• Soil loss/erosion

• CAFO waste pollution into air, water, and land

• Antibiotic overuse leading to antibiotic resistance
What is Local Food?

• Literally = food produced relatively close to where it is sold
• Not a reliable indicator of sustainability, nor are food miles
• Good food system:
  – Source/farm identified
  – Fresh and delicious
  – Healthy, ethical, environmentally & socially responsible
  – Pasture-raised animals for eggs and meats
  – Sustainable and organic
  – Regenerative and beyond organic
• Local food sales estimated to be $20 billion in 2019
PIG GESTATION CRATES

Putting the “Factory” in Factory Farming since 1969
Pollution: water & air quality
Sustainable grazing: increases soil health & cycling nutrients, builds soil organic mater & soil function, decreases soil erosion & nutrient loss into streams.
Increasing soil fertility & decreasing pollution

More ethical, producing a healthier product
Diversified cropping, IPM, increasing biodiversity, habitat for pollinators

Monoculture, high use of chemical inputs, lack of biodiversity and habitat for pollinators
Integrated Pest Management
Support for Pollinators
Soil Conservation vs. Soil Erosion
Healthy Soil Ecosystems
Local Food Systems Supporting Rural Communities

Housing Developments and Urban Sprawl
Local Good Food Systems’ Environmental Benefits

- Carbon sequestration in soils
- Increasing soil health & fertility
- Decreased use of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides)
- Decreased pollution: soil & input run-off, eutrophication, dead zones
- Improving water quality & conservation
- Promoting biodiversity & habitat for native pollinators
- Keeping local land in agriculture vs. development
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