



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY

Deepening Food Democracy

The tools to create a sustainable, food secure and food sovereign future are already here—deep democratic approaches can show us how

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INTRODUCTION

Imagine a group of 15 citizens from your community. These citizens are a cross-section from your community, representative in gender, age, education, party affiliation and ethnicity. They gather to discuss their concerns about the impacts of climate change on their lives and potential steps to overcome those challenges. After days of discussing their collective community vision of what a sustainable and resilient community is, they draft a citizen's report. This report is used as a launching pad for conversations and actions with their local government and their community to create a sustainable future.

Now imagine thousands of your neighbors attending a community event to vote to allocate public funds—over \$1.5 million—for local projects: community gardens, playground reconstruction, community center renovations, and improving technology access for neighborhood schools. Community members proposed these projects—in fact, one comes from someone on your block. Another comes from one of your friends across town. Together, community members vote on projects. More than half of the ballots are cast in a language other than English. The representatives of your district know that these projects have the support of the community. And the community has a deeper understanding of and trust in their government and is ready to hold them accountable to these ideas developed by the community itself.

"We talk about liberal-this conservative-that, republicans-this democrats-that, at the end of the day we are our government. We are the ones responsible for making these decisions[...]I'm thrilled and honored to be a part of a process that reminds me why this grand [democratic] experiment continues. And it's not been perfect, and it will not be perfect, but we can always make it better, and things like this are a start. Thank you for the opportunity."

—Citizen Jury Member from Morris, Minnesota Rural Climate Dialogues

These two stories are true stories from Morris, Minnesota and New York City, respectively, which exemplify a style of governance that many are unfamiliar with, but is practiced across the United States and across the globe. This style of governance—called "deep democracy"—has immense implications for the way we interact with each other as citizens: with our neighbors, with our co-workers, with our governments, and with other institutions. Deep democracy blurs the lines between the government and citizen in order to make both more effective at solving tough problems. Deep democracy takes "We the People" seriously, understanding that democracy is something that can always be improved, not somewhere we've already arrived. This is particularly

true in the case of food and agriculture, where we increasingly have a system that "as individuals none of us would choose"²—a system with insufficient access to affordable food, huge amounts of food waste and obesity all at the same time. Deep democracy offers the potential to turn things around by creating new spaces and ways for us to solve our problems, by talking directly to each other, and coming up with common-sense solutions together.

Indeed, many organizations and local governments have used forms of deep democracy, in some cases, more or less continuously for *hundreds of years*.³ It is a powerful force for change through its ability to bring people together to exchange ideas—and form new ones. Using deep democracy, citizens manage budgets, discuss potential solutions for contentious health issues and manage scarce resources. Further, the true measure of the success of a deep democratic process is how well it is able to draw directly upon the voices the most marginalized and least powerful, and to truly integrate them into decision-making processes and policies. Deep democracy can change the tone of the news you hear on a daily basis: instead of hearing about gridlock in Congress and increased polarization of the American people, you can hear stories of processes that enabled cooperation and compromise across dividing lines.⁴

Deep democracy contrasts sharply with, for instance, the current U.S. political system, which is largely controlled by the voices of the few. Representatives' ability to work toward the well-being of their constituents is hindered by corporate influence, uncompetitive politics, and the fact that doing nothing and blaming it on the "other side" is often a better strategy for politicians of either party than negotiating on *anything*.⁵ Therefore, deep democracy is an alternative that allows us to decide and act on the most complex issues of the day, calling upon citizen power.

"When people delegate their power and responsibility for governance, they do not lend them but give them away." —Thomas Prugh, Robert Constanza, and Herman Daly, *The Local Politics of Global Sustainability*

"If we are to be a great democracy, we must all take an active role in our democracy. *We must do democracy*. That goes far beyond simply casting your vote. We must all actively champion the causes that ensure the common good." —Martin Luther King, III

Just as our current political system is controlled by the few,⁶ our food system has drastically changed in the past 100 years. Power and control of food and agriculture have become deeply concentrated and consolidated, at the costs of many livelihoods, justice, and sustainability. In response, people across

the country—in community organizations, at universities, within local, state, tribal, and national agencies, and in businesses are asking what a sustainable food system looks like and how we can get there. How can we simultaneously counter trends in hunger, obesity, widening socioeconomic disparity, an aging farm population being squeezed out of sustainable livelihoods and environmental damage? The efforts underway to make food systems more resilient and sustainable can be supported and facilitated through deep democratic processes.

There are already many precedents and frameworks for linking food sustainability with social justice and a reassertion of political power—from prison inmates growing food for themselves and others, to hundreds of food policy councils and citizens' food councils across the United States, to the work of groups like the Restaurant Opportunities Center United, National Family Farm Coalition, and U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance. These frameworks, actions, and movements form a foundation for how deep food democracy can evolve in the United States.

Taking it further

Where might the processes started in Morris and New York City go? These and similar approaches hold a lot of promise towards the kinds of changes we need—and can develop ourselves—that cross normal lines of party, class, race, and gender. Imagine continuing and expanding the dialogue in Morris after the 15-person discussion, and the citizens' report. Imagine repeating it in another community; then another. Community members' ideas, reports, and experiences are exchanged; commonalities are noted, as are differences. Together, citizens from the communities (perhaps you!) and others across the state are meeting with the state government to present not just citizens' reports, but also the local actions that followed. Community members directly tell their elected officials what has worked, and what hasn't; what is in common across all the communities, and what is different. The usual partisan gridlock is unable to stand in the face of this, because communities and community partners have already had the really tough discussions across the usual dividing lines. Neither party is able to ignore the momentum from their own constituents. The communities are able to tell the state what it needs to do to support a sustainable and resilient future, based on the local actions and solutions that have already been developed: by the people themselves, for the communities themselves, from across the state.

We haven't gotten to this point in deep democratic practices, where communities' solutions, and their willpower, are sustained, coordinated, and amplified together... Yet. But the project in Morris—called the Rural Climate Dialogues—is continuing, and will be coming to more communities in the coming months. The participatory budgeting process tried out in New York is one of but many examples of this process, which is now used in thousands of examples around the world. Another world of deep democracy is already here, happening around us, and it's building momentum! Look to the resources at the end of this report to learn more and explore how you can bring it to your community.

STRENGTHENING LOCAL ECONOMIES, SUPPORTING FAMILY FARMS, AND GIVING POWER IN THE FOOD SYSTEM BACK TO CITIZENS

The fundamental American values behind deep democracy are much needed, and arguably on the rise today—especially within the food movement. While the food movement in the United States is still growing, solidifying, and starting to work through its own internal inconsistencies, the importance of dignified access to food for everyone is increasingly acknowledged by NGOs, citizens and even corporations throughout the U.S. The benefits of local food and local economies are increasingly recognized, including the important part they play in supporting and even rebuilding the kinds of community connections we will need in order to face the intense challenges before us. Fighting food deserts—or what food activist Karen Washington has called food apartheid—has gained a place on national and regional agendas. Supporting small, local growers is a priority that resonates with low-income neighborhoods in the Bronx through the White House Rural Council.⁷ This burgeoning food movement is as much about putting *power* back into the hands of communities, food workers, farmers and farm workers as it is about producing and distributing healthy, sustainably-grown food. And what's more, even as we are having these conversations in the United States, there are active social movements and a whole international conversation working very much in parallel. Whether we realize it or not, many around the world are fighting the same battles as U.S. citizens and consumers, though many of them go by different names.

Food sovereignty

Although it is often misunderstood as a call for each country to produce all of the food that it consumes, **food sovereignty** is in reality about altering the power dynamics of food systems. While locating food production more locally and regionally will likely play a part, food sovereignty is fundamentally concerned with placing control of food systems into the hands of those most often disregarded and oppressed by corporate-driven food systems. It is about redirecting the values, resources, and joys of food, to focus on the health and livelihoods of each country's farmers and citizens themselves, rather than the needs and profits of a global, financially-driven and speculative marketplace that serves investors and large multi-national companies.

In fact, food sovereignty emerged as a counterpoint to an increasingly globalized, export-driven food system in the 1990s that continued to fail both the hungry and the needs of most farmers. In response, La Vía Campesina⁸—an

international movement of peasants—emerged and has come to advance food sovereignty as one of their fundamental values. La Vía Campesina is a global effort by and for small-holder farmers to challenge the neoliberal “globalization” trade agenda that continues to undermine their ability to grow food for themselves and for their communities. La Vía Campesina helped foster a larger conversation. After years of conversations among many different groups, assembled grassroots organizations and nonprofits at The Forum for Food Sovereignty in 2007 in Nyeleni, Mali issued a declaration. According to the declaration, food sovereignty is defined by focusing on food for people (not just private profit); valuing food providers (who must make a living and who, in cruel irony, make up a bulk of the world’s hungry); localizing food systems; returning local control and rights over land, water, and genetic resources; building knowledge and skills; and working with nature.⁹

“The decision-making process of La Vía Campesina [the international small farmers’ movement] is officially by consultation and consensus. It is comparatively respectful of the autonomy of member organizations, though there is a good deal of lobbying fellow members to adopt particular positions. These positions are in principle created by articulating the concerns of the base within each national organization, bringing them to table in La Vía Campesina, and having a dialogue to reach common positions... This is a slow process, especially as peasant organizations, in contrast to NGOs, do not respond quickly, yet time has shown that this method builds the strong basis of trust that is so important for collective action... [La Vía Campesina has had to deal with] the multitude of different languages spoken by their members and representatives and the even greater level of cultural diversity... The issue of unity in diversity at the cultural level is also crucial. **It is remarkable in today’s world that a movement can be coordinated by a Muslim, and incorporate Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and members of many other religions, together with radical Marxist and social democratic atheists, all scarcely without raising an eyebrow internally...**”¹⁰

Agrarian citizenship

Many members of La Vía Campesina have experienced marginalization historically, often at the hands of governments, and have responded by developing their own practices and values of democracy. Brazil is one such example where politics and land rights have been linked through the historical oppression of Brazil’s rural populations since colonial times. Land ownership equaled political power and control; as 3.5 percent of landowners control over half of Brazil’s arable land, landless



La Vía Campesina. CC image courtesy of wdm via flickr.

rural farmers were therefore excluded from political participation.¹¹ However, an organization made up of thousands of rural families without legal title to land—the Landless Rural Workers’ Movement (MST)—has worked toward a new vision of participation in decision-making, something scholar Hannah Wittman has called “agrarian citizenship.” Whereas citizenship is normally seen as a state of being, these grassroots

Figure 1. Brazil Land ownership



- Percentage of land that is owned by 3% of the population
- Approximately 3% of the land area

organizers in Brazil have approached citizenship as a continual act of improving quality of life, working toward social progress for the working class, protecting the earth and safeguarding its resources for the next generation. Agrarian citizenship is thus a *practice* of providing food for your community, region, and nation while challenging conventional notions of what it means to be modern or peasant, urban or rural, a subject or a citizen. For these rural communities, the way they make sure that their basic human rights are secured is through continuous rural action and collaboration—very much in the spirit of deepening democracy. As a result of their approaches and actions, the MST and parallel Brazilian groups have brought about land reform and redistribution benefiting *hundreds of thousands* of farming families—well over a million people. Research to date indicates that many or most families see increases in quality of life and income, along with healthier diets, increased political awareness or involvement, and an increased sense of controlling their own destiny. These newly settled farm families have also, in many cases, helped safeguard natural areas in and around their farming settlements.¹² Further, as a core member of La Vía Campesina, MST has been part of re-shaping the international food conversation to focus on food sovereignty and the rights of small farmers around the world.

Food democracy

These movements and ideas which originated abroad may not seem to directly apply to the food system crises we witness in the United States. It can be difficult sometimes to see how the dysfunctions of the U.S. food system directly relate to these international grassroots movements. But the deeply rooted



Farmers markets can help support food democracies as consumers are able to directly interact with the food producer. CC image courtesy of john s. quarterman via flickr.

power of the corporate-controlled food system affects U.S. food and agriculture, just as it affects the farmers, citizens, consumers and workers behind these international movements.

We can see this, for example, in the organic sector of U.S. alternative food movements. Although the history of organic agriculture includes concerns for farmer autonomy and independence, public health, soil health and sustainability, and even perceived moral risks from industrialized food systems, today an organic food industry competes with "conventional" industrial food suppliers.¹³ The broad, complex and holistic aspirations of organic agriculture have been significantly channeled into forms that neither challenge the current power dynamics within our industrial food system, nor propose a systematic or liberating alternative. Corporate organic supply chains mirror those of their conventional counterparts: they are often large farms, where immense amounts of bio-derived inputs are used, with products then transported thousands of miles away to distant grocers. Certainly, the face of organics is diverse and varied—ranging from the aforementioned large operations to small, diverse family farm operations. But there is currently no guarantee that the way farmworkers on organic farms are treated is any better;¹⁴ organic farms are also often monocultures—nearly biological deserts. Consumers' choices to buy organic food does nothing to challenge extreme concentration in food and agriculture, and does nothing to improve the access of U.S. citizens with limited incomes to foods for a diverse, healthy, and sustainable diet. In other words, corporate organic does not ultimately answer the question of how our food system can be ecologically sound and socially just.¹⁵ So although the exact words ("food sovereignty" or "agrarian citizenship") may not currently "speak" to us in the U.S., the ideals behind them and concerns motivating them surely ought to.

For this reason, some in the U.S. food movement speak instead of **food democracy**, building on the foundational importance of democracy in the American identity. Food democracy's ideals—and deep democracy's—contrast sharply with the highly centralized, industrial, corporate food system we currently have. Food democracy seeks to organize the food system so that communities can participate in the decision-making, can see the ecological risks and benefits to food system choices, and can respond collectively and accordingly.¹⁶ It maintains that "voting with your dollar" is not the only, or even best way to change the system. Rather, we should "vote with our vote,"¹⁷ and through getting directly involved in our local, regional, and even national food debates. These ideas and frameworks may appear lofty and out-of-touch with what is possible. But, quite to the contrary, these concepts are being implemented on the ground today. Food democracy in action can include farmers' markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) operations, the hundreds of existing food policy councils, the

thousands of urban agriculture projects, and Farm-to-School programs across the U.S.—all examples of spaces that bring producers and consumers directly in contact with each other,¹⁸ to learn and work together to build citizens’ agendas beyond the partisan gridlock, corporate allegiances and lack of leadership from too many of our elected representatives.

All of these concepts—food sovereignty, agrarian citizenship and food democracy—aim to link food and farming systems with fundamental changes in decision-making power, in *how* we do democracy. We are told that a truly alternative system is not possible, or that the desire for this kind of food system is “elitist.” But this only makes sense from a point of view that is limited to the idea of “voting with your fork” (or rather, the dollars you may or may not have). These three different concepts all call for more ways for people to directly engage with the decisions made in their own food systems.

Of the three terms, food sovereignty is the most widely adopted framework, used by many groups internationally and—to a growing extent—within the U.S.¹⁹ All three draw from, and contribute to, the ideals of deep democracy. Thus from here on we will refer primarily to deep democracy, with only occasional reference to these three important and prominent frameworks, as we feel deep democracy captures much of the core tenets of all three.

OUR CURRENT DEMOCRACY

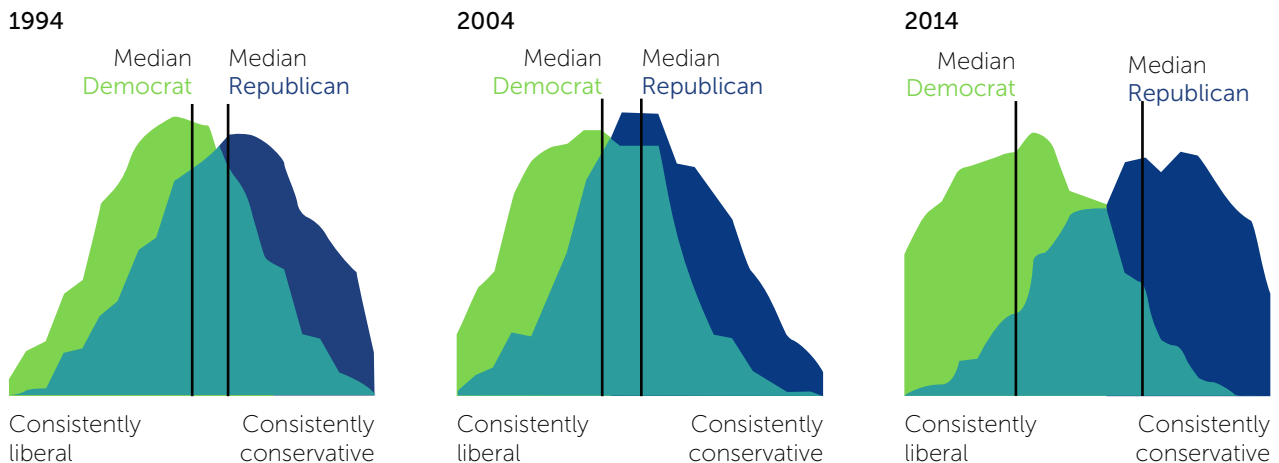
The proportion of Americans who “trust the government in Washington” only “some of the time” or “never” has risen steadily from 30 percent in 1966 to 75 percent in 2014.²¹ Not only do we more deeply distrust our government, but our representatives in government are becoming increasingly partisan. Further our fellow Americans most engaged in politics are from the extreme ends of the political spectrum. We hold less ideologically in common than even two decades ago in 1994.

“In most cases, though, participation is dominated by the ‘usual suspects’ and extreme voices, and widely dismissed as pointless. It rarely resolves conflicts or changes decisions. For most people, these opportunities to participate are simply not very attractive, compared with the countless other ways to pass time. Is this the best that democracy can offer?”

—Josh Lerner, *Making Democracy Fun: How Game Design Can Empower Citizens and Transform Politics*

Furthermore, those on either extreme end of the political spectrum are less likely to even be friends or neighbors with those of different political leanings than themselves. This leads to a troublesome feedback loop, where people are not being exposed to viewpoints different from their own. This combination of partisan politics, a lack of participation from

Figure 2. Democrats and Republicans More Ideologically Divided than in the Past
Distribution of Democrats and Republicans on a 10-item scale of political values



Source: PEW Research Center for the People and the Press. “Political Polarization in the American Public,” <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>

Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions. The green area in this chart represents the ideological distribution of Democrats; the blue area of Republicans. The overlap of these two distributions is shade turquoise. Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents.

most moderate Americans, and disproportionate participation from fringe viewpoints means that the policy conversations are centered around each party "getting what they want," instead of attempting to reach consensus, or "meet halfway" as most Americans desire. Moderate Americans are increasingly disengaged with politics.²²

From a relative high point in the early 1960s, voter turnout by 1990 dropped by nearly a quarter; millions of Americans are no longer finding the most basic act of citizenship relevant or beneficial. Similar trends characterize participation in state and local elections.²³ These declining trends in voter turnout mean that our elected *representatives* are not truly representing our nation. It means that those that are often most impacted by important health and nutrition policies are not able to contribute to that policymaking. Although people are not voting, they could still be actively engaged in public debate; drops in participation in parent-teacher organizations, labor unions, and organized religious groups show that people are not getting together as much. Most emblematically, there appears to have been a steep drop in the number of bowling leagues, but an increase in how much Americans bowl—we are, more and more, literally and figuratively "bowling alone": engaging in fewer social interactions outside work or school, in church, or over a leisure activity and a beer.²⁴

Despite intentions from the federal government in recent decades²⁵ to revolutionize the government into being more transparent and inclusive of all citizens, American public policy and decision-making continues to be inaccessible. Even

calling our system a democracy is no longer necessarily accurate based on results from recent research studying American citizens' political power.²⁶ Many citizens, however, do not need peer-reviewed studies in order to explain their own feelings of disillusionment and alienation. We *feel* it; we *know* it, even though the reasons for this decline in civic engagement are multiple and complex (drastic changes in demographics, technology, work life and schedules, family life, community structures, and even our built environment all contribute). Research and intuition, in this case, agree: we are at an all-time low in terms of civic engagement and social trust.

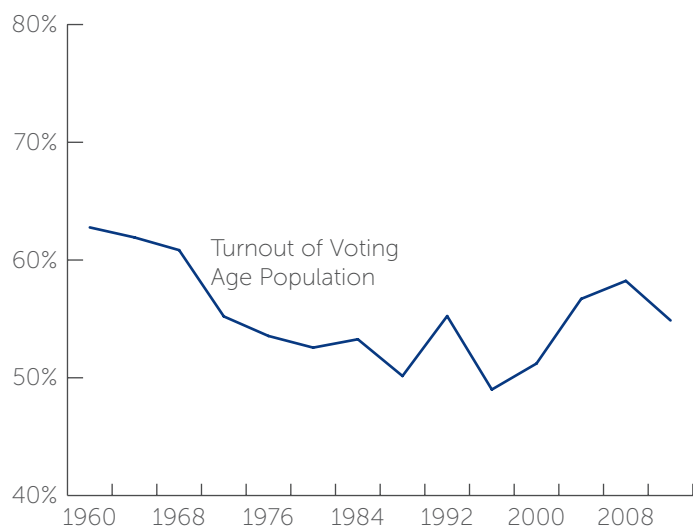
Parallel to these changes in government participation, we are seeing drastic changes in our social, economic and ecological systems. These "wicked problems"²⁷ of inequality and sustainability (rising rates of preventable diseases, widening income gap, stagnating economy, global climate change, threats to ecological systems) demand adaptable, responsive government systems to respond, plan and act. However, instead of traveling further down the more participatory and democratic road that researchers and personal experiences tell us may be able to cope and adapt, we are retreating to more concentrated and privatized means of decision-making. For example: over the past 40 years across the increasingly globalized marketplace, the food system is consolidating to fewer, bigger players. Our more consolidated and global food system—and indeed our entire economy—is less resilient to change.²⁸ We have yet to fully "recover" from the global recession.

All of this points to the need to revolutionize how we grow, eat and make decisions. How can we regain trust in our neighbor and in our government? How can more people from more areas of life participate in government, leading to more efficient and successful decision-making? How can a deeper, more meaningful democracy transform our food systems so that they recognize the limits of our planet and build equality? Food and farming issues are extremely divisive; how can we make sure that these issues of food access, land and resource ownership, and food policy do not further divide us, leading us to distance ourselves from those with perspectives unlike our own?

DEEP DEMOCRACY

For all things, there is "the theory" and there is "the reality"—the practices. We know all too well now that our marketplaces do not function perfectly—that corporations that are "too big to fail" can, and will, fail, and at great cost. Consolidation leads to markets of monopolies, with corporations ever striving to further limit competition and consumer choice.

Figure 3. Voter Turnout in Presidential Elections from 1960 to 2012



Wherever corporations can “externalize” costs—make society pay for the costs of their products, like pollution, climate change, traffic congestion or even hunger—they will. This means that we end up with markets where prices do not reflect the impacts of products on people and planet. (One study, for example, estimated in 2001 that there were \$32 billion USD in costs to society from U.S. agriculture that didn’t show up in the prices of food—in other words, around one-third of the total value of our agriculture system was off the books!)²⁹ And beyond the market, representative government hardly functions perfectly either.

While the ideals of deep democracy might sound impractical, work from countless researchers—including a few Nobel Prize winners—plus experiences from people all over the world shows that far more is possible than we might imagine. We can innovate our democracy. After all, our democracy itself was a dramatic innovation at its founding, and changes since then, big and small, have brought us ever closer to our ideals.

In deep democracy, citizen’s values and ideas are provided via listening and reflecting in conversations with others. It is not based on an expectation that all citizens will reach agreement on all important issues; rather it creates opportunities for people to learn, expand and sharpen their preferences, while building knowledge of and empathy toward their fellow citizens.³⁰ There are inevitably points of disagreement, sometimes strong ones, especially around the social, economic, and ecological risks, benefits, and trade-offs for the participants. But crucially, instead of harmonious consensus, deep democratic processes emphasize learning to live with some trade-offs in order to meet fundamental values shared by almost all people. It is learning to sometimes figure out “what you can tolerate” in order to avoid endless fights over trying to get everything that everyone “wants.” This process may seem messy, but by the same token deep democratic processes—such as participatory budgeting and citizens’ juries—much more accurately and efficiently capture the diverse viewpoints of citizens.

Deep democracy has been practiced across the globe, in all types of places and cultures. What follows is a handful of examples that highlight the underlying strengths of deep democratic processes in achieving sustainable outcomes in our communities. These examples demonstrate how deep democratic approaches are being implemented on the ground—giving inspiration, and guidance, to what we can truly do if

we decide to do it. Further, a brief, but still not comprehensive, list of other examples called upon during the research of this report follows in the Appendix.

INTERNATIONAL CASES

Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil

Ordinary Citizens Managing Big Budgets

Porto Alegre, the capital of the Brazilian state Rio Grande de Sul, is renowned³¹ for its “participatory budgeting” model that was in place from 1991 to 2004.³² Now being used in over 1,500 cities worldwide, Participatory Budgeting directly engages citizens in making priorities for spending in their communities and neighborhoods. In Porto Alegre, participation reached the level of at least 50,000 of its 1.5 million citizens. In some cities where it’s been implemented, as much as 10 percent of a town’s total population has participated.

It was in Porto Alegre, however, that the most advanced form of participatory budgeting seems to have developed. In their system, each of the 16 regions of the city held two annual meetings. At the first session (in some areas attended by over 1,000 people), the people elect delegates to represent specific neighborhoods, and review the budget and results from the previous year. After this meeting, these delegates hold a number of meetings with their fellow residents to set neighborhood budget priorities and develop specific proposals.³³ Three months later, each region holds a second annual meeting to choose and approve neighborhood proposals, and to elect councilors to the Municipal Council on the Budget. The councilors then develop criteria for evaluating proposals (including social justice criteria), develop a budget based on the proposed projects, and approve and send a budget to the city legislature and the Mayor. The legislature may suggest, but not require, changes; the mayor can approve the budget as proposed, or send it back to the participatory Municipal Council (who can override a veto with 2/3 vote). Otherwise, the budget has to be adopted as proposed.

On participatory budgeting: “Despite its limitations, there are strong elements that can contribute to the American society—**particularly because there is a crisis and the debate about distribution of wealth is on**

Deep democracy hinges on the idea that not only are the perspectives of all citizens valuable to decision-making, but rather they are essential

the agenda.” -Adalmir Antonio Marquetti, a professor of economics at Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, from a *New York Times* article

Between 1989 and 2004, the portion of the city budget decided through this process expanded from two percent to 20 percent; poorer districts saw much greater levels of investment and improvement; the percent of city residences with running water went from 75 to 98 percent; and functioning municipal schools nearly tripled. Beyond this, the process also seemed to promote more civic engagement throughout the city, the formation of more city groups, and improved understanding of the compromises and processes of city budgeting. Further, research indicated that although women, low-income, and low-educated citizens did achieve completely proportionate representation at the Municipal Council, they *did* make up as much as 35, 34 and 18 percent of the councilors, respectively. Thus, if one were to wonder how the participatory budgeting

Make-up of the Porto Alegre
Municipal Council



system was different than plain old “normal” representative democracy, one question to ask is how often city councils (in Brazil or even the U.S.!) get anywhere near one-third women, one-third low-income, and one-fifth citizens without a high school diploma.³⁴

Many detailed accounts of Porto Alegre’s processes are available, but researchers Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Ernesto Ganuza have pointed out that Porto Alegre maintained some very important innovations that haven’t always been carried along to the 1,500 other cities using these processes. Specifically, they point out that Porto Alegre saw the successes it had in part because of the scope and importance of the participatory budget process in Porto Alegre (eventually deciding 20 percent of the city budget).

In other words, this is a process where—whether it’s on your city block, in your apartment building, at the grocery store or at a public event—you’re no more than a short walk away from someone who had direct input into the city budget. Indeed, all you need to do to be one of those people is to attend a meeting.

Participatory budgeting as a process to increase citizen participation and government legitimacy has also been implemented in the United States. In 2011, four New York City Council Members launched a participatory budgeting process



A New York City participatory budget meeting. CC image courtesy of neotint via flickr.

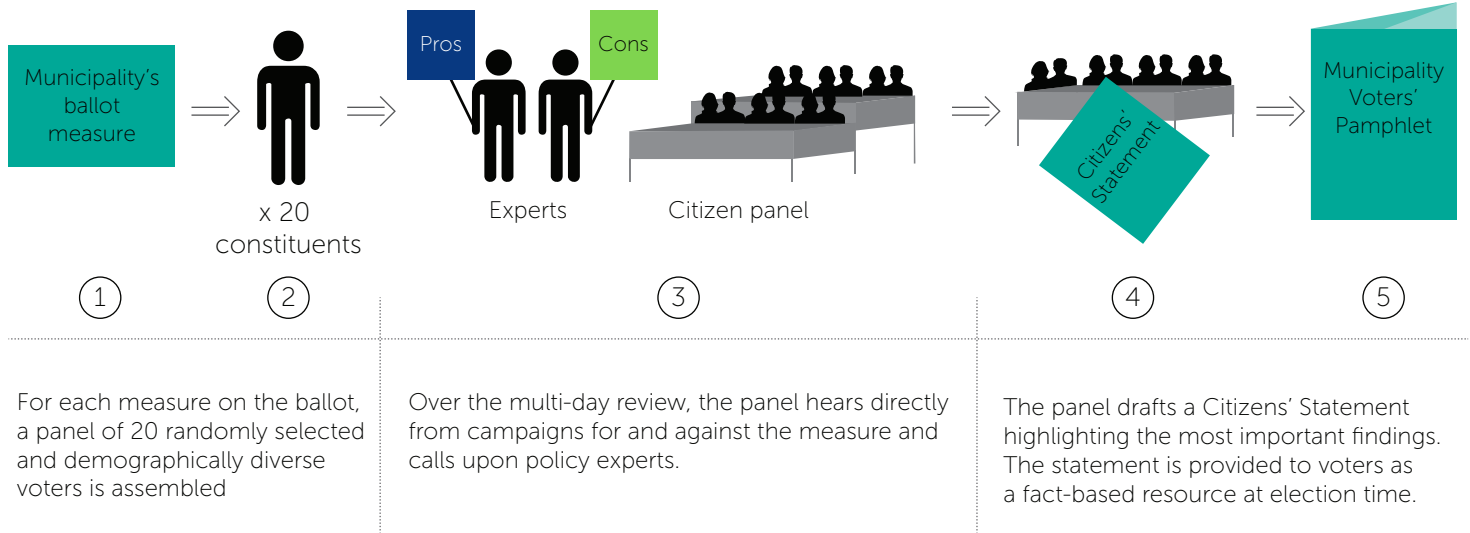
in New York City for constituents to allocate a portion of their discretionary funds. Now in 2014, 23 Council Members—or nearly half of the City Council Members—participated, enabling residents of those participating districts to decide spending on a total of \$25 million. Similar to Brazil’s participatory budgeting process, residents proposed and voted on local infrastructure projects.³⁵

Technology consensus conferences in Denmark

Ordinary citizens deliberating on complex topics

Visiting some of the forums or comment sections online could convince anyone that people have an inherently difficult time discussing everyday topics in a civil or reasonable way, to say nothing of mulling over complex, scientific or “wicked” problems. Yet complex scientific discussions deeply benefit from citizen engagement, ensuring adequate attention to potential risks and benefits to their lives. “Wicked” problems are better served by a diversity of people thinking about how to solve them, and by people directly talking through their differences. In this regard, Denmark is showing what is possible as the home to one of the longest standing and most successful government initiatives to involve citizens in its science and technology policy decisions. Their participatory approaches—namely citizen panels and consensus conferences—have specifically been developed to establish an informed and rational discussion of science and technology—to create an opportunity for deeper democracy for the Danish citizenry³⁶ and to also expand the public debate on the most contentious issues of the day.

Figure 4. How Oregon's Citizen Initiative Review Works



Source: Healthy Democracy. "Citizens' Initiative Review: How It Works," <http://healthydemocracy.org/citizens-initiative-review/oregon/how-it-works/>

The 1960s and 1970s saw increasingly heated public debate on scientific issues. This debate proved that assessment of new science and technology could not be confined to the roles of experts or decision-makers. These technologies could immensely impact communities and their economic, ecological and social well-being.³⁷ Citizens think about science and technology in different, yet complementary ways to scientists: considering how issues could impact their health and work and that of their family.³⁸

In Denmark, during a time of particularly intense public debate about biotechnology, nuclear power, environmental issues and information technologies,³⁹ a Board of Technology⁴⁰ was established to initiate technology assessment and to facilitate public debate about these science topics.

The newly established Board of Technology fulfilled its charge to broaden the conversation through the establishment of aforementioned consensus conferences in 1987. Consensus conferences are open public meetings that allow citizens to dialogue with each other and experts. A citizen panel consists of 14 people who are selected to be a representative cross-section of society in age, gender, education, profession and current hometown. They are introduced to the topic by a professional facilitator and formulate the questions to be taken up at the conference and participate in the selection of the expert panel which is present during the conference.⁴¹ Through a facilitated,⁴² multi-day process, there is open dialogue about the conference topic between audience members, the recruited citizen panel and the expert panel. At

the conclusion of the conference, the citizen panel produces a final summary document, presenting conclusions and recommendations to the public, press and expert panel.

Since the inauguration of the Danish Board of Technology, more than twenty consensus conferences have been conducted, ranging from irradiation of foods to sustainable consumption to electronic surveillance.⁴³ The impacts of the consensus conferences range from the expected to unforeseen. The expansion of the deliberation and dialogue beyond "expert" communities allowed for increased legitimacy in decisions and transparency of governance. Fundamentally, the inclusion of public voices added social concerns and values to the primarily scientific viewpoint of any expert panels.⁴⁴ There is increased accountability and legitimacy of decisions in the eyes of the citizenry. And the consensus conference presents an informed citizen viewpoint to policymakers, with potential for impacting parliamentary proceedings.

To this day, the Danish Board of Technology continues to create opportunities for Danish citizenry to engage in science and technology policy decisions. More recently, the board has expanded to larger conversations with fellow European Union (EU) nations. In 2013, the board was specifically called upon to facilitate citizen input and involvement in the EU's "Human Brain Project," a process which will involve five different forms of consultation of citizens in the EU over a 10-year period. And even on a larger scale, the board initiated the "World Wide Views" meetings—two meetings which involved citizen consultation from 38 countries on climate

policy and from 25 countries on biodiversity respectively. The United Nations (U.N.) received both results.⁴⁵ These processes are very similar to deliberative polling—a process in which a representative sample of citizens are asked survey questions. A similar representative sample is then provided more information about the topic and are surveyed again to determine via experiment if the dialogue and information sharing by the participatory process has impacted points of view.⁴⁶

Denmark's Technology Consensus Conferences show that citizens can tackle and understand complex topics; that they bring unique and important points of view to the conversations that experts might not have considered; and that, contrary to current displays in the U.S. government, people are capable of making nuanced and sophisticated assessments and agreements on complex topics.

Communally owned grazing lands in Törbel, Switzerland

Ordinary citizens building cooperative institutions

In 1968, ecologist Garrett Hardin popularized the idea of the "Tragedy of the Commons." According to the theory, left to their own devices, individuals will—as a result of rational self-interest—consume and use beyond the ecological limits of the planet. As a collective, society is thought to be incapable of managing common pool resources (CPR)—forests, rivers, fisheries, grazing land and fellow organisms—sustainably. Hardin's quintessential example of the tragedy involves a village of grazers who own a village green in common (i.e., they all share joint ownership of it). Each herdsman wants to maximize profit and therefore will continually add to his or her own private herd. The herdsman will receive all of the benefits of the increase in his herd through eventual sale of the animal. At the same time, the quality of the grazing land owned by everyone may decrease, but the herdsman only feels a portion of this consequence.⁴⁷ So each herdsman, in this scenario, is motivated to keep increasing their herds, profiting from the additional income, until the green is completely grazed out and collapses—impoverishing all of the herdsman. But no single herdsman, Hardin argued, would decide on their own to stop the march toward overgrazing, because they would get individual rewards while paying only part of the costs (until total collapse).

These theoretical herdsman were long thought to represent all "users" in common pool resource management systems—the fishers in depleted fisheries; ranchers and farmers in strained farm land; residents watering grassy lawns in the dry Southwestern United States. The "Tragedy of the Commons" dilemma makes problems of population growth



Törbel, Switzerland. CC image courtesy of Wandervogel via Wikipedia.

and global climate change seem insurmountable. How can these users look beyond self-interest to manage the commons effectively?

Although many natural resource systems are being depleted due to improper management, lack of communication, and difficult-to-enforce regulations, it proved to be something of a surprise when it was seen that examples exist of common pool resources managed sustainably and effectively, in some cases for *centuries*. Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom worked tirelessly throughout her career to document the *processes* that made the difference between common pool resource management that *sustained* the resources the users depended on, and those that depleted and destroyed their own resources. Ostrom, along with her colleagues and peers analyzed the themes uniting these examples (positive and negative) over the course of decades, working toward a *theory* of effective common pool resource management. What about certain institutional set-ups allowed humans to trust one another, cooperate and act as a collective organism? Why did some groups of people succeed, sometimes for a very, very long time, and others fail?

One example Ostrom and colleagues examined was Törbel, Switzerland. Törbel is home to one of the oldest and longest-standing success stories of common pool resource management. For centuries, Törbel, Switzerland peasants have managed communally owned forest and grazing lands. Written rules of the resource management go back to the 13th century; an association to self-regulate the communally owned lands emerged in late 1400s. Previously, Swiss villagers had decided that forests and low-productivity high alpine meadows should belong to the community rather than private land-owners. Early on, they set the boundaries between private and community land. The Törbel villagers individually—or through complex condo-type agreements—managed their privately owned plots with grains, vegetables, fruit trees, and hay, whereas family-owned cattle would graze on communal land, with direction by herdsman.

Grazing rules established in 1517 are still enforced today. These rules state that "no one is permitted to send more cows to the alps than he can feed in winter." Given the environment and system in place in Törbel, enforcement of this rule was easy as it was obvious afterwards who had obeyed the rule and who hadn't. A local official—a *Gewalthaber*—can levy fines on violators. The official is elected by an association of local cattle owners. Cattle owners contribute an annual fee that pays staff to maintain roads and paths on the mountain-side. Further, these officials also arrange for distribution of manure—that is, fertilizer—on the summer pastures.

Communal ownership may seem archaic to some; but Swiss villagers had and have a nuanced view of land ownership, understanding the advantages and disadvantages of private versus communal lands. They tried to match ownership to land tenure carefully. Similar systems exist across Swiss villages. However, many are quick to point out that the exact legal systems across successful common pool resource schemes are organized and managed differently. Arguably, the evolution of common pool resource management in Törbel, Switzerland is that much better suited to manage resources in Törbel because it was developed in place there and inherently acknowledges the unique local situation. The Törbel villagers govern themselves via their own association and rule-making.⁴⁸

And this is one of the key lessons for us—in a different country, and for the most part facing different problems than those facing the residents of Törbel for the past 500 years. The rules the villagers made worked for their system; it matched their place, and has largely kept pace with the times for centuries. The villagers are able to change their own rules without interference from other people who don't live, work and depend on the resources of their area. Thus their rules have adapted well to changes in population growth and increases in the value

of the villagers' labor in the outside economy. Boundaries of communally owned lands were firmly established as indicated in the 1507 inventory document. Regulations imposed substantial fines for any attempt by villagers to appropriate a larger share of grazing rights.

In the U.S., our farmers and ranchers face a large number of challenges. And what they do does not just affect them and their communities—it has benefits, and costs, for the rest of us as well. At the same time, farmers and ranchers are not the only ones in rural communities. These have often lost many residents, farmers, and institutions as farming has increasingly become a profession that can only be tackled by those with access to more and more credit, more and more land, and less and less variety and diversity on their farm. But not only were the decisions that led to this state of affairs not freely taken by the farmers and ranchers and their communities themselves, they were not even the result of a grand social conversation where Americans chose to have a different food system. The voices of the consumer, of the farmworker and restaurant worker, of the low-income city resident, the food systems scholar, the parents and the teachers—none of these are the reason our food system took the turns it did; few of these voices have ever been seriously heard or consulted in the debating of our Farm Bills, and the Farm Bills have been designed by officials cloistered in Washington, D.C., not by a process where people and communities had real, direct power and voice to express a vision of the food and agriculture system we want.⁴⁹

We cannot possibly present here a comprehensive account of the examples globally of successful participatory processes, nor can we discuss them in their full complexity. Rather, Törbel and the other cases we present do demonstrate that across place, time, culture, and politics: people can self-organize, cooperate, deliberate and create sustainable ecological and social systems. The success of these processes implies—and has shown—that for a given cultural context, viewpoints from across society can and must be included in order to effect change. Voices that are more marginal—for example, the direct voices of farmers, farmworkers and restaurant workers in the U.S.—must be given a larger place, and the voices of corporations and elected government moderated in order to listen and directly deliberate with communities themselves. Indeed, scholars note that both *direct communication* and *relative equality* have to be features of deep democratic decision-making. This is necessary to prevent "socially or politically powerful groups from blocking socially beneficial changes to the detriment of their own particular interests,"⁵⁰ a situation that might seem all too-familiar in today's United States. (For further examples in particular of deliberative processes in the United States, please see Appendix).

WHAT MAKES DEEP DEMOCRACY DIFFERENT

Although deep democracy is an innovative "technology" as demonstrated by the examples, it is something all citizens can understand, witness and practice. Deep democracy is a technology that can be accessed by all. What ties these seemingly disparate examples together? How can the success of grazing lands management in 1500s Switzerland share any similarities with the participatory budgeting in Brazil of the 1980s? All these examples share strengths in how their decision "spaces" allowed humans to be at their cooperative best in solving complex problems.

Solving the complex challenges of our day—in particular how to grow and eat within the means of our planet—requires examining potential solutions and taking incremental steps toward a different future. Deep democracy means the involvement of all those in the food system, especially those that are disregarded and oppressed by our current corporate, globalized food system. Immigrant farm workers, food industry employees, low-income food consumers, women and minorities all have perspectives essential to moving toward solutions to how we can grow and eat food that support our health and the health of our environment.

Ensuring that diverse perspectives are exchanged in dialogue requires more than simply providing the option. Special attention must be paid to the *barriers* for the diverse perspectives to be heard. How is the system preventing citizens from participating? Transportation, time constraints, problems with ID cards, and illness are all practical reasons that have prevented minority citizens from engaging in the political process. In contrast, as one researcher noted, the affluent have "participatory megaphones that amplify their voices in American politics [...]."⁵¹ The success of deep democracy is dependent upon overcoming the barriers to civic engagement (time, money, resources), especially for those currently excluded from the conversation. And while some citizens may think that they (or others) do not have the "expertise" to engage in discussions about how their government should run, groups with more diverse viewpoints are better able to identify solutions to problems than groups composed of issue experts with more similar viewpoints.⁵² Given that, both theory and practice tell us—despite what you may have heard—that we are quite capable of cooperation, given the right tools, the right space, and the power to cooperate to take care of our communities, and each other.⁵³

“So far, I love feeling like we have some say in what is done.”

—Brooklyn participant in Council District 39 participatory budgeting

“At its heart, [participatory budgeting (PB)] exemplifies two bipartisan ideals: transparent, effective service delivery and civic engagement. Both Democrats and Republicans are striving to get the most out of depleted resources and serve citizens’ needs as efficiently as possible. **PB has a proven track record of rising to this challenge, by injecting public scrutiny, knowledge, and creativity into budgeting.**”—*Daniel Altschuler and Josh Lerner – Christian Science Monitor*

Deep democracy is uniquely situated to respond to complex issues, especially involving food systems for numerous reasons. Participatory governance starts at the community level and is therefore best at detecting and addressing problems within the community and responding to a changing environment. In our increasingly globalized world, many solutions are outsourced to other entities that do not have as complete a picture of the local social, political, ecological and built environment.

Localized governance may not guarantee diversity, but it makes it far more likely. Diversity and equality work together to ensure good decision-making. Diversity creates more efficient and comprehensive solutions, whereas equality allows for those voices to be heard unmasked by bias or large outside influence. Hence, participatory decision-making—as food sovereignty calls for—both depends on and helps support greater equality while generating better and fairer solutions.

The benefits to deep democracy go beyond an enhanced ability to come up with solutions: deep democracy facilitates citizens to adapt those solutions as circumstances change. Many of our problems, particularly in food justice and sustainability, are wicked problems that will change and evolve over time. Currently, the bodies making decisions about food and farming systems do not align with the natural geographic boundaries of regional and local foodsheds. This mismatch can lead to problems in decision-making and response. The "solutions" to one problem exacerbate a crisis in another area of life. Citizens can test solutions over time and be able to respond and change modes of action, even if there is not initial common ground on the problem at hand. Citizens can see what goes into decision-making and can actively participate, or at least be assured that someone similar to them is represented. Imagine a world where someone in your neighborhood, or even your apartment building, directly participated in a budgeting project for your town. You may have very different points of view from your neighbor, but he or she is much more likely to understand your circumstances than many elected

North Carolina's Food Council Networks

While problems of hunger, malnutrition and obesity impact our country and food consumers become more distant from food producers, communities search for opportunities to discuss food issues across sectors and disciplines and create a more connected food system. "Food policy councils" (FPCs) fill the space in between local, state and federal agencies as well as businesses, non-profits and academia. Food policy councils are popping up across the country, speaking to the demand of communities to have more control and autonomy in food decisions. Food policy councils vary in every way imaginable: councils are funded differently (if at all); their deliberation and decision-making processes may be very structured or informal; they may have very defined member roles and responsibilities; and they may or may not disseminate their policy discussions and perspectives to larger council bodies or public agencies. Yet they all share in fulfilling a need of communities to seek more fair food systems that strengthen their communities.

Food policy councils can play a unique role in connecting the "How?" of deliberative processes with the "What?" of food access and justice. Already, FPCs have heightened potential for being inclusive, transparent, and intentional spaces for dialogue. Residents who are impacted by food and health policies can define their own priorities and discuss contentious food issues of the day (affordability, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), food assistance programs, health insurance and its relationship to food choices, nutrition, food access). Their decision-making can also be nimble and adaptive as FPCs tend to be local or regionally-defined entities. Finally, they can be a part of system of nested institutions that bring food issues to forefront of state and national agendas.⁵⁷

Similar to the rest of the country, the state of North Carolina has seen a boom in food policy councils in the last decade. From a handful of food policy councils in 2004, now 40 of the state's 100 counties are represented either by local or regional food policy councils. Now, instead of the majority of those involved in FPCs in North Carolina being from the center of the state and many being from the public sector, these newer food policy councils are more representative of the diversity of North Carolina, reflecting urban and rural communities and different actors within the food system. This momentum of food policy work reached a critical point in 2012, where a plan to create a state food action plan left many asking, "What are others doing on the local level? And how can we interact and strengthen each other's work?" This led to a change in focus locally and state-wide.

representatives and this will be reflected in his or her contributions in the participatory budgeting process. Deep democracy creates decision-making processes that are much more accountable to citizens and allows them to directly channel any public scrutiny into making the process better.

Finally, deep democracy can benefit society by creating opportunities for information exchange, understanding and cultivation of empathy in regard to your fellow man. Some may perceive their American neighbors as selfish; rather we have created policies, programs and environments that *promote* selfish behavior. We are not inherently selfish; we are capable of compassion and cooperation, provided the right circumstances and information.⁵⁴ The gamut of wicked problems we face today—worldwide hunger and poverty, rising rates of obesity and preventable diseases, stagnating economy, issues of land, water, and resource vulnerability and scarcity, biodiversity loss, global climate change—can all be connected to the way we grow, exchange and eat food. How can we feed ourselves while recognizing our ecological limits and guaranteeing the respect and quality of life for all global citizens? How can we march toward our vision for a sustainable and resilient food system? Deep democracy does not automatically answer the "What?" of transforming food systems, rather it provides the "How?" for determining the path.⁵⁵

Deep democracy rethinks how we conduct our decision-making business. We are not at this place of diminished trust and increased polarization because it is the only way, rather, we are being incentivized to be disengaged. Far from being an isolated, lone case of democratic innovation, the "technology" of deep democratic processes has traveled far and wide, and is now used across the globe. This includes projects within the United States, such as in Brooklyn Council District 38 participatory budgeting—part of larger Participatory Budgeting NYC—where \$85,000 were allocated to the Red Hook Library Community Garden with the participation of 3,000 Brooklynites from District 38. More than two-thirds of the votes were cast in a language other than English in the district. This is but one of many possible further examples. In this final section, we will explore further two more cases where some of the principles and practices of deep democracy are being used, or where it would offer distinct advantages to ongoing efforts to reform the food and agricultural system. In other words, some of the exciting and emerging examples of food sovereignty made practical.⁵⁶

In response to the interest of local food justice advocates to connect with others across the state, in September 2012, 15 food policy groups were convened from across the state. Some of these were existing food policy councils, whereas others were groups that aimed to create a local FPC in their area. They converged on a shared vision for what a network of food policy councils in the state would look like: they would be engaged with the state-level food council, they would share resources and tools, and they would actively communicate with each other sharing best practices.

Community Food Strategies—a program of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems based in Raleigh, North Carolina, is facilitating the growth and development of these councils and the larger ‘network of networks’ for the state of North Carolina.⁵⁸

Community Food Strategies helps cultivate local food bodies that have accessibility and diverse participation at the forefront of their priorities. Even something as simple as referring to a participating food body as a “food policy council” makes some citizens feel as though they do not have the expertise to contribute; the word “policy” can deter citizens with valuable input from participating. Rather the organizations are often referred to as “food councils” to empower citizens.

Furthermore, these councils have a dynamic structure where they simultaneously take actions, build solidarity among their members, and create organizational transparency and structure. Community Food Strategies has also cultivated a culture of “and” thinking instead of “or” thinking in these councils across the state. “And” thinking means that instead of trying tirelessly to reach consensus, council members are more concerned about communicating ideas and finding compromises. Ideas and action steps are not mutually exclusive with others’ priorities and perspectives. Councilmembers discuss more than just “what they want,” instead focusing on “what they can live with”—knowing that in return, in a different aspect or issue before the council, they may get what they want that a different councilmember may view as something they can simply live with. This tolerance is an important aspect of providing the “grease” for the wheels of the process to run smoothly.

The councils’ “network of networks” benefits from very purposeful organizational strategies. For example, the councils actively seek members that fill three main roles:

1. They seek people who can push for short-term successes and wins. These successes can fuel further work by maintaining enthusiasm.

Figure 5. Nested system of food policy councils



2. They seek people who can develop and nurture structure of the organization. These people are important because they bring “institutional sustainability” to the organization itself.
3. And finally, they seek people who can encourage opportunities among members to connect socially and build their own local network of people working for food justice. This is building the “social capital” essential to good decision-making, and is essential to the structure and success of the organization.

Not only are diverse actors essential to creative and fair decision-making, but all different types of personality types are essential to maintain the work itself. These three aspects sum to sustain the councils moving forward. If only fulfilling one of the three areas, organizations can become drained of energy and momentum or conversely be undirected in their action.

Community Food Strategies also assists the councils in evaluating what ‘inclusion’ truly means on the local level. The inclusion of the marginalized food voices is essential, but is simply inviting representatives from those areas of life enough? Councils are encouraged to rethink the way they communicate, the way they structure agendas, where and when they meet to better include marginalized voices. They are encouraged to go beyond including the one “token” farmer. Taking the notion of “network of networks” even further, councils

are encouraged to be creative in including the marginalized voice, such as creating their own farmer food council body that meets once a year—during the winter lull of the growing season. This body can then send one representative member to the community food council body.

The food councils across North Carolina met in December 2014 to discuss their actions moving forward—this means continued efforts to communicate and work collaboratively, but also beginning to expand the conversation about how their work can impact state-wide policy decisions about food and farm systems. And their network has already even expanded to collaborate and share best practices with other states in the Mid-Atlantic, showing the promise of nested institutions for deep democracy.

This movement for nested systems of governance—where food councils are pushing for equality and diversity at the local level and then channeling goals, perspectives, and information to larger networks is not only found in North Carolina. The California Food Policy Council is the product of collaboration of local food councils and organizations across the state. Local bodies worked directly with state Departments of Food and Agriculture as well as Health and Human Services to create a state-wide council that could facilitate communication and "collective action."⁵⁹ The existence of these nested and networked systems of decision-making, especially around food systems, are proof of people's demand to be more involved in food system decision-making. And it also speaks to the strength of participatory processes in being more inclusive, fair, and transparent forms of decision-making.⁶⁰

Rural Climate Dialogues: Morris, Minnesota

Citizen juries are powerful opportunities for deliberation and collaboration. One source of their power is the selection of panelists to be demographically representative of a place—as a citizen, you may not be able to attend the event, but someone representative of you is there in your stead. Another source of their power is their ability to provide practical, balanced information to the panelists and a platform for those that are often alienated from our current political processes, to speak and discuss with fellow community members. Rural American communities are such places that have been largely dismissed by our current political processes and main political actors. The climate conversation is flooded with misinformation. Instead of discussing the climate change impacts on rural communities (in addition to urban environments), the focus is on the negative impacts of greenhouse gas regulation, as perpetuated by the fossil fuel industry and climate change skeptics. Just as rural smallholder farmers have asserted an agrarian citizenship and reclaimed their role as political



A discussion at the Morris Climate Dialogue.

actors in Brazil, rural communities in the U.S. are stepping up to make sure they are active participants in solutions to climate change.

Concurrently, rural communities have faced intense economic changes in the past quarter century. Climate change impacts can further worsen the social, ecological and economic vulnerability of these areas. Rural communities are particularly vulnerable to climate change as they bear the burden of both direct impacts (such as more extreme temperatures and more intense, sporadic precipitation patterns, and thus, negative effects on agricultural livelihoods) as well as indirect impacts. Rural community livelihoods are closely linked to the natural resource base through jobs in forestry, agriculture and tourism, which leads to economic, ecological and social vulnerability under a changing climate. Climate mitigation actions can also greatly burden these communities given rapid changes in bioenergy production or taxation of transportation systems.

For these reasons, rural residents are integral to crafting effective adaptation and mitigation policies via deliberative processes. Climate policy cannot just aim to increase the resilience of urban communities at the burden of rural communities to support a "clean" energy future. Climate policy must integrate the perspectives of all communities. Rural communities are especially apt to contribute to climate change policy as they are intimately linked to the land through their livelihoods and are familiar with evaluating risks and benefits on a daily basis—a framework useful in climate change policy and action.

Through collaboration between the Jefferson Center⁶¹ and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), one rural community in Minnesota is experiencing firsthand the fruits of the deliberative democratic involvement. While public debate surrounding climate change continues to be heated and polarized,⁶² fifteen Morris, Minnesota residents met for

the first Rural Climate Dialogue to learn about the current and potential impacts of climate change on their community, discuss their concerns, and collaboratively plan to mitigate those challenges to build a resilient, healthy community.

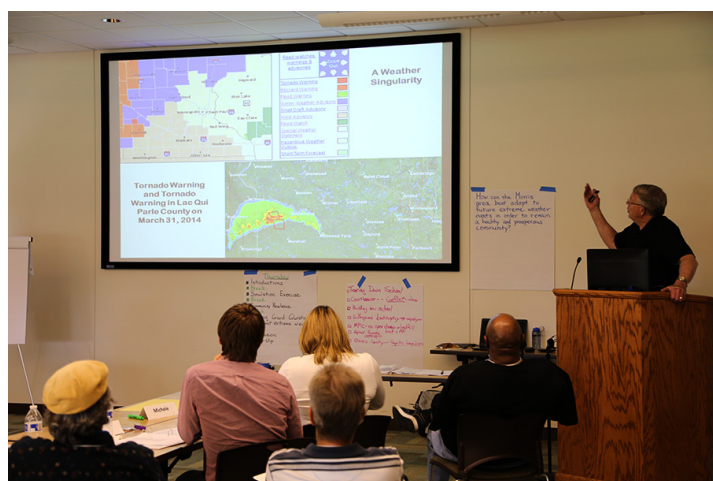
“Rural communities are particularly vulnerable to changing weather conditions, but **they also have a unique opportunity to respond to these challenges.**

It’s essential that these responses come from rural communities like Morris, and specifically from a demographically representative voice which includes the fears and hopes of our youth.”

–Anna Claussen, Director of Rural Strategies, IATP from Morris Sun Tribune

Prior to the citizen jury, the facilitating team from the Jefferson Center and IATP worked extensively and directly with community members to address apprehension and skepticism of the forthcoming citizen jury process. Often, rural community members are the *study subjects* of academic, governmental, and nonprofit research and projects, yet are never granted the agency to develop the vision of that program, much less implement it. The efforts of the IATP and Jefferson Center team to work with community stakeholders created a respectful and transparent environment: where the timeline of involvement, scope of process, and intent of the climate dialogue were clear.

Also prior to the citizens’ jury, the Jefferson Center and IATP conducted a small citizens’ jury process with high school students and teachers in Morris. Local experts presented information on climate change impacts, energy and efficiency information, as well as how to effectively deliberate and reach consensus. This process was a remarkable opportunity to demonstrate to high school students how they can be empowered by democracy, rather than ignored by it. Students and teachers alike were impressed by how they could speak



A discussion at the Morris Climate Dialogue.

openly about one of the most controversial and politicized topics of our time.⁶³ This student citizens’ jury did not intend to determine climate solutions for their communities, rather it engaged students with real and practical information for them about climate change impacts and was an initial gathering to prepare the community for the climate dialogue. Also, becoming familiar with constructive deliberation, the students then served as ambassadors to their own families and community. Finally, they disseminated energy surveys to their neighbors to map the interest in energy savings and efficiency across Morris, opening up avenues for community and family discussions.

“I wasn’t sure what to expect. I thought it’d be a bunch of people who were very adamant about this topic and would want to get together and ‘hurrah’ about it. **I was very impressed with this group’s ability to come together as community members, as neighbors, and talk about these things in an open, civil, and friendly manner.**”

–Citizen jurist, Morris Climate Dialogues Final Report

After this extensive process, the first set of Rural Climate Dialogues in Morris, Minnesota, convened in June 2014. The 15 citizen jury panelists were selected from a pool of survey respondents and randomly chosen to match the demographics (gender, ethnicity, party affiliation, age, education) as closely as possible to those of Stevens County.

This representative group of panelists embarked on a multi-day discussion, facilitated by trained members of the Jefferson Center and IATP. The panelists heard presentations from the local experts (some of the same experts that visited the high school) on how climate change could impact their lives through energy, food, natural resource, and agricultural systems. From day one, the deliberation focused on creating an action plan for their community that *prioritized the most vulnerable*. As the final citizens report states, “Devastating weather is becoming more frequent in Stevens County. Increased living expenses brought about by climate change and extreme weather, including food, clean water, transportation, property damage, and energy costs currently, and will continue to, adversely affect all members of the community, especially those with low or fixed-incomes.”

Some citizen jurists expected the exercise to be like others heaped onto them. On the contrary, the fifteen panelists reached the end of the process with a powerful citizen statement on how they could begin to respond to climate change and a renewed spirit of what is possibility in this “democratic experiment.” The Morris Citizens’ report, written by the jury panelists, states key facts of how climate change will impact Minnesota, the concerns and opportunities for the

IMPLEMENTING DEEP DEMOCRACY

community, and their recommendations for moving forward. The Jefferson Center and IATP are committed to helping the community turn their deliberation into action.

"[...] Climate change presents short- and long-term challenges and opportunities for everyone. We must all participate to solve these issues."—*Morris Citizens' Report*

The Jefferson Center and IATP will facilitate two more pilot Rural Climate Dialogues in Minnesota communities. For all these pilot projects, community members prove to themselves that they do not need to be the *target* of climate policy, rather they can be a part of the solution in building resilient, healthy communities. While it is true that these dialogues are not yet reaching the full ideals of deep democracy—unlike, for example, participatory budgeting, the citizens are not making decisions that bind government decision-makers—but the Dialogues present a strong example of both the fact that such conversations can be had and are productive among everyday, average citizens, *and* they show the way for this kind of process to start being scaled-up, institutionalized, and one day perhaps the norm for how decisions are made in our society.

The citizens' jury in Morris focused on the concerns of the community and how to build a resilient community in the face of climate change. Citizens' juries can also be facilitated with the specific aim of informing the citizenry on contentious ballot issues. In the state of Oregon, ballot measures determine some of the state's largest policy decisions. Ballot measures can be confusing and difficult to understand, and proponents on both sides can exacerbate the confusion by misinformation presented through charged political ads.

Healthy Democracy is a nonprofit organization that works to increase citizen participation and power in our democracy, specifically through facilitate deliberations and dialogues. Healthy Democracy facilitated a Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review of Measure 92 in the 2012 elections. Measure 92 required food manufacturers and retailers to label genetically engineered foods.⁶⁴ For the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review 20 randomly selected and demographically representative voters were gathered into a panel and heard directly from policy experts. After this multi-day process, the panel drafted a citizens' initiative statement that summarized the arguments in favor and the arguments in opposition of Measure 92. This statement fed directly into the Oregon Voter's Pamphlet. This citizens' panel was convened under different circumstances than the Rural Climate Dialogues in Morris, Minnesota, but similarly worked to inform the citizenry through a balanced presentation of arguments and ample opportunity for deliberation.⁶⁵

In this report, we have given examples and research on the need for deep democracy, and its potential. By presenting both the theory, and the practice, we hope to show that not only is deep democracy vital, but it is also feasible—it has been tried out in a variety of ways within the United States, and around the world. The point is not that all the kinks have been worked out—no human system ever has *all* the kinks worked out. The point is that "democracy" is not just something we have to accept as voting every couple of years. Interacting with, and making decisions with our fellow citizens is not only possible, it's been shown to work—in Törbel, in Denmark, in New York City, in North Carolina and more. Our current systems are not capable of handling the problems before them, but the good news is that, in all likelihood, *We* are. These examples show that we can, have, and do work together—and where we see, across the food system, organizations continuing and springing up to bring food access, dignity, sustainability, fresh food, seasonal food, local food, less processed food, better wages for farm and restaurant workers, fight climate change, improve our diets, and fight corporate power—these organizations are the proof that we're raring to work together for change. Deep democracy offers some of the tools to expand from where we are, and generate a food movement made up of the voices of the people, solving the tough problems and rising up to show that there is a different way to implement them. Not waiting for unresponsive politicians to get over the gridlock that keeps them in office; not voting with the dollars that are already so concentrated in the hands of a few, where several Americans quite literally have millions more votes than poor and middle-class Americans—but generating the change and the policies for our own communities, in our own communities, and across and with other communities.

List of Acronyms

- CPR: Common pool resource
- EU: European Union
- FPC: Food policy council
- IATP: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Glossary of Key Terms and Concepts

- **CITIZENS' JURY:** A group of selected members of a place (town, region, country, etc.) that make recommendations or action proposals to decision-makers on complex issues after a time of learning and dialogue on the issue. Citizens' juries are one of several participatory methods that aim to improve the quality of decision-making and make policymaking more transparent, legitimate, effective, efficient and sustainable. The citizens selected to participate are often selected to be demographically representative (in gender, ethnicity, age, education) of the place.
- **COMMON POOL RESOURCE (CPR):** Natural or human-made resource where one's use of the resource subtracts from another's use and where it is often necessary, but difficult and expensive, to manage users. Common pool resources include fisheries, forests, water resources, wildlife and the atmosphere or air, where there is a finite capacity to use and/or pollute the resource, therefore excessive use can damage or deplete the resource for others' use. Throughout history, many groups of people have *effectively* managed common pool resources as documented most famously by institutional analyst and researcher and Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom. The study of sustainable common pool resource management has immense implications for how we as a globalized society manage dwindling and precious natural resources.
- **CONSENSUS CONFERENCE:** A participatory method that involves citizens assessing a science or technology issue. Consensus conference participants are everyday citizens, not "experts" in the field. Citizens contribute by making their views known in the form of visions, concerns, values, and reflections on everyday experiences. The consensus conference method emerged due to the overwhelming notion that assessment of new and emerging technologies (such as nuclear power and biotechnology) should not be limited to 'experts' and the representative government.
- **DEEP DEMOCRACY:** A participatory approach that values diversity of viewpoints, equality among participants, and elevating the minority voice in facilitated dialogue to help formulate sustainable decisions and policies for any and all areas of life. Deep democratic processes include citizens' juries, consensus conferences, and participatory budgeting. Deep democracy emphasizes that the success of a decision-making process emerges from the transformative power of people gathering and dialoguing around issues.
- **FOODSHED:** A region where food flows from the area that it is produced to the place where it is consumed, including the land it grows on, the path it travels and where it is consumed. Many efforts to create more sustainable food systems focus on creating and strengthening localized and regional foodsheds.
- **FOOD DEMOCRACY:** Working to improve food systems for all, not the few, based on communities' participation in democratic decisions about the food system.
- **FOOD POLICY COUNCIL:** A grassroots body that can influence decisions made by governments at all levels, businesses, and/or organizations that affect how food gets from farm to plate, as well as strategize, dialogue, plan, and act, as an organization itself, to build and strengthen the local and sustainable food system. A *food policy* can be as broad as a federal regulation of food labeling or as local and specific as a zoning law that lets residents raise chickens in urban environments.
- **FOOD SECURITY:** When all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life (definition from World Food Summit of 1996).

■ **FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:**

i. “[...] the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.” (from the **Declaration of Nyéléni, the first global forum on food sovereignty, Mali, 2007**)

ii. **A global, transnational movement of peoples and organizations working toward definition ‘A’.**

■ **FOOD SYSTEM:** All processes, people and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items. The food system also includes the inputs used and outputs generated at all of these steps of food.

■ **Network (more precisely a social network, but in this report simply referred to as a ‘network’):** a structure of people or institutions (the ‘actors’) and the ways and nature of how they are connected or interact.

OTHER EXAMPLES AND CASES

In writing this report, we did not attempt to comprehensively cover the entire range of participatory processes occurring across the U.S. and the globe. However, to provide even more inspiration to implement deep democratic approaches in your work and lives as well as provide more examples to illustrate the broad range of applications of these approaches in diverse places, with different social, cultural and political contexts, below are more examples to explore, that were referenced briefly throughout the report.

Projects and groups practicing, advocating, or embodying elements of deep democracy

Organization	Mission/more information	URL
Better Together (an initiative of the Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America at Harvard University)		http://www.bettertogether.org/
California Food Policy Council (CAFPC)		http://www.rootsofchange.org/content/about-cafpc
Center for Deliberative Democracy	“The Center for Deliberative Democracy, housed in the Department of Communication at Stanford University, is devoted to research about democracy and public opinion obtained through Deliberative Polling®.”	http://cdd.stanford.edu/
Center for Social Inclusion		http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/
Community Food & Justice Coalition		http://cafoodjustice.org/
Community Food Strategies	Provides support for the North Carolina Network of (Food) Councils:	http://communityfoodstrategies.com/
		http://communityfoodstrategies.com/what/network/
Danish Technology Board		http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?page=forside.php3&language=uk/
The Deliberative Democracy Consortium		http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/index.php
Deliberative Polling by The Texas Public Utilities Commission (see write-ups at):		http://apps2.eere.energy.gov/wind/windex-change/pdfs/33177_tx.pdf ;
		http://cdd.stanford.edu/research/papers/2000/utility_paper.pdf
		http://cdd.stanford.edu/polls/energy/

Projects and groups practicing, advocating, or embodying elements of deep democracy

Organization	Mission/more information	URL
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative	"The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's (DSNI) mission is to empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse and high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners."	http://www.dsni.org/
The Farmer-to-Farmer Movement (El Movimiento Campesino-a-Campesino)	Explored in Eric Holt-Gimenez's book, <i>Campesino a Campesino: Voices from Latin America's Farmer to Farmer Movement for Sustainable Agriculture</i> (Oakland: FoodFirst Books)	
Federation of Southern Cooperatives		http://www.federationsoutherncoop.com/
The Food Dignity Project	"Food Dignity is a 5-year initiative to trace [paths to a brighter future] taken by five U.S. communities and to collaborate in mapping and traveling the most appropriate and effective roads forward for creating sustainable community food systems that build food security. The Food Dignity team includes dozens of people at two universities, one "action-think" tank, one college, and five community-based organizations."	http://fooddignity.org/
FoodFirst	"Food First envisions a world in which all people have access to healthy, ecologically produced and culturally appropriate food. After nearly 40 years of analysis of the global food system, we know that making this vision a reality involves more than technical solutions—it requires political transformation. That's why Food First supports activists, social movements, alliances and coalitions working for systemic change."	http://foodfirst.org/
The International Food Security & Nutrition Civil Society Mechanism	"The purpose of the CSM is to facilitate civil society participation in agriculture, food security and nutrition policy development at national, regional and global levels in the context of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)... The CSM is an inclusive space open to all civil society organizations, with priority given to the organisations and movements of the people most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, i.e. smallholder producers, fisherfolk, pastoralists, indigenous, urban poor, migrants, agricultural workers etc. The CSM is founded on the belief that the people most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition must be the agents of their own development, are best placed to represent their own interests and views and are not only victims but also bearers of solutions."	http://www.csm4cfs.org/about_us-2/what_is_the_csm-1/
The Jefferson Center	"We envision a democracy where individuals interact genuinely with public institutions, elected officials, community organizations, and with one another to address common challenges. Our current work advances civic engagement and public deliberation on a range of issues including environment and climate, student civic leadership, patient safety in healthcare, and diversity and inclusion in public institutions."	http://jefferson-center.org/
Moral Mondays and Forward Together		https://www.facebook.com/ncnaacp
		http://www.thenation.com/article/180491/how-moral-mondays-fusion-coalition-taking-north-carolina-back#
		http://www.advancementproject.org/pages/north-carolina-forward-together https://twitter.com/moralmondays

Projects and groups practicing, advocating, or embodying elements of deep democracy

Organization	Mission/more information	URL
The Movement of Landless Rural Workers (<i>Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra – o MST</i>)	See also extensive work by scholars Hannah Wittman (http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/person/hannah-wittman/); Wendy Wolford (https://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/people/wendy-wolford/); and Angus Wright (https://csus.academia.edu/AngusWright)	http://mstbrazil.org/
The Movement Strategy Center		http://movementstrategy.org/
National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation		http://ncdd.org/
Oregon's Citizen Initiative Review Commission	For information on their recent review of GMO legislation, see write-up at http://healthydemocracy.org/citizens-initiative-review/oregon/oregon-citizens-initiative-review-background/	http://www.oregon.gov/circ/Pages/index.aspx
Participatory Budgeting in New York City	"Through Participatory Budgeting, residents of twenty-four Council Districts across the City are directly deciding how to spend \$25 million of taxpayer money. From September 2014 to April 2015, community members are exchanging ideas, working together to turn ideas into project proposals, and voting to decide what proposals get funded.	http://pbnyc.org/
The Participatory Budgeting Project	"Our mission is to empower people to decide together how to spend public money. We create and support participatory budgeting processes that deepen democracy, build stronger communities, and make public budgets more equitable and effective. Building on decades of experience around the world, we understand participatory budgeting (PB) as a democratic process in which local people directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. We approach our work in three main ways: We build real power over real money; We transform democracy; We address inequality. "	http://www.participatorybudgeting.org/
Participatory Grantmaking (information at):		http://www.coloradotrust.org/online-publications/reports/2013-annual-report/grants/community-based-participatory-grantmaking http://hausercenter.org/iha/2011/12/05/emerging-models-of-participatory-philanthropy-frida-the-young-feminist-fund/ http://www.issuelab.org/resource/who_decides_how_participatory_grantmaking_benefits_donors_communities_and_movements
Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA)		http://www.panna.org/ And particularly http://www.panna.org/issues/food-agriculture/food-democracy
Rural Coalition	"The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant, and working people from the United States, Mexico, Canada, and beyond working together toward a new society that values unity, hope, people, and land. Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is one of the most grassroots-oriented and culturally-diverse of rural organizations. With over 90 grassroots member organizations we serve as a critical advocacy voice of African-American, American-Indian, Asian-American, Euro-American, Latino, and women farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and rural communities throughout the U.S."	https://www.ruralco.org/

Projects and groups practicing, advocating, or embodying elements of deep democracy

Organization	Mission/more information	URL
Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative		http://srbwi.org/
The US Food Sovereignty Alliance	"The US Food Sovereignty Alliance works to end poverty, rebuild local food economies, and assert democratic control over the food system. We believe all people have the right to healthy, culturally appropriate food, produced in an ecologically sound manner. As a US-based alliance of food justice, anti-hunger, labor, environmental, faith-based, and food producer groups, we uphold the right to food as a basic human right and work to connect our local and national struggles to the international movement for food sovereignty."	http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/
La Vía Campesina	See also the work of Jun Borras (http://www.iss.nl/iss_faculty/profiel_metis/1120791/); Annette Desmarais (http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/sociology/facstaff/3497.html); Maria Elena Martinez-Torres (http://neyolnotza.ciesas.edu.mx/pi.aspx?Publica=1844); Phil McMichael (http://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/people/philip-mcmichael); and Peter Rosset (http://www.ecosur.mx/component/academicpages/?id=407&Itemid=1487).	http://viacampesina.org/en/
Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis (pioneering center for the study of Common Property Management)	See especially the Ostrom Workshop Library:	http://www.indiana.edu/~workshop/ http://webtest.iu.edu/~workshop/drupal/?q=node/1507

Case study collections and databases

- Commons in Action at the International Association for the Study of the Commons
 "An impressive array of evidence from around the world that communities are able to manage common property resources effectively and sustainably."
<http://www.iasc-commons.org/impact-stories>
- Food Voices: Stories from the People Who Feed Us
<http://foodvoices.org/index.html>

Other resources and further reading

- Arun Agrawal, Eva Wollenberg, and Lauren Persha, "Governing agriculture-forest landscapes to achieve climate change mitigation," *Global Environmental Change* In press, November 7, 2014, doi: 10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2014.10.001
- Sol Erdman and Lawrence Susskind, *The Cure for Our Broken Political Process: How We Can Get Our Politicians to Resolve the Issues Tearing Our Country Apart* (Dulles: Potomac Books, 2008).
- Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, eds., *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance* (London: Verso, 2003).
- Jesse Hardman, "Budgeting for the people: US cities let citizens divvy up funds," *Al Jazeera America*, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/12/4/participatory-budgeting-gives-residents-say-in-spending-city-money.html> (accessed November 17, 2014).
- *International Journal of the Commons*, <http://www.thecommonsjournal.org/index.php/ijc/index>
- Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapieza, and Luigi Zingales, "Long-term Persistence," (*formerly*, "Was Putnam Right?"), <http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/faculty/sapieza/htm/putnam.pdf>.

- Alexa Kasdan and Susan Lerner, “Be Our Guest: Participatory budgeting gives voters a voice in government spending and could curb corruption,” *New York Daily News*, (April 22, 2013) <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/br-guest-participatory-budgeting-tool-corruption-article-1.1323640?localLinksEnabled=false> (accessed November 17, 2014).
- Tim Lang, David Barling, and Martin Caraher, *Food Policy: integrating health, environment and society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- Frances Moore Lappé, *Democracy’s Edge: Choosing to Save Our Country by Bringing Democracy to Life* (San Francisco: Wiley/Jossey-Bass, 2005).
- Frances Moore Lappe, *EcoMind: Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want* (New York: Nation Books, 2013).
- Josh Lerner, *Making Democracy Fun: How Game Design Can Empower Citizens and Transform Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Thomas Prugh, Robert Costanza, and Herman Daly, *The Local Politics of Global Sustainability* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1999).
- Hank Renting, Markus Schermer, and Adanella Rossi, “Building Food Democracy: Exploring Civic Food Networks and Newly Emerging Forms of Food Citizenship,” *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food* 19, no. 3 (2012): 289-307.
- Hannah K. Wittman, Annette Aurelie Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe, eds. *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2010).
- For an updated list of examples, please visit [<http://agroecopeople.wordpress.com/deepening-food-democracy-further-resources/>]

ENDNOTES

1. Deep democracy has many related terms, including participatory, strong, and deliberative democracy, that have small differences in meaning in scholarly literature. We use the term 'deep democracy' in this report to encompass all the concepts and practices of these related terms.
2. Small Planet Institute, "Our beginning," <http://smallplanet.org/about/mission> (accessed November 14, 2014).
3. Examples include millions of hectares in village commons in Japan, and the huerta and zanjera systems in Spain and the Philippines, respectively: Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 58-102.
4. For further resources on such real-life positive examples, beyond those discussed here, see the list in the Appendix.
5. Sol Erdman and Lawrence Susskind, "Will our politicians ever do the right thing?" *Huffington Post*, October 4, 2010, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sol-erdman/will-our-politicians-ever_b_750017.html (accessed November 14, 2014).
6. See Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 3 (September 2014): "Even overwhelmingly large pro-change majorities, with 80 percent of the public favoring a policy change, got that change only about 43 percent of the time..." (p. 572); "majorities of the American public actually have little influence over the policies our government adopts... But we believe that if policymaking is dominated by powerful business organizations and a small number of affluent Americans, then America's claims to being a democratic society are seriously threatened (p. 577). See also Elias Isquith, "Cronies, corruption and cash: Lawrence Lessig on why we need a super PAC to end all super PACs," *Salon.com*, http://www.salon.com/2014/06/18/teaching_us_to_hate_each_other_lawrence_lessig_on_his_super_pac_to_end_all_super_pacs/ (accessed November 14, 2014).
7. Just Food, "Bronx Residents Celebrate 10 Years Of Growing Their Own," <http://www.justfood.org/blog/category/stories/2013-06-03/bronx-residents-celebrate-10-years-growing-their-own> (accessed November 14, 2014); Doug McKalip, "Local Food, Local Places: A Federal Partnership to Help Rural America Use Local Food and Build Local Economies," White House Domestic Policy Council, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/06/09/local-food-local-places-federal-partnership-help-rural-america-use-local-food-and-bu> (accessed November 14, 2014).
8. To learn more about La Via Campesina, see Annette Desmarais, *La Via Campesina: Globalization and the Power of Peasants* (Halifax and London: Fernwood Publishing and Pluto Press, 2007); and their website, *La Via Campesina: International Peasant's Movement*, <http://viacampesina.org> (accessed November 14, 2014).
9. A. Haroon Akram-Lodhi, "How to Build Food Sovereignty," (conference paper, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 2013), http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/foodsovereignty/pprs/15_AkramLodi_2013-1.pdf (accessed November 14, 2014).
10. Maria Elena Martinez-Torres and Peter Rosset, "La Via Campesina: the birth and evolution of a transnational social movement," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 165-166.
11. Land administration laws in Brazil ensured that land and labor were provided to elite sectors of society by excluding the rural landless, women, and wage laborers from direct political participation (Hannah Wittman, "Reframing Agrarian Citizenship: Land, Life and Power in Brazil," *Journal of Rural Studies* 25 (2009): 120-30).
12. Ibid. See also an overview of "Ecological land reform in Brazil" in M. Jahi Chappell et al., "Food Sovereignty: An Alternative Paradigm for Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation in Latin America," *F1000Research* 2 [v1; ref status: indexed, <http://f1000r.es/23s>] (2013): 235; Angus Wright and Wendy Wolford, *To Inherit the Earth: The Landless Movement and the Struggle for a New Brazil* (Oakland, CA: FoodFirst Books, 2003); and Friends of the MST, "Friends of the MST," <http://www.mstbrazil.org/> (accessed November 14, 2014).
13. Julie Guthman, *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2nd ed., 2014), 3-12.
14. Outside of the important benefit that they by definition decrease or avoid exposure to a wide variety of synthetic pesticides.
15. Josee Johnston, Andrew Biro and Nora MacKendrick, "Lost in the Supermarket: The Corporate-Organic Foodscape and the Struggle for Food Democracy," *Antipode* 41 (June 2009): 509-532.
16. For more detailed discussion of the concept of food democracy, see chapters by Graham Riches, Zita Botelho, and Tim Lang in the section "Toward Food Democracy," in *For Hunger-proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems*, eds. Mustafa Koc et al. (Ottawa: International Development Research Center), 203-224; and Neva Hassanein, "Practicing food democracy: a pragmatic politics of transformation," *Journal of Rural Studies* 19, no. 1 (2003): 77-86. We should note the existence of the NGO Food Democracy Now! (<http://www.fooddemocracynow.org/>). Although their conceptualization of food democracy is similar to ours, their work on many important issues of sustainability and justice in the food system is not necessarily oriented towards the frameworks of food sovereignty, agrarian citizenship, or deep democracy per se.
17. See e.g., Marion Nestle, "Eat Drink Vote," Marion Nestle and The Cartoonist Group, <http://www.eatdrinkvote.com/> (accessed November 17, 2014).
18. Riches et al.
19. For example, IATP is part of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance (<http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/>) and takes part in the annual Food Sovereignty Prize ceremony held in the United States.
20. Although there have been some variation in the trends of trust/distrust in the government, many of these sharp and rapid declines or increases can be attributed to specific historical events such as Nixon's resignation, the Clinton impeachment, or Hurricane Katrina. (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, "Public Trust in Government: 1958-1995," <http://www.people-press.org/2013/10/18/trust-in-government-interactive/> (accessed November 17, 2014)). On the whole, there has been a steady decrease in trust since the 1960s.
21. Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* (January 1995): 65-78, and his book expanding on this, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); and see Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, "Public Trust in Government: 1958-2014."
22. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, "Political Polarization in the American Public," <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/> (accessed November 17, 2014). Mediation scholars Sol Erdman and Lawrence Susskind (supra Note 5) point to the additional problem that every national representative in the US represents multiple, clashing interests—and so a winning strategy is often to do nothing and blame it on the other party in order to keep a slim majority of your voters without hugely alienating any.
23. Putnam.
24. Ibid.
25. Barack Obama, "Transparency and Open Government: Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies," *WhiteHouse.gov*, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment; and John Kamensky, "National Partnership for Reinventing Government: A Brief History," *National Partnership for Reinventing Government*, <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/whoweare/history2.html> (accessed November 17, 2014).
26. Gilens and Page.
27. A "wicked problem" is one where there are not definitive, clear and obvious solutions; where there may be many legitimately-held definitions of the problem and the reasons for it; and where the details, limitations and resources around the problem may change over time.
28. Jiankui He and Michael W. Deem, "Structure and Response in the World Trade Network," *Physical Review Letters*, 105 (November 2010): 198701.
29. Jules Pretty et al., "Policy Challenges and Priorities for Internalizing the Externalities of Modern Agriculture," *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 44, no. 2 (2001): 263-283.
30. Patricia Wilson, "Deep Democracy: The Inner Practice of Civic Engagement," *Fieldnotes: A Newsletter of the Shambhala Institute*, February 2004, http://ncdd.org/rc/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Wilson-Deep_Democracy.pdf (accessed September 5, 2014).
31. David Lewit, "Porto Alegre's Budget Of, By, and For the People," *Yes! Magazine*, December 2002, <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/what-would-democracy-look-like/562> (accessed September 5, 2014).
32. This section on Porto Alegre relies heavily on two sources: Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "Participation, Activism, and Politics: The Porto Alegre Experiment and Deliberative Democratic Theory," in *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, eds. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, (London: Verso, 2003), 45-77; and Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Ernesto Ganuza, "Participatory Budgeting as if Emancipation Mattered," *Politics & Society* 42, no. 1 (2014): 29-50.
33. There are also parallel "thematic" meetings where delegates consider problems that affect the city as a whole.

34. Some might question whether the latter two numbers—low-income and low-education participation—are not bad things. To us, this jibes rather uneasily with two other deep American tendencies—skepticism of authority and supposed respect for those who have gone through the “school of hard knocks”. We would argue that low-income and low-education citizens deserve as much direct representation as anyone everyone else. Also, we strongly disagree with the idea that you can solve problems like poverty or lack of education by developing solutions “at” people, rather than with them.
35. Participatory Budgeting in New York City, “About,” <http://pbnyc.org/content/about> (accessed November 17, 2014).
36. This discussion of technology consensus conferences must be seen in the historical context of Danish pursuit of enlightenment. Public debate and continued learning were strong pillars of Danish political and social life since the late 19th century (Edna F. Einsiedel, Erling Jelsøe and Thomas Breck, “Publics at the technology table: The consensus conference in Denmark, Canada, and Australia,” *Public Understanding of Science* 10 (2001): 83-98.).
37. Simon Joss, “Danish consensus conferences as a model of participatory technology assessment: an impact study of consensus conferences on Danish Parliament and Danish public debate,” *Science and Public Policy* 25 (February 1998): 2-22.
38. Einsiedel et al.
39. Public debate about biotechnology was specifically fueled by the first specific plans for an industrial production plan for genetically modified organisms in Denmark (Einsiedel et al.).
40. To learn more about the Danish Board of Technology’s current projects, please visit their website: <http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?survey=15&language=uk>.
41. Ida-Elisabeth Andersen and Birgit Jæger, “Scenario Workshops and consensus conferences: towards more democratic decision-making,” *Science and Public Policy* 26 (October 1999): 331-340.
42. While we haven’t overly emphasized it in this report, it is important to note that having established and well laid-out processes, skilled and experienced facilitators, and the expectation of working together repeatedly are all consistently important factors in deep democratic processes. See the Appendix for some of the numerous resources offering further information and training in deep democratic practices.
43. Co-Intelligence Institute, “Consensus Conference: A Danish description,” <http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-ConsensusConference1.html> (accessed November 17, 2014).
44. Einsiedel et al.
45. World Wide Views, “World Wide Views,” <http://www.wwviews.org> (accessed November 17, 2014).
46. James S. Fishkin, “Deliberative Polling: Executive Summary,” Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University, <http://cdd.stanford.edu/polls/docs/summary> (accessed November 17, 2014).
47. Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162 (1968): 1243-1248.
48. Ostrom, 280.
49. In fact, there was a process much more similar to this, where farmers and ranchers pulled together and expressed a clear agenda and a clear set of demands to national officials. The monumental U.S. Farmers’ and Ranchers’ Congress of 1988 (<http://www.iatp.org/documents/a-report-on-the-united-farmers-and-rancher-congress>) made a difference but did not, in the end, get what it sought. We are arguing here, in essence, that the process behind that Congress itself was a more legitimate—and wiser—process than the bill that the U.S.’s elected representatives came up with independently. Although by no means perfect, the Farmers’ and Ranchers’ Congress is much closer to deep democratic ideals and the scientific evidence around communities self-governing (e.g., as in Torbel) than what later actually happened in the U.S. Congress (as in Gilens and Page’s study, where they found Economic Elites getting their way rather than the average voter).
50. Quote from Farrell and Shalizi (supra Note 29). Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom, however, made very similar points in her foundational works on Common Property Management.
51. Daniel Weeks, “Why Are the Poor and Minorities Less Likely to Vote?,” *The Atlantic*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/01/why-are-the-poor-and-minorities-less-likely-to-vote/282896/3/> (accessed September 10, 2014).
52. Lu Hong and Scott E. Page, “Groups of diverse problem solvers can outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers”, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 101 (2004): 16385-16389, <http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~spage/pnas.pdf>.
53. M. Jahi Chappell, “Science means having to say ‘I’m sorry’”, *ThinkForward*, <http://www.iatp.org/blog/201309/science-means-having-to-say-%E2%80%9C%E2%80%99m-sorry%E2%80%9D>; Farrell and Shalizi; Ostrom.
54. Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, “Is Equality Passe?,” *The Boston Review*, <http://bostonreview.net/samuel-bowles-herbert-gintis-is-equality-passe> (1998).
55. The “What?” question of transforming food systems has also been answered quite convincingly. Agroecology is an integrative scientific discipline that is deeply rooted in social justice and food sovereignty. For more information on agroecology, please see IATP’s Agroecology Issues Page: <http://iatp.org/issue/agroecology>.
56. Mary Frost, “Brooklynites fund schools, libraries, gardens in participatory budgeting vote,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 16, 2014, <http://www.brooklyn eagle.com/articles/2014/4/16/brooklynites-fund-schools-libraries-gardens-participatory-budgeting-vote> (accessed September 5, 2014).
57. Like efforts in Ohio: <http://glennschool.osu.edu/food/>, or current work at Johns Hopkins University: <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/projects/FPN/>.
58. <http://communityfoodstrategies.com/>.
59. <http://www.rootsofchange.org/content/about-cafpc>.
60. Nested governance—also called “polycentricity”—was also extensively written about by Elinor Ostrom before her death. See <http://www.geo.coop/node/647> and <http://www10.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/pe/2009/04268.pdf> for two example works.
61. For more information on the Jefferson Center, please visit their website: <http://jefferson-center.org/>.
62. Andrew Rockway, “Re-engaging Americans in Climate Debate,” *Jefferson Center*, March 21, 2014, <http://jefferson-center.org/re-engaging-americans-in-climate-debate> (accessed September 5, 2014).
63. Since some participatory processes – and our current democracy more generally – have been critiqued for not including youth voices, the student dialogue aspect of the Rural Climate Dialogues demonstrates the potential for providing a forum for student voices and how that can also benefit our decision-making.
64. <http://healthydemocracy.org/citizens-initiative-review/oregon/measure-92-final/>.
65. <http://healthydemocracy.org/citizens-initiative-review/oregon/how-it-works/>.