

Louisa County Food Policy Audit Final Report



Anastasia Carihfield, Brian Hickey and Kate Wellons

Louisa County Food Policy Audit Final Report

Overview and Project Goals

The goal of the food policy audit for Louisa county is to read over official documents of Louisa county and contact representatives in the locality to determine the extent of the security and sustainability of the local food system. The purpose of the audit is as a first step in creating a sustainable system that meets the goals of the Louisa residents. The audit will determine what steps have already been taken to ensure local food security and sustainability and will allow us to work with Louisa community members to create recommendations for future improvements.

The five areas we will be examining will be public health, economic development, environmental benefits, social equity and land conservation in the context of the local food system. The public health section of the audit looks at issues such as decreasing obesity, raising awareness of healthy living, promoting healthy eating, supporting community gardens, and reducing exposure to pesticides in food. Economic development focuses on supporting local food production, processing, and distribution and the creation of new local food businesses. Environmental benefits looks at how the community is working to reduce its carbon footprint, food waste, and stream pollution. We will look at issues of social equity such as improving transportation to grocery stores, supporting grocery stores and farmers markets in underserved areas, increasing availability of healthy foods to the community, supporting equitable farm working conditions and creating an emergency food infrastructure. Land conservation looks at preserving potential agricultural land, reducing start-up farm debt and limiting development in agriculture land.

Louisa County is a predominantly rural county, and is proud of its history, agricultural resources and scenic landscapes. Only about 10% of the county is considered urban, while 71% is in forestal lands, 16% in crop, pasture and open land and 3% in water bodies. Some of the main goals in their Comprehensive Plan include maintaining their rural heritage, promoting environmental stewardship and promoting agriculture and forestry.

According to a 2009 Census estimate, Louisa's population makes up roughly 4% of the entire Virginia population at 33,078. The population as of 2008 was 18.8% African American, compared to 19.9% for Virginia, 51% female, which is generally the same for Virginia, and only 1.4% Hispanic, compared to 6.8% for Virginia as a whole¹. The majority (71.7%) of the adult population (those >25) has a high school degree, compared to 81.5% of Virginia residents, and 14% have a bachelor's degree, compared to 29.5% of all Virginia residents.

The median household income for Louisa County is \$54,777 compared to the Virginia median of \$61,210. Louisa, however, stands out in the sector of home ownership, with 81.5% of its residents owning a home, compared to 68.1% of Virginians.² Of Louisa County industries providing employment, 15.6% are in educational, health and social service, 14% are within manufacturing, 13.4% in construction, and 11.5% of Louisa industries involve retail trade. Government employees constitute 17% of the workforce, 74% are salaried or provided a private wage, and 9% are self-employed or not incorporated.² As of October 2009, unemployment rose slightly above the state average in Louisa at 7.8% (Virginia, 6.4%). Louisa describes itself as

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County QuickFacts: Louisa County, VA," n.d., <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51109.html>> (accessed March 10, 2010).

² City-Data, "Louisa County, Virginia (VA)," n.d., <http://www.city-data.com/county/Louisa_County-VA.html> (accessed April 15, 2010).

becoming a “bedroom community,” with only 36.4% of its residents both living and working in the county. Many residents commute to urban areas such as Richmond and Charlottesville. For males, the most common industry is construction (23%) and health care for females (13%). Only 4% of males are involved in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industries.

Agriculture in Louisa County is focused in livestock, poultry, and their products, which constitute 76.45% of the total market value of agricultural products sold. 8.09% of this value is found in nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod. There are 1395 harvested acres of corn for grain, 758 harvested acres of wheat for grain, and 1468 harvested acres of soybeans for beans. Vegetables constitute only 13 harvested acres in Louisa.²

Agriculture and forestry are major industries in the county, both with regards to the economy and the character of the community. In the Comprehensive Plan, Louisa County is concerned with limiting urban and suburban growth to certain areas (namely the towns of Mineral and Louisa) in order to protect valuable agriculture land and the county waterways. Because issues like environmental stewardship are so valuable to Louisa, it is likely that sustainable food policy practices will eventually become a part of the Comprehensive Plan. Good food policy has the potential to protect the environment, support the local economy and foster a sense of community, all of which are important goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Some of the important places around Louisa County include Lake Anna, the Twin Oaks Community and the Green Springs National Historic Landmark District. Lake Anna is a major tourist destination and provides a large number of jobs to residents. Boating and fishing are the

² City-Data, "Louisa County, Virginia (VA)," n.d., < http://www.city-data.com/county/Louisa_County-VA.html > (accessed April 15, 2010).

two major attractions to the park, but it also features 15 miles of hiking trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding and camping facilities. The lake is known for its populations of largemouth bass, crappie, and bream. Managed deer hunt, a method to control deer populations, is allowed that allows individuals to participate through a lottery. Mirroring Louisa County's emphasis on education, Lake Anna features an Environmental Education Center.³

The Twin Oaks Community, an egalitarian community founded more than 40 years ago, includes ecological sustainability as one of their goals. Community members grow most of their food organically and sell tofu to nearby natural food stores. Because they build their own building, Twin Oaks is able to incorporate multiple facets of alternative energy, including solar features, extensive insulation, solar hot water, and permaculture landscaping.⁴

Lastly, Green Springs is a privately owned historic area recognized by the National Park Service and the source of much pride to Louisa County. It spans over 14,000 acres in Louisa County and is made up of homes and farms preserved in their authentic conditions, many dating back to the nineteenth century and earlier.⁵

Methodology

Initial Document Review

To create our initial audit of food policy in Louisa County, we looked through documents available online looking for language related to food policy. We read through the Louisa County

³ Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, "Virginia Parks: Lake Anna," 2006, < http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/lak.shtml> (accessed May 4, 2010).

⁴ Twin Oaks, "Twin Oaks Intentional Community," n.d., < <http://www.twinoaks.org/index.html>> (accessed May 4, 2010).

⁵ National Park Service, "Green Springs," n.d., < <http://www.nps.gov/grsp/index.htm>> (accessed May 4, 2010).

comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinances, documents on the Louisa Extension office homepage, relevant information on the county school homepage and on the websites of related organizations such as community outreach programs such as JABA.

Compiling Document Findings, Creating the Draft Audit

After reading through the relevant documents, our class decided as a group how to compile and present the information. We decided on a simple excel spreadsheet indicating which food policy language was present and a separate word document of supplemental notes describing our findings. The supplemental notes describe the food policy in place in Louisa and any ambiguous findings and include specific textual references.

List of Resources:

- County of Louisa Comprehensive Plan (2001, 2006) - downloaded
- Comprehensive Plan updates and public comments, 2005
(http://www.louisacounty.com/LCcommdev/PP_CompPlan.htm#)
- Code of Ordinances for Louisa County (http://library1.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=12480&doc_action=whatsnew)
- Zoning definitions
(http://www.louisacounty.com/LCcommdev/PP_ZoningUses.htm)
- GIS Map (<http://gis.timmons.com/louisaims/gis.aspx>)
- Louisa County Parks and Recreation (<http://www.lcpr.info/>)
- Clean Community Commission (<http://louweb.louisa.org/CCC/>)
- Community Cupboard, emergency food pantry
(<http://www.louisacounty.com/LCliving/cupboard.htm>)
- Louisa County Public Schools
(<http://www.lcps.k12.va.us/education/district/district.php?sectionid=1>)
- School Comprehensive Plan – downloaded
- Breakfast menu, Wellness Newsletter – downloaded
- Wellness grant
(<http://louisacounty.va.schoolwebpages.com/education/components/whatsnew/default.php?sectiondetailid=18638&itemID=1628>)
- Twin Oaks – Independent Group (<http://www.twinoaks.org/>)
- Local foods search (<http://www.buylocalvirginia.org/search/search-result.cfm?type=any&County=459&keyword=>)

- Virginia/Louisa County Census Bureau Quickfacts (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51109.html>)
- Louisa County City-Data (http://www.city-data.com/county/Louisa_County-VA.html)
- National Park Service: Green Springs (<http://www.nps.gov/grsp/historyculture/stories.htm>)
- Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation: Lake Anna (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/lak.shtml)

Contacting Community Partners

During our document review, we compiled a list of possible community contacts, including members of the local government, school employees and directors of community outreach organizations. In addition, our graduate assistant, Jessica Ray, provided us with another list of similar community contact options. We divided the list evenly, and each group member called or emailed several contacts to make interview appointments.

Community Partner Interviews

Most interviews were conducted in Louisa County with two group members present. Questions asked depended on the line of work of the interviewee, though some questions regarding the audit and food policy in Louisa remained the same. We created an interview template with key questions, so each interview followed the same general format. Some of the questions from the template drew on important interview questions we had decided on as a class. At the end of each meeting, the interviewee was invited to the final class presentation and was given an invitation.

Seven interviews were conducted in total. All interviewees were asked the following question, with some variation based on their occupation:

- What do you do as [job position]?
- What comments or questions do you have about our food policy audit?
- How would you say food policy (or lack of) affects you in your line of work?

- Do you think fresh, nutritious food is generally available and accessible to most Louisa residents?
- What policy options do you think are most important in improving access and availability?

All interviewees were asked to name their own priorities from which they believed Louisa County would benefit most. The table of interviews conducted for the audit can be found below.

Name	Title, Organization (government/non-government)	Date
Donna Isom	Director, Community Cupboard (non-government)	3/31/10
Ginger Dillard	Nutrition Services, Betty Queen Center (non-government)	3/31/10
Becky Vigon	Manager, Mineral Farmer's Market (non-government)	4/1/10
Randy Herman	Nutrition Director, Louisa County Schools (government)	4/2/10
Tracy Nezda	Extension Agent, Extension Office (government)	4/2/10
Jeremy Camp	Director, Community Development (government)	4/2/10
David Holtzman	Senior Planner, Community Development (government)	4/2/10

Compiling Interview Findings, Follow-up

Following each interview, the notes from each interviewer were compiled and discussed. Key findings were recorded in a document with all interview notes. Information from the interviews was used to update the Louisa food policy audit and supplemental notes by drawing on suggestions of community members on items we had missed or misinterpreted.

At the end of each meeting, the interviewee was asked if he or she had any questions or would like to learn more about any policies. A follow-up email was sent within a week of the meeting thanking the interviewee and providing any additional information they requested.

Final Write-up and Synthesis of Information

Following the final interview, all the information gathered during the document review and community partner meetings was analyzed. Information on current food policy in Louisa was compared with general trends towards new policies discussed in community meetings. Other findings included an analysis of what community members believed were the most important new policies for Louisa to adopt and the positives and negatives of the current system.

Successes and Challenges During the Process

Completion of the Louisa County food policy audit has been both rewarding and frustrating. One thing we learned during this process is that, especially for a less populated rural county like Louisa, there is only so much you can learn from documents available online. The comprehensive plan was a great resource to learn about the general values of the county, but it gives little information on the up-and-coming policies and ideas emerging in the community. We found the community meetings to be vastly more helpful in understanding food policy in Louisa and what the community thinks of such policies and programs.

One difficulty we faced was having enough time to complete the meetings and interviews. We believe we spent far too much time researching documents, which forced us into a time-crunch for the community engagement portion of the project. Through this experience and others, members of our group have learned that community engagement always takes much longer than you expect and that delays and setbacks must be anticipated. It was particularly difficult for our group to schedule meetings since each trip was at least 2.5-3 hours including driving.

Regarding the meetings themselves, community members were almost all extremely enthusiastic to speak to us and interested in our work. We did not receive any negative or hostile treatment during our interviews.

Audit Findings

A large portion of our audit findings and our general knowledge of Louisa County's food system came out of our interviews with community stakeholders. While our document research uncovered only a few "YES" responses to audit questions, our conversations with people working in Louisa revealed that there is a much stronger effort toward public health and an equitable food system than is reflected in the county's documents.

Public Health

Louisa's Comprehensive Plan does not specify a goal for improving public health, but as a region within the Thomas Jefferson Health District, it does fall under the health provisions for the district. The only public health issue we could find was that of food safety at "establishments such as restaurants, school cafeterias, hospital cafeterias, and temporary event vendors." The TJHD's Environmental Health Program inspects food establishments and works to educate about food borne illnesses.

Louisa's public school system has done much to ensure that children eat healthy food while in school. None of the schools sell junk food in their vending machines, but follow the Virginia Action for Healthy Kids guidelines for filling them: no sodas, no snacks over 300 calories, and all whole-grain cookies and snacks. Most bread items on the breakfast and lunch menus also contain whole grains (at least 51%). This is a higher percentage than is required by

the USDA because Louisa believes strongly in the importance of whole grains in a healthy diet. While most of the breads served are no longer cooked in the school kitchens, schools do still cook dinner rolls on site. Raw meat can no longer be cooked on site due to safety regulations.

Public schools have to follow USDA guidelines for menu-planning (reduced fat is emphasized) and Virginia Department of Education guidelines on when meals can be served. The Nutrition Director felt that these guidelines were beneficial, but worried that increased restrictions (e.g., reduced salt) resulting from the First Lady's emphasis on school nutrition might make food tasteless. Last November, Louisa schools participated in the Farm-to-School week by purchasing and serving apples from local growers. The Nutrition Director would like to continue participating in this week and to increase the amount of local foods served, but the challenge is finding appropriate foods that are available when school is in session, which only briefly overlaps with Virginia's growing season. Items on the agenda for Louisa's Nutrition Director include getting nutrition education in classrooms, revamping Louisa's school wellness policy, creating a school garden at the new Moss Nuckols Elementary, creating higher education opportunities for school employees and putting nutrition facts on school menus.

Louisa's Extension Office compliments the efforts taking place in the schools, as well as other areas of public health, through educational programs. The Family Wellness Services provide educational programs on finances, diets, kids' eating habits, parenting and childcare. In one interview, a stakeholder brought up a concern about cooking knowledge, saying that even if people have access to fresh and healthy food, "if people don't know how to prepare something, they won't eat it." This is one area that the Extension Office tries to address through its education programs. Its mission to reduce obesity includes efforts such as 4-H education about healthy snacking, Nutrition Core (educates about nutrition, health, wellness, physical activity,

food safety, and home food preservation), Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids (a research-based program to educate youth about smart nutritional choices) and diabetes testing. Still, several stakeholders mentioned a desire to see more education efforts in the county--about food preparation, buying local, sustainable growing practices, how to eat healthily on the SNAP program and general nutrition for students and their parents.

Transportation was one area where stakeholders felt improvements would make a huge impact on residents' access to fresh, healthy food. While JAUNT buses will take people anywhere in the county (e.g., grocery stores) Monday through Friday, as one stakeholder said, "they can only do so much." JAUNT does not run on weekends and so cannot take people to farmer's markets on Saturdays. With more funding, said one stakeholder, JAUNT could start weekend rides. This is important for people who don't have vehicles or can't afford gas in a rural community like Louisa, and especially for particular populations like seniors and people with disabilities. Louisa's Comprehensive Plan also suggests improvements on biking and pedestrian paths, especially "around schools and shopping centers." However, for many residents in Louisa, walking to a grocery store would not be feasible with the locations of stores as they are now or with difficulty walking, and even biking would prove difficult with large bags of groceries. Some sort of public transportation would be helpful for Louisa residents.

Reducing community exposure to pesticides and chemicals was another area of the audit where we found some documentation of efforts in Louisa. Although the Comprehensive Plan does not require any sort of reduction in pesticide use on crops due to some confusion over whether that responsibility lies with Louisa or the state of Virginia, it does recommend reduced use to protect groundwater: "When land uses are proposed within an area vulnerable to pesticides used with the proposed land use, Extension Agents can consult with landowners about

the risk of pesticides in the area, and if appropriate, recommend alternative pesticides to protect groundwater." One stakeholder thought that Louisa residents would be interested in food policy related to pesticide use. There is also a note in the Zoning Ordinances to dispose of septic tank sludge underneath the ground so as to prevent contamination of county food supplies.

Finally, many community members that we spoke with expressed a desire to see more community gardens in Louisa. Creating gardens would increase access to fresh, local food by growing it right in the community, and it would educate people about where food comes from and how to grow things and be more sustainable as individuals or families. Several stakeholders informed us of plans already in motion to create a community garden next to the Community Cupboard on land owned by the county and another at the new elementary school Moss Nuckols. Other community members suggested seeking support from the local government for community gardens in vacant lots and in trailer parks, and creating gardens on unused land owned by local churches. The Louisa Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances both mention the importance of preserving open space in the county, although for use as recreational space and environmental buffers that reduce impervious surfaces. None of the county documents specify preserving open space for the purpose of creating community gardens. Additionally, "farm" animals such as poultry and livestock may be kept in residential areas as long as they are 300 feet from adjacent properties.

Economic Development

Every part of Louisa County has access to one of three farmer's markets in the area: the Louisa, Zion Crossroads and Mineral Farmer's Markets. We were only able to speak with the manager for the Mineral market, which one stakeholder described as the most diverse of the

three markets. At the Mineral market, at least 75% of each stand's products must be homemade or homegrown, and all stands are local with the exception of a couple from North and South Carolina for added diversity. Most of the foot traffic at the market is thought to be from Mineral residents, but the market tries to attract people commuting between Charlottesville and Richmond or who spend time at Lake Anna, as well. There are about ten farmers at the market each week, ranging from professional farms to people with productive personal gardens who sell occasionally. Farmers are not policed at the market, and the market's manager feels this lack of food policy or regulations helps make the market successful. The only people liable are the sellers themselves because the market is held on private land.

One stakeholder says that “the USDA is doing a pretty good job” with agricultural regulations but also expressed concern about some upcoming policies that might affect farms and the farmers market. There is a food safety bill in the works which would make it more difficult for smaller farms to comply, potentially forcing them to close. It might not only affect how farmers raise produce but whether they could sell canned items, etc. Continuing the regulatory conversation, one stakeholder thought that a little government oversight is good, but not too much. Another stakeholder echoed that sentiment, saying, "Step back and let the farmers do what they've been doing!"

When asked what policies would be most important in improving access to healthy food in Louisa, several stakeholders responded by saying that local agribusiness should be better supported. In the words of one stakeholder, "Eating local is important because it supports our economy." Promoting the Buy Local campaign, removing restrictions on small farms, supporting grocers who supply fresh, healthy food and procurement of local foods in schools were all mentioned in interviews. Another community member would like to see more support

of the local tobacco industry because it is also an important part of Virginia agriculture and the economy. Louisa does offer tax incentives to landowners who maintain their property in agriculture through Agricultural-Forestal Districts (AFDs), in order that “residential development is slowed and county resources are not overburdened.”

While Louisa does not have a specific policy of supporting the purchase of local foods, it does state in the Municipal Code that "The county may, in the case of a tie bid, give preference to goods, services and construction produced in such locality or provided by persons, firms or corporations having principal places of business in the locality, if such a choice is available." We did not find a guide to local foods or any other language supporting procurement of local foods in any documents.

One last comment from an interview relating to economic development was that many residents of Louisa like to hunt. The stakeholder thought this should be a form of food security represented in our audit.

Environmental Benefits

A strong emphasis in one community interview was on reducing food waste in Louisa, where the stakeholder asserted, "It is sinful to throw away a loaf of bread when you know someone else could use it." The Food Lion in Louisa has a policy of not allowing people to glean produce or meat--only bread products. Walmart, however, has just approved the Community Cupboard to be one of eight food banks to glean fresh foods. Community Cupboard staff had to go through training on safe storage and transport of food items before they could be approved. When the Community Cupboard has excess food, they donate it to mental health facilities, daycares and the SCHIP program to avoid waste. However, JABA's Betty Queen

Center will not always accept excess food from the Community Cupboard because JABA donations must meet JABA's and Virginia Department of Aging's dietary guidelines for low salt, low sugar and low cholesterol, be properly packaged and fit JABA clients' specific dietary guidelines.

The Mineral Farmer's Market also has a gleaning program. The market's manager goes around at the end of each Saturday and picks up unsold produce to donate to the Community Cupboard. Farmers were all very receptive to the program, saying that most of the leftover produce would have gone into the compost otherwise.

Louisa's Comprehensive Plan also mentions various efforts to reduce the county's environmental footprint and nonpoint source stream pollution. It states that the county's design standards were created to protect the local watershed and natural environment in a variety of ways, although without mentioning agriculture specifically. These design standards mention the use of "natural vegetation to mitigate effects of stormwater runoff through infiltration and filtering" and minimum 100-foot riparian buffers around the county's reservoirs "to filter out sediment and other non-point source pollutants from runoff before it reaches those critical water resources." Zoning Ordinances also recommend the reduction of stormwater erosion, but none of these documents specify practices related to agriculture. Additionally, the ordinances prohibit the "storage of gasoline, kerosene and other petroleum products and flammable liquids, dynamite, blasting caps and other explosives, pesticides and poison and other such materials which could result in hazard to life and/or water pollution in the event of flooding."

Social Equity

Louisa has several programs seeking to provide food for residents of Louisa with greater need. The Community Cupboard provides food for low-income residents, with the mission of "Working to ease hunger with compassion." It began as an attempt to get USDA food to seniors in the Louisa area. The idea was that seniors would sign up to pick up food regularly from the Cupboard, but they found that many people did not sign up, so now a JABA representative signs up for them and delivers the food. The Community Cupboard now provides supplemental food products for income-eligible families once a month. It serves 650 families and about 1300 individuals, about 96% of which receive food stamps. The amount of food given to a family is determined by how many people are in the household. Most of the Cupboard's food comes for free from the USDA and is delivered from the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond. Other food comes from donations from the Wal*mart, Food Lion, Farmer's Foods, a variety of local civic groups, churches and farms, gleaning from the Mineral Farmer's Market and donations from private gardens. Despite the donations from local farms and gardens, local produce never makes up the majority of the foods given out, and those donations are usually during the summer and fall. The Cupboard is also able to purchase food beyond what is donated to them, and when asked about what factors influence the kind of food that is purchased, a stakeholder responded that for the Community Cupboard, price is a major factor. Storage is also an issue; they try not to buy too many perishable items so as to avoid waste. They do own several industrial-sized refrigerators, however, which can store a large amount of cold donations.

One stakeholder felt that there could be more coordination between agencies serving low-income and needy populations in Louisa. There are many agencies out there -- Social Services, Community Cupboard, JABA, Extension Office and others -- and increased communication

could improve access to healthy food via education for these populations. The director of the Community Cupboard told us that sometimes single mothers will come into the office having been referred there by Social Services to get free diapers for their children, but will have never heard that the Cupboard can provide them with food as well. Therefore, increasing awareness of Louisa's resources would be an important step towards food equity. We were not able to get in contact with Louisa's Social Services.

Although Louisa has not done a needs-assessment of low-income areas in relation to food access, the Comprehensive Plan does state the importance of bike and pedestrian facilities and of open space. If used to improve routes to food retailers and open space for community gardens, these efforts would help improve access to fresh food for low-income residents.

To serve its elderly population, Louisa is supported by Jefferson Area Board of Aging, which has a goal of procuring local food for its clients, acknowledging "the insecurities of the conventional food system." When determining what food to purchase for its clients, JABA considers the food's packaging, the dietary guidelines of the client and the VDA dietary guidelines for seniors. There is also a JABA CSA effort, where farmers come and the senior residents buy food from them directly. JABA cannot endorse this because of legal issues, but the farmers come and sell their products from the back of their vehicles. Additionally, Meals On Wheels is set to start in July this year.

We could not find any language in county documents supporting equitable working conditions for farm laborers in the area, but one community contact assured us that there is a policy regarding housing for migrant workers.

Two programs still in the planning process would benefit low-income residents of Louisa. First, the manager of the Mineral Farmer's Market said that an Electronic Benefits

Transfer (EBT) machine is in the works for the market this year to enable people on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to buy food at the market. It is a long process, so in the meantime, they hope to at least hand out SNAP applications and direct people to the food bank. Second, the School Backpack Program is set to start in September of this year to provide children at risk for food insecurity with food to take home for the weekends.

Land Conservation and Access to Land for Food Production

The Comprehensive Plan of Louisa strongly emphasizes conservation of lands for the preservation of the county's "rural character." It declares, "We should work to preserve the rural nature of Louisa, perceived as open spaces such as agricultural and forestry lands, through designation of such areas and initiating conservation design development standards for new development." It does not specify that these spaces and land should be used for food production, however. Map 14 of the Comprehensive Plan shows the agricultural and forestal districts of Louisa, and the Zoning Ordinances state the purpose of this map as "promoting health, safety, order, prosperity, the conservation of natural and historic resources and the general welfare." Land use taxation is also used to preserve agricultural lands, as described in the Economic Development section.

While Louisa already has a lot of policies promoting land conservation, community contacts mentioned a few concerns. One stakeholder thought that farmers would benefit from more resources and education programs regarding good growing practices and how to be sustainable on a small scale. Another stakeholder was concerned that not many young people want to go into farming today, despite a large portion of Louisa's youth growing up on farms. Several stakeholders wanted to see more support from the county for community gardens.

Analysis

From our document review and community interviews, we found that there are several important resources available to improve food access for Louisa residents, as well as newly-formed initiatives aimed at increasing access of local and healthier foods. In addition to the nation-wide SNAP initiative, the Community Cupboard is an important supplemental food program for Louisa residents. Other organizations in the area, such as JABA and the Virginia Cooperative Extension, are working towards improving the diets of at-risk populations such as low-income families and the elderly. Social services in Louisa also is likely to play an important role in improving food access, though they were not available for interview for this project.

In addition to the resources already in place, we encountered a variety of new initiatives in Louisa aimed at improving access of fresh, healthy food for residents. We were impressed with the school initiatives to reduce junk food and increase education on health and nutrition. Community gardens were also popular proposals in Louisa that were not mentioned in any official documents. We noted that both the public schools and the Community Cupboard had plans in place to start community gardens on their land.

Our findings indicate that within organizations working closely with food access and diet issues, there is a wealth of knowledge on the food system and ideas for improving it. The lack of official policy on food in Louisa seems to stem from government officials simply being unaware that the issues are present. When asked whether food policy was an important topic to Louisa residents, one stakeholder simply said no, most people did not consider it an important issue. Another stakeholder mentioned that people might be interested in food policy in how it relates to food safety or pesticides on food. Overall, though, the question of providing fresh, nutritious and

local foods to Louisa residents is not on the minds of those people working outside the food system. Even among several stakeholders working in the same building, those who did not work directly with food or diet programs were not as aware of the access issues or involved with programs to improve the food system.

It is hardly surprising that a lack of awareness about the food system seems to be the reason for limited government initiatives. Many people do not immediately notice the connection between food and social equity or food and local economics. One stakeholder emphasized the importance of making people aware of all the resources available, and we believe this sort of public education is a critical starting point to improving the Louisa food system. First and foremost, Louisa residents must be informed of what the term “food system” means, and how it affects their health and their jobs and their children. Organizations currently involved in food access issues must coordinate their efforts and work together to reach the greatest number of people. Finally, it is crucial that all those involved must let their local government officials know that food policy is an important issue to them that must be addressed by government policies as well as grass-roots efforts.

Personal Reflections

This project was an eye-opening experience for us, and a great introduction to fieldwork in food policy. One of the most encouraging things about the project was how enthusiastic all of our community stakeholders were. They were all genuinely interested in the topic we brought to the table and had insightful recommendations for our audit and for future policy in Louisa County. While it is clear that there are many difficult barriers to increasing healthy food access to rural areas like Louisa, we have seen such creative initiatives that we believe the food

revolution is truly touching all parts of the country. We hope this research will help our stakeholders and the residents of Louisa achieve their goal of a healthy and sustainable food system.

Louisa County Priorities

The top five policies identified by our community stakeholders as their chosen priorities for Louisa County included: creating community gardens; improving public transportation; encouraging procurement of local foods, especially in schools; increasing awareness of the food resources and opportunities available in Louisa and promoting farming as a profession; and helping local farmers by removing restrictions and helping them find a place in the market for their products.

The first priority, creating community gardens, is already in the works at the Community Cupboard and the public schools. Additional steps could be taken to promote the gardens, for example by including gardening at schools as one of the encouraged activities in a school wellness plan. A new school wellness plan is in the works for Louisa, and including the school garden as an example of increasing access to fresh and local food would be an excellent first step towards more positive food language in official documents and policies. The City of Los Angeles Child Nutrition Policy⁶ has many school nutrition recommendations that are already in place for Louisa and could serve as a good template for a countywide child nutrition policy or for food-related language for a school wellness plan.

Schools could also promote their community garden during Farm-to-School week, by bringing in local farmers to help at the garden or my simply reinforcing the benefits of eating foods grown in your community or locality. Missoula County Public Schools⁷ have an

⁶ City of LA Child Nutrition Policy,
<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/LAChildNutrition.pdf>

³⁴excellent resolution detailing the benefits of participating in Farm-to-School programs and giving kids hands-on education about how food is grown.

Transportation is a problem that will require a much longer-term solution, and is especially difficult in a rural area such as Louisa. One aspect of transportation that is already mentioned in the Comprehensive plan is the use of safe bicycle and walking routes. Because Louisa is a rural and scenic area, increasing safe bike routes all around the county could encourage exercise, improve access to food stores and increase tourist travel to Louisa. The Chicagoland Bicycle Federation⁸ has started several initiatives that could help Louisa improve bicycle transit, such as including bicycle safety education in schools and sponsoring bicycling events to raise awareness about bike transportation and funding for new routes.

Of course, bicycle transit is not always the most practical, and many stakeholders mentioned increasing the JAUNT bus route as an important goal. Increasing the availability of JAUNT buses, such as having buses run on Saturdays when the farmer's market is open, would be an excellent first step by building on existing infrastructure. Other opportunities that have been suggested in the article "Recipes for Change: Healthy Food in Every Community" by Linda Shak, et al.⁹ One that could be implemented in Louisa is a shuttle sponsored by grocery stores or even one of the farmer's market. She states that this is economically advantageous for stores since it increases revenues by providing low-income neighborhoods with access to stores that they otherwise would not have shopped at.

The third community priority, increasing procurement of local foods, especially in schools, would mean healthier food options for kids as well as support for the local economy.

⁷ Missoula County Public Schools resolution, <http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/text/MTmissFarmSch.pdf>

⁸ Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, <http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-207/127.html>

⁹ "Recipes for Change: Healthy Food in Every Community", Linda Shak et al.

There are already signs in Louisa that local procurement is an interest in the county, as there is a flyer on the Louisa County website encouraging people to buy from local farmers to support the economy. Schools, however, face tremendous barriers to including local food in their menus, including higher costs, less convenience and the need for additional cooking training for cafeteria workers. A report at the University of Minnesota in the Hopkins school district⁹ summarizes many of these difficulties and potential policy suggestions. One suggestion that we believe is feasible in Louisa is looking to distributors already providing food to schools and finding out which of their products, if any, are Virginia grown. This would be the simplest and cheapest way to increase local food consumption through existing channels. The schools can also influence distributor's products by making it clear that buying local is a priority for them.

The goal of increasing awareness about food opportunities and resources is one that can be achieved in many ways. The Mineral Farmer's Market already uses local media to advertise the market. Other opportunities for growth in this area include greater collaboration between the non-profit organizations such as Social Services, the Community Cupboard, the VA Extension office and JABA. A widely distributed, collaborative publication could make people more aware of the variety of food supplementation programs available and be a resource for other information, such as health recipes or food-related events in Louisa. As for encouraging farming as a profession, we believe community gardens and food education in schools is a good first step towards getting the next generation involved in food production. Other stakeholder priorities, such as removing restrictions on small farms, would also serve as catalysts by making the farming profession a more attractive one for young people. The Alachua County

⁹ "Making the Farm/School Connection: Opportunities and Barriers to Greater Use of Locally-grown Produce in Public Schools", JoAnne Berkenkamp.

Recommendations to Maximize Local Food Production and Processing¹¹ includes many suggestions for improving land use and business growth which could be adapted for use in Louisa County.

The final stakeholder priority, removing restrictions on small farmers and helping them find a place in the market, ties in to numerous food system goals, such as increasing availability of healthy food, improving the local economy and conserving farmland. Some changes to farm regulations must be pursued at the state level, but county residents can start by being aware of the policies in place and informing their representatives that they want policies to support the small farmer. The Pottawattamie County Farm to Fork Action Plan¹² is a comprehensive list of opportunities to support local food producers, such as providing technical support, identifying potential markets, developing a farmer mentor program and researching financial incentives available to producers. Since the VA Extension Office already provides some of these services, they could use the ideas in the Action Plan to expand or modify their services. If this is not feasible due to financial constraints, the Action Plan and Alachua County Recommendations could be used simply as examples for the Louisa Municipal government of how food policy language can be incorporated into existing county goals such as economic growth or land preservation.

¹¹ Alachua County Recommendations to Maximize Local Food Production and Processing, <
<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/text/200905211730170.AlachuaLocal%20Food.pdf>>
(accessed May 5, 2010)

¹² Pottawattamie County Farm to Fork Action Plan, <
<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/text/200910151610310.PottawattamiFarmtoFork.pdf>>
(accessed May 5, 2010)

Appendix A: References and footnotes

- ¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County QuickFacts: Louisa County, VA," n.d., <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51109.html>> (accessed March 10, 2010).
- ² City-Data, "Louisa County, Virginia (VA)," n.d., <http://www.city-data.com/county/Louisa_County-VA.html> (accessed April 15, 2010).
- ³ Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, "Virginia Parks: Lake Anna," 2006, <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/lak.shtml> (accessed May 4, 2010).
- ⁴ Twin Oaks, "Twin Oaks Intentional Community," n.d., <<http://www.twinoaks.org/index.html>> (accessed May 4, 2010).
- ⁵ National Park Service, "Green Springs," n.d., <<http://www.nps.gov/grsp/index.htm>> (accessed May 4, 2010).
- ⁶ City of LA Child Nutrition Policy, <<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/LAChildNutrition.pdf>> (accessed May 5, 2010)
- ⁷ Missoula County Public Schools resolution, <<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/MTmissFarmSch.pdf>> (accessed May 5, 2010)
- ⁸ Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, <<http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-207/127.html>> (accessed May 5, 2010)
- ⁹ "Recipes for Change: Healthy Food in Every Community," Linda Shak et al.
- ¹⁰ "Making the Farm/School Connection: Opportunities and Barriers to Greater Use of Locally-grown Produce in Public Schools", JoAnne Berkenkamp.
- ¹¹ Alachua County Recommendations to Maximize Local Food Production and Processing, <<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/200905211730170.AlachuaLocalFood.pdf>>
- ¹² Pottawattamie County Farm to Fork Action Plan, <<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/200910151610310.PottawattamiFarmtoFork.pdf>> (accessed May 5, 2010)

Appendix B: Community contacts

Name	Title	Organization	Email	Phone
Donna Isom	Director	Community Cupboard	d.isom@cvalink.com	(540) 967-3577
Jeremy Camp	Director	Community Development	JCamp@louisa.org	540-967-3466
David Holtzman	Senior Planner	Community Development	DHoltzman@louisa.org	
Randy Herman	Nutrition Director	Louisa Co. Public Schools	hermanrs@lcps.k12.va.us	540-894-5115
Tracy Nedza	Extension Agent	Louisa Co. Extension Office		540-967-3422
Ginger Dillard	Nutrition Services	Betty Queen Center	gdillard@jabacares.org	(540) 967-4435
Susan Colvin (did not)		VA Cooperative Extension	sbcovlin@vt.edu	540-967-3422

respond)				
Becky Vigon	Manager	Mineral Farmers' Market	market@townofmineral.com	(540) 854-7626
Susan Carter (met with Ms. Dillard instead)	Case Manager	JABA	scarter@jabacares.org	
Judy Berger (did not respond)	Senior Center Director	JABA	jberger@jabacares.org	434-985-2047
Charles Rosson (did not respond)	Agriculture Agent	Louisa Co. Extension Office	crosson1@vt.edu	540-967-3422
Paula Molina (Met with Ms. Dillard instead)	Center Manager	JABA Louisa Community Center	pmolina@jabacares.org	(540) 967-4432
Paul Oswell (no longer a director, have not heard from interim)	Director, Louisa DSS	Department of Social Services	Paul.Oswell@dss.virginia.gov	540-967-1320
Willie Gentry (did not respond)	Chairman	Board of Supervisors	LCBS_CD @ louisa.org	540-894-6437 (Cell)
Wendy Morris (did not respond)	Outreach Worker; Rural Outreach program	Monticello Area Community Action Agency	macaalou@verizon.net	540/967-9522
Gary Rice (no longer at Health Dept.)		Louisa Health Department		540-967-3707

Appendix C: Community comments

What roles do the stakeholders interviewed play in Louisa's food system?

- Director of the Community Cupboard runs the food bank/distribution center, which began as an attempt to get USDA food to seniors in the Louisa area. The Thomas Jefferson Area Food Bank wanted to reach out to seniors and was able to do so through the Cupboard. The new warehouse for the Cupboard was just built. The idea was that people would sign up to pick up food regularly from the cupboard, but they found that many people did not

sign up, so now a JABA representative signs up for them and delivers the food. The director attends a monthly food policy meeting with the food banks to learn about new food policies affecting Louisa, which are set by the Central Virginia Food Bank.

- The Extension Office is the educational arm of social services serving a five-county area including Louisa. The family wellness portion of the Extension services includes education related to finances, diets, kids' eating habits, parenting and childcare.
- The Extension Office has programs working toward reducing obesity: healthy snacks at 4-H programs, the "Nutrition Core" program (which includes Master Food Volunteers, who educate about food safety, preparation and nutrition through the "Ultimate Food Experience" [from the Va Extension Office: A Virginia MFV is an individual who acts on behalf of Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) as a volunteer educator within his or her community after receiving training in FCS through cooperative programming with VCE. These volunteer educators serve as partners with VCE to promote, inform, and work with community leaders, industry and individuals presenting programs on all aspects of FCS, including nutrition, health, wellness, physical activity, food safety, and home food preservation.]), Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids and diabetes testing.
- The duties of Louisa County Schools' Nutrition Director include menu planning, food purchasing and personnel. Menu planning and food purchasing involves going to school nutrition food shows to do product testing through the professional association, then allowing students to sample different types of pizza (e.g.) and having students then give their preferences.
- Duties of the director of the Mineral Farmer's Market (the largest farmer's market in Louisa) include getting more people to attend the market, answering questions about the market and giving out and processing applications for the market. The director also created the website (www.mineralmarket.org) and works with the department of agriculture to find local farms for the market.

Food in schools:

- Louisa will start a school backpack program in September 2010 to provide children at risk for food insecurity with food to take home for the weekends.
- Items on the agenda for Louisa County Schools include nutrition education in classrooms, revamping Louisa's school wellness policy, creating a school garden at the new Moss Nuckols Elementary, higher education opportunities for school employees and putting nutrition facts on menus.
- Most items on Louisa's school menus now contain at least 51% whole grain; this is a higher whole grain standard than USDA's. Schools follow the Virginia Action for Healthy Kids guidelines for filling vending machines (no sodas, whole grain cookies, naturally carbonated juice "Switch" and snacks all under 300 calories).
- Most breads are no longer cooked in the school kitchens, except dinner rolls (which are 70/30 whole grain). Meats are no longer bought raw because of safety, but kitchens are full-service.
- Schools do not source locally or connect with local farmers to get school food, except during Farm-to-School week in November. Last year local apples were brought in, but not much local produce is available in November. A colleague uses meat from local

farmers, which is a possibility. Schools plan to participate in Farm-to-School week again next year.

- School systems get government entitlement dollars based on the number of kids in schools and the number of schools in the system. They use that money to make commodity orders (processed meats), which are made for the year on December 15. A school system's nutrition director can choose from a list of processors through the Electronic Commodity Ordering Software (soon to change).
- Forty-four percent of Louisa students are on free and reduced lunch program; it's computerized and anonymous, so there is no stigma.

Farmer's markets:

- At the Mineral market, 75% of each stand's products must be homemade or homegrown. There are a couple of vegetable resellers from North and South Carolina to add diversity to the products available.
- Most of the foot traffic at the market is thought to be from Mineral residents, but the market tries to attract people commuting between Charlottesville and Richmond or who spend time at Lake Anna, as well.
- There are about ten farmers at the market each week, ranging from professional farms to people with productive personal gardens who sell occasionally.
- Another project in the works is getting EBT machines at the market. That is a long-term project; right now they hope to at least hand out SNAP applications and direct people to the food bank as a start.
- The media in Louisa has been great in portraying the farmer's market with advertising, letters to the editor, etc. They consider the market to be not-for-profit.
- One stakeholder said that the Department of Agriculture and the Farm Bureau have been great in working with the farmer's market.
- One stakeholder said they are working on getting the JAUNT bus to go to the farmer's market.

Role of emergency food providers:

- Louisa's Community Cupboard provides supplemental food products for income-eligible families once a month.
- It serves 650 families monthly, and about 1300 individuals. About 96% of the families served receive food stamps. The amount of food given to the family is determined by how many people are in the household.
- Most of their food comes for free from the USDA and is delivered from the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond. Other food comes from donations from the Walmart (supply center?), Food Lion, Farmer's Foods, a variety of local civic groups, churches and farms, gleaning from the Mineral Farmer's Market and donations from private gardens.
- Despite the donations from farms and gardens, local produce never makes up the majority of the foods given out; those donations are usually during the summer and fall.

- Louisa will start Meals On Wheels in July 2010.
- One community stakeholder emphasized that the programs are successful because the community is very supportive and generous, always donating their food and efforts.
- Local farmers can donate their surplus to the food bank.
- Angel Ministries do not typically ask for farmers' surpluses. The food from the Angel Ministries, however, is not well balanced--sometimes people will only get corn or cereal. Angel Food Ministries is a national program. You can buy boxes of food at reduced rates and it's open to everyone. Sometimes the boxes will have a good amount of fruits/vegetables -- but are they nutritional or canned in sugar/salt?
- One stakeholder said the Emergency Food Pantry in Louisa is not a very strong program. It's only supported by churches.

What impacts choices made about what food is purchased by individuals and groups in Louisa?

- For the Community Cupboard, price is a major factor. Community stakeholder says that USDA foods provided are “free with quality” and are nutritious. The Community Cupboard must follow certain nutrition guidelines for the foods they give out. Storage is also an issue; they try not to buy too many perishable items so as to avoid waste.
- In Louisa's schools, USDA guidelines and knowledge about what foods kids like are used to purchase foods and plan menus.
- One stakeholder said that convenience influences food purchasing decisions most in Louisa.
- Shopping options in Louisa include: a Food Lion and two small markets where people can purchase food. The local farmer's market is only seasonal (spring/summer/early fall).
- One stakeholder said that because seniors eat pretty well anyway, nutrition is not the greatest concern at JABA.

Food Waste:

- One community stakeholder noted Food Lion has a policy of not allowing people to glean produce or meat--only bread products.
- The Betty Queen Center will not accept excess food from the Community Cupboard due to JABA regulations on dietary guidelines for seniors.
- There are two churches near the Community Cupboard which help with storage of perishable items. When the Community Cupboard has excess, it gives it to mental health facilities, daycares and the SCHIP program to avoid waste.
- After the market each week Becky goes around and picks up unsold produce and gives it to the Community Cupboard. Farmers were all very receptive to the program, saying that most of the leftover produce would have gone into the compost otherwise. Spotsylvania County also recently started a similar project on gleaning.

Details we missed in the document audit:

- Question 100: Housing of migrant workers IS included in zoning ordinances.
- Cafeteria workers are part of the ServeSafe program, with training in food safety.

- Many people in Louisa hunt, providing a form of food security not represented in our audit.
- One stakeholder recommended we look through SOLs for nutrition education.
- There are three farmer's markets within reach of the county: Zion Crossroads, Mineral and Louisa (every part of the county has access to one).
- Stakeholder was unsure, but for Question 13, it is thought that people may be educated about nutrition through Social Services. We have not been able to get in contact with Social Services.

How food policy affects Louisa residents:

- One stakeholder says regulations on gleanings; transport and storage of emergency food in Louisa are good--not excessive or burdensome.
- One stakeholder finds USDA policies regarding schools helpful but is concerned that Mrs. Obama's push toward healthier schools may create restrictions that may be too strict (e.g., restrictions on salt, when they are already required to reduce fat, would make food tasteless). State regulations from the Virginia Department of Education determine what times meals can be served in schools; these tend to work *with* national regulations, not against them. The nutrition director must follow these minimum regulations but is allowed to make them stricter because children are an at-risk population.
- One stakeholder says that “the USDA is doing a pretty good job” but is also worried about some upcoming policies that might affect farms and the farmers market.
- There’s a food safety bill in the works which would make it more difficult for smaller farms to comply, potentially forcing them to close. It might not only affect how farmers raise produce but whether they could sell canned items, etc.
- One stakeholder thinks a little government oversight is good, but not too much.
- At the farmer's market, the only people liable are the sellers themselves because the market is held on private land. Farmers are not policed, and the lack of food policy or regulations helps make the market successful.
- One stakeholder says there’s been a resurgence of victory gardens lately, and policy makers should not be telling people what they can and can’t grow.
- One stakeholder would like to see more support of the local tobacco industry because it is also an important part of Virginia agriculture and the economy.
- There is a JABA CSA effort -- farmers come and the senior residents buy food from them directly. JABA cannot endorse this because of legal issues, but the farmers come and sell their products from the back of their vehicles.

Are Louisa residents concerned about food policy?

- One stakeholder said that Louisa residents would probably be interested in food policy related to safe food production and pesticide use.
- One stakeholder believes food policy is not something Louisa residents are interested in, saying that most people don’t care unless it affects them directly.

- "Food is on more peoples' minds today than in the past as a means to stay healthy. Our culture is pointing fingers at our food systems, but I foresee a society change in the works."

Is fresh, nutritious food generally available to Louisa residents?

- One stakeholder mentioned preparation as a concern regarding access to fresh, nutritious food: if people don't know how to prepare something, they won't eat it. Another stakeholder noted that the Extension Office does work to educate in this area.
- One stakeholder thinks fresh, nutritious food is definitely accessible through schools, although cost must be taken into account. Schools provide fresh fruits and vegetables once a week.
- One stakeholder would like to see schools and nursing homes getting fresh produce and thinks the county government should have a hand in it: "They need to work with the school board and work with the farmers who are willing. I'm trying to facilitate."
- Many children in Louisa live on farms, so they probably have access to fresh, nutritious food; however, many also live in poverty and probably do not.
- One stakeholder does not think fresh and nutritious food is generally available. The produce at the farmer's market isn't that fresh because it has travelled several hundred miles.
- One stakeholder thinks there's a lot of ignorance about food assistance in Louisa. Additionally, because Louisa is such a poor county the general public has a "feed them anything" attitude.
- One stakeholder questioned whether the food in the grocery stores is really all that fresh or accessible.

What policies would be most important in improving access to and availability of fresh, nutritious food in Louisa?

- Increasing awareness of healthy and local food options, along with inter-agency communication about resources like the Community Cupboard.
- Several stakeholders said community gardens were important, one specifying government support of changing vacant lots to gardens and another suggesting that trailer parks could be given subsidies to have community gardens. One also mentioned that churches also have space for potential community gardens; oftentimes, churches have acres of unused land.
- Reduce food waste. One stakeholder said, "It is sinful to throw away a loaf of bread when you know someone else could use it."
- Eliminate hunger: although no one in Louisa is starving, a stakeholder noted, "no one should have to go to bed hungry."
- Land use: one stakeholder expressed concern that not many people want to go into farming nowadays.
- Several stakeholders mentioned transportation, considering Louisa is a rural community: a more structured transit system would be beneficial for food access, perhaps a service

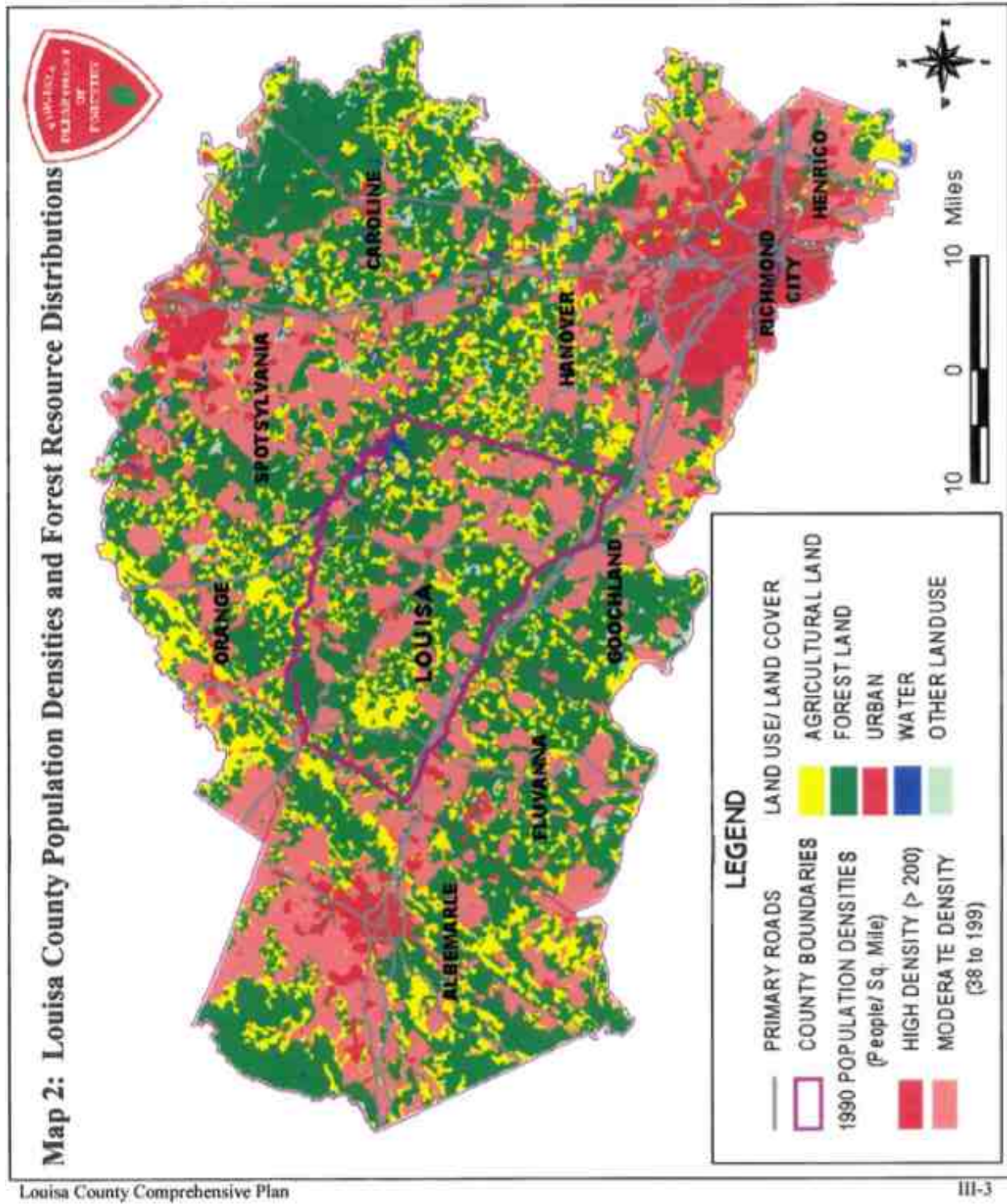
for particular populations such as the disabled or seniors. One stakeholder said that many people don't have vehicles or can't afford gas in Louisa. The JAUNT bus is the only option, but "they can only do so much." Another said that there's an extensive JAUNT route during the week in Louisa so people can get to work around the county and all the way in Charlottesville. This does NOT run on the weekend, however. Farmer's markets are on the weekend. More funding could result in weekend JAUNT rides.

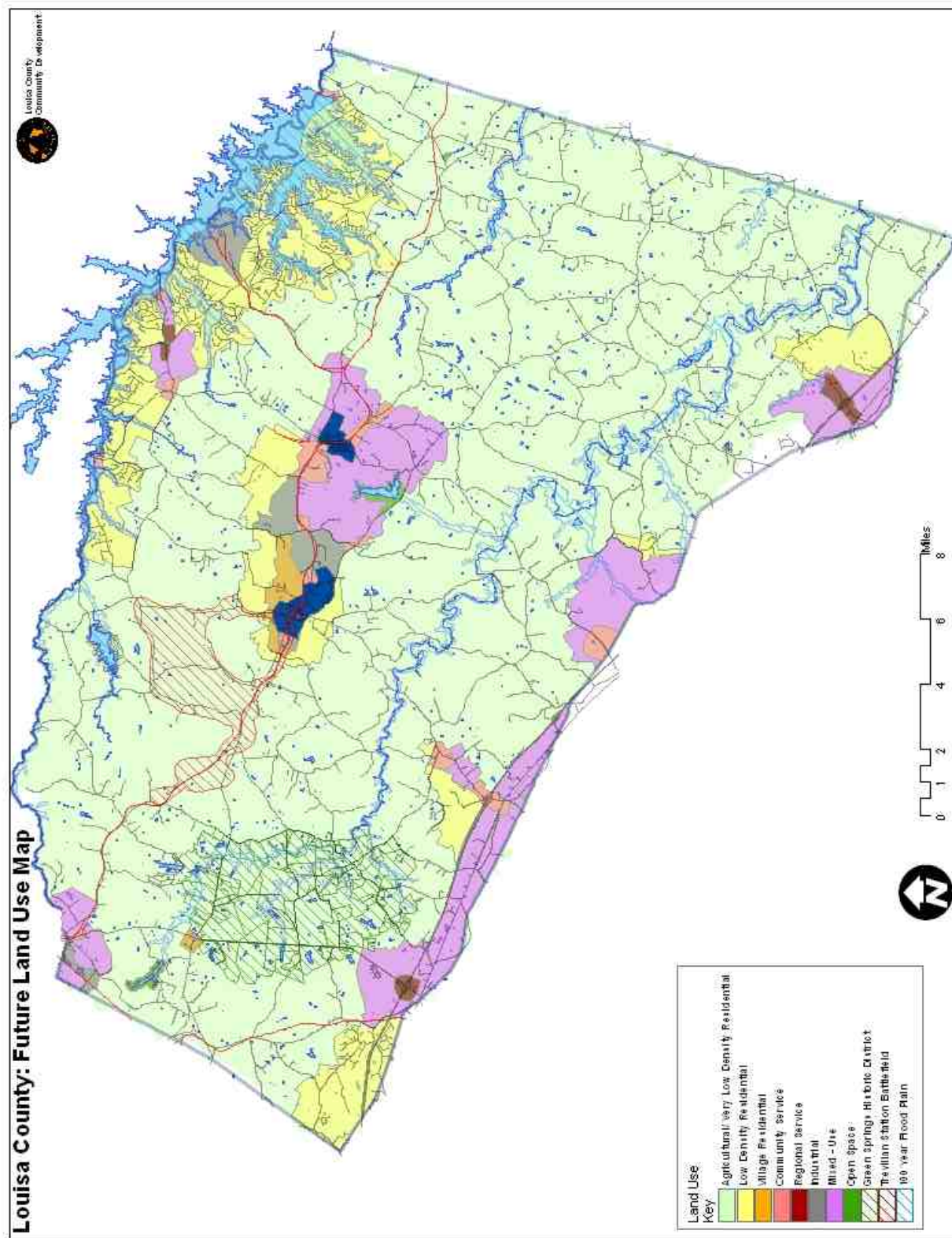
- Education about food preparation, buying local, how to be sustainable on a small scale and good growing practices.
- Promotion of local agribusiness (Buy Local).
- Several stakeholders were interested in removing restrictions on small farms and helping them to find a place in the market.
- Supporting grocers to supply fresh, healthy food (especially in convenience stores).
- Creating a local distribution center.
- Education about nutrition through the SNAP program.
- Seminars on nutrition for students and parents.
- "Step back and let the farmers do what they've been doing" --One stakeholder supports as little policy as possible with as much support as possible.
- Schools getting produce from local farms.
- Procurement of local foods.

Other comments:

- One stakeholder mentioned concern that we still have hungry people in America and most of the corn we're growing is for feed.
- One stakeholder mentioned that there are lots of elderly people in Mineral.
- There is a plan for Brackett's Farm for a community garden.
- The Local Food Hub has an educational farm in Louisa.
- Acorn Community writes news articles in Louisa and has a seed bank.
- The Community Cupboard recently got approval to be one of 8 food banks chosen to glean foods from the Walmart stores. They had to go through training on safe storage and transport of food items. One stakeholder said that "Walmart throws away 500 million pounds of food a year."
- There are plans to build a community garden next to the Louisa Resource Center (where the Community Cupboard is located). The land is owned by the community.
- "There are enough people with backyard gardens to support at least one of our senior centers." Many people in Louisa have enough space to grow their own food and they can the surplus for the winter months. There's less of this now, but it used to be the sole method for eating.
- "Eating local is important because it supports our economy." "We're seeing the first generation with a lower life expectancy."
- One stakeholder tried a garden in Louisa in an empty lot, up on a hill, but it did not work out because the soil in Virginia is not the best. It was hard to till given its location on a hill, but Parks and Rec plowed it for them.
- Louisa has a grant now for \$2 trips to medical appointments to anywhere in the county.

Appendix D: Maps and visuals





Appendix E: Louisa County Food Policy Audit (Document page numbers omit Audit; Resume at Appendix F)

LOUISA COUNTY FOOD POLICY AUDIT

NOTE: References to "LOCAL FOOD" includes local wineries, breweries, and cideries.

By: Anastasia Carihfield
(amc7w@virginia.edu), Brian
Hickey (bth2b@virginia.edu), and
Kate Wellons (kcw9q@virginia.edu)

		Comprehensive Plan	Zoning Ordinances	Other Plans/ Strategies/Programs	Independent Ordinances	Regional or State Guidelines	School Programming/Wellness Policy	School District Strategic Plan	Other	REFERENCES
1. PUBLIC HEALTH										
a. Reduce and Prevent Community Obesity and Chronic Illness										
	Does the locality express a concern or a goal for improving public health?	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	Thomas Jefferson Health District Environmental Health Program (VA Dept. of Health website)
	Does the locality mention a goal to reduce obesity and/or chronic illness?	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	Interview - school nutrition policies
	Does the locality have an overall wellness plan?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality clearly allow, support, or advocate for Farm to School (or similar) programs - for educational purposes, or for provision of food for school cafeteria?	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	Interview - Farm-to-School participation
	Does the locality have other provisions for school purchasing of local or organic foods?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality clearly have a policy to reduce availability of junk food in schools and public buildings (e.g., vending machines and purchasing options)?	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	Interview - Virginia Action for Healthy Kids guidelines
	Do the schools have a policy or program to educate cafeteria workers on preparation of fresh, local food and/or nutrient-rich food?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Is the locality clearly encouraging or supporting the inclusion of food-based lesson plans in schools?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality clearly encourage and/or directly support establishment of school garden programs at all levels of K-12?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Is the locality currently employing or considering a "joint use" agreement to open the use of school land for food production (school gardens, community gardens, community urban farm)?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality encourage that chain restaurants provide consumers with calorie information on in-store menus and menu boards?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality have a clear tax or other strategy to discourage consumption of foods and beverages with minimal nutritional value, such as sugar sweetened beverages?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality have educational/ promotional programs to discourage the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for sodas, high sugar and low nutrient foods?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
b. Engage public by increasing awareness of healthy and local food options										
	Does the locality have a goal for increasing awareness of healthy food or lifestyle choices?	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	Interview - Extension office outreach
	Has the locality adopted a clear policy defining "local" food?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality have a clear goal that supports the production and distribution of local food?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality publish or support a public guide to local food?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality have a clear policy of encouraging (or giving preference to) event caterers or vendors that will use locally sourced food?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality develop media campaigns, utilizing multiple media channels (print, radio, internet, television, social networking, and other promotional materials) to promote healthy eating?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality support or participate in a Food Policy Council?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
c. Flexible Policies and Zoning for creative and adaptive uses										
	Does the code allow for and support protection of open space?	yes; no	yes; no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-10; V-69), Louisa County Zoning Ordinances (Sec. 70-61; 86-192.1)
	Does the locality promote or enable easy accessibility to community gardens, for all neighborhoods and income levels?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	yes	Interviews - several plans for gardens
	Are there land protections for farmers' markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality promote or enable easy, local access to community gardens by allowing small pocket parks throughout the locality to be used for, or transformed into community gardens?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	

	Does the code allow for temporary and conditional use of abandoned lots for neighborhood gardens and/or urban farms?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
25	Does the municipality sponsor or work with an area community land trust in setting aside land for community? or nonprofit gardens? or gardens where low-income residents can grow produce for sale?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
26	Does the zoning code have language that supports residential "farm" animals; chickens, goats, roosters? (look for re-defining domestic animals)	no	yes	no	yes	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Zoning Ordinances (Sec. 86-66.1), Louisa County Municipal Code (Sec. 14-5)
27	Are there funding streams available for food related projects, such as Community Development Building Grants?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
28	Are there regulations allowing flexibility for food producers to engage in minimal on-site processing?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
29										

d. Promote multi-modal transportation options to food sources

	Does the locality offer multi-modal transportation in the community?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
30	Does the locality have a policy or programs to provide multimodal transportation options in the community to enable transportation of low-income populations to grocery stores? Does it reference or include transportation for migrant farm workers from camps?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
31	Does the locality have a program that, alternatively, transports local produce to low-income neighborhoods and migrant farm worker camps? (e.g., trucks, food carts, etc.)	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
32	Do safe biking and walking paths exist between neighborhoods and food stores and markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
33	Does the locality have a bus service that connects neighborhoods directly with food stores and markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
34	Requiring no more than one bus change? Does the locality have a bus service, low-cost taxi or ride-sharing service that connects neighborhoods directly with food stores and markets? Requiring no more than one bus change?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Interview - JAUNT
35	Are these transportation services available at multiple times of day and evening?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
36	Does the locality have a bike path or sidewalk plan?	yes	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (V-51-56)
37										

e. Reduce community exposure to pesticides and chemicals in foods

	Does the locality have a policy or program to reduce pesticide use, with appropriate enforcement?	no*	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-18-19)
38	Does the locality have or support a policy or program to ensure appropriate protection of all farm workers from exposure to pesticides? (e.g., training in farm worker language about dangers of pesticides, appropriate application and protection measures, provision of equipment, etc.)	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
39	Does a program or regulation exist that ensures proper communication of sanitation and hygiene practices for farm workers to ensure food safety?	no	yes	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Zoning Ordinances (Sec. 78-34)
40	Does a policy or program exist to encourage transition to low-spray, sustainable, or organic agricultural methods, to reduce human and environmental exposure to potentially harmful chemicals?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
41	Does a policy or program exist to encourage transition to sustainable or organic agricultural methods, to provide increased carbon sequestration?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
42	Is there a policy or program that offers incentives to farmers to switch to more sustainable growing methods?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
43										

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a. Support local food production

	Does the locality offer working farmland tax incentives, such as agriculture/forestry districts?	yes	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-15)
44	Is there a local government policy or preference for local agencies to purchase low-spray, sustainably grown, or organic food?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
45	Does the locality have economic development goals to support regional food production?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
46	Is there a local government policy recommendation for purchase of local food when available?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
47	Is there a support system to supply existing farmers with steady and seasonal farm labor?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
48	Are there local government or other programs to inspire and train new farmers, including assistance to immigrants who may come from farming families?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
49	Are there economic development programs or incentives or other tools for retailers to favor purchasing local food?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
50										

b. Support development of local processing infrastructure

	Are the financial or other programs to support or incubate food-related businesses?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
51	Is there a USDA-inspected community cannery, kitchen, or other processing facility open to local farmers, food entrepreneurs, and the public?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
52										

c. Support development of local distribution infrastructure

	Does the locality have a policy to support local farmers' markets or tailgate markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality provide institutional support for local farmers' markets or tailgate markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Is there economic development support for businesses that provide regional distribution of regional food, such as a Food Hub?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
d. Support development of new businesses using locally sourced products & heritage foods										
	Does the locality provide tax incentives, leasing agreements, or other incentives to support development of businesses using locally produced food?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality have a policy or program to support the identification and development of local heritage seeds, crops, foods, and heritage food products?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality have a policy or program to support stores that offer fresh local produce, meats, dairy and eggs to low-income populations, including farm workers?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
e. Support increased Security of Food Supply										
	Does the locality have an emergency preparedness plan that includes contingency plans for short-term interruption of food deliveries?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
3. ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS										
a. Reduce community carbon footprint and reduce nonpoint source stream pollution										
	Does the locality have a policy or goal to reduce its community environmental "footprint"?	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-2-3)
b. Reduce nonpoint source stream pollution from agriculture										
	Does the locality have a policy or goal to reduce nonpoint source pollution from agricultural operations?	yes	yes	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-12), Louisa County Zoning Ordinances (Sec. 86-212)
	Does the locality provide support for the establishment of riparian buffers along farmland streambanks, to reduce nonpoint source pollution.	yes	yes	no	no	yes	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (V-4), Louisa County Zoning Ordinances, Stormwater Management Act of the Code of Virginia (Sec. 38-102, 38-125)
	Does the locality have a policy or goal to fence out all livestock from streamways?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality have a policy or goal or participate in a program to manage excess animal manure?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
c. Reduce Food Waste										
	Is there a policy or program to encourage foraging from unused home fruit and other gardens?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality have a map for local food foraging? Are there a policy or program or opportunities for gleanings from local farms and restaurants?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	Interview - Community Cupboard
	Does the locality offer demonstration programs to encourage composting?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	Does the locality offer a central site for composting home food and yard materials?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	See 1.E.	
4. SOCIAL EQUITY										
a. Increase transportation system access to markets that sell fresh and healthful foods by underserved communities										
	Does the locality have a policy to provide access to quality food for all citizens, especially those with greater need?	no	no	yes	no	no	N/A	N/A	yes	JABA (website), Community Cupboard (Louisa County website)
	Does the locality have a bus service, low-cost taxi or ride-sharing service that connects low-income neighborhoods directly with food stores and markets (requiring no more than one bus changes) - for rural as well as urban areas?	no*	no	yes	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (III-38-39), JAUNT (website)
	Are these transportation services available at multiple times of day and evening, in rural as well as urban areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Has the locality done any infrastructure, transportation or other studies to identify issues of low-income neighborhoods gaining access to quality food, in rural as well as urban areas?	no*	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-10)
	Do safe biking and walking paths exist between low-income neighborhoods and food stores and markets, in rural as well as urban areas?	no*	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (V-51-56)
	Are farmer's markets geographically accessible by low income neighborhoods, in rural as well as urban areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
b. Support location of grocers providing healthy local, foods in diverse and underserved locations										
	Does the locality have an expedited development and/or permitting process for groceries that will provide healthy, local foods in underserved locations - in rural as well as urban areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Does the locality recognize through policy or programs the need for low income, immigrant populations, and migrant farm workers, to have access to grocers that provide local, fresh foods - in rural as well as urban areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
	Are tax credits available to developers for opening a grocery store in certain areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	

	Are there any regulatory incentives, such as relaxed zoning requirements, that can facilitate new stores in										
79	underserved areas?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
80	Does the locality offer any predevelopment assistance to developers to expedite the review process?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
c. Increase availability of fresh and healthful foods for underserved communities											
81	Does the locality support the purchase/ use of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to provide low-income access to farmer's markets?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
82	Does the locality support the policy of \$2 or \$3 for every EBT dollar, when the EBT is used at farmer's markets or other market venues for fresh, local food?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
83	Do farmer's markets and/or grocery stores accommodate WIC coupons, Senior Nutrition coupons, or EBT machines?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
84	Do farmer's markets enable \$2 or \$3 healthy food credit for every EBT dollar?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
85	Are markets and stores accessible at multiple times and days to accommodate varying work schedules?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	yes	Interview - several farmer's markets	
86	Does the locality support, or are there programs for mobile farms stands and mobile food carts?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
87	Do local faith, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions (public and private) have policies to buy local food for events when available?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		
d. Support an effective emergency food infrastructure											
88	Does the locality have a policy that its citizens have a "right to food security." (cf. Belo Horizonte, Brazil)	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
89	Does the locality support the provision of a central directory of all emergency food providers?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
90	Does the locality have a system for directing / referring people in need of food to the places that can help?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
91	Does the locality support coordination and cooperation among emergency food providers?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
92	Does the locality support a method, structure or storage facility for donations of fresh foods to emergency food providers?	no	no	yes	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Interview - Community Cupboard	
e. Support equitable working conditions for farm labor											
93	Does the locality support a living wage policy for all those who work, including migrant farm labor?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
94	Does the locality support access to fresh, healthful food by the farm laborers who are helping to produce the food?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
95	Does the locality provide or ensure that training for farm workers is provided in a comfortable training environment, and that the training is adequate and in their native language, and that someone is available to answer farm worker questions in their own language?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
96	Does the locality provide or ensure that adequate protection against pesticides is provided to farm workers?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
97	Does the locality have a program or support a program to encourage and enable transitional farm labor to become engaged in, or participate in, or become integrated into community events - such as through volunteering for county fairs, agricultural events?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
98	Does the locality have a clear contact for migrant farm workers to contact, to participate in any aspect of the community?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
99	Does the locality have a map of where farm worker camps are, to facilitate understanding and planning for their needs?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
100	Are housing options available for migrant workers?	no	yes	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Interview - zoning ordinances	
f. Promote community involvement and ownership in local food system											
101	Are community members involved in the organization of markets or other food opportunities?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		
102	Are culturally appropriate, fresh food options available for immigrant and ethnic populations in stores?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
103	Is there support for diverse, local, traditional - and fresh food practices?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		
104	Does the locality support or have a program to incorporate the participation of local migrant workers into local food farmers' markets and farm stands, to integrate and protect workers while they're in the community, as isolation is a major factor in migrant worker life?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
105	Does the locality support or have a program to support community gardens and other agricultural opportunities for low income, immigrant and farm labor populations?	no	no	yes	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Interview - gardens planned	
5. LAND CONSERVATION / ACCESS TO LAND FOR FOOD PRODUCTION											
106	Does the locality have a policy to support land conservation for food production?	yes*	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (II-1)	
107	Does the locality encourage or support land conservation easements for food production?	yes*	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-12)	
108	Does the locality clearly allow the use of public space or land for nonprofit community food gardens?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		
109	Are there creative leasing or financing models to reduce start-up farming debt?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no		

110	Does the locality have a map of its prime agricultural lands for conservation?	yes*	yes	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-16), Louisa County Zoning Ordinances (86-3)
111	Does the locality have a map of prime agricultural lands that it wishes to conserve for food production, agri-tourism, heritage tourism, or other purposes supporting local food production.	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	
112	Does the locality limit development potential in prime agricultural land through purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, establishment of agricultural districts, or through other means?	yes	yes	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	Louisa County Comprehensive Plan (IV-14-15), Louisa County Zoning Ordinances
113	Does the locality have a green infrastructure plan that incorporates consideration for food production into the plan?	no	no	no	no	no	N/A	N/A	no	

Appendix F: Audit supplemental notes

1. PUBLIC HEALTH

1a: Reduce and Prevent Community Obesity and Chronic Illness

Q1: Mention of goal for improving public health:

a. The Thomas Jefferson Health District Environmental Health Program discusses improving public health for Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Greene and Nelson Counties: "We protect public health by permitting and inspecting establishments such as restaurants, school cafeterias, hospital cafeterias, and temporary event vendors (booths at public fairs). We help to insure that food is prepared and maintained safely to prevent food borne illnesses (salmonella, etc). We investigate reports of food borne illnesses and work with businesses and citizens to educate and correct deficiencies." <<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/LHD/ThomasJefferson/environmental/food.htm>>

b. The School Nutrition Director is currently revamping the school wellness policy.
[Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q2: Goal to reduce obesity:

a. Louisa County public schools serve low-fat and mostly whole-grain foods in an effort to reduce and prevent obesity. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q3: Overall wellness plan:

a. Not mentioned

Q4: Farm to School programs:

a. Louisa County public schools participated in the Farm to School day last November and intend to continue participating. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q5: School purchasing local:

a. Local foods are not currently purchased, but the School Nutrition Director would be interested in doing so if it were feasible. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q6: Reduce available junk food:

a. Louisa County public schools sell only whole grain and 300-calorie-or-less snacks and naturally carbonated juice, and no sodas, in their vending machines. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q7: Educate cafeteria workers:

a. Not mentioned

Q8. Food based lesson plans:

a. Currently not mentioned, but the School Nutrition Director is in the process of adding these. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q9. School gardens:

a. A school garden is in the works for the new Moss Nuchols Elementary being built. The School Nutrition Director would love to see more school gardens. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q10. Joint use agreement:

a. Not mentioned

Q11. Chain restaurants/calories on menus:

a. Not mentioned

Q12. Tax on/discourage low nutritional value items:

a. Not mentioned

Q13. Discourage SNAP for sugary foods and beverages:

a. This is an issue that stakeholders would like to see addressed. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

1b. Engage public by increasing awareness of healthy and local food options

Q14. Increase awareness of healthy lifestyle:

a. Louisa Extension Office Family and Consumer Sciences provides education programs regarding diets and healthy eating habits in kids. Master Food Volunteers educate about food safety, preparation and nutrition throughout the community. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q15. Definition for local food:

a. Not mentioned

Q16. Support production and distribution of local food:

a. Not mentioned

Q17. Guide to local food support:

a. Not mentioned

Q18. Purchasing preference for local:

a. The Louisa County Municipal Code mentions "Preference for local products and firms" in its Procurement section: "The county may, in the case of a tie bid, give preference to goods, services and construction produced in such locality or provided by persons, firms or

corporations having principal places of business in the locality, if such a choice is available."
<http://library1.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=12480&doc_action=whatsnew>
[See Sec. 60-16]

Q19. Media campaign to support healthy eating:

- a. Not mentioned

Q20. Support Food Policy Council:

- a. Not mentioned

1c. Flexible Policies and Zoning for creative and adaptive uses

Q21. Code allowance for open space or community gardens:

- a. In the Louisa County Comprehensive Plan on chapter V page 69 (V-69) there is a reference regarding open space: "Clustering of buildings allows for development of sites and maintaining open space. Units are sited closer together, leaving a greater expanse for natural areas, which can act as visual or environmental buffers from adjacent uses. Clustering is central to conservation planning and use of planned unit developments." Open space is referenced in the context of conservation of natural areas and community gardens are not specifically mentioned.

- b. On page IV-10 of the Comprehensive Plan another reference to open space states: "More compact development designs reduce the cost of development and promote watershed protection by reducing impervious areas, conserving natural areas, and providing community recreational space.

- c. Section 70-61, Note 1 of the Louisa County Zoning Ordinance states that the preservation of real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, forest and open space uses within its boundaries is in the public interest and ordains that the real estate shall be taxed in accordance with the Code of Virginia. In addition, Section 86-192.1 states that open space promotes attractive and unique developments that are also environmentally conscious. It states that not less than 30 percent of total acreage shall be open space, whether dedicated to public use or retained privately

Q22. Promote accessibility to community gardens for all neighborhoods:

- a. The Community Cupboard has plans to create a community garden on the county-owned property surrounding the cupboard, where residents visiting the food pantry could access fresh produce as well. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q23. Land protections for farmers' markets:

- a. Not mentioned

Q24. Pocket parks to community gardens:

a. Not mentioned

Q25. Allow abandoned lots for gardens or farms:

a. Not mentioned

Q26. Work with community land trust, non-profits, or allow low-income to sell produce:

a. Not mentioned

Q27. Code allow for residential zones to keep “farm” animals:

a. The Louisa County Zoning Ordinance states, in Section 86-66.1, Yard Regulations, that animal waste treatment systems for either livestock or poultry shall be located no closer than 200 feet from any property line and 500 feet from any adjacent residence, domestic water supply, school, church or public recreation area off the property.

b. The Louisa County Municipal Code does not specifically allow residential farm animals, but it mentions "Burial or cremation of animals or fowl which have died," implying that owning fowl may be allowed. <http://library1.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=12480&doc_action=whatsnew> [See Sec 14-5]

c. Agriculture is allowed as an accessory use in the R-1 and R-2 districts, except that farm animals and fowl may not be raised or kept on lots which are closer than 300 feet to any adjacent property line. [Community Contact]

Q28. Funding for food projects:

a. Not mentioned

Q29. Minimal on-site processing:

a. Not mentioned

1d. Promote multi-modal transportation options to food sources

Q30. Offer multi-modal transportation:

a. Not mentioned

Q31. Transportation for low income or migrant workers to grocery stores:

a. Not mentioned

Q32. Transport food to low income and migrant neighborhoods:

a. Not mentioned

Q33. Safe biking and walking paths to food sources:

a. Not mentioned

Q34. Bus service connects neighborhoods and food stores, does it require more than 1 transfer:

a. Not mentioned

Q35. Provide low-cost taxi or ride share to food sources?

a. JAUNT buses will take residents anywhere in the county if they call ahead of time, usually 24 hours. [Community Interviews, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q36. Is transportation available during days and nights?

a. Not mentioned

Q37. Bike path or sidewalk plan:

a. The Comprehensive Plan contains numerous suggestions to improve bike paths and pedestrian walkways (pages V-51 to V-56), especially in the towns of Mineral and Louisa. The plan notes that the Zoning Ordinances do not reflect these suggestions and may need to be updated. The plan does not specifically mention improving access to food or grocery stores, but there is an emphasis on connecting localities with safe bike networks and improving pedestrian walks around schools and shopping centers.

1e. Reduce community exposure to pesticides and chemicals in foods

Q38. Reduce pesticide use, appropriate enforcement:

a. The Louisa Comprehensive plan, on pages IV-18 to IV-19, references several studies in the 1980's and 1990's regarding local government programs to regulate pesticide use, however there seems to be confusion as to whether the regulation responsibilities should fall to the state or localities. The plan states: "It seems, then, that local governments could limit the application of pesticides within such areas though a control of certain land uses generally linked with specific pesticides...However, these types of local controls seem to conflict with a recent decision by the General Assembly to control pesticide use at the state level."

Reduced pesticide use is not required or enforced, just recommended: "When land uses are proposed within an area vulnerable to pesticides used with the proposed land use, Extension Agents can consult with landowners about the risk of pesticides in the area, and if appropriate, recommend alternative pesticides to protect groundwater."

Q39. Protect farm workers from exposure:

a. Not mentioned

Q40. Protect food safety through proper training of farm workers:

a. Section 78-34 of Louisa's Zoning Ordinances states that it is unlawful "to dispose of the sludge and other material removed from septic tanks except by depositing it under the surface of the ground in such manner that it will not be exposed to the atmosphere or endanger the source of domestic water or food supplies."

Q41. Encourage transition to low spray or organic to reduce chemical exposure:

a. Not mentioned

Q42. Encourage transition to organic or sustainable for increased carbon sequestration:
a. Not mentioned

Q43. Offer incentives to transition to sustainable or organic:
a. Not mentioned

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2a. Support local food production

Q44. Working farmland tax incentives:
a. According to the Louisa Comprehensive Plan, approximately 9.2% of the agricultural/forestal lands in Louisa are considered Agricultural-Forestal Districts (AFDs). The plan states: "AFDs were established by the State of Virginia as a means for counties to offer incentives to landowners to maintain their property in agriculture and forestry...The rural nature of the landscape is maintained and the tax rates remain low since residential development is slowed and county resources are not overburdened" (IV-15). The emphasis is on maintaining the county's rural character, though the incentives could also be used to encourage food production.

Q45. Purchasing preference for low-spray, organic or sustainable:
a. Not mentioned

Q46. Economic development support for food production:
a. Not mentioned

Q47. Purchase of local food when available:
a. The Louisa County Municipal Code mentions "Preference for local products and firms" in its Procurement section: "The county may, in the case of a tie bid, give preference to goods, services and construction produced in such locality or provided by persons, firms or corporations having principal places of business in the locality, if such a choice is available."
<http://library1.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=12480&doc_action=whatsnew>
[See Sec. 60-16]

Q48. Support system for seasonal labor for farms:
a. Not mentioned

Q49. Program to inspire and train new farmers, including immigrant assistance:
a. Not mentioned

Q50. Incentives for retailers to purchase local food:
a. Not mentioned

2b. Support development of local processing infrastructure

Q51. Programs to support or incubate food related businesses:

- a. Not mentioned

Q52. USDA kitchen or other processing facility available:

- a. Not mentioned

2c. Support development of local distribution infrastructure

Q53. Allow for farmers markets or tailgate markets:

- a. Not mentioned

Q54. Provide institutional support for farmers' markets and tailgate markets:

- a. Not mentioned

Q55. Economic support for regional distribution center:

- a. Not currently mentioned, but stakeholders have expressed an interest in creating a distribution center. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

2d. Support development of new businesses using locally sourced products & heritage foods

Q56. Incentives for businesses using locally produced food:

- a. Not mentioned

Q57. Support for identification and development of heritage seeds, food, products, etc:

- a. Not mentioned

Q58. Program that supports stores that provide fresh, local options for low income:

- a. Not mentioned

2e. Support increased Security of Food Supply

Q59. Emergency preparedness plan for disruptions in food supply:

- a. Not mentioned

3. ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

3a. Reduce community carbon footprint and reduce nonpoint source stream pollution

Q60. Goal to reduce footprint:

- a. The design standards recommended in the Louisa County Comprehensive Plan were created to protect the local watershed and natural environment in a variety of ways, including: protection of local streams, lakes and estuaries; protection of sensitive forests, wetlands and habitats; urban wildlife habitat through natural area preservation, reduction of stormwater pollutant loads; and reduced soil erosion during construction (IV-2 to IV-3).

3b. Reduce nonpoint source stream pollution from agriculture

Q61. Reduce nonpoint source pollution from agriculture:

a. Design Standard #4 of the Comprehensive Plan is to "Use natural vegetation to mitigate effects of stormwater runoff through infiltration and filtering" (IV-12). This section describes many advantages to using buffer systems to protect stream water quality, though the recommendations are for general protection and do not mention pollution from agriculture sources specifically. The section also includes recommendations for pesticide management (see Q38).

b. Section 86-212 of the Zoning Ordinance for Louisa prohibits the "storage of gasoline, kerosene and other petroleum products and flammable liquids, dynamite, blasting caps and other explosives, pesticides and poison and other such materials which could result in hazard to life and/or water pollution in the event of flooding.

Q62. Riparian buffers used to reduce nonpoint source pollution:

a. The Comprehensive Plan states: "Surrounding the County's reservoirs, open space represents a minimum 100-foot riparian buffer intended to filter out sediment and other non-point source pollutants from runoff before it reaches those critical water resources" (V-4).

b. Section 38-102 states that the Stormwater Management Act of the Code of Virginia will "maintain the integrity of stream channels for their biological functions and drainage, minimize the impact of development upon stream erosion, and preserve and protect water supply facilities from stream erosion and nonpoint source pollution. Furthermore, Section 38-125 explains that Non-structural measures such as "minimization of impervious surfaces, stream buffer reforestation, providing additional stream buffer areas, flow splitting and dissipation, wetland restoration, and development design that reduces the rate and volume of runoff" will be encouraged to satisfy water quality requirements of the article.

Q63. Fence livestock from stream banks:

a. Not mentioned

Q64. Program to manage excess animal manure:

a. Not mentioned

c. Reduce Food Waste

Q65. Encourage foraging from unused locations:

a. Not mentioned

Q66. Local map for food foraging:

a. Not mentioned

Q67. Opportunity for gleanings from farms and restaurants:

a. Community Cupboard recently became one of eight of sixty sites approved to glean from WalMart locations and to get trained on how to glean and transport food items. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q68. Demonstration programs for composting:

a. Not mentioned

Q69. Offer central site for composting from homes and yards:

a. Not mentioned

4. SOCIAL EQUITY

4a. Increase transportation system access to markets that sell fresh and healthful foods by underserved communities

Q70. Quality food for all citizens:

a. JABA has a "Local Food Initiative" which aims to provide elderly residents of Region Ten in Central Virginia with "local goods and services," acknowledging "the insecurities of the conventional food system." <<http://www.jabacares.org/page/full/local-food-initiative/>>

b. Louisa has a Community Cupboard which provides food for low-income residents. Its mission is "Working to ease hunger with compassion." <<http://www.louisacounty.com/LCliving/cupboard.htm>>

Q71. Bus service, taxi or ride share in rural as well as urban areas:

a. When the 2006 Comprehensive Plan was written, the JAUNT bus service for the elderly was the only form of public transportation in Louisa. The bus runs between Charlottesville and the town of Mineral (III-38, III-39A). The Plan includes a list of suggested projects from the Thomas Jefferson Rural Area Transportation study, which include increased JAUNT routes and services, though no other form of public transportation is suggested.

Q72. Transportation available during day and evening in rural as well as urban areas:

a. Not mentioned

Q73. Any studies to assess needs of low-income neighborhoods to gain access to fresh foods:

a. The Louisa Comprehensive Plan states: "The Center for Watershed Protection examined some of the myths and facts associated with smaller lots and clustering and found that open space design was selling, cost less to produce, creates a sense of community when linked with bike and pedestrian facilities, is not solely for upper-bracket incomes, and could be accomplished with no net loss of units" (IV-10). This is not a needs assessment of low-income areas but has implications for increased food access in low-income areas when these lots have pedestrian routes and open space is used for community gardens.

Q74. Safe biking and walking paths to food sources in rural and urban areas:

a. Reliable biking and walking paths are not currently present, though there are plans to increase routes (see Q37). No mention of walking/biking paths in relation to food access.

Q75. Farmers' markets geographically accessible:

a. Not mentioned

4b. Support location of grocers providing healthy local, foods in diverse and underserved locations

Q76. Expedited development review for food stores in under served locations:

a. Not mentioned

Q77. Does locality recognize need for low income, immigrant and migrant populations to have access to fresh, healthful foods:

a. Not mentioned

Q78: Tax credits for opening food stores in certain locations:

a. Not mentioned

Q79. Any regulatory incentives, ie relaxed zoning requirements, to facilitate food stores:

a. Not mentioned

Q80: Offer predevelopment assistance to developers for grocery stores:

a. Not mentioned

4c. Increase availability of fresh and healthful foods for underserved communities

Q81. EBT machines at farmers' markets:

a. Not mentioned

Q82. Dollar matching, or increased value (\$2 or \$3 for every one spent) opportunities for EBT dollars spent on healthful foods at grocery stores:

a. Not mentioned

Q83. Food sources accommodate WIC, Senior Nutrition, EBT:

a. Not mentioned

Q84. Farmers' markets enable \$2 or \$3 healthy food credit for every EBT dollar:

a. Not mentioned

Q85. Markets and stores accessible at multiple times of day:

a. Farmer's Foods and Food Lion are open every day all day. The Louisa and Mineral farmer's markets both run Saturdays, but the Zion Crossroads market runs Fridays. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

Q86. Mobile farm stands or carts:

a. Not mentioned

Q87. Faith, nonprofit or institutions have purchasing preferences for local foods:

a. Not mentioned

4d. Support an effective emergency food infrastructure

Q88. Right to food security:

a. Not mentioned

Q89. Central directory of emergency food providers:

a. Not mentioned

Q90. System for referring people in need of food:

a. Not mentioned

Q91. Support coordination and cooperation between agencies:

a. Not mentioned

Q92. Opportunity for storage of fresh foods for providers:

a. The Community Cupboard has three industrial-size in addition to regular-size refrigerators to store cold donations. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

e. Support equitable working conditions for farm labor

Q93. Living wage policy for all who work, including farm labor:

a. Not mentioned

Q94. Access to fresh, healthful food for those who produce it:

a. Not mentioned

Q95. Ensure training for farm labor that is comfortable, accessible in native language:

a. Not mentioned

Q96. Adequate protection from pesticides:

a. Not mentioned

Q97. Opportunities for transitional farm labor to become engaged in local community:

a. Not mentioned

Q98. Person available for migrant farm workers to contact regarding community events:

a. Not mentioned

Q99. Map of farm worker camps:

a. Not mentioned

Q100. Housing opportunities for migrant workers:

a. We did not find this provision in Zoning Ordinances, but a stakeholder said there is a policy regarding housing for migrant workers. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

4f. Promote community involvement and ownership in local food system

Q101. Community involved in organization of food opportunities:

a. Not mentioned

Q102. Culturally appropriate fresh foods:

a. Not mentioned

Q103. Support for diverse, local, traditional - and fresh - food practices:

a. Not mentioned

Q104. Incorporate migrant workers in markets and community events:

a. Not mentioned

Q105. Opportunities for low income, immigrant, or migrant to participate in gardens or food projects:

a. The Community Cupboard has plans to create a community garden on its property, which is owned by the county. [Community Interview, See Compiled Interview Notes]

5. LAND CONSERVATION / ACCESS TO LAND FOR FOOD PRODUCTION

Q106. Land conservation for food production:

a. Part of the Vision Statement for the Louisa County Comprehensive Plan states: "We should work to preserve the rural nature of Louisa, perceived as open spaces such as agricultural and forestry lands, through designation of such areas and initiating conservation design development standards for new development" (II-1). Conservation of agricultural land is a key aspect of the Comprehensive Plan, though it is phrased in terms of maintaining a rural character and food production is not mentioned.

Q107. Conservation easements for food production:

a. Conservation easements are mentioned in the Comprehensive plan as a method of open space management on page IV-12. They are not mentioned with reference to food production, however, but preventing over-development. The first positive aspect described for conservation easements is "guarantees protection from further development".

Q108. Allow public space or land for food production:

- a. Not mentioned

Q109. Creative leasing or finance models to reduce farmer start-up debt:

- a. Not mentioned

Q110. Map of prime agricultural lands:

- a. Map 14 of the Comprehensive Plan (IV-16) is of the Louisa County Agricultural and Forestal Districts as well as the Green Springs Historic District. There is no map with areas described as "prime" agricultural land.

- b. Section 86-3 of the County's Zoning Ordinance states that map of Louisa County is "ordained for the purpose of promoting health, safety, order, prosperity, the conservation of natural and historic resources and the general welfare."

Q111. Map of prime agricultural lands to conserve for food production, agri-tourism, heritage tourism, or other purposes supporting local food production:

- a. Not mentioned

Q112. Limit development potential through PDR, TDR or other programs:

- a. Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Agricultural Forestal Districts (AFDs) are all mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan on pages IV-14 to IV-15 as means to control development. The major goals are to preserve agriculture and forestry areas; there is no mention of food production. Land Use Taxation is also used for preservation: "This reduction in tax assessment has been shown to be essential in supporting a profitable agricultural/forestal business" (IV-17).

Q113. Green infrastructure plan that incorporates consideration for food production:

- a. Not mentioned