Program Narrative

The Iowa State University Community Food Systems (CFS) certification is intended for intermediate levels of food system practitioners. It is a process-based certification that increases capacity for food system practitioners to work within community and develop food systems. This certification involves visioning techniques, research and community food systems assessments, and strategic development of projects. Participants will gain new skill sets for decision-making, facilitation and team-building techniques, and will learn to bring projects from visioning to implementation for reaching systems-based goals.

This certification includes both an in-person workshop and online modules. If full certification is not desired, participation in the online modules is not required.

The two-day workshop is centered around activities and networking with colleagues to learn a new framework for community food systems development. It focuses on building new skills for facilitation and developing vision, mission and core values; tools for conducting community food systems assessments; prioritization methods; evaluation techniques; and project management and development.

The Community Food Systems curriculum offers six different levels of certification:

- Comprehensive
- Facilitator
- Assessor
- Mapping 101
- Feasibility
- Economic Impact
- Design Thinking

The modules associated with the individual certifications dive deeper into Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the CFS process (Visioning and Implementation), conducting a community food systems assessment, tools for project management and evaluation, feasibility studies, economic impact, and design thinking. See following pages for learning objectives by module.

Upon certification, participants will receive templates, slides, and tools for conducting various elements relevant to their certification.

Participant Learning Objectives:

- Understand community food systems and how they relate to larger community and economic development goals
- Engage and empower community partners to work collectively toward a community food system
- Discern the different sectors of the food system and their impact on community
- Utilize Collective Impact and Strategic Doing methods
- Develop coalitions working toward collective community goals
- Increase strategic partnerships with organizations for creative collaborations
- Execute community processes including facilitation, project management, partnership, and building successful teams
- Improved ability to develop community food systems assessments through mapping, interviews, and public input sessions
- Identify primary and secondary data sources for community food systems assessment and priority projects
- Utilize community food system assessments to determine priority projects
- Understand evaluation methods for determining collective community projects
- Acknowledge the importance of design in community food systems and where it fits within project development
- Become aware of new tools and resources for various food systems sectors: production, transformation, distribution, consumption, and resource management
- Able to apply concepts and skills learned to develop a place-based Community Food Systems Program in your own university or organization.
- Create evaluation methods to understand whether projects developed are successful.

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Workshop Objectives by Topic:

**Introductions + Overview**
- Increase knowledge of partners in the room
- Develop understanding of common language for community food systems
- Understand certification process

**Community Food Systems Framework**
- Increase knowledge of community food systems process and program
- Understand ways of creating menu of services and applications

**Q1: Vision**
- Develop new facilitation methods for coalition development
- Understand new tools for identifying assets and gaps as they relate to the food system
- Be aware of tools for visioning and strategic planning

**Individual Engagement**
- Understand role of facilitator in Quarter 1 of the process
- Improve knowledge for individual engagement

**Q2: Research**
- Understand role of facilitator in Quarter 2 of the process
- Understand how 5-year and 20-year activity relate to vision, mission, and core values
- Understand the difference between vision, mission, and core value statement
- Develop new tools for creating vision, mission, and core value statements

**Secondary Data**
- Understand the importance of secondary data and mapping for decision-making
- Learn where to find relevant data
- Understand how to collect and aggregate data into reports
- Improve awareness of existing food system mapping platforms

**Q3: Input**
- Understand role of facilitator in Quarter 3 of the process
- Increase ability to create consensus

**Primary Data**
- Understand the importance of primary data
- Identify strategies for gathering public feedback

**Compile Assessment**
- Understand the process of completing a community food systems assessment
- Understand the differences between, and importance of, a research manual, snapshot, and assessment

**Project Brainstorm**
- Understand how vision, mission, and values relate to priority projects
- Improve skills for facilitating prioritization of community projects

**Community Leadership:**
- Develop new ideas for creating capacity and community leadership
- Reflect on community leadership

**Transition to Strategic Doing**
- Understand the difference between Collective Impact and Strategic Doing
- Understand the fundamentals of Strategic Doing

**Q4: Prioritize**
- Understand role of facilitator in Quarter 4 of the process
- Understand how to evaluate and determine priority projects within a coalition
- Develop new facilitation skills for strategic planning and collective decision-making
- Improve understanding of the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2

**Evaluation**
- Understand the difference between program, project, and systems evaluation
- New ability to create a systems-based evaluation logic model
- Understand how systems evaluation relates to project evaluation

**Project: Goals and Metrics**
- Understand how to create a project logic model
- Improve ability to create project team goals, objectives, and output statements
- Increase awareness of the different roles within project teams

**Importance of Design**
- Understand where design fits in food systems development
- Identify potential partners for design assistance

**Project: Development + Implementation**
- Consider creative ways to represent a project
- Understand the use of critique and public input to solve problems
- Learn new tools to evaluate project needs and gaps

**Phase 2 Coalition**
- Understand project connections to coalition’s collective goals
- Develop new tools for facilitating group discussion

**Process Review + Transition:**
- Understand full scope and timeline of community food systems process
- Understand the transition of leadership
Online Module Objectives:

Certifications:
- Comprehensive: all online modules
- Facilitator: Modules 1-4
- Assessor: Modules 1, 3, and Mapping 101
- Mapping 101: Mapping 101
- Feasibility: Module 1 and Feasibility
- Economic Impact: Module 1 and Economic Impact
- Design Thinking: Module 1 and Design Thinking

Modules:

Module 1: Community Food Systems Framework
- Increase understanding of the logistics for certification and how the CFS process can be used in your own communities and regions
- Increase understanding of the timeline and CFS process, common language for working with partners and other certified leaders
- Improve awareness of food systems tactics and the ability to consider additional needs for research in your own communities

Module 2: Collective Thinking + Facilitation
- Improve awareness of learning tools to offer collective thinking process
- Develop new skills in coalition development strategies, ways of engaging new stakeholders and diverse audiences, and how to build trusting environments
- Understand the Strategic Doing framework and how it relates to Community Food Systems
- Improve confidence for facilitating groups and moving projects into the implementation phase
- Increase confidence in Phase 2 transition and project management

Module 3: Community Food Systems Assessment
- Improve understanding of food systems assessments and the CFS framework for conducting an assessment
- Learn new sources for finding relevant information and data
- Develop new skills in creating a research manual for a community asset area
- Increase understanding of GIS and how it can be used in the food systems context
- Enhance ability to create a map with the QGIS opensource software
- Improve ability to create a place-based community food systems assessment and snapshot utilizing the ISU Extension and Outreach Community Food Systems template

Module 4: Project Coordination and Development
- Understand of the process of Phase 2, and become aware of tools to support the technical assistance needed for projects
- Develop new skills and techniques for promoting, obtaining support, and presenting priority projects to both internal and external stakeholders in the community
- Improve ability to create precedent reports and case study packets
- Increase understanding of best practices for conducting research for projects and how to use case study methods
- Understand common language around design thinking
- Improve awareness of funding outlets for projects
- Increase ability to evaluate projects and programs
- Understand of the transition out of the CFS process for communities, including local capacity development, project continuation, or discontinuing the process of coalition development

Goldsboro, North Carolina

St, Croix, Virgin Islands
Design Thinking

- Understand the need for design as it relates to food systems processes and projects, and where to engage with designers in the community food systems process
- Learn observation techniques for site development as an intermediate stage for concept design and strategy development
- Develop new skills in observation as it relates to site or product design, including the function of space and identity in community design projects.
- Learn new ways of partnering with additional organizations and businesses as it relates to technical assistance needed for design

Economic Impact Analysis

- Understand the need for economic impact studies
- Improve ability to conduct an impact analysis that may benefit a community project or asset area
- Develop new skills to prepare for the use of the IMPLAN model, if desired

Feasibility Study

- Increase understanding of the need for feasibility studies and awareness of tools for assisting businesses in feasibility work
- Learn of additional partners or organizations that may be able to support in conducting full feasibility analysis studies
- Understand steps for conducting a feasibility study and expected outputs needed
- New awareness of where to access data needed to conduct various components of business feasibility analysis

Mapping 101

- Increase understanding of the importance of mapping and appropriate ways to utilize both visualizations and assessments within business development, organizational pursuits, and community food systems
- Increase understanding of GIS and how it can be used in the food systems context
- Improve ability to create a map with the QGIS opensource software
- Learn new sources for finding relevant information and data
- Improve ability to create place-based map
- Develop a report based on a place-based map