

**WHERE OUR FOOD COMES FROM:  
THE OBERLIN COLLEGE FOOD SYSTEM**

**A Student Research Project**

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Daniel Elshoff  
Greg Kehm  
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**Project Coordinator:  
Sam Passmore (Oberlin College, '85)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**The Meadowcreek Project, Inc.  
Fox, Arkansas**

**&**

**The Oberlin College Environmental Studies Program  
Oberlin, Ohio**

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## INTRODUCTION

Environmental Studies students at Oberlin College study how natural systems work, and the ways human actions affect the health of these systems. Because natural systems are complex and interconnected, the ramifications of human actions can be difficult to trace. The motivations behind our behavior--why we choose to live in the world as we do--can be equally difficult to discern. In studying environmental matters, then, it is important to draw upon the insights of a variety of disciplinary viewpoints. For instance, to understand water policy thoroughly, one needs to be conversant in at least water biology, economics, policy making, political theory, history, and ethics.

Today, we are faced with a series of serious environmental problems: solid and toxic waste disposal, ground water pollution, soil erosion, deforestation, desertification, global warming, acid precipitation. In order to solve these problems it is necessary to understand them clearly, in all their complexity. Environmental Studies programs at Oberlin and other colleges and universities are among the responses our society has made to this need. The questions we ask ourselves in Environmental Studies have, therefore, quite practical implications: What are we doing now? What are the effects of our actions? What, if anything, would be better, and why? How could this preferred alternative be achieved?

This emphasis on interdisciplinary thinking and the practical application of ideas led to an unusual research project on the Oberlin College Campus. In January, 1988, four Oberlin students began to study the role Oberlin College plays in the food system. This effort was jointly sponsored by the Meadowcreek Project, an Arkansas-based environmental education and research center, and the Oberlin College Environmental Studies Program. The study viewed the Campus Dining Service (CDS), the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association (OSCA), and the local agricultural community as educational resources, as a laboratory of sorts. In effect, we drew a conceptual boundary around the campus, and traced a resource flow--food. We studied food purchasing records, agriculture production statistics, and interviewed College administrators and faculty, food service managers, local farmers, agriculture extension agents, food distributors in Cleveland, and policy makers in Columbus.

If it is unusual for students to study their institution's purchasing habits, it is doubly unusual to suggest ways that those habits might be changed. Yet, when understood as an exercise in thinking about the world and how it might be made better, such a project becomes exciting education. It also provides opportunities to an institution like Oberlin College to

We have three purposes in preparing this report. First, we would simply like to help educate members of the Oberlin College community about our role in the food system. Second, we offer it as a catalyst for dialogue around the issues of educational innovation and local buying. Finally, we hope our findings will play a small part in affecting how we at Oberlin think about education and how we use our buying power. This combination of education and advocacy creates a tension that we consider quite positive. The goal of local purchasing provides purpose to our work. The standard of intellectual rigor and honesty insures that our biases will not control our conclusions.

We begin this report, in Chapter I, with an inventory of local and regional agricultural production. In Chapter II, we examine Campus Dining Service's food purchasing practices. Any discussion of local food buying must be based on an understanding of local food production and local needs. In Chapter III, we develop a case for purchasing local and regional food products. This is a rather abstract discussion, intended to explain why we should even consider the option of buying locally-produced agricultural commodities. From there, in Chapter IV, we speculate on how potential market connections could be made. Our list of strategies for local buying is long, and some might be difficult to implement. By including them all we mean to inspire members of the College community to imagine what is possible. We, together, can determine which ideas are best and most practicable.

local merchants and grain elevators. Much of his profits come from this ability to capture the fees that middlemen normally receive.

Very few farmers in northern Ohio farm at this scale. Lorain County farmers average 140 acres in size.<sup>2</sup> This is, however, a misleading figure, because grain operations tend to be larger than other kinds of farms (vegetable, fruit, livestock, and dairy). A typical Lorain County farmer will work between 750 and 1000 acres.<sup>3</sup> Individuals who farm at this level purchase their inputs and sell their farm products through middlemen.

When not planting or harvesting his own crops, Mr. Burrer harvests other farmers' crops on contract, or hauls goods in his trucks for a fee. Work of this kind will on occasion take him as far south as Florida and as far east as Philadelphia. By doing so he extracts more work out of his investments than he would by only farming.

He recognizes that an operation of this scale has at least one drawback--debt. Mr. Burrer expects to always need to borrow money to buy inputs, rent land, and replace equipment.<sup>4</sup> Burrer and all other farmers are also vulnerable to the vagaries of nature. This summer's drought was a particularly poignant example of this, with U.S. grain production cut by one third.

#### THE DIVERSITY OF LORAIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

Peak, a vegetable man, and Burrer, a grain farmer, are representative of Lorain County agriculture in many ways. First, the County boasts an unusually diverse set of agricultural enterprises: grain, livestock, dairy, fruits, field vegetables, and greenhouse vegetables. Figure 1 below represents in graphic form the different farm enterprises in Lorain County, and their relative economic importance in sales.

glacial lake to drain. As the lake gradually receded, new shorelines were created.<sup>6</sup>

The historic shorelines are represented by a series of roughly parallel ridges. These ridges, delineated by roads such as "Butternut Ridge" and "Stoney Ridge" Roads, are ideal for horticultural crop production. They are composed of well-drained sandy soils; they are protected from untimely freezes by the moderating effect of Lake Erie; their higher elevation makes them less frost-prone as well. It is at these topographies that fruits and vegetables are grown.

The southern two-thirds of the County, the till plain, is characterized by large areas of gently rolling ground. Because of its clayey, nearly level soils and distance from the Lake, this part of the County is not well suited for fruit and vegetable crops. Instead, farmers here concentrate on grain, livestock, and dairy enterprises.<sup>7</sup> In this light, it is interesting to note that Peak lives and works along one of the ridges, while Burrer farms land near and south of Oberlin.

The proximity of Cleveland and other urban centers encourages diversity in Lorain County agriculture. The highly developed transportation system along the Lake, and the outlet to the Atlantic that the Lake provides, makes it easy for local farmers to tie into export markets. This is particularly important for large grain farmers like Corwin Burrer, a portion of whose product is exported overseas.

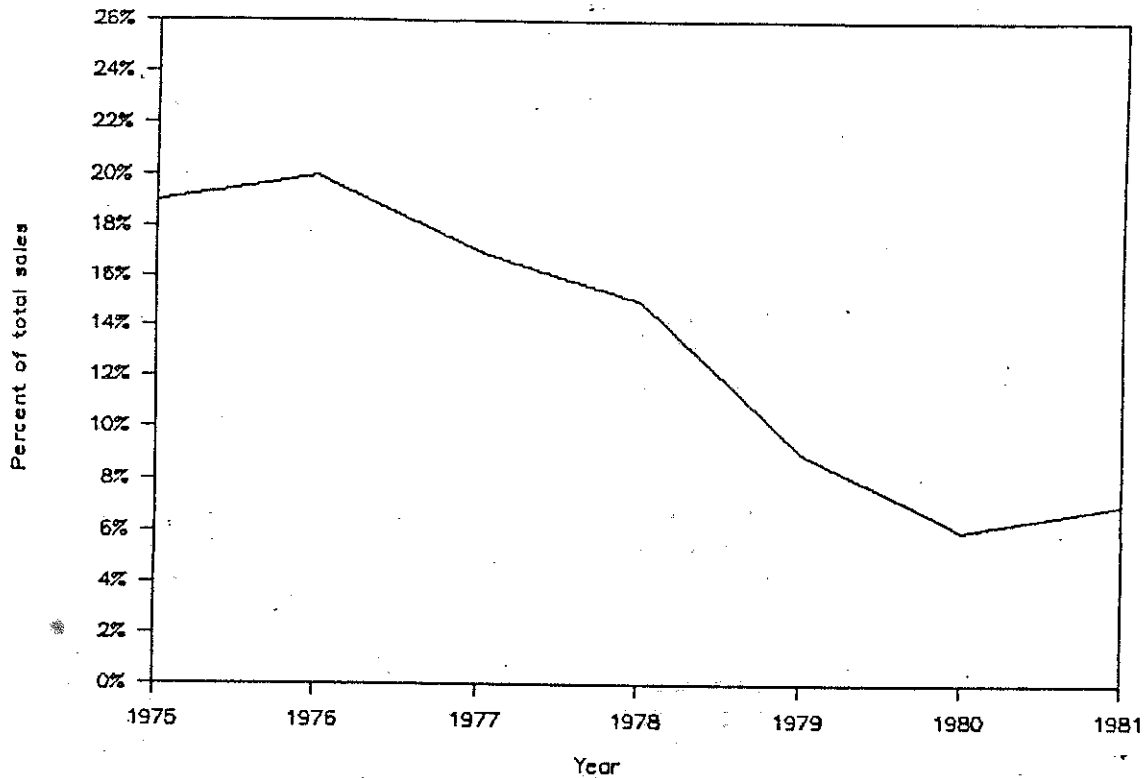
In contrast, the adjacent urban centers provide a ready local market for Lorain County products, particularly dairy, fruit and vegetable items. Most of the liquid milk consumed in Greater Cleveland is produced by dairies in Lorain and surrounding counties. Similarly, many of the small to medium vegetable and fruit growers in Lorain County grow for the local market; hence, many farm markets and roadside stands dot the highways of Lorain County. What is not sold locally is often sold regionally through any of the thirteen produce distribution companies at the Northern Ohio Food Terminal, as Ted Peak does.

Lorain County agricultural production has always been diverse. In the not too distant past (say, when Ted Peak was a young man) this diversity was built into most farms. Each farm family operated a wide range of enterprises, including livestock, grain and horticultural crops. Today, the County remains a cornucopia, yet each farmer now specializes in a smaller number of farm products.

There have been more recent changes effecting agricultural diversity in the County. For illustration, Figure 2 ranks the economic importance of each agricultural sector over the past decade.

Figure 3.10

Cash Receipts from Vegetable Sales  
Lorain County, 1975-1981



A number of factors have contributed to this startling drop. First, as described earlier, many of the hot-house vegetable growers have gone out of business. Second, a number of field vegetable growers have sold their land to developers, making way for suburban expansion. Third, some of the land once used for vegetable cropping has been converted to over 300 acres of nursery production. Lorain County nurseries, which grow ornamental plants for landscaping, have prospered and now account for much of the revenue listed in the "other" category above.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the decline in vegetable production, Lorain County agriculture remains diverse. Table 1 lists all of the major agricultural commodities produced on a commercial scale in the County.

auction, and from there allowed to mature further before slaughter. Milk is sold to a number of dairy companies, and it is subsequently marketed as liquid milk or cheese. Fresh produce items are marketed through a number of channels, depending on the size of the farmer's operation. For instance, two farms grow most of the County's 2,300 acres of sweet corn, and due to their size they sell almost entirely to large volume wholesale purchasers. Grapes (220 acres in Lorain County) are grown under contract with Welch's, which uses them to make juice in an up-state New York plant. Under the terms of their contract with Welch's, Lorain County grape growers are permitted to set aside 10 percent of their acreage for other markets, which accounts for the 22 acres of production listed in Table 1. Strawberries (43 acres) are grown primarily for direct local purchase, sold through roadside stands and pick-your-own operations.

Naturally, these produce items are not available all year long. Table 2 outlines the seasonal availability of Lorain County crops.

County greenhouse growers produce fresh tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, peppers, and radishes throughout the cooler months, as described in Table 2.

## LORAIN COUNTY AGRICULTURE: A MODEL FOR OHIO

While most counties in the state of Ohio tend to produce only a handful of major commodities, the state as a whole boasts a broad range of agricultural enterprises. Lorain County is unusual in that examples of most of these enterprises can be found within its borders. In this sense, Lorain County serves as a composite picture of Ohio agriculture.

In the rolling hills of Southeastern Ohio, livestock and forestry are the principal agricultural activities. Throughout most of central and northern Ohio, grain (principally corn and soybeans) and livestock (principally beef and pigs) dominate the agricultural sector. Around the urban centers, like Cincinnati and Cleveland, fresh produce and dairy farmers thrive alongside grain and livestock operations.<sup>15</sup> The Hartville area, in northeast Ohio, is known for its radishes and lettuce, and Celeryville in northwest Ohio is a center for celery production. The Sandusky area, along Lake Erie west of Oberlin, is particularly well-known for its tomatoes and cucumbers; most of these are processed into canned tomato products and pickles.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, the Ohio economy has a large food processing sector--Heinz, Smucker's, Campbell's and Stouffer's to name only four of the better known companies. Lesser known local and regional food processors, including dairies, bakeries, and custom butchers, can be found in all parts of the state. A more thorough catalogue of Ohio food processors can be found in Appendix A.

There are two notable exceptions to the rule that Lorain County provides a model for Ohio agriculture: root and muck crops. Although root crops, like potatoes and onions, could be grown along the County's sandy ridges, they generally are not; most farmers think this ground is more profitably farmed differently. The clayey soils further south of Lake Erie are too dense to grow root crops well.<sup>17</sup>

Muck crops, like celery and asparagus, prefer muck soils, which are found in swampy areas that have been drained. These soils are high in nitrogen and organic matter. For all practical purposes, Lorain County has no muck soils. The largest muck crop area in the state is, again, around Celeryville in northwest Ohio.<sup>18</sup>

With over 1,000 farms in Lorain County alone, it would be impossible to provide a comprehensive list of local and regional producers. Appendix A includes an extensive catalogue of farmers and farm marketers operating in Lorain and surrounding counties.

improvements. The contract also details specific requirements the College has of Marriott:

- o adequate quality and quantity of food
- o prompt and consistent food preparation
- o attention to budgeting
- o responsiveness to particular food concerns (e.g., vegetarian meals, boycotts).

The Oberlin/Marriott fee agreement is one of the most interesting aspects of the contract. Most food service institutions run on a profit-loss contract where a fee is paid to the food service, from which the food service must draw all operating expenditures and profits. Marriott at Oberlin is instead run on a Guaranteed Fee and Service contract in which Marriott is paid a percentage of the overall cost of operation. Unlike a profit and loss contract, losses or gains are absorbed by the College, which insures that any savings are received by the College. Thus, while Marriott does not have a direct incentive to incur savings, efficient management is an important component in Oberlin's choice of a dining service. Marriott works to retain its Oberlin College account, because Oberlin's high standing across the country reflects well on the Marriott Corporation.

CDS maintains a high level of cost efficiency, largely due to its ties to the larger Marriott Corporation. First, CDS pays extraordinarily low prices for much of the food it purchases because, in effect, it buys in league with other Marriott accounts. With \$35 million of accounts in the Cleveland area alone, this buying power makes it possible to obtain very favorable prices from suppliers. Second, the national, regional, and district offices provide information and establish quality standards that benefit the CDS. Standards for items like beef and chicken insure a high quality product. CDS managers receive information on state of the art technologies, learn of successful educational or nutritional programs at other Marriott accounts, and attend national management conferences.

Under Mr. West's supervision, the Marriott-employed dietitian, Rebecca Stotter, plans the actual menus six months in advance. These menus, based upon nutrition, variety and eye appeal, are evaluated by the Oberlin College Director of Residential Services and the Associate Dean of Students, and by executives in Marriott district and national headquarters.

New items are constantly added to the menu, either to replace unsuccessful items or to experiment with new ones, and CDS management solicits new menu ideas from all corners of the campus. Dining hall managers and cooks are invited to make suggestions, adapting menus to fit the character of each dining hall. Student feedback is welcomed by both CDS and the College. The Food Service Advisory Board (FSAB), composed of

neighbor's kitchen or flour in a Western European kitchen. Similarly, consumers have virtually no way of discovering precisely where their food originated. They may know, for example, that oranges often come from Florida and California, but not know the actual date or county of harvest. They certainly have no way of knowing who actually grew the oranges.

Ohio imports over 60% of its food.<sup>2</sup> In a recent study, it was found that all of the strawberries, tomatoes, and broccoli marketed by six of the thirteen commission houses at the Northern Ohio Food Terminal are grown out of state; these three commodities are grown in Lorain County.<sup>3</sup> As a general rule, our apples come from Washington, our cheese from Wisconsin, beef from Texas, and potatoes from Idaho. We eat many foreign goods too: bananas from Costa Rica, Columbian coffee, nuts from East Africa, even garbanzo beans from Turkey. During the winter months most of our soft fruits, such as plums, come from Chile and other South American nations.

On its journey from the farm to the table, the typical food item passes through a number of hands. The first stop may be a local grain elevator, a commission house, perhaps a cannery or a packing plant. Next it may be shipped to a mill, a terminal market, or a food wholesaler. Supermarkets, restaurants, and food service institutions are typically the next step before arriving, finally, at the dinner table. Figure 4 illustrates many of the possible marketing chains for three common commodities.

CDS works with several main food suppliers. Gordon's Food Service, a Michigan company, is Oberlin's main distributor of different grocery items, from teas to frozen entrees. Marriott food buyers, based at the regional office in Chicago, first negotiate price contracts with national and regional manufacturers of food products, like Uncle Ben's or Kellogg. These contracts, negotiated on an annual basis, guarantee Marriott a very low price, on the condition that during the year the Marriott system buy an agreed-upon volume of the product. In this way, price and volume of purchases are connected. The more Marriott agrees to buy, the lower the unit price it receives. These food manufacturers ship their products to Gordon's, which at the request of CDS dining hall managers, delivers them to Oberlin. Gordon's also handles all shipments of beef, contracted nationally with large beef packers. In essence, Gordon's does not actually own the products it handles, so it can't charge the mark-up it might normally receive; instead, it only performs the service of delivery, for which it receives a fee. Marriott occasionally puts its handling contract out for competitive bidding. This year, all Marriott accounts in this region of the country changed from Acme Food Service, based in Akron, to Gordon's. Because it moves a larger volume of products than ACME, Gordon's was able to accept a lower fee for each delivery it makes.

All Marriott accounts in the Cleveland area receive fresh produce through A. LoPresti & Sons of Cleveland. No specific price agreements are made for produce, because produce prices can shift from day to day. LoPresti would not be willing to guarantee a fixed price, and likewise, Marriott would not commit to buying a specified volume of any produce item. Instead, LoPresti agrees to sell the Marriott accounts produce at a fraction above fair market value. In return, Marriott accounts in the Cleveland area buy all of their produce from LoPresti.

LoPresti buys through two means: a brokerage firm, the C.H. Robinson Company; and smaller commission houses based in the Northern Ohio Food Terminal. In the former and more common case, Robinson usually buys from commission houses in California or Florida--only rarely from an individual farmer. LoPresti does have an expressed interest in buying Ohio-grown produce, and will market it when available and profit can be made. However, when an Ohio product is available, LoPresti also buys the same product from outside the state. During September, for instance, unless Ohio tomatoes are specifically requested, LoPresti is as likely to sell its customers tomatoes from California, Florida, or Mexico.<sup>5</sup> Table 3 lists some of the products LoPresti provides, and indicates whether the principle origin for each is in or outside of Ohio. Items marked with an asterisk are products LoPresti purchases from in-state sources when they are available (typically during summer and fall growing seasons). Items in brackets are purchased by

Finally, CDS buys from two local suppliers, without contracting with them. Fresh fish is supplied by the Euclid Fish Company. CDS has an "agreement" to buy from Euclid Fish, but not a contract, as it does with LoPresti. Case Farms supplies CDS with poultry products, including fresh free-range Amish chicken.<sup>7</sup>

## FACTORS IN FOOD PURCHASING

A host of criteria determine the choices CDS makes about its food supply. These factors, to the best of our knowledge, are described below.

### Agricultural Production.

Factor 1: Predictability of Supply. A food service must be assured that it will receive the products it orders.

Factor 2: Quality of Supply. The quality of the food it purchases and the meals it prepares is of utmost importance to CDS.

Factor 3: Year-round Supply. A food service uses all food products, including fresh produce, all year long.

### Food Marketing.

Factor 4: Cost of Products. In order to be cost-effective, CDS strives to spend as little as possible without sacrificing the quality of the products it purchases.

Factor 5: Standardized Packaging Requirements. A food service is accustomed to receiving goods packaged according to industry standards.

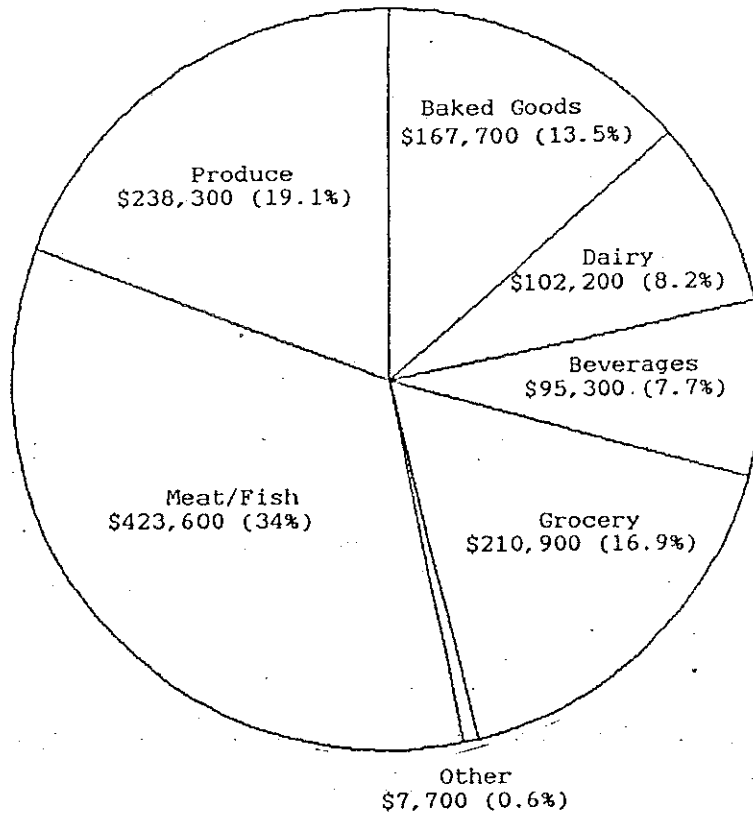
Factor 6: Regularity, Dependability, and Flexibility of Delivery Schedules. In order to trim its own labor costs and respond to unexpected food needs, a food service must be able to count on the timeliness of delivery.

Factor 7: Standardized Billing Procedures. A food service would be reluctant to accept unorthodox invoices or pay for the product immediately upon delivery.

### In-House Processing.

Figure 5.

CDS Food Expenditures, by Category  
Jan.-May & Sept.-Dec., 1987

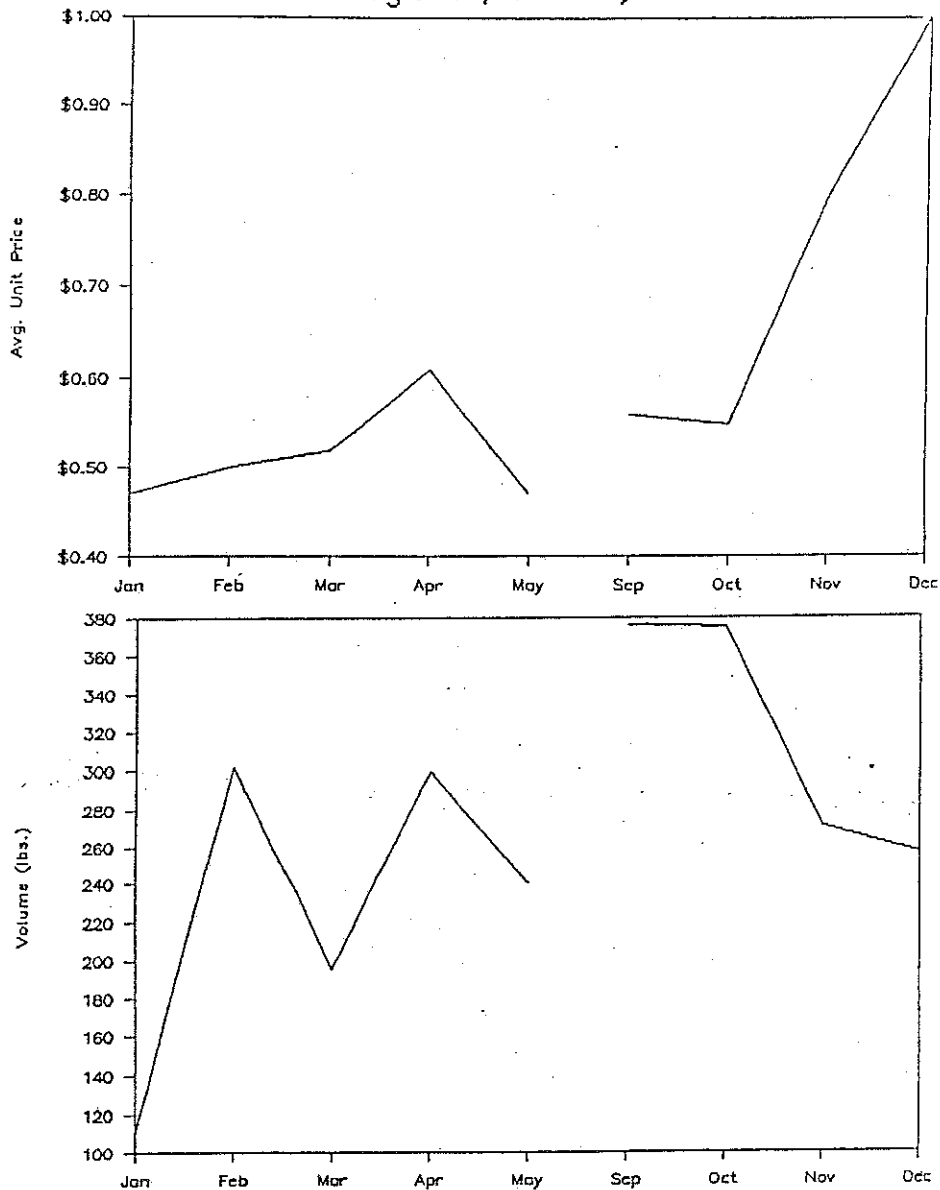


"Beverage" includes juices and soft drinks. "Dairy" includes liquid milk, cheese and processed cheese (e.g., cottage cheese and cream cheese). "Meat/Fish" includes fresh and frozen meats of all varieties. "Grocery" includes condiments, frozen entrees, breakfast cereals, and canned and frozen produce. "Other" includes food preparations like soup base.

These divisions are interesting, in part, because they suggest areas of opportunity for local purchasing. Of the processed foods, most dairy products, meat, baked goods, and some fish (together, accounting for 55.7% of the budget) are available in Lorain County or the surrounding region. As stated earlier CDS buys an unusually high proportion of fresh produce (19.1% of budget). Fruits and vegetables provide some of the best opportunities for direct purchase from farmers, because they require less handling and processing between farm and kitchen.

Each month, there are noticeable variations within these categories. Figure 6 graphs these changes over time for "grocery," "meat/fish," and "produce."

Figure 7.  
CDS Boxed Leaf Lettuce Purchases by Unit Price and Volume,  
Jan. - May & Sept. - Dec., 1987



When price was low during September and October, the volume of CDS purchases was high; in contrast, when price was high in November and December, purchases were low. From January through May, when prices were moderate and fluctuating, the volume of purchases were also moderate and fluctuating. Here, and in other instances, CDS managers demonstrate a high level of expertise in responding to price and other variables, like quality and availability.

While the volume of CDS purchases for some items vary, some purchases remain relatively constant. This is particularly true of processed items, baked goods, and dairy products. Also, CDS purchases of whole fresh

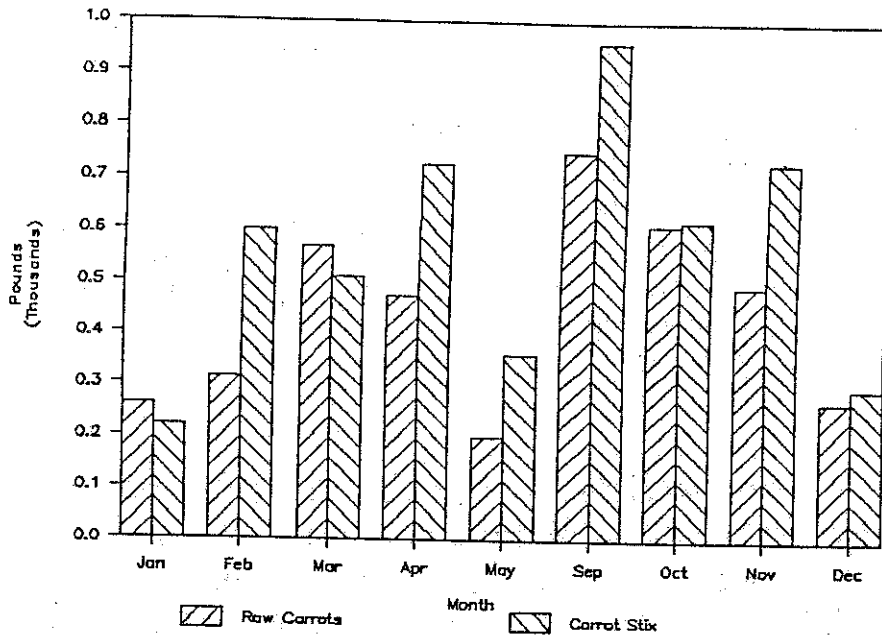
Purchases of apples remain relatively constant; discounting for the beginning and ending of the semester schedule, banana purchases do also. This raises the issue of seasonality. In November, when local apples are plentiful, CDS was paying its lowest price during the year--\$0.11/apple. In April, when local apples are not readily available, the highest price--\$0.16/apple--was paid. Conversely, exotic fruits (i.e., those that cannot be grown in Ohio) like oranges were cheapest during April--\$0.08/orange--and most expensive during November--\$0.14/orange. (It should be noted that CDS bought fewer oranges during November.) Considering this, it might be cost-effective to increase purchases of local fruits when in season, and during the cooler months buy more of the exotics like oranges and other citrus. This would represent a move toward "seasonal buying."

It is, in some ways, misleading to speak of apples, beef, even flour, in generic terms. There are different varieties of apples, different cuts of beef, different types of flour. CDS buys Iceberg, romaine and leaf lettuce, all in different volumes for different prices at different times of the year. Although leaf and romaine lettuce are grown commercially in Lorain County, Iceberg is not. CDS buys Kellogg's cereals, and Heinz Ketchup. While Heinz manufactures ketchup in Ohio, Kellogg is out-of-state. A change in variety or brand could make it possible to buy more local and regional goods. This is commonly called "import substitution."

With 16.9% of the food budget paying for grocery items, the CDS--like all food service operations--buys a large variety of processed and pre-prepared items, ranging from ground basil to frozen stuffed flounder. Highly processed items, like frozen entrees, are purchased for a number of reasons. They are, first of all, convenient. Second, preparing large quantities of them from scratch would require considerable skill. Third, and perhaps most importantly, they tend to be cheaper when the labor costs of in-house preparation are taken into account. Table 4 provides a sampling of these products, along with the corresponding principal ingredient for each.

Figure 10.

CDS Raw Carrot & Carrot Stix Purchases  
Jan.-May & Sept.-Dec., 1987



The volume of Carrot Stix purchases typically exceeds that of fresh carrots, although Carrot Stix are considerably more expensive. During 1987 the price for Stix ranged between \$0.97 and \$1.13 per pound, while fresh carrots ranged from \$0.11 to \$0.34 per pound. Fluctuations in the prices for both products were similar, with highs coming in May and lows in November. It may be that in a case such as this it would be possible to buy whole carrots and process them on-site. Local labor would benefit, as would local farmers, if some carrots were bought locally.

In sum, CDS is an extremely intricate operation. Its complexity makes it both difficult and fascinating to study. Although we do not presume to understand its workings half as well as CDS management, we do think opportunities exist to increase purchases of locally- and regionally-produced foods. The next chapter discusses the reasons why we might want to take these steps.

Reason 3: Economic Security. Although we don't often think of it, our food distribution system, with its long transportation lines, is vulnerable to unexpected or unplanned events. Possible disturbances include strikes, fuel shortages, and technical failure. Even a relatively minor breakdown can wreak havoc, as did a truckers' strike in 1979 when Florida melon growers lost \$1 million.<sup>5</sup> A vibrant local market for locally produced food commodities, existing alongside the conventional marketing system, is an insurance policy against disruptions of this sort.<sup>6</sup>

Reason 4: Direct Purchasing. Buying direct from a producer, whether it be a farmer or manufacturer, is almost always cheaper. A portion of the fees normally paid to middlemen can be captured by the producer, while supplying the product at a low price. Although one need not buy direct in order to buy local -- regular market channels can handle local products -- buying locally does tend to create more opportunities for direct buying. For the homeowner, this can mean shopping at a farmer's market or roadside stand. For wholesale food buyers, this can mean establishing contractual arrangements with a farmers' cooperative.

Reason 5: Supports Local/Regional Farmers. Although we are told the "farm crisis" is over, all is not well in the Ohio farm sector. The number of farmers continues to decline, with fewer than 90,000 farms in Ohio today as compared to over 200,000 in 1950.<sup>7</sup> (For more detail, see Appendix C.) 1985 Ohio farm debt was estimated at \$4.9 billion, and many small rural banks struggle to remain open.<sup>8</sup> When consumers purchase locally produced farm commodities, particularly if buying direct, they help maintain the solvency of local farmers.

Reason 6: Multiplier Effect. When a consumer spends a dollar on a locally produced commodity, it benefits more than the specific seller. That dollar stays in the local economy and generates additional business, according to what economists call the "multiplier effect." Sales and employment multipliers have been calculated for Ohio's agricultural sector. A job created in farm production creates between 1.85 and 4.26 additional jobs in the Ohio economy. A dollar spent on Ohio farm products generates between \$1.94 and \$3.28 more business.<sup>9</sup> (In each case, the actual impact lies somewhere between the low and high figures.) In short, money spent on local food items strengthens the local community. Dollars spent on imported food generates only a fraction of this wealth for the local economy. For a more detailed description of Ohio agricultural multipliers, see Appendix D.

production, packaging, processing and distribution.<sup>13</sup> The fuel demands of our food distribution system account for a large portion of this energy budget. For every \$2 of energy we use to produce food, we spend an additional dollar to move it around.<sup>14</sup> In 1981, this translated into \$5.5 billion worth of fuel, which in turn meant the expulsion of over four million tons of pollutants into the air.<sup>15</sup>

When we buy local farm goods, transportation lines contract. As a result, we make more efficient use of a precious natural resource. We reduce our dependence on oil. We cut down on air pollution.

Reason 10: Waste Reduction. Players in the food marketing and distribution system work hard at reducing waste and spoilage. Still, it seems unavoidable, with produce losses in 1982 estimated at \$1.03 to \$2.03 billion.<sup>16</sup> Although local food marketing can not reduce waste to zero, it can be more efficient. There are fewer channels and people to handle--and mishandle--the product. With fresh products, shorter delivery times between farm and table also diminish the chance for spoilage.

## COMMUNITY

Reason 11: Food Origin. Under the conventional marketing system, most consumers have no idea how their food was grown or how it has happened to arrive in their hands. Without knowing how the system works, consumers have no way to judge how they would like best to participate in it. When we buy local, food production and marketing systems become less mysterious, allowing us to be more active and responsible consumers.

Reason 12: People and Land. Purchasing local food provides a way to recognize the bonds that bring us together in vibrant, healthy communities. When asked, "Why buy local?" most people will include in their justification something as simple as: "It's nice to help each other out" or "I like to give back some of what I receive." For some, this sense of connectedness extends beyond the human community to include the land resource itself. However intangible these connections may be, people do find them satisfying and meaningful.

Asset 5: State Support. The Office of the Governor, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and the Ohio State University Division of Agriculture all promote local market development for Ohio food products. These state agencies could provide valuable technical support. (See Appendix E.)

Current Food Purchasing Patterns. (See Chapter II.)

Asset 6: Large Purchaser. With an annual food budget in the neighborhood of \$1.4 million, CDS could make a significant impact on the local economy with only a modest change toward local purchasing. Using the economic multipliers for direct purchase of farm products, a one percent change in CDS purchasing would generate between \$26,700 and \$45,300 of additional business in the local economy. A five percent change would generate between \$128,100 and \$216,600.

Asset 7: Precedent for Local Buying. CDS already buys a number of its food items locally or in-state, including milk, bread, and chicken.

Asset 8: Precedent for Value-Based Purchasing Decisions. CDS boasts the premier vegetarian meal plan in the nation. CDS uses no MSG for health reasons, and purchases no seedless white grapes or Campbell's products because of the College's support of organized labor's efforts.

Asset 9: Year-Round Purchasing.

Asset 10: CDS Relative Control Over Produce Purchases.

Asset 11: Large Produce Purchases. Produce provides the best opportunities for direct purchasing arrangements, because it requires the least amount of handling and processing before reaching the consumer.

Asset 12: Current Produce Purveyor Buys Locally/Regionally.

Current In-House Processing Practices.

Asset 13: Advance Menu Planning. Because its menus are planned six months in advance, CDS can anticipate its food needs long before products are actually delivered. This would allow sufficient time for farmers to plan production schedules to meet some of CDS's food needs, should CDS choose to contract with local/regional farmers.

Asset 26: Oberlin's Tradition of Innovation.

Asset 27: Extracurricular. Oberlin recognizes the value of educational opportunities that exist outside of the classroom.

Asset 28: Food Service. Many people in the Oberlin College community regard the kitchens and dining halls as educational resources.

## STRATEGIES.

In implementing a program of increased local buying, some of the changes that could be made would be relatively easy, while others might be quite difficult, and some wholly impractical. Below, we catalogue some of the possibilities that have occurred to us, offering them as suggestions of what might be done, and as an invitation to others to speculate further. For each strategy, we discuss why we think it is attractive, and how it might be accomplished. In most cases, implementation would involve the cooperation of people on and off the Oberlin campus. We have placed an asterisk by those strategies which strike us as easy and highly visible changes, suggesting that they may be good starting points for any program of local food purchasing. Table 5, at the end of this chapter, summarizes these strategies and the related means of implementation.

### Prepare To Handle Local Items.

There are ways to design a food service operation that will make it easier to make use of locally available items, particularly fresh and seasonal items.

Strategy 1: Further Expand Purchases of Fresh Produce. As previously discussed, fresh produce provides some of the best opportunities for local market connections, because it is available and requires little handling between farm and kitchen. Any expansion of produce purchases creates new opportunities for local purchases.

Strategy 2: Further Expand In-House Processing. CDS's commitment to in-house processing is remarkable, and the new North Campus Dining Facility may create some opportunities here. New labor-saving equipment may, at once, make it more cost-effective to increase in-house processing and free up some labor to do additional tasks. Any capital expansion involves the cooperation of Oberlin College and the Marriott Corporation.

based companies. Because these are grocery items, Marriott/Chicago negotiates directly with the manufacturer for most of these items. We are not suggesting that all of Marriott buy from Ohio food processors, but perhaps it would be possible for CDS to make more purchases of Ohio processed foods. We list below a short list of processed foods and an Ohio manufacturer for each. Some of these companies are national and international corporations that also have plants outside of Ohio. Others are much smaller, producing for the local and regional market only. A more thorough list of Ohio food processors can be found in Appendix A.

\*Strategy 7: Sauerkraut: Stokely U.S.A. (Huron County).

\*Strategy 8: Apple Juice: Tastee Apple, Inc. (Tuscarawas County).

Strategy 9: Meats: Canal Fulton Provision (Stark County);  
Superior Brands Meats, Inc. (Stark County).

\*Strategy 10: Snack Foods: Frito-Lay, Inc. (Butler County).

Strategy 11: Potato Chips: Thomasson Potato Chips (Lorain County).

#### Direct Local Purchase Arrangements.

Fresh produce offers some of the brightest possibilities here, because it is available from local farmers who are growing for local markets, and CDS has a high degree of control over its produce purchases. But local harvest times do not mesh well with the academic calendar. Some produce items, like raspberries, green peas, and bib lettuce are only available in June. Others, however, are available in September and October--squash, tomatoes, and apples to name only three. (For further information, return to Table 2.) Before buying these and other produce items locally, CDS would first need to be assured that it could obtain them through conventional channels during other times of the year. Ways to extend the seasonal availability of local produce will be discussed later.

It would be difficult for CDS to pursue an aggressive program of direct local purchasing with only current staffing levels. Students and food marketing professionals could assist CDS. Students could help on a volunteer basis, for credit, or as a student job. First, if students were asked, many would simply volunteer information about local and regional food sources; with encouragement, they might even investigate their proposals. A more complex arrangement would involve a partnership between CDS and OSCA, with OSCA members doing most of the legwork. This relationship would take advantage of each institution's strength: OSCA's relatively "free" labor and CDS's buying power. Third, the College

products, although in some cases more expensive, are generally of better quality than imported vegetables.

Strategy 18: Locally Stored Produce. Lorain County does have some refrigerated storage capacity, used primarily for apples, table grapes and potatoes. Through direct purchase arrangements, CDS could buy these products, and even contract for others to be stored on its behalf. Nutritional loss during storage might rule out some of these items, during their harvest times in distant growing areas. There are times of the year when all apples and potatoes, for instance, are sold out of storage. In these cases, a local apple or potato stored locally would be as suitable as one grown in Washington State or Idaho.

Strategy 19: In-House Storage. CDS could store some items beyond their normal seasonal availability.

Strategy 20: Preservation. CDS might be able to replace some of its frozen and canned fruit and vegetable purchases with local produce preserved locally. To accomplish this, CDS would need to buy local produce in bulk when available and freeze it in-house, or contract with a local/regional cannery to do the same. In addition to cost and convenience factors, storage capacity and health standards would need to be considered.

#### Import Substitution of Fresh Produce.

Import substitution involves replacing current purchases of imported products with equivalent local/regional ones. Buying Ohio processed foods is one example. Opportunities exist with fresh produce as well, and in some cases these items would be available through normal market channels. Because changes of this kind might come as a surprise to students, an explanation would be necessary. The FSAB or CRD could help with this.

Strategy 21:\* Different Varieties of the Same Produce Type. As previously discussed, most produce items come in different varieties. Lettuce varieties, for instance, include romaine, leaf, and iceberg. In some cases, CDS buys varieties within a produce family that are not grown in Lorain County or the region. Iceberg is not available locally. If CDS bought less of these "exotic" varieties, it would be in a position to buy more local produce.

Strategy 22: Different Types of Produce. Some fruits--bananas, oranges, grapefruit--cannot be grown in northern Ohio, but many can--apples, peaches, grapes. If CDS were to buy fewer exotic fruits during local seasons, it could supply more of its needs with local fruit.

Strategy 25: Summer. Although Oberlin College is not in session during the summer, CDS operates on a limited schedule, serving summer conference participants. As discussed previously, many local seasonal items are only available during these months, which creates opportunities for local purchase that do not exist during the academic calendar year.

Strategy 26: Contract Agreement. In their periodic contract negotiations, the Marriott Corporation and Oberlin College could agree that the goal of increasing the percentage of local purchases is a positive one. Further, an agreement could be reached that would direct CDS to buy locally/regionally when all other factors are equal. Ohio Governor Celeste made a similar request of state purchasing agents. Appendix E includes a copy of this administrative order.

#### Education.

We hope that the materials presented in this report serve as a means to help educate the larger Oberlin College Community. We also hope that our work encourages others at Oberlin to view our dining halls and the local agricultural community as an educational resource. The opportunities for further research and information sharing, classroom work and practical experience are virtually limitless.

\*Strategy 27: Video Showings. As a means to introduce the Oberlin College community to the idea of purchasing local food items, the video developed as part of this research effort could be shown on campus: in classes, dormitories, dining halls, and co-ops.

\*Strategy 28: Identify Local/Regional Purchases. When CDS buys a local or regional food product, it could be identified with a map or diagram at the serving line. This simple step would alert students to the issue of local buying and to CDS's community involvement.

\*Strategy 29: Provide Written Information at Dining Halls. Many of the issues related to local buying, and agriculture in general, are not easily understood. Short essays on specific aspects of the production and distribution systems would be interesting reading at meal-time. This would also provide a means for CDS to explain why it is purchasing some items locally. Students, perhaps those active in FSAB or CRD, could help prepare these materials.

\*Strategy 30: All-Ohio Special Meals. As a way to feature Ohio food products, and foster discussion on the issue of local economies, the FSAB

*5. Notify & Encourage Suppliers	5. Suppliers
*6. Concentrate Purchases when Local	6. Suppliers
*7. Buy Ohio Processed	7. Marriott/Chicago
8. "	8. "
9. "	9. "
10. "	10. "
11. "	11. "
*12. Direct Purchase Arrangements	12. }
13. "	13. } Students; OSCA;
14. "	14. } It's Fresher from Ohio
15. "	15. } (IFFO); Oberlin College
16. "	16. }
17. Buy Greenhouse Vegetables	17. Suppliers
18. Local Stored Produce	18. Local Farmers
19. In-House Storage	19. Oberlin College
20. Preservation	20. Oberlin College
*21. Import Substitution, Varieties	
22. Import Substitution, Types	
23. Expand Market in Lorain Co.	23. Local Institutional Food Buyers; IFFO; local funders
24. Expand in Marriott System	24. Marriott System; IFFO
25. Summer Purchasing	
26. Contract Agreement	26. Oberlin College
*27. Video Showings	27. Student Researchers
*28. Identify Local Purchases	
*29. Written Materials	28. Food Service Advisory Board (FSAB); Coalition for a Resourceful Oberlin (CRO)
*30. All-Ohio Special Meal	30. FSAB; State Officials
*31. Public Information	31. Office of Communications
32. Study Economic Effects	32. Faculty; Students
33. Study Nutritional/Health Effects	33. Faculty; Students
34. Study Local Agriculture	34. Faculty; Students; Farmers; County Extension Agents
35. Expand Study to other Resources	35. Faculty; Students; Buildings & Grounds

Jeff & Becky Wuthrick  
River's Bend Farm  
24696 Hartley Road  
Alliance, OH 44601  
821-4095  
Berries, Pork, Herbs

Mark Stump  
Maple Shade Sugar House  
742 W. Mansfield Street  
New Washington, OH 44854  
418/492-2542  
Maple Syrup

**Bill & Rick Erickson**  
**Fowler's Mill**  
**12500 Fowler's Mill Road**  
**Chardon, OH 44024**  
**286-2024**  
**Stoneground Flours & Meals**

Deborah Indoe  
Richman Farms  
Medina, OH  
948-2604  
Maple Syrup

**Adele Straub**  
**Grafton, OH**  
**926-3316**  
**Produce**

Ted & Molly Bartlett  
Silvercreek Farms  
562-4381  
Berries, Eggs, Free-Range Hens

Dennis Orre  
Orre's Berry Farm  
Geauga County  
834-1575  
Berries

Mr. Stoll  
Urbana Farms  
Homeworth, OH  
821-8013  
Produce

Sam Doss  
Sam's Farm  
Columbia County  
457-2404  
Corn, Raspberries, Apples, Plums

Ralph Dull  
Medina County  
667-2718  
Peppers

**Apple Hill Farms**  
**8690 RD #2 Vermillion Road**  
**Amherst, OH 44001**  
**965-7077**  
**Apples & Strawberries**

**Columbia Berry Farm**  
**19060 West River Road**  
**Columbia Station, OH 44028**  
**236-8416**  
**Berries**

**Cider Mill Farm**  
**52547 Darrow Road**  
**Vermillion, OH 44089**  
**967-2599**  
**Apples, Blackberries, Grapes**

**Fenik's Farm of Sweet Corn**  
**6413 Lake Avenue**  
**Elyria, OH 44035**  
**324-2507**  
**Corn**

**Fruitful Farm**  
**4820 Center Road**

**Tom Jefferies**  
24564 Squire Road  
Columbia Station, OH  
236-5994  
Honey

**Fred Eppley**  
10266 Murry Ridge South  
Elyria, OH  
322-8096  
Potatoes

**Richard Gerhart**  
Western Reserve Growers  
Center Ridge Road  
North Ridgeville, OH  
327-8056  
Greenhouse Tomatoes &  
Cucumbers

**Leroy Smith**  
18853 West Road  
Wellington, OH  
647-4435  
Eggs

**Gil Havry**  
Avon-Belden Road  
Grafton, OH  
Feed Lot, Cattle

**Jack Rollins**  
46785 State Rte. 162 W.  
Huntington, OH  
647-2731  
Hogs & Pigs

**Howard Johnson**  
28961 St. Rt. 58  
N. Sullivan, OH  
647-4485  
Sheep & Lamb

**Ken De Chant**  
2705 Huron-Avery Road  
Huron, OH 44839  
419/433-2221  
Rhubarb & Vegetables

**Dan Brentlinger**  
Hydroponic Produce Co.  
P.O. Box 310  
Medina, OH 44258  
725-5656  
Cucumbers, Lettuce, Tomatoes,  
Gourmet Vegetables

**Ken & Jeff Zellers**  
K. W. Zellers & Son Inc.  
13494 Duquette Ave., NE  
Hartsville, OH 44632  
877-9371  
Beets, Radishes, Lettuce, Greens

**Chase Heyman**  
Enterprise Hill Farm  
5264 Huber Road  
Norwalk, OH 44857  
419/668-0242  
Cabbage & Tomatoes

**Neill Welch**  
Welch Fruit Farm, Inc.  
12301 Mason Rd.  
Vermillion, OH 44089  
965-5002  
Apples, Cherries, Nectarines,  
Peaches, Pears, Plums, Pork,  
Beef

**Harold Baumann**  
R. Rt. #2  
Amherst, OH 44001  
965-7652  
Apples, Other Fruits

BAKED GOODS

Nickels Bakery of Ohio, Inc.  
775 W. North St.  
Lima, OH 45801  
419/224-7080  
Buns

Tony's Bakery Inc.  
721 White Road  
Fremont, OH 43420  
419/332-6418  
Bread, Buns & Hard Rolls

Athens Pastries & Frozen Foods  
13600 Snow Road  
Brook Park, OH 44142  
676-8500  
Filo Dough, Walnut & Fruit Strudel,  
Pita Bread

Amster Bagel Bakery Co.  
13891 Cedar Road  
South Euclid, OH 44121  
321-2102  
Bagels

Archway Cookies, Inc.  
2041 Claremont Ave.  
Ashland, OH 44805  
419/289-0787

Continental Baking Co.  
178 Forge  
Akron, OH 44309  
376-6111  
Baked Goods, Bread

Gardner Pie Co.

36 Van Buren Ave  
Barberton, OH 44203  
745-1161  
Cakes, Pies

Isabella Bros., Inc.  
1370 W. 69th St.  
Cleveland, OH 44102  
961-1586  
Bread, Hard Rolls, Pizza

Consolidated Cone Co.  
15 McDonough St.  
Dayton, OH 45402  
513/223-0400  
Ice Cream Cones

Ellis Bakery, Inc.  
577 Grant St.  
Akron, OH 44311  
376-5012  
Pita Bread & Baklava

Schwebel Baking Co.  
965 East Midlothian Blvd.  
Youngstown, OH 44507  
783-2860  
Bread & Rolls

BUTTER

Dairy Farm Products Co.  
429 Westwood  
Orrville, OH 44667  
682-1060  
Butter, Milk, Cream, Ice Cream Mix

Land O' Lakes  
2001 Mogadore Road  
Kent, OH 44240  
678-1578

Stokely USA, Inc.  
71 N. West St.  
Norwalk, OH 44857  
419/668-2027  
Canned Sauerkraut

Vanderhorst Cannery, Inc.  
840 Oliver St.  
Saint Mary's, OH 45885  
419/394-5236  
Canned Tomatoes

Great Western Juice Co., Inc.  
16153 Libby Rd.  
Maple Heights, OH 44137  
475-5770  
Fruit Juices & Cocktail Mixes

M & B Fruit Juice Products Co.  
1651 Home Ave.  
Akron, OH 443110  
633-8401  
Beverage Concentrates

Ohio Pure Foods, Inc.  
681 W. Waterloo Rd.  
Akron, OH 44314  
753-2293  
Fruit Drink & Orange Juice

Smucker, J.M. Co.  
Strawberry Lane  
Orrville, OH 44667  
682-0015  
Preserves, Jellies, Ice Cream  
Toppings

Tastee Apple, Inc.  
60810 City Rd. 9  
Newcomerstown, OH 43832  
614/498-8316  
Apple Juice & Cider

United Canned Corp.  
12505 South Ave. Ext.  
North Lima, OH 44452  
549-9807  
Canned Mushrooms

#### CANNED SPECIALTIES

La Choy Food Products  
901 Stryker St.  
Archbold, OH 43502  
419/445-8015  
Chinese Food

Alfa Foods  
9000 Dutton  
Twinsburg, OH 44087  
425-7139  
Alfalfa & Bean Sprouts

Empress Food Products, Inc.  
10592 Taconic Terrace  
Cincinnati, OH 45215  
513/771-1441  
Chili Products

Stegner Food Products, Co.  
5 Chili Hill Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45238  
513/922-1125  
Canned Meats, Soups & Sauces

Worthmore Food Products Co.  
1021 Ludlow Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45223  
513/559-1473  
Food Processing, Soup & Chili,  
Spaghetti & Pizza Sauce

4999 Mead Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44127  
883-1845  
Sugars and Corn syrups

Crystal Mfg. Co.  
1828 Fulton Rd.  
Cleveland, OH 44113  
241-044  
Syrups

HCH Corp.  
799 Sharon Dr.  
Cleveland, OH 44145  
835-0263  
Fruit Syrups

**Ingredient Technology Corp.**  
**110 Liberty Ct.**  
**Elyria, OH 44035**  
**324-6060**  
**Food Seasonings & Soybean**  
**Products, Spices**

Phillips Syrup Corp.  
1311 Brookpark Rd.  
Cleveland, OH 44109  
661-4800  
Pancake Syrups, Shake & Beverage  
Bases, Chocolate Syrups & Fudges,  
Sundae Toppings

Hyre's Extracts Co.  
1769 Addison Rd.  
New Carlisle, OH 45344  
513/845-4103  
Vanilla Flavoring

#### FOOD PREPARATIONS

American Popcorn Co.

701 Monroe St.  
Van Wert, OH 45891  
419/238-2803  
Popcorn

H & K Products, Inc.  
10246 Road P  
Columbus Grove, OH 45830  
419/659-5110  
Tea, Concentrated Liquid

La Fronteriza Inc.  
27962 E. Broadway  
Moline, OH 43465  
419/838-5051  
Corn & Flour Tortillas, Plain &  
Flavored Tortilla Chips

La Tejanita Tortilleria  
2100 W. State St.  
Fremont, OH 43420  
419/332-2222  
Corn Tortillas

Pelton Popcorn Farms  
16793 County Line Rd.  
Bloomdale, OH 44817  
419/454-2811  
Popcorn

Wileswood, Inc.  
1401 Huron-Avery Rd.  
Huron, OH 44893  
419/433-3355  
Popcorn

Big Gus Onion Rings, Inc.  
4500 Turney Rd.  
Cleveland, OH 44105  
883-9045  
Onion Rings

Rold Gold Foods

1418 Warrensville Center Rd.  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44121  
291-1043  
Ice Cream

Harwill Ice Cream Co.  
6519 Carnegie Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44103  
Ice Cream

Royal Ice Cream Co.  
6519 Carnegie Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44103  
432-1144  
Ice Cream

#### MACARONI, SPAGHETTI & NOODLES

Campbell Soup Co.  
1900 Progress Way  
Sidney, OH 45365  
513/498-2191  
Japanese Noodles

Ideal Macaroni Co.  
26001 Richmond Rd.  
Bedford Heights, OH 44146  
292-7272  
Macaroni

Weiss Noodle Co.  
31313 Aurora Road  
Solon, OH 44139  
248-4550  
Dehydrated Soup Mixes, Egg Noodle  
Products

#### MEAT PACKERS

Canal Fulton Provision  
2014 Locust St.  
Canal Fulton, OH 44614  
854-3502  
Meat Packing; Hotel, Restaurant &  
Hospital Portion Control Cutting;  
Slaughterhouse

Dinner Bell Foods, Inc.  
W. High St.  
Defiance, OH 43512  
419/782-9015  
Sausage, Luncheon Meat & Smoked  
Meat Products

**Lauerhahs Custom Butchering**  
**17333 Avon-Belden Road**  
**Grafton, OH 44044**  
**926-3365**  
**Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb Meat**  
**Packaging and Slaughtering**

**Henrietta Packing**  
**Rd #2, Rt 113**  
**Amherst, OH 44001**  
**965-4891**  
**Beef, Swine**

**Steve Polansky Market**  
**6703 Dewey Road**  
**Amherst, OH 44001**  
**988-2617**  
**Beef, Sheep, Swine, Goats**

Superior Brand Meats, Inc.  
1888 Southway SE  
Massillon, OH 44648  
832-7491  
Beef, Pork, Luncheon Meats,  
Smoked Meats

Woeber Mustard Mfg. Co.  
561 E. Madison Ave.  
Springfield, OH 45503  
513/323-6281  
Horseradish & Mustard

#### POULTRY & EGG PROCESSING

Agri General, Inc.  
US Rte 20 E.  
Norwalk, OH 44857  
419/668-1673  
Processing of Farm Eggs

Ekleberry Poultry, Inc.  
820 Grove Ave.  
Bucyrus, OH 44620  
419/562-1953  
Poultry Processing

Poultry Processing, Inc.  
160 Holmes City Rd.  
Winesburg, OH 44690  
359-5302  
Iced & Pre-Packed Poultry

L & W Egg Prdcts., Inc.  
6075 C. R. 207  
Millersburg, OH 44654  
674-1550  
Liquid, Frozen & Dried Eggs

Sunny Morn Eggs, Inc.  
Rte 2, Box 103  
Dundee, OH 44624  
893-2613  
Egg Processing

#### SAUSAGE & MEAT PRODUCTS

Equity Group/Ohio Div.  
2208 Grant Rd.  
N. Baltimore, OH 45872  
419/257-2341  
Hamburgers

Prepared Foods of Sandusky  
1034 Hancock St.  
Sandusky, OH 44870  
419/627-9738  
Meat Products: Bacon & Roasts

Swift-Eckrich, Inc.  
17739 St. Rte 231  
Nevada, OH 44849  
614/482-2451  
Boiled Hams

Swift-Eckrich, Inc.  
2500 Industrial Dr.  
Freemont, OH 43420  
419/332-1541  
Packaged Cold Meats

Couch's Country Style Sausage  
4750 Osborn Rd.  
Cleveland, OH 44128  
587-2333  
Sausage

Diamond K Meats, Inc.  
5015 Fleet Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44105  
271-6363  
Processed Meats & Sausages

R&K Sausage Co., Inc.  
6316 Lansing Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44105  
341-1251  
Sausage, Pork & Beef

Betty Kanamen  
Marketing Coordinator  
Ohio Ecological Food and  
Farm Association  
3185 Township Road 179  
Bellefontaine, OH 43311

This information was drawn from several sources including:

- o "It's Fresher From Ohio" Producer's Lists
- o Buy the Best: Buy Ohio, a directory developed by the State's Buy Ohio Office
- o The Ohio Guide to Heartland Cuisine, forthcoming from the State Department of Agriculture
- o Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Membership Directory
- o Conversations with Local Farmers and the Lorain County Agricultural Extension Specialists.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of all farmers and food processors in Lorain and surrounding counties, let alone Ohio. It should, however, serve as a good starting point for individuals interested in exploring the possibility of buying local/regional farm commodities and processed foods.

- |                          |                         |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. potatoes              | 17. orange juice        | 33. tomatoes, processed |
| 2. peppers               | 18. apple cider         | 34. cheese              |
| 3. cucumbers             | 19. chicken, fresh      | 35. eggs                |
| 4. lettuce               | 20. beef, fresh         | 36. butter              |
| 5. cabbage               | 21. green beans, frozen | 37. flour, WW soft      |
| 6. celery                | 22. green beans, canned | 38. flour, WW hard      |
| 7. zucchini              | 23. carrots, fresh      | 39. flour, other        |
| 8. onions                | 24. carrots, canned     | 40. baked goods         |
| 9. tomatoes, fresh       | 25. broccoli, fresh     |                         |
| 10. bananas              | 26. broccoli, frozen    |                         |
| 11. grapes               | 27. sweet corn, fresh   |                         |
| 12. oranges              | 28. sweet corn, frozen  |                         |
| 13. apples               | 29. sweet corn, canned  |                         |
| 14. strawberries, fresh  | 30. cantelope           |                         |
| 15. strawberries, frozen | 31. melons, other       |                         |
| 16. blueberries          | 32. potatoes, prepared  |                         |

This list of items has several cantaloupe characteristics:

- o all the major food groups are represented
- o some of these foods are grown locally
- o some are exotic (i.e., they cannot be grown locally)
- o some are fresh
- o some are processed
- o some items on the list are single products
- o some represent a variety of products (e.g., baked goods).

In studying these items we were interested in learning how purchases of specific items change over time, particularly as these changes relate to fluctuations in unit price, volume purchased, and expenditure. We were also curious about how the purchases of the same food, but in different forms (fresh, frozen, canned), compare.

Again, the data collection process was rather straightforward. We went through the invoices and collected the following information for each purchase of each item listed above:

- o month of purchase
- o quantity of purchase
- o unit price of item
- o amount spent on purchase.

In those cases where the units of purchase were not standardized, we only noted the month and cost of purchase. (Spanish, White, and Yellow Onions

## APPENDIX C

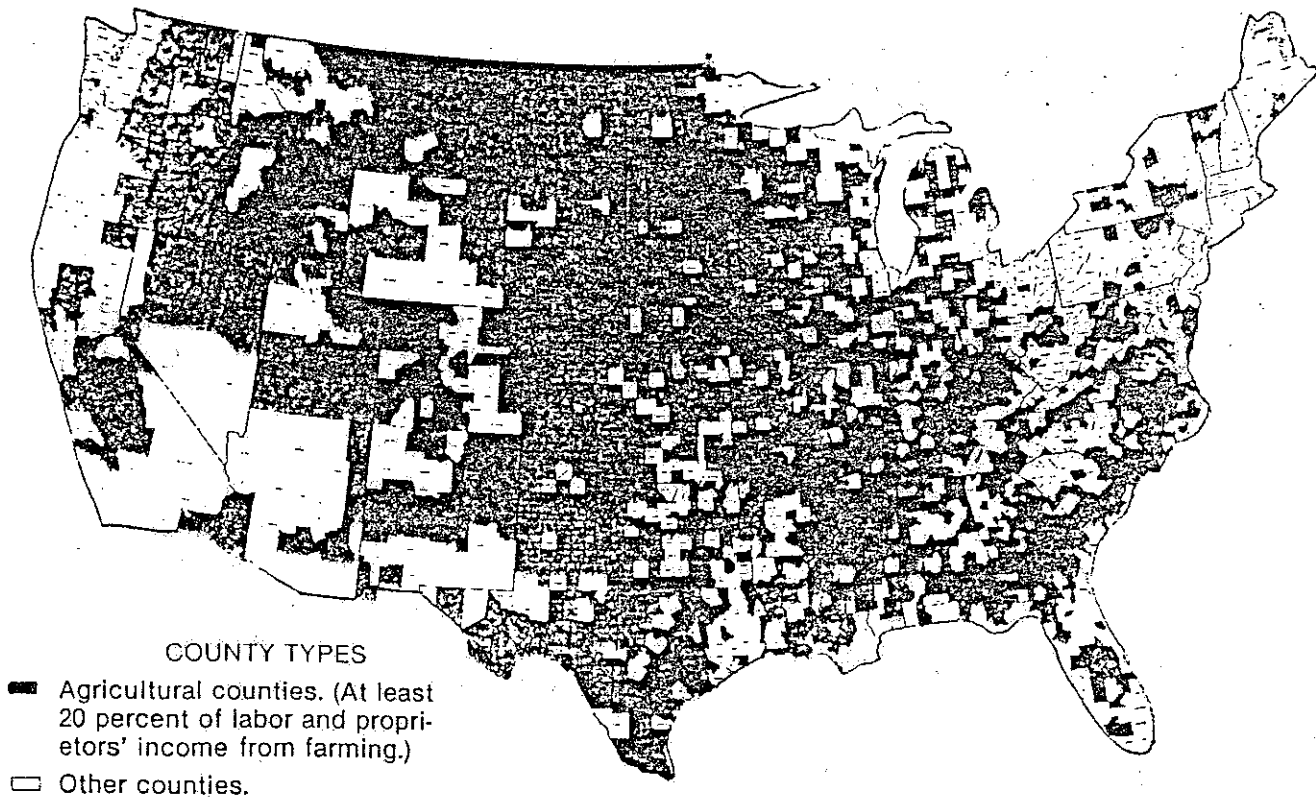
### STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURE: LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO, U.S.

The characteristics of Lorain County farmers, and their farms, are changing, as they are in Ohio and the U.S. generally. Again, Ted Peak and Corwin Burrer are in many ways representative.

**Farm Population.** Most Americans are aware that the U.S. has been experiencing a long-term migration of its rural population to urban areas. Many young Americans living in suburban neighborhoods today have grandparents or great-grandparents who were farmers. Still, few of us know of this migration's proportion. Figures 11 and 12 illustrate this shift on a national basis.

Figure 11.1

Agricultural Counties, 1950



and the urban population.<sup>4</sup> The average age for Lorain County farmers is 50.7 years.<sup>5</sup>

Number of Farms/Land in Farms. As farm population has declined, the number of farms and total land in farms has dropped as well. Figures 13 through 16 graph these changes over time for Lorain County and Ohio.

Figure 13.6

Number of Ohio Farms, 1920-1986

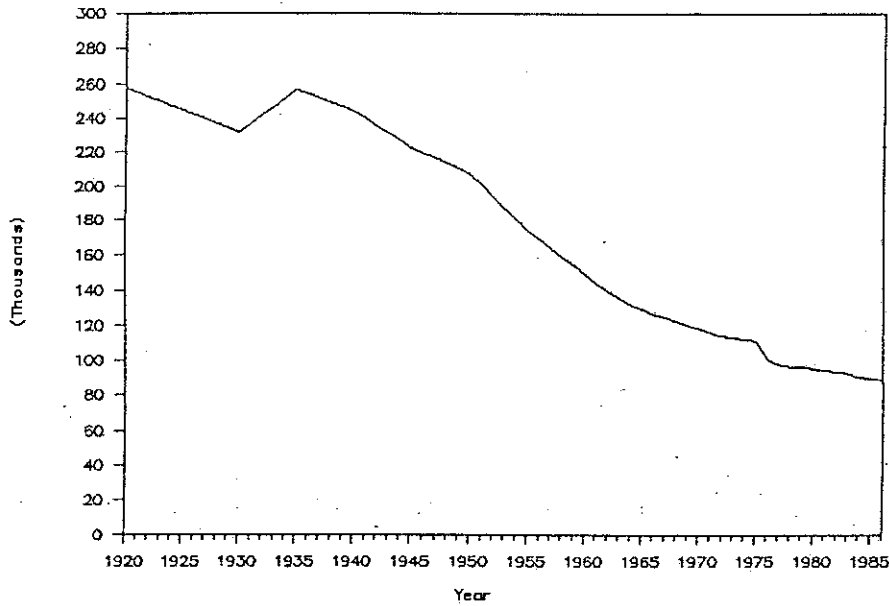
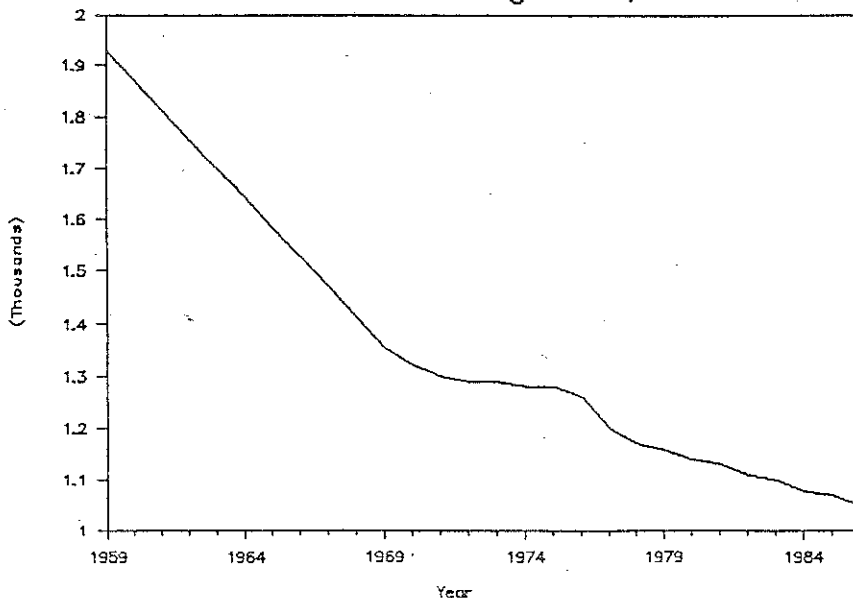


Figure 14.7

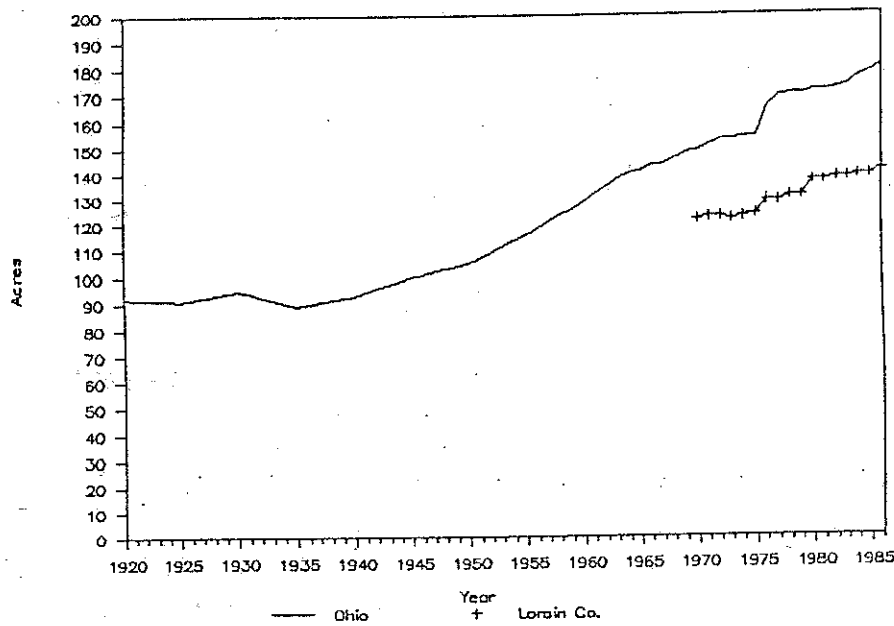
Number of Lorain County Farms, 1959-1986



Size of Farms. While farm population, farm numbers and the total land in farms have been declining steadily, the average size of farms has been rising. We can see this in the growth of both Peak's greenhouse facility and the scale of Burrer's grain operation. Figure 17 graphs this climb in farm size for both Ohio and Lorain County.

Figure 17.10

Average Size of Farms, Ohio and Lorain County, 1920-1986



Productivity. As the average size of farms has increased, the average productivity of each farm has consequently risen. Only ten years ago, the average Lorain County dairy had about 40 milk cows, but today, dairies in the County average 74 milkers.<sup>11</sup> The average yield per acre for most major agricultural commodities has also increased, as illustrated for corn and soybeans below.

## APPENDIX D

### AGRICULTURE'S LINKAGES TO OHIO'S GENERAL ECONOMY: THE AGRICULTURAL MULTIPLIERS\*

All of the agricultural sectors purchase equipment and supplies from other economic sectors. As output expands in an agricultural sector, this requires additional purchases from many non-agricultural sectors. The direct linkages between farming and fertilizer sales, agricultural chemical sales, and farm machinery sales are obvious. Less obvious but equally important are the indirect linkages to basic sectors such as steel, rubber, communications, and services. Additional farm machinery indirectly requires greater outputs from steel, rubber, and other sectors. Expansion in these basic sectors also requires additional coal, industrial machinery, and many other inputs. Although this illustration is brief and very incomplete, it illustrates that changes in the agricultural sector eventually ripple out to nearly all other sectors in the general economy.

Regional economic models can be used to trace these linkages between sectors. An input-output model is a type of regional economic model that provides considerable detail in describing these linkages. Using data on the sales and purchases of each sector, an input-output model describes the interdependence between sectors. Based on this data, employment and sales multipliers can be developed for each sector.

An Ohio input-output model was developed in order to trace the linkages of agriculture to Ohio's economy. Table 6 shows the employment and sales multipliers for each industry. The type I multiplier shows the amount of total employment generated within Ohio as a result of the purchases from other support industries. For example, for each 100 new jobs on farms 85 jobs are required to produce the fertilizer, feeds, chemicals, and other farm inputs. For food processing, the type I multiplier is 3.12, meaning that 3.12 jobs are created in the rest of the economy for each additional job in food processing. Since the food processing multiplier measures all of the backward linkages, it includes the changes in farm production and input supplies resulting from an expansion in food processing. But further it indicates changes in all other basic sectors of the economy. The type I multiplier states the direct and indirect impacts of a sector.

The type II employment multiplier for farms is 4.26 (or 2.3 times the type I multiplier of 1.84). The type II multiplier is always higher than type I because it reflects the impact of the additional consumer spending due to higher local incomes. Type I multipliers reflect the impact of increased

Table 6 (Contd).

Sector	Sales Multiplier		Employment Multiplier	
	Type I	Type II	Type I	Type II
III. Food Processing				
Meat Packing	1.89	2.61	2.98	6.07
Processed Dairy Products	2.27	3.39	4.32	9.68
Canned and Frozen Foods	1.96	3.14	2.58	5.76
Beverages	2.13	3.59	3.56	9.10
Other Food Products	1.81	3.07	2.53	6.72
Total	1.98	3.12	3.12	7.37
IV. Fiber Processing Plants				
Leather	1.60	2.83	1.36	2.52
Textile	1.54	2.74	1.46	2.93
Total	1.57	2.78	1.39	2.76
V. Lumber and Wood Products				
Wood Products	1.75	3.09	1.65	3.54
Furniture	1.94	3.59	1.70	3.75
Total			1.67	3.64
VI. Paper and Paper Products				
Total	2.00	3.53	2.21	5.75
VII. Food Distribution				
Wholesale/Retail Food Stores	1.35	3.04	1.19	2.54
Eating Establishments	1.56	3.15	1.25	2.36
Total	1.35	3.08	1.23	2.43
All Agricultural Sectors	1.35	2.01	1.32	2.28

\* Excerpted from Governor's Commission on Agriculture Technical Report on Agriculture's Contribution to Ohio's Economy, by George Morse, et. al. (Columbus, OH: OSU Division of Agriculture, 1984), pp 4-6 & 19-20.

Summit, Medina, and Lorain. Third, it works more directly to establish specific local market connections for local farmers. To date, they have focused on fresh products for up-scale markets, like specialty grocery stores and fine restaurants. They are, however, interested in expanding into other areas of food retailing and wholesaling. The project has one full-time staff person, Marisa Warrix, whose immediate supervisors are Barbara Drake and Randall James, both Extension Agents (in Home Economics and Agriculture, respectively) in the Geauga County Office (14269 Claridon-Troy Road, P.O. Box 387, Burton, OH 44021; 834-4656). Local contacts for the program are Charles Behnke and Jerry Long, both Extension Agents in Lorain County (Agriculture Center, Elyria, OH 44035; 329-5350).

17. In conversation with Behnke.
18. Ibid.

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