



WHY NETWORK MAPPING?

Network mapping provides a view of the diversity of participants within a given system and how they are connected.

Looking at the local food economy as a system, its growth is NOT based on the number of participants, but on the quality of connections between those participants.

The network mapping allows us to assess the quality of our connections and develop strategies to improve them.

GROWING REGIONAL NETWORKS



Two key processes:

1) KNOWING THE NETWORK

Review of current and potential network connection, assets, and projects that could best build network strength and diversity.

2) KNITTING THE NETWORK

Determining what steps can be taken to increase information flow, innovative practices, and new collaborations in the regional food space.

RE-FRAMING PERSPECTIVES

Strong sense of we/they

vs.

Everyone has something of value to offer

Influenced by ideas in own camp, reject others

vs.

Open to new ideas from anywhere

Keep what we are doing to ourselves

vs.

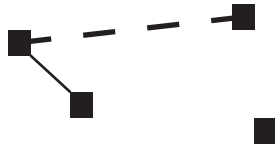
Openness and transparency to get feedback

Knowing the Network I

**NETWORK PATTERN
BASICS**

EARLY EMERGENCE NETWORKS

“Twosie”



“Closing a Triangle”

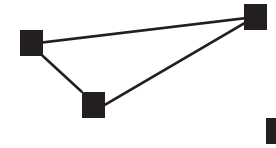
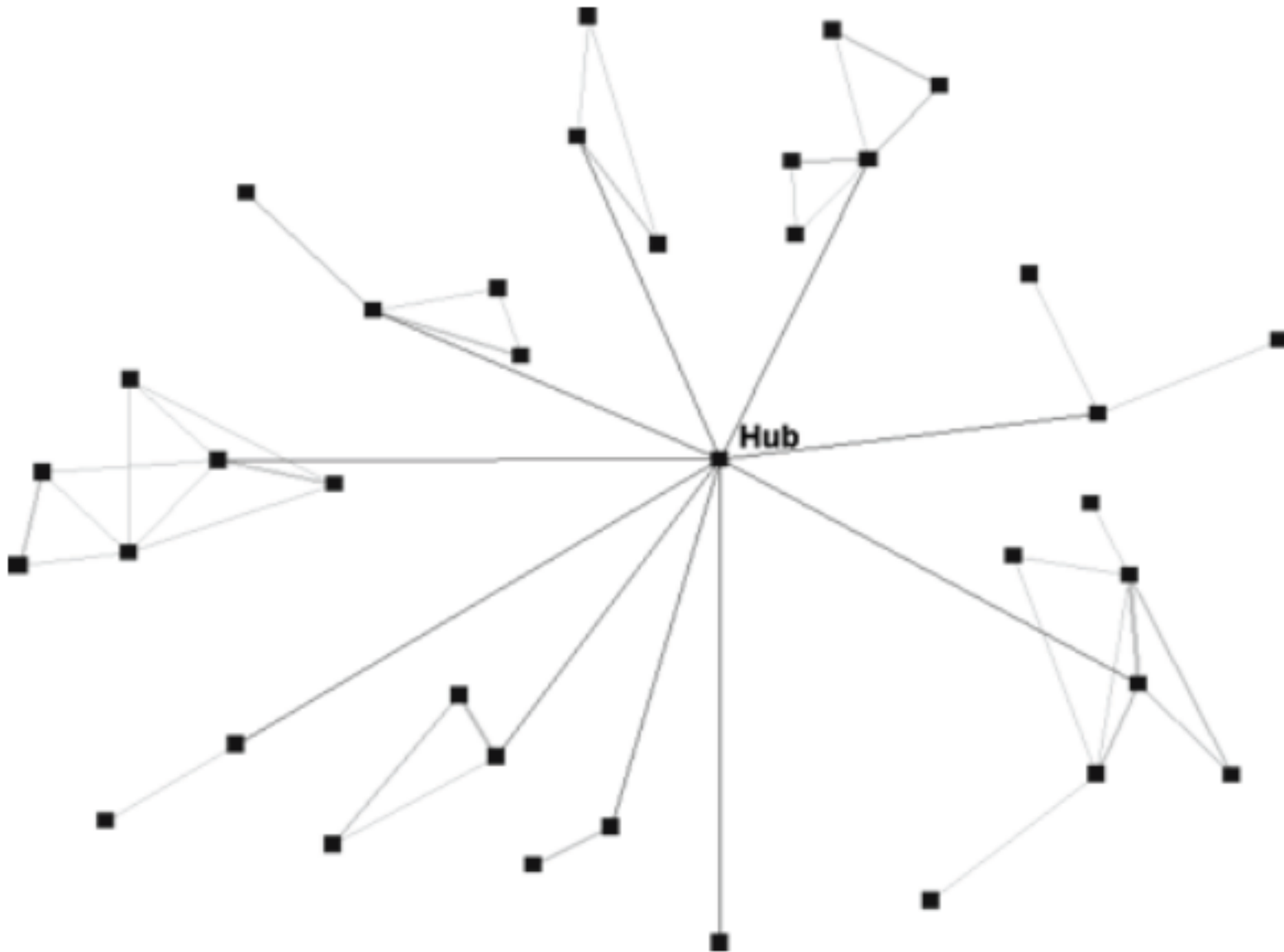
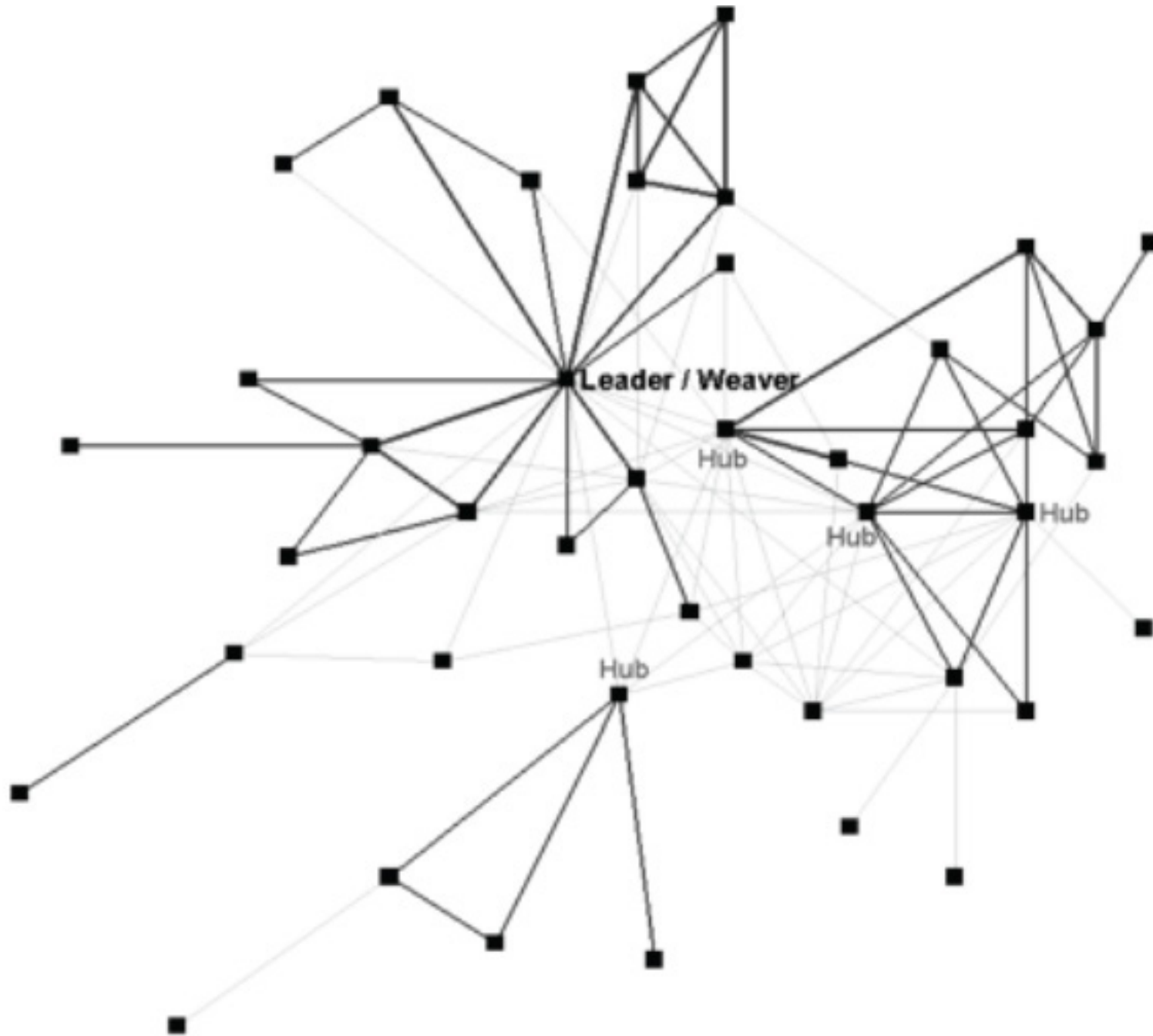


Figure 1 – Scattered Emergence

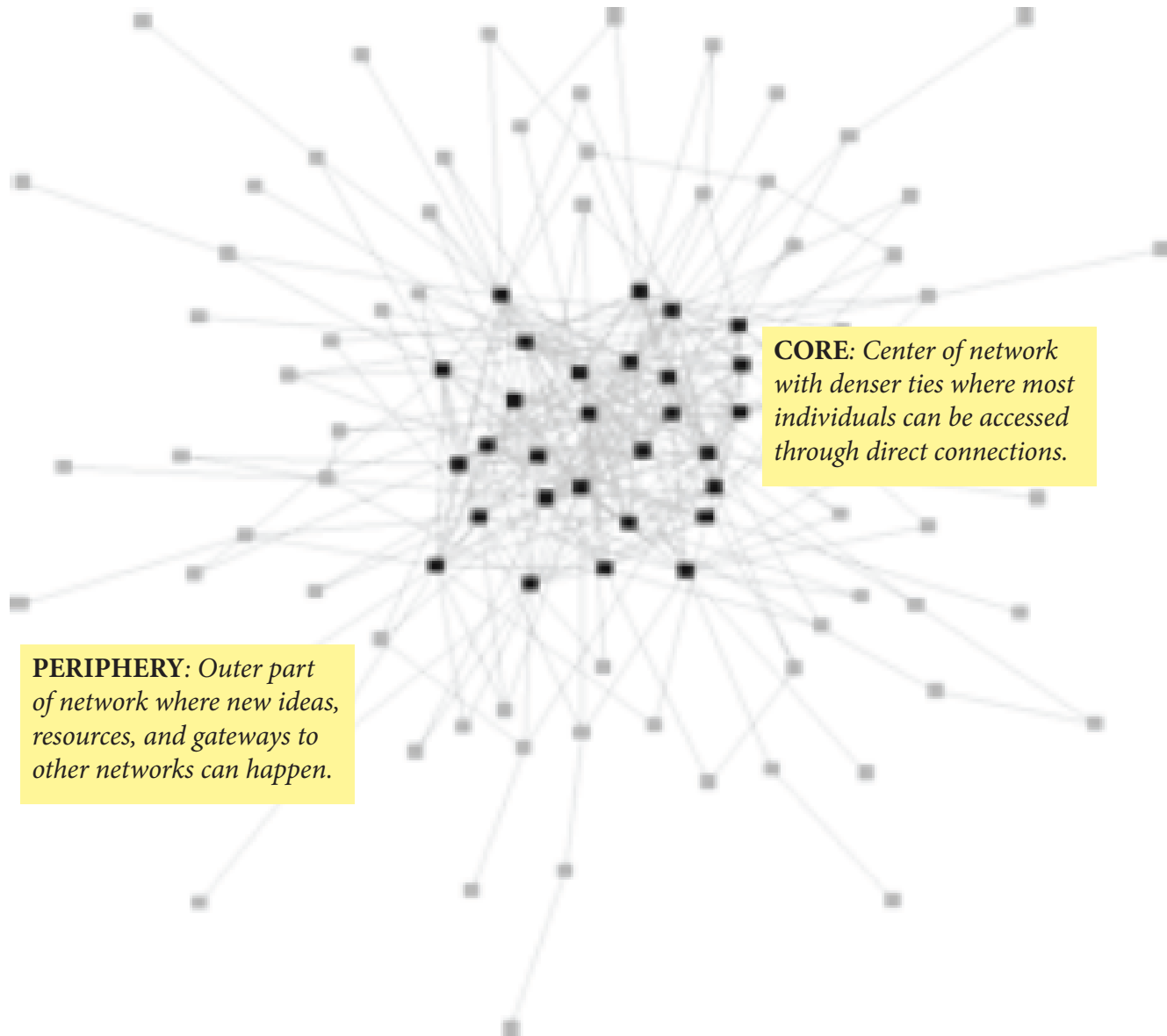
HUB AND SPOKE NETWORKS



THE MULTI-CLUSTER NETWORK



THE SMART NETWORK



CORE: *Center of network with denser ties where most individuals can be accessed through direct connections.*

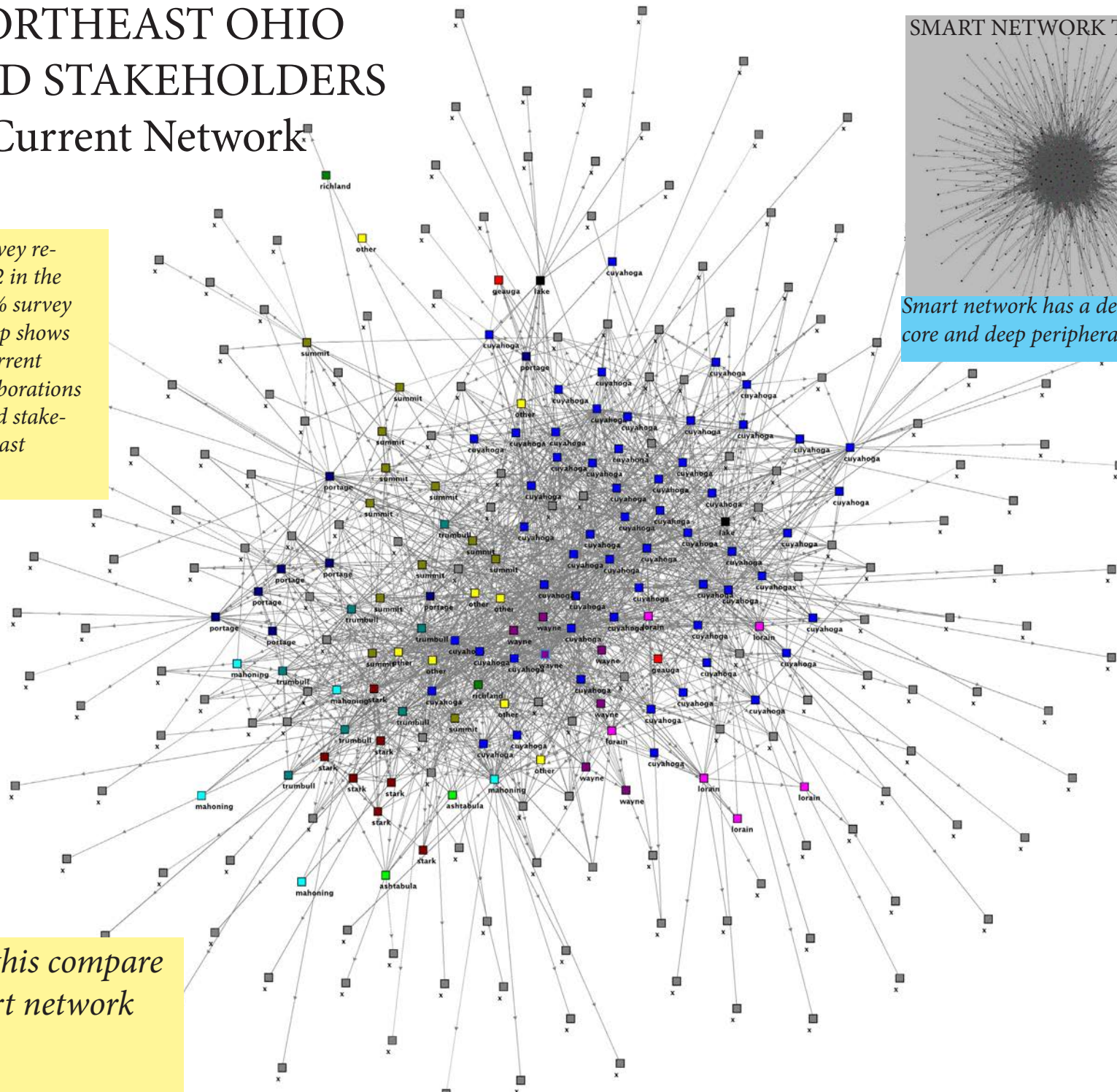
PERIPHERY: *Outer part of network where new ideas, resources, and gateways to other networks can happen.*

Knowing the Network II

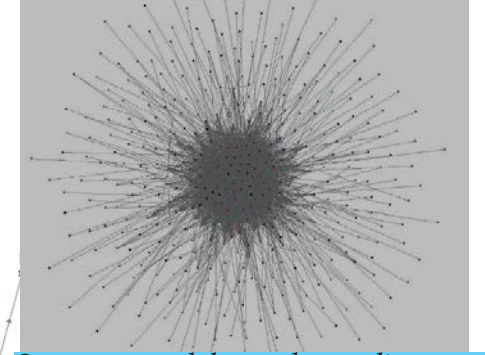
**NORTHEAST OHIO
REGIONAL FOOD NETWORKS**

NORTHEAST OHIO FOOD STAKEHOLDERS Current Network

Based on 135 survey responses out of 192 in the network for a 71% survey response rate. Map shows distribution of current connections/collaborations between local food stakeholders in Northeast Ohio.



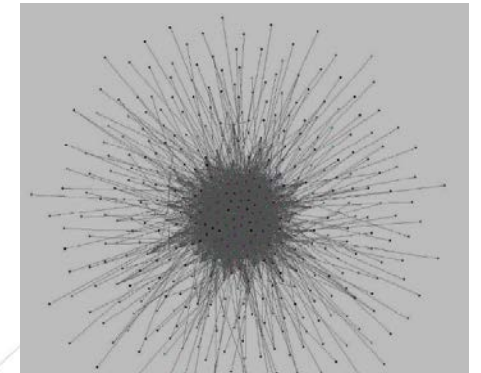
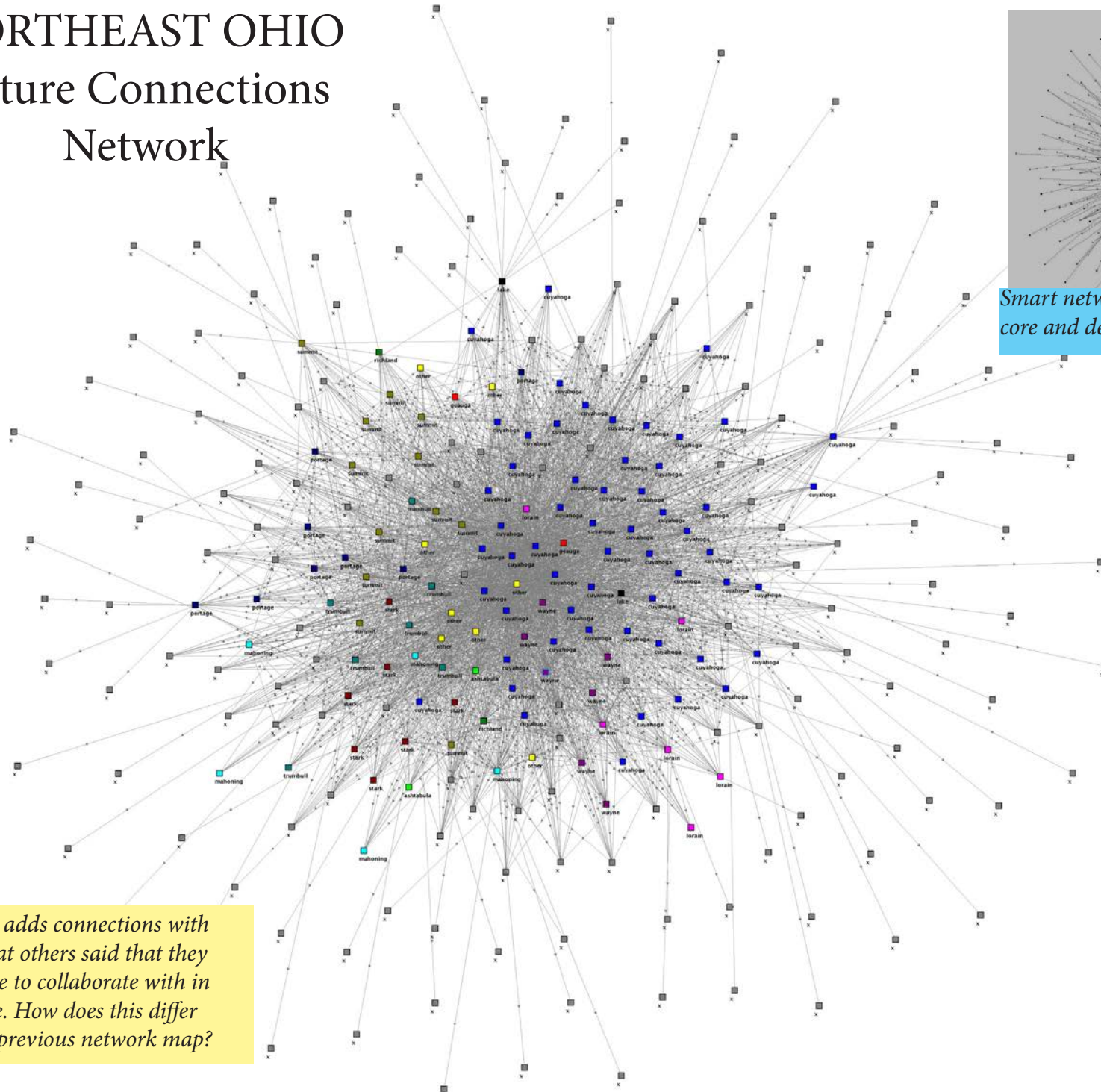
SMART NETWORK TEMPLATE



Smart network has a dense, diverse core and deep peripheral connections

How does this compare to the smart network template?

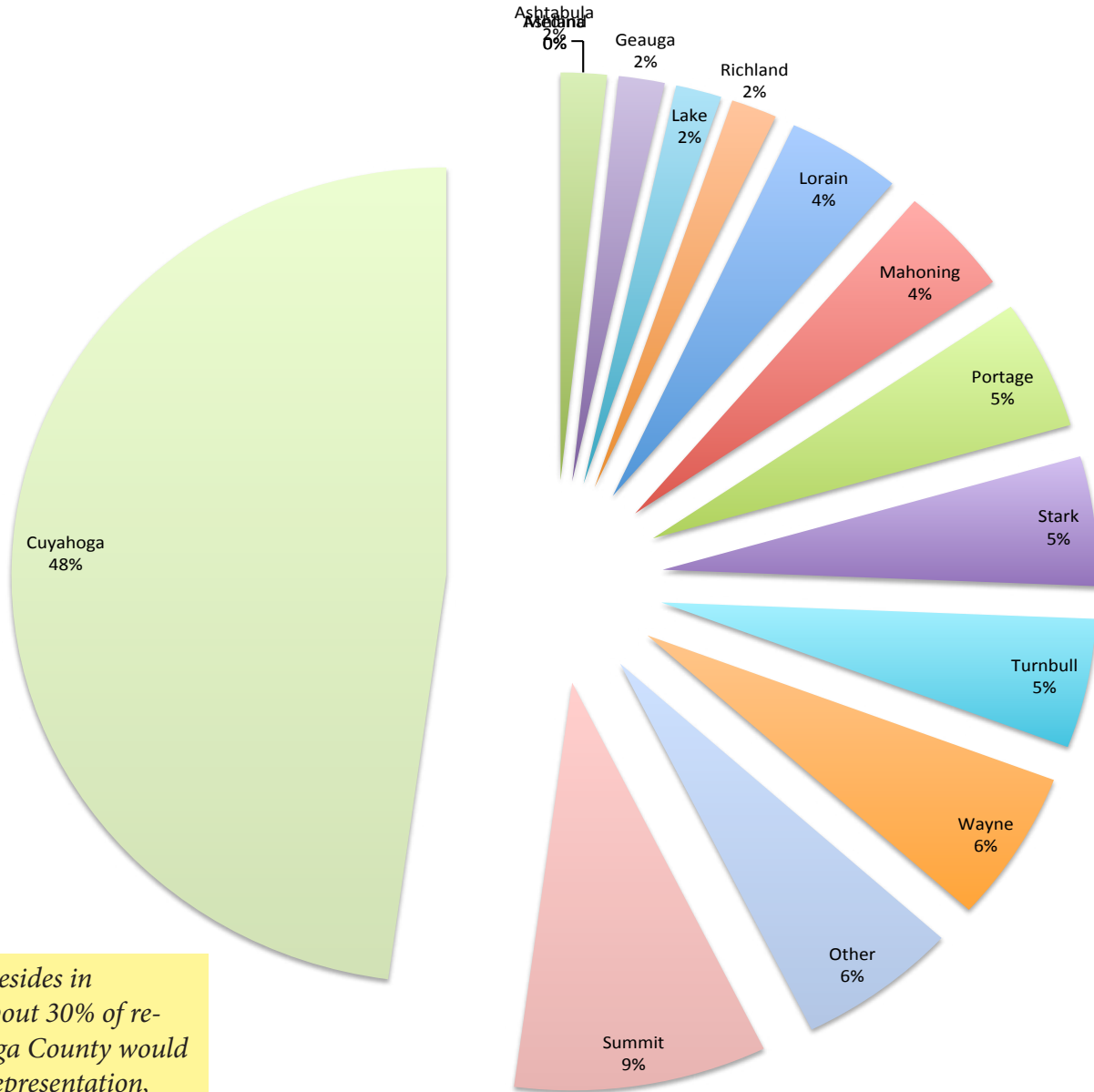
NORTHEAST OHIO Future Connections Network



Smart network has a dense, diverse core and deep peripheral connections

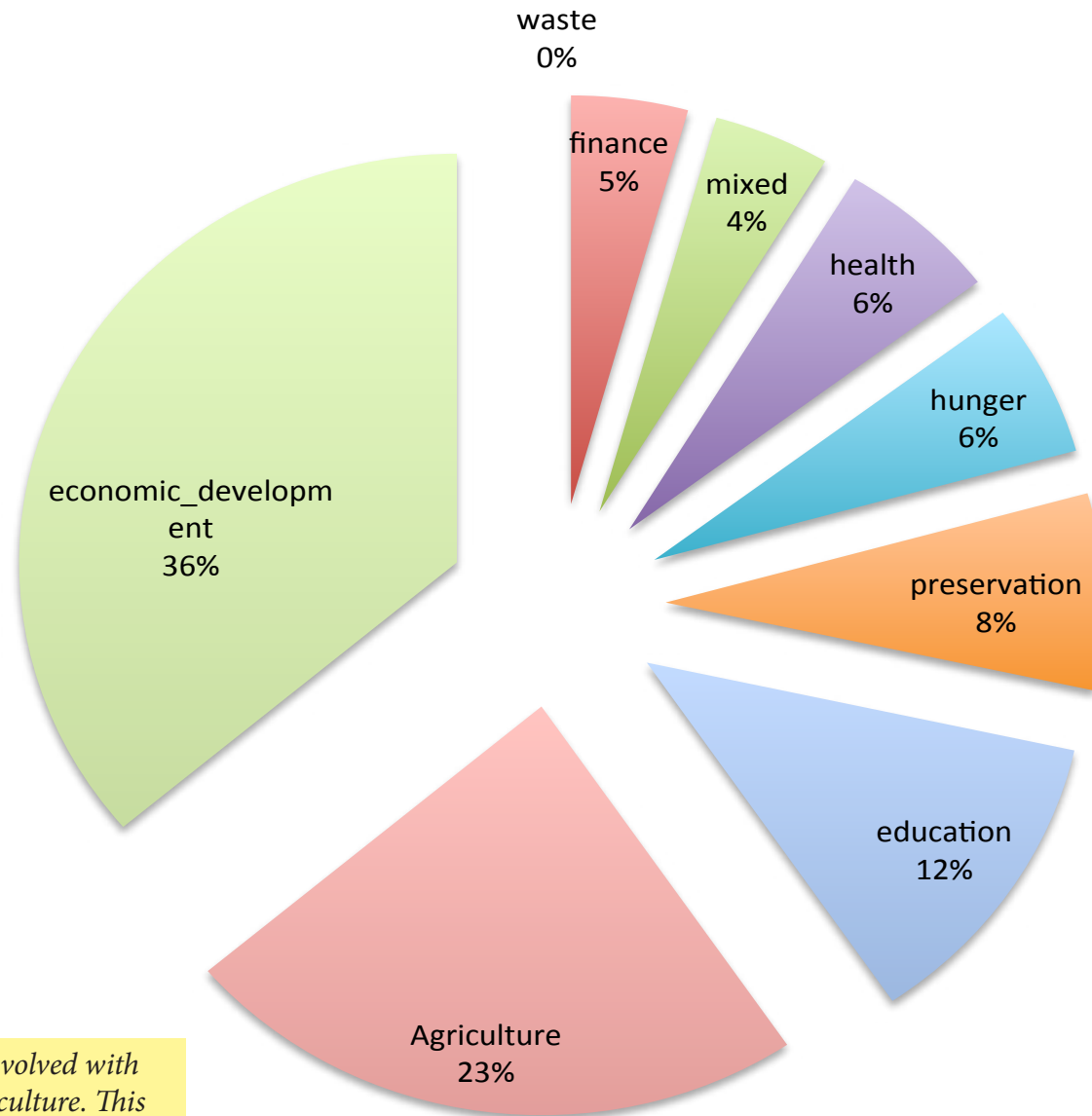
This map adds connections with people that others said that they would like to collaborate with in the future. How does this differ from the previous network map?

In What County Are You Based?



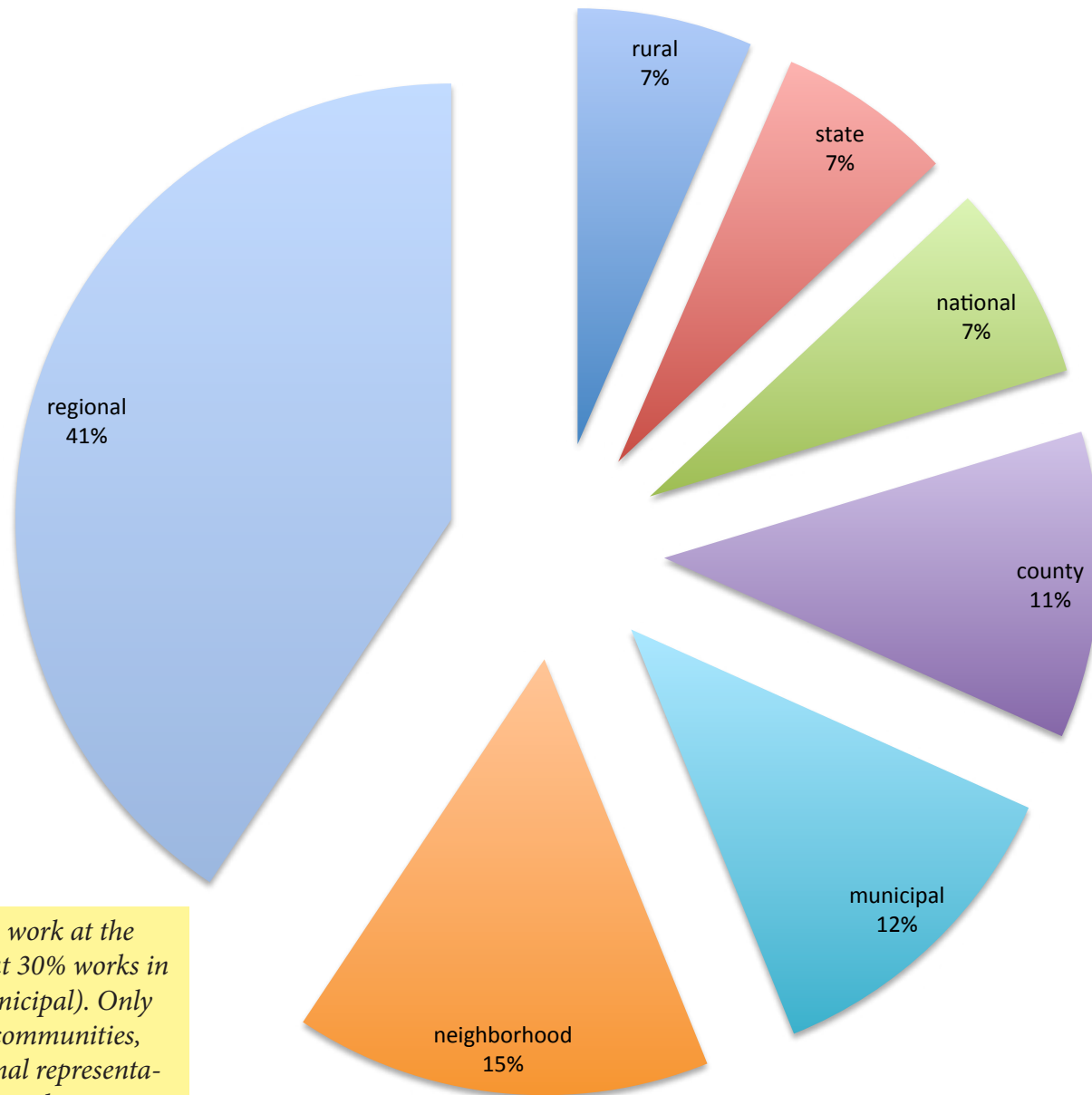
About half of the network resides in Cuyahoga County. With about 30% of regional population, Cuyahoga County would be expected to have more representation, but more proportional representation from especially rural counties would be optimal.

Sector in which you work?



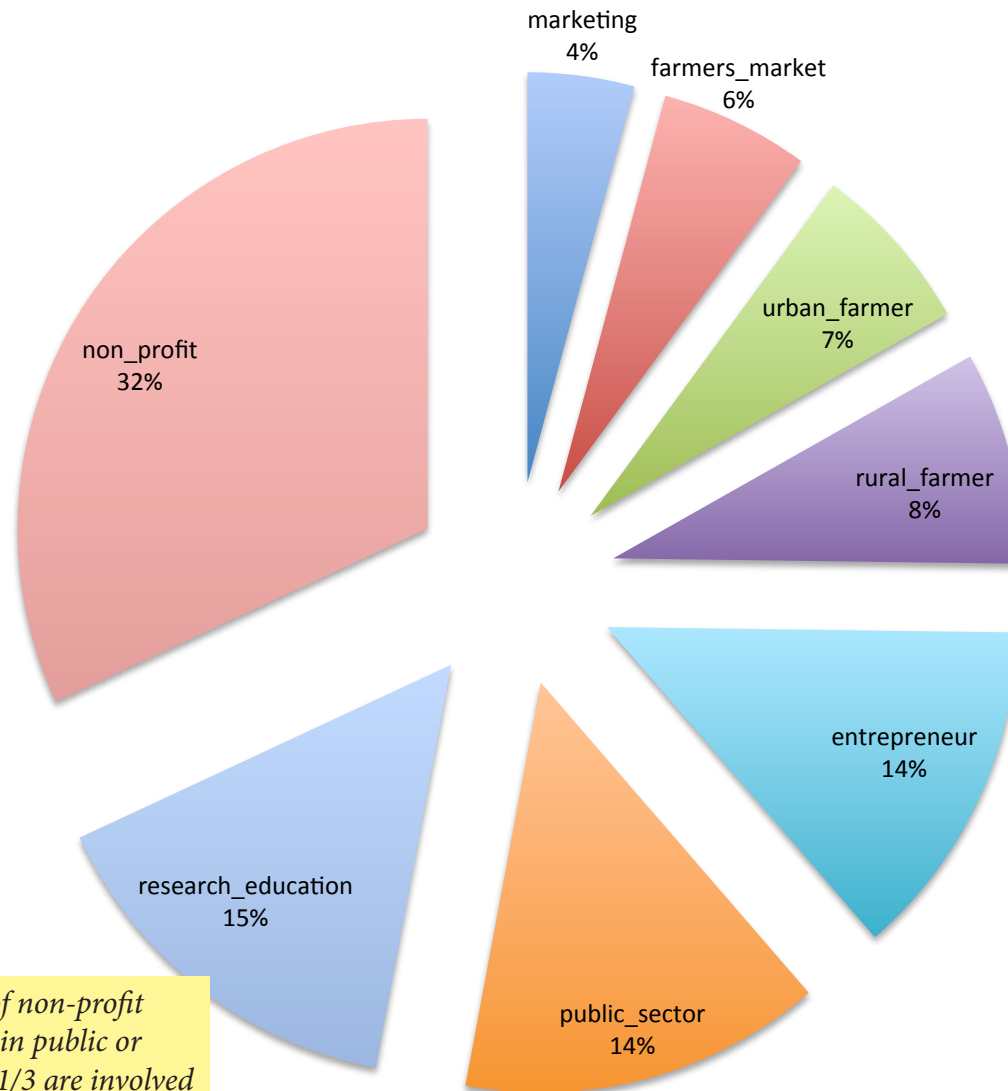
About half of the network is involved with economic development or agriculture. This bodes well for linking local foods with economic development. But what about health or food security?

At What Scale Do You Work



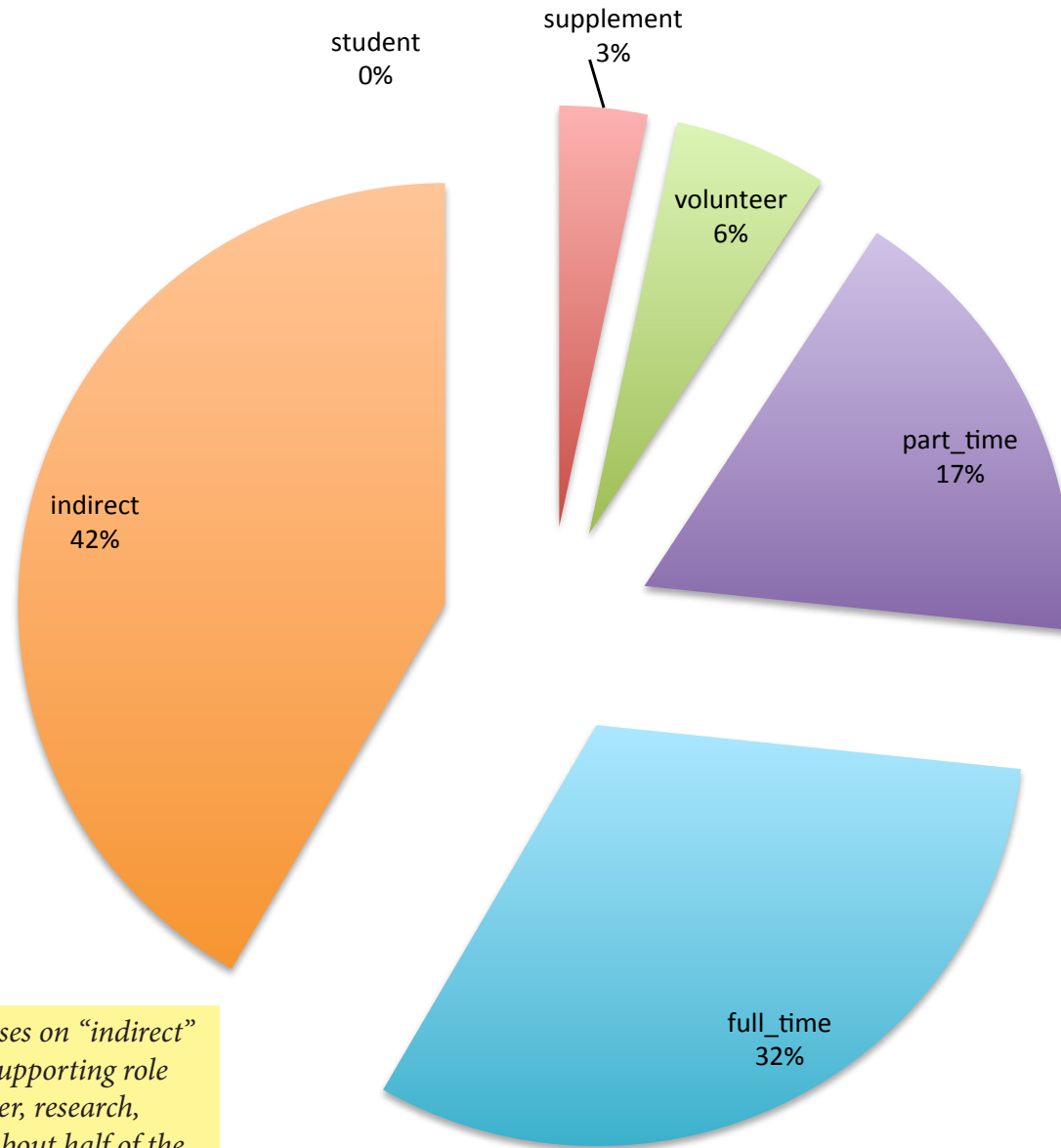
About 41% of the network reports to work at the multi-county or regional scale. About 30% works in urban settings (neighborhood or municipal). Only a small percentage focuses on rural communities, the same percent for state and national representation in the network. How do we effectively increase representation of more rural stakeholders?

What Primary Local Food Role Do You Play?



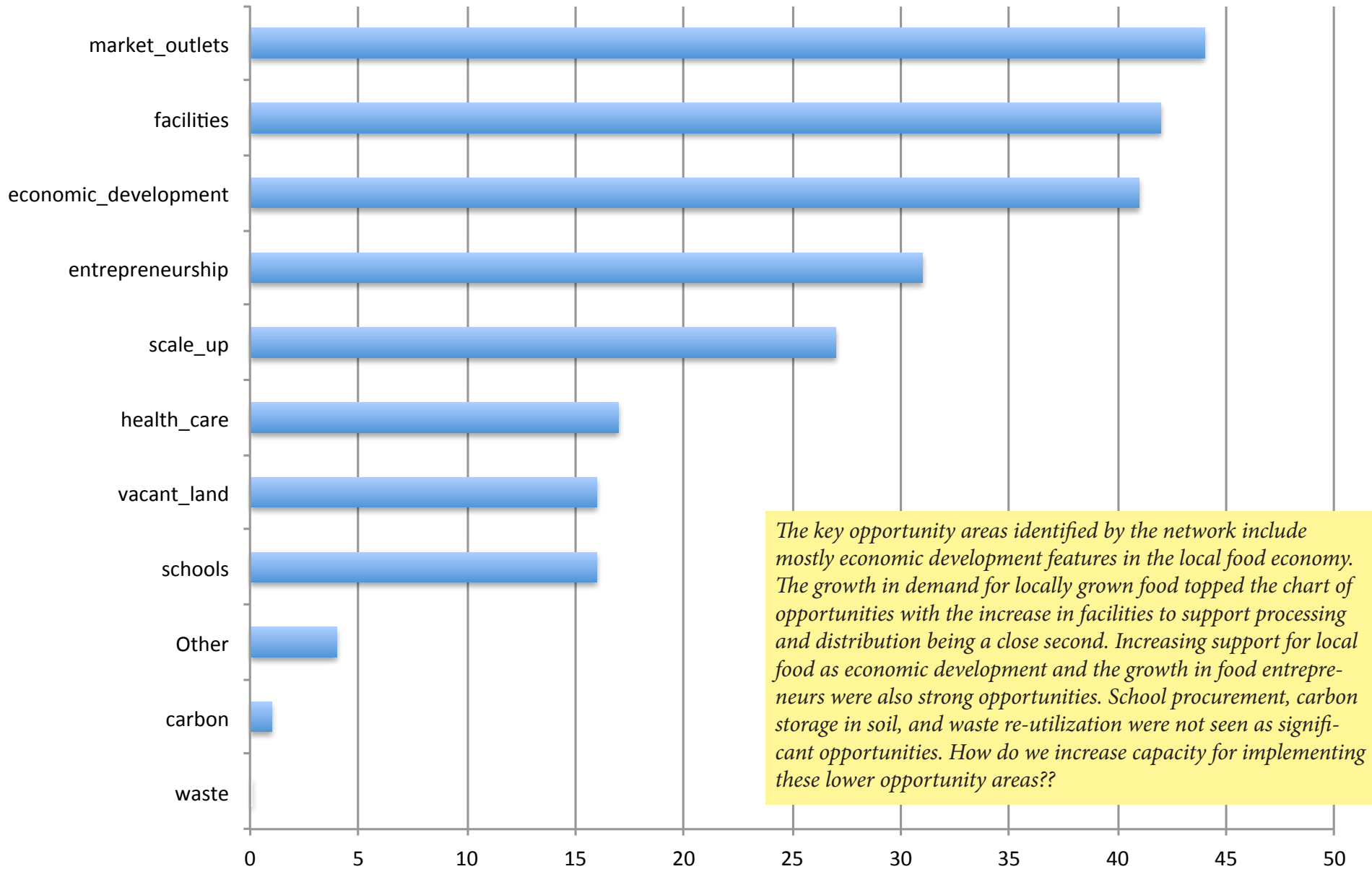
About 1/3 of the network consists of non-profit organizations and 61% is involved in public or quasi-public organizations. About 1/3 are involved with food production or entrepreneurship. Is this the best mix? What are the advantages and disadvantages of public or community organizations in the network?

What is the nature of your local food work?



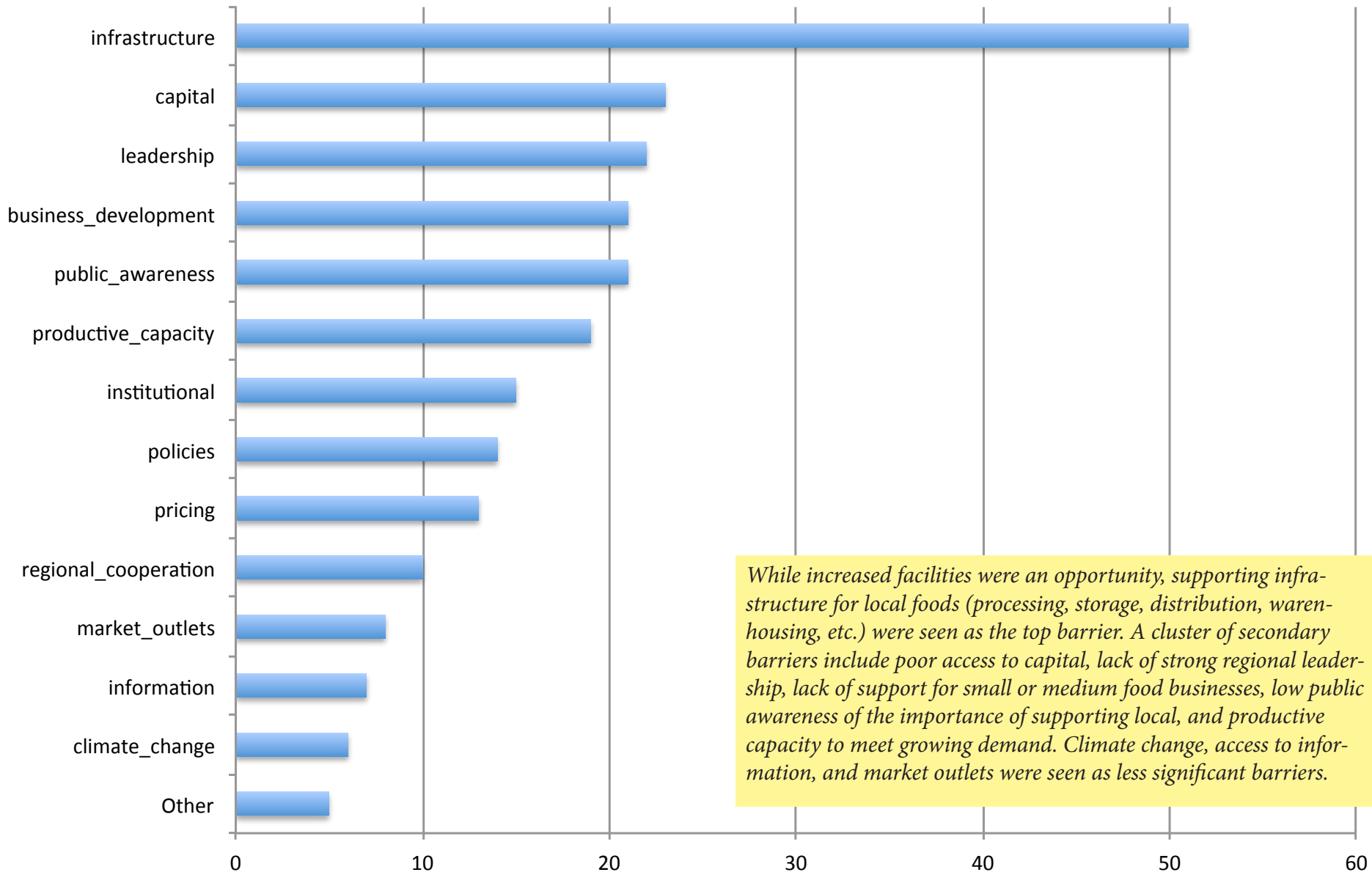
About 42% of the network focuses on “indirect” work or people that provide a supporting role for local food systems (i.e. funder, research, education, government, etc.). About half of the network works full time or part time in the local food sector. There’s less reliance on a completely volunteer-driven network.

Key Opportunities for Local Food Growth



The key opportunity areas identified by the network include mostly economic development features in the local food economy. The growth in demand for locally grown food topped the chart of opportunities with the increase in facilities to support processing and distribution being a close second. Increasing support for local food as economic development and the growth in food entrepreneurs were also strong opportunities. School procurement, carbon storage in soil, and waste re-utilization were not seen as significant opportunities. How do we increase capacity for implementing these lower opportunity areas??

Key Barriers to Local Food Growth



While increased facilities were an opportunity, supporting infrastructure for local foods (processing, storage, distribution, warehousing, etc.) were seen as the top barrier. A cluster of secondary barriers include poor access to capital, lack of strong regional leadership, lack of support for small or medium food businesses, low public awareness of the importance of supporting local, and productive capacity to meet growing demand. Climate change, access to information, and market outlets were seen as less significant barriers.

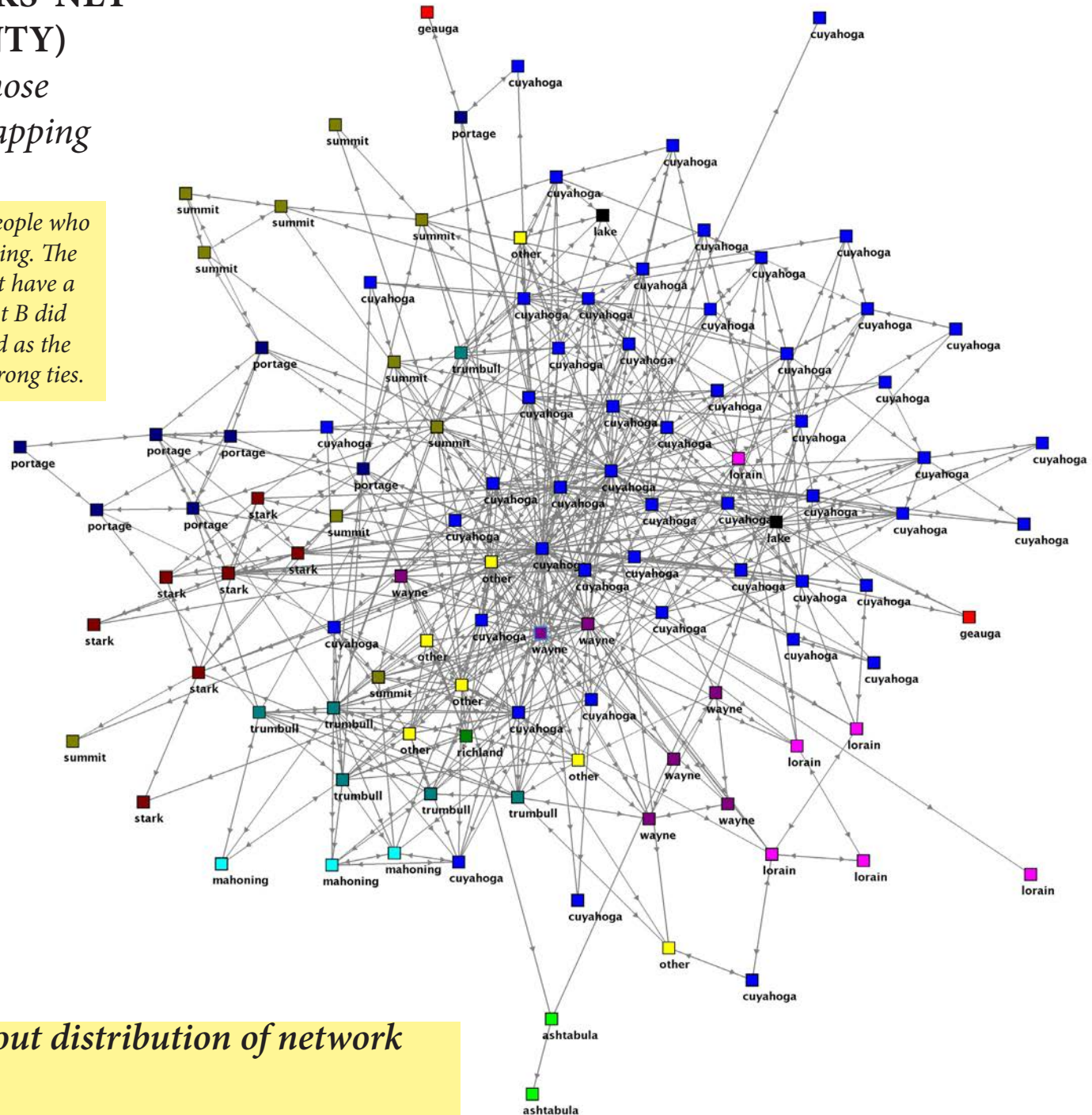
Knowing the Network III

**REGIONAL NETWORK
RESILIENCE**

RECIPROCAL LINKS NETWORK (COUNTY)

People Who Chose Each Other on Mapping Survey

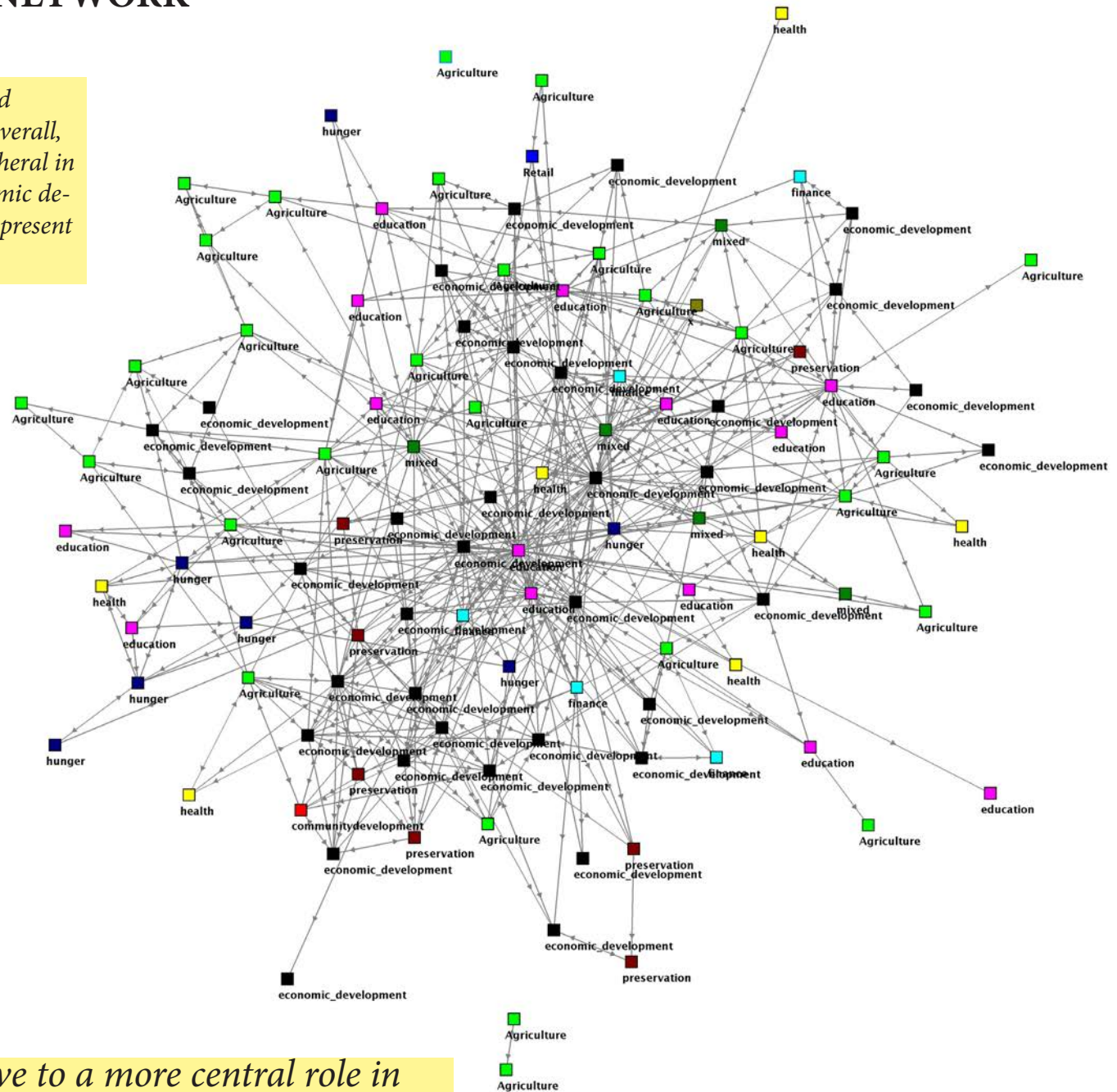
This map shows reciprocal links- people who chose each other for network mapping. The map eliminates any two people that have a one-way connection (A chose B, but B did not choose A). This could be termed as the "real network" which shows only strong ties.



What do you notice about distribution of network connections by county?

RECIPROCAL LINKS NETWORK (SECTOR)

In terms of sectors, there is some good mixing in the core between sectors. Overall, agriculture interests seem more peripheral in the network as do health care. Economic development and education seem more present in the core.

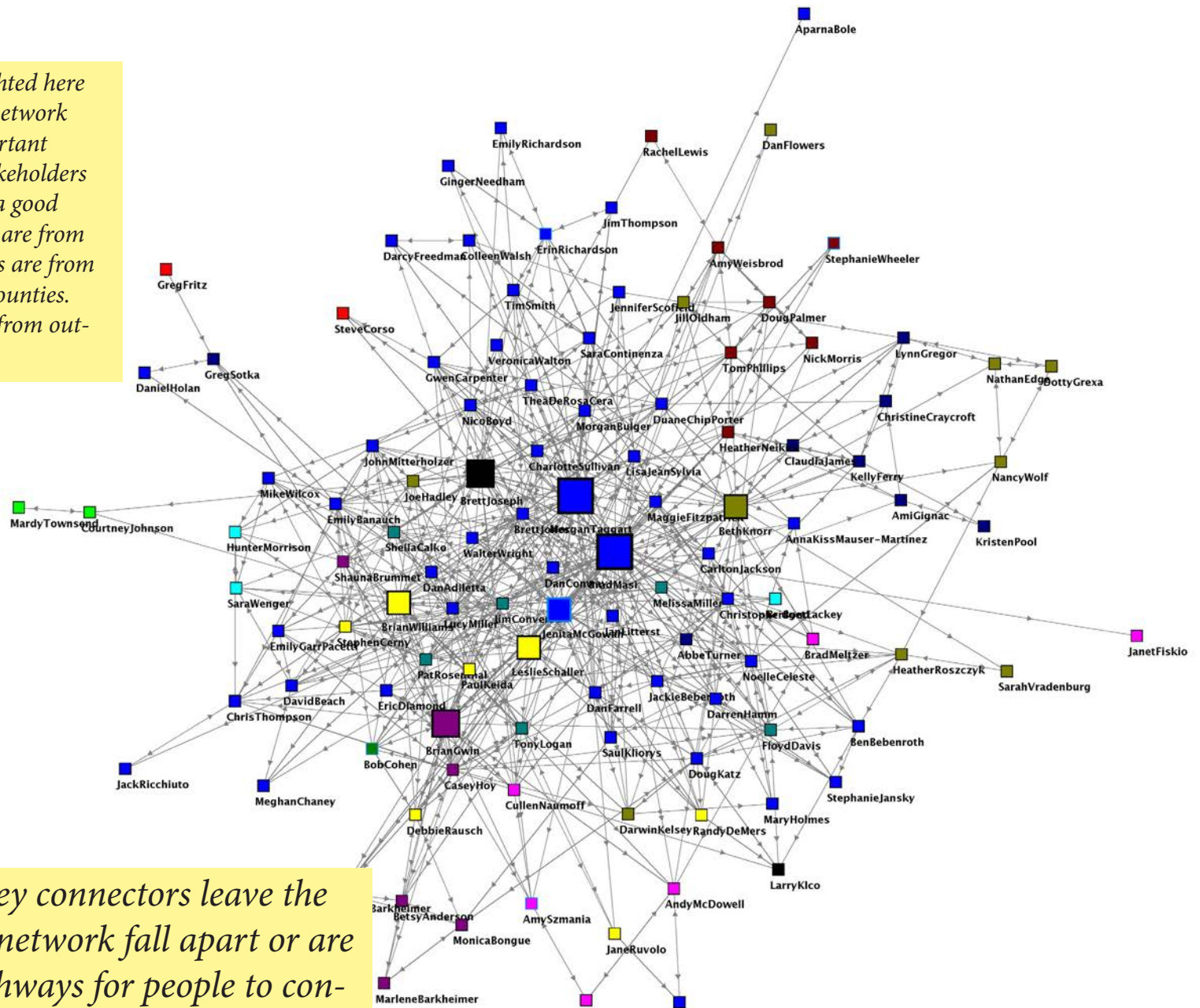


How does agriculture move to a more central role in the network?

CURRENT NETWORK:

Resilience Test

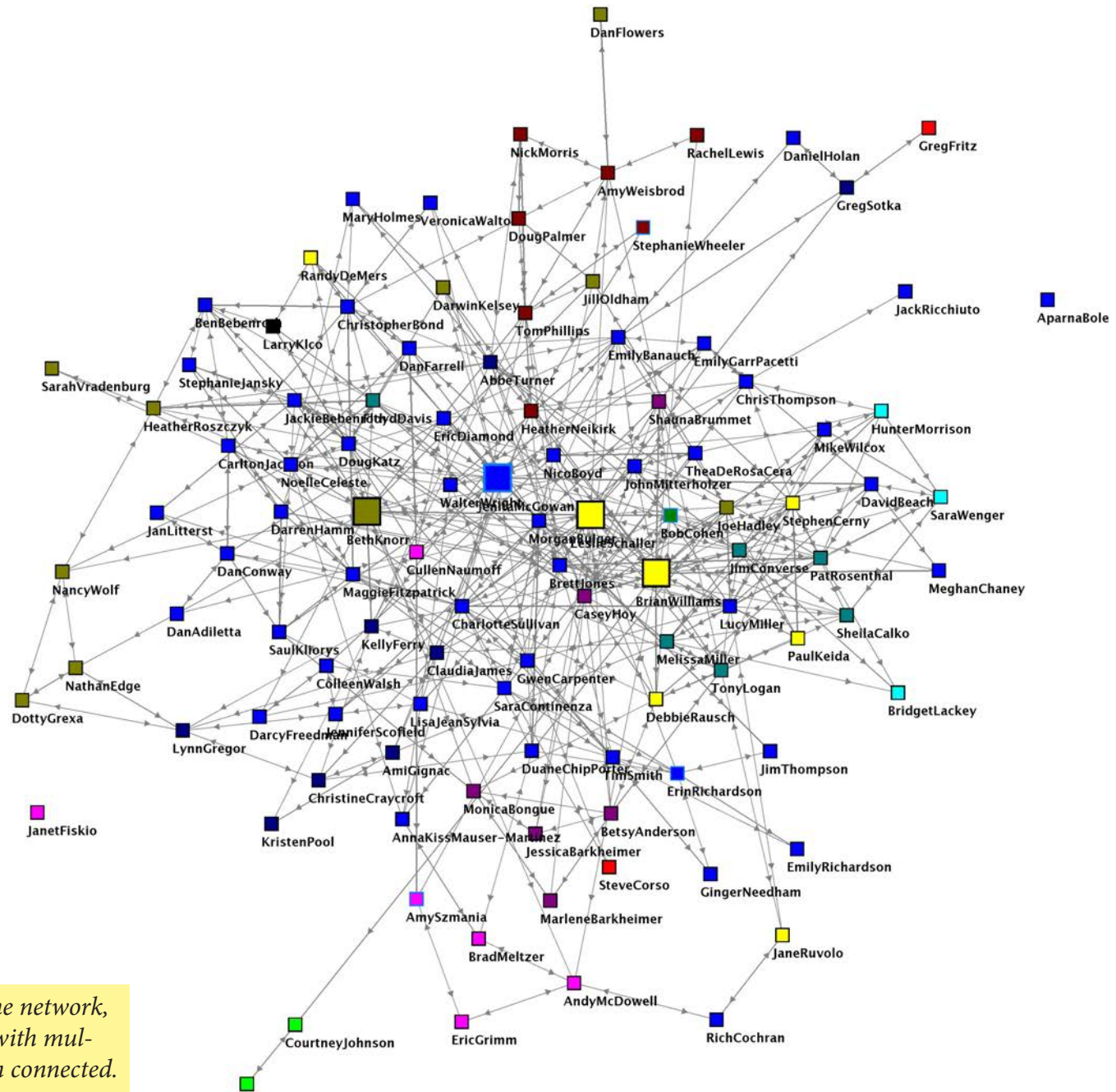
The eight individuals highlighted here have the highest number of network connections, serving as important “hubs”, connecting many stakeholders across the network. There is a good mix of key connectors. Three are from Cuyahoga County and others are from Lake, Wayne, and Summit counties. Two key connectors are also from outside of Northeast Ohio!



What happens if key connectors leave the network? Does the network fall apart or are there still other pathways for people to connect?

CURRENT NETWORK:

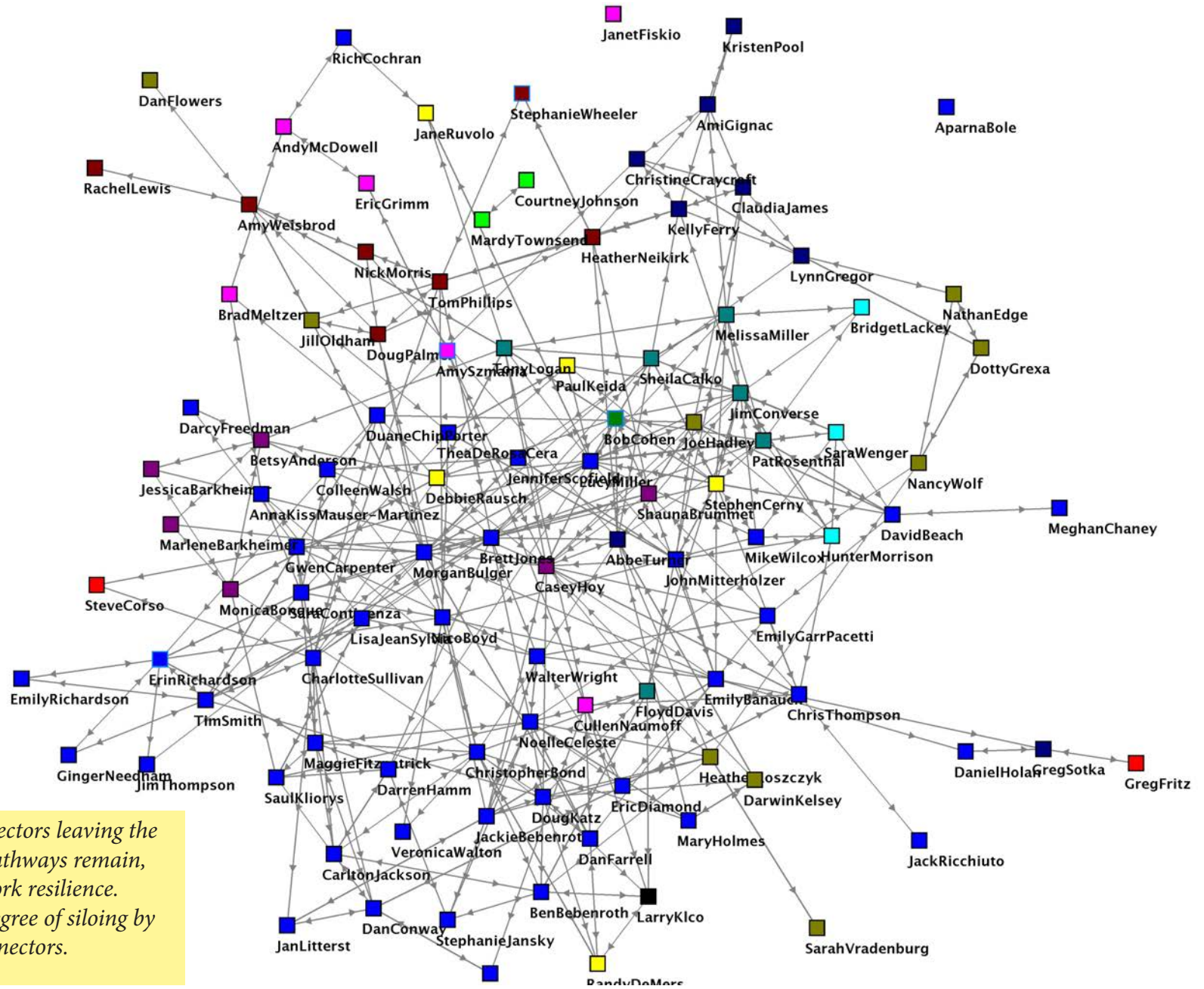
Minus Top Four Hubs



If the top four connectors leave the network, there is still decent connectivity, with multiple ways that people still remain connected.

CURRENT NETWORK:

Minus Top Eight Hubs

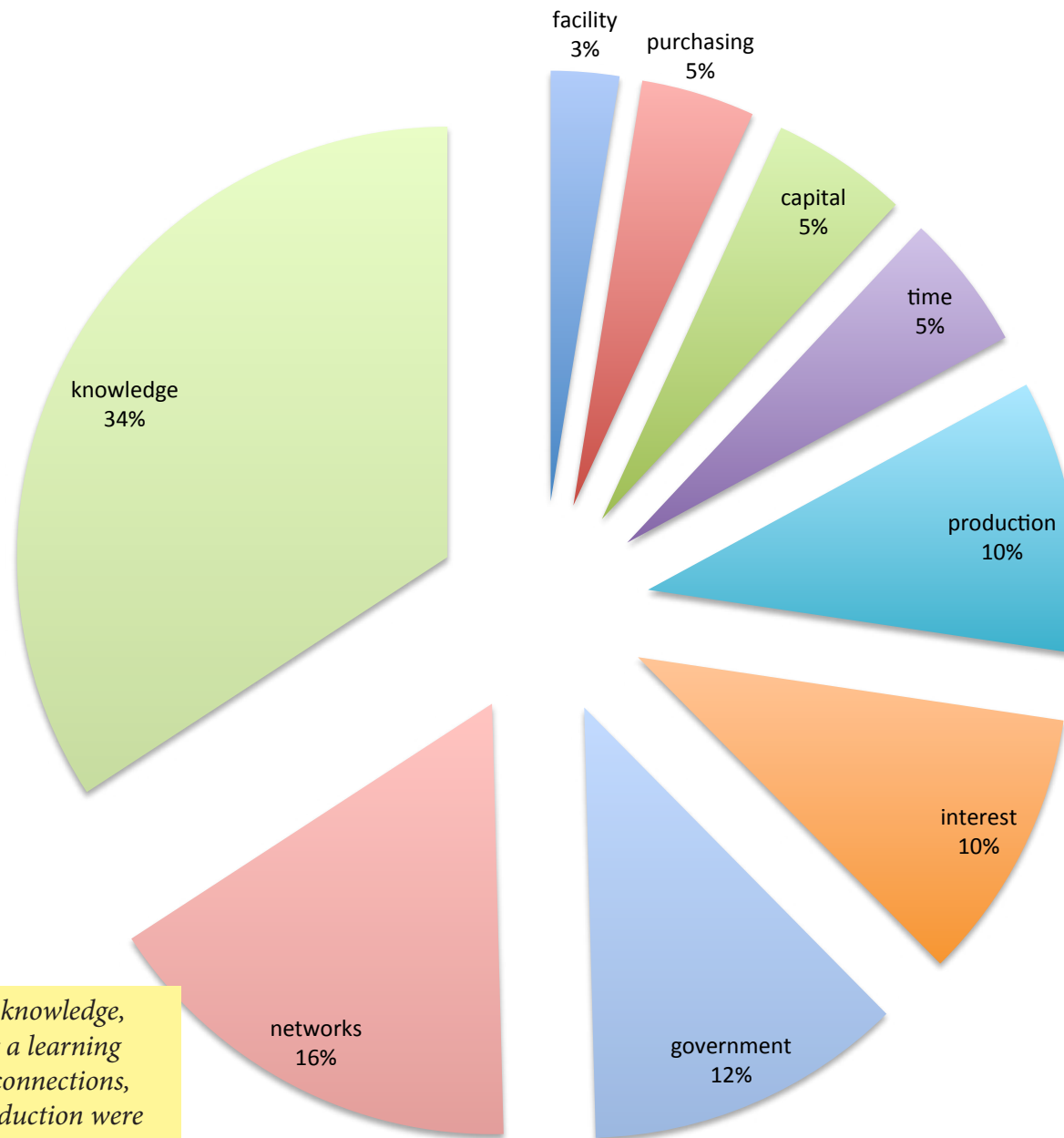


Even with the top eight connectors leaving the network, many functional pathways remain, indicating high overall network resilience. However, there is a higher degree of siloing by county without the eight connectors.

Knowing the Network IV

**REGIONAL NETWORK
DIVERSITY**

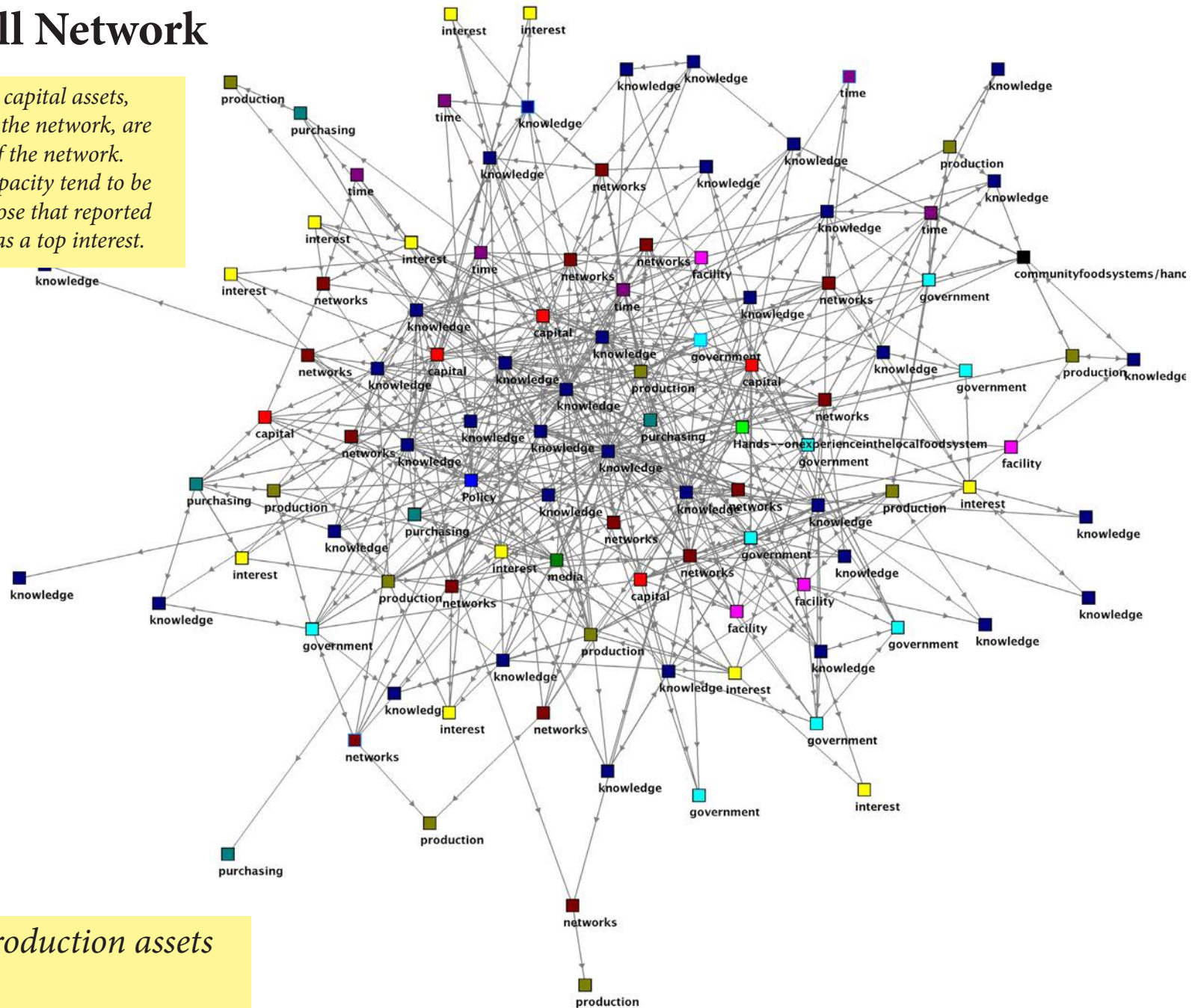
What assets do you bring to the regional network?



The primary reported asset is knowledge, indicating strong potential for a learning network to emerge. Network connections, government, interest, and production were also some key assets. Facilities, purchasing, capital, and time are less available assets to the network.

ASSET MAP Full Network

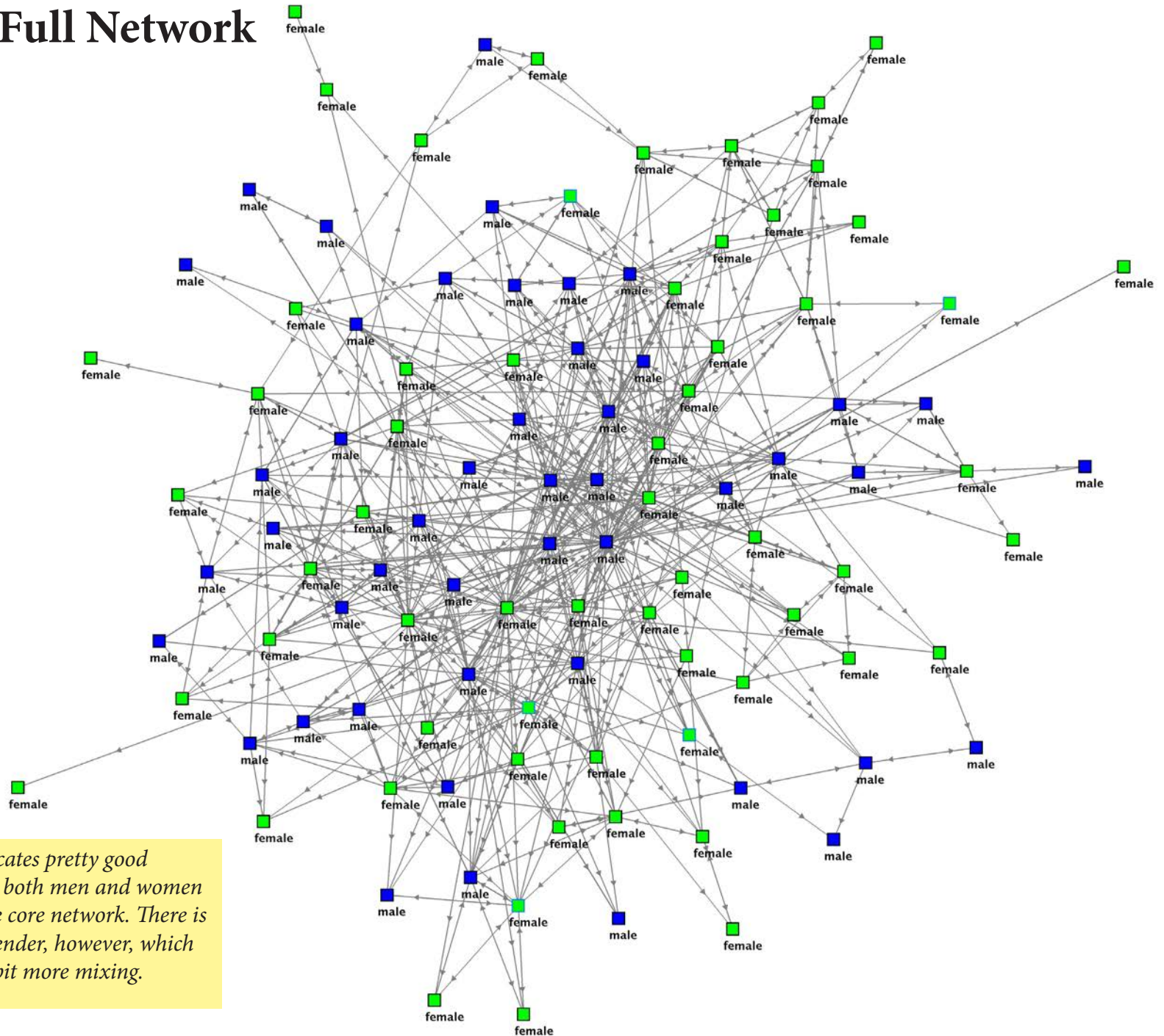
Looking at the asset map, capital assets, while a low percentage of the network, are present close to the core of the network. Those with production capacity tend to be more peripheral, as do those that reported an interest in local foods as a top interest.



How do we get production assets closer to the core?

GENDER DISTRIBUTION

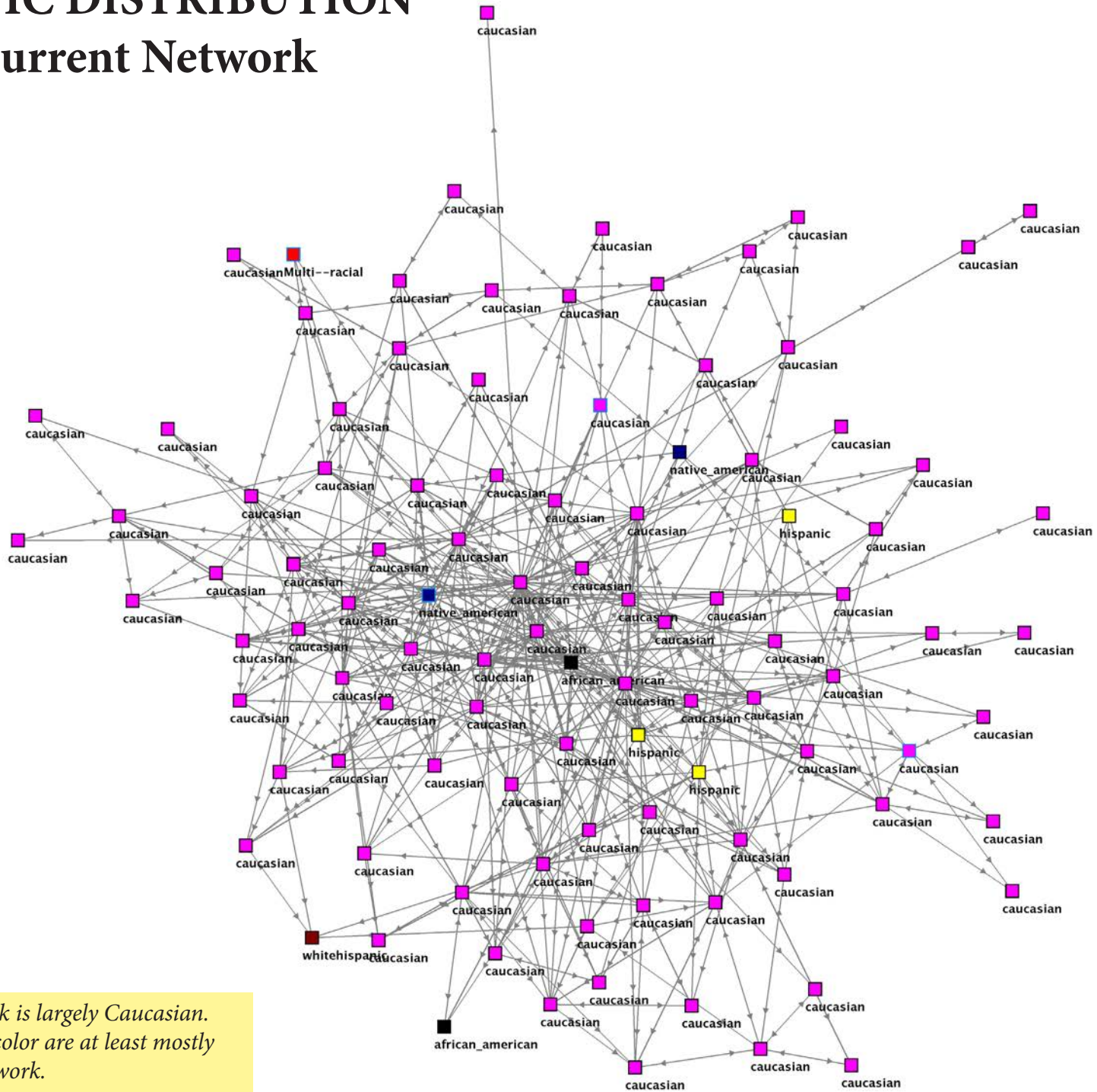
Full Network



The network map indicates pretty good mixing of gender, with both men and women occupying places in the core network. There is a bit of clustering by gender, however, which indicates a need for a bit more mixing.

ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION

Current Network

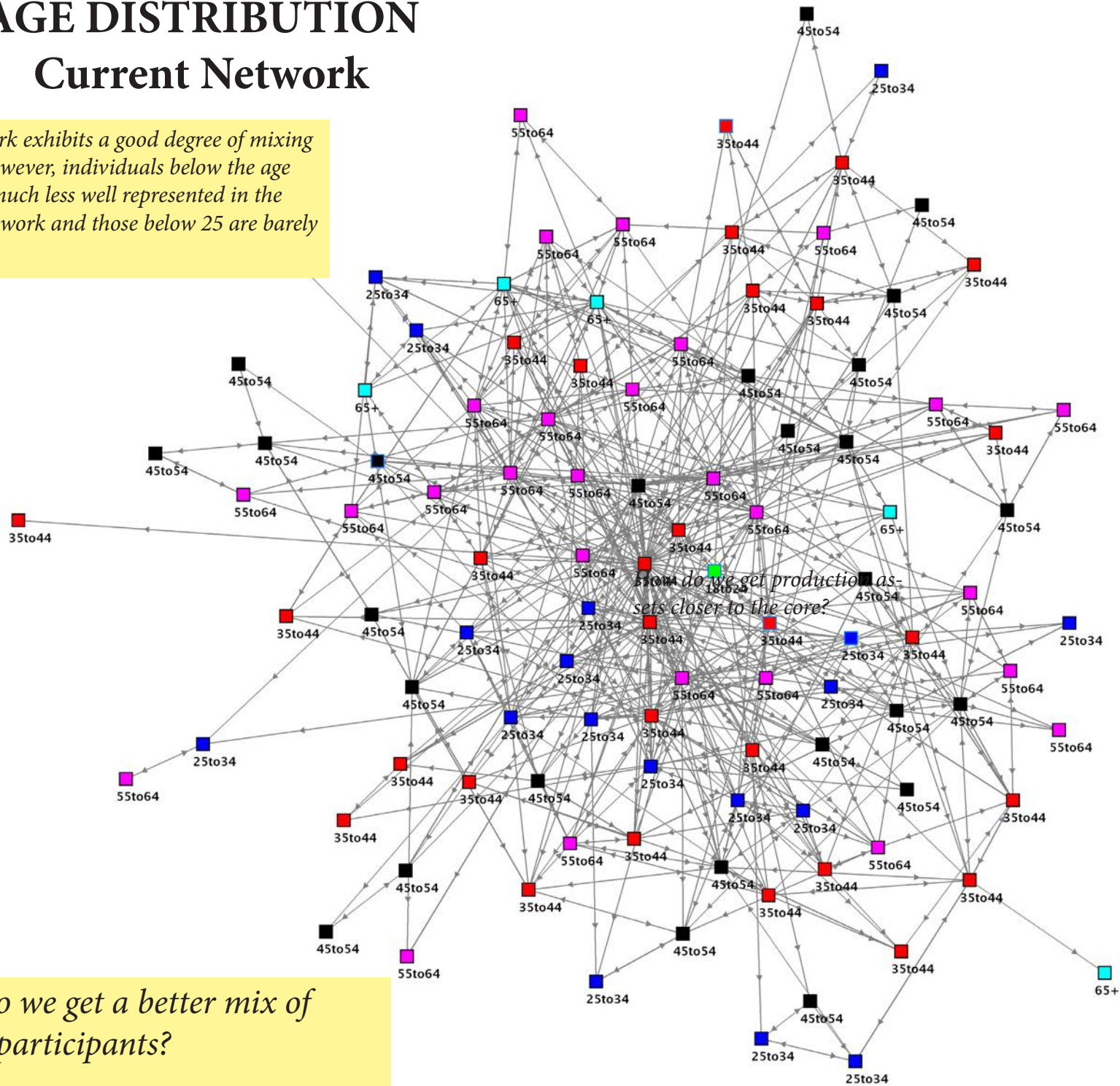


The regional network is largely Caucasian. However, people of color are at least mostly close to the core network.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Current Network

The network exhibits a good degree of mixing by age. However, individuals below the age of 35 are much less well represented in the overall network and those below 25 are barely present.



How do we get a better mix of young participants?

Knitting the Network I

**REGIONAL NETWORK
COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS**

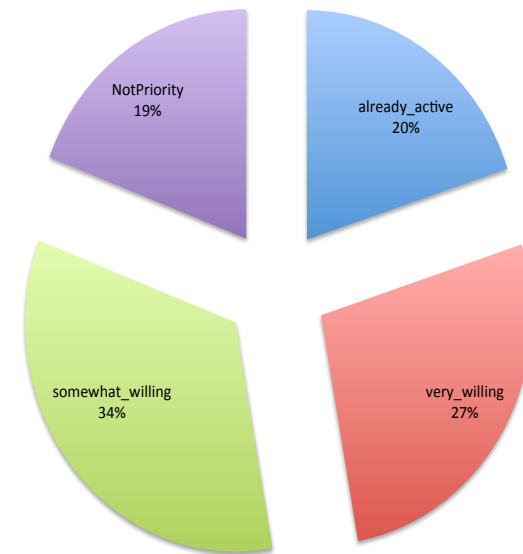
COLLABORATIVE POTENTIAL

Are You Willing to Collaborate?



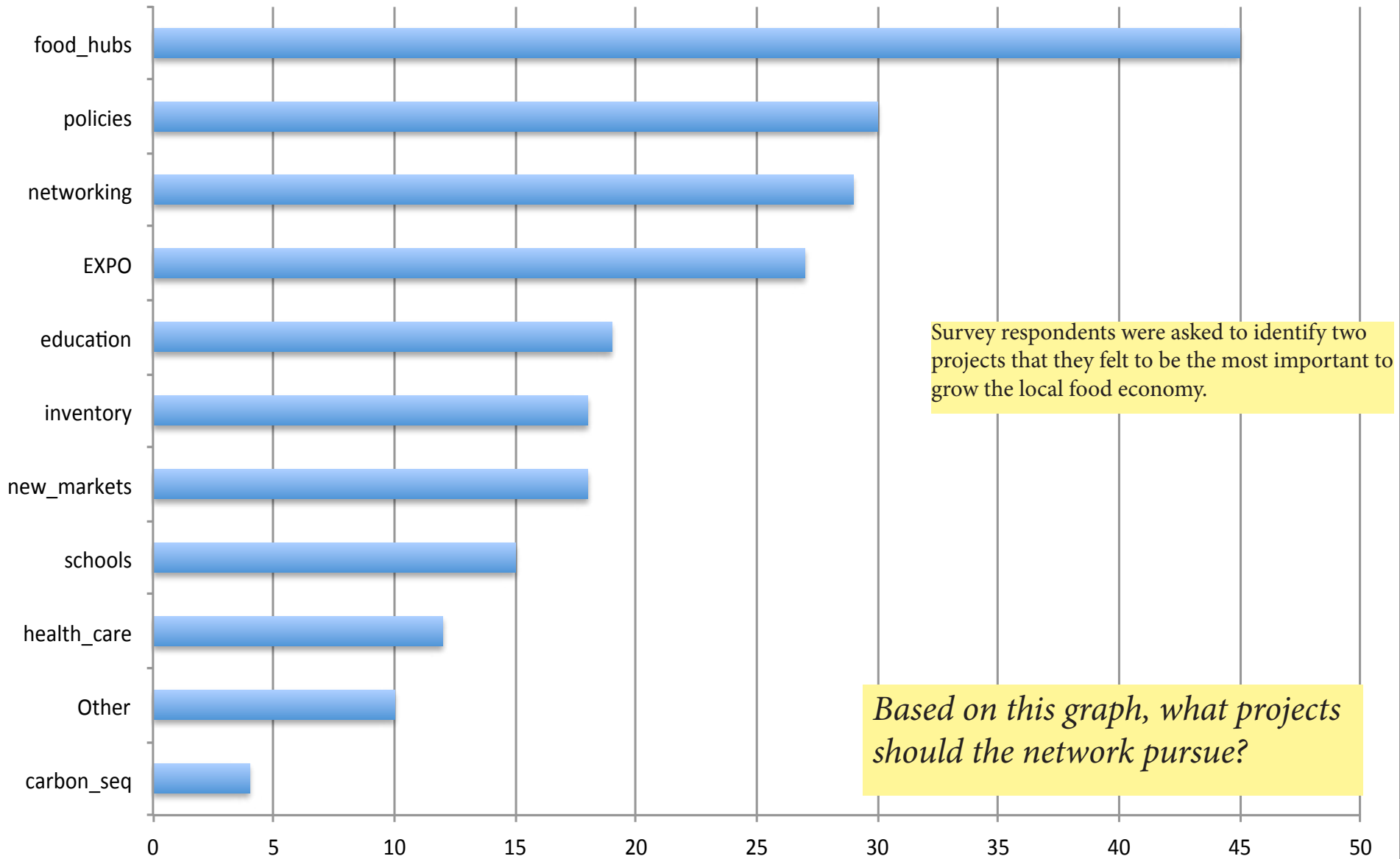
The network shows a high willingness to practice collaboration, with almost all respondents indicating at least some willingness to collaborate with others and 75% either active or very willing to collaborate.

Are You Willing to Play a Convening Role?



There is high leadership potential in the network, with 81% showing at least some willingness to convene a group and almost 50% very willing or already active as conveners.

Key Projects for Local Food Growth

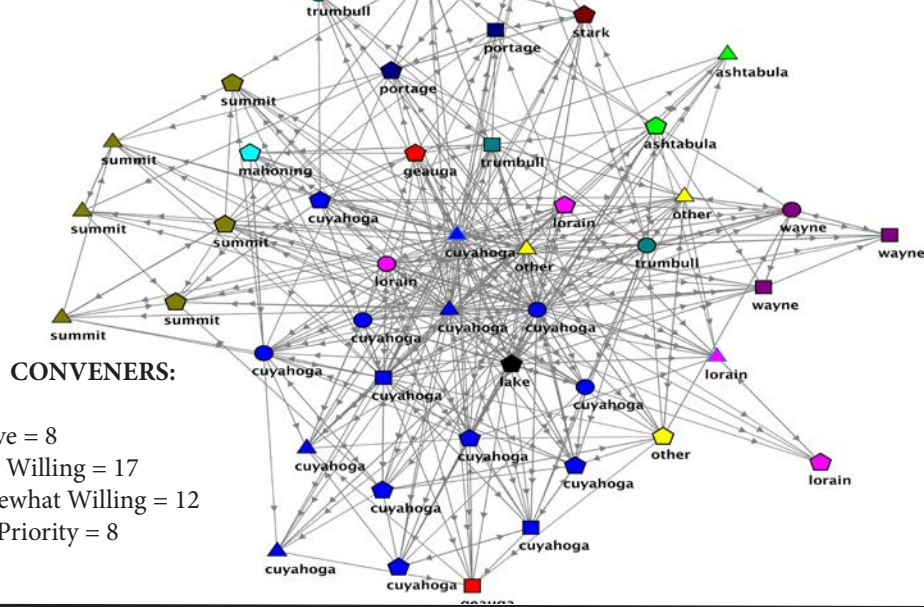


Survey respondents were asked to identify two projects that they felt to be the most important to grow the local food economy.

Based on this graph, what projects should the network pursue?

NETWORK REVIEWS OF PROJECTS:

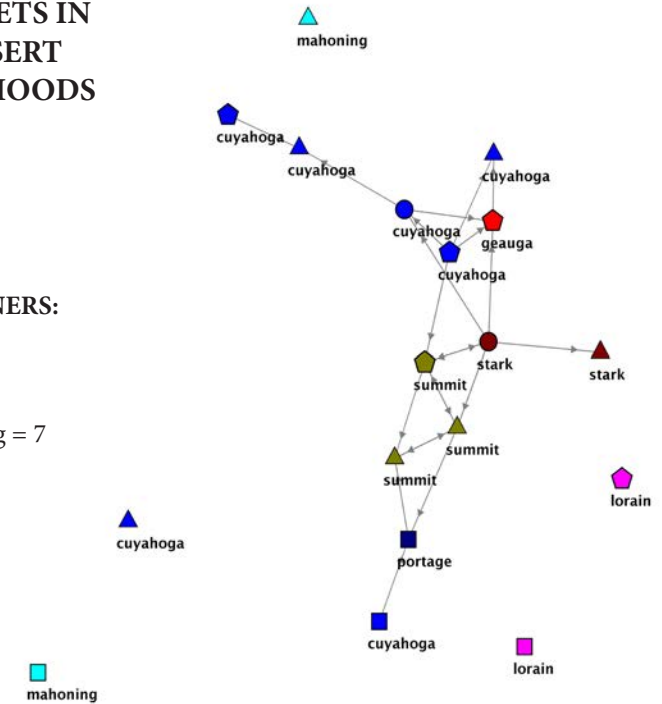
FOOD HUB DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



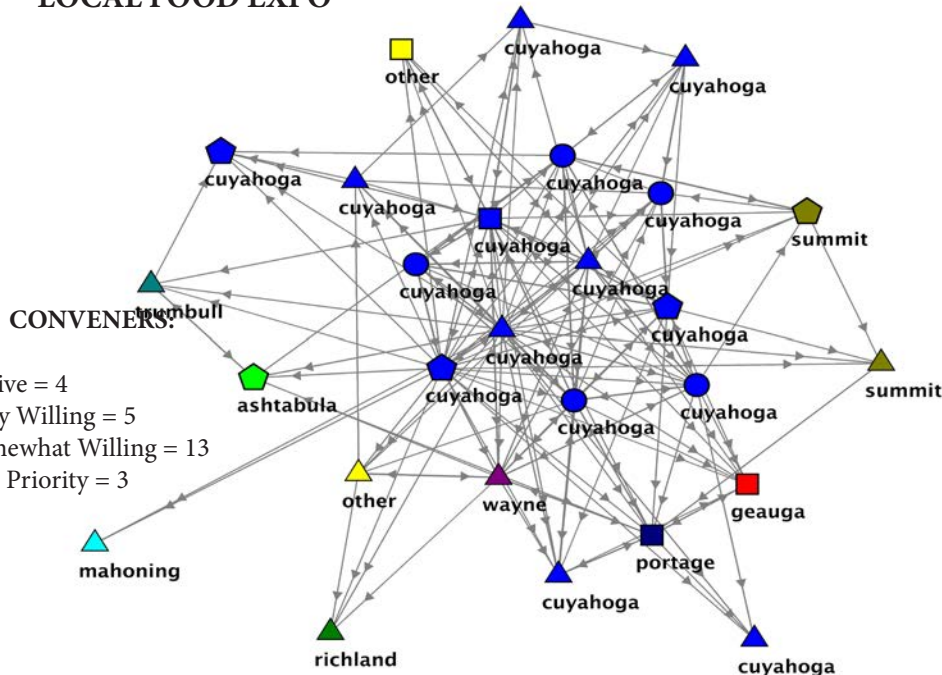
NEW MARKETS IN FOOD DESERT NEIGHBORHOODS

CONVENERS:

- Active = 2
- ◇ Very Willing = 5
- △ Somewhat Willing = 7
- Not Priority = 3



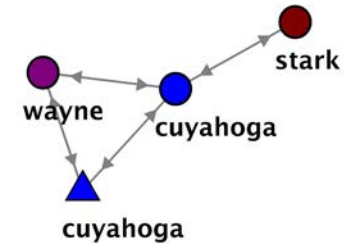
LOCAL FOOD EXPO



SOIL CARBON PROJECT

CONVENERS:

- Active = 3
- ◇ Very Willing = 0
- △ Somewhat Willing = 1
- Not Priority = 0



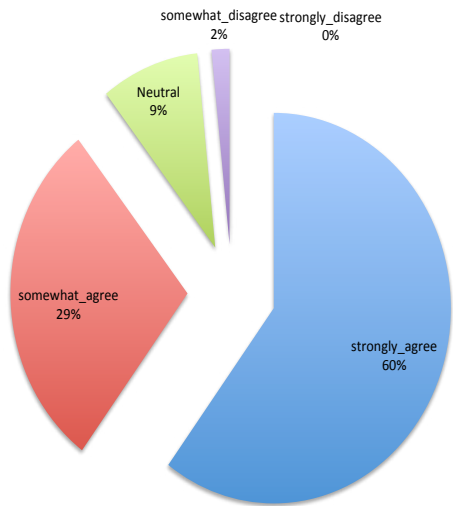
Here are the network maps for each project. Does looking at these in terms of networks change how you think about what projects to pursue?

Knitting the Network II

REGIONAL NETWORK GROWTH MECHANISMS

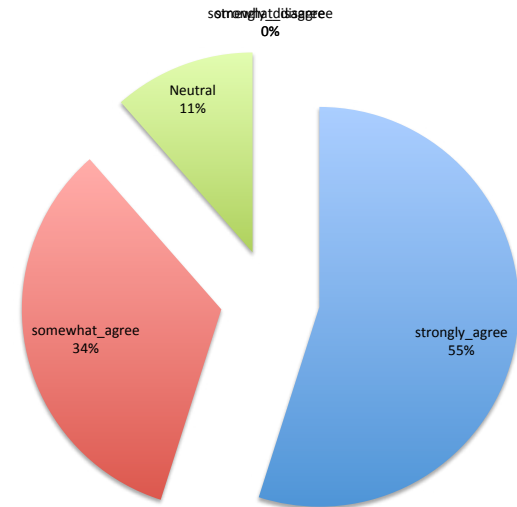
MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM

Regional Food Council



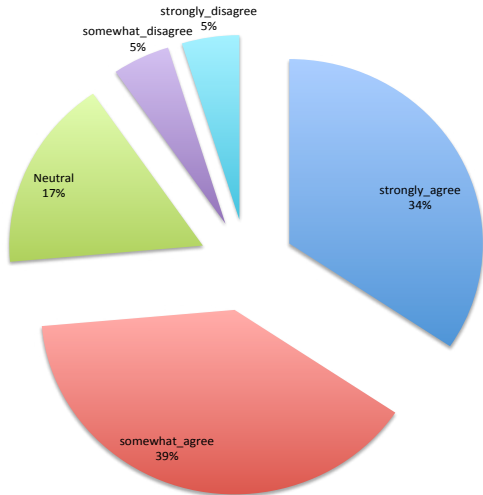
89%
Agree

Regional Learning Network



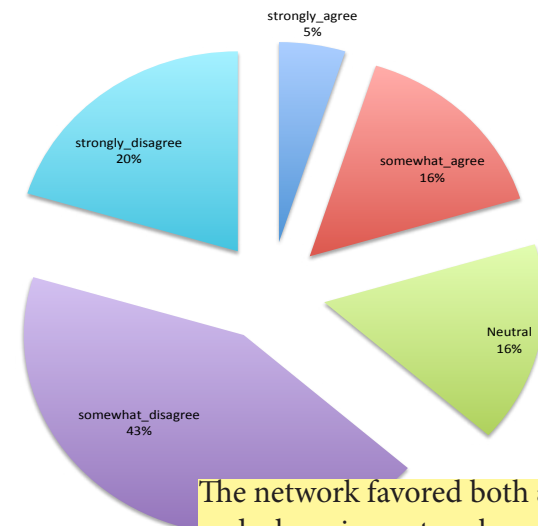
89%
Agree

Local Food Authority



73%
Agree

No Regional Formation



21%
Agree

The network favored both a local food council and a learning network equally. Which mechanism(s) best supports projects?

A complex network graph with many nodes and edges, overlaid with text. The nodes are small squares, some colored (blue, yellow, green, red, purple, pink, cyan) and some grey. The edges are thin grey lines connecting the nodes. The text is in a bold, black, serif font, centered on the page. The background is white.

THE NETWORK APPROACH

1) ENCOURAGES US TO START SHARING TO PROVIDE NEW INSIGHTS ABOUT OUR WORK

2) ABOUT BEING MORE INCLUSIVE AND REACHING OUT TO EVERYONE IMPACTED

3) ABOUT EXPERIMENTATION AND REFLECTION

