

Thank you Ivor.

There are so many great reasons to get involved in promoting local food, from health to sustainability to job creation. *My* first motivator was my children, and my concern for their health and the health of their world. Simply put, I want to feed my children food that I can trace to its source.

I joined Grasshoppers, specifically, to help my friend, Ivor, an inspiring, fearless, and dedicated visionary. Through the efforts of *many* people over many years, Louisville is now positioned to be a leader, showing the way to reinvigorate a local food economy. We have so much to build upon here from our hard working farmers to tireless nonprofit sector advocates to our policy and government advocates to a thriving private sector to the leadership of Mayor Fischer.

In Louisville, we now face a tipping point. One of those rare opportunities to turn local food from a fringe idea to the mainstream way that people eat. And the biggest reason... the reason that the politicians and private sector leaders are taking notice? Because **consumers** are showing their power through demanding local food and transparency in food sourcing. That is how we will put the economy in local food economy, and add jobs and circulate dollars back into our family farms and small businesses.

So how do we in this room take advantage of this moment and successfully leap frog to a thriving local food economy? It will take 5 things coming together: Consumer demand, Fair Pricing, Cooking, Capital with Technical Assistance, and Shared Best Practices.

First, we need **Consumers to make that choice every day**. Consumers are the tidal wave that will ultimately change the way people eat. So we are asking our City to set a goal for yourself and your family. Have 25% of the food you eat be local. Grow some of your own. And when you go into a restaurant, ask what they have on the menu that is local? Ask the food service at your employer or school to add at least one local item to

the menu every day. When you decide to shop, look for local options, from farmer's markets to the local section in the grocery store to a traditional farmer's CSA.

Or, do all your shopping with Grasshoppers. All year-round you can buy from us local eggs, milk, cheeses, chickens, beef, pork, mushrooms, flour, soy sauce, locally brewed coffee, locally baked bread, and as many locally grown fruits and veggies as you can handle! That right there is over 25% of your food consumption! And the impact of this one act... eating fresh, local food will be felt in better health and more jobs for our city, and the resurgence of family farming throughout our state. At Grasshoppers alone, we would be paying family farmers some 5 million dollars a year and adding 20 jobs to our local economy.

Next, we need to grapple with **PRICE**. People think good food is expensive because their comparison is McDonald's. But when you cook more, you spend less money... on food and on healthcare. If we're going to make this work, we've got to be willing to pay a fair, not unreasonable, price for our food, so that farmers can afford to grow it in a way that is sustainable.

On the other hand, we don't want to leave out the many folks whose resources are stretched daily in a choice among the rent, utilities, medicine and food. Grasshoppers is working to partner with producers, such as Marksbury Market, and neighborhood groups to offer a food share that is more reasonably priced and available to those with limited resources.

Third, we need to relearn how to **COOK!** Much like we are losing the art of growing food, we have lost the art of everyday, simple cooking with fresh local ingredients. We all need to reach back to our grandparents' tradition of standing with our families around the hearth and cooking and eating and sharing our days. Please join us to help teach people how to cook again by sharing simple recipes, offering cooking demonstrations, and inviting others to a local meal in *your* home.

But if consumers do their part, we'd better get those farmers and food entrepreneurs up and running so we've got enough food to meet this challenge!

So FOURTH – we need CAPITAL that comes with TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE Every day at Grasshoppers we talk to farmers asking them to grow more food for us because consumers are demanding more. Willis Schrock at JD Country Milk struggles to supply all the milk that people want because he needs cash to buy his glass bottles while he waits for you to return them. The cheese maker needs cash so he can let his cheeses age and not be forced to sell them before they're ready. Mary Courtney and others are trying to shift from tobacco to chemical free produce, but these transitions cost money and require a clear market.

Micro loans are an innovative trend that can help in this context. So would you be willing to make a \$100 loan to the farmer who grows tomatoes or corn or chicken for you? And make a commitment to buy the tomatoes he or she grows, so that his market is guaranteed and the loan can be paid back? At Grasshoppers, we think that much like Kiva has done in other countries, we can tap into the energy of the community of folks in Kentucky who want to see our local food economy thriving, and who are willing to support it by making a \$100 0% interest loan to their farmers. That's about what you're getting on your savings or money market account today, but this investment will yield meaningful social returns that you can be proud of, from preserving our farm land to reducing our carbon footprint. If twenty thousand Kentucky consumers made one hundred dollar loans to farmers every year, we'd have a \$10 million loan fund over 5 years.

With guidance from folks in Louisville like the Beargrass Christian and other micro-lending programs, who have been working on micro-lending in other sectors, and with the vision, leadership and support of Emily Bingham and Stephen Reily, Grasshoppers is launching Seed Capital Kentucky, a non-profit organization established to support the growth of family-scale farmers and small food entrepreneurs to stimulate production to meet the growing demand for local food in our community.

Finally, we all need to SHARE BEST PRACTICES. There are so many of us working on various pieces of this puzzle in Kentucky and all around the country. We need the benefit of each others ideas and support, from the national level, such as TED and the Glynwood Institute, to state support and the support of local leaders. I ask you to join Grasshoppers and all the other advocates of local food to help us *recognize this moment*, and take advantage of the energy and momentum represented in this room, and leap frog local food into the mainstream.

Thank you so much for your time and attention.