

**Harrisdale Homestead  
A Project of the Wallace Foundation**

**Annual Report March, 2018**

**We are reviewing and updating our mission:** *To contribute to rural economic and social vitality through activities that promote locally-produced foods and public health, contribute to public understanding of the food system, advance agricultural sustainability, cultivate community, and foster democratic participation and leadership. (See Appendix for our definitions of key terms)*

**Our continuing goals (2018-2020) and supporting activities:**

**GOAL 1:** To participate in community activities, organizations, and initiatives for fostering:

- \$ health and well-being and improved quality of life.
- \$ understanding of agriculture, food, and community development and their interconnections.
- \$ strategic planning.
- \$ increased production and marketing of local food.
- \$ an appreciation of the value of a diverse food and agriculture system including local food and revenue generating exports (corn & soybeans).

**Activities in 2017:** We continued to participate in Healthy Cass County, Cass County Local Food Policy Council (CCLFPC), Cass County Local Food Action Coalition, Southwest Iowa Food and Farming Initiative (SWIFFI), and Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG; formerly under the Leopold Center, but now a project of ISU Extension). Gil served as the chair the CCLFPC.

**Plans for 2018:** We anticipate continuing our involvement in the same organizations.

**GOAL 2.** Collaborate in organizing events intended to increase the appreciation of agriculture and local, healthful food.

**Activities in 2017:** We collaborated with the 2016 Local Food and Farms Celebration partners-- Rolling Acres Farm, Brun Ko Farm, and Harrisdale Farmstead--to sponsor the 2017 Local Food and Farms Celebration in September. This year's event was expanded to include 3 additional farms--Smith Generation Farms (at Harrisdale) exhibiting planting and harvesting equipment with a focus on cover crops, Alan Robinson with a focus on mid-scale beef production, and Barry Robinson with a focus on fledgling diversified local foods enterprise. The collaborators also increased the number of organizational exhibitors at the respective sites, including the Wallace Foundation exhibit at Harrisdale. In addition, we worked with Sweet Joy Shoppe in Atlantic to offer a local foods dinner that evening. This meal featured local meats processed by local lockers and locally-grown produce.

**Plans for 2018:** We plan to continue collaborating with last year's partners to organize another Local Food and Farms Celebration. We have been discussing goals for modest growth in the

event while trying to keep it geographically compact and organizationally manageable.

**GOAL 3:** To participate in professional activities that relate to the Harrisdale Homestead mission.

**Activities in 2017:**

- \$ Ardy: member of NC-1196 USDA Multistate Research Project, board co-chair for Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems
- \$ Gil: associate editor for *Renewable Agriculture & Food Systems*, member of the team for NAFSN's Professional Certification Program in Food Systems Development, board member for Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems
- \$ Ardy is co-author of the introductory chapter of the book, *The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Guide to Nutrition Communication*.

**Plans for 2018:** We are currently anticipating continuing with the same activities as in 2017.

**GOAL 4:** Move forward the Wallace Foundation "Local Farms, Food, and Marketing" and "Resources, Membership and Youth Involvement" committees.

**Activities in 2017:** No significant progress.

**Plans for 2018:** In conjunction with the Wallace Foundation Board we propose to reorganize, revision & revitalize these committees and to find additional mostly younger members. Identifying prospective members would be an ongoing activity, but most committee work will need to take place in the months of November through February.

**LONGER TERM GOALS 2021 - 2023:**

Continue work on the current goals plus:

- \$ Assist community organizations and initiatives in studying and evaluating community-based programming goals and strategies.
- \$ Developing in collaboration with other partners an incubator for beginning farmers interested in fruit, vegetable, and small-scale livestock production.

## **Appendix: Our Definitions of Key Terms**

Rural economic and social vitality: We think that for a locality to be a good place for people to live requires (a) an economic base that provides opportunities for provisioning the adequate goods and services; (b) a social “climate” that is conducive to people feeling included, supported, and valued; and (c) broad-based democratic decision-making practices that promote the general welfare by effectively addressing issues, solving problems, and seizing opportunities.

Activities include investing our time, expertise, and resources both in our own initiatives and in organizations that share our goals of promoting rural economic and social vitality.

Locally-produced foods include any food or food product grown or processed in a location geographically-proximate (e.g., within the county or adjacent counties) to that product’s consumer. We deem "local" to be valuable only to the extent that it is associated with freshness, nutritiousness, transparency, social justice, producer benefits, and ecosystem health.

Public health refers to the prevalence of good physical health among members of the population resulting from good diets, adequate exercise, reasonable access to needed medical treatment, etc. It also refers to having satisfaction with life and a sense of well-being in the populace.

Food system includes the ecological base in land, the agricultural inputs and suppliers, the range of all agricultural producers and practices, produce buyers, food-related transport systems, food processors and distributors, food retailers, food pantries, household food-related equipment and practices, family and community food decision-making, and food waste practices and facilities.

Agricultural sustainability refers broadly to the capacity for a social grouping to continue to supply the needs of its members from available resources over a long period of time under a wide range of social and ecological changes.

Community (as distinguished from locality of habitation) involves people possessing a strong sense of shared identity, mutual concerns, and collective interest shaping extensive social networks characterized by cooperative, collaborative, and mutually supporting social relationships. Community is important for motivating people to work together both to address problems and issues and to act on opportunities.

Democratic participation and leadership refers to having broad-based and meaningful involvement in important public decisions as well as allowing for any ordinary, competent citizen to take an active role in public deliberations on issues and problem solutions.