

Harrisdale Homestead
A Project of the Wallace Foundation

Annual Report February 2020

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 A for our definitions of key terms)*

Our continuing goals (2019-2021) and supporting activities:¹

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 consumption of local food.
- an appreciation of the value of a diverse food and agriculture system including food produced for local consumption and revenue-generating exports (corn & soybeans).

Activities in 2019:

- We continued to participate in Healthy Cass County (HCC), Cass County Local Food Policy Council (CCLFPC), the state-wide Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG; formerly under the Leopold Center), and Practical Farmers of Iowa.
- Ardy has contributed to Healthy Cass County planning and evaluation. She was part of the team seeking local financial support for a Cass County health coordinator. The position has been created and Brigham Hoegh has been hired. She's off to a great start.
- We presented as co-authors on "Community Builders Process for Local Food System Development," at the joint annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Food and Society / Agriculture Food, and Human Values Society (ASFS/AFHVS) that was held last June at the University of Alaska in Anchorage. This presentation focused on the food and agriculture component of a larger local community development project conducted in Cass County 2004-6 & 2009. Our goal was to highlight the community development achievements and to share the process with others who might find it useful in their localities.

¹ We describe below what we have been doing "wearing" the "Harrisdale Homestead" hat. As a matter of our responsibility to the board of the Wallace Foundation as a not-for-profit organization, in any of our activities in which confusion might arise about which of the three entities associated with the Harrisdale name--Harrisdale Homestead, Harrisdale Farmstead, and Harrisdale Farm—we are acting under, we strive to be clear and transparent. The "Farmstead" is our for-profit local foods production enterprise in which we have been growing and selling local foods by order and at farmers' markets. The "Farm" is Ardy's family's farmland which we now own. We rent to a local farmer who grows corn and soybeans. Clearly our experiences in each of these different entities informs our thinking about the other. For example, working with our renter and NRCS personnel with regard to the "Farm" helps to ground us in the practical realities of contemporary conventional agriculture.

- We presented on our activities and goals to the following organizations: Kiwanis, Atlantic Lyons Club and the Atlantic Rotary club.

Plans for 2020: We anticipate continuing our involvement in the same organizations at similar levels. We plan to work with our co-authors to submit a manuscript on the Community Builders process for publication in the open-access, peer-reviewed *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (JAFSCD).

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

Activities in 2019:

- We collaborated with the 2016-17 Local Food and Farms Celebration partners--Rolling Acres Farm, Brun Ko Farm, and Harrisdale Farmstead--to sponsor the 2019 Local Food and Farms Celebration in early October. This year the event was scaled back due to scheduling issues that limited participation. Exhibits during the event included the Wallace Foundation, DezaRae Farm soap products, the Cass County Local Food Policy Council, and Healthy Cass County. The event flier is appended to this report. At last year's celebration we had modest numbers of very interested open-house participants at all three sites.

Plans for 2020: We will soon begin planning with last year's partners and other community members to organize another Local Food and Farms Celebration, this year at a better time.

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

Activities in 2019:

- Ardy is a member of NC-1196 USDA Multistate Research Project and Gil and Ardy are on the leadership team of the Thomas A. Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems (<http://lysoncenter.org/>), a project of Cornell University's not for profit umbrella called the Center for Transformative Action.
- Ardy is co-author of the introductory chapter, "Communication is the Essence of Nutrition Practice" (Mayfield and Gillespie), for the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Guide to Nutrition Communication*, edited by B. Mayfield, 2020.
- Gil is an associate editor for *Renewable Agriculture & Food Systems* for which he manages the peer review process for approximately four manuscripts per year.
- Gil and Ardy serve as advisors to the Lyson Center's *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* (JAFSCD); <https://www.foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj/about>), and Gil reviews manuscripts for JAFSCD.

Plans for 2020: We are currently anticipating continuing with the same professional activities as in 2019. We are becoming a shareholder the JAFSCD journal because we think that its focus ". . . on the **practice** of agriculture and food system development. . ." is very consistent with both the goals of the Wallace Foundation and with the practical and applied research that we think we

need for rural development.

LONGER TERM GOALS 2020 - 2023:

Continue work on the current goals plus:

- Assist community organizations and initiatives in studying and evaluating community-based programming.
- Develop more effective means and practices for reasoned discussion and examination of agriculture and local food to increase the general public's understanding and appreciation of the topic. Ardy has been engaging people in discussions about related topics and Gil is contemplating working to develop tools modeled after the National Issues Forum dialogue process to engage people in considering what kind of agriculture and food system they would like to see in the future. In this effort, we are open to assisting in "connecting the dots" regarding current and potential organizations and initiatives to maximize use of resources and to improve communication.
- Our goal, articulated in last year's report, of developing, in collaboration with other partners, an incubator for beginning farmers interested in fruit, vegetable, and small-scale livestock production has been put on the back burner for the time being because we lack suitable onsite housing and because of concerns about the prospects for profitability from small enterprises.

Appendix A: 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 nearby counties) to that product’s consumer. We deem "local" to be valuable only to the extent that it is associated with freshness, nutritional value, transparency, social justice, producer benefits, and ecosystem viability.

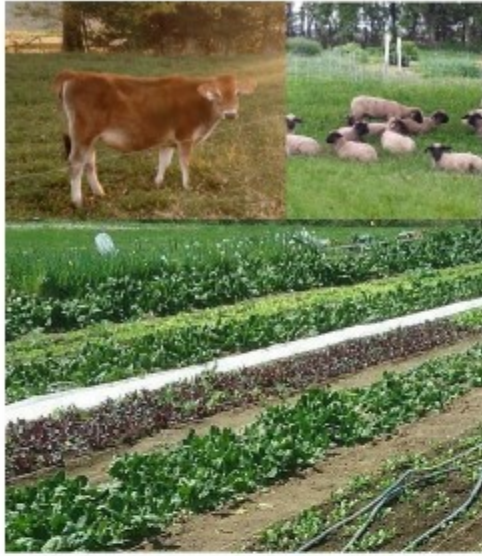
Public health refers to the prevalence of good physical health among members of the population resulting from good diets, adequate exercise, reasonable access to needed medical treatment, etc. It also refers to having satisfaction with life and a sense of well-being among the populace.

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 strong bonds of shared identity, mutual concern, and collective interest; bonds that shape social networks to be 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.



4th Annual
*Local Food
& Farm
Celebration*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH
10 AM-4 PM GUIDED FARM
TOURS & ACTIVITIES
PICNIC LUNCH @ NOON

Visit a diverse set of farms located between Atlantic and Elk Horn.
Explore a world full of vegetables, fruits, row crops, livestock and bees.
Experience the farms, get to know the farmers, and give the kids a chance
to get up close and personal with dirt, veggies, tractors and animals!

**Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on any of the farms over the noon hour.
Water & lemonade will be provided.**

Maps are available online and signs will be posted along the route!

Open House Farm Locations

Harrisdale Farmstead - fruit, veg. & sheep
Rolling Acres Farm - organic vegetables
Brun Ko Farm - pastured beef & pork

Exhibits

DezaRae Farms - goats
Smith Generation Farms, Inc
Wallace Foundation
Cass County Local Food Policy
Council

For more information contact Emily @ 712-249-3187
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