From the holdings of the Department of Special Collections , Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ

These documents are either in the public domain, or can only be used for educational and research purposes (Fair use) as per U.S. Copyright law (text below). By accessing this file, all users agree that their use falls in the public domain or within fair use as defined by the copyrightlaw. We do not charge any permission or usage fees for the publication of images of material inour collections, including those provided by Princeton University Library, via our website, catalog, or directly from staff.For more information regarding copyright, credit, and citation please review the information onthe Copyright, Credit and Citation Guidelines page of our website.
https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/policies/copyright-credit-and-citation-guidelines. If you have any questions, including how to order higher-quality images from the collection, contact Special Collections Public Services via our Ask Us! Form. https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/ask-us

---

Doctoral Dissertations, 2011-2026 Sociology

2014

Organizational Form and Mission in the Alternative Food Movement

Schacht, Stephanie

Princeton, NJ : Princeton University

---

http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/dsp014x51hm25c

U.S. Copyright law: The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, §108, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of fair use that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve a violation of copyright law. https://www.copyright.gov/title17/title17.pdf

ORGANIZATIONAL FORM AND MISSION IN THE ALTERNATIVE FOOD MOVEMENT

Stephanie Schacht

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY

OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

RECOMMENDED FOR ACCEPTANCE

BY THE DEPARTMENT OF

SOCIOLOGY

Advisers: Viviana Zelizer (Co-Chair)

Miguel Centeno (Co-Chair)

Paul DiMaggio (Adviser)

September 2014

© Copyright by Stephanie Schacht, 2014. All rights reserved.

Abstract:

Scholars and journalists alike have looked to the local food movement as an example of a rise in "ethical consumption" or "consumer citizenship," either deriding it as weak form of social movement activity or praising it as a strong form of embedded economic activity. I examine the alternative food movement as a set of new consumer organizations with specially defined ethical and communal goals and ask how organizational structure and mission impact the practices these organizations undertake to implement various social and economic goals. I first interview over 20 founders from the field to understand how founding motivations are associated with structural and mission focused considerations, providing broad context into the field as a whole. The bulk of my analysis is, however, a deep dive: extended participant observation on six organizations over the course of the selling season, running each week or more over about six months, with follow up communications and interviews. Narrowing my focus on two organizational forms—markets and cooperatives—and three types of missions—instrumental, food focused goals; social justice goals; and both—I examine how aspects of relational work varied across organizations, based on their missions and forms. In so doing I uncover a picture of social purpose organizations that is both richer and more complex than earlier theory on these organizations has suggested.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	**pgs 1-18**
Chapter 1	**pgs 19-72**
Chapter 2	**pgs 73-132**
Chapter 3	**pgs 133-200**
Chapter 4	**pgs 201-256**
Conclusion	**pgs 257-268**
Works Cited	**pgs 269-277**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the advice, time, and encouragement of many friends, family, advisors, and research participants.

First thanks go to my committee members, Viviana Zelizer, Miguel Centeno, and Paul DiMaggio, for their tireless reading and re-reading of my work over the years. You've offered wisdom in so many overarching and pinpointed ways in this dissertation's various stages of development, from ideation, to implementation, to first and second and many later drafts. You've allowed me the flexibility to try new ideas and methods, pushed me to think more clearly and potently. Each of you has been an invaluable mentor in my development as a sociologist. For all of this intellectual contribution, as well as your good humor and great care, I am forever indebted.

I must acknowledge with thanks as well my second readers, King-To Yeung and Patricia Fernandez for their participation in my defense. By taking the time to offer your comments and expertise, you've made the experience of presenting one's culminating work a pleasant and enriching one. I thank King as well for his instruction over the years in cultural sociology.

Beyond the dissertation itself, I owe thanks to other faculty members who helped cultivate my sociological imagination over my years at Princeton: Delia Baldassari, Mitch Duneier, Sara McLanahan, Katherine Newman, Martin Ruef, Matt Salganik.

My gratitude goes as well to my family for their support of my intellectual curiosity over the years and for their encouragement of my professional pursuits. I thank my mother for pushing me to get the best education possible, in spite of financial and cultural constraints and for creating opportunities for me to attend college, something she'd foregone herself. I thank my father also for the sacrifices he made to allow this trajectory to be possible, for travel that broadened my horizons as a child, and for keeping me on task when I'd wanted to quit. I thank my stepmother for her love of food and commitment to agriculture, something that no doubt informed my research on many levels.

My friends at Princeton, in New York, and spread many far and wide: you gave me great ideas, helped me craft my elevator pitch again and again, and, most importantly, kept me social, well fed, and laughing in the midst of what could otherwise have been an isolating time writing. I'm thankful for the salons we hosted in Brooklyn living rooms, the dance parties at D-Bar and karaoke at The Ivy, the study and writing dates at countless cafes, the late nights in Firestone and Wallace. Your goodness was so good to me.

Last, but not least, I am grateful to everyone who participated in my research. You helped this become what it is through your wisdom, dedication, and heart. Allowing me a glimpse into the work you do was a personal treat with professional impact, for which I am indebted and appreciative. Try as I might have, I know this dissertation cannot do you and your work full justice: you nurture those around you well beyond the food and well beyond what my words can convey.

INTRODUCTION

The "alternative food movement" has gained increasing strength in the United States, representing a significant contemporary consumer movement. A survey of popular media reveals this proliferation of "alternative food" in the minds of mainstream consumers, with newspapers like the *New York Times* painting the farmers market as a core urban backdrop, and books like Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma* and Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral* and documentary films such as Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation* and Robert Kenner's *Food Inc*. chronicling the ills of mainstream forms of food production and advocating alternative food systems. Moreover, the alternative food movement is not only about food—it is also part of a broader movement of "ethical consumption" or "consumer citizenship" that has attracted consumers and economic sociologists (Sassatelli 2006). In these movements, consumers purposefully invest economic decisions with ethical determinations and invest ethical decisions with economic determinations. In so doing, the alternative food movement has gathered advocates and critics, not unlike other attempts to mix ethics with economic action (Fourcade and Healy 2007). Scholars and journalists alike have debated whether the local food movement is a social movement (Alkon and Norgaard 2009, Allen et al. 2006, Barham 1997, Lyson 2004, Macias 2008) or not (Fahlquist 2009, Armstrong and Bernstein 2008, Sassatelli 2006, Johnston 2008, Jacobsen and Dulsrud 2007), but the range and depth of this economic activity, as it takes structure and meaning in the form of organizations, has often been overlooked.

The motivation for this project came out of two separate threads of experience I was having when the project began. The first was a desire, based on previous research projects, to better understand how social change worked in the context of economic activity, where and how change was successfully implemented, and where and how it faced resistance. The second was related, and also personal: I started changing my own consumption patterns to be more in line with values that were becoming more important to me at the time. I had joined a community-supported agriculture (CSA) organization and became interested in the possibility of what some call "food sovereignty," taking more control over my own food production, joining a community garden near my home to raise chickens and eat locally produced eggs. I got a lot of joy out of these experiences of consuming and producing more locally, and I noticed that other people did, too. Having been interested in corporate social responsibility and ethical investing, I decided to spend time with an economically oriented movement that I was already involved with personally, one that was working at the grassroots level. Questions remained for me: How did organizations working in the economic sphere promote social goals? Was this an easy or effortful project, what meanings were mobilized, what relations developed, what boundaries were set, and what challenges were faced where? The alternative food movement presented, for me personally but also more broadly, an intrinsically compelling research site for a question of far-reaching interest: How do organizations involved in economic action make ethical commitments, and how do they implement them? Or, to pose the question differently: How can social purpose entities infuse economic action with their missions?

As an economic movement, the alternative food movement encompasses a wide array of organizations promoting consumption-, production-, and distribution-oriented change. These economic models include brick-and-mortar co-ops, producer-distribution networks of free food, freeganism, buying clubs, and other alternative-consumption models, including, for example, local currencies and time-exchange arrangements. I focus on two of the more ubiquitous among these organizational forms, which are interesting for theoretical reasons: farmers markets and CSA arrangements. These two organizational forms present an axis of variation following the wide literature in organizational and economic sociology on differences between co-operative[1] and market forms of organizing economic action. From the myriad potential missions of these organizations (something I will also look into), for theoretical reasons I focus on two. On one hand, the provision of fresh, local produce can be seen as an individualized goal whereby consumers focus on specific characteristics of food: its freshness and its origin. On the other hand, the achievement of social justice can be seen as a collective goal whereby individuals organize toward solving issues of inequality.

Even if social movements are much more than organizations, in the case of the alternative food movement (and many other movements), organizations are a key part of what sustains the movement's work. Farmers markets, CSAs, and other alternative food

[1] While some have argued that CSAs have simply become subscriptions and are no longer buyer cooperatives, in the field from which I sample, most CSAs are community organized by one or more community members who finds other neighbors to join in membership, coworking, and sharing of the farmers' risk and reward. I later learned in fieldwork that leaders of CSAs often call the organization a co-op when describing it to outsiders unfamiliar with the form. The general rule of democratic participation in work and equal involvement is something that not even all co-op brick-and-mortars do.

organizations are the sites of exchange through which consumers engage with whatever constitutes their commitment to "alternative food." These organizations, in presenting an "alternative," come with strong missions and also, at times, convictions about the way food should be consumed, produced, and/or distributed. However, implementation is another process, involving several steps: deciding on the mission of the organization, deciding what form the organization of work will take, making formal accounts of what the organization does or will do, and putting this work into practice on the ground. This dissertation delves into that process step by step, examining variation by organizational form and mission in the outcomes of organizations in the alternative food movement.

Background on Alternative Food Institutions

I intend to explore farmers markets and community-supported agriculture groups, two organizational forms related to the alternative food movement, alternatively called the "locavore" movement or "alternative food institutions" (AFIs). Participation in this movement involves multivalent meanings, from better health to more connected communities, to environmental sustainability and support of the small over the industrial. The organizations are deeply economic—proposing to change consumption in line with a different form of production and/or distribution. The alternative food movement has grown rapidly in recent years, and it is more and more in the public consciousness in the US.

Farmers markets and CSAs are popular manifestations of the alternative food phenomenon, but each has particularities. Both of these economic structures involve

sharing resources between producers and consumers, sometimes with the exchange of currency, sometimes with the exchange of goods and services, and sometimes with combinations of the two. Farmers markets are organized with a market exchange interface. Farmers market transactions typically occur in open air (though some markets are indoors), and farmers and/or farm staff interact directly with individuals who are usually buying for own or home consumption. They've been compared to prototypical pre-modern markets, reviving connection in public spaces. Meanwhile, CSAs can be classified as co-operative structures whereby a community joins together to support a farmer, coordinating funds and organizing efforts of the economic structure and receiving produce from a partner farm.[2] While many CSAs in the US are initiated by farmers, CSAs in New York City are often organized by community members[3], who then seek partner farmers, and community consumers continue to volunteer labor to keep the CSA running; thus, this New York City CSA model can be described as a co-operative structure. Both farmers markets and CSAs tend to focus on providing a market for fresh, local fruits and vegetables. Farmers markets in New York City generally focus on produce, while also allowing the sale of certain prepared foods made with local ingredients, such as apple juice from local apples. Honey, dairy, and sometimes meat, poultry, and fish are also allowed, with certain restrictions. CSAs in New York City generally start with a mandatory vegetable share, after which members may also be

[2] Co-operatives have been defined as organizations that "replace market relations between a corporation and its consumers or producers with relations of ownership, control, and collective self-provision" and that act "as a 'third way' between markets and states or corporations or as a way to organize outside established institutions" (Schneiberg et al. 2008: 637, 639).

[3] Some of the farmers market founders I interviewed for Chapter One also founded CSAs, as organizational projects. However, most CSA founders I interviewed and all CSAs observed in depth were community originating.

offered shares or a la carte offerings from food producers, such as dairy, fruit, meat, or even coffee, wine, and fish.

Review of Literature on Alternative Food Institutions

Most of the existing literature on alternative food systems emphasizes how alternative food organizations differ from other ways of buying and selling food rather than investigating the different outcomes, goals, and organizational forms of alternative food organizations. In this literature contrasting the alternative food movement with other food movements, authors tend to point to the "embeddedness" of "alternative" food systems as compared to other "conventional" food systems. According to Feagan (2007), concepts of "embeddedness" have often been associated with local markets in the literature: more local equals more embedded. Similarly, Lyson and Green (1999) compare socioeconomic paradigms of global and local food systems to MacKenzie's (1995) corporate vs. community capitalism; Barham (1997) examines the sustainable agriculture movement in France as a protest against an encroaching market logic; and O'Hara and Stagl (2001) use "local" and "embedded" synonymously in a study of US CSAs.

While the embeddedness literature focuses on social ties in the alternative food movement, other empirical work focuses on ideologies or moral claims as another axis of variation among alternative food organizations. However, the majority of these works (Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007, Winter 2003, Hinrichs and Kremer 2002, Cone and Myrhe 2000) do not investigate differences across organizational form. Furthermore, studies that do examine different goals like social justice and fresh produce do so only at

the level of participant feelings, perhaps with the exception of Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007), who take a cynical view of CSAs' organizational rhetoric . This leaves an unanswered question: How are broader categories of social organization (at the organizational form level) associated with the formalization and implementation of certain ideological goals?

Some literature on the alternative food movement does consider how differences in organizational form may impact movement outcomes. Hinrichs (2000) takes a comparative approach, proposing differences in "embeddedness" between farmers' markets and CSAs, and borrowing Block's assertion that all markets balance embeddness, instrumentalism, and "marketness." Hinrichs (2000) specifies that social ties are one axis of variation along which differences may appear across organizational forms, but, unfortunately, this work includes no corresponding empirical analysis. Sage (2003) compares the two organizational forms empirically, finding that members of organic and artisanal food networks in Ireland emphasize the opportunity to connect over face-to-face interactions as a factor supporting their choice to participate in these alternative food networks. Ultimately, Sage (2003) stops with an analysis of participant satisfaction and its connection to the flexibility of each form. A broader literature has focused on producer co-operatives in the agricultural sector (Krivokapic-Skoko 2002), comparing this form to other forms of organization.

Other work on CSAs and farmers markets suggests that they may be associated with different ideologies, with implications for our investigation of how missions might vary

across the two organizational forms. One of the original goals of CSAs was to support a local farmer through policies of internal redistribution, with higher-income members of the cooperative paying more so that lower income-members could pay less (Allen et al. 2006). Following this, we might expect co-operatives and social justice goals to be paired. However, empirical work on alternative food organizations has been inconclusive on the question of how organizational form relates to ideology and how either relates to outcomes. Some scholars (Allen et al. 2006, Macias 2008) contest the idea that CSAs can be a win-win for producers and low-income consumers, while others (Andreatta et al 2008) attempt to show how attempts to serve poor communities can be combined with the CSA form of organizing. Alkon and Norgaard (2009) argue that farmers markets are generally more concerned with promoting local farmers than with social justice, while Macias (2008) suggests that markets do a better job than CSAs in dealing with food equity. Hendrickson (2009) suggests that alternative food systems do not have clear visions and cites this as a weakness of the movement relative to the dominant system of agricultural production, while Alkon and Norgaard (2009) highlight exceptional cases in which the market form is intermixed with "food justice," a combination of antiracism and social justice "reshap[ing] thinking within the fields of sustainable agriculture and environmental justice" (300).

If the literature has been inconclusive on the outcomes of alternative food organizations, it has also told us little about their informal practices. Many articles come closer to an exposé of a movement than a systemic comparison of particular organizations (Hendrickson 2009). For example, the cases Fisher (1999) examines in New York City

imply that the New York Greenmarket system's implementation of food stamps does more to help small farmers than to help poor individuals. La Pradelle (2006) also suggests that some of the core missions of farmers markets (local, non-industrial production) that she studies in France are not implemented in practice—that where the traditional market "works," at Carpentras, it does so through a kind of illusion of equality, as the public space encourages personal friendliness without mention of social hierarchy or difference. A unique contribution to the relationship between organizational form and a social justice mission can be found in Guthman, Morris, and Allen (2006), who examine farm and food security in farmers markets and CSAs in California, surveying managers over the period 2004-2005. These scholars find differences in CSA and farmers market managers' perceptions how to remedy income inequality, with 22 percent of CSA managers suggesting that high-income individuals subsidize low-income shares but only one farmers market manager supporting this conclusion. In a continuation of this survey, Allen et al.'s (2006) survey of farmers market and CSA managers in California shows that most believe their organizations should have some strategy for addressing food security and attempt some way of doing this. However, they also suggest that few use direct outreach as a method and also that, in spite of these strategies, few low-income people participate in either farmers markets or CSAs. As a result, Allen and colleagues (2006) argue that "while most managers of such institutions express general interest in questions of food security, their actual practices to further these ends are constrained by both practical issues and perspectives about low-income assistance, including some skepticism of redistributive models" (Allen et al. 2006: 7). While incomplete in terms of understanding how redistributive practices intersect with other

practices, these studies highlight how informal practices may vary by the type of organization as organizations attempt to implement their missions and advance the movement.

The Framework for this Study

Alternative food movement organizations do work that is deeply economic, and which can be more usefully interrogated through the analytical frameworks available in economic sociology. Zelizer (2010) provides a useful analytical approach to the study of differences among economic arrangements by focusing on the "relational work" taking place in various sites, and I employ this framework throughout the fieldwork. Zelizer's "relational work" framework includes four aspects: social ties (among individuals or groups involved in economic activity); transactions (the interactions and social practices involving goods and services); media (representations of rights to goods and services); and shared meanings (that people attach to those social ties, transactions, and media). I add an organizational form component to this variation. Like other forms of work, we can imagine that the way relational work is done may depend on the form in which that work is organized (Durkheim 1984[1893]). And, indeed, much of the work that contrasts ways of organizing economic action has focused on at least one element among social ties, transactions, monetary media, and meanings. In this analysis, I examine relational work in on the ground practice, as it interacts with rigid structures and also responds dynamically to changing situations.

Comparing organizations with similar missions: Are similar missions implemented differently across organizational forms, and, if so, how?

There are three schools of thought on how implementation might vary by mission and organizational form: the mission trumps view, the form trumps view, or the complexity/heterogeneity view. The mission trumps view has appeared most prominently in the social movement literature, in which some scholarship has made strong contrasts between organizations based on their missions. Organizational ecology, on the other hand, has tended to treat the environment—not the founders—as the primary agent. In so doing, ecologists, following Hannan and Freeman (1977), have focused on organizational form as the key to understanding variety in organizations. In this view, missions and other organizational characteristics are seen as derivative of organizational form, and forms are seen as "structural conveyances for cultural materials that become infused with norms, values, and beliefs as entrepreneurs use frames to mobilize resources" (Rao 1998: 947). Baron and Hannan (2002), Baron et al. (2001), and Baron et al. (1996), in their work on high-tech startups, argue that founders' intentional decisions at the beginnings of their organizations shape initial structures as well as later changes.

In addition to views that suggest the primacy of mission or form, there is a view of organizational behavior that highlights the complexity and heterogeneity of what organizations do. One strong example is Bordt's (1997) study of women's nonprofit organizations in New York, which presents surprising results regarding the relevance of ideology and organizational form to a particular social movement: most women's nonprofits in New York did not fit into a bureaucratic/collective dichotomy but, rather,

were hybrids; ideology and organizational form were strongly associated only in the early stages of the movement by radical individuals; and most organizations did not talk much about structure, seeing it as emergent rather than intentional. Walker and McCarthy (2010) highlight that both goals and forms are important in distinguishing between organizational forms in community-based organizations In particular, they identify the congregation-based and individual membership-based organizational forms, "as each type of structure carries with it differential sources of legitimacy, capacities for resource cultivation, and means of membership engagement and leadership development" (320). To compare organizations at the micro level, I examine their practices following Zelizer (2010), paying particular attention to social ties, monies, transactions, and meanings.

The Chapters To Follow

In Chapter One, I examine the process of founding and look at the landscape of organizational forms and missions in the local food movement in the area from which my deeper case studies are chosen. To do so, I interview 23 founders in the alternative food movement as well as analyze documents from the field. Founding is often the focal point for understanding the relationship between organizational goals and organizational forms, and several studies in organizational sociology have focused on organizational founding. Founding is important because intentions guide how organizations are shaped and the broader social meanings aligned with fields.[4] This work builds on Schneiberg et al.'s

[4] Scott describes a process of institutional creation and diffusion by which societal institutions impose or diffuse models to fields, using DiMaggio and Powell's definition of fields. These models—"beliefs, norms, menus, and scripts"—are then imposed on or diffused through fields to individual organizations, and transferred to what he defines as "actors," with a feedback loop through which the models and menus are invented and

(2008) findings that activist entrepreneurs often chose the co-operative form for ideological reasons, Lounsbury et al.'s (2003) account of how political struggles lead to changes in cultural meanings and the emergence of new industries, and Bordt's (1997) investigation of the elective affinity between radical versions of feminism and the collective form of organizing. This chapter asks: *In what ways do missions within the same social movement differ across organizational form? Do forms or missions motivate the founding process?* Taking a birds-eye view of a localized local food movement, we see the relationship between fresh, local food and social justice missions, farmers markets and CSAs.

This second, third, and fourth chapters are based on multi-site fieldwork on six alternative food organizations, paired across three missions (fresh, local food; social justice; and the combined mission fresh, local food and social justice) across two organizational forms (farmers markets and community-supported agriculture shares). In these chapters, you will meet six organizations with which I spent significant time, and which I call Asheville FM, Abilene CSA, Boise FM, Burlington CSA, Cady CSA, and Columbus FM. Observations on these organizations were catalogued over participant observation over the course of a growing season, running each week or more over about six months, with follow up communications and interviews. Each chapter focuses on a specific axis of economic comparison, describing economic practices of each organization and how aspects of this economic behavior vary by organizational form and mission.

---

negotiated by actors, then transferred back through organizations and organizational fields (Scott 1995: 142).

Chapter Two focuses on the social ties in each organization, delving specifically into their division of labor and practice of community. In this chapter I compare how the organizations were structured, how leadership developed, and how relations with outer-ring members, customers, or neighborhood members were cultivated and bounded. We see how the markets and CSAs employed or enlisted staff and help to facilitate the economic activity, involving transactions that could vary by the degree of social stratification, formal differentiation, and material and normative reward (Bordt 1997).

Chapter Three focuses on the formal and informal practices around monies and transactions in these economies. Specifically, I analyze money and contracts, comparing how and what monies and contracts were used in the various organizations, and how the relations involved in these monies and contracts were remade in each context in keeping with organizational structure and goals. We learn how specially designated government assistance worked alongside other government-backed monies, demanding different degrees of attention and record keeping. And we also learn how contracts varied by form in the relations they marked and by mission in the meanings they articulated.

Chapter Four focuses on organizations in crisis rather than status quo, examining two organizations that faced the same crisis. In this chapter, we see relational work as a whole and examine how preexisting relations and meanings were interpreted differently in the organizations as they mobilized their crisis response. We see evidence for Schneiberg et al.'s (2008) assertion that "forms are neither chosen in a social vacuum nor simply given in actors' organizing repertoires. Rather, they have to be assembled, theorized,

disseminated, politically defended, legitimated, and made available as options for problem solving" (Schneiberg et al 2008: 638, citing Clemens 1997; Meyer et al. 1997; Rao 1998; Scott 1994).

I chose the organizations for more in-depth fieldwork based on stated differences in their missions, which I learned in mapping the field (the analysis presented in Chapter One). The organizational design was structured around comparison across two axes: 1) by form, comparing three CSAs and three FMs and 2) by mission (names that start with the same letter, like Asheville and Abilene, have similar missions). Asheville FM and Abilene CSA had missions that focus on instrumental, food-focused goals. The organizations were situated in demographically different environments, with one in a predominately white, middle- to upper-class neighborhood and the other in a historically black, mixed-income neighborhood. Each was a freestanding economy, with farmers who sold at other farmers markets or CSAs in the area. Boise FM and Burlington CSA had missions focused dually on food and social justice goals. Both groups were in historically low-income immigrant neighborhoods of color that still retained that demographic base while also now including young white populations. In both cases, materials were translated into Spanish and in some cases into other languages, to be accessible to the community. The farmers market was part of a project with other food-related goals. Cady CSA and Columbus FM represent organizations with missions that leaned more heavily toward social justice goals than the average CSA or farmers market. One was situated in what was predominantly a community of color, with many immigrants and an average income lower than many other areas in the city, while the other was in a now relatively affluent

neighborhood of mixed racial and ethnic composition. Both were associated with nonprofit organizations that were very community-based.

I do not delve into gender in the analysis that follows, though I acknowledge the importance of gender in economic life. The provisioning of food has often been seen as women's work and still is, to this day. Furthermore, Acker (1990) and others have asserted the relevance of studying gender inside organizations as well as in organizational structure. The six organizations with which I did fieldwork promoted new structures that, it turned out, involved both men and women, in cooperatives and markets, and in leadership positions and non-leadership positions. In each pair but one, there was a difference in gender in the leadership, with one of the leaders identifying as male and the other as female. I chose to randomize gender in the results to protect the organizations as well as to focus the analysis on their character rather than the gender of their participants. This is quite contrary to the "positing of gender-neutral and disembodied organizational structures and work relations [as] part of the larger strategy of control in industrial capitalist societies" (Acker 1990: 139). What I found, and what I highlight here, is the degree to which economic change in this subset of organizations was promoted by organizations involving both men and women, in ways that accorded more with the organizational goals than the gender of participants. The fact that organizations sharing missions showed similarities in terms of often-gendered assumptions like hierarchy and community building, is even more provocative when we realize that the gender of this leadership was mixed.

Gaining access to these organizations was not without challenge. A demonstration of existing and early support for the movement was important for gaining fieldwork access, I learned, because many people in the movement believed that it was still fledgling and were cautious of any negative press. Though I did not know people in these organizations before I began my research, my prior experiences of belonging to a CSA, participating in urban farming, volunteering at a farmers market, and attending a number of food policy-related events formed an initial bond. In addition, in some cases I spent several hours picking up trash, cleaning, putting up fliers, weeding, and doing other tasks alongside members of the organizations before I was invited to spend more time with them. Through working alongside these organizations, I gained a deeper appreciation of the work they do and grew to respect their work in a deeper, more nuanced way. To quote Summers Effler (2010), this study is neither homage nor exposé: "My goal is to describe the processes that support collective efforts to work towards visions of the common good. … By painting a complex picture, I explain how ordinary people can become and remain involved in extraordinary efforts" (Summers Effler 2010: xvii).

The analysis that unfolds in the following chapters allows you to see a slice of a movement from both a birds-eye and on-the-ground perspective. As you experience life under the tent, in the hot summer sun, with Asheville, Abilene, Boise, Burlington, Cady, and Columbus, you see the complex ways that organizations build a movement individually as they define their internal relationships, their work in a broader community, the monies and transactions they allow and how they're defined, and how they weather storms. As you read this detailed analysis of a field and then go deeper with

six organizations, you will learn how these economies work and how a broader social movement takes shape in its various dimensions. In the course of my analysis, I propose a theoretical framework for relational work at the organizational level, highlight why social purpose organizations deserve more attention, and show how participating in the alternative food movement has useful lessons for how we organize economic life and how we might change it.

CHAPTER ONE:
MISSION, FORM, AND FOUNDING IN THE FIELD

> Interviewer (SS): And do you remember why you decided not to do the farmers market?
> Interviewee: Let me think about that. Um, to be honest, I don't think we gave the matter a huge amount of thought. I mean, if I were to look at it now, I would have answers and I would say, you know, "We consider this a better alternative because you have a direct relationship with the farmer," but at the time, to be perfectly honest, we were kind of, you know, floundering and somebody told us this name and we sort of went for it, you know. So it was sort of 'Oh, oh, okay. Let's try that." ...
>
> ***
>
> Another interviewee: Food is such a good issue to organize around because, as we said, it's just such a happy thing … in food, it's still relatively abundant in this part of the world, so people aren't at each other's throats, but of course, if it was scarce, we would be at each other's throats, we'd behave the same way people do it another areas where people are killing each other for food instead of oil.

What causes social purpose organizations to come about? How do people take an interest in starting something in their community, whether for profit or community building or activism, or for all of these reasons? Are questions of mission and structure intentional, and, if so, how are these intentions shaped and solidified? I take interest in these questions of founding, mission, and structure, and examine them in the context of the alternative (or local) food movement. In this chapter, I survey the field of the alternative food movement in one large city and focus specifically on two organizational forms, CSAs and farmers markets.

There is disagreement in the literature on organizations about the relationship between goals and more structural decisions about organization founding. Stinchcombe's (1969)

classic definition of organizations specifically identifies organizational goals as central and intentional: an organization is described as a "set of stable social relations deliberately created with the explicit intention of continuously accomplishing some specific goals or purposes" (142).[5] Meanwhile, to paint with an admittedly broad brush, organizational ecologists tend to emphasize environmental dynamics over the intentions of founders, and social movement scholars tend to highlight the agency of movement actors' intentions. In an organizational field like the alternative food movement, which combines economic activity and social change characteristics, we are left to wonder how goals and structure interact in the process of founding. In this chapter, analyzing both public documents and a sample of primary interviews with organizational founders, I look at grassroots founding to better understand how "ethical consumerism" and "sustainability" steered social change and seek to answer these questions: *In what ways do missions within the same social movement differ across organizational form? And what causes social purpose organizations to come about, and in the way that they do?*

LITERATURE

The sociological literature on organizational founding disagrees on to what extent goals or structures matter in the process of organizational founding and how these two aspects of organizational life intersect. Organizational ecology tends to foreground environmental factors, giving founders and organizational leaders a back seat (Haveman and Rao 1997, Barnett and Woywode 2004, Carroll 1985, Hannan and Freeman 1984). For example,

[5] "Stinchcombe (1986, p. 194) asserts that the entrepreneurial creation of new forms 'is preeminently a political phenomenon' because support has to be mobilized for the goals, authority structure, technology, and clients embodied in the new form" (Rao 1998: 916)

Haveman and Rao (1997) describe early plans of organizational founding as simply "theories in use," far less than agentic roadmaps or blueprints, showing how adaptation and selection drive the co-evolution of institutions and organizations. In the case of consumer watchdog organizations, Rao (1998) shows that even though cultural entrepreneurs create organizations through a practice of bricolage, selecting from existing frames to create novel forms, the goals of social purpose organizations can also change over time, in ways that are not necessarily the explicit intention of one or a few founders but rather the result of ecological factors. Meanwhile, the neoinstitutional approach takes a middle road, describing organizational outcomes as "a result of the interplay between individual agency and institutional structure" (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). In between, Baron et al. (1996), in their work on high-tech startups, argue that the earliest days of an organization are key to understanding its future outcomes, and research by Baron et al. (2001) and Baron and Hannan (2002) confirms the neoinstitutionalist assertion that founders' cultural blueprints imprint organizations both in their founding and their evolution.

On the other hand, goals and intentions are sometimes figured as key to structural decisions and/or superseding structural concerns in the eventual outcomes of organizations. Where goals are seen as influential to the practice of economic activity, theoretical expectations of what these goals might be and how they are put into effect also vary. In the traditional economic view, goals of self-interest, rationality, and efficiency are seen as driving economic activity at large, as well as motivating choices between structural forms. For example, North (1993) argues that self-interest and more

formal enforcement are underpinnings of economic activity. Examining economic decision-making, Williamson (1991, 1973) argues that forms are chosen for reasons of efficiency. Even more heterodox economists like Ben-Ner, who examines co-operative activity (1984, and with Putterman 2009), and economic sociologists like Uzzi (1999, 1997) focus on efficiency as an organizational motivation and outcome. In so doing, they give power to founders' goals but also shortchange the notion that founders of organizations may choose an organizational form with goals and outcomes other than efficiency in mind. Incorporating a broader analysis of organizational founding and the relationship between structure and missions, Schneiberg et al. (2008) highlight economic as well as social change goals in their analysis of ideological choices for the co-operative form in Grange.[6] Complicating one of the divisions of legal organizational structure most taken for granted, DiMaggio and Anheier (1990) highlight the blurred lines between nonprofit and for-profit characteristics, arguing that organizations' underlying practices are more continuous than the legal structures they choose: "In historical perspective, US NPOs appear less a single form than a kind of cuckoo's nest occupied by different kinds of entrepreneurs for different purposes" (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990: 141).[7]

[6] "Bringing movements (back) in reintroduces agency and politics into institutional analysis, shifting the explanatory focus from isomorphism and diffusion to contestation and the production of multiple logics within fields" (Schneiberg et al. 2008: 636).

[7] "Lines between public, NP, and FP enterprise are often unclear: indeed 'publicness' is better viewed as a continuous variable than as a category (Starr and Immergut 1987, Levy 1987). Is a NP hospital run by a FP management company as 'nonprofit' as one that is not? Are NPOs funded through closely monitored contracts as 'private' as those receiving categorical entitlements with only superficial financial monitoring? When regulation is both detailed and uniform across provider types, behavioral correlates of form are likely to be weak" (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990: 149).

Social movement theory also forms expectations about the relationship between goals and structures in organizational founding. For example, Polletta and Jasper (2011) describe how decisions made around collective identity have expressive characteristics. But they also ask, "How do activists choose from among the strategies, tactics, targets, organizational forms, and deliberative styles available to them?" (Polletta and Jasper 2011: 292). Commenting on Lichterman's (1996) study of "'Green' environmental activists," they point out how organizational survival was secondary to mission integrity for Lichterman's subjects: "They would rather see an organization collapse than compromise their overriding commitments to democratic process." (Polletta and Jasper 2011: 293, referring to Lichterman 1996). Similarly, Rothschild and Whitt (1979), Bordt (1997), and Kleinman (1996) argue that goals correspond with form, even if these ultimately become complicated in organizational practices (Rothschild and Whitt 1979) or evolve into hybrid forms (Bordt 1997).

While the efficiency question has captured the attention of a broad range of social scientific investigators (Uzzi, Ben-Ner, and Williamson are three very different examples), the substantive literature on alternative food organizations and other social purpose organizations (Alkon and Norgaard 2009, Allen et al. 2006, Barham 1997, Lyson 2004, Macias 2008) foregrounds the social goals of alternative food organizations, at times almost seeming to forget that they are in many cases money-making organizations. For example, Barham (1997) attributes a wide range of goals to local food organizations, linking these goals to Polanyian embeddedness.[8] Johnston et al.'s (2011) interviews with

[8] "In this study, I share the view of some authors (Friedmann and McMichael 1989; Friedmann 1993) who have seen a connection between Polanyi's analysis of the double

20 Toronto families about their everyday eating habits find several repertoires—eco-eating (local and organic), restricting meat, and social connections and community building. This literature takes for granted the link between alternative food organizations and a different, more "embedded" economic activity. Critics of alternative food movements and related types of "ethical consumption," meanwhile, point to the economic elements of these organizations as key means of distinguishing them from more traditional social movements (Sassatelli 2006). These critics see such new social movements as driven less by social justice missions than by the individualized concerns of the consumer (Fahlquist 2009 on individual vs. institutional responsibility, Armstrong and Bernstein 2008[9], Sassatelli 2006[10], Johnston 2008 on consumer as individual, citizen as collective, Jacobsen and Dulsrud 2007 on political consumerism[11]).

---

movement of societal self-protection and the emergence of alternative agriculture social movements that call for such things as relocalization of food production, consumption networks more closely tied to community-level institutions, environmental protection and stewardship through farming, and fair trade practices with the Third World. In an era of increasingly globalized trade and rapid transformation in the cultural and natural bases of food production and consumption (Goodman and Redclift 1991), these groups may represent an effort to find a new balance between the demands of international trade and the "laws" of the market on the one hand, and the needs of human communities and the environment on the other." (Barham 1997: 241).

[9] "Many post-1960s social movements—such as environ- mental, women's, and lesbian/gay movements—targeted civil society as well as the state and pursued "cultural" as well as "political" goals (Cohen 1993; Duyvendak and Giugni 1995; Inglehart 1977, 1981, 1990; Melucci 1985, 1989; Pichardo 1997; Staggenborg and Taylor 2005; Touraine 1981). …One of the more puzzling aspects of "new" social movements has been a focus on cultural change, particularly when not associated with efforts to change governmental policy or to seek inclusion in the polity. Environmental, women's, and gay movements have focused particular attention on changing culture. Cultural goals make little sense within the political process perspective." (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008: 79).

[10] "It is important to problematize the equation between alternative and critical consumerism and political action. An obvious problem has to do with the fact that the different practices which are usually collected under this banner are fragmented and potentially conflicting, thus rendering rather difficult the formation of viable collective identities and initiatives. ... For example, alternative distribution networks (from second-hand shops to farmers' markets to box schemes) not only respond to a politically conscious middle-class consumer but also attract urban disadvantaged groups which

These debates in the substantive literature on alternative food organizations remind us of a broader point made about nonprofits: "Some critics view NPOs as instruments of capital; others scorn them for evading the laws of the marketplace" (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990: 153). Instead of either/or conceptions about goals and structure, or economic and social purpose, we might seek a looser explanation, arguing that "forms are neither chosen in a social vacuum nor simply a given in actors' organizing repertoires" (Schneiberg et al 2008: 638) and that goals are sometimes drivers of and homologous with structure. Part economic activity, part social movement activity, these organizations can be seen as "alternative" models in which goals drive the perceived need to found as well as decisions about structure. This might lead to differences in organizations within the movement, with some closer to an individualized dimension and some closer to a collective dimension. For example, social justice missions may be more likely in the more co-operative ends of the movement (Rothschild Whitt 1979), namely in the

---

might not be able to afford to shop via formal channels. Likewise, the demand for organically grown vegetables typically mixes private health concerns with some degree of environmental consciousness and is coming from diverse sources, from a large vegetarian movement as well as health-conscious or gourmet carnivores. … alternative consumer practices, with all the ordinariness which accompanies daily consumption, cannot be easily translated as 'means' of political participation. They can be easily absorbed by the market precisely because they are often routine and polysemic practices situated within the market" (Sassatelli 2006: 224-225).

"By looking at the discourses accompanying new forms of consumption such as ethical and critical consumption, the adoption of a frugal lifestyle or the preference for Fair Trade goods, we can start asking when and how, under which conditions and to what effect consumption might be the means people use to create the identity they feel they have lost as labourers or use mass goods to counter the homogenization of capitalist production, rather than suppose that this is precisely what consumption is *per se*" (Sassatelli 2006: 238).

[11] Atkinson (2012) disagrees: following interviews with a small sample (8) of socially conscious consumers, she argues that "socially conscious consumers pay attention to the collective good by meeting their individual private interests.

organizational forms closer to co-operative models, like the CSA, a model that, in New York, often involves communities organizing at the grassroots level and an ownership ethos such as the idea of shared work. On the other hand, markets (Williamson 1991, 1973, Callon 1998) may be more likely to be born out of more individualized goals, as the market form is often portrayed in association with anonymous and self-interested behavior.

From the literature, we can expect that goals and structure may be either 1) explicitly linked in intentions and outcomes of organizational founding or 2) more environmentally determined. And, by extension, we can expect either 1) a more straightforward dichotomy where CSAs (in the New York context, closer to co-operatives) are linked to social justice missions and farmers markets are more individually driven or 2) a less clear cut dichotomy, where "alternative food organizations" at large have goals that either cut across form because they are all similar or are too much of a hodgepodge to make generalizations.

While the rest of the dissertation will examine the actual practices of organizations, here we are interested in the founders' statements as organizational origin stories.

METHODS

In this chapter, I answer the question *In what ways do **missions** within the same social movement differ across **organizational form**?* by surveying primary organizational literature and complementing these findings with interviews of farmers market and CSA

founders. I subsequently follow this with interviews to understand the dynamic interplay between goals, structures, and founding decisions to answer the question *What causes social purpose organizations to come about, and in the way that they do?*

For the first section, I use document analysis to compile a list of farmers markets and CSAs in New York, relying on primary and secondary online sources, including nonprofit directories, farmers market and CSA web pages, and borough news bulletins. I operationalize the variables in this question by interpreting the *missions* of an organization as the mission statement that appears in primary source paper or online documents of the organization or in the goals attributed to the organization by founders and/or organizers. Where missions are not explicitly stated as such, I use the organization's self-description, namely what the organization is said to be doing or trying to do. I operationalize *organizational form* as either farmers market or CSA, the former representing a market form of organization and the latter representing a co-operative form of organization. It should be added that these organizations vary in their degree of formalization, from unincorporated community groups to projects of other organizations to incorporated nonprofit or for-profit organizations. Where the farmers market or CSA is portrayed as having its own organizational identity (not a project of another organization), I use the mission or goals of the farmers market or CSA. Where the farmers market or CSA is seen as a project of a broader organization, I use the mission or goals of both the project and the broader organization, if both are available.

I create a database of missions and organizational forms from the aforementioned sources. From this search, I identify over 100 each of CSAs and farmers markets. Most consumers would identify each of these as distinct markets or CSAs, as each CSA and farmers market represents a distinct site of consumption, a distinct CSA to which one might belong or a distinct farmers market that one might visit. This search undercounts the CSAs and farmers markets that exist in New York City, more likely to find the public markets and CSAs and less likely to find the private food distribution arrangements may that have developed, for example, through a workplace or restaurant.[12]

From the list of CSAs and farmers markets, I searched for primary and secondary websites that contained a mission or description. Where various options were available, I used the most detailed and primary description, favoring, for example, an organization's description on its own website over the same organization's description in a nonprofit directory. When information was not available but contact information was listed, I wrote to the listed email address to ask for a brochure or description. From this information, I created columns, with a binary identification of the organizational form (CSA or farmers market), the name of the organization, and the mission statement or description of the organization. I use this basic initial spreadsheet for later analytical coding and also as a population from which to draw a sample of interview subjects.

For the analytical coding of missions of "organizations," I had to narrow the database down to distinct organizations, not just distinct locations. Many CSAs in New York City

[12] The alternative food movement in New York is ever growing and thus is not limited to these two organizational forms or to the organizations I found at the time of this analysis.

are supported by or affiliated with another organization; however, the CSA network is decentralized, and CSAs retain decision-making independence, so all of the more than 100 CSA organizations are amenable to individual analysis. Within the pool of farmers markets in the city, on the other hand, several can be seen as networks of distinct sites (physical locations) operated by the same organization. After accounting for this consolidated structure of the farmers market field, I analyze the missions, where they exist, of about 150 alternative food organizations in the city. Missions were not listed for some of the farmers markets, meaning that the farmers market analysis likely overstates the impact of nonprofit and larger farmers markets, which were more likely to have web pages.

Methodologically, I analyze the list of farmers markets and CSAs in two different ways. The first analysis of the data imposes a rigid categorization on organizational missions, examining missions with regard to whether they include social justice-oriented goals (following from Fahlquist 2009 on individual vs. institutional responsibility, Armstrong and Bernstein 2008, Sassatelli 2006, Johnston 2008 on consumer as individual, citizen as collective, Jacobsen and Dulsrud 2007 on political consumerism, and Rothschild Whitt 1979 on collectives). I am most interested in drawing boundaries between fresh, local food missions and social justice missions, given the hypothesis that social justice goals and co-operative forms of organization are more likely to be associated.

In the next analysis, recognizing the broader list of goals associated with the alternative food movement (Alkon and Norgaard 2009, Allen et al. 2006, Barham 1997, Lyson 2004,

Macias 2008, Sassatelli 2006), I also code the data in a second, more fluid way, in which I examine differences between the two structural forms along a broad range of purported goals. Here, I interpret the missions from a looser perspective, asking how the organization answers the question: What needs to change? Or, what will you accomplish by consuming through this organization? I supplement the qualitative analysis of these two kinds of database information with semi-structured, open-ended interviews with founders of farmers markets and CSAs to better understand the interplay between goals, structures, and other dynamics in the founding decision-making process. I aimed to interview 20 founders and ultimately interviewed 28 individuals from 23 organizations (as some organizations had several founders present). I performed, recorded, and transcribed these interviews myself. The interviews lasted about 45 minutes on average, ranging from 30 minutes to just over an hour.

Founders were chosen at random from the sample of the farmers markets and CSAs in my spreadsheet of overall missions and organizational forms. Prospective interviewees were contacted via email or phone—first via email unless only a phone number was listed—and I met those who agreed to an hour-long, open-ended interview at a place they recommended. In a few cases, interviews were not possible due to various circumstances—the market no longer existed, the founder had moved out of the city and could not be interviewed in person, or the email address and phone numbers were out of service or could not be found, among other reasons. Only one organization explicitly declined to be interviewed; the rest either never replied or my attempts to schedule a time never worked out. The interviews with founders represented farmers markets and CSAs

in four of the five New York City boroughs. In a few cases, more than one person was interviewed at once if the interviewees preferred that several co-founders be present for the discussion.

While the interviews were open-ended, the kinds of questions I asked included what led the founder to the particular project; how the organization came to be organized as a farmers market or CSA rather than some other type of organization with a similar goal; and how an alternative food organization would look if the interviewee had the chance to design another one in the future. These questions provided ample insights on the goals associated with the project as well as the deliberations and contingencies that entered into the founding of the organization.

Findings from Analysis of the Farmers Market and CSA Database

My analysis of the missions of 41 farmers markets and 103 CSAs in New York City reveals surprising results. My expectation that co-operative structure would be more associated with social justice missions than would the market structure was not confirmed: instead, a greater proportion of farmers markets in the sample had social justice missions than did CSAs. However, the second analysis, which incorporates the broad range of goals listed in organizational self-reports, reveals that CSAs were more goal-laden organizations than were the farmers markets in the sample.

I. "Social justice" and CSA, farmers market and "fresh local food"?

In the first analysis of missions of these 144 organizations, I impose a rigid

categorization, following the literature (Fahlquist 2009, Sassatelli 2006, Johnston 2008, Atkinson 2012). I create five categories for organizations based on this rigid distinction—grouping organizations by those with only individualized goals; only collective goals; both kinds of goals; neither kind of goals; or no listed mission. "Social justice" goals tended not to be mentioned explicitly in this sample of alternative food organizations, while organizations in the sample do overwhelmingly mention the "fresh" and "local" qualities of food offered through CSAs and farmers markets. "Social justice," then, is coded where related intentions such as redistributive economics, a preference to purchase from farmers of color, or support for farm worker welfare are mentioned. These interpretations were made in the same way across the two organizational forms.

First, very few alternative food organizations, only 2 to 3%, had missions of social justice alone. Second, a more significant minority of alternative food organizations combined social justice missions with missions of fresh local food; 20% of CSA organizations and 27% of farmers market organizations could be categorized in this way. Finally, the majority (69%) of CSA organizations identified fresh local food as their goal. A much smaller proportion (29%) of farmers market organizations did so. It should be added that many more farmers markets than CSAs in my sample did not have publicly available missions (37% for farmers market vs. 8% for CSAs); however, even if all these farmers markets had the mission of fresh local food, the proportion would roughly equal, not surpass, the proportion of CSAs with fresh/local food missions.

The expectation that social justice as a co-operative goal would be homologous with

CSAs and fresh, local food as an individualized goal would be homologous with the farmers market form was not confirmed by this analysis.

Values of CSAs and Farmers Markets

The previous analysis responds to critics' expectations that there will be a distinction between alternative food organizations and more traditional social movements organized around social justice concerns. However, a variety of important details are left out of the analysis, which fails to capture the degree to which various values may be associated differentially with the two different forms of organizing (market and CSA). In this section, I analyze the missions and descriptions of the organizations in a more comprehensive way, adding different categories of values as they appear in the organizations' self-descriptions. Thirty-eight different values result from this process. I group these into six broader themes: revered qualities of the consumer products; ideology of consumption; relation to producers/production; relation to other consumers; broad environmentalism; and other values and goals. In the organizations' own stated discourses, CSAs emerge as more value-laden organizations—this is evident in the comparison of proportions as well as in a calculation of the average number of values per CSA vs. per farmers market, 5.9 vs. 2.3.

The most popular stated values, shared across the two forms, are those related to the consumer product itself, the particular qualities of the food.[13] The majority (more than 50%) of CSAs espouse particular values regarding food—it should be fresh or just picked

[13] Interestingly, Brown (2009) finds in interviews with Fair Trade (FT) shoppers that "FT shoppers prefer to frame4 conversations about their purchases away from moral issues and toward less polarizing discussions about product attributes" (Brown 2009: 856).

(68%), local (79%), and pesticide free or organic (63%). Farmers markets as an organizational form also tend to support the values of fresh or just picked (34%) and local (32%), fewer farmer markets mentioned organic or pesticide-free produce (10% vs. 63% of CSAs). On the other hand, more CSAs than farmers markets in the sample make explicit a concern with health and nutrition (37% of CSAs, 29% of farmers markets). In general, the values around the product are similar across CSAs and farmers markets.

I use the term "ideologies of consumption" o refer to various values about consumption as a more abstract economic process (related to production and distribution, as opposed to just describing what will be eaten). Most alternative food organizations do not describe consumption in this more abstract and collective way (Fahlquist 2009, Sassatelli 2006, Johnston 2008). Where these more abstract descriptions of consumption appear in organizations' self-descriptions, consumer education and helping the local economy are two points on which some CSAs and farmers markets agree, although consumer education is favored by CSAs (12% for CSAs vs. 7% for farmers markets) and helping the local economy is favored by farmers markets (12% for FMs vs. 8% for CSAs). No farmers markets make explicit ideologies opposing genetically modified food, opposing industrial farming/agribusiness, or proclaiming their difference from grocery store purchasing, while 2%, 5%, and 7%, respectively, of CSAs referenced these ideals.

CSAs also make more explicit the direct relation of consumers to producers and production. Over half of CSAs emphasize the form's goal of financially supporting a farmer, and at least one-fifth of CSAs mention knowing a farmer or forming a direct

relationship with growers (24%), supporting local farms or contributing to their survival (32%), and supporting small or family farms and/or contributing to the survival of small or family farms (28%). Some (17%) of farmers markets also mentioned a desire to support local farms, though not necessarily small or family farms (2% of farmers markets). About 10% of farmers markets mentioned that the market provided an opportunity to know the source of one's food, though a smaller percentage mentioned getting to know the farmers themselves (2% of farmers markets). In comparison, 15% of CSAs emphasized knowing the source of one's food and 24% emphasized forming a direct relationship with growers.

Interestingly, the two forms share a similar emphasis on the value of relations between consumers: 24% of CSAs and 22% of farmers markets mention a goal of building community, in the sense of fostering relations between local people, whether stopping by the market or joining the CSA. More but still few CSAs emphasize inclusiveness and diversity (4% vs. 0% of farmers markets), and more CSAs emphasize a goal of more equitable distribution or making produce available to low-income consumers (23% vs. 15% of farmers markets). These last points relate to social justice themes in addressing income and racial inequalities in the broader society.

Although the alternative food movement has associations with the environmental movement, organizations did not make broad statements of environmentalism in their self-descriptions. Only 7% of farmers markets mentioned environmental advocacy as a goal and only 2% had a mission stating that shopping at farmers markets helped the

planet; over one-fourth (28%) of CSAs mentioned some explicit goal of environmental advocacy.

Interestingly, a number of other values and goals surfaced in these organizations, goals I had not expected from other research on alternative food institutions and ethical or socially conscious consumption. These differed starkly across the two forms. A number of farmers markets had community-oriented goals that highlighted other aspects of community: 24% of those with mission statements (again, likely overstating nonprofit farmers markets, although several for-profit markets were also in the sample) were interested in farmers markets as an avenue for youth education or job training, 20% were interested in farmers markets as public spaces, and 15% saw their farmers markets as upholders of cultural tradition. Very few CSAs mentioned these goals. More farmers markets also explicitly mentioned the term "food justice" (12% vs. 4% of CSAs). Some goals that were mentioned by CSAs but not mentioned by any farmers markets were values related to feminism and spirituality. Five percent of CSAs mentioned Jewish values as an explicit community value supported through the CSA model, and other interviews suggested that religion appeared in other aspects of CSA founding. One CSA mentioned feminism in its organizational mission, and gender appeared as a more broad issue in CSAs, which has far more women founders and participating members.

Questions remain after these first two analyses: Are questions of mission and structure intentional, and, if so, how are these intentions shaped and solidified? And if we now have a sense of the values within a particular field, our original question remains: What

causes social purpose organizations to come about? How do people take an interest in starting something in their community, whether for profit or community building or activism or all of these reasons? For answers to these questions, we turn to interviews with organizational founders.

Findings from Interviews with Organizational Founders

To gain more context on the differences in goals across CSAs and farmers markets, and to understand the extent to which goals and forms were linked in the founders' decision-making processes, I randomly sampled organizations within the broader sample and conducted interviews with farmers market and CSA founders. These interviews suggest that constraints such as personal time and expertise, as well as limitations of the institutional environment, often drove prospective founders' decisions about how to organize. This was particularly the case for what I call "food as end" founders, all of whom were focused on fresh, healthy food as a mission. The "food as end" founders who had tried another model instead of CSA (3/9) ultimately chose CSA out of convenience, not ideology or familiarity. In addition to facing environmental pressures, people had "taken for granted" logics (Thornton and Ocasio 2008) about how to organize. This was the case for the "food as means" founders who had ideological reasons for choosing CSA, but also for the "food as end" founders who had prior familiarity with the CSA model and as a result tried only that form (6/9). Goals were meaningful as well, however, especially for the "food as means" founders, 4/13 of interviews in my random sample, who cited choosing the organizational form for ideological reasons and, as a result, couldn't seem to imagine a farmers market as a possibility. Similarly, "food as event"

founders (of farmers markets) also considered organizational form and drew sharp boundaries, tending to only recognize the more public version of an alternative food organization: the market. The interviews suggest that "food as means" founders (existing in the CSA sample but not the farmers market sample) and "food as event" founders (existing in the farmers market sample but not the CSA sample) make intentional, goal-driven choices about form and also draw sharp boundaries between CSAs and farmers markets. "Food as means" founders tended to have prior social movement and activism experience, while "food as event" founders tended to be people well positioned with local government and space-makers. The interviews suggest as well that in nonprofit organizations, the form of the food economy was not a strong motivating decision, only a later issue of practical implementation. Nonprofit organizations often used both forms, citing external sources (funders, community surveys, etc.) as motivating this choice.

I. Convenience, Community, and/or Conviction: The Founding of CSAs

Based on my interviews, I divide the sample of CSA founders into two categories—"food as end" founders and "food as means" founders. These two types of founders tend to prefer different types of information as they make decisions regarding CSA founding and the choice of the CSA form. While all founders share "community" as a motivation, convenience of selecting the form is more often cited by "food as end" founders, who tended to be less involved in civic organizing outside the CSA. Conviction in the form is more often cited by "food as means" founders, who tended to be more engaged in civic and activist pursuits at large. The two exceptions here are young CSA founders, for whom familiarity with the form is a distinguishing factor beyond "community" and

convenience: these founders' experience of belonging to CSAs with their parents shaped the choice of that structural form over another that might accomplish the same goals.

Convenience

For "food as end" founders, seven of the thirteen CSA interviews, the organizational form that resulted (CSA) was described as the most convenient way to accomplish their goal of getting fresh, local food: "Whatever takes the least amount of effort, you know." In many of these cases, the organizers had attempted to join an existing CSA; when they found out it was full or never heard back from the email list they eventually tried to go on their own. Propelled to the CSA form for its apparent convenience, these founders may not have had much prior knowledge about the history of the CSA and/or the various values associated with the particular form. For example, in one case a founder stated:

> Interviewee 1: Honestly, we just wanted to be a part of a CSA and there wasn't one that we could be a part of
> SS: Why do you think you wanted to do CSA? Hopefully that's not too existential or anything.
> Interviewee1 : No. Ha.
> Interviewee2: It was a new concept to us at the time. We'd only heard about it maybe a year before or something like. There's no Greenmarkets to speak of, really, in this area. It seemed like the way to get our hands on it first of all, you know.

In this case, and others where the founder had heard of CSAs but wasn't particularly tied to the form before founding, founders often made contact with one of two umbrella CSA organizations for support. In some of these cases, founders had tried first to create a farmers market and later went with the CSA model as more convenient and do-able. This adds some context to the expectation from theory that farmers markets would be more associated with individualized goals such as healthy, local food and less associated with

the co-operative form. In practice, this was complicated by environmental constraints and bureaucratic challenges: for many people, farmers markets were harder to set up.

For "food as end" founders who went with convenience in the founding process, familiarity with the farmers market form led them to try that model first. In one such case, the founder of a CSA had tried for a couple of years (before starting the CSA) to start a farmers market in her neighborhood. She posted on a community listserv, took an informal survey, and went to two farmers market organizations asking if they would be interested in starting a market in her neighborhood. When none of these efforts succeeded, the woman gave up until the following year, when a new person moved into her neighborhood and posted an idea to start a farmers market on the same community listserv. After the two spoke and the new person learned of the history of failed attempts to start a market in the area, he suggested that they look into CSA:

> So I gave him the whole saga. And he was like, "Okay, I see that it's an uphill battle and everything, but let's talk about what we could, are there, is the time ripe yet for the farmers market or should we consider something different? What about a CSA?" … I had just kind of heard of them, I really didn't know anything about them. … I don't know for sure if he was a member of one previously, where they had lived before, but his wife is really into green stuff … And he was just [] more knowledgeable about the CSA thing.

The two of them ended up co-founding a CSA.

The thought of a farmers market also came first in another neighborhood, where a group of women with young children had formed an informal playgroup. In discussing how the CSA had come into being, the founder said these women began talking about food and the lack of quality produce in the neighborhood. Most were familiar with the farmers

market form; fewer were familiar with CSA. They had talked about attracting a farmers market to the neighborhood, but then a friend of one of the women in the playgroup suggested they talk to her sister, who was a farmer, and she suggested they contact a CSA support organization. They did, going with that form because the founding process seemed straightforward.

In another neighborhood in which organizers were contemplating different ways of bringing in alternative food, the founders had started with the local business community. These "food as end" founders were simultaneously pursuing both the farmers market and CSA form, seeking both options for the neighborhood:

> Interviewee: There was around the same time, and there still has been, a push to get a farmers market going in this part of [the neighborhood], and I mean, I remember going business to business getting a petition signed and […] I started going into some of the local businesses and one of the guys point blank, one of the owners told me, "This will never happen. The business owners don't want it. They don't want the competition. And we're all on the community board. We will not allow it to go through." And I tried to say, 'Well, you know, it's a different model, and you guys don't offer" and this was the owner of a flower shop, too. […] But yeah, he just said point blank "it's never going to happen" and that was, I think, I remember getting that petition signed a year after the CSA or the first year of the CSA, we were working on getting that signed, so …
> SS: So you kind of wanted both, actually?
> Interviewee: Yeah.

Another founder had learned of a similar situation affecting her neighborhood. CSA seemed like the most feasible way she could obtain organic produce:

> I mean, probably at the time I was, like, I want organic produce that's local, this [CSA] is how I know how to do it. I could start it out of my [place of worship]. I didn't think about starting a farmers market, but I will say that other people in this neighborhood have tried and there's been a lot of, um, opposition from local businesses, like grocery stores and stuff like that, that's my understanding, I mean this is hearsay, but I know other people have tried to get a farmers market and couldn't.

In both of these cases, the farmers market was the first structure pursued in the neighborhood until, facing seemingly insurmountable resistance, the founders pursued the CSA form. In the last case, the founder said that if there had been a farmers market with organic produce in her neighborhood she would not have tried to start a CSA.

Why was the CSA form more convenient, and what was the result? The CSA support organizations provided workshops and in-person and online resources to help navigate the processes involved in CSA founding, giving "food as end" founders an organizational template for accomplishing their goals, as well as introducing them to new concepts associated with the CSA form and other CSAs in the area. The new meanings of the CSA form—as opposed to other ways of consuming—could become more integrated with the CSA concept for these founders over time, even if convenience was at the top of their minds in the first stages of founding. The categories that motivated original founding were not set in stone, and values changed over time. In the words of another founder, looking back on the way the CSA concept took on layers of meaning for her:

> Um. I mean, I think for me, I had just heard about CSA and I thought it was a pretty interesting model, and I wanted to be a part of it and try it out and, you know, it seemed like a model that was. It was low impact, it didn't require a lot of capital on our part to start, especially if we could find a sort of in kind location, so, and also the connection, establishing a connection with the farm I thought was sort of really interesting, and I liked the idea of sort of going past those regular models and just having my money go directly to a farm and knowing where it was going and what it was doing and the fact that I could just go out at any point and see what my money was doing. So that was sort of why for me. And it was just in the news a couple times then. It was just an interesting thing.

In each of these "food as end" cases, whether the CSA was the first option pursued or had been pursued after attempts at starting a farmers market had failed, the ultimate choice of

how to structure an alternative food organization was motivated not by ideological considerations of the co-operative structure behind CSAs but more by convenience, given the exigencies of the situation and the competing demands of these founders' hectic lives. This helps explain why, in some cases, values we would expect to be more associated (in the field's statistics) with the co-operative form were not always deeply entrenched in organizations of that form: many CSA founders had no pre-existing convictions about that form, and some had even pursued the market form first. For each of these "food as end" founders, fresh local food was a greater concern than social justice; none of them mentioned social justice-oriented aims, in comparison to half of the "food as means" founders, to whom we turn next.

Conviction

In contrast to "food as end" CSA founders, four out of the thirteen CSA founders had strong ideological reasons for starting an alternative food organization, and a CSA in particular. These included three seasoned activists (two political and one religious) and a young political radical. These founders had committed themselves to activism outside of the food space prior to founding a CSA and were also familiar with co-operative dynamics from having lived in a communal or co-operative environment. These people—who I call "food as means" founders—had different decision-making frameworks for starting organizations, frameworks that emphasized the relevance of a "structure" and its relation to their goals. Within the goals of "food as means" founders, popular values like health and community were articulated in a deeper logic of systemic change; these founders saw the CSA not as an end in itself but as a means to accomplishing something

broader. These founders saw themselves as a part of a social movement, not just a consumer movement.

One of the seasoned activists had belonged to a neighboring CSA and described how she saw the changing demographics in her own neighborhood as an opportunity to use the CSA form to create more community engagement:

> Yeah, part of it was. "Hey, we should have this in our neighborhood" … and I think that CSA is sort of a community-building tool which [sic] I thought after a few years would be used not only to provide vegetables but to sort of link together different people in the community and different demographic groups.

In this case, the founding of the CSA was seen as setting the foundation for more change in the community, with the intentions for founding extending beyond the end of food.

Similarly, another founder had been involved in organizing around land and housing issues in the city when he became aware of issues of health and agriculture and became aware of CSA as an opportunity for bridging these concerns.

> I think as people began to get sick, people around me, [were] getting cancer and just experiencing the whole health issue firsthand, you know, you began to ask yourself is there a better way to live, and so we started looking more into our personal health, and then when the concept, when I first heard the concept [from an activist in the area of community economics] I immediately realized it was something we needed to do …

Like the aforementioned founder who hoped the CSA would lead to crossing boundaries in her community, this "food as means" founder later articulated how he saw food as a strategic issue around which groups could organize.

> Food is such a good issue to organize around because, as we said, it's just such a happy thing as opposed to housing where everyone's at each other's throats, it's like trying to organize, make people behave correctly around a gold mine, you know,

> "Don't sell your apartment for a million dollars, be nice." In food it's still relatively abundant in this part of the world, so people aren't at each other's throats, but of course if it was scarce we would be at each other's throats, we'd behave the same way people do it in other areas where people are killing each other for food instead of oil.

This founder had been involved in environmental organizing at large and saw food as a means for integrating some of the issues about which he was passionate.

In another case, a woman who was involved in the environmental side of a spiritual movement had become engaged firsthand in CSA farming and sustainable agriculture, realizing CSA could be a way to further advance the ideals of the movement to which she had dedicated herself:

> And I was all excited about this whole movement of the new cosmology and our place in the universe … and we've always been advocates of the poor. … So I say, let's put our money where our mouth is …

For one of the younger activists in this pool of "food as means" founders, starting the CSA was just about being in the right place at the right time; she was already directly committing much of her time to ideological causes and working in a non-hierarchical, non-money-based community. She had wanted to do something larger around issues of food and connected with others in her political circle who were interested in these issues:

> I walk in the door and the two of them were sitting across from each other at that little table, and they were like, "Hey, we're having a meeting, do you want to join us?" and I was like, "Okay, sure," well, I just said yes, and then was like, "What are we meeting about?" and they were meeting about [one of them] wanted to start a CSA. … I just fumbled in the door and was like, "Yeah, cool, this is exactly, yeah, I'm so down," and then we got to talking and trying to conceptualize what our goals were … and it started just getting really broad, broader and broader, … with food justice in general. … And for me it was just super upsetting that how are we going to fight any kind of revolution if I can't feel good in the morning, you know. … We ended up with all of these takes on it. Mostly just trying to, what we wanted to do was get food to lower-income communities … It was this larger, broader project. But we ended up getting a little too big for our britches and had to just narrow it down to the CSA.

This founder cited support from the umbrella organization as motivation for starting with the CSA as the first step in what they wanted to accomplish broadly. She wasn't particularly attracted to the CSA and, over the long term, she favored other models in the food and agriculture space:

> We had them [the support organization] to sort of fall back on to show us the way … So I think that's why we did CSA, 'cause it was already an established model, basically, that we could follow. And I think the idea was that eventually we were going to tweak it more and more.

For this young activist and her co-founders, the CSA was a compromise, something more conventional than they had intended:

> Interviewee: … even when we started a CSA, I didn't want to do a CSA. That wasn't what I wanted to do, 'cause it's just not, it's better than nothing but it's just not ideal, I think we can do better than that.
> SS: Why?
> Interviewee: Why? Why is it not ideal? Money, I think money. And that's just always the obstacle, is money. Money, and I think, I mean, I didn't know what a CSA was until maybe, I think, I had just heard about it probably right around the same time that I got involved with it, you know. And so I think a lot of people don't know what a CSA is, and it's just like, "Yeah, hell no, I'm not giving you like $500 to like maybe get some crops."

For this founder, CSA was ultimately chosen as an acceptable and feasible compromise, whereas farmers markets, buying clubs, and co-ops were of no interest, a point on which she was more vocal than the other "food as means" founders, who stated they just preferred the CSA model. When I asked her about other potential models, she mentioned producer-distribution networks of free food, freeganism, and other alternative models that don't involve monetary transfer.

Community

"Community" was another key theme mentioned in founding narratives, and it was a

cross-cutting theme for both "food as end" and "food as means" founders of CSAs. For "food as means" CSA founders, "community" was an intentional aspect of the social goals driving founding decisions, such as organizing a CSA to bring together different demographics or provide an outlet for working on activist projects. Meanwhile, for "food as end" founders, "community" was described as a possible by-product of the main goal of obtaining fresh, local produce. The same theme took on different meaning and preference in the two broader narratives.

When asked about other things that she might be like to do in the alternative food space, one of the "food as means" founders mentioned the intention of deepening community:

> Interviewee: It would be nice to have a CSA in a more open public area.
> SS: Why?
> Interviewee: I guess I envisioned it as something that would draw the community together, and so I think whatever I would envision would have that goal in mind. And I could also see. Honestly something else that I could see doing is a community garden, and I think that the similarity between those two things is that it creates a space and a location where people can come so there's a focus, the community garden even more so because it's there, it doesn't go away. The CSA sets up for a day.

At another point, this founder mentioned that "community" was about bridging different demographics in a changing and diverse neighborhood. Another "food as means" founder mentioned "community" in the context of more activist work:

> Yeah, otherwise, if you don't have that other activities going on, it's like what distinguishes you from a buying club or a supermarket, it's like, "Oh, I can save you money." It's like that, only—that is a motivational factor in this culture—but it's [saving money] not a great social factor to bring people together, to save money, just to, you end up with suburbia, everyone goes to the supermarket but no one really connects in some way. It's kind of, so you're trying to be a venue, a forum for people to talk about things [and] connect with one another

For this person, the difference between the CSA and grocery store model of consumption

was not just a difference in relation to the produce but also a difference in relation to broader social changes that needed to take place.

"Food as end" founders also mentioned the cultivation of community. But rather than seeing "community" as an integral part of the social movement behind CSAs, for them it was more like icing on the cake. One of the "food as end" founders specified fresh, local food and support of small local farms as primary among the intentions that led to the founding of the CSA but later highlighted a interest in giving back somehow:

> It also was just, um, feeling like we wanted to do something useful with our spare time, just to be able to provide something that there was obviously a demand for in the community, and it really helped us feel a lot more a part of the community and [area]. Take more of a stake in it I guess. It's definitely improved. I guess quality of life sounds kind of silly to say. It makes us feel good.

Or, similarly,

> I had just moved to the neighborhood, so I just wanted to be involved. … to me, coming to Brooklyn, I was, like, I don't know anybody. So it was a nice way to meet people.

And in the same founding group:

> I also had a positive experience volunteering before this and wanted to connect with the community and feel that I was spending my time worthwhile and force myself to eat better. … and I just thought it was so neat, like, you know, community supported agriculture, how cool is that, you're partnering with a farmer that's really invested in what they're doing. I don't know, I just really wanted to meet people that wanted to do something, you know what I mean?

Community was embraced by both "food as means" and "food as ends" CSA founders, in some cases perhaps as a motivation and in others, quite possibly, as a term that came to be associated with the form after the fact of founding.

CSA-Specific Values: Sometimes the Impetus, Sometimes Acquired Later

Founders associated various values with CSAs, although many of what I term "food as end" founders could not remember how they first heard about CSA or when they first decided they wanted to join. Thus it did not seem that ideology drove structural choices in these cases; their mission of fresh, local produce could be achieved through various organizational forms. Many founders in this camp did not know much about the form before embarking on the road to founding. One woman even joked that she thought it was a secret club (she belonged to one of those, too!). Take for, example, this large founding group:

> Interviewee 1: I don't even know when I first heard about CSA. But I do remember hearing that it was just picked the day before and a better price than the farmers market and all bundled together, so it was sort of like forced variety, whereas I'd go to the farmers market and I'd only buy my favorite things and I wouldn't have enough food for the week, so it was sort of forcing myself to eat more vegetables, but I can't even remember when I first heard about it. But I guess I had and tried to sign up, but a bunch of them in our neighborhood failed, and the next year I got into [one], but I don't know. Do you remember when you first heard about CSA, the concept?
> Interviewee 2: I don't know. I don't think so. It might have been in like *The Omnivore's Dilemma* or something.
> Interviewee 3: Oh, see I, haven't [read it].
> Interviewee 2: It might have been before though.
> Interviewee 4: I heard from my husband's sister.
> Interviewee 5: I think it was around September 11 like ten years ago. Not hearing about it, but hearing that most of the apples in New York City, like all of the green apples, came from South Africa.
> Interviewee 3: Nuh-uh?

Social movement members often cite a conversion moment or a well-developed ideology for their participation in a movement (Polletta 2006, Blee 2002), but these "food as ends" founders perhaps did not see this as a movement at first, though some were now quite

passionate about the organizations they created. They could not remember when they had first heard of the CSA form or developed a sense of its value. One "food as end" founder was very explicit about this. She chose the CSA (over other forms) out of convenience because she wanted more organic produce in her neighborhood, and she spoke frankly about the thought process behind organizing. She mentioned how the values associated with the CSA form had been acquired after founding, not before:

> SS: And do you remember why you decided not to do the farmers market?
> Interviewee: Let me think about that … To be honest, I don't think we gave the matter a huge amount of thought. I mean, if I were to look at it now I would have answers, and I would say, you know, "We consider this a better alternative because you have a direct relationship with the farmer," but at the time, to be perfectly honest, we were kind of, you know, floundering, and somebody told us this name and we sort of went for it, you know. So it was sort of, "Oh, oh, okay. Let's try that,' you know.

For these "food as ends" founders, not only were values not static (as stated missions always make it appear) but they were also multivalent, even within the same founder or group of founders, conforming to Sassatelli's (2006) descriptions. For example, in a case where there were four main founders, there seemed to be four different views about the CSA. One of the couples had moved away, so I interviewed the couple that had remained. The wife stated that CSA was important because she was "politically being anti-big ag" and "supportive of local organic small farms [more] than it necessarily was because I need to eat everything organic." But the husband affirmed his interest in the food itself: "I'm still bigger on freshness and local than I actually am on organic." Meanwhile, these interviewees described the two other founders (who had since moved away) as having a strong interest in food justice and access. The organizers said they felt this diversity of values strengthened, not weakened, the CSA in that the founders could complement one

another and bring more elements to the organization. In another case, a CSA founder said that she saw everything coming together with the CSA form:

> I was really into the idea of having a relationship with a farmer that was somewhere else but that we could make this connection with him and say, 'Look, we really support local sustainable agriculture. We are investing in you to give us delicious food," and it's really great, it's rewarding. And like I said, I had kind of a selfish reason, too, because I wanted to kind of work, you know, have work experience in the area. And the price, you can't beat the price [...]

The founders' acquisition of a broader language around the form might be explained at least in part by the support from the CSA umbrella organizations, which provided background information, case studies, and other templates but also did so in a decentralized, hands-off way, with each group retaining independence and taking on characteristics from their own community. One "food as end" CSA founder said of the support organization in the early process of founding:

> There's so much I like about the [CSA support org] the way it's set up …I like the way it's a loose umbrella that it gives you, it's very decentralized, it gives you all of the guidance you need, really, really helps you. …and yet you as your little local CSA, you still have a very direct relationship with your farmer, and that's very satisfying. So really they're very, I would say, I really like the model because in the early stages they're very hands on and then they're very hands off, you know. I think they're there if you need them but they let you let a thousand flowers bloom, kind of. … I would venture to say there are as many CSAs as there are types of community, you know, that each CSA reflects the kind of community that it's grounded in.

Neither Conviction Nor Convenience: Keeping the Familiar

Three of the "food as end" CSA founders chose CSA out of familiarity with the form, either because they had belonged to it before or because they had grown up around that model. In one of these cases, the founder had belonged to a CSA for several years with her family and had become so habituated to the food that she called the farmer directly (a

very unusual instance among these cases) and asked how she could get a CSA in her neighborhood. For this young woman, community organizing did not seem to be at the forefront of the project; when asked if she would start another alternative food organization, she only mentioned possibly trying to organize enough people to get delivery from her farmer again if she moved to another neighborhood. For this founder, it was really about maintaining the same produce from this particular farm.

In the other case, the founder's experience with CSA had made him familiar with the concept—he saw it as having changed "the culture of [his] life a bit":

> I would cook at home more. I would have friends over. I became a little bit more focused on, I guess, on [noticeable pause] an act that I guess was antithetical to consumption that you do every day.

This founder shared a number of values in common with "food as means" founders in the sense of these "antithetical to consumption" acts, but he was more reserved than "food as means" founders were when it came to expressing the more explicitly critical aspects of his motivations, as the noticeable pause indicates. While his past experience with CSA convinced him to do it again, his journey to start a CSA was motivated by deeper engagement with alternative agriculture, who, like three of the other 13 CSA founders, cited *Omnivore's Dilemma* as part of what spurred him to think about organizing a CSA.

Like the young woman who started a CSA directly with her old CSA farmer, another woman went directly to a farmer after having met the farmer in a professional context. She had been raised on a farm and was familiar with the CSA concept from her exposure to the agricultural world but had never managed to join one. When the farmer called her in relation to the professional context that had originally brought them together, they

began speaking informally about CSAs, and the two of them mutually decided to do a CSA together.

II. "Food as End," "Food as Event," and Nonprofit and For-Profit Organizations: The Founding of Farmers Markets

We saw that farmers markets differed from CSAs in their stated values. Founding stories also reveal differences among the forms. Farmers markets founders were more likely than CSA founders to be established individuals or organizations prior to organizational founding, and they also took different pathways to founding an alternative food organization. Like CSA founders, many farmers market founders could be described as driven by "food as end" goals before founding, although, like "food as means" CSA founders, a couple of them were now known widely in their neighborhood from the work they had done in the local community or the food movement. These "food as end" farmers market founders, in contrast to the "food as end" CSA founders, often cited a conversion experience at the moment when they decided a farmers market was something they wanted to do. Some farmers market founders were also what I call "food as event" founders, typically more publicly known and influential (Merton 1968) in the sense that they described their networks as involving direct connections to local political influence that allowed them to more easily gain access to space. These founders described the act of founding as something relatively common and straightforward, in contrast to descriptions of uphill battles given by CSA founders who unsuccessfully tried to start farmers markets. "Food as event" founders portrayed the farmers market as an "event" in the community with the potential to draw further recognition to the founder and/or the

area. Farmers markets founders also included already incorporated nonprofit or for-profit organizations, some of which also started CSAs.[14] In these cases of organizational founders with farmers markets and CSAs, the CSA was described as an add-on to the market and other projects of the organization.

"Food as End" Founders and Incorporated Organization Founders: External "Turning Point"

Among farmers market founders, many cited a turning point in their decision to found a farmers market, often prompted by an event such as being asked to start a farmers market or noticing a gap in the community infrastructure. In one such case, someone who had started a community garden said that he was approached by a neighborhood group looking to bring a farmers market to the area. In another case, a community-based organization was approached by someone in the local government who was interested in starting a farmers market in that area. This founder was familiar with and friendly to the idea of farmers markets and basically took on the project on his own for the organization for which he worked. Though the idea was not his own, he saw the opportunity as a great way to advance the nonprofit's work:

> [The organization] was a community-based nonprofit and one of their missions is economic development of the community, and I thought it would be great to have the farmers market be an incubator for residents in the community to develop business.

This person later said that he thought founding the market really had to do more with his position on the staff than with the organization as a whole. Like many nonprofit organizations, this one was strapped for time and resources, and the farmers market

[14] None of the interviews in the last section on CSA founders were with organizations that had incorporated prior to CSA founding.

founder's commitment, to run the market on his personal time, was key to its existence:

> Interviewee: I think fortunately that I was at [the nonprofit] at the time, I'm not sure that if I wasn't there that it would have developed because 1) it was on the weekend so that's normally outside of the time that people would work
> SS: So you kind of did that on your free time essentially?
> Interviewee: Yeah, … I guess I have a little different spirit about work … I tend to live a life of service, so [] I look for things that give me energy, so this was satisfying for me.

The idea of the local government asking community gardeners and organizers to set up farmers markets was a relatively recent phenomena, according to the history given by one farmers market founder, who gave a strikingly different picture of the relationship between local government and community gardeners at an earlier point in time:

> We started to look at some of the things that were happening around food, social issues, environmental issues, that were plaguing our community, and since we grew food [in community gardens], we started to look at the food problems that were plaguing our communities and our neighborhoods and we looked at the fact that we had no fresh produce. … so we said, "You know, since we know it, we grow it, let's start our own farmers market." And so we proceeded by first doing a survey, and in retrospect I think that's the best thing one can do, and I say that because now everyone is jumping on the bandwagon of CSAs and farmers market, and the intention is good, however, if the community doesn't want it, you just can't force it. It's something that the community has to own and want for it to be successful, and so by doing the survey we found out that 99.9% of people wanted a farmers market … and so we the first year we launched a farm stand … people came by and were buying it. So the second year we went to our community board …

While this founder's group was open to other alternative food organization structures, they initially chose farmers market as the form in which to organize because at the time the other forms were so novel:

> We started with the farmers market because of the fact that, well, we didn't even really know about CSAs or food co-ops back in that time. The mentality in the time was really on garden preservation … we were trying to really come up with a way that took community gardens into a next phase, to let people understand that there was a need, that growing food

> was important, that growing food and educating communities around food was important, which is the truth now. But back then people never saw the connection … And I think by starting [the] farmers market, one of the first community-based farmers markets that's run by community gardens, now you're starting to hear the broad conversation around food and health. And it started in people, in neighborhoods, like community gardens that were growing food and were understanding that correlation and that concept that people in community gardens growing food for their own family that they knew was fresh, that they knew where it was coming from, and they knew that was culturally appropriate.[15]

Gaps in the community infrastructure were also important for two other farmers market founding cases. In these cases, the recent closing of a grocery store became further incentive for a nonprofit founder to start a farmers market as part of its community programming. In the first case, organizers were looking to start a community development project around agriculture when a change in the community's food access landscape spurred the desire to found a market:

> So that was our work, and we started doing some agriculture, and we were looking at having like a small farm cart or stand, and the local grocery store closed. And we were like, uh oh, got to start a market.

In the second case, one of the organizational staff commented:

> So when the grocery store specifically was demolished, [the nonprofit org] … that you know got us [the nonprofit org] immediately involved. … So [the org] did a lot of community meetings …with the public housing residents… and a recurring theme was not having access to food and not having access to quality. So within that few years, the organization was applying for different grants to do some food work.

As the grants came in and personnel and infrastructure became available, the organization pursued multiple ways to organize around food, including creating a farmers market. On this point, the staff member commented:

[15] This case highlights the complexity of the motivations of fresh, local food, highlighting how it is implicitly linked to social justice in one community but not in another.

> The [farmers market] is really, it's in direct relation to what the [] grant was asking For, so I would say funding is what drives that. And also what's manageable in terms of staff. The [farmers market] really requires someone to be a full-time manager of that initiative.

Another, more unusual tale in this bunch came from a founder who cited her motivation as having seen farmers markets while traveling in Europe and thinking that the concept might solve health problems in the community where she lived.

> The reason I started the market—let's start there—is that there were high levels of juvenile diabetes in my community as well as high blood pressure here with our elders and middle-aged people … this area was what we call now a food desert. You could not find fresh fruit and produce. … And when the neighborhood started changing …now it's picked up because the Europeans have moved into the neighborhood. […]
> SS: And so how did you decide to do farmers market, like why farmers market as opposed to something else or ... ?
> Interviewee: Well, I'll tell you why … My best friend lives in Italy, one of my best friends. And I used to go to Italy, and the mother and her every morning would go to the farmers market and would pick up the produce that they're going to cook for that day and then they would lay out all of this… The tomatoes, they smell like tomatoes, everything's so fresh … and so I brought that concept back with me. And every country that I go to, most people shop locally, they're not into this big warehouse shopping, you know. And I saw how in Amsterdam that 95-year-old people riding their bikes all over the city and the city looks like ours … and I'm going, "What is their secret? What is going on here? I want to be like that!' and it felt like I found out that most of them shop at the farmers market, they eat fresh produce, and they first ride their bikes or get some kind of exercise in three or four times a week, and I said, "There's something going on with this." So that's why I chose the farmers market.

"Food as End" Founders and Incorporated For Profits: Farmers Market as Moneymakers

While some founders cited an external turning point in their perception of the need for a farmers market, two of the founders who ran the market as a for-profit endeavor described the farmers market form in money making terms. For one of the founders, the

farmers market became an inadvertent business while for the other it became an inadvertent expense. In the latter case, a farmers market was developed by a social purpose for-profit organization as a way to financially support programming in a way that would still be compatible with the organization's mission. The founder saw the farmers market as a palatable way to provide funds to float other areas of greater interest:

> I already had [the broader organization] … Well, in the process of doing that we became financially very strapped because nobody was paying for any of these events. And so, but we also realized that food was the one thing that was pretty reliably popular and for which people paid money because they have to eat. So we decided that we needed to do something, we needed to make money, but we didn't want to give up the space. … Ah, voila! Farmers market … It really fit nicely into the whole [] mission—food, nutrition is healing ourselves, and the fact that we are striving to provide only organic is also healing the planet, and the community of a market, and we thought we could have events related to the market. It all just fit very nicely.

This organization was incorporated as a for-profit, but the founder was motivated by social aims:

> Well, we're not in this to maximize profits. We're trying to help sustain this [space]. And we have bills to pay. But we don't have to, you know, this is not a standard business. We're kind of a cross between, I don't want to do the nonprofit model. I don't want to depend on foundations. I think that people who are trying to create a different society need to learn how to do it independently, and hopefully with financially sustainable models.

On the other hand, for another farmers market founder, a desire to bring a farmers market to her community eventually became a larger business, to her surprise. The interest around healthy food came out of a chemical food scare among parents with young children, leading a group to mobilize and eventually start a co-op. The co-op ultimately became a lot of work for the organizers, motivating the founder to try something new. The eventual impetus for the farmers market was both personal and community oriented:

> And after awhile I said to myself, "There's got to be a better way to doing this," so I said, "Well, maybe we should start a farmers market" …
>
> The other thing was …most of the stores had left … it was an economic development idea…. and I sort of realized that when people shop outdoors they tend to interact more, so there was sort of a community feeling I felt it engendered. … I just thought we're having so much trouble with this co-op, it seemed so labor intensive, maybe it would be easier if the farmers came and we could just buy from the farmers, but, um, I didn't realize that there was more to it. … you know, I think I started the market just because I thought it would be easier. And it was something that I was familiar with …

As the apparent need for farmers markets grew, the farmers market grew into what a partner of hers called "an inadvertent business."

"Food as Event": Is There Any Other Way?

Two of the other farmers market founders emphasized being well positioned in their neighborhoods, with easy access to space and other connections that might be necessary to host a public farmers market. Neither of these farmers markets had missions listed online, but both could be described as aimed at providing fresh local produce, not focused on social justice. Both of these "food as event" founders had started their own businesses, one a for-profit and one a nonprofit, prior to starting the farmers market. One of these men had organized events his whole life, and ties to the community helped establish him as someone capable of starting a farmers market in the area alongside work he was already doing:

> But the point was we had a lot of people coming. [talks about a community event he began] So I wanted to do different linkages. So it just came to me. I said, "Well, let's do a farmers market," and like I said, I was talking to [someone about the market] for [] years … you know, so there was a lot of skepticism on my part early on in the beginning.

While he was skeptical about adding a food-related event to the other types of events he hosted, no other food-related structure came to this founder's mind. Once he decided food could be included, the farmers market was in the works.

In another neighborhood, influential block association members eventually went on their own with a farmers market after trying a couple of external options that didn't work as well:

> Interviewee: Well, this area, which is a very wealthy area …we don't have any produce. We had, five years ago our last little market closed … and all we have are these kind of awful, we have bodegas. … First we hired, you know who [name] is? … She did this market for us, but it wasn't what we needed ... And we went with [names organization] and that didn't work out … And then I decided the other block association went their own way, and I said, well, I'll just underwrite this other thing
> SS: Can I ask about how you, how these community associations got together and decided they wanted to do that? Like, how did those conversations happen, or … ?
> Interviewee: [giving me a look like I'm an idiot]
> SS: Did everyone sort of know each other already?
> Interviewee: It's [the area's name]. What kind of question is that?
> SS: Enlighten me, enlighten me. I'm from Florida.
> Interviewee: It's [the area's name]. Everybody knows everybody. I mean …
> SS: So people were just talking informally?
> Interviewee: Yeah, [three of us] had coffee at [café] and we said, "Why don't we do this?" and they said great, and we underwrote it together. …

Unlike some of the CSA founders who had wanted a farmers market and tried to get one going but met with overwhelming resistance, this individual was able to start a farmers market in the area in three different ways, reshaping it until the best fit was found. Like the other "food as event" farmers market founder, this person described himself as an "organizer" and had been working on his own for most of his adult life. The mission was

just to bring produce to the neighborhood. These two neighborhoods were extremely different, but the positions of their founders were relatively similar in that each had deep roots and influential social networks in his community.

The idea that there was an association between farmers markets and influential persons in a community was also seen from the outside. Some CSA founders who had been interested in bringing farmers markets to their community described having found the CSA form more realistic for them because they felt that "influential people" started farmers markets. One CSA founder explicitly said that farmers markets just didn't seem like things that "regular" people started:

> It wouldn't occur to me that regular people start farmers markets, although I guess they do, but like I would think that maybe you have to know more farms than I do or maybe you have to be like a Chamber of Commerce, or maybe. It wouldn't occur to me. Whereas I sort of knew how to join a CSA. I was like I'm a member of a [religious group], they have space, there's organizations that can help me find a farm. It just seemed like I would know how to do that [start a CSA], whereas I don't know that I would know how to do that [start a farmers market]. I mean, I'm sure, whatever, you learn or you ask and then, you know, like, I don't know that it's beyond me, but it probably just wouldn't occur to me.

Another person cited the influential persons argument as well. She had tried to start a farmers market in her neighborhood but ultimately failed. Years later, a farmers market was coming to her area, because of what she described as the support of a local councilman:

> One person from the, from the community trying to corral all of these different things didn't work, but then [councilman] wanting to do something [] in the neighborhood got it in. And also he has more clout, obviously, than I do and all of that.

III. Looking Across Forms: We Do It All vs. Why Would We Do It Any Other Way

In addition to asking founders about the founding process of their organizations, I also elicited interviewees' feelings about other forms of organizing in the alternative food space, asking why they had chosen the form they founded as opposed to other forms, as well as a hypothetical question about what else they might do in the alternative food space.

The salience of boundaries between different structural forms in the alternative food movement varied across founder types, with "food as end," "food as means," "food as event," and nonprofit or for-profit organization founders showing different patterns. Among CSA founders, the boundaries between forms were different depending on whether they were "food as end" or "food as means" founders; "food as means" founders were likely to have sharper boundaries between forms and be more attuned to the co-operative and/or communal aspects of CSA. With respect to farmers market founders, neither of the "food as event" farmers market founders considered CSA, nor did one of the "food as end" farmers market founders, who didn't see it as "hands-on" enough. For each of these people, the energy of the public space was part of the motivation for founding farmers markets over other forms of alternative food organizations.

Furthermore, the "food as event" farmers market founders seemed to believe that the farmers market was really the only way to do it. When I asked these founders about CSA, brick-and-mortar co-ops, or other forms of getting produce to their neighborhoods, my

question was met with confusion. The already incorporated organizations, on the one hand, often had multiple forms of alternative food organizations in the works or were doing something else co-operative in addition to the market: their response was essentially "we do it all." These founders seemed relatively agnostic about the model in which they pursued alternative food and associated missions; those who pursued both forms often described them as "just projects"—a CSA project, a market project, etc. Even in what I call "why would we do it any other way" cases, most founders of CSA and farmers markets did not refer to the other form as competition, with the exception of one of the farmers market founders (a for-profit) and the CSA founders who said they likely would not have started a CSA if a farmers market had existed in their community.

We Do It All: These Are Just Projects

Four of the ten farmers market founders interviewed also had CSA programs. These tended to be nonprofit organizations focused on community or economic development, who referred to the different economic structures as "projects" or "programs." One of these cases had an explicit social justice mission; in another case, the founder articulated social justice issues in the interview that would not have been visible from the online descriptions of the organization. In three cases of organizations that had both farmers markets and CSAs, the farmers markets came first and the CSAs tended to grow out of the farmers markets, supplied by the same vendors. In the fourth case, the nonprofit basically chose forms as it had the funding and staff to pursue them:

> Why it happened that way? Well, you know, from what I understand there was no rhyme or reason to why one thing before the other, other than I think funding would be the first. That sort of drives, being a nonprofit, that sort of drives the initiatives.

This nonprofit saw the programs as all part of the same community initiative. They described the programs were described as involving different amounts of organizational effort and serving different customer bases but all coming together in a synergistic way.

One of the "food as end" farmers market founders, who had also started a CSA and was open to starting a store in the future, described a similar philosophy of programming synergy, where each of the different forms followed a common goal:

> We're also looking at, with [a partner], having a sort of community grocery store … whereby almost like a co-op or CSA but it's for-profit … the wheels are always turning. Even though we're in the moment, it's always looking at, you know, what's next … not only looking at food but looking at … what impact does the work that you do have in terms of social, environmental justice.

This "food as end" farmers market founder was more like the "food as means" CSA founders, seeing food as a means to tackle other social issues in the community. However, food was really the first goal here, as this founder saw health and social justice as intertwined in this context, in the spirit of "food justice."

For this founder, and for another of the founders who had a farmers markets and CSA, the two models represented different challenges. In one case, the challenge was getting low-income CSA members to understand the concept and stay on:

> Interviewee: First day the CSA opens, I knew something was wrong when I start seeing people show up with shopping carts. All right. And me having worked many years in food pantry, I knew what was going on. … and so I call the woman … and she said, "Oh, I'm so sorry. They're not going to come back. They didn't understand the concept." I said, "I explained the concept." "I know, I was there, we explained," and … it's

> no one's fault but the system, and I say that because in my area alone you can go to a food pantry Monday through Friday.
> SS: Right, so you become habituated to that style of …
> Interviewee: … of free, and abundance. Not always healthy. But free and abundance. So getting people to understand the concept that they have to pay a farmer, the concept that they are paying for healthy food, the concept of paying, hits free.… So this year we're going to do something different…

In the other organization's case, changes in structure over time meant that the CSA eventually became more integrated into the farmers market and the broader programming of the nonprofit so that, in the words of the founder, the CSA consumers could get more connected to the mission. This founder saw the various alternative food forms—whether CSA or farmers market—as projects supporting his nonprofit's mission:

> I mean, I think the thing about a not for profit is it has a declared social mission that is about public benefit. Farmers markets aren't necessarily about that, neither are CSAs. I believe intrinsically they can be. They also can be challenging and problematic and are tested and being tested all the time.

We Do It This Way; Competition and/or Preference

As a contrast to the "just projects" view held by organizations supporting both farmers markets and CSAs, one for-profit farmers market founder saw CSAs as a different model, one that either represented competition or opportunity:

> Interviewee: I certainly went through a lot of feelings about the CSAs, and the whole scene is changing. And [we're] … really at a juncture point to try to figure out how to stay current …Sometimes the CSAs siphon off some of our customers, so we wonder, "Is it a good thing?" It's of course having more access, more people are getting the produce. Um, it's just sort of, we're trying to figure out how it works out with helping us because it's a mini threat to us … the whole field is becoming much more segmented, and it's a totally different landscape out there now.
> SS: You mean more segmented in terms of communities, or … ?
> Interviewee: Well, you know, there are the urban farm stands, there is the farmers markets, and then the CSAs, and I think everyone, there's not that much co-operation among them. Everybody is so focused on their little segment.

Some CSA founders also expressed the feeling that farmers market founders saw sharp boundaries between CSAs and farmers markets. In one case, a CSA founder—one of the more ideological of the "food as end" founders—cited antagonism from a farmers market nearby:

> They saw my effort as being competitive with that, and I was probably coming in with too much fire and brimstone about why CSA was a better thing to do. The greenmarket[16] that they were using, I think it's a great asset, but I don't think greenmarkets are inherently much different than supermarkets … I mean the presence of the greenmarket does encourage people to eat more vegetables, probably, because they see it and they would want to stroll through the greenmarket and buy something because it's all on display … Greenmarkets have a hyperreality in that people think they're participating in something more than they're participating when they go to a supermarket. So anyway, they go to greenmarkets and it serves the purpose of increasing consumption, but it's a one-act deal … I would not argue that it changes people's diet to a very significant degree … but nevertheless, I do think it is of benefit so I don't want to put it down. But I also thought that CSA was better, and I wanted to add that, and they were in opposition.

These two were outliers among the "food as end" founders. Most of the founders of alternative food organizations, like the founders of organizations that had both forms and saw them as projects or programs, did not see the different forms as competitive—some farmers market founders also had CSAs, and many CSA founders also mentioned shopping at farmers markets or even supporting the idea of having both in their neighborhood.

Meanwhile, other founders, particularly "food as means" or "food as event" founders, preferred the form they had chosen. In the founders' stories, implicit boundaries between

[16] A number of people use "greenmarket" as synonymous with farmers market, even though Greenmarkets is a program run by a particular organization. In this case, it seemed the person meant farmers markets in general, not the organization.

farmers markets and other forms were sharpest for "food as means" CSA founders—none of whom mentioned farmers markets—and for "food as event" farmers market founders—none of whom understood the relevance of other forms for what they were trying to do. Interestingly, though, even some of the "food as end" founders who had chosen the CSA form out of convenience supported the co-operative vision more broadly, whether before they founded a CSA or now that they had become more accustomed to the idea. In response to my hypothetical question about alternative forms, this subset of "food as end" founders shared interests in other co-operative models outside the food space.

Notably, several CSA founders mentioned that they belonged to a co-op or would be interested in belonging to a co-op, although most couldn't fathom starting one because of the time commitment. Some had decided to get around this by expanding their CSA. As one CSA founder stated:

> A couple of the organizers from the CSAs … are now starting a [brick-and-mortar] co-op, trying to start a co-op. … I was involved with that process for awhile, and I'm sort of keep[ing] tabs of it online but not really able to go to meetings as much as I'd like to …we sort of worked around that in our CSA by acquiring, by partnering with more farms and sort of acquiring what we wanted.

After discussing the wide array of things their CSA offered, this founder added, as if to explain how a farmers market or brick-and-mortar general co-op was unnecessary:

> I mean, we have constraints on how much we can expand, but it's sort of worked for us, and, I mean, I think the only other things that I'd want are like toilet paper and paper towels …

Another founder echoed this sentiment:

> And I mean, as far as a buying club, we sort of do that through our CSA a little bit,

> not in the form of the co-op, but, I mean, we're looking into getting, like, fair trade coffee and chocolate, and that would be more of a buying club, like through a CSA.

Speaking of the time constraints involved with setting up a more generalized brick-and-mortar co-op, another CSA founder called co-op founding "a very hard slog … just a whole other, hell of a lot of work," referring again to the convenience of the CSA over other forms one might found (not just farmers markets). Another had started going to co-op founding meetings but felt that "we couldn't be involved in it at that early of a stage because it was so [much—], it was just planning to plan"; the CSA, on the other hand, seemed doable:

> When the CSA opportunity just showed up in our inbox, we were, like, "Yes! We can make this happen."

These refrains fit with the CSA theme of "convenience" but also complicated it: the CSA founders who mentioned multiple forms of co-operative buying evidently had some broader interest in the co-operative model, even if they didn't articulate this as readily as the "food as means" founders did.

Alternative food organization founders also mentioned non-food related co-ops in response to my question about hypothetical alternative food organizations that they might start. For example, one CSA founder mentioned a babysitting co-operative she knew about and thought that the CSA would be a good format for starting up that kind of co-operative in her neighborhood. She saw the CSA as a platform for doing more co-operative organizing.

The extension of the co-operative vision in areas outside of food was more explicitly

articulated by one of the more activist farmers market founders:

> SS: So had you thought of doing something else besides a market …?
> Interviewee: … co-working was also an option … But, I had tried that […] and it was just a lot of trouble, lot of trouble. … I originally thought the idea of the farmers market, it never occurred to me that the farmers market would cost me a lot of money. […]
> SS: You know, I'm looking at alternative forms of organizing, like markets, co-ops, CSAs, had you thought of doing something else like a CSA or a co-op or a buying club?
> Interviewee: No, don't forget that I'm not in this because I was thinking about food. That's not how this started. This started because I'm an old radical … it just sort of has evolved that food has become the way I think it's … I see a real potential for organizing alternative forms. [] It isn't that I'm interested in food and I'm looking for structures. I'm interested in these alternative forms, and food seems to be the way.

Like some CSA founders who became serial CSA joiners and starters, some farmers market founders went into building more farmers markets. This was the case with one of the "food as event" farmers market founders, who saw these markets as part of "different linkages" he was making around health.

One "food as end" founder who had a "this was just the way we wanted do it" mentality about boundaries between forms also organized the farmers markets for health reasons. This founder mentioned having thought of co-op and CSA but decided against them because they weren't "hands-on enough":

> I was, you know, initially, and there's nothing wrong with a CSA. It's a good way. It just didn't appeal to me as much as being there, hands-on. … There was nothing greater than having the kids come out and plant seeders, iust try to instill in the kids and bring us all together for a community effort. And this seemed to be the simplest way to do it.

Meanwhile, one "food as event" farmers market founder seemed not to even understand my question about alternative forms; he had not heard of other ways of getting produce to

a community and thought the market was basically all he needed to consider:

> Interviewee: No, no, I just wanted I have guys who have produce to sell to people who want to buy it. It's a real linear, it's a very linear, you know, uncomplicated. […]
> SS: Would you start other things in this food space, produce? Are you interested in doing more, or do you feel like the market's … ?
> Interviewee: Well, what we would like to do is to, uh, I was going to say we were thinking of having a roadkill market … [laughing]

As with the processes leading up to founding, the degree to which sharp boundaries were drawn among alternative food organizations varied by the founders' goals. "Food as end" founders and formalized organizations—for-profit or nonprofit—which did both forms and saw them as simply distinct projects or programs often drew weak boundaries between the forms, including trying various forms to accomplish the same end. On the other hand, "food as means" and "food as event" founders were more tied to the particular form they had founded, CSA or farmers market, respectively.

CONCLUSION

My investigation into the field and founding paths in this particular, localized social movement shows that alternative food organizations come about for a variety of reasons, some as direct as a community member wanting fresh produce for himself or herself and organizing to make that happen and others as indirect as broader communitarian or environmental aims through which food issues came to represent a vehicle. Alternative food organizations arose for reasons of profit, community building, and activism, sometimes intentional and sometimes inadvertent. This suggests that theories of nonprofit entrepreneurship that posit a single explanation or a single relationship between values and structure are misguided: in the real world, people start organizations for many

reasons, and there are many possible relationships between structure and values.

In some ways, differences between organizational form led to a lack of sharp boundaries between the goals of CSAs and farmers markets. The smaller-than-expected association between co-operative values and CSAs might be explained in part by the fact that some CSA founders chose the form out of convenience, having been just as open to the farmers market form for their "food as end" purposes but finding it easier to start a CSA given the support of a CSA umbrella organization. This is an interesting pattern showing the role of social movement network-building at an institutionalized level, in which a nonprofit is set up for the purpose of creating more organizations in its own mold, a twist on DiMaggio in Powell (1983) in that "norms" are not carried by a professional organization yet conform in outcomes to similar institutionalization projects (such as described in Rao, Morrill, and Zald 2000, and earlier work like that of DiMaggio 1982). The "we do it all" model of nonprofits, which incorporated CSAs and farmers markets as "just projects" with the same theme, is similar, with a different environmental factor at work: funding. These patterns of convenience and "we do it all" founding conform with expectations about the ecological relationship between goals and forms, with less intentional linking on the part of founders (Haveman and Rao 1997, Barnett and Woywode 2004, Carroll 1985, Hannan and Freeman 1984).

On the other hand, some founders explicitly and intentionally linked goals and organizational forms, driving some of the differences we might expect in the field in terms of the breakdown in goals between the two forms (Polletta and Jasper 2011,

Lichterman 1996, Rothschild and Whitt 1979, Bordt 1997, and Kleinman 1996). While "social justice" was often not explicitly mentioned in formal documents, "food as means" founders of CSAs articulated social justice themes alongside the choice for this more co-operative form. Interestingly, farmers market founders with social justice leanings did not tend to articulate social justice themes in the same way, although two—a for-profit and a "food as end" farmer—were clearly motivated by social justice issues. The more public and non-membership based nature of the farmers market might have led these founders to seek more diffuse goals to appeal to a broader base (McCarthy and Walker 2004, Walker and McCarthy 2010).

As with broader findings on nonprofit organizations, alternative food organizations fall along a continuum, some perhaps as "instruments of capital" and others "evading the laws of the marketplace" (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990: 153). This organizational field, as the overall mix of values indicates, is part economic activity and part social movement activity, but not necessarily for each organization, complicating binaries between market and other forms (Callon 1998, Uzzi 1996, and Williamson 1991) as well as between alternative food organizations and the food economy at large (Barham 1997). While many alternative food organizations are more about consumption than about political engagement in the more traditional social movement sense (Sassatelli 2006), some founders do take on collective issues, seeing food as a means to broader ends, and not just a goal in itself.

CHAPTER TWO:
DIVISION OF LABOR AND COMMUNITY

A woman from the street yelled out various comments: You're taking up the sidewalk, there's already a supermarket nearby, I'm not fat and don't need this, why do white people always tell us what we need? (paraphrase) Two of Boise FM's staff members, one white and one Hispanic, were visibly upset by the woman's comments, and one of them mentioned them even an hour later. "We're trying a different model," the market manager of the Boise farmers market replied to the passerby yelling her criticisms at the tents on the street with tables covered in produce. A subway train passed loudly nearby, the smell of food truck kebabs wafted into the farmers market tent, and the summer heat left beads of sweat on bodies in and outside the tent.

What different model was the Boise market manager referencing? As a social justice project, this farmers market was more than just a place to buy and sell food. Boise FM was part of an organization focused on other food-related themes, with a mission focused both on food and social justice goals. It was situated in a historically low-income, heavily Spanish-speaking immigrant neighborhood, which retained that demographic base while also now including newcomers different in race and economic background. The farmers market was part of a project with other food-related goals. What distinguished Boise's model from other forms (to the market manager's point in the introductory quote) was not only the relationship that Boise had with the farms and produce they supported but also the relationships they formed with staff and the community.

The Asheville farmers market's mission was health focused, and when the founder was asked why the market was started, he mentioned health first. Pushed further, though, the founder included community definitions in the market's mission. Asheville FM highlighted instrumental, food-focused goals and was situated in a historically black, mixed-income neighborhood. As the founder spoke, community became a more complex definition for the market:

> Interviewee: The mission, goal, was to bring fresh produce to my community for health purposes. The majority, I'd say most of individuals walking around here with high blood pressure, diabetes, and juvenile diabetes is the reason why I started the market …
> SS: How would you describe what you see as the community*?*
> Interviewee: Wow, that's very interesting. What I used to see and describe as a community were people who lived together in a small sort of setting, area, and they worked together, keeping it clean and having some set rules that are not necessarily talked about but just respected and understood and if … you know, people looked out for one another, that kind of stuff, I considered to be community. Of course, the local stores, your mom and pop shops, and things like that, were part of the community. You would just turn your money over right in your neighborhood. That's economic power. …

What was this "community" of which Asheville FM's manager spoke? Boise and Asheville—and the other organizations studied—were involved in various relationships in the process of exchange.

In each case, community was not something that just came naturally because alternative food institutions were inherently "embedded." These organizations preferenced and cultivated social ties through relational work, creating, maintaining, negotiating, and altering personal connections to an even greater extent than in Zelizer's (2005) observations of consumption. Core members of the CSAs and staff in the farmers markets

focused intentionally on social ties to cultivate community among themselves as well as between the organizations and customers, members at large, and neighborhood members. The organizations sustained social ties through food, but not only that—and sometimes in ways that sacrificed profit.

Defining and constantly redefining, on their own terms, questions of what made alternative food organizations "alternative" and how they developed "community" was a large part of what drove the alternative food organizations—Farmers' Markets and CSAs—I observed. What were the particular ways these organizations formally organized and informally practiced relational work (Zelizer 2012)? To what can we attribute differences and similarities in the relational work in these organizations? In this chapter, I focus on organizational structure and process: formalization and the division of labor; decision-making and control; rewards and incentives; and community to understand how they're associated with differences in form and mission.

In terms of social ties, the focus of comparison in this chapter, the literatures on economic activity and social movements give different expectations about what might to occur in these local food movement organizations—markets and co-operatives—whose various missions range from those straightforwardly aligned with profit aims for the farmers (promoting local, healthy food) and those mixedly aligned with social justice aims (dealing with consumer income inequality in some way). Scholars have often called these "embedded" organizations (Feagan 2007, Lyson and Green 1999, Barham 1997, O'Hara and Stagl 2001, Starr 2010). However, this work, like much of the broader

sociological literature on embeddedness (Krippner and Alvarez 2007, Uzzi 1999, Granovetter 1985), has either tried to prove embeddedness or to see its advantages, rather than to understand how social actors make economies embedded and in what ways. [17] To understand the successes and struggles of the organizations themselves, we need to look at how social ties were shaped in the context of organizations defining "community" and "model" in situations like the ones described above in the Boise and Asheville FMs. Examining these definitions from the perspective of particular practices within these organizations, we can see where the variation in relations and relational work is associated with broader structures of the organization, their forms and missions.

Zelizer (2005) alludes to boundaries within and without an organization as a way to understand differences in types of relational work, highlighting differences within the site and across the site's boundaries. Following from this, I look first at the internal relationships, the division of labor, among core members and staff of the organizations, and then at the organizations' broader community relations. The organizational literature leads us to expect that the internal organization of relations is influenced by a variety of factors, for example, the variation between bureaucratic and collectivist organizations (Rothschild-Whitt 1979), hybrid structures (Bordt 1997), or network forms (Powell

[17] An exception is Uzzi's (1997) description of some cases in the textile industry where designers and manufacturers went against self-interest to reinforce their ties, but the literature has not developed this much since. The literature on alternative food institutions (Feagan 2007, Lyson and Green 1999, Barham 1997, O'Hara and Stagl 2001, Starr 2010) suggests that "embeddedness" is something that results automatically from direct ties with farmers. In the more general literature on embeddedness of economic activity, meanwhile, sometimes sharp distinctions are made between market ties and embedded ties (as do Uzzi's textile industry subjects, Uzzi 1997) and other times markets are described as relationally ripe, "arenas of social interaction" (Beckert 2009: 248).

1990).[18] Within these structures, one of the dominant axes of variation is the degree of coordination and hierarchy. For example, leadership is expected to be minimal in markets (Smith 1986, Williamson 1973, Hayek 1945)[19] and in co-operatives (Rothschild-Whitt 1979). Relations may be influenced as well by the material and operational constraints of an organization, as in the minimalist form (Halliday, Powell, and Granfors 1987) or in Baron et al.'s (1996) suggestion that firms must attain a minimum size before formal systems of practice emerge, at least with regard to their focal area, HR systems.[20]

While organizations can vary in formal structural ways, they also have different "normative bases" and "climates" (Powell 1990) that distinguish relations between types of organizations. For example, in Powell's conception (1990) the climate of a market might be characterized by precision and suspicion, a hierarchical organization might be more formal and bureaucratic, and a network organization might be more open-ended and characterized by mutual benefit. Organizations can similarly vary by emotional characteristics, with bounded emotionality (Martin et al. 1998) marked by low boundaries between work and private life or with emotionally resonant motivation as the form in which work is rewarded (Summers-Effler 2010). Looking at external relations, these normative bases or climates may also characterize relations between organizations and

[18] Rothschild-Whitt (1979) and Bordt (1997) describe distinctions of bureaucratic and collectivist-democratic organizations, including, among others, differences in authority, social control, recruitment and advancement, incentive structure, and task differentiation.
[19] "Markets are a form of noncoercive organization, they have coordinating but not integrative effects. As Hayek (1945) suggested, market coordination is the result of human actions but not of human design" (Powell 1990: 302).
[20] They showed that model, size, and age were significant in determining presence of some characteristics, such as mission statements, standardized performance reviews, and regular social events, but not others, such as knowledge or skill based pay, written job descriptions, or non-monetary rewards for performance.

surrounding groups, including customers or community members. Organizations may take on community-based characteristics true of the "community-based" concept in traditional social movements (McCarthy and Walker 2004, Walker and McCarthy 2010), while others may more closely resemble "third places" (Oldenburg1991) or community capitalism (Tolbert et al. 2002).

I hypothesized that this relational work varies in alternative organizations based on the organizational form and missions of the organizations—that co-operative and social justice organizations, for example, would be more likely to avoid hierarchy and espouse normative rewards internally in their division of labor and more likely to resemble community-based social movements externally in their relationship with customers and community members. Moving beyond a blanket term of "embeddedness," I use the internal and external division in relations as a way to approach the multiplicity of relations constituting farmers markets and CSAs. In this chapter, I first define the leadership structure in each organizational form and borrow Abolfia's (1996) idea of market-making as defined by price stabilization, information processing, and market continuity to see the social construction of economic exchange by these organizations. I then discuss the different meanings and practices around the division of labor by organizational form and mission, including organizational rewards for work and the degree of breadth in organizational decision-making. Next, I discuss broader notions of community, the tightness or looseness of boundaries with the neighborhood, differences that varied more by the organizations' missions than organizational form. These are

linked, forming the two principle approaches I identify as ways that the organizations consider social ties.

Division of Labor: Hierarchy and Coordination

The expectation from theory is that both market and co-operative forms of organization are characterized by a limited presence of hierarchy. In the cases I observed, hierarchy was indeed minimal in the organizations that took on both market and cooperative forms of economic exchange; however, in both cases, coordination was key. In both organizational forms and across all missions, leaders had specific responsibilities attached to their roles. While hierarchy was minimal, coordination was perhaps even more important in these organizations because alternative food organizations pushed the status quo, had minimally formalized documents, and relied on normative as well as material rewards. These organizations sought to create something new, challenging what currently existed and encountering local resistance, with relatively minimal formal organization. Minimal formal organization, it turns out, produced a need for practically situated and flexible coordination. Leaders in these organizations coordinated sales, operations, and human resources, and they cultivated a culture of community within the organization. While this coordination was effortful, the leaders often deemphasized their own leadership. The particular coordination responsibilities and the institutionalization of role names varied by organizational form, while the meanings and discourse surrounding leadership varied more by organizational missions.

Hierarchy and Coordination in Market Making

Markets in the alternative food movement required leadership to coordinate market activities.[21] The visible hand in these markets was that of the market manager, a role common to all farmers markets I observed and one that was institutionally formalized by the Farmers Market Federation, a support and governance organization for farmers markets. The Farmers Market Federation listed the hiring of a market manager as one of the key items on its checklist to set up markets (Farmers Market Federation of NY 2010), and these markets had to deal with bureaucratic elements such as permitting, accounting, and the handling of formal documents. Similarly, as places where the interaction of staff, vendors, and community members was key to success, the organizations developed practices for motivating employees and sustaining the organizational culture through relations with vendors, staff, and those outside the boundaries of the organization. In some ways, farmers markets were "made" much as Abolafia (1996) observed on Wall Street, with the managers acting as price stabilizers, information processors, and suppliers of market continuity. The character of each of these practices, however, was very different. As social-purpose entities, in some cases with nonprofit status, price stabilization, information processing, and supplying market continuity were each infused with values around the organizational missions to support local farmers, improve health, or improve food access and affordability.

[21] This view of spontaneous generation, even as described by Powell (1990), focuses on the coming together of buyers and seller, where "no one need rely on someone else for direction, prices alone determine production and exchange" (302).

Price Stabilization By Mission and Design in Markets

Market managers were indirect price stabilizers, coordinating price through recruitment and market design. While producers controlled their own prices, market managers indirectly stabilized prices by attempting to recruit farmers who did not heavily compete with one another in product mix and by arranging the layout of the market in such a way that direct competition would be minimized. For example, the Asheville market manager described how he[22] had learned to set up the market from watching successful markets nearby[23] and noticing things like how similar goods would be placed stalls apart. The aim of this was to help farmers sell more at market, receive a fair price for their produce, and attempt to recruit vendors who would provide different products, enhancing the market's variety. A byproduct was indirect price stabilization.

Recruitment was an indirect price stabilizer, but it was also a practice very much influenced by the social purpose nature of the organizations. As social purpose markets, they incorporated social goals: small farms were encouraged over large, and farmers of color were also encouraged in organizations that prioritized this as a social goal. The recruiting of small farms was a mission very core to the existence of each of the organizations and one that very clearly set them apart from traditional supermarkets and other ways of consuming in the organizations' surrounding communities. The recruitment of farmers of color was sometimes an additional layer of selection in farmer recruitment. This could be intertwined with the social justice missions of the organization (as in Cady

[22] Here and elsewhere gender, was assigned through a coin flip to help de-identify organizations.
[23] Note the comparison to Harrison White's (1981) ideas of market exchange.

CSA, which came out of social justice goals and activism but was now in a relatively affluent neighborhood of mixed racial and ethnic composition) or in a combination of the organizational mission and a desire to cater to the audience's target market (as in the Asheville, Boise, and Columbus FMs, which were focused on relatively instrumental ("foodie"), mixed food and social justice, and more social justice-based goals, respectively). Catering to the audience's target market did not just mean growing the kinds of vegetables that the customers might prefer, but perhaps also speaking their language and serving as a visual referent of a shared ethnic or racial background. In the Columbus market, which leaned more heavily toward social justice goals than the average farmers market and which was situated in what was predominantly a community of color, with many immigrants, the social mission of the organization included an additional layer of support for local entrepreneurs who might be selling food or community garden-grown vegetables, above and beyond the support provided to small regional farms. This extra layer of support included price support through institutionalized limits to competition that might disadvantage local entrepreneurs. As the market manager of Columbus FM stated in an interview:

> Well … the farmers know that the gardeners grow specific things, so the farmers will not sell those things. And a lot of our customers will come and look for those specific things … and the farmers are not allowed to sell that so they know to send, which gardener to send that customer to.

In the context of the culture of Columbus FM, this institutionalized regulation of competition felt more co-operative than coercive. Even in cases where the rule did not apply, there was a practice of cross-vendor referral, creating a climate (Powell 1990) of trust and mutual aid.

Information Processing: Brokering Community, Not Just Transactions, in Markets

Market managers of farmers markets were also information processors. The information-processing role was more significant and diverse for market managers in farmers markets than in more conventional market exchange settings like those described by Abolafia (1996). The role was more significant in that market managers processed information perhaps even more than they processed transactions; it was more diverse in that the set of information included not just economic but also community concerns, often focused outside the bounds of profit.[24]

One of the most important aspects of the information-processing role in farmers markets was that of quality control, which was not just about the produce for sale in the market but also included consumer-facing education on quality. Market managers regulated the freshness and origin of farmers' products in line with good business practice around quality control (Akerlof 1970). More educationally, the market manager also informed customers about product qualities and prices. Product qualities that they articulated included the distinctions between organic and conventional produce and various intermediate production methods. They also emphasized and articulated the point of origin, as farmers were asked to include information about their farm's location, and the

[24] Uzzi (1997) highlights the importance of "embedded ties" to firms in the New York textile business for providing fine-grained information transfer, finding that "information exchange in embedded relationships was more proprietary and tacit than the price and quantity data that were traded in arm's-length ties," communicating a sense of "style" that was otherwise difficult to articulate and "more than a matter of asset-specific know-how or reducing information asymmetry between parties, because the social relationship imbues information with veracity and meaning beyond its face value" (Uzzi 1997: 45-6).

market manager sometimes answered questions about whether produce was available locally or seasonally. Quality enforcement was intertwined with promoting a model to bring healthier, fresher produce to customers. Freshness was described as "quality," and managers stated that produce should be of the "highest quality." Freshness was something valued by all markets and part of what—along with "local"—were qualities of farmers markets that the organizations felt distinguished them from nearby alternatives.

While we would expect quality regulation to be a more typical component of information processing in economic exchange, these markets performed a much broader range of information processing to serve the dual function of stimulating market demand and acting as a community resource. Beyond simply providing information about the quality of the produce, the markets provided more general education about the benefits of healthy eating. All three markets hosted nonprofits that provided cooking and nutrition workshops, and in each case the market provided tent space to these groups at no cost. In addition to hosting these mission-relevant outside groups, market managers also provided more ad hoc information about cooking and nutrition. For example, one of the things that Asheville FM's market manager was most proud of was the fact that he had "cured" some neighborhood members through healthy eating, especially juice cleanses rich in leafy greens. In other sites of consumption, it is likely that any education occurring in the economic exchange is brought by both sides to the exchange rather than created onsite before or during the exchange. The educational component of the markets distinguished them from nearby alternatives.

Even beyond the market as a place for produce, the processing of community information was extensive, and this set these markets apart further, reminding us of how both Boise and Asheville FM's market managers distinguished their organizations in the descriptions that appear at the beginning of this chapter. The emphasis on community as a goal in itself was reflected in the activities that consumed market leaders' time. Even as they were organizing a place of economic exchange, market managers acted as community ambassadors, providing information to consumers and passersby that extended beyond the boundaries of the market. Asheville FM's market manager, for example, provided a wealth of information in informal, ad hoc ways onsite: advising customers about healthy restaurants in the neighborhood, providing conflict resolution advice to friends and colleagues, coordinating a car repair when a passerby's car broke down near the market, and advising on event space rentals, just to name a few instances. This broader community information-processing role was not limited to Asheville. The Asheville farmers market was in some ways an informal Chamber of Commerce. Similarly, but with a slightly different tone, the language of "community organizing" appeared in both the Boise and Columbus farmers markets. The market managers of these organizations similarly processed information as community ambassadors, not only monitors and conveyers of product quality.

Included in the community aspects of information processing was some boundary drawing by the organizations of informational themes that might be controversial with customers. As community ambassadors, there was reluctance among market managers to too strongly promote values that might be abrasive to customers, even if they were in

keeping with the organizational missions. Balancing a desire to promote their missions with a desire for wide market appeal, market managers might avoid communicating about environmentalism or even health in ways that might make customers feel intimidated. Some have read this to mean that these social movements are depoliticized (Sassatelli 2006), but it is also in line with the literature on community-based organizing (Walker and McCarthy 2010, McCarthy and Walker 2004). For example, when Boise FM's customers asked about the unavailability of certain produce items (with questions like, "Why don't you have bananas?" or "No tomatoes anymore?!"), Boise's market manager modeled for staff how to respond with indirect discussion about local origin and seasonality. While local produce was a key component of the organizational mission, Boise avoided lecturing about buying local. Instead, Boise's staff was shown how to mention where the produce came from or to say what time of year it would come out instead of lecturing about the bigger picture of local food systems or alternative forms. A conversation with Boise on this topic helped further elucidate this:

> I mean, the questions about organic food, that's still sort of in that area … I think there's sort of maybe a lack of knowledge about what the word even means … and I think people, many people, they see it and they see "this word's on it and that means it's more expensive" or like "it's sold in a place where I don't normally go or I don't feel I want to go" and so sometimes there's that idea of, like, "Okay, here people bring these things into my neighborhood that I don't want." But we … try to just engage them and ask questions and listen, and as much as we talk about food or want to listen to people about what they … how they feel about it and what they think and just try to give them some information. You know, why pesticides probably aren't good for you, which, you know, to a lot of people makes, probably it seems very common sense, but if people haven't talked about it or thought about it, then it's just very alien."

In this way, Boise FM workers educated customers about local purchasing and seasonality but preferenced inclusion and avoided confrontation. Similarly, Columbus FM's market manager did not discuss values-oriented issues in the market. For example,

although environmental issues were a key aspect of the market's organizational mission and manifested in other ways, they were subsidiary to the community focus. Thus, even though there was an implicit emphasis on organic (and similarly chemical-free) produce, environmental topics like recycling and plastic bag use, which were controversial in the community, were handled with friendly incentives rather than prohibitions. The organization implemented related values in a more indirect way by providing space for nonprofits to provide information on a range of topics extending beyond health and nutrition.

Supplying Market Continuity: A Sometimes Invisible, but Hard-working, Hand

In addition to acting as price stabilizers and information processors, market managers also supplied market continuity. Again, as the general process of market making was similar to the idealized forms of market exchange (Abolafia 1996), perhaps the most basic difference in terms of market continuity was that for these organizations, the market was not expected to go on. When I asked market managers what they saw as the biggest successes of the market, all three responded with something along the lines of "that we're still here," defining success in terms of survival, a commonality between these farmers markets and community organizations (Walker and McCarthy 2010). As organizational leaders, but also, in a sense, movement leaders, market managers internalized the need to maintain market continuity. Rather than leaving the continuity of the market to the forces of supply and demand, the market managers regarded the market's survival as an aspect of their personal responsibility. As with the other aspects of their market role, this market

continuity was not just a function of the economic exchange of produce. As Boise's market manager described it:

> SS: What do you think is the biggest thing you'd want to change about the market and what is preventing that from happening and, on the flip side, what is the biggest success?
> Interviewee: Um, what would I want to change? You know I think I would just want to have … I think maybe more activity, more … just more goings-on, more things to do at the market other than just buy veggies … what's preventing that is just the newness of it and just the lack of awareness, but that's a big part of what we're targeting, just getting out, talking to people, bringing people in, and what do you think is the biggest success? [pause] I mean I think … its continued existence. … the fact that it's still there. People have tried to really get it going in that neighborhood and it just takes a lot, I mean way more time than many people realize, or even that I realized it would be, and just creativity.

While managers acknowledged limits to their agency—for example, saying that the community or different audiences might not be "ready" for local food—they also believed that they were guardians of the market and its continuation.

On a day-to-day basis, one of the key elements of this market continuity was maintaining the presence, satisfaction, and good will of vendors, without which the markets could not exist. For example, the Asheville FM's market manager described his conflict resolution response as having to "go market manager on" the vendors, describing cases of no-shows or of interpersonal struggles between vendors. In all cases, there were weeks when popular vendors did not show, and this the ease with which vendors came and went posed problems for market managers, threatening the viability of the market as a whole. Rather than seeing the freedom to truck and barter (or not) as the way markets worked, Asheville FM's market manager expressed a belief that everyone in the market made an implicit

commitment to be there consistently over the entire market season. He described any violation of this a violation of the norms of professionalism.

The problem of inconsistent attendance also faced the Boise farmers market. Sometimes this was simply week-to-week variation—for example, bad weather or personal illness—while other times week-to-week absences turned into permanent exit, as vendors may have realized that the market was not the best financial decision for them among the changing array of selling channels. Boise's market manager had a less strong view of his authority on these issues than did Asheville's manager, admitting that there wasn't much he could do to sanction vendors who might want to attend inconsistently, or even leave. Although market managers had the ability to prohibit vendors from joining or continuing in the market (as I will discuss in the next chapter), they felt less control over vendor exit. Describing a particular case, the Boise market manager said:

> That was sort of a disappointment. Yeah, they pulled out … I mean, really … There are no repercussions, we don't fine them if they can't come in or if it's not working for them, which with the small farms, family farms, it's sort of one way and what our conversation with them is sort of "How can we help you out, how can we make this work" … we definitely try to do what we can to try to work with them and make sure they can stay and make it … This year we're trying to find other outlets like other wholesale outlets, so when they, it makes their trip to the market more worthwhile so they can sell out every day

Farmers market managers often fulfilled this responsibility for market continuity through personal sacrifice: coming early, staying late, trying to fill in the holes when staff or vendors did not show. For example, with space a scarce commodity in New York, in the early hours of the morning the Asheville market manager sat in his car holding parking spots for the market's vendors. At Boise, when the market was short-staffed, the market

manager and even an unpaid founder of the market pitched in to sell produce or fulfill tasks that were typically handled by other workers. At Columbus, the market manager implemented various pre- and post-market initiatives to deepen involvement and inclusion among the market vendors and staff. Maintaining market continuity was something that market managers took direct responsibility for, stepping in when conflicts arose or resources were thin, sometimes at significant personal cost.

Coordination and Leadership in CSAs

Markets have been described as leaderless, but so have co-operatives, for a different reason. While Adam Smith's invisible hand has been the caricature of the market, the co-operative might be pictured as a group of horizontally united members making mutually beneficial and collective decisions. In this characterization of the co-operative, the group overtakes the need for a leader, and we would expect the role of leadership to be minimal in this context. Indeed, in the case of the organizations I observed that approximated the co-operative model (CSAs), coordinating roles were minimally hierarchical and only loosely related to many of the characteristics associated with leadership. Furthermore, these coordinating roles were not clearly and formally defined as they were in markets with the market manager role. Though an important CSA support organization in the region advocated a "core group" as something successful CSAs should have, not all CSAs explicitly institutionalized the core group or called it by that name. The "core group" was referenced repeatedly at Burlington CSA, but not at either Abilene CSA, where there were "regular volunteers" and "members," or Cady CSA, where everyone

was called a "member," though some were more involved than others in the planning aspects of the CSA.[25]

Burlington's "core group" was the most formalized in that it referred to a central group with specific, named, and somewhat stable roles. In spite of being the most formalized of the three, however, its boundaries were loose, unlike the hierarchical, rational-legal role differentiation that might appear in a bureaucratic organization. After hearing the lead organizer at Burlington CSA talk at length about "core," I asked him, "How would you define core?" He struggled to pin it down exactly, giving a few definitions:

> SS: How would you describe, there are some people who come to the meetings but then don't do things every week at the distribution, then there are people who do things every distribution but don't come to meetings, would you consider all of those people core?
> Interviewee: Um, I'd say yes, absolutely. They are all on the core list, the email list. …
> SS: Like, how would you define core?
> Interviewee: Core is pretty much [a] self-definition … it's pretty much self-selecting, like one decision is do you want to be privy to the core emails. Um. And like what I was saying about [names one of the members], she took on a lot of responsibility, but I guess, you know, it wasn't official, so that situation can exist but we try for it not to exist because it's better for everyone [to know how much and what others are doing[26]] …
> SS: There was, like, a couple who often like helped out a lot at the beginning and the end [I described] they just took extra shifts basically but didn't do other things … Oh, I can't believe I don't … I mean would you consider that core?
> Interviewee: I wouldn't consider that core only because they themselves didn't express the desire to be in on things. Core is basically that you have the ability to comment on decisions because you know they are being made

[25] In Abilene CSA, there was a recognized leader and the rest of the group were called "regular volunteers," in Burlington CSA there was a formalized "core group" with a de facto lead organizer, and in Cady CSA there was a founder who acted as a de facto leader with other named organizing roles having responsibility for certain functions.
[26] Added by CSA contact when reading.

The ambiguity in the Burlington CSA leader's description reflected the sense that the leader saw entry into core as wholly voluntary and could not describe why it had ended up as it had: some people were interested more in the remote, online planning and news, while others were more engaged in person, sometimes at the exclusion of being involved in more strategic decisions.

In spite of the less institutionalized name for leadership and the fact that leadership was distributed across multiple individuals, leadership roles in CSAs also included price stabilization, information processing, and supplying the continuity of exchange. Next, we will see how these processes occurred in small co-operatives.

Price Stabilization by Mission and Design in CSAs

Price stabilization was the role perhaps most different in CSAs compared to farmers markets, in part because the price stabilization function was built into the CSA structure of transactions and therefore was not something that leadership regulated. The lack of sensitivity to market fluctuations—price being a key component of this—was described as one of the advantages of the CSA model (to farmers) in that farmers would not be subject to the wild vacillations in price that might occur in markets. Because members in the CSA model generally paid a lump sum for a season, prices at the produce level were not a focus for the groups unless they were used to make comparisons with local alternatives.

While this aspect of price stabilization was less central, these groups emphasized the choice of farmer as a key component in determining price and variety. CSAs chose farmers who fit the mission of their organization as well as the demographics of their members. In communities with low-income members and/or social justice missions, the CSA were especially keen to select a farmer who was sympathetic to cost concerns and might also work with the CSA to support their mission of access.[27] In this way, CSAs stabilized price as part of implementing their mission. Additionally, allocation was regulated in CSAs across persons, in that each member received an equal quantity share of the harvest for that week. The organizer often had a say in how this happened, adapting farmer allocation if it seemed necessary to do so to ensure equal shares among members. As such, the focus with respect to members was on stabilization of equality rather than stabilization of price per se.

Information Processing: Brokering Community, Not Just Transactions, in CSAs

Like farmers market managers, CSA lead organizers played an informational role, one that extended beyond produce transactions to community-oriented work. In all cases, lead organizers conveyed information between CSA members and the farmer. In the Abilene and Cady CSAs, the lead organizers usually communicated directly with the farmers about the produce that would arrive for the week and then communicated the weekly produce list to the entire CSA via email and face-to-face discussions onsite, sometimes with preparation tips or other details. This process was similar at Burlington, except that

[27] This could be done through lower-priced shares overall or through giving out "free shares." A certain number of cost-free shares were sometimes given to CSAs to be used by volunteers or in reducing the overall price of all shares (for example, if one free share was given for each 10 shares, a 100-person CSA could lower its average price by 10%).

the responsibility for processing information from the farmer was distributed among a greater number of "core" members. At core group meetings, various members communicated updates on the farm, and on distribution day a different set of members—those in charge at the site on distribution day (a rotating group)—might call the farmer with questions. Produce information was also conveyed at Burlington through a more expanded set of communication tools, including a whiteboard onsite and an occasional newsletter over email and on paper onsite. The newsletter communicated information about the farm, produce received, recipe ideas, and CSA events.

CSA leaders also took on characteristics of "community projects," communicating information beyond the produce to encompass a wide range of community issues. Across CSAs there were sharp differences in the range of this information and the way it was processed. Burlington and Cady often communicated to the CSA at large about non-food and non-farm related issues. The lead organizer of Cady CSA, for example, had a wealth of information about the neighborhood and the city, which she shared in a very casual way at the CSA distribution site. At various points during the season, the Cady CSA organizer explained neighborhood history, including information about development and gentrification in the area. Similarly, in Burlington CSA, core and other members often had informal discussions among themselves about political topics, including environmentalism, social protest, and civic and political engagement. These issues were uncommon in Abilene CSA, but health topics were shared among regular volunteers, who

both discussed their own practices and commiserated on details of their lives, like coworkers passing the time.[28]

Supplying Continuity of Exchange: A Sometimes Invisible, but Hard-working, Hand

The lead organizers of each CSA also played a role in supplying the continuity of exchange, but, similar to the other roles, this responsibility was distributed among more than one person. Among the demands of maintaining continuity, CSA leaders sometimes faced inconsistent farmers and/or inconsistent members. The inconsistency of members was a particular feature of the CSA model, and the degree of difficulty posed by this inconsistency was influenced as well by the CSA's missions. This uncertainty took two forms: membership renewals from year to year, and membership activity within a given year. Membership activity within a given year was the biggest source of day-to-day uncertainty, as it affected operations in the moment. Because the CSA relied on member labor to function, absences or failures to sign up for work commitments created broader issues that sometimes threatened to delay distribution. Dealing with these problems was a responsibility assumed by the lead organizer or, in the case of Burlington CSA, various members of the core group.

The continuity of exchange at CSAs involved an extra layer of uncertainty on a yearly basis in that the relative parity of members needed to be maintained, both in work commitment and in quantity and quality of produce. For example, for a few weeks at Abilene CSA a produce shortage occurred—the last members to pick up their CSA shares

[28] This last clause on "coworkers" is an observation made by the lead organizer when reading my draft.

found themselves with no fruit cartons. The CSA never determined the cause of this issue, but the lead organizer assumed responsibility for maintaining this exchange by speaking with the farmer, who sent extra fruit the following week for the members who had missed it before. The lead organizer also asked that regular volunteers monitor fruit pickup after the first week the problem surfaced. At Burlington CSA, shortages also occurred. Similar to the resolution at Abilene CSA, Burlington CSA's coordinators communicated with the farmer to have the farm send more produce to members, and the coordinators monitored the next distribution for any shortages. However, at Burlington the lead organizer also sometimes personally sacrificed as part of an assumption of responsibility for the parity of exchange among members. For example, when peas ran out one week, one of the core members asked the lead organizer if she could get more than the weekly allocation of peas this time because she thought they had under-weighed her share the previous week. Not wanting to disturb the collective pot, the lead organizer agreed, taking the peas from his personal share to give them to the other CSA member.

An additional layer based on mission meant that social justice issues were also part of maintaining exchange. In CSAs with social justice missions, supplying market continuity meant maintaining the economic redistribution. This issue came up in both of the CSAs that offered graduated shares, Burlington and Cady. In these CSAs, lead organizers and/or core members assumed responsibilities related to nonprofit funding or personal exigencies that might affect the provision of low-income shares. This became a regular concern and responsibility, especially in Burlington CSA, where a significant proportion of the CSA membership was on EBT (food stamps), paying week to week. If these

members dropped out of the CSA, it could create financial ripples for which the core group assumed responsibility, devising the solution (which I will describe further in the next chapter) to take new enrollments of low-income members as spots opened. Similarly, Cady CSA devised a contractual process to cushion the redistribution pool so that the social justice mission could be maintained.

As with the market managers who saw market continuity as their responsibility, and not just the unavoidable nature of economic exchange, CSA leadership saw the continuity of exchange as their responsibility, incorporating their goals of collective parity and collective good into the process of maintaining exchange.

In CSAs and Markets: Just Like Everyone Else—Reluctant Leadership

As the literature on community-based and co-operative organizations (Walker and McCarthy 2010, McCarthy and Walker 2004, Rothschild Whitt 1979) leads us to expect, leaders were often reluctant to describe themselves as such and did not always receive differential material rewards for their work. In reality leaders committed significant time and energy to keep the organizations running, including managing labor, retaining customers, and monitoring and enforcing product expectations. But leaders framed their rights and responsibilities in non-hierarchical ways, accepting the title of leader reluctantly. This was true of all co-operatives, but also of one of the markets, Boise, reminding us of Summers Effler's (2010) findings.[29] Even where clear leaders were

[29] Summers Effler (2010) finds that the leader of the more bureaucratic nonprofit she observes is defensive about hierarchical structure and the division between paid and volunteer work. The organization's growth made the organization more hierarchical as

accepted, as was the case at the Asheville and Columbus farmers markets, these organizations fostered social relations in ways common to collectivist organizations, seeing relations as community-based, holistic, personal, and with value in themselves (Rothschild Whitt 1979).

This reluctance to accept hierarchical definitions of leadership was evident in everyday practices at the markets. At Boise FM, for example, reprimanding workers was very rare, and the market manager was much more likely to jokingly encourage certain proactive behaviors than to strictly criticize negative behaviors. One week the market manager accidentally tapped me with a produce item from the market, one of the other volunteers said, "Show her who's boss, boss man," and we all laughed at the incongruity of the boss concept with our experience of the organization. The founders of Boise also declined to receive special treatment, and acted as regular customers when they visited the market.

In spite of these informalities that ignored or subverted the hierarchy, leadership was key to the markets. The market manager role had certain formal and seemingly necessary responsibilities. Because these responsibilities were organized in the role of one person, a hierarchy of roles appeared even if it was something that Boise FM sought to avoid. For example, the manager had to enforce standards with vendors, something that Boise's manager felt put him in an uncomfortable position, saying

> It's a touchy thing, I guess. It's something that I definitely don't like dealing with, but it's something also that's a necessary thing.

---

the division of labor became more pronounced, but this evolution to greater status distinctions was not intentional and was met with some unease (Summer Effler 2010: 98, 126, 186-7). This was a distinction that mapped out well on markets vs. CSAs.

At the Boise farmers market, tasks involving money and outreach were specialized and distinguished as paid. It was understood that the market manager had responsibility for the finances as well as for external relations and that the outreach managers had ultimate responsibility for making sure outreach materials were distributed.

Outside of these specialized tasks, however, work in the market appeared interchangeable and undifferentiated to the extent that it was difficult for workers to know who was being paid and for external visitors to know who was "in charge." Interns and staff jointly unloaded and loaded items from the storage vehicle, taking tasks they preferred and as they needed to get done. In these cases, specialization came out of patterns where certain people did certain tasks, but this was personal preference and not institutionalized.

Each of the CSAs, regardless of its mission, described leadership as reluctant and loose and was unlikely to associate it with hierarchy. Without denying their work and commitment, leaders were likely to describe themselves as being like everyone else This tendency existed even in Abilene CSA, where there was a different transactional relationship for regular volunteers compared to the general membership (I will discuss transactional relationships further in the next chapter). But even in Abilene CSA, the leader said her preference was that the organization run itself:

> Within the last couple of years the farm has taken on the business side of it and … we've mainly been able to go to a hands-off approach in terms of the business model, which is great because it's not our interest to be in that space anyway. …

This boundary-drawing around the leadership role was mobilized especially in situations of conflict at Abilene CSA. The leader expressed particular frustration when members confused her with the farmer, especially when she was blamed for problems the farm might have experienced. This indicated a misperception of the structure of the CSA relative to the farm. At these times, Abilene CSA's leader would explain to members that she was a member just like them.

While Burlington CSA's leader was more likely to take on the leadership role in situations of conflict, his distance from the leadership role was also more pronounced. In this way, he seemed to accept responsibility without wanting to accept power. In conversation he called the role "general coordinator," and described how he wanted to abolish this role to make the CSA more horizontal:

> Interviewee: We were trying to move toward a structure where we didn't need a general coordinator. … I like that idea, but it didn't come from me. It came from [the founder] to begin with, but it didn't get through to the new people, so I think people assumed that I was the general coordinator, and I didn't want to be the general coordinator. I'm not that [] type actually. I like to do things, I don't like to tell people what to do …There's still messiness in terms of the roles, and it's happening again, I mean not happening again, but there's always tension in defining them and so on.
> SS: But it's completely voluntary?
> Interviewee: It's completely voluntary and, also, but in some ways that's what creates some of the tensions. Because it's unclear []: some people operate as if there were no hierarchy and some people operate [as if] there were, and we never talk about it so it becomes a problem.

At Burlington CSA, the lead organizer said "core" was loosely defined,[30] but some members perceived the division between core and general membership as more fixed and hierarchical. For example, at Burlington a "swap box" had been instituted as a way to

[30] The leader said: "Core is basically the ability that you have to comment on decisions because you know they are being made."

allow members to swap an item they didn't want for an item another member had left in the box. In response to a perceived rule violation around swapping, a member who was not currently on the core told the core members about it, rather than talking to the woman directly, explaining, "I didn't want to overstep my bounds and say something because I'm not one of the main people anymore, but that's not how the swap box works." These kinds of issues created some of the confusions Burlington CSA faced (as noted above), where the leader was perceived as "boss" or "in charge" in spite of contrary intentions.

Compared to Abilene CSA, grappling with power and hierarchy was complicated by an additional layer at Burlington CSA due to the social justice issues that Burlington saw as core to the organization. Burlington CSA's strong discomfort with the leadership role was affected not just by the informality of the leadership but also by the awareness of inequality and demographic difference in the neighborhood. In the words of Burlington CSA's general coordinator:

> I heard this transaction described once, somebody [not from the CSA] came in and *asked to see the manager* (my italics) and was all mad and [] it was presented as "people don't understand, this is all volunteer." But I remember that episode, and you can't talk about it without including race and class, you just can't. What was behind that was that someone [from the neighborhood was] reacting to someone coming into their neighborhood and [] taking on this official manner because that seemed natural to them. So, I mean, [] sometimes things can come off as abrasive or as if there's distrust, and that's only to be expected.

While Burlington CSA sought to avoid hierarchy, coordination was formalized in both the general work requirement as well as recruitment of members to join the core committee. For Burlington, work for general membership was a key component of the CSA, and Burlington CSA had developed a large number of volunteer tasks, far more

than the other two CSAs, to create opportunities for all CSA members to contribute through work. The integral nature of the work commitment was so taken for granted by Burlington that core organizers seemed frustrated when people did not work, even though it would have been possible to do the same work with far fewer people.

On top of this, Burlington's solicitation of members to join the core committee was expressed in terms of need for "roles" and "positions," involving a high degree of coordination and specialization:

> One of the most pressing roles needed for the coming season is the Membership Coordinator. We'd like to thank [] for the wonderful job [] did as the membership coordinator/general coordinator as well as for the many additional tasks she took on. The Membership Coordinator will likely be split into two complementary but separate positions so if you're interested (or want more information) please email me.
>
> *Please feel free to pass this along to other members who might be interested in joining the core group …*

Thus, even though hierarchy was something Burlington CSA's leaders wanted to avoid, the organization used named, specialized roles, although general membership work requirements were meant to be equal and open to member choice. For example, core members on the finance group were in charge of keeping track of Burlington's finances, including decisions about share pricing, categories, and subsidization. There were also site leaders who managed the flow of general volunteers, tracking who came to their shift and in what order. Even outside of core there were some regular volunteer tasks at Burlington CSA that were seen as requiring experience, in contrast to the strictly interchangeable co-operative model of Rothschild Whitt (1979). For example, the same few volunteers usually handled the sign-in of members from week to week, and when

replacements were needed for these specialized tasks they were solicited from the core volunteers email list rather than from general membership. Burlington CSA blended a co-operative ethos with a higher degree of coordination.

Decision Making in Farmers Markets and CSAs

Similar to the way that coordination often rested in a hierarchy-reluctant few, decision-making in these farmers markets and CSAs was also often centralized in leadership roles and formally distributed only in the Burlington CSA and Columbus FM. Where there was a lack of distributed decision-making, leaders described this as pragmatic. Where decision making was more distributed, this required additional effort, in Burlington and Columbus' case, motivated by social aims.

At Abilene CSA, where, as the leader put it, "the CSA basically runs itself," decision-making was minimal and seemed to be a self-conscious preference of the organizers. At the pre-season bonding event that Abilene held for its regular volunteers, the focus was much more on socialization than on CSA "business": the division of labor was planned in about five minutes in between catching up over drinks and appetizers, a strong contrast to the few two-hour-long meetings for the Burlington core group. Abilene CSA had been formed as a departure from what Abilene's founders described as a more formalized CSA group. In describing this other CSA, the emphasis on extended decision-making was framed as bureaucratic and unnecessary to the functioning of the CSA's work. Abilene CSA's climate was a more relaxed, hands-off approach to running a community project.

Burlington CSA, meanwhile, had more specialization and hierarchy, as well as lengthy meetings outside of CSA distribution hours in which those interested in CSA decisions would deliberate the direction of the CSA. These meetings were well attended, and members often debated the merits of one issue over another, for example, what kind of dairy products should be selected or how to prioritize between fair trade and locally roasted coffee. However, even with the distributed decision-making at Burlington CSA, the lead organizer reflected on the need to deepen decision making to further implement the organization's social justice mission. In spite of progress, some at Burlington CSA felt there was still a lack of diversity in the core and saw increasing the involvement of different types of members in the decision-making process as one of the key goals:

> I think that there's … it's a funny relationship between … the core group is sort of dominated by one kind of person … I feel there's growing communication between the people who've been in the community longer and the people who have tended to be in charge of core. … I was hesitating because, again, I feel like this is something that's hard to talk about, and we don't talk about it and, um, I think my, I'm not sure everyone would agree with me …
>
> [talks about someone who has been in the community longer and is also less involved in CSA] … There's a weird kind of thing that seems like they're sort of outsiders in this [in the CSA] and it's ridiculous, I mean it is ridiculous but it's sort of inevitable and it has to be addressed … she's like a member of the community board, she's a leader in her community, … but I feel like it's a funny thing because in the core we pretend we feel like we're leaders, but we're dealing with leaders, everyone's a leader, you know.

The Burlington CSA leader identified the organization's ability to get more low-income members and more longtime community members involved in core as one of the main successes of the CSA. Having succeeded in attracting a broader sample of the neighborhood in the CSA, Burlington's next goal for fulfilling its mission was to diversify decision-making by recruiting a more representative selection of members to

core roles. This discussion elicited a little discomfort from the Burlington leader when we spoke—"I was hesitating because, again, I think this is something that's hard to talk about"—because the aspiration highlighted a gap remaining to be narrowed. Burlington CSA was committed to continuing these kinds of discussions, as uncomfortable as they might sometimes be.

Columbus FM also interpreted its social mission in terms of a distributed decision-making process, with co-operative elements institutionalized not just in the informal practices but also in the written rules and regulations of the market. Vendors were invited and encouraged to attend market meetings that occurred outside of market hours, and contributions to market decisions were democratized formally through an invitation to vote on decisions in market meetings. More committed involvement in the activity of the market was also encouraged through discounts in vendor fees. In this multi-pronged way, Columbus FM prioritized distributed decision-making even at a financial cost to itself.

Normative over Material Rewards

Theories on co-operatives and alternative organizations (Bordt 1997, Rothschild and Whitt 1979) argue that co-operatives often sustain commitment through non-material means, an expectation confirmed in these alternative food organizations. The incentive structure in each of the organizations—even the farmers markets—accorded with the collectivist-democratic ideal type, based more on solidarity incentives (challenging/interesting work, effecting social change, shared purpose and/or friendships among coworkers, chances to use skills, personal empowerment) than material

incentives. The revenue of each of these community-based organizations was limited, but the work had meaning for most involved, work valued in much more than revenue, as prices and vendor fees were often lowered in line with the organizational mission. The ethos around providing material rewards did differ by organizational form, however, with farmers markets desiring to provide material compensation where they could and with CSAs generally divorcing material reward from CSA work.

Default of Pay in Farmers' Markets

In observing work in the farmers markets and speaking with market managers, it was clear that farmers market work was generally seen as the kind of work one should get paid for. In keeping with the view of pay as default, negotiations and justifications were made when this was not possible. For the Boise farmers market, for example, due to limited funds, outreach managers and the market manager were the only staff members who were paid. The market manager role was supported through the proceeds of market sales, and the outreach manager role was funded through a combination of grant money and market sales. The Boise FM needed more labor in the market than market sales and grant money could support, however, and solicited volunteers and/or interns, as these unpaid roles were called. It had been made clear from the outset of recruitment that the roles were unpaid. On the first day of the season, Boise volunteers/interns were told that they could take what they felt was fair compensation for their time at the market—as a thank you—and "their policy for volunteer time"—assessing their own discount or gifting.

Although it was understood from the outset that that Roanoke could not compensate interns other than through the in-kind gift of free produce, the issue came up later in the season when one of the interns spoke with the market manager about the role and tried to negotiate financial compensation for her work. The intern had been inconsistent in attendance at the market lately and explained to the market manager that if she could get paid then she would not have to get another job and could be more committed to the market. The fact that the market manager and the outreach managers were being paid and the rest of the workers were not exacerbated this issue, and the intern spoke with one of the paid workers about it. One of the vendors offered the intern the opportunity to do some work for her that would be paid, and the market manager had no problem with this. The volunteer was technically working for the market, not the vendor, and so she was leaving her volunteer job mid-shift to work with the vendor; however, no one said anything to indicate they thought this inappropriate. The market was not against material rewards; rather, it wished it could provide them to all employees. Instead, it cultivated a spirit of meaning in the work, gave gift produce, and allowed the workers flexibility in pursuing paid work.

This kind of ad hoc management of a vendor's stand was not unusual, even if it usually was not paid. Maybe in part because some workers were not being paid much and retention was difficult, these organizations often demanded flexibility, if not also a lack of hierarchy. One of the most common ways that flexibility showed up in the markets was through "watching stands." Vendors and workers across various tables (organizations) often asked others to watch their stands when they had to run errands or

use the restroom. This happened at all three markets and was something that I saw every market day at Boise FM. [31] In Boise, personal contacts and founders helped the market managing organization when the market needed extra hands. Paid staff members coordinated schedules so that a paid staff person was there at all times, but market workers were also able to balance outside commitments.

Among the organizations, normative rewards were always foremost, even for Columbus FM, which was the most bureaucratic in terms of the structure and materiality of rewards. At Columbus FM, the organizational mission of social justice was intertwined with financial reward for the people of this community. Pay was set in a formalized way, with tiers for commitment, experience, and seniority. The market paid youth workers on the basis of seniority; they also deducted pay for bad behavior. The institutionalized system was a key component of bringing opportunity for training and work to the neighborhood, by encouraging professionalism and retention. Though flexibility allowed a variety and breadth of experience in the roles, professionalism was monitored rigidly, with rules regulating tardiness, swearing, and other behaviors that might impact one's job readiness. These rules were enforced with predetermined penalties for escalating and repeat offenses, including various material sanctions and, if extreme, firing. There were also full-time staff from the nonprofit associated with Columbus FM who were paid salaries and worked the market as part of their regular job.

[31] For more context on the class and race dynamics of using bathrooms and participating in sidewalk life, see Duneier. In *Sidewalk*, Duneier shows that the men vending print material on the streets are not allowed to use bathrooms at places like McDonald's, etc, and yet the family vending Christmas trees gets keys to someone's private house.

While material rewards were scant, gifting was an alternative to pay and a broader practice that seemed to flow naturally out of the community ethos of the farmers markets. At the Boise market, it was an unspoken rule that staff and volunteers shared food and drink they brought from home or bought at the market. At both the Asheville and Boise FMs, gifts were also given to former staff members who stopped by the market. When a family friend and former staff member visited the Asheville market, the market manager often gave him bags of produce for free or at a steep discount, describing the gift as his "fringe benefit" for his devotion to the market. A former volunteer at Boise FM also still helped now and then and sometimes took produce in return or engaged in other exchange; for example, she once borrowed the market's van for a couple of hours to do personal errands. In these cases, market manager gifts came at the expense of the organization's own finances, carrying over a feeling of reward even months or years after the volunteers—perhaps struggling, temporarily out of work or underemployed—had shown their devotion to the market.

Financial Reward as Incongruent with CSA Work

While an expectation of material reward was the default in farmers markets, CSAs had a different default, generally eschewing rewards in the form of money, and, often, even in kind. The option of in-kind compensation in the form of a free produce share for organizing members was something that an umbrella CSA support organization included in its descriptions of how to set up a CSA. Additionally, CSA farmers often gave a certain number of free shares to each CSA for a certain number of shares sold. These free vegetable shares could be used to compensate core members for their commitment to the

CSA, something several CSAs in the area apparently did. That said, in spite of the expectation of in-kind (vegetables) compensation for "core" organizers and leaders, only one CSA in these three did this.

Compensatory shares were given at Abilene CSA, but not at Burlington or Cady, where core members reacted to the suggestion of free shares as inappropriate and incongruous with their conception of the CSA form. When I asked the general coordinator of Burlington CSA if core volunteers received any payment for their time, he laughed! Similarly, when the farmer gave the Cady CSA organizer extra produce now and then she commented how that felt like special treatment and made her a bit uncomfortable. She would tell the farmer, "It's not like that."

But while core organizers at the Burlington and Cady CSAs saw material rewards for their role as inappropriate, they felt uncomfortable *not* providing rewards for non-members who offered work to the CSA,[32] indicating a boundary-drawing at membership in the co-operative. For example, at Burlington CSA, when members were not available and non-members were asked to help, the core organizer of Burlington said he felt these people should get something for work they did:

> And then with unloading the truck … it's going to be different this year. I was never happy with people just helping us and not having any clear benefit from it. And one of them, this older guy, complained, and I was like, "I know, you're right!"

[32] At Burlington, these non-members were personal contacts of members, mobilized in calls for volunteers, for example during off hours that members might not be available. In Cady, these were people in the community who would come to the CSA in the hopes of getting some leftover produce, or interns who volunteered time as a form of work experience.

Similarly, Cady CSA felt that the intern who was working with the CSA and related organization should get some material compensation for that work. The nonprofit associated with the CSA paid for the intern's transportation and whatever else it could afford and was hoping to do more the following year, recognizing the intern's needs in spite of the organization's limited resources.

CSAs, with a minimal regard for material rewards in the organization, faced a need to be flexible with workers and coordinated much of this informally as vendors and staff of farmers markets coordinated "watching stands." For example, Abilene CSA's volunteers worked out their own vacations and illnesses by swapping with one another. Even when a crisis hit the farm supplying Abilene (see Chapter Four), the same volunteers maintained their commitment, arranging between themselves who could come, even though at that point the compensatory vegetable share was no longer an incentive to come to the CSA each week.

The need for flexibility was even more prominent at Burlington CSA, where there were no comped shares for volunteers and also a more intense commitment of work. Among the organizing members of Burlington, it was taken for granted as basic and necessary to the concept of CSA that members would contribute labor as part of membership. One of Burlington's core members said that if people didn't want to work for the CSA, then he did not understand why they would choose to join. These core members felt that members who shirked on volunteering took advantage of those who fulfilled their

volunteer requirements. The commitment for lead organizers was deeper and more frequent, often involving weekly commitment as opposed to the usual twice-a-season shift for regular members. Lead organizers often took a year off after a busy year at Burlington CSA. Some of the more active members had to adjust schedules mid-season to deal with the more intense work commitment.

Relations Beyond Division of Labor: Building Community, Customers

Alternative food organizations are often described in the academic literature (Feagan 2007, Lyson and Green 1999, MacKenzie 1995, Barham 1997, O'Hara and Stagl 2001) as community-based organizations, as "embedded" and involving more direct exchange than the usual form of consumption. While we have seen how considerations of community imbued the division of labor in these markets and co-operatives, the typical definition of "community" in the literature on alternative food organizations refers to the relationship through the act of consumption. This was expressed in different ways across the organizations, with variation more by mission than by form.

Market managers often used the word "community" and took for granted that it was a defining part of their markets. For example, Asheville FM's market manager talked about community as a key part of the mission, and, when asked exactly what that meant, talked at length (as in the quote at the beginning of this chapter) about the feeling of community as people who looked out for one another, supported and were supported by local stores, and fostered community culture and economic power, among other characteristics. The community at Asheville visible in the day-to-day relations at the market seemed to

revolve mostly around the network of the market manager. The market manager confirmed this in our interview:

> SS: How would you describe the relationships that exist at the market, what are the different kinds of relationships?
> Interviewee: I'm sorry, do you want me to describe relationships between me and the farmer or me and the customer, or … ?
> SS: whatever you see as the relationships. What are the different categories of relationships?
> Interviewee: Oh my god. Um, well, well, between me or just in general watching?

The community I saw could be described as a series of regulars whom the market supported with its presence sometimes even more than with its produce. Having people on the street with whom passersby could converse, trade advice, and make human connection was perhaps as significant to some of the market patrons as fresh, local produce. Reflecting on these regulars, the manager said:

> It's very important. People who come to the market on a regular basis, it gives them something to do. We have some elders that come religiously, whether they're buying or not. By the way … that's what I meant by community. It's something happening in their community that they feel that they can come to and just lend a word or two.

Asheville's manager talked about one of these women, who walked several blocks from her home to the market, past at least a few supermarkets on the way. In the market manager's impression, the woman came more for the connection and to show support than she did for the produce, of which she never bought much.

Developing this point, the market manager commented on the range of relationships the market supported:

> I have good relationships with the community. … We have people walking the streets that have all kinds of, I don't want to say disabilities, but they're special people. Whether they're in a suit or they're dressed

> down in a sweat suit, they all have different energies and different personalities. I tend to speak with everybody and have a good rapport with everybody. And that slight little thread that I have, that I feel I have, tends to bring everybody together, no matter what, because I love the people. You don't judge people by the cover of what someone has in their mind, you know what I mean? But the society always judges books by their cover, you know ...

Visitors of various kinds—low-income and upper-income, institutionalized and professional—came for entertainment and a smoking break on the corner near the market, and never bought anything.

In spite of this commitment to the community, Asheville's market manager did not see himself as a community organizer, but, rather, described himself as a mediator between old and new elements of the neighborhood. He was often involved in community issues, even if social justice was not a component of the mission. Describing how the market responded to one of the more challenging dynamics he saw in the area, gentrification, Asheville's market manager stated:

> We used to have a discussion tent, actually, when I started the market. I didn't call it a discussion tent, … "meet your neighbors" was a way to exchange recipes, a way to … because it was very hostile [number of years] years ago when the changes, when gentrification was happening it was very hostile because you had people who moved in who said, "I don't want to say hello to you, I just want to buy my house, buy my apartment and live free and I don't know you and I don't want to know you," and the people who were here were saying, "Well, when you come into Rome you do as Romans do," and so that was a big conflict. And I felt that the market was caught smack dead in the middle of it because we had a sort of neutral feeling about it in the sense of, "Well, they have the right to come in and buy their homes and not really speak," but then you do want to respect the older people who have been here, felt like if you were in Italy, you'd have to learn a little Italian in order to get around, so we sort of played the liaison, the middle person, between them.

The market manager felt the market occupied a middle place ideologically and tolerated a wide range of individuals in the process.

Asheville FM's regulars were key, and Asheville did not do many special events anymore to recruit new regulars: effort was invested in deepening the existing community. At Asheville, gifts often spilled out of the market boundaries into the relationships in the community, for example, to people in the neighborhood who the market manager knew were sick or were making food for a sick person. The market manager also occasionally gave extra produce to regular customers, for example, an extra ear of corn for a woman he recognized.

At Abilene CSA, Asheville's analog in terms of mission (but a very different organization in terms of demographics and structure), there was also preference for investing in deepening the organization's existing community over expanding the organization's community. At Abilene CSA, the lead organizer described community in terms of the "familiarity" of knowing "you can count on seeing at least some of the same people regularly":

> Interviewee: We have people that move to other neighborhoods that try groups that decide "You know, I really have so much more fun coming to this one and it was such an enjoyable experience that once a week I'll just go out of neighborhood and do this." I still have some people like that.
> SS: Why do you think that is?
> Interviewee: I think because we have some history built up, so there's some familiarity over time, and I think because it's a steady group of volunteers, so you do at least see some of the same people, you can kind of count on seeing at least some of the same people regularly, and they're generally friendly people, and so it's nice to be greeted by name and have some nice words. That's definitely a nice thing, and I think some of the groups you show up and they have volunteer commitments so someone is out there once with another friend and they're doing their thing, and

> maybe they're friendly, but you're just showing up and taking your bag of this and bag of that and then you walk away. That's, you know, that's a little bit of a different experience, so I think that's been a success in terms of the community portion of what we're doing in bringing people together.

Contrary to the Durkheimian view on solidarity, the lead organizer attributed the community that existed at Abilene to the lack of a work requirement for general membership, describing how regular volunteers gave the CSA more of a "community" feel. This contrasted with Burlington CSA's view that work was an aspect of community building among the members (essentially customers) of the CSA.

In Abilene CSA, community building was largely between regular volunteers, who had known each other for years through the CSA. In the lead organizer's words:

> SS: How would you describe relationships at the CSA?
> Interviewee: I mean it's pretty good. It's nice that you meet people in the neighborhood, and there's certainly people who have been doing it for a long time and probably keep doing it more because it's a social thing as much as getting the produce. I certainly think that we have people who like the concept and are just more inclined to that sort of experience and, you know, other people who don't go for it don't renew, is really what it comes down to.

Still, the idea of this deepening community—in general, not just among the regular volunteers—was something that Abilene thought distinguished the CSA form from other forms of shopping. As if answering Boise FM's point about the "different model," Abilene's lead organizer said:

> It's also somewhat of a gathering spot because some people have been in the group for quite awhile and they have the opportunity to catch up with some friends. So that's a nice aspect of what we do and probably something that's also a little bit different than a traditional supermarket shopping type model in that you're in something of a club together with people who are at least likeminded to the degree of participating in this type of group. And some friendships develop off

> of that. And that's kind of a nice aspect to it. We're outside, so it'll be nice for some people to hang out, linger a little bit, exchange ideas for recipes or catch up on whatever.

Abilene CSA organized a beginning- and end-of-season meeting at a local bar and sometimes also gatherings at one another's homes or at the bar after the distribution. These were not large public or general membership events but, rather, small informal hangouts for the regular volunteers. Rather than a special event for the membership at large, the Abilene CSA provided high-quality professional CSA recipe books to all new members as a welcome to their CSA and to the CSA concept. This could be seen as an invitation to a more committed involvement down the line.

While Abilene CSA and Asheville FM focused on deepening existing relations, at the organizations with a social justice component—Boise FM, Burlington CSA, Cady CSA, and Columbus FM—there was a desire to expand the organization's community and involve more people from the local area. This sense of "community" involved the sense of newcomers as neighbors, often across demographic difference, with an organizational aspiration to reach, at least in part, a low-income or diverse audience. This community did not just emerge and deepen on its own: it took significant effort—called "outreach" by most of these organizations—to cultivate this community.

It is important to note that outreach was not always key to the financial viability of the organizations; it was more a social mission. At Burlington CSA, the organization as an economically viable relationship with a farmer could have existed without outreach, as the CSA had many members. However, making the CSA accessible to low-income

members intertwined with goals to expand "community," in terms of linking the CSA's existing community with the broader neighborhood in which it was situated and intended to serve. This made outreach a key component of the organization's mission. As Burlington's lead organizer said:

> SS: One of the questions I was going to ask you was how you describe the importance of outreach. …
> Interviewee: I think it's one of the most important things because we do have that backing from [nonprofit] and that does give us a good many [low-income shares]—I mean, it doesn't cover all of the subsidy demand, but it covers a lot of it. And if we don't find people that this would be useful for then [we're not taking advantage of the funds[33]] ... So the outreach is really, really huge. And it's also important to get people involved in the organization who will then also become part of the core and also be making decisions and are also then more connected to the community that has lived there longer. …

Burlington CSA organized special events to deepen members' involvement in the CSA community. These often included attention to practices that would encourage involvement of a variety of members. For example, at the beginning of the season there was a "welcoming" event that core organizers planned. In core meetings, core members planning the event had been concerned that new members might not feel as comfortable at the event, so they planned ways to encourage random connection. One specific concern was to bridge linguistic barriers, and an icebreaker addressed this: nametags were provided asking people to list languages they could speak, drawing a wide range of responses across class and race boundaries. The welcome event also included a suggestion box labeled "old fashioned suggestion box." Later in the season, the Burlington CSA held an event called "Food Fair" that was open to anyone, even outside the CSA, in which members shared meals they had made with CSA produce. Another

[33] Added by CSA contact when reading.

week the CSA had a "pantry swap," in which people were asked to bring items from their pantry that they were not going to use and trade from the table of things other members brought, with leftovers going to a food pantry.

Describing the importance of special events, Burlington CSA's lead organizer said:

> They make the CSA more happening. Um, it's also a place where people can start volunteering, can get more involved, easily. So, for example, in the community meal we put on, one of our "phone people" [harkening back to a description of how the CSA dealt with differences in internet access/use among members] ended up washing all of the dishes. But [] actually she was someone who I think I'd never seen [] do a volunteer shift until the winter share, and she's been in the CSA [for a couple of years], and I think I know that she hadn't done her volunteer shifts. So all of a sudden she just has a different relationship to things. And I think people sometimes, when you organize them, it seems like there, I guess like last year with the Food Fair, it seemed like this wasn't much, but I think people like them anyway, like, whatever gets done people really like.

The leader at Burlington CSA described the "high" he got from cultivating community across an expansive range of members.

> I mean, I feel like I get on this outreach high [laughs] when I hear about these things working.

The CSA was putting more and more effort into special events that could help with this goal of broadening the CSA's community across the expanse of the neighborhood, further fulfilling its mission of access, especially to low-income populations. Burlington CSA's lead organizer described events Burlington was involved with along this theme:

> We're doing more events actually, more smaller events, and we've been able to get into some schools through connections from the CSA members themselves, and also we went to community board meetings in … we're doing more of that kind of thing. And also the church actually has become … I don't know if you've heard about these free community meals? … Oh! Um, they're really amazing. So those have been, those have brought a lot more people together, you know. … So just all of these small

> organizations coming together really make a difference in terms of outreach.

The expanded view of community to involve "outreach" was not just a CSA characteristic. Boise FM, like Burlington CSA, viewed the community in an expansive way, as the diverse set of people living and working in the area. As part of its formalized outreach, Boise FM made conscious efforts to have staff and interns who could speak, literally and figuratively, to the "community." The organization hired bilingual staff and used dual-language marketing materials, signage, fliers, and coupons that communicated information in both Spanish and English.

Community involvement was also promoted with community surveys, much like the "old fashioned suggestion box," made less old fashioned. Rather than reading the forces of passive market supply and demand as a signal of what the community wanted, the market actively tried to offer goods and services the community needed by surveying them before and after the season. Back to the Boise market manager's point, this was part of what made the market a "different model":

> SS: How do you find out what people want?
> Interviewee: We ask. And we do surveys, and we do informal surveys, just talk to people at the markets. And that's, I think, something too going to the relationships with people … there is that conversation all the time and people come to try new things, and there's also, there are a lot of perks to coming and knowing your farmers, like, I've, for example, I always round up or, like, throw a little extra something in their bag, or if they're, like, "Ooh, what's this?" I, like, if they get something else, I'll be. like, "Oh, try this," and toss something else in their bag.

Like its mission counterpart Burlington CSA, Boise FM's market manager described special events as an extension of outreach, a way to invite neighborhood members into

the market free of any intimidation that might have prevented them from stopping by the market before:

> We want it to be an inviting place. And I think sometimes … anything new can be intimidating … Even if it's … the majority of our farmers are new immigrants or minorities, so they're definitely people that look like or talk like or are from similar backgrounds to the people that are in the neighborhood. But it's still, I think new faces can be intimidating; so I think having something to kind of break the ice and something to kind of invite people in, to be, like, no pressure, nothing is expected of you, just come and be here. You can come and be here, you can pass through.

Though money was an active part of the exchange at these events, no spending was required and many people just passed through.

Regular gifting reinforced the welcoming air at Boise FM and was often done at the expense of profit and more in the spirit of community building and public service:

> I tell them, the people that are working with me, and helping me out, they'll say, like, I had [names someone] … she would always ask specific, wanted to know, when should I do this, you know, if someone's doing something or has a little kid with something or a kid who seems like they need some more, give them some more. And I think with that it's not really so much about the costs. Is it really, for them, what's for one extra potato, it's really not going to cost more, but it's the idea … yeah, it's a gesture, just saying, "We appreciate you." It's just a little thank you, it's just nice to make people smile.

A staff member might offer a crying little girl an apple or a curious old man a peach. The staff did not seem angry when, as happened once, a bedraggled man asked if he could have sample after sample of the cider that was being offered that week, relishing several small cups; rather, the staff allowed it, seeming to incorporate this into the market's activity.

As social justice projects with longstanding roots (either personal or organizational), Columbus FM and Cady CSA were committed both to expanding community more

widely and to deepening community among a set of longstanding members. Like Abilene CSA, Columbus FM and Cady CSA had a longstanding place in the community, compared to the newer Asheville, Boise, and Burlington. Compared with Abilene, however, the social justice missions of Columbus FM and Cady CSA included an emphasis on an expanded sense of mutual benefit. In Cady CSA, aspects of the related group's mission included explicitly collective elements and a desire to move away from institutionalized life toward a solidarity economy. These solidarity elements permeated the CSA through a relaxed and open community:

> SS: How would you describe relationships at the CSA? I think they're good. I mean not necessarily good or bad, I mean just what kinds of relationships are there?
> Interviewee: Um, we did a survey, quite a few people mentioned that they liked the whole community aspect. … Sometimes, you know—as I guess you've witnessed—we get a whole group out there, which is kaffeeklatsch, which is nice. And sometimes, like with the winter share, [a couple—gave names] would bring sausages and bread, and then people would just stay like late … and they'd make a fire, a wood fire, […] and he'd cook.
> SS: Yeah, I mean that was definitely something that I noticed that was different about this CSA, just that people linger.
> Interviewee: And that's nice. And we like to encourage more of that.

The kaffeeklatsch idea was literal sometimes, when Cady's lead organizer offered coffee, tea, and snacks at her nearby home or the outdoor distribution site. Cady CSA also built community through its related nonprofit in informal ways, hosting events in the neighborhood that anyone was welcome to attend, regardless of whether they lived in the area or belonged to the CSA. The bounds of this community spilled out of the CSA into the neighborhood on a weekly basis. Cady's lead organizer had a list of personal contacts whom she would call if there was unclaimed produce at the end of the distribution day or if members stated their wish to donate a share that week. In mobilizing this list, Cady's

organizer would sometimes share particular stories about financial struggles, including biographies that traced back decades. The CSA also made farmer-centered special events and informal interaction with the farmer a part of the fiber of the project, deepening the mission of a "direct connection" with producers common to so many alternative food organizations. Cady CSA's lead organizer mentioned these interactions with the farmer as a key part of deepening community:

> I think it's nice having the whole thing with the farmer and the potluck we had on the weekend. I think it does give people a better sense of community, and it certainly helps with the community building aspects. I think it would be nice if we could always have coffee out there and tea, whatever, for people.

While community was associated with lingering and building a sense of connection, it was even broader than that. A sign was posted in the distribution site about "building global community," including a variety of social justice practices, such as eroding the boundaries between us and them; "notic[ing] the workings of power and privilege in your culture," "help[ing] build economies from the bottom up," "defy[ing] corporate domination," and "judg[ing] governance by how well it meets all people's needs." Though this poster was one used in community groups more broadly and not specific to this organization,[34] these were themes that the organization evoked through its informal practices. Cady's organizer expressed her belief that community was fostered in part by the kind of intimacy that can develop in small groups like Cady CSA:

> [One] year [] we were going to do really heavy recruitment … we said, "We want to have 100 members." The thing you have to remember is then [farmer] won't give the good stuff, won't have to do the farmers market and we'll get the good stuff, you know, the beautiful, unusual eggplants.

---

[34] http://justlists.wordpress.com/2008/11/07/40-ways-to-build-a-global-community/

> But, you know, the bottom line is that he doesn't really grow much of those unique crops, so he never really has enough of it for CSA. There are quite a few CSAs around here, and I think that's fine. I think you kind of have more of a sense of community if you're not so large.

Turning to Cady CSA's mission counterpart, Columbus FM also emphasized social justice and identified "community" as one of the key aspects of the organization's work. When I asked the market manager of Columbus FM what the most distinctive aspect of the market was, he said, "I can't think of one [market] that has such a strong community aspect. … Everyone looks out for one another." Columbus FM defined the community primarily in terms of local entrepreneurs living in the neighborhood, gardeners and small business people who lived in the neighborhood. These local entrepreneurs were described as "members" by the Columbus market, using a terminology more common to the co-operative form than the traditional market:

> The members … that live in this area that we work with on a regular basis, they are the strongest community members as far as helping with the advertising to helping move tables and chairs to participating in all of the workshops and events that we have. And spreading the word …

The term "members" was not used superficially: a sense of community involvement and ownership was part and parcel of the organization's goal to use the market as a vehicle for more community engagement and empowerment. Columbus FM deepened social justice-focused practices seen in the other organizations in more structured, institutional ways. The market tried to make it easy for people to get connected no matter their skill set or desired level of engagement, providing opportunities for community members to sell at the market, lead educational programming, canvass the streets or community meetings in outreach, and participate in the planning or execution of special events. Describing a particular event that occurred during the season, the market manager

discussed the various ways people living in the community got involved in the market, saying, "We actually have something for everyone." Outreach at Columbus FM was extensive, and for the most part behind the scenes, accomplished through the joint efforts of staff and community members. Speaking of outreach at Columbus, the market manager explained:

> We go to almost every community meeting you could think of, that we know of, and talk about it and drop off fliers. We train our community educators to also go out and do the same and promote.

The community basis of the Columbus market was also reinforced by community surveys, a process we saw in the other social justice organizations, Boise, Burlington, and Cady. Columbus FM described its plans and special events as defined by this input:

> I would say that the importance of special events is … one of the big things about this community is people feeling like it's safe. Safe, a nice place to be in, a nice place to bring their children, people come to walk their dogs. And people just come and talk and not even buy things, you know. So the entertainment brings people to hang out more and also encourage them if they're hanging out so long, yeah, let me buy some hot food. … But the main reason for it is the creating the sense of a safe space. And it's also from all of our community meetings that we've had throughout the years, it's something that people wanted.

Community surveys were used to decide the specific character that events should take:

> Based on our surveys that we do, we find out where people are from, what their backgrounds are. And, you know, with that in mind we think, "Okay, well this person is, most of our customers are from [this area] so they want to see [this kind of music]" … a lot of the activities are kind of based around the population in the community and then we just go out and find out who's out there [i.e., providers]. And who can do that ...

While Columbus FM was more institutionalized and structured in its approach to community building, it also carved out open space for community connection, not only in its community meetings but also in third spaces (Oldenburg 1991) in the market. Columbus staff often moved tables at different points in the season according to the

weather to make it more comfortable for people to sit and linger. Seating where people could sit and "loiter" was seen as a key aspect of the market, similar to the kaffeeklatsch of Cady CSA. One day, when I told one of the staff members that he could find me at the picnic table if the organization needed help, he said, "Good, you'll be another one of the people who hangs out here all day. We like people to loiter." The market also created open-ended gatherings after the market a few times during the season in which different community vendors were asked to come and "just hang out." Columbus FM's market manager said these informal times were also instituted through responses from the surveys they did:

> Because another thing in our surveys and in our meetings is some of them [vendors] feel there's a disconnect, and usually that's the people that don't participate in events that we have. … so we try to create this [named] session that meets on [day of week] right after the market so that they can get to know each other better.

While deepening community among existing regulars was an aim, it was balanced in some ways by expanding community to newcomers. Along these lines, Columbus FM dealt with environmental and health issues with a concern for the feeling that being too heavy-handed would not be welcoming. When asked about explicitly promoting issues around the environment or social justice, the market manager distinguished between market days and community meetings, saying that community meetings were the place where engaged members of the community were able and encouraged to talk about garden or market issues. Meanwhile, the market manager described environmental efforts at the market as governed by "subtle suggestions." An example of this was how the market attempted to change waste norms, running an incentive program to limit use of plastic bags by providing gift certificates when people came with a cloth bag. Compost

was accepted at the market, but the market also did not prevent vendors from using Styrofoam and plastic goods, which spilled out of the trashcans. Environmental and health issues were a focus for the market but were balanced with a concern for creating a place where everyone could feel comfortable.

Conclusion

The organizations I observed, much in keeping with the embeddedness school's interpretation of alternative food organizations, defined themselves as motivated by community. This community was not one monolithic, easily arrived at phenomenon, however.

These six organizations, markets and co-operatives, created community in ways that accorded more with their missions than with the demands and constraints of their organizational form. Notably, most of the organizations were non-hierarchical and leaders were likely to describe themselves as "like everyone else," not dissimilar to Summers Effler's (2010) findings that even the leader of the more bureaucratic nonprofit she observed was defensive about hierarchical structure and the division between paid and volunteer work. Still, in spite of a general avoidance of hierarchy, coordination was key in each of the organizations. Social justice missions sometimes created the need for even greater coordination, and, where this was so, it actually made the organizations more bureaucratic, a surprising result in light of the theory on co-operatives.[35] Based on what we know (Biggart 2001) about how difficult it can be to cultivate solidarity across

[35] The lead coordinator commented when reading this that this did seem to ring true for the CSA and was a surprising insight!

demographic difference—confirming the broader assertion that the strength of circuits and other bounded groups depends on the homogeneity of members—the level of organization and committed staffing needed to do outreach to diverse populations makes sense. As we consider the difficulty of outreach, the tendency toward more bureaucracy and organization becomes easier to understand.

While significant differences existed across organizational missions, the type of role definition and the degree of formalization—written rules and roles, clear divisions between activities and persons—in the division of labor were areas that showed stark differences across organizational form. These differences were reinforced by the influence of external bodies. Though task differences in the different economic structures affected roles, the degree of institutionalization was not necessarily in one direction. Both CSAs and farmers markets often worked with multiple farmers or vendors and needed knowledge of how to coordinate exchange and verify product quality. Farmers markets were regulated and institutionalized by the state, whereas CSAs were loosely advised by umbrella organizations or by the farmers with whom they worked. In farmers markets, the market manager role was one that might be explicitly funded or used in relationships with external groups. The farmers market manager role was also mentioned in key educational materials and in training that market managers must attend. In CSAs, there was no explicit need to use institutionalized terminology in defining roles. CSAs had a different structure, and educational materials and training were decentralized and voluntary. As a result, roles came about through the patterns set up by founders, who might or might not have consulted materials provided from outside and who established

the missions of the organizations in part by relying on their own outside experience with business and/or community associations.

Many studies of alternative food organizations have focused on relationships between consumers and farmers as the marker of their embeddedness. Indeed, compared to other organizational forms, these direct exchange markets and CSAs created a less intermediated relationship between consumption and production. Within these organizations, however, my fieldwork suggested that differences in community building were subtle across organizations. While each organization deepened a sense of community, some were focused more inwardly on deepening connection and solidarity within the organization, while other organizations were focused more outwardly, expending significant energy on "outreach." More specifically, Abilene CSA and Asheville FM conducted a limited amount of outreach, which fit with the conception of community as tied around familiar regulars. This deepening of community among regulars did not depend on the organizations' broadening a sense of belonging but, rather, connecting closely to those who belonged. For the more social justice-focused organizations, however, outreach was a key component, especially in Boise FM, Burlington CSA, and Columbus FM. The expansive nature of community in these organizations goes far beyond the characterization in Johnston et al. (2011) and Johnston and Baumann (2010), who find that in food politics, social motivations are mentioned less frequently than environmental issues. Organizations who pursued "outreach" did so with explicitly social aims, considering ways to reach community members across linguistic barriers and across income hurdles that might have otherwise prohibited

participation. The expanding sense of community and the persistence of outreach cannot be fully appreciated without understanding the street scenes in some of these places, often loud and bustling, full of informal activity and sometimes even raucous public behavior. The organizations cultivated community even in the face of dissenting opinions, like the yells at Boise market with which we began this chapter, or with the occasional violent passerby.

Organizational "outreach" demanded a strong degree of openness and tolerance, sometimes even at the expense of immediate environmental issues, for example, as we saw at Boise and Columbus farmers markets in the practice of not being too heavy-handed with environmental suggestions to avoid isolating themselves from community members, and to encourage access without being ideologically pedantic. Market organizers at Boise and Columbus might have preferred a stricter environmentalism, but with the emphasis on community first, they tried to make the markets more welcoming to the broad community (Sassatelli 2006, Walker and McCarthy 2010, McCarthy and Walker 2004).[36] Even in one organization not explicitly focused on social justice, Asheville FM, the openness of the market to the public and its willingness to engage on topics like gentrification did not accord with literature that describes community-

[36] Walker and McCarthy (2010) argue that "the legitimacy of such organizations rests, in part, on the extent to which the organization accurately represents the interests of low-income communities, as local nonprofit organizations need to balance expertise and local representation (Abzug and Galaskiewicz 2001). However, community-based organizations that involve a large number local community members in the leadership of the organization may find that they are more effective in raising grassroots funds, which tend to be effective in promoting survival (Walker and McCarthy 2007)." (Walker and McCarthy 2010: 320).

consumption locales as exclusionary places by and large.[37] Among the challenges of creating community in these organizations was the need for organizational members to tolerate difference as it arose, which sometimes required the skills not just of an organizer but also of a mediator.[38] Though generally permissive, market managers drew boundaries around certain standards of behavior and also occasionally cut ties with members of the public if those partnerships did not support of the organization's value claims.[39]

In their commitment of time, financial sacrifice, and sometime even discomfort, these organizations exemplified relational work even above and beyond the multiplicity of

[37] Thus, these are a contrast to the social sanitizing that Harvey (2005) describes in the "Political Economy of Public Space" and that Cohen (1996) describes in her history of suburban shopping malls. Cohen (1996) shows how New Jersey shopping malls attempted to become the new community centers, saying, "it was hard to think of consumer items or community events that could not be found at one or the other of these two shopping centers." (Cohen 1996: 1058) However, in Cohen's (1996) assessment this also had the effect of privatizing public space and leading to exclusion of various groups as "developers deliberately defined their communities through a combination of marketing and policing" (1059).

[38] With respect to their likelihood of taking up controversial issues, McCarthy and Walker 2004 expected that individual membership based organizations would be more likely to do so " [as] CBOs [congregation-based organizations] aim to organize across a broad base. In practice, this means inclusion across a diverse set of community cleavages including race, ethnicity, age, geography, and congregation of origin" (McCarthy and Walker 2004: 102-103S." McCarthy and Walker (2004) find a statistically significant difference in the two organizational forms' likelihood of taking on various issues.

[39] For example, the Boise market had once partnered with a community garden, and this partnership was eventually dissolved when members of that garden began endorsing views that the market did not support. Giving an example, the market manager recounted a time in the garden when a person dressed as Ronald McDonald gave a tour of the garden, and the market manager expressed his doubts about the sincerity of the Ronald McDonald tour guide's claims that McDonalds supported composting and local food efforts in the neighborhood. This and other character concerns around the partnership had led to the market's separation from this partnership, in spite of the various other benefits it provided.

types of relational activity that Zelizer (2005) observes[40], extending solidarity beyond consumption and sociability. In organizations with social justice missions, the CSA or farmers market was seen as economic activity but also as a kind of community organizing, reminding us of issues described in Walker and McCarthy (2010) and McCarthy and Walker (2004).

[40] In retail settings, "people engage in three somewhat different types of relational activity… They acquire goods and services for other people, engage in sociable interactions with fellow customers and retail personnel, and display group membership and differences from other people by means of their purchases" (Zelizer 2005: 344).

CHAPTER THREE:
MONEY AND CONTRACTS

> I feel like … if you know if somebody's selling whatever, bootleg CDs or whatever it is … even if they're not officially joining the market or whatever, if they're set up right in the middle of it and are right next to it, then I think people might … if we allow it, then we're responsible for it, and that becomes then our liability responsibility, and that's definitely not part of … It's a fine line because we want to encourage, support entrepreneurs and just people who are trying to take it upon themselves to do something to get by, essentially, you know, it's not a very wealthy area, so it's, like, whatever people can do to make a buck, but … (Boise Market)

> I mean, people who have enough money usually want to give more. They'll say, "Oh, well, I'm definitely in that category," you know. … we let them figure that out. And they're generally good about that. We've never had a problem. (Cady CSA)

These statements from the Boise market and Cady CSA reflected the on-the-ground way organizations engaged with contracts that affected their members and the surrounding community. In Boise's case, formal rules led to a values question, as the need to do what was (legally) right affronted the edges of the organization's partial mission of economic redistribution. In Cady's case, the founder's sense of trust in members and assumption of general benevolence undergirded the way economic action was structured.

These statements complicate the traditional view of economic action that occurs in textbook cases. Economic theory has often taken a cynical view of the individual and portrayed externally backed money and contracts as safeguarding transactions that might be damaged or prevented by guile and distrust. For example, North (1993) describes commitment as credible only if there are self-interest-oriented motivations to honor the

commitment or if the commitment is forced by coercion or lack of discretion, and Williamson (1996) argues that "the concept of calculated risk (rather than calculated trust) should be used to describe commercial transactions." (97). The embeddedness school in sociology has also seen calculative behavior as a basis for economic action. Granovetter (1985), for example, acknowledges generalized morality but points out that "the widespread preference for transacting with individuals of known reputation implies that few are actually content to rely on either generalized morality or institutional arrangements to guard against trouble" (Granovetter 1985: 490).[41]

In this environment of self-interest and guile,[42] scholars have pointed to the utility of money and contracts to support the efficiency and trust necessary to facilitate exchange between economic actors. In arms-length market transactions, money is described as the trustworthy broker of value between participants. Money is also seen as divided into "all purpose" and "special purpose" money, the latter having been replaced by money that is standard, quantifiable, and good for exchange, which replaced gift trade made possible

[41] Social constructionists have also found calculative behavior in certain markets, but analyze it as a social construction rather than an innate human characteristic. Abolafia's (1996) study of bond traders finds their institutional rules emphasize minimal trust, the appropriateness of opportunism, calculated risk, and money as a form of identity. Self-reliance involves cultivating a sense that "trust is minimal, one's only obligation is to oneself, and opportunism is understood as an appropriate form of action" (29); the view of risk is that it is needed to make money, should be calculated, and should involve only rationality; and money is viewed as "more than just the medium of exchange" but a form of identity and status distinction (30).

[42] "Oliver Williamson has noted that real economic actors engage not merely in the pursuit of self-interest but also in 'opportunism'—'self-interest seeking with guile; agents who are skilled at dissembling realize transactional advantages. Economic man… is thus a more subtle and devious creature than the usual self-interest seeking assumption reveals' (1975, p. 255)." (Granovetter 1985: 487).

via reciprocity (Polanyi 2001).[43] Similarly, in business relationships, whether new or longstanding, contracts are portrayed as providing support for the previously agreed terms either through enforcement by law or the shadow of law. In some cases, contract is even seen as a precondition to economic exchange where relationships won't work (Shapiro 1987, Akerlof 1970, Beckert 2009).[44] That said, in spite of the predictions of neoclassical economic theory, studies have shown that contract may be avoided in favor of "gentlemanly agreements" (Macaulay 1963) and in other cases for fear of harmful effects (Ben-Ner and Putterman 2009).[45]

---

[43] Polanyi distinguishes gift trade, which links partners in a relation of reciprocity; administered trade; and market trade, which he describes as synonymous with "exchange" (Polanyi 2001).

[44] "Only when buyers are confident of not being exploited by their contract partners will they engage in market exchange. ... Creating this confidence is thus a fundamental precondition of stable market relations" (Akerlof 1970; Bacharach and Gambetta 2001 in Beckert 2009: 259). Shapiro (1987) describes contract as a control mechanism for arms-length economic activity: "contractual control offers an alternative to those unable to personalize their transactions" (Shapiro 1987: 632). The view of relationships also emphasizes calculation. Poppo and Zenger (2002) see these relationships as calculative, rational behavior with an eye on the shadow of the future: "familiarity, based on years of personal relationships, is necessary to develop relationally governed exchanges" (722). In a like assessment, North (1993) argues, "credible commitment can only be realized over a very long period of time."

[45] In his classic study Macaulay (1963) found that businessmen often failed to carefully plan future contingencies of business transactions or seek legal sanctions to effect them; in contrast, "businessmen often preferr[ed] to rely on 'a man's word' in a brief letter, a handshake, or 'common honesty and decency'-even when the transaction involves exposure to serious risks" (58). Macaulay found that this behavior was not necessarily a lack of foresight, rather, a social phenomenon: "Such planning indicates a lack of trust and blunts the demands of friendship, turning a co-operative venture into an antagonistic horse trade" (1963: 64). Ben-Ner and Putterman (2009)'s lab experiment on the likelihood of engaging in contracts found that "The large majority of instances of trusting and trustworthiness in those interactions in which contracts could be opted for took place without contracts. Out of all interactions in our experiment in which agreements and contracts were possible, agreement (concurrence on the same proposal by A and B) occurred in 87.4% of cases" (Ben-Ner and Putterman 2009: 119). This contrasted with the "predictions of economic theory under the assumptions that subjects are (1) concerned only with their own payoffs, (2) not guided by values and ethical concerns, (3)

In contrast to the view, in the dominant strands of economic literature, that society is filled with self-interest and guile, traditional social movement participants have often sought to emphasize co-operation over distrust, and, when organizing around economic exchange, have, correspondingly, sometimes adopted an aversion to the traditional tools of economic exchange, taking the same interpretation as the economic literature but attributing it to the presence of monetary media rather than human nature.[46] Contractualization and other forms of bureaucratic rule-making were chief among the practices that some alternative organizations, like those followed by Rothschid-Whitt (1979, sought to avoid.[47] Alternative organizations in Rothschild-Whitt, for example, adopted a collective ethos and "challenge[d] the bureaucratic conception that organizations should be bound by a formally established, written system of rules and regulations. Instead, they [sought] to minimize rule use" (Rothschild-Whitt 1979: 512). Similarly, some counterculture social movements created new forms of money or attempted to avoid money altogether in favor of barter or other forms of non-money-based exchange, viewing money as a key tool in commodification (Marx 1859, Polanyi

---

rational, and (4) assume that their counterparts in the experiment are like them in these respects serve as a useful analytical benchmark" (Ben-Ner and Putterman 2009: 112).

[46] In Rothschild-Whitt's (1979) description of alternative institutions in the 1970s, she states, "Alternative institutions may be defined in terms of their members' resolve to build organizations which are parallel to, but outside of, established institutions and which fulfill social needs (for education, food, medical aid, etc.) without recourse to bureaucratic authority" (510).

[47] Contracts have bureaucratic, rational-legal qualities. As Macaulay (1963) uses the term, contract "involves two distinct elements: (a) Rational planning of the transaction with careful provision for as many future contingencies as can be foreseen, and (b) the existence or use of actual or potential legal sanctions to induce performance of the exchange or to compensate for non-performance" (56).

2001, Simmel 1900).[48] In a more extreme manifestation of this, Guillen describes the absence of money as key to the establishment of anarchist collectives in Spain: "In all these villages or towns property registers were burned, money abolished and Libertarian Communism made reality" (Guillen: 5). Other alternative organizations in the food space and broader social movements to change consumption have focused on non-monetary vehicles to greater connection through economic action. For example, barter networks have been set up where homegrown and homemade goods can be traded in person, "freegan" dinners and dumpster dives propose to reclaim food before it is wasted, and farms often set up unpaid work trades for produce and skill sharing, as in the widely popular global WWOOF network.

Kleinman's study of an "alternative" organization (1996), meanwhile, found that ways of making money for the alternative organization were driven by a need to fit the alternative conceptions of the organization: for example, fundraising was talked about often but rarely fully implemented, because it was seen as too conventional for an "alternative" organization. Meanwhile, the collectivist organizations that Rothschild-Whitt (1979) investigated, such as the "Free Clinic" and the "Free School," often used comparatively little money, and where they did use money, the relationship was complex, leading to other bureaucratic processes, like record-keeping:

[48] Espeland and Stevens (1988) highlight a broader way of conceiving of this issue: "One way to think about the tension between ethical systems and formal rationality is to conceptualize it as a contest over the limits of commensuration" (Espeland and Stevens 1988: 321). Through the commensuration process, by transforming distinct units into a common metric, "commensurated value is derived from the trade-offs made among the different aspects of a choice. Value emerges from comparisons that are framed in terms of how much of one thing is needed to compensate for something else" (Espeland and Stevens 1988: 317).

> Alternative organizations often strive to be economically self-sustaining, but without a federated network of other co-operative organizations to support them, they cannot. Often they must rely on established organizations for financial support. This acts as a constraint on the achievement of their collectivist principles. For instance, in order to provide free services the Free Clinic needed and received financial backing from private foundations as well as from county revenue-sharing funds. This forced them to keep detailed records on expenditures and patient visits and to justify their activities in terms of outsiders' criteria of cost-effectiveness. (Rothschild-Whitt 1979: 523)

The literature on alternative organizations (Kleinman 1996, Olin Wright 2009, Rothschild-Whitt 1979, Bordt 1997) leads us to believe that alternative food organizations might eschew bureaucratic and market elements of economic activity like money and contracts. Similarly, Schneiberg et al. (2008) argue that consumer co-operatives are defined by "collective self-supply in which consumers bypass middlemen, obtain otherwise unavailable goods, or opt out of market or state provision" (637). We might expect this to be the case particularly for the more social justice-oriented organizations or for the more co-operatively oriented organizations. That said, as some of the founders interviewed in Chapter One state, even the more cooperative, social justice-oriented ends of this movement may not depart far from the use of money. How money will appear in these organizations remains a question.

An expanding subset of work in behavioral economics and economic sociology takes a middle road between the "separate spheres" and "hostile worlds" views, as Zelizer characterizes these two poles. The relational work perspective (Zelizer 2012) of economic activity highlights the role of social ties—to which we turned in Chapter Two—but it also focuses on the effort involved in and the dynamism surrounding money

and transactions. Taking this approach, we can argue that money and contracts have more dynamic and flexible roles in signaling collective intentions and marking social relationships. The relationships and intentions involved in economic activity can be seen as ends in themselves, as well as meaningful shapers of economic activity, not simply as tools endowed with value through enforcement possibilities provided by state backing of money and legal backing of contracts.[49] Whereas some see money as a commensurating force in market transactions and not in other transactions (Callon 1998), Zelizer argues that monetary media may establish distinctions, rather than homogeneity, in various forms of economic activity.[50] Similarly, as Zelizer argues for a connected view of money's role in economic relationships, there is also a middle space between the over- and underinstitutionalized views of contract. Heimer (2001), for example, cites the negotiation for those "situations in which the conflict among institutions requires participants to decide which rules and routines are most appropriate or most compelling" (Heimer 2001: 50).

What might we expect for alternative food organizations in particular? Alternative food organizations have characteristics that, based on traditional economic theory, might make the need for contracts even more likely. With CSAs, for example, because the

[49] The Zelizer framework of "relational work" includes four aspects: social ties (between individuals or groups involved in economic activity); transactions (the interactions and social practices involving goods and services); media (representations of rights to goods and services); and shared meanings (that people attach to those social ties, transactions, and media).

[50] For example, Zelizer (1997) writes that, at the formal level, "separate currencies have repeatedly served to enforce the dependency of women, children, and the poor," thus making distinctions between individuals, distinctions that they may accept or subvert (210).

organizations require that one exchange partner make an advance payment without being sure if the other party will fulfill contractual obligations (Akerlof 1970), we could expect them to be considered more risky and for contract to be used as an insurance and assurance mechanism. Similarly, in the case of both CSAs and farmers markets, because the goods are often purported to have particular qualities that are largely invisible to consumers (Akerlof 1970), such as organic/natural production methods or localized regions of origin, we might expect that markets and CSAs would need to verify and prove these points in formal ways, leading to bureaucratic elements.[51] Food and agricultural organizations in general tend to rely on contract. For example, Wolf et al.'s (2001) study of intermediaries ("fresh handlers" and "processors") in California finds that contracts are ubiquitous. We might expect as well that the distribution organizations studied here rely on these same relationships with farmers.

Meanwhile, with regard to money, we know from previous literature on alternative food organizations that various monies might exist in this type of economic activity, at least in farmers markets. For example, Allen et al. (2006) highlight the fact that farmers markets in California sometimes struggled with accepting food stamps, given that new debit-

[51] The standardization of agricultural and food products is so taken for granted that scholars have used it as a case example. For example, in "Institutions and Credible Commitment," North (1993) argues for grocery shopping as a example for rational behavior: "It is one thing to assume that individuals act rationally in the sense that the term is used in expected utility theory when they go to the supermarket or participate in financial markets in the United States" (13). Similarly, in describing the process of commensuration, Espeland and Stevens (1988) use the example of global agricultural commodities: "For example, futures traders buy and sell agricultural commodities by virtue of standardized grading systems that constitute products for entire industries. Grading systems create explicit categories of relative quality, and hence relative value, that make possible trade …" (Espeland and Stevens 1988: 329).

based food stamps (EBT) require special equipment and a power source, often inconvenient in farm stands. This suggests that "special purpose monies," in the language of Polanyi (2001), may be used in these organizations, though we do not know what, if any, adaptive strategies are in use around those monies.

In this chapter, I examine how local food movement organizations of two types—farmers market and CSA (nearer a co-operative form)—put into practice the use of monies and contracts while maintaining the economic activity of an alternative organization. Particularly, I ask:

> *Will legal tender money and contracts be used in the range of these organizations? Or will these economic conventions be shunned by some organizations in favor of alternative arrangements?*
>
> *Where they do appear, will monies and contracts be negotiated in particular ways to deal with the organizations' pre-existing assumptions about money and contracts (as for example, associations with bureaucracy, etc.)? How will these negotiations play out?*
>
> *And will the existence and negotiation of these monies and contracts vary based on the structural form (as CSA or farmers market) or mission (those with social justice missions vs. those without) of the organizations?*

This chapter first frames the use of monies and contracts in these six organizations. The second section examines variations in money use across structure and ideology, and the third section examines variations in contract use across structure and ideology. Finally, the fourth section examines negotiation of money and contracts as a negotiation of mission-based exchange.

I. Money and Contracts as Integral to Alternative Food Organizations, but Varying by Structural Form

The farmers market and CSA models I observed each involved the use of money, and many also involved a weak form of contract as well. While many CSAs today operate more like a subscription, the CSA model adopted in each of the CSAs I observed was a membership model with co-operative tendencies. Members pre-paid, with some form of money, for a season's worth of vegetables, and, in most cases, signed a membership agreement to mark this payment and their more general relationship to the CSA group and the supplying farm as consumer-members. Interestingly, in social justice-oriented CSAs (Burlington and Cady), the membership contract and payment procedure were made flexible by the organizations' incorporation of low-income shares. A different payment plan was afforded based on financial need, in which members could pay in installments or could pay weekly if they had low incomes or were on EBT, while certain other provisions of membership (such as work commitments, in these CSAs) were held constant among member-consumers. In farmers markets, on the other hand, transactions were typically one-shot and in real time,[52] with customers using money to buy produce. Farmers markets adopted no contracts with customers, but all signed agreements with vendors, stating specific rules about the products that could be sold and the relationship between the market and its vendors. Transactions at markets were similar to usual market activity in the real-time exchange of money for goods, and they were one-shot for some, although many customers became regulars, creating a different, less anonymous form of exchange. Additionally, special assistance monies created different accounting and

[52] There were many exceptions to this, however, as I describe in Chapter Two, with regular customers and gifted produce.

transactional responsibilities for the markets than might be anticipated by traditional economic theory, changing economic activity for the supporting organizations and the customers who bought things using these monies.

Monies in CSAs and Farmers Markets

A variety of monies were used at these alternative food organizations, both CSAs and farmers markets, and the use of money was key to supporting both the more individualistic and the more collectivist goals of these organizations; acceptance of special monies was key to implementing social justice goals. Grants, fundraising, and for-profit sales, as well as cash, checks, and special assistance monies all appeared in these organizations.

Although seen as "alternative" organizations, the alternative food institutions I observed incorporated money as an integral part of both their economic viability and social missions. For all organizations, supporting local farmers was a key aspect of the organization's social mission and this support of farmers involved financial exchange. While the mechanisms through which this monetary transfer occurred varied by organizational form and mission, none of the organizations completely did away with traditional money or bemoaned its presence as a necessary evil; they instead incorporated it in various forms and flexible ways, looking to get more of it through market, government, and private means. As Boise's market manager stated, financial sustainability was a key component of the market's mission:

> SS: You mentioned in the beginning, when you were talking about the mission, you mentioned the word "sustainability." What does that mean to you?
> Interviewee: It means a lot things. I think it means environmental sustainability, so supporting farmers, producers, growers, that are using practices that are not damaging to the environment. It's sustainability for them, for their livelihood, for their continued existence as farmers. It's sustainability for the market and the employees, being able to maintain the jobs that we created. And for the people in the neighborhood it's to be able to continue to provide the food and information and events and things that they can afford or access … you know, attend for free ... I think it's all of that.

All the organizations relied on a mix of funds to accomplish their goal, taking monies from different sources and of different types. Fundraising—either through grant seeking, members' donations, or tiered payment for redistribution—was a core function of both the markets and the CSAs, with the exception of one that was completely self-sustaining. Five out of six cases, including both CSAs and markets, incorporated fundraising assertively, in contrast to Kleinman's (1996) experience with alternative organizations that avoided it. Not only was this fundraising pursued in an assertive way, it was also intertwined with market-based aspects of the CSAs and markets, and didn't reflect a belief that finances would contaminate (Douglas 1986, 1966) missions or that money would contaminate customer-producer relationships. Organizations applied for grants in addition to their market-based selling and CSA-based distribution. For example, grants to augment the purchasing power of low-income customers were aimed at maintaining the "fair market" for farmers as well as maintaining a reasonable buying price for other consumers.

Though cash money has been portrayed as commodifying and corrosive to relationships (Simmel 1900), cash was a key form of exchange in both organizational forms and across both more individualized and social justice missions. Cash was also taken in fundraising (as in a donation jar) alongside grant money receipts and cash for payment. For example, at the Burlington CSA, cash was used to pay for leftover a la carte items at the end of the day, for example cheese, that a purchasing member did not pick up and that thereby was up for the buying (rather than the taking). This extra money was seen as a fundraiser for the CSA, and it allowed the CSA to "pay back" an account shortfall that occurred due to accounting issues with low-income shares. Similarly, toward the end of the season cash, was taken in a donation jar at Boise market to support the organization's continued efforts to promote local food and food access. When I asked the market manager what the donations were for, the manager explained that things were getting tight, grants had dried up, and the market was still waiting for money from the organizations that sponsored the special monies. In short, they were awaiting reimbursement and needed to make ends meet, not dissimilar to the situation in Burlington CSA, Boise's mission counterpart. The donation bucket stayed out for a couple of weeks, and the market also adopted other market-based strategies for making ends meet, such as opening a new short-term tester market in a different location.

Relationships with state and local government and nonprofit organizations made it possible for the markets and CSAs to support various monies that I call special assistance monies, as they were intended to help low-income individuals, new mothers, and senior citizens. These were used alongside other monies, depending on the organization,

including cash, check, credit, online payment processing services, and, in one case, monies created by the organization itself. In CSAs, these provisions included accepting EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) terminals for food stamps (formally called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP), and in farmers markets EBT was accepted alongside a variety of other monies, such as $2-denominated coupons called "Health Bucks," WIC[53] fruit and vegetable checks denominated in values of $6, $10, or $15 that could be used at farmers markets and supermarkets, Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)[54] $4 checks for WIC and Seniors to be used only at farmers markets, and in some cases Double Dollars Coupons, a pilot program to double the value of WIC fruit and vegetable checks when spent at farmers markets. Acceptance of food stamps (through EBT) was a practical component of two of the CSAs and all three of the farmers markets. In CSAs, EBT could be used to pay for vegetable shares, on a weekly basis. In farmers markets, EBT could be used onsite for farmers market purchases. Rules governed these transactions in both types of organizations. The Health Bucks program, provided by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene[55] and redeemed through the Farmers

[53] WIC is a federal program; in NY, WIC is run through the New York State Department of Health. "The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk." http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/women-infants-and-children-wic

[54] The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), through the NY State Department of Health, "provides checks to women, infants and children through the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) and to seniors in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for the purchase of locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables." http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/fmnp/

[55] The DOHMH is a city agency, a department of the Government of New York City that is charged with public health issues.

Market Federation,[56] provided $2 coupons for every $5 spent in EBT at farmers markets in the area. Health Bucks were also given out as an incentive for participating in cooking classes and other health events of community groups who had applied to do so (NYC Health).[57] These coupons could be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets. In general, EBT monies could be spent on various goods at the markets, but WIC and Health Bucks checks could be used only for vegetables and fruits.[58]

One of the strongest differentiating factors in money use was by organizational structure. As we might expect, the physical presence of money was more common in farmers markets than it was in CSAs, largely because the CSAs involved pre-payment of a lump sum, so money was less likely to appear for each week's exchange. Money was more visible in farmers markets, used as a primary way to facilitate exchange, with cash and other "special monies" (Zelizer) changing hands alongside one another many times a day. On the other hand, cash was not as common a presence in CSAs, where the bulk of members made payments before the CSA season started.

Rarely Cash in CSAs, Mostly Cash in Farmers Markets

While financial transfer from members (customers) to farmers was integral to the functioning of CSAs, the prepayment policy adopted by the CSAs meant that money appeared onsite only in particular ways and at particular times. Pre-payments for seasonal

[56] This is a state-wide network of farmers markets.
[57] http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/////downloads/pdf/cdp/health-bucks-app-inst.pdf
[58] http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/farmers-market-report-11.pdf

shares usually occurred before the season began and took the form of cash, check, or online transfer. However, money appeared at other times during the season as well, as the CSAs incorporated economic activity beyond the main CSA transaction.

Circumstances where cash appeared in CSAs included monies for donations, one-off sales, special events, and also for people who were accustomed (for example, people who voluntarily or circumstantially had no bank account) or required onsite (EBT payers paying late, or in Burlington, also weekly cash/check payments for low-income share members not on EBT)[59] to use cash to settle accounts. With the exception of third-party involvement (as with EBT payers at Burlington, which I will discuss in more detail later), there was no institutionalized system for handling cash in the Abilene, Burlington, or Cady CSAs, and trust generally surrounded the handling of this form of money. Abilene rarely dealt in cash, and where cash existed in Burlington and Cady it was marked by this trust. Not long after I got to know members of the Burlington CSA, I was several times entrusted with large amounts of cash when I was asked to help with ad hoc CSA transactions, such as taking late CSA share payments or helping take signups for the farm trip. For example, one week when I was asked to take the monies for extra shares, a Burlington member gave me over $300 in cash toward a vegetable share, saying he went check-free several years ago. This member did not ask for a receipt; in the rare event when a member asked for a receipt, I wrote out a handwritten receipt on a piece of paper

[59] Government rules on food stamps state that recipients can pay only for what has been received, so CSA members on food stamps could not pay in advance with food stamps for their shares and also could not use food stamps to pay for weeks of their share that they missed/did not consume. In these cases, cash had to be paid.

and gave it to the person. Discussing this point, the lead organizer of Burlington CSA commented:

> I think there's a lot of trust there because we all but a few of us go around with a lot of money that is from the CSA and there aren't particular rules. It's just assumed that everyone will do what they need to do.

The leader of the Burlington CSA core group used a manila envelope to store cash monies and checks, which he jokingly and affectionately called the "cash box":

> Interviewee: The other rule is, and this was more of a [nonprofit sponsor] rule. The [nonprofit sponsor] person was the person who handled all of the cash, handled all of the transactions … But because the merchandise sales happened after [nonprofit sponsor] left, I would keep the money.
> SS: So that was the deal with your little folder?
> Interviewee: Right ... I had so many dreams of losing checks. I thought I had lost checks. In the end we didn't lose any checks, but [finance committee guy] and I were, like [laughs]
> SS: I remember one time someone gave me, like, $400 in cash, actually and I was, like, what do I do with this? Am I going to lose this?
> Interviewee: [laughs] Right.
> SS: I don't want to pay $400.
> Interviewee: I know, I know, it's just flying around … it wasn't pretty. That whole process was very unpretty. So now we have our own checking account.

Burlington CSA's lead organizer described how the formalities that did exist in the CSA around money resulted from the relationship with their nonprofit sponsor.

Cady CSA, not dissimilarly, used a plastic container with a handwritten label to collect cash monies. The same container was used for different payments, changed with a little paper sign or sticker identifying that the money was being used, for example, for payments for bulk tomatoes or donations for the farmer after a hurricane. Similarly, when Cady CSA used a container to collect cash outside of the normal distribution funds, the CSA organizer did not monitor the container or the amount of cash that people put in,

even for payments for bulk orders the members made. The level of trust on this point was clearly implicit; with no contracting, regulation, or enforcement, it was assumed that people would give what they owed. The management of cash was an informal and relaxed process, and the core organizers of Burlington and Cady CSAs acknowledged this.

While cash appeared in these instances, more trackable forms of payment were often encouraged and used at the CSAs, and all three CSAs facilitated the handing over of checks to the farmers. Checks or online transfer were helpful to Abilene; Abilene's lead organizer commented that these methods were preferred, as the CSA described itself as a mere facilitator of the consumer-producer relationship, especially in the financial aspects, even if it did also take administrative fees that were used for specific organizational needs, like tables, baskets, and lights, and wants, like community building events for core organizers. For Abilene, money handling had changed over time:

> Originally the marketing and collection of funds was done by the local organizers on the purely volunteer basis. However, payments were made out in the name of the farm. Our particular crew. We're not any kind of legal entity. So there's no one to actually write a check to. But we would do the marketing and collections and send that up to the farm. Within the last couple of years, the farm has taken on the business side of it directly … we've mainly been able to go to a hands-off approach in terms of the business model, which is great because it's not our interest and we don't want to be in that space anyway … the farm itself just feels it's in their interest to take over the business. They've matured.

While cash was handled with a good deal of trust at Burlington, at the Abilene CSA, which lacked a general work requirement and also internal redistribution through low-income shares, cash never appeared. Even when checks were used, they were handled by

the lead organizer. When the lead organizer stepped away, the regular volunteers might now and then take checks, but the lead organizer asked for them when she returned.

While non-cash forms of payment were the default in CSAs, cash was the default in farmers markets, and markets as a whole did not permit customers to use non-cash forms of payment like checks and credit cards, with the exception of government assistance monies. These government assistance monies came in both debit and check form: food stamps Electronic Benefit Transfer, WIC and Senior checks, or coupons tied to EBT use ("Health Bucks"). While the EBT terminal looked like a credit card machine, it was not used for credit cards because of the fees charged by credit card processors. At Boise FM, people often went down or across the street to use an ATM when they realized they needed cash.[60]

Government Assistance Monies in Alternative Food Organizations

Government assistance monies were a significant part of the transactions in the alternative food organizations, appearing in all three markets and two of the three CSAs and helping to fulfill the organizations' financial sustainability and social justice concerns. In two of the CSAs, both of which had a social justice component to their mission, EBT (the food stamps debit system) was accepted as a form of payment for members. In each of the markets and many others in the city Food Stamps Electronic

[60] While other studies have shown (Allen et al. 2006) issues with the EBT machines and thus with access to customers wanting to pay with EBT, the machines currently used in the organizations I followed (farmers markets and CSAs) were wireless and generally worked very consistently. In a few exceptions when machines broke down (I'll discuss this in the negotiation section), the farmers market managers adapted as best they could to keep access available.

Benefit Transfer was accepted, as in CSAs, but several other monies as were also accepted, WIC and Senior FMNP (Farmers Market Nutrition Program, specific to farmers markets) checks and coupons tied to EBT use ("Health Bucks"). In the markets, where cash appeared, the handling was straightforward, but for government assistance monies there was an institutionalized process, based on external rules, for dealing with the exchange. This made for differences by organizational form in how monies were treated. A variety of things supported the institutionalization of EBT and Health Bucks in farmers markets: the terminal (EBT machine), promotional banners, a promotional media kit, tokens to act as "dollar" credits for EBT debits, signage, training for farmers market workers, and logs/accounting materials.[61] Only the EBT terminal was provided in CSAs. There were several steps to the institutionalized use of EBT, WIC checks, and related monies as they were translated into money with transactional value: verification of persons, in which persons were deemed eligible; verification of transaction, in which transactions were deemed permissible; translation of monies into placeholder monies (in farmers markets, special tokens redeemed via EBT debits that could be used onsite with vendors in lieu of cash); and delay of accounts, in which monies were made known on the books of the farmers market or CSA.

[61] According to the Farmers Market Federation of New York: "Under the NYS Wireless EBT Program, market managers, mobile markets, farm stands and NYC Green Carts are provided, free of charge, with a wireless POS terminal. They are also provided promotional banners and a media kit with branded images for the program. Markets using the central terminal system are also provided, free of charge, with serialized, market specific, EBT tokens and signage for each farmer and vendor in the market participating in the program. Each participant in the program undergoes training in the administration of the program at the market/farm level, including the rights and responsibilities of each partner in the program – the Federation, the market and the participating farmers and consumers. Included in the responsibilities is the required EBT transaction logs that allows tracking of all sales and redemptions of EBT tokens." (http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/work-shop-programs/ebt.html)

Verification of persons, in which persons were deemed eligible

Verification of persons was a particular requirement of special assistance monies, meaning that low-income customers had to be identified as proper recipients of these funds. This was protocol in both farmers markets and CSAs. While all members in the CSA tended to identify themselves as members before receiving their share—involving a check-in system in all three CSAs, with self check-in in Cady CSA—only customers using EBT had to identify themselves at the market. Market managers were required to check EBT cards, and market managers always made sure that individuals had their EBT card. Verification of persons had implications for the "anonymous" view of markets—a scholarly view of non-anonymity as connection—and perhaps also for the customers' feelings of privacy—a lay view that may prefer privacy over income status.[62] Cash money did not enable one's ability to be "known." However, the verification of proof of government assistance might not have fostered the kind of connection that those customers preferred. In CSAs, all members had to be verified in a sense, although Cady CSA was especially concerned with privacy on the point of income and operated through trust, allowing members to check themselves in and also making private the EBT transaction.

[62] This issue of privacy came up in Cady and Abilene with the subsidization programs. Observing the Cady CSA for weeks without having seen the contract yet, I knew only that EBT was available but not that there was a sliding scale, a strong difference to Burlington, where this was a visible and institutionalized process of "check-in." The presence of a sliding scale was only known to members via the contract—which made this option available—but otherwise its existence didn't show up during distribution. For example, the Abilene CSA's lead organizer joked when we were discussing the sign in process for CSA members: "We don't ask people to show ID or anything like that [laughs]."

Verification of transaction, in which transactions were deemed permissible

Food stamps, FMNP, Health Bucks, and other money transactions were regulated in terms of products that could be purchased, not just the process—monies had to be used for fresh fruits and vegetables. This rule predominantly affected farmers markets, where market staff also provided education around the rules. This had interesting implications for customers, making for complicated exchanges to satisfy the rules around these media, involving multiple translation efforts in the course of even one person's purchase. Because of the rules around some of the special assistance monies that could be used only for produce, customers using these monies sometimes found they needed to organize their exchanges into produce and non-produce items. At CSAs, the verification of transaction with EBT also existed, even with the different structure of transactions across the two forms. While EBT was accepted in Burlington and Cady CSA, it could be used only for vegetable shares in these CSAs, making a similar distinction between produce and other farm products, as in the farmers markets. EBT rules also dictated that EBT could not be used for a product that the EBT recipient did not receive, something that conformed with the farmers market exchange but that led to an alteration of the typical CSA transaction of pre-paid shares. EBT would be transacted weekly, and when members missed a share they were supposed to pay for that share but could not do so with EBT, so they had to pay cash.

Translation of monies into placeholder monies

In farmers markets and not CSAs, special assistance monies were also translated into placeholder monies to mimic cash. Depending on the market, before or after the verification of the product, the EBT monies were translated into placeholder monies that the customer could use onsite and that later would be converted between vendors and the market manager to cash or organizational credit. The state required each of the markets to disburse round "tokens" as a local exchange of value for the food stamps Electronic Benefit Transfer. Other monies could not be translated, meaning that customers had to use the exact amounts on Health Bucks and WIC checks. A currency exchange happened onsite each market day: the vendors at the markets returned "special monies" to the market manager in exchange for a credit to their account or a check in reimbursement. This translation of monies into placeholder money did not exist in CSAs. With the share model, once members had paid, equal shares of produce were received and no money or placeholder money was exchanged at the site of vegetable distribution.

Delay of accounts, in which monies were made known on the books of the farmers market.

The final step of the institutionalized process around government assistance monies was the translation of funds that came back to the farmers market and CSA organizations. After transactions were verified, and, in the case of farmers markets, currencies were made valuable to market vendors, the CSA organizers or market managers had to account for the receipt of these monies. In farmers markets, this necessitated reimbursement. Accounting for these media (for example, the Health Bucks or FMNP checks received)

had to be done by a certain time for the market to be reimbursed, and late submission of accounts or confused handling of monies could mean that money came out of the market's funds. The external organizations mandated formal accounting practices for these special monies, and they enforced compliance through financial penalties to market makers who did not turn in forms or who turned them in late. The market manager of Asheville FM said this had created difficulties for the market when staff made mistakes with the accounting processes and the market became responsible for the difference. Market managers also said that there was a delay in receiving reimbursement, and they would have to float the money in the meantime. This could present challenges if the market account did not have cash reserves. Asheville's market manager, for example, said that money to float Health Bucks and check reimbursement funds often came out of his pocket. Boise FM's market manager also said that while the delay in accounts was not an issue at the beginning of the season, because they had money from grants and food sales left in their account from last year, late in the season there was a gap in timing between receiving reimbursement and needing to pay market staff, leading the market to need to seek other ways of fundraising.

The various processes involved in handling special assistance monies pertained to all alternative food organizations that accepted these monies, creating strong differences between farmers markets and CSAs, as more special assistance monies were accepted—and thus had to be handled—in farmers markets. Use of these special assistance monies imposed bureaucratic elements, including rules governing interactions with customers and accounting and record keeping.

Summary

CSAs and farmers markets in some ways had a clear distinction in their use of money. The CSA model generally involved lump-sum pre-payment, for which checks and online transfer were preferred, and the farmers market generally involved real-time, point-of-purchase payment, for which cash was preferred. However, in dealing to various degrees with the demands of customers, and in some cases organizational missions to expand access, the alternative food organizations demonstrated flexible uses of money. Furthermore, some went beyond formal processes for handling special assistance monies to encourage their use and stimulate new ways of extending access, a point that I will discuss later in this chapter. Alternative food organizations did not try to undo the money aspect of their economy but, rather, they incorporated money from various sources and of various types into their organizational work, not as a necessary evil but as a necessary good. While trading existed in CSAs and gifting existed in markets (as we saw in the previous chapter), these forms of economic activity did not replace money-facilitated exchange but, rather, coexisted with it.

Contracts in CSAs and Farmers Markets

While we have discussed the differences in monies that were influenced by external groups according to organizational form, a similar dynamic occurred with contracts, with structural variants between farmers markets and CSAs largely due to templates from outside—for example, those provided by similar organizations, the state (in the case of farmers markets), or umbrella organizations (in the case of CSAs) about how agreements

should be written and with whom. Unless noted otherwise, I use the term contract to mean a signed agreement between two parties that marks specific expectations about behavior in the market and/or CSA. Macauley (1963) describes contracts as varying by the types of issues being planned around as well as the degree of planning for these issues. Parties can

> (1) … plan what each is to do or refrain from doing; ... (2) They can plan what effect certain contingencies are to have on their duties … (3) They can plan what is to happen if either of them fails to perform; … (4) They can plan their agreement so that it is a legally enforceable contract-that is, so that a legal sanction would be available to provide compensation for injury. (Macauley 1963: 56)

These issues can be planned to varying degrees, with a range from very carefully taking the issues into account and explicitly planning for contingencies to not considering the issues at all (Macauley 1963: 57).

The contracts used by these alternative food organizations tended to incorporate the first two characteristics of Macauley's definition more than the last two, dealing less, if at all, with legal enforcement of the agreement. These contracts might have had legal validity but were often described more as membership agreements[63] that customers signed (in the CSAs) and rules and regulations that vendors signed (in the farmers markets). Contracts were similar to agreements in that, though signed and specifying some forethought about boundaries and contingencies, they lacked emphasis on enforcement. For example, in Boise FM's words:

> SS: How are fees structured for the vendors? Are there certain rules and requirements around them being there? Do they have to sign a contract, like, how formalized is that process?

[63] Interestingly, the CSA contract was usually called by that name, even if it was described subsequently as a membership agreement.

> Interviewee: We have our rules and regulations and they agree to and sign at the beginning of the year.
> SS: You mentioned this a bit in other parts, but are there times when the rules you establish to run the market don't work, and what happens instead?
> Interviewee: Um, hmmm [thinks for awhile], I guess so … Don't know. I'm trying to think back over. ... we sort of set out the rules, and a lot of stuff is sort of, I mean, a majority of everything that's written into our rules. But it's not necessarily posted or reviewed, or we don't do a lot of discussion around it.

Contracts in both farmers markets and CSAs focused on what was permitted and expected in the economic context. One of the surprising elements was that the contractual relationship varied by organizational form: a key distinction between the two organizational forms was that farmers market organizations wrote contracts with suppliers/vendors but had no contracts with customers, while CSA contracts existed between the CSA organizations or farm and the customer but no contracts were created between the CSA organizers and the farmer. An additional distinction was that the farmers market contracts were largely one-way documents specifying rules and regulations for vendors, while CSA contracts were three-way documents specifying what consumer-members could expect from the farm as well as what was expected from consumer-members with respect to the farm and the rest of the CSA consumer-members. For farmers markets, contracts with vendors were rules and regulations about who could sell at the market, what kinds of products were permissible, and in what way these products could be sold. For CSAs, contracts with customers were membership agreements about what the CSA could expect from farmers in terms of produce as well as what was expected from members in terms of support of the CSA farm and the rest of the consumer-members.

Most CSA organizers mentioned how they did not have a formal document specifying their requirements of the farmers, saying that they took this on good faith and that they could verify the farmers practices themselves by going to the farm. The CSA relationship with the farmer was based on trust, with verification coming from the relationship between lead members and the farmer, through a combination of visits to the farm (at least once in all cases) and communication that developed into more friendly ties. This use of contract accorded more with Macauley's (1963) research findings that contracts may be avoided in favor of handshake-style agreements and Ben-Ner and Putterman's (2009) research findings that contracts can have harmful effects on the feelings of trust and solidarity in a relationship. While CSA organizers took for granted some kind of contract with customers, they often indicated that one hadn't been worked out with the farmer, in direct contrast to how contracts worked at farmers markets. The understanding seemed to be implicit, for example, in Abilene's description of the CSA's goal in one of our conversations:

> The mission is to create a direct market between a producer—an agricultural producer— and consumers, that there is a personal relationship between the two parties. That there is knowledge representing the consumer side that the interest is in knowing who and where your food is coming from, that there's not the vagaries of packaged product and warehoused delivery chains and what not."

This sentiment was echoed in Abilene's description of the lack of contract with the distribution site that had hosted them for some time, favoring personal communication over formalization:

> We've had an arrangement with the [site] that we're at informally for quite awhile now, [gave time span], and we maintain communication with them

> prior to the season, throughout the season, and as the season is ending, and we always try to make sure that there's communication.[64]

Similarly, the lead organizer of Cady CSA explained how they had considered making a contract with the farmer but how it ultimately had fallen off the list of priorities:

> SS: So is the only CSA contract the one the membership signs… ?
> Interviewee: Yeah. …
> SS: There's not a contract with the farmer?
> Interviewee: You know, actually we worked on that with [the farmer] one year, and we never actually finalized it …

This was an interesting point because one of the core aspects of the CSA concept was that the produce would have particular characteristics—coming from a small farm, usually using organic or natural methods—leading us to believe (following Akerlof 1970) that some distrust and, correspondingly, a formal verification process might exist. Burlington CSA's lead organizer commented on this when I asked about important elements that might not be contractualized:

> SS: And are there certain things that you require of them, when you're in the process of deciding who you're going to take on? Things like that? …
> Interviewee: We wanted the veggies to be organic. Possibly we would have considered a farm that was basically organic but not certified, but [farmer] was a great option. There's … always discussion [] and it centers on organic versus local, I know that [was the issue] with the eggs, cheese, and yogurt. [Our current providers[65]] are connections that we made with [vegetable farmer]. I know the extra share people researched other possibilities. But they stuck with these. … and in terms of other things we require of them, I wouldn't say require, but [vegetable farmer] is aware of our sliding scale system and helps us with that in some ways …

Indeed, the Burlington CSA researched these elements to a great extent and also debated them in core group meetings. However, in general, these aspects of organic and local were not specified in a formal contract by any of the CSAs. CSA lead organizers instead

[65] Added by CSA contact when reading.

relied on relationship, repeat communication and personal verification of the produce. CSA lead organizers talked often about the process of visiting the farm and seeing it with their own eyes. Farm trips were organized, usually once a season, as a ritual of the CSA. This seemed to replace the need for contract, as in the Abilene CSA lead organizer's words:

> SS: And do they have to provide anything to do … like, this is our farm practices, x, or do they have to sign anything?
> Interviewee: No. We don't ask for that. That's the understanding is that this particular farm is NOFA—Northeast Organic Farming Association—certified. … the common thread when you meet with farmers at events where they try to bring groups together, the common thread is that the farmers always say that you should really go and physically see where the fields are, where the livestock is, where all of the stuff is because you could deal with someone and everything seems very credible, but if you were to actually go and see what they're doing, it's not. It's, maybe it doesn't look like what it is, or maybe they're not even a production facility, maybe they're just getting stuff and bringing it down and putting on a straw hat and overalls and saying, "Oh, hey, we're a farmer." So that's why we feel like the actual farm visit is something that's really enshrined in the group because you can actually walk through the fields you can actually see, "Here's where we have this particular crop" … [gave more details on seeing and believing]

Burlington CSA's lead organizer commented that, although the organization did not make contracts with various vendors, there might have been a contract between the supplying farm and its nonprofit supporter:

> SS: Are there any contracts with the vendors? Like, what are the rules with the vendors, things you require of them?
> Interviewee: See, this is working with [nonprofit sponsor], they take care of that, right. I think, I know they have a contract with the vendors, who are subsidized so that's [vegetable farmer's name] and [fruit farmer], so they have contracts and know when they're going to pay them and all of that. With the extra shares, I don't believe they ever had a contract, and we certainly didn't, and we're not doing that now, either. ….

While CSA organizations did not tend to make contracts with their suppliers, they did generally have contracts with members (customers). These CSA contracts with members (customers), referred to by lead organizers as "contracts," specified how the CSA worked—a share of the harvest on a weekly or biweekly basis and a commitment up front to the season's worth of produce—as well as the particular CSA's mission, at both the individual organization level (the details of the particular organization) and the organizational form level (CSA as shared risk). Both Burlington and Cady CSA member contracts followed this format, though one of the CSAs I observed, Abilene, did not have a contract with customers.

Abilene's lack of a contract between the CSA organization and members was something that the lead organizer did not realize until crisis hit (I'll discuss this more in Chapter Four). The typical CSA contract mixed information about the farmer with information about the CSA organization itself. Also, the fact that the Abilene CSA did not have member work requirements meant that one of the usually contractualized aspects between members and the CSA organization was not relevant in Abilene's case. Because it wanted to put as little commitment or inconvenience on members as possible, the Abilene CSA was less like the Burlington and Cady CSAs and more like a farmers market in its customer service orientation. Abilene CSA had no formal contract defining the relationship with members, volunteers, and/or the farmer, and the requirements for customer/members were the fewest compared to Burlington and Cady. When I asked the lead organizer about any rules pertaining to members, she listed mainly rules about how the regular volunteers were supposed to behave with members:

> The rules aren't really strict. I'm thinking of a couple of things that are rules, but then I'm thinking of exceptions to the rules, in which case they aren't really strictly enforced … You know, if someone shows up [late], we try to pre-bag a few things … So if someone calls and says, "I can't make it, can you bring something to my apartment?" you know, that's not something that we do … I'll tell them, "I'll make up a bag for you and put it on the steps, and if I'm still around then I'm still around, but if not I'm not," there's no guarantees on that, um, rules that are strictly enforced. I try to discourage people very strongly from doing anything that would be disturbing to the [distribution site]. … We don't have a volunteer commitment, so that's not any kind of rule. We don't ask people to show ID or anything like that [laughs] … I don't try to burden the members with a whole lot of stuff.

Abilene CSA's decision not to have a work commitment was based on a desire not to burden members as well as to enhance the economic prospects of the farmer Abilene supported and keep on good terms with their distribution site:

> Interviewee: For awhile now, rather than having a volunteer commitment among all members, the model that we've gone to is having steady volunteers, and in exchange for coming out every single week we provide a share to those people so they get 24 weeks of produce in exchange for a couple hours of work every week.
> SS: And how did you decide to do that model, and how did you find the people that ended up doing it?
> Interviewee: …When I started doing it I had some regular people who would help. My theory at that time was as long as there's someone regular who meets the truck to set things up and someone regular to be there to close things down that the rest of it I wasn't too concerned about. … then we thought it was important to have people volunteer so that they had some sense of the group and be there for a longer stretch of time and meet more people that way. It's kind of a nice way to feel involved. … We never wanted them to feel that there had to be a commitment, you couldn't be in the group unless you did this. The driving force that we had was to make sure that the farm was selling enough shares to make it worth it to do. Overall, that was always the number one thing. … [Also] there was a bit of a being a known quantity to the folks at the [distribution site] that "Oh, I see this person around, it's okay." You know the churches also tend to attract kind of a lot of marginal people come around their mission is to help people in whatever kind of condition and sometimes they're taken a little advantage of …. So it worked better to have a reliable group of people who could back each other up, who could be there all the time. It seems to work well for us as a group as an organizing principle and it

> works well for our hosts in terms of what we need to do and gives them a sense of security as well.

With the longstanding nature of the CSA and the lead organizer's close relationship with the farmer, the commitment between the two seemed to be taken for granted, becoming a gentlemanly agreement that only some in the Abilene CSA understood and shared.

The member contracts for both Burlington and Cady CSA, on the other hand, required work as part of membership, and the work commitment had to be formally confirmed via signature. This is not necessarily a core feature of all co-ops or CSAs, but co-ops with work requirements say these requirements are linked to involvement and commitment.[66] In Burlington CSA, the core member in charge of volunteering made a list toward the end of the season that detailed who had and had not fulfilled their work commitment, following up with those who had not to see if they could be persuaded to work in the final shifts of the season or other volunteer efforts to the CSA.[67] Fulfilling the work requirement was perceived as just as important to the character and functioning of the organization as the fulfillment of financial obligations, which were accounted for in a similar way at the end of the season. Cady CSA did not regulate the work requirement as strongly as Burlington did, although there were always at least a couple of volunteers onsite, with the lead organizer, the intern, and various other friendly members lingering.

---

[66] At the Park Slope Food Co-op, by offering only one "deal," which is simply called membership, I think we clear the way for a higher level of involvement and commitment. Also, I believe that some sort of class system would emerge if members could choose a membership level, because the members with more money would tend not to work, and the members with less money would tend to work. There is also something about the very nature of work—when performed in a decent environment, work can enhance the possibility of a sense of caring, of pride and of ownership (PSFC "Membership Manual," 6).

[67] There was no ultimate punishment for people who did not fulfill the work requirements, yet the vast majority of members did participate.

The spirit of the CSA contract also gave more freedom of exit to the more risky members, contrary to what theory (Akerlof 1970) would have us expect. EBT payers were exempt from the pre-paid aspect of the CSA contract because of the rule that EBT could being used only for items that had been received. In both the Burlington and Cady CSAs, this meant that members sometimes dropped out of the CSA without ever paying the remaining portion they would not use, leaving a partial share available and unpaid for. Both of these CSAs that had redistributive shares adapted strategies for dealing with the financial strain this might impose. Burlington CSA, for example, created a wait list through which new members in the EBT-paying category could be added during the season if or when other members in that category dropped out. After years of dealing with such account shortfalls, Burlington also created an additional contract with EBT payers to specify the need to commit to a seasonal share. Cady adapted in a different way: It took a deposit from EBT payers at the beginning, which would be refunded back to the members if they completed the season. At Abilene CSA, where everyone pre-paid and there were no EBT members, in the couple of cases where a member went on extended vacation or moved, these members "sold" their share to someone else, finding a replacement to reimburse them for the costs they had paid upfront.

The CSA contracts themselves mixed commercial and co-operative elements, for example, in the definition of the CSA relationship to support farmers through risk sharing, to support CSA members through work, and to commit to the community ethos of the CSA. However, the CSAs also went beyond contract in supporting their values.

One value apparent in all of the CSAs was the idea that equality in exchange was an understood aspect of CSAs that reflected their co-operative nature and membership boundaries. This began with the basic requirement in each of the CSAs that every member buy a vegetable share. It also appeared in associated norms, such as that members take only the portion of produce allocated to them and also that they not over-investigate product quality at the expense of others.

In contrast to the contracts that CSAs established with customer-members, farmers market managers established contracts with vendors and claimed to have few or no rules regarding customers. Most market managers cited an absence or pronounced lack of rules pertaining to customers, but all vendors committed to rules and regulations before obtaining a space to sell at the market. The farmers market signed contracts with vendors, specifying who could sell at the market and what could be sold and how. These contracts often also included information on state and local regulations as well as explanations of the market fees and other aspects of the relationship with the market-hosting organization. Farmers market contracts also specified that market managers have the right and responsibility to inspect a farm or business if questions existed about the seller's claims. Quality was explicitly listed as a requirement in the Boise farmers market contract, as was the need for transparency in product presentation, with prices clear to customers. Production process and quality specifications were to be enforced through dismissal from the market if violations occurred. Columbus farmers market's contract was similar in the basics but included significantly more planning and contingencies than did Boise's. Columbus farmers market listed an explicit ban on GMO products in the

market, a ban that was also observed in Asheville and Boise but not formalized in their contracts. In addition to general rules, Columbus also specified who could staff farmers market tables and requested a further layer of transparency, in that vendors were required to report their daily income at the market, breaking it down by the type of money they received and the type of products they sold. A more formalized process for enforcing policies and dealing with appeals had been instituted at Columbus. Different policies were enforced with various degrees of severity, from a range of fines to expulsion. Selling non-permitted items/produce and endangering the health and safety of customers were punished most strictly, by temporary or permanent expulsion. Vendors were told that they might need to wait until an appropriate time after the market to discuss the issue in person and that they could appeal in writing after notice of a violation. Appeals were put up to vote at market meetings, which were open for attendance by the market managing organization and all of the vendors, reflecting the more democratic decision-making process of the market and the extent to which other vendors had a say in addition to the market organization. In addition to signing on to the rules, vendors also waived liability against the Columbus market. The Asheville farmers market's rules were a short document that vendors did not have to sign; like its mission counterpart, Abilene CSA, Asheville did not emphasize the contract. Asheville's rules, like those of the other markets, specified what products could be sold, such as locally grown and produced produce, only from the farmer's crop plan, and produce and products following all licenses and rules in accordance with governmental rules and regulations.

While Boise farmers market's contract had no rules for customers, it did list rules for vendors in relation to customers, including treating the customers courteously and not engaging in discrimination. Similarly, at Columbus, although customers did not sign a contract, vendors were asked to sign on to general behavior proscriptions, including not using profanity in dealing with customers, acting in a professional manner in which family or friends not disrupt the market, and being prepared to give change to customers. Although Asheville's rules were shorter than Boise's and Columbus's, they specified that professional etiquette tobe observed, that booths be maintained in a "neat and organized fashion," that the market manager be called in case of any delay in their presence to market, and that "all workers at the market should utilize good customer service skills."

If equality among members was a notion adopted by CSAs, standards of freshness, locality, and food safety were a similar ethos seen as guaranteed by the farmers markets. These were not always easily enforceable, but rather involved negotiation of what made sense co-operatively and commercially in light of what was legally required by external groups. Farmers markets specified more rules about the selling side of the relationship, but this also left an opportunity to formally negotiate a mission to support farmers, in various ways in each of the farmers markets. In all three markets, this was done through what were described as lower tent fees and also fees that were pegged to the size of the farm rather than making small and large farms pay the same price. All of the farmers markets made special tiers for tent size to accommodate different vendors and also waived fees for nonprofits doing educational work onsite. In addition to extending support through tent fees, markets also negotiated a design element to limit competition

in the market, a strategy that the market managers saw as aiding the various individual vendors. Columbus FM institutionalized co-operation with rules that vendors not sell specific competing produce categories; competition was also managed in the Asheville and Boise markets. The regulation of competition with the goal of creating a more vibrant market was contrary to the traditional economic view of markets and perfect competition. Sometimes this co-operative behavior even extended beyond the boundaries of the market.

In the absence of a contract with customers, market managers were often surprised and could not think of what to say when I asked whether there were rules that pertained to customers. Those "rules" for customers that did exist were described as general norms for public behavior and were seen as common courtesy. For example, Boise FM's market manager joked that the rules were "no hitting, no biting, no throwing things":

> SS: Do you have any, are there any rules for customers you can think of?
> Interviewee: Um, we don't allow smoking at the market, which is sort of loosely enforced. It's a busy area, people pass through and they're smoking, whatever, that's their thing, but we try to avoid that. ...
> SS: It did seem like there were some more informal cases where people seemed like they were doing things that didn't seem appropriate, like someone would say something to them.
> Interviewee: Yeah, I guess sort of general rules about … that really go anywhere and are very sort of universal, like harassing people that are working there or selling, or other customers or … and I think anything that's going to create a negative experience for people in the market … or just drunkenness or whatever. I'd have to escort people away or ask them to leave—and that's anywhere—but I think at each location there were a few regulars that also were just around that area that are just drunk or on a rant or on a mental different plane and would come and just yell at people or throw things. And we were just, like, "Okay, come on, you got to go." No hitting, no biting, no throwing things. Those are our rules."

The market manager of Columbus FM gave a similar response:

> SS: Are there rules that pertain to customers?
> Interviewee: Customers? No smoking.
> SS: No bikes.
> Interviewee: No bikes, you know that very well.
> SS: That was the only enforced rule I saw.
> Interviewee: Yeah, pretty much. No bikes, no smoking. And then just regular common sense, like don't come in here cursing and acting crazy. But for the most part, most people are very respectable, you don't have to deal with too much.

At Asheville FM, the market manager also conceded that there were basically no rules for customers. The relatively markets' rule-free environment with respect to customers is more interesting when we consider the nature of these markets as public spaces, some in lively and occasionally dangerous environments, as we recall from Chapter Two. The lack of contracts with customers, however, would be expected from the economic theory on markets, where supply and demand, but especially demand, is unfettered.

II. Negotiation of money and contracts as a negotiation of mission-based exchange

While organizational forms differed in money and contract use, organizations also negotiated economic exchange, including the use and meaning of monies and contracts in that exchange, in accordance with their mission. The farmers markets and CSAs negotiated the financial and social missions of their organizations using—not avoiding—money and contracts, making decisions about how monies could be used, how much could be used, and who could use them, and deciding to whom and for what contracts would apply. For CSAs and markets that had a social justice component to their mission, the negotiation of low-income pricing and/or low-income monies was a large part of both fulfilling the organization's mission and maintaining its financial sustainability. This could involve significant work on the part of organizations, as we have already noted in

the section on monies. Even where negotiation of monies might have helped economic viability, that negotiation was framed in terms of access rather than profit, emphasizing the social justice component of the work and demanding more effort (and often more bureaucratic formality, at least in the case of the special assistance monies) than the simple, "efficient" approach to exchange. Similarly, alternative food organizations in some cases institutionalized aspects of their mission within contracts, mixing co-operative with commercial, and in other cases organizations went beyond contracts to fulfill their missions. In the negotiation of monies, Abilene CSA showed similarities to Asheville FM, its mission counterpart; Burlington CSA, Boise FM, and Columbus FM were similar; and Cady CSA was similar to Burlington, Boise, and Columbus, but less institutionalized. With respect to contracts, Abilene CSA and Asheville FM, Burlington CSA and Columbus FM, and Boise FM and Cady CSA showed similar philosophies.

Negotiation of Money as a Negotiation of Mission-Based Exchange

While there were differences in the availability of monies by structural form, as I have described, alternative food organizations' practices also involved mission-based negotiation of monies. Abilene CSA was like Asheville FM in its view of outreach and the associated effort of handling associated monies, seeing the various steps as a bureaucratic headache, if not also invasive. This meant dealing to a lesser degree with the various institutionalized processes around the special assistance monies—obtaining the monies, verifying them with customers, and then providing the accounting and waiting for reimbursement. Burlington CSA, Boise FM, and Columbus FM were similar in their commitment to going above and beyond, signing up for as many special assistance

programs as were available and creating extra systems for outreach involving monies. Cady CSA was similar to Burlington, Boise, and Columbus in mission but with a more low-key approach, institutionalizing fewer of the practices around money.

Social Justice Missions and Outreach Practices as a Determinant of Monies Used

While monies available varied by structural form, to implement missions through these monies, alternative food organizations relied on significant organizational effort and a commitment to obtain the monies, encourage their use, and develop creative ways of making the process sustainable even given the various rules and regulations governing the monies. A CSA had to decide and arrange on its own to accept one of the government assistance monies, obtaining the EBT machine and forming relationships if grant monies were also needed to subsidize the shares or develop member-driven fundraising or redistribution plans. Similarly, while farmers markets had more externally mandated rules about accepting EBT and related special assistance monies, the extent to which these monies were built into the fiber of the organization varied by organizational mission.

Boise FM, Burlington CSA, Columbus FM, and Cady CSA implemented social justice missions through use of money, giving low-income consumers access to alternative food organization . In this process, government assistance monies directly helped to further the organizational missions to make food more affordable for low-income populations while also maintaining financial benefit for farmers. Boise, Burlington, and Columbus were more similar in the level of institutionalization on these fronts, while Cady was similar in commitment but adopted a less bureaucratic process.

Rather than pursue an anti-capitalist alternative economic structure, alternative food organizations often used monies to accomplish their goals of changing economic exchange. For example, the Boise market's manager said:

> Yeah, so we basically try to enroll in and just be involved in as many coupon or incentive programs as possible, which is also part of maintaining access or increasing access so it's anybody with any form [of money] can still come to the market and be a part of it.

The "outreach," as it was called, required considerable effort to fulfill the social justice missions through monies-oriented means, as the monies helped low-income customers participate in alternative food organizations. The extent of outreach cannot be downplayed, as several groups went to considerable lengths to make this possible, from advocacy by Burlington CSA during their workday to recruitment of people for the outreach role in Boise FM, Burlington CSA, and Columbus FM. In Boise FM, the cash box sometimes overflowed with customers' payments of "special monies," and the staff member who was "outreach manager" commented at one of these points that this made her feel good because it was a sign that her work was having an impact. Responding[68] to the record-keeping example given by Rothschild Whitt (1979), however, Boise's market manager admitted that the staff time required to keep such detailed records limited the impact that staff could have by spending more of that time on programming. In Columbus FM, outreach to EBT payers was reinforced in several ways, through food stamp screenings onsite, regular advertisement about special monies at the market manager stand, and also by bundling EBT tokens in $5 increments that made it easier to

[68] The market manager read the draft on Boise market and commented in that section.

distribute extra monies like Health Bucks coupons. In Burlington CSA, fulfilling the social justice mission led the CSA to become more bureaucratic, establishing a relationship with a nonprofit support organization that demanded more recordkeeping and also establishing more formal roles for core members, including finance and outreach.

In the more social justice-oriented farmers markets, Burlington and Columbus, staff expressed a desire to be able to extend access farther than the letter of the monies allowed and found innovative ways to extend their social mission through financial means. Talking about the rules around monies as a bare minimum, Columbus FM's market manager explained that "some people just want to make a market," referring to the way in which some market managers concerned themselves more with the market as a functioning buying and selling space than with the organizational aspects of running a community-based project. The Columbus FM had internalized the externally provided formal rules about how to institutionalize monies (through signage, outreach, boundary drawing, accounts, etc.) into its own practices, but also went above and beyond these rules. This was also true at Boise FM, where, as at Columbus, aspects of the money institutionalization project had been routinized as part of the market setup each market day morning. Boise FM had two large banners: one advertised the EBT card specifically, and the other highlighted that food stamps were accepted. When the banners did not go up in a timely fashion before the start of the market, the Boise market manager reminded the outreach manager, lightly reprimanding her, saying "that's [so-and-so's] job." The special monies were also advertised on the aprons that staff, including volunteers, sometimes wore.

Another place that negotiation occurred in the use of monies to fulfill organizational missions was in extending access through the translation of monies. By translation, I mean the point at which customers use an EBT debit card and the market manager or other market staff converts this debit amount to token currency that can be used with vendors in the market. At Columbus FM, an institutionalized translation system developed to facilitate the disbursement of EBT monies. Translation could be time consuming and had to be done a certain way, following the state's rules. So, the organization innovated to make the calculation more efficient, allowing consumers to opt out of the $5 default if they wanted a different amount and did not care about the Health Bucks. EBT tokens were pre-sorted into bags that contained five tokens ($5 worth) each, a suggestion that, according to the market manager, emerged from vendors during community meetings at Columbus FM. While the $5 increment was institutionalized at Columbus FM, at Boise FM it was mentioned in an informal way—for example, if a customer spent $4, the salesperson might mention that customers could receive $2 for every $5 spent. The market manager explained that the goal was to make customers aware of the incentive if they were on the cusp of missing out on it.

The Boise FM also made some of its own monies, an exception to the general preference of these organizations to advocate for the use of special assistance monies rather than create their own alternatives (though theory on alternative organizations might have led us to expect them to do so). Boise's creation of its own monies was in line with the organization's desire to stimulate food business and also to increase access. Interestingly,

the additional monies that Boise created were modeled on the special assistance monies, working in line with them rather than in opposition. In the first weeks of the season, the Boise market issued its own coupons similar to Health Bucks, which also complemented EBT. The Boise market manager said these additional currencies were modeled on the other special monies that had been institutionalized externally:

> SS: The other ones at the end that were worth $2 and $4 were with [your fiscal sponsor, a farm org] at the end that were worth $2 and $4?
> Interviewee: Yeah, those are senior promotion, and also with the other $2 ones we often don't get the Health Bucks until July, and we start the markets in June so we want to still have the promotion where it's every $5 in EBT you get a $2 coupon, so we wanted to still have that for the duration of the market, so basically we float that cost until, and for all of the farmers, we pay all of the farmers back the day of the market and we float that cost until we can get Health Bucks back and then we redeem them and get paid back. With the additional senior coupon, and that was through [fiscal sponsor], they found the funding, they support the coupons that we have for that and that was basically just to do more outreach with the seniors and bring more people to the market.

The Boise FM market manager said that the creation of temporary coupons at the beginning and end of the season was intended to boost consistency. The Boise market's season started before and ended after the state-sponsored monies were available; so, low-income consumers came to the market at its onset and wanted to be able to use the programs that had been described during outreach. With the coupons at the end of the year, Boise FM set up its own rules in co-operation with its partner, but the rules were similar to the ones that had been established by the state. The particularities added by Boise FM and its supporter innovated regarding two issues that had come up in practice: 1) Customers and vendors often complained they couldn't buy honey and dairy with special monies and 2) customers often tried to "use up" all of their checks at once instead of spreading them out in regular visits. Each of these practices around the terms of money

had a financial implication for the Boise market, but it also had implications for the mission, which was attentive to the populations that the state had determined to be in need of assistance and access to "good food."

In Burlington CSA, according to one of its core members, the subsidization program was one of the biggest headaches but also one of the biggest reasons for and rewards of the project. The Burlington CSA's financial responsibilities included making decisions about share pricing, categories, and subsidization. This was a somewhat complicated analytical process involving different income tiers and also the meaning of EBT in relation to the organization's mission:

> *SS:* You talked a little about … income brackets. How did those conversations happen? What are the things you take into account?
> Interviewee: [The year before] we only had three levels, so we had a little bit higher than the farmer's price, the farmer's price, and below the farmer's price and the cutoff was [] SS: How did you get that income?
> Interviewee: The [low one] was 200% of poverty level, the in-between range I don't know how that was determined, and people had a problem with that because it was so narrow and it didn't, it just seemed arbitrary, so then we revisited it for [this past year] and it ended up being a long, drawn-out decision. […] So we used census data to determine the poverty level in our area … The thought process was first determining the cutoff for [the highest-paying level] and then determining how the [other income] ranges would work. … this is all trust based also. So what we tell people is to determine, think about what your income is, what your assets are, and put those together and match that to the chart.
>
> SS: So the lower level was 200% of poverty level and the upper was over the median income.
> Interviewee: Yeah, and then EBT was just EBT, and that was an innovation from the previous year, and that was another decision, a decision of should we just have EBT, and it was a big decision actually because there is a big difference. 'Cause I felt [the previous year] that our low-income wasn't serving the …low-income groups that were living there longer because people would find out.
> SS: It was serving, like, grad students?
> Interviewee: Yeah [laughs].

> SS: Actually, I don't think I qualify for that, but yeah.
> Interviewee: There wasn't any EBT requirement for level 1, so it was just below [$K] so people would just find out about it [through the internet or whatever and[69]] there were only a certain number of slots, so those slots would be taken quickly through the internet or whatever, and it didn't seem fair. It seemed not to be in accordance with our mission.

Here the core organizers of Burlington allude to the deep attention they paid to financial aspects of the organization's mission, not just using financial structures and monies to make the mission possible, but also considering the meaning of their mission in light of concerns related to monies. Given the lack of information about all of their CSA members, their prospective CSA members, and the default rates of the various groups, this was an uncertain exercise, and core members debated the right way to do tiers. A new tier had been added through member deliberation, and the idea of adding a low-income tier that didn't require EBT involved departing from the typical procedure, remaking it for their individual community. Here, they aimed to be attentive to the spirit and not just the letter of their mission to extend financial access. In this neighborhood, low-income members could include young (often white) people working intern-like roles or going to graduate school (not unlike me, and hence my joke) as well as older people and families (often of color, or immigrants) who were living on low incomes. Tiered pricing in this respect was a sensitive and not necessarily straightforward issue, revolving around what income, access, and redistribution meant, an issue Burlington's core group negotiated in subtle ways that kept in mind not only their members but also the members they worked hard to attract in line with the CSA's social mission. Burlington did not simply want more EBT-paying customers but wanted more customers who fit their goals

[69] Added by CSA contact when reading.

of broader access across the neighborhood. Redistribution for them was not simply point-in-time calculations of income but rather a heuristic around structural disadvantage.

In addition to negotiating how the program would be set in motion, Burlington CSA core members worked to ensure the continuity of the mission's financial aspects over the course of the year. In the middle of the season, the core members learned that the grant they received to subsidize shares would not be available for the winter due to budget cuts at their nonprofit sponsor. The first time the lead organizer told this to another of the regular volunteers, the regular volunteer seemed confused and said, "Wait, you mean it won't be subsidized? What do you mean?" The lead organizer said he would be "embarrassed" to offer a winter share if it was not open to everyone. These emotional reactions indicated that subsidization was taken for granted as a core part of the Burlington CSA economy and that without it, things were not the same. Shortchanging this aspect was seen as a betrayal to both the members and the mission. The subsequent discussion of this issue centered on how much of the redistribution within Burlington CSA was supported externally vs. internally and whether the CSA could make it work without the external support. Burlington CSA's lead organizer and the head of finances in the core committee advocated for continued funding of the CSA during the workday, taking time off of their jobs to help with CSA matters. When the external funding was no longer an option, the core group eventually put together its own fundraising campaign that made it possible to continue subsidization for the winter season. Alongside this, they took over the EBT administration responsibilities for the winter share when the nonprofit sponsor organization could not do so.

In addition to maintaining access through the tiered system, Burlington CSA innovated on financial issues that had arisen due to the rules of the government assistance monies, namely that the weekly payment for EBT complicated the more general pre-payment structure of the CSA. When I spoke with Burlington CSA in the season after I had spent the most concentrated time with them, they said that they created a new document that would help ensure the financial sustainability of the CSA at the same time that it continued to promote low-income shares.

> SS: What are some of the ways that transactions and monies are organized, like rules of transactions at the CSA?
> Interviewee: [laughs] I guess there are different categories of transactions. … [with lower-income payers] this was a problem last summer, no, you don't have to pay upfront, you pay every week and so and so, but there wasn't enough information given about how that worked. I don't think our members—[] of any level—understand that if you're paying us weekly, you're paying us back, that you've already been paid for. It's like there's no idea of where the loss is coming. So people for the summer share easily drop out or then didn't come and then didn't pay what they had missed and so on. So that's a rule, but it's not. That you have to pay for [your share], if you're a weekly payer and you've missed, you still have to pay. That's a rule that not everyone followed, and it's a rule that wasn't easy to enforce. So we're doing more about enforcing it. And in the winter share we only lost $10, as opposed to $500, so that's a big difference just by making people aware and having them sign an extra thing.
>
> SS: I guess that leads into the question of are there times when the rules you establish to run the CSA don't work and what happens instead? …
> Interviewee: The whole thing about having these extra contracts for the weekly payers, those rules have changed …

Burlington's lead organizer mentioned that they had extended weekly paying beyond EBT payers to other low-income tiers, and might extend this further in the future. The idea here was to help make the CSA viable for different groups and lessen the strain of an upfront payment.

In Cady CSA, the lead organizer also had a particular philosophy about how the sliding scale should run: as a self-reported system like Burlington CSA but also without predetermined income brackets. Describing the way that the sliding scale worked and the reasons for the process of self-determined ability to pay, the lead organizer of Cady confirmed an assumption of trust that appeared in other ways in the CSA, like the lead organizer's open-house policy in allowing people to go unattended into her house to use bathrooms and also her practice of keeping an unlocked garden, a point she often mentioned to CSA members—"Well, we just keep it unlocked all of the time." With regard to negotiating the terms of financial contract and payment, she said:

> Interviewee: Well … we have a sliding scale, but we don't ask people what their income is or their, what their disposable income is. We have a sliding scale plus we take EBT/food stamps.
> SS: Why don't you ask people what their income is?
> Interviewee: We've found it's not necessary, that people are just honest about that. It feels just like prying, kind of. And people are usually quite forthcoming. I mean, people who have enough money usually want to give more, you know. They'll say, "Oh, well, I'm definitely in that category," you know? Just interestingly enough. …[gave details] you know we let them figure that out. And they're generally good about that. We've never had a problem. I mean, we always have, or we have always had, I should say, more people declare themselves higher income than those that declare themselves lower income … But, you know, the low-income share has to be subsidized by the higher-income share

The description from Cady CSA reflects anything but the cynical view of self-interest seeking with guile often attributed to economic actors (Williamson 1979, and after) and instead a sense that people are "just honest" and if they "have enough money [they] usually want to give more." While Cady CSA had this trusting spirit toward members' relationships to money, it did ask for a $50 deposit for EBT-paying members in case they needed to drop out, although the lead organizer said that if the member couldn't pay the

deposit, the CSA was not strict on this point. This insurance-like program aimed to deal with the same issue that Burlington had encountered around payment mismatch between EBT members and the structure of CSA pre-payment. The CSA was keen to keep private the nature of payment for the CSA, whether cash, credit, or special assistance funds via EBT, in order prevent the possibility that promoting access across different income brackets would lead to social stigma.

The missions of the Abilene CSA and Asheville FM emphasized health and local food without explicitly including a social justice component. Accordingly, the provision of and emphasis on monies to support low-income buying were less central than in the organizations that emphasized social justice aspects of their work. Abilene CSA had no internal subsidization. But core members were aware that subsidization occurred in other alternative food organizations, and Abilene had reasons for not providing it. The lead organizer said that because of the neighborhood Abilene CSA served, there was no need for internal subsidization or EBT acceptance. Indeed, this was a wealthier area, wealthier at least than Burlington's, and the Abilene CSA leader said that if the neighborhood were different, adding low-income shares would be the one thing they would probably change. That said, it wasn't unheard-of for passersby to confuse the CSA with a soup kitchen in the area. Regular volunteers at Abilene CSA commented on downsides to subsidization as well. One of the volunteers said a friend of his was in a CSA that had asked him for proof of income and said that seemed overly invasive to him. The lead organizer of Abilene agreed, adding that subsidized shares would be a logistical mess that would have to draw on the regular volunteers, who already high commitment to the organization,

given the lack of a general work commitment. Abilene CSA did have a subsidization program through gifting that was framed as being based on loyalty rather than income, as the ethos of mutual benefit extended to strengthen the bonds of the existing group rather than expand it more diffusely (I talk about gifting in more detail in Chapter Two).[70]

At Asheville FM, Abilene CSA's mission counterpart, EBT/Food Stamps and other government assistance monies were accepted, but tokens and Health Bucks were often few and far between, and outreach, though some took place, was minimal compared to Boise and Columbus. Asheville's market manager went to churches and local community meetings to talk about the market and also went to local WIC offices to put up a flyer and tell the WIC recipients where they could use their checks. While the market manager at Asheville valued providing produce to low-income people in the community, for the most part this was often done through internal discounts and gifting, not unlike the way that things worked at Abilene, Asheville's mission counterpart. Asheville FM saw the rules and effort around special assistance monies as prohibitive. As I mentioned previously in describing the processes of verification, translation, and delay of accounts involved in the use of government assistance monies, Health Bucks had to be picked up from the local Department of Health, the various coupons and checks had to be recorded, and the organization had to wait for reimbursement. The Asheville market manager, who ran the market with little assistance, complained about the need to pick up special monies, do extra accounting, and wait for reimbursements. So he often provided support through

[70] Like the Boise and Columbus farmers market, rewards at Abilene CSA were given to those who volunteered. At Abilene CSA this was often to longstanding members, friends and family of the lead organizer and regular volunteers who helped close down the distribution site at the end of the night and received leftover produce in return.

discounts rather than through the special assistance monies. Echoing Abilene CSA's view on privacy and prying, Asheville FM's market manager explained his belief that people would come by and could be appealed to at a personal level through fresh produce and low prices, not through large, institutionalized signs emphasizing government assistance monies. This seemed aligned with his desire to support the pride, rather than the dependency, of the neighborhood.

That said, when special assistance monies were used at Asheville, they were mobilized, like other aspects of the market's design, to advance the market's strong emphasis on health. Asheville's market manager said, "I want to get people off rice and potatoes, so I'm not having it," describing how he tried to regulate carbohydrate consumption in the market, a point that was also a rule for some of the special assistance monies. Asheville FM implemented carbohydrate enforcement through the selection of vegetables the market manager sold (all greens, herbs, tomatoes, etc.; no winter squash or potatoes, etc.) but also, at one point, through the gatekeeping role of transactions using government assistance monies. The market manager said that, before the translation process (tokens that could be used anywhere in the market) was instituted, customers would have to go through him with the EBT so he could regulate what they were buying. The manager added that since the market started using the tokens, it was not as easy for him to regulate what people bought (like potatoes, etc.) as it was before the tokens came into existence, because the tokens gave customers flexibility to shop after receiving them, rather than having to see the market manager at the end, during checkout.

Organizations used monies in different ways, even as they were affected by institutionalization efforts from the outside. Organizations' individual negotiations of what elements of using monies they would emphasize often got at the spirit, and not just the letter, of their missions to promote health, support farmers, and/or extend financial access to sub-populations in their communities. Subsidization at Burlington CSA, for example, involved census-backed hurdles for determining who was financially in need and who wasn't, and, informally, incorporated ideas of race and ethnicity as well as income. At Cady CSA, subsidization was more casual and self-determined, influenced by a belief that people are "just honest" and if they "have enough money [then] usually want to give more." At Abilene CSA, the lack of subsidization was also a response to the community's perceived needs—as a more affluent neighborhood, the need for financial privacy was more important than financial redistribution. Although Columbus FM's market manager acknowledged that "some people just want to make a market," each market—Asheville, Boise, and Columbus—found itself concerned with more than just the purchase and sale of produce and also with an intertwined attention to community affairs and the financial health of customers, vendors, and the local area. Columbus FM and Boise had outreach staff (as mentioned in Chapter Two) and routinized processes for encouraging the use of monies that would extend the social justice mission. Boise FM also created its own monies to help advance its mission, taking cues from the government assistance monies but also building in innovations that dealt with some of the problems that had been encountered with use of these monies in the market.

"Alternative" organizations might have done away with money and either replaced it with something else or made their own currency. This happened to some extent, as organizations sometimes practiced gifting instead of monetary sale and payment and even made their own coupons. However, in the parts of the "alternative food" movement that I observed, leaders often felt their business was precarious and usually focused on trying to get existing monies rather than making new ones. For them, the alternative they provided was more about making different types of economic transactions more financially sustainable than it was about changing economic interaction through use of new monies or abandonment of money as the facilitator of exchange. While CSAs adopted a different form of exchange, using a pre-payment model that emphasized a "share" of the produce, the external rules for government assistance monies (EBT in this case) made the payment with EBT in CSAs more market-like. CSAs with social justice missions negotiated their social justice missions in other ways to extend access widely and meaningfully. These organizations approached various kinds of money in distinctive ways, something that we will also see in how they created and enforced contract.

Going Beyond Contract and Mixing the Co-operative and the Commercial

Farmers markets and CSAs also negotiated the terms of contracts in ways that accorded with structural and mission-related aspects of the organizations. While economic theory leads us to expect that financial aspects of the business are the aspects most typically contractualized, these organizations mixed co-operative and commercial elements. Written agreements were used in five out of the six of the organizations that I observed. Where contracts did exist in the CSAs, they included signing on to both the co-operative

and commercial aspects, themes that were intertwined rather than separated, regardless of the differences in missions among the three CSAs. Similarly, in farmers markets contracts mixed missions to provide local, fresh food and/or implement social justice missions with issues of payment, entry and exit. While structural form dictated differences in contract—for example, as in the emphasis on vendor contracts in markets and membership contracts in CSAs—mission-based negotiations were also important to understanding the practices alternative food organizations used with contracts. Abilene CSA was like Asheville FM in its minimal view of contract in favor of a taken-for-granted way of doing things. Burlington CSA and Columbus FM were more similar in using a contract that specified details of the relationships involved and incorporating contingencies in the planning process, institutionalizing some aspects of the mission in the formal agreements. Boise FM and Cady CSA were similar in emphasizing values that drove their mission well beyond contract, though Boise was more formalized (nearer Burlington and Columbus) than was Cady.

Abilene CSA was like Asheville FM in its minimal view of contract in favor of taking for granted a certain way of doing things. The tight-knit nature of Abilene's longstanding group, and its hands-off approach to the relationship between the farmer and consumers, led to a tacit agreement without a formalized counterpart. Instead, the shadow of a contract was mobilized as a taken-for-granted definition of "CSA," a point that I will return to in more detail in Chapter Four. The tacit agreements between members included the notions of equality that were characteristic of CSAs in general. In Abilene CSA, some of the regular volunteers would comment that they could not believe

some people just took extra tomatoes or other items when they were not looking. The CSA had instituted a split share to accommodate early CSA members who had been used to that amount even though the farmer no longer formally offered a half share. The lead organizer of Abilene also mentioned the issue of equality and collective good when we were discussing potential misunderstandings in the CSA, describing individual choices as affecting everybody:

> Another type of misunderstanding would be sometimes people will split a share with someone else … that sometimes will lead to some problems because then they will treat it like I'm going to take half of the stuff and the other person will come with the understanding that they'll take the other half of the stuff. Not everything is perfectly divisible. If it's by weight, great. If it's a piece count that's an even number, okay. Sometimes the share will consist of things like that and then one rutabaga and one bulb of garlic. Well, now all of a sudden I have a lot of garlic people and no one wants the rutabaga. And so now at the end of the night, now I have a mismatch, and that's a mismatch that affects everybody."

At Abilene, the core CSA transaction was seen as collective, demanding an ethos of equality among members. The desire to keep the CSA available to all longstanding members (even those who were not interested in the full share) as well as make the farmer's work as easy as possible conflicted with the desire to keep all shares equal.

Asheville market's written contract was also minimal compared to those of other farmers markets, similar to its mission counterpart, Abilene. While Asheville FM's rules and regulations document was short, the market manager referenced taken-for-granted expectations of vendors, such as professionalism. The market manager described having to "go market manager" on the vendors at one point, to enforce the tacitly understood rules of the market. When I asked the market manager what he does in these situations, he said:

> I kick them out. No, I'm just joking. I try to be diplomatic, but sometimes they result in expulsion and sometimes they just sort of pan out. People realize that they're silly and very miniscule problems that can really, you don't really have to deal with them. So a lot of times I let them skate by, but if you're really disruptive I wont' tolerate it … in my market. I want it to be professionally ran [sic] at all times. I don't like … drama, as you would say. I don't tolerate it. And bad enough, public noise alone is dramatic, and it can be the buses going up and people yelling and coming with their dog and allowing them to poop right in front of my space, those are just normal moments alone. Why would I want to stand and argue with my own vendor in the public space?

Asheville farmers market also negotiated its support for small farmers through informal practices that went beyond its minimal contract. For example, the market manager, vendors were allowed to pay the vendor fee on different schedules, even though they were supposed to pay each day; some paid at the end of the week or the end of the month instead. Because of this variation, Asheville's market manager sometimes had to front his own money:

> SS: Do they pay each week or do they pay at the beginning of the season, or … ?
> Interviewee: It depends on the farmer. … They're supposed to pay after each day of service, but for some it's much easier for them to pay at the end of the month. The month may not come [laughs]. We're pretty open as long as we keep a tab. It can be a little tedious, but we try to keep a tab on what they owe.

Burlington CSA and Columbus FM were similar to one another in their use of contract to institutionalize aspects of the mission in the organizations' formal agreements. Burlington CSA's practices of work commitment and subsidized shares distinguished it from Abilene. Additionally, Burlington used several contracts. The signed contract for general membership—purchase of a vegetable share—was not just a formality of the payment process but, rather, a document the Burlington CSA core group used as a signal of commitment as important as money. At the end of the summer/fall season, Burlington

encouraged interested people to fill out a form for the winter share to secure a spot, even if they did not have a check on them to pay immediately (checks could be mailed afterward). The CSA later added another signed document to establish a more formal agreement with some of its low-income members, after running into problems in previous seasons with a drop-off in the payment of low-income shares, which were paid weekly instead of pre-paid like non-subsidized shares. Also, unlike other CSAs, the Burlington CSA had contracts with its farmer, set up through the nonprofit fiscal sponsor that helped Burlington fulfill its food access mission. Similarly, Columbus FM formalized elements of mission-based implementation to a greater extent than did other farmers markets. Columbus FM's vendor support was deeply theorized in its mission, and there was institutionalized support for market participants through formally specified discounts; determining vendor fees by the size of the operation, not the tent size; and providing discounts for volunteering or contributing to decision-making by attending meetings. This was unusual among the markets I observed and in line with Columbus's mission to support local entrepreneurs as well as its longstanding nature as a social justice space with nonprofit funding. Columbus FM was also similar to Burlington CSA in its level of formalization.

Burlington CSA was the most formally tied to contracts of the CSAs, but Burlington's core members also saw themselves as responsible for certain unwritten obligations to members. I call this a belief in a "contract of fairness," and it came to the fore in various ad hoc practices, such as enforcement of swap rules, raffles for gift items, distribution of excess, rigid calculations of "levels" of income, and the overall topic of subsidization of

shares. For example, in Burlington CSA, even a decision as seemingly small as what to do with a donated bus seat for the CSA's trip to the farm drew a question about what constituted equality in distributing rewards. The lead organizer said that a raffle had just seemed like the fairest way to handle the donated ticket. However, when the lead organizer saw the list of members still awaiting a ride share, he said he felt conflicted about having to raffle between those two people, one of whom did a lot for the CSA and another of whom he believed to be in greater financial need. The equality inherent in the idea of the raffle seemed to contradict the idea of deservingness. A similar conflict around equality and process occurred in discussions that some members of the core group had about spending that members might do for the CSA:

> If we wanted to, we could get reimbursed for money that we spent, but many people didn't and … I know there was some tension around that because someone said that everyone should get reimbursed, so that then people who have to get reimbursed don't feel bad about getting reimbursed, and that seemed like a fine principle, but then, like, the bureaucracy behind it was too much of a pain, basically. So that never got off the ground.

Here, the idea of equality—in terms of everyone being reimbursed so that no one felt bad for asking to be reimbursed—was complicated by the implementation process, which would require the CSA to deal with more bureaucracy and track more receipts. The CSA also negotiated equality in creating a "swap box," an institutionalized form of trade in which members could take a produce item they didn't want and trade it for another in the box. The Burlington CSA organizer said that the swap box was developed "just as an alternative, for people who felt that not having a choice was too oppressive." Even though the swap box disrupted the idea that everyone should receive the same share, the idea of equality was retained in principle. Members had a felt sense of what some

referred to as "swap box rules": swaps were understood to be "one for one" and not to compromise the allocated shares on the distribution tables.

Boise FM and Cady CSA were similar in emphasizing values that drove mission well beyond contract, though Boise was more formalized (nearer Burlington and Columbus) than was Cady. Cady CSA, like Burlington CSA, had a contract that everyone signed and that spelled out various aspects of the economic relationship beyond just financial elements. While a signed agreement was required at Cady, the tenor of Cady's attention to the contract was somewhere in between the other two CSAs—in contrast to Abilene, a contract existed, but it was emphasized less than at Burlington, and Cady had no contract with the farmer or other additional contracts. Cady, whose stated mission was the most social justice oriented, indicated that it favored trust over bureaucracy and also made exceptions in the spirit of social justice, even above equality. For example, Cady CSA's contract formally mentioned that "all shares are the same size and content," but at times members who came to pick up at the end of distribution asked if they could have one or two extra units of certain produce items, and the organizer would make allowances. Cady had a more relaxed way with its contract, making exceptions where the lead organizer knew of a member's financial need. Cady CSA also distributed excess goods from the CSA to community members who were known to be in need, thinking of social justice more than equality per se. In the lead organizer's words:

> With some frequency, people don't pick up, and they'll just say, well, donate my share, and we do. You know, there are always neighbors … Some I know totally cannot afford a share. ... This year, however, we may very well be donating almost everything to the halfway house for battered women … I didn't really know for sure if they do a lot of cooking, but

> they do, apparently, and they really do as of now want a commitment to get into healthy eating. So that would be a good thing.

The Boise market also fell in between in terms of emphasis on social justice and bureaucratic process. The Boise market manager described how these themes were sometimes in tension, for example, when they had barred one interested vendor from selling at the market because the vendor did not go through the process of making his production process compliant with state rules.[71] The market manager believed that the vendor's juice wasn't hazardous, but he felt his hands were tied by the legal rules he had to enforce as the market manager, posing a risk that the market could be fined if it was not in compliance with the rules for vendors. This created tension with the spirit of their mission, the manager said:

> Another thing we've [] had some difficulty around is trying to support and encourage people that are other vendors, not farmers, and then producers of juice, baked goods, whatever, and holding them to the rules. They have to have their food protection certification, and depending what it is they have to either do it in a commercial kitchen or get a health inspection [described the process].

The Boise market manager's conflict on this point also showed up in the market's relationships with area street vendors:

> I feel like … if, you know, if somebody's selling, whatever, bootleg CDs or whatever it is … even if they're not officially joining the market or whatever, if they're set up right in the middle of it and are right next to it then I think people might … if we allow it then we're responsible for it, and that becomes then our liability responsibility, and that's definitely not part of … It's a fine line, because we want to encourage, support entrepreneurs and just people who are trying to take it upon themselves to do something to get by essentially, you know, it's not a very wealthy area so it's, like, whatever people can do to make a buck, but …

[71] While some markets have problems with the actual or claimed authenticity of vegetables, this did not occur in the markets I observed.

In these cases, the market dealt with agreements it had made with external groups to uphold certain rules, feeling conflicted in terms of the non-contractualized elements of its own mission—to support the community and fulfill a spirit of social justice, not just the letter of the law. This created a tension for Boise, which wanted to support low-income entrepreneurship but had superseding values about good health and legal obligations around its permitted space. Where it could, though, Boise often went beyond contract to implement its missions. Though discounts were not institutionalized in contract at Boise FM as they were in Columbus FM, vendors received discounts on an ad hoc basis to reward commitment to the market; where possible, discounts were also based on the farmers' financial needs. In the Boise market, for example, a vendor with whom the market had a close personal relationship paid the same base fee as other sellers at the market but this vendor did not pay extra for equipment like tents and chairs, and they also received storage and transportation for free from Boise. The market manager described waiving these fees as a part of the marlet's mission to support small entrepreneurs, adding that this particular vendor did a lot for the market, regularly helping with more general market operations. The written and agreed-upon rules about market fees were flexible in other ways at Boise FM. The market manager said that he often asked vendors how the day went before settling accounts and would occasionally waive the market's vendor fees when the vendor had a slow day:

> SS: Did they pay each time they come?
> Interviewee: Yeah, they just pay when they come.
> SS: At the end of the day, like, here's the vendor fee?
> Interviewee: Yeah. And if they, you know, there are days if it's just really bad weather or for whatever reason a really bad market day, there are days that we're, like, "Don't worry about it," because it also has to be worth their while, and it's for them, too, that's their livelihood, and I think it's a

> dual thing, it's just as important that people are getting food as it is that they're making a living. That's very much interconnected.

Similarly, though the Boise market manager policed some boundaries, and couldn't support illegal, non-permitted economic activity in the market boundaries, when legally recognized vendors tried to sell in the market's permitted territory the market manager went out of his way to help these vendors find space outside the market's boundaries. In one case, the market manager had conversations almost every week with a vendor who was permitted to sell on the street but parked in an area that had been reserved for the market. Although it was extra effort for the Boise market, every week the market manager and another one of the market staff helped push the vendor's food truck to an area just beyond—but still very near—the market to support that vendor's ability to sell.

III. Discussion

In their use of contract and monies, the social purpose organizations I observed in the alternative food movement mixed concerns for both financial and value-oriented goals. Use of contracts and monies did to some extent fit the expectations of traditional economic theory. Organizations used contracts to regulate entry and exit, establish payment and quality expectations, and create a base for enforcement. Also, the ways that money appeared in markets versus co-operatives differed in terms of functional concerns, conforming in some ways to the stereotypical contrast between a one-shot transaction and a lump sum membership transaction. However, in important ways, these social purpose organizations employed contracts and monies in very mission-focused ways that neither traditional economic theory nor traditional social movement theory would lead us to

expect. They practiced relational work on a daily basis, exercising choices about economic exchange based on the social ties and meanings involved. The organizations balanced concerns for financial viability, privacy, trust, co-operation, and economic inequality, negotiating the presence and interpretation of monies and contractualized transactions in the process.

In some ways, as Rothschild Whitt (1979) would lead us to expect, these alternative organizations attempted to avoid bureaucratic elements. Interestingly, this was more the case for the less social justice-oriented and less "alternative" organizations—Abilene and Asheville—because the social justice-oriented organizations had to deal with bureaucratic outside bodies, such as nonprofit sponsors, granting organizations, and governmental groups. As in Zelizer's (2005, 1997) work, monies established distinctions, not homogeneity, categorizing groups of people but not deterministically. Money itself was not necessarily a trustworthy broker of value; instead, the relationships that bound participants were the trustworthy broker of exchanges involving money.

Organizations and individuals negotiated not just the meaning of these monies but also their financial value, performing relational work as they did so. A variety of monies were in use at these alternative food organizations to support both the financial viability of the producer-consumer relationship and collectivist goals like redistributive attempts at food access. There few issues with accepting food stamps monies (in contrast to Allen et al. 2006)—probably at least in part because of improvements in wireless EBT terminals—and the government and nonprofit groups also offered additional special assistance

monies that the organizations incorporated. One of the strongest differentiating factors in money use was by organizational structure, as farmers markets were open to more institutionalized forms of external support in the terms of money incentives, like the Farmers Market Nutrition Program coupons, among others. Organizations incorporated money as an integral part of both the economic viability and social missions of their organizations; contrary to expectations, the view of money was even more expansive in organizations with a social justice mission. This observation makes sense in terms of the efforts needed to attract new low-income consumers, but it is surprising from an old social movements perspective in the sense that counterculture social justice organizations often hoped to eschew reliance on dominant cultural political and economic institutions. It reminds us of Rothschild Whitt's (1979) comments on the Free Clinic and other alternative organizations that formed relationships with bureaucracies to sustain their social goals. The use of special assistance monies, based on a particular kind of relationship with low-income consumers, demanded more institutionalized behaviors around exchange relations, with various steps including the verification of persons and transactions for eligibility, the translation of monies into placeholder monies (in farmers markets, as a replacement for cash), and the delay of accounts, in which monies were made known on the books of the farmers market or CSA.

Contracts, always deeply relational in their delineation of parties across a transaction, reinforced the goals of alternative food organizations, regulating quality on behalf of customers in farmers markets and regulating the collective provisioning of produce in CSAs. Specific sets of social relations shape the type of relational contracts established.

Structural differences in contracts between farmers markets and CSAs existed largely due to external templates about how agreements should be written and with whom; for example, farmers markets tended to make contracts with vendors and CSAs tended to make contracts with customers. Contracts, especially at farmers markets, included language employing specific agricultural terminology, as we might expect from Wolf et al. (2001). However, provisions often focused on counter-conventional agricultural methods, such as the ban on GMO in Columbus market and, in all the organizations, an explicit preference for local and direct exchange. While structural differences were important in this way, mission was also instrumental in determining what the contracts included as well as what they left out, and organizations invested these written documents with meanings that corresponded to the economic exchange they intended to create. That said, in practice, the written, ideal type transaction was not set in stone. The organizations in many cases contractualized the matters that meant most to them—such as work requirements in Burlington or group decision-making in Columbus—but contracts were not the be all, end all. Farmers markets and CSAs all went beyond contract to support their values, whether to ensure the health of customers or to negotiate the meaning of food access and inequality in their community. There were limits to enforcement, and organizations negotiated what made sense co-operatively and commercially in light of what was legally required from external groups. In some cases, enforcement of rules (for example, from outside) impinged on the implementation of aspects of the organizations' missions, as in Boise's description of limits on its ability to support small entrepreneurs who might not be abiding by permitting and licensing terms. However, in other cases,

organizations sometimes bent the letter of their own law to fulfill the spirit of their mission, such as when Cady's waived "equality" because need seemed more important.

Using both money and contract, the farmers markets and CSAs negotiated the financial and social missions of their organizations, making decisions about how and what monies could be used and deciding to whom and for what the rules would apply. Organizations' negotiations of what elements of monies to emphasize often centered around the spirit, not just the letter, of their missions to promote health, support farmers, and/or extend financial access to sub-populations in their community. Rather than create an anti-capitalist alternative economic structure, alternative food organizations tended to mobilize, not exclude, monies to accomplish their goals of changing economic exchange, even going above and beyond to obtain these monies on behalf of consumers or (in Boise's case) to create their own. Interestingly, social justice missions involved these alternative food organizations in more bureaucracy than they might have preferred otherwise, as we see, for example, in Burlington's having more formal practices only in areas governed by its nonprofit sponsor or in comparison of Abilene and Asheville's relative informality in contract use compared to the other organizations that included an access component. Markets and CSAs went beyond narrow views of money and contract to demand quality and solidarity, as appropriate in the bounds of their structural form and in accordance with their social missions.

CHAPTER FOUR
CRISIS

The stories that follow show how two organizations responded to a similar crisis that dramatically affected each organization's ability to do business. The crisis was occurred naturally and hit each organization at the same time. As both organizations—two CSAs with different missions—grappled with the crisis that befell their farms, they mobilized novel strategies in keeping with their existing practices and ideals. In this chapter, I share how these two organizations—of the same form and in the same industry and movement, but with different missions—crafted different responses to a crisis, showing the fundamentally different ways they interpreted the meanings and relations in their groups, in spite of both belonging to the same organizational form.

The natural disaster that befell the New York foodshed in the summer of 2011 was one that farmers and customers could not have imagined at the beginning of the season. If some occupations demand more respect for uncertainty than do others, farming is one of these, beholden, especially in organic, open-air production, to the uncertainties of the natural world. Farmers plan their business around sun and rain and snow and pests, setting contingency plans and updating their business decisions week to week as natural events like weather, weeds, and pests emerge. Still, some natural events can foil even the most flexible and robust plans. Halfway through the 2011 season, at the end of August, such an event hit a number of farms in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region. It was a hurricane, predicted to be of unusual scale for this part of the country. A Wall Street Journal blog joked: "With an earthquake under our belt and Hurricane Irene on the way,

New Yorkers may be wondering what Steven Spielberg movie they're caught in. Barring any asteroid strikes, we will make it though this disaster-filled week."[72] In accordance with the predicted scale of the event, city officials shut down the public transportation network in anticipation, mandated for the first time an evacuation of thousands of people from their homes, and set up emergency shelters around the city.[73] People citywide flocked to stores to stock up on batteries, nonperishable foods, and other emergency goods. In the end, the hurricane sidestepped the city and, other than some fallen trees and flooding in scattered areas, the city emerged relatively unscathed, subsequently mocking the forecasts as sensationalist.

For regional farmers and the urban consumers they supplied, however, the hurricane had some very real consequences. In the days leading up to the storm, as farmers in the states surrounding New York City braced themselves for an impending and still uncertain event, so too did city dwellers, including the producers, distributors, and consumers involved in the local food movement. As farmers in rural areas harvested ready and vulnerable crops, securing whatever else they could, so too did urban farmers and gardeners in the city, concerned that if forecasts were accurate, the effect could be devastating. In the aftermath, while many New Yorkers—shielded from storm damage and without personal connections to affected persons in other areas—dismissed the storm as a pseudo-emergency, the reality was that Irene caused significant damage throughout the New York foodshed, affecting farms directly through winds or indirectly through

[72] http://blogs.wsj.com/metropolis/2011/08/24/hurricane-irene-in-new-york-city-local-landfall-likely-on-sunday/
[73] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/28/hurricane-irene-new-york_n_939759.html#s341992

flooding various in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Several farmers supplying New York City customers experienced catastrophic damage, though others experienced little more than some extra rain. In some cases in the Northeast, farms that had been in the same family for several generations were completely destroyed, and many other farmers faced bankruptcy. Hurricane Irene was indeed a disaster, "large-scale, unusually costly, unusually public, [and] unusually unexpected" (Vaughan 1999: 292).

Perhaps for many consumers, even those involved to some degree in the local food movement, the realization of the natural disaster's impact on their food supply hit only days later. Of the six organizations that I followed and that you have come to know, two were dramatically affected. In this chapter, I compare the experiences of these two organizations to explain how they mobilized successfully—in different ways—to resolve the crisis, drawing on and reinterpreting the relations, monies, and contracts that I have described in normal times. Abilene and Cady were organizations of the same structural form, though Abilene was defined by more instrumental, food-focused goals, while Cady leaned more toward social justice. This difference in mission ultimately shaped the form of and meanings behind relations, monies, and transactions visible before and after crisis.

In many ways that I have already shown, Abilene and Cady were similar. Both were CSA groups that had operated for several years with consistent, returning members as well as recent joiners. The membership of both Abilene and Cady included a mix of high-income professionals and more modestly paid workers; some members had advanced degrees and prestigious jobs, while others struggled with unemployment or underemployment. Some

members of both organizations could afford to have nannies or housekeepers pick up their CSA share for them; others came after a long day of work. Both received their goods from farmers who served other CSAs alongside their own. In spite of these similarities, Abilene and Cady differed in other ways. While neither organization was new and both farmers worked with other CSAs, Abilene had been operating several years longer than Cady, and Abilene's farmer had a more longstanding and larger business than Cady's. Cady's membership was also significantly smaller than that of Abilene, and each group had set different goals for maximum membership, Cady's a fraction of Abilene's. Significant to all of these differences, affecting how the two CSAs were run and providing the status quo base for what would be available after crisis, was the difference in the two groups' missions. When asked about the founding of the organizations, Abilene's founder replied, "I just like the food. I like good tomatoes." By contrast, Cady's founder talked about the organization as providing a space where people could connect, receive cheap produce, and tap into the community. Abilene's founder was active in the food movement, including its more political aspects, but saw the CSA as broader, a way to bring good-tasting food to a large group of people. The two founders were quite similar as persons—active in their communities, interested in food—but their gut verbalization of their respective organizational goals reveals differences in how the two CSA defined themselves. In formal written documents for members and prospective members, Abilene CSA emphasized the importance of local, organic food and forming a direct relationship with a small, sustainable family farm. Cady CSA's written promotional materials emphasized many values shared with Abilene and other CSAs, including the importance of organic food and a direct relationship with small farmers.

However, Cady also formally embraced the goal of providing access to good food for low-income members of their community, a less common mission in New York CSAs at large (~35% of CSAs in Chapter One) and not a point mentioned by Abilene. Cady also mentioned its sliding scale and acceptance of food stamps in its membership agreement. While both Abilene and Cady expressed a desire to provide direct support to small farmers, Cady elaborated on this with more social-justice oriented language, addressing issues that farmers faced such as low incomes and employment insecurity. Cady also mentioned a lack of interest in supporting large corporate farms and emphasized the community aspects of its work, values that were uncommon in the written materials of CSAs analyzed in Chapter One, including language that described Cady as part of a broader "collective" that was "committed to social change." These differences in mission appear directly and indirectly in the distinct ways that the organizations responded to crisis, including what type of farmer was sought, what kinds of members joined the CSA, and what language and philosophy was available to leadership and acceptable to include in appeals to the general membership.

These differences were most clearly visible in the different resolution strategies and implementation practices that Abilene and Cady developed to deal with the devastation their associated farms faced after the hurricane. Interestingly, though, even though the hurricane was essentially the same physical disaster, the perceived problems and the actual problems posed by stakeholders differed. Abilene's and Cady's practices showed that they were negotiating different institutional hurdles, while facing the same natural disaster and the same unresponsive government entities, and employing the same

organizational form. The other chapters have focused on how monies, contracts, social relations and definitions of community differed in the six organizations. Here, we zoom in on two during a particular slice of time, when crisis brought these issues to the forefront.

Abilene and Cady each had its own idea not only about what good food economies look like (reflected in its mission) but also its own acceptance of the constraints the organizations faced. These constraints were tied to each organization's history of structuring itself as a particular kind of CSA. What about our contract? The relations among our members? Our symbolic and material resources? These questions were latently in place before crisis and were mobilized afterward in different ways. While each group responded flexibly, adopting new strategies as the crisis developed, the kinds of relations, transactions, media, and meanings—using Zelizer's (2007, 2005, 1997) framework for relational work—that formed during crisis were shaped the understandings and resources that existed beforehand, leading to differences in the tone and timing of the financial exchanges, the way money would be marked, and what transactions would be chosen and between what parties. Thus, we will see that the media, relations, transactions, and meanings differed in the two CSAs both before and after the crisis.

Relational work theory (Zelizer 2007, 2005, 1997) predicts a flexible and negotiated process, one that we should see particularly in these micro interactions. Negotiation and contestation is very much in accordance with Zelizer's (2007, 2005, 1997)'s observations even outside of the organizational lens. This contrasts with the neo-institutionalist view

of organizations (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, Dobbin 1994, Haveman and Rao 1997, Mizruchi and Fein 1999, Rao 1998), which tends to take a less micro view, arguing that we should expect more rigidity as organizations strive to maintain consistency over time, whether for internal or external legitimacy, to reinforce a sense of common understandings, or to share associations with broader groups, like the CSA umbrella organization. The relational work that each group did was not divorced from interests or incentives, nor can interests and incentives wholly explain it.

While the CSAs' responses to the crisis fall in line with the kind of divergence that Rao (1998) argues "demonstrates how the boundaries of an organizational form and its cultural contents are shaped by politics" (912), comparing Abilene and Cady causes us to question this process on a more fine-grained level, asking what aspects of the organizational form are emphasized and how this emphasis is consistent with the organizations' history and how they define and redefine themselves. The difference was not in the identity of the consumer—as in Rao's (1998) case—but in the organizations' view of the consumer-producer relationship, defined by common understandings as well as institutionalized ones, supported or not by documents like contracts. The literature on organizational crisis (Vaughan 1996, 1999) also leads us to expect some tension between transparency and secrecy, manifested both in the documents and relations of the organizations.[74] For both Abilene and Cady, the organizational form of CSA was a bundle

[74] In revealing what the crisis was and how the organization would respond, both Abilene and Cady responded with greater transparency while still maintaining a degree of secrecy: "division of labor, hierarchy, and specialization segregate[d] knowledge about tasks and goals (Vaughan 1996: 292). Aspects of the organizational structure as well as the response were kept secret in both organizations, "even as crisis demand[ed] some of the previously hidden characteristics to be revealed" (Vaughan 1999: 277) but these

of certain ideas about relations, transactions, and meanings, and also more than that, setting up roles and governance structures, sets of competencies and routines. The organizations emphasied and de-emphasized aspects of this form (a CSA is and does X), as bundled in the concept corresponding to the organizational form or as unbundled and repackaged in a looser sense of community (when we do Y, we are just an example of a big process of what communities do). As we will see, this preferential emphasis of one kind or another rewrote relations, transactions, and meanings as well as the form to which they reportedly belonged.

Hurricane Hits Abilene

By the time the hurricane hit Abilene, I had already come to know the CSA and its general working practices. Abilene was unusual among the CSAs I observed—and unusual among the CSAs I sampled—in its reliance solely on regular volunteers, without any volunteer work requirement for the whole of the membership body. There were fewer than ten regular volunteers, and they divided their time commitments into roughly three shifts, one for setup and meeting the farmer, another for the middle of distribution, and the last for break-down and dealing with leftover produce. All of the regular volunteers received a free vegetable share for the season as a thank-you for their commitment to organizing distribution. Other than the time shifts, to which volunteers were regularly committed, tasks during distribution were relatively flexible, including signing in other members, stocking vegetables, or answering questions about the produce or the organization as they arose. While the tasks during distribution did not correspond to fixed roles, Abilene's division of labor was characterized by two things: decision-making dominated by the lead organizer, in consultation with the CSA founder; and

---

revelations were partial—for example, recall the post crisis description of the use of funds in Abilene.

implementation among the volunteer group that was otherwise non-hierarchical. The lead organizer and sometimes the founder were responsible for communicating with the CSA's farmer and membership. Routine pre-hurricane communication included emails and website posts to members that summarized upcoming transactions, usually two days in advance. In addition to formal communications, the lead organizer was also responsible for managing funds, including paying for volunteer group bonding events (informal events that usually included volunteers, longstanding members, and their families) and mailing members' checks for special orders. The lead organizer also had final discretion over gift transactions, including where leftover produce went (to the distribution site and its workers, a local restaurant/bar, other members or friends) and to whom vegetable shares or other gifts from the farmer might go.

Before the hurricane, important relations in Abilene included this division between volunteers and regular members, which was marked informally through different communication streams to volunteers and regular members as well as different rituals and payments. Another pre-hurricane division was between longstanding and newer members. Because Abilene had existed for several years, some members had known each other in and outside the CSA for some time. Even early in the season, this created different interaction patterns. For example, volunteers tended to solicit advice from longstanding members more than membership at large, ask them for backup help when regular volunteers were not available, and invite them to take leftover produce. This likely occurred because these conversations were informal, and informal conversations were easier among those who were more familiar to one another. Some longstanding

members also had direct relationships with the farmer that involved face-to-face meetings or a felt connection from having received that same farmer's produce for several years, while some newer members indicated that they did not know the farm's or the farmers' names or were unclear about Abilene's division of labor . The lead organizer commented that some members had confused her for the farmer.

The hurricane hit the farm supplying Abilene when Abilene was about halfway through the season. Until that point, Abilene's organization had run smoothly: produce was plentiful, fresh, and appeared on time; volunteers came consistently and performed all of the necessary tasks to run the CSA; relations with the distribution site were smooth; there was always enough equipment and grocery bags for members; and most customers seemed pleased with the produce selection and the CSA management. The CSA had also adapted successfully to several challenges, including rearranging shifts around volunteers' health and employment changes, changing the distribution start time to meet the wishes of members who wanted to pick up their share earlier than originally scheduled, and dealing with common CSA issues like late payments on special order items, forgotten special order items, and member dropouts. Though these issues might have presented significant challenges for many other CSAs, they were handled smoothly and quickly in Abilene. Abilene also gave new members a special CSA cookbook, which the recipients seemed to see as an unexpected and unusual bonus.

Before the hurricane, Abilene had seen only two problems of note that season. Both involved consumer dissatisfaction with the amount of produce: one from members who

were receiving half shares and believed they were receiving inferior shares, and the other from fruit share members[75] who did not receive produce in select weeks. These problems and their resolution strategy foreshadowed how the hurricane crisis would be perceived and resolved in Abilene.

With respect to the first problem, the farmer had discouraged half shares but Abilene continued to allow half shares that had been grandfathered in to its members. The farmer's advice on distributing produce was based on whole shares, and so after receiving produce from the farm, the lead organizer would either split whole shares in half, or, if that wasn't possible, give half-share members choices between share items. For example, where regular members might get three pounds of tomatoes, half-share members would get 1.5 pounds, and where regular members might get one head of romaine lettuce, one head of red leaf lettuce, one bunch of sage, and one bunch of basil, half-share members might get one head of romaine *or* red leaf lettuce and one bunch of sage *or* basil. In cases like the latter, where the split was not a clear half and instead a choice had to be made, half-share members sometimes complained, particularly one person who confided, "Sometimes we feel like second-class citizens at the half-share table." When I shared this response with the lead organizer, she said that it was true to some extent—that the shares were not really being allowed by the farmer so they could only do their best to compensate the half-share members fairly.

[75] Fruit share members were a subset of the vegetable share members. All members of the CSA were required to have a vegetable share to participate. Some of these elected to purchase a fruit share on top of this. The fruit share was not affected by the hurricane as the fruit was coming from another farm.

The other notable problem that Abilene faced before the hurricane was a shortage of fruit in the first weeks of the fruit season. The first time this happened, the farmer and the lead organizer mobilized separate but co-operative strategies of resolution. The farmer gave members who did not receive fruit the previous week double shares the following week. The lead organizer wrote to the general membership via email:

> We were a little short on fruit last week. I don't know if it was because of a delivery issue or if there was a mistake after things got to the [distribution site]. To be safe, please make sure you are signed up for a fruit share before taking one and please make sure that you have coordinated with share partners to avoid misunderstandings.

The lead organizer wrote a separate email to volunteers before the distribution to ask them to count fruit shares and to be cautious with signing in members. In this email, she revealed her faith in the farmer, saying that "[the farmer] is sending down extras to make up for it, but I'm not totally convinced that [the farmer] didn't send down the correct amounts to begin with." The problem of missing and possibly stolen fruit was handled through a particular set of transactions and relations: consumers shared dissatisfaction with the volunteers, the lead organizer relayed the problem to the farmer, and the farmer absorbed the problem by compensating the dissatisfied consumers with extra produce. The problem was also handled through two different communication channels, an informal one to volunteers—in which support of the farmer was conveyed strongly—and a formal email to the entire membership that did not apportion blame.

As in the case of missing or stolen fruit, increased communication from the lead organizer (and farmer) to members and compensatory transfer to members defined Abilene's resolution to the produce shortage caused by the hurricane. Abilene's primary

response after the hurricane was to boost communication with members, keeping them abreast of dynamics on the farm and explaining plans for the future. The relationship between core organizers and the farmer was revealed even more through the crisis, as Abilene maintained faith in, and support of, the farmer, with whom Abilene had a longstanding relationship, more longstanding than Cady's relationship with its farmer.

The formal communication of updates from both the lead organizer and farmer to members began before the storm hit and was frequent in the following week, continuing throughout the season. The first hurricane-related email from the lead organizer to members came the day before the hurricane was to reach the area and seemed intended to prepare members for uncertainty, informing members that:

> [The farmer] … [is] scrambling around to harvest any crops that won't stand up to the expected strong winds, heavy rains and flooding. So the weekly selection is a bit of a best guess … [but] they fully intend on making the [week's] deliveries. […]

At this time, as the storm neared the New York City area, communications from the farmer and lead organizer indicated they were going out of their way to convey future uncertainty. As they had before the storm, the farmer and the lead organizer co-operated in communicating to members. The lead organizer posted the farmer's note on the website and included a four-paragraph description of expectations of the coming storm. In the note, the farmer conveyed that he was preparing for all contingencies. The farmer attributed control for whatever might come their way to "Mother Nature," but he also alerted members to the possibility that his fields might flood. While transactions were uncertain, the farmer mentioned particular types of produce the farm had harvested and

instructed members on how to deal with the potential surplus by freezing whatever they could not use right away.

Hours after the storm hit, the farmer and lead organizer co-operated again—in spite of power outages—to communicate to members and give them a sense of the situation on the ground. The lead volunteer posted another message from the farmer with photos documenting the storm's damage. These showed fields flooded to the point that only treetops were visible and an image of a barn's roof peeking out of the water; there was also an interior view of the flooded barn. Some longstanding members interacted electronically with these communications, stating their commitment to the CSA. They wished the farmer well, expressed gratefulness that the crisis was not worse, and thanked the farmer for the delicious produce the farm had provided so far. A couple of days later, the lead organizer posted a more up-to-date summary about the farm. At this point, members still did not know what the post-hurricane harvest would look like.

On the first day of distribution after the hurricane, the distribution table was piled high with bright red and green peppers, mountains of tomatoes, eggplants, and carrots. At distribution, members informally expressed positive and happy surprise at the bounty of the harvest, and, in the process, some indicated they were unaware of the flooding in rural areas. This was in line with the existing distinctions between longstanding members and regular volunteers, on one hand, and general membership, which was not as involved in the informal life of the CSA. Recognizing the surprise of some of these general members, volunteers tried to convey continued uncertainty to the upbeat members, explaining how the bounty reflected pre-hurricane harvesting and not the real damage of the storm.

Meanwhile, those who lingered onsite before and after picking up their share, generally only longstanding members and regular volunteers, debated the potential long-term damage to Abilene's farm. A few members had been in rural areas during the storm and described how they had witnessed the hurricane's destruction firsthand. They called the farmer by first name and shared empathetic understanding of problems affecting more rural areas, drawing on what they had seen at their family or vacation homes. Three longstanding members talked with the lead organizer about what they might do for the farmer, suggesting a possible loan for equipment and repairs and asking if the government or insurance companies might provide disaster relief to the farm. Later that night, on the steps of the distribution site, a few volunteers and longstanding members congregated to talk about the hurricane and what it meant to be in Abilene, sitting on the stoop talking about the CSA model of shared risk and how it was better to have CSA in those kinds of emergencies because of how it helped the farmer. This empathetic discussion of the relationship to the farmer occurred only between the longstanding members and the volunteers, reflecting the informal communication divisions that had been apparent before the storm as well. While the longstanding members were actively concerned about the welfare of the farmer, they did not try informally during distribution or formally through emails to convert newer members to these empathetic understandings of the farmer's situation.

A couple of days after the first post-hurricane distribution, the farmer wrote to members on the website again, thanking them for their messages of support and telling them how they could help at the farm, what they could expect in terms of future harvest, and what

the plans were for the upcoming farm festival. Again, the emphasis was on uncertainty but provided a best guess for upcoming transactions between the farmer and members:

> We are going to continue on with the deliveries although the amount will not be what it was. We are trying our best and feel that we need to take things one day at a time. If the season needs to be shortened, we will let you know as far in advance as we can. Right now, our goal is to see 2011 though to the end. …

The farmer also mentioned the unique importance of the CSA relationship, as compared to other producer-consumer relationships:

> We are really doing OK. There are farms in [the area] that have lost all of their crops and do not have the support of a CSA community behind them. Thank you again for being part of [our farm]…

One of the longstanding members interacted electronically with the farmer about this, elaborating on the meaning of the CSA relationship, including the concept of shared risk; thanking the farmer by first name; and acknowledging the disproportionate burden the farmer faced.

The concept of "shared risk" would surface later as a problem for Abilene, showing the gap between formal and informal information about the organization and understandings that had developed in practice through longstanding membership and/or regular engagement through volunteer commitment. It turned out that Abilene did not have "shared risk" as a written concept in its membership contract for that year, even though longstanding members and volunteers described this as the hallmark of what they were doing.

In a separate communication from that of the farmer, the lead volunteer sent an email to the CSA members alerting them to the farmer's update on the website and summarizing the farmer's note:

> The good news is that everyone is safe and there are viable crops in the fields so the season will continue. [The farmer] put out a call for volunteers this weekend, if you'd like to pitch in give he a call …

Unfortunately, in coming days, it turned out that the farmers' hope for a continued season would not materialize. Even though formal communications from the farmer and lead organizer had continued to mention uncertainty, the end of the season was a shock to the members and the farmer. The farmer, the lead organizer, and the CSA founder reported electronically the surprising news that their farm's vegetable season looked to be over:

> After yesterday's positive report it is with great sadness that I report a ruling by the FDA prohibiting the harvest and sale for human consumption of any and all flood covered crops. This ruling impacts on the vast majority of farms on the east coast […] . As the ruling stands, this ends the season for [us].

The second shock (of the FDA ruling) thus was framed in a way similar to the first (of the storm flooding): the situation was described as outside the farmer's control, but the farmers described themselves as doing everything in their means to gain control of the situation. Abilene leadership, meanwhile, took a supportive role, explaining that they and the farmers were still looking into the ruling with relevant state and federal agencies. Members were also called to action: "the best course of action is to have as many people as possible contact their local and national officials to try to get consideration for farms on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind that this is a federal ruling." The founder posted an example of what she was planning to write to officials. This communication, with details about the FDA ruling and the farmer's anticipated course of action, mentioned the

issue of a member refund for the first time, providing selective information about farm financial situation in order to suggest that a refund was impossible:

> Again, as it stands this stops all crop harvesting activities at the farm for the season. The materials and labor for the remainder of the season were already purchased so the farm is not in a position to refund members for vegetable shares. […]

At the beginning of September, still less than a week after the hurricane hit, the farmer communicated unfolding events and contemplated the future course of action. Ultimately, the farmer decided to end the season in accordance with the FDA ruling, revealing the details of the ruling to the members in the process. In its communication, the farmer stated that if a farm went against the FDA ruling and sold produce,

> and there is a complaint it will trigger an investigation by Ag and Markets and also by the FDA. At that point the farm would have the products seized and be issued a fine. Any resulting law suit [sic] from the consumer would hold the farm completely liable because the farm did not abide by the FDA and Ag and Markets recommendation.

As a result, the farmer said,

> We just cannot take that chance. We have the whole farm to lose and would rather give up this half of the season than be under the possibility of an investigation and lawsuit for the remainder of the season. […] As much as we would like to keep delivering, we need to start to clean up and get the farm back on track for next season. […]

It is interesting to note how the farmer's description of the CSA relationship changed when the farmer spoke about the legal interpretation of that relationship. CSA members, who had been thanked for being a "part of [their farm]" and had in some cases responded with their own sentiments of "the CSA relationship" and shared risk, were now seen as consumers engaged in a legally risky relationship with producers vis-à-vis the state. In this note, the ultimate justification for the decision to end the season became liability. A

few longstanding members debated this decision in the next couple of distributions, asking whether the produce was still safe to consume in spite of the FDA ruling. They seemed willing to take the risk if the farmer was still consuming the produce. Some longstanding members asked the lead organizer if the farmer was eating their produce and in other ways tried to ascertain the probability that goods were still safe for consumption. Part of the issue that members debated was whether the legal issue of producer liability to consumers applied to their particular situation. Perhaps the farmer would not be punished directly for selling produce but would be wholly responsible for the risk if any consumers complained of defective or contaminated produce.

On the day it was announced that the vegetable share would not continue, a separate note told members that the fruit share would continue, with double the amount every other week. The lead organizer sent out a separate email to volunteers to express his understanding of how this might impact volunteer commitments, and she proposed a transactional solution to compensate volunteers:

> I understand if you don't get fruit and it's not worth it to come out and volunteer. I can talk to [the farmer] about getting a few comp fruits since the comp veggies don't work out. Just let me know if you plan on coming and when so I can plan accordingly.

Everyone who was volunteering in the beginning continued to come throughout the rest of the season, and, though fruit was not officially comped, there was always some fruit left over at the end of distribution, and volunteers and the lead organizer facilitated ways to get it.

All of this was happening quickly, and several emails went out from the lead organizer in a short span of time, with comments and replies from longstanding members correspondingly. However, in spite of several emails from the lead organizer and web posts from the farmer, several of the newer, less engaged members came to distribution the following week even though it had been canceled, and one member came to distribution two weeks after the hurricane not knowing that the vegetable share had ended.

The first distribution after the hurricane was buoyant because much had been harvested before the storm and so many members believed the hurricane had had minimal effect. However, two weeks later, when the first fruit distribution occurred, more conflict surfaced behind the scenes. About half of the CSA's members had purchased a fruit share, and the other half would no longer receive anything from the farm for the rest of the season. While changes to the transactions were being discussed informally in emails between volunteers and onsite between volunteers and longstanding members, some of the general membership complained privately to the lead organizer over email. At the first fruit distribution, the lead organizer explained informally to me and other volunteers that in the days and even weeks that had followed since the decision was announced, she had received several emails asking about the ruling and the status of the share, "as if [she] was the farmer." This revealed that many of the newer members did not know how the CSA worked as an organization, who the farmers were, or what role the lead organizer and regular volunteers played vis-à-vis members or farmer. The lead organizer stated that in these cases she felt the need to clarify boundaries between members like herself and the farmers, and would do so as diplomatically as possible.

The effect that the farmer's decision might have on the business the following year was on the mind of the farmer and Abilene's leadership. Although the lead organizer did not seem overly concerned about membership numbers because Abilene had long been flush with members, at the first distribution after the hurricane the lead organizer estimated that if about three-quarters of the members showed up, then she felt that she would be in the clear in terms of not having to deal with continued complaints. The sign-in sheet was used to keep a tally as the day progressed. Meanwhile, the farmer expressed to the membership this concern about how the fall-off in the share would affect morale. "Morale" was an interesting way to frame what could also be seen as an issue of consumer loyalty or attrition and was in keeping with the framing of the relationship as a tight CSA bond:

> Hopefully the fruit will keep spirits high and some fresh produce on our members [sic] tables. We feel this can help keep our members and our CSA structure together to get through this year and difficult time. […]

With the next delivery, the farmer sent an appreciative email to share members, posted by Abilene's lead organizer. It reiterated that the relational bond between CSA members and farmers went beyond a simple consumer-producer transaction:

> After such difficult and trying times we are so happy to be able to deliver fruit to members with a Fruit Share this next week. … We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all of the CSA members. We know how difficult it is for members not to receive any more Vegetable Shares after the flood and it has been devastating for us. The decisions we needed to make always had the CSA member in the forefront. Without the support of the CSA and the financial structure that the CSA membership secures for the farm, we do not think our farm would have been able to survive the loss of the harvest at such a critical time of the season. Because of CSA and the members, we are looking ahead to next season. Thank you.

The farmer also hosted a series of meetings with this and other CSA groups in the city a couple of weeks after the hurricane. These took place near CSA sites and were mentioned online by the lead organizer, who said, "Everyone is encouraged to come and find out what happened during the storm and its aftermath and what that means going forward. This is your chance to get information directly from the farmers and to voice your opinions and concerns." It was the only time—other than farm visits—that Abilene members at large were invited to meet the farmer.

A few members of Abilene attended this meeting with the farmers. In the distribution following the meeting, a few volunteers and longstanding members circled around the fruit table to get the summary of events. One member read aloud the meeting notes that her aunt had sent. The notes confirmed the end of the season and said that the government or insurance companies might allocate some monies but that members shouldn't bank on that. The notes stated that many people at the farmer meeting understood the farmer's situation, but some were critical and asked the farmers about a refund. In Abilene at that time, there was still talk about whether monies might be coming back to the farmer and eventually the members. Asked about this at the CSA pickup, the lead organizer was frank with members, both newer and longstanding, about the low likelihood that it would happen. The lead organizer informally summarized the meeting as she had experienced it, speaking to whoever asked.

For the first two fruit-only deliveries, electronic updates from the farmer came in two separate notes posted to the website, one dealing with the product being delivered and one updating members on the more general state of the farm. The product notes were

straightforward descriptions of the fruit and its taste. These notes linked transactions to relational meanings by reiterating the notion of farmer support, reminding members of the CSA relationship and the meaning it held for them as farmers. Anticipation of the next season was mentioned as well, reflecting farmer anxiety about renewal rates. The second note among the early posts that came out after the FDA ruling provided an update on the state of the farm, including the historical situation of the hurricane and how recovery was progressing even a month later. The next year was mentioned several times, as a way of connecting members to the idea of renewing their relationship with the farm.

Meanwhile, Abilene's founder mentioned to me privately that she thought some people in the CSA, though probably not many, might be experiencing some financial hardship from the early end of harvest. She said she had gone to see the farmer at his farm and that the farmer was a bit concerned about people not signing up for next year, especially newer members of Abilene and members of other, newer CSAs. The founder believed that more experienced CSA members were more dedicated and understood the idea of shared risk and the general nature of bountiful harvest from this farm. This reiterated the boundaries between longstanding and new members with respect to their understanding of relations and incorporation of meanings associated with the CSA. Longstanding members were believed to have greater tolerance for suboptimal transactions.

In addition to regular informational and relationship-building communications from the farmer, Abilene continued an important relationship-building ritual: the farm visit, which was designed as an opportunity to establish bonds both among CSA members and

between the farmer and the members, and to underline the concept of the CSA's direct relationship with the farm. It was in the communication about the first farm visit, in mid-October, that the lead organizer introduced for the first time Abilene's decision to provide potential gift monies to members:

> Being ever optimistic, I am thinking about next season. […] For those who do not know, we add a few dollars onto the cost of a share in order to freshen up supplies, pay for domain and hosting fees, provide an occasional donation to the good folks at the church who have supported us all these years, help subsidize car rentals for farm visits and generally help the group run a little more smoothly from time to time. Members who renew for the 2012 season will get a small rebate back that will include this $10 fee plus a little more based on the number of renewals. I do not know the specific amount number at this time. We'll do what we can. This is not money coming back from [the farm], it's money that we have collected as the local group. So you will pay [the farm] the full amount and as the roster information is finalized I will review the data and have rebates mailed out.

This communication both announced the rebate and disclosed new (to some) information about Abilene's accounts. The rebate was framed as a kind of appreciation for the previous year and incentive to continue with the CSA. The lead organizer also explained that the rebate would come from Abilene's accounts, not those of the farmer. We can interpret this as a form of indirect financial support to the farmer because Abilene had never suffered from low membership and could tolerate losing a few members. The lead organizer had mentioned the possibility of rebate in recent weeks before the announcement was made in conversations that took place informally at distribution between the lead organizer and volunteers and longstanding members.

The decision about what form the transaction should take involved deliberation both about the people who would benefit from the transaction as well as the meanings that would be associated with the transaction. At the first distribution after the farmer announced he would comply with the FDA ruling, the lead volunteer organizer said that

some people had written to ask for a refund, and that one particular couple was pretty angry about the end of the vegetable season. When the lead organizer replied that the CSA's goal is to help small farmers and said that there was nowhere for the refund money to come from, the lead organizer said that an angry member was even more annoyed at that and wrote a long email back saying that he wanted to cancel his fruit share as well. At the first distribution after the ruling had been announced, the lead organizer began to talk with some longstanding members and the volunteer group about the possibility of using the administrative fees and other money from the CSA account to refund people who were complaining. The lead organizer mentioned informally that the CSA had reserve funds because each member was assessed an administrative fee, and there was also money from half shares, which were priced at about $50 more than half of the amount of the full share, to discourage half shares. This money was not being used for much anymore, the lead organizer explained to volunteers and longstanding members. In these early informal negotiations, the volunteers and longstanding members did not disagree with the idea of providing monies from Abilene accounts, but there was disagreement about how such monies should be used, with some people concerned about rewarding the people who were complaining so intensely. Eventually, a rebate for all returning members was chosen as the solution to the crisis. The lead organizer expressed informally at distribution that Abilene was not going to advertise the monies as a refund for the current season because it did not want members who didn't renew to ask, "Where's mine?" She wanted the rebate to be seen more as a thank-you for renewing than as an entitlement.

Abilene's rebate decision was complemented by a different rebate from the farmer, which was announced a couple of weeks later. In a formal announcement, the farmer mentioned the possibility of winter shares through a different farmer and offered to give the farm's CSA members a discount. Thus both the farmer and the lead organizer provided rebate compensation for the fall-off in harvest, but in both cases the rebate was separated in time and transaction from the disaster, described as an incentive for renewing members. It was also described as a gift "in the spirit of CSA" (in the farmer's note). It is worth noting as well that the transfer of funds went in the direction of farmer and CSA to general membership. As we will see in comparing Cady's response to the crisis, this was not the only way to resolve the issue.

After the rebate was announced, only a few more communications went out from the farmer and lead organizer to general membership. Toward the last distribution date, the farmers sent a recap of the year along with another thank-you to the members and a reminder about the next year:

> What a season we have all endured. The farm has been sustained with the support and commitment of the CSA members and we cannot express completely our sincere gratitude. As farmers we know the power of nature and respect both the devastation and also the blessings that are part of working within the natural world.
>
> Seed catalogs arrive every day and we are placing orders for supplies needed for the spring. The fields are covered with a Winter Rye cover crop. The garlic is planted and waiting for the spring.
>
> As we look forward to the upcoming season we are filled with a sense of gratitude and commitment to our CSA members and renewed understanding of what it means to be a CSA farm.

The farmers' message included images of sustainability, support, commitment, gratitude, and the uncertainty of nature, as well as plans for the future, and they mentioned, as they had several times since the crisis, the importance of the CSA relationship.

Around this time, the lead organizer also sent out an end-of-season email, including a description of how to renew and more information about the rebate:

> **Renewals**
> Registration for the 2012 season is open. Current members who renew will get a rebate from the local group. Each full share has an added $10 that the local group uses to freshen up supplies, buy cookbooks for new members, and cover administrative items. We are going to use that money for the rebates. The exact amount of the rebate will be based on the number of people who renew. …
>
> **Final Thoughts for the Season**
> Obviously it was a disappointing season all around. Money was paid for shares of a harvest that was wiped out and these are not the easiest economic times for a lot of people. For the folks who decide that the risk of the CSA model is not worth it, please keep supporting local producers in some form when possible.
>
> Many smaller growers go out of business or at the very least have to make very hard choices to overcome debt resulting from a lost season. Make no doubt about it, the regulatory structure favors large producers who answer to a different type of shareholder. Maintenance of the land is not a significant part of those decisions. The land is entirely remote from the decision makers and the consequences are deferred to the locals. The future does not have to be about multinational corporations controlling food and water supplies. What we are doing in our own small way in our community has kept several hundred acres of land in the New York City watershed in the hands of a family farm growing crops without the aid of pesticides.

The lead organizer's point about monies for the rebate now included the cookbook that was provided as a gift to new members earlier in the year. The lead organizer also described the importance of supporting local farmers. Saying she understood that after such a year some might find the CSA relationship too risky, the lead organizer also described how the CSA relationship helps farmers survive in cases like this. The note was

more critical of the dominant agribusiness system than any previous Abilene communications had been, and it situated Abilene members' decisions to renew in terms of consumer choices with big-picture implications for the future.

Cady CSA

Cady was more than halfway through its season when the hurricane hit its farm. By that point, the working practices of the organization were already visible. Unlike Abilene, Cady required all members to volunteer at one full distribution during the season. Usually the founder and some of the longstanding members hung out at the distribution site, an outdoor space that afforded the opportunity to lounge, weather permitting. The volunteer shift was fairly relaxed, usually consisting of two weekly volunteers, the founder and/or some longstanding members, and myself. Sometimes the weekly volunteers brought family members or pets. Some weeks one or two college-age interns joined the CSA member-volunteers. As the weeks went on, sometimes members who had volunteered in prior weeks joined that week's volunteers. As we have already seen, the tasks for Cady's volunteers were roughly similar to those of Abilene's, with the difference that every Cady member, new or longstanding, was required to volunteer. Volunteers for the week sat casually around a table piled with produce and occasionally monitored the pickup flow, answering questions that came up about the CSA or the week's produce. As in Abilene, there was a sign-in sheet for Cady's members, but Cady's members signed in on their own, through an honor system, while in Abilene the regular volunteers were in charge of checking in other members. Decision-making power in Cady sometimes fell to the founder alone and at other times represented the result of dialogue between the founder and other longstanding members. The founder was also responsible for the handling of

most funds, such as regular share payments, grants, and disbursements from the account, but the coordinator of extra shares took those payments and the interns were responsible for handling payments that involved use of EBT/food stamps. As in Abilene, the founder decided, with some input from the other volunteers, where leftover produce would go.

When I first joined Cady, there were some visible divisions between longstanding and newer members, in that relations among longstanding members were noticeably closer, with members' kids playing with one another and mothers breastfeeding in public at distribution. However, as the season progressed and more and more members had volunteered in the casual scene that was Cady's distribution, new links began to be formed, and members who had volunteered with one another greeted and asked after one another. The lead organizer invited members by email by to join various events in the neighborhood—composting lessons, potlucks, protests, and canning workshops, to name a few. The founder also maintained an open-door policy for members in the use of her home during distribution. She kept specially ordered extra items there, and people would help themselves to what they had ordered. Anyone who needed to use the restroom or get a glass of water, etc., could walk into her home without the founder accompanying them. Longstanding members had experienced this system and seemed familiar with it, although new members always seemed a little surprised the first time the founder told them just to go in—"it's unlocked." Similarly, for the first half of the season, only the more longstanding members knew the farmer, but this changed after the hurricane.

Cady faced a hurricane situation very similar to that of Abilene, but while Cady's internal response to the crisis also included increased communication as well as a financial package, the financial transactions differed in significant ways. At a fraction of the size of Abilene and in a less affluent neighborhood, Cady mobilized a considerable no-strings-attached fundraising program for the farmer. As a result, relations with the farmer developed in a new way compared to earlier in the season. The farmer began to appear regularly at CSA distributions, spending time talking informally with Cady CSA members (even though she had other CSAs in the city).

Cady CSA's response included a financial element beginning with the first distribution after the hurricane hit, when a plastic donation container went out. It was a container similar to one that had been used earlier in the season to collect money from members who had made extra purchases of bulk tomatoes, except that it now had a label reading "save [farmer's name's] truck." The founder started off the container by putting in her own money. She mentioned this point privately to one of the more engaged members and friends of hers. Several other members put money in the container during the course of the distribution, asking the founder and other longstanding members how the farmer was doing and exactly what damage had occurred. The donation jar was placed right next to the produce for the week, and the founder mentioned the "save the truck" fund informally a couple of times during the course of the distribution. When the container had appeared before to collect sale monies, it had been kept in the shed with the bulk tomatoes. Here, used to solicit donations, the jar was more visible and was announced verbally.

Like Abilene's, Cady's farmer had her harvest season ended prematurely by the storm. In the first few weeks, however, the farmer tried to supply the CSA with whatever stored produce she had, which was reflected in a good deal of corn the first few weeks, becoming noticeably less fresh as the first few weeks passed. Other produce that was delivered then, and especially later in the season, came from the farmer's connections with a farmer in a bordering state, with whom she said she traded sometimes. Because of this connection the members never went without produce, despite the fact that the farm had suffered a severe hit from the hurricane, though the quantity and selection of produce was less plentiful in general and also lacked winter staples. The founder communicated that the farmer had planted new items with short germination periods and had contracted with another farmer friend in a neighboring state to get some vegetables for share members, but there was still uncertainty**.**

There was also a financial concern for members. In addition to the neighborhood members who had now and then received Cady's leftovers, several paying members of Cady seemed to be struggling financially and might sometimes take corn or other vegetables at the end of the night if it was apparent that some would be left over. Cady already had had an income-oriented structure from the outset, in which high-income members subsidized low-income members and EBT/food stamp payment options were made available (the latter required the CSA to put in a deposit to borrow a special machine). In consultation with some of the more longstanding members, the founder dealt informally with the concern that the disaster would hurt Cady members, especially those on food stamps . On the first distribution day, the founder said privately to one of

the members who used food stamps that there might not be other harvests in the future but that with EBT you are not allowed to pay for what you have not received, assuring the member that he shouldn't worry about a financial hit. The founder knew about this member's and several others' financial constraints.

At distribution the following week, now two weeks after the hurricane, one of the more longstanding volunteers spoke with the founder at length as the distribution was coming to a close. He expressed concern that the storm's fall-off in produce could impact not just the farmer but the poorer members of the CSA and asked whether the EBT (food stamp) payers were still picking up and paying; he openly asked the founder how much money was in Cady's account and suggested that they use all of the monies from administrative fees to help the farmer and to fill in the shortfall in expected payments from early-exiting EBT payers. The founder said that one EBT member was still paying, and that she (the founder) had offered to let this member not pick up and not pay, but so far they were coming as before. One of the longstanding members and the founder discussed whether Cady's accounts were sufficient to cover the shortfall of funds that would result from EBT members ending the season early. The longstanding member also asked if people had complained about the drop in produce, and said that the corn looked old and the shares were smaller. According to the founder, one couple had said something like, "The first year we join—what luck—after we'd wanted to for so long," but otherwise, the founder said, negative comments had been minimal. One day during distribution, when the founder mentioned that the farmer was worried that members might think the CSA model was too risky and not join again next year, the member to whom the founder was

speaking—a member who was supporting himself with temporary work—said, "Yes, but it's also to know that you're doing something good for a farmer, better than [the farmer would] have if she just went to market."

From the beginning, and at different points through the season and beyond, Cady members were made to feel through informal and formal communications that the farmer's survival rested to some degree on their ability to help in whatever way they could, and perhaps this was quite true, given that the farm was very small. At the first post-hurricane distribution, one of the longstanding members mentioned that she was trying to organize something politically to get farmers markets to waive the farmer fees for those hit hard by the storm. In addition to mobilizing internally within Cady, this member believed that others in the CSA could mobilize to effect change in other areas where the farmer's business occurred. The financial element of response to the storm developed rapidly in the days after it hit. Even at the first post-storm distribution, the founder said that she was trying to get whomever she could—in or outside Cady—to send personal checks to the farmer. At the same distribution, one of the members who paid with EBT asked whether Cady members could donate via an online payment processing service, and less than a week after the hurricane, a donation drive was set up. One member's partner worked in fundraising and had suggested to the founder that Cady set a fundraising goal of $1000 by the end of the week. The founder communicated about the drive over the member listserv, sending repeated emails to update members of their collective progress toward the goal. The appeals referenced both an understanding of members' own hardships and the farmer's continued need:

> Hello Everyone:
> [One of the members] made a suggestion that we set a fundraising goal for this week @ $1000.00. We know times are rough, and that may seem like a lot, and indeed the flood has resulted in a loss for all of us […] If you've already given your limit we understand and, above all, [farmer's first name] understands. She is doing her best to be able to deliver at least some produce each week as long as possible, and as of yesterday she already seeded some fast-maturing crops.
>
> In any case, we've set up a new [online payment processing] account, for those of you who might wish to contribute [that way…]
>
> And see if perhaps some friends/associates would like to send a donation as well. […] [The farmer's] hope is that she can at least pay something toward the rent she owes. Her feeling is if she makes an effort now, those she's indebted to will be more patient.
>
> And, just a point of information: A friend asked me today, "Why can't the landlord give her a break?" The answer is that [the farmer's] "landlord" is herself a "small" farmer, who has also been devastated by the flood—not as small as [our farmer], but by no means a "big" landlord like a big nyc landlord with multiple properties. Moreover, their fairly typical "Farmer's agreement" is that after harvest rents become due. It's possible, I suppose, the farmer will forgive a small percentage of the rent—if she can. As for [large NYC farmers market org] tent rental, it does seem there is a movement underway to lessen the burden.
>
> Anyway—please consider making a/another contribution! And please ask a few sympathetic friends if they'd like to contribute as well.
>
> Thank you so, so much. Understand no one expects you to do more than you can.

In addition to organizing ways that Cady members could support the farmer financially, a work day at the farm was scheduled for the Labor Day weekend, soon after the hurricane, and a longstanding member sent an invitation, including directions and an offer to pick up CSA members and friends from the bus station in the farm town.

After setting up the online payment account, the founder sent several emails updating members on how much had been raised, explaining where the money was going and how it would be transferred. For example:

> We've given her $520 in cash so far ($220 last week and $300 this week, for which she's incredibly grateful, but she keeps saying "I'm not the only one" and "just don't worry"—but I can tell our donations have given her spirits a tremendous lift) –[one of the other organizing members] will message you about a potluck soon to which we'll invite [the farmer] and give her a check (we still have $700+ to give her)

At distribution the day before, there had been little talk of the farmer or the hurricane. However, communications about the donations reveal the personal contact between the farmer and lead organizer and the kinds of connection the group was making through direct financial assistance and face-to-face meetings. At the distribution following the weekend potluck, the founder and another one of the members relayed details from the event, including a summary of a speech the farmer made about her financial situation and her appreciation of Cady's donations. The longstanding members relayed this connective story to the general members who were volunteering but may not have joined the potluck.

In another email sent by the founder, she elaborated on the idea of community solidarity, including the idea that all of the members were a cohesive group, a "community":

> This is really exceptional, folks—and, from my perspective, this really is how we can make a difference in the world, community by community coming together to help one another. I know it isn't easy for anyone. Unexpected expenses always pop up at inopportune times. School is starting. New babies come along. Boilers break down. Computers go awry. Cars bite the dust. All this and more—but the last $10.00 put us at $700.00!

There was no mention of "CSA" or "consumers" or vegetables. Cady's appeal to community did not appear to rely on a specific name for the farmer-member relationship

and was also open to financial support from "associates of [members]," which is how the lead organizer described people outside Cady.

More emails came, including links to articles about the hurricane and its impact on farmers in the area. One email linked to an article about the arbitrary way that relief was being designated to those affected by the disaster:

> FYI: as of now it appears, [county name], where [our farm] is located, has not been included in those counties designated as qualifying for relief—maybe only because [the government official] didn't happen to visit [that county]. It is possible some relief will still come, if the local authorities and politicians make enough of a case for it. But clearly [the farmer] and others like her need help now in order to get by. Please send donation info on to anyone you think might be willing to help. One donor said this morning he had planned to send his $$ to a major organization, but realized by sending it for [the farmer] it would all be used exactly where needed—a good point!

Here we see a contrast in the ways in which Cady and Abilene viewed appeals to government and other large institutions. Cady decided to sidestep large institutions, favoring direct payments to the farmer. The founder sent emails every couple of days, and fundraising continued for several months after the hurricane. The founder also updated members about different ways that she and other members were getting involved by making contact with external groups.

The week following the potluck where the farmer formally received a portion of the donated monies and made a speech to members, the farmer stayed around for distribution. Until then, the farmer had been coming about a half hour or so before Cady's members arrived, dropping off the harvest for the week and leaving shortly thereafter. This week she stayed at Cady's distribution site for a couple of hours, almost

until the end of the evening, sharing time with the members. Distribution was held in the founder's home that evening, and she had made it a welcoming environment. The vegetables were arranged in bins in the front room, nearest the door, and the volunteers for the week sat in couches and chairs around the vegetables, chatting and helping out with distribution. The founder, the farmer, and some other members gathered in the back, where the kitchen was, and the founder brewed coffee and boiled water for tea, offering drinks to the farmer, her children, and whoever else wanted them. The two weekly member-volunteers drank ginger tea in the kitchen, chatting with each other, the founder and the farmer and her family, now and then returning to the front room to check in on members who were entering to pick up their produce, some of whom came back to meet the farmer. In the back, the discussion was about farming and food. A couple of members volunteered to go to the farm to help; others offered verbal support, complimenting the farmer's produce and asking her about opportunities for her to develop business in the rural area where he lived. The cash jar for farmer donations was still out in the front room, placed in a corner near the sign-in sheet.

The second week the farmer came—now five weeks after the storm had hit—she had not been able to harvest some of her quick-germinating crop due to further weather problems. As a result, she was able to harvest only six bunches of turnip greens, and this became a sore point for some members, who voiced their disapproval. When I arrived some minutes before official pickup time, the founder, with the farmer present, instructed volunteers to make little bunches of turnip greens from the six medium-sized bunches that the farmer had harvested. There was debate then (and later) about whether this was

the best strategy for dealing with such issues, as there were so few bunches that dividing them would mean only five or so small leaves of greens for each person. But as we have already seen, Cady and the other CSAs favored equality at large. As members came, volunteers recited the explanation they had heard: the farmer had started harvesting, but then it began to rain heavily so we were able to get only a "sample."

In an email that followed that evening, the founder took the opportunity to communicate news from the farmer, to share how nice it had been to spend time with her at distribution, and to explain the situation with the turnip greens. This was at the end of September. The founder wrote:

> HI Everyone:
>
> Thanks everyone for helping out today. It was nice to have [the farmer] & [her family] hang out with us for awhile, aye? We'll be looking forward to more greens! For those of you who have not yet picked up, the greens are just a teensy bunch—a "sample" [the farmer] said, of turnip greens. As [the farmer and her family] were picking this morning, a serious thunderstorm came up, so they decided it was best to leave the field. Consequently, we got only a "sampling." […]

The following week, and most weeks for the remainder of the season, the farmer stayed for the distribution. Sometimes she would bring her college-aged child, who was taking a semester off to help with the farm. As before, the founder created a hospitable environment, with coffee and sometimes items she had canned from the farmers' produce—jams and pickles and salsa. The farmer would talk at length about her farm and the various problems she faces in day-to-day business, from pests to weather. She also mentioned personal difficulties, including financial stress and how she was not looking forward to going back to the factory to work (she had done so for years in the off-season

but had hoped before the hurricane that she could avoid it this year), how she must get up very early to farm and got little sleep, and other struggles of being a farmer. Members and the farmer would sit outdoors or in the founder's home, near the produce for the week. A few of us were there by convention almost every week (myself, the founder, and some of the more longstanding volunteers) and others by duty for the week alone (the member-volunteers of the week). As other members of Cady came to pick up their share for the week, some lingered with the farmer and the regulars. As the farmer spoke, the lingering Cady members listened sympathetically and asked questions about various crops. During these weeks when the farmer stayed around, the donation bin remained visible near the produce or sign-in sheet, occasionally gathering new funds, although most were donated online.

As the weeks after the hurricane progressed, the informal interactions between Cady members and their farmer deepened and the formal communication dropped off. The founder used a holiday get-together that she was hosting as an opportunity to remind members of the farmer's financial situation. In each of three reminders about the holiday get-together, the founder included an update on the farmer's financial situation and informed members that donations would be accepted for the farmer as well as for a local organization helping women in need. These emails were sent out to a list that included CSA members but also other people in the community. The last of these reminders gave a detailed update:

> Dear Friends:
>
> Just to say:
>
> I spoke with [the] director of the safe house in our community for whom we've collected donations the last few years. [She] tells me they continue to need toiletries for the women, bath essentials for the babies and toddlers, and diapers—mostly "toddler, not infant" size. No clothing or fabric items.
>
> Please understand it's only our suggestion to bring a donation of these items, or a cash donation for our CSA farmer, [farmer's name], who is still "over her head" due to the rampage of Irene. [Our farmer] is pretty much working alone these days—with her [child] who has put college on hold during this stressful time. [The farmer] had hoped this would be the year she could work less in the factory and put more time into farming, but that was not to be. If you'd rather contribute to [Cady's farmer online], that can still be done by sending a donation to [].
>
> All that said, we understand well that these are grim times, economically, and we certainly respect that your contributions may have to go elsewhere.
>
> What's most important is that you bring yourself with a heart full of readiness-to-enjoy-yourself!
>
> *Our annual open house is our small way of thanking all of you for your many contributions to all the work that needs to get done, and to thank you for the love, the joy, the magic, the provocative thought and inspiration you bring.*

As with the earlier fundraising emails, this invitation (which was sent to a list larger than just the CSA list) referred to a community that was broader than the CSA. It emphasized again that everyone was contributing in his or her own way and that any financial contribution should come only if it was feasible. By the end of the fundraising, over $1,400 had been donated. Relations with the farmer seemed to deepen after the crisis, with monetary implications above and beyond the CSA "subscription" fee, even as members received less produce than anticipated. Complaints were negligible, and the flow of donated funds was significant. The founder played a big part in bringing this situation about, but she was not alone— members formed an informal support structure for the farmer, including the volunteer coordinator, the member with a professional fundraiser for a partner, the member who organized a farm trip, the EBT payer who

continued to come even though she didn't need to, and the many others who sent their contributions. Some of these members who coordinated support and donated were longstanding members, but some had joined just that year. When I asked the farmer about Cady in comparison to other CSAs to which she supplied produce, she called it "special." As Cady responded in solidarity with the farmer's struggles, the farmer reciprocated with a deepening of the relationship, frequently attending distribution in the weeks after the storm.

The Field as a Whole

Abilene and Cady were not alone in how they were affected by the storm and their response to it. Regionally, several fundraising efforts occurred outside of Abilene and Cady to help farms and farmers affected by the hurricane, which included support from both farmers market and CSA organizations. A number of farmers markets came together to host parties and dinners to raise funds for affected farmers. Local restaurants pitched in for these efforts, donating a portion of their sales to relief in a special event a month after the storm. Months later, some farmers markets also held an end-of-season party as a fundraising drive for affected farms. All of these farmers markets-related events were consumption-based, tending to involve a meal or party as a fundraiser for contributions to the affected farmers who sold at those markets. Some farmers markets also collected donations of nonperishable foods and toiletries for farmers and their families, which could be dropped off at select farmers markets. A CSA umbrella organization, meanwhile, donated a part of the proceeds from one of its fundraising events to affected CSA farmers. This CSA umbrella organization also set up a webpage with "information

about donation, volunteer, and advocacy efforts to help local farms affected by the storm." The CSA organization also took a route not based on consumption, highlighting opportunities for activism, mentioning bills in the House of Representatives that were relevant to Irene disaster relief. Like Abilene's, the CSA organization's communications emphasized their interpretation of the meaning of "sharing risk" and "supporting farms." They wrote:

> Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership—a mutually beneficial long term relationship between farmers and their members. Shared risk is a concept that is included in every description of CSA and in every membership agreement form. In most years, sharing risk means that a few of the crops that a farmer originally plants and plans to include in shares don't make it in. Occasionally it means a late start to the season due to a wet spring. In 2009, sharing the risk meant few or no tomatoes as most New York farmers were hit with tomato blight. But mostly we don't notice our risk as our shares are supplemented with the bounty of the other 100 varieties of vegetables that CSA farmers have planted.
>
> But the concept of shared risk is very real, and in the wake of Irene we are all reminded of this. No matter how skilled a farmer is, no matter how hard she works, no matter how well he's planned, there was nothing they could have done to prevent the severe flooding. Farmers continue to wait for flood waters to recede so that they can determine the full extent of the damage.

The organization also shared detailed information about physical and financial damage:

> Unfortunately, this all comes at the worst time of the season. Money has already been invested in crops that now cannot be harvested, and it is now too late in the season to replant many crops. When bad weather strikes in the spring, farmers have time to replant and recover. This late in the season there simply aren't enough days to start over for many crops, particularly for slower growing winter crops: for instance, winter squash takes 100 days from seed to harvest, potatoes take from 70 to 120 days, turnips 60 days, onions 80 to 150 days. Unfortunately, at this point in the season, there just isn't that much time left.
>
> In addition, CSA farms often don't have crop insurance. Crop insurance is tied to a particular crop, rather than the farm as a whole, and as a result, is better geared for farms that grow large amounts of fewer crop varieties. For this reason, it's very difficult for CSA farmers—who grow 100-150 different crop varieties—to value their crops in order to apply for crop insurance. For CSA farms who do have crop insurance, the insurance doesn't come close to covering their losses, the claims process is incredibly complicated, and reimbursement can take months.

> […] As CSA members, you have already provided stability and support for your farms. Hurricane Irene is an all-too-real example of the kind of weather disaster that can put small family farms out of business. CSA is a vital partnership that can allow farms instead to survive, to return next season and provide the usual bounty to its members.
>
> What your CSA farmers need the most now are your patience and understanding, as well as your commitment to their farm over the long haul."

One of the umbrella farmers' market organizations issued a similar report, without the comments about shared risk and crop insurance:

> This could not have happened at a worse time of year ... It's a triple whammy. This is the busiest time of year at market. This is when the bulk of harvest is in. The fall is when our farmers earn their yearly income. It's also a time of year when you can't really replant what was lost. And it's a time of year where you're harvesting products that are going to sustain your business through the winter—those storage crops.

Although the hurricane affected many local food distribution organizations, among the organizations I chose as case studies, Abilene and Cady were hit hardest. The others experienced fewer difficulties from the storm, and thus adjusted in more minor ways. Columbus, the farmers market complement to Cady in terms of mission, stayed open the morning before the hurricane was supposed to have touched down in New York City. Public transit was shut down that day, but the market went on for two hours in the morning and sold out. This fit a pattern at the Columbus market, which was open on days when it was pouring rain or when snow fell unexpectedly. The market served a local population that depended to some extent on the food it offered, and Columbus—which stated that its mission was about access and community development—continued even through inclement weather. Of the several farmers sold at Columbus, only one was badly

affected, and he arranged an agreement with the market manager on how to best serve out the season.

The Asheville and Boise farmers markets and the Burlington CSA were not much affected by the storm. In Asheville—the farmers market complement to Abilene—discussion of the storm did not dominate the organization's communication with customers or vendors. The Boise farmers market was also relatively sheltered from problems stemming from the hurricane. In the week following the storm, there was some talk about how it had affected area farms, but after that the discussion did not reappear. Similarly, the Burlington CSA was not affected by the hurricane, as its farmer was not hit. So the issue did not come up in this CSA other than general concern after the hurricane when some members showed up to distribution with news of how badly other farms had been affected.

Summary/Comparison

Both Abilene and Cady showed solidarity with the farmer and mobilized internal solutions to the problems they and the farmer faced, but they differed in the ways they mobilized resources and ordered transactions, as well as reinforced and bounded relations. Relations with the farmer were strengthened in Cady, and internal mobilization brought financial sacrifice from members of the group. In Abilene, however, though some members were supportive even at an expense to themselves, other members expressed a feeling of injustice regarding the consumer-producer relationship, felt that they were treated irresponsibly, and asked for financial compensation. Where both

Abilene and Cady expressed concern for and solidarity with their farmers, Cady expressed not only a feeling of concern but also one of responsibility for their farmer. Within the same alternative food movement, each organization had its own ideas not only about what good food economies look like but also about accepting the constraints their organizations faced by virtue of belonging to a particular organizational form and a particular organizational history. The kinds of relations, transactions, media, and meanings—the kind of relational work (Zelizer 2007, 2005, 1997) that occurred—before and after the crisis differed in these two organizations of the same form. While each group responded flexibly, adopting new strategies as the period after the crisis developed, their agency after the crisis was constrained both by available understandings and resources as well as a perceived need for or natural default to consistency in behavior, shaping differences in the tone and timing of the financial gift, the way money would be marked, what transactions would be chosen and between what parties. Using Zelizer's (2007, 2005, 1997) framework for relational work, we can see that the media, relations, and transactions, and the meanings associated with them, differed in the two CSAs both before and after the crisis:

ABILENE				
	pre-hurricane		post-hurricane	
	formal	informal	formal	informal
media	online payment for CSA shares; checks or online payment for extra items	coupon gifts and group credit card for volunteer bonding events	rebate for membership renewal	did take refund out of group fund for the one very angry member
relations	member to farmer, volunteers to farmer, volunteers to members	longstanding members to volunteers, longstanding members to new members	emphasis on CSA relationship as particular form, mention of legal relationship between consumers and producers	longstanding members to volunteers, longstanding members to new members
transactions	CSA shares- members pay, distribution site and volunteers receive as gift	leftover shares or produce gift to volunteers and friends, gifts from farmers to volunteers	rebate for membership renewal	gift fruit shares to volunteers and also a longstanding member, leftover shares or produce gift to volunteers and friends, gifts from farmers to volunteers
meanings	farmer support, organic and healthy food	healthy food, cooking, socializing within small group, farmer bond	farmer support articulated in more detail as "shared risk," commitment	conflict over rights of consumer and responsibilities of producer in crisis situation, anti large corporate farms

CADY				
	pre-hurricane		post-hurricane	
	formal	informal	formal	informal
media	online, check, cash, or EBT card payment for CSA shares; online, check, or cash payment for extra items		online, check, or cash donations; exempted EBT card payments for exiting EBT members	
relations	member to farmer, members to each other, members to founder, interns to members farmer and founder, different income category members to one another	members' families and pets to other members, neighbors in need to founder and members	farmer social networks to farmer and members, member to farmer, members to each other, members to founder, different income category members to one another	farmer's family to members, members' social networks to farmer, neighbors and members in need to founder and members, exiting members to farmer and members
transactions	CSA shares- members pay, differential cost by income; interns paid modestly	leftover shares or produce gift to volunteers of week, needy members, or neighbors in need, use of founder home for members' needs	gift donations from members and members' social networks to farmers, farmer purchasing from farmer networks	gift goods from founder to members and farmer and farmer family, gift of exempt payment from EBT paying members
meanings	farmer support, organic and healthy food, consumer income redistribution, consumer-producer income redistribution, anti large corporate farms,	community building, connection to nature	farmer support, consumer-producer income redistribution, community support	loose boundaries between members' social networks and member responsibilities, consumer income redistribution

Cady CSA formally handled the hurricane crisis by providing narrative updates about the farmer, setting up a donation jar and online payment account to receive member and member's friends' donations, and providing a welcoming environment for socialization among Cady's members and their farmer. Like Abilene, Cady was sensitive to the need to be transparent in its use of funds, but most communications were narrative and persuasive in nature, describing the farmer as worthy of aid and emphasizing the community as the sphere through which aid of this kind happens. Formal communications through the email listserv came exclusively from Cady's founder, while in-person communication was more informal and multi-vocal. Because members were each required to volunteer for at least one distribution, members met one another and shared their personal stories as they learned more about the farm. Both formal communications and informal communications were directed to the membership at large, the only exception being that informal communications occurred onsite and usually involved impromptu discussions with whoever was there; some members lingered more often than others, though the longstanding members were not necessarily the only ones who did so. Cady extended open invitations to both new and longstanding members for the informal chats onsite as well as various workshops, potlucks, and holiday parties. When the farmer started attending Cady's distributions—about a month after the hurricane—the founder facilitated a welcoming environment for whoever wanted to linger and chat with other members and/or the farmer. We can contrast Cady's potluck to Abilene's farmer meeting to highlight the difference in the ways that farmers established post-hurricane communication with the members.

While Cady's farmer's crop was devastated like Abilene's, Cady's farmer took a further hit to her bottom line by contracting to buy produce from a colleague in a neighboring state and by seeding new, quickly germinating crops. The produce tapered off in quantity after the hurricane and also lacked winter staples like root vegetables, but Cady members received vegetables every week. At times, disappointment was voiced informally during distribution about the amount or quality of the crop: no winter root vegetables, old-looking corn, or the scant "samples" of turnip greens. In general, however, the atmosphere during distribution was friendly and never confrontational. A similar lack of conflict existed behind the scenes, according to the founder; there were no angry emails, although two members exited the CSA, reportedly for financial reasons. Cady's founder never took responsibility for the storm or the fall-off in produce, though she did take responsibility for needy members and the needy farmer. She and other members mobilized the internal group to aid the farmer financially. In both Abilene and Cady, the founder also took responsibility for communicating the farmer's story as compellingly as possible; in Cady the founder hosted opportunities for farmer and members to meet, and for speaking with economically struggling members, providing them opportunities to exit, something that the lead organizers stated was less of a concern in Abilene CSA.

While some of Abilene's members pushed for a refund, despite their reported lack of financial need, Cady avoided discussing a refund while meanwhile suggesting and facilitating exit for vulnerable members. Non-monetary compensation went from the farmer to the members through the contracted produce, which the farmer paid for out of pocket. Otherwise, money mostly flowed in the opposite direction, when Cady's members organized a fundraising drive to help the farmer. This was not farmed as

payment for the farmer's further outlay for new quickly germinating crops or the crops she had contracted to replace the hurricane loss, but rather as a way for the farmer to get back on her feet for the next season. At Cady, the fundraising was not even mentioned in relation to the vegetable transaction that had brought all of the members together in relationship with one another and the farmer. In the founder's words, the fundraising was just an example of how members of a community come together to support someone in their midst who has faced hardship. This community was loosely bounded, to include Cady's members and the farmer but also to include whoever else Cady's members could bring in to support the farmer—other members of the neighborhood, coworkers, the range of their social networks.

In contrast, at Abilene, communications after the hurricane mentioned the spirit of "CSA" and/or the concept of "shared risk" to the complaining members. Abilene did not broach the topic of a general membership fundraiser for the farmer, and, perhaps in this environment, they could not have done so. Correspondingly, the farmer, who had a larger farm than the one supplying Cady, also relied on the "CSA" organizational form as a relationship with particular expectations attached. At Cady, meanwhile, neither the lead organizer nor the farmer mobilized these terms. The farmer did not mark the organizational form of "CSA" as a distinguishing factor of the solidarity that she received from Cady. Only one of the members—a member of limited financial means—used "CSA" in describing his feeling toward the farmer, commenting that it was empowering to be able to support a farmer in this way, distinguishing it from a market relationship. While several of Cady's members were struggling financially, apparent from the lower-tier membership, only two members stopped coming to pick up, one formally and one

informally. One of the EBT/food stamp payers continued to come and pay throughout the season.

As Cady accepted various media for its shares—checks, cash, electronic payment, EBT/food stamps—so too did it make available multiple ways to donate to the farmer. The donation jar was left out for the rest of the season, and people continued to put money in even toward the end, although the vast majority of funds were raised electronically. Opportunities to provide donated labor were also facilitated. While Cady CSA's farmer also delivered her produce to other CSAs in the area, she seemed particularly attracted to the environment that this CSA provided and mentioned that it "was different." After the hurricane and the money collection, the farmer also started coming regularly to the distribution and spending time with Cady. The founder of Cady often had coffee and tea out for the farmer and other CSA members, and this environment provided a chance for consumer and farmer to talk informally, sometimes even for a couple of hours. Thus, rather than weakening relations, the hurricane and Cady's response to it helped strengthen the community that included farmer and members.

Abilene CSA formally handled the crisis of the hurricane through a series of informational updates to its members, communicating repeatedly about the state of the farm, government regulations, and plans for next season's planting. Abilene counteracted the assumption by some that it was the farmer's or the CSA's mistakes or misconduct (poor communication, failure to provide produce as agreed by defending the farmer as a victim of natural disaster), negotiating at the same time a definition of the crisis as a case of mistake, misconduct, or disaster (Vaughan 1999). Framing the lack of produce as a

natural disaster was accomplished through online communications from Abilene's farmer, communication from the farmer mediated by Abilene's lead member organizer, and communication directly from Abilene's lead member organizer. These formal email communications and web posts differed from informal communications onsite. While formal communications were directed to the membership at large, informal communications occurred onsite during distribution and usually involved impromptu discussions among the lead organizer, longstanding members, and volunteers. The farmer did not meet in person with Abilene's regular members as the decision making process was in play but scheduled a formal in-person meeting with members after the decision had been made to end the season early.

While Abilene's lead organizer responded to the crisis mostly by deferring decisions to the farmer, the lead organizer and founder made the decision to "rebate" members who signed up again for the next season, meaning that each returning Abilene member would receive some financial compensation for his or her commitment to the farm in bad times. This was both a sign of appreciation to members and also a way of supporting the farmer by attempting to mitigate potential attrition in membership that the farmer might experience after a bad year. If the farm had provided refunds to some and not others (among the CSAs it supplied), it could have created a problem for the farmer, who, like Cady's, supplied several CSAs in the city; Abilene was among the more affluent of these. With the rebate, Abilene internalized the problem locally by taking money out of the CSA pool. The rebate kept separate the Abilene and farmer accounts, and the manager distinguished between an entitlement refund and a gift rebate. The informal and formal

communications about the rebate differed both in when information was supplied to different groups and in what degree of information was revealed about accounts. Informal communications at distribution among longstanding members and volunteers took place prior to the formal communication, as longstanding members and volunteers were asked for advice on the efficacy of a rebate, before the idea was shared as a fait accompli with the general membership. In addition to the rebate, the increase in communication was Abilene's most noticeable response to the crisis, though Abilene's efforts to communicate with members fell on deaf ears in some cases, even though these communications had been sent to membership at large. In spite of regular emails, one member wrote to the lead organizer to say that he was not interested in renewing because of the way the season had gone but especially because of the "poor communication" and because there had been no attempt to materially compensate members for the past season's fall-off in vegetables.

Abilene's organizers found themselves operating in a mostly reactive way to dissatisfied members' demands. The organization did not sever ties between dissatisfied members and the group but rather attempted to reinterpret those ties to prevent further damage and repair the sense of injustice that dissatisfied members expressed. The dissatisfied members were, both in actuality and in rhetoric, viewed as special cases, and their unwillingness to co-operate was indicated when they said that their perceived rights (as consumers) were not being met. Disagreement within Abilene about the definition of CSA members' relations to the producer was at the heart of the disagreement about the appropriate disaster response and the transactions that would be involved in that

response. Viewing themselves as wronged consumers, dissatisfied Abilene members called for refunds to compensate for the unfulfilled transfer of produce. Both these perceived rights (guaranteed transaction of produce) and the emphasis on customer relationship (produce transaction as primary to the relationship) were met with disagreement from Abilene's organizers.

Though they were sympathetic to the disappointment of these members (recognizing the organization's consumption focus), the lead organizer and other longstanding members upheld the notion that the CSA relationship in which they saw themselves engaged was not the same as a traditional consumer-producer relationship (it did not depend on guaranteed produce transactions). The farmer, too, used the consumer-producer relationship only when describing the legal risk to the farm. The rules and rights about which dissatisfied and "loyal" members disagreed marked the boundaries between these groups, boundaries between the meanings that dissatisfied members associated with the economic relationship and those that loyal (longstanding and continuing) Abilene members associated with it. These boundaries had real implications for Abilene and its farmer, in their short-term concerns around trust (the risk they might face legally and financially if something were to happen to a member and that member blamed the farmer) and their longer-term concerns about loyalty (which had implications for the future viability of the business in terms of repeat customers). When confronted by appeals from dissatisfied members, Abilene's lead organizer realized that the physical contract had changed and there was nothing in it about "shared risk" to cite. Understandings of "shared risk" were solid in the collective memory of longstanding

members, but they were not institutionalized on paper, and so many of the newer CSA members had not assimilated them. Lacking the physical contract that would justify their actions in writing, Abilene's leaders rhetorically instilled formal communications with a sense of the meanings associated with the organizational form, the concepts of "shared risk" and "CSA."

Cady was also affected by member turnover after the hurricane, but financially vulnerable members were invited to leave. The members of Cady exhibited, at least on the surface, a positive solidarity (in the Durkheimian sense) in which collective beliefs seemed to be common to members. The leader rhetorically reinforced these beliefs and their relationship to individual responsibilities, both formally and informally. She portrayed each member as having an important role to play in the community, in which the division of expected financial contribution to the crisis was distributed by financial ability: "no one expects you to do more than you are able." This was consistent with pre-storm structures of economic action within Cady, which included tiered payment by income. Cady leadership did not invoke "CSA" (the organizational form) or consumer-producer relations (the produce transaction-centered relationship) in their appeals for disaster response. In many ways, Cady's appeals were framed in such a way as to dissolve, rather than emphasize, the member-farmer relation and to reframe both parties, and their friends and associates, under the broader umbrella of "community." When confronted with crisis, Cady's leaders pointed to a loose definition of a general social contract in which members of a diffusely bounded community aid one another in time of struggle. Cady did not reference the unwritten, formal contract and did not rely on

definitions of organizational form, although its contract had a line saying, "CSA involves sharing the rewards and risk (e.g. crop failure, poor weather, early winter, etc) with our farmer."

Part of the difference here was the division of relations and interactions in Abilene, a division that was visible only informally. In Abilene it turned out there were two kinds of interactions—one in which outsiders faced conflict with formal definitions and communications (Where's our refund? Where's the communication?) and a second in which insiders negotiated meanings and strategies of action informally face to face (Is a refund fair? What about a rebate? What does "shared risk" mean?). "CSA," as the economic action came to be known in Abilene, was formally open to everyone, as everyone had formally indicated membership through the act of payment. Informally, the relations, transactions, and meanings attached to Abilene's economic action differed among members. Only some of Abilene's members were engaged in labor, face-to-face communication, and/or discussions about strategies for action. Meanwhile, "community," as the economic action came to be known in Cady, was something that no one formally signed on to but that was informally open to everyone. There might have been a feeling early in the season of insider-outsider divisions at Cady, but new and longstanding members worked closely together, and Cady fostered socialization and involvement widely, including encouraging new members to take leadership roles. The call to action did not mention characteristics specific to the organizational form—"CSA relationship" or "shared risk" or produce transactions. No rebate or refund was discussed. Donations were mobilized for the farmer both within and outside the boundaries of membership in

Cady. Even from the outset, few people in Cady CSA seemed to put any faith in a positive response from the government or insurance companies, while even a couple weeks after the hurricane, Abilene members informally discussed the possibility of government response and formally advocated contact with the government as the "best response." Mobilizing as a community to immediately accept responsibility for what would happen to the farmer, Cady started taking donations as early as days after the hurricane.

Both Abilene and Cady CSAs responded as best they knew how to the similar challenge each faced. Each organization had a structure of relational work before the storm—different social ties, monies, and transactions, and different meanings associated with these, based on their contrasting missions, one more focused on instrumental/food-focused goals and the other more focused on social justice. When faced with a challenge, available understandings and resources were brought to the solution, showing how two groups of the same organizational form—but with different missions—responded in distinct ways to a similar crisis.

CONCLUSION

Organizations create and conform to structures, interpret and implement missions, and envision and revise rules as they go. They also operate toward a purpose, whether to change their field, bring meaning to the customers or constituents they serve, earn a return for their shareholders, create jobs for the long or short haul. For the alternative food organizations I studied moving toward purpose involved many hours of practical on the ground work, including coordination and leadership, record keeping and rule enforcing, even where organizations sought to avoid hierarchy and bureaucracy. In the process of pursuing their organizational missions of individual health, environmentalism, or social justice, these organizations correspondingly cultivated relations within a division of labor and also within a broader community, some looking to deepen existing community and others looking to broaden community ever wider through "outreach." They not only made ethical commitments, they implemented them by infusing economic action and social change, each on its own terms. In viewing the informal life of formal organizations, we see relational work (Zelizer 2005) as the effortful and thoughtful practice it is: relations, transactions, monies and meanings varied significantly both across organization form and the goals with which organizations aligned. Organizations did things differently depending not only on how they were structured but also on how they defined their sense of purpose.

As organizations will values-based goals, the struggle for stability came along with a desire for change in the status quo. Even if previous theory (Zelizer 2011) has questioned if organizations like micro-credits and cooperatives have superior ethics in practice, my

interviews with founders of farmers markets and CSAs as well as ethnographic case study on six of these organizations finds that these particular organizations implemented different ethical practices in accordance with their ethical goals, sometimes even in the face of external pressures to institutionalize process in a certain way. While both structure and goals mattered for the practices on the ground, mission meaningfully overrode structure in some cases. We can expect that mission mattering is not an isolated case of these alternative food organizations. As hybrid organizations—both bureaucratic and collective (Bordt 1997), both public and commercial (DiMaggio and Fernandez-Kelly 2010: 10), both not-for-profit and for-profit—these represent a new and growing mode of social purpose organizations, rooted both in social change and economic enterprise.[76]

The first chapter of this dissertation looks at the breadth of the field and decisions about founding. Through interviews with founders of farmers markets and CSAs I learned that in most cases founders did not want to create organizations, they just wanted to create solutions to the problems they perceived, whether those were a lack of quality produce for their family or for their neighbors, the need for economic development, or the creation of more chances to connect within the community. Because of this, the pre-conceived organizational plan was not so much a blueprint as "recipe knowledge" (Berger and

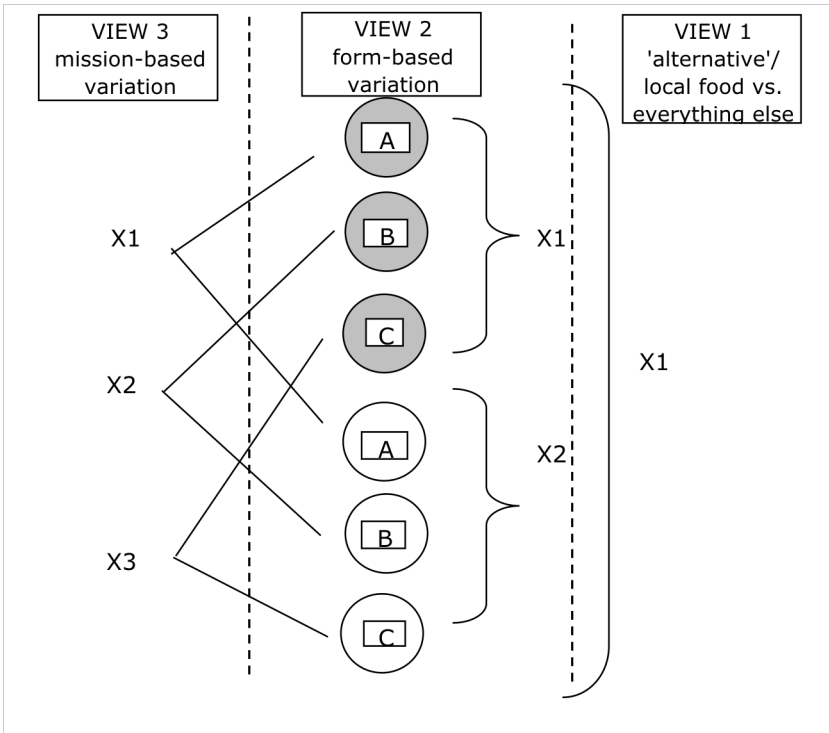
[76] DiMaggio and Fernandez-Kelly (2010) suggest that some constituents favor commercial enterprise in places where nonprofits once thrived "Stern and his colleagues raise the possibility that immigrant artists may influence not just the content and style of art and music, but also the way in which arts institutions are organized: If Philadelphia is typical, artists from new immigrant communities are eschewing the grant-supported nonprofit organizations that for the past century have been the primary way serious artists have reached their publics, in favor of new arrangements, often rooted in commercial enterprise" (DiMaggio and Fernandez-Kelly 2010: 10).

Luckmann 1966)[77] to the problems each founder perceived she and her community faced and the best ways she knew to fix these. Both the presence of constraints as well as the idealistic visions of the possible played a role here in determining founding structures. For some founders, the choice of a particular organizational form was arrived at mostly as a matter of convenience, as they looked at available structures and their own ability to work within those, and chose the most straightforward path. For others founders, there was a more conscious conviction around how to align organizational structure with the perceived problem that needed to be solved, whether that was choosing a form that allowed harmony with a broader vision of social justice or choosing a form that seemed to hold more opportunity for the economic development of an area through use of public space. Even looking beyond the organizations they came to found, founders approached the broader field of alternative food organizations in a similar vein of variation, with varying degrees of knowledge and interest in the broader field of CSAs or farmers markets. Some were attracted to the alternative food movement as a first point of departure, others seeing it as secondary, or even tangential, to broader social aims they hoped to achieve. With these different mental models of their own sphere of agency as well as the broader sphere of economic and movement activity in which they were involved, founders drew boundaries in different ways as they mapped their organization. In my own boundary drawing, I looked for distinction between "old social movement"

[77] Berger and Luckmann's "recipe knowledge" includes situations in daily life when you just need to know enough to get it done. "My interest in the hidden workings of the passport-getting procedure will be aroused only if I fail to get my passport in the end. … a large part of the social stock of knowledge consists of recipes for the mastery of routine problems. Typically, I have little interest in going beyond this pragmatically necessary knowledge as long as the problems can indeed be mastered thereby" (Berger and Luckmann. 42-3)

orientations organized around rights and redistribution and "new social movement" orientations organized around consumption. In the alternative food movement, I saw these corresponding missions as ones of "social justice" and "fresh, local food." While these organizations were indeed practicing a particular mode of economic activity distinct from nearby offerings in their communities, some founders went beyond this consumption lens toward collective goals, seeing food as a means to broader ends, and not just a goal in itself.

From this starting point of the various mission and structural combinations organizations in this field might pursue, I approached the case study component of this analysis with three views of organizations to guide case study comparisons. The first was that "alternative" / local food was monolithic compared with everything else—this is the view that these organization are "more embedded" than others, exemplified by the existing literature on alternative food organizations. The second view was that organizations are



most meaningfully distinguished by structural form, exemplified by the broader organizational research, such as that in organizational ecology; this suggests that we should expect the strongest differences between farmers markets and CSAs. The third view was that organizations are most meaningfully distinguished by their goals, exemplified by the social movement theory view, suggesting that we should expect the strongest similarities between organizations that share common missions and the strongest differences across those who do not.

In extended fieldwork on these six organizations over the course of their growing season, I observed how these organizations implemented their work on the ground. Through this lens into the micro behavior on the ground, I found that variation of each of these types existed. For example, as the farmers markets moved from more health/local food missions to social justice missions there tended to be more democratic decision-making, more formalized outreach, and a greater perception of the work as community organizing, all elements we would expect to align with more cooperative models. However, at the same time, there also tended to be more specialized events, more formal rules, and more internalization of even potentially competitive outsiders, elements that could be signals of greater bureaucracy. Similarly, leaders of both CSAs and farmers markets that put an effort on "outreach" often adopted the behaviors of "organizers," not capitalists in the traditional sense. As the CSAs moved from more health/local food missions to social justice missions there tended to be more lingering by non-'working' members, giving the exchange a more communal feel. In each of these observations, it was clear the taken for granted-ness of the way that micro aspects of work tied to purpose. In the day-to-day of

running markets and coordinating distribution, organizations rarely spoke about "mission": they took for granted what they did as simply what groups like theirs do. Similarly, labor and community were framed in a limited way in paper documents but were a core part of the functioning of all organizations as well as a core part of what organizational leaders described as their missions.

In Chapter Two, we saw how organizations developed practices and meanings around two sets of key relations: the internal division of labor and the broader relations with their community. Most of the organizations sought to avoid hierarchy, but in each case leadership existed and coordination was key. Social justice missions sometimes created the need for even greater coordination, and, where this was so, it actually made the organizations more bureaucratic. Even though the farmers market manager role was more institutionalized than the idea of a CSA "core," in both cases leaders added a level of hierarchy that was out of keeping with organizations' self-conceptions. This was mobilized in external relations, not dissimilar to Swidler's (1979) findings on the need for principals in free schools, an institutional demand produced by relationships with outside nonprofits and government bodies. Yet, outside of the demands on leaders to liaise, keep records, and manage finances, the division of labor was relatively unsegmented. In terms of broader relations with their community, differences existed largely by organizational mission. While each organization deepened a sense of community, those with individualized, food-focused goals were focused more inwardly on deepening connection and solidarity within the organization, while social justice oriented organizations were focused more outwardly, expending significant energy on "outreach." Implementing this

goal required significant commitment in practice.[78] Outreach took active effort and time as well as the cultivation of social ties across race, ethnicity, and SES. Organizational members looked to cultivate bridging individuals who could speak more effectively to the neighborhood members the organization looked to reach out to. Where financial distribution across members was a manifestation of the social justice mission, organizations also advocated for funding and took hits to their own organizational finances to make redistribution possible in spite of common challenges like member attrition.

In Chapter Three, we saw how the six organizations developed practices around key transactional concerns to accomplish the relational work demanded by their structures and hoped for in their missions. In all cases, contracts and monies were incorporated in very mission-focused ways, balancing concerns for financial viability, privacy, trust, cooperation, and economic inequality. Both market and cooperative structures of economic activity incorporated a variety of monies as integral to economic viability and social missions. Beyond this, the view of money was even more expansive in organizations with a social justice mission, contrary to expectations (Kleinman 1996, Rothschild-Whitt 1979) suggesting money's place dwindling in organizations with social justice goals. Organizations went above and beyond to obtain special assistance monies

[78] Another point to notice for movement-focused practitioners was the work and goal conflict around pro-environmental practices, which did not resonate with all audiences and were balanced alongside a desire to be welcoming overall. While all organizations offered pesticide free produce, for example, only some instituted measures like composting and a decrease in the use of plastic bags. In these cases it wasn't enough for the leaders to want to do so, actual time and infrastructure commitments had to be there.

on behalf of consumers and producers, or—in Boise FM's case—even to create their own. Contracts, likewise, reinforced the goals of alternative food organizations, regulating quality on behalf of customers in farmers markets and regulating the collective provisioning of produce in CSAs. While structural form was important in this way, mission was also instrumental in determining what the contracts included and how the organizations formally defined the economic exchange they intended to create. While all farmers markets made contracts with vendors, for example, only Columbus FM gave those vendors voting rights in a democratic process for the market's activities. Similarly, while CSAs tended to make contracts with consumers, the way in which they incorporated financial need into these formal documents varied by mission.

In Chapter Four, we saw the full breadth of relational work as it existed in two organizations, Abilene and Cady CSAs, before and after a similar crisis event. This chapter focused the broader differences described in the previous chapters by narrowing in on two organizations of the same form but different mission. Isolating differences in mission by comparing the two CSAs' responses to a hurricane that affected their farmers, we see relational work (Zelizer 2007, 2005, 1997) differed based on differences in mission. Each organization showed solidarity with the farmer and mobilized internal solutions to the problems they and the farmer faced, but they differed in the ways they mobilized resources and ordered transactions, as well as reinforced and bounded relations. Relations with the farmer were strengthened in Cady CSA—an organization with professed social justice leanings—and internal mobilization brought financial sacrifice from members of the group. Meanwhile, in Abilene CSA—an organization with

goals more focused on instrumental/food-focused issues—some members were supportive even at an expense to themselves, while others expressed a feeling of injustice and personal loss, asking for financial compensation. While both organizations were of the CSA form, each organization was characterized by a different interpretation of the social ties, monies, and transactions in their CSA, and the meanings associated with these. While each group adopted new strategies as the period after the crisis developed, available understandings shaped differences in the tone and timing of the financial gift, the way money would be marked, and what transactions would be chosen and between what parties.

From founding to crisis to status quo, farmers markets and CSAs organized and practiced economic action in conscious and effortful ways, in line with findings from a growing body of recent literature that "aim[s] to show that market exchange is saturated with moral meaning—that is, that it involves more or less conscious efforts to categorize, normalize, and naturalize behaviors and rules that are not natural in any way, whether in the name of economic principles (e.g., efficiency, productivity) or more social ones (e.g., justice, social responsibility)" (Fourcade and Healy 2007: 300). These organizations put into practice their goals for social justice, environmentalism, and better food not only in how they engaged consumers or farmers—the characteristic "embeddedness" of previous substantive literature in this area—but more complexly, in the ways they were incorporated and named as forms, to the ways they wrote contracts, enforced rules, structured work relations, and developed community. In the process, they faced challenges ranging from basic concerns around viability and financial sustainability to the

more nuanced definitions of the reach and fulfillment of their missions. Likewise, they incorporated multivalent interpretations of their success. For example, the Boise farmers market manager described their market's definition of 'sustainability' as a multi-pronged one:

> SS: You mentioned in the beginning you were talking about the mission you mentioned the word 'sustainability': what does that mean to you?
> Interviewee: It means a lot of things. I think it means environmental sustainability, so supporting farmers, producers, growers, that are using practices that are not damaging to the environment. It's sustainability for them for their livelihood, their continued existence as farmers. It's sustainability for the market and the employees, being able to maintain the jobs that we created. And for the people in the neighborhood it's to be able to continue to provide the food and information and events and things that they can afford or access or … attend for free …I think it's all of that.

With 'sustainability' a buzzword in popular media and with farmers markets and CSAs expanding throughout the United States and abroad, these findings have meaningful implications for policy makers and advocates interested in the realities of community and economic development and the promise of alternative food organizations to promote these goals. Proponents of community capitalism have argued that local capitalism and civic engagement have reinforcing effects on civic welfare, "not only foster[ing] a sense of public integration and cohesion but also enhanc[ing] development of public goods and civic welfare" (Tolbert et al 2002: 91). The organizations studied here crossed the divide between local capitalism—small mom-and-pops, homegrown entrepreneurs—and civic engagement—charitable organizations, local hangouts, and gathering places ("third places" in Oldenburg's 1991 words). Each of these organizations was both a food and social sector organization, whether or not each founder in the broader field conceived of it as such: mission core to what the organizations did and how they did it. Some—those

social justice focused organizations that relied on "outreach"—were also community organizations of the traditional sense, mimicking central community hubs of democratic voice and mutual aid. This latter extension was a point I did not expect from my entry into the world of local food, first as a consumer preoccupied with finding the best place to obtain fresh, local, pesticide-free produce from small farms. The fact that these organizations could provide a collective good as much as the physical food objects offered for sale was not a foregone conclusion, nor an easily arrived at fact for the organizations who managed to accomplish this. The collective good produced in these organizations depended not just on social identity, reciprocal relationships, or sanctions (Anthony 2005) but on how people defined the economic relationship in which they were involved and the breadth and depth of the community they hoped to create as a result of their organizing economic activity in this way.

While some audiences see the rise in popularity of farmers markets and CSAs as signs they are thriving, the refrain among leaders of these organizations that they were lucky to still be in existence points to the need for continued support of organizations struggling with common demands. Each organization I studied—even those focused on more individualized goals—was attempting to model a solidarity economy in support of local food producers as a countermeasure to industrial food, factories, distance, and unhealthiness. This stands as a contrast to the wider feeling that this connection is being lost with the increasing popularity of these organizations:

> "As the local food movement has gone from a trickle to a sweeping current, and sales of local farm products have grown, it seems that many community-supported agriculture (CSA) subscribers may have lost touch with the original intention behind the term. As a farmer, and one who's researched and written

> about the history of CSAs in the U.S. and abroad, I find this trend deeply troubling. It seems many urban residents now see the CSA as just another form of "retail farming" rather than a model for civic agriculture, a site-specific form of solidarity, or associative economics that can transform relationships." (Henderson 2012)

What I saw here was more than mere subscription and more nurturing even that the food that was bought and sold.

WORKS CITED

Abolafia, Mitchel Y. 1996. *Making Markets*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender and Society.* 4(2): 139-158.

Akerlof, George. "The market for lemons: qualitative uncertainly and market mechanism." *Quarterly Journal of economics* 89 (1970).

Alkon, Alison Hope and Kari Marie Norgaard. 2009. "Breaking the Food Chains: An Investigation of Food Justice Activism." *Sociological Inquiry.* 79(3): 289-305.

Allen, Patricia, Julie Guthman, and Amy Morris. 2006. "Meeting Farm and Food Security Needs through Community Supported Agriculture and Farmers' Markets in California." The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, Research Brief, #9.

Andreatta, Susan, Misty Rhyne, and Nicole Dery. 2008. "Lessons Learned from Advocating CSAs for Low-Income and Food Insecure Households." *Southern Rural Sociology.* 22(1): 116-148.

Anthony, Denise. 2005. "Cooperation in Microcredit Borrowing Groups: Identity, Sanctions, and Reciprocity in the Production of Collective Goods." *American Sociological Review.* 70: 496-515.

Armstrong, Elizabeth and Mary Bernstein. 2008. "Culture, Power, and Institutions: A Multi-Institutional Politics Approach to Social Movements." *Sociological Theory.* 26(1): 74-99.

Atkinson, Lucy. 2012. "Buying In to Social Change: How Private Consumption Choices Engender Concern for the Collective." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* 644: 191-206.

Barham, Elizabeth. 1997. "Social Movements for Sustainable Agriculture in France: A Polanyian Perspective." *Society and Natural Resources.* 10(3): 239-249.

Barnett, William P. and Michael Woywode. May 2004. "From Red Vienna to the Anschluss: Ideological Competition among Viennese Newspapers during the Rise of National Socialism." *American Journal of Sociology.* 109(6): 1452-99.

Baron, James and Michael Hannan. Spring 2002. "Organizational Blueprints for Success in High-Tech Start-Ups: Lessons from the Stanford Project on Emerging Companies." *California Management Review.* 44(3): 8-36.

Baron, James, Michael Hannan, and M. Diane Burton. January 2001. “Labor Pains: Change in Organizational Models and Employee Turnover in Young, High-Tech Firms.” American Journal of Sociology. 106(4): 960-1012.

Baron, James, M. Diane Burton, and Michael Hannan. 1996. “The Road Taken: Origins and Evolution of Employment Systems in Emerging Companies.” Industrial and Corporate Change. 3(2): 239-275.

Beckert, Jens. 2009. “The Social Order of Markets.” *Theory and Society.* 38(3); 245-269.

Ben-Ner, Avner. 1984. “On the Stability of the Co-operative Type of Organization.” *Journal of Comparative Economics.* 8: 247-260.

Ben-Ner, Avner and Louis Putterman. February 2009. “Trust, communication, and contracts: An experiment.” Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization.” 70: 106-121.

Berger, P. L. and T. Luckmann. 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Biggart, Nicole Woolsey. 2001. “Banking on Each Other: The Situational Logic of Rotating Savings and Credit Associations,” *Advances in Qualitative Organization Research*. 3: 129-53.

Blee, Kathleen. 2002. *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Bordt, Rebecca. 1997. *The Structure of Women’s Nonprofit Organizations.* Indiana University Press.

Brown, Keith. 2009. “The Social Dynamics and Durability of Moral Boundaries.” *Sociological Forum.* 24(4): 854-876.

Callon, Michel. 1998. "The Embeddedness of Economic Markets in Economics." Pp. 1-57. In *The Laws of the Markets*, edited by Michel Callon. Oxford: Blackwell.

Carroll, Glenn R. 1985. "Concentration and Specialization: Dynamics of Niche Width in Populations of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology*. 90:1262-1283.

Cohen, Lizabeth. 1996. “From Town Center to Shopping Center; The Reconfiguration of Community Marketplaces in Postwar America.” *The American Historical Review* 101: 1050-81.

Cone, Cythia Abbott and Andrea Myrhe. 2000. “Community-Supported Agriculture: A Sustainable Alternative to Industrial Agriculture?” Human Organization. 59(2): 187-197.

DiMaggio, Paul and Patricia Fernandez-Kelly. 2010. “Introduction: The Diversity and Mobility of Immigrant Arts.” In DiMaggio and Fernandez-Kelly, eds. *Art in the Lives of Immigrant Communities in the United States.* Rutgers University Press.

DiMaggio, Paul and Helmut Anheier. 1990. “The Sociology of Nonprofit Organizations and Sectors.” *Annual Review of Sociology.* 16: 137-159.

DiMaggio, Paul and Walter Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." *American Sociological Review*. 48: 147-160.

DiMaggio, Paul. 1982. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in 19th-Century Boston." Pp. 374-397. In *Rethinking Popular Culture : Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies*, edited by Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Dobbin, Frank. 1994. "Cultural Models of Organizations: the Social Construction of Rational Organizing Principles". Pp. 117-142. In *The Sociology of Culture: Emerging Theoretical Perspectives*, edited by Diana Crane. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Douglas, Mary. 1986. *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Douglas, Mary. 1966. *Purity and Danger.* Routledge and Keegan Paul.

Durkheim, Emile. 1984 [1893]. *The Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Free Press.

Espeland, Wendy Nelson and Mitchell L. Stevens, 1998. "Commensuration as a Social Process." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 24: 313-43.

Fahlquist, Jessica Nihlen. 2009. “Moral Responsibility for Environmental Problems—Individual or Institutional?” *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*. 22: 109-124.

Feagan, Robert. 2007. “The Place of Food: Mapping out the ‘Local’ in Local Food Systems.” *Progress in Human Geography*. 31(23).

Fisher, Andy. 1999. “Hot Peppers and Parking Lot Peaches: Evaluating Farmers’ Markets in Low Income Communities.” Community Food Security Coalition.

Fourcade, Marion and Kieran Healy. 2007. “Moral Views of Market Society.” *Annual Review of Sociology.* 33: 285-311.

Granovetter, Mark. 1985. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *American Journal of Sociology*. 91:481-510.

Guillen, Abraham. “Anarchist Economics: An Alternative for a World in Crisis: Spain 1936-1939 The Economy of the Libertarian Collectives.” Zabalaza Books: Johannesburg, South Africa.

Guthman, Julie, Amy Morris, and Patricia Allen. 2006. “Squaring Farm Security and Food Security in Two Types of Alternative Food Institutions.” *Rural Sociology* 71(4).

Halliday, Terence, Michael Powell, and Mark Granfors. Aug 1987. “Minimalist Organizations: Vital Events in State Bar Associations, 1870-1930.” American Sociological Review. 52(4): 456-471.

Hannan, Michael T. and John Freeman. 1984. "Structural Inertia and Organizational Change." *American Sociological Review*. 49:149-164.

Hannan, Michael T. and John Freeman. 1977. "The Population Ecology of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology*. 82: 929-964.

Harvey, David. "The political economy of public space." *The politics of public space* 17 (2006): 34.

Haveman, Heather A. and Hayagreeva Rao. 1997. “Structuring a Theory of Moral Sentiments: Institutional and Organizational Coevolution in the Early Thrift Industry.” *American Journal of Sociology.* 102: 1606-51.

Hayek, Friedrich. 1945. “The use of knowledge in society.” *American Economic Review.* 35, 519-530.

Heimer, Carol A. 2001. “Cases and Biographies: An Essay on Routinization and the Nature of Comparison.” *Annual Review of Sociology.* 27: 47-76.

Henderson, Elizabeth. 30 April 2012. “Farm-connected CSAs should offer more than just ‘veggie subscriptions.’” *Grist.Org* http://grist.org/locavore/csa-just-a-vegetable-subscription-or-a-way-to-truly-connect-with-your-farm/

Hendrickson, Mary. 2009. “Creating Alternatives: A Participant Observer’s Reflections on the Emerging Local Food System in Kansas City.” *Southern Rural Sociology.* 24(2): 169-191.

Hinrichs, Clare. 2000. “Embeddedness and local food systems: Notes on two types of direct agricultural market.” *Journal of Rural Studies*. 16: 295-303.

Hinrichs, Clare and Kathy Kremer. 2002. “Social inclusion in a Midwest local food system project.” *Journal of Poverty*. 6: 65-90.

Jacobsen, Eivind and Arne Dulsrud. 2007. “Will Consumers Save the World? The Framing of Political Consumerism.” *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics.* 20: 469-482.

Johnston, Josee, Michelle Szabo, and Alexandra Rodney. 2011. “Good food, good people: Understanding the cultural repertoire of ethical eating.” *Journal of Consumer Culture*. 11: 293-318.

Johnston, Josee and Shyon Baumann. 2010. *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Foodscape.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Johnston, Josee. 2008. “The Citizen-Consumer Hybrid: Ideological Tensions and the Case of Whole Foods Market.” *Theory and Society.* 37: 229-270.

Jordan, Jennifer. 2007. “The Heirloom Tomato as Cultural Object: Investigating Taste and Space.” *Sociologia Ruralis.* 47(1).

Kleinman, Sherryl. 1996. *Opposing Ambitions: Gender and Identity in an Alternative Organization.* University of Chicago Press.

Krippner, Greta and Anthony Alvarez. 2007. "Embeddedness and the Intellectual Projects of Economic Sociology.” *Annual Review of Sociology*. 33: 219-240.

Krivokapic-Skoko, Branka. November 2002. “The Concept and Classifications of Agricultural Co-operatives.” Australian Centre for Co-operative Research and Development: Paper No.8.

La Pradelle (de). Michele. 2006. *A Market Day in Provence*. University of Chicago Press.

Lichterman, Paul. *The search for political community: American activists reinventing commitment*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Lounsbury, Michael, Marc Ventresca, and Paul Hirsch. 2003. “Social Movements, Field Frames, and Industry Emergence: A Cultural-Political Perspective on US Recycling.” *Socio-Economic Review.* 1: 71-104.

Lyson, Thomas. 2004. *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community.* Tufts University Press.

Lyson, Thomas and Judy Green. 1999. “The Agricultural Marketscape: A Framework for Sustaining Agriculture and Communities in the Northeast.” *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture.*

Macaulay, Stewart. Feb 1963. “Non-Contractual Relations in Business: A Preliminary Study.” *American Sociological Review.* 2(1): 55-67.

Macias, Thomas. 2008. "Working Toward a Just, Equitable, and Local Food System: The Social Impact of Community-Based Agriculture." *Social Science Quarterly.* 89(5): 1086-1101.

MacKenzie, Lynn Ryan. *Capitalism, power, and community well-being: developing a model for understanding the effect of local economic configuration on cities and their citizens*. Cornell University, January, 1995.

Martin, Joanne, Kathleen Knopoff and Christine Beckman. 1998. "An Alternative to Bureaucratic Impersonality and Emotional Labor: Bounded Emotionality at the Body Shop," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43: 429-469.

Marx, Karl. 1970 [1859]. *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers.

McCarthy, John D. and Edward T. Walker. Sept 2004. "Alternative Organizational Repertoires of Poor People's Social Movement Organizations." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly.* 33(3): 97S-119S.

Merton, Robert King. 1968. *Social Theory and Social Structure.* New York: Free Press.

Mizruchi, Mark and Lisa Fein. 1999. "The Social Construction of Organizational Knowledge: A Study of the Uses of Coercive, Mimetic, and Normative Isomorphism," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44: 653-683.

North, Douglass C. March 1993. "Institutions and Credible Commitment." *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics.* 149(1): 11-23.

O'Hara, Sabine U. and Sigrid Stagl. July 2001. "Global Food Markets and Their Local Alternatives: A Socio-Ecological Economic Perspective." *Population and Environment: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies.* 22(6): 533-554.

Oldenburg, Ray. 1991. *The Great Good Place.* New York: Paragon House.

Polanyi, Karl. 2001. "The Economy as Instituted Process." Pp. 31-50. In *The Sociology of Economic Life*, edited by Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Polletta, Francesca. 2006. *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Polletta, Francesca and James M. Jasper. 2001. "Collective Identity and Social Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology.* 27: 283-305.

Poppo, Laura and Todd Zenger. May 2002. "Do Formal Contracts and Relational Governance Function as Substitutes or Complements?" *Strategic Management Journal.* 23: 707-725.

Powell, Walter W. 1990. "Neither Market Nor Hierarchy: Network Forms of Organization." in B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings, eds., *Research in Organizational Behavior*. 12: 295-336.

Rao, Hayagreeva. 1998. "Caveat Emptor: The Construction of Nonprofit Consumer Watchdog Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology.* 103: 912-961.

Rothschild-Whitt, Joyce. August 1979. "The Collectivist Organization: An Alternative to Rational-Bureaucratic Models." *American Sociological Review.* 44(4): 509-527.

Sage, Colin. 2003. "Social Embededness and Relations of Regard: Alternative 'Good Food' Networks in South-west Ireland." *Journal of Rural Studies.* 19: 47-60.

Sassatelli, Roberta. 2006. "Virtue, Responsibility, and Consumer Choice: Framing Critical Consumerism." in J. Brewer, and F. Trentmann (eds.), *Consuming Cultures, Global Perspectives: Historical Trajectories, Transnational Exchanges*, Oxford: Berg.

Schneiberg, Marc, Marissa King, and Thomas Smith. 2008. "Social Movements and Organizational Form: Co-operative Alternatives Corporations in the American Insurance, Dairy, and Grain Industries." *American Sociological Review.* 73: 635-667.

Scott, Richard. 1995. *Institutions and Organizations.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 3rd Edition.

Shapiro, Susan P. Nov 1987. "The Social Control of Impersonal Trust." *American Journal of Sociology.* 93(3): 623-658.

Simmel, Georg. 2004 [1900]. *The Philosophy of Money*. New York: Routledge.

Smith, Adam. 1986[1776]. *An inquiry in the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*. New York: Penguin Books.

Starr, Amory. 2010. "Local Food: A Social Movement?" *Cultural Studies ←→ Critical Methodologies.* 10(6): 479-490.

Stinchcombe, Arthur. 1965. "Social Structure and Organizations". Pp. 142-193. In *Handbook of Organizations*, edited by James March. Chicago, IL: Rand-McNally.

Summers Effler, Erika. 2010. *Laughing Saints and Righteous Heroes: Emotional Rhythms in Social Movement Groups.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Swidler, Ann 1979. *Organization Without Authority: Dilemmas of Social Control of Free*

Schools. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Thompson, Craig and Gokcen Coskuner-Balli. 2007. "Enchanting Ethical Consumerism: The case of Community Supported Agriculture." *Journal of Consumer Culture.*

Thornton, Patricia and William Ocasio. 2008. "Institutional Logics" In eds Greenwood, Royston, et al. *The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Tolbert, Charles M., Michael Irwin, Thomas Lyson, and Alfred Nucci. 2002. "Civic Community in Small-Town America: How Civic Welfare Is Influenced by Local Capitalism and Civic Engagement." *Rural Sociology.* 67(1): 90-113.

Uzzi, Brian. 1999. "Embeddedness in the Making of Financial Capital: How Social Relations and Networks Benefit Firms Seeking Financing." *American Sociological Review*. 64:481-505.

Uzzi, Brian. 1997. "Social Structure and Competition in Interfirm Networks: The Paradox of Embeddedness." *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 42:35-67.

Uzzi, Brian. 1996. "The Sources and Consequences of Embeddedness for the Economic Performance of Organizations: The Network Effect." *American Sociological Review.*

Vaughan, Diane. 1999. "The Dark Side of Organizations: Mistake, Misconduct, and Disaster." *Annual Review of Sociology.* 25: 271-305.

Vaughan, Diane. 1996. *The Challenger Launch Decision.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Walker, Edward T. and John D. McCarthy. August 2010. "Legitimacy, Strategy, and Resources in the Survival of Community-Based Organizations." *Social Problems.* 57(3): 315-340.

White, Harrison C. 1981. "Where Do Markets Come From?" *American Journal of Sociology*. 87:517-547.

Williamson O. 1996. Transaction cost economics and organization theory. In *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, Smelser NJ, Swedberg R (eds). Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ; 77–107.

Williamson, Oliver E. 1991. "Comparative Economic Organization: The Analysis of Discrete
Structural Alternatives." *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 36:269-296.

Williamson, Oliver E. 1979. "Transaction-cost economics: the governance of contractual relations." *JL & Econ.* 22: 233.

Williamson, Oliver. May 1973. “Markets and Hierarchies: Some Elementary Considerations.” *The American Economic Review*. 63(2).

Winter, Michael. 2003. “Embeddedness, the new food economy, and defensive localism.” *Journal of Rural Studies.* 19: 23-32.

Wolf, Steven, Brent Hueth, and Ethan Ligon. 2001. “Policing Mechanisms in Agricultural Contracts.” *Rural Sociology.* 66(3); 359-381.

Wright, Erik Olin. July 2009. *Envisioning Real Utopias.* E-download.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2012. “How I Became a Relational Economic Sociologist and What Does That Mean?” *Politics & Society*. 40: 145-174.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2011. *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2007. “Pasts and Futures of Economic Sociology.” American Behavioral Scientist. 50(8): 1056-1069.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2005. *The Purchase of Intimacy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2005. "Circuits within Capitalism." Pp. 289-322. In *The Economic Sociology of Capitalism*, edited by Victor Nee and Richard Swedberg. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zelizer, Viviana. 2005. “Culture and Consumption,” in *Handbook of Economic Sociology*, second edition, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press and New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005, pp. 331-54.

Zelizer, Viviana. 1997. *The Social Meaning of Money*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.