

Economic development impact of beginning farmers – small but mighty – What language and numbers are needed to advocate with policy-makers and others who dismiss the economic impact of most start-up farms?

Learning Outcomes

1. Importance of quantitative economic impact assessment and reporting
 - a. Terminology
2. How to use economic data to tell a story, gain support for appropriate investment
 - a. Strengths and limitations
3. Understanding of approaches to data set collection on each farm/ within a county or region
4. Clarify partnerships needed to conduct this work
 - a. How to find and engage them

Webinar, September 19, 2011, 12:00-12:30pm

1. Why do we need to collect and report data on economic impact of beginning farmers? (Todd Schmit)
 - a. What we are and are not going to discuss
 - b. What are the key terms/definitions when talking about ag. economic impact
 - c. Examples of comparable work/studies in this field
 - d. Participant survey/polling

Face to Face workshop (Albany) September 30, 2011, 10:00-12:10pm

1. (10:00-10:25) Intro/discussion (Anu Rangarajan)
 - a. Why is this important, what do we want to know?
 - b. What is important to demonstrate to key leaders and stakeholders?
 - c. Are you involved in this work now? How do you approach the data collection and analysis?
2. (10:30-10:55) Economic importance/magnitude of small farms (Stephan Goetz)
 - a. How economic data has been used to generate investment
 - b. Do Local Food firms matter?
3. (11:00-11:25) What skills, tools, people and data are needed (Todd Schmit)
 - a. What data is needed and how do you collect it?
 - b. Costs of survey methods
 - c. Building a team
4. (11:30-11:55) Putting it together: how to tell the beginning farmers economic impact story (David Conner)
 - a. What works for you and what hasn't been covered?
 - b. What if the data does not tell the story you want, are there inherent risks in this analysis?
How can you manage that risk?
5. (12:00-12:10) Survey: What commitment level can you or your organization make to this work?
What support would you need? What would you hope to accomplish?

Resources

Conner, D. S., Knudson, W. A., Hamm, M. W., & Peterson, H. C. (2008). The Food System as an Economic Driver: Strategies and Applications for Michigan. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*, 3(4), 371-383.

Swenson, D. (2006). The Economic Impacts of Increased Fruit and Vegetable Production and Consumption in Iowa: Phase II. Ames, IA: Regional Food Systems Working Group Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University.

Swenson, D. (2010). *Selected Measures of the Economic Values of Increased Fruit and Vegetable Production and Consumption in the Upper Midwest*. Ames IA. Retrieved from http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/research/marketing_files/Midwest_032910.pdf

Dawn Thilmany of Colo State did IMPLAN based talk at AAEA