



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



CRAFT
AT CHATHAM UNIVERSITY

CRAFTING A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

Over the past year, CRAFT has continued to refine our vision, values, and theory of change to ensure our team and work remain grounded and effective in supporting our regional food system and the people who live, work, and eat within it.

Our Mission

The Center for Regional Agriculture, Food, and Transformation at Chatham University works to transform the future of food and agriculture in Western Pennsylvania and beyond.

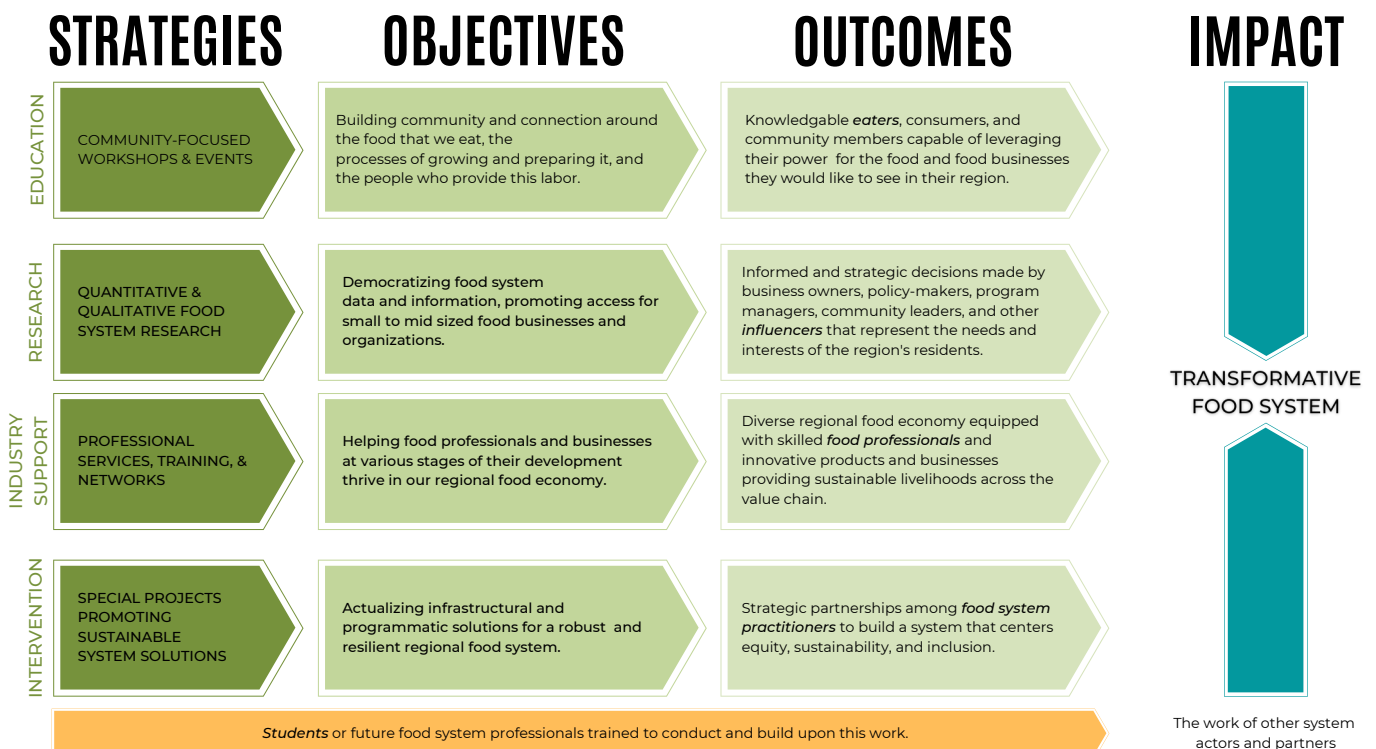
We define a **transformative food system** as one that is:

Equitable: fostering fairness and transparency across the value chain.

Inclusive: actualizing economic, social, and cultural well-being as part of the food system.

Sustainable: valuing dignity, worth, sovereignty, self-determination, and the inherent power of all people.

Our Theory of Change



CRAFTING A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

Our Core Values

The role of food in fostering systemic change

Food systems are the central institutions of our communities, because of the central role that food plays in our daily lives - Everybody eats.

A holistic approach to food systems

As we work to transform our food system, we honor the social, political, and cultural significance of food to the people who eat it and recognize the varied approaches necessary to achieve the change we seek. We are mindful of our role as leaders and as followers, as well as the opportunities to dismantle and construct. Put in other words: there are no silver bullets.

Communities are the hub of vibrant food systems

We center community in our pursuit of transformative regional food systems that value the people who live and work within them. Vibrant regions are comprised of vibrant communities.

Resilient food systems are diverse food systems

The strongest and most durable systems are those built upon the collective wisdom derived from a diversity of experience, which is made possible through policies and cultural norms that include, center, and create space for all types of people, business, expertise, and lived experience.





The rich and complex heritage and food traditions of our region, country, and world

We recognize the history and culture of all of our region's historical and current residents, including the fraught and complex history of land ownership and food production in our region and country and the foundations that were laid by displaced indigenous and enslaved peoples from which we now benefit.

EDUCATION FOR A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

*Objective:
Building connection around the food that we eat, the processes of growing and preparing it, and the people who provide this labor.*




COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

-  **24 virtual workshops**
-  **217 participants**
-  **3 students engaged**
-  **\$5,130.00 in revenue**

Through our community workshops we engage regional and national audiences in a model of food education that pairs hands-on culinary and food production skills with academic, cultural, and scientific knowledge, while simultaneously engaging the public with local food business owners, chefs, and bakers. Workshop participants hone their own food preparation skills while also learning where they can source local ingredients and products, as well as the historical and current context in which these practices and traditions have been cultivated over time and are maintained today.

In FY20-21, CRAFT continued their community workshop series virtually. CRAFT held 24 workshops in total covering a variety of topics and skills, including wood-fired baking, working with a variety of grains and local grains specifically, kimchi, miso, dosas and chutney, South Indian seafood curry, and more. Due to reducing the ticket price for these virtual events, CRAFT brought in less revenue than in the past. However, we successfully maintained the same level of programming and participation and are excited to build upon that continued momentum when we return to in-person offerings in the coming year. Three students were engaged in the workshop programming, supporting curriculum development and general program coordination. A total of \$5,130.00 in revenue was earned, which helps us support these student opportunities and ensure our instructors receive fair compensation as well.

THE FOOD LOVERS' ELECTIVE





-  **4 virtual events**
-  **73 participants**
-  **4 students engaged**

In the spring of 2021, CRAFT launched a new virtual program called The Food Lovers' Elective. This is a student-led series designed to create opportunities for Chatham students to engage in conversations with community members about food, culture, advocacy and all topics in between. The goal is to provide students with an opportunity to apply what they're learning in the classroom to curate an engaging discussion about food on and beyond the table with food experts of various crafts, experiences, and expertise. The series encourages conversations around diverse issues and topics about the food system from different perspectives.

RESEARCH FOR A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

*Objective:
Democratizing food system data and information, promoting access for small to mid-sized food businesses and organizations.*




REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM INVENTORY

-  **Combined GIS maps of food producers, processors, aggregators, and outlets in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia**
-  **Web page, housing maps, raw data, and supplemental resources**
-  **Developed and published public methodology.**
-  **3 students engaged**

Through our Regional Food System Inventory, we aim to build a foundation of food system information that is available to any food business or organization who may be looking to identify potential product or ingredients, buyers, sellers, distribution sites, etc., or conduct a deeper analysis of our regional food system. This is currently the only resource that provides food system stakeholders with such comprehensive and current entity-level information about food production in the Tri-State area.

Over the past year, CRAFT finalized a methodology for maintaining this open-source data that we believe will be sustainable in the long-term and allow us to regularly update the data every two years. This methodology incorporates the feedback and insight we received through interviews and surveys of the broader community of users. It is available, along with the GIS maps and raw data, on the Inventory's new webpage, which also allows users to provide feedback and sign up for regular data updates. Our first update of producer and processor data in the Tri-State area is currently underway. We expect to publish this update in the Fall of 2021.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA FOODWAYS COLLECTION

-  **Continued archiving**
-  **New social media account and campaign**
-  **2 students engaged**

Social distancing requirements have made it difficult to continue conducting oral history interviews. However, we have continued with archiving our existing interviews, as well as exploring new ways to share this knowledge more broadly. To this end, we launched a new account on Instagram dedicated to sharing the stories of those included in this collection. Follow us at @foodwaysdigest to learn more, and stay tuned for more updates when interviews resume.

Objective:

Helping food professionals and businesses at various stages of their development thrive in our regional food economy.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT FOR A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

FOOD INNOVATION LAB

 **19 clients served (22 projects)**

 **2 Makers-in-Residence**

 **\$36,863 in revenue**

 **5 students engaged**

Through the Food Innovation Lab, CRAFT invests in local entrepreneurs from the earliest stages of ideation to market-readiness, providing business support services within a sliding fee scale model designed to meet each innovator where they are. Services support local entrepreneurs and small business owners in developing recipes and consumer experiences, sourcing locally, branding, food safety, business plan writing, strategic consulting, and more.

This past year, we've had the honor of working with 19 clients, including two new Makers in Residence and local businesses such as Old Tin Roof Farm, Everyday Cafe, Anar Gourmet Food, Oliver's Donuts, Ruckus Coffee Gallery, and others as they bring new products and business ventures to the market. We also continue to partner with Pittsburgh Partnership, Neighborhood Allies, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority. The lab brought in over \$36k in revenue this year, which helps fund student opportunities in the Lab and throughout CRAFT, as well as supports the accessibility of our services through a sliding-fee scale.

PANDEMIC PIVOT SERIES & START-UP SUCCESS PROGRAM

 **17 workshops and trainings**

 **540 participants**

 **3 students engaged**



Maker-in-Residence Erika Bruce of Le Beau Gateau

In partnership with Chatham's Center for Women's Entrepreneurship, CRAFT launched an incredibly successful professional series to support local entrepreneurs in navigating the pandemic and launching new businesses. Sessions covered a variety of topics, including SWOT analysis, nutrition labeling, food photography, and other food-business-specific considerations for entrepreneurs, as well as highlighted pandemic pivot success stories with useful takeaways and applications.

The series was met with great demand with every session filling to capacity. The program is currently ongoing and set to conclude in Fall of 2021.

GRAINS PROGRAMMING



Hosted virtual conference with 20 guest speakers and 388 attendees from around the country and world



Launched annual regional grain box, making 51 sales and \$3,185 in revenue



Launched regional grain network to connect professionals across the value chain with 16 members



Continued Neighbor Loaves program in collaboration with 7 local bakeries who donated 1,311 loaves of bread to local pantries



Launched a professional baker training program in collaboration with Community Kitchen Pittsburgh with 18 graduates across 3 cohorts



3 professional workshops with 15 participants and \$325 in revenue



3 students engaged

Despite the significance of grains to our food system and daily diets, they're often left out of local food movements because of the predominance of consolidated grain producers and subsequent loss of knowledge around growing them. In our region, for example, grains were once far more commonly grown for human consumption, but now are often only produced for animal feed. You can go to any farmer's market in Pittsburgh, and find local produce, meat, and dairy, but you will be hard pressed to find local flour. This is a space that not many are currently operating in our region, and it is a gap we feel well-positioned to fill.

Over the past year, we've specifically increased our breadth of programming for grains professionals, providing a variety of training and network opportunities. This includes a national conference, a baker training program, and a professional workshop series focused on working with local grains. We also launched a professional network to connect regional producers across the value chain, as well as share relevant resources and educational opportunities.

In the summer of 2020, we launched regional grain box that features the products of regional growers, bakers, millers, maltesers, and more, connecting consumers with regional producers, product to try their own skills, stories, and more. Our first box sold out and we anticipate our second annual box, currently available for order, will do the same.

Revenue earned from this programming supports the provision of grain-specific services through our Food Innovation Lab, as well as opportunities for students to engage in the work.

CULINARY TOURISM

- 🍏 **Completed Pennsylvania culinary trails project**
- 🍏 **20 regional recipes developed**
- 🍏 **2 students engaged**

CRAFT completed their Pennsylvania culinary trail project in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. The first of these trails is expected to launch in the Fall of 2021 (after some COVID-related delays). A preview of the trails was released in the state's [2021 Happy Traveler Guide](#). CRAFT also developed 20 recipes inspired by regional traditions that highlight and utilize ingredients from farms and food businesses features along the trails.



Cover of 2021 Happy Traveler Guide, featuring the culinary trails developed at CRAFT.

INTERVENTIONS FOR A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM

Our fourth program area is newly defined this fiscal year in order to better communicate the work we are engaged in and how it contributes to food system change. We've created it to house all of the work that we do that has a broader system focus. Often we engage in this work on a contractual basis similar to work completed through the Food Innovation Lab. However, these projects are often larger in scale with the objective of benefiting our community and food system more broadly.

This fiscal year, work in this area has included a project supporting the build-out and launch of **Oasis Community Kitchen**-- an educational and share-use commercial kitchen space in Pittsburgh's Homewood neighborhood. There are only two other kitchens of its kind in Pittsburgh and we believe this space meets a true need among small and mid-sized food entrepreneurs in our region.

In a similar space, we've more recently engaged in a feasibility study for the **Washington Business District Authority** for a commercial kitchen and incubator space in downtown Washington, Washing County, as well as commercial kitchen mapping and capacity analysis for the Philadelphia and Boston metro areas.

We've also been working with **Republic Food Enterprises** on the USDA certification of their poultry slaughtering unit in Republic, PA/ Fayette County-- another infrastructural need in our region that particularly meets demand among smaller poultry producers.

Finally, throughout this fiscal year, we've been working with local partners **Sustainable Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, Pasa Sustainable Agriculture, Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank, the City of Pittsburgh,** and others to implement a COVID-response emergency food program aimed at fostering an emergency food system that meets emergency food needs while also supporting sustainable solutions to food insecurity. The program **Allegheny Eats** centered sustainable livelihoods in the restaurant industry and fostered connections between local growers and restaurants. The program worked with seven local restaurants to raise funds and prepare free meals for industry workers impacted by the pandemic with 30% of ingredients for these meals sourced from local growers and producers. Over the course of the program, 11,000 meals were provided to impacted workers, and 15 partnerships were fostered between local restaurants and food producers. Additionally, restaurant partners reported that the funds enabled them to create or maintain a total of 14 positions. Four restaurants reported that the funds enabled them to survive the pandemic.



Food Innovation Lab Graduate Consultant Toni Simpson working in our newly renovated kitchen space.

CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

Reimagining Emergency Food for Sustainable System Solutions

Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society and Association for the Study of Food and Society (June 2021)

Grains & PA Culinary Tourism

Philadelphia Grain & Malt Symposium (March 2021)

MEDIA

[!\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b_img.jpg\)](#) ***Allegheny Eats: A Meal Kit Service To Help Restaurant Workers, Farmers & Producers***

[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\)](#) ***Farm-to-table meets food relief in pilot meal kit program***



Firemaster Cristina Law hosting a community bake at the Eden Hall wood-fired oven.