

DRAFT: WORKKNG SKETCH,..../APRIL 15, 2023

**1. TITLE: A Project
to instigate community action
for the development and institutionalization
of a “Stevens Community / County-Wide,
Food Emergency Preparedness Plan”
that is coupled with a “Local Food System.”**

*“ an abrupt shortage of food
(like when grocery store shelves become bare for a week or more)*

*will be the first frightening impact
of unreversible climate disruption
felt by the now-complacent public.*

Panic, chaos, and suffering will follow.”

2. SYNOPSIS

**An effort is needed in Stevens County to ensure that all its citizens
will have adequate access to food into the long-term future
in face of predictable (and un-predictable) supply-chain disruptions.**

**Possible causes of disruptions, singly or interactively, include climate
“weirding,” pandemics, economic system depressions, nuclear war, domestic or
inter-state terrorism, non-state actor terrorism, technological system failures, or
any other “Black Swan” situations.**

**This project will not do the planning and implementation.
This project will catalyze a community effort to do so.**

**The outcome will be to have a ‘market-place’ (rather than
a governmental) based local organization ensure local access
to locally produced food, no matter the season, during both
emergency and non-emergency situations**

**The structure of sch a market-place based organization
would be designed incorporating concepts of Community
Supported Agriculture (CSA), cooperatives, and non-profits**

The functioning of such a market-place organization will require the close articulation of production, storage, distribution, and consumption factors. Farmers and consumers will need to be actively engaged and committed. The operation needs to be economically self-sustaining via a “cooperative market” principle.

The initial goal will be for a “catalyst group” to organize a leadership “working group” that will develop and implement a “food emergency preparedness plan” embedded in a “local food system.”

The working group will be comprised of stakeholders from the “center” of the community who will be passionate, motivated, and committed to undertake the needed planning and implementation.

The project goals are synergistic. A food emergency plan will need access to locally-sourced food. A well-established local food system will ensure the efficacy of the emergency plan for the long-term future. Even if there is never a need to activate the food emergency plan, achieving a robust local system will pay myriad benefits to the community: healthier food availability, more young farmers producing wealth, a more vibrant retail sector, a greater sense of community for all.

3. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

.1. Climate disruption is beginning to affect food production globally.

(See Appendix A for documentation.)

.2. In Morris/Stevens County, there are social service programs that address current chronic inadequate access to food situations, and there are governmental mechanisms that provide assistance for recovery from natural and human-caused disasters. Neither program appears designed to address future impacts of intensifying severing of climate change, especially in their ability to provide longer term assurance of adequate food access.

.3. This proposed project is intended to:

.1. Educate the community on climate impacts to food production.

.2. Organize a leadership “Working Group” composed of “center-based” community stakeholders and all interested others to develop a “Food Emergency Preparedness Plan.”

.3. Provide technical assistance to the Working Group to ensure that the Plan is adopted, implemented, and “institutionalized” to ensure long term viability for the operationalized Plan.

.4. Explore opportunities during the planning process to expand the scope of this project into a “Local Food Reliance” or “Local Food System” efforts.

5. There are few, if any, examples of a local governmental unit having developed a comprehensive “Emergency Food Preparedness Plan.” Thus, this might also be an opportunity to develop this as a “model” project, to demonstrate to other communities the value of doing so. This would be in parallel to the “Morris Modell” that was developed to address future directions for Morris’ energy future;

4. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS:

.1 Few community stakeholders seem to be aware of, or are in denial of,

.1 the projected and already emerging climatic changes that impact food production and consumer food availability.

.2 the existing and increasing probabilities of food supply-chain disruption that impact consumer food availability.

.3 Hence, and understandably, there is currently little interest or motivation by current stakeholders in this community to develop a food emergency plan or to develop greater community resilience to improve local food production.

5. STRATEGY:

.1 The basic instigation strategy will be to utilize a “community education via community engagement” approach.

.2 The goal of this project is not to develop a “food emergency preparedness plan,” but to educate and organize a community effort to do so.

.3 The “deep” goal is to not only achieve development of such a plan, but to also get the Plan operationalized and “institutionalized” so that it becomes an integral part of community’s preparedness structure.

.4 This “deep” goal also invokes the “next Seven Generations” time perspective principle to ensure that future planning continues for the long term and that ongoing preparedness and local food production development continues to “re-calibrate” capabilities in faced of ever-evolving changes in climate, production, and market conditions.

.5. In that few local units of government have yet developed a “local food emergency plan” or a “community food resilience plan,” this may be a unique opportunity to design an exemplary “model.” This “model” would parallel nicely the “Morris Model” that has been developed for sustainable energy production.

6. NEED AND PERSPECTIVE

.1 Several local documents which served as benchmarks for this project are:

.1 The Stevens County Food Assessment (E. Brands, October 2022)

The purpose of this assessment was “to describe food security in Stevens County at both community and individual scales.” The survey findings were based on current— not future or changing — food production conditions. Hence, the methodology of future food-availability assessments needs to incorporate predictions and trends of evolving conditions that impact food production, globally and locally

.2. The Stevens County’s Emergency Operations Center documents entitled:

.1 Hazard Mitigation Plan

.2 Disaster Recovery Loan Program

.3 West Central Initiative-Stay Open for Business

(Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery).

.2 The County’s current preparedness stance is one of a “re-active” stance for dealing with community emergencies. There appears to little focus on prevention. Also, the issue of emergency food provisions are not specified in these documents, although emergency food delivery is included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan but the nature or adequacy of that emergency food is not available to public inquiry or evaluate on.

.3 While the Stevens County governmental structure does provide ready mechanisms for ready responses to destructive, episodic events (caused by tornadoes, straight-line winds, blizzards, droughts, etc.) it seems highly unlikely that such hazard response programs were designed for, or are capable of, adequately accommodating, extended food shortage events, such as for two weeks to two months to two years. Nor is there any mechanism for citizens to assess the adequacy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

.4 Additionally, in taking a broader, futuristic perspective, there exists a broad and vast scientific and political policy literature that documents the projected trends regarding significant and troubling climatic impacts on food production — and consequently, local and global food accessibility. The following two citations are examples:

**.1 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
Climate change and food security: risks and responses. (2015)**

<https://holisticmanagement.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Jones-AdaptingFarming-Quivira-Feb10.pdf>

**.2 United States Department of Agriculture - ARS
Climate Impacts on Agriculture: Implications for Crop Production (2011)**

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2355&context=usdaarsfacp>

.5 Thus, while the local Stevens Community and County have good assessments of the current status of food availability, and numerous mechanisms (including an established local Food Shelf operation), for food assistance distribution and disaster-related emergency responses, there exists no attention to, or planning for, long term changes in food access of availability due to projected climatic and other possible negative impacts. Hence, the need for this project