

UC DAVIS

AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Fifth Annual Narrative Report to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Inter-Institutional Network for Food, Agriculture, and Sustainability (INFAS)

Grant # P3012851

April 29, 2015

Submitted by:

Dr. Joanna Friesner

National Network Coordinator

Inter-institutional Network for Food, Agriculture and Sustainability

Dr. Thomas P. Tomich

W.K. Kellogg Endowed Chair in Sustainable Food Systems

Director, UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute

Director, UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

Professor of Community Development, Environmental Science & Policy

University of California, Davis

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Project Summary:

The **Inter-institutional Network for Food, Agriculture and Sustainability (INFAS)** is a national network of university and college educators, researchers, and activists, who collaborate in analysis, synthesis, and problem-solving with practitioners to increase U.S. food-system resilience; to illuminate critical trends and common stewardship of public goods essential for food systems, such as water, biodiversity, ecosystem services, and public institutions; and to reduce inequity and vulnerability in the U.S. food system. INFAS currently has scholar members in 20 states and 25 institutions and plans to expand to encompass institutions in even more states, including areas currently underrepresented in food systems and sustainable agriculture efforts. Because it includes scholars from different disciplines, INFAS has the capacity to consolidate data and raise visibility about complex food system challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, individually we network extensively with diverse populations to link knowledge with action.

The primary strategy undertaken by INFAS in the past project year to work towards our network goals was to engage, via a 'Core Design Team' (CDT), in a **Network Design process** that included reviewing and refining the Network's priorities, values, and approaches in order to inform the design and implementation of future Network collaborative projects. In the past project year the CDT finished the network design planning and development phases with assistance from a professional network design consultant. Throughout the process the CDT engaged two community members from outside the INFAS academic membership that the CDT felt were vital to enhance perspectives and provide additional areas of expertise that would enable us to better address the needs of marginalized communities and vulnerable children. At the conclusion of the initial design phase, the CDT produced a draft INFAS statement on equity in the food system which was disseminated to the entire Network for input and discussion. Member input and discussions led to the addition of a framing Preamble and a finalized **'INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System'**; both are included in this report and are being disseminated broadly amongst member networks.

The Network Design process challenged us in positive ways and enabled us to refine and refocus the Network's priorities and values. It also served to strengthen existing network ties and establish vital new connections between academia and the communities that we strive to serve. Most gratifyingly, the process demonstrated that with vigilance, patience, and a commitment to inclusion, Networks can work well and can have far-reaching impacts. The design process enabled us to fully commit to working with community members as leaders, co-creators of knowledge, and co-formulators of questions in building solutions. This collectively-developed commitment will provide the foundation that INFAS needs to undertake future collaborative activities, including community relationship-building and outreach, to ensure that members of universities and institutions of higher education are working with communities to create a more just food system for all people.

INFAS Progress Toward Goals

INFAS Core Design Team (CDT) Progress on Network Design

Background

INFAS collectively agreed on a major change in focus of Network activities at the summer 2013 annual meeting (described in last year's report). Briefly, following an in-depth discussion of priorities for action and engagement INFAS concluded that a process to interrogate Network values and priorities was needed to build the foundation necessary for collective impact. The group collectively developed these objectives for the Network Design (ND) Process:

1. Develop a better understanding of what brings people to INFAS
2. Develop a better understanding of group's passions
3. Develop the Network's understanding of
 - 3.1. what we mean by 'community'
 - 3.2. 'engagement in issues of poverty'
 - 3.3. 'structural racism'
 - 3.4. 'latent tensions simmering under the surface'
 - 3.5. how to share understanding and framing of issues across regions
 - 3.6. raising up local voices in the national level framing

The group consensus for the process to develop a Core Design Team (CDT) made up of INFAS volunteers and a professional facilitator. The CDT would hold a series of working sessions (virtual and face-to-face) addressing the context, current reality, and desired state of the food system and, using this as a starting point, develop a proposal for framing and action to share with the entire Network for consideration, feedback, and adoption.

Impacts through Interviews of the Core Design Team: Personal and Professional Benefits and Synergistic Activities Stemming from Participating in the INFAS Network Design Process

The Core Design Team (CDT) formed with 8 volunteer INFAS members in late summer 2013. Initial discussions led the CDT to quickly determine that additional voices were needed to augment the existing members. During the last quarter of 2013 the CDT developed and administered a call for proposals to engage a professional facilitator with demonstrated expertise facilitating complex multi-stakeholder and multi-collaborator teams. The CDT emphasized that the facilitator must have an understanding of and commitment to resolving structural and systemic issues regarding social justice, including race, class and gender. During that time the CDT also developed a list of external 'voices' to invite to join the CDT. By January 2014 the CDT had selected Curtis Ogden (Interaction Institute for Social Change) to be the CDT facilitator. Of the 'external voices' the CDT invited, Joann Lo (Food Chain Workers Alliance) and Cheryl Danley (FoodCorps) accepted our invitation to join the CDT.

This section contains summaries of interviews of CDT members that were conducted by Joanna Friesner, the INFAS Coordinator. Joanna asked each person to describe the personal and professional impacts and outcomes of their 1-1.5 year-long participation on the INFAS CDT.

1. Patricia Allen, Marylhurst University, INFAS member described that the 'whole corpus of her work' for decades has focused on social justice and social change in the food system. As a pioneer in food justice, for many years she has felt that she was a lone voice in both academic and popular aspects

of the food movement. Her involvement on the CDT, particularly with the collective decision to emphasize social justice in the food system, opened up new conversations on social justice with new colleagues at a variety of institutions. That the INFAS core team is focusing on social justice is a significant step forward that will have ripple effects throughout the INFAS network and eventually the academy as a whole. With an entire network engaging in this work she is hopeful that real and positive change toward food justice could come about.

- 1.1. *Patricia's thoughts on next steps for INFAS:* The CDT process has engaged in vital conversations about social justice and equity in the food system, focusing on race. The network should expand its focus to include class and gender, as well as race, in discussions, scholarship, and activities of inequity in the food.
2. Molly Anderson, College of the Atlantic, INFAS member described several personal and professional impacts. (1) She completely revised the 'Food, Power and Justice' undergraduate course she teaches to include more on racial equity and share a significant number of resources, both academic and community-based. (2) She was recently invited by Bard College to give a keynote address and was asked specifically to talk about the INFAS network and the impacts of academic networks. One reason they asked her to speak is because they're planning to launch a local food policy initiative and they believe that Molly's network experience could help them focus their planning. She intends to share with them the reasons the CDT decided to focus on equity in the food system and the importance of establishing networks and working together for collective impact. (3) During the past year she organized an international roundtable on the importance of working with community stakeholders to improve food systems resilience with Casey Hoy, another CDT/INFAS member. Molly said that she wouldn't have known Casey well enough to collaborate on this activity, had she not been a part of the INFAS CDT. (4) Molly was asked to give a keynote address at a conference on food justice at Harvard Law School where she connected the right to food and food justice with racial inequity in the food system. The importance of racial equity has become much more apparent to her through the work that INFAS has done. (5) In the work Molly is doing with the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems she has advocated for inclusion of non-academic experts and a true transdisciplinary approach to knowledge creation that includes the voices of those who suffer impacts of food system inequities. While this was important to her before working with INFAS, the resources and discussions through INFAS and the CDT have elevated this subject and helped her articulate its significance in different settings.
 - 2.1. *Molly's thoughts on next steps for INFAS:* Now that the CDT process has concluded the framing phase (via the CDT-developed 'Statement on Equity in the Food System') it is imperative to fully disseminate the statement and preamble with INFAS and its partner networks and to move to collective action across a range of levels.
3. Cheryl Danley, FoodCorps (now formerly of FoodCorps) conveyed that she continues to "be impressed with INFAS's commitments to equity in the academic sphere", an approach and commitment that she finds unusual in her experience with many academics. She further described several personal and professional benefits from her participation on the CDT including that the CDT's focus on equity encouraged her to initiate similar conversations at FoodCorps and also at the Pesticide Action Network, of which she is on the Board of Directors. She found it significant to work with WKKF grantees at a recent Food and Community gathering and, via her connections with the CDT, make new connections between community activists and INFAS academic partners. She noted the importance of one activity that stemmed from the CDT's commitment to equity and partnering with communities: the INFAS workshop held during the Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (PAWC) in 2014 in Tuskegee, Alabama. Cheryl noted that she was first introduced to the invaluable approach of 'meeting people where they're at' during her time as a WKKF fellow and that she was gratified that the CDT took this notion to heart when choosing to attend PAWC and build

additional networks there. Finally, based on her involvement with INFAS and the CDT she had the opportunity to invite FoodCorps staff to hear LaDonna Redmond speak and to meet with the programs team; this helped lead to further training at FoodCorps by LaDonna.

4. Casey Hoy, Ohio State University, INFAS member stated that the most direct and immediate benefit of being a CDT member was that he “learned a lot about racial equity in the food system”, which he described as a “pretty large shift in focus from his disciplinary background and previous work” (agricultural ecology and agroecosystems management). He conveyed the importance of working on this important topic on a diverse team and at a national level and that he considers racial equity to be a cause that would require all of INFAS (and more) to address successfully. He is part of the large team of faculty and administrators engaged in developing the ‘Discovery Themes Initiative’. (DTI) at The Ohio State University (OSU). This new initiative will ‘focus on three critical societal needs: Health and Well Being, Energy and the Environment, and Food Production and Security, reflecting OSU’s obligation as a public, land-grant, research university’ and strives to be ‘a transformative effort.’ The DTI will result in hiring a large number of new faculty members within the three thematic areas. He is the faculty leader for a DTI investment area in ‘Resilient, Sustainable and Global Food Security for Health’, including 30 new faculty hires across the University and a strong social justice theme in the proposed work. Due to his involvement with the INFAS CDT Casey says he has “found ways to infuse how racial equity and justice fits into the DTI transformation” at OSU, and particularly the food security investment area, and that the CDT’s focus on racial equity has enabled him to “listen and shape the initiative in a different way than many of his colleagues”. An additional benefit is that the design process has encouraged him to strengthen connections with Central State University; an HBCU that was recently given 1890 Land Grant status and that is located a short 1.5 hour drive from OSU. It has also sparked new conversations with the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at OSU. These conversations are on-going and Casey emphasized that one focus is on the importance of connecting groups like the Kirwan Institute, Race Forward, and People First to scale up INFAS collaborations in a concerted and strategic way. As part of the DTI, Casey intends to raise a conversation across the University about the ‘right to food’, a concept that hasn’t been accepted as a valid issue in the United States but is an active area of debate and concern in the international arena.

4.1. *Casey’s thoughts on next steps for INFAS:* We need to move from commitment to the cause, the compelling ‘what we’re about’, to the action steps, ‘what we do about it’, that can best be tackled by the INFAS network expanded to active collaborations with activists at a national scale.

5. Tom Kelly, University of New Hampshire, INFAS member, reflected on his work with Food Solutions New England (FSNE) that started prior to his participation on the CDT and how the two efforts have reinforced each other. FSNE collectively committed to racial equity as part of their process and Tom’s participation with the INFAS CDT has enabled him to develop this commitment more deeply including providing opportunities to “operationalize the commitment to racial equity in the food system.” Tom has found it extremely valuable that the INFAS effort reinforces the FSNE regional commitment and provides additional legitimacy to the concept of social justice in the food system. The Network Design process itself created valuable opportunities to deepen relationships with INFAS members with Tom noting in particular the increased quality of the conversations and issues that the CDT engaged in. Tom further highlighted the key perspectives brought by Cheryl Danley and Joann Lo, the ‘external voices’ brought in to the CDT to augment INFAS’s academic perspectives. Tom stated that the CDT’s work, which culminated in “calling out race and equity explicitly”, was a process that has profoundly reinforced and strengthened his commitment to race and equity and his capacity and effectiveness in bringing that commitment to the work that he does in sustainability and food systems. An additional benefit that Tom noted was that his work on the CDT inspired him

to join a session involving ‘communities of color’ at an environment conference that, prior to the CDT, wouldn’t have been his first choice. At that session he forged new relationships with a professor at Florida A and M (an HBCU) who has invited Tom to visit and give a presentation. He also made connections with several others working at HBCUs, MSIs, and TCUs. Finally, Tom noted that the INFAS workshop held at the PAWC meeting in Tuskegee, Alabama was a fantastic experience that he would not have experienced without the network design process and his participation on the CDT.

6. Joann Lo, Food Chain Workers Alliance (FCWA), described the networking benefits to her in her role as the Director of the Food Chain Workers Alliance by participating on the INFAS CDT. She previously had known of several CDT members but hadn’t met them in person or had the ability to work significantly with them. After working with the CDT and getting to know them better she has had several new opportunities including being invited to speak in a graduate class which includes members of the future generation of leaders that will work on the food system. Through relationships cultivated on the CDT she was invited to join the External Advisory Board of the Agricultural Sustainability Institute at UC Davis and she has been recommended to participate in an agricultural food labor session at an upcoming conference.
7. Tom Tomich, UC Davis, INFAS member, INFAS host, and ASI Director, described the impact on the Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI) stemming from his participation on the CDT by reflecting first on ASI’s initiation: “We envisioned social justice to be a core part of ASI from the beginning but it has proven to be elusive. The key impact of the INFAS Network Design process and being on the CDT is that it has moved us to action.” Tom’s participation on the CDT has given him a set of insights and approaches that he feels will help the Institute. He noted specifically the benefits of having Joanna Friesner, the INFAS Coordinator, co-located at ASI because she has catalyzed discussions about social justice and racial equity within ASI. She has engaged new staff members who are emerging as leaders in the Institute and some staff members have begun reassessing their projects and activities based on these discussions. For example, one of the ASI coordinators is developing a pilot project with a template for new projects that contains a social justice checklist with items such as “Who will benefit from this project?”, “How is the budget being allocated to participants?”, “Which groups will get to see the results?”, and “Who is being consulted at each stage of the project?” Directly due to engagement with the CDT, Joanna presented the INFAS draft statement on equity in the food system to the ASI External Advisory Board which sparked a valuable, yet difficult, discussion. Tom noted that, similar to the CDT, “ASI is grappling with translating aspirations to clear principles and meaningful initiatives”, and that it will take time to develop ideas. However, he believes that by participating in the CDT this conversation at ASI has been given a huge boost.

Additional INFAS Activities

1. **Initial face-to-face meeting of the INFAS Core Design Team (CDT) and Public Panel:** Following several months of virtual meetings the CDT gathered at the UC Davis campus in Davis, California for a three day workshop (March 14-16, 2014), hosted by INFAS host Tom Tomich and INFAS Coordinator Joanna Friesner.
 - 1.1. The workshop included the 8 member Core Design Team (CDT), the Design Team Facilitator, and two external members who joined the CDT in January to broaden the discussion (Joann Lo, Food System Workers Alliance, and Cheryl Danley, FoodCorps.)
 - 1.2. Members of the CDT participated in a public panel discussion with the campus community entitled ‘**Perspectives on race, ethnicity, class, and gender in the food system.**’ The event was well-attended and the panel and interactive discussion centered on inequities in the food system.

- 1.3. A key outcome of the workshop was consensus of the CDT to propose to the broader membership that the Network state clearly that we recognize multiple forms of oppression and are committing to equity in the food system. It was further agreed that the CDT would propose to forward racial equity tactically, but that we will continue to educate ourselves about the intersections of race, class and gender in relation to the food system.
2. **Development of the INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System:** the CDT collaboratively drafted the 'INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System' at the March 2014 CDT workshop. It went through significant rounds of editing and input from the larger network. The statement was finalized in September 2014.
 - INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System
 - 2.1. *INFAS is a network of educators and researchers who are dedicated to food system sustainability and committed to supporting, learning from and partnering with activists in our communities. We recognize that our food system is profoundly inequitable and institutions of higher education hold power and privilege that can be used for good or harm. Equity in opportunity, food access and health outcomes is a non-negotiable foundational principle of a sustainable food system and a core value and commitment for us.*
 - 2.2. *To help build equity in the food system, we are focusing on the barrier of structural racism as an initial entry point. We recognize multiple forms of oppression; so we also will focus on gender and class oppression, and the intersections among race, class, and gender that shape barriers and opportunities to equity.*
 - 2.3. *We make a commitment to collaborate with communities of practice and place through our research, education and convening capabilities to better understand, communicate and find solutions to how food system disparities affect the experiences of those most affected by systemic inequities. We will strive to work with and respect community members as leaders, co-creators of knowledge, co-formulators of questions and co-facilitators in building solutions as we endeavor to create a more just food system for all people.*
3. **Development of the INFAS Vision Statement:** the CDT collaboratively drafted the 'INFAS Vision Statement' at the March 2014 CDT workshop. It has undergone several rounds of editing and input from the larger network.
 - INFAS Vision Statement
 - 3.1. *We envision a US food system that is environmentally sustainable and socially just. This requires structural equality so that race, class, and gender no longer determine health outcomes, social status, or economic opportunity and so that healthy, restored agroecosystems and fisheries are achievable.*
4. **INFAS Core Design Team (CDT) workshop at the WKKF Food & Community Gathering:** The CDT hosted a workshop entitled 'Ensuring Equity: The Potential of Activist-Academic Collaborations', which was attended by over 50 people ranging from members of academia, NGOs, policy groups, community organizing, and non-profit organizations.
 - 4.1. The interactive discussion centered on inequities in the food system and opportunities for practitioners within and beyond academia to effectively work together towards food system equity. We started the workshop by sharing the INFAS draft 'Statement on Racial Equity'.
 - 4.2. Following this framing, small groups engaged in storytelling of experiences with various food systems inequities. Finally, participants collectively addressed the question "Beyond connectivity, what are ideas, and where are there opportunities, for aligning

community and university work in addressing racial equity?" The group discussed potential strategies and approaches to strengthen new and existing academic:activist linkages.

5. **INFAS annual meeting at the WKKF Food & Community Gathering:** The focus of this meeting was to engage additional INFAS members in discussions about the INFAS draft Vision Statement and Statement on Equity in the Food System. There were a number of useful comments including that the CDT should develop a Preamble to the Statement on Equity in the Food System in order to better set the context and frame the complexity of the food system.

Key Annual Meeting Outcomes

- 5.1. Governance: Patricia Allen concluded her one year term as Executive committee Chair; Molly Anderson assumed the Executive Chair position (2014-2015) following one year as Chair-elect. The Executive Committee confirmed the nominations of Nancy Creamer and Tom Kelly, and Tom Kelly was appointed to serve as Chair-elect (2014-2015.)
- 5.2. The CDT agreed to draft a Preamble to the Statement on Equity in the Food System:
- 5.2.1. *As members of the Inter-institutional Network on Food, Agriculture & Sustainability (INFAS), we see that food and agriculture are part of a diverse set of interconnected systems. We recognize the value of systemic analysis to identify full impacts of policies and practices, how components of the food system function, and gaps in our understanding. We recognize that the food system has effects on, and is affected by, almost every other sphere of human activity and well-being. Therefore, we value transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to solving problems, in addition to contributions that are made within single disciplines.*
- 5.2.2. *We recognize that the global food system is profoundly inequitable along lines of gender, class, and race. In the US, racial inequity is expressed in the still-living legacies of slavery, racism, and theft of resources from indigenous peoples, all of which continue to prevent equal opportunity for many individuals and groups. Inequity is also expressed structurally in the leadership, infrastructure, and decision-making mechanisms of our food system, which continues to favor the small subset of the population (usually white, male and coming from backgrounds of relative affluence) that has held power in the US from its founding as a country.*
- 5.2.3. *We recognize multiple converging trends in US food systems that are leading us away from sustainability, resilience and social equity and toward irreversible thresholds at which we could enter a drastically transformed and impoverished world. We know that we live in a time of increasing uncertainty that demands new coping mechanisms. Global environmental change (climate change, nutrient cycle disruption, loss of biodiversity, ocean acidification, etc.) constitutes a cluster of potentially severe thresholds to which food systems contribute; strikingly, the loss of human diversity, as native peoples and their languages continue to be decimated, also is irreversible.*
- 5.2.4. *We value the cultural diversity of the US food system: the many foodways and cultural practices of all our peoples. We understand that specific foods people eat, food production, and food consumption have spiritual, cultural, and social significance that goes far beyond food's nutritional and economic value.*
- 5.2.5. *We see that US policies and practices sometimes push food system actors away from sustainability, resilience and social equity. We understand that these policies and practices have global impacts, affecting the food system choices of*

people across the world as well as within our own borders and leading to limits on opportunities for all, but especially women, poor people, and people of color. We know that policies and practices can be changed with sufficient motivation, knowledge and mobilization of political power.

5.2.6. *We seek to meet our responsibilities as food citizens from our positions within, or working with, institutions of higher education. We understand that the goal of “sustainability” is a call to action that requires much more of us than our formal job descriptions, and we come together to learn and act in more effective ways to promote racial equity, economic equity, and environmental restoration and health.*

6. **Fall meeting of the INFAS Core Design Team (CDT):** Nine CDT members gathered in Cary, North Carolina for a three day workshop (November 21-23, 2014), hosted by John O’Sullivan and Shorlette Ammons. The foci of this workshop were to: examine a case study of a similar network; discuss experiences of several CDT members that had presented the INFAS statements at their institutions; come to consensus about the kind of Network INFAS should be, including membership and maintaining relationships with community activists; and strategize and prioritize actions. The consensus for the key next step was to more fully engage the network in co-creating action agendas.

Key Workshop Outcomes

- 6.1. The CDT agreed to rename the ‘INFAS Statement on Racial Equity’ the ‘INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System’ and maintain the Statement’s strategic advancement of ‘structural racism’.
- 6.2. The CDT agreed that there is a need to develop data resources to help INFAS make the case that the food system is inequitable. Ideally we would have several slide sets including national data and local/regional data. This resource would be useful to set the national and regional contexts and help us to connect our efforts with policy-makers and others on a well-coordinated scale.
- 6.3. The CDT agreed to develop a new document that outlines the responsibilities and expectations of being an ‘active network participant.’ The draft list includes these points:
 - 6.3.1. Agree with the INFAS Vision Statement and Statement on Equity in the Food System
 - 6.3.2. Incorporate the INFAS mission statement and principles into your work
 - 6.3.3. Commit to connecting your work with others to effect change and share knowledge at local, regional, national, or international levels including communities outside academia
 - 6.3.4. Share resources from your place-based work into INFAS and take resources and share back to place-based community work. ‘Resources’ could be information, ideas, publications, or collaboration opportunities including for funding or other relevant activities
 - 6.3.5. Commit time and resources (based on capacity) to participate in INFAS activities including meetings and related activities
 - 6.3.6. Commit to honest Network communication and engagement, e.g. participating in discussions, contributing to activities etc. (based on capacity)
 - 6.3.7. Model and share best practices in campus:community relationships
 - 6.3.8. Be an ambassador for INFAS: cultivate relationships within INFAS and also connect this Network with other networks. Be willing to talk with new people about INFAS; invite more people to participate and share the Network’s

commitments to equity in the food system and the pillars of sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems (economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability.)

7. INFAS Core Design Team (CDT) participation in the PAWC meeting to network and advance the INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System. Over the course of the network design process, the CDT came to understand the importance of ‘meeting people where they’re at’, particularly when those we wish to engage aren’t in the traditional academic sphere. Since a key focus of the design process evolved into the desire to work collaboratively with the communities we (as academics) wish to collaborate with in the search for sustainable, equitable solutions, it became clear that we should join more community gatherings.

- 7.1. Several CDT members participated in the Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (PAWC)- December 7-9, 2014 at Tuskegee University. CDT members held a workshop entitled ‘Ensuring Equity in the Food System: Potential of Activist-Academic Collaborations’ which was facilitated by CDT member Shorlette Ammons.
- 7.2. CDT members focused on listening to the participants rather than presenting. There were brief introductions of INFAS and our recent process on racial equity in the food system. The bulk of the workshop focused on small and large group discussions of how each person’s work intersects with racial and social justice and success stories of community-university collaborations with respect to racial and social justice work.

Key take-aways from PAWC workshop participants:

- 7.2.1. Key questions raised: ‘what has INFAS done?’ ‘what will INFAS do?’ ‘How do you engage communities in the ways you’re describing?’
- 7.2.2. Recognition that network and relationship building IS action.
- 7.2.3. Recommended a ‘Right to Food Research Agenda’ that establishes this right as a preface.
- 7.2.4. Keep community members updated on INFAS efforts.
- 7.2.5. On INFAS website- provide examples of INFAS work that relates directly to the Statement on Equity in the Food System
- 7.2.6. Food is an entry point for kids was expressed in the forum.

Modification to Original Approach, Challenge/Opportunity, and Unanticipated Outcome

The original approach taken by the Network was modified significantly in the third year of the project (as reported previously). Briefly, members assessed the original Network approach (seeking grant-funding for collaborative projects) and came to the consensus that effective engagement for the desired collaborations that would span states, institutions and disciplines required a change in approach in how INFAS identified priorities, engaged with communities, and developed activities. In particular, it was acknowledged that the many commitments and priorities of individual Network members presented real challenges to coalescing on a manageable number of collaborative activities. Further, it was clear that members needed to interrogate deeply how the Network activities can reflect our commitments to addressing inequities in the food system in a strategic way that takes our current limitations into account (few appropriate funding opportunities including limited support for interdisciplinary collaborations, support for external stakeholder participation, time constraints, etc.) The new approach was for a subcommittee of INFAS members (the Core Design Team, or CDT) to interrogate Network values, goals and priorities to assess what topic(s) or approach(es) would best leverage a network approach and reflect our common values and commitments. INFAS agreed that a professionally facilitated ‘Network Design’ (ND) process would be most effective in achieving our goals and produce the best results. An unanticipated outcome of this process was that the ND process led to the proposal

that we, as a Network, would state clearly that we recognize multiple forms of oppression and are committing to equity in the food system. It was further agreed that the CDT would propose to lead with racial equity and that we will continue to educate ourselves about the intersections of race, class and gender in relation to the food system in our collective actions. Raising up racial equity, in particular, as the lens through which future Network activities would be viewed is a significant change in INFAS's approach. Another unanticipated outcome was that the ND process enabled us to redouble our commitment to collaborating with communities of practice and place and commit to working with them as leaders and co-creators of knowledge. In retrospect, the 'challenge' we had in identifying projects to effectively bring the Network together provided us with our greatest opportunity yet: to explicitly interrogate our values with respect to scholarship and outreach and re-engage with the communities that we aspire to collaborate with in the search for sustainable, equitable solutions.

Future Plans

1. *Did the project become self-sustaining during this time period?* The Project is self-sustaining with half-time staff support provided by the endowment to UC Davis from WKKF which ensures stable support and funds for some member networking. The Network is continuing its activities based on the Network Design process (described previously). Additionally, many INFAS members hold endowed faculty positions ensuring continuity of representation from many of the member institutions. Funding for new projects will need to be secured by INFAS members with assistance from the INFAS Coordinator who will continue to provide the vital support needed to maintain Network activities. Without this staff support the Network would be unable to be as active as it has.
2. *What structure has been established for the continuation of this project?* The structure that has been established for the continuation of this project involves staffing (funded by the Endowment), guidance by the INFAS host (volunteer faculty member) and governance by the elected Executive Committee comprised of volunteer members of INFAS that each serves three year terms.
3. *What indications are there that this project can (or cannot) be adopted elsewhere?* It is unclear whether this project can (or should) be adopted elsewhere but since it is national in scope, and it is open to new members that agree with the responsibilities and expectations of INFAS members, it is not obviously advantageous, or resource-efficient, to recreate INFAS domestically. Many Network members have international ties and an international network may develop. A key component for success in establishing networks such as INFAS is the availability of funding for stable staffing and the ability to identify a person (or people) with the appropriate blend of network and faculty support experience to take the lead, as appropriate, and effectively engage network members.

Additional Planned Future Activities

4. INFAS sponsorship of a special issue of the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development (JAFSCD) entitled 'Labor in the Food System from Farm to Table'. Publication is scheduled for winter 2015 or spring 2016.
 - 4.1. To advance our commitment to equity in the food system, and as an outcome of our network design process, INFAS is sponsoring this journal issue including that the CDT will write the opening editorial/commentary in which we plan to include the INFAS statement on equity in the food system. The CDT helped develop the call for paper submissions and will assist with reviewing and selecting papers to publish. Several INFAS members plan to submit additional papers for publication in the journal.
 - 4.2. The CDT will use this action to engage additional INFAS members in the network design process and to focus further on social justice and equity in the food system.
 - 4.3. We will also publicize this issue to other networks and use it to engage in discussions on equity beyond the INFAS network. For example, we will advertise and solicit submissions during the 2015 AFHVS meeting this summer in Pittsburgh, PA, including during the INFAS roundtable (see below).
5. WKKF Food Hubs Meeting scheduled for April, 2014 in Louisville, KY.
 - 5.1. Several members of the Core Design Team (CDT) will meet with additional INFAS members to strategize an action plan for the coming year, including planning for the annual INFAS meeting and a larger fall gathering that will be open to the broader INFAS network and strategic partners and focus on developing an INFAS action agenda.
 - 5.2. Several CDT members will participate on a meeting panel entitled 'The Role of Academic Institutions in Creating Equitable Food Hubs and Food Systems.'
6. INFAS Annual Meetings and Roundtable on Collaborations for Equity in the Food System: Progress, Challenges, Priorities scheduled for the 2015 ASFS/AFHVS Conference at Chatham University in Pittsburgh, PA.
 - 6.1. INFAS plans to hold its annual meetings during this meeting.
 - 6.2. An INFAS proposal has been accepted to conduct a roundtable: Collaborations across food system activities (sectors) and actor organizations are recognized to be essential to build political power and greater equity across race, class and gender boundaries; yet many potential collaborators have competing interests and mixed records of inclusivity and efficacy. What leads to successful academic-community partnerships for social equity? What elements have contributed most to the success of past campaigns and strategies for social equity in the food system? What are the current leverage points for creating social equity? Does the promotion of racial equity in the food system require specific actors or strategies? How can power among collaborators be "equalized" to achieve effective working relationships? This roundtable will include presentations by a number of food system practitioners from academia, advocacy groups representing food system workers and others who will talk about progress, challenges, and priorities in building coalitions and collaborations within the food system. The roundtable's discussant will lead a structured discussion with roundtable members and the audience with questions and topics drawn from speaker contributions.
7. Fall/Winter 2015 INFAS and Community Outreach Workshop. The CDT is planning to launch the outcomes of the Network Design process in a face-to-face meeting with a broad membership of INFAS, as well as strategic partners, during an INFAS-sponsored two day workshop. Tentative plans for the workshop include (currently under discussion):
 - 7.1. Dissemination and group discussion on network design outcomes with the focus on moving towards network action.

- 7.2. Open space for participants to self-select and divide into smaller working groups to take the collaboratively developed ideas the necessary step further and start diving into proposed actions.
- 7.3. Desired Outcomes: Formation of several working groups to pursue specific agenda pieces that will inspire group members to engage in network action which will be developed and refined over the following months.

Dissemination

1. What information or evaluation findings from your project have been made available to the field and how? INFAS publications, reports, governance and processes are publicly available on the INFAS website maintained by the INFAS Coordinator and hosted at the Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI) at UC Davis: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/programs/infas/infas-reports>. INFAS members have held (or participated in) a number of workshops at meetings that range from purely academic to those with community member and activist partners, e.g. the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society meeting, the WKKF Food and Community Gathering, and the Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (see *activities*.) INFAS members published two open-access commentaries in the previous year including 'Critical research needs for successful food systems adaptation to climate change' and 'Food webs and food sovereignty: Research agenda for sustainability'. INFAS maintains an active email listserv with 70+ members, with additional members added regularly. This email listserv is the primary method for communication within the INFAS network and members share a range of information and opportunities related to sustainable agriculture, food systems, education, and social justice.
2. What plans do you have, if any, at this time for disseminating information about your project? INFAS is sponsoring a special issue of the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development (JAFSCD), entitled 'Labor in the Food System from Farm to Table', which will be published in the coming year. The INFAS Core Design Team (CDT) will author an opening editorial/commentary in which we plan to include our statement on equity in the food system and information about the INFAS network. Three members of the CDT are participating in the 2015 WKKF Food Hubs meeting including serving as panelists and moderator for the 'Role of Academic Institutions in Creating Equitable Food Hubs and Food Systems' plenary panel. Later this summer CDT members will facilitate a roundtable entitled 'Collaborations for Equity in the Food System: Progress, Challenges, Priorities' at the 2015 Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society (AFHVS) meeting. These activities, including the annual INFAS meeting during the AFHVS meeting, are strategically leading towards a larger academic:activist:community workshop planned for this fall/winter in which CDT members will facilitate a 2-3 day event that will focus on moving the network to collective action. We envision this occurring through group discussions to frame the current realities and desired future food system and that will include the outcomes of the network design process and the statement on equity in the food system, followed by collective brainstorming of an action agenda. Finally, participants will self-select a working group to join to begin fleshing out a particular action topic that they feel most interested in and committed to.

Project Director's Opinion

1. What do you think are the most important outcomes and "lessons learned" from this project?
 - a. The most important outcome of this project was that we learned that social justice, and specifically racial equity, will bring network members to the table to work collaboratively, and put in large amounts of their time. We learned that INFAS members felt moved to do this but they just didn't know how to do it on their own.
 - b. A significant lesson learned was that having relationships built is a required foundation to establishing trust, which, in turn, is crucial to exploring and expanding boundaries and comfort zones.
2. What recommendations would you make to other project directors working in this area or to the Foundation?
 - a. With respect to establishing and enabling Networks, we learned that we needed a professional process consultant to help facilitate the network design process. It was highly valuable that WKKF provided INFAS support partly as an endowment and partly as a current-use gift as the latter enabled the hiring of a process consultant.
 - b. It was really important in our process that we were not required to spend the current-use gift right away. It turned out that we needed some time, as a Network, to explore and consider several avenues of action, some of which turned out to be dead-ends. Not having a strict timeline to spend the current-use gift enabled us to more fully engage network members in dialog about activities and more carefully (and wisely) choose the path forward.



Annual Narrative Report Guidelines

Evaluation Questions for Grant P301281

- Was an effective governance structure established?

The INFAS Executive Committee (EC) was established in a previous project year. The nine-member committee includes six regular and three *ex officio* members. All members guide INFAS activities; regular members advise INFAS host Thomas Tomich and INFAS Coordinator Joanna Friesner on the allocation of funds, and facilitate communication and evaluation of INFAS activities to Tomich and the Dean of the UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Members serve staggered terms to allow overlap with replacement members and provide continuity.

- How were issues identified for the network to address or coordinate joint activities and responses?
 1. Annual INFAS meetings: The third annual INFAS meeting was held this past project year during the 2014 WKKF Food and Community gathering in Detroit, Michigan. The next annual meeting is scheduled for June 2015 during the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Meeting at Chatham University (an INFAS member) located in Pittsburgh, PA. The annual meetings include a general network meeting, open to all INFAS members and interested guests, and a second small INFAS executive committee (EC) meeting that is closed to the executive committee, the INFAS host (Tom Tomich) and the INFAS Coordinator (Joanna Friesner). The EC meeting follows the general meeting and is concerned primarily with governance issues such as approving the budget and Coordinator workplan. The EC meeting ends with an evaluation discussion of the INFAS host and Coordinator (who leave the room during the discussion, returning to hear a report back from the EC Chair.) The annual meetings, in conjunction with the INFAS email listserv, are the primary platform for the network to address or coordinate joint activities and responses. In the past project year, the INFAS membership discussed the INFAS statement on equity in the food system and provided input to the Core Design Team (CDT); one piece of valuable feedback was a recommendation for the CDT to draft a preamble to the Statement that would provide a broader framework for the statement.
 2. INFAS virtual meetings: The INFAS CDT convened regular (biweekly to monthly) virtual meetings as part of the network design process. To inform the virtual meetings, additional INFAS members were engaged via digital communication including the INFAS email listserv.
 3. INFAS email listserv: The INFAS email listserv has a subscriber base of about 70 members that regularly circulate information within the Network. All members are invited to share opportunities via the listserv; frequently shared items include employment listings, calls for action, meetings and gatherings, funding notices, relevant publications, education opportunities, and blog postings and other relevant information.
 4. INFAS administration and host: Network host Thomas Tomich has connections to a diverse array of networks spanning many disciplines and stakeholder groups. This places him in a key position to act as a conduit for information flow and to assess numerous opportunities for activities, resources, and shared collaboration. Network Coordinator Joanna Friesner meets weekly with Tomich to assess potential opportunities arising from his various connections and those from the INFAS committees and the broader Network membership.

- Is there evidence that providing for the endowed chairs to function as a network has raised the national profile of the science of sustainability?
 1. We have some evidence that providing for the endowed chairs to function as a network has raised the national profile of the science of sustainability as well as on academic:community relationships, networks, and commitment to social justice in the food system. INFAS is sponsoring a special issue of the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development (JAFSCD) entitled 'Labor in the Food System from Farm to Table'. Publication is scheduled for winter 2015 or spring 2016. Based in part on the prestige and scholarship of several of the endowed chairs participating on the Core Design Team (CDT), INFAS will contribute the opening journal editorial and commentary where we will publicize more broadly the INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System (developed in the CDT network design process.). We will also use that platform to comment on the science of sustainability and to articulate goals for the desired state of sustainable agriculture and food systems. We will also use this action as an opportunity to engage additional INFAS members in the network design process and disseminate our focus on social justice and equity in the food system.
 2. A second national scale activity involving some of the INFAS endowed chairs is ongoing engagement with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC). Several members started discussions with Ferd Hoefner, NSAC's Policy Director, to develop a plan for mutually beneficial interactions and support. For example, to encourage more INFAS members to join NSAC as Participating Member and have them provide input on the NSAC Research Committee listserv. NSAC schedules regular calls several times a year between the NSAC research committee and interested INFAS members. NSAC plans to ask for technical information and resources from INFAS relevant to specific Requests for Applications (RFAs) or emerging research areas. In follow-up work to the Network Design process INFAS members will work to develop a research agenda and engage with NSAC to help them frame larger discussions. INFAS members will develop a protocol for engagement with NSAC in response to national level policy topics. Several INFAS members plan to serve on USDA review panels as individuals and provide input to National Program Leaders about research approaches in areas of sustainability science.