



Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network
Partenariat sur l'économie sociale et la durabilité
Bridging, Bonding, and Building / Renforcement des liens et des capacités



Mobilization around Food Security

Within the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships (CSERP): A National Scan

Canadian Association for Studies in Cooperation
Annual Meetings, June 5 – 7, 2008. UBC.

Cooperative Renewal: Cooperatives in the Twenty-
First Century

Session: Cooperation and Mobilization: Building
Food Security through the Canadian Social
Economy Research Projects.

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Social Sciences and Humanities
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Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

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Background

- **Food security** exists when an individual or a community has access to sufficient nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods that are produced, procured and distributed in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just (adapted from Fairholm, 1998).
- **The Social Economy*** is an economy based on human values and the principles of solidarity and mutual self-help, collective entrepreneurship, commitment to community service, autonomous management, democratic decision making, primacy of people over profits, principles of participation and empowerment.
see <http://www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic> for further discussion on the Social Economy
- **CSERP:** Nodes and National Partners involved in the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funded research on the Social Economy.



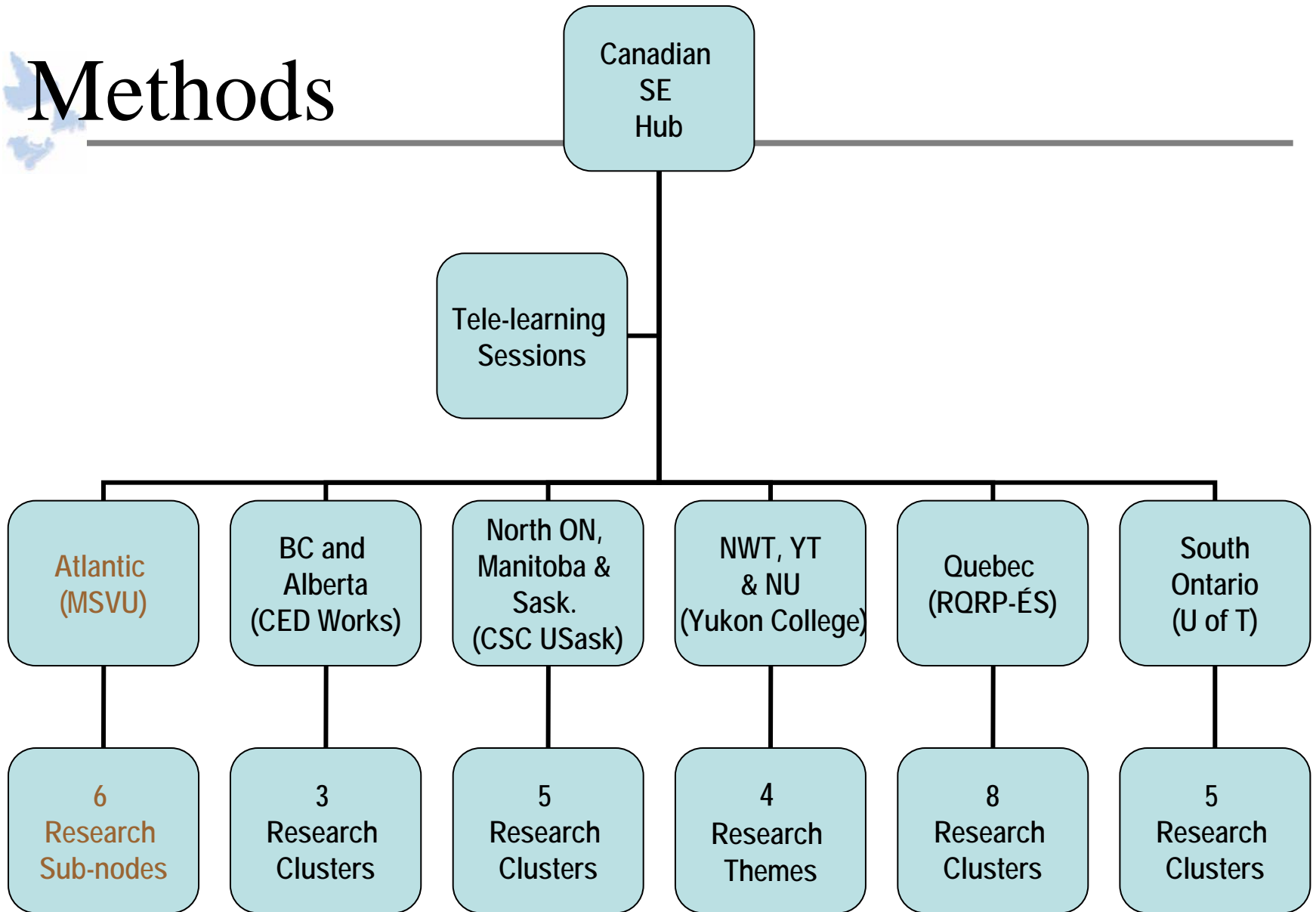


Purpose and Objectives

- to fuel discussions within the SES Node on further potential collaborations at the local or national level
- to create a document that identified food security research projects and partners within CSERP, opportunities for regional or national collaboration, and gaps in the food security research fabric
- Today: highlight community and university based research projects working within the social economy to build food security CSERP, with a specific focus on the role of cooperatives.



Methods





Continuum of CFS Strategies

McCullum C, Desjardins E, Kraak VI, Ladipo P, Costello H. Evidence-based strategies to build community food security. Journal of the American Dietetic Association. 2005;105(2):278.

Stage 1: Initial food systems change

- small but significant changes to existing food systems



Stage 2: Food systems in transition

- Establishing or strengthening social infrastructure to connect food system through capacity building, partnerships and networks



Stage 3: Food systems redesign for sustainability

- Advocacy and public policies that integrate different policy fields to increase a community's food self-reliance and achieve nutritional goals.



Results

Building Community Food Security Through Research within CSERP





Initial Food Systems Changes

- Cooperative Case Studies (BCICS/Hub)
- Citizen Farmer Cooperative (Atlantic)
documentation of development process
- Beef Marketing Studies/ Penokean Hills (N.Ont)
 - Phase 1: assessing demand for local beef, feasibility of cooperative approach
 - Phase 2: create a marketing strategy, increase awareness of local beef, as well as networking and knowledge sharing (beginning transitional food systems)
- Cooperative Marketing Options for Organic Ag. (Prairies)
inventory of Saskatchewan experience in co-operative marketing
- Harvest Moon Society (Prairies)





Transitional Food Systems

- Citizen Farmer Cooperative (Atlantic)
mobilization of farmers and citizens
- Penokean Hills Beef Marketing Study (N.Ont)
... networking and knowledge sharing
- Harvest Moon Society
- Coopérative Agricole La 'Récolte de chez-nous' / The Really Local Harvest Farmer's Cooperative (Atlantic)
- Cooperatives and the Future of Food (Hub/CCEDNet)





Sustainable Food Systems

- Cooperatives and the Future of Food (Hub/CCEDNet)

Collaborative networks support research and policy analysis leading to supportive legislation





Challenges and Limitations

- Income related food insecurity
- Northern
- Aboriginal
- **Policy**
 - To support cooperative food systems
 - many projects on policy analysis, development, advocacy, etc;
 - Few actualized





Opportunities

For Collaboration

- Communities have unique food security needs
- Need for multiple approaches across the continuum
- Need for collaboration across stages of continuum
 - E.g.: initial education project facilitates collaboration
 - One of the cooperative principles is education
- Need to work towards systemic change
- Filling in gaps
- Tele-learning session to build on this session (CSERP)
- CCEDNet Food Policy Working Group
- Cooperative Secretariat (Dept of Ag, FEDERAL)
- Canadian Cooperative Association, Co-op Development arm
- International Cooperative Alliance: Agriculture interest





Opportunities

For Further Food Studies Research

- How do we make connections between income- and food systems-related food insecurity work
- Role and potential of regional and national networks
- Role and potential of cooperatives
- *Other opportunities will hopefully arise today*



Role of Food Cooperatives

- **Potentially to deal on a local level with:**
 - problems of small-scale farm attrition; centralization,
 - globalization of food; environmental degradation and energy waste.
Farmer-Citizen Cooperative
- **Increase social cohesion and social capital:**
 - within immediate marketing group,
 - within larger communities
 - among the diverse food system stakeholders. Harvest Moon Society
- **Development of partnerships/collaborative communities:**
 - Composting facility and farmers. Very Local Harvest Cooperative
 - Coop. producers, distributors, lobbyists. Cooperatives and the Future of Food
- **Influencing Policy Development:**
 - Supporting research and analysis. Cooperatives and the Future of Food

