5-2016

La Minga as a model of food justice? : a thesis on the motivations and practices of immigrant and native-citizen growers at La Minga cooperative farm in Prospect, Ky.

Tyler Austin Short
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/etd>

Part of the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Short, Tyler Austin, "La Minga as a model of food justice? : a thesis on the motivations and practices of immigrant and native-citizen growers at La Minga cooperative farm in Prospect, Ky." (2016). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 2410.
<https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/2410>

This Master's Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. This title appears here courtesy of the author, who has retained all other copyrights. For more information, please contact thinkir@louisville.edu.

LA MINGA AS A MODEL OF FOOD JUSTICE?
A THESIS ON THE MOTIVATIONS AND PRACTICES
OF IMMIGRANT AND NATIVE-CITIZEN GROWERS
AT LA MINGA COOPERATIVE FARM IN PROSPECT, KY

By

Tyler Austin Short
B.A., University of Louisville, 2013

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Anthropology

Department of Anthropology
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2016

LA MINGA AS A MODEL OF FOOD JUSTICE?
A THESIS ON THE MOTIVATIONS AND PRACTICES
OF IMMIGRANT AND NATIVE-CITIZEN GROWERS
AT LA MINGA COOPERATIVE FARM IN PROSPECT, KY

By

Tyler Austin Short
B.A., University of Louisville, 2013

A Thesis Approved on
April 22, 2016

by the Following Thesis Committee:

Lisa Markowitz, Thesis Director

Shawn Parkhurst

Catherine Fosl

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the workers, peasants,
gardeners, farmers, indigenous peoples, and the landless
who struggle for justice and sovereignty.

The land belongs to those who work it!
Globalize the struggle!
Globalize hope!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the members of La Minga for participating as subjects of this research project. They welcomed me into the organization, shared their produce, and taught me how to grow food with care for the land. Carla Wallace and her siblings merit particular acknowledgement for sharing their land with La Minga. Their generosity provides the opportunity for community members to exercise their human right to grow food for consumption, sharing, and sale. I would like to thank Dr. Lisa Markowitz for serving as the Director of my thesis committee. Her feedback helped me to write with greater clarity and strength. Her research on local food systems is a major inspiration to my focus on food justice projects in Louisville. I also want to thank Dr. Cate Fosl and Dr. Shawn Parkhurst for serving as committee members. Dr. Fosl's involvement in the local struggle for fair housing and her efforts to carry on the legacy of Anne Braden have inspired me to recognize the interconnections between housing discrimination and food injustice. In addition, Dr. Parkhurst put an incredible amount of energy toward guiding me and many more students over the last couple years. He has helped me recognize the importance of asking questions and regarding the act of writing as a process of thinking, and to him I attribute my understanding that humans make history according to circumstances transmitted from the past. I would like to thank Dr. David Owen and Dr. Jennie Burnet as well. I am honored and grateful to have received critical thinking and writing training from them. I also want to acknowledge Jeneen Wiche. Her course on food and body politics motivated

me to recognize that food comes from the land – not the supermarket shelf – and compelled me to think about the labor power expended by workers at each stage in the commodity supply chain. I would like to acknowledge the Department of Anthropology for providing grants that allowed me to engage in this research project without the threat of financial insecurity. Lastly, I would like to thank my brother and parents for their constant support.

ABSTRACT

LA MINGA AS A MODEL OF FOOD JUSTICE? A THESIS ON THE MOTIVATIONS AND PRACTICES OF IMMIGRANT AND NATIVE-CITIZEN GROWERS AT LA MINGA COOPERATIVE FARM IN PROSPECT, KY

Tyler Short

April 22, 2016

Progressive and radical stakeholders in the local food system call for forms of agricultural production and distribution that dialectically oppose the dominant paradigm of corporate-controlled agribusiness. This ethnographic research engages with the question of whether La Minga is a model of food justice. I collected ethnographic data from May 2015 to March 2016 via informal conversations and semi-structured interviews with members of the farm as well as secondary data gleaned from literature on anarchism, political economy, and food and agriculture. La Minga serves as a small-scale example of immigrants and native-citizens exercising their human right to produce healthy, culturally-appropriate food according to self-determined purposes. The values of the nonprofit organization and the routine practices of growers are indicative of the farm project's mission to realize more equitable and inclusive local food systems, specifically by providing garden access and increasing the availability of sustainably-produced foods among growers' households and social networks.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Methods.....	5
B. Literature Review.....	9
CHAPTER TWO	
INTERCONNECTIONS: BACKGROUND TO LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS.....	25
A. The Landscape of Alternative Agrifood Institutions.....	26
B. The Landscape of Food (In)security and Food (In)justice.....	34
CHAPTER THREE	
LA MINGA: “COLLECTIVE WORK FOR COLLECTIVE GOOD”.....	44
A. History of the Farm.....	45
B. Values and Principles: Permaculture, Participatory Democracy, and Collective Work for Collective Good.....	55
CHAPTER FOUR	
LA MINGA A MODEL OF FOOD JUSTICE?.....	77
A. Grower Profiles: Routine Behavior and the Benefits of Gardening.....	78
B. Tensions and Problems.....	115
CHAPTER FIVE	
CONCLUSION.....	127
REFERENCES.....	134
APPENDICES.....	143
CURRICULUM VITA.....	159

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This ethnographic thesis project focuses on the organizational dynamics, production activities, and distribution practices of growers at La Minga Cooperative Farm in Prospect, KY. At the end of the 2015 growing season, the farm consisted of ten members with garden plots – including myself – and an additional three participants who began the assembly of an aquaponics system in the greenhouse. Members cultivated a variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers for consumption, sharing, and sale. Six of the thirteen farm participants were foreign-born citizens, and the others were native US citizens. Only three growers produced crops for market sale, one of whom lives in the farmhouse and has coordinated the project since its formation in 2009. Participant observation fieldwork entailed working in my garden and hanging out with research subjects, occasionally helping them with tasks like weeding and harvesting. As a first-year gardener and member of the farm, my “embodied” (Holmes 2013:35) and participatory approach to producing and analyzing data allowed me to gain an insider’s perspective on the physical and social realities of farming at La Minga. Also, my positionality as a student researcher led me to analyze the organization and individual growers from an outsider’s perspective largely informed by theories stemming from anarchism (Graeber 2004; Solnit 2009:90; see also Shannon et al. 2012:11; Spannos 2012:42), Marxian critiques of political economy (Marx 1978[1848]:474; Graeber 2007:85; Wolf 2010[1982]:73; Harvey 2014:294; see also White 2012:117), and

literature on food and agriculture (Scott 1998:292; Allen 2004:21; Desmarais 2007; Wolford 2010; Wittman et al. 2010; Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Holt-Gimenez 2011:309; Field and Bell 2013).

I developed the following questions to guide the research and writing processes. What motivates growers to produce food at La Minga? What are the key values and procedures of growers' production activities and distribution practices? What is the structure of the nonprofit organization, and to what extent do individual members contribute to realizing the collective missions established by the farm leadership? I utilize the concepts of 'structure' in reference to the totality of "social relations, economic arrangements, political processes, cultural categories, norms, values, and ideals" of the organization (Ortner 2010[1984]:516). These lines of inquiry are intended to problematize the banality of gardening and the power dynamics that characterize the internal politics of the group. As Wolford (2010:6) points out regarding her ethnographic fieldwork with members of the Landless Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil, "[Focusing] on ordinary people, everyday political economies, and common sense... is often not pretty; it is gossip, it is petty power struggles, and it is storytelling." My daily fieldwork involved documenting and analyzing the agency of members as well as various contradictions to the organization's narrative that vanguard growers hinge to notions of a group united in diversity (Zavala 2016), organized horizontally (Zavala 2013b), and motivated by the vision of "an educational, communitarian, and open space for sustainable production" (Escobar 2016).

I offer the findings of this research as "a gift" to the members of La Minga with hope that my conclusions could inform strategic planning sessions, particularly

concerning critical tactics that could strengthen the on-the-ground dynamics and public relations of the organization (Graeber 2004:12). A key purpose of this study is to evaluate La Minga's strengths and weaknesses based on the documents produced by the Board in 2013 as part of their filing for recognition as an education-oriented 501(c)(3) nonprofit (Zavala 2013a; 2013b; see Appendix A, B). These documents can be used to hold members accountable for their actions and duties, resolve conflicts among the group, and chart pathways for achieving short- and long-term goals (see the end of Section IIIB for discussion of documents). The practical and theoretical implications of La Minga are also important to elucidate for "stakeholders" in the local food system, e.g. academics, activists, policy-makers, business leaders, landowners, farmers, and farmworkers (CFA 2015); thus, another core objective of this research project is to identify main features of the La Minga model. Free-of-cost access to garden plots and water stands out as the most fundamental attribute, and the Wallace family makes this possible by sharing part of their third-generation, six-hundred-acre property with the organization. La Minga's approach to sustainable food production represents an incipient yet viable model for implementing similar projects aimed at expanding access to garden space for aspiring growers and healthy products for local eaters.

My argument revolves around the topic of food justice, which agroecologist Eric Holt-Gimenez (2011:319–323) defines as a progressive trend in the alternative food movement. Food justice activists repudiate the dominant "corporate food regime," i.e. the "rule-governed" structure of food production and distribution based on fossil fuels and the dominance of global monopolies, and they embed human rights discourse into their call for and participation in "a gradual, grassroots-driven transition to a more equitable

and sustainable food system” (Ibid.). I take inspiration from members of local organizations who practice food justice, such as individuals associated with New Roots Inc. and Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL) who emphasize that access to fresh food is a basic human right. My main claim is that La Minga is a small-scale example of immigrants and native-citizens exercising their right to produce healthy, culturally-appropriate food according to self-determined purposes. I regard the values of the nonprofit organization and the routine practices of growers as indicative of the farm project’s mission to realize a more equitable local food system, specifically by providing garden access and increasing the availability of sustainably-produced foods among growers’ households and social networks.

In the following section I present my methodology and discuss my fieldwork. I also point out the major themes that emerged over the course of data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of theory that animates this ethnographic work, gleaned from literature on anarchist social organization, capitalist political economy, and alternative food and agriculture movements. The first half of Chapter Two surveys the local food scene. In the second half I analyze whether initiatives to increase access to fresh food are equitably distributed across the city. I also locate La Minga in local context by focusing on the three market-oriented growers’ distribution practices and a few members’ roles with Community Farm Alliance (CFA). Chapter Three begins with a temporal situating of La Minga. I briefly look at the history of the Wallace family, the use of their six-hundred-acre property in Prospect, and the origin of La Minga. The subsequent section provides a window into the organizational structure of La Minga Inc., an education-oriented nonprofit. I highlight the values that underpin the

power dynamics and agricultural practices within the collective. The next chapter consists of ethnographic profiles pertaining to each grower during the 2015 growing season. My aim is to explicate the motivations, production methods, and distribution practices of those twelve individuals because their stories support my argument that the farm project largely succeeds in its collective mission to foster a space where anyone can exercise their human right to grow and eat healthy food. I conclude Chapter Four by uncovering a series of tensions and problems that occurred between members of the farm project. The interrelated subjects of coordination, communication, and financial resources stand out as common threads that run through most tensions among the organization. In the final chapter, I summarize my argument by grappling with the open question of whether La Minga is a model of food justice.

A. Methodology

This research project mainly entailed participant observation fieldwork at La Minga (the IRB qualified this study as “exempt”). Data collection lasted from late May 2015 until March 2016. I collected primary data by conducting semi-structured interviews and engaging in informal conversations with research participants. I used an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions (see Appendix C). Semi-structured interviews were largely aimed at eliciting responses concerning growers’ gardening motivations, production activities, and distribution practices. The sample population for this study entailed a total of seventeen subjects. The sample size for La Minga was thirteen research participants, six of whom immigrated to the US within the last couple decades. I also interviewed leaders of a few local nonprofit organizations – La Casita Center, New Roots

Inc., and Catholic Charities of Louisville Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program (RAPP) – in order to understand their roles in the local food and immigrant rights movements as well as the extent to which they associate with La Minga members. I collected secondary data from maps, news articles, and scholarly publications pertaining to Louisville and the local food scene specifically. I also referenced secondary data from ethnographies, NGO reports, and journal articles in order to situate La Minga into the contexts of food and agricultural political economies as well as social and environmental justice movements.

My methodology was aimed at gaining an insider perspective of growers' daily experiences at the farm. I gardened alongside research subjects during the summer and autumn months in order to understand their production activities. Borrowing from the work of medical anthropologist Seth Holmes (2013:34), I employed an “embodied” approach to fieldwork. I generated qualitative data in the forms of field notes about sensory experiences within natural and social settings, such as: the aches in my body after hours of hard work; the lightening of my hair and darkening of my skin from sun exposure; bug bites; calloused hands; the smell of plants while working in the fields; noises on the farm like birds and nearby traffic; the taste of fresh produce; and the experience of working on hot and humid summer days. I collected quantitative data in the forms of food prices, crop yields, spacing between crops, and the distance between the farm and growers' residences (see Bernard 2011:257).

While at the farm, I played the dual role of a first-year member and a student researcher. Balancing emic and etic perspectives proved difficult because insider and outsider points of view are dialectically linked. Insights gained during participatory

fieldwork informed my outsider’s perspective of La Minga, and my etic understanding of the farm project’s role in the local food scene served as a lens for perceiving the production and distribution activities of growers as well as the nonprofit organization as a whole. Anthropologist Catherine Allen (2002:18) describes the slow process of learning a new *habitus* by noting how ethnography entails “paying attention to aspects of behavior that are second nature” to research subjects. In this regard, my objective was to adopt an emic perspective on working the land and participating in the organization. With an insider’s point of view, I examined patterns of behavior like planting techniques and harvesting routines. I also focused on the material structures that shaped possibilities, e.g. the landscape, as well as the shared sets of symbols utilized by growers, such as *minga* and *milpa* (see Murchison 2010:95). Attempts to shift my point of view involved working in my garden and hanging out with research subjects, and after leaving the field site each day, I engaged in data analysis with an outsider’s perspective and drew preliminary conclusions that informed subsequent fieldwork experiences.

I relied on secondary data and theory in order to contextualize primary data (see Murchison 2010:93). I coded and sorted data according to key themes – words, ideas, material culture, events, and processes – deriving from field notes, interview transcripts, and photographs produced during fieldwork (Murchison 2010:178). All analysis was completed by hand. The following table indicates the main categories of themes that emerged from my research at La Minga and other field sites like farmers’ markets and community centers.

Production	Distribution	Motivations of Members	Organization and Power
land, water	self- consumption	self- employment	participatory democracy
seeds	sharing, gifting	hobby, develop skillsets	celebrate cultural heritage
tools	market sale	friendships with members	inclusivity

training	profit	therapy, physical activity	diversity
permaculture	dinner parties	connect with nature	equity
sustainability	Harvest Festival	social change	community-building
individual and collective projects	community access to healthy food	household nutrition, fresh food procurement	articulation and tension of individuals and the collective

These themes derive from the organization's constitution and related documents, informal conversations, and semi-structured interviews. The category of production comprises the means and procedures by which members cultivate the land. The categories of distribution and motivations overlap and capture the variety of reasons why members participate at the farm. Those classified according to organization and power shed light on the internal politics and public relations of the nonprofit. In the final chapter, I revisit these themes and discuss the range of problems and tensions that emerged over the course of data collection and analysis.

The time span of data collection and my lack of Spanish fluency were the major limitations of this study. A handful of growers speak Spanish as their native languages, and most of them stated that they did not feel comfortable speaking English. Most informal conversations included a mix of Spanish and English, but all interviews were done in English. Thus, my lack of Spanish fluency limited my ability to collect information concerning growers' motivations and strategies. The procedures of plot and crop rotation were largely missed because of the limited temporal scope of this project. I entered the field at the end of May 2015, and most gardeners already had crops planted by that time. Data collection ended in March 2016, weeks before the majority accessed plots for the year. During that time span, I mainly witnessed and documented the transition from spring to summer, end-of-year procedures, several winter events, and some spring preparations for the annual growing season.

B. Literature Review

Food-systems scholar Patricia Allen (2004:21) argues that present-day food and farm movements concentrate primarily on “sustenance and sustainability,” categories which she anchors to the interdisciplinary themes of food, environment, and livelihood. The main points of her analysis concerning the broad topic of food range from safety standards to the accessibility and nutritional quality of products. The theme of environment addresses the use of natural resources and the ecological effects of agricultural production. Her examination of livelihood and life chances calls into question patterns of land ownership, the working conditions experienced by farm laborers, and the corporate consolidation of international markets for land, seeds, credit, etc. Allen’s categories of sustainability and sustenance as well as the themes of food, environment, and livelihood largely encapsulate the practical and theoretical dimensions of members’ day-to-day activities at La Minga and the long-term missions of the organization.

As an education-oriented 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the leadership of La Minga not only intends to coordinate permaculture-inspired activities on-site but also to engage with community members via an array of social, economic, and political networks beyond the farm. The group’s constitution states that the farm project aims to work with partners and associates in order to accomplish the following movement-building goals: A) build community-centered food systems that ensure nutritious food for all residents, B) develop prosperous livelihoods for farmers in and around Louisville, in the US, and globally, C) form and maintain food systems that are inclusive, equitable, healthy, and sustainable, and D) educate on policies relating to healthy local food economies (Zavala 2013a; see Appendix A). The foremost and immediate mission of La Minga is to encourage

sustainable production by facilitating access to land, training, and other resources for members to work in a diverse and cooperative environment founded on shared intentions to produce healthy food for consumption, sharing, or sale (Ibid.).

Although I focus on “real people doing real things,” social theory is needed to understand and elucidate the major themes – production, distribution, motivations, and organization/power – that emerged from data produced via daily participant observation at the farm throughout the summer and autumn months (Wolf 2010[1982]:xx). I also situate into theoretical frameworks information collected from La Minga planning meetings, holiday gatherings, and community events during the winter months of 2015–2016. Perspectives that make intelligible the case of La Minga come from literature on food and agriculture, political economy, and anarchism.

Key Concepts in the Alternative Food and Agriculture Movement

Stephen ‘Esteban’ Bartlett – the Director of Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL) and a Board member of La Minga Inc. – invited me to attend the Agricultural Missions Inc. (AMI) 2015 Study Session that occurred in late October. AMI is a New York-based ecumenical organization (est.1930) with a global model of advocacy and accompaniment centered on ending the poverty and injustice that rural communities struggle to overcome. Esteban works as the AMI Coordinator for Education and Advocacy, and he facilitated the Study Session at Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church in East Louisville. The whole event was titled “The Socio-Ecological Crisis, Immigration, and Food Sovereignty.” The two panel discussions included: “Climate, Agriculture, and Immigration” and “Immigration, Agriculture, and Community Resilience.” The first panel included a *campesino* from Nicaragua representing the Esquipulas Agricultural

Project, two AMI Board members, and Nelson Escobar, a coordinator and co-founder of La Minga. The second consisted of the Director of the Catholic Charities of Louisville Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program (RAPP), an immigrant rights activist, and two additional members of La Minga – Yedith, a maize expert, and Elmer, a representative of Hispanic-Latino Ministries as well as the President of La Minga Inc.’s Board of Directors.

Esteban began the Study Session by emphasizing the need to examine root causes of socio-economic inequality, human migration, and climate change. Without elucidation, he commented that the “many structural issues” of capitalism have contributed to causing and exacerbated the crises identified by AMI. The particular focus on rural livelihoods was rooted in the notion that ecologically-oriented solutions to unsustainable agricultural practices must come “from those working the land” (Bartlett 2015). Esteban made a reference to La Via Campesina (the Peasant Way) and noted that the base of the movement for social and environmental justice includes grassroots organizations and coalitions of peasants, small- and medium-scale family farmers, farmworkers, ranchers, and fishers; in addition, he stated that most members of Via Campesina live in the Global South, and they articulate their agro-ecological paradigm in terms of the struggle for food sovereignty. Esteban briefly claimed that food sovereignty is a radical departure from the concept of food security because proponents of the latter often fail to consider – hence, not work to resolve – the causes of hunger and, more broadly, food insecurity. Bartlett said that the most general cause of food insecurity is lack of economic or physical access – not the lack of supply – but he did not further explain how the alternative vision for food sovereignty differs from the mainstream notion of food security.

Food security, food justice, and food sovereignty are major topics within the present-day social and environmental justice movement for sustainable agriculture. In response to unprecedented increases of world prices for staple foods, the UN developed the concept of food security at the 1974 World Food Conference in Rome (Allen 2004:42). The initial denotation aimed at ensuring national and global supplies of basic foodstuffs, and the conference concluded with Member States committing to a universal declaration on the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, a goal unmet despite the drastic increase of worldwide food production and the “dumping” of the Global North’s agricultural surplus – produced with state subsidies – into the South (Holt-Gimenez 2011:315). The FAO modified the definition over successive decades in order to emphasize physical and economic access to food for individuals, households, communities, and regions (Wittman et al. 2010:3).

The FAO’s (2006:1) definition of food security was adopted at the 1996 World Food Summit: “Food security exists when all people, at all time, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” Similarly, USDA (2015b) characterizes food security at the household level and defines the term as, “Access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.” USDA (Ibid.) further explains, “Food security includes at a minimum: the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods; and assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies.” Allen (2004:23) points out the axiomatic notion that poverty is the primary cause of food insecurity within market economies. Despite decades of international

attention, the WFP (2016) estimates one in nine people currently suffer from hunger and undernourishment worldwide. Fourteen percent of US households and seventeen and half percent of households in Kentucky were food insecure in 2014 (Feeding America 2014). On the local level, Dare to Care Food Bank (2016) estimates one in six residents of Kentuckiana – the area comprising eight counties in northwestern Kentucky and five counties in Southern Indiana – experience food insecurity.

Holt-Gimenez (2011:323) characterizes food security discourse as a vital part of the corporate food regime's reformist trend, which is led by UN agencies, humanitarian aid organizations, and socially-conscious business leaders. Proponents of the food security concept call for strengthening social safety nets like SNAP, food banks, and international food aid (Ibid.). Those institutions, however, rely on USDA commodity surpluses and financial sponsorship from government, multinational corporations, and philanthropic foundations (Ibid.). Food security advocates react to the socio-ecological crises unleashed not only by neoliberal patterns of deregulation and privatization over the last thirty years but also the government- and corporate-driven introduction of industrial agricultural technologies into the Global South during the 1960s and 1970s (Ibid.). The Green Revolution greatly expanded the use and dependence on genetically-modified seeds, synthetic fertilizers, and other agrochemical inputs, which ultimately prompted a global shift to an oil-based economy, the loss of ninety percent of the Global South's biodiversity, and the displacement of millions of peasants to urban slums where they became "a reserve army of labor" (Ibid.; Marx 1867 *In* Desmarais 2007:3). The overall aim of corporate food regime reformists is "to mainstream less inequitable and less environmentally damaging alternatives into existing market structures," such as Fair

Trade and certified Organic products supplied to consumers by conventional retailers. If the broad concept of food security charts no pathways for fundamentally transforming existing structures of agricultural production and distribution, what are some alternative visions (Allen 2004:46; Wittman et al 2010:3)?

Food justice discourse is foundational for progressives within the current-day constellation of alternative agrifood movements (Allen 2004: 65; Holt-Gimenez 2011:323; Markowitz 2012:532). The NY-based nonprofit organization Just Food (*In Alkon and Agyeman 2011:5*) defines food justice as “communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food, i.e. food that is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers, and animals.” The concept of food justice problematizes the racialized and class-based effects of corporate- controlled production and distribution. Alkon and Agyeman (2011:5) highlight the prevalence of “food deserts” or “food swamps” in poor and non-white communities in which residents experience limited or no access to healthy options because of food prices, store location, and transportation (see section IIB). Groups like the D-Town Farmers in Detroit stress the importance for those most marginalized by agribusiness – such as low-income and minority populations burdened by supermarket and housing redlining – to lead initiatives geared toward meeting food needs within their respective communities (Ibid.). Farmers’ markets, urban gardens, farm-to-table programs, institutional purchasing, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) are chief elements of the food justice trend (Allen 2004:64; Holt-Gimenez 2011:324). Food policy councils are another expression of the food justice movement that brings various local food stakeholders “together at the table” in order to develop solutions to the range of social-

ecological tragedies engendered by the capitalist political economy of food and agriculture (Allen 2004:3; Desmarais 2007:3; Holt-Gimenez 2011:324).

The main challenge for food justice activists is to address food emergencies – hunger, food insecurity, and environmental degradation – while gradually working toward bringing about the “regime change” needed for ensuring equity and sustainability in local, regional, and global food systems (Holt-Gimenez 2011:325). The progressive agenda of food justice must be merged with the radical vision of food sovereignty in order for the alternative food movement to systematically tackle poverty and hunger. Calls for food sovereignty pinpoint root causes of food insecurity, such as the historical and interrelated problems of poverty, unjust land tenure, exploitative wage systems, institutional racism, sexism, corporate control over government, and the devastating effects of resource depletion and climate change (Wolford 2010:59; Masioli *In* Wittman et al. 2010:35; Desmarais 2011:203; Holt-Gimenez 2011:324; Holmes 2013:78; Sassen 2014:154). Advocates of food sovereignty organize on various political scales in order to repudiate the dominance of high modernist agribusiness, and they struggle to democratize, re-localize, and re-integrate food and fiber economies (Allen 2004:38; Scott 1998:301; see also CFA 2007; Desmarais 2011:45).

The peasants, family farmers, farmworkers, ranchers, fishers, and landless leading the movement for food sovereignty through Via Campesina demand that those who work the land should have the right to control agricultural policy and productive resources. Via Campesina formed in 1993 and first articulated its radical platform for justice and democracy at the 1996 World Food Summit. Via Campesina’s (*In* Field and Bell 2013:6) seven principles of food sovereignty include:

- 1) Food is a basic human right. Each nation should declare that access to safe, nutritious, and culturally-appropriate food for sustaining a healthy life with full human dignity is a constitutional right.
- 2) Land belongs to those who work it. Agrarian reform is necessary because genuine land redistribution will ensure that landless and farming people – especially women – have ownership and control over the land they work. Territories must be returned to indigenous peoples.
- 3) People who work the land should have the right to practice sustainable management of natural resources and conserve biodiversity free from restrictions inherent to intellectual property rights, specifically with regard to seeds.
- 4) Food is first a source of nutrition and secondarily an item of trade. Nation-states must reprioritize schemes of promoting and supporting food trade among multinational corporations. Agricultural policy should be tailored to domestic consumption, meaning that food imports must not depress prices or displace local production.
- 5) Transnational corporations must be taxed and regulated by multilateral institutions like the WTO, World Bank, and IMF that have facilitated the globalization of hunger.
- 6) Everyone has the right to live free from violence, and food must not be used as a weapon. Increasing poverty and marginalization in the countryside cannot be tolerated.
- 7) Smallholder farmers must have direct input in agricultural policy-making at all levels.

Via Campesina defines food sovereignty as both “the right of peoples to define their agricultural and food policy” and “the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods, respecting cultural and productive diversity” (Desmarais 2007:34; Wittman et al. 2010:2). This concept addresses the pressing question of which institutions are implicated by human rights discourse within the alternative food movement. If national policy and multilateral agreements promoting liberalized agricultural production and trade have engendered the displacement of farmers from their lands and facilitated the monopolization of agribusiness, then nation-states and global institutions like the WTO and IMF must be held accountable for the neoliberal agenda of the corporate food regime that denies poor and marginalized peoples the right to food, land, and a safe and dignified life. In recognition of the estimated three-quarters of the world’s poor live in rural

areas and depend on agriculture for survival, the platform of food sovereignty represents an alternative rural development strategy based on local agroecological knowledge, the democratization of resource control, and grassroots decision-making (Desmarais 2007:21).

Uses of Marxian Theory

At his graveside in 1883, Friedrich Engels lauded the many theoretic contributions of Karl Marx to historical scientists and the militant proletariat worldwide. Engels (1975[1883]:681) highlighted two particular “laws” that Marx discovered: surplus value and the base/superstructure dialectic. Marx (1978[1852]:595) arrived at these groundbreaking conclusions by means of his materialist conception of history. I utilize Marx’s framework to explore crucial questions about the ways in which La Minga members “make history” according to historically-transmitted circumstances, such as growers’ use of land on Carla Wallace’s third generation farm and some members’ involvement in food activism on the local, state, national, and international levels. My primary use of Marxian theory is to understand whether La Minga members’ self-determined agricultural activities and distribution practices contrast the exploitative labor process of capitalist production. In addition, the concept of “modes of production” proves useful for conceptualizing La Minga growers’ direct access to the means of small-scale agriculture and the power dynamics that define social relationships at the farm (Marx 1978[1848]:474). The works of Marx and Marxist theorists are helpful for identifying how research subjects’ production and distribution practices correspond or conflict with typical features of capitalism like the maximization of profit, the experience of alienation

among the working class, and the unsustainable use of natural resources, all of which are captured by considering the interplay between social labor and capital accumulation.

Marx's materialist conception of history developed out of his commitment to studying Hegel and Feuerbach (Patterson 1999:30). He explored Hegel's claim that humans realize their essence through social labor, but Marx situated this notion into the context of a materialist political economy rather than an idealist philosophy; in addition, he built on Feuerbach's conception of alienation in order to explain the concrete and subjective conditions that characterize the exploitation of the working class by the bourgeoisie. Marx theorized that a mode of production, such as capitalism or feudalism, encompasses the means of production – land, tools, skills, and knowledge – and the social relations of production. The division of labor according to class is central to capitalist political economy. The bourgeoisie are capitalists supported by institutions like the Church and the State (Erickson 2010:11). Capitalists own the means of production and buy the labor power of workers, the direct producers of value who lack independent access to those means (Marx 1978[1848]:482). The relationship between capital and labor is thus fundamentally unjust and antagonistic due to the unequal social relations of production and unequal access to the means of production. Marx argued that the capitalist mode of production is historical – rather than 'the natural order of things' – and required the institution of certain prerequisites that permanently severed the feudal ties between direct producers and the land, the principal means of production (Patterson 1999:31).

The profit motive, according to Marx, is both the driving force and *telos* of capitalism (Erickson 2010:11). The bourgeoisie accumulates capital by exploiting the labor of proletarians and the raw materials of the earth. Surplus value or profit is mainly

generated through the process of selling commodities on the market at a higher exchange-value than the costs of production. The value of wages paid to workers is thereby inversely proportional to the profit extracted by capitalists (Marx 1978[1867]:334). Marx emphasized that labor power by nature is not a commodity for workers to sell to capitalists for a wage. Labor power within a capitalist political economy is a commodity, and fluctuations in supply and demand affect the market value of workers – meaning that the alienated workers themselves are commodities and reified instruments of production (Marx 1978[1848]:479). Thus, capitalism is arguably a transformation of slavery; however, instead of the predominant mode of buying labor involving the sale of chattel by second- or third-party owners of such articles of commerce, “we rent out ourselves” based on wage-labor contracts (Graeber 2004:71).

Wolf (2010[1982]:77) notes how Marx, with the support of Engels, spent most of his life analyzing the capitalist mode of production so that he could contribute to putting an end to it. Tucker (1978:xxxi) points out that the basis of Marx’s critique of wage labor was not that wages were too low; instead, his moral condemnation was based on the historical reality that “wage labor by its very nature dehumanizes workers and defeats humans’ natural urge toward spontaneous productive activity, converts humans’ free creativity into forced labor and drudgery, and frustrates the human need for a variety of occupations.” Marx wrote as a staunch proponent for a form of socialism that entailed “a new mode of productive activity” constituted by “the free activities of human beings producing in cooperative association,” and he claimed that the socialization of the means of production through a dictatorship of the proletariat was the primary requisite for such a society (Ibid.). Similar to Marx’s (1978[1875]:531) vision for communist society –

“From each according to his ability, and to each according to his needs!” – La Minga collectively aims to build “an educational, communitarian, and open space” (Escobar 2016) for community members to work toward meeting basic social and food needs.

It is important to consider the interconnections between people, places, and things that make up what feminist geographers J.K. Gibson-Graham (JKGG) (2013:10) refer to as the below-the-waterline diversity of an iceberg economy. JKGG provide support for their claim that economic activity is not fundamentally capitalist. Instead, the representation of an iceberg consists of capitalist wage-labor – what is visible as productive to capital – above the waterline, and the underwater aspects are identified by JKGG (2013:11) as “what possibly keep us afloat as a society,” e.g. education, producer and consumer cooperatives, not-for-market production, self-provisioning, self-employment, barter, informal lending, gifting, volunteering/unpaid work, under-the-table payment, illegal activities, community/neighborhood organizing, friendships, kinship/family, children, the retired, and faith-based organizations. JKGG (2013:7) insist that economies are “outcomes of the decisions we make and the actions we take.” Their reframing model of economic activities serves as a contribution to analytical and ethical discourses about radical strategy and practice centered on how to “take back the economy.”

JKGG (2013:10) note how they take their inspiration for *Take Back the Economy* (2013) from Marx’s materialist conception of history, but they diverge from Marx by offering the iceberg economy as tool for representing the diversity of practices that contribute to social and environmental well-being. Instead of solely categorizing people into antagonistic classes based on economic involvement, JKGG (2013:13) aim to

illuminate the diversity of economic activity that social agents perform “on many fronts.”

JKGG characterize “the diverse economy” as such:

Labor	Enterprise	Transactions	Property	Finance
Wage	Capitalist	Market	Private	Mainstream Market
Alternative Paid	Alternative Capitalist	Alternative Market	Alternative Private	Alternative Market
Unpaid	Noncapitalist	Nonmarket	Open Access	Nonmarket

JKGG (2013:xiii) emphasize that communities worldwide are currently reshaping social, economic, and political institutions with visions of equity and justice. These transformative local, national, and international movements express similar concerns and engage in common tactics for achieving mutual goals within rural and urban areas. Concerns addressed include pressing questions about what we need for living healthy and dignified lives, how we ought to distribute surplus, what types of relationships with people and environments facilitate ‘the good life,’ what materials we should produce/consume, what is necessary for caring for the commons, and how we should store and use our surplus for investing in the future. Responses to such questions are inherently normative and must be historically-grounded by contextualizing material disparities and ideological divisions engendered by social systems of oppression (Bronner 2011:8).

Anarchism

Anarchist scholarship provides conceptual tools for identifying and clarifying the foundational values and routine procedures of La Minga members. Above all, a look at the core aspects of anarchism is needed to understand La Minga’s emphasis on the importance of sharing labor and produce “according to the needs and possibilities” of growers within the collective (Zavala 2013b). From my perspective that merges emic and

etic insight, the principles of mutual aid, individual autonomy, self-organization, and the rejection of inequality constitute the moral basis of La Minga. It is important to note that, on occasion, some La Minga members explicitly voiced their ideals of justice in such terms. Most growers' claims regarding their values and opinions entailed implicit references to these notions of gifting and equitable distribution of productive resources. Although growers have not raised a black or red flag over the farm, I perceive the nonprofit's values of internal equity and non-authoritarianism to reflect a form of social organization inspired by anarchist approaches to ensuring that means and ends remain consonant (Graeber 2004:7). In other words, the farm leadership claims to foster a liberating, cooperative, and educational project by means of horizontal communication and facilitation rather than hierarchical mandates or hegemonic persuasion. Anarchist theory regarding mutual aid and autonomy is particularly crucial for explicating the articulation and tension between agency and structure with respect to individual contributions to collective goals.

Economic anthropologist David Graeber (2004:7) claims that the anarchist principles of mutual aid, voluntary association, self-organization, and the rejection of inequality "refer to forms of human behavior that have been around about as long as humanity." Anarchism denotes,

"[T]he name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government – harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, *freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption*, as also *for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations* of a civilized being" (emphasis added; Kropotkin 1910 in Graeber 2004:1).

Graeber (2004:12) characterizes anarchism not as a theoretical framework but as an attitude and a certain faith in the idea that building "a livable society" is possible. He

critiques socialist intentions to seize state power through “a great revolutionary battle” and instead writes as an active proponent for an anarchist ‘revolution-in-reverse,’ which would entail the processual and consensus-based formation (and continuous transformation) of directly-democratic, anti-authoritarian social relations constituted by a diversity of identity groups organized in active opposition to existing structures of domination and violence (Graeber 2015). Social movements must have means that are consonant with their ends, i.e. freedom is unattainable through authoritarian measures (Graeber 2004:7). Thus, in contrast to the Marxian revolutionary strategy of instituting a dictatorship of the proletariat, Graeber (2004:45) advocates for series of revolutionary actions aimed at reconstituting social relations through strategically “rejecting, resisting, and confronting” State as well as corporate power (Ibid.).

Anarchist social theory is useful for identifying how the three basic principles of direct democracy – self-organization, voluntary association, and mutual aid – underpin the means by which individual and collective agents organize to form the institutions of a new society ‘within the shell of the old’ (Graeber 2004:7). The altruistic principle of mutual aid refers to social relationships by which “every participant is both giver and recipient in acts of care that bind them together” (Solnit 2009:86). Relationships characterized by mutual aid tend to exemplify a balanced form of reciprocal exchange, which is characteristic of egalitarian social relations (Shultz and Lavenda 2014:216). Whereas the unilateral act of charity “hands down from above” and sets the stage for the belittlement and patronization of recipients, mutual aid “reaches across” through expressions of solidarity and radical empathy aimed at cooperatively meeting each other’s needs and aspirations (Solnit 2009:87). Co-participants in mutual aid networks

demonstrate that “giving is itself the gift” because “continual exchanges knit together a society” and are thus fundamental to the realization of community (Ibid.).

The case of La Minga constitutes a fledgling moral economy of food premised on the right of each member to self-determinately grow and consume healthy, culturally-appropriate products. Drawing on political scientist James C. Scott’s *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (1976), Wutich (2011:5) describes “the moral economy” as an alternative social order with two key tenets. First, everyone has the right to access the means of subsistence and survival, and second, each community member is obligated to obey norms of reciprocity through exchanges of gifts in the forms of labor power, surplus produce, and meals (Ibid.). This notion of a moral economy mirrors what JKG (2013:xix) refer to as “a community economy – a space of decision making where we recognize and negotiate our interdependence with other humans, other species, and our environment.” Among peasants, family farmers, and others, participation in moral economies is a matter of survival that allows resource-scarce or risk-prone households to maintain subsistence with help from family, neighbors, and friends when needed (Ibid.). Mutual aid thus engenders “social insurance” for those engaged in repeated exchanges of goods and services (Ibid.).

CHAPTER TWO

INTERCONNECTIONS: BACKGROUND TO LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Food-systems scholar Patricia Allen (2004:7) provides insight to studying alternative agrifood movements. She notes that researchers tend to approach alternatives to corporate-controlled agricultural production and distribution in one of the three ways: 1) to identify and describe alternative practices, 2) to evaluate and classify different types of alternative institutions or practices, and 3) to analyze “specific expressions” of unconventional activities or systems like the direct marketing of produce or the operation of a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) enterprise. Analysis of the local food movement thus requires a focus on the interplay between various parts that constitute whole systems. I mostly limited the scope of my research to the production and distribution activities of La Minga members. Food consumption and waste are additional components to food systems that receive little-to-no attention in this study. Knowledge of these interconnected stages of the food supply chain is fundamental to promoting of healthy eating habits, organizing communities, building rural-urban partnerships, supporting small businesses, strengthening alternative economies, reducing waste, and protecting the commons.

A. The Landscape of Agrifood Institutions

Louisville's local food systems are driven by the participation of community leaders, grassroots organizations, and charities. It is important to embrace this diversity for common ground to be established concerning viable models to rebuild food systems by expanding access among low-income communities and marginalized communities (Hassanein 2003 *In* Markowitz 2012:539). The following categories capture a variety of actors and spaces that constitute the structures of the food systems in Louisville and surrounding areas: 1) farms, 2) community gardens, 3) farmers' markets, 4) Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and Fresh Stops, 5) grocery stores, 6) restaurants that source local produce, 7) food assistance sites like community pantries as well as emergency kitchens and shelters, 8) nonprofits and grassroots organizations, and 9) policy-makers and public universities.

Farms:

Food miles typically determine whether products are local, but the term 'local' sometimes refers to food produced from within a radius of up to two hundred and fifty miles, depending on the sourcing principles of retailers, restaurants, and alternative food distributors like Fresh Stops and consumer cooperatives. Louisville's local food movement thus entails farms located in Kentucky as well as southern Indiana. Poultry, beef cattle, dairy, equine, and swine are major commodities for both states. The main cash crops of Kentucky include corn, soybeans, tobacco, hay, wheat, and timber (KY Farm Bureau 2013:8). Indiana's main cash crops are corn, soybeans, hay, wheat, melons, and mint (IN Dept. of Agriculture 2012:1). White males comprise almost the entire farming populations in Kentucky and Indiana, and the average age of farmers in each state are 57.6 and 55.8, respectively. Farming is the primary occupation of only about

forty two percent of principal farm operators in Kentucky and forty four percent in Indiana. Kentucky has 107 farms with Organic certification, compared to the 282 certified farms in Indiana, and there are at least one hundred more farmers in Kentucky who grow organically but have chosen not to become certified (Plath 2003).

Community Gardens:

Louisville Metro contains at least fifty community garden sites. In addition to the ten gardens managed by the Cooperative Extension Service, twenty seven gardens are open for public use, and another twenty four sites are open but limited to a small group of participants (Kang-Bartlett 2014). Gardens tend to positively impact neighborhoods in a number of ways. The transformation of vacant lots into productive green spaces engenders aesthetic appeal due to the beautiful array of colors, shapes, and sizes. Garden projects facilitate leadership development and bring together people of all ages to work on personal and collective tasks. Participants build stronger community bonds through frequent engagement at the garden sites, which in turn could lead to reduction in crime and vandalism in neighborhoods. Garden participants have direct access to fresh fruits and vegetables, thus contributing to greater food security and household health within neighborhoods. Garden spaces allow for community members to “learn agrarian perspectives, skills, and life-sustaining practices” (Long et al. 2014), and gardens provide opportunities to share surplus as well as to sell produce individually or as a collective. The initial steps of starting a garden include identifying community leaders who know local assets as well as the needs of community members, finding a potential location, testing the soil, and forming a strategic plan to begin and sustain the project. Most gardens in Louisville include at least fifteen plots or raised beds, pathways wide enough for wheelchairs and wheelbarrows, watering systems, fencing around the perimeter,

locked tool sheds, benches or picnic tables, no more than one sign, shared composting areas, and a parking lot (Long et al. 2014). Community gardens are subject to the city Land Development Code, and most community garden sites require gardeners to sign an agreement form that details growers' rights and responsibilities.

Farmers' Markets:

There are about twenty four farmers' markets throughout the city. Farmers' markets in Louisville represent part of the growing popularity of direct-marketing in agriculture nationwide. In 1994 USDA (2014b) reported fewer than two thousand farmers' markets, which increased to three thousand markets five years later, over six thousand in 2010, and up to about eight and a half thousand in 2015. Louisville is situated in the plant hardiness zone 6b that encompasses most of Kentucky as well as the southern portions of states spanning from Connecticut to Kansas, and in this zone the average annual extreme temperature ranges between negative five and zero degrees Fahrenheit. Thus, the annual growing season typically lasts from May 15 until October 15. Most farmers' markets operate during this five-month period. The Bardstown Road market runs throughout the winter months, making this the only year-round farmers' market in the city.

CSAs and Fresh Stops

There is an unknown number of CSAs within the local food system. Unlike the updated lists of farmers' markets featured on government websites and local news reports, records of CSA opportunities are unavailable and would require a census of all gardeners and farmers in Louisville and surrounding areas. In the 2010 publication titled *The State of Food: A Snapshot of Food Access in Louisville*, the Food in Neighborhoods Committee (FiN 2010) estimated that over five hundred individual "shares" were supplied weekly to consumers in Louisville. The CSA model is a direct-market approach

to agriculture. At the beginning of the growing season, consumers register and pay up-front for weekly boxes of produces, thereby becoming shareholders for the season. Depending on the farmers' capacity to supply a variety of produce, consumers either select from a list the items desired each week or simply sign-up and receive whatever items the farmer supplies in the share. Shareholders generally meet the suppliers at a farmers' market or at farms; in some cases, shares might be delivered to homes. The CSA model is the basis of Green BEAN Delivery, which transports bins of consumer-selected local produce to homes in Louisville as well as throughout Cincinnati, Lexington, and parts of southern Indiana. Locally-owned businesses like Rainbow Blossom, the Root Cellar, and the Reynolds Grocery Company also function as share pick-up locations for various CSAs. The CSA model is important for beginning and small-scale farmers due to the minimal capital investment required as well as the "scalability" of such projects, meaning farmers can incrementally scale up or down according to market access and consumer demand. Furthermore, the eleven New Roots Inc. Fresh Stops are similar to CSAs in that consumers buy shares of local produce that vary over the growing season and pick-up the food at designated times and places, but Fresh Stops differ from a typical CSA in several ways. First, Fresh Stops are "organized by and for the community" (Moskowitz 2013:24) rather than by farmers or policy-makers. Second, Fresh Stops focus on reaching low-income households located in neighborhoods characterized by food insecurity and hunger. Third, communities can pool their resources, e.g. food stamps and cash, in order to multiply purchasing power, thus allowing shareholders to be eligible for wholesale prices paid one or two weeks in advance. Fourth, on pick-up days, Fresh Stops are run by volunteer/shareholders and New Roots staff members rather than the suppliers.

The volunteers are tasked with setting up the area with tables and chairs, signing-in people as they arrive, assisting at each table of produce, and holding cooking demonstrations. Finally, most Fresh Stops reserve seventy five percent of shares for households identified as low income according to WIC eligibility guidelines (Moskowitz 2015). Share prices are set according to a sliding scale based on income: mothers assisted through WIC pay six dollars per share, SNAP recipients and other low-income shareholders pay twelve dollars, and all others pay twenty five dollars. It is crucial to note that the Fresh Stop model aims to solve the problem of farmers not wanting to sell at farmers markets located in high crime and low-income areas of town; however, only one Fresh Stop operates during winter months.

Grocery Stores:

The Reynolds Grocery Company is located on Frankfurt Avenue in the Clifton neighborhood, and it is the only business in the city that only sources from local suppliers. Reynolds Grocery opened in June 2013. The store works with a core group of seven meat producers and about ten suppliers of fruits and vegetables. The business is staffed by the owner – Sean Reynolds – and one employee, and they average about twenty receipts per day. The Root Cellar was another all-local grocery that closed at the end of 2015. The first Root Cellar location in Old Louisville was open from 2011 until May 2014, and the second location in Germantown operated since October 2013. Root Cellar Owner Ron Smith employed about five people and sourced from about seventy five or eighty farmers at the height of the business, but he scaled down significantly over the last couple years and maintained a core of about fifteen suppliers. Toward the end of 2015 the Root Cellar averaged about twenty five receipts per day, and Ron spent most of his time at the store and employed one person part-time. While the Root Cellar sourced

all products from within one hundred and fifty miles from Louisville and Reynolds Grocery currently does the same, some grocery stores only source a few local items. For example, health and food store Rainbow Blossom offers some local produce and milk alongside other items sourced from within the US and abroad. The Louisville grocery chain Valumarket also sources some local produce as well as local milk. Kroger sources a handful of products certified and marketed through Kentucky Proud, a KY Department of Agriculture (KDA 2016) branding program for foods produced or processed within the state.

Restaurants and Bars

There are at least twenty restaurants and bars in Louisville that use ingredients supplied by local farmers. Some of these “upscale,” farm-to-table restaurants are Harvest, Rye, Decca, and Mayan Café, which are all located in “NuLu,” i.e. ‘New Louisville:’ the name for the gentrified East Market District of downtown. Other restaurants and bars that claim to seasonally source local food products to various extents include Ramsey’s Café on the World, 610 Magnolia, Proof on Main, Lilly’s Bistro, Wiltshire on Market, North End Café, Varanese, Blind Pig, Eiderdown, the Oakroom, Sway, Hammerheads, Jack Fry’s, the Silver Dollar, Sevice, Basa Modern Vietnamese, the Holy Grail, Gary’s on Spring, Sidebar, Crescent Hill Craft House, Mesh, and Against the Grain Brewery & Smokehouse. Local foods sourced by these businesses range from meat, cheese, fruits, and vegetables.

Food Pantries and Homeless Shelters

Dare to Care Food Bank warehouses and delivers emergency food assistance – mainly surplus USDA commodities with long shelf-life – to its network of Hunger Fighting Partners constituted by faith-based organizations and the YMCA as well as

emergency kitchens and shelters. Dare to Care works with over three hundred partners in Louisville and surrounding counties, and these organizations insist that they are committed to bringing an end to hunger. Dare to Care's major "community partners" consist of Yum! Brands, Walmart, Kroger, Meijer, Lift a Life Foundation, Brown-Forman, Kosair Charities, ConAgra Foods, and Morgan Stanley. In addition to supplying items for food pantries and shelters, Dare to Care (2016) aims to end hunger through the following programs: Kids Café, Backpack Buddy, Mobile Pantry, Patrol Against Hunger, and Cooking Matters. These latter programs are all geared toward providing assistance to the most vulnerable persons in Louisville and elsewhere, such as children, senior citizens, and low-income families. In light of the fact that most food provided through charities and community-driven pantries does not come from local growers as well as the nearly forty percent rate of waste in the US food system, the volunteer-based group Harvesting Hands (2013) gleans from farms and farmers' markets and delivers the fresh produce to emergency shelters and kitchens.

Nonprofits and Grassroots Organizations

According to the Center for Nonprofit Excellence (2016), over two hundred nonprofits operate throughout Louisville. While only a very small portion of these groups focus directly on local food and agriculture, several organizations are involved in the local food movement through partnerships with those on the frontline. YMCA of Greater Louisville, Dare to Care Food Bank, and Metro United Way are some of the largest nonprofit organizations in terms of local gross income. YMCA's food programs include nutritional counseling and the Healthy in a Hurry Corner Stores by which they partner with small convenience store owners in order to increase the availability and affordability of 'fresh' fruits and vegetables; however, Healthy in a Hurry locations do not offer local

produce. In addition, Metro United Way's Farm to School Table program connects local farmers with Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), thus allowing for school chefs to use more fresh fruits and vegetables as ingredients in breakfasts and lunches. New Roots Inc. also plays a major role, primarily by coordinating Fresh Stops for low-income families. Nonprofits involved in community service and gardening projects within the local food movement are Presbyterian Hunger Program, YouthBuild, and American Community Center. Key examples of nonprofit organizations that focus specifically on agriculture include the Food Literacy Project (FLP), Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL), the Catholic Charities Refugee Agricultural Program (RAPP) and Louisville Grows. The last organization manages the Urban Growers Cooperative (UGC), which distributes produce grown within 15 miles of its West Louisville office.

Policy-makers and Public Universities

The Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement (HHM) is a countywide initiative aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles based on exercise and healthy eating habits. The Mayor's HHM began in 2005 with Mayor Abramson (2003–2011) and continues under the administration of Mayor Greg Fischer (2011–present). HHM emphasizes a health-in-all-policies approach, which considers the health and wellness effects of all government policies, particularly those related to land use, transportation, education, and housing. The Mayor's office provides funding opportunities for local nonprofit organizations, such as the \$7,500 grant issued to SAL in 2015 for its *milpa* program and the \$5,500 granted to Louisville Grows. The Center for Health Equity – part of the Louisville Metro Department of Health and Wellness – also plays a leading role by addressing health disparities. The Center for Health Equity (2011:38; 2014:43) has issued two comprehensive reports on the social determinants of health, pointing out how food

insecurity and malnutrition are rooted in poverty, unemployment, housing disparities, the over-abundance of cheap and unhealthy foods, and the unavailability or inaccessibility of fresh food options. Policy recommendations for eradicating food deserts have been put forward by the Louisville Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC). This council emerged in 2010 with funding from a CDC grant, and FPAC's formation was part of a series of events that began when CFA issued a report (2007) highlighting the food inequities in Louisville. CFA's report led to the launch of a task force organized by the Center for Health Equity, and the task force then merged with HHM in 2008 to become the Food in Neighborhoods Committee (FIN). In addition, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA 2016) is part of local food systems, primarily by overseeing the Kentucky Proud marketing program, issuing grants, coordinating Cooperative Extension offices, supporting farmers' markets, managing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) trainings, and directing the hemp pilot project. Finally, as a public universities and land-grant partners, the University of Kentucky (UK) and Kentucky State University (KSU) play crucial roles within local food systems. UK is the main base of the state's Cooperative Extension services, which offers growers technical assistance and educational opportunities. UK has extension agents in all of the state's one hundred and twenty counties, and KSU extension agents work in most of these.

B. The Landscape of Food (In)security and Food (In)justice

Who gets to eat fresh, healthy food in Louisville? It is imperative to address whether the social, economic, and health benefits of expanding local food systems have distributed evenly, particularly in respect to race, class, and geography. In the article

titled “The West End: A Tale of Two Cities,” Dan Crutcher (2013:24) compares the twenty two census tracts that constitute West Louisville with twenty two East End census tracts. His study provides crucial insights on the racialized and class-based disparities across the city. The map below shows the area of Crutcher’s analysis, and the following table summarizes the statistics at the base of the article.

	West End	East End
Total Population	61,251	68,523
African-American Population	79%	4%
White Population	18%	91%
Unemployment	13.4%	3.9%
Median Household Income	\$21,733	\$59,600
Bachelor’s Degree or higher	7%	55%
Median Home Value	\$66,977	\$229,623
Automobile Ownership	69.1%	93.2%
Total Businesses	1,856	6,352

With regard to food availability and access, Crutcher (2013:26) reports a total of five supermarkets and thirty restaurants in western neighborhoods, twenty of which are fast-food or chain restaurants along with zero sit-down restaurants. The East End has about nine supermarkets as well as two hundred and fifty five restaurants that include seventy six fast-food or chain restaurants, and the other one hundred and seventy nine are

independent businesses that provide table service (Crutcher:2013:28). In their publication titled “Bridging the Divide” (2007:6), CFA recorded one full-service grocery store for every twenty two thousand residents in West Louisville and East Downtown, whereas the East End averaged one grocery store for every six thousand residents. Groceries located in resource-limited and marginalized neighborhoods typically offer lower quality produce and very limited options for organic items, and low-income households with limited or no vehicle access often lack access to fresh and healthy alternatives because of unaffordable prices and the distance to supermarkets (Moskowitz 2013:24). Compared to the predominantly white and affluent East End, West Louisville and East Downtown residents – most of whom are African-American – experience higher rates of food insecurity and health complications due to the combined effects of low income, limited transportation, the overabundance of cheap and unhealthy foods, and the lack of appealing and affordable produce in accessible grocery stores.

In respect to those census tracts Crutcher (2013) analyzed, western neighborhoods host one weekly farmers’ market – the People’s Farmers’ Market located in Russell at Eleventh and Muhammad Ali – and the eastern neighborhoods host seven farmers’ markets in River Park Marina, Crescent Hill, Deer Park, Douglass Loop, Rainbow Blossom, Beargrass Christian Church, and Whole Foods (KDA 2015). Farmers’ markets have not proportionately expanded into low-income communities. Two major factors contribute to the near absence of farmers’ markets in West Louisville. First, the high crime rate in western neighborhoods deters producers from participating in weekly gatherings for several hours. Second, many farmers prefer to sell produce wherever they perceive markets, such as in the upper-income neighborhoods located in the East End. A

key challenge for expanding fresh food into low-income areas is that most farmers experience difficulties trying to make a living from small-scale agriculture, and they are generally unable to sell their products to low-income eaters at the same prices that more affluent eaters are willing to pay. According to Karyn Moskowitz (2013:25), the Executive Director of New Roots Inc., the amelioration of food injustice is not a priority for many local farmers.

The uneven distribution of risk and illness across the city indicates patterns of structural violence that must be systematically addressed with an intersectional approach to food justice. Moskowitz stated during a recent interview, “We’re dealing with the history of oppression. That’s the challenge.” She moved to West Louisville in 2007 after securing a community organizer position with CFA, and her main tasks included helping to start Grasshoppers Distribution, working to keep alive the Smoketown-Shelby Park farmers’ market, and organizing one of Louisville’s first community-driven farmers’ markets in a “food desert” neighborhood. She describes her initial experiences in the city by writing, “I had never before heard the term [food desert]. Within ten minutes of walking around my new neighborhood, I got it, loud and clear. There was food apartheid in this town” (Moskowitz 2013:23). Her use of the term “food apartheid” refers to the high availability of fresh food in the East End while the ‘food deserts’ or ‘food swamps’ are primarily in the West End and East Downtown. Food apartheid is part of a broader and historical context of social injustice by which political and economic forces subject the poorest and least powerful members of society to intensified risks of all kinds (Shultz and Lavenda 2014:351). East and West Louisville are divided not only with regard to food access and economic opportunities but also in terms of health and public safety.

West Louisville and East Downtown residents not only lack the same degree of access to fresh food as those living in East End neighborhoods, but they also experience significantly greater rates of poverty and unemployment, higher death rates from diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and homicide, and much lower life expectancy. Any attempt to expand local food systems should contemplate the racialized and class-based disparities revealed by such statistics because the struggle for food justice fundamentally corresponds with the struggles for health justice, fair housing, full employment, living wages, etc. Activists and farmers leading the local food movement should recognize these inequities in order to implement sustainable production and equitable distribution strategies that ensure affordable, healthy foods for all residents.

If farmers' markets have not successfully increased access among low-income communities, what are the alternatives? Community garden sites are distributed evenly across the city, but garden plots are generally too small to supply the necessary amounts of fresh food for entire households. Gardens allow for participants to supplement food costs by growing a limited amount of fruits and vegetables; however, the vegetable growing season lasts for only five months – from May until October. While gardens provide opportunities to grow and eat healthy foods, the seasonal and plot-size limitations necessitate broader solutions to low-income residents' experiences of food insecurity and hunger throughout the entire year. The Reynolds Grocery Company, a small and all-local food store, also fails to solve the problem of inaccessible local food for low-income eaters in West Louisville and East Downtown because the business is located on Frankfort Avenue in Clifton, and products are sold at the same or higher prices found at farmers' markets. Even with transportation to the store, residents from outside of the

neighborhood might not be able to afford the products, and the owner of the business struggles to make a living to the point where he cannot lower the prices. Similarly, locally-produced foods sold at Valumarket or other grocery stores might be regarded by low-income eaters as inaccessible due to problems of affordability or lack of transportation.

The Fresh Stop model of New Roots Inc. stands out as one of the major alternatives to farmers' markets and private food retailers. The organization operates according to principles of social and environmental justice, specifically food justice. New Roots recognizes that access to healthy food is a human right presently denied on the racialized bases of income and geography. Fresh Stops solve several problems related to food availability and accessibility. Whereas many farmers do not want to set up in reputedly high-crime areas, the Fresh Stop model allows for farmers to drop off their produce a couple hours before shareholders arrive for pickup, thus saving them the time involved with direct marketing. Fresh Stops also addresses the problem of unaffordability because shareholders pool their resources, thereby making them eligible for wholesale prices. The sliding scale for purchasing shares also addresses this problem because New Roots reserves seventy five percent of its shareholder base for low-income eaters. However, only one of the eleven Fresh Stops operates during the winter, meaning that most shareholders lack year-round access to affordable, locally-produced fruits and vegetables. Nonetheless, New Roots demonstrates that building strong urban communities and partnerships with producers in rural areas are necessary aspects of food justice.

In addition to the alternative, community-organized distribution model New Roots, RAPP represents a model of food justice concentrated on small-scale production in urban gardens and small urban farms. The program currently operates according to a contract with the Kentucky Office for Refugees, which channels grant monies and federal resettlement funds for the two RAPP employees – the Director and the Culinary Arts Program Chef. RAPP started in 2007 as a recipient of the federal RAPP grant administered through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) (see Stewart 2012). Membership with agricultural program is open only to refugees, and the eight-week Culinary Arts Program includes refugees as well as former inmates who participate in order to receive food safety certification and assistance securing employment. RAPP works with over two hundred refugee families in Louisville by coordinating access to nine community garden sites, facilitating over twenty technical training demonstrations per year led by Cooperative Extension agents, and assisting growers with the sale of their produce through the UGC and at five farmers' markets (Peot-Stevens 2015). Growers originate from Bhutan (forty percent), Somalia (thirty percent), Myanmar (fifteen percent), and the DRC and Burundi (fifteen percent) (Ibid.). Considering the agricultural experience of nearly all RAPP participants, the primary purpose of the program is to coordinate access to the means of small-scale agricultural production, such as garden spaces, water, tools, and technical training regarding local growing conditions. Reporting post-season assessments, the Director states that each RAPP family reduces summer food costs by about one thousand dollars. Household consumption and community sharing are the main motivations of program participants, and a few families produce food for sale to RAPP CSA shareholders, the RAPP Culinary Arts Program, and the UGC. The Director

of the program describes one of the nine RAPP sites as a market-oriented “incubator farm” based on a social enterprise model by which the thirteen Somali growers collectively sell about ninety-five percent of the harvest.

Where does La Minga fit into the alternative agrifood landscape? Three members – Nelson, Esteban, and Andrew – previously served on the short-lived Food Policy Advisory Council. Their roles on that task force ranged from documenting problems that local residents experience related to food access and advocating for policies aimed at addressing the root causes of food insecurity. Currently, members of La Minga organize with Community Farm Alliance (CFA). Nelson serves on the CFA Board of Directors, and Esteban is also greatly involved with the farmer-led organization, which formed in 1985 and incorporated a year later. CFA advocates for policies that represent the interests of small- and medium-scale family farmers in Kentucky. CFA originated as suicide-prevention and credit-counseling hotline during the 1980s farm crisis that followed the agricultural boom of the 1970s. More recently, the organization’s efforts were crucial to the April 2000 passage of KY House Bill 611, which set up a farmer-led process for spending tobacco settlement monies. This legislation allowed for dividing the funds among counties according to economic dependence on the crop as to support the diversification of farm operations. HB 611 also established one hundred and eighteen County Agricultural Development Councils that submit strategic plans to the Agricultural Development Board for addressing the needs of local agricultural economies (Richards 2013:11).

CFA is a member the National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC), and NFFC is part of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance as well as Vía Campesina. CFA focuses on

developing and sustaining L.I.F.E., i.e. a locally-integrated food economy that prioritizes increasing access to quality, local foods and creating sustainable livelihoods for local farmers (Billings et al. 2010). The vision of CFA entails “a food and fiber system” that ensures all Kentuckians have access to locally-grown, nutritious food at an affordable price. The organization calls for an agricultural system that plays a vital role in the state’s economy and functions according to principles of socio-ecological sustainability. CFA meetings serve as a space for Nelson to articulate the interests of La Minga members into a broader strategic plan that could apply to agricultural systems statewide. Most of all, Nelson emphasizes the need for CFA to pressure policy-makers into providing land and other capital for landless persons seeking to farm for market or non-market purposes. In February 2016 the Director of CFA presented Nelson with an opportunity to coordinate a Beginning Farmer project with Latino participants interested in pursuing agriculture as a form of self-employment. Nelson stated that he looks forward to working with CFA on the initiative, but he was presented with the opportunity on the last day before the grant proposal deadline, meaning the leadership of La Minga had no chances to provide input concerning the plan and vision of the program that will take place at the farm.

In 2015 only three of the thirteen La Minga members produced food for market sale. During the beginning of summer, Nelson sold vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers at two farmers’ markets: the Beechmont Open Air Market and the first-year Bluegrass Market, both located in south-central Louisville. Low customer turnout prompted Nelson to abandon the latter site after a few weeks. He distributed produce to both locations of the Mexican grocery store called Supermercado Guanajuato and also sold to the NuLu restaurant Mayan Café. Steve sold fruits and vegetables – mostly from his private orchard

business – at the Gray Street and Belknap farmers’ markets. The third market-oriented grower, Josh, joined La Minga in October and planted three one-hundred-foot beds of garlic, and he intends to sell the product to local restaurants and New Roots Inc. In 2015 Nelson and Josh each distributed produce through the UGC as well, but at the end of March 2016, the former grower said that the UGC was no longer in operation. A Louisville Grows employee confirmed Nelson’s statement. La Minga does not and has never operated a CSA, though such a venture could begin anytime if members decided to coordinate production according to such a business plan.

A major contradiction of La Minga’s role in the local food movement is the farm’s location in one of the wealthiest towns in all of Kentucky. The East End area of Prospect is predominantly white and includes a mix of suburban sprawl and the vestiges of a rural farming economy. Public transportation runs between downtown and Prospect – the bus stop is about a half-mile west of La Minga – only twice per weekday. Although each member of the organization owns a vehicle, the peri-urban location of the farm likely hinders the participation of prospective gardeners who lack access to reliable transportation. Another contradiction of La Minga’s place in the alternative food landscape is that the organization lacks heavy machinery, specifically riding or two-wheeled tractors, needed to scale-up the project.

CHAPTER THREE

LA MINGA: “COLLECTIVE WORK FOR COLLECTIVE GOOD”

What are the main attributes of the La Minga model, and how do members organize themselves among the collective? This chapter first situates the farm project into historical context. I specifically focus on how three generations of the Wallace family have used their land for agricultural, community-oriented, and conservation purposes. I discuss the life history of Carla Wallace in particular, and I aim to shed light on how the fundamental goal of La Minga – facilitating access to garden plots – could be replicable under circumstances similar to the agreement between the Wallace family and the leadership of La Minga, by which Carla and her siblings share a portion of their inherited property as a generous expression of solidarity with the organization. I then briefly elucidate the meaning of *minga* and attempt to explain the governance structure of the nonprofit. Organizational partnerships and public relations are also discussed. My aim is to address the power dynamics that characterize on-the-ground interactions and the decision-making process as well as the ways in which La Minga members’ affiliations to communities in Louisville strengthen the collective mission of the farm project. The final point of analysis in this chapter considers how the permaculture-inspired production guidelines established by the Board of Directors constitute a viable model of sustainable land use that dialectically opposes the dominant paradigm of industrial agribusiness.

A. History of the Farm

La Minga is located on the Wallace Farm Conservation Easement. The group's space amounts to ten and half acres of the six-hundred-acre property owned by Carla Wallace and her siblings. They provide the organization with access to the land and treated well water at no cost. The perimeter of La Minga is lined with wildflowers, old fencing, and large trees that shade parts of the farm during the morning and early evening. The space consists of a house and garage, an open field with football goalposts, unused chicken coops, large compost piles, a 20*50ft greenhouse, the two-acre cultivation area, and a largely-uncultivated three-acre space open for use. Fifteen miles from downtown Louisville, La Minga is situated on the easternmost edge of the Wallace family's land that crosses the Jefferson–Oldham county line. The family's whole property includes over ten rental homes, open spaces for producing hay, and the popular petting zoo called Henry's Ark. La Minga is largely autonomous in terms of the group's relationship with the Wallace family. Aside from two rules that ban cutting down trees and producing meat, Carla and her siblings do not impose on production decisions or strategic planning. They also allow La Minga to rent parking space to a small landscaping company. That rent money is La Minga's only form of regular income – paid monthly – and thus constitutes the basis of the farm project's financial sustainability. La Minga does not charge plot fees or membership dues because parking rent and the private donations collected from attendees of the annual Harvest Festival cover most collective expenses, such as tools, seeds, permits to sell at markets, and the utility bills for the farmhouse.

What motivates Carla and her siblings to share their land with La Minga? Although the decision to transform part of their property into a community farm was

made among all of her siblings, Carla initiated the idea after meeting Nelson in 2009, and she has since played the role as La Minga's main contact. The historical background below thus particularly focuses on Carla's motivations to support the organization. Future ethnographic or historical research about the farm project should consider the interrelationships between La Minga and Carla's siblings.

A look at the history of their family and third-generation farm is necessary to fully understand Carla's altruism and solidarity with the seven-year-old cooperative farm project. The agreement between the Wallace family and the leaders of La Minga is important to explore because such a relationship could be replicated elsewhere on smaller and larger scales. Also, there are major theoretical implications to Carla's involvement, particularly concerning the critical praxis of "a traitor" to whiteness and the interests of the capitalist class (Ignatiev and Garvey *In MacMullan* 2009:154). Her commitment to realizing the mission of La Minga reveals a crucial lesson on how white allyship within social struggles can play out in terms of privileged property owners sharing land with landless persons interested in growing food as a hobby or form of self-employment.

Carla's grandfather, Tom Wallace (1874–1961), bought the initial property in 1910 shortly after marrying Augusta French, an heiress of Smith, Kline, French pharmaceutical fortune (O'Neill 1997). Tom named the land Ronda Farms in reference to a Spanish town where he and his wife spent time during their honeymoon (Huffman 2005:6). They expanded the size of the property to its current six hundred acres. Despite complications with tenants and the lack of profit generated by the overall farm operation, Tom Wallace practiced and promoted the virtues of a "commuter pastoralist" lifestyle by which his tobacco and dairy farm functioned as a natural sanctuary away from the

industrializing core of Louisville where he worked as a journalist on Henry Watterson's editorial staff at the *Courier Journal* since 1905 (Huffman 2005:7). He purportedly rose at four in the morning, tended to his cows and other tasks on the farm, and transported milk to markets in the city before arriving to work at eight o'clock (Ibid.). In the 1920s, Tom began working with the *Louisville Times*, and he rose to prominence as editor from 1930 until retirement in 1948 (Huffman 2016). His influence extended into the realm of conservation advocacy. He co-led two major and successful wilderness-preservation efforts, including a five-year campaign (1926-1931) against plans to construct a dam at Cumberland Falls in southeastern Kentucky and a decade-long struggle against the Echo Park Dam in Colorado during the 1950s. Carla's father Henry Wallace (1915–2006), one of two children, took over the family farm after Tom passed away in 1961.

Moncada Farms is the current name of the Wallace's entire property. The place-name, given by Henry Wallace, references the military barracks in Santiago de Cuba attacked by Fidel Castro and his cohort of Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries in 1953, an assault which launched the *Movimiento 26 Julio* and led to the toppling of the Batista dictatorship by 1959. Carla stated during an interview that her father was greatly inspired by the health and literacy campaigns mobilized by the Castro government (Wallace 2015). Henry lived in pre-Castro Cuba as a writer for the Havana Post, and he worked there as a correspondent for TIME and LIFE magazines as well. He admired Fidel and vocally supported the revolutionary government in belief that the socialist regime could overcome the social, political, and economic inequalities engendered by colonial rule and capitalist imperialism (McKinney 2006). Henry Wallace's vocal disapproval of US-backed dictatorships in Latin America coincided with his anti-war activism and

participation in the civil rights movement. He also advocated against the death penalty and in support of LGBT equality. Upon his death in 2006, Henry was the largest donor to the ACLU of Kentucky. Opponents of Henry's political activity and worldview confronted him as he drove, shot bullets at the Moncada Farms sign, and once bombed the family's mailbox.

Henry continued his father's scheme of producing dairy and tobacco along with renting parcels to tenants living in rental homes on the whole property. He also used a portion of Moncada for the exotic animal zoo called Henry's Ark. Situated on Rose Island Road close to the river, the private petting zoo began unofficially in the 1960s when Henry realized that animals were "the best babysitters" (O'Neill 1997). He started purchasing rescued llamas, goats, ponies, horses, and rabbits, all of which were ideal for Carla and her siblings to interact with and learn how to nurture as they grew older. Henry's Ark opened to the public in the 1970s, and his inheritance allowed him to maintain the annual operating costs of at least \$75,000 (Ibid.). The space of Henry's Ark amounted to thirty acres and at the height of the project included two hundred animals, covering nearly every letter of the alphabet, such as antelopes, bison, camels, donkeys, emus, water buffalo, yaks, and zebras (Ibid.). Over the last few decades, the site has attracted tens of thousands of visitors each year. Recently the Wallace's instituted a no-feeding policy, which lowered visitor numbers; however, the nonprofit zoo continues the original policy of no-cost admission. Penny Schaefer, Director of Henry's Ark, noted in a memorial piece after Henry passed that the menagerie was "a gift to the community" (McKinney 2006). The attraction served as a site of mutual benefit and a symbol of a

generalized system of reciprocity where Henry offered his gift to visitors who contributed donations in return.

Henry and his children committed to preserving their six-hundred acre farm in December 2000 by signing a conservation easement worth an estimated \$8.1 million, one of most valuable land grants ever made in Kentucky (McKinney 2006). The easement transferred a portion of the legal rights of ownership, specifically the development rights, to the grantee while the Wallace family maintained private ownership and management of the land. River Fields Inc., the grantee, has monitored the land since 2001 in order to ensure that use restrictions remain unviolated. “The Guardians of the Ohio River” agreed to safeguard the property in perpetuity by preventing the exercise of development rights to mining, construction, and subdivision, regardless of whether the Wallace’s sell or share any part of the farm. Henry urged his children to co-sign the contract for several reasons. Henry’s upbringing on the farm and the conservation legacy of his father presumably influenced his decision to preserve the land in the face of surrounding suburban development projects (Huffman 2005:92; McKinney 2006). The Wallace family also began to benefit from income tax deductions after granting the land to the NGO (River Fields 2016). Furthermore, Henry was inspired by the foresight of Louisville heiress Sallie Bingham’s gift to the community. In 1999 Bingham granted to River Fields and the Kentucky Heritage Council the four-hundred-acre Wolf Pen Branch Farm – located on Harrods’s Creek about five miles south of Moncada Farms – due to the farm’s historical importance as one of the first mill sites in Jefferson County as well as its ecological bounty of waterfalls, rolling hills, wetlands, and the presence of a federally-endangered plant species (Thomas 2015). Henry approached River Fields to sign a

similar contract. The conservation easement also provides sanctuary for wildlife, primarily deer and birds but also rabbits, foxes, turkeys, and insects.

Carla remarked that her father “never stopped marching for peace and against injustice.” In addition to dedicating his life to writing, he engaged in activism and agriculture after moving back to Kentucky from Cuba, particularly alongside civil rights activists Anne (1924–2006) and Carl Braden (1914–1975). While living in Havana, Henry was aware of the sedition charges that the Braden’s faced in connection with the bombing of a house that they purchased in 1954 for a black family – the Wades – in the white Louisville neighborhood of Shively. He engaged in a correspondence with Anne and remained informed of the charges, which prosecutors premised on the Bradens supposed affiliation with the Communist Party as well as the accusation that they blew up the house in order to spark social unrest amid a political climate of great tension – that era entailed both Cold War McCarthyism and the SCOTUS-mandated desegregation of public schools. Henry regarded Anne as a mentor and very good friend, characterizing her as “a true liberal who stayed in the room when fights started” (Fosl 1997). He attended hundreds of demonstrations in Louisville and elsewhere but was “never in the middle of it [like Anne and Carl]” because he spent most of his time raising his children and working on Moncada, isolated from the city center (Ibid.).

With his financial security, Henry was able to show up and speak out for social justice without fear of red-baiting or employment blacklisting (Fosl 1997). He mentioned to Anne Braden’s biographer (Ibid.) that his father Tom was “a segregational racist” and the son of a slave owner. Henry opposed those values and raised his children to treat people according to the following notion recounted by Carla’s sister Naomi, “In this

adventure we call life, we're all connected, and an injury or injustice to one affects us all" (McKinney 2006). Responding to an interview question about the foundations of her worldview and social activism, Carla echoed the aforementioned lesson on interconnectedness often repeated by her father as she referenced "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in which Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. argues, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly." Henry Wallace exposed his children to the civil rights movement by bringing them to direct-action gatherings in Louisville. With her parents, Carla attended several demonstrations in support of local anti-segregation efforts, against the Vietnam War, against the Contras in Nicaragua, for peace in El Salvador, and against apartheid in South Africa (Forward 2014). Carla lived in Prospect growing up as well as in Amsterdam with the family of her Dutch mother, Sonja deVries, who came from "a working-class family that understood the oppression of workers who often don't see the fruits of their labor" (Wallace *In Baye* 2014). Carla's grandmother participated in the resistance to Nazi occupation of Holland (1940–1945); at a young age, Carla asked her about why she took the grave risk of sheltering communist and Jewish resisters under the apartment floorboards. She stressed the importance of solidarity by saying, "That's just what you do." As a teenager, Carla personally chose to get involved in social justice work with racism as a primary focus. Her decision to work as an activist was largely informed by the socially-progressive values she learned from both sides of her family.

Carla was raised within "a culture of resistance." She mentioned during an interview (Wallace *In Baye* 2014) how her mother opposed the idea of neutrality; Sonja

would say, “If people are oppressed and people are oppressing, you choose sides!” By choosing to stand with the oppressed, Carla joined “the Other America,” which Anne Braden (2005) described in an essay by writing, “This resistance has roots that stretch back to the beginning of the human race. In every age, no matter how cruel the oppression carried on by those in power, there have been those who struggled for a different world.” Carla dedicated herself to learning how race is intertwined with the founding and wealth-building of this country (Forward 2014). She began to understand the rootedness of racism in intersecting systems that affect everyone, such as schools, housing, healthcare, the food supply chain, and the criminal justice system. Braden, largely because of her friendship with Henry Wallace, was one of Carla’s key mentors. Carla learned in depth about social activism through the Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, an organization formed by Braden and others in 1975 that aims to organize an anti-racist majority engaging in tactics like direct action, public forums, and lobbying decision-makers in city halls and the state legislature. Today, the KY Alliance operates in conjunction with local Black Lives Matter (BLM) organizers that lead Stand Up Louisville as well as with Fairness Campaign and the Louisville chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), two nonprofit organizations co-founded by Carla. “We have to be part of changing things systemically,” she emphasized in a speech regarding her role with SURJ – a network of over 140 grassroots organizations that organized nationally in 2009 as a response to the racism that followed Barack Obama’s election to the White House (FOR 2013). The mission and strategies of SURJ were developed with inspiration from the black-led Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which called on white folks to be vocal and visible

during civil rights movement. SURJ has organized community members to show up and break white silence, particularly regarding the frequent cases of lethal police violence against black and brown bodies (Coates 2015), e.g. Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, and Freddie Gray. Carla's work with SURJ has focused on encouraging whites to fight for equality and justice as if their lives depended on the freedom of the oppressed and marginalized.

Carla grew up recognizing how her family had “more than enough [land and wealth]” while many others struggled to meet basic needs. As she became more active in social movements, Carla began to understand how land is unfairly held by a small group of people and that many farmers – particularly black farmers in the South – have lost their lands and livelihoods due to the corporate assault on small- and medium-scale agriculture (Wallace *In Baye* 2014). In 2009 she was presented with an opportunity to counter such injustice on the local level. Carla met Nelson Escobar through the Los Monitos Language Company where he taught Spanish part-time. After speaking with Nelson about his search for land to work, Carla successfully persuaded her siblings to support the formation of La Minga – free of cost for growers – on what was unused space at the family's farm. Esteban Bartlett (2016a) was involved in the formation of La Minga by helping to advise Carla about the logistics of starting the project. Nelson co-founded the farm along with two of Carla's friends through Fairness Campaign who lived in the farmhouse on-site. Nelson stated during an interview (Escobar 2015) that he intends to live at the farm for the rest of his life, and accessing land and a house through Carla was fundamental to successfully integrating into his ‘new Kentucky home’ (McKenzie 2014). Leaders of La Minga have characterized Carla as “a politically- and socially-conscious

landowner” and “an unusual landlord” because she shares a portion of Moncada Farms rather than auctioning the property or seeking to extract market-value rent from growers (Bartlett 2013:77; Zavala 2015a). At the 2015 Harvest Festival, Carla even asked Nelson if La Minga needed more land to expand the project. Nelson considers the partnership with her as “a major blessing, maybe even a miracle.”

In a word, privilege motivates the altruism of Carla and her siblings regarding their agreement with La Minga by which growers access the land and water at no expense. When she initially asked her siblings to support the project, Carla was compelled not by profit but a humanitarian desire to provide an opportunity for landless persons to engage in agriculture for the purposes of consumption, sharing, and sale. Other than tax breaks for contributing to La Minga Inc., there are no apparent economic incentives for the Wallace family to share their property. Carla puts into practice the social justice principles that she learned through both sides of her family. Her solidarity with La Minga is grounded in the values taught by her grandmother, who sheltered Nazi resisters in Holland, as well as the lessons of her mother, who insisted on fighting against the oppression and exploitation of working-class people. Her father Henry also influenced Carla to a great extent, particularly his love for nature and animals that led to the formation of Henry’s Ark. Similar to how Henry offered the menagerie as a gift to community members, Carla’s sharing of land with La Minga is a form of gift-giving that demonstrates her willingness to use part of her inherited wealth for the good of others.

B. Values, Principles, and Procedures: Permaculture, Participatory Democracy, and ‘Collective Work for Collective Good’

This section explores the political structure of La Minga and the production activities of the growers. First, I discuss the etymology of *minga*. Next, I describe the power dynamics and membership structure that characterize daily interactions and the formal decision-making process within the collective. I also briefly highlight the organizational affiliations of La Minga members. In the final subsection I make use of the organization’s constitution and related documents in order to describe its core values and production guidelines.

Etymology

The literature suggests that *minga* is an hispanicized spelling of the Quechua word *mink’a*. As a verb, *mink’a* means “to ask for help” or “to call home a debt” (Allen 2002:72). The nominal form of *mink’a* refers to “a collective work party” (Allen 2002:275; see also Erasmus 1956:445, Allen 1981:166; Rockefeller 1998:188; Kellet 2011:270; Wutich 2011:7; Townsend 2012:15; Verzijl 2013:281; Betrisey 2014:371). Erasmus (1956:446) and Betrisey (2014:371) define *minga* as a “festive” form of social labor involving a work group gathered from within a community and along lines of kinship in order to accomplish “a labor-intensive, time-limited task” like building a house, plowing land, and harvesting crops. The convener of a work party plays the dual role of “festive host and work boss,” and attendance ranges from at least ten to sometimes hundreds of people (Ibid.). Common features of a *minga* include libation, feasting, storytelling, music, and dancing (Erasmus 1956:449; Rockefeller 1998:189; Townsend 2012:16). In this sense, *minga* refers to “a quasi-reciprocal” labor mobilization strategy that, according to (Sallnow 1989:243), literally means “to recompense in a form different

from that of the original assistance.” Although *minga* participation is often voluntary, non-paid, and non-coerced aid, i.e. a favor (Erasmus 1956:461), strong social and economic obligations compel community members to attend in order to maintain important relationships with other households intertwined in a social safety net (Kellet 2011:271). Townsend (2012:15) quotes from a research subject in lowland Bolivia, ““If you have a pig, corn, and yucca, you can throw a minga...If someone invites you to a minga, you go because one day they will come to yours.”” Criticism and ostracism could result from lack of involvement because “communal participation is important to survive” (Kellet 2011:271). Social networks reproduced through *minga* labor are particularly crucial for agricultural producers due to the intensity of the work and the risk of crop failure (Ibid.).

In this case, *La Minga* signifies the farm as a place and the collective as a nonprofit organization. The farm leadership translates the term to “shared group effort” and “community work for community good” (Bartlett 2013:77; Escobar 2015). They borrow the term from Quechua, an indigenous language spoken in the Andes region of South America. Growers embraced the concept when it was proposed by Esteban Bartlett during the first couple years of the farm project. He suggested the name and guiding value in light of his exposure to the practice of voluntary, collective labor while in Ecuador years prior. Bartlett (2016) noted a few instances in which growers mobilized for collective tasks. About four years ago, La Minga members worked together in order to construct a metal wire fence around the two-acre cultivation space, and two years later a group of members erected the greenhouse.

Other prime cases of *minga* at the farm include the group effort needed to plan and host the annual Harvest Festival and the group-based production of a strategic plan for the nonprofit, a process that first occurred in 2013 and again in the early spring of 2016. Members also plan to assemble in April 2016 to construct an electric fence around the existing fence that fails to keep out deer, raccoon, and other crop predators. Participation in group-based activities is both voluntary and integral to realizing the long-term purposes of the farm project, but lack of participation in collective efforts did not result in retribution to any extent from what I observed. For instance, the greenhouse underwent repairs in early March 2016, and those involved not only included the few growers who plan to use the structure as soon as possible for starting seeds but also Nelson's farmer-friend who coordinated the work party due to his experience, possession of tools and supplies, and solidarity with La Minga. One member stated with excitement via email days before that she would participate, but she did not attend the work party or notify anyone of her circumstance. However, neither she nor the others absent on that day will lose their right to produce food at the farm, and likewise, participation in collective tasks does not allow for members to command disproportionate access to productive resources.

Participatory Democracy

This subsection draws from the organization's bylaws and another founding document titled "Values, Principles, and Procedures of La Minga" – both of which were produced by the Board of Directors in 2013 as part of filing for recognition as an educational nonprofit organization (Zavala 2013a; 2013b). The primary contributors to those two documents were Nelson (Coordinator), Elmer (Board President), Esteban

(Board Member), and Carla Wallace (Friend of La Minga). Before filing for nonprofit status, growers had not yet developed governing documents detailing the group's values, conflict resolution strategies, or members' roles within the collective. Registering for 501(c)(3) status thus entailed the formation of a Board of Directors and the creation of bylaws. Three years have passed since the Board assembled and created the foundational documents. La Minga has changed significantly during that time period, mainly with respect to membership fluctuations, vacancies on the Board, and the start of both an aquaponics project as well as the SAL-sponsored Three Sisters program. La Minga recently filled the two vacant Board positions – Treasurer and Secretary – and the organization is presently focused on devising strategies for 2016, a new operating budget, and a five-year action plan. Below, I describe the mission and principles that guide the collective. I also describe the membership structure and decision-making process

The nonprofit organization is comprised of Active Members, Associate Members, and Friends of La Minga. The first category includes participants who work on a plot or in the greenhouse. The second comprises individuals and organizations with common values, such as those committed to promoting healthy food production and access. Associate members are considered by the leadership of La Minga as “*compañeros del camino*” (partners walking along the same path) (Zavala 2015a). The third type of membership consists of individuals and groups who support the farm project with their time or financial assistance. New members are considered Friends of La Minga until recognized as an associate or active member. In previous years, producers had to work an annual growing season in order to be eligible for membership rights, but during 2015, the two first-year growers (including myself) became active members after just a few months

of involvement. Only active members have voting rights – one vote per person – and associate members are eligible for election to the Board of Directors. Officers also have one vote per person during General Assembly and Board meetings. Officers meet at least twice a year, and all members of the organization are allowed to attend each meeting of the Board.

Based on the political philosophy of both Rousseau and Mill, Wolfe (1985:371) describes the individual and collective benefits of participatory democracy by writing,

“Not only does participation lead to control but it has an educative effect that reinforces and sustains participation. The educative function is crucial because participation itself transforms man's character by strengthening his psychological and practical capacity for political involvement.”

La Minga members practice participatory democracy in a number of ways. I attended the two General Assembly meetings and three festival planning meetings in 2015 as well as the two strategic planning sessions during the first couple months of 2016. I observed that the leadership of the organization encourages all participants to engage in discussion and the decision-making process. The Board of Directors does not function to represent the interests of each individual member. Instead, active members have the right and obligation to show up and speak out when the collective meets to devise policies and procedures. Per the bylaws, all active members can contribute to directing the agenda of meetings, resolving conflicts, and suggesting modifications to fiscal plans through either a majority-based procedure or a consensus process.

The governance structure of La Minga is characterized by a horizontal power dynamic between the General Assembly and the Board. The bylaws state that there must be at least three Board members – President, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the end of 2015, six officers constituted the leadership of La Minga, including Elmer (President),

Sarah (Secretary), Priyanka (Treasurer), Nelson (Farm Coordinator), Esteban (Associate Member; Director of SAL), and Heather (Associate Member; past CFA employee). A term limit of three years applies to each position.

Officers meet at least twice a year, and all members are allowed to attend Board meetings.

I refer to the Board and other highly-involved members as ‘the leadership of La Minga.’ In theory, leadership roles within the organization do not entail hierarchical positioning vis-à-vis the membership base with regard to policy-making and commanding productive and financial resources. The principle of horizontal governance largely articulates into practice. It is important to note, however, that one of the Board members – Nelson – plays the role of Coordinator of day-to-day operations, and his respective power manifests as dictates concerning which areas growers can use and decisions about finances (particularly the rent agreement with Earthbound). Furthermore, Board members have the most responsibility in terms of IRS accountability measures. The General Assembly, however, is designed to function as “the maximum authority” for decision-making during meetings that occur at least once a year. The annual Assembly meetings bring together all members as well as any special task forces formed by the Board. Assembly participants with voting rights have the power to approve new members, remove members, elect individuals to the Board, approve changes to the constitution or bylaws, and make the final decision in cases of conflict between members of the Board.

Membership diversity is a core feature of the collective. The organization’s bylaws include a non-discrimination policy that underscores the importance of growers working in cooperation to produce and promote healthy food. The leadership emphasizes

that La Minga is “a space of peace” where respect for humans and nature must guide the behavior of all growers (Zavala 2013b). With regard to national origin, four growers immigrated to the US from Latin America within the last ten years, and two of the aquaponics participants are Indian immigrants who moved to the US from Tanzania. The other seven producers are native citizens, only two of whom grew up in Louisville. Five growers speak Spanish as their primary language. Ten members have children. Four are women, and the rest are men. I was the youngest grower (age 24), and Nelson the oldest (age 58). One grower is in his late twenties, and others are between thirty and sixty years old. Several growers practice certain forms of Christianity, and some other members claim to have no religious affiliation. Although sexual orientation was rarely a topic of discussion between growers and me, introductions to their partners led me to assume that most are heterosexual. In terms of personal ideologies, most growers expressed values and opinions that seemed toward the center-left and far left of the political spectrum. The majority of growers produce for household consumption and sharing among the collective and with friends, family, and neighbors. The three market-oriented growers also consume their produce and share with other members of the group.

Partnerships and Associations

La Minga’s community-based affiliations provide opportunities for members to pursue the organization’s educational and movement-building goals. La Minga connects to communities beyond the farm through friendships, professions, organizational solidarity, and local markets. The association between La Minga and CFA stems from the involvement of three Board members: Heather, Nelson, and Esteban. CFA provides a space for members of La Minga to meet Kentucky farmers, learn how to navigate state

and federal agricultural policy, and propose solutions to the common problems that small-scale farmers face, e.g. healthcare costs, crop failure due to the effects of climate change, the booms and busts of commodity markets, and lack of political training needed to effectively organize a movement of small farmers, landless workers, fisher folk, and ranchers (CFA 2015). Although the linkage is not based on fiscal sponsorship, CFA previously co-sponsored La Minga's Harvest Festival by helping to advertise the event. Heather used to work for CFA as the Community Outreach Director, and she connected Nelson with the grassroots, farmer-led organization a few years ago (Escobar 2015). Nelson currently serves on the CFA Board of Directors, and he has decades of experience working as an organizer and advisor in El Salvador. Nelson worked as an educator for Catholic Charities, the Salvadoran Institute for the Promotion of Cooperatives, and the National Credit Union Federation. He also co-founded the Salvadoran Consumer Cooperatives and advised on the Advocacy Committee for Rural Development in El Salvador.

La Minga's only partnership during the 2015 growing season was with Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL), a nonprofit organization directed by Esteban Bartlett. My use of the term partnership refers to "collaborative relationships that exist between two or more independent nonprofits to increase programmatic impact through shared or combined services, resources, or programs" (Community Foundation 2016). Although Esteban and SAL associates have grown the crops for six years on the family farm of former CFA President Adam Barr, SAL's Three Sisters program officially began in 2015 on two plots at La Minga.

During the late winter preceding the 2015 growing season, SAL partnered with La Casita Center to host a *nixtamal* (maize treated with alkaline solution; used for porridge, tortillas, and tamales) festival. They celebrated the 2014 maize harvest from Barr Farms, and Esteban distributed informational flyers about the upcoming *milpa* project in Prospect. Several attendees of that gathering engaged in the program in the months that followed. In return, Esteban shared part of the harvest with La Casita and other community partners. The process repeats each year. SAL and La Casita co-hosted an MLK commemoration gathering in January 2016 and another *nixtamal* festival in mid-March. For those potluck events they prepared tortillas with maize grown at La Minga and Adam's farm. He anticipates several of festivalgoers to participate during the 2016 growing season, and maybe some individuals will seek access to personal garden spaces. Other participants of the 2015 *milpa* at La Minga included some of Elmer's friends through Hispanic-Latino Ministries as well as associates of Andrew and Esteban from Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church and other SAL programs, such as the summer garden camp.

Largely revolving around the cultivation of maize, Esteban described his approach to the *milpa* as a community organizing strategy aimed at "building a culture within the [local food and immigrant rights] movement" (Bartlett 2016a). Involvement in the Three Sisters program allowed for attendees to collectively acquire basic agricultural skills, make friends, and celebrate the cultural heritage of Mesoamericans. Esteban describes the Three Sisters production method by emphasizing the interdependence of each crop. The heirloom maize grows over fourteen feet tall, and sprouting from the same holes, pole beans climb up the cornstalks and fix nitrogen into the soil. The squash

provides ground cover, which retains moisture and reduces the need for weeding. At the base of each cluster of vegetables, mounds are vital for water retention and providing durable support so that the cornstalks do not fall over from wind or weight.

Participants of the program included members and non-members of La Minga, and they had the opportunity to learn about the cultivation of maize, beans, and squash by planting, weeding, and harvesting on four Sundays between May and October. With regard to the importance of the *milpa* project for each grower at the farm, everyone involved – six of thirteen members – expressed great satisfaction. Yedith joined La Minga in conjunction with the opening day of the program, and she enjoyed growing familiar crops alongside her associates from La Casita. Elmer was excited to meet first-time visitors (over forty individuals) on the opening field day and witness them return on the following weeding and harvest events. Nelson commented on how he enjoys the aesthetics of the Three Sisters plots, and he suggested that the project offers opportunities for growers and community members to work together on meaningful tasks. Andrew and Esteban underscored the community-building aspect of the project. They both emphasized the importance of recognizing ourselves as beneficiaries to the ten-thousand-year-old tradition of maize production. From my perspective, the SAL-sponsored Three Sisters program at La Minga stood out as a key example of food justice. *Milpa* participants sustainably produced nutritious staple foods customary to Mesoamerica, and the harvest was celebrated and shared among community members, particularly through La Casita Center and SAL.

A Moral Economy of Food: Foundational Values and Practices

This subsection addresses the social values and production guidelines established by La Minga's Board of Directors. The basic purpose of the farm project has been clear since the beginning – to generate access to land, training/technical assistance, and other resources to encourage sustainable production in a diverse and cooperative environment of healthy food for self-consumption or sale (Zavala 2013a). During the 2015 growing season, I observed that the organization largely fulfilled this purpose on a daily basis. All growers had free access to land, water, compost, tools, and some seeds. With regard to the use of collective funds, the bylaws state, "Funding for each crop, product, or project will be individual responsibility or members in each project [formed according to common agreement]. The organization can provide contacts or financing if necessary and possible" (Zavala 2013b). Technical assistance in the forms of advice and demonstrations often occurred upon request through one-on-one, verbal interactions between a beginner and an experienced grower. Growers did not collectively possess any functional rototillers or heavy machinery. They primarily worked with stirrup and grub hoes, machetes, shovels, wheelbarrows. Other forms of technical assistance like educational workshops and group demonstrations did not take place throughout 2015, except for the SAL-sponsored Three Sisters program on four Sundays: May 24, July 5, August 2, and October 25.

Leaders of the collective established the principles of production with inspiration from permaculture, an approach to farming and gardening that combines edible landscaping, xeriscaping (little to no irrigation), and natural landscaping (native plants and others well adapted to local ecology) (Bradley 1992:467). In 1978 Holmgren and

Mollison coined the term permaculture, i.e. “permanent culture,” as a systematic method aimed at designing a sustainable site that meets the needs of those working the land, such as food, water, shelter, and fuel (Ibid.). Permaculture centers on observing natural systems in order to understand the limitations and proclivities of a site, and advocates of the method emphasize making use of the whole area and dividing the space into multiple zones based on microclimates and frequency of use (Ibid.). All plants and animals on-site should benefit the landscape and growers making use of the land. Companion planting and species diversity are also fundamental to permaculture design (Ibid.). Ecologically-conscious farmers and gardeners tend to borrow certain principles from the method because of the difficulty of attempting a complete permaculture operation.

Below I summarize the permaculture-inspired production guidelines that the Board established in 2013. The organization aims to practice natural farming that involves observing and imitating nature – “which is quite wiser than us” – rather than trying to control every factor of the ecosystem through use of chemicals or genetic alterations (Zavala 2013). The leadership of La Minga emphasizes that the implementation permaculture will be a process, and eight interconnected practices constitute the group’s holistic approach to achieving this long-term goal. First, they aim to avoid plowing in order to prevent destruction of bacteria and fungi that make soil rich and varied. Plows should only be used for crops like potatoes and carrots that demand such preparation of the land. Second, growers ought to avoid activities that compact the soil, particularly working immediately after heavy rain, because the roots of plants need proper drainage and exposure to air and minerals. Third, members ought not to use synthetic fertilizers, and organic fertilizers – such as the soybean concentrate purchased

by Nelson and used by some other growers as well – should only be applied when growing conditions require. Fourth, growers should not use herbicides, and weeding ought to be done minimally through natural methods; in addition, weeds removed from the soil should then be placed around plants to decompose and provide nutrition for the roots. Fifth, synthetic pesticides are to be avoided, and if necessary to save a crop, growers could use organic pesticides made personally or bought from a store. Sixth, growers should not drastically prune, thereby allowing plants to reach natural form. Seventh, the collective intends to enrich the natural soil by using compost and cover crops like daikon radish, clover, rye, and buckwheat. The final principle emphasizes the procedures of crop and plot rotation. The group has no particular method for rotating crops or leaving plots fallow, and there are no records of previous crop locations in each plot. Nelson coordinates crop and plot rotation based on memory and communication with growers.

The illustration below represents plot assignments during the 2015 growing season, and following table indicates the crops that each member produced throughout the year.

2015 Growing Season			
Plot(s)	Name	Year at LM	Crops
1, 3	Elmer	4 th	rice, beans (two varieties), maize, cucumbers, summer squash
2, 10	Esteban	4 th	maize (three v.), beans (three v.), winter squash (three v.)
4	Angela	1 st	tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, peppers
5, 8	Francisco	5 th	tomatillos, garlic, squash (two v.), flowers, lettuce, cilantro, strawberries, maize
6, 9, 13	Nelson	7 th	chipilín, potatoes, lettuce, cilantro, summer squash (2 v.), amaranth, strawberries, flowers
7	Josh	1 st	Garlic
11	Andrew	1 st	Okra
12	Yedith	1 st	tomatoes (two v.), squash, peppers, chard
14	Tyler	1 st	peppers (five v.), tomatoes (8 v.), basil, cucumbers, butternut squash, zucchini, chard, eggplant
15	N/A	N/A	fallow (third and final year)
N/A	Steve	3 rd	fruit trees and bushes

The table above does not include the plot number of one grower – Steve – because he used land outside of the fenced-in cultivated space, located parallel to plot number one. He prepared some of the three-acre space in early summer and started planting fruit trees, nearly all of which were either destroyed by deer or failed due to lack of water. Three additional members – Priyanka, Sunita, and Stephen – used part of the greenhouse (not featured in the above satellite image; located parallel to plot six on the outside of the fence) for a hydroponics project with peppers and tomatoes, which they plan to develop into an aquaponics system with a fish tank and vegetable beds during 2016. Overall, the 2015 growing season concluded with thirteen farm participants, including the ten growers and group of three working inside of the greenhouse.

The farm project is premised on the autonomy and self-determination of individual members, but growers have certain responsibilities to the collective that ensure a cooperative dynamic overall. Participants are expected to receive permission before taking food from another grower's plot, except when someone has clearly abandoned crops. Growers are encouraged to take on *cargos* ('burdens,' in this context meaning 'leadership roles') and expected to engage in collective activities – such as working on the plots of Three Sisters, hosting the annual Harvest Festival, and sowing cover crops at the end of the season – but participation is a personal, voluntary decision. Members ought to also help maintain order at the farm by placing tools where they belong and picking up litter, especially plastic. Although each member decides what to grow, group-based coordination is crucial for non-competition and crop specialization. In other words, coordinated production means that “members do not have to grow all the things they like

to eat” (Bartlett 2013:77). If all growers specialize in two or three crops, then each member has access to a wide array of produce.

Everyone shared food among the collective to varying extents. During the annual Harvest Festival in October 2015, Steve brought apples and peaches from his orchard to share with attendees. Josh sold produce grown in his home gardens to the festivalgoers and donated the money to support the collective’s fundraising effort. Yedith permitted open access to her tomatoes, chard, and squash during most of the summer because she rarely went to the farm. . Francisco also granted members permission to harvest garlic, cilantro, lettuce, and all other crops from his plots. In previous years, Elmer shared several pounds of beans with Nelson, but he did not share much with anyone else during 2015, largely as result of flooding and crop predators. Angela shared some of her first yield of lettuce, tomatoes, maize, and cucumbers with a few growers. The aquaponics group had no yield to share, but I presume they would give produce to growers based on needs and possibilities. Personal examples of gifting produce to growers mostly occurred at nighttime upon my departure from the farm after a few hours of work. While walking to my car after harvesting, I would make sure to offer produce to anyone present. Other forms of food sharing occurred upon the request of one member to another, such as when Nelson asked if he could get some peppers from my garden for his dinner or in the cases of me asking to harvest some cilantro and chipilin after helping to weed Nelson’s crop rows. Days when I helped Nelson harvest potatoes – typically twenty to thirty pounds – he offered me the opportunity to take as much as I wanted, which was often just about a pound. Members shared snack foods – like fruit or nuts – and water, and Nelson frequently invited everyone present at the farm during midday to eat lunch. He typically

offered a dish customary to Salvadorans and Hondurans: *atole chuco*. This hot drink or soup was prepared with water, salt, black beans, *alguashte* (ground seeds of *ayote* squash), and fermented *masa* (dough made by mixing water and finely-ground maize treated with slaked lime). The *atole chuco* was always served in a *huacal de morro*, i.e. a vessel formed by halving a certain kind of small tree fruit. On some occasions, I observed a couple growers hand Nelson salad mix, soup, or other prepared dishes. Nelson seemed to receive most gifts because of his role as coordinator and his occupancy of the farmhouse.

I perceive the social organization and power-dynamics of La Minga to reflect the communist maxim, “From each according to [his, her, or their] ability, to each according to [his, her, or their] needs” (Marx 1978[1875]:531; Harvey 2014:296). Growers never quoted this motto, and only a couple of members were familiar with the works of Marx. The adage resonates with how the leadership of La Minga expresses the organization’s basic values. One of the nonprofit’s foundational documents addresses the topic of individual and collective responsibilities by stating, “It is an expectation that products will be shared according to the needs and possibilities of members, but sharing will be an individual decision” (Zavala 2013b). However, no grower – except for Nelson – would experience a food crisis in the instance of crop failure or if the farm became inaccessible for any reason. Nelson’s livelihood would be severely disrupted because he makes a living selling a few crops grown only at the farm, and La Minga provides the majority of his food to eat and trade with other farmers. The notion ‘according to need’ thereby seems largely rhetorical in the sense that most growers participate at the farm as a hobby rather than out of the basic necessity to eat. By August, three of nine gardeners

abandoned their crops because of scheduling and logistical conflicts, but their gardens were small and contributed little to the overall food intake of their families. The failure of Steve's fruit trees and bushes – caused by drought and deer – did not result in his inability to eat or make money during 2015, but he will have to adapt his financial plan for 2016 and beyond to account for those losses. Excessive rain caused about thirty percent of Nelson's potatoes to fail, which effectively amounted to losing a significant portion of a three-month investment (the crop's growth period). Elmer's rice and beans also failed due to birds, deer, and flooding, but at harvest time, his family did not experience a food crisis because he and his wife have professions, hence purchasing power.

The most crucial point to takeaway with regard to La Minga's collective values and guidelines of production is that the nonprofit's permaculture-inspired approach serves as a very small-scale example of an alternative model to conventional agricultural production. This point is particularly important considering the vision articulated by Nelson in the draft 2016 strategic plan, which he characterizes as, "An educational, communitarian, and open space for permaculture recognized at local and national levels as a successful alternative model for [sustainable] agricultural production" (Escobar 2016). Desmarais (2007:69) differentiates between the dominant paradigm of industrial agriculture and the alternative agroecological paradigm espoused by the international peasant movement La Via Campesina. These two models differ based on six main categories: 1) centralization and decentralization, 2) dependence and independence, 3) competitive and community, 4) domination of nature and harmony with nature, 5) specialization and diversity, and 6) exploitation and restraint (Ibid.).

On the one hand, the dominant model is premised on the concentration of production, processing, and the market. Fewer and larger farms mean that principal operators are pressured to increase reliance on ‘experts,’ long-distance markets, external inputs, and credit. Market forces compel conventional commodity producers to compete based on self-interest, thereby leading to their emphasis on efficiency and the maximization of profit. Conventional production alienates humans from nature largely due to “the imposition of human time frames and systems on natural cycles” (Ibid.). The dominant paradigm is premised on limited genetics, monocultures, standardized production, and the separation of crops and livestock. Furthermore, conventional agriculture relies on non-renewable resources to grow products and depends on simplified calculations of complex systems, which tends to result in the loss of biodiversity and the non-recognition of local knowledge from those who work the land.

On the other hand, the alternative paradigm of agroecology highlights the importance of localized and regionalized production, processing, and marketing based on more farms and farmers with direct control over their lands and resources (Ibid.). Agroecology places primary emphasis on the personal values and skills of producers, thus local knowledge is more valued than external sources. The alternative paradigm advocated by Via Campesina rests on the fundamental notion of small-scale production as both “a way of life” and a business (Ibid.). Proponents of agroecology encourage increased cooperation among producers and holistic approaches to production that avoid attempts at unnaturally controlling biological systems and processes. This alternative model of agriculture involves recognition of the fact that humans are part of and dependent on nature; moreover, the integration of crops and livestock as well as the

cultivation of polycultures allows for small- and medium-scale producers to work with natural energy and nutrient systems. In addition to maintaining broad genetic diversity, other core aspects of agroecological production include the recycling organic material, the avoidance of synthetic inputs, and the intercropping of fields. Overall, the approach of agroecology is based on sustainable production and consumption, heterogeneous cultivation methods, and equitable access to productive resources needed to meet basic food and social needs (Ibid.).

Summary of Values, Principles, and Procedures

Upon entering the field in late May, my lack of gardening experience prompted me to seek technical advice from Nelson, Esteban, and Elmer. It is important to note that no one referred me to the founding documents or intended to engage in a formal training session aimed at orienting me or other new members into the collective. From May until late August, my gardening activities were largely self-informed and spontaneous rather than based on techniques learned from the farm leadership. Although I had a basic awareness of the organization's inspiration from permaculture and thereby refrained from using chemical inputs, I violated – unintentionally and out of ignorance – other natural farming principles espoused by the organization. I only saw the group's production guidelines and bylaws in late August after notes from the annual General Assembly meeting were sent to each member. Reading the file titled “Values, Principles, and Procedures of La Minga” (Zavala 2013b) was a revelation: I perceived my plot differently. As described above, this document contains guidelines that advise against plowing the land, pruning plants, and weeding excessively. I considered whether I had over-worked my garden and caused harm to the soil from intensive weeding. I also

recognized that my few instances of pruning violated the guideline of allowing plants to grow “as nature designed them” (Zavala 2013b). In addition, I perceived the organization in a new light. My focus shifted from single members to the interrelationships between them. I paid close attention to the decision-making process as well as the ways that members commanded resources. With a broader view of the organization as a whole, questions of power and authority arose out of situations that revealed apparent inequities and communication breakdowns related to accessing financial and productive resources (see Section IVB).

For the purposes of this research, the nonprofit’s foundational documents serve as important tools for conceptually mediating between growers’ farm-based activities, i.e. the production and harvesting of crops, and the local food scene more broadly. La Minga’s bylaws emphasize that the growers’ overall mission is to generate access to land, training/technical assistance, and other resources for sustainable production in a diverse and cooperative environment (Zavala 2013a). La Minga aims to facilitate educational initiatives on-site and beyond the farm. Events like the SAL-sponsored *milpa* program provide opportunities for community members to learn how to cultivate the Three Sisters, and some La Minga members also give presentations and represent the farm at agricultural and academic meetings, such as Nelson’s 2016 participation as a panelist at both the Southern SAWG and Dimensions of Political Ecology conferences in Lexington. In addition, these documents serve to legitimize the nonprofit in the eyes of state entities and private funders. Finally, the procedures outlined in the organization’s foundational documents could also be used to mediate conflicts between members or to hold members accountable for fulfilling group-oriented duties. All members have access to the bylaws

and related documents through an online data storage service, but the organization does not educate new members about collective values, principles, and procedures. The latter point is crucial to consider because such documents might seem banal or too formal for a group of less than twenty members. These files are important for charting pathways to achieve short- and long-term goals, but the mission and vision of La Minga can only be achieved through common understanding and collective effort.

CHAPTER FOUR

LA MINGA AS A MODEL OF FOOD JUSTICE?

Do growers at the farm practice food justice? If so, how? The NY-based nonprofit organization Just Food (*In Alkon and Agyeman 2011:5*) defines food justice as “communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food, i.e. food that is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers, and animals.” Growers produce a wide variety of healthy fruits and vegetables, mostly for consumption purposes but also to share and sell to community members. About half of the growers were presumably upper-middle class, considering their residential locations and full-time professions. A few growers likely live under or right at the poverty line; for them, the production of food within a cooperative setting is crucial for reducing food costs. Overall, the La Minga model of food justice – specifically regarding the production of food – rests on the agreement between the Wallace family and the leadership of the farm project. Growers have free-of-cost access to garden plots per the solidarity agreement with Carla Wallace in particular. La Minga is founded on permaculture-inspired production guidelines, but members do not receive any sort of training or consciousness-raising pertaining to the values and principles outlined by the Board (Zavala 2013b). The grower profiles below are intended to highlight the ways in which individual members practice food justice. I specifically discuss their motivations as well as their production and distribution activities. The profiles provide wide-ranging support for my main claim that La Minga serves as a small-scale example

of immigrants and native-citizens exercising their right to produce healthy, culturally-appropriate food according to self-determined purposes. As discussed in the second half of this chapter, the La Minga model is complicated for a number of reasons, particularly the fragility of the organization and its marginal role in the local food movement; however, the stories and perspectives that growers expressed indicate that the organization largely accomplishes its goal of providing garden access and increasing the availability of sustainably-produced foods among growers' social networks.

A. Grower Profiles: Routine Behavior and Motivations for Gardening

Upon joining the collective in late May, I openly established my role as a student-researcher through requesting informed consent from each member, thereby ensuring they knew my main purpose there was to gain an insider's perspective of gardening at La Minga. I worked (and relaxed) at the farm for several hours nearly six days a week from June until July and about three or four days a week during late summer and early fall. I asked all of the growers if they needed help in their gardens, and my main intention was to learn about their techniques for planting, weeding, and harvesting as well as their distribution procedures. Nelson asked me for help on his plots several times, and on a few occasions I aided him freely without expecting reciprocation beyond a very small portion of the crop, such as a pound of potatoes out of thirty pounds harvested. Elmer also asked for help maintaining his rice, beans, maize, and cucumbers before he went out of town for a couple weeks. I worked on his plots only a few times, always without expectation of labor reciprocity. In addition, Steve requested my assistance in March 2016 concerning the installation of a fence around his fruit trees at the farm. He reached out twice, and scheduling conflicts led me to regretfully decline both times. The other six growers never

asked for my help, and neither did the three members involved with the aquaponics project inside the greenhouse; however, I had a goal to help each member of the group to some extent in order to understand their activities at the farm. I worked on every garden plot except for Steve's because I rarely saw him at the farm. I helped Nelson the most – a total of about twenty hours or more from June until October – and I worked on Josh's plot the least. The latter grower joined the collective in October, and I helped him plant garlic for about fifteen minutes as an expression of amity because I supposed that he didn't consider me as a friend. Although I asked a couple of schoolmates to help me plant on my first day – one of whom had gardening experience from working as an intern for a prominent local farmer – not once did I call on a fellow grower for help in my garden, largely for two interrelated reasons. First, status differences – mainly regarding age and agricultural experience – led me to help growers without calling back the favors in kind. Most growers were at least fifteen years older than me, and as a first-year producer, I hoped to develop agrarian skillsets that could serve as a foundation for future gardening endeavors. Second, I worked on their plots with the intention of establishing rapport and friendships with each person. I hoped that they would recognize me as a *compañero* dedicated to intergroup solidarity.

Those who spent the most time at the farm included Nelson, Elmer, and Francisco. I encountered the other growers – Yedith, Angela, Andrew, Esteban, Steve, and Josh – and the aquaponics folks – Stephen, Sunita, and Priyanka – with much less frequency. The subsections below are intended to illuminate the motivations, gardening practices, and distribution procedures of each grower.

Nelson

I asked Nelson during an interview (2015b) if he would describe the experience of walking onto the front porch of his house and looking out at the farm every morning. He stated without hesitation, “I feel free.” With regard to self-employment, Nelson explained that he could stay on the porch and relax, or he could put on his boots and hat and make his way into the fields. He received work orders from no one. “I never thought I would be a full-time farmer or that I would live in the United States,” Nelson said while elucidating his “decision” to produce food for a living when La Minga started in 2009. He had very little agricultural experience prior to becoming a farmer. After immigrating to the US from El Salvador in 2006, Nelson lived at Comer Farms in Southern Indiana. He cultivated a large, private garden outside of his house. He generated income by maintaining their plant nursery and later began to work part-time in Louisville as a Spanish instructor, which is how he met Carla Wallace. In response to a question concerning his process of integrating into society, Nelson described how the lack of a college degree was “an obstacle” to finding employment opportunities by which he could apply his decades of experience as a community organizer and policy advocate. Also, he did not know many people, and his English skills were minimal. Another major tension Nelson experienced stemmed from what he referred to as the “individualized culture” of the US.

Once La Minga formed, Nelson made the hour-long drive from Scottsburg to Prospect several days a week for about two years until committing to live out of his pickup truck – parked at La Minga – during three summer months of 2011. He eventually had the opportunity to move into the farmhouse once the former tenants – two of Carla’s

native-citizen friends who also co-founded the farm project – ended their lease. By growing food for consumption, sharing, and sale, he limits purchases from corporate groceries to a minimum. He tends to buy only about twenty-five percent of his food from grocery stores throughout the summer and fall. Most of the food he consumes during those two seasons comes from his garden plots at La Minga, as gifts from growers and friends, and via product exchanges with local farmers whom he has known for a few years. He met most of his farmer friends through CFA and by participating at farmers’ markets in Louisville and Goshen.

Nelson said that he has become “*realizado* (realized),” by which he meant that he feels self-actualized and “fully satisfied” with his agrarian lifestyle. He remarked that the benefits of farming far outweigh the negatives. He stated that the main difficulties related to food production are physical exhaustion, social isolation, financial uncertainties, and the effects of unpredictable weather. “Being a farmer is hard work,” Nelson emphasized, “You know that.” He said that he felt isolated and disconnected from society when living and working at Comer Farms, and he claims to experience less isolation at La Minga because he regularly exchanges produce with local farmers, distributes to local eaters via four market channels, and has opportunities to hangout with growers when they work at the farm. Moreover, he mentioned that the purposes of his participation at La Minga “go beyond food production,” meaning that he is also motivated to build community and engage in political activism. He previously served on the Louisville Food Policy Advisory Council. Nelson’s current roles as the Coordinator of La Minga and a CFA Board Member provide opportunities for him to apply the community-organizing and policy-making skillsets that he developed over three decades of nonprofit work in El

Salvador. Overall, Nelson stated that the key benefits of farming include connecting with nature, using fresh ingredients for meals, raising his children in a semi-rural setting, and supplying culturally-appropriate produce to members of the Latino community in particular.

Nelson's main products destined for local markets included potatoes, chipilin (a leafy green plant native to Mexico and Central America), jicama (a turnip-like tuber native to Mexico), squash blossoms, and an assortment of flowers. He grew squash, cilantro, and okra as well, mostly for personal use and trading with friends. The majority of his seeds were saved from the previous year. He also obtained seeds from friends and as gifts which his oldest daughter regularly sends via mail. The seeds that he purchased came from Fresh Start Growers Supply in East Downtown. Nelson attempted to use two large plots at the farm, but in July he abandoned one. He did not have the energy to control the weeds that dominated about ten rows of newly-planted chipilin and several hills of potatoes. He abandoned that particular plot also because excessive rains destroyed over half of the potato crop. Overall, the demand for labor on Nelson's plots exceeded his capacity to maintain the spaces. To mitigate his problem, he considered either hiring a part-time farmworker or using biodegradable plastic for weed control. He followed through with neither of those ideas; instead, he worked the land as usual and relied on my occasional help.

Nelson cultivated potatoes and chipilín in the same hilled rows. The process of harvesting potatoes with a shovel and replanting the root systems required caution as to prevent harm to the chipilin growing between every other potato plant. He prepared the land for potatoes with an old and heavy grub hoe used to form the hills, some of which

were about fifty feet long while other rows reached close to eighty feet. He spaced the potatoes about a foot apart. Toward the middle of summer, he deconstructed the hills in order to solely grow chipilin on his primary plot. He planted chipilin in raised potato beds and on flat ground by making holes with a post digger or drain spade, transplanting seedlings from plastic starter trays, filling the holes with compost, and gently pressing down at the base of each plant. He planted other crops, e.g. okra and squash, by digging a small hole with a shovel and loosely covering the seeds with soil. Aside from using a grub hoe to make raised beds, Nelson avoided plowing his gardens.

Nelson consistently participated in four market networks throughout the year. He sold produce at the Beechmont Open Air Market every Saturday morning starting in mid-June. It was his first year at that site, and on the second week, he completely sold out, which had never happened in the six years of his involvement at farmers' markets. Nelson sold all of his chipilin to one person on that day. The same Latina customer was there waiting for him when he arrived late to the market on the following Saturday, and she bought every bunch of chipilin before he even set up the tables and canopy. Furthermore, almost every Friday from mid-June until mid-October, Nelson distributed about fifty bunches of chipilin to Supermercado Guanajuato in the East End and Central Louisville. Toward the end of summer he began to also sell squash blossoms to the same buyer. Nelson said that members of the Latino immigrant community love to eat foods from their native countries.

After explaining how the two Mexican grocery stores typically sell out of Nelson's chipilin and squash blossoms within a couple hours, he suggested that supplying culturally-appropriate foods can allow Latino immigrants to continue cultural traditions

or even develop hybrid foodways by mixing customary and unconventional ingredients or preparation methods. Nelson also sold between twenty and fifty pounds of potatoes to the Urban Growers Cooperative (UGC) at least twice a month during summer. The UGC charged a twenty percent distribution fee and transported products to New Roots Fresh Stops and downtown ‘foodie’ restaurants like Harvest and Mayan Café. Lastly, on a few occasions, Nelson directly marketed jicama to the owner of the latter restaurant. The growth period of jicama is close to five months, and he harvested the one-yield crop only about three or four times, each instance from a different sector of the raised, one-hundred-foot rows that he constructed in the same manner as potato hills.

Elmer

Elmer and his wife moved to the US from Nicaragua about a decade ago. He grew up alongside eight siblings in southwest Honduras amid an impoverished rural setting. His father was a resource-limited farmer for whom the possibility of owning a tractor amounted to “a dream” (Zavala 2015b). Elmer moved to a city on the Caribbean coast of Honduras at age eighteen because he considered the countryside to have “no future” under the political-economic circumstances that caused many small-scale farmers to experience “two crises per year” (Zavala 2016). He described how commodity prices consistently fell at harvest time, and *coyotes* (middlemen) “robbed the crop” and took the products to “big businessmen” intent on maximizing profit. He stated, “For most of my [adult] life, I didn’t want to think about agriculture. [My family] worked hard every Monday through Saturday, from five in the morning until four or five at night, all year. It happened every time” (Ibid.). In a sorrowful tone he added, “It was very unfair.” His father – over eighty years of age – now only produces food for consumption and depends

on his children to send money. Elmer said that the story of his family “is repeated a million times.”

Elmer received ecumenical training while living in Nicaragua, and he has made a living as a Christian minister for all of his adult life. The economic and food security of his household compels him “to reach out his hand to others” according to the lessons embedded in the Gospels (Zavala 2016). He works with Latino immigrants in the Preston Highway area of Central Louisville – also referred to as “Little Mexico” – and a few examples of his practice as a Reverend include visiting homes, leading Bible study fellowships, and organizing community festivals for birthdays and holidays (Aja 2014). He applies his professional skills of communication and facilitation to his role as the President of La Minga Inc.’s Board of Directors. The primary point of similarity between the two social spheres is Elmer’s commitment to motivating the participation of assembly members. Furthermore, he firmly believes in the importance of working with “the weak,” i.e. marginalized and grief-stricken individuals. “My highest goal,” he said, “is to love my enemy. If you are my friend, it is easy to love you.” In line with his training, Elmer recognizes that the Christian faith is highly divided. “You have your Presbyterians, Catholics, Evangelicals, Baptists, etc.,” he claimed and went on to argue that, ultimately, they are united by a clear emphasis on loving thy neighbor as thyself. He applies that principle of loving thy neighbor not only to humans but also to “trees, rivers, and all other beings in Creation.” Elmer merges Christianity with the worldview and customs of his Lenca ancestors. He stated that members of his ethnic group recognize spirit animals and sacred places, and he described how they ask for permission from the spirit of a tree, for example, before felling it. The Lenca are indigenous to Central America, and their

struggle for sovereignty over ancestral territory has recently received international attention in light of the high-profile assassination of Berta Cáceres – an indigenous environmental activist, co-founder of OPINEH, and close associate of the Garifuna people on the Caribbean coast of Honduras – on March 3, 2016 (Bartlett 2016b). Most Lenca live in southwestern Honduras and eastern El Salvador. They have historically relied on fishing and *milpa* (intercropped) agriculture for subsistence and economic exchange (Zavala 2016).

Elmer partially incorporates his Lenca heritage and Christian faith into his agricultural practices. He said, “When I think about permaculture, it’s like a prayer.” While working in his gardens, he thinks, “Earth, I want to take care of you because you take care of me.” Unlike his ancestors and one other member of La Minga –Esteban Bartlett – Elmer does not perform planting or harvest ceremonies. He underscored his commitment to mindfulness and sustainable land use by saying, “You and I are part of the earth. That tree is part of the earth. We are all connected... The most important [legal] rights are for the earth. If the earth is protected, I am protected.” He pointed at the concrete alleyway behind his house and claimed, “The earth is *un cuerpo vivo* (a living body). It needs to breathe.” He then called attention to the loose topsoil in his backyard garden as we discussed his no-till approach to planting. He demonstrated how to plant seeds or seedlings by lightly scooping bits of soil to the side with his fingertips.

He engages in *milpa* production in his home gardens and at La Minga. Both sites tend to yield half of the food consumed in his household of five during an entire year. He lives in a house located about three miles south of downtown and fifteen miles southwest of La Minga. He has cultivated his entire front yard and half of his backyard for six and a

half years. The total area of his front yard is about three hundred square feet, and his backyard garden is two hundred square feet. In 2015 and years prior he grew maize, beans, squash, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, lettuce, sunflowers, garlic, and onions at home. He bought some seeds and plants from a Latino-owned garden store, but most of his seeds were saved from previous years. The purple- and white-flowered morning glory vines that climb his fences are used as natural fertilizer, which he removes from the ground and places around the base of plants. He does not use chemical fertilizers; instead, at the end of each year, he spreads morning glory, leaves, cornstalks, and some straw across his gardens.

His use of land at La Minga is aimed at producing large quantities of foods ideal for drying and consumption throughout the year. He mostly grew bush beans and an upland variety of rice, and he also produced maize, cucumbers, and squash on his two plots. At the end of the 2014 growing season, Elmer harvested about one hundred and fifty pounds of rice as well as two hundred and fifty pounds of beans; by stark contrast, in 2015 he harvested only two pounds of rice and thirty pounds of beans. The failure of the latter crop was caused by excessive rains and disturbances from deer, rabbits, and mice. His rice grew well, and as an upland variety, flooding was neither needed nor destructive to the resilient grain. Elmer arranged a workday with another grower, Angela, who enthusiastically proposed the idea of bringing her students to help harvest the rice. Rain prompted them to cancel their plan for an afternoon in late September, and Elmer waited for over two weeks and never heard back from Angela concerning his bid to reschedule. In response to a question about why he did not call on other members or friends for help, Elmer said, “The problem was not that I had no one to help me harvest. I could have done

that alone” (Zavala 2016). His reason for waiting was that he wanted the students “to have a good and new experience.” Unfortunately, during those weeks that Angela did not reply, birds ate almost the entire crop. Elmer remarked that Nelson witnessed the birds ravaging the field day after day. Nelson never notified Elmer of the problem, thereby letting his five months of hard effort to go largely to waste. He dismissed the losses, maintained friendships with Angela and Nelson, and expressed to members at a 2016 planning meeting that the crop predators “are also our sisters and brothers.” He went on to say, “They all have their function, and eliminating them would change the balance [of the ecosystem].”

Elmer produces food “as a hobby” for the purposes of consumption and sharing (Zavala 2016). He has never sold produce. He enjoys producing food, using fresh ingredients for meals, building community, connecting with nature, and sharing produce with friends and neighbors. He expounded on the importance of gifting by claiming, “When we share food, we are also sharing our energy, our love. It makes people smile.” With regard to time management, he stated, “Agriculture is not my main priority. My family and work are top priorities.” Elmer drove to La Minga about three or four days a week throughout June and July. He typically started farming at nine or ten o’clock in the morning and left around two or three in the afternoon. Most days he would leave the farm to meet with his family or go to work. Elmer said that he frequently filled a basket with produce from each member’s plots and shared the food with associates from Hispanic-Latino Ministries. “Mexican people [in the ministry] really love peppers,” he remarked.

He spent little time at the farm in August and September for two main reasons. On the one hand, his plots needed much less attention after heavy rains and critters destroyed

a lot of his beans; on the other hand, the remainder of his crops was largely under control leading up to harvest season in early October. Elmer always parked next to his primary plot – almost a quarter of an acre in size – at the very end of the grass pathway that separates both sides of the two-acre, fenced-in cultivation space. About once a week I observed him using a lawnmower between his one-hundred-foot crop rows and then weeding the rows carefully with a standard garden hoe. Elmer said that he needed to weed his rice a total of three times, and he was capable of weeding all of it within three or four days. He often listened to Honduran satellite radio via his cell phone while working in the fields. He usually wore a hat and long sleeves for protection from the sun. He liked to pick blackberries and raspberries from along the fence adjacent to his plot, and he took brief resting periods at the far end of his plot in the morning and early-afternoon shade.

In addition to farming with his father as a youth, Elmer's agricultural experience ranges from gardening at home while living in Nicaragua to producing beans at Comer Farms soon after he immigrated to the US. He met Nelson through two mutual friends, and the four of them maintained private garden spaces at that farm in southern Indiana. Elmer joined La Minga in the fourth year of the project. He takes a great deal of pride in his growing practices that are grounded in procedures learned from his father and the agricultural legacy of his ancestors. He conceives of his home gardens and his main plot at La Minga in terms of "permaculture projects." He has maintained the same plot for four years. Although he has never used a soil testing kit, Elmer observes the soil quality on his plot at La Minga increase with each annual growing season. The soil of his home gardens improves every year too. He tilled the land at both sites only in the first year. Unlike some other growers at the farm, he does not use a rototiller, hoe, or any other

instrument to turn over the land before planting each year. His primary method for planting entails the use of a wooden digging stick and a mallet. At home he can use his hand to plant seeds because the soil is much looser than the farm. He prepares his plots at La Minga by mowing the grass, clearing one-hundred-foot rows with his personal hoe, and subsequently walking down each row making one hole – about an inch in diameter and an inch deep – every eight or ten inches. Next, he transfers seeds into each hole from a small bucket roped around his torso – a technique he learned while working alongside his father decades ago – and he covers the seeds with soil. Elmer places twenty to thirty pieces of rice in every hole that extends down thirteen consecutive rows, and only half of the grains tend to sprout. His other nineteen rows include two to three beans per hole. The spacing between each cluster of rice and beans was slightly larger than the blade of a hoe, thus allowing for systematic weeding of the rows and proper growth of the crops. Furthermore, he planted two or three maize kernels about every eight to ten feet within each row of rice and beans. On a separate plot, he planted three rows of maize, beans, cucumbers, and squash. The vegetables grew together, and each mound was spaced about eight feet apart. He also formed a sunflower perimeter around the two plots of Three Sisters that Esteban facilitated. The sunflowers grew over twelve feet tall, and once they fell to the ground in late September, Elmer cut the flowers from the stems and harvested the seeds at home.

Francisco

Francisco moved to Louisville from Mexico a little over ten years ago. He lives with his wife and young children in an East End house. His other children are adults, and they live outside of Kentucky. His oldest daughter seasonally sends him packets of

vegetable and flower seeds as gifts. In addition to those sent to him and the seeds that he attempts to save from each crop at the end of every season, Francisco buys some seeds online and from garden supply stores in the city. He only grows food at La Minga and has never gardened at his current home for reasons related to lack of sufficient space and sunlight. He joined La Minga in 2011 after meeting Nelson at a church in Central Louisville. For a few years, he sold produce alongside Nelson at the Goshen farmers' market less than a mile away from the farm. Francisco has not sold crops since that market closed in 2014. He claimed that working the land and having direct access to fresh vegetables were the most beneficial aspects of gardening (Diaz 2015).

Although he occasionally hurts his back from using a hoe, Francisco enjoys being outside, experimenting with growing techniques, and producing foods he grew up eating (Ibid.).

In 2015 he mainly produced strawberries, tomatoes, tomatillos, cilantro, squash, maize, greens, amaranth, garlic, potatoes, succulents, and flowers. He shared among the collective, and with regard to his open-access gardens, he often emphasized, "Take what you need. Whatever you want is right." He also shared small amounts of produce with a few friends from church. The majority of his crops were eaten at home. During summer and autumn months, Francisco's harvest accounted for about one-third of the food consumed in his household. I asked about why he grew so many inedible flowers, and he said that they were intended not only for his wife and daughters but "to make God happy" as well, suggesting that God looks down with joy at the beauty of the farm (Diaz 2016).

Francisco lives about thirty minutes south of La Minga. Transportation is not a problem because he owns a car and has sufficient income to fuel his trips between home,

work, and La Minga. He farmed nearly every evening during summer and fall. I never saw him in the morning or afternoon. He usually arrived at the farm just a couple hours before dark, and on multiple occasions, I observed him arrive at sunset. On most days, Francisco went to La Minga after a shift. He has worked full-time as a custodian at a shopping mall in the East End for a few years, and he was employed part-time in an Amazon warehouse during the late fall and winter months of 2015–2016. He often worked in the darkness until ten or eleven o'clock. Francisco stated that he was accustomed to farming at night from his time living outside of Puebla, located about eighty miles southeast of Mexico's federal capital. He described how lights from the city center illuminated the night sky enough for him to work on his small parcel of land where he lived for over fifteen years (Diaz 2015). However, from my perspective, the light generated by downtown Louisville and nearby Prospect neighborhoods never seemed bright enough for safely and effectively working after dark.

Francisco says that he “is always doing a thousand different tasks” (Diaz 2015). His work schedule and family responsibilities conflict with his aspiration to spend more time at the farm, and he attempts to always be prepared for the next steps of each project. For example, in early March 2016 Francisco used a standard garden hoe to prepare a couple eighty-foot rows, but he left the rows empty for several weeks until eventually transplanting lettuce and garlic. Another example is his use of space behind the greenhouse. In that area he constantly has plastic containers filled with flower bulbs, *Moringa* trees, herbs, and vegetables scattered around the drying tables and a considerable amount of collective junk, e.g. old greenhouse plastic, metal rods, and wood with rusty nails. The tools that Francisco used to complete most tasks were a shovel,

wheelbarrow, and hoe, all of which were from the farm. In his car he kept a knife and pair of scissors mainly for harvesting. He used compost on-site and some potting soil purchased from local garden stores. He shoveled compost into a wheelbarrow, mixed it with potting soil, and filled plastic containers for starting transplants. After transferring the contents of those pots into his gardens, he re-fills the containers with soil and attempts to start more plants. He put compost in his fields too, particularly at the base of plants and in the form of slightly-raised garden beds. He used a hoe for weeding and to turn over the land before planting, and he kept a pair of scissors and a small knife in his car for harvesting flowers and vegetables.

Both of Francisco's plots appeared highly unorganized during summer and fall. Rather than planting in straight rows or intercropping like almost every other grower, he cultivated the land in small, square sections filled with one crop in each area. There were no clear pathways within his gardens. When he led me on tours of his space, we zigzagged between clusters of plants and amid tall grass that seemed to be choking his tomatoes, squash, garlic, and cilantro. I frequently observed him working, but I never noticed drastic changes to his space, specifically concerning weed control or the overall aesthetics of his plots. Francisco knew where each crop was located despite his apparent lack of management, which thereby calls into question the notion of a well-maintained or orderly garden. Although his growing procedures differed from the techniques of other members, they were systematic nonetheless. His practices were embedded with rationale and self-determined ends in sight, i.e. to eat and share the produce. He also experimented with growing methods and referenced some information online. He had a method for starting seeds, preparing the land, transplanting seedlings into the ground, and weeding

around the plants to ensure proper growth. He demarcated the perimeter of most crop clusters by lining dry cornstalks and old wooden posts along the edges of the square or rectangular spaces. He seasonally rotates the location of annual crops within his plots, and at the end of each year he scattered leaves and cornstalks across his plots to regenerate the soil.

I asked Francisco if he ever intends to become a full-time farmer. “If we had a tractor with a headlight, I would quit my job tomorrow, and I would be here all day and night,” he explained, “I used to sell at the church in Goshen. I would sell again if we found another market.” He expressed his vision to participate in a production cooperative, but he did not use those words specifically. Francisco said that he wants to sow, maintain, and harvest crops, but he wants to avoid all aspects related to distribution. Ultimately, he suggested the idea of working the land together according to a production plan, and others in the cooperative would lead the marketing efforts.

Yedith

Yedith immigrated to Louisville with her then-husband after he secured employment in the city over a decade ago. “Those weren’t my plans, but here I am. I like Louisville.” She grew up in Michoacán, Mexico and continued to live there as an adult until moving to the US. Her parents owned cattle ranches, and they produced vegetables and fruits at home. She helped with some farm chores as a youth, but she has only maintained a home garden for the last five years. Esteban Bartlett characterizes Yedith as “a maize expert” (Bartlett 2015). I asked about her experience utilizing the crop. She said, “There are many uses. In my hometown we use the big, green leaves of the plant to make *corundas*, which are like tamales but smaller.” She continued, “*Corundas* are fresh

and rich, and the flavor of the leaves is delicious. With the maize kernels, you can make tortillas, *atoles* [gruels], and many different kinds of tamales. You can also use leaves from the cob to make tamales and handicrafts. All parts of the plant can be used for animal feed and compost” (Rodriguez 2015). Yedith’s agricultural background is foundational to her recognition that healthy food habits are central to good health (Ibid.). She enjoys gardening and using fresh ingredients in meals for her young children. “I ate the best salsa this year,” she mentioned with regard to growing tomatoes and peppers (Ibid.). Yedith experiences enchantment witnessing the growth of her plants. She likes to spend time outside connecting with nature and working with her kids. For her, the best part about gardening is eating fresh food (Ibid). Half of her harvest supplied three months of tomatoes, peppers, and squash. She shared about a quarter of the yield with friends and froze the remainder for use during winter. She has never sold nor seriously considered selling food from her gardens.

Yedith joined La Minga in May 2015. She learned about the farm a couple months prior while attending a *nixtamal* festival located at La Casita Center in Old Louisville. The latter nonprofit organization is based on a holistic model of accompaniment and hospitality aimed at supporting immigrant families meet basic needs and develop social networks that foster personal growth and community engagement (Barillas 2015). Yedith has been an active volunteer and program participant with La Casita since she moved to Louisville. Esteban Bartlett’s organization Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL) co-hosted the event dedicated to celebrating “the Amazing Maize,” and Bartlett also attempted to recruit participants for the Three Sisters program scheduled to take place at La Minga on four Sundays from late May until late

October. Yedith was one of twenty or thirty adult festivalgoers who signed up to receive more information about the *milpa* project at the farm. She brought her children to La Minga for the first day of the program, which entailed a seed-blessing ceremony and group-based planting of maize, beans, and squash. A total of fifty or sixty people were present for that workday, most of whom were affiliated with La Casita and Esteban's church (see Section IVB). Yedith spoke with Nelson about growing some vegetables, and he assigned a plot sized per her request. Within the following weeks, she and her daughter weeded the space and started planting vegetables.

Yedith's children are her biggest concern, and gardening is a low-priority hobby. She experiences a tension, however, because she intends to prepare nutritious meals with fresh ingredients for her children, but she has little time to maintain her gardens. She lives about fifteen minutes southeast of La Minga. She rarely went to the farm. When I saw her, she always had her two children. The older child helped in the garden, and the younger one sat near or inside of the car, depending on the temperature outside. Her plot at La Minga was much larger than her garden at home. She produced two varieties of tomatoes, jalapenos, chard, squash, and maize. Most of her seeds were saved from the previous year and given to her as gifts from friends, and she bought some seeds and transplants from a nearby store. She weeded by hand and used some tools from the farm. She preferred a garden trowel for planting, a hoe for weeding, and a knife for harvesting.

Her plot was situated between a one-hundred-foot row of okra and a patch of flowers perpetually dominated by Johnson grass. The tomatoes were grown in two rows that extended twenty feet. She supported the plants with bamboo sticks and twine purchased from a garden supply store. The chard was directly seeded and grew well

despite the weeds surrounding the fifteen-foot row placed to the right of her tomatoes. Yedith grew squash in about five mounds next to the flower patch. A few stalks of maize ran perpendicular to the rows of tomatoes and chard. She grew some peppers in a couple short rows on the back half of her plot. She abandoned her gardens after becoming pregnant in late summer. Despite her busy schedule with a newborn, she continues to generate income by making floral arrangements and accessories for children. She owns her own company but “practically does not work” because she “dedicates herself to home.” Yedith does not know when she will be available to start growing food again.

Angela

Angela immigrated to the US from Spain as a toddler, and she grew up in various cities across the country. She has lived in Prospect with her husband and children for several years. I asked whether Angela identifies as an immigrant, and she said, “There’s a saying in Spain: *La sangre tira* [Blood pulls]” (Ponzio 2015). After mentioning how she has visited family in Spain on numerous occasions, she emphasized that she honors the history of her family and respects the determination of her father for his efforts to become a successful doctor upon moving to the US decades ago. Angela has two kids and works as a Spanish teacher at a high school near La Minga. Her house is located in the neighborhood next to the farm. It takes her two minutes to drive there. She usually gardened around five or six o’clock in the evening about two or three days a week during the early summer months. She went to La Minga mainly to water her plants and harvest vegetables for dinner. If she stayed to work, she would often weed for thirty minutes to an hour using a collectively-owned stirrup hoe.

Angela joined La Minga in April 2015 with no agricultural background. She received most of her gardening tips from Nelson, Elmer, and Francisco because of their experience and frequent presence at the farm. She also referenced some information online. For example, in the greenhouse she started a couple trays of tomatoes, many of which she transplanted. She shared the extra seedlings with other growers. I accepted several of the plants and asked whether they were determinate or indeterminate, terms that I had recently heard about while talking with employees at local garden stores. Neither she nor I understood the difference between the two types, and the next time we encountered each other, she summarized the findings of her brief research on the topic. Another example of Angela receiving technical assistance occurred when Nelson assigned her plot and demonstrated the simple procedure of planting seeds and seedlings. He instructed Angela on how to dig small holes, transplant, and cover the base of the plants with compost. Her garden was much smaller than most other plots and sized according to her request. She grew two types of tomatoes, two varieties of peppers, cucumbers, carrots, and maize. Her tomatoes were in a forty-foot row at the back of her plot, and the peppers were located in the middle along the same line as the tomatoes. Both crops were planted about three feet apart, and maize grew on the edge of her plot and extended for about thirty feet with a couple feet between each cluster of stalks. There were a couple sections toward the front of her garden where she grew onions, carrots, and cucumbers. The onions were mainly the responsibility of her friend who only went to the farm a couple times. Despite the resilience of the crop, weeds quickly dominated that part of her garden and choked the onions before they reached maturity.

Angela stated that her prime motivation for gardening was to bring more fresh food into her household (Ponzio 2015). Her garden yielded less than a quarter of her household's food intake during summer. She froze a small amount of tomatoes and maize, but most of her produce was eaten within days of bringing it home. Although nearly all of her harvest was dedicated to household consumption, she always offered to share with growers at the farm. She regards agriculture as a hobby rather than a path to generate income, thus she would never consider growing for market. She produced food primarily in consideration of her family's nutritional health. She enjoys participating in a social group, working the land, learning new skills, and consuming products of her own labor (Ibid.). Angela often took her children to the farm so that they could work in the garden and learn about the growth of vegetables. She constantly uploaded photos to Facebook showing her garden, harvested produce, and cooked meals. One day she posted a picture of her son eating some carrots that he grew from seed. Angela's father visited the farm a couple times to help till the land in preparation for a row of pumpkins that she neglected within weeks. Her entire plot was abandoned toward the end of August once the school year started.

Andrew

Andrew is a native US citizen. He grew up in Long Island, New York alongside Esteban and a couple more siblings. Their father was a socially-progressive pastor deeply involved in the movements for civil rights and against the war in Vietnam. While living in Japan during the mid-1980s, Andrew worked as an organizer of civil rights initiatives among Korean immigrant communities. He lived in San Francisco throughout the following decade and continued to work in the nonprofit sector as a defender of human

rights and a proponent for development projects that valued people over profit. Fifteen years ago, he moved to Louisville with his wife and children. Andrew has since worked full-time at the Louisville-based Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) as the Associate for National Hunger Concerns. His main responsibilities entail the coordination of grant opportunities and communicating with grant recipients. Andrew and Esteban are leading members of Food in Neighborhoods (FiN), a coalition of local farmers, nonprofit organizations, public health advocates, and Metro Louisville officials that united around to support grassroots efforts aimed at “building a just, healthy, and sustainable food system” (Kang-Bartlett 2016b). The Bartlett Brothers are well-known locally for their agrifood activism, especially their repeated calls to personally debate representatives of Monsanto on the topics of food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture. Andrew and Esteban are coordinating members of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance, which consists of PHP, AMI, NFFC, Food First, Grassroots International, Why Hunger, and over twenty more grassroots groups and NGOs. Furthermore, Andrew is the chief operator of the Louisville Food Blog. He intends for that website to consolidate scholarly resources, advertise upcoming events, and share information about the key organizations involved in the local food movement. He regularly participates in reforestation projects across the city, mainly in West Louisville and East Downtown; in addition, over the 2015–2016 winter months Andrew attended several Louisville Grows workshops focused on permaculture gardening in urban settings.

Andrew has thirty years of gardening experience. He currently lives in an East End house less than ten miles southwest of La Minga, and he uses his whole front yard for growing food. In 2015 he produced spinach, lettuce, kale, strawberries, onions, sweet

potatoes, cherry tomatoes, sweet and mild peppers, and a chipilin plant gifted by Nelson. Soil tests from his backyard revealed traces of lead near the alley, thus he only grows blackberries in a small pot near the contaminated space. He also formed a Hügelskultur mound in his backyard, which is a raised bed containing sticks, branches, and other compost below layers of turf and humus. Andrew joined La Minga in May 2015 on the first of four days of the SAL *milpa* program. His plot was situated between Yedith's garden and a field of Three Sisters, and he cultivated a single one-hundred-foot row of Burmese okra. He used seeds from the previous year and spaced the plants about six feet apart. His planting method entailed the use of a collectively-owned hoe and trowel for clearing the land and digging small holes for the seeds. He tended to his plot only a few times, which were the same days as SAL's *milpa* Field Days. On those Sundays, Andrew worked on his row by hand and with a hoe, and afterward he joined the other program participants in the collective fields of maize, beans, and squash.

Andrew's okra flourished in the summer heat, and weeds never dominated the plants for two interrelated reasons. First, in the early stages of the growing season, he gave the crop enough attention to allow for full maturation – the plants reached five feet tall with a diameter of four feet. Second, the large leaves of the plant provided significant ground cover, thereby reducing weed growth along the entire row. The crop was ready to pick fresh for eating almost every day during late summer and early fall. Although he owns a vehicle, distance and scheduling conflicts accounted for his harvesting only about five times. Andrew described his primary motivations to produce food at the farm by stating, “First off, I just love okra, and I’ve been particularly happy with that variety. I wanted to spread it, share it with folks, and save a bunch of seeds” (Kang-Bartlett 2016a).

Unfortunately, a lot of crop that dried and fell to the ground was destroyed during mid-October when Nelson coordinated a couple landscapers with Earthbound – the company that rents parking space at La Minga – to prepare most of the plots for the late sowing of winter cover crops. Their heavy machinery cleared Andrew’s whole row instantly, ripping the seed pods to shreds and pushing them into the soil underneath a layer of dry cornstalks and dead Johnson grass. Andrew was not notified that his plants would be destroyed. Nelson placed some of the crop into a small basket prior to clearing the field, but within the wreckage of the plot, I noticed and attempted to salvage the remains of at least three times more than what was saved.

In response to a question about whether Andrew has aspired to engage in agriculture for full-time self-employment, he expressed concern regarding the effects of a farming lifestyle on the body of his youngest brother who lives in Minnesota. Andrew previously considered becoming a farmer, but instead he chose pursue gardening as a key hobby at home and elsewhere. He has never sold produce. The yield from his gardens often provides more than half of the fresh food consumed in his household of two during the year. About eighty five percent of what he shared went to family – his mother lives nearby – and the other fifteen percent he gifted to friends. Andrew explained why he enjoys participating at La Minga in particular. He said, “What I love about La Minga is that it is a cooperative, and I think cooperatives are going to save our society. We’ve got to figure out ways to democratize the economy because it has been taken over by corporations and the elite” (Ibid.). Andrew wants to support and become part of cooperatives “wherever they’re growing up.” He characterized La Minga as “so much more human, loose, and warm” than cooperatives previously encountered.

Esteban

As mentioned above, Esteban grew up in New York alongside Andrew and two other siblings. He lived in Senegal for a year during college and subsequently traveled to Central America hoping to learn Spanish. His solidarity with Latin America developed through experiences with the Sandinistas and among indigenous communities in Guatemala that organized against government-perpetrated genocide during the civil war. Over the following years, Esteban moved to Puerto Rico for graduate school, got married, lived in China for two years, and then taught college English in the US. Esteban and his wife purchased ten acres in the Dominican Republic. He worked there as a full-time farmer for six years and still owns the property.

The formation of his agrarian worldview began by reading Masanobu Fukuoka's *One Straw Revolution* (1975). Esteban was influenced by his "provocative" approach to crop rotation and integrating edible crops within an ecosystem (Bartlett 2016a); furthermore, he found inspiration from Fukuoka's advocacy for the widespread use of seed balls, i.e. a mix of clay, soil, and seeds ideal for no-till agriculture and the regeneration of exhausted soil. While living in China, Esteban had the rare opportunity to meet the farmer-writer. Andrew worked with a civil rights organization in Japan at the time, and he invited Esteban and their sister to visit for holiday. Esteban agreed under the condition that they go see Fukuoka on Shikoku Island.

Andrew contacted the Zen farmer-writer and arranged for a first-time meeting. They received week-long work orders from Fukuoka upon arrival and did not see him for several days. Esteban recounted the experience and said:

"We went to a hot bath in a nearby town after five or six days working for him. The next morning we got up late and were lying around in the garden. We didn't have to work [picking oranges] that day, finally. We hadn't seen Fukuoka since the first day.

We were thinking, ‘Yeah, how about that old man? What’s going on with him?’ We didn’t even know where his hut was on the other side of the hill because we’d just been working and working. We were sitting there. Daikon here, mustard greens there. The soil was so soft. It was amazing. All the sudden he comes up. There’s Fukuoka, and he starts yelling at us. ‘There’s no time to be an English teacher! There’s no time to be a Christian! The earth is dying! People don’t realize the terrible changes that are taking place! The acid rain is changing the chemistry of the soil! The Japanese pine is almost extinct because we have a different type of fungus growing on the roots. Now, get your act together! When you finish your breakfast, come over to my hut. It’s down that path.’ He stormed off, and we were thinking, ‘He’s right. We’re soft Westerners. Are we really gonna do it, put it all out there?’”

He welcomed them into his hut, and they spoke at length over some tea. Fukuoka initially told the Bartletts that he had no time for them; however, Esteban quoted him and said, “That wasn’t true. The fact is, mostly I’ve just been sitting right here staring out of the window, thinking to myself, ‘Do I really know what [the true essence of] green is?’” Esteban ended the story by stating, “I learned a lot from him. That is sort of my approach to agriculture, through that lens.”

Esteban decided to pursue agriculture in order to have a lifestyle that merged his “solidarity with Latin America, ideals of justice, and love for nature.” Prior to meeting Fukuoka in Japan, he had no agricultural experience. Bartlett developed strong skillsets while farming on his land in the Dominican Republic. His first major harvest was three hundred pounds of pigeon peas. He took them to market on Christmas Eve, and there was coincidentally an emergency shortage of the product, a necessary ingredient for meals customarily prepared for the holiday. Esteban was thereafter referred to as “*Hombre Guandul* (Pigeon Pea Man).” He began to produce peppers and gather coconuts for market sale after recognizing that people liked to cook the peas with those items. Bartlett sold oranges – an estimated 40,000 pounds during one particular year – from his grove of thirty trees in full production as well as coconuts to beachgoers on Sundays. His day-to-day tasks on the farm mainly entailed the maintenance of three heifers, which he learned

about through experience and some help from neighbors. He also researched agricultural methods by reading books and conducting experiments, specifically concerning soil conservation and improvement.

Esteban moved to Louisville about twenty years ago and co-founded SAL in the following years. His key responsibilities as Director of SAL range from writing grants and facilitating programs like the summer garden camps and Three Sisters program. He is a leader of FiN and an active member of CFA. Bartlett has years of experience coordinating and consulting fledgling organizations in Louisville, such as RAPP and New Roots which formed in 2007 and 2009, respectively. He previously directed a training program for aspiring farmers. Two of the participants in that program were members of CFA and Carla Wallace's organization Fairness Campaign; moreover, the couple occupied the house at La Minga and co-founded the farm project with Nelson. Esteban assessed the land at Moncada Farms and collaborated with Carla prior to the formation of La Minga. He started growing food there in 2012.

Esteban's role at the farm largely revolved around the cultivation of maize, beans, and squash located on two plots. Bartlett consumed the yield in numerous ways, generously distributed to friends and community members, and selected the best seeds for future production. He mainly shared with La Casita Center and SAL associates. Some beans and squash seeds used for the *milpa* were purchased from an organic seed catalogue, and all of the maize came from saved stocks of three heirloom varieties. Esteban's plots were minimally tilled at the beginning of the growing season. He went to La Minga only a few times outside of the Three Sisters schedule that spanned late May through October. On the second and third Sundays of the program, he assembled weeding

work parties – consisting of at least fifteen participants each instance – which accomplished in a matter of hours what it would have taken Esteban days to complete alone. Esteban does not produce food at home, but he regularly accesses the SAL community garden at a church near his residence. The SAL garden supplies up to ninety percent of the vegetables that his household of three consumes during the annual growing season and about thirty percent during the winter. The yield from SAL’s plots of Three Sisters at La Minga and Barr Farms normally provides twenty-five percent of his household’s staple food needs. He has not sold produce since living in the Dominican Republic, and he does not intend to sell in the future. He prefers collective production and community gatherings to celebrate the harvest.

Steve

Steve is a native US citizen and has lived in East Louisville for thirty years. He joined La Minga in 2013 with about a decade of agricultural experience. He formerly worked as an engineer and environmental science educator. For several years, he has owned and operated an orchard business in Crestwood, Kentucky called Lowe Creek Farm. He cultivates tree fruit, e.g. apples, peaches, and apricots, as well as blueberries and raspberries. As a full-time orchardist and gardener, Steve sells produce each week during summer and fall at the Jefferson farmers’ market as well as at UofL’s Belknap and Gray Street markets. He was featured very briefly in the documentary film *PlantPure Nation* (Campbell 2015) within the setting of the Gray Street market, and he expressed his perspective on the capitalist market system by arguing that greater consumer demand for local food results in more farmers and an increase of locally-oriented supply. In previous years Steve sold fruits and vegetables at the Lyndon and Goshen farmers’

markets. He became a member of La Minga after establishing a friendship with Nelson during the couple years they each vended at the latter market site.

Steve is not an Active Member of La Minga; instead, the Board recognizes him as a Friend of La Minga for tax purposes. The Board confers a degree of separation – per Steve’s request – between Lowe Creek Farm and the nonprofit organization inspired by cooperative economics (Ibid.). One major result of Steve’s membership status is that growers lack access to the two tractors he owns and parks at La Minga. The machines are property of his private orchard business, and he has never offered or allowed for growers to use them. The topic of his tractors left idle for most of the year is somewhat a conflict among the collective, but growers tend to avoid addressing the situation with Steve for two main reasons. On the one hand, it is commonly understood that he intends not to share the equipment. In order to scale-up the project, leaders of the farm have stated the need for some type of heavy machinery, such as a two-wheel push tractor or a conventional tractor that would cost much more to purchase, but the organization lacks sufficient capital for such a collective investment. According to his own volition, however, Steve occasionally uses one of the tractors for collective purposes, such as leveling the gravel driveway at the property entrance. He also shares apples and peaches from his orchard with attendees of the annual Harvest Festival at La Minga. Steve spent little time at the farm during 2015 because nearly all of his crops failed from drought and the deer that he referred to in the singular form of “Bambi” (Hess 2015). Despite those setbacks, he remained involved at farmers’ markets and began planning how best to use part of the three-acre space uncultivated by the other La Mina growers.

Steve also produces food at home. His three agricultural operations provide well over half of the fresh food that his household of three consumes during the year. Plastic tanks behind his house store rainwater for crops, and he harnesses solar energy by utilizing twenty six panels installed on the roof. Steve uses about seventy five percent of his backyard for growing fruits, vegetables, and native wildflowers and grasses. The city of Hurstbourne – a division of Louisville Metro – recently issued to Steve a potential total of twenty thousand dollars in fines for violating land development code. *The Courier Journal*, a local newspaper, picked up the story and sought input from the parties engaged in a legal dispute over Steve’s right to produce trellised raspberries, grow native wildflowers, and keep a small plastic box attached to the side of his house that protects a plug for an all-electric vehicle. A city bureaucrat inspected the property and claimed that residents of Hurstbourne are permitted to use no more than twenty percent of their yard for gardening (Bruggers 2015). According to the city attorney who brought forth the civil lawsuit, over thirty neighborhood residents signed a petition that characterized Steve’s property conditions as “offenses to the senses” and “an ongoing nuisance of extreme measures” caused by “discarded materials, vehicles, equipment, items, objects, empty containers, puts, and other debris” (Ibid.). The crux of Steve’s countersuit is the notion that anyone at risk from the alleged “danger” of his property, which is completely enclosed by fencing, would in fact be trespassers and in violation of civil law.

Josh

Josh was born and raised in Louisville. His current-day involvement in the local food movement initially stems from employment with the Root Cellar, an all-local grocery store open daily from 2011 until the end of 2015. He worked at both store

locations – in Old Louisville and Germantown – for a total of three years. The business was small, and his responsibilities were great. He remarked, “I basically ran the store and developed the financial models. I regularly visited over thirty different farms and had opportunities to learn about a diversity of production techniques. I really got a handle on the local food economy at the production, distribution, and consumption levels” (Orr 2015). In addition to receiving training from the store owner, Josh learned about food and agricultural systems by independently researching cooking tips, the political economy of mainstream market systems, and sustainable production methods.

Josh’s employment with the Root Cellar prompted him to recognize the need to expand access to local and affordable food into resource-limited communities across the city. Operating the Mobile Root Cellar over the course of several months awakened him to the problem of food injustice. He drove throughout West Louisville and East Downtown with the aim of supplying fresh products to community members; however, high food prices caused the initiative to fail. While working at the grocery store, Josh participated in several more projects aimed at building a more just and sustainable local food system. For example, a few years ago he joined a group of food activists with a compost-processing initiative in Old Louisville that began in 2010 under the direction of UofL’s Sustainability Office (Mog 2016). Josh got involved as an intern and significantly expanded the operation. His goal was to transform the project into “a commercially-viable venture,” but he experienced setbacks regarding ineffective coordination on behalf of the Sustainability Office (Orr 2015). Josh decided to pursue the idea elsewhere and met with city officials to devise a long-term plan that was then abandoned because he did not want to assume the financial responsibilities associated with starting a business.

In addition to working at the Root Cellar, Josh volunteered with New Directions Housing Corporation, an organization dedicated to providing fair, safe, and affordable housing in Louisville and Southern Indiana. His role with the nonprofit centered on launching and maintaining a garden at one particular housing complex in the California neighborhood. He facilitated popular education sessions with community youth, and strived for residents to take collective ownership over the garden project. Josh learned how to garden during that era of his young adult life. After several months with New Directions, Josh received a job offer from the Director of Louisville Grows who heard about his work in West Louisville. A partnership formed between Louisville Grows and the KY Department of Agriculture to begin an out-of-school-time gardening program for youth associated with the Parkland Boys and Girls Club. Josh became an employee of Louisville Grows, and he played the role of program coordinator for nine months until choosing to work directly with the Boys and Girls Club for another nine months. He wrote a series of documents for programmatic events and financial records, and he spent a lot of time teaching the young gardeners about food production. That program dissolved once Josh left to seek another form of employment. He stated with regard to the lack of continuity of the program, “Unfortunately, those things only work out when you find people who know what they’re doing and give a damn about the job despite the low pay” (Orr 2015). He subsequently became a near-full-time employee of Fresh Start Growers Supply, a locally-owned business located in East Downtown. Josh worked there for a year and ultimately committed to full-time, self-employed agriculture.

Josh joined La Minga in October 2015 with the intention of producing a few rows of garlic. He began to prepare five two-foot-wide beds – spaced two feet apart and raised

about twelve inches – after a couple of Earthbound landscapers cleared the majority of the farm with heavy machinery and tilled a thin layer of compost into Josh’s plot. He used a rake and shovel to form the beds that extended one hundred feet and subsequently planted cloves into the loose soil with help from a friend. Josh situated three rows into each bed, and the rows were spaced a little over two inches apart in order to allow for proper growth of the allium bulbs. The scapes grew a foot above ground during the winter months, and in early March he applied a fresh layer of woodchip compost to each bed as a measure for preventing weeds and maintaining non-compacted soil (Orr 2016). The crop should be ready to harvest in July or August 2016. He plans for a yield of several hundred pounds from that two-hundred-square-foot space alone. Josh intends to consume and share a small amount of the product, but his primary purpose is to market the garlic via New Roots Fresh Stops, local restaurants, and Reynolds Grocery.

Josh produces the majority of his food needs in a garden at home. He lives with a few friends in a West Louisville house situated directly next to the Louisville Grows People’s Garden. Josh and his house-mates grow fruits, vegetables, and herbs for consumption, sharing, and sale. They engage in radical forms of food procurement too, such as trapping rabbits, squirrels, possums, etc. in their gardens and alleyway. Josh expressed his agricultural motivations by stating, “I’m interested in exploring what kinds of self-sufficiency are really possible, especially in an urban environment. I mainly produce food for myself and to share with family and friends, but the reality of our economy requires some level of capital accumulation. So agriculture is a way for me to make money and accumulate capital in the form of food, equipment, knowledge, etc.” He aspires to produce food “to a serious extent” for the rest of his life. Josh engages in

farming because “that is what feels real ecologically and emotionally,” and he hopes to soon become part of an intentional community outside of the city consisting of skilled labor and based on principles of sustainable self-sufficiency. He thinks that his current lifestyle as a farmer and activist is preparing him to participate in such a communal setting.

Priyanka, Sunita, and Stephen

This group of active members started a greenhouse aquaponics project at La Minga in mid-summer 2015. Priyanka and her mother Sunita are native citizens of India, and they moved to the US about ten years ago. Stephen is a native citizen of Kentucky, and he previously produced vegetables at the farm for two annual growing seasons while on breaks from studying at Kentucky State University. He left the collective a couple years ago after securing employment with the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension office. Stephen continues to work there as Horticulture Agent. He coordinates the Master Gardener program, which trains and certifies volunteers to assist Extension Agents with educational endeavors across the county. Participants are required to engage in a total of twenty four hours of training that occurs once a week over a three-month period, and the program covers the basics of botany, plant pathology, soil, and inputs like pesticides and herbicides. Master Gardener trainees have opportunities to learn about optional topics like fruits, vegetables, landscape design, water gardens, and interior plants. Stephen instructed Sunita’s training experience a couple years ago, and they decided to pursue the initial stages of a long-term, market-oriented aquaponics project. They discussed ways to efficiently and sustainably organize, power, and maintain each component to a closed-

loop system consisting of fish in a tank and crops in beds. The term aquaponics thus refers to a system that combines aquaculture and hydroponic crop production.

Priyanka joined the cooperative agreement between Stephen and Sunita. Their initial plan entails one fish tank and three vegetable beds. The aim is to develop perpetual symbiosis between the fish and plants. Sunita described their envisioned system by first emphasizing the need for electricity in the greenhouse to power the pump that circulates water from the fish tank, into the vegetable beds, and back to the tank. She noted that bacteria convert the toxic excretions from tilapia – a genus chosen to culture for reasons related to size, resistance to disease, and reproductive rate – into nitrates and nitrites, and the water passes through rock filters at the bottom of each bed. The nitrified water fertilizes plants, the roots of which remain submerged rather than embedded in soil. The group used extra materials stored at the farm, such as several plastic tanks and metal frames gifted by Steve a few years ago. They pooled resources for acquiring the water pump, pipes, river stones, and other crucial items. All of the assembly and maintenance will be done by themselves. Whereas Sunita and Priyanka lacked the necessary insight for beginning the project alone, Stephen’s experience at KSU and the Cooperative Extension office provided a strong foundation for his involvement. They printed an instruction guide consisting of over two hundred pages of text, diagrams, and references. Overall, their intention is to produce tilapia and vegetables for market sale.

Priyanka explicated the group’s collective motivations to participate at La Minga:

“First and foremost, this is something we have talked about for a long time, and this is a great opportunity to go through with the project out here [at the farm]. We already know that with water increasingly becoming a very scarce resource and more buildings going up – meaning we’re losing land – the problem of people not having access to fresh food is going to be exacerbated, especially in food desert areas. This is a system that, once up and running, we can use and take [the produce] into those areas, and they will have access to fresh food, which is a fundamental right. Once we get the system

going, we can grow so much more food in a very small amount of space. That is one of the benefits of aquaponics. You don't just have the ground level. You can also go vertical. You can pack in a lot of vegetables, and even dwarf trees, in a small area" (Deobhakta 2016).

Priyanka elucidated the growing popularity of aquaponics and noted the examples of natural disaster relief projects as well as the Gaza Strip where Palestinians struggle to produce and access sufficient amounts of nutritious foods because of land and water scarcities, population density, maritime restrictions, and the internationally-condemned blockade imposed by the Israeli military (see also Suchak 2012; Qandil 2015). With regard to Louisville, she stated their collective interest in a CSA model of food distribution and also noted the possibility of partnering with Fresh Stops. While they plan to recover the financial costs incurred from acquiring materials, Priyanka said that the project is "not for profit." She emphasized that the goal is to increase fresh food access, particularly in resource-limited geographies, thus contributing to the realizing the long-term aim of the food justice movement, i.e. "a gradual, grassroots transition to a more equitable and sustainable local food system" (Holt-Gimenez 2011:319–323).

Summary of Grower Profiles

The ten subsections above highlight twelve members' approaches to food production and distribution. These grower profiles suggest that La Minga collectively fosters a peaceful, communitarian, educational environment where members produce culturally-appropriate and healthy foods for self-determined purposes (see Zavala 2013b; Escobar 2016). In 2015 three members used land at the farm for generating income. They sold produce at farmers' markets, through the UGC, and to the owners of locally-owned restaurants and grocery stores. The aquaponics group plans to either collaborate with Fresh Stop organizers or experiment with other alternative distribution procedures.

All other members produced food solely for household consumption and sharing with friends and family. Most growers accomplished routine tasks by using collectively-owned tools like hoes, shovels, wheelbarrows, scissors, and water hoses. The experienced growers practiced different methods for planting and weeding, and out of the five new members in 2015, two were first-year gardeners who received tips from others in the group. A few members abandoned their plots before the end of the annual growing season, and most plots were negatively affected by periods of drought and excessive rain as well as the constant risks posed by crop predators like deer, birds, and raccoons.

B. Tensions and Problems

This section explores the major tensions that emerged within the organization during the course of this research project. The following points of analysis are best understood by revisiting the categories of themes listed in Section IB. Similar to Graeber's (2015:44) approach to writing the chapters of *Utopia of Rules*, the subsections below do not constitute whole arguments but instead aim to "start a conversation" within the organization about various topics related to production, distribution, the motivations of members, and the power dynamics that characterize internal politics and public relations. My focus on problems and contradictions at La Minga is inspired by Wolford's (2010:8) analysis of agrarian social movements, specifically the MST in Brazil; she writes, "Nothing could be more ordinary than tension; it is the effort to suggest otherwise that actually creates trouble for movements." The values, principles, and procedures of La Minga (Zavala 2013b) are important to consider in regards to recognizing tensions and devising critical strategies to overcome them. One grower suggested (in anonymity) that the low membership rate over the last few years could mainly be attributed to

personality differences and power struggles between certain members and the coordinator. Another grower emphasized that the farm leadership fails to educate new members about the production guidelines and organizational principles established by the Board (Ibid.). Most members emphasized the need for enhanced communication, particularly concerning plans for group meetings and work days.

According to several members who participated in an early March strategic planning session, the marginality of La Minga in the local food movement stems largely from the lack of organizational capacity to write grants, hire staff members, and organize regular programs for educating community members about the farm project's basic commitment to sustainable agriculture. La Minga is geographically marginal as well. The farm project is disconnected from most urban gardening and fresh-food initiatives in Louisville, especially those in resource-limited neighborhoods typically characterized as food deserts. The organization is also structurally marginalized by the dominance of corporate-controlled agribusiness. The political and economic forces of capitalism pressure market-oriented growers to get big or get out, and financial uncertainties have prompted them to compromise some permaculture-inspired values in order to reduce the demand for labor, increase yield, and consequently generate greater profit, such as through the use of heavy machinery for land preparation and plastic mulch for weed control. For several reasons, some of which are highlight below, La Minga is not recognized by the state or national agencies that implement agricultural policy. Without a farm number, the organization lacks access to governmental support in the forms of material and financial resources. Overall, most of the tensions discussed in this section do not prevent La Minga from realizing its primary mission, which is to provide access to

garden plots and basic technical assistance. Problems among the group, however, indicate major setbacks concerning the educational and movement-building goals of the nonprofit (see introduction to Section IB). Consideration of these tensions could allow for the group to be more equipped to address them through the processes of direct democracy.

Communication between the Coordinator and Active Members

An indirect conflict between Nelson and Francisco occurred in early March 2016. The latter was absent on the day that a few active members and a group of Earthbound landscapers convened to repair the greenhouse. Francisco was not notified of the meeting plans. Upon arriving to the farm a day later, he saw that all of his potted plants that were in the greenhouse had been removed, and most pots were dumped into a pile of compost. I spoke with him about the matter and tried to explain that Nelson coordinated the task of clearing out the greenhouse in order to make standing room for replacing the plastic lining. Nelson instructed us to place a few pots of live plants into a safe area. He said to throw out most of the other pots, some of which appeared to only be filled with soil and others contained plants that were apparently dead. Francisco referred to the dumping of his possessions as “a criminal act.” He said, “It’s not funny. I work hard every year to grow these, and every year someone throws them all out. This happens every year, and I don’t know why. Look at this.” He picked up a *Moringa* tree from the pile of compost and pointed to the root system, “Look, this is still alive. We can make big business from this in a couple years. It’s not trash.” Within a week, Francisco salvaged almost all of his plants and flower bulbs that were dumped. He re-potted them and, with approval from Nelson, he situated the containers along the line of trees on the property boundaries. I discussed the situation with Nelson, and he remarked, “Look, I’m sorry [for ordering the

removal and dumping of the pots], but I am not responsible. This happens every year, for five years now.” This example of tension between a member and the farm coordinator reveals the need for enhanced communication from the leadership by ensuring that all members know about collective work days. The greenhouse repairs were organized by Nelson, and he notified members of the plan via email a few days before the proposed date. However, Francisco does not have an email address, and even though members have access to each other’s telephone numbers through the online file storage service, the farm leadership did not call Francisco to notify him of the meeting.

Another instance of coordinator–member tension occurred in October 2015. In Section IVA I noted how Elmer lost all but two pounds of his rice, and in previous years he harvested about one hundred and fifty pounds. At the end of the growing season, Elmer hardly went to La Minga because harvesting was his only task, and he was waiting to hear back from Angela about rescheduling a day for her students to experience the process. Nelson lives in the farmhouse, and unlike several members, he tends to the farm every day. This is important because he witnessed flocks of birds eating the rice crop daily during late September and early October but never communicated the situation to Elmer. Although the conflict was not a direct confrontation between the two growers, this is an example that sheds more light on the significance of effective communication among the group. Elmer could have saved the rice if he was alerted that it was at risk. However, he has the responsibility to maintain his own plots, and members are not mandated to be friends or regularly communicate; however, Elmer and Nelson are close friends, and I was surprised to hear from Elmer that Nelson never notified him about how birds ate the crop more and more each day.

Permaculture-inspired Procedures

The leadership of La Minga has never created documents or maps detailing plot assignments or crop locations. Nelson has the responsibility of coordinating the annual procedure of plot rotation, and crop rotation is the responsibility of each member. One of the nonprofit's founding documents states that no member will have a permanent plot; in addition, according to the production guidelines, members should avoid growing crops in the same space, except for perennials cultivated in small and specific areas (Zavala 2013b). Some members have used the same space for over two years, however. Nelson mentioned that this stems from the collective's low membership before 2015, but neither he nor Elmer have clearly explained why they did not rotate plots within recent years. Elmer has produced rice and beans on the same plot since 2013. His permaculture-inspired growing methods are aimed at regenerating the soil. He rotates crops each year and claims to notice the soil quality increase each growing season, thereby calling into question the need for plot rotation. Nelson uses the same plots from previous years as well, and he practices seasonal and annual crop rotation. Francisco also rotates annual crops on plots he has cultivated for a few years.

At the late August annual meeting, Nelson presented the General Assembly with an agenda item. The topic at hand was Francisco's use of space. He disagreed with the scattered design of Francisco's gardens because the layout did not maximize the use of allotted space, and the major point of contention was his cultivation of perennial plants, e.g. strawberries, asparagus, and flowers. Nelson argued that perennials complicate the goal of rotating crops and plots, procedures which are intended to minimize soil

exhaustion. Some members questioned Nelson's insistence to only grow annual crops inside the enclosed space, and a couple growers suggested a group initiative to research the pros and cons of integrating perennials and annuals. Members passed a resolution that Nelson would coordinate Francisco's consolidation of perennials into a smaller area.

The resolution was in line with the Values, Principles, and Procedures document created by the Board, which states, "No one will have permanent plots. They will rotate each season or year according to the plans of each member, with the exception of the areas of perennials like fruit trees and asparagus" (Zavala 2013b). A few days after the meeting, I spoke with Nelson about his relationship with Francisco, and he said, "I don't want any conflicts. La Minga is my life, and I have chosen that." This particular example of tension between Nelson – the coordinator – and Francisco – a fifth-year grower – illuminates the diversity of production techniques among the organization. As mentioned above, some members disagreed with Nelson concerning his intention to only have annual crops within the two-acre, fenced-in cultivation area. Due to the limited temporal scope of this project, I was largely unable to document plot assignments in 2015 and 2016 because data collection began after most growers had plots and concluded before the majority accessed plots for the year. Though, in March 2016 I observed Nelson began preparing the same plot that he used in previous years. At that time, Francisco already had spring crops growing on land that he started working during the late fall.

Cooperative Production: Aquaponics in the Greenhouse and SAL's Milpa Program

Priyanka, Sunita, and Stephen have not yet fully implemented their plans for an aquaponics project, and as of this writing, their timeline remains unclear. The group initially assembled a fish tank and three vegetable beds, and they plan to expand the

design at least twofold once the system begins to operate. River rocks for the beds have not been obtained. A water pump, pipes, a heating system for winter, and a few other materials are also needed. Their plans are stalled until they have access to electricity. Members have discussed the topic at recent meetings, and the 2015 Harvest Festival committee agreed that the donations collected during the October event would go toward covering expenses incurred from repairing the greenhouse and preparing it for the aquaponics project. The aquaponics group has a projected budget of about two thousand dollars, and that financial plan covers the costs of all materials the group needs. La Minga will likely provide some financial support for the project.

The SAL-sponsored *milpa* project was another example of collective production, but only a few members worked on the two plots of Three Sisters. Esteban weeded both plots on the scheduled Field Days as well as a few instances outside of the program that spanned from late May until October. Andrew also weeded sections of the plots during the second and third SAL-hosted work parties. Elmer and I worked together on the intercropped plots independently of the program, and we focused on weeding and forming mounds to support the cornstalks and climbing legume plants. Esteban noted that Elmer and I “saved the crop” by preventing the Johnson grass and wind from dominating the plants. Raccoons and deer eventually destroyed half of the maize, beans, and squash.

Cooperative Production, Part Two: Quilete Organics

Nelson, Josh, and two of their friends formed a cooperative in the winter months of 2015–2016. One of the participants is a friend of Nelson’s who owns and operates a small farm in Goshen about ten minutes from La Minga. The other individual lives with Josh, and they jointly produce and sell food from their home garden in West Louisville.

This collective of four growers – named Quilete Organics – is aimed at cultivating and marketing foods customary to Mesoamerica, such as amaranth, chipilin, cilantro, and potatoes. Their goal is to grow at two sites: La Minga and the other participant’s nearby farm. They plan to sell the products to Supermercado Guanajuato and Mayan Café.

Surplus will be consumed and sold at farmers’ markets too. From my perspective, Quilete Organics provides a window into the authority of Nelson as farm coordinator, specifically regarding the acquisition of resources with collective funds and the distribution of those resources among the organization.

For example, in March 2016 Nelson spoke with the owner of the landscape company that rents parking space at the farm, and they agreed to an alternative rent payment by which La Minga would be provided with drip irrigation tubing and rolls of black plastic mulch. Some of those materials were used by Josh and his friend, and the remainder of the plastic and tubing is intended for their cooperative’s field of chipilin and Nelson’s potato rows. I asked Josh if the material was biodegradable – an attribute frequently repeated by Nelson when previously discussing his consideration of adopting the weed-prevention strategy. Josh said, “No, it’s not. It’s just a roll of black tarp.” Their use of the tarp for row crops contradicts a key production guideline established by the Board in 2013. One of the founding documents states, “[Do] not eliminate weeds or use herbicides: Weeds do not exist if we know them and learn to control them with natural methods” (Zavala 2013b). Needless to say, plastic mulch is incompatible with natural farming principles.

Additional Weaknesses and Threats Identified by Members

During three strategic planning sessions in early 2016, members of the General Assembly and Board engaged in an activity that Nelson referred to as SWOT. The exercise entailed the identification and brief discussion of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Members identified several interrelated weaknesses: low number of members, few financial resources, no collectively-owned tractor, lack of organizational infrastructure, infrequent meetings, and the need to realize more permaculture-inspired systems by introducing bees, snakes, and animals. Some key threats discussed included: crop predators, the effects of climate change, and the lack of clarity regarding how to obtain the land contract and other financial documents from past years. Members agreed that speaking with the Wallace family's real estate agent should be the first step to addressing these weaknesses and threats. The leadership of La Minga decided to obtain the necessary documents for bookkeeping, and they planned to speak with a member of the Wallace family about registering the farm with the local Farm Service Agency. After receiving a "farm number," La Minga will be eligible for a range of programs and grant opportunities offered through the USDA, Cooperative Extension offices, and other funding sources for education-oriented nonprofits. Grant proposals and program applications could focus on acquiring a tractor, high tunnels for season extension, and materials for the aquaponics project. Grants could also go toward building organizational capacity in terms of hiring staff to maintain fiscal sustainability and design educational programs for community members interested in food and agriculture.

A group of La Minga members assembled several years ago in order to enclose the two-acre cultivation space with wire fencing supported by large wooden posts. The goal was to prevent deer from intruding into the gardens, but over the years they

continued to jump over and bend down a certain part of the fence. Instead of fixing that one ten-foot section in the back left corner, growers abandoned their plans to secure the space. Nelson previously stated that the fence has not yet been fixed because the group – and the farm leadership in particular – has “lacked [collective] initiative” needed to address the problem of crop predators. The wooden entrance gate remains open and barely functions. During planning sessions in the first couple months of 2016, members discussed the possibility of installing a solar-powered fence around the current enclosure. Nelson stated that the collective possesses most of the materials and only needs to acquire a panel and battery set. Installation of the electrical system will likely occur in May once most growers have crops planted. The task will be completed with a group effort and coordination from one of Nelson’s nearby farmer-friends. Esteban expressed concern that raccoons might be able to get through the electric fence once installed. In that case, SAL’s Three Sisters would remain at risk, particularly the stalks of maize that we witnessed brought to the ground toward the end of the growing season. Over half of the *milpa* crop was devastated in 2015. Esteban assembled a couple friends for an emergency harvest of the maize before it became food for what he referred to as “Rocky [Raccoon].” In addition, deer evidently targeted the squash and beans on both *milpa* plots.

As noted in previous chapters, La Minga is located on a conservation easement in one of the wealthiest towns in all of Kentucky. The latter aspect of the farm’s location constitutes a major contradiction regarding its mission to build more equitable and inclusive local food systems. Residents of Prospect are predominantly white and middle-to-upper class. Considering that public transportation runs to Prospect only twice a day, it is difficult for people without reliable cars to get there. Carpooling is one possible

solution to the problem, but most the current members own vehicles and still regard the farm as too distant for frequent visits.

With regard to recruiting new members, there are numerous channels for spreading the word about La Minga. Previous recruitment efforts were led by Nelson, and he focused his sights on a Latino parish in the Preston Highway area of Central Louisville. Francisco was the only person from that community to join through Nelson's two-year-long initiative. Others have contacted Nelson online, but based on recent experiences he prefers not to use Facebook and other social media platforms. Out of several prospective growers who followed-up and visited the farm over the years, Nelson said that only a couple pursued the opportunity to join the collective. It is commonly understood among the organization that recruitment efforts tend to fail because prospective members quickly become dissuaded by the physical demands associated with time-sensitive agricultural tasks. Other key reasons that account for low membership numbers include distance to the farm and individuals' scheduling conflicts with work and family.

How do growers learn about their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis other members? La Minga does not educate new or returning members about the values and procedures of the organization. This is particularly important to point out with respect to the production guidelines outlined by the Board in 2013 (Zavala 2013b). Without a formal orientation process for new members, the collective runs the risk of one or more growers failing to abide by the procedures of proper land use. Andrew specifically called attention to this topic during an interview. He said, "Someone is needed to regularly communicate with everyone via phone and email. Social media is also a critical function

that is weak at this point,” Bartlett continued to remark, “People also need a clearer sense about how they can be involved – what it entails to grow there, to be a member, and other ways to support La Minga.” He thinks that such information is especially crucial for new and prospective members.

Summary of Tensions

The subsections above highlight some of the key tensions that emerged over the 2015 growing and harvest season and during the first few months of 2016. A recurring theme is the lack of effective communication among the organization. The farm leadership could take steps to facilitate regular dialogue aimed at reaching common ground about the roles and expectations of all members. As the coordinator, Nelson is particularly responsible for communicating with each grower and ensuring that everyone agrees to and practices the land use guidelines established in 2013. Weekly or bimonthly dinner parties could serve as a simple yet effective strategy for members to cultivate unity. Other major themes were financing and decision-making. The examples of coordinator–member tension raise questions about hierarchy within an organization that members often describe in terms of horizontal power and the equitable distribution of resources. The General Assembly – “the maximum authority” (Zavala 2015a) – should assume ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the values, principles, and procedures of La Minga are understood and upheld by each member. Unity and mutual understanding among all participants are necessary conditions for the organization to realize its collective mission of bringing about greater inclusivity and equity within local food systems.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I attempted to answer questions about the motivations, production activities, and distribution practices of immigrant and native-citizen growers. I also sought to describe the power dynamics and values that underlie the internal politics of La Minga Inc. A key purpose of this study was to identify the main features of the La Minga model because the farm project's framework might be replicable on smaller and larger scales. Free-of-cost access to garden plots and water stood out as the most fundamental attributes of the organization, and growers' access to these productive resources has been made possible with generous support from the Wallace family. That said, the La Minga model is fragile for a number of reasons. Most of all, direct democracy proves difficult to practice. How can the organization mobilize individual members to participate in collective tasks if such involvement is "a personal decision" (Zavala 2013b)? Another major reason that accounts for La Minga's fragility is that Carla and her siblings gifted the land, and it is unclear whether younger generations of the Wallace family will continue to support the farm project. Distance to the farm also accounts for the low number of members and the partial instability of the collective. Members generally have busy schedules, and almost every grower prioritizes family and work over their agricultural projects. Efforts to recruit producers often fail to bring more than a few growers each year, and according to the farm leadership, recurring members are rare.

Arguably, internal tensions threaten the continuity of the nonprofit organization, but the farm project, i.e. growers producing food individually or collectively, is largely stable due to the land agreement with the Wallace family. This contradiction raises the question: considering that the fragility of La Minga partly results from lack of clarity about whether the Wallace family will remain supportive, is La Minga Inc. – the 501(c)(3) – necessary, under present circumstances, for facilitating access to land?

A major point to consider with regard to the interrelationships between members is whether everyone, by virtue of joining the collective, should be the keepers of their fellow sisters and brothers. In her analysis of disaster communities, Solnit (2009:3) asks, “Are we beholden to each other, must we take care of each other, or is it every man for himself?” This “perennial social question” (Ibid.) problematizes the meaning of the place-name La Minga Cooperative Farm. What does cooperation entail? If participation in collective activities is a personal decision of autonomous members and growers are individually responsible for their own plots – per the organization’s foundational document titled “Values, Principles, and Procedures of La Minga” (Zavala 2013b) – to what extent do members enter into a social contract based on collective responsibility? In the case of that a grower notices predators, weather, or disease threaten another member’s crops, prompt communication could allow the problem to be resolved through emergency measures. The organization’s founding documents include explicit statements about collective duties ranging from picking up litter to receiving permission before accessing another growers’ plot. The files also state that members are expected to treat each other with respect. From my perspective, communication between growers is implicit and vital to a building and maintaining a peaceful, “communitarian” environment (Escobar 2016).

The concept of place is crucial to consider because members of La Minga modify the landscape each growing season and “make history” – under circumstances transmitted from the past – each day that they work on their plots (Marx 1978[1852]:595). Places are produced and reproduced within relations of power (Cresswell 2006:20) and imbued with individual and collective “meaning,” i.e. spatialized knowledge learned and shared among community members through routine, patterned, and symbolic activities (Peteet 2005:93). Places are also differentiated (Cresswell 2006:21). Some are locations of “imaginative will” (Bronner 2011:31) while others are sites of containment and conformity. Places can either be “paradises” of friendship and mutual aid or “hells” characterized by conflict and greed (Solnit 2009:18). The notion of differentiation also captures how places are sites of tension and contradiction; as such, a single place could be defined by inclusion and exclusion, activity and passivity, cooperation and resistance, as well as “hope and despair” (Peteet 2005:27).

La Minga does not operate within a vacuum. Wolf (2001[1990]:385) underscores how modes of production “shape the social field of action” in ways that make possible or impossible the exercise of individual and collective agency. He refers to structural power as, “[The] power manifest in relationships that specifies the direction and distribution of energy flows, [and] in Marxian terms, this refers to the power to deploy and allocate social labor” (Wolf 1999:5). The structural forces of capitalism influence the lifestyles of individual members, the political dynamics within the organization, and the overall mission of the farm project. Most of the hobby gardeners make a living as wage laborers, and the three market-oriented growers generate income as self-employed, full-time farmers. Despite the risk of crop failure and subsequent financial hardship, the latter

growers claim to enjoy farming and contributing to the local food economy. La Minga's vision to realize a more equitable and sustainable food system is predicated on growers' collective recognition of the need for viable models of production and distribution that subvert the dominant paradigm of corporate-controlled agribusiness (Desmarais 2007:69; see Section IIIB). La Minga has been socially produced and influenced by "external forces, structural constraints, and human agency" (Peteet 2005:27). The farm is not an "inert container" but, rather, a dynamic, contested, "politicized, culturally relative, and historically specific" location of social activity (Ibid.).

The organization represents an incipient "moral economy" constituted by members who have both the right to access garden space and the expectation to obey norms of reciprocity and environmental stewardship (Wutich 2011:5). The farm project could also be conceptualized as "a community economy" or a collective space of participatory decision making in which growers "recognize and negotiate" their interdependence with other community members and the natural environment as a whole (JKGG 2013:xix). La Minga is complicated, though. the organization is only the sum of its parts. La Minga is more likely to realize its short- and long-term missions if the majority of members regularly contribute their time and skillsets. The latter statement seems self-evident: collective tasks can be accomplished through collective effort. The problem, though, is that La Minga rests on the principle of personal autonomy, which complicates plans that require collective action, such as repairing the greenhouse or helping to host the annual Harvest Festival. Members self-organize according to their individual capabilities and availabilities, and in contrast to the shared benefits that come

from collective effort, certain members disproportionately experienced the losses incurred by collective inaction.

I want to conclude by addressing one of the most prominent themes that emerged during this study. Elmer expressed his opinion on member recruitment by stating:

“Most of all, La Minga needs more producers. People come out to the farm, see two *locos* (crazy people; referring to Nelson and himself), and never come back. It’s hard work. We used to try to recruit new members, but now we’re more relaxed. People will come. Doing is the best thing. I will be here [at the farm]. People will see and decide for themselves if they want to participate. The most important thing is to tell people about your experiences. They might say, ‘You’re crazy’ or ‘Oh, I want to do that. Can I?’ Then we will say, ‘Of course’” (Zavala 2016).

He repeated, “Tell others about your experiences. Don’t try to convince them [to join]. They can and will decide for themselves.” My hope is that readers of this project walk away with insights concerning the agency of individual members and the structure of the collective as a whole. The question of whether La Minga is a model of food justice remains open. JKGG (2013:7) remind us that economies are “outcomes of the decisions we make and the actions we take.” The motivations and practices of La Minga members are framed according to historically-transmitted circumstances not of their choosing (Marx 1978[1852]:595). Some growers emphasized that fresh food is right of all people, and other members claimed that anyone interested in farming should have the rights to access land and live with dignity. La Minga’s model of cooperative and sustainable production is opposed to the dominance of corporate-controlled, industrial agriculture. I focused on internal politics because consideration of unresolved tensions could allow for members to better collectively address problems as they emerge. Otherwise, the external forces that members can address with collective effort – such as lack of recognition from governmental farm agencies and minimal opportunities for members and non-members to

engage in educational and group-based activities – will continue to threaten the continuity of the fragile farm project.

Do *mingueros* practice food justice? In this thesis I have attempted to provide support for my main claim that the farm project is a small-scale example of immigrants and native citizens exercising their human right to produce healthy foods for self-determined purposes. According to Nelson, members collectively aim to realize a more just local food system mainly by “providing access to land, training, and other resources for sustainable food production in a diverse and cooperative environment” (Escobar 2016). Most growers specialized in three or four crops during the 2015 growing season, and everyone was expected to share “according to needs and possibilities” (Zavala 2013b). Direct access to the means of agricultural production increased the accessibility of fresh fruits and vegetables among growers’ households and social spheres. The gardening opportunities facilitated by La Minga also increased the availability of fresh produce within the distribution networks of the three market-oriented producers. Moreover, members claimed to participate at the farm for the following reasons: to eat fresh food; learn new skills; make money; supply nutritious products to community members; honor their cultural heritage; make friends; engage in political activism; and connect with nature.

La Minga constitutes “a manifold – a totality – of interconnected processes and bundled relationships” (Wolf 2010[1982]:3). The farm is a point of intersection where community members from different sociocultural backgrounds coalesce to become friends and produce food in a collective space. According to Elmer – the Board President – the organization is united in diversity. He thinks that the heterogeneity of members’

experiences, opinions, national origins, and languages engenders a dynamic and educational space for all participants. From my perspective, the land constitutes the main basis of unity among members. The latter notion is evident by growers' emphasis on sustainability, which is aimed at ensuring healthy soil and balanced ecosystems.

REFERENCES

- Aja, Rev. Antonio
2014 Hispanic/Latino Ministries. Mid-Kentucky Presbytery. Prebyterian Church USA.
Accessible via <http://www.midkentuckypresbytery.org/initiatives/hisp>
- Alkon, Alison Hope and Julie Agyeman
2011 Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Allen, Catherine
1981 To Be Quechua: The Symbolism of Coca Chewing in Highland Peru. *American Ethnologist* 8(1):157-171.
2002 The Hold Life Has: Coca and Cultural Identity in an Andean Community. 2nd Ed.
Washington: Smithsonian Books.
- Allen, Patricia
2004 Together at the Table: Sustainability and Sustenance in the American Agrifood System. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press
- Barillas, Karina
2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 20 October
- Bartlett, Stephen 'Esteban'
2015 The Socio-Ecological Crisis, Immigration, and Food Sovereignty. Agricultural Missions Inc. Study Session. Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church. On 24 October.
2016a Interview. Semi-structured. On 30 January.
2016b Press Statement on the Assassination of Berta Caceres and Call to Action. US Food Sovereignty Alliance. Accessible via
<http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/press-statement-on-the-assassination-of-berta-caceres-and-call-to-action/>
- Baye, Better
2014 Interview with Carla Wallace. 13 October. Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame Oral History Project. Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky. Accessible via http://www.nunncenter.org/OHMS-Viewer/viewer.php?cachefile=2014oh257kcrhf016_wallace_ohm.xml

- Billings, Dwight with Jenrose Fitzgerald and Lisa Markowitz
 2010 Kentucky's Community Farm Alliance: From Growing Tobacco to Building the Good L.I.F.E. Accessible via <http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/698>.
- Braden, Anne
 2005 Finding the Other America. Fellowship of Reconciliation. Bottoms Up: A Guide to Grassroots Organizing. Accessible via <http://www.november.org/BottomsUp/reading/america.html>
- Bradley, Fern Marshall
 1992 Rodale's All-New Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening: The Indispensable Resource for Every Gardener. 2nd Edition. New York City: Rodale Books.
- Bronner, Stephen Eric
 2011 Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bruggers, James
 2015 Urban Farmer's Yard Draws Small-city Crackdown. *In* Courier Journal. Accessible via <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/tech/science/environment/2015/12/14/urban-farmers-yard-draws-small-city-crackdown/77114712/>
- Campbell, Nelson
 2015 PlantPure Nation. Documentary Film. 1hr35min. Released 4 April 2015.
- Center for Health Equity
 2011 The Social Determinants of Health in Louisville Metro Neighborhoods. Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness. Accessible via <http://reacheval.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/HER-FINAL-2011.pdf>
 2014 The Social Determinants of Health in Louisville Metro Neighborhoods. Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness. Accessible via https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/health_and_wellness/che/health_equity_report/her2014_7_31_14.pdf.
- Center for Nonprofit Excellence
 2015 Nonprofit Member Directory. Nonprofits. Membership. Accessible via <https://www.cnpe.org/membership/nonprofits/nonprofit-members-list/>
- Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee – General Command (CCRI-CG)
 2005 The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle. <http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/sdsl-en/>, accessed September 28, 2014.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi
 2015 Letter to My Son. *In* the Atlantic. Accessible via <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>

Community Farm Alliance (CFA)

2007 Bridging the Divide: Growing Self-Sufficiency in Our Local Food Supply

<http://cfaky.org/test/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/BridgingTheDivide.pdf>

2015 Annual Meeting. The Farmington Historic Plantation. On 12 December.

Collective Notes.

Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

2016 Organizational Partnerships. Best Practices. Grants and Support. Accessible via

<http://www.cfgreateratlanta.org/Grants-Support/Best-Practices/Organizational-Partnerships.aspx>

Cresswell, Tim

2001 "The Production of Mobilities." *New Formations* 43:11-25.

Crutcher, Dan

2013 The West End: A Tale of Two Cities. *In Louisville Magazine*, March. Accessible

via <http://loumag.epubxp.com/i/111400-mar-2013/6>

Dare to Care Food Bank

2016 Food Programs. About Us. Accessible via http://daretocare.org/about_us

Deobhakta, Priyanka

2016 Interview. Semi-structured. On 6 March.

Desmarais, Annette Aurelie

2007 *La Via Campesina : Globalization and the Power of Peasants*. Halifax : Fernwood Publishing.

Diaz, Francisco

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 30 August.

2016 Interview. Semi-structured. On 23 March.

Engels, Friedrich

1975 [1883] Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx. *In The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd Edition. Ed., Robert C. Tucker. Pp681-682. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Erasmus, Charles J.

Culture, Structure, and Process : The Occurrence and Disappearance of Reciprocal Farm Labor. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 12(4) :444-469.

Escobar, Nelson

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 10 December.

2016 La Minga Inc. Strategic Plan. Draft Document.

Field, Tory and Beverly Bell

2013 *Harvesting Justice : Transforming Food, Land, and Agricultural Systems in the Americas*. New Orleans: Other Worlds.

UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

2006 Policy Brief: Food Security. Issue 2, June. Pp1-4. Accessible via
<http://www.fao.org/forestry/13128-0e6f36f27e0091055bec28ebe830f46b3.pdf>

Food in Neighborhoods Committee (FiN)

2010 The State of Food: A Snapshot of Food Access in Louisville. Report. Pp1-31.

Fosl, Catherine

1997 Interview with Henry Wallace and Carla Wallace. 9 December. Anne Braden Oral History Project. Civil Rights Digital Library. Accessible via
http://crdl.usg.edu/export/html/kdl/abrad/crdl_kdl_abrad_19971209wallace.html

Gibson-Graham, J.K. (JKGG)

2013 Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Graeber, David

2004 Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
2007 Possibilities: Essays on Hierarchy, Rebellion, and Desire. Oakland: AK Press.
2015 Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy. Brooklyn: Melville House.

Harvesting Hands

2013 Harvesting Hands. Programs. KY Interfaith Power and Light. Accessible via
<http://www.kentuckyipl.org/programs/harvestinghands/>

Harvey, David

2014 Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hess, Steve

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 18 September.

Holmes, Seth M.

2013 Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Holt-Gimenez, Eric

2011 Food Security, Food Justice, or Food Sovereignty? Crises, Food Movements, and Regime Change. *In* Cultivating Food Justice. Alkon, Alison Hope and Julie Agyeman, Eds. Pp.309-330.

Huffman, Noah G.

2005 Hanging the moonbow: Tom Wallace and the Cumberland Falls fight, 1926-1931. Master's Thesis. University of Louisville. Accessible via <http://ir.library.louisville.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1647&context=etd>

Indiana Department of Agriculture

2013 Indiana Agriculture Facts. Accessible via http://www.in.gov/isda/files/AgFactSheet_-_English.pdf

Kang-Bartlett, Andrew

2014 Community Gardens Map. Louisville Food Blog. Accessible via <https://louisvillefoodblog.wordpress.com/gardens/>

2016a Interview. Semi-structured. On 24 March.

2016b Food in Neighborhoods. Louisville Food Blog. Accessible via <https://louisvillefoodblog.wordpress.com/group/food-in-neighborhoods-fin/>

Kellet, Nicole Coffey

2011 Microfinance and Economic Inequality in the Peruvian Highlands. *Ethnology* 50(3):259-279.

Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA)

2015 Farmers' Market Directory. Marketing Programs. Accessible via <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/farmers-market-directory.aspx>

2016 Office of Agricultural Marketing. Marketing Programs. Accessible via <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/>

Kentucky Farm Bureau

2013 Kentucky Agriculture Facts. Commodity Booklet. Pp1-28. Accessible via <https://www.kyfb.com/media/files/fed/home-page/2013/CommodityBooklet.pdf>

Kogl, Alexandra

2008 *Strange Places: The Political Potentials and Perils of Everyday Spaces*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Long, Wayne with Sarah Stolz, Attica Scott, Rebecca Fleischaker, Dustin Wallen, Theresa Zawacki, Lauren Heberle, Carol Nortion, Allison Smith, Amanda Fuller, Andrew Kang Bartlett, and Michael McCoy.

2014 Community Gardens in Louisville: A Start-up Guide. Pp1-45. Accessible via <http://louisville.edu/cepm/community-gardens-in-louisville-a-start-up-guide> .

MacMullan, Terrance

2009 *Habits of Whiteness: A Pragmatist Reconstruction*. Bloomington: IU Press.

Markowitz, Lisa

2012 Expanding Access and Alternatives: Building Farmers' Markets in Low-Income Communities. *In* Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World. Pp531-541.

Marx, Karl

1978[1848] Manifesto of the Communist Party *In* The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd Edition. Ed., Robert C. Tucker. Pp473-500. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

1978[1852] The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. *In* The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd Edition. Ed., Robert C. Tucker. Pp594-617. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

1978[1867] Capital, Volume 1. *In* The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd Edition. Ed., Robert C. Tucker. Pp294-438. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

1978[1875] Critique of the Gotha Program. *In* The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd Edition. Ed., Robert C. Tucker. Pp525-541. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Masioli, Itelvina

2010 Seeing Like a Peasant: Voices from La Via Campesina. *In* Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature, and Community. Wittman, Hannah with Annette Aurelie Desmarais and Nettie Wiebe, Eds. Pp. 33-43. Black Point: Fernwood Publishing

McKenzie, Elijah

2014 New Kentucky Home. Documentary. Accessible via
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBVFQT-awfg>

Mog, Justin

2015 Composting. Operations. UofL Sustainability Office. Accessible via
<http://louisville.edu/sustainability/operations/composting.html>

Moskowitz, Karen

2013 The Fresh Stop Project: An Oasis in a Food Desert of Louisville. *In* Sustain Fall/Winter Edition "Local Foods." Pp23-29.

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 17 November.

Nunez, Sarah

2016 Interview. Semi-structured. On 28 February.

O'Neill, Anne-Marie

1997 Animal House. *In* People. Magazine, March. 47(11). Accessible via
<http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20143766,00.html>

Orr, Josh

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. 18 December.

Patterson, Thomas C.

1999 Change and Development in the Twentieth Century. New York: Berg.

Peot-Stevens, Laura

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 2 October.

Peteet, Julie

2005 *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Plath, Pernell

2003 Looking for the post-tobacco king of Kentucky agriculture. Rodale Institute.

Accessible via http://www.newfarm.org/features/0504/ky_tobacco.shtml

Ponzio, Angela

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On

Qandil, Ala

2015 Rooftop gardens provide ‘answer for Gaza.’ War and Conflict. *In* AlJazeera

English. Accessible via <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/07/rooftop-gardens-provide-answer-gaza-201474123655983775.html>

Richards, Martin

2013 The Benefits, Opportunities, and Challenges of Creating Local and Regional Food Systems in Kentucky. *In* Sustain Fall/Winter Edition “Local Foods.” Pp10-17.

Rockefeller, Stuart Alexander

1998 Political Institutions and the Evanescence of Power: Making History in Highland Boliva. *Ethnology* 37(2):187-207.

Rodriguez, Yedith

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 2 December.

Sallnow, Michael J

1989 Cooperative and Contradiction: The Dialectics of Everyday Practice. *Dialectical Anthropology* 14(4):241-257.

Scott, James C.

1998 *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Shannon, Deric

2012 *Anarchist Economics: A Holistic View*. *In* *The Accumulation of Freedom: Writings on Anarchist Economics*. Deric Shannon and Anthony J. Nocella, Eds. Pp.11-39. Oakland: AK Press.

Shultz, Emily A. and Robert H. Lavenda

2014 *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition*. Ninth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spannos, Chris

2012 Examining the History of Anarchist Economics to See the Future. *In* The Accumulation of Freedom: Writings on Anarchist Economics. Deric Shannon and Anthony J. Nocella, Eds. Pp.42-63. Oakland: AK Press.

Solnit, Rebecca

2009 A Paradise Built in Hell: the Extraordinary Communities that Arise in Disaster. New York: Penguin Books.

Stephen, Lynn

2002 Zapata Lives! Histories and Cultural Politics in Southern Mexico. Berkley: University of California Press.

Stewart, Colleen

2012 Growing Good Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program. *In* The Louisville Paper. Accessible via <http://www.thelouisvillepaper.com/growing-good-refugee-agricultural-partnership-program/>

Stout, Robert Joe

2008 Why Immigrants Come to America: Braceros, Indocumentados, and the Migra. Westport: Praeger Publishers.

Suchak, Roopa

2012 Growing Vegetables without soil on Gaza's rooftops. *In* BBC World News. Accessible via <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20125915>

Thomas, Samuel

2015 Wolf Pen Branch Mill. Filson Historical Society. *In* Filson Newsmagazine 5(3). Accessible via http://www.filsonhistorical.org/archive/news_v5n3_wolfpen.html.

Townsend, Shane

2015 Minga: The Communal Work Tradition of Bolivia.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

2014a Census of Agriculture, 2012. United States: Summary and State Data. Geographic Area Series 1(51). Pp1-695. Accessible via http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_US_State_Level/usv1.pdf

2014b Number of US farmers' markets continue to rise. Chart Gallery. Economic Research Service. Accessible via <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chartgallery/detail.aspx?chartId=48561&ref=collection&embed=True>

2015a Overview. The Food Access Research Atlas. Economic Research Service. Accessible via <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

2015b What is Food Security? Measurement. Food Security in the US. Accessible via <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement.aspx#measurement>

Verzjil, Andres

2013 The System Nobody Sees: Irrigated Wetland Management and Alpaca Herding in the Peruvian Andes.

Wallace, Carla

2014a Changing the World by Showing up for Racial Justice. Presentation FORward Radio-Louisville. Accessible via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1C6Lsyeg7Q>

2015 Interview. Semi-structured. On 3 December.

Wittman, Hannah with Annette Aurelie Desmarais and Nettie Wiebe

2011 Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature, and Community. Black Point: Fernwood Publishing

Wolf, Eric

1999 Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis. Berkeley: University of California Press.

2001[1990] Facing Power. *In* Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World. Pp383-397. Berkeley: University of California Press.

2010[1982] Europe and the People Without History. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wolford, Wendy

2010 This Land is Ours Now: Social Mobilization and the Meanings of Land in Brazil. Durham: Duke University Press.

UN World Food Programme (WFP)

2016 Hunger Statistics. What is Hunger? Global Fact Sheet. Accessible via <https://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>

Wutich, Amber

2011 The Moral Economy of Water Re-examined: Reciprocity, Water insecurity, and Urban Survival in Cochabamba,, Bolivia. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 67(1):5-26.

Zavala, Elmer

2013a Bylaws of La Minga Inc. Founding Document. Board of Directors.

2013b Values, Principles, and Procedures of La Minga Inc. Founding Document. Board of Directors.

2015a General Assembly Meeting. La Minga Inc. On 28 August.

2015b The Socio-Ecological Crisis, Immigration, and Food Sovereignty. Agricultural Missions Inc. Study Session. Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church. On 24 October.

2016 Interview. Semi-structured. On 28 January.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Bylaws of La Minga Inc. (Zavala 2013a)

Bylaws of LA MINGA

Article I – Name and Offices

Section 1.1 – Name: The name of the corporation shall be La Minga. It shall be a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Kentucky.

Section 1.2 – Registered Office and Registered Agent: The corporation shall continuously maintain a registered office and registered agent in the Commonwealth of Kentucky as required by law, and at such place as the Board of Directors shall from time to time designate. The corporation may maintain additional offices at such other places as the Board of Directors designate. The corporation's initial registered office and registered agent are as set forth in the corporation's Articles of Incorporation. The principal office of the corporation will be located in Prospect, Kentucky.

Article II – Purpose

Section 2.1 – Purpose: La Minga exists to

- a. Develop community-centered food systems that will ensure nutritious food for all residents;
- b. Develop prosperous livelihoods for farmers in and around Louisville, within the United States, and internationally;
- c. Develop food systems that are inclusive, equitable, healthy, and sustainable;
- d. Educate on policies relating to healthy local food economies;
 - e. Generate access to land, training, technical assistance and other resources to encourage sustainable production, in a diverse and cooperative environment, healthy food for self-consumption or sale.

Article III – Membership

Section 3.1 – Membership Types: La Minga shall have three types of members: Active members, Associate members, and Friends of La Minga.

Section 3.2 – Active Members: Active members are those who have a piece of land to produce healthy food for at least one year. Active members shall have voting rights.

Section 3.3 – Associate Members: Associate Members are individuals or organizations interested in promoting production of and access to healthy food. Associate members will not have voting rights, but shall be eligible for election to the Board of Directors.

Section 3.4 – Friends of La Minga: Friends of La Minga are individuals or organizations who support the corporation with their time or financial assistance. They shall attend and participate in general meetings, but do not have voting rights. New members are to be considered Friends of La Minga until the end of their first year.

Section 3.5 – Membership Dues: An annual membership fee will be collected from each member on a calendar year basis. The membership year will be based on the calendar year, January-December. Membership fees will be collected each year in January. Membership fee amounts will be based on a sliding scale per year, based on ability to pay. Dues policies and amounts will be determined by a majority vote of the Board of Directors annually.

Section 3.6 – Membership Accountability: The Treasurer of the Board of Directors will keep a record of membership. Those members who fail to pay membership fees will not have voting rights.

Article IV – Government

Section 4.1 – Governance: The government of the corporation is based on the General Assembly. Active members, Associate Members, Friends of La Minga, the Board of Directors, and special committees as designated by the Board of Directors may attend the General Assembly meeting. Only Active Members have the right to vote on decision-making. Each Active Member shall have one vote.

Section 4.2 – General Assembly: The General Assembly shall meet once a year. However, the Board of Directors can call special meeting of the General Assembly if it is required.

Section 4.3 – Power of the General Assembly: The General Assembly shall have the following functions:

- Elect the Board of Directors;
- Approve general plans of the corporation;
- Approve new members;
- Remove members;
- Approve modifications to the bylaws;
- Make final decisions in the case of conflict within the Board of Directors or

between members.

Section 4.4 – Quorum: General Assembly meetings must meet quorum, which is defined as 51% of Active Members. However, if quorum is not possible due to extenuating circumstances, decisions may be made by consensus with fifty-one percent of present votes. Votes must be made in person.

Article V – Board of Directors

Section 5.1 – Power of the Board: All other business and affairs of the corporation that do not fall under the above listed powers of the General Assembly shall be managed by the Board of Directors.

Section 5.2 – Number and Tenure: The Board of Directors shall consist of no less than three (3) members, with the exact number of directors to be set by resolution of the General Assembly of members. Each director must be reapproved for his/her position by majority vote at the annual General Assembly. No officer shall be elected or appointed to serve a term of office exceeding three (3) years.

Section 5.3 – Vacancies: When a vacancy on the Board exists mid-term, the secretary must receive nominations for the replacement from either present Board members or Active Members of the corporation two weeks in advance of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Vacancies may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. This new director

will serve the rest of the term until the election of Board members at the annual General Assembly meeting.

Section 5.4 – Resignation: Except as otherwise required by law, a director may resign from the Board at any time by giving notice. Resignation from the Board must be in writing and received by the Secretary. Whenever possible, the resigning director shall hold office until his or her successor has been elected and qualifies for the office per a vote of the General Assembly. If this is not possible, the Board shall follow the laws for filling a vacancy of the Board.

Section 5.5 – Removal of Directors: A director may be terminated from the Board by a majority vote of the General Assembly.

Section 5.6 – Regular Meetings: The Board of Directors may provide, by resolution, the date time and place, either within or without the Commonwealth of Kentucky, for holding regular meetings without notice other than such resolution. The Board of Directors shall meet at a minimum twice (2) per calendar year.

Section 5.7 – Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by, or at the request of, the President or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors with at least one week of notice. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Board of Directors may fix any place, either within or without the Commonwealth of Kentucky, as the place for holding any special meeting of the Board of directors called by them. Meetings may be held by video or telephone conferencing to the extent authorized by law.

Section 5.8 – Notice: Required notices of any meeting shall be given at least two (2) days prior thereto by written notice delivered personally, or by mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to each director at his or her business address. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail in a sealed envelope so addressed, with first class postage thereon prepaid. If notice is given by facsimile or electronic mail, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered at such time as is noted on a confirmation sheet printed by the facsimile machine or computer from which such notice was sent. Any director may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of a director at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, unless the director at the beginning of the meeting (or promptly upon his or her arrival) objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting and does not thereafter vote for or assent to action taken at the meeting. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board of directors need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting.

Section 5.9 – Quorum: Board of Directors meetings must meet quorum, which is defined as 51% of Board members. Quorum shall be required for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of directors. If less than a majority of the directors are present at any Board meeting, a majority of the directors present may adjourn the meeting until a majority of Board members can be in attendance.

Section 5.10 – Absence: Each Board member is expected to communicate with the President of the Board in advance of all Board meetings confirming their attendance. Any Board member who is absent from three consecutive meetings or fails to participate for a full year shall be deemed to have resigned due to non-participation, and his/her position shall be declared vacant, unless the Board of Directors affirmatively votes to retain that director as a member of the Board.

Section 5.11 – Voting: Each Board Member shall have one vote. All voting at meetings shall be done in person; no proxy votes shall be accepted.

Section 5.12 – Manner of Acting: The action of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall constitute as the act of the Board of Directors.

Section 5.13 – Informal Action: Unless otherwise restricted by the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws, any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of directors, or any action which may be taken at a meeting of the Board of directors or of a committee, may be taken without a meeting if a consent, in writing, setting forth the action so taken is signed by all of the directors, or all the members of the committee, as the case may be, and is included in the minutes or is filed with the corporate records. Such consent shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote.

Section 5.14 – Compensation: No Board member shall receive compensation for his/her services. Any expenses incurred by any director by reason of his/her duties or responsibilities may be paid by the corporation; provided, that nothing contained herein shall be construed to preclude any director from serving the corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefor. The Treasurer must record all reimbursements. The Board of Directors shall determine the level of compensation of the Executive Director and any contracted consultants. The Board shall approve compensation guidelines in accordance with state law for all employees of the corporation.

Section 5.15 – Officers and Duties: The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and such other officers as may be created by the Board of Directors and elected in accordance with the provisions of this article.

(a) The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation and shall supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the corporation. The President shall perform all duties normally incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors from time to time.

(b) The Treasurer shall: (1) have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the corporation; (2) receive and give receipts for moneys due and payable to the corporation from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such moneys in the name of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws; (3) maintain records of and collect membership dues, and (4) in general, perform all the duties normally incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be normally assigned by the President or the Board of directors.

(c) The Secretary shall: (1) keep the minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings in one or more books provided for that purpose; (2) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law; (3) be custodian of the corporate records; (4) authenticate all records and documents of the corporation whenever appropriate; and, (5) in general, perform all duties normally incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Board of directors.

Section 5.16 – Committees: The Board of Directors shall have authority to establish such committees as it may consider necessary or convenient for the conduct of its business. The Board of Directors may establish an Executive Committee in accordance with and subject to the restrictions set out in the statutes of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Section 5.17 – Rules: Each committee and task force may adopt rules for its meetings as long as they are consistent with these bylaws or any other rules adopted by the Board of Directors.

Section 5.17 – Conflict of Interest: A Conflict of Interest Policy similar to the Appendix A to the IRS Form 1023 shall be enforced. Any director, officer, or key employee who has an interest in a contract or other transaction presented to the Board of Directors or a committee thereof for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt and full disclosure of his or her interest to the Board of Directors or committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include any relevant and material facts known to such person about the contract or transaction, which might reasonably be construed to be adverse to the corporation's interest. The body to which such disclosure is made shall thereupon determine, by a vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the votes entitled to vote, whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is deemed to exist, such person shall not vote on, nor use his other personal influence on, nor participate (other than to present factual information or to respond to questions), in the discussions or deliberations with respect to such contract or transaction. Such person may be counted in determining whether a quorum is present but may not be counted when the Board of Directors or a committee takes action on the transaction. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon, the abstention from voting and participation, and whether a quorum was present. This policy shall be kept with the corporation records and maintained by the Secretary of the Board. The Board of Directors shall by majority vote amend this policy at any meeting.

Article VI - Contracts, Loans, Checks, and Deposits

Section 6.1 – Contracts and Agreements: The Board of Directors may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) to enter into any contract or agreement or execute and deliver any instruments in the name of and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 6.2 – Loans: No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the corporation, and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. No loans shall be made by the corporation to its directors or officers.

Section 6.3 – Checks, Drafts, Notes, Etc.: All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation shall be signed by such officer(s) or agent(s) of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Section 6.4 – Deposits: All funds of the corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

Section 6.5 – Gifts: Any director or officer may accept on behalf of the corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes of or for any special purpose of the corporation. The Treasurer must record all gifts.

Section 6.6 – Charitable Contributions: Any director or officer may accept on behalf of the corporation any contribution, bequest, or devise for the general purposes of or for any special purpose of the corporation. The Treasurer must record all contributions.

Article VII - Books and Records

Section 7.1 – Books and Records: The corporation shall keep at its registered office in the State of Kentucky (1) correct and complete books and records of account, (2) minutes of the proceedings of Board of Directors and any committee having the authority of the Board, and (3) a record of the names and addresses of the Board members entitled to vote. All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any Board member having voting rights, or his/her agent or attorney, for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

Section 7.2 – Indemnification and Insurance:

(a) Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the corporation shall indemnify (*compensate for harm or loss*) any director or officer, any former director or officer, any person who may have served at its request as a director or officer of another corporation, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, and may be resolution of the Board of Directors, indemnify any employee against any and all expenses and liabilities actually and necessarily incurred by him/her or imposed on him/her in connection with any claim, action, suit, or proceeding (whether actual or threatened, civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including appeals) to which s/he may be or is made a party by reason of being or having been such director, officer, or employee; subject to the limitation, however, that there shall be no indemnification in relation to matters as to which s/he shall be adjudged in such claim, action, suit, or proceeding to be guilty of a criminal offense or liable to the corporation for damages arising out of his/her own negligence or misconduct in the performance of a duty to the corporation.

(b) Amounts paid in indemnification of expenses and liabilities may include, but shall not be limited to, counsel fees and other fees; costs and disbursements; and judgments, fines, and penalties against, and amounts paid in settlement by, such director, officer, or employee. The corporation may advance expenses to, or where appropriate may itself, at its expense, undertake the defense of, any director, officer, or employee; provided, however, that such director, officer, or employee shall undertake to repay or to reimburse such expense if it should ultimately be determined that s/he is not entitled to indemnification under this Article.

(c) The provisions of this Article shall be applicable to claims, actions, suits, or proceedings made or commenced after the adoption hereof, whether arising from acts or omissions to act occurring before or after adoption hereof.

(d) The indemnification provided by this Article shall not be deemed exclusive to any other rights to which such director, officer, or employee may be entitled under any statute, Bylaw, agreement, vote of the Board of Directors, or otherwise and shall not restrict the power of the corporation to make any indemnification permitted by law.

(e) The Board of Directors may authorize the purchase of insurance on behalf of any director, officer, employee, or other agent against any liability asserted against or incurred by him/her which arises out of such person's status as director, officer, employee, or agent or out of acts taken in such capacity, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify the person against that liability under law.

(f) In no case, however, shall the corporation indemnify, reimburse, or insure any person for any taxes imposed on such individual under Chapter 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now in effect or as may hereafter be amended (the "Code"). Further, if at any time the corporation is deemed to be a private foundation within the meaning of section 509 of the Code then, during such time, no payment shall be made

under this Article if such payment would constitute an act of self-dealing or a taxable expenditure, as defined in section 4941 (d) or section 4945 (d), respectively, of the code.

(g) If any part of this Article shall be found in any action, suit, or proceeding to be invalid or ineffective, the validity and the effectiveness of the remaining parts shall not be affected.

Article VIII - Dissolution

Section 8.1 – Dissolution or Closure: If the corporation is dissolved, the remaining funds and assets shall be used solely for charitable, educational or scientific purposes and shall not be disbursed to any officer, director, or agent of the corporation.

Article IX - Waiver of Notice

Section 9.1 – Fiscal Year: Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of these bylaws, the articles of incorporation, or the corporation laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person(s) entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

Article XI – Nondiscrimination Policy

This policy applies to all La Minga employees, volunteers, members, clients, and contractors.

The corporation does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, height, weight, physical or mental ability, veteran status, military obligations, and marital status.

This policy also applies to internal promotions, training, opportunities for advancement, terminations, outside vendors, organization volunteers, members and customers, service clients, use of contractors and consultants, and dealings with the general public.”

Article XI – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be the calendar year, January to December.

Article XII – Corporate Seal

The corporate seal, if any, shall be circular in form, shall have the name of the corporation inscribed thereon and shall contain the words “Corporate Seal” and “Kentucky”.

Article XIII - Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended, altered, changed, added to, or repealed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the General Assembly of members.

Article XIV – Certification

I hereby certify that I am the Secretary of La Minga, and that the foregoing bylaws were duly adopted by the General Assembly of members on this the 20th day of October, 2013.
Elmer Zavala, President

Nelson Escobar, Vice President

Carla Wallace, Witness

Jessica Brown, Witness

CODE OF ETHICS

LA MINGA is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt trade association formed to promote,

develop, educate, and otherwise further a sustainable food system. The business of the association is managed under the direction of the LA MINGA Board of Directors. The Board's code of ethics serves as a code of conduct for association volunteers and staff in their capacity as board members. Code violations may result in sanctions imposed under the Procedures for Review of Board Member Conduct. The principles and requirements that comprise the code and procedures are based on and are designed to ensure full compliance by LA MINGA and its officers, directors, and employees with the fiduciary duties imposed on such individuals by state corporate law, the federal tax code's prohibition on private inurement and private benefit, and other requirements of federal tax exemption, common law due process requirements, federal and state antitrust and unfair competition law, state tort law, and other legal precepts and prohibitions. At the same time, the code and procedures are not designed to supplant courts of law in the resolution of disputes within the organization or industry. Moreover, the checks and balances built into the code and procedures are designed to strike the proper balance between ensuring full compliance with the legal obligations described here and ensuring the integrity and efficacy of the code on the one hand and, on the other, the protection of board members, through the use of reasonable due process procedures, against patently false, malicious, or groundless accusations that could result in significant business or personal harm if not properly handled. Members of the Board affirm their endorsement of the code and acknowledge their commitment to uphold its principles and obligations by accepting and retaining membership on the board.

Board of Directors Code of Ethics - Members of the Board (including ex officio members of the Board) shall at all times abide by and conform to the following code of conduct in their capacity as board members:

- 1) Each member of the Board of Directors will abide in all respects by all rules and regulations of the association (including but not limited to the association's articles of incorporation and bylaws) and will ensure that their membership (or the membership of the entity for which they serve as officer, director, employee, or owner, as the case may be) in the association remains in good standing at all times. Furthermore, each member of the board of directors will at all times obey all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations and will provide or cause to provide the full cooperation of the association when requested to do so by those institutions and their persons set in authority as are required to uphold the law.
- 2) Members of the Board of Directors will conduct the business affairs of the association in good faith and with honesty, integrity, due diligence, and reasonable competence.
- 3) Except as the Board of Directors may otherwise require or as otherwise required by law, no board member shall share, copy, reproduce, transmit, divulge or otherwise disclose any confidential information related to the affairs of the association and each member of the board will uphold the strict confidentiality of all meetings and other deliberations and communications of the board of directors
- 4) Members of the Board of Directors will exercise proper authority and good judgment in their dealings with association staff, suppliers, and the general public and will respond to the needs of the association's members in a responsible,

respectful, and professional manner.

4) No member of the Board of Directors will use any information provided by the association or acquired as a consequence of the Board member's service to the association in any manner other than in furtherance of his or her board duties. Further, no member of the Board of Directors will misuse association property or resources and will at all times keep the association's property secure and not allow any person not authorized by the Board of Directors to have or use such property.

5) Each member of the Board of Directors will use his or her best efforts to regularly participate in professional development activities and will perform his or her assigned duties in a professional and timely manner pursuant to the board's direction and oversight.

6) Upon termination of service, a retiring Board member will promptly return to the association all documents, electronic and hard files, reference materials, and other property entrusted to the board member for the purpose of fulfilling his or her job responsibilities. Such return will not abrogate the retiring board member from his or her continuing obligations of confidentiality with respect to information acquired as a consequence of his or her tenure on the Board of Directors.

7) The Board of Directors dedicates itself to leading by example in serving the needs of the association and its members and also in representing the interests and ideals sustainable food system industry at large.

8) No member of the Board of Directors shall persuade or attempt to persuade any employee of the association to leave the employ of the association or to become employed by any person or entity other than the association. Furthermore, no member of the Board of Directors shall persuade or attempt to persuade any member, exhibitor, advertiser, sponsor, subscriber, supplier, contractor, or any other person or entity with an actual or potential relationship to or with the association to terminate, curtail, or not enter into its relationship to or with the association, or to in any way reduce the monetary or other benefits to the association of such relationship.

9) The Board of Directors must act at all times in the best interests of the association and not for personal or third-party gain or financial enrichment. When encountering potential conflicts of interest, board members will identify the conflict and, as required, remove themselves from all discussion and voting on the matter. Specifically, Board members shall follow these guidelines:

(1) Avoid placing (and avoid the appearance of placing) one's own self-interest or any third-party interest above that of the association; while the receipt of incidental personal or third-party benefit may necessarily flow from certain association activities, such benefit must be merely incidental to the primary benefit to the association and its purposes;

(2) Do not abuse Board membership by improperly using board membership or the association's staff, services, equipment, resources, or property for personal or third-party gain or pleasure; board members shall not represent to third parties that their authority as a Board member extends any further than that which it actually extends;

(3) Do not engage in any outside business, professional or other

activities that would directly or indirectly materially adversely affect the association;

(4) Do not engage in or facilitate any discriminatory or harassing behavior directed toward association staff, members, officers, directors, meeting attendees, exhibitors, advertisers, sponsors, suppliers, contractors, or others in the context of activities relating to the association;

(5) Do not solicit or accept gifts, gratuities, free trips, honoraria, personal property, or any other item of value from any person or entity as a direct or indirect inducement to provide special treatment to such donor with respect to matters pertaining to the association without fully disclosing such items to the Board of Directors; and

(6) Provide goods or services to the association as a paid vendor to the association only after full disclosure to, and advance approval by, the board, and pursuant to any related procedures adopted by the Board.

Appendix B: Values, Principles, and Procedures of La Minga Inc. (Zavala 2013b)

Values, principles and procedures of La Minga

Production and use of land

- 1 - We will farming following the Permaculture- Natural Farming principles. Based on observing or imitate nature, which is quite wiser than us, instead of trying control each and every one of the factors of an ecosystem based chemicals, mechanicals treatments or genetic alterations. Its implementation is a long-term goal, it will be a process.
- 2 - Has implemented the following practices:
 - Not plow. To remove the Earth we are modifying part of the structure and composition of the soil and destroying microscopic communities of nematodes, bacteria and fungi that make a land rich and varied and increase the weeds out seeds that were sleeping. Initially Plough is used only in those crops that are strictly necessary, for example potatoes, lettuce, carrots, etc.
 - Not to solidify the soil: avoid activities that compacted soil and which do not allow that you breathe, such as working the garden immediately after heavy rains.
 - Do not use fertilizers: Simple input of plant material which decomposes by action of the inhabitants of soils is enough to recover the nutrients that once captured the plants at different soil depths. Processed organic fertilizers are use only when the soil analysis or the growing conditions so require.
 - Not eliminate weeds or use herbicides: Weeds do not exist if we know them and learn to control them with natural methods.
 - Not using pesticides: If necessary, will be used organic pesticides or homemade.
 - Not to prune: The purpose is to allow the plants reach the size for which nature designed them. You can prune a branch sick or one to bother in excess of another plant that interests us, but isn't interesting to modify the original form of a tree-based drastic pruning.
 - Enriched natural and permanent soil: Compost, cover crops, etc.
 - Plots and crop rotation.
- 3 - No one will have permanent plots; they will rotate each season or a year according to the plans of each member, with the exception of the areas of perennials like fruit trees and asparagus.
- 4 - To ensure the proper handling and efficiency in production and good overall results each member will specializes in 1-3 crops per season or year

Individual and collective responsibilities

1. Is expected that each one is careful and efficient in their crops, ensuring a good production, consumption or sale of its products.
2. It is an expectation that the products according to the needs and possibilities of the member to be shared, but share will be an individual decision of each one. A member will say when products to share with another member or with everybody have. When someone needs something from another member, wait

for the permission of the other. Except when clearly the crops has been abandoned.

3. Everybody will participate in collective activities; however personal motivation and the time available will define the participation of each at these. It is a personal and voluntary decision.

4. Share labor, crops or plots will be an agreement between two or more members.

5. One or more members can help another when somebody has problems; however make a communication with him or her.

6. Everyone will watch the good maintenance of the farm: leave tools and equipment respective place, not littering (especially plastic) participation in cleaning and general maintenance, etc.

In terms of the formation and interpersonal relationships

1. We are a diverse group, in this sense always respect the diversity of everyone in terms of origin, race, color, sexual orientation, personality and ideology. The guide will be the purpose of working together in the production and promotion of healthy food.

2. La Minga is space of peace, respect as human beings will be the guide of our behavior. We are all human beings and we deserve respect.

3. If a conflict or divergence, it will talk with high respect among those involved, if it is not possible it will be better to stop and it will be talked in the Board of directors or the general Assembly.

In terms of products, projects and financing

1. Each one will decide what to produce, but will be negotiated within an overall plan with the purpose of not compete each other and keep the specialization;

2. Production and projects will be individual, but it can be in small groups or the enteric organization in common agreement, starting with the intention to do it, and then making a specific plan;

3. Funding for each crop, product or project will be individual responsibility or members in each project. The organization can provide contacts or financing if necessary and possible.

4. The search for additional funding in terms of donation or loan will obey La Minga general plan and never accept external funding/support out of this plan, unless the general Assembly decides to do so.

In terms of decision-making

1. Participatory democracy will be applied in the decision-making.

2. Bylaws will define levels and process of decision making at the level of General Coordination, Board of Directors and General Assembly.

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Semi-structured interviews will be aimed at generating answers to the following questions:

- 1) What motivates growers to produce food at La Minga?
- 2) What are the key principles and procedures of growers' production activities and distribution practices?
- 3) What is the structure of the nonprofit organization, and to what extent do individual members contribute to realizing the collective missions established by leadership?

A series of sub-questions must be addressed in order to gain an understanding of La Minga growers' motivations for engaging in local food production and their characterizations of the organization. The following guide includes the topics and a few sample questions per topic likely to be addressed during interviews with growers and other research participants.

I. La Minga growers:

Amount of time living in Louisville or surrounding areas: 1) How long have they lived in Louisville or surrounding areas (did they live elsewhere in the US prior to residing here)? 2) What were the main food-related factors of daily life before immigrating to the US (with regard to food provision, cooking, and storage as well as exchange based on kinship, tributary, and/or capitalist relationships)?

Amount of time growing with La Minga: 1) How long have growers produced at La Minga? 2) How did growers initially learn about La Minga?

Current agricultural activities: 1) Which foods do growers produce? 2) On how much land do growers produce, and what are the sizes of growers' fields? 3) Do growers produce food at home; if so, about how much space do they have to grow, and who owns this space (is it common space for tenants at an apartment complex or private space at an apartment or house)?

Past agricultural/occupational experiences: 1) Do growers have histories of engaging in full-time rural or urban agriculture before growing at La Minga; if not, what were growers' past employment positions? 2) How do their past agricultural experiences influence contemporary activities at La Minga? 3) How did growers learn how to cultivate food products (did they learn from family/kin, through educational programs, etc.)?

Employment status: 1) Do growers also have part-time or full-time wage-labor jobs? 2) To what extent does gardening supplement household income (about how much money do families save on food costs per month and throughout the summer, and how many

persons contribute to the household income as wage-earners)? 3) Do growers aspire to become full-time gardeners/farmers; if so, what would it take for this to become possible (such as access to more land, more time, start-up capital, training, etc.)?

Family and friends: 1) How many people live in the households of growers? 2) How many family members work at the garden sites? 3) Do growers share food from their gardens with family, friends, neighbors, etc.; if so, about how much food is shared per month?

Ethnic and national identification: 1) How do growers identify themselves in terms of both ethnicity and nationality? 2) What are the key factors of growers' ethnic identification processes (e.g. clothing, language, holidays, and foodways)? 3) How do growers describe the meanings of community; in addition, how does the concept of community apply to La Minga?

Relationships with other La Minga growers: 1) Do growers tend to have independent, dependent, or interdependent relationships with other participants? 2) What are the main principles or procedures upon which growers' relationships are formed and sustained (such as mutual aid, solidarity, collective work, collective consumption, etc.)? 3) Are there ever conflicts on-site between growers (conflicts over the use of space, the use of certain inputs, allegations of theft, etc.)?

Relationships with community organizations and businesses: 1) From which organizations (such as Louisville Grows) and/or businesses (such as Fresh Start Growers Supply) did growers obtain their seeds, plants, tools, etc. for producing at La Minga? 2) About how much money did growers invest in their garden plots for this year (and how much did they invest in past years with La Minga)?

Meanings of land and landscapes: 1) What is the significance of the land worked by growers? 2) What is the role of accessing land at La Minga within the context of living in Louisville? 3) How do growers perceive and describe the landscape of the garden sites as whole places; in addition, how do they experience their particular spatial (and social) positioning within the garden site at large (how do they relate to the growers around them as well as other growers' plots)? 4) Do growers actively cultivate the aesthetics of their personal landscapes (by adorning their plots with statues, planting flowers, making evenly-spaced rows of plants, etc.)? 5) What do growers think about while working in their fields; do growers think about the land of their native countries?

Evaluations of La Minga: 1) How do growers characterize the translated meaning of the place-name 'La Minga:' the ideal of 'collective work for collective good'? 2) How do growers define the greatest successes of La Minga? 3) How could La Minga be enhanced with regard to daily matters and longterm goals (what are examples of individual and collective shortcomings)?

II. For the facilitators/Board members of La Minga (Nelson Escobar), Moncada Farms (Carla Wallace), RAPP (Laura Stevens), New Roots Inc. (Karyn Moskowitz), and La Casita Center (Karina Barillas):

Establishment: 1) When was this organization founded? 2) Who were the key participants involved in establishing this organization?

Mission: 1) What is the mission/purpose of this organization? 2) Who was involved with developing this mission statement?

Change over time: 1) How has this organization expanded, scaled down, or experienced both 'booms' and 'busts' since formation? 2) What accounts for expansions (such as more funding, city/state/federal support, new partnerships, community involvement, etc.)? 3) What accounts for 'busts' (lower participation of volunteers, lack of funding)?

Amount of participants: 1) Since formation, how has the total amount of organization members and volunteers increased, decreased, or both? What accounts for changes in the amount of participants with this organization?

Past Projects: 1) What were the first successful or not-so-successful projects that this organization set out to initially complete? 2) Has this organization maintained relationships with other organizations since forming?

Current Projects: 1) What are the current projects of this organization, and what could enhance the efficacy of these projects? 2) How long has this organization been working on these projects, and what are the durations (seasonal or year-long) of these projects?

Location: 1) Where are the locations of spaces in which this organization works, meets, and/or engages in community-based networking (including office buildings, market sites, gardens or farms, residences, etc.)? 2) What are the positive and negative aspects of the particular location(s) of this organization?

Organizational structure: 1) What is the organizational dynamics that characterize relationships between employees/participants/volunteers? 2) What is the nature of the internal politics of this organization; in addition, what are the key mechanisms for resolving conflicts among organization members, organization participants, and volunteers?

Funding: 1) What are the key sources of funding for this organization? 2) Does this organization share the gains as well as the losses (in other words, who benefits from 'booms,' and do these same persons also collectively experience 'busts')?

Partnerships: 1) Who are the key partners of this organization (including non-profits/NGOs, governmental agencies, faith-based institutions or groups, community-based organizations, etc.)? 2) How do these partnerships strengthen the mission of this organization?

Community engagement: 1) How does this organization encourage/invite/welcome engagement from community members? 2) To what extent does this organization rely on the labor of volunteers and/or interns?

Goals: 1) What are the future goals of this organization? 2) How do these goals reflect the mission of this organization? What is needed for these future goals to be effectively met on time?

CURRICULUM VITA

NAME: Tyler Austin Short

ADDRESS: 186 St Matthews Ave Apt 2
Louisville, KY 40207

DOB: Louisville, Kentucky – September 6, 1991

EDUCATION

& TRAINING: B.A., Cultural Anthropology and Latin American Studies
University of Louisville
2009–2013

AWARDS: Public Anthropology Award for Excellence in Writing of Public Issues
with the Community Action Website
2010

Certificate of Merit for Excellence in the Area of Community Engagement
University of Louisville Graduate Student Council
2016

PROFESSIONAL

SOCIETIES Student member, American Anthropological Association
2013–2014

Student member, Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition
2013–2014

Co-founder and President, Amnesty International Student Group
2015

Student member, UofL Student Assembly Against Discrimination
2016

NATIONAL MEETING

PRESENTATIONS:

Short, T. (2013) Commodified Coffee: Habitual Consumption and Consumer Consciousness. Paper presentation.
American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago.

Short, T. (2016) "La Minga is my life:" A Thesis on the Motivations of Immigrant and Native-Citizen Gardeners at La Minga Cooperative Farm. Paper presentation.
Dimensions of Political Ecology Conference, Lexington.