

Sustainable Local Food Systems in Europe and the Americas: Lessons for Policy and Practice

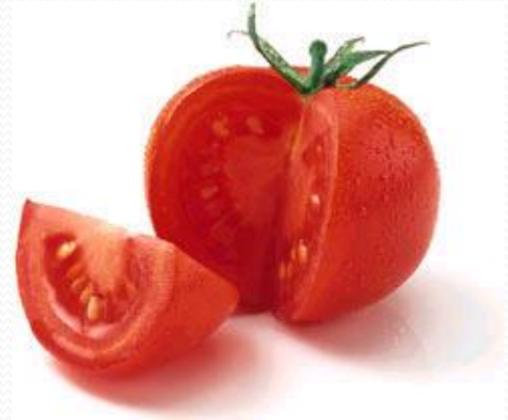
Lost in a Corn Maize? Comparing the EU and
Canada on central government engagement in
sustainable local food systems



Peter Andrée, Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science
Carleton University, Ottawa

Overview

- Introduction: What role for central gov't policy?
- Definitions:
 - Sustainable?
 - Local?
 - Food Systems?
- Comparing EU and Canadian experiences
- Recognizing challenges and possibilities
- Questions
- Policy messages



Introduction

- What role for public policy?



Definitions

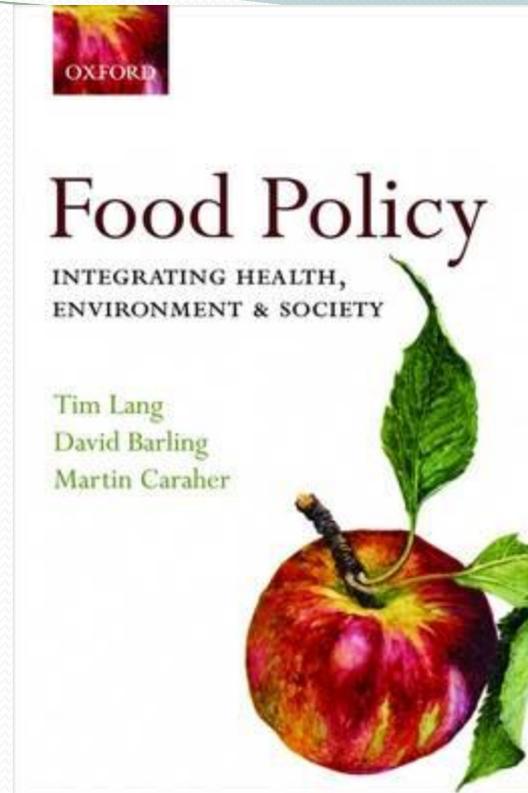


- Sustainability:
 - economic, social and environmental criteria given equal weight?
 - sustainability as resilience
 - sustainability and organics?
- Local food:
 - 100 mile diet?
 - role of exports/imports
 - local vs. “locality” foods



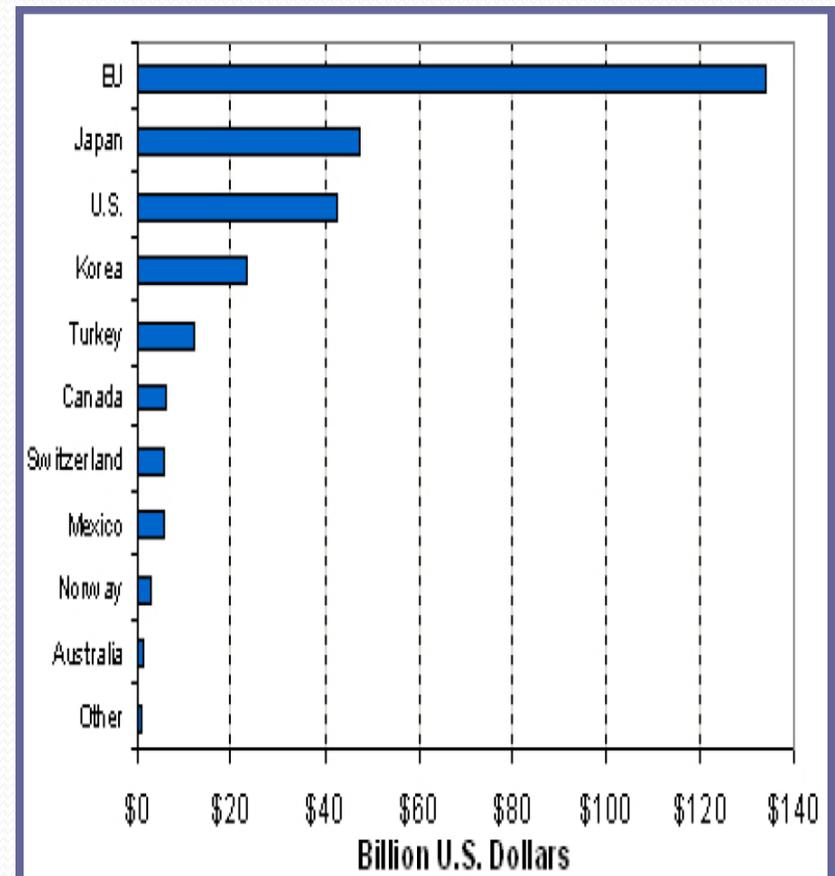
Definitions

- Food systems:
 - inputs, production, distribution, processing, consumption, waste management
 - regulation!
 - Key issue: bottlenecks in supply/value chains



Comparing EU and Canadian Experiences? No way!

- Models/forms of government
- Nature and extent of government intervention
- EU progress on policy integration
- Informal economies in new EU states
- Role of second pillar of CAP (rural development)



Comparing EU and Canadian Experiences? Yes!



- “Food” policy really agriculture, trade and food safety
- Similar challenges with corporate concentration
- Consumer power and “risk societies”
- Continental rather than national food systems
- Ongoing shift from embedded liberalism to neoliberalism
- Growing policy understanding of “multifunctionality”

Comparing EU and Canadian Experiences?

Role of civil society vs.
Entrepreneurialism vs.
state intervention?

Challenges and Possibilities for the those encouraging the local (a few examples at federal level)

Challenges

- Supply Management
- Federal/Provincial divisions in meat processing
- Regulation designed for economies of scale
- “Product of Canada” labelling



Opportunities

- Supply Management
- Federal/Provincial divisions in meat processing
- “Local” exceptions
- “Product of Canada” labelling
- Etc.

Some questions for today:

- Can local food meet the demands of integrative policy thinking (health, social environmental, economic) in a way that productivist agricultural policy has not achieved?
- If so, what policies can help “scale up” the local food movement? Which will do more good than harm?
- What can we learn from the various mixes of state, civil society and industry activity out there?
 - What is role of big business in the sustainable local food movement?
 - What can we learn from the groundswell of grassroots initiatives taking place?
 - What is the role for the state? How can it best engage?
- What are the implications of current policies, including emerging trade agreements?
- How can we (as academics, civil society, government, industry) best engage with communities around developing local food networks?

Key policy messages (esp. for the feds)



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

- First: Do no harm. Work towards scale-appropriate regulation. Don't hamstring local and sustainable innovation
- Engage with this emerging movement of consumers/producers/academics/civil society orgs
- Identify win-win opportunities across departmental mandates and among stakeholder groups
- Pay attention to integrated “food policy” proposals coming forward from various parties and sectors
- Learn from the EU experience, but also value Canadian cross-sectoral models

Thank you!

Enjoy this policy workshop!

pandree@connect.carleton.ca