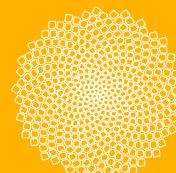


Everyday Experts: How people's knowledge can transform the food system

The People's Knowledge Editorial Collective



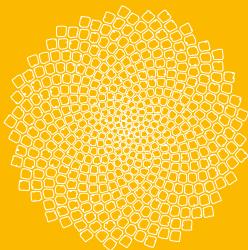
Reclaiming
**Diversity &
Citizenship**

Everyday Experts explains how knowledge built up through first-hand experience can help solve the crisis in the food system. It brings together fifty-seven activists, farmers, practitioners, researchers and community organisers from around the world to take a critical look at attempts to improve the dialogue between people whose knowledge has been marginalised in the past and others who are recognised as professional experts.

Using a combination of stories, poems, photos and videos, the contributors demonstrate how people's knowledge can transform the food system towards greater social and environmental justice. Many of the chapters also explore the challenges of using action and participatory approaches to research.

The chapters share new insights, analysis and stories that can expand our imagination of a future that encompasses:

- making dialogue among people with different ways of understanding the world central to all decision-making
- the re-affirmation of Indigenous, local, traditional and other knowledge systems
- a blurring of the divide between professional expertise and expertise that is derived from experience
- transformed relationships amongst ourselves and with the Earth to confront inequality and the environmental crisis



The *Reclaiming Diversity and Citizenship* Series seeks to encourage debate outside mainstream policy and conceptual frameworks on the future of food, farming, land use and human well-being. The opportunities and constraints to regenerating local food systems and economies based on social and ecological diversity, justice, human rights, inclusive democracy, and active forms of citizenship are explored in this Series. Contributors to the *Reclaiming Diversity and Citizenship* Series are encouraged to reflect deeply on their ways of working and outcomes of their research, highlighting implications for policy, knowledge, organisations, and practice.

The *Reclaiming Diversity and Citizenship* Series was published by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) between 2006 and 2013. The Series is now published by the Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, at Coventry University.

To read any of the 28 chapters in this book freely available to download, please visit:

www.coventry.ac.uk/everyday-experts

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Cover photos:

(left): Field teaching by Farmer Research Team members about planting methods, Lobi area. Photo taken by C. Hickey, December 2014. Used with the permission of project participants.

(right): The Coventry Men's Shed participatory video project exploring "What's Eating Coventry" and unpacks social justice issues related to food in the city of Coventry. More information at www.peoplesknowledge.org

Everyday Experts: How people's knowledge can transform the food system

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The Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR) is driving innovative, transdisciplinary research on the understanding and development of socially just and resilient food and water systems internationally. Unique to this University Research Centre is the incorporation of citizen-generated knowledge - the participation of farmers, water users and other citizens in transdisciplinary research, using holistic approaches which cross many disciplinary boundaries among the humanities as well as the natural and social sciences.

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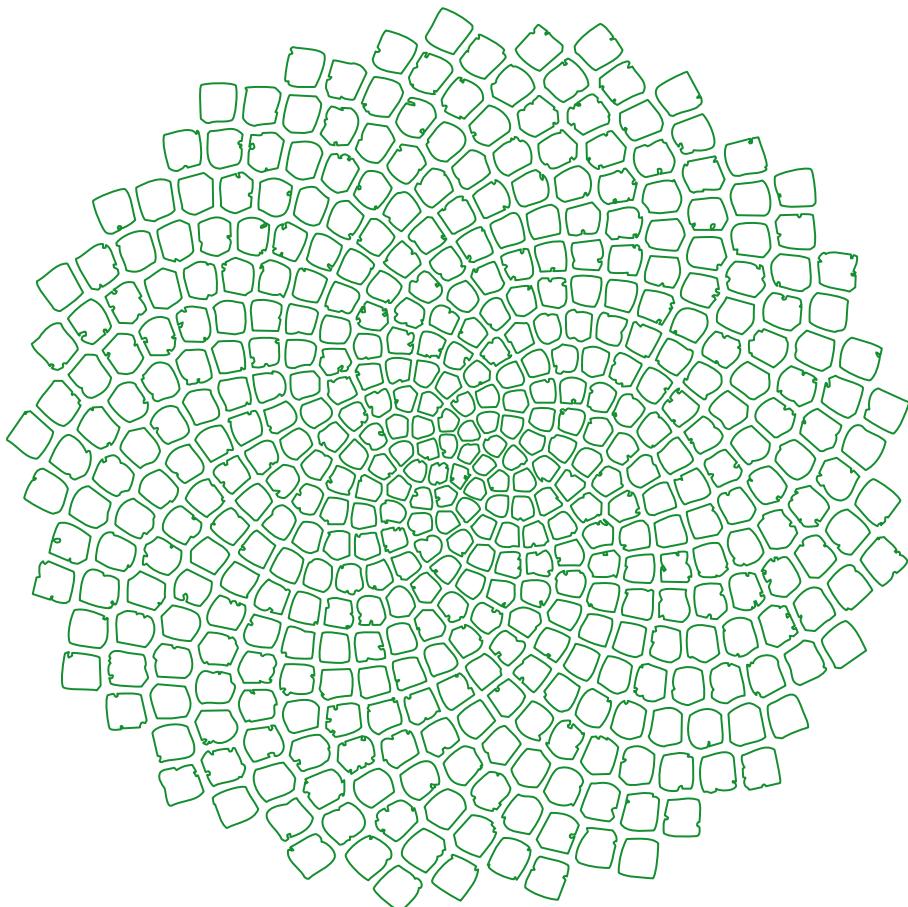
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Professor Michel Pimbert is the coordinator and editor in chief of the *Reclaiming Diversity and Citizenship Series*.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this volume are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, its partners and donors.

19



Community engaged action research and food sovereignty in Canada¹

Lauren Kepkiewicz, Rolie Srivastava, Charles Z. Levkoe,
Abra Brynne and Cathleen Kneen

Geographical location: Canada

Chapter highlights: This chapter focuses on nine community-university collaborations across Canada that took part in the action-based research project *Community First! Impacts of Community Engagement: Community Food Security/Sovereignty Hub*.

It highlights the need to take concrete steps to ensure community-engaged research better supports food sovereignty in Canada.

It draws out three common lessons around the need to unpack assumptions around knowledge production; develop a shared vision of community-campus partnerships; and commit to building relationships over time.

These lessons are discussed in relation to how they resonate with broader discussions in the transnational food sovereignty movement as well as the specific context of settler colonialism in Canada.

The research also suggests that working within a settler colonial state such as Canada presents unique challenges for community-campus engagement.

Keywords: community-campus engagement, food sovereignty, collaborative research.

¹ This chapter is the product of a collaborative research and writing effort through Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE) by three community-based researchers/practitioners: Rolie Srivastava (community researcher), Abra Brynne (former Food Secure Canada staff and current Director of Engagement & Policy with the British Columbia Food Systems Network), and Cathleen Kneen (CFICE community co-lead) as well as two academics Charles Levkoe (CFICE academic project co-lead) and Lauren Kepkiewicz (CFICE research assistant).

19.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the ways universities engage with the public. In Canada, one aspect of this is community-campus engagement, an umbrella term covering a range of approaches including community service learning, community-based research and participatory action research. In its ideal form, community-campus engagement enables reciprocity, builds respect, and provides meaningful learning for all those involved. However, community groups have challenged the motivations of academics and the assumption that partnerships are inherently beneficial, particularly in the context of increasing neoliberalisation within universities (Giroux 2014). These criticisms include the allocation of funding (eg. reductions in public funding and increases in private funding as well as difficulty using funding to pay community members honoraria and wages for their work and other contributions), what constitutes knowledge and outcomes (eg. the individualisation and professionalisation of higher education), and a host of other issues that often undermine relationship building.

Recognising these realities, *Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement* (CFICE) was designed as a pan-Canadian action research project that asks, 'How can community-campus engagement be designed and implemented to maximize value for non-profit community-based organisations?' In this chapter we focus on CFICE's Community Food Security (CFS) Hub, a collaboration between Food Secure Canada/Réseau pour une alimentation durable, the Canadian Association for Food Studies/L'Association canadienne des études sur l'alimentation and a wide range of community and campus partners engaged in food systems work. At the core of the CFS Hub's work is the effort to better understand how community-campus partnerships might contribute to food sovereignty in Canada by learning from our twelve partner projects (for an overview of these projects click the following link: <https://batchgeo.com/map/ab612e0c755f13df028d9b594a138ab3>).²

While the CFS Hub began by adopting the frame of community food security, input from our project partners has led the Hub to embrace food sovereignty as our unifying framework. We understand food sovereignty as a framework and a transnational social movement that challenges the corporate industrial food system and works to transform how food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed and valued (Desmarais and Wittman 2014, Levkoe 2014, Martin and Andrée 2013). Although

2 The twelve CFS Hub partner projects are: 1) The Regina Community Food Assessment; 2) A Developmental Evaluation to Explore a Budding Community/Academic Collaboration; 3) Creating a Food Hub Through University-Community Partnership; 4) Edible Campus: From Showcase to Living Classroom; 5) Planning for Change: Community Development in Practice; 6) Local Food Multipliers and Accessibility in Northern Ontario; 7) Models of Community University Collaboration in the Waterloo Region Food System; 8) Cross-Cultural Food Networks: Building and Maintaining Inclusive Food Security Networks to Support Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Communities; 9) Campus Food Initiative Study; 10) Paying for Nutrition: Income and Food Costs Across Canada; 11) Sharing the Table Manitoba: Sustainable-Local Food Systems, Regulation and Policy-making in Manitoba; 12) The British Columbia Food Systems Network: Responsibility and Relationships: Decolonizing the British Columbia Food Systems Network/Indigenizing our Praxis.

This chapter focuses primarily on the work of the first nine projects.

not all our partners see themselves as part of the food sovereignty movement, much of their work reflects its key principles, including the desire for transformational change (for more on how each of the projects relate to food sovereignty see our map, available at <https://batchgeo.com/map/ab612e0c755f13df028d9b594a138ab3>, and newsletter, available at: <http://carleton.ca/communityfirst/wp-content/uploads/cfice-cfs-hub-newsletter-2014.pdf>). Additionally, our core partner Food Secure Canada is a key player promoting food sovereignty in Canada.

In this chapter we draw on a series of interviews, evaluation reports, conversations, meetings and workshops conducted with our demonstration projects and supporting community and academic partners to examine the following questions:

- What lessons have community and academic partners learned from participating in community-campus engagement?
- How do these lessons resonate within broader discussions about community-campus relationships in the transnational food sovereignty movement?
- What concrete steps can we take to ensure community-campus engagement better supports food sovereignty in Canada?

19.2 Food sovereignty and community-campus engagement in Canada

In Canada, food sovereignty was introduced through the work of the National Farmers Union (one of the founding members of La Via Campesina in the 1990s) as well as the Union Paysanne, based in Québec (Desmarais and Wittman 2014). This occurred in the context of the failure of neoliberal policies introduced by the Canadian government in the 1980s, which purported to remedy (though in many cases exacerbated) low farm incomes, rural depopulation, hunger and environmental degradation (Wiebe and Wipf 2011). The implementation of the People's Food Policy Project from 2007-2011 and its adoption by Food Secure Canada has served to further embed food sovereignty in Canada, particularly by developing an additional pillar/principle to the initial six outlined by the international movement.³ This seventh pillar – food as sacred – was introduced by the Indigenous circle of the People's Food Policy Project, a group of elders, researchers and practitioners who helped guide the process (PFPP 2011, Kneen 2010). This pillar emphasises food as a sacred responsibility that cannot be commodified, reflecting how Indigenous activists, scholars, and knowledge

³ The six principles of food sovereignty:

- Provides food for people
- Values food providers
- Localises food systems
- Puts control locally, and
- Works with nature

(ISC,2007).

holders have challenged and enriched food sovereignty as a concept and practice (Morrison 2011). Indigenous activists have also critiqued the agriculture-centric focus of food sovereignty in Canada as well as the need to engage with how land, self-determination, and colonialism intersect with food systems issues and alternatives (Desmarais and Wittman 2014, Morrison 2011). In response to these critiques, the British Columbia Food Systems Network (BCFSN) has changed the language of its mandate from the protection of 'farmland' to the protection of 'foodlands' and is still seeking a broader term that recognises the connection of Indigenous people with the land for much more than food.

Although vibrant discussions and debates about the meaning of food sovereignty continue to unfold globally, the concept is still in its initial stages in Canada (Desmarais and Wittman 2014, p. 17). More specifically, little has been published about the ways that universities and the food sovereignty movement interact in Canada, even though a lively discussion on the role of academics and researchers has long been a focus within food sovereignty politics and practice. In this context, our research suggests that academics have the potential to play an important role in the movement if they enter into respectful relationships, understand and seek to change "the histories, social relations, and conditions that structure groups unequally" (Verjee 2012, p. 66), and, in turn, "create new structures of engagement" (Sheridan and Jacobi 2014 p.143). However, critics have argued that community-campus engagement can also reproduce the prioritisation of academic needs while co-opting the language of participation and engagement. For example, partnerships between community and academics are often designed to meet faculty publication and tenure requirements and/or students' educational needs. This prioritisation is encouraged not only by a long history of elitism and detachment of universities from the public but also by the neoliberalisation of higher education, which promotes a business-like model for post-secondary institutions that prioritises grants and publications over pedagogy and public service. It is vital that we better understand and develop practices that go beyond the rhetoric of engagement if we want to challenge, rather than reproduce, existing power structures within universities. While community-campus engagement alone may not be enough to change these processes (a point made by one of our community partners during an interview), we believe that learning how this engagement can be part of collaborative movement-building provides an important avenue for engaging in transformational change.

19.3 Collaborative research processes and methodologies

Within the CFS Hub, we have developed a collaborative governance model and participatory action research methodology through ongoing input from our community partners. This integrated approach fits well with food sovereignty as it attempts to place community partners at the centre of research, taking cues from those directly involved in on-the-ground work and engaging with multiple ways of knowing. One of the ways we

attempt to create space for collective engagement across community-campus divides is through the composition and governance structure of our core management team (see Figure 19.1). The team is comprised of two academics and two community partners, as well as a community-based researcher who plays an important supporting role, conducting interviews, analysing results, participating in conferences and co-authoring this chapter. As Figure 19.1 suggests, we have worked to create a horizontal governance structure that allows us to develop the CFS Hub's goals, analysis and writings with collective input from all management team members. We meet regularly using virtual platforms and in person whenever possible. Spending time talking, eating, planning, and laughing - and also working through conflicts and tensions - is important to our ability to work together. Our team dynamic is also facilitated by a shared commitment to transition to a food system based on the principles of food sovereignty.

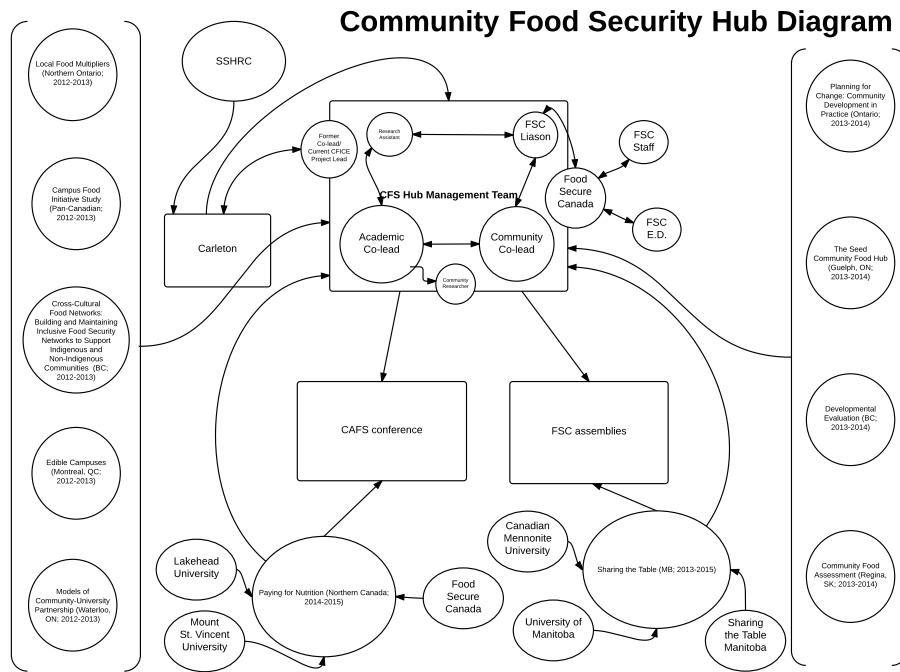


Figure 19.1. Community Food Security Hub Diagram.

In addition to meeting as a management team, we remained in regular contact with the twelve demonstration projects, working collaboratively through teleconference calls, online documents, in-person meetings, and workshops. We also met on a regular basis with the program committee of CFICE, Food Secure Canada and the Canadian Association of Food Studies to obtain feedback on the progress of the broader project. These collaborative processes within the core management team

and with the demonstration projects are two ways we attempted to subvert top-down research. This approach has been vital to our project and has helped improve our practice as the project unfolds.

This chapter draws on collaborations with twelve demonstration projects over the last four years. It focuses on projects taking place in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, as well as two phases of research between December 2014 and June 2015. The first phase involved twenty-five semi-formal interviews, in which interviewees reflected on their experiences with the CFS Hub. The second phase involved an interactive workshop and feedback session held in June 2015 at the Canadian Association of Food Studies Assembly in Ottawa, Ontario with about fifty CFS Hub partners and participants.

The methodologies involved in this research have been an important part of our collective learning. Our agenda was not solely driven by academic or community priorities. It was a joint effort between multiple groups as well as a process in which the lines between these groups were often blurred. In attempting to better understand and develop different ways of collaborating across university-campus divides (sometimes blurring boundaries and sometimes respecting the division for its ability to position people differently), we have noticed similarities between the lessons outlined by our partners and the discussions occurring internationally around food sovereignty. In the next section we consider these lessons and attempt to place them into conversation about the relationship between academics, community practitioners and food sovereignty movements.

19.4 Making community-campus engagement work for community-based organisations

The findings from our interviews highlight three common lessons around the need to:

- Unpack assumptions around knowledge production
- Develop a shared vision of community-campus partnerships and
- Commit to building relationships over time

Our research also suggests that working within a settler colonial state such as Canada presents unique challenges for community-campus engagement.

Unpacking Assumptions

The first lesson that emerges from our research is the need to unpack simplistic binary conceptions of community and academia. Many of our partner project leads emphasised that community-campus engagement brings multiple actors to the table and that these actors do not often fit into dualistic community-campus categories. This means deconstructing assumptions that a faculty member's role is to teach, a students' role is to learn, and a community-based organisation's role is to provide a laboratory or set of needs to explore. Fluid roles and blurred boundaries were apparent

in the Local Food Multipliers project where an ‘in community’ method was used. Using this method, academics “approach the issue of food security as a community member first, one who is immersed in the context of this community and its food security issues” (Harrison *et al.* 2013, p. 103). This ‘in community’ method allowed the group to negotiate the focus of their work and the roles of different players, building a strong and fluid relationship between a university-based research network, students in a community service learning course and two regional workforce planning boards. In another example, the Planning for Change service learning class brought together two student activists and a provincial food systems organisation attempting to support relationships between producers, eaters and public sector organisations. While the students focused on the assigned tasks, they also drew on their experience in the food sovereignty movement to critically assess the project and provide further recommendations for action. This project, like many others in the CFS Hub, blurred the boundaries between academic and community roles.

CFS Hub partners also emphasised the need to challenge assumptions about knowledge creation. In our interviews, community partners demanded their knowledge be valued, respected and not considered ‘below’ academic knowledge. Community partners underlined how knowledge generated in community is at the centre of food systems transformation and that without this knowledge and praxis, academics would have no data to gather or theorise. At the same time, community partners noted the value of academic contributions to knowledge creation. For example, in the Campus Food Initiative project, one partner told us that collaborating with academics opened them up to new ways of looking at their work as well as helping them think through how to frame relevant questions. Other project leads noted the valuable contribution of academic partners in generating and analysing data to back up community organisations’ advocacy work.

The need to unpack assumptions has also been noted within the food sovereignty movement more broadly. During the Day of Dialogue on Knowledge for Food Sovereignty⁴ participants discussed the integration of researchers within the movement and the integration of movement activists within the university. They reported that integration is “creating a growing body of organic intellectuals who are in a powerful, but complicated, position to contribute to the movement” (Sandwell *et al.* 2014, p. 5). The food sovereignty movement also calls for breaking down assumptions of ‘who knows’ and how knowledge is produced, emphasising the need to prioritise the knowledge of local food providers and their communities (Sandwell *et al.* 2014, ISC 2007, p. 39, Pimbert, 2010).

While our projects reinforced these conversations they also demonstrated the need to recognise how actors are positioned differently in respect to power and privilege. For

4 The Day of Dialogue was held in January 2014 and involved seventy academics and activists who came together to discuss key challenges within the food sovereignty movement. This event was a follow-up to a larger conference held by the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague called *Food Sovereignty: A Critical Dialogue*.

example, in the Edible Campus project, it became clear that university partners had a range of resources that were unavailable to the community partners. Through ongoing negotiations with the university, the faculty partners managed to leverage additional funding and a physical space on campus to locate a garden as an extension of the classroom and for the community partner to expand their work. Understanding how we are positioned differently as faculty, students and community members (whose identities may stretch over one or all of these categories) is necessary if we wish to address power disparities and different lived experiences.

Developing shared commitments while respecting difference

Throughout our research, both community and academic partners emphasised that making time to establish shared commitments and consensus about the nature of the relationship is a necessary first step. Although valuable, identifying mutually beneficial projects can come later. Developing Memoranda of Understanding, terms of reference, and/or protocols can help to develop shared understandings and commitments by providing space for partners to articulate their needs, values and ideas, and in doing so, work through differences. For example, in the *Decolonizing the British Columbia Food Systems Network/Indigenising Our Praxis* project, writing, sharing and rewriting several drafts of a collaborative agreement at the beginning of the partnership helped to clarify and work through different understandings of the project. In combination with conversations over the phone, on Skype, and in person, writing several iterations of the collaborative agreement allowed us to come to a better (though certainly not perfect) understanding of our shared commitments to and expectations of the project and partnership.

In the *Cross-Cultural Food Networks* project one participant explained how relationships are “built on common visions, goals, critical knowledge and awareness”. In this project substantial labour was invested in developing protocols to govern community-university relationships to guard against the appropriation of Indigenous knowledge. This process was key to developing a common understanding of the nature of the relationship. It was particularly important within the context of a long and continuing history of theft of Indigenous knowledges. Without it the partnership would not have been able to move forward.

In order to develop shared protocols, participants noted it is also important to acknowledge that people come to partnerships from different experiences. For this reason, a community member in the *Cross-Cultural Food Networks* project noted that everyone involved “need[s] to know themselves and know how to listen to each other”. Additionally, this project showed it is important to look to community rather than institutional protocols and understandings of community engagement, particularly in the context of a settler colony such as Canada where research often reproduces hierarchical and colonial relationships (Battiste 2008, Kovach 2009, Tuck 2009, Smith 1999).

The transnational food sovereignty movement has drawn from Indigenous scholars and activists in British Columbia because they are at the forefront of developing research protocols between academics and communities. These kinds of protocols help to ensure that research "aligns with the vision, values and goals of communities" as well as "outlin[ing] an ethical process for working across cultures (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to decolonize methodologies" (Nyéléní 2014, p.2).

Our research with CFICE demonstrates that a shared vision is an important part of meaningful and respectful community-campus engagement. Research also suggests that this shared vision might unfold or be guided by different principles depending on the context. In Canada we continue to work within ongoing structures of settler colonialism, meaning that we must engage with the different ways that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people come to this land. For example, settler peoples come to this land as a result of violent and ongoing processes of colonisation that institute land as private property (King 2012, Tuck and Yang 2012, Lawrence and Dua 2005). In contrast, Indigenous peoples' relationship to North American lands is based on "creation stories, not colonization stories" (Tuck and Yang 2012, p.6) where land "and all it has to teach, to give, and all it demands, is what it means to be Indigenous" (Alfred 2008, p.10). At the same time, differences exist within the broad categories of Indigenous and settler peoples. For example, those "who are racialized, criminalized, [and/or who] hold precarious citizenship status...do not benefit in the same way from their relationship to the state" as white Canadian citizens (Pasternak 2013, p.49). Understanding one's relationship to land and how this relationship positions us differently (and often complexly) is therefore necessary if we wish to get to a place where we are able to develop shared visions and respectful protocols rooted in food sovereignty.

Building relationships over time

The third common lesson is the need for deep relationships based on personal connections. For example, in the *Developmental Evaluation* project in British Columbia, the community partner noted how her pre-established relationship with her academic partner (who was employed outside the university when they met) helped them to work on an equal footing from the beginning of the project. As noted by another partner, "Good CCE [community-campus engagement] work happens at the grassroots level when two people share a concern about an issue, connect over it, and bring their resources together to address it". Project participants also underlined the importance of face-to-face meetings or, at the very least, regular phone meetings in order to maintain and strengthen relationships. Our management team has found that regular meetings in which everyone has the opportunity to speak provide space to address challenges and celebrate accomplishments (whether personal or professional). Meeting face-to-face helps us develop respectful relationships, whether it is through a walk in the forest, making lunch together, or sharing tea. While these may seem like simple actions, these personal forms

of communication can be radical because they challenge the notion of academic professionalism and objectivity.

Providing multiple platforms for engagement also helps build relationships because it enables the sharing of knowledge and experiences among a range of partners. Opportunities to meet at conferences, host webinars and participate in teleconferences have helped to build and widen our partnerships, brokering connections between local partners and broader networks. For example, at the 2012 Food Secure Canada Assembly we held a workshop designed to support community groups in articulating their research needs to academics. The workshop also focused on ways to connect with academics and departments that might be able to work on issues useful to community groups. A powerful presentation at the Canadian Association of Food Studies conference in 2013 by two Indigenous leaders opened participants' eyes to the manifold ways in which Indigenous knowledge is rooted in tradition and ongoing practice. Supporting our community and academic partners to attend and present their work at these conferences annually has been an important part of building relationships beyond CFICE as part of the food sovereignty movement. Further, a series of [webinars](#) run by some of the partner projects allowed participants to better understand the relationships created as well as the concrete dimensions of the project overall.

When developing relationships and creating platforms for engagement, we have found that it is necessary to engage with the ways that partnerships between communities and academics often involve a variety of power relationships. For example, tenured professors often come to these partnerships with more resources than community organisations including personal salaries, job stability, health benefits, research funding, and institutional legitimacy. Faculty also have an easier time navigating university bureaucracy whereas community organisations continually noted their lack of capacity to deal with the administrative processes required within community-campus partnerships. Community partners rarely have access to the same funding, training, support, or paid staff time to deal with the academic ethics processes, student interns, and other administrative work; for these reasons they noted that 'partnering' with academics often required more effort than benefit. Some community partner organisations also noted that academics often have the privilege of stepping away from community work whereas community organisations do not. Whether this stepping away was due to personal reasons, job responsibilities, or because academics assumed the role of arms-length researchers, the tendency for academics to engage with community organisations in the short-term was frustrating for community organisations involved in the inherently long-term process of movement building. At the same time, community partners noted that considerable contributions were often made by graduate students or contract faculty, who had little control over sudden departures from the partnership (i.e. due to finishing a degree, landing a new job elsewhere, etc).

Relationship building lies at the heart of food sovereignty approaches. In the 2014

report on the Day of Dialogue, academics and activists discussed the importance of personal relationships and the ways that “deeper encounters” beyond professional relationships are “pivotal for building a robust movement” (Sandwell *et al.* 2014, p. 12). In some of our projects, the formation of deep relationships was apparent in partners’ emphasis on establishing long-term personal connections, as discussed above. When deep relationships were sought, partnerships challenged ideas around professionalism in the university; for example, that academics’ role is to maintain ‘objectivity’ and remain at arm’s length as researchers. This is particularly important for academics because when one is operating within a deep relationship, it becomes difficult to follow traditional research assumptions discussed above – particularly those that see communities as objects of study rather than active knowledge producers and holders.⁵

19.5 Reflections and recommendations

In order to engage in meaningful community-campus engagement, experiences from our demonstration projects suggest the importance of unpacking assumptions, developing shared visions, and building respectful relationships. At the core of these lessons is the need to understand our own identities and how our experiences may position us differently. Our positionality is influenced by overlapping dimensions of privilege and oppression, for example, as a faculty member or contract worker in a neoliberal university, or as an Indigenous person or white settler in a colonial state. While many of these lessons are echoed within broader food sovereignty literature, our projects aim to contribute to a better understanding of how these lessons might unfold in Canada. We highlight the necessity of reflecting on shared lessons within the movement while at the same time understanding how these lessons might apply differently depending on one’s positionality within social, political, and historical contexts.

Learning from the lessons outlined above, we invited our partners to identify concrete actions CFICE might engage in over the next four years in order to better support community organisations working towards food sovereignty in Canada. Through interviews and during a workshop at the Canadian Association of Food Studies, our partners highlighted three areas for future action:

- 1) In response to institutional barriers, participants agreed that working with universities can be challenging due to hard-to-navigate bureaucracies, funding structures that privilege academics, and timelines that are often out of sync with community organisations. A key suggestion was the need to *align institutions for community impact* by creating formal protocols and/or evaluation processes that hold universities accountable to the communities they work with and make university cycles and practices less opaque to community

5 At the same time, a community partner tells us that “it is important to acknowledge – with gratitude – the challenge this poses to academics, who are then forced to justify this different, and entirely valid, approach [to the university]”.

partners. Participants also emphasised the need to include a budget line item for 'community impact' within academic grants, and to institutionalise community-based organisations' input as part of the peer-review process for knowledge mobilisation.

- 2) During discussions about connecting academics and community organisations, participants agreed on the need to develop *community-based brokerage models* that could support campus-community partnerships. Participants emphasised that these models must be context specific with respect to the focus and scale of their operation (eg they might work better at regional levels or in specific sectors) and that infrastructure may be necessary to build and maintain relationships as well as ensure accountability. For example, several project partners suggested a web-based platform that links community organisations with academics who are conducting research that supports community advocacy. As CFICE moves forward we are examining what kinds of brokerage models exist and which models are best suited for connecting food sovereignty activists and academics in Canada. Discussions also revealed a need to build bridges with rural and remote communities so they can better engage and connect with academic partners.
- 3) Participants suggested the need for *community-first partnership tools and practices*, including guidelines on how to include honorariums for community members in grant applications, as well as providing templates for protocols and sample ethics forms from which academic and community partners can work. Participants also talked about the necessity of educating faculty and students in how to develop meaningful relationships with communities rather than merely using the language of partnership to forward careers and legitimise research.

These actions, suggested by our partners, will inform CFICE's research. Our aim is to translate the lessons learned during the first three years of the project (outlined above) into concrete actions that work towards system-level change. As CFICE moves forward, our goal is to engage with each of the actions by forming three working groups composed of academic and community members.

These action areas, intended to address systemic issues, were also accompanied by a conversation about disrupting the university as a bureaucratic institution that often acts to silence and delegitimise Indigenous knowledges. We believe this last point is particularly important because of the exploitative (and ongoing) history of academic relationships with Indigenous nations in Canada and elsewhere. Examples of these types of disruptions can be seen clearly within the work of our partners on the cross-cultural communications project, including performing ceremonies as an integral part of research, or continuing to practice Indigenous ways of knowing. These kinds of actions highlight the many ways that Indigenous peoples continue to disrupt the academy through everyday actions of resurgence and resistance (Simpson 2011).

Thinking through how our primarily settler CFS Hub team might support these types of disruptions from within academia, we have begun to engage with how to decolonise our community-campus relationships within CFICE. While cognisant of critiques that decolonisation is an unsettling process and not “a metaphor for things we want to do to improve our societies and schools” (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 1), we echo the statement that “no justice can happen on stolen land”. For us, decolonising community-campus engagement centres on the understanding that “colonization matters” (Byrd 2011, p. xxiii) and that settler colonialism in Canada is an ongoing structure, not a past event (Wolfe 2006). Our intention is not only to further this understanding but also to challenge colonial structures and the ways in which they are replicated in our own practice. In the next phase of CFICE we will explore how to apply these ideas in ways that disrupt inequities within the university and in community, recognising that decolonisation will be different depending on the context. For those beginning to think through some of these issues we echo Jeff Corntassel’s call to think through questions such as: “What does it mean to acknowledge the Indigenous territory you’re on? Are you coming to community, place-based relationships as a settler or as an Indigenous person? Additionally, how are you entering Indigenous homelands – as an invited guest, uninvited, trespasser, visitor, resident, immigrant, refugee etc?” (Snelgrove et al. 2014, p.4).

In this chapter, we have outlined a variety of lessons that guide the way we do research and which inform and are informed by the broader food sovereignty movement. We have also laid out three action areas that our community and academic partners believe are necessary and will attempt to enact in the next phase of the research. Lastly, we put forward the proposal to decolonise community-campus engagement as a way to address the lessons outlined in the context of doing this work in Canada, a settler colony. As one of multiple projects attempting to improve community-campus relationships, we aim to provide resources and support the advancement of community work, to break down the elitism and disconnection that has long characterised academia, and to lay claim to educational institutions in the service of community. Not only do we hope the lessons and action items outlined in this chapter will help to better understand how community-campus engagement can support food sovereignty in Canada, we will also continue to incorporate these lessons within our own research design, using them as a springboard for our future work to engage in relationships that put community first.

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