Week 2 Review

In week 2 I started by working on my idea of creating am IoT device that improved communication among farmers and helped get resources where they were needed. This was a very broad concept so I decided to do some research online to make my work more focussed.

I came across the term “food security” during my research which is a major issue in the world right now. There is already a lot of work being done to use technology, internet, and any other field of innovation to improve food security in certain parts of the world. Africa is the most vulnerable area, and there has been some interesting use of technology to improve its food security.

One product that really stood out to me was something called EZ farm, developed for tech-savvy farmers that were living in urban areas to manage their farms remotely. This project had some level of success and is one of the first to use IoT successfully in this area.

For my product I decided I wanted to make it for small scale farmers more than large scale/commercial farms. The target demographic would not necessarily be the most tech-savvy but the product would not require use of a lot of technology, it would be simple and user friendly. The main purpose of the device would be to share information quickly among farmers and help them make informed decisions. A secondary purpose would be to quickly bring attention to a shortage of resources in any specific regions so it could be dealt with ahead of time.

On Wednesday I discussed my idea with Martin and Frasier and we talked about some of the challenges with pursuing it further. The idea was still too broad and too heavy, I also did not have access to a lot of information about small scale farmers in rural areas, so It would be difficult for me to create the kind of product I was hoping for. Therefore, it would be a better idea for me to pick a smaller niche in this area and work on something that would be more easily accessible.

After our meeting I went back to the idea generation phase. I came up with some smaller ideas related to farming. People are looking to grow food in their own homes nowadays, in their backyard or some other part of their homes, they might benefit from a device that monitored the health of their plants. This would require a number of sensors such as humidity, CO2 levels, sunlight etc. All of these sensors are available for Arduino. However, products like this already existed. Most of the ideas I’m working on now have to do with small scale farming, or farming in home for organic food sources. I need to work on them some more to come up with a tangible product that I can start making in week 3.