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**SPEAKERS**

Interviewer, Participant 149, Interviewer 2

[INTRO]

**Interviewer** 24:23

Awesome. Um, so the first thing we could potentially do is decide some of these connections, ranks of these relationships that have question marks, I will just say, you know, we're really trying to get at your piece of the puzzle. So if I ever ask a question that you're like, I'm not really sure or like, I don't think I can speak to that. Totally let me know we'll skip it. I don't want to waste your time. Um, so it's only if you like, are interested or want to talk about these connections, or you know, have opinions or thoughts about what they might be. Um, so, like use of retail going out, that would be sort of assessing. Um, you know, when people buy food and flinch, you know, where are they buying that from? So, you know, do people go to local restaurants more or chain restaurants more? Or are they about the same? Or do people not really use restaurants at all? Like, they go to grocery stores, do they get a lot of food from the farmers market? You know, how strong are these relationships? Um, is that something that you would be interested in talking about?

**Participant 149** 25:34

Okay. Is, do you want me to pick one? Or are you saying-

**Interviewer** 25:39

Yeah, um, we can start off with maybe, um, chain versus local restaurants? Uh, if you have any, any thoughts about, um, you know, the similarity, or the differences between how strong these relationships are?

**Participant 149** 25:55

Okay, um, on the chain versus local restaurants. And I think I'm gonna just, I-I'm going to use my experience, of what I had experience with well, particularly working with, uh Hoophouses for Health, where were people eating? Uh, where were they eating out? At? And I, uh, would say that, in my experience, many people chose chain restaurants and those chain restaurants that were not, um, and this is for general food eating, right? This is general, general food eating, I mean, going out for dining is something different. But um, but general, where they got their, their food, if they ate out was more of a chain restaurant, restaurant and more of a fast food. And that was really more had to do with price and worse, uh, palette to what-what one would be used to. Affordability for sure. Um. And access there, you know, those-those facilities, those, um, chain restaurants are pretty much everywhere. Right? So that was, that was a big part of what I saw. As-as far as local residents, uh, restaurants, local restaurants, producing maybe using local ingredients, that kind of a thing was not of the majority. It is in my case, I mean, if we're talking my personal case, but I don't think that's what we're talking about here.

**Interviewer** 27:57

Yeah, so that was like a connection.

**Participant 149** 27:59

We really try to get that, that particularly those restaurants that are providing, uh, food using local ingredients. That's a real focus for-for many of us that work in the industry, but it was not always, um, I don't want to say appreciated, you know, that it's, I don't know if that's the right word, but does that make sense though?

**Interviewer** 28:41

Yeah, definitely. So how I have, um, added is sort of a weak connection that not many local restaurants, you know, source from-from local food, um, and then I've sort of connected it with a very strong relationship between use of local foods and local food production so that when people you know, purchase it, it supports, um, local food production, if that makes sense to you.

**Participant 149** 29:05

Yes, I mean, that-that's definitely been a goal of the programs that I've worked with in food systems, there is bringing about an awareness of local food production and the connection between fresh and economics and all of those kinds of things. But it is going to be a long time coming for folks to realize the benefits of local food production and nutrition and, um, economic drivers.

**Interviewer** 29:44

Yeah. I want to make sure I'm including that, um.

**Participant 149** 29:44

[Inaudible] we're glad you're doing that part. Whoo.

**Interviewer** 29:44

Yeah, I, uh, definitely want to, uh, make sure I'm capturing this, um. How you're imagining, um, cool. So I sort of added nutritious foods and sort of this idea of local food economy. Um, and we can definitely again, this is your map [laugh]. I'm just, I'm just writing it so totally let me know if there's any time you're like, I wouldn't phrase it like that or like, I would call it something else. Or like I wouldn't connect it that way I would want to connect it a different way. Totally let me know.

**Participant 149** 29:44

It was really very few options in that regards, uh, farmers market shopping — we have worked so hard to get people to the farmers market and that was really the initiative that I was working with as well on the Hoophouses for Health. And we worked with MTA to-to get people to the market, we had vouchers for people to use to access the farmer's market for shopping, it was, it was pretty challenging. And parking is an issue at the farmers market, we know that I'm sure you've had to deal with that, um. And that has to do with cars, and traffic and parking, those kinds of things. Many times, and I'll just iterate this in here, a lot of places — you know, where parking is an issue. It is also because we in Genesee County Flint, and in my town and everywhere, probably, generally in the United States are not keen on walking, right? And so unless you can get a parking place, within so many feet of the door that you're going into, a lot of times it's off putting.

**Participant 149** 30:32

I think that-that-that looks good. I don't I don't know if this is well, I guess I can wait till we get to the farmers market part because there are restaurants within the farmers market as well. So in our farmers market anyways.

**Interviewer** 30:51

Definitely. Um, cool, yeah, we can-we can definitely, um, yeah, talk about these relationships, if that makes sense to you? Yeah. What is your perception of like? how people use? Or like get food from these different sources? Are people mostly getting their food at grocery stores? convenience stores? Are they are they going to the farmers market a lot? Or not really? Um, yeah. What are your thoughts?

**Participant 149** 31:20

Yeah, um, I would say probably most people, uh, shop at-at grocery stores for their food, although the grocery stores maybe I guess it's between convenience and grocery stores. And it all that has to do with transportation too. But, uh, the convenience stores being convenient to walking locations and again, they're everywhere and that can be a party store, a gas station, all of those kinds of places. So those are being, uh, utilized for food. And what I saw in and have seen in my experience is because they are convenient, close, accessible um, you know, within less than a two block walk in many cases. And the food is lesser expensive, and of course, lesser quality, but still, uh, sustaining, I guess I would say can sustain life. Yeah, not at any quality level on a long term. But those are being utilized grocery stores I think are definitely being utilized and I know that we do have a-an initiative with MTA and that East Corridor does run on a grocery store run I think so there is that transportation link there too. But on a day to day you know the-the cheap fast food is still being utilized. Uh, are you asking me what or should I say in here that I know that there was an initiative at one time to have healthier options within the convenience stores. And I think that that's a really good thing. Even for-for myself if I have to stop at the gas station and if I want something relatively healthy to eat, that's a great option. And-and I would really like to see that happen more. I, you know, I would try to get away from the like, dry, um, apples and stuff like that, that-that are not very appealing. But I mean, I don't want to I don't want to make assumptions that that's what's everywhere. But um, as far as grocery stores, yes, our grocery stores are being utilized. We do in Flint have a few more grocery stores now than a couple of years ago, I know Landmark is, I believe there's a couple more grocery store options which is great. Because it is that whole area, particularly to the north was, uh, once Meijer went out of there.

**Participant 149** 36:16

So that enters into, um, activity, you know, transportation being foot transportation as well, which are also healthy initiatives. They enter into this, but it's not on there. So I don't know what you would call that, uh modalities of transport, you know, bike riding, I don't know what you want to call that. But I think that that's an important, uh, perception-perception is that, accessing something doesn't always mean getting right up to the door to make it convenient. I mean, we we want to make it convenient for folks. But, also if they can't get there, it's, um, seen in a negative light. Yeah, the perception is it's harder to access. So that being said, um, the farmers market, although it is very downtown, and you know, they work hard at making it accessible. And I know that there's been initiatives to-to make it more accessible. It has had its challenges. So going back to the grocery stores, I would say that that probably is the highest. Uh, I would hope it's the highest use I guess. I'd like not to think that although I think it's a pretty high number it would be the convenience stores.

**Participant 149** 38:05

And then farmers market, um, I don't know if you want me to skip to this part. And it's like the local food production part and the local food economy and the farmers market. We did do an initiative at one time regarding a local, local farmer, local vendors producing local food versus resellers. Yeah, here is a giant misunderstanding or lack of education or ability to know who's a reseller and who's producing it within our farmers market and I probably I would dare to guess that this is so in other, in all places, too, unless it's a you know, a producer only market but, seasonality is a huge issue. In regards to, uh, to the market to food access, understanding Michigan produce and when it's grown, I know that the Michigan Farmers Market Association does a lot of work within this area too and that-that was who I worked with in this but we still need so much in help, in helping people to understand seasonality and who's-who's growing what you know, we don't grow pineapples in Michigan. You know, the, who is a reseller and-and why, what does that even mean? Who is a reseller? What are they reselling? I mean, where are they getting there food from? Right, but local production is really misunderstood. I could go on about that, but-

**Interviewer** 40:17

No, that's great, I just want to check in and make sure that I'm mapping this in a way that you agree with so added sort of a difference between resellers and local food production in the farmer's market. So I've made sort of two directional arrows that, you know, people sell there, so it supports the farmers markets, but farmers markets also support them. So there's sort of circuitous relationships. Um, and again, I can change it if you don't think this is accurate, but, um, put sort of a lower positive connection to local food production than to resellers. Um, uh, sort of what I was hearing is that there may be more resellers or it's easier for resellers or something like that in a farmer's market. So that's sort of like a higher proportion of the farmers market will be resellers, than the local food production. Um, the other one is adding sort of a seasonality piece. Um, and then education that seasonality is not only bad for use of the farmer's market, not that but like negative impacts. Um, uh, and then, uh, also a negative impact for local food production. Um, and one way to sort of, um, address this issue is through through education that that could maybe, you know, support people understanding what's going on with food and how food is produced, so they would more tend towards local food production, um, and sort of the seasonality impact would be, uh, less impactful. Is that sort of a-a fair map of stuff? I know it's getting a little bit busy. But that's, that's awesome, that its getting busy, uh. Would you want to change any of that?

**Participant 149** 41:53

No, I think that that's, that's good. And again, I'm really glad that you're doing the map stuff, because that looks really confusing to me. But I think that, uh, when we enter in seasonality, and an education, we also enter in effects on budgets, and, um, cost of food too, because, and that all goes with education too, because when things are less expensive, is when they're in season too. So that-that is-is part of it, as well. And that goes back to a broader piece of you know, our transport, our shipping and everything system of getting food from Peru, to Flint, Michigan, um, all of that kind of stuff, which greatly impacts everything.

**Participant 149** 43:06

Oh, and I will add in there, in my experience, and this is more, maybe we'll get to it, but um, more in regards to general homes, uh, access to food or food usage, many things that are of high quality and high nutritious, high nutrition value are overlooked because of just not knowing how to use it. Or what it tastes like or, you know, what are lentils and by golly, lentils are Michigan grown product too, so everybody should know about them, but um, you know, those kinds of knowledge and use of - we've become such a mono, um, food, you know, within the grocery store, it-it scares the heck out of me when you go to the grocery store, and the, the, it you know, it's so like in the produce section, it's so limited of, you know, in-in the last year, and it's probably due to COVID too, but um, how limited the options are and how the choices that-that grocery stores have chosen to keep on their shelves or what you know, I don't know if it's choice and access-access for them, um. It's scary. It's really scary. And that's a you know, certainly a bigger thing that's like grocery stores and their, uh, buyers. I don't know was, is that on the table to talk about that?

**Interviewer** 45:05

Yeah, no, absolutely. Um, you know, I could definitely be like, availability of foods that there-there aren't that many options or choices? Sort of both of these, that there aren't that many out there.

**Participant 149** 45:21

Yeah. And, you know, I know that we're going to have changes in availability in what's offered in grocery stores, particularly. And I'm talking produce-wise. Yeah, I can talk, you know, otherwise too, but it will change given, if we do start looking at more local being United States local, really looking at local, as in Genesee County, grown local, as in Michigan grown is still really local, and then broader out from there, you know, is Midwest and then United States. And so those choices are going to be more reflective of what's what's actually grown and produced here. But, uh, I'm saying like apples at apple time, you know, being, appearing to be limited sources-sourcing. And Washington apples in a Michigan store in, during apple season is not not acceptable in my world.

**Interviewer** 46:40

Yeah, yeah definitely. Um,

**Participant 149** 46:44

I'm grateful for Washington apples but I'm even more grateful for Michigan apples.

**Interviewer** 46:54

Um, would it be fair, I'm considering because I want to make sure that I'm capturing this, um, the idea that like, people are sourcing from national slash global agriculture as opposed to local? Um, in grocery stores, is that an OK way to put it?

**Participant 149** 47:13

Yes.

**Interviewer** 47:14

Okay. Gotcha.

**Participant 149** 47:16

And, and I really think that that has to do with understanding where our food comes from, which is, which is huge and-and within the last, um, I'm lucky enough to have both my parents still. And while they're 89 all of these major, major changes, of course, have happened probably within the last 60 years, which I suppose is, is big. I mean, in the last 10 years, there's been a lot of change, of course, in the last year, but um, people - less understanding about where food comes from. And who - and how it's produced.

**Interviewer** 48:08

Yeah. Yeah, my, um, this is a bit of a tangent, but my, my father is a botany professor, um, in Indiana, and one of his, he does like a introduction to like, plants, basically course. And one of the days is he goes to the grocery store, and like, buys a bunch of fruits and vegetables. And he goes through with his students, like, how they're created and like, what, like genus and families and some of the people are like, what like brussel sprouts grow like that? Like what?

**Participant 149** 48:36

Yes, people are so out of touch with, with how their food is grown, I know that, uh, I did a thing in a classroom on herbs, um, and I had lemon thyme, uh, and little bundles of herbs and passed them around, and the kids smell them and, and all, the one-one comment that I will never ever forget, and this was quite some time ago, uh. The student was unable to identify the word lemon. Unable to identify the word the-the smell, um, is lemon, but said pledge. Pledge as in the dusting stuff. So it just scared me to pieces and that was a long time ago. So um, how far we are from knowing where food comes from. Now I know that there's a lot of initiatives that are really working on that. And, you know, I know we all work on it, but the general misunderstanding and since you just mentioned that your-your father is a botanist, in Indiana I, I am currently reading, um, Braiding Sweetgrass right now. So it's, you know, so all of that is so close in my head right now to, uh, botany professors and actually going into the field. Yeah, and seeing how I, you know, seeing and smelling, living in the field, you know?

**Interviewer** 50:34

Awesome. Well, um, (I) do want to, for a second, um, share, go back to the presentation, because we do have a couple other things we could potentially add to the map, um. So these are what we're, what we're calling food system value. So they are, they're concepts and definitions that came out of conversations, um, and focus groups with Flint residents. So many of them will look familiar, uh, because as you're talking it sort of pings my-my recognition of these concepts that we've already added, uh, education and nutritious food, affordability, and availability, um. But I thought I'd go through sort of the definitions of the ones that we haven't talked about yet, um, and see if you are interested in potentially adding them to the map, you totally don't have to this is, this is a good number, if you want to stick to the four that we've already talked about. Um, we'll go through them real quick. Uh, "community empowerment" is that people want the food system to empower communities through local economic development, uh, fostering a sense of community and prioritizing residents' cultural values. "Quality of life is respected" is sort of a combination of a bunch of different things we were hearing. So it's basically that people want to be able to move throughout the food system with their dignity, choices, comfort and safety respected in a way that promotes the common good and quality of life for all. Um, also have partnerships. So it's a sort of a step above the consumer, so the different groups and organizations, uh, involved in the food system, want it to promote creativity, encourage problem solving, use trust, and strong partnerships that provide leadership and support collaboration, communication. Um, so I think that is all the ones that we haven't talked about. Um. Are any of these ones that you would potentially want to add to your map? Um, are you good with-

**Participant 149** 52:30

Yes.

**Interviewer** 52:31

Okay cool, uh, which ones?

**Participant 149** 52:33

Yes. Um, I have experienced in in all of them, or something to say on on all of them. But the first one that you let, let's take it from the top, the first one that you said that I'm missing, or not missing, but that - what was the first one? Community empowerment. Okay, um, one of the things that we're working on right now with Edible Flint this year has been the, uh, first year that we have cooperated in this, this probably connects over to other areas too. But we have been working with the, uh, Latinx community and the Arab community in regards to our, um, our offerings for our garden of seed packets that we are just - that we distribute every spring. And it's the Edible Flint garden kit. And we have partnered with them and chosen, with their help and support and education, uh, seeds that are used within those communities. So that is, it crosses over from community empowerment to other areas too, but it is empowering. It is greatly empowering for those that are within-within that-those communities that now have access to seeds and transplants that are familiar to them and they use in their cooking. And when I-I really hear myself saying "they" a lot or too much, because "they" are "us", "we" are "them", "we" are "all" and it's all of us and it's going to take all of us and not saying "they" because it's and-and I'm guilty of it, saying "they" but I guess I'm saying it, as an identifying that we have grown to-to be more empowering to the communities, to all of our communities and to be more inclusive. And I shouldn't say all of our communities because clearly, that's only two, you know, identified communities. So, uh, but we're trying to empower - and that's even wrong to say that let me back up. Because we don't have the power, we all have the power, but empowering all of us together, I guess. And those gifts go back and forth. Because not only are folks that utilize and consistently utilize those, uh, transplants and seeds are able to access them, but others that may not have that experience are able to learn from and access those, too. So that's one thing on the, um, on that, and then you might have to refresh my memory on the other two, or maybe other two categories.

**Interviewer** 52:35

It would be quality of life is respected-

**Participant 149** 56:09

Oh, quality, quality of life. Okay, um, yeah, quality of life is respected. Okay. So, because, you know, I'm reading, Braiding Sweetgrass, and because it, while I've always had these, um, and this is on a more personal level now, but I'm taking it on a personal level, and-and changing it up to my community level is that when the local, when people actually are able to understand the localness of food, and the people who are growing it-

**Interviewer** 56:57

Yea

**Participant 149** 56:57

-it is then that the quality of life is respected, but not fully until you actually are able to, um, to develop that learning about how that food is grown. And our connection to the land, and-and that is, you know, in the mission statement of Edible Flint is connecting, um, people to the land and to each other. So that that is in our mission statement. So, I think it does, all of those little things have a bearing on-on the, uh respecting the quality, you know, or respecting, uh, the quality of life is respected. You know, it really does grow that — about everything in there, you know, use of local foods, um, building community, respect for the land. I mean, I didn't, didn't say that, but, um, understanding that our resources are finite. They are not infinite. When, uh, particularly, when we - when we abuse them, particularly our soil. Oh, man, don't get me started. [Laugh]

**Interviewer** 58:34

No, I kind of want to get you started.

**Participant 149** 58:38

Because it all comes down to the soil.

**Interviewer** 58:40

Yeah. Yeah, this is actually something that I, you know once we talk through some of these values wanted to loop back about because I really want to hear your perspective on-on this food waste piece, um. And, you know, the connection to composting and, you know the power of that in local production in communities, um. That's something that you-you wouldn't mind talking about.

**Participant 149** 59:08

Yeah, um, well, as I said it, it actually all comes down to the soil for-for everyone, but that isn't necessarily - I mean, it's clearly on the local level, too. But um, I, personally, I think that that's where it all starts, but that's because I work in composting, and food waste, and wasted food. And yes, I am passionate about it. And I do think that it does affect everything. So what-what part do you want? Was there one more category that I left out of the other?

**Interviewer** 59:51

There was, one was partnerships.

**Participant 149** 59:53

Oh, partnerships. Okay. Yeah. And I can speak to that just a little bit in the bit that, um, partnerships are so important, I think. And that's one of the things that right now, we're doing with this-with this project with, um, the aquaculture, I mean, kind of a weird partnership, but you know, we're compost site that's going to be producing food. And, uh, that partnership with the x access to local food production at our facility is-is a huge thing, and it brings that full circle to the partnerships, um, a partnership with a composter, who processes food waste, and then also does production of food that needs local markets for it. And that's to say, I mean, certainly not only our, our facility, but, um, going to, you know, thinking about Flint Fresh, right, um, much of that food, unfortunately, is coming not locally. And as hard as they are working or some there are working on developing that food as, as that place as a food hub for farmers, unfortunately, they're up against a heck of a lot. And we've got to figure out how these partnerships between the farmers and the food hub, and the market and all of everyone who offers food, uh, or has access to food, how we can partner because that is critically important. And I know that-that has, you know, we have tried to do that on many levels in Flint. Uh, you know, in an a-, you know, providing access and partnerships, it's been, it's been challenging. And then of course, then you have COVID, and it's really hard to partner with anybody but, you know, the partnerships, partnerships are going to play a huge role in, in the food model and waste model. Huge. If we don't have partnerships, we don't, we don't have any of those.

**Interviewer** 1:02:42

Yeah.

**Participant 149** 1:02:44

But if we don't have soil, we don't have any of it either. So these are, these are some critical pillars.

**Interviewer** 1:02:55

So sort of double check, sort of connected partnerships, um, to supporting local food production, composting with use of local foods for farmers markets, um, and then I also added this connection that - definitely tell me to change it or get rid of it is that you sort of mentioning with Flint Fresh that the-the lack of partnerships means that they are not sourcing, um, local. Um, so it sort of created this-this negative connection to national, global agriculture, that in the absence of partnerships, that it's more supportive. It's not supporting local food production.

**Participant 149** 1:03:33

Right. And, and there's, you know, there's the call for that too, the call for um, is there the call for the local production? You know, um, I'd like to think there is but I, I some ways I don't, I think it's not as strong, you know, like, I know, when the food hub gets those contracts for, you know, some contract for something. It's just, it's just like any of these things, it's like, um, okay, so they get a- they- say they get a contract for something is, is there a clause in their contract that says, must be 10% local food or, you know, must source locally or whe- if-if possible, you know, it's the same in composting you know? Or road projects you know, must source 10% recycled organics you know, it's it's the same thing it- unless it's written into something, as long as you fulfill the contract and you produce the food, you know, give them the food. Do they care where it comes from? It-it has to do with yes, lack of mandate for local. Yeah. I mean, if if they mandate it, I mean, a lot of times people don't like mandates, right? They don't like to be held down to something, but how are we going to grow this if we don't have it. And it's always, you know, looking at, you know, cheapness, that's not the right word. You know, lesser expensive, also sometimes means lesser quality, too. And, and then, you know, going mandates is, is a critical thing and making something, you know, changing things, you know, at least in the beginning. Hopefully, once markets start for this stuff, once farmers, you know, are in, in demand, it's the same for us in the composting world, you know, once our, our products are seen as, um, are understood as valuable, and worthy and important and high quality. You know, that's when things start to change. And then, if you want me to talk about food waste, and wasted food, those are two different things.

**Interviewer** 1:04:58

Yeah.

**Participant 149** 1:06:06

And then composting. And, [Name], I know, you know, too, about the hierarchy of food, I mean, you can, I don't probably need to put that in there. But of course, we, you can put a hierarchy of food in there as a category, I guess. And then I won't, I won't go right down the list of things, but the food, food waste hierarchy, uh, being critical to everyone, not just us who work within it, but to everyone, if everyone understands the impact of-of the hierarchy of food waste that is, is critical. So when I say food waste and waste of food are two different things, they are food waste, or wasted food has to do more with spoilage and um, and-and, you know, we see a lot of food, uh, wasted food within trying to help people to make changes, because we can, you know, like working with the vouchers with the Hoophouses for Health, you know, we can give people vouchers and then to be used for locally grown food, but if those folks don't know how to use that locally grown food, it-it can become wasted food.

**Participant 149** 1:08:11

And we all - everyone is guilty of wasted food, you know, oh, that, you know, cucumber that's in the back of our frigerator that we anticipated using, but being more cognizant of, of spoilage and, you know, buying what you need and all of those kinds of things. And then food waste, uh, having to do more with, uh, residuals of food that either come from farming, well that farming can-can also have wasted food that-that doesn't get harvested and all of that equates to resources used and I could, I could go on for hours about this, but I'll try to limit it. Uh, yeah, so food waste and wasted food are again being two different things, but then ultimately ending up, uh, after you go through that hierarchy of food is, you know, ultimately getting to that point in which the higher and better use than the very end being landfilled is, you know, just above that is composting, and we have local ability to manage that part. Local, right, right in our own, you know, our own city and-and our own county. I mean, Flint is home to a anaerobic digester which is huge, and many people don't even know it. But um, Flint is home to that. I mean they, if they think about or if they understood where - when they flush their toilet in the city of Flint is what I'm talking about here, not everywhere, but um, within the city of Flint or what goes down their drain, it, they're utilizing the anaerobic digester with every flush and with every down the drain, right. So, understanding the infrastructure is-is, you know, that's a huge part of all of this too is understanding where your stuff goes, where stuff comes from and where it goes. We've-we've gotten so far away from where we are, where people are in the, um, where people fit, you know, where we fit in our communities, who, who we are, and how everything relates. Everything connects to the other so — but yeah, we have local sources for composting, and then those composters do, you know do what, you know the process that we do to process that and-and that's a feedstock that we need. And, so when you look at all of these different little boxes, and where food waste intersects on every single one of those is huge. So food waste is in every single part of this. And that food waste, which number one needs to be dealt with through the hierarchy, we need to reduce it first. And you know, um, and there's a whole list of things underneath that. And then we need to, you know, food to people, which then also takes in back on the first part is, you know, like the food bank, the food bank food is, I mean, we know where the food bank food comes from, right?

**Interviewer** 1:12:01

Yeah

**Participant 149** 1:12:01

It's secondary stuff, right? And our people are receiving secondary food, but it is working the hierarchy. But also, it's important to know where that food's coming from. And, you know, whether it's overproduction dates, you know, an outdated dating system for foods. Um, and you can tell me this stick more to the topic.

**Interviewer** 1:12:03

This is good. Um, I will just say that we do have a hard cutoff at 10:30. Because-

**Participant 149** 1:12:40

Okay, I'm good with that. I don't even know what time it is.

**Interviewer** 1:12:43

It's 10:14. [Laughing]

**Participant 149** 1:12:45

All right. Tell me to wrap it up. I mean, tell me I mean, I don't want to leave out composting for sure. Because that's my, you know, my thing. But um, let me just finish that part by saying that capturing, being able to capture the, the, the true what ends up being truly, um, spoilage becomes a feedstock, or is a feedstock for the composting process. Or for organics recycling, let me say, because there are some, you know, since we're talking about Flint, we can talk about AD too. But, uh, composting, that becomes a sought after, a much needed, um, part of the composting, which then gets properly managed, and back in to the system as soil to begin the process. So there's your circular economy. And, and at this point, composting is you know, that that circular economy and getting that soil back out that beautiful, um, high, highly made compost from Country Oaks, um, in, back into the system to-to, to grow the food.

**Interviewer** 1:14:19

Yea.

**Participant 149** 1:14:23

Sort of like, I-I will leave it at that and let you do what you need to do with me for the next 15 minutes. So that I don't like, because I could talk for hours.

**Interviewer** 1:14:35

We appreciate it. No normally, I usually try to schedule a bit of a gap time. So if it's like well, let's let's keep talking. But personally, this is-

**Participant 149** 1:14:44

I'm good with that. I'm good with that.

**Interviewer** 1:14:47

Great, um. So I saved this file. Um, the next thing that I wanted to potentially talk about is, you know, one of the goals of this project is not only to sort of put together the puzzle of what's going on with food and Flint, but also identify a leverage point. So opportunities for-for significant change to the system. Um, so I've already written down a couple things that you've talked about as potential opportunities for change of these leverage points, like, um, raising the use of locally produced food and local restaurants, uh, healthier food and convenience stores, education and a lot of different ways to sort of, you know, build this understanding of how to use and prepare food, how food is grown, infrastructure, all these sorts of things that would lead to, you know, better supporting local understanding the worth and value of food. I'm also worked on strengthening partnerships, mandates for local, mandates for compost potentially, and, you know, capturing these resources, building these feedstocks, building the circular economy. Are there other things that that come to mind as potential leverage points in the system?

**Participant 149** 1:16:10

The only thing and I know that I-I and I-I want to make sure but I don't want to certainly focus on the composting aspect, but there needs to be more arrows going out from the composting to, because truly soils impact every single thing on here. So I want it to be seen as not the end, but a beginning, if that's if that's a way to look at it too. Because, again, everything comes from the soil, everything, whether it's local or not local, but composting is a hyper local, uh, you know, process. And we are very fortunate in Flint because we are talking about Flint right now that we have such as this place, and so, um, the ability to get that material back into the soil, and, and back again, like this year's International Compost Awareness Week's focus is, uh, behind me is the poster and the words are grow, eat, compost, repeat. So it is that circular part of things. And, uh, I just want to I want to make sure that the composting part gets back as the beginning a-as the repeat on it. But [Name], I know you'll make sure that that happens within composting, too. So, um, but so you asked me if there was anything else that I, did you ask me anything else?

**Interviewer** 1:18:07

Yeah. Any other, you know, potential leverage points that you would see in things that are not happening for me that that could and would have like, potentially, like powerful positive outcomes, that could mean little things it could be big things, I know it's kind of an open ended question.

**Participant 149** 1:18:25

Well, I think, yes, I think that there's probably lots but I do think, the connections between these I mean, it's lovely to look at all those little arrows and stuff and how, how much we do connect with each other. I mean, we need to connect with each other. It's so important we cannot and in, in Flint, if if I might, might say, has been, it's probably unlike, I mean, like any other city, right? In regards to, you know, you've got groups that are spinning on their own, and siloed and not doing the partnerships and at all. We all could do a better job of partnering and knowing about each other, and, you know, engaging more, for sure, and I think that's certainly under utilized. And I think that it's really important as we move forward in the food systems for sure, in-in every system, honestly every system.

[COVID SECTION]

**Interviewer** 1:19:39

Um, well I will save this file. Um, the last thing we're going to do is, in these last couple of minutes, I'm going to add COVID-19 as a concept into the map. I'd like to talk a little bit about maybe your experience or your understanding of how COVID-19 has impacted the food system in Flint?

**Participant 149** 1:20:09

Yeah, it is, of course has as it's affected, you know, e-everything, of course. How it has? It's made all of this much harder. And it has, you know, on a personal level, what- do I think COVID-19 has made up any positive impacts too? I guess that's yet to be revealed in the fact of health and nutrition. Have people- has it? You know, I guess I'd like to know that, too. You know, and maybe this will reveal that too. I would like to think that COVID-19 could have a positive effect on health and nutrition. I'm going to be hopeful about that. I think that it has made everything harder. So I see that as, you know, having taken a lot of our resources and our ability to connect. I also would, you know, this is just a, you know- I'd like to think that it has a positive. So I'd like to think that there could be an arrow going to it, but I don't know that.

**Interviewer** 1:21:51

Yeah,

**Participant 149** 1:21:51

I don't- I don't have that information. It has the potential. It has the potential to do that. It has the potential to change things in a way that focus on our health, and nutrition.

**Interviewer** 1:22:08

Yeah.

**Participant 149** 1:22:11

And more local infrastructure, but I don't know that.

**Interviewer** 1:22:22

Any, anything else you'd like to add or change about how it's sort of represented COVID in the map?

**Participant 149** 1:22:32

Um, on the COVID-19, on the COVID-19. I guess, I'd like to think that it had a positive in the fact that it-it has had the potential for sure to help us to understand that our local economy is very critical.

**Interviewer** 1:22:53

Yeah.

**Participant 149** 1:22:54

So I don't know where that goes. But certainly has that ability to do that. Whether it has I don't- I don't know.

[COVID SECTION ENDS]

**Interviewer** 1:23:09

Well, I will save this file, um, and then stop sharing. Um, absolute last question is another sort of open ended one, you know, we've talked a lot about sectors and values, production and compost and COVID-19. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about today that you potentially want to add? And that's sort of important to this conversation around food in Flint, to make sure that we sort of carry this forward in our research? And the answer can be no.

**Participant 149** 1:23:47

I guess it's one that you know, it, it really has been for many years, like I think I have mentioned that. It's sometimes challenging within Flint and I had said probably other communities too where we-we work in little silos and we don't partner. I think this, what you are doing has the potential to change things dramatically. Because I think Flint for too long has tightly held to a- and within that tightly held community of food, has to the detriment of growing the food system. And so I hope that this will shed light on some positive ways to move forward, utilizing how-how much how many amazing people there are everywhere in the city, and how culturally diverse we are, and how we need everyone to make this to make these changes for-for food access, food security, and our health.

[OUTRO]