

Investigating the Feasibility of Establishing Food Processing and Distribution Centers in Western Iowa



Production

- Current marketing and distribution is direct to customer by farmers market, community supported agriculture and farm stands
- Small number of growers sell to wholesale markets
- Minor interest in cooperative marketing model

Demand

- Restaurant and coop food stores currently purchase local food
- Institutional purchasing priority is cost
- Currently little incentive to change purchasing practices

Processing Facility

- Facility start-up costs
- Facility profit thresholds
- Facility feasibility



Recommendations

- Education
- Cooperation
- Cooperative

Entrepreneur researcher Jim Collins recent interview in “Inc.” is excellent example of how local foods will provide sustainable economic impact. A “movement” needs to be developed; the customers become the company. Wendy Kopp created an organization called “Teach for America” with the goal of transforming education. The local foods model needs passionate leaders and participants to develop something bigger than themselves to transform society. Today’s young people see this clearly and the ambitions are huge.