

Regional Food Systems: A View from the Northeast U.S.

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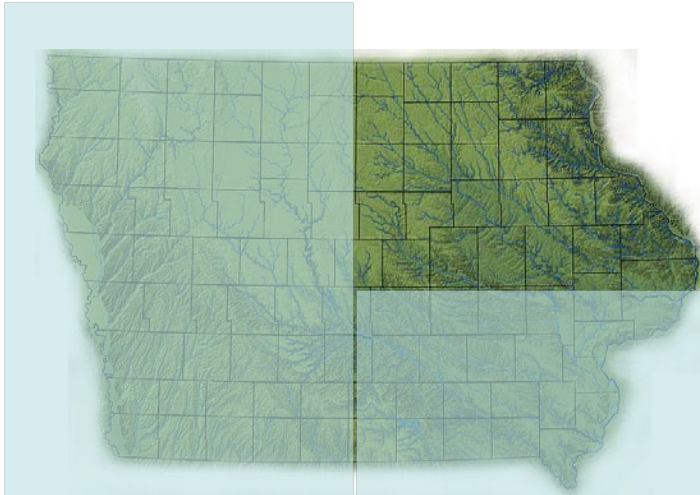


- **REGIONAL ATTRIBUTES**
- **DRIVERS**
- **REGIONAL RESEARCH EXAMPLE**
- **SOME OPEN QUESTIONS**



Defining "Region"

Not as simple as we would think



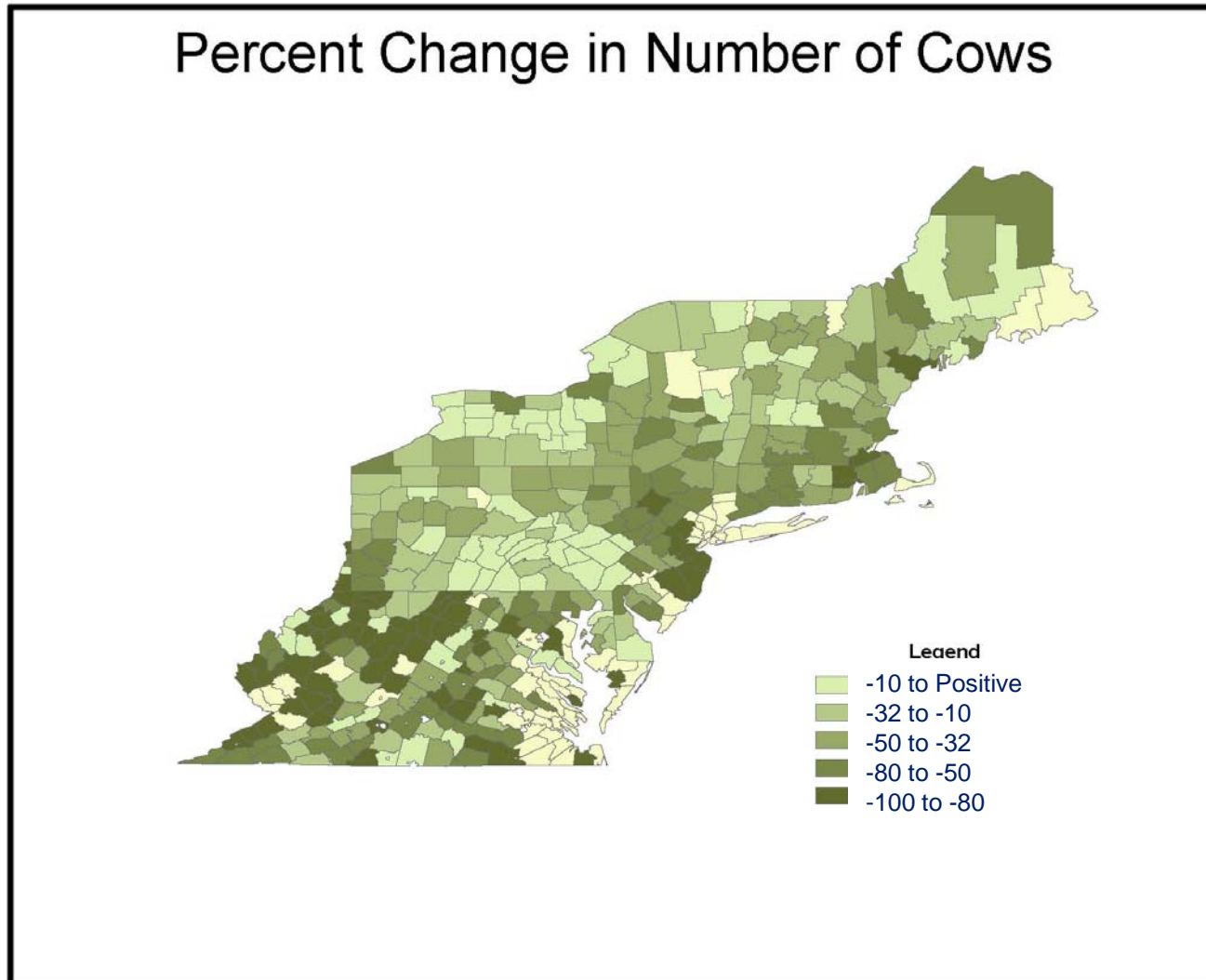
Urbanized, High Density (in general)



Dense
Population

http://www.nasa.gov/images/content/49261main_usa_nightm.jpg

Long-term agricultural challenges: Loss of farms, farmers, and infrastructure



DRIVERS
IN THE
NORTHEAST

Continued Rapid Growth in Local Food



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/images/FMNPfa2.jpg>

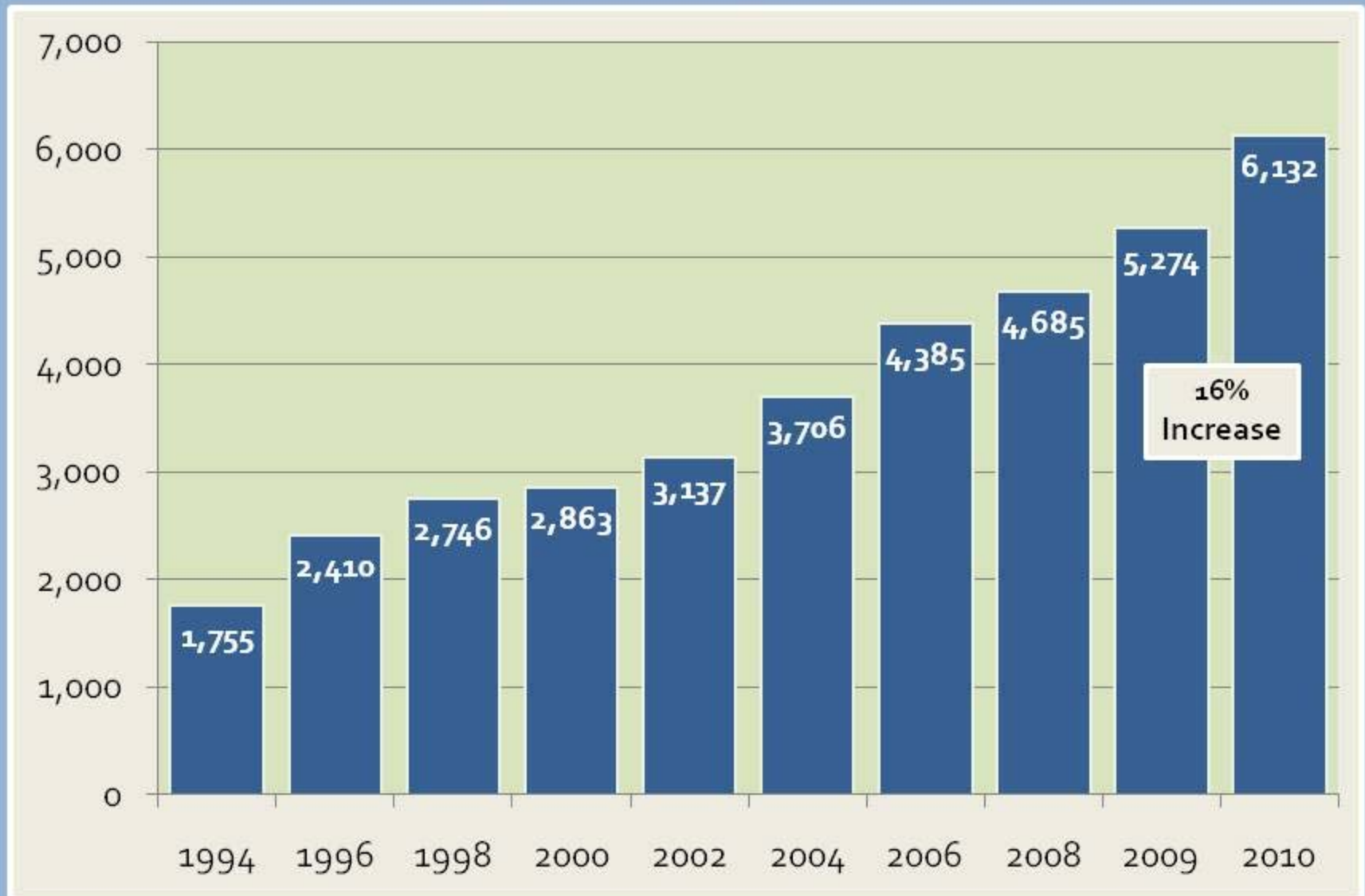


<http://washington.ifas.ufl.edu/images/ChipleyFarmersMarket2008005.jpg>



http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/Uploads/FMNP/barrels_of_peppers.jpg

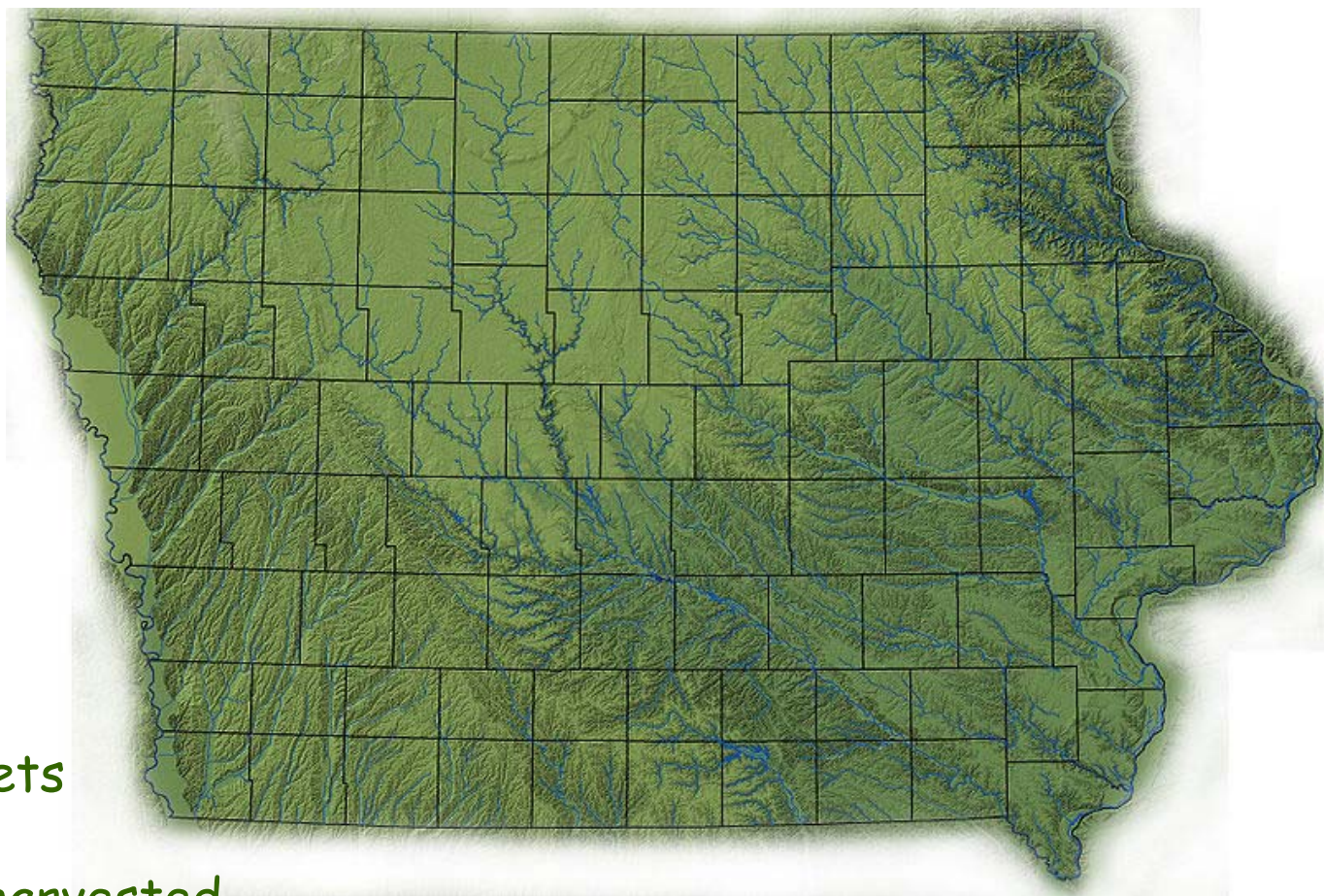
Number of Operating Farmers Markets



Source: USDA-AMS-Marketing Services Division

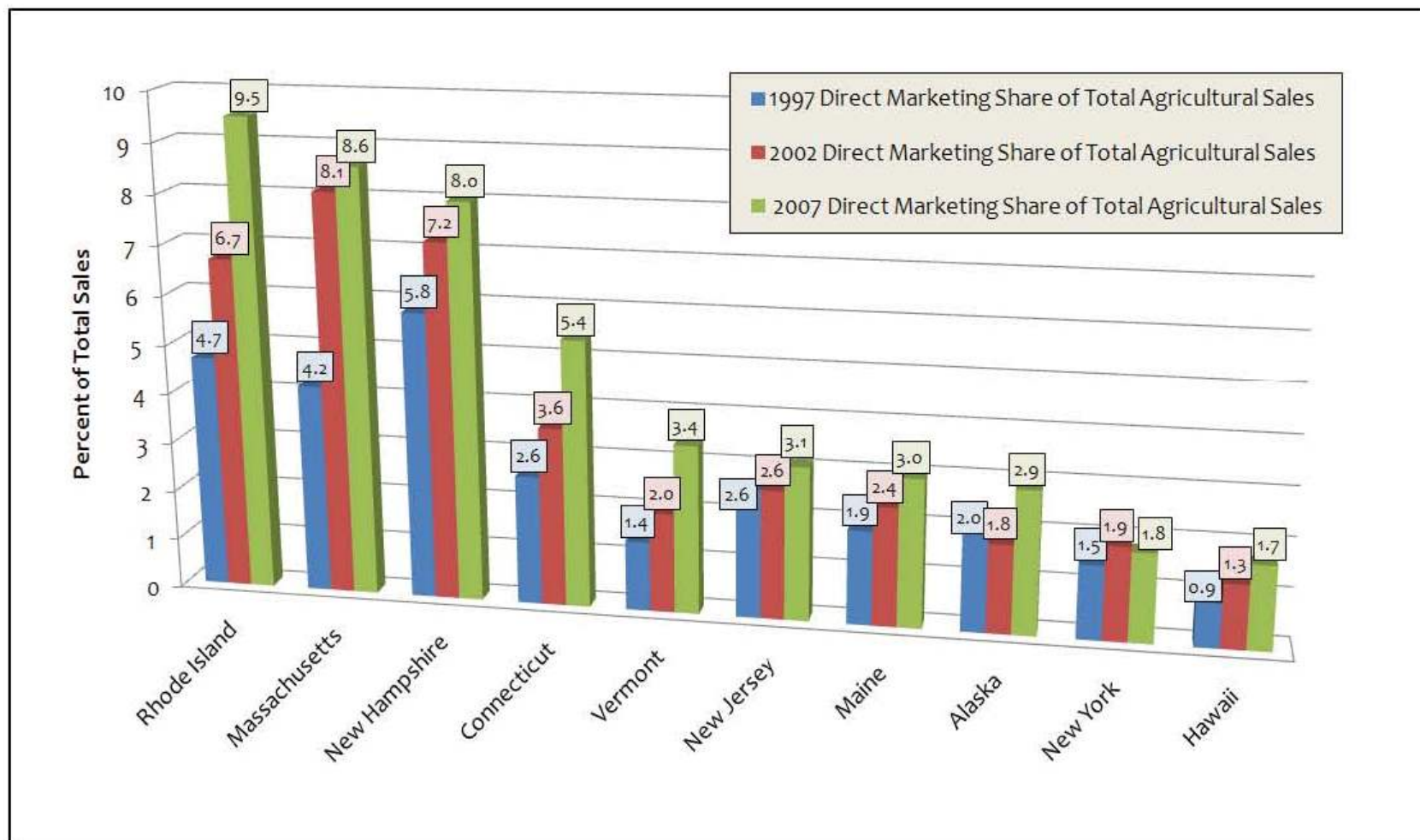


249 Farmers' Markets
7,691 Farms
0.154 million acres harvested



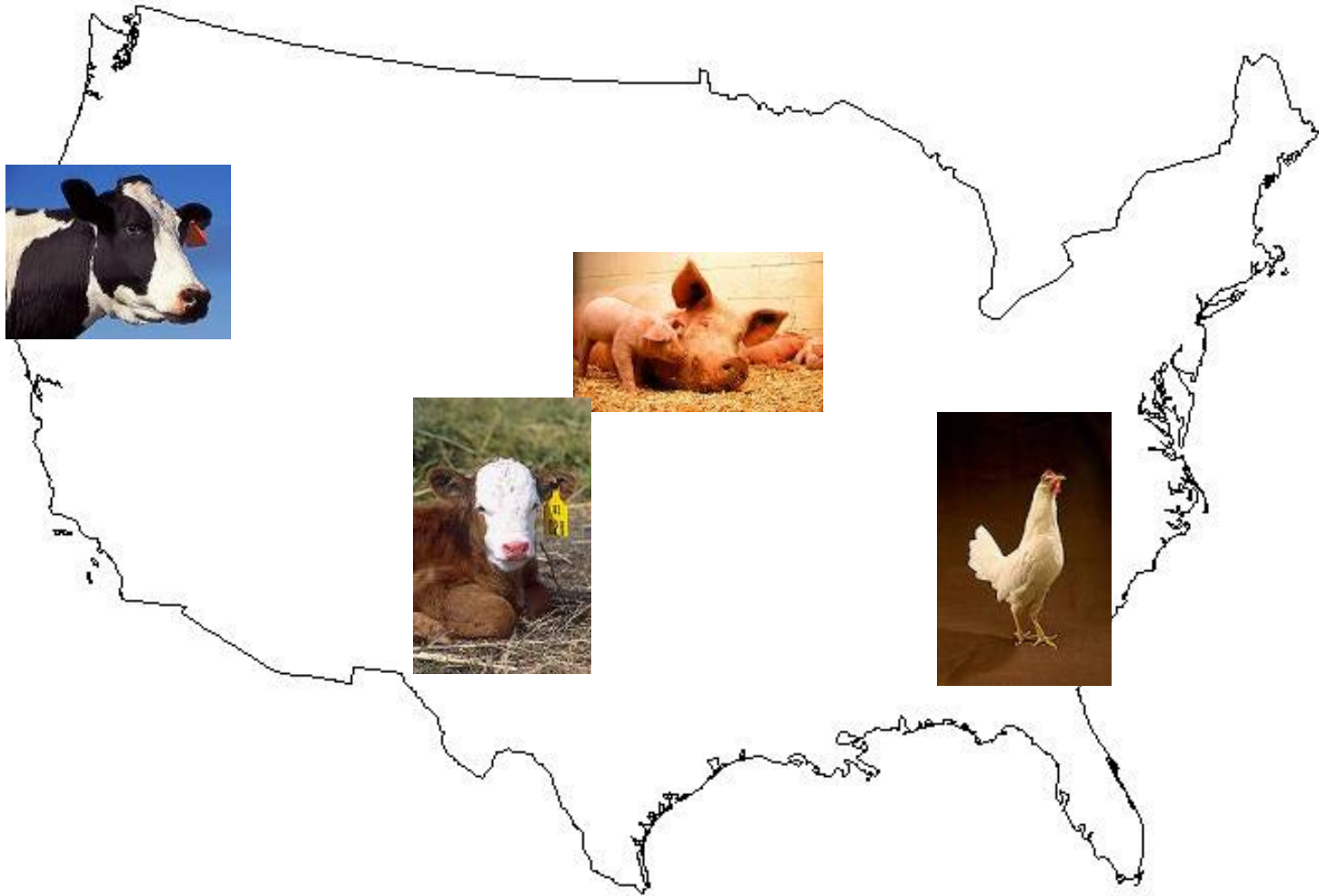
239 Farmers' Markets
92,900 Farms
23.7 million acres harvested

Chart 3: Top 10 States, Direct-to-Consumer Food Marketing as Share of Total Agricultural Sales, 2007



Source: Compiled by USDA Agricultural Marketing Service from 2007 Census of Agriculture data

Concentration and Consolidation in Food System



Geographic Concentration of production more susceptible to biological, abiotic, or political stresses

Concentration and Consolidation in Food System

- Geographic Concentration
- Corporate Consolidation



Concentration and Consolidation in Food System

- *Geographic Concentration*
- *Corporate Consolidation*
- *Processing Consolidation*



Scale as a Driver



Photo by Eric Brennan



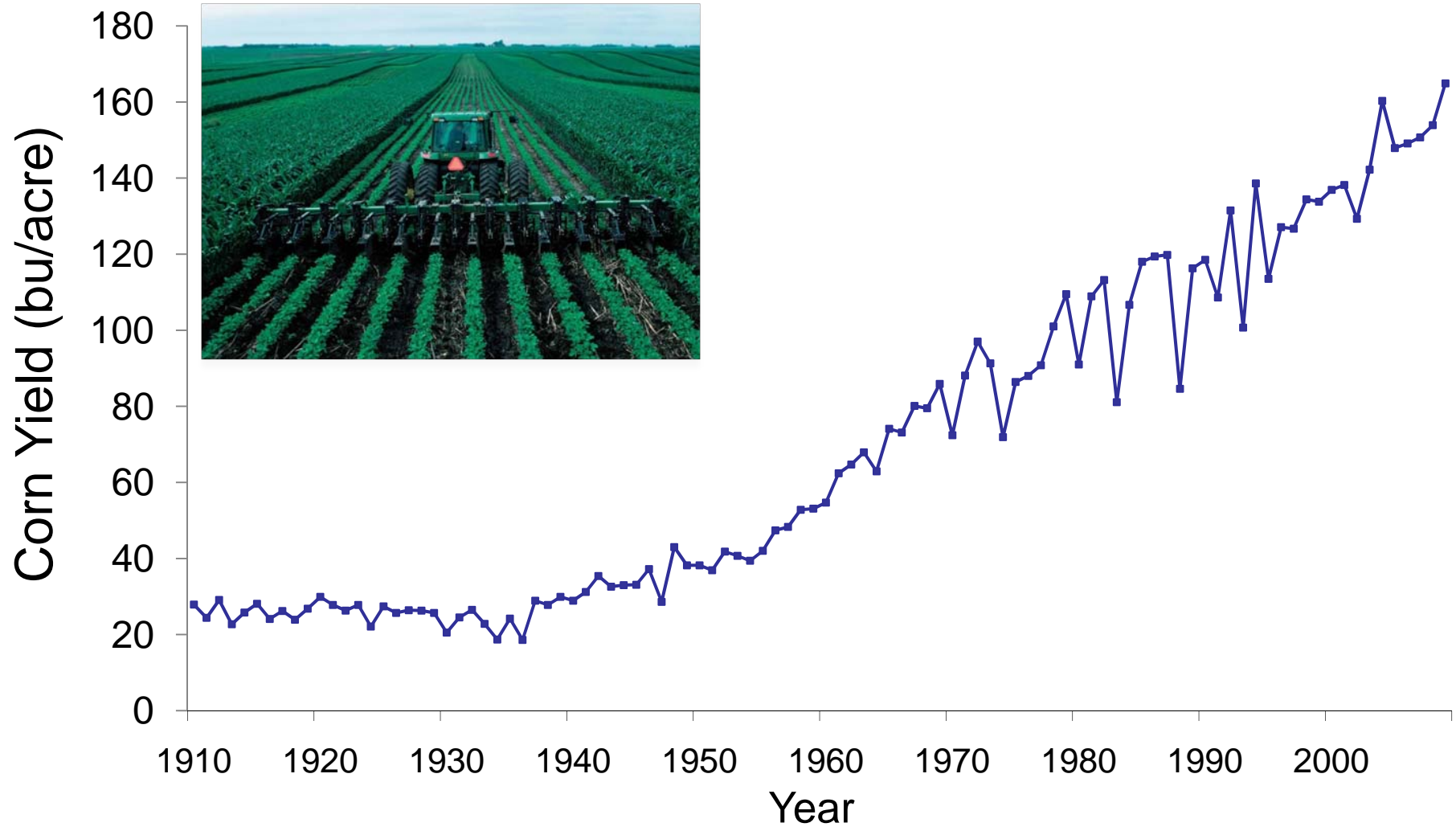
Environmental Risk



Policy Conflicts: Internal and External



Science and Policy focus on Yield



Enhancing Food Security through Regional Food Systems

A Regional Research Collaboration



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grant no. 2011-68004-30057
from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

7 Million Food-Insecure Consumers: A Day-to-Day Concern



Increasing Reliance on Food from Outside the Region (or Country)



Inequalities in Food Access



The Basic Question is this:

Can regional supply chains
provide healthy foods to low-
income consumers, at a price
they can afford?



Market Basket Approach





Processing/Distribution



Access in Communities



Farm-level Production

Objective 1. Assess current and potential community-level constraints and opportunities for improving access to regionally produced healthy food for people in disadvantaged communities.

At 9 sites in Northeast:

- Assess food access
- Structural aspects to access
- Food basket comparison
- Consumer behavior



Ken Hammond, USDA

Access in Communities

Sites Include:

- New York City
- Syracuse
- Baltimore
- Philadelphia,
- Pittsburgh
- Charleston, WV
- Essex Co. VT
- Sussex Co. DE
- Madison Co. NY

Objective 2. Identify and assess best food supply chain practices for underserved areas of the Northeast, compare site-specific, regional and global chains, and identify policy interventions.



Processing/Distribution

- Case studies of regional supply chains
- Best practices for supply chains
- Foodshed and supply chain models
- Policy and scenario analysis

Objective 3. Quantify the current and potential capacity of the urban and rural Northeast to produce food that meets consumer needs.

- Baseline production
- Capacity (GIS and modelling)
- Where future production could occur
- Climate change
- Land use changes



Farm-level Production

Open Questions on Regional Food Systems

- Relationship between structural characteristics of food system and public health (*not* food choice or consumption)
- Land requirements for changing consumption patterns
- Benefits and costs of encouraging different scales of food system (from local to global)

Open Questions on Regional Food Systems

- Metrics of identifying optimal solutions in terms of scale
- Environmental liability of regional food systems
- Feasibility and logistics of regional supply chains to institutions (Farm to School, for example)

Thank you!