

BEAT LIFE Strategic Plan

A Strategic Plan to Create a Local Integrated Food Economy (LIFE) by the Berea Economic Advancement Team – BEAT

VISION

Berea is recognized worldwide as a unique, special place. We envision Berea's identity to include a robust culture and economy of local food; available and accessible to all people, supporting the creation of the next generation of farmers, creating better health for our children; and is a partnership of farmers, businesses, consumers and Berea's private and public institutions.

This vision is apparent by:

- Most single home yards have gardens for food.
- Community gardens for those without yards.
- Accessible educational resources for community members, such as free on-going training for producing, preserving and storing food.
- Local restaurants dedicated to using and showcasing local food.
- Berea's public and private schools using and showcasing local food in the cafeteria and classroom.
- Supportive regulations and policies, such as:
 - True agricultural zoning
 - A transition of land and farmers to food production
 - A comprehensive plan to safeguard soils and control erosion
 - Closing our nutrient cycles with city wide composting, waste management, reuse and recycling
 - Providing food security and safety
 - A "Berea Brand"

Obstacles

- Berea does not have a publically available community certified kitchen.
- Public perception, i.e. too expensive, availability, health, buying habits
- Cooperation, especially among farmers (i.e. at the farmers market)
- Non-commodity food production risky – no public support policies
- Lack of capital for private and public investment
- Seasonal production
- Lack of support for entrepreneurs
- Local food is not viewed as economic development, as evident by lack of data

Goals

- 20 % single family households producing food by 2017
- 400 % increase in community gardens by 2017
- Create a plan for identifying, utilizing and safeguarding soil

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- Create a curriculum for more educational resources and training
- 500 % increase in Farmers market sales by 2017
- Creation of aggregation point(s) for farmer and consumers
- Create a plan for Berea “branding”

Action Plan

- Initiate a Berea Community Food Assessment
- Profile of community socioeconomic and demographic characteristics
- Profile of community food resources
- Assessment of household food security
- Assessment of food resource accessibility
- Assessment of food availability and affordability
- Assessment of community food production resources
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