Seed to Sustainability: Entrepreneurial Support for Seed Growers & Plant Breeders

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Agricultural biodiversity is the lynchpin for a resilient food system. Diversity in agriculture can be improved by both increasing the diversity of crops as well as the genetic diversity within these crops. These goals are countered by consolidation in the seed industry and trends in patenting of varieties, an approach to intellectual property that restricts both farmer-saved seed and breeding. Community Food Initiatives has partnered with three Universities, seed banks, and agricultural groups to reverse the consolidation of seeds. This project engages and empowers seed savers and plant breeders to help address food security and sustainability through a series of regional workshops.

Food Insecurity Among Older Adults: The Role of Housing Costs and Home Equity

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This research investigates the relationships between food insecurity and housing costs, and whether home equity borrowing through reverse mortgages relieves food insecurity in older age. We connect seven OSU colleges to develop the foundation for a NIH proposal.
We propose a feasibility study for a local food infrastructure intended to increase institutions’ ability to purchase local foods and provide additional, stable revenue streams to small- and medium-sized farms in Licking County and Central Ohio.

Food environments in low-income communities, with fewer supermarkets and more convenience stores, provide less access to healthy foods. Our work will assess the interplay of sociodemographics, food environment and the diets of low income Americans.
Visioning and Initiating the New Student Farm at Waterman

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This proposal addresses the critical need to revive The Ohio State University’s student farm at Waterman. Underpinned by a belief in resilient, ecological, and community-minded food systems, this proposal outlines a two-pronged approach to initiate the farm and envision its future. We emphasize the need to organize a unified community around student food and farming activities; break ground at Waterman; crystalize a mission and vision for the farm in a group studies course; and create structures for interdisciplinary curricular and community involvement ensuring the farm’s long-term sustainability.