

**Toward Dismantling Racial Inequity in the Food System:
Exploring Inclusivity, Antiracist Practice and Radical Food Justice Principles
in the Sustainable Agriculture Movement**

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Abstract

The sustainable agriculture movement emerged in response to environmental and economic challenges generated by industrial agricultural modes of production. While this movement has garnered increasing support since the 1980s, only recently have social concerns been called into question. Current critiques claim sustainable agriculture often replicates the social inequities present in the conventional model, particularly in relation to race, class, and gender. This thesis examines this trend in relation to race and income by researching seven nonprofit organizations and/or farms in the sustainable agriculture movement that seek to be inclusive of low-income people of color both as producers and consumers. Research results are assessed, categorized, and explained in relation to strategies of programmatic inclusivity, antiracist practice, and food justice principles. Analyses reveal a diverse array of engagement throughout these three frameworks of inclusivity (programmatic, antiracist, food justice) yet highlight the need for a clearer pathway toward enacting and assessing best practices and dismantling structural forms of inequity within the sustainable agriculture movement.

Keywords: sustainable agriculture, racism, economic inequality, food justice, antiracist practice, producers, consumers, structural inequity, inclusivity

Chapter 1: Introduction

Of the many stereotypes that exist for farmers, being black or brown usually isn't one of them. In the past, the image of the family farmer who grew your potatoes and delivered fresh milk to your doorstep was usually one of an older white man, wearing overalls and a smile. Supporting him were his wife and children, and together they made the day-to-day operations of the family farm run. A connection to this image made people feel their food was fresh, real and supporting an honest, hard-working source within rural America. Today, people find most of their food in grocery stores, and while packages claim to be "farm fresh" most of the images associated with farming now depict large tractors, acres and acres of land, and perhaps just one person driving a combine. This stark contrast represents the advent of industrial agriculture, a system that engrained itself in US food production in the second half of the twentieth century.

Industrial agriculture revolutionized the amount of time, labor, and effort put into the production of food. It also greatly decreased the cost of food and increased its convenience. Yet, most of these changes have been accompanied by myriad social, economic, and environmental problems that have caused many consumers to question the soundness of this system. The negative consequences of issues like food borne illness, confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), high fructose corn syrup, and GMOs, all byproducts of this industrial model, have turned many Americans toward the alternative food movement.

The alternative food movement challenges the status quo of industrial agricultural production and the larger food system in which it is embedded, by offering alternate modes of production, consumption and distribution (Allen, 2004). The sustainable agriculture movement represents one of many initiatives within the alternative food movement umbrella. This movement specifically addresses the need for a less harmful agricultural production system. As

such, it promises healthier, more environmentally sound, and more economically just ways to produce food. Furthermore, this movement is largely carried out by small-scale, family farmers.

The values and imagery of sustainable agricultural producers are in many ways encapsulated in the family farm ideology of the preindustrial agrarian model (Guthman et al., 2006). Rather than an older white man, however, in my experience, the sustainable family farmers of today are more likely to be idealist and young, moved by the mission to change the food system. In fact, in many cases these new young farmers have transitioned from nonagricultural careers and backgrounds, to struggle to achieve their dream of farming for a living while striving to raise a new generation of people who know where their food comes from (Shute, 2011). This new face of farming often appeals to likeminded consumers from similar backgrounds, who may even wish they too could leave their jobs and urban lifestyles to join this new farm movement. Despite the differences between these new farmers and the preindustrial agriculture family farmer, there is one primary identifier they have in common—race. Even this new image of the family farmer rarely includes a person of color, and even more rarely, a low-income person of color.

Wrapped up in much of the discourse of “fixing” the food system, is a desire to return to a farming past in which people were more directly connected to the sources and the people who produced their food (Holt-Gimenez and Harper, 2016; Allen and Sachs, 1993). Implicit in this argument is an assumption that past food systems were more just. Conflating preindustrial agrarianism with a socially just model of food production, however, is both naïve and racist. As many scholars acknowledge, this country’s agrarian past and focus on the image of the family farmer obscures the abysmal realities people of color have had in our agricultural system through slavery, indentured servitude, and farm and food system labor (Gray, 2013; Holt-Gimenez and

Harper, 2016; Allen and Sachs, 1993). Furthermore, our nation's romanticization of the white family farmer has concealed and continues to conceal the role people of color play in our food and agricultural system, as well as the degree of exploitation and exclusion they experience even within alternative food movement spaces (Alkon and McCullen, 2011; Obach, 2015; Grey, 2013).

A history of racist policies and institutions within American agriculture has created a system that is largely exclusive in who it serves and represents as farmers, a practice the sustainable agriculture movement has largely replicated. Furthermore, research indicates that consumption within this movement is also dominated by an upper/middle income, white demographic rather than encompassing a more diverse racial and socio-economic populace (Guthman, 2011; Hinrichs, 2000; Guthman et al. 2006). These trends highlight the need to examine the role alternative production models play in hindering a socially just food production system (Guthman, 2004). In an effort to advance social change within the food system, my research examines how the sustainable agriculture movement is being inclusive of low-income people of color. My research addresses initiatives within the sustainable agriculture movement that work to incorporate low-income people of color as producers and consumers because I want to learn how this movement is being inclusive of this population in order to help readers understand how food system actors can incorporate just, inclusive, and anti-racist practices into their work so that they can advocate for strategies that achieve a more equitable food system. Thus, my first research question asks, how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers? In addition, my second research question asks, how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as consumers?

In an effort to address these research questions, my thesis is organized in the following manner. First, I introduce relevant background and significance to contextualize my research in Chapter two. Second, in Chapter 3, I outline the methodologies and methods I used in order to collect and analyze my data. Third, in Chapter 4, I discuss my results, analyses, and conclusions. Finally, in Chapter 5 I conclude my thesis by summarizing my findings, and providing recommendations for future study.

Chapter 2: Background and Significance

As an introduction to my research topic and problem, in this chapter I provide relevant background and significance for each of my research questions. In order to do so, I first contextualize the emergence of the sustainable agriculture movement by explaining what came before it. As such, I begin this chapter by describing the history and defining features of the agricultural systems that preceded the sustainable agriculture movement as we know it today. These are the colonial, extensive, intensive, and industrial agricultural models. Next, I describe the history and arrival of the sustainable agriculture movement, and highlight its defining features which emerged as a response to various problems created by the industrial agriculture model. Subsequently, I outline the limitations of this movement, specifically in terms of its ability to address the social problem I am looking at in my research—race and class inequity. Finally, I conclude this chapter by reintroducing my research questions, reminding the reader how they aim to guide my work toward the advancement of social justice within the food system.

2.1 Conventional Agriculture: An Overview

In order to contextualize the rise of the sustainable agriculture movement in the 1980s, the following section elaborates on systems of agriculture that existed prior to this method of production. Starting with colonial agriculture I describe forms of production prior to American Independence. I follow this with a summary of two distinct phases of agriculture post-independence known as the extensive and intensive regimes, which in turn led to the rise of the industrial agriculture production system (Goodman and Redclift, 1991).

2.1.1. Colonial Agriculture

Colonialism is an inherently political act, rooted in agriculture but driven by a nation's economic motivations (Matties, 2016). I begin my overview at the time of colonization not in

any way to undermine or minimize indigenous farming practices and their value or influence, but because I feel colonial practices have been more directly responsible for the shaping of the US food and agricultural system as we know it today. Accordingly, this form of agriculture was designed to serve the British economy and dictated by its economic institutions. This occurred first in the form of private companies, and then in the form of the state (Cochrane, 1993).

Operating similarly to modern day capitalist enterprises, both of these entities were motivated to make profits quickly while investing as few resources as possible (Cochrane, 1993). This drive for profit was even pursued at the expense of human and environmental wellbeing. For instance, tobacco was the first crop colonists were mandated to grow, even when they had little to eat, a policy which created massive food insecurity and hunger (Shryock, 1939). In fact, it was only through the graces of native people that colonists were able to combat starvation by learning to cultivate corn (Shryock, 1939). As this practice illustrates, the labor structure of colonial agriculture was highly exploitative. Characterized by intensive hand labor, this system was first reliant on large family structures, then by indentured servitude, and finally by slavery (Shryock, 1939). Furthermore, this agriculture system not only exploited people, but also relied on unsustainable environmental practices. The clear cutting of forests for cropland, exhausted the land's nutrients and led to long term degradation of the soil for future generations of growers (McMichael, 2009). This early example set the tone for a trend that has persisted throughout white settler American agriculture, production systems that are dictated by capitalist markets, exploitative of labor, and at odds with human and environmental needs (McMichael, 2009). Building on these foundations, subsequent agricultural systems are described below.

2.1.2 The Extensive and Intensive Regimes

The period immediately following American independence and lasting up until World War I has been characterized as the “extensive regime” (Goodman and Redclift, 1991, p. 87). Though contributing toward the eventual highly industrialized agriculture model that emerged in the 1950s, this time period is not yet considered to include intensive forms of industrial agricultural production. Instead, this extensive regime was focused on meeting the needs of overseas markets, increasing staple crop production by expanding the land based used for agricultural purposes, and developing labor saving technologies such as the tractor and the plow (Goodman and Redclift, 1991). In addition, while crop specialization was becoming more regionally focused, markets were still considered to be competitive (non-monopolistic), and the growth of this industry was still relatively slow (Goodman and Redclift, 1991). A final distinctive feature of this time period was the presence of many non-capitalist food relations in terms of consumption patterns and domestic roles/responsibilities. For instance, reflective of gender norms and behaviors during this time, many women did not work outside of the household and were growing and making the majority of their family’s food from scratch (Goodman and Redclift, 1991).

Following this period, the interwar years (between WWI and WWII) acted as a transition between this extensive regime, and what was known as the “intensive regime” (Goodman and Redclift, 1991, p. 89). Heavily influenced by war time technological advances, this second regime was associated with rapid technological change, increased productivity growth, and the globalization of production and exchange (Goodman and Redclift, 1991). It was also during this period that the agricultural industry began to be dominated by monopoly market structures. In addition, more capitalist forms of consumption emerged along with changing domestic roles like

the entering of many women into the workforce (Goodman and Redclift, 1991). From 1945 onward, this newly intensive regime developed into what we know today as the industrial agriculture production system. As this system is so pervasive and prominent today, the next section will describe its defining features in more detail.

2.1.3 Industrial Agriculture

The terms conventional or industrial agricultural production both refer to the system of farming that developed within what Goodman and Redclift (1991) describe as the intensive regime¹. Perhaps the two greatest drivers of this production model are policy and technology (Winders, 2009). Consequently, the three main defining features of the industrial agriculture system are price and supply control, technological investment, and the rise of multinational corporate control (Morgan et al., 2006).

Initially created to protect farmers from price/income instability, agriculture policy has created an elaborate system of price and supply controls aimed at guaranteeing a minimum price regardless of market swings. As a result, over time federal policy has sometimes incentivized farmers to over produce, and other times not to produce at all (Winders, 2009). While protectionary in nature, this mechanism creates gluts and shortages of crops that have a powerful impact on international agricultural markets, food prices, and world hunger (Collier, 2008). In addition, only certain farms of a certain size and crop profile have access to this level of business support (Beitel, 2005).

The industrial model's second defining feature, technological investment, has also been heavily influenced by federal policy. Government driven policy has incentivized the use and

¹ I will use the term conventional and industrial agriculture interchangeably throughout this thesis, to describe the dominant farm system that prevails today.

development of labor saving (mechanical) and yield improving (fertilizers, pesticides and biotechnologies) advancements through investment in research and development (Ayazi and Elsheikh, 2015). The primary way this happens is via a key piece of legislation known as the farm bill. Updated every five years, the farm bill allocates federal dollars to a variety of agricultural concerns only one of which is research and development (Ayazi and Elsheikh, 2015). The majority of the research, development and production of new agricultural technologies, however, is carried out by large agricultural companies rather than the government. Research and development of new technologies is yet another means through which large corporations have come to dominate the food system. This hegemonic role large corporations play in the food system, is the third defining feature of industrial agriculture production (Morgan et al., 2006).

As mentioned above, along with government support, many large agricultural as well as chemical companies have invested in significant technological advances in this industry. Furthermore, labor saving and yield improving technologies have allowed agriculture producers to scale-up and farm much larger pieces of land, with far fewer people than ever before. Yet these changes have also made farmers far more dependent upon agribusiness for expensive inputs, a trend that has resulted in a lot of contract labor arrangements to be made with input suppliers (Carolan, 2012). As a result, unable to compete with the scale of industrial production, many small producers without the necessary resources and capital have been forced to go out of business, and/or convert their operations to act as contract labor for these larger corporate farms (Hefferman, 2000). In addition, the massive scale and availability of commodities afforded by these new technologies has led to an increasingly large food processing industry which is also controlled by large corporate entities. Therefore, in the industrial agriculture production system,

corporations not only play a key role in agricultural supply and production, but are also central to food processing and distribution, accumulating profit all along the way (FitzSimmons, 1986).

Industrial food production not only radically transformed the time and human labor needed to produce food, but it also increased the quantity and variety of foods available to consumers (Cochrane, 1993). In fact, there are many ways in which this system has created a more convenient, less costly, and less time consuming way to procure food (Pollan, 2006). These changes however, are also accompanied by negative intended and unintended consequences, which have led our current food system to be under increasing scrutiny for the harm it has done to the environment, human health and well-being, and the viability of small-scale producers within the food system. Together, these concerns garnered momentum for the creation of an alternative system of food production known as sustainable agriculture.

2.2 Sustainable Agriculture: An Overview

The previous section discussed the evolution of agricultural systems leading up to the emergence of the sustainable agriculture movement. The following section describes the context in which the concept of sustainable agriculture developed and highlights this movement's defining features, which emerged in response to various problems created by the industrial agricultural production system. As such, the subsequent subsections address the historical, environmental, and economic aspects of sustainable agriculture.

2.2.1. The History of Sustainable Agriculture

While many people think of sustainable agriculture as a relatively new concept, many of its principles are rooted in much older forms of agriculture and philosophical thought. As Harwood (1990) explains in great detail, sustainable agriculture (though not known by this name) was written about at the turn of the twentieth century. In fact, he claims that parts of this

movement share concepts that were popularized by colonial philosophers such as Jefferson and Emerson (Harwood, 1990). The term sustainable agriculture as we know it today however, was not coined until the 1980s (Agyeman and Evans, 2004). While previous decades saw what was thought to be exponential agricultural production, by the 1980s environmental and financial concerns converged calling conventional agricultural practices into question (Allen, 2004).

In terms of the environment, energy shortages of the 1970s led the US to reexamine the petroleum-based inputs that had become a mainstay of industrial agricultural production (Allen, 2004). In addition, at this time, the links between industrial farm inputs and resource depletion, environmental and water contamination, habitat loss, and even decreased crop yields were being exposed (Constance, 2009). In essence it became clear that the environmental practices of the industrial production system could not be sustained indefinitely.

Another critical component to the development of the sustainable agriculture movement was economic (Allen, 2004). The 1980s was also a time in which farm bankruptcies were at their highest numbers since the great depression, a result of low commodity prices that made it impossible for many farmers to pay back their loans (Hefferman, 2000). These financial troubles motivated farmers to question if there were more viable alternatives to the conventional model. Throughout this time concepts that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s, like organic, biodynamic, and agro-ecological farming systems, gained popularity (Dalhberg, 1991; Harwood, 1990). Additionally, popular authors like Jackson, Berry, and Rodale began to write about potential alternatives, ultimately motivating even the USDA to legitimize sustainable agriculture as a viable alternative form of agriculture (Allen, 2004; Harwood, 1990).

While the evolution of the sustainable agriculture movement remains mostly undisputed, its definition is much less concrete. In fact, various scholars and organizations rarely agree to one

meaning of this term (Allen and Sachs, 1993; Dahlberg, 1991; Hegyes and Francis 1997; Gray, 2013; Agyeman and Evans, 2004). As mentioned above however, two of the movement's most prominent features present in nearly every definition are: environmentally sound farming practices and the economic viability of the small farmer. The next section below describes each of these in more detail.

2.2.2 Environmental Features of Sustainable Agriculture

There is a consensus in academic literature focused on the sustainable agriculture movement, that its definition must include production practices that are environmentally friendly. Levy (1989), for instance, attributes the rise of sustainable agriculture to the destructive environmental impacts of industrial farming and defines its main approach as focused on short and long-term strategies to minimize ecosystem harm. She states: "...sustainable agriculture emphasizes place-specific agriculture and an ethic of land stewardship that requires an intimate understanding of a particular piece of land being farmed" (Levy, 1989, p.418). In this quote Levy (1989) illustrates that sustainable agriculture is less about certain prescribed practices and more about a common ethic of farming and caring for the land. Similarly, Mason (2003) defines the term sustainable agriculture as "a philosophy" and "system of farming" (p.3). He mentions that the term means different things to different people, but that reversing the degradation of natural resources is a key element to all sustainable agriculture systems (Mason, 2003). Finally, a third scholar Dahlberg (1991) agrees that there are many approaches to sustainable agriculture each with slightly different practical and technical solutions (e.g., biodynamic agriculture, organic agriculture, regenerative agriculture, and agroecology), all of which place a common emphasis on environmental stewardship. In addition, as illustrated below, this environmental

component to sustainable agriculture is also very prevalent in non-academic definitions of this term.

Outside of academia, many organizations and other entities agree there are multiple explanations of sustainable agriculture. Even the USDA describes sustainable agriculture as a term that “defies definition” (Gold, 2007). One example is the definition adopted by the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), a self-identified grassroots alliance of organizations that works toward federal policy reform to advance sustainable agriculture, food systems, natural resources and rural communities. According to their website NSAC’s envisions a form of agriculture where “a safe, nutritious, ample, and affordable food supply is produced by a legion of family farmers who make a decent living pursuing their trade, while protecting the environment, and contributing to the strength and stability of their communities” (“NSAC Mission”, n.d.). Again, this definition emphasizes environmental concerns. In addition, it reveals another key theme included in the definition of sustainable agriculture: the economic viability of the small farmer.

2.2.3. Economic Features of Sustainable Agriculture

A second key feature of sustainable agriculture present in most definitions used by both scholars and activists is its promise to enhance the economic viability of small farm businesses. This aspect of the movement, mentioned in NSAC’s definition above, is also discussed as a key feature of sustainable agriculture within academic literature. The economic angle of sustainable agriculture was largely popularized in reaction to the failures of the industrial system to serve the small farm community (Guthman, 2004). In light of the farm crisis of the 1980s felt most by small and medium sized farmers, a viable alternative promising lower input costs and higher

return, resonated with many growers (Allen, 2004). This main feature is well illustrated through a specific type of sustainable agriculture known as organic.

While not formally popularized until the 1980s, the organic movement emerged from back to the landers and other counterculture groups of the 1960s (Allen, 2004). Many of these first proponents of organic agriculture were concerned with the purity of their food, how the environment was treated within farm systems, and how to recreate tight-knit rural communities (Pratt, 2009). Yet, farming organically quickly gained popularity outside of these groups because it offered a price premium. This price premium provided growers a means to justify a higher value for their goods substantiated by the increased time and care that went into producing them without toxic, labor-saving inputs (Pratt, 2009). This premium alone was a big enough motivator for many small growers that were operating at a loss in the industrial model to switch over to organic production practices (Guthman, 2004). As Obach (2015) describes, organic growing techniques provided a way for small family farms to survive big agribusiness take over by minimizing the expense of off-farm inputs.

Ironically, this price mechanism that small farmers benefitted from, was ultimately coopted by the entry of larger industrial growers into the organic market (Guthman, 2004). As this industry grew, producers became distanced from consumers and concerns were raised about the need for a system of verification to ensure growers were using the practices they said they were (Pratt, 2009). This concern led to the development of the National Organic Program (NOP) (Constance, 2009). This new certification system however, had financial consequences for the many small growers who spearheaded organic production practices in the first place. As a federal program, NOP created non-stringent standards that allowed for the entry of large farms into the industry (Guthman, 2004). This entry of larger growers (with economies of scale) into

the organic market threatened the survival of the small and medium operations who had initially found success in organics (Guthman, 2004). As a result, many small farmers to this day choose not to get certified (Obach, 2015). Instead, as a means to overcome corporate competition, some small farms have found success by organizing with other growers and selling their product cooperatively in the organic market. Others have found ways to distinguish themselves through the local food movement (Obach, 2015).

Outside of organics, another prominent form of sustainable agriculture is illustrated through the local food movement. Producers who identify as a part of this movement are usually smaller, and often choose not to become certified organic as their sales are more regional and less institutional in nature (DeLind, 2011). In fact, the growing popularity of “buying local” in favor of seasonal, sustainable options produced by family farmers, has created a booming industry estimated at \$12 billion dollars (2014) and projected to reach \$20 billion by 2019 (“USDA Results”, 2016).

The lucrative nature of the local food movement clearly illustrates its potential to help small to medium size growers overcome many of the challenges they might otherwise face within both the industrial and organic agriculture systems. In addition, as illustrated in a previous section small to medium sized growers, whether engaged in local, organic or other means of sustainable agriculture, also incorporate a strong environmental ethic into their farming practices. While these are two clear improvements from the conventional model, they do not fully remedy all of industrial agriculture’s externalities. In fact, what is often lacking is a mention of the social components of an agricultural system that either hinder or advance social justice. The next section of this chapter explores the ways in which the sustainable agriculture movement is engaging with this issue.

2.4 Social Components to Sustainable Agriculture

The sustainable agriculture movement's strong emphasis on the need for environmentally friendly farming practices and the promotion of the economic viability of small producers often overshadows this movement's social concerns. This section explores the extent to which definitions within sustainable agriculture acknowledge and include social components.

While not as prevalent, there are definitions of sustainable agriculture in both academic and nonacademic literatures that include social concerns. For instance, scholar Waltner-Toews (1996) acknowledges the tendency of the sustainability movement to exclude social concerns from its framework, and points out the need to apply systems-wide thinking to agriculture in order to create an alternative that can advance social, political and environmental sustainability. As such, in his definition of sustainable agriculture he states: "Environmental stewardship, economic viability, and human welfare all fall within the domain of a sustainable agriculture" (Waltner-Toews, 1996, p.686). Similarly, Ikerd (2008) emphasizes the need for this term to be inclusive of all current and future generations and their needs. He states: "A sustainable agriculture logically must be ecologically sound, economically viable and socially responsible" (Ikerd, 2008, p.96). Through this statement Ikerd (2008) advocates the inclusion of social responsibility into the definition of sustainable agriculture, rather than the sole focus of this term on environmental and economic concerns.

There are also examples of institutions such as University of California Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education Program (UC SAREP), a research initiative within one of the most prominent agricultural schools in the country that incorporates social components into their definition of sustainable agriculture. UC SAREP states: "sustainable agriculture integrates three main goals--environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic

equity” (Feenstra et al., n.d.). Similarly, the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) also includes social elements into their definition of sustainable agriculture. The Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) at UCSC incorporates social components into sustainable agriculture, as seen in their mission statement: “The mission of CASFS is to research, develop, and advance sustainable food and agricultural systems that are environmentally sound, economically viable, socially responsible, non-exploitative, and that serve as a foundation for future generations” (“CASFS Mission”, 2016). Like Ikerd (2008), CASFS puts forth a more inclusive definition of this term by referencing social responsibility in addition to the environmental and economic components of sustainable agriculture.

Although not as prominently, the USDA is another source that references social concerns in their definition of sustainable agriculture. In 1990, the Farm Bill articulated that:

The term sustainable agriculture means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term: satisfy human food and fiber needs; enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends; make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources, and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole. (Gold, 2007)

The wording and placement (at the very end) of this social component, which references the need to augment the quality of life not just for producers but for all of society, is perhaps not ideal or particularly explicit. Nevertheless, its mention is significant as the USDA is a government entity with the potential to influence a more socially inclusive model of sustainable agriculture through policy, funding and research. In fact, there is an entire research institution within USDA, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) that is dedicated to sustainable agriculture (“About SARE”, n.d.).

All of these examples provide hope and evidence that sustainable agriculture discourse is being inclusive of social equity concerns in its definition. However, the diversity of definitions of these social factors makes it difficult to assess the degree to which the sustainable agriculture movement is contributing toward a more socially just production model. In order to clarify the ability for the sustainable agriculture movement to be inclusive of social justice principles, it is important first to define them. The following section explains the way the concept of social justice is applied in my research.

2.5 Social Justice

As illustrated in the previous section, some sustainable agriculture movement scholars and actors have been inclusive of social components in their definition of this movement's practices. However, the ways in which social concerns are discussed varies. While it is significant that scholars and activists are moving beyond a purely economic and environmental focus for this movement, assessing its ability to overturn some of the negative social consequences of the industrial agricultural system requires closer scrutiny. Yet before assessing the role the sustainable agriculture movement can play in advancing social justice, the way this term is used within my research, must first be defined. The following subsections illustrate how social justice is defined for the purposes of this thesis as well as assess the degree to which the sustainable agriculture movement is incorporating social justice principles specifically in relation to my research questions.

2.5.1 Social Justice Definitions

While there are many different definitions of social justice, for the purposes of my research I chose to rely on a specific scholar's interpretation of this term. As stated in Capeheart's (2007) work, the concept of social justice is complex and particular to a society and

its population. With this in mind, I chose to consider the following principles of social justice: inclusion and democracy; reflexivity; and the equitable distribution of the needs, benefits, and difficulties of living within a society (Capeheart, 2007, p.2). Using this definition as a guide, I imagine a socially just, sustainable agricultural production system would be inclusive of a diverse array of people acting as producers; create and distribute agricultural products to all people; and create non-exploitative labor relations. While I consider all three of these components to be equally important, for the purposes of my research I chose to focus on the first two. This is partially dictated by my interests as a researcher, and partially dictated by the fact that labor relations in the alternative food movement is such a vast topic within itself that it merits a whole separate thesis.

2.5.2. Social Justice and the Sustainable Agriculture Movement

While many of the original advocates and creators of the term sustainable agriculture envisioned a fundamental overhaul of our food and agriculture system, many scholars and activists alike admit that while progressive in many ways, it currently lacks the power of transformation (Allen and Sachs, 1991; Guthman, 2004; Gray, 2013, Dahlberg, 1991; Alkon and McCullen, 2011). In fact, many of these authors argue that most of the social components of the sustainable agriculture movement are focused on the well-being of specific demographics of people namely white family farmers, and consumers who can afford the higher costs associated with food produced in a sustainable manner (Allen and Sachs, 1991; Guthman, 2004; Gray, 2013, Dahlberg, 1991; Alkon and McCullen, 2011). In addition, the equitable and fair treatment of agricultural laborers is often forgotten about within the sustainable agricultural movement (Guthman, 2004; Gray 2013). For the purposes of my research I chose to specifically focus on inequity in relation to the incorporation of low-income people of color into the sustainable

agricultural movement both as producers and consumers. I briefly describe each of these shortcomings below.

2.5.3. Producer Diversity within the Sustainable Agriculture Movement

The first of the three social components I explore in this section is producer diversity. While definitions of sustainable agriculture allude to inclusion of social equity and/or social responsibility in this movement, it has been my observation as a farmer and activist that the sustainable agriculture movement is disproportionately dominated by white producers. In fact, this observation is the main motivation behind this research.

In her most recent work *The Color of Food*, author Natasha Bowens, encourages readers to take a deeper look at the “monochromatic” image the sustainable agriculture movement presents as the face of the modern farmer. Her work highlights the many African American, Latino and Indigenous farmers who work within the sustainable agriculture movement today and are often left out of the spotlight (Bowens, 2015). While Bowens’s (2015) work plays an important role in uplifting and uncovering farmers of color in the sustainable agriculture movement, the fact remains that there are still far fewer producers from this demographic in agriculture in general. This section of my thesis explores this trend in more detail by providing some background on the role racism has played and continues to play in our food system.

The underrepresentation of people of color as primary producers (not just agricultural laborers) can largely be explained by policies that have subjugated many new immigrant groups to be exploited as migrant labor by the agricultural industry (Majka and Majka, 2000). Furthermore, the exploitation of these immigrants has created long lasting barriers for them in terms of access to wealth and capital. This reality has made it very difficult for many current and former farm laborers to become business owners (Merem, 2006).

This trend is particularly apparent in members of the black community who from the moment they set foot on US territory were enslaved as agricultural laborers (Constance, 2009). Following slavery, the persistence of institutionalized racism in the form of Jim Crow laws, further complicated the black community's relationship to all forms of agriculture (Jordan et al., 2007). While there was an original surge of black land ownership after the abolition of slavery, it peaked around 1910 at 12.8 million acres (Merem, 2006). After this date the number of black owned farms actually began to decline due to discriminatory lending practices, and racially segregated federal support from entities like cooperative extension (Merem, 2006). It was not until the late 1980s that the government acknowledged the discrimination many black farmers had faced, but congress didn't intervene until the 1990s (Jordan et al., 2007). Although there was a lawsuit filed and won, the settlement money (\$50,000/claimant) did little to reverse the issues faced for so long by so many (Merem, 2006). This history illustrates why there are so few black farmers remaining.

The Central American and Mexican communities that have replaced the majority of black agricultural labor in the US also face many barriers to business ownership. The majority of immigrants from these countries who comprise farm laborers are undocumented and have little to no organizing capacity with which to leverage change (Story, 1995; Gray, 2013). Their limited legal status also makes it more difficult for them to advocate for non-exploitative working conditions, let alone services to help them make their own businesses a reality (Story, 1995).

While I was unable to find data regarding the number of farms owned and/or operated by farmers of color within the sustainable agriculture movement, I deduced that these challenges faced by people of color would be equally prevalent in this alternative food movement. This

assumption was the driver behind why I chose to explore strategies being implemented by movement actors into order to overcome this barrier for my research. Before getting to these specifics however, I next introduce similar racial equity issues people of color face engaging as consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement.

2.5.4. People of Color as Consumers in the Sustainable Agriculture Movement

Often justified by the increased time and labor needed to produce food in a more environmentally sustainable manner, the sustainable agriculture movement urges consumers to pay more for their products (Allen et al., 2003). This approach however, ignores larger social dynamics of income and wealth inequality in the US, which make it difficult for lower income people to access and afford sustainably raised products (Alkon and Norgaard, 2009). In addition, this reality is embedded within the context of the inextricable link between race and class by which a far higher percentage of people of color are low income due to centuries of discriminatory practices and institutions that have privileged white people over other races (Lipsitz, 2013). As such the space in which sustainably raised products are bought and sold tends to be exclusive of low-income communities of color (Guthman, 2011).

Two of the most widely discussed marketing outlets within sustainable agriculture that illustrate this trend are farmers' markets and community supported agriculture (CSAs). While statistics indicate a continued growth of the local food industry nationwide, a number of food systems scholars call into question the demographics of these local food consumers (Guthman 2011; Alkon, 2012; Perez et al., 2003). Guthman's (2011) California-based surveys of farmers' markets and CSAs, for instance, indicated that local food efforts primarily serve white and upper/middle income populations. In fact, many survey participants (producers) attributed their aversion to being inclusive of lower income communities of color to a fear this demographic

would drive away higher income shoppers (Guthman, 2011). Most importantly, this study found that the racial and income diversity present at farmers' markets was not proportionate to the racial and income diversity of the local population as a whole (Guthman, 2011). Instead, they were predominantly white spaces (Guthman, 2011). Similarly, Alkon (2012) has found that markets can become white spaces even in predominately black communities, signifying a cultural component to alternative food markets that is racialized as well.

Similar to the farmers' markets findings, another study focused on the profiles and experiences of CSA customers in California and found that 90% of CSA membership was white, educated (81% had engaged in higher education), middle to upper income earners (65%) with household incomes averaging \$60,000 or more (Perez et al., 2003). Again, in comparison to the demographics of the region surveyed where 49% of the population was non-white and the median household income was around \$45,000, the consumers in these marketing outlets are non-representative of the diversity within the community (Perez et al., 2003). This study supports many anecdotal observations that CSAs tend to serve a specific, privileged demographic.

Although research implicates farmers' markets and CSAs to be dominated by middle/upper income white consumers, this does not necessarily mean they are intentionally excluding low-income people of color, nor that there are not examples that disrupt this pattern. In fact, deeper investigations into these two alternative food institutions show both ideological and practical motivation to be more inclusive of these demographics (Allen et al., 2006; Alkon and McCullen, 2011). In one California-based study, well over the majority of the surveyed CSA and farmers' markets managers expressed that they were both supportive of and had tried strategies to be more inclusive towards low-income people of color (Allen et al., 2006). Yet,

despite these efforts there were very low rates of participation reported (Allen et al., 2006).

These findings demonstrate the importance of understanding how to address the underrepresentation of low income, racially diverse consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement. This need is in turn the focus of my second research question. The following section restates my research questions and purpose prior to introducing my methods and methodologies chapter.

2.6 Research Problem and Questions

This final section reintroduces my research statement and questions in relation to the background that has been provided above. While the industrial agriculture system revolutionized the way food was grown, processed, distributed and consumed, it also produced many intended and unintended consequences. These consequences have had environmental, economic and social impacts. As this chapter illustrates, the sustainable agriculture movement emerged to address these consequences, and did so in a variety of ways. However, as my definition of social justice indicates, there is still room for investigation as to how thoroughly the sustainable agriculture movement is working to be inclusive of a diverse array of people acting as producers and consumers. My research addresses initiatives within the sustainable agriculture movement that work to incorporate low-income people of color as producers and consumers because I want to learn how this movement is being inclusive of this population in order to help readers understand how food system actors can incorporate just, inclusive, and anti-racist practices into their work so that they can advocate for strategies that achieve a more equitable food system. In order to do so, my first research questions asks: how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers? My second research question asks: how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as

consumers? With these questions as my guide, in the next chapter I explain the methodologies and methods I implemented in my research.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

In this chapter I describe my positionality as a researcher and explain the methodology and methods I used to answer each of my research questions. My positionality explains the lens through which I approached my research and how my personal experience informed my work. My methods and methodologies are based in non-obtrusive research strategies and grounded theory.

3.1 Positionality

The positionality of every researcher situates their perspective and approach toward their research. In regards to this thesis, my personal values around food and social justice strongly informed the questions I chose to ask. Because I believe that healthy, sustainably grown food and livelihoods should be accessible to everyone, my research questions were aimed at transforming this belief into a reality, particularly for those impacted by race and class disparities. In addition, my positionality was impacted by my own life experiences within the sustainable agriculture movement.

While I have worked on and engaged with many different aspects of the alternative food movement, my heart has always been in farming. My interest in my research topic is therefore rooted in my own experiences working on farms and running urban agriculture projects in disadvantaged communities. Through my experiences I have learned that the cheap price of industrial food, the financial burdens of running a farm business, and the hours of work associated with eco-friendly and socially just farming practices compounded with social problems such as poverty and racism make it difficult to bring good food to all people. This

struggle has inspired me to question the possibility of creating a truly just form of sustainable agriculture, free from the exploitation of people and the planet, and in service to all communities and ecosystems.

It is my belief that nourishing, culturally relevant, socially just and sustainably grown food is a human right and not a commodity dependent upon one's access to a market place. I feel that we have to find a way to make this belief a reality, and so my hope is to apply any solutions that I learn throughout the research process to my own farm and food systems work, or at the very least to embrace a new perspective that may help to lead to an eventual realization of this goal. In the next subsection I explain the methodology I applied in order to answer my research questions.

3.2 Methodology

The methodology I used in my research is known as grounded theory. As grounded theory states, data guides analysis; therefore, there are no preset categories of analysis but instead they emerge after all data is collected (Oktay, 2012). As such, grounded theory emphasizes the role dynamic, real world situations play in informing data. As a food systems practitioner this approach is especially appealing as it validates what is happening in this field. In terms of my own work, this methodology allowed me to conduct research without preconceived groupings or themes in mind about what strategies organizations and/or farms are using to engage low-income people of color. For example, although I knew I was looking for initiatives aimed at increasing the number of producers and consumers from disadvantaged groups, I did not know what specific types of strategies I would find. Hence, as grounded theory indicates, I let my data inform my work by categorizing these strategies by theme after collecting and analyzing all of the organizations and/or farms in my data set. These categories are illustrated in more detail in

the subsequent findings section of Chapter 4 (see Tables 1 and 2). Yet first, it is important to explain how I selected my data points. This is done in the next section of this chapter, which discusses the methods I used for data collection.

3.3 Methods

This chapter subsection describes the methods I used in order to answer the following two research questions: 1) How is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers; and 2) How is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as consumers? In terms of the scale of my research, both research questions were focused on examining organizations and/or farms within the United States. While I did not restrict my search to a specific geographic region, many of the organizations and/or farms I looked at were located in California. Below I describe the data collection strategies I used in order to answer both of my research questions.

3.3.1 Data Collection

In order to answer each of my research questions, I gathered information from both academic and non-academic sources. To find academic literature, I primarily used the Marylhurst library catalog, journal search engines, and Google Scholar. As such, each data point was found by using the following keywords in my searches: “sustainable farming/agriculture and people of color”, and “farming and low income communities”. For the non-academic sources, I collected data from websites, organizational and governmental reports, and articles. Each of these were found through internet searches guided by the same keywords/phrases I used for my academic search. In addition, I found data by tracing references from sources I had already read.

While using these search terms within academic sources both with and without quotations, I did not find any detailed accounts of specific organizations and/or farms that were

trying to increase the number of low-income people of color acting as producers and consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement. Therefore, I mostly relied upon data collected from nonacademic sources. However, even when searching within nonacademic sources, placing these terms in quotations, did not yield any results. When I removed the quotations these same sources yielded between ten to fifteen pages of relevant results. After sifting through these results, I began the selection process by focusing on organizations and/or farms that had substantial information regarding their programming both on their website and through other sources that reported on their activities. In addition, I mostly used the same sources to answer each of my research questions. This was not my original intent, yet once I began my research I found that most of the initiatives focused on this population were trying to impact their role in both production and consumption and that the organizations and/or farms I found were some of the most prominent ones doing this work. In addition, it is worth noting that while I had originally hoped to include more farm businesses in my results, I only found one farm that had sufficient information to answer my research questions. Instead, the majority of my results were nonprofit organizations that combined farm business activities with programming focused on engaging low-income people of color in the sustainable agriculture movement.

Using these criteria, I selected six nonprofit organizations and one farm business to include in my study. Finally, I supplemented the information I found for each of these entities with an academic search that used each organization and/or farms name as a search term. I then read and incorporated any of these relevant results into my analysis. Although the majority of my data was informed by nonacademic sources, the frameworks I used in my analysis were heavily based upon academic literature. These frameworks are described briefly in the following section.

3.3.2. Data Analysis

In my analysis I examine each organization and/or farm's engagement across three different frameworks of inclusivity. The first framework revolves around programmatic activity. As such, in order to assess the extent to which programming is being inclusive of low-income people of color both as producers and consumers, I first organized engagement strategies into categories illustrated in Chapter 4 by Tables 1 and 2. As outlined in the methodology section above, these categories and subcategories were derived using grounded theory. In terms of assessment, the more categories an organization and/or farms initiatives fell into, the more inclusive I considered it to be of the population studied.

In addition to analyzing programmatic components to inclusivity, I also examined the extent to which these organizations and/or farms were implementing antiracist practices and food justice principles. More specifically, I used work from the following scholars to guide my analysis: Holt-Gimenez and Harper (2016) for antiracist practices, and Slocum and Cadieux (2015b) for food justice principles. For these levels of analyses, I considered organizations and/or farms as a whole rather than examining their individual initiatives. Again the more practices and/or principles an organization and/or farm was engaged in, the more inclusive I considered it to be. The intention behind these added layers of analyses was to broaden the way I defined inclusivity by recognizing that simply including low-income people of color as participants in sustainable agriculture programming does not in itself help to create a more diverse and inclusive movement. Instead, deeper levels of engagement are necessary especially on the organizational level as I have observed they are often key drivers of sustainable agriculture movement norms and culture, especially because working farms usually have limited time engage in this way. While this section provides a brief overview as to how I constructed

my analysis of inclusivity, in the next chapter I explain these frameworks, analyses, and my findings in greater detail.

Chapter 4: Results, Analysis and Conclusions

As was indicated in the background and significance chapter, a major critique of the sustainable agriculture movement is the limited ways in which it advances social justice within the food system. Though a progressive improvement from the conventional agricultural system both in terms of more environmentally sustainable practices and the economic viability of small producers, this movement is often exclusive in the demographic of producers and consumers it serves. Though equity issues in terms of race and class were not the original focus of this movement, scholars and activists have increasingly advocated for ways in which it can be more inclusive and better serve a more diverse demographic of people (Allen, 2008; Guthman, 2008; Brown and Getz, 2008; Alkon, 2012). In order to better understand and highlight this work, my research explores different strategies actors within the sustainable agriculture movement are implementing in order to better engage one specific demographic (both as producers and consumers) within the sustainable agriculture movement—low-income people of color. In order to do this, my first research question asks how the sustainable agriculture movement is being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers. In addition, my second research question asks how the sustainable agriculture movement is being inclusive of low-income people of color as consumers. Using these questions as a guide, this chapter presents my findings, analysis and conclusions.

In the first section of this chapter, I present the three frameworks I use to assess the extent to which each organization and/or farm is being inclusive of low-income people of color as both producers and consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement. These frameworks include programmatic strategies, which I categorized through the use of grounded theory, antiracist practice, and food justice principles. Following more thorough explanations of each of

these frameworks I present my results and analysis. My findings are primarily illustrated by Tables 1-3 as well as described in greater detail, separated by organization. My analyses are also described in detail and separated by organization. Finally, I conclude this chapter with a summary of some key findings, gaps in findings, as well as some conclusions.

4.1 Frameworks for Analysis: An Overview

In my research, I chose to explore ways in which organizations and farms within the sustainable agriculture movement are consciously acting to challenge the status quo of the white, upper middle class nature of the sustainable agriculture movement. As such, my research explores the extent to which these actors are being inclusive of low income communities of color both as producers and consumers by examining their programs and practices. As explained in Chapter 3, I selected seven different farms and/or organizations and learned as much about them as I possibly could, given the limitations of using nonobtrusive research methods. I then applied three different frameworks to my analysis in order to assess each organization and/or farms level of inclusivity of the target population studied.

The first framework emerged from looking at specific programmatic strategies each organization and/or farm is implementing in order to best serve or engage producers and consumers from this demographic. Using grounded theory, I grouped each of these strategies into categories (see Tables 1 and 2) and then assessed a program as being more or less inclusive depending on how many categories its work fell into. What I discovered after completing this initial level of analysis, however, is that looking at an organizations and/or farms programs alone does not always indicate the full extent to which this organization demonstrates inclusivity. Conversely, just because an organization or farms' programs may serve this population does not

equate the organization with acting in an inclusive, antiracist, and just manner. Therefore, in order to augment my analysis, I incorporated antiracist and food justice frameworks as well.

In assessing antiracist practice, I looked for the implementation of three key practices outlined by prominent scholars in the alternative food movement (Holt- Gimenez and Harper, 2016). The more antiracist practices an organization or farm displayed, the more inclusive I considered it to be. Finally, I also added a food justice framework to my analysis in efforts to broaden this antiracist lens and examine any other forms of injustice that may also adversely impact the population I studied. For this level of analysis, I looked for the implementation of three key principles outlined by prominent food system scholars Slocum and Cadieux (2015b). As was the case with the other frameworks I used, the more food justice principles an organization and/or farm put into practice, the more inclusive I considered it to be of this population. In the next sections, I describe each of these frameworks (programmatic, antiracist and food justice) in more detail.

4.3 Framework One: Programs and Practices

The first framework of analysis I used involved examining to what extent programs and/or practices were being implemented to better serve and/or engage low-income producers and consumers. In efforts to more clearly understand these programs and/or practices I first categorized them according to their commonalities (see Tables 1 and 2). This section briefly describes each category in more detail, separating engagement around producers and consumers respectively.

4.3.1. Programs and Practices used to Cultivate Producers

In efforts to answer my first research question, I examined what specific programs and/or practices each of the entities I studied were implementing in order to generate or support more

low-income people of color to become agricultural producers within the sustainable agriculture movement. As grounded theory indicates, after examining all seven organizations I included in my study, I then grouped these strategies into three distinct categories based on their common characteristics (see Table 1). These categories are: Farmer Training (Category 1), Business Incubation and Support (Category 2), and Leadership that Reflects the Population Served (Category 3). In addition, because there was quite a bit of variety within Category 1 (Farmer Training) I created subcategories within this category. These subcategories include: training exclusively for low-income people of color (not open to those who do not fall into this demographic), flexible scheduling, financial assistance, and social justice components to programming. Again these subcategories were extrapolated through the use of grounded theory by looking for common themes within farmer training programming that specifically catered to low-income people of color. This more specific level of data organization allowed for a greater detail of analysis by illustrating the direct implications different features have within each program. All of this information is illustrated as well as described in more detail in the findings section and through Table 1. Furthermore, each of the three main categories is explained more in depth below.

4.3.2. Category 1: Farmer Training

While farmer training programs have increased in number and popularity along with the rise of the sustainable agriculture movement, I have observed through my own personal experience as a farmer in training that there are relatively few that cater to disadvantaged communities. Barriers for this population to engage in typical farmer training programs usually include cost, location, and time commitment. For instance, often students have to be involved in training full time, pay upwards of \$4,000 to participate (not including housing, food, travel or

other personal expenses) and be able to relocate to a rural location for 6 months to 1 year (“Homepage UVM Farmer Training Program, n.d.; “Homepage MSU Organic Farmer Training Program”, n.d.)”. While some of these programs affiliated with university agricultural extension offer scholarships, they are limited in number and they rarely cover full tuition.

Another popular learning model within sustainable agriculture is apprenticeships and/or internships on working farms. The Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA) is a networking website that has listings of hundreds of farms that participate in this model. However, many of the same barriers exist for low income people of color to engage in this type of training. For instance, the majority of the farms listed on ATTRA pay small monthly stipends (\$50 – 500) if they pay a stipend at all (“Sustainable Farming Internships and Apprenticeships” ATTRA, n.d.). A low-income adult with a family and/or previous bills is unable to survive on this arrangement, even for a few months. In addition, although some farmer training programs offer tuition assistance, finding apprenticeships that pay a livable wage is virtually unheard of (“Homepage MSU Organic Farmer Training Program”, n.d.; “About” CASFS, n.d.). As both of these examples illustrate, many farmer training models within the sustainable agriculture movement primarily cater to one demographic: white, upper/middle class men and/or childfree women². While some accommodations may be made through scholarship programs and minimal stipends as indicated above, these models largely exclude low-income people and people of color with or without dependents, whose social situation makes it impossible for them to participate in these programs. Through my research, I attempt to discover alternative program models that are more inclusive of people from these demographics who wish to enter into farming.

² Men/women with children could also be considered part of this category if they have access to childcare, which again is often class dependent.

My findings on common practices indicate several examples of farmer training initiatives that are more conscious of the needs of more diverse populations and have taken specific steps in order to meet these needs. More specifically, I identified four strategies that cater to this population. Listed as subcategories within Category 1 (farmer training) they include: training exclusively reserved for this population, flexible scheduling, financial assistance, and social justice components to programming. In subsequent sections, I describe each organizational initiative that fell into Category 1 as well as its subcategories. Next I describe Category 2 which engages another strategy to increase the number of disadvantaged farmers.

4.3.3. Category 2: Business Incubation, Technical, Legal and or Financial Support

While Category 1 highlights the need for farmer training programming with a focus on increasing the diversity of agricultural producers within the sustainable agriculture movement, Category 2 highlights an additional and often subsequent level of support for these growers. Research indicates that the greatest obstacles beginning farmers face are lack of capital, equipment and land, as well as the high startup costs associated with each of these necessary inputs (Shute et al., 2011). Furthermore, as illustrated in Chapter 2, all of these resources have been historically denied to farmers of color (Jordan et al., 2007). Through my research, however, I found that there are organizations working hard to overcome these historic inequities within the sustainable agriculture movement. These examples are discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter. Next I introduce a final way in which the nonprofits/farms I included in my research are working to increase the number of low-income producers of color.

4.3.4. Category 3: Leadership that Reflects the Population Served

Acting as a final tactic to help increase the number of low-income producers of color, is Category 3: Leadership that Reflects the Population Served. A common theme indicated in

antiracist practice is uplifting and encouraging leadership of people of color, often coupled with the practice of having more privileged (often white) individuals “step back” (Alcala, 2015; Holt-Gimenez and Harper, 2016). Addressing the void of leadership among people of color in alternative food movement spaces is a key concern for many scholars and activists hoping to create a more socially just food system (Slocum, 2006; Guthman, 2011). For instance, a growing number of food systems scholars have become critical of the “whiteness” of alternative food movement spaces (Guthman, 2011; Hinrichs, 2000; Alcala, 2015; Slocum, 2006). Scholar Rachel Slocum (2006) has even described whiteness as “an organizing feature of the alternative food movement” (p.12). Many scholars and activists warn the danger of this trend is not just in the overrepresentation of white bodies, but in their ability to “define the rhetoric, spaces and broader projects of agri-food transformation” (Guthman, 2011, p. 277). In other words, the white demographics’ power and influence over these alternative spaces can lead to the exclusion of the needs and norms of many non-white people. As was depicted through examples of farmer training programs that can be exclusionary by design, a lack of a more diverse array of people involved in the creation and design of this type of programming can prevent their participation. On the other hand, as my research indicates through this third category, cultivating leadership from within the populations that you aim to serve, can lead to more intentional design that can create and inspire greater inclusivity within this movement. As all three of these categories indicate, there are strategies being implemented to better incorporate low-income people of color as producers within the sustainable agriculture movement. In addition, as the next section outlines these entities are also engaging in strategies aimed at increasing the number of low-income consumers of color within the sustainable agriculture movement.

4.3.5 Programs and Practices Used to Cultivate Consumers

In efforts to answer my second research question, I examined what specific programs and/or practices each of the entities I studied were implementing in order to generate or support more low-income people of color acting as consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement. As grounded theory indicates, after examining all seven organizations and/or farms I included in my study, I then grouped these strategies into three distinct categories based on their common characteristics (see Table 2). These categories are: Accessibility to Low Income Communities of Color (Category 1), Education/Skill Building (Category 2) and Subsidies (Category 3). In addition, because there were a variety of approaches within these 3 categories, I further distilled each approach into more specific subcategories. Again, these subcategories were selected because they were more specific, common approaches taken within each category. Within Category 1 (Accessibility) I included the following subcategories: location and EBT/SNAP redemption. In Category 2 (Education/Skill Building) the subcategories are garden installation and training, cooking and/or food justice workshops, and youth programming. Finally, Category 3 (Subsidies) included the following subcategories: free and reduced prices, and matching funds. These categories are also illustrated in more detail in the findings section as well as through Table 2. Furthermore, each of the three main categories are explained more in depth below.

4.3.6. Category 1: Accessibility

This first category of initiatives designed to increase the number of disadvantaged consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement considers the accessibility of retail outlets to this population. Scholarly research indicates healthy food access within low income communities and communities of color is a multifaceted issue (Grace et al., 2007; Fisher, 1999;

Allen et al., 2006). For the purpose of this research, however, and in accordance with grounded theory, I found the following two patterns (subcategories) that impacted access: location and the ability to redeem EBT/SNAP benefits. More specifically location refers to the physical location of markets in relation to where low-income consumers of color live. In the next section, Category 2 explores Education and Skill Building initiatives as another way to increase the number of disadvantaged consumers within the sustainable agriculture movement.

4.3.7. Category 2: Education and Skill Building

While Category 1 illustrates strategies focused on access, Category 2 takes a non-market approach to increasing consumption through education and skill building. There are three primary ways (or subcategories) that Category 2 aims to do this: home garden installation coupled with the teaching of basic gardening skills, teaching of cooking classes and/or food justice classes, and youth programming around food and farming. All three of these subcategories present solutions aimed at empowerment and useful skill building in order to help increase consumption of sustainably raised food within disadvantaged communities. Finally, Category 3 introduces a third strategy aimed at increasing the number of disadvantaged consumers within the sustainable food movement: subsidies.

4.3.8. Category 3: Subsidies

A third and final category that emerged through a grounded theory approach was the use of subsidies. While the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and national farm policy use subsidies to keep farmers in business, the sustainable agriculture movement makes use of this strategy in order to give a greater number of people access to sustainably-raised, and often higher-priced, food. Two ways in which I observed this happening through the data I collected were, free/reduced prices and matching EBT/SNAP benefits. Meeting or matching the prices

people already pay for produce and/or giving it away for free are both ways that may attract more consumers from this demographic. Nonprofit initiatives usually fundraise to fill this gap between consumers and producers or use higher income sales to make up the difference. Again, examples of these strategies will be explained more in depth in subsequent sections of this chapter. Before presenting my findings, however, in the next section I further describe the two other frameworks I used in my analysis.

4.4 Framework Two: Antiracist Practice

Racist practice is at the heart of racial inequity in the food system and in society at large. One attempt to overturn this reality is through the implementation of antiracist practices. While there is variation in the definition and application of antiracist practice, I chose to focus on how authors Holt-Gimenez and Harper (2016) define it. These authors emphasize that racism stands in the way of creating a just food system, and urge activists to engage in three key antiracist practices in order to dismantle it. These practices are (Holt-Gimenez and Harper, 2016):

- Cultivating people of color as leaders in the food system
- Helping people of color heal from historical trauma
- Explicitly acknowledging the role racism plays in the food system

Using these practices as a guide, I examine the extent to which the organizations/farms I studied are engaging in antiracist practice. Depending on how many of these three practices are being put into place I indicate that these organizations and/or farms are either limited or very engaged in antiracist practice. As indicated above, I also correlate greater engagement in these antiracist practices with a greater degree of inclusivity. Recognizing that antiracist practice does not, however, encompass all levels of inequality experienced by the population studied I chose to

incorporate a food justice lens into my analysis as well. This approach is described in the subsequent section.

4.6 Framework Three: Food Justice

In order to take my analysis of inclusivity one step further, I also chose to apply a food justice framework to my work. While racism is a very large and prevalent barrier facing low-income people of color, this is not the only social structure around which this population experiences disadvantages. Therefore, I also chose to incorporate a more radical interpretation of food justice in my study to help highlight and mitigate some of the other social injustices this population faces.

Many scholars and food systems actors have debated the term food justice and its use within the alternative food movement. Hence, in utilizing this term it is important to define the way it is being interpreted. In seeking to understand its meaning and relevance to the advancement of social justice, I applied an interpretation based on scholars that take a more critical views of what it means to do food justice work (Allen, 2010; Slocum and Cadieux, 2015; Brent et al., 2015; Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011). As a result, I discovered two primary approaches within this more critical interpretation of food justice (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011).

The first approach, identified as progressive, revolves around practical and usually small-scale, localized attempts to work within disadvantaged communities (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011). Popular examples of this approach may include creating farmer's markets or community gardens in low-income neighborhoods in order to improve food security. While this approach can yield enriching projects/results, it does not fundamentally seek to dismantle the structures that cause social inequities (like food access) in the first place (Brent et al., 2015).

Therefore, this more critical lens toward food justice advocates for a second, more radical approach (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011).

A more radical approach to food justice uses food systems problems (like healthy food access) as a starting point around which to organize efforts that aim to dismantle the larger social structures that have created and reproduce social inequities within the food system (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011). This strategy acknowledges the need for political, economic and social change (Brent et al., 2015). In a way, these two food justice approaches can be likened to the difference between various methods of anti-hunger work. For instance, while there are many charities that focus on food collection and distribution as a means to combat hunger, there are others that advocate for doing work that gets at the root cause of hunger such as unemployment or the lack of a social safety net. Both methods aim to combat hunger, yet one treats the symptoms of this problem while the other addresses its root causes. Food justice work is the same in both approaches, in the sense that the progressive approach treats the symptoms of food injustice (like food insecurity), while the more radical approach gets at the political, economic, and social structures responsible for creating and perpetuating these injustices.

Within the more radical food justice approach described above, there are still various interpretations. For the purposes of my research, however, I turned to scholars Slocum and Cadieux's (2015a) work on the practical application of radical food justice. These authors suggest four key points around which transformative change can occur: trauma/inequity, exchange, land, and labor (Slocum and Cadieux's (2015a). In a second more detailed article, these authors take this approach one step further by focusing on the first of these four key points: trauma/inequity (Slocum and Cadieux, 2015b). After conducting extensive research on grassroots as well as nonprofit food justice work, these authors claim that many food systems

actors say they are doing food justice work but in reality fall short of this goal (Slocum and Cadieux, 2015b). Furthermore, they explain that many people “get stuck” in their pursuit for food justice around their first key point of trauma and inequity (Slocum and Cadieux, 2015b, p.39). In an effort to help movement actors get unstuck they suggest three practical strategies of engagement. These three strategies include (Slocum and Cadieux, 2015b, p. 40):

- Actively acknowledging the impact structural inequalities have upon participants.
- Institutionalizing reflexive practices that encourage the continual acknowledgment of these structural inequalities, as well as transparent, antiracist practice (i.e. accountability).
- Speaking out in solidarity with other social justice advocates working on the same or other inequities participants face.

Using these three principles as a guide, I further my analysis by examining their incorporation by the organizations and/or farms I studied. Depending on how many of these three principles are being put into place, I indicate that these organizations and/or farms are either limited or very engaged in radical food justice practice. As indicated in previous sections, I also correlate greater engagement in these food justice principles on behalf of the organization and/or farm with a greater degree of inclusivity. Next, in the results and analysis section below, I describe the work of each organization/farm and analyze the degree to which they are being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers and consumers by utilizing all three of these frameworks.

4.7 Results and Analysis

In this section of my thesis I present and analyze my data. In order to answer both research questions one and two, I include three tables as well as more descriptive explanations of the programs, activities and strategies each organization and/or farm implements in effort to be

inclusive of low-income people of color. Table 1 illustrates the strategies being used to be inclusive of low-income people of color as producers by category. Table 2 illustrates the strategies being used to be inclusive of low-income people of color as consumers by category. The third and final table (Table 3) illustrates the antiracist practices and food justice principles each organization and/or farm is engaged in. Finally, below these tables I provide more detailed descriptions of the how each organization and/or farm's activities fit into each of these frameworks.

Table 1: Strategies Used to Increase/Support Low Income Producers of Color

		Planting Justice	Soul Fire Farm	Growing Power	ALBA	Patchwork City Farms	Phat Beets
Category 1: Farmer Training	Training Offered Exclusively for low income communities of color	✓	✓		✓		
	Flexible Scheduling		✓	✓	✓		
	Financial Assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Social Justice Components to Training	✓		✓	✓		
	Paid on the Job Training	✓					
Category 2	Business Incubation and/or Technical/Legal/Financial Support	✓		✓	✓		✓
Category 3	Leadership that reflects the population served	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 2: Strategies to Increase Access for Low Income Consumers of Color

		Food What ?!	Planting Justice	Soul Fire Farm	Growing Power	ALBA	Phat Beets	Patchwork City Farms
Category 1 : Accessibility to Disadvantaged Consumers	Location	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	EBT/SNAP Redeemed		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Category 2: Education/Skill Building	Garden Installation and Training		✓		✓			
	Cooking and Food Justice Workshops	✓	✓	✓			✓	
	Youth Programs	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Category 3 : Subsidies	Free or Reduced Prices	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
	Matching Funds					✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Engagement with Antiracist Practices and Food Justice Principles

	Antiracist Practices			Food Justice Principles		
	Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Principle 1	Principle 2	Principle 3
	Cultivating Leaders of Color in the Food System	Helping People of Color Heal from Historic Trauma	Explicitly Acknowledging the Role Racism Plays in the Food System	Acknowledge the Impact Structural Inequities have upon Participants	Institutionalize reflexive, antiracist practice	Speaking out in Solidarity with other Social Justice Advocates
ALBA	✓			✓	✓	
Growing Power	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Planting Justice	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Soul Fire Farm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patchwork City Farms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Food What?!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Phat Beets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.7.1. ALBA: Results

The Agriculture and Land Based Training Association (ALBA), is a nonprofit organization most well-known for its farmer training program. Located in Salinas California, ALBA has a unique role and mission of providing farmer training and business incubation for the state's farm worker population. Because of their location, they mostly serve Latinos, many of whom have worked in the agricultural industry for many years both in the United States (US) and Mexico. In fact, in its early stages this program was known as the "Farm worker to Farmer" program because of its focus on "learning and advancement for hard-working, low-income farm workers and aspiring farmers seeking a better life" ("Homepage" ALBA, n.d.).

ALBA's farmer training program is open both to families and individuals and is taught in English and Spanish. ALBA's official mission is to "advance economic viability, social equity and ecological land management among limited-resource and aspiring farmers ("About ALBA", n.d.). As such, their model runs on a sliding scale (income/need based) cost model. In addition, class time is created in a way that can potentially accommodate full-time working adults. Courses run one weeknight per week (Wednesday 6:00pm-9:00pm) and one weekend day (Saturday 1:00pm-5:30 pm). While additional homework may be given, participants are only required to be onsite in training during these times. All of this information is free and made available on their website in both English and Spanish ("Programs- Farmer Education Course/PEPA," ALBA, n.d.).

A second very complimentary program ALBA offers is business incubation and support (Category 2, Table 1). Again this level of programming focuses on an economically and socially disadvantaged Latino population, and pulls many applicants from the farmer training program. During farm incubation, growers have access to a wide range of technical assistance, and low-

cost rent and equipment usage. They also have the option to sell produce into ALBA organics a licensed produce distributor onsite. All of these services have the potential to greatly assist new growers who tend to struggle with cash flow, marketing, and high start-up costs associated with equipment and land. The incubator serves over 35 farmers/year (“Programs- Organic Farm Incubator,”ALBA, n.d.).

A third and final program of ALBA’s is their matching fund program known as Market Match (Category 3, Table 2). While ALBA is not a vendor that accepts Market Match dollars, they are an intermediary for this program. Market Match, a program of the Ecology Center (a California based nonprofit) is an incentive program that matches federal benefits like CalFresh (formally known as EBT) and WIC (supplemental nutrition program for Women Infants and Children) when they are redeemed at farmers’ markets (“Homepage”, Market Match, n.d.). As of 2016 this program was offered at over 250 markets across the state (“Homepage”, Market Match, n.d.). ALBA is a third party processor for over ten markets in the region in which they operate. Without their services more than one entire county would not be able to use EBT/SNAP at local area farmer’s markets. Next I provide analysis of this organization.

4.7.2. ALBA Analysis

In analyzing ALBA’s programming, I found that they were very inclusive in terms of cultivating low-income people of color as producers. This is illustrated through their farmer training and incubation programs described above, as they were engaged in all three categories intended to increase the number of producers from this demographic (see Table 1). As for consumers, however, their programmatic efforts to be inclusive of low-income communities of color is limited. As illustrated in Table 2, the only consumption category in which they are engaged is Category 3: subsidies, which was a result of a matching fund they help to facilitate.

This limitation is best explained by the fact that producers and not consumers are the explicit focus of this organization.

Regarding the second category of analysis, antiracist practice, ALBA is limited also in their engagement. This limitation is defined by their implementation of only one of the three antiracist practices I applied as a framework for analysis. The practice their work does embody, is having people of color in leadership roles (practice 1). For instance, ALBA's board has a few members that are representative of ALBA's participants. As for the other two practices, they do not engage in or acknowledge the need for their participants to heal from trauma (practice 2), nor do they make any explicit reference to the role racism plays the lives of their participants (practice 3).

As for the third tier of inclusivity analysis, radical food justice, ALBA is very inclusive, defined by the incorporation of two out of three of Slocum and Cadieux's (2015b) suggested practices. For instance, through their mission statement, they incorporate practice one by acknowledging the ways their participants suffer from social inequality. They further acknowledge this reality by tailoring their programming to meet some of the limitations this population faces in regards to scheduling, language capacity, and cost options. As for the second practice, they institutionalize reflexive antiracist practice on an organizational level by cultivating leadership of color as illustrated by having a few board members of Mexican and Central American descent. Finally, in terms of the third practice, I did not find an indication that ALBA engages in public solidarity with other social justice efforts. Next, as a second organizational example I introduce Growing Power.

4.7.3. Growing Power Results

A second organization I chose to examine in my research is known as Growing Power. Based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Chicago Illinois, this organization runs a variety of programming aimed at engaging new producers and consumers in the sustainable agriculture movement. On the producer side, Growing Power has both a farmer training program and business incubation (Categories 1 and 2, Table 1). Their farmer training program, known as the Commercial Urban Agriculture Training Program consists of 5, 3-day weekend seminar courses that run from January to May (once a month) of each year (“Education- Workshops- Commercial Urban Agriculture,” Growing Power, n.d.). Participants are required to attend every session in order to complete the program and the cost (meals included) is \$2800.³ Scholarships and sliding scale fee structures are available upon request. In addition to these farmer training courses, Growing Power also runs an urban farmer incubator program. Based in Chicago this three-year program includes land, skill building workshops, legal/technical and marketing assistance. All applicants, however, are required to have some previous experience in farming and/or a farmer training program. While there is no mention of prioritizing applicants of color or low-income individuals, they do offer scholarships and need based sliding scale tuition, and so can be seen as inclusive of these populations in this way. Even without financial assistance, however, the annual cost of the program is quite reasonable (\$1800 or about \$150/month) considering that most urban land leases are costly and unaccompanied by technical assistance and support (“Farms-Chicago-Farmers for Chicago”, Growing Power, n.d.).

On the consumer side, Growing Power operates a CSA, market baskets, restaurant sales and farmer’s markets. While not all of their marketing strategies exclusively serve disadvantaged

³ For those coming from out of town, transportation and lodging costs would also be an added expense.

communities, this organization holds a strong belief that all communities deserve access to fresh, healthy food, and they work to help meet this goal in a few different ways. For instance, a few of the farmer's markets they sell at both in Chicago and Milwaukee are located within diverse communities with higher needs for healthy food access (Category 1, Table 2). In addition, in Chicago they operate a mobile market known as the Fresh Moves Produce Bus, which makes quite a few stops every day throughout neighborhoods and partner agencies in Chicago that serve residents with limited access to fresh food ("Farms- Chicago Farms- Fresh Moves", Growing Power, n.d.). While there is no information given on their website as to whether or not any of their farmer's market locations accept EBT/SNAP, the mobile market does (Category 1, Table 2).

In addition to making local produce accessible through sales, Growing Power also works to increase access through education and skill building workshops (Category 2, Table 2) via garden installation and training (subcategory 1), and youth programming (subcategory 3). While they do not offer home garden installation/builds, I still considered them a part of this subcategory as they have donated over 50 gardens to day care centers in high need communities throughout Milwaukee ("Outreach-Outreach Projects", Growing Power, n.d.). In addition, Growing Power runs year-round paid job opportunities for underserved high school aged youth that combine skills in growing, cooking, eating, food justice and youth/community empowerment. As with many other organizations that fell into this subcategory within Consumer Category 2 (Table 2), Growing Power's youth programming is designed to expose youth to the food system, give them some job experience, and cultivate future leaders, growers, eaters and activists ("Education-Youth Corps", Growing Power, n.d.). Finally, Growing Power also partners with local underserved schools and other youth groups in need to provide them with

farms for tours and one day/few hour events. While these act as less in depth experiences, they still expose underserved youth to some of the important concepts mentioned above. Next, I provide inclusivity analysis for this organization.

4.7.4. Growing Power Analysis

Overall, Growing Power yielded very inclusive practices in my analysis. In terms of programming, as illustrated above, Growing Power was very inclusive as it met all three producer categories (Table 1) and two of the three consumer categories (Table 2). As for antiracist practice, this organization was also defined as very inclusive because it fulfilled two of the three practices. As an organization they have a strong leader of color, Will Allen, who identifies as a disadvantaged farmer himself with a powerful and very personal family history of sharecropping (practice 1). In fact, Allen still does a majority of the teaching of Growing Power's Milwaukee based workshops. In addition, they have a highly diverse staff in terms of race, gender, and age (Bybee, 2009). I did not, however, find any evidence that Growing Power is actively engaged the second antiracist practice, which promotes to healing of trauma within communities of color. Yet, this organization does engage with the third practice of calling out racism as a barrier for those with whom they work, primarily through a satellite project called the Growing Food and Justice Initiative (GFJI). GFJI is a collaborative effort whose mission is: "aimed at dismantling racism and empowering low-income and communities of color through sustainable and local agriculture" ("About us", Growing Food and Justice Initiative, n.d.). Explicit in their mission, GFJI acknowledges racism's impact within the food system and the need to put an end to it in order to advance equity within the food system. In fulfilling their mission GFJI hosts annual gatherings, dismantling racism trainings and resources and acts as a network for information sharing and collaboration ("About us", Growing Food and Justice

Initiative, n.d). Growing Power, like the GFJI views its work as not only producing and providing food but also using food as medium to challenge racism and power/resource imbalances in high need communities (Block et al. 2012).

As far as radical food justice, Growing Power is highly inclusive as it implements all three of the food justice principles Slocum and Cadieux (2015b) outline. Like many of the other organizations I looked at, Growing Power acknowledges structural inequities that impact many of the communities and individuals they work with by adapting some of their programming to accommodate the barriers this demographic faces (practice 1). One major way they do this is by offering sliding scale costs, and multiple course date options for those with less flexible schedules. They also offer micro loans (up to \$2,500) for new urban and/or rural growers who are trying to start a sustainable farm business on their own land/leased lot. As for the second food justice principle, Growing Power institutionalizes reflexive, antiracist practice by having leaders of color involved in multiple levels of their organization from founder to board and staff. They also do this by embracing the mentality of always putting the needs of a community (and not necessarily their organization) first (Block et al., 2012). In fact, as Erika Allen, staff and daughter of founder Will Allen, describes, creating truly sustainable community food systems requires disenfranchised people to be not only recipients but actors. She illustrates this in the following quote through which she describes Growing Power's philosophy around community involvement:

So true sustainability in terms of community food systems means that disenfranchised people, especially youth and their families, are involved in the process not only as beneficiaries of 'good (and carbon-neutral) food' but as a central part in the planning, development and execution of the food system, including its interlocking parts: energy, housing, public transportation, economic development, and so on. (Allen, 2010b, p.1).

This quote also acts as a great segue into Slocum and Cadieux's (2015b) third food justice principle of acting in solidarity with other social change organizations. The language above clearly illustrates that Growing Power staff see the need and value in collaborating with others to solve additional systemic issues that impact the population they serve. Another way in which Growing Power does this is by engaging with local and state level food policy task forces and councils in order to bring equity issues to the forefront of the food movement (Allen, 2010b). Growing Power has also been praised for the work it does to bring diverse communities together over the dinner table to discuss issues of race, class and food culture (Walter, 2012). While this can be a powerful means to spark important conversation and understanding between the white alternative food movement culture and disenfranchised communities within which an organization like Growing Power is situated, there is also a danger in attracting white outsiders to these neighborhoods. Gentrification can in fact become a means through which communities that are well served by Growing Power can be displaced (Walter, 2012). This impact urban agriculture is having is a growing national trend, and therefore Walter (2012) suggests the need for Growing Power to be aware of and address this concern directly. The next section describes another organization that works to uplift and engage disenfranchised communities in sustainable agriculture practice—Planting Justice.

4.7.5. Planting Justice Results

A third organization included in my study is Planting Justice. Based in Oakland California, Planting Justice's mission is to "democratize access to affordable, nutritious food by empowering urban residents with the skills, resources and knowledge they need to maximize food production, expand job opportunities, and ensure environmental sustainability in the bay area" ("Homepage" Planting Justice, n.d.). In order to accomplish these goals, Planting Justice

runs a variety of urban and rural farm sites as well as programming that engages disenfranchised communities both as producers and consumers.

One of their main producer oriented programs is the farmer training program (Category 1, Table 1). Run in collaboration with MESA (Multinational Exchange for Sustainable Agriculture) this new pilot project is called the Bay Area Farmer Training Program. Though the program does not exclusively serve disadvantaged communities, three quarters of the participant slots are reserved for “immigrants, refugees, formally incarcerated and under-resourced beginning farmers” (“Programs- Bay Area Farmer Training Program” MESA, n.d.). In addition, for anyone who self identifies into any one of these categories, the program is free of cost and a \$500 stipend is available. It is, however, unclear if this is a monthly stipend or 3-month stipend (the length of the program); regardless, this amount would not be enough to off-set all of one’s living expenses as a single individual or person with a family living in the Bay Area. So far there is no information about day/time commitment of this program, but their applicant questionnaire does ask about one’s work responsibilities, so one could assume this is taken into consideration.

Upon completion of the three-month Bay Area Farmer Training Program, participants have three different incubator options to choose from. The first option is to launch their own farm business with support from Planting Justice staff. While they do not have their own land based incubator site, Planting Justice provides trainees with ongoing technical, legal and financial assistance to launch their own small business in the location of their choice. The second option is for graduates to apply for a position to work and gain experience at one of Planting Justice’s growing sites. This essentially means that they would come on staff at Planting Justice. Finally, the third option is to apply for a 3-6 month paid apprenticeship through one of MESA’s network farms. This offers a paid, hands on opportunity to get more experience on a working

farm. Planting Justice's diversified options for graduates offer multiple ways to gain experience and/or find work in this industry, catering to the diverse needs and interests of their participants.

In addition to the farmer training and incubator programs, Planting Justice offers another unique program aimed at supporting disadvantaged producers. Known as their Holistic Reentry program, they hire formerly incarcerated community members and pay them a living wage ("Programs-Holistic Reentry" Planting Justice, n.d.). A key component to their approach is providing their employees job advancement opportunities (both financial and task related) in 6 month increments. They also offer social/emotional support for those employees who are transitioning back into their communities from prison. The majority of the men they hire were exposed to gardening and Planting Justice staff at San Quintin, as a part of the Insight Garden Program, yet Planting Justice does not restrict who applies ("Programs-Holistic Reentry" Planting Justice, n.d.). So far they have had over 20 employees go through this Holistic Reentry Program, none of whom have recidivated. A different approach from farmer training, this on-the-job-training model is a bit more like an apprenticeship and/or internship but with the added benefit of pay (Category 1, Table 1). This is a unique approach as most jobs with training require a certain degree of experience. Instead Planting Justice challenges the status quo in order to provide an opportunity for living wage work for those in need.

In addition to the programs they have that cater to increasing the number of disadvantaged producers, Planting Justice also conducts initiatives that work to increase the number of consumers coming from low-income, high need communities. They do this both by increasing access to consumers through marketing produce they grow at affordable prices (Categories 1 and 3, Table 2) and by engaging in education and skill building workshops (Category 2, Table 2). For example, they operate a sliding scale produce market out of their 2-

acre urban farm site located in a neighborhood where residents lack access to grocery outlets within a few mile radius. At this onsite market, they accept EBT/SNAP and also carry cottage industry products like honey, pesto and nuts.

On the education end, their work falls into the first (garden training and installation) and second (cooking and food justice workshops) subcategories of the education and skill building category (Category 2, Table 2). For example, their Transform Your Yard program, gives high need community members' home gardens as well as basic garden skills. Though this program is fee-based, they reserve a few garden installations each year as a part of their "Community Justice Garden Hub" project which provides individuals and/or communities impacted by the justice system with a home garden installation free of charge ("Programs-Transform Your Yard," Planting Justice, n.d.). The cost of these builds are subsidized by full paying customers in other neighborhoods, and a several of them are donated each year. Applicants must complete a detailed questionnaire showing their willingness to participate and interest in the program. In fact, one in three of Planting Justice's garden installations are subsidized in this way by their for profit garden builds (Sbicca, 2105). In addition to this program, Planting Justice also offers workshops at their urban farm site that cover basic gardening skills, as well as food justice topics, at a sliding scale rate ("Programs-Food Justice Education" Planting Justice, n.d.). Next, I will assess the inclusivity of this organization using the three frameworks of analysis.

4.7.6. Planting Justice Analysis

Planting Justice is yet another organization that displays highly inclusive practices across all three frameworks of analysis. In terms of its programs, Planting Justice is highly inclusive of low-income people of color's engagement as producers, as evidenced by their representation in all three categories (see Table 1). They are also highly inclusive of low-income consumers of

color, as they also engage in all three category strategies illustrated in Table 2. In terms of antiracist practice, similar to other organizations studied, Planting Justice applies two of the three practices I incorporated in my analysis. For example, one practice they include is cultivating leadership roles for people of color (practice 1). This is evidenced by the fact that one of the main two instructors of the Bay Area Farmer Training Program is an immigrant farmer of color (Programs- Bay Area Farmer Training Program” MESA, n.d.). In addition, through their reentry program they exclusively hire people of color as staff, which they acknowledge is both reflective of the neighborhood in which they are located in as well as the result of an unfortunate correlation between race and the likelihood of incarceration (Sbicca, 2015). They also promote leadership of color through their board, as well as their cofounder (“Who are We”, Planting Justice, n.d.). In fact, one of the board members is also a staff member who was a part of the Holistic Reentry program. His presence and participation represents the potential for the communities Planting Justice aims to serve to be represented within the leadership of this organization (“Who are We”, Planting Justice, n.d.). As for the second antiracist practice, I did not find any evidence that they work to help people of color heal from historic trauma. Planting Justice does, however, engage in Holt-Gimenez and Harper’s (2016) third antiracist practice, the calling out of racism as a structural barrier that impacts their staff and the participants they serve. The primary way in which they do this is through their grass roots canvass work. Led by their organizing team, Planting Justice’s canvass program has engaged over 50,000 people since its inception in 2012, and raises over \$150,000/year for the organization (“Programs-Grassroots Canvassing,” Planting Justice, n.d.). Organizers go door to door to engage residents in the bay area about equity issues within the food and prison systems.

Analyzing this organization in terms of radical food justice, I found that they fully engage all three of Slocum and Cadieux's (2015 b) principles aimed at alleviating trauma and inequity in the food system. In regards to the first principle which involves acknowledging structural inequities, they explicitly state on their website the many structural forms of inequities the communities they serve face around employment, crime, and safety ("Our Work", Planting Justice, n.d.). In addition, like many of the other organizations I studied, Planting Justice provides programming that is specifically adapted to the population they serve and the barriers they face. For example, as described above, their farmer training program reserves applicant spaces for low income, formerly incarcerated and refugee/new immigrant participants. In addition, their reentry program does this by restricting hiring to formally incarcerated community members.

Another way in which they acknowledge inequities is by including social justice components into the curriculum of their farmer training program. While there is not any specific information given on what the social justice elements of the curriculum look like, it is significant that they include this topic in their training, as it acknowledges that there are social injustices present within the food system that are important for current and future producers to be aware of. A third way Planting Justice acknowledges inequity is through their grass roots canvass work, described above. In fact, this type of engagement aims to slowly lead to social change by altering individual perspectives about the structural nature of social justice issues Planting Justice is working on.

As for the second food justice principle which involves institutionalizing reflexive, antiracist practice, Planting Justice works on this in the same way as many of the other organizations included in my research, by promoting leadership of color. The primary way this

is apparent is through the hiring of diverse staff members, whose opinions they value and whom they want to promote and uplift as leaders. Doing so, requires allowing all staff member's voices to be heard and incorporated into their work ("Programs-Holistic Reentry" Planting Justice, n.d.).

Finally, Planting Justice's work also engages the third and final food justice principle of acting in solidarity with other social justice related organizations/initiatives. They do this by listing a variety of partners that they collaborate with on programming on their website (About-Partnerships, Planting Justice, n.d.). They also indicate this on their home page through the slogan "Fresh veggies. Good jobs. A safer, healthier neighborhood," which implies their understanding that neighborhood health goes beyond healthy food to include other key components like living wage employment and safety ("Homepage," Planting Justice, n.d.). In addition, their work reflects common values with the economic justice movement of providing living wage work for the socially and economical marginalized communities (Sbicca, 2015). In fact, the founders of Planting Justice strategically chose to create a for profit business (garden installation and nursery) in order to fund living wage work within the food system as well as provide income for some of their non-profit initiatives like their free workshops and subsidized garden installations (Nolasco, 2011). The organization I introduce next, Soul Fire Farm, also embodies many food justice and antiracist principles and practices.

4.7.7. Soul Fire Farm Results

The next organization included in my research, Soul Fire Farm, is both a working farm and nonprofit. Located in upstate NY, Soul Fire Farm has a unique mission to end "racism and injustice in our food system" ("Homepage" Soul Fire Farm, n.d.). In efforts to fulfill their mission, Soul Fire Farm has a concrete list of strategic goals (listed on the homepage of their

website) one of which is to train the next generation of farmers of color in the food system. They also work to reach low-income, disadvantaged and formerly incarcerated consumers.

In the producer category, Soul Fire Farm host two levels of programming aimed at farmer training that targets people of color (Category 1, Table 1). The first level of farmer training programming is known as the Black and Latinx Farmers Immersion (BLFI 1.0). This program is a 1-week intensive that introduces participants to farm and food systems issues by combining farm experience with skill building workshops on a variety of subjects like cooking, natural building, racial healing, and social justice within the food system (“Food Sovereignty Programs- Black and Latinx Farmers Immersion” Soul Fire Farm, n.d.). This program is intended to inspire and expose people of color to sustainable agriculture as well as promote racial healing in relation to food, farming and the land. As such, the program is restricted to participants who identify as (as the title implies) Black, Native, mixed race or Latinx, and is also exclusively taught by people and farmers of color (“Food Sovereignty Programs- Black and Latinx Farmers Immersion” Soul Fire Farm, n.d.). In addition, BLFI 1.0 provides flexible scheduling and a sliding scale payment plan. They run four, one week sessions throughout the summer to accommodate people’s varying schedules and provide onsite housing and allow for children if they are supervised at all times. They also offer a sliding scale model for their training with the suggested range of \$100-1,000 dollars.

The second level of programming offered is called Black and Latinx Farmers Immersion 2.0 (BLFI 2.0). Designed for more advanced students, this is 7-month farmer training program for aspiring farmers of color who have already completed 2,000 hours of farm work experience. The program offers more advanced farm related skill development and mentoring. Farm accommodations are provided, yet there is no mention of weekly time commitment, whether

participants are paid (or receive a stipend) and/or whether there are other costs associated with the program.

On the consumer side, Soul Fire Farm, like many of the other organizations described above, works both on increasing consumption within disadvantaged communities by providing affordable market access as well as education and skill building workshops (Categories 1 and 2, Table 2). On the market side, Soul Fire Farm provided some of the most detailed demographic information of any of the organizations I researched. In terms of people of color represented in consuming their produce, their CSA alone served 44% Black consumers, 27% Latino consumers, 23% Multiracial consumers, 10% Asian consumers and 1.4% Indigenous consumers. In addition, CSA customers have the ability to pay for their share using EBT/SNAP benefits and/or pay on a sliding scale. Another unique attribute of their CSA is that they do home delivery for every single share making access based on location a non-issue for isolated communities. In this way, they overcome the location access point and EBT/SNAP accessibility of Consumer Category 1 as well as the reduced cost (sliding scale) within the Consumer Category 3 (subsidies).

In addition to these market solutions, Soul Fire Farm also hosts a series of workshops and community events for youth and adults to engage them in topics like sustainable farming, cooking, and food justice (Category 2, Table 2). They also partner with local underserved schools as well as other youth groups in need to provide them with farms for tours and one day/few hour events. Next, I provide an analysis of inclusivity for this organization and its initiatives.

4.7.8. Soul Fire Farm Analysis

Soul Fire Farm is another example of a highly inclusive organization. As illustrated in more detail above, in relation to programming, they cultivate low-income producers of color, by

means of two out of the three categories displayed in Table 1. In addition, their work engages in all three of the consumer categories illustrated in Table 2.

As for antiracism, Soul Fire Farm demonstrates engagement across all three practices. In regards to this first practice, they have people of color involved in all aspects of leadership (staff, CEO, and board). As for the second practice, all of their programming creates an intentional space for black, native and latinx communities to heal from racialized food system trauma. In fact, cofounder Leah Penniman speaks regularly at events about the intentional antiracist mission Soul Fire Farm promotes and the need for structural, institutionalized change within and outside of the food system (Brent et al., 2015). Finally, in regards to the third practice, they are explicit and clear in their mission statement which seeks to end racism and injustice in the food system.

Soul Fire Farm also implements all three elements of Slocum and Cadieux's (2015b) food justice principles. First, they acknowledge the structural inequities low-income people of color face within the food system through their mission statement, and the language their founder uses, as stated above (principle 1). They also use their educational programs to raise awareness around the structural roots of inequities. Soul Fire Farm also engages the second of Slocum and Cadieux's (2015b) food justice principles, institutionalized reflexive, antiracist practice by creating a diverse and participatory staff and participant environment as evidenced in the design of their farmer training program. As for the third food justice principle that revolves around solidarity, Soul Fire Farm is one of the most engaged organizations within this practice. They not only state on their website that they work with many other local farms and organizations aimed at promoting antiracist practice and ending social injustice in the food system, but they also offer up the farm as a retreat space for other social justice oriented nonprofits. In this way, they support and network with others working to improve the lives of the participants and

communities Soul Fire Farm serves. Next, I introduce the first and only working farm included in my results, Patchwork City Farms.

4.7.9. Patchwork City Farms Results

The next data point in my research, Patchwork City Farms, also happens to be the only working farm (not nonprofit) that I included in my results. As such, unlike the organizations I examined, Patchwork City Farms does not offer any additional programming due to the time, financial and labor constraints of running a business. This farm is, however, run by producers of color, and they do have certain initiatives that cater to lower income consumers of color.

Based in Atlanta, Georgia, Patchwork City Farms is owned and operated by two women of color who live and farm in the lower income neighborhood they sell their produce to. As stated in farmer interviews, their explicit mission is to “uplift” the community they live and work in and show others by example that it is not only possible for black farmers to heal and reconnect to the land, but also to run a profitable farm business (“Cecilia Gatungo & Jamila Norman - Patchwork City Farms”, 2013). In addition to acting as an example and inspiration for other lower income people of color to become producers, Patchwork City Farms also acts to increase consumption patterns from this same demographic. For instance, they serve neighboring residents by selling at the farmers’ market located in the low-income community of color in which they farm and live. They also accept EBT/SNAP payments for their CSA shares, which are available for pick up at this same market (Category 1, Table 2). As part of a collaborative effort with SWAG (South West Atlanta Growers Cooperative), Patchwork City Farms enables their CSA customers paying with in a EBT/SNAP benefits to pay only 50% of the actual cost of the box.

Patchwork City Farms also offers non-market opportunities for youth and adult residents to learn more about growing one's own food through volunteering (Category 2, Table 2). In interviews, owner Jamila, mentioned time and again that she intentionally grows produce in a high need community to set an example and act as a resource for community members who are willing and interested in engaging in growing food in a sustainable manner. She especially tries to attract African American residents who have become disconnected from the land through painful farming histories ("Cecilia Gatungo & Jamila Norman - Patchwork City Farms", 2013). In this same interview, Jamila also describes how neighbors used to grow and trade food in their backyards not all that long ago, but that a lot was lost with the current generation that was encouraged to move away from this lifestyle. As such, Jamila hopes to inspire people to get reengaged in the process by welcoming community members to come help at the farm any day (after school until sunset), as well as on Saturdays. Lastly, Patchwork City Farms partners with local underserved schools to provide them with farms for tours and one day/few hour events. This is especially relevant as Patchwork's land is actually leased from local public middle school property. In collaboration with teachers, they even have a few plots reserved as a learning garden. Next I provide an inclusivity analysis for this farm.

4.7.10. Patchwork City Farms Analysis

Because Patchwork City Farms is the only working farm I looked at, it was difficult to compare their efforts to the other organizations I examined that had access to more funding and resources with which to work on equity issues. Despite this barrier, they still displayed a fairly high degree of inclusivity across programmatic, antiracist, and food justice frameworks. As far as programmatic inclusivity for low-income people of color hoping to be producers, Patchwork City Farms only matched into one category (Category 3, Table 1). This again can largely be

attributed to the fact that they are not a nonprofit with programming but instead a working farm. Their initiatives were, however, included in all three of the consumer categories (see Table 2).

In terms of antiracist practice, like Soul Fire Farm, Patchwork illustrates engagement in all three practices. In regards to the first practice, both owners are women of color. As for the second and third practices, in multiple video clips the owners acknowledge the the role racism has played in the food system and the need for particularly black communities to heal from trauma before entering into agriculture again (“Cecilia Gatungo & Jamila Norman - Patchwork City Farms”, 2013). In fact, they mention many times both in these video clips and on their website that healing form the historic trauma of slavery is a big part of what drives them to farm in an urban, visible environment, hoping to inspire other to do the same. Finally, in analyzing Patchwork City Farms in terms of radical food justice they are actively involved in two out of three of Slocum and Cadieux’s (2015b) food justice principles. As I mentioned above, the owners of this farm acknowledge the structural inequities present in the food system (particularity in regards to race) through their own experiences and through those of others and recognize this is a barrier for many people of color to engage in sustainable agriculture (principle 1). Second, as African American business owners, they practice reflexive, antiracist practice (principle 2). There is not, however, any mention of engagement in the third food justice principle of public acts of solidarity. The next organization presented is Food What?!

4.7.11. Food What?!

Another organization I looked at in my research is Food What?! Based in Santa Cruz, California, Food What?! is primarily a youth empowerment and food justice focused nonprofit organization, yet they also work to increase access to healthy, sustainably raised food in disadvantaged communities. They do not intentionally work to support low-income people of

color to become producers (although this could be a byproduct of some of their youth programming). Instead, they work more on the consumer side with marketing and education.

In terms of increasing food access in resource-poor communities, Food What?! hosts two affordable community farm stands at schools within Santa Cruz county (Category 1, Table 2). They do not specify whether or not they are EBT/SNAP accessible, but their locations are within the neighborhoods in which low-income consumers and consumers of color reside, making them accessible in this way. In addition, Food What?!, provides food access through their youth programming (Category 2, Table 2). Each of the youth involved in their programming, for instance, receives a free weekly CSA bag to take home and share with their families. In addition, their youth interns work to maintain school garden sites throughout Santa Cruz County at high need schools, while school is out of session. This effort also enables free healthy food access for youth at the schools whose gardens they maintain.

As for education and skill building workshops, Food What?! primarily does this through internships and job training programming that target underserved high school aged youth. Through these programs, Food What?! gives youth job experience, as well as exposes them to many different parts of the food system such as growing, cooking, eating, food justice and community empowerment. In fact their summer session even includes structural racism and anti-oppression training in topics like labor rights in the food system and the embodiment of racial healing (“About Us-Annual Report,” Food What?!, 2015). Next, I analyze this organization and its initiatives in terms of inclusivity.

4.7.12. Food What?! Analysis

Food What?!₂ like ALBA₂ was still fairly inclusive of low-income people of color given its limited organizational focus. Since this organization exclusively focuses on serving youth it

displays limited programmatic inclusivity, but still a high degree of inclusivity in terms of antiracist and food justice practices. As such, because this organization does not work with adults, nor does it have the intent of training youth to become farmers, its work did not fall into any of the producer categories of programmatic inclusivity and was therefore not included in Table 1. On the consumer side, however, their work falls into all three categories as illustrated by Table 2.

As far as antiracism, their work engages in all three of the practices I analyzed. They engage in the first practice by cultivating youth leadership among their students who come from low-income communities of color and by hiring junior staff from this diverse and underserved demographic. In addition, they have board members who are people of color. They engage in the second practice by hosting workshops for their youth that tackle trauma healing and anti-oppression work. Finally, they engage in the third practice by explicitly calling out racism and its role in the food system in the food justice classes they teach to their students.

As for radical food justice, Food What?! engages two out of the three principles. For instance, they acknowledge that there are structural inequities that impact food access for low-income communities of color by offering progressive food justice solutions like subsidized market solutions (EBT) in high need communities as well as providing their own youth with free bags of food (principle 1). As for the second food justice principle, they institutionalize reflexivity and antiracist practice by cultivating leaders of color as described above. They do not, however, work on the third principle of engaging in solidarity with other social justice organizations. The next and final organization I present in my research is Phat Beets.

4.7.12. Phat Beets Results

The final organization I included in my research is Phat Beets. Based in Oakland, CA Phat Beets, like Food What?!, is a nonprofit organization that primarily runs youth programming around food and agriculture. While they do not operate any farmer training program, they do support producers of color in other ways. In addition, they engage in a variety of programming to assist low-income communities of color in engaging in the sustainable agriculture movement as consumers.

The first way in which they support producers is through their CSA program which prioritizes buying from “small, organic and spray free farmers of color” (“ORDER CSA – Order a Beet Box CSA” Phat Beets, n.d.). In this way, they provide a form of financial support to these growers with the goal of sustaining local farm businesses owned by people of color (Category 2, Table 1). It is also through their CSA program that they are able to support low-income consumers of color who might not ordinarily have access to (location) or be able to afford a full priced CSA box. Known as a “beet box” Phat Beet’s CSA program matches EBT/SNAP customers’ purchase so that they only pay ½ of the full CSA price (Category 3, Table 2). As an added bonus, members within a 1-mile radius of the high-school-run youth farm that Phat Beets collaborates with receive free delivery (“ORDER CSA – Order a Beet Box CSA” Phat Beets, n.d.).

Another market based method through which Phat Beets works with lower income consumers of color, is by offering farm stands at medical clinics that serve patients suffering from diet related diseases. At these markets Phat Beets conducts a prescription vegetable program called “beet bucks” through which patients are given vouchers (or prescriptions) for vegetables fillable at any Phat Beets farm stand. In addition, at one market each week, every

patient receives produce entirely free of cost. Each of Phat Beets farm stands is also a part of the Market Match program through which EBT/SNAP customer's purchases are matched up to \$10.

A final way in which they engage low-income consumers of color is through educational programming (Category 2, Table 2). Phat Beets, like organizations mentioned above (Food What?! and Growing Power), provides paid job opportunities for underserved high school aged youth. Through their internship program they expose youth to growing, cooking, eating, as well as food justice and youth development activities. They even run some programming to help overweight teens work towards a healthier body weight through rekindling a relationship to cooking, eating, and growing food. Next, I provide inclusivity analysis for this organization and its initiatives.

4.7.13. Phat Beets Analysis

Similar to Food What?! Phat Beet's focused mission limits this organization's engagement in programmatic inclusivity in terms of producers. Despite this limitation, however, this organization still displays high levels of inclusivity within the programmatic activity in regards to consumers as well as within antiracist and food justice frameworks of analysis. In terms of programmatic inclusivity, similar to Food What?!, Phat Beets is primarily a youth empowerment organization and therefore they are also not engaged in cultivating new producers. One of their programs (CSA) does, however, support existing farmers of color (Category 2), which is why they are included in Table 1. In addition, this organization does a lot of work with low-income consumers of color as illustrated by their presence in all three categories with Table 2.

In respect to promoting antiracism, Phat Beets engages in all three practices. They engage in the first practice through their youth programming which creates leadership positions for low-

income youth of color. They may also do cultivating leadership positions within their staff but I was unable to find any information about any of their staff and/or board members. As for the second principle and third practices relating to trauma and racism, they advance these practices by hosting the Decolonize Your Diet! Workshop series, which they helped develop along with a few other organizations (“Get Involved – Decolonize Your Diet! Workshop Series” Phat Beets, n.d.). Through a variety of lessons, this curriculum helps to explain some of the historic and institutionalized ways unhealthy food and eating habits disproportionately impacts low-income people of color in the United States.

Finally, in terms of radical food justice, Phat Beets also engages in all three of Slocum and Cadieux’s (2015b) food justice principles. This organization utilizes the first principle—acknowledging the presence of structural inequality in lower income communities of color—throughout a lot of their work. This is perhaps best illustrated through the curriculum they use in their youth programming called “Decolonize your diet,” which focuses on addressing racism and oppression in the food movement (“Get Involved-Decolonize your Diet Workshop Series”, Phat Beets, n.d.). Another very interesting way in which they acknowledge structural inequity is through some of the non-food work that they do.

In terms of the second principle, unlike other organizations I was unable to find any information about their staff and/or leadership. However, I considered them to incorporate institutionalized reflexive antiracist practice because of their lengthy statements about issues facing communities of color that they clearly consider priorities as well as the workshops series described above. Finally, they also engage very thoroughly in public solidarity work, the third of Slocum and Cadieux’s (2015b) food justice principles. For example, they have a statement on their website that clearly explains their position on affordable housing and the process of

gentrification (“About- Phat Beets Position on Gentrification” Phat Beets, n.d.). In addition, they also sit on a restorative justice council and host monthly meetings with residents to discuss how to improve community safety. These meetings tackle a variety of safety topics from violence and policing, to public education and economic development that does not displace residents (“Organizing- Building Community Safety: Get Organized” Phat Beets, n.d.). These examples clearly illustrate how Phat Beets understands and the social justice issues faced by the population they serve within and outside of food system. Their solidarity work addresses many of the nonfood related needs of the population they serve and is perhaps the clearest example of this practice out of any of the organizations I researched. Next I summarize contributions and conclusions drawn from my research.

4.3 Contributions

My research addressed initiatives within the sustainable agriculture movement that work to incorporate low-income people of color as producers and consumers because I wanted to learn how this movement is being inclusive of this population in order to help readers understand how food system actors can incorporate just, inclusive, and anti-racist practices into their work so that they can advocate for strategies that achieve a more equitable food system. I explored inclusivity by studying strategies food systems actors implement in order to better engage this demographic, as well as the extent to which they engage in antiracist practices and radical food justice principles. This work reminds readers of the continued need to work toward social justice within and outside of the food system by highlighting the need to prevent the alternative food movement from repeating the injustices of the conventional agricultural model, and society as a whole.

Each organizations and/or farm included in my research had some degree of engagement with at least two of the three frameworks I used in my analysis. While some clearly engaged more thoroughly in programmatic inclusivity, some in antiracist practice, and still others in food justice principles, all of them engaged in more than one of these frameworks. While this study is limited in various ways, which I will described below, these results leave me with hope that while the sustainable agriculture movement in many ways is a white dominated space there are change efforts underway. In my concluding thoughts I would like to acknowledge some common trends that emerged from my results and analysis. While overall I found a very high level of engagement in all three of the frameworks I used in my analysis there were, however, areas of reduced engagement as well as some trends that I would like to point out below.

In the first framework of analysis that looked at the programmatic level of inclusivity, overall results were pretty well distributed amongst all categories. Nevertheless, to be thorough, I will outline a few of the outliers. In terms of producer engagement strategies, the most underrepresented category, which displayed two or fewer results (or less than half of the six organizations), was paid job training. In fact, the only organization utilizing this strategy was Planting Justice. In addition, using this same definition of underrepresentation, there were two organizations that engaged in only one producer engagement category. They were Phat Beets and Patchwork City Farms. As indicated in my finding above, in the case of Phat Beets, this was because of the limited focus this organization has on training and supporting producers. As for Patchwork farms, this was a reflection of the fact that they are a working farm without nonprofit resources to devote to cultivating other producers of color. Second, as far as consumer engagement strategies the most underrepresented categories, which displayed three or fewer results (or less than half of the seven organizations), were matching funds (from category 3:

subsidies) and garden installation and training (from category 2: education and skill building). In addition, all but one organization was engaged in three or more strategy categories. This organization was ALBA, which as my findings indicated can be primarily explained by the fact that working with consumers is not the primary focus of this organization.

In regards to the other two frameworks I used, the following overall trends were observed. In terms of antiracism, each practice was engaged by at least half of the organizations and/or farms studied. Nevertheless, the least represented practice defined by engaging only four of the seven organizations or farms was the second practice—helping participants to heal from historic trauma. Similarly, in terms of food justice, every principle engaged at least half of the organizations and/or farms studied. The least represented principle, also defined by engaging only four of the seven organizations and/or farms, was the third principle—speaking out in solidarity with other social justice advocates. While I am able to point out these discrepancies, the limitations of my study prevent me from analyzing the reasoning behind these trends. This limitation is discussed below.

Although my research points out some of the important ways the sustainable agriculture movement is being inclusive of low-income people of color, the approach I took is also limited in many ways. Conducting nonobtrusive research methods for instance, barred me from gathering the most up to date information directly from the organizations I looked at through means like participant surveys. In addition, the information I collected from academic sources was also limited by the work previous scholars had or had not conducted on the organizations and/or farms I looked at. As such, my research methods prevented me from being able to indicate the efficacy of these efforts due to lack of data. Therefore, my first question is, how effective are the approaches I studied at ensuring organizations within the sustainable agriculture movement

are being inclusive of low-income communities of color, and how can this be measured? For example, while Erika Allen (2010) of Growing Power clearly referenced this organization's commitment to authentically doing what is best for the participants they aim to serve, I have a lot of questions about how this can be done. What are best practices around ensuring low-income communities of color are involved in the development of programming that could benefit them without tokenizing a few individuals? How do you get people suffering from multiple social inequalities to care about sustainable food and farming above other more pressing concerns like affordable housing, health care and unemployment? In addition, though I analyzed the extent to which the organizations and/or farms I studied incorporated the three levels of inclusivity I utilized in my analysis, I did not explore what mechanisms allowed them to do so. Conversely, I did not consider the factors that might limit their engagement/motivations in pursuing them. Therefore, a second question that emerged from my research is, what allows each organization/farm to create and sustain programming, and/or antiracist and food justice practices?

Finally, I also found limited data regarding what best practices exist around inclusivity in regards to incorporating low-income people of color within the sustainable agriculture movement. While some of what I found shaped the frameworks I created, I sometimes felt as though I was pulling loose ends together. For example, there was a lack of clarity around how to put some of the antiracist practice and food justice principle concepts into practice. For instance, I had challenges with regards to the first food justice principle, the acknowledgement of the structural causes of inequities that impact low-income communities of color. While throughout the research process I certainly found multiple sources that highlighted the importance of acknowledging these inequities as structural and not individual in nature, I found limited

literature around how to practically dismantle these inequities. While my data and analysis included clear suggestions of practices aimed at overcoming racism on a social level for instance, there was little to no mention about how to tackle political, economic, and institutional forces that maintain and uphold racism. Furthermore, structural change is generally challenging to understand and actualize. Though many of the authors I read identified its importance, I did not find anyone who specifically explained how to impact political, social and economic structures in a fundamental and transformative way.

In addition, I also had challenges in regards to the second food justice principle, which called for institutionalizing reflective antiracist practice. For instance, while I did my best to interpret what I thought this meant, which was primarily expressed through the promotion of leadership of color throughout my analysis, I also felt this term could mean so much more. If authors like Holt-Gimenez and Harper (2016) or others in future work further defined what this looks like in practice, it would be very helpful. Knowing how to implement antiracist and food justice concepts practically, and finding impactful examples of people and/or organizations that have done so, has the potential to make it much easier for food systems practitioners to contribute to social change. Therefore, another future area of study I would suggest is the creation of more concrete practical suggestions nonprofit and/or movement farms can incorporate into their work. The next and final chapter will recapitulate my work and iterate some closing thoughts.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As a young farmer and activist of color describes in her most recent work *The Color of Food*, Natasha Bowens was both disillusioned and discouraged by the lack of black and brown faces in the sustainable food and farming movement. Upon closer inspection, however, she realized that the mainstream portrayal of this movement that almost exclusively highlights young, white growers is both misleading and false, and that there are indeed many farmers of color farming sustainably outside of the spotlight. Her point of view is best illustrated by the following quote.

I was looking at the food and agriculture movement through the lens that most do: a lens that show us that healthy food is for people with certain incomes, who live in certain neighborhoods and have certain skin tones; a lens that show us a monochrome picture of who small, organic farmers are; a lens that promotes books and documentaries on farming and good food from an exclusive community of authors, directors and film subjects; a lens that only points to farmer of color when highlighting statistics about their rapid land loss and plummeting census numbers; and a lens that only shows black and brown faces when talking about farm labor and food shortages. (Bowens, 2015, p. 215-216)

This clear and powerful description highlights the dominant role the image of upper/middle class white consumers and producers play within the sustainable agriculture movement.

I must admit, in the beginning of my research process I too fell into this trap, buying into this lens Bowens (2015) describes and wondering where all of the farmers of color were in this movement. In fact, I designed my research around this assumption.

My research addressed initiatives within the sustainable agriculture movement that work to incorporate low-income people of color as producers and consumers because I wanted to learn how this movement is being inclusive of this population in order to help readers understand how food system actors can incorporate just, inclusive, and anti-racist practices into their work so that

they can advocate for strategies that achieve a more equitable food system. In order to do this, my first research question asked, how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as producers? My second research question asked, how is the sustainable agriculture movement being inclusive of low-income people of color as consumers? Using these questions as a guide, I first explored the strategies food systems actors are implementing on a programmatic level in order to better engage low-income people of color. My hope was that my results would help to highlight best practices for inclusion. In order to augment this analysis, I also looked at the extent to which these organizations and/or farms applied antiracist practices (Holt-Gimenez and Harper, 2016) and radical food justice principles (Slocum and Cadieux, 2015b) to their work. The intention behind these added layers of analysis was to broaden this goal of inclusion, recognizing that just seeking to include people of color as participants does not in itself help to create a more diverse and inclusive movement. Instead, organizational practices, awareness and culture must also be considered.

My results indicate that many of the organizations and/or farms that I studied not only utilize initiatives that are inclusive, but they also create organizational cultures of putting antiracist practice and radical food justice principles into action. However, results also indicated that no organization was fully engaged in all three forms of inclusive practice. This is of course an area of growth, as well as an opportunity for future research that might indicate reasons behind this trend. In addition, I was limited in my ability to assess the efficacy of these strategies and/or whether or not they could be considered best practices due to the implementation of nonobtrusive research methods as well as limited available data. This again is an area in which scholars and practitioners may want to consider engaging in more research. Finally, my research also indicated that further clarifying certain antiracist and radical food justice practices like

acknowledging the impact structural inequalities (like racism) have on people of color, could help to further drive social change work.

In closing, as Maya Wiley (2013), president and founder of the Center for Social Inclusion, so eloquently describes, the most effective way for activists and change makers to advance a more equitable food system is by finding solidarity with other movements trying to dismantle institutionalized inequities present throughout our political, social and economic systems. Wiley (2013) claims we are stronger and more effective together, and uses a farming analogy to call this important work “cross pollination”. Interestingly enough, this concept has great synergy with the third food justice principle I implemented as a framework for analysis. Similar to Wiley (2013), I have come to believe that food justice work is just one means through which to advance a more equitable society. Yet, the food movement cannot accomplish this task on its own, or in a vacuum. Instead, in order to contribute toward this larger necessary change, food systems actors must create and articulate a coherent plan through which to collaborate with other movements fighting for social justice. Together we must organize, strategize and take action to create long-lasting, structural social change for the benefit of all people.

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