

Action/Research Team Instructions

Going Local: Capitalizing on Our Resources in St. Lawrence County

This part of the symposium is where you have an opportunity to reflect on what you've heard and seen so far and discuss existing strengths as well as opportunities for initiatives and businesses in your assigned sector. As you think about suggesting specific action items, please consider the following:

1. Refine the list of “assets” in your sector

Starting with Michael Shuman's list of assets for your sector, how would you refine and expand that list? In other words, what do you see as the real strengths of St. Lawrence County? What do we already have that would support the expansion of local business? Think about things like land, labor, capital, and technology. What kinds of local businesses are already in place? What other kinds of assets—social, political, environmental, even spiritual—does the County have that could be used to support local business?

2. Refine the list of “indicators” for your sector

We must identify measures of economic, social and environmental strengths and weaknesses that can be used to assess growth over a period of years. In the beginning, these indicators will define our current situation, and then we can use them to monitor progress over time. What do you believe are the best indicators of progress for your sector? Look over the list of indicators provided by Michael Shuman as a starting point. You can select the ones you think are most useful, delete some, and/or propose new ones that reflect your own sense of what would measure “progress” for St. Lawrence County. The ones you select will depend on what you think is important for our local area—what should we be measuring?

3. Consider “Leakages”

What goods and services are local businesses and consumers buying now in your sector from the outside that could be produced inside the County? For example, if we produce 50,000 chickens annually in our county, and consume 500,000 chickens here annually, should we consider finding ways to encourage more chicken farms?

4. New ideas?

Given the assets and leakages, please brainstorm a list of the kinds of initiatives and businesses you would recommend forming. Think about initiatives and businesses that would boost the indicators, and that align with your standards for environmental-friendliness and quality of life issues.

5. What is needed for initiatives and businesses to succeed?

- What do we already know about them?
- What additional information do we need?
- What kinds of projects, in the community, the research lab, or the classroom might enable you to gather that additional information?
- What additional resources and support might be needed?
- What government regulations govern such things? (e.g., what are the regulations about chicken farms?) Are there government subsidies to support the idea? (e.g., chicken-farming subsidies?)
- If we decide to market a product or service locally, do you expect it would all be consumed in the local market or would some of it be exported? (e.g., if we start chicken farms, would it only be to satisfy the local market or also for export?)

Initiative/Business Idea Template

Action/Research Team on Sector _____

Convener(s) for 2003-2004 _____

Working Title of Initiative or Business Idea: _____

(Complete a separate template for each idea for 2003-2004)

What we already know about this topic:

Additional information we need:

Community projects to gather info:

Research needed to gather info:

School/college projects to gather info:

Additional resources and support needed:

Known government regulations and/or subsidies: