



The Intersection Food Justice & Racial Justice: Focus Forward

Brought to you by: Minnesota Department of Agriculture through the Good Food Access Fund
– Technical Assistance program in partnership with Region Five Development Commission

Grounding & Intros

We must ground ourselves in the history of how dominant impacts the culture in our food system. These impacts are deeper in disenfranchised communities. That trauma is real and valid.

Overview

Attendees Intro: **Name & What role do you play in the food system?**

Agenda

Workshop objective

- Please **type** your intros in the chat (Accessibility)



AGENDA

We are in this together!

Intros - 5 mins

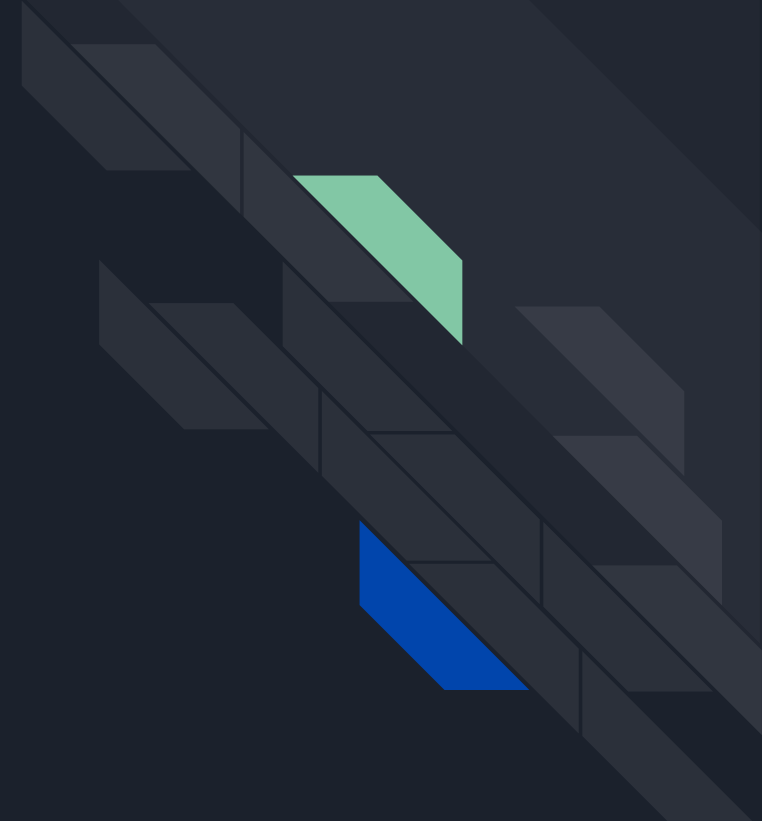
Objective - 5 mins

History & Panel - 15 mins

Video - 2 mins

Q & A - 30 mins

Closing



History of our Food System

NOT Black History

WHY is the issue of RACE even an “issue” for humans?

- Race as Social construct
- American CASTE system the supports oppression based on physical characteristics.

In the 1880's, Black farmers suffered the most in the economic downturn and organized themselves into the Colored Farmers' Alliance. The organization promoted economic self-sufficiency and racial 'uplift' through vocational training, at the expense of demands for political equality.



THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE

- Originated in 1875 in Lampasas County, Texas.
- States that were a part of the National Farmers' Alliance



The Farmers' Alliance, 1887. (National Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska)

History of our Food System

The Homestead Act of 1862 provided free land to settlers. To earn 160 free acres, settlers had to live on and **farm** the land for five years. This brought 75,000 people, mostly from Europe, to **Minnesota** within three years. The new homesteaders plowed the prairie soil and planted crops, creating many small family **farms**.

What did that mean for Black Farmers? - USDA Socially Disadvantaged Farmers & Ranchers

Caste System - Research Carl Linnean

Chattel slavery impacted originations of many of these agricultural practices.

Scientific struggle. WHY is race and equality we have to fight for?

Industrialization and Urbanization (19th Century)

In 1790, 95 percent of American families lived in rural areas. Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, many Americans moved to urban areas, seeking new jobs created by the Industrial Revolution. By 1900, 40 percent of Americans lived in cities.

To meet the growing urban demands caused by this population shift, food producers increased output, often using industrialized methods of mass production.

INDUSTRIALIZED FOOD SYSTEM

Food has been weaponized against poor people.

The importance of FOOD ACCESS



Our History of Resilience

1920's - CREDJFAAWN = Coop



Farmers' Institute, Kerkhoven, Minnesota, in Swift County, 1913.



The Great Depression (1930s)

While the economic fallout of the Great Depression was felt throughout the United States and around the world, it also profoundly affected American agriculture.

Donald Worster (1979) argues that the **Dust Bowl** and the Great Depression occurred simultaneously because they were both products of the same American society, culturally oriented toward rampant expansionism, which destroyed balance, both economically and ecologically. During the 1930s, this imbalance was evident as the strained soil of the southern plains in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico turned from profitable wheat production to dust.



History of our Food System

World War I and II (1914-1918 and 1939-1945)

The World Wars required civilians to temporarily modify eating practices, changes that transformed the American diet and food system. During WW I, the US government encouraged civilians—often through posters—to consume more fresh foods, such as produce, eggs, and dairy products, whose perishable nature made them unsuitable for shipment to the warfront (Freidberg 2009: L. 513).

This wartime promotion played a role in changing how Americans ate long-term and created consumer need and desire for kitchen equipment that maintained the freshness of perishable foods (Freidberg 2009: L. 556). As a result, home refrigerator sales increased considerably between the wars, from 8 percent in the 1920s to 44 percent by 1940 (Nickles 2002: 696).

During WW II, the military food machine developed new foods for soldiers, such as Spam, dehydrated potatoes, and powdered orange juice. At the war's end with no more troops to feed, the food industry sought new markets, taking aim at the American housewife.



History of our Food System

The Counterculture (1960s and 1970s)

Black Panther Party founded 1966

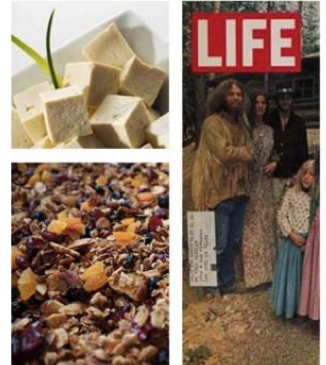
BLACK PANTHER PARTY
FREE BREAKFAST
50TH ANNIVERSARY
revolution is a process, not an event!



Motivated by a perfect storm of political, social, and environmental strife in the late 1960s, the counterculture took on the food industry, bringing the movement's broader political and ecological agenda to the dinner table.

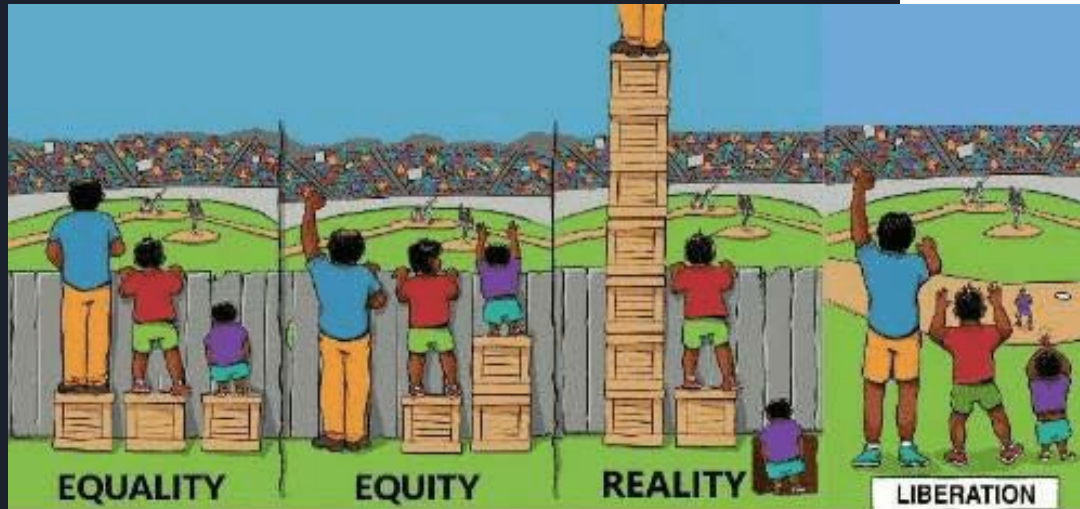
The hippie foods of the countercuisine—characterized by “the oppositional language of...natural vs. plastic, white vs. brown, process vs. processed, fast vs. slow, light vs. heavy” (Belasco [1989] 2007: 104)—eventually went mainstream. In this process, certain elements of the countercuisine survived in tact, others were modified and combined, while still others disappeared entirely. Today's health foods—from granola to tofu—as well as organic agriculture, the greater availability of ethnic cuisine, and more widespread concern for ecology, green living, and global warming all have roots in the counterculture.

This led to 1980's Healthism



What is meant by Racial Equity?

Definition from Equity in Policy



Racial equity invites us to consider how being a person of color shapes their sense of agency and quality of life. Racial equity is the quality of fairness in systems that determine treatment, access, opportunities, and advancement of individuals or groups regardless of their racial identity or affiliation. Racial equity is achieved when “race is no longer a determinant of socio-economic outcomes and life opportunities” (Race Forward).

This is an understanding of racial equity based on shifting more power to people of color (rather than simply including them) and that focuses on changes to decision-making, leadership and operational organization.

Local & Statewide Efforts

- MN Food Charter Resources - [Healthy Equity Guide](#)
- Developing clear Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Goals
- Implementing Equity reference





PANEL DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS PRESENTED BY THE GROUP:

How is our central MN food system impacted by historic and current racism?

How am I personally impacted?

What is my role?

Why has it been difficult to construct an external communication addressing racism on behalf of my organization?

What are the real and perceived barriers / repercussions?

What would it look like to become an anti-racist organization or business?

How can we begin to envision an equitable food economy?

These questions were generated by Food Access Points and their interest in dialogue about the intersection of food justice and racial justice, and helped shape the focus of this workshop.

PANELIST: (bios)

J. DeVon Nolen - Moderator - West Broadway Farmers Market

La'Taijah Powell - Appetite for Change

Marcus Kar- YouthFarm

Closing

Short Videos produced by Marcus Kar:

Link: <https://youtu.be/AECK5rC3j0I>

Link: <https://youtu.be/a9hXnmc6AC0>

Link: <https://youtu.be/PsOOMbrPJP8>





Q & A:

QUESTIONS PRESENTED BY THE GROUP:

How is our central MN food system impacted by historic and current racism?

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What is my role?

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What would it look like to become an anti-racist organization or business?

How can we begin to envision an equitable food economy?

What do you see as next steps for your organization to foster equity & inclusion?

- Please type your response in the chat or if your preference is to speak directly let the moderator know.



Cited Sources:

<https://foodsystemhistory.wordpress.com/timeline/>

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<https://www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/racial-equity-implementation-guide-food-hubs>

<https://www.history.com/news/free-school-breakfast-black-panther-party>

https://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Linnaean_taxonomy

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colored_Farmers%27_National_Alliance_and_Cooperative_Union

<http://mnfoodcharter.com/resources/>



Thank you!

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