Berkeley Food Institute
2014 End-of-Year Progress Report

Food is proving to be a remarkable catalyst at the University of California, Berkeley, bringing together many people from multiple disciplines to address critical social, environmental, and economic problems and opportunities tied to food and agriculture. The Berkeley Food Institute at UC Berkeley (BFI) has made significant progress over the calendar year 2014, achieving many accomplishments in its main program areas. BFI has also gained increasing visibility, impact and recognition, both in the UC system and in the broader community, from local to global levels.

This a summary of BFI’s progress and achievements in the 2014 calendar year, and it includes highlights of organizational development and communications, as well as program accomplishments in research, education, policy, and community engagement.

Organizational Development and Communications

BFI’s mission is to support transformative changes in food systems, to promote diversity, justice, resilience, and health. The Institute envisions a world in which all people have access to nutritious and affordable food that is sustainably and justly produced – ensuring healthy people and a healthy planet.

Programs Areas: BFI creates and supports linkages between research, education, policy, and practitioners that pertain to our mission. The main strategies that BFI is implementing are:

- **Research**: Conducting and supporting research that is interdisciplinary, innovative, collaborative, and aimed to affect change in policy or practices
- **Education**: Developing unique educational opportunities to advance knowledge and problem-solving in food systems
- **Policy**: Fostering links between research and policy, to inform and/or communicate with policy-makers
- **Practice/Community**: Collaborating and engaging with community initiatives, practitioners, and public efforts to support diverse, just, resilient, and healthy food systems

**People**: BFI’s mission and programs have attracted hundreds of people and organizations who have become involved and interested in BFI’s educational events, research, community engagement projects, and other activities. BFI has 103 Affiliated Faculty and staff (as of December 2014), and has engaged with faculty and staff in all of the major schools partners of BFI (Public Health, Public Policy, Natural Resources, Journalism, and Law), as well as from other disciplines and departments such as Business, Environmental Design, Engineering, and Letters and Sciences (including Anthropology, Sociology, and others). See Appendix for BFI’s faculty “Knowledge Map.”

**Staff Team and Executive Committee**: BFI’s directors, including Executive Director L. Ann Thrupp, and Faculty Co-Directors Claire Kremen and Alastair Iles, have continued to provide leadership and program development. Program Manager Rosalie Z. Fanshel was hired in January 2014, and is responsible for a wide array of administrative and program activities; and Graduate student researchers Nora Gilbert and
Aileen Suzara helped develop research, educational, and community engagement activities. Undergraduate work-study students Stella Kim and Catherine Vo were also vital members of the BFI team. The Executive Committee, comprised of members from the partnering colleges and schools and two founding donors, has continued to meet monthly to provide advice and input to BFI staff. In 2014 we continued to have renowned Visiting Fellows, as noted later in this report, and will have two new distinguished Visiting Fellows in Spring 2015. BFI continues to serve as a hub, facilitating communication and interaction among many people at UC Berkeley, as well as diverse stakeholders outside of the campus.

**Themes**: BFI’s work can be clustered into the several main themes or foci, which are portrayed below:
- Sustainable Agriculture and Ecosystems
- Policy and Justice
- Economics and Business
- Society and Culture

In addition, **Health** is recognized as a central thread or theme, since food systems interact with the health of individuals, of society, the economy, farms, and the planet.

These themes in food systems coincide with expertise existing at UC Berkeley, and they link to issues that are urgent for social and public policy needs. In each these areas, BFI is focusing on key topics that are particularly urgent; and we are aiming for outcomes to support transformative change.

**Communications**: BFI continues to improve and update its website, and has substantially expanded content on centers, faculty affiliates, events, and other programs. We update the Facebook page and post occasionally on Twitter. BFI has an extensive and growing list of contacts, which includes hundreds of diverse stakeholders that are both outside and inside the University. BFI sends out weekly e-newsletters – which is read at a rate of over twice the industry average – and continues ongoing outreach and expansion of our contact list. BFI is developing a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system, and identified a consultant in December who will help customize our CRM in January 2015. In Spring 2015 a new Graduate Student, Dani Lee, will join BFI as Communications Assistant. BFI is also engaged in many partnership activities, including interaction with the UC Global Food Initiative, explained in the final section of this report.
Summary Table: Overview of Programs: The table below lists programs that BFI has implemented in the past year. (The majority of these will be continued and expanded in future years.) The headings for the table show the main interrelated strategies. The following pages summarize progress and impacts in Research, Education, Policy, and Practice/Community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>RESEARCH</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>PRACTICE/COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants for interdisciplinary action-oriented research; integrate research into policy agenda, outreach, and practice/action; expand grant program to scale up influence</td>
<td>BFI symposia and action-oriented workshops for researchers, educators, policy makers, and community on timely topics like Food Policy (SNAP) and social movements with practitioners; link to policy issues</td>
<td>Visiting Fellows Program; Faculty Seminars</td>
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<td>Food Exchange Series and DFS Roundtable</td>
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<td>Edible Education Course</td>
<td>Growing Green Awards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collaboration with national and international forums and policy initiatives on food system change</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Develop Undergraduate Food Systems Minor</td>
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<td>Policy Program: two-way linking of BFI/UC Berkeley research to policy makers; produce policy briefs</td>
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<td>Supportive role in development of an Urban Agro-Ecology Center</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Internship Program in Food Systems; connection to Undergraduate Food Systems Minor</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Grad Student Fellowships</td>
<td>Support Student Groups’ activities (small grants)</td>
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<td>Public campaign on food and/or federal food policy</td>
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• **Survey of Urban Farms to Address Agroecological Problems and Needs**: Altieri (ESPM) and Pallud (ESPM), together with community groups, analyzed typical problems that urban growers face through a survey of about 20 urban farms in the East Bay. The survey identified some major challenges, including soil quality and insect issues, as well as land tenure and economic concerns. In the next stage of the project, researchers will identify and establish agroecological approaches to resolve these problems.

• **Increasing Access to Nutritious Food Sources through Urban Foraging**: Stark (Statistics) and Carlson (Integrative Biology) have begun an innovative study of the identification and distribution of “wild” foraged foods (i.e., weeds like dandelion and purslane) in urban areas of the East Bay, developed computer-assisted mapping tools, and trained students in plant identification and evaluation of the prevalence of these foraged foods. This project has received media attention from the San Francisco Chronicle and UC Media Center. The next stage of the research will include nutritional and toxicological evaluations of the foraged plants.

• **Using a Human Rights Approach to Overcome Labor Injustices in the Food Industry**: Fletcher (Law), and Jayaraman (Food Labor Research Center) are evaluating restaurants’ common practice of paying subminimum wage to tipped workers through a human rights framework, to document how this subminimum wage contravenes international human rights conventions, and to harness international legal standards for advocacy efforts on behalf of the workers. The project combines legal research and interviews that can help develop policy recommendations.

• **Food Stamp Policy (SNAP) Reforms and Potential Restrictions, Related to Health and Nutrition**: Laraia (Public Health) with Crawford (Public Health), Echaveste (Law), and Hoynes (Public Policy) organized a workshop with policy analysts and academic researchers in May to discuss the potential effects of restricting purchases of certain foods and benefits on SNAP participants. The workshop helped to design demonstration project of the restrictions at the county level.

• **Participatory Mapping with Farmworker and Farmer Families in Salinas**: DeMaster (ESPM) with Parikh (Information), Jensen (Geography), and others are fostering dialogues about the food system between scholars, community actors, and agricultural producers through participatory mapping approaches of food system supply chains in the Salinas area. This project has revealed that producers’ priority concerns are related to access to land, and information on land prices.

Most of the projects will be completed by mid-2015, and all five of these project teams will be allowed the extensions through 2016, if justified. BFI will hold a forum in May 2015 for the teams to report results, and will help communicate the results to the public, policy-makers and media.

2. **Seed Grants Proposals Solicited and Planned for 2015**

The UC Berkeley Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research committed funding to BFI’s research programs in 2014-2015. In October BFI announced another RFP for new seed grants for the 2015 year. The criteria for selection are similar to the previous year, and the maximum amount for each grant will be $25,000. The applications were due in late November, and 18 proposals were received from multiple disciplines, covering a wide diversity of relevant topics. The review committee convened in December 2014 and the final selection of six research projects will be announced in early January.

3. **Diversified Farming Systems and Agroecology Research**

Since 2014, BFI hosts the Center for Diversified Farming Systems (CDFS), a research hub that examines how different forms of agriculture along a spectrum of diversification affect human societies and the environment. This group is making large strides in developing two comprehensive research projects that exemplify the link between research and policy/practice:

- Effects of food safety scares and regulations on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and livelihoods
- Quantifying a suite of farming practices on ecosystem services and economics, aimed to inform
A group of the CDFS researchers, led by Claire Kremen, was given notice that they will tentatively be awarded a competitive $500,000 grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the USDA.

4. Food Labor Research

In 2014 the Food Labor Research Center (FLRC) at UC Berkeley formally affiliated with the Berkeley Food Institute. During 2014, the Director of FLRC, Saru Jayaraman, was a Visiting Fellow at BFI and a Visiting Lecturer for the Goldman School of Public Policy. The mission of FLRC is to study, expose, and intervene on the wages and working conditions of workers in the U.S. food system, and to build a joint food and labor policy agenda that expands the definition of a sustainable food system to include sustainable working conditions. FLRC is undertaking research projects regarding working conditions in the food industry and participated in public lectures and other events sponsored by BFI.

5. Visiting Fellows

BFI continued to host renowned visiting fellows in 2014. In Spring 2014 we hosted Saru Jayaraman, Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC-United) and Director of the Food Labor Research Center at UC Berkeley, as noted above. During the fall semester, Jayaraman continued to be affiliated with BFI. We also hosted Clare Hinrichs (working on corporate power in food systems), Renske Lynde (working on innovative business and impact investing in food systems), and Gil Eshel (working on soil health and cover cropping). Saru Jayaraman and Kathy DeMaster (ESPM) co-led a faculty seminar organized by BFI, resulting in a new book project on Consolidation in Food Systems. We will have two new Distinguished Visiting Fellows in the Spring 2015: Mark Bittman, NY Times columnist, and Daphne Miller, MD and author. Daphne Miller and Claire Kremen will co-teach a graduate seminar on the relationship between biodiversity and health.

Educational Accomplishments

1. Inventory at UC Berkeley Courses Related to Food Systems

BFI completed and updated an inventory of courses related to food and agriculture systems offered at UC Berkeley, which includes over 90 courses. The inventory is available on the BFI website and serves as an excellent resource for students, prospective students, and faculty.

2. Food Exchange Series, DFS Roundtable, and other Public Educational Events:

Held monthly during the academic year, the Food Exchange Series brings together Berkeley faculty and external experts who discuss key issues in food systems. Each forum features a diversity of perspectives, and is interactive among a panel of 3-4 speakers, a moderator, and the audience. Topics in 2014 were:

- Pesticides and Alternatives for Pest Control
- Open Source Access to Land and Genetic Resources
- Labor and Health in Food Systems
- Sustainable Livestock Innovations and Impacts
- Agriculture and Fracking
- Causes, Consequences and Social-economic Dimensions of Obesity
- Health and Social Impacts of Urban Food Gardens

Each forum included discussion of policy and research implications, and was followed by a reception. The events attracted 45–120 people, and reached 200-600 more people through video recordings posted on the BFI website. The Center for Diversified Farming Systems also sponsors a monthly Roundtable, which features experts on the scientific and sociological aspects of diverse farming approaches and agroecology. The topics in 2014 were:
Biodiversity on the Farm: Inefficient, Unproductive, Only for Luddites?
Pollinators as a Poster Child for Diversified Farming Systems
Food Chain Restoration: Recovering Monarch and Bee Populations
Developing Seeds in Diversified Farming Systems
Participatory Research Methods for Agricultural Extension
Urban Foraging: Low Hanging Leaves
Social Action and Agrifood Movements: Diversity, Aims and Outcomes
Practitioner and Expert Panel on Soil Health and Ecosystem Services

BFI also held a special half-day symposium on Food, Representation, and Identity, and participated actively in other public educational events, including but not limited to: UC Berkeley Food Day; produce harvest events for the Berkeley Food Pantry; a conference on Zero Food Waste; a conference on Land Tenure and Rights for Farmers; and three events called “Menus of Transformation” for the Discover Cal Lecture Series, which featured presentations by six BFI faculty Affiliates. BFI is planning many events in 2015, which are posted on the BFI website: http://events.berkeley.edu/index.php/calendar/sn/bfi.html

3. Courses: Edible Education
BFI co-sponsored a course in Spring 2014 called Edible Education, led by Michael Pollan and Raj Patel, which was attended by 500 students and 200 community members every week. This course featured panel discussions and lectures by leading experts on many aspects of food and agriculture systems. BFI collaborated with the Edible Schoolyard Foundation, Graduate School of Journalism, and College of Letters and Sciences to support the course professors and to organize discussion sessions. For the Edible Education course in Spring 2015, Professor Gary Sposito of the College of Natural Resources is the main organizer and teacher, and it will be co-hosted by Visiting Fellow Mark Bittman, through BFI’s support.

4. Development of a Food Systems Minor, including Experiential Learning in Food Systems
In response to escalating interest by students and faculty, BFI facilitated a committee to develop a proposal for an undergraduate Food Systems Minor at UC Berkeley, for a comprehensive education on critical social, ecological/biological, and cultural issues related to food systems. The draft proposal includes a community engagement component (i.e., internship) requirement, as well as course requirements and electives, based on existing courses at UC Berkeley. BFI research assistant Eleanor Lum and graduate student researcher Aileen Suzara investigated experiential learning opportunities, surveying over 300 NGOs, agencies, and businesses to learn about potential internships, and met with groups and departments on campus who have internship programs. In Fall 2014 the draft proposal was submitted to a committee of the College of Natural Resources for review. If/when approved, this Minor will have a significant impact for hundreds of students and also for potential employers, providing a great educational opportunity for those interested in this field.

5. Other Student Opportunities and Support
There is tremendous activity and enthusiasm among UC Berkeley students who want to pursue education and careers in food system transformation. BFI staff members meet regularly with individual students and participate in student group-led efforts. BFI lists on our website the student groups on campus that deal with food systems and also food-related classes and other resources for students, and provides some support for educational events. BFI is expanding opportunities for student involvement through hiring additional graduate and undergraduate students. BFI’s Executive Director spoke at a Career Forum in Spring 2014 on Food Careers that was sponsored by the Alumni Association, and was attended by over 70 students. In 2014 BFI began the process of developing graduate student fellowships in policy, journalism, and community engagement, which will launch in 2015.
Policy Program Development and Accomplishments

BFI recognizes that significant policy changes at local, state, national, and international levels are required to achieve transformation of food systems. The objectives of BFI’s policy program are to:

- Facilitate communication and information exchange between UC Berkeley researchers, policy-makers and government agencies to address priority policy issues in food systems
- Ensure that useful information and research findings from UC Berkeley are identified and utilized effectively in policy and legislative processes, and by advocacy organizations
- Promote and gain public attention regarding policy issues on food systems

These objectives will contribute to fostering policies, political-economic reforms, and/or governance processes that advance sustainability and health in food systems. BFI began work on these objectives in 2014 by undertaking the following policy-related activities:

1. **Identifying Prospects for Policy Influence**
   Executive Director Ann Thrupp has met with dozens of faculty members and stakeholders – including policy-makers, NGOs, and other scientists outside of UC Berkeley – to identify current or future research that has potential for informing policy-makers or influencing policy in food systems. BFI developed a survey to identify research needs in this field, and sent the survey to over 300 organizations. BFI is continuing to develop contacts with policy people, through meetings in Washington DC and Sacramento with representatives from agencies such as USDA and CDFA and with NGOs who work on policy issues. Ann Thrupp also serves on an Advisory Group of the California Agriculture and Climate Network, which is proposing a program for the use of AB32 funding to support “climate-friendly” agriculture.

2. **Connections with Policy-makers from Local to Global Levels, including Policy Analysis for FAO**
   A subset of BFI’s Executive committee met with State Senators Mark DeSaulnier and Loni Hancock in January 2014 to learn about their interests and research needs on food policy issues, and to discuss potential collaboration. Further connections with policy-makers at the state, federal, and global levels have been established. For example, Ann Thrupp met with Secretary Karen Ross and Deputy Secretary Amrith Gunasekara of CDFA, State Assembly member Mark Levine, Mark Nechodom, Director of California’s Department of Natural Resources, and USDA directors in Washington DC, to talk about common interests. In April of 2014, BFI was asked by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to carry out an analysis of governmental policies to support pollination and ecosystem services. This project involved a graduate student, Terra Rose, from the Goldman School of Public Policy, who carried out policy research, with guidance from Claire Kremen and Ann Thrupp; and the project resulted in the publication of a report that is being used at international levels for policy discussions and negotiations about protecting pollinators as an example of supporting ecosystem services.

3. **Policy Program Support and Capacity-building**
   BFI applied to the Clarence Heller Foundation for a grant to build the policy program, and was pleased to receive news in summer of 2014 that the Foundation granted our request. As a first priority for this purpose, BFI developed and posted an announcement for a Policy Director position. We received over 200 applications, interviewed top candidates, and selected Nina F. Ichikawa to become the new Policy Director. Nina will begin work in January 2015. The BFI team discussed effective strategies to achieve policy impact, identified likely priority topics for policy briefs for 2015. BFI carried out fundraising and planning for a policy workshop focused on “Rethinking Nutrition Policy in the US,” which will be led by Hilary Hoynes (Public Policy), Barbara Laraia (Public Health), and the Center for Weight and Health, along with BFI. This workshop will be held in May 2015, and will include policy-makers and NGO advocates as well as academic researchers. The BFI directors and funder Bob Epstein also planned ideas for a project
on soil health, to document the economic and environmental benefits of soil health as a way to generate policy support for sustainable “climate-friendly” agriculture.

4. Policy-related Research Inventory and Success Stories at UC Berkeley
BFI graduate student researcher Nora Gilbert began a comprehensive inventory of research that has been undertaken by BFI’s faculty affiliates related broadly to sustainable agriculture and food systems. She created a database of published articles by dozens of faculty, and reviewed these articles to determine whether they have potential implications and relevance for policy. This database will be useful for BFI’s policy program and to eventually will be shared with the public. Graduate student researcher Aileen Suzara will continue this project in 2015. BFI is supervising graduate student fellow Miranda Everitt, who was selected through a competitive process to work on a UC Global Food Initiative policy project to document “success stories” whereby research has been used for informing policy in food and agriculture. Miranda, who is a student of the Goldman School of Public Policy, has begun preparing short case studies for this purpose.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Accomplishments

1. Growing Green Award Program
BFI collaborated with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) for the implementation of the 2014 “Growing Green” Award program, which recognizes and awards national leaders in sustainable and just farming, food systems, education, and activism. BFI collaborated in the selection process and took on a major role in organizing and funding the award event in May 2014. The event, held at the Berkeley City Club and attended by 240 people, honored the award winners: Will Harris (Sustainable Livestock Practitioner), Chip Taylor (Pollinator Protector), John Reganold (Educator), and Sibella Kraus (Regional Food Systems Leader). The award event included a “learning fair” at a reception. We received positive feedback and evaluation from the attendees. News about the award winners was also published broadly in national media, raising attention to these important leaders in sustainable practices.

2. Urban Agroecology Activities
BFI has collaborated with faculty and cooperative extension specialists who are developing an urban agroecology educational program. These efforts involve participatory research on agroecology and community activities at the Gill Tract Farm, a UC Berkeley field station in Albany, and planting vegetables that serve community needs for food justice/security. The efforts also aim to expand the use of the Student Organic Garden and other plots at the Oxford Tract field station, adjacent to the north side of the UC Berkeley campus.

3. Building Collaboration with Stakeholders and Allies Involved in Food System Change
BFI has also collaborated with organizations at the state, national, and international levels, including the Union of Concerned Scientists, Institute for Trade and Agriculture Policy, California Climate and Agriculture Network, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, Sustainable Food Trust in the United Kingdom, ETH/World Food Systems Center in Switzerland, and EAT Stockholm (an international coalition). Ann Thrupp served on a Review Committee of research proposals on agroecosystems for the US Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Claire Kremen is serving on a committee of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services that addresses pollination and sustainable farming at the global level. BFI initiated conversations with directors of UC Santa Cruz’ Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program, UC Davis’ Agricultural Sustainability Institute, and Stanford’s Food Systems initiative to collaborate on common interests.
4. **BFI’s Involvement in UC Global Food Initiative**

BFI has been involved in a new “Global Food Initiative” that was launched in Spring 2014 by the Office of UC President Janet Napolitano (UCOP). The Initiative is enabling collaboration among the UC campuses to raise visibility of the research and education in food and agriculture in the UC system, and more broadly, to address food security globally. BFI provided detailed information to UCOP about the food and agriculture programs at Berkeley. BFI’s Executive Director is collaborating with the Chancellor’s Office to coordinate UC Berkeley’s working group for the Global Food Initiative. BFI is co-leading two subcommittees of the Global Food Initiative, on Experiential Learning and Policy in Food Systems, and helped recruit and supervise student fellows to assist with these committees. In these subcommittees, BFI/UCB is collaborating with other UC colleagues, undertaking activities that could increase impact of food programs. BFI and UCOP are co-sponsoring the “Big Ideas@Berkeley” Contest, collaborating with the Blum Center for Developing Economies. We received funding from UCOP for these activities.

5. **Participation/Collaboration in Forums and Conferences and Other Activities**

BFI’s directors participated and spoke in many external conferences and forums in 2014, contributing to education and dialog on critical topics in food systems. These included: California Academy of Sciences Meeting (Kremen, San Francisco), Kellogg Foundation Food Systems Conference (Thrupp, Detroit), INFAS Institutions in Food and Agriculture Systems meeting (Thrupp, Detroit), IATP meeting on Agroecology (Thrupp, New York), IATP symposium on Food Systems Policy (Iles, Bellagio), EAT Forum (Thrupp, Stockholm), 13th IUPAC Congress on Pesticide Chemistry (Kremen, San Francisco), FAO Conference on Agroecology (Thrupp, Rome), UN and Millennium Institute meeting (Thrupp, New York), Miami University’s Distinguished Lecture Program (Kremen, Ohio), California State Board of Food and Agriculture (Kremen, Sacramento), 11th Hour Connect Meeting (Thrupp, San Francisco), and others. BFI is engaging in other collaborative activities with community members. For example, BFI has publicized and participated in events for SAGE Center, Cooperative Extension, Ecology Center, Brower Center, Food First, Lexicon of Sustainability, and others.

**Overview of Impacts and Beneficiaries**

BFI is contributing to the development of knowledge, education, and practical and policy initiatives to support more sustainable, healthy and just food systems in California, the nation, and globally. BFI continues to evaluate its programs and outcomes to understand whether they are meeting expectations and contributing to our mission and goals. BFI is highly productive in implementing program activities, and achieving desired outcomes. We have received positive evaluations on events as well as feedback on timing of events and suggestions of future panels. The BFI team reflects on each event to critically evaluate the outcomes, and to identify and work on areas of improvement.

Our reflection on progress indicates that BFI is providing benefits to the following key constituencies:

- The University of California Berkeley, and wider UC system, its faculty, staff and students
- The Bay Area community, through educational, research, policy, and outreach activities
- Stakeholders (including NGOs, farmers, businesses, agencies) in California, the US, and beyond
- Policy-makers at the state, national, and international level

**Funding**

The budget for 2014-2015 is approximately $900K, and will expand in the future years. BFI continues to explore new funding opportunities.
The Berkeley Food Institute greatly appreciates the important contributions of our funders:

- UC Berkeley Office of the Vice Chancellor for research
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Appendix

BFI Knowledge Map of Affiliated Faculty