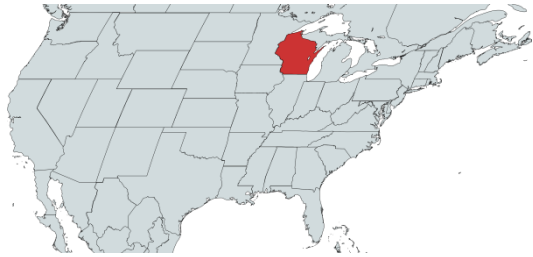


Madison/Dane County - USA



Madison, Wisconsin's capital has a population of 258,000 in a metropolitan area of 680,800 (2020 census). State government offices (45,000 employees) and the state's flagship university (48,000 students and 24,000 employees) work in Madison.

Mifflin Street Grocery Cooperative (1969-2006) Born of political strife and student activism, neighborhood volunteers opened Madison's first food cooperative and market for local, organic products. Mifflin helped to open several coops in different locations, with four retailers currently operating in Madison and supporting local, organic foods.

Dane County Farmers Market (1972), is the largest producer-only farmers market in the US. 150 vendors encircle the state Capitol April through November, and a vendor's cooperative manage the market.

The Wisconsin Cornucopia Report (1982) was a first attempt to study Wisconsin's food system.

The Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (1989) is a UW participatory action research center for sustainable agriculture and food systems.

The Agroecology Program (2007) is a UW graduate program that teaches students to research and engage with agricultural systems in a broader environmental and socio-economic context.

Madison Food Policy Council (2012) This government-supported forum and platform acts as a driver of Agroecology, bringing stakeholders together to address issues of food security, food sovereignty, nutrition, and justice in local food systems, using both governmental and nongovernmental policy.



Case study referee

Michael Bell

Other participants

Sarah Lloyd, Michelle Miller
Madison Food Policy members and
constituents



michaelbell@wisc.edu

TERRITORIAL FOOD SYSTEM



Type of region Peri-urban

	Quantitative/objective data	Qualitative assessment and trends
Approximate size and population	508,000 acres farmland in Dane County; 2500 farms; top ranked county in state ag production; sales \$152m in grains and oilseeds and \$9.3m in produce; 378 farms under 10a, 85 farms over 1,000a and average acreage 197a (2017). 2.5% of agricultural lands were lost between 2005 and 2015 (2016).	The city is growing very quickly and the county is urbanizing. Farmland is expensive and urban development encroaches.
Main social issues	Madison poverty rate 16.4%; Dane county 9.6%.	Poverty, hunger, racism. Lack of affordable, ownable housing. Labor rights struggles.
Type of agriculture	The county has four main watersheds. To the west (Driftless region) are two watersheds where diversified agriculture is common. To the east, commodity row cropping is common in the other two watersheds. Groundwater drawdown exceeds recharge rates.	Row crop and livestock agriculture are intensifying, further endangering water quality (fertilizer runoff). Despite 40+ years of watershed projects, farmland preservation, and technical standards, these efforts have proved necessary and insufficient. Several NGO-led urban agriculture projects are underway; also efforts to support wholesale markets and direct markets
Presence of agroecological systems	2% (50) organic farms (2017). 750a of prairie restored (2021). Reduced phosphorus load by almost 22,000# from 2008-2021 with conservation practices/tech standards.	There could be more. Leadership for agroecology on farm comes from other counties in the state (Marathon, Sauk, Vernon, etc.)
Short circuits (and anteriority)	23 farmers markets in Dane County; 8 in Madison; Community Groundworks and Rooted manage a network of 4000 gardens on 47 acres of land in Dane County. About eighty FairShare CSAs make about 170 weekly stops in Madison. 1200 farms participate in farmland preservation,	There is a rich food scene in Madison – local food is available from many grocery stores, restaurants. Consumers know the names of farms and farmers that serve their city. The common practice of attending farmers market made possible the protests against Act 10 in 2011. (ppl knew where to park, etc..)
Specific agri-food system dynamics and initiatives (and anteriority)		participatory neighborhood efforts; urban gardens; food pantries; food marketing coalition ; project of a public indoor year round market



Main stakes for the transition

relieving hunger and inequality; achieving carbon neutrality; flood control

Key obstacles to AE transition

No public wholesale market. Lack of refrigerated storage. Hollowing out of local processing capacity. Lack of data at the county level. Closing of neighborhood groceries. Lack of affordable housing. Failing labor market. Cost to entry high. No coherent statewide commitment. Low access to capital.

Leading actors in the transition

City and county through the 2 FPCs, county Extension; UW-Extension, CIAS, Kaufman Lab; Wisconsin Food Systems Collaborative,

Institutionalisation of the agrifood transition

FPC, with representatives of a diversity of stakeholders and residents, [Dane County Extension Community Food Systems](#), UW research, curricula, participatory action research.

Actors excluded from projects

Poor communities, transient communities

3 innovative initiatives

[Farley Center for Peace, Justice and Sustainability](#)

The Farm Incubator program cultivates BIPOC farm businesses. Currently, a dozen businesses are working sixteen acres and selling direct and wholesale.

[Silverwood Park](#)

This Dane County park serves as a working farm and outdoor classroom. Five farmers are growing for market and six are growing for personal consumption.

Wisconsin Food Systems Collaborative (newly formed)

A coalition of food systems organizations work together to support and develop emerging supply chains and wholesale market collaboration.

Case study local partners