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New Perspectives on the Next Generation of Farm Households

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Plan for today

- Introduction ~ 10 min
- Shoshanah Inwood, Community Development & Applied Economics, U of Vermont ~ 20 min
- Michelle Howell, Hickory Lane Farm ~ 20 min
- Open discussion ~ 35 min

Rural Urban Interface

Within community distance
of a large urban area

Communities containing a
mix of long-term and
newer residents

Low density development

Mix of urban and rural land
uses



Dynamics of Farming at the RUI

- STRESSES:
 - Land Markets
 - Urban pressure bids up price of land
 - Social Conflicts
 - Neighbors & Nuisance Complaints
 - Agribusiness Infrastructure
 - Dropping below a 'critical mass' of farms
 - Inputs, Services, Processing, Wholesale Markets

Yet the RUI significantly contributes to US agriculture

- Represent less than 20% of all counties
- Account for 41% of U.S. agricultural sales
 - 95% of U.S. fruit and nut sales
 - 95% of U.S. nursery greenhouse sales
 - 84% of U.S. vegetable sales

2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture Data



Dynamics of Farming at the RUI

- OPPORTUNITIES

- New marketing outlets

- Farmers markets, roadside stands, U-pick
 - Nursery/Greenhouse operations
 - Urban customer preferences (organic, local, etc.)

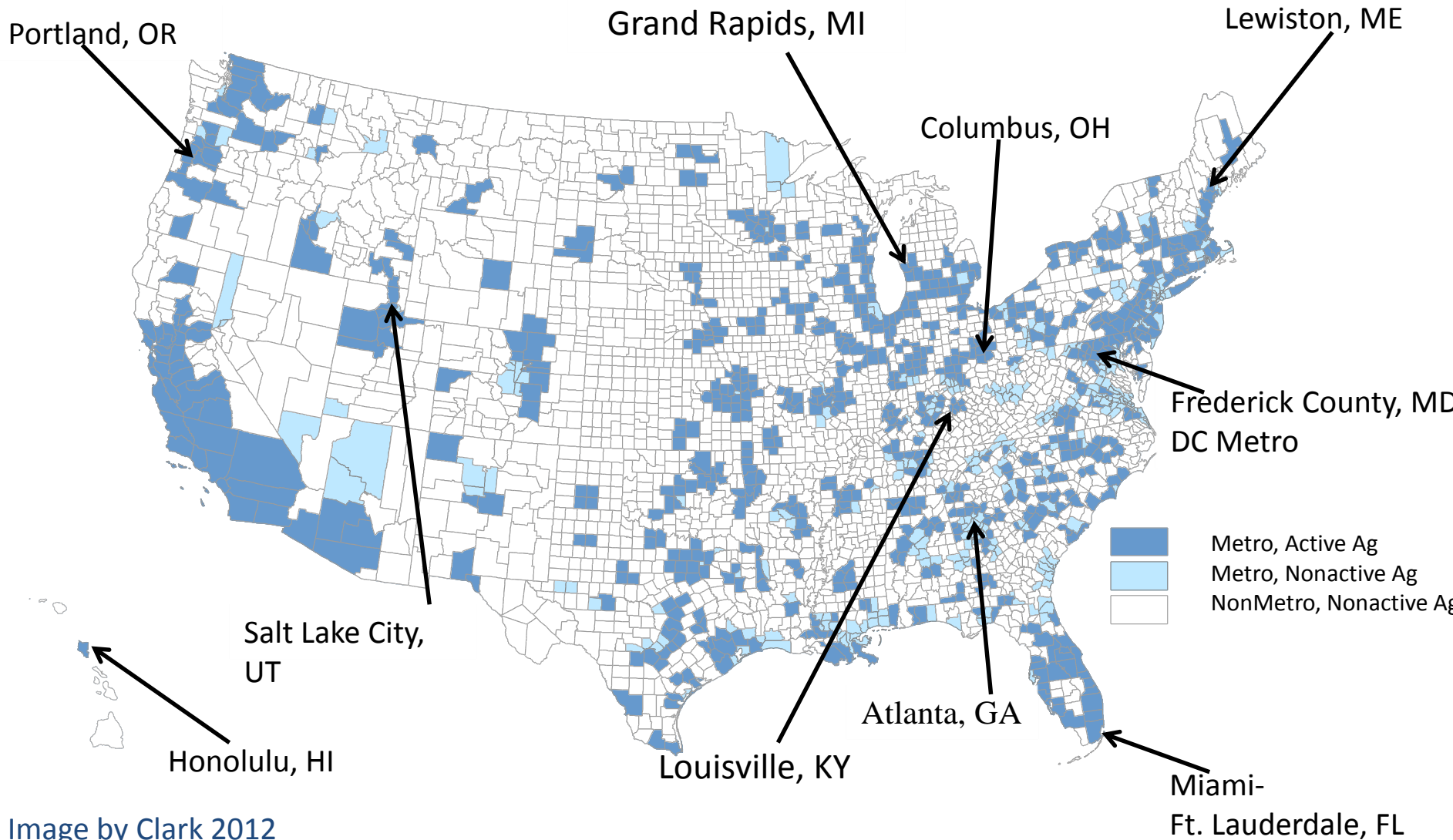
- Leveraging land values

- Collateral for loans & investment
 - Selling small parcels to raise cash
 - Security that underlying assets retain value

Ag at the Rural-Urban Interface

- Offers opportunity (such as growing interest in local and regional foods) and challenges (such as land use competition)
 - Is very important to US agriculture
 - Leading one to think that to protect farms we should focus only on access to and creation of new markets and
- Facing these conditions, the success of agriculture at the RUI depends on the creation of new farm enterprises, *growth of existing farms, and passing farms down through generations.* (We have relied on the succession of the family farm.)
 - Which require additional considerations

Our recommendation is based on work at these study sites



The growth and persistence of the **farm household** depends on



- Economic action can be based on family needs
- Differences between multi-generational and first generation farm households

Must revisit how we address the farm household to maintain the landscape

- A focus not just on getting new farmers started, but on the growth and replication of these farms
- The complexity of the Farm Business + Family = Farm Household
- First generation farmers have different motivations and socialization
 - This calls for examination of general trends in the workforce and perhaps a focus on workforce development
 - With limited resources, who do we invest in making more first generation farms become multi-generation farms

Our current work.

Small and Medium Scale Farm Growth,
Reproduction and Persistence at the Rural-
Urban Interface: Balancing Family, Goals,
Opportunities and Risks

- Find out more:

<http://senr.osu.edu/research/ag-and-food-systems>

Exurban farmers' perceptions of land use policy effectiveness: Implications for the next generation of policy development

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