A CASE STUDY COMPARISON OF DIRECT SELLING ALTERNATIVE FOOD NETWORKS IN BELO HORIZONTE, BRAZIL AND TORONTO, CANADA.

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by

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A Case Study Comparison of Direct Selling Alternative Food Networks in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Toronto, Canada.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines two local direct-selling AFNs: one in the Global North, in Toronto, Canada, and the other in the Global South, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It considers the experiences and roles of farmers within these two AFNs, using the findings to assess the potential and limitations of these two networks in what are two very different geographical locations. A comparative case study approach was taken, using a qualitative methodology. To the researcher's knowledge, the comparison of a Northern AFN to a Southern AFN has not been documented, and thus this study provides a unique opportunity to observe how the AFNs are similar and how they are different in these two distinct locations. Data was collected primarily through qualitative interviews with farmers in each AFN case study, together with direct observations at points of sale. The findings from this thesis demonstrate that common assumed narratives about AFN farmers, that they are small scale, environmentally sustainable and socially just, are more complex than the literature suggests when held up to the varied reality of farmers' experiences and livelihoods. The valuation or devaluation of local food shapes farmers' successes at market, along with the economic, political, and physical spaces for farmers within each city. In Toronto, farmers both benefit from, and co-construct, narratives that value local food, as they cater to predominantly elite consumers. In Belo Horizonte, farmers attempt to divorce their food from its local origins by 'sterilizing' it to relate it to supermarket food. Each AFN model privileges certain groups to the disadvantage of others. The Toronto case study AFN focused on the participating farmers to the exclusion of low-income consumers, and the Belo Horizonte case study AFN focused on the low-income urban consumer to the detriment of participating farmers. This thesis makes a

contribution to the AFN literature by providing a Southern perspective to a literature that has been predominantly Northern-based, including demonstrating that assumptions about valuation of the ‘local’ and of an elite class of consumer within AFNs do not hold true in the case of Belo Horizonte.

Keywords: Alternative Food Networks; Local Food; Farmers’ Markets; Short Food Supply Chains; Brazil; Canada

DEDICATION

To my children, Gavin and Marianne, and to the children of Pastorinhas

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Archer Daniel Midlands
AFN	Alternative Food Network
APF	Agricultural Policy Framework
CDN	Canadian Dollars
CEASA	Centrais de Abastacemento de Minas'
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
CUSTA	Canada-US Free Trade Agreement
DR	Direto da Roça (Direct from the Farm)
EMATER	Empresa de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural do Estado de Minas Gerais
FHAC	Food and Hunger Action Committee
FMN	Farmers' Market Network
GAPCO	Gerência de Apoio à Produção e Comercialização de Alimentos (Department of Food Production and Commercialization Assistance)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
HDI	Human Development Index
IMF/WB	International Monetary Fund/World Bank
INCRA	Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária
LFP	Local Food Plus
MAPA	Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply)

MDA	Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário (Ministry of Agrarian Development)
MLAF	Market-Led Agrarian Reform
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra
NAC	New Agricultural Country
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFT	Ontario Food Terminal
PFRD	Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PPS	Project for Public Spaces
PRONAF	Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar (Programme of Support for Family Farming)
PSE	Producer Support Estimate
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers Party)
SCHC	Stonegate Community Health Centre
SFSC	Short Food Supply Chains
SMAB	Secretaria Municipal de Abastecimento (Municipal Secretariat of Nutrition and Food)
TFMN	Toronto Farmers' Market Network
TFPC	Toronto Food Policy Council
TNC	Transnational Corporation

USD	United States Dollars
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZHP	Fome Zero Programme (Zero Hunger Programme)

Chapter One

Introduction: A Tale of Two Farmers

It is early Thursday morning on a bustling corner in a middle-income neighbourhood of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Samuel[1] *is methodically unpacking from the back of his old pick-up truck bunches of collard greens that he had harvested that morning before it was light out. He places some of the best greens prominently on the table he has unloaded and sprays the produce with water to keep it cool and make his display look as clean as possible. While most of the busy office workers walk by without noticing him, an elderly woman walks towards the stall. He stops to greet the early customer, who compliments him by remarking that the collard greens look beautiful today. They discuss their families, and he asks about her son who had recently applied for a new job. After a few minutes of catching up on each other's lives over the past week, the woman carefully selects her greens, and consults the displayed price chart. She pays, tells him that she will see him next week, and heads home. With a smile, he wishes her well, and turns back to unloading the truck, trying to ensure the crates of vegetables are placed in the shade before the day becomes too hot.*

Meanwhile, 8000 kilometres away, Mike sips a fair-trade coffee from his travel mug at the Dufferin Grove Farmers' Market, in Toronto, Canada. Only a few minutes into his day at the market, he has already been up since early that morning, harvesting produce, packing his truck and making the drive into the city. Although the market just opened, it

[1] Names have been changed to protect the identities of participating farmers.

is already quite busy with customers strolling past the stalls. He answers a question from a curious market customer, a young woman pushing a baby stroller, about what to do with the mud-packed odd-looking vegetable, kohlrabi, she holds in her hand. Around the busy stall, other customers stock up on heirloom tomatoes while listening to his advice, a few of them picking up the kohlrabi to try for themselves. He has no price list on display, but the woman asks and he quotes her his price. The woman pays and leaves with kohlrabi in hand, eager to try out a few new recipes. Mike is on to the next customer, who has a big bunch of muddy beets in one hand and is handling the chard with his other hand.

What do these two farmers, in two vastly different geographical locations, have in common? How do their experiences differ? What factors lead to these similarities and differences? In this thesis, I explore these questions as I seek to understand the experiences of farmers participating in Alternative Food Networks (AFNs) in these two locations.

1.1 Research Focus

This thesis examines two local direct-selling AFNs: one in the Global North, in Toronto, Canada, and the other in the Global South, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It does this by considering the experiences and roles of farmers within these two AFNs, using the findings to assess the potential and limitations of these two networks in what are two very different geographical locations. An AFN is a broad term embracing the many forms of

emerging networks of producers, consumers and other actors (administrators, intermediaries, activists, proponents) that seek to organize relationships between producers and consumers in different ways than in the industrial food system (Renting et al. 2003). Geography is at the "cutting edge of food studies" (Guthman 2009, p. 259) and researching 'local' food from a geographical perspective allows for a critical examination of how ideas of space, place, scale, and class are constructed, reinforced and articulated within the case studies. Local food is often treated uncritically in AFN scholarship and assumed to be inherently 'better' than food that comes from greater distances away. In this work, I interrogate many of the positive assumptions made in the AFN literature about local alternatives, and do so from a North/South perspective.

Although AFNs have been extensively studied across a range of academic disciplines, to my knowledge, the comparison of a Northern AFN to a Southern AFN has not been documented in the scholarly literature. Indeed much of the AFN literature has been developed in the global North, even though there are important insights which can be gained from looking at AFNs in the global South (Abrahams 2007). Looking at local levels, the dichotomy of North and South is often dismantled, and there are similarities between locations. At the same time, the local particularities in Southern AFNs cannot be assumed to be the same as in Northern ones (Abrahams 2007). In Canada, there has been a recent resurgence of farmers' markets and popular interest in localization of foods, while in Brazil, there has been a decline in farmers' markets and a recent proliferation of supermarkets. Although Brazil is a major agro-exporting nation and an agricultural power, the specific case study AFN shares many of the characteristics common to a

'Southern' case study, (Abrahams 2007). By examining two case studies, one in the North and one in the South, the similarities and differences between AFNs in two distinct geographical locations can be identified, allowing dominant Northern-based assumptions about AFNs to be critically assessed.

A comparative research design can also help identify the potential for cross-case knowledge transfer and the context-specific aspects to each case study. Case studies in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Toronto, Canada are ideal for this purpose. Both Brazil and Canada are nations that have focused in their recent history on industrialized agriculture for export rather than on small-scale farming, and there are many small farmers in both locations who are struggling economically. Both Belo Horizonte and Toronto have vibrant AFNs, and these two cities have been connected through informal communications and visits among administrators of food programs in each city. This introductory chapter outlines the objectives of the thesis and provides an overview of the thesis structure.

1.2 Research Objectives and Approach

At the onset of research, my overall goal was clearly defined: to compare the two case study AFNs through understanding the experiences and livelihoods of the participating farmers. The comparison between these two case studies led to the subsequent definition of three primary research objectives addressed in this thesis. The first objective is to assess the extent to which participating farmers' lived experiences either support or challenge the dominant narratives that frame and define AFNs and their related

production systems. The narrative of ‘small farmer’ is often treated uncritically in AFN literature, and the scale of the ‘local and small’ farmer is considered ‘good’. Under this objective, I identified from the literature three dominant ‘good’ narratives about farmers in AFNs, and I ask ‘how true is the narrative for participant farmers in each case study AFN?’ The narratives identified are:

- ‘small is beautiful’
- the ‘environmentally responsible’ farmer
- the ‘socially responsible’ farmer.

For the first objective, the focus is thus on the on-farm livelihoods of individual farmers or farming households.

The second objective is to understand how participation within the AFN creates various spaces for farmers, and why the kinds of spaces created differ between the two selected case study locations. The goal is to ‘place’ the farmers in the city. Under this objective, I ask:

- How do constructions of narratives and related consumer practices around ‘local’ food create or diminish spaces for farmers in each city?
- What types of physical, economic and political spaces are opened for farmers in each city?

For the second objective, the focus is on the creation of spaces for farmers in the city (rather than on-farm).

The third objective is to assess the potential and limitations of each of the case study models. Two main questions are considered:

- What is 'alternative' about each case study AFN?
- For whom are they alternative?

For this objective, the scale is the AFN as a network, and the places are the linked sites of production and consumption, both specifically for these two case studies and within the broader alternative food movement.

The research employed a qualitative methodological approach, similar to other AFN research (e.g. Feagan and Henderson 2009, Hinrichs 2003, Jarosz 2008, 2011, Kloppenburg et al. 2000, Lamine 2005). Data were collected primarily through qualitative interviews with farmers in each AFN case study, together with direct observations, mainly at points of sale. The theoretical framework evolved as I reflected on findings, expanding from work on AFNs themselves to include concepts from literature on livelihoods, commodity fetishism, and social justice. Ideas of scale, place, space and class are foundational throughout the analysis, which addresses various scales; space and place on the farm and in the city; and a class spectrum from poor Brazilian farmers to elite Canadian consumers.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into eight chapters. After this introductory chapter, Chapter Two discusses the relevant political-economic context to the case studies as well as the specific background to each case study AFN. In Chapter Three, the methodology for the

research is outlined and the specific methods of data collection and analysis are discussed. The chapter concludes with a reflection on how my role as researcher affected the research process, particularly the primary data collection methods of interviewing and personal observations.

In Chapter Four, key theoretical concepts are outlined. From this I construct the theoretical framework that informs discussion and analysis in subsequent chapters. Chapters Five, Six and Seven present the findings of the research. Chapter Five focuses on the on-farm resources and activities of farmers in the AFN in order to address the first objective outlined above. The varying resources and decisions of farmers and the wide spectrum of experiences are outlined and contrasted against the three identified AFN narratives. Chapter Six discusses the farmers' role in constructing food narratives in each case study in order to address objective two. The political and economic spaces that are or are not available to farmers through varying construction of local food are examined. Chapter Seven addresses the scale of the AFN, examining the similarities and differences between the two case study AFN models in order to answer the questions posed in objective three. Chapter Eight reviews the main findings of the thesis and outlines its theoretical and practical contributions.

Chapter Two

The Industrial Food System in Brazil and Canada and Case Study Background

This chapter is organized into two sections. In the first section, I discuss the relevant political economic context for the research. I begin by outlining characteristics of the industrial food system, to which alternative food networks (AFNs) are posited as being a better 'alternative'. I then discuss how the industrial food system dominates the agricultural sectors in both Brazil and Canada, and the place of small farmers within this system. In the second section of this chapter, I begin by providing the relevant background of the food economy and the food policies and programs in the case study cities of Toronto and Belo Horizonte. I then outline the case study AFNs.

2.1 Main Characteristics of the Industrial Food System

Although the main focus of this thesis is on AFNs, these cannot be understood apart from the industrial food system. AFNs are often posited counter to this system. Harris (2010, p.357) provides generalized but useful description of the current industrial food system, as:

> Globalized networks of food production, distribution, storage and retail that are controlled by multinational agri-business and retail corporations. Production and supply chains are managed over long distances, exhibit high degrees of vertical integration and are driven by corporate capital.

As noted by Weis (2010a), this system is characterized by high per farmer productivity, control of inputs and outputs by powerful transnational corporations (TNCs), a heavy dependence on technology (including massive machinery and high input use), the predominance of monocultures, the availability of diverse food offerings in supermarkets from various parts of the world (which allows consumers to disregard seasonality), intensively reared livestock and massive environmental externalities.

Although farming is key to the system, farmers are just a small part of the overall system in terms of control of both value and decision making of inputs, outputs and retailing. The Canadian National Farmers Union (NFU) states that for farmers "the core issue [with the current industrial food system] is one of autonomy and control" (NFU 2010, p. 1). Farmers, farm workers and food processing workers are removed from the decision-making process at the point of production (Hendrickson and James 2005) and surplus and decision making is controlled by TNCs (Weis 2007). The farmer is "embedded at the centre of an agrifood chain that reaches from energy, fertilizer, seed and chemical companies at one end, to packers, processors, retailers and restaurants at the other…Every link, with the exception of the farm link, is dominated by a tiny number of huge transnational corporations" (NFU 2005, p. 8). Farmers in both Canada and Brazil are subject to what has been termed the 'cost-price squeeze' (Pierce 1994) whereby input costs are high and selling prices are low. As Magdoff et al. (2000, p. 12) describe, "farming is one of the few businesses that pays retail prices for inputs and sells its products at wholesale prices."

Proponents of the industrial food system laud the ability of industrialized agriculture to provide relatively cheap and abundant foods, and a 'better' (protein-based) diet (Weis 2010b). 'Meatification', or the move to a diet with more meat products, which has accompanied industrialization of agriculture, is supposed to be a reflection of this improved diet (Weis 2007). TNCs have been successful ideologically in transforming dietary aspirations and creating brand loyalty (Weis 2010b). In the global South, this led to a rapid nutritional transition beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, with a shift to a higher fat, higher protein and higher refined carbohydrate diet that is considered 'Western' (Popkin 2001). This shift is not occurring evenly across the global South, and comparative to large parts of South Asia and Africa, Brazil is very advanced in this transition.

The cheap cost of food also hides the externalized environmental, health, and social costs of the industrial system. Environmentally, there are many negative externalities to industrial agriculture, including massive amounts of greenhouse gas emissions because fossil fuels are used to substitute technology for labour, and to compensate for biophysical problems created or exacerbated by planting monocultures. Industrial farming is based on the dependence on synthetic fertilizers and the use of insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. The transport of foods across the globe, a concept known as the 'food miles'—the distance from point of production to point of consumption that our food travels, and the environmental impact of getting the food between these points—also adds to the environmental costs, and this has long been a central dimension of how the importance of AFNs is framed.

Human health is impacted in various ways. The pesticides, fertilizers, hormones and antimicrobials used in industrial agriculture all have negative health implications (Sutton et al. 2011). The toxins in the environment that are largely attributed to industrial agriculture practices led The United States annual President's Cancer Panel Report to conclude that "to a disturbing extent, babies are born 'pre-polluted.'" (Reuben 2010, p.vii). There are also dietary concerns with the focus on high protein and high processed diets. High consumption of animal fat and processed foods is linked to an increased risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia and some kinds of cancers (McMichael et al. 2007). All of these health impacts lead to a burden on health care systems, and have high social costs for communities dealing with obesity and illnesses. The social costs of the industrial food system also include the psychological toll associated with factory farms and industrial slaughterhouses (Weis 2010b). An under-reported consequence is the treatment of farm workers, including migrant workers[2], who are often underpaid and face horrific working conditions (Weis 2007). To a large extent, the interests of farm workers, small family farms, rural communities, and the general public, have all been usurped by the interests of agri-business (Altieri 2007).

In summary, the industrial food system is highly-mechanized, highly-productive and controlled by a small number of TNCs. On the surface, the system is viewed as a way to provide an abundance of cheap and protein-rich foods. Yet the costs of this system are high, and are not reflected in the pricing of food. The characteristics of this system are

[2] In Canada, there is an international dimension to this migration, mainly from Latin America and the Caribbean. In Brazil, this mainly involves a large internal migration of workers.

evident in both Brazil and Canada, and in the subsequent section I discuss the specificities of the industrial system in each location.

2.2 The Duality of Agriculture in Brazil

The Brazilian agricultural system can be characterized as a dual system. On one side is a highly industrialized agricultural sector that is controlled largely by both Brazilian and foreign TNCs and a very powerful class of large-scale landholders, and that has been identified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the largest competitor to United States exporters. On the other side lie a large number of small family farmers, working small plots of land (often with unsecure tenure) and landless peoples. This duality is reflected in the organization of the governmental ministries responsible for agriculture. Brazil is perhaps the only nation in the world that has two Ministries directly responsible for agriculture – the Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply or MAPA), which has traditionally focused on agri-business, and the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA). Reflecting the tension between the two sides of agriculture in Brazil, these two ministries do not always agree on agricultural policy, as has been demonstrated through their opposing viewpoints at international negotiations (such as the contentious WTO negotiations in 2005). In this section, I first discuss the industrial food system in Brazil, including the influence of liberalization on transforming the agricultural system, and the more recent changes in retailing. I then shift to the administrative policy regimes of the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (from 1995-2002) and Luiz Inàcio da Silva

(Lula) (2003-2010). Both have attempted to deal with small farmer and land tenure issues in Brazil during their administrations through a series of reforms.

2.2.1 The Industrial food system in Brazil

Brazil has emerged over the past few decades as an agricultural powerhouse and is considered the archetype of a 'new agricultural country' (NAC), as described by Friedmann (1993). Following the dominant development 'logic' of rising agricultural productivity as a means to economic growth (Sachs 2005) as well as politically powerful class of large-scale landholders, Brazil over the past three decades has privileged the interests of industrialized agriculture. This has contributed to it becoming the third largest agricultural exporter (by value) in the world today, and the leading exporter of poultry, sugar, tobacco and coffee (USDA 2011, Wilkinson 2009). The exports of primary bulk commodities make up the majority of their agricultural exports. The country is the second leading exporter of soybeans behind the United States, and combined the two nations account for 76 percent of total trade in soybeans. Brazil is also a leading sugarcane producer, the world's largest sugar exporter, and the world's second largest ethanol exporter (behind the United States). The country's meat industry has rapidly expanded and increased its exportation over the past decade, with US $13.1 Billion in exports in 2010, double the 2004 level. It ranks first in poultry exports, second in beef exports and fourth in pork exports worldwide (USDA 2011). As of 2009, Brazil had 340 million hectares of cultivatable area, with an additional 77 million hectares available without further encroachment into either the Amazon or the Pantanal wetland area (Wilkinson 2009).

In the 1970s, agriculture in Brazil grew quickly, partially because of policies such as minimum pricing and government procurement which formed a part of the import-substitution model the country followed (Farina 2001). The debt crisis which began in 1982 forced Brazil to borrow money and renegotiate its borrowing with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (IMF/WB). As a condition of borrowing, agricultural liberalization started in 1988 and continued into the early 1990s. This included freeing trade, reducing obstacles to foreign direct investment, making cuts to credit subsidies, and removing minimum prices (Chaddad and Jank 2006, Farina and Reardon 2000, Farina 2001). Input suppliers took over as the main financer and coordinators of agriculture in the country (Farina 2001). In addition, public services such as agricultural research and infrastructure improvements were cut substantially. The total expenditures for agriculture plummeted from 5.6 percent of total government expenditures between 1985-1989, to 1.8 percent of expenditures between 2003-2005 (Chaddad and Jank 2006). This period was one of agro-industrial growth. For example, in the period from 1990 to 2005, meat production increased from 7.5 to 20.7 million metric tons and grain production doubled from 58 to 120 million metric tons (Chaddad and Jank 2006). Although Brazil has important trade linkages with China, perhaps the most important external market in the future, growth for Brazilian agro-exports is partially constrained by trade barriers and subsidies to domestic producers and exporters in the developed world. In an attempt to counter this, Brazil has asserted its position as a global agricultural power by arguing for greater market access and the reduction or elimination of subsidies for developed nations at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

TNCs exert much influence upon Brazilian agriculture, and liberalization in the late 1980s and 1990s opened up agriculture for TNCs to enter the market. Some foreign corporations have had a long history of involvement in Brazilian agriculture. For example, Nestlé opened its first factory in Brazil in 1921 (Nestlé 2011). Other TNCs, including Unilever, Anderson Clayton, Corn Products Company, Dreyfus, and Bunge, have been present since the beginning of the agrifood industry (Wilkinson 2009). A few key commodities have until recently remained domestic, including coffee, sugar and milk. The growth of the now important white meat (i.e. pigs and poultry) and soy sectors also developed initially under the control of domestic firms. In the 1990s, TNCs began to displace national companies in almost all agricultural sectors, including the important soy sector (discussed in Section 2.2.1), the input sector, and most recently the white meat sector. The access to financial capital in a time of decreasing public financing for agriculture has been a major factor in securing their control in these industries (ibid).

An examination of the soybean complex, the most important commodity to Brazil in terms of the value of exports, provides a powerful example of the role of liberalization on the growth of industrialized agriculture in Brazil. The demand for soybean is linked to the rising demand for meat, as soy protein and oil is overwhelmingly used for livestock feed. There was heavy investment and support for soy production from the Brazilian government from the 1960s to the 1980s (Schnepf et al. 2001). Public agricultural research allowed for the opening up of new areas for soy cultivation in the Midwestern savannah region (Chaddad and Jank 2006, Wilkinson 2009). Three domestic firms—

Ceval, Perdigão, and Sadia—were involved in the lucrative soy complex prior to liberalization. During deregulation in the 1990s, national firms involved in soybeans were largely displaced by transnational corporations. The majority of the soy trade is controlled now by four transnationals – Bunge, Cargill, ADM and Dreyfus. These firms control fertilizer supplies, which are a key input for soy production (especially on the Amazonian frontier), and access to financing at the time when public credit is being cut (Wilkinson 2009). Liberalization has also allowed for the rapid transformation of the soy seed industry through biotechnological advances and private patent rights, and three corporations—Monsanto, Syngenta and DuPont—now control most of the soy seed industry. Transgenic seeds dominate soy production despite a strong resistance to block transgenic soy by social movements (including the Movimento Sem Terra, discussed below) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Wilkinson 2009).

This growth in the soy sector has come at a great social and environmental cost. The expansion of soy production in Brazil is linked to massive concentration of land tenure and income, in a country that already has severe land and income inequality (which is discussed in further detail below). It is estimated that for every agricultural worker who is employed in the sector, 11 workers are displaced to make room for soybean cultivation, although the number is thought to be lower than that in the cerrado because it is not widely populated (Altieri and Pengue 2006). Workers are forced onto more marginal land, into new agricultural frontiers (such as the Amazon) or into the city (where they become the urban poor). Environmental costs include the heavy use of pesticides, herbicides, extensive soil erosion and degradation, and transportation. In short, severe

environmental and human costs have contributed to Brazil's advancing position as an agro-exporting powerhouse.

2.2.2 The Transformation of the Retailing Sector in Brazil

Another fairly recent shift in the Brazilian food sector has been the entrance of TNCs into food retailing. This is significant because small farmers mainly sell domestically. Carrefour has been in food retailing in the country since the 1970s, but liberalization in the 1990s has led to a 'transnational offensive' of food retailers (Wilkinson 2009, p. 4). Hipermercados (or hypermarkets) are opening up and increasingly pushing out small grocery retailers. The same growth in supermarkets that took fifty years in the United States took only 10 years (from the early 1990s to the early 2000s) in major parts of Latin America, although the clientele in Latin America is markedly different from the United States as it is mainly the middle and upper class (Reardon et al. 2003). In 1994, the five top supermarket chains in Brazil had 23 percent of market share of retail food sales, and in only five years this had grown to 40 percent (Farina 2002). By the late 2000s, supermarkets had an estimated 75 percent of market share, and dominated sales of processed foods and bulk commodities, but supermarket sales of fresh produce is most likely lower than 75 percent of market share (Reardon et al. 2008). In 2009, three firms—Carrefour, Wal-Mart, and Pão de Açúcar (a firm that is national but has 50 percent foreign interest)—accounted for 40 percent of total sales (Wilkinson 2009). These hipermercados are highly organized, having set up huge private distribution centres for fresh produce and often having entered into formal or informal contracts with farmers or firms that contract farmers (Farina 2002). Farmers forced into contracts have restricted

autonomy, and production risks are transferred to the farmer while restricting their share of the profit (Weis 2007). Hipermercado corporations also have their own quality assurance standards, which can be difficult for small farmers to meet (Henson 2008). The private distribution centres and private standards are displacing their public equivalents, and the state-run 'Centrais de Abastacemento de Minas' (CEASA) distribution centre in the case study state of Minas Gerais is experiencing a massive decline (R. Diniz, pers comm. 2008).

The hipermercados have focused on products that are in demand in Brazil – processed foods, meat and dairy. Under the development narrative of industrialization of agriculture is the view that rising meat consumption is an indicator of 'improved' diets (Weis 2010b). Following this narrative, Brazil has undergone a nutritional transition across all income classes in the past few decades. There is a reorientation of demand to protein and value-added products, especially dairy, meat and processed foods. From 1974 to 2003, consumption of what are classified 'industrialized' products such as cookies and soft drinks has increased by 400 percent, and the increase has occurred across income classes (Levi-Costa et al. 2005). Brazil retains more than 70 percent of its meat production for the domestic market, and the nation is one of the world's largest meat consumers on both an aggregate and per capita basis (Lock et al. 2010). Although Brazil is a major fruit producer, the consumption of fruits and vegetables by Brazilian households is lower than the World Health Organization recommendations; in 2003, fruit and vegetable consumption accounted for only 2.3 percent of total caloric consumption among Brazilians (Levi-Costa et al 2005). Moreover, the consumption of fast-foods from

international chains (such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut and Burger King) is used as a distinction of class, as they are relatively expensive food outlets and are located in wealthy neighbourhoods of major Brazilian cities (Jaime et al. 2011), including in the case study city of Belo Horizonte (personal observations 2007).

2.2.3 'Family Farming' and Agrarian Reform since Liberalization

The growth in agricultural production and exports masks the uneven reality of Brazil's polarized agricultural landscape. According to the most recent agricultural census in 2006, 3 percent of rural owners possess almost 57 percent of current agricultural land, while 62 percent of Brazil's farmers farm on only 8 percent of the total land. As discussed below, land ownership is a contentious issue, and one that has not been dealt with effectively. In addition, hunger is pervasive in Brazil. Although Brazil exported $55B USD in agricultural exports in 2008 (FAO Yearbook 2010), food insecurity affected 30 percent of families in 2009, and over 50 percent of households that are considered low-income (IBGE 2010). Two successive governments, that of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002) and that of Lula (2003-2010) have attempted some reforms to deal with the duality that exists in the Brazilian agricultural landscape, without fundamentally challenging it. These two eras are described in the two sections that follow, in order to provide the policy context within which small farmers are operating.

2.2.3.1 The Cardoso Legacy

In 1995, the Brazilian government, under the leadership of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, made land reform and family farming a policy goal in an attempt to alleviate rural

poverty. Even though total spending on agriculture was low during his two terms, the government spent 18 percent of its annual agricultural expenditures in Cardoso's first term (1995-1998), and 27 percent in Cardoso's second term (1999-2002) on family farms and land reform policies and programs. The program targeted to 'family agriculture' was called the Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar (Programme of Support for Family Farming, or PRONAF) in 1995, and consisted of a set of policies including subsidized lines of credit, capacity building and research and extension (Chaddad and Jank 2006). The program has been criticized because it attempted to integrate small farmers even more into modern, mechanized commercialized agriculture (LRAN 2002). Cardoso created the Ministry of Agrarian Development in 2000, which was responsible for programs targeted to family farms (including PRONAF) and land reform (Chaddad and Jank 2006).

Land reform was an important political issue during the Cardoso administration, as the mobilization by landless peasant groups was widespread. It was also a prominent part of the administration's rhetoric on its accomplishments (Pereira 2003). The issue of land inequality has persisted in Brazil since colonial times. Strong social movements have arisen in response to this land inequity; the most successful and well-known being the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), founded in 1984. This movement attempts to redistribute land to peasant farmers through the occupation of large landowner properties that are sitting idle, and subsequently to get the government to expropriate the land once the occupants prove they can farm it and award title to them. The MST has also become a voice for many peasants on farming issues, representing

approximately 1.5 million peasants in 23 of the 26 states in Brazil (MST n.d.). Despite a lack of support from the MST for market-led reform, Cardoso enacted a policy of Market-Led Agrarian Reform (MLAR) that relied on willing sellers to redistribute land to buyers, with little government intervention (Wolford 2005). During his two terms in office, Cardoso is credited for creating 3,924 new settlements benefitting 393,842 families, approximately just under two million people total (Welch 2011). But the MLAR approach has been critiqued for not settling land with the most marginalized landless peasants, and for providing farmers poor quality land that is far from markets and that has little basic infrastructure. In addition, although settled farmers were mostly able to re-pay their purchasing loan, overall there was a decrease in income after settlement in most regions (Borras 2003). Conversely, MLAR has been found to have mainly benefitted large landowners who have been able to sell low-quality land at high prices (Borras 2003, Wolford 2005).

2.2.3.2 Lula and the Question of Agrarian Reform

In 2003, Lula, of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers Party, or PT), was elected president of Brazil. Until 2002, the PT supported a radical vision of agrarian change and land reform, one that would weaken the power of the elite ruling class. Lula attended protests, visited land occupations and participated in discussions with peasant organizations such as the MST. Although Lula and the PT backed away from a radical vision of land reform during the 2002 campaign, instead considering agrarian change as a means to further develop agriculture economically, he still garnered much support from those involved in the landless peasant movement (Welch 2011). The policy brought forth

after Lula won in 2003 was meant to integrate small family farms into the highly commercialized model of agricultural development, and only superficially to pay attention to land reform. The programs included investment into public purchasing programs, infrastructure improvements on agrarian reform settlements and formalizing land tenure with squatters, but making sure to avoid most confrontations with large landowners. The government largely sought to avoid confrontation by moving the landless to the less-valuable Northern interior (at great environmental costs), rather than challenging large landowners and agri-business in valuable coastal areas (Welch 2011). Lula initially signalled to small farmers and landless organizations that he supported their efforts. In his first year as president, he supported an organic agriculture law that included a provision for certification for peasant agriculturalists and small farmers through a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). This system was backed by a coalition of peasant and small farmer organizations, while industry was pushing for a third party certification system that would make it difficult for small farmers to certify (Meirelles 2010). Yet organizations such as the MST quickly grew disgruntled with Lula's lack of progress to advance the landless cause. The MST had little power in the general public to pressure Lula to do more. As noted by a prominent MST leader, Joan Pedro Stedile, the mainly urban masses are influenced by the negative image of the MST within the popular media (which is controlled by the elite class), and thus there is not widespread support for their agenda within Brazil (Garmany and Maia 2008).

During Lula's first term, spending on programs under MDA accounted for 45 percent of total agricultural expenditures (as noted, in the context of falling overall agricultural spending). Spending on PRONAF doubled (to R$2.8 Billion) and spending on land

reform increased by half a Billion Reals (from R$1.84 to R$2.4 Billion) (Chaddad and Jank 2006). In 2005, Brazil's average Producer Support Estimate (PSE) was about 6 percent, well below the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 30 percent (WTO 2009). Although the figures are disputed by the Lula administration (which asserts more families were settled), independent estimates (by a well-respected pro-agrarian reform research group at the University of São Paulo) state that the Lula government created 2,517 new settlements and settled 416,015 families in the period from 2003-2009, approximately just over two million people (Welch 2011).

Despite these figures, throughout Lula's term, conditions for small farmers and the landless did not improve. The government continued to have an agricultural development model that promoted commodity exports and mono-cropping, even for small family farms (Welch 2011). Land inequality continued to grow. Land concentration increased between the 1995-1996 agricultural census and the 2005-2006 census (with Gini coefficients of .856 and .872 respectively). In 2006, over 1.1 million small farmers had land tenure arrangements that were insecure, such as non-titled land or temporary access to land (IBGE agricultural census 2006). This included the common practice of sharecropping (or 'meeiros') in some states. A meeiro is a person who works the land under contract that establishes a percentage of the production as payment for the use of the land. This practice is entrenched in Brazil, and has been practiced for over two centuries even among smallholding farmers. A recent concern is land-grabbing by foreign interests. For example, Volkswagen is purported to own lands in various states totaling 30 million hectares (Welch 2011).

The PT government under Lula's successor, Dilma Rousseff, has indicated they will continue with the same agricultural policy orientation for family farming and land reform, although Rousseff has indicated she will take a harder line against protesters who take actions such as occupying government buildings to speed up the land reform process (Welch 2011). Overall, while Brazil ascends as an agro-exporting power globally, inequality is pervasive in the countryside, while modest rural reforms are pursued. The political will to create substantive change with regards to land inequality is lacking under the current administration.

2.2.3.3 Summary: Agro-Industrial Growth in Brazil and the Small Farmer

Brazil has two major sides to its agriculture. On one side, there is a country that has emerged a dominant world agro-exporter with agricultural industrialization and liberalization, in which TNCs have come to hold great influence. Most recently, corporate influence has been seen in the supermarket sector, as TNCs try to capitalize on the rising middle class. On the other side there is a country rife with inequality, where many small farmers struggle to make a living by farming and food insecurity still affects over 30 percent of households. Land tenure remains a contentious issue, as land inequality has actually grown since liberalization, and there is little political will to deal with pervasive land tenure issues. Although there are many differences between the Brazilian agricultural landscape and the Canadian agricultural landscape, they are both major agro-exporting nations, and as discussed below, the same characteristics of industrialized agriculture are evident in Canada.

2.3 The National Food System in Canada

Canada is a long-established agricultural surplus exporting nation, with surplus exports historically dominated by wheat. The Canadian agricultural system is very tied to the United States agricultural system, which is the birthplace of many technologies that facilitated the transition to the current industrial agriculture system. Canada is considered, along with the United States, to be the most industrialized agricultural nations in the world (Weis 2010a). There has been a concentration of farming into fewer and larger farms, to the detriment of small and medium sized farms, which are disappearing from the farming landscape. This section discusses the trajectory of farming and the industrial system in Canada, and the government policy directions that have enabled this.

2.3.1 Concentration and Capital-Intensive Farming in Canada

Nationally, primary agriculture accounts for a small share of the total economy, only 1.7 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but when the entire agriculture and agrifood industry is considered, it accounted for one in eight jobs and 8.2 percent of GDP in 2009 (Agriculture Canada 2011) – which speaks, in part, to the shift in value away from farms. Globally, in spite of a relatively small population, Canada has a disproportionately large influence on agricultural trade. In 2009, it was the fourth-largest exporter of agriculture and agrifood products (with $35.2B Canadian Dollars (CDN) and sixth-largest importer of agriculture and agrifood products (with $27.9B CDN) in the world (Agriculture Canada 2011). It is also the second largest wheat exporter in the world by value, with $5.3 Billion United States Dollars (USD) of exports in 2009, the top exporter of rapeseed

and rapeseed oil (canola) in 2009 (FAOSTAT 2011a and 2011b), and the tenth largest pork producer in the world in 2001 (FAOSTAT 2011c). Canada is dependent on export markets to a large extent, far more than the United States or the European Union, which have larger internal markets (Skogstad 2008). The nation's top agricultural trading partner is the United States when exports and imports are combined and with the exception of a few commodities the two countries have had well-integrated agricultural trade since the adoption of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUSTA) in 1989, which was then taken over by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 (ibid).

Canada's agricultural trade largely consists of low-cost 'breadbasket' exports, large-scale imports of tropical and semi-tropical products, and value-added exports geared to end consumers (Skogstad 2008, Weis 2010a). The agricultural systems in both of these countries consist largely of what has been termed the 'grain-oilseed-livestock' complex, where the most of the coarse grains and oilseed (mainly barley, corn, and canola in Canada) are fed to intensively reared livestock (Weis 2010a). This complex is controlled by TNCs, with control of inputs, including the seed, through to outputs and retailing. Even the organic sector, sometimes thought of as an alternative to the industrial system, is not immune from the influence of TNCs. In both the United States and Canada, corporations have been active in lobbying for changes to organic regulations to weaken them to suit corporate interests (Jaffee and Howard 2010, Johnston et al. 2009). Fourteen of the top 20 food processors in North America have either introduced organic versions of existing brands or acquired organic brands (Howard 2009). The Government of

Canada has implemented a nation-wide organic certification standard, based to a large extent on the standards of third-party certification bodies, and it relies on these private bodies to grant organic status (Government of Canada 2009).

A contentious example of corporate control in agriculture has been the case of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The government regulatory agencies in charge of GMOs have the conflicting roles of both regulating and promoting biotechnology. The government also invests in biotechnology and also profits economically from the industry (Skogstad 2008). GMO crops are more prevalent across the United States and Canada than any other location in the world (Weis 2010a). The case of canola in Canada demonstrates how TNCs have asserted their power to control an entire industry. Since the 1980s, seed TNCs have come to dominate the canola industry in Canada. GM canola was introduced in 1995, and by 2009, 90 percent of all canola in Canada was GM canola (Beckie et al. 2011). The technology use agreements force farmers to agree not to save seeds or sell their crops to a purchaser not authorized by the TNC, and the contracts are used by the downstream industry to lock farmers into their supply chains, virtually eliminating choice for farmers. Instead, decision making over seeds has been put in the hands of a few TNCs (Kuyek 2007). The payments to TNCs by farmers for the use of GM seeds (including to Monsanto, Cargill, Bayer, Pioneer Hybrid International, Dow, Viterra, DL Seeds and Brett Young) amounted to $120 million dollars on average (between the 2007-2008 to 2009-2010 seasons) (LMC international 2011), Monsanto in particular has dominated the commercial sale of GM seeds. The inclusion of technology transfer fees boosts the total ‘value’ of canola to the Canadian economy.

Canola growth and the proliferation of GM canola seeds has come with environmental, economic and social costs. The case of Monsanto versus Percy Schmeister provides an example of the high costs to farmers. Saskatchewan farmer Schmeister had his canola crop contaminated by Monsanto's GM Roundup Ready canola, and in 1998 was brought to court by Monsanto for planting a GM canola without purchasing it or paying the required acreage fee (Skogstad 2008). The case went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, which ruled that Monsanto does have a valid patent – claiming that a gene can be patented and that Schmeister did infringe on this patent -- though it also ruled that the costs and damages requested by Monsanto did not have to be paid by Schmeister (ibid).

2.3.2 Retailing in Canada

TNCs and large national retailers also dominate the retailing sector. The consolidation of retailing in Canada began to accelerate in the 1980s, and by 1987 the five largest grocery distributors accounted for 70 percent of all grocery sales. By 2008, the top three food retailers—Metro, Sobeys and Loblaws—provided 78 percent of all food sold to consumers in grocery stores (Carter-Whitney 2008). Canada's industrial surpluses are also tied to high per capita consumption levels (Weis 2010a), with an average protein and fat intake much higher than the world average (FAO 2010 Table D1). Processed foods, with high proportions of sugar and salt, are the main diet of North America's poor and working class (Donald 2009). Canadians have some of the lowest food costs in the world, accounting for approximately 10 percent of household expenditures in recent years (Agriculture Canada 2011). Unlike in Brazil, fresh produce sales in Canada continue to

grow, with over 6 Billion dollars in sales in 2006 (Agriculture Canada 2007). The popularity of 'local' food has also been documented, with a survey in 2006 showing that Canadians believe that local food has many benefits over other food, including economic, health, taste and environmental benefits, and that 42 percent of Canadians had regularly purchased local food when it was available (Ipsos Reid 2006). In this context, farmers' markets, which declined when supermarkets emerged in the 1930s (Guthrie et al. 2006), are experiencing a resurgence (FMO 2011). Yet supermarkets remain the primary location where consumers buy produce, and these retailers rarely source from small farmers.

Small farms are not able to enter the grocery market for a number of reasons. They cannot supply the quantities the stores require on a consistent basis. Supermarkets also cater to consumers in Canada, who expect diverse produce offerings at all times of the year, rather than tailoring sales to seasonal availability. Farmers in Canada face a short growing season. Due to the single harvest season of much fresh produce, farmers depend on processing as a wholesale outlet. In Ontario, there has been a decline in fresh produce production, attributed mostly to the loss of processing capacity (NFU 2011). Farmers are also responsible for meeting produce standards, and increasingly supermarkets are imposing their own standards that control how food is produced (Henson and Humphrey 2009). Through the imposition of government standards on produce alone, it is estimated that in Ontario, every year over 25 million pounds of otherwise healthy and edible fresh fruit and vegetables are unsold, and have to be ploughed under because they are

'seconds' (or Canada #2 grade), with the farmer forced to incur the ensuing loss of income (Ontario Association of Food Banks 2009).

Supermarkets source their food mostly from large distributors (Carter-Whitney 2008). In 2010, Ontario exported just under $100 million of vegetables, while the province imported just over $175 million of vegetables (NFU 2010). The Ontario Food Terminal (OFT) is the provincially-run food outlet with the mandate to provide an outlet for Ontario produce (OFT website, n.d.). The OFT has been identified as a potential leader in sourcing a local food system with local farm produce (Metcalf Foundation 2008). Yet despite a daily farmers' market with local farmers, much of the food that passes through the OFT is imported. Supermarkets in Ontario often treat produce as a 'loss leader', meaning that it is priced at a level where it is expected to incur a loss, in order to entice consumers into their store and make gains on other products, a dynamic which in turn deflates the price of produce for local farmers (ibid).

2.3.3 Canadian Government Agricultural Policy

In Canada, the encouragement of ever larger and more capital-intensive farming has been the major policy thrust of all levels of government since the 1970s (NFU 2003). In 1969, the major national policy document on agriculture, *The Report of the Federal Task Force on Agriculture*, concluded that the national focus should be on reducing the number of family farms by two-thirds, and integrating the remaining farms with agri-business through means such as contract farming and debt financing. This document has provided the framework for successive Agricultural Policy Frameworks (APFs) until today (NFU

2008). In the 1970s, Canada had a highly interventionist approach to agriculture, and the government intervened in ways that included: subsidies to support and stabilize farm incomes; marketing boards that were responsible for fixing supply quotas and prices (e.g. wheat, egg, and dairy boards); import quotas and tariffs to protect domestic commodities; and export subsidies for commodities reliant on external markets (Skogstad 2008). Skogstad (2008) argues that these measures were put in place not to support farmers as much as to increase agricultural productivity and as a reaction to the protectionist measures of other industrialized states.

In a policy document in the late 1980s, the government signified a shift in agricultural policy towards a more market-based agro-industry in the policy document 'Growing Together' (Agriculture Canada 1989). The focus on agro-industry was also signalled by the change in the name of the Ministry responsible for agriculture from 'Agriculture Canada' to 'Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada' in 1993 (Skogstad 2008). This marked the shift towards a focus on 'competitiveness' in Canadian agriculture, which has persisted (NFU 2009, Skogtad 2009). The National Farmers' Union (NFU) (2009) has challenged the Canadian government's conflation of the terms 'competition' and 'competitiveness', stating that these two terms can be considered opposites. Competitiveness is best served by a few large firms, which is detrimental to competition, and the Canadian government's focus on 'competitiveness' has allowed TNCs to consolidate power and decrease competition in most industries. The input of most farmers into this policy is limited. Canada does not have a united farm lobby with powerful influence from both large profitable farms and commodity groups.

Organizations which represent large farmers tend to be grouped around specific commodities (for example, the Canadian Pork Council, Canadian Soybean Council etc.), most of whom are ideologically positioned on the right. Other umbrella organizations, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the NFU, are positioned to the centre and left respectively, with the NFU generally seen as the voice of smaller-scale family farmers (Skogstad 2008).

2.3.4 The Farm Crisis and the Farming Landscape in Canada

The impact of the policy orientation towards large export-oriented farms resulted in increased exports, but the profit has not been captured by small farmers. The multi-decade trend has shown that while farmers have become more efficient and production has increased, the gap between gross farm income and net income is widening. The beneficiaries of the economic gains from increased productivity are mostly the processors and input suppliers (NFU 2003). In times when farmers do get higher prices for their products, input manufacturers increase their prices in order to capture a greater share of farmers' profit dollars (NFU 2005).

By the 1980s, many analysts and family-farm organizations, such as the NFU, stated that Canada was in a ‘farm crisis’. By 1988, direct payments to farmers from the government accounted for almost half of total net income for farmers (Pierce 1994). Per farm net income was almost negative $7 000 per annum in the first half of the 2000s (NFU 2005). Between the years 1985-2008, farmers in Canada produced $802 B in farm products, yet they keep just $3 Billion in net income (inflation adjusted to 2009 CDN dollars). That is

0.4 percent of the total farm profits, while TNCs that supply farm inputs have captured almost all of the other 99.6 percent (NFU 2009). 2010 was the third worst year in the history of Canadian agriculture for net farm incomes, if government support payments are excluded (NFU 2010). The flipside has been soaring debt. For instance, in Ontario alone, total farm debt in has risen to almost $16 Billion (NFU 2011).

Farmers are relying on two main income sources to deal with the economic strain of falling prices and rising costs. The first is seeking work off the farm. 60 percent of Canadian farmers sought off-farm income between 2001 and 2006 (Jette-Nantel et al. 2011). In 2008, small farms (with gross revenues between $10 000 and $99 000) relied on off-farm income for over 90 percent of their total income, while medium sized farms (with gross revenues between $100 000 and $249 999) relied on off-farm income for over 70 percent of their income (Statistics Canada 2011). The second source of support is government payments. The government of Canada has a long history of Income Support Programs for farmers, also called Income Safety Net Programs. These were designed largely to be ‘disaster assistance programs’, but they have become a necessity for farmers coping with negative net market incomes. Current government support payments include the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization program and the AgriStability Program federally, and in Ontario, the provincial Ontario Whole Farm Relief Program and the Ontario Farm Income Disaster Program. In the province of Ontario between 1995 and 2008, program payments have shifted to larger farms, from 6 percent of total payments to 26 percent in this time period (NFU 2011). The PSE for Canada in 2010 was 17.71 percent, still lower than the average for the OECD as a whole (OECD Table 2011D), but

much higher than Brazil's (which, as noted above, was 5 percent in the last reported year of 2005).

The farm crisis has led to striking structural changes in Canadian agriculture. Farmers have been pressured into expanding farm size in an attempt to deal with increasing costs, low prices and reduced margins, resulting in high debt and bankruptcies (Weis 2010a). The agricultural landscape is becoming increasingly polarized. Between 1986 and 2006, the average farm size grew by 28 percent, while the number of Canadian farms fell by 22 percent (Statistics Canada 2007, Chart 11). In Ontario, almost half of the farms in the 130 acres to 240 acres range have been lost since 1976, while the largest farms in the province have increased six-fold (NFU 2011). In the last 20 years, Ontario has lost 25 000 farms, the majority of them small and medium-sized farms (ibid). The resulting landscape is one of fewer, larger, and more intensive farms.

The seasonal importation of foreign workers on farms has become essential since fewer and fewer Canadians are willing to accept the demanding work and low pay of farm jobs. Some farmers are dependent on low-wage migrant workers from Mexico and the Caribbean to provide manual work. In 2004, just under 19 000 migrant workers entered Canada through the Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (Brem 2006). These workers often face dangerous working conditions, such as having to apply hazardous pesticides without proper training, and segregated housing conditions. They also face unfair labour conditions, including having to pay into the Canadian

Employment Insurance plan without being able to ever receive Employment Insurance, and not being able to unionize in Ontario (ibid).

2.3.5 Summary: Agro-industry growth and the 'farm crisis' in Canada

In summary, Canada is one of the most industrialized agricultural nations in the world. It has a long history of policy focusing on agro-industrial growth and more recently 'competitiveness', which has favoured TNCs and heavily industrialized large-scale farmers over small farmers. As a result, Canadian farmers have been in a 'farm crisis' for nearly 30 years, while TNCs are making record profits. Some farmers are looking to alternatives to the industrial system in order to escape the control of the system from inputs to retailing by TNCs, and to capture profit. The rise in popularity of local food in Canada has led to a 'new food economy' that may provide opportunities for farmers. In the following section, I focus on the food economy in both case study locations, and then focus in on the two AFNs which comprise the case studies for this dissertation.

2.4 Study Background: Urban food systems in Toronto and Belo Horizonte and the case study AFNs

In this section, I begin by providing an overview of the city level context for the case study AFNs, including relevant city and NGO food policies. I then provide an overview of the Belo Horizonte case study AFN, and of each market in the Toronto case study AFN, in order to set the context for the examination of each AFN in the subsequent chapters.

2.4.1 Case Study Location: Belo Horizonte

Belo Horizonte is the largest city in and the capital of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil (see Appendix V), with a population of approximately 2.4 million inhabitants in the city proper, and nearly 4.4 million in the greater metropolitan area (IBGE 2011). The city is surrounded by agricultural land, and much of it is mountainous, difficult to farm, and farmed by small farmers. The population is highly segregated into high income areas and low income 'favelas' (or slums), often located adjacent to one another. For example, the neighbourhoods of Sion has a Human Development Index (HDI)—an composite index of development based on life expectancy, literacy, education and living conditions—that is comparable to the most developed nations. Meanwhile, it is bordered by a favela with an HDI that is comparable to the least developed nations (PNUD 2006). In the high income neighbourhoods, supermarket chains are prevalent; for example, Sion has three Carrefour supermarkets within a one kilometer area. In addition, international restaurant chains, such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut, and Hard Rock Café, are present in Belo Horizonte in affluent neighbourhoods. Belo Horizonte is distinct from most other major cities in Brazil because a stronger presence of small grocers has persisted, which is attributed to the efforts by the municipal government through their 'Sacalão ABC' program (Farina 2002), discussed in more detail below.

Food insecurity is a major issue in Belo Horizonte, and the catalyst for the municipal food security programs was the rate of malnutrition and food insecurity in the 1990s. It was estimated that in the early 1990s, almost 20 percent of all children under 3 in the city endured a level of malnutrition (SMAB 1995). The Belo Horizonte AFN is working

within the broader context of the 'Fome Zero' (Zero Hunger Program, or ZHP) policy regime, although the program in Belo Horizonte pre-dates the ZHP. The ZHP was introduced by the Brazilian government in November of 2002, with the ambitious goal to eliminate hunger in Brazil. The policy is innovative in many respects, foremost because it recognizes that social inequality underlies food insecurity, describing hunger as "an issue of unequal access to food, and not lack of availability" (GFRB 2004, p. 19). This national policy is being implemented via local level programs. The comprehensive approach that Belo Horizonte established has been lauded as a model for other urban food security programs in Brazil under the ZHP. The Belo Horizonte approach has also received international recognition, winning the 'Future Policy Award' by the World Food Future Policy Council in 2009.

The municipal government initiated their food security approach in 1993, and continues to run it within the Secretaria Municipal de Abastecimento (Municipal Secretariat of Nutrition and Food, or SMAB) (Mafra 2004). Belo Horizonte's programs are run on the principle that all citizens have a right to good quality and adequate quantities of food throughout their life, and that the government is responsible for ensuring that right (Rocha 2001). The main approach is to intervene in the market to reduce the prices of certain foods so that they are affordable for lower-income citizens (Mafra 2004). The main objectives in the food security program are: to provide food assistance to vulnerable groups and individuals; to regulate the market, directly or indirectly; to lower costs and reduce the distance between producer and consumer; to coordinate social assistance to

combat hunger; and to give information about nutrition and the cost of healthy food (Mafra 2004). To achieve these, programs include:

- School meals provisioning
- A Popular Restaurant (where nutritious meals are provided at affordable prices)
- The weekly publication of information on average costs of basic household goods
- School and community gardens
- Direct from the farm produce stalls, and
- The Sacalão ABC produce grocers.

Of particular note are the 'Sacalão ABC' produce grocery stores, where 21 fresh fruit and vegetables are sold at a fixed price below market cost. This program has been credited for helping enable the persistence of the small grocers in Belo Horizonte, unlike other cities in Brazil where grocers have disappeared as supermarkets have emerged (Farina 2001). The SMAB programs focus on partnerships and civil society participation, and various programs have partnered with NGOs, the University of Minas Gerais, philanthropic groups (that run daycares, nursing homes and community centres), and the private sector (Rocha 2001). My research focused on the program Direto da Roça (DR), which fell under the portfolio of the Department of Food Production and Commercialization Assistance (Gerência de Apoio à Produção e Comercialização de Alimentos, or GAPCO).

2.4.1.1 Direto da Roça (Direct from the Farm)

Unlike the Toronto case study, which consisted of a commonly known type of AFN in the form of farmers' markets, the DR program involves single farmer stalls in various locations throughout the city of Belo Horizonte. The goal of the program is to sell affordable, locally grown produce to consumers at a reasonable cost. The program allows

farmers to sell to citizens directly, and eliminate the intermediary, as well as to supply urban citizens with fresh and affordable local produce. Any producer who is classified as a small family producer can enter the program. All of the farmers must meet the standards for a small farmer set by the Empresa de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural do Estado de Minas Gerais (EMATER), which is the state rural extension and technical assistance agency. The classification includes a provision on the percentages of sales (80 percent) that come from agricultural production, and a maximum land size of approximately 80 hectares. Producers work with GAPCO to identify selling locations and to work through the various city approvals (such as neighbourhood council, city council, SMAB, municipal traffic and planning office). The locations vary from street corners in the city's business district, to locations in plazas in middle-to-lower income neighbourhoods. In the early 2000's, the mayor's office directed GAPCO to limit the number of sellers in the 'Contorno' region (the city centre which is encircled by a thoroughfare called 'Avenida de Contorno', see Appendix VII), resulting in a major shift in location for many producers in the program and a contraction of the program (Guimares, pers comm. 2007). At the time of fieldwork in 2007, there were 18 small farmers involved in the program, while in 1999 there were 36 farmers in the program (Rocha 2001). Of this, five farmers were located adjacent to Sacalão ABC grocers, while the others are in various locations throughout the city.

Farmers work with SMAB to choose days and times of the week to sell, usually starting early in the morning. They must sell on set days of the week, but individual farmers may choose anywhere from one day a week (although two is the preferred minimum) up to

seven days a week. Farmers may also sell at more than one stall in the city, as they may sell at the stall themselves or hire employees to work at the stall while they stay on the farm or sell elsewhere. The price of produce sold is controlled by SMAB. There is a set pricing chart that farmers must abide by, although at certain times of year when produce is less bountiful (notably in the wet season), farmers are allowed to set their own prices for certain products. Farmers must sell only their own produce, or produce from another DR farmer. All of the farmers belonged to an association, and the farmers took turns with a rotating presidency of the association, and all but one farmer from the program participated in the research.

2.4.2 Case Study Location: Toronto

The city of Toronto is the most populous city in Canada with 2.5 million inhabitants (see Appendix VIII), and is located on top of prime agricultural land. Around the city, there are 1.8 million acres of land designated as a Greenbelt area, established in 2006 to protect remaining farmland, green space and watersheds (Government of Ontario 2010). In the city itself, Toronto boasts an ethnically diverse population, as demonstrated by the fact that in the 2006 census, half of the inhabitants were born in a country other than Canada (Statistics Canada 2006).

The Greater Toronto Area (or GTA) is an area that includes Toronto, as well as the surrounding municipalities of Peel, Halton, York and Durham. It is one of the largest food clusters in North America, with a long history of food processing (Blay-Palmer and

Donald 2006, Donald 2009) and a vital food community of activists, governmental and non-governmental organizations (Friedmann 2007). In the past decade, there has been an emerging 'new food economy' (Blay-Palmer and Donald 2006), driven by consumer demands (Ajayi et al. 2010). There have been some successes in the food community with incorporating local food requirements in large institutional food procurement contracts, notably the University of Toronto (Friedmann 2007). Toronto is also the home of the 'Local Food Plus' (LFP) organization, which is an innovative non-profit that certifies local farmers for environmentally and socially responsible practices as well as linking these farmers with interested corporate and institutional food purchasers. The major retailing trends in Toronto include the growth of 'local' food markets, the growth in options for obtaining ethnic and culturally appropriate food, and specialty foods (including organics and products for specific dietary restrictions) (ibid). 85 percent of all Southern Ontarians still buy their food primarily from supermarkets (Metcalf Foundation 2008) and supermarkets have responded to these trends in various ways. For example, Wal-Mart has announced in 2010 that it is committed to stocking 30 percent Ontario produce (Ajayi et al. 2010).

At the same time as this new food economy is emerging, the GTA has seen a steady increase in food insecurity since 1995. There has been an increase in the use of food banks. From 2009 to 2010 alone, food bank use in Toronto rose by 14 percent from approximately 874 000 to 997 000 (Daily Bread Food Bank 2010). Food deserts—neighbourhoods that do not have access to good quality and affordable foods—are also increasing in Toronto's 'inner city' area (Martin Prosperity Insights 2010). Most

supermarkets in the city are located alongside large retail development and are located far from inner city residences (ibid).

The municipal government in the City of Toronto has been involved in city food policy for two decades. In 1991, the municipal government established the Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC), to deal with food security issues in the city. In 1999, the city also formed The Food and Hunger Action Committee (FHAC) to examine food (in)security, ways to reduce hunger in the city, ways to improve nutrition and ways to support sustainable food initiatives. They developed Toronto's Food Charter (2001), which states that "Every Toronto resident should have access to an adequate supply of nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food". In May 2001, city council passed the charter unanimously. However, after the creation and signing of Toronto's Food Charter, the FAHC was not re-established.

The TFPC acts as a sub-committee of the Toronto Board of Health, and its role is to promote awareness, collect information, bring together various stakeholders and advocate for policy change. According to its mandate, the TFPC:

> partners with business and community groups to develop policies and programs promoting food security. Our aim is a food system that fosters equitable food access, nutrition, community development and environmental health.
>
> (TFPC website, 2011)

The TFPC is comprised of a few permanent staff and a council that includes City Councillors and volunteers from various sectors including representatives from the not-for-profit, faith, industry, labour, consumers and business communities. Notably, there is

also representation from farmers on the council. The TFPC is widely recognized in North America as being innovative and for their work leveraging public infrastructures to support a web of food programs (Friedmann 2007).

The TFPC also acts to provide linkages between and support for various not-for-profit organizations in the city, including the case study markets. This also includes The Daily Bread Food Bank, Canada's largest food bank and the biggest agency in the city dealing with immediate food needs (Daily Bread Food Bank 2011). FoodShare is another not-for-profit that was originally established in 1985 to do much the same as the Daily Bread Food Bank, in order to co-ordinate and deliver emergency food services. In the late 1980s, FoodShare shifted the organization's mandate to focus on long-term systematic change in the food system (what they term a 'Field to Table' approach). The approach is:

> …multifaceted, innovative and long-term approach to hunger and food issues. This means that we're involved in diverse actions: grassroots program delivery, advocacy for social assistance reform, job creation and training, nutrition education, farmland preservation and campaigns for comprehensive food labeling are just a few examples of the areas we work in.
>
> (FoodShare website)

One of the initiatives that FoodShare took the lead in is The Farmers' Market Network (TFMN), from which the case study markets were chosen. The network was initiated in 2006 with partial funding from a grant from the Project for Public Spaces. The network includes a group of market organizers, whose markets:

> …operate independently, differing in size, style and requirements, but we share a focus on supporting sustainable agriculture and building strong communities. We work together to share information, farmer referrals, and best practices, to help new market organizers, to advocate for positive city policies, and to raise the profile of farmers' markets.
>
> (TFMN website)

At the time of research design, the network involved six markets, and of those, four market managers agreed to participate (see Appendix IX). The network has since expanded to include 13 markets within the Greater Toronto Area. The four farmers' markets that participated in this study are: the Dufferin Grove Organic Farmers' Market; Stonegate Farmers' Market; Wychwood Barns Farmers' Market (now called The Stop's Green Barn Famers' Market); and Withrow Park Farmers' Market. These markets are run by community members or groups, but official permission for their operation must be granted, most notably by both the city's Parks and Recreation Department (in the case of Dufferin Grove Organic Farmers' Market and Withrow Park Farmers' Market) and Toronto Public Health. Each market is discussed in detail in the following section along with an overview of a market that served as a 'competing' market to these community-based ones, the 'My Market' Liberty Village.

2.4.2.1 Dufferin Grove Organic Farmers' Market

The Dufferin Grove Organic Farmers' Market (the Dufferin Market) was started in November of 2002, and was initiated by three farmers who were already attending another market in the city, and interested community members (Freeman and Beckerman 2007). The Dufferin residential neighbourhood is a mix of detached homes, semi-detached homes and apartments. The area has a mix of income levels, with 18 percent of families and 13 percent of private households earning over $100,000 and 21 percent of families and 33 percent of private households making less than $30,000 in 2005 (City of Toronto Community Profile, 2006a).

The market operates year-round Thursdays from 3pm-7pm in Dufferin Park, a city facility which also has an outdoor bake-oven, a winter ice rink, and hosts many community events. There are 28 different vendors, although not all attend at all times of the year, and the products sold include fish, other meats, cheeses, soy, flowers, chocolate, foraged foods (such as mushrooms), prepared foods, fruits and vegetables. The vendors at this market must be committed to organic farming (or organic sourcing in the case of prepared foods), and most of the farms are in transition to organic or are certified organic. From this market, five fruit and vegetable farmers were research participants (some of whom also attended other markets[3]).

2.4.2.2 Stonegate Farmers' Market

The Stonegate Farmers' Market (Stonegate Market) started in 2005, when FoodShare identified that residents (especially lower-income residents) in the area lacked access to healthy foods. FoodShare approached the Stonegate Community Health Centre (SCHC) and The Stonegate Eccumenical Ministries to partner together to run a 6-week trial market, with FoodShare providing most of the produce. The Stonegate Market is located in a church parking lot on a major street that acts as the dividing line between a very prosperous neighbourhood of single family homes and some large apartments with low-income residents. On one side of the divide, 79 percent of the population lives in 75 low rise apartments, the median income is $45,520 per year, and 28 percent of families and 38 percent of children are low-income. On the other side of the divide, 80.5 percent of the

[3] In this section, I indicate the total number of farmers from each market who participated in interviews. There was some overlap with some farmers attending two or three of the markets.

residents live in single family dwellings, the average income is $114, 261 a year, and 9.7 percent of families and 7.6 percent of children low-income in 2005 (SCHC no date).

In 2006, Stonegate Market started running as a permanent seasonal market with farmers and other vendors, with FoodShare running a stall that brought foods that were lacking from farmers (mainly fruits and breads). The Stonegate Market runs Tuesdays from June through to the start of October, from 4pm-7pm. The market is administered by the SCHC thorough a full-time market manager. One goal of this market is to increase access to affordable fresh local foods for the low-income residents, though the market is also designed to be a space for all residents in the community. In 2009, Stonegate initiated a food voucher program, using a private grant (The Carrot Cache Community Resources Inc. Fund) to distribute $10 and $20 vouchers to over 200 members of the community that use the food bank to use towards food at the Market (SCHC Annual Report, 2009). At the time of research, there were seven vendors selling items such as crafts, herbal products, baked goods, fruits and vegetables. All three of the fruit and vegetable farmers at the market participated in the research.

2.4.2.3 Withrow Park Farmers' Market

The Withrow Park Farmers' Market (Withrow Market) started as a pilot market day, initiated by community members in the neighbourhood, in September of 2006. The area around Withrow Park is predominantly single family dwellings and it is a relatively wealthy area, with 47.4 percent of families and 33.2 percent of private households making over $100, 000, in contrast to only 11.7 percent of families and 15.6 percent of

individuals classified as low-income in 2005 (City of Toronto Community Profile, 2006b).

The market was a part of the PPS grant to start a limited seasonal market in 2007, running on Saturday mornings from 10am to 1pm, and this has evolved into a permanent seasonal market between late May and the end of October each year. It is located in Withrow Park (a City of Toronto Park), a park with sports fields, child play equipment and wading pool, and an off-leash dog park. The market is administered by a volunteer committee of neighbourhood residents. At the time of research there were approximately 12 vendors (although the number fluctuated) and this included vendors selling fresh fruit and vegetables, meats, baked goods and prepared foods. From this market, five produce farmers participated in the research (some of whom also frequented other case study markets).

2.4.2.4 The Stop's Green Barn Farmers' Market (formerly Wychwood Farmers' Market)

The Stop's Green Barn Farmers' Market (Wychwood Market) started in 2007 as limited seasonal pilot market with funding from the PPS grant, run by a partnership between some community individuals and The Stop Community Food Centre. The Wychwood neighbourhood is a relatively affluent area, with 44 percent of families and 19.7 percent of private households earning an income of over $100,000 a year in 2005. However, it also is comprised of a sizable low-income population, with 16.8 percent families and 23 percent of private households classified as low-income (City of Toronto Community Profile, 2006c).

At the time of research, the market was still in its temporary location in a church yard and was a seasonal market on Saturdays from 8am to 12pm. It was run mainly by a volunteer manager, with some assistance from The Stop Community Food Centre. However, shortly after the field research was concluded, the Wychwood Market moved into its permanent location, the Wychwood Barns complex. The Wychwood Barns are a re-development of former Toronto Transit Commission streetcar repair barns. The market also became a year-round market and expanded considerably from approximately eight vendors at the church location to between twenty and thirty vendors at the Barns location. The fieldwork reflects the market prior to the change in location. At this location, four farmers participated in the research (some of whom also frequented other markets in the case study).

2.4.2.5 Comparison Farmers' Market Brand: 'My Market' Liberty Village

Although not formally a case study market (as it was not a TFMN market), I also conducted interviews with a few farmers at the Liberty Village 'My Market', since farmers and market managers in the case study markets made frequent mention of the 'My Market' brand. The 'My Market' brand was initiated in 2007, the same year as the Farmers' Market Network received funding from PPS funding for the case study markets. These seasonal markets claim to be 'Certified Local Farmers' Markets', where all farmers must produce all of the products they sell. Unlike the case study farmers' markets, all of whom allow some degree of reselling, reselling at My Market brand farmers' markets is not permitted. The idea is to have a trusted 'brand' of markets that

allows consumers to know they are getting produce from the actual farmers who grew it. There are currently five ‘My Market’ branded farmers’ markets. The My Market Liberty Village was one of two pilot markets in the ‘My Market’ brand, and operates from June to October in a parking lot from 9am to 2pm on Sundays. At this market, I conducted informal discussions with five farmers and the market manager, and on-farm interviews with three farmers, one of whom also participated in one of the case study markets.

2.5 Conclusions

There were two main purposes of this chapter: first, to outline the political economic context that the case study farmers are working within; and second, to provide the case study background for each city and AFN program. Both nations are focused on maintaining and growing their agro-exporting sector, and most small farmers are not profiting in this system. In Canada, there is still some support for farmers, although this has raised the average farm incomes from negative numbers to zero in many cases, and it has not stopped the trajectory towards fewer and larger, more industrialized farms. In Brazil, there is less government support for farmers, although there are more farmers still on the land. The AFNs provide an opportunity for small farmers to access a market and capture some of the value usually lost to other links on the chain in the industrial system. The case study AFNs in both locations are local, direct selling farm stalls. In Canada, they are in the form of farmers’ markets run by community members or groups (with permission to operate granted by various city government departments), while in Brazil they are individual stalls throughout the city in a program run by the municipal government. Both are operating within a broader city context where food security has

been prioritized by local governments and, in the case of Toronto, by local NGOs, and Brazil, by some national-level policies. In the next chapter, I discuss how these case studies were approached methodologically, and the specific methods used in the research.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Methods

This chapter precedes the chapter introducing the theoretical framework, as the qualitative methodology employed in this research meant that the framework was developed as the field methods and analysis occurred. Thus, it is important to understand the methodology that was taken to develop this framework. In this chapter, I first provide the rationale for the qualitative methodological approach used in the research, including the justification for the comparative approach taken. I then outline the specific methods used for primary data collection. I identify the differences in the methods used in primary data collection between the two locations, and how they may have influenced the findings. In the last major section of this chapter, I discuss how my position as researcher impacted the research design, conduct, analysis and reporting of findings.

3.1 Methodological Approach

The overall objective of the research was to better understand the problems and potential of AFNs, mainly from the perspective of participant farmers. The goal was to develop theoretical understanding of AFNs, with particular interest in the similarities and differences in the experiences of farmers between the two case study locations

In this research, I took an inductive and emergent approach, leading eventually to the development of the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter Four. With this approach, I did not start with a 'tabula rasa' (as outlined by Strauss and Corbin 1998). Prior to

constructing my theoretical framework, I was well informed about AFN debates, having already read the majority of the AFN authors cited in Chapter Four. However, as ideas and issues emerged from analysis and interpretation of the data, I frequently re-visited the AFN scholarship and turned to theories outside of the initial scope of this literature to better understand my findings.

The methodological and theoretical approaches taken in this study are meant to allow for 'understanding' (Cloke et al. 2004), and within human geography understanding includes "figuring out what spaces, places, environments and landscapes *mean* to people, or trying to understand the *meanings* that people in given situations acquire, elaborate, share and perhaps contest in relation to activities of geographical consequence." (ibid, p. 308, original italics). This is best undertaken through an inductive, qualitative approach. Within AFN scholarship, qualitative methodology has commonly been employed to understand the construction and practices of AFNs (e.g. Feagan and Henderson 2009, Hinrichs 2003, Jarosz 2008, 2011, Kloppenburg et al. 2000, Lamine 2005). Qualitative methodology provides the opportunity to gain a more complete or complex picture of situations by uncovering the multiple realities that exist, rather than discovering an objective 'truth' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). A good example of using qualitative methodology to understand meaning in AFN research is work by Hinrichs (2003), who used thick description of 'local' banquets in Iowa to understand the various constructions of 'local'. The use of 'thick description' "emphasizes the complex layers of meaning that can attach to what are often apparently simple social behaviours" (Cloke et al. 2004, p. 308). Thick description can be contrasted with thin description. Thin description is

describing an action, and thick description is aimed at understanding the cultural meaning behind the action (Geertz 1973). In the case of this work, I sought to go beyond the actions and words of my participants to understand the meanings of and context within which they were situated.

In order to achieve 'thick description,' I used qualitative case comparisons, which have been employed occasionally in AFN scholarship to understand various experiences, processes and outcomes of AFNs. Baxter (2010) provides a useful definition of both what case studies are, and how they are used. He states that "case study research involves the study of a single instance or small number of instances of a phenomenon in order to explore in-depth nuances of the phenomenon and the contextual influences on and explanations of that phenomenon" (Baxter 2010, p. 81). Case study research is based on the philosophical assumption that the goal of understanding one-case in-depth (or in this study, two cases) of a phenomenon is valuable (ibid).

The rationale for conducting comparative case study research in Toronto, Canada and Belo Horizonte, Brazil was both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, much of the alternative food network (AFN) literature has been developed in the global North, even though there are important insights which can be gained from looking at AFNs in the global South (Abrahams 2007). To my knowledge, the comparison of a Northern AFN to a Southern AFN has not been documented, and thus this study provides a unique opportunity to observe how the AFNs are similar and how they are different in these two distinct locations. Theoretically, comparative case studies are used to better understand

the whole, while also acknowledging that each case study in itself has its own problems and relationships to understand (Stake 2006). The case studies chosen highlight nuanced specificities within each location that may not have been apparent without a comparison, as well as identify issues that were common to farmers and the AFNs in both locations. With the paucity of case studies in South, this Southern case study cannot be assumed to be reflective of a broader trend or general pattern, but it does provide a valuable contribution from one Southern location.

From a practical standpoint, case studies in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Toronto, Canada are ideal because each city has vibrant AFNs, and these two cities have been connected through informal communications and visits between the administrators of food programs in each city. These administrators have identified that there is a potential for cross-learning. Although there were some key differences between the AFNs, including the consumer base size, selling location, and administrators, there were also similarities, including a similar number of farmers participating, the focus on local food, and farmers selling directly in a major urban centre. I employed specific field methods—interviews and observations—in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the complex meanings and activities of farmers in AFNs, and of how the AFNs functioned. These methods are discussed in more detail in the following section.

3.2 Research Methods

Qualitative research is inherently multi-methodological (Denzin and Lincoln 2005), and many AFN case studies have relied on multiple methods to provide a more complex

understanding of the contradictions and dynamics within the case study (e.g. Feagan and Henderson 2009, Feenstra 2002, Guthman et al. 2006). In my research, multiple methods drew out different types of data and different perspectives that either complemented or contradicted each other. For example, during an interview, one farmer stated that he was personal friends with the majority of his customers; however, in observing his interactions over multiple days, it was evident that he did not know many of his customers well. The methods chosen for this research were informal interviews with farmers, formal interviews with other relevant informants (including government officials, NGO employees, consumers, and market organizers) and personal observations. Table 3.1 outlines the number of sources and amount of data collected using each of these methods.

Interviews and participant observation were the most appropriate methods to meet the objectives outlined in Chapter One. Interviews were appropriate because, as noted by Dunn (2010), interviews can fill a knowledge gap that methods such as observations and census data cannot; they can investigate behaviours and motivations that are complex; they reveal differing opinions or consensus within a group; and empower research participants within the process of the research. Observation both complements and contextualizes the interview data (Kearns 2010). On the other hand, focus groups were not appropriate due to their tendency to lead to negotiated understandings (Cameron 2010). Although questionnaires are excellent at revealing trends and frequencies, the standardized format of questionnaires limits the depth and extent of qualitative data (McGuirk and O'Neill 2010).

Table 3.1 - Method, type of and amount of data collected

Method	Data Collected		Amount of Data Collected	
	Canada	Brazil	Canada	Brazil
Interviews with Farmers	14	17	292 typed pages	380 handwritten pages
Observations at Market	~28 hours	~37 hours	47 handwritten pages	68 handwritten pages
Key Informant Interviews	7	12	26 pages of transcript	46 pages of typed notes

3.2.1 Interviewing Farmers

One of the two primary data collection techniques was in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews have been used frequently in research that has the goal of understanding various aspects of AFNs (e.g. Jarosz 2008, Johnston and Szabo 2011, Lamine 2005, Trauger 2004), including: consumer reflexivity and ethical consumption; the interaction between producers and consumers; and the motivations and roles of women farmers. In this research, a major focus was on understanding farmers' experiences and roles in the AFNs, so in-depth interviews with farmers were appropriate.

The interview guide was developed based on informal discussions I had with farmers who were potential interviewees during my exploratory first fieldwork visits to Belo Horizonte and Toronto. At that point I did not have a set proposal and had not chosen farmers yet as my main interview cohort. I selected farmers as the focus of this research

because in a preliminary scoping research trip to Brazil it appeared that farmers' voices were often overlooked within the AFN. Once I had decided on farmers as the interview cohort, I used the notes from my informal discussions with them and from other exploratory fieldwork as well as the AFN literature to identify major themes for the initial interview guide. The format was flexible, consisting of some set themes and ideas that I wanted explored in each interview, but I did not follow a specific format, order, or wording for questions. One of the benefits of interviews with topics rather than set, structured questions is that it provides an opportunity for unanticipated ideas, information and themes to come out (Hay 2000). Rapport was very important, so the interviews were approached in the manner of having a conversation with a purpose in mind (Eyles 1988), and the goal was for the farmers to tell their own stories. Generally, I began the interview by asking about the farmer's history, and the guide acted as a way to prompt discussion if there were lulls in the conversation. All topics on the interview guide were discussed at some point in the interview. I found that as the conversation flowed I did not have to rely on the interview guide, and most of the themes were covered without prompting throughout the discussion. This approach allows for a better understanding of experiences than a more formal or rigid interview structure because it is responsive to ideas brought forth by the interviewee and affords the flexibility to clarify meaning. Feminist researchers advocate an approach in interviews where the interviewer and interviewee interact and share information in order to co-construct knowledge (Oakley 1981), and I attempted to do so in each interview. I believe I established good rapport with all but one interviewee – a farmer in the Toronto case study who declined a face-to-face interview

and did a brief phone interview instead. The results from the interview with this person were interpreted taking our lack of rapport into consideration.

Because of the flexibility built into the design, new ideas and themes emerged and the interview guide evolved over time. I allowed the interviewees to steer the direction of discussion to a great extent and in the process many other themes emerged. An iterative process was followed, where the initial guide was re-worked for subsequent interviews and farmers were re-visited in some cases. Appendix II is three sample interviews guides: one from prior to conducting the research; the second reflecting changes made during fieldwork in Brazil; and the third reflecting changes made during fieldwork in Toronto.

3.2.1.1 Recruitment of Interviewees

In both case studies, I attempted to get a complete sample of the produce farmers in each AFN. In both locations, administrators acted as 'gatekeepers' to the farmers, an issue that will be discussed in Section 3.4.3 below. In the case of Belo Horizonte, this meant trying to get a complete sample of all producers in the DR program. I began by asking for a complete list from the administrator of the DR program and then independently verified if these farmers were still selling in the program by going stall to stall throughout the city. In Toronto, I asked for permission to access each of the six markets in the FMN from the market managers. Four of the six markets agreed that I could approach their farmers to participate. Each of these four markets was a mixed market, with produce farmers, meat farmers, sellers of prepared foods, and in some cases with craft vendors. I decided that any producer whose main product was produce would be asked for an interview, in order

to have a better comparison with the Belo Horizonte participants, who were interviewed in a field season that preceded the Toronto interviews. I identified these farmers at the market, and asked market managers for their list of participants (to capture produce farmers who only sold at some times of the year and were not present when I compiled the list) in order to construct the cohort. I also approached a purposeful sample of farmers at a 'Certified Local' market (an alternate AFN model discussed in Chapter Two) in Toronto midway through the field season, as I discovered that these markets were a topic of concern with my research participants in Toronto. At the Certified Local market, I approached one organic farmer, one conventional farmer and one farmer who participated in both the Certified Local market and one of the case study markets. In total, there were 17 interviewees in the Belo Horizonte case study, and 14 in the Toronto case study. Some of these farmers were only interviewed once, while those who agreed to it were interviewed two or more times.

I contacted each farmer to set up an interview at a time and place (either at the stall or on the farm) convenient for them. In Belo Horizonte, I did this in person at each market stall. In Toronto, I initially talked to each farmer at the market stall, but the interviews were set up mainly via email or the telephone. In Belo Horizonte, all farmers agreed to participate in the research (a full cohort) and to an in-person interview, although one farmer did eventually have to decline because of health issues. In Toronto, I also conducted interviews with all of the farmers involved at the market at the time of fieldwork. There were some differences in how interviews were conducted between the two case study locations, which are discussed below.

3.2.1.2 Differences in Farmer Interviews between Case Study Locations

Table 3.2 outlines the notable differences between the two case study locations. Instead of seeking uniformity across case study locations, my goal was to understand farmers' experiences, and to do this I decided that developing rapport and adapting the methods to each case study situation (and also to each farmer's individual situation) was more important than having standardized methods. Yet in the interest of transparency, and because how the interviews were conducted did impact on the findings, it is important to discuss the major differences in methods between case studies.

Table 3.2 - Differences in case study methods between case study locations

Consideration	**Belo Horizonte**	**Toronto**
Main Location of Interviews	At the farmer's stall or on farm (also conducted informal follow-up visits to 11 farms)	On farm
Type of Interview	Less Structured	More structured
Interviews with Customers	Yes (with permission of farmer)	No
Recorded	No	Yes
Language	Portuguese (secondary language)	English (primary language)
Frequency of Contact	Multiple discussions/observations at each stall over a few month period.	One main interview/average of 2 days of market observations per market.
Timing of Interviews Initial: Follow-up:	 Jan-April 2007 Jan- Feb 2008	 August 2007- March 2008 June-August 2008

Location and Structure of the Interviews

The first aspect of the methods that differed between case studies was the location of the interview. The interview site can both define how the interviewee constructs their own identity and can also influence interviewee-interviewer dynamics (Sin 2003). In Belo Horizonte, the majority of my interviews with farmers took place at their selling stall. On a basic level, the location of the interview shaped the formality of the interview and the interview topics that came up. I asked questions during set-up, in between customers, and as work around the stall (such as arranging produce) was being done. The interview often lasted hours, from initial morning set-up (usually around 6am) until the end of the selling day (usually around 2pm). The tone of most interviews was conversational, often with acquaintances of the farmer joining in with their own comments. Also, the topics changed rapidly as different situations arose and brought on different questions and comments. Many of the farmers invited me to their farm, and I took advantage of this opportunity and also conducted informal follow-up visits to 11 of the 17 farms. Only one farmer was interviewed exclusively on-farm, as he was not selling at his stall during the field research period (he had hired help selling for him at the market). An advantage to the interviews being conducted at the stall was that the flow of conversation rarely felt forced, or the time taken for the interview rarely felt like it was disturbing the farmer. In addition, I had the opportunity to visit most farmers at their stalls on return visits, using the opportunity to draw out details noted as I reviewed the data daily. This type of ethnographic research was beneficial, as it allowed me to observe what people do, in addition to what they have said (Herbert 2000). This process allowed for an iterative process of data collection to occur, and for me to become very well acquainted with the

farmers. This knowledge of the farmers' personalities aided immensely in my analysis of the interviews. For example, one farmer was very negative in my initial interview. In subsequent contact with this farmer, I learned that he is a very pessimistic person, and that my initial impression that he was very unhappy with his livelihood was unfounded. I could interpret his tone and words differently based on knowing his personality better.

In the Toronto case study, the interviews were conducted on-farm. Although I wanted to conduct the interviews at the market to follow the precedent set in Belo Horizonte, the farmers' markets were extremely busy with a constant flow of consumers and the farmers working there did not have time to answer questions at market. The dynamics of the interviews were very different from those in Belo Horizonte. First, despite the fact that I offered to do the interviews as the farmer was working and offered to assist by doing a low-skill job to help out, most farmers preferred to do the interview inside their house and to devote a specified period of time to it. Only one farmer accepted my offer of low-skilled help, and with her I planted tomato seeds in her greenhouse. The interview took on a more formal tone with all of the Toronto case study farmers. While the conversation did flow from one topic to another, the set-up of the interview, usually at a table with the voice recorder present, set the tone for the interview. In many cases, throughout the interview I was very aware of the time I was taking up in the farmer's busy day. As well, although contact with the farmers continued at the farmers' markets, the busyness of the markets limited follow-up conversations. As a result, I did not get to know the Toronto area farmers as well as the Belo Horizonte ones. Overall, I felt that the relationships I developed with most of the Canadian farmers were more formal and impersonal, while I felt as though I developed friendships with the Brazilian farmers.

Recording of Interviews

In Belo Horizonte, the main interviews were not voice recorded due to two factors. First, it was difficult to do so in a noisy public space and over such a long interview time (often 4-5 hours at minimum). Second, I noted on my first few interviews where I attempted to use a voice recorder that the farmers were uncomfortable with the recorder present. For this reason, I decided to take handwritten notes of all farmer interviews in Belo Horizonte. I did record some follow-up interviews because I felt I had already developed rapport and the farmers would not be as bothered by the voice recorder. Yet I noted that even in these follow-up interviews the farmers were very aware of the recorder, and they continually looked at the recorder and spoke in a stiff manner. When the recorder was turned off a more natural flow of conversation occurred and rapport (which had been developed over the initial interview) was re-established. Because of this, the data from the interviews in Belo Horizonte consisted mostly of hand-written notes, with some quotes written verbatim in Portuguese and then translated by me.

In Toronto, the farmers seemed comfortable being recorded. Because the interview was at the farmer's kitchen table in most cases, a clear interview recording could be obtained. Only one interviewee did not want a tape recording made because she was uncomfortable with how her recorded voice sounded. I also took notes at each interview, so the data consisted of both a transcribed recording and written notes. As a result, during analysis I could better note the subtleties of language in Toronto as compared to in Belo Horizonte. In reporting findings, writing quotations in the interviewees' own words is important to

reveal how meanings are expressed in the respondents' own words, rather than the researcher's interpretations of their words (Baxter and Eyles 1997). The transcriptions from the Toronto case study allowed me to represent the interviewees' own words throughout the following chapters, while this was more limited for the Belo Horizonte case study.

Speaking to the Consumers

In Belo Horizonte I was able to speak with customers at the stall. Farmers were told at the onset that they could control access to their consumers, so no consumer was approached for an interview without the knowledge and permission of the farmer. In this way, farmers acted as gate-keepers to the customer. In Toronto, at the onset of the research the market managers asked that I not approach customers at the market. The managers do a yearly survey of customers (to which I had access, but found to be of limited use) and were wary of research fatigue with customers. Therefore, I had to depend on personal observation to gather research on the customers at the markets. The methodological limitation that this has on the research findings is discussed in Section 3.4.4.

Role of Language

All Belo Horizonte interviews were conducted in Brazilian Portuguese, which is my second language. In Brazilian Portuguese, the dialects and meanings vary not only from location to location, but also among classes. The subtleties of the language as they referred specifically to the research were learned as I conducted the research. For example, there were various terms for farm, and each had their own meanings and

connotations, depending on how they were being used and by whom. I mistakenly referred to one farmer's land as a 'fazenda' after other farmers in the program had used that term, and he quickly corrected me and told me he had a 'roça', which is a term that refers to a smaller farm. He explained that while some farmers in the program referred to their land as a fazenda, he had so little that he did not want it referred to as such. Rather than being insulted by how I referred to his land, he was very willing to explain why he was insulted by the term, and others liked to use it. Since Portuguese was not my first language, my questions about the subtleties of the language were answered willingly and indeed assisted in not only developing my rapport with the farmers but providing sometimes unexpected conceptual clarifications.

The Sequence of Case Study Fieldwork

Qualitative research is inherently iterative. As such, the order in which I conducted the case studies had an impact on the findings. As noted in Appendix III- Fieldwork Timeline, I conducted the main Brazilian interviews prior to the Canadian ones. The research goals evolved during the Brazilian case studies, and the approach to the Canadian case study interviews reflected this evolution. Thus, the order in which the case studies were conducted, which was a result of practical considerations, had an impact on the findings of the research. Themes and ideas that were brought up in the first case study were incorporated into the interview guide. For example, based on the Brazil interviews, the importance of personal interactions at market was included as a theme in the Toronto interview guide.

3.2.2 Personal Observations

The second main method that I took in this research was conducting hours of observations in both case study locations. Most of the observations occurred at the market rather than on-farm and notes were made both during the observations and in a field diary that I wrote after the fact. In most cases, I told the research participants that I was observing for the purpose of research. In both case study locations, I spent hours at the market stall observing interactions between the farmers and customers. In Belo Horizonte, observations and conversation with farmers took place at the farmer's stall (and thus some observations could be clarified or elaborated on by the farmer). Due to how busy the Toronto markets were, I did not converse with the farmer while conducting observations. However, in some cases I was also a 'covert-observer' (Flowerdew and Martin 2005). For example, when working at the desk provided to me by the Municipal Government in Belo Horizonte, I overheard discussions and made observations about programs and policies which furthered my understanding of the case study by providing a broader policy context. In another example, in the cases where I was being a customer (in both case study locations), I made observations that the research participants and the consumers may not have realized were recorded (after the fact) and used as data.

3.2.3 Key Informant Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with twelve key informants in Brazil, and six semi-structured interview and one unstructured interview in Toronto. Appendix IV is a list of the key informants I interviewed in each case study. In each location I made a list of the people in various levels of administration of the AFN, as well as other key people

who the farmers (or other key informant interviewees) identified. I then contacted the key informant for an interview, and prepared an interview guide specific to the individual, based on their role or position. I conducted semi-structured interviews with each key informant at their place of employment (or for all four market managers in Toronto, in a neutral location such as a coffee shop). In the Toronto case study I had more difficulty recruiting key informants, so there were three individuals who I contacted who either declined an interview or did not respond to multiple requests. In Belo Horizonte, all of the key informants that I contacted granted an interview. The interviews were coded alongside the farmer interviews.

3.2.4 Analysis of Interview Data and Observations

In keeping with the iterative nature of this study, analysis of the interview data was conducted as the interviews progressed and later interviews built on the initial findings and observations made while in the field. After the fieldwork was completed in each location, the voice recordings from the Toronto case study were transcribed. These were then coded based on major themes. I also coded my personal observations which, in Brazil, were interspersed with the handwritten interview notes. Since there was no fixed conceptual framework at the onset of coding, owing to the inductive approach being adopted, the initial codes were mainly descriptive and included both terms used in the interview text, and themes I identified as forming part of the emerging conceptual framework. Coding was facilitated by the use of the software program NVivo, and in NVivo I did an initial coding of all Brazilian case study interviews, all Canadian case study interviews, and did likewise with all observation notes and key informant

interviews. As I progressed with further refining and thinking of the ideas and themes, codes were grouped and re-grouped numerous times, and the themes ranged from very specific ones such as 'economic resources' to general ones such as 'constructing local'. Although coding is often associated with grounded theory (Cloke et al. 2004), I did not take a 'pure' grounded theory approach as noted above. Rather than being 'grounded' in the voice of the research participant, the codes were "generated in the context of a *two*-way 'relationship' between researcher and research participant…in practice, what really occurs here is that the meanings are produced precisely through the encounter *between* reader and author" (Cloke et al. 2004, p. 327, italics in original). As the researcher, I could not help but to bring out what I found meaningful, rather than being a 'neutral conduit' (ibid) for the research participant.

After I had refined my initial coding, I conducted 'member checking' (Baxter and Eyles 1997) with seven farmers in Belo Horizonte (on my second field visit to Brazil in January and February 2008) and with five farmers in Toronto (on follow-up visits to markets in summer 2008). In this work, member checking was used not only to understand how my interpretations were viewed by farmers (and if they agreed with them), but these visits to both case study locations also provided new ideas, perspectives, and the opportunity for clarification, that I then incorporated into further analysis. In Belo Horizonte, I was able to take ideas from the Toronto case study, where interviews were conducted after the initial Belo Horizonte fieldwork, and then explore ideas that emerged during the initial Toronto fieldwork. For example, after my initial fieldwork in both locations, I better

understood the importance of how local food was viewed in each AFN. In my follow up visit to Brazil, the valuation of local food was explored in more detail with farmers.

After the follow-up field trips, further refining, organization and linking was done by hand using hand-written notations rather than using NVivo. The coding was used merely as a 'jumping off' point to direct me to explore (and either incorporate or in some cases reject) different theories. In particular, uncovering key similarities or differences among research participants (and in some cases uncovering unique experiences and in others identifying 'silences' or what is not discussed) led me to read, reflect on and refine my conceptual understanding of the ideas. The coding was used as an aid to making sense of the material rather than a means to understand or interpret it (Flowerdew and Martin 2005). The NVivo and hand-written coding was most useful as an organizational tool, with interpretation occurring as I read, reflected, re-read and eventually wrote about the ideas that now form Chapters Four to Seven of this dissertation. I then followed a process of 'writing through' the data, a process that "help[s] to construct data and interpretations rather than simply reporting on them." (Cloke et al. 2004, p. 338). Although the main concepts were decided upon prior to writing, writing through helped me make conceptual linkages and refine these ideas.

3.3 Practical Considerations in the Research

In this section I discuss the practical considerations that may have had an impact on the findings of the research and how they were dealt with. The issues raised relate to how my position as researcher shaped the fieldwork approach, interactions, and outcomes.

3.3.1 Positionality and Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methodology demands reflexivity, as our motives and actions as researchers shape the research process and outcome. The idea of situating knowledge has been discussed extensively in feminist geography, and is based on the idea that the knowledge created is dependent on who is creating it (Rose 1997). As the interviewer, I was an 'active instrument' in the research (Baxter and Eyles 1997). Thus, my opinions, perspectives and experiences shape the research and it is important to disclose and reflect upon my 'position' as researcher. Positionality can be understood as "facets of the self…[that] are articulated as 'positions' in a multi-dimensional geography of power relations" (Rose, 1997, p. 308). One way to assess this is to look at my status as either an insider or outsider in relation to the interviewee. Although these categories do not reflect the complex relationships that I had with the interviewees, they provide some understanding of my position relative to the interviewees and the power relations involved in any interview process. Generally, in Brazil, my status as an outsider, with more education, social and economic status, positioned me as the individual with conceivably greater power in the interview relationship (except when it came to language, as described above). In Canada, the power dynamic was more equal, since many of the farmers had similar social and economic backgrounds to my own, and the majority had at least one University degree.

3.3.2 Insider/Outsider Status

In this section I discuss my status as an insider/outsider in both Canada and Brazil, and what opportunities and limitations this placed on my fieldwork. Because of the very different locations in which I conducted my research, I had a very different position in each case study. Thus, I will address my status in each location separately.

In Toronto, there were some obvious ways that I was considered an insider, such as my common language, nationality and ethnic background shared with (most of) the research participants. There were also some other notable ways in which I was an 'insider' that helped the research and deserve further elaboration.

1) Growing up in Southwestern Ontario

Because I was a 'small town' girl who was from the same Southwestern Ontario agricultural area (Stratford, Ontario) as the majority of the research participants, I shared a sense of common understanding and experience with research participants, although I was an 'outsider' in that I was not from a farming background. Common cultural references, for example a discussion of a well-known television commercial with one interviewee, were understood. This background also helped in my understanding of the experiences of farmers in the region and the changes they have experienced over time. In addition, discussion of the weather in the area and of places we both knew helped place me as an insider. My previous educational experience (although not in Agriculture) at the University of Guelph, Ontario's most prominent agricultural university, was a commonality I shared with the majority of research participants, and this helped with developing rapport. These commonalities came out because of the structure of the interview, which was conducted fairly informally around the kitchen table or while I helped on the farm.

2) Being an AFN participant

As a participant myself in an ‘alternative food network’ (as a consumer in a Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) program and at my local market), the research participants and I shared a common understanding of some of the issues within the food system and some alternative solutions. Common ideals, values and issues with the movement were more easily identified by me as I could relate from my own interaction with AFNs. For example, issues of privilege and the pricing of organic foods and the decisions over what to purchase at market versus what to purchase ‘cheaply’ are a part of my day-to-day reality. Often, research participants would ask me about pricing from my perspective, which is both an opportunity and a problem with being an insider. In addition, these values, and my self-identification as an AFN participant, helped to forge common bonds with some of the more ideologically motivated farmers.

Although I have highlighted ways that being an insider aided in the research, there are also ways in which it was a disadvantage in the research. My own experience with AFNs as a participant often led to questions from the farmers about ‘what I thought’ about certain issues and debates. This led to some awkward times when my own opinions and thoughts were contrary to those of the participants, and I had to answer truthfully and try not to jeopardize the rapport I had developed with the farmers. For example, in one interview the farmer was very set on keeping pricing very high since it is most ‘fair’ for her as the farmer to make money, irrespective of whether or not most people can afford the produce. She subsequently asked me if I agreed with her, and I decided to answer

somewhat evasively and shift the focus (which I did by agreeing with her that she deserved a fair price for her produce). I believe this woman was satisfied with not getting a direct answer.

As an active participant in a CSA program, a type of AFN, I came in with certain ideas that were not universal. For example, in the CSA network that I participate in, the farmer has a certain sustainable farming ideology that informs how she operates. In my third interview, I quickly realized my bias as it was not reflective of all AFN farmers. I had been projecting my own idealized view of his farming operation onto the interview. Realizing this as I conducted the interview allowed me to approach future interviews without assumptions about the ideological position of the farmers, and in fact led me to explore ideological motivations for participating in AFNs.

In other ways I was an ‘outsider’ in the Toronto case-study, which acted as both an advantage and a disadvantage. I do not come from a farming background, so cannot fully comprehend the day-to-day reality of farming, and the various struggles that the farmers face. The differences were apparent in subtle ways. For example, in one interview I mentioned how it had been a difficult drive because of a lot of snow on the ground, yet the farmer noted that for him it meant that the ground would have adequate moisture in springtime. There were times where I needed clarification on some of the farming language and terminology, and at times it broke the flow and rapport of the interview as my position as an ‘outsider’ was brought to the forefront. Alternatively, this also allowed the farmers to educate me, and sometimes led to meaningful insights.

At the market in Toronto, I was not a part of the 'community' that has developed around the AFN. I did not have a long-term history attending the market, and as such, some of the inner workings and dynamics I gained from secondhand sources. This came to the forefront when observing animosity between two vendors, and I was not comfortable asking these vendors themselves. I heard about the conflict from another vendor (or a secondhand account). I also did not have contacts at the market, and had to rely on the market manager, who was a new contact at all but one market.

As an academic, I was automatically labeled an outsider by some farmers. The most notable example of this is the open hostility I received from one research participant who refused to do an in-person interview but consented to a very brief phone interview. She mentioned to me that although I may not work hard as an academic (an assumption she had made about me as an academic), she works hard and does not have time to waste with 'the likes of me'. This is perhaps a reflection of the attitude that women in academia are relatively privileged because they can afford an education, and have professional status (Kobayashi 1994).

In Brazil, I was mainly an outsider, and this had both advantages and disadvantages in the research design, data collection and analysis. Brazilian Portuguese is not my first language and my accent and dialect exposed me an outsider from the onset. This was a disadvantage as some of the more nuanced meanings of the language were not picked up on during the interviews and during analysis. Yet my ignorance of certain terms and

meanings also proved to be an advantage at times, as the farmers would sometimes be very explicit about how they meant to use a term. For example, I knew there were various ways of referring to a farm (Roça, Fazenda etc.) and was aware that they referred to different scales of farms, but I did not fully comprehend the social constructions and value meanings attached to these terms. A few farmers explained to me why they used each term and they were very clear about how they felt about the terms.

My status as a Canadian and as a person of a social class that was able to travel to Brazil and be university educated (or, as an 'international researcher' as most of the farmers referred to me) made me an outsider. This made it difficult for me to understand the livelihoods of the interviewees, and thus to relate to them. At the onset of fieldwork, it was this class and nationality differentiation that I was most aware of, and I was conscious of my privileged position vis-à-vis the interviewees. My main concern was that the interviewees would resent me as a member of the privileged class. However, my nationality and status actually worked to my advantage in some ways with the farmers. Three farmers told me that they thought the interest of an 'international researcher' in their personal stories gave them greater status with the municipal government officials who administered the program. Surprisingly, my position as an 'international researcher' was a problem mostly with the administrators of the program, who came from a similar educated and socio-economically secure background. A few of the key informant interviewees were guarded and I felt they feared being judged negatively, and in another case, a key informant spent much of the interview boasting of his international experience and credentials and did not answer most of my questions.

As a woman doing research with mostly male farmers in Belo Horizonte, I was an outsider. Brazilian society is highly patriarchal, and my gender played a role in interview interactions. For instance, one male interviewee was very helpful and I thought we had developed excellent rapport by my second time visiting him. However, at the end of the second visit he asked me to go to a restaurant with him for dinner that night, and when I declined he became less friendly on subsequent visits. I also began to question his claims of success in the program, as I now believe he was boasting to impress me. In other instances, more subtle reminders of my gender were brought up, such as questions about how my husband felt about me being alone in Brazil.

Overall, my position vis-à-vis the farmers played a role in all aspects of the research design. My position as an outsider in Brazil and both an outsider and a relative insider in Toronto were most apparent in the fieldwork stage. The examples provided were some of the more obvious ways in which my position affected data collection. The examples provided are intended to be a snapshot of the influence of my position as researcher, because in reality my position influenced all aspects of data collection (as well as on the initial research design and the analysis) and every single interaction in numerous ways.

3.3.3 The Role of ‘Gatekeepers’

In both case study locations I used ‘gatekeepers’ to gain access to the interview cohorts since I decided to conduct the research with the cooperation of the administrators of the AFN programs in both locations. Gatekeepers are people who control access to a

particular group because they are either in an official position or position of power (Hughes and Cormode 1998). Using gatekeepers may lead to issues of access to diverse experiences, as the gatekeepers may attempt to restrict access to those interviewees who reflect the experiences and opinions that favour the gatekeeper (Cloke et al. 2004, Flowerdew and Martin 2005). Although I did not encounter issues of restriction to certain interviewees in either location since I had already determined my interview cohort prior to meeting the gatekeeper, I did face a problem with one gatekeeper trying to exert control over how I accessed farmers. In Belo Horizonte, one program administrator, who is from the municipal government, was appointed as my 'guide' by his superiors, and he insisted on coming with me to each farmer's stall for the first visit and on many farm visits. I negotiated with him to leave me alone for the actual interviews and to state I was not working for the government but was an independent researcher, but his presence at the start of the interview affected my ability initially to develop rapport with certain farmers. It was usually on the second or third visit, when I was alone, that I felt the farmers were comfortable enough with me to open up beyond simply stating they were very happy in the program, under the assumption I was reporting back to this official. I had to be clear with farmers that I was not affiliated with the Municipal Government and that the interview was confidential. One farmer remarked to me, after I had met with him multiple times, that he at first did not trust me since I was linked to this gatekeeper (in his words, a 'spy' for the municipal government) so he did not feel he could speak freely about his negative experiences like this official's rude treatment of the farmer. Although I made every effort to distance myself from the gatekeeper, I had to take into account that some farmers may not have trusted me enough to disclose their true feelings on some

aspects of the DR program. In Toronto, I did not encounter gatekeeper issues to the same extent, as the farmers' market managers made introductions where appropriate, but generally did not interfere with the interviews. I was never questioned about my affiliation with the market managers and all of the farmers seemed to understand my position as a university researcher.

3.3.4 Methodological Limitations

As with any research, there are some limitations that arose during the fieldwork. Prior to conducting the research, my intent was to conduct interviews with farmers who were not participating in the AFNs, as well as those who had been participating but had stopped. There were two major limitations to accessing the first group, those who were small farmers but did not participate. The first limitation was time, which was especially limited in the Belo Horizonte case study because I was only in the field for a three month period and a follow-up four week period. The second limitation was the difficulty with defining a cohort of such farmers. In the Belo Horizonte case study I knew many farmers, but I had few connections outside of the familial network of the farmers in the program. I decided that interviewing relatives of the DR participants was not an accurate reflection of the general small farming population, since members of the general small farming population did not have the knowledge that these relatives of DR participants did. Similarly, in Toronto I had connections with farmers who were acquaintances of the AFN participants. Many of these farmers participated in other farmers markets or other AFNs, and the community of AFN (and small organic) farmers in the area is relatively small and tightly knit. To overcome this limitation in both locations, I sought out informal

discussions with farmers when I encountered them in places such as the food terminals and roadside stands and from this gained some insights about why they were not participating in the specific AFNs that I was studying. Overall I do not feel I gained an adequate understanding of the experiences of farmers who are not participating in the AFNs. A second limitation was the restricted access I had to customers in each location. In Toronto I had no access to customers, as noted above. In Belo Horizonte, I had access to customers but the farmers acted as 'gatekeepers' by choosing who I could and could not speak with. As such, the data collected reflected a potentially biased sample of customers who were on favourable terms with the farmers.

A third limitation that was noted in the Belo Horizonte case study was the reliability of secondary data. This is indicative of the problems with relying on data provided by the AFN administrators in both locations. In this particular instance, the reports produced by the Municipal Government about the DR program proved to be inaccurate. For example, the number of farmers reported to be in the program was over 30, while in reality there were only 18 at the time of research. When inquiring about this, I was informed that when producing the report the administrator had simply 'carried over' the number of farmers from previous years, rather than updating the statistic. This brought into question other statistics in the report, which upon further inquiry also proved to be inaccurate. Therefore, my history of the program had to be reconstructed mostly from farmer accounts and key informants, rather than from official reports.

3.4 Conclusions

Qualitative methodology has been used within AFN scholarship to understand the experiences, constructions and practices within AFNs but there is a lack of North/South case study comparison. Nevertheless, AFN research that employs qualitative methodology often uses case studies, and this research methodology followed in this tradition. Using a case study allowed for a comparison of farmers' experiences in distinctly different geographical locations, allowing greater insight into each case study as well as additional observations about AFNs in general that could not have been obtained from one case study alone. The specific methods employed were in-depth interviews, observations and key informant interviews, because these methods are most effective at gaining insight into the farmers' personal experiences and the functioning of the AFN. Throughout the various stages of the research process, consideration was given to my position as researcher, and my status as insider and/or outsider. The thick description that was gained from the interviews and observations allowed me to understand phenomena not well described in the existing AFN literature, and to seek out other literature that could contribute to a better conceptual understanding of the phenomena. The theoretical framework in the chapter that follows was developed using the methodological approach and methods noted in this chapter.

Chapter Four

Setting the Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I establish the theoretical framework for the discussion of the research findings in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Prior to conducting the field research and beginning analysis of the findings, the conceptual framing of the research had drawn primarily upon the AFN literature. Through the iterative process of conducting field research, reflecting on my findings, and interpreting and re-interpreting the data (as discussed in Chapter Three), I have expanded this framework to include select concepts from scholarship on livelihoods, social justice, and consumption, including culturalist interpretations of commodity fetishism. I also draw on the geographical literature on scale, space and place, as these concepts explicitly or implicitly inform both the theory and the practice of AFNs.

The majority of the theoretical base for this study is still drawn from the academic scholarship on AFNs. I begin this chapter by identifying types of 'alternativeness' in the AFN scholarship. Particularly useful are conceptualizations of AFNs in relation to—rather than in opposition to—the industrial food system, and literature identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs), a common form of AFNs. I then ask the question: 'alternative for whom?' I identify which groups or individuals could benefit from an AFN, and in what ways, to contrast these findings with the empirical evidence of who actually benefits in the AFNs under research in this study.

One major shortcoming in the AFN literature is the tendency to assume individuals fall into a ‘group’ with common experiences, values, and outcomes. However, when focusing on farmers participating in the AFNs, my findings show that there are a wide range of experiences, resources, and values represented. Literature on livelihoods provides useful concepts to better comprehend these differences in experiences and resources. In particular, the concepts of ‘capitals’ and ‘well-being’ are employed in this thesis to capture the range of differences in the livelihoods and experiences of the participant farmers. Scaling-up from the level of the individual farmer to that of the AFN, one of the key issues that emerged in the findings was that of the lack of social justice within each network. I therefore draw on ideas of social justice, specifically the concepts of inclusion and exclusion. Having established that social injustices occur within the case study AFNs, I then seek to better understand some of the ways by which injustice occurs. The literature on commodity fetishes provides a conceptual grounding for explaining how some narratives within AFNs are shaped by specific actors and, linking back to the social justice literature, how these narratives can create exclusive spaces. The concepts of ‘double fetish’ narratives and ‘geographical knowledges’ proved especially useful for examining how these narratives are constructed within the study AFNs.

Finally, ideas of place, space, scale, power and class permeate both the research findings and the literatures that I employ. Therefore, the last section of this framework is dedicated to better understanding the tensions that exist among the concepts of scale, space and place and understanding how they relate to one another. Examining the contested construction and mobilization of place, space and scale within the case study

AFNs provides a better understanding of the power and class dynamics prevalent in the AFNs, which impacts on their function, their potential and their limitations.

4.1 What is 'Alternative' about 'Alternative Food Networks'?

A central question that emerged in this dissertation, first posed by Whatmore et al. (2003, p. 389) and again by Watts et al. (2005, p. 22), is: "what is alternative about the alternative food economy?" The very 'alternativeness' of the two AFN models presented in the case studies can be questioned, based on differing ideological viewpoints. From a radical perspective, a true alternative works to overthrow the industrial food system, and its capitalist and neoliberal basis (Goodman 2004, Ilbery and Maye 2005, McMichael 2000). As I discuss in Chapter Seven, neither of the case study AFNs has the ability or desire to be transformative outside of the confines of the current system, and Lee (2000) and Watts et al. (2005) both acknowledge the reality that AFNs operate mainly within the industrial system.

Some suggest that AFNs can work within capitalism yet still work against the industrial food system. Within the majority of the AFN literature, the 'alternative' is juxtaposed against the industrial food system discussed in Chapter Two. The term 'industrial food system', although used with caution since it can lead to a binary comparative with an idealized form of the 'alternative', is defined in general terms within this work as "globalized networks of food production, distribution, storage and retail that are controlled by multinational agri-business and retail corporations. Production and supply chains are managed over long distances, exhibit high degrees of vertical integration and

are driven by corporate capital" (Harris 2009, p. 357). Central to this definition are the concepts of scale and power, wherein farmers and consumers in the system have little control, and power is concentrated with actors who are not connected to a specific place. The reality of the industrial food system is more complex than this simplified definition conveys; however, a debate about the industrial system and how it is defined is outside the realm of this study. Rather, the important aspect to the study is how AFNs are characterized as counter to the main characteristics of the industrial system.

Even though scholars have noted that comparisons to the industrial food system are problematic (Holloway et al. 2007), literature on 'alternativeness' tends to be conceptualized as a local/global dichotomy. AFNs are commonly defined by what they are not – that is, they are something different from and better than the global, industrial, environmentally degrading, corporate controlled system (DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Ilbery and Maye 2005). The importance of scale and power are implied, as 'global' is linked to the other negative aspects of the system (environmentally degrading, industry-controlled), and 'local' can therefore be interpreted as much better environmentally, socially, and democratically. Morgan et al. (2006) define characteristics of alternativeness, all of which are in contrast to characteristics of the industrial system. According to them, AFNs redistribute value through the network (rather than profit-hoarding by industry); embrace some sort of relation of `trust' between food producers and consumers (rather than foster a disconnect between producers and consumers); and use new or different forms of political association and market governance. These characteristics are useful for understanding how AFNs can function; however, they can

be interpreted as a ‘checklist’ that oversimplifies a more complex reality. They also set a binary distinction between alternative systems and the industrial one:

> Although we try to eschew binary oppositions… it is useful to draw a stylized distinction between two agri-food systems, namely: the conventional system, which is dominated by productivist agriculture and large companies producing, processing and retailing food on a national and global scale, and the alternative system, which tends to be associated with a more ecological approach to agriculture, with smaller companies producing and retailing food for localized markets. This distinction of course is something of a caricature because… the border between these two systems is becoming more and more porous.
>
> (Morgan et al. 2006, p. 2)

Comparative binary definitions such as this do not further the understanding of the case study AFNs, as there is much intermixing of the industrial and the alternative at the scale of production (discussed in Chapter Five), consumption (discussed in Chapter Six), and the AFN as a whole (discussed in Chapter Seven). Morgan et al.’s (2006) binary is based on common assumptions within the AFN literature about scale (global versus local), the implied power relations (large companies versus small ones) and environmental ideologies (resource-intensive and degrading versus an ecological approach). Even though they acknowledge that this distinction may be a ‘caricature’, they nevertheless set out idealized characteristics of each system, reinforcing common assumptions.

That the participants in the ‘alternative’ system also rely on aspects of the industrial system in order to make a living is evident in the case studies, where farmers are embedded in the industrial system for farm inputs, as well as other livelihood expenses (such as clothing, education, transportation, etc.). Thus, as noted at the onset of this chapter, the farmers are inescapably embedded in a capitalist system, trying to be ‘alternative’ in ways that fall within it. In these case studies, the economic imperative for

farmers, in terms of their need for income and resources in order to have viable livelihoods, was evident and is discussed in Chapter Five. This economic reality is acknowledged by Watts et al. (2005), who state that the economic considerations of farmers must be central to AFNs if these networks are to succeed. This demonstrates the importance of the farmers within the network and provides some explanation as to why AFNs (including one of the two case study models) often prioritize farmers' economic needs over the needs of other actors.

In order to better understand this mixing of 'alternative' and industrial within the AFNs, Follett (2009) provides a continuum from:

> Corporate, weak alternative food networks; and local, strong alternative food networks. The weak corporate version focuses on protecting the environment; however, it neglects issues concerning labor standards, animal welfare, rural communities, small-scale farms, and human health. Local, strong alternative food networks not only assure environmental protection, but they also address the issues [of labour, animal welfare, rural communities, small-scale farmers and human health] that weak alternatives neglect.
>
> (2009, p. 31)

He notes that at each extreme the resulting networks are merely a caricature, and that most reality fits within the middle of each extreme, as is demonstrated with my case studies in Chapter Seven. Follett's continuum is production-biased, in that it considers mostly on-farm and environmental benefits of 'strong' alternatives, versus social justice and consumption-side benefits. The idea of characterizing aspects of AFNs as 'weaker' or 'stronger' is useful to understanding differences amongst AFNs. However, my case studies demonstrate that using a continuum of 'weak to strong' obscures the reality that at the scale of production, different participants within particular networks have differing

values and goals, and would be at different points along the continuum. Ascertaining where an AFN 'fits' along the continuum is dependent on the scale, whether looking at the individual participant (in Chapter Five) or at the network level (Chapter Seven). In addition, the AFNs (and some individuals and households within each AFN) are 'strong' alternatives in some ways, and 'weak' alternatives in other ways. Although Follett (like Whatmore et al. 2007 before him) provides a good set of characteristics to understand what constitutes an alternative, this type of continuum is conceptually ineffective to understand this research. What is more effective is to understand the particularities and in what ways different AFNs are alternative. Both of the case study AFNs are SFSCs, with the potential for significant environmental, social and economic alternatives to the dominant system.

4.2 Local AFNs: Alternative in What Way(s)?

SFSCs are a type of 'relocalization of food' (Ilbery and Maye 2005), and are considered by some scholars to be one of the strongest 'alternatives' (Follett 2009, Watts et al. 2005). This indicates the centrality of scale (particularly the 'local/global dichotomy') within AFN theory, which is further considered in section 4.7.1 of this chapter. According to Watts et al. (2005), SFSC networks have displayed alternativeness in ways that are environmentally, socially and economically beneficial. These narratives have arisen out of and reflect the sometimes diverging interests by various theoretical perspectives and practical organizations of what AFNs can or should achieve. The environmental narrative draws on the influence of sustainable agriculture and the environmental movement. The sociology literature has focused on ways in which AFNs

have altered social relations around food and in particular on ideas of trust. The focus on the economic alternativeness of AFNs is based largely on the practical political economic reality of farming and food systems, and has come from work predominantly in the rural studies literature. In this section, the various 'ways of being alternative' within the AFN literature are identified, and are then compared to the reality of the participant farmers and the case study AFNs in subsequent chapters. Specifically, the narratives are compared and contrasted to the reality of individual participant farmers in Chapter Five and to the AFNs in Chapter Seven.

4.2.1 Environmental Alternatives

As noted, the first and perhaps primary organizing narrative in the AFN literature is that AFNs are more environmentally sustainable than the industrial system (e.g. DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Follett 2009, Morgan et al. 2006). The North American AFN movement has deep roots in the sustainable agriculture and environmental movements of the 1970s (Allen et al. 2003, Guthman et al. 2006) which led to the organic movement (Goodman and Goodman 2007). The AFN environmental discourse is centred on an idealized view of small and local farming that "makes the best use of nature's goods and services while not damaging the environment" (Pretty 2002, p. 56). SFSCs are posited as the model for environmentally friendly alternatives since they operate at this local scale and purportedly involve only 'small' farmers. They also involve the reduction of the distance between the sites of production and sale or 'food miles', even though recent studies suggest that the majority of greenhouse gas emissions associated with food is at the stage of production (Weber and Matthews 2008), putting focus on the farmers and their

farming methods (as I do in Chapter Five). Goodman and Goodman (2007) believe that local AFNs open space for sustainable farmers who are attempting to escape the increasingly corporate dominated organic movement. Organic agriculture has in many ways replicated the industrial system that it initially set out to oppose (Guthman 2004). Yet this categorization of the environmentally friendly farmer obscures the varied reality found among case study farmers, whose environmental practices and attitudes are significantly influenced by the resources available to them, their motivations for farming and the marketability of 'organic' or environmentally friendly products.

One of the key assumptions with the 'environmental farmer/environmental AFN' narrative is that individuals within the network have the same values and goals as the network, rather than their own individual interests and goals. The livelihoods literature is employed in Chapter Five to understand why on an individual and household scale some farmers within AFNs fit the environmental farmer narrative, while others do not. Indeed, there is some literature that provides a more critical assessment of the case for 'local' alternatives being more environmentally friendly. On the scale of the AFN, Hinrichs and Allen (2008) make the point that just because the scale of an AFN is 'local', it is still not clear that it is more environmentally friendly. When looking at the individual farmer scale, Hinrichs (2003) argues that local small farmers, because of limitations to resources or knowledge, may not be better stewards of the environment than corporate agriculture.

Another issue with this narrative is that at the scale of the network, there is conflict between providing an environmental alternative versus a social alternative in terms of

accessibility to the network for some participants. This contradiction is particularly relevant to the case study AFNs, where the goals of the network are different in each location. The organic movement has been accused of being largely accessible to, and in fact catering to middle to high income consumers (Guthman 2003) and AFNs with the environment as a focus may be exclusionary, in large part due to higher prices. Satisfying other social goals, such as inclusion of low-income consumers, may occur at the sacrifice of environmental ideals. This contradiction is further developed conceptually in Section 4.5.2 of this chapter, and then applied to the case study AFNs in Chapter Seven.

4.2.2 Social Alternatives

AFNs have been cited as being social alternatives in two very different ways, depending on the perspective from which they are discussed. Within the social justice literature, the 'social' aspect of alternativeness involves the inclusion of groups traditionally marginalized within the industrial system (such as various low-income groups) – which, as noted in the previous section, can be at odds with other goals. This aspect of social alternativeness is discussed in Section 4.5.2 on social justice. Here, my focus is on a common way that AFNs have been considered 'socially alternative': through the alternative social relations that can be created between farmers and consumers in AFNs, and on the related concepts of 'embeddedness' and 'relations of trust' (Watts et al. 2005). These concepts aid in the understanding of the day-to-day workings of the AFNs, particularly in terms of interactions at the market among farmers and consumers, and the resulting outcomes, explored in Chapter Six.

Within the sociological literature on AFNs, there is extensive focus on ideas of 'embeddedness'. Social embeddedness can be defined in terms of the social ties that enhance and modify economic interactions (Hinrichs 2000). The reciprocity, social connections and trust of direct selling is considered a hallmark of SFSCs (ibid). The dominant narrative found within the AFN literature is that people are disembedded from their food in the industrial food system, and that AFNs, particularly ones built around 'local' foods, are 're-embedding' people within the food system. Goodman and Watts (1997) stress that place, social embeddedness and trust in AFNs are all interwoven. 'The local' is posited as the place where embeddedness occurs, and this leads to relations of trust between producers and consumers (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). Feagan (2007, p. 28) describes the concept of embeddedness as "sociocultural processes associated with relationships between producer and consumer such that food transactions are re-embedded in community and place." Winters (2003) cautions that embeddedness cannot be thought of as the antithesis of commercial aspects or material aspects of livelihoods. He notes "the tendency… is to adopt the continuum approach with embeddedness at one end as a euphemism for market relations based on close social and inter-personal interactions and relations of loyalty" (p. 25), and cautions against this simplified continuum. He stresses the importance of understanding the meanings behind social interactions, to understand the degrees and qualities of embeddedness. Embeddedness may be a strategy used by certain individuals or groups to gain power or influence. In this study, relations of trust led to outcomes for farmers in the city that would not have been otherwise possible, and these are discussed in Chapter Six.

For consumers, social interactions have the potential to shape the consumers' ways of knowing about food and the food system and change their actions towards more sustainable ones (Kerton and Sinclair 2010). The flow of information may lead to the potential for these social relations to reach beyond actions within the AFNs, which is considered in Chapter Seven. Yet this flow of information is based on 'trust' between producer and consumer, and "trust…is political. It is not necessarily based on equitable relationships nor reflexive democratic processes" (DuPuis and Goodman 2005, p.365). At the scale of the AFN, social connections are also linked to ideas of creating community and the construction of place (Feagan 2007). The relations of trust can lead to communities of people with similar ideologies (Durrschmidt 1999). Feenstra (2002) discusses the importance of the social spaces at farmers' markets where "rich social interactions took place…and to get to know one another in the context of a common purpose or vision" (p. 102), yet she acknowledges that a common purpose or vision is not always the outcome of these interactions. Related to this, key considerations in all of the subsequent chapters are: 'Who is involved in the relations of 'trust'? What narratives are their interactions constructing and conveying and reinforcing, and for what purpose? This study does not assume that the social 'alternativeness' of the case study AFNs is inherently good, but rather that it is based on understanding the relations of power and class that are present in the AFNs.

4.2.3 Economic Alternatives

As outlined in the subsequent chapters, an ever-present economic imperative (Watts et al. 2005) shapes the actions of individual farmers and of the AFNs, even though meeting the

economic needs of farmers may compromise other goals of the AFN. Much of the literature on farmers' markets that emerges from the rural studies literature is case study based and focuses on the economic alternatives provided to farmers (e.g. Brown 2002, Hunt 2007). From the production side, AFNs may provide the opportunity for farmers to gain back control of their production choices to some extent (Welch 1997, cited in Hinrichs 2000), and be less reliant on the industrial system for dictating production standards and consumer preferences. To some extent, they also gain control of their pricing, although farmers in AFNs do compete with industrial prices as well (Hinrichs 2000). Direct consumer AFNs provide an opportunity for farmers to bypass an intermediary and get retail value for their produce (Griffin and Frongillo 2003, Holloway and Kneafsey 2000). They can capture the "economic rents arising from the commodification of the 'local', with these returns accruing, at least in theory, to owners of local material and intellectual property rights" (Goodman 2009 p. 11). Thus economic benefits may be accrued from the social valuation of the scale of the 'local', again demonstrating the linkages between the social and economic. For consumers who have the means, AFNs can also provide access to good quality produce, unique local products and consumer choice in consuming more 'moral' foods (Morris and Kirwan 2010).

One central contradiction of AFNs is that they have also been cited as an economic alternative for low-income consumers. Allen (2010) believes that AFNs may have the potential to allow for low-income consumers to access fresh, local food otherwise unattainable to them through the industrial system. Yet, as noted above, the economic imperative of farmers is central to AFNs in many cases, including in both case studies, so

balancing the potential for AFNs to be an economic alternative for both producers and consumers becomes difficult. This is a question elaborated on from a social justice perspective in Section 4.5.2 below, and then in relation to the case studies in Chapter Seven. This also leads to the next question considered: 'alternative for whom?'

4.3 Alternative for Whom?

As the contradictions within AFNs above demonstrate, a key question that emerges is 'alternative for whom?' At the scale of the AFN, there are many actors who may benefit: farm workers; producers (ranging from very small scale farmers through to major corporations); administrators and managers; and consumers of all kinds (in different socio-economic classes, cultural backgrounds, ages, etc.). It is sometimes assumed that within 'local' AFNs, the power relations and positions of each of these actors can be considered equal, yet this may not be true (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). AFNs may have the potential to be a viable alternative only for certain populations or interest groups, while other interest groups are sometimes completely left out.

The 'small' farmer is often the focus of AFNs, especially local direct selling AFNs, most likely due to the primacy of the environmental narrative that dominates AFN theory, as noted above. Within the AFN literature, a certain type of 'small farmer' is often assumed, and the ideals associated with the scale of the 'local and small' farmer have just recently begun to be interrogated more thoroughly (with notable contributions from geographers), as discussed below in Section 4.6.1. This small farmer is commonly portrayed as small-scale, both in terms of land size and total production volume, environmentally

responsible, and socially responsible. In Chapter Five, I compare the assumed narratives of environmental and social responsibility and small scale of farmers in AFNs to the reality for the participant farmers in this study.

The goals of AFNs for farmers usually match well with the interests of a second main interest group in AFNs, the so-called 'reflexive consumer'. A 'reflexive consumer' is someone who consumes using "… a conscious reflexivity, such that people monitor, reflect upon and adapt their personal conduct in light of its perceived consequences" (Guthman 2003, p. 46). In a more critical tone, the same consumers are usually politically left leaning, and economically and socially middle class (Slocum 2007). They have been called (somewhat derogatorily) 'yuppies' (Guthman 2003). Abrahams (2007) sketches a profile of the typical AFN consumer as discussed in the literature, who:

> may look something like this; White, upper-middle class, with a sophisticated sensibility, middle to late middle-age, professional, academic, with access to transport and credit. She frequents farm stores and chique [sic] produce markets to buy organic, fresh, fairly traded food.
>
> (p. 110)

This consumer is willing to pay more for food because of the perceived environmental and moral benefits of this food (ibid). AFN scholars now argue that it is necessary to get beyond the elite consumer class characterized above in order to further AFN conceptualizations, although this is difficult (Goss 2004). In practice, there is a greater tendency for AFNs to be structured so that the focus is on small farmers and the reflexive/yuppie consumer, while low-income consumers may get ignored (Allen 2008). Having an economically and socially middle-class consumer benefits the farmer, in terms

of their ability to get a better price, so farmers who participate in AFNs may have little motivation to cater to lower-income consumers.

At a broader scale, the question ‘alternative for whom’ leads to the question of the goals of the AFNs and their potential. Allen et al. (2003) suggest that AFNs may be either ‘alternative’ or truly ‘oppositional’, or incorporate aspects of both. However, Allen et al. (2003) point out AFNs “may have effects in ways that are unexpected or out of proportion to what it seems they can actually accomplish given their small size and neoliberal orientations. For example, it is possible that alternatives…may indeed begin to increase members’ interest and engagement in food-system problems and solutions.” (p. 72). Bebbington (2004, p. 401) suggests that small scale alternative movements may be seen as an “expression of long-dominated and marginalized identities – identities which at the same time reformulate through the activity of the movement”. This interpretation aligns with the findings of the case study AFNs, where space is created for farmers in new places because of the AFN, as discussed in Chapter Six. There is also some evidence that AFNs have the potential to create ‘transformative learning’ so that consumers critically reflect on their practices and make changes towards a sustainable lifestyle (Kerton and Sinclair 2010). Thus, AFNs such as the case study ones, which focus on a small-scale and local alternatives, could eventually lead to both a scaling-out and a scaling-up (concepts discussed in Section 4.6.1 below) and one day lead to a more radical or transformative change in the food system, which is discussed in Chapter Seven.

At the broader scale, a glaring gap in the AFN scholarship becomes apparent. The experiences of two-thirds of the world's population – the entire global South – is largely ignored within AFN literature (Abrahams 2007). Most of the current discussion about the conceptual basis of AFNs is occurring within the confines of the English-speaking academic world (Ilbery and Maye 2005, Maxey 2007), making reference to the European (including UK) and North American systems. There is little input from other regions of the world (Abrahams 2007). A critique of this Northern focus in the literature is made by Abrahams (2007), using the example of AFNs in South Africa to argue that AFNs in the South are fundamentally different from those in the North. However, she states that although these AFNs have to be considered contextually:

> A conception of AFN in the south offers a timely contribution… by arguing that issues that are perceived to have greater significance in a developing world context are in fact integral to the formation of an inclusive worldwide knowledge base of AFN
>
> (2007, p. 97).

These issues are ones of poverty, food insecurity and cultural diversity. She notes that AFNs in the South, far from the elite consumption-based approach prevalent in the North, can be a means for poorer urban communities to access food in a system of emerging supermarket dominance. The issue of access for the urban poor is a dominant characteristic of Southern AFNs; however, it is not far removed from the same issues that a social justice conceptualization of Northern AFNs strives for. As discussed in Chapter Seven, the ways in which alternativeness is interpreted and conceptualized may expand if we embrace more diverse examples AFNs, including ones based in the global South. Extending the analysis requires going beyond the AFN literature.

4.4 Livelihoods, Social Justice and Fetishism

In order to better understand specific issues and themes in the research, I broaden the theoretical scope to include select ideas and concepts from the livelihoods literature, the social justice literature, and one particular sub-section of the AFN literature, that of culturalist interpretations of food fetishisms. In this section, the relevant concepts from these bodies of literature are discussed and how they are employed in subsequent sections is outlined.

4.4.1 Livelihoods

In Chapter Five of this dissertation, I focus in on one particular set of actors within AFNs: the farmers. The AFN literature makes many assumptions about the farmers involved in actual AFNs. Farmers are often considered as a 'group', and yet the uniformity of experiences and values assumed by this grouping does not match the varied reality of participant farmers in my research. Therefore, I use a livelihoods approach to look at how farmers' resources and experiences can be contrasted to some of their assumed attributes in dominant AFN narratives. Modern livelihood concepts have evolved to provide actor-oriented perspectives (Chambers and Conway 1992, Sen 1981, Solesbury 2003). These perspectives do not discount issues of inequality and power relations at a broader scale, but are also interested in lived experiences, the micro-scale of household and community, and in how people's own actions shape their experiences (de Haan and Zoomers 2005). This approach is taken in this thesis because it allows for the identification and understanding of the multiple factors that shape experiences at the individual and household scale, and to better understand individual motivations and the

intrinsic aspects of these experiences. Rather than considering ‘small farmers’ as a unified group, a livelihoods approach allows an understanding of how farmer experiences and motivations vary within the AFN.

Livelihood approaches have long been linked to work on food security, both from rural perspectives, and from the perspective of access to food for the urban poor. This has not, however, translated into a strong theoretical link between livelihood theories and AFN literature. Even though sustainable rural livelihoods has been a goal of the AFN movement since inception (DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Goodman and Goodman 2007), few studies have used livelihood concepts to analyze local AFN movements. Goodman and Goodman (2007) suggest that the “livelihood perspective found in political ecology and development studies … might enrich the analysis of alternative agro-food networks and their changing configuration” (p. 23). Looking at farmers’ experiences through a livelihoods lens can help to “understand the ways in which people have created livelihood opportunities… as well as the obstacles.” (p. 515).

Chambers and Conway (1992) define the term livelihood in its simplest form as a “means of gaining a living” (p. 5), and a livelihood is comprised of: “capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living” (p. 5). Livelihood assets are the means of production available to an individual, household or group that can be used in their livelihood activities (Soussan et al. 2000). In simplified terms, they are the ‘building blocks’ of livelihoods. The most common way to examine assets is using the concept of capitals, something that can be accumulated, exchanged or

depleted. Within agriculture, Pretty (2002) notes that success relies on the value of five types of capital: natural, social, human, physical and financial.

As Pretty (2002) himself admits, using a capitals approach to assets can be problematic, as it assumes that the assets are measurable and are transferable. However, something such as nature or food cannot be reduced to only a commodity, as there are social and cultural values that cannot be measured empirically. As Fine (2001) critically observes of social capital, it is "an implicit acceptance of the stance of mainstream economics, in which capital is first and foremost a set of asocial endowments possessed by individuals rather than, for example, an exploitative relation between classes and the broader social relations that sustain them." (p. 38). de Haan and Zoomers (2005) point out that when studies focus on the trade-offs and interactions between capitals, it is difficult to go beyond material motives, aims, and outcomes. Despite these drawbacks, as Pretty (2002) notes, the terms have their uses to look at basic questions in agriculture. A capital approach can be used as a way to highlight the differences in resources and experiences among farmers in my study. I have chosen to use a less theoretically-loaded word than 'capitals', that of 'resources'. I do not try to 'count' resources, or assign monetary benefit to them, but rather focus on broad differences in resources, which lead to outcomes that are not simply classified as good (or enhancing resources) or bad (or detracting from resources). However, in Chapter Five I do rely heavily on the framework that Pretty (2002) introduced, to look at how differences in natural, social, human, physical and financial resources lead to different realities for participating farmers.

Another aspect of livelihoods that often complements a capitals/resource approach is the consideration of ‘well-being’. This can balance the resource perspective of livelihoods that I have adopted with a less materialistic perspective of farmers’ experiences. For example, in AFN work with women farmers, Jarosz (2011) found that there was a distinction between ‘making a living’ (equated with the livelihood capitals noted above) and ‘making a life’. She identified that women farmers who participated in a case study in the USA held motivations beyond ‘making a living’ that included nourishing themselves and creating social ties through nourishing others.

In Chapter Five I draw extensively on Chambers (1997), who has developed a ‘well-being’ approach to livelihoods. This allows for people to define their own criteria of what outcomes are important to livelihoods. Focusing on the quality of life of a person, which encompasses diverse meanings for different people, provides a means to understand how outcomes are experienced by individuals and households. Instead of measuring livelihood success by the positive effects on resources alone, some of the intangible aspects, like happiness or satisfaction are also considered. Chambers (1997) defines well-being very broadly:

> Unlike wealth, wellbeing is open to the whole range of human experience, social, psychological and spiritual as well as material. It has many elements. Each person can define it for herself or himself. Perhaps most people would agree to including living standards, access to basic services, security and freedom from fear, health, good relations with others, friendship, love, peace of mind, choice, creativity, fulfillment and fun.
>
> (p. 1748)

He stresses that well-being is an individual condition, and thus can be defined in very different ways by different people, or even differently by the same people at different times in their lives.

Although these conceptualizations of assets and capabilities are more comprehensive than ones that simply count capital as resources, they also can be problematic. The risk is that by focusing on how certain experiences are important to making life meaningful, material inequalities and injustices are somehow excusable, or at least less severe. A person living in poverty who is happy is 'less poor'. Therefore, I was careful in my analysis not to overvalue the intrinsic aspects of livelihoods. Instead, I try to provide a balanced understanding of both material and 'well-being' or intrinsic outcomes, and acknowledge that material well-being plays an important role in overall well-being.

The focus on the individual farmer, or in some cases the household, allows for an understanding of individual actors within AFNs, and using concepts from the livelihoods literature allows for the highlighting of individual perspectives (Chambers and Conway 1992, Sen 1981). Yet understanding farmers' experiences in the AFN allows for only a partial understanding of how the AFN is functioning, how farmers influence the structure of the AFN, and how it influences their experiences. In the next section, I discuss concepts employed at the scale of the AFN in order to better understand some of the tensions between satisfying the needs and expectations of the farmers and other potential AFN participants, notably low-income consumers.

4.4.2 Social Justice in AFNs

Moving from the scale of the individual actor to that of the AFN, one of the key themes that arose in the study was the potential for exclusion from the AFNs of certain socio-economic groups, most notably low-income consumers. This affected the outcomes for the participant farmers, as well as the overall potential of the AFN. The literature on AFNs provides contradictory perspectives about the potential of AFNs to include low-income consumers. On one side of the debate, there is an abundance of literature discussing the elitist consumption elements of AFNs, and on the other, AFNs are posited as a potential solution to poor people's lack of access to nutritious, organic and affordable food (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). Although the goals of some AFNs are to be socially just, "the social relations of consumption underlying these new forms of food provisioning are highly unequal. Their markedly higher prices, the time-space commitments needed to acquire and prepare these alternative and local foods, and the associated food knowledges involved strongly suggest that significant levels of economic and cultural capital are required to gain access" (Goodman 2009, p.14). This 'elitist' element was apparent in one of my two case studies, and there were issues of exclusion and power in both AFNs, which led me to adopt a social justice approach to examine these issues.

The social justice literature is vast and there are a variety of perspectives on what 'social justice' entails (e.g. see Smith 1994). For the purpose of this study, I have chosen to focus on social justice predominantly as it has been conceptualized within the AFN literature. The ideas developed in this section inform the discussion of the AFN potential and limitations in Chapter Seven, and allow for a better understanding of how the question of

‘alternative for whom?’ posed above impacts various participants and non-participants in the case study AFNs.

The industrial food system is blamed for being unjust for many participants, from farm workers to small farmers to low income consumers (Hinrichs and Allen 2008). Broadly defined, social justice is concerned with “how the good and the bad things in life should be distributed in a human society” (Miller 2001, p. 1). However, an initial question that arises when looking at social justice within AFNs is: ‘Can access to AFNs be considered an issue of social justice?’ This questions leads to an examination of competing philosophical ideas of (in)justice and needs, which is beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, I accept the compelling argument brought forth by a prominent scholar within the AFN and social justice literature that:

> Without a direct focus on justice issues, alternative agrifood efforts may only create marginal, safe spaces for the privileged that may simply serve as a bleeder valve for the dominant agrifood system. Privileged people may participate and be ‘‘protected,’’ and therefore fail to agitate for a better food system, leaving the vast majority of the world’s population to cope with the problems wrought by the conventional agrifood system. Without an explicit focus on justice, we may be ushering in this type of two-tiered food system, based on a politics of complacency among the privileged who benefit from the alternative agrifood system.
>
> (Allen 2008, p. 159)

Further, Allen challenges academics to identify and discuss issues of social justice in AFNs. Therefore, in this study, understanding the issues of exclusion within the case study AFNs is important in order to understand the potential limitations and potential consequences of these two different AFN models. Within this study, my main interest

was first in identifying ways of exclusion within the networks, and second in understanding what that means for the potential of each AFN.

The main theme that arose in this study was the issue of membership in the AFN. The question of membership is prominent within social justice literature (Smith 1994). In fact, according to Waltzer (1983), “The primary good that we distribute is membership in some human community. And what we do with regard to membership structures all of our other distributive choices… for it is only as members that men and women can hope to share in all other social goods” (p. 31). Membership goes beyond merely the question of being a member or not, it is a question of to what extent a particular actor is or is not a member (and the underlying power relations of this membership). The idea of participation for all is central. Who is included or excluded, and to what extent, relates back to the question of ‘alternative for whom?’ posed above, and ultimately factors into the answer to ‘alternative to what end?’ Within AFNs, the emphasis on the social justice needs and concerns of one group may overshadow or exclude the needs of other disadvantaged groups (Hinrichs and Allen 2008). In this study, issues of exclusion were noted predominantly with two different groups: on-farm labourers (discussed in Chapter Five); and urban low-income consumers (discussed in Chapter Seven).

One issue that has been relatively ignored within the AFN literature, with some notable exceptions (e.g. Allen et al. 2003, 2008, Guthman et al. 2006) is that of on-farm labour. Farm labourers are not excluded from the network, in that they are an integral part of the on-farm production of food. However, the urban consumers, removed from the spaces of

production, often assume that on-farm social justice is considered under the umbrella of ‘sustainable agriculture’. In practice, however, sustainable agriculture has been critiqued for failing to address farm worker issues, including labour practices and representation (Brown and Getz 2008). Within AFNs, the on-farm issues are often hidden from the urban consumer and the AFN organizers, who typically do not consider on-farm social justice issues (Allen et al. 2003). On-farm workers are not represented at the market, and are thus not a part of the construction of AFN food narratives (discussed below in section 4.5.3 and in Chapter Six). This leaves on-farm workers as relatively powerless individuals within the network. It also highlights the issue of space and place, as the person at the market—the ‘farmer’ rather than ‘farm worker’ in some cases—has power because they cross from the space of production into the market space. Although this study did not delve into on-farm labour issues in detail, this issue is discussed briefly in Chapter Five.

A second, more recognized aspect of social justice within AFNs is the problem of exclusion of certain urban consumer groups, notably low-income consumers. There is ample evidence that AFNs have the potential to create social exclusivity in urban environments (Allen et al. 2003, Guthman 2002, Hinrichs and Allen 2008), which can be based on multiple factors including race, culture (see Slocumb 2007 for work on ‘whiteness’ and culture at farmers’ markets), class and political ideology (Guthman 2002). Those who do the excluding do not necessarily want to exclude, yet their presence “links with wealth, cars, location, leisure time and specific knowledge. Exclusion happens in many little and larger ways that work to make people uncomfortable in a

neighbourhood, [or] financially unable to purchase organic fruit…" (Slocumb 2007, p. 526). This creation of an exclusive, or what I term an 'elite' space, was prevalent at most Toronto farmers' markets, as is discussed in Chapter Six. Who was included and excluded from market spaces led to the question of 'social justice for whom?', relating back to the earlier question of 'alternative for whom?' An 'exclusive' consumer base may allow farmers to capture a higher price through the attachment of certain narratives to the product (as is discussed below in Section 4.5.3 and in Chapter Six), which arguably leads to greater justice for farmers, as they are more 'fairly' compensated for their work.

Although pricing is not the only factor in exclusion, debates about pricing and who benefits were the main means by which social justice was widely considered and discussed within the AFNs. The question that then can be asked is: who is responsible for ensuring a fair price for both farmers and low-income urban consumers? In Chapter Six I discuss the struggle to balance 'fair' pricing and adequate compensation by individual farmers, and in Chapter Seven, the same conflict between fair pricing for farmers and trying to have an inclusive AFN is considered at the scale of the network.

Scaling-up from individual actors and groups within the AFN to the network, AFNs have been lauded as being central to the 'food democracy' movement broadly characterized by the "imperative to organize the food system at a scale where democratic needs are met" (Johnston et al. 2009, p. 510). Allen (2008) notes that many AFNs intend to deal with issues of social justice, but in practice this does not happen. The reality of trying to balance the needs of various actors means that certain actors are privileged over others.

Guthman et al. (2006) pessimistically believe that a 'win-win' solution—for farmers and for low-income consumers—may not be possible. Returning to Allen's (2008) argument about the potential of complacency among those who have power and influence beyond the scale of the AFN, a key issue is how the AFN is represented, and who is it purportedly representing beyond the network, as well as what the broader implications of the AFN are. Returning to a central question of this inquiry, that of the potential and limitation of the case study AFNs, in Chapter Seven I ask: how does inclusion and exclusion of certain groups within the AFN affect the potential of the AFN to be a broader alternative?

As noted above, exclusion does not merely happen. It is created through practices and social interactions, and benefits some while disadvantaging others. One of the ways in which exclusion within AFNs occurs is through the creation of exclusive spaces. In the next section I examine how narratives are created around food that lead to exclusivity, and in Chapter Six, I identify how they lead to exclusive spaces for certain AFN participants.

4.4.3 The 'Second Fetish' and 'Geographical Knowledges'

As the previous sections suggest, AFNs, and the foods that are produced, exchanged and consumed within these networks, have values and assumed narratives attached to them. The literature on commodity fetishism provides an important theoretical thread to help understand the narratives about AFNs. Despite claims by some AFN theorists that some

AFNs can partially decommodify foods (e.g. DuPuis 2000, Hinrichs 2000, Morgan and Murdock 2000), food is treated as a commodity in this framework.

Marx (1887, p. 46) states that "A commodity appears at first glance a trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties." The commodity's 'use-value' is evident, and the 'metaphysical subtleties' that Marx refers to do not originate from this use-value. It is the commodity's 'exchange value' that is partially hidden. Sometimes the social properties of a commodity seem to be inherent in the commodity, yet in reality the value is constructed by social relations between people, both in the present and in the past (Watts 2005). The commodity is "not what it appears. There is, then, a hidden life to commodities and understanding some of this secret life might reveal profound insights into the entire edifice – the society, the culture, the political economy – of commodity-producing systems" (Watts 2005, p. 533). A way to better understand these hidden qualities is through understanding the fetish qualities of a commodity, which Harvey (2000. p. 7) believes can lead to "extraordinary insights."

Fetishism is a type of reification. Reification is the act of "transforming human properties, relations and actions into properties, relations and actions that are seen to be independent of human endeavour" (Watts 2005, p. 541). In other words, a commodity may appear to be a 'thing' divorced from the human labour that produced it. The fetishization of food has been a recurring theme in studies of critical social scientists (Barnt 1997, Goodman and DuPuis 2002, Johnston et al. 2009). Johnston et al. (2009)

define fetishism in the food system as “a lack of transparency in the food system that obscures how relations of production are socially produced rather than naturally given” (p. 511). Industrialized agriculture, and in particular the TNCs which dominate it, have been powerful in cultivating brand loyalty, leading to food that is “[h]ighly-branded, packaged and de-spatialized commodity, and severed from time, space and culture (or season, landscape and meaning), it shifts for many into the moral unconscious” (Weis 2010, p. 317). Consumers of a meal most likely have little knowledge of the life of the commodities up to the point of their purchase. Embedded within the food ingredients that make up their meal are various spatial ranges of production (from all over the world), various food commodity chains, and unequal social relations (Harvey 1990). Harvey (2010) provides a good discussion of how fetishism might play out in a typical supermarket, using the example of lettuce:

> You go into a supermarket and you want to buy a head of lettuce. In order to buy the lettuce, you have to put down a certain sum of money. The material relation between the money and the lettuce expresses a social relation because the price– the "how much" –is socially determined. Hidden within this market exchange of things is a relation between you, the consumer, and the direct producers– those who labored to produce the lettuce. Not only do you not have to know anything about that labor or the laborers who congealed value in the lettuce in order to buy it; in highly complicated systems of exchange it is impossible to know anything about the labor or the laborers, which is why fetishism is inevitable in the world market. The end result is that our social relation to the laboring activities of others is disguised in the relationships between things. You cannot, for example, figure out in the supermarket whether the lettuce has been produced by happy laborers, miserable laborers, slave laborers, wage laborers or some self-employed peasant. The lettuces are mute, as it were, as to how they were produced and who produced them.
>
> (p. 39-40)

Commodity fetishism is a basic characteristic of capitalism, and is therefore unavoidable in a capitalist system (Harvey 2010). The case study AFNs connect the direct producer

with the consumer, but are still operating within a capitalist system, and thus the idea of commodity fetishism is relevant in trying to understand their constitution as sets of social and economic relations.

Castree (2001) is critical of the 'epistemological straightjacket' in which many Marxists have confined the concept of commodity fetishism. He posits that geographical concepts of place, scale and power are central to the understanding of commodity fetishism. He states that work that attempts to 'unveil' commodities may underplay the positive aspects of consumption and fail to examine what is happening on the commodity surface. Castree sees commodities as "complex, mutable, and mobile sites of social relations, cultural identity and economic power…they engender a pluralized, multiperspectival, reflexive geographic imagination attuned to the relational dynamics… [of] cultures, places and ecologies" (Castree 2001, p. 1520). He challenges modern Marxists and geographers in general to attempt to unveil the sites of social, environmental, economic and cultural exploitation without essentializing them.

To meet Castree's challenge to unveil these relations without essentializing them, I draw on Cook and Crang's (1996) work to understand food fetishism in my case studies. Marxist scholars Bernstein and Campling (2006) critique Cook and Crang's work, and in particular the Cook et al. (2004) work as fundamentally misrepresenting Marx's original meaning of commodity fetishism. They argue that Cook et al. (2004) is an egregious example of a culturalist interpretation which is "typified, at its worst, by that peculiar mixture of intellectual promiscuity, conceptual inflation and shallowness" (Bernstein and

Campling 2006, p. 423). Despite such criticism, I nevertheless find much that is useful in Cook and Crang's (1996) idea that “constructed meaningful knowledges about (food) commodities and their geographies… become a crucial means of adding value to these commodities" (p.134). However defined and described, such symbolic constructions of fetishes around food were evident in my research findings, and were actively co-constructed and reinforced by AFN-participant farmers to extract additional value from their marketed produce.

Cook and Crang (1996) develop the concept of the ‘double fetish’. As they explain, “in the first fetishization, consumed commodities and their valuations are divorced for and by consumers from the social relations of their production and provision through the construction of ignorances about the biographies and geographies of what we consume” (p. 135). This follows the meaning of fetishization as Marx intended it, as discussed above. The second fetish, which occurs simultaneously, relies on constructed cultural meanings of places and spaces to “differentiate (the commodity) from the devalued functionality and homogeneity of standardized products, tastes and places” (p. 132). The key difference is that while the first fetish is an inevitable feature of a capitalist economy, the second fetish is a construct to create an imagined biography of a product. If the first fetish turns social relations into ‘things’, the second fetish is taking the ‘thing’ and relating it back to imagined people and places. This second fetish—what I term an ‘elite fetish’ since in Toronto it is partially co-constructed by and for an exclusive class—surrounds foods in my case studies. In Toronto, certain types of consumers are drawn to

‘elite’ foods, thus reinforcing the ‘elite fetish’ and the socially exclusive spaces where the purchasing occurs.

Cook and Crang (1996) also provide another useful concept in their examination of the construction of the second fetish, that of ‘geographical knowledges’. They note the importance of place to the construction of the second fetish, as “foods do not simply come from places, organically growing out of them, but also make places as symbolic constructs, being deployed in the constructions of various imaginative geographies”(p. 140). These knowledges are employed by farmers to promote certain commodities and by consumers to justify their consumption (Morris and Kirwan 2010). Three types of geographic knowledges around commodities are constructed for and by the consumer: the settings (the context in which they are used); the biographies (how they move about the food system); and, the origins (where they come from) (Cook and Crang 1996). Geographical knowledges are constantly shaped and re-shaped over time and in various places (Morris and Kirwan 2010), so the same commodity can have different constructed meanings both across time and space.

In this study, this concept of the second fetish is employed to understand the geographical knowledges constructed around foods. Cook and Crang (1996) caution that trying to deepen these knowledges can be problematic, as there is then the potential to fall into the trap Castree (2001) noted of essentializing places and cultures. I try in this thesis to avoid essentialization of place, space and scale by interrogating their construction in the AFNs. A failure to understand how these geographic concepts are socially produced could

"parallel and support the cultural and economic valorizations made through constructions of 'authenticity', and is thus easily recuperated into existing and elitist consumer and producer cultures" (Cook and Crang 1996, p. 145).

In the two case studies considered in this thesis, the second fetish was found to be both reinforced and co-constructed within the AFN, notably in Toronto where an 'elite' fetish is created by farmers and consumers, since they both have the power to do so. Fetish narratives are constructed at various scales about specific spaces and places by classes that have the power to do so. These key ideas – scale, space, place, power and class – are examined in the subsequent section, as they underlie all of the theoretical concepts discussed in this chapter.

4.5 Scale, Space, Place, Power and Class

Throughout the discussion in this chapter and the subsequent analysis, the key geographic themes of scale (notably the 'local'), space and place are prominent, especially in terms of how these are constructed and mediated by relations of power and class. In order to clarify how these concepts are employed by AFN scholars and how they are created and manifested in the two case studies, this section focuses on the debates over scale, space, and place within the geographical and AFN literature, noting the power and class relations inherent in the shaping of these contested ideas. Ideas on place, space and scale have all been discussed within the AFN literature, particularly to interrogate assumptions made about the 'local', about 'small scale', and the food fetishes constructed based on geographical imaginings of both place and scale. Uneven power relations, although

central to shaping experiences both within the AFN and outside of it, have not been discussed as explicitly in the literature. But power cannot be separated from ideas of 'local' (or from any aspect of the AFN), as the meaning of local is negotiated and re-negotiated by those who have the power to do so, and, as discussed in the social justice section above, the AFN itself empowers certain actors over others. Repeatedly throughout the analysis in the chapters that follow, asking the question of 'alternative for whom?' highlights what actors are being included, and in what ways, and what actors may be excluded, and how this reinforces class relations.

The ideas of scale, space and place are difficult to disentangle because they are employed in ways that often confound them. As Brenner (2001, p. 591) states, "the concept of geographical scale… has been blended unreflexively into other core geographical concepts such as place… and space." Indeed, one of the central concepts in this study, the 'local', is a scale as well as a place and space, as is discussed below. Certain classes have the power to define and re-define ideas of the 'local', and to use these constructions to reinforce their class position, as is discussed in the final part of this section.

4.5.1 Scale

In this study the contested meanings of 'local' and 'small' are evidence that scales are socially constructed rather than ontologically given (Marston 2000). Scales are therefore not a passive platform at which activities occur, they are defined by and are outcomes of these activities and also create these activities (Marston et al. 2009). The notion of power is central in this, as Smith (1995) states:

> Far from neutral and fixed, therefore, geographical scales are the products of economic, political and social activities and relationships; as such, they are as changeable as those relationships themselves. At the very least, different kinds of society produce different kinds of geographical scale for containing and enabling particular forms of social interaction.
>
> (p. 60–61)

Therefore, in this study, scale is considered as contingent on particular actors and political struggles in particular places and times, and includes a historical, social, economic and political context. Scale becomes "the embodiment of social relations of empowerment and disempowerment and the arena through and in which they operate" (Swyndegouw 1997, p. 169). In this study the AFN is considered a scale at which these social processes can be observed, are created and negotiated. Scale in this study is not a passive delineation – it is a contested concept that privileges some and excludes others. AFNs can be considered one scale at which social practices and unequal relations of power are manifested.

Some scholars believe that scales form a 'nested hierarchy' (Howitt 2002). This is problematic, as it assumes that each scale 'fits' within the scale at the next level of the hierarchy (Marston et al. 2005). Scales can more usefully be seen as networks of interaction, and as a means to link local processes to regional or global events (Cox 1998). In the construction of scale, the larger scales (e.g. the global) do not necessarily dominate the local, and there is not necessarily a top-down power dynamic to scales (Swyndegouw 1997). Power asymmetries among scales are contested (Leitner 1997). In the two case study AFNs, and within the AFN literature, there has been a binary distinction made between the 'local' and the 'global' food system, although it has been noted as a problematic dichotomy. Instead, the interactions between scales, from

individual to global, can be conceptualized as a mosaic of superimposed and interlayered scales (Brenner 2001). It is useful to examine what the ‘local’ scale is purported to do, in order to contrast that to the reality of the case study AFNs.

As noted in Section 4.2 above, the dichotomy of global versus local is common within AFN theory, where global is associated with the market economy, large scale, industrial processes that degrade the environment, while local is associated with the moral economy, small scale, natural processes that protect and regenerate (Hinrichs 2003). The scale of the local is often conflated with the ‘small’ scale agriculture. Small farmers are lauded as sustainable, and small scale has played an important role in framing resistance to the large scale narrative surrounding the industrial food system (Abrahams 2007). Farmers within ‘local’ AFNs are assumed to be ‘small’ at the scale of production. This narrative is interrogated in Chapter Five, as the reality is that just as the scale of the local is contested, so is the scale of production within the study AFNs.

As discussed earlier, not all local agriculture fits into this simplistic idea that local equates to the ‘good’ (Hinrichs 2003), and Born and Purcell (2006) have coined the term ‘the local trap’ to capture the tendency to assume there is something inherently good in the local. Allen (2008) notes that although local food networks such as farmers' markets may be shorter, the power dynamics may be similar to those in the industrial food system, just on a different scale. Thus, there are those within and outside of the network who have social, economic and political power, while others do not. This critical examination of the construction of the local is not new to the geographical literature. Harvey (1996) notes

that ‘local’ is a value-laden term, and that an unreflexive localism (accepting the local without any thought as to how it is constituted) can lead to social exclusion of certain classes. He states: “‘the local’ as a concept intrinsically implies the inclusion and exclusion of particular people, places and ways of life. The representation of the local and its constructs—quality, embeddedness, trust, care— privilege certain analytical categories and trajectories” (p. 461). The implications of these power dynamics are apparent in Chapter Six when looking at the spaces for farmers in the city, and in Chapter 7 when discussing how each AFN functions and who are the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ within the AFN. DuPuis and Goodman (2005) agree with this sentiment and urging that within AFNs, a reflexive approach to localism should be practiced, as adopting a false romantic view of the local can lead to a denial of the politics of the local and can result in a blindness to social injustices. They do state that the intent of a reflexive critique of ‘local’ is not an attempt to undermine AFNs; rather, it is an attempt to improve the political grounding of local AFNs. Thus, in this study I provide a reflexive critique of the construction of ‘local’ food and ‘local’ farmer to better understand the AFN, not to attempt to undermine its potential.

Other scalar concepts that are employed in this research are those of ‘scaling-up’ and ‘scaling-out’. These are important to understanding the broader potential of AFNs. The focus on the ‘local’ scale and creating minor agro-food alternatives has been blamed for potentially creating weak agro-food politics (Guthman 2008) and may only be an ‘irritant’ to the industrial food system (Hassanein 2003). It has been argued that in order for these ‘irritants’ to create substantive change, they must both scale-out and scale-up.

Johnston and Baker (2005) state that in order to create change, AFNs must " 'scale out' to other localities and households, but they must also 'scale up' to address structural concerns like state capacity, globalized industrial versus bioregional agriculture, and the unequal distribution of wealth at the national and global scale." (p. 314). Thus, they argue that when looking at scalar issues, we must consider the ability of specific projects to both scale-out and scale-up. In Chapter Seven, the potential of the AFNs to scale-out and scale-up are discussed.

4.5.2 Place and Space

Related to the concept of scale are the concepts of space and place. All three of these interrelated concepts are co-constructed (Agnew 2005), and yet, within AFN scholarship, space is given less consideration than scale or place. Cox (1998) provides a useful conception of space where power can be exerted, using the idea of 'spaces of engagement' and 'spaces of dependence'. "Spaces of dependence are defined by those more-or-less localized social relations upon which we depend for the realization of essential interests and for which there is no substitute elsewhere; they define place-specific conditions for our material well-being and our sense of significance. These spaces are inserted in broader sets of relationships of a more global character and these constantly threaten to undermine or dissolve them . . . In so doing they construct a different form of space which I call here a space of engagement: the space in which the politics of securing a space of dependence unfolds" (Cox, 1998: p.2). In a study of the spaces at the farmers' market in the UK, Holloway and Kneafsey (2000) suggest that farmers' markets offer spaces that are both 'alternative' to the industrial system for

farmers and consumers, as well as spaces that involve a “re-entrenchment of nostalgic and socio-politically conservative notions of place and identity” (p. 294). Thus, ideas of places and place-based fetishes are interpreted and created within the market spaces. In this study, the AFNs can be thus seen both as spaces of dependence for participant farmers, as they rely on these spaces to sustain their livelihoods, as well as potential spaces of engagement for farmers, who can help create place-based narratives. They are also ‘alternative’ spaces for economic, social, and political action.

As is demonstrated above, space and place are deeply intertwined. Place can be considered space that have meaning attributed to them (Harris 2009). Places are “an intense focus of discursive activity, filled with symbolic and representational meanings, and they are the distinct product of institutionalized social and political-economic power” (Harvey 1996, p. 316). Feagan (2007) notes that place is at the conceptual “quiet center” of AFN theory, and adds that “there is strong argument for *emplacing* our food systems, while simultaneously calling for careful circumspection and greater clarity regarding how we delineate and understand the ‘local’” (p. 23, italics in original). The scale of the ‘local’ food network is therefore interpreted as a ‘place’. The idea of geographical knowledges (Cook and Crang 1996), discussed above, demonstrates how the fetishes that are attached to local foods result from the often idealized constructions of place. Direct marketing alternatives allow for a sense of ‘authenticity’ to be attached to the construction of place because of the trust that develops between the farmer and the consumer (Holloway and Kneafsey 2000), leading to the construction of an ‘authentically

local' product. In Chapter Six, this study shows how place construction can purposely be used by those with power in the network.

4.5.3 Class and Power

Two other concepts that require clarification in this dissertation are those of class and power, especially in relation to food. Class is both a contested concept and a concrete reality, and power is enacted through class. Classes can be constructed by the economic position of individuals, their personal life experiences, social positioning and relations of power, and political affiliation, among other factors (Gidwani 2008).

Social meanings are attached to food and eating, and food practices can be an enactment of class. Bourdieu (1984) describes how food practices are often an enactment of class distinction specifically for elites. Elite class culture is not only about what one eats, it is about how food is approached. Many social elites treat food and eating as more than a mere necessity, and view eating as "a social ceremony, an affirmation of ethical tone and aesthetic refinement" (ibid, p. 196). Aesthetically, food is 'presented' and evaluated based on characteristics such as shape and colour. Like other classes, the types of food and the way it is procured, prepared and eaten can be an affirmation of class.

In the literature on AFNs, the middle class has been identified as having power to define what constitutes 'good' food (DuPuis and Goodman 2004), a view that is echoed in this research. This middle class is based not only on economic position, but also on social and cultural position (Slocumb 2007). Members of the 'AFN middle class' have the

knowledge and education to understand various issues surrounding food, and often the political motivation (left-leaning) as well (ibid).Value judgments are made based on the cultural and social values of this class both within AFNs and in broader food culture. A classic example of this is cows' milk, which is often portrayed as the 'perfect' food for all rather than a culturally and historically specific food, because of lobbying from a coalition of groups that are predominantly white middle class (DuPuis 2002). Food as an enactment of class distinction is sometimes articulated through binary oppositions between 'good' and 'bad' food (Guthman 2003, Slocumb 2007). For example, 'organic food' contrasted with 'fast' food might be seen as an assertion of power by the middle class, putting 'good' (or organic) food culturally and economically out of reach for the lower class, and leading to judgment of the lower class for consuming 'fast' food (Guthman 2003). What food someone eats can be a marker of class distinction. An example of this is the heirloom tomato, which has ascended to a symbol of elite status and of 'good taste' within North America (Jordan 2007).

In study of consumers in a high-end supermarket chain that caters to the 'conscious consumer', Johnston and Szabo (2011) found that consumers may shop in a location to affirm, improve or display class status. Class and status entry requirements into spaces of consumption also create distinction, as only certain classes have the economic and cultural power to enter in these spaces (Slocumb 2007), and certain foods purchased in these exclusive spaces (such as the heirloom tomato purchased in a Farmers' Market) act to reinforce class distinctions (Jordan 2007). Therefore, class is enacted through how people approach food, what foods they value as 'good', and where food is purchased.

Throughout this dissertation, issues of class and power are revealed through the discussion of who is participating in the case study AFNs and how they are participating in these AFNs.

4.5.4 Summary: Scale, Place, Space, Power and Class

These central but often assumed geographical ideas of scale, space and place – and the role of power in the definition of these concepts – have often been unproblematically assumed or given superficial treatment within AFN literature. However, recently scholars within the AFN literature have acknowledged that these concepts are contested and negotiated (e.g. DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Feagan 2007, Harris 2010, Hinrichs 2003, Winter 2003). Within the AFN literature, the scale of the 'local' has often been treated without consideration of who has the power to contribute to the definition of local and the consequences that result from certain conceptualization of 'local'. Certain values, such as small-scale and sustainable, are attached to the local and it is often posited as 'good' in binary opposition to the 'bad' global. DuPuis and Goodman (2005) call for a reflexive approach to 'local' food studies, and this is the approach I take in the subsequent chapters. Similarly, place and space are intertwined concepts that must not be treated uncritically. Space is socially constituted by those with power and spaces in AFNs can be many different things for participants (e.g. spaces of dependence, engagement, and nostalgia). Place is intertwined with space, and can be considered space that has been given meaning by certain people (Cressman 2004, Harris 2010). 'Local' is not only a scale, it is also a place. Place construction is used by various AFN participants for various motivations.

Power and class are also important to consider in this work. Class is enacted and reaffirmed in AFNs. The middle class has more power within AFNs, and this class places judgments (what is 'good' or 'bad') based on their own values. This valuation or devaluation can make the 'good' out of reach for other classes. In the subsequent chapters, space, place, power and class are treated reflexively, to better understand how constructions of these concepts shape the case study AFNs.

4.6 Conclusions

The theoretical framework for this research, as discussed in this chapter, was developed through an iterative process, starting with the literature on AFNs to develop key questions for the fieldwork, and then going back to the AFN scholarship during data analysis to see where the literature was useful and to identify areas that needed further engagement in order to understand the emerging, on-the-ground processes and themes. In this continual process of re-thinking, reading, and re-interpreting, I arrived at a point where the ideas began to fit together into a loosely-interpreted theoretical framework.

The framework is mainly developed from key themes and ideas in the AFN literature. Central questions here helped to frame one of my key research questions: 'What is the potential and limitations of each case study AFN?' In some radical interpretation, the AFNs are not alternative since they do not seek to overthrow or even challenge the industrial food system. In this thesis, the discussion of 'alternative' comes from a position that for some people, at some scales and in some ways, AFNs present an alternative to the dominant system, and a better way of doing things. In terms of how that alternativeness is

defined, the research draws on discussions of SFSCs as ‘stronger’ alternatives, to examine the extent that some of the narratives of SFSCs—as an environmental alternative, a social alternative, and an economic alternative—reflect the actual livelihood experiences of participating farmers. One of the theoretical limitations of the AFN literature is that the focus is mainly on the scale of the AFN. The livelihoods literature, particularly the capital assets framework developed by Pretty (2005), provides a means by which individual and sometimes household livelihoods within AFNs can be understood. This provides a better understanding of the actual variety of experiences in AFNs, in contrast to assumed narratives of an ‘environmental farmer’, a ‘socially just’ farmer, and a ‘small scale’ farmer. It also provides a way to explain findings of some of the non-monetary benefits for participating farmers.

By asking, ‘alternative for whom?’, I have identified the potential actors in the network who could benefit, and in Chapters Five and Six I focus mainly on one actor, the farmer. AFNs tend to empower certain actors over others. Central to these power dynamics is the defining of the ‘local’ scale, and who is included in and excluded from negotiations of the ‘local’. To understand how these farmers are benefitting from a particular narrative of the ‘local’ scale, the concept of commodity fetishism is useful. The ability of farmers in Toronto to benefit from what I term an ‘elite’ fetish (one constructed by both the farmer and a progressive and socio-economically middle to high income segment of society) contrasts sharply with farmers in Belo Horizonte, who do not have the power to shape the narratives surrounding their produce. The concepts of the ‘second fetish’ narratives and

'geographical knowledges' (Cook and Crang 1996), provide insight into both how these narratives are created and the role of place.

One of the central contradictions noted within AFN theory is the inability of AFNs to be alternative for everyone. Allen (2008) makes a strong case that AFNs need to understand social injustices within AFNs. The social justice literature on membership and particularly the power dynamics of exclusion helps with the understanding of who is excluded. The 'win-win' analogy presented by Guthman (2008) helps with the understanding of the implications of exclusion (and inclusion) within case study AFNs in Chapter Seven. Within this, the concept of space emerges as key, as AFNs can be spaces of both dependence and engagement (Cox 1998) for particular actors. In Chapter Six, I discuss how SFSCs open up various economic and political spaces for farmers. At the level of the AFN itself, the concepts of scaling-up and scaling-out provide a means by which the potential of the AFN can be understood.

There are some notable limitations to the theoretical framework, which make the analysis in subsequent chapters difficult. The most glaring shortfall in the AFN literature is the lack of consideration of the differences between AFNs in the (global) North and the South. The difference in the goals of the AFN, who is being included and excluded (and in what ways), how local is negotiated and the implications of the local narrative, as well as how commodity fetishes develop around food (and who gets to create the narratives) are all considerably different between my two case studies. In the Toronto case study I can draw on a lot of literature to understand what is occurring, but in the Belo Horizonte

case study I have very little to draw on that is not North American/European-centred. Yet this limitation also provides an opportunity for this study to contribute to a stronger understanding of AFNs. Although many of the circumstances and struggles between case studies are similar, there are marked differences. Chapter Five explores how issues of production, particularly the issue of land tenure in Brazil, vary significantly between the case studies and lead to differing livelihood capital for the farmers there, and in similar circumstances. In Chapter Six I discuss how the assumptions surrounding 'local' food come from a Northern narrative of a 'valuation of the local', and do not reflect the reality in Belo Horizonte, indicating the importance of local context and of power relations within the AFN and the broader community. In Chapter Seven, the differences between an AFN that focuses on farmers and 'elite' consumers (in Toronto) versus one that focuses on providing for low-income consumers (in Belo Horizonte) lead to differing outcomes for various participants and for the AFN as a whole.

Chapter Five

Livelihoods, Well-being and the Environmental/Socially Just Farmer

In the two case study AFNs, as in AFN scholarship, narratives around farmers are constructed that may or may not reflect the reality of each participating farmer. In this chapter, I assess the extent to which participating farmers' lived experiences either support or challenge the dominant narratives that frame and define AFNs and their related production systems. I ground the experiences of farmers in their everyday reality, using livelihoods theory to analyze the complex and varied experiences of individual farming families. The scale of the 'small farmer' is often treated uncritically as a group with common interests, values and experiences, without consideration of the variation that occurs within this group. I identify three common narratives about small farmers, related to their on-farm practices, which are relevant to my case studies. The first narrative is that of 'small is beautiful'; the second narrative is that of the environmentally responsible farmer; and the third narrative is that of the socially responsible farmer. As is increasingly being done by other AFN scholars (DuPuis and Goodman 2005, Guthman 2003, Hinrichs 2003, Hinrichs and Allen 2008), I hold these narratives up to scrutiny by contrasting them with the actual practices of participating farmers, in order to develop a more nuanced understanding.

To scrutinize these generalizations in terms of actual farmer experiences, I draw on livelihoods theory, particularly ideas about various types of resources or 'capitals'. I

examine the three narratives outlined above, and highlight farmers within each AFN who demonstrate the range of experiences among the farmers. The inter-related themes of scale and power are prevalent throughout this discussion. In AFN theory, the assumptions of all three narratives are based on ideas of an inherently 'good' small scale. Yet in each case study AFN, the construction of 'small' farmer involves certain actors having the power to define and delineate scale, while others might contest the construction but have no power within the network to define 'small farmer'. In addition, power relations on-farm are sometimes obscured at the scale of the network. An additional theme that I discuss in this chapter is social relations at the scale of individuals, and the importance of relations of trust. The livelihoods scholarship provides an opportunity to examine farmers' social and non-material experiences using the perspective of 'well-being'. I therefore include a section that examines livelihoods not from a resources perspective, but rather in terms of how farmers' livelihoods relate to their well-being. I seek out individual stories and experiences that indicate which aspects of well-being matter to these farmers. By exploring both the material (resources) and non-material (well-being) aspects of farmers' livelihoods, a more complete understanding of farmers' experiences in AFNs and why they participate can be gained.

5.1 Small Farming and Livelihoods

As discussed in Chapter Four, a livelihoods approach can enrich the analysis of AFNs (Goodman and Goodman 2007). Specifically, the approach allows for a better understanding of the experiences, challenges and opportunities that AFNs present for participating small farmers. Although the goal of AFNs is often to support 'small'

farming, the individual experiences and needs of farmers participating in AFNs are rarely considered. I draw on two main strands of livelihood theory: the 'capitals' (or resources) approach and a well-being approach.

Pretty (2002) notes that 'success' in securing an agricultural livelihood depends on the value of five types of capital:

> Natural Capital – the food, wood and fibres, and the water, soil, climate, nutrient cycling, and biological pest control (among other cycles and natural stocks). Natural Capital yields food, wood and fibres.
>
> Social Capital – norms, values, and attitudes of cooperation; relations of trust, reciprocity and obligation; and common rules and sanctions that are agreed upon. Social Capital yields a flow of collective action (structured in various groups) that contributes to cohesion of peoples in society.
>
> Human Capital – the total capability that resides in individuals, made up of their stocks of knowledge, skills, and health, and enhanced by institutions and technologies that strengthen these stocks (schools, hospitals, training).
>
> Physical Capital – the stores of human-made material resources, such as buildings, infrastructure, irrigation, tools and technologies, communications, energy, and transportation. These resources make labour more productive.
>
> Financial Capital – value claims on goods and services, as valued by the financial system. Pensions, remittances, grants, subsidies, savings and mortgages are all types of financial resources that make up financial capital. Unlike the other four forms of capital, financial capital in and of itself does not lead to greater

productivity; rather it is the use of it to obtain the other forms of capital that leads to greater productivity.

Despite the critiques of the capitals approach noted in Chapter Four regarding the reduction of all things to an economic valuation, I do rely heavily on the 'capitals' framework that Pretty (2002) introduced. I treat capitals as 'resources' and look at how differences in natural, social, human, physical and financial resources lead to different realities for participating farmers. I balance this approach with a 'well-being' approach to livelihoods, as developed by Chambers (1997), ending the chapter with an examination of less material aspects of livelihoods that participants valued. I start the chapter by looking at how individual 'small' farmers differ in their natural, social, physical, human and economic resources, and how the assumptions about small scale, notably the idea that 'small is beautiful', needs to be interrogated. This allows for a better understanding of the various types of 'small' farmers who participate in AFNs.

5.2 'Small is Beautiful'

As discussed in Chapter Four, ideas of scale are prominent within the AFN scholarship, and form an undercurrent of this study. The idea that 'small is beautiful' (Schumacher 1973) dominates much of the thinking on AFNs. Yet small is not an ontologically given size (as noted by Marston 2000), and the undue focus on size obscures other relevant resources that differentiate and limit the 'small' farmer. Most of the discussion around scale in AFNs does not set a definitive size for 'small farm' and 'small' varies from location to location. But there are still certain ideals that are associated with small farms. The notion of a 'small farm' is often linked to the idea of the 'family farm' and to

farming that does not require a lot of technological inputs (e.g. Via Campesina 2009). The small farmers in this study vary greatly in their land size, land tenure, level of technology, and economic resources, and these factors all impact on their livelihoods. In this section I consider the natural resources (fertility of the land, access to water, etc.), the social resources and relations to land tenure (family inheritance of land, institutional arrangements, etc.) and the economic and physical capital (ability to pay for the land, access to technology) of farmers in my case studies. The discourse of 'small' farmer as evoked in some AFN literature may not be false, in that these farmers are all small when contrasted to agro-industrial farming complexes (see the binary definition used by Morgan et al. 2006). Nevertheless, a single categorization of 'small' obscures issues that influence farmers' experiences, specifically those of access to resources, land tenure and landholding size.

In Brazil, any discussion of small farming must be put in the context of the most pressing land issue, that of land inequality and widespread insecurity of tenure. An overview of land reform issues in Brazil is presented in Chapter Two. The experiences highlighted below show how there are immense differences in land tenure arrangements even among small farmers. In Toronto, the tenure situation is more formal and less precarious; however, the 'small' farm in this case study varies in size from 227 hectares (ha) to about 1 ha.

5.2.1 The Construction of 'Small' Farmer in Belo Horizonte

Scale is a contested idea, and in Belo Horizonte there are political, historical, social and economic relationships that shape scale. In the Belo Horizonte case study, one idea of 'small farmer' is constructed through the name of the AFN program itself, 'Direto da Roça'. As a farmer in the program noted, the name gives a false impression to consumers that all of the farmers are 'Roça' farmers. Locally there are historically different terms to apply to different types and scales of farm, each evoking a different social and economic image. As farmers discussed, very small farms with low technology, often associated with the poorest farmers who have little social or economic power, are called Roças. Farms that have more infrastructure and technology, are generally bigger and securely tenured, and are associated with the rich landowner class, are referred to as Fazendas. At least one farmer felt that another farmer in the program was a 'fazenda' farmer, and implied that this fazenda farmer ought not to be a part of the program. As Hinrichs (2003) notes, AFNs in theory and in practice play on the global/local dichotomy – where global is considered large scale, and the local is small scale, and inherently 'good'. Likewise, the 'Roça' program name evokes a dichotomy against the 'Fazenda' (in some locations in Brazil referred to as 'latifundias'). However, in the case of Belo Horizonte, the 'small and local' are not necessarily equated with 'good' in the minds of consumers, a dynamic that I explore in Chapter Seven.

A specific conceptualization of 'small' is institutionalized within the Belo Horizonte case study AFN. All of the farmers in DR did have to be classified as 'small farmers' by EMATER, which is the state rural extension and technical assistance agency. The classification includes a provision on the percentages of sales (80%) that come from

agricultural production, and a maximum land size of approximately 80 ha. Therefore, the notions of ‘small’ were negotiated and decided on at a bureaucratic level with no possibility for an alternative definition from the farmers themselves. This definition was not accepted by the participant farmers; yet the farmers did not have the power within the AFN to implement changes to the institutionalized meaning of ‘small’ farmer, since the municipal government had set the EMATER definition as the standard. As discussed above, there is tension between farmers who feel they truly have ‘Roças’ (the smallest farm in the program was under 1 ha) towards those who they feel were unfairly advantaged because they had ‘Fazendas’ (the largest farm in the program was close to 27 ha). This is only one of many tensions over land and scale of production in the AFN, as land tenure and access to resources are as important to the scale of production in the Belo Horizonte case study as actual land size. All three of these factors affected the livelihood outcomes for farmers in the Belo Horizonte case study.

5.3.1.1 Scale of Production, Land Size, Tenure and Resources in Belo Horizonte

Land sizes varied from 0.7 ha to approximately 27 ha in the Belo Horizonte case study (see Appendix V). Despite the concern of some farmers about differences in farm size among participants, having a large land base was not critical to success in the program. The most successful farmers in the program had secure land tenure and abundant natural resources on their land. For example, the farmer who had 0.7 ha of land considered himself, and was considered by others a success in the program. He has abundant natural resources, specifically access to water, which is critical during the annual dry season (approximately May through October). He also has good soil. As well, he has relatively

secure land tenure, as he will inherit the plot of land he farms that is currently owned by his father. Without negating the role of his work ethic or skills, or what might be seen as his human capital, his successes can be partly attributed to inheriting good quality land and being of the small landowner class, with rights and privileges to land and title. This demonstrates the importance of both natural resources and social resources in this case study, in the form of the traditions of familial inheritance.

In fact, the most pressing issue that differentiated the experiences of farmers in DR was the land tenure situation, not the actual size of landholding. The variation among farmers can be seen through a comparison of three participating farming households, each with very different land tenure situations. These farming households were chosen because in two cases they represent the extremes in land tenure security among participating farmers. On one extreme, the farmer is very land insecure and his livelihood is vulnerable due to his failing health and limited resources. On the other extreme, the farmers are not only land secure but also resource secure. I begin with a farmer who is highlighted because her land tenure situation is fairly unique within the case study, as there is only one other participating farmer who shares the same land tenure status as her.

Two farmers in the program have a land tenure situation that is unique within the program, and that demonstrates the power inequalities that exist within Brazilian society associated with land tenure. They are both farmers at ‘Pastorinhas’, an agricultural encampment that is part of the agrarian reform program run in cooperation with the federal agrarian reform agency Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária

(INCRA). Since both farmers have had similar experiences, I focus on the farmer whose recent struggles making it to market demonstrate the limitations that both of these farmers face. She comes from a long line of farmers who have historically been marginalized, working as farm hands and sharecroppers rather than owning land of their own. Thus, there was no land to pass on to her when she began farming. She had years of insecure land tenure arrangements including sharecropping and working as a farm hand, as well as few years living in Belo Horizonte. The struggles she faced in getting access to land, and the realization that she would not be able to afford to purchase land because she was not making enough money as a sharecropper or renter, gave her the impetus to seek a more radical alternative to secure land of her own. In 2001 she was part of a land occupation by 120 families on an encampment that they named 'Pastorinhas'. The land chosen was unused and under Brazilian law could be occupied for 'productive use'. Her experiences with the occupation demonstrate the conflict and power struggles over land in Brazil today. The occupying farmers had a very precarious land tenure situation, having twice been forcibly evicted and had their crops destroyed. Only 20 of the initial 120 families remain on the land at the time of research, because many farmers desisted in the face of such conflict.

Since the start of the occupation, the farmers of Pastorinhas were in discussions with INCRA about setting up a formal land agreement. In 2008, they purchased the land in a formal land agreement with INCRA, which holds the 25-year mortgage on their land. They have good physical resources on the land, and have used their skills as farmers to practice farming methods that will protect the natural resources. In addition, since gaining

tenure, the farmers have been able to install irrigation on the land through a grant provided by a small international aid agency, and have also dug a pond to ensure access to water. Thus, the farmers can be seen to have benefitted to a degree from the international support of the agrarian reform movement in Brazil. Still, they have very few economic and physical resources since there is a general lack of support for the agrarian reform movement, particularly among institutions (both private and public) in Brazil. For example, the highlighted farmer from Pastorinhas who participates in the DR program has precarious access to technology. For two months she was unable to make it into her market stall because she did not have the monetary means to fix her damaged truck. She cannot leverage her land title to get money, as she has found banking institutions are not willing to lend to someone involved in a land reform program. She also has limited social ties in the city, and she stated that she has faced much discrimination because of the negative image associated with agricultural reform farmers. She purposely hides her land tenure situation most of the time:

> Some people know, but most don't understand how it is. I explain that we live in an agrarian reform camp. I think it is a question of prejudice, people don't really understand. Those images that pass on the television are what stay in their minds… Our family subsists on this land. We don't have another profession and we need to work the land.

The lack of broad-based support for agricultural reform farmers from her customers has meant that she is in a position where she cannot count on her customers' support if they find out her land tenure situation. Although she has won the right to her land, she still faces challenges dealing with the social and economic barriers of being a land reform farmer.

The second farmer who I highlight is one who has an insecure land tenure situation. He is a hired hand on a farm, and is allowed to rent a small portion of this land to grow his own fruit; he sells exclusively manufactured fruit products such as jams and candied fruit that his wife makes. He has never owned his own land, and has been in his current role of 'caretaker' for at least a decade.[4] He has limited access to technology, and he is not able to afford a car or truck. Twice a week he carries what he can in boxes, and takes two buses and a cab to get to his market stall, making him dependent on the transportation infrastructure to make a living. His situation is insecure because his access to land is dependent on his ability to continue working for the landowner. Over the past few years this has been challenging since he has had some health issues that make it hard to work. He is aging (currently in his 50s) and may not be able to work much longer as a hired hand. If this is the case, he stands to lose his house, which sits on this land, and access to his plot of land. He, along with the four DR farmers who rent land, expressed concern with the security of his livelihood. These five farmers stated that because they were land insecure, they could not plan for future harvests or improve the natural resources on their land with irrigation to help with production during the dry season.

At the other end of the 'small farmer' spectrum was a couple who had inherited their almost 20 hectares of land from family. The links between their land tenure and resources demonstrates how land tenure is important for livelihood security. The wife's family had been on that plot of land for many generations. The land had abundant natural resources, most notably a stream. They have accumulated many physical resources over their time on the land, such as a small greenhouse, a tractor and multiple vehicles. The couple farms

[4] The farmer was unsure of exact dates and provided general timeframes for his farming history.

a portion of this for DR while their children farm the majority of the land and sell through intermediaries. Overall, this farming couple was very land secure and resource secure. Even if the case should arise that they cannot farm anymore, they note that they have family with the means to take care of their needs. They do plan on retiring at some point in the next decade, but intend to still live on the farm. This contrasts with the farmer discussed above who is a caretaker, who will lose his land and his home if and when he retires from farming.

Another farmer specifically identified this particular landowning couple as not 'deserving' to be in the DR program. The farmer who stated this said that they "came from money and were rich," with their Fazenda. His issue with this couple was that even though they had more land and resources than most of the DR farmers, they were all grouped as 'small' farmers within the program. Thus, there was a perception of class difference among the 'small' farmers in the program. It was not merely the size of land that they had, but also their resources that led to the perception by other farmers that they were a part of the 'Fazenda' class.

In summary, there was no 'typical' small farmer in the Belo Horizonte case study, as each had different resources upon which to draw. One important distinction was the land tenure situation of the farmer. The farmers with the most secure land tenure, which was passed down through family, had the resources to be very successful in the program, as well as the security that if and when they had to stop in the program they would still have adequate resources. In contrast, other farmers had precarious land tenure situations and

insecure livelihoods. The decision about who was a small farmer was made by the state government, and the farmers in the program did not have the power to assert their own ideas about who should be in the program. This lead to resentment among some farmers who felt that others in the program were not actually in the small farming class, but were 'fazenda' owners.

5.2.2 The Construction of 'Small' Farmer in Toronto

In the Toronto case study, the farmers' markets did not institutionalize one definition of 'small' farm. How 'small' is defined allows for negotiation among farmers and market managers, which allows for farmers to have some power in the process. There is also less resentment among farmers about the farm size and resources of other farmers. In Toronto all of the farmers interviewed own their own land, while in Belo Horizonte the farmers are sometimes part of a historical context of struggles for land tenure. Nevertheless, there were still marked differences among the Toronto farmers in terms of resources to which they had access (see Appendix V[5]). Tenure was gained either through family inheritance or purchase, with a down-payment for purchase coming from income gained from non-farm employment or in a few cases with the help of family. In contrast to Belo Horizonte, where natural resources—especially access to water—are a major factor in a farmer's success, issues of land quality and access to water were not brought up by any of the Toronto farmers. The short growing season is a major concern for all farmers, and season extension technology (e.g. greenhouses) is a resource that has been considered by all

[5] Appendix V summarizes: the means by which land tenure was obtained (either inherited through family or purchased); the land size (including how much is cultivated for sales at the market in cases where it varies greatly from the total land size); and, any rented land in addition to the land already owned by the farmer (which did not apply in the Belo Horizonte case study).

farmers. I have chosen to highlight two farmers in the Toronto AFN to illustrate how participating farmers come from a range of farm size and have various economic and physical resource bundles. This reinforces the idea from the Belo Horizonte case study that size alone is not adequate to look at 'small' farmers, as access to resources sometimes plays a greater role.

The first farmers are a young couple, who bought a small farm with 1.6 hectares under cultivation. As they describe, "getting into farming in the first place was daunting." They did not inherit land and the start-up capital to purchase a farm was almost prohibitive. Their experience as new farmers is not unique, as noted in Chapter Two, since the high cost of farming is a major barrier for some farmers. They decided to start with a very small piece of land with the intention to obtain more over the long term. Their immediate goal is 'to break even' and pay the mortgage. They are limited by their economic resources, which resulted in an inability to invest in the physical resources need to expand their farming. They have identified that season extension would most likely increase their profits as it would extend their selling window by a few months, but at this point they cannot afford to invest much in season extension technology. They do have a small greenhouse to start plants earlier in the season, but they want to expand further in order to extend the season into the winter when their economic resources are extremely limited, since they have no produce to sell during the winter months.

In contrast, another farming couple has recently bought a large farm, and has another family farm that was inherited. They own approximately 405 hectares divided between

their current farm and their inherited family farm. They grow grain and raise heirloom cattle and sheep in addition to their market produce. As the husband explains “we’ve got enough diverse offerings, plus we’ve got the grains that the other farmers don’t have because we’ve got the land base – a lot of them are 20 acres or less.” They can diversify enough that their participation in the AFN generates less than 5 percent of their total revenue, and thus they depend very little on direct marketing at farmers’ markets. Their large land holdings and abundant resources also come with burdens. They wish to scale back the size of the farm and see direct marketing as a way to have a better quality of life and still run a viable smaller farm, yet feel ‘trapped’ to some extent by their current scale. Their main short term goal is: “To pull ourselves back to just the 400 acres [162 hectares] here so we’re not doing crazy things like driving combines at night from here to Bradford because that’s what the weather says we got to do. And grow the direct to consumer farmers’ market side of the business to the point where it is the economic engine for the farm.” They are investing in season extension infrastructure and were beginning construction of a greenhouse on the weekend I was at their farm. Even with scaling back and emphasizing the higher-value, direct to consumer selling, they maintain other crops to lower their risk. This is an advantage this couple has over other participating farmers. Other farmers have to focus on their market sales since they do not have the land or resource base to maintain other crops. This family, with land and resources, may not be the vision of ‘small is beautiful’ that is evoked within AFN discourse in terms of size, yet they have the resources to be one of the most environmentally responsible farms in the AFN (see discussion in section 5.4). This demonstrates how farmers with an abundance

of resources may have greater ability to hold true to other aspects of 'sustainable agriculture'.

5.2.3 Summary: 'Small' Farmers in Belo Horizonte and Toronto

In both Belo Horizonte and Toronto, the AFNs were comprised of farmers from 'small' small farms, and 'big' small farms (or arguably in the case of Toronto, a medium sized farm). Yet land size was secondary to the natural, economic and physical resources that each farmer had. In the case of Belo Horizonte, this was further complicated by the larger issues of land tenure and class. Family inheritance plays a role in securing access to land for some farmers in both locations, and these farmers tended to have more resources than farmers who were either renting land (in Belo Horizonte) or had purchased their own land (in Toronto and in Belo Horizonte). The farm size does impact on the strategies each farmer employs, but farmers could be economically successful in the AFN irrespective of farm size. In both case studies, farm size and technology, and in the case of Belo Horizonte, land tenure, varies greatly. This breaks down the idea that there is one 'small is beautiful' farmer or small farmers can be considered as one homogenous group. There are a variety of farmers, with different levels of natural, social and economic resources, and these resources affect both on-farm production and selling in the AFN.

How and by whom the 'small' farmer is defined within the AFN leads to the question of 'alternative for whom?' (as posed in Chapter Four). Specifically, the question is raised about how exclusive the AFNs should be in terms of what size of farmers they should include. In Toronto, farmers do not resent other farmers for having more land or

resources and are accepting of an AFN that is open to farmers having diverse access to land and resources. In contrast, in Belo Horizonte there is a lot of resentment by some participating farmers that an AFN that specifically lauded itself as being for ‘Roça’ farmers was allowing access to farmers with greater resources. In particular, the participating farmers’ take different paths to the AFN, from inheritance to the hard fought battle for land by land reform. To the farmers who have fought for land ownership, or who may not have secure tenure, the categorizing of ‘small’ farmer to those who they perceive as having an easier path created resentment. In Belo Horizonte, some farmers think that the definition of ‘small’ farmer made without consultation by the AFN government administrators is too inclusive and does not hold true to the ‘Roça’ image of the program.

5.3 Unpacking the ‘Environmental Farmer’ Narrative

In this section, I deconstruct the ‘environmental farmer’ narrative to understand the environmental values and practices of farmers in each case study. Each farmer’s access to resources impacts their ability to be ‘environmental’ farmers, which is a narrative central to conventional conceptualizations of sustainable agriculture and AFNs. As explained by Goodman and Goodman (2007), local food AFNs in North America are the dominant space where ideas of environmentally sustainable and organic farming are expressed. In the Brazilian context, the environmental narrative of farming can be traced to agroecological principles espoused by social movements like the MST, and the influence of the global movement, La Via Campesina.

In the Toronto case study, most of the farmers in the AFN were organic farmers, as most of the markets required organic farmers, demanding either certification or some other proof of production methods. While Dufferin generally requires certification, Withrow and Wychwood both require proof of organic or ecological farming, and The Stonegate Farmers' Market had a mix of organic and conventional (but low-spray) growers. Most of the farmers in the Toronto case study, as organic and ecological producers, identified strongly with the dominant environmental farmer narrative. In Belo Horizonte, in contrast, the program did not require or even encourage organic standards. In fact, the standardization of pricing within the program meant that farmers had no incentive to practice more environmentally-sound practices, as they would not be able to capture any value-added for this. In Belo Horizonte, none of the farmers in DR were certified organic, and generally farmers did not express strong environmental values. As Hinrichs (2003) points out, farmers in AFNs are not necessarily better stewards of the environment than other farmers. Age and economic viability are factors that impact farmers' knowledge or ability to be environmental stewards. This is true in the case of most of the Belo Horizonte farmers, who have always been conventional farmers, and who did not have the knowledge, economic ability or market incentive to explore more environmentally sustainable principles. In this section, I highlight three Toronto farmers and three Belo Horizonte farmers who all fit along a continuum from 'beyond organic' to 'conventional' farmers. This continuum can be conceptualized as: Beyond Organic—Certified Organic—Non-Conventional (uncertified)—Conventional (Figure 5.1).

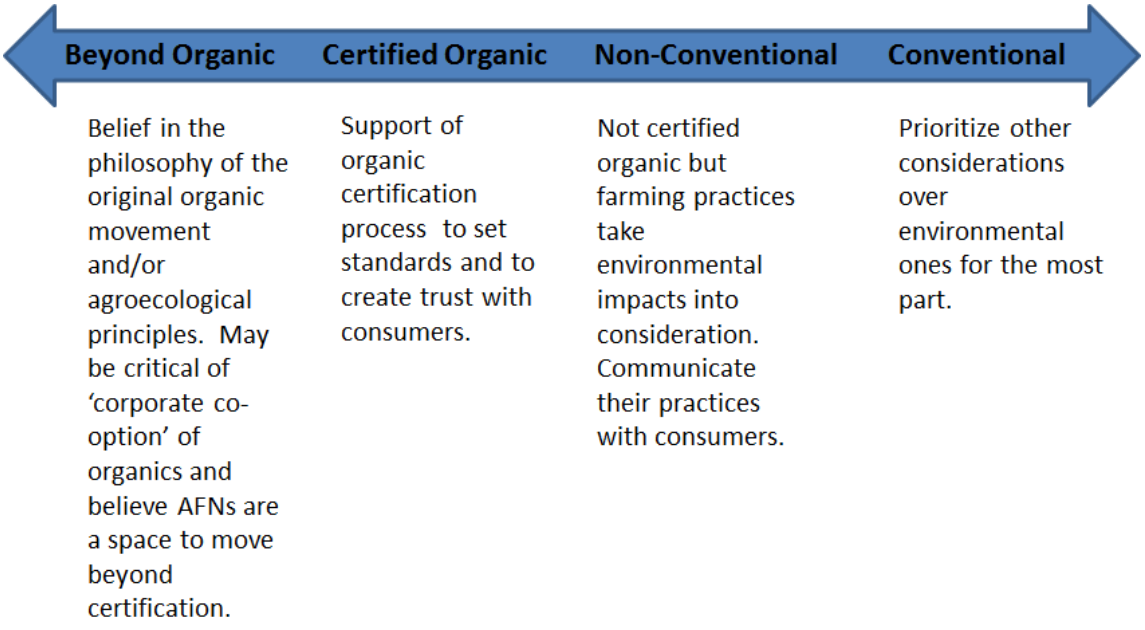

Figure 5.1 The Continuum of Environmental Values of Case Study Farmers

Along this continuum, two farmers, one in Belo Horizonte (who is a notable exception to the norm in that case study location) and one in Toronto are closer to the 'beyond organics' end of the spectrum. The second Toronto farmer is closer to the certified organic part of the spectrum. Two other farmers, one in Belo Horizonte and one in Toronto are close to 'non-conventional' while the last farmer in Belo Horizonte (who is closest to the views of the majority of the Belo Horizonte farmers) is conventional. All three farmers in Toronto not only discussed their environmental philosophies, but all emphasized how their environmental practices are communicated to consumers. In the Belo Horizonte case study, environment does not play as prominently in the discourse,

although most farmers mentioned spraying of pesticides as a concern that their customers have.

The Toronto 'beyond organic' couple was introduced in the preceding section, as owners of the largest farm in the case study. They started out in conventional farming but moved into organic farming 10 years ago. They have a mission statement for their farm available on their website for customers that outlines their views on sustainable farming:

> Our production practices will adhere to both the letter and the spirit of organic production. We will strive for the smallest environmental footprint possible. Our animal husbandry will be humane and meet the biological needs of the species as naturally as possible.
>
> We selected "Sustainable Agriculture since 1819" as our tagline because it embodies everything we are trying to accomplish at [farm name]. "Sustainable" to us means farming in a way that provides for our family both in the current generation and for the generations to come. We are certified organic by OCPP, meaning that we do not use any synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. Our cropping program blends the techniques farmers have used for centuries such as building the soil using cover crops and compost with modern technology such as no-till planting to create a sustainable low footprint farm.

They began thinking about organic agriculture many years ago, when the husband took the first ever organic agriculture class at the major agricultural university in the province when he was getting his agriculture degree. They are 'beyond organic' in their farming because they not only comply with organic certification regulations, they believe in the philosophy of the organic movement, and agroecological principles. They wrote down their mission statement partly to inform consumers and partly "to remind us not to take the temptation to get sucked in going the corporate organic route." They do have organic certification because it is required for some of their business transactions. Nevertheless,

they have “started to get a bit disillusioned about what could be called certified organic”, and later stated that “when it became a codified set of rules, it lost its integrity”. They gave the example of shopping for organic processed foods (such as macaroni and powdered cheese sauce and ketchup), and felt this did not fit with the idea of real and whole food that was more in keeping with their idea of organic. They also discussed the environmental problems of large-scale corporate farms. These sentiments agree with Goodman and Goodman’s (2007) assertion that the ‘organic’ label has been co-opted by corporate interests, turning some small organic farmers away from corporate organics, and that local AFNs are the space for them to articulate alternate visions of organic. This couple is cutting back their production of organic grains, even though it is a source of profit, because despite being certified it does not match with their idea of organic: “I don’t think it’s actually sustainable in a true organic – the philosophy – it didn’t match up with the philosophy so we’re scaling back.” Their objection centred around the use of mono-cropping for grains and the need for mass production and wholesale of the grains. They also see the local food movement as a location where they can get back to the roots of sustainable agriculture. At some point in the future, they believe “there may come a point where we will consider no longer being certified, once we have a customer base that understands what we do.” They believe there is the potential within local AFNs to move beyond an idea of organic that is defined by corporate interests, and where farmers are passive recipients of organic standards rather than active participants in shaping the standards. The couple is optimistic that relations of trust with consumers will develop in the AFN, and that this will allow them to regain the power to express their own definition of ‘organic’ rather than be held to the standards set by corporations.

The other ‘beyond organic’ farm is on the agrarian reform encampment of Pastorinhas. The farmers at Pastorinhas are definitely outside of the norm in this case study with their commitment to ecological farming. There is a strong link between the agrarian reform agenda in Brazil and the agroecology movement. Although neither of the two farmers that were a part of Direto da Roça were driving forces in Pastorinhas agroecological farming initiatives, they did participate as members of the encampment community. When they first occupied the land, the planted area had been mono-cropped, then abandoned, and the soil was not very healthy. The Pastorinhas community was committed to restoring the health of the soils. One leader in the community discussed how they practiced seed saving, mixed cropping, using native plants, and used minimal pesticides. In addition, when they occupied the land there was a tract of 142 hectares of forested land. The Pastorinhas community decided to set aside this tract as an ecological sanctuary. The Pastorinhas farmers’ environmental values did not align with the values of the AFN administrators. For example, I noted that the choice to farm using agroecological principles received very negative responses from the EMATER liaison to DR and the DR coordinator. On a visit to the farm, both of these administrators expressed doubts about seed saving. They stated to me later that seed saving was not as effective as getting seeds that were created in a lab since the ‘experts’ know better than the farmers. However, the Pastorinhas farmers were both self-educated and had received help from people in other occupied encampments who were farming ecologically, gaining an understanding of agroecological farming methods. Thus far, they had had success with their plantings. This example is illustrative of a few tensions that exist in the case study.

First, the farmers' knowledge is not as valued as those of 'experts' because the farmers do not have formal training in agriculture, while the two administrators of the program have agricultural diplomas. Both administrators made mention of this difference to me in their discussion with me on the drive back from the Pastorinhas visit. Second, the tensions between the 'traditional' and 'modern' exist within the AFN. In Chapter Six, this is discussed in relation to market-place experiences, yet, this example shows that the traditional is considered inferior to the modern with respect to on-farm production. The Pastorinhas DR farmers did not discuss their participation in agroecological farming with their customers due to the stigma attached to land occupations and the association between agroecology and land occupations. Thus, unlike the case of the Toronto 'beyond organic' couple, they did not see the AFN as the place to articulate their views of 'beyond organic'. Nevertheless, the farmers were able to translate their knowledge of ecological farming into enhancing their natural resources. For example, they dug ponds in the shade near the forested track to store rainwater in the wet season, and grew seedlings from saved seeds rather than purchasing seeds.

The Toronto 'certified organic' farming couple have been either in transition or organic for over 10 years, and the woman in the couple in particular believes strongly in the certification process. They have had a positive experience with certification, and credit the certification process with helping to increase their skill and knowledge of organic farming methods. The wife notes that "even the certifiers are being really helpful. That's the one thing I think is really important, for people who – you know, there's no reason for anybody not to be certified. It's not that expensive any more. The lady that come and did

our inspection, she's a farmer! And we got to share so much advice, it was so helpful – it was really good. It was really good." One of their biggest conflicts with a few of the other farmers at the market is that they don't value or respect the certification process and may let their certification lapse. This couple wants to:

> Keep it certified. You know, I think there's got to be that level and I don't understand why – there's no excuse. There should be no excuse. [One group of farms is] not certified and I read an article on one farm and their excuse was it was too much money. All these different excuses don't add up. It usually means that they can't or they just don't want to. They know that the certifiers are going to say you're wearing out your land, you can't do this, you can't use that, they don't want to be told what to do and they know it's going to be a little difficult for them so they just give up.

They believe that for the sake of the customers, certification is clear to understand and sets the standard, and that trust should be placed in 'certified organics'. The cooption of certified organics is not a big concern to them, as they believe that it does not affect their customer base, or their own operations. Rather, they depended on and valued the credibility that they receive from being certified organic. This contrasts with the 'beyond organic' Toronto couple, who see the potential for developing relations of trust that will give them credibility with their customers.

The next farmer along the continuum is also a Toronto farmer. She has a family fruit farm, with her elderly father mainly responsible for the farming decisions (although the interview and all interaction took place with her, not her father). She talks about the evolution of environmental thought on the farm:

> Over the years, we've seen so much from spray it to death, every four days, spray something. That was the philosophy – you know when we bought the farm fifty years ago – spray it. DDT, carbolics, whatever, you

> know, this that and the other things – you'd just spray it. We'd spray them, right.
>
> And over the years, again, things change, and we realized, and my dad started to realized as well, this is the way it works for him. Right now what we do is my dad does a lot of tilling of the soil, so he doesn't have to spray for weed. .. So he doesn't do a lot of chemical fertilization except – he has to do some for the trees. You know, and that's – he does minimal, minimal fertilizing…And also, he sprays only [sparingly on the fruit trees].

Hinrichs (2003) asserts that age, economic considerations and knowledge all impact farming practices with regards to the environment, but in this case the farmer chose more environmentally sound practices despite age and potential economic implications. She used the term a 'non-conventional farm' to describe her approach. Her family farming values around pesticides have also been shaped by cancer in the family, which has made them use pesticides sparingly. She communicates to customers:

> It's low spray… we just tell them with fruit trees it's really hard. A fruit tree that has been going for 10 years, you can't just take it out and do – I mean, you take 5 years for a fruit tree to start fruit bearing... so what we tell people is it's sort of a non-conventional, low spray, most of it is a lot of handwork, turning the soil and stuff like that, and they're fine with that.

She also relates stories to customers about her own children working on the farm, picking bugs off of the produce, to show that it is healthy enough to trust her own children with it. Fruit farmers have difficulty being organic because of the nature of their work, but she and her father are trying their best to minimize fertilizer inputs and pesticide spraying. For this farmer, the main issue is balancing the production costs, relative to yield, of low-spray farming with her own environmental values.

The second Belo Horizonte farmer highlighted here does not have an organic farm, although she has considered moving towards organic production. The farmer is 'non-conventional' since she does try to use more environmentally sound practices, as she tries to spray only where necessary. She also did not spray close to picking time, to minimize residue. She has been farming using 'non-conventional' methods for her entire farming life, and she notes that her non-conventional approach was passed down from her family and is a family tradition. Yet her adult children who farm on the same land do not share this farming tradition, opting for the more 'modern' farming methods that are input intensive, including the use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. She would like to get organic certification, but when she made inquiries into the process, she found that it was not only costly to get certified, but that it was also costly to produce using organic methods that are certifiable. This supports Hinrichs's (2003) assertion that economic considerations are a real barrier for organic certification. It also demonstrates that for at least this one farmer, the Participatory Guarantee System (PSG) is not a viable option. In addition, the set pricing of the AFN has dissuaded her from venturing further into organics. She believes that she would not be able to make the money back in the DR program because she would still have to sell at the DR set prices and there is no pricing incentive for organic producers. In contrast to the DR Pastorinhas farmers, who did not discuss their agroecological farming with consumers, she openly discussed her low-spray farming with her customers. When I spoke to consumers at the stalls, there was evidence that relations of trust over her environmental practices had developed. They told me that they trust her produce because it has a low level of pesticides, and because she uses clean water and it is therefore hygienic. The concern for health and hygiene overrode the

environmental concern from these customers, and for almost all customers interviewed in Belo Horizonte. Therefore, there is an incentive for farmers to focus on consumer perceptions of hygiene rather than other environmental practices such as use of pesticides.

The last example I have chosen to highlight in this section is a farmer who typifies the Belo Horizonte case study producers. When I first met the wife of this farmer (who is not a farmer herself), she confided in me that she was concerned with her husband's "abuse of his land". She told me that she tries to tell him to think of the health of the land and not use as many pesticides on it, but that he is not listening. She thinks this is evidenced by reduction in natural resources that he has experienced, with notably less fertile soil. He had been planting on his father's land for a few years, but in his words, "that land became tired" and unproductive. He then had to rent land, and after a year on this land, he is already having issues with the soil, and is seeking help to find out what is wrong with it. He estimated that his productivity had decreased by 80% in one area and 50% in another, and he suspected soil salinization or nutrient deficiencies. He intensely uses fertilizer inputs, herbicides, pesticides, since he "needs to use them, or things will not grow at all on this land." On one visit to his land, I was with the EMATER liaison to the DR program. Through their conversation about his poor soil, I learned that this farmer does not have the knowledge of how certain environmental practices affect soil nutrients, specifically how his irrigation practices may have led to soil salinization. He later stressed that his produce was very hygienic, which he believes is the main concern for his consumers, further confirming that farmers in the case study focused on hygiene rather

than broader environmental practices. As with the ‘non-conventional’ farmer in Belo Horizonte, the pervasiveness of hygiene as a concern rather than environmental ‘sustainability’ influenced this farmer’s practices. It is evident that each farmer has his or her own reasons for the environmental practices chosen in both locations. The following section is a summary of these varying and sometimes competing environmental narratives.

5.3.1 The Environmental Narrative Summary

With the exception of the Pastorinhas farm, there was a great difference between the Toronto and Belo Horizonte farmers in regard to environmental values and practices. In Toronto, all of the farmers brought up environmental values on their own, rather than being prompted by me. The farmers in Toronto who participated in my research adopt practices that are between ‘beyond organics’ (four of the farmers), ‘regulatory organic’ (six of the farmers) and ‘non-conventional’ (four of the farmers) along the continuum. There was some conflict among farmers over environmental practices in Toronto, based on differing ideas of what organic stood for. One farmer who is ‘beyond organic’ decided not to re-certify because he felt re-certification required too much documentation and paperwork, and a ‘certified organic’ farmer was frustrated by this and felt it devalued the market and made consumers lose trust. This leads to the thought that for her, the trust created by the certification process was stronger than the personal bonds of trust in the AFN. Likewise, in the one market where conventional produce was allowed, there was conflict among farmers about the language used by both organic and conventional farmers., Both sides felt there was some misleading communication to customers about

their practices. This tension between farmers over what organic should and does mean for both the farmer and the consumer shows how the idea is greatly contested in this case study. Some farmers saw the potential to redefine ‘organic’ within AFNs, while others fought to maintain a certified organic market. All of the farmers were keenly interested in how their environmental practices were interpreted by consumers at market, and felt that their environmental values and practices were one of the main reasons that consumers bought from them.

In Belo Horizonte, although there were many unprompted discussions about how clean or hygienic produce was, I generally needed to prompt with a question about environmental practices. Farmers were taking their cues from consumers, as Hinrichs (2003) suggested, but rather than focusing on the environment, they focused in on only one element of environmentally sound farming, that of hygiene. Only Pastorinhas, with links to the MST who advocate ecological farming methods, was radically different from the dominant ‘hygiene’ focus of DR farmers. This narrative was constructed around the view by most consumers that the supermarket had ‘hygienic’ produce, while individual farmers had to gain the trust of consumers over their hygienic practices. It is important to note that in the Toronto case study, most of the markets only allowed organic or ecological farming, while the AFN in Belo Horizonte did not have an environmental focus. The competing narratives in Toronto were therefore mostly between ‘beyond organic’ visions and ‘certified organic’ ones. In Belo Horizonte, the competing visions were mainly between ‘non-conventional’ and ‘conventional’ (with the one notable exception of Pastorinhas). As well, in the Toronto case study some of the farmers did not have farming backgrounds

and specifically started farming for environmental reasons. In fact, in that case study, the farmers who were on the 'non-conventional' end of the spectrum were all from traditional farming families. This might be because of the influence of the farmers' upbringing in conventional farming, both within their own family and the farming community. In Belo Horizonte, all of the farmers came from farming backgrounds and the environment did not factor greatly into their decision to become farmers in the first place. There is also not the same opportunity for 'value-added' organics in Belo Horizonte with consumers (which is discussed in detail in Chapter Six). The examples discussed above demonstrate how the environmental values and practices varied greatly among farmers and depended on each farmer's knowledge, resources, and the customers' wants. It also depends on structure and focus of the AFN, which is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

5.4 Unpacking the 'Socially Responsible' Narrative

Although not as prominent as the discourse around the environmental farmer, the roots of AFNs in North America have a link to social justice movements (Allen et al.2003). Similarly, peasant movements in the global South have strong social justice imperatives (Via Campesina 2009). On-farm labour was a major theme in both case studies. However, in agreement with Allen et al.'s (2003) findings, on-farm labour issues have largely been overlooked in these case studies. The findings of this study, in accordance with Brown and Getz (2008), show that the 'family farm' encompasses various types of production methods, including some that use exploitative labour practices. In this section, I consider how farmers' varying human and social resources influence labour decisions,

and the on-farm social justice implications of those decisions. When unpacking the ‘socially responsible’ narrative in both case studies, I found that the availability and cost of labour was a concern for farmers, and created situations where exploitative practices were used.

5.4.1 On-Farm Labour in Belo Horizonte: Exploitation as the Exception

The main labour challenge facing farmers in both Belo Horizonte and Toronto was how to meet the on-farm demands while also maximizing their time selling in the city. In Belo Horizonte, the social ties of farmers greatly shaped their on-farm labour practices. Specifically, the availability of family labour was important. All but two relied on family relations as their main labour source, and there was reciprocity among family members to balance livelihood activities such as child-rearing and off-farm employment for extra income. The reliance on familial labour was based on a relationship of trust that each member of the family is working in the best interest of the family farm. This allowed for farmers to leave the family farm and work at the stall in the city with the reassurance that on-farm tasks were being completed. Most farmers were wary of hiring outside labour, even if it would allow them to expand selling locations or time in the city. For example, one couple in Belo Horizonte stated they “did not trust outside workers, they would either steal from us at the stall, or not work hard on the farm without constant supervision.” However, the reliance on family placed a large burden on families, and was limited by family composition. Although not directly observed, there was also the potential for exploitative labour relations within the family, including gender issues and child labour.

The exceptions to the norm in Belo Horizonte were two farmers, both of whom were motivated to expand the number of selling days and now operate their market stalls six days a week. To do so, they had to expand their labour pool so as not to have to rely solely on familial labour. They both use sharecroppers to compensate for their absence on the farm and worked full-time in the city. The sharecroppers in both cases were in an arrangement with the farmer where they use his land and equipment (including tractor) in exchange for giving 50% of their produce to him. The other 50% is also sold at the stall by both landowning farmers, since they do not charge for transport of this produce, so it is more economical for the sharecropper to sell to the landowner than selling to an intermediary. This arrangement has the potential for the exploitation of the sharecroppers. Farm workers in this study suffered from some of the injustices common to agricultural labourers elsewhere, namely low wages, food insecurity, and job insecurity (Food First 2009). At the farmer's request I was not able to speak to the sharecroppers, so my discussion of their situation is based on his word, and on the perspectives of DR farmers who have been sharecroppers at some point in their farming careers. As one farmer in DR who had previously been a sharecropper noted, the owner in a sharecropping arrangement walks away with the land, and the crops that are on the land, while the sharecropper walks away with nothing, and has few legal recourses. One landowning farmer's statement that he has often ended sharecropping agreements on short notice because of conflicts with the sharecropper further add to the evidence that it is an insecure livelihood for the sharecropper. The landowning farmer has the power in this land/labour arrangement, as he may end the contract with little consequence to him.

For the farmer, although this arrangement is financially beneficial in many ways, he "needs to trust that they will produce and also have good quality products." He does not have the trust that comes with a familial labour arrangement, where there is reciprocity. The lack of true reciprocity in the relationship sometimes leads to dishonesty, as sharecroppers in the past have not split 50/50, as per the agreement. When asked about the consequences of sharecropping on the labourer, one farmer did not see any problems. He felt the sharecropper was given good quality land, use of a tractor and the selling arrangement, which is better than an arrangement with an intermediary. Within the AFN, farmers are allowed to sell the sharecroppers' produce as if it were their own, since the regulation states that it must have been produced on their land, rather than by them. These two farmers who used sharecropping actually benefitted more economically within the AFN than those farmers who limited selling because of familial labour limitations. Thus, as Allen et al. (2003) found in their work, the AFN can actually be used to hide unjust labour practices.

5.4.2 On-Farm Labour in Toronto: Various Labour Strategies

In Toronto, the balance between on-farm and off-farm labour was also a challenge, and the familial social capital of Toronto farmers was very different from in Belo Horizonte. In Belo Horizonte there was the expectation that any available family members from multiple generations will be a part of the farming livelihood and are expected to share part of the workload. In the Toronto case study, family farming that includes multi-generation or extended family was not as prevalent. Only two farmers relied on extended family as the main labour source on-farm or at the market. For the majority of farmers,

family labour on the 'family' farm did not extend past the immediate family, and there was a need for some outside labour in most cases.

There were a variety of other labour arrangements, from not having any outside labour to hiring migrant workers. One farmer did not seem to be bothered by using migrant labourers, stating that although it was "too bad" that more Canadians didn't want to work as farmhands "You know, it doesn't really matter to me who does the work as long as it gets done to the satisfaction of me, [and] the customer." One farming couple typified the experience in Toronto with their struggle to find an arrangement that meets their labour needs but also reflects their values. They had recently chosen to expand since they did not want to miss out if another market was successful. In the past they hired Mexican migrant workers, and knew it was an unfair relationship with the labourers. The previous year they had only some familial on-farm labour and one local teenager. This was not ideal, as one would have to be present to instruct them, so was not able to attend the market. That season they had decided to hire back Mexican migrant labourers, despite wanting to hire locally. They discussed the strain to pay bills and pay their workers well, and stressed that additional markets would allow them to make a living. If they do not hire "cheap labour" (the Mexican workers) when they are at the market, the farm sits idle:

> This past year... on the days that we were gone, the farm stood still. So unless we were here and we were working, the days (were not productive on farm). The days we are not in Toronto are the days I'm running the crew and I'm harvesting, which consisted of a local girl… a school kid, [my husband's] mom, and the two of us. This year, we're getting Jose back, a Mexican fellow that worked on our conventional farm for like 14 years… I want to enable and help with the local economy and give people jobs, but I need at least 2 really good guys here because I can't make it run without. It's just too hard. It's impossible. I can't do it. They are trustworthy, they know what they're doing, so that's going to be awesome. We're going to

> get home from Market, and at least there's going to be some of the crops taken out so the next morning I don' t have to go out there and harvest everything myself and then grade, I can just start washing the beets and then cut out later to do the tomatoes later in the day. So that's going to be really [nice].

Their struggle with finding good local labour and desire to support the local economy with their labour practices was not unique. As another farmer noted,

> The whole idea of the community markets is that it goes back in to the community, but I had to bring in labourers. I hire Sihks [Sihk immigrants from a nearby city] on occasion when the strawberries come in, sometimes they can only come on the weekend. … In the past I have had offshore labour, a lot of farms here bring them in, there was only one year we did that… Unfortunately with the local kids now not wanting to we are forced to.

These types of sentiments were widespread in the Toronto case study, yet the farmers felt forced to hire inexpensive labour to balance on-farm and off-farm work.

At least one farmer felt so strongly about fair treatment of his workers that he was able to hire one 'farm manager' fulltime throughout the year, and pay a decent wage. This was a financial strain on his farm, especially in the winter when farm income was low. He credits the structuring of the AFN to allow him to sell imported food in the winter as a main reason he could maintain a farm manager and pay fair wages. Yet he was the only farmer in the case study who expressed this sentiment. Thus, in Toronto, selling within the AFN may have the potential to create more equitable labour situations, although in reality this was limited to one farmer thus far.

5.4.3 Summary: On-Farm Social Justice in Belo Horizonte and Toronto

The findings from both case studies show that finding on-farm labour was an issue for participant farmers. Some farmers in the AFNs do create on-farm labour inequalities through their practices. In Toronto, most of the farmers struggled with the moral implications of hiring outside labour, unlike in Belo Horizonte, where family labour dominated. Family labour arrangements can also be potentially exploitative. All farmers face a dilemma when they enter into farm labour agreements in order to expand, or in some cases, to even sustain their current activities. None of the farmers in the research had mal-intent when they entered into unjust labour relations. Some felt forced into it, despite wanting other options; others saw it as what they needed to do to succeed and did not question the practice. Labour relations involving hired labour tended to benefit the landowning farmer at the expense of the labourer. As such they do not follow the ideals of sustainable agriculture movements and AFNs to create more socially just societies. They instead perpetuate classes of farm owners and farm workers. However, these arrangements are effectively 'hidden' within the AFN, since they occur on-farm and away from the eyes of consumers. It brings up the question again of 'alternative for whom?' Although the owner farmer is benefitting within the AFN, as are consumers, the on-farm labourers are not seeing a benefit although they are (nominally) 'participants' in the AFN. They do not have any power within the AFN, and may not even know that they are in fact a part of an 'alternative' to the conventional system. Their position is marginalized in both systems. The need for unjust labour within AFNs in order for farmers to thrive, or in some cases survive, should call into question the effectiveness of the AFN as a truly 'alternative' social relation.

5.5 The Well-Being of Farmers

Unlike the narratives above, where I can discuss the situation of certain farmers in comparison to others, well-being cannot be compared in this manner. As Chambers (1997) explains, well-being is defined by each individual. What constitutes well-being for each farmer in this study is unique, and direct comparisons are not useful. Although this makes it difficult to discuss well-being, to ignore this aspect of livelihoods does not provide as complete a picture of farmers' experiences. I start this section by highlighting how some farmers have gained a sense of fulfillment from their livelihood. I then look at specific attributes of well-being (as defined by Chambers, 1997) that were identified by farmers: friendship, creativity, and a sense of security. I have chosen to use the examples of farmers who expressed specific strong feelings about various aspects of well-being.

Overwhelmingly, despite the hardships of their livelihoods, the farmers that I interviewed had a passion for what they do. One Toronto fruit farmer, despite being generally pessimistic about farming and his future, admitted that "I've got a crazy passion for it… you're not going to be in this long term if you're not [passionate]." The farmers conveyed feelings of passion for the land they grow on, for what they grow, and for their role as providers of food in their community. The two main elements of well-being that were both observed by me and discussed by farmers were the personal fulfillment they felt through producing food and the connections with their customers, moving beyond a monetary 'consumer' relationship to a 'friendship'.

5.5.1 Sense of Fulfillment

It is difficult to choose examples of how farmers felt a sense of fulfillment from participation in the AFN. What constitutes fulfillment and how it is gained is personal to each farmer and generalizations cannot be made. The sense of fulfillment that farmers felt was not a topic that was discussed extensively, since personal feelings of fulfillment are often difficult to articulate. In this section I highlight the experiences of farmers who have identified 'types' of fulfillment. The first farmer was unique in that he gained a deeply personal spiritual fulfillment, relating to the spiritual well-being noted by Chambers, from his market interactions, something not expressed by any other farmer in either case study. I identified two other kinds of fulfillment that were expressed by farmers and provide examples of each of these chosen from a variety of farmers. Some farmers feel fulfilled by the role they play in society as providers of good quality, healthy food. A second sense of fulfillment felt by farmers is through the experiences that farming provides them and their family.

The farmer who expressed a sense of spiritual fulfillment from his livelihood did so during a memorable first encounter I had with him at market. The discussion began with him providing his farming history. He had been a conventional tobacco farmer, but after nearly 20 years he no longer felt good growing a commodity that is harmful to people's health. One day he decided that he needed to radically change what he was doing and he stopped tobacco farming and transitioned into organic farming. Since converting to organic produce he explained: "I feel so much better farming in the last 5 years organically than I ever did growing conventionally. Just a complete turnaround." He decided to sell at markets to "fulfill my spiritual and personal needs, rather than my

economic needs… It's a nice sunny day, you have time to chat… Every time I leave, I leave with some knowledge… If you feel good then you're motivated [to keep farming] and it's just a good feeling." He contrasted this to how he felt as a tobacco farmer, where every day he knew he was producing something that was making people sick.

The benefits that farmers provide to society are a motivator for some farmers. Another Toronto farmer expressed the sentiment that, "You feed people for a living, you keep people alive and healthy." She does feel frustration at how even with the sense of well-being that she feels, there is a lack of monetary compensation for her work:

> It's frustrating sometimes thinking about what you do for a living. What does a banker do? You're sitting and pushing a pencil around and stuff and you're feeding people and how can there be such a shift in your income? How can one person make hundreds of dollars an hour for doing what? When you're feeding people? And you get 'what'?... Sometimes you do feel like beating your head against the wall, but… because the people are so good, they keep you going… when I come back to the farm and you start all over again, you're happy to go, because you're just met with so much compassion. People really like you for what you do. So, it's worth the hard work. Feels good.

A Belo Horizonte farmer expresses a similar sentiment, stating that although he is usually exhausted, he gets his energy to continue from the knowledge that he is providing for others. His encounters at the market reinforce this and it helps him "refresh every day to work another day." Yet he is also frustrated since all of the small farmers that he knows work so hard and still struggle to have a viable livelihood. These two examples reinforce the need to look at livelihoods from both a material and non-material perspective, since while both farmers feel personal fulfillment for what they do, they still have to have viable livelihoods. The worry over economic considerations detracts from their sense of well-being.

For some farmers, approval from others validates them. One farmer in Belo Horizonte discussed how she felt valued for her hard work and perseverance when she sold at her stall and heard people discuss how "beautiful my produce is." She takes pride knowing that people continue to come back to her, as it shows her that they appreciate her hard work to provide them with "produce that is good for you and grown with love." Yet other farmers do not look outwards for validation. As one Toronto farming couple states: "sometimes we have to admit it's a lonely road. For us what worked is that we've come to the conclusion that the approval of others around us isn't what's important in our lives, so this probably allows us to do [what we do]." They have made the choice to be farmers because they want to have a livelihood that their children can be a part of, which is an indicator of 'quality of life' (Chambers 1997). Overall, fulfillment is a difficult concept to understand as it varies from farmer to farmer and was deeply personal. Nevertheless, farmers did indicate that these feelings of fulfillment provided the motivation to continue farming and participating in the AFN.

5.5.2 Friendships

If looked at from a purely capitals perspective, the friendships formed through farming and selling at the market could be converted into social capital. Yet as Chambers (1997) notes, friendships are also a part of well-being. Although a few farmers discussed friendship in the context of gaining clientele, and thus converting social resources into economic resources, farmers in both Toronto and Belo Horizonte valued the friendships

they have made at the market. The majority of the examples are taken from the Belo Horizonte case study, where the theme of friendship was prevalent.

Even when the friendships add to their economic resources, they were also contributing to farmers' sense of well-being. For example, one farmer in Belo Horizonte discusses how people who were once clients have turned into friends: "I have a lot of friendships here, it is like a family. We have customers who buy from us and turn into friends. Our objective is not only to make enough to live, but also to make friends." The importance of these friendships was evident when I observed him interacting with these people at his stall. He obviously enjoyed it when clients who were friends stopped by, and chatted and joked with them whether or not they purchased from him. Another Belo Horizonte farmer placed a very high value on the friendships she had gained, explaining that "here people are like my family. When I started here I started to really know the people. I have one woman, a nurse, who even endearingly calls me 'mom'. She come to the farm and brings me Christmas presents and for my birthday. She cares about me a lot." She later the same day reiterated happily to me that

> It is a family that I have here. I have a lot of friendships that have formed with people my own age, but also with the younger generation. I have watched some of the younger people grow up. Sometimes people come back to the neighbourhood just to visit me.

At one point when she had some health issues, she had stopped going to the stall, and was sending her nephew instead, but "People would miss me, they would ask if something had happened to me…I think they really did miss me, not just the stall. I also missed them, and came into town to go visit some people at their home." One Toronto farmer stated that some of the friends he has known for 17 years of selling at various locations in

Toronto. He considers these friends his main social network and that helps him deal with the relative isolation of the farm. Another Belo Horizonte farmer stated that "There are people here we treat like siblings… My friends here love us. If we are tired they energize us, they treat us like their family. We truly are rich in friendships here…I am not here just for the money, I love the people here and come for the friendships I have."

These farmers all defined friendship as a key component of their happiness in their livelihood. Notably, the importance of friendship was more prevalent in Belo Horizonte than in Toronto. Although it is difficult to know why, I believe it could be related to the underlying class issues in Belo Horizonte, and the historical marginalization of the small farming class. For these farmers to be treated as 'friends' by urban consumers may carry more personal value to the farmers, after being marginalized within society for so long.

5.5.3 Other Indications of Well-Being: Access to Culture and Security

Since well-being is such an individual feeling, farmers discussed in-depth some aspects of well-being that were important to them. I am highlighting two such aspects, to demonstrate the range of experiences that can contribute to well-being. One Toronto farmer loves the balance he has in his life between farm and city, and his eclectic personality is suited to this balance:

> First and foremost is the opportunity to interact with people, for me with a lot of respects I enjoy the city, I don't have any access to culture out here, you know culture, theatre, restaurants, not that I have a lot of time for that. But through your ear to the ground, through the contacts you make through the markets, friendships that come to visit at the farm, come to work for a day, whether it is for money or for free, but again, … you are invited to opportunities you otherwise would not be, like parties for example. … It is fun for me as a farmer to get into the city periodically, it

> is kinda nice to live in the country but to have access to the city…It is a lot more vibrant.

The ability to have a farming livelihood with close-knit ties to the city allows him access to the vibrant cultural milieu of the city. He also sees this as beneficial to the cultural development of his children, as he notes that "I bring my kids so my kids are exposed to different elements…an exposure to people that my children have that they wouldn't have if they were just distributing off the farm. So, my kids have been exposed to wide types of food, and are not as fussy as others, and are more tolerant, there are all kinds of benefits." For this farmer, who has travelled extensively and describes himself as a "bit of a wanderer before I grew roots here", the cultural opportunities provided to both him and his children through the AFN contribute to his sense of well-being.

The other farmers I want to highlight expressed a completely different aspect that has contributed to their well-being, and that is a sense of security. A farming couple in the Belo Horizonte case study discussed with me the rude, and sometimes even threatening situations they had faced in the past, when they tried to sell directly without a permit. Now, they credit their decision to enter into the DR program for a sense of security: "The Direct from the Farm program is good since we have more security now. We know that everything is legal, with a license and we are not afraid of the authorities anymore… we have tranquility." They have credited this peace of mind as forming a part of their long term health.

5.5.4 Well-Being: Does It Matter?

Although, as Chambers (1997) notes, well-being is defined differently by each person, the AFN provides farmers the opportunity to improve their well-being. As mentioned in Chapter Four, one way that AFNs can be alternative is by creating new social interactions. The social interactions are often considered in terms of the potential for the creation of community, rather than for how they impact individual livelihoods. The benefits of the sense of fulfillment that farmers in the AFN have expressed and the various aspects of 'well-being' that are satisfied by AFN participation are not often considered within AFN theory. The re-connection of farmers to consumers can, as demonstrated, also help create a sense of satisfaction for their work in farmers. These aspects are not easily identified or measured, yet they are still important benefits for farmers. There is a tendency to focus on the links between the social benefits and economic benefits in the scholarship, and this can detract from value placed on less tangible benefits such as farmer well-being. Well-being is often overlooked in the greater analysis of the potential and limitations of AFNs and is not often incorporated into AFN theory.

5.6 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that some of the more common assumed narratives about AFN farmers – small scale, environmental sustainability and social justice – do not often hold true when held up to the varied reality of farmers' livelihood experiences. These findings support the emerging, more critical AFN literature advancing more nuanced understandings of the on-the-ground complexities of farmers' livelihoods. The farmers each have certain environmental and social values, and these values, along with

the natural, physical, social, human and financial resources that each farmer has, shape the farmer's actions and decisions.

In terms of the 'small' scale, the actual land size is not as important for success as the contentious issue of land tenure in Belo Horizonte. The idea of scale is central to the narrative of 'small farmer'. In this case study, scale has been institutionalized in the regulations of the AFN by municipal officials, based on notions of 'small' scale set by the state government. Yet these institutionalized ideas of 'small' farmer do not reflect the cultural and social constructions of scale associated with the 'Roça' and 'Fazenda.' This has led to tension in the AFN among farmers, especially among those who consider themselves to be true 'Roça' farmers and in a different class with less power than the larger Fazenda farmers. The farmers who contest the inclusion of 'Fazenda' farmers do not have the power within the network to shape the rules of what classifies as a 'small' famer. In Toronto, despite the range in farm size, there is not the same historical and cultural context of land tenure inequality, and therefore there are not the same issues among farmers about the range of scales of production of AFN farmers.

Tensions do exist in the Toronto case study surrounding the construction of the environmental narrative at the market, specifically around the definition of 'organic' produce, while in Belo Horizonte farmers did not raise issues with the range of environmental practices by farmers in the AFN. While some farmers in Toronto rely on the social relations of trust with consumers to shape a different meaning of 'organic', other farmers feel that maintaining organic certification with all farmers will maintain the

trust of consumers. Those that want to farm ‘beyond organic’ feel that the certification process has been co-opted by corporate interests. There is some tension between these competing narratives among farmers who frequent the same market space, as the farmers who believe in organic certification believe that all farmers should certify to maintain public trust.

In both locations, on-farm labour was a major constraint for farmers wishing to expand or in some cases even maintain their current production. This led to the decision by some farmers to enter into labour relations that may be exploitative, and creates two classes of farmers in the AFN: the farmer class, and the on-farm labourer (or sharecropper) class. The question of ‘Alternative for whom’ is important here, as even though this relationship may benefit the farmer in terms of greater margins in the AFN, it may leave the on-farm worker exploited. The on-farm labourer has limited power in the AFN, and their experiences are not considered within the broader AFN because the exploitation occurs on-farm rather than at market.

I end the chapter with an overview of some of the ‘well-being’ indicators of livelihood. The definition of well-being is personal to each farmer, and indicators do not allow for comparison or contrast among farmers. However, the importance of social interactions at the individual scale (rather than the scale of the AFN) is demonstrated in this section. These personal stories from farmers demonstrate the non-material importance of these social interactions for farmers’ livelihoods, something that has not been captured well in AFN theory.

A more complete understanding of the choices and experiences of farmers in each case study AFN can be gained from looking at their values and practices ‘on-farm’. The AFN literature tends to make assumptions about farmers in AFNs all having similar values and practices but the case studies demonstrate that there are many differences among farmers in values and resources, and that this creates power differences and tensions among farmers who have competing values or differences in resources. All farmers work within an economic and material reality, but this livelihood reality is different for each farmer. In the next chapter, the experiences of farmers ‘at market’ rather than ‘on-farm’ are examined, in order to understand how their interactions in the market space affect their experiences, as well as open other spaces in the city for farmers.

Chapter Six

Narratives of 'Local' Food and Spaces for Farmers in the City

In this chapter I explore how participation within the AFN creates various spaces for farmers, and why the kinds of spaces created differ between case study locations. One of the most striking differences in the experiences of the farmers in Belo Horizonte and Toronto resulted from how different narratives around foods resulted in very different social classes of consumer who participated in each AFN. Farmers in Toronto draw on the valuation of the 'local' scale, while in Belo Horizonte, the devaluation of the 'local' leads farmers to attempt to divorce their produce from place-based narratives of local. In Toronto, the farmers were selling mainly to elite consumers, which led to the formation of what might be seen to be elite spaces at the market. In contrast, in Belo Horizonte the consumer base was mainly low to middle income consumers, and the spaces for farmers in the city were marginal. In Chapter Seven, I examine wider social justice implications of these valuations of local food, and what that means for the potential of each AFN. In this chapter, I focus specifically on the farmers in the AFNs, and the impact of narratives constructed around certain foods. Cook and Crang (1996) argued that a 'second fetish' narrative created around food has a profound impact on the way it is produced, purchased and consumed. I explore not only how local produce can be socially constructed quite differently in different locations, but also how this affects the physical, economic and political spaces created for farmers in the city. My case studies provide an excellent example of the contrast between different social constructions, and consequently

valuation, of local food. The purpose of the chapter is not to examine the process of how these narratives have been shaped in Toronto and Belo Horizonte, but rather how these constructions lead to differing opportunities for farmers. I begin by providing the reader a snapshot of a typical day at the market, as constructed by a composite of my experiences at one market in Toronto, the Dufferin Grove Farmers' Market, and one stand in Belo Horizonte.

6.1 A Tale of Two Markets: A Day at the Market

To highlight the narratives that are evident in each case study at the space of purchase, I have constructed a composite overview of one purchasing location in each case study. The sketches are based on my personal observations over multiple visits to each location. I have focused on details that are commonly considered indicators of socio-economic status, as well as ones that help define the atmosphere of the market. In the Toronto case study, I have chosen the Dufferin Market to illustrate the workings of market space that has become an elite space of consumption. I have chosen Dufferin Market because it is considered a model to which the other markets in Toronto aspire, it is characterized by some farmers as less elite than other markets in the city, and it is the most established and popular of the markets I studied. In the case of Belo Horizonte, I have chosen a typical market stand to demonstrate the contrast. The stand was selected because it is illustrative of an average stand that is located and focused around a residential neighbourhood and in proximity to a supermarket (as is Dufferin Market) rather than a commercial thoroughfare. Just as Dufferin Market is established, the farmer chosen is also very established in the area, as he has been selling at the same location for seven years. The

purpose of this descriptive sketch is to provide a picture to the reader of how different these two AFN spaces are. Subsequent sections will discuss these differences in terms of the narratives that are built around food, the farmer, and AFN spaces.

6.1.1 The Dufferin Grove Farmers' Market

In Toronto, the Dufferin Market is located in a corner of the Dufferin Grove Park, a 14-acre city owned park (see Figure 6.1). It runs every Thursday from 3 to 7pm. Surrounding the park on three sides are streets of Victorian-era homes (with Dufferin Street, a major street on the fourth side). The park is home to a skating rink, a playground, a bake oven (which the area residents association lobbied for), and gardens. On a typical summer market day, it is difficult to find parking, as many people drive to the market. The types of vehicles that people drive can be considered a display of class, and the majority of vehicles I noted were fairly new models of brands that are commonly considered upper-middle class family vehicles (for example, Volvo wagons, Honda Accords). As well, there are people walking and cycling to the market. Many of the market-goers are families, and include children on bicycles, in strollers and in carriers. Most of the market-goers are white, although not exclusively. Another indicator of class, the attire of people varies from very casual to fairly formal. Some market-goers appear to still be in work attire, mainly khakis, button down tops or polo shirts. Others are in casual summer skirts, jeans, and some in shorts and t-shirts, and Birkenstocks. The farmers are generally in casual attire as well, frequently wearing jeans and t-shirts. At 3pm, people are already congregating, chatting with each other as well as the farmers. The market is quite busy as parents come with their children after school, and then the after work crowd trickles in.

Figure 6.1 A Typical Thursday in the Summer at the Dufferin Market
(photo credit to Shawn Caza of www.t.isgood.ca)

A telling indicator of social status is how consumers budget at the market. The nearest supermarket is located only a few hundred metres away, directly across Dufferin Street in the Dufferin Mall, that includes a No Frills supermarket with an abundant supply of low cost foods. The prices of market foods are not only higher than at the adjacent No Frills, which is to be expected since organic produce is generally more expensive. Very few people question the price, and although it is a consideration, it appears not to be the only deciding factor on food purchases. For example, most people do come with a list of foods to purchase. Some consumers adhere to that list. Others leave with food consisting of items on the list and items that they purchase on impulse. Many different foods that are not found in the supermarket, like kohlrabi and celery root, as well as unique varieties and colours of more traditional items like candy-striped beets and purple carrots can be found at different times in the season. People ask the farmers about produce they do not recognize, and some people decide to try something new or splurge on a more expensive item that they have tried and enjoyed. The produce is displayed in different ways, depending on the farmer. Mud-caked roots on some produce at one stand, stacked haphazardly, invoke images of produce pulled straight from the ground, while another

farmer has cleanly scrubbed produce displayed in a more artistic style. Some farmers have a price list posted, while others do not. At the market, people bring their own reusable bags; they greet one another and the farmers; and the atmosphere is social. The market has a distinct community feel, and there are multiple community events (food-related and not) throughout the year. The market manager sends a weekly email list with weekly updates about the farmers at the Market, and about other community events and food related issues and events in Toronto.

The contrast between this market space and that of the strip mall across the street is stark. Novelist Anand Mahadevan (2009, online) wrote an illustrative vignette about the contrast between the park and the strip mall side of Dufferin Street:

> Walking south of Bloor on Dufferin Street, one is presented with two choices. To the right is the Dufferin Mall anchored by one of Canada's busiest Wal-Marts, a prodigiously stocked No Frills supermarket, and scores of generic mall stores squeezed cheek-to-jowl with their backs to the city. To the left, a large grove of trees flanks an outdoor ice rink and a grassy pathway hosting a weekly farmers' market. Beyond them are a basketball court, soccer fields, and extensive children's play areas.

In the strip mall, the cars varied from new to old, economy models and brands to luxury models and brands. There is a mix of races and languages being spoken. In No Frills there is signage for sale items, including produce. There is very little interaction among consumers, or between consumers and the supermarket staff. However, it is quite busy at the same time as the Dufferin Market is on.

6.1.2 Belo Horizonte Farmer's Stand

The chosen farmer's stand in Belo Horizonte (see Figure 6.2 for a picture of a typical farmer's stand in Belo Horizonte[6]) is located in the lower to middle class neighbourhood. It is located in a small square across from a supermarket (the 'EPA', a small store) and is surrounded by trees. The farmer sells on Tuesdays and Saturdays and arrives at around 5am to set up for 6:30am to 7am. He stays until either they have sold out (which on good days happens around noon) or by about 2pm. People trickle in during the daytime hours, with a busy time at about 7am and another busier time before lunch at around 11am. The time of the month is a factor in how busy he is, and at the end of the month there is a noticeable drop in sales. His customers tell him it is because they get paid at the start of each month so by end of the month they have little income left. People do not drive there, most come on foot with their families, and small children either walk or are carried in their mothers' arms. Most of the customers are stay-at-home mothers or they are elderly. Some people, especially elderly, take the bus home after they have their bags of purchased produce. People wear clothing typical of lower or middle class Brazilians, notably flip-flops (common attire of the lower class), jeans, shorts, casual skirts and t-shirts. The farmer sells a very traditional array of common foods, such as collard greens, lettuce, spinach, green onions and herbs. He does not sell more varied produce because he believes that people will not buy more expensive items. Prices are set by the government, yet some people ask about pricing, and make decisions based on cost. Elderly customers especially inquire about prices, and a few wait until the end of the day to try to bargain down prices on leftover items. On days with a lot of produce left over,

[6] In order to protect the confidentiality of the research participants, the photograph in Figure 6.2 is not necessarily one of the exact location discussed in the example. Rather, it is typifies a stand in this neighbourhood.

the farmer does offer 2 for 1, and on occasion 3 for 1 pricing on produce. People go into the adjacent EPA, compare prices, and since the set DR prices are usually less expensive, they purchase from the stand. They arrive with a shopping list that has mainly staple items on it, and leave with items on the list, or they substitute other items that are on for discounted prices. There is concern over cleanliness and orderliness at the stand, as many customers either question or remark about the hygienic conditions under which the farmer is acting. The farmer has the government mandated price list in the corner of his stand; however, since the list has not changed in some time, customers tend to know his pricing. There is obvious friendship between the clients and the farmer and they discuss personal issues like family and health.

Figure 6.2: a Typical DH Farmer's Stand in Belo Horizonte

These two typical days at the market demonstrate many of the differences between the case studies. These differences are discussed below, looking at how the market spaces and their distinct narratives of food are constructed.

6.2 A Tale of Two Markets: the Elite Consumer/the Non-Elite Consumer

The Toronto market space is one that has many elite elements to it, not the least of which are the consumers who frequent the market. In contrast, the Belo Horizonte market stand does attract some elite consumers, but the majority of the consumers are not. Terms used by farmers in Toronto to characterize the consumers at the various markets include: yuppies, hippies, granola kids, young families, predominantly white, and middle to upper class. Many of these terms fit with the AFN consumer as represented in the academic literature (e.g. Abrahams 2007, Guthman 2003). In Belo Horizonte, farmers generally characterize their customers as: housewives, hired help, elderly, professionals, people on a budget, students, and retired farmers. Those that frequented the stands included a broad spectrum of society from rich to poor depending on the location of the stand. For example, at the stands close to a municipal building and close to major hospitals, the clientele includes government officials and doctors. Abrahams (2007) asserts that the consumer in the global South does not match the caricature of the urban consumer in the North, including the consumers described by the farmers in Toronto, and this holds true in Belo Horizonte, where consumers are generally of a lower socio-economic class.

The farmers and the market managers in Toronto are aware of the tendency towards an elite element surrounding local food. A farmer noted “this elitism that’s around… local

food and all this kind of stuff. I'd like to be able to cut through that". But it is not fair or accurate to characterize every Toronto market-goer as a part of the elite. A farmer characterizes the Dufferin Market clientele (who were noted as being less elite than some other markets by farmers) in this manner: "as far as income, I think we have the whole spectrum, and I would say that – you know – I don't think that that high-income earners are a bigger percent of our customers. It's usually young families with children, and not all of them have a lot of money to spare." The markets attract people who do have some discretionary disposable income, which they have decided to spend at the market, although, as noted in Chapter Four, these individuals may be middle class in ways other than economic class, such as being part of the cultural middle class associated with AFNs.

The biggest exception to the elite consumer base in the Toronto case study is the Stonegate Market that borders two neighbourhoods: one made up of middle-income family homes and the other consisting of low-income high-rises. The customers at this market are much more mixed, and the market space itself has less of an elite feel to it. Generally the consumer base in Toronto conforms to the AFN literature's identification of elitism at farmers' markets. This exemplifies the 'second fetish' that Cook and Crang (1996) argue surrounds certain food. I refer to this fetish in Toronto as an elite fetish for two reasons: it is (partially) constructed by elite consumers; and the fetishes serve to keep the foods and market spaces predominantly elite ones. Class is affirmed and enacted at the market, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This is similar to the findings by

Johnston and Szabo (2011), although in their case they were able to say based on consumer interviews that the affirmation of class was indeed intentional.

In contrast, in Belo Horizonte, there is no elite fetish attached to the foods at the market stand, nor to the stand space itself. The consumers are mainly lower-income and older. One farmer characterizes her consumers as "people who are older, who were raised on what I produce. The younger generation does not like this food. They like processed food like… potato chips for example." Processed and imported foods and brands are seen as a status symbol among Brazilians, so farmers are faced with more competition from new and different 'modern' foods, and from supermarkets and hipermercados that carry these foods. As a part of the dietary transition common to developing nations (and reinforced through the industrial food system), the elite Brazilian consumer is consuming less fresh produce and more processed foods (Levi-Costa et al. 2005). In Belo Horizonte, there is a status attached to shopping at supermarkets rather than farm stands (J. Mattar, personal communications), similar to other major cities in Brazil. Based on farmers' experiences and my personal observation, the 'elite fetish' is not apparent at the market stand; instead, it is apparent in supermarkets and fast food chains that are commonly linked to North American culture, such as McDonalds and Pizza Hut. This demonstrates the cultural context that differentiates the two case studies, and strengthens Abrahams's (2007) case that there needs to be more focus on Southern AFNs. The linking of 'modern' and 'desirable' with food products and chains (like McDonalds and Pizza Hut) in Brazil (and in other locations in the global South), and 'old-fashioned' or 'traditional' to the farmers' produce, leads to very different AFN outcomes for farmers and other AFN participants.

6.3 A Tale of Two Markets: How Farmers Co-Construct Narratives

The narratives attached to local food are both drawn on and reinforced by farmers in each case study location. In Toronto, the local is valued and therefore the farmers draw on place-based imaginings of 'straight from the farm' when selling their food. This reinforces ideas of the imagined 'local' and 'traditional' places with the consumer. In Belo Horizonte, the local is devalued and therefore farmers try to distance themselves from narratives of 'local' and 'traditional', instead adopting narratives of 'modern' and 'sterile' to sell their food. This reinforces the valuation of the 'modern' and the devaluation of the 'local' and 'traditional' that is already occurring in Brazil.

6.3.1 Constructing Narratives and Food Presentation

The food narratives in each location both reinforce and are constructed by presentation in the market space. In Toronto, as in Morris and Kirwan's (2010) case study, farmers have drawn on narratives to directly contrast their food to 'conventional' food when presenting it to consumers. In addition, they draw on the 'nostalgia' of entrenched traditional ideas of the farm, as Holloway and Kneafsay (2000) suggest. For example, one farmer uses a 'straight from the farm' narrative when presenting his produce. He explains:

> I suppose I am kinda a straight off the farm, sorta. My style, people are accustomed to buying dirty things from me too. I mean I do wash some things, you know presentation is important, stuff looks, it looks good on the table … I don't lay out fancy blankets and I have some baskets that I put things up just because it contains it on the table but when you have 30-40 things on the table, you can't have a lot of presentation, so basically it is just right off the field.

Using Cook and Crang's (1996) idea of imaginative geographies (made up of origins, biographies, and settings), by leaving things 'dirty' and without 'fancy blankets' he is purposely invoking an image of the origins of the food (local – from his own farm), the biography (picked by him, picked fresh) and the setting (a 'real' market stand). He is also creating images of food as it was in some imagined idyllic past age, prior to the standardization and homogenization of food.

In contrast, farmers in Belo Horizonte are trying to invoke a different geographical imagining, one that rather than distinguishing them from supermarket fare, attempts to draw on similarities to it, and surpass it in cleanliness and safety. They try to profit from the value placed on the 'modern' and distance themselves from the devalued 'local' and 'traditional'. Standardization and homogenization, which are devalued in Toronto, are valued in Belo Horizonte and thus farmers attempt to create this narrative in their food presentation. The modern supermarket narrative focuses on maintaining sanitary and sterile conditions rather than 'straight from the farm' narratives like in Toronto. I noted that most of the farmers clean produce meticulously, spray it with water frequently (even on cooler days), and straighten their stand if it got at all out of order. As well, every farmer told me about how clean their on-farm water was. Cleanliness, both on farm and at the stand, is a point of pride. One farmer told me that "I like to wash produce a lot; people come by and think my produce is better than every other Direto da Roça producer, but it is because I keep my stand clean and neat." He then spoke negatively about another producer, whose stand he didn't believe was up to standard, and was reflecting poorly on the DR program. The farmers are very focused on what they termed the

'beauty' of their produce, trimming off any leaves or roots that took away from it. They equate beauty to quality of produce. The narrative of this geographical imagining is constructed through presenting an origin as 'sterilized'; the biography is a mixture of 'local, yet just as good as large farms'; and the setting for selling is 'just as clean and orderly as the supermarket'.

6.3.2 Constructing Narratives and Food Trends

The value placed on local food allows for the valuation of certain products that are considered a part of this 'traditional' local in Toronto. Specifically, one product, the heirloom tomato, is valued because it is 'traditional', a part of the place-based construction of 'local'. One farmer states:

> I don't want to be charging 4 dollars a pound for [heirloom] tomatoes, as an example, this is too much money for you. I know they shouldn't be priced that anyways. So, there is an element of elitism there that I have always opposed, and it has cut out a large segment of the population because of pricing. So the pricing needs to, if you want to entice the average person to buy organics, it needs to be reasonable pricing, it can't be 100 percent or 200 percent more. …. You know, this heirloom elitism that is out there now. You can't have anything that is a hybrid, well, you know the hybrids come from heirloom and hybrids have a bank of heirloom seeds to produce them, so in that respect they are not bad really. And again because it is an heirloom they can charge more for them, they can charge 4, 5, 6 dollars, …a pound, when the seeds are dirt cheap, it is ridiculous. The hybrid seeds are more, and it doesn't cost more to produce the heirlooms so in reality it should be cheaper or at least the same price.

In Toronto, most farmers actively co-construct the 'elite food' narrative, and at the same time take advantage of it to extract higher prices. Farmers introduce new and different foods (or 'exotic local' foods) to customers. These foods are often linked to an imagined past, through such things as 'heirloom' or 'heritage' varieties. Some farmers use the

valuation of ‘local’ to try to introduce new and unique varieties of produce at market.,For example, one farmer notes:

> We’re probably going to stay away from tomatoes as well, because everyone’s into tomatoes, heirloom ones. We don’t want to go in when it’s crowded. We do a lot of greens and a lot of root crops and over the years I’ve been growing kohlrabi and this year it’s really started to take on. And – it’s something you can sell to people because people come out and “ooh, what can you do with that.” And you can explain to them.

The Brazilian farmers also try to capture economic profits by responding to trends. The devaluation of the ‘local’ and traditional produce means that they cannot capitalize on the ‘heirloom’ foods that they produce. For example, collard greens are a traditional food that the farmers in the study have been producing as long as they have been farming. The farmers noted that recently collard greens have not been selling as much as they have in the past, and that their older customers are the main consumers of collard greens. With declining sales in traditional foods, the farmers have tried to respond to some of the elite food trends that have emerged elsewhere. For example, at least one Brazilian farmer responded to his clients asking for arugula, which is trendy in supermarkets and restaurants. Yet, with a the less affluent consumer base, they are not able to price these products at a premium like the farmers in Toronto do.

These contrasting experiences from Toronto and Belo Horizonte demonstrate the differences in the economic spaces that have been created for farmers. In one case study farmers were able to gain some control over what they produced (as discussed by Welch 1997, cited in Hinrichs 2000) by planting new ‘local’ and ‘heirloom’crops and varieties.

In the other case study the farmers also were able to plant new varieties, but their choice was more limited as they had to keep their clientele in mind.

6.3.3 Summary: Constructing Food Narratives

There is a contrast between the two case studies regarding the construction of food narratives. In Toronto, where the 'local' and 'traditional' are valued, the farmers are active in reinforcing and further constructing the 'straight from the farm' narrative. In Belo Horizonte, having a 'straight from the farm' presentation would be detrimental to selling because of the cultural devaluation of the local. The farmers in Brazil are trying to divorce their food from the local narrative, and instead construct the narrative of their food being standardized in taste and 'hygienic', like in the supermarket. The different value placed on local food means that there are also differences in the spaces in the city available to farmers in each case study, which is the focus of the subsequent section.

6.4 Spaces for Farmers

AFNs have the potential to open up new spaces within the city, and create new place-based understandings (DeLind 2002). Historically, although both Toronto and Belo Horizonte had once been cities with a strong market history, the market tradition in Toronto has been insignificant for decades, and there has been a recent decline in the market tradition in Belo Horizonte (J. Mattar, personal communications). In each case, the AFNs did open new spaces for farmers in the city, including: physical spaces (for markets or stands); economic spaces (at market and outside of the market); and political spaces. Where these spaces opened, and to what extent, varied greatly between the two case study locations. In Toronto, the elite fetish attached to local foods opened up elite

spaces within the AFN, and beyond. The devaluation of local food in Belo Horizonte meant that although space was created in the city for farmers, farmers were pushed to the physical, economic, and political margins of the city. In this study, the co-construction of space and place (Agnew 2005) are evident. In Toronto, space for farmers in an elite area allow for the elite fetish to be both reinforced and further constructed. In Belo Horizonte, space for farmers in the margins of the city help reinforce and further construct a devaluation of local food.

6.4.1 Spaces for Farmers I: Physical Space for Markets

The opening of physical spaces for farmers in the city environment is not widely discussed in the literature. Perhaps this is because the site of the market is assumed as merely a physical space, not as a representation of power. It is clear in these case studies that the physical location of the market has a profound impact for farmers, and that what spaces are being made available is related to how much power farmers have within the AFN and within the city. The farmers' markets in Toronto are generally located in relatively affluent neighbourhoods, giving physical access for farmers to an urban population that can support them. In Toronto, new spaces for markets have increased in recent years. In fact, since the start of this research in 2007, the markets in the TFMN have grown from 7 markets to 13 markets. In 2004, a guide to Farmers' Markets listed 11 markets in Toronto proper (*Toronto Star*, 2004). By 2009, the TFMN listed 21 markets in Toronto (TFMN website, 2009). There have been barriers to opening and sometimes maintaining market space, which have mainly been the result of conflicts with the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department (PFRD). Two of the market

managers who operate markets in city parks mentioned clashes with the PFRD. The demand for the markets from affluent urban residents has meant that these barriers are more annoyances than true impediments. The affluent consumer base exercises power in the city, for example by contacting local city councillors to resolve issues with PFRD. As noted above, the creation of elite fetishes around food means that farmers are getting access to elite physical and social spaces in the city, and to the powerful consumer-base associated with those spaces.

In contrast, in Belo Horizonte the DR stands have mostly been kept out of the wealthy neighbourhoods. The city has an affluent inner city core along the south which is contained within a ring road called Avenida do Contorno, commonly called the 'Contorno' area. Many of the current program farmers have sought permission to put stands in 'Contorno' neighbourhoods that currently do not have any DR stands, but they have been denied. They believe that the neighbourhood associations in these areas do not want the farmers. As one farmer told me, "People think our stands are ugly and poor." The President of the Association of Farmers in Direto da Roça found this to be a big issue:

> In the central [Contorno] region, farmers who are not already here cannot enter. There have been cases where locations have been taken away. The possibility of getting your space taken away is greater than the possibility of getting a space added (in this region)… It is tremendously difficult to create new spaces for selling. What is the difference between our stand and a newspaper stand like the one over there [across the street]? Why can't they make spaces for us just like for all the newspaper stands? Yes, there is [prejudice]. In every corner there is a newspaper stand. What is the difference between the space it occupies and the space I occupy here?

One administrator of the program admits that he had five to six farmers leave the program as licenses were revoked within the Contorno area. He explains that the city had promised to 'clean-up' the streets, and this meant removing many vendors, including DR farmers. He stated that "first world cities don't have street vendors" which provides insight into the administration's views that street vendors, including DR producers, do not have a place in a 'modern' Belo Horizonte, as they reinforce the 'old fashioned' narrative attached to market stands. The director responsible for DR, as well his supervisor, the Secretary for Food Sustenance and Food Security, both say that the barriers with locating DR stands in the city centre come from other departments within the city, including Transit, the Planning Department, and the Regional Council. Regardless of who is responsible for denying access to the affluent Contorno area, the physical closing of spaces for the DR farmers has implications for their success in the program. Most of the farmers that were forced out of the Contorno area have left the program, since they can no longer make a living. Some of the current farmers believe that the whole program has weakened because of the removals from the Contorno. A long time DR farmer says that although about 10 new farmers start every year, they usually leave the program in a few months to a year because they are now forced to locate in poorer neighbourhoods. At the time of research, there were approximately 18 farmers active in the program. This was down substantially from the early 2000s, at which time, according to longtime participant farmers, there were over 30 farmers in the program.[7]

[7] Official Municipal records of the number of farmers in the DR program were found to be inaccurate when reviewed, so the number of participants in past years cannot be verified.

In both case study locations, farmers want to be in affluent neighbourhoods so that they can benefit from connecting with more affluent consumers. In Toronto, farmers have seen an opening of the physical spaces where they can sell in these locations, as is evidenced by the rapid expansion of farmers' markets in the city. Despite some issues with city departments being in conflict with the wants of the (elite) public, the expansion of farmers' markets shows there is a willingness to open physical spaces for farmers within the city. Yet as noted by a few farmers and a market manager alike, caution must be used with this expansion, because as physical space for farmers' markets in the city expands, it may not necessarily translate to a similar increase in consumer demand or economic space (discussed in Chapter Seven). In contrast, in Belo Horizonte, although the initial program created new spaces in the city for farmers, the desires of the public (at least as interpreted by municipal officials) have actually forced farmers out of some of the initial space opened when the program began, and pushed them into more marginal physical spaces in the city.

6.4.2 Spaces for Farmers II: Economic Spaces for Farmers (at Market)

As has already been demonstrated, there is a potential for farmers to use the elite fetishization of 'local' foods to capture higher economic returns for their food. In Toronto, there is a certain extent of economic empowerment of farmers within the AFN. The valuation of local food and the physical access to affluent consumers at market provides an opportunity for farmers to price their products higher than conventional market values. Some farmers agree with this price capturing, since most small-scale farmers are barely breaking even with farming costs. Although every farmer in Toronto

expressed some sentiment regarding the fact that everyone should have the right to access good quality local food, one farmer feels that "the farmer is not responsible to make the low-cost produce available." Another farmer justifies it by discussing how powerless they are to control the pricing of her produce in the broader market. She believes that:

> People should be paying more for produce than they pay because the price of produce has nothing to do with the cost of production, the cost of produce is set artificially by the US so I don't really feel that we need to lower our prices to help people.

Taking advantage of the fact that people at the market will pay more than what they would at a supermarket allows the farmers at market to break free from the price fixing that they must conform to when selling wholesale or directly to supermarkets, and to receive what they consider a fair price for their produce. They gain, as noted by Hinrichs (2000) in other case studies, some level of control over their pricing. The decisions over pricing are far from agreed upon. There are a wide range of opinions from farmers about whether or not farmers are unfairly taking advantage of elite fetishes around foods, or if they are getting their due compensation in a market of severely depressed prices. Some farmers were shocked at the prices others charged at the market, and feel that the prices charged for 'heirloom' produce especially are unfair. As one farmer explains:

> We keep our prices, we're pretty good. We're kind of in between. I notice the other vendors so are cheaper, if they're not certified they can get away with it, they're a little bit cheaper. We're fair – you know, when I look at the grocery store prices even for conventional? [We] are even around that price for our beets. We move a lot of beets. 3 huge beets for a couple bucks[8]. It's a really good price, so we're not gouging people, never think of it as that, because I do know some people – some farmers, some vendors that - and you see the price boards and you're like "oh, what are you doing?" – I grow those [heirloom] tomatoes, I know you don't have to charge a million dollars!

[8] All prices are in Canadian dollars.

However, it is not only certain foods (like the heirloom tomato) that are subject to prices that farmers feel are too expensive. Farmers noted that Toronto pricing was generally higher than in other locations near the city. One couple provides two examples:

> L – Sometimes we go "What??" they're charging THAT much? Sometimes people –
>
> M – Raspberries last year. We were selling a pint of raspberries – when we first got there we were selling them at $5 a pint until we found out that people were selling them a half pint at four. So then we raised up to $6 for a pint and that was as much as I could … Ethically as much as I could possibly charge and still sold out.
>
> L – People have that mentality, they go "Oh it's Toronto", you know. But then you get that odd person that genuinely loves fresh vegetables who goes "Aw, I can't really afford that" and you feel bad because you know – because everyone set this standard that, ooh, you know, it's got to be - $2 a pound for squash. Well, some of these large squash are 5 pounds.
>
> M – Yeah, 10 dollar squash!
>
> L – That's just ridiculous!

Toronto is considered a place of affluence by farmers, and the markets in Toronto that these farmers frequent are largely affluent, reinforcing this idea. The irony, the farming couple remarks, is that if they needed to they would not be able to afford to shop at the markets in Toronto on their farming income.

Farmers who were concerned by what they consider price gouging were worried about the effects on the consumers who come to market but are not able to afford the food that they want to purchase, not on the more affluent customers. At Stonegate, where the market is consciously trying to avoid the elite fetish around food, a farmer shares that "I can't overprice myself, I try to keep things very reasonable" or he won't sell anything. Although all of the farmers at the market are concerned with their customers who are not

little opportunity for farmers to capture even the same price as supermarkets do without losing sales to the supermarkets. One farmer summarizes it well: “You can’t increase prices, because then you won’t sell as much, so you will come out making less.” The strategy that some farmers in Toronto have employed to sell produce that will get a greater return for a relatively similar amount of input, such as heirloom tomatoes versus hybrid tomatoes, is not effective in Belo Horizonte. The narrative around local food is devalued, and that includes any type of ‘traditional’ produce. Even selling produce that is considered more ‘modern’ does not equate to value capture since people often want the least expensive option. For example, I observed over the course of four hours one morning at a farmer’s stand many people asking about the price difference among three types of lettuce: an iceberg-type lettuce (at 50 cents), Boston lettuce (at 75 cents) and Romaine (at $1.50)[9]. According to the farmer, all of these are relatively similar to produce in terms of inputs and labour. Most people, after asking, chose the least expensive option, although some chose Boston lettuce. The Romaine lettuce did sell, but only to a few people who did not compare prices before purchasing.

The farmers have effectively cut out the intermediary by selling directly, and this has meant a greater return. Nevertheless, they have little power to decide and set a fair price for their produce as the prices of inputs and on-farm factors change. This contradicts much of the AFN literature , developed in the context of the global North, regarding the capturing of economic value by farmers participating in AFNs (e.g. Griffin and Frongillo 2003, Hinrichs 2000). At certain times of year, farmers discussed that prices are fair. However, both weather and prices for inputs can vary, making a fixed price at market

[9] All prices in Brazilian Real.

problematic at other times of year. During my 2007 field season in Belo Horizonte, there was a period of heavy rains that flooded many of the farmers' fields. One farmer had to purchase his greens from another DR farmer since he was worried about losing customers if he did not have produce. He was forced to sell this purchased produce at cost. He discussed that even if the set pricing was lifted in that difficult production period, his customers have come to expect the lower price, and he would lose patronage if he raised the price. Another farmer actually lowered her price during this same period, despite the fact she had fewer greens to sell, because they were smaller than usual. She felt it was unfair selling smaller, and in her words 'uglier', greens for the usual price. This again demonstrates the linkages between the narratives around the food and the prices that the farmer is able to capture. This may also speak to the differences in motivation between the consumer in Toronto, who may not mind buying 'uglier' greens to support the farmer during bad weather conditions, and the consumer in Belo Horizonte, who is looking for the best economic value.

Overall, at the market, economic spaces are opened for farmers in Toronto. The farmers in this case study are able to set prices that are above the conventional prices, and can especially benefit from higher prices for certain 'heirloom' products because of specific narratives attached to them. In Belo Horizonte, the prices for farmers are fixed. Although they do make more money than they would if they sold to an intermediary, they have little power to set prices that reflect the variations in inputs and weather. The farmers are also limited by the expectations of their customers, and feel that raising prices would result in fewer customers.

6.4.3 Spaces for Farmers III: Economic Spaces for Farmers (Outside of Market)

The AFN literature has documented many cases like above where there are greater economic returns for farmers within the confines of the AFN, such as a specific farmers' market (e.g. Hinrichs 2000). The elite fetish of food is being constructed partially within the AFN. The valuation of local foods and local farmers also allows for economic spaces to open beyond the physical space of the market in Toronto. This is both a result of, and also reinforces, the elite fetish, and is less-well documented.

Toronto farmers have new economic spaces in the city, and those spaces are getting bigger every year. Farmers are finding many outlets for their produce, including CSA's (Community Shared Agriculture), new farmers' markets, small specialty grocery stores, and restaurants specializing in local foods. Although these spaces cannot always be directly attributed to their participation in the farmers' market, most of the farmers credit the market as the 'jumping-off' point for these other connections. At the very least, one farmer remarked that the market and the other economic spaces are complementary. As one farmer explains, "over the years we have had more outlets as more people demanded organic foods, natural food stores and such opened up." All of these stores cater to affluent consumers and take advantage of the elite fetish attached to local food. One of the major complementary sources of revenue for almost all of the farmers in the Toronto market was selling to high end and often organic specialty stores. In one extreme case, a farmer estimated that only 5 percent of the value of his total sales was attributed to the farmers' market, while the largest percentage (it varied greatly so he was unable to come

up with a specific percentage) was sold to specialty stores and some restaurants. He sold at the Stonegate Market, which as previously mentioned did not support raised prices and did not have the elite fetish that other markets had. Therefore, being able to sell at high-end stores allowed him to participate in a market that he otherwise would not participate in, since he did not make a good enough return at Stonegate alone. This example may provide a model for creating a more socially just AFN. If the 'burden' of cost can be put on the high-end consumer, through sales at places like specialty stores and restaurants, access to the AFN could be subsidized for the low-income consumer. In this scenario, the farmer still earns the higher margins they need for their more labour intensive production, although less so than if he sells at both specialty stores and a more affluent market.

The collaborations with stores allow for innovative partnerships. For example, one couple explains a new partnership they have formed to help promote their CSA box:

> Something new that we're trying this year is we've got a partnership going with a retail store in Toronto… And – we have an arrangement where the (*Store name)*, now they're all about local food as well, but they have very limited freezer space, so we're going to show up there with our refrigerated truck every Thursday afternoon from 4 till 7, and we're basically going to be their mobile produce department and that's another spot we can do the CSA boxes and we also have plans to basically set up a small scale market stand at their store pretty much, for their customers…I don't know of anybody else doing this, but I really like the concept of this partnership between two businesses and that they have the physical location which we don't.

These farmers have been empowered to actually create new and innovative economic spaces because of the connections they have made in the city.

Another space that has opened for farmers is in restaurants, as consumers and chefs have both created demand for local food. Chefs have also helped create narratives of local food, and some have become local food advocates. In the 1990s, one farmer spent time developing a relationship with some young and innovative chefs who were interested in local fresh food and different exotic foods that he produced. From these ties, he now sells to over thirty Toronto area chefs. Another farming couple has a restaurant background, and they estimate that 70 percent of their total sales go to restaurants in Toronto. The key to their relationship with chefs is their restaurant background, as they understand and can 'speak the same language' as the chefs.

> The restaurants have always been our bread and butter, so we always went more towards the restaurants – we certainly make more doing restaurant deliveries than at the farmers' markets, so we never really pushed ourselves at these farmers' markets so much… I love the relationships I've developed with the chefs. I mean – most people that get into restaurants, cooking and especially getting to running as executive chef, it is for more than just – more than just the money, that's for sure. Same with us over here, and that's recognized that we're in it more for – more so for reasons than just the money. And there really is a lot of respect and from that I've developed some good relationships now with different chefs from Toronto that have come up here and spent the night, you know, really good relationships that seem that they're going to continue, that's for sure.

They take requests to grow special crops for chefs, and base some of their planting on what chefs want and also on what is new and popular on the cable television network The Food Network. They also suggest new produce to chefs based on what they would like to grow, and they think the chefs enjoy the innovation required to create new recipes with these foods. They have an ordering and delivery system set up for restaurants, and have geared their future business for this market. They believe that restaurants they deal with align with their philosophy of short-chain supply: "Restaurants – I don't know, there are

different views on restaurants as far as direct-to-consumer sales go, but I see it as direct-to-consumers. The slow food philosophy on chefs is that they're co-producers." They have gained exposure through these endeavours, participating in a Farmers' Night at one restaurant where their produce was featured, and with links from restaurant websites to their own.

The synergies created between the various economic spaces for farmers and the market AFN are apparent in these examples. However, this also indicates that the Toronto AFN is growing on private-sector market interests, something seen as problematic by both Guthman (2008) and DeLind (2002). The economic spaces for farmers are notably 'elite' spaces, and therefore the AFN may be contributing to the 'bleeder valve' for the privileged in an otherwise dominant conventional system (Allen 2008). The economic spaces benefit the farmers, but do help reinforce the elite fetish around local food.

In contrast to the multiple economic spaces open for Toronto farmers, farmers in Belo Horizonte have limited economic spaces in the city. The one outlet that they have had some success selling to has been restaurants. Unlike in Toronto, where one of the reasons restaurants are purchasing from local farmers is because they are 'local', restaurants in Belo Horizonte are purchasing because of convenience and price. The space for farmers is again limited by the limited valuation of 'local' as a place construction. Five of the farmers sold to restaurants, with the two farmers who sell the most to restaurants approximating that they sell 20 percent of their monthly total to restaurants, and the other 80 percent directly. The remaining farmers, who either do not sell to restaurants, or sell

insignificant amounts to restaurants only on occasion, believe it is primarily their location (the physical space where there stand is located) that makes it hard to establish restaurant sales. Most are located outside of the wealthy restaurant areas, and they do not have access to chefs. Furthermore, the expectations of many restaurants are for sales on whatever day they call for produce, which can be done only by farmers who sell many times a week. Since the local produce is not valued, chefs are not willing to go out of their way, or pay a premium price, for DR farmers' products. The farmers in Belo Horizonte do not have the power to create many economic spaces outside of the AFN, mostly because there is no elite fetish attached to their food.

One other economic space that farmers are notably absent from in Belo Horizonte is the wider suite of programs associated with SMAB. In fact, the DR farmers do not sell to any other SMAB programs, such as the popular restaurant or the school programs. When asked about this, the Under-Secretariat agreed it was an issue; however, he noted that logistically it was easier to run the programs getting supplies from larger wholesalers. In addition, SMAB could keep the costs down if they purchased from wholesalers and have a more stable supply. The Under-Secretariat noted that it would be ideal to support local small farmers like the DR ones, but that realistically SMAB is not set-up at this time to do so, since all of the departments and programs are run separately. The fact that this space, within the actual municipal department that is overseeing the DR program, is closed to farmers demonstrates that few spaces have been opened for DR participants outside of the market stand. There is potential in the future for farmers to sell to other

SMAB programs; yet, there would need to be some pressure for change within the Secretariat.

6.4.4 Spaces for Farmers IV: Political Spaces for Farmers

In both of the case study locations, the cities are ‘spaces of dependence’ (Cox 1998) for the farmers. Farmers depend on their income generated within the AFN to sustain their livelihoods. In both Toronto and Belo Horizonte, they are in a difficult position whereby the decisions made about the AFNs, on which they depend for their livelihoods, are in the city, a space where they are outsiders to a large extent. City governments, responsible for setting policies and programs that affect the farmers, are primarily responsible to their own citizens. Because of this, it is crucial that the farmers can depend on citizen support, especially those citizens that are the elite, with connections and power in the city.

In Toronto, the connection to these affluent urban consumers has given a degree of voice and power to farmers, since they have the backing of a segment of society that has influence within the city. The AFNs therefore open up ‘spaces of engagement’ for farmers (Cox 1998). The elite citizenry can use their influence to put farmers’ issues at the forefront of the agenda. The weekly contact with this elite citizenry has given farmers the opportunity to share their concerns and experiences. The farmers, when asked to describe their customers, used terms such as ‘educated’, and ‘knowledgeable’. In Toronto “most people are really aware. I think the average urban Toronto market consumer is pretty educated these days,” according to one farmer. This has occurred because of the sharing of knowledge between consumers and farmers. As another farmer states, “It’s

great, it's like a big interaction that's all about sharing and food is meant to be shared, right. And knowledge is meant to be shared." This lends support to the assertion that AFNs can change consumers' knowledge about food systems (Kerton and Sinclair 2010, LaTrobe 2001, Smithers et al. 2008).

The backing of elite consumers becomes important as they have some power in the city to exert influence. The farmers and market managers have access to the affluent and educated population through mediums such as the internet and email, in addition to within the market space. Farmers have their own websites, where issues and ideas important to them can be posted, and markets also have mailing lists. These listservs inform market-goers about what they can expect at the market every week, and sometimes it includes farmers own description as to what has been happening on farm, especially in times of extreme weather (such as rain, cold, heat, hail etc.). The listservs often go beyond this basic information. For example, the various listservs have provided information about events in Toronto that support local food, about petitions and other social action surrounding food, and national and international farming campaigns and events. As one farmer explains:

> And what she [the market manager] does too if she's ever worried about what's going on, she runs direct to the customers. She'll send a mailer [on the listserv] and then people get right back to her with support, so there's a good support system there. I try not to get too political. I know lots of people – I think at [this market] and the markets we go to, we've got plenty of people that know how to talk.

The farmers therefore have political space at the market where they have some influence with the powerful affluent consumer. Politically, they still may not personally have power

in much of the city to deal with officials, but they have the backing of a powerful citizenry. For example, in March 2008 the city introduced new wording in the regulating of Farmers' Market Permits (to better align with the 'Certified Local' market narrative of local, discussed in Chapter Seven). The Market Managers feared that this would make their farmers have to make drastic changes to what they take to market, or would make the markets ineligible for a Permit. The managers were able to organize, and support from their consumers was gained, resulting in a halting of this particular change to the city policy on Farmers' Markets. However, caution must be used when equating power for a few farmers with power for all small farmers. These elite consumers, and the privileged producers that are in contact with them, may only agitate for insignificant changes which affect them as citizens directly (Allen 2008).

Conversely, the farmers in Belo Horizonte lack access to influential people within the city, and therefore lack power within the city. Thus, in this case study, although spaces of dependence are created for farmers, the AFNs cannot be interpreted as spaces of engagement. The farmers have some support in the local government within the secretariat. However, as the Under-Secretariat of SMAB remarked, their main priority must be the citizens of Belo Horizonte, not farmers who reside outside of the city. As discussed above, farmers have been pushed out of spaces they once occupied, and they did not have the power to stop this marginalization. This demonstrates how limited their influence is, and how decisions that affect them in the city are made without their representation or voice being heard. That is not to say that farmers had no voice or influence at all, as they do have loyal customers who will rally around a farmer. For

example, one farmer benefitted from an engaged community who lobbied on her behalf in a low to middle income area. A small grocery store located just down the street was actively trying to get rid of her market stand. The owner came over as she was setting up her stand-alone early in the morning, calling her names and threatening her. The owner also lobbied the government to have her removed from the program. However, a group of her customers started a petition, and the local bakery and pharmacy also helped collect signatures for her to stay. The grocery store ended up leaving that location, and thanks to the local community and their petition, her stand was not removed. This citizenry was notably not elite, and they only held influence within the boundaries of their low-to-middle income neighbourhood.

Farmers in Belo Horizonte, because of their lack of political power, worry about the permanence of the both their individual stands and the broader program. Since it is a municipal program, and the municipal government is elected every four years, tension is particularly high around the time of election, in which the farmers cannot vote since they are not citizens in Belo Horizonte. One farmer expressed worry that a change of political party in power may mean the end of the program. A new party may want to create their own legacy; DR is a part of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) legacy. Even with the current PT government in power, during their two terms in office, the program has been weakened. Other farmers preferred not to think about it. As one famer said, “It is not like we can do anything about it, politicians have the power.” Yet the weakness of the program may also contribute to the lack of political power. One farmer believes that, “If there were a hundred farmers in the program, it would be a lot harder to remove.” He

noted that the weakness of the program relates back to the removal of farmers from the Contorno, and the subsequent removal of farmers from the public eye. He equated the 'public eye' to the middle and upper class that lived in the affluent city centre.

Overall, in both case studies the AFNs were 'spaces of dependence' for farmers economically. In Toronto, the connection with the elite citizenry allowed for the AFN to also act as a space of engagement. In Belo Horizonte, there is a lack of political power in the city. The lack of power can be partially attributed to the spatial marginalization of the farmers to areas outside of the 'Contorno.' This not only weakened the program in terms of decreasing the number of farmers participating, it also put fewer farmers in potential contact with 'elite' consumers.

6.5 Keeping the Spaces Open?

As I have discussed above, Toronto farmers benefit from the elite fetish constructed around locally-produced food in many ways. They are able to access physical, economic, and political spaces in the city. The main downside of this is that the market spaces are accessible to middle and upper-income class consumers, and exclude many other citizens. I discuss this issue in Chapter Seven when I look at social justice in AFNs. However, there are other potential disadvantages as well. Farmers in Toronto markets depend on the elite fetish of local food for these physical, economic and political spaces to remain open. They are thus dependent on 'reflexive consumers' who will continue to choose the higher priced farmers' market products over supermarket fare. This consumer base may erode in the face of three different pressures.

First, there is some disagreement among the market managers and farmers involved in Toronto markets about how many ‘reflexive consumers’ there are in the city. A few of the managers I interviewed were worried about the rapid expansion of farmers’ markets, wondering if there is a large enough reflexive consumer base to support them. Others in Toronto cite the huge consumer base, and the relatively small segment of society that currently shops at farmers’ markets, to make a case that there is still a lot of potential for more farmers and farmers’ markets in Toronto. They contend that local food still has a lot of room for expansion in the city.

A second pressure stems from the fact that, although food is a necessity, in times of recession, fewer people have disposable income to spend at the market, or might even decide or be forced to forgo spending money at the market and instead shop for food at less expensive supermarkets. This means that farmers may have to drop prices to retain their consumers.

A third pressure stems from the fact that elite fetishes may change over time, as Jordan (2007) demonstrated with the case of the heirloom tomato. Even with the changing of what foods are ‘trendy’, it is sometimes difficult for farmers to plan for the season ahead and know what crops will sell well, and which products already have a ‘crowded’ market. Since meanings of place are constantly changing, there is also the potential that the entire category of ‘local’ food may not be as popular in the future as it is now. Farmers are taking calculated risks, such as expanding production, building infrastructure for season

extension, and planting new crops, depending on a stable if not expanding consumer base in Toronto. Even with a core constituency of 'reflexive consumers' who may support local food and local farmers, the opening of new farmers' markets and expansion of existing ones has brought more farmers into the city. If the narratives change, then this core base of 'reflexive consumers' may not be able to support the growing number of farmers that depend on Toronto consumers.

The Belo Horizonte farmers do not benefit from the elite fetish surrounding local food, and they have been kept out of many physical spaces and forced to keep pricing low. They do not benefit from increased sales or opportunities and have to market their produce in the face of increased preference of and competition from supermarkets. They are fairly constrained within their current situation, and are unable to adjust prices with the increasing costs of production. However, factors such as changes in the consumer economy and elite fetishes have a lesser impact on them, and since people need food and their food is competitively priced, their consumer base is fairly stable. Also, Brazilian consumer trends have tended to value things perceived as 'American', such as McDonalds and processed store bought foods. If local food is perceived as 'American' or internationally popular then there is a potential that the Brazilian elite may pick up on the 'trend' towards local food and local farmers, to the advantage of the DR farmers. Meanwhile, the farmers in Belo Horizonte need to continually fight in order to penetrate into more elite, central areas of the city, or, to adapt to their position at the margins.

In both locations, there are also larger forces to consider. Most notably, the increasing price of oil (upon which industrial agriculture and long distance food transport depend) may drive food prices up, making local food a viable alternative. Concerns over safety of global foods, supply, the environment and health also should be considered. These considerations may push the food system in both locations towards the 'local' as a practical alternative, with less need for the reliance on the 'trendiness' of local food to sustain the consumer base.

6.6 Conclusions: the 'Local', Space, Class and Power for Farmers

In this chapter, I started by providing a sketch of a typical purchasing location in each AFN. Delving deeper, the narratives that are being reinforced in each location, and the class-based power relations that are occurring are revealed through these sketches. Although these constructions of 'local' food do not happen exclusively within the confines of the AFN, the 'elite fetish' narrative is reinforced by farmers in Toronto. In Belo Horizonte farmers attempt to conform to the food that has an elite fetish narrative attached to it: food from supermarkets and fast-food chains. This is one of the most marked differences between case study locations, and follows the assertion by Abrahams (2007) that AFNs in the South have some very marked differences from those in the North in terms of participants. The differences in the co-creation of either elite fetish narratives in Toronto or the attempt to divorce local food from a local 'imagined biography' in Belo Horizonte lead to very different conditions for farmers in both case study locations. The spaces for farmers in the city reflect the power of the class of consumers that the farmers primarily interact with. The spaces for farmers also reinforce

class divisions in the city by putting farmers 'in their place', whether it be in more elite spaces in Toronto or in the lower class spaces in Belo Horizonte.

In Toronto, farmers reinforce and help create elite fetishes attached to local food by drawing on nostalgic place-based narratives of 'straight from the farm.' They benefit from this by having the power to set the prices for their produce. They capture value for the produce, especially specific 'heirloom' varieties of products, considered even more 'traditional' and valued by consumers despite having similar production costs as non-heirloom varieties. They are also able to connect to other economic spaces in the city, such as restaurants and high-end retail outlets, and create innovative partnerships. The result is that the AFN acts as both a 'space of dependence' for farmers, but also a 'space of engagement'. The farmers are connected to a segment of society that can act on their behalf, and they have multiple ways of doing so (e.g. word of mouth and listservs).

In Belo Horizonte, the AFN is a space of dependence for farmers, but only of limited engagement. Farmers try to divorce their food from the 'traditional' place-based narratives, because it devalues the produce. The farmers are actively trying to invoke narratives of 'modern' food by creating an image of 'hygienic' and 'sterilized' and position their food as just as good as the supermarket in order to cater to the middle and upper class. They do not tend to have elite consumers at the market stand, and thus have limited power in the city. This is reflected in the fact that they have few economic spaces outside of the stand in the city. At the market stand, the set price within DR means that they are not able to control prices and adjust them when production prices increase. The

farmers have been removed from upper and middle class spaces in the ‘Contorno’ and relegated to the lower class neighbourhoods. The removal of farmers from the ‘Contorno’ demonstrates one way that the program is vulnerable to changes in government and citizen will. Although the Toronto case study is also dependent on the city government in many ways (including infrastructure and permitting), the markets have not encountered major challenges such as being removed or being required to change location. The Brazilian case study is illustrative of the limitations of an AFN where local food is not valued, in contrast to where it does tend to be valued, as in the North American context. Chapter Seven shows how the differences outlined in this chapter—in the narratives attached to ‘local’ scale, the spaces and places for farmers, and the classes that participate in AFNs—lead to different outcomes at the scale of the AFN.

Chapter Seven

The Case Study AFN Models: 'Alternativeness', Problems and Potential

In this chapter I explore the potential and limitations of each of my case study AFNs. I begin by identifying the main differences between the two case study models, and I draw on these throughout the rest of the chapter to explain differences in outcomes. I discuss the ways that the AFNs do present a degree of an alternative environmentally and socially, even if they are not a radical one. Yet these AFNs are not an alternative for everyone, and the central question of 'alternative for whom?' is asked in order to understand the implications of inclusion and exclusion in the AFNs. Exclusion and inclusion also happen by means of the expression of scale in the AFNs, and the shaping of the narrative of 'local' in each case study location. To answer the question of the long-term potential of the AFNs, the ability of these AFNs to scale-up to address larger structural changes, and to scale-out to reach other households and individuals and change power dynamics is considered.

7.1 Differences between the Two Case Study AFNs

From a theoretical perspective, there is much to learn from these two case study models. They are similar in some basic ways, in that they are both SFSCs and focus on farmers coming into the city to sell. However, their intent ('who are they alternative for?'), their organization (private versus government), and the differing context of each (North versus South) provide insight into the limitations and potential of these differing models. It also

provides a much needed contribution from the global South, which (as noted by Abrahams 2007) is lacking in current AFN literature.

This interrogation is also important from a practical perspective since in each AFN, a version of 'alternative' is being spread, along with its benefits and consequences. The administrators in each case study note that both of these AFNs have acted as reference points, innovators and models for other small programs. As such, they do have the potential to spread a certain type of 'alternativeness'. In the case of Belo Horizonte, the entire approach to food has acted as an innovator and a reference point for other municipalities (Rocha 2001). In 2009, the Belo Horizonte Food Security Program won the 'Future Policy Award' by the World Food Future Policy Council. In Toronto, the success of the Dufferin Market led to the forming of the Farmers' Market network (funded through the Project for Public Spaces), with the hopes that the Dufferin Market experiences could act as a 'mentor' for other start-up markets.

The two models of AFNs do share some basic similarities in that they are both urban direct selling AFNs focused on local food. However, there are some key differences between the two models. Table 7.1 outlines the differences between these AFNs, and the subsequent discussion will focus on how these differences impact the function, potential and limitations of the AFN.

Table 7.1 Differences between the Toronto and Belo Horizonte AFN models

	Toronto AFN model	**Belo Horizonte AFN model**
Actors involved at AFN inception	Mainly urban citizens (some links to farmers, to food advocacy groups and to the TFPC)	Municipal government
Current administrators	Urban market managers (private citizens, paid or volunteer)	Paid government employees
Main goal	Supporting sustainable farming and providing locally-produced foods to consumers	Ensuring food security for citizens
Pricing	Farmer-directed	Government-controlled
Decision-making	Consensus building with manager as mediator	Government mandated with input from farmers
Form	Farmers' market	Individual farmer stalls

In the remainder of this chapter, I examine how the difference in the focus, participation and organization of the two AFN models leads to different outcomes for each AFN model. For each model, there are different answers to the questions: 'What is alternative about the case study AFNs?', and 'For whom are they alternative?'. These questions are posed in the remaining sections of this chapter, in order to understand both the potential and limitations of each AFN model.

7.2 What is 'Alternative' about the Case Study AFNs?

In this section, I discuss the ways in which each case study AFN model can be considered 'alternative'. I begin with the assertion that these AFNs are not 'radical', but are alternative in other ways. The case studies demonstrate how the conventional/alternative dichotomy does not adequately deal with the complex interactions between the

conventional and alternative systems. Both AFNs are alternative in that they are SFSCs, but the values that form the foundation of the AFNs impact what aspects of SFSC 'alternativeness' are prevalent.

7.2.1 'Radical' Alternative

As noted in Chapter Four, these case study AFNs are not alternative by more radical interpretations of 'alternativeness', in that they did not try to challenge the conventional food system, or its capitalist and neoliberal basis. In fact, both case studies are based on the ideals of consumer choice, value capture and entrepreneurialism. Further, the Toronto markets do so outside of the realm of the state, using private citizens and groups to act, a hallmark of neoliberalism and an aspect that has been critiqued as a downfall of citizen-based AFNs.

There is one distinct difference between the case studies in terms of value capture. As noted by Lee (2000) and Watts et al. (2005), farmers work within a capitalist system, so value capture allows farmers to ask a price they feel is fair in order to maximize their profit margin. In Toronto, all of the AFN market managers stated that they made a point to stay out of pricing and leave that within the farmers' control. At one market, a manager told me that one of the farmers consistently kept the rest of the farmers' prices in check, since he set his prices at 'fair but reasonable' levels. At another market, a farmer remarked to me that when she started, a manager told her to increase her price to better capture the 'real value' of the product. In contrast, in Belo Horizonte there are price controls set by the municipal government. This can be interpreted as in some respects

dismantling the ‘market control’ aspects of food. The municipal government has identified a gap within the current system, in that food is not affordable for everyone, and set out with a goal to remedy it by providing accessible food. High-level administrators in the Belo Horizonte program note that there is a place for the market, for the state and for private citizens in food provisioning (Gopel 2009). Belo Horizonte has Municipal Law number 6.352, providing the mandate to the government for ensuring the right to food for its citizens. There is the political and economic context for essentially overriding the market to provide food. Even with a controlled price, these prices are set by the government based on keeping the produce lower than the market price. Thus, the AFN is not totally separated from the conventional system. The administrators depend on the conventional system to provide price cues. The rest of this section is devoted to the main ways in which each case study is ‘alternative’, focusing on less radical and more subtle means of being ‘alternative’.

7.2.2 The ‘Alternative/Conventional’ Dichotomy?

The binary distinction made between the alternative food system and the conventional one, posed by scholars such as Morgan et al. (2006), obscures the complex reality that the case studies demonstrate. The case studies are integrated into the conventional food system in a number of ways. For example, farmers still rely on the conventional system for their inputs, and thus have to price their product accordingly. In the case of Toronto, where the pricing at market is not controlled at the level of the AFN, the farmer has to also be aware of, and to some extent follow, the pricing for similar products within the conventional food system. In Belo Horizonte, even though the farmers also purchase

inputs from within the conventional food system, they do not control pricing. Yet pricing is set by the AFN administrators based on a market comparison to ensure it is under the market price, so this AFN model is not separate from the conventional system entirely. This example of how the 'alternative' and the 'conventional' systems are mixed is merely one of the more obvious ways. Other, more subtle mixing occurs on many scales and in many ways, including the way the conventional food system shapes the food preferences of AFN consumers and food standards, including organic certification standards. Overall, to set a dichotomy of conventional versus alternative does not represent the reality of the influence of the conventional food system on the case study AFNs. Forces at varying scales, from the individual through to the global, affect the AFN. Accepting that the case study AFNs work within or are influenced by the conventional system, the focus now shifts to examining how, as SFSCs, they may present an environmental and social alternative.

7.2.3 SFSCs

The AFNs are both Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) since they link local producers with local consumers. Watts et al. (2005) believe that SFSCs are one of the strongest types of alternative food networks. In Chapter Four, I identified three broad ways that SFSCs could be alternative: environmentally, socially, and economically. The potential for these two SFSCs to be an economic alternative for farmers was discussed in Chapter Six, and in Section 7.3.1 above, the difference between how pricing of food is managed or not managed with each AFN model is discussed. In this section, the focus is on the AFN models as environmental and social alternatives.

7.3.3.1 Environmental Alternatives Versus Social Alternatives

Although the environmental narrative is central to much AFN theory, in Chapter Five I demonstrate how there are a range of environmental viewpoints expressed by participating farmers. In this section, I discuss how at the scale of the AFN, the focus can be on either environmental values or social values. One of the prominent differences between the case study AFNs is their differing identification of their main priority: sustainable agriculture and support of farmers in Toronto; or, food security and access for low-income consumers in Belo Horizonte.

The priorities of the AFNs are based on the initial interests and motivations of the organizers, though they have evolved from these to a degree. In the case of Toronto, two of the four markets were started by either a community group or members of the community. For example, at the Withrow Market, the market manager got the idea to start a farmers' market after walking through the park one day and thinking that it would be a nice location for a market. Her interest is in the ecological side of farming and supporting local small farmers, and she sees her role as "a facilitator, they [the farmers] are the folks we need to make it all happen…we are just there to make it possible for them." As such, this market can be interpreted as both an 'environmentally-motivated' and farmer-centred market. Likewise, the Dufferin Market started as part of the revitalization of the park itself, with collaboration between a local community group, three organic farmers and the parks department (Freeman and Beckerman 2007). Their main focus is on making the market "viable for the farmers, as well as useful for the

community." (Freeman and Beckerman 2007, p. 5). As the manager discusses, the focus on farmers is justified, as "they are among our low income population, negative income in many cases, and that is not acceptable." Thus, the manager states that the focus is on creating social justice and environmental sustainability for farmers, a common interest group in AFNs in North America (Guthman et al. 2006).

The other two Toronto AFNs have collaboration with organizations with a more urban food justice approach. The Stonegate Market is organized through the Stonegate Community Health Centre, which focuses on food security for low-income residents in the area. The Wychwood Market was a collaborative effort between community members and The Stop Community Food Centre, which focuses on food justice issues. Both of these markets have goals that deal with fair wages for farmers and accessibility for low-income urban consumers, trying to create a situation that others have noted to be difficult, if not impossible (Guthman et al. 2006). For example, at the Wychwood Barns Farmers' Market: "A long-term goal is to develop strategies for making local, sustainable food accessible to low-income community members while ensuring producers receive a fair price for their products" (Wychwood Market Vendor Guidelines, 2011). However, up to this point, neither of these markets has come up with an effective means of balancing the often conflicting needs of these two populations. Like in the other markets in Toronto, thus far the needs of farmers have taken precedence at both markets.

In Belo Horizonte, the Direct from the Farm program was started by the municipal government, which is elected and funded by the urban residents of Belo Horizonte, as

part of a wider initiative to ensure food justice for low-income urban residents. The start of the entire suite of programs was initiated in the context of discussions about human rights and the right to food, which was institutionalized in the Belo Horizonte Municipal Charter. The primary goals of this AFN are to deal with low-income urban consumer access to food. As most farmers' market and direct selling AFNs discussed in the literature are initiated primarily with the needs of farmers in mind (Guthman et al. 2006), this makes this particular AFN somewhat different. Yet as noted by Abrahams (2007), within the context of Southern AFNs, it is not unique in practice. Farmers do not play a prominent role within the larger strategy of the municipal food programs, and the under-secretary of Food Sustenance and Security in Belo Horizonte notes "The space for the small producer, in this large web of programs, is small…the priority has to be on the citizens of Belo Horizonte first." The main focus of the program is on providing safe, fresh and nutritious local produce at affordable prices to the urban consumer. In fact, some of the other programs run by the municipal government undermine the interest of farmers by allowing intermediaries to sell at 'open markets' and through purchasing food from the food terminal for other programs. The producer is a secondary concern, as the Under-Secretary notes that they do need farmers in order for the program to run, but that the government cannot focus on the farmer over the low-income consumer. Notably absent within this AFN when contrasting it to the Toronto case study is a focus on an 'environmental' narrative by the actors within the network.

The differing focuses of the AFNs demonstrate that although it may be assumed that SFSCs have the ability to have both social and environmental benefits, in actuality, these

case study AFNs prioritize certain values over others. In Toronto, the main focus is on environmental values, including the creation of rules that include only organic or low-spray farmers in most markets. This shapes the type of farmer who is included in the network. In Belo Horizonte, the focus is on the low-income consumer, and as such farmers included in the AFN are not necessarily environmentally friendly.

7.3.3.2 Social Alternatives and the Creation of 'Community'

As noted in Chapter Four, at all scales the social cannot be separated from the economic. In this section, the focus is on how differences in the spatial structure and administrative goals of the two case study AFNs lead to differing social relations at the scale of the AFN community.

One of the characteristics of SFSC is that they have the potential to create more 'embedded' social relations around food, and thus create a community. Durrschmidt (1999) asserts that these relations of trust create communities among people of similar ideologies. Feenstra (2002) discusses the importance of the social space in helping create community, noting that "social spaces are… for celebrating, for enjoying each other's company, for learning how to support one another…They are the glue that allows the new community food system to hang together or not" (p. 102). In Toronto, the structure of the AFN as a group of farmers' markets that are located in a community location (especially those in city parks) rather than individual stalls like in Belo Horizonte provides an opportunity for communal spaces to be created. The administrators at the markets focused greatly on creating community spaces, with activities such as live music

at the market, and events such as special food celebration days to foster the sense of community. For example, the Stonegate Market manager has a very limited budget for the market but has prioritized having music and events at the market, since she wants to create a "community feeling to the market". The Withrow Market has events during the market in conjunction with holidays and harvest days. In an information booklet printed about the Dufferin Market, the linking of the market with the community is made explicit: "the integration of the market with the park…makes it an essential part of community life" (Freeman and Beckerman 2007, p. 2). The booklet continues on to list ways in which the market has been integrated with other community events in the park, such as the community bake-oven 'Pizza Fridays' in the summertime. These examples show how the AFN administrators have consciously worked to create a 'community around food'. Yet creating community cannot be treated as inherently 'good', as there are benefits and drawbacks. The creation of 'community space' may act as a way for class to be affirmed or enacted (Johnston and Szabo 2011). The community in Toronto that is created around the AFN can be interpreted in part as a way to display class and power by wealthier consumers.

In contrast, the individual market stalls in Belo Horizonte are not spatially as conducive to creating 'communities around food', and the market administrators are also not actively encouraging the creation of community. Based on my observations and discussions with the day-to-day administrators of the program, they viewed the AFN as an economic alternative for both the farmers and the consumer, but not as a social alternative or a way to create a sense of community. It is therefore up to the individual

stall farmers, and in some cases the members of the neighbourhood in which they are located, to create a ‘community around food,’ placing the responsibility on individuals rather than on the AFN administrators. In some locations this did happen, but in others it did not. The difference was due to a combination of factors, with two prominent observable ones. One factor is the stall location – those in residential neighbourhoods had a greater community feel generally than the stalls located in business areas. Another factor is the farmers themselves – as some farmers interacted in ways that created the relations of trust that could lead to the creation of a ‘community around food’. One benefit to the creation of community that is not based around an exclusive class was that the space was open for a more diverse range of individuals and at some stalls there were elite consumers, such as the stall adjacent to a municipal hospital that attracted both doctors and their lower class patients.

In both case studies, the community that is created is not necessarily one that is based on the inclusion of all citizens. In fact, the spaces that are created may lead to exclusive communities. The question of ‘alternative for whom?’ allows for the examination of social justice in the AFN community.

7.3 Alternative for Whom? Social Justice in AFNs

Both of the case study AFNs had to deal with the tensions that are created by weighing the need for a fair income for participant farmers, and dealing with urban social justice issues. As Allen (2008) notes within AFNs in general, there is the problem in these two case studies that the focus on seeking social justice for some disadvantaged people leads

to the exclusion of other disadvantaged groups. As discussed in Chapter Five, most of the Toronto farmers' markets studied had some aspects of an 'elite fetish' attached to them, and this provided economic and social benefits for farmers. The consequences are that the AFN has become an exclusive space. Understanding the extent of what classes are excluded from the AFN is beyond the scope of this work (and further work should be done to understand the income, culture and racial aspects of exclusion from the case study AFNs). The most obvious means of exclusion, which will be discussed here, was based on income. Those of a lower economic class are excluded because they cannot afford to purchase at the higher than the conventional market price in the Toronto case study.

As in the case study by Guthman et al. (2006), all of the market managers expressed a degree of concern about the lack of accessibility for low-income consumers. For example, one market manager makes an effort to have the market accessible for a wide segment of the local community, both culturally and economically, by focusing as much as possible on groceries rather than luxury goods, but she does acknowledge that some lower-income people cannot afford to shop at the market. Her sentiments were echoed by other managers, and some have even gone as far as trying to partner with local agencies to develop some sort of voucher program for low-income residents. One market (Stonegate) recently initiated a short-term voucher pilot program, although it has not yet been evaluated to determine if it was successful. The paradox, as noted by Guthman et al. (2006), is that the market can still be 'win-win' without low-income consumers even being considered, just an 'elite' win-win. The main goal of the Toronto farmers' markets

is to provide a viable alternative for farmers and the AFNs can thrive without the low-income consumers, assuming there is a sustainable middle and upper class consumer base. Thus, low-income consumers can be 'ignored' and need not be catered to or considered.

In Belo Horizonte, even though the program focus is on low-income consumers, its administrators are forced to consider the needs of the farmers to some extent because they cannot run the program without participating farmers. The administrators of the AFN do so by making some concessions on prices and on location which may not meet their goals of accessibility for low-income consumers, but will incentivize farmers enough to stay in the AFN. This is a fine balance, as sometimes the priority focus on low-income consumers does force farmers out of the program. For example, new licenses for DR stalls are mainly being approved in areas of the city targeting low-income consumers, and most farmers are interested in areas of the city where they can attract affluent consumers. The government also has not come up with a 'win-win' solution, as the remaining farmers in the program have more discontent with the AFN itself, and do not feel empowered. However, the AFN could still attract farmers since it was a 'better' alternative than some other livelihood options for farmers (as discussed in Chapter Five). This takes advantage of the farmers' situations rather than providing a 'winning' AFN for farmers. The administrators of the program also admit that even with price controls, the lowest-income group still cannot afford to purchase their food within the program, showing again how difficult a balancing act this model of AFN truly is.

Allen (2008) makes a compelling case that ignoring social justice issues does create the potential risk of complacency among the privileged and in effect creates a two-tiered system. However, as Anne Freeman, the manager for Dufferin Market, argues, AFNs can also create the potential for awareness among the privileged, or the creation of a more 'reflexive consumer'. The Dufferin Market maintains an email listserv and sends out weekly emails that contain not only market news, but news in food and agriculture and calls to action around larger food issues such as genetically modified foods and organic agriculture. Whether or not the consumers in Toronto are in fact 'reflexive', there have been positive impacts from the support shown by elite consumers on farmers' livelihoods and on the spaces open for them, as shown in Chapter Five and in Chapter Six. Like the opinions expressed by market managers in the Guthman et al. (2006) case study, one manager in Toronto argues that the focus on urban poverty may be misdirected:

> When I see the huge middle class, I sometimes get frustrated about the connections between farmers' markets and poverty…farmers' markets are not the place to solve poverty. My position has always been that there is a huge proportion of the population that can afford to spend more on their food, and choose all the time to spend on luxury items… I guess I felt let's tackle that first.

She acknowledges that markets may not be a panacea for all the ills in the food system, and feels justified that the focus on getting support for farmers from the upper and middle classes is a good incremental start. This can be interpreted as a justification for focusing on an 'elite win-win' approach. The focus of this AFN model on farmers can be rationalized because, as stated above, direct selling AFNs cannot function without farmers, but they can function without low-income consumers. By focusing so extensively on farmers, managers and farmers in Toronto have effectively 'ignored' the

low-income consumers, and have a functional and successful, albeit exclusive, AFN without these actors.

In contrast, the administrators in Belo Horizonte have attempted to construct an AFN that has the potential to be more inclusive and 'win-win' for farmers and all consumers, including low-income ones, but in doing so they have had to compromise on satisfying the needs of the farmers. In addition, noting from Table 7.1 that their priority is on the low income consumer, the need to include the farmer in the AFN has meant that the there have also been concessions made that may not benefit the low-income consumer. In effect, the administrators in Belo Horizonte have come up with an 'acceptable-acceptable' situation rather than 'win-win', not an option discussed by Guthman et al. (2006) in their evaluation of the social justice implications of AFNs. Both of these AFNs also risk potentially re-creating some of the social inequalities that are prevalent in the dominant food system, either through exclusion, which can create a two-tiered food system, or through a compromised inclusion. Neither AFN has a viable 'win-win' solution to the issue of fair prices for farmers and affordable food for low-income consumers, suggesting that Guthman et al.'s (2006) assertion that there can be no 'win-win' in AFNs for both agricultural sustainability and food security holds true when they are bound within broader systemic imperatives.

7.4 Defining the 'Local' in Toronto and Belo Horizonte

How the 'local' is defined, represented and negotiated, and by whom, has large implications in each network. In Toronto, the local scale of both production and

consumption has been captured and reproduced by the elite class, while in Belo Horizonte, the local scale is largely looked upon unfavorably by elites, being the scale of food source that is associated with the poor. I will begin this section by discussing how 'local' is contested, negotiated and institutionalized in the Toronto case study, and by whom, and the implications of this on the farmers and on the AFN. Through this, I will describe some of the common ideas and values that are embedded in the 'local'. I then discuss how there are fewer competing discourses around the construction of the 'local' in Belo Horizonte, which demonstrates that "different kinds of society produce different kinds of geographical scale for containing and enabling particular forms of social interaction" (Smith 1995, p. 61). Understanding the construction of 'local' in Belo Horizonte also demonstrates why a greater understanding of Southern AFNs is needed to broaden our theoretical understanding of local AFNs.

7.4.1 Toronto: Constructing the 'Local' at the Scale of the AFN and in the City

In Toronto, the meaning of 'local', as it relates to food, farmers, and alternative food networks, is a contested concept imbued with (and embedded within) issues of scale and power. As noted earlier, the 'local' is valorized by the urban consumer in Toronto because of the nostalgic links to the 'traditional'. Many different actors therefore attempt to define what is most authentically local, to benefit from the valorization of 'local' food. At the scale of the city, there are dueling 'local' narratives. The farmers and managers of the case study AFN markets are now facing competition from a newer type of market model in the city, the 'Certified Local' markets. The Certified Local markets offer an alternate narrative of local food, in which food sold at the market must be grown by the

seller, and no reselling is permitted. The consumer constructs and reproduces the local scale based on their understanding about the food and the farmer, and about how the food system operates. With the advent of the Certified Local market, there has been the introduction of a vision of local that may challenge the case study AFN markets. As a consequence, farmers and managers are competing for the trust of consumers that the construction of local within the case study AFN is as valid as the construction by the Certified Local market.

Farmers are concerned about striking the balance between maintaining authenticity and trust with consumers, and making enough profit to continue farming. The participating farmers have varied perspectives on the best ways to do so, and some see a place for reselling to some extent (of either local or imported food) in order to have a viable livelihood. Administrators of the markets have been given the task of managing the expectations and values of the consumers along with the livelihood reality of participating farmers. They have to do so with careful consideration of how authenticity can be maintained with consumers, especially with the competing narrative that is gaining city-wide attention from the Certified Local markets. They are responsible for taking the discursive negotiations of the ‘local’ and institutionalizing these by means of rules and regulations, in order to clarify what constitutes the ‘local’ in the case study AFN markets.

The case study markets in Toronto each had slightly different rules of what would be accepted as a local farmer and local food, but in general they all had similar

institutionalized rules for farmers regarding selling local food. During the course of the case study, the most pressing issue surrounding the construction of the 'local' was the competition from the narrative presented by the administrators of the new Certified Local Farmers' market model. Although the Certified Local markets were not a part of my primary research, I conducted in-depth interviews with three farmers, informal interviews with two other farmers, and personal observations at one such market, the 'My Market Liberty Village'.

The idea of a Certified Local market in the city was both popular (in media and with city officials) and controversial (with farmers at other markets, such as the case study markets). The Liberty Village market provides a good example of the power dynamics involved in the construction of local foods, and of whose voice is being heard in the construction of local markets. The institutionalization of a certain vision of 'local' is made within the rules of the market. In the Certified Local Market Rules and Regulations (My Market 2011) the desire to authenticate market farmers is discussed. The rules of this market state that "There is **zero tolerance** for the reselling of products that have not been grown by the vendor" (p. 2, original underlining and bolding). It did not matter if the food that was to be re-sold was local or not, the importance was that the farmer was a local farmer, selling only his or her own product.

With the exception of one farmer (who was a personal friend of the administrator), all other farmers I talked to were frustrated that setting such stringent limits on local food and local farmers was actually hurting farmers. For example, one farmer pointed to a

specific situation where reselling of local produce actually benefits farmers selling at the market:

> I don't have a problem with a farmer supplementing product. A number of years ago Beamsville froze out, they had 25 percent of a crop… and we had people from Beamsville buying from us. Are you going to say "that's bad", are they going to go to market with no product? They are paying for a stall, if they are buying Ontario product, I don't care if they are getting it from me, or from Joe Blow, they are getting local product that is being consumed, which is the name of the game. Now some purists say you should only sell your own product…

The same farmer also pointed to a situation where a local non-market farmer, the market farmer and the consumer benefit from limited reselling:

> There is a fellow in Vineland, all he does is grow berries, raspberries, and some blackberries, it is all he does and he does a beautiful job. I tried growing berries, my berries are not nearly as nice as his, so what am I going to do, have half an acre of ugly berries and take them to market or am I going to let him grow 20 acres of berries and I buy half an acre's worth of good quality product that I can be proud of, the customers are happy with, and he is happy to sell. So then neither of us in theory make money, or I make money, he makes money.

When this farmer attempted to voice his opinion to the management he felt it was not valued because the management of the market (in particular, one person) was intent on a certain vision of what a local farmers' market was. This is an example of how political power is embedded in place construction (Harvey 2000), and how some actors – in this case the management – have the power to reify and institutionalize a particular definition of local.

In a *Toronto Star* article (May 2008), the originator of the My Market brand, Bob Chorney, admitted that finding farmers that meet the strict requirements that they have set out is difficult. This demonstrates the disconnect between the management's ideal 'local

farmer' and the reality of local farmers. One farmer who is not a part of the certified local markets and who sells year round at one of the case study markets was outraged at the idea of the 'Certified Local' market, and articulated the disconnect well:

> What do they expect farmers and farmers' employees to do in the winter? You're still paying mortgages, we're still paying payments on tractors and vans and other equipment, and if we have staff, first of all, people are not making a lot with seasonal farm employment, so the least you can do is try to employ as many of your staff through the winter… So I don't see anything sustainable (for farmers) about that certified market model of local in season… I'm outraged with… (the) simple mantra of buy local and nothing else. It's just so simplified.

At this market, neither was the 'local' consumer involved in constructing the definition and delineation of 'local'. This is evidenced by the wording of the regulations, where the market is being referred to as providing an example to consumers (and other markets) about how local markets should be constructed. Consumers' support by shopping at a 'Certified Local' market can be interpreted either as support to some extent for the vision of 'local' in the market, or, as suggested by some farmers, as an ignorant consumer who believes the propaganda put out by the 'Certified Local' market administration about local food.

The certified markets can also be interpreted as an attempt to create a standardized 'local food' throughout the city, rather than embracing the 'diversity of place' (Cook and Crang 1996) in different neighbourhoods in the city. As one farmer suggests:

> With certified (local markets), it just doesn't go with the multicultural city, the different neighbourhoods, promoting diversity of food and local food and he's approaching it with very much a multi-national corporate approach. Which doesn't go with local. So I'm kind of alarmed because it sends a message to city policy makers, they like to control things, so they think now they can whitewash the whole thing and make it all the same.

This farmer makes the important distinction that ‘local’ refers not only to the food and farmers, but also the community where the market is being held. He recognizes that AFNs provide a location for place-based understandings to be shaped by communities (DeLind 2002). At the Certified Local market, the power dynamics result in a market model and definition of local being imposed on both the farmers and the consumers.

The Certified Local discourse of a local food market has meant that those markets that do not adhere to the same guidelines have the potential for being considered less ‘local’ by consumers. For example, in 2007, as the Certified Local markets were launching, the markets were framed as unusual because they featured real farmers and they should be seen as “role models for all farmers’ markets” (Chorney, 2007, online). The implication in this is that other markets are not as authentic, as they do not feature real farmers, and by extension, real local food. In the case study markets, this leads to concerns by both market managers and participant farmers about the potential deterioration of the relations of trust that were established between farmers and consumers in the case study AFNs. These relations are important to the farmers to maintain their customer base and to managers to attract people to the markets.

The Dufferin Market has actively challenged the Certified Local discourse. In July 2007, the market manager posted a note on the webpage to clarify the market’s own standards of local food and local farmer. The release noted that although there are some ‘fakers’ alongside farmers at some markets, it is “too bad, though, that these comments in the media could leave people feeling more suspicious than excited about heading out to

markets" (Dufferin Market website, 2007). An example of the potential for trust relations to break down was given by one farmer who had used some recycled boxes with 'Product of Mexico' to pack her own produce to transport to market. She was confronted and questioned by some consumers, and she lost at least one sale because the customer thought she was a 'huckster', a derogatory term referring to resellers that pose as farmers. All of the farmers and managers in the case study AFNs feel that there is a struggle for authenticity with consumers because of the power of the Certified Local market in institutionalizing one conception of the 'local'. This struggle is mostly with attracting new customers and creating relations of trust with them, since farmers and managers believe that long-term customers already trust them.

An example of a market that manages to balance the various constructions of what a local market means is the Dufferin Market. The Dufferin Market is used here as an example because the local rules from this market have become a model for the other case study markets. As noted, the Dufferin Market attempts to base its regulations on decisions reached by consensus. Thus, farmers who often have problems with meeting guidelines of 100 percent local food, help to shape the construction of the 'local'. The manager has come up with guidelines through consultation with farmers and consumers, in an attempt to be flexible enough to accommodate farmers and the demands of providing produce at a year-round market, while trying to still have a local market. These rules provide a compromise that the producers for the most part agree with.

The actual guidelines contain provisions, including:

- All farmers have to produce the majority of what they sell.
- In the growing season they can only have 30 percent of their produce from off-farm, (the “70/30 rule”).
- There is “grower-priority”; when there is a product where one farmer has home-grown product and another farmer has off-farm product, the off-farm product cannot be sold (unless the priority farmer agrees).
- Only farmers that meet the “70/30 rule” in the growing season can sell at the winter market.

These rules demonstrate that although there is a priority placed on food grown by the participating farmers, there is still some flexibility for supplementing with off-farm produce, including other local produce as well as imports. This example demonstrates how there is an overlapping of scales, as farmers are using ‘global’ produce to sell at the local market. As one participating farmer states: “Dufferin really came up with a smart way of promoting and yielding to local. Local by producer grown, and then local secondary, and then if there’s nothing else available locally, then you can import. And I think they have very sensibly done this and it’s a strong market for that reason.” All of the farmers participating in this market were satisfied with the rules around local food and felt that there was little conflict among farmers within the market because of these rules. Local and global food is not a binary distinction in this case study.

The rules at the Dufferin Market have been shaped by consultation with both the producers and the consumers, mediated by the market organizers, an informal but participatory approach. DuPuis and Goodman suggest (2005) that this is an ideal way for an AFN to evolve, as power is shared within the AFN. The organizers of the market listen

to and mediate the various opinions and issues among farmers. As well, every vendor at the market is expected to work cooperatively. The guidelines state that "a demonstrated willingness on the part of all vendors to work co-operatively and respectfully and resolve issues as they arise is an essential requirement and condition of participation in the market." The market managers are members of the community, and keep an on-going dialogue with farmers and with the community. This is done through formal means such as surveys, as well as informal discussions with consumers at each market and the weekly market e-mail. The result is a local market that is shaped by the mediated values of farmers and community members. Although conflict at the market still exists, the market has been shaped as a community venue, where cooperation is encouraged over competition. Other Toronto markets that formed a part of the case study are using the Dufferin Market as a model, with some variation for specific community-based situations. The Dufferin Market may have an advantage over these markets since it has been in existence longer, and therefore there has been a longer time for relations of trust to develop between farmers and consumers. In the more fledgling case study markets (notably Stonegate and Withrow Park), the managers and farmers both note that they require the market to grow in the upcoming years in order for the market to continue running.

The valorization of local food has led to competing narratives attempting to claim a more 'authentically local' market. The growing popularity of the Certified Local market may be undermining the relations of trust between farmers and consumers at markets that are not certified, including the case study AFN markets. In less established markets,

including every case study market in Toronto except the Dufferin Market, the relations of trust between farmers and the consumer base is not as strong, and the farmers may lose customers who are not yet confident that the 'local' presented by the farmers is 'as authentic' as the Certified Local brand. Until recently, the participants in the AFN were able to negotiate and create visions of local mostly within the AFN and the relations of trust over the authenticity of the food and farmer were largely non-issues. Now, with the competing narrative coming from the Certified Local brand, the farmers and managers have to compete and defend their own construction of a 'local' market. The main barrier to maintaining authenticity with consumers is that the AFNs allow some reselling, which may be used to question the authenticity of the farmers and the markets.

7.4.2 Belo Horizonte: Constructing the 'Local' and the 'Modern' at the Scale of the AFN and in the City

In Toronto, there are many contestations of the meaning of local that are occurring at the scale of the AFN. In contrast, in Belo Horizonte, the discourse around local is being shaped by actors working at larger scales (which is beyond the scope of this thesis), although the effects of this shaping can be noted at the scale of the AFN. The attempts to counter this narrative are also not occurring at the scale of the AFN, but are occurring at the scale of the individual farmer.

In Belo Horizonte, there are very few competing discourses of the local, but also little interest in 'local' as it pertains to food. This points to the difficulty in using the primarily North American and European based literature on AFNs in the context of other areas of the world (Abrahams 2007). In this case study, the issue is not who makes claim to or

defines the local; rather, it is who gets to claim the ‘modern’. In this case study location the ‘local’ is devalued because of the links to the traditional and the ‘old-fashioned’. Therefore, there is little motivation for competing narratives of ‘local’ (or traditional) in the city. The farmers in Belo Horizonte are attempting to underplay the ‘local’ aspect of their AFN, and create a narrative of ‘modern’ around the food. In Belo Horizonte, the attempt to counter this narrative is not happening at the scale of the AFN. Rather, individual farmers are left to attempt to create a discourse around the ‘local’ as ‘just as modern’ as supermarket food.

In Belo Horizonte, there has been no attempt by farmers or administrators to reclaim or construct ideas of the local. Nevertheless, the local is still institutionalized in the regulations of the AFN. EMATER was responsible for certifying that the farmer was in fact from the state of Minas Gerais and that the food that was sold was in fact produced by them (although for practical purposes, farmers only came from an approximately 50km radius from the city). In fact, based on my discussions with farmers and personal observations of interactions between farmers and consumers, the ‘local’ was assumed and having to authenticate the food as local was a non-issue. There were no noted questions from consumers about locality, nor did I note any discussion in the popular media surrounding this issue.

An issue that was prevalent in the case study was the association between the selling of food at a farmers’ stall with being ‘old-fashioned’ and the selling of food in a supermarket as being ‘modern’. This is a form of de-valorization of the local and

valorization of the modern. Just as the Certified Markets challenged the farmers and managers to counter with their own visions of local in Toronto, the growth of supermarkets and the devaluation of the local challenges the farmers and administrators in Belo Horizonte to come up with competing narratives. In order to attract consumers, these actors could react by either trying to 'revalue' the local, or by trying to posit the local food as 'just as modern'. Yet the administrators in Belo Horizonte are notably absent from any attempt to shape either a re-valued local or a 'just as modern' discourse. The administrators of the program were not unaware of the issues that the AFN farmers were facing with the devalorization of their produce. Both administrators and farmers noted that there was a decline in the number of people willing to buy from the traditional market sources, as has been discussed. The administrator in charge of the municipal 'feira livre' program (an evening market program offered by the government that is open to intermediaries as well as farmers) discussed how market culture has a strong history in Belo Horizonte. However, this culture is changing, and he provided the example of two historical, city-owned market buildings recently closing as proof of this change. Although supermarkets in Belo Horizonte are not as powerful as in other urban centres in Brazil, the AFN administrators thought that the growth in hipermercados will continue to erode market culture. They acknowledge the linking of supermarkets to a sense by consumers that 'local' food is not as good as the modern food in the supermarkets. Of importance is the site of the sale and the market stall, and by association the food at the market stall, are devalued as compared to the supermarket. Despite acknowledging the devaluation of local and how this impacts farmers selling at market stalls, they have not come forth with any attempts to re-define local. Perhaps this is in part because, as noted in Table 7.1, in

Belo Horizonte the main goal of the AFN is to provide access to local food for low-income consumers. As such, a devaluation of local food means that the market stall does not become an exclusive space. I also observed a sentiment of futility on the part of the administration about trying to address the trend towards modern consumption practices.

The farmers who are most impacted by the devaluation of local food thus become the main actors within the AFN who attempt to construct narratives around the site of the market stall and their 'local' food. As most of the farmers note and my personal observations showed, the majority of the clientele at the market stalls is middle-aged to elderly and come to them as it is the way they have always shopped, or because they cannot afford supermarket foods. Attracting younger customers is vital for the long-term success of the AFN. The farmers note (and work by Farina 2002 corroborates) that the younger generation is not as interested in the foods offered at the stall, as they are consuming more 'modern' processed foods. Because there is no attempt to construct any countering narratives at the AFN level, the long-term success of attracting customers is in jeopardy. Power asymmetries in scalar construction are evident, as the farmers are not very powerful, either within the AFN or in the city, so they have a limited ability to shape food narratives. This is especially apparent when contrasted to the power that the chain supermarkets have to shape the 'modern' narrative.

The irony of this 'local farmer's stall as traditional/supermarket as modern' dichotomy is that it is a false one when considering the food sold at each location. Based on discussion with some supermarket produce managers and with farmers selling at the CEASA food

terminal, most of the produce in supermarkets is purchased either directly from local farmers at much lower prices, or is purchased through the CEASA food terminal, which only sells food produced within the state of Minas Gerais. Discussions with farmers at the food terminal and in the countryside show that 'modern' produce is often grown by farmers much like those in the DR program, although it can also be grown by larger industrial farms, and sold through an intermediary to the supermarket, with the only differences being the supply chain, the cost (on average 30% more at the supermarket) and the point of final sale. Thus, the modern is constructed through the idea of the supermarket, rather than the food itself. The supermarket conveys modernity and affluence. The lack of prominence of the DR AFN within Belo Horizonte, in stark contrast to the farmers' markets in Toronto that have negotiated ideas of local food in prominent media publications, shows the lack of political power that DR farmers have, and the apparent lack of interest in engaging in a re-shaping of the discourse by administrators.

7.5 Summary: Constructing the 'Local' at the Scale of the AFN

A key difference between case studies in Toronto and Belo Horizonte is how ideas of 'local' are either valued or de-valued by consumers, and in particular by elite consumers. In Toronto, the valuation of 'local' has led to competing narratives of what is authentically local. In Belo Horizonte, the devaluation of the 'local' has left farmers competing to create an image of 'just as modern' as the supermarket. The other main difference between these case studies is the scale at which narratives of 'local' and

'modern' are being constructed, and the implication of this on how much power actors at the scale of the AFN have.

In Toronto, the scale at which these competing narratives are constructed allows the AFN to be able to assert some power. Not to discount the influence of a broader North American construction of 'local food', but the Toronto AFNs do have power to contest and create constructions that suit their own interests. Here, the competition is occurring between two different 'local' AFN models. Although the Certified Local AFN model is gaining traction in the city, the AFNs are positioned to counter this with their alternative visions of local. This is occurring at the scale of the AFN, with both market managers and farmers working to create an alternative vision of local, and the articulation of this in places such as on the market websites and, mainly, through the relations of trust that they have with current consumers. In Belo Horizonte, the dominant 'modern' narrative is being shaped by supermarkets, acting at a larger scale, and the AFN has not been active in countering this narrative. The AFN administrators are not even attempting to engage in the debate, perhaps because the de-valuation of the local works to keep the program targeted to lower-income consumers, or perhaps because of the perceived futility of attempting to change such a dominant 'modern' narrative across Brazil in a program that is targeted at the scale of one city. These two case studies demonstrate the complex power structures and relations that underlie the social construction of scale, and the real impacts of these constructions on the AFNs and on participating farmers.

7.6 Alternative to What Ends? Scaling-Up, Scaling-Out and Power in the AFNs

The two case study AFNs are fairly small in both size and scope. However, as noted by Allen et al. (2003), AFNs may have potential that are not proportional to their size and scope. Although it is difficult to evaluate the potential to both scale-out and scale-up, to understand the broader potential of these AFNs it is important to do so. Scaling-out involves including more households, individuals and locations in the AFN, while scaling-up involves having an impact at the scale of the larger food system to address broader structural concerns (Johnston and Baker 2005). In this section, I discuss indicators of the potential of the case study AFNs to scale-out and scale-up, as well as their potential impact on power relations within society.

7.6.1 Scaling-Out

Scaling-out, or the potential to broaden the AFN to other localities and households, may be counter to the idea of a 'local' network. In Toronto, there are two potential ways that the AFN model can be scaled-out, either through the creation of more community markets, or the inclusion of more farmers and consumers per market. In terms of allowing more farmers per market, each individual market has set their own guidelines about who can be included in the market. At the Dufferin Market, which is the most successful of the four markets, the market manager has decided to not allow farmers offering similar products to existing farmers into the market, as she does not want to grow unsustainably and create more competition for the existing farmers. The Wychwood Market and Withrow Market allow access to all interested new farmers, who meet their selling criteria regarding local food. Both managers did state that in the future, if the market

becomes too large, then they will have to reconsider this, but at this point because they are fairly new, they are experimenting with the scale of the market. The Stonegate Market is actively trying to recruit more farmers, but because it is the least financially successful of the four markets, it has difficulty with even maintaining its current scale.

With regards to scaling-out to other locations, one manager noted problems with expanding the community farmers' market model in the city of Toronto. The manager of the Dufferin Market and coordinator of the Farmers' Market Network (to which all of the participant markets belong), Anne Freeman, is hesitant to support a move towards 'more is better' (i.e. the more markets the better for the local food movement), but rather would like to see the current rapid growth of markets slow down to levels she thinks are more sustainable. Her concerns are based on beliefs that the city does not yet have the consumer base to support all of the new and proposed markets. As she explains, the scaling out of the market, without a corresponding scaling out of the consumer base, may split the existing consumer base in that a consumer who used to purchase at one market will go to another. This will create more work for producers, who rather than sell a lot at one market will have to go to multiple markets to sell a lesser amount at each. She believes that some markets will eventually fail, and "that is a shame, it is a lot lost, for producers and the message it sends to the neighbourhood and the city." She notes that there is conflict and competition between markets, and this is not beneficial for the farmers involved. She would rather build a few small and strong markets than attempt to reach more consumers, and potentially involve more farmers.

This demonstrates one of the potential pitfalls of community-based markets, which is that actors may be interested in preserving 'their' community market and protecting 'their' farmers. The market managers in Toronto in some ways tried to support a broader expansion of the AFN model (for example by their participation in the Farmers' Market Network), but at the same time there was competition among markets for a still-limited consumer base. The market farmers and managers worked hard at increasing their own consumer base and creating social relations at the market. Their hesitation at expansion that may draw customers away from their markets, or may draw farmers away if other markets are more successful, demonstrating their prioritization of the individual market over the broader AFN movement in the city.

The AFN in Belo Horizonte is actively attempting to scale-out by adding more farmers and thus more stall locations, albeit on the outskirts of the city only, while restricting stalls in the core of the city. Yet there are a few issues with scaling-out in this case study. First, the scale of the AFN, because it is a city-run program is limited by the physical boundaries of the city. Thus, at some point if it were to continue to grow there is a physical barrier to growing beyond the city. Second, the sometimes limited success which farmers have in the program, especially since they have been kept out of the city centre, means that the interest from farmers not currently participating is low. The devaluation of local food has meant that direct selling is not necessarily an attractive option for farmers. In a visit to the CEASA food terminal, I discussed with farmers who are not a part of the program about barriers to entry, and most were not even interested because they thought it was too risky and that people in the city were not interested in their food. Even if the

profit margin would be higher than selling wholesale, the farmers I talked to did not believe it was worth the risk.

One way that both of these AFNs have attempted to scale-out is through the promotion of these AFN models to other locations within the country. This means of scaling-out may balance the desire of the markets in Toronto to protect their own community market while at the same time promote the local food movement. For example, the Dufferin Market has created a brochure about community markets in public parks that is aimed towards start-up markets in both Canada and the United States. In Belo Horizonte, administrators of the program have presented the program at international conferences and symposia. But the strength of the Toronto AFNs locally in meeting the specific place-based needs and requirements of their participants may be a weakness in scaling-out. For Toronto, scaling-out the idea of a community market is not a unique contribution as there are community markets throughout North America. What makes the AFN unique is how each of the four markets has created a market that addresses the different community needs and, in the case of the most successful market especially, created a sense of community. The participation of all actors in the network has created four unique market places that cannot be exported to another location or situation, but that at their current scale work very well. In comparison, the design of the Belo Horizonte case study is less focused on the creation of community and the needs of AFN participants, especially farmers. The design is focused on dealing with a city-wide issue (and in fact a nation-wide issue in Brazil) of access to food by low-income citizens. This is a weakness for the actual AFN function at the local level in many ways, as noted throughout this

thesis, but it does lead to a more readily transferable model. Again, there are some specifics that will not easily translate to another location. For example, the specific prices set are city-specific and the involvement of EMATER only works within the state of Minas Gerais. Yet for cities in Brazil dealing with similar issues of local farmer access and low-income consumer access, it is a more readily transferable model. Already, the neighbouring municipality of Betim is interested in creating a similar program.

Examining how well the AFNs can scale-out provides insight into their broader potential. Paradoxically, the focus on the local scale and community can be counter to the ability to scale-up and scale-out. In Toronto, the concern over protecting the local farmers' markets and local farmers has resulted in limited scaling-out within the city. The transferable aspects of this market are fairly generic (e.g. community-centred and run, direct-selling markets), so the AFN does not present a new or unique model for scaling-out. In Belo Horizonte, the focus on city-wide issues that are common to other locations in Brazil presents a good model for scaling-out within the country.

7.6.2 Scaling-Up

In terms of scaling-up, the 'local' focus of these AFNs in some ways precludes some of the more transformational ways of challenging current structures or global inequalities. Even if they are not transformational, Allen et al. (2003) point out that AFNs "may have effects in ways that are unexpected or out of proportion to what it seems they can actually accomplish given their small size and neoliberal orientations. For example, it is possible that alternatives…may indeed begin to increase members' interest and engagement in

food-system problems and solutions" (p. 72). The Toronto case study markets in particular have a greater focus on education around food issues and the farmers and administration encourages action by their consumer community. This is an area for future research in this AFN, to understand how awareness created at the scale of the AFN translates to actions at other scales by the consumers.

The Toronto AFN attracts an affluent and powerful consumer class. The power and influence of this class beyond the AFN has been demonstrated through their ability to help open spaces in the city for farmers (as discussed in Chapter Six). The Toronto case study AFN may lead to a consumer class who has the power to articulate views at other scales, with more potential to scale-up to address structural issues in the food system. Participation in the AFN by this class is capitalized on by administrators and farmers, as they use the AFN to inform this consumer class of issues in the food system that either affect them or that they are passionate about (for example, the Dufferin Grove listserv). However, some work on 'reflexive' middle class consumers suggests that they are not as 'reflexive' as has been assumed (Johnston and Szabo 2011). A better understanding of the actual actions of 'reflexive' consumers in Toronto is an area for future research, to understand if the Toronto case study leads to scaling-up. Even if scaling-up is possible in Toronto, it is important to consider whose values are being scaled-up, as the middle class may project their own values on broader society (for example see DuPuis 2002, Guthman 2003).

Although, as noted in Chapter Two, some small farmer movements (most notably the MST) have a political forum in Brazil, suggesting political power for small farmers and their concerns and issues, the small farmers in the program (except the farmers at Pastorinhas, as noted in Chapter Five) do not for the most part identify with or feel their voices are represented well by the MST. At the level of the city, in Belo Horizonte, the AFN farmers and administrators do not generally reach a consumer class that has any power, and thus the AFN does not have the same ability to scale-up that the Toronto case study may have. Even if the farmers or administrators used avenues such as newsletters and listservs (which they do not) they would be informing relatively powerless consumers. However, the municipal government has attempted to intervene in the capitalist pricing of food by mandating set prices. These prices do impact on the produce in the immediate vicinity of the stalls during the time the stalls were operating. For instance, in one location, the small grocer nearby price-matched with the DR prices on the days and during the times that the farmer was at his stall. However, the overall impact of this, with only 17 farmers in operation and operating limited days and times, is negligible.

7.6.3 Creating New Power Relations within the AFNs

Another way that AFNs may potentially lead to change is by changing their internal power dynamics. When contrasted to the conventional food system, AFNs are cited as having the potential to create more equal power relations. Chapter Six discussed the potential of AFNs to create new spaces and change power relations for participating farmers. Although AFNs may have the potential to empower groups and individuals

disempowered within the conventional system, this does not always occur in practice (Allen 2008). In this section, I examine how the AFN structure impacts on power relations. In these case studies, the institutional and administrative structure of the AFN was found to have a large impact on the operation of power within the AFN, but the structure of local AFNs is not often considered in the literature.

The workings of the AFN are very different in each case study location. The example of the Dufferin Grove market's negotiated regulations, discussed earlier, is a good example of how power dynamics in the Toronto AFN model tend to work. It begins with informal discussion and mediation of various perspectives by the market manager, and then (if needed) a draft formulation of a regulation, and revisions as part of the process as new issues arise. Generally, throughout the Toronto farmers' markets, farmers agreed that they were being listened to and had input on matters that affected them. They felt like 'participants' in the AFN, rather than passive recipients. This shows that there is the potential for this model of AFN to create more equal power dynamics, at least between producers, elite consumers and market administrators. Yet there were instances where the power that market managers held was apparent. As was noted in Chapter Six, in at least one instance the market manager 'suggested' to a farmer that they should change their pricing, and I noted in at least one instance a manager soliciting prices from other managers to see what the price of a particular product should be to set the price at her market. Although in both of these instances the managers were asking for the prices to be increased, which means a greater profit is gained by the farmer, in the first instance the farmers were not comfortable with the price change, as they felt it was unfair. This

demonstrates the power that managers do have at the market over farmers, even when they are acting in what they may feel is the best interest of the farmer. It must be noted, as discussed earlier, that the voice of one group, the low-income consumer, is not heard since they are not participants within the AFN. This brings into question what other voices are not being heard (e.g. what ethnicities, genders, family types, political affiliations etc.)? The AFN structure allows for new relations of power for a select group only.

In Belo Horizonte, the AFN was bureaucratic and the role of the farmers and the consumers in shaping the AFN was limited, which counters DuPuis and Goodman's (2005) belief that AFNs should develop collaboratively. For example, the DR farmers did have an association, which was formed after the municipal government suggested it as a means to have more of a say in the AFN. However, the association was weak and was not consulted regularly by the AFN administrator when issues arose. Throughout my fieldwork, I found that the largest concern with this type of power dynamic was that the one administrator who had the most day-to-day contact with farmers also held power in relation to these farmers. One notable example of this was prior to a visit to one of the participant's farms, when the administrator dictated what he expected for lunch when he arrived on farm. He did so under the guise of a jest yet it was interpreted by the farmer as a demand, one which was difficult for the farmer to meet as he requested expensive meat and cheese as a part of the lunch. Although not specifically discussed with me by farmers, based on my observations of the interactions between this administrator and the participant farmers, there were many issues of the administrator using his position of

power over certain farmers he did not personally ‘like’. The administrator favoured some farmers over others, creating tensions among farmers, and creating opportunity for some farmers to open stalls in new locations expected to be profitable, while denying others the same opportunity. For example, one farmer was told she could no longer sell in one new location that she thought would be very profitable, but I then saw the administrator approach another farmer about filling the spot at this same location. When questioned by me, he stated that he thought the other farmer was a better ‘match’ for that location but would not provide details as to why. I interpreted this as a way of favouring the farmer who was his friend rather than another equally deserving farmer. On a visit to one farm, the same administrator was openly skeptical of some of the seed saving techniques practiced by the two farmers who were taking agro-ecological approaches, noting afterwards to me that they were “absurd to think they knew better than college educated people,” such as himself, with a diploma in agricultural extension. He created a distinction between those like himself (who were ‘educated and urban’) and those like the farmer (‘uneducated and rural’).

The top-down approach from the government created a situation where the farmers and the consumers were both ‘recipients’ within the AFN, rather than true participants. Using the terminology introduced by Cox (1998), the AFN is a space of dependence for the farmers (and potentially for the consumers), but is not a space of engagement. The farmers have limited power to engage. The rules of the program were created and administered by the government, and there was no attempt made to change the deeper class issues that exist within the society, either for farmers or low-income consumers.

7.7 Conclusions

What the intent of the AFNs is ('who are they alternative for?'), how the AFN is organized, and the differing context of each affects the potential of the AFN. Neither of these alternatives present a 'radical' alternative, as they do not try to counter or subvert the conventional food system or its capitalist basis. The case studies are linked to the conventional food system in multiple ways, and even the attempt in Belo Horizonte to regulate pricing at the level of the municipal government is based on pricing products in relation to the prices in the free market.

These case study models do present alternatives for certain groups in some ways. Who is empowered to shape narratives of the 'local' has a great impact on exactly how the AFN is alternative, and who benefits. In Toronto, the AFN attracts affluent consumers, who not only have purchasing power but also have political power in the city. Thus, the AFN presents an economic and social alternative for small farmers, and creates a sense of community around food for the AFN participants. Interpreted another way, this 'sense of community' could also be seen as an affirmation of class in an exclusive space, as lower class consumers are excluded. In the AFN, farmers and the administration are empowered in the discourse around 'local' food, a contested idea at the scale of the city. There is tension between the idea of scaling-out in Toronto and the reality of potential competition that may arise from such scaling-out. Within this tension, the motivations of the AFN farmers and administrators may be revealed, as the focus on success for 'their' market may over-ride greater aspirations to make AFNs reach more people. There is the potential

for scaling-up to occur in this AFN because of the focus on citizen engagement, although the notion of the 'reflexive' consumer needs to be interrogated further. In addition, it is important to consider whose values are going to be reflected in the scaling-up, and if the middle class can create change that is inclusive of the values of excluded participants.

Meanwhile, the Belo Horizonte case study provides an interesting contrast to the 'norm' AFN in North America, in that it is focused on low-income urban consumers rather than farmers and environmental values. This case study provides some insight into the struggles and potential of an AFN that has a very different focus than most of the Northern-based ones. The structure of the AFN allows for the potential for the inclusion of a broader segment of society; but it does not empower farmers or consumers, create a community around food for participants, or enable farmers to counter urban residents' devaluation of the local. Scaling-out is limited by the boundaries of the municipality to some extent, although at least one neighbouring municipality has shown interest in adopting a similar program. Even within the municipal boundaries, the government has limited the spaces for farmers (excluding selling points in the affluent 'Contorno' area) and this limits the ability to scale-out since farmers are unable to access affluent and more influential consumers. The AFN model may also be scaled-out to other cities in Brazil because the problems of access to food and small farming that it tries to address are common to other major cities in the country. In terms of scaling-up, the government has attempted to intervene in the capitalist food system by setting fixed prices, and this has the potential to scale-up to challenge the dominant food system. However, since the program is limited in scale, this impact is negligible. If the program scaled-out

considerably so that there were hundreds of locations where grocery prices were forced to be lowered, then the ability to scale-up would be greater.

Both case studies demonstrate the importance of considering class, power and scale within AFNs, and of the North/South context. In Toronto, a consumer class that has power and uses their power to benefit the farmers, but also has created a community that is exclusive. If the power that this community has in broader society can be harnessed, as has been attempted with educational efforts by market organizers and farmers, then this AFN may scale-up. Yet even if they do, the values that are being scaled-up may reflect this consumer class alone, rather than a broader spectrum of society. The case study in Belo Horizonte demonstrates how Northern-based assumptions and values do not always hold true in the South. The powerful consumer class that is involved in AFNs that inform much of the Northern-based literature is not participating in the Belo Horizonte case study. Therefore, the class and power dynamics are very different, and lead to an AFN that is more inclusive but less powerful in the city. The inability of participants to change the negative narrative attached to 'local' food is an example of the powerlessness of the participants in Belo Horizonte, and is a limitation for the AFN to scale-up. Overall, the role that the consumer class plays in constructing scale and asserting power within and beyond the AFN is paramount to understanding the potential and limitations of each case study AFN.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions: The tale of Two Farmers in two very different Cities

It is just after 2pm and the heat of the concrete in the small square in Belo Horizonte is making the day feel almost unbearably hot in the sun. Samuel serves his last customer of the day, an elderly woman whom he knows well, before packing up his stall. She came for some broccoli, but knowing she can get bargains at the end of the day, she bargains a good price for a head of lettuce that look like it is starting to wilt and a large pineapple. Samuel, glad to get a bit of money for them, readily agrees and throws in another head of lettuce and a few peppers, joking that she needs to bring him some of her famous 'pão de quiejo' (Brazilian cheese buns) as a thank-you next week. As she leaves on foot, he packs up the remainder of the produce into a crate, intending to stop by the orphanage just out of town to donate it, and unfolds his stall. As he packs everything into the back of the truck, Samuel makes a mental tally of the day's sales and decides that for an end of the month (when money is tighter for his customers), it was an okay day. As he up starts his truck, his thoughts have already turned to a mental list of all of the things that must be done on the farm before the day is done.

Later that same day, 8000 km away, it is 9pm in Toronto and the humidity has finally started to abate in Dufferin Park. Mike is serving his last customer of the day, a middle-aged man, who is buying some rainbow beets. Mike tells him to take some of the leftover fennel for free, just to try it out, and let him know next week how he liked it. After surveying what is left over at the end of the day, Mike decides that there is not enough to

take to the food bank. Instead, he gives and barters it with a few other market vendors. After chatting a bit with another farmer about how to deal with the tomato blight that has affected many plants this year, he climbs into his truck to begin his long drive home. On the road home he does a mental tally of the day, and decides that it was a decent day at market. There were three farmers with kale this week, and he makes a mental note to talk with the other two farmers to see where his pricing of kale is in relation to them. As he starts up his truck, his thoughts turn to what tasks he has on-farm tomorrow morning.

8.1 Introduction

In this dissertation, I sought to understand how the experiences of farmers like the two discussed above, who live and work in very different geographical locations, are similar and how they differ. These farmers exemplify two local direct selling AFNs, one in the Global North, in Toronto, Canada, and the other in the Global South, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Examining their experiences allows dominant narratives about AFNs to be held up to critical scrutiny and the potential and limitations of these networks to be assessed. In this concluding chapter, I draw together the main findings from Chapters 5, 6, and 7, relating these to the objectives of the research and addressing their contribution to the academic literature on AFNs. Intersections of scale, place, space and class in the operation and representation of AFNs are highlighted throughout, thereby highlighting the utility of a geographical approach. I end with a discussion of the practical contributions of this research, directions for future research and concluding thoughts about possible futures for AFNs in the North and the South.

8.2 Findings and Contributions: Livelihoods, Values and AFN Narratives

The first main objective of the research was to assess the extent to which participating farmers' lived experiences either supported or challenged the dominant narratives that frame and define AFNs and their related production systems in both academic and popular discourse. To achieve this objective, I drew on the literature on livelihoods to interpret farmers' actions and experiences on-farm. In the livelihoods literature, the value of five types of 'capitals' or resources—natural, human, social, physical and financial—can contribute to the ability of an individual or household to secure a viable livelihood (Pretty 2002). The livelihoods approach allowed me to understand how each farmer has differing natural, physical, social, human and financial resources. Farmers' actions and decisions are shaped both by their environmental and social values, along with their bundles of available resources. Farmers participating in AFNs are often idealized as being small-scale, environmentally responsible and socially just. In this thesis, I have demonstrated that a more nuanced approach to understanding farmers is required.

A key finding and theoretical contribution of the research is the significance of scale, challenging the narrative of AFNs as unproblematically involving 'small' farmers. In AFN research, I suggest scale needs to be considered as both physical reality and as social construction. The comparative approach adopted in this thesis demonstrates that how and by whom 'small' scale is defined differs within and between AFNs, and can lead to tensions among farmers. In Belo Horizonte, the AFN relies on definitions of a small farmer that have been made by the state. The name of the program evokes images of a certain type of small farmer- a 'Roça' farmer. Yet in reality there are two classes of small

farmers participating in the Direto da Roça program: the majority with ‘Roças’ (small holdings and fewer resources, many with insecure land tenure) and those with ‘Fazendas’ (larger holdings and more resources, usually inherited land with secure land tenure). Land tenure, a contentious issue in this country, must be considered within the historical and cultural context of land inequality in Brazil. Farmers who have insecure tenure did not have the power to articulate their definitions of a ‘small’ farmer. In the Toronto case study, by contrast, there was no expressed tension over constructing the scale of small farmer. This illustrates how the case specific context and North/South differences can enhance and provide a nuance to the AFN research and the development of AFN theory.

Examining the second AFN narrative, that of the ‘environmental’ farmer, also demonstrates the importance of considering local context and the utility of a ‘livelihoods’ approach to understanding farmers in AFNs . Each farmer had a different ‘resource bundle’ and set of values that influenced on-farm environmental actions. In addition, the consumer also had a role in influencing farmers in their environmental decisions. This resulted in an ‘environmental spectrum’ of farmers. On one end of the spectrum were those farmers who were ‘beyond organics’, while on the other end of the spectrum there were those who were ‘conventional’ farmers. In Toronto, there were tensions among AFN farmers who have different environmental values, while in Belo Horizonte, the environment was not an issue of contention among the AFN farmers. Two core issues around the environment in the Toronto case study were those of power and trust. For farmers who were ‘beyond organic’, the power and influence of the corporate appropriation of organic led to their decision to try to move beyond organic certification.

As Goodman and Goodman (2007) suggest, this allowed for the AFN to be a place to articulate alternate environmental visions. For other farmers, certification was important to create and maintain a certain kind of mediated trust with consumers, speaking to the dominant influence of the industrial organic system in creating the organic narrative. In Belo Horizonte, both the economic cost of organic certification and the lack of farming knowledge about how to farm organically factored into the decision by most to farm near the 'conventional' end of the continuum. Overall, there was no typical 'environmental farmer', as the farmer's own values and resource bundles, as well as the influence of the customer, lead to different environmental practices among AFN farmers.

The third AFN narrative that of a socially just farmer, was examined from the perspective of on-farm labour. The type of labour used was very dependent on livelihood resources in both locations, as labour was a major constraint for farmers wishing to expand or in some cases even maintain their current production. This resulted in unjust labour relations and the creation of two classes of farmers in the AFN: the farmer class, and the on-farm labourer (or sharecropper) class. When answering one of the questions posed under the thesis's third objective, which is 'Alternative for whom?', the case study AFNs demonstrate that on-farm, the AFNs provide an alternative for farmers, while in some cases condoning, or at least masking, exploitation of the on-farm labour class. The on-farm labourer has limited power in the AFN, and their experiences are seldom considered within AFN literature because the exploitation occurs on-farm (the site of production) rather than at market (the site of consumption). The on-farm practices of farmers are to a great extent 'hidden' from consumers, who know farmers as they present themselves in

the space of the market. This leads to the potential for farmers to have a role in shaping narratives of food that evoke certain images of the ‘farm’, thus co-creating fetish narratives around locally produced food.

8.3 Fetishizing the ‘Local’

The second objective was to explore how participation within the AFN creates various spaces for farmers. The goal was to ‘place’ the farmers in the city, an environment that was quite different from ‘the farm’. Here, construction of the narrative of ‘local’ was found to be critical in understanding the experiences of farmers within the AFN, and in assessing the potential of the AFN itself.

Recently, AFN scholars have begun exploring how geographical ideas can aid in the understanding of AFNs (see Feagan 2007, Hinrichs 2003). This thesis has demonstrated that understanding the scale and place construction of the ‘local’ in AFNs is paramount to understanding how power and class operate in the networks and in the spaces and places for AFNs in each city. There are implications for farmers, in terms of what value can be captured for their product, how much influence they have in shaping narratives of local, what spaces are open for them in the city and what class of citizens they interact with. A reflexive approach to localism, as is urged by DuPuis and Goodman (2005), allowed for an understanding of how the co-construction of local, and even of the market as a ‘place’, occurs in the market space. As Harvey (1996, p. 316) has posited, and this work confirms, places “…are the distinct product of institutionalized social and political-economic power.” As the ‘tale of two cities’ in Chapter Six illustrates, farmers are not

merely passive recipients of the constructed narratives of local food, they, along with AFN consumers, have a role in creating and reinforcing constructed andchanging geographical knowledges of ‘local’. Cook and Crang’s (1996) concept of ‘geographical knowledges’ is useful in interpreting these constructions. Comparing case studies, farmers do not have equal power to influence ideas of the local in each location. Farmers in Toronto actively co-produce, intentionally or not, constructions of place to reinforce ideas of ‘local’. These farmers are working within a context where local is valued by an elite consumer class that has power in the city, and thus the farmers can take advantage of this to open physical, economic and political spaces in the city for themselves. In Belo Horizonte, farmers have not even attempted to invoke a geographical knowledge of ‘local’; rather, they have attempted to sterilize the food so that it invokes an imagining of ‘placeless’ (or global) food. However, because they are relatively powerless to shape narrative, and they deal with a class of consumer who has little power in the city, there are fewer physical, economic, and political spaces for these farmers in the city. In fact, there has been a closing of physical spaces for farmers in Belo Horizonte over the lifespan of the AFN, and farmers have been powerless to stop the spaces from closing. Abrahams (2009) stated the need to conduct case studies in the South to understand the theoretical gaps in the AFN literature. This finding, that a de-valuation of the local in a city in the South has such significant impact on the success of farmers in the network, and that farmers therefore try to create a narrative of placeless or sterilized food, is, to my knowledge, a new contribution to AFN theory.

8.4 The Potential and Limitations of the AFNs

The third objective of this research was to understand the potential and limitations of each of the case study AFNs. Each case study did present alternatives for certain groups in certain ways. Who has the power to shape narratives of the 'local' scale is a key determinant of who is included and who is excluded in each AFN. In addition, the goals expressed within each AFN shape how the AFN is set up, and this in turn impacts on who benefits.

Again, a central finding is that understanding the valued or de-valued narratives of local can lead to a better understanding of inclusion and exclusion in the AFN, how powerful the AFN is in the city, and the ability of the AFN to scale-up and scale-out. The Toronto AFN is an alternative not only for farmers, but for affluent consumers, as 'local' food is mainly food for elite consumers. The sense of community around food that is created in Toronto can be interpreted as a positive outcome, or could be interpreted as a means to reaffirm class status in an exclusive market space. In Belo Horizonte, the primary goal of the AFN, as articulated by the municipality, is to serve low-income consumers. To meet this goal, the design of the AFN leads to the potential for inclusion of a broader segment of society. However, the AFN structure does not lead to the empowerment of farmers or consumers, nor does it create much of a community around food for participants or enable farmers to counter urban residents' devaluation of the local. Using the idea of 'spaces of engagement' and 'spaces of dependence' (Cox 1998a), the Belo Horizonte case study is a space of dependence for farmers, but not a space of engagement, while the Toronto AFN is both a space of engagement and of dependence.

This tension within the Belo Horizonte AFN, between AFN administrators changed with catering to the urban poor and farmers trying in vain to attract the elite consumer, provides another contribution to the literature. Abrahams (2009) noted that conducting more Southern AFN case studies, the issue of access for the urban poor can be better understood. This study demonstrates that this includes the negative implications that the focus on the urban poor has on farmers in the network. The Belo Horizonte AFN is designed to meet the needs of the low-income consumer rather than the affluent consumer, but farmers are expected to make the compromises to ensure that the program is accessible to the poor. Access for the urban poor is not just an issue in the South, yet in Toronto only one Market (Stonegate) makes an effort to create a more accessible market. Intersections of class with space, place and scale shape these outcomes – something that would have been evident to some extent had each case been examined individually, but is highlighted more clearly by the comparative approach adopted in this work. The contributions from this study strengthen the conceptual and practical understanding of the benefits and limits of each approach.

To understand the broader potential of the AFNs, I employed the concepts of scaling-up (to contest the status quo at other scales) and scaling-out (to additional locations), as defined by Johnston et al. (2009). In Toronto, examining the potential to scale-out, by creating more markets, exposes the tension between trying to create a broader local food movement and the protection of existing markets. The focus by administrators on success for ‘their’ markets may over-ride greater aspirations to make AFNs reach more people.

The ability to scale-up in this study hinges on the actions of the 'reflexive' consumer, something that was beyond the scope of this thesis but certainly warrants further research. It is also important to consider whose values are going to be reflected in scaling-up, as the Northern AFN consumer tends to be in an affluent class with its own values and ideals. In Belo Horizonte, the idea of the AFN may be scaled-out, but the potential of the actual AFN to scale-out is limited by the municipal boundaries and the decisions of the municipality to exclude farmers from selling in the affluent 'Contorno' area of the city. In terms of scaling-up in Belo Horizonte, the issue is again one of power. The municipal government has to a small extent attempted to scale-up by fixing prices at the farmers' stalls, which in some cases forces grocers to price-match. Yet since the program is so weak in the city, there is very little overall impact from this intervention in the market.

8.5 Practical Contributions

Overall, the comparison of two case studies in different locations, one in the North and one in the South, provides insight into how this particular Southern based AFNs challenged several assumptions in the Northern based literature. This research thus not only makes a theoretical and empirical contribution, but also has a potentially practical contribution, namely for other AFNs to learn from these contrasting case studies.

The thesis's focus on farmers in AFNs provides a practical perspective on what is working for farmers and what is not. Farmers are in a unique position in AFNs, since although their livelihoods are often dependent on the AFN, they operate in a space where they are not 'citizens' of the city. This thesis has shown that when farmers have some

power in the AFN, not only are farmers more successful, but it also creates a stronger AFN. In practice, this challenges AFNs to create regulations and conditions that work for farmers. As noted in Chapter 7, the Toronto farmers' markets provide a good example for other AFNs of a network that includes collaboration with farmers to incorporate their views on regulations such as reselling and organic certification in order for a compromise between farmers' needs and consumer expectations.

The practical implications of a lack of power of farmers within the AFN are demonstrated through the case study of Belo Horizonte, where farmers do not have as much power in the city. One of the most obvious manifestations of this lack of power is the exclusion of farmers from the 'Contorno' area of the city. Superficially, this appears to impact farmers mainly because of a lack of access to affluent consumers. However, the lack of access to the affluent consumers also affects the political strength of the AFN, the creation of other spaces in the community for farmers, and potentially even the ability of the AFN to scale-up through the affluent 'reflexive consumer'. AFNs that are focused on low-income consumers must be aware of the limitations this poses for enhancing their power and potential in the city.

The issue of inclusion and exclusion in the AFN, and how class reinforces this, is informative for AFN administrators. Although, as noted in the thesis, the market managers in Toronto were fully aware of exclusion from the market, the main means by which this was discussed was through economic pricing. In this work, I have shown how exclusion is also based on the actual market space itself and the community that is

created around the market. Thus, some of the practical solutions that have been proposed to ensure greater access, such as food vouchers or in the United States the use of food stamps, may not adequately deal with issues of access.

In terms of the management of the AFNs, the main finding that AFN administrators should be aware of is how the market environment both co-constructs these spaces of exclusion or inclusion, and the role of the institutionalized meanings of 'local' food in this. In this work I have used the Dufferin Market as an excellent example of a market that allows for farmers to have power in determining rules and regulations. As much as this benefits farmers, unlike the rigid government-determined rules in Belo Horizonte, the negative implications for consumer inclusion and the creation of an elite space are also evident. Although the Toronto market managers are all keenly aware of these elite spaces, understanding the role of the market regulations in creating this space may allow for some reflection and changes that will open the market to be more inclusive for consumers. The move by the Stonegate market administration to pilot an innovative voucher program shows that there are many possibilities for inclusion, and that these markets have administrations that are up to the challenge. The government bureaucracy that administers the DR program has shown both less awareness at the limitations they have institutionalized within the program, and less will to change the program to better meet the needs of the disadvantaged participant, the farmer.

8.6 Directions for Future Research

One area that requires further research is the ability of consumers, through their food purchases, to create changes that scale-up, though this is an area that has been identified in other works and theoretical advancements are being made (see, for example Johnston and Szabo 2011). The main area I identify for future research, where the theoretical concepts are still in the beginning stages, is that of adding Southern AFN perspectives and case studies. This significant gap has been identified by Abrahams (2009), and this case study comparison provides a small contribution to fill this gap, but is by no means definitive. This thesis has not been able to draw on many examples of 'Southern' AFNs in order to gain information about what aspects of the case study in Belo Horizonte are 'typical' of a Southern AFN and which ones are context specific, unlike in Toronto where I can draw from numerous case studies. Even what is considered an AFN may differ from North to South, as the Farmers' Markets often discussed in the North-based literature are considered conventional in many locations in the South, including Belo Horizonte, although Farmers' Markets are in decline there.

As demonstrated in this thesis, many of the key assumptions—the affluent consumer, the focus on the farmer—do not hold true in at least one case study in the South. The rapid transformation of the supermarket sector and of consumer preferences in the South makes this an even more pressing topic of research, as theoretical understanding must keep pace with the shifts in on-ground reality. Many more case studies need to be done to uncover more nuanced understandings of the reality of Southern AFNs. In particular, case studies done not only in the South, but by Southern researchers, will provide good 'insider'

perspectives and allow for a more diverse base of researchers to contribute to the AFN literature. Secondly, comparative research, like this study, is useful for making the 'obvious' and the 'hidden' aspects in one case study apparent when contrasted to another case study. This will allow for a theoretical and practical understanding of AFNs that is not only geographically broader and inclusive of Southern perspectives, but also reflects the nuances from the North that are highlighted through a case study comparison.

8.7 Concluding Thoughts

From the time that the research was conducted until now, farmers' markets and other AFNs in Toronto have grown at a considerable pace, although this trend is not directly attributable to the influence of the AFNs studied. On the surface, this can be interpreted as a good direction for AFNs in Toronto. Yet in this work, I have shown that community market model AFNs were largely exclusive (with the exception of Stonegate) and created communities of food that acted to reaffirm class distinctions. It is important to consider who is benefitting from the proliferation of AFNs in Toronto. Since the time of research, the number of foodbank users has also increased to rates that had not been seen in over a decade (Daily Bread Foodbank 2010). The success of the local food movement in Toronto must be tempered with the reality of food insecurity in the city. At the same time, in Belo Horizonte, the current DR program has been merely maintaining similar numbers of farmers as at the time of research, yet serves low-income consumers, the population that the Toronto AFN failed to serve. In this work, I have attempted to respond to the challenge by Allen (2008) to have "an explicit focus on justice" (p. 159), yet, practically, these AFNs have been narrow in their scope considering justice only for

certain interest groups. Despite the focus of scholars (such as Allen et al. 2003, Guthman 2002, Hinrichs and Allen 2008, Slocumb 2007) on the problem of exclusion of certain groups within AFNs, these divisions within AFNs mean that, in practice, a 'win-win' solution is still a theoretical 'objective' rather than a reality. The changing demographics noted in both locations may, by necessity, lead to innovations within the AFNs to better serve a more diverse population.

The findings of this research provide a timely contribution in the current context of AFN proliferation in North and supermarket proliferation in the South. The findings show how the Toronto AFN does provide an alternative for some, particularly farmers, but that without changes, AFNs in the North may serve merely to reinforce class division in a time where food insecurity among low-income consumers is rising. The Belo Horizonte case study findings illustrate that AFNs can serve low-income consumers, a lesson for the Northern AFNs; however, farmers need to be empowered in order for AFNs to thrive, and the participation of affluent consumers is key. In this time of supermarket proliferation in Brazil, there is still the potential for affluent consumers to turn back to local food. Trends in consumption among affluent consumers in the South tend to follow those in the North. If so, and the Belo Horizonte case study farmers can capitalize on the popularity of local food, this case study has the potential to act as a model for AFNs in both the North and the South, in which farmers, low-income consumers and affluent consumers all participate together.

At the start of this dissertation, I noted how AFNs are posited counter to the industrial system, even though through this research I have shown that they are, for the most part, embedded within it in terms of pressures and imperatives they face (e.g. price disciplines, the uneven class purchasing power). The case study AFNs are not ‘utopias’ and this work has identified both some of the strengths and some of the weaknesses of these types of AFNs. However, this does not mean that AFNs cannot be a true ‘alternative’ to the industrial system. Through case studies such as these, AFN theorists and practitioners can use the understanding of the drawbacks and the successes of particular AFNs to advance theoretical and practical knowledge, using this to build stronger alternatives that may eventually lead to transformative changes to the inherently flawed industrial food system.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Ethics Approval

Office of Research Ethics
The University of Western Ontario
Room 00045 Dental Sciences Building, London, ON, Canada N6A 5C1
Telephone: (519) 661-3036 Fax: (519) 850-2466 Email: ethics@uwo.ca
Website: www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

Use of Human Subjects - Ethics Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. B. Dodson
Review Number: 12947S **Revision Number:** 1
Review Date: August 2, 2007 **Review Level:**
Protocol Title: Producer's perspectives on an Alternative Food Network in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Toronto, Canada
Department and Institution: Geography, University of Western Ontario
Sponsor: International Development research centre
Ethics Approval Date: August 2, 2007 **Expiry Date:** July 31, 2008
Documents Reviewed and Approved: Revised Study Title, UWO Protocol, Revised Study End Date, Letters (2) of Information and Consent (Administrator, Farmer)
Documents Received for Information:

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above referenced revision(s) or amendment(s) on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information. If you require an updated approval notice prior to that time you must request it using the UWO Updated Approval Request Form.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or consent form may be initiated without prior written approval from the NMREB except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the subject or when the change(s) involve only logistical or administrative aspects of the study (e.g. change of monitor, telephone number). Expedited review of minor change(s) in ongoing studies will be considered. Subjects must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation.

Investigators must promptly also report to the NMREB:

a) changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
b) all adverse and unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected;
c) new information that may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study.

If these changes/adverse events require a change to the information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment advertisement, the newly revised information/consent documentation, and/or advertisement, must be submitted to this office for approval.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussion related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

Chair of NMREB: Dr. Julie McMullin
Deputy Chair: Susan Hoddinott

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information		
☐ Denise Grafton (dgrafton@uwo.ca)	☐ Jennifer McEwen (jmcewen4@uwo.ca)	☐ Ethics Officer (ethics@uwo.ca)

cc: ORE File

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Appendix II: Interview Guides from the Start, Middle and End of Research

Guide from February, 2007 (Ethics Approval Submission)

Producer Interview Topics

1. Farming History

Please tell me about how long you (or your family has been farming), where you have farmed and what you have farmed.

2. Farming Present

Where is your farm now, and what size is it? Who does what on the farm? What is farmed? What is the day to day routine of farming in your family?

3. Market History

Before this stall, where did you sell your produce? What kinds of produce did you sell? Who were the main consumers of your products? Can you please explain what shifts you have seen in the market, and how you have adjusted to these shifts.

4. Present Market

Where else do you currently sell your produce to? Why have you chosen to sell in the markets you have chosen?

5. Current Goals

What are your current goals in farming? What do you do to try to meet these goals? What gets in the way of achieving them?

6. Future Goals

What kind of future do you see for yourself and your children? Do you want farming to be in your future?

7. History of 'Market' involvement

When and why did you get involved in this program? How did you find out about the program?

8. Current 'Market' Experiences

What amount of your produce is being sold through this program? Who are your main consumers? What about the program is working for you, what is not? How does the program fit in with your current and future goals? Can you tell me about some personal experiences you have had at the market?

Interview Guide from April 2007 (Brazil)

1. Farming History

-Talk about history of farming, how long has your family been in farming, how long have you been on this land? In produce?
- Family farming now, where, what, linkages?
- What is your land tenure arrangement, who shares this land with you? How has tenure affected your farming?

2. Farming Present

- size of your farm? And how much is market garden?
- How did you decide on the crops you plant each year? Comment on changes in the variety of produce you bring to market over the years?
- employees/family workers and seasonal change in those?
- quality of land?

3. Selling History/ Present:

- Where did you sell your products in the past? How has that changed?
- Where do you sell your products now? Wholesale (role on atravessadora)? Retail? Farmgate? Food Terminal? Restaurants? Sharecropping?
- Can you explain any significant shifts you have seen in farming/markets that have affected you, and how you have adjusted to these shifts in terms of markets you pursue?
- Role of supermarkets affected you? Trends in buying? Younger generation preferences?
- How much do you sell via DR?

5 . DR

- How long have you been in DR? Where (location change)? How did you find out about DR? Why did you decide on selling directly?
- Expansion? When/where did you expand?
- What has worked? What has not?
- can you talk about how it has evolved along the way?
-What are your thoughts about how DR should run?
- Why are there not more farmers?
- How do you get to the city?
- What are your thoughts about reselling?
- How do value added products fit into your strategy? What % of total sales?
- What are the benefits of direct selling, what are the drawbacks for you?
- Who is buying your produce?
- Do you want to expand?
- Do you think organic certification is useful (are you certified)? Do customers care about that?

6. Non-Monetary (social/cultural etc)

- non-economic benefits of selling directly? Feel valued for your work? Feel a part of a larger community? Education?
- relationship with your customers?

7. Current Goals

- What are your current goals in farming? What do you do to try to meet these goals? What gets in the way of achieving them?

6. Future Goals

- What kind of future do you see for yourself and your children? Do you want farming to be in your future? What future do you see for agriculture in Brazil?

Interview Guide from June 2008 (Canada)

1. Farming History

-Talk about history of farming, how long has your family been in farming, how long have you been on this land? In produce?
- why did you move into organics/sustainable and the produce that you chose?

2. Farming Present

- size of your farm? And how much is market garden?
- How did you decide on the crops you plant each year? Comment on changes in the variety of produce you bring to market over the years?
- employees/family workers and seasonal change in those?
- Season extension/cold storage?

3. Farmers Market History/ Present:

- Where did you sell your products in the past? How has that changed?
- Where do you sell your products now? Wholesale? Retail? Farmgate? Food Terminal? Restaurants?
- Can you explain any significant shifts you have seen in farming/markets that have affected you, and how you have adjusted to these shifts in terms of markets you pursue?
- Role of supermarkets and "organics" affected you?
- How much do you sell via Farmers Markets?

5 . Farmers Markets

- How long have you been going to markets? Which ones? Why did you start at farmers markets at first, and which ones? How did you find out about the Toronto markets? Why did you decide on selling directly through markets?
- Expansion into other markets, work vs. payback? When/where did you expand?
- What has worked at the Markets? What has not?
- can you talk about how it has evolved along the way?
-What are your thoughts about how a market should be run? Should it be open to any farmers? Should it be strictly controlled? Need to be organic only or not?

- What are your thoughts on year-round markets, what role does Dufferin being year-round play in your business?
- How much produce of yours is reselling and where do you get it from? What are your thoughts about reselling (esp. at year-round markets)?
- Thoughts on 'certified organic'?
- How do value added products fit into your strategy? What % of total sales?
- What are the benefits of direct selling, what are the drawbacks for you?
- Who is buying your produce?
- Do you want to expand into more Farmers Markets? (or other direct selling)?
- How has the focus on "local" affected your business?
- How has the evolution of "organics" affected your business? Do you think organic certification is useful (are you certified)?

6. Non-Monetary (social/cultural etc)

- non-economic benefits of selling directly? Feel valued for your work? Feel a part of a larger community? Education?
- relationship with your customers? You thank them on your website, can you talk about loyalty/trust/friendships?

7. Current Goals

- What are your current goals in farming? What do you do to try to meet these goals? What gets in the way of achieving them?

6. Future Goals

- What kind of future do you see for yourself and your children? Do you want farming to be in your future?

Appendix III: Timeline of Field Research

Fieldwork Component	Date
Initial Toronto Consultations	March 2006
Initial Brazil Consultations	July 6 2006
Brazil Field Research	March to May 2007
Toronto Field Research	August to May 2007
Follow-up in Brazil	January to February 2008
Follow-up in Toronto	June 2008

Appendix IV: List of Key Informant Interviewees

Brazil	**Position**
Adriana Rocha	Land and Production Researcher- Cedefes- NGO focused on Social Movements
Romeu Silveira Diniz	Manager of Farmer Market area of CEASA
Flavia, Ricardo	Produce Intermediaries (and re-sellers at Markets)
Helton Magalhaes Marra	Manager of 'Feiro Modolo' program, Municipal Government
Desiderio Junqueiru Neto	Director of GAPCO
Jamil Galuppo Mattar	Cabinet Head, GAPCO
Raul Machado	EMATER liaison to DR program
Valdir Actair Guimarães	DR Program Coordinator
Rodrigo, Eduardo, Carlos	Producers in various Organic Markets (run by Municipal Government)
Canada	**Position**
Anne Freeman	Market Manager, Dufferin Grove Farmers' Market and TFMN Coordinator
Julia Graham	Market Manager, Stonegate Market
Cookie Roscoe	Market Manager, Wychwood Market
Roberta Stimac	Market Manager, Withrow Park Market

Debbie Fields	Executive Director, FoodShare
Robert Chorney	Organizer of ‘Certified Local’ Markets
Wayne Roberts*	Head of the Toronto Food Policy Council

indicates informal interview

Appendix V: Land Tenure and Size of Participant Farmers in Brazil and Canada

Land Tenure (secure)	Land Size (ha)	Offsite Rented Land (ha)
Brazil		
Inherited	20 (not all in use)	
Inherited	27 (~1 in use)	
Inherited	7	
Inherited	0.7	
Purchased	5	
Purchased	2	
Purchased (AR)	~2	
Purchased (AR)	~2	
Inherited and Purchased	1.5	
Family Land	~10	
Family Land	0.7	
Family Land	1	
Rent	2.5	
Rent	~2	
Rent (Partnership of two DR farmers)	2.5	
Hired hand	Unknown	
Canada		
Inherited	7.7	n/a
Inherited	40 (8 in use)	n/a
Inherited	24.3 (8-10 in use)	n/a
Inherited	5.7	5.7
Inherited	20	4
Inherited	3.75	n/a
Inherited	13 (6-8 market garden)	1-2
Inherited	1.6	n/a
Inherited and Purchased	227 (~130 in use) + 202 on other	n/a

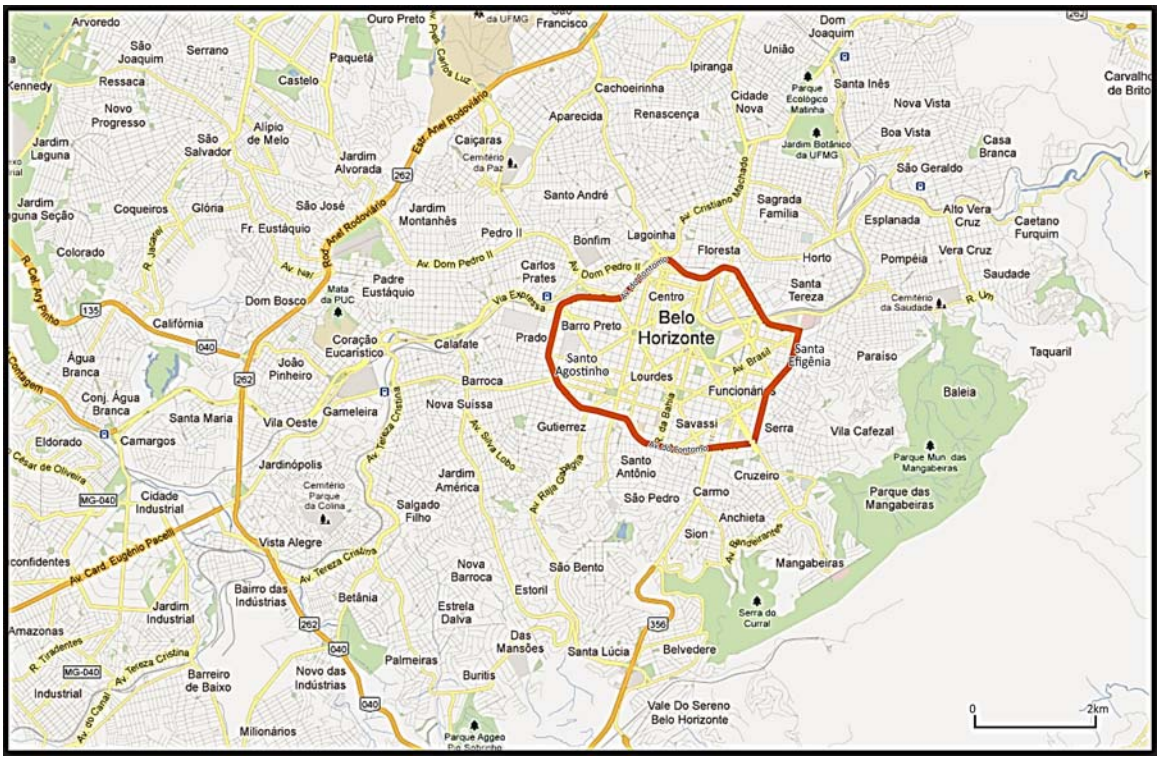
	property	
Purchased	27.5 (0.8 in use for market garden)	n/a
Purchased	20 (9 in use for market Garden)	1-2
Purchased	not given	n/a
Purchased	40.5 (12 in use for market garden)	n/a
Purchased	2	n/a

AR - Agrarian Reform
Family Land - owned by someone in family other than the DR participant
Hired Hand - works someone else's land and has access to small plot on this land

Appendix VI: Location of Belo Horizonte, Brazil

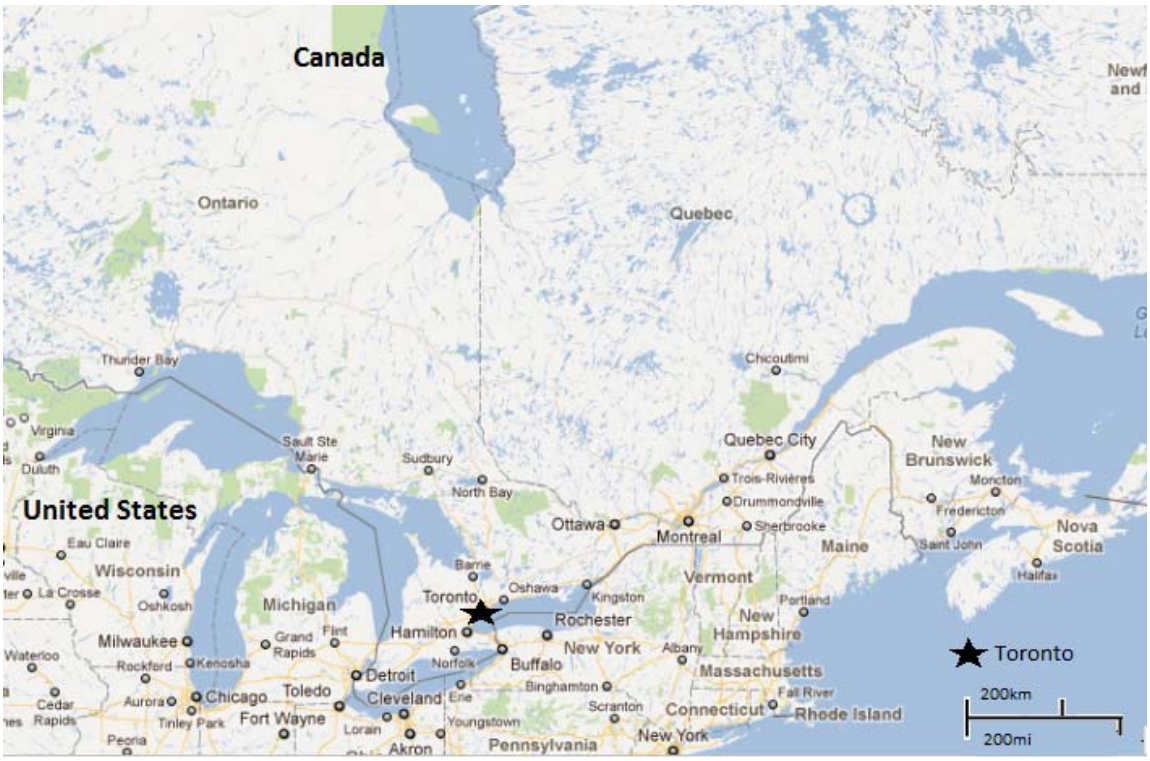
(Source: modified from Google Maps)

Appendix VII: Location of Avenida do Contorno, Belo Horizonte, Brazil



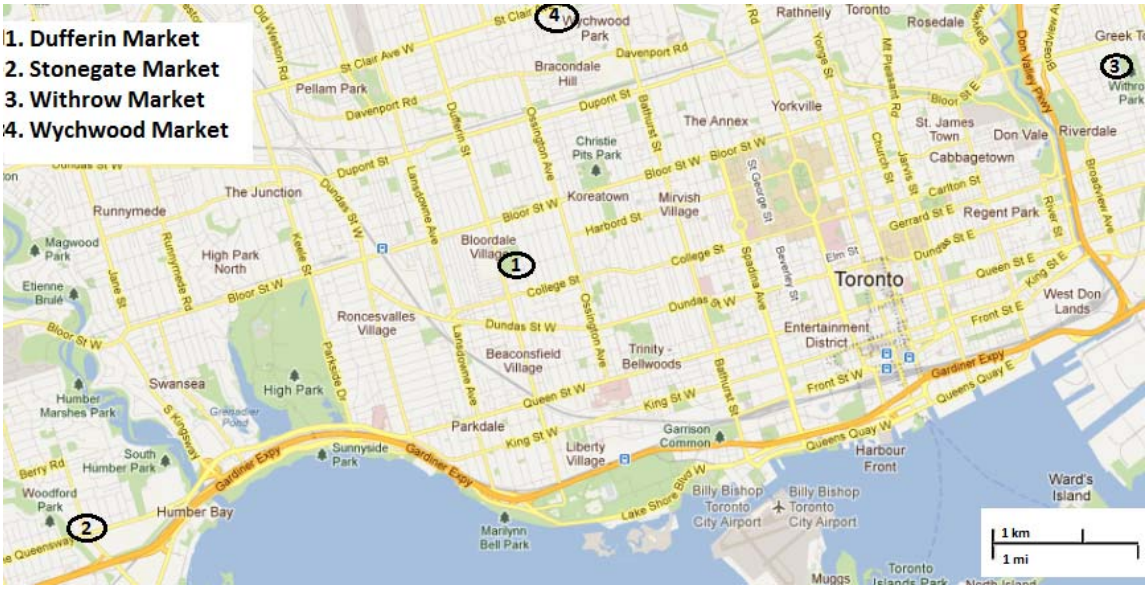
(Source: Modified from Google Maps)

Appendix VIII: Location of Toronto, Canada



(Source: modified from Google Maps)

Appendix IX: Location of case study Markets in Toronto, Canada



(Source: modified from Google Maps)

CURRICULUM VITAE

Erin M. Pratley	
Post Secondary Education and Degrees	University of Guelph 1998-2002 B.A. Honours in Geography University of Guelph 2003-2005 M.A. Honours in Geography University of Western Ontario 2005-2012 Ph.D. in Geography
Honours and Awards	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Scholarship 2006-2008 (leave in 2008-2009), 2010 International Development Research Centre "Windows on Development" Grant 2006-2007 Pleva Teaching Assistant Award 2007 PhD Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) 2005-2006 University of Western Ontario Social Science Research Grant 2006 SSHRC Master's Canada Graduate Scholarship 2004- 2005 Northern Scientific Training Program Grant 2005 ArcticNet Student Poster Award 2004 CSAHS Graduate Scholarship 2004

	Latornell Conservation Scholarship 2004
Related Work Experience	Lecturer The University of Western Ontario 2007, 2010 Lecturer University of Guelph 2010 Teaching Assistant The University of Western Ontario 2005-2007
Selected Conference Presentations	**Pratley, E**. (2008). Direto da Roça: Farmer's experiences in a direct marketing program in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Presented at the American Association of Geographers Annual Conference. April 2008, Boston, Mass. **Pratley, E. (**2006). Changes in Food Procurement Strategies and Food Security in Arctic Bay, Nunavut. Presented at the American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, March 2006, Chicago, Illinois. **Pratley, E. (**2005)**.** Changing Livelihoods/Changing Diets: the implications of changes in diet for food security in Arctic Bay, NU. Presented at the Canadian Association of Geographers Annual Conference, June 2005, London, Ontario.