



connect

With increases in food related illnesses, such as the most recent 1.2 billion salmonella infected eggs, it is important to bring awareness to the public about where their food is coming from and how it is being produced. Through this awareness the public gains the power to make choices about the health and nutrition of their food without the long drawn out process of policy change. The power to create change is in each and every person's control through what they purchase and why.

By focusing on the local farmers I want to create an awareness and interest for the customers to question where their food is coming from and how it is being produced. By presenting the farmers through pictures, stories and maps customers get personally connected to them and the food. By explaining the varying benefits consumers can find their own connection to what is important to them from supporting their local economy to providing healthy food.



increasing visibility of LOCAL FOOD PARTNERS

community

While both these topics, local economy and farm practices, relate directly to sustainability issues and trends, the consumers need strong personal reasons to make changes meaningful.

The initial project description came from Wendy Armstrong, owner of Thrive Carry Out Café. She wanted to create an outdoor eating area for Whitemarsh Plaza to increase visibility and business for herself and the other tenants.

- Through our initial meetings with Wendy we learned that her goals are:
- To promote healthy eating as FUN and EASY
- To increase awareness of supporting LOCAL food and products
- To provide INSPIRING ideas that her customers can implement at home or work

GET TO KNOW YOUR FARMERS
Buying products from local farmers supports the local economy. Just as local small businesses give back to the community through taxes, wages and supporting other neighborhood businesses and organizations, local farmers give back to the community through monetary contributions and in addition to environmental and nutritional benefits.

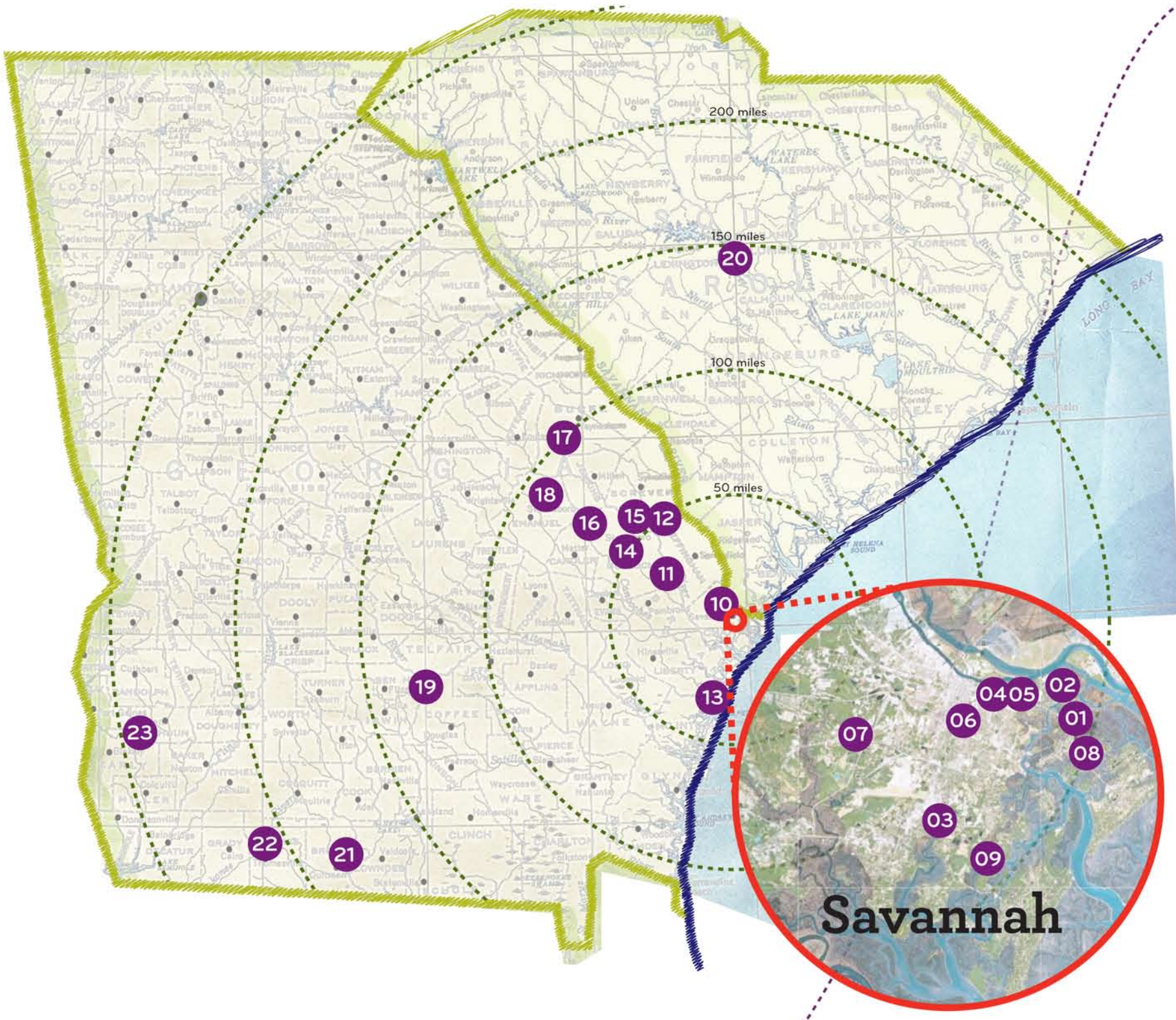
While not all farms are certified organic the majority of small local farms are practicing organic farm techniques with or without the certification, as the certification process can be costly and time consuming.

Part of getting personally acquainted with your farmers involves asking the tough questions. It's important to know what farm practices they utilize and what that means to the environment but most of all what that means to the health and nutrition of the food.

At the Refreshing Opportunities Whitemarsh Plaza event our class held during the final week of the quarter, we had an impressive turnout of interested community members. Most importantly for this segment of the project, there were several farmers that attended and expressed appreciation and interest in the farm location map.



The community actively participated during our public reception held at Whitemarsh Plaza August 24.



local economy

An important part of supporting the local economy is purchasing locally grown produce. This requires understanding what and when fruits and vegetables are available in your area. Even though our markets are global and allow us to buy anything from anywhere at anytime, it's important to understand the implications such purchases have, negative implications such as massive amounts of energy used to ship products from one part of the world to another. Even without drastically changing your eating habits you can make a change by understanding what produce can be found locally and make a point of buying local first. Also start to think about where your food might be coming from. It can be as simple as purchasing orange juice from Florida versus California if you live on the east coast.

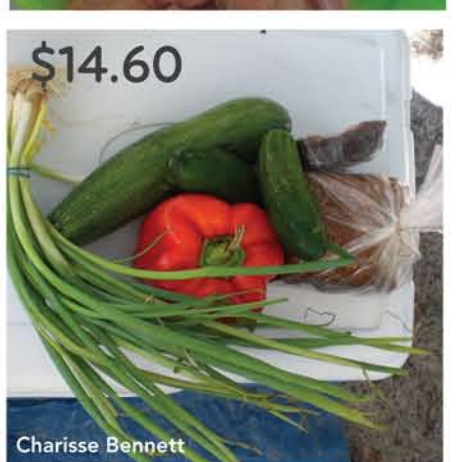
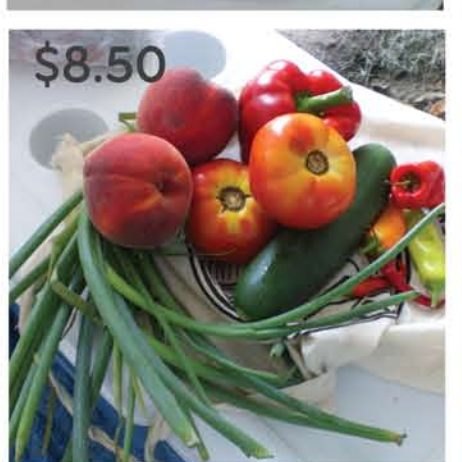
Pictured to the far right represent produce, chicken and baked goods purchased at the Forsyth Farmers Market on Saturday August 21st. The goal was to see what could be purchased for around \$10. While \$10 a week in produce isn't nearly enough to feed an entire family, it is enough to make a difference, a difference for your nutritional health and a difference for the health of the local economy.

How are you supporting YOUR local economy?

YOU = \$1.9 BILLION into Georgia's economy

if 3.7 million households spend **\$10 /week**

= \$1.9 BILLION into Georgia's economy



Charisse Bennett