

This project examines the perspectives and connectedness of organizations in the Farm to Plate Network in its first year of operation, from 2011 to 2012. Through this examination, it is concluded that membership in the Farm to Plate Network creates new connection and enhances existing connection between food system organizations. Furthermore, researchers found that among member organizations, lower forms of collaboration (such as information-sharing), were denser than higher forms (such as project/program collaboration or resource sharing).

To achieve this analysis, a number of methods were employed to gauge the performance of the network in its first year. Network meeting minutes were analyzed to depict the makeup of a governing network, and an online survey was conducted to assess the positions and roles of member organizations to inform an operational network. In addition to statistical analysis, social network analysis was performed to depict and analyze the Farm to Plate Network. Survey respondents were largely in agreement that membership and participation in the network had yielded benefits to their organization. Furthermore, an analysis of the forms of collaboration between organizations showed that information-sharing networks were denser than networks involving deeper relationships, such as project/program collaboration and resource sharing. Methods and results of this study will make up a baseline of the network, and will be used in the future to track the trajectory and performance of this network throughout its life cycle.