Introduction
In Western Wisconsin there is a strong push to develop a more robust regional food system, for economic development as well as for health reasons. Consumer interest in local foods has grown considerably, however, along with the newfound interest are various challenges associated with bringing local foods to market.

Objectives
Overall Goal: To identify and help bridge selling opportunities between food buyers and regional producers in Western Wisconsin by beginning to document the “gap” between actual and potential supply and demand of locally grown agricultural products. We define “locally grown” as food grown in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties.

Methods
1. We researched existing projects on local food sales and economic impact studies of “buy local” campaigns. Overall, literature was not readily available, however a few notable studies we found include:
   1. “Measuring the Economic Impacts of Buy Local Campaigns in Iowa” by Dave Swenson
   2. “Buying Local in Marshall County and Marshalltown, Iowa: An Economic Impact Assessment” by Dave Swenson
   3. “The College Food Project” – University of Wisconsin-Madison
   4. “Recipe for Success: Recommendations of the Dane County Local Food Policy Advisory Sub Committee”
   5. “Attracting Consumers with Locally Grown Products” – University of Nebraska-Lincoln

2. We researched historical data of food crops grown in this region, comparing the agricultural censuses of 1929 and 2002.

3. We brainstormed possible ways to track both actual and potential demand and supply for local products in Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties. Data from the United States Department of Agriculture provided the actual supply and potential demand in the area. In an attempt to identify the potential supply and demand of food in the region we compiled a list of “Points of Sale.” The list includes schools, hospitals, nursing homes, correction facilities, food processors, CSAs, farmers markets, restaurants, and grocery stores. Primary resources for this list include: Dunn and Bradstreet, Savorwisconsin.com, the Farm Fresh Atlas, various City Chamber of Commerce websites, and Wisconsin.gov.

4. Our next step will be to develop surveys and questionnaires for grocery store managers, restaurant owners, consumers, and local farmers. Farmers were chosen as the survey recipient for actual and potential supply due to a variety of reasons. Surveying “Points of Sale”, such as grocery stores, would lead to problems with sourcing, as many suppliers of food do not know exactly where they received the food from. Surveying the general population would lead to problems due to lack of general knowledge about local foods. The average buyer does not know where their groceries were grown.

Possible survey areas include the total percentage of locally produced food that is purchased locally, total acreage of farmland dedicated to growing for “local” markets in the area, willingness/ability to grow additional food for “local” markets, and willingness/ability of grocery stores/restaurants to purchase food for to sell as “locally grown.”

Results
1. Analysis of the historical census data showed that local area farms have decreased in number while increasing in size. It also showed that the variety of crops in the area has decreased.

2. Discussion of the best ways to track actual and potential demand and supply for locally grown foods are summarized in the chart below:

3. List of “Points of Sale” including contact information for all facilities.

Conclusion
We anticipate that our results will provide insights into how best to benchmark and track local food sales within a region. We will share our findings statewide so that other “buy local” initiatives may learn from our efforts and mistakes.