



FACT SHEET · WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

What the Experts are Saying

The following are quotes from some of the leading experts about the importance of diversification in sustainable agriculture.

"I'm inspired by so people in rural America that have a true entrepreneurial spirit. Their innovation coupled with a desire for sustainability will keep their communities vibrant for generations. The stories we highlight in *Renewing the Countryside* publications showcase those individuals and organizations who are finding ways to be successful with a commitment to a triple bottom line. They realize that in order to truly find success, they must be economically profitable, contribute to their communities, and leave the earth they live on a little better than when they got here."

— *Jan Joannides, Executive Director, Renewing the Countryside, www.renewingthecountryside.org*

"The instability of farm commodity markets means that many producers must develop diverse sources of income far beyond traditional crop production, including both on farm and off-farm activities. *Renewing the Countryside* is the best single source of information on the wide range of options that creative successful producers are using to reach their dreams and ambitions."

— *Mark Ritchie, President, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), www.iatp.org*

"Turning a \$2 bunch of basil into a \$6 jar of pesto isn't rocket science. But it's the sort of simple shift that will help keep American farmers on their land. These farmers will be more marketers than their ancestors. And they'll do this by distinguishing their product -- not just grinding basil into pesto, hosting blossom tours in their orchard, getting certified as organic, turning pork into sausage -- and capturing more of what consumers spend on food. By raising more crops and more products, they will insulate themselves from the inevitable dips in prices or crop failures for a given product. Either way, farmers who diversify in some way will carve themselves a place in the future of the American food system."

— *Brian Halweil, Senior Researcher with Worldwatch Institute and author of *Eat Here: Reclaiming Homegrown Pleasures in a Global Supermarket* (W.W. Norton, 2004), www.worldwatch.org*

"To benefit communities and working landscapes to the fullest, agriculture must be diverse to be sustainable, innovative and centered in its place. Livestock and crops on the same farm complement one another biologically and help farmers to balance risk and income, especially in organic systems. Farms and farmers become more resilient as they market a variety of products -- fresh and value-added -- across the seasons to the nearest markets that value their multiple contributions to human health and ecological vitality."

— *Chris Hill, executive editor, www.NewFarm.org*

