

Stepping It Up After Compact Fluorescent Bulbs: Is Food Next?

While a scaled response to the climate challenge is still far off, we have certainly seen real breakthroughs in the last year in first identifying the climate mess and now, through excellent campaigns like Yahoo's 18seconds.org, the emergence of the compact fluorescent bulb as an early, easy thing that people can do.

The smart money now suggests it will soon be show-time for the "buy local" food movement -- which has been quietly warming up for the main stage for some time. Certainly the stats are easy to grasp: the energy it takes for the average person's food consumption generates two tons of CO2 per year - bigger than lighting and appliances, space heating, air conditioning and water heating combined. The average meal travels 1,400 miles from source to table...so buying local is a serious key to cutting carbon emissions.

What will it take? Most likely, a smart mix of community-based efforts like [Harlem's FoodChange's S.O.U.L Food Project](#), economic success stories like [Portland's Food Alliance](#) and a dash of marketing genius to make sure that "buy local" comes off as less hippy-dippy and more mainstream. The rapidly growing [Buy Fresh, Buy Local campaigns](#) (now in 45 communities) is one very promising model to support.

At center stage for this work moving forward - for both the non-profit sector and the emerging for-benefit food business -- will no doubt be [The Fair Food Foundation](#). Beginning operations in January 2008, the Foundation will focus on fresh and local food system development through reconnecting urban and rural economies. The well-regarded program director of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Food and Society Initiative, Dr. Oran Hesterman, will serve as the Fair Food Foundation's president and chief executive officer. With a start-up grants budget of between \$12 million and \$20 million per year, the foundation will instantly be a key hub in scaling this important climate solution.

The food-climate connection is also expected to get another global boost soon, as the The International Panel on Climate Change is expected to name agriculture is one of two main priorities. This is expected to occur at the last meeting of the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development taking place next month in Capetown. The public is invited to comment on the working draft until May 21.