

## Central U.P. Farm & Food Economy



# Buying Local Food Matters!

### The Central U.P. has ample resources:

Residents of the Central U.P. earn \$5.6 billion of income annually.  
Farmers work 281,000 acres of land.

### Yet the region faces immense dilemmas:

Over 50,000 residents (31%) earn less than a liveable wage.  
The Central U.P. pays \$140 million per year to treat medical conditions related to obesity and diabetes.

### Farmers do not earn enough money:

- 1,166 Central U.P. farmers sell \$61.6 million of food products per year (1989-2011 average), spending \$62.2 million to raise them, for an annual loss of \$633,000. This is an average net loss of \$540 per farm.
- Central U.P. farmers earned \$3.4 million less by selling commodities in 2011 than they earned in 1969 (in 2011 dollars).

### The Central U.P. food economy drains away \$430 million each year:

- Farmers spend at least \$29 million per year buying farm inputs sourced outside of the region.
- Consumers buy more than \$400 million of food each year that is sourced outside of the region.

### Farmers and consumers are connecting:

- 141 farms sell \$574,000 of food products directly to consumers. This is a 22% **increase** of number of farms selling direct, and a 24% **decrease** in direct sales since 2002.
- If each Central U.P. resident purchased \$5 of food each week directly from farmers in the region, this would generate **\$45 million of new farm revenue** for local farms. This would be a 70% increase in farm revenue! **New local food facilities are needed for this to happen!**



Data compiled October, 2013, by Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center (Minneapolis)  
Sources: USDA, Centers for Disease Control, Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Covers Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee, & Schoolcraft Counties in Michigan  
See full summary at [www.crcworks.org/crcdocs/miupCENTsum13.pdf](http://www.crcworks.org/crcdocs/miupCENTsum13.pdf)