Common Features of Food Systems Around the World

- Spatial dispersion
- Differences in scale of production across vertical levels in the food system
- Sequential nature of production
Common Features of Food Systems Around the World

- Uncertainty of production
- Seasonality
- Perishability
- Increasing international integration
- Important public-sector roles

Common Food System Problems

- Price instability due to both supply and demand shocks (more at farm level than consumer level in industrialized economies)
- Chronic inadequate access to food by many low-income households
Common Food System Problems

- Importance of macro policies on food system
- Negative attitudes towards “intermediaries”
- High cost of direct gov’t. buying & selling activities ➔ Perception that neither the market nor the state works well.

Structural Transformation

- Decrease in relative role of farming in the economy (% of GDP, employment)
- Movement away from household-level production to a more integrated economy
- Linking farmer and others in the food system to the information system of the wider world.
Development Approaches, 1960-Present

- Industrial Fundamentalism: 1950s and 1960s
- Planning & Parastatals: 1950s-1970s
- Expanding Farm-level Production–Green Revolution: 1960s-1970s
- Integrated Rural Development--Poorest of the Poor

Current Emphases:
- Liberalization, Structural Adjustment & Beyond
- Globalization of the Food System
- Food Security
- NGOs
- Information and Institutional Design