

# Human, Social, and Cultural Capitals among Latino Gardeners in Denison and Marshalltown, Iowa

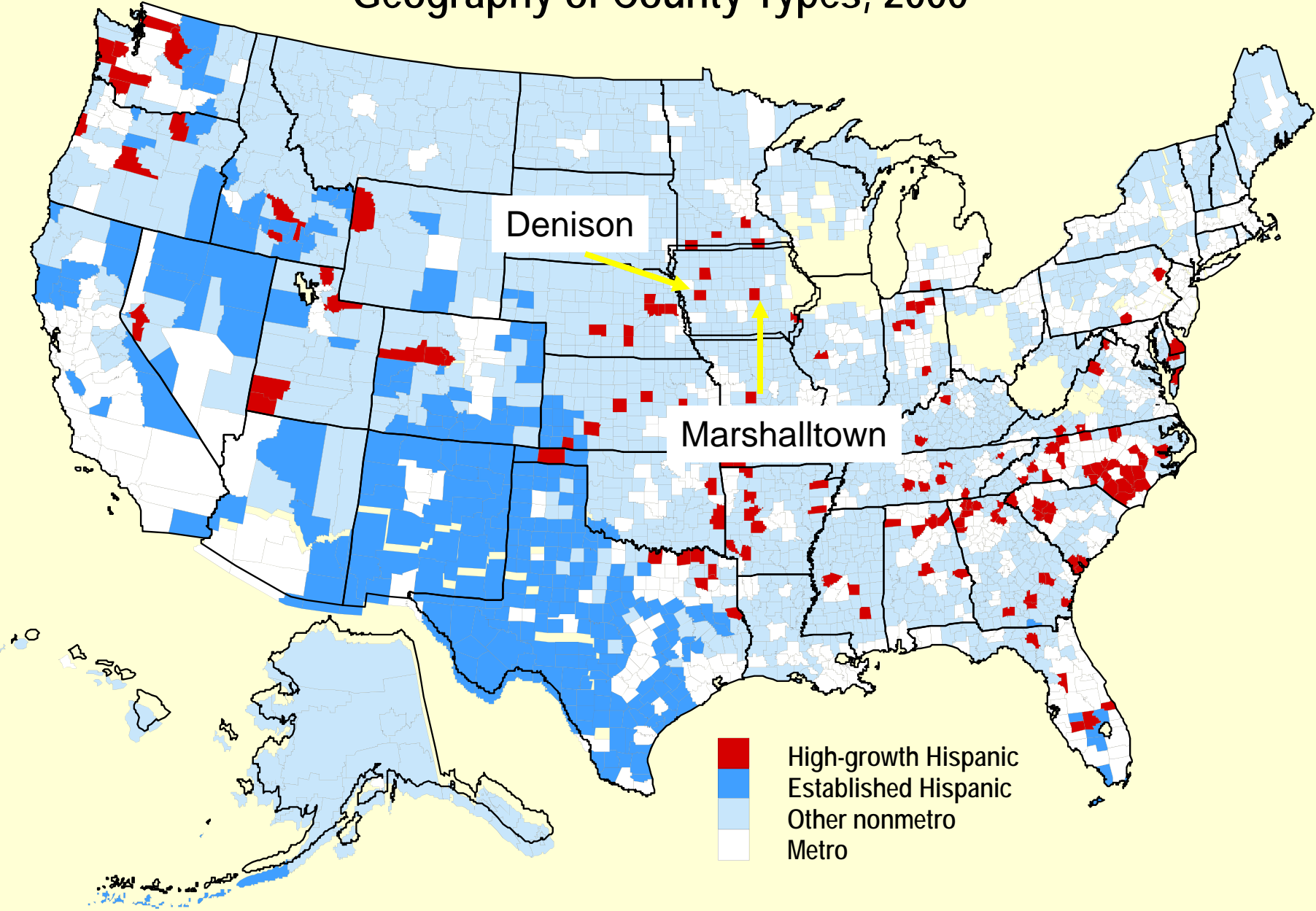
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Cambio de Colores 2010



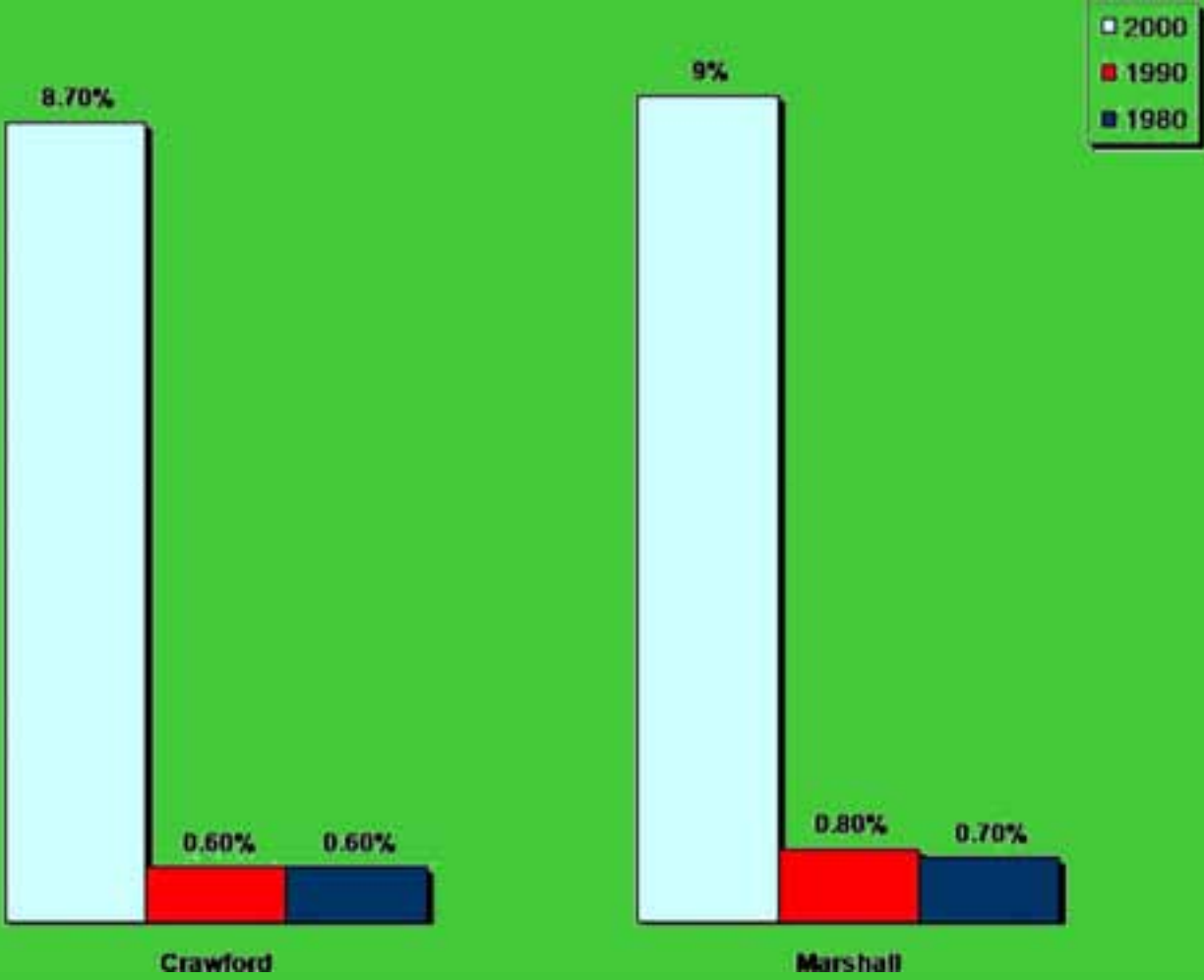
Drawings from Children at the gardens

# Geography of County Types, 2000



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

# Percentages of Residents of Hispanic Origin in 1980, 1990, and 2000



Source: U.S Census Services 2009



## Latino Population in Iowa

Marshall County in 1990 was 292- in 2007 was estimated in 5,455

Crawford County in 1990 was 98- in 2007 was estimated in 3,129

(Source: U.S Census Bureau)

### Most of the Latino immigrants come from:

Mexico (Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Campeche)

El Salvador

Guatemala

(Durand et. al. 2001; Woodrick 2004; Grey and Woodrick; Lewis and Tafota 2008)

Latino immigrants have the potential to become diversified farmers and contribute with sustainable elements to agriculture and food systems in this state (Lewis 2006, Lewis and Tafoya 2008). First generation of Latino immigrants in Denison and Marshalltown have a rich background in diversified agricultural production from their home countries (Lewis and Tafoya 2008), and most of them want to farm in the U.S., although not necessarily as their sole livelihood strategy.



## Case Study Sites and Institutions supporting projects with Latino/a gardeners and beginning farmers in Denison and Marshalltown

-Marshalltown Community Gardens located in the Iowa Valley Community College in Marshalltown (MCC) -2 gardeners – Plots: 40 by 40 feet

-Start Your Own Diversified Farm in MCC- 2 beginning farmers- Plots: aprox. 2 acres

COMIDA (County of Marshall Investing in Diversified Agriculture), MCC, Iowa State University, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Prairie Rivers of Iowa Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) in Marshalltown, among other institutions and collaborators.

-Denison Community Gardens- 4 gardeners- Plots: Averaging 10 by 20 feet. M and M Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) in Carroll, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI), Farmland Foods, and Iowa State University Extension





## Goal of this study

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences in gardening and farming vegetables and fruits of Latino gardeners and beginning farmers in these two rural communities of Iowa.

What were the mechanisms by which Latino/as became gardeners and beginning farmers, exploring the motivations and the community capitals that they mobilized.



# Community Capitals Framework and Hypotheses

**Human Capital-** Latino/a gardeners and beginning farmers have an important agricultural background from both their home countries and from other parts of U.S. that have facilitated their gardening and farming experiences in these two rural towns.

**Social Capital (bonding and bridging)-** Social relationships among gardeners are essential aspects for their motivation in the participation in gardening and farming programs.

**Cultural Capital-** Cultural motivation inspired the new farmers and gardeners to participate in the programs.

**Natural and Built Capitals-** For the Latino/a gardeners and beginning farmers that participated in this study, I hypothesize that natural and built capitals may be accessed by the mobilization of other community capitals.

**Financial Capital-** Financial gain could be one of the primary motivations for their participation in the projects.

**Political Capital-** Critical for Latino immigrants



# Methodology

**Case studies.** Cases studies and the participant observation provide data for cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis (Neuman 2003)

**8 In-depth interviews.**

**Participant observation.** “be part of the day-to-day experiences” (Denzin 1989: 156).

Visits to their homes

Visits to their gardens

Meetings in MCC and Iowa State University Station Office in Crawford County (Denison).

**Secondary data, photographs, and drawings.**





## Gardeners and beginning farmers interviewed

Names	Origin	Gardening and Farming Programs	Time of participation	Age	Gender
Oscar	Jalisco- Mexico	Start Your Own Diversified Farm- MCC- Marshalltown	1 <sup>st</sup> year	57	Male
Guillermo	Michoacán- Mexico	Start Your Own Diversified Farm- MCC- Marshalltown	1 <sup>st</sup> year	34	Male
Pablo	Guanajuato- Mexico	Community Garden- MCC- Marshalltown	4 <sup>th</sup> year	40	Male
Martin	Guanajuato- Mexico	Community Garden- MCC- Marshalltown	6 <sup>th</sup> year	48	Male
Lucía	Guachapan- El Salvador	Denison Community Gardens	4 <sup>th</sup> year	32	Female
Ricardo	Campeche- Mexico	Denison Community Gardens	4 <sup>th</sup> year	36	Male
Juan	Municipio de Quesada- Guatemala	Denison Community Gardens	1 <sup>st</sup> year	49	Male
Raul	Campeche- Mexico	Denison Community Gardens	1 <sup>st</sup> year	40	Male

## Natural, built, and financial capitals



-7 out of 8 had gardens before (6 out of 8 used their home yards)

-Awareness of healthy and fresh food and soil quality.

- To make economic profits was not one of the main motivations they had. The return of their investments.

-All of them would prefer to use natural agricultural inputs. Concerns about the application of chemicals:

*“When you put chemicals on the soil, it is like a drunk who wants more and more.” Oscar*



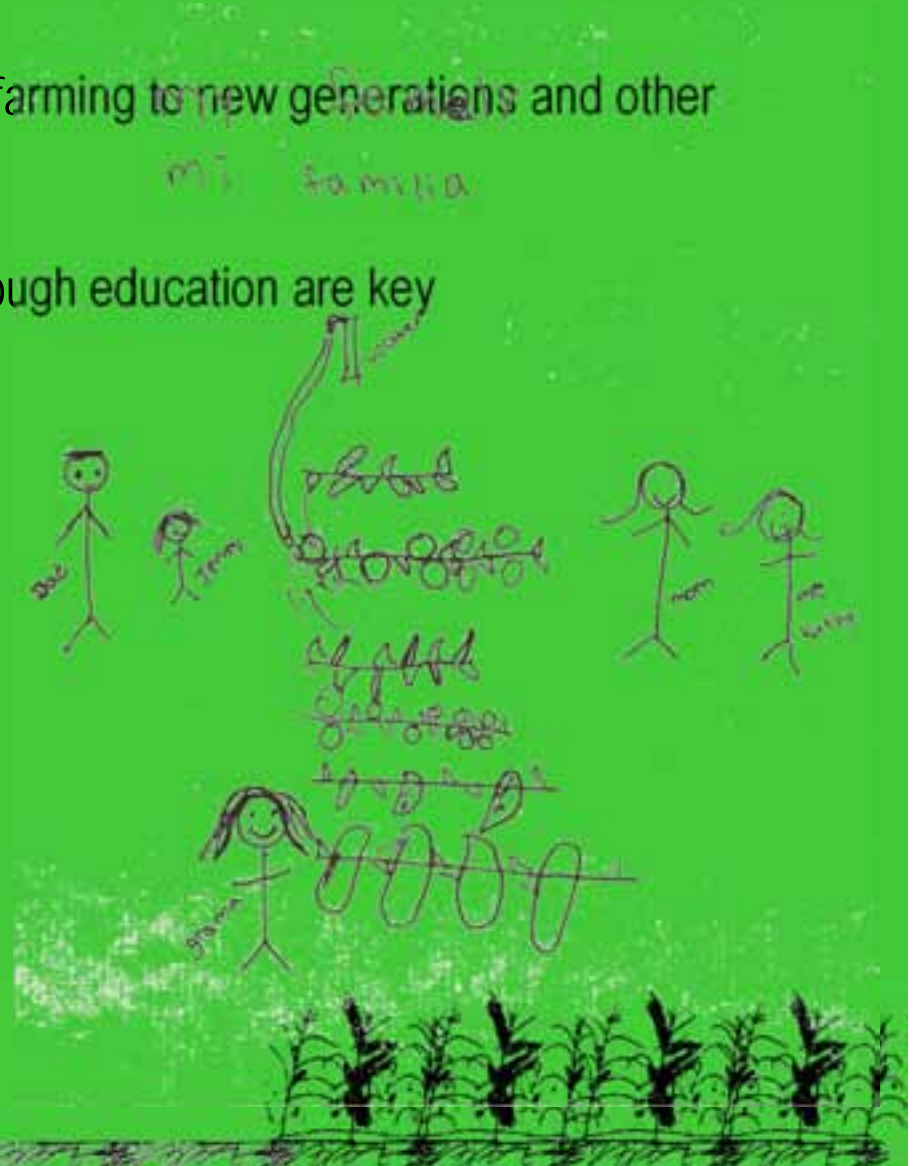
## Human Capital- Agricultural knowledge and skills

-Knowledge from their countries and other parts of the U.S

“Somos del campo” “We are from the country side”

-Transmission of knowledge about gardening and farming to new generations and other gardeners

-Enhancement of the different capitals capitals through education are key





## Gardening, farming and building social capital

-Social capital allows access to other capitals



-Social capital is reinforced through **sharing** food and the experience of gardening and farming  
*"I shared all the potatoes with mi brothers, Diego. My dad never liked to sell things; for him it was better to give things as presents to friends. In Mexico, he never went around selling watermelons. When people came to visit, he gave them watermelons. Who knows why he had that habit? And more than likely that is why we share this value -- I don't like to sell my produce, either. If I see a friend, I will give it away to him." Ricardo*

-Gardens provide spaces for social relationships

-Critical aspects of high bonding social capital

-Bridging social capital through educational courses





## Cultural capital

-Re-signifying the life in the countryside and being outside

-Sharing:

"I am still a campesino" (countryperson)

*"It is something that I really like, Diego. It is something that I do not want to lose. It is like a tradition or like a hobby. Because we have the forest and the countryside in our blood I think, I cannot get along without it."* Ricardo

-Quality of food and cultural importance of the varieties grown

*"To eat fresh produces is important. My children generally do not like onions, but when they are from here, and when I barbeque meat, I have to put on twenty or thirty onions because they are not going to be enough, everybody eats onions, but they will not eat an onion from the store."* Raul



# Conclusions

Human, social, and cultural capitals are the most critical elements among Latino/a gardeners and beginning farmers in Iowa. These capitals can mobilize financial, natural, and built capitals.

-Human capital among Latino immigrants represents a potential for diversified agriculture and local food systems.

- The strengthening of human capital through educational tools can improve gardening success

-The reciprocity that **sharing** entails enhances knowledge exchange, commitment, trust, and social and cultural integration.

-The cultural meaning of “ser campesino” and the cultural meaning of gardening and farming are key and potential elements for diversified agriculture and local food.



## Recommendations

- Latino/a gardeners need resources from outside the Latino community and they can come through the interaction with long-term gardeners and/or farmers in Iowa and creative educational programs. Example: Manure or composting.
- The social and cultural importance of **sharing** can be enhanced through festivals, social events, gatherings, and/or even soccer games.
- Educational incubator programs need to develop more leadership among Latino/a gardeners and/or beginning farmers. Shared visions and trust are key.
- To enhance the informal social networks around local food. Channels for social inclusion and social justice.
- To have active representation of members from the Latino community





Thanks!!  
Questions?





## Vegetables, grains, legumes, herbs, and fruits cultivated at their homes in their countries and in their gardens in Iowa

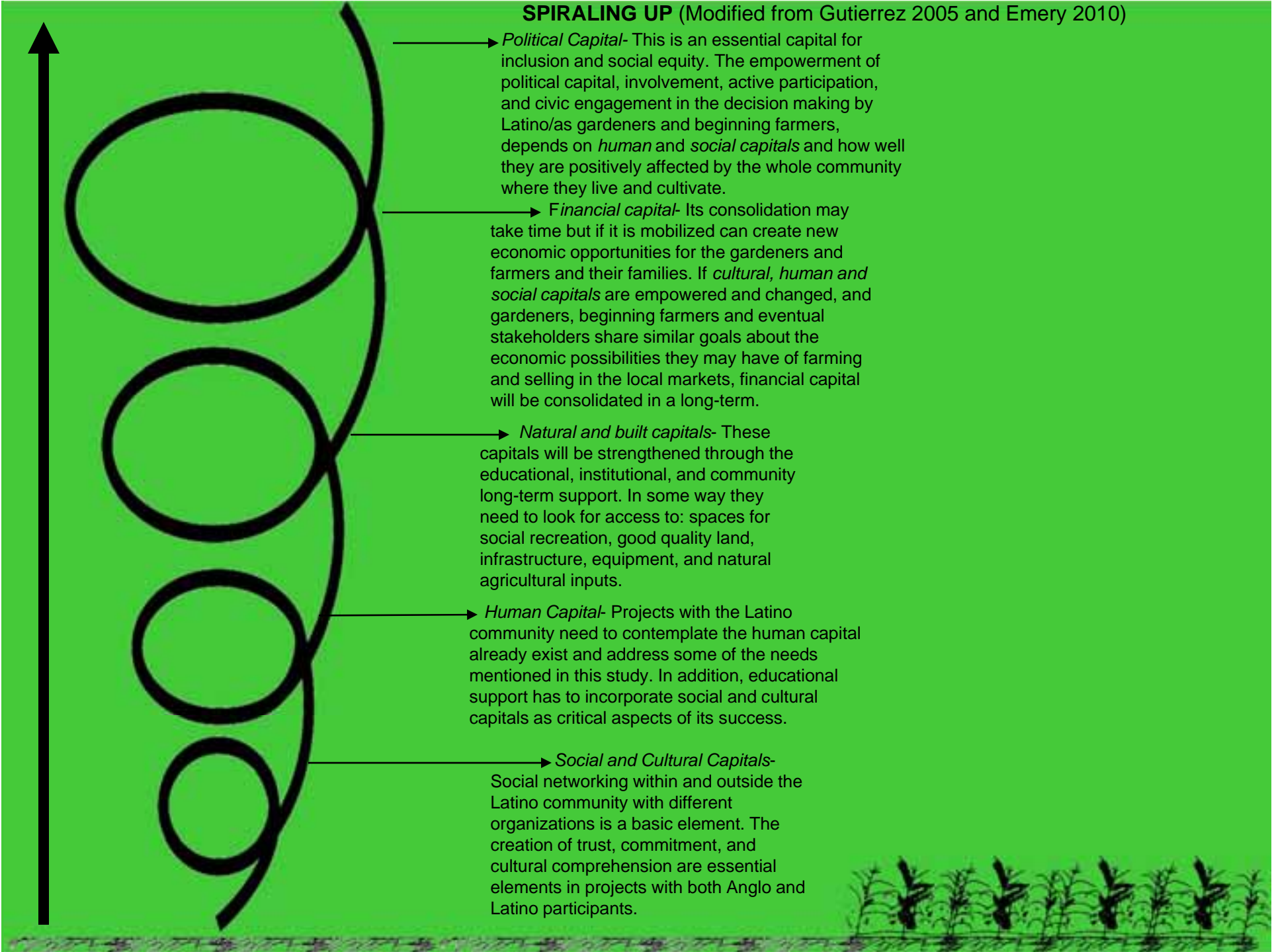
Gardeners and origin.	Crops cultivated at home in their countries.	Vegetables, fruits, legumes, and aromatic plants cultivated in their gardens in .
<b>Martin-</b> Guanajuato	White corn, beans, tomatoes, and peppers.	Cucumber, beans, onions, different kinds of peppers, beets, green tomatoes, and large red tomatoes
<b>Oscar and Maria</b> Jalisco-Mexico	Barley, alfalfa, wheat, pears, orange, lime, different kinds of corn, potatoes, and yam bean.	“Poblano”, jalapeño, Joe’s Long Cayenne, and yellow banana peppers (some seeds from Mexico), onions, yam bean (lost) four different kinds of squashes (some seeds from Mexico), zucchini, five different kinds of tomatoes, white corn (lost), cilantro, lettuces (lost), cabbage (lost).
<b>Lucia and Pedro-</b> Guachapán El Salvador	Beans, white corn, tomatoes, chilies, and rice.	Beans, radish, tomatoes, and squash (seeds from ).
<b>Pablo-</b> Guanajuato	Tomatoes, peppers, white corn, and peanut.	Beans, peppers, green tomatoes, large red tomatoes, cucumbers, white onions, and sweet potatoes.
<b>Guillermo and Silvia-</b> Michoacán México	White corn, wheat, beans, and sorghum.	Two different kinds of tomatoes, cilantro, chickpea (seeds from ), white corn, beans, watermelon, squashes, belt (for first time) and Santa Fe Grande peppers.
<b>Ricardo-</b> Campeche- México	White corn, peppers, tomatoes, beans, radish, and cilantro.	Two different kinds of tomatoes, onions, potatoes, cucumbers, and watermelons (lost).
<b>Raul-</b> Jalisco, México	White corn, beans, squash, cucumber, sorghum, and chickpea.	Tomatoes, cucumber, Santa Fe Grande and Joe’s Long Cayenne pepper, cilantro, radish, squash, and onions.
<b>Juan-</b> Municipio de Quesada- Guatemala	White corn and beans.	Cabbage, cauliflower, onions, two different kinds of tomatoes, watermelon, and melons.



Types of knowledge and/or skills	Martin	Oscar-Maria	Lucia and Pedro	Pablo	Guillermo-Silvia	Ricardo	Raul	Juan
Selecting and saving seeds	California-Mexico	Mexico and Iowa	El Salvador	Mexico and Iowa	California and Iowa	Iowa	Mexico	Guatemala
Planting and soil preparation	In previous gardens, Iowa	Mexico, California and Iowa	El Salvador	Television U.S.	Mexico, California, and Iowa	Mexico	Sioux City and Iowa	Guatemala
Fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides (natural and chemical)	In the garden, Iowa	Mexico (natural) and Iowa (chemical)	In the garden, Iowa	Mexico and Iowa (chemical)	In the garden, Iowa (chemical)	Mexico (natural) and Iowa (chemical)	Sioux City	Guatemala (natural) and Iowa (chemical)
Water	Mexico	Mexico	Garden, Iowa	Mexico	Mexico	Mexico	Mexico	Guatemala
Equipment and tools for farming	Mexico and Iowa	Iowa	El Salvador	Mexico and in the Garden, Iowa	California	Mexico	Mexico	Guatemala
When and how to harvest	Garden, Iowa	Mexico and Iowa	El Salvador	Mexico and Iowa	Mexico, California and Iowa	Mexico and Iowa	Mexico	Guatemala
Market and/or preserving food	Preserving through drying from Mexico and from other gardeners in Iowa	Preserving through drying, freezing and canning, and market, from Mexico and Iowa	Preserving through drying and canning from El Salvador	Preserving through drying and freezing from other gardeners, Iowa	Preserving through drying and canning from friends and course in MCC, Iowa.	Preserving through drying and freezing from other gardeners in Iowa	His wife. Preserving through drying and canning from Mexico and other gardeners, Iowa.	Preserving through freezing from Guatemala



## SPIRALING UP (Modified from Gutierrez 2005 and Emery 2010)



→ *Political Capital*- This is an essential capital for inclusion and social equity. The empowerment of political capital, involvement, active participation, and civic engagement in the decision making by Latino/as gardeners and beginning farmers, depends on *human* and *social capitals* and how well they are positively affected by the whole community where they live and cultivate.

→ *Financial capital*- Its consolidation may take time but if it is mobilized can create new economic opportunities for the gardeners and farmers and their families. If *cultural, human and social capitals* are empowered and changed, and gardeners, beginning farmers and eventual stakeholders share similar goals about the economic possibilities they may have of farming and selling in the local markets, financial capital will be consolidated in a long-term.

→ *Natural and built capitals*- These capitals will be strengthened through the educational, institutional, and community long-term support. In some way they need to look for access to: spaces for social recreation, good quality land, infrastructure, equipment, and natural agricultural inputs.

→ *Human Capital*- Projects with the Latino community need to contemplate the human capital already exist and address some of the needs mentioned in this study. In addition, educational support has to incorporate social and cultural capitals as critical aspects of its success.

→ *Social and Cultural Capitals*- Social networking within and outside the Latino community with different organizations is a basic element. The creation of trust, commitment, and cultural comprehension are essential elements in projects with both Anglo and Latino participants.