Who knows where your food comes from?

CS 147 · Assignment 1: Needfinding · Team 3



Team



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Narrowing our domain

STUDIO

More-than-human worlds

SPACE

Food & agriculture

FOCUS

Sustainable food, from farm to table

Why food?

Climate · food · ag-tech

Everyone eats, every day

Soil · weather · bees



Methodology

Three links in the food chain



Grow → **Sell** → **Eat**

METHODOLOGY

Who we picked at each link

GROW

John

Weekly shifts on a teaching farm

Donald

Soil researcher, now farming

SELL

Jenny

EXTREME

Honey vendor, beekeeping school

Andrew

Grows & sells his own fruit

EAT

Natalie

EXTREME

College student, vegan since 7

All names are pseudonyms

METHODOLOGY

Apparatus



Voice Memos

auto-transcribed



Phone photos

artifacts & context



Consent forms

+ pseudonyms

Where we met them



Farm, mid-shift

John · Donald

Found during a volunteer shift.
Lead: Charlotte, notes: Katie*



Market stalls

Jenny · Andrew

Walked up to their stalls. Jenny, lead: Emma, notes: Erin & Davido. Andrew, lead: Davido, notes: Erin

Video call

Natalie

Found through Erin's hometown network.
Lead: Erin, notes: Emma & Davido

*Charlotte's friend and fellow volunteer, helped with notes · No compensation offered · All names are pseudonyms.

METHODOLOGY

Guiding Questions

1

Background

"How did you get into beekeeping?"

2

Routines

"How do you know which tasks to do?"

3

Feelings

"Would you want more freedom?"

4

Big picture

"How has farming been shifting?"

Interview Results



GROW | SELL | EAT

John

- Weekly shifts on a teaching farm
- Interviewed while mulching

> *To be honest, I don't really know how they [the farm managers] decide [what to do on the farm].*

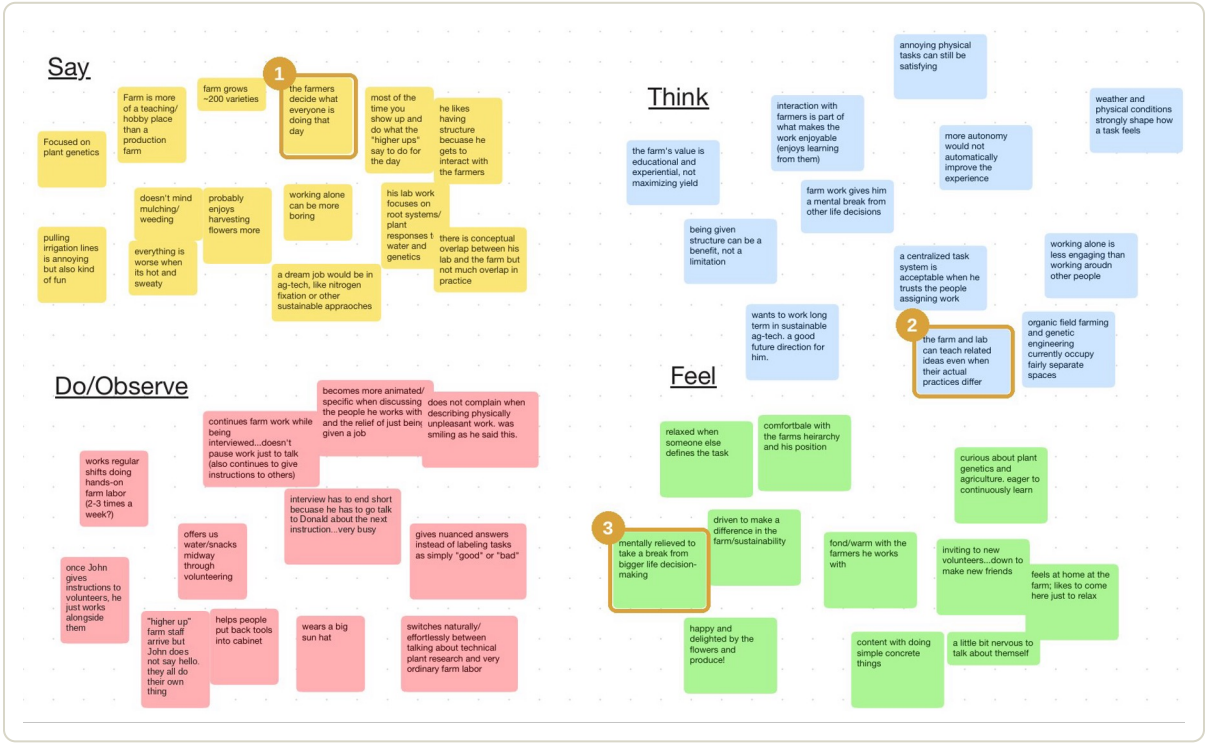
In their words

> *There's definitely some overlap in ideas, but not really overlap in practices.*

> *It's not the kind of place you would produce food to feed lots of people.*

SURPRISE **Even on a teaching farm, the reasoning stays with staff, and he's fine with it**

Empathy map



1 SAY

The farmers decide what everyone does that day

→ Reasoning stays with staff

2 THINK

Farm and lab teach related ideas, but practices differ

→ Ideas travel, practices don't

3 FEEL

Relieved to take a break from big decisions

→ Not knowing can be a relief

Numbered = our most interesting findings



GROW | SELL | EAT

Donald

- Soil researcher, now farming
- Interviewed mid-shift

> *I don't know how to grow the crop [myself].*

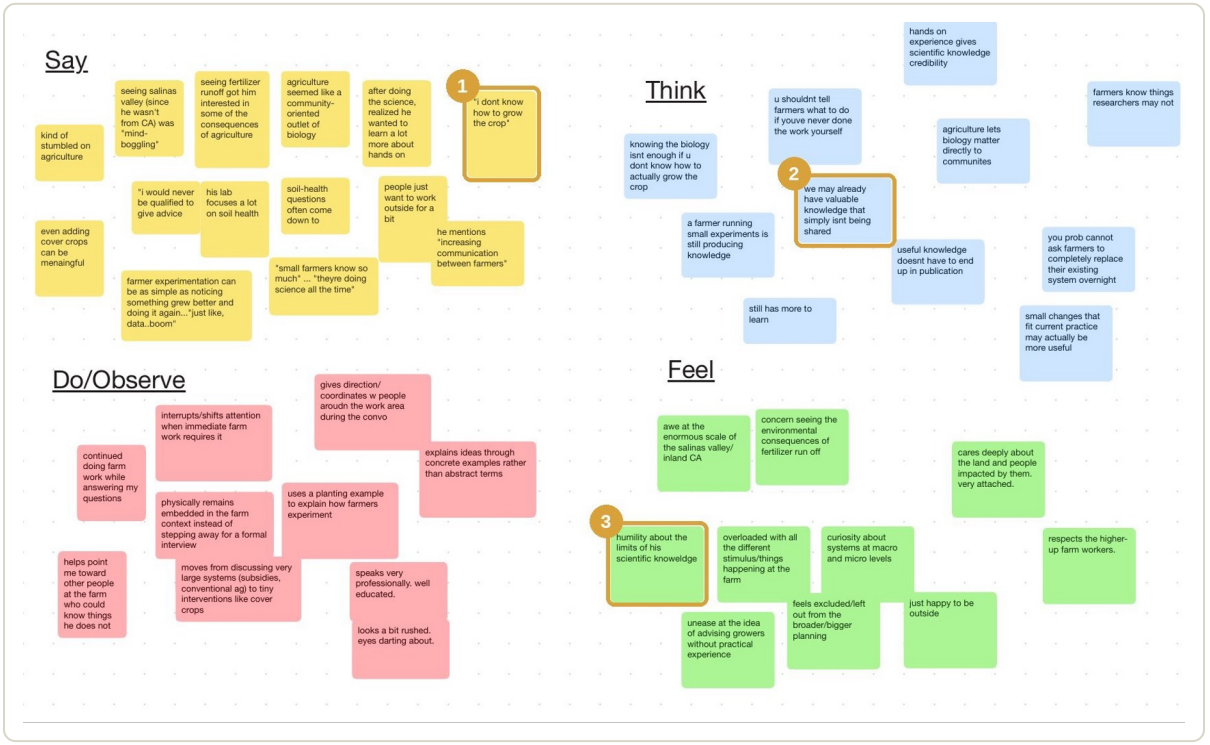
In their words

> *Small farmers know so much… they're doing science all the time.*

> *Education is a big one… increasing communication between farmers.*

SURPRISE **His fix isn't new tech, it's farmers sharing what they know**

Empathy map



1 SAY

"I don't know how to grow the crop"

→ Lab knowledge isn't field knowledge

2 THINK

Valuable knowledge isn't being shared

→ It stays with farmers

3 FEEL

Humble about the limits of his science

→ Defers to growers

Numbered = our most interesting findings



GROW | **SELL** | EAT

Jenny

- Honey vendor, beekeeping school
- Interviewed at her stall

> *How do you know it's pure honey if you don't know the beekeeper?*

In their words



> *I don't think there's a loss of interest. I think there's a lack of knowledge.*

> *95% of new customers don't realize... it changes with the seasons.*

SURPRISE **Her sales pitch is a lesson: she taught us with a tasting**

Empathy map



Numbered = our most interesting findings

1 SAY

Not a loss of interest, a lack of knowledge

→ The gap is education

2 THINK

Selling and educating are the same job

→ She sells by teaching

3 DO

Offers tastings without being asked

→ People learn by tasting



GROW | SELL | **EAT**

Natalie

- Vegan since 7, medical diet
- Interviewed by video call

> *I'm used to being vegan, and I'm scared I'm going to be allergic to something.*

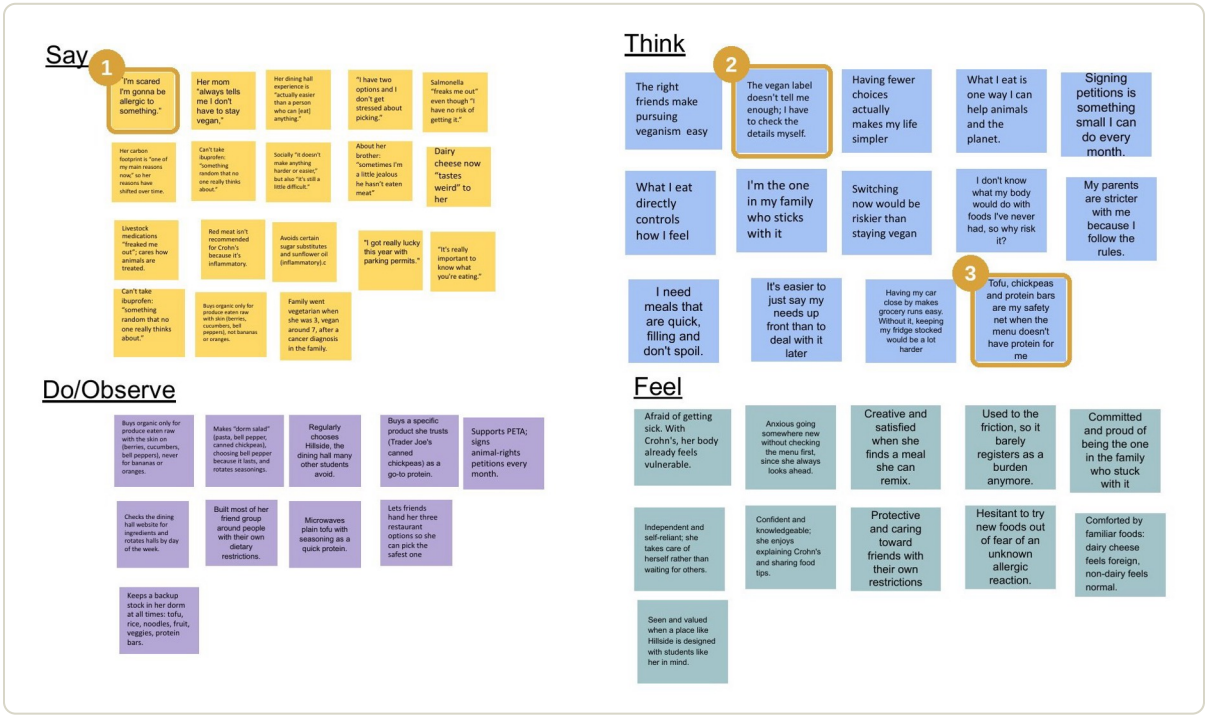
In their words

> *If I'm unsure if something's going to have something inflammatory in it, I'll look it over.*

> *I always have tofu in my fridge… because I know some days I won't have options.*

SURPRISE **Fewer options means less agonizing, but she always needs a backup**

Empathy map



1 SAY

"Scared I'm gonna be allergic to something"

→ Fear keeps her vegan

2 THINK

The vegan label doesn't tell her enough

→ She checks details herself

3 THINK

Backup food is her safety net

→ She built her own system

Numbered = our most interesting findings

Analysis + Reflection

ANALYSIS

Contradictions

	SAYS / EXPECTED	BUT
Jenny	Trust honey only if you know the beekeeper	**Proves purity with color and taste**
Donald	Did more research	**Feels less qualified to advise farmers**
John	Works on a farm built for teaching	**Doesn't learn why tasks are chosen**

ANALYSIS

Tensions

Natalie	Fewer options make choosing easier	⇄	Some days there's nothing she can eat
John	Curious, eager to learn	⇄	Relieved not to have to think
Donald	Sees big system problems	⇄	Believes in small steps, like cover crops

ANALYSIS

Surprises



Natalie

Stays vegan partly out of fear of allergic reactions, not just ethics



Donald

His fix isn't new tech, it's farmers sharing what they already know



Jenny

Says most new buyers don't know honey changes with the season



Nobody lacks care!

INSIGHT 1

Food knowledge lives in people

Donald	Farmers' know-how rarely gets written down
John	Doesn't know how his farm's decisions get made
Jenny	Says new buyers don't know honey varies by season

INFERRED NEED

Growers and sellers need a way for what they know to travel with their food.

INSIGHT 2

Trust comes from evidence you can check

Natalie	Checks ingredient lists herself
Natalie	Buys organic only if you eat the skin
Jenny	Uses color and taste as proof

INFERRED NEED

Buyers need evidence they can verify themselves, not just a label.

INSIGHT 3

Fewer choices can be a relief, when they're dependable

John	Being told what to do is a relief
Natalie	Two options means less agonizing
Natalie	Keeps backups for days with none

INFERRED NEED

People need structure they can rely on, so fewer choices feel like relief, not risk.

Summary

SUMMARY

Key learnings

Hypotheses to test in A2

1

Food knowledge lives in people

Donald · Jenny

2

Checkable evidence beats labels

Natalie · Jenny

3

Fewer choices help, if dependable

John · Natalie

iNTERVIEW REFLECTION

The interview process

What surprised us

- Interviews happened mid-task, not sit-down
- Noisier and shorter than lecture's examples
- Context gave us artifacts we'd never get in a room

How we adapted

- Asked about whatever they were doing
- Paused for customers, then picked the thread back up
- Said yes to Jenny's tasting

Next time

- Don't suggest answers
- One question at a time
- Ask growers about their tools

WHAT'S NEXT

Questions we'll take into A2

How do shoppers who never meet a grower decide what to trust?

What do growers know that never reaches buyers?

When does more information add burden, not confidence?

WHAT'S NEXT

A2: who we'll talk to



Grocery shoppers

average buyers



Fast-food regulars

non-users · care least



Food-waste expert

domain expert

Thank you

Emma · Charlotte · Erin · Davido



Appendix

Transcripts	Assignment 1 · Team Drive
Empathy maps	One per interviewee· Team Drive
Consent forms	Combined PDF · Team Drive