

## **AFPC Meeting Notes July 20, 2007**

Present: Trudy, Erin, Steve, Mary, Branden, Laura, Linda, Sylvia, Pablo, Kelley, Tammy  
Guests: Tricia Sexton, Paige Foran, Kenya Friede

### **Farm Bill Education Piece**

Intended to educate policy makers. It is long but actually three documents in one. Two purposes: educate about farm bill and urge creation of food policy council.

Jen has list of people to send it to that includes King County and City of Seattle execs plus staff people. Also to federal senators.

Question: Disseminate at venues other than officials? Like at events.

Timeline:

LR – likes idea of getting it out to general public as soon as possible.

Send to electeds on Monday. ASAP As well as editorial boards of both papers.

Cover letters need tightening up - should be one page. Branden will work on them.

Trudy suggested additional edits to Farm to Cafeteria section. Strengthening local food systems makes us less vulnerable to disruptions in food supply and thus strengthening our national security.

Jen needs to send it to Ed. Board ASAP because they are more or less waiting for it. Will try to send it to Editorial Board today, if possible.

**Decision:** Farm Bill Piece was approved!

EM - voiced concern about disseminating the piece to the general public before it goes to electeds and the editorial boards.

LR - general public dissemination could help contribute to building a groundswell of support to mandate the FPC.

Decision: Kelly will disseminate the piece(s) at Strengthening Local Communities Everywhere event on 7/21

### **Farm to School Policy Overview**

Farm to School is more than getting food into cafeterias. School gardens, field trips, curriculum as well as procurement for food service.

Many policies/decisions occur at school level among parents, activists, teachers and others.

At the local level, mayors can issue statements or recommendations about what should occur at local level.

At the state level, Depts of Ag and Health can push for statewide policy (e.g. NY).

Geographic preference issue has been argued to be legal by legal groups such as The Harrison Institute for Public Law – Mathew Peter. There is also perceived risk about interpreting USDA policy.

Farm Bill encourages geographic preference and includes other programs that affect getting food into schools.

Barriers to farm to school:

Perceived risk.

Staffing issues.

Distribution.

Meeting demand and processing requirements.

Food safety.

Curriculum and time limitations for school gardens, etc.

Lack of processing and distribution mechanisms.

Policy barriers:

How to bring people to the table and make this issue a priority.

Schools involve lots of players.

Hospitals have different circumstances.

CFSC created document of state legislation examples that can bring about farm to school.

Examples of what local FPCs have done include Portland and San Francisco.

TB - Issues are similar to PCC having 8 stores and trying to source locally. Need one invoice instead of 100. What about a wholesaler cooperative model that could result in a lower cost.

Seattle has a competitive bid process because it is large, but smaller schools have more flexibility.

TB - Farmers are notoriously independent and so don't always want to work together.

EM – school districts often require liability insurance and food safety certifications. Also, have distributor exclusivity contracts. Duck is distributing Food Alliance product a way to increase local procurement.

Union laws are an issue. Perceived threat to jobs if volunteers do some of the work as in the case of Orca School and pilot salad bar program.

EM - Federal funds flow into state which go into local schools so federal and state laws apply. RCW “treats food like pencils” same sort of bid process as supplies.

Child Nutrition Act influences federal rate of reimbursement for school meals. Oregon has proposed leg. To increase reimbursement using state funds which makes geographic preference easier.

LR – states that have voted to align with WTO rules have to follow those rules. In Europe, specifications have to be very specific e.g. fresh bread, can't be preserved.

WA is a WTO state that must adhere to WTO rules.

BB – Institutional structure (eg a staff person or actors and rules) is necessary. Need liaison between farms and schools e.g. CAFF. At what level has farm to institution been most successful? What would our role be as a local entity?

TB - Many decisions are made at the local school level. Have school boards been addressed directly?

Effort is coming out of Skagitonians from work on Farm to Hospital and recently farm to school. Working with Abbi's Northwest

Abbi's Northwest – Abbi Little is a broker distributor. Launched a private for partnership entity with Chef Tom French to get local food into institutions in the broadest sense. Part classroom education as well as procurement.

Lynch pin has been activist food service directors in many places.

Has to be two pronged: local level and policy level at state.

ME will meet with Leslie Zenz to talk about history of State FPC process.

Amy Ellings at the State DOH is trying to build creating an FPC into her work plans. Access to Healthy Foods may be working toward becoming a state FPC.

PM - What about other food producers? (not just farms) E.g. bread.

EM - suggests adding barriers to F2S as a fifth paper to put out.

BB - Two possible decisions: Is there enough here that we want to work on this in the long run? Personal, opinion = yes.

Do we link this possible long-term effort with short project like issue papers?

Decision: Yes, pursue f2s or f2i as a long term project topic.

### **Local Thanksgiving Update**

KCD is interested in funding the effort but is still having meetings about it.

Applied to Seattle Dept of N'hoods under climate change focus. Applied for full \$15k with a portion as volunteer time and cash as matching. Puget Sound Fresh can provide some match in terms of promotion.

Letter from Sims to sent out to retailers to support this project.

Pledge has been drafted.

Developing collateral materials and talking with From the Heart of WA to develop web page?

Do we have a strategy for getting into schools? Depends on funding.

Branden's food system class can be counted toward this.

LR – City's Urban Sustainability Forum may have one session focused on food – perhaps as early as November but it is very preliminary. Need ideas for good speakers. B. Kingsolver, M. Pollan, R. MacRae (Branden has some funds to bring him in), Tim Lang, Sue Roberts Kellogg Food and Society Fellows. Margaret Chrome at Michael Fields Institute, Marion Nestle, Deb Madison and her brother who wrote The Blithe Tomato.

How does AFPC provide education about the topic? Where do you get the turkeys?

Turkey raffle? Develop issue papers or salons/dialogues. Discussion questions for community dialog. Authors of Plenty will be here in late September for a conference – could arrange a separate event with them.

TS – HC Guide will include an article on Local TG. AFPC can be the authors if in by August 6. Tricia will email Jen and Mary about this.

Deadlines for LTG are approaching – do we want to talk about this at the next meeting? Yes.

### **Update on Continuation of AFPC**

Discussion of continuation commitments and another extension in August.

If people would like to step off the council, August would be a good time to do so. Council made decision that it can nominate and vote on replacements. Let us know your feeling before the August meeting. We will want to decide on continuation status at August meeting.

What is happening that might help us make an informed decision?

LR - will be giving briefing to senior Mayor's staff next Wed. and will include AFPC and workgroup recommendations. Doesn't feel like the Mayor's office is going to be on board any time soon. Might be a good idea to talk with Councilmember Sally Clark – she is very concerned about Farmers Market tenure. Branden is happy to talk to her. EM says both she and Conlin serve on BOH. Clark is interested in healthy food access for low-income and Conlin is interested in emergency food.

EM – new opportunity to speak with County Council staff about how to create FPC. Meeting scheduled on August 15 w Sylvia, Tammy, Branden, Laura and Erin. This person is connected to the BOH.

BB – hasn't heard from Conlin's office. But drafting of resolution language first step is get issues on the table next might be what do we do? – establish the FPC.

Will follow up with Mike Mann at the Mayor's office.

EM – KC BOH voted unanimously to eliminate trans fats from the county and require menu labeling for chain restaurants. This is local food policy that aligns nationally. Encourage the AFPC members to share this news with constituents and colleagues.

BB – Huge deal that this got so much attention and that it passed. BB will contact Ivar's about their position – “good idea but it's too expensive.” “As a local Seattle resident ... I won't be going to Ivar's because you don't care about public health.” Anthony's claims same thing.

Next paper = greenhouse gas emissions.

Need to discuss process for editing and making decisions on papers.

Next AFPC meeting is August 17 at Good Shepherd Center.

Note we are actually now turning out real documents with real deadlines and we need to honor deadlines! Policy – one week turn around, if you don't weigh in then interpreted as acceptance.

Topic for next meeting: local thanksgiving.