



About the Acting Food Policy Council of Seattle-King County

December 2008

Our Mission

The Acting Food Policy Council of Seattle-King County works with community, business, agriculture, and government partners to identify gaps in the region's food system and develop integrated policy recommendations and actions that will help our region achieve a food system that supports healthy people, communities, and the environment.

Our work is grounded in the belief that all residents should have access to nutritious, fresh, and affordable food that is produced and distributed in a just manner; and that farming, food processing and distribution flourish as part of the local economy and contribute to a healthy environment.

The AFPC can directly assist cities and King County to achieve their goals of environmental protection, economic development, and social justice. Good food policy is simply good social policy: we all need to eat.

What does the Acting Food Policy Council do?

The most important function for the AFPC is to serve as a bridge between all local governments and between rural producers and urban and suburban food consumers to achieve a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to food policy. Examples include helping improve distribution of regional foods between farms and cities or increasing small-scale food processing to get more local foods into grocery stores, farmers markets and other retail outlets.

While some groups and agencies in the Seattle and King County region already do good work on various aspects of food policy, from farmland preservation to nutrition education, environmental sustainability, land use planning and transportation, these challenges are not easily addressed by one agency alone. The AFPC is designed to facilitate cooperation and integrate different perspectives into cohesive and actionable recommendations.

Accomplishments

The AFPC has played a critical role in several key initiatives that are bringing local, fresh food into our schools and cities and helping local farmers find more marketing opportunities. Here are a few:

- In 2008 the AFPC was a leader in the coalition of dozens of organizations statewide that helped pass the landmark *Local Farms, Healthy Kids* bill (HB 2798/SB6483). This bill creates the Farm to School program that gets healthy, Washington grown food into lunchrooms across the state. It also makes it easier for low-income families to purchase locally grown food by enabling farmers markets to accept food stamps. *Local Farms, Healthy Kids* places Washington at the forefront of local food systems policy nationwide.
- The AFPC worked with the University of Washington and Seattle University to conduct *neighborhood community food system assessments*. The first project (The Sound Food Report) has served as a major source of local food systems data for other research and policy development. Other projects have identified areas with poor transit access to healthy food, and quantified the climate impacts of local food purchasing decisions. This information has been utilized by the City of Seattle, prompting several high-profile articles in local newspapers. AFPC members have shared these assessment tools with researchers and government agency staff.
- In April, 2008, the AFPC worked with the Seattle City Council to help create and pass the *Local Food Action Initiative* (Resolution #31039), which creates a food policy framework for the city of Seattle and directs city agencies to identify their impact on the food system and recommend ways to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, promote procurement policies that prioritize local food, highlight economic development opportunities and create permanent farmers market sites for area farmers. The Local Food Action Initiative makes Seattle a national leader in urban food system policy development.
- The AFPC has been instrumental in attracting over \$1 million in national funding to the region for improving access to healthy eating and active living. In 2006, Seattle was one of 9 communities across the U.S. chosen by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to receive a 2 year, \$1 million planning grant through their *Food & Fitness Initiative*. This grant, which in turn prompted matching funds from the Seattle Foundation, will be used to move the region toward greater social and health equity for families and children. The implementation phase of the grant will last an additional eight years and bring several million dollars of additional funding in direct support of community-identified goals. Additionally, the AFPC's work helped King County secure a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to improve healthy eating and active living efforts in four public housing sites in Seattle and King County.

For more information, please visit our website at www.king.wsu.edu/foodandfarms/foodsystems.htm or contact Tammy Morales, Interim Coordinator, WSU King County Extension at 206.205.3131 Updated 12.05.08