



Food Security Forum 2010 Discussion Group Notes



Arcata Local Food System and Policy

Facilitator: Jenny Riegg
Panelist: Susan Ornelas

Top 3 Action Items:

1) Food in Schools:

- Policy
- Access
- School gardens
- Food cultivation in school curriculum / standards
- HSU student involvement
- Meeting w/ key players needed

Discussion:

- Look into policy involved w/ School Boards to weave gardening/ food systems into curriculum/ state standards
 - ex. Alice Waters Edible School Yard as resource model
- School Gardens: how to deal w/ schools' summer vacations?
 - Need garden managers year round: could be work-study student from HSU, grad-students, Service Learning Center students from HSU or high schools, parent volunteers, etc.
 - \$2000 grant funding through North Coast Community Garden Collaborative, could be used for managers, garden infrastructure, creating business plan for students to sell produce for profit. Grants are generally short-term, best for getting projects started/ not necessarily sustaining them
 - Gardens must fit into school cycle: utilize Humboldt's temperate climate, emphasize winter production
 - Jacoby Creek School has garden: is currently underutilized, needs garden to be integrated into curriculum
 - FreshWater school has functioning garden: each teacher does different crop they grow
 - Goals include: to get kids excited about food, shift image of growing food as lowly job, address the obesity epidemic
- School Kitchens/ Cafeterias:
 - What has already been done?
 - Can school gardens produce their own food for cafeteria?
 - Look at schools w/ success: ex. Laurel Tree
- HSU Student Involvement:
 - How can students plug into more projects in the community?
 - Can community service be more tied in to curriculum?

2) Food Preservation/ Processing Facility:

- To be utilized by farmers, producers, community members
- City of Arcata Foodworks is starting up: still needing to determine what the community wants / needs in this space

Discussion:

- Address growing season constraints of Hum. Co.: can't grow everything year-round, need ways to preserve
- Address current transportation model: petroleum & shipping options won't be as is currently forever
- Policy: gov't needing to enable food security in communities; grant programs needed; creating jobs to grow more local food
- Communal Preservation Facility: to process larger quantities of bulk foods, ex. Applesauce, tomato sauce, refried beans, etc.
 - Obstacle: Cost. Farmers do not want to sell their produce for cheap enough price to do bulk processing
 - Can public utilize granges & school cafeterias w/ commercial kitchens to do food preservation?
 - Ex. Bayside Grange wants to upgrade kitchen: would community help w/ this if they could use it?
- Food Works: owned/ managed by City of Arcata, food processing space for community
 - City still determining what community needs from such a space
 - Will upgrade facility/ equipment: what is needed?
 - Space already in high demand
 - There are many specialty/ value added products from Hum. Co., this could expand
 - Food Works has potential to expand current size X2
 - Meeting needed to articulate what Food Works needs w/ farmers, producers, caterers, etc.

3) Community Collaborated Gardens:

- ex. Lawns to Gardens Project, Community Gardens
- Aim is to educate public about growing food, ex. Lawns to Gardens Handbook
- Policy needed to encourage/ not prohibit such projects
- ex. Demonstration garden beginning at Phillips House

Action Items & Discussion not to be lost:

- City policy to limit sales/ vending machines w/ items containing high fructose corn syrup
- Promotion of fresh fruits & veggies in corner stores: have this included in County Planning
 - Make produce more affordable for stores & customers- need incentives to carry local produce
 - 'Localvore' concept catching on, stores slowly trying new products
- Get local produce/ food into big-box stores, ex. Safeway, Costco, Rays etc.



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- How to infiltrate these markets?
- Look at Farm Bill Policy
- Consumers must also demand this of stores
- Create restaurant rating system based on how much local foods they use
 - HSU student could compile data
 - How affordable is it for restaurants to utilize local foods?
 - This could educate farmers and consumers to local availability
 - Reference Buy Fresh Buy Local program's data on restaurants
- Mobile Kitchen for schools w/o cafeteria kitchens
 - To teach kids about food and cooking
 - Possible obstacles: sanitation codes, adequate dishwashing
 - Utilize Farm-to-School Program statistics to what schools have kitchens
 - What resources do schools have / need to organize something like this?
- Food Policies in General Plan Update
 - Zoning to create access to / availability of local foods
 - Food growing and purchasing to be prioritized