



## Food Security Forum 2010 Discussion Group Notes



### Steps to Achieve Co-op Strategic Plan

Facilitator: Sarah Mora

Panelist: Dave Feral

1. Strategic Plan is being facilitated around the room.
2. Developing a cannery could help bottom line
3. Increasing the amount of local foods available in the stores

Looking at Improving our Financials and Serving the Community

Continue to support and hold forums like this one.

Start looking at needs not wants (how many kinds of beer do we need)

Label GMO's in the Store

Community Education:

Teach people how to grow things

Action Item: Offer classes on how food is grown and how to grow our own food as part of the cooking classes now offered. (Dave)

Action Item: Partner with other local organizations to encourage community gardens.

Action Item: Support the establishment of distribution and processing facilities for local farmers

Action Item: Information on Co-op website and in newsletter about how to grow and preserve food

Action Item: Establish a kids program so they can learn how their food is grown and where it comes from.

Action Item: Create a resource network for people on what resources/organizations are doing related to food security/nutrition.

Action Item: Encourage entrepreneurial development of rural production area such as Hoopa.

Action Item: Continue involvement in forums/panels such as this.



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### Distribution and Coordination in New Local System

Facilitator: Kelley Kyle

Panelist: Melanie Patrick

Initial discussion group: Willow Rain, Steve Salzman, Pat Higgins, David Lippman, Dana Silvernale, Chris Wisner, Helen Love, Claudia Abbot-Barish, Mediha Saliba, Michelle Wyler, Nate Wiesner, Melanie Olstad

Double Humboldt County Agriculture--How long to set up distribution system?

- Starting now—two farmers bought trucks
- need volume model to get food into institution; risk to plant one

Ideal location for food distribution system—Plan West-Rio Dell

- Where do the farmers want the facility?
- Farmers are focused on farmers markets
- Food hub can be built on existing lots
- Co-op has shared cooler for restaurant pick up

Headwaters a source for funding?

Farmers need to cooperate to have enough volume.

- Concern—price per item for institutional sales

Land use concern—too much emphasis on exporting (beef)

- Ship to Bay Area in niche market—export truck farming.

Pie in sky is creating enough volume to export

What is the price point to eat local food?

Food is so subsidized—what does it take to create a new model?

- USDA commodities 10 cents /pound for ground beef
- \$1 for every kids lunch going to fresh produce

How do we create the infrastructure?

- Capitol—share banking for creating action item

Local investors interested in local economy—community corporations model

- refrigerated storage unit
- need plan
- use model of buying chickens, animals, except buying refrigeration



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Agreements in place for CSA for schools

Food for People money going for purchase from local farms

Partnership with Locally Delicious helps with gleanings

Headwaters goals had to focus on exports. That was success. Farmers spend lots of time in pick-up trucks doing the circle. Need to stop redundancy—raise volume, still have distribution problems. If farmers, stay on farms and not focus on distribution.

Needs:

- store grain
- share equipment
- commercial kitchen

Need communal vision—what is next piece to move forward?

Arcata Economic Development facility

Model NCGA model—Farmers' Market

Utilize Farm Bureau? Facility to sell only local products

Facility on First & E

Waterfront development at foot of C

Start focus with distribution & refrigeration

Does Co-op want to deal with two farmers who consolidate their volume?

Co-op is like a Farmers' Market. Local is important

Need organization that can sell local tomatoes

Hospitals want one vendor

Schools want salad bar delivered

Huge stimulus fund coming through Jr Co—can we funnel it?

Move away from non-profit model



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Move away from individual farmer's needs to cooperative model

Ship from maverick model to how to work together

50% locally grown food within two years—have mentoring system

Tomato people need to talk; potato people need to talk

Do more research—visit Bob's Redmill—check out what's needed to move to next level

Some co-ops act as distribution system

Arcata Economic Development Commission needs vision to push through proposal

NCGA? (North Coast Growers Association)

Sysco (food distributor) demands 80%--local farmers locked out of contracts and can't sell to jails, hospitals, HSU, institutions

Is there a sequence to connect dots—needs commitment from farmers, then next steps can happen



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### 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



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### Farmers Issues and Land Use

Facilitator: Kristyna Solawetz

Panelist: John LaBoyteaux

Introductions and group interests: City land use, Media (North Coast Journal, Food for Thought radio), UCCE, Healthy Humboldt, Southern Humboldt and land issues, historical land use and redesignation

#### Current Issues:

-Past generations and succession: How do we avoid repeating mistakes?

-General Plan Update: Redesignate 160,000 acres of prime ag lands. 100,000 acres currently occupied by rural residential designations. 60,000 acres are believed to be vacant. Heated topic surrounding farming on rural residential—should be able to farm. When county is looking at growth in urban areas, they are talking about consolidating growth for those who need services (not intended to limit those living on rural residential, but rather serve those of lower income that need greater access to services).

1.2 million acres of timber land

We have 75,000 acres of farmable land

-Sustainable agriculture: economical, environmentally healthy, and socially beneficial. Should sustainability necessarily be profitable? Study tracked organic farms and found most need outside supplemental income.

-Land distribution and variety of production. Increase segments of agriculture that are in higher demand. 3.8% of wheat grown domestically are turned into whole wheat flour, so prioritizing uses is important in determining county efficiency, and would require a shift of practice and knowledge of those who use grains.

-Organic production and purchasing. Organic milk: Horizon was only purchasing 15% of organic milk produced.

-We are already producing enough beef and dairy... What are the issues for grains, vegetable cultivation, etc. land use loan availability and start-up costs for beginning farmers

-Land use planning: If competing interests for land and price is inflated, farmers will not be economically viable for buying. Restricted for agricultural land use only is important in securing land for farm production

Realtors have designated quantities of land to be available for housing, could we initiate something similar for farmers? An agriculture inventory of land available for purchase, lease, etc. Like a dating service—linking needs with resources

Deborah Giraud is conducting a study of landowners who own greater than 10 acres.

Survey asks what land is available, considerations for selling or leasing land, etc.

-Marijuana culture, large housing developments, riverfront recreation, and public lands acquisitions are biggest factors in conflict with agricultural land uses.

-Historical uses of land, production of successful crops no longer under cultivation, what lessons can we learn from the past?



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-Ag land preservation is driven by soils. Policies should honor soils maps. Definition of prime land in General Plan uses Williamson Act to keep bottomlands in prime designation. Coastal Act also protects prime grazing lands.

### Questions:

- How much land would we need to feed the county?
- Subsidies: How do subsidies affect Humboldt County? Beef and dairy often receive matching grants. Waste management for beef cows. However, these are not necessarily price supports.
- Certification of food safety: Senate bill 510 may require farmers to receive \$500 certifications for food safety (excluding smaller scale farms?).
- Is the dairy industry actually profitable? Is it falsely supported/promoted?
- High elevation grazing and grain production? What works, what is harmful?
- What are the efficiencies of grain cultivation? The food system is vulnerable, even globally due to economics and fuel.
- Are we looking at an old model or a post peak oil model? Post peak oil model calls for more localized system, not reliant on other countries.
- How can we better utilize land in McKinleyville? How can we produce food closer to where people live?

### Action:

1. **List of aspiring farmers** (10 years or less experience). Build a database documenting future farmers. Identify farmers, assist in networking with mentors, supplies, land, etc.
2. General Plan: **Articulate food systems advocacy from perspective of community (in addition to farmers). Articulate farmer's perspective to community.** CAFF has booth at farmers market for education to community? Article in Co-op news outlining planning meeting times? March 11 meeting may be last General Plan Update meeting to attend.
3. **Utilize social networking and digital communication** to continue pursuing goals. Use current list serves to disseminate information regarding needed action.



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### Food Access for Low Income Community

Facilitator: Danielle Stubblefield  
Panelist: Anne Holcomb

Child Nutrition Act:

Enough \$ at Federal level, summer health program is part of school meals program, based on urban model. But in rural areas schools aren't in session and hard to get reimbursement for travel mileage b/c have kids miles and miles away. 85% of kids in meal program aren't served in summer.

Cannery needed: 65% of year we can use fresh food at big enough volume. But in winter months we import apple sauce, all these things that we could make locally. If we could start preserving our own food for other 35% of time we'd start growing our food production by 50%. Economic development is one of best things that can happen to low-income.

See emergency preparedness sheet, only 6 of all items canned locally. We can't be self-sustaining in emergency . . . another whole market, how big of production would that be?

Anne: to have facilities for people to be able to use equipment at household production level could help b/c it's expensive to have those materials.

Entrepreneurial ideas: soup mixes

Economies of scale: if have enough to produce, makes it economic to do. Cuts waste – a problem for farmers. All farmers over produce b/c they want to capture every sale that they can.

Export opportunities: is the same as importing dollars.

Discussion of canning would be hiring entry-level workers.

Sun Valley bulb farm: helping a certain demographic, canning facilities would be those same types of workers. If health care and reasonable living wage, etc., then would have people stick with it.

Economic development – in cannery, dist that gets food to cannery, in finished product side, and in farm production side . . . would grow large part of community that involves local foods. Welfare to work program are working at Food for People, maybe couldn't continue education or had disability, and they need to just build their experience and on-job training. Entry level jobs help build that.

Why did the original canneries disappear? Located within the Grange halls?

Then food became cheaper and more readily available in stores, happened nation wide. Coast Seafood used to process locally and now do it in Washington, but think all there processing equipment is still there.

Fuel, gasoline is so cheap so transporting food seems cheap. But that will change. Most canneries use electrical and natural gas for production.

Processing has proven economically viable in this community – all high value-added items that have biggest margin are who are doing it. Carvalo's is in Crescent City, Tomasos in Blue Lake, Rita's in Eureka.

What's next step: feasibility study, business plan, community support, funding . . .

Building community support – Steve Suttell

It's pure and simple economic development.

Weekday markets: ugly EBT sign, cluttered . . . would be nice to have another table (1/2 table even) that's fully devoted to this. At Saturday market, running at \$500/day. He's only at best \$40/day, and that's in the first 2 weeks of the month.

Take EBT card from food stamps, exchange into 'wooden bucks'.

WIC has checks, can grow directly to farmer and deposited like a check.

Henderson Market may have more seniors, it draws a good cross-section, and more EBT used there.

More marketing might help – fresh air, music . . . bring out the good qualities of FM to advertise it to the general public and food bank clients.

The sign most people see is the blue sign that has big picture of EBT card on it.

What about Eureka mall? NO, haven't done well in past there.

How can we promote food stamps at FM:

- A nice table
- A banner, something visible (he has space on
- Sign on each farmers stall that they take EBT card there
- Use visuals! That each sign has picture of card.
- Market and cross-market at every opportunity.
- Ask about putting EBT card/accepted on annual FM calendar that goes
- Announce it regularly on PA system
- In all NCGA press to put in regularly 'we take EBT and WIC' (need to check with WIC that they are ready for the promotion)

EBT card is great; it's free money for the farmers

1.75 million each month comes into Hum Co from food stamps – Henderson Center market gets about \$120/month.

What's different at Arcata market that makes it better known there.

Obstacles: its still too expensive for the food stamp users, they need to stretch their food stamps further.



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What about local funding: Can you get a \$1 match to apply at farmers' markets that matches every food stamp \$1

Healthy Choice Pilot: does incentivize the use of your food stamp for fresh fruits and dollars – any room for Advocacy to get Humboldt included, or is it already a done deal? A small pot of money in Farm Bill that will select states. The time to make a push for Humboldt to be one of these Counties would come if and when CA was a chosen state.

At an obesity conference remembers there was a pilot that gives example of a local foundation (maybe white wave?) that gave incentives for buying at FM to give folks a 'bigger bang for buck'. But it wasn't sustainable b/c when the money was used up it ended.

Senior FM vouchers offered in the summertime – 2 years ago admin through state-wide Area agency on aging, they were going to drop the program b/c too expensive to run. But Ca Dept of Ag took it on b/c state would have

Amount coming into Hum Co has declined over years, maybe down to \$5,000 – less being made accessible, not due to demand.

Food Bank made their own summer farmers market vouchers – 'yellow bucks', they would need funding again to do that.

From Farmers' market perspective, this is win-win.

To further promote Food Stamp/EBT use at farmers' markets.

Combine sign with EBT, WIC!

Food Bank has a laminator.

EBT at farmers' market also helps combat the stigma of what food stamp users are buying.

EBT card can also be used for plant starts/herb starts. You could start your whole garden with EBT! How can we get that word out?

Can share that idea with Community Gardening Collaborative

A kit of starts: An informational package: how to grow, here's some seeds, use your EBT card at the nursery booths

Food Bank and NCGA to increase visibility of EBT availability – Deborah Waxman and Dave McCuish (signs pointing outward towards street)

Include

Campaign: Start your garden here at the farmers' market with EBT!

Deborah Waxman– to include garden starts

Dave McCuish and Danielle Stubblefield – will look at CAFF growing chart and try to select best information

How to take it from the FM and move it to a backyard garden.

NCGA can share/promote anything as long as it is free – can put it on his table.

People might just not know how to start – hard to invest in time to dig/create garden

We should make it seasonal, so that consumers could easily know what varieties – looking at all the seeds available in stores gets confusing of what grows when, what grows in our climate.



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Brainstorm of ideas:

- Pick 10 items to provide growing season info on so not confusing
- Pick items that produce all summer long and have continuous : straw berries, summer squash, salad greens, potatoes, onions, chard,
- Winter: purple sprouting broccoli, salad greens, kale
- Have easily available at FM manager's booth
- Need to promote it to farmers to make sure they were bringing starts (most have extra on their farms)
- (available rest of season at Co-op)

Seconds from farmers: they have them available by the lug or by the bag, but still a LOT of people buy them, it's not only available to

The problem with the canning idea is that it would take the free food away from the Food Bank. Would cannery even be profitable: can it compete with WinCo?? You'd have to coordinate with all the farmers to get their seconds, you'd have to transport it to the canning site . . .

Also in Mexico paying them such cheap wages, it outcompetes price of gas.

Two levels:

1. The idea of the advertising itself
  - a. Images: EBT card, garden, plant starts (with an arrow between each one?)
  - b.
2. The package of materials to help them do it: starting with brochure
  - a. Idea of how much money a garden can save you (i.e. 'a 10x10 plot can produce \$200 worth of vegetables') – how make into an image
  - b. Very readable: small chunks of info
  - c. As visual as possible
  - d. List of materials they would need
  - e. Plant growth chart



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### Disaster Preparedness and Food Security

Facilitator: Noelle Melchizedek

Panelist: Linda Nellist

Gotten away from the model of helping ourselves and being prepared for other people. Think they're self-sufficient but are only as self-sufficient as their pantries.

\*Information/Education

\*Making People aware of what they can do (growing their own space)

\*Tracking resources – Linda doesn't know where all of the fresh food resources are. Everyone should have a sense of where these are; where the resources could be.

Publication of locally produced foods has happened in the past – information is available.

Public health had created a list of food resources.

Issue: 28 Items on list: 6 of them we can produce here in Humboldt County – is not self-sustainability at all.

ACTION ITEM: Create a community cannery. Hoopa could be a model. Steve Suttell.

Issue: Lack of information

ACTION ITEM: How are we going to promote these informational resources that exist about what food is available. Information about who is responsible for what when disaster strikes. Where are those resources and how will we access them? How to make those public.

Question: Who has food stored? Red Cross? No, Red Cross doesn't have warehouse space.

Red Cross helps other agencies set up the information and Red Cross and such – but the COUNTY is the lead for this work.

Issue: What agency is responsible for assisting with an economic disaster?

ACTION ITEM: Economic disasters? Is not a formal protocol that Red Cross would deal with, however it's part and parcel of having a healthy community. Practicing it needs to happen.

Issue: Sustainability/supplement existing food

ACTION ITEM: Informational brochure/package: For individual households: Set of seeds + information about how to grow food in a small household. Would educate and empower the



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entire community, which would need an educational campaign. Approach the existing Garden Collaborative to assist/create: Andrew Newcomb

Issue: Neighborhoods don't have a sense of community for preparedness; traditionally neighborhoods don't discuss food preparedness/have set up for a neighborhood mini-garden.

**ACTION ITEM:**

Issue: raise awareness of individual responsibility and encourage support of local food support efforts.

**ACTION ITEM:** Create mini-gardens that neighbors can either buy into, work in as part of, or can participate in, honoring their physical abilities and talents. Have experts present to assist with the set-up of these gardens, have mini-grant programs. Multiple agencies could come together to also incorporate food preparedness as part of their mission/promotion (supporting community gardens, community garden collaborative, Lawns into Gardens is not the current infrastructure, CAFF, food not lawns to be prepared for disasters). Linda Nellist & Andrew Newcomb – and as a suggestion Anne Holcomb (not as the coordinator/contact, but interested as in the concept). Linda will take this back to the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster Consortium.

Issue: Need to coordinate resources for teaching cooking and also being prepared for disaster preparedness.

**ACTION ITEM:** Purchase a vehicle that has two purposes: one is to have a vehicle to be a demonstration and teaching kitchen people how to cook in outlying areas that can be owned by disaster preparedness agencies. CalFIRE has model, and locally the Salvation Army has a canteen. \_\_\_\_\_??

Issue: Communities don't have information specifically of what land could be used for community gardens.

**ACTION ITEM:** cities and County map available infill areas that could be community gardens, and offer them to communities/neighborhoods, with an emphasis on perennial food sources (oil baring and protein baring nuts and seeds).

Issue: there are foraging opportunities available in Humboldt County.

**ACTION ITEM:** categorize and educate about availability and location of forage foods.



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### Local Foods Preparation, How to Do It Your Self

Facilitator: Portia Bramble

Panelist: Ann Anderson

- List of businesses, cooperative apple presses etc.? Existing facilities. Lacking:
  1. Garlic, olives press, etc.
  2. Think about what I buy that are imported, artichoke hearts...
  3. Sea salt, olive oil...
  4. Existing facilities, become cooperatives, shared processing
  5. **ACTION: facilitate communication...** CAFF's role?
  6. Tomaso's pasta sauces, is it locally sourced? Does do all canning and jarring on site
  7. Poultry co-op, as an example for others in formation process
  8. Co-packer idea: your recipe, their facility. Small seasonal batches
  
- Is there a cooperative distribution system? Tomasos does some.
- Inventory of products not available locally
- School lunch programs need to be localized and health oriented. Problem: contracts with food providers, etc.
- Home gardens: grow your own classes, victory garden movement, Living Green Gazette, new local business
- Lawns to gardens program in Arcata
- Haley West HSU graduate student focused on home gardens as an indicator of self-sufficiency, etc. New movement, looking for interviews. **ACTION: home garden network in HumCo.** Forum. Email contact [haleywest@gmail.com](mailto:haleywest@gmail.com)
- Communication
- Shared production equipment: what is needed? Survey farmers about what is needed. Small sample of what our farmers do need.
- If we had the facility the demand would grow, supply would increase. **ACTION: new or existing facility.**
- Work with solar preservation.
- Excess produce and no outlet.
- Micro-growers consignment store idea, exists in Arizona.
- Public policy, ag. policy
- **ACTION: Create a Clearing house for information.**
- Tool Library
- Ideas for people who do not have yard space, project facilitation for alternative growing techniques i.e. indoor growing, sprouts.
-



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- New farmers need information and training: Plan It Green Conference, CR. UCCE, conferences, Sustainable Ag. Research (SAR), SBDC, ACRES (biological farming)
- Locally Delicious: create a website that is fully comprehensive?
- Important not to be redundant or reinvent the wheel, CAFF is a good example of difficulty associated with this issue.
- Food distribution center could serve in this role, example Rio Dell project or FoodWorks.
- Senior housing facility could be a kitchen hub as well.
- Involving granges?
- School gardens.
- Garden shares, get help in your own garden.
- Website to exchange information, match making. **ACTION: Identify existing websites that could serve this purpose.**
- Need more publicity.
- **ACTION: Identify two separate networks- Gardeners network and commercial growers network**
- **ACTION: Sustainable Funding**
- **ACTION: Agricultural Tourism and Farm Tours**

### **Emails to add to list:**

**Andy Sehic**

**Mark Debrow**