



**Colorado  
Food Systems  
Advisory Council  
Update  
❖  
June, 2011**

**June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011**

**Dear Partners,**

We are happy to report that the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council is now in full swing! The Council was established through Senate Bill 10-106, a bill initiated by LiveWell Colorado, and seated in October 2010 by Governor Ritter. The Council recently held its 3<sup>rd</sup> official meeting (an all-day planning retreat on May 26<sup>th</sup>) and we would like to take this opportunity to update you on how we have spent the past several months and our plans for the future.

### **Update on Past Activities**

The Council devoted much of the winter and spring of 2011 to becoming more acquainted with one another and with Colorado's food system. The Council's first meeting, held on January 27<sup>th</sup>, focused on organizational structure, electing a Chair (Jim Miller, Deputy Commissioner, Colorado Department of Agriculture) and a Vice-chair (Ruth Stemler, Director, Share Our Strength CO), and establishing policies and procedures.

The Council then focused on learning more about Colorado's food system, such as learning who is doing what across the state, and other opportunities to bring the Council to shared understanding and common terminology. The Council participated in a series of webinars related to understanding the role of the U.S. Farm Bill, discussing current food systems projects underway across the state, and learning from national food policy council "guru" Mark Winne from the Community Food Security Coalition.

The Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> official meeting was held March 24<sup>th</sup> at Colorado State University. Various faculty shared "teasers" of current data, information, and research efforts about elements in the food system – production, processing, distribution, food access, and consumer behavior.

With all of this rich information (and deep piles of paper) in hand, the Council spent the day of May 26<sup>th</sup> discussing their vision of the food system. Emphasis was on developing decision-making processes, and coming to agreement around short-term, 2011 priority work areas.

### **Moving Forward**

The Council agreed to form a series of subcommittees that will be meeting throughout the summer of 2011 to advance the top-priority actions that emerged from the May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Subcommittees will be tackling the proposed areas of focus, below. These areas do not constitute the entire list of potential actions identified by the Council, but rather areas that are ripe for immediate action in 2011. In some cases, the Council may play a supporting role, in others an initiating role, and in some cases simply helping to guide study or assessment efforts.

#### **Communications:**

- Engage Coloradans in the work of the CO-FSAC
- Advise the Development of a Food Systems Clearinghouse
- Educate about Hot-Topic Food Systems Issues

#### **Partnership Development:**

- Build Capacity & Coordination with Local Food Policy Councils
- Coordinate and Collaborate with the Farm-to-School Task Force

Food Access:

- Connect Food Assistance Programs to Local Food Systems (e.g., enhancing the use of SNAP/EBT machines at farmers' markets)
- Promote Food & Nutrition Awareness

Economic Development:

- Expand Economic Development of Food System Industries
- Understand Existing & Needed Infrastructure for CO Producers
- Explore Community & Commercial Food Processing to Connect Local Foods to Coloradans

**Upcoming Meetings**

Thursday and Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, State Tour, Details TBD!

Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1-4 pm, Location TBD

Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 pm, Location TBD

**Keep In Touch!**

The Council will be busy developing communication plans this summer. If you have ideas or suggestions of how the Council can best communicate with you, please contact one of the Council staff, listed below.

Subcommittees are open to participation from stakeholders around the state, and the Council will be recruiting additional members. If you are interested in learning more about some of the work listed above, and feel you could participate in a subcommittee, please also contact one of the staff. Subcommittee meetings are being scheduled as soon as possible.

Lastly, the Council is subject to the open meeting law and does post notice of all full Council and subcommittee meetings. For now, Council meetings will be announced through the Colorado Department of Agriculture website: [www.colorado.gov/ag/commissioner](http://www.colorado.gov/ag/commissioner) and click "Food Systems Council".

**Sincerely,**

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