

# FARM TO SCHOOL TASK FORCE

## SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> MEETING MINUTES

### TASK FORCE MEMBER ATTENDEES

Bernie Orsini, Mark Lara, Andy Nowak, Kristin Tucker, Leo Lesh, Jane Brand, Susan Motika, Wendy White, Julie Moore, Tanya Fell, Jeremy West

### TASK FORCE STAFF

Lyn Kathlene, Jewlya Lynn

### GUESTS

Cynthia Torres, Food Systems Advisory Council; Albert Marty, Food Systems Advisory Council; Wendy Peters-Moschetti, WPM Consulting; Lisa Walvoord, LiveWell; Karen Ryan, LiveWell; Molly Shay, CU; Eric Aakko, CDPHE

### RECAPS AND UPDATES

#### Roadmap review – background and overview

- *Audience question:* Suggestion to move the Health Policy Coalition work to relate to the State and National Policy Precondition.

#### Public Will Building Among Leaders

- *Briefing Book:* Intended to capture momentum, projects, and active work of committees in the context of the strategic direction of the Task Force. Developed by a group of Core Team members collaboratively. Appropriate for use with funders, legislature, key state agency stakeholders. This is the back-up materials to the one-pager about the Task Force.
- *Key Contacts Engaged*
  - *El Pomar Foundation:* Paula Buser in Canon City schools is looking to connect with Colorado Corrections Industries agricultural programs (dairy farm, orchards, fish, buffalo herd, etc.). Through her, the Task Force Core Team followed up and met with El Pomar's representatives. Encouraged to submit an application for funding the staff support and activities of the Task Force. Additionally, supporting and offering technical assistance to Colorado Corrections Industries as they explore becoming a food hub for the region. Task Force will be attending and presenting at the Pikes Peak regional council for El Pomar.
  - *The Colorado Health Foundation:* Meeting first in the spring and again this September to propose grant funding for the projects.
  - *CDC Conference Presentation:* Invitation to present on the Farm to School Task Force

as an initiative to help improve child health through good nutrition.

- *Legislature:* Invitation from Senator Massey to attend a breakfast in front of the House Education Committee to give an update on the Task Force progress in January.
- *Farm to School Task Force Roadshow:* A PowerPoint is being developed to serve as a roadshow tool as requests come in for presentations on the Task Force and farm to school work more broadly.
- *TED Talk by Andy Nowak regarding school gardens in Denver Public Schools:* The story of the school gardens from top down and ground up. Additionally, Denver Public Schools submitted an application to the Colorado Health Foundation for a feasibility study, focused on the potential of farming on school sites, legal and contractual issues as they produce more food, where would a food hub fit into the program, what are the infrastructure needs. They are moving forward with farming projects, including one with Agriburbia, looking at a different way of using land for agriculture. Needs to be completed by 2012 to include in a bond for the 2012 election. Costs estimated at \$12 million.

### **Food Hub Development**

- Supportive of two pilot projects with food hubs through school districts. Design is to use current infrastructure to serve as an aggregation point for small and medium size farmers in the community and minimal processing, followed by distribution to their schools. Long-term goal is to build enough infrastructure to support not only their own schools, but also other districts in their area. To sustain, they are looking to also partner with hospitals, universities, and retail, serving as a local food hub. Utilizing students as part of the model. First hub, Greeley/Evans, is just starting to prepare food.

### **Farm to School Task Force Logo**

- Logos were provided for everyone to look at. There is agreement to have the Information Hub workgroup select the logo with input from other Task Force members. Please submit feedback to Wendy White by September 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Guest comment: Business school at University of Colorado is interested in doing help with logo. There is a group focused on Farm to School.

### **Colorado Food System Advisory Council**

- *Attachment:* Colorado Food System Advisory Council flyer.
- Progress to Date:
  - January 2011: Opening meeting focused on organizing structure and developing policy and procedures. Chair is Jim Miller, Deputy Commission of Agriculture, and Vice-Chair is Ruth Stemler.

- March, 2011: Educational meeting with learning on food systems in the state.
- May, 2011: Vision, key priorities for 2011 (Communications, Partnership Development, Food Access, and Economic Development).
- August 2011: 2½ day statewide tour meeting with food councils throughout the state, farmers and ranchers, and farmers' markets. Opportunity to learn and gather information, build visibility, find out what stakeholders want the Council to accomplish.
- September 2011: Next meeting is happening on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011.
- Encouragement to visit the Food System Advisory Council website: <http://www.cofoodsystmscouncil.org>. Logo contest design competition underway. Information is available on the website.
- Discussion regarding the diversity of members on the Advisory Council and discussion with communities on the state tour in August. Stakeholders identified barriers between producers to end users. Common theme was desire to do the right thing, but challenges figuring it out. In some places, the issues were micro level (e.g. barriers in bringing fresh bread to market), but the micro level issues are indicative of broader barriers so these small issues don't become barriers. Stakeholders asking about specific issues, such as requirements to sell to schools from the producers' perspective. Described positive environment at different places they visit (e.g. engaged, festive farmers market in Colorado Springs, despite challenging location). Need for skill building among different producers in managing their products, pricing, sales, and bringing food to markets.

## SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES/DISCUSSION

### Information Hub

#### *Overview*

- Purpose is to gather the existing information (well-organized links and documents), disseminate lessons learned and resources, interactive peer networking in a discussion group or blog. Many groups will be linked to it, local to region to state and federal.

#### *Progress*

- Brandon Williams at CDPHE will develop the website. He has developed a mock site.

#### *Discussion*

- Dynamic and static resources. Logo. Design components.

### Pilots & Evaluation

#### *Progress*

- Krista Garand and Andy Nowak submitted a CHF grant application for a southwestern FTS

workshop. Currently, producers lack understanding of food school safety protocols and how to respond to school bids.

- Outcomes: FTS Food Safety manual and How To Respond To School Food Bid manual. The goal is to have the documents for the January 2012 Real Food conference. The goal of the CO FTS Food Safety and Food Bid manual is to address small and large.
  - CHF asked to switch grant to a sponsorship ask. LiveWell, CDPHE, and CHF are sponsoring with a total of \$9K, most of which will be used for scholarships for participants from around the state.
  - D11 completed school meal assessment, Rick Hughes is applying for CHF grant for infrastructure for a food hub. CHF will likely provide some funding.
  - In light of the listeria scare, it is really important to get the food safety protocols implemented.
  - GAP/GHP is too restrictive for small and medium-size producers. Start with GAP/GHP but more manageable. Jeremy West has a two pager. There are other states that have created models. Know more about the food service side than the producer side.
- Support the efforts occurring now by pursuing resources to support them.
  - Real Food CO is launching a Weld County producer food hub. A farm has been selected. RFC will be involved in design, evaluation, etc.

### *Discussion*

- Need more evaluation of these efforts. CDPHE has offered their evaluators. Real Food CO has offered to follow up with producers and schools. Susan Motika will take back the ask for evaluation to CDPHE. Have the subcommittee meet with the CDPHE evaluators. Susan reviewed many evaluations, but most are older. We need to look at specific projects but also how Colorado adds to the field of evaluation of FTS so CDC understands the role of Colorado in FTS.
- We can have statistics on the Information Hub that highlight evaluation results.
- People have been asking for data from previous years. We need to capture it and know how to use it.
- Evaluation of the Weld County producer hub is an opportunity to gather information about the producer side of the food hub.
- Greeley/Evans district is building evaluation into his food hub.

## Policy

### *Progress*

- One document was drafted this summer: *Q&A on School Food Procurement and Geographic Preferences*. Received feedback and will edit. Already drafted a guide for local producers that will come out shortly.
- Inspections and food safety is being handled differently by the counties which makes it hard for producers to know how to work in multiple counties.

### *Discussion*

- Need to discuss how to distribute the policy document beyond our Information Hub.
- Need to understand the areas of push and pull on county regulations without going into every county. Need to be respectful of county and state laws. Is there overlap or confusion that we can help clarify? CDPHE will put out a one page draft for feedback. Cindy Torres notes that some health departments have rules that encourage direct markets. These can be used as examples from peers.
- The Colorado School of Public Health is working on food safety, and faculty and students could be helpful. Look at it from all sides. Julie will make the connection to the PH. Melissa Bunning's students.
- Colorado Farm to Market has regulations that are a good starting point. It is not a county by county approach.
- Federal and state regulations differ.
- What are the school districts purchasing in order to understand the supply and demand? Leo gets reports on what was bought in detail, but smaller districts do not often have the capability to do it with accuracy. Mark notes that his district has a health person for the region, not by county. A food hub will solve the problems of small farmers and health regulations. School policy indicators workgroup with CDPHE, CDE, etc., are releasing a survey soon (SPI) – can we use this to collect the information needed to move forward? Working group today can help identify the information needed. Get the question list done, share it with the FSDs so they can start identifying and saving the data – best to do in collaboration with FSDs. Jeremy and Julia Erlbaum have a list.

## Facilities Grants

### *Overview*

- Information on how to find and apply for grants for facilities.
- CSI is working on this internally, and reaching out to school districts and other partners who have been involved in putting together grant proposals for facilities schools need. Goal: Facilitate and streamline the process for facilities, particularly in small schools, to identify what things are needed, capacity of different types of equipment, value of

equipment, and costs associated. This will simplify the process of schools pursuing funding for their equipment needs. The information will include standard, boilerplate language on why each piece of equipment is needed.

- Agreement this work is ideally for small districts – larger districts have the capacity to collect this type of information themselves.
- Materials will be available on the Information Hub for anyone to access.

### *Discussion*

- For many schools, facilities are not an issue. The issue is transitioning from processed food to preparing their own food. Older schools have equipment.
- For other schools, the facilities are the biggest obstacle. Newer schools may not have any kitchen facilities. Older schools may not have electronic systems needed to power large kitchen equipment.
- A hood is one of the most expensive items, though some other equipment can be expensive.
- Suggestion of policy committee crafting recommendations for what new school facilities include to meet regulatory requirements.

## **SMALL GROUP REPORT OUT: KEY ACTIONS FOR EACH PRIORITY**

### **Information Hub Working Group**

#### *Ideas*

- Migrate the current FTS website to a more encompassing site with Task Force work and more.
- Conduct surveys at events to find out the type of information people want and the method of updating most useful to them. CSNA Fall Conference 9/30-10/1; Durango Conference; Real Food – January 2012.
- Sustainability: Colorado Department of Agriculture main contact to update /maintain the website. Others? Administrative access? Brandon at CDPHE is the main resource for the website.
- Launch before the next Task Force Meeting: Beta version by 11/1/2011 and live by 12/01/2011.
- Within each audience's page, have information on the following topics: food safety, procurement, schools, producers, parents and community (where to get involved), training (webinars, presentations).

#### *Dynamic content information*

- Event calendar that anyone can add to; FTS-TF in events but color-coded; Ask an Expert – anyone can pose a question; Poll questions that change with immediate results and

comments, eg: how many people did the Colorado Proud School Meal Day?; daily / weekly FTS news to share information and educate – how to do this?

### *Static content information*

- Links to local school districts with farm to school; map with links to schools doing FTS, producers selling to schools, coops aggregating, and food hubs; grants.

### *Logo and Website Design*

- The logo will be used on website and materials, and for schools and producers to use. (Julie will work on the logo)
- Freshen up the logo with launch of website.
- RSS Feed – what is it? How is it used?
- Social network component.
- Forms and documents: headings that lead to a new window with specific documents.

### **Pilots & Evaluation Working Group**

- Meet with the evaluation team at CDPHE. What is the “ask”? How will we use the results? Consider school and producer sides and multiple models.
- Multiple evaluators (CDPHE, CSU): possibly pursue funding. Use CSU grad students, School of Public Health. What is the expertise of CDPHE evaluators – do they have health focus mostly and need other evaluator partners? Create an evaluator team.

### *Outcome evaluations*

- Schools – usage patterns/data. Perceived value (students, parents). Models – rollout of local products. Consumption, child health indicators (long term change, BMI, sick days, behavior, academic outcomes, CSAP scores). Infrastructure, transportation, safety, storage, staff capacity, state bid process.
- Producers, are they devoting more land to school products, shifting sales to schools? Pull and document existing data from CSU, Department of Agriculture: cost by type of food, usage data / markets, models for different sizes – cost, volume, price, crop type, timing, infrastructure, evidence of new markets.

### *Model evaluations*

- Producers: size, role, school gardens, seasons, availability, variations in infrastructure, food safety practices including traceability when aggregating, washing, kill facilities, storage, aggregation, staff capacity, food preparation process, training, startup and ongoing costs, rollout, number of local products, definition of local.
- Schools: refrigeration, inclusion of student curriculum (eg. nutrition), size, role, school gardens, seasons, availability, variations in infrastructure, food safety

practices including traceability when aggregating, washing, kill facilities, storage, aggregation, staff capacity, food preparation process, training, startup and ongoing costs, school policies – bids, CAP and GHP, guidance to producers, rollout, number of local products, definition of local.

### *Environmental context evaluations*

- County health department policies, geography in the state varies greatly, transportation, infrastructure, societal attitudes: urban versus rural, political climates, land and water preservation issues, local production, and availability of direct distribution.

## **State Policy and Regulatory Reform Working Group**

### *Cutting Edge Policy Criteria – what should it look like 15 years out?*

- Background research!
- Who else to involve, who else to consult with?
- What's within our charge / roadmap that can be done?
- State/federal/district level policies
- Legislative, regulatory, general policy
- Programmatic partnerships
- Timeline: short term, long term

### *Cutting Edge Policy Issues*

- District small purchase threshold
- County enforcement/monitoring of food safety (considering variations of interpretation)
- Clear understanding of state and county regulations and interactions
- Monitor the HHFKA development to make sure it doesn't curtail implementation. Example: school meal nutrition standards. Look defensively, yes, but also proactively.
- Proactively address school nutrition standards at the state level (see Massachusetts).
  - Competitive foods; pricing strategies, subsidies for healthy foods: meats, grains, fruits, vegetables; vending standards; dinner standards
- State health / nutrition education standards
- General law with state BOE regulatory enforcement
- Examination of the enforcement scheme (incentives)
- Creating new programs to help students understand where their food comes from. Example: school gardens.

- Catalog quick hit guides for policies – 2012 strategic plan.
- TA guidance on best practices for land use, joint use.
- USDA Foods (commodities) – federal level add priority to use local foods.
- Zoning issues that relate to school gardens (land use, water, school CSAs, youth farmer's markets).
- Integration of S.A. functions to achieve a deeper result.
- Look at overall school food regulatory arena to streamline for efficiency and effectiveness: overlap, duplication, contradiction.
- Economic development policy results
- **Question:** Can the Task Force legally advocate on policy?

## LIVEWELL UPDATE

- Handout: Colorado FTS Primer.
- Ways in which LiveWell Colorado is looking at School Food. LiveWell just went through an internal facilitated session, and a vision statement for school food was created. The next step is a Theory of Change, a systems map, and then convening partners including FTS-TF.
  - Vision statement: Every student and staff member in CO has access to and choosing to eat healthy food in school every day.
- Economic development is an enabler but not the primary focus for LiveWell, rather it is the school staff and students.

## FOOD SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- In the state tour, the FSAC learned that communities have food systems and are trying to deal with the FTS aspect. Much of the FSAC interests are parallel to the FTS-TF. The FTS-TF work being addressed is exactly what the schools need. We also need to get the parents and public to be educated about fresh foods – not just the schools that need to change.
- Barb Marty, a FSAC member is on the Rocky Mountain Farmer's Union Board of Directors and the State Agriculture Commission Board. Her family used to have a 4,000 head feedlot that was overcome by Commerce City spread. Now out in Strasberg on a farm.
- The FSAC will have a formal launch of its website soon, but you can check it out now: [www.cofoodsystmscouncil.org](http://www.cofoodsystmscouncil.org). The site will have a standard PowerPoint, talking points, and a public summary of the tour that will be approved at next Thursday's meeting.
- The FSAC Subcommittee on Food Access meets next Tuesday, when more information will be available. Their charge is to leverage all food assistance programs in Colorado – where we are on participation, are people eating healthy foods, is it connected to CO agriculture?

- The FSAC Subcommittee on Economic Development is having two regional economic development summits on November 15<sup>th</sup> (Longmont) and November 18<sup>th</sup> (Pueblo), each from 10am to 2pm. This is an area of overlap between the Council and the FTS Task Force. The Subcommittee is looking at opportunities and barriers to building regional systems, which are so necessary to FTS. Having this subcommittee inform FTS-TF is important.
- **Question:** Is the Economic Development Subcommittee specific to FSAC or connected to other efforts?
  - **Response:** It will use what has been done before, but it is also a way to introduce the council to producers. There is a need to connect to producers directly. Some council members do not work directly with producers. We chose Pueblo and Longmont because we wanted different types of producers to be involved – small, mid-size, large, fiber & forage, meat. Access to land, getting products to market themes. How is Pueblo addressing these? In Longmont, there are a lot of resources. In Boulder – what could happen if those resources existed across all public/private partnerships? We are in the process of developing the format for the summits. How to invite producers – open invitation or targeted to sectors in the AG industry? How to use orgs on FSAC and others to identify target invites and open to others more generally? We are hoping for 60-80 participants at each location. We have not designated topics. Instead of designating FTS or Farmers Markets as topics, we are allowing the participants to define the topics.
- Getting the groups together can be helpful because common problems get brought up.
- The biggest question was “How do we access resources to fund our projects?” Even with the agricultural organizations, there is still a major need to fill in the gaps. Eg.: How to access capital for infrastructure loans when you lease your land? How to inform the nascent farmer programs occurring around the state. People didn’t know about value-added producer grants, farmers market promotion grants, etc. Also visited proactive, innovative communities – want to foster those relationships. There can be professional and cultural barriers to development.
- At the USDA visit we learned there are many grant programs that are under-applied for. We want to get groups together to show there are solutions to their problems.
- Policy issue: land use and best practices that promote food, marketing, aggregation. The Rocky Mountain Land Use is compiling best practices for local foods land-use zoning.
- Policy Issue: H2A program and access to labor. Shortage of skilled agricultural labor in the fields. We could put people back to work on farms but it’s not a solution when people don’t have the skills. Need incentives to build careers in agriculture – labor skill development, health insurance, access land and equipment.
- FSAC role in the economic development summits: To listen, learn, translate and then advise the people who are to take action on the issues. We will be giving recommendations to the governor’s office and legislature (AG and Education Committees), and agencies like CDE or

USDA rural economic development (Jim Isgar).

- The biggest value is learning what others are doing at the intersections of issues, like SNAP at farmers markets and SNAP in the Department of Human Services. Building partnerships is necessary.
- **Question:** Is there a cottage industry bill?
  - **Response:** Last year it didn't get much traction. The biggest value of the effort was on food safety education. Representative Gail Schwartz is bringing it back this year.
- **Ask:** The FSAC would like the FTS-TF to help identify and recruit for the Economic Development Summits. Producers and processors are the focus for these summits. We are not looking for buyers (schools) now.

## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- Bernie Orsini on FSAC economic development subcommittee.
- Wendy White on FSAC communications subcommittee.
- Jane Brand on FSAC Health Food Access subcommittee.
- Cindy Torres on FTS-TF policy working group.
- Barb Marty on FTS-TF Pilots and Evaluation working group.

## DECEMBER FTS TASK FORCE QUARTERLY MEETING

- Four hour meeting in Metro Denver area. Agenda:
  - 2-3 hours on the 2012 workplan, results of committee work.
  - 1 hour in a party to celebrate the good work! Who to invite? Andy and Bernie will work on the food.

## WRAP-UP ~ WHAT WENT WELL AND WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE BETTER?

- Not enough time.
- Core team work can be better connected to FTS-TF.
- More water!
- Like agenda ahead of time.
- Like how guests were incorporated and should keep doing it.
- Like having committee meetings in the quarterly meeting.
- Effective in small group setting – keep on task.
- Liked the scribe paper.
- What process should we use with requests for participation of the FTS TF?

## **FARM TOUR (CANCELED DUE TO MUD)**