



## Summary of the October Working Groups Meetings of the Sacramento Region Food System Collaborative

Information about the upcoming working group meetings is in Next Meetings below.

Minutes

### **Meetings of the Food Access, Ag Sustainability, and Education Working Groups of the Regional Food System Collaborative**

Valley Vision

October 13, 14, & 15, 2009

**Participants:** See below

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Food System Collaborative Working Group meetings. The meetings were productive and input from everyone was helpful. This email includes minutes from all three working groups meetings, thus making it rather lengthy. The bolded headings should help with navigation. The next working group meetings will be in November; dates and times are listed below.

#### **Working Group Priority Areas**

Each working group created two-year priority areas. The groups began by reviewing the goals created at the Food Collaborative meeting in September. By drilling further into those goals and considering what could have the most impact on the local food system as well as what is feasible within a two-year deadline, the working groups created the following priority areas.

#### **Food Access Working Group:**

1. The region has a food aggregation and distribution facility dedicated to sourcing fresh, local food that is a replicable model.
2. We will create 20\* new access points for fresh, healthy food. (\*The group agreed to reconsider the number of new access points based on a better understanding of the current access point "baseline." s.)
3. Expand area of urban land in ag production by X. (Number to be determined following review of relevant information.)

#### **Ag Sustainability Working Group:**

1. Convene all county supervisors from all six counties to educate and have them sign onto our ag sustainability platform.
2. Double\* direct market sales in each county within the next two years. (\*The amount of increase may be restated once more information is gathered.)
3. Improve the integration of technical assistance and resource availability to help all farmers be successful, especial new farming entrants.

#### **Education Working Group:**

1. Map channels of communication and create a two-year coordinated, education communication plan and related activities.
2. Identify in each jurisdiction and county, one or two elected officials to educate so that they champion the local food system.

### **The Discovery Process**

We reviewed the four-step methodology we'll use to turn these goals into actions: Discovery, Design, Implementation, and Evaluation. Each group began the Discovery phase by answering the following questions for each goal: What do we need to know to make this happen? What's already happening in the region? What are best practices in this area? Below are the areas each group felt would need to be explored further or questions answered for each of their priority areas.

### **Food Access Working Group**

Priority Area 1: The region has a food aggregation and distribution facility dedicated to sourcing fresh, local food that is a replicable model.

- Need a business plan that makes this goal economically viable. None of our goals will work if they're not economically viable. Data gathered through the RUCS project and resources available at SACOG should be incorporated to help insure this facility is planned using solid data and wise land use and transportation planning

Priority Area 2: We will create 20\* new access points for fresh healthy food.

- Need a map of current and prospective access points to have a frame of reference and basic information
- What is a viable price point in the market to clear the market in order to keep the farmer producing and to satisfy the market demand that's out there?
- We need to start by understanding the data already gathered for the RUCS Local Market work.
- What are the regulatory barriers to meeting these goals?
- Who is currently working to create new access points? How many have been created in the past two years?

Priority Area 3: Expand area of urban land in ag production by X.

- Review Portland's Diggable City. How long did it take? Is there a measurable impact yet?
- Work with Paul Philley at the Air District on already identified key barriers to local growing and local resale.

### **Ag Sustainability Working Group**

Priority Area 1: Convene all county supervisors from all six counties to educate and have them sign onto our ag sustainability platform.

- To what extent is the Williamson Act in use in each county?

- We need to identify the key regulatory impediments are to agriculture so that we can best craft a response.
- Who has an agriculture element (or plan) in their general plan currently?
- Is there need to have a SACOG-like group for agriculture that channels resources and policy improvements to help farmers be successful? Is there a model we might borrow lessons from?
- How do we create a better marketing and branding campaign to consumers to improve sales and commitment?
- Can we document the economic impact (production plus all secondary and tertiary values [examples: water, energy production, etc.]) of agriculture in the region, including quantitative and qualitative data? Does it already exist?
- How can we integrate Blueprint and HCPs, general plans (and Ag elements), and other policy documents into the platform to create a comprehensive look
- What is the risk of the fiscalization of land use to Ag sustainability?
- How can we create ways to pay farmers for environmental stewardship and services? Best practices?
- How can we create economic incentives or advantages for farmers whose land serves as development buffers from jurisdictions that benefit that may be urban?
- Can we develop our own Williamson Act program at the regional level? An example might be Solano and Monterey County.
- Can we get some planning resources from the State to help with this?

Priority Area 2: Double\* direct market sales in each county within the next two years.

- What are the direct sales today and historical trending over the past 5 years?
- How do we define "direct sales?"
- What crops that we currently produce or can produce here have the most potential to increase sales? (Not all equal)
- What are the tipping points that, if addressed, would increase sales? We need some breakthroughs.
- Is UCD working to gather information on direct sales in Sac County? Beyond?
- How can we document the health benefits of healthy food access as an appeal to institutions to jump onboard, despite expected higher costs?
- How can we involve not only Supervisors but also health departments, ag commissioners, planning departments, economic development directors and all other Ag "touch points" in a County for shared understanding and get them on the same page to improve Ag sustainability and healthy food access?
- Is there a move to reduce UCD's Small Farm Center supports and, if so, what do we do about it?

Priority Area 3: Improve the integration of technical assistance and resource availability to help all farmers be successful, especial new farming entrants.

- What technical assistance is currently available to both experienced and new farmers?
- What organizations work in this area? (Farm Bureau, FAA, Ag extension, CA Farmlink, NRCS, etc.)
- How does risk get shared in growing sales? CSA's viewed as a less risky entrance point. Can institutions be in position to pick up excess volume after a farmers market is over at an attractive cost? (i.e. food banks) Need to look at

- new economic collaborations?
- How can we assess and evaluate the efficacy of existing programs based on local existence?
- How can we better capitalize or incubate new farm opportunities. Check out New Mexico's food policy council as a model? Can we do an ALBA like model?

## **Education Working Group**

Priority Area 1: Map channels of communication and create a 2-year coordinated, education communication plan and related activities.

- Look into what's been mapped already including educational programs within: school districts including school gardens and other related programs; health care systems; food access projects including county/jurisdictional efforts, CBOs, and faith-based organizations; food access points including community gardens, farms with an educational program, and farmers markets. (Educational programs include: nutrition; gardening/agriculture, cooking, benefits of buying local, and seasonality.)
- When looking at schools, what are the state level mandates about allowable foods and related issues?

Priority Area 2: Identify within each jurisdiction and county, one or two elected officials to educate so that they champion the local food system.

- Need a list of elected officials.
- Check with current contacts to determine who already are champions.
- Need to know what the policywork/platform will be from the Ag Sustainability Working Group.
- Inventory of currently proposed legislation regarding local food, allowable foods in schools, and other relevant information.
- Who is currently undertaking General Plan revisions? What are the deadlines for input?

## **Next Steps**

Valley Vision will begin to research answers to the above and report to the respective work groups in three weeks.

## **Next Meetings**

All meetings will be held at Valley Vision and are open to everyone. Please RSVP to [robyn.krock@valleyvision.org](mailto:robyn.krock@valleyvision.org).

Food Access Working Group meeting: Tuesday, November 3rd 9-11am

Education Working Group meeting: Tuesday, November 3rd 3-5pm

Ag Sustainability Working Group meeting: Wednesday, November 4th 9-11am

Another meeting of the whole Food System Collaborative will take place in the beginning of December. More information to follow soon.

Along with the work of the Food Collaborative, The California Endowment has funded a project in South Sacramento as part of their Healthy Communities strategy. Currently,

a group of organizations and residents from within South Sacramento and throughout the region has formed a coalition to plan how to make the community a healthier place to live and work. One of the workgroups has identified Food Access as one of the priority areas for improvement in the region; this work can help to inform future work of the Food Collaborative. Please consider attending this meeting and lending your experience to the discussion around improving food access in South Sacramento.

Community Infrastructure and Assets Workgroup: Food Access  
November 17th  
5:30-7:30pm  
Location: North Franklin Business Association on Franklin Blvd.

If you are interested in attending this meeting, please contact Paul Towers:  
paul@pesticidewatch.org or 916-551-1883 916-551-1883 so we can keep track and potentially call on you to share information around your efforts to address food access.

### **Participants**

#### Food Access Working Group:

Charles Mason, Ubuntu Green  
Blake Young, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services  
Paul Tower, Pesticide Watch  
Shawn Harrison, Soil Born Farms  
Paul Cultrera, Sacramento Food Coop  
Bill Maynard, Sacramento Area Community Garden Coalition  
Jose Martinez, Yolo Food Bank  
Paul Philley, Sacramento Air Quality District  
David Shabazian, SACOG  
Chris Morfas, Sacramento Air Quality District  
Mary Helen Doherty, Alchemist CDC  
Carol Cassaday, consultant  
LaTisha Lawson, Oak Park Weed & Seed  
Nicholas Barry, Office of Senator Darrell Steinberg  
Bill Mueller, Valley Vision  
Robyn Krock, Valley Vision

#### Ag Sustainability Working Group:

Bill Maynard, Sacramento Area Community Garden Coalition  
Dan Silva, Silva Orchards  
Paul Tower, Pesticide Watch  
Trish Kelly, Applied Economic Development  
Paul Cultrera, Sacramento Food Coop  
Paul Muller, Full Belly Farm  
Jeff vonKaenel, Sacramento News & Review  
Allen Gunderson, community member  
Bill Mueller, Valley Vision  
Robyn Krock, Valley Vision

#### Education Working Group:

Dawn Dunlap, Health Education Council  
Maxine Barish-Wreden, Sutter Health  
Glayol Sahba, Sutter Health

Julia Thomas, Sacramento Food Coop  
Clare Bonsall, Sacramento Food Coop  
Janice Kelly, community member  
Peg Tomlinson, community member  
Charles Mason, Ubuntu Green  
Allen Gunderson, community member  
Kat Ortiz, Valley Vision  
Robyn Krock, Valley Vision

For more information about the Sacramento Region Food System Collaborative, please contact Robyn Krock at [robyn.krock@valleyvision.org](mailto:robyn.krock@valleyvision.org) or 916-325-1630 916-325-1630 .

For more information, please click [www.valleyvision.org](http://www.valleyvision.org).