Food Policy Council
March 14, 2013

Present: Katz Boose, Mateel Community Center; Amie McClellan, WISH; Dian Bacioalupi; Donna Wheeler, DHHS SSB; Joseph Ormond, Transition Humboldt; Sara Mosser; Kelley Kyle, PHB; Anne Holcomb, Food for People; Martha Shanahan, St. Joseph & Redwood Memorial Hospital; Linda Prescott, HCOE; Deborah Giraud, UCCE; Jay McCubbrey, Humboldt County Public Health Tobacco Free Humboldt; Michelle Postman, DHHS Nutrition Education & Obesity Prevention; Portia Bramble, NCGA; Kevin Cunningham, Shakefork Community Farm; Michael Kein, Garden of Eatin'/Freshroots Humboldt; Caterina Lewis-Perry, Garden of Eatin'/Freshroots Humboldt; Michelle Wyler, CAFF; Barbara Wasser, HSRC; Bryan Holley, HSRC; Debbie Peticara, NC Community Garden Collaborative; Dave Feral, Feral Family Farm; Seth Rick, River Bees; Erin Derden-Little, CAFF; Melanie Bettenhausen, Co-Op; Carol Momé, Locally Delicious; Holly Hensher, UCCE; Melissa Jones, CCRP; Danielle Newman, NCGA/Farmer

Producers Table:
- Portia NC Growers Association/Farmer’s Market
- Sarah Mosser HWMA. Regional Food Waste
- Michelle Wyler, CAFF
- Erin Derden-Little, CAFF
- Kevin Cunningham, Farmer, Shakefork Community Farm
- Seth Rick, River Bees Ranch

Announcements:
- Arcata Plaza Farmer’s Market opening April 13th
- Winter Market every Saturday at Café Brio
- Seed & plant exchange in March
- Taco Tuesday collaboration with Humboldt Made, Eel River Org Beef, CAFF

Manufacturer Table:
Deborah Giraud
- Develop a value added cooperative facility where farmer can put food into jars etc.
- New Kitchen in So Hum
- Cottage food law opportunities and grants for education

Dian Bacioalupi, Master food preserver. Spices business. Infrastructure for preserving food.

Distributors Table:
Melanie Bettenhausen
- The Co-op is in the midst of strategic planning and one of our proposed long term goals is “Develop our Local Foodshed.” There will be an all-day workshop on April 20th.
- Mateel Community Center wants to share that, thanks to the CalFresh grant, we have been able to stabilize our community meal program and reach out to many more hungry folks and offer them services. This outreach is a result of CCRP!

Katz Boose, Mateel Community Ctr
Amy McLellan
Jay McCubbrey, Humboldt County Public Health Tobacco Free Humboldt Retail camp in summer. Starting w/survey on food, tobacco marketing. Looking for ways to transform retail environment to offer healthy choices. A lot of common goals with FPC.
Carol Momé, Locally Delicious

Healthcare/Social Services/Food Insecurity Table
- Kelley Kyle, Public Health. Community Based work.
- Linda Prescott, HCOE
- Barbara Wasser, HSRC
- Anne Holcomb
- Debbie Peticara, NC Community Garden Collaborative
- Joseph Ormond, Transition Humboldt
- Michelle Postman, DHHS Nutrition Education & Obesity Prevention
- Martha Shanahan, St. Joseph & Redwood Memorial Hospital
- Donna Wheeler, Social Services Calfresh, MediCal
- Humboldt CAN Tea & Talk in March
- Nutrition training for community based orgs April 19th
- 2 series of cooking classes for Calfresh clients in March and April
- April 17th school wellness policy update forum
- Open Door Clinic starting community garden
- School food equipment grant

Recycling Table:
HWMA’s Foodwaste to Watts program is going strong with apprx 50 participating restaurants/other food producers diverting compostables.

Other Table:
- Fresh Fruits Humboldt: Catarina and Michael
- Urban Farmers, part of food security is growing own food. Support for backyard farmers, landlords permit. Permit urban farm stands. Selling surplus helps economic security.
- Food As Art: at June Arts Alive.
- Michael, also of Garden of Eatin’

Farmer Panel Presentation:

Kevin Cunningham, Shakefork Community Farm
Grain CSA. NCGA Board Member. Policy and Land use. General plan.

- Has 85 acres on Van Duzen River. Mid county. 3 farmers markets: Arcata, Garberville & Fortuna. Involved in all 3 market organizations. Diversified farm: vegetable production, small vegetable CSA. Most known for grain production. 5th year of running grain CSA. Small grains: cutting back due to available tillable farmland. Grown every small grain imaginable. Very small scale, antique equipment. Right on riverbar. 40 acres of river bar. 45 acres open ground. Good
pasture, rocky for tilling. Raising meat and poultry 3-4 years, process on farm, sell at farmers market. Starting to raise more cattle and sheep, raise milking goats. Starting 3rd CSA for grass fed meats.

- Farm has 3 apprentices per year who work, live, learn, be part of farm for season. 4th year of doing apprenticeships. Farm labor is an important issue. Feel strongly re traditional apprenticeship program culture, live and work on farm, not available in most agricultural education institutions. Not technically legal what they do. Feel strongly re education, working with Erin at CAFF, great thing for local mid county area. School groups from local schools visit, get food, workshops. Big part, not of economy of farming, but farming lifestyle. Lifestyle and business get mixed together.

- Issues: main pastured poultry producer, raise and process meat chickens, may have 20,000 chickens on farm as long as farm doesn’t pay labor and do direct sales. Stringent re standards, limited to off farm or farmers markets, no resale allowed under agricultural exemption. Limiting factor: stores would love to have locally grown chicken, can’t do it because of legal issue.

- For chicken processing, farm needs stationary building with sewage, and separate bathroom. Don’t have this resource here in county. To move forward in county we need that. Was part of Humboldt Poultry Cooperative, which created a local mobile processing facility. Clean place to process. In hindsight, would not have developed because of USDA regulations.

- Local county policy issues: protection of prime agricultural lands in county in large usable parcels. Tweaking of regulations to allow selling stable crops: meat, milk, staple foods in addition to fruits/veg. Anything that allows young and old agricultural opportunities, learn about growing food. If 10% of population farmed, would be self-sustained community. Now 2-3%. Need 13K farmers in county. Education very important.

Seth Rick, River Bees
Raises and breeds honey bees. Honey at farmer’s markets. Activist and advocate in community. Shively

- In his 26th season as beekeeper. Learning beekeeping from German father in Hudson Valley NY, been an interest in his family since 1906. In raising bees, he interacts with the environment: different kinds of pollen coming into hive, what flora is blooming. Started business in 1987. Last year was the worst ever. Over the years there have been growing problems with bees, lost all bees 6 years ago. Bees don’t winter well in valleys, too wet. Moved out of Shivelly. Best yard is above Alton on ledge, pasture up Van Duzen and Eel River valleys. Produced 1 ½ -2 tons honey/year, used to make herbal honey with lavender. Customers are mad because he can’t produce this product anymore. Bees in Van Duzen totally gone 6 years ago. Had never seen anything like it before.

- After losing all bees, joined national beekeeping org, learned nationally beekeepers are losing bees. Started going to conferences every year listening to scientists. Has gone to 2 worldwide conferences. Diversionary science in this country, in our country universities funded by corporations; in other countries, scientists are paid to see what is going on. Germany, France, Latvia, Italy, Spain studied GMO corn and systemic pesticides on corn, neurotoxin designed to interrupt insects’ ability to navigate. This is affecting bees. A Purdue University study found that seed coating is moving to wild flora (translocating). Should make it illegal. Biggest crop in country is corn, in quite a predicament. 25% short on almond crop, which is the largest commodity in California, provides much of worlds almonds. Mosanto has to answer to powerful almond board.
Van Duzen River was a great spot: air, circulation, sunshine. When mites came into Humboldt in 1991, bred queens from surviving stock, and was able to continue without any chemicals. 6 years ago everything changed. Only thing that changed was that GMO corn came into community. Will send pollen to Penn State University for pesticide testing.

Kind of a mess, he is moving bees farther and farther from agriculture. Growing up, bees and agriculture were part of symbiosis. Bees on top of buildings in NYC have less chemicals than those on agricultural lands.

Bees have to be brought into San Fernando, had to fly bees in from Australia, which introduced viruses. Only way to have healthy environment is to make it illegal to grow GMO crops. Talked to a few farmers, very supportive of doing this in a farmer led way. Corn pollen blows in wind, pollen can stay alive in beehive 3 days, can contaminate someone’s corn crop with GMO pollen if bring bees in.

Prop 37 failed. Health people, Kaiser Permanente advised workers and patients not to eat GMO food AFTER vote. In study, 4 plants process corn syrup that leaves mercury in corn syrup. More and more GMO corn and pesticides every year. More people in prison than on land, need to get back to land, help each other, grow food.

Heart driven, loves bees, loves ecology. Hard, long hours, labor of love. Volunteer internship done for number of years. Woman from Israel came, in 2 weeks taught how to graft queen bees. Going after organic farmers, don’t want people to know, want people to go to grocery store. Cancer rates going up. French protested... Want people to know what is going on.

Dave Feral
Feral Family Farm. NCGA member. Accounts at grocery outlets. Agriculture, landuse planning, watersheds.

Grew up with a single parent, not much money in household. Getting free lunch, cans of government peanut butter, cans of honey with bee parts.

Across the nation, one in every 2 children grow up not having enough nutrients. Remembers 3rd grade, standing up and getting dizzy. Connection to food is strong, values power individual has who can grow their own food. Should be potatoes growing in lawns, fruit in backyards. In Humboldt County, approximately 25K people out of 127K, need food that is not there for them, eligible for food subsidies. Power in food you eat.

We are at a place in history unlike any other. As a 3rd grader getting free lunch, also learned about the environment. Fished in creeks, caught steelhead, mother would cook. Grandmother taught how to farm. Tied to water & food.

Developed outdoor school, Web of Life: curriculum garden and watershed.

In 1992 read Earth in the Balance. Climate change: rainfall getting shorter locally. Greenhouse effect is real in our county. Rainfall patterns have changed, dryer winters and rain comes in 3 day downpours rather than gentle rains over entire winter.

Need to consider what we want for future, how to do it. Feed people, protect watersheds. On the North Coast, 27 of our river and streams impaired by turbidity. Restoration going on to solve problems in rivers, need to continue that. Need to focus on what works.

Feral Farm: with background on education, saw that we need more models for sustainability. In this county, 4% of food comes from here, rest comes from elsewhere. Susan Ornelas took
survey and looked at all land in Humboldt County and crops that could be grown here. If used all arable soil, could feed county year round.

- Infrastructure not up to par, need more than 1 outlet to process foods. Feasibility study cost to make happen. In 2008 food symposium, came up with steps. Know we have answers, need to follow thru.
- 5 hrs away from largest cities from north and sound, what is carbon footprint? Can we justify making products to ship out, can we feed our local people instead?
- Need to have economic drivers. Permaculture: efficient and useful, and traps energy systems. Ultimate thing to trap energy. Lots of open space in Humboldt.
- Only 3% of land is ideal for agriculture. In GP, so valuable and precious, way for people to be powerful and strong.
- Climate change real, happening already. Things are going to change and we need to be prepared. Plum trees not producing because of change in rainfall: instead of 5 months of gentle rain, have 3 days of downpour, which destroys fruit producing flowers.
- This group: Policy shapers, part of revolution
- More infra, more hubs, store food, not shipping. Shrink carbon footprint.

Questions/Comments:

Any programs thru HSU as source of internships, where students get credit for working on farm?

- Kevin: Arcata educational farm had loose affiliation w/HSU. Main block is that HSU is not agricultural school, lots of students at HSU that have interest in organic farming. Not larger administrative or political support there for them to get credit. CR has ag, Kevin graduated from there. Would like to work with CR, have not yet pursued.
- Deborah Giraud had conversation with Dean of CR. They have requirements too, law says apprentices have to be part of agricultural program. Precedent in Oregon, working in local farm and got credit at community college.
- Seth: in old days, elders taught young people their hands on knowledge. That’s how he learned it. People in county doing a long time, know a lot. Removed from college crowd. Good to go to their farms, can use labor, would be good symbiotic relationship.

At Co-op talking about a ban on growing GMO’s. NCGA has non GMO policy. Active supporters of Prop 37. Take seriously and hope to fight with everyone. Possible to ban on county level. Had on ballot here, fell apart.

Louie Patrini slow food movement. I’m in the US, where they spend more $ to lose weight than to eat.

Finding pesticides. Great Chinook run, died before they could breed, don’t know what was in the water.

Q: sold lavender honey, can’t sell anymore? Light honey was on lower Van Duzen river.

Had hottest year on record in country, drought. GMO corn not drought resistant. Old strains drought tolerant.
Need to make growing part of culture Thailand, Italy, part of culture getting crops. Pesticide residues in fish, animals, us, fatty tissues. In biosphere now, accumulating. Pollen analysis, proved that spring coming 1 day earlier every year for 20 yrs.

Deb: thanks for 4H, teaching, know it takes a lot of time. They are the mentors.

Tribal culture: still go out and harvest food. Balance betw farming and hunting/gathering/water use? Dave: Areas south of here, where water is scarce. Nutrient and plant space, can dry farm and not need so much water. Lived in Orleans. Seth: pressing issue in areas, restore salmon runs. Where protein used to come from, devastated fish. Fish DNA in redwoods, need to live in wilds, learn from indigenous people how to live in wild. “extraction mentality”

At co-op, not pure food. Organic farmers allowed to use antibiotics at farms. A lot of good products though, buy local.

**FPC Review**

**Recommendations**

- Ann: Diversity of group has gone up and down. Hard to get farmers here in the summer production months. Partnerships, advances in Food Security issues.

- Love networking

- Have panel of speakers by sectors. What are food policy issues that are present? County level on GMO. Commission of the supervisors. Need to take time to learn.

- What is the mode of communication? Basecamp, but need permission needs to be set by person outside of group. Meeting Wizard. Ideas: moving to blog, Constant Contact, Mail Chimp. Would like to get group of people to discuss. Suggestion from Dave: farmers work long hours, things are sporadic. Most have access to internet. Facebook sort of thing, farmers would use. Communication has been funky.

- Katz: loves words. CCRP speaks to hear. FPC doesn’t work for her, Food Security Council? Not sure it’s policy.

- Catarina: Question re membership. 3 primary sectors: for profit, nonprofit NGO, government. Community is missing. Easier for for-profit to speak for organization, harder for nonprofit sector or government sector, because they are speaking on behalf of others. What is group decision making process? Laura: don’t make decisions, group has done more networking, sharing, etc. Portia: suggestion of a networking group, maybe way to have policy subcommittee, joined for advocacy. Laura: need to have both. Jay: work with group, Tobacco Education, 7-12 people, meet monthly. Do not take official positions. Develop policy, write, advocate for policy. Have bylaws, membership, voting rules. This is amazing group of people, such level of interest. Beauty of network, can be flexible and allow for things to change and fluctuate.
Laura: people surveyed want this group to endorse. This is challenging because group is not stable, different people come. Anne: look at work other FPC’s are doing, can tag on or add rural perspectives. Humboldt is very unique, have things we’re proud of. Part of recommendations to have networking, speaker panels, CFPC. Structure definitions.

Dave: Mission? Started turning group into doers. Stopped it. Portia: was on committee, came to consensus wanted to draft, didn’t do it. Goal? Seth: room full of people that care. Bodies, land, food. Education: once people know, it becomes a phenomenon. Example: Locally Delicious, educating children, beats corn syrup and government cheese. People who can talk about this, it’s validating. Sarah: mission, goal, likes these questions, always in her head. Networking opportunities are important. Also many network outside this room, would like to eliminate redundancy.

Dave: Weakness: FPC doesn’t describe what we do, seems like group is Healthy Food Stewards. Sarah: Talk about changing name. Humboldt Food Sys Alliance. Deborah: would like to work on policy, one that is doable, can see change in less than 10 years, such as farm apprenticeship. California Farm Link has paid staff person, would be her contribution.

Melanie Coop. How sustainable is network in CCRP? Advantage of going to Co-Op Board of Directors, is that the Board can endorse policy and go to Board of Supervisors. Co-op publication goes to 10,000 in community. Meeting space is available. Don’t have staff time but part of her job is to find out what’s important in the community. Caterina: alliance that has subcommittees is good thing. Develop communications sector, create alliance that is open to people, they can join in to what seems imp to them. Bring back to Alliance every 6 mos. Gives people opportunities to work independently but still as part of alliance.

Move into strategic plan process? County/Calfresh. Don’t want to just give people a bunch of food stamps, help people eat more healthfully. Speakers energized more, things that affect at all levels.

Laura: willing to work to do next phase of policy council? LOTS OF HANDS RAISED. Help CFPC, putting together next panel (different sector) similar to what Portia did. Other FPC’s in Humboldt? Hoopa Klamath/trinity FPC. One in DN. Orleans? Not an FPC, large movement, received grant for Food Sec in Klamath Basin. Inc Yurok, Karuk. List of obj similar to what’s in this room. Laid out in flow chart. Holly, Deborah, can do for May.