Humboldt Food Policy Council  
December 1, 2011  
NOTES


CCRP: Danielle Stubblefield, Kristina Bollmann, Melissa Jones, Alissa Leigh

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Current Announcements / Plans for 2012 (go-around)

Angie Schwab – Humboldt Made – Gave long update at last meeting so will be brief. Work more with Buy Fresh Buy Local.

Portia Bramble – NCGA – Gave update last meeting, too. Looking forward to expanding Market Match from last year – just found out they got the Roots of Change grant!

Anne Holcomb – Food for People – Excited about Roots of Change, went with Portia to meet them in LA – working on changing state level policies. Next year trying to keep up with need at Food Bank – right now up 40% over this time last year. Announcements: Hunger Fighter Challenge Teams are taking donations & competing around area, Wed 7th is Pints for Nonprofits (for Food Bank) night at Mad River Brewery

Fawn Scheer – Greenway – Will be starting a new entrepreneurship program they’re excited about.

Erin Derden-Little – CAFF Farm to School – Grow Farm to School program, expanding classroom component and continue working with food service directors. Just yesterday met with Eureka City Schools and it went well!

Jennifer Bell – Food for Thought – expanding website. Creating digital stories around food issues for Humboldt Access TV. Is working with Deborah Giraud, Joyce Houston and others to organize a Master Food Preserver ‘train the trainer’ program for Feb/Mar.

Linda Prescott – HCOE – have some funds to focus on more professional development for teachers and food service staff around nutrition. The application process for their main funding source for nutrition education is changing for 2012-13 year. It is moving from an in-kind match source to a competitive grant process.
Rhonda Lewis – Fortuna Community Services - Plan to increase community garden involvement, till more land. It is a garden for groups, not individuals. Have Master Gardener who is growing specialty garlic varieties as well as polenta corn to sell & raise money to go back into the garden. Model is that groups have to tithe back a portion of their produce to the pantry.

Jared Zystro – Seed Alliance – Has RBEG grant to build seed production in area, getting equipment & working with SoHum farmers (Humboldt good climate for seed production). Contracting with CR farm for seed production and doing variety trials with local farmers – such as organic sweet corn breeding. Organizing seed saving workshops for community members. Announcement: National Organic seed production/convention in Washington state in Jan.

Teresa Grenot – HSU Library – passed to Rhea.

Rhea Williamson – HSU Spons Programs Fdn – Would like to see more collaboration between HSU and the organizations represented at Food Policy Council. RFP’s come across her desk and SPF can help with applications as long as project involves HSU Students/Staff/Departments. Professors on campus are working on related issues, examples: media, obesity, K-12.

Ann Anderson – Locally Delicious - Initiated program: anyone who donates $50 to Food for People gets a free Locally Delicious cookbook!

Suzane Simpson – Locally Delicious – Lunchbox Envy is new book project, includes HCOE, Northcoast Children’s Services & St. Joe’s. Students from Arcata High School Art Institute are doing the graphics, they were blown away by these students’ abilities and do it for donation only. They are also tweeting and have a newly design website. Once a month does Access TV spot with Betsy Lambert, share your topics with her.

Lou Moerner – NCIDC – Providing food boxes for the holidays – please let her know if you have any Native clients in need. Did a survey with the food boxes & made some changes. Inspired by Food for People cooking instruction, created a cookbook to go in food boxes and has received positive feedback. Expanding digital storytelling: wants to share message that hunger is a social injustice.

Martha Shanahan – St. Joes – passed to Kathy.

Kathy Hayes – St. Joe’s – Wellness & prevention plan has been released. New community benefit plan includes ‘food security’, therefore food access projects are eligible for funding. Next year will focus on increasing food security of single mothers after results of CCRP/Food Bank survey are in. Have just put in teleconferencing in Resource Centers, so folks can sign up for CalFresh or get other assistance right from there.

Michelle Wyler – CAFF – New Farm to Table 2012 calendar available! New grant to partner with First 5 and HCOE to expand Harvest of the Month to playgroups. Will continue working with St. Joe’s (expand to new site) on workplace wellness, past year have provided CSA prepaid
boxes to employees and was very successful. Have recently released Farm to School digital stories starring Angie Schwab’s sons!

Donna Wheeler – DHHS Social Services – This year have really listened to community needs, did outreach. Increased CalFresh caseload by 52% in past couple years. Have more CalFresh funds to use now, want to partner with organizations and look to leverage funds by providing match for appropriate projects.

Cynthia Coronado-Brown – Co-Op – Will be working on ballot initiative re GMO labeling. She’s applied for Nat’l Organic Standards Board position and is waiting to hear soon. In Jan (or Feb?) the Co-op is bringing Mark Kastel from the Cornucopia Institute to the area.

Michael Waddle – CAN Del Norte – Excited that they just launched their own FPC.

Angela Glore – CAN Del Norte – Applied for grant to AARP for mobile farmers’ market. Applied for USDA Community Food Project grant, focused on community gardens and also to work with some to scale up and sell at market. Strategic planning with smaller outlying towns.

Ron Phillips – Rural Human Srvcs – Crescent City farmers’ mrkt sales have greatly increased, offered Market Match for CalFresh participants this year. Recently received FMPP grant for mobile teaching kitchen, to expand people’s knowledge about how to cook the foods at the market.

Ben Carvalho – Wild Planet seafoods – wanting to engage more with the local community on food issues. In 2012 they will be expanding their sales, just got into 3 regions of Costco! (But not our region unfortunately). When asked about employee #s, said they have 14 in their office and many more (esp crab season) on the docks.

Barbara Howe – DHHS Public Health – Finally seeing prevention money as part of the Community Transformation Grant (one of 12 regions in the state to get it). Funds support work related to systems and policy. One statewide goal is to reduce sugary beverage intake, the other goals are flexible for the recipients to choose. She wants to see the FPC to move forward in 2012 with a policy change accomplishment!

Deborah Giraud – UCCE – First time in 19 years they have FMNEP position (have hired Dorina Espinosa from DHHS) – yahoo! Deborah will be working on a new project of 4H and ag outreach to Native Americans in Klamath/Hoopa. Looking to hire another ½ time position for that. Met w/ Angela Glore at the Klamath community garden, wants to support and be a part of it.

Heather McKellar – Ray’s Arcata – Local products display is up at front of store for the holidays!

Danielle Stubblefield – CCRP – Will be working with Deborah on Native American project to do food assessment along Klamath River. Currently working on Del Norte food report and next
year looking forward to analyzing the 1000+ Food Pantry surveys that Alissa & students are entering into database now.

3. Future Funds & Projects
Grants have come up in the past year that seemed promising for helping to implement some of the food systems changes we want to see, followed by a flurry of e-mails between organizations to nail down ideas and who the lead applicant will be. There is often a short window of time and we can’t get it all together. We’d like to be better prepared for 2012 by looking ahead at a calendar of grant deadlines, and linking our project goals and ideas to the grants that can help us realize them.

Looking at grants spreadsheet and input from participants re grants ‘how to’ and experiences:
Deborah Giraud: Beginning Farmer/Rancher (#14 on list), need to grow young people into farmers. Succession workshops, to pass land onto heirs or new business partners. Worked with Farmlink, who put her into two grants that are being implemented now.
Learned 2 lessons:
● Networking/collaboration. Partnership with FarmLink formed over years of working together, now they have written her into grants which required very little effort on her part.
● When something new comes along, apply for it quick before it gets popular (federal grants).

Michelle: CAFF (statewide) used RBOG grant to support TA, Buy Fresh Buy Local, and feasibility studies for food hubs. Now implementing an aggregation/packing hub in Santa Rosa, in conjunction with non-profit group Bakalu (sp?). She’s also heard that NEOP (Nutr Edu & Obesity Prevention grants) will fund FPC’s.

Angela Gløre: On the years that you are not applying for a grant, see if you can be a reviewer – it is a great learning experience and you really get a sense of what they are looking for! She saw that veteran reviewers gave everyone a 0 to start, and applicants had to EARN every point.

Rhea: When a grant is rejected from a funding agency, ask for the reviewer comments. This allows you to see where you were strong and where you lost points. Don’t give up when you don’t get it the first time – she’s seen that the 3rd time is when you win it!

Deborah: USDA Rural Devel state director likes Humboldt, wants to support us, so we’ve got an ally / connection with her.

Angie: funders are looking for ‘shovel ready’ projects!

Ann A.: Locally Delicious is using an alternative, new funding source online. It is ‘Kickstarter,’ where people from all over world can donate to your cause.

Danielle: Go to the URLs at bottom of grants spreadsheet (handout) to see good examples of how USDA grants have been (or could be) used for local food systems development.
Open Discussion:
Community Food Projects grant last year: to develop a site providing storage (including cold storage) that both the schools (HCOE) and Food for People could use (separated, but in same building). It would allow for aggregation of produce by multiple small growers (in the eventuality of the schools purchasing from local farmers, or the Food Bank doing more so), and also meet the Food Bank’s current needs for food/cold storage that are increasing.

This led to discussion of how many aspects of growth/expansion/self-reliance within our local food system are dependent upon better distribution infrastructure, in particular a place that allows for cold storage and aggregation. Whether it is for the schools or for larger markets, it is a bottleneck in our current food system. Anne H. said there are a lot of groups in the room who may be interested in such a resource, but may not realize it is a common interest (as it ties to many different projects in different ways).

Angie said that an aggregation/distribution center was the #1 priority that came out of the Specialty Ag Cluster planning, too. So the County would offer any grant application a letter of support, and may even be able to help with matching funds. Basecamp can be a place to record our individual knowledge on collaborative projects, for example she was just talking to a guy in Rio Dell who wants to build an aggregation center. CAFF has feasibility studies on it, someone (?) has a business plan. Basecamp can be a place to build our partnerships and ideas.

Not all are interested in this project, and it was pointed out that we need to not just focus on one thing – to remember the different strengths and priorities that are represented around the room, and include everyone’s interests.

It was voiced that we are a ‘powerhouse,’ that the group in the room can get a lot of things done. Want to take on a large issue!

Rhea suggested a strategic plan, something that articulates what the priorities of our group are and would indicate what grants we are eligible / fitted for. She’s seen groups write each other in as sub-awardees, with each contributing the value of their time (if it fits their organization’s goals and they are already going to do the work) in order to create the %match that the grant might require. (i.e. include the $10,000 worth of time they would already each be putting in separately, and each get $15,000 of the new funds to go towards expansion and collaboration of the project).

Danielle discussed that we have not done Strategic Planning or developed a Mission Statement but that when the group come together it was over an agreed-upon platform to work on sustainable, local food systems and also equitable food access – that we want to bridge those two separate issues and don’t believe they have to be in different camps. We’ve also chosen the 9 policy topics that have been what our organizing, brainstorming and planning have been around.
People suggested we write out some priorities, either pick a few specific projects to all rally behind or have guiding principles so we know better what direction we are moving in. The need for a clearer group, shared identity was echoed by others.

This led to a discussion of how participants would like the Council to have a clearer vision, and develop some lead priorities. When we meet in 2012 the group wants to talk more about this. Some ideas were:

- Hold a strategizing session – not take as much time as would be needed for a Strategic Plan, but at least to come up with something like a Mission Statement and key interests
- Create an inventory of participants, something that gives us each better insight into who the various organizations, biz and individuals are. Information it could possibly include are:
  - Skills and interests
  - Grants applied for and gotten
  - What they can offer to help others with / an expertise
  - What they need help with
  - What is their organization’s Mission (in regards to grant applications, this often sheds light on which organizations can do which parts)
  - Some aspects could be answered separately, a) as a repr of an organization and b) as an individual.

The use of Basecamp was discussed. It can be a place to hold our ‘institutional memory’, contain old documents, and also be a place for people to share contacts and develop project ideas. Danielle will post the Policy Topics and the ‘Hubba Hubba’s’ of each topic, as well as other documents regarding our history, structure and work done at previous meetings. She will send out instructions for using Basecamp!

4. Final Thoughts and Evaluation
Our next meeting will be in February – it will be our ‘First year review’. At a Task Force meeting in October of 2010 we made key decisions regarding the organization and structure of the Food Policy Council to start in 2011. At that meeting the group also decided to re-visit those decisions after a year of working together. Now we’ve finished our first year, and in Feb will discuss.

Thanks for your participation!