



## Sonoma County Food System Alliance

### DRAFT Results

January 17th, 2011, 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Health Department, Manzanita Room

*In Attendance:*

	Debora Hammond	√	Jana Hill	√	Lisa Preschel
	Craig Anderson	√	Trathen Heckman	√	Linda Peterson
	Misti Arias		Stephanie Larson		Mark Netherda
	Doug Baretta	√	Wendy Krupnick		Jim Shelton
√	Ellen Bauer		Cathy Luellen-Aflague		Susan Stover
	Phina Borgeson		Lisa Correia		Amy Chestnut
	Davin Cardenas		Melissa Minton		Rick Theis
	Cathryn Couch	√	Tanya Narath	√	Amanda Bornstein
√	Paula Downing		Jim Canterbury	√	Marion Deeds
√	Suzanne Doyle		Paul Kaiser		Lisa Andresen
	Talmadge Savage		Joe Pozzi		
√	Terry Garrett				

With Miriam Volat ([Miriam@aginnoventions.org](mailto:Miriam@aginnoventions.org)), facilitator, and Helen McGrath ([Helen@aginnoventions.org](mailto:Helen@aginnoventions.org)) Ag Innovations Network and guest Bill Leland of Cloverdale Alliance for Financial Education (CAFÉ).

### Events

- March 3<sup>rd</sup>: Building Healthy, Just and Sustainable Communities in the Face of Climate Change, will include 36<sup>th</sup> Environ Leadership Awards.  
<http://envirocentersoco.org/dinner/http://envirocentersoco.org/dinner/>

### Alliance Network

- FFSA: focus on F2S, county-wide, series of dialogues to focus on health, diet, food sources, etc. health related to nutrition and ag- fresh v. processed. Health, rather than fresh- some processed is healthy.

## Info Share

Wendy: Spiral Foods, (the first food coop in Sonoma Coop recent years), currently has 134 members and need 1,000 to open. They are very well organized, but need support and membership full membership is \$300. <http://spiralfoodscooperative.org/>. Ag zoning ordinance is up on 1/31, would like recommendations from CAFF to be endorsed by other organizations. Has already been voted on, not completely satisfactory results, done at the end of last year (contact Wendy for more info). At CAFF's annual meeting, young woman named Susan Butler looking to start 10 mobile vending vans in the county, has to be within 600 ft of ADA bathroom. Can ask her to come and present, may be franchised, and could be a good set up for Cielo Azul. Climate scientists also visited the meeting and showed models for climate change- loss of soil moisture was especially startling.

Bill Leland: Guest of Paula, based in Cloverdale with a group called CAFÉ, (Cloverdale Alliance for Financial Education). Their purpose is to support low-income people, micro-enterprises and job creation. Food and Ag is a crucial area, and wants to tie into other efforts in the region.

Amanda: Greenbelt Alliance publishes an inventory of "at-risk" lands, green spaces at risk of being developed, every 5 years and will come out in the spring. Looking for opportunities in regional planning process to protect Ag land, especially for economic development.

Paula: Sonoma Direct has shut down, they specifically served the small meat producers in the area and was a crucial service for these small producers. Now folks need to head out of the county for processing. Would be great to get people together to discuss what to do- where to we go, etc. It is for sale.

Trathen: Has seen the climate change scenarios, as well. Significantly past worst case scenarios where we sit with current emissions.

Linda: Now works with UCCE, managing a three year USDA beginning farmers project that includes business development, will be connected to SRJC, and she will be conducting outreach for new farmers. Graduates will have access to County Lands. The first Ag happy hour was hosted and successful, stay tuned for info about the next one in February. North Coast Regional Food System Network, the five county group, technically ends in July. They are looking for funds to keep it going, 2/10 group meets. Discussing regional marketing, and have been working with go Local for regional branding.

Terry: Last week he made a presentation to the Economic Competitive Task Force, chance for Go Local to share local initiatives, and spotlighted food. Highlighted the economic amplifier: every 10% of local consumption of local products creates \$31 million dollars. They discussed processing and manufacturing possibilities for econ development, and how to combine city/county resources with private enterprise. Study under way with SSU on branding and marketing to look at locals preferences, in Sonoma County specifically, with a large emphasis on food. International Biochar Conference will be in Sonoma County this year. <http://www.biochar-international.org/conferences>

Lisa: Jana and Lisa have been working on a school garden survey, and will connect it to the food service survey. They are trying to come up with a benchmark, how much food could be served/purchased/grown?

Marion: Department of Human Services and the Health Department are partnering to utilize funds for SNAP for education classes to children and families, emphasis on fresh, healthy foods. They will be held county-wide, but concentrated in SR based on poverty level info, fitness info, etc. Human Services filled in in areas that Health Dept. was restricted from.

Jana: School garden survey will be finalized this week, and will draft a press release, etc. The American Public Health Assoc. has policy grant and she is applying for the Action Plan, will keep us posted. Jana wanted to share a great video on farm-to-school activities at Sonoma Valley Unified School District with Alliance members:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2YSollqnAc>

## **Alliance Business**

### **Members**

- Holes in the following stakeholders: Ag producers, labor and environmental stakeholders
- Focusing on creating goals will help determine who need to join.
- New Health Officer will join and Walt Kruse's replacement. County reps have BOS meetings, SSU Food Service have been supporting on F2S
- Timing might be a problem
- Have consistent members make sure they are communicating with other members-mentors, etc.
- Do we need a committee focused on action related to Ag, for growers? Water will emerge as the primary issue for Ag producers this year.

### **Food Policy Council Survey (see responses for the survey below)**

- Original vision, council for local food system alliance members and regional council members to inform state wide policy
- Survey needs to be completed by 2/3, - Jana is submitting

### **Planning 2012**

- Action Plan does not prioritize, it is huge, but is an important foundation for future Alliance work
- How do we use the assessment to create indicators for progress?

- They will be listed in action plan to help track progress of action plan

## IDEA GATHERING

- Rather than focus on increase of production of food in Sonoma County, preventing decrease of Ag land and production?
- Food Forum was a kick off for the Alliance, could be done again and work could be done there, could look very different.
- FSA needs to determine top 2-3 goals for 2012
  - Awareness raising- what is working and what needs action? Importance of focusing on best practices, effective efforts that are working
  - Need to identify some wins- i.e. effort on backyard bees, chickens ordinances, 350 Challenge, etc. (effective collaborations)
  - Also having focus on Ag production, as well as small scale, backyard skills and efforts
  - Access and affordability of food- shop local is elitist and the local diet model is clearly not feasible for all- how do we address that? Is this true or a perception?
- More support for moving action plan forward, in a faster efficient way. What support does this committee need from the Alliance? Would work in the FSA meetings help- possibly.
- In lieu of the Food Forum, look at other county events, i.e. Heirloom Festival
- There is an underlying economic focus in many if the issues brought up- from production to consumption. Related back to Action Plan, how can businesses have a direct impact on some of these barriers?
  - As a group, identifying a reliable source of data for us to create these benchmarks, data to work from.
- Price perception includes supply and demand, could feed into “produce more food here” goal, many models throughout the country are demand driven.
- From a producers perspective, barriers as far as land/availability, labor, etc. overall cost of production is significant and could be a barrier to many of these goals
  - What do we do to raise all these little boats? Increase access, support local producers, etc.
- *Most of the above is mentioned and included in the Food Action Plan (FAP).*
- Education, and direct marketing opportunities to address multiple issues. Highlight items in the FAP that are timely and current

## **Farm to Institution Update**

- Several growers that attended the food service training want to contract directly local schools, to provide and grow specifically for food service - A direct success and outcome of that event

## **Food Action Plan**

- The 15 goals are more drilled down than before, but need to be prioritized
- Current sections are:
  - Healthy Eating
  - Ag and Environment
  - Econ Vitality
  - Social Equity
- The document is going out to stakeholders soon, now thru April, for buy-in, what is missing, who else needs to see this, etc.
- Strategies are for local municipalities, as well as businesses and individuals to endorse, adopt, etc. To be done June thru August/Sept.
- Stakeholder list exists for tracking, members will be solicited via e-mail to conduct stakeholder reviews/outreach. There is an interview document to follow
- Aim is to present to BOS, city council to adapt by somewhere between June-Sept.

## *Feedback*

- Giving examples might be helpful
- Question of “promotion” what is the action for that?
- How can we point to resources, activities that are already happening?
- In econ vitality- what is local for this document?
- Part of the stakeholder review is building relationships to help ensure adaption and support, etc.
- Why does “*Increase in Community Resilience*” fall into Social Equity? Many of the goals fit into other categories – policy committee will work on this.

## **Communication and Outreach**

- Is this a way for the Alliance to move on some specific issues, current and emerging
- Need a better online presence- have pubs on Alliance homepage
- Work on indicators first

- Use communication platform to move certain items along, or perhaps decide what the next steps are.
- Creation of a committee might be key to streamline the process

### **Next Steps**

- *What beyond the FAP, F2S and Policy does the Alliance need to focus on this year?*
- Focusing on the Action Plan seems important
- Process of identifying emerging issues as the FAP develops, as well as other committee/work areas
- Need to focus on FAP and do an excellent job on the opportunity we have been given
- *Beyond that, what does the Alliance want to focus on?*
- Focus on FAP, F2S goals, identifying other emerging issues to engage with through collaboration, communications and marketing, etc.
- Overall need for alliance to address the meat processing loss in the county, the farm bill, but it needs capacity
- Overall awareness building is a role the Alliance can serve for several of these issues
- Ongoing dialogues around: access, climate change, what is local, Agland preservation, meat processing, Farm Bill, social equity, increase in local demand and water
- F2S determines reasonable goal for 2012, Policy committee can vet options for farm bill participation

### **Answers to Food Policy Council Survey- for approval**

1. List your group's top three priority objectives:

- a. Complete a countywide Healthy and Sustainable Food Action Plan to serve as a countywide policy platform to encourage, support, and drive organizations, regulatory, and legislative policy to achieve a more vibrant food system for Sonoma County.
- b. Pursue farm to institution efforts, primarily to get at least 50% of Sonoma County school districts to commit to purchasing 10% of their products from local sources.
- c. Helping make connections and raise awareness about the food system within the community.

2. What is the biggest barrier you face in achieving each objective?

- a. time, staff, and funding
- b. lack of institutional busy practices and policies

c. cost of production, access to markets for farmers, and lack of experience for new farmers

3. For those working on policy issues, please list your top three policy priorities:

- a. Healthy eating
- b. Agriculture & environment
- c. Social equity
- d. Economic vitality

4. What is one issue you'd like to address but cannot because it is a state or federal issue?

- a. all species processing
- b. regulations about local produce (i.e. selling home garden produce, using school garden produce in the cafeteria)

5. Is there an issue that you feel could be addressed more successfully by working at a regional level with other local bodies?

- a. marketing
- b. distribution/aggregation
- c. meat processing facilities
- d. watershed protection

6. What are successful policies you've working on/passed/implemented at the local level that you think have potential to be successfully implemented:

In your region: Sonoma County Healthy and Sustainable Food Action Plan; County Land for Food Production; iGrow

7. Are there any particularly challenging policy initiatives that you have not been successful at?

- a. School District Food Policy around local foods (but still working on it)

8. Would your group participate in a CA Food Policy Council of Councils?

Yes

9. Does your group have any barriers that would prevent you from participating?

Funding and capacity.

10. Does your group regularly communicate with the public?

Yes, countywide distribution, about 8 times over 2011 covering our work, events, and major accomplishments

11. Please describe any communication resources your organization or group is able to offer to a statewide council:

- a. Website
- b. Facebook

12. What kind of information would be most useful to your group?

- a. Best practices
- b. Data sources and data
- c. Policy analysis
- d. Portal to share documents as models

13. What would be the most effective way for your group to receive/share that information?

- a. online or electronic sharing methods

14. Does your group sit within another organization?

- a. Ag Innovations Network

15. Please describe the decision making structure of your group:

The Sonoma County Food System Alliance uses consensus as its decision-making process. Consensus decision making strives to reach an agreement among a majority of SCFSA members and alleviate the objections of the minority to achieve the most agreeable decision. Thus, consensus is reached when all members agree to a decision, and each group member can support the decision, whether or not he or she prefers the decision, because all voices were heard and it was reached fairly and openly.

16. How would this impact your group's ability to take positions on policy/legislation issues at the state or federal level?

We would need consensus from Alliance



17. Do you have any specific concerns about the formation of a CA state food policy council of councils?

Needs to include all sectors of the food system to be representative (i.e. urban, rural, suburban, etc.)

18. Provide any additional comments:

Would be great to have more information on the governance and the structure of the proposed council of councils