

Farm to School Outreach and Planning Group

Minutes

- 12/14/06 -

In attendance: Beth LaShell, Tina Evans, Katie Pepinsky, Mirabell Iris, Bevin Williams, Marcus Renner, Jim Dyer

1. Review schedule, responsibilities, and contingency plans

We went over the proposed schedule for the conference one more time and made a few adjustments.

We settled on the following schedule:

Friday

10:00 Conservation Easements and Farmland Conservation Tools – This session will be targeted at producers and local policy-makers. The focus will be on how to use and in some cases adapt existing conservation tools and programs to deal with the problem of preserving land for food production. We would like to have a discussion about ways to get creative with existing tools, such as easements and zoning, to deal with our unique situation in La Plata County. The focus is not on preserving general ag but on preserving our prime farmland and growing spaces, both large and small. **Responsibility:** Jim will work with staff of local land trusts, NRCS, and others to figure out how to structure this discussion. We think a group of about 30 people would be a good goal.

11:30 Break

12:00 Lunch – Lunch provided for producers and purchasers to get them there. Perhaps they're mixed together at different tables to allow for networking.

1:00 Producer-Purchaser Dialogue & Discussion – We decided that we should think broadly about purchasers. The list should include schools, prisons, hospitals, restaurants, retail grocery stores, and nursing homes. We talked about really doing personal outreach to get these people here. The group felt that instead of sending students to do outreach that we should really concentrate on getting some of the producers and purchasers to our next meeting so they can start talking about it with their peers. We came up with the following list of purchasers to invite to the next meeting: Allison Dance (Cyprus), Michael Hurst (Carvers), Tim Turner (Zia Taqueria), Ore House, Off the Vine, and Aspen Café. Producers we said we would invite include: Dave and Kay James, Jerry Zink, Trent Taylor, Jason Cole, Katrina Blair, the Chamberlains, RAS Farm. Marcus will need help in doing outreach to these groups to get them to the next meeting.

Jim and Katie will work with Krista on structuring this session.

3:30 Break

4:00 Concurrent Session: Partners Discussion with Keynote Speaker – This would be a discussion of the results of the food assessment with the keynote speaker to get their perspective on things to think about given the specifics of our situation in Southwest Colorado. We could send them a summary of the Food Assessment ahead of time as a white paper. This session would be open to those attending the first two Friday sessions. Our goal would be to have 20 to 30 people here.

4:30 Concurrent Session: Reception, Local Food Fair and Seed Swap – This would be the first event of the conference open to the general public. The Fair could be an open set-up of displays and information tables around the FLC Ballroom. We talked about the importance of having some snacks here to get people to come. Some people we thought could take leadership for this section would be Katrina Blair, Gabe Eggers, Mari Rice, and Amy Foster. Katie will contact these folks to start an email conversation about what this would entail.

5:30 Dinner – We discussed different ways of doing the dinner and the awkwardness of some people having a sit down meal and other still browsing the reception. After the meeting, Beth and I talked about limiting the dinner to the people who attended Friday's sessions and having it in Memorial Student Lounge instead of the Ballroom. This would reduce our costs and give us a closer estimate on numbers. This is the idea that we're now working with.

6:30 Welcome to Conference and Presentation of Community Food Assessment – This could start as people are finishing dinner and could be a powerpoint presentation in the Ballroom. **Responsibility:** Katie and Shari

7:30 Keynote Speaker – What's Happening Around the Country/World with Community Food Security? Lessons, inspirational stories, thoughts of speaker on morning discussion. Since the meeting we discovered that Janet Brown is not available. The group decided that Brian Halwell from Worldwatch Magazine should be our second choice. Marcus will make this contact. Other options include Marion Kalb, national Farm to School director who is now in Santa Fe, and Dave Henson, the director of Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. Marcus did find more information on Katy Mamen and she is another possibility.

9:00 End

Saturday

9:30 Welcome and Orientation – Opening remarks to orient attendees to the schedule of the day.

9:45 Food Assessment Review - This would be a condensed review of the food assessment for those who didn't come to the day before.

10:00 Producer-Purchasers Report – This would be a quick report on the producer-purchaser dialogue from the day before so people understand what these issues are.

10:15 Break

10:30 Breakouts: Issues, Questions, Visioning.

This session would focus on presenting what's currently happening in each area, answering people's questions, and getting people hooked by doing some creative visioning for where we should be in 5 years. Because two big findings for the food assessment is that there are access issues associated with low-income residents and that we need to boost production we agreed that each breakout group should explicitly address these two issues.

Four breakout groups.

- **Growing Spaces:** We decided to focus this session on community gardening and move the issue of farmland preservation into the “Production, Marketing, and Distribution” session. **Responsibility:** Shari Fitzgerald, Sue Bruckner, possible to get city staff involved in this session, possibly Jennifer Lopez from the Regional Affordable Housing group to connect with affordable housing issue.
- **Farm to School Action Teams:** This session will look explicitly at Farm to School especially with regard to implementation of the districts' wellness policies. **Responsibility:** Jim and possibly Michael Brennan from 9-R
- **Higher Education & Food Security:** This session will look at the role of Higher Education in contributing to community food security through such things as demonstration projects, courses, technical assistance, and purchasing. **Responsibility:** Marcus, Mari, Tina, Students (follow-up: EC)
- **Production, Marketing and Distribution:** This session will look at ways to boost production for others and strengthening the connection between local producers and consumers. **Responsibility:** Katie and Beth

Ideas from the morning session will be brought back to the ballroom on posters that will be displayed and to which people from other sessions can add other ideas. Two “open” or “thematic” posters on food security for low-income residents and ways to boost production will allow us to collect ideas on these themes

12:00 Lunch and small group discussions at tables.

1:00 Breakout: Goals, Strategies, Next Steps

This breakout would then be a strategy session, setting of next meeting, and perhaps putting together a timeline for the next year of work in each of these areas.

2:30 Report Back and Closing

Groups would get back together in the FLC ballroom to present their work and the next steps to the rest of the group.

3:00 Celebratory Reception

Posters from the afternoon session would be brought back to the ballroom so people could mingle and look at the ideas and plans generated in each group. We felt having an ending reception would allow people to leave who wanted to and allow others the space to socialize and build relationships

2. Choosing a Name

We decided to call the conference “Homegrown: A Local Foods Conference” but do have “Community-based solutions,” “Sustainability,” “Food Security,” and “Local Food System” on the poster to give more of a flavor about what we’re trying to achieve.

3. Getting Local Food for the Conference

We all agreed that this was important. We also agreed that FLC is the best place to hold the conference. This means working within Sodexho’s catering guidelines. There are two options:

We can choose lunches and a dinner from their menu and find local product to substitute into the menu and pay the premium for the local product.

We can create our own lunch and dinner with local product for them to prepare. The downside of this is that it might cost more for preparation.

Either way, Sodexho catering meals are \$10 to \$12 per person. For something special such as this they need numbers and menu options about three weeks ahead of time. This will make it difficult to get an accurate head count for the meals. This in all affects the budget for the conference and hence the registration fee.

We talked about different ways to structure the fee. One fee with meals included and another without meals. We wanted to make the conference as affordable as possible, especially for students.

Marcus said that he would try to work with the budget to identify a fee structure for the conference.

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Friday, January 5th at 3 p.m. at FLC. Marcus will reserve a room and let people know.

Next time we will focus on outreach and publicity.

- Marcus will bring a draft of the promotional material for the group to review
- Everyone should bring names of people to target with outreach. We will build the targeted outreach list in the meeting.
- We will also make some decisions on food. Beth and Marcus will try to identify local product available in February, but everyone else should ask producers they know what would be available.
- We need to get more of the people we want at the conference to attend the planning meeting – please outreach to others to get them to attend. More than anything else, this will build word of mouth excitement and help boost our numbers.