

## **FARM TO SCHOOL MEETING, 9 April 2007, 3:30-5:00 PM, 9R Admin Bldg**

**ATTENDING:** Jenny Wrenn, Katy Pepinsky, Krista Garand, Jason Cole, Katrina Blair, Marje Cristol, Jeanine Justice, Linda Herz, Dianne Burress, John Welty, Kay James, Julie Hudak, Jennifer Wheeling, Jim Dyer

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Marje explained the new EBT (Electronics Benefits Transfer) system being implemented this season at the Durango Farmers Market to allow food stamp purchases. We discussed briefly how we could help encourage use of this system – ideas are welcome.

Kay reported on a presentation she and David gave for the Env Science Dept at CSU, and some details on the local food that was served.

Jim reported that several from SW Colorado attended the SW Marketing Network's conference in Flagstaff last month – and hopefully they will be able to use locally some of the ideas they gathered.

**SCHOOL GARDENS:** Shari sent in a report that the garden groundbreaking at Ft Lewis Mesa school will be 8:30 AM on 25 April. The greenhouse is started, and a cistern obtained for storing hauled water for the garden – a fact of life in SW La Plata County. Shari will be sending a workday schedule (added at end of these minutes).

**FARM TO COLLEGE:** Jim reported that Jillian Steen of Ft Lewis College attended the Farm to College workshop at the SWMN Conference in Flagstaff. Reps from various colleges in the SW discussed work with food service, college gardens and farms, as well as sust ag curricula. We hope to get a report from Jillian at a future meeting.

Marcus sent a reminder that the FLC Local Foods Task Force from the Homegrown Conference will meet on 18 Apr 5:30-6:30. The meeting will be in Miller 260. This is the small conference room next to the housing office on the second floor of Miller Hall. Let Marcus know (247-7091) if you need more specific directions. We will brainstorm about hands-on student projects, get an update about the Community Food Security Grant, talk about the Old Fort site, and get progress reports on several different initiatives.

**GROWING PARTNERS GRANT:** Katy gave an overview of the proposal being submitted to USDA for a variety of projects coming out of the Community Food Assessment. The proposal is being submitted this week. Wendy reported on a networking meeting for low-income service providers that may be of interest to this effort.

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLES COALITION GRANT:** This grant has been received, and Jeanine Justice, the new coordinator for the project, joined us to explain the worksite wellness, healthy active environments, and healthy local foods aspects of the grant.

The Healthy Local Food part of the grant will work on helping customers make healthy and local food choices in restaurants and groceries, farm to school activities, consumer education on wise food choices, facilitating local purchasing by institutional buyers, and increasing access to healthy local foods through new markets, etc.

Our present plan is to use these Food, Agr, and Farm to School meetings as an informal advisory group for these efforts, and to have a smaller group which would implement these activities be the healthy local food committee of the Healthy Lifestyles group. Contact Jim Dyer (588-2292, [jadyer@frontier.net](mailto:jadyer@frontier.net)) to join that group or if you have suggestions.

John Welty spoke of the importance of helping consumers recognize the real, but often hidden cost of food. We discussed the need for local food distribution to institutional buyers – perhaps at the farmers market. Wendy pointed out the need for business planning assistance to help start-up small farms become profitable.

#### 9R DISTRICT UPDATE:

**BREAKFAST:** Krista reported on last month's National Breakfast Week where several local products were featured (see last month's minutes). There was an excellent response and interest in these foods. For example, the breakfast participation at Florida Mesa nearly doubled during that week. Shari sent this exciting report from FLM:

*At our school, we treated the week as an opportunity to not just enjoy local food but to celebrate community. At least six families, during that week, participated in the breakfast program as first timers. We had coffee, donated by Desert Sun (a must out here, since we arrived at 7:15, kids in tow) and sat with other families and neighbors: moms, dads, and kids. The egg sandwiches with Sunnyside ham were a big pleaser with the adults that first day and each kid in the lunchroom asked for seconds. And even I, a proclaimed vegetarian, partook in the biscuits and gravy-yum. But according to the kids and the parent partner and the kitchen staff there, cracked wheat was the overall favorite. And I think it did what we at the Farm to School group have always said would be the most effective. It combined the farm to cafeteria with farm education. Weeks earlier at the elementary school Trent Taylor was part of the school science fair. He brought in the cracked wheat for the kids to sample. These kids later saw the cracked wheat at the school breakfast and made the "connection." They know the farm from living out here, saw it at the science fair and now on their breakfast tray!*

*Thanks to Krista, all the local producers, and kudos to our school, parent partner and families for making this experience at our school a success! We look forward to more community and local food opportunities and hope we can share our experience with other schools*

*Shari Fitzgerald, Fort Lewis Elementary parent*

**SALAD BARS:** Local greens are now going to Ft Lewis Mesa school, so 10 schools are now getting local greens from Turtle Lake!!

**PUBLICITY:** Krista is preparing the Breakfast and Lunch Calendar for next year, and she needs advertisements from local groups and business including producers, as well as a Farm to School logo for highlighting local foods. Jim will work with Krista to get started on these two

items. Jenny recommended that we see if we could help local newspaper reporters get stories into the national press about our Farm to School efforts to gain recognition locally as well.

NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting will be Monday 14 May, 3:30-5:00 most likely at the 9R Admin Building — room to be confirmed.

Remember — all FTS minutes and other FTS and local food info is at [www.sustainableSWcolorado.org](http://www.sustainableSWcolorado.org)

Thanks to you all

Jim Dyer

=====

As promised, here is more from Shari Fitzgerald on the new garden coming to Ft Lewis Mesa School -- looks like a great project.

Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary is holding its ground breaking ceremony for the Quinisa Memorial Learning Garden on April 25th at 8:30 am. The ceremony will last 15-20 minutes and will include an overview of the learning garden, a reading of gardening poetry by FLM students, and a ribbon cutting.

Parent and Community Volunteers Needed to Help Facilitate Classroom Activities:

Wednesday April 25th: mending and preparing the soil

Thursday April 26th: planting and mulching the bird and butterfly garden

Community Workday April 14th 3pm- 6pm and May 5th

Other Wish List:

Tools- spades, shovels, rakes, wages, gloves (kid sizes and adults)

Flat rock- we will haul and gather if needed

Boulders and river rock

Contact Shari Fitzgerald at 588-3865, [thegardenprojectsw@colorado.org](mailto:thegardenprojectsw@colorado.org) or Kristi Wiebel at [kwiebel@durango.k12.co.us](mailto:kwiebel@durango.k12.co.us) to volunteer or learn more about the school garden