

San Francisco Food Alliance Meeting
April 13, 2005 (3:00 pm – 5:30 pm)
California Wellness Foundation Office, One Kearny Street

Introductions

Beth Altshuler (MIG), Michael Blacksborg, Sandra Decker (City of Dreams), Diane Joy Goodman, Naomi Goodwin (St. Mary's Urban Youth Farm), Abby Harris (California Wellness Foundation), Susana Hennessey-Lavery (SFPDH Tobacco Free Project), Paula Jones (San Francisco Food Systems), Beth Kassler (Get Out and Learn), Lynn Lampky, Sraddha Mehta (SF Department of the Environment), Bu Nygrens (Veritable Vegetable), Fernando Ona (SFPDH), Stacey Parker (Garden for the Environment), Gail Priestley (St. Anthony Foundation), Leah Rimkus (San Francisco Food Systems), Michelle Ross, Zoë Rossing (San Francisco Food Bank), Owen Taylor (San Francisco Food Systems), Sue Trupin, Zetta Wells (San Francisco Food Systems).

Regional Food Policy Organizing

- Paula informed the group that the California Nutrition Network (CNN) Food Security Task Force will be meeting Friday, April 15th, in Los Angeles. The California Nutrition Network provides funding from unused Food Stamp Program dollars to organizations doing nutrition education, physical activity promotion, food assistance promotion throughout the state (approximately \$100 million total funding in CA). The Food Security Task Force includes several projects that are focused on food security work, including food assessments and food policy.
- Representatives from several food policy councils throughout California will be at the meeting Friday and there will be a discussion around the possibility of these local initiatives coming together or of convening a “Council of Councils.” Also, last year the California Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) held several listening sessions throughout the state to solicit feedback around the development of a state food policy council in California. While there are other models of state food policy councils in the U.S., this might not be the best model in California due to the state’s vast size, diversity, and large scale agriculture. Paula asked for feedback on how the SF Food Alliance felt about these ideas and whether there was any interest in working with other cities and counties to combine efforts and formalize a structure in some way.
- Meeting attendees generally agreed that communication and networking between coalitions and food policy councils made sense in order to gain knowledge and synergy, but voiced preference for maintaining autonomy in a more grassroots way rather than creating any sort of government-appointed or overly bureaucratic state food policy council. Starting a new organization could drain time/money resources. Meeting attendees asked what the California Food and Justice Coalition could do to integrate the work of different cities, counties, and regions.
- Leah shared a list of the 2005 Policy Recommendations from the California Nutrition Network’s Joint Steering Committee. These recommendations were identified for promoting long-term environmental and policy change to increase the access and availability of fruits

and vegetables, physical activity and nutrition assistance programs for Food Stamp users and other low-income Californians.

- Diane informed the group of the organizing efforts starting now that aim to affect the 2007 Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is a federal bill that is passed every five years (the 2002 Farm Bill expires in September 2007) and affects numerous food and farming laws and programs, such as agricultural subsidies, conservation programs, and food assistance programs. The Environmental Defense Fund and American Farmland Trust are two of the leading bodies in advocacy efforts, hoping to add more conservation programs into the Farm Bill rather than the historical production-based subsidies. The Farm Bill will first hit Congressional committees in early 2006, so grassroots organizing and involvement is needed now to show how the Farm Bill (aka “Food Bill”) affects consumers in urban areas, not just farmers in rural areas. There will be a related workshop in Sacramento on June 28th sponsored by the California Association for Food and Farming (formerly Cal SAWG). For more information, see <http://www.calfoodandfarming.org/>.

California Hunger Action Coalition Legislative Agenda

- Gail from St. Anthony Foundation reported on the California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC), a statewide coalition with no paid staff. CHAC sponsors a Hunger Action Day each year in Sacramento which has proved very successful. Last year, for example, when the Governor wanted to discontinue transitional food stamps for people leaving cash assistance, the public outcry prevented him from doing so.
- Of all states, California is ranked last in the percentage of eligible residents who are enrolled in the Food Stamp Program. The current participation rate in the state is approximately 40%. This translates to a loss of \$1.5 billion in federal dollars per year.
- CHAC is pushing the message and understanding that the Food Stamp Program is not a welfare program but a food and nutrition program. Their message for Hunger Action Day is “Do not balance the budget on the backs of the poor.”
- San Francisco’s Department of Human Services has piloted innovative programs to increase local participation in the Food Stamp Program, including “Food Stamps in a Day” events launched at St. Anthony Foundation and the Haight Ashbury Food Program. Our county workers need tools from the state to make these programs reach out to more people who need them.
- Hunger Action Day is on Tuesday, May 10th in Sacramento and there will be a free training in San Francisco’s St. Boniface Church Theater (175 Golden Gate) on Monday, May 2nd. Bring your constituencies to both events. You will receive a packet of information for Hunger Action Day and can be hooked up with a captain from your legislative district in Sacramento.
- CHAC has the following items on its 2005 Legislative Agenda:
 - Oppose Governor’s budget cuts to CalWORKS recipients and seniors receiving SSI/SSP

- Oppose federal cuts and caps to vital nutrition programs
- Preserve funding on nutrition, health care, and other social services
- Support a requirement of fresh fruit with every school breakfast
- Support AB 696: The Food For Families Act of 2005 (Judy Chu) that will improve access to the food stamp program by reducing red tape
- Support standard and mandated reviews of school breakfast to determine accordance with USDA guidelines for fat and saturated fat
- Support AB 1385: The Food for Schoolchildren Act of 2005 (John Laird) which will automatically enroll families receiving food stamps for school meals
- Support SB 284 (Abel Maldonado) which will provide funding for a statewide produce network that will purchase produce from California farmers and distribute to hungry families via food banks
- For more information on CHAC and Hunger Action Day, see <http://www.hungeraction.net>.

Bayview Hunters Point Farmers' Market

- The Department of the Environment (DoE), with funding from a Salton Foundation Grant, is sponsoring a new farmers' market in Bayview Hunters Point, working with local community groups LEJ and Girls2000 and the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association.
- Project partners completed an extensive survey process to plan for the market site and market weekday, collecting about 600 surveys.
 - The first choice for the market site was the Bayview Opera House, but this arrangement was not possible due to scheduling conflicts with events planned at the Opera House.
 - The second choice was on the street outside of Bayview Plaza (Third and Evans/Gavlez)
 - DoE will go before the Department of Parking and Transportation (DPT) tomorrow to get approval for the street closure at Third and Evans. DPT only allows four closures per year, so this permit will need to be revisiting. DoE also asked Supervisor Sophie Maxwell to sponsor an ordinance for the street closure, but this would probably not be passed and finalized until mid-May.
- The current start date for the Bayview Hunters Point Farmers' Market will be Saturday, May 21st. The market will be open from 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and there will be a grand opening celebration with an appearance by Supervisor Maxwell and the Mayor.
- District 10 represents the southeast sector of San Francisco, including Bayview, Hunters Point, Visitacion Valley, and Potrero Hill. The SF Food Alliance's District 10 working group has come together sharing an interest in food issues specifically within those neighborhoods and typically meets monthly on Monday afternoons at Southeast Health Center.

Update on SF Food and Agriculture Report Card and Participatory Process

- This is a collaborative project of the SF Food Alliance, mapping out the current food system in San Francisco from production to consumption to recycling. A working group has come together and selected a list of indicators to measure and track in the following areas:
 - Government food programs/charitable feeding programs
 - Urban Agriculture/organic recycling
 - Food Retail
- Groups and individuals in the City and County have already expressed interest in the Food and Agriculture Report Card and when the information will be available. The Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment (ENCHIA) group will be using indicators and information from the Report Card. Supervisor Sophie Maxwell referenced the Report Card in a report for her Child Nutrition Hearing in March.
- The working group is currently pulling together the data and drafting text for each section. A rough draft of the Report Card should be completed by the end of April.
- The participatory process will be a citywide event at City Hall in the summer, bringing together decision makers within City and County Departments and Government with residents. The event will use the Report Card as a basis for making recommendations and developing actions around the local food system. There is a working group focused on planning this event. There is no date set yet for the event.
- The working group for the participatory process has come up with goals for the event, developed a matrix to inform recruitment efforts for the event, identified who we should be able to recruit through our connections, and identified where there are gaps. We will need additional help in recruiting folks in urban agriculture and community gardens, recipients of food assistance, and individuals working in the food retail sector.
- Meeting participants voiced that it will be helpful to get people in the City and County educated about the existence of the Report Card, helping agencies in their strategic planning by informing them of what is going on in our city's food system. It will also be a useful benchmark and assessment tool for measuring change and progress in future years.

Announcements

- (Sraddha) The Department of the Environment is compiling case studies in different areas for distribution during World Environment Day (June 2005). One area of focus is food and agriculture, and will highlight some of San Francisco's achievements in food and agriculture with reports, flyers, links, and attachments compiled on CD-Rom.
- (Stacey) There will be a community gardening meeting on Sunday, May 15th at White Crane Springs Garden (7th and Lawton). This is convened by a new organization, San Francisco Garden Resource Organization (SF GRO).

- (Stacey) World Environment Day is partnering with SF GRO to design a mosaic/mural at Garden for the Environment (7th and Lawton). SF GRO will also be providing a map for people attending WED who want to visit a community garden(s) in San Francisco.
- (Naomi) Volunteers are needed at St. Mary's Youth Farm for site maintenance. The gates at the site, 600 Alemany Blvd at Ellsworth, are usually open every second Sunday. Email slugsf@hotmail.com for more information.
- (Leah) The date for the next SF Food Alliance meetings is given below. We plan to have a presentation on the SF Food and Agriculture Report Card on the agenda. We welcome proposed speakers, presenters, discussion topics, and other meeting agenda items. Please contact me if you have agenda items for the meetings: leah.rimkus@sfdph.org
 - Tuesday, May 17th, 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
(Location TBD)

Upcoming events

- May 2 – Hunger Action Day Training (9:15 am – 3:30 pm)
St. Boniface Church Theater, 175 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco
- May 3 – Meeting of the SF Food Alliance District 10 Working Group (3:00 pm)
Southeast Health Center, 2401 Keith Street, San Francisco
- May 10 – Hunger Action Day
State Capitol, Sacramento
- May 15 – Community gardening meeting (11:00 am – 3:00 pm)
White Crane Springs Garden, 7th Avenue and Lawton, San Francisco
- May 17 – San Francisco Food Alliance meeting (6:00 pm – 8:30 pm)
Location to be determined
- May 21 – Grand opening of farmers' market in Bayview Hunters Point (9:30 am – 1:30 pm)
Third Street and Evans, San Francisco
- June 28 – Workshop on the 2007 Farm Bill sponsored by California Coalition for Food and Farming. For more information, see <http://www.calfoodandfarming.org/>
Clarion Hotel, Sacramento