

**San Francisco Food Alliance Meeting**  
**November 16, 2005 (4:00 – 6:30 pm)**  
**New College of California, 766 Valencia Street**

Introductions

Larry Bain (Nextcourse), Christopher Cook, Robert Egger (DC Central Kitchen), Chris Friedel (Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy), Christine Goette-Carpenter (SFDPH), Park Guthrie (Life Learning Academy/Organic Opportunities), Susana Hennessey-Lavery (SFDPH Tobacco Free Project), Elizabeth Jones (Tsar Nicoulai Caviar), Paula Jones (San Francisco Food Systems), Lynn Lampky, Stefan Lynch (UCSF School of Nursing), Stacey McCarthy (Earl's Organic Produce), Bu Nygrens (Veritable Vegetable), Caron Obstfeld, Stacey Parker (Garden for the Environment), Leah Rimkus (San Francisco Food Systems), Zetta Wells

Food and Nutrition Advocacy in Washington, D.C. (Robert Egger)

- Robert is the founder of DC Central Kitchen (DCK), a nonprofit community corporation just 400 yards from the Capitol. DCK recovers food from local foodservice businesses for distribution to local agencies and provides culinary arts job training for unemployed men and women who are either homeless or receiving public assistance.
- DCK collects 2 ½ tons of donated food per day, enough to serve 4,000 meals to over 100 partner agencies. DCK chooses to work specifically with agencies that value clients' independence. For information, see: [www.dccentralkitchen.org](http://www.dccentralkitchen.org)
- Robert is currently the Chair of the Mayor's newly-created Commission on Nutrition. This group is setting out to document the health care costs of food-related diseases like diabetes, stroke and cancer in Washington, D.C. in order to illustrate economic impact and to advocate for greater attention to food issues there.
- Robert is the Co-Convener for the 2006 Nonprofit Congress, an initiative to unite the nonprofit sector and create a common vision and voice for all charitable nonprofits. He talked about needing to reframe the debate and reshape the way that we do social service work – shifting from arguments of good/bad, right/wrong to economic decisions. For more information, see: [www.nonprofitcongress.org](http://www.nonprofitcongress.org)
- Other updates Robert mentioned included the following:
  - Food System Leadership Institute (funded by Kellogg) is a new two-year program intending to further the leadership ability and food systems knowledge of selected fellows working in university academia, government and industry. It involves the deans of 26 universities (National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges). For more information, see: [www.fsli.org](http://www.fsli.org)
  - Senate Hunger Commission recently proposed a Food Employment, Empowerment and Development (F.E.E.D) Act which would provide \$100 million across five years to cafes as educational and job training venues. United States Senators Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ), Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) and Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) authored the bill. More information can be found at [www.kitchensinc.org](http://www.kitchensinc.org)

## SF Food Alliance Updates

- After Robert spoke, Paula and Leah handed out printed copies of the finished *SF Collaborative Food System Assessment* to all meeting attendees.
- Leah provided a general overview of the SF Food Alliance Round Table and the last SF Food Alliance meeting, including the process of developing key food system problem or priority areas and narrowing down a list of 17 issues to a few key focus areas.
- During the last SF Food Alliance meeting (October 19<sup>th</sup>), attendees reviewed a list of several problem/priority areas around food in San Francisco and voted on the top issues which the Alliance could focus its efforts on, considering the following four criteria: enthusiasm, high need, practical and meaningful. The following items received the most votes:
  - Lack of extensive knowledge about the food system and lack of awareness of the opportunities and mechanisms for buying directly from farms and supporting sustainable farmers among city agencies, city contractors, businesses, institutions and individual residents (16 votes)
  - Lack of sustained, consistent support for food policy activities and lack of implementation and accountability around food related recommendations and policies (12 votes)
  - Low utilization of city and county owned open space for food and agriculture production (7 votes)
  - Lack to access to healthy food in certain neighborhoods of San Francisco (5 votes)
- In order to outline future activities of the SF Food Alliance, meeting attendees considered the two items that received the highest number of votes (see bulleted list above), discussing what has already been done and/or is currently being done in that area, what still needed to be done, and possible actors, contacts and resources available. The intention of this activity was not to create a wish list, but rather to address the gaps that the SF Food Alliance could actually work on and that might be achievable in six months to a year.

## Increasing Awareness and Knowledge of the Food System in San Francisco

- When first discussing what has been done and/or is currently being done in this area, The SF Food Alliance Round Table in August was mentioned as a good example of education and training around the food system for city agencies, contractors and residents.
- Larry mentioned that he is working with the National Parks Service creating criteria for vendors to support sustainable food systems in their Requests for Proposals, including points for using local, seasonal, and organic. The States Parks Department is looking at providing subsidies for this because good food costs more.
- Paula and Leah have worked with the San Francisco Unified School District in their nutrition policy and meal programs, advocating for more sustainable food purchasing and identifying ways that more of these products might be included.
- The San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) has started to create purchasing guidelines to help department employees select/model not only nutritious options, but sustainable food options as well. SFDPH would like input on their draft policy (handed out during the meeting) and suggested additional venues for gathering feedback/support. The

SFDPH draft policy targets department-sponsored events and programs, such as SF General Hospital. It also proposes the creation of a website making it easy for employees to find healthy and locally grown food for meetings.

- The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency is interested in setting up communal kitchens in the new assisted living facilities in the Van Ness corridor/SoMa.
- There were some questions among the group regarding college courses and whether the curriculum at City College and/or SF State University offers coursework in sustainable food systems.
- Meeting attendees broke up into small groups to address three different populations' awareness and knowledge around food systems – (1) city agencies and contractors, (2) businesses and institutions, and (3) residents and the general public.

#### *City agencies and contractors*

- Some food systems education for city agencies and contractors has happened or is happening via the Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA), the Redevelopment Agency (kitchens in Van Ness corridor), Slow Food, city clinics, the new Board of Supervisors' Food Security Task Force, and the new Organic and Sweat Free/Fair Trade ordinances.
- Some of the needs or possible activities that the group identified included the following:
  - Create criteria for good food and an achievable range to incorporate in city procurement, bidding and contractual processes.
  - Follow up with *SF Collaborative Food System Assessment* and have targeted meetings with all Supervisors and other key department heads.
  - Develop a “dog and pony show” for the assessment with games and activities.
  - Develop an accessible resource guide on how and where to purchase local, healthy, sustainable food for city-sponsored meetings, events, programs.
  - Provide feedback on the draft SFDPH policy, finalize and propose for approval within department.
- Possible actors, partners mentioned for this item included SFDPH, Kaiser, CUESA, local chapter of the American Dietetic Association, as well as a number of SF Food Alliance meeting attendees.

#### *Businesses and institutions*

- Some food system education for businesses and institutions has been done and/or is being done through Om Organics, Whole Foods, Rainbow Grocery, Slow Food, wholesalers, restaurants, foundations, community supported agriculture and farmers' markets.
- Some of the needs or possible activities that the group identified included the following:
  - The SF Food Alliance serve as a clearing house for food system information and networking for businesses and institutions.
  - Create a “road show” with a brochure and a 10-15 minute pitch for restaurants, retail and foundations.
  - Create a “Food Systems 101” including, for example, 10 quick tips for things you can do to support healthy and sustainable food system.

- Fold food system awareness and support for sustainable agriculture into the green certification awarded by SFDPH/DoE, or have a seal/stamp for restaurants that support this in San Francisco.
  - Fold the “homeland security” concept into food security and local, sustainable food systems when talking to public officials.
- Possible actors, partners mentioned included the San Francisco Food Alliance and the Department of Human Services.

*Residents and the general public*

- Some food system education for the general public has been done and/or is currently being done through city clinics, the First 5 Program, 5 A Day campaign, Kaiser Permanente’s “Thrive” campaign, some college curriculum (City College), CUESA, Slow Food, SF Green Schoolyard Alliance, and through the new *SF Collaborative Food System Assessment*. However, much of this is standard food and nutrition focused, not necessarily around sustainable food systems.
- Some of the needs or possible activities that the group identified included the following:
  - Create an educational campaign for the general public, including use of media, billboards, and bus shelters.
  - Work with neighborhood associations to present and cosponsor educational activities.
  - Acquire corporate backing (e.g. Kaiser) for educational campaign.
  - Host a citywide teach-in on sustainable food systems.
  - Bring food and food system education out to neighborhoods similar to Peoples Grocery.
- Possible actors, partners mentioned included SFDPH and Kaiser Permanente.

Gaining Support for Food Policy Activities, Implementation and Accountability in San Francisco

- Paula introduced this topic for a larger group discussion, and referred to the appendix included in the *SF Collaborative Food System Assessment*, which outlines food-related policies in San Francisco from 1996 through the present. This list illustrates that we already have plenty of policies and recommendations which have been written and approved, but that implementation and enforcement are still needed. This is why we are considering a more institutional food policy advisory committee or other entity.
- The Board of Supervisors’ newly-created Food Security Task Force is charged with creating a strategic plan in the next two years; however, this group will focus on federal food assistance programs (not more systemic food issues) and will not necessarily look at implementation, enforcement and accountability.
- There was some discussion in the group around the format that such an advisory committee would take and on whether there was already a framework for food policy advisory groups (e.g. who to involve, governing rules) that we could use. Attendees also mentioned the value of good old-fashioned advocacy versus an institutional policy committee, commission or other advisory body. A couple of meeting attendees suggested that we needed an entity with some power in city government while maintaining the SF Food Alliance’s community

element. The Alliance is credentialed because it is not an institutionalized body, but it cannot operate forever without funding and leadership.

- Some of the needs or possible future actions/activities that the group identified for this priority area included the following:
  - The SF Food Alliance to remain as a center point for community groups' networking, information sharing, lobbying and advocacy
  - Draft the basic nuts and bolts of what policy entity should look like in San Francisco.
  - Develop 5-10 interesting statistics on San Francisco's food system and use media to build momentum in support of this food policy entity. Create public service announcements claiming, for example, that "San Francisco needs a food czar."
  - Research different models of food policy councils, including possible connections to the Mayor's Office, funding mechanisms, and ongoing support (e.g. Tobacco Free Project, Asthma Task Force).
- Robert suggested that the focus be expanded from food policy to encompass nutrition and health as well. The DC Mayor's Commission on Nutrition intends to illustrate the impact on public health and on the overall budget of bad food and an aging population in the DC area, setting the scene for future policy hearings. Both public health and economic arguments need to be made.

#### Next steps

- Leah will send out an email to meeting attendees, outlining areas where there is overlap in what needs to be done (e.g. development of a food systems 101, food assessment presentation).
- Paula will email updates to meeting attendees on what is happening with the Board of Supervisors' Food Security Task Force and in other parts of city and county government in terms of creating a longer-term food system advisory body.
- Stefan suggested that there might be a need for a shared vision among the SF Food Alliance of what the ideal food system should look like. Leah referred to the SF Food Alliance Membership Agreement with the vision and statement of purpose, created over a year ago. This document could be revisited and revised if Alliance members wish to do so. This led to a suggestion to develop talking points on the SF Food Alliance and the food system, using common terms, to use when going out and speaking with to groups.
- The next SF Food Alliance meeting will be scheduled over email. Leah would like to do an online poll or vote to reassess what weekdays and times work for most people.

#### Announcements

- (Chris F.) Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Community Analysis Workshops through New Urban Research, Inc. in Oakland and San Francisco in January
- (Chris C.) Food Med Conference in Oakland on November 17<sup>th</sup>
- (Stefan) UC Berkeley Extension is offering an 8-week class in January on Disaster Planning and Public Health in the Center for Infectious Diseases
- (Park) Garden Work Day on Treasure Island on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>