

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
December 16, 2014
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: January 20, 2015, 3-5p.m. @ [HHS campus](#)

Attendees:

Steering Committee - Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Leah Smith (AIM); Rebecca Smith (HHS)

Committee Members – Alexandra Danino (SF/Marin Food Bank); Lauren Klein (UCCE); Liza Crosse, (Aide to Supervisor Kinsey); Susan Martinelli (Marin Community Clinic); Terrie Green (Marin City Community Services District)

Guests – June Farmer (Marin City CX3); Kerry McGrath (Marin Organic)

Welcome – Janet Brown

HEAL mini grant proposal updates – Rebecca Smith

There were 4 applications for HEAL mini grants from MFPC member organizations. HEAL review process is happening now, and Rebecca will announce selected grant applicants at the next MFPC meeting. AIM, MO, Marin City CX3, and Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative applied. The next application round will be in ~August 2015. HEAL Active Living applicants included transportation access to parks (working with Marin Transit and Marin Open Space) and a project promoting physical activity in the workplace.

Organizational wellness policy discussion – Rebecca Smith

Marin Health & Human Services is interested in creating a Food and Beverage Policy for HHS events, meetings, and programs. Marin City CSD has already adopted a rigorous Food and Beverage Policy. If others are interested, the [Bay Area Nutrition & Physical Activity Collaborative](#) (BANPAC) works with Bay Area counties, cities, and organizations to help them adopt Healthy Food and Beverage Policies by lending credibility, providing technical support for drafting policies, and providing monetary incentives to organizations that adopt such policies. Policies can include local food sources as part of the guidelines. HHS has the opportunity for trainers to come to Marin to do training – is there interest in this being a MFPC activity in March 2015? This can include MFPC co-sponsorship of the event. Rebecca will confirm the logistics of the training between now and January meeting. ****All MFPC members present today approved co-sponsorship.**

Another HHS opportunities for participation & MFPC co-sponsorship – Rebecca Smith

The HHS Campus has a community advisory board to guide activities and programming. In 2010 they hosted a resource event and are planning another food resource event on February 25, 2015 in the afternoon in this room, along with updating the printed food resource guide. Would the MFPC like to be involved in this? It's a good

opportunity to expand information and awareness of food policy programs to service providers. Flyer to be sent out in early January. ****All MFPC members present today approved co-sponsorship.**

Follow Up:

-Bonnie will check with the MFPC via email for any final objections to MFPC co-sponsorship. Otherwise, both events are approved for co-sponsorship.

-Julia has an example of a food resources guide from Vermont to share with Rebecca. - Janet recommends the movie "Growing Cities Movie" - WWII 48% of food consumed was in community and school gardens. All the lawns in the nation total a larger acreage than US farmland.

Year-end evaluation – Julia Van Soelen Kim

Informal feedback and direction from people present, with a more formal feedback survey to come in early 2015. Refer to the running list of topics (identified at the beginning of the year) on the back of the meeting agendas. Continuing themes: community specific needs, CalFresh, school meals, food security and equitable access. Waiting for: aging, production, and distribution, as well as for breastfeeding awareness to circle back. How are we doing topic-wise? How is the pace (Too fast or slowly? Handling too few or too many topics?)

- Rebecca: the topic of community specific needs is both broad and deep, and will have to take time. Also looking forward to ways to work with MFPC so there can be more immediate engagement with other organizations, for a balance between in-depth planning process and short-term planning wins to maintain motivation.

- Terrie: I think the pace has been going well.

- Leah: how do we do the work we want to do in a meaningful way without neglecting other topics? I agree the pace has been good, as long as we keep track of topics that get pushed back, as they are timely.

- Janet: over this last year, since we identified community specific needs as a topic, we have had presentations from each of the targeted communities, had day-long tours with each community, debriefed each tour, and pulled out themes to develop policy based on immediate connections. We are in good shape and will continue on this theme well into 2015.

- Leah: future advocacy training for the MFPC in 2015 so that we feel confident and equipped with the skills to present the eventual packets to decision-makers.

- Julia: what is working well regarding meeting format, and what are suggestions you would like us to consider?

- Liza: all this good work is underway, and while it is not complete yet, it is important. When the time comes, I think we should have some media outreach, face-to-face interviews with key players. Other FPC's in the area are at this public outreach stage.

-Julia: Marin City CSD's website has an excellent example of outreach telling their story in a video, and Janet Brown was featured in the Huffington Post "[Farm to Fork Across America: AllStar Organics Farm -- Infusions and Blends for an Appreciative Market.](#)" Marin City has been selected for the second round of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Award. Their video [RWJF](#)

[Culture of Health Video Entry](#) was submitted to help illustrate the culture of health in Marin City.

-Lauren had a videographer at the Community Garden Summit.
- Susan: could the Steering Committee give the breastfeeding coalition some guidance on how we can get breastfeeding into policy – what kind of document are we looking for? As important as the document is the policy implementation plan. Perhaps more powerful if it is woven throughout larger equitable food access policy (as a food and public health issue), rather than its own stand-alone policy. Very few mothers meet their breastfeeding goals. We can become a community that makes breastfeeding as the norm again with supportive infrastructure. The Latino Policy Forum had a lot of discussion about helping make breastfeeding more accessible in the Latino community.

Council representative updates (All)

- Rebecca: a 4-hour youth development training “Media Smart Youth” on February 23 or 26 on engaging young people in food-related policy systems and environment work and media as it relates to food access. LIFT with Davidson Middle School. For providers; will be a youth- adult training opportunity to follow.
- Julia: [Market Bus Tour for Small Farms](#) on February 24, 2015; a tour of wholesale markets in San Francisco for North Bay specialty crop producers (not ideal for urban and community gardeners because it’s more wholesale).
- Leah: Huge movement to support Market Match in farmers markets - 30 California organizations (led by the Ecology Center in Berkeley) put together a proposal to support Market Match across the country. Will find out in the spring. Millions of dollars, potentially - that can *only* be spent at farmers markets. The Ecology Center is also helping markets and farm stands be able to accept EBT. In Iowa every farmer in farmers markets have EBT machines from state funding. A lot of families are not yet aware that they can use EBT at many farmers markets. Interesting issue of the markets that don’t accept EBT yet – some don’t see there being enough interest, potential stigma, cost of implementing, etc... Farmers have seen sales increase as a result of Market Match, but there isn’t hard dollar amount data yet. Effort to create a CA state fund for Market Match to match the federal funding.
- Alexandra: met the County’s new CalFresh Assistor for the County, Daniel – a systems change that came out of this group. The County’s call center is also a huge improvement in CalFresh assistance. Resource: state website “data dashboard” shows how many families have CalFresh by county. As of June, 56% of families on Medical are also on CalFresh (which run on the same income eligibility chart lines). There is still room to grow because the remaining 44% of families on Medical but not CalFresh most likely qualify for CalFresh since the Medical application is more strict).

Discussion on draft Equitable Access Policy document and working group meeting – Julia Van Soelen Kim and Janet Brown

-December 11th Policy Subgroup meeting was canceled due to the storm. BUT we are in great shape with a wealth of resources to draw from and a great model from San Francisco. We know we want policy to be measureable and data-driven. We are going

to develop a city-focused policy (customizable) and County-focused policy (for unincorporated areas). Will be rescheduling our working group meeting and hope to have something to present at the next meeting for the Council's input.

-If we were to integrate breastfeeding into the document, where and how? → Could breastfeeding be inserted in the healthy food access as well as emergency food sources sections. Perhaps also under community food production section?

-Safe transportation routes is the category we know less about. Please give us tips or direction if you have any. → Transportation is a huge issue. There are community-based transportation plans that deal with public transportation, fixed-route options, and bike-pedestrian plans. Might talk to planners about existing documents and where we can weigh in. We can begin with broad language, and link with stake-holders in the community.

Closing remarks (Janet Brown)

"It's not easy to cross boundaries to adopt a whole-systems approach to health. It means leaving the areas we know well and venturing into fields where we have to depend on the expertise of others. It means learning unfamiliar concepts and mastering new tools to engage complexity. It means asking people to take health into account in making decisions that usually depend on other considerations. It may provoke controversy. It may make people we approach uneasy and even angry. It requires patience, imagination, courage, integrity, and a sense of humor."

- Dr. Richard Levins, John Rock Professor of Population Science, Harvard School of Medicine

Meeting adjured at 5:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 20, 2015, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at the [HHS campus](#)