

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
October 20, 2015
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: November 17, 2015, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. [HHS campus](#)

Attendees:

Steering Committee – Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); Alexandra Danino (SF/Marin Food Bank); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Reba Meigs (HHS)

Committee Members – Becky Gershon (SF/Marin Food Bank); Casey Poldino (Zero Waste Marin); Cío Hernández (HHS); Kiely Hosmon (YLI); Lauren Klein (UCCE Marin); Liza Crosse (Aide to Supervisor Kinsey); Lori Davis, (Sanzuma); Madeline Hope (West Marin Waste Education); Marv Zauderer (ExtraFood.org); Miguel Villarreal (Novato USD)

Guests – Angie Corwin (Community Alliance with Family Farmers); Joti Shephi Levi (GoNextGeneration.org and Novato Charter School Garden Educator); Janae Madsen (Pacific Union College); Judi Shils (Conscious Kitchen, TurningGreen.org); Katy Sheppard (Conscious Kitchen Garden Coordinator)

Claudia Zaugg (MPH student at UC Berkeley); Wendy Johnson (Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden); Judy Wetterer (Wareham Development), Greg Knell (San Rafael Board of Education); Shelley Flint (Sustainability Director and Garden Educator at San Domenico School)

Welcome & Council Representative Announcements – Janet Brown

- Celebrate the BOS approval of the MFPC Food Day resolution last Tuesday.

Garden to School Panel – Lauren Klein

With Angie Corwin - Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Judi Shils, Conscious Kitchen, Joti Shephi Levi - GoNextGeneration.org and Novato Charter School Garden Teacher, Katy Sheppard - Conscious Kitchen Garden Coordinator, Miguel Villarreal - Novato USD, and Lori Davis - Marin County Office of Education Wellness Coordinator, and Sanzuma.org

- Joti: Eco Educator at Dixie School District. Working on a unified curriculum for the district incorporating food as much as possible. Summer pilot program this past summer: working in 5 school gardens to maintain them over the summer with a couple students from Redwood High School's Sustainability Program; this meant that when school started there was food in the garden.
- Angie: Farm to School Coordinator for CAFF, runs Harvest of the Month. Purchases local sustainably grown produce directly from local farmers (Sonoma County and out), package with educational materials, and deliver throughout the county. Last month she delivered 192 tasting kits. Program is designed to lead into curriculum and educate our future consumers on nutrition, farming, sustainability issues, etc. Should this program come to Marin County?

- Lori: Wellness Coordinator for Marin County schools. 5 schools in Novato and San Rafael have been chosen this year for an assessment of the health of the school and community. This informs a plan on how to make the school a healthier place; school gardens are often part of the answer.
- Miguel: National Farm to School Advisory Board. Looking for school gardens to be sustainable year-round. Believes that the breakfast program could be a source of funding for school gardens. About \$500,000 more federal dollars could be coming in if all eligible kids ate breakfast, and the food from the school gardens could help sustain the school nutrition programs as well. So far 1 school in Novato USD has started the breakfast program so that all kids go through the breakfast line.
- Katy: Middle school teacher who had started a school garden at her school. Met the ED of Project Eat, inspired by the community 3 school districts of school garden coordination. Funded with a \$4 million operating budget, with the hope that garden champions would take it over. It worked well when they paid well; funding got slashed 3 years ago and the program diminished drastically. Getting sustainable funding is crucial. Through Conscious Kitchen, she is in daily conversation with the kitchen and the students are involved in every part of the process, the ultimate goal.
- Judi: Conscious Kitchen. Ran Eco Top Chef the past 5 years; prepare a Fresh, Local,,Organic, Seasonal, Non-GMO menu for \$2.25/head. Secret ingredient: put a chef in a kitchen and see what would happen. The amount of waste at a school under the average food program is phenomenal. Pilot program at Bayside MLK did a pilot program for 5 days: set the tables with cloths and flowers, chefs made beautiful food that fit the budget, there was zero waste because kids ate everything, teachers joined in and ate with the kids in conversation over good food, building community. After that week, she returned to the superintendant turned over the food program to Conscious Kitchen. No obstacles because there were intentional leaders (superintendent, principal, vice principal). Opened at Willow Creek Academy to become the first all organic school district. At the end of the day it's all about crunching numbers. USDA still does a full reimbursement for all the kids in the school, and they don't buy commodities at all. Hosting a meeting on November 5th at Cavallo Point in Sausalito with the County Office of Education and heads of private schools as well to share ideas and address individual situations to increase the chance of replication.
- Gilo Rodriguez (Lauren): teaches the kids in Spanish and English at West Marin Elementary in Pt. Reyes, all of the garden's food goes to the students' meals.
- Next Steps for MFPC through February – how could MFPC help you? What should go into the MFPC report in February? Countywide vision? Cross-county partnerships? Policy barriers?
 - o Mandate education, mandatory school wellness policies and/or curriculum.
 - o Education of the families is crucial (re: nutrition education) – parent liaisons at school learning about nutrition and wellness and bringing in parents.
 - o FLOSN food – proven that it's affordable.
 - o Educate local organizations to increase awareness; gardens can be built and funded by local orgs looking for opportunities to enhance their communities.
 - o MFPC can get the success stories out to inspire and guide those that don't see the way.
 - o Also need to bridge teachers' needs for curriculum and standards. There is a lot of science-based core curriculum out there... Check out LifeLab and Edible Schoolyard. There are still gaps in covering core standards, which doesn't relieve

stress on teachers, plus it's easier to get funding if you cover standards. A binder of curriculum increases the chances that it will live on beyond a particular garden champion. Standardized tests drive curriculum; get questions on health and wellness and gardens on the standardized tests and then schools will teach it. Some work has happened on health education standards 4 years ago, but it hasn't really been rolled out in schools much.

- How could we coordinate all of these programs so that we are working as a more unified whole? Index of schools in Marin and what they have going on, a comprehensive list of the resources there are out there. An advisory board of folks doing similar work to remember all the good work that is happening*. It is tricky here because there are 18 school districts in the county, and then the private schools – we need an operations manager, people to help coordinate, and a facility to host things.
- Change Standardized tests to incorporate science-based garden education in the testing

CA Food Policy Council Report – Reba Meigs

- Policy Update from the statewide meeting in Sacramento. AB1321: Market Match program passed. USDA federal program of EBT dollar matches. Will make it more feasible that farmers markets across the county can offer market match. Soda tax: interest in pushing legislation on soda taxes. The soda tax in Mexico has decreased soda consumption and increased water consumption. If a soda tax is passed, they are looking at the money coming from the Farm to Fork office through CDFA. AB515: increase the variety of foods produced by farmers that would get a tax credit if donated to food banks. This bill didn't pass, but folks are brainstorming other related work. In general: CA Dept of Public Health is interested in food policy councils, there is interest and commitment in finding ways to fund councils and make them more impactful in the future. MFPC is unique in our structure; a lot of other councils feel they lack support from their BOS and county Health Depts. Many remarked on how helpful the MFPC general plan language has been for other councils across the state.

Equitable Access Report – Julia Van Soelen Kim and Becky Gershon

- Celebrate BOS presentation on 10/13 and next steps.

To be ready by February with meatier work of a real strategic plan with prioritized items for action and funding, we need to hustle. Keep meeting with individual supervisors, identify our priorities, drill down with departments and entities of implementation to get a sense of feasibility and what it will take. We need to be specific in our February asks of the BOS. We need to winnow out what to do, and figure out who is responsible for what. Next Equitable Access working group meeting: id priorities, then meet with departments, then work with supervisors. What we'll do, how, who, and at what cost.

1. Regroup EA work group **before the November MFPC meeting?
2. Meet with departments
3. Strategic Plan
4. Meet with Supervisors
5. Budget process

- Calendar of what's next

NOVEMBER: first draft of report due on Nov. 17 MFPC meeting – also begin production theme
DECEMBER: 3-department meeting; final draft of report due; Dec. 15 to be a working meeting

JANUARY: meet with supervisors; identify prioritized budget requests by January 19 meeting
FEBRUARY: present to the BOS (or push to March if necessary)

Do we want to formalize our membership structure?

More formalized structure may incentivize attendance. We are moving from a council that exchanges ideas and networks to a council that gets work done on a particular agenda. When there is outside homework to be done, a more formalized structure is helpful. Interim suggestion: email the Council to let us know if they do or don't want to be listed as a member.

Timely opportunity: write a letter to MMWD stating that water rates are significant barriers to community-based agriculture, asking for a reduced rate for food production. Janet, Lauren, and Steve to write this. And follow up with a thank you letter.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Tuesday October 20 from 6 – 8 pm: Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative's celebration of work to support family farms, increase access to local healthy good, and advocate for sustainable food policy, "Spirit of the Harvest."
- Thursday October 22 from 9am – 12pm: Marin Communications Forum discussion on Health Equity in Marin
- Thursday October 22: Dine and Donate to benefit Davidson Middle School Garden Program at Vin Antico in San Rafael.
- Saturday October 24 is Food Day – social media, Op Ed pieces, celebrate and thank the BOS **examples of Marv's Op Ed piece in the IJ tying in Equitable Access to ExtraFood.org and their mission, and Steve's inclusion of MFPC to his organization's fundraiser**
- December 3 at the Throckmorton Theater in Mill Valley Annual Benefit Concert for ExtraFood.org

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 5:05 p.m.

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