

MFPC NOTES

MFPC mtg: 8-16-16

Attendees: Steering Committee members: Lori Davis, Alexandra Danino, Julia Van Soelen Kim, Steve Schwartz, Reba Meigs, Becky Gershon, Lauren Klein

Members: Gueidi Beltran HHS/WIC; Madeleine Hope, Anjurle Duchaussee, HHS Public Benefits; Sheila Kopf SF Marin Food Bank; Casey Poldino, Zero Waste Marin; Elaini Negussie HHS; June Farmer, Marin City CX3, Marv Zauderer, Extra Food.org.

Guests: Andy Olson, Tyler and Armen, Olson Farms; Shasta Phillips and Dan Carney, MMWD; Teresa Fogolini, North Bay Children's Center

Welcome and Council Announcements:

- Steve S: Cal FPC update (he had to leave early)
- Sheila: SF/Marin Food Bank: Novato High school's food pantry is starting as soon as possible, providing food pantry access at 3 different schools. Typical pantries are farmers market style for parents, students or both. Run by volunteers. San Rafael High food pantry. Entered into a contract with Novato Unified.
- Reba M: Food Resource Guide is about to be released. **Action Item: Send edits to Katherine at HHS by Sept 1st. KKielich@marincounty.org.**
- Casey P: Zero Waste School Program has launched in several schools.
- Farmer Andy Olson is on Berkeley Food Policy Council, and is here to speak on Farmers Row Crop panel today – Brought two of his temporary farm assistants - WWOOFers (<http://www.woof.net>)

Council Business:

Julia VSK: Prospective Membership call. No new membership presentations.

Production Panel: Increasing Farm to Institution Production in Marin County

(Row Crops)

Lori Davis facilitating: Andy Olson of Olson Farms. Janet Brown did not come.

- Lori: Organizing food farmers for Farm to School buying co-op
- Andy Olson: He has 7 acre fruit and vegetable at 2 farms in Sonoma and Marin County, Chileno Valley (one of them is 25-40 miles away). Year-round production. Kale, cucumbers, beets, watermelons, parsley, vegs,

zucchini, tomato, herbs, greens, cabbage, some fruit trees, 250 chickens for eggs. His customers: a resto in SF, He rents his land. Also sells to Cheeseboard Pizza, Berkeley and student run farm to student at UC Berkeley. Grows custom crops for them. Primary relationships with kitchen managers. He delivers to SF and Berkeley himself. Can deliver to Marin schools. Lots of quality control, pick to order, completely organic but not certified, pays attention to food safety. Went to UCB 2006-2010. His UCB Ag cohort is all doing tech work! Lots of farmers have other farms outside the area. Lori: Do you have school food service contracts? He can't cut his produce up --Baby carrots, for example. He has no kitchen for processing. He likes to sell produce that can be used with minimal processing. Working with Lori to try to contract with San Rafael City School district. Not sure what the quantities are yet, what they need. Matching organic wholesale prices. Has a CSA in North Oakland.

- Dan C: How do you schedule your irrigation? Eleven miles of rows on drip tape, moving it around. Pays for sewage treatment also - Using city water in Penngrove but paying an Ag rate. Water management is \$1500/month. Gophers are a problem. Not much of property on timers. Chileno farm is on a well. Built a pond and French drain with pump. Following a large chunk of land on Marin farm. He can buy more water on East Bay farm. Water use records go to the sewage agencies.
- Lori: central kitchen at SR High? Andy can deliver there. He has excess produce often. Crop Mobster, EztraFood.org, SF/Marin Food Bank was recommended to him for gleaning.
- He's trying to get a farm stand going on Petaluma Hill Road. He's functioning on a 'grow it and they will come' philosophy. Tries to grow mostly 'storage crops' only because he has limited refrigeration capacity. No refrigerated truck. He's banking on butternut squash because it can keep through winter without refrigeration. Wants to renovate shipping containers for storage. Suggestion: Oakland Ship Yard often has them inexpensively or slightly damaged. Would need a welder.
- Needs orders months ahead of time-- Miguel and Rita have given year-round menus and calendars that identify the materials needed for salad bars.
- Nutrition Education and Zero Waste school program will be in partnership to deal with organic waste.
- "Kids that grow food, eat what they grow"-June Farmer.
- He lives in Berkeley. Arman and Tyler are WWOOFers. Does he have institutional food service connections. He needs to know what you want, and how much. Lori is only focusing on Salad Bars. What can he grow well? Not lettuce- Lettuces are difficult because they can get slugs, diseases and need storage.

- He does not do 'grow contracts' because his production can be unstable. CAFF not bound by law if there is a natural disaster.
- **NEXT STEPS:** Andy would love to know months ahead of time the basic interest of local wholesale buyers such as school districts – will they want beets, if so what kind and when? Good faith effort on both sides with clear communication, “If I have the product and its good quality, I want to know you’re going to buy it from me.”

Community and School Garden Update:

Lauren Klein, UCCE; Shasta Phillips and Dan Carney, Marin Municipal Water District.

- Community Gardens (neighborhood, school, institutional, etc) have grown from 86 to 120 gardens between 2009 and present, and there are still some waitlists but situation is better, as are summer management of school gardens. Since 2014, have worked on municipal policy around creating community gardens (incs all kinds of gardens including school gardens), a map showing gardens in the county and potential sites, and gatherings of Garden Coordinators to share best practices and technical information. Good 'Garden-to-Cafeteria' Marin IJ article on 8/8/16.

Lauren's new contract is between UCCE Marin and MMWD to focus on water efficiency in community gardens in Marin Municipal Water District's service area as a 1-year pilot program (August-September). MFPC has had water use in urban/suburban food production on their radar for some time, including the MFPC 11/30/15 letter written to the MMWD Board requesting attention to water rates as a impediment to more easily creating community gardens. Water use research was done in the Bay Area, and to some extent, nationally. In the new contract year, 30 gardens will be evaluated and water budgets developed, with the possibility of MMWD installing sub-meters. To begin, garden criteria are being developed with timeline for evaluations. Soil health, low-income communities, sub-metering, water savings, success capacity, among other criteria will be considered. Additional technical support and the possibility of other minor improvements may be available in this program depending on needs. Friendly water use 'report cards' will be posted. Water work in gardens will allow MMWD to go to school boards and speak about savings. The program will be given at no cost to the garden.

Equitable Access Report:

- **Save the Date:** Marin Communications Forum event on Thursday, September 1st on Hunger and Food Insecurity in Marin. MFPC will be presenting, along with many member organizations.
- **Save the Date:** Equity Summit – Nov 9th tour, 10th conference.
MFPC has been invited to participate and lead a focus area on Equitable Food Access.
Becky: Organizational committee to meet in one month, in addition to a 2 week call-in meeting.
- Reba: Sugar Sweetened Beverage (SSB) work – In the HHS mandate particularly because of childhood obesity epidemic. Does MFPC want to take a role in this work? What level of leadership in this effort? SSB distribution fee imposed on distributors. They have a choice to pass along.
- Dan C: What would the money go to? If we can give them a framework then it could go to school gardens, universal preschools, other good uses for the public funds.
- Report is largely published and work continues to charge forward
- Madeleine H: She is involved with Marin Human Rights Commission -- may be a good partner in this work.

Other ACTION ITEMS:

- Bonnie/UCCE to put Dan Carney and Shasta Phillips on the MFPC email list.

Closing. 5:00pm.