

Marin Food Policy Council  
Meeting Notes  
September 17, 2019  
HHS Wellness Campus, 3240 Kerner Blvd, San Rafael

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 15, 2019, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the HHS campus, Room 110**

**Attendance:**

**\* = Voting members**

X	Alexandra Danino, SF-Marine Food Bank*	X	Madeline Hope, West Marin Waste Education*
X	Bonnie Nielsen, UCCE		Marv Zauderer, ExtraFood.org
	Bonny White, West Marin Com Services*		Melanie Raquel, Marin Housing Authority
X	Bruce Richard, Envi. Forum of Marin	X	Paula Freeman, Covia
	Casey Poldino, Zero Waste Marin*	X	Reba Meigs, HHS Public Health*
	Cathryn Couch, CERES	X	Steve Schwartz, Interfaith Sus Food Collaborative*
X	Elaini Negussie, HHS Nutrition Wellness	X	Susan Lopes, Mill Valley Chamber of Commerce
X	Felicia Chavez, Systems Thinking Marin		<i>Guests:</i>
	Gueidi Beltran, WIC*	X	Alex Porteshawver, DrawDown: Marin
	Heather Bettini, CAM	X	Guadalupe Gallegos, Interfaith Sus Food Collaborative
	Janet Brown, AllStar Organics	X	Kath Delaney, SF-Marine Food Bank
X	Julia Van Soelen Kim, UCCE*	X	Kim Rago, Environmental Forum of Marin
	June Farmer, Marin City CX3*	X	Marchon Tatmon, SF-Marine Food Bank
X	Kathy Carver, ExtraFood.org*	X	Marisa Coyne, UC Master Gardeners pgm coordinator
X	Kathy Koblick, HHS Public Health	X	Meg Davidson, SF-Marine Food Bank
X	Lauren Klein, Comm. & School Gardens	X	Rob Bennaton, UCCE Alameda County
X	Liana Orlandi, Ag. Institute of Marin*	X	Roxy Yekta, HHS Nutrition Wellness Program
	Lorenzo Cordova, BOS*	X	Sabine Dabady, UCCE Alameda County
X	Lori Davis, Sanzuma*	X	Sarah Estes-Smith, Aide to Supervisor Kate Sears
	Madelene McCann, Marin Child Care Council	X	Wendy Tobiasson, citizen

**Welcome and Announcements – Julia Van Soelen Kim**

- Alex: Local Food and Foodwaste Stakeholder collaborative, aimed to design local solutions to climate change, see Alex with questions
- Reba: Friday is youth led climate march in SF, Mill Valley, San Rafael, and Novato
- Steve: three Americorps VISTA positions in Sebastopol. Full time yearlong positions working with Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative. Contact Steve at: [Steve@interfaithfood.org](mailto:Steve@interfaithfood.org) or (707) 634-4672 if interested, or apply online at: <http://bit.ly/ISFC-VISTA-2019>. Apply asap; interviews scheduled 9/10/19 – 10/11/19.

**Council Business – Julia Van Soelen Kim**

Senior Garden Tour recap

- Highlights: residents mentioned their food bank and ExtraFood.org deliveries, excited about that access to food; older adults were very proud of their gardens and the work they put into them – its more than just the food (experience of being outside and sense of accomplishment); appreciated focus of creating greater accessibility and inclusiveness.

## Policy Updates – Steve Schwartz

### CAFFN Update:

- Senator McGuire (champion on food access work recognized statewide) invited to speak to CFFN, meeting at MCF on Friday 10/11 @ noon, contact Steve if interested in attending.
- Of CFFN's 20 bills, 3 made it through legislative process, all 3 on governor's desk, we have a week to send letters of support:
  - AB 614: tax credit for people who donate to food banks – **Vote to support: approved.**
  - AB 842: guarantee all public students have access to nutritious meals (targeting kids who have gotten CalFresh) – **Vote to support: approved.**
- Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act (Farm to School and Kids Eat Local Acts); want Congressman Huffman to sign on these.
- Older Americans Act reauthorization happening now as well, crucial to the funding we get for seniors in Marin; MFPC can take a stand on this issue next meeting
- Master Plan on Aging this Friday: opportunity for senior aid
- Proposed rule change for SNAP benefits (revision of categorical eligibility for children): 3.1 million SNAP recipients. Marin BOS already submitted substantive public comment in opposition. One week left to comment (9/23 is the deadline). **Vote to oppose: approved.**

### Climate Change and the Food System Panel – Rebekah Weber, CCOF; Kathy Carver, ExtraFood.org; and David Lewis, UC Cooperative Extension, Marin

*Objectives: learn new research, understand impact on local food system, and identify local efforts to mitigate impact.*

#### Intro – Felicia Chavez

- Ecoliteracy.org guide – 3 sections/modules: How Climate Change Affects our Food Systems, How our Food Systems Affects Climate Change, Promising Strategies to Address CC. Interactive, multimedia, engaging, lots of details and specifics, as well as further resources. Center For Ecoliteracy founded by Fritjof Capra. How to develop ecoliteracy in kids in schools.

#### Rebekah Weber, CCOF, Policy Director ([presentation](#))

- Text How Organic Ag relates with Climate Change. CA Certified Organic Farmers. Largest certifier in North America. Organic definition: follow federal standards and use holistic practices to promote balanced ecosystems. Federal program with regulations, rules and standards that come along with inspection and regulation.
- Organic practices are intended to build healthy soils (as well as many other goals), which is important in relation to climate change.
- Some regulations/standards: land has not had synthetic pesticide or other prohibited materials for 3 years; must maintain or improve soil organic matter; must implement tillage practices that minimize erosion; must implement crop rotation that aid pest management, improve soil organic matter, and provide erosion control; must graze ruminant animals on pasture for at least 120 days a year.
- Healthy soils are the link between organic farming and its importance as a mitigator of climate change – why? The potential to store carbon: the process of storing carbon from the atmosphere into biomass and soils (carbon sequestration).
- CCOF conducted a literature review of over 300 peer reviewed scientific articles to understand what the science says about the benefits of organic farming. Report talks about: climate change, water and contamination, local economies, health benefits of

organic, and more.

- Climate Change science highlights: Rodale Institute long-term comparative study says soil organic carbon is increased 15-28 percent, UC Davis study confirms (14 times rate of carbon sequestration as conventional fields after 10 years). Results confirmed by global studies (similar across various ecosystems).
- Let's see organic as part of the solution and recognize it in our policies at the statewide level. Healthy Soils Program through CDFA – intention is to build healthy soils, provides incentives to farmers to take on healthy soils practices. Would like to expand the CDFA's Healthy Soils Program to include organic transition package. \*\*Opportunity to weigh in on the HSP on CDFA website (webinars next week).
- Stay tuned for a companion report with more policy recommendations from CCOF David Lewis, UC Cooperative Extension, Marin ([presentation](#) and handouts: [Climate Change Trends and Impacts on California Agriculture](#); and [Increasing Precipitation Volatility in Twenty-first Century California](#))
- What is UCCE? Cooperative Extension: relationship between CA land grant school and County of Marin. Land grant: fed govt allocated land to each state to provide practical and technical info to the general public. Partnership and collaboration with UC and local specialists in 3 areas: ag, natural, and human resources. Ex: national park service and ranchers, urban ag and food systems, urban and rural forest health... assigned in counties based on local needs. 100 years old in Marin next year.
- Marin County Ag and Climate Change: Marin Climate Action Plan and DrawDown: Marin – on the ground work. Background on Ag Portfolio for Marin: stats from 2018 Crop Report by Marin County Ag Dept.
- Stats: \$80-100 million gross in ag production in the past 2 decades... 160,000 acres in production, majority in livestock (highest use and most productive use). 35,000 in organic pasture. Nuts from central valley, leafy greens from central coast and Salinas valley. Our Food system is around the state.
- Dairy has been declining through time since 1940s, though still a large portion, has diversified within its production. Marin and Sonoma used to be the largest producers in the state. Diversification: majority of dairies are certified organic, as well as farmstead products produced right on farm from the farm's milk. Gross value for dairy has shrunk also because the price it gets has decreased.
- Livestock: increased, largely due to growth in small-scale poultry.
- Field crops (including hay and silage): more organic fields due to organic certification regulations and needs for organic feed and forage.
- Fruits, veg, grapes: small relative to other groups of products. Only 450 acres! A lot of acreage came out of ag production after WWII, drop from 400 to 150 acres. Organic farmers and ranchers brought it back to about where it was in 1940s. Happens with lease arrangements with larger property owners & ranchers.
- Aquaculture here is second largest in the state.
- CA is Mediterranean climate: cool wet winters and warm dry summers. Western facing parts of continents around 34 degrees latitude. All experiencing same climate change issues: annual precipitation volatility is increasing. Average rainfall is 52, but it bounces all over the place, and climate change increases this volatility – increase in very wet years and increase in very dry years. More pronounced and dramatic storms ('atmospheric rivers'). Where do storms come within the rainfall season? Can we capture the rain? Majority of

ranchers' water comes from rainfall, holding ponds, and diverting water from streams and rivers (not tap, and generally not wells). Therefore when there is no rain, there is no water for cows to drink.

- Marin and CA soils are highly variable, 3-5% organic matter in general. Every 1% increase of soil organic matter gets you about 1.5 backyard swimming pools of water stored in the soil, which extends your grass' growing season.
- 40-60% of what is grown on independent farms doesn't make it off the farm because it's the "wrong size" – depends on the product. Once the food leaves the farm there are more additional transportation etc. impacts; and accumulated climate impacts of wasting food once it's in a home are much higher than when it happens on-farm.
- National group: Association of Environmental Educators – for curriculum resources.

Kathy Carver, ExtraFood.org ([presentation](#))

- The food waste problem – the scale in US: 40% of all edible food is wasted in the US \$218 billion a year. Every day we throw away enough food to fill the Rose Bowl stadium (as well as all of the resources that go into producing it and getting it to our tables). 25% of our freshwater is used to produce food that is thrown away. Reducing food waste by 1/3 would meet the food needs of all food insecure people in the US.
- Food waste and climate change: 87% of global transportation contribution to global warming. Food rotting in landfills creates methane, which is worse for climate crisis than carbon dioxide. Global food waste (as a 'country') would rank third after US And China in global warming perpetrators. US food waste contributes the equivalent of 37 million cars.
- Global food waste patterns: more at the farm (production) level in developing countries, more at plate (consumption) level in developed countries. Meat wasted contributes to over 20% of carbon footprint of food waste (even though we waste very little).
- International DrawDown ranked solutions to climate change (food waste #3 but would rise to #2 or #1 if landfill methane production were included!
- AND as our population increases, our food waste increases.....
- DrawDown:Marin 6 focus areas: renewable energy, transportation, buildings and infrastructure, local food and food waste, carbon sequestration, and climate resilient communities.
- Reducing food waste is one of the EASIEST and QUICKEST solutions to have an impact on climate change as well as an opportunity to increase equitable access to healthy food for vulnerable communities.
- ExtraFood.org feels that food waste and hunger are solvable problems in Marin. First step: county-wide food recovery program (immediate delivery of food from any Marin organization, grocery store, hospital, school district, farmers market, etc. to any non-profit serving Marin's vulnerable populations). Do not hold onto or store food – transactions (with refrigerated trucks) happen within 30 minutes, and operate 365 days of the year. Pair donors and recipients with location in mind.
- In over 5+ years, they have rescued over 3 million pounds of food!
- Understanding expiration dates is an important part of the issue. Food doesn't expire, it slowly declines in quality.

## Q & A

- Localizing food systems: ExtraFood.org model is like an end emergency measure – what about further upstream? How could localizing food systems help to reduce food waste?

- Acreage of Marin ag stats can help us be realistic: Marin is dependent on other areas to round out our food system. Ideal is food gets produced where it can be. Marin does what it does best, and this largely produces animal protein. Marin Carbon Project and more organic is important. Also can support people growing food in their backyards. Global Footprint Network's footprint calculator is a good resource. The areas that are high producers in CA are more vulnerable to climate change. In CA only about 4% of ag land is in organic production – big room for improvement here. Also losing ag land to development pressure, which worsens climate change situation. Food Recovery orgs are working hard locally to feed vulnerable people.
- Dietary patterns: moving to plant-based diet can make a big difference.

### **Policy Updates**

Endorse Food Now Standards - Cathryn Couch

- Marin Food Now adopted Healthy Food and Beverage Guidelines for organizations (more fresh, more whole food, and limiting salt, sugar, and processed). Asking MFPC to endorse those guidelines. **Vote to support: approved.**

Approve sponsorship of Food Day Resolution - Reba Meigs

- MFPC to sponsor Food Day Resolution in October, can build off of above food guidelines, partner with HEAL to sponsor Food Day activities in communities. **Vote to support: approved.**

**Closing** – Julia Van Soelen Kim

**Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.**

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