



SLO County Food System Coalition Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2017, 4:00-6:00 PM

SLO Public Health Red Room, 2180 Johnson Ave., SLO

Attendees: Ellen Burke, Becca Carsel, Joel Diring, Linda Fraser, Kylie Hensley, Teresa Lees, Linda McClure, Jen Miller, Wendy Minarik, Dena Paolilli, Roxanne Sanders

Current Voting Members (8): (have attended at least 3 of the last 4 meetings) Nicki Anderson, Becca Carsel, Joel Diring, Linda Fraser, Kylie Hensley, Linda McClure, Jen Miller, Jeff Wade

I. Introductions & Announcements

- Ellen - Pop-Up Art Space in Paso Robles on February 3 & 4 (see flyer in newsletter)
- Roxanne & Jen - Food Bank's Ribbon Cutting & Open House on January 30 (see flyer in newsletter)

II. 2016 Recap

Outreach

- Booth at 2016 Earth Day

Policy - Jen & Kylie

- Policy Win: Farm to Food Bank tax credit (AB 515) - Jen
 - o The existing tax credit to encourage farmers to donate to food banks was set to expire at the end of 2016.
 - o The new version of the tax credit had bipartisan support at the end of 2015, but Governor Brown vetoed all tax credits.
 - o During 2016, advocates rallied to write the tax credit into the state budget, which is good for 5 years.
 - o At the last minute, the tax credit was taken off the Budget Subcommittee's agenda, but Senator Monning, who sat on the committee, got it back on the table at urging from Carl, Director of the SLO Food Bank.
 - o The new tax credit was written into the budget and increased to 15%, to help make donations to food banks financially viable for farmers.
 - o The food bank is currently working on farmer education about the tax credit.
- Policy Win: CalFood (AB 1577) - Jen
 - o This bill renamed State Emergency Food Assistance Program (SEFAP) as CalFood and provides \$2 million in the state budget for food banks to purchase locally grown produce. For example, the SLO County Food Bank used \$24,000 of this money to purchase local turkeys for Thanksgiving 2016.
- CA Food Policy Council - Kylie

- o Kylie represented the SLO FSC at the CA FPC statewide meeting in Sacramento in August 2016.
- o The CA FPC's original backbone organization, Roots of Change (ROC), lost its funding at the end of 2015. A volunteer steering committee has been working to restructure the CA FPC to operate without the admin, financial, and strategic support provided by ROC and is looking for a new fiscal sponsor.
- o VOTE ON CHANGES IN CA FPC OPERATING GUIDELINES - The CA FPC steering committee proposed changes to the group's guidelines to give the steering committee authority to "enter into strategic partnerships with mission-aligned organizations" on behalf of the CA FPC. We, the SLO FSC, **voted** to unanimously support these guideline changes at our 1/17/17 meeting.
- o The CA FPC released their [2016 Food & Agriculture Legislation Tracker](#) and added a [Legislator Scorecard](#) that shows how each legislator voted on the tracked bills. We have hard copies of these that we will bring to our meetings with legislators in 2017. (See 2017 goals below.)

Farm-to-School (F2S) - Teresa

- Reminder, the 4 F2S components are: school gardens, ag and nutrition education, procurement, and promotion.
- Goals met in 2016:
 - o Defined vision and mission statements
 - Vision: Every student and school community in San Luis Obispo County is engaged in a local food and farm culture that nourishes children's health, cultivates viable farm economies, and builds vibrant communities.
 - Mission: To bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to promote and support F2S activities.
 - o Established partnerships and monthly meetings to determine desired outcomes
 - o Created a database and set up leadership roles and responsibilities
 - o Success with produce broker Harvest Santa Barbara in supplying Cal Poly and Paso Robles USD Food Service with vegetables from local farmers
 - o Looked at various F2S surveys and models
 - o Presented at Community Advocacy meeting on 5/5/16 put on by the FSC
 - o Planned and hosted first F2S mixer on Nov. 15 with over 30 diverse stakeholders in attendance
- Other updates:
 - o Laurel, the new food service director for Lucia Mar is also the F2S rep for the central coast region
 - o Teresa and the work group have been using [liberating structures](#) at their meetings using a guide from Cal Poly.
 - o Growing support for CA Thursdays, a marketing campaign highlighting local produce and scratch cooking at schools.

CalFresh Alliance - Jen

- Raised awareness of SLO County's dismal participation rates (38% of eligible people in the county are enrolled, based on 2014 data) (2nd worst county in CA, which is 2nd worst state in the country).
- The work group invited DSS and partner agencies (e.g., Public Health, County Office of Education, CAPSLO, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, Cal Poly, Cuesta) to the conversation and formed the CalFresh Alliance, which meets regularly and is generating a lot of activity. The alliance is in the process of setting goals & planning.
- Hosted a webinar on July 19, 2016 with Kim McCoy Wade, Chief of the CalFresh Branch of the CA DSS, with over 20 stakeholders present to show support, including Board of Supervisor Bruce Gibson. This event created momentum towards increasing CalFresh enrollment rates.
- The SLO County DSS director retired, and the new director who started about 3 months ago, Devin Drake, was formerly the deputy director of DSS in Santa Barbara and was instrumental in forming and implementing their 3 year plan which increased enrollment rates by 16%.
- SLO DSS is offering trainings for CBO's about how to help people apply for CalFresh. The training dates are listed on the home page of the FSC website (slofoodsystem.org). There is an additional training at the Food Bank (1180 Kendall Road, SLO) on January 26 from 2-4pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.
- SLO DSS is piloting same day enrollment and coordinating application with schools.
- Jen thinks that SLO DSS has an RFP on the way to fund CBOs to do CalFresh outreach.

Food Hub/Economic Development for Small, Local Farmers - Ellen

- Realized that the idea of a physical food hub is not realistic or financially viable for our population density.
- Defined the goal of the working group as providing market opportunities for small local farmers, which is the main need that came out of the farmer interviews funded by the SLO Map grant.
- Connected with Harvest Santa Barbara (via Niko's contact).
- Started hosting Farmer-Buyer mixers about every 3 months at the Guild Hall (Niko is coordinating). The 2 mixers so far have been successful, although timing is a challenge for the different populations.

EBT at Farmers' Markets - Kylie

- Stephanie Teaford was chair of this work group, but she stepped down due to a change in her position with Cal Poly. Kylie will coordinate the group in 2017 as part of the CFP grant goals.
- Helped North County Farmers Market Association apply for and receive funding for Market Match (\$10 of EBT → \$20 to spend at farmers market to incentivize EBT recipients to shop at the farmers markets).
- Also coordinated with SLO Downtown Association.

III. 2017 Goals

Outreach

- Participate in 2017 Earth Day and have Kylie attend Farmers Guild meetings on behalf of the FSC.

Policy - Jen & Becca

- Stay connected with the CA FPC and attend statewide meetings.
- Meet with local government representatives. People who expressed interest in attending: Jen, Teresa, Roxanne, Kylie. **Email slofoodsystem@gmail.com if you would also like to attend meetings with our local legislative reps.**
- CA Assn. of Food Banks 2017 policy focus on food security issues
 - Food waste prevention and recovery funding
 - SSI cost of living increases funding
 - Disaster planning
 - Integrating FAFSA and CalFresh eligibility applications
 - CalFresh program improvements

look out for requests to sign onto letters of support

Farm-to-School (F2S) - Teresa

- Host the Growing Edible Education (GEE) Symposium in SLO County on October 6-7, 2017.
(See detailed list of brainstorming workshop ideas in the newsletter.)
 - Workshops, field trips, keynote speakers, farmers and other guest speakers
 - Sponsorships and scholarships
 - Marketing materials
 - Finding farmers
 - Strengthening community engagements in F2S
 - Strengthening Food Service Directors' participation in CA Thursdays and Smarter Lunchrooms
 - Strengthening school gardens and green school efforts to continue after the GEE Symposium

The GEE Symposium planning committee meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5pm upstairs at the UCCE offices, 2156 Sierra Way, SLO.

Email Teresa at treelees@charter.net if you would like to be involved in the GEE Symposium planning committee or know of any leads for workshops, speakers, farmers, etc.

CalFresh Alliance - Jen

- Create a 3 year plan like Santa Barbara's that the SLO DSS prioritizes and adopts internally.
- Work with COE on a check box for free/reduced lunch enrollment that allows DSS to process it as a CF application as well.
- Work to modernize CalFresh enrollment (e.g., updated application, call in with voice signatures).
- Invite the new DSS Director, Devin Drake, to a meet & greet with the CalFresh Alliance.

Economic Development for Small, Local Farmers - Ellen

- Continue hosting the farmer-buyer mixers.
- Continue coaching farmers to develop business plans.
- Develop a plan to increase purchasing of local food with a 10% pledge campaign (defining “local” as within SLO County) inspired by the [NC 10% Campaign](#) that Ellen heard about at a conference. She thinks she can use the SLO map funding that was meant to support a “food hub”. We brainstormed about ideas for this marketing campaign idea and about potential methods of creating, updating, and distributing a database of local food producers and farmers markets.

EBT at Farmers’ Markets - Kylie

- Reach out to Peter Jenke, the manager of the SLO Thursday night farmers market, to see if he is ready to apply for Market Match funding.
- Reach out to Kirstin McMaster with the Downtown Association, who is working to increase enrollment for Pell grant student recipients.
- Increase the number of farmers markets that accept EBT and the number of CalFresh recipients who shop at farmers markets.

CFP Grant - Joel

- Incorporate beneficiary surveys into the reporting for the new CFP grant.

IV. Closing

- We brainstormed ideas for new members and speakers for the 2017 quarterly meetings. If you have any ideas, bring them to our next meeting or email slofoodsystem@gmail.com.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 from 4-6pm at Copeland Health Education Pavilion, 1911 Johnson Avenue, SLO (3rd floor in the auditorium)