

Food Policy Council

3/10/15 Minutes

Presentation led by Janet Sklar

- Janet discusses locally grown foods available to schools (Potatoes, Corn, Cabbage, cabbage).
- Farm to School considers "Local Foods" as foods produced in New York and states geographically adjacent to NY.
- "As Fresh as fresh can be" - products go from farm to school within 24-48 hours.
- One of the side benefits of selling local produce to schools is the educational opportunities as students are encouraged to learn about healthy foods, and food safety.
- Janet stated that Diane Schulman (couldn't make it) hopes someday 50% of produce will be grown locally.
- GAP stands for "Good Agriculture Practices"
- Some small food growers are exempt from "GAP" (for now).
- Augie discusses who is mandated to be in compliance with "GAP".
- Joel points out that most large-scale food retailers have higher standards than the "GAP" standards.
- Janet discusses the Interdisciplinary approach to nutrition.
 - It can be taught in math, science, history, physical education.
- Child Nutrition Programs are self-sustaining. Paid in part for by tariffs on imports.
 - Money that comes into school lunch program pays to sustain the program (salary, food, equipment).
- Federal Government gives \$3.04 in reimbursement per child to school districts. The state government only gives an additional \$0.06 per meal.
- "Most people are two paychecks away from being homeless themselves"-Janet
- There are 128 school districts on Long Island.
- Presently there is a disparity between students that are eligible and those that are actually utilizing the program.
- Participating schools have to offer both breakfast and lunch to students.
- School districts are allowed to keep \$300,000 in the bank as reserve. NYS carefully monitors school districts to ensure that they don't become a profit generating entity.
- Local grown foods come from the distribution center on Long Island.
- District pays for the retirement benefits of food workers. This has created perverse incentives to outsource food service in schools.
- It's time for "Universal Feeding"-Janet
 - Universal Feeding" is the concept that meals should be free for all students.

Vacancies

- Augie discusses recommendations for vacancies
- There never has been a food retailer representative.
- Recommendation to replace "Regional Planning Council" position with someone from the "Seafood Industry".
 - Augie thinks he might be able to get someone from shellfishing/aquaculture.
- Augie Discusses candidates for the Food Processor Position
- Recommendation to have Nikki Kateman (RWDSU/UFCW Local 338) replace John Woods.

- Augie mentions that there is a need for someone from a Local Community Group.
 - Zahrine suggested Jennifer Capezza from the Health & Wellness Council.
- Recommendation to have Janet Sklar fill the School Administration vacancy.

New Mission Statement

- Augie calls for a vote to adopt the new mission statement.
 - Michael Haynes (Long Island Cares) makes a motion, Zahrine (Cornell Cooperative Extension) seconds the motion
 - All voted in favor of adopting the new mission statement.

2014 Food Policy Council Report

- Motion by Greg Pigott (SCDHS), second by Vivian Vilorio Fisher
- All voted in favor of accepting and approving the End of Year Report.

Updates

Community Gardens Sub-Committee

- Iman gave an update of the Community Gardens Sub-Committee and announced a Seed Starting Workshop.
- Food Equity Committee had a conference call to identify priorities for the year.

Food Equity Committee

- Standardization of data for food waste and composting.
- Food Tasting demonstrations at Farmers Markets
- Abdul's WIC application did get approved.
- Food Equity Committee has a recipe tasting planned for the spring.

Why Buy Local Committee Update

- Augie had a meeting with Governor Cuomo's office and he announced they are looking to open up a "Taste New York"/agriculture visitor's center adjacent to the Suffolk County Farm in Yaphank.
- Local industry is under branded and greater awareness is needed.
- Signage will be a big part of promotion. This will be the first Taste New York site that will be built from the ground up rather than occupying an existing building.
- Augie said he has advocated for WiFi at the site and an electronic information kiosk.
- Vision includes picnic tables/outdoor areas.
- Proposed site has visibility from the LIE. CCE will assist with staffing the facility.
- State wants to start breaking ground in a couple of months and open in April of 2016 (tentative).

Other Announcements

- Robin (Cornell Cooperative Extension) announced their spring garden school will be in Brentwood on Saturday, April 11 and on the east end on Saturday, April 18 (2/3rd of the workshops relate to growing food).
- More information can be found on: ccesuffolk.org
- Cornell will also be offering a course this summer called "Framework for Gardening".

Meeting adjourned at 10:42AM.