

Health, Wellness, Hunger and Food Access Subcommittee
of the NC Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council
Friday, June 1, 2012 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
4300 Reedy Creek Road, Raleigh NC 27607.

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Diane Beth, Kristen Baughman, Melissa Cunningham, Barb Listenfelt, Arnie Pancaldo, Jennifer Erasquin, Audrey Edmisten, Katie Harr, Dr. Alice Ammerman, Stephanie Jilcott, Freda Butner, Veronica Bryant, Lucia Leone, Earline Middleton, Margaret Gifford, Tes Thraves, Lynn Harvey, Linden Thayer, Michelle Futrell

Note taker(s): Kristen Baughman; Melissa Cunningham

Purpose of this group

This group is a merger of the Farm to Fork committee and HWHFA subcommittee. Our legislatively appointed committee is small but we wanted broader representation so we merged. Technically only the 4 appointed committee members can vote: Dr. Gerald (Diane can sit in for her), Alice, Earline and Lynn.

Updates from members

- Diane followed up with Kristi Nixon of DENR and discussed salad bars in school. Kristi addressed her staff during their regional environmental health staff meeting; no one was aware of concerns. She agreed to discuss the issue again during their regional quarterly meeting. She will poll the staff again to make sure there aren't any issues. (Reminder: we were told there were environmental health inspectors who were not allowing salad bars in schools, but there is nothing in NC law that prohibits salad bars.)
- Sustainable Foods NC – an Agricultural Coalition – Tes is on it. Looking at ways to leverage connections to move policy forward to facilitate sustainable food in the state. Have people from Nicholas school at Duke and law students. Seems relevant to this group. We should build on some of their initiatives. They've compiled a document of policy issues around food justice; may be good to give us some ideas. Alice will sort through it and pull out some things that would be useful to the group. Could this be tied into a local government toolkit that PAN is developing?

SNAP Ed updates from Veronica

- The SNAP Ed Advisory Committee has met several times. Who is a part of the advisory committee?
- Funding
 - o The HFHK Act changed the funding structure; USDA allocates the amount we receive.
 - o Funding for 2014 will be based on 2009 national SNAP Ed funding and our participation rate.

- USDA has said that since the economy is getting better we should not anticipate an increase based on participation rate. When the calculation is done there may not be an increase. Right now they are anticipating a 1%-1.5% increase based on cost of living, but NC has not actually received any information on that funding.
- Right now, DSS is going off the FY2012 funding rate with 1.5% increase. Won't know the true amount until the end of July.
- We can no longer apply for funding. Used to be able to apply for whatever we wanted if we had match for it. It is now like a grant process and they allocate to us what they see fit. As of right now our funding is based on an allocated amount. That will change in 2014. Then it will be 10% based on participation rate and 90% based on previous funding, 50/50 computation by 2015. Knowing funding will be tied to participation rate we are trying to increase participation of all eligible.
- You can apply for outreach funding separately, but need a 50% match. Must be different staff than the ones doing education. Purpose is to increase those participating in SNAP/EBT, not to educate.
- Implementing agencies are trying to find creative ways to increase SNAP Ed participation, particularly among adults. Trying to get them to do things a little differently. Want to keep the presence in schools, but need to target more adults. Implementing agencies have started to talk more with DSS offices to target more adults.
- The state has 6 implementing agencies, which cover about 70 counties. (NC State, NC Coop Ext, UNC-G, UNC-CH, Durham, The Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education).

Is it possible to increase the number of implementing agencies?

- To increase the number of implementing agencies we would need additional funding. DSS plans to look at the carryover funds (from the past 2-3 years) from current implementing agencies and then reassess. They may have to restructure if agencies consistently have carryover funds. Then they may bring on other agencies. However, they are still not sure if that could be a potential source of funding for new agencies. If no one has carry over funds then we are in the same position.
- Given the shift to adults, would it make sense to see if other agencies are better suited to reach the target population? To increase implementing agencies funding would have to increase. If they got a significant amount of money they would open up the process to bring on more implementing agencies. Especially if there are agencies who are serving adults.
- Need to be positioned if more money does come about from increased participation. But right now they are just trying to maintain the implementing agencies they have now. The more implementing agencies we have they have to be able to fund the staff and materials to implement their program.
- If there is an increase in funding we should think about which agencies will be well suited to apply and that will serve the council.
- Sequestration – provision in the federal law, there could be a funding reversion to base level rates if the government does not act. All federal funds will be affected, including

Food stamps funds. The government will have to act to make a congressional amendment to ensure funding priorities are fulfilled or it will go back to late 80s funding. CNP are entitled so they will not be affected but they rely on SNAP data for enrollment and they will be affected if SNAP is. People are creating plan B's just in case. So what would that do to SNAP Ed? Veronica's USDA contact said they don't anticipate funding cuts

- Block granting has only been seen in the Farm Bill. Recent conversations with USDA have told Veronica to move forward with what she has and are not anticipating cuts.
- What can this group do to get people signed up for SNAP? We can request the amount we want for outreach to increase participation. Currently have 4 outreach providers that are contracted with DSS. This is anticipated to increase to 8 or 9. The money is there to request. Examples of outreach include: providing FNS information to individuals who are potentially eligible so they can make a decision to apply; provide info to actually help them fill out the application and get verification; provide a workshop on how to use your benefits. Have to be very careful that they are not providing education.

Outreach Funding, EBT and Farmers' Markets (FM)

- Could a FM apply for outreach funding? Remember it's a 50/50 reimbursement, so need match. DSS is in the process of reaching out to farmers' markets to assist them with EBT.
- EBT and FM
 - o USDA awarded funds to all states to assist FM who do not have authorization on or before Nov 18 2011. DSS can assist them, but they have to be a structured FM with a manager. The funds will be used to purchase EBT machines, pay wireless connection fees, and pay for monthly maintenance fee. Have to apply for authorization their own. Collaborating with marketing division of NC Dept of Ag and other agencies they have contracts with. Also working with Regional USDA office to help FM gain EBT access. If they are a full time FM and did not have access before 11.18.11 have them contact Veronica. Veronica is also talking with Kevin Hardison and Mr. Thompson. EBT contractors will do necessary paperwork to get FM access. An EBT contractor is Efunds.
 - o The current funds for free wireless are for multi venders.
 - o Funds will provide for machine that does EBT/Debit and funds can be used for farmers that want EBT/credit. The funds cannot be used for tokens, just equipment and wireless access.
 - o Money for single venders is a different pot; they can provide the equipment.
 - o The machines are \$1000. Not sure what the connection fee is. The monthly fee is about \$45. FM will have to pay their own transaction fee – 15 cents per transaction, about \$25/month.
 - o Efunds does have an option to provide machines that do all 3 EBT/Credit/Debit
- The group can assist in getting FM-multi venders interested. Need help with outreach and helping them get authorization.
- What are the criteria that a market is ready and accountable?

- Outreach materials will describe responsibilities that are expected for those they will support so that they are aware and to determine if they have the manpower to do the admin side of it. Who is helping with that? DSS is working with USDA. Also info online, the info is there for them to access to learn what it takes.
- Perhaps Veronica with the help of state partners could host a webinar to get info out. She has received some info that needs to do out in email. Waiting for more info from contractors then will draft email that will go out to FM.
- Too early to send anything to listservs. Veronica is still waiting for info. She has some farmers that are ready to go. Just need to contract piece which is not in place yet.

SLFAC Recommendations

- Local foods assessment recommendation, can we tie in with what Debbie is doing?
- Rec #9. School Gardens- Diane will ask Ben to write up something on what they've done and where we're at so that we can decide whether to continue this recommendation for next year.
- Should we address early child care? Endorse obesity task force recommendations.
- Endorse study bill for lunch time.
- Rec #12. BCBS Foundation made a huge donation, 1.5 mil for capacity building; they bought food trucks. This does not effect the school's capacity to store and prep. Collaborate with food processing centers around the state? The new trucks could get the food to the facilities. Type this up as a recommendation – minimally processed foods could be done at food processing centers. Golden LEAF has funding for equipment as a subsection. Assemble what is currently available. Maybe we should compare this with the obesity task force since they recommended something similar. Our rec could reference or match their recs. Pilot for public/private partnership in value added processing center – Earline will take the lead for drafting this.

Discussing Marketing at Next Meeting

- During our next subcommittee meeting, Kristen has made the request that the committee focuses on discussing marketing local foods in terms of health.
- Freda is working on a new project of marketing local foods in hospitals and it has a health component. Tes also has a group working on marketing.
- Marketing to lower income consumers about local foods could include info about cost.
- Use specialty crop grants? –put in the recommendations that our Subcommittee work with NCDA&CS
- Tes will get a copy of the grant, food-corp partner in Oregon

School Lunches

- Support study bill about school lunch times- this is a concern. Will take longer now that we have more food on the children's tray. Minimum is a cup of fruits/veggies each.
- House bill 503- parents right to decline recommendations, vending is gone, school lunch boxes choice.

- Kristen will talk to Joy about what our group can do about this bill. If there are hot issues we might want to ask for some approval of urgent recommendations at the next Council meeting.

Next Full Council Meeting Scheduled: July 26, 2012 1pm to 4pm

Location: Martin Building, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh

Action Items:

- **Kristen:** Add what Maureen sent to the last meeting's minutes; send out link about specialty crop grants to the subcommittee. Will talk to Joy about House Bill 503.
- **Veronica:** send one pager on SNAP Ed and one pager on Outreach Funding; draft blurb about FM and EBT that can be sent out to the subcommittee and their listservs.
- **Diane:** assist Veronica in setting up a webinar – involve Freda and Kevin; ask Ben to write up something on what they've done regarding Recommendation # 9 (school gardens and leafy greens research) so we can decide whether to continue with this recommendation for next year. Diane also has a staff person that was working on a policy toolkit, she will find this and send along.
- **Alice:** will type up subcommittee's recommendations and send to Kristen. Will sort through the Sustainable Foods NC Coalition document and pull out some things that would be useful to the group. Also, get the HWHFA subcommittee together with SNAP Ed advisory committee.
- **Earline:** draft a blurb about piloting a public/private partnership in value added processing center for the schools.
- **Tes** will send Kristen a copy of the grant (food-corp partner in Oregon).