

Track #2: Farm to Folk: Positive Economic & Health Benefits of Communities  
Becoming Markets for Local Food

**Friday, October 28, 2016**

**Work Session #1: Track Introduction and Lay of the Land, 11:00-12:10**

42 participants for Work Session #1

11:00-11:40 Introductions

**Welcome** (Aubree)

Introduced herself as the Montana Farm to School Coordinator, track #2 co-organizer.

Purpose of Track #2 -highly participatory, exploring opportunities and challenges, looking at initiatives to solve problems, working together, engage through the whole process, limited talking *at* you. Take our local food systems to the next level.

Address issues such as increasing access to Montana-made foods and creating new opportunities in Montana markets for Montana producers and businesses

We are the “salad bowl” track, combines many different areas.

(Neva)- How do we as consumers play a role in the food system?

**Core Questions-** (Kaleena Miller)— will guide us today and tomorrow.

1. What innovative approaches are Montanans currently using to connect food, agriculture, health, and local economies?
2. What are the opportunities for further developing local/regional food markets within Montana? Are there particular needs and opportunities in communities not served well currently, such as Eastern Montana, rural areas, tribes, and people of moderate to low income?
3. What are the barriers to further developing local/regional food markets and other provisioning systems in Montana?
4. What projects, programs, or policies (strategic priorities) can we identify that will help overcome existing barriers? What action steps need to be taken? By whom and when?

**Getting to know our track participants:**

(Introduced by Neva) **Speed Meeting:** 4 lines of people, two lines facing each other, answer the questions: Who you are? Where you work? Where you live? What are your hopes for our work within our track? Will spend 2 minutes in each group (1 minute/person) and then rotate one person. This is a working meeting, so this exercise is a way to get to know each other.

All 42 members of the track participated in this exercise for about 20 minutes.

**Introductions of Track #2 team:**

Neva Hassanein- Professor of environmental studies at UM

Rachel Levy- FoodCorps service member Philipsburg/Drummond, Recorder

Aubree Roth- Montana Farm to School

Kaleena Miller- AERO

Kaitlin McGatherty- UM student, writing report on our session

**Ground Rules** (Neva):

[\*] Hold each other accountable

- [\*] Respect others' time, opinions, property, and space
- [\*] Speak from your own experience
- [\*] Laugh & have fun
- [\*] Be willing to respectfully challenge others
- [\*] Be willing to ask; non-judgmental atmosphere
- [\*] Help each other with language
- [\*] Be attentive and actively listen
- [\*] Remember our purpose in being here
- [\*] Limit cell phone use and turn off the sound

### Morning Panel **Innovations in Food Production, Processing, and Distribution** 11:40-12:15

#### **Bryan Ulring- Yellowstone Grassfed Beef**

- inspiring to hear what everyone is doing and be part of this discussion
- first core question, nourish ecology, economies, \_\_\_\_\_ with healthy beef that is good for people and the land
- innovation is creating new things and new and original technology (definition) He feels it is the opposite of what they are doing “taking food back to the basics”
- authentic, transparent relationships
- nothing new— native Montanans had it figured out- healthy local regenerative foods to nourish people
- Use excel and social media (modern)
- “using cattle to regenerate landscapes and nourish our community”
- use natural food production
- building relationships- “relationships are what connect food, health, ag, and our communities”
- over the last 50 years the conventional food system has thrived on anonymity and keeping consumers in the dark ex- GMO labeling, country of origin labeling
- resilient relationships more than just sales-
- chef and food service people out at the ranches to develop the best relationships
- financial resiliency- by keeping dollars in Montana
- ecological resiliency- using consumer dollars to build up the soil
- social resiliency- millions of healthy meals to students, hospitals, families

#### **Laura Garber- Homestead Organics Farm** located outside of Hamilton also working on launching a new poultry processing facility outside of the Bitterroot

- 14 acre certified organic poultry and produce farm
- sells at farm stand a farmers market
- farming for 18 years
- uses farm stand for customers to get the experience, often have baby animals for children
- also runs Zen Kitchen catering company— all word of mouth, 3 weddings, 5 fundraisers,
- Farm as hub for education— degree in elementary education, kindergarden program (come 5x per year) always has a theme (example-carrots last year)
- Farm camp- 5th year, week long camp for kids in elementary school, high school students have week long training
- special needs camp- 3 hrs/day, student with autism paired up with high schooler for a week
- -cultivating connections youth farm internship- hire 8 high school schools 3 days a week for six hours to grow food for the meals on wheels program

- All about Cooperatives - loyal to local— connecting farms and finding ways where farmers don't have to be in competition with each other, multi-farm CSA, produce, wheat, and grains— expanding to collaboration of growers to
- Seed cooperative- selling to 15 stores, Montana grown certified organic
- Montana poultry growers cooperative- the legality of processing poultry has made it impossible for small farmers to do it locally, farmers working together—raised 20,000 on Kickstarter plus much more in grant money to build poultry processing facility— anyone in the state can have poultry legally processed. First publicly available poultry processing in the state. The MT Butchers Co-op owns the poultry processing facility (FIRST co-op owned poultry facility in the country)
- “we can work together and make it work”
- also built a commercial kitchen

### **Dave Prather- General Manager Western Montana Growers Cooperative**

- Farmer owned provides marketing and distribution services
- improving the local food system by providing farmers access to local and regional food markets
- farmer co-ops, farmers in charge of their own destiny
- started with fruit and veg now dairy, cheese, meat, value added, frozen and fresh
- provide market assessment for farmers- what are costumers interested in purchasing, what farmers get to grow what
- employe sales staff— marketing assistance and branding
- customers- grocery stores, restaurants, institutions (UM), public schools ,healthcare institutions
- multi-farm CSA
- use technology- provides platform where growers can let us know what is available and so customers
- 4 trucks for distribution- mostly stay in the western part of the state but work with distributors to get the rest of the state as well as Washington and Oregon
- Dave's 9th year with WMGC
- growth of food movement in Montana is inspiring
- challenges still to come
- get healthy delicious food out to those who want to eat

### Q&A with panelists:

Q: Is the poultry problem state level or USDA?

A: (Laura) problem is there is not enough people processing poultry bc there is no where to process it, more facilities = more processing. Regulations are federal and state.

Q: Beef processing in MT?

A: (Bryan) There are a couple USDA processing facilities. Grassfed Beef single biggest cost is processing. In the small family run facilities it takes 30 minutes to process, in the big processing facilities it takes 11 seconds. State inspection basically has to meet federal standards.

(Aubree)- Schools can purchase from both state and federally inspected facility

Q: difference between international standards and federal/state?

A: (Laura) Silly things, wall thickness

Q: How can you get people to want to buy local chickens even if they cost more?

A: People who can afford them need to put their money where their mouth is. (Bryan) the commodity beef is inexpensive because of cheap feed  
Not basing a meal where meat is the main part of the dish,  
(Mark) Look at the health of students, matter of priority, using safflower oil  
(Laura) Educating kids to want Kale! Parents will buy it.  
(Dave) Look at it from consumer and farmer perspective. Value judgement. Grocery stores are owned by corporations say they want to have local food but its not happening.  
EDUCATING CONSUMERS!!

## **Work Session #2: Current Situation to Future Vision, 1:15-4:30**

### Afternoon Panel: Innovations in the Marketplace (Buyers)

#### **Jessica Wilcox- Food and Nutrition Services Director Livingston HealthCare**

- 25 bed hospital
- started at Livingston in 2007, meals were served out of aluminum foil
- wanted to model healthy food
- Western Sustainability Farm to Restaurant Campaign- building connections with local producers. Mainly meat and potatoes.
- now have 50 local vendors, 37% of budget to local food
- opened new facility- 25 bed— cafeteria has taken on new image “Cafe Fresh” — want to be one of the most sought after restaurants in southwestern Montana
- design space to feature culinary arts— big window into kitchen
- chef/staff speak with patrons to explain what/how they are cooking
- all buffet “people eat with their eyes”
- everything sold by weight
- have featured ethnic days
- grab and go cooler— deserts made in house
- have convenience foods- granola bars, etc.— no trans fats, added sugar, etc.
- use ghost town coffee
- collaborate often with entities in Livingston
- Food Resource Center

#### **Jill Flores- Production Manager, Montana State University**

- biggest challenge is quantity
- to overcome they formed partnership with Meat Montana- MSU uses 2000 pounds of hamburger in a week
- ice cream: 87 gallons/wk. —distributed by Wilcox
- look for products that Montana grows in abundance
  - relationship with Root Cellar— processes MT grown produce for MSU
- Local Distributor Companies- allow them to use several different products that would be hard to get the amount they need on their own, comes from multiple producers
- relationship with Dept. of Ag— Steer a Year program— 9 Steer— lasted not even 2 weeks. The Steer were raised and consumed on campus
- went to 4H livestock fair and purchased 4 pigs
- MSU is land grant college
- strive to bring local products in, serve products to the kids that they are interested in eating

#### **Mark LoParco- Director of Dining, University of Montana**

- if we want local food, humanely raised meats, fair wages, etc. we as consumers must constantly consciously support farms, producers, legislators who share these same values
- At the university of Montana they are:
  - UM farm to college program— surpassed 10 million \$ kept in MT economy
  - build mutually beneficial relationships with our stake holders
  - forward-contracting: PEAS farm want to build hoop houses, borrowed 6000\$ but the school bought \$6000 worth of onions that they would grow
  - Real Food Challenge
  - Regional stakeholders- WMGC. Mission Mountain Foods. Buy value added local produce, bumper crops, split cherries, tomatoes, if they have a large amount of products they will buy it
  - 3 for 3 for grants, one for geothermal greenhouse
  - Montana pulse advisory committee- for high pressure skillet costs \$40,000, but will now buy pulse crops
  - 2 campus gardens- learning laboratories— closed loop food system, save seeds
  - Montana Food And Ag Coalition
  - influencing sustainable food and business practices on a national and international level
  - menus of change— collaborative, UM one of them— develop global strategies that address social and environmental change and implementation
    - ex-plant based diet, increase nuts and legumes, sustainable animal, healthy oils (ex- safflower oil)
- Challenges each of us to “Vote with our fork”

### **Maria Pace- Superintendent Boulder Elementary School**

- one of the innovative things that is happening and Boulder Elementary is about the culture and to do the very best for the children in the district, started at the board and district level
- provide best for our children including food
- had three passionate community members about gardening
- 16,000 people in boulder. Free/reduced rate 65%
- Hired an amazing food service administrator who got it, trusted foodCorps, grounded in great relationships
- NCAT reached out for them to be part of USDA Farm to School Grant —board was all about it
  - had to increase local food purchasing by 30%
  - WMGC
- all about bringing people together, the board wanting to do the best for our children
- had a community meal last night with all local ingredients
- have to make it a priority, if cost is higher administration just has to figure it out

### Q&A (with all panelists):

Q: Price, how do you convince the procurement system to give you some flexibility in getting more expensive local food?

A: (Mark) It's our budget, we can spend it how we want.

(Maria) At the school level it is a different ballgame. We have some commodity foods but overall our Board has a vision of providing what is best for our students. Some schools have opted out of the USDA school food program but that is not a possibility for all schools .

(Dave) We have to be able to meet people half way. Each situation is different. Partner with Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center to process food to be available for schools, retail, institutions. Important for season extension. Work with Fresh Fruit and Vegetable snack Program.

(Trevor- sustainability director for UM) UM has written into contract that there is an exception for anything that qualifies as Farm to College so they do not have to work within their Sysco contract. They can get it cheaper by going direct, not through Sysco

(Jessica) All contracts are negotiable.

(Mark) We need to approach this as, Is this the right thing to do? Is it right for us to want to feed out kids? Is it right to use certain ranching processing? We need to get more money to be able to spent per child on school meals. We need to demand it so the legislator will follow.

(Michael) People who come into the food pantry are some of the most well fit people in Montana. The food pantry makes their own bread for food pantry distribution and local businesses. All based on other peoples ability to pay (flexibility). They make their own soup, chili, pasta sauce. They process and vacuum seal produce. For pricing, develop outside buyers based on their need and ability to pay so that they can provide the food for those who can't afford it. It seems to fill a need for all involved. Wants their food pantry to be self-sufficient so they sell their value-added products. They have a culinary training program. Don't see a kitchen see an economic development entity. Synergistic economic opportunities

Q: How do we market that its the right thing to do, that it's the right time? Is there a marketing campaign to get the message out? How do we spread the word through education in towns where people aren't surrounded by it?

A: (Jessica) Exposing people to what food should be. "Let the food market itself". We need to get this food into institution and expose people to it in small communities.

(Michael) It must start with the kids

Q: Comment on the concept of good food policy.

A: (Mark) How big is your vision? We need to start right now preserving Ag. land. No land=no food. It takes courage to go out and commit to that. It is what must happen. MT will be less likely to be impacted by climate change due to its Ag growing capabilities. Start now preserving and building that.

(Barb-Whitefish) Start on the local level. Want to get it into schools we need our school teachers at the table. Need School Boards to be

(Mary) US Conference of mayors has a working group on food. Who is our state is involved in that?

(Laura) Each of us have to do it now, buy local food all the time.

**Addressing Core Question #1:** What innovative approaches are Montanans currently using to connect food, agriculture, health, and local economies?

(Neva) What is happening on MT that are assets for us going forward? Fill out sticky notes and apply them to the the categories listed around the room: people, policies, programs, businesses, organizations/agencies, other. After applying the sticky notes we will have a **gallery walk** to see what is around the room.

Sticky-note activity (As posted on post-it notes around the room):

### **Policies**

- We changed MT's law so that schools can purchase local food even if its a bit more costly
- Local food policy
- Land stewardship

- Relationships
- Good food policy and schools and hospitals
- Supportive labeling regulations
- Think of local food as healthcare investment
- More change to P/K-12 foodservice rules to empower local/healthy food
- MT attracts many retirees/2nd homeowners— Is there a way to provide tax benefits for them to help protect out Ag land? Could also be used to help young/ beginning farmers and ranchers
- Wellness policy at the school board level
- It's the right thing to do
- More money is allocated in the Child Nutrition Bill for school food
- Open space bonds passed for agricultural land preservation

### **Organizations/Agencies**

- Online food co-op
- Attend school's wellness meetings and talk about good food policy
- Pay high school students (at risk, girls, etc.) to grow food for...
- Purchase from 4-H
- FoodCorps
- USDA Farm to School
- NCAT
- Build relationships
- Model programs
- Story Mill Garden
- Cooperative food processing for local value adding
- Making health a priority in evaluating cost
- UM's "Farm to College" contractual language
- Farm to Institution Programs
- Farm to College Programs
- Hospitals model healthy food
- MT Farm to School leadership team
- Governor's Main Street Montana
- Within community collaboration (food bank, schools, hospitals, community kitchens)
- Interagency collaboration buying from/supporting each other

### **Programs**

- veggie school coin \$5.00
- community outreach
- Farm Camp
- awesome education programming
- poultry coop.
- relationships and collaboration
- menus of change
- agritourism
- training high school students to lead farm camp to create the next generation of local food advocates
- utilizing FoodCorps and other great programs in MT
- utilizing institutions as an avenue for spring boarding local foods into homes
- farm to... school/table/collect/etc.
- pairing on farm education with food security/ food access problems
- nuts and legumes at the center of the plate

- marketing local food in rural communities (books= stories of farmers, cafes, chefs, recipes)
- renewing the countryside sold at those community businesses
- MSU training emerging food and nutrition professionals in sustainable food systems to incorporate in internship rotations around the state and into their careers in food service, healthcare, and public health
- Team Farm (multi-farm CSA)
- Farm to School— especially in rural areas
- MT Dept. of Ag Grants and programs
- state inspection program for meat processing
- MT Harvest of the Month
- Food/Farm education
- collaboration
- season extension practices (WMGC & MMFEC)
- cooperative managed facilities
- It's about the kids—passionate educators
- community agriculture projects
- double SNAP dollars
- Gallatin Valley Food Bank
- Farm Camp
- companies like Root Cellar that add value to proceed on a medium-large scale
- SFBS program
- Local/regional processing facilities
- SNAP availability at Farmer's Markets, Co-ops, WMGC
- Elders and Youth connections

### **People**

- direct partners- farm and classroom
- every person at this conference—commitment to all local food
- maintaining and building resilient relationships—get rid of anonymity
- less government—more personal responsibility and action
- administrators engages to change the food system
- develop a direct (easier) avenue for farmers to participate in schools
- transparent relationships
- Information sharing base—northern MT growers coop
- resilient relationships between consumers and producers and institutions
- interested school boards through passionate locals
- handshakes to hugs
- food service personal making local a priority
- public school leadership in prioritizing school nutrition
- down stream consequences (values)
- personal relationships over sales leads to strong business relationships and strong community
- public interest in local food
- exposure
- authentic transparent relationships—deep resilient relationships
- ranch visits
- working together as a community creates more opportunities
- assessing our values and making the choice, the decision to do the right thing

### **Other**

- Regional specific initiatives (seeds, coops, poultry processing)
- Innovation through simplicity

- Utilizing natural, holistic systems
- Innovation is reverse? Returning to original farming practices
- Ranching is a big part of MT's historical economy and cultural heritage. Projects like Yellowstone Grassfed Beef build off of this tradition to re-envision how ranching can promote community and agricultural sustainability
- Starting to focus on healthcare more—prevention
- Diverse farm experiences
- Building healthy soil
- Farm Camp- high school students and youth, high school students and disabled, YMCA, host of other programs
- Intergenerational food and agricultural education
- Menus of Change
- Fertile open land
- How to get people to buy local food at the true cost of food
- Cooperative advertising. To educate the public on quality difference and intrinsic value of locally hand processed meats (model tourism, “get lost” “Its the right thing to do”
- Going back to the basics of food! Simplicity, holistic practices. Safe for people, land, and animals

(Neva) **What is our vision for 2026?** What will our food system look like specifically for our track. Our track has two themes expanding markets and ensuring access to healthy nutritious food for all people. We will separate these two themes to talk about this. Different tables will address either expanding markets or food access. After break we will address challenges and opportunities for these visions. Lets get creative. Then we will work on new initiatives we want to create or expand to finally come up with action plans.

Track #2 is broken into 4 smaller groups to address the question: **What is our vision for local food markets in 2016? What is our vision for food access —local and healthy— via- non market mechanisms?**

**Vision Posters for 2026** (copied directly from posters):

Group A:

- Local food 1st and for all— all access points have local food available and well displayed
- School pantries and backpack programs
- Better pairing of buyers from different socioeconomic backgrounds
  - use this to create culture around food
- De-stigmatize local/organic as only for wealthy
- More community kitchens and cafes
- Our vision is to create a culture that values quality food and that the average Montana family can source the majority of their food from local farmers/ranchers

Group B

- local scratch-cooked foods cooked and served in all institutions (private and public)
- use food as community revitalization
- kids growing food for community
- MT local food system strategic plan ([vtfarmtoplate.com](http://vtfarmtoplate.com))
- every Montanan values and eats local, healthy food regardless of demographics
- preserves and protect agricultural land
- MT Dept. of Ag. to promote Montana food to Montanans
- Local food and agriculture public service campaign
- For every \$1 toward political campaigns, “\$1 will be spent to strengthen local food system”

### Group C

- MT Good Food Policy
- Revise Farm Bill to incentive local food production
- Statewide marketing campaign to support MT Ag and local food productions (MT Brand)
  - marketing line of Dept. of Ag budget or non-profit led? or Dept. of Tourism?/ Commerce?

### Group D

- Vibrant, community led food systems projects supported by policy, statewide networks, and funding
  - Incorporating MT foods into emergency/supplemental food programs, institutions, agencies, and community economic development is the norm
  - Incorporate food system and nutrition education into MT education standards (for children and adults)
  - Preserve agricultural land and opportunities to feed Montanans into the future
- (Neva) How can we make a these visions a reality? All groups met together near the posters to see what some of the common themes were:
- local food for all/access for all
  - gardening education
  - every Montana values local food regardless of demographics
  - agricultural land protection
  - -PSA for local food
  - -statewide marketing/network
  - -Incorporate food and Ag education into Montana state educational standards

### Discussion of posters:

- Lots of crossover between groups visions
- All visions are inclusive (demographic/geographic)
- Speak to our right for food. Need to shift values
- Shifts in policy and shifts that are community led/community revitalization

Next, groups will regroup and work on core question #2, First focusing on opportunities, then challenges.

Address core question #2: **What are the opportunities for further developing local/regional food markets within Montana? Are there particular needs and opportunities in communities not served well currently, such as Eastern Montana, rural areas, tribes, and people of moderate to low income?**

“All these challenges are opportunities”

### Group Opportunity Posters

(Neva) What are our biggest opportunities to bring about change? What are the clear opportunities we might pursue in order to develop some initiatives?

Discussion:

- Policy and money for lobbyists
- bring people in touch with what food look like, smells like, whose your farmer
- looking at existing models that could be a start to developing a better network of policy, community led projects, co-ops, businesses
- educate people about what is happening, encouraging
- culture of Montana— what does that enable us to do?

(Neva) Over the evening think about these opportunities and think about how we can take the next step— specific action. We have done a lot of good thinking today, a lot of good sharing of knowledge and now we have to take that to the next level.

Opportunities (as copied directly from group made posters)

\*group identified biggest opportunities marked with “\*\*”

#### Group A

- many successful models to replicate and expand upon\*—success building on success— communities mentoring communities
- higher education has interest and ability to teach these skills
  - consider short-term training opportunities
  - extension curriculum
- opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration\*
- School sporting event concessions\* —if you can't sell to the regular school lunch program, try sporting events
- Jobs
- local food distributors\* and coops
- many locally owned grocery stores
- community food Co-ops
- kids- get 'em while they're young

#### Group B

- Food banks/food resource centers
- AmeriCorps (FoodCorps, Vista, etc.) \*
- MAPS for public service campaign (media institute)
- local food event (at the fair?)
- Farm Bill reauthorization
- seed banks
- snap-ed, double SNAP program, wholesome wave, WIC, senior coupons
- established Farm to Folk (table) programs/organizations
- school breakfast/lunch/summer feeding programs
- replication of existing food system support organizations/programs\*—models that already work
- community service
- cooperative model!\*— values-based supply chain, creative partnerships
- farmers
- high school— conversation teams, farm to school team
- land (right now)
- innovative procurement
- passionate people and leaders\*
- policy leaders\* (USDA grants/private funding) (Juneau, Michelle Obama, Tester)
- No Kid Hungry

#### Group C-1 (marketing)

- sponsorships
- collaborations\*— Dept. of Ag./tourism/commerce/livestock/DPHHS
  - identify liaisons within departments
  - also private collaborations
  - mandates in each department— percentage of budget towards local food
  - Rotunda Day

- Investment in Food Security—food sovereignty (ROI program established)
- Statewide commission\*— a state department to survey remaining Ag. land (map it)
- documentary creation\* — UM, MSU, department capabilities (Livingston Model), personal stories
- Proactive framing of issues\* — political aides
- prioritize local food, sustainable farming—state priority
- incentivize sustainable ag. practices

#### Group C-2 (Marketing)

- have legislator be challenged to eat on \$1.50/day
- have an Eat Local Day statewide— annually? monthly?
- governor use local food in facilities and at all conferences
- Good Food Policy\*
- Marketing Campaign\*
  - Dept. of Tourism \$
  - Non-profit business partnership
  - use existing brand materials
- Farmer-buyer community building— team building, personal, get to know each others needs
  - Get on farm\*— dirty or vice versa
- sharing stories
- dynamic pricing

#### Group D

- look at existing community led policy models (like Livingston Food Resource Center)\*
- MT F2S Leadership Team
- Food and land coalition in Bozeman
- Farm Bill and supportive politicians\*
- existing listening sessions between Tester and MDA
- look at existing municipal, county, state, local food policy
- supportive politicians
- current election
- supportive culture
- MT pride— sense of community and place\*
- lots of land\*
- growing number of small farms statewide and interest in local food/farming
- increased support and understanding of F2S and SNAP/DSD+ Local food
- increased communication between Dept. of Ag., DPHHS, and Dept. of Livestock
- prevalence of small business in MT
- Extension

#### Challenges (as copied directly from posters)

##### Group A (access)

- limited buying power in small communities
- geography and population size
- funding for all our great ideas...
- consistency in quality and quantity
- culture of cheap food
- minimum wage and average earnings
- providing education without preaching
- development of open farmland

- stigma

#### Group B (access)

- Funding
- not all farmers markets accept SNAP/WIC
- Personnel
- short growing season
- crooking/food prep/preservation/culinary skills
- procurement policies
- distribution (centers, people labor, distance)
- imbalance of supply and demand
- people who don't value/prioritize local food
- land-accessibility, pressure from developers
- grocery stores—too much processed, lack of local food
- no statewide event/rallying cry
- availability of seeds
- communication—isolation, insulation
- cost of real food vs. perceived cost of food/true cost of food
- Farm Bill— commodity subsidies make cost of artificial food low
- competing priorities
- misinformation and lack of information
- bureaucracy and politics
- climate change/drought— community resiliency

#### Group C-1 (marketing)

- potential push back from industries (local food marketing campaign)
- de-incentivize non-sustainable agriculture\*
- lack of legislator leadership\*— too few champions for local food, ag. land preservation, and economic development
- weight of election
- funding\*
- lack of a clear concise definition of sustainable and local in MT\*
- lack of cohesive trademark\* (MT made, local, organic, homegrown)

#### Group C-2 (marketing)

- if all does well, how to keep up with demand (seasons, processing, distribution)
- water
- processing capacity
- changing values, status quo\*
- MT struggles with economies of scale distance\*
- distribution
- connecting producers with buyers

#### Group D (access)

- cost of local food/lacking funding\*
- conservative culture and lock of public tuning
- lack of income to purchase local food
- polarization of political climate
- HB-630 is confusing and inaccessible and needs communication/education
- climate
- lack of connivence in local food

- size/distance/rural\* (impact on communication)
- Montanans are used to artificially cheap food
- low pay for farmers
- distribution of farms
- lack of skilled labor
- lack of production facilities\*
- healthcare system doesn't recognize nutrition as critical to health
- resistance to change
- stigma around local food
- quantities= small individual farms
- lack of good statewide communication
- obstacles for beginning farmers and ranchers
- contractual obligations with Cisco, etc.
- lack of tuning
- Government subsidies\*
  - primarily on consolidated food system and policies that disproportionately benefit them
- externalities

### **Work Session #3: Taking it to the Next Level**

As participants left they marked how the day felt for them. The chart was labeled smiley face, neutral face, and sad face. The count ended as follows:

Smiley: 21

Neutral: 2

Sad: 0

#### General Themes From Day 1

- cultural values/pride of place/relationships
- promoting/marketing/storytelling
- MT policy
- US policy and Farm Bill
- values-based supply chain and Co-ops and distribution

### **Saturday October 29, 2016**

#### **Work Session #4: Strategic Priorities, 9:00-10:30**

Session opens with participants walking around the room looking at the posters the groups put together yesterday and identifying anything that resembles initiatives.

(Neva) Good Morning, how is everyone doing? We have work to do today.

We now have the task to come up with a list of initiatives that we reasonably think we can do to move forward. We will now pull off these sheets types of projects/initiatives to walk through today. Participants will call out popcorn style and Neva will write them down. Then we will take the list and narrow it down. Participants will get to vote on their top initiatives and then we will form working groups to come up with an action plan for each initiative. We hope to come up with the top five initiative.

(Aubree) These are not just recommendations to bring to the governor but also what WE in the room can do.

(Mark) All the work should go forward, even the initiatives we come up with that are not the top 5, that we do not work on today. We shouldn't forget about them.

Proposed Initiatives (shared by participants with the group):

- MT Good Food Policy
  - municipality, county, or statewide
  - part of government or independent
  - could be procurement based
- Starting a statewide food policy council
- comprehensive agricultural land and agricultural water assessment
- statewide marketing campaign for local food
  - multifaceted, many people picture different things, books with stories, documentary stuff, guerrilla like vs. standard, indicators to know if we are progressing
  - need to market to people who don't feel the same way we do, we don't need to "preach to the choir" we need to market to small communities
  - looking at marketing campaigns that are successful
- strategic events with the legislator
  - example- have to eat \$3.18 for lunch/\$1.70 for breakfast, Pulse Campaign
- Sharing models— taking models that already exist and fleshing them out so they can be replicated (406 Farmed)
- Need for more research/updating institutional market studies
- Getting producers and consumers on a mutually appreciating basis— move towards a relationship based economy — organizing a socializing, farm tours, connecting producers with consumers more on a socializing basis
- Education— working with OPI to develop educational standards, Farm to School and outreach
- how do we use cooperative models more— increase number of cooperatives and how to apply the cooperative model to agriculture
- work with low income households access to quality food affordability
  - food sovereignty
- hold food access summit
- statewide local food audit— look at purchases by grocery stores, restaurants, institutions
  - looking at diversity of the food people are buying— where are the gaps
- coordinating local food distribution across the state— connecting co-ops across the state— between connect food distribution between eastern and western Montana, more efficient
  - currently we have a for profit infrastructure like Albertsons or Costco, it shouldn't be use vs. them we need to work with those companies— lets make it economically attractive for these companies to deliver MT food around MT. There trucks are half empty most of the time
- develop a new AmeriCorps program called community-corps, have an AmeriCorps member in every community in MT working on whatever food issues that community has
- funding mechanism from all the departments of the government so that everyone is a stakeholder in agricultural economic development
- Push Senator Tester to push community food projects
- Farm Bill subsidies for small local farmers

(Neva) For the next hour and a half we will go in-depth with 5 of these initiatives based on our vision. Our vision is to create a culture that values quality food and that the average Montana

family can source the majority of their food from local farmers/ranchers. Participants labeled their top three initiative choices with a blue dot sticker.

### **Top 5 Initiatives:**

1. Food Access Summit and low income households increase quality local food access for all
2. Food Policy Council (tribal, regional, local) objective—Good Food Policy
3. Local Food Audit and Institutional Market study update
4. Marketing campaigns
5. Farm to School and Education in School

(comment) How are we going to include marginalized populations within all of these categories? Make sure to think about this in your working groups

## **Work Session #5: Action Plan, 10:30-12:00**

(Neva) Each table needs group facilitator and scribe. Hold yourself and your group accountable that everyone's voice is heard. Use all the ideas that are at the table. The group's task is outlined on the yellow sheet we have passed out. The sheet is entitled "**Track Goals, Strategies, and Action Planning**".

- A. The first task is for each group to create an Action Plan by addressing the following:
1. Define the outcome —what is the goal, what does success look like: A statement of what will be in place or accomplished by 2026 or sooner. You may also identify several shorter-term goals of outcomes
  2. What are the major strategies we will use (educate farmers and offer incentives to use cool farm practices; pass legislation to....; etc)
  3. What resources do we have, and need if any, to implement this plan?
  4. Who will be or could be a lead organization(s) and what other groups are involved? Who else besides us should be at the table to help lead and make this happen?
  5. When could this be done by (in your best case scenario)?
  6. What are three or more important steps to take in the next 3-12 months, and who will do it?

B. Present Plans, Engage and Discuss: each workgroup presents its plan to the track to the entire group:

### **1. Food Access**

Poster (scribed):

- Outcome: Create a statewide working forum that connects local food access leaders physically and digitally to improve food access in their communities
- Goals
  - hold statewide local food access youth and elders summit, to be used as a model for other summits
  - establish NCAT food Access list serve
  - food access resource publication
- Strategies
  - hold a Pablo local food access summit as model for future regional and statewide summit (mid March 2017)
  - hold an Eastern MT local food access summit (Oct 2017)
  - keep the team together (regional meetings Dec. 2016)
    - team debrief after 1st two strategies are complete

- Resources
  - Coalition, NKH, PECH
  - MT food bank network, food security council
  - MSU- willing to host state conference
  - Northern Plains
  - specific state the tribal agencies
  - SKC Extension/ all extension
  - and many more
    - funding for Pablo Summit 1/2 secured
    - group as greatest resource!
- Important Steps
  - Set quarterly conference call dates for working group
  - hold planning meeting for Pablo Summit by early December, summit to be held in March 2017
  - begin planning Eastern summit by late spring to be held in late fall 2017
  - setup NCAT listserv and food access webpages
  - each member will write up a success story from their community as beginning of resource publication (asap post on webpage)

#### Group Share:

- statewide working group to connect people physically and digitally— main outcome
- statewide food access youth and elders summit
- establish NCAT food access list serve
- food access resource publication
- something that people can model off of
- have a lot of planning to do in the next few months
- hold an Eastern Montana local food access summit
- regional summit in March —Pablo
- Eastern summit in October
- resources- so much already going on— MT food bank network, food security council— how can they help
- someone will donate 50% of what the summit costs
- food security grants, other grants
- don't think funding will be a big issue
- MSU hold a statewide conference
- struggles in each regional area
- set quarterly conference calls for group
- working groups in summits— examples: different cooks (seniors, Head Start)
- write success stories from their own communities
- Comments/Questions
  - Neva offered help/facilitation

## **2. Food Policy Council** (tribal, regional, local) objective—Good Food Policy Poster (scribed):

- outcome: establish a statewide food policy council, informed by a network of local and regional food councils mandated by the Governor
- Strategies: (a) leadership development mechanism (b) inventory and summary of current policy issues feeding the creation of concise action
- Resources: (a) [have] agencies established, models in other states, previous governor support (b) [need] facilitator, appointed council, local community buy in, state government support (mandate?)

- Lead Organizations: NCAT, AERO, CFAC, Grow MT, MSU, UM, MT Food Bank Network, MSU Extension, Tribal Council, PECH, state government agency liaisons
- Food Policy Council established and holds first meeting within one year
- Steps:
  - 3 mo: identify who we's like on the council
  - 6 mo: approved members established
  - 12 mo: vision and mission established

#### Group Share:

- outcome—establish statewide food policy council, mandated by the governor
- governor supports it financially
- MT Food Policy council mainly working on legislative issues
- group of people tasks with being informed on legislation and disseminate it to food system councils to counties/regions
- county/regional groups would talk to council about what issues they would like the policy council to look into
- Food Legislation experts
- persuade leg. to vote in the way that the council feels
- influence congress— inform them about how important is to vote a certain way
- strategies— leadership development mechanisms that already exist
  - inventory and summary of leg. issues already is existence
- work off existing model
- is there any budget line for a council like this
- need financial support— paid facilitator position
- need local buy-in
- organizations: NCAT, extension, tribal council, MSU, UM
- want to have first meeting within 1 year
- in next three months identify who they want to have on the council
- 6 months- through application process—members chosen

#### Questions/Comments

- Food Security Council of the MT food bank
- connect with USDA Ag. stations— break up the regions to have representative from
- Extension Agents, Watershed groups
- state food council informed by network of local and regional food councils
- using existing organizations instead of a new layer of bureaucracy
- thinking beyond stakeholders to specific places being represented
- Did you think of anything the council would do besides legislation? — Rule implementation
- Health group links

### **3. Local Food Audit/Assessment**

#### Poster (scribed):

- Areas to Audit: public institutions (schools, hospitals), private institutions(grocery, restaurant), available arable land (and applicable water rights), types/diversity of goods produced (can complete diet by sourced from MT)
- First steps:
  - ID gaps in research
  - who has done/will conduct assessment
  - how we can use the numbers/assessment
  - ID unit of measure for each assessment dollars (not weight/bunches) to evaluate/quantify

- look to replicate Fraiser study in 2004
- Outcome:
  - consumer benefit (like restaurant score) (could have sign outside/part of advertising)
  - a benchmark/understanding for vendors to evaluate themselves
  - data collected here, then used in a study evaluating economic impact (impact of money spent on local food staying in MT)
  - to inform public policy
  - value of the assessment
  - statewide assessment of local (MT) food purchased by public and private institutions/businesses
- Strategy/Resources
  - use existing studies by replicating their data collection methods
  - ID gaps in these methods
  - Funding: federal grants, tax money through the Dept's of commerce and Ag.
- Lead organizations
  - Dept of commerce and ag
  - university system
  - NCAT and other nonprofits
- When done?
  - methods, standards, funding and relationships in place in 3 years
  - annual data collection
- Immediate Steps (3-12 months)
  - consolidate existing data
  - ID relevant studies, how we replicate them
  - Reach out to Dept. of Ag 1st and then other stakeholders to gauge interest and capacity
- Who?— Dave Prather, Trevor/Kara, NCAT, CFAC, NPRC
- Challenge worth mentioning— resistance from institutions in sharing their purchase data; if too hard consider collecting producer sales numbers

#### Group Share:

- thinking about what is the existing knowledge out there and what are the gaps, what would leverage change
- statewide assessment of local food purchased by private and public institutions
- take this info and do an economic impact study on it
- how much are we spending on local food, what are the multipliers (how much goes to community/farmer)
- its the right thing to do because of these objective economic/social values
- it is a big undertaking
- strategy- what info. is already out there, can we use that methodology, can we update
- need money and resources to pull this study off— grants, taxes
- synergy of a lot of different organizations public and private
- colleges- research
- pulling all these together to get funding
- when— in three years, using the next 3-12 mo to look at existing data
- how can we use what has already been done
- reaching to dept. of ag./commerce and nonprofits to see what their capacity is
- Dave will talk to Dept. of Ag, others in group with start pulling together data
- goal— make objective statements about local food- where its going,
- do they track purchases or sales— they see it going both ways, and would be fleshed out over the next three years
- concrete data about why this stuff matters

- Comments/questions:
  - Neva is happy to help track down studies
  - part of this assessment should look at populations that these institutions are serving— free/reduced lunch, how much of this is going to low income families
  - this data can be broken down into so many categories
  - not just what are the goods produce but who is getting them
  - looking at produced and purchased
  - Albertsons (and like companies) are not mandated to have data on local food so they may not be apt to do it
  - include Farmers markets and SNAP EBT
  - University —contact George Haynes and Kate Fuller at MSU

#### **4. Marketing campaign**

##### Poster (scribed):

- Montanans understand that local food is essential to health and wellness, food security, and a vibrant local economy
- statewide marketing campaign
- successful local models have been identified and actively shared/made into templates
- follow-up work session to flesh out idea strategies— who needs to be at the table?
- Ask governor to convene/invite him to ID players/direct state staff to be involved
  - Full committee( who else?) Lisa Bullock, Michelle Obama, a professor, a marketing specialist, business student (Point person not yet identified)
- Who can help? What are resources? — Grow Montana, CFAC, AERO, state government, Farm to School, volunteers, community leaders, models already in use, NCAT, famous people

##### Group Share:

- first, they realized it is a huge task, spend half the time trying to see the big picture, what would it look like if implemented
- want MT people to understand the importance of local food
- local food as household words
- statewide strategic marketing campaign
- not enough time to flesh out the details
- key players— need to identify point person/campaign, Lisa Bullock
- other resources and collaboration— grow Montana, CFAC, F2S, AERO, NCAT, famous people
- other models they can use
- comments/questions
  - community self development strategy to attain vision
  - MT local food is essential
  - AERO local meeting to share models

#### **5. Farm to School and Education in School**

##### Poster (scribed):

- advisory committee dedicated to standards
- working with MSU to integrate Farm to School into teacher Education/education leadership programs
- Groups— MSU, OPI, SAM/Admin, Food Banks, local farm to school organizations
- Happen in 2018
- Steps:

1. Form Advisory Committee
  2. Determine process/opportunities for amending standards
  3. Draft F2S standards/ plan incorporate in teacher ed and leadership ed
- Who: Samantha O'Bryne, Erin Jackson, MSU Extension, volunteers (Aubrey, Marylou)
  - Identify: funding, tracking/story sharing, policy, identify existing programs

Group Share:

- broad topic— increase F2S integration in the food system
- goal-2026 100% of k-12 schools will participate in at least one element of farm to school: procurement, education, and school gardens
- major strategies- incorporate Farm to School in Educational standards
- develop advisory committee made up of different stakeholders from MSU, OPI, administrator, food banks, locals,
- needs to be statewide mandated
- by 2018 need plan for full integration
- identify what the process will be for incorporating the standards
- identify the opportunities—standards that already encompass farm to school
- draft farm to school standards
- incorporate using colleges as resource— farm to school education training in education and leadership programs— upcoming teachers learning how to do this
- funding needs to be present for it to be successful
  - policy level— food policy— education funds allocated
- track existing farm to school program
- sharing success stories and going to administrator meanings to promote and give tangible ways
- Comments/Questions
  - • What is your win?— by 2026, with steps along the way

**Full Summit Share-out:** delivered by Mark LoParco

- goal: statewide marketing plan that results in MT understanding that local food is essential for health and wellness, vibrant local economies
- goal: statewide assessment
- goal: statewide working group
- goal: achieve 100% participation of K-12 schools to implement 1 of the three parts of Farm to School
- goal: establish a statewide policy council